



## **Lt George Ewing Chapter (Athens, Gallia, Jackson, Meigs, Vinton Counties, Ohio) Jan 2017**

### **Chapter Meeting Dates and Presentations:**

**evening meetings begin at 6:30pm**

January 26<sup>th</sup> - Tony Robinson, Central District OSSAR Chairman. Will bring us greetings from the Ohio Society and will present the Wreaths Across America fund raising project. Athens Red Cross, S May Ave.  
**Please bring \$14 per person to cover cost of take-out meal from Bob Evans Restaurant; thanks.**

February 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 2017: Ohio Society SAR 2017 Winter Meeting – Lima, OH

February 20, 2017 George Washington Birthday (President Day)

February 23<sup>rd</sup> Barney Grueser. Will present on the restoration of early barns and cabins of SE Ohio

March 23<sup>rd</sup> Tom O'Grady will discuss the origin of Southeastern Ohio History Center; history in the making

April 27<sup>th</sup> Sarah Kinkel, OU History Professor, will present Women of the American Revolution.

May 5 – 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Board Of Management OSSAR Meeting

May 25<sup>th</sup> Mound Cemetery, Marietta, Memorial Service for Revolutionary War Patriots of Northwest Territory

May 25<sup>th</sup> Awards Dinner at Chester. Tentative speaker: Steven Frash, Southeast District OHSSAR Chairman.

June 3<sup>rd</sup> Noon: Joint DAR-SAR Picnic at Compatriot Benz's home, 4841 Angel Ridge Road, Athens

---

If you had traveled through Guysville this past summer between Memorial Day & Labor Day, then you would have been delighted with the patriotic theme of the home of Therese and Keith Lackey at 7061 SR 329. We will be presenting them with the Flag Displaying Certificate this year.





Frances Wentz Taber, in her home-office - before her late father's, Lt. Ned James Wentz', 1933 US Naval Academy diploma and ceremonial sword and scabbard. Also pictured are the 1812 sampler stitched by her ancestor, Amelia Beaumont, from Athens County, Ohio, and a 1976 BiCentennial needlepoint flag stitched by Frances Wentz Taber, herself! Photo on right: Frances Wentz Taber presents the insignia program to her Fort San Luis Chapter NSDAR membership.

Frances is a Lifetime and Fifty-eight-year Member of NSDAR – at Tallahassee, Florida. She has established fifteen Patriot ancestors – including four through her late father, Lt. Ned James Wentz. Her email is [francestaber@comcast.net](mailto:francestaber@comcast.net) in case anybody has some genealogical questions. Frances' explains her genealogy:

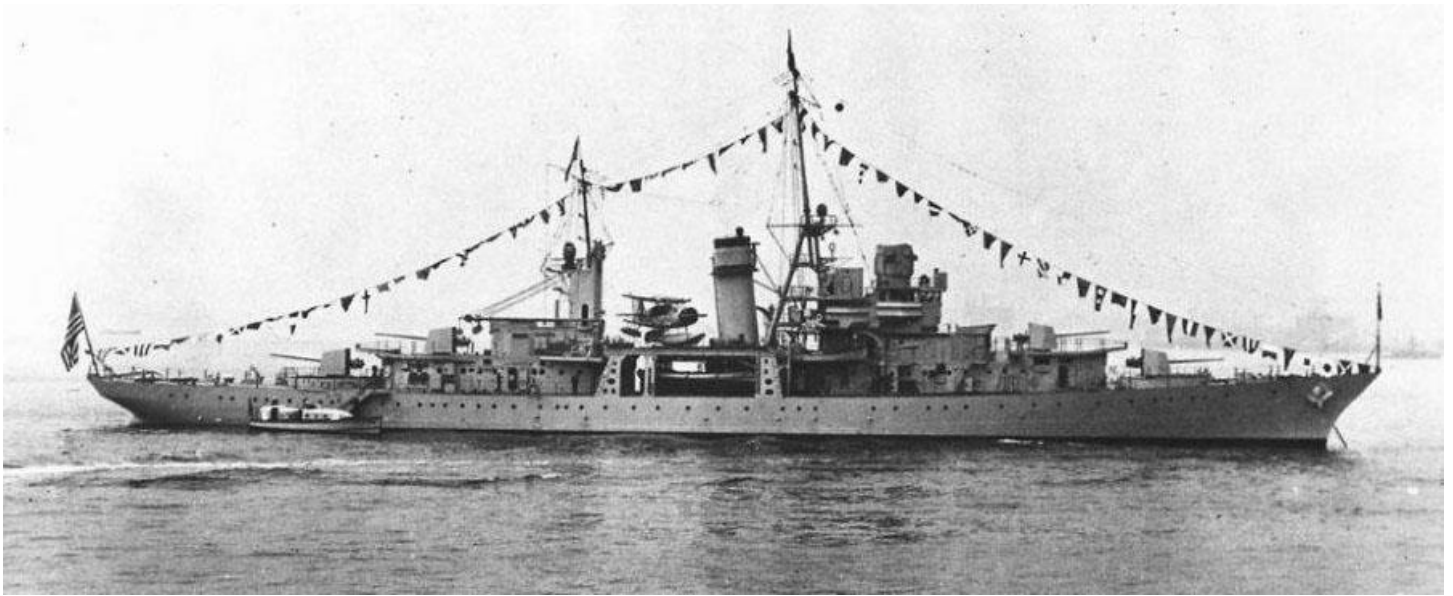
Samuel BEAUMONT, IV, CT patriot, was my fourth great-grandfather. His eldest child, daughter Virginia Frances "Fannie" BEAUMONT wedded William Zebulon "Zeb" GRIFFIN, whose father, Lemuel GRIFFIN, was also a CT patriot. The families had settled along Federal Creek near the family of George Ewing and his son Thomas. Fannie and Zeb were my third great-grandparents. Both the BEAUMONT and the GRIFFIN families settled at Athens County, shortly following 1800 and then departed for Charleston, (W)VA, in 1818. Note that before that Thomas Ewing had worked the Kanawha Salt Works for several years earning money to pay his father's debts as well as tuition for Ohio University where he graduated in

