



Empire Patriot

Empire State Society
Sons of The American Revolution
Descendents of America's First Soldiers

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THE HISTORY OF VALLEY FORGE

By Ron Avery

The following article has been reprinted in its entirety by the expressed permission of the Author.

Introduction

The images are heartrending, dramatic and so powerful that they are embedded in the nation's historical consciousness: Bloody footprints in the snow left by bootless men. Near naked soldier wrapped in thin blankets huddled around a smoky fire of green wood. The plaintive chant from the starving: "We want meat! We want meat!"

These are the indelible images of suffering and endurance associated with Valley Forge in the winter of 1777-78. "An army of skeletons appeared before our eyes naked, starved, sick and discouraged," wrote New York's Gouverneur Morris of the Continental Congress.

The Marquis de Lafayette wrote: "The unfortunate soldiers were in want of everything; they had neither coats nor hats, nor shirts, nor shoes. Their feet and their legs froze until they were black, and it was often necessary to amputate them." A bitter George Washington - whose first concern was always his soldiers - would accuse the Congress of "little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers. I feel superabundantly for them, and from my soul pity those miseries, which it is neither in my power to relieve or prevent."

The suffering and sacrifices of the American soldiers at Valley Forge are familiar, iconic images, but there is another side of the picture. Valley Forge was where a new, confident, professional American army was born. Three months of shortage and hardship were followed by three months of relative abundance that led to wonderful changes in the morale and fighting capabilities of the Continental Army.

France would enter the war on the side of the new nation. Valuable foreign volunteers and fresh replacements would trickle

into camp.

Most important, it was at Valley Forge that a vigorous, systematic training regime transformed ragged amateur troops into a confident 18th century military organization capable of beating the Red Coats in the open field of battle.

Background

Philadelphia was the largest city in the new nation. It became the de facto capital after representatives of the 13 colonies gathered there as the Continental Congress to demand their rights as Englishmen and later proclaim independence and battle the British.

Lethargic Maj. Gen. William Howe, commander of British forces in America, made his move on Philadelphia in September 1777 thinking that, perhaps, the capture of the rebel capital would end the war.

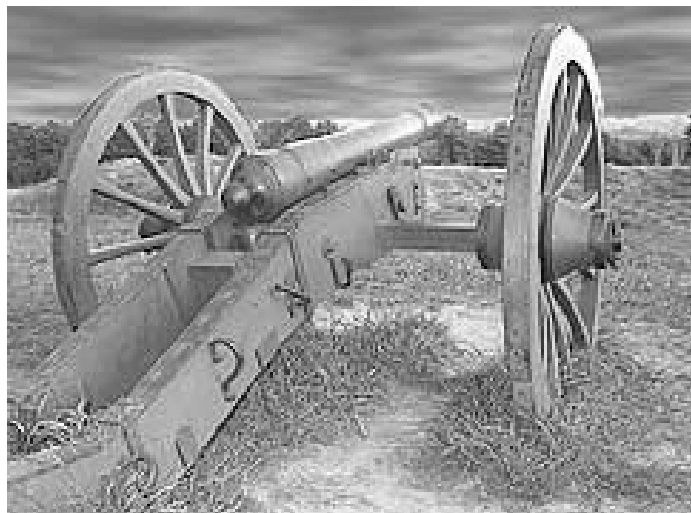
Howe loaded 15,000 troops on an armada of ships and sailed from New York City to Elkton, Maryland on the Chesapeake Bay. His forces then marched north on Philadelphia.

Washington attempted to block Howe along the banks of the Brandywine River but was

outnumbered and outmaneuvered. Two weeks after Brandywine, Howe entered Philadelphia unopposed.

When told that the British had taken Philadelphia, Benjamin Franklin, representing his nation in Paris, said, "No Sir, Philadelphia has taken the British." As events turned out, Franklin's clever quip contained a kernel of truth.

Washington attempted a bold surprise attack on the main British forces at Germantown on October 4. His plan was too complex and after some initial surprise and much confused fighting, the Americans were forced to retreat. Those remarkable amateur soldiers had marched about 35 miles and fought a four-hour battle in one day.



Protecting Valley Forge

Continued Page 4 Column 1

ROCHESTER CHAPTER HONORS LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS



Sheriff John M. York receiving a Certificate for Outstanding Service From Chapter President Stephan Clarke

The Rochester Chapter, Empire State Society, SAR, held their annual fall luncheons at the historic Spring House Restaurant to recognize outstanding service in Law Enforcement and Fire Safety. Sheriff John M. York was recognized for his long service to the citizens of Livingston County and the State of New York. Sheriff York has instituted a number of widely recognized programs and serves as an officer of the New York State Sheriff's Association as well. During his remarks at the November luncheon, Sheriff York explained many of the ramifications of security following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Our December luncheon honored retired New York State Trooper Robert Faugh for his years of service as a Trooper and as a volunteer fire fighter, the first person in New York to serve in both capacities at the same time. In retirement, Faugh has been involved with training local fire and police agencies about how to handle hazardous materials incidents and teaching a strenuous defensive driving course for several police agencies. He also teaches safe driving classes for the Rochester and Western NY AAA.

The Rochester Chapter is proud to have been able to recognize both men for their outstanding contributions to the safety and quality of life for people throughout the Rochester area. ○

A Busy Schedule for the Rochester Chapter

Fall and winter have been busy for the Rochester Chapter .

For our first major event of 2003, the Rochester Chapter held its annual celebration of George Washington's birthday on 22 February-the first time in several years we've been able to hold the observance on President Washington's actual birthday - with a luncheon at the historic Spring House Restaurant. Despite the bitter cold, an enthusiastic group gathered for the luncheon to recognize Eagle Scout Anthony Noto as winner of our Eagle Scout Essay competition and to present New York State Senator Richard A. Dollinger with the Silver Good Citizenship Medal and Certificate. Eagle Scout Noto holds 39 Merit Badges, is an Order of the Arrow member, an honor student in high school where he carries a load of four Advanced Placement courses each year. Senator Dollinger is a life-long resident of the Rochester area, a practicing attorney and a former member of the Monroe County Legislature. The Rochester Chapter is proud to recognize two such outstanding citizens. ○



ESSSAR PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Whenever you get the chance to talk about the SAR and its membership qualifications - take it - you may never know who is listening and what opportunities will open up.

