

M I N N E S O T A

SAR Salute



THE MINNESOTA SOCIETY SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION NEWSLETTER • www.MinnesotaSAR.org • ATUMN 2014



Annual Constitution Day Luncheon

Thirty-five 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 Constitution Day Luncheon. The total attendance was 54. Jax Café had prepared their marvelous Broiled Atlantic Salmon, with a Mushroom Ravioli as the vegetarian alternative. Key Lime Pie topped off the meal.

Many awards, new member certificates and rosettes were presented during the meeting. Twelve members of the Mitchell family were in attendance to witness Harold Thomas Mitchell Jr., Harold Thomas Mitchell III, Todd Lewis Mitchell and Tore Walton Mitchell accepting their member certificate and rosette.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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





David Sinclair Bouschor Addressed the MNSAR at the Constitution Day Luncheon



Retired District Judge, David Sinclair Bouschor was the speaker of the day at the MNSAR Constitution Day Luncheon held at Jax Cafe on Saturday, October 4, 2014. His talk on “The Anatomy of Justice” was a thoroughly enjoyable presentation of anecdotes from trials over which he presided during his distinguished career on the bench. He noted that Duluth, Minnesota had very few serious crimes during the 1970’s. One notable exception was the murder trial of

Marjorie Congdon.

Bouschor also noted that the U.S. Court System is better than that of many other nations. He feels that Minnesota has very good District Judges who are elected by the people every six years.

David Bouschor is a past president of the former Duluth Chapter and the Minnesota Society SAR. Following his dissertation he was presented the Certificate of Appreciation from the Minnesota Society.

Awards Presented During the Luncheon

- Eagle Scout Streamer from the NSSAR to the Minnesota Society.
- Honorable Mention in the Jennings H. Flathers Award to the State Society (Minnesota) with fewer than 500 members with the best news publication.
- Meritorious Service Medal from the Minnesota Society to John Charles Sassaman for his untiring work aiding prospective members in joining the MNSAR.
- Liberty Medal from the NSSAR to John Sassaman for being the top-line sponsor on ten member applications.



Five Mitchell’s accept their Membership Certificates and Rosettes from the Secretary-Treasurer of the MNSAR, John Hallberg Jones.



Craig Whiting shows his musket to a youngster following the Constitution Day Luncheon.



Eagle Scout Committee Chair, John Sassaman, and his assistant, Stuart Markham, III, unfurl the Eagle Scout Streamer. Paul Kent Theisen stands between them.

MNSAR MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Membership Changes Since Spring 2014

NEW MEMBERS:

Name	Patriot
Daniel Walter Latham.....	Jesse Kneeland
Harold Thomas Mitchell, Jr.	Garret Harsin
Leonard Charles Wilson	Robert Wilson, Sr.
Neal Preston Kingsley	Israel Curtis, Jr.
Kevin Alexander Bley	Elijah Banks
Halold Thomas Mitchell, III.....	Garret Harsin
Mason Mathew Mitchell.....	Garret Harsin
Todd Lewis Mitchell.....	Garret Harsin
Tore Walton Mitchell.....	Garret Harsin

MEMORIAL MEMBERSHIPS:

Chase John Jones.....	Elijah Lincoln
Lincoln Darwin Jones.....	Elijah Lincoln

TRANSFERRED IN FROM OTHER STATES:

Kyle Francis Crissey.....	Isaac Swift
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SUPPLEMENTAL PATRIOTS APPROVED:

William Raymond Johnson.....	Jonathan Woodburn
William Raymond Johnson.....	Norman Burroughs
Ronald Wayne Peterson.....	Thaddeus Pratt
Ronald Wayne Peterson.....	Eli Bosworth
Bryce Alexander Remple.....	William Cheatwood
Bryce Alexander Remple.....	John Clayton

- Oak Leaf Cluster to Arthur Louis Finnell to supplement his Liberty Medal for being the top-line sponsor on ten member applications.
- Life Membership Pin from the Minnesota Society to Arthur Finnell.
- Bronze Color Guard Medal from the Minnesota Society to Craig Whiting.
- Lamplighter Award from the NSSAR to Stephen Thompson for his support for the Center of Advancing America’s Heritage.

AMERICAN EAGLE



News of Yesterday Reported Today

Sunday October 5, 1777

AMERICANS DEFEATED AT GERMANTOWN

Germantown, Pennsylvania—The American Army was defeated yesterday at Germantown, Pennsylvania. General George Washington devised a convoluted nocturnal march and dawn attack that was nearly victorious. Germantown had ended in a tragic reversal of fortunes of war. Such a complicated plan needs almost perfect execution and completely cooperative conditions of terrain and weather. But the conditions were too hostile and the human errors too numerous.

After the Brandywine disaster, General Washington marched his battered army north across the Schuylkill River to Pennypacker's Mill. No longer could he guarantee the safety of the American capital.

