

**History of the Spokane Chapter of SAR until 1973.  
Presented by Judge Ralph P. Edgerton**

The Spokane Chapter No. 1 minutes reveal that it was organized originally under the auspices of the Oregon-Washington Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. These minutes also reveal that at one time we had a library in charge of Howard Bell, brother of John W. Bell, Jr., who was an accountant in the Empire State Building.

The national organization of the SAR is not much older than our local chapter. The organization began not back east where you would expect but the impetus came from San Francisco. That original organization was called Sons of Sires of the American Revolution. In New York City about that same time in 1875, a similar organization was formed that came about as part of the Centennial celebration in 1876, the following year. In New York a little later another organization was formed called The Sons of the Revolution which allowed membership to collateral lines whereas SAR membership is restricted to lineal descent.

The original national organization of Sons of the American Revolution was formed in Louisville, Kentucky in 1889. The Spokane Chapter No. 1 was formed February 1, 1894 as a chapter of the Oregon-Washington Society of the SAR originally formed in Oregon in 1891. The Montana Society was formed in 1891 and the Idaho Society in 1909. The Washington Society was split from the Oregon Society in

September of 1894 and the Washington State Society was chartered on June 17, 1895 in Seattle. The charter members of the Spokane Chapter plus a few others became charter members of the state society and we became Chapter No. 1 on the state roll.

When the National Society was formed at Louisville, Kentucky, the question was raised as to whether women should be admitted to membership and it was decided negatively. Someone has pointed out that it was a good thing for the ladies that they hadn't been admitted because that caused them to form the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1890 with the same structure and membership requirements. They have done much more work than we have and have done a far superior job of getting members.

The charter members of the Spokane Chapter No. 1 of the Oregon-Washington State Society were Arthur W. Doland who was president of the Spokane Drug Company; Egbert Tangiers Smith Steele who was a merchant and dropped in 1899; Kirkland K. Cutter the architect dropped in 1896; William Howard Maxwell civil engineer dropped in 1902; John Kennedy Stout a lawyer; Henry Martin Hoyt, a lawyer, who later transferred to California; J. C. McKinstry about whom nothing more is known; Warren W. Tollman, later a Supreme Court Judge who dropped in 1899; Joseph Tilton Doolittle, a doctor; William Henry Eades, retired merchant; William H. Maxwell, civil engineer;

Waldo G. Paine who came to Spokane as a realtor and then went into the railroad business and became President of the Spokane and Inland Railroad and the terminal is located where the public library now is; Clement S. Rucker, mining broker; Stephen G. Whitman and George H. Whittle, an agent of the Northern Pacific Railroad.

This chapter has down through the years followed a pattern. It has never been particularly affluent although it has had affluent members. The financial status has always been somewhat in jeopardy but has managed to break even. The practice started early in the first couple of years of presenting the retiring president with a badge signifying his term.

The practice was to hold the annual meeting in January to elect officers, to hear the treasurer's report and to appoint a committee of three members to arrange the February 22<sup>nd</sup> banquet. This is the program of the third annual banquet of the Spokane Chapter. Apparently ladies were not invited for several years. The program consisted of a toast to the State and National Societies replied to by Col. J. Kennedy Stout, a lawyer; 'Mission of the Blue and White' by George S. Brooke, grandfather of Philip Brooke, Jr., a lawyer in Spokane, (Mr. Brooke was first president of what is now the First National Bank); then a toast to Howard George 'to be drunk standing'; then a discussion about the possible consolidation of the Sons of the

Revolution and Sons of the American Revolution led by T. D. Rockwell; then a toast to 'our wives and daughters' with a reply by C. S. Rutter; Frank T. Post, president of Washington Water Power Company for a number of years, toasted the flag. "The remarks of Messer's Brooke, Post and Rockwell were particularly eloquent and were frequently interrupted with applause. After the regular program had been given, Mr. Rockwell and others entertained the company with numerous stories. At 11:45 p. m., the company adjourned."