I was in our local post office recently and the Asst. Postmaster wanted to know if I would like to place some items in their lobby display case. When I asked just what items they were looking for, I was told "whatever you want, we didn't know your name only that is was that fellow that's always talking about Patriotism and the SAR". With SAR/DAR items, History books, and Revolutionary War era artifacts donated from Compatriots Whiting Lightfoot, Sheldon Robinson, Richard Cowles, the Corning Baron-Steuben Chapter, DAR, Compatriot Cowles and I began our "task" to make the public more aware of our Country's History and Patriotic Society. When a local General Store heard about the project, they donated some collector Revolutionary War Dolls to further catch the eyes of the postal customers. The display case is in a very good location where anyone using the lobby has to walk right past it. The best part of the story is that there is no time limit on how long we can keep the items there and there is no charge. The display is also not permanent, we can change it as often as we wish.

Susan and I have also been attending other society functions, whenever the snow storms would give us access to the highways, which has gotten the SAR more publicity as well as "free advertising". Many times it has resulted in recruiting new members for our society. A good conversation starter is the new Revolutionary War History Book that ESSSAR Treasurer Logan Cheek introduced at the November ESSSAR Board of Managers Meeting. The hardcover book contains over 200 pages of pictures and information. At a time when the schools don't seem to be teaching this part of our Country's History, the book is a well welcomed asset. See Logan for more information in obtaining a copy for yourself, copies as gifts, or possibly talking to your school officials and having them purchase a quantity.

Thanks to Saratoga Battle Chapter for their fine job in hosting our March 2003 ESSSAR Board of Managers Meet-

ing. There were approximately 35 people attending. If you haven't visited Satatoga Battle's new website, check it out and you'll find yourself in for a treat.

A special thanks goes to ESSSAR Past President Dennis Marr for all the work he has done in finding a home for our important documents, records, etc. It has been quite awhile since Past President Marr was assigned this task and it has now appeared to be coming to a final closure. Thanks again, Dennis.

Another special thanks goes to the membership of Oriskany Battle Chapter, their President Burke Muller, Treasurer Tom Schafer, and Registrar Frances Roecker for all the fine work they have been doing to build this chapter. A final thanks to all those who brought in new members to our Society this past year. "

Our next ESSSAR Board of Managers Meeting will be our Annual Meeting and will be hosted by Oriskany Battle Chapter at the Beeches in Rome, NY on 17 May 2003. I hope to see you there.

It looks like Summer is finally on its way. My best to each of you and your families, Respectfully & Patriotically



A Nation, as a Society, forms a moral person, and every member of it is personally responsible for his Society.

Thomas Jefferson, 1792 O

NEWTOWN BATTLE CHAPTER

Hopefully, when you read this article we will have had Spring behind us and looking forward to Summer. It's been a long Winter and I hope each one of you survived it well.

During our January Chapter Meeting the following slate of Officers for 2003 were reelected to their respective offices; William J. Woodworth - President William E. Sebring - 1 st Vice President John F. Bogart - Secretary Samuel R. Pulford - Treasurer George W. Hauck - Chaplain Sereno S. Tanner - Historian William J. Woodworth - Registrar

Having no nominations for the vacated position of 2nd Vice President, an

EMPIRE PATRIOT

The Empire State Society
Sons of the American Revolution
Editor: Henry W. Croteau, Jr.
441 Route 23
Claverack, NY 12513-5145
Telephone 518-851-9040
E-Mail hcrot@mhonline.net

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Send changes of address to:

Jonathan E. Goebel, Secretary ESSSAR
96 Old Mill Pond Road
Nassau, NY 12123-2633
Telephone 518-766-2142

election for this position will take place at the upcoming April Meeting.

In our "Membership News" comer, we have several applications awaiting approval with 4 being approved since our last newsletter report - David Heckman, Robert Earl Bliss, Robert Edwin Bliss, and Alan Reed Tompkins. Congratulations and welcome to the Chapter!! We have enough prospective members who are working on their required material to make the former Tompkins County Chapter a reality sometime this year. This has been a long ongoing project for Newtown Battle, but it will be a welcomed accomplishment when we have this former great chapter rechartered. Plans for the April meeting will include a Chapter Knight Essay Contest Winner presentation to Miss Sarah Stauffer from Horseheads, New York. Sarah is a Senior at Corning-Painted Post High School in Corning, NY and because of her work in the Community as well as various other activities, she will also be presented with the SAR Bronze Citizenship Medal with accompanying Certificate. Compatriot Donald P. Ryan will be presented with a SAR War Service Medal and Viet Nam Bar. Don had a Supplemental Application recently approved for the wife of his Patriot Ancestor.

Future Chapter plans also include the Annual Chapter Family Picnic, the Chapter's "SAR Informational Booth" to be present at various events throughout the

Concluded on Page 7 Column 2

Valley Forge, Continued from Page 1

For several weeks American forces camped about 20 miles from Philadelphia in Whitemarsh along high hills that were ideal for defense. Howe tried to lure Washington from his impregnable position in December, but after a few minor skirmishes withdrew back to Philadelphia.

Some in Congress — now safely in York, PA. — urged Washington to attack the British in Philadelphia, but the commander-in-chief realized it would be suicidal. His men were worn out and ill-equipped. Even before Valley Forge, there was a supply crisis. Many soldiers were already shoeless and their uniforms in tatters.

It was normal for 18th century armies to cease combat during the coldest months and take up “winter quarters.” Washington was looking for a place to rest his army that would “afford supplies of provisions, wood, water and forage, be secure from surprise and best calculated for covering the country from the ravages of the enemy.”

He sought the opinions of his generals on the best location for the winter encampment. There was no consensus, and Washington was forced to decide the matter alone.

On December 12th, the troops began the move from Whitemarsh to the west bank of the Schuylkill River at Valley Forge. It was a 13 mile march that was delayed and took eight days.

The troops crossed the Schuylkill on a wobbly, makeshift bridge in an area called the Gulph. They were forced to bivouac at the Gulph for several days after a snowstorm and several days of icy rain made roads impassable. On December 18th

the soaked and miserable troops observed a Day of Thanksgiving declared by Congress for the American victory in October at Saratoga, N.Y.

Joseph Plumb Martin, a Connecticut Yankee, who wrote a fascinating account of his years in the Continental Army recalled that thanksgiving dinner decades later: “We

worst was over, but they were wrong.

Valley Forge - 25 miles from the city - was a good choice. It is a high plateau that might have been designed by a military engineer. One side is protected by the river. Two shallow creeks provide natural barriers that would present problems for attacking cavalry and artillery. Any attackers would have to charge up-hill.

Where the Valley Creek entered the Schuylkill was a small village, giving the area its name. It contained a complete iron-making operation owned by two Quaker families, the Dewees and Potts.

