



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



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Our May meeting speaker was Michael J Radcliff, who joined the NSSAR September 25, 1997 by descent from Thomas Nuzum, a Quaker who served as Overseer of the Poor in Delaware County, Pennsylvania. In addition to Thomas Nuzum, Mr. Radcliff has 8 supplemental ancestors, and has sponsored 11 new SAR Members. He is currently the National Color Guard Vice-Commander and the TXSSAR State Inland Registrar and has been in the Texas Color Guard since December 1997. Mr. Radcliff is a member of 12 Historical and Genealogical Societies including the Society of the Cincinnati, the Virginia Society, and Jamestown Society, and is a dual member with the Georgia Society, West Virginia Society, the Delaware Society, and is a Charter Member of TXSSAR McKinney Chapter #63. He co-sponsored the new C.A.R. Matthew Bolton Chapter Collin County, Texas, sponsoring four new members for the Children of the American Revolution, and co-organized and co-chartered the Craig Austin Rowley, Texas Society Chapter of 1812, Plano, and Collin County, Texas in 2004. In addition, he is a member of the Plano Masonic Lodge, a Scottish Rite Mason, a York Rite Mason, and a member of the Hella Shrine, as well as a Ham Radio Operator.



[Photo by Tom Whitelock]

Michael J Radcliff as
George Mason and the
Bill of Rights.

In This Issue:

<i>Minutes from the May Meeting</i>	2
<i>Good Citizenship Winners and Presenters</i>	6
<i>Another Gunpowder Adventure</i>	7
<i>Speaker's List</i>	12

In this issue, we have a fourth article by Compatriot Frank Roberts;

“Another Gunpowder Adventure”

Frank's article begins on page 7.

Our next meeting will be held on June 14, 2012 at the Texas Land & Cattle Steak House on Lake Ray Hubbard in Garland: dinner at 6:00, the meeting starts at 7:00. Our speaker will be Drake Peddie, currently the President of the Denton Chapter and the Chairman of the Council of Chapter Presidents for the Texas Society. In his presentation, Privateering: Pirates or Patriots???, Mr. Peddie will appear as Captain Jonathan Haraden, a privateer captain from Salem, Massachusetts.

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

The May 10, 2012 meeting of the East Fork-Trinity Chapter of the SAR was called to order at 7:13 by President Walt Thomas, at the Texas Land and Cattle Steak House in Garland.

Thirteen members and nineteen guests were in attendance:

Members; Allen Christian, Frank Roberts, Montie Monzingo, Bill Bellomy, Walt Thomas, Tom Whitelock, Gary Snowden, Robert Vickers, Gary Lovell, Paul Ridenour, Dave Powell, Charles Windham, and Jess Lovell,

And guests; Jane Roberts, Vivian Dennis-Monzingo, Barbara Thomas, Martha Bellomy, Barbara Powell, Della Vickers, Mike & Carol Radcliff, Dorothy Ridenour, Jim & Nell Welborn, Glenn & Peggy Atterberry, Christine Lewis, Garry & Doobie Lewis, Joe Sullivan, Mindy Lovell, and Fred Hawkins.

Chaplain Bill Bellomy opened the meeting with prayer.

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

President Walt Thomas acknowledged and welcomed the guests present.

Secretary Montie Monzingo presented the minutes. Compatriot Tom Whitelock moved that the minutes be approved as posted. The motion was seconded by Compatriot Paul Ridenour and was carried.

Treasurer Harmon Adair was absent due to his representing the chapter at a JROTC awards presentation.

Announcements:

President Walt Thomas reported on the following:

Armed Forces Day, May 19th, there will be a visit to the 19 veterans at the Rowlett Health & Rehab. On June 30th, there will be a reception for new citizens. A DAR

luncheon is scheduled for November 3rd. There will be a Christmas Parade on December 1st. Members are encouraged to attend these events. Tom Whitelock attended the burial of PFC Philip Schiller (KIA in Afghanistan) at the DFW National Cemetery. Tom Whitelock added that there were five burials before Schiller's, and that the Patriot Riders were in attendance.

Compatriots Allen Christian and Paul Ridenour reported that the Denton Chapter had a large color Guard and would welcome our color guard to join theirs and vice versa. Also, the McKinney chapter is quite active; not just in McKinney.

Tom Whitelock presented a list of needs from the VA Hospital in Bonham. He offered to take items brought to our meetings to the hospital.

Frank Roberts reported on the awards presentation at Heritage Christian Academy. Frank also discussed his articles that have appeared in the chapter's newsletter. He added that he would enjoy researching our compatriots or a particular battle if we were interested.



