

HEROES OF '76

History of the Order



**A Side Degree of National Sojourners, Inc.
A Military-Masonic Order**

Vol. I From the Beginning Through 1995

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of my revered friend Colonel William Biehl, Jr. USMC (Ret), National Commander (1980-81), who did not live to see the fulfillment of his dream of a completed History of the Heroes of '76 , and to whom I made a death-bed promise that the work he started would some day be finished. We will never know what his great mind might have contributed to National Sojourners and the Heroes of '76 had he lived a while longer. Rest in Peace, my friend. . . your work is done, at last!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To the Headquarters Staff of National Sojourners, Inc.: **Nelson Newcombe**, National Secretary, **Shirley Grumbling** and **Maryanne Cox** who, although very busy, always acted as though helping me was the only thing they had to do.

To **Clarice Nelson**, my dear wife of fifty-one years, who proof-read this work again, again and again

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To my Brother **James J. "Jim" Gordon** from Poway, California whose expertise with that electronic monster, the computer, made the professional appearance of this work possible.

To Brother **Donald L. Shaw** from Radcliff, Kentucky who, because of his extensive investigation of the life and times of Edward B. Jones, was a major source of information.

And, to the myriad other Sojourners, Heroes, and Camp Followers who either knowingly or unknowingly made a contribution.

INTRODUCTION

"**A**bout 1876, Brother E. B. Jones, a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, composed a ritual of a side degree and called it the Heroes of '76 ."

Thus begins the History of the Heroes of '76 as given in the OFFICIAL MANUAL Heroes of '76 . What follows should be called the short history of the Heroes of '76 because it leaves unanswered many questions which tend to bother members who want the whole story. In this treatment of the subject we will undertake to cover the history of the Degree in detail.

Before his untimely death in 1981, Brother William Biehl, Jr., National Commander of the Heroes of '76 , had begun to prepare just such a record. Just prior to his death, Brother Biehl gave the paperwork associated with his research to this writer, who was then, and remains to this day, the National Historian of the National Sojourners, Inc. This history makes extensive use of the research begun by Brother Biehl.

The mists and myths of over 125 years have obscured much of the early history associated with the Heroes of '76 Degree. The facts that can be authenticated are few, but they can be linked together by the use of tradition and sensible application of reasonable suppositions. History is rarely written down at the time it occurs, simply because it is not recognized as historically important at that time. It is the passage of years that renders history important, and it is this same passage of time that makes it difficult to assemble and which results in more and more revision as time passes and more and more information becomes available. So it is with the Heroes of '76 . To quote Mr. Bill Moyers, a former Presidential Press Secretary: "The past is no row of bare facts waiting to be memorized by school children. Nor does it stand in our backyard like an old picket fence, slowly and silently rotting. The past is a real world, inhabited by villains and heroes and regular folk passing this way on swift journeys. Their story is our story the tie that binds each generation to all others."

It is in that spirit this account is written. The intent is to make the history of the Order of Heroes of '76 an interesting story to be read and passed on, rather than a cold recitation of facts and figures. We pray your approval.

CALEB ATWATER



The story of the Heroes of '76 has to begin in Circleville, Ohio in the early 1800's. There lived a Brother, **Caleb Atwater**, a man educated in the finest schools available at that time learned in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, a lawyer, an ordained minister, a legislator, and, more importantly to us, a Masonic writer and historian. Brother Atwater was raised in Pickaway Lodge #18, Circleville, Ohio on 7 October, 1820. His writing talents, his devotion to Freemasonry, and his interest in American history were combined when he wrote an essay entitled The Patriot Masons of our Country. Atwater delivered this material as part of an oration at his Lodge in Circleville, Ohio on June 25th, 1821. This oration was subsequently published in a book entitled MASONIC MISCELLANY Vol I, 1821-2 and sometime later in a presentation book entitled THE EMBLEM. It is a beautiful piece of writing, as in glowing terms he describes the

contributions made to the founding of this Nation by members of the Craft:

"Who was it, that, quitting the peaceful shades of Vernon's Hill all the pleasures which wealth could purchase, friendship offer, or domestic felicity afford placed himself at the head of our Armies, at the unanimous call of his countrymen, and contended many a year for our liberties and independence, until victory crowned his efforts with success?

"It was Washington, who was a Freemason, and delighted to meet with his brethren upon the level and part with them on the square. So may we ever meet and part, my Brethren.

"Who was it, that, quitting the pursuits of private life, a useful, honorable, and lucrative profession, assumed the sword and fell in defense of our liberties at Bunker's(sic) Hill? It was Warren, who was our brother, and at the head of our Order in his native state when he fell.

"Who was it, that, by his discoveries in electricity, gained a high place as a philosopher in fame's temple? Who was it that by his indefatigable exertions, raised himself from the humblest walks of life to the highest eminence as a statesman? Who, from poverty became rich by his industry, economy, and prudence? Whose writings are read in every part of the civilized world? Who was it, in fine, that 'snatched' the lightnings from heaven, and the scepter from tyrants? It was Franklin, who was at the head of Freemasonry in Pennsylvania.

"Washington, Warren, and Franklin were Freemasons, whose virtuous labors in public and private life, in the field and in the cabinet deserve our esteem, our admiration, and our gratitude. Compared with these brethren, how sink the monarchs of Europe? Though they despised the gewgaws of princes, they gloried in wearing our jewels. The simplicity and sublimity of such characters are only estimated by the Craft, and will be honored and revered by mankind as long as patriotism, courage, constancy, fidelity, perseverance and all the amiable and heroic virtues find eulogists and admirers.

"We need not the illustrious examples of other ages and distant countries to excite us to the performance of every duty, to the practice of every virtue while Washington, Warren, and Franklin are remembered. Freemasonry, they were thine! Columbia, they were thy shield, thy boast and thy glory!

"Freemasonry! Thy sages, thy philosophers, thy warriors, and thy statesmen of our country, who have fought, toiled and bled, and died in our defense, are remembered with gratitude by thy sons! History has raised a monument to their fame more durable than marble which shall stand firm and its inscription continue, undefaced, while the world shall stand. Patriots of every country read the inscription upon this pillar, dedicated to patriotism and to virtue. The patriots of the Revolution, guided by the eternal principles of justice, truth, and patriotism, sought to exalt their country, and they succeeded in the attempt. How sickening to the eye of every genuine patriot are the courtiers of this silken age when compared to those who, in an iron age, endured every privation, passed through all manner of perils, toiled and bled for their country. How sink the potent patriots of these days when compared with those, who during our struggle for independence, might have been tracked by the blood which at every step distilled in crimson currents from their weary feet? Their clothes, consisting of shreds and patches of every color,

barefoot and hungry, they redeemed us from slavery. With soldiers thus accoutered, our brethren, Washington, Warren, Clinton, Gates, Lee, Scammell, La Fayette, and others conquered the best appointed armies that Great Britain had ever sent into the field. Patriots of every age and country shall repeat this story to their children while every Freemason shall rejoice that the principal actors in those days of peril were our brethren."

Brother Atwater's essay goes on for several more pages, but by now, anyone familiar with the ritual of the Heroes of '76 knows that many of the archaic yet identical words and phrases written by Atwater have found their way into the ritual as we know it.

What more do we know about Caleb Atwater? He was born in North Adams, Massachusetts 25 December, 1778. (That would have made him about 43 or 44 years old when he wrote Patriot Masons). His mother died when he was five years old, and he was brought up in the home of a wealthy neighbor. He was expected to earn his board and keep; and one bitterly cold night, while out tending his guardian's farm animals, his hands were so severely frost-bitten that he was physically handicapped for the rest of his life. After he was released by his guardian, he worked his way through Williams College at Williamstown, Massachusetts. He was valedictorian of his class, graduating with both a bachelor's and a master's degree while still in his teens. He then moved to New York. He studied for the ministry and was ordained in the Presbyterian Church. He later married a young woman who had apparently been one of his students. A year later his young wife and newborn child died. His health was poor. After his wife's untimely death, he took up the study of Law. He was admitted to the New York State Bar and shortly thereafter married again, this time to the well-educated daughter of his Law mentor. He moved to Circleville, Ohio in about 1813 and his family followed by 1815. He knocked around Ohio for several years trying to make a living as a lawyer. He was apparently a fine public speaker. In 1817 President Monroe appointed Atwater as postmaster of Circleville. The small income from that gave him the time to organize and complete his work on *Western Antiquities* which was published by the American Antiquarian Society at Worcester, Massachusetts in 1820. That work, the full title of which was *Descriptions of the Antiquities Discovered in the State of Ohio and other Western States*, is his masterpiece and a major pioneering work on American archeology. In 1821 he gave up his position as postmaster and was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives. His major interest was in the public education system. He put his prolific pen and his oratorical skills to work on numerous important occasions and became a foremost exponent of public education. He played a major role in the building of the Ohio Canal. Like many of the earth's movers and shakers he created many political adversaries who eventually, with his unwitting help, ended his political career. He demonstrated his worth in one final important act. He was largely instrumental in concluding treaties with four Indian Nations, the Chippewa, Ottawa, Potawatomy and Winnebago. Thereafter he attempted to win other political appointments, but his reputation for duplicity and his abrasive personality did him in. He became embittered toward the political machines.

Atwater died March 13, 1867, having sired six sons and three daughters. The name Atwater no longer exists in the telephone or city directories of Circleville, Ohio; however there is a street and a school named Atwater. City officials cannot give any information, but they assume that these were in remembrance of Brother Caleb considering his stature in the history of the City and State. It is very doubtful that he ever served in the military as he would have been 33 years old at

the time of the War of 1812, and 82 at the time of the beginning of the Civil War. It is possible that he may have been a member of a militia unit as was customary in those days, but whether he was or not is of minor importance to us. For anyone wishing to learn more about Brother Caleb Atwater, The Pickaway Quarterly, Summer 1992 Edition, contains an extensive Bibliography and a well-researched and well-written article by a Mr. W. W. Higgins, entitled Caleb Atwater, Circleville's First Citizen. This publication is on file in the Heroes of '76 archives at the National Headquarters of National Sojourners, Inc.

There is no direct evidence to connect Atwater with the cited article except the name, but the evidence seems incontrovertible that Caleb Atwater from Ohio and Caleb Atwater, author of Patriot Masons... are one and the same. How then, does this square with our understanding that "about 1876, Brother E. B. Jones... composed a ritual...and called it the "Heroes of '76 "? To answer this question one must apply a "reasonable supposition." Read on: The next chapter, about Brother E. B. Jones, and the following information may provide the answer.

