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# The Halifax Dispatch

The Newsletter of the Halifax Resolves Chapter, NC Society  
Sons of the American Revolution

2014 & 2016 winner – 1st Place Nationally (single sheet)—Carl F. Bessent Newsletter Award

## Message from the President



Compatriots,

On October 20 we celebrated a much-delayed grave marking for SAR compatriot Nicholas Bunn Boddie (1889-1951) at historic Rose Hill Plantation near Nashville.

Anyone who has visited the property has seen the beautifully restored old home and the attractive farmland surrounding it. Few, however, have actually gone so far as to visit the family cemetery, tucked away just past the skeet shooting range near the edge of the woods. This was the site of our ceremony – a meaningful moment that connected us to the past.

The cemetery is a scene of calm and beauty. Buried in it are multiple generations of the Boddie family, from the present generation back to Revolutionary patriot Nathan Boddie, whose grave our chapter marked several years ago. It is meticulously manicured and maintained, and is obviously a spot that is cherished by the Boddie family.

I was a bit ashamed seeing this wonderful little cemetery, for it made me remember the vine-filled and overgrown family cemetery that was on our family farm in Edgecombe County, where I grew up. In it were about fifteen or so marked graves, and supposedly many more unmarked graves. Of particular interest to me in our cemetery was the grave of my great-grandfather George Richard Gammon (1847-1910), who was a bit of a legend in the family. Supposedly a very tall man who often wore a red cape, he was born near Dawson's Cross Roads in Halifax County, but moved to northern Edgecombe after he came home from the Civil War, where he married local girl Nancy Ellen Newsome (1853-1923) and raised a large family. Stories about "Old George" abounded in the family --- he had an early flush toilet in the house, he

had been a progressive farmer for his time, he had worked hard to pay off a mortgage on his wife's farm after the Civil War, and he played the violin! In fact, he is listed in Civil War records as a musician in his regiment.

Old George was my father's own grandfather. Daddy never knew him, but he spoke of him often, and always with reverence and respect. He knew so much about his grandfather that he could even tell you exactly which fence posts had been installed by Old George, all across the farm. And somewhat begrudgingly each year, Daddy would make sure the cemetery was (more or less) cleaned out. It took about a day to cut through the vines, and it wasn't always a very thorough job, but it took place every fall. After the cleaning each time, my father would walk out to the cemetery and stand there quietly and look at his grandparents' double tombstone, then return to his farm work after a few moments. And he would usually complain that night that his

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The November meeting will be held Wed., 11/14, at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall of the Halifax United Methodist Church in Halifax NC. Our speaker will be Chris Grimes, our own North-east Region Vice-President of the NC SAR.

His topic will be "The Outer Banks Sea Coast Companies." We will also be presenting some awards to a few of our members.

The ladies of the Methodist Church will be preparing a delicious dinner, but reservations are required, no later than noon on Friday, 11/9. You may email President Gammon at [thepinnacle@ec.rr.com](mailto:thepinnacle@ec.rr.com), or call him at [252-732-6476](tel:252-732-6476). The cost of the dinner will be \$10 per person. If we do not hear from you, we will presume you will not be able to attend. Be sure to let us know if you are bringing any guests, as any last minute guests who we do not have a RSVP for may not be able to get a meal.

uncles and aunts (children of Old George) never showed any interest in keeping the cemetery clean, and that it all fell on him. But the complaints only lasted a few minutes, and we didn't hear them again until the following year.

My father's older sister even had a childhood memory of attending the funeral of her grandmother Nancy Gammon in that cemetery in 1923. Her most vivid memory of the ceremony was when her four uncles lowered their mother's wooden coffin into the grave, threw in straw on top of the coffin, and then shoveled dirt into the grave. Supposedly, the straw helped to deaden the mournful and hollow sounds of the dirt hitting the coffin. She held this memory the rest of her life.

One time I asked my father why he bothered to keep the old cemetery clean, especially since he always complained about it. He said briefly, "Son, I may not have known my grandfather, but I still have a connection to him." And then he gave me a look that parents give their children when the conversation is officially over, so I didn't pursue the topic any further.

I weave these little stories to make a small but (hopefully) meaningful point – that we didn't know our patriot ancestors, but we still have a connection to them. We have known people who knew other people who knew other people who knew these patriots, and even though the chain may be long and even a little convoluted, it still exists. And we feel it. And we celebrate it every time we attend an SAR function, be it a regular meeting or special events like grave markings. I know the Boddie family was celebrating this type of connection at their family cemetery, and I was touched by it. I encourage all of us to find ways to celebrate the memories and traditions of our family, at all generations, to keep the connections alive.

