



EMPIRE PATRIOT

Newsletter of the Empire State Society, Sons of the American Revolution
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Compatriot Charles E. Ogden

Leads the fight to save the Saratoga Battlefield

Under Compatriot Ogden's leadership the Saratoga Battlefield was saved, eventually becoming "The Saratoga Battlefield National Park." He is the father of the Saratoga Battlefield National Park.

At a quarterly meeting of the Rochester Chapter, SAR, held on 22 May 1923 at the Rochester Club, Compatriot Ogden reported that he had received a telegram from Judge Harvey Foote Remington, who was attending the SAR National Congress in Nashville, Tennessee. Prior to this meeting, due to efforts of the Rochester Chapter, SAR, legislation had been proposed to have the United States Congress designate the Saratoga Battlefield as a National Park. However, this legislation failed, as other bills previously at the state level had failed. It was decided by many of the members that the Rochester Chapter should consider acting on its own. Rochester Chapter President, Raymond G. Dann appointed a committee, chaired by Charles E. Ogden, to draft a resolution proposing that the SAR acquire the two farms that made up the major portion of the battlefield, some 400 plus acres in all. This committee consisted of Charles E. Ogden, Chairman, Judge Harvey F. Remington and Frank E. Gannett.



Charles E. Ogden

Judge Remington submitted the resolution drawn by this committee to the 1923 SAR National Congress, then in session in Nashville, TN., calling for support from the national society in the acquisition of the Saratoga Battlefield. Later, a telegram was received by Ogden from Remington, stating that the resolution had passed unanimously and a committee of seven was to be appointed by the incoming president general to study the situation. This was extremely good news for the Rochester Chapter. They endured many disappointments at various stages of the process of asking the New York State Legislature, as well as the United States Congress, to act with no avail. With the national society's support, the Rochester Chapter, led by Charles Ogden, now had some clout to wield when they began negotiations with the owners of these farms located on the site of the Battle of Saratoga.

Since attempts to interest both state and national governments in securing the battlefield had failed, and since the national society had given the Rochester Chapter the green light to proceed, little time was wasted in swinging into action, led by the former Publicity Director, State Department of Public Works, Compatriot Ogden. After national's study was concluded, the result was the formation of "The Saratoga Battlefield Association, Inc." It consisted of members of the chapter and other interested parties in New York state. Negotiations began in earnest with the owners of the two farms. The Freeman farm was purchased for \$10,000 and the Sarle farm for \$9,500. With these two farms in hand, the Saratoga Battlefield Asso. Inc. now owned over 400 acres of battlefield land. A newspaper article in possession of the Chapter dated August 26, 1923 states, "Rochesterians aid in buying historic site." Incidentally, this historic battle is generally referred to by most historians today as the "turning point of the American Revolutionary War."

In summation, prior to the involvement of Charles Ogden, visitors to the site could not view the battlefield without trespassing on private property. The Rochester Chapter's 50th Anniversary Paragraph History states; "Compatriot Ogden made this project one of the major efforts of his life." It was this determination and refusal to quit that eventually led to the Saratoga Battlefield. Three years later, in 1926, the New York State Legislature passed a bill making the battlefield a State Park. It was not until 1938 that Franklin D. Roosevelt added the Saratoga Battlefield to the National Park System. Thanks to the efforts of Compatriots Ogden, Remington and Senator, James W. Wadsworth, who made the motion to form the committee at the 1923 National Congress.

Today, patriotic Americans as well as people from around the globe can come to Saratoga and reflect on the decisive battle that turned the tide for the Americans in their quest for independence.

(Written by Steve Arter, Past President, ESSAR)

EMPIRE STATE SOCIETY, SAR PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Susan and I send New Year's greetings as well as a belated Merry Christmas to each of you and your families.

During the November 2009 Board of Managers meeting, several issues were discussed such as placing the "Empire Patriot" on a web site, and checking again into the possibility of a fund raising project regarding an ESSAR Medal. Dennis Booth has given us some insight into the web site matter, and I have some quotes from the same medal manufacturer who supplies the NSSAR with their medals.

