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APYs are subject to change weekly.
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From the President General

American Spirit's cover subject this issue is the instantly recognizable Brooklyn Bridge—and the less well-known woman who proved so vital to its creation. Emily Roebling took over as supervising engineer of the bridge after her husband was injured and could no longer do the job. Despite the dangerous, often deadly work, Emily's perseverance and diplomacy helped raise the "Eighth Wonder of the World." The feature also highlights Emily's active service to the DAR. That is why it seems fitting that a New York Daughter, Marilyn Cole Greene from the Enoch Crosby Chapter, brought us this story.

At Montpelier, James Madison's home in Virginia, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has undertaken a monumental restoration project. The goal of the four-year, $30 million project is to restore the home to the way it was in 1809, when Montpelier was an elegant 22-room family dwelling. The home grew to 55 rooms in the early 20th century under the stewardship of the duPont family. However, by 2008, two centuries of renovations will be stripped away, leaving a building almost identical to the one Madison knew after retiring from the White House.

Rounding out our issue devoted to architectural pioneers, we salute America's first women architects—from Catharine Beecher, who designed model home environments, to Louise Bethune, considered to be the first professional American woman architect. Although these women saw their careers in very different ways, their efforts became the blueprints for later professionals.

For much of America's early history, the phrase "saving the whales" did not have the modern meaning of ending whales' slaughter—it meant rendering the mammals into oil. The vast wealth from the whaling industry helped drive a young nation's economy; but, as our feature shows, the profits and the success could not last.

With Independence Day and Flag Day upon us, July is the perfect month to bring a story to you about "human flag" events. These gatherings are collaborative efforts where hundreds, even thousands, of people come together to create living expressions of patriotism. Popular at the beginning of the 20th century, these human displays of patriotic symbols were revived after 9/11.

This issue's Spirited Adventure takes you to St. Augustine, Fla, where the country's Spanish influence has been apparent since the settlement was founded in 1565. Our Historic Homes department opens the door to the Florence Griswold House, now a museum honoring Griswold and her influence on American Impressionist art. At this Old Lyme, Conn., boardinghouse, American landscape painters were nurtured by its gracious landlady and inspired to paint the rural Connecticut landscape.

Finally, American Spirit has once again been honored for its design and editorrial excellence. The Society of National Association Publications (SNAP) awarded the magazine its Gold (first place) Award for Design Excellence. Our September/October 2004 feature story, "When Women Lost the Right to Vote," won an Honorable Mention in the 2005 American Society for Professional Communicators (ASPC) Master Communications Awards.

Best wishes for an enjoyable summer, and thank you for your support of American Spirit magazine!
**Scouts and Silhouettes**

I was so pleased to see the craft article on silhouettes in the March/April 2005 issue of *American Spirit*. In February 1961 when I was a Cub Scout Den Mother in Montgomery, Ala., our boys made silhouettes of themselves, working in pairs. They used the method of projecting their silhouettes on the wall standing between a piece of paper and a table lamp. That made a pattern that they then cut out of black construction paper. They gave them as gifts to their moms after they were used as centerpieces at the Blue and Gold Banquet. Needless to say, our Den won first place for decorations.

I also want to point out September 17, 2005, is the 275th anniversary of the birth of Major General Baron Steuben, Drillmaster of the Continental Army. Many commemorative events are planned in Oneida County, N.Y., where he is buried. I would be happy to hear from anyone planning events elsewhere in the United States and Germany.

Keep up the good work with our beautiful *American Spirit* and the *Daughters* newsletter.

Mary Helen Jones
Holland Patent Chapter, N.Y.

**An A in American History**

Thank you for your permission to distribute copies of “Their Thoughts Were Free” by Gin Phillips (March/April 2005) to teachers participating in our Teaching American History grant. We will be visiting Lowell Mills this summer (as one of many museum sites on a 10-day trip) and this article will be an excellent supplement to that experience.

Emily George, age 13
Gurnee, Ill.

**Not So Fast**

In your March/April 2005 “Whatnot: On This Day in History,” I noticed an error in the March 20, 1985, date. The statement says Libby Riddles won the Iditarod in just over 18 hours. After researching her for a school project I found that she finished the race in 18 days, 20 minutes and 17 seconds. I hope you find this information useful.

Emily George, age 13
Gurnee, Ill.

**Making Joyful Noises**

Thank you for the fine article and attractive layout on sacred harp singing in your January/February 2005 issue. Perhaps your readers will be interested in knowing that Nashville will host the 2005 United Sacred Harp Musical Association Convention September 10-11 at Belmont University. Sacred harp singings have been held in Nashville since at least the 1930s.

Etha P. Green
Nashville, Tenn.
What not
NEWS > EVENTS > MISCELLANY

LOOKING BACK
ON 225 YEARS

THANKS TO MORE THAN FIVE YEARS of lobbying Congress, the 225th anniversary of the American Revolution will receive the attention it deserves. Last year, the House and the Senate passed the 225th Anniversary of the American Revolution Commemoration Act, lending the war the national recognition and funding that the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Hudson River Valley Institute and other groups have been fighting for since 1999.

Dr. James Johnson, executive director of the Hudson River Valley Institute, testified in support of the act before a U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee.

"I’m afraid people are losing sight of the significance of the war," Johnson says. "We need to re-educate the public and help explain how the American Revolution reflects our values and who we are today."

The National Park Service will mark the 225th celebration through a series of events held nationwide titled, "Lighting Freedom's Flame."

Patriots' Weekend 2005, this year’s signature event of the 225th anniversary celebration, will be held September 29 to October 2 in Tarrytown, Tappan and Sleepy Hollow, N.Y., to commemorate the treasonous relationship of Benedict Arnold and Major John André.

Next year’s signature event will highlight the French contributions to the Patriot cause. The anniversary celebration lasts through 2008 and will trace the footsteps of the later years of the war.

For more information on these and other events of the 225th anniversary celebration, visit www.nps.gov/revwar.

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY
(Sources include Library of Congress' "American Memory" http://memory.loc.gov)

July 5, 1777: The British surround American troops at Fort Ticonderoga, N.Y., forcing them to flee.

July 9, 1776: New York City citizens topple a statue of King George III during a public reading of the Declaration of Independence, five days after its adoption by the Second Continental Congress.

July 23, 1904: Charles Menches of St. Louis invents the ice cream cone.

August 3, 1492: Christopher Columbus begins the voyage that would lead him to the New World.

August 17, 1805: Meriwether Lewis discovers a village of Shoshones and finds out that Chief Cameahwait is Sacagawea's brother.

August 31, 1774: Royal Governor of Virginia John Murray Dunmore and 1,900 British troops arrive at Fort Pitt, Pa.

Quick Quiz

THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR
1 What James Fenimore Cooper book is set during the French and Indian War?
2 The French and Indian War was part of what larger war, taking place in Europe?
3 What present-day city was young George Washington referring to when he said, "As I got down before the canoe, I spent some time in viewing the rivers and the land in the fork, which I think extremely well situated for a fort; as it has the absolute command of both rivers."
4 Did the British use biological warfare during the French and Indian War?
5 What treaty ended the French and Indian War in 1763?

Answers on page 7.
IN HIS FOOTSTEPS

LONG BEFORE GEORGE WASHINGTON was Commander of the Continental Army or President of the United States, he was a young officer in the French and Indian War. Follow in his footsteps this month in Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania’s Laurel Highlands to commemorate the second year of the 250th anniversary of this brutal and contentious war that started over the control of land west of the Allegheny Mountains.

Open through April 2006, the “Clash of Empires” exhibit at the Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh presents the story of the war that sent shockwaves around the world. Among its more than 200 paintings and artifacts, the exhibit features the original Treaty of Fort Necessity and original uniforms, clothing and weapons used by European, Colonial and American Indian participants.

Outside Pittsburgh you can visit Fort Necessity National Battlefield, the scene of the first battle of Washington’s career, and Fort Ligonier, a reconstructed British fort where you can view the future president’s remarks on his experience in the war.

For more information, visit www.frenchandindianwar250.org.

Clockwise from top right: “The Uniform of a British Colonial Colonel” by Charles Wilson Peale, 1772; engraved powder horn, c.1758; “Oneida Leader Scarouyady” by Robert Connell, c.1754

A Farewell Fondness

YOU WON’T FIND Caleb Hall’s name in a U.S. history book, but you might find his favorite topic in there—President George Washington’s farewell address.

A successful farmer in late 19th-century New York, Hall spent hundreds of dollars to ensure the memory of the speech would endure. For starters, he paid for the publication of pamphlets that contained the farewell address. He also erected statues of both the President and Washington’s mother, Mary, in St. Andrews Cemetery in New Berlin, N.Y. Most notably, he left money in his will to four area schools so they could award prizes to the best readers of the farewell address—a tradition that still exists today.

By DAR members Theresa M. Willansen, Astenrogen Chapter, and Jeannie Westcott, Oneonta Chapter
IN THE GALLERIES
If your summer travels include New York, Los Angeles or Boston, make time to visit the following exhibits.

THROUGH JULY 30

“The Declaration of Independence”
To celebrate the Fourth of July, the New York Public Library will display its copy of the Declaration of Independence, hand-written by Thomas Jefferson, at the Humanities and Social Sciences Library. Following ratification by Congress on July 4, 1776, Jefferson made several copies of the document highlighting the changes Congress made to it. The library’s copy is one of only two known to survive intact.

Humanities and Social Sciences Library, New York, (212) 930-0830; www.nypl.org

OPENS JUNE 12

“Encounters: The Fur Trade”
From the Great Lakes to the Pacific Ocean, the American West in the early 19th century was synonymous with fur trading. The second in a three-part series of exhibits on the history of the West, this display explores the blended stories of merchants, hunters, trading posts and villages across the country, starting with the trading cultures along the Mississippi River and ending with the creation of a new culture in the West, the Métis, a French term meaning mixed-race.

Autry National Center, Los Angeles, (323) 667-2000; www.autynationalcenter.org

THROUGH AUGUST 21

“The Quilts of Gee’s Bend”
Taking scraps from worn-out clothing, the women of Gee’s Bend, a small, isolated, historically black community in southern Alabama, have created some of the most geometrically striking quilts of the 20th century. See 60 quilts and learn about this unique artistic tradition and the four generations of quilters who have kept it alive.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, (617) 267-9300; www.mfa.org

DON’T FORGET YOUR FIFE
FANS OF MILITARY MUSIC won’t want to miss next month’s 2005 National Fife and Drum Corps Muster at Fort Ticonderoga, N.Y. Witness nearly a thousand musicians from around the country re-enact 18th- and 19th-century military Fife and Drum Corps as they perform wearing period uniforms and marching in military drill precision.

Before modern modes of communication, military commanders used small flutes, or fifes, and drums to relay messages to their troops. Fifers and drummers also provided entertainment for the troops.

This practice gained popularity during the American Revolution and was used in the United States military until the early parts of World War I. The National Fife and Drum Corps Muster gathers every year.

For more information, visit www.fort-ticonderoga.org.

Answers to quiz on page 5:
1 The Last of the Mohicans
2 Seven Years’ War
3 Pittsburgh
4 During the Pontiac Rebellion in 1763, Sir Jeffrey Amherst, the Commander in Chief of the British forces, suggested giving blankets contaminated with smallpox to the Indians. It is not known if the plan was ever carried out, though.
5 The Treaty of Paris
Take a step inside the DAR Museum for a closer look at its fascinating collection.

