

*The Sons of the American Revolution*



# Germany SOCIETY

SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GERMANY SOCIETY

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GERMANY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER FROM PROVISIONAL  
CHAPTER EDITOR CHRISTOPHER MCLARREN



## *The DISPATCH*

*Newsletter of  
The Baron von Steuben Chapter (Provisional)  
The Germany Society*

**In the 246<sup>th</sup> Year of the United States of  
America**

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**Editor's Thoughts:**

*".....our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honour."*

## *The Sons of the American Revolution*



*Our Germany Society of the Sons of the American Revolution has many, many members. But of those only a handful of us actually live here in Germany.*

*“.....our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honour.”*

# The Sons of the American Revolution

*The National Society and our German Society President Jessel hope that we few here in-country, despite our physical distance from each other, might nevertheless get together, 1) to enjoy each other's company, both as fellow descendents and as Americans, but also 2) to show the (13-star) flag here in Germany, to do what we can to remind ourselves and our neighbours of the accomplishments of our ancestors and strengthen respect for our country's role in the rise of democracy and freedom in the Western World.*

*The DISPATCH is meant to support those aims. This is our Newsletter, Please help me make this a useful vehicle of communication. The easiest way to do that would be to submit articles about you and your ancestor.. All of our Patriot ancestors contributed to the establishment of our country, and all of them had stories to tell. This is a good place to tell those stories.*

Christopher McLarren, *Editor*

## Allies Remembered

### *Vivre le Régiment Royale Deux-Ponts!*

In most SAR State Societies, the members live within that state. Even SAR France are the SAR Members who live in France (and Belgium). Our Stateside Germany Society of the SAR, however, is unusual in that most of our members actually live in America, but they have some important connection with Germany and therefore are also part of the Germany Society. But then there are those of us SAR members who actually live in Germany.

Our Baron von Steuben Chapter is being established to support our members who actually live here.

One would think there would not be very many of us, i.e., people who live in Germany but who have ancestors who fought for American freedom long ago and on the other side of the Atlantic.

But we are not alone in showing the 13-star flag. The Daughters of the American Revolution are also very much present here. Based largely in the far western part of Germany, their Palatinate Chapter cares for DAR members throughout Germany. Our 'sisters' have been in Germany for longer, reminding Americans (and others) of our heritage of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and doing positive good for people living here.

Therefore, it was a pleasure to be invited to participate in their dedication of a plaque in honour of 18<sup>th</sup> century German-speakers who joined with the royal forces of France to fight on the American side - and who were there at Yorktown.

#### **The background**

Many people today have two countries; their own and America. Think nowadays of omnipresent American food, American cars, American fashion, American films, American music, etc.

In the time of our ancestors, Thomas Jefferson observed that most traveled people would want to live in their own country. But their second choice? France!<sup>1</sup> Think 18<sup>th</sup> Century and then think French wine, French fashion, French music, French literature, French science, French philosophy, even French weapons.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.monticello.org/research-education/thomas-jefferson-encyclopedia/every-man-has-two-countries-his-own-and-france-spurious-quotation/>

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So it is no surprise that in the area of Germany bordering France, some of the local aristocrats were then almost as much at home in Paris as they were in Germany. Case in point: the local aristocratic family of the Franco-German border town of Zweibrücken (in French: Deux Ponts) had a house in Paris and an apartment in the city of Versailles. Christian and Wilhelm von Forbach-Zweibrücken spent much of their time in the center of their world – Paris

So, when King Louis XIV committed French troops to the struggle in North America, the lords of German-speaking Zweibrücken, raised troops in the Saarland, Palatinate, Alsace and Lorraine for the King's service. That is how the German-speaking *Régiment Royale de Deux Ponts* went to America and was part of the allied army at the Battle of Yorktown. On October 14th, 1781, the Regiment charged and took Redoubt 9, a prelude to the succeeding general assault on Yorktown. (See below.)

In October 2022, the ladies \* of the DAR Palatine Chapter dedicated a plaque in memory of the *Régiment Royale* in the regiment's home city of Zweibrücken.

