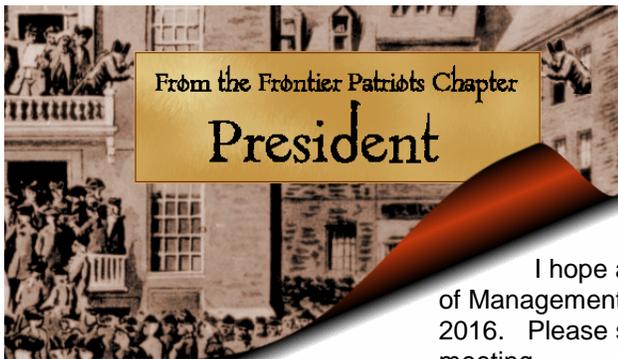


This is NewsLetter Issue No. Two ~ For the year 2016



The quarterly meeting of the Frontier Patriots Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution will be held at King's Family Restaurant, 3001 6th Avenue, Altoona, PA on Saturday, June 4th, 2016 at 12:00 Noon.

I hope all members will attend to help us plan for the PASSAR Board of Management Meeting which our chapter is hosting on November 11-12, 2016. Please save these dates so that you can both help and attend the meeting.

Reminder ~ For those of you that receive this newsletter by US mail, if you have an email address, we would appreciate you sending it to us to use for future newsletters. Printing and mailing these newsletters is very expensive. Please send to our Secretary Melvin McDowell at [melvin.mcdowell@gmail.com](mailto:melvin.mcdowell@gmail.com)



## Now On Exhibit:

### Bedford County's Role in the American Revolutionary War

An exhibit featuring thirteen informational panels accompanied by a collection of authentic American Revolutionary War artifacts is currently being shown at the Bedford County Historical Society gallery. The informational panels were created by, and the artifacts are from the personal collection of, this newsletter's author, Larry D. Smith. The exhibit will be open through 2016 and into the first part of 2017. There is no set fee for

admission to view the exhibit, but a donation is requested.

The 3' x 4' informational panels present various aspects of the American Revolutionary War from the viewpoint of the inhabitants of this south-central Pennsylvania region that was the frontier of the province at the time.

On the following pages are the first few panels. The rest will appear in future newsletters.

## Prelude to the American Revolutionary War



# The Parliamentary Acts 1764 ~ 1774

### 1764 Currency Act

The colonies are prohibited from issuing and using their own currency.

### 1765 Stamp Act

All 'public' papers, such as legal documents and newspapers or broadsides, were required to have a stamp affixed, for which a duty was to be paid.

### 1765 Quartering Act

If there was not sufficient space in the barracks, then soldiers would be housed in any 'public' building, such as a tavern. But if that were not adequate, then soldiers could be housed in private dwellings or their outbuildings.

### 1766 Declaratory Act

Parliament has the right to issue laws that would be binding on the Colonies in all cases whatsoever.

### 1767 Townshend Acts

Existing Acts to be enforced, additional customs officials to be hired, and additional taxes to be levied on certain items.

### 1773 Tea Act

The British East India Company may sell its tea at a cheaper rate than the Dutch East India Company.

### 1774 Coercive Acts aka Intolerable Acts

A series of Acts intended to punish the Colonies, Boston in particular, for not complying with the previous Acts. & To serve as a warning that continued non-compliance would not be tolerated!



'Stamp Tax' Stamp

Frederick,  
Lord North

King George III

Charles,  
2nd Marquess of  
Rockingham

Lord George  
Sackville Germain

George Grenville

Charles Townshend

### 1775 New England Restraining Act

Since the British Colonies had halted their trade with Great Britain, then they should not be permitted to trade with any other nation.

This stamp shows that it was issued for the amount of 1 shilling and 6 pence. The staple that firmly affixed the stamp to the document has slightly rusted, causing the discolored spot. The smaller stamp would be pasted over the staple on the backside of the document.

# American Revolutionary War Independence Declared



# 1775 ~ 1777

## The Unanimous Declaration

The idea of declaring independence from the mother country, Great Britain, was first voiced in a letter written by Samuel Adams to his cousin,