*In order to secure funds for a college education, Thomas obtained employment in the Kanawha salt works, where he sometimes labored as long as twenty hours a day. Later, he was to become an operator and substantial owner of salt works in the Chauncey area. In the course of two or three years he saved enough from his scanty earnings to free his father's farm of debt and with the meager surplus enrolled, in 1809, in Ohio University. After his funds were exhausted, he returned to the salt works to save more money. He later returned to the University and became its first graduate in 1815 (NB: there was a 2<sup>nd</sup> graduate as well). It was the first B.A. degree ever granted by any college or university in the Northwest Territory. <http://www.sandcastles.net/lifeTE.htm>*

Frances has shared with me the following wonderful story of how she obtained her father's US Naval Academy Ceremonial sword a few years ago, and gave permission to post this in our newsletter.



**USS Erie (PG-50)** was the lead ship in a class of two United States Navy patrol gunboats. Launched and commissioned in 1936, she operated in the Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea until torpedoed and fatally damaged by a German submarine in 1942 near the island of Curacao (former Dutch colony) in the southern Caribbean. The explosion and fire killed 7 crew members and wounded a further 11 out of a full crew of 230. Credit: Wikipedia. Unfortunately, the father of Frances was among the fatalities.



## **Ned James Wentz**

Lieutenant US Navy (circa 1940)

b. 12 JAN 1910. Haigler, Dundy Co., NE

d. 12 NOV 1942. at sea – coast of Curacao Id

*USS ERIE (PG-50)*

m. 11 NOV 1934, Goody, Pike Co., KY

Elizabeth Frances SIMMS

b. 24 JUL 1914, Charleston, Kanawha Co., WV

d. 19 SEP 1994, Jacksonville, Duval Co., FL

interred at: Sunset Memorial Cemetery,

South Charleston, Kanawha Co., WV

## **U.S. Navy sword returned to owner's daughter 70 years after his death (Wentz '33)**

SOURCE: Tallahassee Democrat; Written by Gerald Ensley, Democrat senior writer, 29Apr13

Frances Wentz Taber said she's heard of people returning wedding rings many years after they were lost. But the Tallahassee resident said she never heard of anyone returning a sword.

Until two weeks ago, when a businessman from Grand Cayman mailed her the military sword that belonged to her father, U.S. Navy Lt. Ned James Wentz — who died at sea 70 years ago.

The sword was salvaged in 1942 from the wreckage of her father's ship, the *USS Erie*, shortly after the ship was sunk by a German submarine near Venezuela during World War II. The salvage diver who found the sword, and later his son, spent decades trying to find Wentz' survivors — before succeeding April 8 when the sword arrived at Taber's Tallahassee home. "I had chill bumps," Taber said. "It was as if my father said, 'I want to give you one more thing of mine.'"

