



This is NewsLetter Issue No. One ~ For the year 2022

The Bedford County Militia

I began to produce the newsletter for the Frontier Patriots Chapter in the year 1991 ~ at a time when the chapter was named the Blair County Chapter. In the second issue of that year, thirty years ago, I provided a summary of the structure of the Bedford County Militia and how it changed from 1777 to 1781. Eight of you Compatriots received that newsletter and [hopefully] read the article at the time. The rest of you have had the opportunity to read that second newsletter, along with every other issue, on the website at the url address:

<https://frontierpatriots.com/Newsletters.htm> .

In deciding on a main article for this issue, I thought that I would reprint that original article along with some additions.

The Associators

The precursor to the Bedford County Militia was the Association. The Bedford County Associators were those troops rallied in the summer of 1775 and the spring of 1776. The name was derived from the fact that the troops 'associated' with the Patriot Cause. The Pennsylvania Committee of Safety published *Extracts From The Votes Of The House Of Assembly, Of The Province Of Pennsylvania,*

Containing Rules And Regulations For The Better Government Of The Military Association In Pennsylvania, The Articles Of Said Association, And The Resolutions Directing The Mode Of Levying Taxes On Non-Associators in Pennsylvania on 19 August 1775.

Four companies of volunteers from throughout the county were raised in the initial call. In early 1775, Robert Cluggage was commissioned with the rank of Captain to command a company of riflemen. That company traveled to Massachusetts to assist in the siege of Boston. The company was incorporated into Colonel William Thompson's Battalion of Riflemen. Richard Brown also raised a company of riflemen which became part of Colonel Samuel Miles' Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment in the defense of the province. Cluggage's and Brown's companies therefore became part of the *Continental Line*, the name given to the nation's first organized army. Two more companies were raised as the War began to unfold. Neither of them became part of the Continental Line, but rather remained in Bedford County to provide defense for the county's residents. The third company, raised on 22 March 1776, was commanded by Captain Samuel Davidson. A fourth

company, commanded by Captain Thomas Paxton was raised between 12 September and 2 November 1776.

The Militia Battalions

The Bedford County Militia consisted of three battalions throughout the course of the Revolutionary War. In the year 1777, the First Battalion consisted of six companies, and the other two battalions consisted of eight companies. By the year 1781 enough men were recruited to enable all three of the battalions to consist of eight companies.

At the start of the Revolutionary War, Bedford County was not populated as heavily as the counties in the eastern part of the state. In those eastern counties more than one company could be formed *from* the recruits of a single township area because of the large number of residents making up the available manpower pool. The total number of men who enlisted, or were otherwise recruited in York County at the beginning of the war alone, numbered 4,621 according to the April, 1778 return. Such a large number of men did not even inhabit the whole of Bedford County in that year. Unlike the militia of those heavily populated eastern counties, the Bedford County Militia was composed of the 22/24 companies noted above, each such company made up of men from a rather widespread region.

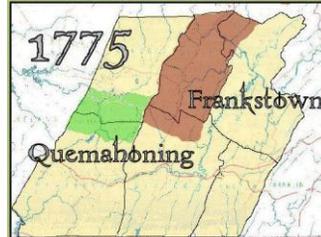
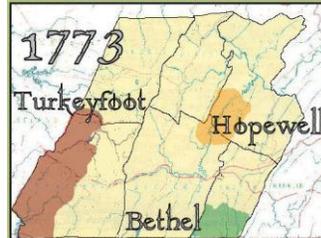
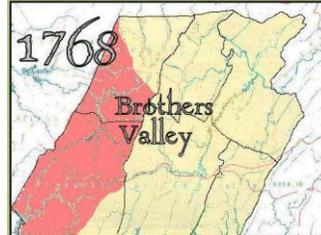
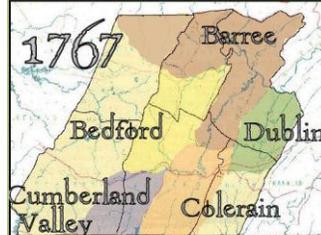
The *First Battalion* in 1777 was made up of recruits from the Bedford, Brothers Valley, Cumberland Valley, Quemahoning and Turkeyfoot Townships. These townships comprised the area of western and southern Bedford County at the time. In regard to the region in the present-day, Bedford and Cumberland Valley Townships included what is half of present-day Bedford and Blair Counties. Brothers Valley, Quemahoning and Turkeyfoot Townships included the whole of present-day Somerset and Cambria Counties. Six companies were raised for the First Battalion.

