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Magazine of the

Jefferson County Historical Society

Volume LXXVI
December 2010

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Magazine of the

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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"History by apprising them [citizens] of the past will enable them to judge of the future; it will avail them of the experience of other times and other nations; it will qualify them as judges of the actions and designs of men; it will enable them to know ambition under every disguise it may assume; and knowing it, to defeat its views."

Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia, Query 14, 1781

"It is history that teaches us to hope."

Robert E. Lee, letter to Charles Marshall, 1870

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JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Organized May 21, 1927

To identify, present, preserve and promote the history of Jefferson County.

www.jeffersonhistoricalwv.org

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Editor's Note

It has been a really snowy winter, a really hot summer and now is the time for another, I think, really good magazine. I always thank Clare Hendrix at Winchester Printers for putting the magazine together and I do it again, but I also need to thank the authors of our articles. I use an old but appropriate cliché: It is nothing without you!

For those of us who have forgotten or never knew about our "quasi-war" with France, the magazine starts off with a great article about that "war" and how it affected Jefferson County. It is certainly different to see the first president as Commander in Chief when John Adams is president.

Most of us here in the county have always been told and consider James Rumsey to be the inventor of the steamboat. This next article gives an interesting perspective to Rumsey's accomplishments.

The article "Dear Uncle..." shows the Father of our Country was truly fatherly and very practical. The letters back and forth between him and his nephew are a primer for raising a young man.

Born in Summit Point, Ward Hill Lamon was as close to Abraham Lincoln as any of his associates. If he had been present that night at Ford's Theater, perhaps the South would not have been ravaged by the carpetbaggers.

Yes, General Washington had a land agent in the county. You will find out about that agent, Battaile Muse, who lived near Kabletown.

On December 20, 1860, South Carolina (coincidently, my father's family's home state) seceded from the Union and on April 12, 1861 fired the shot that started a great war that would cost over 600,000 American lives. The magazine for the next four years will chronicle The War as it unfolded in Jefferson County. To get off to a good start, the last article in this year's magazine on Logan Osburn (also from Kabletown) et al recounts what happened here pre-War.

I respect the fact that some people are not interested in The War, so there will be non-War articles of interest published during the next four years. Do you notice that I have a hard time calling it the Civil War? I prefer to call it the War for Southern Independence because to us Southerners, that is exactly what it was. But, to be more consistent with contemporary authors, I will use Civil War...which it was not. But, I am not going to start until next year and by then, I might have changed my mind.

I will be looking forward to seeing the great stories that I know are here in our county.

Jim Glymph at home on the Avon Bend

Washington's Last War. Harpers Ferry's First

By Gene Wilkins

In the waning months of the eighteenth century, and in just the second decade of the newly formed Republic, the young United States found itself through no overt belligerent act or policy of its own facing a growing conflict with a former friend and ally, France. This conflict became known as the Quasi-War of 1798-1800. This undeclared war was real enough to the killed, wounded, or captured seamen aboard over 300 American merchant and warships in coastal Atlantic and Caribbean waters.[1]

England, still recoiling from her loss of the North American colonies, continued to be engaged in perennial wars with the French, the Spanish, and the Dutch. In France, barely a dozen years since the United States asserted its Declaration of Independence, national revolutionaries deposed the rule of monarchy following violent bloody uprisings.

Washington had sent an envoy, Chief Justice John Jay of the Supreme Court, to England to negotiate a rapprochement between the two countries in which a principal issue was unrestrained commercial trade in the West Indies.[2] The French took bitter affront to this Jay Treaty. Engaged in their extended war with England they considered "any friend of England an enemy of France." The reigning government following the revolution was the Executive Directory that issued a series of decrees which allowed French warships and commissioned privateers in the Atlantic and Caribbean to board or even seize neutral ships in which French captains suspected them to be carrying contraband or English seamen.

American shipping merchants, of course, were outraged. President Adams sent peace emissaries to France; however, French agents in arrogance and greed demanded an exorbitant bribe and other preposterous concessions even before negotiations could begin. Failed diplomacy and escalations of ship seizures by French privateers served to hasten pending imminent warfare between the United States and France.[3]

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[1] Ian W. Toll, *Six Frigates; The Epic History of the Founding of the U. S. Navy*, New York: W. W. Norton, 2006, p. 43.

[2] Alexander DeConde, *The Politics and Diplomacy of the Undeclared War with France, 1797-1801*, New York: Scribers Sons, 1966,

[3] Ron Chernow, *Alexander Hamilton*, New York: Penguin Press, 2004, p. 549.

