



SAR Alabama



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

My fellow Compatriots,
I'm honored and privileged to serve as your president. My sincere thanks to so many that have mentored and guided me to this office. I ask for your continued support as we navigate 2021.

What a difficult 2020 was with COVID-19. There were so many changes and yet your efforts are not forgotten in how you adapted to this new environment. Each of you continued to serve your communities and support the SAR even during the uncertainty of COVID-19. The time we are living in is a part of our society's story and our history together.

Speaking of history, the SAR has a rich history as a patriotic, historical, and educational 501 non-profit, US Congressionally Chartered Organization under [Title 36 of the United States Code](#) that seeks to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom, an appreciation for patriotism, a respect for our national symbols, the value of American citizenship, and the unifying force of e pluribus unum.

The SAR is the largest male lineage organization in the U.S. and consists of 50 state-level societies with more than 500 local chapters and several international societies. Prominent members include 16 U.S. Presidents,

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Kirkland installed as president at ALSSAR state convention



—Photo by Jim Maples

William Kirkland, left, is installed as ALSSAR president by outgoing president David Jones as Michelle Kirkland looks on.

While the past 12 months have been challenging, we were able to find a venue to host an in-person state convention.

The American Village was gracious enough to allow a small number of us to meet in person. A turnout of approximately 47 members and guests were in attendance.

This annual meeting was the first ever for the Alabama Society where we had members in person and virtually at the same time.

Compatriot Eric Alford was the technician who made this possible.

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One of state's top ambassadors and former Minuteman recipient Lee Swart passes away

One of the SAR's greatest ambassadors, Oura Lee Swart, passed away on Jan. 17 in Fort Payne. He was 84.

In addition to earning the organization's highest award, the Minuteman Award in 2001, Swart served as a chapter president of the Little River chapter, at every level as a state officer, on numerous national committees and as a Vice President General of the Southern District.

"Lee was a gentleman of the old school who was courteous and polite. He was also tough and had strong beliefs about integrity and what was best for the SAR," noted NSSAR Pres-



Oura Lee Swart served as ALSSAR president in 1996.

ident General Tom Lawrence (2015-16). "Lee was not afraid to share his opinions about what was best for the SAR even though others may disagree. If he thought he was right he would not back down and would continue to argue his point not because he was stubborn but because he genuinely believed his course was better for the SAR. SAR will miss his wise counsel."

Swart was born on June 14, 1936, in the family home on the northwest Kansas wheat and cattle farm as the 13th of 14 children born to his parents, George Martin Swart and Zula May Gilkerson Swart. His early days were spent at the family farm in Gove County

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Message

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members of Congress, local business and community leaders. This is a great time to recruit and reach out to your friends and family to be a part of our society's rich history.

My first contact with the SAR began when I was a junior in high school as a recipient of the JROTC Medal awarded by the SAR. The award would later spur my interest in genealogy and to learn more about my ancestor who was a private in the Continental Army.

Having now served in various posts and committees at the chapter, state and national levels of the SAR, I only grow in my appreciation and excitement for the service we provide to our communities. As president, our society will concentrate on the following three areas this year:

COLOR GUARD. Continue to grow and develop our color guard and our honor guard. Our color guard is one of our best public relation tools. Being a member of the color guard has been a fantastic experience for me. I encourage every member this year to consider making the investment and buy a uniform. There will be opportunities for the members of our color guard to participate in various events throughout the year.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING. We will develop and encourage more education training for our fellow compatriots. We have talented leadership all over Alabama serving at the local, state and national level. We are making a difference in our communities across this country and answering the call to serve.

EDUCATION. We will continue to be available to our schools public, private and homeschool co-ops. There is a curiosity out there about the American Revolution. I challenge each of us all to pick one history topic, person or an event and be a subject matter expert to your chapters and schools that you visit. No time in history have we had so much access to historical books and records online.