Taber, 72, was only two years old when her father died; her mother died in 1994. Born at a Navy base in the Panama Canal Zone, she was raised in West Virginia and Jacksonville. Before she received the sword, mementoes of her father consisted of a cache of letters, a couple photos and a few of his childhood possessions.

She was married three times, most memorably for 34 years to her third husband, Robert "Bo" Taber, a mining company executive and real estate developer. She had two children, became a real estate broker and spent the last 30 years living in Amelia Island and Virginia.

Two years ago, she and her husband moved to Tallahassee to be close to her two children, son Francis Gibbs, chief of staff for the Florida Department of Transportation, and daughter Elizabeth McAuliffe, director of research for Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida. Last September, her husband, 95, died — an unfortunate fact that nonetheless was key to the return of her father's sword. "I feel my late husband had a major hand in my having this sword today," Taber said.

Taber's father received the sword in 1933 upon graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy. Though midshipmen still receive such swords, they are no longer part of their official dress uniform as they were in Wentz' time. The sword has Wentz' initials at the hilt and his full name inscribed on the shaft.

The sword has rusted into its leather scabbard. Taber is trying to extricate it with daily doses of WD-40. Kent Eldemire, son of the diver who salvaged the sword, said his family purposely never tried to remove the scabbard. "We never repaired it because that's the way my dad found it and we thought that was the way (his family) should get it back," said Eldemire, a developer and tour company owner in George Town, Grand Cayman.

The *USS Erie* was officially a patrol gunboat, though it was the size of a Navy destroyer and had a crew of 180 men. It escorted Navy vessels in the Caribbean and patrolled the Panama Canal Zone.

On Nov. 12, 1942, the *Erie* had just escorted ships to Curaco, a then-Dutch-owned island off the coast of Venezuela, when a German submarine fired a torpedo at the ship. The torpedo tore into the officers' quarters, killing a Filipino dining steward and six U.S. Navy officers — including Wentz. The remainder of the 180-man crew managed to swim to shore. But the torpedo caused the ship to sink, blocking the Curaco harbor. The Navy hired a Jamaican rescue vessel to help salvage and remove the vessel.

The senior salvage diver on the Jamaican ship was Enos Eldemire — whose own father had died at sea just before his birth. Eldemire found Lt. Wentz' sword in the wreckage. Seeing the owner's name inscribed on the sword, Eldemire attempted to return it to the U.S. Navy without success. "It was wartime; I assume there was a certain amount of secrecy being practiced," said Kent Eldemire.

Over the ensuing years, Enos Eldemire made attempts to find Wentz' family and return the sword. He wrote letters to the U.S. Navy, the Naval Academy and other agencies. No one responded. "I never asked him why (he tried to return the sword)," said Kent Eldemire. "But knowing his personality, I'm sure he felt that sword belonged to someone's father and would be a beautiful memento to give back to the family."

In 1977, Enos Eldemire died. With the arrival of the Internet, Kent Eldemire made sporadic attempts to find the Wentz family, calling people he found named Wentz but not finding the sword's owner. Then two months ago, Kent Eldemire had a dream in which he heard the name Ned James Wentz. "I'm not one of those guys who (believes in) dreams. I can't answer why that name was in my mind," Eldemire said. "But after the dream, I tried again (on the Internet)."

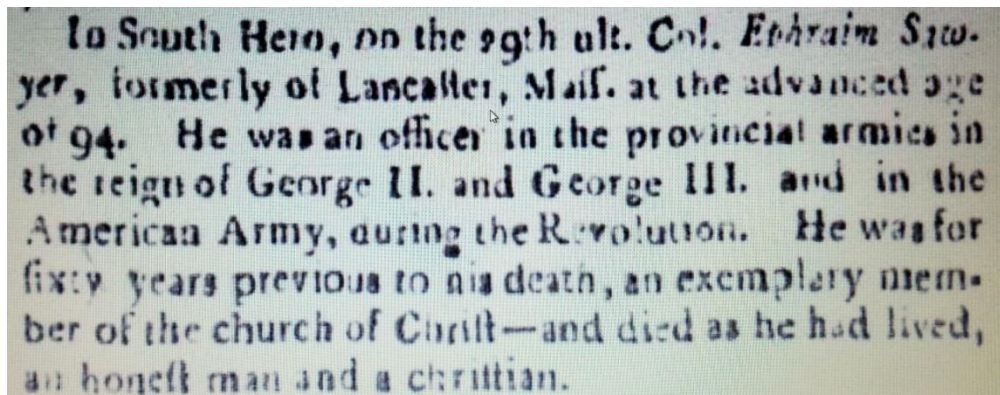
This time, Eldemire came across an obituary of Robert "Bo" Taber, who had died in Tallahassee in September. The obit included the full name of Taber's widow, Frances Wentz Taber. Eldemire called Beggs Funeral Home in Tallahassee and explained the story of the sword and asked the funeral home to contact Frances Taber. She looked up Eldemire on the Internet, found he was a successful businessman about her age, and decided to contact him.

