

FROM THE FILES OF THE HISTORIAN



During our recent fundraiser we asked the membership for their ideas about how the association could raise money in addition to annual dues and Willard items sales. Several members wrote in that we should have a website where we could post the newsletter for others to see and then perhaps join up. This suggestion means one of two things. Either we are doing a poor job of advertising or people are not reading the newsletter.

The Willard Family Association has had a Website for many years now. It contains the history of the WFA, provides past newsletters in full, lists the associations officers, items for sale and even has listings of many Willard ancestors going back to Major Simon Willard.

The webmaster is our 4th. Vice President Rodney Willard and the genealogical information is managed by Karen Willard, the WFA Computer Archivist.

If you type in "Willard Family Association" into your Browser it is usually the first listing on the page. Or, just enter the actual web address, <http://www.willardfamilyassn.org/> Come see us on the web for information on the Willard family.

The Willard Family on eBay.

One of my most rewarding experiences after joining the millions of worldwide individuals that view eBay on the internet, was to enter just the name "Willard" Up came all kinds of material bearing the Willard name. The winner hands down are sellers who offer every type of memorabilia on the two movies Willard. However there is also all kinds of material and photographs on the famous boxer Jess Willard, another descendant of Major Simon Willard. There are many items dealing with the old Willard battery

company started by another Major Simon descendant. Memorabilia from the Willard Hotel in Washington D.C. It also appears that there were several other Willard Hotels in the US. Memorabilia from the Emma Willard School in Troy, New York; the Willard Asylum in upper New York State; the great desert painter Stephen Willard from Palm Springs, California and much more.

Every once and awhile a real treasure shows up. A book of sermons by Major Simon's son Rev Samuel Willard of Boston published in 1727 and the first large folio book printed in America; the original deed for Henry Willard's farm in Harvard, Massachusetts; a first edition of the History of Concord, Massachusetts written by Joseph Willard; even copies of the rarest published Willard genealogy, The Willard Hosmer Genealogy by Augustus Willard, founder of the Willard Hotel in Washington, DC. Only 36 copies were printed.

The hardest part is trying to purchase some of these items. A Willard Battery sign can bring as much as \$ 300.00 or even more. An unused ticket to the Willard-Johnson fight in Havana sold for 380.00. How about an original Moon Mullins comic strip by Frank Willard? (Yes, another descendant of Major Simon Willard.)

The famous painting, the Spirit of 76 by Archibald Willard (Actually there were several painted) appears on just about every medium made by man. Prints, reproductions on canvas, on the bottom of plates, key chains, you name it and chances are there is one with the Spirit of 76 on it. Have you ever noticed that most of the items bearing a copy of this famous painting always leave out the young man lying on the ground in front of the men marching.

That is it for this issue of Willard News. I will see you in the spring

Newsletter with more historical information from the "Files of the Historian."

REMEMBERING EMMA RIETZEL

The Willard Family Association of America, Inc. has lost another one of its greatest volunteers. On September 30, 2004 we said goodbye until later, to our beloved Emma Rietzel.

Born in the old Willard Homestead in Wethersfield, Connecticut on September 11, 1912, Emma and her husband Paul lived in a house on a piece of land that was part of Josiah Willard's original homestead in the 1600's.

Emma served with distinction and fortitude on the Executive Board of the Willard Family Association of America, Inc. in a variety of positions, the last being President Emeritus, at the time of her passing. She served as President, Corresponding Secretary, Director, and Editor of the Newsletter and helped wherever necessary. Emma was always available for many, many years of service.

It has been stated by some in her company at the annual family reunion she had fierce pride in her family, she always welcomed everyone she met and she displayed wit and perceptiveness. Emma was a pillar of strength and loyalty to the Willard's and we will miss her among us. Our heartfelt sorrow to her family and friends.

Contributed by Alan Spooner

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

The Board of Directors of the Willard Family Association of America, Inc. want to thank Mrs. Samuel (Lucy) Willard of Atlanta Georgia for her gift of \$ 4000.00 during our fund drive last fall. Her support of the Association is really appreciated.