**Nutty Buddy**

Anyone who has watched a child play for hours with a cardboard box knows that sometimes it's the simplest toys that most delight. That principle was one the creator of the walnut head understood well.

It's rare that such a home-crafted plaything—with its walnut head and clothespin body—survived at all. Although its date is unknown, DAR Museum curators believe that the clothes of the mother doll indicate that the toy was made in the 1830s. Dolls in the 19th century were commonly made with objects used in the home such as clothespins, perfect because of their round "head" and two prongs for legs. Since early clothespins were made of one piece connected by a spring, this made the dolls look even more lifelike.

The walnut head doll is just one of the homemade toys in the museum, which also has an early 19th-century corn cob doll covered in muslin and one made of rolled-up wad of muslin wearing a neoclassical muslin gown. An 1860-era doll made of a wishbone is another highlight of the collection. Not made for play, the wishbone doll functioned as an old-style pen wiper.

Visitors to the DAR Museum can see these dolls and other historic toys in the New Hampshire Attic. Designed in the 1930s by Wallace Nutting, a New England collector, antiquarian and writer, the period room is filled with a collection of children's furnishings, toys and games, spanning almost 150 years of childhood fun.
tight focused biography of George Washington uncovers the man behind the myth, and two histories of American business trace the nation’s role in global economic power.

BEYOND THE LEGEND

Would-be readers of George Washington biographies are like travelers at a crossroads, with a choice of several roads to consider.

The longest roads overlook few details about the public life of the Father of our Nation. Two multi-volume biographies of Washington, one by Douglas Freeman and another by James Flexner, are the definitive biographies for scholars and serious students of American history. Other biographies are devoted to demythologizing Washington, focusing on areas of his life that scholars can’t agree on due to the lack of primary source material. Then there are works like Parson Weems’ biography that gave us the details of Washington’s childhood never verified and mostly debunked, like the proverbial cherry tree.

Now there is another path to pursue. Readers looking for a tightly focused yet authoritative biography of Washington will enjoy Joseph J. Ellis’ *His Excellency* (Knopf, 2004). At a mere 275 pages, it’s a shortcut that’s worth taking.

Ellis’ book expands on a chapter from his Pulitzer Prize winning *Founding Brothers*. In a manageable approach to Washington’s life, Ellis never strays far from what he can verify, painting a multi-faceted portrait of a man who developed his revolutionary spirit in the course of working first as a soldier, then as a landowner. His career progression is in contrast to that of many of the other Founders, who were university-educated and schooled in the abstract ideas of revolution.

Ellis builds a cogent thesis of Washington the young officer and future general, and he details how military setbacks experienced in the French and Indian War shaped the future course of the Revolution. Washington’s bitterness at how the British military treated the provincial soldiers was a wound that drove him throughout his military career.

Following his campaigns in the wilderness of the Ohio country, Ellis shares Washington’s first “retirement” and reveals the young Virginia squire to be more of a striver than some of the other famous gentleman farmers from the Old Dominion. Ellis shows how Washington the businessman—pragmatic, with an eye for opportunity—grew dissatisfied with the Crown and the economic realities of being under its thumb. His support of Revolution was basic and practical.

Surprisingly little is devoted to George and Martha’s relationship, absent because Ellis is reluctant to move away from what he can verify, and also because our author is most interested in what makes Washington “the Foundingest Father of them all.”

In his answer, Ellis describes a confluence of opportunity, good public relations and good genetics. Washington looked the part of a leader and had qualities that set him apart from other men. But Ellis makes it clear that our first president was destined to lead, knew he was working for something extraordinary and was able to make uncommon personal sacrifices in the service of his country.

Instead of the legend of the cherry tree, all American schoolchildren should learn the reported account of how Washington was able to prevent the military, which had gone unpaid, from staging a coup at his headquarters in New-Chester, N.Y., in the months following Yorktown. Playing off his fame and exuding leadership, Washington addressed the crowd of 500 officers who were ready to stage a revolt. According to Ellis:

Washington walks slowly to the podium and reaches inside his jacket to pull out his prepared remarks. Then he pauses—the gesture is almost certainly planned—and pulls from his waistcoat a pair of spectacles recently sent to him by David Rittenhouse, the Philadelphia scientist. No one has ever seen Washington wear spectacles before on public occasions. He looks out to his assembled officers while adjusting the new glasses and says: “Gentlemen, you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown gray, but almost blind in the service of my country.” Several officers began to sob. The speech itself is anti-climactic. All thoughts of a military coup die at that moment.

In addition to striking moments like that one, Ellis manages to convey someone more human than the man most of us have grown up knowing. Washington is more practical, more ambitious, more frustrated and more political than we may have realized. *His Excellency* is one road worth taking to get right to the heart of George Washington and the birth of our nation.

—Jack Fitzgerald

MONEY MATTERS

Stroll through the typical bookstore or library and you’ll discover the American history section is dominated by titles relating to military and political events and personalities. Yet increasingly, publishers are offering titles for general readers that interpret the sweep of American history through an examination of its industry, economy and financial development. To understand American history, these new books suggest, you must understand its unique economic development as well as its military and political milestones.

One of the more prolific writers in this genre, John Steele Gordon has spent his career uncovering and telling the stories of Wall Street titans and industrial accomplishment. **continued on page 10**
continued from page 9  In his most recent book, An Empire of Wealth: The Epic History of American Economic Power (HarperCollins, 2004), Gordon utilizes his considerable reporting and storytelling skills to paint a sweeping new portrait of American economic development. Unprecedented in the history of mankind, writes Gordon, America’s dominance in the world today is not because of its weapons or imperialism, but rather the result of its democracy, ingenuity and capitalism.

The avid reader of American history may find little new here, but Gordon provides an excellent survey of the most significant factors and events affecting the American economy, from pre-Colonial days to September 11, 2001. Along with recent popular biographies of Alexander Hamilton and Benjamin Franklin, Gordon’s book reinforces the argument that some of the nation’s founders provided future generations with the tools to create the world’s most powerful economy. While detailed in its look at these early Americans, if the book is weak in any aspect, it is Gordon’s sparse material related to the latter part of the 20th century.

By viewing the American story from this business historian’s perspective, the reader is challenged to re-examine familiar events in new ways. Such a focus suggests both the inevitability of the nation’s ultimate role in global economic power. In other ways, it underscores the near-miraculous alignment of forces that gave the nation the opportunity to reach such heights. A convergence of natural resources and man-made forces made America unique, Gordon convincingly argues.

Unlike other parts of the New World, the strip of North America that would one day become the nation’s birthplace was settled under the auspices of for-profit corporate ventures (that, ironically, went bankrupt) and not as a part of some governmental or religious strategy. This, and English legal traditions and freedoms, provided rich topsoil for growing an economy, Gordon says.

Because of its epic breadth, the book seldom lingers on any one development in America’s economy, rapidly dashing through three centuries. Yet by providing the economic context for the most familiar events in the nation’s history, Gordon’s book provides a fresh retelling of each era. - Harvey King

INSPIRATIONAL INNOVATORS

While Empire of Wealth clips through 300 years of business history at a breakneck pace, another current book in the genre takes a less-ambitious and slower-paced approach. Harold Evans’ They Made America: Two Centuries of Innovators from the Steam Engine to the Search Engine (Little, Brown, 2004) explores our history by examining the contributions of some of America’s most successful entrepreneurs.

Perhaps because the book accompanies a four-part PBS series, They Made America is presented as a collection of biographical essays. For this reason, the volume makes for great bedtime reading, with each chapter a self-contained short biography.

The approach evokes the type of inspirational biographies often packaged for the young reader. Evans even expresses hope that the book will have the same effect as that recounted by Thomas Edison when he claimed to draw inspiration from reading the biographies of earlier innovators.

Appropriate for readers of all ages, the book offers fascinating and entertaining looks at the lives of the people behind some of America’s most successful innovations. Many of the innovators are obvious choices, like Edison and the Wright brothers. However, the book’s most compelling profiles cover lesser-known inventors like Ida Rosenthal, creator of the Maidenform bra, and Ruth Handler, founder of Mattel and creator of Barbie.

Both Gordon’s and Evans’ volumes offer hopeful glances at the future as long as the nation stays true to its foundational liberties and economic freedoms. Despite some notes of caution, both writers offer many compelling reasons to believe America will continue to be an empire of wealth and innovation. - H.K.
IF YOU ASKED Darlene Farmer 25 years ago about her family tree, the conversation would probably have lasted only a minute or so. If you asked her the same question today, she could talk to you for hours. That's because she has a deep-seated passion for history and genealogy, which ignited after a fascinating conversation with a great aunt.

"She said, 'Darlene, I'm going to tell you some things about the family that no one else will tell you.'"

Ms. Farmer, who was living in Ohio at the time, started researching her mother's side of the family by pursuing leads she received from her aunt. She quickly discovered that researching one's genealogy was a long, involved process.

“It was hard to research people of color in the very early days,” she says. “Information wasn't readily available. Most of my research involved looking at untouched, primary sources dragged out of the dark basements of a number of courthouses and repositories.”

She put her efforts on hold when she enlisted in the Army in 1982 and started her career in computer science.

Stated on at Arlington Hall Station, Va., for her entire tour of duty, Ms. Farmer served until 1988 with two additional years on inactive reserve. When she was honorably discharged, she began working for the federal government and eventually transferred to the Pentagon. Today she serves as a team leader for the Information Technology Agency, where she conducts performance monitoring on large mainframe military computers. After her discharge, she finally had time to pursue her genealogy project again.

Ms. Farmer has unearthed some interesting facts about both sides of her family, which she traced to Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee and the Carolinas. "My family didn't lead the life that is classically portrayed for people of color during that time,” she says. “They lived in huge houses with wraparound porches and cherry wood furniture. They were free, educated people living in a racially mixed farming community. They were also coal miners.” Some of her ancestors even taught coal-mining classes at the all-black West Virginia Institute. Ms. Farmer also learned that she comes from one of the first families of Tennessee.

Genealogy isn't just a hobby. Besides researching her family, Ms. Farmer, who is part Cherokee, provides genealogical support to African-Americans and Native Americans alike. She is also involved in genealogical research projects on the Underground Railroad and the first black school in Prince William County, Va.

A Daughter since 1999, Ms. Farmer is a member of the Pentagon Chapter that she helped organize in 2003 with fellow DAR members who work at or near the Pentagon. She previously served as the Chapter's Historian.

"Genealogy is so important because everyone who has gone before you has contributed to who you are today," she says. "It's always important to know the branches of your tree."

When she's not working full-time, earning her master’s degree in health information management or working on a genealogy project, she finds time for another passion—quilting, which she and a small group of women enjoy doing every Friday night.

To nominate a Daughter for a future issue, e-mail a description to americanspirit@dar.org.
Five questions every woman should ask herself.

- Do I have a signed will to protect my assets as well as my family and friends and is it stored in a safe place?

- Do I have any low-yielding stocks that I could reinvest in a charitable gift annuity or living trust for a better stream of income?

- Did I protect my family from the burden of high estate and income taxes due upon my death?

- Did I make arrangements in my estate plans to preserve the futures of the charitable organizations, like NSDAR, that I supported during my life?

- Did I take advantage of the new NSDAR gift planning program that is free with no obligation?

If you answered "no" to any of the questions above, you may benefit from speaking with a member of the Gift Planning staff in the Office of Development at the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. Simply complete the form and mail it to the address listed, or please call 1-800-449-1776 or e-mail giftplanning@dar.org to speak to someone about bequests, gift annuities, trusts or other estate planning tools.

