Uncovering History at Ferry Farm

The Excavation and Reconstruction of George Washington’s Boyhood Home

FROM THE DEPTHS

The Many Lives of the HMS Augusta

HONING THEIR CRAFT

Early Furniture Makers Made Colonists Feel at Home

THE PAXTON HOUSE AND INN

Restoring a Piece of Kentucky History
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 more than 180,000 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 945,000 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.

Consider membership in the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), a volunteer women’s service organization that honors and preserves the legacy of our Patriot ancestors. Nearly 250 years ago, American Patriots fought and sacrificed for the freedoms we enjoy today.

As a member of the DAR, you can continue this legacy by actively promoting patriotism, preserving American history and securing America’s future through better education for children.

Preserving the American Spirit
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Interpretive Washington house overlaid on the Ferry Farm landscape, painted in 1833 by John Gadsby Chapman.

COURTESY OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON FOUNDATION

2 Daughters of the American Revolution
From the President General

Last October I had the privilege of visiting Ferry Farm, the site of George Washington’s boyhood home and the subject of our cover feature. After spending almost a century as an endangered site, Ferry Farm is rising again, as a team of archaeologists, historians and volunteers with the George Washington Foundation work to reconstruct the circa-1740 house and uncover new information about the early life of America’s first commander in chief. As part of the current State Regent’s Project, Virginia Daughters have so far raised more than $125,000, including a $5,000 donation from the National Society, to fund a downstairs room at the home.

Once one of His Majesty George III’s premier warships, the HMS Augusta was sunk by Patriots in the Delaware River, where its decaying hulk lay for more than 100 years until some of its timbers were salvaged and used in the New Jersey Room at DAR’s Memorial Hall. The ship’s odd journey is one more of the many stories that comprise DAR’s history.

Because of American Spirit’s focus on the lives of Patriots—this issue’s subject is General Hugh Mercer—we rarely talk about the lives of Loyalists. Some faced mob violence and property seizures because of their allegiance to the Crown, and others changed their allegiances throughout the war depending on their treatment. Fearing persecution after the Revolutionary War, thousands of Loyalists fled to Canada, where they faced new hardships before becoming a vital part of the fabric of their new country.

Another feature explores the trade and art of furniture-making in Colonial America, as well as discusses how Americans continue to incorporate Colonial styles into their homes. Colonial Williamsburg’s Historic Trades programs provided beautiful photos of its skilled artisans at work, recreating Colonial-era trades such as carpentry, joining and cabinet-making.

In our Historic Homes section, you’ll read about the Paxton Inn, an early 1800s-era inn that has been revitalized by members of the Limestone DAR Chapter, Maysville, Ky. The inn, along with the adjoining Paxton House, tells the history of one of the first settlements in Kentucky.

Our article on Maryland’s Benjamin Banneker illuminates a remarkable, but little-known individual who made major achievements in astronomy, mathematics, surveying and publishing. Largely self-educated, Banneker’s accomplishments were all the more impressive because he was a free African-American in a slave state. Though he took no part in the Revolution, he later upbraided Thomas Jefferson and fellow Founders for allowing slavery to continue.

We hope that you enjoy this edition of American Spirit. Our circulation has hit a new high thanks to your support. It is a joy to Celebrate America with you!

Lynn Forney Young

President General

American Spirit

Volume 150, No. 1 • January/February 2016

DAR Magazine Office toll-free subscription number
(866) 327-6242

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Originally from Illinois, Rep. Evans was introduced to the idea of public service early on. Her parents were both World War II veterans, and her father, who was a plumber, was an elected representative in his union.

After graduating from high school, Rep. Evans moved to Washington state to pursue a degree in oceanography, but ultimately studied business administration. She worked full-time at a phone company to pay her tuition bills.

"While there, I became a union steward, which taught me a lot about negotiation and finding common ground," says the member of Hawai‘i Loa Chapter, Kamuela, Hawaii.

Later, she took a state government job, representing the government’s interests in Washington's ports and harbors.

Rep. Evans moved to Hawaii in 1999, after living in Malaysia where her husband, Rick, worked. She settled into life full-time on the Big Island, while Ricky commuted to Malaysia, coming home every three months.

"We did that for about 20 years," she says. "He had a wonderful career there, and it was exciting for me to start my new life here."

As part of getting in touch with her new community, Rep. Evans attended a town hall meeting in 2001, and realized public office might be a good match for her background, experience and skillset.

She ran against the incumbent the following year and won by 112 votes. In office since 2003, Rep. Evans has served seven consecutive terms representing the northwest corner of the Big Island.

Once elected, she got to work improving the West Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery, which is located in her district in Kailua-Kona. "It had sunken graves and looked terrible," she says. "When I talked to veterans about it, they were really upset."

She helped organize local veterans’ groups and secure funding from the state of Hawaii to create a master plan for the site. Once a plan was set, the federal government, along with private donors, helped fund the restoration.

"Fast forward many years later, and we now have a beautiful cemetery," she says. "It’s considered one of the top veterans’ cemeteries in the United States."

In addition to helping veterans, Rep. Evans is also passionate about women’s issues, including ensuring equal opportunity and pay in the workplace, and preventing domestic and sexual abuse.

"It is an honor to be at the table representing women, but it’s also a challenge, because our numbers are dropping in the Hawaii state legislature," she says. "I think there should be equal numbers of men and women when we're voting on any issue, and I’d certainly like to see more women believe that they need to be at that table."

Rep. Evans also represents Hawaii as a member of the National Conference of State Legislatures. With the organization, she has traveled to Saudi Arabia and Japan, helping to represent American legislators on issues such as economic development and higher education.

In her free time, Rep. Evans enjoys gardening and Chinese brush painting, as well as donating her time and expertise to various community organizations.

"I’ve had good health, a good education and wonderful exposure to so many unique opportunities, so every day I try to find ways to give back for all that’s been given to me," she says.

That includes the DAR, which she joined after members from across the country volunteered to help research her lineage.

"People whom I had never met in Illinois, Kentucky, even in Virginia were doing research, visiting courthouses and looking at old newspapers to help prove my lineage. Their passion and dedication impressed me so much that I knew the DAR was a special organization."
The iconic timekeeping piece commonly known as an hourglass, often viewed as a symbol of death and the march of time, has been around since the late Middle Ages. Hourglass aliases include “sand clock,” “sand glass” and “time glass,” as well as “the poor man’s clock,” a reference to its affordability.

The earliest hourglasses employed glass spheres that were blown separately and connected by a doughnut-shaped seal of cording and wax. Technological improvements made later hourglasses more efficient. After 1760, the spheres were blown in one piece, eliminating the seal that often failed.

In March 1764 Peleg Thurston and Sons advertised hourglasses in the Newport (R.I.) Gazette, offering many sizes including “quarter and half-minute glasses; half-hour; one and two hour-glasses.” Made in England sometime between 1765 and 1800, this example is crafted from oak and glass. Though river sand likely fills this hourglass, powdered marble, silver powder, tin powder, ground cinnamon and powdered egg shells could also be used.

Hourglasses were commonly used on ships to determine time at sea, distance between ports in conjunction with the speed of a ship, and the calibration of watches. The granular material inside the glass spheres generally remained unaffected by moisture and the constant swaying of the ship, unlike other timekeeping devices. Clergy and scholars also used them to regulate sermons, meditations and study routines.
Celebrating the National Park Service’s Centennial

Presidential-themed Parks

For the last 100 years, the U.S. National Park Service (NPS), an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, has been safeguarding America’s parks and historic landmarks. In 1916, Congress created the NPS to conserve and protect parks, and over the years, the agency has also helped build trails and playgrounds, revitalize buildings and neighborhoods, promote local and national history, and educate new generations about conservation and history. Today the service is in charge of more than 400 parks, monuments and landmarks in all 50 states, in Washington, D.C., and in the U.S. territories of Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

Many of the national parks have a direct connection to America’s past presidents, preserving the birthplaces, childhood homes, burial grounds and residences of America’s leaders. Here are four of these presidential-themed parks:

President’s Park (Washington, D.C.): The White House has been the home of every president except for George Washington. Occupying a vast 82 acres, President’s Park houses a visitor’s center, Lafayette Square, the Ellipse and the White House. In Lafayette Square, a 7-acre park located inside President’s Park, visitors can see the statue of Marquis de Lafayette, the French officer who fought on America’s side in the Revolutionary War. The Ellipse, a 52-acre portion of the park, was once used as campsites for Union troops in the Civil War. While anyone can explore the grounds of the park, a tour of the White House must be scheduled six months in advance.

Adams National Historic Park (Quincy, Mass.): This 13-acre park includes the birthplaces of John Adams, the second president, and his son, John Quincy Adams, the sixth president. Though the park is open only from April through November, visitors can take guided tours and learn more about one of the most influential families in American history.

Theodore Roosevelt National Park (Watford City, N.D.): Visitors can tour buildings from Roosevelt’s two ranches, as well as view a number of items that belonged to the 26th president. Visitors may also see herds of bison and mule deer. Activities include fishing, hiking, guided tours, back-country camping, canoeing and bird watching.

Lyndon B. Johnson National Historic Park (Stonewall, Texas): Visitors can tour the boyhood home and LBJ Ranch, the final resting place of our 36th president. The visitor center also contains memorabilia from President Johnson’s presidency. The Sauer-Beckmann Farmstead, a 1918-era living history farm, is another popular site at the park. Interpreters wear period clothing, conduct tours, and perform farm and household chores as they were done in the early 1900s.

The official birthday of the NPS is August 25, 2016. Go online to learn more about the year-long celebration: www.nps.gov/subjects/centennial/index.htm.
Vaccines and Stem Cells: Weapons against Lung Disease

By David Ebner

Every fall, the billboards and television commercials urging you to get a flu shot start to creep into the national narrative. Many people have reservations about the flu vaccine; some state it causes headaches and even engages flu-like symptoms. However, the statistics strongly support the flu vaccination over trying to tough it out, especially for the elderly. The CDC estimates that, in people over 50, there is a 77 percent reduction in hospitalization for flu symptoms when vaccinated.

Why not give yourself the best possible chance to be healthy? During flu season, most people agree with this logic and get a flu shot. The benefits are even more compelling for those suffering from a lung disease like COPD. The coughing, shortness of breath and fatigue that come along with the flu are everyday symptoms for those with lung disease, and the possibility of contracting the flu can turn these already harsh symptoms into something potentially fatal like pneumonia or respiratory failure. That’s why the CDC recommends that people with these conditions get the flu shot yearly.

Most pulmonologists will also urge their patients with lung disease to get a flu shot, but this has led patients to ask about other options to protect and improve their lung function. If a shot can vaccinate them from the flu, what can be done about lung disease? New options are emerging, and some have discovered stem cells as the answer. Just like the flu vaccine, stem cell therapy offers the possibility of improving lives through effective management and treatment of debilitating conditions.

Stem cells have become a buzzword in the news over the past few years. However, much of the talk is about fetal stem cells; few people are talking about adult, autologous stem cells that are present in all of our bodies. As our body’s repair system, these cells live in blood, bone marrow and fat tissue. They naturally respond to injury or illness; however, stem cells don’t move quickly, hence our bodies don’t instantly heal when we get sick. Autologous stem cell therapy can expedite this natural healing process.

A clinic called the Lung Institute (lunginstitute.com) is working to change this. They treat lung diseases with stem cells from the patient’s own body. In essence, they extract the cells through a minimally invasive procedure, isolate them and then reintroduce them to the lungs after giving the patient natural growth factors that promote cell replication. This quickens healing by directing the cells—and their healing properties—toward the diseased area. The result is healthier tissue growing in place of damaged tissue, and although this doesn’t cure the disease, it acts like the annual flu vaccine by slowing further degeneration and bringing a normal life back within reach.

