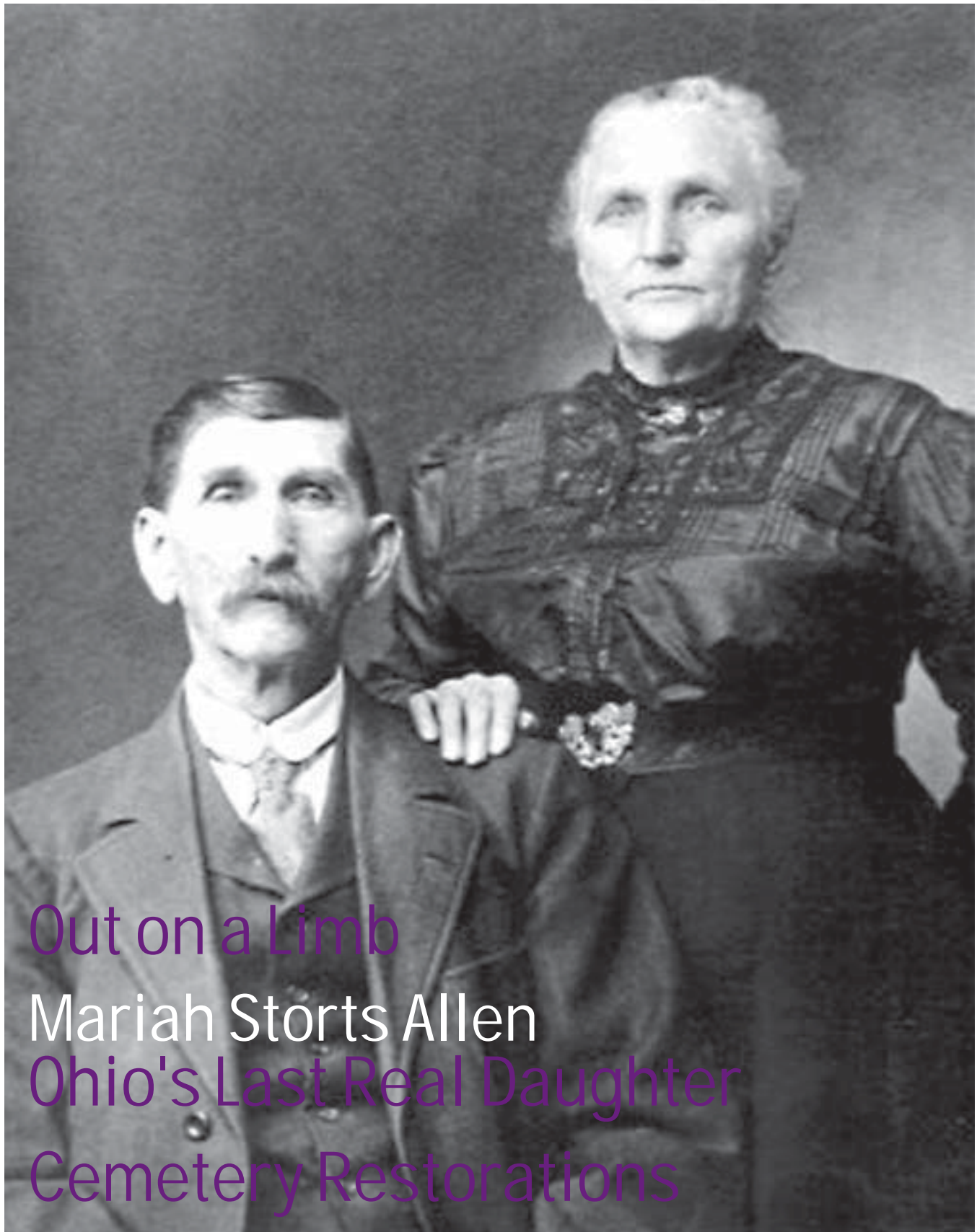


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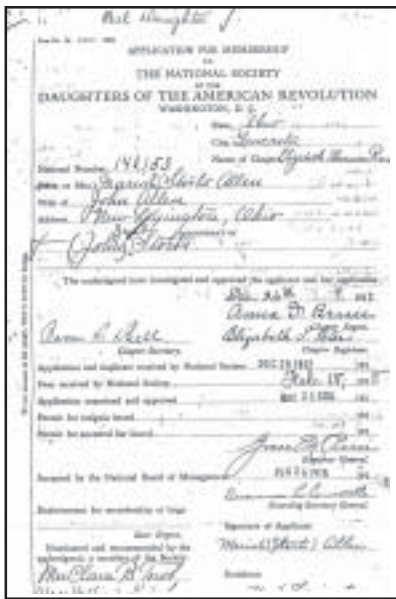


Out on a Limb

Mariah Storts Allen

Ohio's Last Real Daughter

Cemetery Restorations



Ohio's Last Real Daughter

Honoring Mariah Storts Allen,
Ohio's last surviving Real Daughter.

by **Keith H. Kaufman**

It was a hot day 15 July 2003. A day when the memory of Mariah Storts Allen was burned into the hearts and minds of the more than 150 people assembled on opening day of the Perry County Fair to witness the dedication of her Ohio Bicentennial Historical marker.