With the new year comes an assortment of important SAR and other organizational scheduled meetings within the next few months. Unfortunately, some of these meetings have conflicting dates with others. March will be one of those busy months with the NSSAR Spring Leadership Meeting scheduled to be held in Louisville, KY on March 4-6, 2010 and the New York State Society CAR will be holding their 91st State Conference in Newburgh, NY that same weekend. Following those dates, Saratoga Battle Chapter is planning on co-hosting along with the Stone Arabia Battle Chapter the next ESSAR Board of Managers meeting one of the remaining weekends in March.

Other scheduled important meetings later on this year are the following;

NSSAR Congress to be held in Cleveland, OH – June 25-30

Middle Atlantic States Conference to be held in Philadelphia, PA – Aug. 13-14

Fall Leadership Meeting to be held in Louisville, KY – Sept. 23-25

Details and information for these meetings as well as others can be found on the NSSAR web site as well as in the upcoming issues of the "SAR Magazine".

My best to each of you and your families for a great and prosperous New Year.

Bill Woodworth, President

Chaplains Column The Revolutionary War Chaplain

We continue our history of the Chaplain in the Revolutionary War, and its growth throughout the following wars. The relationship between the American military and the clergy began on April 19, 1775, at the Battle of Concord Bridge. My research has found that a number of New England clergy served at Concord. A minister named **William Emerson**, later died while on active duty; **Joseph Thaxter**, was wounded at Bunker Hill. Two others, **Edmund Foster**, a theological student and the Reverend Doctor **Philip Payson** also served. The last three not only ministered to the minutemen, but also, "shouldered their muskets, and fought like common soldiers." It was written that the Rev. Payson "seized a musket and put himself at the head of a party, and led them forward to the attack." **William Emerson** served at Concord in the capacity of a chaplain only, and so he has the distinction of being the first Revolutionary War Chaplain. On July 29, 1775, the Continental Congress legally established the military chaplaincy. From the founding of this country, chaplains were an integral part of the armed forces. Since then, the U.S. military has recognized the religious diversity of its soldiers. Originally, the U.S. Military Chaplaincy consisted only of Protestant clergy. During the Mexican-American War, Catholic chaplains were first recruited and Jewish chaplains during the Civil War. Today, the chaplaincy has over 200 denominations that have been granted status, including Muslim groups Buddhist groups and Mormons.

Remembering Our Deceased Compatriots

Occasionally, I will receive notices of a member of our Society who has passed away. I send a sympathy card to the family when I am notified, and when an address is provided. Somehow, it seems the right thing to do to remember the life and work when a fellow compatriot dies. I would appreciate an email with the deceased's name and the address of the nearest next of kin. You could send it to me at <tlmas@roadrunner.com>. Reverend Terry L. Sheldon, State Chaplain

Lest We Forget

Almighty Father, we ask Thy blessing on the soul of our dear departed Compatriots. We thank Thee for their membership in our society these many years. And now that they have passed on to that greater light, that light which we cannot receive while in the body, we ask Thee to receive them more and more into Thy faithful service and keep them under Thy protected care to Thy Honor and Glory of Thy Holy Name. Amen

A Final Salute

Edward Alan St. Germain - Westchester-Putnam
Frederick William Morgan - Newtown Battle
Burton Eugene Schoonover - Newtown Battle
David Bruce Nichols - Newtown Battle
Sereno Scranton Tanner - Newtown Battle
William Breckenridge Shafer - Newtown Battle
Harold Small - Oriskany Battle
Walter S. Cookenham - Oriskany Battle
William Thompson Wares - Oriskany Battle
Jay Carlton Widener, Sr. - Rochester
Henry Redman Dutcher - Rochester
Ronald Marvin Staring - Stone Arabia
George Howard Ballard - Walloomsac
Albert Almy Young, Jr. - Long Island
Edward Lloyd Hendrickson - 1st New York Continental
Marvin Alden Humphrey, MD - Saratoga Battle
Henry Goebel, Jr. - Saratoga Battle
Henri Lafayette Baxter, III - Columbia-Mid Hudson

American Patriotism

Some Compatriots may have either already read or heard this story. It is not about the American Revolutionary War, but it is worth repeating. Medal of Honor recipient, Colonel Van T. Barfoot faced legal action against him for flying the American Flag on a 21-foot flagpole in his front yard.

