



# THE BURNING ISSUES



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## From the Chair

Greetings!

1779 has begun, with Mabee already under our belt! After Market Fair at Johnson Hall, we move on to German Flatts. The Tryon Minute Company has secured an area for off-site tacticals, so don't stay away if that's your interest.

A continuing reminder to all... Please do your best to support BVMA events. It is important to the organization, and to the sites that host us. We try hard to provide for the needs and interests of all our participants. Which includes working with the limits of the site. The number of participants is often less important than the experience available to them at these events... and we strive to create the best experience possible.... not just for the combatants, but for all who attend. The biggest event, with the biggest war game, is not often the most enjoyable. Many of us who belong to other umbrellas can attest to that.

We are different than some of the other groups that promote Rev War living history. We have a geographic focus ... specifically the three valley region (Mohawk, Hudson, and Schoharie) and the people that fought, suffered and died in this area in support of what they believed in, whether

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# 1779

## "The Sullivan-Clinton Campaign"

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## Behind the Lines

As expected, this year is turning out to be a much quieter year than last — A good opportunity to come up with some new ideas for programs. We have several events coming up that we can try our hand at new (or tried and true) programs. So far, all of the site managers and event coordinators that I have come across are very supportive to Behind the Lines programming. After all, our programming is part of the draw!

Do you have something you'd like to try, but don't want to go it alone? There are a lot of folks in Behind the Lines that would be willing to help, if not to coordinate, a program you might come up with. So step forward and tell us your ideas. Next up are German Flatts and Old Fort Johnson Colonial Days. Both sites are "civilian-friendly", and would welcome anything that we can add to the program - just be sure to let the event coordinators know what you'd like to do.

Next year (1780), promises to be a very busy year. We'll get together soon, perhaps sometime in August, and start some of the planning. Several Behind the Lines representatives are on the 1780 planning committee, so we are able to get in on the ground floor for these events. So start thinking now of programs you'd like to do or to see done. And watch the website or the list for an announcement of the next meeting.

— Kristin Gitler  
Behind the Lines Delegate

**From the Chair** (*cont'd*)

that was independence or support of the Crown.

We seem to have lost support from some units, primarily those not part of our geographic base, and while that is somewhat troubling, it does not affect our mission. I suggest we may want to look at our by-laws, however, to simplify the procedure for removing from our rolls groups that have expressed no interest in continuing with us. I don't think it's appropriate to continue membership status for units who themselves have opted out. Membership should mean something.

We have camp safety guidelines. I expect everyone to be familiar with them and lend a hand enforcing them. This is not a thread-counting issue; it affects the health and welfare of all of us. We will also have a provost system in place, so please cooperate with these folks.

No one wants to stop anybody from having a good time at our events, far from it! But, in having a good time we need to be aware that our good time might be an annoyance to someone else, so, lets use a little common sense.

On to German Flatts!  
J. Osinski  
Chairman

**Marriage Banns: an Announcement!**

**Both long-time BVMA members,  
we wish them all best for their future together!**

**Banns of Marriage**

(Lat. *bannum*, pl. *bann-a,-i* from an Old English verb, *bannan*, to summon).

— In general the ecclesiastical announcement of the names of persons contemplating marriage. Its object is to discover any impediments to a proposed marriage; incidentally, it makes known to all duly interested in the latter the fact of its near celebration.

From the beginning of Christian society the marriage of its members was looked on as a public religious act, subject to ecclesiastical control. The obligation of making known to the bishop all proposed marriages dates as far back as the beginning of the second century and ceased only when, in the fifth and succeeding centuries, owing to the development of the parochial system, it became the duty of the parish priest to prevent invalid or illicit marriages, in which duty he could and did avail himself of the aid of reputable parishoners. The publication in the church of the names of persons intending marriage seems to have originated in France about the end of the twelfth century; it was already a custom of the Gallican Church in 1215, when Innocent III mentions it in a letter to the Bishop of Beauvais.