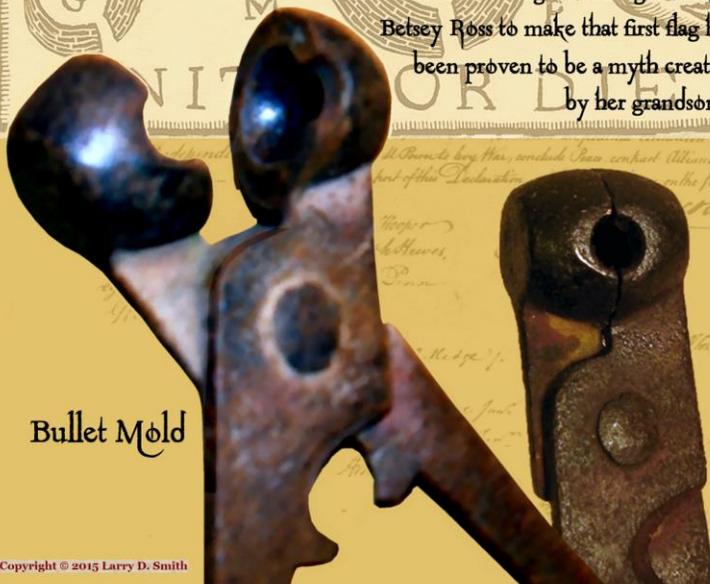
John Adams on 15 January 1776: "A motion was made in Congress the other day, to the following purpose: That whereas we have been charged with aiming at independency, a committee should be appointed to explain to the people at large the principles and grounds of our opposition, etc."

On 07 June 1776, the Congress passed 'certain resolutions respecting independency.' On the 11th a committee, consisting of John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert R. Livingston and Roger Sherman was named to prepare a draft of a document declaring independence. The first draft was brought before Congress on 28 June 1776; a discussion about it was held on Monday, 01 July. That discussion continued on the following day, and then on the 3rd. On 04 July 1776, the final draft was read by Benjamin Harrison, a vote was taken; it was passed and signed by all of the delegates except for those from New York (who had not been authorized to do so). The engrossed 'original' on which John Hancock signed his name so bold 'for King George to see all the way from England' was not actually signed by all of the delegates until 02 August 1776.

## The Flag

During the 14 June 1777 session of Congress, it was resolved that: *the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white: that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.*

The 'fact' that George Washington asked Betsy Ross to make that first flag has been proven to be a myth created by her grandsons.



Bullet Mold

## The Bedford Resolves 09 May 1775

*Resolved*, That this County will immediately form into Military Associations, and prepare themselves, in order to defend their lives, liberties, and properties, from any illegal attempts made against them.

*Resolved*, That each Township in this County shall be immediately notified to assemble themselves at a certain day and place most convenient for that purpose, and then and there, by ballot or otherwise, choose Officers in their respective Townships.

*Resolved*, That the said Officers when chosen, shall make out a Roll, and each man shall subscribe his name in said Roll, and that the Captain shall immediately transmit a copy thereof to the Committee of Correspondence at Bedford.

*Resolved*, That the Committee of this County shall purchase all the Powder and Lead in any store that may be had within the said County, and have the same put up in some safe Magazine in the Town of Bedford, for the use of the said Soldiers; and that each Company shall, by subscription, make up a proportionable part of the same; which Ammunition shall not be distributed without the orders of the Committee of Correspondence of the said County, or until it shall be thought necessary by this Committee or a majority of them.

*Resolved*, That each Company in this County shall use their utmost endeavors to purchase or provide all the Ammunition they can, so that no person in the said Company shall have less than one pound of Powder, and Lead in proportion.

*Resolved*, That as soon as the said Companies are formed, they and each of them shall be subject to military regulations and discipline, in the same manner as any other of His Majesty's Troops are (corporal punishment only excepted.)

*Resolved*, That in case any person or persons in this County shall refuse to subscribe himself in a roll of some Company in the said County, in order to defend the cause of liberty now contending for, or by any ways or means whatever discourage or disunite the said Association, that then be or they so offending shall be immediately reported by some of the officers of their respective Townships, to the Committee of Correspondence at Bedford, in order that such steps may be taken as by the said Committee may be thought most prudent; and that, in the mean time, no person or persons within the said County shall, directly or indirectly, have any dealing or commerce, by either buying or selling, borrowing, or lending to or with any of the said offenders.

*Resolved*, That all persons within this County that are not at present provided with Guns, Swords, or Tomahawks, in case of ability shall provide for themselves, and in case of inability, that the Captain of each Company shall immediately transmit their names, or their number, to the Committee of Correspondence at Bedford, that proper measures may be taken in order to provide them.

*Resolved*, That each Township shall meet and choose their Officers, and make return agreeable to the above Resolves, within the space of ten days from this date.

By order of the Committee of Correspondence: David Espy, Clerk

Resolves, such as those adopted by Bedford County were written and passed by the Committees of Correspondence for most of the counties in Pennsylvania.

It was believed for many decades that Bedford County had not adopted a set of Resolves, because, unlike those of the other counties, the Bedford County Resolves were not included in the published *Pennsylvania Archives*. While researching for his book, *Mother Bedford and the American Revolutionary War*, Larry D. Smith discovered the Bedford Resolves in the *American Archives*.