Colonel Barfoot had a battle with the homeowners association in his neighborhood in Richmond, VA. The homeowners association had threatened to take him to court if he failed to remove the pole from in front of his home in suburban, Richmond, VA. The association said the pole violated the neighborhood's aesthetic guidelines.

Virginia Senators, Mark Warner and James Webb rallied behind Barfoot, a World War II, Korean and Vietnam veteran. In a letter, Sen. Webb urged the association to "consider the exceptional nature of Col. Barfoot's service when considering his pride and determination in honoring our flag."

Additionally, Rep. "Buck" McKeon (R-CA), Ranking Member on the House Armed Services Committee, introduced a bill to allow any Medal of Honor recipient to properly display a flag at their home in any way they may choose.

Recently, the homeowners association dropped the threat of legal action against Col. Barfoot, and he was "allowed to keep" the 21-foot flagpole in his front yard.

Col. Barfoot was awarded the Medal of Honor for actions while his platoon was under German assault near Carano, Italy, in May 1944. He was credited with standing up to three German tanks with a bazooka and stopping their advance. Also, he was awarded the Purple Heart and other decorations, and served in Korea and Vietnam before retiring from the service in 1974. It is a sad commentary indeed when this type of action has to be taken to allow an American hero to legally and properly display his flag. Well done Col. Barfoot!

Colonel Barfoot should be presented with a Flag Certificate from the Sons of the American Revolution. This story brings to mind the question. Do we present enough Flag Certificates from our local chapters? There must be people and business' that properly display the American Flag. Let's hear from our chapters on what we are doing.

The Arlington Story

The Worcester Wreath and its involvement with the Arlington project was inspired at the early age of 12 years old when, As a Bangor Daily News paper boy, Morrill Worcester won a trip to the Nation's Capitol. It was a trip he would never forget, and Arlington National Cemetery made an indelible impression. In later life, he recognized that his success as a businessman was in a large part, due to the values of this Nation and the Veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

In 1992, the Wreath Company found themselves with an excess of wreaths nearing the end of the holiday season. Seeing an opportunity to make a boyhood dream a reality, efforts to do something special with those wreaths began in earnest. With the help of Maine Senator Olympia Snowe, arrangements were made for the wreaths to be placed at Arlington in one of the older sections of the cemetery, a section which received fewer visitors each passing year.

With plans underway, a number of other participants began their support for the project. Blue Bird Ranch, Inc. provided transportation of the wreaths to Virginia. Volunteers from the American Legion and the VFW Posts gathered with members of the community to decorate each wreath with signature red, hand-tied bows.

Now, over fifteen years and over 100,000 wreaths later, many volunteers participate in the project each year. After learning of the annual trek to Arlington to honor our fallen heroes.

"Wreaths Across America" is now a non-profit 501(C)3 organization. It was formed as an extension of the Arlington Wreath Project. In 1992, 5,000 Christmas wreaths were laid. By 2008 over 300 locations held wreath laying ceremonies in every state, Puerto Rico and 24 overseas cemeteries. Over 60,000 volunteers participated.

Saratoga Battle Chapter

On Saturday, December 12, 2009, on a beautiful and cold day at the Gerald B. Solomon National Cemetery in Schuylerville, Richard Fullum participated in the annual "Wreaths Across America Ceremony," with CAR members from the Schuylerville Society and the Bemis Heights Society.