A cache of American military stores had been placed at Valley Forge. After the Battle of Brandywine the British had learned of the cache and raided the village, seizing the goods and burning houses. Arriving American troops found trees in the area but little else.

Suffering

The troops arrived at Valley Forge in time for Christmas, but there was no holiday feast. Already the men's diaries spoke bitterly of a diet of “fire cakes and cold water.” A fire cake was simply a flour and water batter fried

on a griddle. The morning after Christmas, the men awoke to find four additional inches of snow on the ground.

The first priority was the building of huts. An order issued by Washington spelled out the style and size of the Spartan quarters.

Every 12 men would share a 16x14 foot log hut with walls six and a half feet high. Each would have a stone fireplace. The roof would be of wood board. Most

Continued Page 5 Column 1

To Governor George Clinton

Head Quarters, Valley Forge, February 16, 1778

Dear Sir: It is with great reluctance, I trouble you on a subject, which does not fall within your province; but it is a subject that occasions me more distress, than I have felt, since the commencement of the war; and which loudly demands the most zealous exertions of every person of weight and authority, who is interested in the success of our affairs. I mean the present dreadful situation of the army for want of provisions, and the miserable prospects before us, with respect to futurity. It is more alarming than you will probably conceive, for, to form a just idea, it were necessary to be on the spot. For some days past, there has been little less, than a famine in camp. A part of the army has been a week, without any kind of flesh, and the rest for three or four days. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not been ere this excited by their sufferings, to a general mutiny or dispersion. Strong symptoms, however, discontent have appeared in particular instances; and nothing but the most active efforts every where can long avert so shocking a catastrophe.

Our present sufferings are not all. There is no foundation laid for any adequate relief hereafter. All the magazines provided in the States of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland, and all the immediate additional supplies they seem capable of affording, will not be sufficient to support the army more than a month longer, if so long. Very little has been done to the Eastward, and as little to the Southward; and whatever we have a right to expect from those quarters, must necessarily be very remote; and is indeed more precarious, than could be wished. When the forementioned supplies are exhausted, what a terrible crisis must ensue, unless all the energy of the Continent is exerted to provide a timely remedy?

Impressed with this idea, I am, on my part, putting every engine to work, that I can possibly think of, to prevent the fatal consequences, we have so great a reason to apprehend. I am calling upon all those, whose stations and influence enable them to contribute their aid upon so important an occasion; and from your well known zeal, I expect every thing within the compass of your power, and that the abilities and resources of the state over which you preside, will admit. I am sensible of the disadvantages it labours under, from having been so long the scene of war, and that it must be exceedingly drained by the great demands to which it has been subject. But, tho' you may not be able to contribute materially to our relief, you can perhaps do something towards it; and any assistance, however trifling in itself, will be of great moment at so critical a juncture, and will conduce to keeping the army together till the Commissary's department can be put upon a better footing, and effectual measures concerted to secure a permanent and competent supply. What methods you can take, you will be the best judge of; but, if you can devise any means to procure a quantity of cattle, or other kind of flesh, for the use of this army, to be at camp in the course of a month, you will render a most essential service to the common cause. I have the honor etc.

Letter from General George Washington to Governor George Clinton of New York

had nothing to eat for two or three days previous except what the trees of the forests and fields afforded us, but we must now have what Congress said, a sumptuous Thanksgiving to close the year of high living. . . . it gave each man half a gill (about half a cup) of rice and a tablespoon of vinegar!”

On the 19th, the famished troops finally marched into Valley Forge. The ragged soldiers might have thought the

Valley Forge, Continued from Page 4

huts were built in a pit about two-feet below the ground. Generally, there was only a dirt floor and some sort of cloth covering for a door. The huts were drafty, damp, smoky and terribly unhealthy.

The primitive shelters were laid out in regular patterns to form streets. Officers built their huts behind the enlisted men's cabins. These were similar in construction but, perhaps, not as crowded.

Housing the Army was fairly simple. Clothing and feeding the troops was a daunting challenge.

Transportation was the major stumbling block. The supplies were out there. Getting them to Valley Forge seemed impossible. Roads were rutted quagmires. It was difficult to recruit wagoners. Continental money was nearly worthless, so Pennsylvania farmers often hid their horses and wagons rather than contract with the Army.

The man in charge of military transportation, Quartermaster General Thomas Mifflin hated his job. Mifflin was a wealthy Philadelphia merchant and a born politician who wanted glory on the battlefield not the headaches of transportation. He literally ignored the job. It wasn't until the spring when Washington's most capable general, Nathanael Greene, took over the quartermaster's post that supplies began to move in decent quantity.

An Unhealthy Life

The first priority of the soldiers was keeping warm and dry. The troops faced a typical Delaware Valley winter with temperatures mostly in the 20's and 30's There were 13 days of rain or snow during the first six weeks.

Illness, not musketballs, was the great killer. Dysentery and typhus were rampant. Many makeshift hospitals were set up in the region. The Army's medical department used at least 50 barns, dwellings, churches or meetinghouses throughout a wide area of Eastern Pennsylvania as temporary hospitals. These places were mostly

understaffed, fetid breeding grounds of disease. All were chronically short of medical supplies.

America's first true military hospital - constructed for that purpose - was built at Yellow Springs, a popular health spa about 10 miles west of the encampment. About 300 sick men were accommodated in the large three-story wood structure. Washington once visited the Yellow Springs Hospital and stopped to exchange a few words with each patient. Dr. Bodo Otto, an elderly German and his two physician sons, ably ran the hospital until the end of the war.

Much of the sickness was traceable to unhealthy sanitation and poor personal hygiene. Washington constantly complained of the failure to clear the encampment of filth, which included rotting car-

for all those who had not already had the disease. A survey at Valley Forge showed many vulnerable soldiers. Some 3,000 to 4,000 men were vaccinated.

Knowing how unhealthy the congested the huts were, Washington ordered windows cut for circulation in the spring and even encouraged some to move from their squalid quarters into tents.

Just how many became seriously ill during the Valley Forge encampment and how many died of these illnesses is not known. Even in the mild weather of late spring, the medical department informed Washington that 1,000 men were too ill for combat. Those who died at camp or in hospitals has been estimated as high as 3,000.

Things Improve

In early March, the energetic and competent Gen. Nathanael Greene was appointed quartermaster general, and soon things improve rapidly. Greene got down to business by dispatching engineers to improve bridges and roads between Valley Forge and Lancaster. Wagons began arriving with clothing and food.

