



The Empire Patriot



Newsletter of the Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution

Vol. 10 No. 2

<http://www.sar.org/esssar/>

August 2008

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I consider it an honor to serve you once again as your President and representative. I would also like to congratulate all those who were newly elected or re-elected as Board of Managers and Officers.

Our new Editor has noted that he will only be in this position temporarily. We need to have someone fill this position and now would be a good time to consider this since we have people to "show you the ropes".

Compatriot Hank Croteau has "retired" after more than a decade of providing us with a great newsletter which I believe was recognized by the NSSAR with an award. A special thanks to Hank for ALL he has done.

Another special thanks goes out to **ESSSAR Registrar Roy Goold** for the years of service he has, and still is, contributing to our State Society. Roy is entering his 26th year in this position. Congratulations to both of these men for their dedication, contributions, and service in making this a fine society.

We have a Constitution and Bylaws Committee chaired by **ESSSAR Chancellor Thomas Rankin, Esq.** that is checking amendments to see if there is a need for change. If you have suggestions for any amendment changes or additions please contact Chancellor Rankin. Remember, your amendment suggestion needs to be submitted in writing.

I want to thank all those chapters who have their own newsletters, especially one that I have seen that needs complimenting. The Huntington/Long Island Chapter has a great newsletter which is sent out via e-mail as well as regular mail. The issues that I have received are in color and have had some very interesting articles.

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2008-2009

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Columbia-Mid Hudson Valley



(l. to r.) Rodney Andrews, Hank Croteau and Duane Booth)

The Columbia-Mid Hudson Valley Chapter meeting was held April 5, 2008, at the Cappuccino Restaurant in Red Hook, NY.

Jennifer (Jen) Dragon, Regent of Wiltwyck DAR Chapter, was the guest speaker. Her subject matter was early mapping techniques using carved wood with hand painting to the process of printing in color. Her slides consisted of world maps of the 1500's; the world, America and the Hudson Valley in the 1600 and 1700's continuing up to the early 1800's.

Awards, Pins & Certificates were presented. "Years of Service" pins and certificates to **Thomas Akins**, who is on active military duty, so his mother, Linda Akins, was invited to accept his award in his absence along with **David**, her other son. Both David and Thomas have twenty years of SAR service. **Matt Murphy** was presented his pin and certificate for twenty-five years of SAR service. "Past President" pin and certificate were presented to **Paul Haynes** - 2001 and 2002.

By mid-2008 the Chapter should surpass fifty members.

Duane Booth, ESSAR Vice President of the Capital District, presented Henry **Croteau** with a beautiful wooden plaque for faithful and dedicated service as Editor of the "Empire Patriot" 1999 - 2008

The next meeting will be August 23rd at the Pegasus Restaurant in Coxsackie, NY.

Westchester-Putnam



President Stevens presents the Bronze Good Citizenship Medal to Christopher Di Pasquale.

The Westchester-Putnam Chapter Spring Luncheon meeting was held May 17 at Brasserie Swiss Restaurant in Ossining. Yorktown Middle School teacher **Christopher Di Pasquale** was our special guest. Chris discussed his recent book An Object of Great Importance, The Hudson River During the American War for Independence. He is active in several historical societies as well as a Revolutionary War re-enactor. Recognizing his many contributions and dedication in furthering understanding about the events of the Revolution, the chapter awarded him the society's Bronze Good Citizenship Medal.

Membership continues to increase with a net gain of eleven members in the past year. The chapter now has 66 members. **Matt Rakoff** of Scarsdale received his membership certificate at the luncheon. **Chuck Whitesell** of Wappingers Falls and **Nicholas Goodwin**, son of compatriot **Charles Goodwin**, are also new members of the chapter. **Scott Vincent**, who lives in White Plains, transferred from the New York Chapter. Welcome to all our new members!



Newest chapter member Matt Rakoff, left, receives his membership certificate from President Stevens.

Per annual election, **Ken Stevens** will continue as President, **Walt Thompson** as Vice President/Registrar, **Gordon Miller**, Treasurer, **Bill Brown**, Secretary, **Allan Warnecke**, Genealogist, and **Stewart Manville**, Historian. Re-elected managers are **Walter Ludlum**, **Barrie Mabie**, **Bill Olson** and **Morgan Seymour**.

President Stevens participated in a wreath laying sponsored by the Yorktown Historical Society at the grave of Colonel Christopher Greene, marking the 227th anniversary of the Battle of Pines Bridge. He also represented the chapter at several DAR events, where he was introduced and gave a brief update on chapter, state and national SAR activities.

