

# ❖Sweetland/Swetland Lore #16❖

(Formerly Swetland Lore)

December 2000

## 2001 SFA Reunion - July 27-29, Williamsport, PA

This is a wonderful time to remind you that our reunion next year will be on July 27-29, 2001 in Williamsport, PA at The Genetti Inn. Some of you know that Williamsport is the home of the Little League championships and, perhaps, have seen the games on television.

By now you will have received the Preliminary Notice. If your copy did not reach you, drop a note to Mark W. Swetland, 13 Raymond Road, Bluffton, SC 29910-452 and I will send you a second copy. The first mailing went out before 11/25/00.

Our Civil War ancestors is the theme of the 2001 reunion. Robert Ulrich will tell us something of what our ancestors must have faced.

My great-grandfather, Austin Aaron Swetland, and his brother, Mulford, served from September 1864 to June 1865 in the 189th regiment, Company I, N. Y. Volunteers. Austin's diary tells of the dreary days, the long marches, the illness, the work. Those who lived through the war and returned home without injury were rugged men. Parts of Austin's diary have come to you in early issues of Swetland Lore.

We urge you to come and bring all the memorabilia which have come down to you. Be sure to identify them with your ancestor's name and your own. Also bring all the photos you have of these men.



This picture shows Emory Sweetland, dated 1863, Gettysburg, PA. See his speech on page 4.

### 2001 SFA Scholarship

The SFA will award a scholarship to a Swetland descendant in the year 2001 for use in college. See the conditions on page 3 of this issue. Note there is a deadline for submitting an application.

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## A Sweatland Mystery or more than one!

Many of us remember Flora Sweatland Paine. She came to the first reunion in 1986 with five of her nieces. Flora longed to know who the parents of her grandfather, Archelaus Spencer Sweatland, were. She and others had looked for years with no success. Flora died in 1993 without ever learning.

Not too long ago Eunice Colson, who came to the first reunion with Flora, came across a slip of paper dated June 1997 which caused her to take sharp notice. It reads: "Archelaus S. Sw. was born 16 July 1803, s/o John Samuel Sw. and Sarah Jane Pease in Longmeadow, Mass." No reference was with it.

The full last name was not written out, probably short hand to save time. Archelaus is so unusual that this may well be the birth date of Archelaus Spencer Swetland.

This provides a starting place for another search and creates more than one mystery. Where did the slip of paper come from in 1997? Who is John Samuel Sweatland? Why has this data not been seen by other searchers?

Eunice at the age of 90 is unlikely to go to Longmeadow for research but one of her younger relatives may be inspired to do so.

Archelaus married Samantha Pease. Perhaps, research in the Pease lines may help us resolve the mystery of Archelaus's parents.



## 1900 Swetland Family Reunion

Roger Swetland, my grandfather, attended the Swetland Family Reunion, held in August, 1900. His letter of Sept. 4, 1900, to his sister, Kitt Swetland, tells the story of the meeting.

"I left there at 7:20 and reached Jamestown about ten o'clock. Next morning took a boat up Chautauqua lake and arrived Bemis Point at 11:20. Found about fifty Swetlands on hand and more came later. We all had dinner together and then a little program at which they insisted your brother should speak - a task almost too great for his modesty. However, I took for my theme the Swetlands as I know them and tried to describe faithfully their peculiar traits and habits. I spoke particularly of pie. At the close many of them came to me and said I had hit them off to a dot. So guess we are one people.

"They are smaller than we are. More like Uncle Morg and Uncle Muff. Are mostly dark, although they do say that red hair is characteristic of their tribe. They have the same blunt way of saying things and many little peculiarities which are unmistakable Swetland ear-marks. They are descended from Theophilus who, as nearly as I can figure it out, must have been a brother to our grandfather Aaron's father although perhaps only a cousin.

"I went over the records carefully as possible with Dr. B. S. Swetland, who has given most attention to the family. We find two Aaron Swetlands. One born July 28, 1753, whose father name was William; the other born Jan. 4, 1748, whose father's name was Joseph. If we could find out what our Aaron's father's name was, it would

straighten out our whole branch. It seems to me as I think of it, that I have heard father say that his grandfather's father's name was William, but I am not sure. Perhaps Aunt Ette can tell. The Aaron whose father was William had sisters Rhoda, Hannah, Lydia, Temperance and Sarah, and brother John. The other Aaron had a sister Mary and brothers David, Eli, Joseph, Eleazer and Levi.

"We had a pretty good time and they were all very kind and much interested in our family and its history. They plan to have the next meeting,

*The Uncle Morg and Uncle Muff mentioned were Morgan and Mulford Swetland, brothers of Roger's father, Austin Swetland.*

Aug. 28, 1901, at some point on Chautauqua. As next year is the great Pan-american exposition in Buffalo, rates will be very low and and they are going to make an effort

to get out the largest number ever met. There is a large branch in Ohio closely related to the Chautauqua Swetlands and they are coming in force next year. I promised them to use my efforts to have our branch well represented also. They also plan to hire a hotel on the lake for three or four days before the reunion and have all who can come there and have a good old-fashioned visit. They think they can get a rate of about \$1.00 a day for that time and hope to have a large attendance for that.

