

# BATTLE LINES

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## NEWSLETTER OF THE SARATOGA BATTLE CHAPTER - SAR

### CHAPTER NEWS

#### TOM RYAN HONORED BY DAR

Compatriot Thomas J. Ryan of Troy was recently honored with a Silver Tea by the Fort Crailo Chapter, NSDAR.

Tom, who has been a member of NSSAR and our chapter since 25 Feb 1998, was honored by DAR for enrolling his seven daughters in the DAR, six in the Fort Crailo Chapter!

The ceremony was held at the Gilead Lutheran Church in Brunswick, Rensselaer County and was hosted by Dona Kreiger and Alberta Kreiger of Troy.

Interestingly, Tom had originally thought his ancestor Jacob Moak to have been of Dutch ancestry. Research, however, revealed Jacob to be an immigrant from Switzerland. Tom's family is planning a trip to the ancestral home in the near future.

Congratulations, Tom!

#### MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT PETER K. GOEBEL

Volunteers are still needed to work on several important SAR programs, especially the Eagle Scout Competition. If you have not been as active in the chapter as you would like, please contact Pres. Goebel at 518-762-6055 to discuss what you might do to contribute to our work.

Each member is needed, and appreciated. My thanks to those who are serving our chapter so well, and especially those who worked so hard on our Annual Wreath-Laying ceremony at Saratoga National Historical Park.

### BICENTENNIAL OF THE DEATH OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

December 14 is the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of the Father of our Country, President General George Washington.

At a time when a high school chooses to change its name from George Washington High School because Washington had owned slaves, it would pay to pause to reflect upon just what he meant to the establishment of our nation.

The victory in the Revolution was not a foregone conclusion. It has been estimated that only about one third of the populace supported independence from the "Mother Country;" another one third actively opposed such a move; and the remainder were fence-sitters.

General Washington was not only a superb military leader, he was an inspiration to his troops on a continuing basis. Suffering defeat after defeat, and the agony of Valley Forge, Washington never lost his faith that God would watch over this noble cause.

We take much for granted today: instant communication world-wide via the internet; cell phones; more cable TV channels than we can count. Not to mention the creature comforts that seem only to be our due, our birthright. They are not. We enjoy the freedom of living in the greatest country on earth only because, over 200 years ago, a small group of Americans believed enough in what they were doing to persevere through deprivations and tribulations that we cannot even imagine.

"First in War; first in Peace; and first in the hearts of his Countrymen."



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## ANCESTOR CORNER

by Compatriot Ronald E. Newton

My ancestor Stephen Gibbs was born at Sandwich, MA on 15 Feb 1755, son of Josiah Gibbs and Mercy Cornish. He married Mehitable Bourne in June of 1782 in Wareham, MA.

Both Stephen and his widow received a pension for his service in the Revolutionary War. Stephen applied for his pension in Hartford, VT in 1832. He states that he enlisted in late 1776 while living in Plymouth, MA into Capt. Partridge's company (MA state troops) for a term of 3 months. In September of 1778 he again enlisted, this time into Capt. Curtis' company of state troops. He enlisted lastly in 1781 at Wareham, MA into Capt. Churchill's company. His various terms of service took him to Bristol, RI, Seconnot Point, RI and Butte Hill, RI.

Stephen's daughter Polly Thomas made an affidavit in 1850 claiming certain benefits due her from his pension. She states that Stephen had died 18 Aug 1835 at Pomfret, VT and that Mehitable had died at the same place on 1 Apr 1847.

The Registrar of the Hartford (VT) Probate Court certified in 1850 that evidence had been presented to prove Mehitable's death and her leaving 3 children: Annett Wolcut of Stockbridge, VT, Polly Thomas of Bridgewater, VT and Stephen Gibbs of Michigan. An administrator of the estate was named, after which the records go silent.

*Excerpted from Newton/Dimick Families-  
Allied Families*

*Compiled by Robert S. Newton  
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Your submissions for "Ancestor Corner" are solicited - just send in a few paragraphs about one of your SAR ancestors to Dennis F.M. Marr, Three Ravens Court, Troy, NY 12180.

## BOOK REVIEW

by Dennis F.M. Marr, Registrar/Genealogist

All of us who have been doing genealogy for any time know the frustration of trying to flesh out information about the women in our family tree. It seems that we often have paragraph after paragraph, sometimes page after page, of narrative about our male ancestors: their military exploits, land dealings, estates, etc., leave a paper trail for us that helps us to learn much about them.

Often, our notes or narratives about our female ancestors are reduced to "she was born, she was married, she died...." I am happy to report that a wonderful new book is available that may help us to fill in some of those missing blanks on our distaff side.

*The Hidden Half of the Family: A Sourcebook for Women's Genealogy*, by Christina Kassabian Schaefer (Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, MD. 1999) is a veritable treasure trove of tips and guidelines for working on our female ancestors.

The thesis of this book is that, at some point or another, most women had to interact with the legal system, whether with respect to her dower rights, acknowledging land transfers, etc. The author gives us a state-by-state description of such matters as common-law marriage, property rights and inheritance, suffrage, citizenship, and more. With this information, we then know what to look for and, as important, what not to look for, in a given place and time.

If you have e-mail and internet access, this book can be obtained via Amazon.com; or, try your local bookstore. Highly recommended.

## PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

With this issue, we complete the third year of *Battle Lines*. The positive feedback is greatly appreciated. Beginning in 2000, we will be doing the newsletter quarterly, in March, June, September and December.

*Dennis F.M. Marr  
Editor*