Walloomsac Battle Chapter



(l-r) John Sheaff, Lewis Slocum, George Ballard, Ronald Newton, David Newton & Duane Booth

The Walloomsac Battle Chapter participated in the dedication of the Veteran's

Memorial Plaque at the Easton, NY Town Offices on Flag Day June 14th. Chapter President **John Sheaff** put together a wonderful display of flags, our Chapter Banner and several pictures. Chapter member **Lewis O. Slocum** laid a wreath on behalf of the Chapter as well as Dual Chapter Member & Saratoga Battle Chapter President **George H. Ballard, Sr.**

Newtown Battle Chapter

The annual picnic will be at Newtown Battlefield State Park - Just East of Elmira, NY Saturday, 23 Aug 2008 - Beginning at 11:00AM until ? Cost is \$1.00 per person, plus dish to pass, table service, lawn chair (meat and beverages will be furnished.) Please R.S.V.P. by 09 Aug 2008 TO: Bill Woodworth, (607) 962-8290 billsue3@juno.com

Activities will include battlefield tours, re-enactments, vendors, trolley rides, and much more.

When arriving at the teller station, tell them you are attending the "SAR Picnic" and you will be allowed free entrance. Otherwise you will be charged an "Event Fee" for each person.

NOTICE FROM THE EDITOR

The **deadline** for submission of material for the next issue will be **October 14, 2008**.

Since I am determined that this should be OUR newsletter, and not MY newsletter, when I put on my editor's hat, news, articles and ideas can be sent to me at:

17 Riverview Farm Road
Ossining, NY
10562-1912

or I may be reached by phone at (914) 762-8619;

or e-mail at Patriot1@AmericanRevolution.org

You may also contact me through the website I created:

www.AmericanRevolution.org

WASHINGTON AND THE CONSTITUTION

The following is a revised text of a presentation given by your editor before the California State DAR Convention a few years ago.

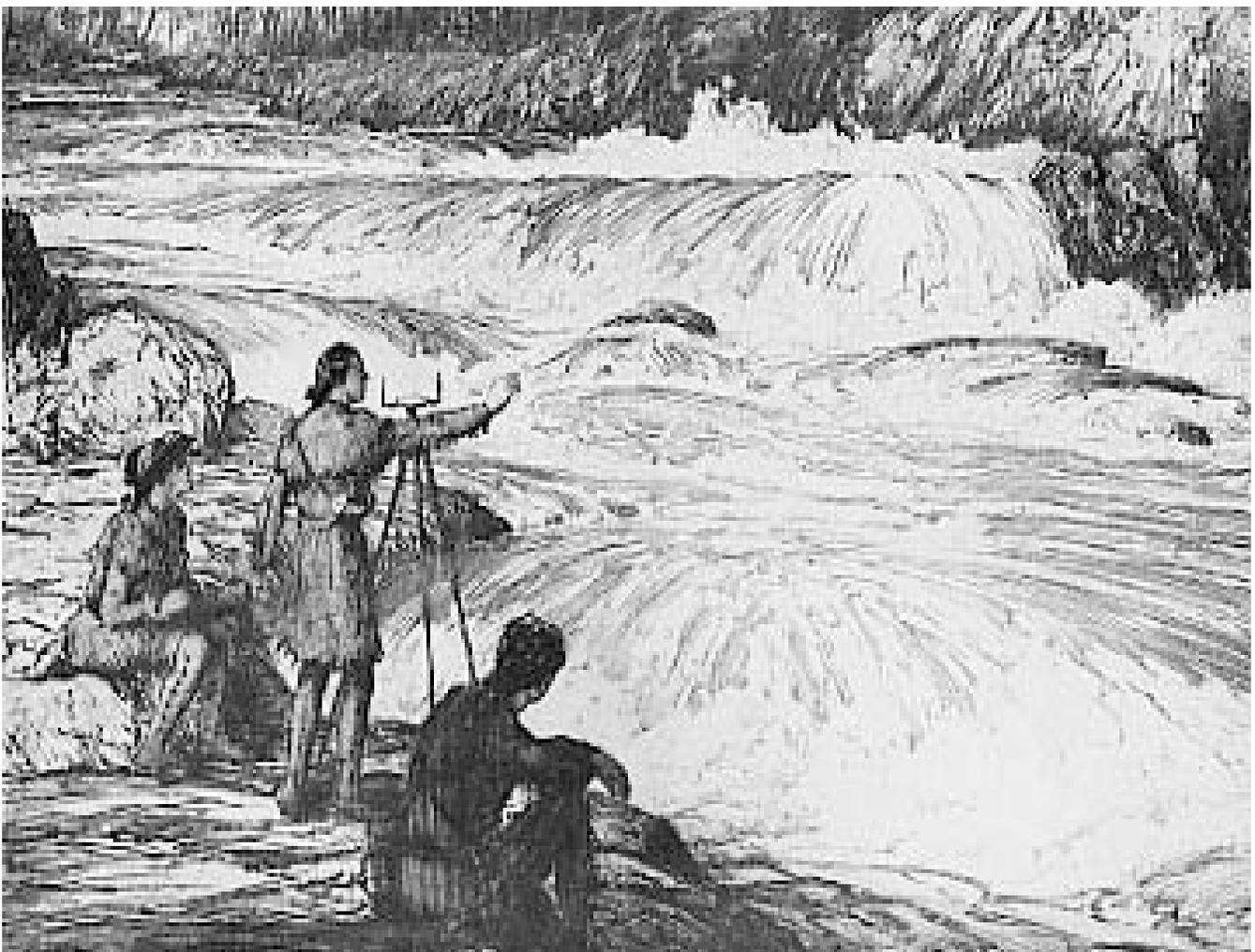
The information contained herein is from collections of original correspondence. The organization and formatting is from a pamphlet published by the Washington Birthday Bicentennial Commission in 1932, written by David Matteson.