Also in early March a baking company of some 70 men

headed by Philadelphia gingerbread baker Christopher Ludwig arrived at camp. The German-born patriot refused to profit from his labor. Eventually, each soldier got the daily pound of bread promised by Congress. Ludwig, himself, baked for the headquarters staff and often spoke with Washington.

In April great schools of shad surged up the Schuylkill River to spawn. Thousands were netted, and the soldiers gorged themselves. Hundreds of barrels were filled with salted shad for future use. One soldier wrote, "For almost a month the whole camp stank and men's fingers were oily."

Despite Washington's daily orders, there was little real military discipline in the camp. General John Sullivan once commented, "This is not an Army; it's a mob."

Continued Page 6 Column 1



The Infamous Delaware Crossing

casses of horses. The commander-in-chief even issued orders concerning the use and care of privies, but men relieved themselves wherever they felt.

"Intolerable smells" finally prompted Washington to issue orders that soldiers who relieved themselves anywhere but in "a proper Necessary" were to receive five lashes.

In the absence of wells, water was drawn from the Schuylkill River and nearby creeks. Men and animals often relieved themselves upstream from where water for drinking was drawn.

One of Washington's major worries was an outbreak of small pox. Inoculation was still relatively new and controversial, but the General was a firm believer in the procedure. The winter before at Morristown, N.J., he ordered inoculation

There were no regular roll calls. Sizes of units that were supposed to be equal varied radically. Orders prohibiting gambling, fighting, selling Army equipment and wandering away from camp were routinely ignored.

While brave, Continental troops possessed few skills in the art of 18th century warfare. They didn't know how to march in ranks or maneuver on the battlefield. The bayonet - crucial to battlefield success - was used mostly to cook over a fire. All this was about to change with the arrival in late February of Friedrich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin Stuebe, known to history as Baron von Steuben. The title was of his own making. He had served in the Prussian Army of Frederick the Great but rose no higher than captain. Now, at age 47, he was out of work and applying for military posts in several places. In Paris, Steuben impressed American envoys, Benjamin Franklin and Silas Deane, who provided the German with a glowing letter of recommendation. Some suggest that Franklin inflated Steuben's military credentials and coached him on how best to get an appointment.

Like the Marquis de Lafayette, the Baron said the right words when he spoke to members of the Congress and the Board of War: He would serve without a salary. He did, however, want his expenses paid. Both the War Board and Washington liked the man's modesty and viewed Steuben as a possible candidate for inspector general of the Army.

Steuben was appalled by what he observed during his first weeks at Valley Forge. Washington asked the German to study the situation and provide reports on camp defenses, troop morale and military readiness. Steuben's reports were detailed and astute. In a short time, Steuben was named acting inspector general. His primary mission involved training, and he attacked the task with dedication and zeal.

Washington liked Steuben immediately even though the Prussian could not speak English. But he could speak French, and Washington appointed two of his French speaking aides, Alexander Hamilton and John Laurens to work with the Prussian.

Steuben has been called history's only popular drillmaster. The men loved his gruff manner, his cursing in broken English and his hands-on-style of demonstrating

every move personally. He insisted that officers drill with their men, and he pared down the officers' staffs of personal servants.

He created his own manual of arms and drill to fit the American situation. Simplicity was the keynote. The training started with a select group of 100. When these men knew what they were doing, he released them to teach others. Soon he was drilling large masses of entire regiments and brigades.

He constantly taught the use of the bayonet. He gave lessons in mounting guard and sentry duty. He insisted that every watch be synchronized with the headquarters' clock. And page-by-page Steuben wrote in French an army drill book that was then translated into English. "Regulation for the Order of Discipline of the Troops of the United States" was then copied by an officer in each brigade.

Within weeks, everyone could see a new proficiency and new pride among the formerly dispirited men.

There were other factors coming together to boost morale and send sagging spirits soaring. Most important, France entered the war as an ally of the new nation. America got the good news in April. Great festivities were held in camp on May 5. Along with prayer, parading and gun salutes, each man was issued a gill of rum. French-made uniforms and military gear soon began arriving in camp.

Back in March, an extra month's pay was issued to all in camp for having stuck it out through the miseries of the winter. Washington added a ration of rum for each soldier.

Farmers began bringing their produce to a camp market and fresh military units arrived at Valley Forge.

An Anti-Washington "Cabal"

Most historians agree that the so-called "Conway Cabal" was not a organized effort to replace Washington with Gen. Horatio Gates, the victor of Saratoga or some other general.

But there were some in the Army who felt they were better qualified than the Virginian and several politicians were critical of his performance.

The so-called "cabal" was a lot of mutterings and niggling criticism that finally broke out in the open with the help of an arrogant Irish-born, French-reared soldier of fortune, Thomas Conway. He was re-

cruited in France by Silas Deane and was granted the rank of brigadier general. Washington and many other American officers took an immediate dislike to the boastful Conway.

It seems that Conway along with English Army veterans Charles Lee and Gates all felt they had better military credentials than Washington and would make better commanders.

In fact, with the exception of brilliant but minor victories at Trenton and Princeton, Washington had lost all his battles with the British. On the other hand, Gates' victory at Saratoga had resulted in the surrender of 6,000 British troops. In truth, Gen. Benedict Arnold and Daniel Morgan had saved the day at Saratoga with little help from Gates.

Washington's civilian critics included Philadelphia physician and radical patriot Dr. Benjamin Rush; New Englanders John and Sam Adams and Elbridge Gerry. The man most responsible for the supply problems at Valley Forge, Thomas Mifflin, was another loud critic.

The whole anti-Washington movement was brought to a head when an aide to Gates, Gen. James Wilkinson, revealed over drinks, details of a certain letter to Gates from Conway that was highly critical of Washington.

Washington was informed of the Conway letter by Gen. William Alexander "Lord" Sterling. Conway's letter allegedly stated, "Heaven has been determined to save your country; or a weak general and bad counselors would have ruined it."

Washington confronted Conway with the insult, which brought Gates into the fray and eventually the whole thing became a matter for Congress.

In the end, Washington emerged stronger than ever.

About a year later, Wilkinson and Gates engaged in a pistol duel, in which neither was injured. Washington admiral John Cadwalader, a Pennsylvania militia leader, fought another duel with the obnoxious Conway hitting him in the mouth. Conway recovered and returned to France.

In truth, most of the officers and men suffering at Valley Forge worshiped Washington. Many historians say the leader's calm, caring presence during those horrible winter months was the most important factor in preventing the Army from disintegrating.

