Family Ties at the Fairbanks House

Understanding Our Identity
The Lessons of Immigration Museums

Alexander Hamilton
And His Controversial Vision of American Greatness

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Table of Contents
features

20 Alexander Hamilton’s Controversial Vision of American Greatness
As the first Secretary of the Treasury, Hamilton garnered praise for his successful fiscal policies as well as scorn for his divisive politics.
BY COURTNEY PETER

31 The Genesis of Lineage Societies in America
Lineage societies such as the DAR, S.A.R. and others were launched in the aftermath of the Civil War to honor the past and express patriotic fervor.
BY LENA ANTHONY

36 The Lessons of Immigration Museums
By sharing the stories of ancestors who made the perilous trip to American shores, immigration museums open up visitors to a greater understanding of their history and identity.
BY SHARON MCDONNELL

40 Black Kings and Governors of Early New England
From the 1750s to around 1850, African-American slaves and freemen in some New England towns formed a kind of unofficial African-American government that operated in the shadow of the white power structure.
BY BILL HUDGINS
Table of Contents

JANUARY | FEBRUARY 2015

departments

15 Spirited Adventures
Des Moines, Iowa
First founded as a military post at the confluence of two rivers, the state capital of Iowa has become a thriving Midwest city and a hub for presidential politics.
BY JAMIE ROBERTS

18 Genealogy Sleuth
Tall Oaks from Little Acorns Grow
The mid-19th century saw the emergence of family tree lithographs, beautiful representations of ancestral relationships.
BY MAUREEN TAYLOR

26 Historic Homes
Family Ties
Home to eight generations of one family, the Fairbanks House has retained much of its original structure despite being one of the oldest homes in North America.
BY NANCY MANN JACKSON

46 Our Patriots
Indispensable Hand
Though he first served in the British army, the Irish-born Edward Hand later enlisted in the Continental Army and served with distinction.
BY JEFF WALTER

2 Daughters of the American Revolution

About the cover:
Spinning wheel in the Fairbanks House in Dedham, Mass.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENN OWEN

in every issue

3 President General’s Message
4 Today’s Daughters
5 National Treasures
6 Whatnot
12 Letters to the Editor
14 Bookshelf
American Spirit
National Society Daughters of the American Revolution
Volume 149, No. 1 • January/February 2015

From the President General

DAR will officially commemorate the 125th anniversary of its founding on October 11, 2015, but American Spirit will celebrate all year long with articles devoted to the history and achievements of the National Society. Looking forward, the entire September/October 2015 issue will be dedicated to sharing the many ways DAR members have made monumental differences to our nation, particularly in the areas of historic preservation, education and patriotism.

One of this issue’s DAR-focused stories describes how the spirit of the Colonial Revival movement inspired the creation of various lineage societies, including the DAR. Eighteen women attended the first organizational meeting of the National Society on October 11, 1890, with a goal of honoring their Revolutionary Patriot ancestors and bringing unity to the war-fractured country. A supplement to the story offers fun facts and statistics spanning 125 years of DAR history.

Sharing its 125th anniversary with DAR is New York’s Ellis Island Immigration Station, founded in 1890 when the federal government took over the immigration process from the states. It’s one of the locations we’re spotlighting in a feature on immigration museums in the United States and abroad. These museums not only tell the stories of ancestors who bravely traveled to America, but they also give us a better idea of how immigrants have shaped our country. The Whatnot section dives even deeper into Ellis Island’s history, recalling DAR members’ involvement in the lives of the millions of immigrants who passed through its gates.

Alexander Hamilton’s life is fascinating—born in the Caribbean, the brilliant Founder studied at King’s College, served as aide-de-camp to George Washington during the Revolution and co-authored the Federalist Papers. We narrow our focus on his term as the first Secretary of the Treasury, which garnered him praise for his successful fiscal policies as well as derision for his controversial nationalist politics.

Our Black History Month feature uncovers little-known details about the 18th-century tradition among African-Americans of electing black governors or kings in several New England Colonies. A black governor was called on to perform important functions within his community, and the position commanded respect from both black and white residents.

The Our Patriots department spotlights the Irish-born Edward Hand, who served the Revolutionary cause with distinction as an officer and a physician. Genealogy Sleuth details the art and symbolism of family tree lithographs, born in the mid-19th century as decorative representations of ancestral relationships.

Our cover story spotlights the Fairbanks House in Dedman, Mass., built in the late 1630s—early 1640s for a family of Puritan immigrants from England. Home to eight generations of the Fairbanks family, the house has retained much of its original structure. As a sidenote, this story was photographed by one of our talented DAR members, Jenn Owen.

Lynn Forney Young
The story was hardly a source of pride for her family, but these days she’s grateful to know it, since the details have helped her unlock a rich ancestral past, with ties to the Revolutionary War and beyond.

In order to escape instability in the Philippines, Ms. Gonzales immigrated to the United States with her family when she was 8 years old. They settled in Los Angeles, and despite being the new kid, she remembers her fourth-grade teacher made the transition easier.

“She introduced me to the class in a way that celebrated my being a new student from another country,” says Ms. Gonzales, a member of Kate Waller Barrett Chapter, Alexandria, Va. “Instead of being teased and bullied, the children looked at me as sort of a celebrity. Years later, I realized what an incredible act she performed and how influential it was for my life.”

After moving to the Washington, D.C., area for her father’s work, curiosity about their American ancestor led Ms. Gonzales’ mother to the National Archives, where she was handed a box of his military records. “Inside the box was a manuscript of his ancestry traced all the way back to Colonial times,” Ms. Gonzales says.

But finding the manuscript was just the first step in the long process of validating it, and it took one of Ms. Gonzales’ cousins multiple trips to libraries across North America and Europe to do so. In the course of her research, the cousin attained membership with the Clan Munro USA, a Scottish genealogical heritage society. (President James Monroe was descended from the Clan Munro, whose members were located in the Scottish Highlands.)

Ms. Gonzales, taking an interest in her cousin’s discoveries, joined the organization as well.

Ms. Gonzales since has joined the Georgia Salzburger Society and the DAR, of which she became a member in 2006. In the process of applying for her DAR membership, Ms. Gonzales made another surprising discovery: Carobel Heidt, her great-great-aunt, the sister of her paternal great-grandfather, was a DAR member in the 1890s when the DAR was first formed. (“Her DAR number, 2898, was only four digits long and started with a two, which means she was probably one of the first 3,000 members of the Society,” she says.)

She also discovered that her Patriot’s ancestors owned land in Fairfax County, Va., where she and her family moved in 1980.

“It gives me chills knowing that they lived here,” she says. “It’s like they called us home.”

While her various genealogy-based memberships are certainly a source of pride for Ms. Gonzales, belonging is about much more than that.

“I have realized that the real treasure in being able to join each genealogical society is the incredible ancestral journey that follows,” she says. “It’s like spending time with your grandparents and learning about their grandparents. Each society has given me a piece of the puzzle that is my family. It is a true self-discovery.”

Today, when she’s not furthering her knowledge of her family’s rich history, Ms. Gonzales works with her brother in his online retail business. In her spare time, she enjoys scrapbooking, which she says helped spark her initial interest in genealogy, and making handmade cards and origami sculptures. She is also doing research for her father’s autobiography, which will of course include a chapter on the family’s history.
Covered in Bohemian garnets and bearing an enameled shield with 13 stars, this small brooch owned by first DAR President General Caroline Scott Harrison and now part of the DAR Museum collection has much to say about identity. The pin dates to around the time her husband, Benjamin Harrison, was elected 23rd president of the United States in 1888. Garnet jewelry from Bohemia, a region in present-day Germany and the Czech Republic, was quite popular then.

By the last quarter of the 19th century, candidates’ wives were a visible part of presidential campaigning. Both Mrs. Harrison and Anna Morton, wife of Benjamin’s running mate Levi Morton, appeared on posters promoting their husbands’ ticket. It is not clear whether Mrs. Harrison wore the pin while campaigning, or if perhaps it was an item she acquired during her time in the White House. Clearly, it is a piece of jewelry meant to illustrate patriotic sentiment.

The pin is also an example of an item made for the American market by craftspeople in other nations, a practice that began well before the country was founded. The design closely resembles eagles used in heraldry over the centuries. Outstretched talons, the curved ends of the wings and particularly the three-part tail echoing a fleur de lis—not the traditional fanned tail feathers seen in depictions of American eagles—are found on many European coats of arms.

The shield on the pin is not the squared shape seen on the Great Seal of the United States but a spade-shaped à bouche shield, which contains a notch where a lance would rest. Thus, European artists used imagery familiar to them to create a brooch depicting an eagle with wings outstretched to represent the expansive American nation.
The establishment of a national society of women descended from Revolutionary ancestors can be traced to a meeting held August 9, 1890, with only three women in attendance. Ellen Hardin Walworth, Mary Desha and Eugenia Washington began planning the basic outline of the National Society that night at the Langham Hotel, where Mrs. Walworth lived. In 1927, District of Columbia Daughters placed a plaque outside the building to commemorate the site where the DAR was founded. The Langham Hotel has since been demolished.

Mary Virginia Ellet Cabell, who held the position of Vice President Presiding during the organization’s first two years, literally welcomed the National Society into her home at 1407 Massachusetts Avenue NW, which became the first official home of the NSDAR. Several eventful meetings occurred there, including the second organizational meeting of the National Board of Management on October 18, 1890, and a conference for national, state and chapter officers in October 1891.

From July 1891 through October 1893, the National Society rented office space in a building located at 1505 Pennsylvania Avenue NW. Among the business conducted there was a March 5, 1892, meeting called for the purpose of finalizing the organization of the National Board of Management, as evidenced by this notice dated February 26, 1892.

The Washington Loan and Trust Building at 902 F Street NW served as headquarters for the DAR from 1894 until 1905, when the National Society at last moved into Memorial Continental Hall. A lease dating to 1902 shows that monthly rent at the time was $181.50. The longest-running of the National Society’s temporary homes, the building was expanded in the 1920s and now houses a Courtyard Marriott hotel.
DAR and the Ellis Island Immigration Station
125 Years of Service to Immigrant Families

This year DAR shares its 125th birthday with another important American institution: Ellis Island. In the 35 years before Ellis Island opened, immigrants arriving in New York were processed at Castle Garden Immigration Depot in Lower Manhattan. Ellis Island was chosen in 1890 by the House Committee on Immigration as the site of the new Immigration Station for the Port of New York. Before the federal government stepped in and took over the immigration process on April 18, 1890, each state managed its own immigration records, with varying degrees of organization and diligence. The federal takeover made records much more centralized—and ultimately, easier for genealogists to search.