Books, intended as presentation pieces, were a popular form of literature in the 1800's. Publishers gathered material and assembled it into books for various interest groups. One of these publishers was Leavitt and Allen of New York. Around 1850, they published a book called THE EMBLEM. Its title indicates its subject matter. The authors were careful not to reveal any of the secrets of the "Craft." Most of the articles concern themselves with the moral lessons of the Order and their application to everyday life. To ensure wide acceptance, the articles selected for publication were written in common, down-to-earth language. Standing out like a diamond among lesser gems was Atwater's article. It is not known whether Atwater reconstructed the article for formal publication, or for that matter, whether the publisher had ever obtained his permission to use it. It is, nevertheless, clearly credited to Atwater. The book, undated, as was the custom in those days, apparently enjoyed considerable success and was presented to many Grand Lodge libraries as well as to many prominent Masons. There are at least two copies known to exist in remarkably good condition considering their age of over 100 years. One of these copies is in the National archives at the National Headquarters of National Sojourners, Inc. It was obtained from the collection of the late Brother Morrill W. Marston of El Camino Real Chapter #413. (This Chapter was later renamed General Morrill W. Marston Chapter). Additionally, the book previously referred to (MASONIC MISCELLANY) is a part of the collection of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky.

EDWARD BEACH JONES



Edward Beach Jones is the next important Mason who figures into the history of the Heroes of '76 , (1832-1894). Brother Jones was born near the city of Petersburg, in Brunswick County, Virginia on April 11, 1832. His father died when Edward was quite young, and in 1844 his mother moved the family to Paducah, Kentucky. In 1864 Brother Jones married Miss Lucy Ware. Four sons were born of this union; Harry E., Paul S., Oscar B. and E. B., Jr. Early in life, Brother Jones entered the mercantile business (clothing and gent's furnishings), and was thus engaged, through the Civil War, until 1868. Nothing has been found to

indicate that Jones was militarily involved in the Civil War, and all indications are that he was not. In 1868 he was elected Circuit Court Clerk of McCracken County. In 1874 he returned to the mercantile business and later became Deputy Postmaster for a short time, after which he went to the office of the County Court where he served as Deputy until 1892 when, at the age of 60, he was re-elected to the office of Circuit Court Clerk. He was serving in this office at the time of his death. Brother Jones died of tuberculosis (or consumption, as it was called in those days) on August 2, 1894.

Brother Jones was made a Mason in Paducah Lodge #127 on Christmas Day in 1854. He served this Lodge with distinction until 1889 and was Master from 1861 through 1867; which is, incidentally, throughout the Civil War. In 1867 he was elected Grand Junior Warden where he served for two years because the Grand Master was re-elected and served for two years. After that Brother Jones was regularly advanced through the Grand Line until he became Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the State of Kentucky in 1871. Brother Jones belonged to all of the York Rite Bodies and served as Grand High Priest of Royal Arch Masons in Kentucky 1869-70. In 1889 he affiliated with and helped found Plain City Lodge #449 of Paducah, Kentucky, and, subsequently (1891) became Master of that Lodge. He was also active in the Odd Fellows and the Knights of Pythias.

It does not take great imagination to visualize what went on in the mind of Brother E. B. Jones in 1875. The Centennial of the United States was upon the Nation. If what happened during the recent Bicentennial celebration can be any indication, great things were being planned to celebrate the occasion. Brother Jones may have been perusing some Masonic literature, and when he came upon Atwater's work he realized that it was made to order for a patriotic Masonic Degree; or, he may have been toying with the idea of a patriotic Masonic side degree was searching through Masonic literature for material to use for that purpose. It is most unlikely that we will ever know, but either way, there can be no doubt that the degree is built around work credited to Atwater. Brother Jones is credited with being the creator of the Heroes of '76, and properly so. Without him there would have been no such degree. In all probability the degree in its infancy was little more than an invocation, a recitation which included Atwater's words, and a closing of the Bible; nevertheless, it became most popular. It is not hard to picture in one's mind Brother Jones standing in his Masonic regalia and reciting the words; the candidates awed by his majestic presence, mesmerized by his mastery of ritualistic performance, and thrilled by his rhetoric concerning patriotism and love of country exhibited by the Masons of old. No doubt, as time passed, Brother Jones added to and developed the degree by including an obligation, working tools, penalties and transitional paragraphs to unite the various parts into a cohesive whole. Tradition and Brother Christopher Van Deventer's narrative history inform us that during Brother Jones' lifetime, no one conferred the degree but himself.

There has been some conjecture as to why Brother Jones did not credit Caleb Atwater with his contributions to the degree. One might say that it was Atwater who really wrote the degree. One might say that, and some have said it, but they are wrong. It was Jones who wrote the degree. The degree only makes use of the writings of Caleb Atwater as it does the writings of Brother Sir Walter Scott (*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*); Theodore O'Hara, (*The Bivouac of the Dead*); Ralph Waldo Emerson, (*The Concord Hymn*); and others. It should here be noted that Brother Christopher Van Deventer probably wrote more of the degree than did Jones, surely having

written the history and the monitor, and probably the verse concerning the "First to Fall" wherein mention is made of the shock resulting from Warren's death at Bunker Hill. Additionally, contributions have been made by a select committee (The '51 and '56 Manuals); Brother William Biehl, Jr. (The Bennington Flag Lecture); Brother Frank McCullough (The Guardhouse Briefing); Brother James. E. Johnson (The Commander's Admonishments); and John P. Scherger, Wm. Biehl, Jr. and Charles A. Folsom (The Bi-Centennial Manual). None of these contributors are credited in the ritual, and correctly so. It is a derivative work, and failure to credit does not constitute plagiarism. Nor is it evidence of sinister intent to convert the work of others to one's personal credit. The degree is the thing! The individual parts which in and of themselves served other purposes have value in this instance only when taken as a part of the whole. There is a classic example of this in the case of the American's Creed which is credited as having been written by Mr. William Tyler Page. In fact, that work derives from at least ten different sources, never denied nor concealed by Page but also not credited to the original authors in the work itself.

THOMAS J. FLOURNOY



Thomas J. Flournoy is the third Mason to play an important role in the developmental history of the degree. He was born August 7, 1842 and died September 5, 1925. Very little has been discovered concerning Brother Flournoy's life beyond the dates of his birth and death because a fire in 1937 destroyed all of the stored records of the Masonic Temple in Paducah, Kentucky. It is known is that he was a member of the Paducah Commandery #11 and that he was Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Kentucky 1893-'94.

Tradition and the historical account left to us by Brother Christopher Van Deventer inform us that "Before his death (Jones) gave a copy of the ritual to Brother Thomas J. Flournoy..." This was not a capricious act. Brother Flournoy, an accomplished ritualist, had the Masonic stature and ritualistic capability to carry the degree forward as Jones intended. There has been some conjecture as to whether a script actually exchanged hands. It seems to be a virtual certainty that it did. Portions of the work have come down to us almost exactly as written by Atwater. It is more than likely that Flournoy never knew of Atwater's contribution, and considering the archaic and heroic language and style used by Atwater, it seems reasonable that, regardless of how familiar Flournoy might have been with the work, something would have changed over time unless he were following a written script. Brother Flournoy proceeded to spread the degree by moving it out of Kentucky and conferring it on selected Masons from many states including Tennessee, Illinois, Iowa, and Georgia. It also seems obvious that both Jones and Flournoy considered the degree essential to preserving the memory of the gallant Masons who founded this Nation rather than simply a reward for meritorious service to Masonry. Brother Van Deventer states in a speech recorded in 1963 that he and Flournoy agreed that "too many could not be told," when referring to the making of several Heroes without the mandatory presence of "three."

The short history of the degree contained in the manual, the speech by Van Deventer, and the

history of the Heroes of '76 printed in the May-June 1963 issue of THE SOJOURNER, inform us that Brother Flournoy gave a copy of the ritual to Brother Christopher Van Deventer. It is practically certain that in this case a script was passed. Van Deventer was too new to the degree to have brought it along unchanged without a written copy. In this same article Van Deventer states that shortly after receiving the degree he rewrote the ritual. He states that his rewrite consisted largely of coordination working tools and arrangement. It is also clear from Van Deventer's speech at the 1963 Convention that he added the John Paul Jones "who-was-it" and also the verse about the "first to fall" to the Warren "who-was-it." This writer is of the opinion that Van Deventer was the author of that verse. Van Deventer further states that shortly after he rewrote the ritual, "Uncle Tom" (Flournoy) approved the rewrite. These original scripts have passed from existence so far as can be determined. Brother Van Deventer was then in possession of the degree, and his records indicate that he began to confer the degree in 1921. He is known to have initiated more than sixty Heroes of '76 .

The first written copy of the degree that historical researchers have been able to find is the one written by Van Deventer in 1936. There are two original copies of this manual known to exist. Thanks to the generosity and sense of historical responsibility of Brother Delbert B. Shapiro of Chicago Chapter, both are in the possession of National Sojourners, Inc. One, slightly dog-eared copy, is safely deposited in the National Archives of the Heroes of '76 ; the other, a near mint copy, containing the original signatures of both Christopher Van Deventer and George Unmacht is on display in the Heroes Room at The Collingwood Library and Museum on Americanism. This display includes a copy of every edition of the Heroes of '76 manual.

What else do we know about Colonel Christopher Van Deventer, USA, (1874-1964)? His name has been frequently mentioned thus far, and in all probability any person reading this history is by now beginning to wonder, "who was this guy"? It's a fair question, and we have some of the answers.

CHRISTOPHER VAN DEVENTER



Christopher Van Deventer was a man respectfully admired by his vast number of friends, primarily for his exemplification of the tenets of the great Fraternity of Freemasonry. He was ever a gentleman, a profound patriot, a staunch supporter of good citizenship and good government programs, a military and Masonic leader, and an ardent practitioner of brotherly love. His predominant characteristic was service to others. Brother Van Deventer was born in Clinton, Iowa, July 1, 1874. He grew up in Tennessee and completed his education at the University of Tennessee, Columbia University and the University of Michigan, with a Masters Degree in Engineering. He obtained employment as an engineer at the Stanley Electric Company in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, the predecessor of General Electric Corporation. Before moving to Chicago, he pioneered in hydroelectric development of Tennessee waterways and worked on the first project that brought high-tension electricity to the city of San Francisco. In 1906 he established the Van Deventer engineering consultant firm in

Chicago. During WW-I he had as his ultimate assignment Director of Operations and Personnel for the Chief of Engineers in the American Expeditionary Forces in France. He was decorated by both the American and French governments. While in France, he attended the historic meeting which organized the American Legion and upon his return to the United States founded the Castle Post of the American Legion in Chicago with a membership composed primarily of men who had served in the Corps of Engineers. (The castle is the insignia of the Corps of Engineers). Prior to the War he had been Chief Rabban of Medinah Temple, AAONMS. He was held in that position until he returned home. Van Deventer was installed as Illustrious Potentate in 1920. In 1922-23 he was President of the Chicago Chapter of National Sojourners. It was during this time that he instituted the Heroes of '76 degree.

