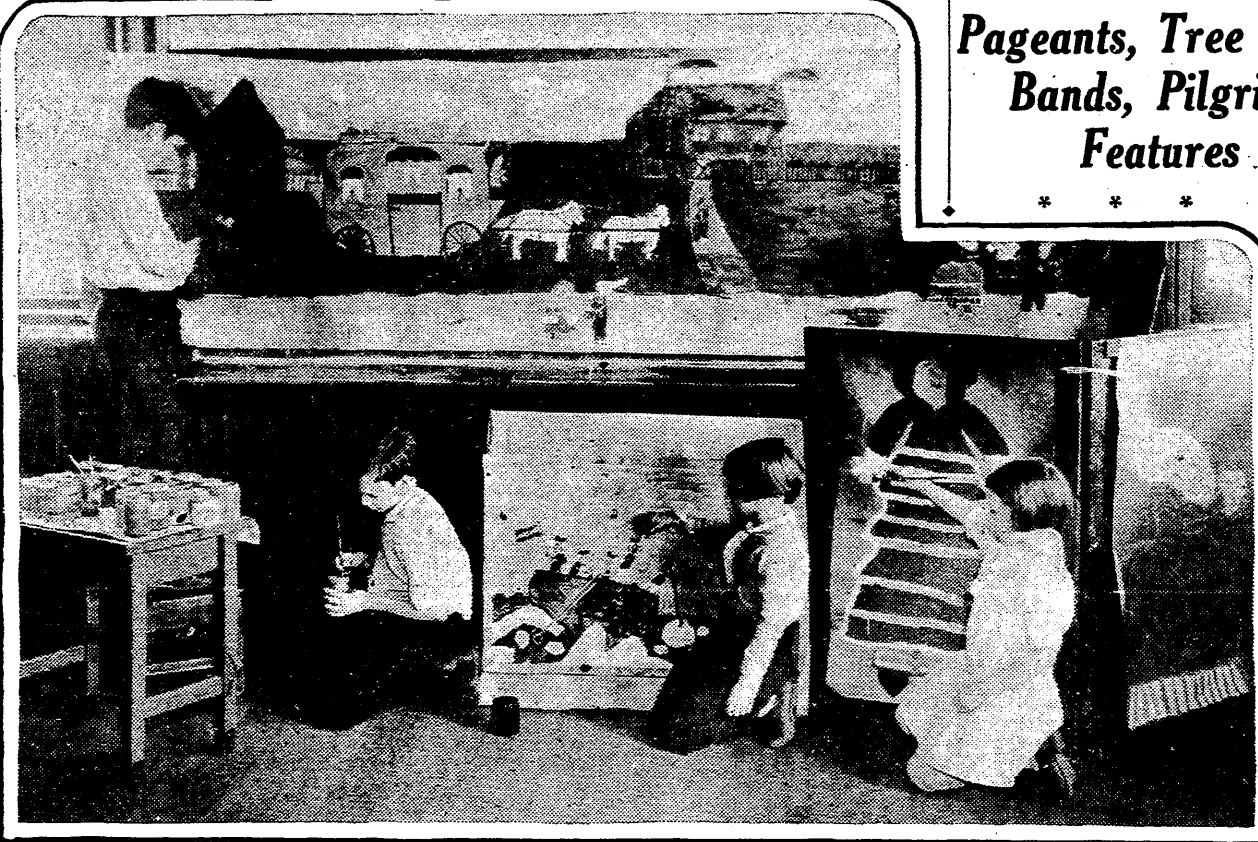


TRENTON PUPILS TO HONOR WASHINGTON

Pageants, Tree Planting, Concerts by School Bands, Pilgrimages to Historic Spots Among Features of Bicentennial Celebration Here



By Elma Lawson Johnston
This year when men's courage and morale are sorely tried by depressing economic conditions and by world unrest, this nation will pause to pay tribute to the memory of George Washington and, it is hoped, draw anew inspiration from his life of lofty ideals and his tremendous sacrifices for the good of his countrymen. Perhaps the 200th anniversary of Washington's birth could not have come in a better time, for surely men never needed to stop and take stock of the qualities that have made Washington, during all these years, such a revered figure and powerful influence in American life.

