

M. Graham Clark Chapter of the SAR - Minutes of Meeting 18 December 2021

The meeting was called to order by President David Bartlett at 8:33 a.m. at the Country Club of Missouri

The colors were posted prior to the meeting. There was no color guard.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by COM Garland Lessley who then offered the opening prayer as chaplain. The Pledge to the SAR was led by COM Billy Voight.

President Bartlett recognized guests who included at least 8 spouses of attending members. Guests included: CAR liaison Dee Woodward, prospective CAR member Nicholas Barber - great nephew of COM J. Y. Miller and Mary, and prospective member James Tuttle. See appended list for complete attendance.

Birthdays for the month of December included COM Russell DeVenney and his grandson and sister, and COM Wayne Merrill. Anniversaries for December included COM Wayne Merrill and his wife Patricia, and COM Russell DeVenney and his wife Laura.

Those recognized for sick call included COM Dr. R. L Woodward. Members signed a card of encouragement to be sent to COM Woodward.

President Bartlett announced a break for breakfast.

President Bartlett reconvened the meeting at 9:03, and thanked and acknowledged the good work done by Vice-President Alan Hiles, who presided over the past three meetings.

President Bartlett introduced the day's speaker, COM J. Y. Miller who gave a presentation on **"Christmas at Valley Forge."**

In the autumn of 1777, after a series of hard-fought battles that concluded with the British taking the capital of Philadelphia, General Washington retreated with an underfed, poorly clothed army of 12,000 men to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania for the winter and spring. An industrial town with an ironworks and sawmill, 18 miles northwest of Philadelphia, the army encamped on a 4,000-acre site from December 23, 1777, to June 19, 1778.

Arriving two days prior to Christmas Day, the men quickly constructed fortifications and huts. Nearly 3,000 of the men were physically unfit for duty. Food was scarce and many of the men suffered during the winter without shoes. Disease was rampant and, ultimately, nearly 3,000 men died at Valley Forge.

The dire circumstances of his army led General Washington to bitterly complain about the lack of support from the Continental Congress and he drafted a letter resigning his command.

Ultimately, after seeing the support of the men in the encampment, he threw the letter into fire. Washington considered a surprise attack on the British, who were only a day's march away. Washington wanted a repeat of his triumph at Trenton, a year earlier. However, his staff wisely counseled him to abandon this plan as a heavy snow began to fall on Valley Forge.

On Christmas Day, the exhausted troops received a holiday dinner of burnt mutton and watery broth. The footprints of the soldiers without shoes were bloody red streaks in the snow.

The army was racially and ethnically diverse with 30% speaking English as their secondary language. Slaves and free blacks, Indians, combined with all manner of religious groups and ethnic Europeans made the army a melting pot reflective of the emerging country they were fighting for.

Washington approved of a plan to inoculate the troops against small pox, as the British army was. One-third of the troops were inoculated at a time so that the number of troops suffering side-effects at one time would be minimized.

In February of 1779, Baron Friederich von Steuben entered camp and accepted the task as Inspector General of standardizing the military drills, sanitation, ceremonies, etc., that had previously been different for the troops of each colony.

By the end of the winter, the hardships the men endured and their new-found military discipline served to bond the men and gave them new confidence, unity, and *esprit de corps*. Valley Forge was that cold crucible by which was forged the American Army that won the war.

President Bartlett thanked COM Miller for his presentation.

Secretary Mitchell Moore announced the minutes of the last meeting were on the website and moved they be approved. COM Alan Hiles seconded. Motion passed.

Past President Charlie Lee reported on the slate of officers presented by the committee, to be voted on during the February meeting. They are as follows:

President – COM David Bartlett, Vice-President – COM Alan Hiles, Secretary – COM Mitchell Moore, Treasurer – COM Russell DeVenney, Genealogist/Registrar – COM John Coutts, Historian – COM Paul Whatley, Chaplain – COM Garland Lessley, Sergeant-at-Arms – COM James Lee, Executive Secretary – COM Paul Whatley.

Appointed positions include: Webmaster – COM J. Y. Miller; Trustees – COM J. Y. Miller, COM John Coutts, and COM Charlie Lee.

Treasurer Russell DeVenney reported on the treasury and noted the need to reimburse COM J. Y. Miller for the \$22 monthly cost paid to the domain host of the website. So moved by COM DeVenney and seconded by COM David Bartlett. DeVenney mentioned with thanks a generous donation made this morning to the Chapter by Friend Dr. Krause.

Motion to approve the Treasurer's report by COM Wayne Merrill and seconded by COM Charlie Lee. Motion passed.

Genealogist John Coutts gave a detailed report on the status of applications that is attached to the minutes. COM David Bartlett moved for approval of the report and COM J. Y. Miller seconded. Motion passed.

The 50-50 drawing was held COM J. Y. Miller with guest Nicholas Barber picking the ticket and \$13 was won by COM Jim Lee.

Under current business, President Bartlett announced the next meeting of the M. Graham Clark Chapter of the SAR would be January 15, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. at the Country Club of Missouri.

President Bartlett announced this day is Wreaths Across America Day in remembrance of veterans with wreath-laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery as well as more than 2,500 additional locations in all 50 US states, at sea and abroad.

President Bartlett informed members of various web resources: mgcsar.org, mossar.org, sar.org, PRS – Patriot Research System – <https://www.sar.org/patriot-research-system/>.

Among the tools on one of the websites is a Google Maps tool detailing the gravesites of veterans of the Revolutionary War.

There was no unfinished business.

New business: COM J. Y. Miller gave an update regarding future programs and mentioned that those who have a program can also volunteer to be listed on the Speakers' Bureau section of our Chapter website.

COM Terrill Jones informed members of Facebook websites available.

The SAR recessional was then led by COM Terrill Jones followed by the closing prayer by COM Lessley Garland.

President Bartlett moved to adjourn. Second by COM J. Y. Miller. Motion passed and meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Mitchell Moore, Secretary

MGC RSVP. DECEMBER		
NAME	MEAL	
Barber, Nicholas	1	Guest of JY
Bartlett, Bob & Priscilla	2	
Bartlett, David	1	
Coutts, John	1	
DeVenney, Russ	1	
Hiles, Alan & Waylene	2	
Jones, Terrill	1	
Krause, William	1	
Lee, Charles	1	
Lee, James	1	
Lessley, Garland & Connie	2	
Lucas, Luke & Kathryn	2	
Lybarger, Jesse	1	
Miller, J.Y. & Mary	2	
Miller, Raymond & Ruth	2	
Merrill Wayne & Pat	2	
Moore, Mitchell & Sharon	2	
Moore, Richard	1	
Pickard, Blair	1	
Tuttle, James	1	Prospect
Voight, William	1	
Whatley, Paul	1	
Woodward, dee	1	Guest\