



East Fork-Trinity Chapter Newsletter Texas Section Sons of the American Revolution



Volume ?, Issue 4 April 29, 2012



[Photo by Nell Wellborn]

East Fork-Trinity Chapter's Presentation of Heroism Medal
To Rockwall County Deputy Keven Rowan
Before Rockwall County Commissioners Court
On April 10, 2012

President Walt Thomas's Proclamation is on page 2.

In This Issue:

*More on the
Presentation
Of Heroism
Medal* 2

*Minutes from
the March
Meeting* 3

*General
Washington's
Triumph at
Trenton* 7

Speaker's List 15

*In this issue, we
have a third
article by
Compatriot Frank
Roberts;
"General
Washington's
Triumph at
Trenton"
Frank's article
begins on page 7.*

Our next meeting will be held on May 10, 2012 at the Texas Land & Cattle Steak House on Lake Ray Hubbard in Garland.

Our speaker is to be Michael Ratcliff, whose presentation will be, "George Mason: The Bill of Rights"

Dinner at 6:00; the meeting starts at 7:00.



The EF-T Color Guard,
accompanied by
Barbara Thomas.

From left to right:
Tom Whitelock,
Montie Monzingo,
Barbara Thomas,
Walt Thomas,
Allen Christian.

[Photo by Vivian Dennis-
Monzingo]

I would like to thank the Commissioners and Sheriff Heavenson for this opportunity to honor Deputy Rowan today.

Just as the Sons of the American Revolution honor our forefathers who risked all in the struggle to gain our independence over 200 years ago; we also honor those in law enforcement who "serve and defend" our citizens today.

We are perhaps a little "late to the party" with this award, Deputy Rowan having already received some recognition for his heroic act. However we feel that his courageous action, in saving these two young women, exemplifies the courage and commitment that our founding fathers exhibited over 200 years ago in the creation of our nation. We want to add our appreciation for the actions of Deputy Rowan on January 28, 2012 and recognize him today.

Deputy Keven Rowan, the East Fork Trinity Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution would like to award you the SAR Heroism Medal for your actions on January 28, 2012. Your actions represent the best ideals of the Sons of the American Revolution and of the citizens of Rockwall County. Thank you for your willingness to take action when faced with a situation with others in eminent danger.

Your training, personal commitment, and a certain amount of luck placed you in a unique position to save two lives and you willingly put yourself at risk to ensure their safe rescue. We are honored to present you this certificate and medal for your heroic actions.

Walt Thomas

Minutes from the April 2012 Meeting of the East Fork-Trinity Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution

The April 12, 2012 meeting of the East Fork-Trinity Chapter of the SAR was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Walt Thomas, at the Texas Land and Cattle Steak House in Garland.

Ten members and nine guests were in attendance:

Members; Allen Christian, Frank Roberts, Montie Monzingo, Walt Thomas, Tom Whitelock, Gary Snowden, Robert Vickers, Gary Lovell, Paul Ridenour, Charles Windham, and guests Jane Christian, Jane Roberts, Vivian Dennis-Monzingo, Barbara Thomas, Della Vickers, Tom Crowe, Ginny Crowe, Betty Carolyn Heikka, and Travis Heikka.

In the absence of Chaplain Bill Bellomy, Compatriot Gary Snowden opened the meeting with prayer.

Compatriot Gary Lovell led the pledge of allegiance to the US flag, Compatriot Frank Roberts led the pledge to the Texas flag, and Compatriot Gary Snowden led the pledge to the SAR.

Secretary Montie Monzingo presented the minutes from the March meeting, which were approved as posted.

Treasurer Harmon Adair was absent due to his presenting a JROTC award for our chapter.

His report, via email, is

April Balance \$833.90

Deposit

Cash	\$62.00	Cash collected March and April less speaker's meal
Check	\$327.00	2012 Dues from TXSSAR

New Balance **\$1222.90**

President Walt Thomas acknowledged and welcomed the guests present.

President Thomas reported on the state SAR meeting in San Antonio: the year-book created by Tom Whitlock took second place honors, and the poster presented by Aanchal Malik took fourth place honors (Aanchal Malik is in the fifth grade at Walnut Glenn Academy in Garland. His teacher is Mrs. Sonsel).



President Thomas and Treasurer Adair at the SAR state meeting.

[Photos from the web]



Registrar Allen Christian reported on the Heroism Medal Presentation at the Old Rockwall County Courthouse. The chapter's color guard, consisting of President Walt Thomas, Registrar Allen Christian, Secretary Montie Monzingo, and Historian Tom Whitlock, presented a medal and a certificate to Deputy Keven Rowan for his bravery in saving the lives of two young ladies at Lake Ray Hubbard. The proclamation read by President Walt Thomas is on page 2 of the newsletter, and photos of the presentation are on pages 1 and 2.