The SAR is amazing society with a good future ahead. I invite you to join these efforts. Thank you again for allowing me to serve as your president.

Patriotically yours,

—William A. Kirkland II, Esq.



—Photo by Jim Maples

A true patriot

ALSSAR president David Jones, left, presents Gen. Galvez compatriot and past ALSSAR president Edmon McKinley with the Patriot Award at the state convention. The Patriot Award is one of the state's highest honors, presented for long faithful and outstanding service at the state or chapter level.

Endowment Fund reaches milestone

HUZZAH! The membership and chapters of the ALSSAR need to congratulate themselves on the support given to the ALSSAR state endowment fund over the past several years! On Dec. 31, 2020, the value of the endowment stood at \$112,622.81.

The endowment was started in about 2001-02 with a legacy gift to the society of \$8,000 and then increased with periodic contributions from members and/or chapters. The money was maintained in CDs and Money Market accounts — with no financial support ever generated — to give back to the state society for youth activity awards.

In August 2015, the society entered into an agreement with the Community Foundation of South Alabama to manage the endowment fund and \$27,500 was provided as the initial seed money. Today, as noted, that endowment now stands well over \$100,000 and, annually since 2017, has returned dollars to the state treasury for youth activity awards, including \$1,200 at the ALSSAR convention in February.

Since 2017, \$4,600 has flowed back into the society for support of the vital youth activity awards.

While a bullish stock market has helped increase the value of the fund, it has been direct donations from individual members and chapters, gifts made in memory of deceased members and friends, and in one case a \$1,000 donation to honor a living member to recognize his contributions to the society that has facilitated the growth of the endowment.

What is truly remarkable is some of the larger donations have come from private trusts outside the organization in recognition of the efforts made by the ALSSAR to promote patriotism in both grammar and

high schools through our youth activities. This is yet another feather in the cap of the ALSSAR which the membership should be extremely proud!

Recognition of the efforts of the society in teaching the principles upon which this country was founded by outside trusts is a tremendous credit to the work accomplished by the Alabama Society.

As the value of the endowment grows each year, an ever-increasing number of dollars will be returned to support our youth activity awards. Remember the corpus of the fund will not be spent.

Have you considered donating? A one-time gift, a personal commitment to yourself to make a regular monthly or quarterly contribution, a donation as a memorial for a member or good friend, or even a gift as part of your overall estate planning?

There is nothing to preclude a chapter from making an annual commitment in their working budgets to the endowment fund. On the state website are numerous examples of draft letters that can be used.

Regardless of the type of donation, the CFSA will provide a tax letter, and in the case of a memorial donation a letter to the deceased's next of kin. To make things even better you may use your credit card so, in addition to your support of the youth programs of the ALSSAR, you can also earn hotel or airline miles plus a potential tax write-off at the end of the year! It is a win/win/win situation!

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Endowment Fund Committee. Again, the members and leadership of the ALSSAR are to be congratulated for their efforts in reaching this important milestone along with their active support of youth programs.

—John Wallace



—Photo by Jim Maples

New officers for 2021 are, from left, president William Kirkland, vice president Bill, secretary Jim Griffith, recording secretary Eric Alford, treasurer John Van Zandt, registrar Ronald Bearden, chancellor Jay Maples, Rev. John Killian and sergeant-at-arms Joseph Barker Jr. Not pictured are historian Robert England and genealogist Earl Gilliam.

Convention

(Continued from Page 1)

The Black Warrior River Chapter was the host chapter for only the second time in Society history. Chapter president Rich Johnson kicked off the convention as the host.

President General Jack Manning brought greetings from the National Society as did Vice President General of the Southern District Michael Schenk. Librarian General Tony Vets brought greetings from the Louisiana Society, while Alabama DAR Regent Tammy Clemons and Alabama CAR President Lillian Pennington brought greetings from their respective organizations.