I would like to receive more information about:
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PATRIOTISM PERSONIFIED

Expressions of patriotism take many different forms, from the display of a single flag to an individual wearing red, white and blue.

Imagine participating in a collaborative effort—one that creates a living, breathing iconographic display. That’s exactly what generations of Americans have done to form elaborate human flags and other emblems of liberty.

BY MAUREEN TAYLOR
While the exact origins of the personified flag are unknown, they became a popular style of public exhibition around the turn of the 20th century. In 1896, 2,000 schoolchildren formed a flag in St. Paul, Minn., for a parade to honor war veterans.

During the first two decades of the 20th century, similar living flag demonstrations captured the imagination of Americans. In cities and towns across the country, these gatherings were commonplace at parades. Flag Day celebrations or when dignitaries visited. When Teddy Roosevelt visited Hot Springs, Ark., for the 1915 State Fair, 3,500 schoolchildren dressed in red, white and blue recreated the American flag while singing "Dixie Land." Later in the decade, while war raged in Europe, Americans participated in events like the Preparedness Parade held in Providence, R.I., on June 3, 1916. Marchers once again passed in front of 1,500 schoolchildren posed as the stars and stripes on the steps of the city hall.

In commemoration of Defender's Day, September 12, 1914, the 100th anniversary of Baltimore's defense during the War of 1812, scores of schoolchildren also created a flag at Fort McHenry—one with 15 stars and stripes. Every May since 1983, the National Flag Day Foundation and scores of kids from schools in the Baltimore area return to the fort and move to their designated positions on a grid while holding colored cardboard. The result is a "flag" that moves with the breeze.

Creating Living Emblems

The size and scope of all of those living impressions of patriotism are dwarfed by the creations coordinated by Arthur S. Mole, a British-born photographer who ran a studio in Zion, Ill., and John D. Thomas. Mole and Thomas took the notion of human flags a step further. Instead of kids, they used thousands of military personnel to depict the flag.

Ten thousand sailors and officers of the U.S. Naval Training Station in Great Lakes, Ill., participated in Mole and Thomas' "Living Flag of Blue Jackets" in 1917. It was the largest flag of its kind, measuring 143 feet at the top, 66 feet at the bottom, 350 feet at the left and 184 feet on the right. The pole measured approximately 550 feet in length. The human requirements were staggering: close to 2,000 sailors for the red, 3,500 for the blue and at least 1,800 men for the 48 stars. Former Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft were there for the amazing undertaking.

According to the "Great Lakes Recruit" of December 1917, the "flag" was laid out according to the law of perspective so that it would resemble an actual flag when photographed. In order to capture the event on film, Mole and Thomas had to build tall towers that overlooked the parade grounds. Afterwards, the Navy Relief Society of Great Lakes sold copies of the picture for a dollar and ran advertisements in newspapers like the New York Times suggesting, "Every patriotic home should display this photograph, the most wonderful, most inspiring picture ever taken." Even in a photo postcard of this flag, individual sailors are visible.

After their initial success, Mole and Thomas convinced other base commanders to participate in larger and more complex creations of American symbolism. For a Statue of Liberty at Camp Dodge, Iowa, 18,000 men stood at attention; 19,000 stood for a portrait of Uncle Sam at Camp Lee, Va.; 21,000 for the portrait of Woodrow Wilson at Camp Sherman, Ohio; 25,000 for the Liberty Bell at Camp Dix, N.J.; and 30,000 for the U.S. Shield at Camp Custer, Mich. A mere 9,000 marines personified their emblem at Parris Island, S.C., in 1919.
Each of these events required at least a week's preparation. Mole and Thomas sought perfection — there is even a crack visible in their human Liberty Bell. After World War I, interest in their photographs dwindled, and Mole returned to his studio in Zion.

**REVIVING THE PHENOMENON**

While Mole and Thomas brought a wide variety of patriotic symbols to life, after the war, ordinary Americans continued to recreate human flags, although not to the degree they did before the conflict. Mrs. Joseph B. Tate of Asheville, N.C., who became known as the “Lady of the Flag,” received an American Cross of Honor for taking part in 16 of these events, more than any other person. Right up to the New York World’s Fair of 1940, where Boy Scouts formed the flag, children continued to be an integral part of these flags either by wearing red, white and blue clothing or by holding colored paper overhead.

Interest in this format continued to decline throughout the remainder of the 20th century until the events of 9/11 revived the human flag as a nationwide experience. Within days of the attack, thousands of Northern Californians formed one as a tribute to the members of Sacramento Search and Rescue who traveled to New York. On the one-year anniversary of the tragedy, groups throughout the nation also recreated flags with individuals of all ages to show American unity.

A hundred years after the phenomenon was at its apex, interest in living flags has revived. And this time, it’s not just an activity for the kids or military personnel — people of all ages are being recruited to wear red, white and blue.

Organizer of the oldest continuous human flag event, The National Flag Day Foundation has a detailed online manual (www.flagday.org/FLAG_files/Producing_LAF.pdf) explaining how groups can plan their own patriotic event.
St. Augustine
America’s Oldest City

By Nancy Mann Jackson

An old cannon beside a tower at the 17th-century Spanish fortress Castillo de San Marcos.
FOR YEARS, AMERICANS HAVE LEARNED THE HISTORY OF THEIR NATION FROM A BRITISH PERSPECTIVE, BUT THE STORY OF EUROPEANS IN AMERICA ACTUALLY Began LONG BEFORE JAMESTOWN AND PLYMOUTH ROCK. IT'S A STORY THAT BEGINS IN ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA., WHERE THE COUNTRY'S FIRST PERMANENT EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT WAS FOUND IN 1565. IT'S A STORY THAT IS EVIDENT ON A STROLL THROUGH THIS HISTORIC CITY, AND ONE THAT THE PEOPLE OF ST. AUGUSTINE LOVE TO SHARE.

"IF YOU WANT TO FULLY UNDERSTAND the history of the United States, you really need to understand the Spanish history as well as the British," says Karen Harvey, a DAR member of the Maria Jefferson Chapter and author of St. Augustine and St. John's County: A Pictorial History (Donning Company Publishers, 1980). "Not only is St. Augustine the ideal place to learn that, but it's also a very walkable, historic city where you can just walk around and drink in the sights and the history."

While Europeans were settling in various places across America during the 1500s and 1600s, St. Augustine is special because it lasted. "It's the first place that European culture, laws and ways of life took a foothold and stayed," says Charles Tingley, Library Manager for the St. Augustine Historical Society. "And the city is special because we have plenty of remnants of those early days; for instance, we have a Catholic church with parish records that go back to the 1590s.

"St. Augustine eventually became a flashpoint in the conflict of empires, first the French and Spanish, then the British and Spanish," Tingley continues. "The story of this rubbing of empires together is the story of Colonial America, and St. Augustine played such a significant role in that."

EARLY COLONIAL DAYS

Spanish explorer Don Juan Ponce de Leon became the first European to discover the North American mainland when he arrived in Florida in 1513 and claimed it for Spain. Over the next 50 years, Spain launched six expeditions to Florida but none was successful. When the French established a fort and a colony along the St. John's River in 1564, Spain's use of the Florida shoreline for treasure fleets was threatened. In reaction to the French colonization, Spain's King Philip II named his most experienced admiral, Don Pedro Menendez, Governor of Florida, and instructed him to explore and colonize the territory, driving out any settlers from other nations.

When Menendez arrived in Florida in 1565, he quickly established a settlement and named it St. Augustine. After defeating the French garrison, he set about building the town. This era, the city's First Spanish Period, lasted from 1565 to 1763 and established the structure of the city that is still in place today. For instance, St. Augustine's central plaza was laid out in 1598 by decree of the king of Spain, with all streets running north and south, east and west, Harvey says. "The plaza is still in use today as a marketplace, gathering spot and center for city affairs."

During the First Spanish Period, St. Augustine was frequently attacked by pirates and the British. After the British established colonies in Georgia and the Carolinas, Spain authorized the building of a stone fort to protect St. Augustine from attacks. The fort, Castillo de San Marcos, was completed in 1695 and has never fallen to enemy attack.

In 1763, Spain ceded Florida to British rule to regain control of Cuba, ushering in 20 years of British rule in St. Augustine. The look of the city changed as British colonists added fireplaces, windowpanes and second stories to Spanish-style buildings with flat roofs and low-hanging balconies, Harvey says.
ST. AUGUSTINE IN THE REVOLUTION

Florida was under British rule during the American Revolution, and the people of St. Augustine remained loyal subjects. "Our story about the Revolution is a little different from that of most American cities," Tingley says. "Because British rule was so new here, the city remained loyal to the British crown. The role St. Augustine played was that of a refugee camp for those fleeing revolutionaries in Georgia and South Carolina. The city was also a place to hold prisoners of war taken by the British.

"At one point during the Revolution, most of the key revolutionaries from South Carolina were being held in St. Augustine, including three signers of the Declaration of Independence, Edward Rutledge, Thomas Heyward and Arthur Middleton," says Virginia Hassenflu, former Chapter Regent of the Maria Jefferson Chapter. "They stayed all over the city, in various homes and even in the Statehouse. These Patriots celebrated the first Independence Day in St. Augustine's Statehouse on July 4, 1781."

While St. Augustine was under British rule, the city's most enduring group of citizens arrived. Originally from the Island of Menorca off the coast of Spain, the Menorcan people are a blend of Greek, Italian and Spanish ethnicity. During the mid-18th century, a Scottish settler brought 1,400 Menorcans to Florida as indentured servants to work on his indigo plantation 70 miles south of St. Augustine.

"Nine years later, the Menorcan servants escaped and walked 70 miles up the coast to St. Augustine, where the British Governor gave them freedom," Harvey says. "Even after the British left St. Augustine, the Menorcans stayed and made this city their home."

The Menorcan people established their homes to the north of the city's plaza, in the same area where many of their descendants live today. While other groups came and left the city, many Menorcans remained in St. Augustine and helped the city evolve. In fact, just 25 years ago, half the city's population still had Menorcan surnames, Harvey says.

When the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1783, Florida was returned to Spanish rule for the Second Spanish Period, which lasted 37 more years. While many of the British settlers left the area, the Menorcan colonists remained. With Spanish as their native language and Catholicism as their traditional religion, it made sense for them to stay in their newfound home under Spanish rule.

As neighboring colonies became states, Colonial days in St. Augustine began winding down. In 1821, Spain sold Florida to the United States, and St. Augustine's colorful 250-year Colonial history came to an end.

MODERN LINKS TO COLONIAL DAYS

No other American city has a Colonial history as long and rich as St. Augustine's, and evidence of that past is still apparent centuries later. "Even though the city was destroyed many times by fire and siege, and we only have about 30 Colonial buildings still standing, we do have a tremendous archaeological record of our city's past," Tingley says.

"We're sitting on a two- to three-foot-deep deposit of archaeological remains that tell the story of Sir Francis Drake's 1586 attack on St. Augustine, of the pirate raid in the 1660s and of the attack by the British in 1702," he continues. "All these events have left archaeological remains, and now we have many of these items on display at the Government House and City Museum. Other than just looking at buildings, you can see tangible evidence of our past, such as the thimble used by a young girl, the remains of scissors and chamber pots from 300 years ago."

Along with the archaeological remains that surround them, the people of St. Augustine are acutely aware of their city's past and its importance to the America of today. To that end, the city places a high priority on the honor and care of its historic structures. Strict codes restrict people from tearing down buildings that are over a certain age or from painting historic homes certain colors. "St. Augustine is a city of history," Hassenflu says. "The people do hardly anything else but honor the history of this place."

