

The Marshal

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ROBERT FORSYTH CHAPTER OF THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION



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PRESIDENT'S DISPATCH

By Edward P. Rigel, Jr.

Compatriots,

While many people take the summer to relax and enjoy time off, the Georgia Society SAR tries to remain busy pursuing the Patriotic, Educational, and Historic goals of our Society. Nowhere is this more evident than at the SAR Annual National Congress. This year, more than 300 Compatriots from around the country met in Boston, MA, to conduct business and recognize the achievements of Chapters and State Societies. The Georgia Society was well represented with fifteen Compatriots in attendance, and we were front and center at the Monday Night Awards Ceremony. State President Greenly accepted no fewer than twenty-five awards on behalf of the Georgia Society and its Chapters. A particular point of pride was the Robert Forsyth Chapter being recognized with the USS Stark Memorial Award for Chapters with the best record of Service to Veterans over the past year (10-49 members). The Chapter also received twelve stars for its Patriot Biography Streamer, representing the hard work done by Chapter members in researching the life of their Patriot ancestors.

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Members of the Robert Forsyth Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution attend a joint Flag Retirement Ceremony with the Piedmont Chapter. Together, both chapters collected and respectfully disposed of 1311 flags collected from flag recycling receptacles around the area. (L-R): Chris Russo, Gene Bryant, George Thurmond, Hal Hardin, Ed Hooper, John Flikeid, Ed Rigel, Jr. (background in uniform) and Tom Davis, along with the award-winning Georgia Society SAR Color Guard.

ROBERT FORSYTH AND PIEDMONT CHAPTERS HOLD FLAG RETIREMENT CEREMONY

By Emil Decker, Editor.

On June 18, 2016 the Piedmont and Robert Forsyth chapters of the SAR held a Flag Retirement Ceremony for the 1311 flags that were collected from the Home Depot Flag Recycling Receptacles located in Roswell, Cumming, and Dawsonville locations. Members from both SAR chapters as well as members from the Martha Stewart Bulloch DAR, Martha Stewart C.A.R. Society, and Patriots of Liberty DAR were in attendance.

The Robert Forsyth and Piedmont Chapters rotate the hosting of the Retirement Ceremony. Held at the Northside Chapel Crematory in Roswell this year, next year the Robert Forsyth Chapter will host the event at Ingram Funeral Home in Cumming.

Public concern as well as confusion regarding the proper respect shown to the flag of the United States has led to many questions regarding the law relating to the flag's handling, display, and ultimate disposal. (Cont. page 2)

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ROBERT FORSYTH CHAPTER MEMBERS ATTENDS SEVERAL GRAVE MARKINGS



SAR Grave Marker.



Chapter President Ed Rigel and GA President Allen Greenly rendering honors at the grave marking of Patriots Pvt. Ruben Blanchard, Capt. James Cartledge, and Pvt. Samuel Cartledge. The grave marking, held on Oct. 15 at the Damascus Baptist Church Cemetery in Appling, GA, was sponsored by the William Few Chapter SAR.

THE FIRST GRAVE MARKINGS ?

In the first year, (1889), the Massachusetts Society initiated a program to suitably mark the graves of Revolutionary Patriots buried in the Old Bay State with an appropriate metal SAR marker. Many Massachusetts towns formally requested the Massachusetts Society to mark the Revolutionary graves in their cemeteries. Later, the grave marker was adopted as the official SAR grave marker. On October 19, 1894 Compatriot Nathan Appleton, an officer of the Massachusetts Society, placed the first grave marker, an SAR marker, on the grave of Marquis General de Lafayette in Picpus Cemetery, Paris France. On January 17, 1896, Benjamin Franklin's birthday observance, the Massachusetts Society placed an SAR grave marker on Franklin's grave in Christ Church Cemetery, Philadelphia. ¹

¹ Centennial history of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, 1889-1989, Robert A. Lentz, Executive Director, National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. Library of Congress Catalog 90-72152; ISBN : 1-56311-028-8. (Only 1000 copies were printed. Very hard to find.)

PRESIDENT'S DISPATCH (CONT.)