Registrar Allen Christian reported on the eight schools at which Good Citizenship Awards will be presented by our chapter. He encouraged members to take part in these presentations.

Vice President and Webmaster Ridenour reported that he had entered the chapter's website in the Robert B. Vance Website contest.

President Thomas presented a report from the officers in the form of a motion: that the chapter meet during the month of June, but not during July or August. The motion was seconded by Compatriot Charles Windham, and the motion was carried.

Under old business, Registrar Allen Christian reported on his earlier request for record copies from each member of the chapter, including record copies for supplements. He asked those who had not submitted record copies to please do so.

There was no new business.



Compatriot Robert Vickers was presented with a military service medal and a certificate for his service in the US Air Force. Robert was stationed at Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene, Texas, where he served as a weatherman.

[Photo by Tom Whitelock]

Our guest speaker, Tom Crowe, was introduced by Vice President Ridenour.

Mr. Crowe's topic was,

“Just Next Door – the Revolutionary War in Louisiana”.

[Photo by Vivian Dennis-Monzingo]



During his presentation, Mr. Crowe led the audience from the early North American colonies: Spanish (1565), French (1605), and British (1607), to the Revolutionary War battles in Louisiana in 1779. During that time span, much of the land in the present day USA changed boundaries and ownership many times. In the battles in Louisiana, General Bernardo de Galvez led his troops to victory over the British. General Galvez was one of the authors of the treaty of Paris in 1783, which ended the Revolutionary War. Mr. Crowe then answered a question raised

earlier; “Who used the first Lone Star Flag?” It was used by the Republic of West Florida (at that time consisting of the panhandle of Florida and lower portions of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama).

Compatriot Tom Whitelock conducted a raffle and the winners were: Betty Heikka (one of our two visitors), Barbara Thomas, Walt Thomas, Tom Crowe (our speaker), Allen Christian, Jane Christian, Paul Ridenour, Vivian Monzingo, Montie Monzingo, Gary Lovell, Gary Snowden, Jane Roberts, and Bob Vickers.



Jane Christian, the pride of Muleshoe, Texas, displays her prize.

[Photo by Tom Whitelock]

In the absence of Chaplain Bill Bellomy, Compatriot Allen Christian closed the meeting with a prayer, and President Walt Thomas led the closing.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Montie Monzingo, Secretary

Announcements:

1. Our next meeting will be held on May 10, 2012 at the Texas Land & Cattle Steak House on Lake Ray Hubbard in Garland.

Our speaker is to be Michael Ratcliff, whose presentation will be, “George Mason: The Bill of Rights”.

2. The Chapter will hold a meeting on June 14th.

General Washington's Triumph at Trenton December, 1776

Friday the 13th is by tradition considered an unlucky day, as that was the day in October, 1307, that King Philip IV of France ordered arrested and eventually had executed the leadership of the Order of the Knights Templar. However, Friday the 13th of December 1776 might be considered a very lucky day for General George Washington and the budding American Revolution.

By December of 1776, hopes of establishing the Thirteen Colonies of America as an independent nation were at an all-time low. The American army had lost battle after battle with the British army and its mercenaries, the Hessian auxiliaries, and Congress was not responding to the needs of the Continental army or the militia forces in pay, arms, and supplies. Furthermore, the enlistments of the majority of General George Washington's army were up on January 1, 1777.



General George Washington
Painting by John Trumbull

Then came Friday, December 13th, and the capture of the American General Charles Lee by the British. Lee, an experienced former British career army officer, considered himself far above all other officers in the American Army and treated his superior, George Washington, with contempt. He was also known to be vain, insolent, and possessing of unfettered ambition. Washington was aware of Lee's feelings towards him, but, knowing Lee had loyal officers in the American army and connections in Congress, was cautious in dealing with him. Lee's untimely, foolish, and rather comical capture (he was captured by Major Banastre Tarleton leading the same British cavalry unit Lee once commanded, while having breakfast in his nightshirt) relieved Washington of Lee's presence, insubordination, and threat to accomplishing the winning of the war.

On that same Friday, though seemingly unconnected, Congress gave Washington

full rein in conducting the war in a resolution that provided him with "...full power to order and direct all things relative to the department, and the operation of the war." Unleashed by Congress, and no longer weighed down by Lee's insubordination and unbridled ambition, Washington acted quickly, putting into motion a bold plan to defeat the British in a battle and restore the nation's morale.