A complete bibliography will follow the article.

The illustrations accompanying the text are part of a limited edition series of lithographs also issued by the same Commission in 1932 and now in the private collection of your editor.

When I say the name "George Washington" you immediately think "Father of his Country." Unless of course you went to school after that fateful day when "history" ceased to exist, and became one aspect of "social studies," but that's another story.

The images that come to mind are two. First, the Great General, leading a rag-tag band of rebels to victory over the mightiest military machine on the face of the earth. Secondly is the image of the First President, perhaps his greatest accomplishment in that office being the fact that there was a Second President.



Washington surveys the wilderness. It was the Great General's familiarity with western rivers and potential trade routes that led to the germinal beginnings of inter-colony conferences that led to the Constitutional Convention.

Etching by Robert Nisbet, 1932.

But between the end of the war and the beginning of the presidency, something happened in America. The creation of the greatest document in human history - the Constitution. Could it be that the greatest man in the country - nay, the greatest man in the world at that time - sat back and had no hand in such a creation? We almost never hear of it. Historians look for more "juicy" stories that will sell books and make them famous. So it remains for humble folk like us to sift through the evidence to see what was *really* going on.

Of course, if I say the phrase "Father of the Constitution" the name that immediately comes to your mind is James Madison. I do not mean to denigrate or minimize the genius of Madison in my remarks. He and he alone deserves the credit for our Constitutional form of government. My point is merely that without Washington, Madison's great work might have fallen like seeds on fallow ground, to become a footnote in history instead of the very framework of our history that it became.

INFLUENCE OF POTOMAC NAVIGATION (1772-1785)

Washington's first link in the chain of the Federal Convention was his interest in the improvement of Potomac River navigation. Development of a route into the West had been a concern of the original Ohio Company, in which the Washington family was active; and George's early surveying and western journeys and campaigns, with the attendant acquisition of land, gave him both information and reason to advance the project.

Through Washington's efforts, Virginia in 1772 passed an act "empowering Trustees ... to raise money ... for the purpose of opening and extending the Navigation of Potowmack from the Tide water to Fort Cumberland." [half-way from D. C. to Pittsburg] Nothing was accomplished, however, until the close of the Revolution.

His concern was not entirely economic. He realized that the developing West had a natural trade outlet down the Mississippi, and in order to counteract this tendency and to keep that distant region loyal to the yet fragile Union such an eastern route as he proposed was essential. He wrote Humphreys, July 25, 1785: "My

attention is more immediately engaged in a project, which I think big with great political, as well as commercial consequences to these States, especially the middle ones; it is by removing the obstructions and extending the inland navigation of our rivers, to bring the States on the Atlantic in close connexion with those forming to the westward, by a short and easy transportation. Without this, I can easily conceive they will have different views, separate interests, and other connexions. I may be singular in my ideas, but they are these; that, to open a door to, and make easy the way for, those settlers to the westward (which ought to progress regularly and compactly) before we make any stir about the navigation of the Mississippi, and before our settlements are far advanced towards that river, would be our true line of policy.

