

M I N N E S O T A

SAR Salute



THE MINNESOTA SOCIETY SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION NEWSLETTER • www.MinnesotaSAR.org • SPRING 2017



2017 Annual Washington Day Luncheon

February 18, 2017 – Minneapolis, Minnesota – 36 members of the Minnesota Society, along with spouses, guests, and members of the Society of the Sons of the Revolution in the State of Minnesota, gathered for the Annual Washington Day Luncheon. The total attendance was 62. Jax Café had prepared their signature Pistachio Encrusted Chicken for the group, with a vegetarian alternative for those desiring such. The assemblage enjoyed a delightful Raspberry Mousse for dessert.

New member, James Bruce Pease, flanked by MNSAR Color Guard members, Steven Hyde and Paul Theisen.

INSIDE THE
MNSAR SALUTE...

Annual George Washington
Observance and Luncheon

Military Lessons from the
Hudson Valley Campaign of 1777

American Eagle

New MNSAR Members

Hutchinson Eagle Scout Honored

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Minnesota Society
Sons of the American Revolution
2700 East Minnehaha Parkway
Minneapolis, MN 55406-3743





MILITARY LESSONS FROM THE HUDSON VALLEY CAMPAIGN OF 1777

COL Ronald Edward McRoberts, Past President General, North Central District NSSAR and Past President of both the Minnesota Society SAR and Minnesota SR brought a fascinating and thorough presentation about British General Burgoyne's fateful Hudson Valley Campaign culminating in the two battles of Saratoga and its aftermath.

The British plan was a three pronged invasion of General John Burgoyne heading south from Canada on Lake Champlain, Lt. Col. Barry St. Leger marching east along the Mohawk Valley and the British Commander-in-Chief in North America, General William Howe, traveling north from his base in New York City. They were to converge near Albany New York and effectively cut off New England from the rest of the colonies.

The American Major General Philip Schuyler, commander of the Northern Department and Major General Arthur St. Clair, in command of Fort Ticonderoga had no intelligence concerning the British invasion until it was almost too late. Burgoyne's 4,700 British forces, 4,500 Hessian mercenaries and 500 Indian allies were hoping to draw the American forces at Ticonderoga to engage in battle or to lay siege to the Fort. General St. Clair chose to evacuate instead. His army marched across the pontoon bridge to Mt. Independence and the New Hampshire Grants.

Burgoyne sent forces out from his main body to pursue the retreating army where they caught up to the American rear guard at Hubbardton. On July 7, 1777 the

British troops faced determined resistance in the Battle of Hubbardton. The British won the battle but the American rear guard provided valuable time for the retreating army.

General Burgoyne elected to wait at Skenesborough, NY for his supplies until the entire army could advance. Burgoyne presented the Americans with a magnificent gift of time, during which the soldiers-turned-axemen made great progress felling trees, damming streams, and dismantling bridges. On July 29, three weeks from the day General John Burgoyne had landed at Skenesborough, his exhausted army reached Fort Edward. It had taken him three weeks to advance twenty-three miles.

In the meantime, the woods were alive with Indian parties, one of which had killed and scalped Jane McCrea, a beautiful young fiancée of a soldier in Burgoyne's army. The story was white-hot in the hearts of militia gathering across the border in New Hampshire and Vermont.

St. Leger laid siege to Fort Stanwix, situated midway from Lake Ontario to Albany on the Mohawk River. General Washington had sent General Benedict Arnold to the northern theater. Arnold realized that the enemy commander's Achilles' heel was his Mohawk Indians. He used a half-wit Tory named Hon-Yost Schuyler, as a useful means of causing Chief Brant's Mohawks to desert. St. Leger was compelled to raise the siege and retreat back toward Lake Ontario. Arnold would join General Horatio Gates and the

main army near Saratoga.

General William Howe decided to set his sights on Philadelphia rather than take a subordinate role to General Burgoyne.

Burgoyne had to leave part of his forces at each fort he captured, he was also behind schedule, he had no influx of loyalists as he had anticipated, and St. Leger's and Howe's part of the three-prong plan failed to materialize.

General Gates, on the other hand, had a strong defensive position at Bemis Heights and patriot militias came pouring in to give the American a six-to-seven thousand man army.