As the weather cools off, the Georgia Society Color Guard returns to its usual busy schedule during the Autumn months. You will hear of an increase in Patriot Grave Markings taking place throughout the State, with the Robert Forsyth Chapter hosting a Grave Marking for Patriot James Rylee on Oct. 29. A Patriot Grave Marking involves elements from a US Military funeral, a Church funeral, and the wishes of the family. They are conducted with honor and dignity in remembrance of the service given for our country. These events include presentation of the United States Colors by the Georgia Society SAR Color Guard, a biography of the Patriot given by a descendent, and the unveiling and dedication of a specially designed SAR Patriot Grave Marker. There will also be wreath presentations by the SAR, DAR and other lineage societies. While the ceremony itself is a solemn occasion, it is always enjoyable to spend time with Compatriots from around the state, hearing stories of events from the past (ask Allen about Jack Ferguson teaching him how to "Present Arms!")

As the school year gets underway, we should again look to place emphasis on our Youth Contests. In particular, the Rumbaugh Oration Contest and Knight Essay Contest are open to any high school student (grades 9-12) with an interest in United States History and do not necessarily have to be conducted through the school. If you know a student who is interested in entering one of the contests, please have them contact us so we can coordinate their submission. Entries are due to the State by Dec. 31, so don't delay!

As always, thank you for your support and dedication to the Robert Forsyth Chapter. We have come a long way in just three years since our chartering and I look forward to working with all Chapter members as we continue to grow.

In Patriotism,
Ed Rigel, Jr.

GRAVE MARKINGS CONTINUED



*Compatriot Ed Rigel Jr. renders honors at the grave of Moses Ayers.
Picture courtesy of Rick Reese of the Piedmont Chapter*

On Saturday, September 3, 2016, Chapter President Ed Rigel, Jr, attended the grave markings of Patriots Robert Walters and Moses Ayers. Sponsored by the Samuel Elbert Chapter, the graves are located in Hart County, just below the SC state line. The following is from the Samuel Elbert Chapter grave marking coordinator and gives a bit of info on the Patriots:

Robert Walters, Sr., 1732-1794, buried at Shoal Creek Baptist Church in Hart Co., (once Franklin Co.) Believed to be born in Scotland; emigrated to colonies in 1743, first to Maryland, then moved to Pittsylvania Co., VA. He was a veteran of the French & Indian War. He served in the VA. Troops & furnished material aid during the Revolution. He came to Ga. in 1784 buying 600 acres on Big Shoal Ck. & Tugaloo River where he operated a mill.

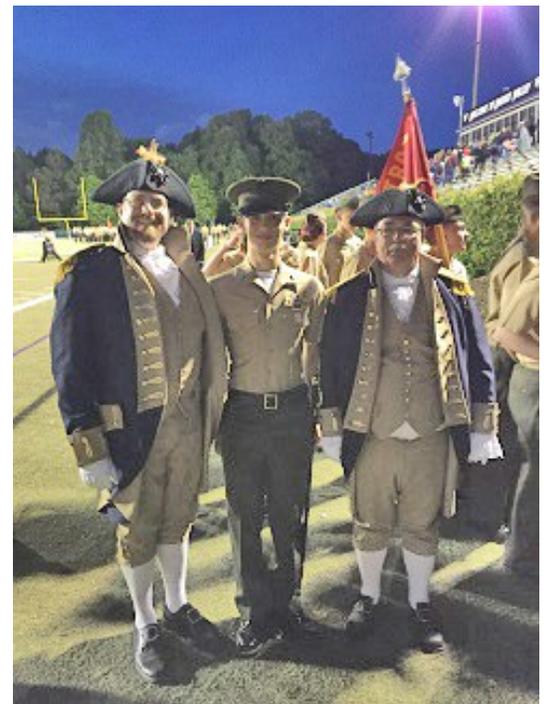
Moses Ayers, 1740-1833, is buried at Old Reed Creek Church Cemetery, Hart County. Born in Scotland or Wales; In 1778, he served in Charles Kennon Co. of the VA

PATRIOT BIOGRAPHY CONRAD HEYER

By Ed Rigel Jr.

Conrad Heyer was born in Waldoboro, ME, on 10 Apr 1749 to Johann Martin and Catherine Heyer. He was the first son born to German immigrants in the new settlement of Waldoboro. He was active in his church where he sang in the choir and served on a committee to select a new pastor.

Heyer enlisted in the Continental Army in 1775 and was present at the Battle of Bunker Hill. He was a member of the advance guard in the crossing of the Delaware River and survived the winter at Valley Forge with General George Washington.



The Bronze JROTC Medal awarded to Cadet Lieutenant Jacob Jewett. Compatriots Ed Rigel Jr. and Allen Greenly attending

ANNUAL PICNIC



Robert Forsyth Chapter met on July 23 for a typical Georgia Bar-B-Que Picnic. Thank goodness we had an air conditioned club house to relax in as we enjoyed the food and fellowship of our compatriots and family.