Leaving Valley Forge

Philadelphia was a difficult place for the British to defend. Now that France was in the war, the city was also vulnerable to attack or blockade from the sea. It was decided to abandon the Quaker City and move British forces back to their base in New York City.

The British completed their evacuation on June 18th. An estimated 3,000 Tories left the city with the troops. Within hours, American cavalry arrived in the city.

Ready to move against the retreating British, Washington abandoned Valley Forge on June 9 by crossing the Schuylkill River and setting up camp a mile away. He ordered work parties to clean up the old campgrounds, filling the latrines and burying all garbage.

The general was waiting for the British to make their move north through New Jersey. And when word came that the Red Coats were gone on June 18th, he followed immediately.

Now the Continental Army was ready to fight. Professionalism, confidence and pride marked those who had survived the ordeal of Valley Forge.

The two armies clashed on June 28 at Monmouth Courthouse. The battle was almost single-handedly lost by an inept but always arrogant Gen. Charles Lee. When Washington learned that Lee was retreating instead of advancing, the seemingly stoic commander flew into fury and galloped out to turn the men around and lead the attack.

The battle at Monmouth was inconclusive, but it was the British who retreated this time. And it was clear to everyone that those ragged Continentals - who had suffered so much at Valley Forge — were now a fair match for the British. ○

WALLOOMSAC BATTLE CHAPTER

The Battle of Bennington

16 August 1777 Walloomsac, New York

This event will be commemorated over the weekend of 15-16-17 August 2003 with activities in the area of Bennington, Vermont and at the New York State Bennington Battlefield Historic Site. This year special efforts are being made to coordinate the timing of these activities to avoid conflicts, to organize publicity and to produce a unified accurate calendar of events.

Involved in this effort is the Chapter, Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce, Bennington Museum, Bennington Fire Department, New York State Bennington Battlefield Historic Site, Living History Association and others.

The Walloomsac Battle Chapter has already participated in two meetings held by the Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce and has submitted a preliminary schedule of events in which it will take part. In particular the Chapter is hoping to cosponsor with the Bennington Museum a program to be held at the Museum on Friday evening 15 August, 2003. The Bennington Museum will have a special exhibition related to Battle of Bennington beginning April 1, 2003 and other special events as part of its 75th Anniversary celebration.

The Chapter also expects to participate in other activities such as the Fourth of July parade in Salem, NY.

John H. Sheaff, President ○

THE GEORGE S. AND STELLA M. KNIGHT ESSAY CONTEST

The George S. and Stella M. Knight Essay Contest for the year 2002-2003 is now complete. The winner has been selected by the committee composed of two retired high school principals with teaching backgrounds in English and History, a retired consulting engineer and a retired teacher of History and Sociology. I am sorry to report that only two chapters attracted participants. Yet this was an improvement, since the previous year had only one participating chapter. In a state containing thousands of highly qualified juniors and seniors this is a desperately inadequate situation. I hope for better things to happen next year.

Although the postal service must be used for final submission of essays, I encourage the continued use of the internet and the ESSSAR website to advertise and transmit the information and rules about this annual event. I will gladly cooperate with any members who have suggestions which could improve and increase participation in the contest.

If you would send your name or the name of a person who will conduct the contest in your chapter area, I will appreciate it and will exchange communications at any time. The result will be greater knowledge of the Sons of the American Revolution and of patriotism.

Frederick W. Morgan, ESSSAR Knight Essay Chairman

743 W. Second St.

Elmira, NY 14905-2239 ○

NEWTOWN BATTLE CHAPTER *Continued from page 3*

remaining year, updating the Chapter Constitution & By-laws, Chapter Christmas Party, and spreading the word about the SAR. I was asked by the Post Office, here in Painted Post, to place a SAR - Revolutionary War - Patriotism Display in their lobby. With the donation of items from Compatriots Whiting Lightfoot, Sheldon Robinson, Richard Cowles, the Corning Baron-Steuben Chapter, DAR the SAR/DAR is now represented very well as is our Country's History. Compatriot Cowles and I placed several items in a large locked display case with "advertisements" regarding SAR Membership, the SAR Cookbook, and the History book the ESSSAR is promoting.

Keep checking our Chapter Website for upcoming events, news, meeting minutes, new members and their patriot's names, etc. Compo Paul Pell continues to do a fine job in keeping everything updated and us informed. If you have 17 May 2003 open on your calendars, join us at the Annual ESSSAR Meeting being held at the Beeches in Rome, NY.

My best to each one of you and your families. Thanks for your help in making Newtown Battle a GREAT Chapter. ○

William J. Anselmi

FAMOUS QUOTE

"Fill what's empty, empty what's full, and scratch where it Itches."
- *the Duchess of Windsor, when asked what is the secret of a long and happy life* ○

FOR SOME BLACK SOLDIERS, WAR WAS THEIR OWN FREEDOM FIGHT

By Michael D. Schaffer Philadelphia Inquirer Staff Writer

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Few soldiers at Valley Forge have as much at stake in the fight for freedom as Nero Hawley. For Hawley, the muddy little city of huts that the Continental Army has thrown up so hastily on the hills above the Schuylkill in the winter of 1777-78 is a way station on a rutted road to the Promised Land.

Hawley, born in 1758, is a Continental soldier from Connecticut. He is also a slave who has agreed to take his owner's place in the army in exchange for freedom at the end of the war. Black soldiers have fought for America since the Revolution began in April 1775, and fought well.

They were at Lexington and Concord and Bunker Hill. They crossed the Delaware with Washington. They fought at Brandywine, where Edward Hector, a black soldier in the Third Pennsylvania Artillery, bravely gathered up arms discarded on the battlefield even as the British advanced. And now, they are at Valley Forge.

By the time the war ends in 1782, about 5,000 African Americans will have fought for American independence. But many more - anywhere from two to five times as many - will have rallied to King George III, drawn by British promises of liberation that are more convincing than lofty declarations about human equality.

As the winter wears on at Valley Forge, desertion and disease are shrinking the Continental Army. Gen. George Washington must act quickly to build up his force before fighting begins again in the summer. The crisis gives birth to two schemes for tapping a pool of manpower that Washington has been reluctant to use before - slaves.

Gen. James Varnum of Rhode Island has proposed recruiting slaves in his home state and giving them their freedom as soon as they enlist. They will form a mostly black unit, one of only two or three in a racially integrated army. And one of Washington's aides, idealistic, young John Laurens, 23, has suggested to his influential father, Henry Laurens, the president of Congress, a similar plan for enlisting slaves in the Laurens' home state, South Carolina. Neither the elder Laurens nor Washington gives young Laurens' proposal more than lukewarm support. The Rhode Island plan will succeed. John Laurens' South Carolina project, unable to stand against deep fears among Southern whites of slave revolt, will remain the unfulfilled dream of a man far ahead of his time.