Congress appropriated $75,000 to construct the first Ellis Island Inspection Station, which officially opened on January 1, 1892. The site quickly became what was likely America’s busiest immigration station, processing more than 12 million immigrants by the time the station closed in 1954. In 1907 the station processed 1,004,756 immigrants; its busiest day was April 17, 1907, when 11,747 immigrants were processed. Today, 40 percent of Americans can trace their ancestry through Ellis Island.

For the vast majority of immigrants, Ellis Island truly was an “Island of Hope,” the first stop on their way to new opportunities and experiences in America. For the rest, it became the “Island of Tears,” a place where families were separated and individuals were denied entry.

DAR and other service organizations helped immigrants acclimate to their new home, generously donating money, time, and expertise. From 1921 to 1954, the DAR distributed millions of copies of its Manual for Citizenship, in various languages, to immigrants at Ellis Island as they passed through the Railroad Room. Many immigrants used the Manual to learn English and to become familiar with the requirements for citizenship.

On average, the inspection process took approximately three to seven hours, but some families spent weeks or months at Ellis Island waiting for clearance to enter the country, often because they lacked proper documentation or because they were suffering from contagious diseases. DAR chapters from across the country regularly sent practical donations to aid in these families’ comfort. At the Detention Building, DAR members passed out clothing, food, books, yarn, sewing materials and other items to detainees through a window that was later dubbed the “Window of Hope.” Immigrants were said to see a DAR member and call out, “Here comes the Revolutionary lady.”

DAR members also provided occupational therapy via hands-on lessons in needlecraft, sewing, crocheting and more, helping detainees pass the time as well as make necessary items for their families. During the war years, when immigration was halted, the DAR remained at Ellis Island to serve the returning wounded and disabled servicemen temporarily stationed there.

In 1988 DAR established the Ellis Island Restoration Committee, the purpose of which was to raise donations for the restoration of Ellis Island and promote the project among DAR members and the public. The DAR encouraged members to place an ancestor’s name on the American Immigrant Wall of Honor, and it also sponsored a room called the American Spirit Gallery in the Ellis Island Immigration Museum. The organization’s efforts raised $750,000 toward the restoration and refurbishment of the site.

—By Carol Felsen, Commemorative Events Committee National Vice Chair, 125th Anniversary of Ellis Island

Honoring the Station
DAR members remain active in celebrating Ellis Island and all that it has meant to this nation of immigrants. Here are some ideas for ways to commemorate the 125th anniversary.

- Examine your chapter’s history or minutes from the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s to determine if your chapter sent volunteers to work with the detained immigrants, or sent contributions or supplies to be used at the site. Present those findings and any historical photos or documents at an upcoming meeting.
- Ask chapter members if they have ancestors who passed through Ellis Island, and invite them to speak about those ancestors’ experiences.
- Start a program to assist immigrants with the naturalization process, whether with English as a Second Language classes or civics education courses.
- Watch newly digitized NSDAR Archives videos related to Ellis Island at www.dar.org/ellisislandvideos.
Genealogy Guides

THE NATIONAL SOCIETY’S membership roll includes more than a few genealogy enthusiasts who delight in helping others discover and appreciate the unique story of their family history. The sheer amount of material available can be intimidating for a novice who may not know where to begin, but some helpful advice is sometimes all a would-be family historian needs to become a full-fledged “genie.” By sharing their expertise, Daughters can help foster a greater understanding of American history, one of the core missions of NSDAR.

Members of Chief John Ross Chapter, Chattanooga, Tenn., have embraced the opportunity to introduce genealogy to a new audience. On September 20, 2014, the chapter sponsored its second annual African-American Genealogy Workshop at the Bessie Smith Cultural Center in Chattanooga. It was a fitting choice of venue: The Bessie Smith Cultural Center promotes cultural, educational and artistic excellence, fosters research and education of African and African-American heritage, and provides a venue that allows the community to celebrate through education, art and entertainment.

The creation of the workshop can be traced to 2013, when Chief John Ross Chapter members attending Continental Congress met Jean Best Richardson, who was planning to travel to Tennessee for business. While there, Richardson came to Chattanooga and presented her African-American genealogy to a group of interested new genealogists in fall 2013. Chapter members kept in contact with the workshop attendees and this year held their second workshop. Daughters reviewed basic beginner tips, shared online resources, distributed lots of handouts and discussed how to get organized. At a separate workshop held November 18, 2014, a local librarian presented an overview of the African-American genealogy resources available in the Chattanooga Library.

The Celebrate America! initiative spotlights DAR members providing meaningful service to their communities. Send entries and photos of members in action to americanspirit@dar.org.

Mad About Museum Social Media

Keep up with the DAR Museum’s latest news on these social media platforms: Twitter (@DARMuseum), Facebook (www.facebook.com/DARMuseum) and Pinterest (www.pinterest.com/DARMuseum). The platforms give DAR Museum staff members the opportunity to provide details about the DAR Museum’s new exhibition, “Eye on Elegance: Early Quilts of Maryland and Virginia,” on view in the main gallery until September 5, 2015, as well as describe many of the women involved in the quilts’ production. The Pinterest board makes the exhibit even more interactive by encouraging readers to find birds, beasts and blooms hidden in some of the quilts.

In addition to news about the current exhibition, the Museum’s Facebook page uncovers some of the collection’s most fascinating objects, and its Twitter handle provides relevant, up-to-the-moment links for those interested in early American history and collectibles.

Social media is also the fastest way to learn about the Museum’s programs and specialized tours. Look for information on its Downton Abbey-inspired tour, “Meanwhile, Across the Pond: Life in the American Mansion,” coming this month.
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In 1950, Libertad Chapter, Liberty, Texas, changed its name from Sophia Lee Harrison Chapter to Libertad, the Spanish word for liberty. The town of Liberty was founded near the sites of a Spanish settlement called Atascosito, established in 1756, and Champ d’Asile, a short-lived French colony established in 1818. Settlers along the Atascosito Road unsuccessfully petitioned to join Stephen F. Austin’s colony. Subsequently, in 1831, Mexican land commissioner José Francisco Madero formed the municipality of Villa de la Santísima Trinidad de la Libertad, later shortened to Libertad.

Martintown Road Chapter, North Augusta, S.C., shares the name of a local landmark that dates to the 18th century. In the 1730s, Martintown Road was a path traders and American Indians used to travel between Fort Moore and the Saluda ridge. Later it became a wagon road from Ninety-Six to Augusta. The road itself was named for the family of Abram and Elizabeth Marshall Martin, who lived beside it. Abram served in the Revolutionary War, as did the Martins’ many sons. During the Revolution, Martintown Road was widely used by Patriots, Tories and the British. Today, South Carolina Route 230, one of the city’s major highways, follows its path.

The name of Westport Chapter, Kansas City, Mo., commemorates the town of West Port, established in 1833 by John C. McCoy, who also founded nearby Westport Landing the next year at a bend of the Missouri River. West Port and Westport Landing became jumping-off points for the thousands of adventurers and explorers seeking their fortunes in the largely unknown American West via the Santa Fe and Oregon trails. The growth of West Port and the nearby town of Kansas, incorporated at the site of Westport Landing in 1850, laid the foundation for Kansas City.

If your chapter name has an interesting story behind it, please send it to americanspirit@dar.org.

Research on Hannah Till Uncovers Her Fortitude at Valley Forge

HANNAH TILL served as a cook to General Washington during the brutal 1777–1778 winter of the Valley Forge Encampment and later as cook to Marquis De Lafayette. Despite the important role she played at Valley Forge, and her status as a free negro according to church record, her final resting place has remained somewhat of a mystery.

It has long been known that Till and her family once resided at 182 South 4th Street in Philadelphia and were practicing Presbyterians.

However, recent research uncovered that her husband, Isaac, was listed as an associator during the Revolution and subsequently became a “wipmaker” [sic], according to the Pennsylvania Septennial Census of 1793. But even more fascinating was the discovery of documentation in the records of the Philadelphia Scots Presbyterian Church that said Hannah gave birth to a child, Isaac Wormley Till, during the Valley Forge Encampment. He was baptized on the fourth Sunday of August 1779 at the age of 19 months.

After the death of her husband, Hannah and her children, including a daughter Sarah, became members of the First African Presbyterian Church. They were buried in its original burial ground. When the burial ground was sold, the remains were moved to the Lebanon Cemetery. When the cemetery was sold, Till’s remains were reinterred at Eden Cemetery in Collingdale, Delaware County, Pa., where they remain today.

The fact that Till was pregnant and gave birth while cooking for the commander in chief during a bitterly harsh winter that claimed the lives of thousands of Continental Army soldiers is proof of her fortitude and loyalty under trying circumstances.

— By Marion T. Lane, Ed.D., of Bucks County DAR Chapter, Doylestown, Pa., and a Friends of Valley Forge National Historical Park board member
The American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, the first such national tribute to specifically honor America’s 4 million living disabled veterans as well as the hundreds of thousands of deceased disabled veterans who were injured in military conflicts throughout the nation’s history, was dedicated in October 2014 in Washington, D.C.

The 2.4-acre triangular site, close to the U.S. Botanic Garden and south of the U.S. Capitol, was designed by landscape architect Michael Vergason to convey disabled veterans’ courage and sacrifice as well as the renewal of their sense of purpose after tragedy. It features a ceremonial flame in the center of a star-shaped fountain that flows into a triangular-shaped reflecting pool. Glass panels etched with text and photographs depicting veterans’ personal journeys surround the pool.

The long process to erect the memorial began in 1998, when Lois Pope, a prominent philanthropist with a strong interest in veterans’ causes, met with Jesse Brown, then Secretary of Veterans Affairs in the Clinton Administration, and Art Wilson, National Adjutant of the Disabled American Veterans, to start a foundation with the mission of raising private funds to design, build and permanently maintain a memorial.

Learn more about the memorial, now operated by the National Park Service, at www.avdlm.org.

Memorial Honors a Debt to Wounded Heroes

O, Oregon Pioneers!

WALK IN THE FOOTSTEPS of Oregon pioneers and settlers at the Willamette Heritage Center in Salem, Ore. The center, which formed in 2010 from the merger of the Marion County Historical Society and Mission Mill Museum, educates visitors about the history of the Willamette Valley region, particularly that of its textile industry, which became crucial to Oregon’s economic stability. The five-acre campus is home to 14 historic structures, including the working displays of the 1895 Thomas Kay Woolen Mill as well as several historic Salem buildings that have been relocated to the mill site.