"I told him, 'I was not aware of the sword, but everything else you tell me (about the *USS Erie*) is completely accurate,' " Taber said. "I didn't figure it was a hoax. Nobody could dream this up." Within days, Eldemire shipped the tube containing the sword to Taber. "Now that it's back in its rightful ownership, we're just over the moon," Eldemire said. "Things like this don't happen in life."

**PS:** Frances told me that she and Kent Eldemire have developed a phenomenal long-distance friendship; the son of the salvage director, who discovered and preserved her father's sword, from 1942. Kent Eldemire is now eighty years old, an immensely successful businessman in both Grand Cayman (his birth home) and Queensland, Australia, has wife and four grown children. He splits his time – three months at a time – between the two locales. This is, now, a three-year friendship!

## Major genealogical discovery by Scott M Moody, Harvard Class of 1971 AB Biology

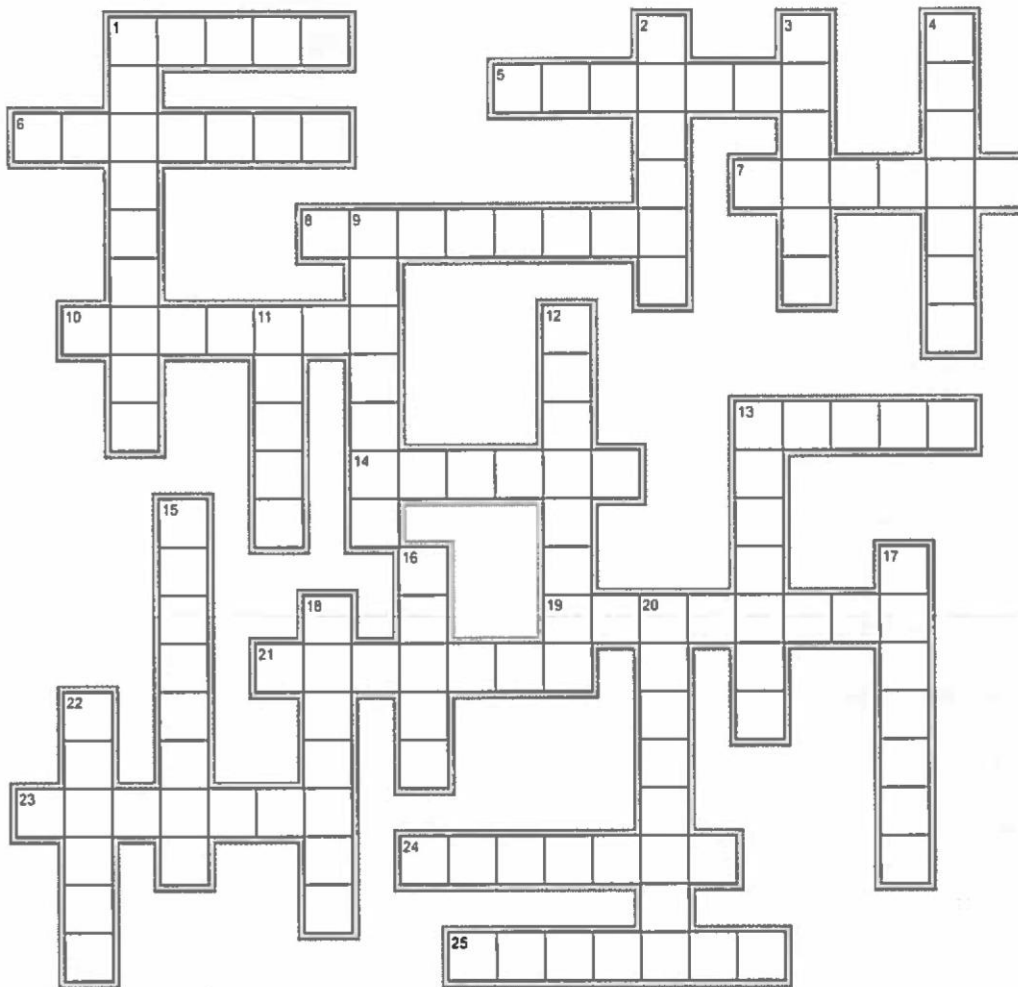
The **Ohio College** (later university) was founded in 1804 but didn't matriculate students until 1809. The president was the only instructor, the **Rev. Jacob Lindley**, a graduate of Princeton College in New Jersey. In 1812, **Artemas (Artimus) Sawyer**, a 1798 graduate of Harvard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, was added as a second teacher. He also practiced law and was **Prosecutor** for the combined Washington/Athens County for the terms 1812-1813 and 1815-1816. Unfortunately his term was cut short when he was thrown from his horse and died in 1815. Therefore, he was the instructor of **Thomas Ewing**, one of the first two graduates of Ohio College, as well as his legal mentor as T Ewing was the country prosecutor 1817-1820.



