



*Missouri State Society Daughters of the  
American Revolution*

***Patriot of the Month; April 2009***

***Frank Woodruff Buckles  
"The Last Remaining Doughboy"***

*The members of Elizabeth Harrison Chapter NSDAR are pleased to honor Frank Woodruff Buckles of Charles Town, West Virginia, as a Patriot of the Month. He is the oldest and last identified living veteran of World War I and served honorably in both World War I and World War II.*

*Mr. Buckles was born and reared in Bethany, Harrison County, Missouri. He entered the U.S. Army at the beginning of America's involvement in World War I in April of 1917. Only sixteen years old, he was asked by his recruiter to show a birth certificate. Later he said of that event, "When I was born in Missouri, they didn't [issue] birth certificates, and the only record we kept was in the family Bible, and I told them I wasn't going to bring that down here, so...they took me."*

*Before being accepted into the Army, he was turned down by the Marine Corps due to his slight weight. In 1917, Buckles was sent to Europe on the RMS Carpathia, the same ship that had rescued survivors of the Titanic sinking in 1912. During the war he served in England and France, driving ambulances and motorcycles for the Army's 102 Man, 1<sup>st</sup> Fort Riley Casual Detachment. After the Armistice in 1918, Mr. Buckles escorted prisoners of war back to Germany. Frank Woodruff Buckles was the recipient of the World War I Victory Medal, the Army of Occupation of Germany Medal and France's highest honor, presented by French President Jacques Chirac, the French Legion of Honor Medal.*

*Following his discharge in 1919, he attended the dedication of the National World War I Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, in honor of those Americans who died in World War I. While there, he met General John Joseph "Black Jack" Pershing, commander of all U. S. forces in France during the war. Mr. Buckles lived in Germany from 1936 to 1938. While there, he met Adolph Hitler.*

*In the 1920's Mr. Buckles worked for the White Star Line in Canada (the company that had operated the Titanic). During World War II, he worked as a civilian for an American shipping company in the Philippine Islands. He was captured by the Japanese in 1942 and spent the next three years in the Los Banos prison camp. He was rescued on February 23, 1945.*

*In 1953, Mr. Buckles married Audrey Mayo and purchased a 330 acre farm in West Virginia. He and Audrey had one daughter. His wife died in 1999. When asked about the secret of his long life, Buckles replied, "Hope." He chuckled, "When you start to die...don't."*

*The U. S. Library of Congress included Mr. Buckles in its Veterans History Project and has audio, video and pictorial information on his experiences in*

*both world wars, including a full 148 minute video interview. His life was featured on the Memorial Day 2007 episode of NBC Nightly News and on March 6, 2008, he met with President George Bush at the White House. He is the Honorary Chairman of the World War I Memorial Foundation which seeks refurbishment of the District of Columbia War Memorial and its establishment as the National World War I Memorial on The Mall in Washington, DC.*

*On May 25, 2008, Mr. Buckles received the Veterans of Foreign Wars' Gold Medal of Merit at the Liberty Memorial. He sat for a portrait taken by David Delonge, it will hang in the National World War I Museum, as "the last surviving link".*