The Thomas Kay Woolen Mill, one of numerous textiles mills in the valley, produced wool products from 1889 to 1962. The original site opened in 1890 with a workforce of 50 who labored 60 hours a week. A fire destroyed much of the mill and outbuildings about five years later. By 1898 the mill had been rebuilt, and two additional stories were added in 1937. Today it remains one of the best-preserved Victorian-Age factories in the West.

Also on the site are the 1841 Jason Lee House, which predates the first wagon trains to cross the Oregon Trail; the 1847 John D. Boon House; and the 1841 Methodist Parsonage, built as part of the Methodist mission to Oregon’s American Indians.

For more information, visit www.willametteheritage.org.
Revolutionary Reunion

My seventh cousin John P. Zafiris Jr. and I recently met in person for the first time on September 7, 2014, at the Worcester Revolution 1774 festivities [mentioned in the January/February 2014 issue of American Spirit]. John and I initially made contact via Ancestry.com last September. We learned that we were connected through our sixth-great-grandparents, Moses Kezer and Sarah Barker of Shirley, Mass. Practically a year to the day after our initial contact, John and I were able to meet in person for the first time at the 240th anniversary celebration honoring Worcester’s role in ousting British authority without firing a single shot. I can’t imagine a more perfect place or moment for two cousins, descended from the same Colonial family, to meet for the first time. This was truly a family reunion hundreds of years in the making.

Jennifer Willson
Colonel Timothy Bigelow DAR Chapter

Remembering Clark’s March

Thank you for publishing the Our Patriots article on George Rogers Clark in the July/August 2014 issue. I was pleased to see the picture depicting the militiamen and Kaskaskia volunteers going to Fort Sackville. I am very proud to report that among them on that march were my ancestors—Danis, Gendron and Montreuil French patriots.

Marlene D. Seymour
Liberty Bell of the West DAR Chapter, Chester, Ill.

Sunset Beach in Its Rightful Place

Martin John Brown’s article on Hall Jackson Kelley in the July/August 2014 issue is an interesting article on part of Oregon’s history, and I enjoyed reading it. However, page 44 states that the top left photo is of Sunset Beach, which was the end of the route of the Fort to Sea Trail that the Lewis and Clark expedition used from Fort Clatsop to the Pacific Ocean.

Yes, the trail ends at Sunset Beach; however, living within a half mile of this beach I can verify the picture is not Sunset Beach. That particular spot of beach is about midway between the South Jetty of the Columbia River where it meets the Pacific Ocean and an 18-mile-long expanse of sandy beach that extends all the way to the south end of Seaside, Ore. Just in case any readers decide to walk the 12-mile trail, don’t be disappointed when you walk out onto the beach and there are only miles of sand and not the spectacular display of the ocean tidal currents hitting a rocky outcropping. It’s still an awesome sight; just a different sight.

Barbara Canessa
Astoria DAR Chapter, Astoria, Ore.

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FOR THE MOST PART they were ordinary men, those men who took on the most powerful army in the world and won American independence. They were farmers, booksellers, surveyors, blacksmiths and an occasional member of the professional class. Even George Washington, who was almost always the exception to any rule, rose from unremarkable circumstances that cannot account for who—and what—he became.

And that is Jack Kelly’s theme in Band of Giants: The Amateur Soldiers Who Won America’s Independence (Palgrave MacMillan, 2014). The Revolution was fought and won almost exclusively by amateurs—individuals who accomplished more than anyone ever thought they could, who rose from all walks of life to fill a pantheon of heroes.

Kelly is a journalist, novelist and historian, and all three vocations shine through in his narrative style and pacing. He focuses on the major military leaders, most of whom are arguably less well-known than noncombatant Founders such as John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson.

His account begins in 1754, with George Washington leading a party of militia and American Indian allies against a French outpost. It was Washington’s first battle, and things went terribly awry, leading to the death of a French diplomat. The young lieutenant colonel had no idea that the debacle would trigger the French and Indian War, which in turn set the stage for the Revolution.

In Colonial America, many men had served in local militias and some had combat experience in the French and Indian War. But very few had long-term, professional military experience, the kind that could come only with service in the British army.

And though Great Britain kept troops billeted in the Colonies after the French and Indian War, they disparaged the colonists’ military abilities and admitted few to their ranks. So the military geniuses who emerged in the War for Independence learned from books, from more-experienced men, and from many mistakes made in the midst of battle.

Kelly doesn’t overlook their shortcomings. Band of Giants relates how General Horatio Gates, the hero of Saratoga in 1777 and a harsh, persistent critic of Washington, wildly misjudged the situation in South Carolina in 1780 and suffered a disastrous loss at Camden.

Often, Kelly highlights their lesser natures to make their eventual triumphs all the more impressive. When Daniel Morgan, “The Old Wagoner,” was passed over for promotion in favor of less-experienced but more politically connected men, he emulated Achilles and retired to his farm in June 1779.

Morgan brooded there for a year, then rejoined the Continental Army in 1780 in the Carolinas. His smashing defeat of Banastre Tarleton’s Loyalist legion at the Battle of Cowpens on January 17, 1781, weakened the British and contributed to Cornwallis’ decision to abandon the Carolinas for Virginia and his ultimate defeat at Yorktown.

Kelly brings to life the dire moments of the war—the privation of winter quarters at Valley Forge and Morristown, N.J., the fecklessness of Congress, and the inexcusable delays in furnishing pay and supplies for the troops.

His storytelling hits its peak when he writes about Benedict Arnold. A daring and celebrated soldier in the early years of the war, Arnold’s ambition, pride and Tory wife led him to infamy and treason. Kelly’s narrative about how Arnold’s betrayal was discovered just in time to prevent the calamitous loss of West Point is the stuff of which thriller novels are made.

Kelly also stresses that Arnold’s duplicity was discovered only because three ordinary Continental soldiers stumbled onto the plot when they arrested British spymaster John André. Out of uniform and behind enemy lines, André was carrying papers describing the plan and implicating Arnold when he was arrested.

Musician and writer Gerard Way has said, “Heroes are ordinary people who make themselves extraordinary.” Besides the leaders Kelly profiles, there were untold thousands of others—soldiers, sailors and their families, civilians in all walks of life—who bore up and did their duty, which was extraordinary.

—Bill Hudgins
American Indian Settlement

Iowa was home to prehistoric American Indian civilizations between 500 B.C. and A.D. 1300, and archaeologists have identified the remains of several prehistoric villages, dating from about A.D. 1300–1700, in contemporary Des Moines.

By the 1600s these indigenous people were splintered among 20 different tribes, including the Ioway (from whence the name Iowa is derived), Sauk, Mesquakie (or Fox), Oto and Missouri. The Sauk and Mesquakie, primarily based in western Illinois and eastern Iowa by the 1730s, became the most powerful tribes in the region.

French Exploration

Beginning in 1666 Father Jacques Marquette, a French Jesuit priest, ministered to the indigenous people of the Great Lakes region. After hearing talk of settlements down south along a great river, he joined Frenchman Louis Jolliet on his expedition to explore and map the Mississippi River. On June 25, after traveling down the Wisconsin River, they landed on the Iowa side of the Mississippi.

In 1682, Robert de La Salle claimed the Mississippi River Valley, including Iowa, for King Louis XIV of France. However, only a few missionaries and fur traders ventured down the Mississippi River toward Iowa over the next century, according to Iowa (Grolier Publishing, 2000) by Martin Hintz.

In 1788, the Mesquakie American Indians permitted Julien Dubuque, a French Canadian, to mine lead near their villages along the eastern edge of the Mississippi River. Dubuque lived in the area until his death in 1810, and was considered Iowa’s first European settler.

From Military Post to Capital City

Carved from the vast Louisiana Territory, the Iowa Territory, which included large areas of Minnesota and the Dakotas, was established in 1838. A territorial capital was first set up at Burlington and then moved to Iowa City in 1841, with Robert Lucas named the first territorial governor. He began agitating for statehood, which was eventually granted on December 28, 1846.

Three years before statehood, the eventual capital of Iowa originated as a military garrison. In May 1843, Captain James Allen and his company arrived at the junction of the Des Moines and Raccoon rivers and supervised the construction of a fort on the site. Dubbed Fort Des Moines, it was built to protect and control the Sauk and Mesquakie American Indians, who had been transplanted to the area from their lands in eastern Iowa. In 1846, after the Sauk and Mesquakie were removed from the state, the fort was abandoned.

The Flood of May 1851 destroyed much of the remaining settlement, but the town recovered quickly and incorporated on September 22, 1851. In 1857, the name “Fort Des Moines”
was shortened to “Des Moines,” and it became the state capital. After a railroad line was completed in 1866, the city quickly grew in size.

Between 1900 and 1938, Des Moines constructed large Beaux Arts public buildings and fountains along the Des Moines River as part of a “City Beautiful Movement.” The area, now called the Civic Center Historic District and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, includes the former Des Moines Public Library building, the central Post Office and City Hall.

A Shift Toward the Cosmopolitan

Once the center of vast acres of farmland, Des Moines has evolved into a major banking and insurance center, home to the headquarters of 60 life, health and casualty insurance companies. Recently named the best city for business and careers by Forbes Magazine, Des Moines’ downtown population has doubled over the past decade, according to The New York Times. To combat Iowa’s often-harsh winters, the city built a climate-controlled skywalk system that links downtown businesses, hotels, restaurants and parking garages. Iowa is also home to the first caucuses of the presidential primary cycle, attracting many presidential candidates to set up campaign headquarters in Des Moines.

What’s the Meaning of Des Moines?

Some believe Des Moines comes from the American Indian word moin-gona meaning “river of the mounds,” referring to burial mounds near the riverbank. Others believe that the name refers to the Trappist monks (Moines de la Trappe) who lived at the mouth of the river. French fur trappers and traders referred to the river as La Rivière des Moines, meaning “River of the Monks.”

From: www.dmgov.org/InfoCenter/Pages/HistoricalInformation.aspx
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IN THE MID-19TH CENTURY, pride in one’s heritage reached new heights—literally. It was the age of oversized lithographic family trees. These artistic representations of family founders and descendants couldn’t be relied upon for precise documentation, but they were intended to be appreciated for their decorative value. Today they are a treasure to own and a beautiful model for modern family trees.

Ancient Symbol Meets a New Technology

The tree as an ancestral icon dates back to biblical times, but it was first represented visually in the Middle Ages. It wasn’t long before hand-painted watercolor charts and needlework samplers appropriated the tree to honor a family’s ancestors.

This ancient symbol joined a new technology from Germany—lithography, or the art of printing using inked limestone or metal plates—around 1820, when the technique was brought to America. While it began as a means to publish theatrical works and other commercial materials, lithography soon was employed as a means of printing family trees as well.