All things considered, the annual meeting and convention was a success. While this convention was condensed into a half day instead of the traditional two-day event, the sequence of events were a little out of the normal order.

New officers were installed during the morning session via zoom by Vice President General Michael Schenk. Youth awards were received by the sponsored chapters and new members of the George Washington Endowment Fund were inducted.

In the youth awards, Olivia Paterson, sponsored by the Tennessee Valley, won the Rumbaugh Oration contest, followed

by Samantha Simmons (Birmingham) and Brinkley Cottingham (Shoals).

Catherine Simpson, sponsored by Gen. Galvez, won the Eagle Scout Award, followed by Michael Karmondi (Cahaba-Coosa) and Alex Cole (Tenn. Valley).

Clayton Cain, sponsored by the Black Warrior River, won the Knight Essay contest and another Black Warrior-sponsored entry, Emia Sesson, won first place in the JROTC competition, followed by Megan Green (Tenn. Valley).

Katherine Cain, sponsored by the Black Warrior River chapter, won the brochure contest and Layla Shurden, sponsored by the Tennessee Valley, won the poster contest, followed by McKinley Morris (Little River) and Reid Collins (Shoals Area).

After a fantastic catered meal by "Southern Sweets by Joan," members engaged in fellowship.

The afternoon session was streamed live on Facebook as members received a powerful speech from our guest speaker Compatriot Tom Walker. Outgoing President David Jones gave his farewell address stressing the importance of members being active in the community while incoming President William Kirkland II addressed the Society with his goals for the forthcoming year.

—David Jones



—Photo by Jim Maples

David Jones presents Penni Jones with Lydia Darragh Award.

In Memory...

Louis Cleveland Culver Bradley Lamar Sanders

The Cheaha and Gen. Richard Montgomery chapters recently lost compatriots when Louis Culver and Brad Sanders passed away.

LOUIS CLEVELAND CULVER, a member of the Cheaha chapter and a resident of Anniston, passed away on Jan. 26 at the Northeast Alabama Regional Medical Center. He was 90.

Culver was a 1952 graduate of the Birmingham Conservatory of Music, a 1956 graduate of Birmingham Southern College and graduated from Jacksonville State University in 1978 with a master's degree in English.

He was the organist and choirmaster at the Church of St. Michael and All Angels for 32 years. He was an English instructor at JSU from 1978-1993. He also taught private piano and organ for many years.

He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Deenie M. Culver, brother-in-law Guy M. McCullough Jr., sister-in-law Kristie C. McCullough, two nieces and three nephews.

Memorial services in Anniston and Birmingham will be held at a later date due to the COVID pandemic.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions be made to the Organ Fund at The Church of St. Michael and All Angels, PO Box 1884, Anniston, AL 36202, or the Music Discretionary Fund at Cathedral Church of the Advent, 2017 6th Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203.

LT. COL. (Ret.) BRADLEY LAMAR SANDERS, who joined the Gen. Richard Montgomery chapter in 2001 and was a resident of Montgomery, passed away on Jan. 15 after bat-

ting pneumonia. He was 79.

Mr. Sanders was a long-time member of Eastern Hills Baptist Church. He served on the board of directors for Max Federal Credit Union after completing more than a three-decade career in the National Credit Union Administration. He completed over 22 years of service to our country in the United States Air Force and Alabama Air National Guard.

Sanders flew 204 combat missions during the Vietnam War as a B-52 navigator, earning a Distinguished Flying Cross as well as an Air Medal with 9 Oak Leaf Clusters. He completed his military career with the 187th Fighter Wing in Montgomery, flying in the F-4 Phantom as a Weapons Systems Officer.

Sanders attended Murphy High School in Mobile, studied at Auburn and Northern Michigan followed by completion of an MBA at Louisiana Tech.

He served the Gen. Richard Montgomery chapter in a variety of positions as an officer, including as chapter president in 2005. He was serving as chapter secretary at the time of his death.