Washington's adversary, British General William Howe, considered the capture of General Lee the beginning of the end for the American cause, and therefore feeling no further real threat, declared his army was going in to winter quarters. Howe planned to travel to New York to bask in the opulent parties and warm companionship of friends and colleagues. However, before leaving, Howe ordered a chain of outposts be established along the New Jersey side of the Delaware River from Burlington to Trenton to guard against possible incursions by Washington's army camped on the south side of the river, and left Major General James Grant in command.

Washington quickly learned of the chain of outposts, made a decision to strike at one of them, and selected Trenton as his target. He immediately ordered out patrols to attack British pickets around Trenton, intending to drive the enemy into a tighter perimeter so his forces could approach closely without being detected. He soon learned from captives taken by his patrols that Trenton was garrisoned by Hessian mercenaries, commanded by a Colonel Johann Rall (also spelled "Rahl"). Washington's patrols were so successful in harassing the Hessians that even the twenty or so British dragoons stationed at Trenton refused to venture out of the perimeter without infantry support and protection. The Hessian's morale began to drop, as they had, after all, traveled clear across the Atlantic, fought successfully for the British, and now wanted to relax, drink, play cards, and womanize the winter away. Instead, they were being constantly harassed by an elusive and persistent enemy.



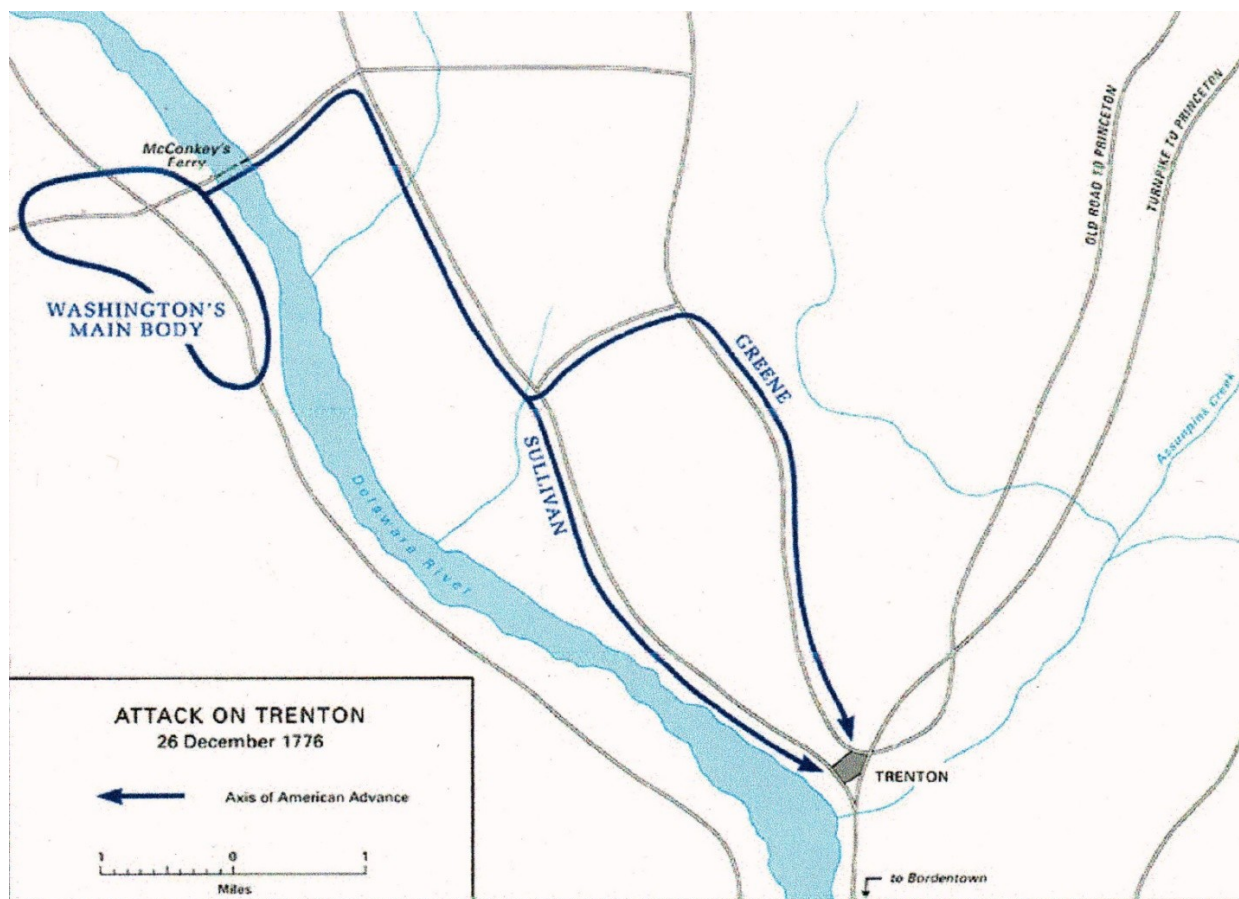
1777 Mezzotint of
General Sir William Howe.

