

## Old Elbridge Cemetery 8-10-13



It is said that we die three times; first when our body expires, next when we are buried and finally when our names are last spoken. We gather here today to mark the graves of 21 veterans of the Revolutionary War. Many of these men served years of service in the Continental Line. At least one was disabled, others died destitute. Joseph Plumb Martin, a private in the 8<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Continental Line wrote of his experiences, which must have been shared by these men. In one passage he tells of marching for many long miles in the cold and rain with a sprained ankle. When the column finally turned into a wood for the night it was so wet that he was unable to light a fire. He and his companions were “forced by necessity, to lay down and sleep if we could with three others of our constant companions, Fatigue Hunger and Cold”.

The men whose graves we mark today suffered great hardships so that we can live today in freedom. One of those who we honor today is private Freelove Roberts. Roberts served in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Continental Dragoons in Captain Jeronemus Hoogland’s third troop. Whatever Capt. Hoogland experienced, Freelove Robert’s experienced. Elkanah Watson in his book “Men and Times of the Revolution” wrote of his travels during the war. One passage regarding Captain Jeronemus Hoogland, is especially poignant:

“At Morristown I met Captain Hoogland, an intimate old friend whom I knew in Newport in 1774. He had been taken prisoner at the battle of Long Island and was now escorting some British officers to New England.....The history of poor Hoogland, his self sacrificing, devoted patriotism, and ill requited services, had many a parallel in the lives of officers of the Revolution. It found them buoyant in hope, rich in the promises of youth, or in the vigor of manhood; It left many of those who survived, maimed in person, broken in constitution and inadequately

remunerated by their country. When I first knew Hoogland, in 1774, he was a handsome, facetious, high spirited youth of eighteen. We mingled together in the gaities of the beautiful island then in the rich enjoyment of plenty and repose. Too soon it became the theatre of contending armies. Three years later I again met him, a sun burnt veteran who had already seen much hard service. In 1788, fourteen years after, I again saw him, a merchant in Lansingburgh, NY. He was although young in years he was old in suffering. He appeared like an old man hobbling on crutches. Thus he lingered a few years longer, and sank into a premature grave, a martyr in the cause of liberty. Posterity can never estimate the sacrifice and sufferings of the patriots of the Revolution.”

On December 16, 1788, the Poughkeepsie Journal (Poughkeepsie is located 90 miles downriver on the Hudson from Lansingburgh) reported the death that morning of Captain Jeronemous Hoogland in his 31<sup>st</sup> year.

“This gentleman is one of many whose deaths may, in a great measure, be attributed to their warm attachment to, and the many severe hardships they encountered for the welfare of their country”.

Freelove Roberts shared the experiences and sufferings of his captain. The other 20 men we honor here today must have shared similar experiences and suffered extreme hardships at the altar of freedom. Many of these men were also broken in health and died destitute and deserving of our thanks. We therefore thank each and every one for their service, for their sacrifice and for all that they gave to a grateful nation.

Robert J. Gang III  
President Syracuse Chapter ESSAR