I had the honour of representing SAR Germany, as our Germany Society Vice President John Bredenfoerder, who had booked his flight to attend the ceremony, was hindered by a last-minute accident which made it impossible for him to fly across the Atlantic. And President Patrick Mesnard of the SAR France (over 300 members) was also invited, but couldn't get away.



Meeting Karen Rink, Organizer of the DAR event

\* Although terribly old-fashioned, I hope none of their members object to being titled 'Ladies'. From what I experienced, not only is it meant as a compliment, it is also quite accurate.

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Dr. Charlotte Glück, the Director of the excellent Zweibrücken City Museum gave us a tour of the current exhibition on *Christian and Wilhelm von Forbach-Zweibrücken*

We then walked over to the dedication site.



First, we were serenaded by the Zweibrücken City Ensemble with the Regimental March of the *Régiment Royale Deux Ponts*



The plaque was then unveiled by Barbara Gibbons, DAR Chapter Secretary,

followed by a presentation by the Oberbürgermeister of Zweibrücken Dr. Marold Wosnitza, in which he drew really interesting parallels to the Ukraine's present-day fight to defend their independence (with the help of friends) to our ancestors' fight (with the help of friends). But also: "The German-American friendship is still closely maintained in Zweibrücken. A few days ago, a delegation visited the Zweibrücken partner city Yorktown in Virginia as part of Yorktown

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Day. This visit has shown me and all the delegates again the importance of maintaining city partnerships, staying in constant exchange, and having an open ear for our friends in the US. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Daughters of the American Revolution for being an important pillar of this friendship. The bronze table is now part of the culture of remembrance of our German-French-American history," said Mayor Dr. Wosnitza.

Other guests included local historians, members of the Palatinate Chapter, the Regent of the French DAR Rochambeau Chapter (Paris), the past DAR Units Overseas Chair, who had come over from Atlanta, and other DAR members. And of course our own Baron von Steuben Chapter of the SAR Germany Society.

The ceremony was concluded by rousing renditions of 'Yankee Doodle' and then the 'Star-Spangled Banner'. Things one doesn't hear in Zweibrücken very often any more.



(Normally, it is hand on heart. However, veterans of US Armed Forces are, by US law, permitted to salute during the National Anthem.)

Thereafter we had a lovely lunch at a nice hotel. It was a time for good food , good conversation and an enlightening talk by Historian Dr. Daniel Fischer of the University of Lorraine at Metz, France.

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My compliments go out to the Palatinate Chapter. It was a great pleasure to meet Regent Jensen and to work together with Karen Rink, the Zweibrücken Committee Chair. We are looking forward to cooperating with the Chapter in the future, to strengthening our common 'revolutionary' presence and to reminding people not only of what our ancestors did but of what our heritage means to us today.

**Chris McLarren**

Here is the Stars and Stripes coverage of the event:

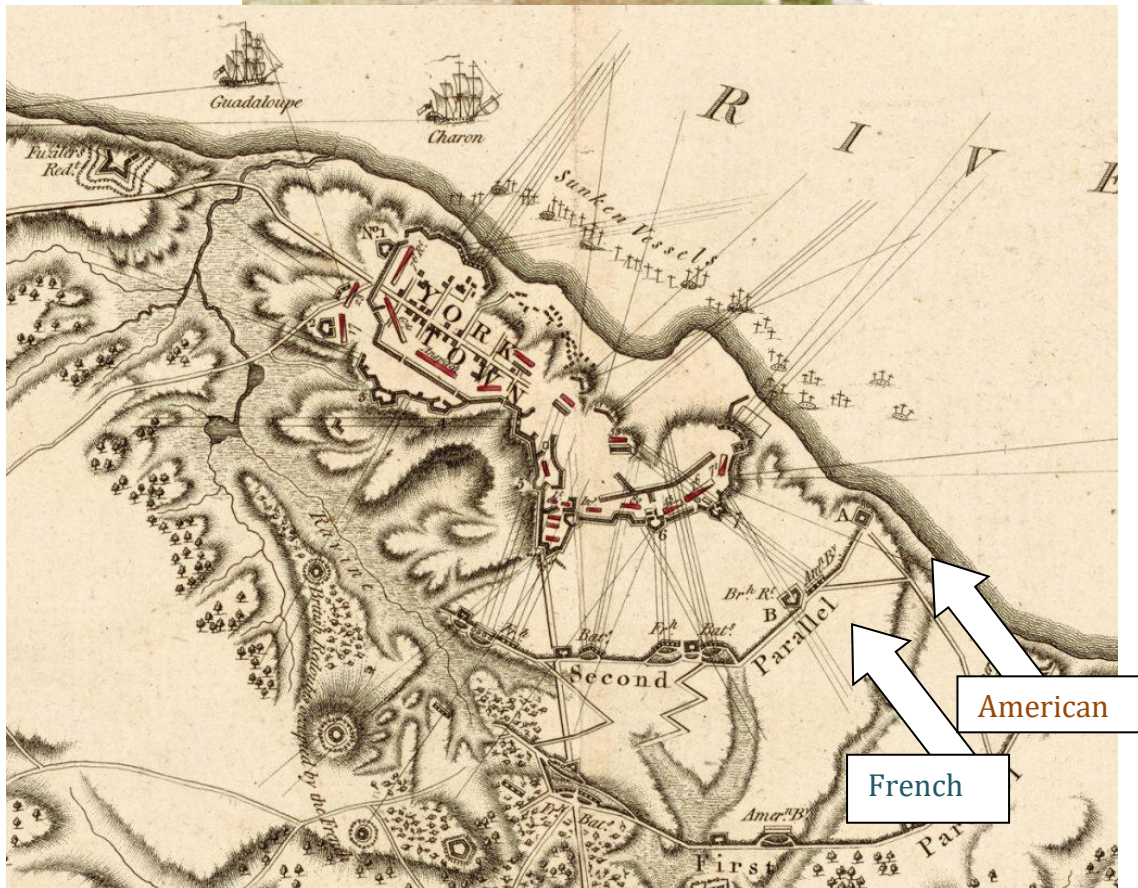
<https://www.stripes.com/theaters/europe/2022-10-30/daughters-american-revolution-plaque-zweibrucken-7859302.html>

### **Battle Report: The Taking of Redoubt 9 at Yorktown**

The *Régiment Royale Deux-Ponts* was there

When the French and American forces under Washington and Rochambeau moved to besiege the British position at Yorktown, the British built Redoubts 9 and 10 some 400 yards out from their main position. These positions needed to be taken so that Allied positions could move closer to allow their artillery to bombard the entire British area, before a general assault on the main British line.

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On the night of October 14th, 1781, the French Gâtinais and les Deux-Ponts Regiments were ordered to capture British Redoubt 9 (B) and the American troops to capture Redoubt 10 (A).



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French cavalry officer Guillaume, vicomte de Deux-Ponts (one of the two brothers honoured on the plaque at Zweibrücken) explained:

Before starting, I had ordered that no one should fire before reaching the crest of the parapet of the redoubt; and when established upon the parapet, that no one should jump into the works before receiving the orders to do so.

Our fire was increasing, and making terrible havoc among the enemy, who had placed themselves behind a kind of intrenchment of barrels, where they were well massed, and where all our shots told. We succeeded at the moment when I wished to give the order to leap into the redoubt and charge upon the enemy with the bayonet. Then they laid down their arms, and we leaped in with more tranquillity and less risk. I shouted immediately the cry of “Vive le Roi” which was repeated by all the grenadiers and chasseurs who were in good condition, by all the troops in the trenches, and to which the enemy replied by a general discharge of artillery and musketry. I never saw a sight more beautiful or more majestic.[1]

Private Georg Daniel Flohr of the Royal Deux-Ponts wrote:

Anyone can imagine what happened once we were inside the redoubt. People of four nations were thrown together: Frenchmen, English, Scots, and Germans . . . the soldiers . . . were so furious that our people were killing one another . . . The French were striking down everyone in a blue coat. Since the Deux-Ponts wore blue, many of us were stabbed to death . . . One screamed here, the other there, that for the grace of God we should kill him off completely. The whole redoubt was so full of dead and wounded that one had to walk on top of them.[2]