Wealthy patrons interested in their heritage commissioned genealogists to research information, then hired artists to draw the charts and lithograph firms to print them. Prominent lithographers included Thomas Sinclair and Frederic Bourquin of Philadelphia.

These first prints ranged in size from book dimensions to wall-sized. Oversized versions hung on poles like those used to hang old maps in historic classrooms. By the turn of the 20th century, these lovely lithographic creations had become the fan-shaped charts—graphical depictions of family relationships—that are familiar to contemporary genealogists.

From Custom Print to Commercialization

By 1845 anyone could buy a blank tree to illustrate themselves. In that year Jarvis Griggs Kellogg and his partner Samuel Hanmer of Hartford, Conn., printed a design by Edwin Hubbard with blank spaces where names could be added. It came complete with instructions on how to fill it out. In 1871 Currier and Ives printed a tree that contained 14 oval spaces to be filled by small card photographs known as cartes des visite.

Plenty of variation appeared in those historic printed family trees, but there were standard icons as well. Women were represented as foliage, while men were represented as branches.
The trunk usually signified the immigrant ancestor. Sometimes the root or ground would bear the ancestor’s name to illustrate the family’s foundation in America and basis of future success.

Family lines that died out were generally represented by branches that were either sawed or broken off. These broken branches generally signified unmarried individuals, couples without children or those who died young. For example, on a family tree representing the descendants of William and Mary Henderson Kennedy from 1750 to 1881, the number of lives or families cut off outnumber those branches that survived.

An oak, a symbol of integrity and stability since the medieval period, was a popular choice for tree designs, as were pine and beech trees. The tree of the Lippincott family—the descendants of Richard and Abigail Lippincott who left Devonshire, England, and settled in Boston in 1639—featured the names of individuals on each colorful leaf.

Regional differences can occasionally be found in these lithographs’ secondary symbolism. Families whose ancestors emigrated from Europe often included a view of the ocean, a seacoast or a ship to signify the immigrant’s journey. Families of pioneers who traveled inland included trains or other modes of transport on their lithographed family trees.

Unfortunately there is no comprehensive list of all the illustrated family trees that were printed in the 19th century. In 1868 William Whitmore, a well-known genealogist, published a bibliography that included a list of some of these trees. A full text version of his book, *The American Genealogist: Being a Catalogue of Family Histories and Publications*, can be found on Internet Archive (www.archive.org). Another list appears in *The Art of Family: Genealogical Artifacts in New England*, edited by D. Brenton Simons and Peter Benes (New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2002).

To find actual examples of illustrated family trees, try contacting larger libraries that specialize in genealogy, such as the New England Historic Genealogical Society, the Library of Congress and the Family History Library of the Church of the Latter-day Saints. Also try historical societies, archives and public libraries in places where your ancestors resided.

Begin your online hunt by searching the various terms by which these trees were known, such as “decorated family records,” “pedigrees,” “genealogical charts,” “genealogical arbors” or “tabular pedigrees” in Google Images. View collections on Pinterest, such as those pinned by Kimberly King (www.pinterest.com/kimberlyrena/genealogy-charts-forms-more), or draw inspiration for your own project by searching “family tree” on the site.

Though the 19th-century designs left little space for details other than names—and certainly not citations—that’s not true of modern versions. According to Janet Horvoka of Family Chart Masters (www.familychartmasters.com), “Today’s printed tree comes in a variety of sizes and shapes and can include many details about family members, such as photographs, graphics, documents, artwork or narratives of certain individuals.” The largest tree the company has printed included 30,000 people and was more than 800 feet long.

A larger-than-life family tree gives you a tangible reward for all that time you spent researching your genealogy and provides relatives with an awe-inspiring view of your shared history.

Grow Your Own Family Tree
In the earliest years of the U.S. government, the man whom many considered the second-most powerful man in the nation was neither a landowning Southern gentleman nor an experienced Northern statesman. Instead, the unofficial title belonged to Caribbean-born Alexander Hamilton. His career followed a steep trajectory as he progressed from George Washington’s trusted aide-de-camp to co-author of the Federalist Papers to the first Secretary of the Treasury. This ascent from obscurity to intensive involvement in the formation of the new government provoked discord. By Courtney Peter
Hamilton's nationalist politics also proved to be divisive. Employing a knowledge of financial markets that few Founding Fathers could match, Hamilton advocated for the federal government to assume the states' Revolutionary War debt, establish a national bank, implement domestic taxes, and choose England, not France, as the nation's primary trading partner. His fiscal policies were highly successful, but because they were introduced at a time characterized by widespread suspicion of powerful institutions, resistance to taxation and anti-British sentiment, they were also highly controversial.

"He was the clear-eyed apostle of America's economic future, setting forth a vision that many found enthralling, others unsettling, but that would ultimately prevail," writes Ron Chernow in his book *Alexander Hamilton* (Penguin, 2004). "He was the messenger from a future that we now inhabit."

**MY KINGDOM FOR A TREASURY**

Following the Revolutionary War, multiple factors threatened the survival of the United States. Hamilton summed up the situation in Federalist Paper No. 15, writing, "We have neither troops nor treasury nor government."

President George Washington took charge of a weak federal government that had lacked power to control the states or to collect revenue. It may have seemed like a favorable situation for a country that had recently won independence from a distant government and its oppressive taxes, but for a nation deeply in debt it was a dangerous one. The United States' cumulative debt was estimated at $79 million—$25 million in state debt and $54 million in national debt, approximately $12 million of which was owed to foreign nations. Federal revenues did not even cover the annual interest.

Following the Revolutionary War the United States’ cumulative debt was estimated at $79 million. Federal revenues did not even cover the annual interest.

In September 1789, Washington chose Hamilton, his trusted military aide, as Secretary of the Treasury. "It turned out to be perhaps the most important decision that Washington made as president of the United States," writes Peter R. Henriques in an essay included in *Sons of the Father: George Washington and His Protégés* (University of Virginia Press, 2013). "The success of his administration largely hinged on the adaptation of fiscal policies that would revive confidence in the fledgling nation."

Although he was only in his mid-30s, Hamilton was equipped to handle the job. He gained an early introduction to the commercial world as a teenager while working as a clerk for a Caribbean merchant firm. And Hamilton’s Continental Army service alongside Washington helped shape both men’s ideas about the newly independent nation’s needs, namely a national army, centralized power over the states, a strong executive and national unity, Chernow explains.

**A FRENZY OF FISCAL POLICY**

In rapid succession, Hamilton presented segments of his multi-phase economic plan to meet those needs. "Instead of proceeding with small, piecemeal measures, he had presented a gigantic package of fiscal measures that he wanted accepted all at once," Chernow writes.

The first phase called for the federal government to assume the states’ war debts, and also to fund the national debt using revenue from the sale of new securities. "He believed that consolidating state and national indebtedness would exhibit the power of the federal government," John Ferling

The House of Representatives passed Hamilton’s funding bill on June 2, 1790—except for the assumption component. Assumption encountered strong opposition from Southerners such as Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, who saw it as a bailout for the North at the expense of the South, where many states had already retired their war debt. After Hamilton promised to support the Potomac River as site of the national capital in exchange for Southerners’ support of assumption, the assumption bill passed July 26, 1790.

Looking to diversify the federal revenue stream through the addition of domestic taxes, the treasury secretary proposed an excise tax on spirits and stills as the second phase of his master economic plan. Implemented in July 1791, the spirits tax was unpopular—so much so that it led to the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794—but also crucial, as it became the second-leading source of federal revenue.

The third pillar of Hamilton’s financial system involved the creation of a national bank that could issue legal tender, increase the currency supply and stimulate the economy. Fiscal conservatives and political adversaries erupted in criticism. The plan was attacked as unconstitutional and Anglocentric. Some thought a national bank would favor Northern merchants to the detriment of Southern farmers. Others expressed a general distrust of large, powerful financial institutions.

Madison, a leading critic, accused Hamilton of exploiting the Constitution. In reply, Hamilton cited a clause in Article 1, Section 8, which gives Congress the right to pass any legislation deemed “necessary and proper” to exercise its listed powers, including the right to collect taxes, borrow money and regulate commerce.

It is true that Hamilton modeled his banking plan on the English financial system. But rather than position the United States as subservient to England, “His objective was to promote American prosperity and self-sufficiency and make the country ultimately less reliant on British capital,” Chernow writes. “Hamilton wanted to use British methods to defeat Britain economically.”

In late February 1791 Hamilton’s bank bill became law. By summer, the frenzy of trading in bank scrips issued at the initial public offering of the Bank of the United States led to a crash. An even more severe financial crisis that followed the next year proved damaging to the fourth phase of Hamilton’s economic plan.

Introduced in the fall of 1791, this phase encouraged the promotion of manufacturing through federal subsidies, liberal immigration policies, publicly assisted infrastructure improvements and other measures. Hamilton, who thought a purely agrarian society would always be subordinate to Europe, saw industrial prowess as the route to prosperity. The manufacturing bill he prepared failed to pass the House, becoming the only major pillar of Hamilton’s financial blueprint that did not result in legislation. But, ultimately, his vision for an industrialized nation was fulfilled.

HAMilton VS. JEFFERSON

Even as these measures established a stable financial foundation that helped solidify the union, Hamilton’s political feud with Thomas Jefferson threatened to divide it. Hamilton’s rise to power coincided with Jefferson’s service abroad, first as trade commissioner and then as minister to France, where he lived from 1784–1789. Upon returning to the United States, Jefferson accepted his appointment as Secretary of State in early 1790.

Their ideological clash was such a pervasive topic in print and in conversation that politicians and citizens were moved to choose one of two emerging political parties, aligning themselves with either Jefferson’s Democratic-Republicans or Hamilton’s Federalists. The two men came from disparate backgrounds that helped form their worldviews. As a member of a landowning Virginia family, Jefferson was a product of the Southern plantation culture. Hamilton, as a poor Caribbean youth with neither an inheritance nor a trade, gained access to the business world through employers and benefactors. Considering the circumstances, it’s no surprise that Hamilton envisioned the United States as a manufacturing society, while Jefferson dreamed of a nation of citizen farmers.

They also held fundamentally different views regarding the division of federal power and the path to economic independence. Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, believed in the people’s ability to govern themselves. His ideal government conflicted directly with Hamilton’s: The Virginian favored a small federal government, a strong Congress, a weak executive branch and state
sovereignty. While serving as governor of Virginia during the Revolutionary War, Jefferson’s main responsibility was to protect the interests of his state. Devoid of state allegiance and serving under the commander in chief, Hamilton believed the states’ prioritization of self-interest over the national cause nearly led to the loss of the Revolutionary War.