We are in the midst of a fight to eradicate the flu just like the measles and pox of yesteryear. In the past, when the medical field banded together to tackle these diseases head-on, they were able to develop a vaccine. With the advancements in medical research today, the question of whether this can be done for lung disease is forthcoming, and by the looks of it, stem cells could play a starring role.
Secrets of the DAR Library

HANGING JUST ABOVE the portrait of George Washington in the DAR Library is the official insignia of the DAR. Library staff recently went on a hunt to discover more about the emblem and its provenance.

Mark Whatford, assistant director of the Library, noticed a plaque placed on the lower right side of the insignia. The height of the plaque on the wall and dim lighting made it difficult to get a good look, even with the magnification of camera phones. With a better camera, a long-range lens and a small ladder, staff finally snapped a clear photo of the plaque. It reads:

Presented to the DAR by the Army-Navy Chapter in 1926,
in memory of its deceased members.
Made from a captured British cannon from the Battle of Saratoga.

How did a British cannon from Saratoga become the DAR insignia? Library staff scoured 1926 issues of Daughters of the American Revolution Magazine and found an article written by Florence Gheen, historian of the Army-Navy DAR Chapter. She explained that the insignia was made from parts of a British cannon obtained by Major General Eli A. Helmick, husband of the chapter regent. Mrs. Gheen wrote that the new insignia would replace the old wooden one hung in Memorial Continental Hall.

As for George Washington’s portrait, when it was removed for the DAR Museum’s current exhibit, “Remembering the American Revolution, 1776–1890,” the staff learned that it was being damaged by the sunlight and variance in temperature in the Library. It will not be returned to the Library, but it can be seen in the Museum exhibit, which runs until September 3, 2016. —Kiera E. Nolan, Reference Librarian, NSDAR

DAR Library Gears Up for Its 2016 Lecture Series

FOLLOWING UP on its inaugural 2015 series, the 2016 DAR Library Lecture Series will spotlight award-winning authors and professors on subjects pertaining to history and research. The monthly programs are on Saturdays at 1 p.m., in the O’Byrne Gallery at the DAR Headquarters at 1776 D Street in Washington, D.C. All programs at the DAR Library are free to the public, and book signings follow the talks.

The series starts January 9 with a talk by Dr. Andrew Jackson O’Shaughnessy. He will be speaking on his DAR Book Award-winning work, The Men Who Lost America. This work examines the actions of British leaders that sparked America’s fight for independence.

On February 20, Dr. Alice Reagan will lecture on “The Suffrage Prisoners at the Occoquan Workhouse.” She will illuminate the struggles and obstacles women faced when they fought for the right to vote in the early 1900s.

The other lectures in the series are:
• Love Letters from Mount Rushmore by Richard Cerasani, March 19, 2016, at 1 p.m.
• “Using Maps in Historical Research,” a lecture by Professor Charlie Grymes from George Mason University, April 16, 2016, at 1 p.m.
• The Grand Forage 1778: The Revolutionary War’s Forgotten Campaign by Todd W. Braisted, May 14, 2016, at 1 p.m.
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Located in a small rural county in northeastern Georgia, the Oconee County Veterans Memorial and “Freedom,” a magnificent bronze American eagle, welcome thousands of residents and visitors annually to honor the courage and achievements of our nation’s heroes. From the militiamen who shivered and starved at Valley Forge to the young men and women currently patrolling the mountains of Afghanistan, the monument honors them all.

The eagle sculpture, with a 7½-foot wingspan, towers over the Wall of Honor and serves as the focal point of the memorial. Inscribed on the black granite wall are the names of Oconee County warriors who served during America’s modern wars and the names of those killed in action through Memorial Day 2015.

Artist Mike Curtis of Sagle, Idaho, himself an American veteran, made the bronze available at a significant discount to the Oconee Veterans Memorial Foundation. Funding was made possible with the aid of a matching fund grant from NSDAR.

The first phase was dedicated in 2008. Construction on the Wall of Honor and installation of the bronze eagle began on July 4, 2014. A dedication ceremony was held on Memorial Day 2015 hosted by the Veterans Memorial Foundation and supported by the grant sponsor, the Reverend John Andrew Chapter, among other volunteer groups. The ceremony included the traditional calling of the roll of all county citizens killed in action from World War I through Operation Enduring Freedom, followed by the playing of “Taps.”

The NSDAR Special Projects Grants program invites public charity 501(c)(3) organizations to apply for matching fund grants to support local projects related to historic preservation, education and patriotism. Visit www.dar.org/grants to learn more.
Ypsilanti Chapter, Ypsilanti, Mich., was named after General Demetrius Ypsilanti of Greece. Inspired by America’s fight for liberty, Gen. Ypsilanti led the Greeks fighting against the Turks of the Ottoman Empire during the Greek Revolution. The city of Ypsilanti, Mich., founded in 1825 during the Greek struggle for independence, is named after him. A bust of the general stands between American and Greek flags at the base of the Ypsilanti Water Tower. The first official meeting of the DAR chapter—whose name was chosen to represent the Greek general and the city of Ypsilanti—was held on October 19, 1896, the anniversary of the Battle of Yorktown.

On April 5, 1950, 12 women organized the Ketoctin Mountains Chapter, Bluemont, Va. The name honors the area’s American Indian and Revolutionary legacy. The Siouan American Indian tribes who hunted, fished and lived in the mountains of western Loudoun County, Va., named the area’s mountain range the Ketoctin Mountains, an Indian name meaning “wooded hills.” Later in this same mountainous area, settlers built a church in 1770 and named it Ketoctin Church. The church became the center of patriotic activities both prior to and during the Revolutionary War. The church’s cemetery contains graves of some Revolutionary War soldiers, one as early as 1777. Loudoun County had many volunteers to enlist in the Revolutionary War, reportedly more than any other county in the Virginia Colony.

The Preston Trail Chapter, Pottsboro, Texas, was named after a wagon train trail in north Texas. The Old Preston Road was originally part of a major American Indian trail that extended from near the site of present St. Louis to southwestern Texas.

Between its creation in 1840–1843 and the coming of the railroad three decades later, the road was the principal immigrant route into northern Texas. In one six-week period in 1845, roughly 1,000 wagons crossed the river into Texas. In the mid-1850s the road marked the route for Texas’ first cattle drive. Cattle swam the Red River at Rock Bluff Crossing, a natural rock formation that served as a chute into the water. The road remained the principal route to the north for Texas cattle until the Civil War.

By 1870 the main cattle trails had moved farther west, but the Preston Road was still the most important route for immigrant and freighter traffic in north-central Texas. That changed when the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad bridge across the Red River was built in 1872 at Denison, 12 miles downstream from Preston. With the major flow of traffic bypassing it both east and west, the road declined in importance. Today, between Dallas and the intersection with U.S. Highway 82 west of Sherman, the state highway closely parallels a section of the route of the original Old Preston Road.

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

ARCHAEOLOGISTS AT Minute Man National Historical Park in Massachusetts have found evidence that could lead to a new understanding of one of the first battles of the Revolutionary War.

On April 19, 1775, Captain John Parker, the commander of the Lexington militia, and his men met a British force of 700 men on their way to Concord. Eight of Captain Parker’s men were killed, and 10 were wounded. But after the British moved on, Parker’s men reassembled and waited to attack the Redcoats on their return to Boston.

The ambush—now known as Parker’s Revenge—was originally thought to occur on what’s now referred to as Battle Road, located between Concord and Lexington. But archaeologist Meg Waters and her team now say that evidence leads to a different location—a local farmhouse, about 300 yards north of the original spot.

On December 5, 2015, Waters told NPR that her team made the discovery by unearthing buried musket balls with ground-penetrating radars.

“You can just picture a Lexington militia man standing there, accidentally dropping a ball ‘cause he’s being fired at by the British,” Waters said. “So it’s really exciting—each ball that comes out of the ground is telling us a story.”

Waters and her team believe that the location of the musket balls help pinpoint where the minutemen fought the British.

Today, Minute Man National Historic Park hopes to include the archaeological team’s discoveries into how they explain the battle to visitors.

A Daughter’s Adventurous Life

Born on August 22, 1883, anthropologist, social worker, novelist, poet, professor, centenarian and Daughter Ruth Murray Underhill lived an adventurous life that seemed unconventional for a woman of her time.

Inspired by a desire to help the unfortunate and broaden her understanding of other cultures, she traveled from the tenements of Boston to war-torn Europe to the desert Southwest.

Underhill was born one of four children in Ossining, N.Y.. Her mother, Anna Taber Murray, was a member of the Mohegan DAR Chapter, Ossining, N.Y., which Underhill also joined in 1907.

When Underhill was 16, her family toured Europe, which awakened an interest in languages and curiosity about different cultures. She graduated in 1905 with a degree in English from Vassar College, and for a time taught Latin at a boys’ school. She was keenly aware of the swirling social issues of the time and left teaching to become a social worker, first in Boston at the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and later in Brooklyn, N.Y.

After World War I ended, she moved to Italy to work with the Red Cross. In 1930, she enrolled at Columbia University and discovered what would become the major focus of her life, anthropology. She studied under Franz Boaz, Columbia’s legendary pioneer of modern anthropology, and Ruth Benedict, another star of the department.

Underhill earned her PhD in 1937, having concentrated her research on the Papago tribe of American Indians (also known as the Tohono O’odham) in southern Arizona. She learned their language and wrote several books based on her research, including Autobiography of a Papago Woman.

A few years after receiving her doctorate, Underhill worked for the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs as an anthropological consultant from 1942 to 1948. She studied many American Indian tribes, worked on education projects and wrote materials for the bureau.

In 1949, Underhill left the bureau for an anthropology professorship at the University of Denver. She retired in 1952, but continued to lecture widely and write, and was honored by the Tohono O’odham for her work with them and efforts to preserve their history and culture.

Underhill died on August 15, 1984. Her memoir, An Anthropologist’s Arrival describes her long and full life, which one reviewer said could be summed up in a line of her poetry: “Life is not paid for. Life is lived. Now come.”

On December 5, 2015, Waters told NPR that her team made the discovery by unearthing buried musket balls with ground-penetrating radars.

“You can just picture a Lexington militia man standing there, accidentally dropping a ball ‘cause he’s being fired at by the British,” Waters said. “So it’s really exciting—each ball that comes out of the ground is telling us a story.”

Waters and her team believe that the location of the musket balls help pinpoint where the minutemen fought the British.

Today, Minute Man National Historic Park hopes to include the archaeological team’s discoveries into how they explain the battle to visitors.
The National WWII Museum in New Orleans recently completed its newest pavilion, Campaigns of Courage: European and Pacific Theaters, with the grand opening of “Road to Tokyo: Pacific Theater Galleries.” The exhibit focuses on the Pacific theater battles fought during World War II, highlighting oral histories from veterans. “Road to Tokyo” retraces the grueling trail that led from Pearl Harbor to Tokyo Bay by way of New Guinea and Southeast Asia, the Himalayas, Burma and the islands of the Pacific. Through personal narratives, artifacts and oral histories, the exhibit tells the story of the Americans who forged a road to Tokyo and ended the war at last. 

For more information, visit www.nationalww2museum.org.

The Colonial North American Project

HARVARD UNIVERSITY is in the middle of a multi-year project to digitize all known archival and manuscript materials in the Harvard Library that relate to 17th- and 18th-century North America. Known as the Colonial North American Project, the project will scan and make available online documents in 12 repositories.

Ranging from the significant to the mundane, these documents reveal a great deal about topics such as social life, education, trade, finance, politics, revolution, war, women, Native American life, slavery, science, medicine and religion.

In addition to reflecting the origins of the United States, the digitized materials also document aspects of life and work in Great Britain, France, Canada, the Caribbean and Mexico.