"You can never walk down the street in this city without seeing someone in some kind of Colonial costume," Harvey adds. "What we are and what we represent is present in everyday discussion. In St. Augustine, it's impossible not to be aware of our culture."
What to See in St. Augustine

-Colonial Spanish Quarter Living History Museum.
Step back in time when you visit this working 1600s village, where you'll see people doing carpentry work, blacksmithing and growing traditional fruits and vegetables.

-Castillo de San Marcos.
The oldest fort in the United States, Castillo de San Marcos took 23 years to build and was completed in 1695. Never conquered by enemy forces, it takes responsibility for St. Augustine's staying power as the oldest permanent European settlement.

-The Oldest House.
Also known as the Gonzalez-Alvarez House, the "Oldest House" is one of several Colonial homes open to visitors. The home displays the combination of Spanish and British architecture that became a signature look for St. Augustine during the British period and is one of the most studied homes in America.

-Ximenez-Fatio House.
Built about 1798 by Andres Ximenez, a Spanish storekeeper, the Ximenez-Fatio House reflects both Spanish and English design principles. It has been continually operated as a boardinghouse, and the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Florida currently manages it.

-St. George Street.
Take a stroll down this main street, which dates to 1595 and runs from the plaza in the center of St. Augustine to the city gate, which was saved from demolition by the Maria Jefferson Chapter, DAR, in the early 1900s.

1 St. Augustine's old city gate was saved from demolition by the Maria Jefferson Chapter, DAR, in the early 1900s. 2 St. George Street dates from 1595 and is still a bustling thoroughfare. 3 The Oldest House Museum on St. Francis and Marine Streets is three centuries old, the oldest surviving structure from the Spanish Colonial period. 4 An aerial view of Castillo de San Marcos, built by the Spanish between 1672 and 1695. The fort was never conquered by enemy forces. 5 Carefully honoring their city's past, the people of St. Augustine are acutely aware of their city's importance to early American history.
Today, Montpelier, James Madison's estate outside of Charlottesville, Va., is shrouded in scaffolding and tarpaulins. Behind the protective covering, one of the most ambitious restorations in America is taking place—two centuries of renovations will be stripped away, leaving a building almost identical to the one Madison would have known after retiring from the White House.

It is hoped, says Mike Quinn, president of the Montpelier Foundation, which manages the estate, that the project will improve the visibility and visitor experience of Montpelier and, in doing so, highlight Madison and his contributions to the nation.
MADISON REMEMBERED

Madison, the nation's fourth President, is still often overshadowed by his contemporaries. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson both have prominent and picturesque monuments in the nation's capital. Their homes are American icons.

The enduring monument—if it can even be called that—to the Father of the Constitution is the James Madison Memorial Building, one of three gargantuan but unremarkable structures that comprise the Library of Congress. And the 50,000 visitors who are welcomed to Madison's Montpelier each year is a small number next to the 1 million visitors to Washington's Mount Vernon and the 500,000 visitors to Jefferson's Monticello. Quinn attributes Montpelier's comparatively low visitation numbers to the reality that it has been difficult to connect to Madison and his legacy.

Yet Madison's work is hardly forgotten. Year after year at the National Archives building, three quarters of a million people stare reverentially at the display cases that house two documents largely attributed to the hand of Madison: the Constitution and Bill of Rights. There is something transformative about being so close to something so elemental about America. It's this uplifting feeling that the Montpelier restoration team hopes to capture.

HONING A CONSISTENT MESSAGE

After Dolley Madison sold Montpelier in 1844, following James' death eight years earlier, the stately home then passed through six more owners who made their own structural amendments. In 1901, it was acquired by William duPont of the wealthy E.I. duPont family, who drastically remade the house, enlarging Montpelier from 22 to 55 rooms.

"The problem was that the house is so confusing. No one could figure it out," Quinn says. Instead of providing visitors with a consistent message about Madison and his role in forming the United States and framing the complex and lofty ideas behind the Constitution, tours would habitually degenerate into meaningless exercises explaining which walls were part of the original home.

The history of the house and its later occupants was interesting, but visitors wanted a clear window into the life of Madison, not one clouded by tangential asterisks and footnotes.

SAVING MONTPELIER FROM ITSELF

Usually when a property like Montpelier passes into the hands of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, as it did in 1983 through Marion duPont Scott's bequest, the National Trust does just what its name implies: It preserves the acquisition.

"We sort of freeze it in the condition we found it, and we don't make any changes," says Jim Vaughan, Vice President for Stewardship of Historic Sites, about the National Trust's properties. Thus, for 20 years the home remained not as it was in Madison's time, but as it was when Ronald Reagan occupied the Oval Office. Madison's mother's wing remained as Ms. Scott's equestrian room while Madison's celebrated library became a bedroom and his office a hallway.

Although the duPont additions made for a spectacular, turn-of-the-20th-century home, even Scott recognized that there was more value in preserving Madison's legacy and mandated in her will that the home be returned to its original state. However, given the typical treatment of such properties and the effort it would take to reconvert the home, obeying her wishes was anything but assured. It was not until 2001 that the Montpelier Foundation commissioned a study to determine if enough evidence existed to justify a restoration to the Madison era.

The conclusion of the two-year fact-finding mission? Underneath the thousands of square feet of additions and the pink pastel stucco that made the home look more like a seaside Miami mansion than the estate of one of the country's first Presidents, the original home survived. Along with the supporting evidence afforded by historical documents, the team was confident that a bold and laborious rescue was possible. That was the good news. The bad news was that a faithful recreation of the Madison's home would take years of meticulous work. The final bill was anticipated to top $20 million.
Deciding to restore the home was an exception to the National Trust's rule that a structure should be maintained as it was when acquired, says Vaughan.

"We prefer to treat historic sites with a very light hand and to tell the full story of the history of the site," he says. "In this case, the significance of Madison and our feeling that Madison was the historical figure [among the other occupants] and his role in American history is such that he needed to be at the forefront."

RESTORATION OF THE HOME

Beyond having the background information needed to get the project right, Montpelier's makeover has been supported by an abundance of funds. To date, $40 million has been raised for the home, a sum aided by a $20 million gift from the estate of Paul Mellon.

In addition, the Montpelier Foundation attracted an advisory panel that includes experts from such preeminent historical sites as Colonial Williamsburg, Monticello, Old Salem and Mount Vernon. Other expertise comes from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the Maryland Historical Trust and the National Trust, which still owns the property. Although input from so many sources can render decision-making difficult, the safety net is reassuring, Quinn says.

Even though Madison himself lived in different versions of the house, it was decided that the modern edifice should reflect his last years in the mansion. Thus the incarnation of Montpelier that will welcome future visitors will include the original Federal-style building constructed by Madison's father in 1760, as well as the later 1797-1800 addition, constructed when James and Dolley took up residence there. Finally, the Montpelier of the 1820s also includes two side wings with terraces added between 1809 and 1812.

OLD MEETS NEW

Montpelier's rebirth, which began in December 2003, is a modern fusion of disciplines—something that would have appealed to well-rounded Renaissance men like Madison and Jefferson. First and foremost it is a restoration project. Yet to get to the point where the hammer meets the nail, much more has to happen. With hundreds of excavations into the layers of paint, plaster and timbers, the project requires a healthy dose of archeology. It also requires historical inquiry. Arriving at a decision to use a certain color or fabric comes after scouring period documents. Each layer of investigation inevitably leads down another road. For instance, when it is discovered that one section was built during a certain time frame, it spurs a hunt for the right type of nail from that era. That, in turn, requires research and often trial and error as to how exactly such a piece was created.
In total, 100 people have been pulled in for the project: architectural researchers, archeologists, engineering consultants and traditional restorers such as masons and blacksmiths. Some must get their hands dirty on site while others, connected by e-mail and telephone conferences, fuss over details in sterile laboratories hundreds of miles away.

The composition and location of the team are representative of the project’s overall technology dichotomy. On one hand, the latest methods are used to decipher how the house was constructed and what pieces went where. In this regard, what is happening amid the rolling farmland of central Virginia resembles the detective work of “CSI” more than an episode of “This Old House.”

“If we didn’t have the technology we had when we started the project, there’s just no way we could have done this project so efficiently,” says Alfredo Maul, Associate Director of Architectural Research at Montpelier. He adds that even as recently as five years ago the undertaking would not have been feasible with the existing technology.

Laser levels measure consistent heights in a building that has sagged over the years. Paint chips and wallpaper flakes are analyzed under ultraviolet lights. More than 40,000 digital pictures have been cataloged, some of which are converted to architectural drawings through the use of photogrammetry. Overlapping databases and drawings connect thousands upon thousands of details so minute that even individual nail holes in the floorboards are recorded. Drafting software renders two-dimensional drawings into lifelike animations so accurate it makes the viewer...
Clockwise from above: A beautiful remnant of 1760s-era wall painting was uncovered on the second floor during plaster removals. Rafters are put in place to restore the shingled roof that covered the bedrooms of Madison's mother, Nelly, and his wife, Dolley. Mason Wayne Mays uses a plaster screed to finish portico column capitals. Heart pine wall plates will carry the ends of the rafters for Nelly Madison's serrated roof. Montpelier masons repair a 1809-1812 Madison-era basement window opening.

IMAGES COURTESY OF THE MONTPELIER FOUNDATION
wonder if the house has not already been completed.

"They [the Montpelier team] have established a new scientific state of the art for how you examine an old structure," says Vaughan of the National Trust, who hopes the technology-heavy methodology will take hold in future restoration projects.

On the other hand, there is some irony in the use of such newfangled methods. Once the restoration team has an idea of what needs to be done, it can only be achieved by using antiquated construction methods that are hardly ever employed by today's craftsmen. Vaughan says that as technology increases, "one of the great challenges" is finding people who possess "the old hand skills."

Many members of the construction crew are tops in their fields and have worked on a number of similar preservation projects, but as their numbers dwindle, there is also a conscious effort to pull in those with less experience. It is hoped that this new generation will perpetuate the knowledge necessary for future restorations.

**CAREFUL WORK, UNCOVERED SECRETS**

Today Montpelier hides so many details—each with its own amazing story of discovery—that it is nearly impossible to appreciate them all. Consider the home's main entrance:

Like the rest of the house, the exposed brickwork of the front façade was covered by a layer of stucco after the house passed out of Madison hands. The restoration crew began the project by removing this exterior layer. Should bricks or mortar need to be replaced, they are not delivered from the hardware store but must be made by hand using the same materials gathered from the same places in the same proportions that were used 200 years ago.

"This is a unique project: it's the home of James Madison. Only the best things are going to go back into this building—otherwise it's just better not to do it," says Maul.

The original portico as envisioned by Madison and Jefferson drew on Classical design, but in the latter part of the 1800s the owners cut back the grand stairs to make it more practical to get from a carriage to the front door in bad weather. Now those stairs will again extend as they were in Madison's day.

Recreating the imposing columns required the restoration team to study those associated with Jefferson, knowing that he favored the design of the Italian architect, Andrea Palladio. The design and size of the original columns and capitals were extrapolated from centuries-old paint outlines preserved on the brickwork of Montpelier and then cross-referenced with Palladio's writings. From these figures, a group of modern masons was assigned the task of recreating the columns using a traditional recipe for the plaster coating and making special tools and dies to shape the columns just as they would have been when Madison walked through them.

In deconstructing and then recreating the home in this careful, studied manner, the team has uncovered much about the Madisons, Montpelier and the construction of the period.