Her distinction? Mariah Storts Allen was Ohio's last surviving "Real Daughter," a title bestowed by the Daughters of the American Revolution to those whose fathers fought under Washington in the American Revolution.

Mariah's Patriot

The year was 1777. A 13-year old boy named John Jacob Storts volunteered to fight in the American Revolution War to become a patriot for independence. On 5 April, John enlisted in the Continental Army at Red Hill, Pennsylvania, under Captain Fickle and camped at Valley Forge. By May he was serving the Pennsylvania Continental Regiment of Artillery, Frederick County, Maryland, as a matross.

The duty of the matross was to position the cannon and ready it to fire. The fire Mr. Storts started back in 1777 to help guide America to freedom, continued to burn on through his descendants as I, his great-great-grandson, enlisted to fight for a historical marker for his daughter Mariah, so she, too, could take her place in history.

Mariah's Story

Mariah was born 4 August 1842 in Bearfield Township, east of New Lexington, Ohio, the youngest child of John Jacob Storts and his second wife Mary Ann. It should be noted that June Gladney of New Mexico has proven Mariah's mother Mary Ann Burket/Burkhead as a descendant in First Families of Ohio, the oldest and most prestigious OGS Lineage Society. On 30 November 1862, Mariah married John Wesley Allen and became the mother of 11 children, eight of whom survived her.

In a 26 July 2003 article in the *Pataskala Post*, Mariah was described as "a bold, feisty lady." How bold? She was

88 years old when she took her first plane ride.

Later in the article Mariah was depicted as “a weaver of rugs, a gardener, a herbalist, a fiercely God-fearing American woman...She was a prolific correspondent about her father’s life, and willing to provide information to family genealogists, but also enjoyed living in quiet obscurity.” A companion article detailing Mariah’s family will be published in the June issue of *Ohio Records and Pioneer Families*.

A life-long resident of Perry County, Mariah Storts Allen was accepted by the National Board of Management on 26 June 1918 as a “Real Daughter” of the DAR.

“Real Daughters” were made honorary life members of the society. Mariah was a member of the Elizabeth Sherman Reese Chapter of Lancaster, Ohio, and at the time of her death on 2 May 1933, only five “Real Daughters” were still living in the United States.

DAR Real Daughters

In a 1932 article entitled, “Real Daughters and the Bicentennial” in *Daughters American Revolution Magazine*, it was stated that since the DAR inception, 741 “Real Daughters” had been admitted to membership, but only 132 had been pensioned by the society. Mariah Storts Allen was one of five members receiving a monthly pension from the society.

The first pensions awarded to “Real Daughters” was granted by the National Board of Management at its meeting on 5 June 1906 for \$8 a month.

The monthly pension was increased by an Act of the 31st Continental Congress to \$20 and, by the 34th Continental Congress to a monthly sum of \$25. At the time, the pension was paid from the income of the Liberty Loan Fund.

Mariah had been interviewed multiple times for the DAR magazine and in her last interview for the above mentioned article, Mariah wrote that while she can just barely remember her “gallant father,” John Jacob died when Mariah was 10, her mother’s description of him and their early life was clear and distinct.



(All photos by Mrs. Betty Franklin)

Piper Major Robert L. Black dramatically leads a combined OSSAR Color Guard and American Legion Color Guard out of an old covered bridge.

The Quest Begins

The quest to honor Mariah Storts Allen began in January 2001, when I became aware of the Longaberger Legacy Initiative and plans for the Ohio Bicentennial. An application for grant funding was first sent to the Longaberger Legacy Initiative, and Mariah’s marker, like so many others, was not selected.

I had high hopes it would be awarded, as I thought the word “legacy” seemed to be appropriate to describe Mariah’s life, but I didn’t let disappointment stop me.

Later, I applied directly to the Ohio Historical Society and the Ohio Bicentennial Commission, asking for a historical marker for Mariah Storts Allen as Ohio’s last “Real Daughter” and guaranteeing that the marker would be paid through private funding.