Hamilton and Jefferson fought for political territory as well. Because customs taxes resulting from trade with Great Britain accounted for a significant percentage of federal revenue, Hamilton closely monitored foreign policy. Jefferson viewed this attention as an encroachment on State Department affairs. During a February 28, 1792, meeting with Washington, Jefferson contended that “…the department of the Treasury possessed already such an influence as to swallow up the whole executive powers.”

“He was convinced that Hamiltonianism would in time lead to the Europeanization of America, leaving Americans prey to the evils he had observed firsthand during his five years in France—monarchy, rigid social stratification, concentration of wealth, poverty and urban squalor,” Ferling writes of the Secretary of State.

Whereas Hamilton’s public life was dedicated to erecting a sturdy framework of laws backed by viable government institutions, Jefferson preferred to keep government institutions to a minimum. “Jefferson was the poet of the American founding; Hamilton was the nation builder who infused the essential elements of permanence and stability into the American system,” writes Stephen F. Knott in *Alexander Hamilton and the Persistence of Myth* (University Press of Kansas, 2002).

Both men left their posts before the end of Washington’s presidency—Jefferson resigned at the end of 1783, Hamilton in early 1795. Hamilton originally planned to resign sooner but opted to extend his tenure, due in part to a desire to clear his name of accusations that he misused Treasury funds. The accusation was connected to his affair with the married Maria Reynolds and her husband James Reynolds’ subsequent blackmailing of Hamilton. The treasury secretary, who drew income only from his salary, having given up all outside enterprises during his term, was stricken by the suggestion of fiscal impropriety. He cooperated fully with the congressional committee created to investigate the matter, to the point of recounting lurid details of his affair, and was cleared of any professional wrongdoing.

After their resignations Hamilton and Jefferson continued to influence national politics. Jefferson owns an indisputable advantage in longevity, as Hamilton died in 1804 following his duel with Aaron Burr, while Jefferson lived to 1826. The third president remains one of the most prominent figures in the American historical narrative, and deservedly so.

Hamilton’s work was also invaluable to the success of the early Republic, and his visionary federal programs remain recognizable in the modern United States. “The foundation of America’s superpower status was laid in the early days of the Republic when Alexander Hamilton, who had a vision of American Greatness, battled with forces fearful of the concentrated political, economic and military power necessary to achieve that greatness,” Knott writes.

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**Notes on Legal Tender**

The only two non-presidents whose portraits appear on American currency notes are Alexander Hamilton, who is pictured on the $10 bill, and Benjamin Franklin, pictured on the $100 bill. Thomas Jefferson’s portrait has graced the $2 bill since 1869, but the note featured Hamilton’s portrait when it debuted in 1862.
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When Jonathan and Grace Lee Fairbanks, then known as Fayerbanke, emigrated from Yorkshire, England, with their six children in 1636, they became one of the first families to settle the town of Dedham, Mass., which was founded as a Puritan utopian society. By the following year, the couple had started construction on their homestead, a timber frame house. It served as the family home for eight generations and has long outlasted its neighbors. Since the last member of the family moved out of the Fairbanks House in 1904, the home has been a museum showcasing an early American way of life.

“Though Jonathan and Grace had a bit more wealth than many other early settlers in the area, overall they were an average early settlement family,” says Erin Leatherbee, curator for the Fairbanks House, which is owned by Fairbanks Family in America Inc.

“This family represents the evolution of lifestyle of families in New England from early settlement, through the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, the Industrial Revolution and into the 20th century,” she continues. “The family’s legacy is important not only to Dedham and New England, but also to American history as a whole.”

The house has evolved throughout the centuries as the Fairbanks family grew, yet much of the original structure and many original features remain intact.

Studies conducted on 19 beams in the Fairbanks House reveal that the oldest beams were felled in 1637, making it likely the oldest known timber frame house still standing in North America.

Architecture and Construction

In 2006, studies in dendrochronology, or tree ring dating, were conducted on 19 beams in the Fairbanks House. These studies showed that the oldest beams were felled in 1637 and the latest in 1641. Based on those studies, the Fairbanks House is believed to be the oldest known timber frame house still standing in North America.

Throughout the original house, there are decorative details that imply that a skilled craftsman constructed it. Skilled carpenters were readily available in Dedham during the 1630s and 1640s, Leatherbee says. “Historical records detail two or three skilled carpenters from East Anglia, England, living in Dedham when the Fairbanks family joined the town,” she says. “And the construction style of the house is of East Anglian origin.”

Timber frame construction is known for its carefully fitted and joined timbers secured together with wooden pegs. Visitors are able to see those timbers and pegs from the original construction throughout much of the house, especially in the attic of the original portion.
Life in the Fairbanks House

Because the Fairbanks family’s time in the house spanned eight generations and three centuries, the home features opportunities to learn about and experience various stages of early American life. Visitors can experience the four original rooms of the house, with traditional finishes dating to 1637. The tour also includes two rooms that were renovated in the 19th century to reflect modern style and materials. The hall, or kitchen, of the house remained largely unchanged even through eight generations. It was only partially updated as cooking methods changed between 1750 and 1800, Leatherbee says, though the last resident did have a cast iron stove installed before 1904.

A favorite room of both visitors and tour guides is known as the “lean-to,” an addition to the original house updated in the 18th century.

Above: The east end of the Fairbanks House was added in the late 18th century. Below: The lean-to was added in the late 17th century.
Clockwise from top left: The parlor chamber is one of the original four rooms of the house. • Spinning wheel • A detail of a door handle • The hall, or kitchen, was modified in the 1800s, with the primary change being a reduced firebox. • A scale belonging to the Fairbanks family sits below tin pitchers and other antique kitchen implements • An 18th-century Dutch Delft plate
late 17th century. The room reflects the hard work and physical labor that was a staple of life in the early days of New England, Leatherbee says. “Under the steep sloping roof of the north elevation, this room served as a workshop for the many chores and farm work. Today we use the room to exhibit numerous hand tools, farm equipment, and butter- and cheese-making tools.”

While most of the furnishings in the home are not original to the Fairbanks House, a 17th-century wooden chest that belonged to the original owners is one of the home’s most treasured items. The chest was built and carved by a local joiner, John Houghton, during the period of 1652–1665. It’s noted in the inventory of Jonathan Fairbanks in October 1668: “The parlor chamber—one chest and one box worth 17 shillings.”

The locally made chest remained in the family through all eight generations of those living in the house and was documented in the late 19th century when the structure became known as a local historic landmark, Leatherbee says. However, as Rebecca Fairbanks, the last occupant of the house, grew older, she found it increasingly difficult to keep up with the financial demands of the house. “In the late 1800s, Rebecca sold this chest,” Leatherbee says. “The Fairbanks Family in America, along with other interested parties, purchased it at auction in 2003 and brought the chest back to its original home.”

Saving a Treasure

While all the other homes in the area that were built during the same time period have long since been razed, the Fairbanks House has remained standing due to its long history as a family home and the commitment of local preservationists who saved it from a similar fate.

In 1897, due to her advancing age and financial woes, Rebecca Fairbanks sold the Fairbanks House to a local developer, Leatherbee says. “Recognizing what a historical landmark the house was, local women, together with a wealthy Boston woman, Martha Codman, raised public awareness of the imminent threat to the historic homestead and purchased the house back from the developer to save it from destruction.”

The group of historic preservationists allowed Rebecca Fairbanks to remain in the house until it was sold to the newly formed Fairbanks Family in America Inc., which opened it as a museum in 1904. Since then, the home has been continually operated as a non-profit historic museum, open for tours from May through October.

Visiting the Home

Visitors often comment on how untouched the house is and how much of the 17th-century character remains intact after so many generations occupied it, Leatherbee says. “Those with architectural backgrounds are amazed by the amount of original structure visible and accessible during standard tours of the home. Others enjoy hearing the stories of how the spaces in the house were used throughout the centuries and how the uses may have changed depending on the needs of the residents.”

“The house offers a unique perspective into American history that is often lost when houses are modernized and renovated,” Leatherbee says. “Many restorations and conservation projects have been completed to the structure, exterior and interior of the house over its 110 years as a museum to ensure its stability for new generations of visitors. Overall, the historic character remained intact, and the evolution and renovations made during its occupancy remain unchanged.”

When You Go

The Fairbanks House museum is open to the public from May 1–October 31, Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m.–3 p.m. and Sunday from 1–4 p.m. Guided tours start at the top of each hour.
Who is eligible for membership?
Any woman 18 years or older, regardless of race, religion or ethnic background, who can prove lineal descent from a Patriot of the American Revolution is eligible for membership. DAR volunteers are willing to provide guidance and assistance with your first step into the world of genealogy.

How is Patriot defined?
DAR recognizes as Patriots not only soldiers, but also anyone who contributed to the cause of American freedom. To find out if your ancestor is recognized by the DAR as a Revolutionary Patriot, use the request form available online. Visit www.dar.org and click on “Membership.”

How many members does the National Society have?
DAR has 177,000 members in nearly 3,000 chapters worldwide, including chapters in 14 foreign countries and one territory. Since its founding in 1890, DAR has admitted more than 925,000 members.

How can I find out more?
Go to www.dar.org and click on “Membership.” There you’ll find helpful instructions, advice on finding your lineage and a Prospective Member Information Request Form. Or call (202) 879–3224 for more information on joining this vital, service-minded organization.
The Genesis of Lineage Societies In America

HOW DAR AND OTHER PATRIOTIC LINEAGE ORGANIZATIONS BEGAN
— By Lena Anthony —

On May 10, 1876, the Centennial Exposition opened in Philadelphia. It was the first official World’s Fair to be held in America, and it drew exhibitors from around the world to showcase industrial and technological advancements, from canned foods to the telephone. Nine million Americans attended the exposition during its six-month run from May to November, which equaled a staggering sum of one out of five Americans, according to Dee Brown in The Year of the Century (Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1966).

The exposition was designed as a celebration of progress, but also of the past that enabled these advancements, such as the Declaration of Independence, which marked its centennial that year. The result was a renewed patriotic fervor that swept the nation and helped spark the founding of the various patriotic lineage societies that organized in the late 19th century, including DAR.

“The expo likely instilled in many Americans a sense of pride and profound gratitude for the sacrifices of their ancestors,” says Tracy Robinson, DAR director of archives and history. “But I think it could also have served to exacerbate whatever fears of progress and change people experienced at the time. Lineage organizations provided an outlet by which Americans could both honor the accomplishments of their ancestors and feel a personal connection to the past.”