"It can, I think, be demonstrated, that the produce of the western territory, (if the navigations which are now in hand succeed, and of which I have no doubt) as low down the Ohio as the Great Kanhawa [Charleston, WVA to Point Pleasant], I believe to the Falls, and between the parts above and the Lakes, may be brought either to the highest shipping port on this or James river, at a less expense, with more ease, (including the return,) and in a much shorter time, than it can be carried to New Orleans, if the Spaniards, instead of restricting, were to throw open their ports and invite our trade. But if the commerce of that country should embrace this channel, and connexions be formed, ... if that should be the case, the Atlantic States, (especially as those to the westward will in a great degree fill with foreigners,) will be no more to the present Union, except to excite perhaps very justly our fears, than the country of California, which is still more to the westward, and belonging to another power." Now, I want you to stop a moment and think about the passage I just read. Here is the Great General, before he was President, before the Presidency existed, before the Constitution even existed, giving his thoughts on formulating a national policy of westward expansion, and referring to California by name - not Nueva España, but *California!*

RIVALRY OF VIRGINIA AND MARYLAND (1784-1785)

The Potomac was the boundary between Virginia and Maryland - indeed the waters were in the jurisdiction of the latter. Virginia had only reserved her right of navigation, so that an

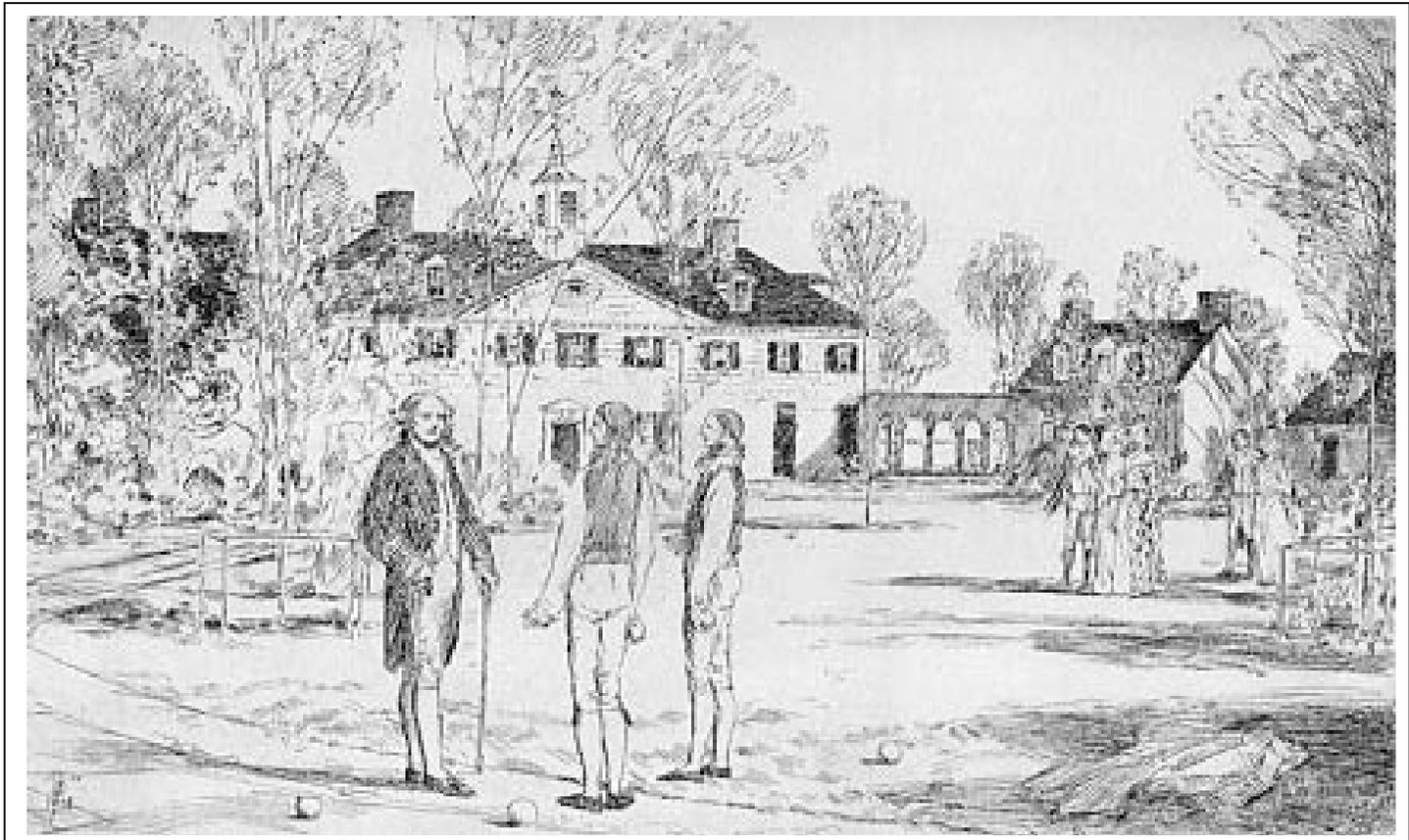
agreement between the two states was essential. Jefferson shared Washington's desire for the development, and so did Thomas Johnson, formerly Governor of Maryland. Washington wrote Jefferson, who was then in Congress at Annapolis, March 29, 1784: "... I wish, if it should fall in your way, that you would discourse with Mr. Thomas Johnson, formerly Governor of Maryland, on this subject."