[Photo by Tom Whitelock]

Christine was presented with a certificate of appreciation, which the members had signed on the back.

Christine Lewis, widow of Delora Lewis, attended the meeting accompanied by her son Garry Lewis and his wife Doobie Lewis. Delora was a founding member of our chapter when it began in Mesquite. Christine presented Compatriots Allen Christian and Tom Whitelock with the original charter, a chapter banner, and photographs.



[Photo by Tom Whitelock]

When the chapter's color guard presented the award at Rockwall Commissioner's Court, Nell Welborn was in attendance to record the friends of the library's donation. She took photographs of our presentation and had the photographs and an accompanying article published in several local newspapers. For her service, the chapter presented Nell Welborn with a certificate of appreciation.



[Photo by Tom Whitelock]



[Photo by Tom Whitelock]

Compatriot David Powell was presented with a military service medal. David served for 23 years in the Air Force, beginning as an airman and rising to the rank of captain. Much of his time in the air force was spent in England (where he met his wife Barbara), Germany, and Langley Air Force Base.

Compatriot Jess Lovell was presented with a military service award. Jess served in the US Marine Corp, having to get parental consent since he joined at 17 years of age. Jess spent time all over the world, most notably in Somalia. Later he was assigned to Camp Pendleton where he taught heavy weapons.



[Photo by Tom Whitelock]

Our guest speaker, Michael Radcliff, was introduced by Vice President Ridenour. Mr. Radcliff's topic was, "George Mason: The Bill of Rights".

Mr. Radcliff's presentation was in two parts: in the first part of the presentation, Mr. Radcliff assumed the role of George Mason and expressed Mason's views on the need of a Bill of Rights. George Mason wanted guaranteed rights for individual citizens and the separate states. In the second part on the presentation, Mr. Radcliff read complementary comments about George Mason made by notable historic figures such as Thomas Jefferson.

Compatriot Tom Whitelock, having become wise to the fact that the first few raffle winners were getting the picks of the litter, cleverly disguised all of the prizes in boxes marked only with "?s".

Tom conducted the raffle and the winners were: Barbara Thomas, Dorothy Ridenour, Garry Lewis, Doobie Lewis, Montie Monzingo, Jane Roberts, Jim Welborn, Nell Welborn, and Peggy Atterberry.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13.

Respectfully submitted,

Montie Monzingo, Secretary

Don't Forget, we will meet in June:

Our next meeting will be held on June 14, 2012 at the Texas Land & Cattle Steak House on Lake Ray Hubbard in Garland: dinner at 6:00, the meeting starts at 7:00. Our speaker will be Drake Peddie, currently the President of the Denton Chapter and the Chairman of the Council of Chapter Presidents for the Texas Society. In his presentation, Privateering: Pirates or Patriots???, Mr. Peddie will appear as Captain Jonathan Haraden, a privateer captain from Salem, Massachusetts.

2012 Good Citizenship Award winners and presenters

School	Presenter	Winner	Date, Place and Time
Rockwall High School	Paul Ridenour	Michael Kelso	May 22, Rockwall Auditorium 7:00 PM
Rockwall Heath High School	Paul Ridenour	Trevor Reichardt	May 24, 7 pm
Heritage Christian Academy	Frank Roberts	Caleb Cathey	Wednesday, May 9th at 1:30
Forney High school	Tom Whitelock	Kyle Sanders	May 20 at 2:00 PM, Auditorium
North Forney High School	Paul Ridenour	Crystal Bui	May 21st at 7:00 p.m. Auditorium
Cain Middle school	Walt Thomas	Darwin David	May 15, Rockwall Heath High School Performing Arts Center 6:00 PM
Williams Middle School	Montie Monzingo, Allen Christian	Eric Wimpee	May 10th at 2:00 pm in gymnasium
Utley Middle School	Montie Monzingo, Allen Christian	Matthew Roland	May 15th at 2:30pm in the Performing Arts Center
Sunnyvale High School	Walt Thomas	Ricky Thomas	May 31st at 6:00 PM in the SHS Cafetorium

Another Gunpowder Adventure
The Raid on the British Brigantine *Betsy*
At St. Augustine, Florida

In the month of July 1775, a combined patriot force of the colonies of Georgia and South Carolina executed a bold maneuver by seizing a British armed merchant vessel, the *Phillipa*, at the mouth of the Savannah River. The patriots confiscated her cargo of 16000 pounds of gunpowder, along with lead, shot, and Indian trade muskets, and sent 9000 pounds to the Continental Army, dividing the rest between the two colonies. The success of this raid and the urgent need for more gunpowder spurred further plans by the rebel South Carolina Council of Safety to find and take other supplies of British gunpowder.