Source: Shahan, Thomas J., *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume II*, New York, Robert Appleton Company, 1907

## The Officers Marquee, or Some Advice to Young Officers



Your recent publication of a certain Privates Corner, has impressed me that perhaps this disquiet in the ranks, whether provincial or not, may weigh weary on the younger officers. And so, this epistle seeks to offer some advice to young officers.

First, see certain unruly privates like the rug in your marquee. While they are often soiled, they are most serviceable when taken out and beaten regularly. A rambunctious colt requires training and discipline, this is where your stable-boys, or NCOs, come in. They should not spare or be spared the lash either. Simms in his *Military Medley* recommends a good piece of ash or hickory such as a cricket bat, along with a downward motion. I prefer a nice pole of willow myself and an underhand motion. It gives a nice crackling which impresses the men, and its light-weightiness does not discourage vigorousness, Furthermore, why waste damaging a good cricket bat?

Secondly, a private should always be aware of his station in life, and address his meager concerns through his NCO. The concerns of the private rabble are pitiful, and of little concern to the Commissioned officer. Treat them as you would such common gnats buzzing about.

Thirdly, should such an uppity private forget the afore-mentioned, and address you directly, the officer's best weapon in his arsenal, is a well-scented handkerchief or pomander. For not only is your moral sensibility offended by this discourtesy, your olfactory senses will likely be more offended. Lavender, peppermint, and sandalwood are most pleasant. However, during the late French Wars, I dare say oil of camphor may be needed when dealing with a Provincial, to block such offensiveness.

I trust this lesson in Military Department will be beneficial to younger Officers.

I am & remain,  
Dean B Foppingfarce,  
Leftenant



## Stupid Questions from a Twisted Tinker

Questions we've all heard and the answers we'd like to use just once... A decidedly irreverent and humorous look at a hobby that we all hold so dear.

Q. What does a highlander wear under his kilt?

A. I don't know, they get really annoyed if you try to flip them over to check.

Q. It never fails, you're sitting around the camp fire at lunchtime and you get, "Hey Mister, whatcha eatin'?"

A. Kindersnitzel, and if you're having krout with that, it'd be kinderbraten.

Q. Did you really sleep in your tent?

A. Yes, and I've got the hat hair and back ache to prove it.

Q. Are you really going to eat that?

A. No, I spent \$40 bucks and 3 hours cooking it just so I could throw it out!

Q. On the battle field, how do you know you're dead?

A. Your heart stops beating and everything goes black.

Q. If it rains, what happens then?

A. You get wet.

Q. What do you do if your clothes get dirty?

A. Wait till it rains.

Q. That's not a real gun, is it?

A. Exactly how fast can you run, and remember to zigzag.

Q. Are you Amish?

A. No, we're part of the militant wing of the Mennonites.

I hope this provides a good natured jab at all of the really trying questions we all had to endure through out the years. Thanks to all who provided questions or answers.

YMHS,

Mike Kowalski, "The Twisted Tinker"

### Italians in the American Revolution

Submitted by Louis Coletti

*From the beginning of U.S. history, Italians have supported American independence.*

Three Italian regiments, totaling some 1,500 men, fought for American independence: the Third Piemonte, the 13th Du Perche, and the Royal Italian.

Filippo Mazzei, a Tuscan physician, fought alongside Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry during the American Revolution. Mazzei drew up a plan to capture the British in New York by cutting off their sea escape, and convinced France to help the American colonists financially and militarily in their struggle against British rule. He also inspired the Jeffersonian phrase: "All men are created equal" when he wrote "All men are by nature equally free and independent."

Italian officers in the American Revolution include: Captain Cosimo de Medici of the North Carolina Light Dragoons; Lieutenant James Bracco, 7th Maryland Regiment, killed at the Battle of White Plains; Captain B. Tagliaferro, second in command of the Second Virginia Regiment, a direct subaltern of General George Washington; 2nd Lieutenant Nicola Talliaferro of the 2nd Virginia Regiment; and Colonel Richard Talliaferro, who fell at the Battle of Guilford. Other Italian officers, most from Massachusetts, are on regimental rolls of the Continental Army.

