

THE ILLINOIS DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

A request has been made for some account of the work accomplished by the Daughters of the American Revolution, in Illinois.

The objects of the Society are

To perpetuate the memory of the spirit of the men (and the women) who achieved American independence.

To acquire and protect historic spots.

To encourage historic research (particularly that which relates to the Revolution).

To secure and preserve the records of individual service of Soldiers, Sailors and patriots of 1776.

To encourage and promote the celebration of patriotic Anniversaries.

To give every possible aid and incentive to the study and practise of good Citizenship.

The daughters of the American Revolution are pledged to cherish American freedom, to foster true patriotism and love of country and to aid in securing for manhood, all the blessings of liberty.

Any woman is eligible to membership in the D. A. R., who is of the age of eighteen years, and can bring proof that she is descended from some man (or woman) who at the time of the American Revolution did with unflinching loyalty render material aid to the cause of Independence;—this with the proviso "that the applicant be acceptable to the society."

The first Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution organized in Illinois was the Chicago Chapter, formed in 1901. Other Chapters throughout the length and breadth of the state, speedily followed so that by 1907-8, Illinois recorded a D. A. R. membership of over three thousand women, twenty of whom were the daughters of Revolutionary Soldiers.

Many of these "Real Daughters" have, within the past year, answered to their names and are not.

While at the time of the American Revolution the North-western territory was remote from the heart of the struggle it was made possible to hold the interest and sympathy of the frontier through the medium of Indian Scout, Trapper, and Hunter; so, the news (a few months late) of the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill were themes for earnest consideration and speculation in many a wilderness hut, and sturdy log cabin.

No part of this Union has an older, more interesting or romantic story than our Illinois, ruled as it had been successively by five different nations, Aboriginal, Spanish, French, English and American. Perhaps Illinois' most thrilling interest center within the ninety years of the French occupation from 1673 to 1763; there was during this time, a constant series of dramatic incident and while in the main, one walks amid battle, murder and sudden death, there is always another side to the grim picture—beautiful, simple and serene. As one follows those soldiers of Christ, who with peace and goodwill in their hearts, explored the Mississippi, in their frail canoe, to plant everywhere the Cross and establish the faith. With English occupation (after the victory of General Wolf at Quebec) there began to grow an ever increasing sense of injustice in the hearts of the Franko American settlers in the Illinois region, and thus it came to pass that one hundred men from our present State enrolled their names as members of the regiment of General George Roger Clark, of Virginia, when he undertook the campaign against the British in the Northwest and through the capture of Kaskaskia gained for the Union that vast territory, that made it possible for the struggling little republic to pay the greater part of its national war debt.

So while not one of the thirteen original states Illinois took helpful and prominent part in the war of the American Revolution.

THE D. A. R. OF ILLINOIS DURING THE PAST SIXTEEN YEARS

In Southern Illinois, almost within the environment of the old city of Metropolis on the banks of the Ohio and overlooking many miles of the river from its rocky heights are still observed the ancient ramparts of one of the most interesting Forts of our country.

The origin of the name of the Fort is a disputed question, some authorities claiming that it was called "Fort Massac" in honor of the French Minister of Marines, M. de Massac, while others claim that it was named for the engineer who constructed the Fort whose name chanced to be "Massac" too. Since July 1778 Fort Massac has had official recognition from the United States and as it was a judicious selection for the site of a fort, (it was one of the chain of five which the French had erected to keep the English in their strip of land along the Atlantic coast) it was made strategically valuable. At Fort Massac, up to 1778, had halted every expedition from Canada going

down the Wabash. And here at Fort Massac in June of 1778, George Roger Clark rendezvoused his little army and then marched on to capture Kaskaskia and here at Fort Massac the Flag of the United States was first unfurled in what is today the state of Illinois. It was here also that Aaron Burr came to mature his scheme of conquering the Southwest; it was here on this spot that he met failure, disgrace and exile; it is through and from the ashes of this deed of wrong (righted with such righteous vengeance) that there arose, a hundred and odd years after, our greatest American Epic—"A Man without a Country"—so this bulwark of the frontier stood as a national defence until free navigation of the Mississippi river was an assured fact.

As late as 1812 we find the old fort repaired, put into service, and furnished with a new stockade and occupied by the Illinois Mounted Rangers who were entrusted with its defence. Then a long peace came to us, as a nation; and gun and sword were hung high in the rafters where rust gathered, and the old Fort was deserted. As time passed, its claim to a place in history became fainter and fainter in the Country's mind. This, until the Illinois Daughters of the American Revolution, inspired by Mrs. Matthew T. Scott of Bloomington, began to interest themselves in restoring this Revolutionary landmark to its proper dignity and importance. Like any great work, this was difficult of accomplishment, for it meant, beside interesting the D. A. R. of the State, the bringing of the State's representatives at Springfield to consider the matter of giving money for the purchase of the site, the restoration of the Fort, and the making of the land about "Fort Massac" into a state park. The committee, under the able leadership of its chairman Mrs. Scott, won the desire of their hearts, and much of this final realization of their hopes is due to the personal interest and helpful council of our Governor Deneen.

SO THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION OF ILLINOIS HAVE RECREATED AND PRESERVED FOR ALL TIME FORT MASSAC.

