



A MONTHLY PUBLICATION BY THE  
MOTHER LODGE CHAPTER OF THE SONS OF  
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

January 2008

Volume 2, Issue 1

# Mother Lode Dispatch



Calling All Compatriots



## President's Corner by Tom Douglas

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Jim Faulkinbury, Tom Chilton, Verona Mhoon, and Helena Hurst brought the Revolutionary War period to life for three classes of 5<sup>th</sup> graders in the multi-purpose room of the Jackson Elementary School on Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup>. The 5<sup>th</sup> graders sat attentively while Capt. Jim, Mountain Man Tom, Nancy Hart, and Molly "Pitcher" Hayes explained their roles in the Revolutionary War effort. I had the opportunity to talk about the SAR Poster Contest that centers around Molly Pitcher and her experience during the battle of Monmouth on June 28, 1778. Jim and Tom are members of the Sacramento Chapter SAR., and Verona and Helena are members of the Sacramento Chapter DAR. I want to thank these people for their support of our chapter.



We are still searching for the right time and place for the Mother Lode Chapter's official chartering ceremony and dinner. It will probably not be until some time in March as CASSAR President Karl Jacobs has a full calendar until then. We hope to finalize a date and place soon so that we will be able to get invitations out in a timely manner.

Looking forward to seeing you all at Mother Lode's next meeting on January 22<sup>nd</sup> at Denny's Restaurant, located at 3446 Coach Lane in Cameron Park.

Tom



Denny's Restaurant  
3446 Coach Lane  
Cameron Park, CA.

# Photos from the Jackson Elementary School Presentation.

Photos by Tom Douglas.

- Mother Lode Chapter Officers for 2008**
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Valley Forge Program
- Vacant**  
Law Enforcement Program
- Vacant**  
Flag Certificate Program
- Tom Douglas**  
Americanism Poster Contest



Helena Hurst, Sacramento DAR, portrays Molly "Pitcher" Hays.

**Editors Note:** The statements and opinions expressed herein are solely those of the author(s) and do not necessarily state or reflect those of the Editor or of the California or National Societies, Sons of the American Revolution.

# More photos from the Jackson Elementary School Presentation.

Photos by Tom Douglas.



**Jim Faulkinbury tells about being a Captain in the Continental Army, and about one of his soldiers, Robert Shurtleff/Shurtliff, aka Deborah Sampson.**



**Helena Hurst and Verona Mhoon tell of everyday life during the Revolutionary War.**

# More photos from the Jackson Elementary School Presentation.

Photos by Tom Douglas.



Mountain Man Tom Chilton tells of his life “over the mountain” in eastern Tennessee, and how he used his rifle to protect his family.



A mock battle was fought between the Colonists (the girls) and the Red Coats (the boys). We are happy to report that the Colonists won!!

## More photos from the Jackson Elementary School Presentation. Photos by Tom Douglas.



One of the soldiers was wounded during the battle. It looked for a while as if his arm might have to be amputated, but Doc Tom and Doc Jim were able to save his arm so that he could fight another day.



Period flags were displayed and described.

# The American Revolution – Month By Month - January 1778

by Andrew J. Stough III

On December 19, Washington and the Continental Army finally arrived at Valley Forge some twenty miles from Philadelphia to spend the winter in what to many minds today was perhaps a cold, but safe, hideaway for the winter. Forgotten or not known by many of today's young students is the fact that Washington led a poorly fed, ragged, and partially clothed army whose passage could be traced by its bloody footprints left in the snow. The valley's name was derived from a forge, which had been burned by the British during the fall of 1777. The valley, naturally defended by the Schuylkill River on one side and steep bluffs on the other, left two sides to be fortified. At the same time that these sides were being fortified, it was necessary to find shelter for the soldiers from the penetrating wind and cold.