Rebel informants reported a cache of gunpowder stored under British control in warehouses at Nassau, on New Providence Island, in the Bahamas Islands Group. A letter from the South Carolina representatives at Philadelphia to their Council of Safety in Charleston was immediately dispatched stating that “...large quantities might be got from the government of the Havanas...”. suggesting Cuba, though obviously the representatives meant the Bahamas, as Cuba was under Spanish control.

To accomplish the task of seizing the cache of much needed gunpowder, a sloop-of-war of the New York Navy, the *Commerce*, was temporarily acquired by South Carolina’s Council of Safety. One of South Carolina’s most experienced seaman, Clement Lemprière of Mount Pleasant, a village on the north side of Charleston Bay, was appointed captain of the vessel and rather vague orders were issued by the council on July 24, 1775, informing Lemprière to “...embark on the said sloop *Commerce*...to proceed to such places and to take such measures he shall think proper to procure gunpowder...”



Fig. 1. Armed Sloop similar to the *Commerce*.

To insure fair treatment in the event Lemprière or any of his crew should be taken captive by the British, his orders included the following stern warning: “It is also hereby declared that if any commander or officer, under the King’s authority shall in any degree ill-treat the said Clement Lemprière or any of his company, the King’s officers now in our power shall be treated with equal severity, of which all persons are required to take due notice.”

The council's second orders to Lemprière were equally vague, only stating that he was to proceed to the Island of New Providence in the Bahamas Island Group with sealed orders to be opened when in sight of the island.

Lemprière's orders were amended and finally clarified on July 25, when the Council of Safety sent the following: "...the said Clement Lemprière is hereby ordered to proceed forthwith, with all convenient dispatch, to the Island of New Providence, on that island to seize, and from that island to embark on board the said sloop, all such quantity of gun-powder as he shall find and be able to take on..."

The instructions directed that Lemprière was to then proceed to Tucker's Island, North Edisto River, South Carolina, with any captured gunpowder and send notice of his arrival to the Council of Safety. Lemprière was also informed that if he could not obtain the gunpowder at the Island of New Providence, he was free to obtain British gunpowder wherever he could find it.

Lemprière's departure from Charleston, scheduled for July 25, was delayed when heavy seas with accompanying strong wind and rain squalls forced him to anchor at South Edisto Island. On the 26th, the bad weather continued, and to avoid heavy seas he worked his way up Port Royal Creek and made Port Royal the following day. Taking advantage of the continuing delay due to poor weather, he spent the next two days cleaning the hull of the *Commerce*. On the 30th, sailing weather improved, and he worked southwest through Skull Creek to Calibogue Sound and anchored for the night. On August 2, the *Commerce* was finally able to get underway in open sea and set sail south along the coast of Florida towards the city of St. Augustine.

Lemprière's log is not clear as to his course to the Bahamas, but apparently he intended sailing to the southern tip of the Florida peninsula, and across to the Island of New Providence. As he approached St. Augustine, Florida, the weather again worsened, and



sometime after midnight on June 7th, Lemprière sought protection by sailing through the St. Augustine cut and into the bay. He quietly dropped anchor a good distance from the old Fort Castillo de San Marcos so as not to gain the attention of the British garrison quartered there.

Fig. 2. St. Augustine Bay, East Florida. Extracted from Atlantique Press Image, Henry Hird, St. Augustine, Florida.

Early the next morning, Lemprière got underway and was moving towards the bar at the cut to St. Augustine Bay when a vessel was

sighted at anchor just inside the channel. He ran down on the vessel and found her to be the British brigantine *Betsy*, out of London, commanded by Captain Alvara Lofthouse. Though the brig was armed with two cannon, and had twelve soldiers from ashore on board in addition to twelve crew members including the captain, the *Commerce* was clearly stronger with twenty-six armed crewmen and more cannon. Wisely, Lofthouse complied with Lemprière's orders to allow the ship to be boarded and searched.