The Varnum and Laurens plans are the latest halting steps in a strange, clumsy dance between black and white Americans of the Revolutionary era. White Americans cannot fight a war against the king without taking account of black Americans.

When the American Revolution begins in April 1775, the 13 rebellious colonies have a population of about 2.5 million, including about 500,000 blacks, most of them slaves. Heady talk of freedom is everywhere. The slaves have heard it, and want their share. Many white Americans, even in the South, have begun to see an uncomfortable incongruity in keeping other men in bondage while fighting for their own liberty.

(Washington, a Virginia slave owner, seems in his private correspondence to be uneasy about slavery, but never takes a public

stand against it. He does provide in his will that his personal servant, William Lee, is to be freed upon Washington's death and that his other slaves are to be freed after his wife's death.)

The dispute between mother country and colonies makes heroes of several African Americans. When Redcoats fire on a Boston crowd in 1770, killing five colonials in an incident that comes to be known as the Boston Massacre, the first to die is a black man, Crispus Attucks. When the war begins in April 1775 at Lexington and Concord, one of the Americans wounded is a black man, Prince Estabrook. When Americans and Redcoats clash at Bunker Hill, a black man, Salem Poor, so distinguishes himself that his commanding officers recommend to the Massachusetts legislature that he be rewarded because "in the person of this said Negro centers a brave and gallant soldier."

But, for a while, it looks as if the only reward Poor and other black soldiers will get is the boot. Washington arrives in Cambridge, Mass., on July 2, 1775, to take command of the Continental Army. A scant eight days later, an order goes out banning the enlistment of "any deserter from the [British] Army, [or] any stroller, Negro, or vagabond." Black soldiers already in the new Continental Army will be allowed to remain - for the moment.

By autumn of 1775, it is beginning to look as if blacks will be excluded from the Continental Army altogether. On Oct. 8, 1775, Washington and his generals agree unanimously "to reject all slaves [for enlistment], and, by a great majority, to reject Negroes altogether." But by the end of December, the high command reverses position, changing its mind, if not its heart. The generals are responding to a proclamation on Nov. 7, 1775, by Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, offering freedom to "all indented servants, Negroes, or others" who flee their rebel masters and join the King's forces. Washington labels Dunmore an "arch traitor to the rights of humanity" who "should be instantly crushed."

Suddenly, black soldiers seem a lot more important to Washington. He writes on Dec. 31, 1775, to John Hancock, then president of Congress, explaining that he has authorized the reenlistment of black soldiers already in the army. Otherwise, he warns, "it is to be apprehended that they may seek employ in the Ministerial Army."

Congress resolves Jan. 16, 1778, "That the free Negroes who have served faithfully in the army at Cambridge, may be reenlisted therein, but no others." But the need for more men trumps any legal ban on enlisting blacks. Recruiting officers in the North turn readily to African Americans to fill the manpower quotas imposed on the states by Congress, offering freedom in return for military service.

Meanwhile, some whites work out deals to have African Americans such as Nero Hawley substitute for them in return for eventual freedom. (Hawley survives the war and is freed in November 1782. He becomes a brick maker in Trumbull, Conn., receives a pension of \$40 a year in 1813 for his service, and dies in 1817.)

However wary Washington may have been of recruiting among slaves, he endorses Varnum's plan. The Rhode Island legislature moves quickly, passing a law in February 1778 providing

Black Soldiers fight for freedom, Continued from Page 8

that "every able-bodied Negro, mulatto, or Indian man-slave may enlist into either of... two battalions, to serve during the continuance of the present war with Great Britain; That every slave so enlisting shall... upon his passing muster... be immediately discharged from the service of his master or mistress, and be absolutely free."

The law also provides that the state compensate the slave owners for their loss, "at a price not exceeding one hundred and twenty pounds." The Rhode Island legislature ends the program on June 10, 1778, because of the cost of compensation.

But before it ends, more than 200 African Americans sign up. Richard Rhodes, born in Africa in 1760, would speak for all the recruits when he recalls years after the war: "I entered the Army for the purpose of obtaining my freedom." On Aug. 24, 1778, a report by Adjutant General Alexander Scammel will find 755 African Americans in the Continental Army - and that doesn't include the newcomers from Rhode Island.

Throughout late winter, new soldiers - black and white - stream into Valley Forge. There, they find themselves part of a force that is being shaped into fighting trim by another newcomer, a strangely likable man with little knowledge of English but a talent for drilling troops, no matter what their skin color or language. O

ESSAR DOCUMENT SURFACES ON "EBAY"

In February of this year, State President Bill Woodworth noted an old ESSAR document for sale on Ebay. After he mentioned it to Past President Dennis Marr in an e-mail, Dennis went on the Ebay site to check the item out. It had an opening bid of \$9.99, with no bids entered yet. Dennis placed a bid and, as the only bidder, won it for the opening amount.

The document measures approximately 17.5"x14" and is on parchment-type paper. There is water damage and the original wax seal is unreadable, although the familiar white, yellow and blue SAR ribbon is intact. The document is a charter issued by the ESSAR upon the petition of 14 members from Long Island on 9 January 1941, and it authorizes the formation of "Long Island Post No. 1 of the Washington Guard." It is signed by President Goodwin and Secretary Charles A. Dubois.

Any member who can shed light on this is encouraged to advise our Historian Jonathan E. Goebel. O

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MARCH BOM MEETING

It was unanimously approved at the March Board of Managers meeting to explore the possibility and pricing of having the Empire State Seal, as you see on the front cover, cast in such a way to come up with a decorative medal. As research continues, we will keep you informed.

Also under discussion by the Publicity Committee, as a way to promote our Society throughout the State, by designing a colorful trifold generic brochure that could be used any Chapter. The idea being to educate the public on a broader spectrum of awareness to increase our membership. O

BIRTHPLACE OF THE U.S. MARINE CORP.

Birthplace of The U. S. Marine Corps, The American Masons and The St. Andrews Society, Tun Tavern: (excerpt from Warrior Culture of the U.S. Marines, copyright 2001 Marion F. Sturkey)

Ask any marine. Just ask. He will tell you that the Marine Corps was born in Tun Tavern on November 10, 1775. But, beyond that the Marines recollection for detail will probably get fuzzy. So, here's the straight scoop

In the year 1685, Samuel Carpenter built a huge "brew house" in Philadelphia. He located his tavern on the waterfront at the corner of Water Street and Tun Alley. The old English word tun means cask, barrel, or keg of beer. So, with his new beer tavern on Tun Alley, Carpenter elected to christen the new waterfront brewery with a logical name, Tun Tavern.