America’s First Lineage Society

While the late 19th century saw a surge in patriotic lineage societies, the
honoring of lineage was not a new concept. In fact, America’s first lineage society, the Society of the Cincinnati, was established in 1783 as an organization for Revolutionary War officers. (Learn more about the society in the May/June 2013 issue.)

“Membership was hereditary, and even then passed only to the eldest male descendant of each original officer,” explained Wallace Evan Davies in Patriotism on Parade: The Story of Veterans’ and Hereditary Organizations in America 1783–1900 (Harvard University Press, 1955).

This exclusivity may have been the reason that many critics, including Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and John Jay, “denounced it as both un-American and unpatriotic,” according to Davies. “At a time when the American Revolution had not only overturned monarchical rule but also occasioned attacks upon the doctrine of primogeniture in several states, this naturally struck many as the first step instead toward an American nobility.”

Ignoring the pressure to disband, the Society of the Cincinnati pressed on and chose George Washington as its first president-general. Washington, Davies noted, approved of the organization’s goals to provide charitable assistance to members in need but “was reluctant to endorse such novelties as insignia, badges and the other regalia of a hereditary military order.”

Despite its strict membership requirements and lack of acceptance among some Americans, the Society of the Cincinnati would serve as a prototype for future lineage organizations. Much like the Cincinnati, some lineage organizations chose as their official leaders “individuals of prominence who lent prestige and perhaps even financial support but otherwise were often merely figureheads,” wrote Davies.

For example, in 1890 the organizing members of the DAR chose first lady Caroline Scott Harrison as their first President General. “This certainly contributed to the organization’s high profile on the national stage very early in its history,” Robinson says.

Within months of organizing, the Society of the Cincinnati had amassed more than 2,000 members in the 13 original states and France, including 23 signers of the U.S. Constitution. But as the years passed and the rigid membership requirements remained in place, the society’s numbers and perceived threat to the country dwindled. The organization had to pass the Rule of 1854, which allowed additional members to join. It was under that rule, in 1876, that John Austin Stevens sought membership in order to travel to the Centennial Exposition as part of a like-minded group. When he was denied membership, he sought to form a more democratic society for the descendants of officers or soldiers of the Revolution, which he named Sons of the Revolution (S.R.).

Stevens met with interested members at the New-York Historical Society on Washington’s birthday in 1876, “but there’s no record of them traveling to Philadelphia for the centennial,” says Dr. Larry Simpson, past president of the New York Society Sons of the Revolution.

Whether or not they attended, once the centennial passed the organizers of the nascent society “lacked any great fervor to move the organization along,” Simpson says. The S.R. remained largely unchanged until 1883, the centennial of New York’s Evacuation Day, the day the last of the British soldiers departed through New York Harbor. “There was a huge celebration in New York for this centennial and that’s when they reorganized and became a formal society,” Simpson says.

**Patriotic Fervor**

Historians, including Davies, have been quick to note that the centennial celebrations of 1876, 1883 and even 1889, which marked the 100th anniversary of George Washington’s inauguration and the founding of the Sons of the American Revolution (S.A.R.), served as the occasions for organizing and joining lineage societies, but not the causes. For those, it’s important to understand what Americans were going through in the late 19th century.

“The country had come through a great deal in the 30 years or so since the beginning of the Civil War,” Robinson explains. “First there was the war itself, then Reconstruction, then the excesses of the Gilded Age, and finally the beginnings of the Progressive Era with its emphasis on reform. After so much turmoil within such a short amount of time, it doesn’t surprise me that Americans might be tempted to look back to the country’s origins for guidance going forward.”

Dr. Walter Powell, executive director of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, suggests that xenophobia, or at least a general suspicion of immigrants, may have played a role as well. “Clearly one concern was the rapidly changing face of America in the industrial age, with large numbers of immigrants arriving from Eastern and Central Europe,” he says. “While views among society members varied, as they do with all organizations, clearly many were worried that new immigrants did not understand or necessarily share the ideals of the American Republic as they interpreted it.”
Many patriotic lineage organizations focused their efforts not just on creating social opportunities for their members, but also on education and historic preservation.

A Place for Men and Women

When the first Mayflower Society organized in 1894 in New York, followed by a general society in 1897, its purpose was to express pride in ancestry and promote democratic ideals. While most patriotic lineage organizations were either all-male or all-female, the General Society of the Mayflower Descendants was a notable exception. Membership was open to any resident of the United States who could prove direct lineal descent from a Mayflower passenger.

Women were always permitted to be members and voting delegates, and, in fact, seven women founded the Connecticut Mayflower Society in 1896. Another notable exception to the gender rule was the S.A.R. In its earliest years, at least, some branches of the S.A.R. admitted female members until the practice was outlawed at the organization’s first national congress in April 1890.

This action inflamed American women passionate about celebrating their Revolutionary Patriot ancestors and directly led to the founding of the DAR six months later, when 18 women attended the first organizational meeting of the National Society on October 11, 1890. As Diana L. Bailey points out in her book, American Treasure: The Enduring Spirit of the DAR (The Donning Company, 2007), “Letitia Green Stevenson would later write in her 1913 account of the Society’s founding: ‘It became apparent that if women were to accomplish any distinctive patriot work, it must be within their own circle, and under their own leadership. The ardor and zeal of a few undaunted women never flagged, and their determination to organize a distinct woman’s society became a fixed purpose.’”

The eventual success and proliferation of the S.R., S.A.R. and DAR sparked what Davies called “a wave of interest” in patriotic lineage organizations and the creation of new ones that were even more exclusive. The Order of Founders and Patriots, which was organized in 1896 in New York, “welcomed only those having ancestors in the direct male line or in the mother’s male line in the Colonies before 1657 whose forebears also served in the Revolution,” according to Davies.

A New Role for Women

Societies for women abounded around the same time DAR formed. For example, the Colonial Dames of America formed in 1890 just before the DAR, the United Daughters of the Confederacy organized under a different name that same year, and the National Society of Colonial Dames organized in 1891. The Children of the American Revolution (C.A.R.) was founded by DAR member Harriett Lothrop in 1895.

Historians agree that the emergence of genealogy as a hobby may have played a role in the growth of women’s lineage organizations. According to Davies, several prominent newspapers introduced genealogical departments, libraries set aside space for genealogical research, and “it became the pastime of women and even more especially of unmarried women who … concentrated on their forebears.”

But perhaps more vital were women’s changing roles, both at home, due to some of the advancements on display at the Centennial Exposition, which gave them more free time, and outside the home, as evidenced by the political and social activism of the Progressive Era, which took off in the 1890s. Patriotic lineage societies provided the means by which women could join together to make a difference.

“No one in well over a century of DAR history,” Robinson says. “Its service in the Spanish-American War and World War I, its support for child-labor laws, its management of Ellis Island occupational therapy facilities and all of its services to immigrants, the founding of DAR schools, and its historic preservation efforts all mirror the more popular Progressive Era reform activities performed by American women in general. DAR has always been about service.”
DAR by the Numbers

In honor of the Daughters of American Revolution’s quasquicentennial celebration this year, we have compiled some interesting facts and statistics spanning the National Society’s first 125 years.

**DAR Membership By Age Group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage of Membership*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>4,217</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>8,865</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>11,184</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>21,017</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>36,177</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-75</td>
<td>44,081</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-85</td>
<td>31,915</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-95</td>
<td>16,960</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96+</td>
<td>1,877</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(based on count of 176,293 members with known birth dates)*

**Fast Fact:**

Six states are younger than NSDAR—Utah, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, Alaska and Hawaii.

**Years the Society Admitted the Most New Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>13,906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>13,805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>13,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>12,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>11,676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>11,413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>11,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>11,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>10,813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>10,770</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fast Fact:**

Eighteen women attended the first organizational meeting of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution on October 11, 1890. In 2014, registration for the 123rd Continental Congress, the National Society’s annual convention, totaled 3,113 Daughters and guests.

**Number of NSDAR Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1892*</th>
<th>1915</th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1965</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2014**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,306</td>
<td>91,996</td>
<td>143,349</td>
<td>183,180</td>
<td>200,540</td>
<td>178,557</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(the earliest year for which the count is available)

**Annual National Dues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1915</th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1965</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$2</td>
<td>$2</td>
<td>$2*</td>
<td>$3*</td>
<td>$15*</td>
<td>$37*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* for chapter members; members at large pay a different rate

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm), $2 in 1915 had the same buying power as $47.13 today.
First Five Chapters Organized
(All are still active.)
1. Chicago Chapter, Chicago, Ill.
2. Atlanta Chapter, Atlanta, Ga.
3. Nova Caesarea Chapter, Newark, N.J.
4. New York City Chapter, New York, N.Y.
5. Wyoming Valley Chapter, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Fast Fact:
More than 600 DAR members have cited John Hart of New Jersey as their Revolutionary War Patriot ancestor—the highest number of any single Patriot. A signer of the Declaration of Independence, Hart served on the local Committee of Safety, in the Provincial Congress of New Jersey and as a delegate to the Continental Congress.

16 Chapters Use “Washington” in Their Names
Colonel John Washington—Katherine Montgomery, Washington, D.C.
Martha Washington, Washington, D.C.
Mary Washington, Washington, D.C.
Mary Hammond Washington, Macon, Ga.
Martha Washington, Sioux City, Iowa
Washington, Washington, Iowa
Betty Washington, Lawrence, Kan.
General Washington, Trenton, N.J.
Mary Washington Colonial, New York, N.Y.
Jane Washington, Fostoria, Ohio
Washington Crossing, Yardley, Pa.
George Washington, Galveston, Texas
Lady Washington, Houston, Texas
Ann Washington, Mount Vernon, Wash.

Most Common Birth States Of Proven DAR Patriots
1. Massachusetts—29,729
2. Connecticut—18,672
3. Virginia—16,282

Fast Fact:
Despite the rule that no two chapters may have the same name, there are two Martha Washington Chapters—one in the District of Columbia and one in Iowa—that likely were named before the rule was set.

States with the Most DAR Members
1. Texas—17,674
2. California—9,875
3. Florida—9,867

Fast Fact:
There are 2,746 DAR chapters (as of December 2014).

States with the Fewest DAR Members
1. North Dakota—172
2. Hawaii—262
3. Alaska—283

(States with the Most DAR Chapters)
1. Texas—200
2. Virginia—130
3. New York—127

(States with the Fewest DAR Chapters)
1. Hawaii—3
2. North Dakota—4
3. Alaska—5

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(American Spirit | January/February 2015)
Most of our ancestors left their homes for a better life, seeking opportunity, escape from political or religious persecution, or simply to experience the thrill of adventure and change. Several important immigration museums in the United States and Europe share these stories, many of which are inspiring, astounding or heartrending.

