

THE ORDER OF THE FOUNDERS AND PATRIOTS OF AMERICA – 1896

The Coat of Arms

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“The Order of the Founders and Patriots of America is a unique order, and the only one of its type in the United States. Originally founded at Astor House in New York City on February 24th, 1896. It has societies in fourteen states, and a total membership of around 800. Its objectives are, briefly, to promote patriotism; protect and preserve documents and articles associated with United States history; and to collect and preserve records relating to the first colonists of the United States, their ancestors and descendants.

The membership requirements are very rigid, being based strictly upon hereditary succession in the male line from the early settlers in America. The well-known American author, Cleveland Amory, in his humorous work WHO KILLED SOCIETY says of the Order “Probably the most difficult of all patriotic societies to enter is the Order of the Founders and Patriots --- not because of any so-called Society ‘exclusiveness’ but because of what, genealogically, is demanded. To qualify for membership, the applicant must be a man over eighteen years, of good moral character and reputation, who is lineally descended in the male line of either parent from an ancestor who settled in any of the Colonies now included in the United States of American prior to May 13, 1657, and one or all of whose intermediate ancestors, in the male line, who lived in the period of the American Revolution from 1775 to 1783, fought for the United States against Great Britain. To establish his eligibility, each applicant must satisfactorily prove his descent by proper documentary evidence, to the satisfaction of the Genealogist of the State Society which he is desirous of entering, and also to the satisfaction of the Genealogist General of the Order. He must also be proposed and seconded by members of the Order in good standing, and approved by the membership committees.

The national headquarters of the Order is located at the Federal Hall Memorial, 15 Pine Street, New York. The Order publishes extensive bound genealogical records covering all of its associates (as members are called) since its founding. In addition, it publishes a semi-annual bulletin. The General Court of the Order is the supreme authority of the Order, and meets once a year, normally in New York City. State societies hold meetings as directed by their respective governors.

Among the more well-known members have been such American greats as Presidents of the United States, Warren G. Harding and William Howard Taft, Admiral George Dewey, Vice-President of the United States Charles G. Dawes, and Major General Ulysses S. Grant, III, to name a few.

The insignia of the Order consists of a badge of gold, as follows, Obverse – Upon a radiated star, or, a cross enamelled gules; thereon the effigy of an officer, in Continental uniform (i.e. the uniform of the Continental Army of the American Revolution) surmounted by that of Captain Miles Standish, habited in morion and breastplate; both effigies within a chaplet of oak and laurel leaves, all or. Reverse – upon a radiated star, or a star of thirteen points, enameled azure, in its center, the arms of the United States in relief, with a white circle, inscribed “Steadfast for God and Country”, all or.

The Seal of the Order may be blazoned; upon a shield or, a Continental Soldier at attention, habited proper, surrounded by a constellation of thirteen stars, azure; upon the centre of the chief, a ship of the seventeenth century, under full sail, proper; above the shield, the dates 1607-1857; beneath the shield, the date 1776; the whole surrounded by an annulet gules, inscribed “The Order of the Founders and Patriots of America,” in exerge, 1896; the edge beaded; the field, or. (Or, is gold – Gules, red, Azure, blue.)”

References:

Order of the Founders and Patriots of America Bulletin, page 6 and 7 – Vol. XXXVIII – No. 1 – Feb. 1965 – Whole no. 103.

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Herbert S. Brush, Jr.

First Lieutenant of Field Artillery,

Army of the United States – Retired

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Donnel J. Hubbard

Past Registrar General OFPA

Past Governor VA OFPA