More Take up the Cause

Many others also took up the fight, writing letters of support. Among those, Ohio’s Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives, the Honorable Larry Householder who stated: “As we prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of this great state, Ohioans remember the great pioneers that came before us. Mariah is undoubtedly a person to remember and honor time and time again.”

Through the generosity of family and friends, the funds needed for the marker were secured and I was notified in November 2002 that the Ohio Historical Society had approved the historical marker.

These historic markers began in 1957 when it was decided the corporate limit markers, which were started at the state’s sesquicentennial celebration in 1953, were not big enough to put histories on. Mariah’s historic marker took three months to make, under the expertise of Sewah Studios in Marietta.

Dedication Program

The dedication began with the dramatic entrance of the Ohio Society Sons of the American Revolution and the New Lexington American Legion Color Guard, through a covered bridge that sits at the entrance of the Perry County Fairgrounds, led by Piper Major Robert L. Black, a highland bagpiper from Columbus, Ohio, and commanded by Patriot John H. Franklin Jr., WRSSAR, Cleveland.

The piper continued to play as the Color Guard lined up in front of the “old log cabin,” near the site for the unveiling of Mariah’s marker.



Mrs. Marilyn Hohn Vaglia, member of the Lagonda Chapter DAR, Springfield, Ohio, gives a stirring address on behalf of Mariah Storts Allen and the DAR.

David Snider, a member of the Perry County Historical Society, gave the welcome and introduction.

Afterwards, many in attendance could be seen wiping tears from their eyes as the Signing Patriots of New Lexington Middle School, under the direction of Kay Householder, signed the *Pledge of Allegiance* to the accompaniment of a Lee Greenwood song. OHSSAR First Vice President James Lochary sang the national anthem.

In Memory

Compatriot Terry A. Whetstone, NSSAR trustee gave the invocation, followed by remarks from New Lexington Mayor Janine Conrad.

Bob Clark, representing U.S. Congressman David Hobson, Ohio Seventh District stated: "It is so fitting that we are gathered here today, not only celebrating Ohio's Bicentennial, but also the end of an era in Ohio history by dedicating the Bicentennial marker for Mariah Storts Allen, the last 'Real Daughter' of the American Revolution, who passed away May 2, 1933."

Maureen Damiani, operations manager of the Ohio Bicentennial Commission and Kristina Markel, field specialist for the Ohio Historical Society presented additional messages, as did James Meutzel, president of the Children of the American Revolution and Larry R. Perkins, president of the OHSSAR.

Chance for Freedom

Marilyn Hohn Vaglia, state regent of the Ohio Society DAR, gave a stirring keynote speech:

"The American Revolution seems to have happened so long ago, just something to read about in history books. But Keith Kaufman can hold his mother's hand. She can hold her mother's hand, and that woman can reach out and touch Mariah Storts Allen. This is just a moment in time passing. And to think of how the generations are linked is something everyone should be aware of.

In my lifetime I have read and learned about countries in other parts of the world that are in the

midst of revolution, their citizens striving for peace and freedom.

I sit in my secure part of America and think, 'How awful to be there, how scary, how dangerous.' Such a short time ago Mariah's father, Jacob Storts, took a chance that would affect his whole life, and the lives of his descendants. He became a rebel, a usurper, a patriot. He joined the many men in the colonies who took a chance for freedom. Most were ordinary men who became extraordinary because of what they did. They gave us America.

When we look at this marker for Mariah Storts Allen we think of what it means. A real daughter, her father was a heroic man. She lived a long time into our era. We know her; she links us into that part of history that shaped what we have and what we are today.

On July 4, just ten days ago, the Daughters of the American Revolution rededicated the Madonna of the Trail statue that is in Springfield, Ohio. This statue honors 19th century women, most of them daughters of the Revolutionary Patriots, who migrated into the Ohio Territory, as Mariah did, then to the Mississippi Valley, then the Oregon Territory and beyond to the western edge of our great nation. These were heroic women who probably never felt heroic during their lives. But they passed on to their descendants that heroism, courage, fortitude, and the sense of freedom that their fathers fought so hard for.

...In 1890 the organization, the Daughters of the American Revolution, was established. In the 113 years of its existence, over 820,000 women have proved their descent from a Revolutionary Soldier and



Town Crier Robert Nute Farling delivers a touching proclamation for Ohio's last "Real Daughter."

earned the right to membership in this organization.

I am proud that Mariah Storts Allen was an honorary member of the Daughters of the American Revolution. She, along with the current 170,000 members, have always worked to never let the patriots of the American Revolution be forgotten.

