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# ❖ Sweetland/Swetland Lore #15 ❖

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(formerly Swetland Lore)

September 2000

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## Lasting Impressions - How to save cemetery data

**A** way to record and save the data that you collect in cemeteries has come on the market. Marjorie Scott has sent a newspaper clipping and brochure on "Lasting Impressions" and "Memory Medallions."

Created by Waynesburg, PA, district attorney, Glenn Toothman, III, he has developed an invention that will let you download pictures and text detailing the significance of a grave site or historic monument using a laptop computer or a hand-held unit and scanner.

Using a Memory Medallion, you can place it on the tombstone and let visitors read the history of the person in the grave. The Memory Medallion comes in two levels, Level I and Level II. Level I will record up to five pages of text plus a photo. Level II allows for more information to be stored via Hyperlink, including two minutes of digital video, five additional pictures and two minutes of audio.

Their brochure provides details on what to submit to obtain a Level I medallion. Cost is \$312.00 but a special introductory offer lets you get one for \$295.00.

The newspaper article showed a picture of a medallion with information that it will include. You can contact Lasting Impressions at 61 North Richhill St., Waynesburg, PA 15370.



*Mark W. Swetland, Sr. photo taken for his 7th birthday, August 8, 1893. He is the father of your editor.*

You can contact them by e-mail [grtlaw@greenepa.net](mailto:grtlaw@greenepa.net) or the Internet [www.memorymedallion.com](http://www.memorymedallion.com)

## Plan Ahead for the 2001 SFA Reunion

Preliminary work has begun for the Sweetland/Swetland Reunion 2001. Among the suggestions for place was Williamsport, PA - one of the historic gateways to the west. Situated on the West Branch Susquehanna River, among green mountains, it offers beauty as well as convenience.

There are motels, historic inns, B & Bs, restored theater, paddleboat ride on the river, several excellent libraries for your research, Little League Museum, four nearby colleges (Bucknell University, Lycoming College, Lockhaven University, Pennsylvania College of Technology), and then wildlife of a different nature, deer, black bear, wild turkey, etc. nearby. For shoppers there is Bro-Dart (library supply house and store) and the famous Woolrich store nearby. We are inquiring for the third or fourth weekend in July 2001

As for transportation, the area is off route 15, just above I-80 and connected by rt. 220; served by Lycoming County Airport and bus services, assuring easy access.

We are looking for general interest programs. If you have an interest, talent to share or suggestions for a topic and/or speaker, contact reunion chair Robin Leidehecker (1380 Radio Club Road, Montoursville, PA 17754; 750-433-4338; or [robleid@suscom.net](mailto:robleid@suscom.net) for e-mail.

We will keep you posted.

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## John Sweetland in the Revolutionary War - Part II

**P**art I of the story of John Sweetland in the Revolutionary War appeared in S/S Lore #14. Thanks to Anne Kirby Part II is now now on hand and part III will come later.

“The story of John Sweetland’s involvement with the Marblehead regiment under Col. John Glover began in S/S/ Lore #14. Sweetland, like his father and grandfather, was born in Marblehead, Massachusetts. He served as a private in a regiment made up of fishermen from his home town. Two months after his regiment rowed the army across the East River, George Washington again called upon their strength and skills

On November 16, 1776, the Battle of Ft. Washington on Manhattan Island resulted in a catastrophic defeat for the Americans in which they lost 2,900 men and countless munitions and supplies. They retreated to Ft. Lee on the New Jersey side of the Hudson River. While they were at Ft. Lee, Thomas Paine, the writer of *Common Sense*, came and requested that he be allowed to mingle with the soldiers, so he could see the war through their eyes. He borrowed a drum from the regimental drummer and wrote by the campfire with his paper on the drumhead.

One cold morning a rider brought news that 4,000 British troops were marching toward them. To avoid being trapped, General George Washington personally led the men on a retreat all the way across New Jersey. This army, with its sick and injured, marched for days and nights with no food through freezing rain and mud. They were headed for safety in

Pennsylvania, but the Delaware River stood in their way. With the British in hot pursuit, Washington ordered officers to bring boats from Durham. Then he requested Col. John Glover’s regiment to move the entire army across the Delaware River in one day.

The Marbleheaders knew that they would be easy targets for the British cannon if they failed to move everyone across in time and were caught by Cornwallis’s army in their boats on the river. So from daybreak to dark, Glover’s regiment, with Private Sweetland, rowed the entire army across the Delaware to safety.

