

General Meeting of the Members of the
Descendants of the Signers of the
Declaration of Independence, Inc.
Carpenter Suite, Waldorf-Astoria Hotel
New York, N.Y.
18 February, 1956

The meeting was called to order by the President-General Mr. Percy Hamilton Goodsell, Jr. at 3.00 P.M.

In the absence of the Chaplain-General Mr. Goodsell offered the Society prayer.

It was moved and approved that the reading of the Minutes of the previous meeting be dispensed with, as they had been mailed to all members.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT-GENERAL

Thanks are extended to the New York State Society Pres., Mr. Edward R. Finch, Jr. and Mr. A. H. Wellman for their assistance in arranging the program for the day.

The Society was represented by the President of the New York State Society, Mr. Finch, the President-General and Mrs. William H. Suttentfield at the Annual Service for the Patriotic Societies of New York in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Sunday, November 20, 1955. The President-General was the guest of the Daughters of Cincinnati Society at a reception at the Cosmopolitan Club on December 1, 1955, and he represented the Society at the Annual Luncheon of the Huguenot Society of America at the Hotel Plaza, on December 3rd. That officer was also a guest of honor at the 60th Anniversary luncheon of the Daughters of Holland Dames at the Hotel Pierre on December 13, 1955. On Sunday, January 8, the President of the New York State Society D.S.D.I. and the President-General represented the Society at the second Annual Church Service of the Colonial Dames of America at the Church of the Incarnation, and the President-General was guest of honor at the annual Founder's Day Luncheon of the National Society of New England Women at the Waldorf-Astoria on January 24, 1956. On Sunday, February 5, the President-General represented the Society at the 38th Annual Church Service of the National Society of Colonial Dames in the State of New York at Christ Church Methodist, New York. Invitations were received to the annual Egg-nog Party of the Colonial Dames of America on January 9th, 1956, and to a luncheon of the National Society Magna Charta Dames on November 15, 1955.

Rosettes for button hole have been ordered and may be obtained from the Treasurer-General at small cost.

A letter was read from the Rev. Ernest A. Harding of Christ Church expressing his appreciation of having been appointed Honorary-Chaplain-General. Also a letter from Mrs. Goodsell thanking the Society for their resolution expressing regret at her inability to attend the Richmond meeting. Acknowledgment was made of Mrs. Mercer's generous donation to the dinner.

REPORT OF BOARD

The President-General reported briefly on the Richmond meeting and the meeting of the board previous to this meeting. Plans for the Annual Congress to be held in Philadelphia May 12th and 13th were briefly discussed. Notices of this occasion will be

mailed to the full membership. As this is the 250th Anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin and also an opportunity will be had to see the progress of the work in restoring Independence Hall and the large amount of research being undertaken, it is earnestly hoped that we will have a large attendance at the forthcoming Congress.

REPORT OF VICE-PRESIDENTS - No report

SUMMARY FROM REGISTRAR-GENERAL

Mrs. Patterson reported seven new Senior members and twelve new Junior members elected at the meeting of the Board. Five deaths were reported and their memory was observed with silent prayer. There were no resignations.

REPORT OF HISTORIAN-GENERAL

Miss Densmore reported that the National Park Service is undertaking excavations of Independence Square to ascertain location of foundations of buildings and walls. This work may be inspected by the membership at the time of the Annual Congress.

SUMMARY OF TREASURER-GENERAL'S REPORT

In the absence of the Treasurer-General, Mr. John P. Duane, the Assistant Treasurer-General, summarized the report which had previously been read and approved at the meeting of the Board. The report is appended to these Minutes.

SUMMARY OF REPORT OF SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The President-General read a splendid letter from our Scholarship Student, Mr. Tayler F. Turner, Jr. of Fredericksburg, Virginia, now completing his last year at the University of Virginia. Mr. Turner not only appreciates the assistance given him but feels it will be a challenge in later life to live up to the trust the Society has placed in him.

REPORTS OF GOVERNORS

The President-General stated a letter had been received from the Massachusetts State Society and he had suggested to them that they hold a general meeting. It is felt that New England has many descendants who if brought into the Society would contribute strength to the National Society.

Mr. Finch reported for the New York State Society stating that a program is under way to get younger members more active through essay contests, distribution of copies of the Declaration and other activities. The President-General complimented the New York State Society on their good work.

Mrs. Patterson reported on the activities of the Pennsylvania Society in connection with the forthcoming Congress on May 12th and 13th.

Mrs. Suttentfield reporting for North Carolina suggested that it was very difficult to arouse the interest of the men in organizations such as ours. Mr. Goodsell pointed out that in the North these societies had become well established. The organization of meetings, luncheons, dinners and outings with eligible guests helps promote interest in the Society.

Mrs. Goodsell made no report for the Governors at Large.

OLD BUSINESS

Secretary-General reported on "Byberry" the Benjamin Rush Homestead; that it is hoped that prior to the meeting of the Congress we will have engineers' plans from the agent of the owner, and that we can then formulate permanent plans for the preservation of this landmark with the cooperation of other interested parties.