Washington had 12 man huts, each 14 feet by 16 feet, built from standing timber found in the valley. Imagine felling trees, squaring and notching them, dragging them by hand to the construction area, then putting up the huts, and doing that without clothing suitable to the frigid winter weather. Water for cooking and drinking was scarce. Since there were no springs, a small but inadequate stream was the only source of water. Easily contaminated, it became a source of sickness due to the poor sanitation practiced in the camp. Remarkably, despite the hardships, deaths, and desertions, there was not overall unrest among the troops.

Until everyone was housed, many men spent the night by the open campfires to stay warm and to survive the night. It was remarkable that most of the huts were up by the end of December, but it took most of January to get the open spaces between logs chinked to stop the wind from whistling between the logs, and to get a good draft established in the chimneys, allowing relief from smoky huts and fires that gave off little heat. Even so, life in the huts was never comfortable or really warm. During the building of the huts, officers and men alike shared the discomforts of the camp. When the troops were housed, then, and only then, did Washington and his officers take up residence in homes nearby.

Food and clothing were extremely scarce. It was not unusual for men, who would be inside a hut, to remove some or all of their clothing in order to clothe those who had to stand guard or work outside. Some food, blankets, shoes, and clothing were at hand but unavailable. Ward notes that for lack of a competent commissary and quartermaster to store and distribute supplies, hogsheds (barrels) of both food and clothing were unloaded in the snow and frequently covered by the next storm. Some were found, but frequently the food was spoiled and the clothing unusable.

In the past, Washington had not had a large supply train. This gave his army mobility to strike and disappear like a will-o'-the-wisp. The previous asset of a small, unorganized supply train became a liability. The problem was complicated by many things. First, just who was responsible for funding and shipping supplies? The states considered themselves sovereign; the Congress considered the states to be subservient. Some states sent supplies for their troops to be used only for their troops; some states supplied nothing stating that if it was a Continental Army that it was Congress' responsibility. Congress thought it was the responsibility of all states to either furnish supplies or funds for the support of all troops in the Continental Army regardless of their state origin. Congress and Washington wanted an American Army. The states were reluctant to lose control over any state forces or assets, and Congress had no ability to enforce obedience.

While the wrangling continued, Washington treated the troops as a unified command, spreading supplies over the entire army regardless of whence they came. Meanwhile the army was cold and hungry. In part, the problem of a lack of supplies was due to unscrupulous businessmen who charged exorbitant prices and sometimes furnished shoddy materials and weevily foodstuffs. The problem was not only a lack of foodstuffs and clothing, but also in its arrival and distribution. The army had suffered from lack of delivery and shortages in the past, but it had never been as critical as at Valley Forge, where different sources place force strength at 9,000 to 11,000 men. Foraging locally was not the answer. Due to Howe's previous foraging, there was nothing left in the immediate area to buy or to forage. The population had already been stripped, and if it had not been, the patriot army would have received no assistance from the local people who were predominantly Loyalists, and/or Quakers, who were predominantly loyal to the Crown.

Some supplies were foraged, but from a distance. Captain McLane and Company, with the aid of some Oneida Indians, were successful in taking cattle from British detachments, driving herds from the Wilmington area to Philadelphia for slaughter. It is noteworthy at this time to mention the role of two minorities at Valley Forge - Women and Blacks! A thaw in early January allowed Patriot women from Philadelphia to drive ten pairs of oxen to Valley Forge to be slaughtered. They also brought 2,000 shirts that they had sewn and smuggled out of Philadelphia. A Negro girl, Mary McDonald, came to join the Army, bringing with her potatoes, apples, and nuts for the troops. Martha Washington also came bringing with her foodstuffs and medications. She remained to tend the sick and wounded and to be of comfort to the dying. Her ministries were appreciated, and a morale booster. Patriot farm women brought bread, pies, and other foodstuffs when the weather allowed. While such assistance was only a drop in the bucket, when spread around thousands of men, its morale value was great at a time when it was direly needed.

