



# GAZETTE FRANÇOISE.

Du Janvier 2005.

*Du BUREAU du PRÉSIDENT,  
from the President's Desk*

Happy New Year! I hope that everyone had a safe and happy holiday.

The February Regimental Meeting is currently scheduled for Saturday, February 26<sup>th</sup> in Berlin, MA. At the meeting will be voting on which events the Regiment will be attending, as well as voting on the leadership of the regiment for the 2005 season. During the meeting, we will also be voting on the Membership Proposal, which was included in last month's newsletter.

We will continue holding a drill on the second Saturday of every month. We will also be holding a distaff gathering at the same time and location. Both are currently scheduled to be held at the Stow Town Hall and will be from 10:30am – 12:00pm. In addition, we will be holding a work party at Bill Rose's house on the Second Tuesday of the month. I look forward to seeing to you all at the upcoming drills, work parties, meetings and through out the entire year.

*Your Humble Servant,  
Dana Rock, Président Régiment de SaintOnge*

*Le RAPPORT du CAPITAINE,  
Captain's Report*

Framingham on the Sudbury

Happy Holidays, Joyeux Noël, and Happy New Year! Welcome to 2005 and it looks to be a great year.

We've had a pretty quiet December with just the drill and the work party. Thanks to Dave Walrath for securing the Stow Town Hall for us for the winter months for our drills and Regimental gatherings. We'll try to have not only drills, but distaff gatherings as well. Stay tuned to the chat list to add ideas to the list of topics or activities.

As stated last month, the Continental Line meeting will be January 22 in Annapolis, Maryland. Dana and I are planning on attending, but if anyone is interested, please let us know. We'll bring back the latest and greatest information on the up and coming events for 2005 and 2006. As stated at the November meeting, we'll be the main show for the July events in Rhode Island. We'll also be talking with the Southern folks to see what is going on for Yorktown.

Next month will be the annual meeting in Berlin at the Community Center near Frank and Rosemary's place. The meeting will be February 26 from 10 to 12. This will be our voting meeting for events, staff, and officers. We'll try to stay as close to the allotted time as possible, but do plan for the event to run slightly over in time. We will be voting on the membership proposal as well, so take some time to read the proposal through. Many thanks to the Board of Directors for coming up with the proposal that is under consideration.

Again, thanks for a great year and looking forward to the next and see you all at the next drill/gathering!

*Pour le Roi et le Régiment,  
Steven*



*ÉVÉNEMENTS PROCHAINS,  
Upcoming Events*

*DRILL & DISTAFF GATHERING,  
Saturday, January 8. ~ Arrival :* Drill & distaff gathering will begin at 10:30am. It will be only 90 minutes long so please try to arrive on time. **Directions :** We'll be at the Old Town Hall in Stow, MA – many thanks to Dave Walrath for securing the location. Old Town Hall is on Route 117 in Stow, one block west of the intersection of Routes 117 & 62. There is limited parking on the street; additional parking is available at

the "new" Town Hall directly across the street. From the East: Take Rt. 117(W) to Rt. 62 (Stow Ctr.); Old Town Hall is on the right, one block west of the Rt. 117/62 intersection. From the West: Take I-495 to Rt. 117 (E) - Old Town Hall is about 8 miles on your left, just before the Rt. 62 intersection. From the South: Take Rt. 62(E) to Route 117; turn right and it will be one block on your right. From the North, take Rt. 2 or Rt. 111 to Rt 62(W); take Rt. 62 to Rt. 117 and turn right for one block. **Details:** A dual purpose meeting time from 10:30 – 12:00 will give every member a reason to go out into the cold on this January Saturday! For the soldats - the French Drill will be worked on during this time, so please remember to bring cartridge box, musket & hat. If the weather looks good, the drill will take place out doors – so keep that in mind when getting dressed... you might want those regimentals if the weather is chilly enough! For the distaff members of the regiment – we'll be meeting indoors for another gathering. This time around we'll be having a 'From the Neck Up' vanity session as we poke, prod and preen before the mirrors! Plan on bringing accessories for hair and dress (such as jewelry, flowers, caps & kerchiefs) and get and give advice about how best to wear these accessories. Also feel free to bring gowns and other clothing to compare and contrast different combinations. Several dressmaker dummies will be on hand to save ourselves from getting dressed and undressed all morning! This is a great chance to get to know your fellow distaff members a bit better and to ask questions and share ideas about projects and upcoming events. Coffee & tea will be available for all – hope to see you there! If the weather is nasty – call Steven at 508.877.9648 for any change or cancellation info.