THE FIRST SALUTE

By Ed Hooper

“This rock, of only six miles in length and three in breadth, has done England more harm than all the arms of her most potent enemies, and alone supported the infamous rebellion... When I leave the island of St Eustatius, it will be as barren a rock as the day it erupted from the sea. Instead of one of the greatest emporiums on earth, it will be a mere desert, and known only by report.”¹

Thus did Admiral Sir George Brydges Rodney, Commander-in-Chief of the British West Indian fleet, decree the fate of this small island. Statia was a key link in the Continental Army’s slender chain of supply. The tiny volcanic island, called the *Golden Rock* because of its great wealth, ² accommodated over 3000 ships per year.³ For a while Statia, as St. Eustatius was known locally, was the only link between Europe and the fledgling American colonies. The island sold arms and ammunition to anyone willing to pay. It was one of the few places from which the young United States could obtain military stores.

On November 16, 1776 Captain Isaiah Robinson of the 14-gun American Brig-of-War, the “Andrew Doria”, flying the new Continental Colors sailed into the harbor of Statia firing its 13 gun salute indicating America’s long sought independence. International protocol required an acknowledgement of any sovereign flag with a salute minus 2 guns. The 11- gun salute reply, roaring from the cannons at Fort Oranje under the command of Governor Johannes de Graaff, technically established Statia and thereby Holland as the first foreign nation to officially recognize the newly formed United States of America.²

The *Andrew Doria* had arrived to purchase munitions for the American Revolutionary forces. She was also carrying a copy of the Declaration of Independence, which was presented to Governor de Graaff.

(cont. on page 6)

CONRAD HEYER (CONT)

After serving three years, Heyer returned to Waldoboro and was granted a pension in 1818. He married Mary Weaver in 1778 and they had nine children: George, Mary Polly, Margaret, Catherine, Cornelius, Elizebeth, Sarah, Charles, and Lucy.

The *Annals of Warren* describe Heyer as a “hard-working, temperate man, and now, at the age of 102 years, is able to read fine print without glasses, although his hearing is somewhat impaired.” His father died before he was born, and it was believed that such men “who never saw their father” were able to heal sore eyes and other illnesses by a look or a touch. Heyer was thus sought after for that purpose and is rumored to have cured the daughter of a rich Bostonian but refused payment for fear of annulling the cure.

Conrad Heyer died on 19 Feb 1856 at the age of 106 years, 10 months, and 9 days, and was buried in the church cemetery in Waldoboro, although he was later reburied in the German Cemetery with full military honors. “Thousands of people came, said to have been the largest number ever assembled in town.” A monument was erected in his memory, with the inscription “This monument is erected by citizens of Waldoboro to perpetuate the memory of an honest and worthy man.”

Conrad posed for a daguerreotype portrait when he was 103 and is believed to be the earliest born person of whom a photograph is known to exist.

THE FIRST SALUTE (CONT.)

An earlier copy had been captured on the way to Holland by the British. It was wrapped in documents that the British believed to be a strange cipher. In reality, the documents were written in Yiddish, to the Jewish merchants in Holland.

During the next few years, St. Eustatius became a real thorn in the side of King George III as additional arms found their way into the hands of the beleaguered Americans. Ships running contraband for the rebels became an extremely profitable business for Dutch merchants.⁴

The British felt the incident of the salute to be a serious one. Britain protested bitterly against the continuous trade between the United Colonies and the island. In 1778, Lord Stormont claimed in Parliament that, "if St Eustatius had sunk into the sea three years before, The United Kingdom would already have dealt with George Washington". Nearly half of all American Revolutionary military supplies were obtained through St Eustatius. Nearly all American communications to Europe first passed through the island.²

In retaliation for its support of the rebellious colonies as a result of the "First Salute", Britain declared war with Holland on December 12th 1780, and on the 3rd of February, 1781 the British Admiral, George Bridges Rodney arrived at the island from St. Lucia with a fleet of 15 ships of the line.³

Governor de Graaff did not know about the declaration of war, however, Rodney offered de Graaff a bloodless surrender to his superior force. Rodney had over 1,000 cannons to de Graaff's 12 cannons and a garrison of 60 men. de Graaff surrendered the island, but first he fired two rounds as a show of resistance for the honor of Dutch Admiral Lodewijk van Bylandt, who commanded a ship of the Dutch Navy that was in the harbor.²

