



The Musket Report

Newsletter of the Wiregrass Chapter, ALSSAR Enterprise, Alabama "Home of the Boll Weevil Monument"



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February Meeting

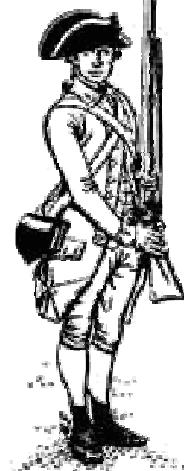
The February meeting of the Wiregrass Chapter will be **11:30 AM**, Thursday, **19 February** at the **Creekside Grille** on Hwy 27 N. Please let President Oden know by Monday the 16th if you plan to attend so that a headcount can be provided to the restaurant. Several activities are planned for the meeting to include the presentation of a Flag Certificate, and the recognition of DAR member Karen Bullock from Troy. Dr. Scott R. Smith retired chairman of the English Department at the Enterprise-Ozark Junior College will be our guest speaker and present a program on the notorious Frizzel murders committed in Pike County in 1857.



Glenn Nivens has provided an exciting update on the activities at the American Village. As you may recall, the National Cemetery was dedicated last July adjacent to the American Village. Currently, The American Village/Citizenship Trust is seeking to acquire the connecting 75-acre plot between the Village campus and the National Cemetery with the subsequent development of the Alabama Veterans Living Liberty Legacy project. The National Veterans Shrine will be the centerpiece of the project and is envisioned that an above-ground tomb will house the remains of Revolutionary War Patriot David Lindsay similar to the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington. The present grave of this patriot who was an early settler of Shelby County is going to be moved as a result of a road widening project within the county.

Other major features (already under construction) include a replica of the Concord Bridge across the Charles River and a replica of the West Wing of the White House. From that Concord Bridge, a meandering "Veterans Freedom Trail" throughout the Living Liberty Legacy Site will be developed. Along which will be various "Stations" of American History and it has been proposed that a half-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Wall become one of those "Freedom Stations".

Certainly some exciting long range projects which will greatly contribute to honoring all of our veterans and their sacrifices in keeping America free.



By now everyone should have their new 2009 calendar up and ready to go. Please take a couple of minutes and note the following important dates. As always, the third Thursday of each month will be the normal chapter meeting for February - June, and, as in the past, the chapter **will not meet in July**. The **August Family Picnic** is scheduled for **Saturday 22 August** this year, while our annual **SAR - DAR Constitutional Week Awards luncheon** is set for **September 17th**. The location for the two events is yet to be established, but our new incoming State President Dr. John Killian, will be our guest speaker at the Constitutional Week Luncheon. Our October and November meeting will be on the 3rd Thursday, with the **December Chartering Banquet** is planned for the evening of **10 December**. It is planned for our November meeting to be slanted toward our veterans along with another canned food collection for a local food bank! *Don't forget, wives are always welcome at the meetings!!*

During the January planning meeting, it was decided to undertake another grave marking this Fall. The chapter has several choices as there are known Revolutionary War graves in Pike, Bullock and Barbour counties. Some preliminary work is already underway to identify descendants of two of the patriots.

Two other important dates need to be noted. On **May 9** the ALSSAR monument to Gen. Galvez in Baldwin Co. will be dedicated and then on the **25th of May** will be the Fifth Annual Blue Star Salute at the American Village

Membership growth is also a key goal in 2009. It is suspected that each of us knows someone who is eligible for membership, and we should make every effort to invite them to a meeting while volunteering to aid in finalizing their paperwork.

Certainly a busy year ahead with lots of opportunities for each member to participate while honoring our patriot heroes and keeping their story alive!

Flag Certificate



On the 20th of January, Andy Spann, in uniform, presented the Sampson City Council a Flag Certificate in recognition of city's 24/7 display of Old Glory at the City Hall.

If you are aware of someone who properly displays the flag, please contact President Oden or Andy Spann. This is a great way to recognize individuals who fly the flag appropriately and does garner good publicity for the SAR.

ALSSAR State Meeting

At the State meeting on the 27/28th of February, one item of business that will be addressed is raising the state dues from the current \$12.00 a year to \$15.00 while raising application fees by \$5 to \$20.00 The last time dues were increased was in 2002 However, some feel that given the current economic environment, these might not be prudent actions. Please send your thoughts to President Oden, so he can voice your concerns at the meeting.

The Vermont Republic and the Green Mountain Boys

Vermont, of course, is nestled between New York to its west and New Hampshire to its east and is known for maple syrup and a fiercely independent population. Initially inhabited by Native American Indians, the Vermont area was first explored in 1609 by a French expedition led by Samuel de Champlain. He claimed the area for France, and the state's largest lake bears his name. A century later the initial English settlers arrived. In 1724 they constructed their first permanent settlement (*Fort Dummer*) on a site near present-day Brattleboro. In 1763, the Treaty of Paris ended the French and Indian War, giving the area to the British. Parts of the region were controlled by the Province of New York and Province of New Hampshire.