The banquets were usually held at the Davenport Restaurant. This was before the Davenport Hotel was built and where the Matador Room is located. Then for a time the banquets were held at the Spokane Hotel and then later at the Davenport Hotel. Here is an item in 1898 – "Paid Louis M. Davenport for annual dinner--\$25.00." In 1899, the dues were \$2.50 a year. Expenses that year were dinner of \$25., cigars \$1.50. waiter \$1.00 apparently for tip, flowers \$1.00, Tiffany and Co. for badge for retiring president \$10.95. Balance on hand \$7.50. That was one of the better years.

We have had nice relations with the DAR. They were quite generous in their invitations to us. There are a number of invitations included in the minutes and we have had a lot more in recent years. Here is one such invitation: "Dear Sir: In the days of the Revolution, the women were not invited to the Boston Tea Party but, in spite of

that fact, it gives us, the Esther Reed Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Spokane, great pleasure in writing the Sons of the American Revolution in Spokane with their ladies, a most cordial invitation to take tea with us at eight o'clock on Tuesday evening, the eleventh of February at the home of Mrs. M. J. Gordon, 502 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Any relic of Revolutionary times will be appreciated. Mrs. L. H. Wells, Vice Regent, Esther Reed Chapter, DAR."

In time the Spokane Chapter began holding meetings on various patriotic days, particularly Lexington and Concord Days. Flag Day, June 14<sup>th</sup>, came about by reason of the activity of the national organization of the SAR. At one time, there was to have been, and the program was even printed, a celebration of the anniversary of the birth of Lafayette. Dubrau, who used to teach French at Lewis and Clark High School, was to have been the main speaker. There is a handwritten note at the bottom of the page where this program is pasted in, "This Lafayette banquet was not held due to a lack of sufficient reservations."

The newspapers in those days were kinder to us than they are now. They not only printed the program at length but they also printed the names of all those in attendance and they listed all the foods and drinks on the menu.

In 1905, Stephen Beasley Leonard Penrose, president of Whitman College, spoke at the Davenport Restaurant. His topic was 'The Twentieth Century Patriot' in which he pointed out that there could be as much valor and as much good citizenship in just being a good citizen as there could be in fighting a war. That was not the only time that Penrose addressed the Spokane Chapter. In 1913, he was invited back. The majority of his talk at that time showed that he anticipated some of the rest of us in our dissatisfaction with direct legislation by initiative and referendum. He lost his eyesight about 1923 and his last year at Whitman College was 1935. The papers of those days gave liberal quotations from speeches made by banquet speakers.

Originally oratorical contests were under the auspices of the Washington State Society with one held each year in Seattle, Tacoma and Spokane with prizes to the winners in each locality. In 1917, there was no contest because there was no money for prizes. When the oratorical contest was resumed in 1919, it became entirely a Spokane undertaking and that year Del Cary Smith, Sr. was the winner.

In 1904, the annual banquet was not held on Washington's birthday as had been the custom because so many of the members could not be present. There was a Masonic function at that time and the Sons of the American Revolution deferred to the Masons. In the

minutes of that banquet of 1904 was this entry. "As James F. Sloan volunteered to furnish the wine for the banquet, he was added to the committee without motion." In one of the treasurer's reports, they wound up with a deficit of thirty-seven cents for which the treasurer asked reimbursement.

Thomas S. Brewer was Vice-President of the Exchange National Bank. E. E. Flood, who joined in 1915, was an officer with the Exchange National Bank. S. S. McClintock and his brother, both members, had McClintock-Trunkey, here for many years. Secretary Brewer wrote to McClintock as follows: "Dear Sir and Compatriot, Spokane Chapter No. 1, SAR: We will hold a luncheon Monday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at twelve o'clock, Hall of Doges, Davenport Hotel and you are cordially invited to attend. We believe that April 19<sup>th</sup> should be celebrated as a national holiday and called Patriot's Day for the following reasons: On April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1775, the first blood of the Revolution was shed at Lexington. On April 19, 1783, cessation of hostilities was proclaimed in the American army. On April 19, 1794, John Jay was confirmed as special envoy to England. On April 19, during the war with Mexico, the American troops entered Jalapa. On April 19, 1850, the famous Bull-Clayton treaty was signed. On April 19, 1863, the Battle of Colwater, Tennessee was fought. On April 19, 1865, the

funeral services of Abraham Lincoln were held at Washington, D. C. On April 19, 1898, the war with Spain commenced."