The website, http://library.harvard.edu/colonial, was launched in late 2015 and provides access to more than 150,000 pages of documents, such as papers that belonged to New England’s well-known Winthrop family and letters of Revolutionary-era personages such as James Otis and John Hancock.
Before Indiana became a state in 1816, it was the southernmost part of the Indiana Territory, which also included Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and part of Minnesota. (Before 1800, it was part of the Northwest Territory, which also included Ohio.) The state’s first capital was in southern Indiana, but state lawmakers thought a capital needed a more central location, founding Indianapolis in 1821 to fulfill that need.

In contrast to many cities at the time, the layout of Indianapolis was carefully planned and inspired by Washington, D.C. (In fact, Indianapolis’ planner Alexander Ralston helped Pierre L’Enfant design the nation’s capital.)

Like Washington, D.C., it featured a center circle—Monument Circle—from which streets radiated like wheel spokes, and 1-mile-square sites were zoned for civic buildings.

**A Transportation Hub**

European Americans began to settle in central Indiana after the 1818 Treaty of St. Marys, where the American Indian tribes of Miami, Delaware and Wea relinquished their claims to land comprising one-third of modern-day Indiana to the state’s first governor, Jonathan Jennings.

Indianapolis later developed into an important hub for the region and country, but transportation was initially a problem for the young city. The White River wasn’t navigable by the new flat-bottomed steamboats, and a canal to link the city to the Wabash and Erie Canal in the 1830s went bankrupt after just a few segments were completed. A National Road—later called Washington Street—became crucial to the town’s early growth.

**INDIANAPOLIS**

*The Crossroads of America*

By Sharon McDonnell

The Midwest city best-known for its Indianapolis 500 race, the world’s biggest single-day sports event, boasts other distinctions: one of the nation’s largest children’s museums; a thriving city whose population growth is much faster than the national average; and thoughtful urban planning, both past and present.

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The city’s emergence as “Crossroads of America” first began when seven different railroads converged into its grandly styled Union Station. When the first line, Indianapolis and Madison Railroad, was finished in 1847, the city had fewer than 8,000 residents. (Union Station, where the young Thomas Edison worked as a telegraph operator, is now the Crowne Plaza Indianapolis [www.crowneplaza.com/ind-downtown]. It features suites in 26 authentic Pullman train cars on their original tracks.)

It wasn’t long before the city’s easy train access to coal and natural gas deposits helped industrialists to build foundries, and machine and railroad-related shops. Rich farmland surrounding Indianapolis fueled its growth into a center of grain and wool mills and pork-packing plants. Streetcars began running in Indianapolis in the mid-19th century, and a light-rail system connected it to other cities in the 1890s.

Eli Lilly and Company was founded in 1876 by a chemist in Indianapolis, which is now its world headquarters. Walker Manufacturing Company, a hair-products company, built its factory and hair-culture school in 1910 here as well. Its founder, Madame C.J. Walker, an orphan who toiled in cotton fields, is considered America’s first self-made woman millionaire and first African-American woman millionaire. A portrait of Walker crafted from hair combs can be found at The Hotel Alexander (www.thealexander.com).

By 1909, 17 automobile and auto parts makers were based in the city, before the industry moved to Detroit. Fortunes created in these new industries were reflected in the Beaux Arts-style of the Grand Hotel, opened downtown in 1913. (Today it has been restored as the Omni Severin, a Historic Hotels of America member: www.omnihotels.com/hotels/indianapolis-severin.)

Historic Districts

Unlike the attached row houses so common in cities in the East, single-family homes were more common in Indianapolis since land was so readily available. In the city’s first residential district, Lockerbie Square Historic District, many grand brick homes and wood-framed cottages were built from 1850–1900. Early land owners included the Scots and Scots-Irish, but so many German immigrants settled in the 1840s–1850s that Lockerbie Square was dubbed Germantown in local newspapers. During the Civil War, Joseph Staub, a German tailor, sewed Union uniforms in his 1859 brick Greek Revival home. The district’s most famous home is a stately brick Italianate house built in 1871 and rented by Indiana poet laureate James Whitcomb Riley for 23 years. Now a National Historic Landmark, it’s filled with original furnishings and possessions.

Benjamin Harrison, an Indianapolis attorney elected president in 1888, and his wife, Caroline, the DAR’s first President General, lived in the Old Northside Historic District. The district was a desirable area for industrial, political and social leaders from 1850–1900.

The city’s best-known artists and writers lived in the Irvington Historic District in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These homes’ eclectic architecture styles ranged from Victorian Gothic, Italianate, French Second Empire and Arts & Crafts. George W. Julian, an abolitionist congressman, welcomed guests such as Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth to his brick Italianate home. His daughter, Grace Clarke, became a leader of Indiana’s suffragette movement. His brother, Jacob Julian, an abolitionist attorney, designed Irvington and its winding Victorian Romantic-style streets as a planned suburb east of the city in 1870. Butler University,
founded by an abolitionist attorney in 1855, opened a campus in Irvington in 1875. Unusual for its time, Butler admitted students despite race or gender.

A Hub for Life Sciences and Technology
Today, greater Indianapolis has grown 12 percent from 2004–2014 and is now home to almost 2 million people. Eli Lilly has played a crucial role in making the city a headquarters for the life sciences industry, including biotech and medical device firms. Its Lilly Endowment, one of the nation’s biggest philanthropies, has focused on supporting the arts, chiefly the world-class Children’s Museum. Listed No. 6 in the next top 10 cities for tech jobs by Fast Company in 2015, the city also is home to Anthem Inc., one of the nation’s biggest health insurance companies; one of the manufacturing and assembly plants for Rolls-Royce Corporation; and more than 400 motor sports companies.

For more information, go to www.visitindy.com.

Don’t Miss These Gems

Children’s Museum of Indianapolis
www.childrensmuseum.org
One of the nation’s best children’s museums (and the only one where a faux dinosaur on its hind legs appears to be breaking in), it features a huge collection of dinosaur fossils and exhibits devoted to world treasures, such as a re-created Terra Cotta Warriors excavation site. Another section takes an immersive look at another country’s culture. (China is its current exhibit.) “The Power of Children” tells the story of three children who helped change the world: young author and Holocaust victim Anne Frank; Ruby Bridges, one of the first children to integrate New Orleans schools; and Ryan White, who died of AIDS.

Eiteljorg Museum
www.eiteljorg.org
This museum devoted to American Indian and Western art, including the Taos School of Artists, lies in 250-acre White River State Park. Imported Italian gondolas, paddle boats and kayaks can be found in the park’s Central Canal.

Benjamin Harrison Presidential Site
www.bhpsite.org
This brick Italianate mansion built in 1874–1875 is now a house museum dedicated to President Benjamin Harrison, grandson of President William H. Harrison and great-grandson of a Declaration of Independence signer. His wife, Caroline, served as the first DAR President General.

Indianapolis Museum of Art
www.imamuseum.org
The museum features the nation’s most comprehensive group of paintings by George Seurat and his followers, a collection of J.M.W. Turner works, and a large collection of Paul Gauguin Pont-Aven School paintings. Robert Indiana’s iconic red steel LOVE sculpture can be found outside the museum along with a contemporary sculpture park. Oldfields House, a National Historic Landmark mansion that once belonged to Eli Lilly’s son, is also here.

Indianapolis Cultural Trail
www.indyculturaltrail.org
This 8-mile bike and walking path links six neighborhoods and seven public art works.

Indianapolis Motor Speedway
www.indianapolismotorspeedway.com
The speedway’s 100th auto race is set for May 2016. Fans can ride a real IndyCar with the Indy Racing Experience, and admire vintage and classic cars at the Hall of Fame Museum.

Don’t Miss
These Gems

Indianapolis Museum of Art
Indianapolis Motor Speedway
THROUGHOUT NSDAR’S 125-YEAR HISTORY, every President General has faced historic preservation challenges in maintaining our home in our nation’s capital. Each has successfully risen above those challenges to finance restoration needs, often at the expense of other highly visible and worthwhile projects. That is why the time has come to permanently “guard that which is committed to our trust” by establishing a permanently restricted fund to support the preservation and conservation of our National Headquarters’ architecture, the restoration of our historic property and the funding of immediate restoration needs at DAR Constitution Hall.

The Guardian Trust Campaign will support the preservation, restoration and conservation of our historic property and, in turn, will allow NSDAR to focus on projects that go beyond our magnificent marble walls and expand our impact around the world.

Please follow in the footsteps of our Founders and help us preserve their vision for the finest buildings ever owned, managed and run by women. Your gifts will ensure that this investment today will touch countless lives tomorrow and for generations to come.

TO LEARN HOW you can play a transformational role in the future success of our historic organization, please call the Office of Development at (800) 449-1776, complete and return the enclosed reply card, or visit us online today at www.ouramericanlegacy.org.
No Place Like Home

In *The House Tells the Story*, watercolorist and essayist Adam Van Doren takes us inside 15 presidential homes through the medium of illustrated letters to his friend, Pulitzer-Prize winning historian David McCullough, who originally suggested the project to Van Doren. (McCullough also provides the forward to the book.)

The book’s charm lies both in the illustrated letter format and in the chatty nature of the letters. Where photographs would overwhelm with detail, Van Doren’s watercolor sketches engage the reader’s imagination by focusing on only a few key elements in each scene to bring a sense of immediacy and intimacy.

For instance, Van Doren’s caption for “The Stone Library” at Peacefield in Quincy, Mass., home of both John Adams and John Quincy Adams, notes that it contains 14,000 volumes. But the artist uses only a few dozen vertical rectangles and dabs of color on shelves to suggest the collection. The long green-baize covered library table with its antique lamps, a clock, scattered volumes and a pushed-back chair suggests one of the Adamses has just stepped out and will return shortly.

The illustrations include some wonderful caricatures. One of his letters from Franklin D. Roosevelt’s home Springwood, at Hyde Park, N.Y., shows FDR seated in an open car, his cigarette holder jutting at its familiar jaunty angle from the famous grin. At the Harry S. Truman home in Independence, Mo., Van Doren shows Margaret Truman standing somewhat anxiously beside a piano. And a sketch from John F. Kennedy’s early boyhood home in Brookline, Mass., touchingly depicts JFK gently kissing the top of his elderly father’s head in 1961.

Van Doren’s writing is equally chatty. He and McCullough were friends before the project started, and there are frequent asides about mutual friends, places and events both had been, and arrangements to see a property together.

If Van Doren’s name sounds familiar, it’s because he is part of one of America’s most culturally accomplished families. His grandfather—poet, writer and scholar Mark Van Doren—won the 1940 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, while his great-uncle Carl Van Doren won the 1939 Pulitzer Prize for his biography of Benjamin Franklin.

Van Doren introduces each house with a brief essay about the home and its tie to a president. He also includes anecdotes about his visits, which are as intimate and informal as his letter.

For instance, the oppressive heat of a Virginia summer nearly overcame Van Doren as he worked on a sketch of Mount Vernon. He sought refuge on the veranda, musing that George and Martha Washington and their guests also sat there to catch whatever cool breezes wafted over the Potomac.

On the other extreme, Van Doren contended with 14 inches of snow on the ground and bitter cold at the Calvin Coolidge Historic Site in Plymouth Notch, Vt. And while sketching Theodore Roosevelt’s home Sagamore Hill in Oyster Bay, N.Y., Van Doren was interrupted by Teddy himself booming, “Good job! Keep up the good work!” Teddy’s apparition turned out to be Roosevelt portrayer James Foote, who was in character for a performance at the home.

*The House Tells the Story* is the kind of book you start out to buy as a gift for someone else, but end up keeping for your own pleasure. It will also whet your appetite to visit or revisit these homes, armed with new eyes and a fresh appreciation of their importance to America’s leaders. —Bill Hudgins

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For many people, the 2013 film “Lee Daniels’ The Butler” provided their first awareness of the role that African-Americans have played in relation to the presidency of the United States. The film is loosely based on the life of Eugene Allen, who worked as a White House waiter and butler for 34 years until he retired as head butler in 1986.