President Adams' posture changed from neutrality and diplomacy to armament and mobilization. His first priority was to address the immediate battlefields, the harbors and coastal waters of the United States and shipping lanes of the West Indies. Merchant ships were armed and shipyards tooled up to convert merchant ships to sloops and brigs of war.[4]

The unreasonable French decrees underwriting violations of American shipping led to inevitable Congressional Acts in the spring of 1798 giving discretionary power to President Adams to increase the strength of the regular army and accepting volunteers in the event of a threatened invasion by a foreign power. On July 16, 1798, the United States Congress authorized and directed an increase of the Regular Army with twelve regiments of infantry and six troops of light dragoons, "to be enlisted for and during the continuance of the existing differences between the United States and the French Republic, unless sooner discharged."[5]

This increase of arms was known as the Provisional Army and President Adams convinced 66-year-old George Washington to resume his Revolutionary War position as Commander in Chief of the Army. Washington accepted with the reservation that he not be required to take to the field, and that Alexander Hamilton, his Senior Aide-de-Camp/Chief of Staff during the Revolutionary War be appointed his second in command.[6]

Harpers Ferry as a site for a national armory and arsenal had always had its opponents and detractors; however, chief among its champions was Washington who was particularly familiar with the area since his early years as a surveyor and later as a land speculator and stockholder in the Potowmack Company, a stock venture promoting navigation on the Potomac River.[7] During his presidency Washington lobbied vigorously and successfully for funding from Congress to acquire property for federal use in the peninsula bordered by the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers.

Because of the intensity of opposition and the high rank of those opposing the site it can be speculated that had it not been for the Quasi-

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[4] Michael A. Palmer, *Stoddert's War; Naval Operations During the Quasi-War with France, 1798-1801*, Columbia, S:, Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1987, p. 131.

[5] Carlos E. Godfrey, *Organization of the Provisional Army of the United States in the Anticipated War with France, 1798-1800*, Philadelphia, PA: Magazine of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Vol. 38, No. 2, 1914, p. 2.

[6] Dorothy Twohig (Ed.,) *The Papers of George Washington, Retirement Series, Vol. 3, Sept. 1798 - April, 1799*, Charlottesville, VA: Univ. of Virginia, 1999, pp. 268-269.

[7] Merritt Roe Smith, *Harpers Ferry Armory and the New Technology: The Challenge of Change*, New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1977, p. 27

War, there may have been no funding for the armory-arsenal. By 1798, however, lands adequate for a full-sized manufacturing armory and arsenal had been acquired, and construction was planned to begin by mid-1799.

At the same time that the fledgling armory-arsenal was getting off the ground it would soon have to post on federal land three regiments of the Provisional Army and the command staff of Southern Commander Major General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney.

From Washington to Secretary of War McHenry[8]

For five weeks in November and December, 1798, Washington, Secretary of War McHenry, Generals Hamilton, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney conferred in Philadelphia. They took on the enormous task of organizing an army. Planning sessions regarding logistics, recruitment, integration of the Provisional Army within the Regular Army, selection of an officer corps, and locations of the posts of differing commands were but a few of the myriad issues that had to be resolved.

Philadelphia, December 13, 1798

..An arrangement for the recruiting service is the point of primary urgency. For this purpose each state should be divided into as many districts as there are companies to be raised in it, and to every company a particular district should be allotted ... The stations eligible in this view may be found for two Regiments in the vicinity of Providence River...two other Regiments in the vicinity of Brunswick in New Jersey..for two other Regiments in the vicinity of the Potomac near Harpers Ferry.

...since it is not doubted that in the prospect of serious attack upon this country, the disposition of the army ought to look emphatically to the Southern Region as that which is by far the most likely to be the scene of action. *[Emphasis added.]*

..with respects the stations for magazines. It is conceived

---

[8] John Fitzpatrick (Ed.,) *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources 1745-1799*, Vol. 37, Nov. 1, 1798-Dec. 13, 1799, Washington, DC: U. S. Govt. Printing Office, 1940, pp. 32-45.

that three principal permanent stations will suffice and that these ought to be Springfield and Harpers Ferry which are already chosen, and the vicinity of Rocky Mount on the Wateree, in South Carolina. ..that near Harpers Ferry it is well known possesses extraordinary advantages for foundries and other manufactories of iron. It is expected that a canal ere long [will] effect good navigation.[9]

Unexpectedly serious illness of General Pinckney's wife prevented him from taking the field until late 1799. Replacing General Pinckney in responsibility for stationing troops at Harpers Ferry was a competent, industrious Virginian, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Parker, commanding officer of the 8th Regiment Infantry, who in the fall of 1799 found himself in direct partnership with a micromanaging Commander in Chief hastening to provide winter quarters for the troops.[10]

From Washington to Thomas Parker[11]

Washington wrote to Parker in adamant terms directing that the regiments' encampments should be at Harpers Ferry, and huts be built for the troops.

Mount Vernon 28th Sepr 17

..I shall be more pointed in drawing your attention to the Site at, or as near, as one can possibly be obtained, to the Arsenal which is established at the confluence of the Potomack and Shanondoah, for your Encampment.

I view the Work at that place as important, embracing, as a place of Arms, more objects than any other in the United States; of course, possessing at the same time, all the other requisite advantages which an abounding Country, good situation—and strength, can furnish, that it ought to be the place at which the 8th 9th & 10th Regiments should be

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[9] Ibid., p. 41.

