



*Tampa Chapter
Sons of the American Revolution
April 2022*

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April Meeting

The next meeting of the Tampa Chapter Sons of the American Revolution will be held on Saturday April 16th. As was the case last month we will be meeting on the Second Floor of the University Mall in the area denoted as the "Underground". Drive to the backside of the mall. You will see a parking garage. Go to the 2nd floor and park. Enter through the door, walk straight until you reach a big hallway, turn right. Walk 30 or so feet and the room will be on your left.

This JROTC recognition month. From 11:30-12 we will have our business meeting. This will include the reports of the secretary, treasurer, registrar and any other officers or committees needing to make a report. Then any old business followed by new business. We will then adjourn to the food court for lunch. Lunch may take a bit longer with all of the cadets and their parents. Sometime (no later than 12:45 hopefully) we will reconvene for the recognition of the cadets. Following the recognition, 1st VP Robbie Robinson will speak on leadership.

March Meeting

We recognized Jeffrey Lubinski, our essay contest winner and presented him with a check from the Florida SAR for finishing 3rd in the state contest. Jeff explained to the chapter why he wrote about John Paul Jones and what he learned about Jones.

President Klug made arrangements for author David O. Stewart to make a Zoom presentation to our Chapter, using the technology at our new location. Mr. Stewart is a bestselling writer of

history and historical fiction. The Wall Street Journal called his recent book **George Washington: The Political Rise of America's Founding Father**, an "outstanding biography" with "clear, often superlative" writing and "a narrative drive such as life deserves." He won the History Prize of the Society of the Cincinnati and the George Washington Memorial Award. Mr. Stewart also discussed some of his other books. All of his books are available on Amazon.

American Revolution Note

George Bancroft-American Whig Historian



The late historian John Lukacs wrote in a 1961 essay on Bancroft that "George Bancroft was the most successful of all American Historians." Today that may seem like an overstatement when compared to popular historians of today... Gray Gallagher, Joseph Ellis and Thomas Fleming spring quickly to mind. But from the publication of the 1st volume of his 10 volume History of the United States in 1834 until several years after his death in 1891 his History of the United States remained a best seller and his influence on how Americans viewed their early history unsurpassed.

Bancroft lived a full, long life. In addition to writing his History, he founded the U S Naval Academy, served as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to London and Berlin, and involved himself in Democratic Party politics. His History was greatly influenced by his view of Jacksonian politics, the Romantic age in which he lived and also by the view of history writing emerging in Germany.

In the introduction to his book, he wrote:

The sovereignty of the people is here a conceded axiom, and the laws, established upon that basis, are cherished with faithful patriotism. While the nations of Europe aspire after change, our constitution engages the fond admiration of the people, by which it has been established. Prosperity follows the execution of even justice; invention is quickened by the freedom of competition; and labor rewarded with sure and unexampled returns.

Over the next few pages, he waxes poetic about an eagle soaring in a cloudless blue sky "visible to the Children of Liberty". He concludes his introduction with these words:

A favoring Providence, calling our institutions into being, has conducted the country to its present happiness and glory.

He left the introduction unchanged through several new additions until, in 1882, for a new edition he added:

The foregoing words, written nearly a half-century ago, are suffered to remain, because the intervening years have justified their expression of confidence in the progress of our republic. The seed of disunion has perished; and universal freedom, reciprocal benefits, and cherished traditions bind its many states in the closest union...

He was, as mentioned last month and as you can see from the above quotations, a Whig historian. A few more examples:

the English civil war was a struggle between the simple, democratic, virtuous "Low Folk" Saxons and the "High Folk of Normandie"; the epic campaigns of Britain and France for the domination of the Atlantic world were but a war "between the Catholic and the Protestant Powers."

And

The victory of the Revolution "was the first decisive victory of the industrious middling class over the most powerful representative of the mediaeval aristocracy".

And

"The world is in a constant state of advancement; things are getting better and better all the time"

His *History* was New England centric, particularly Puritan centered. He wrote:

"(This is) the history of a Unique People, of a Unique Revolution, of the Providentially Chosen People of God."

There are problems with Bancroft's *History*. He played fast and loose with his sources. Occasionally misquoting them and often stringing together parts of sources into fictitious speeches.¹ He got bogged down at times and there are omissions from the narrative that simply didn't fit his themes. His time in London and Germany gave him access to enormous amounts of documents, yet he made little use of this fortuitous circumstance.

He viewed history as romantic literature. He wrote not as things were, but as he thought they ought to have been. Two examples:

He used a portrait of Franklin as the frontispiece for Volume 2. After looking at the proofs, he sent the following to the engraver: "The warts on Franklin's face I wish omitted." Not Franklin as he was but as he should have been. Likewise, "Westward the star of empire takes its way" were the words pressed onto the cover of Vol. 1. Bishop Berkeley's famous words spoke of the course, not star, of empire. This was pointed out to him, but he did not change it, he liked star better.

