

M I N N E S O T A

SAR Salute



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Honoring Chief Orono

Orono Minnesota – On May 27, 2014, members of the MNSAR, the Lake Minnetonka Chapters of the DAR and C.A.R. were on hand at the Orono City Council Chambers for Orono’s 125th anniversary dedication event honoring the city’s namesake, Chief Joseph Orono.

Chief Orono was leader of the Penobscot tribe in Maine who gallantly supported the Americans during the Revolutionary War. In 1806, Chief Orono’s efforts were recognized by naming the Penobscot River Valley township in his honor, thereby creating Orono, Maine. New Englanders who settled on the shores of Lake Minnetonka bestowed the name Orono on their township at its creation in 1889 in memory of their beloved home.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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MNSAR SPRING AND SUMMER EVENTS

Chief Joseph Orono Plaque Dedication



The Minnesota Society of the Sons of the American Revolution have graciously donated a plaque honoring Chief Joseph Orono, which was dedicated at the beginning of the regular meeting of the Orono City Council on May 27.

The event was spearheaded by MNSAR member, Aaron Hale Printup, who is also a member of the Orono City Council.

During the dedication ceremony the mayor read a letter from the chairperson of the town council of Orono, Maine. Former President of the MNSAR, Larry Sisk, said a few words about Chief Orono and how glad he and the MNSAR were to donate the plaque. Representatives of the Lake Minnetonka Chapter DAR and C.A.R. also spoke during the event.

Remembering Francis P. Markoe

Our senior member of the MNSAR, Francis P. Markoe, passed away peacefully at home on May 4, 2014. He joined the MNSAR in 1946. Markoe is survived by four children, 10 grandchildren, one great-granddaughter and five brothers.

Markoe was an entrepreneur, starting his business in 1956. His passions were traveling with his family and friends, the “penny game”, pool side lunches with his grandchildren and great-granddaughter, family dinners with four generations, storytelling, cruises, and watering his lawn.

He was a longtime resident of Dellwood, Minnesota.

His son, Francis L. Markoe, is currently a member of the MNSAR.

2014 MNSAR Medals and Awards Programs

Minnesota Society ROTC Awards

Once again the Minnesota Society presented medals in all ROTC-JROTC units in the state. There are seven college units and twelve high school units.

The Minnesota Society expresses its appreciation to the following Compatriots for volunteering to present medals and certificates: Charles E. Boyles, Hon. William Johnson, John Hallberg Jones, Truck Morrison, John C. Sassaman, LTC Dean Shepersky, Larry W. Sisk, and Marvin E. Stonecipher.

Minneapolis and St. Paul Chapters Bronze Good Citizenship Medals

The Minneapolis Chapter continued the program of Bronze Good Citizenship Med-

als in 2014. This chapter has one of the largest programs of any chapter in the country.

This Spring we awarded the medal in 24 area high schools and one Naval Sea Cadets squadron.

In all, it was a fine program once again.

Medals were also awarded to eleven St. Paul area high school students this year.

Flag Certificates

On Flag Day five Saint Paul area businesses were presented with flag certificates by the Saint Paul Chapter SAR. This years recipients were:

- Murphy’s Auto Repair, Hastings
- Newport Auto, Newport
- Pease Cafe, Pease
- Shell Rapid Lube, Hastings
- Van Dyke Mansion, Hastings

Eighth Annual C.A.R. Pancake Breakfast

Wayzata, MN – World War II and Korean War veterans were honored at the historic Wayzata Depot during the annual C.A.R. Pancake Breakfast held on Independence Day. The annual event features the “Flying Pancakes” where recipients stand back as their pancakes are tossed from the grill onto their plates. The weather was perfect and attendance was huge.

The MNSAR Color Guard and the Seventh Pennsylvania participated in flag raising and the veteran ceremonies. Mayor Willcox of Wayzata introduced each honored veteran and the Lake Minnetonka C.A.R. presented each with a patriotic hat. The Lake Minnetonka Children of the American Revolution originated, produce and man this annual family celebration, which fulfills their motto of, “Patriotism in Action”.