He was raised in 1905 in Woodlawn Park Lodge #789 (later Auburn Park). He was a member of La Fayette Chapter #2, R.A.M. Palestine Council No. 66, R.&S.M. and Apollo Commandery #1, Knights Templar of which he was Eminent Commander in 1912. He was coronetted 33rd Degree Scottish Rite in 1912; was Most Wise Master of Gourgas Chapter, Rose Croix in 1920; Minister of State and Orator, Oriental Consistory in 1927; Grand Sovereign, Red Cross of Constantine in 1927.

In addition to his Masonic Service, Brother Van Deventer was very active in civic affairs. Some of the things he was involved in were: President of the Adventurers Club; he was in charge of Federal and State participation for the Chicago Century of Progress Exposition (1933-34 World's Fair); first President of Chicago Post of American Military Engineers; and for many years he was a special representative for the Museum of Science and Industry. He was an ideal man for men of all ages to emulate.

Christopher Van Deventer died 23 February 1964 at Rockford, Tennessee. He is buried in the family plot in Knoxville, Tennessee. To quote the eulogy provided in the March-April 1964 issue of THE SOJOURNER, which reported his death, "Colonel Van Deventer was, without question, one of the greatest men, Masons and Sojourners who ever lived. His kindness and wise counsel served well in the early days of the organization of National Sojourners, and his gift of the Heroes of '76 did much to expand its membership. He and General Fries are the only recipients of the National Sojourners Legion of Honor Medal (as of 1964). He was also Honorary National Commander Emeritus of the Heroes of '76 and served four years as National First Vice President of National Sojourners during its organizational years in the early twenties." Brother Van Deventer is undoubtedly the most important person in the history of the Heroes of '76 and one of the most important in the history of National Sojourners, Inc. The author, by virtue of all the research conducted for this history, has come to the inescapable conclusion that, although there have been many hands and minds associated with the development of the Heroes of '76, Brother Van Deventer's contributions and efforts far exceed in importance those of any other individual. It is also certain that without him the degree would never have come to National Sojourners, Inc., and further would not have achieved the degree of importance in Freemasonry and in National Sojourners that it has.

In 1922, by his own account, Brother Van Deventer, searching for a way to revive and enliven the Sojourners Club conceived a bold scheme. He realized that the Heroes degree had been a one-man show for nearly fifty years and that, as such, would never receive the wide distribution

it deserved. He also realized that it was ideally suited to the membership of Sojourners and that it might provide the "shot-in-the-arm" that Sojourners sorely needed. The question was how to go about it. Local units under the sponsorship of the Sojourners was the obvious answer, and Van Deventer coined the term "Camp" to identify them. He proceeded to organize the first Camp (Bon Homme Richard) in Chicago Chapter in 1922. In 1923 he and several other Heroes from Chicago went to Washington, D. C. and organized George Washington Camp there. Following that, Camps were formed in most Chapters of National Sojourners, a situation which prevails to this date. Brother Van Deventer's foresight and his belief that this action would serve to stimulate Sojourners has proven true beyond what even he may have foreseen.

But, the Van Deventer contributions did not stop there. Now that The Heroes of '76 was no longer a one-man show, it became essential that there be some form of organization. Because it was what he knew best, and because it was appropriate to the degree, he instituted the military organizational structure which is the hallmark of Heroes Camps to this day. The officers were given military titles, the meetings were called "bivouacs," and the candidate became a "recruit." Although most of the ritual work remained the same, the basic concept had changed. No longer was one man conferring the degree on a class of candidates; now a group of men conferred the degree upon one or more recruits. Other changes were also necessary. The traditional parts of the script had to be changed to reflect the new status of the degree and make it more suitable for use in Sojourners. Van Deventer was careful to retain the original degree as it had been given to him. With the large number of Camps, it was evident that the "landmarks" would soon be lost unless a means could be developed to preserve and standardize the degree. Accordingly, Van Deventer became the driving force behind two things that he believed to be essential: first, formation and activation of a National organization of Heroes of '76 similar to National Sojourners, and second, making it the function of this organization to preserve the original degree and/or to make such changes as became necessary to enhance the degree and spread it into fertile territory. In the furtherance of these objectives Van Deventer states that during the year following the founding of the national organization (1924) the "short form" of the ritual was developed. He writes that the "pause with the words in reverence to the dead (was) welcome," and credits Brother George F. Unmacht with that suggestion. Van Deventer wrote and distributed the first known manual in 1936. He probably decreed the wearing of the tricorne hat, although that is conjecture.

THE BENNINGTON FLAG



The Bennington Flag was adopted as the official flag of the Heroes of '76 at the National Encampment held in conjunction with the 8th Annual National Sojourners Convention in St. Louis, Missouri in May 1928. (The Bennington Flag is shown as part of the "set-up" for the second section in Van Deventer's 1936 manual.)

The Bennington Flag is unique among Stars and Stripes in that it has seven white stripes and only six red ones the opposite of the National Flag. The thirteen stars are arranged with eleven in an inverted "U" and the other two in the upper right and left corners of the blue canton. Contained within the "U" is the numeral 76. It couldn't have been better suited if it had been

designed especially for the Order.

Legend has it that the flag flew August 16, 1777, during the Battle of Bennington, above the storehouse where the Bennington Monument now stands. Members of the Fillmore family of Bennington owned the flag from the time it was rescued by Nathaniel Fillmore, who fought in the Battle of Bennington. The flag was passed along in the Fillmore family until 1927 when it was given by Maude Fillmore Wilson to the Bennington Museum. Interestingly, it was the next year, 1928, that it was designated as the "official" flag of the Heroes of '76 .

This flag has been the subject of much controversy. Some justified, some not. There are even some who contend that it is a total fraud, having been devised at about the time of the Centennial and foisted off on the public as the flag used at the battle of Bennington. Others, such as the Vermont Historian, John Spargo, insist that it was present at the Battle of Bennington. The truth probably lies, as is usually the case with legends, somewhere between the extremes.

In March, 1995 the flag was removed from the Bennington Museum for authentication and restoration. As of July 1, 1995 there are no results of this examination. The fabric of the flag will be examined by experts at the Museum of American Textile History, Textile Conservation Center in North Andover, Massachusetts. According to a pamphlet published by the Bennington Museum, if it contains only linsey-woolsey, (linen and wool) it may indeed date to 1776. If it contains cotton, it was probably made around 1812. In that case it could not have been present during the battle, but more likely would have been created in commemoration of that battle.

There have been many claims for the honor of having been the first land battle in which the Stars and Stripes was flown: Assanpink and Middlebrook, New Jersey; Fort Schuyler and Fort Arene, New York; Brandywine, Pennsylvania; Hubbardton, Vermont; Crook's Bridge, Delaware; and about a dozen others. None of these claims have been substantiated and some are obviously incorrect. Until fresh research proves otherwise, the camp flag of a Vermont Militia Company, known as the Bennington, must be recognized as the first Stars and Stripes used on land by American Armed Forces although its size (10' x 5½') establishes that it could not have been carried in battle as it would have been both too heavy and too cumbersome. It is certainly the oldest stars and stripes still in existence. The Flag Book of the U. S. A., (By Whitney Smith, Director of the Flag Research Center, Lexington, Massachusetts) asserts that it was indeed flown during the battle of Bennington on August 16, 1777. The extent of the claims made for the Bennington Flag ends with its early display. There is no proof that it was an "official" flag of the United States Army or government.

Vermont was not one of the original thirteen States because its territory was claimed by both New York and New Hampshire. Never-the-less, men from the Green Mountain State fought against the British in the Revolution, and some of them may have flown this, the first known example of, the Stars and Stripes. Since 1963, the Bennington Battle Flag has been hoisted at the Vermont State House 15-17 August, each year, in commemoration of that important victory.

The official governmental reluctance to use the new National Flag in the field all but annihilates two other claims to have been the first unfurling of a government issue Stars and Stripes at Crook's Bridge, Delaware on September 3, 1777, and at Brandywine, Pennsylvania eight days

later. Both of these claims are unsupported by any contemporary or subsequent evidence.

Some historians have claimed that the Stars and Stripes was hoisted on August 3, 1777 during the British siege of Fort Schuyler. This claim ignores the fact that although flag legislation was passed in June of that year, the act was not published until over four weeks after the siege of the patriot garrison on the Mohawk. It also ignores the irrefutable testimony of Colonel Marinus Willet, the second in command, who provided a detailed narrative of the action. He reported that on the night of August 2-3 the patriots improvised a "Continental Flag" cut from garments donated by members of the garrison. There is no mention at all of stars. (The blue canton came from the cloak of thrifty Captain Abraham Swartwout, who presented a bill for the destroyed garment a year later.) Corroborating evidence comes from a carving on a powder horn owned by John McGraw - one of the fort's soldiers. It bears a carved reproduction of the fort showing a flag hoisted above it the Grand Union Flag.

The blame for the persistence of the groundless Fort Schuyler claim rests with what was formerly called the War Department. In 1926 the Department announced the "Stars and Stripes got its baptism of fire in a land battle in defense of Fort Stanwix, New York on August 2, 1777." (Fort Stanwix, built in 1758 as a frontier post against the French, had fallen into ruin long before the Revolutionary War. In 1776 a new fort was erected on the site and named in honor of the oft-maligned New York patriot General Philip Schuyler.)

This "Official" finding for Fort Schuyler brought sharp protests from students who were more careful of flag history. The embarrassed War Department hastily withdrew its statement. Two months later the original statement was again released to the press! A second time the Department retreated in confusion and published a correction. The retraction was complete and unqualified, but as is usually the case with misinformation, it received less publicity than the original, twice-repeated declaration, and so, the roots of the Fort Schuyler story are deeply implanted.