*REGIMENTAL WORKPARTY, Tuesday, January 11.* ~ **Arrival:** Doors open at 7pm. Folks are invited to stay until 9pm. **Directions:** Bill & Cori Rose will be opening their home to us for the evening. Their address is 36 Rocky Dundee Road in Bolton and the phone number is 978.779.5488. (*Editor's note: These directions are my best recollection on how to get to Bill's – if you haven't been there before, please email the list to verify the directions*) The best route to Bill's house is from Route 495. From Route 495, take Exit 27 (Route 117) and head west on Route 117 into Bolton. In Bolton center, at the blinking light, take a left onto Watoquodoc Road. You will pass Nashoba Valley Winery and Orchards on your left. Take your next left onto Old Bay Road – it's a sharp turn and easy to miss. Follow Old Bay Road to the end and take a right. You will pass Rocky Dundee Farm (or something with a similar name) and the road will end a bit further ahead at a dead end/dirt path. Take a left turn immediately before the dead end. Follow the road around the island and continue straight on the far side. Bill's house is the large

colonial on a slight rise - #36. **Details:** Bill Rose is generously offering his home for a series of winter workparties over the coming months. They will be held on the second Tuesday of each month, from approximately 7pm to 9pm – any changes will be published to the email list and in upcoming newsletters. This month, Bill has suggested the following projects to work on: Hats and/or French Musket Slings. For those that aren't in need of either, Bill has also offered to conduct a brief lesson on constructing 17<sup>th</sup>-Early 18<sup>th</sup> century Six Board Chests. It's a great chance to get a bit accomplished and enjoy the company of fellow members, as well as get to know new friends! Hope to see many people there – call Bill, Steven or Dana with questions.

*REGIMENTAL WORKPARTY, Tuesday, February 8.* ~ **Arrival:** Doors open at 7pm. Folks are invited to stay until 9pm. **Directions:** See January 11 Workparty directions. **Details:** Bill Rose is generously offering his home for a series of winter workparties over the coming months. They will be held on the second Tuesday of each month, from approximately 7pm to 9pm – any changes will be published to the email list and in upcoming newsletters. Bring whatever project you are currently working on – cartridge boxes, gaiters, hats, musket repairs, leatherwork or sewing – whatever could use a few more hours of work! Projects that will be given special attention will be listed in the February newsletter – call Bill, Steven or Dana with questions or suggestions.

*DRILL & DISTAFF GATHERING, Saturday, February 12.* ~ **Arrival:** Drill & distaff gathering will begin at 10:30am. It will be only 90 minutes long so please try to arrive on time. **Directions:** See January 8 Drill directions. **Details:** A dual purpose meeting time from 10:30 – 12:00 will give every member a reason to go out into the cold on this January Saturday! For the soldats - the French Drill will be worked on during this time, so please remember to bring cartridge box, musket & hat. For the distaff members of the regiment – we'll be meeting indoors for another gathering. Topics for discussion are still undecided – so send a message to the list if you have any ideas! Coffee & tea will be available for all – hope to see you there! If the weather is nasty – call Steven at 508.877.9648 for any change or cancellation info.





## SAINTONGE GOVERNING BOARD, *The Duties of Each Position*

Duties of Commanding Officer: The Commanding Officer shall be the senior field officer commanding the Regiment at its field events. The Commanding Officer may appoint another person to act temporarily in such capacity, and may appoint such subordinate officers as he shall deem necessary or advisable. .... The Commanding Officer shall designate members of the corporation to serve in the Grenadier, Chasseur, Musique or Fusilier companies, who shall elect the senior noncommissioned officer of each company.

Duties of President: The President shall be the chief executive officer of the corporation and as such shall have charge of the affairs of the corporation subject to the supervision of the Board of Directors. The President or his or her designee shall preside at all meetings at which he or she is present.