# The American Revolution – Month By Month - January 1778

by Andrew J. Stough III  
(continued from page 6)

Black soldiers, estimated at a total of 25,000 men over the course of the war, served in both American and British forces. While few in number compared with the total force, they had been with the army since Breeds Hill, and would remain through Yorktown and beyond. Oliver Cromwell, a black man, was with Washington crossing the Delaware to Trenton in 1776, remaining with the army through Yorktown. Peter Salem, another black man at Valley Forge, was at Breeds Hill and was credited with firing the shot that killed Major John Pitcairn, the officer who had given the order, "Disperse Ye Rabble" at Lexington in 1775. Peter Salem served in the Continental Army for a total of seven years.

General Nathaniel Greene was appointed to cure the supply problem. By March, the supply problem was solved with the establishment of an efficient commissary and quartermaster service. However, no amount of efficiency and industry can overcome the lack of money to purchase supplies, nor to offset the chicanery of those who stand to prosper from the sale of supplies in a wartime economy.

Unfortunately, during those dark days, there were many desertions by desperate men. Some simply went home. Some even went to Philadelphia in order to find food, clothing, and shelter by seeking service with Howe, who paid sixteen dollars for every American soldier who brought his musket and swore allegiance to the King. Ward notes that those who answered this call were mostly not American born.

Then there were those who were not surviving at all. Medicine being what it was, those who were only sick were kept in the same huts with those terminally ill from smallpox and typhus. When a man died his clothes and blankets were taken to be worn by the living. Anyone unfortunate enough to wear the same clothes or to be moved into a sick hut and given the same blankets that had covered small pox or typhus victims was almost surely given a sentence of death. At first the dead were buried in marked graves. Men visiting the graves of dead comrades frequently fell into a state of melancholy, which resulted in a general lowering of camp morale. For the benefit of all, Washington ordered the dead buried in unmarked graves. Men were not the only victims; horses were also dying for lack of forage, and over 500 horses died, adding to the already rampant sanitation problem.

Part of the problem was Washington's success in obtaining long enlistments. Had Washington only had to cope with the small numbers of men encamped in previous winters, the problems at Valley Forge would not have been so great. In previous years, by January 1, the bulk of the army was either going home or had already departed. The difference could be seen in the number of holdovers from 1777, variously given as eight to eleven thousand men. Previous winter encampments had been small and an army in name only. In January of 1778, it was an army in numbers, but in its weakened state, not an effective one. Morale in the camp was remarkable, considering first that compared to the total encampment, desertions were relatively small. Secondly, that despite the great number of sick or dying men and the hardships endured by the rest, that there was no great unrest or despondency in the camp. The "Band of Brothers" which Washington had envisioned and prayed for, had formed at Valley Forge. It was a direct result of men coming together to serve in a common cause, and to serve until that cause was realized. They were united in this brotherhood, strengthened by an unspoken belief that they were no longer partisan soldiers from different states but members of the Continental Army. Their conversion to a national army might well be covered by the motto "E Pluribus Unum."

During this time, Benjamin Franklin was in France assuring the French and other Europeans that the majority of Americans were solid supporters of the Revolution, and regardless of the burden, would accept nothing less than total independence. Later sources, including former president John Adams, stated that at best there was no more than one third of the population who supported the Revolution. Other source have confirmed this assessment, with one third loyal to George III, some of whom would fight for him; also many more who were merely loyal, but would not help the Revolution in any way. The final one third were of neither conviction and were not getting into the argument either way and did not care which side won. Fortunately, simple statistics do not tell the whole story. That one third who believed in the Revolution believed intensely and were willing to give everything they had, including their lives to the cause of liberty and independence.

January departs with this band of patriots struggling to secure their huts, many still sitting and dozing by campfires at night to keep from freezing. It was this quality of tenacious belief and activity that eventually won independence from Great Britain and George III.

References: Encyclopedia Britannica, Ward's "War of the Revolution", Reeder's Revolutionary War, Lawson's The American Revolution, Spiegelman's Washington at Valley Forge and Stein's Valley Forge.