The failure of the British to prevail in the siege of Fort Schuyler blocked off the important Mohawk Valley and prevented the siege troops from joining up with Burgoyne at the Hudson River. Burgoyne then turned to his left flank and moved on Bennington, Vermont, a vital supply base for New England and New York troops. Our Brother, Colonel John Stark set out from Bennington to meet the British threat. It was there and then that he exhorted his men, "Tonight the American Flag floats over yonder hill or Molly Stark sleeps a widow." By sundown August 16, 1777 the encircled Hessians had surrendered their commander lay dying and Molly Stark was preparing a welcome for her husband. Victory in this battle led to the decisive triumph at Saratoga just two months later.

The Battle of Bennington is believed to mark the first appearance of an American Flag bearing thirteen stars and thirteen stripes. The claim is weak, but of all the claims for the first "Stars and Stripes" this flag has the clearest record and the most historical merit. Despite its unusual design it is impossible to believe that it had any source other than the June 14, 1777 flag resolution of the Second Continental Congress. The flag designer may have misunderstood the actual wording of the "thirteen alternate red and white stripes," or he may have deliberately arranged them white and red in accordance with the principles of heraldry. The use of the figure "76" can only be

explained as a method of honoring in blazonry the year of independence. The arrangement of the stars and the number of points were, of course, left to the imagination of each designer until specified by statute 135 years later.

Two months after the Battle of Bennington the first Stars and Stripes is supposed to have presided over Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga. Also, there is the familiar story of how the flag was made. In truth, no story about the flags of the Revolution would be complete without the charming story of how patriot women cut up their flannel petticoats in a burst of patriotic devotion. Despite the continuing tradition that the Stars and Stripes was raised at Saratoga, there is not a shred of evidence to support such a belief no background details to add substance to the legend, no consistent account of its usage, and, of course, no actual flag to be preserved as irrefutable evidence. Still it is not beyond the realm of possibility that, as the distinguished Vermont historian John Spargo has suggested, the Saratoga Stars and Stripes was indeed the Bennington Flag.

All of the forgoing notwithstanding, the Bennington Flag is the official flag of the Heroes of '76 . It perfectly symbolizes the purposes of the Order. One would be hard pressed to design a flag better suited. So, whether it is a fraud, whether it is the first "Stars and Stripes" used in a land battle, whether its stripes are all wrong, whether Colonel Stark was referring to it or to some other emblem, or whether it was present at Saratoga as Burgoyne surrendered all these things are of little importance. It is, "Our Flag."

THE CONTRIBUTORS

In Brother Van Deventer's first known written edition of the ritual (1936), he uses several other works which he does not credit, but which are known to have been written by other authors. The first, which he uses in his "aims, tenets, and purposes" at what was then the beginning of the ritual is from the Lay of the Last Minstrel, written by another great Freemason, Brother Sir Walter Scott, in 1805. The sixteen lines used in the ritual are from Canto VI of the poem. They bear repeating here as another example of the magnificent works from which the degree of the Heroes of '76 has been derived:

Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned,
From wandering on a foreign strand?
If such there breathe, go, mark him well,
For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim,
Despite those titles, power and pelf,
The wretch, concentered all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And doubly-dying shall go down

To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.

Van Deventer also used a verse from a poem by Wilbur Dick Nesbit, entitled Let us smile, which goes as follows:

The thing that goes the farthest
Toward making life worthwhile,
That costs the least and does the most,
Is just a friendly smile.
A smile that bubbles from the heart,
That loves its fellow men,
Will drive away the clouds of gloom,
And coax the sun again.
It's full of worth and goodness, too,
With manly kindness blent.
It's worth a million dollars,
And it doesn't cost a cent.

Van Deventer further borrowed from another work in the portion of the ritual wherein the Brethren pause for a moment in their work to remember those Heroes who have gone before. These four lines, slightly modified, come from the first verse of the twelve-verse poem, The Bivouac of the Dead, written by Theodore O'Hara. It has been suggested that it is not necessary here to include the entire work, but this poem is widely recognized as the finest tribute to fallen soldiers ever written. All but five stanzas are included here in order that Mr. O'Hara's masterpiece may be enjoyed by those who read this history. After all, the Heroes degree has such a purpose, and it is easy to see why Brother Unmacht suggested that it be included in the ritual.

The muffled drum's sad roll has beat
The soldier's last tattoo!
No more on life's parade shall meet
The brave and fallen few.
On fame's eternal camping ground
Their silent tents are spread.
And glory guards with Solemn round
The bivouac of the dead.

No rumor of the foe's advance
Now swells upon the wind.
No troubled thought at midnight haunts,
Of loved ones left behind;
No vision of the morrow's strife
The warriors dream alarms.
No braying horn, nor screaming fife
At dawn shall call to arms.

Their shivered swords are red with rust,

Their plumed heads are bowed.
Their haughty banner, trailed in dust,
Is now their mortal shroud -
And plenteous funeral tears have washed
The red stains from each brow.
And the proud forms, by battle gashed,
Are free from anguish now.

The neighing troop, the flashing blade,
The bugle's stirring blast,
The charge,- the dreadful cannonade,
The din and shout are passed;
Nor war's wild notes, nor glory's peal
Shall thrill with fierce delight
Those breasts that nevermore may feel,
The rapture of the fight.

Like the fierce northern hurricane
That sweeps his great plateau,
Flushed with the triumph yet to gain,
Come down the serried foe,
Who heard the thunder of the fray
Break o'er the field beneath,
Knew well the watchword of the day,
Was "Victory or Death"!

Here, five stanzas are omitted. The poem continues:

Rest on, embalmed and sainted dead,
Dear is the blood ye gave.
No impious footstep here shall tread,
The herbage of your grave.
Nor shall your glory be forgot,
While fame her record keeps
Or honor points the hallowed spot,
Where valor proudly sleeps.

Yon marble minstrel's voiceless stone,
In deathless song shall tell,
When many a vanished age hath flown,
The story how ye fell.
Nor wreck, nor change, nor winter's blight,
Nor time's remorseless doom,
Can dim one ray of glory's light,
That gilds your deathless tomb.

And, finally, to wrap up some of the examples of derivative works that make up the most beautiful parts of the Hero's ritual, all of which make major contributions to the beauty of the work and none of which are credited to their writers, is one added by Van Deventer from the "Who-was-it" about Warren:

Ah, many a noble heart was hushed,
In the battle's din that day.
And many a long life's hope was crushed,
In that dark and sad array.
But never a heart more brave and true,
Than the martyred heroes who fell,
The first in the cause of liberty,
On the heights of Bunker hill.
It swept the country like a funeral knell,
The sorrowful tidings how Warren fell.

THE EARLY MANUALS

Despite Brother Van Deventer's good intentions, too much leeway was permitted in the ritual. Camps began to devise their own rituals. Some were short, to accommodate a short session after the close of a regular Sojourners' meeting, and some were long to provide a full evening's activity when a degree was conferred at a meeting called for that exclusive purpose. So, in the late 1940's, a committee was formed of some of the most qualified and dedicated men in the National organization: Brothers John K. "Ricky" Rice, Robert J. Dunlop, Wayne C. Smith, Jere M. Leaman, Eulan I. Snyder, and Merritt B. Curtis. Their mandate to revise and standardize the ritual. As is usually the case with committees, they produced a work resembling a platypus. (That is, something for everyone). It was not one, but two rituals, designed obviously to fill the two purposes previously mentioned, the short and the long evenings. This work was produced and distributed by 1951. It was probably a little ahead of its time. It was about three times longer than the work which it replaced. It added the now familiar formal opening which begins with the first verse of Ralph Waldo Emerson's "The Concord Hymn." This poem/song was first presented at the completion of the Concord monument, April 18, 1836, over 60 years after the battle it commemorates. The author is not credited in the ritual, but it goes without saying that no one ever intended to imply that this was in any way original to the Hero's degree. The full text of the Hymn follows:

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flags to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmer stood,
And fired the shot heard 'round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror sleeps;
And time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set today a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit that made these Heroes dare
To die and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

A Toast to the Flag, by Brother John J. Daly of the Washington Herald, appears for the first time in the 1951 ritual produced by the select committee. This was the first time that the author of a work used in the ritual had been credited. This "Toast," a great favorite with National Sojourners and Heroes of '76 members was a gift from Brother Daly to National Sojourners. A copy bearing the picture and signature of the author hangs on the wall of the Collingwood Library and Museum in Alexandria, Virginia. Numerous members have committed it to memory, many with their own unique manner of delivery. A chance to recite it in public is a cherished privilege among the members of the Order.

A Toast to the Flag

Here's to the red of it,
There's not a thread of it,
No, nor a shred of it,
In all the spread of it,
From foot to head.
But Heroes bled for it,
Faced steel and lead for it,
Precious blood shed for it,
Bathing it Red!

Here's to the white of it -
Thrilled by the sight of it,
Who knows the right of it
But feels the might of it
Through day and night?
Womanhood's care for it
Made manhood dare for it,
Purity's prayer for it
Keeps it so white!

Here's to the blue of it -
Beauteous view of it,
Heavenly hue of it,
Star-spangled dew of it
Constant and true;
Diadems gleam for it,

States stand supreme for it,
Liberty's beam for it
Brightens the blue!

Here's to the whole of it -
Stars, stripes and pole of it,
Body and soul of it
O, and the role of it,
Sun shining through;
Hearts in accord for it,
Swear by the sword for it,
Thanking the Lord for it,
Red, white and blue!

The committee added the Revere "Who-was-it," and they also defined, for the first time, the elected National Officers and provided that Camps should have similar officer lines.

Their work was not finished, however, because the new manual did not meet with universal approval. In 1956 under the sponsorship of this committee another manual was issued. It was essentially the same as the previous manual, and in fact very much the same as the one in use today except that an installation ceremony written by Brother Eulan I. Snyder had been added.

Then in 1961, only five years later, a strange thing happened. Apparently because of unhappiness with the 1951 and '56 manuals, a movement developed at the National Encampment to return to square one. It is not clear just who led this maneuver or even if there was a clear leader. It is the suspicion of this writer, however, based on Brother Van Deventer's comments concerning the merits of simplicity and brevity in his 1963 speech, that it was Van Deventer, himself, who led the revolt. It being generally acknowledged that he was the main man where the Heroes of '76 were concerned, there is no doubt he could have influenced the National Encampment to approve just about anything he recommended. In any case, a resolution was passed which declared, "Following this bivouac (sic) the only official manual of the Heroes of '76 shall be the one given to us by Colonel Christopher Van Deventer." Even though the new "little blue" manual should have been, by virtue of the wording of the resolution, exactly the same as the one first written by Van Deventer, it was not. The list of National Commanders was retained, and the Revere "Who-was-it" was eliminated, as were the formal opening and other administrative instructions.