From the standpoint of civic patriotic helpfulness, first on the honor roll of the D. A. R. of Illinois should be inscribed the deeds of Mrs. Lydia Moss Bradley, a "real daughter" whose father served with Washington at Yorktown, and witnessed the surrender of Cornwallis. Mrs. Bradley gave to her home city (Peoria) a beautiful public park, and built and endowed with her entire fortune the Bradley Polytechnic school, one of the very best Polytechnic schools in the Country.

In the last sixteen years the Chapters of Illinois have done many patriotic deeds for the betterment of their state. Revolutionary graves have been discovered, authenticated, and marked; tablets have been set upon historic spots; in several instances monuments have been erected; courses of lectures have been given to schools and in settlement houses on "The Causes that led up to the American Revolution." Statuettes of the "Minute Man" and of "George Rogers Clark" have been presented to public schools; pictures depicting patriotic events in American history; framed copies of the Declaration of Independence; American flags, and libraries of history (and fiction founded upon American history) are but a few of the many gifts generously offered by the D. A. R. of Illinois to schools and settlement centres.

For years the individual work of this State has been greatly handicapped by the demands upon individual Chapters to add to the building fund necessary for the continuance of the work upon Continental Memorial Hall, the "Daughters' National building in Washington D. C.

Fine as this object is as a storehouse for the preservation of Revolutionary documents and relics (if it is ever completed), it has never appealed to the writer as commensurate with the obligations and responsibilities of the home field—Illinois.

Brilliant and bewildering as the yearly Congresses in Washington have become, it is a question whether the great majority of the women who have journeyed hundreds and thousands of miles (at no small personal expense)—go back to their chapters charged with an inspiration for more loyal and enduring service for all that means helpfulness to good citizenship. A journey from the north, east, south and west in company with a delegation more interested in the political D. A. R. Arena, than in the desecration of the American flag or the hopeless ignorance of what freedom means to the recently admitted population within our gates is not an inspiring introduction to the week of Congress.

It is a question whether or not the gorgeous and most inappropriate display of jewels and laces at

business meetings is conclusive in impressing the thoughtful beholder with a just idea of either Republican Simplicity or American good taste. It is not a question but an assured fact that few of the many women who speak (through the entire week of Congress) are ever heard in the large Amphitheatre, it is also true that the Reader (the official reader) should use a megaphone to make herself intelligible—so the majority of the D. A. R. who unlike the "lilies of the Field" spend their contended happy lives in healthy domestic toil and plenty of active spinning in many housewifely directions turn their faces homeward with a secret wonder as to why it was? and what it was all about? and with a grateful and never failing sense of obligation to the Newspaper of Washington for giving such space; and detail, in their columns to all that has transpired in the Continental Congress.

The inspiration to and for patriotism is given to the delegate in full measure if she can slip away from the parliamentary wrangles, the business, the teas, the receptions, the Committee meetings and hie herself out to Mount Vernon and spend one of those bright, fair spring days recreating through fancy the life story of George and Martha Washington from the standpoint of their home lives—or she can go to the Capitol and through the medium of the Sculptors chisel and the magic of the Artists brush she can take back to that time when the brave Continental "faltered not" and so strengthened, up lifted and inspired. She can take her place among her delegations and be at peace in the midst of confusion. She can even come to realize that the Congress is a great thing after all for apart from its glare and glitter, its political aspirations and animosities she came to know how fine this body is; of what splendid mothers, wives, and sisters of the United States of America it is composed and while for the moment the glittering ones dazzle and confuse common sense reasoning, tells her that in the bosom of the great majority of the delegations, love of country has been the object of the pilgrimage.

But again and again—let it be said man's duty is, to his home, woman's to her fireside. Illinois is our home and our fireside and to Illinois the D. A. R. owe their first and best allegiance. Here the problem of the citizen child has taken strong hold upon our conscience.

The D. A. R. of Illinois have come to understand the wisdom of Earth's greatest teacher, when he set a little child in the midst of the multitude and said "in as much as ye do it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye do it unto Me."

The Daughters of the American Revolution of the State of Illinois are working where work is most needed for liberty, for freedom and for good citizenship. They are holding the children by the hand and step by step the D. A. R. and the children of the strangers within our gates follow the flag and learn to keep step to the music of the Union.

Laura Dayton Fessenden

A REVIEW OF THE GRAND ARMY BY BRET HARTE

I dreamed last night of a Grand Review
In Washington's Chiefest Avenue,
Two hundred thousand men in blue,
(I think they said was the number.)
Till I seemed to hear their trampling feet
The bugle blast! and the drums quick beat!
The clatter of hoofs on the stony street!
The cheer of the people who came to greet!
And the thousand details that to repeat
"Would only my verse encumber,
Till I fell in a revere, sad, and sweet
And then into deeper slumber,
When lo! in a vision I seemed to stand
In the lonely Capitol.
On each hand far stretched its portico
Dim and grand its columns ranged
Like a martial band of sheeted spectres
Whom some command had called to a last reviewing,
And the streets of the City were white and bare,
No footfall echoed across the square;
But out of the misty midnight air
I heard in the distance a trumpet's blare,
And the wandering night winds seemed to bear
The sound of a far tattooing.
Then I held my breath with fear and dread,
For into the square with a bragen tread
There rode the figure whose stately head
O'er looked the Review that morning.
It had never bowed from its firm set seat
When the living column passed at its feet,
Yet now it rode steadily up the street
To the phantom bugle's warning
Till it reached the Capitol square,