2009 marked the 18th anniversary of the "Wreaths Across America" project that initially adorned the headstones of our Nation's veterans at Arlington National Cemetery. Over the years, this program has continued to grow and has expanded to include 350 State, National and local cemeteries. This year Solomon National Cemetery had sponsorships for 408 Christmas wreaths, a ten-fold increase from last year. The CAR Societies sponsored 30 wreaths themselves and collected sponsorships for an additional 70, which included donations from the Saratoga Battle Chapter itself and many individual compatriots. Prior to the official wreath laying ceremony, the members of the CAR societies helped to lay the wreaths on the veteran's graves, which included those of family members and friends. Dressed in the Class A uniform of a World War II infantryman, Richard presented a wreath to the headstone of past chapter president and World War II veteran, Carlton E. Covell, and saluted.

Approximately 100 people attended the official wreath laying ceremony that began at noon and included representatives from the Civil Air Patrol and other veterans groups. This ceremony was simultaneously held at over 350 locations across the world. The highlight of the ceremony was the laying of the ceremonial wreaths at the Veterans Memorial. In total, seven wreaths were placed in honor of the veterans of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines and the MIA/POW. Lexi Zerrillo, President of Schuylerville Society accompanied by fellow members of the CAR placed the wreath in honor of the Marine Corps veterans, and Richard placed the wreath in honor of the MIA/POW. An honor salute ended the ceremony.

Richard said, "Wreaths Across America is a project I very much would like to see SAR maintain support of. Ideally, every headstone should be adorned with a wreath, and perhaps in the years to come, we can help make that a reality."



Richard Fullum laying wreath on the grave of Carlton E. Covell



Richard Fullum with members of Civil Air Patrol

Finger Lakes Chapter

At a recent meeting, Norman E. Wheeler, Sr., Chaplain, received three awards from President, Blaine Elkie. He received the Fire Safety Commendation Award for 20 years as a firefighter, the Emergency Medical Service Award for 20 years as a paramedic on the Lansing ambulance, and most of all, he received the Robert E. Burt, Boy Scout Volunteer Award for 55 years as a Boy Scout Leader. A point of interest about the scouting award, Norman never had the opportunity to be a Boy Scout, but has made sure that scouting was available to those who want it. Also, he has been appointed as our Eagle Scout Coordinator.

He first became involved as an assistant Scoutmaster at the Naval Mine Depot, Yorktown, VA. He was serving in the U.S. Navy, and the troop was composed of children of naval personnel. He continued his involvement while attending college. He was Vice Chair for Leadership Training with the Mohegan Council in Central Massachusetts. Later, he was Chair for Leadership Training in Montpelier, VT. Since 1972, he has been actively involved with the Baden Powell Council in Cortland-Tompkins County, NY. He has been Scoutmaster, Cubmaster, WEBELOS Den Leader, Unit Commissioner, Chair for special projects; first aid rally, learn to swim, pop-corn kernel, etc. He has been a Merit Badge Counselor for most of the safety merit

badges, and genealogy merit badge. With the genealogy merit badge, he strives to get the scouts more interested in their ancestry leading toward revolutionary ancestors. He has provided leadership at the Taughannock District. Currently, he is a member of the Advancement Committee and the Eagle Board of Review. Recently, he received an award from the Baden Powell Council as a James E. West fellow.



(l-r) Norman Wheeler and Blaine Elkie the group entertained for almost two hours. He has another type of program, and we most certainly will invite him back.

Valcour Battle Chapter



On Sunday, 11 October 2009, a special program commemorating the Battle of Valcour, which occurred in 1776 on Lake Champlain during the American Revolution, was held at 1 p.m. at Clinton County Community College in Plattsburg, New York. The Valcour Battle Chapter, SAR and the Saranac Chapter DAR were present along with several historians from the community.

The commemoration involved an engagement that took place on 11-13 October 1776 in which a fleet of the American colonies, commanded by Benedict Arnold, fought a superior British fleet to a standstill in the strait between Valcour Island and the shore of the colony of New York. Although the British won the three day battle, the long delay to build the fleets prevented them from moving south to divide the colonies in 1776.

This enabled the Americans to gain enough strength to defeat them at Saratoga in 1777, bringing the French into the war, and eventual victory in the War for Independence.