For example, restoration experts are very interested in what seems to be the use of color washes applied on the exterior of the home in order to blend different shades of brick and mortar from the various Madison-era additions. Work done on the sides of the front door revealed that they actually retracted into the brickwork—the original rope and pulley are still intact, forgotten when the windows were likely painted shut during a later owner's tenure. Upstairs, a sassafras-themed plaster painting from Madison's parents' time in the house is the only known surviving example of its kind. And, as Madison and Jefferson shared skilled craftsmen, much of what can be seen at Montpelier illuminates what likely lies behind the walls at Monticello, Poplar Forest and the University of Virginia. Particularly ingenious is the balcony gutter system that Jefferson designed for his colleague—an innovation that was covered over when a second story was erected on top of the flat terraces over the side wings.

Such hidden secrets are their own reward and make the tedious day-to-day tasks of the restoration more bearable. For those so intimately involved in it, those secrets are likely all the reward there will be. Despite all the attention to detail, in the end, the goal of the four-year project is that the work will go largely unnoticed, Maul says. Much of the work that has been done on the house will be hidden behind layers of reformed plaster and timber. Even the visible changes will be ignored.

But that will probably be the ultimate compliment to the team—when visitors simply feel that they are truly in Madison's home. No longer will tours be about which walls are original. Rather, visitors will come to know Madison on a more intimate and personal level, to walk where he walked, to see what he saw, perhaps to think as he thought and to finally feel at home in Montpelier.

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Montpelier remains open for tours during the restoration efforts. A visit affords the unique opportunity to see inside the project. For more information, visit www.montpelier.org or call (540) 672-2728.
‘THIS ALLURING ROADWAY, RESTING ON TOWERS WHICH RISE LIKE THOSE OF ANCIENT CATHEDRALS: THIS LACEWORK OF THREADS INTERWEAVING THEIR SEPARATE DELICATE STRENGTH INTO THE COMPLEX SOLIDITY OF THE WHOLE.’ Comments from the 1883 Opening Ceremony

As the caissons sank, the towers rose and the steel cables were spun in place, one brave woman could be spotted amid the hundreds of men struggling to build the world’s longest bridge. Quite possibly the first woman field engineer, Emily Roebling was responsible for taking over the project when the chief engineer, her husband Washington Roebling, became incapacitated with Caisson disease. For 11 years, Emily supervised every facet of the construction, and she was solely responsible for interpreting her husband’s ideas and relaying details back to him as he watched the progress from their Brooklyn Heights’ apartment. She communicated orders to assistant engineers, won over politicians and quelled revolts that threatened to halt the project. Her intelligence, loyal support and efficiency were indispensable in the construction of a beloved landmark.

IN THE MID 1850S, AS HE TRAVELED ON THE Fulton Ferry from New York to Brooklyn, the German immigrant John Augustus Roebling imagined a more efficient way to cross the East River. The brilliant engineer knew that building a bridge across a half-mile-wide stretch of the river would increase commerce to Brooklyn and ensure its viability. Still, such a span
would have to withstand fast currents and savage winds without impeding the boat traffic on the busy river.

To solve the engineering challenges, Roebling envisioned a suspension bridge with its roadway suspended from thick cables across two supporting towers. Though John’s reputation was formidable—he had already built suspension bridges in Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and across Niagara Falls—and his design was innovative, it took him 15 years to win over skeptical investors and politicians who doubted such a bridge could be built. It wasn’t until a group of prominent engineers gave their support to the project that Congress and President Ulysses S. Grant approved the plans.

On January 3, 1870, ground was finally broken, and Roebling’s dream was on its way to becoming a reality. By then it had become a family project.

Emily Warren’s family settled in the village of Cold Spring, N.Y., in the early 1700s. This picturesque village is located on the shores of the Hudson River directly across from West Point. Born on September 23, 1843, the second youngest of 12 children, Emily enjoyed all the benefits of growing up in a Northeastern patrician family, which included a solid education.

An 1864 visit to her brother, Major General Gouverneur Kemble Warren, who was commander of the 5th Corps of the Army of the Potomac, coincided with a wartime ball. There she was introduced to one of her brother’s young officers—Washington Roebling. About this meeting Emily later wrote: “We fell in love straight away. I captured his heart and he mine. Mutual love and confidence in each other has defined our relationship ever since.”

Washington had graduated from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and was a promising young engineer when he and Emily married in 1865. Their marriage was a true partnership, remarkable for its time, and they enjoyed intellectual equality and mutual respect. Washington and Emily also shared a passion for engineering, mathematics and construction—a marvel in an age when women were expected to conquer the domestic arts rather than the sciences. Their shared passion would eventually lead to one of the greatest engineering feats of the 19th century.

Following their wedding, the newlyweds joined Washington’s father, John Roebling, in Cincinnati, where John was engineering the construction of the Ohio River Bridge. In June 1865, Emily and Washington sailed for Europe to do research for John Roebling’s new project—a bridge to link Manhattan Island with Brooklyn.

While in Germany, Emily studied submarine foundation construction, metallurgy and bridge engineering along with her husband. There she also gave birth to their only child, John Augustus Roebling II, in the same small Prussian town in which his grandfather had been born. Upon their return to the United States, the Roeblings settled in Brooklyn Heights, and Washington joined his father on the Great Bridge.

From the very beginning, the bridge project was marked by tragedy. Three days into construction, in July 1869, John Roebling lost part of his foot in an accident at the bridge site. He died from tetanus after refusing medical help. He was one of at least 21 men who died while building the bridge, and dozens of others were badly injured.
After John's death, his equally talented son took over as chief engineer. Washington was not content to merely supervise his workers. He insisted on participating in the most dangerous aspect of the construction: working with the underwater caissons. Repeated dives into the depths of the East River left Washington with Caisson disease, commonly called the bends, caused by the constant pressure changes impacting his body. This extremely painful condition left him paralyzed and unable to continue as an active participant in the bridge work. Fortunately, there was another brilliant mind in the Roebling family ready, willing and able to take command.

**IMMEDIATELY EMILY VOLUNTEERED**

to become Washington's eyes and ears on the construction site. She returned to her studies of mathematics and engineering, catching on at a fast pace, so that she could convey her husband's instructions to the workers. Of his wife's efficiency, Washington said, "At first I thought I would succumb, but I had a strong tower to lean upon, my wife, a woman of infinite tact and wisest counsel."

While Washington watched the bridge's progress via telescope from their home in Brooklyn Heights, Emily managed virtually every aspect of the project, including dealing with engineers, members of the press and various politicians who watched their every move. "It was common gossip that hers was the real mind behind the great work," writes David McCullough, author of *The Great Bridge* (Simon & Schuster, 2001), "and that this, the most monumental engineering triumph of the age, was actually the doing of a woman." When the board of directors demanded Washington's removal from the project, Emily appeared before the American Society of Civil Engineers, the first woman ever to address the group. Following her historic speech, the board relented and kept Washington as chief engineer.

Paul Roebling said of his grandmother: "She was no mere 'gofer'—she understood as only a Roebling could what needed to be done and how it should be done. Without Emily, it wouldn't have been a Roebling bridge. Without Emily there may not have been a bridge at all."

The Brooklyn Bridge was finally completed on May 24, 1883. Emily led the first march across the bridge accompanied by a live rooster, an ancient symbol of bravery and victory. According to records from the opening ceremonies, "from one end of the bridge to the other, the men stopped their last-minute work to cheer her and lift their hats as she came by."

**EMILY'S LIST OF ACHIEVEMENTS DIDN'T END with her invaluable contributions to the Brooklyn Bridge.** The scope of her work might have changed, but her pace barely slowed.

After the bridge's completion, the Roeblings moved from Brooklyn to Troy, N.Y., where they lived while their son, John, attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Four years later, they moved to the Roebling hometown of Trenton, N.J., where Washington took over the family's Iron Cable Company. They began a far less complex building project: a mansion that was completed in 1892. It was from this magnificent home on West State Street that Emily expanded her many interests. She kept up her engineering studies, spoke out nationally on women's suffrage, became a businesswoman and earned a law degree at age 55 from New York University in 1899. The rooster that accompanied Emily at the completion of the bridge was stuffed and became part of the museum in their home.

Emily loved to travel, attending the famous 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. In 1896 she returned to Europe to attend the elaborate coronation of Czar Nicholas II, about which she later lectured to many charitable causes. The trip also included Emily's
presentation to Queen Victoria in London.

Upon her return to Trenton, Emily devoted herself to writing a book about the history of Cold Spring, her girlhood home. During this period she edited *The Journal of the Reverend Silas Constant*, a circuit-riding Presbyterian minister in the late 18th and early 19th centuries in Westchester County, N.Y. She also added a chapter on the Warren family. Published in 1903, the book remains a valuable genealogical research tool for those researching families in this geographical area.

**EMILY WAS ALSO ONE OF OUR COUNTRY’S leading "club women," belonging to the Colonial Dames of America, National Society of Colonial Dames of the 17th Century, Holland Dames of America, the Huguenot Society and the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, for which she worked tirelessly. She helped secure subscriptions for the NSDAR Memorial Continental Hall project, became New Jersey State Regent and served as a Vice President General until 1902. Miss Batcheller, State Regent of New Jersey, nominated Emily for President General, declaring: "[Emily represents] the highest type of American gentlewomanhood, who has the brains, the heart and the special gifts, honor, wisdom, knowledge, charity, that fit her for this exalted position."

Mrs. Roebling entertained members of the National Society lavishly in New York City, but she was defeated in the election. Not long after, Emily died at age 60 after a battle with stomach cancer. Her death on February 28, 1903, was recorded in *American Monthly Magazine*: "Mrs. Washington A. Roebling, a much loved Daughter of New Jersey, formerly Vice President General, died at Trenton, New Jersey. She will be greatly missed." (Despite his illness, Washington lived until 1926, dying at age 89.)

Emily Warren Roebling was brought home to New York and was buried beside her mother in the Cold Spring Cemetery in the village where she was born. Beneath the large stone cross that marks her grave read the words, "Gifted, Noble, True."

*Marilyn Cole Greene is a member of the Enoch Crosby Chapter, New York, DAR.*

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**VITAL STATS: BROOKLYN BRIDGE**

- **TOTAL LENGTH OF ROADWAY:** 5,989 FEET, OR 1.13 MILES
- **LENGTH OF RIVER SPAN BETWEEN TOWERS:** 1,595 1/2 FEET
- **HEIGHT OF ROADWAY ABOVE WATER IN CENTER OF RIVER SPAN:** 135 FEET
- **DEPTH OF BROOKLYN CAISSON BELOW WATER:** 44 1/2 FEET
- **DEPTH OF NEW YORK CAISSON BELOW WATER:** 78 1/2 FEET
- **HEIGHT OF TOWERS ABOVE WATER:** 276 1/2 FEET
- **DIAMETER OF EACH MAIN CABLE:** 15 3/4 INCHES
- **NUMBER OF WIRES IN EACH MAIN CABLE:** 5,434
- **NUMBER OF PEOPLE CROSSING THE BRIDGE ON OPENING DAY:** 150,300
LAYING
THE
FOUNDATION:

The First
Female Architects
in America

by GIN PHILLIPS
Millions of people from all over the world traveled to Chicago's World's Fair in 1893, called the World's Columbian Exposition, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America. Crowds wandered through 633 acres of gleaming white Beaux-Arts buildings, exhibits ranging from a giant cheese block to booths lauding hamburgers and newfangled carbonated soda.