One of my many revolutionary war patriots was **Colonel Doctor Ephraim Sawyer** (5great grandfather from my maternal grandmother's lineage) from Lancaster Mass. Artemas was his 2<sup>nd</sup> cousin thus my relative; cool!

# Ewing SAR Chapter Jan 2017 Newsletter

Scott M Moody



EclipseCrossword.com

## Word bank

ARTEMAS BEAUMONT BOBEVANS COLONEL CURACO ELDEMIRE ENSLEY EPHRAIM  
EWING FEDERAL FLAGS FRANCES GRIFFIN GRUESER KANAWHA LACKEY LINDLEY  
NEBRASKA NEDJAMES PANAMA PATRIOT SALTWORKS SAMPLER SAWYER SWORD  
WENTZ WREATHS

## Across

1. Graduates of the US Naval Academy receive this at commencement ceremony
5. River valley in West Virginia that had large salt extraction works
6. Highest ranking officer among Scott Moody's many patriots of the revolutionary war
7. Winner of our flag certificate this year
8. Jamaican diver who found the sword and returned it to daughter Frances 70 years later
10. One of the early families of Athens County, ancestors of Frances Wentz Tabor
13. Family name of one of the first two graduates of Ohio College
14. Writer for the Tallahassee Democrat newspaper
19. Ned James Wentz was born in this state
21. First name for Mrs nee Wentz Taber
23. Second professor hired by Ohio College Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ Sawyer who taught and mentored Thomas Ewing in law studies.

## Across

24. Frances has documented 15 \_\_\_\_\_ ancestors
25. January chapter presentation by Tony Robinson will discuss ?

## Down

1. First industry established in Athens County other than farming
2. Family name of one of Scott Moody's many rev war patriots
3. Where Frances Wentz was born
4. Name of major creek flowing from Amesville to the Hocking River
9. First president and professor of Ohio University
11. Lackey's house in Guysville was covered with \_\_\_\_\_ last summer
12. Famous Gallia County resident who started a restaurant chain
13. Colonel Sawyer of Lancaster Mass rev war patriot of Scott Moody
15. Lt. Wetz's two given names
16. Naval Officer who died at sea because of a Germann submarine attack
17. Frances still has a \_\_\_\_\_ made in 1812 by her ancestor Amelia Beaumont
18. February meeting presentation by \_\_\_\_\_ will discuss early log buildings of the area
20. Former saltworks in Athens County
22. Harbor where the USS Erie was sunk

## Officers and their contacts for 2016-2017

President,	James Lochary	<a href="mailto:jameshenrylochary1@gmail.com">jameshenrylochary1@gmail.com</a>
1 <sup>ST</sup> Vice-President,	Tom Romine	<a href="mailto:romine1t@gmail.com">romine1t@gmail.com</a>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-President,	Carl Denbow	<a href="mailto:denbow@ohio.edu">denbow@ohio.edu</a>
Treasurer, Newsletter	Scott Moody	<a href="mailto:summonzeus@gmail.com">summonzeus@gmail.com</a>
Secretary,	George Benz	<a href="mailto:GBenz.654@outlook.com">GBenz.654@outlook.com</a>
Registrar, Genealogist	Andrew Chiki	<a href="mailto:andrew.s.chiki@gmail.com">andrew.s.chiki@gmail.com</a>
Webmaster,	Carl Denbow	<a href="mailto:denbow@ohio.edu">denbow@ohio.edu</a>
Historian	James Frost	<a href="mailto:mlf4jaf@aol.com">mlf4jaf@aol.com</a>
Chaplain	Dale Colburn	
Sergeant at Arms	Benz & Moody	
Color Guard	(Tom Romine, Jim Smith, Scott Moody, Andy Chiki)	

**WEBSITE, please visit:** <http://www.sar-ewing.org>~~~~~