The *Second Battalion* was composed of recruits from the townships of Ayr, Bethel, Colerain and Dublin - all of which lay in eastern Bedford County. In the year 1777, this region from which the Second Battalion was recruited included basically

what is today Fulton County. The region did include the eastern half of Bedford County and the south-east corner of Huntingdon County. Eight companies were raised for the Second Battalion.

The *Third Battalion* was formed out of the remaining area of Bedford County, and included men recruited from the Barree, Hopewell and Frankstown Townships. In 1777, the region from which the Third Battalion was recruited included primarily what is today encompassed by the northern half of Blair County and the west and northern parts of Huntingdon County. Eight companies were raised for the Third Battalion.

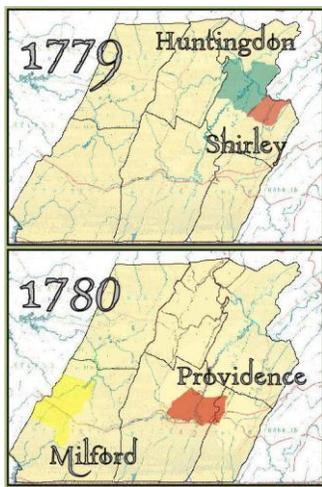
An example of the sparsity of residents - and, in turn, the available recruits - for the Bedford County Militia can be seen in the fact that Frankstown Township (as noted above, from which the whole of present-day Blair County comes) was, in 1775, home to only about sixty-three taxable families. In the 1775 tax assessment there appeared only fifteen additional single freemen. These



figures might be a little deceptive because they do not reflect the total number of men of recruitment age; they are only indicative of the number of households that could be taxed for property. The Federal Tax (or Class Tax as it was known because it divided the residents up into classes from which recruits could be

chosen) that was taken in the latter part of the year 1781 shows that two years before the War would end there were 104 men 'able-bodied *and* between the ages of eighteen and fifty-three years' in the entire area of Frankstown Township. By comparison, the Class Tax levied on able-bodied men of the township of Manheim in York County (an area of size roughly equal to Frankstown Township), in the year 1777 recorded 291 men who would be available recruits for the militia.

The low number of men available to be recruited into the Bedford County Militia *required it* to differ in many ways from the militias raised in the other (*i.e.* eastern) counties of Pennsylvania. Because of the fact that the companies could not be divided up into numerous classes, such classes could not be called out for tours of duty on a routine, alternating basis. Also, because of the low number of men comprising



each township area, when they were called out for duty there would be fewer able-bodied men to remain home to defend their homes and farmsteads. This latter situation is well documented in the petitions sent by the inhabitants of this frontier region to the Supreme Executive Council of

Pennsylvania in their attempts to elicit help from the more populous areas of the state.

An aspect of the Bedford County Militia which differed somewhat from the other county militias is embodied in the word 'frontier.' Because of the fact that this area was indeed a portion of the western frontier, the imminent threat of Indian incursions was very real. Just as real was the threat of a possible invasion from the north and west by the British out of Forts Niagara and Detroit. And very real was the threat of bullying by the local Tories. The atmosphere of constant threat from these forces led to the creation of Ranging Companies to patrol the frontier, as compared to the companies of militia that were drilled and trained

to engage in direct combat and defense of fortifications.

A couple additional companies were raised during the years 1778 and 1779. And in a few cases, the officers changed in which the original Captain was replaced by the First Lieutenant.

In the year 1781 the numbering of the battalions and companies changed. What had been the Second Battalion in 1777 now became known as the *First Battalion*. The township areas from which the men had been recruited for the Second Battalion stayed the basically same in 1781 under the name of the First Battalion. In addition to Air, Bethel and Colerain townships, the area of Cumberland Valley Township was now included in this battalion's jurisdiction. Also the newly formed Providence Township was included in the First Battalion.