By September Burgoyne expected to have succeeded. He decided to cut his lines of communication and head south. On September 19th the British tried to outflank the Americans. It had been cold and foggy that morning. By eleven o'clock, it cleared, and Burgoyne ordered three signal guns fired. The attack was on. The Battle of Freeman's Farm raged for hours. It was getting dark as the Americans retreated through the woods behind their breastworks, leaving Burgoyne in possession of the bloody clearing. The last army to leave a battlefield is technically the victor, but as he ordered his troops back to their camp two miles away and left behind 620 dead or dying men mingled with three hundred killed or wounded Americans, he was stunned at the American resistance.

General Howe, when he left New York for Philadelphia, had put General Sir Henry Clinton in charge of New York's defense,

with instructions to assist Burgoyne if opportunities arose. On October 3, Clinton sailed up the Hudson River with 3,000 men, and on October 6, one day after receiving Burgoyne's appeal, captured the highland forts named Clinton and Montgomery. Burgoyne never received Clinton's dispatches following this victory, as all three messengers were captured.

Burgoyne wasn't about to retreat to Canada. He had less than a month's supply of food and almost no fodder for the horses. He decided to fortify his position. Finally, on October sixth, Burgoyne decided to see if there was some way around the Americans. He ordered a reconnaissance in force for the next day: he himself would lead it. Word of his movement had been received at Gate's headquarters. Wilkinson rode out to Daniel Morgan on the left, carrying back the Old Wagoner's request to attack the British. At this request, Gates is said to have exclaimed: "Order on Morgan to begin the game."

Benedict Arnold, who had been relieved of command, following heated arguments with Gates, fumed and fretted outside his tent, listening in agony to the battle that he was forbidden to join. Shouting, "Victory or death!" he plunged his spurs into his black charger, Warren, hauling back on the reins to clear a sally port – and went galloping toward Morgan and Dearborn, his favorite fighters and their beloved men.

Arnold led the soldiers to Breyman's strongly defended redoubt where German musket

balls pierced Warren's side, and the stricken horse fell kicking and screaming, throwing Arnold clear. Arnold jumped erect with drawn sword, just as a wounded Hessian rolled over and fired at him. Arnold went down with a severe wound in his leg.

Burgoyne's gamble had cost him another five hundred men, half of them captured. The American loss was significantly lower. On October 17, 1777 General John Burgoyne surrendered 5,728 men, 5,000 muskets, and 37 cannon – his entire army.

COL. McRoberts used his unique perspective, having been a military planner in the Army, to impart military lessons learned during the Hudson Valley campaign of 1777: **Trading Space for Time** – The Americans gave up Forts Ticonderoga and Edward but gained valuable time as they withdrew; **Unity of Command** – Burgoyne depended on Howe but had no control over his decisions; **Strategic vs. Tactical** – Burgoyne won the initial tactical battles but lost the overall strategic battle; **Lines of Communication** – After cutting his lines of communication, Burgoyne had no supplies left and no local Loyalist support; **Active vs. Passive Defense** – Gates initially attacked from his defensive positions, but in the end simply waited for Burgoyne to attack, withdraw, or surrender.



NSSAR TRIP 1777: THE ROAD TO SARATOGA

Dates: 4th May to 13th May 2017

- 9 OVERNIGHT STAYS
- Québec City 2 Nights
- Montréal 2 Nights
- Burlington 1 Night
- Lake George 3 Nights
- Albany 1 Night

This itinerary generally follows the 1777 route of British General John Burgoyne from Québec City to his defeat at Saratoga at the hands of Patriots under the command of General Horatio Gates and ends with a patriotic celebration in Albany, the unachieved objective of Burgoyne's campaign. Along the way, we plan to dedicate at least two new SAR markers or interpretive signs.

For more information sign-on to the members area of www.sar.org and type the Road to Saratoga in the search box.

The Constitution Day Luncheon will be held at Jax Cafe on September 23, 2017. Watch for detailed information to be mailed to you.

MNSAR MEMBERSHIP REPORT



New Members were welcomed during the Washington Day Observance and Luncheon: James Bruce Pease, Gary Monroe "Monte" Printup, Jr., and Thomas William Sneed. Certificates for approved supplemental applications were presented to John Snell and Jacob Waters. Member rosettes were presented to those attending their first SAR meeting: Thor Erickson, Michael Moses, Marshall Rinek, and Richard Smith.

NEW MEMBERS:

Name	Patriot
Daniel David Hendrix.....	John Massey
Truxtun Bradford Morrison.....	Thomas Truxtun
Thomas Tullef Morrison.....	Thomas Truxtun
Mark Stephen Bendickson, Jr.	Robert Polley
David Woodbury Hust, III.....	Enos Day
Gary Monroe Printup, Jr.	Joseph Printup
Scott Campbell Hahn.....	Joshua Fairbanks
Thomas William Sneed.....	Thomas Hardeman
James Bruce Pease.....	Robert Cravens, Jr.

