



The Florida Society of the Sons of the American Revolution Fort Lauderdale Chapter Newsletter



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March Chapter Meeting Highlights

by Oscar Krahenbuehl

A good meeting and luncheon was held on March 8th at the Tower Club. Attendance included a visiting Compatriot and his wife from the Boston SAR Chapter, a Broward Chapter DAR Reagent, a prospective member, guests and some members we haven't had the pleasure of seeing for awhile. It is hoped that this upward trend in attendance continues.

It was unanimously agreed that annual chapter dues would be increase from \$15 to \$20 dollars starting in 2002. This proposal was reported in the last newsletter and no objection was received by any officer prior to this meeting. This modest increase will help compensate for our reduced membership.

Former FL President Ed Sullivan gave a report of happenings at a recent NSSAR Trustees meeting in Louisville. It is apparent that proposals to reduce the power of the national executive committee, or at least increase the impact of the Trustees and other state representatives, were not well received. Efforts to accomplish these goals will be continued in several states.

The speaker for the chapter meeting was LTC Frank Reynolds, Air Force, Retired. He presented a vivid and exciting account of air force actions over Japan during WWII and his horrific experiences as a prisoner of war and several close encounters with death. Those events obviously changed his life and we were fortunate to have him share those experiences with us.

April Meeting – Oration Contest

Students from several high schools will present patriotic orations for the Joseph Rumbaugh Oration Contest. The winner will compete in the state

contest at the annual FLSSAR meeting in St. Augustine on May 5th. The contestant from the Ft. Lauderdale Chapter has been the state winner for the past two years and won third place nationally last year. – Plan to come and hear these outstanding young people express themselves and impress you with their oratory skills. As reported last month, this may be the last time our chapter participates in this event. Thanks to Chairman Harry Koepke for arranging and coordinating this event.



Guest speaker Lt.Col Frank Reynolds receives a Certificate of Appreciation from Compatriot Joe Motes at our March meeting.

*NEXT MEETING - APRIL 12th
TOWER CLUB !!!*

*\$18.00 INCL. TAX AND TIP
11:30 SOCIAL 12:00 LUNCH
28TH FLOOR BANK OF AMERICA
1 FINANCIAL TOWER
SE 3RD AVE & BROWARD BLVD
FORT LAUDERDALE*

*FOR RESERVATIONS CALL:
954-441-8735*

*Members living in North Broward need to dial the
area code plus the phone number,
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Fort Henry

September 12, 1782

Last battle of the American Revolution

*Betty Zane, Lydia Boggs, and Molly Scott: The
Gunpowder Exploits at Fort Henry*

By William Hintzen

(From *West Virginia History*, Vol. 55, Pp. 95-109)

Continued from the March issue;

It is also interesting to note her use of the phrase "Monday, September 11th--at all events, the 11th." In 1782, September 11, which was a Wednesday, the Indians appeared around three o'clock in the afternoon, allowing time for the following events from Cruger's timetable. On "the morning of the 11th, a damp morning, Stephen Burkam and one Wright" began their journey "from the Fort to Washington" and traveled about "three or four miles," where they found signs of Indians and "returned to the fort and reported." This also allowed time for the various activities of the other men that morning that Cruger described.¹⁸

The controversy involves confusing two separate events, events that had not concerned Cruger for nearly seventy years and the details of which had occupied neither much prominence nor much importance in her thoughts. When questioned about it she was convinced of the accuracy of her recollections, especially when she was able to remember certain details so vividly, specifically helping Molly Scott get powder for the men in the Zane cabin. When interviewed by Draper in 1846, she said that the Indians had not fired on Molly Scott. However, three years later, evidently having been involved in disputes about the nature of this episode as a result of Draper's interviews, she revised her statement somewhat, saying that on the second day of the siege, "Tuesday, September 12th" (September 12 in 1782 was a Thursday):

the enemy having temporarily withdrawn from the attack, but occupying a position within gunshot of the fort, those within the stockade observed a female leave the residence of Colonel Zane, and advance with rapid movements towards the fort. . . .19

