

Joseph plumb martin



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Order 524553 Topic: Joseph Plumb Martin “ Ordinary Courage” reminds the reader that the American Revolution was fought by ordinary soldiers thrust into extraordinary circumstances. The pages of the human history, daubed in blood shed about wars, the heroics of the war-veterans, the statesmanship and brinkmanship of the political leaders, cruelties and devastation. The suffering and extraordinary contributions of the ordinary soldiers are relegated to the background. The rank and file soldier has to undergo the after-results of the war like starvation, killer diseases and unpredictable weather conditions. " What sort of “ hero” is Martin, having what sort of “ adventure”?”—is not ironic. Some authors have the talent to explain the serious situations, without missing the humorous tone. This is the latent literary genius of authors. Wit and humor are great assets for a writer. Martin describes about the confusing situations that prevailed in the uncertain battlegrounds. Without able officers to guide, issue orders to the soldiers as to the course of action to be followed everything was in a state of mess in the war-fronts. The soldiers were ill-equipped, untrained and faced life-and death situations often. Most of them were inexperienced and did not possess the skills and intricacies of attacking and defending in warfronts. Martin’s grouse that the authorities did not care for the ordinary soldier is genuine. They defended the people and the cause, and once the war was over they were finding it difficult to defend their poor pensions. This observation of Martin is bone chilling: “ If I chance to die in a civilized country, none will deny me that. A dead body never begs a grave; thanks for that.” (p. 179, 180). Martin and fellow-soldiers fought wars with utter dedication in sub-human conditions. Their patriotism was matchless. Martin felt genuine anguish the way the soldiers were treated by the authorities,

once the job was done. His language is not that of a bitter critic. His simple words pierce the conscience of a discernable reader, like a sharp dagger. Revolutionary speeches were delivered by the big leaders, theoreticians on the subject of racism, and other think-tanks from the ivory towers. But the real difficulties of the war was borne by the ordinary soldiers, and the goal of freedom for the Nation was accomplished by them fighting from the deadly trenches, with genuine apprehensions about their survival to see the sun rise for another day. Apart from the war plans of the top leadership the internal war-fever was already there in the minds of the average Americans who later joined the army. Americans suffered from the British policies of mercantilism and imperialism and their aspiration to govern their ‘ colony’ was evident in their policies and actions. The spirit of revolution prevailed in America even before the war commenced. Minds and hearts of average people like Joseph Martin were craving for action. After winning the war what pained him intensely was that his own people let the ordinary soldier down, and left him to fend for himself. In fine, what Joseph Plumb Martin wants to drive home is: The average American soldier had a cause dear to his heart, and that was freedom from the British imperialists at all cost. Soldiers like him had the heart for the sacrifice and finally to receive the rewards or punishments for the sacrifice. Neglect by own authorities and people was the cause of displeasure of the helpless soldiers. Works Cited Martin, James Kirby, Ordinary Courage: The Revolutionary War Adventures of Joseph Plumb Martin. (Editor) Wiley-Blackwell; 3 edition, May 13, 2008.