Major John Belli was the Quartermaster General of the U.S. Army from 1792 to 1794. The first settler in Scioto County, Ohio, he lived there until his death in 1809.

Three of the first five warships commissioned by the Continental Congress of the new American government, were named Christopher Columbus, John Cabot and Andrea Doria. Doria was a 16th century navy admiral from Genoa who was still fighting the Barbary pirates in his mid 80s.

Francesco Vigo (1747-1836), is believed the first Italian to become an American citizen. A successful fur trader on the western frontier (today the mid-western states of Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio), Vigo served as a colonel, spy, and financier during the American Revolution. He died a pauper, but in 1876 the U.S. government gave his heirs about \$50,000 to repay them for Vigo's financial support of the Revolutionary War. Along with George Rogers Clark, he helped settle the Northwest territory.

*Source: The National Italian American Foundation*

### Dutch Tea... (cont'd from pg. 7)

the lump", that is, holding the sugar lump in their teeth and drinking the tea around it.

In Ann Grant's *Memoirs of an American Lady* there is a description of teatime in Albany. "Tea here was a perfect regale; accompanied by various sorts of cakes unknown to us, cold pastry, and great quantities of sweetmeats and preserved fruits of various kinds, and plates of hickory and other nuts ready cracked. In all manner of confectionary and pastry these people excelled; and having fruit in great abundance, which costs them nothing, and getting sugar home at an easy rate, in return for their exports to the West Indies, the quantities of these articles used in families, otherwise plain and frugal, was astonishing. Tea was never unaccompanied with some of these petty articles; but for strangers a great display was made."

#### Sources

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Kalm, Peter, *The America of 1750. Peter Kalm's Travels in North America*, edited and translated by Adolph B. Benson, New York, 1937.

Ukers, William H., M.A., *All About Tea, Vol. II*. New York, The Tea and Coffee Trade Journal Company, 1935



*Polychrome Dutch teapot c.1695*

## Folk Music from the Valleys' Rich Ethnic Heritage

Submitted by Kristin Gitler

I'm always looking for information on 18<sup>th</sup> century folk music other than military music, and our Valleys have a broad ethnic heritage from within which to search. The music from the British Isles is fairly easy to research, but it becomes harder when trying to find Dutch or German 18<sup>th</sup> Century folk music. Try looking online for "18<sup>th</sup> Century German Music", and you get lots of great information on classical composers. Then try searching on "German Folk Music" – and if you get anything back in English, you'll have all the beer festival polka music you could wish for! So I'm still searching, and if anyone has any good resources, please share them!

Although I haven't been able to find any German folk songs that I can specifically attribute to our New York Palatines, there is some information available about the Pennsylvania Germans' musical heritage. Here are two very simple songs – the first one, *D'r Guckgu* (The Cuckoo), is a counting song brought over by German immigrants to Pennsylvania & Delaware in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. I'm not sure if it was a children's nonsense song or something adults may have sung. The second one, *Der Jug hot en Loch* (The Jug Has a Hole), follows the pattern of other riddle songs that we see in old English & Celtic songs (for example, the Cherry Tree Carol, Scarborough Fair) – where one party asks of the other an impossible task. I thought it was interesting that this was not just a British Isles tradition.

### D'r Guckgu (The Cuckoo)

The cuckoo has the best of lives;  
He ably supports fourteen wives.  
Guck gu, Guckherdi gu.

The first wife carries the wood;  
The second builds a fire good.  
Guck gu, Guckherdi gu.

The third carries water over the stoop;  
The fourth turns the water into a soup.  
Guck gu, Guckherdi gu.

The fifth sets a table with a dish;  
The sixth places on it a roasted fish.  
Guck gu, Guckherdi gu.

The seventh taps wine and beer;  
The eighth cries out, "Impossible here!"  
Guck gu, Guckherdi gu.

The ninth to a gentleman's house does go;  
The tenth speaks through an open window.  
Guck gu, Guckherdi gu.