The film depicted Allen as dedicated not only to his work, but also to both the office and the men who held it. He was often silently, almost invisibly, present during blunt conversations about race. Not surprisingly, he sometimes thought of leaving his post.

But what if he could not have left? What if, instead of a black man who daily faced discrimination, he had been a slave who could not leave his master’s control without risking the direst punishment?

The question is not hypothetical: Twelve of our first 18 presidents—from Washington through Grant—owned slaves at one point or another in their lives. Eight of those 12 brought some of their slaves with them when they ascended to the highest office in the land, incurring the wrath of the growing abolition movement.

*The Invisibles: The Untold Story of African American Slaves in the White House* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2016) by Jesse J. Holland tells the stories of how some of those slaves and their lives with their owners kept for themselves. John Adams was the first president to live in the White House, but was never a slave owner. His successor, Thomas Jefferson, was the first president to bring slaves into the executive mansion.

Slavery was often called “the peculiar institution,” and Holland’s vignettes of presidents and slaves indicate why. There were often bonds of trust and affection between owners and slaves—for instance, some of Andrew Jackson’s slaves refused to leave The Hermitage after his death gave them their freedom—but punishment for even small infractions could be severe.

More than one slave in Holland’s account asked how the president, as the living symbol of America’s freedom and liberty, could deny those freedoms to millions. And not just during the president’s lifetime, but after death, as well. The *Invisibles* includes several stories of how slaves fared after their owner’s death.

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For instance, Holland paints an unflattering portrait of Dolley Madison’s handling of the slaves she inherited. James Madison had promised his slaves he would not sell them without their permission or separate families.

But, as her assets dwindled in widowhood, Dolley sold Montpelier along with most of the slaves, and also declined to obey her husband’s wishes that she free one of his longtime favorites, Paul Jennings. Instead, she rented Jennings out as a laborer and eventually sold him.

The buyer subsequently sold Jennings to Senator Daniel Webster, who freed him. And Jennings took some revenge on his former mistress: He publicly disputed her claim that she had personally rescued the famous Gilbert Stuart portrait of Washington from the White House before British troops burned it. Instead, Jennings said a doorman and a gardener took down the portrait. Historians still puzzle over what really happened.—B.H.
UNCOVERING HISTORY AT FERRY FARM

The excavation and reconstruction of George Washington’s boyhood home

By Lena Anthony
In 1833, the artist John Gadsby Chapman painted a landscape of Fredericksburg, Va. The town was the subject, but the real focus of the painting was Chapman’s surroundings. Situated on a ridge along the Rappahannock River, the artist was there to capture one of almost a dozen Virginia landscapes depicting historic sites from George Washington’s life. This ridge, across the river from Fredericksburg, was the site of Washington’s boyhood home. It’s where he lived from 1738 until at least 1753. It’s where he learned to survey, where he joined the Masons, and where he first expressed an interest in joining the military.

However, when Chapman painted the landscape, nothing stood but a pile of rubble. The Civil War ravaged the site even further, as the Washington Home Farm, which by then was known as Ferry Farm, served as a staging ground in the Battle of Fredericksburg in 1862, and was held by the Union Army for the rest of the war.

In the years that followed, the property changed hands several times, houses were built and razed, the land was farmed for profit, and the site even became a home for troubled boys for a short while. Attempts were made intermittently to preserve the property, but most were unsuccessful.

After spending almost a century as an endangered site, Ferry Farm is rising again, as a team of archaeologists, architectural historians and skilled artisans with the George Washington Foundation work to reconstruct Washington’s boyhood home and uncover new information about the early life of America’s first commander in chief. Having positively identified the home in 2008, the foundation is moving onto its next big endeavor—constructing an interpretive replica of the 1740s Washington house.

Saving Ferry Farm

More than once in its history did someone buy—or attempt to buy—the property for the sake of its connection to George Washington.

After the Civil War, a family from Pennsylavnia with ancestral ties to one of Washington’s generals in the Continental Army purchased the property. According to historical archaeologist Philip Levy in Where the Cherry Tree Grew: The Story of Ferry Farm, George Washington’s Boyhood Home (St. Martin’s Press, 2013), the family “came down and cleaned up the damage on the acres including the old Washington home lot.”

Levy points out that in 1925, after the property had already been bought and sold again, an article written by George Allen England in the Daughters of the American Revolution Magazine urged Daughters to “rescue from oblivion a landmark that should be a priceless national heritage.” According to Levy, England published impassioned pleas such as these for various audiences because he was promised a finder’s fee for a buyer.

Finally, in 1928, a fledgling organization attempted to buy the site, but was unable to come up with enough money to close the deal. At least two other attempts to purchase the site by preservation-minded parties also failed.

Not until 1996, when Ferry Farm was rezoned for commercial development and Wal-Mart was eyeing the site for a new store, were preservationists successful. That year the George Washington Foundation purchased 36 acres of Ferry Farm. Thanks to two subsequent acquisitions, the foundation now owns 113 acres. Additionally, a 1998 bill in Congress provided an easement with the National Park Service to help protect Ferry Farm in perpetuity.

“It could have been developed commercially long before our foundation and this community were galvanized to rescue it,” said Bill Garner, president of the George Washington Foundation. “But for the ownership of that land remaining in private hands for so long, we would not have had the opportunity we were given to acquire the property.”

Digging for Clues

Once the foundation took ownership, it made several small-scale attempts at excavation, but large-scale efforts didn’t begin until 2002. Since then, a team led by Director of Archaeology David Muraca has uncovered more than 700,000 artifacts over 13 field seasons. The oldest artifact found on site was a 10,000-year-old spear used by American Indians. In addition to the Washington home, including an intact cellar, they also
found remains of a slave quarter, a kitchen and a storage building, as well as a house that predated Washington’s arrival and one built after Washington left Ferry Farm.

Muraca expects excavation on Ferry Farm to continue for at least another decade, as he and his team, which includes interns, students and volunteers from across the country, continue to discover outbuildings and other artifacts.

In the meantime, the organization is moving forward with the reconstruction of Washington’s childhood home. It broke ground on the project in April 2015. Garner expects the interpretive replica to be completed in late 2017.

**Reconstructing History**

The home will appear just as it did when Washington lived there—red painted clapboard on the outside, a steeply pitched roof, four rooms plus a central hallway on the first floor, two bedrooms in the finished upstairs loft, and an in-ground cellar beneath the central passage.

The restoration team is confident about these and other details of the house because of their extensive historical research, as well as exhaustive archaeological research. For example, a pair of room-by-room inventories of the house from 1738 and 1743 give an idea of the layout of the house, while artifacts found in those locations lend insight into how the Washington family may have used those spaces.

In addition to using period construction techniques and materials, including hand-forged hardware, timber-frame walls and the same type of Aquia sandstone that was used in the original home, the foundation is planning on incorporating interpretive opportunities in the construction process.

Helical piles and precast concrete beams will allow the replica to be constructed just over the original structure’s footprint, but without jeopardizing the integrity of the remains. Muraca said this method will actually help preserve the remains, as well as allow visitors to see inside the actual Washington cellar.

“When people come to visit, we want them to be able to walk onto the Washington landscape and leave the 21st century,” Muraca said. “The best way to do that is to create an environment that looks exactly like it was back then. Any nail will be driven into the wood the same way, so it looks exactly right.”

“With this excavation, we’re trying to understand the formative processes that took place here that made George Washington the exceptional man he was. Whatever he became, he became here.”

– **DAVID MURACA, DIRECTOR OF ARCHAEOLOGY**

DAR State Regent Virginia Storage (L-R, with DAR President General Lynn Young and Presley Wagoner) chose Ferry Farm as the focus of her State Regent’s Project, raising more than $125,000. She helped welcome a large group of DAR members in October 2015 to a tour at Ferry Farm.
Working with Mark Wenger, an architectural historian at Mesick Cohen Wilson Baker Architects, which has participated in restoration projects at Montpelier, Monticello and Poplar Forest, the foundation’s next step is conceptualizing the rooms based on the archaeological and historical data from the site, as well as standing examples of homes from the area. Outside supporters, such as the Virginia Daughters of the American Revolution, will help underwrite the rooms, including furnishings and details.

A lifelong resident of Fredericksburg, State Regent Virginia Storage chose Ferry Farm as the focus of her State Regent’s Project in 2013, as a response to the George Washington Foundation’s $40 million capital campaign. Her project, which will fund a downstairs room, has so far raised more than $125,000, including a $5,000 donation from the National Society. A matching grant secured by the George Washington Foundation will double all gifts made to the Virginia State Regent’s Project between now and March 1, 2016.

“When Wal-Mart tried to buy the site and place a store there, that, to me, was the ultimate insult to historic preservations in our area,” she said. “This always made an impression on me, and I knew that if I ever became State Regent, my project would support this historically significant site in one way or another.”

Understanding Washington’s Childhood

The goal of the excavation and recreation of Washington’s boyhood home has not just been to uncover landscape elements of his surroundings, but also to better understand the life of George and his family members during this time.

“This chapter in George Washington’s life is not very well documented, in part because there isn’t a lot of information,” Muraca said. “With this excavation, we’re trying to understand the formative processes that took place here that made George Washington the exceptional man he was. Whatever he became, he became here.”

More and more, that evidence points to Washington’s mother, Mary, who lived at Ferry Farm for almost 35 years, and the efforts she made as a widowed mother to provide for her children and prepare them for their future stations in life.

Some of the items found thus far include cufflinks adorned with foxes alluding to George’s favorite sport, fox hunting. A tambour hook recovered at the site is the earliest example of this fancy form of needlework in Virginia. Meanwhile, fragments of a small punch bowl—decorated with cherries—are thought to have belonged to Mary.

“When you combine them together, all of these examples show a house on the edge of fashionability, but from a family without a lot of means to be fashionable,” Muraca said.

Mrs. Storage said the real story of Ferry Farm is not the child who grew up there, but the mother who raised him.

“George recognized Mary’s impact on his life when he said, ‘All that I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual and physical education I received from her.’” And that would have happened at Ferry Farm.
The room was a gift from the New Jersey State Society and chapters during construction of Memorial Continental Hall in the early 1900s. New Jersey Daughters raised the then-hefty sum of about $1,600 to pluck the materials from the Delaware River and have them made into paneling, furniture and accessories such as candelabra and a chandelier.

One of eight British vessels to carry the name, this Augusta was launched on October 24, 1763, at Rotherhithe in southeast London. Built of tough old-growth oak, Augusta was classified as a third-rate ship of the line, meaning that it was a fast, agile, powerful craft. Augusta boasted a double gun deck and mounted 64 guns, while her hull design and sail configuration provided exceptional speed and maneuverability, making it one of the fleet’s premier ships.

Augusta spent several years conducting routine patrols in the English Channel before being ordered to sail for New York City in the spring of 1777, according to "Darkened by the Tides and Time: The History and Material Culture of His Majesty’s Ship Augusta” by Tyler Rod Putman (Military Collector & Historian, Journal of the Company of Military Historians, Summer 2014). Under Captain Francis Reynolds, Augusta was one of about 200 ships in the British fleet that supported ground troops marching south to capture Philadelphia.

As troops under General William Howe approached Philadelphia, the fleet—commanded by the general’s brother Vice Admiral Richard Howe—landed troops and then blockaded Delaware Bay. After they took control of the city in late September 1777, British commanders shifted their focus toward three Patriot strongholds down the Delaware River from the city—Mud Fort, aka Fort Mifflin; Fort Mercer, aka Red Bank; and Fort Billings, Putman wrote.

Augusta and several other ships were to provide support from the river and fend off armed galleys from the Pennsylvania Navy as...
British infantry attempted to storm the fortifications on land.

This was a dangerous mission: The Patriots had sown the river with underwater obstacles called *chevaux de frise*—sturdy frames studded with long projecting spikes that could rip the bottom out of a vessel. These obstacles also changed the flow of sediment and created new, unmapped shoals that could trap an unlucky ship.

