



The Halifax Dispatch

HALIFAX RESOLVES CHAPTER, NCSSAR

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Comp. Randy D. Steele

Comp. Rhoderick Williams

Comp. Clark Wiser



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Chapter Meeting Scheduled for 1/24/2004

The January, 2004 meeting of the Halifax Resolves Chapter will be held at Ralph's BBQ in Weldon, on Sat., 1/24/2004. It will begin at 4:00 p.m. and is expected to end around 5:30 pm, after which all are invited to enjoy the delicious BBQ buffet at Ralph's. On the agenda:

- * induction of Comp. C. R. Casey into the SAR
- * a talk by Professor Allen S. Johnson, of NC Wesleyan University, on the causes of the Revolution (they might not be what you expect).

Members, guests and interested parties are cordially invited. The cost is \$12.00 per person, payable by cash or check only. Please RSVP to Steve Avent by 1/10/2004 at 252-459-9427 or by email at savent@mindspring.com or by the US mail at P.O. Box 221, Red Oak, NC 27868.

Cowpens 223rd Anniversary Celebration

The celebration of the 223rd anniversary of Patriot Gen. Daniel Morgan's spectacular victory over British Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton at the Battle of Cowpens will be held Sat., 1/17/04. Comp. Steve Avent is planning to attend this event on behalf of the Halifax Resolves Chapter – if anyone else is interested in attending, please let him know. Here are some details:

11:00 a.m. Morgan Square in downtown Spartanburg, sponsored by the National Park Service. A wreath will be placed at the statue of General Daniel Morgan by the NPS with various attendees participating.

2:00 p.m. Ceremony at the Cowpens Battlefield, sponsored by the Sons of the American Revolution with participation from DAR, SAR, CAR, and other patriotic and historical organizations. The NSSAR wreath will be presented by a national officer at the U. S. Monument in front of the visitor's center. This ceremony will be followed by a march to the monument on the battlefield for the wreath-laying ceremony by participating groups.

Thousands of people come every year for a weekend of celebration including battlefield walks, encampments, speeches, firing demonstrations, drama, wreath laying, and other activities. The Sons of the American Revolution has been a part of this annual celebration since 1994.

COWPENS NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

Cowpens National Battlefield is approximately 60 miles SW of Charlotte, NC. Take 1-85 to Gaffney, SC (exit 92) then five miles west on SRI 1 in the direction of Chesnee, SC. Or take 1-85 out of Spartanburg, SC to Gaffney.

MOTELS

Motels are available in Gaffney, SC: Jamison Inn (864-489-0240); Holiday Inn Express (864-489-1699); Comfort Inn (864-487-4200); Days Inn (864-489-7172). Other motels are located in Spartanburg about 20 miles SW on 1-85. A block of rooms has been reserved at Holiday Inn Express for January 16 and 17. Please make reservations by calling the motel directly. Room cost is \$56.00 plus tax.

The Battle of Cowpens



Brig. Gen. Daniel Morgan

The Loyalist defeat at King's Mountain in October of 1780 revived the Patriot effort for the war in the South. The Army's new Southern Department commander was Quaker Nathaniel Greene, who appointed Brig. Gen. Daniel Morgan ("the Old Wagoner") in charge of the Army in South Carolina. Morgan was a steady veteran, having served with the British Army in the Seven Years war (he still bore the scars of 500 lashes he received for striking a British superior officer), fought in the campaign for Quebec, and participated in the pivotal battle of Saratoga. It was there that Morgan proved himself a tactical genius, and Morgan and his Virginia riflemen were instrumental in the Patriot victory.

By January 16, 1781 Morgan commanded a force of about 1000 men. About 300 were Continentals from Maryland and Delaware Regiments, some of the finest units in the Continental Army. The rest of his force was composed of militia, some riflemen, some French volunteers, and cavalry commanded by Lt. Col. William Washington, 2nd cousin to George Washington.

Coming to meet this assortment of American troops was possibly the most hated man in the colonies. He was referred to as "Benny", or "the Butcher", but to most he was known as "Bloody Tarleton". Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton was one of Lord Cornwallis' favorite officers. Aggressive and reckless, he was hated and feared by the Patriot soldiers who faced him, though they respected his fighting abilities. Tarleton was pursuing Morgan's forces with 1100 infantry and cavalry, and two cannons, and Morgan knew that the following day, January 17, 1781, Tarleton would catch up with him and give him battle.