Rall, a professional soldier of long experience, despised the Americans and their army, considering them rabble, and when an officer suggested fortifying the Trenton Ferry, was told, "Let them come. We want no trenches. We'll go after them with the bayonet." There was no question that Rall was overconfident in his and his men's abilities to deal with the American army and thought little of his enemy, and that was just the attitude that Washington was hoping for.

On December 23d, Washington formed his army into ranks and had read to them the first issue of Tom Paine's *The American Crisis*, with its famous lines, "These are the times that try men's soul. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country..." And finally, Washington chose the phrase

“Victory or Death” as passwords for the operation, indicating the seriousness of needed success.

On Christmas day, Colonel Rall arose with a hangover from the previous evening’s festivities. Nevertheless, he anticipated an all day and all night party of wine, food, and cards. That evening an American patrol shot up a picket guard, with little alarm. For Rall it was just another petty incident. Later that night he refused to interrupt his cards and wine to see a Tory informant carrying information that the American army was on the march. In desperation, the informant wrote a note describing what he had seen, passing it to an aide who took it to Rall. Without reading the note the colonel stuck it in his pocket. He was simply not going to believe that the Americans would dare attack his garrison. After all, a winter storm carrying rain, sleet and snow was building in its fury outside, and who would dare march in such weather, much less mount an attack.



Washington’s Planned March on Trenton.
From United States Army Center of Military History.

But, as the Tory informant knew, Washington’s plan was already in motion. He had sent Colonel John Cadwalader downriver with 2000 troops to Bordertown to neutralize the Hessian force stationed there, preventing them from reinforcing Rall at Trenton. Brigadier General James Ewing’s force was to cross

the Delaware opposite Trenton and seal off the Assunpink (or Assanpink) Creek Bridge on the road to Bordertown to prevent any Hessians from retreating along that route.

The main attack force, led by Major General Nathaniel Greene and consisting of 2400 officers and men, would cross the Delaware above Trenton at McConkey's Ferry after nightfall on Christmas day and attack one hour before dawn on the 26th. Led by Washington, the force left camp at 2:00 Christmas afternoon for the ferry crossing with the first troops arriving there at dark in a freezing rain.

The main crossing was handled by John Glover and his Marblehead men, so effective in spiring the American army out of Brooklyn ahead of the British. Most of the boats used were acquired from the Durham Iron Works in Philadelphia. These were flat bottomed with a beam of eight feet, had four-foot-high sides, and were forty to sixty feet long. Fully loaded, the boats had a draft of only two feet, which allowed them to be brought close to shore for ease of loading. A boat could carry as many as forty men standing up, but the eighteen field cannon and fifty or more horses had to be loaded onto flatboats taken previously from various ferries along the river.



“Passage of the Delaware” by Thomas Sully, 1819.

To complicate matters, the full fury of the storm, a northeaster, hit at about 11:00 pm. Loading the boats, negotiating the ice-filled and fast flowing river, unloading, and returning for another load took until 3:00 in the morning to complete the transfer of men and equipment, three hours later than Washington had planned. Unknown to Washington, both Cadwalader and Ewing had failed to get their troops into position, unable to cross at Trenton or at Bristol due to heavy ice buildup along the shore of the river, a condition fortunately not present at the main crossing site.

Finally on the north shore, the troops formed into two divisions, one led by Major General John Sullivan, and including a group of sharpshooters led by Colonel John Stark, and the other division by Major General Nathaniel Greene, accompanied by Washington. Sullivan's division was to proceed south towards Trenton on the road parallel to the river and hit the town on the southwest side. Greene would move north on a road a little over half-way to Trenton and then down towards the town entering from the northwest.



The army marched together for five miles, where Greene took his division north on what was called the "Pennington Road". The storm raged over the columns the entire march along the snow and ice-slick roads, many of the men, without shoes or boots, wrapping their feet in rags for protection. One trailing officer, Major James Wilkinson, remarked that he could follow the road by the traces of blood in the snow. Rain continued, later turning to sleet and then snow, causing Sullivan to send a message to Washington stating that his men could not fire their weapons due to water getting into the priming powder of the action. Washington's response was, "Tell the general to use the bayonet."

