



NEWSLETTER

#2 2005

A History Of The Blair County Chapter, SAR

I am going to present the "History of the Blair County Chapter" which was included in my book, "Mother Bedford And The American Revolutionary War", in a series of articles for the Chapter's newsletter. In this issue, we will look at the formative period of the Chapter and its forerunner.

The Logan Chapter

In 1929/30 a chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution was formed in Blair County. The chapter was headquartered in Altoona and the name chosen for it was *Logan Chapter*. The chapter's name was chosen in honor of the Indian, Captain Logan. Captain Logan was an Indian who was friendly to the white settlers of the Blair County region during the Revolutionary War period. Although not mentioned in

the history of the chapter which was included in the 1955 Year Book of the Pennsylvania Society, SAR, the historical impact that the Logan Valley played in the formative period of Blair County might have also influenced the naming of the chapter.

In his book, *A History Of Blair County, Pennsylvania*, published in 1931, editor Tarring S. Davis included the following information:

"The Daughters of the American Revolution have in Altoona the Colonel John Proctor Chapter, of which Miss Mary V. Turner is the regent, and Mrs. W. Frank Beck, secretary. Dr. G. C. Robb and Frank B. White are the presiding officers of the Sons of the American Revolution."

The fact that Mr. Davis did not include the name of the chapter might have been a result of the recent formation of the chapter (in 1929, at

the time of the compilation of information for his book).

On 04 April, 1929 a group of at least seven

men met in the Logan Room of the Penn Alto Hotel in Altoona to discuss the formation of a local chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution. Guy C. Robb acted as the group's temporary chairman. As is usual in the formative meetings of any organization, the individual who devises the idea of creating any such organization tends to be the one who acts as temporary chairman. It might be assumed, therefore, that it was Dr. Robb who was the motivating force behind the chapter's formation.

At that organizational meeting of 04 April, 1929 the following individuals were elected as officers: Guy C. Robb, president; Joseph D. Findley, vice-president; Frank B. White, secretary; Robert C. Wilson, treasurer; H. Allen Anderson, registrar; J. Foster Meck, historian; and R. Max Lewis, chaplain. John L. Walker of Pittsburgh, the then president of the Pennsylvania Society, installed these officers on 23 November, 1929 at a formal installation

ceremony at the Penn Alto Hotel in Altoona.

It was not until 20 February, 1930 that the Pennsylvania Society granted the application for the chapter's charter. That charter was presented to the chapter on 08 October, 1930 and contained the names of the following members: H. Allen Anderson, Clinton W. Booser, Dr. Joseph D. Findley, Harry A. Jacobs, R. Max Lewis, J. Foster Meck, Dr. C.H. Metzgar, Dr. G.C. Robb, P.W. Snyder, C.E. Torrance, Frank B. White and Robert C. Wilson.

The chapter's meetings were held in Dr. Robb's office, and continued until the year 1934.

Despite efforts to increase the membership of the chapter, that hoped-for increase simply did not occur. At the same time, the individuals who were charter members became delinquent in paying their annual dues. The Pennsylvania Society made the decision to cancel the chapter's charter on 22 February, 1934.

The Blair County Chapter Is Chartered

Notices appeared in the county's newspapers during the month of November, 1946 announcing that a new chapter of the S.A.R. would be formed in the county. A press release was given to the *Altoona Mirror*, the *Altoona*

Tribune, the *Hollidaysburg (PA) Register*, and the *Morrisons Cove Herald*. Under the headlines of "New Chapter of S.A.R. Will Be Formed In City" and "New Chapter S.A.R. Will Be Formed In Blair County" the article stated that:

"Plans are well advanced for the early establishment of a local chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution in Altoona to include members from the entire county of Blair. It is planned to hold the charter meeting some time in February, 1947."