Which may well have been the cause of Augusta’s demise. The tide was ebbing as the squadron moved upriver toward the forts. Around 6 p.m., Augusta suddenly ran aground, almost directly under the guns from Fort Mercer and Fort Mifflin. Another ship, Merlin, also ran aground nearby. Through the night, the British tried desperately but vainly to drag the vessels off the shoals.

The next morning, October 23, Patriot gunners in the forts realized the situation and began pounding the helpless ships and launched fireboats downriver. The ships’ crews returned fire and fended off the fireboats, but the situation appeared hopeless.

Around 10 a.m., fire broke out aboard Augusta. Accounts differ about what ignited the blaze. The Patriots claimed that “hot shot” started it—cannonballs heated red-hot before being fired at an enemy. Admiral Howe dismissed the idea in his official report, and speculated that burning wadding from the ship’s cannons had blown back aboard ship and ignited the blaze.

Troop transports were brought up to evacuate the crew, though some leaped overboard as the fire spread, including Captain Reynolds. Most of Augusta’s complement was rescued, but between 40 and 60 sailors died during the battle, in the explosion or drowned in the river.

The fire soon reached Augusta’s powder room, which detonated in a massive explosion. People living up to 50 miles away reported hearing or feeling the explosion.

Pamphleteer Thomas Paine described it as “a report as loud as a peal of a hundred cannon at once, and turning round I saw a thick smoke rising like a pillar and spreading from the top like a tree.” Some 16 miles away, Continental Postmaster Hugh Smyth noted, “The shock was felt at camp; several windows were exploded.”

Meanwhile, the land attack on the forts had failed. The British gave up trying to float Merlin, evacuated its crew and set fire to it before withdrawing back downriver.

The Patriots scavenged what they could from the wreckage, including some cannon, cannonballs and other military gear, and dumped the rest in the river in an effort to keep it out of British hands. After the Patriots left the area, British forces were able to salvage some of the guns but many remained on the riverbed, Putman wrote.

And there the wreckage lay for almost a century—a potential hazard to navigation but also a source of plunder as locals dredged up cannon and other metal for scrap. By 1867, some 24 feet of sediment had piled up over the shattered hull and timbers, and rumors had begun to circulate that the ship had carried a fortune in gold aboard to pay British troops, Putman wrote.

The rumors inspired five men to raise the wreck in 1869, and haul it to a point just offshore from Gloucester City, N.J. There was no gold, so to recoup costs the salvage team followed an old coastal tradition concerning important recovered vessels: They covered the hulk with a tarp and charged admission for people to view the remains. But interest quickly waned, and the group abandoned the project.

Augusta’s remains lay in shallow water and were visible and accessible at low tide. Souvenir hunters combed the wreckage for artifacts and found miscellaneous items such as watches, cannonballs, a small keg of butter, buttons, and three human skulls, Putman noted. Others took away pieces of wood that were often made into small keepsakes such as crosses and gavels.

The construction of Memorial Continental Hall between 1904 and 1910 opened a new chapter for Augusta. State Societies were asked to contribute to the effort by adopting a room. Each state room would have its own theme. In 1908, the New Jersey Society DAR proposed sponsoring a 17th-century themed room paneled and furnished from wood salvaged from the Augusta wreckage, said Patrick Sheary, curator of furnishings at the DAR Museum.
The project was led by New Jersey State Regent Ellen Mecum and Ellen Matlock of Ann Whitall Chapter. According to the report on that year’s Continental Congress in Volume 35 of the DAR’s American Monthly Magazine, the ship went down near Mrs. Mecum’s great-great-grandmother’s property.

In her last report as state regent, Mrs. Mecum stated the project cost more than $1,600, and the architect in charge of Memorial Hall’s construction had to be persuaded to alter the plans to accommodate the use of salvaged wood.

Salvaging the wood may have been the easiest part, since it was readily accessible at low tide. Ships were built of old-growth oak because it was the stoutest, strongest wood available. After 130 years of soaking in the Delaware River’s brackish water and being exposed to the elements at low tide, the wood had aged into dense, rock-hard timbers.

After salvage, the wood was allowed to dry for two years before a sawmill began cutting it into lumber. The tough wood quickly dulled blades, and it was full of nails, brads and other pieces of metal that presented a significant hazard to both the sawmill machinery and the crews operating it.

According to an article in the March 6, 1909, issue of The Index: Pittsburgh’s Illustrated Weekly, Miss Matlock told the Pittsburgh DAR Chapter that the wood was being made into “one settee, three arm chairs of one pattern and two arm chairs of another, six side chairs, one bench and one lectern. All the pieces are large and most elaborately carved. No effort to change the beautiful dark color of the wood made by time and the tides was attempted.”

The furniture was patterned after “Jacobin pieces in the treasurer’s house in York, England, in the time of Charles I,” wrote Miss Matlock, who in 1915 was appointed curator of the room.

The salvaged timbers were also fashioned into 7-foot-high wainscoting. A chandelier made from iron spikes and cannonballs from Augusta hangs over the table. The light was made by Samuel Yellin, a renowned master metalsmith who emigrated to America from Poland and started his business in 1909. The inverted dome of the chandelier depicts Columbus’ ships—Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria—and Leif Erikson’s Viking ship, symbolizing the discovery of America by Europeans.

Several candelabra were also constructed from the ship’s wood and metal. According to the history of the room on the New Jersey Society website, the room also contains portraits of the five New Jersey signers of the Declaration of Independence.

“Stained glass windows contain illustrations depicting scenes from New Jersey at the time of the American Revolution: the tea burning at Greenwich; the Indian King Tavern at Haddonfield; the Engagement at Chestnut Neck; the Skirmish at Quinton Bridge; the Battle of Red Bank; the Whitall House; Fort Mercer; the story of Molly Pitcher; Old Tennent Church; the Old Well in Parsippany; Camp Middlebrook; the Battle of Monmouth; Washington’s Headquarters in Morristown; the Battle of Trenton; the Wallace House in Somerville; and the Battle of Princeton,” the site states. The windows were installed in the 1920s.

Originally used as a meeting room, the space was designated a period room in the 1930s, so visitors can view the interior only from the door, Sheary said. However, an online virtual tour sponsored by the New Jersey State Society DAR provides an excellent insider’s view. The virtual tour is at www.dar.org/museum/current-exhibition/new-jersey.
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COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG’s Historic Trades program, which began in 1936, employs more than 70 artisans who are professionals in Colonial-era trades such as carpentry, joining and cabinet-making, as well as printing, bookbinding, wig making and farming. The program is one of the most historically accurate of its kind in the world, and the objects its artisans create reflect the traditions of 18th-century hand craftsmanship. Images of these furniture craftsmen and their tools are featured on the following pages.
Honing Their Craft

When the first European colonists came to America, most brought few furnishings with them. The vast hardwood forests in the New World offered plenty of wood from which to create new furniture, and it was costly to ship heavy goods across the ocean. Instead, the colonists brought craftsmen who could create the furniture they needed and train apprentices to keep Colonial homes furnished.

Furniture makers eventually became the first important American artisans, but their work wasn’t just creative; it was functional and necessary. And the furniture styles they created—as well as many of their remaining pieces—continue to be in demand by homeowners and collectors hundreds of years later. Here’s an inside look at Colonial American furniture.

By Nancy Mann Jackson
A Team Effort

“People have the conception that one man built a whole piece of furniture, but that’s not the case,” said Stanley Saperstein, historian, woodworker and owner of Pennington, N.J.-based Artisans of the Valley, which builds and restores custom furniture using Colonial-era techniques. “Most shops had several people who worked together like on an assembly line.”

Many early furniture designers were also architects, who designed buildings. Each designer created his own style of furniture, but most of the early American designers borrowed their basic styles from Europe.

When the design for a piece of furniture was determined, a joiner took over the project. He was responsible for cutting the wood and making the joints where pieces of the furniture connect to each other. In Colonial days, these connections were made with hot hide glue or mortise joints and pegs.

If the design of a piece of furniture included carvings, a woodcarver would then take over. The carved pieces would then be sent back to the joiner to be connected.

Finally, the finisher completed the project. “The finisher was known as a chemist, because he knew all the formulas for coming up with the different finishes and colors,” Saperstein said. Those included shellac and varnish, which was made by mixing petroleum with natural oils such as linseed oils.

Today, furniture makers using traditional methods, such as Saperstein, must be masters of all those trades. But in Colonial days, “None of those tradesmen could make a piece of furniture by himself,” Saperstein said. “Those who built furniture in early America employed designers, joiners, woodcarvers and finishers. Some masters of cabinet shops get the credit for building a piece of furniture because they owned the shop, but they may or may not have actually built the pieces.”

Common Pieces

While fine furniture required an entire team of artisans, many American colonists simply didn’t have the funds to afford expertly made pieces. “The average person didn’t have classically designed furniture; that was for the rich,” Saperstein said. “Most had American country furniture, which was on the crude side and made by one guy rather than a whole team.”

In many cases, the “one guy” was a farmer who built furniture during the winter months, since many farmers had second trades to make ends meet. Bartering was common in the Colonies, and furniture makers traded their creations with the wares of others in their communities or regions.

Most of the first furniture built in the Colonies was rugged and functional. Most houses included a “sawbuck table,” Saperstein said, a basic table with slats known as a picnic table today. In some cases, the table slats were not fastened to the base and were basically boards across two sawhorses, which could be removed and set aside when the table was not in use, Saperstein said. On each side of the “board” table was a bench, with a chair at one end.

In addition to a crude table, most colonists’ homes also had a six-board chest, which was basically a box with a lid. In those chests, families stored blankets and their off-season clothing. Some people had a crude wardrobe, and better houses may have had a fancy framed chest, but high-end furniture was available only to about one-third of Colonial homes, Saperstein said. “To build a highboy would cost 45 pounds then, which was the average annual salary of a common person,” he adds.
Making Their Mark

Just as the Colonies started out as distant branches of England, the first furniture styles reflected deep European roots.

"Initially this cultural plagiarism was natural enough, because the American Colonies were appendages of England," wrote art critic Edward Sozanski in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "After nationhood, and well into the 19th century, stylistic borrowing reflected a lack of confidence in native cultural values, or even the acknowledgment that any existed. Painters and sculptors, as well as cabinetmakers, tended to emulate European tastes."

However, even though American artisans often mimicked the furniture styles of Europe, they did so with their own style and flair. The designs of leading European designers such as Thomas Chippendale and Thomas Sheraton were adapted with American twists. "There were no innovators in the manner of Chippendale and Sheraton, but by modifying their designs, craftsmen rendered them ineluctably American," Sozanski wrote.

One of the recognizable trends from early American furniture is the American easy chair. While some of the upholstered chairs that continue to be classic American style reflected elements of European design, many have no clear European models, according to Mark Anderson and Robert F. Trent, who wrote a history of such chairs for *American Furniture* (Chipstone, 1993).

And different Colonial regions interpreted the styles in their own ways. For instance, in the Tidewater region of Virginia, most well-to-do families imported their furniture directly from England.

"Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, John Hancock and many other Founding Fathers were wealthy and could afford nice furniture," Saperstein said.

In New England, however, many of the colonists had to be much more frugal, relying on local craftsmen to supply their furniture needs. The first cabinet shops in the Colonies were located in Boston, followed by Philadelphia and New York. Most of the cabinetmakers came from England, opening their own shops and hiring apprentices, Saperstein said.

As the Colonies became more prosperous, furniture models became more complicated. And for many, furniture making became a lucrative business. For instance, John Hancock and his three brothers were all in the furniture business—Henry, a chairmaker and cabinetmaker, and William, an upholsterer, ran the Boston branch of the family firm, John Hancock and Company; and John and brother Belcher opened a Philadelphia branch of the business in 1830. By the time John Hancock died in 1835, he had built the largest upholstery and decorating company in Philadelphia, specializing in wood rocking chairs with plush covers, as well as other custom-made furnishings, according to David Conradsen in *American Furniture*.

