

7 Dec 2015 - Honoring Patriots Buried at St. Mary's Catholic Church Cemetery



The George Washington Chapter teamed with the Saint Mary's Catholic Church and the Saint Mary's Catholic School to honor five patriots known to be buried at Saint Mary's Catholic Cemetery in Alexandria. On December 7th, a ceremony was held to dedicate a memorial plaque at the cemetery. In addition to the names of the five patriots, the plaque describes the early history of the church and cemetery.

The ceremony began with a procession from the school to the cemetery led by color guardsmen Dwight Whitney and Bill Schwetke. The ceremony was conducted at the site of the plaque in the cemetery. The program included the reading of biographies of the five patriots prepared and read by students of the school. Wreaths were presented by the following: Paul Walden, Chapter Treasurer; Bill Schwetke, President of the Culpeper Minutemen VASSAR; Claire Bennett, Kate

Waller Barrett Chapter DAR; Cat Schwetke, Fauquier Court House Chapter DAR; and Eugenia McGroarty, Providence Society. Reverend Edward C. Hathaway, pastor of the church, gave the plaque dedication and blessing.

Greetings from Virginia Society SAR were brought by 2nd Vice President Mike Elston. Joe Dooley, the former President General of the National Society SAR (2013-2014) and an associate member of the George Washington Chapter, also gave greetings. Greetings were also brought by Claire Bennett on behalf of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and Elizabeth Bays, Senior Society President of the Col. William Grayson Society of the Children of the American Revolution. The SAR Recessional was led by Compatriot Covert Beach, son of Louis A. Beach, and Reverend Hathaway gave the benediction.

The ceremony was preceded with the presentation of a gift from the chapter to the school in the form of a framed portrait of George Washington. President Whitney presented the portrait to the school's principal, Janet Cantwell, in front of other members of the chapter.

Congratulations to chapter Past President Russ Shearer (2005-2006) who conceived the project and coordinated the approvals and participation by the church and school, and to Jamie Callender, Chairman of the Graves Registration Committee. Dick Kusserow and Dwight Whitney contributed research and support to the project over the years. Financial support for the project was provided by a \$1600 grant from the George Knight/Kenneth C. Patty Memorial Trust Fund of the Virginia Society Sons of the American Revolution, a \$100 donation from Gads-by's Tavern Museum Society, and donations from members of the George Washington Chapter.

Francis Ignatius Hagan

Patriot Francis Ignatius Hagan was born ca 1754 in Fairfax County, VA.

He enlisted at Hampton, Virginia in 1775, with the 3rd VA Regiment of the Continental Line. He served as a Private under Captain David Arell in 1777. It was noted in his obituary (Alexandria Gazette, 17 Dec 1830) that "he had entered service aht e commencement of the war aand served until its end."

He applied for a pension 1 Apr 1818 in the District of Columbia.

Patriot Hagan died in Alexandria at the age of 76 in Dec 1830 and was buried in Saint Mary's Cemetery, Alexandria, VA.

Sources:

- Gwathney, J.H., "Historical Register, VA in Revolution 1775 to 1783," pg 336
- Wardell, P.G., "VA/WV Revolutionary War Records," pub 1988: 231
- White, Virgil D., "Genealogical Abstracts of Rev War Pension Files," Vol 2 pg 1469
- VASSAR Graves Registration Submissions, Feb 2006

Lawrence Hurdle

Patriot Lawrence Hurdle was born in the Colony of Maryland in 1750. He served as a Private in the Maryland line from the year we declared independence in 1776 until 1782, one of the few who continued to serve throughout the entirety of the arduous war. Patriot Hurdle fought valiantly at the battle of Camden, South Carolina, and others.

He took an Oath of Fidelity and Support to Government of Maryland on January 19, 1778. This Oath created a written record marking him as a rebel against Britain and ensuring retaliation if the Americans didn't win the War of Independence. His bravery didn't stop there: Patriot Hurdle served in the 7th Maryland Regiment throughout the War fighting in such critical battles as the Battle of Brandywine, Pennsylvania, (the longest single-day battle of the Revolution) and the Battle of Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina. Patriot Hurdle was also wounded during the Battle of Camden, yet he was reportedly on hand to witness the British surrender to the Americans at Yorktown, Virginia, on October 19, 1781, in the final major battle of the Revolution. He was discharged at Annapolis, Maryland, in 1782.

Patriot Hurdle later married Nancy Wheeler in 1792, and had eight children.

The State of Maryland granted him a pension on January 27, 1816. The law granting it said it was in "further remuneration for those services by which his country has been so essentially benefitted." At the time of his death he was among the few Revolutionary War Veterans alive.

Later in life, he was baptized at St. Mary's Church. He died on December 1, 1848, and reportedly said on his death bed "I am not afraid of death, let it come." He was buried in St. Mary's Cemetery, Alexandria, VA.

Sources:

- NSSAR Graves Registry: P-188773
- Gen. Pub Co., "Rev War Pension Rolls of 1835," Vol 3: 514
- White, Virgil D., "Genealogical Abstracts of Rev War Pension Files," pg 1781
- Pippenger, W.E., "Alexandria Cemeteries," Vol V, pg 164

Pierre La Croix

Patriot Pierre La Croix was born ca. 1743 and was a twelve year old drummer boy with the French troops defending Quebec against Gen Wolf. His death notice stated he later participated in the American Revolution as well.

Patriot La Croix was a catholic, faithful to the Catholic Church, and carried the name of the cross throughout his almost 90 years of life. He passed away on 22 Sep 1830 at the home of Mr. Edward Smyth in Alexandria, and was buried in St. Mary's cemetery in Alexandria, VA.

Sources:

- BP Henley, B.J.; "Obituaries from VA Newspapers," on Microfilm Lib of VA
- Pippenger, W.E., "Alexandria Cemeteries," Vol V: 304

Francis Murphy

Patriot Francis Murphy was born around 1763 in Queens County, Ireland, before emigrating to the New World.

Patriot Murphy at around the age of 14, enlisted as a Private in Captain Bankson's Company of the Pennsylvania militia. He achieved his dream of opportunity of a life and of freedom in these United States of America, died 30 Jun 1837 and was buried in St. Mary's cemetery in Alexandria, VA.

Sources:

- AP Muster roll
- Pippenger, W.E., "Alexandria Cemeteries," Vol V, pg 111

John Riordan

Patriot John Riordan was born in February of 1763, the very same month that the Treaty of Paris ended the French and Indian War.

When he was only 15, he enlisted in June 1778 as a Private under Captain Joseph Anderson's Company, 3rd New Jersey Regiment.

He died in 1803 at the age of 40, and was buried St. Mary's cemetery, Alexandria, VA, alongside his daughter Mary, who was only 14 when she died.

Sources:

- AP Muster roll
- Pippenger, W.E., "Alexandria Cemeteries," Vol V, pg 127