Morgan came up with a brilliant, though risky plan. He knew the militia would likely run at the first sign of battle, and that his riflemen could not withstand a bayonet attack. He chose as the battlefield a place known to all in the area as "Hannah's Cowpens", which had long been used as a place to pasture cattle. It was mostly open country, with a gradual upward slope. It was a few miles from the swollen Broad River, which would make retreat difficult, thus forcing the militia to stand and fight. He arranged his battle lines with the militia out in front, followed by the battle-tested Continentals at the top of the slope, with William Washington's cavalry on the flanks. Shallow swales running across the slope made the Continental soldiers and Washington's cavalry virtually invisible to the British troops at the bottom of the hill. Knowing the militia would not stand up for long against British Regulars, he attempted to get the most out of them by telling them that all he required of them was to fire three shots and then they could fall back.

Just before dawn Tarleton's forces arrived on the field. As expected, he wasted no time in seizing the offensive. Tarleton's infantry advanced and were met by skirmishers. These skirmishers were Morgan's riflemen, who used the trees to steady their weapons and picked off the British with deadly precision. They then reloaded while racing through the forest, getting off another shot, until they reached the safety of the militia.

Tarleton's troops continued to advance aggressively and ran into the line of militia reinforced by the riflemen. The militia gave Morgan his three fires, hitting many of the British forward officers. The British troops were undaunted and continued to advance, this time with bayonets leveled. Fearing the British juggernaut, the militia moved to the rear in an organized fashion, and Tarleton sent his dragoons in after the retreating militia. The dragoons were almost upon them, when Washington unleashed his cavalymen and a melee ensued.

At this critical point in the battle, the commander of the crack Maryland and Delaware Continentals, Lt. Col. John Eager Howard, gave an order to pull back one of the flanks, but this order was misinterpreted and most of his troops turned and began an orderly march to the rear. The British troops saw this movement and assumed that the Patriot forces were fleeing, and so they charged up the hill after them, becoming more of a mob than a disciplined fighting force. Tarleton then sent in his reserves to administer what he thought would be the coup de grace. Morgan and Howard, meanwhile, regained control of the situation, and located a suitable place to re-establish their line. Morgan ordered his men to halt, turn and fire, which they did smoothly and quickly, and they delivered a volley at point blank range, right into the faces of the surprised British soldiers. They then gave the British a taste of their own medicine, following up with a bayonet charge, which eliminated any remaining resistance and captured Tarleton's two cannons. Washington's cavalry pursued the fleeing redcoats down the main road, killing them along the way. In an ending that could have been written in Hollywood, Washington and Tarleton personally engaged in a close quarters sabre battle, and Tarleton himself barely escaped with



Lt. Col Banastre Tarleton

his life.

The victory at Cowpens was a huge morale booster for the Patriot cause. Tarleton’s command was destroyed. Total losses for the British included 110 dead (including 10 officers), 200 wounded and 530 prisoners. American casualties were only 12 dead.

Highlights of the 9/13/03 meeting.



Comp. Steve Avent calls the meeting to order.



Members and guests enjoy the fellowship.



Comp. Cleveland Hawkins is inducted into the SAR.



Comp. Steve Pittard, President of the Marquis de Lafayette Chapter, Fayetteville, pins the SAR rosette on new member Cleveland Hawkins’ lapel.



Comp. Steve Avent swears in the new officers (l-r):
Comp. Rhoderick Williams, Vice President,
Comp. Cleveland Hawkins, Secretary/Treasurer.
Comp. Joe Harris (proxy for Comp. Franklin Horton, Registrar).



Comp. Carl Witt, of the Historic Halifax Museum, delivers a most interesting and informative talk on the important role of Halifax during the Revolution.

HALIFAX RESOLVES CHAPTER, NCSSAR

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The Sons of the American Revolution is a patriotic organization formed in 1889 and chartered by the United States Congress in 1906, with more than 25,000 living members from all 50 states and 23 foreign countries. Throughout its 115-year history, the SAR has admitted more than 155,000 members. Among them are 16 Presidents of the United States, including George W. Bush and his father George H. W. Bush, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Harry Truman and Theodore Roosevelt. The SAR also has had among its members Sir Winston Churchill and King Juan Carlos I of Spain, both of whom trace their ancestry to Revolutionary War patriots. Membership requires proof of descent from a person who aided in the Patriot cause. Some of the activities we engage in are:

- * commemoration of patriot graves and monuments
- * educational programs in the schools and elsewhere on the ideals of our Patriot ancestors and the American Revolution
- * recognition of outstanding law enforcement officers and JROTC cadets
- * sponsorship of Boy Scout troops



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