Between 1749 and 1764 the governor of the Province of New Hampshire, Benning Wentworth made numerous land grants in what is now present day Vermont. The land grants, totaling about 135, were made on land claimed by New Hampshire west of the Connecticut River, but which properly belonged to the Province of New York. The resulting dispute led to the eventual establishment of the U.S. state of Vermont. According to Wentworth, the border between New Hampshire and the Province of New York was ambiguous. Wentworth made the first grant, Bennington, a township west of the Connecticut River, on January 3, 1749. Cautioned by New York to cease and desist, Wentworth promised to await the judgment of the king, and refrain from making more grants in the claimed territory until it was rendered, but in November 1753, New York reported that he had continued to grant land in the disputed area. Grants briefly ceased in 1754, because of the French and Indian War, but in 1755 and 1757, Wentworth had a survey made 60 miles up the Connecticut river, and 108 grants were made.

Roughly a decade before the start of the American Revolution the Green Mountain Boys were organized as a paramilitary unit in what is now Western Vermont with a mission to keep New Yorkers out of the area. They were comprised of settlers and land speculators who held New Hampshire titles to lands between the Connecticut River and Lake Champlain, what is now modern Vermont. New York had been given control of the area by a decision of the British crown and refused to respect the New Hampshire Grants and town charters. Although a few towns with New York land titles, notably Brattleboro on the Connecticut River, supported the government in Albany, the vast majority of the settlers in the sparsely populated frontier region rejected the authority of New York. The Green Mountain Boys were led by Ethan Allen, his brother Ira, and their cousin Seth Warner and were based at the Catamount Tavern in Bennington, ironically only a short distance from the New York seat of government in Albany. This force was several hundred strong and effectively controlled the area where New Hampshire grants had been issued. New York surveyors and other officials attempting to exercise their authority were prevented from doing so and in some cases were severely beaten. The New York authorities had standing warrants for the arrest of members of the Green Mountain Boys but these could never be exercised.

When the American Revolutionary War started in 1775, Ethan Allen and a force of his guerrillas, along with Massachusetts Colonel Benedict Arnold, marched up to Lake Champlain and captured the important military posts at Fort Ticonderoga, Fort Crown Point, Fort Ann, and the town of St. John (Battle of Fort St. Jean) in Quebec. The Green Mountain Boys later formed the basis of the Vermont militia which selected Seth Warner as its leader. Some of the Green Mountain Boys preferred to stick with Ethan Allen and were captured along with Allen in August 1775 in a bungled attack on the city of Montreal.

The local land owners declared the area an independent nation in January 1777, initially calling it *New Connecticut* and organized a government based in Windsor. When the constitution was drafted the name was changed to Vermont. The Constitution of Vermont was ratified at Elijah West's Windsor Tavern in 1777, and was the first written constitution for an independent state in North America. It was also the first constitution in the New World to outlaw slavery and allow all adult males to vote, regardless of property ownership.

The army of the Vermont Republic was based upon the Green Mountain Boys. Although Vermont initially supported the American Revolutionary War and sent troops to fight John Burgoyne's British invasion from Canada at Hubbardton and Bennington in 1777, Vermont eventually adopted a more neutral stance and became a haven for deserters from both the British and colonial armies. George Washington, who had more than sufficient difficulties with the British, brushed off Congressional demands that he subdue Vermont. The governor of the Republic, Thomas Chittenden, with consent of his council and the unicameral General Assembly, appointed ambassadors to France, the Netherlands, and the American government seated in Philadelphia. There is no evidence of a true exchange of ambassadors.

It took 15 years for New York and Vermont to negotiate a indemnity of several million dollars to be paid to New York to relinquish its claim to Vermont and gain support for Vermont to be admitted to the union. Vermont's independent status held until 1791, when Vermont joined the Union, in part as a non-slaveholding counterweight to the slaveholding Kentucky. The admission of Vermont was supported by the North, the smaller



Engraving of Thomas Chittenden, first and third governor of the Vermont Republic, and first governor of the State of Vermont



states, and states concerned about the impact of the sea-to-sea grants held by other states.

Today, the Vermont National Guard, composed of the Vermont Army National Guard and Vermont Air National Guard are collectively known as the *Green Mountain Boys*, this despite the inclusion of women in both branches since the mid-twentieth century. Both units also use the original Green Mountain Boys battle flag as their banner.

The measure of a man's character is not what he gets from his ancestors, but what he leaves his descendants. ~ Unknown