The President-General spoke of the Sons of the American Revolution taking the ball from us on the observance at the graves of the Signers. The matter had been previously brought up at the Richmond meeting and the President-General proposed that there be standing committees to attend to the matter of placing a small wreath on the graves on the Fourth of July.

Mr. Finch proposed a resolution authorizing the State Societies to handle this matter. The President-General suggested handling the matter through the Governor-Generals as some states do not have state societies. It was approved that a letter be addressed to the Governors by the Secretary-General early in June, asking their cooperation and calling for a report as to the action taken on the Fourth of July.

The Secretary-General reported on the restoration work going on at Independence Hall and it was resolved that the President-General should accept the invitation of Mr. Anderson, Superintendent of the Independence Hall Historical Park Project to hold our Congress this coming May 12 in the East wing of Independence Hall. A motion was made and approved to join the Independence Hall Association and in this connection the Society also approved joining the National Trust for the Preservation of Land Marks as it is felt both these organizations are furthering the work which our Society stands for. The Treasurer-General has been so notified.

Mr. Axford, the Assistant Secretary-General, advised that the Bulletin of the Society will be issued within a month. He also suggested the consideration of an award such as a medal or plaque for a person selected by the Society. The details of this matter will be considered at the Annual Congress on May 12th.

The Secretary-General spoke of the exercises at Benjamin Franklin's grave on the anniversary of his birth. Over 20 organizations were represented and later the bridge across the Delaware was renamed for Benjamin Franklin. He also announced that the Poor Richard Club of Philadelphia has advised the Rector of Christ Church that they will assume responsibility for the care of Franklin's grave and also assist in the restoration and recutting of historic grave stones. He also spoke of the convocation at the University of Pennsylvania where representatives of five universities who had awarded Franklin degrees were in turn honored - Oxford, St. Andrews William and Mary, Harvard and Yale.

A motion to adjourn was made and approved at 4.25 P.M.

At 7 P.M. cocktails were served in the Jansen Suite of the Waldorf-Astoria followed by an excellent dinner, well attended. After the dinner there was a program of light music popular at the period of the War of Independence performed by Miss Leonore Witte, soprano and Mr. Stoddard Lincoln, harpsichordist.

The Secretary-General during the dinner read the names of the Signers and 22 descendants answered to the name of their ancestor as follows:

John Adams	3	Oliver Wolcott	2
Francis Lewis	4	John Witherspoon	1
John Hart	1	George Ross	1
Roger Sherman	1	Philip Livingston	1
Lewis Morris	1	Francis Hopkinson	1
Benjamin Franklin	5	Carter Braxton	1

In accordance with a resolution passed by the Board of Governors on July 3, 1912 the following name is to be carried forever upon the roll of the Society:

#78 Williams, Charles Duane Benjamin Franklin

Died on the S.S. Titanic April 14, 1912 to save the lives of others.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Graham
Secretary-General.

Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence, Inc.

Report of the Treasurer-General

May 1, 1955 to February 5, 1956

Balance on hand May 1, 1955

Cash in City Bank, Washington, D.C.	\$	1357.06	
(Of this amount \$471.04 in Bi-Cen. Fund and \$500.00 U.S. Bond)			
U.S. Treasury Bond		500.00	
U.S. Treasury Bond		500.00	
Scholarship Fund (15 shares A.T.& T.)		2436.53	4793.59

Receipts, May 1, 1955 to Feb. 5, 1956

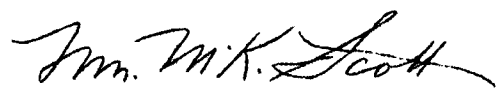
Interest and dividends		166.80	
Miscellaneous		1.50	
Dues and Enrollment Fees		2182.00	2350.30
Total			<u>7143.89</u>

Disbursements, May 1, 1955 to Feb. 5, 1956

Printing		856.95	
Officers' Expenses		174.22	
Donations, Including Scholarship		300.00	
Miscellaneous		.50	
Expenses, Phila. Congress (Receipts 278.50)		64.68	
Expenses, Richmond Meeting (Receipts 282.00)		234.70	
General Expense, Lithoplate		218.50	1849.55
Balance on hand Feb. 5, 1956			<u>5294.34</u>

Accounted for as follows:

Cash in City Bank			
(Of this amount 580.14 in Bi-Cen. Fund and 500.00 U.S. Bond)		1857.81	
U.S. Treasury Bond		500.00	
U.S. Treasury Bond		500.00	
Scholarship Fund (15 shares A.T.& T.)		2436.53	5294.34


Treasurer-General

Report of Delinquent Members

February 5, 1956

Current Dues.....41
One Year Back.....15
Two Years Back..... 6

#1008 Henry Pierce Brawner, Jr.
869 Mrs. Lewis Lerick Harrison
1047 William Thompson Henry Jr.
1004 Miss Lucy Skelton Moffet
643 Robert Morris Snyder
1050 Mrs. Robert Humphreys Welsh