At this same time James Madison was writing to Jefferson suggesting "a mutual appointment of Commissioners for the general purpose of preserving a harmony and efficacy in the regulations on both sides." Accordingly, he carried through a resolution in the Virginia Assembly, June 28, 1784, for such a joint commission to "frame such liberal and equitable regulations concerning said river as may be mutually advantageous." Maryland agreed and the meeting was to take place in March, 1785.

Meanwhile Washington took his last trip over the mountains and wrote Governor Harrison

October 10, 1784, a long letter, pointing out the efforts which Pennsylvania and New York were making, and the political considerations, "which is of still greater importance," since the "Western settlers ... stand as it were upon a pivot. A combination of circumstances makes the present conjuncture more favorable for Virginia, than for any other State in the Union, to fix these matters. ... One thing more remains. ... the supposed difficulty of obtaining a passage through the State of Pennsylvania. How an application to its legislature would be relished, in the first instance, I will not undertake to decide."

After Washington's return from this journey a mass meeting was held in Alexandria, November 15, 1784, attended by gentlemen from both Maryland and Virginia. The newspaper report on the meeting contains this interesting sentence: "This is perhaps a work of more political than commercial consequence, and it will be one of the grandest chains for preserving the Federal Union."



Washington with visitors at Mount Vernon. Prior to the Constitutional Convention, James Madison, Gouverneur Morris and many other notables responsible for creating the Constitution were frequent guests of the Great General. Etching by Childe Hassam, 1932.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR A CONFERENCE (1784-1785)

Washington sent to Richmond, Virginia and also to Annapolis, Maryland a bill to incorporate the company he desired, which passed both legislatures; but a conference was necessary to iron out differences.

Washington headed the Virginia delegation. He wrote Knox, January 5, 1785: "I am just returned from Annapolis to which place I was requested to go by our Assembly ... for the purpose of arranging matters, and forming a Law which should be similar in both States, so far as it respected the river Potomack, which separates them. I met the most perfect accordance in that legislature; and the matter is now reported to ours, for its concurrence."

Madison, in commenting on the matter wrote, December 25, 1784, that there would probably be provision made "for a survey of the different routes for a communication between the waters of Elizabeth River and those of North Carolina." The Virginia Legislature adopted a resolution directing the commissioners who were to meet those from Maryland the next summer to join "in a representation to Pennsylvania on the subject of the waters of the Ohio within her limits." Maryland desired a canal connecting the waters of the Chesapeake and Delaware, which would involve yet one more state in the commercial agitation.

The Maryland-Virginia joint commission on the navigation of the Potomac met in Alexandria on March 20, 1785, and continued its meeting at Mount Vernon where the compact was signed, March 28. Madison on July 26 spoke of the "urgency of General Washington in the late negotiation with Maryland." Both legislatures ratified the compact, but Maryland, November 21, 1785 on the motion of Stone, who had been a signer of the document, asked for a further conference and proposed the inclusion of Pennsylvania and Delaware, Both these states accepted and Maryland appointed new commissioners.

PROPOSAL OF A CONVENTION (1786)

A resolution went very quickly through the Virginia Legislature, January 21, 1786, which ignored Congress and appointed commissioners

to meet with such other commissioners as should be appointed by any of the states to consider the trade of the Union. These Virginia delegates, of whom Madison was the leader, issued invitations which were generally accepted; but delegates from only five states met at Annapolis in September, 1786. A report was prepared by Hamilton and a new convention was proposed to meet in Philadelphia the next May. This call was addressed directly to the states, but a copy was sent to Congress; that body in the end ignored the particular summons but issued an invitation of its own for the same place and time. Thus the Federal Convention of 1787 is linked up with the question of transportation to the West.

Washington's interest was active. Madison was a frequent visitor at Mount Vernon at this time, staying overnight for several days at a time. George Mason and Edmund Randolph, as well as prominent men of other colonies, were also Washington's guests. The comments in his letters begin with one to Lafayette, May 1, 1786: " ... This is a nomination of some of its first characters to meet other commissioners from the several States, in order to consider of and decide upon such powers, ... at the same time that it places it at once in the power of Congress to meet European nations upon decisive and equal ground. All the legislatures, which I have heard from, have come into the proposition, and have made very judicious appointments. Much good is expected from this measure, and it is regretted by many, that more objects were not embraced by the meeting ..."