In 1781, what had been the Third Battalion in 1777, now became known as *the Second Battalion*. The township areas from which this newly named Second Battalion drew its recruits stayed mostly the same as in the year 1777 when it was known as the Third Battalion with the inclusion of Dublin Township in its northern Bedford ranks. The recently formed Huntingdon and Shirley Townships were listed as the source of troops for this new Second Battalion.

Finally, in 1781, the battalion that had been known in 1777 as the First Battalion of the Bedford County Militia, now became known as the *Third Battalion*, with its recruitment region staying the same as it had been in 1777 with the addition of Milford Township. Providence Township (already noted as providing troops to the First Battalion) was included in the listing of sources for troops for the Third Battalion.

About The Companies

In order to understand the Bedford County Militia some notes about the basic structure of the militia system throughout Pennsylvania should be reviewed.

Residents of any particular county and township area within that county were recruited into battalions and companies raised in those particular county/township areas. What that means is that a resident of Frankstown Township in 1777 would more than likely have been recruited into a company of the Third Battalion while a resident of the town of Bedford

would have entered into militia service in the First Battalion. Also it would be very, very unusual for a man to enter into the militia of a county in which he did not actually reside. Some people, in the absence of a record of their ancestor in the rosters of the militia of the county in which he is known to have resided, try to bend history by claiming that their ancestor resided in one county, but enlisted in a neighboring county.

Companies were not raised by the Captain. Men whose job was to recruit others existed and the act of recruiting probably consisted of directing the potential soldier to the county's court house where he would swear an Oath of Allegiance and be assigned to a company. In regard to Captain William Phillips and the company he led prior to their massacre in the Woodcock Valley, some historians state that he was instructed to raise the company himself. That simply did not happen. There exists no record in the county or state archives of any instance in which a man was commissioned as a Captain and then given the responsibility to raise his own company. In fact the reality was just the opposite. The company was raised and the men were then asked to choose their Captain from among their number.

The researchers at the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission have stated that "The men in each battalion elected their own field officers who carried the rank of colonel, lieutenant colonel and major and these officers were then commissioned by the state and expected to serve for three years." Whether that was the practice in Bedford County is not confirmed. Certain of the men who would come to be 'chosen' to serve as the county's militia officers tended to already be the county's civil officers.

The PHMC research has also suggested how the battalions within each county was assigned its number. It has been stated that: "Within each county, the colonels drew lots for their individual rank, which was then assigned to their battalion as First Battalion, Second Battalion, Third Battalion, etc. When new elections were held for field officers in 1780 and 1783, the colonels elected at that time again drew lots for their rank and this resulted in a new order for the battalions." That would explain why the Bedford County Militia's numbering of its battalions changed in 1781 despite the regions from which the companies were raised staying

the same.

At the beginning of this article, it was noted that at the start of the War, only two companies of Bedford County soldiers were taken into the Continental Line, *i.e.* the professional army, and that the rest remained as militia for the defense of the county. Whereas enlistment in the Continental Line was usually for six to eight years, enlistment in the Bedford County Militia was for shorter periods: anywhere from two weeks to two months. In the Militia, men were assigned to particular classes, usually six to eight in number depending on how densely populated the region from which they came was. For any particular tour of duty, two or three classes only would be called out. By not requiring the entire company to leave their homes at the same time, the defense of the families and their homes was better assured.

Last to be discussed will be a comparison between the basic Militia and the Rangers on the Frontier. Rangers were part of the Bedford County Militia and the difference between a Militiaman and a Ranger was in the type of duty in which they were engaged. The Militiaman was employed in garrisoning any of the twenty-plus fortified structures in the region. The Ranger, on the other hand, ranged through the forests on the lookout for British, Tories or Indians who might be intent on harming the residents. Any individual could function at one time as a Militiaman and at another as a Ranger.

Bedford County Militia Officers 1776

In 1776 there were two Battalions established. The **First Battalion** was commanded by Colonel John Piper, with Edward Coombs as Major. The **Second Battalion** was commanded by George Woods, with Charles Cessna as Major. Serving as Captains for the First Battalion were six men: William McAlevy, Daniel Carpenter, William Parker, Francis Cluggage, Philip Cable and Thomas Paxton. Serving as Captains for the Second Battalion were only two men: Samuel Davidson and Jacob Hendershot. Serving as Lieutenants for the First Battalion companies were: ~~~~ Chaney, ~~~~ Higgins, William Frier, Moses Reed, John Stillwell and

Hermann Gray. Thomas Holiday was the Ensign for Captain McAlevy's Company.