The DAR, along with the Sons of the American Revolution, realizes that to know who we are as Americans, we have to know who we were as Americans. This marker reminds us, tells us, don't forget them, honor the patriots who took a chance and gave us the great America we have today."



Front Row: (left to right) Caitlyn, Haley, and Mariah Black. Back Row: (left to right) Paul M. Wilke, Cincinnati Chapter SAR; Robert N. Farling, Lafayette Chapter SAR; John H. Franklin Jr., Western Reserve Society SAR; Paul D. Schenck, George Rogers Clark Chapter SAR; Keith H. Kaufman; Terry A. Whetstone; Larry R. Perkins, president OHSSAR; and William A. Robinson, Arthur St. Clair Chapter SAR.

Hear Ye, Hear Ye

After Mrs. Vaglia's address, Robert Nute Farling, past president of the OHSSAR and serving as the "Town Crier," delivered the following tribute:

"We are gathered here today to Honor Mariah Storts Allen, who had the distinction of being Ohio's last 'Real Daughter' of an American Revolutionary War soldier! This is a tribute to a very fine lady!

Life is not only a great adventure; it is a great school. While Mariah's educational opportunities were limited; her field of observation was extensive. Nature lay before her. Mother Earth told her many things. A new nation was in the making. Her father told her about Washington. She lived in the period of Lincoln.

Many were charmed with Mrs. Allen, not because her father was a soldier under Washington — that merely led them to her. They were charmed with her understanding, with her

keen observations, and with her bright outlook on life. Mariah had a pleasing personality — one that lifted you up and gave you new hopes and courage! She understood a lot about life — it had been a great school to her and she learned valuable lessons — lessons, which are sometimes hard to learn and the learning sometimes embitters; but, the learning made her fine and sweet.

The Infinite Sculptor chisels our lives in our faces. One could read the fortitude of the pioneer women and the sacrifice and devotion of a mother in her face. Mrs. Allen was a worthy Daughter of the Revolution. Perry County and Ohio are proud of her. She occupied a humble place in life — but she made it beautiful and glorious."

Marker Dedication

Now it was my turn to give the formal dedication of the marker. As noted in the

Continued on page 99

Real Daughter

continued from page 93

Zanesville Times Recorder: “(Kaufman) told a story of when, as a child, he wrecked his father’s tractor. His father knew it was an accident and told Kaufman not to worry about it because in 100 years, no one would remember. Kaufman said by dedicating this marker, they were guaranteeing that in 100 years, people would remember Allen and her place in history.”

Following my dedication, David Snider remarked: “These markers are like time capsules that are being passed on to people who have yet to be born.”

The Unveiling

Dressed in period attire, Mariah, 12, Caitlyn, 10, and Haley Black, 8, great-great-great-nieces of Mrs. Allen, unveiled the historical marker. The three sisters descend from Mrs. Allen’s brother Abraham. The eldest, Mariah, was named in honor of Mariah Storts Allen.

Following the unveiling, Piper Major Robert Black performed *Amazing Grace* preceded by the retirement of the colors. The ceremony concluded with a benediction by Terry Whetstone.

Reception

A reception was held after the marker’s dedication at the New Lexington Masonic Lodge, with a special ceremony by members of OHSSAR and members of Battery A, First Regiment, to honor John Jacob Storts, Mrs. Allen’s father, including a musket salute and a dual cannon volley to signify 200 years of Ohio’s statehood.

Mariah’s “day” was a huge success due to the hard work and efforts of many individuals, societies, members and chapters of the OHSSAR.

Mariah’s Legacy Lives On

My goal has been to honor Mariah Storts Allen in all ways possible. A Web site with more information on the life of Mariah can be found at www.sar.org/ohssar/MariahStory/mariah_story.htm. Included on the site



Dual cannon volleys, compliments of Bob Daniels and Ermil Shimp, Battery A, First Ohio Regiment, Statehouse Battery, were performed at a reception after the dedication.



Attendees enjoyed watching the musket salute.

is rare, silent film footage of Ohio’s last “Real Daughter.”

While the last “Real Daughter” died in Pennsylvania in 1943, Elva B. Crawford, archivist and historian for the DAR, acknowledges that Mariah’s film may be the only film in the United States featuring a “Real Daughter.”

It was a hot day 15 July 2003. A day when Mariah’s legacy was unveiled, forged into the steel of a historical marker, proudly standing for all to see and to remember those personally

touched by another’s burning desire to be free. OGN

Keith H. Kaufman is a life member of the OSSAR, a member of the George Rogers Clark Chapter, SAR, president of the Rufus Putnam Chapter, and also belongs to the Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio, Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, and the New Lexington Lodge #250.