The Tavern quickly gained a reputation for serving fine beer. Beginning 47 years later in 1732, the first meetings of the St. John's number one Lodge of the Grand Lodge of the Masonic Temple were held in the Tavern. An American of note, Benjamin Franklin, was its third Grandmaster. Even today the Masonic Temple of Philadelphia recognizes Tun Tavern as the birthplace of Masonic teachings in America. Roughly 10 years later in the early 1740's, the new proprietor expanded Tun Tavern and gave the addition a new name, "Peggy Mullins Red Hot Beef State Club at Tun Tavern." "The new restaurant became a smashing commercial success and was patronized by notable Americans. In 1747 the St. Andrew's Society, a charitable group dedicated to assisting poor immigrants from Scotland, was founded in the tavern.

Nine years later, then Colonel Benjamin Franklin organized the Pennsylvania Militia. He used Tun Tavern as a gathering place to recruit a regimen of soldiers to go into battle against the Indian uprisings that were plaguing the American colonies. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and the Continental Congress later met in Tun Tavern as the American colonies prepared for independence from the English Crown.

On November 10th, 1775, the Continental Congress commissioned Samuel Nicholas to raise two battalions of Marines. That very day, Nicklaus set up shop in Tun Tavern. He appointed Robert Mullen, then the proprietor of the tavern, to the job of chief Marine Recruiter—saying, of course, from his place of business at Tun Tavern. Prospective recruits flocked to the tavern, lured by (1) cold beer, and (2) the opportunity to serve in the new Corps of Marines. So, yes, the U.S. Marine Corps was indeed born in Tun Tavern. Needless to say, both the Marine Corps and the tavern thrived during this new relationship.

Tun Tavern still lives today. And, Tun Tavern beer is still readily available throughout the Philadelphia area. Further, through magazines is advertised to Marines throughout the world. O

SARATOGA BATTLE CHAPTER WEB SITE

Anyone having access to a the Internet via a computer, make sure you check out the web site for Saratoga Battle Chapter. The design, content and layout is very impressive.

<http://www.saratogabattle-sar.org/>

The editor O

WESTCHESTER- PUTNAM CHAPTER

An open letter from the Chapter President, who was unable to attend the March BOM meeting, explaining his program through the Chapter Secretary/ Treasurer, to those in attendance at this meeting.

March 16, 2003

Mr. Kenneth R. Stevens, Secretary & Treasurer
Westchester-Putnam Chapter, SAR
1 Pine Tree Drive
Katonah, NY 10536

Dear Ken:

We have an opportunity to increase awareness and membership in SAR while making a contribution to the scenic beauty of our historic Hudson River Valley.

For the past 5 years, our chapter of SAR has organized 105 cleanup outings on the Hudson River. To date, 217 community service minded volunteers have brought their own kayaks to paddle on the April - November cleanups.

These volunteers pick up waterborne trash and litter that is found floating in the Hudson. This debris has included plastic cups, bottles, jugs, candy & food wrappers, pieces of Styrofoam, a child's truck, fishing equipment and various sized pieces of plastic. Since 1998, we have retrieved 423 cubic yards of trash. Each kayaking volunteer has received at least one free mesh bag on each outing. The mesh bags are made in Florida from 100% recycled plastic jugs.

Our funding sponsors for the mesh bags this year will be Fuji Photo Film, Anheuser- Busch Companies and New York Sea Grant. We expect to hand out 1100 mesh bags to powerboaters, canoeists and kayakers in 2003. Powerboaters use the mesh bags to keep on-board items from being accidentally blown overboard.

Because of train tracks and fencing, many litter-filled areas are not accessible from land. Our future plans call for a landing craft boat (see www.munsonboats.com) to pick up shoreline trash, litter and debris from Yonkers to Troy. This will be my full time job. During the fall and winter months, presentations about SAR and our work would be given to civic, corporate and K-12 audiences.

Funding for the shoreline cleanup project is currently being sought. The goal is \$375,000. Corporate sponsorships are being offered in exchange for logos on the sides of the boat. The 26' X 8.5' aluminum boat with trailer will cost \$85,057 delivered. In addition, a 4 wheel drive pick-up truck (to transport the boat and take trash away), docking, salary, trash recycling, insurance, general maintenance, winter storage and presentation materials for various audiences will make up the balance.

The following people have expressed support for our shoreline cleanup project: Gary Bashor, President, Hudson River Estuary Law Enforcement Task Force; Carmella Mantello, Executive Director, Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council; Fran Dunwell, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; Carol Ash, Executive Director, Palisades Interstate Park Commission.

I would appreciate your asking members at the Empire State Society meeting for their help in promoting SAR and preserving the beauty of our historic Hudson River Valley. Perhaps they know of corporate assistance that may be available. If you will forward that information to me, I will follow up with the individual SAR members.

Best regards,

Walt Thompson, President , Westchester-Putnam Chapter, SAR
15 Somerset Lane, Putnam Valley, NY 10579
Phone: 845-528-1632 - Email: CleanerHudson@aol.com ○

ESSAR ANNUAL MEET1NG

Hosted by Oriskany Battle Chapter, SAR Saturday, May 17, 2003, 11:00 AM at THE BEECHES, Rt. 26N Turin Road Rome, NY 13440

MENU

Chicken Francaise: Six ounce boneless breast of chicken, egg battered and sauteed in white wine and lemon butter.

Baked Stuffed Pork Chop: One 10 oz. pork chop stuffed with our special home style stuffing, baked and topped with our own special gravy. Served with mashed potatoes.

Petite Cut Prime Rib: the perfect size for lunch, 8 oz. of slow roasted prime rib au jus. Served with choice of potato.

Total Price \$17.00

All Luncheons served with choice of soup du jour or tossed salad with choice of dressing, hot assorted rolls, lite potato or rice, hot vegetable, complimentary lite dessert and coffee, tea or milk.

Please make check payable to Oriskany Battle Chapter -SAR and send no later than May 12th to:

Thomas G. Schafer, Sec./Treas.