SUPPLEMENTAL PATRIOTS:

Name	Patriot
David Adriance Foster.....	John Lansing
Robert W. G. Allison.....	Timothy Holcomb, Sr.
Jacob Waters.....	Josephus Waters
Jacob Waters.....	John Armstrong, Sr.



HUTCHINSON EAGLE SCOUT HONORED



The Battle of Bennington, by Wyatt S. Hahn – 2016 MNSAR Eagle Scout Contest Winner

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 32nd president of the United States, once stated, “December 7, 1941 is a day which will live in infamy.” August 16, 1777 is just the opposite. August 16, 1777 is a day which will not be remembered because of tragedy, but because of the effects it had on the Revolutionary War.

Many historians claim the Battle of Saratoga was the turning point of the American Revolution, and they are correct, but it was the events that led up to the Battle of Saratoga that set a course for American victory which includes the Battle of Bennington. The Battle of Bennington was the very beginning of the turn in the war where the United States began to prosper over the British forces.

The Battle of Bennington was short-lived, lasting only a few hours, but the preparation behind the battle was more time consuming. The British, led by General John Burgoyne

planned to eliminate contact between New England and the other colonies, but this plan was cut short because of the recapture of Fort Ticonderoga by the British. As a result of the recapture, the Americans began evacuating the area near Orwell, Vermont causing the southward movement of Burgoyne’s army to be temporarily stalled at Hubbardton. While the Americans took time to resupply and plan for the oncoming of Burgoyne’s forces, Burgoyne’s men had already prepared a plan to invade a depot in Bennington, New York where they would resupply.

On August 9, 1777, a unit of Burgoyne’s army, under the direction of General Friedrich Baum, was joined by a group of British marksmen and continued toward Bennington. On August 14th, General John Stark, commander of the American force, sent a detachment of men to survey the local area for

Indians where they encountered Baum’s men. In surprise, the Americans retreated quickly and destroyed a bridge along the way in order to slow the progress of the British forces. The next several days brought heavy rains which prevented any battle from occurring.

On the morning of August 16th, the weather cleared and General Stark began to execute his attack on Baum’s troops who were now camped on a hillside near the Walloomsac River. Stark split his men into four different forces each of which would attack from a different side.

At three o’clock that afternoon, Stark stated his famous words, “There are the Red Coats; they will be ours or tonight Molly Stark sleeps a widow.” When the British heard this phrase they began to retreat back into the woods where they ran into one of Stark’s forces. At five o’clock on the evening

of August 16, 1777 the first shot of the Battle of Bennington was fired. The British and Americans engaged each other further in what General Stark described as “one continuous clap of thunder.”

Shortly into the battle Stark was captured and Baum was wounded, but each force continued to fight. The Americans followed the British forces and pushed them all the way to Saratoga, New York where the Americans annihilated the British in what became known as the turning point of the Revolutionary War.

The Battle of Bennington was an important battle in American history because it marked the very beginning of the turn for the better for the Americans during the Revolutionary War.

August 16, 1777 is not a day that should live in infamy, but a day that should live in victory.

Wyatt S. Hahn of the Northern Star Council Boy Scouts of America is the Minnesota winner of the SAR’s Eagle Scout Scholarship and Awards Program. Wyatt, seen here with the color guard and the MNSAR Eagle Scout Scholarship and Awards Program Chair, Thor Erickson, was honored at the annual Washington Day Luncheon held at Jax Cafe. His father and mother were also in attendance. Wyatt read his patriotic essay about the Battle of Bennington which is presented below.

Wyatt’s application, four generation ancestor chart and his patriotic essay were sent to National SAR headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky to compete with other state winners for a \$10,000 scholarship. \$6,000 and \$4,000 runner-up scholarships were also chosen.

This year’s national winner was an Eagle Scout from Illinois. The first and second runners-up represented the Florida and Iowa Societies of the SAR.