But more than art and novelty intersected. The fair showcased a Woman's Building—the first time a woman architect's work was exhibited on an international scale—bringing together a cross section of a new group in America: professional women architects.

The fair's timing allowed it to catch hold of the recent thawing of traditional mores in the architectural world. Cornell University and Syracuse University began accepting women in their architecture programs in 1871; the University of Illinois followed in 1873. But the Woman's Building also highlighted the disparity between these pioneering women: They may all have been members of the same small club, but they envisioned their roles and their careers very differently.

PIONEERING PROFESSIONALS

According to Erik Larson in The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic and Madness at the Fair That Changed America (Crown, 2003), organizers wanted the Chicago World's Fair to be a "monument to architecture," in which women would be included. Even amid pressures to keep the fair's construction on schedule, Daniel Burnham, the fair's chief architect, managed to carry out a competition among female architects to determine who would design the Woman's Building.

Still, female architects faced different rules than their male counterparts. Louise Blanchard Bethune, considered the first professional American woman architect, had been the first woman to be inducted into the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1888. The most noted female architect in the country, she refused to even enter the competition because the contest went against her ethic of "equal remuneration for equal service." Male architects for the exposition were appointed to design a particular building and were paid $10,000 for their service, plus any expense for construction drawings. Women architects, however, were asked to compete for the privilege of designing the one building and to take care of any drawing expenses for a "prize" of $1,000.

And while the second-place winner went on to a long career in her chosen profession, the winner, Sophia Hayden, never designed another building. When she was awarded the prize, Hayden had recently received a degree in architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the first woman to do so. But the building process and the many design modifications eventually overwhelmed Hayden. Shortly before the dedication of the Woman's Building, she suffered from an emotional breakdown and was placed in a sanitarium. The year after the fair, she planned a building for the Women's Clubs of America. But the building never materialized, and after her marriage, Hayden never practiced her profession. Her obituary in 1953 didn't even mention her brief career.

Although the fair offered the first large-scale recognition of women's burgeoning role in the architectural profession, it wasn't a truly new role. Women had demonstrated an interest in the field throughout the previous decades, but society was slow to accept them in professional terms.

The publisher of Art and Handicraft in the Woman's Building predicted the 1893 Chicago World's Fair project would hasten the "coming of the day when women will be emancipated from restraints imposed upon her by a worn-out conventionalism."
In an 1891 speech, Bethune said, “Women have entered the architectural profession at a much earlier stage of its existence even before it received legislative recognition. They meet no serious opposition from the profession nor the public. Neither are they warmly welcomed.”

COMMUNITY PLANNERS

Not every American would have scoffed at women’s role in planning and building a community. Native American women played a major role—often the dominant one—in designing and constructing pueblos, wooden houses, tepees and pits. Among the Blackfeet Indians of the Great Plains, the men were expected to hunt the buffalo, but the women were expected to create the shelters from the hides. Iroquois women owned not only their houses, but also all the possessions within.

For white women, however, to actually claim a leadership role in planning private, much less public, buildings would have been to step outside the status quo. “During the first half of the 19th century, a woman’s domain consisted of only two concerns: her home life and her religious life,” wrote Doris Cole in From Tipi to Skyscraper: A History of Women in Architecture (Press Inc., 1973). “Society, and women as part of it, accepted the fact that a woman’s duty was to manage her domestic realm as best she could and not stray far from its physical and psychological borders.”

HOME MAKERS

With such clearly defined roles, women were inextricably linked to the home long before they began officially designing them. Anonymous women throughout the ages planned their own homes. After all, who else knew better what was needed?

So before women began pushing their way slowly through the doors of the architectural profession, a previous generation of women had knocked on that door through less-direct methods. In February 1841, Louisa Tuthill presented a publishing firm with a recently completed manuscript she’d written on American architecture. Her work, published in 1848, set a precedent for women to write architectural criticism and was the first effort by a female writer to address style or architecture. She also supported the existence of a uniquely American architecture, not one devolved from Europe.

Throughout the 19th century, a market flourished for a genre of etiquette books equating housekeeping to a science. That “domestic science” often included suggestions and designs for the ideal floor plan, just one way women could make their environment as cheerful, efficient and healthy as possible.

These books discussed everything from site selection for homes—a high and dry foundation was a must—to proper materials. It was intensely practical advice: what wood worked best for various purposes, when brick might be appropriate, and how to improve ventilation and control humidity. Mrs. L. G. Abell recommended that the nursery, sitting room, kitchen and parlor be kept on one floor so that mothers wouldn’t constantly be hiking up a flight of stairs.

“For the women who planned and built 19th-century America, architecture did not mean the lavish monument or the estate of the wealthy, but economical, soundly constructed buildings conducive to the physical and mental well-being of the ordinary family,” Cole wrote.

INVENTORS OF AN IDEAL

Promoting rigid roles for women as leaders of the home, Catharine Beecher, sister of Harriet Beecher Stowe, argued vehemently and consistently that women were morally superior because of an engrained capacity for self-sacrifice. Catharine and her sister wrote the book The American Woman’s Home, full of detailed theory and drawings of a model home that would add to domestic duties rather than ease the burden.

Beecher intended to up the ante on self-sacrifice. In a series of articles, she presents detailed diagrams of ideal homes, but the conveniences only allowed for more work to be fit into the day. In one article written in 1865, she describes a Gothic cottage replete with machines for the conscientious housewife. The basis of her plans, she wrote, was “to show how time, labor and
The American Woman’s Home, published in 1869, aimed to revolutionize 19th-century home design. Its model cottage (above) was the embodiment of efficiency. 

Expense are saved, not only in the building but in furniture and arrangement. Her design blended the woman’s duty of caring for family with her need to govern the entire home environment. She called the parlor a “home room,” the kitchen a “work room” and the dining room a “family room.”

In 1869 she offered an even more complete house plan in *The American Woman’s Home* (Rutgers University Press, reprinted in 2002). “The kitchen becomes a streamlined, single surface workspace, penetrating the center of the house with its mechanical core of water closets and heating and ventilation equipment,” wrote Dolores Hayden, Professor of the Yale School of Architecture, in *Women in American Architecture* (Watson-Guptill, 1977). “Flexibility is maximized with movable decorative screens hiding extra beds and dressing areas.”

**ADAPTABLE DESIGNERS**

Other women extended their accepted role as homemakers to home creators. Communal, or “collective housekeeping,” caught fire with many women straining against the pressures of never-ending housekeeping duties.

In 1866, Martha McWhirter led a group of 30 women in Belton, Texas, to form the Women’s Commonwealth. Discussions and by investigating the most efficient arrangements.

“The Commonwealth’s buildings reflected an uncommon set of values,” wrote Gwendolyn Wright in *Women in American Architecture*. “The facades were unpretentious, since the group favored extreme simplicity. The interiors were planned for interaction during work and leisure. Each room had several uses ... each one opened into an adjoining space or outdoor area.”

By the time women ventured into professional architecture in the second half of the 19th century, the social mores that had kept them cleaning homes instead of designing them were still shadowing their business behavior. So they adapted. “The objects of the businesswoman are quite distinct from those of the professional agitator,” said Louise Bethune in one speech. “Her aims are conservative rather than aggressive, her strength lies in adaptability, not in reform, and her desire to conciliate rather than to antagonize.”

“Prejudice nourished anonymity,” wrote Judith Paine in the essay “Pioneer Women Architects.” “Denied advancement and frequently employment by established architectural firms, women usually practiced alone or in small offices. Already twice removed from the accepted feminine role by choosing to work outside the home and by daring to practice in a ‘masculine’ field, women architects understood that reticence as well as competence was rewarded. Today most of their names are as faded as the facades they designed.”

Louise Bethune’s luxurious Hotel Lafayette in Buffalo, N.Y., was the masterpiece of her career. In 1888, she became the first woman inducted into the American Institute of Architects.
MEMORABLE CREATORS

Some of those women are finally beginning to get the spotlight that over­looked them for so long. In 1988, marking the 100th anniversary of Bethune's


There are few records about women architects earlier than Bethune, but many businesswomen did achieve their aims, designing and building structures across the country. To recognize these achievements, AIA archivist Tony Wrenn suggested the idea of publishing a book of original essays on women architects, which led to Architecture: A Place for Women (Smithsonian Press, 1989). “Women had to fight against almost insurmountable odds even to study architecture or get a job in an architectural office, yet they produced some of the most memorable architecture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries,” Wrenn said. “Their work was worth celebrating, their story worth knowing.”

The stories include architect Margaret Hicks’ 1878 student project of a work­man’s cottage, the first design published by an American woman architect. At the Philadelphia Centennial in 1876, Mary Nolan of Missouri showcased a prototype house featuring interlocked bricks, and Emma Kimball worked as a drafts­person in Massachusetts during the 1870s.

Then there was Harriet Irwin and her hexagonal houses. She applied for a patent in 1869 for a hexagonal building that she thought would make better use of space, materials and heat as compared to a traditional house. (She was also tired of cleaning her house’s corners.) The usual entrance hall was absent, multiple chimneys were replaced with one central chimney, and the cluster of hexagons increased floor space, light and ventilation compared to rectangular rooms. After Irwin received her patent, the house was built in Charlotte, N.C. A few other hexagonal homes were built in the area, some of which still remain. But the idea never caught on, so Irwin eventually gave up on her innovation.

Harriet Beecher Stowe, a vocal proponent of women’s role in architecture, designed her own house in 1863. She wrote that women architects would be “one of the greatest reforms.”

“The mischief with houses,” Stowe explained, “is that they are all mere male contrivances.”

Drafting the Blueprint

She was America’s first woman architect, and, despite the lack of footsteps to follow, Louise Blanchard Bethune didn’t pause often in her career path.

Bethune, the only daughter of a mathematician/school principal father and schoolteacher mother, was educated at home as were most girls at the time. She didn’t attend school for architectural training—she went a more traditional route and served as a drafts­man and then assistant to a well-known Buffalo architect. At 25, she opened her own office. That same year, 1881, the Association for the Advancement of Women convened in Buffalo, promoting the need for acceptance of women in all fields. Bethune’s new business was announced at the conference.

She practiced with her husband, also an architect, and a draftsman. In case anyone questioned her role within the firm, an 1893 article noted Bethune had been in business for 16 years and “for some years she had taken entire charge of the office work and complete superintendence of one-third of the outside work.”

Bethune’s office designed 18 schools for the city of Buffalo, and many of her office’s industrial buildings are still working today. But the Hotel Lafayette was the masterpiece of her career. The 225-room, seven-story hotel opened in 1904 with hot and cold water in all the bathrooms and was touted as having “all the best that science, art and experience can offer.” Fifty years later, it was still operating as a luxury hotel, although now it’s degenerated into a rooming house desperately needing restoration.

With her wide variety of projects, what Bethune did not pursue were single­family residences.

“Bethune had a strong dislike for single­residence architecture,” wrote Adriana Barbasch in Architecture: A Place for Women. “She rejected the pigeon­holing of women to house design and knew it to be the worst­paying and most frustrating job for any architect.”

As the first woman inducted into the American Institute of Architects, she remained active in AIA throughout her career, holding chapter offices as a vice president and treasurer.