# American Revolutionary War



## The Start Of Open Conflict 1775

**Powder Horn**  
used to carry  
black powder  
for use in  
muskets



### From 'the Shot Heard 'Round the World' To the Battle of Bunker/Breed's Hill

The closing of the port of Boston by the British increased the ill-feelings toward them by the inhabitants of all New England. Word spread that the British intended to march to Concord, where a cache of weapons and ammunition was rumored to be hidden. Patriots hurried to prevent the 'redcoats' from achieving that goal. The colonists met the British on the green at Lexington on 19 April 1775. Who fired the first shot ~ the 'shot heard 'round the world' ~ is not known. What is known is that armed conflict had begun. Eight Patriot militiamen lay dead and ten were wounded, while only one British soldier was slightly wounded.

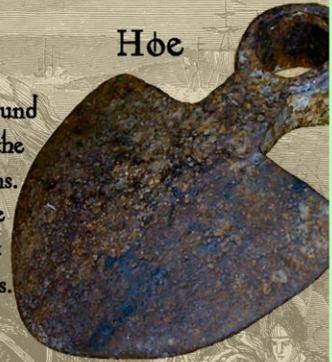
The colonial militiamen fell back to the town of Concord to regroup for a second fight. The British column approached and began to search for the weapons and ammunition, but their search was futile. The military stockpile had been secreted away as soon as the residents of Concord had been warned by Dr. Samuel Prescott that the British were on the march. The redcoats engaged nearly 400 militiamen who had assembled along the west side of the Concord River near the North Bridge. As the redcoats tried to hold the bridge, the colonists tore through them. This time it was the British who sustained the greatest losses with twelve dead, four of which were officers. Only two Patriots lost their lives. The redcoats were routed and began to march back to Boston. They were harassed the whole way.

**Bullet Bag**  
used to carry  
bulletshot



**Hoe**

This hoe was found  
at the site of the  
Battle of White Plains.  
It would have  
been used to construct  
earthen redoubts.



As a 'continental' army formed around Boston, laying siege to the British trapped inside, General Thomas Gage considered breaking through the colonists' line by force. News arrived in the Patriot camps on 15 June 1775 that the British planned to attack the line at Dorchester Heights during the next few days. During the evening of the 16th, the militiamen constructed a redoubt on Breed's Hill. When the British arose on the 17th, and saw the fortification, Gage ordered General William

Howe to attack. Under a barrage of cannon fire from five British warships in the harbor, the redcoats launched an assault of the redoubt. The Patriots held their fire until they could see the whites of the British soldiers' eyes to conserve ammunition. The result was devastating for the British. A second, and then a third assault were made by the British before they finally forced the colonial militiamen to retreat. The British had had enough, though, and didn't chase after the

Patriots. Both sides claimed victory: the British by gaining the redoubt; the Patriots by suffering only 145 deaths to the 226 British.

American Revolutionary War



1775 ~ 1783

# The Militia & Continental Line

## The Militia

The militia system had been in place throughout the English Colonies since the French and Indian War. While the regular British army was on hand to conduct offensive expeditions against foes such as the French or Amerindians, the colonial militias were established in order to provide local security.

The militia differed from the regular army in that it was called out only at times when there was a threat of actual attack. It consisted of men who were untrained in the art of war and who spent more of their time at other professions, such as farming. The men who joined the militia may have looked forward to being paid a small amount of specie for their service. But since they served for only a couple weeks during a tour of duty, the pay was small and the militiaman was not entitled to receive any type of pension or grant of land when the War was ended.

One benefit of joining the militia was that you would not be expected to be far from home. Militias were raised in each county, and were expected to serve primarily in the county in which it was raised. There were some instances, though, in which a militia might be asked to help in the defense of a neighboring county. In June 1781, the Cumberland County militia was helping Bedford County by garrisoning Fort Fetter while there was increasing Amerindian incursions.

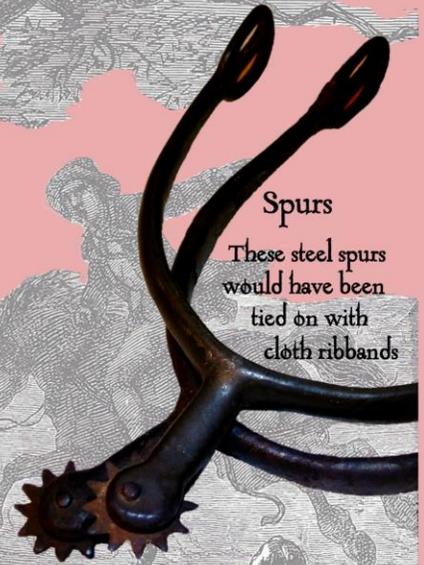
## The Continental Line

The army that formed during the Siege of Boston was formed out of militia units from all thirteen of the colonies in rebellion. The delegates assembled in the Second Continental Congress appointed Virginian, George Washington as the army's commander in chief. The Congress also called for the colonies of Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania to provide ten companies of riflemen to join the Continental army. Bedford County responded with a company under the command of Robert Cluggage.