This 1961 "Little Blue" manual was, in effect, a repudiation of 15 years of effort and development by a blue-ribbon committee. Such men, however, are a force to be reckoned with. At the 1965 National Convention, a highly proficient team was assembled. All were dressed in Colonial uniforms (See picture, above). After this team demonstrated the effectiveness of a well-performed initiation, the 1965 National Encampment reinstated the 1956 ritual. Although it was not reprinted and distributed to the field until 1969, many of the Heroes had retained their 1956 manuals, and the work progressed in some areas without the new printing. There may have been some dissension in the ranks, but the consensus appeared to favor the more standardized and formalized version of the ritual.

It is clear that Van Deventer added the John Paul Jones "Who-was-it" to the work of E. B. Jones inasmuch as Jones took his work from that written by Atwater. The Revere "Who-was-it" was added by the "blue ribbon" committee, and both of these additions found permanence in the 1969 ritual. The actual authors of these two parts of the ritual are lost in antiquity, but it seems most likely that Van Deventer wrote the one about John Paul Jones at the urging of his Navy friends, and the one about Paul Revere was the work of one or more of the select committee previously named.

Every revision of the ritual scrupulously retained the original work. The one exception, the "smile" poem contained in the 1969 ritual was later eliminated in the Bicentennial edition in order to shorten and simplify what was already a too-long piece of work for most people to memorize. This poem was presumably not a part of E. B. Jones' ritual but was more likely added by Van Deventer when he wrote the first "history." The select committee took that part of Van Deventer's work and added it to the end of the ritual. The select committee also issued as a preface to the "new" ritual "A Directive for Heroes of '76 ." This directive mentioned, for the first time, "Landmarks" of the Heroes. Only two "Landmarks" are given. The first: "that the Official Ritual was the first and main 'Landmark' of the Heroes of '76 . Any unauthorized version variation is a violation thereof and must be dealt with accordingly." The second: "...that the Degree is to be conferred ONLY upon those Sojourners in good standing...." This "Landmark" must have caused considerable soul-searching on the part of Van Deventer. In his speech of 1963, Van Deventer said that Brother Flournoy had told him that, "...he and Brother Jones had

talked it over and decided that as many as possible should be told about what these Masons and Brothers had done during the revolutionary period." This "Landmark" was going to limit the message to a special few. In the 1969 manual a third "Landmark" is added which states that "neither initiation fee, nor dues, nor assessment shall be imposed upon the membership." It goes on to refer to the responsibility of the parent Chapter to support the Heroes Camp, and the responsibility of the Camp to relay any monies to the Chapter Treasurer.

As stated above there was some dissension in the ranks about the ritual, especially about the 1969 manual which was actually a reprint of the 1951-'56 rituals. The 1969 ritual was revised in 1971 by another committee composed of Brothers John K. "Ricky" Rice, Albert H. Hulett, and John P. Scherger. This revision retained intact and without change the ritual as it was currently being used, but it revised and added the techniques and procedures which had been developed by the Camps during the so-called "period-of-darkness." (1960-1965 using the "Little Blue" manual). Of major significance was the new provision limiting the number of recruits to two at any one bivouac. This, for the obvious purpose of preventing an over-zealous commander from wiping out the future for his successor, and/or limiting the degree to annual or less frequent presentation so that only a few would see it, and almost none would feel the need to commit part of it to memory.

THE SPIRIT OF '76



The Heroes Medal Lecture, composed by Brother Colonel William Biehl, Jr., states in part, "Let your eyes rest upon the medal before you. . . . Inscribed thereon are several symbols with which you are already familiar. The first which strikes your eye is taken from A. M. Willard's famous Spirit of '76 painting. . . ." So, now comes the contribution of another great Freemason from the Ohio Valley, Archibald M. Willard.

Archibald McNeal Willard was born in Bedford, Ohio on August 22, 1836, the fourth of seven children in the family of Reverend Samuel R. and Catherine Willard. Reverend Willard, a fundamentalist preacher, moved his family frequently from parish to parish throughout the Northern Ohio Western Reserve area. There was little money for more than the basic necessities of life. Of his heritage, Willard wrote: "My father was not only a deeply religious man, but a man of strong patriotic spirit. He inherited from his father, and I from him, an ardent love of country and pride in its glory." The Willards settled permanently in Wellington, Ohio in 1855 where Reverend Samuel Willard ministered to the local Disciples of Christ Church.

As a youth, Archibald was the graffiti artist of the village and left his art on every available space; barn doors, fences, trees and outhouses. He used whatever was available, chalk, charcoal, even his jackknife. Several years earlier, Willard had apprenticed himself to a local artist, wheelwright and wagon maker named E. S. Tripp, where he decorated wagons, sleighs, buggies, etc. He was so expert at this trade that soon his employer's wagons and buggies became noted for their fine quality. He grew to a lanky height of 6'3", a giant of a man in those times, and acquired the nickname of "Deke" or "Deacon" probably because of his father's occupation. His art began to appear everywhere in Wellington embellishing furniture, wagons and sleighs. A Mr. A. G.

Couch won first prize at the 1857 Wellington Agricultural Fair for his furniture hand-painted and decorated by young Archibald Willard. Willard enlisted as a color sergeant in the 86th Ohio Volunteer Infantry soon after the outbreak of the Civil War. He served with this unit and saw action in Kentucky and Tennessee. In February 1864, Willard's unit was mustered out of the service and he returned to Wellington. At this time, Willard made his first contact with J. F. Ryder who photographed and printed several of Willard's Civil War sketches. This same year he married his Wellington sweetheart, Nellie S. Challacombe. Less than a year later he again enlisted in the 176th Ohio Volunteers as a private. He saw action in Nashville, and was subsequently discharged there in June of 1865. He returned to his home in Wellington and resumed his employment with the Tripp factory. He was a member of Wellington Lodge #127 in Wellington, Ohio, a Lodge still active. He was entered March 21, 1867, passed April 30, 1867, and raised May 21, 1867. On December 15, 1891 he was "Withdrawn" (Demitted) from Wellington Lodge. It is believed that he then joined a Lodge in Cleveland, Ohio inasmuch as he had lived in Cleveland since 1876 when he and his family moved there.

It was J. F. Ryder, Cleveland's most famous photographer and entrepreneur who first recognized the talent of the young wagon painter "Arch" Willard from Wellington. It was he who brought Willard to Cleveland where they developed a profitable partnership printing chromo-lithographs of Willard's humorous sketches. And, it was he who in 1875 suggested that Willard might do something special for the Centennial. In October of 1875, after much prior planning, sketching and experimenting, Willard began work on the large 8' x 10' canvas in an upstairs bedroom of the family home in Wellington. The years of 1875-76 were spent almost entirely working on the Yankee Doodle painting. Several considerations dictated a move to Cleveland; i.e. the large well-lighted studio of Willis Adams, the advanced camera and techniques of J. F. Ryder, and less distraction of dogs and family. The move created one problem that turned out to be fortuitous. Freeman Greene, who had been posing as the old drummer could not take the time to travel to Cleveland, and so, Willard conscripted his father, Samuel, as the model for this character. The painting was completed in Cleveland at the end of March 1876 in the studio of Willis Adams on Euclid Avenue near the Public Square. A plaque erected in 1932 marks this site. Christened Yankee Doodle, the masterpiece was first displayed in the front window of J. F. Ryder's art studio on March 27th, 1876. From the first day it drew large crowds despite the cold winds that were blowing off Lake Erie. Willard was pleased with the public reaction to Yankee Doodle. More importantly he was relieved that the large 8' x 10' canvas was finished. He was exhausted. What had started as a humorous cartoon, a promotion for the Centennial, had evolved into an emotional and totally consuming experience. But, he had captured the spirit of those early American Patriots of 1776 as never before or since. It should have been a time of great joy for the artist, but his heart was heavy because of the recent death of his father who had not only modeled for the grey-haired old drummer, but also had inspired the transformation of the painting and symbolized its message.

After the Centennial, the painting was taken to Boston for several weeks where it was placed on exhibition in the Old South Church Meetinghouse. While there, Mr. Brainerd, who had charge of the exhibition, suggested changing the name from Yankee Doodle to The Spirit of '76 because of the association of the term Yankee Doodle with a local "half-wit" of the same name. Willard reluctantly accepted the new name. He wrote, "I gave it the title which I had first in mind, Yankee Doodle. That's the tune I hear when I look at it. But many of those who love it prefer

The Spirit of '76, and I am content with either."

Both Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland, and Abbot Hall in Marblehead, Massachusetts have claimed to possess the Original Centennial Canvas. Of the two contenders, The Spirit of '76 at Western Reserve appears to be much earlier than the painting now at Marblehead. Neither of these two paintings match the photographs, supposedly of the Centennial Canvas, which, over the years were issued by Willard, Ryder, and Marblehead. To add to the confusion, there was a second large Spirit of '76 in existence shortly after the Centennial. On Valentine's Day in 1877 Willard presented an 8' x 13' Spirit of '76 to the Cleveland Gray's Armory. It is believed that this picture was lost when the Armory burned in 1918.

The Marblehead Spirit of '76 is a magnificent canvas. It is the most often reproduced, and therefor the best known of all the paintings. The main contender for the Centennial Canvas has generally been considered to be the Marblehead painting. Willard and his associates all referred to the Centennial painting as having gone on tour after 1876, and having been purchased by General John H. Devereux (Father of the model for the Drummer Boy) and presented to his home town of Marblehead, Massachusetts in 1880. A dispute arises, however, because there is no resemblance between the Centennial painting photographs and the painting now in Marblehead. Additionally, this painting demonstrates an artistic expertise far too advanced for Willard's 1876 Centennial technique.

This discrepancy is easily explained. The painting was returned to Willard in Cleveland in 1892, and for the sum of \$500 he created a vastly improved Spirit of '76, repainting either the returned canvas or possibly substituting a different canvas.

Mr. Willard F. Gordon, a great-great-nephew of Archibald M. Willard, in 1976 published an excellent book about his Uncle "Arch." In the process of researching material for this fine book, Mr. Gordon spent 12 years tracking down the history of his famous relative. Mr. Gordon has come to the conclusion that the Marblehead Spirit of '76, over-painted in 1892, is most likely the Centennial Canvas. Mr. Gordon is, however, somewhat disgusted with the animosity that has developed between Marblehead and Northern Ohio, and suggests that both paintings having been painted by Archibald Willard are equally important. Mr. Gordon's favorite solution to the missing 1876 canvas was offered by a Wellington resident who also was disgusted with the teapot tempest. With tongue in cheek, he assured Mr. Gordon that the missing Centennial Canvas was the 2' x 3' Spirit of '76 at the Herrick Memorial Library in Wellington, shrunk from its 8' x 10' size by improper laundering.