— G. P.
S

AVING THE WHALES HAS BEEN IMPORTANT TO AMERICANS ALMOST SINCE BEFORE THE FIRST COLONISTS ARRIVED AND SAW PODS OF WHALES SWIMMING PAST THEIR SHIPS. BUT FOR A SIGNIFICANT PART OF OUR HISTORY, THE PHRASE “SAVING THE WHALE” MEANT RENDERING THE MAJESTIC AQUATIC MAMMALS INTO OIL, NOT PRESERVING THEM.
Many species were hunted to near-extinction for the oil derived from blubber. The enormous profits from whaling helped drive a young nation’s economy and, in some cases, laid the foundation for distinctly land-based businesses. Whaling also gave us one of our greatest works of literature, Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick*. (Although whaling was in its Golden Age in 1851 when Melville published his masterpiece, the public shunned the lengthy, lyrical work about an ill-fated voyage.)

Many countries engaged in whaling until the practice came under international control in the 20th century. However, America pioneered the technical and economic strategies that transformed the fishery into a 19th-century industrial powerhouse. As often happens, this success sowed the seeds of its own demise. Before that decline began, however, American whalemen charted much of the Pacific, poured vast wealth into the young nation’s economy and helped establish America’s standing as a major sea power.

**ANCIENT MARINERS**

Man has hunted whales for food, oil and bone for millennia in many parts of the world. Whale meat was, and is, a staple in the subsistence diet of some cultures, as well as a much sought-after gourmet meat in Asia and Scandinavia.

In most of Europe and later in America, whale oil and whalebone were highly prized. The oil was superior to other animal and vegetable oils and burned long and cleanly in lamps and when made into candles. It also made an excellent lubricant for early machinery. Whales were often described in terms of how much oil they could produce, for example, a 60- or 70-barrel whale was a considerable catch.

Whalebone—actually part of the jaws of certain whales—is composed of baleen, a substance similar to fingernails and hoofs. Stiff yet somewhat flexible, it made excellent corset stays and hoops to augment the figures of fashionable ladies. It was also made into buggy whips, fishing poles, carriage springs and ribs for fans and umbrellas.
Whaling can be divided into three broad categories. "Shore whaling" generally means scavenging dead or injured whales that have beached themselves or become stranded in shallows. It also describes hunting from boats close to shore. "Boat whaling" refers to hunting from small rowed or sailing craft farther offshore, sometimes out of sight of land. "Pelagic whaling" refers to the sometimes years-long voyages to remote parts of the world that came to characterize commercial whaling in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Native Americans in the Northeast, Pacific Northwest, Canada and Alaska engaged in shore whaling long before Europeans arrived. Indeed, Eskimo and Inuit used bone and ivory harpoons with long lines attached to skin floats to hunt bowhead and other large whales. Similar techniques were used elsewhere, and Colonial whalers often adapted techniques that Indian hunters used.

**THE FAR-OFF PLACE**

Thanks to ships’ logs, personal accounts and official records, we know a great deal about the origin and development of American whaling. This development is in large part also the history of tiny Nantucket Island, notes Nathaniel Philbrick, in Away Off Shore: Nantucket Island and Its People, 1602—1890 (Mill Hill Press, 1984). Director of Nantucket’s Egan Institute of Maritime Studies, Philbrick’s sources for his book included earlier accounts such as History of American Whaling, published in 1878 by Nantucketer Alexander Starbuck, and The History of Nantucket by Obed Macy. (Macy was part of another large, prominent Nantucket clan, and his grandnephew used whaling wealth to found Macy’s department store.)

Colonial whaling did not begin on Nantucket, which was not colonized until 1659. Shore whaling likely began soon after Europeans arrived—Starbuck notes that Massachusetts was founded in part as a fishing colony. According to Starbuck, the earliest recorded systematic whaling efforts were on Long Island, N.Y., at Southampton. In March 1644, the town set up a system for scavenging drift whales. Teams were assigned to cut up whales and divide the bounty along prescribed lines.

Nearby Easthampton and Southwold began whaling around 1650, and coastal settlements on the mainland also organized similar shore whaling efforts. The colonies quickly developed legal codes to decide who could claim a whale, how to share it and, of course, how the governments could tax it.

Enter Nantucket. Located about 30 miles off Cape Cod and barely above sea level, the 14-mile-long island was part of the mainland until about 5,000 years ago. Rising sea levels flooded the low-lying lands to create the island, which may itself disappear in a few hundred years if the seas keep rising.

Nantucket—which means "far-off place" in Algonquin—supported a substantial Native American population long before the first English settlers arrived in 1659. Puritan missionaries had already visited the island and established a flourishing church. The two peoples got along well, at least at first. They shared the island’s few resources, including drift whales, which were considered the Indians’ property. This harmony would not last.

Fiercely independent of the mainland and equally fierce in pursuit of wealth on their resource-poor island, the English settlers turned early to the sea for a living. Macy traces Nantucket’s whaling days to the slaying of an Atlantic gray whale that wandered into the Nantucket Harbor a few years after the colony was founded and could not find its way out. After three days, an unidentified Nantucketer contrived a harpoon and killed the beast. No one there could have guessed what a historic moment it would be.

**NANTUCKET SLEIGH RIDE**

According to Starbuck, by 1672 crews composed of colonists and Native Americans actively hunted whales from small boats and ships. In 1688 in New York, a ship captain sought government approval to sail south to the Bahamas and Florida in search of the valuable sperm whale. Starbuck notes there is no record of the voyage taking place, but cites it as proof of the rapidly increasing knowledge of whaling grounds.

These early whale hunts were conducted in small boats or sailing ships. By 1800 on Nantucket and elsewhere, lookout posts were set up on shore during the whaling season, which ran from autumn to early spring. Crews lived in small huts, ready to run for their boats. After a kill, they towed the carcass
to shore where the blubber was cut off, or “saved,” and then boiled in large pots, or “tried out,” to extract the oil.

The favorite prey of early whalers was the right whale, which can weigh as much as 80 tons and measure up to 60 feet in length. “Right whales” were called that because they were considered the “right” whale to hunt; they came close to shore, didn’t spook when approached and floated after being killed.

In 1712, a Nantucket ship hunting right whales was blown offshore and encountered a group of sperm whales. The crew killed one and towed it home. Whalers instantly realized they could successfully hunt out of sight of land. Not that hunting 60-foot long behemoths was easy. Whalers had begun to tie harpoon lines to their whaleboats instead of floats. A wounded, fleeing sperm whale could drag a boat at literally breakneck speeds, which came to be called a “Nantucket sleigh ride.”

To pursue whales in new hunting grounds, ship owners outfitted ships of 40 to 50 feet in length for voyages of about six weeks, according to Macy. Successful crews cut up the blubber, packed it in hogsheads and sailed home where it was tried out. The returning ships were quickly reprovisioned and sent out again.

In the 1720s, a portable “tryworks” was developed that could be assembled on an island or mainland beach near the hunting grounds. This enabled whalers to potentially bring home more oil, while obliging them to stay out longer or sail farther to fill their casks. Another factor forced them to undertake longer voyages: The number and size of whales closer to shore was dwindling.

FACTORY AT SEA

The real breakthrough, at least from the oil merchants’ perspective, came in the 1750s when onboard brick tryworks were developed. Instead of heading to shore to save a whale, crews could process the whale at sea. Philbrick notes that the average length of a whaling voyage increased from six weeks to more than four months within a decade of the introduction of onboard tryworks. The new technology required larger crews and ships, which also increased cargo capacity. The ships became floating factories, turning raw material into partially refined products.

This changed how whale crews were paid. In the 17th century, American crewmen got a share of the oil and bone instead of wages, which had been the custom elsewhere. Now, a complex system of shares developed whose net effect was to drastically reduce the average sailor’s pay. Sailors found themselves with little to show after months or even years at sea, and some even owed money to the ship owners. They had to sign on for another voyage to try to work off the debt.

On the other hand, 18th-century whale ship owners began to create a highly capitalistic model for their business. In an October 2004 Forbes article called “Blubber Capitalism,” writer Laura Saunders describes how the business was vertically integrated. Ship owners and oil merchants effectively controlled nearly every part of the process—from building ships and barrels to refining and shipping the oil to making candles. They reduced their personal risks and investments by recruiting investors and structuring the deals so the primary investors nearly always profited. It was a model that has been repeated in countless other business ventures to this day.

Increasing supplies of whale oil spurred increasing demand, especially in Europe, and whaling became big business in the 18th century. American ships were particularly successful, inspiring Great Britain to try a variety of unsuccessful measures to protect its own whale fishery.

WARTIME CASUALTIES

What protectionism could not do, war did. Far-ranging whale ships were choice targets for pirates and privateers in the Seven Years’ War, but their attacks did not substantially hinder trade. Indeed, the British government in 1758 exempted Nantucket’s largely Quaker sailors from military service and allowed them to fish the Grand Banks, which were embargoed to other American vessels.

By 1774, Starbuck wrote, the American whale fleet comprised some 360 ships that annually brought home “at least 45,000 barrels of spermaceti oil, and 8,500 barrels of right whale oil, and of bone nearly or quite 75,000 pounds.” England was the primary market, and Nantucket enjoyed a special trading relationship with the mother country. In fact, business was brisk. As far as Nantucket was concerned, the American Revolution could not have come at a more inconvenient time.

A few vessels remained, however, and one of them gained the honor of being the first ship flying American colors to enter Britain, according to Starbuck. In early 1784, The Bedford out of Nantucket sailed up the Thames with a load of whale oil. Several more American whalers arrived soon thereafter.
FROM GOLDEN AGE TO PARIAH

From 1784 to about 1820, the American whaling industry slowly rebuilt. Britain had been its major customer until 1788 when she imposed stiff tariffs on imported whale oil that effectively kept the market closed. Once the taxes were repealed, demand rose and the merchants slowly rebuilt their fleets. Seeking new hunting grounds, ship owners outfitted ever-larger vessels and pushed into the Pacific on voyages lasting two years or more.

The War of 1812 brought the rebuilding to a crashing halt. Much of the American fleet was at sea, their owners believing that the two countries would settle their differences without war, according to Starbuck. As a result, privateers and regular British Navy ships captured many whalers and imprisoned their crews.

When the war ended in 1815, ship owners rebuilt again. During the next 20 years, whaleships explored much of the Pacific, ranging into Polynesia and near Japan. Historians consider the period of 1835-1860 as “The Golden Age of Whaling,” based on the number of men and ships involved and the financial rewards.

Every gilded age has its base side. The relentless hunting voyages meant crews spent years away from home, with little or nothing to show when they sailed into homeport. The whaling ships were Pacific Islanders’ first contact with the West—and with its diseases and vices. And the near-extinction of whale species made longer voyages necessary as nearby fisheries were depleted.

Ships were, of course, lost, and some stories became celebrated disasters. Nathaniel Philbrick’s book, *In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex* (Penguin Putnam, 2000) recounts the sinking of the U.S. whaleship *Essex* in 1819 by an enraged sperm whale. Adrift in three lifeboats, the crew attempted to reach land. They ultimately resorted to cannibalism to stay alive. The *Essex* story stunned a nation and inspired Melville’s later tale.

But whaling’s golden era suffered a mortal blow when petroleum was discovered in 1859 in Titusville, Pa. “Black Gold” soon emerged as far more versatile, cheaper and easier to obtain than whale oil.

The industry had already begun to decline on Nantucket. While oil profits could be staggering, the long voyages meant less consistent work for artisans and craftsmen who built and outfitted ships or processed their cargoes. A devastating fire in 1846 destroyed much of the town, along with huge stockpiles of whale oil. And Nantucket’s shallow harbor could not accommodate the larger whale ships.