In the Spokane Daily Chronicle in 1910 is the following article: "SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION PLAN TO ERECT A COLLOSAL MEMORIAL ON THE SOUTH CLIFF OVERLOOKING THE CITY. ASK PRESIDENT TO UNVEIL MONUMENT." "A colossal statue of George Washington, one hundred feet high, constructed of re-enforced concrete and erected in a standing position on the great circular rock that towers nearly one hundred feet above Cliff Park, is planned by the Spokane Branch of Sons of the American Revolution. The movement was launched today by the Society and the state-wide canvass for funds will be started shortly. It is planned to have the statue completed four years hence and to have the ceremony of unveiling on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the admission of the State of Washington to the Union. J. H. McKnight, who is instrumental in placing the statue of Vulcan at the St. Louis Exposition, introduced the subject at a noon luncheon of the Sons of the American Revolution at the Davenport. The members of the Society were enthusiastic over the plan." Somewhere in that article or in a later article, they figured they could do it for \$50,000. In the minutes is a letter from McKnight: "Since leaving Spokane, I've collected a lot of valuable data on the building of a great colossus. I've discovered a man who is an expert in

all that pertains to the proposition as outlined by me and who is willing and able to take the contract provided we give him at least eighteen months for the actual work on the statue which means that we must have our organization perfected and all the funds provided at least two years before the time at which the statue is to be inaugurated. Under this plan, the work will be as fine and as perfect in an artistic way as any statue ever built and heaven only knows the attention it will attract all over the world. I am having a good time down here but will be ready at the proper time to come back there."

In 1913, we had a membership of fifty-eight. In the treasurer's report at that time, it showed that Dr. Penrose's expenses for coming up here and bringing Mrs. Penrose was paid the magnificent sum of fifteen dollars. Later on, Dr. Meany, History Professor from the University of Washington, came over. He was paid thirty-five dollars for his expenses. There used to be a shop up on Howard, George Varney's, that had shirts and flags and the like. In the treasurer's report in 1912 is the following entry: George Varney for flags - \$25.00. The minutes also show that in 1912 was a Flag Day parade that we did. In 1916, the dues were reduced from two dollars to one dollar a year.

In 1915, W. D. Vincent, president of the Old National Bank, was the speaker. He was an active member of our chapter. He was also

quite active both through this organization and others like the DAR in having these historical monuments erected around here. Sherman Divine, minister of the First Presbyterian Church, was the first Chaplain we ever had. In January of 1917, a purchase of flags for the Flag Day parade was authorized.

A resolution adopted at the meeting of February 22, 1917 reads: "Be it resolved by the Spokane Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, first, that the security and travel on the high seas is implied and asserted in our Declaration of Dependence and whereby our revolutionary fathers stoutly maintained as essential to our independence, this right has from the beginning of our government been maintained by force of arms when necessary as many glorious pages of our history witness it. We commend the President of the United States for his severance of international relations with Germany on account of her threatened violation of this right and pledge our own unqualified support to such measures as the president in his wisdom may propose to protect American lives and property on the high seas. We are of the opinion that efficient military preparedness is the best means of maintaining the dignity of the United States government and the protection of the rights and interests of our citizens wherever they may be. Second, that this Society hereby expressed to Congress and the President our commendation of that which has been done toward

the advancement of military preparedness together with the respectful suggestion that military service for national defense should be obligatory as a personal duty of all citizens of suitable age and physical qualifications. Third, that a copy of these resolutions be forwarded."

After those war-like sentiments, the address of the evening was given by Bishop Herman Page. I don't believe Bishop Cross was ever a member but, several years after he succeeded Bishop Page, he did address the local chapter. There was quite a little displeasure because in his remarks he took the other side and extolled the British to the extent that the Sons were a little bit unhappy.

At the meeting of April 9, 1917, this resolution was adopted: "That we regard enlistment in the National Guard in the present crisis as a patriotic duty to be commended and supported by all good citizens. That we will cooperate with any other body of citizens of Spokane in the effort to guarantee the persons enlisting of the restoration of their possessions upon their return to civilian life and the proper support of their families during their absence. We further resolve that, while we believe that the duty which the United States owes to its citizens and the world at large, demands that she should vigorously prosecute the war against Germany. We pledge ourselves to heartily support the President of the United States in such

recommendations as he may need." A copy of that resolution is spread on the chapter minutes and bears the signatures of those attending.