The eleventh makes the Cuckoo's bed;  
The twelfth lies in it like she's dead.

The thirteenth in the Cuckoo's arms you see  
"For the fourteenth, God, I thank thee."  
Guck gu, Guckherdi gu.

The cu - ckoo has the best of lives; He ab - ly  
sup - ports four - teen wives. Guck gu, Guckgerdi gu

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**Folk Music from the Valleys** (*cont'd.*)***There's a Hole in My Bucket***

There's a hole in my bucket, dear Henry, dear Henry,  
There's a hole in my bucket, dear Henry, a hole.

Well, why don't you fix it, dear Liza, dear Liza?  
Well, why don't you fix it, dear Liza, well, fix it.

With what shall I fix it, dear Henry, dear Henry,  
With what shall I fix it, dear Henry, with what?

With straw, dear Liza, dear Liza,  
With straw, dear Liza, with straw.

The straw is too long, dear Henry, dear Henry,  
The straw is too long, dear Henry, too long.

Well, cut it, dear Liza, dear Liza,  
Well, cut it, dear Liza, well, cut it.

With what shall I cut it, dear Henry, dear Henry,  
With what shall I cut it, dear Henry, with what?

With a hatchet, dear Liza, dear Liza,  
With a hatchet, dear Liza, a hatchet.

The hatchet's too dull, dear Henry, dear Henry,  
The hatchet's too dull, dear Henry, too dull.

Well, sharpen it, dear Liza, dear Liza,  
Well, sharpen it, dear Liza, well, sharpen it.

With what shall I sharpen it, dear Henry, dear Henry,  
With what shall I sharpen it, dear Henry, with what?

With a stone, dear Liza, dear Liza,  
With a stone, dear Liza, with a stone.

The stone is too dry, dear Henry, dear Henry,  
The stone is too dry, dear Henry, too dry.

Well, wet it, dear Liza, dear Liza,  
Well, wet it, dear Liza, wet it.

With what shall I wet it, dear Henry, dear Henry,  
With what shall I wet it, dear Henry, with what?

Wonn d'r Jug a - ver doch en Loch hot, Lie - ver  
Hein-rich, lie- ver Hein - rich. Wonn d'r Jug a - ver doch en  
Loch hot, Lie - ver Lizz, Ei stopps zu.

Source: Korso, George, editor. *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends*, Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins Press, 1949.

**A Music-related Tidbit...**

**Broadsheets** were commonly folded twice or more to make small pamphlets. These were called **chapbooks**; (cheap books), the dime novels of their day. The popularity of chapbooks reached its height in the eighteenth century. **Chapmen** were the peddlers who traveled between towns selling ballads and chapbooks. They were later sold at stalls in town markets and cities. Hence the name **stall sheets**. (*from www.contemplator.com*)



## Dutch Tea History & Customs

By *Kristin Gitler*

When we think of tea and its associated customs and habits, we usually think of it as a British phenomenon. However, it was the Dutch who first introduced tea into this country, and had formed much trade and social custom around tea almost half a century before it became popular in English social circles. The first tea was transported from Macao to Java in 1606-1607, and in 1610, the Dutch East India Company, formed at the Hague in 1602, imported the first tea into Europe. By 1635 tea had become the fashionable beverage of the Dutch court, and became a regular article of European commerce by 1637 when the Lords Seventeen of the Dutch company wrote, "as tea begins to come into use with some of the people, we expect some jars of Chinese, as well as Japanese tea with each ship".

By 1680, tea-drinking became fashionable throughout the country and well-to-do homes had a special "tea room," while the lower-class citizenry, especially the women, formed tea clubs that met in beer halls. The prevailing infatuation for tea was such as to give scope to all manner of satires by concurrent writers. A specimen of these still survives in a comedy entitled, *De theezieke juffers*, or "The tea-smitten ladies", which was performed at Amsterdam in 1701.