AMERICAN EAGLE

News of Yesterday Reported Today

Saturday September 20, 1777

BLOODY BATTLE AT FREEMAN'S FARM

Stillwater, New York – British General John Burgoyne *had* to attack. He had to brush aside the Americans barring his path to Albany, and had to do it quickly. There were not enough horses to pull his big guns and not enough fodder to feed those he had. He had thirty days' supply of food for his army, with no help forthcoming from either General Sir Guy Carleton or General Sir William Howe. If he did not press on, he would have to return to Quebec, as Carleton had a year ago, and produce the same sort of unfavorable reaction in Whitehall. Burgoyne was down to about six thousand men against about seven thousand under Horatio Gates, the American General who recently replaced General Philip Schuyler as Commander of the Northern Department of the Continental Army. This minimal inferiority did not faze Burgoyne because he still clung to his low estimate of American fighting prowess. What he did not realize was that Washington's generosity had provided Gates with more experienced regulars than raw militia, a new and reversed composition of the American field forces.

Late in the afternoon of September 18, General Benedict Arnold and his staff had ridden north to reconnoiter the British advance. Arnold knew roughly the British position: he had continually sent guerilla parties of Daniel Morgan's riflemen out to harass British work crews and snipe at British officers. Colonel Richard Varick galloped up to Arnold and said he had spotted some redcoats on a distant hill. Arnold

could see that the British would probably reach the Americans by late on the 19th, but for now he wheeled his big sorrel horse and returned to camp, disappointing Varick, who had been "in hopes of the General's ordering a party to attack them." That night, the British camped on high ground less than two miles from the American army.

Just as Arnold had expected, the next day, September 19th, 1777, the British tried to outflank the Americans. Burgoyne divided his army into three columns, General Simon Fraser was to be on the British right with 2,200 Loyalists, Indians, and British and German light infantry, trying to skirt the American left and get around behind the long American lines: Fraser's column faced Morgan's riflemen and General Poor's and Learned's veterans. Burgoyne personally commanded the British center, leaving the bulk of the Hessians on his left to protect the artillery train and baggage wagons on the river road. It had been cold and foggy that morning, and Burgoyne and his staff had been unable to get a clear look at the American entrenchments as they advanced through the forest. By eleven o'clock, it cleared, and Burgoyne ordered three signal guns fired. The attack was on, as an American patrol quickly reported to Gates's headquarters in the row of tents inside the fortifications atop Bemis Heights. Shortly after noon, the British vanguard reached a 350-yard clearing while Burgoyne awaited word of Fraser's whereabouts on his right. In his command post, Gates was stubbornly refusing



Arnold's latest exhortation to march out and attack the British quickly before they dug in. But Arnold already had permission for a reconnaissance force, and he interpreted this to mean he could send out Morgan's riflemen and Dearborn's light infantry from his left to make contact with the British. He also sent orders by his aides to get the rest of his division ready to march out to Morgan's support.

When Morgan's men reached the southern edge of Freeman's Meadow, they saw British pickets sitting nonchalantly in the high weeds around the firehouse. One volley of Morgan's rifles scattered the British guard and drove all but its officers back to the woods on the far side: the officers had all been shot dead. When Morgan and his riflemen pursued the fleeing soldiers, they ran headlong into the unyielding center of Burgoyne's army,

which now opened up with volley after volley. The riflemen broke and ran back across the clearing into the American side of the woods. For a moment, Daniel Morgan thought his regiment had been destroyed, and the six-foot-two, two-hundred-pound former teamster openly wept. But he continued to make the signal turkey call, and soon his men regrouped around him. When Morgan's men retreated, Burgoyne ordered his redcoats to march into the clearing and line up by regiments: three thousand redcoats with their field artillery took their places for battle. On the American rim of the forest, Morgan and Dearborn drew up their men and ordered them to open fire on the red line in front of them.

As an aide brought word that Morgan's prized regiment was in trouble, Arnold had all the justification he needed to order in Learned's and Poor's New Hampshire brigades. The

reinforcements, finding that the riflemen had regrouped and were fighting back, took positions to their left. The American line now erupted in a volley at the silent British line. As scores of redcoats dropped in the tall grass, the British, leaving their cannons, turned and ran to their side of the forest, the Americans pursuing them, trying to capture the cannon and turn them on the redcoats. Before they could open up with the artillery, British grenadiers charged them with bayonets, driving them across the field. Back and forth the charges surged, and the volleys ran all afternoon, for nearly four hours, until there were nearly a thousand dead and wounded bodies in the field between the armies. As Arnold ordered out each fresh American unit, seven regiments in all, he extended the American line farther into the woods, away from the river and curling uphill and around the British right flank. On either end of the British line, for most of the afternoon, men stood and leaned on their weapons, unaware of what was happening until their brigade was sent into the fray, which was confined mostly to Freeman's Meadow. Most of the Americans, like Gates and his staff officers, never left the protection of the breastworks nearly two miles away.