After the Annapolis Convention had adjourned and its recommendation was before the Virginia Legislature, Washington wrote Madison, November 5, 1786: "No morn ever dawned more favorably than ours did; and no day was ever more clouded than the present. Wisdom and good examples are necessary at this time to rescue the political machine from the impending storm. Virginia ..., I hope, to take the lead in promoting this great and arduous work."

WOULD WASHINGTON ATTEND (1786)?

Madison, in his reply, brought directly to the General the problem of breaking his retirement once more. He wrote, November 8, 1786: "The expediency of complying with the recommendation from Annapolis in favor of a general revision of the federal system, was

unanimously agreed to. A bill for the purpose is now depending, and in a form which attests the most federal spirit. ... This idea will also be pursued in the selection of characters to represent Virginia in the federal convention. You will infer our earnestness on this point from the liberty, which will be used, of placing your name at the head of them."

For the next few months the struggle between Washington's wishes and his sense of public responsibility engrossed his correspondence. He wrote Madison, December 16, 1786, stating "That the present moment is pregnant of great and strange events, none who will cast their eyes around them can deny. Of this, you, who have had the whole matter before you, will judge; for, having received no other than private intimation of my election, and unacquainted with the formalities, which are or ought to be used on these occasions, silence may be deceptive, or considered as disrespectful. This imputation of both or either I would wish to avoid."

ADVICE OF FRIENDS (1786)

Madison persisted in his urging: "But I am still inclined to think, that the posture of our affairs, if it should continue, would prevent any criticism on the situation, which the contemporary meetings would place you in; and wish that at least a door could be left open for your acceptance hereafter, in case the gathering clouds should become so dark and menacing, as to supersede every consideration but that of our national existence or safety."

Washington appealed then to Humphreys, his former aide, December 26, 1786: "That the federal government is nearly if not quite at a stand, none will deny. The first question then is, shall it be annihilated or supported? If this second attempt to convene the States, for the purposes proposed by ... the partial representation at Annapolis ... should also prove abortive, it may be considered as an unequivocal evidence, that the States are not likely to agree on any general measure, which is to pervade the Union, and of course that there is an end of federal government."

WASHINGTON ADVOCATES THE CONVENTION (1787)

Knox, too, was taken into his confidence. Washington wrote February 3, 1787: "Thus the matter stands, which is the reason of my saying to you in confidence, that at present I retain my first intention not to go. ... My first wish is to do for the best, and to act with propriety. ... That powers are wanting none can deny. ... like a house on fire, whilst the most regular mode of extinguishing the flames is contended for, the building is reduced to ashes. ... however constitutional it may be for Congress to point out the defects of the federal system, I am strongly inclined to believe, that it would not be found the most efficacious channel for the recommendations, more especially the alterations, to flow, for reasons too obvious to enumerate." "... a convention so holden may not be legal. Congress, however, may give it a coloring by recommendation, which would fit it more to the taste, without proceeding to a definition of the powers."

Still, as he wrote Humphreys again, March 8, 1787 the action of Congress in the matter somewhat eased his troubles: "My wish is I confess to see this Convention tried; after which, if the present form is not made efficient, conviction of the propriety of a change will pervade all ranks, ... Till then, however necessary it may appear to the more discerning part of the community, my opinion is, that it cannot be accomplished without great contention and much confusion It is one of the evils, perhaps not the smallest, of democratical governments that they must feel before they will see or act under this view of matters, and not doubting but you have heard the sentiments of many respectable characters on this subject, and perhaps since the business has been moved in Congress of the propriety or impropriety of my attendance, let me pray you, my dear Sir, to give me confidentially the public opinion and expectation as far as it has come to your knowledge of what it is supposed, I will or ought to do on this occasion.

QUESTION OF A STRONG EXECUTIVE

The letter of March 31, 1787 to Madison is of unusual interest, because therein he spoke directly of the possibility of a strong central executive power at which he merely hinted in the letters to Humphreys: "I am fully of opinion that those, who lean to a monarchical government, have either not consulted the public mind, or that

they live in a region which is much more productive of monarchical ideas, than are to be found in the southern States ... yet the period is not arrived for adopting the change without shaking the peace of this country to its foundation. That a thorough reform of the present system is indispensable, none, who have capacities to judge, will deny; and with hand [and heart] I hope the business will be essayed in a full convention.