General Washington began to train the troops and developed those rough recruits into an organized and disciplined regular army.

The Continental line soldier knew that he was enlisted for a period of a year or for the duration of the War. He accepted that fact because he was promised payment for his services (which the militia did not receive).

At the end of the War, when it became apparent that they could not make the promised payments to the soldiers, the Congress and various state legislatures gave grants of land in lieu of specie. Pennsylvania gave such grants of land out of a large tract obtained from Amerindians in 1784 which comprise the present-day northwest corner of the state.



### Spurs

These steel spurs would have been tied on with cloth ribbands



### Paynote

Men who had served in the Continental Line were paid with paynotes like this one. Although given in 1780, it was not payable until 1785. When redeemed, the note had the hole punched in it so that it could not be reused.

### Buckles

Buckles such as the ones shown here were used on shoes and coats.



LIBERTY AND UNION

The exhibit, meant to point out Bedford County's Role in the American Revolutionary War, can be viewed during the Bedford County Historical Society's regular hours of Monday through Friday 9:00am to 4:00pm and the third Saturday of the month 9:00am to 12:00noon.

The Bedford County Historical Society is located at 6441 Lincoln Highway (right at the intersection of Route 56 and Route 30 variously called the Lincoln Highway).

The BCCHS can be contacted by phone at 814-623-2011. Their email is [bedfordhistory@embarqmail.com](mailto:bedfordhistory@embarqmail.com).

As curator of the exhibit, I (Larry Smith) am available to speak to groups of any size about the items and the subjects depicted on the informational panels. If you want to request that I provide a 'guided tour' of the exhibit for an enhanced experience, contact the BCCHS to make arrangements.



## The First British Fort To Fall To American Rebels ~ A ~~Lie~~ Fabrication By James Smith

James Smith, the leader of a group of 18th Century Cumberland (now Bedford) County vigilantes, made the boastful claim that he and his 'Black Boys' had attacked and 'captured' Fort Bedford on 12 September 1769 ~ making it "the first British fort to fall to American Rebels." Smith's claim, made in his autobiography ~ the only such source of the claim ~ has been quoted by Bedford County historians for decades. Re-enactment of the event has provided thrilling entertainment during celebrations in the past. But it is not true.

The property on which the fort was built in 1758 had been granted to Garrett Pendergrass by the Amerindians in the region. The British Army confiscated a portion of Pendergrass' tract when the Forbes Campaign made its way to capture the French Fort Duquesne at the Forks of the Ohio. A petition by Garrett Pendergrass to the Provincial Governor, John Penn was submitted in October of 1766. In that petition Pendergrass stated: "*since the King's Troops evacuated that Fort, and the Avenues thereof, the Improvements of your Petitioner have been surveyed, under your Honor's Warrant afsd, for the use of the Honorable the Proprietaries.*" The petition suggested that the British Army had evacuated Fort Bedford prior to October 1766.

During the year 1769, the Amerindians had made a number of incursions into the region around the three-year-old town of Bedford. As noted by

Smith: "*yet, the traders continued carrying goods and warlike stores to them.*" Alarmed at the situation, a number of persons plundered the offending traders' stores, which they then destroyed. Although their actions were ostensibly for the safety of their fellow Euro-American settlers, the persons who plundered the traders' goods were arrested. Whether they were justified in attempting to deprive the Amerindians of ammunition was inconsequential in regard to the fact that ordinary citizens were not allowed to take the law into their own hands. The arrested persons were fettered in iron shackles and confined in the guard-house in Fort Bedford.

James Smith called together his followers (known as the Black Boys because they smeared ashes and soot on their faces to avoid being recognized). They made plans to attack the fort and free the men who had been arrested. By Smith's own words, they made their move in the early hours of 12 September 1769. They rushed in through the gate, cut the prisoners free and stole a couple muskets, then ran back out. They didn't actually capture the fort, and it wasn't exactly a British fort in 1769 - three years after the British army evacuated it. So although Smith and his Black Boys no doubt did attack the decaying Fort Bedford, it certainly wasn't the 'first British fort to fall to American Rebels.'