The article appeared in the *Altoona Mirror* on 16 November, 1946; in the *Altoona Tribune* on 18 November, 1946; and in both, the

Hollidaysburg (PA) Register and *Morrisons Cove Herald* on 21 November, 1946. It continued to inform the public that:

"There are many eligible members located in Altoona, Tyrone, Hollidaysburg, Duncansville, Roaring Spring, Martinsburg, Williamsburg and throughout the county. The number of eligible members is placed around 200. The state president of the S.A.R., Capt, Charles B. Shaler of Pittsburgh, is ably assisting Dr. L. N. Ray and M. W. Hazel in the preliminary organization work. Membership is based on direct lineage from a Revolutionary soldier, seaman or patriot who gave material aid. Those working on the preliminary organization said it is anticipated that the various chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution located in the county would follow their usual practice of giving valuable aid in securing records. A number of eligible S.A.R. members in the county have volunteered to assist in the organization work."

W. Ray Metz, the chapter historian in 1955 when the *Year Book* of the Pennsylvania Society was compiled, stated in his entry for that book that it was *“through the efforts of Charles B. Shaler, Chairman of the New Chapters Committee of the state organization”* that the interest in forming a new chapter in Blair County was aroused.

On Friday evening, the 13th of December, 1946 a meeting was held at the Penn Alto Hotel in Altoona with Charles B. Shaler directing the proceedings and twenty-two interested Blair County men in attendance. The meeting’s highlights were reported in the *Altoona Mirror* and the *Altoona Tribune* the following day:

“Final plans for the formal organization of a Blair County chapter of the Pennsylvania society, Sons of the American Revolution, were outlined last evening at a dinner meeting of 22 representative citizens at the Penn-Alto hotel.

“The organization meeting was conducted by Capt. Charles B. Shaler of Pittsburgh, past president of the state society and chairman of the new chapters committee, and Edwin B. Graham of Pittsburgh, secretary-treasurer of the state society.

“Formal installation of the new chapter, as yet unnamed, will be held at a dinner meeting at the Penn-Alto Monday, Jan. 27. Morris W. Hazel was elected president of the county group and George B. Fleck was chosen secretary-treasurer, while remaining officers and the board of management will be selected at the meeting in January.

“Installing officer for the Blair county chapter, open to members from Altoona and all of Blair county, in addition to those who are now members of other chapters and who desire to transfer their membership to the new unit, will be Capt. Shaler.

“He will be assisted by national officers and the entire Pennsylvania state board of management. Also present will be representatives from Washington, D.C., Virginia, Maryland and possibly President General Allen Oliver of Missouri and Executive Member Judge Benjamin Powell of Austin, Tex. The state regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Mrs. Benjamin R. Williams of Butler, will also be present.

“Those attending the meeting were informed that Mrs. Ralph Bell, past regent of the Col. John Proctor chapter, D.A.R., deserves much credit for furnishing information leading to the organization of the chapter.

“It is estimated that a minimum of 600 to 700 men of the county are eligible by right of an ancestor having actively participated in the Revolutionary war for membership in the new chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution.”

The men who attended the December 13 meeting included: C. Campbell Beck, William E. Boyer, S. Palmer Carter, Charles E. Faris, Joseph D. Findley, George S. Fleck, L. Peliman Glover, Morris W. Hazel, Floyd G. Hoenstine, Joseph R. Holliday, John McAfee, J. Foster Meck, W. Ray Metz, Leonard N. Ray, John S. Seeds, J. Howard Tobias, Thomas W. Tobias, Charles E. Torrance, James E. Trego, William A. Whittaker, Robert C. Wilson, and Donald M. Yarnall.

The newly-formed chapter acknowledged with gratitude the assistance given by various members of the local DAR chapters in an article printed in the *Altoona Mirror* on 16 December, 1946. Those thanked for their *“splendid assistance”* in securing names of prospective members and in preparing of applications were Helen B. Stitt (regent of the Col. John Proctor Chapter), Mrs. Robert B. Smith (regent of the Adam Holliday Chapter), Mrs. Charles U. Getz (regent of the Fort

Roberdeau Chapter), and Mrs. W.H. Burd of Altoona.