There were twelve new members in 1918: Cyrus Happy, Jr.; Thomas Corkery; Ellis L. Bloom; Luther N. Flagg; Dr. Crowell Wiseman; Henry H. Bell; Ernest V. Price; Frank W. Buzzwell; Harold C. Whitehouse; Charles W. Webster, Jr.; Walter K. Worthen.

In the minutes of the 1919 annual meeting, there appears the program for the year. On February 22<sup>nd</sup>, they celebrated Washington's birthday. They had meetings on March 14<sup>th</sup>; April 21<sup>st</sup> for Lexington and Concord; Friday, May 16<sup>th</sup>; Tuesday, June 17<sup>th</sup> for Bunker Hill; Saturday, September 5<sup>th</sup> for Lafayette's birthday (must have been the one that was cancelled); October 17<sup>th</sup> for Saratoga and Yorktown; November 11<sup>th</sup> for Victory Day; Friday December 12<sup>th</sup>.

Another resolution was adopted during that time period as follows: "Inasmuch as the Industrial Workers of the World by their own confessions and by the findings of so many courts throughout the land are in a conspiracy to overthrow our government and to substitute therefore a Soviet reign of terror, rape and plunder, murder, concentrating a large part of their present activities in the State of Washington and, because of the fact that their propaganda falsely pretends to be the universal voice of working men and honorable unionized labor, we, the Spokane Chapter of the Sons of the American

Revolution, call upon the law officers of all municipalities, counties and states and upon the federal authorities to lay aside quibbling technicalities, antiquated presumptions and official hesitation and proceed to enforce the true spirit of all laws designed to protect and preserve our beloved form of government and its transcendent ideals. We also urge the members of the bar associations confirmable to their sworn duties to institute disbarment procedures against all members of the legal profession who engage in defending members of the said IWW and all similar radical and unlawful organizations excepting only those who may be appointed by the courts. We further urge all loyal and patriotic workmen and finally we call upon all citizens to back up the officers of the law by enthusiastic vigorous and immediate outspoken moral and physical help to the end that our republic as established by our forefathers may continue to be the hope and inspiration of mankind." The sign of the office of the IWW is still on the door on Bernard just north of Riverside on the west side of the street. George Hoden was a member of the IWW and very active in it.

W. D. Vincent discovered that three of George Washington's family descendants are buried out here at Almira, Washington. Mr. Vincent was announced in the paper as having been the discoverer and somebody wrote to the forum thus: "An article appears in the Spokesman-Review on the 23<sup>rd</sup> headed 'Finds graves of Washington's

kin' in which it is stated that W. D. Vincent has discovered that three direct descendants of a brother of George Washington are buried at Almira. Mr. Vincent seems to have taken a long time making this discovery as the matter was given publicity in your paper several years ago and the writer took the matter up with W. P. Bonney, Secretary of the Washington Historical Society in June of 1920 giving him all the facts but no notice was taken of the matter. Bushwad C. Washington was buried at Almira and was the great-great-grandson of John Augustine Washington, brother of George Washington. Tracing his relationship back it is as follows: His father was Thomas Blackburn Washington, his grandfather was Bushwad Corbin Washington, and his great-grandfather was John Augustine Washington, brother of George Washington. Colonel B. C. Washington served two years in the Confederate Army, was commissioned First Lieutenant, was three times wounded and twice captured, was in business in Charleston, West Virginia until 1909 at which time he came to Spokane and located in Douglas County just north of Almira the same year. Mr. Washington died and was buried in the Almira Cemetery in February of 1919 by the side of two daughters. He is survived by two sons, J. C. Washington who lives in Douglas County, and by N. W. Washington who is prosecuting attorney in Grant County and by one daughter." N.

W. Washington is, I assume, the father of Nat Washington who is now a State Senator from down there.

In the late teens or early twenties, we weren't getting through to the state government in Olympia. There was some controversy of some kind and it was difficult to communicate. It was suggested and publicity was given in favor of saying that eventually the government would have to wake up to the fact that we did have this disability of getting to and from the state capital and that eventually North Idaho and Eastern Washington should be made another state.