Services were held on Jan. 19 at Alabama Heritage Funeral Home in Montgomery followed by a graveside service in Alabama Heritage Cemetery.

Sanders is survived by his wife of 53 years, Betty Hammann Sanders, four children Angela Kynard (Chris), Alan Sanders (Paige), Andrew Sanders and Adam Sanders (Mary), 18 grandchildren, four great grandchildren and siblings Wayne Sanders (Barbara) and Charlene Brown (Bob).



—Photos courtesy of Jim Maples

New George Washington Endowment Fund members

The George Washington Endowment Fund added some new members at the state convention. Above left, ALCAR president Lillian Pennington became a GWEF member as her mother, DAR member Jennifer Pennington, right, received the honor of pinning Lillian with GWEF national fundraising chairman Jim Maples conducting the ceremony. Above right, GWEF chairman Jim Griffith, left, and Maples, far right, add new members, from left, Janice Jennings, Stephen Hooks and William Kirkland II.

Swart*(Continued from Page 1)*

and during the winters of 1937-1940 at the Swart family's winter home located in a citrus grove near Hidalgo County, Texas. He graduated as the top student from his grade school and served as high school class president for three years, graduating in 1954.

Following high school he chose to attend Kansas State College (now Kansas State University) for three years and then transferred to the University of Kansas for the final two years where he received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration-Accounting. At KU, on the day of graduation he was also commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United States Army Ordnance Corps and was privileged to have his mother pin on his second lieutenant gold bars after being sworn in the Army.

Not being immediately required to report in the Army for duty Lee chose employment with Ford Motor Company in Kansas City as a cost accountant. After a short stint with Ford he was ordered into active duty with United States Army Ordnance Corps at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland, where he began what was to become a full 20-year career in the Army. He worked for three years with the U.S. Army's nuclear weapons and missile depot (1960-1963) in western Germany, as the battalion adjutant and company commander at Fort Hood and as ordnance advisor to the Vietnamese 7th Infantry Division in 1964-65 at MyTho, South Vietnam. After a short stint at ordnance school, he served as an assistant professor in the ROTC department at the University of Arizona in 1966-69.

He moved on to Fort Sheridan, working with the army's anti-ballistic defense system, another short stint in South Vietnam, followed by an assignment as the director of supply and later maintenance directorate at the army's missile and munitions school at Redstone Arsenal. He returned to West Germany in 1974-77, then was assigned to the 548th Supply & Support Battalion located at Fort McClellan.

In the late 1980s, he joined the Sons of the American Revolution and soon after was instrumental in organizing and forming the Little River chapter in 1989, serving as a chairman of many chapter committees as well as chapter president.

"I've known Lee for over 30 years," said longtime Little River chapter compatriot Ron Bearden. "I came to know him when a group of men in northeast Alabama were meeting to establish a new SAR chapter in the Fort Payne area. This chapter did organize and became the Little River chapter. Lee was instrumental in this effort, holding several chapter officer positions. Within only a few years, he became the president of Little River Chapter. Lee was a regular attendee at the annual NSSAR National Congress. He held several different officer positions with the Alabama Society, and within a few years became the ALSSAR president (1996-97) and subsequently the Alabama trustee. Later, Lee was elected as the Southern District Vice-President General and soon after was designated as a Minuteman in the National Society.

"He proved his leadership skills at the local, state and national levels of SAR. He served on several national committees in SAR. I think his favorite committee was the Medals and Awards Committee. That's the one I remember him speaking of most often. Lee was one of the SAR members who played a lead role during the administration of Rod Hildreth, when Rod was trying to establish an SAR chapter in the Cullman area.

"I rode with Lee and Rod to many of these organizational meetings held monthly. All of this carpooling allowed me to really get to know Lee, and for him to get to know me. Lee, as state SAR president, would later establish and organize the Cheaha chapter in the Anniston area. Every so often I would call

Lee or he would call me to discuss some SAR topic. Most of these calls lasted well over an hour. We discussed not only SAR, but other things like family, local issues, his role as an Army major, etc.