The organization of the chapter was brought another step closer to finality on Wednesday evening, the 70 of January, 1947. Again Mr. Shaler presided over the meeting held at the Penn-Alto Hotel during which the other officers were elected and various of the aims of the chapter were outlined. Aside from Messrs. Hazel and Fleck, Dr. S. Palmer Carter was chosen to serve as first vice-president, Joseph R. Holliday as second vice-president, W. Ray Metz as third vice-president. Floyd G. Hoenstine was elected to fill the position of genealogist, John S. Seeds to be the chapter's historian, J. Foster Meck as chancellor, J. Howard Tobias as chaplain, and Charles A.

Faris was chosen to serve as registrar. The board of management was to include: John E. Trego, Harry A. Jacobs, John McAfee, John Hunter, Thomas W. Tobias, Joseph D. Findley, Robert C. Wilson, William A. Whittaker, and Donald M. Yarnall. (It should be noted that of these individuals, only the name of John Hunter failed to appear in the charter when it was formally printed in 1949.)

The *Altoona Tribune* also noted in its January 8, 1947 issue that: "*The name was chosen also last night...*" This referred to the fact that the newly-formed group took as its name **BLAIR COUNTY CHAPTER**.

As Mr. Metz noted in his history of the chapter for inclusion in the *1955 Year Book*:

"The name selected was the Blair County chapter to establish its geographic location in the state and to commemorate the name of John Blair after whom the county was named, being the only county in the state to be named in honor of a resident. John Blair (1767-1832) was the son of Thomas Blair who settled this area as early as 1785, coming from Franklin county where he contributed to the cause of the American Revolutionary War. His son, John Blair, was a prominent citizen during his life, contributing to the development of this area, being active in establishing the Huntingdon, Cambria and Indiana turnpike and the selection of the Juniata Valley for the Pennsylvania Canal with its terminal at Hollidaysburg, and its connection at Johnstown by the Allegheny Portage Railroad."

Plans were formulated for the Institution Dinner to be held on 27 January, 1947, to which meeting all of the members of the local DAR chapters were invited to attend. Mr. Shaler noted that the two coveted prizes of the National Society, SAR, the Syracuse Banner (for the greatest state membership) and the Colorado Banner (for the largest percentage of gain in state membership) would be on display.

Capt. Charles B. Shaler discussed the tasks the chapter should aim toward achieving once it would be formally instituted. He stressed the importance of the SAR in helping to guide, rather to form, public opinion. He noted that there were communist-controlled schoolboards throughout the state and that such a schoolboard existed not too far from Altoona itself. Mr. Shaler urged the chapter

to aim toward preventing such things as the spending of money to have foreigners write American history texts for American schools, which was the current practice. His comments throughout the meeting were aimed at pointing out that it would be the task and the duty of the Blair County Chapter to do what it could to prevent such "*un-American*" activities from continuing unabated. In adherence to the principles expressed as the objects of the Constitution of the Sons of the American Revolution, Mr. Shaler emphasized the chapter members' role in "*maintain(ing) and extend(ing) the institutions of American freedom*". It is interesting to note that such an injunction was urged upon our chapter forefathers in view of the more recent (1991) approval by the Pennsylvania Society of a motion that the PASSAR would not engage in

actions/resolutions of a political nature. It should also be noted that the only dissenting votes to be cast against that Pennsylvania

Society motion were those cast by Blair County Chapter members!

The Institution Of The Blair County Chapter's Charter

The formal institution of the charter of the Blair County Chapter of the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the American Revolution took place at a banquet held in the Logan Room of the Penn-Alto Hotel in Altoona, Pennsylvania. The event took place on Monday evening, the 27th of January, 1947.