Duties of Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be the chief financial officer of the corporation. The Treasurer shall also have such powers and duties as customarily belong to the office of Treasurer ... [those duties include maintaining checking accounts and filing annual tax returns with the IRS and an annual report with the MA Atty. General].

Duties of Clerk: The Clerk shall record all proceedings of the members and directors in a book or books to be kept therefore and shall maintain such records...The Clerk shall also maintain or have custody of the books and records of the corporation relating to membership, participation of members in field events and related matters.

Duties of Safety Officer: The Safety Officer shall administer the safety rules and policies of the corporation, as adopted by the Board of Directors from time to time. Subject to the oversight and approval of the Board of Directors and the President, the Safety Officer may from time to time take other actions determined by such officer to be advisable in order to promote the effectiveness of the corporation's safety rules and policies.

Directors: The directors shall be responsible for the general management and supervision of the business and affairs of the corporation, including without limitation adoption and operation of all guidelines, policies, standards, procedures and rules necessary or advisable in connection with the activities of the corporation or

otherwise contemplated by these bylaws, except to the extent specifically reserved to the members by Massachusetts law, the Articles of Organization or these bylaws.

*As determined by the Nominations Committee, with the input from individual members of the regiment, the Ballot for the 2005 Saintonge Election appears at the end of the newsletter. If you will be unable to attend the meeting in February, you may mail your completed ballot to Regiment Saintonge, PO Box 854, Sudbury, MA 01776. Mailed ballots must be **received** prior to February 24, 2005.*



## THE FRENCH AND THE POTATO *A Brief History Lesson*

*The following essay is reprinted from SoupSong.com with kind permission from the author, Pat Solley. The essay was originally published as an edition of an electronic newsletter, listed as e-SoupSong #27: July 1, 2002. Many thanks to Ms. Solley for sharing her work! This essay and many others can be found on her very entertaining and informative website: [www.soupsong.com](http://www.soupsong.com)*

### **18th century P.O.W. Antoine Parmentier Saves France with Potato Soup**

ONCE UPON A TIME, a young French *apothicaire sous-aide* joined the army of Louis XV to battle Frederick II's Prussians in Westphalia. In the course of this Seven Years War (1756-1763), he was wounded; he was taken prisoner 5 times; and, as a prisoner of war, he was given 3 squares a day...of potatoes.

You know, *potatoes*--that New World vegetable, related to deadly nightshade, that every good Frenchman knew caused leprosy. Or was poisonous. Or was food for pigs. Or was just plain awful: in the words of Legrand d'Aussy, "The pasty taste, the natural insipidity, the unhealthy quality of this food, which is flatulent and indigestible, has caused it to be rejected from refined households...."

This was mid 18th century France, half rooted in superstition and autocratic imperative, half "enlightened"; addicted to bread; constantly at war; a ferment of revolutionary ideas and scientific inquiries. And Antoine-Augustin Parmentier--for that was the apothecary's name--was a man of his times...and then some.

Born in Picardy, on the Somme River at Mondidier, he was orphaned at an early age. Too poor for school, he was apprenticed at 18 to a pharmacy in Paris, hence to the army and the battlefields of Germany. There, on an all-potato P.O.W. diet, he passed his days examining potato plantings in Hanover, thinking about *la guerre*, about *la vie*, and about the chemistry of food.

At war's end, he returned to Paris with ambition on his mind. Off duty, it was study, study, study, until he finally secured the plum post of "Apothecary" at *L'Hôtel des Invalides*, the King's showcase for old soldiers and military honors. But how to move ahead from there?

Fate took a hand. France's wheat crop failed, and bread--the French staff of life, the very soul of its cuisine--disappeared from *boulangerie* shelves. There was panic in the streets, prompting *l'Académie de Besançon* in 1769 to offer a prize for the best study of "food substances capable of reducing the calamities of famine." Parmentier, who had never stopped his quest into the chemistry of food nor forgotten his belly full of potatoes in Germany, entered the competition. Three years later, *Examen Chymique des Pommes de terre* swept the gold...and brought him to the attention of Buffon, Voltaire, and, yes, Louis XVI, newly ascended to the throne with his madcap wife Marie Antoinette.