Bancroft had three themes in mind when writing his *History*: Providence, Progress, and Patria. By "Providence" he meant that destiny depended more on God than on human will.

Progress meant society was always getting better. By Patria he meant that America's example would bring liberty and freedom to more and more of the world.

He died wealthy and respected, but his reputation did not long outlive him. By the 1890's the writing of history became more and more based on primary sources and more scientific. Books and articles became more narrowly focused and strove to "write it as it was" replacing epic narrative history (Churchill being an obvious exception). And Whig history went into decline.

Historian Edmund Morgan (died 2013) was a neo-Whig historian who tried to revive Bancroft. He agreed with Bancroft's approach. However, his work has been criticized as painting the colonial Americans as more pro-liberty than they were and portraying the petitions the colonists sent to the King as more ideologically pure and less practically oriented than the evidence shows.

Bancroft and those teachers who teach the Bancroft version look at the American Revolution through nostalgic, romantic, nationalistic and relatively uncritical eyes. A pre-ordained Whig epic of progress.

There are people today who would like to see the Bancroft version taught in schools, especially elementary schools. But to do so would be to ignore too much evidence and too many events that don't fit into Bancroft's romantic Whig narrative.

¹ Very reminiscent of Herodotus in his History of the Peloponnesian War—especially Pericles' Funeral Oration

Program Schedule

Dates for the spring are below. Feel free to pass along any program/speaker suggestions to either President Charles Krug, VPs Robbie Robinson, Roger Roscoe or Sec. Bob Yarnell

Apr 16	JROTC recognition
May 21	EMT recognition & Pres. Charles Klug speaking about Port Tampa Bay
Sep 17	Rodney Kite Powell-Historian and Curator of the Tampa History Museum Speaking on the History of Tampa Bay
Oct 15	TBD
Nov 19	Law enforcement recognition
Dec 17	Wreaths Across America

Please let one of the officers know if you would be interested in an informal get-together over the summer.

Color Guard Events and Opportunities

May 6	Battle of Pensacola	Pensacola
May 10	Honor Flight	Clearwater/St Petersburg Airport
May 30	Memorial Day	American Legion Post #5 (?)
June 14	Honor Flight	Clearwater/St Petersburg Airport



The Chapter Color Guard did not participate in any events as a unit since our last Chapter meeting. Commander Dick Young participated the State Color Guard at the Commemoration of the Battle of Thomas Creek on March 26 in Jacksonville and received a flag streamer for the Chapter flag.

We can never have enough Color Guardsmen. If any of you have any interest in joining the Color Guard, please contact Dick Young, Chapter Commander or any of the members of the Tampa Chapter Color Guard. If you do not want to start with the full Continental Line uniform, we can show you how to get started with a militia "uniform" for much less cost.

March minutes

The meeting was called to order by President Krug at 11:35. Following the opening exercises a discussion was held concerning whether we should move the account to a different bank. The issue was put on hold until outstanding checks clear and more info is gathered.

Treasurer Will Wagner reported a balance of \$8623.00.

Secretary Bob Yarnell reported that all reinstatements have cleared state.

Terry Doan gave an update on the JROTC awards.

Jeff Lubinski, the Tampa Chapter essay contest winner and 3rd place finisher in the state contest gave a short talk about what he learned about John Paul Jones in researching and writing his essay.

The space we are now meeting in is part of Soaring City's project to revitalize northeast Tampa. Eddie Burch, a representative of the company, gave the chapter an overview of their plans.

Dick Young gave the registrar's report.

The meeting the adjourned for lunch.

At 12:30 the meeting reconvened. Pres. Krug introduced the speaker, David O. Stewart who talked (via zoom) on George Washington's early life and how that influenced the man he became.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30.

Respectfully submitted

Bob Yarnell

Secretary request

Any officer or committee chairman giving a report that includes numbers or names, I would appreciate it if you could give me that information either via email prior to or after the meeting or hard copy at the meeting. During the meeting I may easily miss those details and that information will enable us to have more accurate and complete minutes. Thanks.

Miscellaneous Reminders

The face book page for the Tampa Sons of the American Revolution is Tampa Sar. The password to add anything is American1776.

Please feel free to upload pictures or comments. Invite all your friends to look.

Chapter Website—remember you can find information about the chapter and programs on the chapter website. <http://www.tampasar.org/>

One of the duties of the Chapter Chaplain is to send cards to our members that are sick. Another is to send a sympathy card to the family of a member who has passed away. If you know of anyone that should be the recipient of these cards, please mention it to Chaplain Balencie or one of the other officers at our next meeting.