The wealth Rodney discovered on St. Eustatius exceeded expectations. There were 130 merchantmen in the bay as well as the Dutch frigate and 5 smaller American armed merchantmen. Rodney, by British custom, expected to receive a significant share of the captured wealth from the King once it reached England. Instead of delegating the task of sorting through and estimating the value of the confiscated property, Rodney oversaw the procedure himself. This delayed his departure from Statia as he ensured the treasure was prepped for return to England.²

The excessive time Rodney spent on St. Eustatius led to allegations that he had neglected his military duties. Rodney should have sailed to intercept the French fleet under François Joseph Paul de Grasse. The French fleet turned north and headed for Chesapeake Bay.⁵

The presence of de Grasse and his fleet of 28 warships at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay prevented the British from giving any support to Lord Charles Cornwallis, whose troops were trapped at Yorktown, Virginia.⁵ He was awaiting desperately needed supplies and the men that Rodney would have transported. General George Washington, with French siege artillery, cornered Cornwallis from the land side. Cornwallis could not be aided from the sea because the French controlled the Bay. Many feel that Cornwallis' predicament was linked directly to Rodney's failure to depart St. Eustatius promptly. Cornwallis had no choice. He surrendered.²

U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt came to St Eustatius in 1939 to recognize the importance of the 1776 "First Salute". He presented a large brass plaque to St Eustatius which is displayed today under a flag-pole atop the walls of Fort Oranje. The plaque reads:

"In commemoration to the salute to the flag of the United States, Fired in this fort November 16, 1776, By order of Johannes de Graaff, Governor of Saint Eustatius, In reply to a National Gun-Salute, Fired by the United States Brig of War Andrew Doria, Under Captain Isaiah Robinson of the Continental Navy, Here the sovereignty of the United States of America was first formally acknowledged to a national vessel by a foreign official. Presented by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, President of the United States of America." ⁶

In 2001 the DAR presented a plaque commemorating the First Salute to St Eustatius and on November 16, 2014 the NSSAR presented a plaque. Both are mounted on the wall in Ft. Oranje alongside FDR's.

Footnotes:

1. <http://www.eyew4weather.info/what-is-st-eustatius-statia-day/>
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sint_Eustatius
3. <http://www.turq.net/statia/faqs.htm>
4. <http://www.jewishmag.com/107mag/jewsofeustatius/jewsofeustatius.htm>
5. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Brydges_Rodney,_1st_Baron_Rodney
6. The American Revolution: A Historical Guidebook. Frances H. Kennedy, Oxford University Press, May 13, 2014. p.116

PATRIOT BIOGRAPHY NATHAN STOTTARD

By Peter Stottard

My immigrant ancestor was Anthony Stoddard, who arrived in Boston in 1638. He was a linen importer and merchant, which included the export of fur and hides to England. He was a selectman, town clerk, town commissioner, deputy to the General Court and constable. Upon his death in 1687 he was reputed to be the wealthiest citizen in Boston. The site of his 1640s home and shop was adjacent the Old State House. The Boston Massacre took place in his front yard – 130 years later.

His son, Rev Solomon Stoddard, was a member of Harvard's 1662 graduating class and in 1667 was appointed as first librarian of the college. In 1670 he prepared to sail to England to explore his fortunes there. With his belongings on board a ship set to sail the next day, he was invited to become Pastor at the church in Northampton in the western Massachusetts wilderness. Had that invitation been one day late I would not be here today.

Solomon served the church for 60 years, returning to Harvard annually for 30+ years to deliver the commencement sermon – an annual 200+ mile round trip trek. The original road from Boston to Northampton, now the Mass Turnpike, was constructed to facilitate his commute. He never missed a Sunday service in his entire pastoral career. He was succeeded in the pulpit by his grandson, Jonathan Edwards, known as America's greatest early theologian.

His son, Rev Anthony Stoddard, was a member of Harvard's 1697 graduating class. Little is recorded about his time at Harvard, other than he was known for "breaking college rules and windows". He served as the Pastor at Woodbury CT for 60 years. In 1736 he built the Curtis House, which still stands as Connecticut's oldest inn.

His son, Capt Gideon Stoddard, was a farmer, Deacon of the Woodbury church, and Captain in the CT trainband and militia. In 1757 he joined a company raised for the relief of Fort William Henry on Lake George, New York in the French and Indian War. The French victory is chronicled in James Fenimore Cooper's highly fictionalized novel, *The Last of the Mohicans*. Colonials were allowed to keep their firearms, but no ammunition, and they were ordered to go home. Indians, having been denied the booty they were promised by the French, set out to attack the defenseless Colonials. Cooper's depiction suggested a massacre of hundreds, but history records 40-50 casualties.