"They are not a "stuck-up" people, but just as plain and every day as we are. I wish we might get a lot of folks to go and have a regular high old time with them."

For the past month or so I have been going through over 200 letters which Roger wrote to his sister, Kitt Swetland Dildine. These date from 1898 after he became principal of The Peddie Institute, Hightstown, NJ until just before his death in 1934.

## Why Family Reunions? What Do They Need?

Why have a family reunion? Ours began to give our relatives a chance to meet Gladys Swetland, then 94 years old (108 years old now). The reunion provided a time and place for relatives to meet, many of whom had not met before. As reunions continued, attending gave us the chance to renew friendships and to meet new relatives. Some who came have yet to find a common ancestor but in the hope of learning they continue to come.

Several people, not many, asked that I continue to run the reunions. What a strange thought! I won't live forever, surely not as long as Gladys. I do promise to come to every reunion as long as I am able to be there. My hope is that we have enough willing workers that our reunions and the Swetland Family Association do not fade away when I do. Enough people who came to the early reunions have passed away to concern me for the future. We need younger people to step forward and take over for those who have done so much in the past four years. Read this as a call to action for all who have not yet served as an officer, run a reunion or published the newsletter.



# John Sweetland in the Revolutionary War - Part III

## The Third and Final Crossing

Less than a week after Thomas Paine wrote his famous words in *Common Sense*, George Washington had them read to his troops. The men, who listened to the words inspiring them not to be "summer soldiers," were starving and lightly dressed in the freezing cold at McConkey's Ferry, Pennsylvania. It was December 25, 1776. The American soldiers were so disheartened from recent losses that the Continental army was likely to dissolve at the end of the year when their enlistments expired. They had just received orders to do the seemingly impossible: cross the Delaware River and take Trenton at night. Paine's words gave the courage they needed to follow orders. Officers gave the men the password for the operation. It was "Victory or Death."

John Glover's fishermen, John Sweetland among them, slid huge flat-bottomed boats down the riverbank and worked the boats across the river through large chunks of ice. As the soldiers shuffled to the boats in the snow, one Major noted that the snow was "tinged here and there with blood from the feet of the men who wore broken shoes."<sup>1</sup> The Marblehead fishermen continued to row back and forth across the Delaware River for nearly 12 hours, bringing across troops, horses and artillery. The fishermen at the front of the boats blocked the ice chunks as they came, then pushed the ice away from the boats with their poles, to keep the ice from hitting the boats broadside. The middle of the river was clear, and then they again smashed their way through the shore ice on the New Jersey side.

During the night, a heavy storm hit and continued throughout the night with snow, sleet and hail. To load the horses, the fishermen held the boats steady while other soldiers held lanterns to let the horses see inside the

boats. With men pushing and pulling the frightened animals, the horses jumped over the high gunwales and into the boats. Then soldiers blindfolded the horses for the trip across the Delaware River.

By 2 a.m., Glover's regiment had everyone across, and they took part in the surprise attack at Trenton. The fishermen set up their cannon at the Assunpink Bridge and effectively stopped the mercenary Hessian troops from escaping from Trenton. Finally the Hessians surrendered and the American took Trenton.

Unlike the two previous river crossings in retreat, this one scored an American victory. It provided the turning point for the war and inspired the

*General Washington put his trust in the Marblehead fishermen and they did not let him down.*

men to reenlist, and thousands of new volunteers to take up the cause of liberty. Miraculously, while over a thousand Hessian troops were killed, wounded or captured, only four Americans were wounded.<sup>2</sup>

General Washington put his trust in the Marblehead fishermen and they did not let him down. This was a long and a severe ordeal, and yet it may be doubted whether so small a number of men were ever employed so short a space of time with greater or more lasting results upon the history of the world.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ketchum, Richard M. *The Winter Soldiers, Battles for Trenton and Princeton*, 252.

<sup>2</sup> Ward, Christopher. *The War of the Revolution*, Vol. 1, 302.

<sup>3</sup> Ward, 303.

This is the last of Anne Kirby's stories - "Private Sweetland in the Revolutionary War - The Third and Final Crossing."

Your editor asks that everyone who has stories of their ancestors write them and send them to him as soon as he or she can. On hand are enough letters written by my grandfather to fill newsletters for many years but you need to hear from other lines of Sweetlands, Swetlands and Sweatlands.

## 2001 SFA Scholarship

In 2001 the Swetland Family Association will award a \$250.00 scholarship to a Sw(e)a(t)land descendant. The award is given first to a high school senior. If no senior applies, the award may go to a college freshman. The scholarship is given only to a student going into or in college. Previous winners are ineligible unless no senior applies.

Past recipients have been Ruth Anne Kirby in 1995 and Katy Lynne Bradley in 1997. No award was given in 1999 as no applications came in.