*—resulted in a catastrophic defeat in which they lost 2,900 men and countless munitions and supplies.*

Within weeks of this heroic crossing which followed severe defeats, Thomas Paine wrote the words which rallied the troops and laid the roadwork for the third and

final crossing by the Marblehead regiment. Knowing the context for Thomas Paine’s words makes them all the more meaningful: “These are the times that try men’s souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it NOW deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.”<sup>1</sup>

1. Thomas Paine, *The American Crisis I*, December 19, 1776

As you read the story of John Sweetland, think of how easy it will be for you to send in similar stories of your ancestors. From this you know that they enlighten other readers and make S/S Lore more interesting. Write to me, Mark W. Sweetland, 13 Raymond Road, Bluffton, SC 29910-4526.

Anne Kirby also wrote that her son Alan had written a fine essay for school. Since he is quite busy with school, you may not read this in the next issue of S/S Lore #16 to be issued in early December but you

### Wonderful People Read S/S Lore

This adds Muriel and Don Ogden to the list of contributors since June 1999. Donations now total \$140.00 since the 1999 reunion. You may also wish to write Muriel and Don, 1862 Le Baron Dr., Stockton, CA 95209. Don suffered a stroke two years ago and was doing well when we saw him June 1999 in Chautauqua. Then December 1999 Muriel suffered two strokes within a week. Don says she is recovering but slowly. Let’s pray for both of them.

Let me remind you that next year 2001 we will give a scholarship to a Sweetland/Swetland descendant, a senior who is entering college, or if no senior applies, to a first year student in college. The December issue of S/S Lore will have full details on the scholarship. The Chairman of the Scholarship Committee is Bill Noyes, 3301-936 Shellers Bend, State College, PA 16801-4236.

Note the reminder on page 1 for the 2001 reunion. Write to Robin with thoughts on where we should meet next summer. Our first reunion in 1986 was at the Denton Hill Ski Lodge. Should we and could we go back there?

## Rev. Ira Allen Swetland

**M**ike Chapman of Burbank, CA, great-great-grandson of Ira Allen Swetland, was given my name by a Family Message Board at Ancestry.com. We have corresponded since then and Mike's e-mail of Rev. Ira results in this story. Mike sent me obituaries on both his great-great-grandfather and great-great-grandmother from the M. E. Church West Wisconsin Conference minutes.

"Rev. Ira Allen Swetland, a superannuated member of the West Wisconsin Conference, died April 30, 1881 at his home near Mauston, WI. He was born Oct. 12 1810 in the town of Derby, Orlean County, VT. At a camp meeting near Lebanon, NH he was converted and immediately joined the M. E. church. Soon manifesting, by extraordinary gifts and graces, his call to the ministry, he was sent in 1831 to labor on Unity Circuit, NH. He became a pastor that year as one of the pastors of the Barton Circuit, NH. In 1834 he married Statira P. Hurd

In 1835 he was ordained. After five years of successful labor, having received an average salary of only \$75 a year, he was compelled to ask a location. In 1840 he was re-admitted and stationed for four years. During 1844 ill health forced him to seek superannuation. Partially regaining his health in 1848 he resumed work until 1852.

Again this year he was again prostrated and, thinking his work in the ministry done, he superannuated and in 1854 came west and settled in Wisconsin. Partially regaining his vigor, he again began preaching. From 1856 he served in various

towns of Wisconsin until in 1861 his health so completely failed that he relinquished his charge and at the conference of 1863 he was superannuated. From then until 1872 the simple epitome of his conference record tells of his indomitable energy of character, his consuming zeal, and the intensity of his love for souls.

He returned to his call in 1863-1864. In 1866 he again was superannuated. He returned and worked from 1868 to 1872 when he was superannuated. While he did not attempt regular work after 1872, he was always ready to "Preach the

*A short time before death came, he responded earnestly when prayer was offered by his pastor, saying in broken terms Happy!*

Word," whenever health would permit. He was a safe and valued counselor of the pastors of the church where he resided. His final

## Using the Internet

months were filled with acute suffering but he endured patiently.

Note that Mike Chapman located us through the Internet at Ancestry.com. Several others have also found us through the Internet

Using the computer and the LDS records available I have obtained ten microfilms with information on Swetlands, Sweatlands and Sweetlands. The ten microfilms have too much to report in one newsletter.

For example, film no. 0931858 has early Potter County vital statistics. The film covers the years of 1842-1899 and records many marriage and deaths of my relatives. Births were seemingly recorded in church records and the Harrison Valley Baptist Church burned during the 1920s so my father's and grandfather's birth records were lost.

Film no. 0903528 is a Potter County General Index to Register's Documents. Page 17 lists nine Swetland items, wills, a tax receipt

## A Letter by Roger W. Swetland - one of more than a hundred which I have saved.

Page 4 is a chance to read one of Roger Swetland's letters. Roger and his family was large. Although he had only two children and was one of two children, his father had two brothers and one sister. Each of his brothers and his sister had more children so Roger had many nephews and nieces.