The dinner/meeting was started by the presentation of colors by a color guard consisting of Miss Vivian L. Carter, Miss Janet H. Roy, Mrs. Helen Palmer Sellers and Mrs. Luther L. Warsing. The patriotic hymn, *America* was sung prior to the Pledge of Allegiance. The Reverend Charles W. Maus, chaplain of the Pennsylvania Society gave the invocation. The dinner came next on the program and it was followed by a vocal solo

by Miss Phyllis L. Bland, accompanied by E.L. Bartholomew. Captain Charles B. Shaler extended greetings to the dinner guests and then turned the program over to Glenn E. Thomson, Esq., of Clearfield who presided over the actual installation of the officers. Mr. Thomson asked the members if they concurred in the desire to establish a chapter, if they approved of the elected officers and if they were dedicated to the ideals of the organization. The formal installation of Morris W. Hazel of Altoona as the first president of the new chapter was conducted by Mr. Shaler, who handed Mr. Hazel his badge of office, his gavel and the organization's charter. President Hazel responded by giving an acceptance speech in which he stated that:

"...it is my hope and wish that we work together as one, that we follow closely the objects of our society, that we shall be inspired with a reverence for the high principles of our forefathers, and that we may help to cultivate in America a love for peace and truth which shall help to demonstrate to the world the meaning of 'liberty and justice for all'. I believe we will go from here toward the goal of a large membership and a strong chapter, which shall be able to carry out the ideals of our national organization."

Following an address by the Honorable D. Emmert Brumbaugh, former congressman and then current State Secretary of Banking, the attendees sang the *Star Spangled Banner* and the benediction was given by J. Howard Tobias, the newly installed chaplain of the Blair County Chapter. Although a number of state and national dignitaries were invited to the affair, only the following were able to attend: Frank B. Steele, Secretary General of the National Society; Edwin B. Graham, a member of the Executive Board of the National Society; and Walter M. Swoope, past president of the Susquehanna Chapter.

The announcement was made that the chapter had been given permission to hold the

charter open until March 15, 1947 to permit any individuals with incomplete applications to be included as charter members. This would prove advantageous for the chapter, because the number of charter members would eventually prove to be more than double that of the twenty-two who initially attended the organizational meetings.

The main speaker for the Institution Dinner, as noted previously, was the Hon. D. Emmert Brumbaugh, a resident of Claysburg and president of the First National Bank of Claysburg. The speech he presented to the guests that evening was reprinted in the Tuesday, January 28, 1947 issue of the *Altoona Mirror*, and included the following

thoughts: *"We were not all born Americans, but we can live as Americans and die as Americans. This has been a country where people have been permitted to develop their talents. On individual initiative alone can we continue successfully in the pattern our forefathers laid down."* He referred to the requisite for membership of "character", and noted that it was the character of George Washington which kept the colonial troops together through dark days. He noted that Washington had devised ways to keep up the morale of his troops, such as the service stripe to denote three years of service and the Purple Heart to honor those wounded. *"It was the first time in history anyone had given honor to those who fought in the ranks."* Mr. Brumbaugh drew attention to the dedication to god and religion that the founding fathers exhibited. *"America when compared to her neighbors in the old world is still in swaddling clothes, but in industrial strength, inventive genius, moral values, form of government, education, standard of living and progress, she is unsurpassed. This rapid growth and expansion is due to the manner in which our forefathers conceived a new nation guided by that priceless rulebook, the Constitution, and a deep-rooted faith and dependence in God."* Mr. Brumbaugh expressed regret that there was no prayer to open the recent San Francisco conference which set up the United Nations because some of the countries did not believe in God and the United States bowed to that belief. What we need, he noted was *"another chair at those tables, a chair reserved for the Prince of Peace"* if the peace is to be established on a basis of justice and fairness to all. Concluding, the guest speaker praised the organization for its determination and character to attempt to perpetuate the ideals of its forefathers and warned those assembled that *"everyone here tonight must see to it that we have a sound and God-fearing government in Washington. If only the American people will become thoroughly aroused and recapture the spirit of true Americanism with the aid of such*

splendid organizations as the Sons of the American Revolution, we can kindle the fires of our national conscience to a white heat. Such action is imperative if we are to preserve the glories of this great republic and be true to our sacred trust as custodians of the priceless heritage handed us by hardy American pioneers of Revolutionary fame."