Most early American craftsmen made use of the walnut, white oak and other native hardwoods in the Colonies to create their furniture, but surprisingly, there were plywoods available, Saperstein said. "Plywood is just thin cut pieces of wood glued together, alternating the grain pattern to prevent warping," he said. "And in some applications, plywood can be better than hardwood."

Of course, all the work was done by hand—contrasted with today’s furniture factories, where most of the work is done automatically with the use of computers. While the craftsmen are fewer and further between, some people—such as Saperstein—are still building and restoring furniture (mostly) by hand. However, power tools come in handy, unless a customer is willing to pay for the extra labor to do everything by hand.

"As I tell people," Saperstein said, "if they had owned power tools back then, they would have used them."
Man of Many Hidden Talents: Benjamin Banneker

Eighteenth-century America produced a number of extraordinary individuals whose accomplishments seem almost impossible given their early upbringing. Some, such as Benjamin Franklin, remain famous today while others, such as Benjamin Banneker of Maryland, are relatively unknown. Both were largely self-educated men, but fate dealt a crucial difference: Franklin was white, while Banneker—an astronomer, mathematician, surveyor and author—was a free African-American living on his family’s farm in a slave state. By Bill Hudgins

Banneker was a key part of the team that surveyed the boundaries of the District of Columbia and also a successful almanac publisher. But he is perhaps best remembered for a letter he wrote in August 1791 to Thomas Jefferson, upbraiding the author of the Declaration of Independence for statements deriding the intelligence of blacks. He also criticized Jefferson for “detaining by fraud and violence so numerous a part of my brethren under groaning captivity and cruel oppression, that you should at the same time be found guilty of that most criminal act, which you professedly detested in others, with respect to yourselves.”

The eloquent letter accompanied a handwritten copy of Banneker’s almanac, which he sent Jefferson as proof that the intelligence and talents of African-Americans were not inferior to those of whites. Banneker urged Jefferson and the other founders “to wean yourselves from those narrow prejudices which you have imbibed with respect to” African-Americans.

Jefferson’s reply was gracious, though he did not address Banneker’s charges and said nothing about the almanac. In a letter to a friend a number of years later, Jefferson mentioned the “long letter from Banneker, which shows him to have had a mind of very common stature indeed.”

Banneker was born November 9, 1731, in Baltimore County, Md. Many details about his family and his early life are vague or poorly documented, in part because virtually all his journals, diaries and other documents were destroyed in a fire shortly after he died.
It is well-established that his white maternal grandmother, Molly Welsh, was born in England and worked as a dairymaid in Devon, England, according to Banneker’s biographer, Charles A. Cerami, in Benjamin Banneker: Surveyor, Astronomer, Publisher, Patriot (John Wiley & Sons, 2002). In 1682, her master accused her of stealing and selling milk from his cows—potentially a capital offense. The judge offered her a choice—death or immigration to the Colonies as an indentured servant. Not surprisingly, she chose to take her chances in the New World.

Fortunately, her master in Maryland was kinder and more generous. When she completed her indenture, he gave her land for a small farm and some money to get started. Realizing she needed help to run a farm, she purchased two slaves at an auction. She fell in love with one of them and freed him. They married and had four daughters, one of whom, Mary, was Benjamin’s mother.

According to Cerami’s biography, young Benjamin was precocious, showing clear signs of remarkable talents. Before he was 6 years old, he had mastered mathematics to such a degree that the family’s neighbors, both white and black, called on him to check their arithmetic on accounts and other matters. He had a phenomenal memory and a highly logical manner of thinking far beyond his years, according to Cerami.

Young Banneker likely learned how to read and write from his grandmother Molly, with the family Bible serving as his textbook. He may have had some formal schooling—when he was 8 or 9 years old a local Quaker schoolmaster took an interest in the well-spoken, inquisitive youth—but the demands of farming eventually ended that. The rest of his education came from voracious reading, and he borrowed books on any and all subjects whenever possible.

Cerami describes Banneker as always fascinated by the world around him and with trying to figure out processes and relationships. A lifelong diarist, Banneker’s surviving journals demonstrate an intelligence beyond not only his age but also beyond the era’s mainstream thinking.

Always fascinated by the nature of time, in his early 20s Banneker was loaned a pocket watch, which he disassembled, studying the parts and determining the ratios of the gears to each other. In 1753, he built a clock out of wood, having extrapolated the correct dimensions of the mechanism from the watch. The clock ran for many years, and was one of the first wooden clocks built in America, Cerami says.

Banneker also spent long hours gazing at the night stars, speculating on their nature and whether they were surrounded by inhabited planets. This early fascination with celestial objects would later help him in creating his almanacs and in surveying the District of Columbia’s boundaries.

Though Banneker’s mind ranged widely, part of it remained firmly fixed on running the family farm, where he lived his entire life. His father died when Banneker was a teenager, leaving the youth to shoulder much of the burden of feeding his family.

Tobacco was their cash crop, though the family tried to be as self-sufficient as possible and raised vegetables and livestock. This became increasingly difficult because tobacco strips nutrients from the soil, and the quality and quantity of the crop declined steadily. Cerami notes that the Bannekers used African methods of nurturing the soil that helped them somewhat offset the damage and improved the yield.

**Hiatus, Then Renewal**

In 1759 when he was 28, Banneker suddenly lapsed into what appears to have been a major depression that lasted nearly 12 years. He continued to work on the farm, but he lost interest in the intellectual pursuits that had previously consumed him. The cause is unknown—there were rumors of an unsuccessful romance, according to Cerami.

Whatever the reason, Banneker emerged from his shell in the early 1770s with the arrival of the Ellicott family, Quakers who established a grain mill not far from the Banneker farm. Local farmers had long debated switching from tobacco to wheat as a cash crop, and the Ellicott mill helped trigger this transition.
Banneker visited the mill, marveling at the complicated machinery that reduced manpower needs and increased efficiency and quality. He also began buying goods at the Ellicott Company store, where he met one of their sons, George, who shared Banneker’s fascination with astronomy and mechanical devices. They became friends and even collaborated on several papers about astronomy.

The friendship revitalized Banneker’s intellectual curiosity and whetted his ambition. He had become intrigued by almanacs, and decided he wanted to publish his own. Well-written almanacs were reliable moneymakers, but challenging to create. One of their most important sections was an ephemeris—a detailed description of the positions of the stars and moon that made celestial navigation possible. An ephemeris for a given area required hundreds of calculations, as did predictions of tidal patterns for that region, another key item in almanacs.

In addition to the ephemeris, almanacs contained articles on numerous subjects, humorous anecdotes and weather predictions. So the creator had to be a gifted writer as well as mathematician and astronomer. Banneker knew he lacked the means then, but years later he made celestial navigation possible. An ephemeris for a given area required hundreds of calculations, as did predictions of tidal patterns for that region, another key item in almanacs.

Surveying the ‘Federal City’

After much wrangling and lobbying by a number of states, Congress in 1790 decided to locate the permanent capital of the United States in a 10-mile square area carved out of Maryland and Virginia on the Potomac River. In 1791, President George Washington chose Major Andrew Ellicott, an uncle of George Ellicott, to survey the boundaries of the new District of Columbia. Ellicott insisted on being allowed to pick his assistants, and he chose his friend Banneker as the team’s astronomer. Banneker’s job involved taking astronomical sightings and, using a delicate and finicky clock, computing the exact location of each starting and stopping point—he was essentially a human GPS. The measurements had to be precise, to help the team keep on course as they slogged through brush, forests, streams and marshes.

Banneker put the care of the family farm in his siblings’ hands and spent two months with the survey team. At that point he was almost 60 years old and suffering from rheumatism; the rough camping the team endured plus having to wake up at odd times during the night to make measurements from the stars likely wore on him. But he completed his task and then went back to his farm, where he at last began working on his almanac.

Banneker’s Almanack and Ephemeris for 1792 hit the market in Baltimore, Philadelphia and Alexandria, Va., in late 1791, and sold well, aided by marketing that unabashedly played up his race. Cerami notes that the printers of the first edition proclaimed that the book was the product of “Genius … calculated by a sable Descendant of Africa who, by this specimen of ingenuity, evinces to Demonstration that mental Powers and Endowments are not the exclusive Excellence of White People, but that the Rays of Science may alike illumine the Minds of Men of every Clime.”

But, as noted earlier, the first almanac led to an uncharacteristically bold move by Banneker, who had hitherto been mostly quiet on the subject of slavery and human rights. His letter to Jefferson (www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part2/2h71t.html) turned Banneker into a well-known figure within abolitionist circles—and also made him notorious among slavery’s supporters.

As he had hoped, the book’s success enabled Banneker to reduce his farming efforts. He published almanacs for five more years, often addressing the subjects of race and equality. The last almanac was published in 1797, the victim of declining sales and the author’s declining health.

During the last years of his life, Banneker spoke of hearing people and sometimes gunfire outside his cabin, and he assumed it was harassment by people his views had angered. Banneker died on October 9, 1806, and during his funeral, a fire destroyed his cabin along with most of his journals and other possessions. Only a few papers and a single journal that had been in the possession of the Ellicott family survived.

The destruction of Banneker’s papers prevented future generations from learning more about this self-taught genius and how he viewed the world. What we do know reveals an intelligence unfettered by conventional wisdom, a man who deserves a place alongside the other greats of his era.
Chicago Doctor Invents Affordable Hearing Aid Outperforms Many Higher Priced Hearing Aids

Reported by J. Page

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A favorite place for judges, lawyers and everyday citizens to gather and mingle, the Paxton Inn once played an important role in the social and political happenings of Washington, Ky. Built by James Alexander Paxton in the early 1800s, the inn also served as a stagecoach stop and refuge for weary travelers.

Today the Paxton Inn is owned and maintained by the Limestone DAR Chapter, Maysville, Ky. Both the inn and the Paxtons’ family home stand today as a tribute to early Kentucky history.

**Becoming Paxton Inn**

Founded in the late 1700s, Washington grew quickly, and by the early 1800s, it was the second-largest town in Kentucky after Lexington. Located just 60 miles south of Cincinnati, it was one of the largest settlements west of the Appalachian Mountains. It even became the first county seat of Mason County, bringing several important political figures to town, explained Sonja Eads, regent of the Limestone Chapter.

In 1804, James Paxton, then a young man around 16 years old, moved to Washington with his uncle, Judge William McClung. Paxton’s father was killed when he was a young boy, and his mother remarried and moved away, leaving Paxton to live with and study under his uncle. Paxton had previously lived with his uncle near Bardstown, Ky., before moving to Washington with him.

McClung was married to the sister of Chief Justice John Marshall—a connection that would later become beneficial to Paxton. Paxton remained with McClung until he used his inheritance to purchase a home and land in Washington. The home—a three-story, Federal-style brick house—was built by David Davis, a blacksmith in the village, sometime between 1800–1805 (the actual date is unknown). The historical society believes Paxton bought the home and the lots of land surrounding it around 1810. The home became what is now known as the Paxton House.

In May 1811, Paxton married Maria Marshall, a niece of the Chief Justice. The Paxtons had seven children. By then, Paxton was a successful attorney and prominent figure himself, and he built a small lawyer’s office behind his home. However,
with a thriving legal practice and growing family, the home was no longer big enough.

“Though we can’t be certain of the exact date, we believe Paxton built the inn sometime between 1810–1821,” said Deborah Risner, a historian at the Washington Visitor’s Center. “Paxton converted the windows on the southern wall of the house into doorways and built the inn directly onto the house. What’s interesting, though, is that they would fire the bricks outside where they were constructing the buildings.”