Archibald M. Willard died October 11, 1918 and is buried in the family plot in the Greenwood Cemetery in Wellington, Ohio. The artist's wife and four of his six children preceded him in death. Son, Harry died in 1917. Of the remaining two children Maud died in 1922 and Byron in 1936. Willard's daughter Maud provided him with his only grandchild, Willard Connally. Connally left no heirs Archibald M. Willard's line had come to an end.

Of the three principal figures in the painting, Reverend Samuel Willard died in 1876, Hugh Mosher, the fifer, in 1892 and the young drummer boy, Henry K. Devereux, died in 1932.

An autographed copy of the marvelous book, *The Spirit of '76 ... an American Portrait*, by Willard F. Gordon, Great-great-nephew of A. M. Willard, is now in The Collingwood Library, available to any who would care to learn more about this great American Artist. It is from this book that all of this historical information was gleaned.

All of the forgoing about the Spirit of '76, however interesting, is actually of slight importance to the Heroes of '76. What is important, and what may never be known is when did these three figures from Willard's great painting become the centerpiece for the logo of the Heroes of '76, and who made the decision. Even though Caleb Atwater, E. B. Jones, and Archibald Willard were all living and working around the same area of the United States at approximately the same time, and even though each was in his own way contributing to the celebration of the Centennial, and although it is possible they might even have known one another, it is a virtual certainty that they did not collaborate on the Heroes of '76 degree. The painting might have been a source of inspiration for E. B. Jones inasmuch as he was working on the degree at about the same time the fame of the painting was sweeping the country.

A Heroes Song Book published in 1928 has on its cover a drawing of the three figures prominent in Willard's painting. This clearly indicates that there was an association with this painting prior to the time the medal/logo was approved.

The Spirit of '76 figures are displayed on the covers of every edition of the Heroes Manual through 1976 in what appears to be a pen and ink sketch of the painting. The sketch was revised in 1967 to again show the drummer boy with a bandage on his head, as in the 1928 sketch, rather than a tricorn hat. The 1976 Bicentennial Manual has on its cover a more accurate drawing of the three figures and the bandage has once more been replaced with a tricorn. It is interesting that the Heroes logo approved in 1929 does not appear on any of these early manuals. The emphasis seems to indicate that the depicted, determined patriots were intended to be representative of the Heroes of '76.

THE BADGE AND THE MEDAL



In his earliest ritual/manual Van Deventer refers to the "badge" of a Hero as being, "Blue on which are the words HEROES OF '76 and the letters EIAR and IEAR in buff or gold." In a subsequent paragraph he refers to the "Blue Ribbon." Although we will probably never know for certain, it seems fairly obvious that this "Badge" had been designed and prescribed by Van Deventer because heretofore there had been no organization and hence no need for a badge. The Heroes medal is another matter.

The only documentation discovered which relates to the design of the Heroes medal appears in a somewhat cryptic paragraph in a letter written 22 May, 1929 to Dieges and Clust (the then officially designated jewelers of National Sojourners) by George F. Unmacht, the National Secretary of National Sojourners. Speaking of the ninth annual Convention held in Detroit in 1929, Unmacht writes, "... Lt. Holden brought with him samples of your insignia

(emphasis added) and some of the folders and all of the members of the Committee of 33 are pleased with your articles. There is only one item on which there might possibly be a change and that is the Past National Commander's Badge of Heroes, our National Commander, Col. Van Deventer being rather opposed to the 'blunderbusses' on this badge. He claims that they should be flintlocks, but personally, I don't see how the flintlocks will fit in and how we can put on the initials I.E.A.R. Perhaps you can work that out so that it will meet with his approval...." It doesn't take a Sherlock Holmes to deduce from this letter that Dieges and Clust, or rather a design jeweler in their employ, most likely designed a Heroes medal and submitted it to the 1929 National Convention for approval. Only one of the "Blunderbuss" medals (possibly the prototype) is known to exist. It was in the possession of Omaha Chapter #19 for many years. We can only guess how this medal came into the possession of Omaha #19. One interesting theory is that, inasmuch as Van Deventer didn't like the "blunderbuss" medal, it may have come into the possession of Albert W. Foreman. Foreman, who was the first elected National Commander was also the chartering Commander of Omaha's Joseph Warren Camp. The medal has now been donated to National Sojourners for display in the Heroes Room at Collingwood. Obviously, Colonel Van Deventer's wishes regarding flintlocks versus blunderbusses prevailed.

The contract for producing and supplying the medals was concluded with Dieges and Clust on 25 June, 1929. It seems possible, from Unmacht's comments, that the original intent of the medal was to identify the Past National Commander. That evidently didn't last long inasmuch as the 1951 manual contains pictures of the medal and gives the source of supply and indicates that they are available and authorized for all Heroes.

THE REFINEMENT CONTINUES

Major improvements and additions.

The medal lecture for the Heroes was composed by Brother William Biehl, Jr. It had long been the practice to give the story of the Sojourner Medal in the lecture to the newly obligated Sojourner. This impressive lecture, written by Brother William F. Koeckert, PNP, was invariably well received by the candidate. There was no such lecture for the equally symbolic Heroes Medal. Accordingly, Brother Biehl took it upon himself to explain that symbolism. After researching the central design of the medal, taken from Archibald Willard's painting, The Spirit of '76, he composed an appropriate lecture. In order to facilitate memorization, the lecture parallels the Sojourner Medal lecture following the same sequence of introduction, description and symbolism. Field testing proved the lecture easy to memorize and impressive for the new Hero. It was incorporated as an optional lecture in the Bicentennial Manual issued in 1976. It should be noted here that again there is no attribution of authorship contained in the Heroes manual.

The "Guardhouse Briefing" was the brainchild of the late Brother Frank McCullough, long-time Officer of the Day of the 49ers Camp of Heroes. He was a man of considerable imagination and always got recruits started off right. At bivouacs and Southern California encampments, he took charge of the recruit(s) and assigned them duties which invariably amused those in attendance. But Brother McCullough was serious, too, and he always gave the recruits a little lecture which

mentally prepared them for their assigned duties as well as for the ceremony to follow; in his own words, "to preclude grave misunderstandings." Brother McCullough was asked by Brother Biehl to put his ideas into writing, which he did. Brother Biehl modified the briefing, and it subsequently came into accepted use in Southern California. In 1974, National Commander James F. Buckner, PNP, published the briefing as a National Commander's Order. It was included in the Bicentennial manual.

Although the select committee moved it to the end of the ritual in the 1951 manual under the title "The Origin of the Heroes of '76," the material that is now known as the "Monitor" was not incorporated into the ritual until 1969. There it was stated that, "Those members of Heroes of '76 who have been appointed Monitor(s) of newly made Heroes of '76 will acquaint the new members with the following: (Read or Memorized)" Then follow the words written by Van Deventer in about 1925 which he called the "aims, tenets, and purposes." The 1976 Bicentennial manual incorporated this material as the Monitor Lecture (Optional).

The "Little Blue" Manual had seriously affected exemplification of the degree. It had become nearly impossible for anyone other than experienced Heroes familiar with, or in possession of, the 1951 or 56 manual to conduct the degree. The 1969 Manual set the stage for regeneration of the Heroes. Additional standardization came about through visitations between camps. Encampments involving two or more camps became popular, particularly in Virginia, Florida and Southern California. Techniques that were developed in one camp were adopted in other camps. There was also some progress at the National Level. In 1975, National Commander Charles A. Folsom published an order limiting the number of recruits at a bivouac to one, with a provision for certain exceptions. This limit was approved by the National Encampment, included in the Bicentennial Manual and continued in the Large-Print Manual.

THE BICENTENNIAL MANUAL

In the meantime, Brothers Scherger, and Folsom had seen the need for revision of the Manual. Their idea was to do the job very thoroughly and meticulously. The object was to get everything under one cover. They wanted a review of all known improvements that had survived field testing. Each innovation would be considered for incorporation into the Manual. Scherger, Folsom and William Biehl, Jr. (all future National Commanders) took up the challenge. After several years of careful review and study, the first draft was completed. After screening and editing, this draft was submitted to many other knowledgeable Heroes, most of whom made suggestions for improvement. Final approval by the Manual Committee took another year. The first distribution was made by National Commander Folsom at the National Encampment in San Diego in 1976 (hence the title Bicentennial Manual). Among the innovations included in the Bicentennial Manual were: a check-list for the various parts of the degree, uniform regulations, clarification of the rank insignia for both National and Camp officers, and detailed instructions necessary to implement the degree.

The 1976 Bicentennial Manual was the first to divide the ritual into three sections. Each section had a differing tone; one Masonic, Patriotic and solemn; one given more to initiatory high-jinx and frivolity; and a third given to clarification of the meaning of the degree and reception of the

new member. The problem of control of the side-liners was addressed; however, many of the members found themselves unable or unwilling to be serious during the first and third sections and still provide the necessary atmosphere in the second section. Thus, National Commander James E. Johnson, borrowing from the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, and paraphrasing some of their ritual, introduced by National Commander's Order two Commander's Admonishments" which charged the membership to observe proper decorum during the first section and set forth the rules for the conduct of the second section. Although these admonishments were in wide use as of 1994, they still had not been approved by the National Encampment and included in the "Official" manual; although the Bicentennial Manual was in its third printing.

The Bicentennial Manual proved to be the most durable of all the rituals and directives dating back to the beginning. Because of it, a standardization of Heroes Degree work began to emerge. A Hero visiting another Camp was now able to recognize the work as he had experienced it. As had always been the case, most Camps had their distinctive character and their own way of doing things, but the ritual now was essentially the same throughout the National Organization.

THE LARGE-PRINT MANUAL

Despite the complete instruction and standardization provided by the Bicentennial Manual, there were those who felt that there was room for improvement. Although the words of the ritual were clearly stated, the foot movements of the participants and other matters of importance to the overall exemplification of the degree still were somewhat left to the imagination and interpretation of the officers conducting the degree. This was especially confusing when, because of Camp losses, relative newcomers to the Camp found themselves in the position of having to exemplify a degree that they had not seen more than once or twice before. Additionally, and for the same reason, the practice of reading from the manual during the degree became more and more prevalent.