On the following page is a reproduction of the original charter signed by the President and Secretary of the Pennsylvania Society, sealed with the seal of that Society, and delivered to the Blair County Chapter. The document is dated the 7th day of June in the year of Our Lord 1949, and in the year of the Independence of the United States of America the 173rd. By the time the application for the charter was granted there were sixty-nine members on the chapter's roll.

It is hard to be certain, at this time nearly fifty years removed from those days of the chapter's beginning, why the charter was not issued earlier than the year 1949. One possibility is that the Pennsylvania Society merely did not move more quickly to act upon getting the charter application actually granted because of other, more urgent matters. Another possibility is that the request to keep the charter open was extended beyond the initial deadline of 15 March, 1947 in order to allow even more incomplete member applications to be completed. An article appeared in the Wednesday, August 6, 1947 issue of the *Altoona Mirror* in which president Morris W. Hazel said that *"plans call for the expansion of the chapter to 100 members by the end of 1947."* He added that *"the charter of the organization has not yet been closed..."* In any case, the charter, like any indenture was eventually signed, sealed and delivered to the members of the new chapter.

On 26 June, 1947 twenty-five new members were welcomed into the chapter at a dinner held at the Penn-Alto. Only six of those twenty-five new members were actually present at the dinner due to the fact that the rest resided outside of the area at the time. A number of the new members were out of the area because they were serving in the armed forces engaged in the Second World War. Past state president,

CHARTER OF BLAIR COUNTY CHAPTER

OF THE



INSTITUTED JANUARY 27, 1847
ALTOONA, BLAIR COUNTY, PA.

Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the American Revolution

Libertas et Patria.

Graden Musser Akers
Edwin Benjamin Balthaser
Cornelius Campbell Beck
Robert D. Bell
Robert John Boyer
William Edward Boyer
Frank Warren Brown, III
Horace Atlee Brumbaugh
William Truscott Canan
Sylvester Palmer Carter
John Hill Christy

Martin Bell Christy, Jr.
Samuel Van-Scoyoc Cree
George Richard Downs, Jr.
Charles Alexander Faria
Joseph Dysart Findley
George Slayman Fleck
Leon Weston Fraker
Charles Irwin Fuller, Jr.
Russell Bare Garver
Lewis Pellman Glover
Roy Wilson Goshorn

Wilfred Lorenz Hair
Edward Willard Hazel
Morris Wilson Hazel
Robert Rogers Herr
George Good Hewitt
Floyd Guanser Hoenastine
Joseph Ramsey Holliday
Alvan Eugene Horton
Harry Augustus Jacobs
Robert Donald Lorenz
Walter Morrison Lorenz
Arthur Rolan Lukens, Jr.

Mitchell MacCartney
James Miller Mathers
John McAfee
John Foster Meek, Sr.
John Foster Meek, Jr.
William Ray Metz
John Allen Murray
Richard Colburn Murray
Jermain Burtis Porter
Leonard Nixon Ray
Warren Ellwood Roy
Fred Burley Sauserman

Fred Thomas Schenk
John S. Seeds
James Wright Simpson
James Stanley Sims, Jr.
Herbert Balt Thomas
John Grazier Tobias
John Howard Tobias
Thomas William Tobias
Charles Edward Torrance
James Moreland Trego
John Elliott Trego
Ralph Harold Wagner

Alfred H. Wasson
Dwight Carr Wasson
James A. Wasson
Bruce B. Watson
Donald Culp Weaver
William A. Whittaker
Alvah Jerrol Williams
Glenn Jesse Williams
Gordon Maurice Williams
Robert C. Wilson
Donald MacCartney Yarnall

Members of the **BLAIR COUNTY** Chapter of the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the American Revolution,
Greeting:

Whereas, In pursuance of and according to Article II, Section 6, of the By-Laws of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, and also in accordance with Article VIII of the Constitution of the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, you have made application to the Board of Managers of said State Society for authority to form a Chapter, to be called and known as **BLAIR COUNTY** Chapter, to be located at Altoona, Pennsylvania, in the County of Blair and of which you are to be members; and

Whereas, The Board of Managers of this Society, by resolution passed at a meeting of said Board, on the 7th day of June, 1949, granted said application;

Now, therefore, know ye that, reposing especial trust and confidence in your patriotism, the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the American Revolution does by these presents authorize you to form a Chapter of this Society within the territory of the County of Blair to be known as **BLAIR COUNTY** Chapter of the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, and we do further authorize and empower you to associate with yourself such other members of this or of any other State Society as may now, or hereafter, reside within the said territory; and, as a Chapter, to adopt such Constitution, By-Laws and Regulations as do not conflict with the Constitution and By-Laws of the National Society or of this Society. All members of this or of any State Society residing within the territory aforesaid shall be eligible to membership in this Chapter; but any member who shall be suspended, expelled, or in any way lose membership in the State Society, shall thereupon cease to be a member of this Chapter, and no person shall be admitted who is not a member of a State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution.

It is your sacred duty to revive and keep alive, especially within your territory, the spirit of pure and unselfish patriotism which inspired the Fathers of the Republic, and diligently to promote the lofty aims and objects of the Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, to the end that our country may be preserved free, independent, and united; that enlightened constitutional government may be maintained, and that peace and happiness, truth and justice, liberty and fraternity may be established among us for all generations.

Given under the seal of this Society, this 244th Day in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and forty-nine and of the Independence of the United States of America the One Hundred and Seventy-Third



John A. Fritchey, II President.

Edwin B. Graham Secretary.

attorney Glenn E. Thomson attended the dinner as the guest speaker. Mr. Thomson's comments

were devoted to "The Constitution", during which he noted that:

"the cost of preserving liberty is sometimes more expensive than achieving that liberty in the first place. " He also noted that "We are not here to boast of our ancestors; we are here to continue that heritage of progress and devotion to ideals left to us by those ancestors. Our problems today are new, such as never faced our ancestors, but we must face them, not with the idea that the old way is the only way to solve them. We must solve them the best way."

To be continued...**(The Early Years)**

Constitution Day Dinner 2005

The Blair County Chapter, SAR was pleased to be able to host a dinner between the SAR and the DAR on Saturday, the 17th of September 2005. The event was held at the Ramada Inn Altoona and began at 5:00pm. Dr. J. Jackson Barlow, Professor of Political Science at Juniata College, spoke on "Perspectives On Constitutional Law." Members of three of the DAR chapters in our region (Adam Holliday, John Proctor, and Bedford) attended as our guests.

The Officers Of The Blair County Chapter, SAR For 2006-2007

President: David G. Hammaker
1st Vice-President: Craig Baxter
2nd Vice-President: Robert Trowbridge
3rd Vice-President: Frank C. Elling
Secretary: Arnold C. Emerson
Treasurer: John D. Faulds, Sr
Chaplain: James L. Curry
Registrar: David G. Hammaker
Historian: Larry D. Smith
Chancellor: Arnold C. Emerson
Genealogist: Jesse C. Williams
Directors: Alvah J. Williams, Arnold C. Emerson, E. Merle Glunt, John D. Faulds, David G. Hammaker, Harry E. Chamberlain, James S. Curry, and Cyrus A. Hammaker
Chapter Newsletter Editor: Larry D. Smith

Blair County Chapter ~ Meeting Dates for 2006

The Blair County Chapter will hold meetings at the Kings Family Restaurant at 3000, 6th Ave., Altoona on the following dates in 2006:

1st Quarter:	February 11	2nd Quarter:	To be announced
3rd Quarter:	August 12	4th Quarter / Annual:	November 18