Around this time Washington received another sickening piece of news. On the night of September 20-21 British infantry had crept through the woods near Paoli and massacred American troops led by General Anthony Wayne. To ensure surprise, General Charles Grey ordered his men to remove their flints from their muskets and rush forward with fixed bayonets. They pitilessly slashed their sleeping victims, killing or wounding three hundred Americans. The "Paoli Massacre" caused Congress to flee Philadelphia to the safety of York, Pennsylvania.

On September 26 the British, led by General Howe, entered Philadelphia to a liberator's reception. Curiously, the fall of Philadelphia was not universally dispiriting. It had been emptied of stores, Congress was gone, it was not a source of supply. If Washing-

ton could hold the water approaches, Howe would be hard put to feed his army.

Although General Cornwallis had taken a detachment of British and Hessian soldiers into Philadelphia, General Howe retained the main body of his army at Germantown, a village just six miles northwest of the city, hard by the Schuylkill River. He expressly placed it there as a bulwark between Washington's army and the capital. Eager for a victory after so much wretched news, and with 8,000 Continentals, and 3,000 militia at his disposal, Washington reckoned that he could stage a surprise raid on Howe's force of 9,000 men, an idea that grew on him when he heard that Howe had diverted two regiments to attack a small American fort on the Delaware.

At a war council on October 3, Washington told his receptive generals that Howe's maneuver made it an auspicious moment for an operation. Forever attuned to the psychological state of his men, he knew this might be the last chance for a victory before winter. Only something dramatic could revive his countrymen's flagging spirits. As he told his generals, "It was time to remind the English that an American army still existed."

As usual, Howe had shrewdly chosen his army camp at Germantown, a place crisscrossed by creeks, ravines, and gorges. The town's main street, the Germantown Road, was lined for two miles with snug, stone houses, many protected by fences and hedges that could retard an American advance. Doubtless remembering his nocturnal raid across the

Delaware, Washington devised another convoluted plan for a forced nighttime march. On October 3 four widely spaced but roughly parallel columns would start moving southeast at nightfall and would converge on Germantown by dawn. Along with General Sullivan, Washington would spearhead a column of 3,000 men charging down the Germantown Road. To the northeast, Greene would lead 5,000 men along a parallel path, the Lime Kiln Road, while still farther north General William Smallwood and another 1,000 militia would venture along a winding old Indian path called the Old York Road. To the south, General John Armstrong would guide 2,000 Pennsylvania militia along the Schuylkill. If all went according to plan, Washington's central column would swoop down on the unsuspecting British, while Greene's column swung around and pinioned their helpless army against the Schuylkill River.

Sullivan's column, marching down the Skippack Road, included Conway in the advance brigade, followed by Wayne, Striling, Maxwell, and Washington himself. Its mission was to reach the British outposts at Mount Airy before dawn. But because of the roughness of the country they were traversing, they did not reach their objective until a misty sun was risen. At once Captain Allen McLane, of the Delaware light horse, charged the enemy pickets, driving them back—but not before they had fired two signal shots that alerted Howe's entire army.

At once the Second Light Infantry rushed to the front, strik-

ing Conway so savagely that he had to call his entire brigade to hold his position. Then the Fortieth Light Infantry, under Colonel Thomas Musgrave, a brave and resourceful officer, joined the battle. Conway was stopped. Sullivan then deployed his own troops to the west or right of his route, trying to dislodge Musgrave—but the light infantry held. Sullivan next called upon Wayne, whose men came charging forward yelling, "Have at the bloodhounds! Remember the Paoli Massacre!" For once the Americans used the bayonet effectively. Twice they hurled the redcoats back, twice they withstood their counter-charges. Now the British began to surrender! Their blood up, Wayne's soldiers ran them through, even after they had laid down their arms and "were crying for mercy." Nothing their officers would do would restrain them. At last came the sweetest music ever in Yankee ears: British bugles blowing the retreat.

Back fell the redcoats, making a stand at every fence, wall and ditch. Sullivan's men pursued, tearing down the fences that were fragmenting them. For a full mile they drove Musgrave and his men before them. Now General Howe came riding furiously up to the front. "For shame, light infantry!" he cried. "I never saw you retreat before! Form! Form! It's only a scouting party."

To give him the lie, and to warm the hearts of his maligned troops, a Yankee charge of grape burst over Howe's head—and the Americans came charging forward.

The sunrise mist was now thickening into fog, growing

rapidly denser. Beneath the cover of its swirling gray billows, the wily Musgrave fed six of his riddled companies into a huge gray mansion astride the east, or left, side of the Skip-pack Road. The mansion was the home of Chief Justice Benjamin Chew. Closing the shutters and barricading the doors, Musgrave posted his men at the windows of the second story. Upon the approach of Sullivan's reserves, the redcoats delivered a plunging fire that sent the Patriots scattering. It was an unexpected impasse, the first setback of a so-far astonishingly successful attack. What was to be done? Washington conferred with his generals. The natural fighters wanted to push on, bypassing the Chew House and leaving a guard behind to neutralize its defenders. But Henry Knox, speaking with resonant authority, cited the military doctrine that, in hostile country, one never left a fortified castle in the rear. This sounded like the sage voice of experience, and Washington made a snap judgment to side with the minority view. It would prove a costly error.