"I consider Lee's passing as a great personal loss. Lee was known all across the United States among SAR members and will be missed. He will be missed by the members of the Alabama Society and more so by the members of Little River Chapter."

At the state level, he had served as ALSSAR registrar, secretary, vice president and president, helping to organize seven SAR chapters in the process as well as developing the national JROTC Cadet Youth program.

"When I first came into the SAR, Tom Richardson, Wylie Johnson, Lee and Rod Hildreth were among the first people I met," noted Tim Gayle, editor of *SAR Alabama*. "The four of them were genuinely great human beings who were truly concerned with who I was and what I stood for. I'm not saying the ones in the organization today aren't, I'm just saying what a positive first impression that made. I always considered them great SAR ambassadors but better people."

By the time of his Minuteman Award in 2001, Swart was known throughout the nation for his work in the Sons of the American Revolution.

"Lee was a no-nonsense participant in the operations of the National Society," said Tom Showler of the Pennsylvania SAR. "He didn't pull any punches when he was the chair of Medals and Awards committee, sometimes going against the feelings of many of the members of that committee; yet in the end he always played fair. I so valued his friendship. He leaves a big hole in the top echelons of the National Society and will be sorely missed."

In addition to his devotion to the ALSSAR, Swart was a lifelong member of the Grinnell United Methodist Church where he was baptized as an infant and confirmed while in grade school; a member of the Grinnell (now Oakley) Masonic Lodge; a member of the Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem (SMOTJ); and a member of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. While living atop Lookout Mountain near Fort Payne, he became a member of the Fort Payne First Baptist Church.

"It is with a heavy heart that we say our final goodbye to my uncle Lee Swart," said SAR compatriot and nephew Michael Rowley. "We were always honored to have him join us on Christmas mornings when he was on leave from the military as I was growing up. My mother always tried to find things to send him as he served around the country and the world. It was her way of saying 'I'm thinking of you and I love you.' He was committed to the family genealogy and proud to be a descendent of patriot Bartholomew Summers.

"He loved this country, served his career defending it, and retired and became completely engaged in the SAR to honor it. He always took an interest in all of the family members and their accomplishments. Never more for one than another, he always said he was proud of all of his nieces and nephews and what they were accomplishing. He will be missed but never forgotten!"

Services were held on Jan. 19 at First Baptist Church in Fort Payne, with the Rev. Pat McFadden and Marshall Henderson conducting. At the conclusion of these services, Lee's remains were transferred to Oakley, Kansas, where services were conducted by the Baalman Funeral Home prior to burial in his family plot in the Oakley City Cemetery.

—Fred Olive



—Photo courtesy of William Rozier

Newest Cheaha compatriot

Cheaha chapter president William Rozier, left, installs the chapter's newest member, Chief Petty Officer (Ret.) Randy Boyer, at its monthly meeting on Jan. 13 in the Anniston Room of the Anniston-Calhoun County Public Library. Boyer's induction was one of the highlights of the January meeting, which also included guest speaker Bill Acker, an Anniston native. Chapter vice president Henry Smith introduced Acker, who presented an excellent program on his own Revolutionary ancestor John Sevier. Following the presentation, Rozier presented Acker with the NSSAR's Challenge Coin.

The Liberty Medal: Building our SAR chapters and state society

The Liberty Medal rewards a compatriot for building and maintaining our state society. Without members helping and many times doing most of the work, we would not have new members joining our society.

John Wallace was discussing the need for all of our members to help in building our state society. He said we should ask our members to help build our chapters and therefore our state society.

How many prospective members have you helped do their application?

Well, let me tell you of the compatriots who helped me to understand why I should join with them in the work of SAR. It began with a small article in a local campus newspaper. I was a student at Samford University and I had been working on my family genealogy but was unaware of SAR.