Both columns reached the outskirts of Trenton at the same time, about 8:00 in the morning, flushing out the Hessian pickets and driving them towards the town. The pickets spread the alarm and the Hessian troops began to turn out under arms. There were three regiments of about 1500 officers and men in the town; Rall's Grenadier Regiment, which he formed up on King Street, the Lossberg Fusilier Regiment took over Queen Street, parallel with King Street, and the Knyphausen Fusilier Regiment stood in reserve. Unfortunately for Rall, guns of the American artillery were already in place at the head of both streets and loosed a volley of grapeshot, clearing the streets of Hessians.

The Lossberg Fusiliers got one of their own cannon into action and fired back, but the Americans charged and took the gun. A Lieutenant James Monroe was wounded in the shoulder while taking the cannon, an asset that

Hessian Officer and Grenadier

would serve him well at a later time in politics. Many of Stark's sharpshooters ran inside houses to dry their pieces, re-prime, and then fire as snipers on the Hessians in the streets outside. Others, following Washington's order to Sullivan, charged with their bayonets, causing the confused and surprised Hessians to begin grounding their arms and surrendering.

Between 400 and 500 Hessians and the small British dragoon detachment were able to retreat south across the Assunpink Creek Bridge, the objective that Ewing was unable to get to due to ice buildup. In the aggregate, about 900 Hessians surrendered with about 25 killed, and 90 wounded. Colonel Rall, hit twice by the sharpshooters, fell from his horse mortally wounded. Captured in the action, in addition to the Hessian troops, were four stands of colors, twelve drums, six brass cannon, and 1000 stands of small arms. Some supplies, including much needed gunpowder, were found in Hessian storehouses.

American casualties were two officers (Captain William Washington and Lieutenant James Monroe) and two enlisted men wounded, and two who reportedly fell out of the march in the night and froze to death, though some sources say the two Americans died



American Troops Charging the Hessian Lossberg Fusilier. Painting by Charles McBaron. From the United States Army Center of Military History

a few days later due likely to pneumonia. Other sources state that two American privates were killed in the action. It was also reported that three Americans were lost in accidents while re-crossing the American army to the southern shore of the Delaware River.

General Washington began his report dated December 27, 1776, to Congress with: “I have the pleasure of congratulating you upon the success of an enterprise which I had formed against a detachment of the enemy lying in Trenton, and was executed yesterday morning”.

In his communication to Congress, Washington recounts the entire exercise from the 25th through the 26th of December in detail, giving great credit to the actions of his officers and men in the following words: “In justice to the officers and men, I must add that their behavior on this occasion reflects the highest honor upon them. The difficulty of passing the river on a very severe night, and their march through a violent storm of hail and snow, did not in the least abate their ardor--but when they came to the charge each seemed to vie with the other in pressing forward; and were I to give a preference to any particular corps I should do injustice to the other”.

Though the action at Trenton on December 26, 1776, was more a raid than a battle, the outcome resulted in the raising of the morale of the American Army, as well as Congress, and further established the revolutionary cause in the eyes of the American people. Most importantly, increased enlistments allowed Washington to rebuild his army and continue the war effort.

Several later-to-be-well-known individuals participated in the battle including, in addition to George Washington, two other future presidents, James Monroe and James Madison. Also in the fight was the future Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, John Marshall as well as Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton.

References:

Fischer, David Hackett, “Washington’s Crossing”, Oxford University Press, New York, NY, 2004.

Fiske, John, “The American Revolution”, Houghton, Mifflin and Co., Boston, MA, 1891.

Leckie, Robert, “George Washington’s War, The Saga of the American Revolution”, Harper Perennial, New York, NY, 1993.

Lee, Francis Bazley. “New Jersey as a Colony and a State”, Publishing Society of New Jersey, New York, NY, 1902.

McCullough, David, “1776”, Simon and Schuster, New York, NY, 2005.

Raum, John O., "History of the City of Trenton, New Jersey", W. T. Nicholson and Company, Trenton, NJ, 1871.

Clyde, Rev John C., A.M., "Rosbrough, Tale of the Revolution, or Life, Labors, and Death of Rev. John Rosbrough...Chaplain of the Revolutionary Army...", Publisher Unknown, Easton, PA, 1880.

Americanism, Main Program Presentations
2012

Meeting	Month	Member Name
1	January	Paul Ridenour
2	February	Montie Monzingo
3	March	Gary Lovell
4	April	Tom Crowe
5	May	Michael Ratcliff
6	June	TBA
7	July	no meeting
8	August	no meeting
9	September	Harmon Adair
10	October	Frank Roberts
11	November	Paul Ridenour [or meet with the DAR]
12	December	Christmas Party