Gideon was absent from Woodbury for only 3 weeks. How he returned 150 miles during the forced march from Fort William Henry is lost to history.

Nathan Stoddard was born August 8, 1742, lived in Woodbury, CT, and married Eunice Sanford about 1767. Little is known about his childhood.

In early 1775 he was commissioned Ensign of the first Company or trainband of Woodbury, which was known as the 13th Regiment of the Colony. Months later he entered the army as a private in the 4th Regiment. This outfit was ordered by Washington to join the troops opposed to the British near Lake Champlain and to garrison Fort Ticonderoga, led by Benedict Arnold and Ethan Allen.

In May 1775 he was taken prisoner and carried to Quebec. Before he was ordered to jail he was concealed by a French landlady, who apparently provided him food and shelter for some time. He eventually escaped by swimming the St. Lawrence River, then trekked 450+ miles on his return to Woodbury. In 1777 he formed another company, of which he became Captain.

In November 1777 he raised a supply of blankets and other provisions, then joined his command at Fort Mifflin, at Mud Island on the Delaware River, south of Philadelphia.

For six weeks the British navy had attempted to sail north on the Delaware to resupply the troops occupying Philadelphia. They had been obstructed in their efforts only by troops at Fort Mifflin on the Pennsylvania side and Fort Mercer on the Jersey side.

Desperate, Admiral Richard Howe finally assembled enough artillery and warships to lay siege to Fort Mifflin beginning on November 10. Mifflin was staffed by no more than 500 men.

From November 10-15 Britain conducted what is described as the heaviest naval bombardment in US history or anywhere in the world in the 18th century. Toward the end cannonballs pounded the fort at a rate of 1,000 per hour.

On November 15 Captain Nathan Stoddard rose up to fire and was beheaded by a cannonball. Lieutenant John Strong, also of Woodbury, related for over 30 years that "for a few moments Nathan stood there, erect, as in life, without a head, before falling."

In the book *Private Yankee Doodle*, author Joseph Plumb Martin described his experience at Fort Mifflin as the greatest hardship he endured in the entire war. For days it was bitter cold, with no ammunition, clothing, food, water, shelter or sleep. The only reward offered for recovery of a cannonball for return fire was a shot of rum.

It is inconceivable to me that the few exhausted surviving troops somehow managed to remove bodies of the dead during their frantic evacuation, but they did. When British landed on November 15 they reported every inch of the fort to be covered in blood.

Nathan died at age 35, leaving one son and six daughters. His burial place is unknown.



Chaplain John Flikeid, (3rd from right) represented the Chapter at a 4th of July Remembrance held by the Community of Roswell, Ga.

ROBERT FORSYTH TRAVELING TRUNK

Our chapter now has a traveling trunk. This educational tool contains objects representing typical items owned and used by citizens of the era. Some of the pieces are a comb, quilt, fan, wallet, toys, candle molds, soap, lead musket balls, as well as reproduction copies of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. There is still room to add additional items to help our interpretive presentations make the life and times of colonial citizens come alive to the imagination of the audience. You can help fill the gaps by checking your personal collection of items for duplicates, or checking our SAR Wish list on Amazon and purchase something for the chest.

<https://amzn.com/w/2ZTMP1OO41TBV>



Items for donation can be coordinated with compatriot Emil Decker at 706-482-8248 or via email at Eldecker@windstream.net.



The Marshal

This publication is the newsletter for the Robert Forsyth Chapter of the Georgia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. It is printed three times per year and is distributed to current and prospective chapter members and to certain officers of the state and national organizations and to certain officials of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month somewhere in Forsyth County. We are moving meeting locations based on availability. Please contact Christopher Russo at 770-315-6348, via email at guido139@yahoo.com or any other chapter officer for the next meeting location. Once a quarter, meetings are preceded with an opportunity for dinner and fellowship.

Prospective members are always welcome at monthly membership meetings. Men, eighteen years of age and older, who are interested in documenting their relationship to an American Revolutionary ancestor and in joining an active group with similar interests are urged to contact the Chapter Registrar, Christopher Russo.

Deadline for the Next Issue:

The deadline for material for the next issue is Feb 25, 2017. In addition to the material, please include hi-resolution imagery. Please direct all inquires or suggestions regarding *The Marshal* to Editor Emil L. Decker at 706-482-8248 or via email at eldecker@windstream.net.