AMERICAN EAGLE

News of Yesterday Reported Today

Thursday May 7, 1778

FRANCE RECOGNIZES AMERICA

Valley Forge, Pennsylvania – Yesterday, On May 6, with his fondness for pageantry, George Washington staged a celebration of the French treaties, beginning with mustering brigades at nine A.M. The treaties were solemnly read aloud, followed by the firing of thirteen canon. The infantry then fired their muskets in sequence, a *feu de joie* that swept the double row of soldiers, who chanted with gusto, “Long Live the King of France.” French officers were embraced everywhere. Baron von Steuben showed off the crack precision of his men, who strutted smartly before a beaming Washington. As a reward, Steuben was appointed inspector general with the rank of major general. “Through it all” John Laurens told his father, President of the Continental Congress, Washington “wore a countenance of uncommon delight.” This was more than a celebration of the French treaties; it was a day of thanksgiving for surviving the horrid winter. In a dream-like transformation, the officers now partook of a bountiful al-fresco dinner. “Fifteen hundred persons sat down to tables, which were spread in the open air,” said General Johann de Kalb. “Wine, meats, and liquors abounded, and happiness and contentment were impressed on every countenance.” Washington even played cricket with younger officers. When he rode off contentedly at five o’clock, his men clapped their hands, cheered “Long live George

Washington!” and twirled a thousand hats in the air. Washington and his aides kept stopping and looking back, sending huzzahs in return.

Even as the Continental Army huddled by fires at Valley Forge, Benjamin Franklin pulled off a magnificent diplomatic feat in the opulent ministries of Paris. On February 6 France recognized American independence through a pair of treaties: the first granting French goods most-favored-nation status in America, and the second committing the French to a military alliance. In the splendid halls of Versailles, Franklin was now addressed not as the representative of thirteen colonies but as an emissary of the United States. In getting a monarchy to bestow its blessings upon an upstart republic, he had won a staggering achievement.

In late April Washington received unofficial word of the French alliance and fully realized its vast significance. At the news, Lafayette gave Washington – the man nobody touched – a double-barreled French kiss on both cheeks. Washington was exultant as tears of joy welled up in his eyes. “I believe no event was ever received with a more heartfelt joy,” he informed Congress. For Washington, the French treaties gave proof that heaven had indeed smiled upon the United States. As he told his troops, in orotund prose, “It having pleased the Almighty ruler of the Universe propitiously to defend the

cause of the United American States and finally, by raising us up a powerful friend among the princes of the earth, to establish our liberty and independence upon lasting foundations, it becomes us to set apart a day for gratefully acknowledging the divine goodness.”

The first fruits of the Franco-American alliance sprouted not in France or America but in Britain, where the British Prime Minister, Lord North, made a determined effort to bring the Americans back into the empire. It was now or never, for the earthquake of Saratoga had produced many aftershocks: new lows on the London stock market; a refusal by the German princes to provide more cannon-fodder, having lost so many men in Burgoyne’s disastrous campaign; Britain’s own manpower reserves at the bottom the barrel; and North’s majority in Parliament diminished. As a condition of his remaining in office, North had received from his friend the king permission to make new offers of conciliation to the Americans.

On February 17, 1778, they were introduced in a House of Commons consisting of stunned Tories and jubilant Whigs. Three days later, in North’s certainty that they would be approved, they were despatched to America.

North began by relinquishing Parliament’s right to tax the colonists. He said he had never believed it was practicable to tax them and prided himself

that as prime minister he had never proposed such a levy. He even conceded the colonies’ right to tax themselves and that any such revenue raised by them should be spent by them on themselves rather than be transferred to the British exchequer. Clearly, he was granting in 1778 everything that, if offered in 1775, would almost certainly have averted the war. North did not speak to the rebellious colonists like the prime ministers of old – a parent chastising an unruly child – but as an equal depending upon the blandishments of sweet reason to bid the prodigal to return to the bosom of the Mother Country.

Yet, he was actually granting nothing, for he did not retract a single jot or tittle of the apparatus of British mercantilism. American manufacturing and commerce would remain under the strict regulation of Britain. Thus the British would resume their lucrative practice of exploiting the rich resources of America while monopolizing the equally profitable policy of supplying her growing millions with manufactured goods. In fine, he was renouncing the unobtainable – Colonial tax revenues – in the interests of retaining the true fruits of empire: mercantilist control of the American economy. As he had told the king: “to give up the levying of positive taxes here is to give up in effect nothing as it is practically certain that none will for the future ever be levied by the British Parliament.”

This was essentially the position taken by the opposition Whigs during the earlier debates on the American question. But the Whigs, sincere in their concern for the Americans, and not, like North, acting out of the duress of military defeat and an American treaty with detestable France, were not so two-faced. Not even the Adamses, in the years preceding the firing of the shot heard round the world, would have been so fatuous as to have expected the Mother Country, alone among the world's exploitative colonial empires, to have abandoned gratuitously its mercantilist policy.