In every city, and in practically every town, village and hamlet some celebration will be held that will recall Washington and his times. Many of these will be elaborate. Others will be more simple, but each will commemorate in some fitting way the great "Father of His Country."

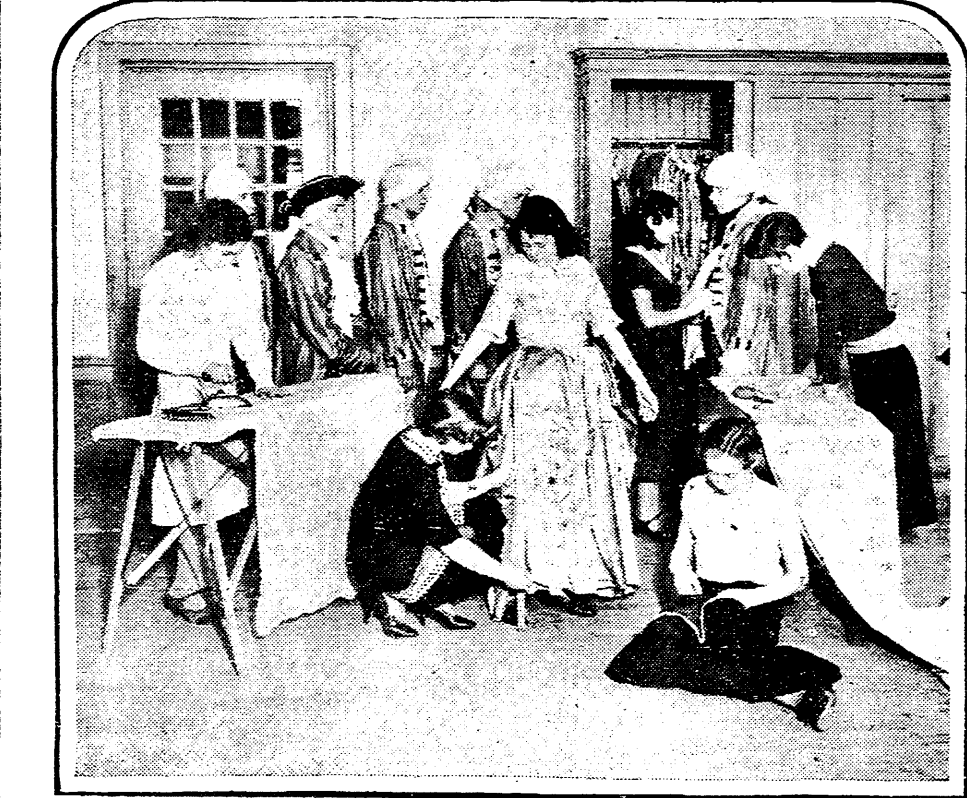
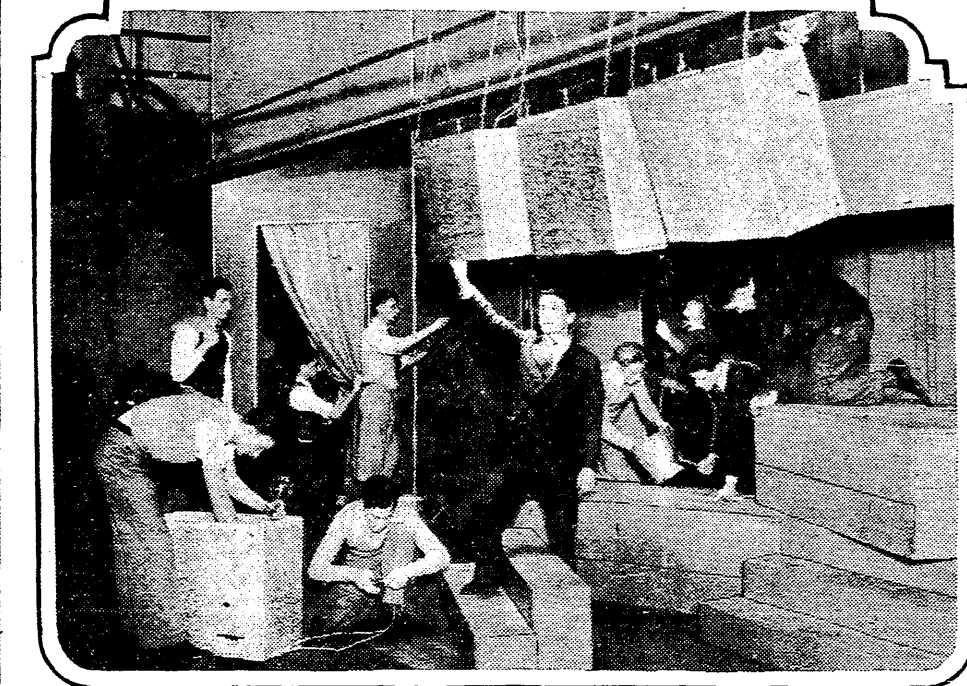
Trenton, centre of important activities during the Colonial and Revolutionary periods, will be the scene of several brilliant events in observance of the Washington bicentennial. On February 22, New Jersey's official bicentennial celebration will be held here, and on April 21 Trenton's own program will be presented. This date is being selected since it marks the anniversary of the day when Washington was given his famous reception here when en route to New York City to be inaugurated first President of the United States.