## David

### *Minutes of September, 2018, Meeting*

The Chapter met at the Halifax UMC on Wednesday, September 19th at 6:30pm. Acting President Ken Wilson presided over the meeting. Rev. Duncan Jones gave the Invocation followed by the Pledge of allegiance led by Pres. Wilson. The SAR Pledge was led by VP Geoff Pittard. Pres. Wilson welcomed the following guest: American Legion Post 308 Commander Richard Kohl with five members of his post. New member Michael Cooper, accompanied by his parents, was in attendance at his first meeting.

In absence of the Secretary-Treasurer Steve Avent, President Wilson presented the Minutes of the July meeting which were approved. The Treasurer's report was present showing a balance of \$1560.15 in the General Fund and a balance of \$540.00 in the Youth Fund. The report was approved.

President Wilson reported on activities of chapter members since the last meeting. He also reported on the Board of Managers meeting that he and President Gammon attended. At the meeting the chapter received awards won at the National Congress. The awards were: Small Chapter Liberty Bell (Americanism) Honorable Mention, Small Chapter President General's Cup Honorable Mention and a Partners in Patriotism certificate.

American Legion Post 308 Commander Richard Kohl presented the chapter with a handmade wooden 3' x 5' U.S. flag. The stars from the flag had been cut from unserviceable flags and attached to the field. Commander Kohl said the flag was in appreciation of the chapter's patriotic work in the community pertaining to flag retirements. The flag was made by Post 308 member Al Burtchell.

The following announcements were made:

- Flag Retirement – Veterans Park, Sat. Sep 22nd, 10:00
- Battle of Kings Mt. Oct. 7, Battle of Shallow Ford Oct. 13th
- Nicholas Bunn Boddie Grave Marking rescheduled for October 20th , 10:00
- Possible Veterans Day Church Service Nov. 11 as well as ceremony at Veterans Park

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Unfinished Business:

Youth Fund – President Wilson reported that National had changed the American History Teacher contest to include middle school and elementary school teachers. He then explained that the chapter had only approved the high school level contest with a prize of \$150.00 and asked what the chapter wished to do. A motion was made by Rev. Duncan Jones to expand the chapter level contest to include the middle school and elementary school teachers at \$150.00 each. After much discussion the motion passed unanimously.

It was also discussed that the Youth Fund would not support the Fall Youth contests. Several members pledged money in support of the fund and several donated after the meeting. Further discussion will be needed as to possibly funding the 2019 contests.

New Business:

Wreaths Across America – President Wilson presented the Wreaths Across America program that is being sponsored by Boy Scout Troop 144 on December 15, 2018 at Cedarwood Cemetery in Roanoke Rapids. Order form were explained and passed out to interested parties. The forms and check are to be returned to Pres. Wilson by the next chapter meeting.

A short program entitled “Stories from Halifax” was then presented by Wilson.

At the conclusion of the program Wilson led the group in the SAR Pledge and Rev. Jones gave the Benediction. The Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

*Recent Chapter Activities*



There's only room for a few pics this month, though the Chapter engaged in a good many more activities that are not pictured. Top-bottom, l-r: the Color Guard and participants (SAR, DAR and Boddie family members) at the Nichols Bunn Boddie grave marking held in Nash Co. on 10/20, Ken speaking on the Battle of Cowpens at Nash Central HS on Oct. 18, and Ken at the S. Nash MS on Oct. 18, speaking on the significance of the dates in the NC Flag.



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*Steve Avent, Editor*



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*The Sons of the American Revolution is a PATRIOTIC organization formed in 1889 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1906. with more than 25,000 living members from all 50 states and 23 foreign countries. Throughout its 120-year history, the SAR has admitted more than 155,000 members. Among them are 16 PRESIDENTS of the UNITED STATES, including George W. Bush and his father George H. W. Bush, Jimmy Carter, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Harry Truman and Theodore Roosevelt. The SAR also has had among its members Sir Winston Churchill and King Juan Carlos I of Spain, both of whom trace their ancestry to REVOLUTIONARY WAR patriots. Membership requires proof of descent from a person who aided in the PATRIOT cause. Some of the activities in which we engage are:*

- \* commemoration of Patriot graves and monuments*
- \* educational programs in the schools and elsewhere on the ideals of our Patriot ancestors and the American Revolution*
- \* recognition of outstanding law enforcement officers and JROTC cadets*
- \* sponsorship of Boy Scout troops*

## **Chapter Officers**

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