Under orders from Washington, Lieutenant Colonel William Smith, carrying a white flag, approached the house with a demand for surrender. The British hold up inside instantly shot and killed the colonel. At this point Washington assigned three regiments to the thankless task of vanquishing the stout house. Knox ringed it with four cannon and pummeled it at oblique angles, but the stone walls seemed impervious. The prolonged attempt to take the Chew House held up part of Washington's column for half an hour and gave Howe's men a chance to regroup. Small squads of Americans kept darting toward the house, only to be pelted by British fire until the grounds were "strewn with a prodigious number of rebel dead," said a British officer.

Belatedly, Washington heeded his dissenting officers and

told his army to move on, leaving a small detachment behind.

With two-thirds of the American army, Nathaniel Greene's column had four miles longer to march than did the other columns. Greene had also been led astray by his guide, so that he was an hour late as he drew near the left of Sullivan's column and the Chew House. At that point Adam Stephen, who was drunk, heard the Chew House gunfire and without orders from Greene, swung his division in that direction. Here was the second unraveling of Washington's plan. Stephen's artillery followed him to join in the futile battering of the big stone mansion, losing another hour.

Greene, with his own division and the brigades of Muhlenberg, McDougall and Charles Scott, pressed forward. Meeting the advancing British at his objective of Luken's Mill on the enemy right, he became engaged in a fierce fight, finally pushing the redcoats back and delivering his planned attack on their right flank. But the British resisted, they had extended their right so that they threatened to outflank Greene's left. Concealed by the fog now thickened with gunsmoke, the American commander skillfully counter-marched his troops to his left to avoid encirclement. Then he struck the enemy wing so hard that it gave way. Devil Pete Muhlenberg led a bayonet charge so impetuous that his men drove clear through the British camp, taking many prisoners. Victory seemed within Washington's grasp.

Even the major unraveling of the battle of the Chew House and the minor one of Stephen's drunken dereliction seemed insufficient to deny Washington the victory, for the British were already debating the wisdom of withdrawing to Chester. Sullivan and Wayne, meanwhile, were driving steadily ahead in the right center, though out of visual communication because of the thick smoke-mixed fog.

With visibility at about thirty yards, neither knew where the other was. Wayne, upon hearing the roar of artillery behind him at the Chew House, fancied Sullivan was in trouble back there. He wheeled around and blundered into Stephen's division, hurrying to overtake Greene. A friendly fire ensued, until both divisions broke, with their men fleeing in panic. Now the fabric of the battle plan was rapidly unraveling.

Sullivan's division, though still fighting, was running out of ammunition. Opposing him, General "No-flint" Grey, on the British left, hurled a brigade at Sullivan's right, while General "Castration" Grant simultaneously struck hard with two regiments at Sullivan's exposed left. Reeling from attacks on their front and flanks, mistaking the sound of gunfire at the Chew House to mean that the enemy was also in their rear, Sullivan's heretofore gallant soldiers began to waver. Their panic was complete when a light horseman rode into their midst shouting that they were surrounded. They broke. Not all at once. At first squads, then companies and battalions, finally en masse. Greene now had no support on either flank, and the British and Hessians who had shattered Sullivan let his fleeing soldiers go while turning to strike at Greene, who had only Scott's and McDougall's brigades with his own division to oppose them, until Muhlenberg, still pursuing an enemy a thousand yards off, turned and made a fighting return to his command.

Now Major General James Agnew's division joined with Grey and Grant to destroy the Americans. But for the skill and tenacity of Greene, the Americans might have perished. Marched out and fought out, they still made a splendid fighting withdrawal, turning to strike back from fences, ditches, walls and houses, stubbornly delaying the oncoming enemy while Greene gradually

drew off all the guns.

The retreat became general when it became known the militia assigned to roll up Howe's flanks had not only arrived at their objective late, but had given such timorous battle that they were easily repulsed. Now Washington sought to stop his army's reward flow, "exposing himself to the hottest fire." But these beaten men could not be rallied. It was not their fault; they had fought well, but had been undone by the blunders of their leaders. And as they ran past their general, they held aloft their empty cartridge boxes as silent justification of their flight. They had fought until they had exhausted their ammunition. Meanwhile, Cornwallis had arrived from Philadelphia with three fresh battalions. Ordered by Howe to pursue – more likely, given the British chief's obvious relief at having escaped disaster, to make sure the Americans did not turn again – his lordship followed at a respectful distance. After eight miles, he halted.

Germantown had ended in a tragic reversal of fortunes of war.

British casualties were 70 killed and 420 wounded, while Americans lost 152 killed, 521 wounded and about 400 captured. Clearly a British victory, it was also the fifth time that Howe had failed to destroy Washington's army. Less than one month after losing one army at Brandywine, Washington was able to march with another right up to the brink of victory against the flower of Europe, led by one of the most skillful tacticians of the age.

Sources:

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