These events will not complete the Trenton bicentennial program, for pupils of the Trenton public schools will stage two other affairs that will rival in interest both of the official celebrations. One of them will be a historic pageant, given for the public, February 26 and 27, in the auditorium of the new Senior High School. The other, on Arbor Day, will be the dedication of 200 American elm trees on the new State highway that in time is to extend from Valley Forge through Washington Crossing to Morristown.

Important and attractive as these two affairs will be, they are actually only a small part of the schools' Washington bicentennial program. The educational authorities have taken advantage of the opportunity afforded by the Washington celebration to make history, civics, reading, English, fine and industrial arts, and even arithmetic more vital and real to the pupils than they may have ever been before. This does not mean that the schools have laid aside their prescribed curriculum to introduce the subject of Washington and his times. Instead in the regular course of study there are many subjects that directly link up with such a celebration. For instance, in American history and literature, the pupils always study about Washington and his era, but this year greater emphasis is being laid on the subject. This is the case throughout the entire system, from the kindergarten and primary grades through the upper high school classes.

To the children all of the individual class and school activities will be very important, but general public interest will naturally centre in the pageant and the tree dedication. The former no doubt will attract a large audience, for it is to be an elaborate, historically accurate and delightful affair. It is to be staged by pupils of the Senior High School, the Junior High Schools, Nos. 1, 3 and 4 and the Junior grades of the Lincoln School.

The pageant, all in pantomime, will



consist of five episodes based upon incidents in the life of Washington. As far as possible they are incidents that took place in or near Trenton. It is proposed to have a Chronicker, in costume of the Revolutionary period, introduce each episode, telling briefly in the manner of the old Chronicker the story of the scene to be presented.

The first episode to be shown is Washington in Trenton in 1756. It is known that he went through Trenton at that time on his way to Boston to confer with General Shirley, commander-in-chief of the British army in America, but it is not definitely known whether or not he stayed over night. If he did, he probably lodged at one of the taverns then existing here and the episode shows the probable scene at the inn. This is the only incident which is not based on absolutely authenticated history, but in which some dramatic license has been allowed. Pupils of the Lincoln School will stage it.

Junior No. 3 students are to present the second episode, Washington and John Honeyman. This deals with the mysterious Jersey spy upon whose

assistance Washington relied so greatly for information in his campaign in the Jerseys. For long years after the Revolution, Honeyman was treated with contempt by his fellow townsmen for his seemingly disloyal activities in the war of independence, and it is only in recent times that his true part has been revealed. There is now in the New Jersey Washington Crossing Park a fountain dedicated to the memory of this man who suffered so much for freedom.

The Christmas Party in Trenton, December 1776, is to be the third episode, and a charming picture it will make. It will show Abraham Hunt entertaining Colonel Rahl and his Hessian officers Christmas night when Washington and his ragged army were crossing the Delaware and preparing to march on Trenton. A feature of the scene will be the dancing of the minut by a group of students in Colonial costume. Junior No. 1 pupils will be responsible for this scene.