Newtown Battle Chapter

Newtown Battle Chapter had another successful Christmas Party where the “presents” are donated to the Veterans at the Bath VA Medical Center. Members who attended had a buffet luncheon. The Chemung County Historian, Archie Kieffer gave a great talk on Revolutionary War Patriot and Sharpshooter, Timothy Murphy. Susan and Bill Woodworth delivered several shopping bags and two big boxes of gifts to the Veterans. Included with all the items, we received total of \$167.00 in

monetary donations. A special thanks goes out to all the members who make this a great project and saying “thanks” to those who continue to give us our Freedom. I consider it an honor to be part of this chapter.

Congratulations go out to several of our members; **Compatriot Norman E. Wheeler, Sr.** who’s a dual member was recently presented with several SAR awards during a recent Finger Lakes Chapter meeting for his service to the community. **Compatriot Timothy Tompkins**, Chapter Treasurer, was awarded the Personal Achievement of the Year Award at a Developmental Disabilities Day Ceremony in Buffalo last summer. **Compatriot John Bogart**, Chapter Secretary, has performed over 1300 hours of volunteer service at the Bath VA Medical Center.

January will be our Annual Chapter Meeting in which we will hold elections. Our following meetings are scheduled on April 17, July 16, and October 17. The Annual Chapter Family Picnic, which is open to all SAR, DAR and CAR members, is tentatively scheduled for August 28th at Newtown Battlefield State Park in Elmira. This event always takes place during the Revolutionary War Re-enactment Weekend. As always, we remind everyone that the chapter is not responsible for anyone taken “hostage” by the British, Native Americans, or Tories during this event.

This past year we lost several great members of our chapter--**Compatriots David Nichols, Sereno “Cy” Tanner, Frederick William Morgan, Burt Schoonover and William Shafer.** On behalf of the Chapter Membership, I send our deepest sympathy to the families of these men--they will all be greatly missed.

Long Island Chapter William Floyd Estate Outing



Attending at Longwood, the estate manor, were Compatriot Bill Lunt, Compatriot Gene Shreve and his wife Sue, Compatriot Desander Mas and his wife Carol, Compatriot Ed Burns, Compatriot Jim Reason, and Compatriot Al Meyer and his wife Bonnie.

little easier to grasp during a tour of the Old Mastic House, a walk through the outbuilding area and a visit to the Floyd Family cemetery. Exhibits are available throughout the house, including historical photographs of the William Floyd Estate and the Floyd family. The house is filled with furnishings accumulated by eight generations of Floyd family members.

Compatriots and families gathered recently to tour the beautiful grounds of the William Floyd Estate in Mastic, on Long Island. William Floyd [December 17, 1734 - August 4, 1821] was a signer of the United States Declaration of Independence as a representative of New York. The members had a very informative tour of every room in the house, upstairs and down, led by a very informed Park Service guide.

Two hundred and fifty years of history are preserved at the William Floyd Estate, which contains architectural features and artifacts from three centuries of American life.

The Estate, which was donated to Fire Island National Seashore in 1965, is located on the mainland of Long Island in Mastic Beach, New York. The Estate contains the ancestral house, grounds and cemetery of the William Floyd family. William Floyd, a Revolutionary War general was born in the house in 1734.

In colonial times, the Floyds ran a huge plantation; later, the family turned to business and politics, and the lands were used for outdoor recreational pursuits like hunting and fishing.

The 25-room “Old Mastic House,” the twelve outbuildings, the family cemetery and the 613 acres of forest, fields, marsh and trails all graphically illuminate the layers of history. The most difficult questions we face when dealing with the past--the relationship between change and continuity--becomes a

Westchester Putnam Chapter

The Westchester Putnam Chapter held our fall meeting on November 21st at the Brasserie Swiss Restaurant in Ossining. Dennis Corcoran, a retired Hendrick Hudson school district social studies teacher and the leader of the annual Hudson River Valley Ramble “Conspiracy Tour”--the story of the spy mission and capture of Major John Andre, was our guest speaker. Dennis spoke about the various local landmarks associated with the plot, and the route taken by Major Andre after he received the plans for West Point from Benedict Arnold. He detailed Andre’s capture, trial and execution. On hand for the meeting was

Rakoff, one of our two members who are descended from Isaac Van Wart, one of the three men who captured Major Andre. Barrie Mabie, a member who is descended from the proprietor of Mabie's Tavern in Tappan, where Andre was held after his capture and during his trial, was also in attendance. In recognition of his years of teaching others about this critical episode of the American Revolution through the Conspiracy Tour the chapter presented Dennis with the Society's Bronze Good Citizenship Medal and Certificate.