All afternoon, Arnold spurred his men on, personally leading their charges and maneuvers, constantly exposed to enemy fire, preferring to lead by example more than by orders. When Fraser's light infantry suddenly turned and skillfully fell on Arnold's right, Arnold galloped up and down the line, rallying his men, shouting, "Come on, boys. Hurry up, my brave boys!" At the head of five regiments of troops, he charged the British center, attempting to break through. Then he led a rapid counter-march through the woods on

the left, trying to break Fraser away from Burgoyne. His attack was bold, brilliant, well disciplined. When he led the charge down from a wooded hill, he very nearly overran the British: only heavy reinforcements of Hessians stopped him. Commuting back and forth between Gates's headquarters and the battlefield a mile and a half away on a big black horse he had named Warren after his old mentor, Arnold "urged, begged and entreated" for more troops from Gates. According to veterans, Gates gave no orders and only once protested. When Arnold led seven regiments into battle, Gates protested that he wanted Scammel's brigade brought back to protect headquarters.

To break the stalemate, Burgoyne, who could see from his horse in the thick of the fighting that the troops in the center of the line were played out and in danger of being outnumbered and outflanked, ordered the Hessians to leave the wagons on the riverbank lightly guarded and relieve the pressure on his troops by charging across Mill Creek ravine to attack the American right. The Hessian reinforcements were led by Major General Baron von Riedesel, whose innovative tactics had routed the Vermonters at Hubbardton. He now was risking annihilation of his vital supply train and bateaux along the river, but Burgoyne was in desperate shape, every bayonet charge being repulsed by heavy American fire. With five hundred infantry and two six-pounders, Riedesel puffed to the top of a hill and ordered his Hessians to advance down into the supposedly impassable Mill Creek ravine, into the weak spot of the American right flank. Surprised, the Americans began to fall back in confusion. At this point, dashing back to Gates, Arnold finally persuaded him to order out Learned's entire brigade from

camp to hurry around behind the Hessians from the woods, but Gates refused to let Arnold personally lead the counter-attack. He made a point of sending Learned himself.

As Learned's troops went astray, becoming lost in the woods and plundering into Simon Fraser's British light infantry, Arnold paced and fumed. Now the sound of musketry came from the American left and right and grew heavier. Effective leadership at the front at this instant could have given the Americans a smashing victory, making Burgoyne give up the attack and retreat toward Ticonderoga and Canada. Gates and Arnold were outside the headquarters tent when Gates's aide, Colonel Morgan Lewis, rode up. Gates was sure he had made a master stroke by dispatching Learned: he asked Lewis how the battle was going now with Learned on the field. Not well, Lewis reported, the fighting was still indecisive. All afternoon, Benedict Arnold had been impatiently sending off couriers, dispatching regiments, pressuring Gates to attack: now he could not stand to remain on the defensive another instant.

"By God, I will soon put an end to it," he shouted, spurring his horse toward the firing. As he galloped off, Lewis remarked to Gates, "You had better order him back. The action is going well. He may, by some rash act, do mischief." Gates turned to his adjutant, Wilkinson, and ordered him to bring back Arnold. Furious, Arnold had no choice but to obey Gates's direct order and return to headquarters. 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. That night, as camp-following women from both armies stripped the dead, the moans of the wounded carried through the chill night air, haunting men on both sides forbidden to go and help for fear of touching off another round of fighting.

Burgoyne nevertheless resolved to resume the attack at dawn. He believed the Americans were exhausted and demoralized. He was right, for the American soldiers were down to one round of ammunition per man and had no more food. But Burgoyne's troops were hardly better off, Fraser advising his chief that they were too exhausted to deliver another assault so soon. They were also shattered by the surprising courage and tenacity of the Yankees. Lieutenant Anbury stated: "We are now become fully convinced that they are not that contemptible enemy that we had imagined them." He also lamented that to claim victory because the British remained in possession of the field was but a hollow vaunt. "I am fearful the advantage resulting from this hard-fought battle will rest on that of the Americans, our army being so weakened by this engagement as not to be of sufficient strength to venture forth and improve the victory, which may, in the end, put a stop to our intended expedition."

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