By the 20th century, demand for whale oil was virtually nil, and plastics would soon replace whalebone. Still, whaling survived despite growing international disapproval. Whale meat remains a part of the diet not only of small groups such as Inuits in Alaska and Canada, but also in areas such as Japan and parts of Scandinavia. In early 2005, there were even reports that Japan would add humpback and fin whales to its annual hunt. Japan justifies these hunts as necessary for scientific research, and the meat of the whales taken is sold for food.

In a sense, whaling remains Nantucket’s primary industry. After the Great Fire and subsequent decline of whaling there, the island’s leaders began to capitalize on the pleasant summer climate and clean beaches as tourist attractions. Its whaling heritage passed into nostalgia and kitschy tourist souvenirs.

One is tempted to see parallels between whaling’s rise and fall and today’s quest to find and tap new, arguably marginal petroleum reserves in remote, environmentally vulnerable areas. We see that the industry of whaling caused incalculable environmental losses before an apparently better substitute came along, just in the nick of time for many species. Will we be so lucky a second time?
THE HOME OF AMERICAN IMPRESSIONISM

Called the "Giverny of America" and the "American Barbizon," the Lyme Art Colony became famous as the country's foremost Impressionist colony in the early 20th century, with its focal point a boardinghouse in Old Lyme. Here American landscape painters flocked for the camaraderie, low rents and nurturing personality of its gracious landlady, Florence Griswold, to paint the gentle rural southeast Connecticut landscape.

BY SHARON MCDONNELL

Opposite page: "Griswold House"
by Harry Hoffman
ARTISTS LIKE CHILDE HASSAM, WILLARD METCALF, William Chadwick and Henry Ward Ranger not only stayed in the late Georgian-style mansion with its grand two-story portico and Ionic columns, now the Florence Griswold Museum and a National Historic Landmark, they also immortalized it in their artworks. The Griswold house by moonlight glows in “May Night” by Metcalf, “A Summer’s Night” by William Howe Foot and “Griswold House” by Harry Hoffman. Its kindly owner is honored in “The Harpist, a Portrait of Miss Florence Griswold” by Alphonse Jongers, while Hassam’s studio is depicted in his “Old Lyme,” “Apple Trees in Bloom,” and again in the wintry “Studio Behind the Florence Griswold House” by Everett Warner.

“It’s the best thing you’ve ever done,” said “Miss Florence”—who described herself as the “keeper of the artist colony” and fondly looked after “her boys”—to Metcalf in a typical burst of generosity, refusing his offer of “May Night” to pay his bill. His 1906 painting won first prize from the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, and the gallery bought it for $3,000.

But the ultimate compliment is probably in the dining room of the Griswold house, where more than 30 grateful artist boarders adorned the walls, mantel and doors with more than 40 paintings of Connecticut landscapes in different seasons—and a light-hearted eight-foot mural, Henry Rankin Poore’s “The Fox Chase,” a caricature of art colony members. Other doors and hallways were also decorated with paintings, inspired by the tradition throughout inns in artist colonies like Giverny, the small village near Paris where Monet lived for more than 40 years, and Barbizon, the village at the edge of Fontainebleau forest, southeast of Paris.

“Oh, no. I really can’t sell it. The door is part of the house,” Miss Florence once demurred when someone suggested she sell a richly adorned door.

A GRAND HOME

Florence Griswold, Connecticut’s counterpart to great art patrons Mabel Dodge Luhan and Marian MacDowell, was born in 1850 in Old Lyme. She was the daughter of a prosperous clipper ship captain, Robert Harper Griswold. The Griswolds were one of New England’s oldest families, and Robert’s grandfather, Matthew Griswold, was deputy governor of Connecticut during the Revolutionary War, as well as governor from 1784–1786. His father, Roger Griswold, was governor in 1811–1812. Nearby Griswold Point and Griswold Beach on Long Island Sound echo the family name.

Captain Griswold bought the mansion where Florence grew up, and he later ran an artists’ boardinghouse in 1841 as a wedding gift for his wife, Helen. Built in 1817 for William Noyes Jr., whose grandfather, a judge, bought 400 acres in Old Lyme, the stately house’s projecting porch features white columns supporting a pediment pierced by a fanlight. The first floor features four big rooms with high ceilings and a central hallway divided by a paneled arch; the second floor mirrors this layout. The house was designed by Samuel Belcher, the architect of the white Congregational Church of Old Lyme, a frequently painted subject for the Lyme Art Colony.

While Old Lyme had been a bustling shipbuilding town at the mouth of the Connecticut River from the mid-18th century on, it declined after the Civil War as steamboats replaced clipper ships. So did the fortunes of the cultivated Griswolds. When Captain Griswold, who often sailed across the Atlantic to London, died in 1882, he left nothing but the mortgaged mansion to Helen and his three daughters—Florence, Adele and Louise.

Due to financial problems, Helen Griswold had already opened a school for young women in her home in 1878. She and her daughters—none of whom ever married—taught literature, music, theater, languages and the home arts for 14 years at the Griswold Home School. Later, the family took in visitors during the summer months, operating informally as a comfortable boardinghouse.
AN ART DOYENNE IS BORN

Miss Florence was nearly 50 in 1899 when her mother died. (One sister had died three years earlier, and the other would be institutionalized in 1900.) She was desperate to keep her home and its 10 or so acres. Luckily that summer, artist Henry Ward Ranger, fresh from years in Paris and Holland but originally from Syracuse, N.Y., arrived as a boarder. He became an ardent champion of forming a distinctively American school of landscape painting modeled after the Barbizon school. Artists like Corot and Millet began coming to Barbizon in the early 1820s, staying in a local inn and renting studios from villagers. They depicted nature, animals and peasants outdoors in what was called en plein air painting, inspired by 17th-century Dutch landscape artists. The countryside around the Griswold home even reminded Ranger of Barbizon with its gnarled oak trees and low rolling hillsides. “It is only waiting to be painted,” he said. The combination of its proximity to New York City by train, Miss Florence’s kindly personality and her willingness to convert her home and barns into an artists’ boardinghouse made the Griswold house ideal.

A stout, voluble talker with a perpetual cigar clamped between his teeth, Ranger was an ardent advocate of Tonalism, a style where generally one color predominated or a subject is glimpsed through a veil of atmosphere. After his enthusiastic promotion of the Griswold house to his artist friends in New York, several joined him in the spring and summer of 1900. Some heard about it in Paris from American artists, while others came together through New York’s Art Students League.

The colony grew more after an exhibit of paintings by Lyme artists at New York’s National Academy of Design in 1902, which prompted artist Allen Talcott to write to Miss Florence, “I think you would be proud of your colony of artists as they are represented at the Academy ... 14 pictures I believe by a very small group of men.” By 1903, 25 to 30 painters in the Lyme Art Colony had come by Ranger’s invitation or group consensus.

THE SHIFT TO IMPRESSIONISM

Hassam’s arrival in 1903 at the Griswold house resulted in a shift in the Lyme colony’s style to Impressionism. Famed as the foremost exponent of French Impressionism in America and a veteran of more than 80 group art shows, Hassam, originally from Dorchester, Mass., studied in Paris, where his Montmartre studio was previously occupied by Renoir, whose dramatic use of color he greatly admired.

Hassam’s artist friends like Metcalf—one of the first American artists to visit Giverny, where he tutored Monet’s children in botany and ornithology—and Walter Griffin began staying at the house. He also invited J. Alden Weir and Edward Simmons, two fellow members of the Ten American Painters, a group of American Impressionists who came together to host their own exhibitions in 1897–1898 in reaction to the more conservative National Academy and Society of American Artists. In contrast to many post-Civil War American artists and collectors who chose subjects from the distant past or exotic, classical locations, these artists preferred to paint American landscapes and seascapes—even cities like Boston or New York—with subtleties of light, atmosphere and mood and use of brushstrokes inspired by the French Impressionists.

Favorite subjects in the Old Lyme area included fields, laurel in bloom at Flying Point, the wooden Bow Bridge over the Lieutenant River and weathered farmhouses and churches. In winter, most artist guests returned to their studios in New York. Many, like Metcalf, Ranger and Talcott, had their studios in the Studio Association building on West 67th Street, overlooking Central Park, where “Lyme teas” were held before spring brought them back to Old Lyme.

Before long, the Griswold house rang with the sounds of artists in high-spirited conversation, playing games and practical jokes. They often dined with Miss Florence, who was knowledgeable about literature, music and the arts, and their leisure hours were filled with pitching horseshoes and playing the Wiggle Game—where an artist drew unconnected lines on paper and others connected them to draw a caricature. They also enjoyed picnicking, rowboating, dressing up in costume with clothing from trunks in the Griswold attic and parading down the town’s main street, as well as musical and theatrical parlour games.

“Just the place for high thinking and low living,” Hassam once teased about the house and its bohemian disarray. Sofas with holes lined the decrepit central hallway, and broken windows and a crumbling cornice marred the house’s once-majestic appearance. When President Woodrow Wilson, a friend of Miss Florence, brought his second wife to visit, Mrs. Wilson complained that she didn’t understand how anybody could bear to stay in such a “dreadfully filthy” place. (His first wife had been more congenial, staying at the Griswold House in the summers of 1905 and 1908–1911 where she studied art, while Wilson was president of Princeton University.)
While one could fault her housekeeping, no one could fault the generous hostess, who gave credit to artists with money problems, sold their paintings by displaying them in her hallway and charged rock-bottom rents of $7 per week for room and board. "Some good spirit brought me to your door and [that] I was privileged to be with you and to share your delightful hospitality which has all the charm of being a guest with the freedom of being at home," wrote Talcott to Miss Florence.

"She wasn't beautiful. She wasn't strong. She wasn't self-reliant ... Her graying, wavy black hair swept loosely back in a low coil, her well-marked eyebrows, her slender nose, her delicately modeled chin, her sensitive mouth, and her smiling black eyes, these were the features we all remembered," wrote artist Arthur Heming in a memoir about the Lyme Art Colony published by the Lyme Historical Society.

In its heyday, the Lyme Art Colony was one of America's most famous art colonies, and reviews of its annual exhibitions appeared in many magazines and newspapers. The country's first exhibit by a summer art colony began as a two-day event charging 50 cents in 1902 at the Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library in Old Lyme. The annual exhibitions continued until 1920. The Lyme Art Association Gallery opened next to the Griswold house in 1921 with land Miss Florence gave to the group. She was its first manager.

But as the colony resisted trends sweeping the art world from the urban realism of the Ash Can School to abstract art from Europe in the 1910s and 1920s, it declined. Miss Florence died in 1937 after selling her estate to a judge the year before because of money problems and bad health. In 1947, the Florence Griswold Association opened the Griswold House as a museum.

LYME AND ART: STILL SYNONYMOUS

In 2002, the Florence Griswold Museum grew much bigger with the opening of the new 10,000-square-foot Krieble Gallery behind the 1817 house, and with the gift of a large American art collection from The Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Company. Today, the museum boasts one of the foremost collections of American Impressionists in the country, with major works by Hassam and John Henry Twachtman, the biggest collection of Metcalfs anywhere, and works by Frederic Church of the Hudson River School.

Again, the Griswold is in fashion. A $2.5 million restoration project is now under way to restore the house to its 1910 Lyme Art Colony heyday. As Miss Florence once wrote: "A few relatives and friends didn't quite approve of the artists at first ... However, it wasn't long before these same people became charmed with the personalities of these well-educated, widely traveled and talented group of men who were far from wild and whose every endeavor was to do serious work.

"So you see, at first the artists adopted Lyme, then Lyme adopted the artists, and now, Lyme and art are synonymous."
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