"I confess, however, that my opinion of public virtue, is so far changed, that I have my doubts whether any system, without the means of coercion in the sovereign, will enforce due obedience to the ordinances of a general government; without which every thing else fails. ... But what kind of coercion, you may ask. This indeed will require thought, though the noncompliance of the States with the late requisition is an evidence of the necessity."

Of interest in the light of the proceedings of the Federal Convention is this insistence on the power of coercion in the central government, though there is no indication that he had in mind, at this time at least, the eventual solution of direct action of the federal government upon the people. It is interesting, too, to contrast the above statement with his indignant rejection of Nicola's suggestion of kingship in 1782.

COUNSELS ON ATTENDING (1787)

These and other letters produced replies that in general urged his attendance. Knox had no doubts, and was almost prophetic in his reply: "I imagine that your own satisfaction, or chagrin, and that of your friends, will depend entirely on the result of the convention. For I take it for granted, that, however reluctantly you may acquiesce, you will be constrained to accept of the president's chair. Hence the proceedings of the convention will more immediately be appropriated to you than to any other person. Were the convention to propose only amendments and patchwork to the present defective confederation, your reputation would in a degree suffer. But, were an energetic and judicious system to be proposed with your signature, it would be a circumstance highly honorable to your fame, in the judgment of the present and future ages; and doubly entitle you to the glorious republican epithet, The Father of

your Country.

"But, the men generally chosen being of the first information, great reliance may be placed on the wisdom and vigor of their counsels and judgment, and therefore the balance of my opinion preponderates greatly in favor of your attendance. I am persuaded, that your name has had already great influence to induce the States to come into the measure, that your attendance will be grateful, that your presence would confer on the assembly a national complexion, and that it would more than any other circumstance induce a compliance with the propositions of the convention."

Humphreys personally thought Washington's attendance unwise. However, he later acknowledged that Gouverneur Morris and others had wished him to use whatever influence he might have to induce Washington to attend. "I could not have promised this without counteracting my own judgment. I will not, however, hesitate to say, that I do not conceive your attendance can hazard such personal ill consequences, as were to be apprehended before the proposed meeting had been legitimated by the sanction of Congress."

WASHINGTON AGREES TO ATTEND (1787)

In the end Washington decided to attend the Convention, writing Governor Randolph March 28, 1787: "... it will, I fear, have a tendency to sweep me back into the tide of public affairs, when retirement and ease are so essentially necessary for and in so much desired by me. However, as my friends, with a degree of solicitude which is unusual, seem to wish for my attendance on this occasion, I have come to a resolution to go, if my health will permit."

To Madison he wrote in the letter above quoted, March 31: "it gives me great pleasure to hear, that there is a probability of a full representation of the States in convention; ... my wish is that the convention may adopt no temporizing expedients, but probe the defects of the constitution to the bottom, and provide a radical cure, whether they are agreed to or not. A conduct of this kind will stamp wisdom and dignity on their proceedings, and hold up a light which sooner or later will have its influence."

to be continued next issue ...

Long Island

The 99th Annual Luncheon, Chapter Awards and Installation of Officers for 2008-2009 was held on Sunday afternoon April 27th, at The Three Village Inn in Stony Brook. The chapter welcomed new members including **Timothy Kirkup** of East Islip.

After the annual election of officers, they were sworn in as shown below.



from left to right: Walter Kuhn, past ESSAR President, Reginald Metcalf Jr., Historian; David M. Shields, Jr., Secretary; Albert Meyer, Treasurer, Desander Mas, President and Edward Burns, Registrar. Missing from photo, Elder Joseph Betz, Chaplain and Nathaniel Corwin, Esq, Chancellor.

Upcoming events -

Saturday October 18th Time: 10:00 AM
Bethpage Restoration Village Tour
Cost: \$ 10.00 for adults, \$ 7.00 for seniors and children 5-12, under 5 free, to be paid at time of admission. Old Bethpage Village Restoration provides visitors with a unique and wonderful opportunity to step back in time and experience life in a recreated mid-19th-century American village. The 209-acre village includes an assortment of homes, farms and businesses. Each October, the village hosts the Long Island Fair, a traditional county agricultural fair that draws tens of thousands of visitors.

Sunday April 2009 Time: 1:00 PM
100th Anniversary Luncheon Three Village Inn, Stony Brook, Notice and cost to be announced.

Sunday June 14th 2009 Flag Day
Re-Dedication of the S.A.R. Flagpole
Huntington Village Historic Cemetery in Huntington Town Center. Ceremonies will include the Huntington Town Militia, local

politicians, Historians and will follow with light refreshments being served.