1777

In 1777, the **First Battalion** was commanded by Colonel William Parker, with Charles Cessna as Lieutenant Colonel and Robert Culbertson as Major. The officers of the companies were:

- 1st Captain ~ Thomas Buck
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ Samuel Moore
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ John Moore
 - Ensign ~ Joshua Owens
 - Court Martial Men ~ Robert Moore, Thomas Hall
- 2nd Captain ~ Gideon Ritchey
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ Edward Roose
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ James Dinsmore
 - Ensign ~ Henry Williams
 - Court Martial Men ~ John Cessna, Abraham Milley
- 3rd Captain ~ Henry Rhoads
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ Frederick Am~~1
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ Jacob Glessnor
 - Ensign ~ Philip Cable
 - Court Martial Men ~ Jacob Fisher,
George Countryman
- 4th Captain ~ William Black
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ Oliver Drake
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ David Jones
 - Ensign ~ Henry Abrams
 - Court Martial Men ~ Enoch Abrahams,
Christian Ankony
- 5th Captain ~ James Wells
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ David Wright
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ Aaron Wright
 - Ensign ~ Solomon Adams
 - Court Martial Men ~ John Reed, James Black
- 6th Captain ~ Richard Dunlap (Delapt)
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ Cornelius McAuley
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ James Beatty
 - Ensign ~ Henry Ewalt
 - Court Martial Men ~ George Milligan,
Samuel McCasslin

In 1777, the **Second Battalion** was commanded by Colonel George Ashman, with Thomas Paxton as Lieutenant Colonel and Martin Longstrath as Major. The officers of the companies were:

- 1st Captain ~ James Martin
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ Campbell Lefevre
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ Isaac Lefevre
 - Ensign ~ Samuel Martin
 - 2nd Captain ~ Hugh Prather
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ William Kelly
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ Thomas Morgan
 - Ensign ~ Joseph Cornelius
 - 3rd Captain ~ Thomas Blair
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ Joseph Orbison
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ Robert Garner
 - Ensign ~ Robert Galbraith
 - 4th Captain ~ John Hamilton
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ Frederick Storts
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ Philip Longstrath
 - Ensign ~ Henry Lavary
 - 5th Captain ~ James Gibson
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ John Galloway
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ William Alexander
 - Ensign ~ David Hunter
 - 6th Captain ~ Abraham Covalt
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ Samuel McFadden
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ Henry Rush, Sr
 - Ensign ~ Bethuel Covalt
 - 7th Captain ~ James Warford
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ Jonathan Payne
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ Samuel Payne
 - Ensign ~ Joseph Coombs
 - 8th Captain ~ Evan Shelby
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ Azer Russ
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ Thomas Davy
 - Ensign ~ David Evans
- In 1777, the **Third Battalion** was commanded by Colonel William McAlevy, with Samuel Jack as Lieutenant Colonel and Andrew Deviny as Major. The officers of the companies were:
- 1st Captain ~ William Simonton
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ Jacob Laird
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ James Vansant
 - Ensign ~ John Vansant
 - Court Martial Men ~ Samuel Davis, Matthew Dean
 - 2nd Captain ~ John Thompson
 - 1st Lieutenant ~ James Caldwell
 - 2nd Lieutenant ~ Samuel Rhea
 - Ensign ~ James Crawford

Court Martial Men ~ Jonathan Edington,
Robert Stewart

3rd Captain ~ Joshua Davis
1st Lieutenant ~ Morris Cain
2nd Lieutenant ~ Thomas Miller
Ensign ~ Jacob Shoub
Court Martial Men ~ Sebastian Shoub,
Michael Watson

4th Captain ~ John Shaver
1st Lieutenant ~ Thomas Willson
2nd Lieutenant ~ George Jackson
Ensign ~ William Enyard
Court Martial Men ~ Samuel Thompson,
William Shirley

5th Captain ~ Henry Black
1st Lieutenant ~ William Devinny
2nd Lieutenant ~ William Moore
Ensign ~ Andrew Jones
Court Martial Men ~ Abraham Robinson,
Hugh Long