Yet the Whigs were indeed jubilant to hear themselves vindicated by a Tory prime minister, and it was said that they were overheard to be "publicly congratulating themselves on the excellent acquisition which they had just made in the person of Lord North." But the Whig policies, alas, they well knew, had been adopted after it was too late. As Edmund Burke ruefully observed, "the pride of men will not often suffer reason to, have any scope until it can no longer be of service."

Because there had been rumors of an impending Franco-American alliance, many Whigs suspected that North's Conciliatory Propositions were not sincere efforts at peace adapted to the terms they had been supporting for years, but rather an attempt to wreck this alliance. Thus Charles James Fox arose to ask the direct question: was it true that a treaty between France and the colonies had been signed recently? North remained silent in his seat. After Burke arose to remind the prime minister that his proposals were an exact replica of those he had himself two years earlier, only to hear them condemned and see them rejected by the Tories,

North still remained at a loss for words. He came to his feet only after an irate Whig jumped erect to threaten impeachment and shout: "An answer! An answer! An answer!" But North's replies were halting and evasive that it became evident to all present – Tory as well Whig – that a treaty had, in fact, been negotiated.

Now North's duplicity and his true intentions became clear: he sought to torpedo the Franco-American alliance by confusing and demoralizing the Americans, by appealing for peace, not to the American leaders, but to those who were neutral or secretly loyal to the Crown or simply weary of the war. With gleeful indignation the Whigs went over to the attack. Isaac Barre denounced the propositions as "a shameful imposture"... a "scandalous deceit ... a cheat of the most gross kind ... a trick upon the public to divide, distract and sow divisions."

Probably the most shattering denunciation of the prime minister was delivered by Burke, who castigated him as a hawk in dove's plumage, and warned him that his proposals had not the slightest chance of being accepted by the Americans. "To leap at once from an obstinacy of five years," he concluded, "to a total concession of everything; to stoop so low without hopes of being forgiven – who can understand such a transformation?"

Even the great William Pitt, Lord Chatham, arose from his deathbed to enter the fray, appearing on crutches in the House of Lords, swathed in flannel, supported by his son-in-law and son. In a breaking voice he expressed his sorrow that America, the jewel of the imperial crown, the colonies that had always been at the center of his policy that had brought France

to her knees during the Seven Years' War, had now, as he lay dying, turned for succor from North's misdirected policies to that same hated kingdom. After the reply of the Duke of Richmond, Chatham again attempted to rise in rebuttal, but fainted and was carried from the chamber, grief stricken in the knowledge that his very triumph over the French had led to the discontent that was now surely about to sever America from the Mother Country.

Just as the Whig opposition had acted with predictable rage and contempt, the Tory majority was stunned and confounded at this absolute reversal of policy. "Astonishment, dejection, and fear over clouded the whole Tory assembly." Was the British lion such a tabby-cat, they asked, that it must lie down and purr and "crouch to the vipers and rebels in America?" Narrow-minded and implacable enemies of the insolent Yankees though they might be, they were still true Britons, whose "hearts of oak" would not quiver at the prospect of fighting both France and America. Some of them began to talk of replacing North with a more acceptable prime minister in the true-blue British mold, but all of them knew – just as did the Whigs – that for all the denunciation and the bluster, even though three-quarters of the House for diametrically opposite reasons opposed the Conciliatory Propositions, most of them would swallow their pride and vote their approval. As the Tories maintained, this alone would demonstrate "the affection of the indulgent, injured mother even to her most degenerate, refractory, guilty children." It was with that noble, self-sacrificing sense of coming to the side of the Americans as a mother to her child, that the Tories sullenly accepted a rare

union with the smirking Whigs. The Conciliatory Propositions were accepted, and a Peace Commission, under the Earl of Carlisle, "a young man of pleasure and fashion, fond of dress and gaming," was authorized to negotiate with Congress.

On April 16, members of the Carlisle Commission set sail from Portsmouth, England, accompanied by General Charles Cornwallis, the newly appointed second in command for North America. Earlier in the year, Lord Germain accepted General William Howe's resignation and appointed General Henry Clinton to succeed General Howe as commander in chief of the British forces in North America.

Word of the French alliance had beaten the Carlisle Commission to America. Three days ago, on May 4, the Continental Congress ratified the treaties of alliance and of amity and commerce with France.

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