Applications should go to Bill Noyes, 3301-936 Shellers Bend, State College, PA 16801-4326, post marked no later than March 1, 2001. Students who apply should include a recommendation from a family member. Attendance at the reunion is not required. However, we urge him/her to come or at least a family member come to receive the award personally.

The award is based on scholarship, athletic endeavors, and leadership qualities as attested by grades, teachers, and school officials. A demonstrated interest in family genealogy or family history will carry weight toward the award.

Possibly, this is the easiest scholarship to apply for. The applicants are fewer than for all other college scholarships.



## Speech by Emory Sweetland, Co. B, 154th N.Y.V.I.

The subject assigned me tonight may seem at first glance to be of small importance but when we remember that at least three quarters of all the enlisted soldiers of our Armies were some time an inmate of those Field Hospitals we can readily see how necessary they were to the success of the Army.

The first would be powerless to strike without the arm and body behind it. So the army would be nearly powerless without the Teamsters to carry along the rations and the ammunition and supplies, the pioneers to build our roads and bridges, and lay our pontoons, and lastly the field Hospital to care for wounded and sick, until such times as they could be sent to permanent hospitals in the rear.

There are many stories written of the heroism of the men who stormed Lookout Mountain or held the bloody angle at Gettysburg — all honor to them but surely we should not forget the men who through storm of shot and shell took a wagon load of ammunition to the front to fill the empty Cartridge boxes or the men who laid the pontoons under fire or of the trained nurses who faced the deadly Typhus fever of the camps — the black measles The Small Pox — or the infection of gangrene, far deadlier than Rebel bullets. I have seen men refuse to care for those suffering from the most deadly disease. Nearly three men died in the army by disease where one was killed by a bullet.

The Second Div. 20th A.C. hospital in the field was the best equipped of any in Sherman's Army and a description of it and how it was run may not prove uninteresting to you tonight. At its head was an old surgeon of experience assisted by seven assistant surgeons. One chief steward drew all medical supplies and distributed a portion to each regiment in the Div. and also had general charge of the hospital — two dispensing stewards — four clerks who kept a complete record of every case in the hospital — about twenty

nurses and cooks — and about that same number of pioneers, who cleared the ground and erected the tents and made themselves generally useful — an ambulance core of 10 ambulances and 20 stretcher bearers to carry the sick and wounded, one medical wagon and ten Army wagons to carry tents and medical supplies. These men were picked men and under proper officers and were as good discipline as any crack regiment. Every man had his particular duty to do.

On the march the sick and wounded were carried in Ambulances and wagons and but little could be done for them except to give them water and something to eat at dinner time. When it was near camping time the surgeon would ride on ahead and pick out some good camping ground, near water if he could and the pioneers would clear the ground of brush and logs. The wagons would draw up in line all facing one way and about two rods apart.

The ambulances would form another line parallel to the wagons and about six rods from them. Between these the white hospital tents would arise as if by magic. Upon the ground large rubbers would be spread and blankets. Then the poor sick and wounded men would be unloaded and placed upon them. The flaps of the tent would be thrown back and a large built in front of each tent giving it a cheerful look. The patients were washed and fed. The Doctor and steward would go around and see who needed medicine and nurses were stationed to care for them during the night.

### The Hospital in the Field

First a good location is chosen and our white Tented city is laid out with great regularity with streets well swept, and drained by ditches, and everything kept scrupulously clean. Two rows of cots are built in each tent with an alley way in the center between. The cots were built by driving four crotched posts with sticks across at each end. Upon these we put

hoop poles. Upon these fine brush — then blankets — two nurses were detailed for each tent, who were required to be quiet — no whispering or loud talk. Must give the patient his medicine regularly, must write the patient's letters and care for all his wants. Nourishing food is given. The Doctor and Hospital Steward are around many times a day.

### The Hospital in Action

We have sent to the rear all the sick and wounded if possible. We have moved up with the soldiers. The wagons are sent to the rear except the medical wagon. The action begins. Soon the stretcher bearers bring in the wounded or the wounded hobble back using their guns for crutches. Some spot is chosen near the line of fire. The pioneers clear the ground of brush and logs and the wounded men are placed in rows on the ground with just enough room to pass between them. All the Doctors stewards and nurses are busy doing up the wound with bandages, Tying arteries and removing bullets. The amputation table is placed beneath some tree and two old surgeons are cutting off the arms and legs of those badly wounded. The stretcher bearers continue to bring in the wounded who are calling for water, water. The pioneers are busy bringing it. Soon we have hundreds of the wounded and dying. The firing increases and comes nearer. Our lines are pressed back, bullets fly thick and fast in our hospital, and amid this leaden hail the wounded are removed to the rear to a place of safety.

Or perhaps our Army press the enemy back and soon we have hundreds of Rebel wounded to care for in addition to our own.

Such are a few views of life in a hospital in the field, on the march, and in action.

This article came from Margaret Smith, courtesy of Lyle Sweetland, South Dayton, NY, Margaret's uncle, the brother of her mother.