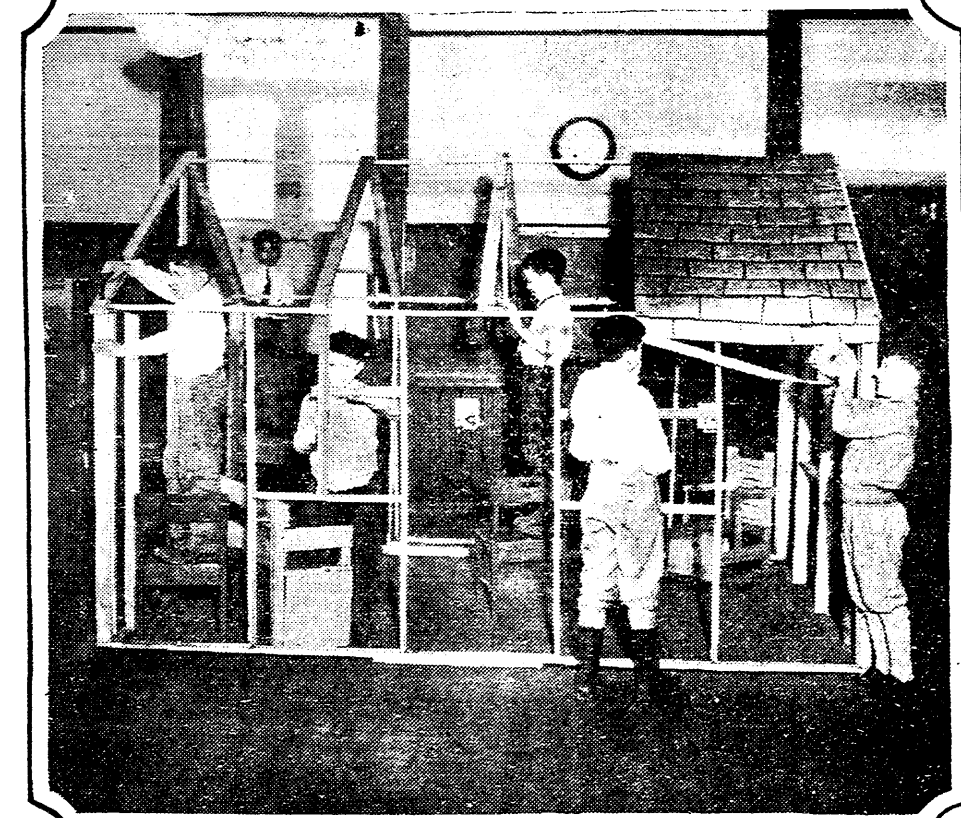
Preparation for crossing the Delaware, the actual crossing and the death of Colonel Rahl and surrender of his troops are to be shown in the fourth episode which the Senior High

School students are preparing. This will be in four scenes.

PUPILS WORK ON PAGEANT COSTUMES AND SETTINGS

Concluding the pageant will be a representation of Washington's reception in Trenton in 1789. That was the occasion when a group of prominent matrons and young girls, all dressed in white, assembled at the Assunpink Bridge to strew flowers in the path of the Commander-in-Chief, and as Washington rode beneath the triumphal arch erected in his honor, to sing an ode especially written for the event.

Before the curtain goes up on the first episode, an orchestra composed of pupils from the five schools will play a medley of musical airs of the Colonial period. Between the second and third scenes a quartet of students will sing an old German stien song, and at the end the audience will join the Chronicker in singing the Star Spangled Banner. There will be an interlude between the third and fourth episodes, showing soldiers on the famous Christmas eve preceding the Battle of Trenton. A life and



Scenes in the Trenton public schools in connection with the Washington Bicentennial celebration are shown in the accompanying photographs. In the upper left, a group of pupils of the Monument School are shown painting pictures to illustrate incidents in the life of Washington and his times, and making mural backgrounds for their plays. In the upper right, boys and girls of Mott School are shown in a dance scene from their Colonial play given at Christmas time as part of the Washington festivities. High School students making sets for the historical pageant to be presented in February at the Trenton Senior High School are pictured in the centre left, while at the right a group of Junior No. 1 School pupils are shown rehearsing for a play dealing with life in Revolutionary times. The photograph at the lower left pictures a group of boys and girls of Junior No. 4 School busy making and fitting costumes for the episode they are to give in the historical pageant at the High School. The house which is to be a replica of one in the Colonial era, shown in the lower right, is being built by pupils of the Monument School.

drum corps appearing after the fourth episode and preceding the appearance of the Chronicker will strike a stirring note.