The transformed windows lead directly into the upper and lower levels of the house, added Ginny Butler, a retired schoolteacher and member of the Limestone DAR Chapter.

“When you walk into the inn, you immediately enter the front foyer. There is a staircase and fireplace in that front room,” Mrs. Butler said. “Behind the parlor is the kitchen. There’s also a large meeting room which, in Paxton’s time, would have been filled with lots of tables for dining or gathering together.”

However, the staircase in the foyer is not original to the inn. The original staircase was located in the meeting room, but it was removed when a telephone company purchased the building in 1918.

The second level of the inn mirrors the first: There’s another large meeting room, as well as two small rooms.

“The large room on the second floor would have been filled with beds,” Mrs. Eads explained. “Oftentimes men traveled without their wives, and there would be three to four people in a bed. You often didn’t know your sleeping partner. The two small rooms would have been private rooms in case a married couple was traveling together.”

But the most distinct—and talked about—feature in the inn is the staircase in the kitchen.

“There a very small, narrow staircase that runs inside the wall in between the fireplaces,” Risner said. “You can access it through a door in the kitchen, and it goes up to the second floor.” It’s this staircase that perpetuates the rumor that the inn was once a station on the Underground Railroad, though there is no official documentation.

“We’re really not sure about the inn being a stop on the Underground Railroad,” Mrs. Eads said. “Our chapter does not support that speculation, nor does the tourism center.

“It makes a good story, especially since the Rankin House, a documented stop on the Underground Railroad on the Ohio side of the Ohio River, is very close,” she continued. “More than likely, the narrow staircase was used as a servant access
between the second floor and kitchen. There’s no evidence to document or substantiate that the staircase or the inn was used in that way.”

In 1822, Paxton and his family left Washington and moved to Columbus, Ohio. According to a published genealogical chart written by one of his sons, William McClung Paxton, Paxton wanted his children to grow up in a free state away from slavery. In 1822, he went back to Washington for a visit but never returned home to Columbus. Paxton was thrown from his buggy and died a few days later from a head injury, at the age of 37. He was buried in Washington on Federal Hill in the Marshall family cemetery.

His epitaph reads, “Though learned and eloquent as a jurist, yet his main attractions were found in his sympathetic heart, his disinterested benevolence, and his moral delicacy of sentiment and action. His home was the retreat of peace and plenty, where, supporting and supported, polished friends and dear relations met and mingled into bliss.”

His son, Alexander Marshall Paxton, later wrote, “[His] reputation and hospitality were both publicly and privately expressed through his residence.”

Restoring History

Ownership of the Paxton Inn passed to his children after their father’s death, and it later served as a store, tavern and even a parsonage. In 1918, the Mason County Mutual Telephone Company purchased the building. Various telephone businesses operated there throughout the years, until one company donated the historical building to the DAR.

Mary Louise Henderson Duke, regent of the Limestone Chapter in the late 1960s, was instrumental in arranging for the donation of Paxton Inn to the chapter. Members of the Limestone Chapter renovated the inn (not the house) in the 1960s, turning it into a museum of Historic Washington and a home for their chapter. Mrs. Duke served as the museum curator for several years.

But it was a donation from Elizabeth Wallingford, a retired schoolteacher and DAR member with a passion for historic preservation, that sparked the much-needed renovations to the Paxton House. After her death in 2004, Mrs. Wallingford left her estate in a trust to acquire, preserve and improve the historic structures in Washington, including the Paxton House.

In 2007, the Preservation Services and Technology Group in Nicholasville, Ky., was hired to rehabilitate the Paxton House. In 2008, the white paint covering the red brick was removed (though the Paxton Inn is still painted white) and a new roof was installed.

“A lot of work was done on the interior of the house,” Risner said. “They did a paint-chip analysis to see what paint was used on the walls and woodwork, and found four different shades of blue.”

The preservation group was able to find matching blue paint to repaint the walls. Further research determined which rooms had wallpaper, and a replica of early 19th-century wallpaper was found to redecorate those walls.
The yellow heart pine floors are original, except in the dining room and a corner of the parlor. A drainage problem ruined the floors in the dining room, and they were replaced with re-milled, 150-year-old yellow heart pine. A portion of the living room floor was removed and a glass insert was placed in the floor to show the mortise-tenon method of joining the hand-hewn oak floor joists together with wooden ash pegs.

The second floor contained an unexpected and humorous glimpse into the life of the house. "After they stripped off the layers of wallpaper, they found where someone had written something on the wall," Risner said. "It read, 'The next time Bertha leaves glasses in school, she will get whipped.' Though Bertha wasn’t one of Paxton’s children, many people really enjoy that quote.”

Although the Limestone Chapter has purchased antiques and furniture contemporary to Paxton’s time, it doesn’t contain any original Paxton antiques. However, a Paxton descendant has donated two pieces of furniture to be displayed in the house—a drop-leaf burl wood table and a sideboard. Items such as chairs, books and other antiques have also been donated over the years. The same family member donated several oil portraits of Paxton family members. In the front parlor of the house is a portrait of his granddaughter, Lydia Ann Paxton Blackburn, in her wedding dress. “By the time Lydia was 10 years old, both her mother and father had died,” Risner said. “She went to live with her maternal grandmother, Vicey Tonsey Bush. Her portrait hangs above the mantel in the room adjoining the parlor.”

The inn also contains oil portraits of Lydia’s parents, Alexander Marshall Paxton and Sally Pendleton Bush Paxton.

Visiting Washington

Today, the Paxton House is home to the Historic Washington Visitor’s Center, where visitors can gather to take tours of both the house and the inn, as well as the rest of the village. Visitors can also tour the Slavery to Freedom Museum at the Marshall Key House, an early antebellum home that Harriet Beecher Stowe visited in 1833. Stowe witnessed a slave auction at the Washington courthouse that later inspired her book, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

The Washington Visitor’s Center is open every day from April through December. Costumed tour guides with an extensive knowledge of Washington’s history lead visitors around the village, giving access to historic buildings that are typically closed to the public.

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Once, They Were AMERICANS

Our Loyalist Canadian Cousins

By Deborah Cummings
These words, penned by Benjamin Rush, a Founding Father and signer of the Declaration of Independence, could have also been repeated by the Loyalists during the Revolutionary War.

The year was 1774 and unrest was looming. After years of living on British-ruled soil, many Colonists sought out independence from Britain because they felt the laws imposed on the Colonies violated their rights. But others—the Loyalists, or Tories, as they were often referred to—remained loyal to the British Crown. While they agreed that the Colonists had suffered at the hands of the British, they hoped for a peaceful reconciliation. They also liked the protection that Great Britain provided from threats of other countries. It was that protection that the Loyalists eventually needed for themselves.

THE COST OF LOYALTY

The largest concentration of Loyalists was located outside of New England. They came from all walks of life—there were farmers, artisans and wealthy merchants. There was also a large number of African-Americans who remained faithful to the Crown, due to Britain’s promise to liberate slaves who fled their Patriot owners.

The Loyalists likely felt torn in their decision. Several Loyalists had fought with Great Britain against France in King George’s War in the 1740s. Others again fought in the French and Indian War from 1754–1763.

As the Revolutionary War raged on, many Colonists switched sides several times, based on their economic situation or how they were being treated. Businessmen sometimes chose sides based on who offered the most profits. Others, such as farmers, were often at the mercy of both sides and were swayed by the way their properties were handled.

Until waves of British troops began to arrive in June and July 1776, Loyalists were vulnerable to Patriot mobs and were beaten, attacked and persecuted. According to William Stewart Wallace in his book, *The United Empire Loyalists* (Glasgow, Brook & Company, 1921), there were two kinds of persecution faced by the Loyalists—“that which was perpetrated by ‘lawless mobs,’ and that which was carried out ‘constitutionally.’”

“In 1765, at the time of the Stamp Act agitation, large crowds in Boston attacked and destroyed the magnificent houses of Andrew Oliver and Thomas Hutchinson [two prominent Loyalists],” Wallace wrote. “They broke down the doors with broadaxes, destroyed the furniture, stole the money and jewels, scattered the books and papers, and, having drunk the wines in the cellar, proceeded to the dismantling of the roof and walls. The owners of the houses barely escaped with their lives.”

Loyalists were also tarred and feathered, meaning they were stripped naked, smeared with a coat of hot tar and feathers, and paraded around the streets in a cart to be mocked. Others were made to ride the rail—Loyalists were seated on sharp rails with one leg on each side. The rail was carried on...
the shoulders of two men, while another man made sure the victim stayed on the rail.

In a June 13, 1776, letter to his brother, New Yorker Peter Eltin wrote, “We had some grand Tory rides in the city this week and in particular yesterday. Several of them were handled very roughly, being carried through the streets on rails, their clothes tore from their back and their bodies pretty well mingled with the dust.”

FAMILY TIES SEVERED

Many families were also divided by the War for Independence. William Franklin, the governor of New Jersey and son of Founding Father Benjamin Franklin, was a staunch Loyalist. William was imprisoned during the Revolutionary War and then later exiled to London. He and his father never reconciled over their different opinions.

In a letter dated July 22, 1784, Benjamin Franklin wrote, “Nothing has ever hurt me so much, and affect me with such keen sensations, as to find myself deserted in my old age by my only son, and not only deserted, but to find him taking up arms against me in a cause wherein my good fame, fortune and life were all at stake.”

Other families, like the Purdy family of Westchester County, N.Y., were also separated. Samuel and Winifred Purdy had five sons. Three sons, Gabriel, Henry and Gilbert, took the side of Great Britain. The other two, Jacob and Samuel, fought for the Patriot cause. In fact, Jacob and Gabriel fought on opposing sides in the 1776 Battle of White Plains, in the very county where their parents lived. Though all five brothers survived the war, the family was split: The three Loyalist brothers moved to Cumberland, Nova Scotia, and both Patriot sons resettled in Westchester County, N.Y.

THE GREAT EXODUS

In the spring of 1776, the first group of Loyalists left the Colonies and traveled to Nova Scotia by ship. The British government gave them free passage. The signing of the Treaty of Paris on September 3, 1783, officially ended the war between Great Britain and America. Though the treaty provided restitution to Loyalists for any property confiscated by the Continental Army, the Loyalists feared increased persecution from the Patriots. Starting in 1783, Great Britain began granting free land in Canada to refugees. In the provinces of Quebec and Nova Scotia, immigrants received 200 acres. They were required to clear and cultivate the specific plot of land they received and build a lodging. Once done, a land grant was issued.

The British government made arrangements to transport between 60,000 and 80,000 Loyalists, their slaves, free African-Americans and American Indians to Canadian British territories in Nova Scotia (and what’s now known as New Brunswick), Quebec, and St. John Island (known today as Prince Edward Island). Loyalists also went to Florida (then a British territory), the West Indies and back to Great Britain. More than 27 ships were commissioned to take passengers from New York, some making as many as three trips. Some Loyalists made the journey to Canada on foot.

A NEW BEGINNING

It wasn’t an easy transition for these migrants. The northern British territories were unsettled, as America was when the first colonists arrived in the 17th century. Mary Fisher, a Loyalist who left for Canada in October 1783, described her arrival in New Brunswick. When they arrived at Oromocto, on the west bank of the St. John River, their captain refused to go any farther because he had no knowledge of the river beyond. Ms. Fisher’s family, and others, traveled the rest of the journey by canoes.

She wrote, “The season was wet and cold, and we were much discouraged at the gloomy prospect before us. Those who had arrived a little earlier in the fall had made
better preparations for the winter; some had built small log huts. This we were unable to do owing to the lateness of our arrival.”

Despite the promises of land and freedom, those who fled the Colonies faced food shortages, harsh living conditions and poor shelter. Many people did not live through the first winter.