In this period, the tea guests came at two or three o'clock in the afternoon, and were received with much courtesy and state. After greetings, they were seated with their feet on glowing foot-stoves, while the hostess took from little tea-boxes of porcelain and silver filigree different kinds of tea, which she put in small porcelain teapots, provided with silver strainers. She made a ceremony of asking each guest to choose the sort of tea preferred, but generally the choice was referred back to the hostess, who then filled the little cups. For those who preferred to mix their drinks, she infused saffron in a small red pot, which she passed to the guests with a larger cup containing the usual small portion of tea, for the guest to fill up from the Saffron pot. Sugar was used for sweetening from the first, but milk did not make its appearance on the tea tray, which was of porcelain or walnut, until it came as the invention of the French Madame de la Sabliere, in 1680.

Tea was not drunk out of the cup, but out of the saucer, and audible sipping and sniffing, in the expression of gratification, were considered polite rewards to the hostess for "a nice tea." The conversation was confined exclusively to tea and the confectionery or cakes that were served with it. After ten or twenty – some say forty or fifty – cups of tea had been quaffed by each guest, brandy with raisins was brought in and was sipped with sugar. With the brandy came pipes, for both men and women smoked.

The craze for tea parties finally resulted in the ruin of many homes, for the women gadded about and left the housework to servants. Many a resentful husband, finding the wife away and the spinning wheel deserted, went to the tavern. As was to be expected, fierce controversies were engendered; reformers attacked tea, and books were written for and against it.

The tea that was used through this period in Holland was the green tea of China and Japan; in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century it began to be superseded by black tea, which also to some extent displaced coffee as a refreshing morning beverage.

The afternoon tea custom was transplanted to New Amsterdam by the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Tea paraphernalia included teaboard, teapots, "bite and stir" boxes, silver spoons and strainers, and were the pride of Dutch housewives. Milk was not used at first, but sugar and sometimes saffron and peach leaves as flavoring agents were sometimes offered. The guests would either nibble a lump of loaf-sugar or stir powdered sugar into their tea – hence "bite and stir" boxes – these were partitioned in the center; one side for lump sugar, the other for powdered. The ooma, or sifter, might also adorn the table, which was filled with cinnamon and sugar which they could sprinkle on their tea-table treats such as hot puffs, pikelets, hot waffles, or wafers. Pre-Revolutionary New Yorkers bought spring water for making tea from vendors who drove about the streets selling water from the tea-water pumps in the outskirts.

Tea remained a habit of the early Dutch descendants, and in 1749, from the predominately Dutch town of Albany, he wrote that "their breakfast is tea, commonly without milk." Kalm also describes the Albanians as drinking their tea "on

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**From the Publisher**

Well, this issues seemed to be a very ethnic-oriented issue! You may have noticed that half of the articles were written by me... that is most certainly not on purpose, but out of necessity! Where are all of the budding writers out there? Most of you have done a lot of research on one topic or another—why not share that with us? Articles do not have to be long—short tidbits and other pieces are always needed—I always have spaces of various sizes to fill.

I really have a need for articles of a more military interest—I cannot and will not fill that space with my own writing, so those of you who have something that you've researched, please do so. Our next newsletter comes out in September—usually Fort Ticonderoga weekend. So please, dig out your research & send in your articles or other items of interest.

Next year, 1780, there is much to write about—be thinking about what you can contribute to our knowledge of the time. This newsletter is supposed to be YOUR newsletter, so please enjoy it, but contribute to it as well.

— Kristin Gitler, Publisher

**NEXT ISSUE SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

The next issue will be published in September, 2004. Please submit articles, ideas, questions, etc.at any time or by August 31st for the next issue.

— *Kristin*

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**The BVMA Online - [www.bvma.org](http://www.bvma.org)**

Don't forget to check the web site for the latest news and information, always linked from the home page. And if you haven't joined already, don't forget our members-only lists:

BVMA: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bvma/> (Moderator - Dean Barnes)

BTL: [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/btl\\_bvma/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/btl_bvma/) (Moderator - Kate Scott)

I always welcome your ideas and input for the website—it should be your source for information & resources! — *KG, Webmistress*



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