Rochester



Members of the Rochester Chapter met at the Avon (Livingston Co.) Village Cemetery on May 6 to install new headstones and bronze markers supplied by the Veteran's Administration and to re-set one stone that had been pulled up and left face down on the ground many years ago. Working with the Avon Cemetery Association, **Daryl Verstrete** arranged the work party and was assisted by Compatriots **Bob Fuller**, **Steve Clarke** and Chapter President **Mike Tunison**. A representative of the Avon Cemetery Association stopped by to offer support and thanks. In a matter of about three hours, the crew set the new stones and bronze plaques from the Veterans Administration, and re-set the one fallen stone. Daryl's daughter, Sheridan, was the on site supervisor.

Graves Committee member Daryl Verstrete, with help from compatriots across the state, continues the search to locate and photograph the gravesites of as many Revolutionary War veterans as possible. In April, Daryl, Mike Tunison, Rochester Chapter President, and **Bill Sebring** of the Finger Lakes Chapter visited more than a dozen cemeteries in Seneca County to photograph and record data about the Patriots buried there.

INTRODUCTION

The urge to move west and the quality of the farmland led Abraham Covert to move from New Jersey to western NY. His descendant, Mike Tunison, was delighted to find Covert's grave and to find that it was marked with an SAR bronze grave marker as shown in the accompanying photo.



Saratoga Battle Chapter



(l-r) Charles Walter, Richard Saunders, Jr., Duane Booth, George Ballard, Primitivo Africa, James Ballard, Richard Fullam & John Sheaff

The Chapter in joint sponsorship with the Saratoga Chapter, DAR, the Saratoga National Historical Park, the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration and the Friends of Saratoga Battlefield held the 5th Annual Citizenship Ceremony at scenic Saratoga National Historical Park in Stillwater.

About 200 people gathered to watch 20 candidates take the Oath of Allegiance to the United States. The program included remarks by Park Superintendent Joe Finan; cannon firing; music by a Fife and Drum ensemble and Boy Scouts presenting the colors.

I'm your new editor. My name is Ed St.Germain. If you want to be formal, you may call me Doctor St.Germain, as I have a doctoral degree (in Jurisprudence) but most folks call me by my life-long nickname, "Saint."

I was born in Vassar Hospital in Poughkeepsie. I spent much of my formative time on the family farm outside of Ballston Spa. When I was practicing law, I used to quip that growing up on a dairy farm left me with a great advantage over most other attorneys - it left me with the ability to recognize it before I step in it.

My ESSAR member number is 9972. My national number is 94142. As the numbers indicate, I've been around the block. In Viet Nam, I delivered babies and I killed men. Perhaps because of that personal experience with the Alpha and Omega of human existence, ever since then, life has tended to seem a bit anticlimactic.

I was going to include a photo of myself, but decided not to for two reasons. First, decked out in full fig with all my SAR medals dangling and jangling, and throwing in things from the Mayflower Society, Order of the Founders and Patriots of America, etc., I look like an admiral in the Bolivian navy. After all, it's said that "SAR" stands for "Sashes And Ribbons." Being a populist at heart, I'm uncomfortable with such displays. Second, if you've been in the SAR any length of time, you've already seen my photo, on the front cover of the Fall, 2001 issue of the national "SAR Magazine." On the right of that cover is a photo of myself and a few others marching along in 18th century uniforms with muskets on our shoulders. On the left is a photo of Compatriot George W. Bush at what's left of the World Trade Center. Above both is an exhortation to "Remember September 11th"

Perhaps a better introduction would be to repeat and rephrase an editorial I wrote more years ago than I care to remember, when I started my very first SAR newsletter. Here it is:

WHY A NEWSLETTER?

While we strive to promote patriotism, history and education, one of the unwritten goals of such an organization as ours is to enrich the lives of its members, if only to the extent of providing an opportunity for such camaraderie and communication with persons of similar interests as might be conducive to intellectual stimulation.

In our case, our members are spread over an area larger than several of the original 13 colonies combined. This in itself militates against regular contact at our meetings, without even considering duties of family, employment, or other demands on our time.

Hence, we need a vehicle whereby any or all of us can reach out to the others to share news, ideas or information of common interest.

It is hoped that this will be a periodical of the widest possible participation, and everyone is invited to submit material for inclusion. If you are afraid of exposing your writing efforts to your compatriots, simply re-read the preceding paragraphs to be reassured that even your editor has no more background in journalism than reading the local paper, and no more command of prose composition than that imparted by high school English teachers. If your reluctance to take pen in hand is acute, call your editor to schmooze about your ideas, and I'll do the writing.

The Empire Patriot
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