This gentleman was Dr. Cornelius Alston Shepherd. He asked Ryall S. Morgan, also of the Birmingham chapter, to help me with the four-page application. Back then we had to type all four pages and repeat the process to submit two original copies.

This started a 40-year-plus membership in the ALSSAR.

Liberty Medal: Any SAR member who after March 31, 1986, signed as first-line sponsor the membership application of 10 new members. For the purposes of this award, the person's name signed as the first-line sponsor should be the person who recruited the new member, and it should not be the name of an officer of a state society or a chapter, or any other person, who did no more than receive the application in the course of his official duties then append his signature as first-line sponsor, and forward the application to the National Society for processing.

—Fred Olive

—Photo courtesy of Jess Brown

Military Recognition Day

The chaplain of the Tennessee Valley chapter, retired Col. James Henderson (right) works with the Speaker of the Alabama House, Mac McCutcheon, to coordinate the annual state House of Representatives' Military Recognition Day on March 10. Chaplain Henderson also delivered the invocation for the event, held at the Alabama State House in Montgomery.



Wiregrass chapter organizes 9-11 Patriot Day ceremony

At noon on Sept. 11, the city of Enterprise, nationally recognized as one of the most patriotic cities in America, held its first 9-11 Patriot Day ceremony at Henderson Park.

“In this time of unrest and push to defund the police, we want to show the local support for our police, fire and first responders,” said Wiregrass chapter president Travis Parker, organizer of the event. “The SAR has sponsored this event as the inaugural event of the ‘SAR America 250 Program’ for the state. This is a six-year series of various types of events leading up to the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.”

A short ceremony was held next to the display of 2,977 flags honoring those killed on 9-11, including the 400 fire and police personnel. Chaplain Leon Adams, the featured speaker, worked as a grief counselor for the disaster recovery in New York City immediately following the event and had many riveting first-hand accounts of his interactions with those who were there that day.

Among the other honored guests and speakers were Chaplain John Logsdon, Elder Rodrick Caldwell, former Wiregrass president and current Enterprise City Council president Perry Vickers (who presented a proclamation from the city), Rep. Rhett Marques and Sen. Jimmy Holley (with a resolution from the state), Congressman-elect Barry Moore, Fire Chief Byron Herring and Police Lieutenant Billy Haglund.

Vietnam veteran Eddie Phillips was the master of ceremonies and the speakers included ALSSAR president David Jones, who challenged the public to help the SAR observe the upcoming 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

The ALSSAR Color Guard presented the colors at the beginning of the Ceremony.

Jones was interviewed by one television station while Parker was interviewed by another, giving the SAR plenty of media attention. The ceremony made the front page in one newspaper and was a full-page feature in another. Facebook Live coverage had more than 3,000 views within a few days.

—Travis Parker



—Photos courtesy of Travis Parker

ALSSAR Color Guard, top left; Rep. Barry Moore (left), ALSSAR president David Jones, top right; 2,977 flags on display, below, placed with care by Boy Scout Troop 150 and Girl Scouts, bottom.



—Photo courtesy of Edmon McKinley

Delivering Christmas to veterans

Edmon McKinley (left), Gen. Galvez veterans committee chairman, presents to the William F. Green State Veterans Home 30 bags stuffed with clock radios, candy, sweatsuits, socks, neck pillows, blankets and other items for area veterans. This annual project of the Gen. Galvez chapter brings joy to both the chapter compatriots who fill the bags and the veterans who receive them.



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Book details the Revolutionary War effort in the Gulf South

Mike Bunn. Fourteenth Colony: The Forgotten Story of the Gulf South During America's Revolutionary Era. New South Press: Montgomery, 2020.

Mike Bunn's book presents, for the first time, the complete history of British West Florida from the exit of the French and Spanish until the fall of the colony in 1781. Bunn's remarkable achievement musters the relevant primary and second sources into an important and readable book.