P.O. Box 30, Washington Mills, NY 13479

For those wishing to stay over the night before - MAY 16, the adjoining Paul Revere Lodge will hold rooms until April 16th - only! Only double rooms available at \$73.00 ○

ATTENTION ALL NEW YORK STATE SAR CHAPTERS

For the past few years the Syracuse Chapter of the SAR and several Syracuse area DAR chapters have been operating a historical exhibit/information booth at the New York State Fair. This popular booth, located in the Art and Home Center building, has provided educational matter with respect to the origins of our democracy as well as many other periods of our history. Presidents, governors, federal and state legislators have visited the booth while touring the Fair and many visitors from many places have commended the booth's sponsors. The booth has been an important distribution point for the SAR and has been an extremely useful instrument to enroll new members. Many of New York State's chapters have already benefited from the booth's presence.

Due to a recent decision on the part of ESSAR, all of the chapters of the state are now invited to participate in this endeavor by volunteering to take a day or two to serve at the booth. If you would like to volunteer please indicate a specific day or days during the Fair's run (August 21 through September 1) that would be convenient for you. Your chapter might even want to put together a chapter team of several people and, thus, be able to spell one another while enjoying the many special treats of the Fair.

If you want to sign up for this important opportunity for service, please contact Bob Pickett at (315) 446-1920 or rpickett@1wcnr.com. Please contact him by July 11 so that the schedule for booth coverage can be prepared. Should you wish to gain more information on the booth at any time you may also contact Bob or Syracuse Chapter President Bill Billingham. The latter can be contacted at (315) 437-8501 or wabkcb@msn.com. ○

ONEIDA NATION POLICE OFFICER HONORED BY ESSAR CHAPTER



Pictured left to right: Ken Deane, Nate George, Stuart Deane, Law Enforcement Medal recipient Darryl Gillette, Oriskany Battle Chapter President Burke Miller and Dan Umstead

ONEIDA NATION HOMELANDS

Oneida Nation Police Sgt. Darryl Gillette Tuesday, March 4, 2003 received the Law Enforcement Commendation Medal from the Oriskany Battle Chapter of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution for his dedicated service.

Burke Muller, president of the local SAR, said he was “doubly proud” to present the award to Gillette because of the historic ties between the Oneida Indian Nation and the United States and because Gillette is a member of the Oriskany Battle Chapter.

“The Revolution’s patriots include the Oneida Indian Nation... the oldest and most enduring government-to-government partnership in the United States,” Muller said. “This award is presented to a person who has served with distinction and dedication in the law enforcement field, and we are doubly proud to present it to Darryl because he is a fellow compatriot.”

Gillette, who has worked in law enforcement since 1975 and with the Oneida Nation Police since 1993, is a great-

great-great-grandson of William Rathbun, a Palatine German who served under Gen. Nicholas Herkimer in the Tryon County Militia. Herkimer’s troops, along with several dozen Oneidas, were on their way to help the besieged colonists at Fort Stanwix when they were ambushed by British forces at Oriskany.

“The award was totally unexpected, and I’m very excited about it,” Gillette said. “This is a great thing for a history buff like me to receive.”

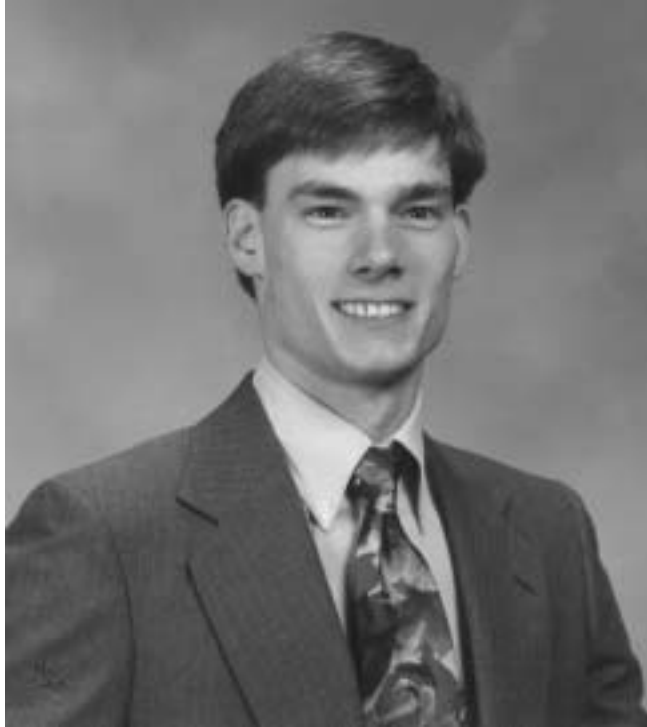
Gillette was a Civil War re-enactor for several years and only recently had his interest renewed in the Revolutionary War, he said. Part of that renewed interest came from the formation of the Oneida Nation re-enactors group in 2002; Gillette is an active member of that group, which portrays both colonists and their Oneida allies.

In the past year, he has participated in the Valley Forge Winter Encampment, the opening of the “Forgotten Patriots” exhibit at the National Daughters of the American Revolution museum in Washington, D.C., and at events commemorating the 225th anniversary of the Battle of Oriskany and the siege at Fort Stanwix. O

EMPIRE STATE SOCIETY SECRETARY ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT GENERAL, NORTH ATLANTIC DISTRICT JONATHAN EDWARD GOEBEL

Jonathan has also served at the National level as National Trustee, Alternate Trustee, member of numerous committees and, currently, as Vice President General. His National committee assignments for the current year include: Joseph S. Rumbaugh Historical Oration, Membership, ROTC, JROTC, Young Members and the Washington-Rocheambeau Revolutionary Road.

ESSSAR State Secretary and North Atlantic District Vice President General, Jonathan E. Goebel has a distinguished record of service to the SAR that belies his relatively youthful age. Since joining the National Society on 28 March 1994, Jonathan has served tirelessly at the chapter, state and national level.



Jonathan is a regular attendee at the semi-annual Trustees' Meetings in Louisville, KY, as well as the National Congresses, where he is admired and respected by all compatriots who come to know him. He accomplishes all of this while operating his historic restoration business, helping on the family farm and working as a coordinator for Rensselaer County.

Jonathan was elected Secretary of the Saratoga Battle Chapter in February of 1995 and has served in that capacity ever since. He has simultaneously served as ESSSAR Secretary for a number of years as well. For his service to the State Society, Jonathan was honored with the first State Distinguished Service Medal awarded by the ESSSAR: the award was proudly presented by then ESSSAR President Dennis F.M. Marr in the fall of 1999.

The Saratoga Battle Chapter and Empire State Society can be proud to count Jonathan as a compatriot and friend. O

CONGRATULATIONS JONATHAN FROM ALL YOUR FRIENDS!



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