In November 1789, Lord Dorchester, governor-in-chief of British North America, bestowed hereditary titles on Canadian Loyalists. He declared at the Council Chamber in Quebec, “Those Loyalists who have adhered to the unity of the Empire, and joined the Royal Standard before the Treaty of Separation in the year 1783, and all their children and their descendants by either sex, are to be distinguished by the following capitals, affixed to their names: U.E. alluding to their great principle the unity of the Empire.”

Loyalists who settled in Quebec struggled with living under the ruling of the Quebec Act of 1774, which restored French civil law and institutions. They petitioned the British government, and in 1791, the Constitutional Act 1791 was enacted to accommodate the Loyalists. On December 26, 1791, Quebec was divided into Upper and Lower Canada. Upper Canada (what became Ontario) was under British law, while Lower Canada (Quebec) retained French ruling.

SAME IDEALS, DIFFERENT OUTCOMES

The Patriots and Loyalists had the same ideology: a staunch devotion to country. In the eyes of Americans, the Loyalists came out on the wrong side of history. But the Loyalists’ move to Canada proved influential.

In his essay “The Loyalist Cause in Canada” in a 1904 issue of Macmillan’s Magazine, Professor John Davidson wrote, “Certain outstanding qualities in Canadian public life and history can be traced back to their influence. Other causes, no doubt, have been at work intensifying and modifying, and it would be a mistake to attribute the loyalty, the absorption in politics, the tendency of officialdom, which have marked Canadian history, to the Loyalist influence alone. … But the Loyalist tradition has been the most powerful influence at work.”

Today, the mottoes of Ontario and New Brunswick reflect the new beginnings for the Loyalists. The Ontario motto reads, Ut incepit Fidelis sic permanet meaning “Loyal she began, loyal she remains,” while New Brunswick’s is Spem redux—“Hope restored.”

Sharing a Colonial Heritage

The United Empire Loyalists’ Association of Canada (UELAC) was formed in 1914 to preserve, promote and celebrate the history and traditions of the United Empire Loyalists. Twenty-seven branches are located in five Canadian provinces. Many UELAC members use the designation UE after their names.

The UELAC maintains an online database of ships that transported Loyalists to Canada. The site includes information on the name of the ship, departure and arrival dates, the number of passengers on each ship, and where they landed. In some cases, the names of the passengers are included. The site also includes a newsletter, Loyalist Trails, which covers many historical topics on Loyalists in the Revolution. The UELAC welcomes updates to its database.

Peter Johnson, president for the UELAC Bay of Quinte Branch in Ontario, Canada, and member of the Saratoga Battle Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, regularly presents to genealogy groups in Canada and the United States. “I’ve always felt that cooperation between the UELAC and American lineage societies benefits all as we do share a Colonial heritage,” he said.
Hugh Mercer was a Scot immigrant who in his youth supported Charles Edward Stuart in his failed attempt to gain the British throne. Escaping to America, Mercer practiced his trade as a frontier doctor and surgeon only to again become engulfed in combat during the French and Indian War. Wounded and abandoned in the frontier wilderness of Colonial Pennsylvania, he barely escaped death in an epic 100-mile trek to safety.

At the suggestion of George Washington, Mercer relocated to Fredericksburg, Va., where he established a medical practice and physician’s apothecary. Later, as a brigadier general, Mercer was one of George Washington’s key military advisors. Mercer performed gallantly at the pivotal battles of Trenton and Princeton. It was at this last battle, facing an onslaught of British Redcoats encircling and bayoneting Mercer, that he sustained fatal wounds.

A Quick Study
Mercer was born on January 17, 1726, to William Mercer and Ann Monro Mercer. As his father was a Presbyterian minister at the Pitsligo Parish Church, Mercer was raised with a strong Protestant reformist mindset. Extremely bright, young Mercer quickly mastered his studies and was admitted at age 15 to the Marischal College of Medicine, a component of the prestigious University of Aberdeen. He graduated in 1744, at 18, as a qualified doctor and surgeon.

A year later, he joined the Jacobite uprising, which sought to overthrow King George II of Hanover, Germany, and place the Catholic Charles Edward Stuart on the throne. The Stuart dynasty had sought to regain the throne since James II was overthrown in 1688 by the Protestant William of Orange in what was called “The Glorious Revolution.”

‘Will Ye No Come Back Again?’
Although Protestant, the Presbyterian Scots allied themselves with the Stuarts in opposition to the Anglican Church. Known more commonly as “Bonnie Prince Charlie” or the “Young Pretender,” Charles Edward Stuart secretly entered Scotland and led an uprising against the Hanovers in 1745–1746. Being a fully qualified doctor, Mercer quickly became indispensable as the rebel leader’s personal physician.

At first, the Jacobites were victorious against larger, but disorganized, English armies until the formidable Lord Cumberland was appointed general-in-chief of the Hanoverian army. Cumberland quickly amassed an overwhelming force that crushed the rebels and the Jacobite uprising at the pivotal Battle of Culloden on April 16, 1746.

The Survivor
The victorious Duke of Cumberland ordered the death of anyone who participated in the Jacobite uprising. For several tense weeks, the “Young Pretender” hid among Highlander families loyal to his cause. He then sailed from the British Isles never to return.

Second on the Duke of Cumberland’s “most wanted” death list was the Jacobite fugitive Dr. Mercer who was Bonnie Prince Charlie’s personal physician. If caught, Mercer would have been “hung, drawn and quartered.” After months of narrowly escaping capture, Mercer furtively boarded a ship to the New World. That ship docked in Philadelphia in May 1747.
To further elude capture by the British, Mercer fled to the western frontier of Pennsylvania. He settled in a frontier outpost that would later be named Mercersburg in his honor. The Scottish immigrant practiced medicine in a rustic setting so remote that he was the sole fully trained physician in this region.

After eight years of relative peace, Mercer again became drawn into warfare as the physician tending survivors of British General Edward Braddock’s failed campaign against the French-held Fort Duquesne located in today’s Pittsburgh. In an ironic twist, the Jacobite rebel who was sought for treason by the British evolved into a captain of the Pennsylvania militia fighting alongside the British Royal Army during the French and Indian War (1754–1763).

As a militia captain, Mercer quickly displayed his mettle in battles with the Shawnee and Delaware American Indian tribes. In particular, the Pennsylvania militia played a major role in the Armstrong Expedition that sought revenge on American Indian raiding parties based west of the Allegheny Mountains.

On September 8, 1756, Ireland-born Lieutenant Colonel John Armstrong led a combined Redcoat and Pennsylvania militia attack on the Delaware Kit-Han-Ne (Kittanning) village. Although the Armstrong Expedition was a success, Mercer was severely wounded in the right arm. The unconscious Mercer was presumed to have died and thus was left at the battle site.

For two weeks, the stalwart Scot managed to survive serious injuries, starvation, predatory animals and vengeful warriors before eventually reaching safety.
Remarkably, he regained consciousness but was now abandoned more than 100 miles from the nearest shelter at Fort Shirley. For two weeks, the stalwart Scot managed to survive serious injuries, starvation, predatory animals and vengeful warriors before eventually reaching safety. He recovered and returned to Philadelphia as a hero, where city leaders awarded him a silver medal. He served four more years in combat and left military service with the rank of full colonel.

The Doctor Becomes General
Mercer moved to Fredericksburg, Va., in 1760. With the British Colonies now at peace with the French, Mercer resumed practicing medicine and opened a physician’s apothecary. His growing list of patients included George Washington’s mother, Mary Ball Washington. Fredericksburg also included a sizable number of fellow Scottish immigrants. One of these families, named Gordon, owned a popular tavern in the heart of the city. Mercer married the tavern owner’s daughter, Isabella Gordon, and they had five children: Ann Mercer Patton, John Mercer, William Mercer, George Weedon Mercer and Hugh Tennant Mercer.

On April 19, 1775, the Redcoats clashed with the Minutemen at Lexington and Concord, Mass. That year, Mercer was appointed to the Fredericksburg Committee of Safety. When Mercer was denied the leadership of the Virginia regiment, he formed the “Minute Men of Spotsylvania, King George, Stafford, and Caroline Counties” in November 1775.

With his obvious leadership skills and reputation for bravery, Mercer soon overcame any reservations on the part of the Committee of Safety and was commissioned Colonel of the 3rd Virginia Regiment on January 11, 1776. Under his command were many future American leaders, including Chief Justice John Marshall and the fifth American president, James Monroe. When he was commissioned brigadier general in June 1776, his first task was to construct Fort Lee along the New Jersey Palisades of the Hudson River.

On November 16, 1776, the British Royal Army and Hessian mercenaries easily conquered Fort Washington, the last holdout American stronghold in New York City. All 2,800 Continental soldiers in the fort were either killed in action or became prisoners of war held in the notorious British prison ships anchored in New York harbor. Fort Lee was abandoned four days later.

With no American forts to impede the British/Hessian juggernaut, most areas of New Jersey soon came under the control of the British Crown. At the same time, the
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Continental Army was in flight, desperately trying to avoid contact with British General William Howe's much larger pursuing army.

In December 1776, Mercer and his regiment crossed the Delaware River into Pennsylvania to await orders from General Washington. By this time, the Continental Army was perhaps at its lowest ebb, with barely 3,000 men fit to fight and many of the enlistments due to expire on December 31, 1776. The American cause for independence was rapidly nearing its end.

In desperation, Washington envisioned a plan to cross the partially frozen Delaware River into New Jersey and attack a Hessian garrison in Trenton. Similar in age and close friends for years, Mercer and Washington were of like mind and mutually supportive. Washington sorely needed this support because several of his high-ranking officers, fearing little or no possibility for success, opposed the plan.

On Christmas Day, 1776, Washington ordered Dunham cargo boats launched from McKonkey's Ferry to bring the beleaguered Continental Army across the icy Delaware. The last of the forces did not reach New Jersey soil until the next morning, December 26, and a major contingent of Continental soldiers never made it across the Delaware at all, due to the severe weather.

The Hessians at Trenton were commanded by Colonel Johann Rahl, who was dismissive of the Continental Army's ability and willingness to fight. The Americans boldly attacked and defeated the Hessians while sustaining only two casualties—George Washington's cousin, Artillery Captain William Washington, and Lieutenant James Monroe. As well as scoring a much-needed military victory, the capture of Trenton spurred new enlistments in the nearly exhausted Continental Army.

In the days that followed, the Americans crossed back and forth between Pennsylvania and New Jersey. General Washington was eager to follow up the victory at Trenton. On January 2, 1777, he ordered his men to attack what was assumed to be the rear guard of Howe's army at Princeton, a village 13 miles north of Trenton. Unfortunately, Washington's information was wrong—they actually encountered crack troops under the command of the formidable British Lieutenant General Charles Lord Cornwallis.

### Fatal Injuries

The 1777 Battle of Princeton, although relatively small in the number of combatants, was nevertheless significant. On the second day of battle, the 1,200-man Continental brigade under the command of Brigadier General Mercer encountered fierce fighting with an 800-Redcoat contingent of Cornwalls' army. In the melee, Mercer's horse was shot out from under him, and Mercer began to fight on foot. The Redcoats may have mistaken Mercer for Washington and surrounded him. Ordered to surrender, Mercer instead drew his sword and slashed at the Redcoats, who beat him over the head with rifle butts and stabbed him with bayonets. ... As an experienced doctor who tended to many wounded soldiers, Mercer knew that his own wounds were fatal, but he lasted nine days before finally dying on January 12, 1777.

### Mercer's Legacy

Hundreds of American cities, counties, townships, forts and streets carry Mercer's name. Some of his descendants were famous generals in subsequent American wars, including four-star World War II Army General George S. Patton Jr. and his son, Major General George Smith Patton III, who served in the U.S. Army in Korea and Vietnam. For his bravery under fire, Major General Patton was awarded two Distinguished Service Crosses as well as the Purple Heart. Another descendant was the prolific singer, songwriter, lyricist and record company executive John Herndon "Johnny" Mercer.
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