“America has been, and continues to be, a nation of immigrants,” says David Favaloro, director of curatorial affairs at the Tenement Museum in New York City. “Immigration museums can play an important role in helping the public understand the profound role immigration plays in shaping our evolving national identity.”

The German Emigration Center in Bremerhaven, Germany, is devoted to the history of German emigration, especially to the United States. From 1830 to 1974, more than 7 million people sailed to the New World from this north German seaport, including more than 4 million Germans and more than 3 million Eastern Europeans.

Visitors are given a digital “passport” of a real-life emigrant as they enter the museum. When scanned, it provides information pulled from thousands of records.
in the museum’s archives, such as the emigrant’s personal history, reason for leaving home, and descendants in North America, South America or Australia.

The digital passport also unlocks audio stations, where you can hear biographies of many notable people who emigrated from Bremerhaven, such as Carl Laemmle, one of Hollywood’s original movie moguls, founder of Universal Pictures and famed for “Frankenstein” and “The Phantom of the Opera.” Before founding what became the world’s most prolific film studio from 1915–1925, he was born in Baden-Wurttemberg, the 10th of 13 children. Emigrating to America in 1884, the teenage Laemmle worked in Chicago and Wisconsin as a bookkeeper and other low-paying jobs, before opening a chain of nickelodeons and later a film company.

Starting at a replica of an 1888 ship, visitors can see passengers clad in period clothing, hear wharf noises, experience a third-class waiting room and learn about the deplorable conditions aboard. Passengers often became sick or died during the trans-Atlantic voyage, which lasted six to 12 weeks.

The museum also features a film interviewing German immigrants about their lives in San Francisco, Texas and New Jersey, as well as a diorama of Germans working at an Illinois farm, a Chicago meat-packing plant and a New York deli. Replicas of New York’s Grand Central Station and its ticket booths enliven the statistic that 87 percent of all German emigrants from 1820 to 1914 went to America. Computer stations help visitors trace their family history.

In Ireland, the grim story of more than 6 million Irish who emigrated from 1848–1950 unfolds at County Cork’s Cobh Heritage Centre. The massive diaspora was spurred by poverty, lack of opportunity, the devastating potato famine of the mid-19th century and a land system in which farmers toiled on land they could not own.

Of the 2.5 million who sailed from the seaport of Cobh, one became the first immigrant ever processed at Ellis Island: Annie Moore, a teenager who arrived with her two younger brothers in 1892. Statues of her stand in front of a restored Victorian-era train station in Cobh as well as inside the Ellis Island Immigration Museum. Exhibits describe a convict ship that departed for Australia in 1801 and the ill-fated Titanic, which was built in Belfast and whose last port of call was Cobh. An on-site genealogist is available by appointment.

Ellis Island, which is part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument, administered by the National Parks Service, tells the story of the more than 12 million immigrants, mostly from Europe, who passed through its gates from 1892 to 1954. (One of the first federal immigration stations, Ellis Island was officially established in 1890, though it didn’t process immigrants in the building itself until 1892.) At its peak, from 1892 to 1924, the Ellis Island workforce
numbered around 500 employees who worked to ensure immigrants were legally and medically fit to enter the country. The Ellis Island Immigration Museum allows visitors to tour the Great Hall/registry room, baggage room and dormitory; watch films and walk through exhibits detailing immigrants’ experiences; and search ship manifests via ellisisland.org in the American Historic Family Immigration Center. (Read more about Ellis Island’s history on page 7 of this issue’s Whatnot section, as well as in the November/December 2006 issue.)

From 1910 to 1940, approximately 1 million immigrants—many from Asian countries—were processed at the Angel Island Immigration Station, located off the coast of San Francisco. In 1997, the National Park Service declared the immigration station a National Historic Landmark, and now a foundation works to keep the station’s history alive. The immigrant detention barracks were completely restored in 2009, and the immigration station hospital is being restored with state and private funding. Guided tours of the site are available, including the barracks where historic Chinese poetry and other inscriptions can be seen on the walls. (Read more about the immigration station in the November/December 2011 issue).

In contrast to some museums’ broad overview of immigrant groups, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York City offers a microcosm: the lives and businesses of residents of a single Lower East Side tenement in different time periods during the

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  www.dah-bremerhaven.de
- Cobh Heritage Centre
  Cobh, County Cork, Ireland
  www.cobhheritage.com
- Irish Family History Foundation
  This collection from 33 county genealogy centers throughout Ireland features more than 20 million Irish records from the 17th to 20th centuries, including birth, death, marriage, census and real estate records, as well as gravestone inscriptions. www.rootsireland.ie
- Swedish American Museum
  Chicago
  www.swedishamericanmuseum.org
- Ellis Island Immigration Museum
  New York, N.Y.
  www.nps.gov/elis
- Angel Island Immigration Station
  San Francisco
  www.aiisf.org/visit
- Lower East Side Tenement Museum
  New York, N.Y.
  www.tenement.org
- Museum of Danish America
  Elk Horn, Iowa
  www.danishmuseum.org

Set to open in 2016 on Washington, D.C.’s National Mall, the National Museum of African American History and Culture will detail the richness and diversity of the African-American experience. Until the museum opens, a gallery is available on the second floor of the National Museum of African American History. Visit nmaahc.si.edu for more information.
19th and 20th centuries. It was a varied crew at 97 Orchard Street: Jewish sweatshop workers, the Levine and Rogarshevsky families, and 14-year-old Victoria Confino, a Greek Sephardic Jew. Residents also included the Irish Catholic Moores, who moved to “Kleindeutschland,” or “little Germany,” from the crime-ridden neighborhood of Five Points, now called Chinatown.

With costumed interpreters leading visitors on walking tours of restored apartments and businesses in the four-story building, the museum offers a personal approach to the immigrant experience on the Lower East Side, one of the most densely populated places in the world in the early 1900s. Foreigners were thrown together to live among others very different from themselves in crowded tenements and forced to deal with bewildering circumstances made even more difficult by the lack of a common language. Despite these circumstances, they learned how to educate their children, find jobs, become entrepreneurs and often achieve much more upward mobility than they could have in their home countries.

The Swedish American Museum focuses on emigrants from Sweden to Chicago. A separate immigration museum—the Brunk Children’s Museum of Immigration—is on its third floor. The museum features interactive exhibits and activities such as climbing on the deck of a 20-foot steamer, touring two century-old Swedish farm cabins, playing in a farm yard and “rowing” a Viking ship. It also has exhibits devoted to Swedish art, music, language, genealogy and even brewing history. A shop features children’s books such as the Pippi Longstocking series, Swedish folk crafts and gifts, and songbooks.

The Museum of Danish America in Elk Horn, Iowa, was founded in 1983 to preserve the history of Danish immigration to America. A building reminiscent of Danish architecture houses more than 35,000 significant artifacts, including family heirlooms brought from Denmark, examples of intricate needlework, tools of early immigrant tradesmen, and memorabilia from Danish-American clubs and organizations. Many of the items on display are treasures that have been passed down through the generations in Danish families.
Though it was the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that finally tore down racial barriers to the ballot, more than 200 years earlier African-American slaves and freemen in a number of New England towns held elections for leaders collectively known as the Black Kings and Governors of New England.

By Bill Hudgins
The practice endured from the 1750s to around 1850 in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. It waned along with New England slave ownership in the years before the Civil War. During that time, the elections sustained a kind of unofficial African-American government operating in the shadow of the white power structure.

Historians believe this limited exercise in self-rule helped African-Americans maintain a sense of dignity and empowerment.


The elections and their accompanying celebrations imitated and often caricatured the white political process. Amused white onlookers didn’t seem to grasp that they were the butt of the parody, according to William Dillon Piersen in Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England (University of Massachusetts Press, 1988).

“While outwardly it may have seemed that the slave population was simply imitating the election festivities of their masters, in actuality Yankee bondsmen were creating an important celebration of black awareness, which, like similar holidays elsewhere in the Americas, borrowed from African forms and satirized white society as much as it imitated Euro-American institutions,” Piersen wrote.

Why were some of the elected African-American leaders called kings, while others were governors? In royal colonies such as New Hampshire and Massachusetts where the British Crown appointed governors, the elected African-Americans were called kings, in a nod to the British crown. In colonies such as Connecticut and Rhode Island where citizens elected their governors, the black victors were called governors, according to Piersen.

How the Elections Began

The origins of the black kings and governors elections are unclear, though they seem to have originated from several local customs.

First, New England slaves were allowed “Negro Hallowdays”—holidays—as early as 1741 when they gathered to remember and celebrate their African heritage, Piersen wrote. These events were frequently presided over by slaves who had been born in Africa, rather than in America, and served as reliquaries of their lost culture. The gatherings also honored descendants of African royalty, such as King Pompey.

Outcasts of Liberty

The rhetoric of the Revolution stirred equally the souls of African-Americans and whites. Untold thousands of slaves ran away to the British lines, where they had been promised freedom. When allowed, others served in militias or the Continental Army, sometimes in exchange for emancipation.

Perhaps most poignantly, 20 New Hampshire slaves led by King Nero Brewster petitioned the state legislature to free them. Brewster was born in Africa to a royal family, then abducted and enslaved. He was a popular king, respected in white and African-American communities, and was re-elected many times.

On December 12, 1779, he and 19 other slaves presented their handwritten petition to New Hampshire’s General Assembly. The document argued for freedom in eloquent terms that echoed the Declaration of Independence.

They said they had been abducted as children “tho’ ignorance & brutish violence of their native countrymen” and taken to America “where (tho’ knowledge, Christianity and freedom, are their [i.e. the whites’] boast) they are compelled, and their unhappy posterity, to drag on their lives in miserable servitude.”

Citing the fervent Revolutionary rhetoric of freedom and liberty, they argued, “here, we know we ought to be free agents! here, we feel the dignity of human nature! here, we feel the passions and desires of men, tho’ check’d by the rod of slavery! here, we feel a just equality! here, we know that the God of Nature made us free!”

The legislature took up the petition on June 9, 1780, and promptly tabled it. Six of the signers were ultimately freed in various ways, though Brewster died a slave in 1789. The “Black Kings and Governors of Early New England” essay on the New England Historical Society website notes that a newspaper obituary praised him as, “A Monarch, who, while living, was held in reverential esteem by his subjects consequently, his death is greatly lamented.”

It was not until 2013—some 233 years later—that state Senator Martha Fuller Clark of Portsmouth filed a bill to posthumously free those who had remained enslaved. It was passed, and Governor Maggie Hassan signed it into law on June 7, 2013, to tumultuous applause.
who was born a prince in Africa, abducted and brought to New England, and sold to Thomas Mansfield of Lynn, Mass.