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## Wreaths Across America Ceremony

The Wreaths Across America story began over 15 years ago when Worcester Wreath Company (a for-profit commercial business from Harrington, Maine) began a tradition of placing wreaths on the headstones of our Nation's fallen heroes at Arlington National Cemetery. Every year, at the height of the season, Morrill Worcester would pack up a truckload of his Christmas wreaths and head down from Maine to Washington DC, and Arlington National Cemetery. Without fanfare, he and a dozen or so volunteers would lay red-bowed wreaths on a few thousand headstones of fallen Americans.

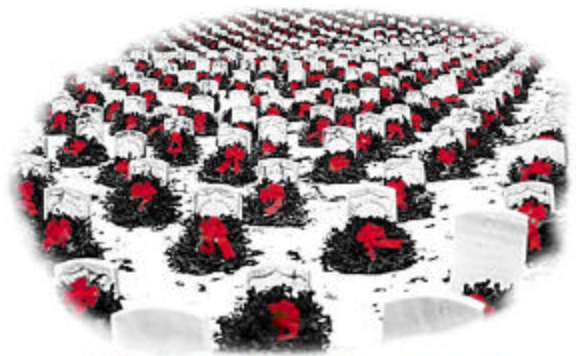
There was no publicity. No crowds gathered. The gesture was one man's private duty, born of a trip to Washington he won as a 12-year-old paperboy. Of all the monuments and memorials he saw, it was the visit to Arlington that stuck with him -- the majesty and mystery, the sadness and the pride, the sight of all those neat rows of government-issue white headstones.

Over that period of time, Worcester Wreath has donated 75,000 wreaths, which were placed by volunteers in a wreath-laying ceremony each December. It is a vision that they will one day honor every veterans' memory for the holidays, as a way to show their gratitude and appreciation for the sacrifices made to preserve our freedoms.

Wreaths Across America was formed as a non-profit organization (501-C3 status - EIN 20-8362270) in 2007, in direct response to the many letters and requests from supporters all around the Country about how they too could get involved and bring the Arlington Wreath Project experience to their local communities.

This year wreaths were placed on the headstones of our fallen heroes at a number of National Cemeteries, including the Sacramento Valley VA National Cemetery located near Dixon. The Anne Loucks Chapter DAR and the Sacramento Valley VA National Cemetery Support Association jointly sponsored the ceremony. The Sacramento Chapter SAR Color Guard was invited to participate in the ceremony. Their part was to assist in the placing of the wreaths near the flag pole before the wreaths were placed in the cemetery proper. As it turned out, the group assigned to present and post the Colors did not show up, and at the last minute the Sacramento Chapter Color Guard was asked to present and post the Colors as well. Sacramento members Dart Winship, Jim Faulkinbury, Ford Osborn, and Tom Chilton attended the program.

The morning was beautiful, but very cold, as it was 32 degrees when they arrived, and stayed cold for the entire ceremony. It was a very moving ceremony, attended by approximately 450 people. Information will be published in the November 2008 Dispatch regarding next year's ceremony, and we hope that many of you will be able to attend. For more information about Wreaths Across America, visit: [www.wreathacrossamerica.org](http://www.wreathacrossamerica.org)



WREATHS-ACROSS-AMERICA.ORG  
REMEMBER - HONOR - TEACH



Jim Faulkinbury and Dart Winship during the ceremony.



Jim Faulkinbury assists in placement of the wreaths.



Tom Chilton and Dart Winship stand at attention.



# More photos from Wreaths Across America Sacramento Valley VA National Cemetery near Dixon

Photos by Michael Elm



# More photos from Wreaths Across America Sacramento Valley VA National Cemetery near Dixon

Photos by Michael Elm



These and other photos taken at the cemetery can be viewed at:  
<http://www.pilotelm.phanfare.com/album/534365/749011#imageID=34829719>

# More photos from the Jackson Elementary School Presentation.

Photos by Tom Douglas.



Tom Chilton stands at attention as a student leads the class in the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag.

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