At the conclusion of The Seven Years' War, several treaties reordered the Americas. Bunn's clear description explains England's acquisition of the territory which became the colony of West Florida. The British government established the capital at Pensacola. Natchez, on the Mississippi River, and Mobile, situated where interior rivers flowed into the bay, were principal cities.

Realizing the huge territory south of Georgia and west to the Mississippi River could not be governed effectively, the British split the area into two colonies divided by the Apalachicola River. The government of the new colony received most of its support from the British Parliament. The governor, lieutenant governor, and a council—an upper house—received appointment to their positions. The colonists elected the lower house. Parliament installed other officials such as an attorney general. Bunn maintains the lower house had little to do since only the governor could summon its members to a legislative session. Popular governor Peter Chester arrived in 1770, but his relations with the lower house soured until 1778 under threat of war.

The population of West Florida settled around Pensacola, Mobile, Natchez, and the northern shore of Lake Pontchartrain. A number of colonists traded with the natives—mainly Creeks—who exchanged deerskins for cook-ware, articles of clothing and other supplies. But Bunn states southeastern tribes competed for trade and fought mainly among themselves. The presence of the Spanish also caused anxiety for those English who made a living in the back country.

Land grants under favorable conditions lured many settlers to the new lands. Even so, no more than 3,000 Englishmen and women called West Florida home by 1770. The American Revolution stimulated immigration by Loyalists, fleeing anarchy. Bunn maintains a little more than half of the 6,000 colonists lived near Natchez by 1775. But as conditions along the east coast of the older colonies threatened the empire, Loyalists in West Florida exhibited little passion for either side in the struggle.

When fighting broke out in New England, there appeared to be little danger to West Florida. This changed. Captain George Gibson led a mission to New Orleans for supplies. In 1777, a Spanish vessel flying a rebel flag hinted at assistance from Louisiana.

Spanish support for the revolutionaries increased largely due to the work of Oliver Pollock, an Irish immigrant and a successful merchant who eventually became close to Louisiana's leadership. He used a tremendous sum of his own wealth to assist the American cause. As England became distracted by a conflict in north America, the Spanish became aware of an opportunity to recoup some of the losses suffered in the Seven Years' War.

Bernardo de Galvez, scion of a prominent family wrapped up in colonial affairs in the new world, became governor and commander in Louisiana. He served in the Spanish army which invaded Portugal and he held a commission in a French regiment. His popularity increased due to his marriage to Felicite de St. Maxent d'Estrehan, whose aristocratic father owned land near New Orleans. Bunn states "Galvez proved himself to be a competent, fair, and decisive administrator in addition to having social grade and political savvy." He distrusted British traders who had business dealings in New Orleans. Galvez prepared for war.

For sometime, revolutionaries yearned for an attack on the Flor-

idas. James Willing, a former resident of Natchez and the brother of Thomas Willing, a successful merchant and member of congress, proposed an expedition down the Mississippi River. He did not divulge his plans but claimed he possessed the authority to take English property. His raid degenerated into a litany of excesses featuring plundering, intimidation, and wanton destruction. Willing's men seized Natchez, and the area around it, and forced a promise of neutrality on its residents. After arriving in New Orleans, Willing's men disposed of their plunder and captured slaves. Bunn maintains the raid and its tawdry aftermath did the revolutionary cause little good. On the other hand, British officials took the defense of West Florida seriously.

The British High command ordered 3,000 soldiers to the Floridas, led by Brigadier General John Campbell. What Campbell found disheartened him; however he oversaw defensive improvements despite the conditions. To add to West Florida's woes, Spain allied itself to France in early 1779 and joined the war in June of that year. In a lightning campaign, Galvez's army captured the British river posts at Manchac, Baton Rouge, and Natchez. Spanish and Americans cleared the British from Lake Pontchartrain and its north shore in short order.