In the letter of June 14, 1911, Carrie was his wife, Carrie Belle Thomas whom he married on 1885. Ruth was his daughter, born in 1900. Bob was Bob Swetland, an older brother of Gladys Swetland, my famous 108-year old cousin. Kate was the wife of Chester A. Swetland, the mother of Bob and Gladys Swetland. Kate must have been there for Bob's graduation from Peddie. Aunt Mary was part of Kate's line, not Roger's but well known to Roger.

The church in the letter was that of the Hightstown Baptist Church, where I was later baptized about 1934. Church records undoubtedly have the correct year and date. All of the people in the letter are people I knew and the church, a building I knew. Many memories come from this letter.

## Roger W. Swetland - A Wonderful Letter Writer

**A** wonderful letter writer. That's the only way to describe my grandfather, Roger W. Swetland, headmaster of The Peddie School, Hightstown, NJ from 1898 to his death in September 1934.

Having inherited many of the letters he wrote to his daughter, Ruth, to his sister, Kitt Dildine and to others whose letters have come to me, I have the pleasure of reading them to see how fine a writer he was. His letter of June 14, 1911 is to his sister.:

"We have had a stormy commencement, the most so of any since we came to Jersey. You, of course, are interested in the affair of Sunday evening. Really, it was quite an occasion for us here in a quiet country town, though the newspapers made much of little, as usual. It threatened storm when we went to the church that evening, so, fortunately, Aunt Mary did not go. About the time the programme was well underway, the storm broke. It was severe, but we thought nothing particular about it until, right in the midst of one of the declamations, there came a blinding flash, a deafening report like that of a big cannon in the room and instantly out went every light. Well, the women screamed, children cried and a few men acted like fools, as they always do on such an occasion. But the rest of us lit matches, and yelled to everybody to sit down.

The Peddie ushers at the door held people back and as soon as we could light a few oil lamps which were in the church, I started the orchestra off on a piece of music, though it wasn't "Star Spangled Banner," as the papers said. Plagued if I know what it was. I was busy

doing something else and didn't take down the title in my notebook. Up to that time we did not know the church was on fire, but it was reported that the electric plant had been struck and that was what put out the lights. So we had just got the audience pretty well calmed, when some fool stuck his head in the door and yelled "fire." I wanted to kill him, but couldn't get to him, and didn't have a gun. That set them all off again. But we kept telling them to sit down, as the fire was on the spire and we were on the ground floor anyway. So we finally got them all out safely, then gathered up the abandoned wraps, music and what few small articles we could carry along and went out ourselves to see the show. Meanwhile, it was pouring cats and dogs.

Well, the spire was on fire well up toward the top, and you remember it is a mighty tall one for a country church, about 175 feet. Ruth and Carrie sat up front near me and behaved beautifully, except that Ruth was badly scared and had to be comforted. Kate streaked it for the house for fear our lights there were out and Aunt Mary alone in darkness. We finally got the family home, wet but safe. The lights at the house had not gone out at first, but were turned off by the electric light company, soon after the fire started, for fear of the fire falling on the wires. After getting the family quieted, I went back to see what could be done. Found the Hightstown Fire Company fairly paralyzed and little doing by them. Their engine boiler even had no water in it and no fire ready to light. Water pressure was low and and not a bit of it could be raised any where near the fire. So we just stood about and let it burn until the fire got

down to the belfry. I say "we stood about" but John Plant, our physical director, Bob, and a few other boys were determined to do something.

So, in spite of opposition, they climbed to the top of the main church building back of the spire and to the top of the chapel alongside, and dragged up hose with them, meanwhile threatened with arrest by the local fire chief. They told him to go where it was hotter than the belfry fire and went right on up. After a bit the fire company came to their senses and got water going and in another hour, the fire was out. The spire fell during this time, fortunately, into the alley by the church, where it could do no damage. For a time it was a hot fight and I wouldn't have given five cents for the chance of saving, not alone the church, but other frame buildings near it. I tell you, we feel pretty "chesty" over the way our boys handled the situation. It was 8:30 when the fire broke out and one o'clock before we were ready for bed. That was bully preparation for commencement.

During the fire, offers came from the M. E. and Pres. churches of their buildings for our use next day. We finally decided on the M. E. and had our exercises there yesterday. Last night we had another thunder storm and the M. E. church was struck as well as one of the trees on our campus. The church was not seriously damaged, and not set on fire. That is the fourth consecutive evening we have had thunder storms and there is another one brooding as I write. Bob won the Wycoff prize, best all around man of his class, \$25, and the first English prize, \$10".