In other words, the Indians were now close enough to shoot but for some reason failed to do so. However, in his official report of the siege, written on the day following its conclusion, Colonel Zane specifically stated that during the second day "the enemy kept a continual fire the whole day."²⁰ They were not on "the hillside and elsewhere too far" away to shoot at the fort or at anyone running between the fort and the cabin. As nothing appears in Cruger's affidavit about Silas Zane being in the cabin in 1782, it seems certain that she correctly remembered helping Scott get the powder in 1781. But too many people insisted that Silas was commander of the fort in 1782, and so Cruger remained silent. The true obstacle

to the resolution of this problem has always been the lack of information on that relatively unimportant Indian attack of 1781, leaving researchers to conclude that, since the gunpowder exploit could not have occurred at the 1777 siege, it must have been at the siege of 1782.

There was one other early spectator to this debate, but his evidence seems to have been as generally neglected as that of Molly Scott's grandson. George S. McKiernan became interested in the history of the border wars in the early 1830s when there were still several survivors. Between 1832 and 1836, he interviewed a number of those pioneers, including Lydia Boggs Shepherd Cruger. Among other observations he stated:

When I first knew Mrs. Cruger she was [a] bright and sparkling young woman. In her later days her memory became confused. She assured Mr. Draper, for instance, in 1846, that John McCulloch was the hero of the leap over Wheeling hill, instead of his brother Sam. . . . >From the interesting nature of the incident of carrying the powder, I made it the subject of inquiry in my interviews with all those persons, and I am quite certain that Mrs. Cruger did not attribute the powder exploit to Molly Scott or to any one but Betsy Zane, neither did any other of the old inhabitants. There is not the shadow of a doubt in my mind that she and not Molly Scott was the heroine of the powder keg. In fact I never heard any of the old pioneers mention the name of Molly Scott. They were unanimous in giving the honor to Miss Zane.21

Cruger and the Fort Henry settlement led unbelievably arduous lives, lives so incredibly difficult that it is no longer possible for us moderns to even begin to comprehend the difficulties. Mere survival required an almost Herculean effort, and many failed to survive those rigorous times. Cruger, born a loyal subject of George III, lived through those terrible days of revolution and horrific Indian warfare as a teenager. She was well into her forties when Abraham Lincoln was born in Kentucky, and she survived to see the end of a civil war and the assassination of the president. Cruger sought to clarify her interview with Draper in her 1849 affidavit:

But undersigned does not wish to detract any from the heroism of that feat, she only desires to correct a gross error--to give honor to whom honor is due. This she deems imperative, that the truth and justice of history may be maintained.22

Honor to whom honor is due, that the truth and justice of history may be maintained--and the honor is most certainly due to Betty Zane. As the illustrious Colonel Zane, speaking through his descendent Zane Grey might well have said:

. . . we should stop a moment to think of the heroes who have gone before . . . we who worked, fought, bled beside them, who saw them die for those they left behind, will render them all justice, honor and love. To them we give the victory. . . . They were true; then let us . . . likewise be true in memory of them. . . .23

Notes

18. *Ibid.*

19. *De Hass, History, 280.*

20. *On Saturday, 14 September 1782, the day following the lifting of the siege, Zane wrote to General Irvine, his military superior at Fort Pitt:*

Sir: On the evening of the 11th instant a body of the enemy appeared in sight of our garrison. They . . . demanded the fort to be surrendered, which was refused. About twelve o'clock at night they rushed hard on the pickets. . . . About eight o'clock next morning, there came a negro from them to us and informed us that their force consisted of a British Captain and forty regular soldiers, and two hundred and sixty Indians. The enemy kept a continual fire the whole day . . . [and] continued around the garrison till the morning of the 13th instant, when they disappeared. Our loss is none. . . .

Newton, Pan-Handle, 127.

21. *Ibid.*, 129.