In 1986 the idea of a large-print version of the manual which contained more administrative instruction surfaced in West Point Camp (Ventura County Chapter #494) when member Robert W. Chambers prepared and began testing a large-print edition of the ritual. The idea was that by having a script which could be read from a distance, members could self-prompt without being obvious, and this would be conducive to memorization. This Camp, led by Brothers John A. Linendoll, Garret L. Collins and Robert Chambers, took great pride in their Camp's from-memory exemplification of the degree, and their reputation for this had begun to spread. Nevertheless they were unable to engender much support for the notion of a large-print manual. The concept did not go away, however, and during the National Command of Brother Kenneth L. Lowmiller (1988-'89), and at his direction, the proposal was tested in some Camps throughout the Nation and the idea began to gain some support as well as some opposition. In 1990, with his accession to National Commander, Brother George S. M. Cowan seized upon this philosophy and promoted it as one of the projects to be accomplished during his year as National Commander. Although it was not approved during his year, this emphasis resulted in approval by the National Encampment in Milwaukee, WI in 1992 of the concept of a large-print manual. Work continued on this project through the National Command of Brother John G. Norris, and in

1993, upon his elevation to the National Command, Brother Benjamin T. Sutherlin took the reins of this project with a determination to get it finished. Utilizing a special Committee consisting of Brothers Herman Nickerson, Jr., George S.M. Cowan, George H. Mason, John G. Norris, (all Past National Commanders) National Chief of Staff, Carl L. Sitter, the National President of National Sojourners, Frank W. Harris, and the computer talents of Brother James J. Gordon (San Diego #45) he brought to the 1994 National Encampment at Del Mar, California the final draft of a completed, large-print, loose-leaf Heroes Manual. The Committee provided 200 "free" copies of the "Draft" Manual to the delegates and recommended approval. After some explanation and discussion the National Encampment approved the new manual for publication and use.

This "New" manual was not new in the sense that it in any way changed the concept or the ritual of the Heroes of '76 . The ritual as presented in the Bicentennial Manual remained unchanged. The two "Commander's Admonishments" were now included as official. The "Bennington Flag Lecture," the "Heroes Medal Lecture," the "Monitor Lecture" and the "Charge" remained optional but were included in the appropriate places in the Manual.

The table of contents and the appendices were much more detailed and were expected to provide better guidance to those who were somewhat unfamiliar with the Landmarks and Traditions of the Degree but who were placed in the position of having to lead their Camps.



A significant addition to the new manual was a system designed to facilitate the use of an official music tape developed by the National Musician, **Brother James E. Alsover**. Over a period of many years, Heroes throughout the Order had been attempting to design and use a program of music to use with the ritual. The primary problem had always been that the Commander either did not allow enough time for a music passage to complete, or he would skip to another section or activity in the ritual and thus throw off the timing of the music. Alsover solved this problem with a system wherein the tape recorder's counter numbers are entered into the appropriate place in the ritual thereby permitting the operator to set up the music for the next passage regardless of actions by the Commander.

Also included in the "new" manual is a depiction of, and specifications for, the Official Seal; and a standard for rendering honors to the Flag and other Patriotic customs. The Bicentennial Manual had been a 6" X 9½" stapled booklet which required republishing, pen-changes, or "paste-ins" in order to modify it. The "new" book is standard 8½" X 11" and loose-leaf, which is intended to facilitate "page-changes."

OTHER SIGNIFICANT HISTORY

A contradiction exists in the ritual today, as it has from the first ritual prepared by Van Deventer, as to the purpose of the degree. In the history written by Van Deventer he states, "...that it should [not] have any other purpose than to give enjoyment and innocent pleasure to Brother Masons and Sojourners." But going from that directly to the ritual we find this statement

in the opening. "Brother Chief of Staff, why are we gathered in this Camp"? and the answer, "To pay tribute to the memory of those gallant Heroes of '76 who gave us liberty and independence." Again, still further on in the lecture, he writes, "This degree my Brother, was instituted for the purpose of perpetuating the memory of our brethren who figured so conspicuously during our Revolutionary struggle." We need not concern ourselves with this apparent inconsistency because the degree is suitable for both purposes, and in fact, accomplishes both. In latter days a "Charge" was written by Brother William Biehl, Jr. which explains to the new Hero that both purposes are intended by declaring, "The specific purposes of this degree have been explained to you; to provide innocent fun and pleasure and to preserve the memory of those gallant Heroes of '76 who gave us liberty and independence."

Correspondence in the National Headquarters indicates that on 11 July, 1969, Brother F. Caldwell Bagley, National Judge Advocate, and Brother Charles L. Leedham, outgoing Chairman of the National Trustees, had the foresight to anticipate the forthcoming Bicentennial celebration and realized that the Heroes of '76 might be subject to "claim-jumping" by other organizations. They began action to obtain legal and exclusive rights to the name "Heroes of '76 ." On 8 June, 1976 the National Patent Office granted a "Trademark" to the name and made it the property of National Sojourners, Inc.



In 1971 National Commander Foster Merker proposed that E. B. Jones, Thomas Flournoy, and Christopher Van Deventer should be memorialized by the Heroes of '76 by placing appropriate markers on their graves. The project became known as the "Merker Marker" project. The funds were raised, the bronze markers (10" bronze replicas of the Heroes medal) were cast, and the graves of Van Deventer and Flournoy duly marked. The grave of E. B. Jones presented a problem, however, as his grave was not to be so easily located.

In 1977 National Commander Leland Williams, assigned the task of finding the grave to Brother Donald L. Shaw, a Sojourner from Kentucky, Jones' home state. Brother Shaw, who was an investigator by profession, had both the expertise and the tenacity to see the job through to completion. He wrote Brother George R. Effinger, 33, the Sovereign Grand Inspector General in Kentucky, suggesting that Jones might be buried in Paducah inasmuch as Jones lived there most of his life and had been raised in Paducah Lodge #127. Brother Effinger contacted a Paducah Mason named John R. Reid who subsequently found and positively identified Jones' grave in Paducah's Oak Grove Cemetery. The grave was marked with a "Merker Marker."

Brother Shaw did not stop there. He embarked on a crusade to give the grave a monument more indicative of the great service that Jones had done for Freemasonry, the Nation, and National Sojourners. This crusade came to a conclusion on the weekend of June 1, 1991, when the National President, National Sojourners, Inc., Brother Benjamin Yudesis, presided over a ceremony at which a Victorian-type, granite monument purchased by donations from members of National Sojourners, Inc., Heroes of '76, and F&AM of Kentucky, was emplaced and dedicated.

At the dedication of the monument a stainless steel Time Capsule which contained several interesting and important items was placed in an opening under the ornamental capstone. Those responsible for the event expressed a hope that during the Tricentennial year, 2076, The Heroes of '76 would hold an encampment in Paducah, Kentucky during which the capsule would be opened, the items removed, evaluated as to their historical significance, and dealt with accordingly.

Elsewhere in this history, reference has been made to the Heroes of '76 Room at the Collingwood Library and Museum on Americanism (CLMA). The establishment of this room is a lengthy and complicated story which will be dealt with in detail in another book. Early in the development of CLMA there was a tacit agreement among the founders and other influential members of National Sojourners, Inc. that eventually a room would be dedicated as a Hero's Room. Although a room was set aside for this purpose and a limited display established there, the room never met the expectations of anyone. The problem, apparently, was interpretation of what constituted a "Hero" for this purpose. Inasmuch as a great deal of money and effort was required over the years to bring CLMA to a state where dedication of special rooms was a practical matter, the Heroes Room rested on the back burner. In 1990 in an exchange of letters between National Commander George S. M. Cowan and CLMA President Archibald W. Lyon an agreement was reached which established that the dedicated room would be a "Heroes of '76 " Room. The concept envisioned by these letters was that "the Heroes of '76 , Room { would } provide a quality, attractive collection of displays for visiting Heroes of '76 , other Freemasons, and non-Masonic persons by illustrating some notable aspects of the American Revolution as well as the Heroes of '76 ; that successive National Commanders, their Lines and Staffs, { would } be committed to the current keen interest and develop different displays."

Although agreement had been reached, progress lagged. Some funds were available and space had been designated, but no one had been specifically assigned to move the project forward. In 1993 the Collingwood Board of Directors established a "Heroes Room" committee consisting of Herman Nickerson, Jr. PNP, PNC; Charles A. Folsom, PNP, PNC, and George F. Harrington (all CLMA Directors). This committee was given authority to get the project moving. Harrington was appointed as the on-site coordinator and given responsibility to get the job done. This turned out to be an inspired decision. Funds were quickly accrued, contracts were let, and the design began to take form. Harrington sought advice and assistance from any source available, and soon a room with interesting and informative displays as well as historically significant artifacts took shape. The room was dedicated on April 17, 1994. It meets or exceeds the design standards set in the 1990 letters of agreement, and is a source of pride to CLMA, National Sojourners, Inc. and the Heroes of '76 alike.

Other happenings not herein recorded are still awaiting the test of time to determine their historical value. There is no doubt that, over the years, many historical events will occur, and some may have already occurred. Further, some of the events chronicled here may, with the passage of time assume less significance than attributed herein. Whatever does happen is being faithfully recorded in the annual reports of officers, articles written for publication in The Sojourner and elsewhere. The significance of these things only time will tell.

THE CAMP FOLLOWERS



The Camp Followers organization, if one can call it an organization, first appeared in Southern California in 1976. **Brother William Biehl, Jr.** of Santa Ana/El Toro Chapter #250 who was at the time National Junior Lieutenant of the Heroes of '76, came to the conclusion that for an Area Heroes Encampment to be successful year after year, there must be a role in it for the ladies. He also realized that their role must be one of equal participation and not that of subservient women-folk. Brother Biehl decided that a Degree which honored the ladies and the role they played in the founding of this Nation was the solution. He wanted the Degree to provide innocent fun and enjoyment for both spectators and participants as well as to honor the ladies for their contributions to the Nation, Freemasonry, and the National Sojourners and Heroes of '76.

An anecdote told to the National Historian by Brother Biehl recalled an incident in Cleveland, Ohio at the Convention held there in June of 1974 wherein he, and several other National Line Officers who had attended the Convention without their wives. Because it was less expensive, these Heroes chose to stay in a nearby motel, rather than at the hotel where the Convention was being held. Brother Joe Chavez from Arrowhead Chapter #421, who was also staying at the motel, had shown the wisdom to bring his wife, Hazel. Mrs. Chavez graciously undertook to generally look after the domestic needs of them all. She prepared lunch for them in her room, made coffee, sewed on buttons, ironed their uniforms and just generally took care of them all. The men, who were very appreciative of Hazel's ministrations, likened themselves to a pack of Cub Scouts and began referring to her as their "Den Mother."