In the *Betsy's* hold the boarding party found one-hundred and eleven barrels of King George's gunpowder (11,000 pounds), a barrel half-full, and thirty small kegs of gunpowder belonging to one Robert Payne, a merchant from St. Augustine. Lemprière sensed that the *Betsy's* crew was not going to put up a fight as he had the upper hand in men and guns, but he wanted help in transferring the gunpowder as quickly as possible onto the *Commerce*. He was able to bribe the *Betsy's* crew with one hundred pounds hard currency to assist in moving the gunpowder between ships. When all of the gunpowder was stored aboard the *Commerce*, the two cannon on the *Betsy* were spiked, and a copy of the South Carolina Committee of Safety's orders to Lemprière was dropped on the deck of the *Betsy*. A draft of dubious worth for 1000 pounds signed by Lemprière was also dropped on deck as payment for the gunpowder belonging to Robert Payne. Without further delay, the *Commerce* set sail, and Lemprière made all haste north for South Carolina.

Bad weather struck again, causing delays in the trip northward, but Tybee Island lighthouse at the south entrance to Savannah Bay was finally sighted on August 10. The *Commerce* soon reached Skull Creek, and moved up the stream, arriving at 10:00 am at Port Royal, where an express message was sent to Charleston. At 3:00 pm the gunpowder was off-loaded, and as Lemprière settled in to wait for further orders from the Council of Safety, he learned that a British Navy sloop had been dispatched out of St. Augustine in pursuit of him, but was delayed by the bad weather and forced to abandon the chase. While Lemprière waited, several militia units arrived to guard the gunpowder, and, on the 17th an express message arrived from Charleston with a detachment of artillery troops, who were to assist in guarding the gunpowder then and on its way to Charleston.

The gunpowder, less several barrels for the local militia, was loaded onboard the vessel *Success*, and Lemprière's log states that there was a "...small squadron of nine sail..." indicating several craft accompanied the precious gunpowder to Charleston. The group of ships sailed at 10:00 am on the 19th, and through the 22nd, was either under sail, being towed, or at anchor due to bad weather. The small armada finally arriving in Charleston at 6:00 am on the 23rd to off-load ninety-one barrels, amounting to 9,100 pounds, of gunpowder.

Lemprière never made the trip to the Bahamas as his orders originally stated, but through his initiative in seizing opportunity he did bring home to Charleston much needed gunpowder that both the colony and the Continental Army were sorely in need of. With regard to the request from the South Carolina representatives at the Continental Congress to the Council of Safety asking for gunpowder, there seems to be no record of what amount of King George's captured gunpowder was sent to Philadelphia. General Patrick Tonyn, governor of East Florida and stationed in St. Augustine, was not amused by Lemprière's seizing of gunpowder from the Brigantine *Betsy*, seemingly right under his nose. On August 21, 1775, and not heeding the warning by the South Carolina Committee of safety, he published a proclamation, naming Clement Lemprière and a Simon Tuffs, and stating that "...in an audacious and piratical-like manner, opened the hatches and took out of the said Brigantine (*Betsy*), and put on board the said Sloop (*Commerce*), one hundred and eleven barrels of Gunpowder belonging to his Majesty, and about four-hundred weight, the property of Mr. Robert Payne, of St. Augustine, Merchant."

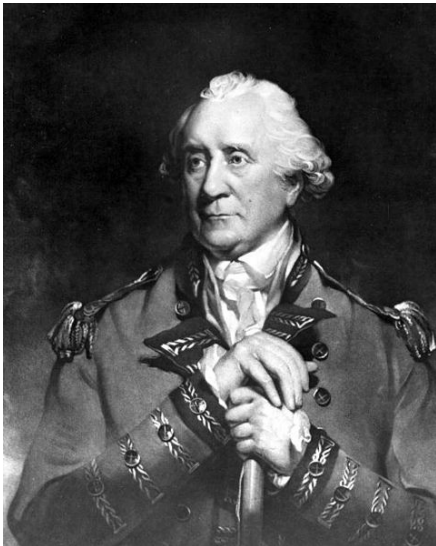


Fig. 3. General Patrick Tonyn, Governor of East Florida

The governor then offered 200 pounds sterling to "...any person or persons who shall apprehend and bring to justice the said Clement Lemprière and Simon Tuffs, and their associates in the said act of piracy." Unfortunately for Governor Tonyn no one ever claimed the bounty.

Author's Note:

The Simon Tuffs mentioned in Governor Tonyn's proclamation appears to be Captain Simon Tufts, later commander of the South Carolina Navy Ship *Defence* and subsequently other ships of the South Carolina Navy.

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Article by Frank E. Roberts

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Americanism, Main Program Presentations

Meeting	Month	Member Name
1	January	Paul Ridenour
2	February	Montie Monzingo
3	March	Gary Lovell
4	April	Tom Crowe
5	May	Michael Radcliff
6	June	Drake Peddie
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