(l-r) Dennis Corcoran in period dress and President Kenneth Stevens

We were fortunate also to have at the meeting two special guests from the CAR, Celeste Goethe, Senior President of the Highland Pass CAR Chapter, and Lisa McPartland, the mother of current state CAR president Kevin McPartland. Kevin is a Westchester-Putnam Chapter applicant. The Highland Pass Chapter was voted the Most Outstanding CAR Chapter in the nation at their national convention in April. Lisa Described the state CAR project, "Heroes and Hope," and a number of SAR members purchased pins to support the project.

The Harvey Birch Chapter of the DAR again invited our chapter members to their annual holiday luncheon on December 12th at the Scarsdale Golf Club. I gave a short talk about chapter, region, state and national SAR activities. Six SAR chapter members attended the event and during the lunch I presented

Charles G. Banks, Jr. with his membership certificate.

Stewart Manville received a 60 year membership pin and certificate. He became a member of SAR on January 2, 1949.

The chapter donated \$100 to support the ESSAR's project to underwrite the effort by the NYS Museum in Albany to mat and frame for exhibition a collection of pastel drawings by Jon Edwin Porter (1903-1981). The pictures are of 23 sites in New York associated with the American Revolution.



(l-r) Elsie Lee, Regent, Harvey Birch Chapter DAR, President Kenneth Stevens, Charles G. Banks, Jr., and his son and sponsor Charles G. Banks, III



(l-r) Steven Manville and President, Kenneth Stevens

Columbia Mid-Hudson Valley



(l-r) Rod Andrews and Alan D. Coon

Our meeting was held at the Pegasus Restaurant in Coxsackie, NY., on December 5, 2009. A total of thirty-four attendees including seventeen Chapter members, four potential members, four DAR spouses and nine spouses and guests.

Andrew Phesay was presented his SAR membership certificate bringing the Chapter membership to fifty-three.

Alan D. Coon was presented the "Silver Meritorious Medal and Certificate" for his outstanding contributions for the last fifteen years as Chapter Secretary/Treasurer. Richard Wambach, Past President (1993-1995) will assume Mr. Coon's duties and responsibilities for 2010 which will complete the election term of office.

We have tried unsuccessfully for three years to promote the George & Stella Knight Essay Contest. Our committee has exhausted all ideas and suggestions to instill any motivation into the high school students in our
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(l-r) Rod Andrews and Andrew Phesay

We had one entry in the Eagle Scout Essay Award contest. John Anderson, chairman of the Eagle Scout Essay Award Contest wrote encouraging letters to both of the Boy Scout Councils in our Chapter area. In 2009, we processed fifteen Eagle Scout Certificates with cover letters.

Our chapter will again donate a check to the NYSSCAR Ninety-first annual state conference in Newburg, NY., on March 5 & 6, 2010.

The 2010 calendar schedule was reviewed with the members. There could be two or three cemetery ceremonies conducted. Additional information will be forthcoming. It was suggested that we could possibly be involved with either one or two parades or display booths in lower Dutchess County. Vice President, Tim Middlebrook feels that our chapter must get more involved with that area, and he will be looking into it.

Once again, our Chapter was one of the first chapters to achieve the 100% membership drive for the third year in a row. It looks like our chapter will be

sharing in the ESSAR membership bonus drive.

We will be holding our next meeting on April 10, 2010 at the Cappuccino's Restaurant in Red Hook, NY. A choice of some lighter meal options are being discussed with the management for this meeting because of interest shown by our members.

**Will 2010 Be A Banner Year
for
The Empire State Society, Sons of the American Revolution?**