

TO ALL COMPATRIOTS AND FRIENDS:

MARCH MEETING

The March Meeting of the Wiregrass Chapter, SAR will be held at **Noon on 18 March at Po' Folks Restaurant** in Enterprise. This will be a general business meeting to review the status of plans for the George Washington Bicentennial Year. All members and friends are encouraged to attend.

GEORGE WASHINGTON BICENTENNIAL ACTIVITIES

1999 is shaping up to be a very exciting and busy year for the Wiregrass Chapter. Working in conjunction with the John Coffee Chapter of the DAR , the following ideas for celebrating this Bicentennial Year within Coffee County have been developed:

- ☞ Proclamation to be signed by the mayors of Enterprise and Elba
- ☞ Presentation of a set of books on the life of George Washington to the Enterprise and Elba Libraries during National Library Week in April.
- ☞ Presentation of flags flown over Mount Vernon to the cities of Enterprise and Elba on 14 June, Flag Day
- ☞ Letters to the editors of various county newspapers discussing George Washington and the bicentennial year.

In addition, planning is underway to develop a program about George Washington for presentation throughout the year to the various elementary schools within the county , along with a program in the fall which will be open to everyone. All activities of this sort do require some extra money. As of this date no Chapter

money has been spent on preparing for these activities. While the chapter has earmarked \$75.00 to help defray some of the costs involved, this will probably be insufficient to cover expected expenses and we will have to depend on some donations from chapter members. Should any member like to make a special contribution for the George Washington Bicentennial activities, please send a check payable to the Wiregrass Chapter, SAR to J.R. Wallace, 200 E. Silver Oak Drive, Enterprise, AL 36330.

WORLD WIDE WEB

Pertinent data on the Wiregrass Chapter has been forwarded to William Segraves, Webmaster for the ALSSAR Web Page. He has assured the chapter secretary that he will have this information posted to the state webpage by the 15th of March. For those of you on line, check out www.sar.org and go to the Alabama Page and check out our new link.

STATE CONVENTION

Due to the fact the Editor is going out of town this newsletter was prepared before the conclusion of the State Convention. Next month, highlights of the meeting will be presented along with the name of the winner of the Rumbaugh Oration Contest. Based on Miss Deel's presentation at the February chapter meeting, she will represent the chapter very well in this contest.

25 YEARS OF MEMBERSHIP

A very special congratulations to Compatriot **Jack Bryan** who was awarded his 25 year membership pin at the February Meeting.

SMALL POX AND THE CONTINENTAL ARMY

The 18th century American populations were essentially stationary. A majority of the population never ventured more than a few miles from home during the course of a lifetime and contact with individuals, such as an army, from outside their geographical area often lead to the spread of communicable diseases. This was a two edged sword, not only could civilians contract diseases from an army, but visa versa.

The most feared ailment was smallpox, which could be both disfiguring and fatal . The roughened skin of facial smallpox scars were a common sight in Revolutionary America, though artists tended to render these blemishes as rosier-than-normal cheeks in portraiture of the time.

In 1775, the Continental forces attacked Montreal and Quebec. The attack against Montreal was successful and in November, the Continental forces surrounded Quebec. The siege, however, was eventually abandoned because of an outbreak of smallpox and harsh winter weather. The Continental army retreated to New York in 1776 and a hospital was established there under Dr. Jonathan Potts to treat the soldiers returning from Canada.

It was known at the time how to inoculate against smallpox, but the procedure was extremely dangerous. Inoculations were performed using live smallpox virus (Jenner had not yet developed his vaccination procedure using the cowpox virus) and had proven its effectiveness when it was used to control an outbreak of smallpox in Boston during the 1720s. Since live viruses were used, the patient could contract smallpox and

die. The patient could also infect others with smallpox.

The Canadian campaign had convinced General Washington that inoculation was necessary and ordered that all Continental line troops be inoculated. Writing from Valley Forge on 6 January 1777, he said:

"Finding the smallpox to be spreading much and fearing that no precaution can prevent it from running through the whole of the Army, I have determined that the troops shall be inoculated. Should the disorder infect the Army in the natural way and rage with its usual virulence, we should have more to dread from it than from the sword of the enemy."

This was the first time that an attempt had been made to inoculate an entire army. The results were successful. Inoculation reduced the death rate from smallpox from 160/1,000 to 3/1,000. Today all recruits into the military receive a wide array of "shots" to help prevent the rampant spread of disease through a military unit.

Source:

<http://www.cs.amedd.army.mil/acv/Chapter%202.htm>

http://www.lwhs.lkwash.wednet.edu/edu/social_studies/student/smallpox

<http://www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty/chronicle/medicine.html>

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