

Col. Richard Somers Unit, SAR Receives Charter From State

The granting of a charter to the Col Richard Somers Chapter, SAR, at its initial dinner-meeting at the Seaside Hotel, Atlantic City, on Saturday, Jan 22, marked the realization of a dream of long standing. This is the first South Jersey chapter and its members will automatically become members of the State and National Society of Sons of the American Revolution. In fact, the New Jersey society, with a present membership of nearly 1000, is the parent of the national society. It was organized in March, 1889, and during the intervening years has enrolled more than 4000 members. Governor Walter E Edge, a native son, and former Governor Charles Edison, are both compatriots.

It is particularly fitting that the Col Richard Somers Chapter should be located in Atlantic City—the garden spot known all over the country, as well as being in a part of New Jersey whose historic past links it closely with the Revolution. The local chapter is named after a man who played an important part in the struggle for independence and who was a descendant of John Somers, who settled on Great Egg Harbor Bay about 1693. In addition to his own accomplishments, Col Somers was the father of a second "Richard," who commanded the "Nautilus" and distinguished himself during the siege of Tripoli, on the shores of the Mediterranean along which our boys are fighting, today.

The State society, SAR, largely with the aid of its 20 chapters throughout New Jersey, has preserved historic spots, erected memorials, aided in Americanization work, published and preserved records of our State's early history, promoted patriotic exercises in the schools, and aided the USO in its worthy war work.

An enthusiastic drive for new members is now being carried on, and in order to be eligible one must be a direct descendant, on either the maternal or paternal side, of a man who took a major part in the Revolutionary War. Hiram Steelman, president of the local chapter; Warren Somers Jr, vice-president, or Paul C Burgess, secretary and treasurer, in Brigantine, will be happy to furnish additional information regarding necessary qualifications for membership. A minimum of ten duly qualified members is required for the founding of a new chapter, which is not limited in number of memberships issued, but whose territorial limits are fixed by the State society at the time the charter is granted. It is hoped that the newly-organized Col Richard Somers Chapter will grow to become one of the leading patriotic organizations in this section, and bring added distinction to the Sons of the American Revolution, particularly during these war days, when there is such a great need for every patriotic effort.

The following officers of the State and national societies, SAR, as well as members of the local chapter, were present at the charter presentation dinner:

John D Alden, historian of the New Jersey Society, SAR; Harold M Blanchard, trustee of the National Society, SAR; Walter H Van Hoesen, president of the New Jersey Society, SAR; Edgar Williamson Jr, secretary of the State Society, SAR; George Winters, past vice-president general of the National Society, SAR; H Philip Archer, Russell Barker, Paul C Burgess, Harrison Cook, Bert Crowley, Edward R Doughty, Robert M Ernest, Thomas L Glenn, William S Henkelman, Paxson Keates, Charles Sumner Moore, Thomas E Newell, Hubert Somers, Samuel Somers, Warren Somers Jr, Hiram Steelman.

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Sons Of Revolution Get Charter Tonight

The Col Richard Somers Chapter of the New Jersey Society, Sons of the American Revolution, will be presented with its charter at a dinner this evening at 7 o'clock in the Garden Room of the Seaside Hotel.

Walter H Van Hoesen, president of the New Jersey Society, will make the presentation.

Hiram Steelman is president of the Col Somers Chapter and other officers are Warren Somers Jr, vice president, and Paul C Burgess, secretary and treasurer.

The chapter is named for Col Richard Somers, who was born in 1737 and died on Oct 22, 1794. He was colonel of the Third Battalion of the Gloucester County Militia, which was made up of men from what is now Atlantic County. The battalion saw much action in the American Revolution.

Col Somers was the father of Cpt Richard Somers, a hero of the war with Tripoli. He was killed in Tripoli harbor on Sept 4, 1804.

Other State officers who will attend the charter presentation are: Frank J Hutchinson, first vice president; Edgar Williamson, secretary; John D Alden, historian; William D Mason, chancellor; Harold M Blanchard, national trustee, and George Winters, vice president.