This incident brought home to Brother Biehl the importance of the support of ladies. After a spirited discussion at the 1976 National Convention in which it became apparent that there was no support for the idea of a women's auxiliary either among the Sojourners or their ladies, Brother Biehl went home determined to do something about it which was in line with that thinking. It was then, in July of 1976 that he sat down at his desk and wrote the "Camp Followers Degree." He designated Hazel Chavez as the first Camp Follower and first "Den Mother" because he felt that she had inspired the degree and in fact had been so designated by the "stag"-Sojourners in Cleveland. Several months of refinement went into the final script. Brother Biehl presented his ideas to some of the Southern California Heroes by going through the ceremony himself. He always startled those who were witnessing it for the first time when he snapped the wooden spoon over his knee. The first "official" Camp Followers were initiated 12 February 1977 in the California Room of the Biehl home in Laguna Nigel, California when he initiated his wife, Eleanor, as number two and Clarice Nelson as number three. The degree was an immediate success when it was presented at the 1977 Camp Pendleton Encampment.

The rules as laid out in the original ritual were simple: To become a Camp Follower a lady must be married to a Hero of '76, must have attended a Heroes' Encampment and must have spent the night in the field with her Hero. It was a "landmark" of the degree that no lady was ever to be offended by the degree either by being pressured to participate or denied participation. Because of this "landmark" the rules began to change, until, finally, the requirements were that she must

be sponsored by a Hero and have demonstrated her support for the Heroes by attendance at an Area Encampment, National Convention, National Mid-Winter or such other qualifications as may be found acceptable.

A beautiful tribute to the patriotic women of America is included as part of the initiatory ritual. The following poem, by Joaquin Miller is recited by a Hero of '76 at the request of the Den Mother prior to giving the obligation:

"The greatest battle that's ever been fought,
Shall I tell you where, and when?
On the maps of the world you will find it not,
It is fought by the Mothers of men.

"No, not with cannon or rifle shot,
Or sword, or nobler pen
And not with wonderful word or thought
From the mouths of wonderful men.

"But deep in a walled-up woman's heart.
A woman who would not yield.
But bravely, silently bore her part,
Lo, there is that battlefield.

"No marshaling troops, No bivouac song,
No banners to gleam and wave.
And Oh, that battle, it takes so long,
From baby-hood to the grave."

In June 1985 at the request of National Commander, Charles S. Allen, the degree was presented to the National Heroes of '76 at the Bennington banquet in Oklahoma City, OK. Southern California Area Den Mother Twila Sutherlin and Assistant Den Mother Clarice Nelson, both Southern California Camp Followers, assembled a team of Camp Followers from around the country and bestowed the degree upon over sixty ladies. The team was arrayed in Revolutionary period dresses. The degree then spread to many other parts of the Country and has become an enjoyable part of Heroes activities throughout the Order. Many of the ladies wear costumes based upon the styles of the 1700's at appropriate local and national events that include the ladies. Among their many other contributions, Camp Followers provide for and serve at hospitality rooms at National events. They decorate tables for the banquets at both the Mid-Winter meeting and the National Convention. They act as sales ladies at the national sales activity rooms. They prepare and serve Camp Followers' Stew and other meals at some encampments. The name "Camp Follower" stirred indignation among some of the ladies of National Sojourners who considered a "Camp Follower" to be a woman of ill-repute who followed the military camps. Brother Biehl had done his homework however and stuck to his guns. For the most part the nay-sayers were stilled when he republished and distributed an article from Woman's Day Magazine entitled "History on Silk," as follows:

"HISTORY ON SILK"

"At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, Molly Ludwig Hays's husband enlisted in the American Army as a gunner, and Molly became a "Camp follower" with her husband's patriotic approval. Given our present-day misconception that camp followers were all prostitutes, this might be difficult to understand. But, actually, most of the women who followed Washington's Army were soldier's wives frequently accompanied by children who performed essential nursing and nurturing services for the wounded. In battle they carried gun-powder, shot and water to the troops and were responsible for swabbing out the cannon after each firing. Because of her bravery as a water bearer, Molly Hays carried the nickname "MOLLY PITCHER" and legend has it that she further distinguished herself by taking over her husband's position at the cannon after he was wounded at the battle of Monmouth. An eyewitness account has it that she and her husband fought together side by side during the battle."

The "official" (approved by both Biehl and the National Commander of the Heroes of '76 , Richard M. Twitchell) Camp Followers membership card was designed and printed by Brother Herald "Super-Squid" Stout of San Diego Chapter #45. The Camp Follower's logo was designed by Brother Phil Slocum of Santa Ana/El Toro Chapter #250. The badge was designed and produced by PNC Leland Williams.

THE NATIONAL COMMANDERS

The first Heroes Manual, published in 1936, lists Van Deventer as National Commander Emeritus and also as Past National Commander for the period 1922-30. The National Commander is shown as Col. Robert L. Queisser. "Honorary" Past National Commanders Brothers Amos Fries, George Unmacht, Merritt B. Curtis and William Bateman are not listed in the '36 manual. Curtis and Bateman do not appear on the list in the 1951 manual, which was the first list to include "Honoraries," but they do appear on the list contained in the 1956 version of the 1951 manual and all subsequent editions. It is evident that Fries and Unmacht were either appointed or elected "Honorary" between 1930 and 1951 and that Curtis and Bateman were added as "Honorary" National Commanders between 1951 and 1956. The procedure of electing the National Commander was instituted in 1930. No individual has ever been elected to more than one term. Of these, there have been 44 Army, twelve Navy, eleven Marine Corps, and four Air Force. Nine have been flag officers in their respective Services. Thirteen have received the National Sojourners Legion of Honor. One, Sitter, holds the Medal of Honor. One, Sutherlin, completed a career in the U. S. Navy, retiring as a Captain; however, during the time he was National Commander, he held the rank of Brigadier General in the California State Military Reserve.

- COL Christopher Van Deventer, USA, Emeritus, LOH*
- MGEN Amos A. Fries, USA, Honorary LOH*
- COL George F. Unmacht, USA, Honorary*
- BGEN Merritt B. Curtis, USMC, Honorary*
- MAJ William H.S. Bateman, USA, Honorary*

- COL A.W. Foreman, USA, (30-31)*
- CAPT John D. Robnett, USN, (31-32)*
- COL Russell P. Reeder, USA, (32-33)*
- COL Frank E. Hopkins, USA, (33-34)*
- LTC Louis C. Wilson, USA, (34-35)*
- COL Robert L. Queisser, USA, (35-36)*
- MAJ Arnold B. Van Raalte, USA, (36-37)*
- RADM Yancey S. Williams, USN, (37-38)*
- COL Walcott Denison, USA, (38-39)*
- CBos'n Henry A. Meyers, USN, (39-40)*
- COL Jere M. Leaman, USA, (40-41)*
- BG Robert H. Dunlop, USA, (41-42)*
- CAPT Frank J. Bailey, USN, (42-43)*
- COL Charles C. Allen, USA, (43-44)*
- COL Ernest G. Rarey, USA, (44-45)*
- VADM Homer N. Wallin, USN, (45-46) LOH*
- COL Resolve P. Palmer, USA, (46-47)*
- COL Arthur J. Perry, USA, (47-48)*
- MG John K. Rice, USA, (48-49) LOH*
- COL Edwin S. Bettelheim, Jr., USA, (49-50)*
- COL Albert H. Hulett, USA, (50-51)*
- MAJ David A. Pfromm, USA, (51-52)*
- MAJ Albert W. Houghton, USA, (52-53)*
- COL Eulan I. Snyder, USN, (53-54)*
- LT Paul M. Newstrom, USA, (54-55)*
- COL Earl Fielding, USA, (55-56)*
- MG Wayne C. Smith, USA, (56-57)*
- BG Harold E. Rosecrans, USMC, (57-58)*
- COL Frank J. Pearson, USA, (58-59)*
- COL George Ruhlen, USA, (59-60)*
- LTC John E. Pokorny, USA, (60-61)*
- COL Turner R. Sharp, USA, (61-62)*
- LT Richard W. Worthington, USN, (62-63)*
- LTC Robert L. Lenhart, USA, (63-64)*
- BG Harry R. Kutz, USA, (64-65)*
- MAJ H. Clifton Kaufman, USA, (65-66)*
- LTC James V. DeMartino, USA, (66-67)*
- COL Donald E. Riedl, USA, (67-68)*
- CAPT George O. Gjoerloff, USN, (68-69)*
- COL Monfurd K. Peyton, USMC, (69-70)*
- LTC Peter W. Pedrotti, USA, (70-71)
- LTC Foster W. Merker, USAF, (71-72)*
- COL Beny Rosaler, USA, (72-73) LOH*
- CAPT James F. Buckner, USN, (73-74) LOH*
- MAJ John P. Scherger, USA, (74-75) LOH*
- MAJ Charles A. Folsom, USMC, (75-76) LOH

- LTC Richard M. Twitchell, USA, (76-77)*
- MAJ Leland H. Williams, USAF, (77-78)
- CWO James E. Johnson, USMC, (78-79)*
- LCDR D. Morton Levy, USN, (79-80)*
- COL William Biehl, Jr., USMC, (80-81)*
- CPT J. Layton Walker, USA, (81-82) LOH*
- MAJ Raymond S. Griffith, USAF, (82-83)
- LTC Ogden Johnson, USA, (83-84)*
- LT Charles S. Allen, USA, (84-85)*
- COL George H. Mason, USAF, (85-86)*
- COL Robert E. Bancroft, USA, (86-87)*
- CWO Anthony J. Natali, Sr. USN, (87-88)
- LTC Kenneth L. Lowmiller, USA, (88-89)
- Capt Charles E. Losey, USMC, (89-90)
- CAPT George S.M. Cowan, USN, (90-91)
- LGEN H. Nickerson, Jr., USMC, (91-92)* LOH
- MAJ John G. Norris, USA, (92-93)
- BG Benjamin T. Sutherlin , CSMR,(93-94)
- COL Carl L. Sitter, USMC, (94-95)* LOH
- COL Jack M. Marden, USA (95-96)
- LTC A. B. "Tom" Harmon, USMC (96-97)
- Capt Clarence M. Nelson, USMC (97-98) LOH
- CWO4 James S. Norris, (98-99)
- LCDR John A. Linendoll, USN (99-00)
- MAJ Benjamin M. Yudesis (00-01)
- CWO Daniel Taylor (01-02)
- MAJ Richard W Williamson (02-03)
- LTC William G. L. Turner (03-04)
- CDR Stanley C. Miller (04-05)

***Deceased**