

Saturday Evening Banquet, Holiday Inn

Compatriot Robert Bowen received a VASSAR Certificate of Appreciation for his service to the state.



Jake Lay, Francis Lay, Lon Lacey, Bob Bowen, Larry Alexander, Lance Lyngar, Gar Schulin, Don McCade, and Paul Bess. Mike Lyman must be taking the picture.

Thaddeus Kosciuszko: Transcontinental Hero

by Austin Levi Burdick - Eagle Scout Scholarship Essay

The great patriotic heroes of the American revolution are renowned as the founders of the United State of America. Each one of these, whether George Washington, Thomas Jefferson or James Madison, devoted a substantial part of his life to the cause of freedom. They possessed courage, devotion, leadership abilities, and willingness to sacrifice for a greater cause. Such traits are found in men of greatness. Among these are Thaddeus Kosciuszko, a lesser known patriot who endeared himself to proponents of liberty on two continents. Thomas Jefferson said of him, "He is as much a son of liberty as I have known, and of that liberty which is to go to all, and not to the few or to the rich alone/"

Thaddeus Kosciuszko was born in 1746 to a land-poor family in Poland. He received a classical education, graduating from a top military school in Warsaw with the specialization in building fortification. Kosciuszko spent five years in France enhancing his military and engineering knowledge. In 1774, he returned to Poland and soon left again to aid in the fight for freedom in colonial North America.

The Continental Army contained few men of skill in the military arts, so Kosciuszko's excellent credentials earned him a commission as Colonel of Engineers in 1776. His first key contribution was erecting the fortifications of the Delaware River near Philadelphia and helping slow the British advance.

In 1777, under General Gates in the North, Kosciuszko engineered the Battle of Saratoga, regarded as the turning point of the war. Another significant contribution was the fortification of West Point which, if captured, would have given the British full access to the Hudson Valley. General Gates appreciated that Kosciuszko understood the goal was as much implementation of a political ideal as victory on the battlefield.