Men like Pompey wielded considerable influence among both enslaved and free African-Americans. It’s likely that the elections were seen as another way to honor them—Piersen notes that out of 31 known black kings or governors, “11 were of probable African birth or African royal heritage.” These included Prince Robinson of Narragansett, R.I., and Governor Tobias and Governor Eben Tobias of Derby, Conn.

Another influential factor was that election day was a major holiday in largely Puritan 18th-century New England. Candidates campaigned with food and drink as well as oratory, turning the serious business of government into a daylong party.

Elections usually were held in late spring or early summer. Voter turnout was high, and farm work practically stopped as everyone came to town to vote. Slave owners brought their bondsmen along or gave them a holiday because they “were too restless at home to be of any use till (the election holidays) were over,” according to Salem minister William Bentley, as quoted in the essay “Black Kings and Governors of Early New England” on the New England Historical Society (NEHS) website.

This annual event presented an opportunity for another Negro Hallowday. One of the first elections was held in 1755 at Hartford, Conn., when London, a slave owned by Captain Thomas Seymour, was chosen as governor.

The idea quickly spread. At one time or another during the next 100 years, elections were held at other Connecticut towns including Derby, Durham, Farmington, Middletown, New Haven, New London, Norwich, Oxford, Seymour, Wallingford, Waterbury, Wethersfield and Woodbridge.

Rhode Island’s first slave election took place in Newport in 1756, followed by North Kingston, South Kingston and Warwick Neck. Elections were also held in the Massachusetts towns of Danvers, Lynn, North Bridgewater and Boston, as well as Portsmouth, N.H.

Vote for Me
Qualifications for office in these African-American elections were as vague as those for most white political positions. And not all of the candidates were slaves—free African-Americans also successfully ran for these offices.

Personal strength was often a factor—people accustomed to hard labor prized prowess, and the campaigns often

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The NEHS essay describes the election processional of King Nero Brewster of Portsmouth, N.H., in fascinating detail. Brewster and his retinue marched through town with “borrowed swords, guns and even horses from their masters for the festive parade, which commenced with the crack of a gunshot. Marchers made a happy racket with many African languages, more gunshots and music from tambourines, banjos, fiddles and drums. …

“In Portsmouth and elsewhere, bondsman deliberately played the fool in their gaudy election day costumes. White people looked on with enjoyment, belittling the slaves’ deportment and clothing as ‘fantastic.’ Today, historians note the white onlookers didn’t understand that the black celebrants were making fun of their stiffness and pretensions—and their obtuseness in not grasping they were being mocked. Their antics were also a form of self-preservation. They didn’t want white people intimidated by their claim to participate in government.”

The candidates also expected their owners to foot the bill for the obligatory food and drink served during election day and at the victory party. There is an anecdote about white legislator E.R. Potter of Narragansett, R.I., whose slave John was a perennial candidate. Finally, Potter told John that one of African-Americans who were permitted to run for office dressed in their best clothes on election day—sometimes asking their owners for gently used hand-me-downs. Their retinue also wore their best clothes, adorned with ribbons, feathers or trinkets and altered to echo African themes.

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In recognition of the 200th Anniversary of the War of 1812, a major event in the history of North America, Family Chronicles/Internet Genealogy is proud to present Tracing Your War of 1812 Ancestors! Noted author David A. Norris has compiled a wealth of genealogical and historical information that can help you locate your War of 1812 ancestor, as well as add valuable context to their life during this tempestuous time.

If you have ancestors who lived during this important and rich period in American history, you will surely benefit from the many sources and tips provided to help you with your research and understanding of the social history of the period. From Colonial court records to money in Colonial America (full contents on our website), this publication will be an invaluable resource to even the most seasoned genealogist.

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Irish-born Edward Hand, physician and general, played a variety of roles in the War for Independence
— By Jeff Walter —

In the early days of the Revolution, Edward Hand served in Boston with his Pennsylvania riflemen.

When General George Washington crossed the Delaware River on Christmas Night 1776 to launch a game-changing attack on Hessian forces at Trenton, N.J., Hand was there.

And when British General Charles Cornwallis formally surrendered 8,000 troops at Yorktown, Va., on October 19, 1781, effectively bringing the War for Independence to a close, Hand again was there on the scene.

Hand also served as a physician and as a respected political and civic leader, and was a trusted friend of Washington himself. But like some Revolutionary heroes, he did not start out on the American side.

From Surgeon to Soldier

Hand was born on December 31, 1744, in Clyduff, King’s County (now County Offaly), Ireland. After earning his medical certificate from Trinity College in Dublin, he enlisted in 1767 as a surgeon’s mate in the 18th Royal Irish Regiment of Foot. His enlistment might have let him bypass the five-year apprenticeship required to become a doctor. On May 20, 1767, his regiment set sail from Cobh, County Cork, Ireland, arriving in Philadelphia on July 11.

For several years, Hand served with the British army on the Pennsylvania frontier, and in 1772 he was commissioned an ensign. He marched with his regiment to Fort Pitt, where the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers converge at modern-day Pittsburgh. Hand served as a surgeon at Fort Pitt during a time of relative calm on the western front.
He returned to Philadelphia in 1774, resigned his British commission and moved to Lancaster, Pa., where he began practicing medicine. On March 13, 1775, he married Katherine “Kitty” Ewing in Philadelphia, a union that would lead to eight children. The region was populated by Scots-Irish immigrants known for their anti-English sentiments, and Hand grew sympathetic to the American cause. That year, he helped form a Colonial militia.

Later in 1775, Hand enlisted in the Continental Army as lieutenant colonel of a battalion of Pennsylvania riflemen. In the Revolutionary War’s opening stage, he served under General Washington during the Siege of Boston, which ran from April 1775 to March 1776, when the British evacuated the city. He also participated in the Battle of Long Island on August 27, 1776, a losing effort for the Continental Army.

Trenton and Princeton

By the time the British overran Manhattan in November 1776, taking 2,000 prisoners, the war was looking bleak for the Americans. Washington realized drastic measures were necessary, leading to a pair of pivotal battles. First came an assault on the site of a Hessian garrison in Trenton, N.J.

On Christmas Night 1776, Washington and his men crossed the icy Delaware River north of Trenton in boats and then marched 19 miles south in a freezing storm. Hand and his Pennsylvania riflemen, accompanied by a battalion of German-speaking infantry, were to block the road leading to nearby Princeton.

On December 26, Washington’s 2,400 troops surprised 1,400 Hessians led by German Colonel Johann Rall, who was mortally wounded. The unprepared Hessians quickly surrendered, while the Americans suffered minimal losses. The relatively easy victory boosted Continental Army morale—and re-enlistments.

A week later, on January 3, 1777, after a series of skirmishes between Washington’s undermanned troops and British forces led by Cornwallis and Major General James Grant near Trenton, Washington’s men found themselves seemingly trapped. All but 500 of the Americans, however, stealthily broke camp during the night and traveled 12 miles to Princeton, where they scored another victory, driving back three British regiments.

The battles of Trenton and Princeton were Washington’s first successes in the open field, and they restored confidence in his leadership ability. Meanwhile, Hand had become an intimate and trusted friend.

According to family tradition, an injury at Princeton cost Hand the sight in his right eye, and portraits from then on show him only in profile from the left side.

A Promotion, Then Frustration

Having demonstrated tactical and administrative abilities, Hand was promoted to brigadier general on April 1, 1777. He returned to Fort Pitt, charged with bolstering the local militia’s effectiveness and thwarting British and American Indian attacks. But this period proved frustrating for Hand, who was unaccustomed to the American Indian style of wilderness warfare, received insufficient resources and had difficulty recruiting volunteers.

After a series of embarrassing incidents—including the so-called Squaw Campaign, in which an attack by Hand’s men on a Delaware America Indian village brought only the death of one old man, four women and a boy, and the capture of two women—Hand asked to be relieved of his command. Congress voted to accept Hand’s resignation, though Washington did so reluctantly, saying, “I esteem him an officer of great worth and merit.”
Hand was reassigned to the northern frontier, based out of New York, and for the next year was a key part of the campaign against Britain’s Iroquois Confederacy allies.

Hand was part of the 1780 tribunal that tried and convicted Major John André, a British officer hanged as a spy for aiding traitor Benedict Arnold’s attempted surrender of the fort at West Point, N.Y.

Siege of Yorktown

In February 1781, Hand was appointed adjutant general of the Continental Army and charged with overhauling administrative and training procedures. He traveled with Washington to Mount Vernon and then Williamsburg, Va., to prepare for the Siege of Yorktown.

Hand’s role at Yorktown, the war’s last major land battle, included preparing siege plans and keeping track of casualties and other battle statistics.

Cornwallis’ surrender on October 19 after a crushing defeat by a combined force of American and French troops forced the British government to negotiate an end to the war. Fighting continued on the high seas, but it was mostly finished in the Colonies.

Post-military Life

In September 1783, Hand was honored for his long and distinguished service by being brevetted major general. He resigned from the Army in November and returned to Lancaster, where he resumed his medical practice. He also became active in politics and civic activities. He was a staunch Federalist whose posts included chief burgess of Lancaster, presidential elector, member of the Continental Congress and Pennsylvania Assembly, and customs inspector.

In 1794, he answered President Washington’s call to serve as adjutant general of the troops sent into western Pennsylvania to put down the Whiskey Rebellion.

Hand’s death on September 3, 1802, was attributed to cholera morbus, a nonepidemic form of the illness.

Hand’s last years were spent at Rock Ford Plantation, on the banks of the Conestoga River a mile south of today’s downtown Lancaster, Pa. The Hand family operated a farm there with fields, livestock and vast orchards. Hand was an avid horticulturalist whose efforts produced a plum named for him.

More than 90 percent of the historic fabric of the original house at Rock Ford Plantation remains intact today. The house, an important example of 18th-century Georgian domestic architecture, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is open for tours.

According to Sword and Scalpel: The Life of Edward Hand of Lancaster by William W. Betts Jr. (Heritage Books, 2014), Hand “will long be remembered as a fervent patriot and as a distinguished, heroic, high-level officer of the American Revolution, whose contribution to the birth of the country was immense.”

Hand’s Hospital

While stationed at Fort Pitt in 1777, Edward Hand set up a hospital to care for American troops. He was a pioneer in establishing a quarantine hospital and promoting smallpox inoculation to combat epidemics, and in 1799 he was a founder of the Lancaster County Almshouse and Hospital.
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