22. *De Hass, History, 281.*

23. *Zane Grey, The Last Trail (New York: A. L. Burt, 1909), 298.*"

Compatriots,

In the recent discussions on the SAR/DAR problems, I have seen it asked why the DAR gets so much recognition over the SAR. The answer is a matter of economics. At the early part of this century, when SAR asked the ladies to leave our organization, the men failed to consider one point. How many of those men had their genealogy done by their wives?

I would suggest that probably less than 20 % of the men did their own work. It was a matter of economics. In those days, the men worked and the women cared for the house. When they weren't doing the VERY hard job of raising their children and caring for the household, the women had far more time for socializing and doing the research required for membership. When they felt like it, some of them even worked on their husbands lines, or helped their husbands to join the SAR.

This is why the DAR grew to 250,000 members while SAR topped out at 25,000. This is also the reason DAR is now down significantly to 165,000. As more and more women entered the work force, there was far less time for things like genealogy.

This has been a growing problem in recent years. For many years Genealogy was the "Playground of the Aged." I was an anomaly when I started tracing my family roots at age 25. When after 9 years, I was able to join the SAR at age 34, I stood out like a sore thumb. As I looked around at our leaders, I saw many of our older members like Bill Gist and Ben Morris who had joined SAR when they were much younger and were encouraged to work their way up through the ranks to become leaders. If we are to be a viable organization in the future, we must encourage more younger members to take an active interest in the workings of the SAR. We need to make younger members feel that they are a part of Committees and that their ideas are taken seriously.

I can tell you that in 10 years of attending Trustees Meetings I have seen quite a few instances where younger members were dismissed simply because they are young. Some of these members no longer come around.

We are in a unique period now where we have the opportunity to attract younger members in far greater numbers than we were thirty years ago. We are now ensconced in the The Information Age. The number of younger persons showing an interest in their family heritage now is far greater than in the past. 30 years ago, it was a lot harder to walk into a courthouse and walk out 10 minutes later with a copy of your great grandparents marriage license. The availability of copy machines was just not there at that time.

We must seize on the interest in Genealogy created by the Information Age. We must create a set of standard criteria to be used by the Genealogy Department as well as State and Chapter Registrars for approving applications. We should NEVER have a situation where an applicant feels he must join the SAR in a different State than where he lives, because a State or Chapter Registrar refuses to accept documentation which would sail through at the National level.

We should also embrace the resources readily available on the internet today. I am not talking about the type of stuff you find on the Joe Smith Homepage, or on Family Tree Makers Site, or even on the Mormon's site at FamilySearch.org. These are all good starting points, but they are full of mistakes. My hope is that we can use some common sense when it comes to internet resources like databases where a person has transcribed the 1850 census for a full county. If you read our brochure, the requirement is that the person must submit a copy of the original census records. I know how lucky I am to live here in Louisville with access to SAR and over 80% of the census records available to me whenever I need them. My question is why do we force Joe Applicant in Podunk, Kansas to delay his application by months and spent exorbitant amounts to get a copy of an original census from Grayson County Kentucky, when he can find that same information on line, in his home office, sitting in his underwear. I have heard all of the excuses, that these items are too easily printed out and manipulated before sending it to SAR. My contention is that it is far easier for a person checking an application to look at the top of the page and go to that website for verification, rather than spend far more time writing a letter to the applicant requiring them to get a copy of the original.

With the technology available today, it is just as easy to scan a copy of an original census record and alter it with any changes you desire. There are a great number of very good sources available on the internet today. There are marriage databases where the whole county has been transcribed. The State of Kentucky has made its Birth and Death indexes available online. These cannot be used to show the parents, but they should be very useful for saving \$9.00 to prove the birth or death date of a spouse who is not a part of the bloodline necessary to accept an application.

My main point is that there are a lot of younger people becoming interested in their heritage. Let's make it easier for them to become a member rather than driving them away.

The opinions expressed here are those of the submitter and should not in any way be associated with any position I may hold at any level in the organization.

Jessie Hagan
Secretary, KYSSAR



Guest speaker Alice Carlson receives a Certificate of Appreciation from President Mike Evans at our past January meeting.

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