Galvez wasted no time. He decided to move against Mobile and its main defense, Fort Charlotte. Though superiors in Cuba hesitated, Galvez possessed confidence his small army could take Mobile. The Spanish moved at a snail's pace after landing south of the Port City. The siege commenced after the fort's commander refused to surrender. Spanish artillery proved decisive and the British surrendered. Ironically, a relief column from Pensacola arrived too late to be of assistance.

Leaving Colonel Jose de Ezpeleta, Galvez returned to New Orleans. Before he departed, Galvez ordered what Bunn calls "an observation post" for the eastern shore. British, and natives engaged in raids and skirmishes between the Village and the Perdido River. These culminated in a British attack on the post. The commander died and command devolved on a loyalist officer as the British faltered. Ezpeleta's men held and the enemy retired toward Pensacola.

By late winter of 1781, Galvez secured men, ships and supplies for an assault on the British capitol. Because of a divided naval command, Galvez entered Pensacola Bay with only ships from Louisiana. After a brisk fight, the little flotilla anchored. The rest of the fleet followed the next day. A thousand troops under Ezpeleta marched from the Perdido and the siege lines opened.

The siege dragged on throughout March and into April. The siege made little progress, frustrating Galvez. However, the Spanish artillery bombarded British positions to such an extent that General Campbell reported that he feared surrender appeared likely. On the morning of May 8th, 1781, a lucky shot exploded a magazine and killed over 75 men. After an attempt to re-group, the British raised a white flag. Three days later, the Spanish took possession of Pensacola.

As Galvez's men settled into the siege of Pensacola, residents of Natchez, resentful over the way the town and its fort had been handed over to the Spanish, revolted.

Galvez led Spanish forces against the British in the Caribbean until the end of hostilities in 1783. He became viceroy of New Spain but died in Mexico of typhus at the age of 40.

The Spanish campaigns succeeded due to excellent leadership and highly motivated soldiers. Galvez deservedly received all manner of honors from the Spanish government.

Mike Bunn's treatment of the action around Mobile corrects earlier geographic errors by other historians due to his extensive knowledge of the area of operations. His book is a major contribution to the history of the Gulf Coast.

—Bob England

ALABAMA SOCIETY, SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALSSAR

3104 Cabot Street Phone: 334-328-4580
Montgomery, AL 36110 E-mail: timgaylesar@gmail.com



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Be sure to send in your chapter news for the next newsletter

If you're submitting material for the next newsletter, please e-mail your pictures and information to timgaylesar@gmail.com or send information about your chapter's activities or upcoming events by June 10 to Tim Gayle at 3104 Cabot Street, Montgomery, AL 36110.

Chapter appeals to taste buds for President's Day promotion

Presidents Day was commemorated by the Tennessee Valley chapter by appealing to the taste buds. The chapter prepared a special recipe of Washington Gingerbread. Mini-loaves of the bread were made for distribution to select media outlets. Included with the bread were two parchment like scrolls containing a history of the bread and the recipe.

The chapter wanted to make sure that the day is remembered primarily for the reason it was initially recognized in the 1880s. That objective was to remember the birthday of Continental Army commander and the nation's first president, George Washington. Although officially still a celebration of Washington's Birthday at the federal level, many states now honor several presidents.

TVCSAR compatriot Jim Maples, who is also a descendant of Washington's Army at Valley Forge, appeared on WAFF-TV, the NBC affiliate in Huntsville. There was a discussion of the Washington Guard and the bread. The show, *Tennessee Valley Living*, is anchored by Payton Walker, who tasted the bread on air. Later feedback indicates the bread was a "hit" in the newsroom.

The recipe was found in 1922 when the home of President Washington's sister, Betty Washington Lewis, was being thoroughly renovated. The recipe apparently had been penned by Washington's mother, Mary Ball Washington. It is believed to have been served at Mt. Vernon and perhaps to the Marquis de Lafayette.

—Jess Brown