It wasn't until the next famine in 1785, though, that France unconditionally surrendered to his potatoes.

How'd he do it? It was a well conducted campaign.

First he breached the royal ramparts. Would His Majesty have the kindness to observe the beauty of flowering potatoes? Louis XVI reputedly popped one in his buttonhole while Marie Antoinette gaily secured a bouquet of them in her bosom.

Then he sent artillery rounds of potatoes into genteel society, staging elaborate "potato theme" dinners for the movers and shakers of the day--including, apparently, America's rakish new diplomat, Ben Franklin. These extraordinary affairs featured potato soup, potato entree, potato entremets, potato salad, potato bread, potato cake, and potato cookies, all topped off with a potato *digestif*. Imagine.

Next he deployed a Trojan Potato to break the resistance of the peasantry. Louis XVI gave him 2 hectares of military land near Paris, at *la plaine des Sablons à Neuilly*, to grow potatoes. Patrolled by day by Royal soldiers, the plot was left unguarded at night, irresistibly drawing the locals who stealthily harvested the apparently forbidden fruit to savor over a home fire.

Above all, big-hearted guy that he was, Parmentier launched a fleet of potato soup kitchens in Paris, deploying bowls of rich, steaming potato soup into the hands of the starving masses. Louis XVI was delighted: "France will thank you some day," he said, "for having found bread for the poor."

What could top this? Surely end of story. *Mais non*. Parmentier had many more potatoes in his pockets. And in 4 short years, when all hell broke loose, Parmentier was there with them in hand.

That darling of the Royals was on the spot when Parisian mobs broke into *l'Hôtel des Invalides* to drag its arms and cannon off for the 1789 Bastille assault...and in no time his treatise on "Growing and Cooking Potatoes" was for sale at all the best Republican bookshops. He was there when Parisians cried "*La Liberté--et les Patatas*" in the streets. He was there, after Louis and Marie's heads had rolled, when the Committee of Public Safety planted seed potatoes in the ornamental gardens of the Tuileries Palace. And, being French, he was likely growling, "*Mon Dieu*, you go too far!" when the Paris Commune blessed potatoes as "Revolutionary food" and made their consumption compulsory.

If Major Parmentier of the Royal Army had saved France with potato soup, so had Citizen Parmentier. And Napoleon was appreciative. In no time it was Parmentier, Health Advisor...then Parmentier, Member of the Academy of Science...then Parmentier, Pharmacist of the Armies...then Parmentier, Inspector-General of the National Health Service. Napoleon had no sooner created the fabled *Legion d'Honneur* in 1802 than he pinned one on Parmentier's breast.

An extraordinary life at an extraordinary time. Parmentier died happy and old in 1813, just months after Napoleon's disastrous retreat from Moscow. What more could a man ask than to rise out of poverty through the engines of education and science...to consort with Kings...to survive the Revolution and be honored by an Emperor? Okay, maybe in his heart of hearts he always wanted to be a star. In a sense, he came close. Interred at Pere Lachaise cemetery, Division 39, place 56, he's just a short walk away from the bones of rock star Jim Morrison.



*Parmentier's Grave*

Apothecary, Scientist, Reformer, Hygienist, Humanist, and Agriculturist, Parmentier lives on in the hearts, minds, and stomachs of his countrymen...every time they dip into a fragrant bowl of *Potage Parmentier*.

## POTAGE PARMENTIER

- 3 cups leeks, white and tender green parts, sliced (although not original to the recipe, the soup is enriched by sautéing the leeks in 3 Tablespoons of butter as a first step)
- 4 cups potatoes, peeled and chopped
- 8 cups water (chicken stock is not original, but is awfully good)
- 1 Tablespoon salt
- 6 Tablespoons heavy cream
- Garnish: chopped parsley or chives

In a Dutch oven, simmer the potatoes, leeks, and salt in the water until all are very tender--about 50 minutes. Puree the mixture, then correct seasoning. When ready to serve, stir in the cream, ladle into bowls or a tureen, and decorate with herbs.