The pageant, like all the other programs in the public schools given in connection with the Washington celebration, will be the direct result of actual student work in the classroom. In manual training classes boys of the senior and junior schools will make all stage settings for the five scenes. Each school responsible for an episode will make the costumes in the home economic classes. The actual information on which the incidents are based will be gained in the usual prescribed study of American history or literature and in additional historic research. Plans for the scenes will be formulated as part of the English studies.

In this way, the pageant is not a project imposed upon the schools with little or no relation to the school curriculum, but it is rather a direct outgrowth of classroom work. The handsome new auditorium of the

high school, with its large and excellently equipped stage will be an admirable place for the presentation of the pageant.

The two performances on the evenings of February 26 and 27 are for the general public. Additional performances are to be arranged for children of other schools in the system, thus making it possible for all pupils old enough to understand and appreciate the pageant to have an opportunity to see it.

The pageant will be the contribution of the secondary schools to the Washington Celebration. The tree planting on the other hand will be the special activity of the elementary schools, from kindergarten through sixth grades. It is a project, in accordance with the recommendation of the National Bicentennial Committee that thousands of trees be planted throughout the nation this year in memory of Washington, in which every elementary school child in the Trenton schools may have a part. In this important undertaking the

Daughters of the American Revolution will have to cooperate with the public schools. The chapters, together with teachers of the Trenton schools, will stage a monster card party Wednesday night, February 17, in the new War Memorial Building and all the proceeds will be devoted to financing the tree planting. Money to buy and have the trees planted is being raised in this way because the late Dr. William J. Bickett felt that this was no time to ask pupils for money contributions for even such a worthy cause. He realized that in many homes the burden of economic conditions is resting very heavily just now, and that to request even a voluntary contribution of a few pennies from the children would subject to painful embarrassment those pupils who could not afford to participate in the giving.

The Daughters of the American Revolution have therefore come forward and offered to hold a public benefit to raise money to pay for the tree planting. Teachers of all the elementary schools are working with the D. A. R. members, and through

the activity of both groups it is hoped to have a fund large enough to fill the Assembly Hall of the Memorial Building and to overflow into the adjoining rooms. Efforts will be made to raise all of the \$600 needed for the tree planting at this time.

TREES WILL BE PLANTED ALONG HISTORIC HIGHWAY

Another agency assisting in the project is the Mercer County Shade Tree Commission, which is advising in the purchase of the trees and will set them in place along the highway. The commission will also furnish a suitable boulder on which to place the bronze tablet that is to serve as a marker.

No more appropriate highway could have been chosen for the tree planting than the new road from Valley Forge to Morristown. When finished, it will be one of the most historical roadways in this country, passing through regions rich in Colonial history and inseparably associated with the memory of Washington. From Valley Forge the road will come to Washington Crossing, passing through the Pennsylvania and New Jersey State parks, and from there to Princeton, Rocky Hill and Morristown. It is proposed to plant trees along this entire highway and about four years ago the undertaking was begun at Washington Crossing. To date 400 American elms have been set out.

The section of road selected by the Mercer County Shade Tree Commission for the trees of the public school children of Trenton is that between Washington Crossing and Princeton. It cuts across the Trenton-Pennington Road, and terminates at the highway known as the Baldwin's Corner Road. It is about a mile in length and will require 200 trees.

Actual planting of the trees will be done at the appropriate season, and the dedicatory exercises will be held by the children April 8, Arbor Day. Since it will be impossible to transport all the elementary school children for these exercises, it is planned to have a few pupils from each school, and they are to be chosen by the student bodies. In the schools at the exact hour of the dedicatory exercises on the highway, those pupils not attending the ceremonies will be having exactly the same program in their buildings. Thus all of the children in the elementary grades will be participating.

Arrangements will be made for the transportation of 200 pupils to and from the highway exercises, and the Mercer County Shade Tree Commission will arrange for protection of the children.

Charles P. Wilber, State Forester of New Jersey, consented to speak in the elementary schools for the purpose of acquainting the pupils with

(Continued on Next Page)