6th Captain ~ William Johnston
1st Lieutenant ~ Thomas Johnston
2nd Lieutenant ~ David Caldwell
Ensign ~ Robert Kirkpatrick
Court Martial Men ~ James Little, Samuel Hysop

7th Captain ~ John Little
1st Lieutenant ~ John Willson
2nd Lieutenant ~ Alexander McCormick
Ensign ~ Alexander Ewing
Court Martial Men ~ Joseph Oliver, James Dickey

8th Captain ~ Daniel Carpenter
1st Lieutenant ~ Francis Cluggage
2nd Lieutenant ~ Adam Thompson
Ensign ~ John Lewis
Court Martial Men ~ Samuel Anderson,
Joseph Predimore

1778

In 1778, an unnumbered company was added to the First Battalion. The officers of that company were:

Captain ~ James Anderson
1st Lieutenant ~ Samuel Todd
2nd Lieutenant ~ John Todd
Ensign ~ William Elliot.

Another unnumbered company was added to the First Battalion composed of men from the Will's Creek

Settlement in present-day Londonderry Township. The officers of that company were:

Captain ~ Samuel Paxton
1st Lieutenant ~ Matthew Kelly
2nd Lieutenant ~ Richard Wood
Ensign ~ Jacob Croy
Court Martial Men ~ Andrew Shearer,
Nicols Liberrick

Also in the year 1778, William Enyard, the Ensign for the 4th Company, 3rd Battalion was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant and John Enyard was named Ensign of the same company.

Also in the year 1778, the 4th Company, 1st Battalion underwent some personnel changes with the promotion of Oliver Drake to Captain. The officers of that company were:

Captain ~ Oliver Drake
1st Lieutenant ~ William Nicholson
2nd Lieutenant ~ Henry Abrams
Ensign ~ David Standiford

1779

The 3rd Company of the 1st Battalion continued to be commanded by Henry Rhoads, but changes were made to his staff. The officers of that company were:

Captain ~ Henry Rhoads
1st Lieutenant ~ James Hemricks
2nd Lieutenant ~ Jacob Walker
Ensign ~ John Bowman
Court Martial Men ~ George Countryman,
Reuben Estop

An unnumbered company was added to the First Battalion in 1779. It was recorded as the Brothers Valley Company and its officers were:

Captain ~ Henry Rhoads
1st Lieutenant ~ James Hemricks
2nd Lieutenant ~ Jacob Walker
Ensign ~ John Bowman
Court Martial Men ~ George Countryman,
Reuben Estop

A second unnumbered company was added to the First Battalion in 1779 with the officers:

Captain ~ William Tissue

1st Lieutenant ~ Christopher Angeny

2nd Lieutenant ~ George Bruner

Ensign ~ George Shaver

In August 1779, John Galloway was commissioned as a Captain in the Second Battalion. No officers for his company were recorded.

Also in August 1779, Samuel Thompson was commissioned as a Captain in the Third Battalion.

1781

In 1781, the **First Battalion** was commanded by Colonel Thomas Smith, with Charles Cessna as Lieutenant Colonel and Andrew McCann as Major. The officers of the companies were:

- 1st Captain ~ Henry Rush
Lieutenant ~ John Longstretch
Ensign ~ Jacob Shingletaker
- 2nd Captain ~ Thomas Davie
Lieutenant ~ James John
Ensign ~ Thomas Harrod
- 3rd Captain ~ Evan Cessna
Lieutenant ~ Samuel Borlan
Ensign ~ Dickey Barkshire
- 4th Captain ~ Samuel Paxton
Lieutenant ~ Matthew Kelly
Ensign ~ Richard Wood
- 5th Captain ~ Charles Taggart
Lieutenant ~ David Hunter
Ensign ~ John Rankin
- 6th Captain ~ George Enlow (Enslo)
Lieutenant ~ none
Ensign ~ George Peck
- 7th Captain ~ Gideon Richey
Lieutenant ~ Edward Rose
Ensign ~ Henry Williams
- 8th Captain ~ James McKenny
Lieutenant ~ Abednego Stephens
Ensign ~ Moses Grahams

In 1781, The **Second Battalion** was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Hugh Davidson, with John Shaver as Major. The officers of the companies were:

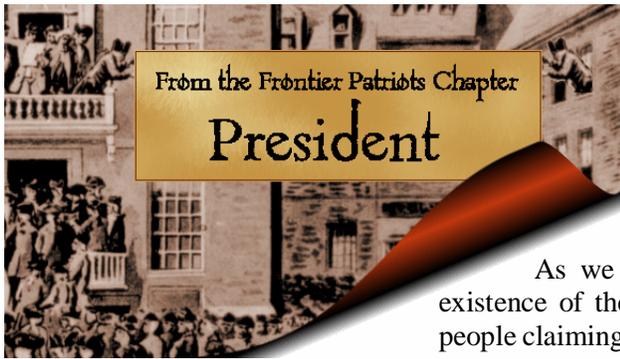
- 1st Captain ~ John Spenser
Lieutenant ~ Edward Rickets
Ensign ~ Thomas Wolson
- 2nd Captain ~ David Walker
Lieutenant ~ John Swagers
Ensign ~ Samuel Coyle
- 3rd Captain ~ John Dean
Lieutenant ~ Jacob Lard
Ensign ~ Archibald Fletcher
- 4th Captain ~ John Thorlton
Lieutenant ~ Thomas Montgomery
Ensign ~ James Maginess
- 5th Captain ~ George Wilson
Lieutenant ~ John Morton
Ensign ~ George Gooshorn
- 6th Captain ~ Jacob Ganow
Lieutenant ~ John Free
Ensign ~ Robert Criswell
- 7th Captain ~ Gavane Clugage
Lieutenant ~ William Bryon
Ensign ~ Benjamin Brown
- 8th Captain ~ Thomas Blair
Lieutenant ~ Robert Gardner
Ensign ~ Nicholas Koons

In 1781, the **Third Battalion** was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Bernard Dougherty, with John Woods as Major. The officers of the companies were:

- 1st Captain ~ Oliver Drake
- 2nd Captain ~ Christopher Brigely
- 3rd Captain ~ George Hostadler
- 4th Captain ~ Samuel Moore
- 5th Captain ~ Peter Angeny
- 6th Captain ~ Solomon Adams
- 7th Captain ~ William McCall
- 8th Captain ~ Philip Cable

During the years 1781, 1782 and 1783, a few unnumbered, independent companies were raised under Captains John Boyd, Thomas Norton, John Fulton, Thomas Davies, James McKinney and Patrick Hainey.





The next meeting of the
Frontier Patriots Chapter
of the Sons of the American Revolution
will be held at Hoss's Steak and Sea restaurant
at 4308 Business 220, Bedford
on Saturday, 12 March 2022
starting at 12 Noon.

As we start into the Two Hundred and Forty-Sixth year of the existence of the United States of America, our nation is in turmoil with people claiming they can change their gender just by deciding that they want to, with one person calling another person 'racist' every time a disagreement occurs and with people comparing every little bump in the road with the most horrendous genocide the world has ever seen perpetrated by the Nazis during World War II. One wonders if the nation can continue to endure. As guardians of our ancestors' legacies, it is up to us, the Compatriot members of the SAR, to stick to the values and morals our forefathers bestowed on us. I live by a personal adage: "I do not have *problems*, I have *opportunities to make things better*." I hope that many of you see through the turmoil in that way too.



2022 Meeting & Event Dates

↻ First Quarterly Meeting	March 12
↻ Second Quarterly Meeting	June 11
↻ Third Quarterly Meeting	September 10
↻ PASSAR BOM Meeting	November 4-5
↻ Fourth Quarterly Meeting	December 10

Officers For The Year 2022

President, Secretary, Registrar, Genealogist, Historian & Chapter Webmaster ~ Larry D. Smith
schmitt@motherbedford.com

Treasurer ~ David G. Hammaker davehammaker@gmail.com

1st Vice-President ~ John W. Betting scubys@pennswoods.net

2nd Vice-President ~ Robert D. Williams pspwill@hotmail.com

Chaplain & Chancellor ~ Melvin C. McDowell melvin.mcdowell@gmail.com

PASSAR's BOM Meeting To Be Hosted Nov 5

Keep in mind that the Fall 2022 PASSAR Board of Management meeting will be hosted by the Frontier Patriots Chapter on November 4-5, 2022. Please plan to attend.

Frontier Patriots Chapter website: <https://frontierpatriots.com>