\* \* \*

*Pardon, mesdames et messieurs*, I just can't bring myself to stop here. Not now, not in the heat of this dogday summer afternoon in Washington, DC, when the entire overheated city and political process could use the cooling elixir of *vichyssoise*.

Brilliant French chef Louis Diat--who created *crème vichyssoise glacée* in New York City of all places--ate hot potato soup for breakfast every day of his childhood in the tiny village of *Bourbonnais* Montmarault. Oh, how he loved it. In fact, the first dish he ever cooked on his own, at the age of 8, was leek and potato soup. Parmentier would have been so proud.

By 1900, Diat had apprenticed in Moulins, then--following in Parmentier's footsteps--was off to Paris to learn the regal craft of *haute cuisine*...and he practiced these arts at the Ritz Hotels in Paris and London. But then, revolution! César Ritz guillotined the old regime of fantastically elaborate dishes and extravagant feasts. He sent Chef Diat to New York to raise the revolutionary standard of exquisite flavor, texture, and simple excellence at the spanking new Ritz-Carlton. Death to exotic affectation! And so, ultimately, *vichyssoise* was born. Diat says, "I remembered how *mamam* used to cool our breakfast soup, on a warm morning, by adding cold milk to it. A cup of cream, an extra straining, and a sprinkle of chives, *et voila*, I had my new soup. I named my version of *mamam*'s soup after Vichy, the famous spa located not 20 miles from our *Bourbonnaise* home, as a tribute to the fine cooking of the region."

## VICHYSOISSE

- 3 large leeks, white parts only, washed well and sliced thinly
- 2 Tablespoons butter
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and sliced thinly

- 3 cups chicken stock
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk
- 1/4 teaspoon white pepper
- 1 cup whipping cream
- Garnish: chopped chives

Melt butter in a large saucepan over low heat, then stir in the leeks and saute at a very low temperature, stirring occasionally, until they are golden. Add the stock, potatoes, and salt--bring to a simmer, then cover and simmer for 40 minutes. Puree, then press through a sieve to get a very fine texture (twice, to please Diat). Return to the saucepan, add the milk and pepper, and bring to a simmer. Remove from heat, stir in the cream, adjust for seasoning (cold soups should be slightly overseasoned), and chill overnight.

When ready to serve, ladle into serving cups and sprinkle with chopped fresh chives. Chef Diat recommends that you serve it in an elegant 2-handled consommé cup...but nested glass bowls, with shaved ice in the bottom cup, are just adorable.

Best regards...and *bon appetit!*  
Pat Solley

\* \* \*

*Resources:* The Catholic Encyclopedia; *Richard Cobb's* Voices of the French Revolution; *Louis Diat's* Gourmet's Basic French Cookbook; *W. Scott Haine's* The History of France; *Victor Hugo's* Les Miserables; Larousse Gastronomique; *William H. McNeill's* "How the Potato Changed the World"; *Antoine Augustin Parmentier's* Les pommes de terre; "Portraits de médecins"; *Waverly Root's* Food; *Scribner's* Dictionary of Scientific Biography; and an assortment of excellent news articles and websites.



## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

☛ BAR DUES ARE DUE – For Saintonge members who also hold membership with the Brigade of the American Revolution (BAR), 2005 membership dues will be collected at the Saintonge regimental meeting in February. Dues are \$25 for the year and include subscriptions to their bi-monthly newsletter and quarterly research journal. A membership also permits participation in BAR events throughout the year. Checks should be made payable to Regiment Saintonge. If you can't attend the meeting, please mail your dues to Regiment Saintonge, PO Box 854, Sudbury, MA 01776. If you are interested in becoming a new member with the BAR, you can download a membership form at [www.brigade.org](http://www.brigade.org) or forms will be available at the meeting in February.



*TWELFTH NIGHT BALL*  
*A Night of Dancing & Merriment*

***The Sudbury Companie of  
Militia and Minute***

*Cordially invites you and your guests to our*

***Twelfth Night Ball***

***At the Wayside Inn, Sudbury, Mass<sup>ts</sup>  
Friday, January 14th at 8:00 p.m.***



*Musick and Contra Dance calling  
by Yankee Ingenuity*

***Be our King and Queen by finding the magic bean  
hidden in the cake ! Join us in the Traditional  
Flag Changing Ceremony. Toast the passing  
Winter Solstice with Meeting House Punch!***

***\$36.00 per couple/ \$18.00  
per person at the door***

***\$32.00 per couple/ \$16.00  
per person if you prepay before  
January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005 by sending cheque to:***

***Sudbury Companie of Militia & Minute  
P.O. Box 187  
Sudbury, MA 01776***

***Reservations for dinner at the Inn may be made by  
calling (978) 443.1776***

*If you have any questions,  
please contact Col. Les Malecki at  
(508) 393.9297 or [lmalecki@charter.net](mailto:lmalecki@charter.net)*



*SAINTONGE HISTORY*  
*A Short History Quiz*

- 1) What is the name of the French city that the Régiment de Saintonge departed from in 1780, headed for America?
- 2) During the American campaign, who is the commander of the Régiment de Saintonge?
- 3) What month and year did the Régiment de Saintonge depart the United States?
- 4) The Americans' victory at what battle helped Benjamin Franklin negotiate a Treaty of Alliance between with France?
- 5) Where did the Régiment de Saintonge travel to after leaving America?
- 6) What is the name of the ship that brought the Régiment de Saintonge from France to America?
- 7) On the march down to Yorktown, which brigade did the Régiment de Saintonge become part of and which regiments made up the rest of that brigade?
- 8) During the American campaign, what location, other than Yorktown, did the Régiment de Saintonge engage in an armed conflict?
- 9) All French troops were issued white cockades for their hats. What color cockade was issued to the troops destined for America as a sign of France's allegiance?
- 10) During the period of the American War for Independence, France was allied with a second country. What country was it and what color cockades were used to signify that alliance?



*A small prize will be given to anyone who mails the correct answers to Regiment Saintonge, PO Box 854, Sudbury, MA 01776. Winners will be announced at the annual meeting on February 26. Look for the answers to these questions and the names of the winners in next month's newsletter. Good luck!*



*EXERCICES et RENDEVOUS,  
Drills & Distaff Gatherings*

*Le PROGRAMME,  
the schedule for 2005*

*The events listed below are the unofficial schedule for 2005 – the official schedule will be printed after it has been approved at the annual meeting.*

Date	Unit	Event
Jan 8	All	<b>French Drill &amp; Distaff Gathering (10:30-12)</b> Old Town Hall, Stow, MA
Feb 12	All	<b>French Drill &amp; Distaff Gathering (10:30-12)</b> Old Town Hall, Stow, MA
Mar 12	All	<b>French Drill &amp; Distaff Gathering (10:30-12)</b> Old Town Hall, Stow, MA
Apr 10	All	<b>French Drill &amp; Distaff Gathering (TBA)</b> TBA
May 8	All	<b>French Drill &amp; Distaff Gathering (TBA)</b> TBA

Date	Unit	Event
Jan 11	All	<b>Work Party at the Rose's (7-9)</b> Bolton, MA
Feb 8	All	<b>Work Party at the Rose's (7-9)</b> Bolton, MA
Feb 26	All	<b>Regimental Annual Meeting (10-12)</b> Berlin, MA
Mar 8	All	<b>Work Party at the Rose's (7-9)</b> Bolton, MA



*85ème Régiment de Saintonge  
2005 Governing Board  
Ballot*

**President (Choose 1)**

- Dana Rock
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Commanding Officer (Choose 1)**

- Steven Taskovics
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Treasurer (Choose 1)**

- Abe Fisher
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Clerk (Choose 1)**

- Kevin Collins
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Safety Officer (Choose 1)**

- Bill Rose
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Board of Directors (Choose 5)**

- Adam Carriere
- Sue Felshin
- Ellie Hutchinson
- Les Malecki
- Frank Marini
- Other \_\_\_\_\_





*Saving the Best for Last . . . Saintonge Distaff Brings Up the Rear  
November 2004 – Plymouth, Massachusetts*

*85ème Régiment de Saintonge  
Post Office Box 854  
Sudbury, MA 01776*