[10] Dorothy Twohig (Ed.,) *The Papers of George Washington, Retirement Series, Vol. 4, April-Dec., 1799, Charlottesville, VA: Univ. of Virginia, 1999*, pp. 307-308.

[11] Ibid., pp. 326-328.



COURTESY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PAMPHLET, 1941

Typical Revolutionary War hut

assembled: that by combining the two objects, they may mutually assist, and benefit each other.

..In building the Huts, observe the strictest regularity: In a word, with the exactness of a well ordered Incampment. Such was the conduct & practice of the American Army to the Northward, during the Revolution in the Winter Cantonments of it.

To Washington from Thomas Parker[12]

Colonel Parker together with Colonel Tobias Lear, General Washington's aide and private secretary jointly select sites for the encampment. Parker asks for marching orders for his regiment.

> *...different Situations in the Vicinity of the arsenal at Harper's ferry. After the most mature deliberations I have with the entire Concurrence of Colo. Lear Given a Dicided preference to the Banks of the Shanandoah Just Above Its Charles Town Berkley 9th of October 1799*
>
> *Sir, ..I met with Colo. Lear at this place yesterday morning & with him Carefully examined the Confluence with the Potomac for Two of the Regiments; and about a mile above & Immediately on a Canal which Supplies a Saw Mill for the other.*
>
> *We Shall be obliged to have Recource to Ground on the Top of the Hill About Half a mile Distant from our Camp for our field parade.*[13]
>
> *It would be pleasing to me to Receive orders to move [my regiment] to my winter Quarters as early as possible....*
>
> *If you should be pleased to Give me any further orders I will thank you to direct to me at Winchester.* [The nearest "Post Town" was Winchester, VA; however, correspondence, dispatches, etc. were also carried by military couriers, messengers or colleagues.]

To Washington from Thomas Parker[14]

Parker notes his arrival at Harpers Ferry and proceeds immediately to cutting timber for building huts for the troops, but voices pessimism that there is adequate timber for slabs to cover huts for all three regiments. He suggests that federal barracks at Carlisle [PA] are sufficient and can better

---

[12] Ibid., pp. 341-342.

[13] This is the first known reference to the higher ground immediately above Harpers Ferry, now called Camp Hill.

[14] Twohig (Vol. 4), pp. 360-361.

accommodate the 9th and 10th regiments. Washington, however, writes in subsequent correspondence that he is reluctant to have his forces in the area so widely dispersed.

Camp near Harpers ferry 24th Octr 1799

Sir, In Concequence of the arrangements that I had previously made I arrived here on the 22nd Instant & proceeded Immediately to Cutting Timber for Hutting the Troops.

On making an estimate of the Timber & Boards or plank that will be necessary for Covering the three Regiments, I find It utterly Impracticable to procure a Sufficiency, as the Rivers are Too low to Transport it by water from the upper Country & It Cannot be procured in the neighborhood. Under these Circumstances I have thought proper to Submit to you whether It would not be prudent to order the 9th & 10th Regiments to be provided for where they Can be Better Accommodated as I am Clearly Convinced that the Troops must Lie in their Tents the Greater part of the winter If they are Sent to this place.

I am Informed that there are Barracks sufficient for Two or three Regts at Carlisle and that this place is Surrounded by a Rich & plentifull Country.

From Washington to Alexander Hamilton[15]

Washington notes dimensions of huts. Alternative quartering of troops in barracks at Frederick or Carlisle is considered, but summarily dismissed for a number of reasons.

Mount Vernon 26 October 1799

..Colo Parker fixed upon a spot which appeared, on every account, the most convenient for hutting, and determined that the huts (which were to be built by the Soldiers) should be

[15] Fitzpatrick, pp. 401-403.

made of rough logs, 16 feet sqr each (to contain 12 men) and covered with slabs...I have repeated to Colo. Parker that the Troops should be hutted in the manner they were in the late war, which he must well recollect.

...it is, in my opinion, unnecessary to make any arrangements for quartering the 9th and 10th regiments in the places which you suggest, vizt. at Fredericktown and Carlisle. From the view which I had of the Barracks at the latter place in the year 1794, I am convinced that the expense of repairing them, [to be] fit for the Soldiers during winter, would be much greater than of building huts. What the situation of the Barracks at Frederick town is, I am unable to say; but I presume they are not much, if any, better than those at Carlisle. And, at any rate this dispersed situation of the troops would defeat a primary and important object, I mean that of having them in one body, where they can be under the eye of a General Officer, and where the disciplining and training the Soldiers can be much better effected than if they were in detached Corps.

To Washington from Thomas Parker[16]

Parker continues to express disappointment about the inadequacy of timber to build huts in the conventional manner prescribed by Washington during the Revolutionary War. He reports going to Frederick to inspect the Maryland State Militia barracks.[17]

Camp near Harpers ferry 31st Octr 1799

...You Can Hardly Conceive how this Country has been pillaged of Timber proper for Slabs. There is not a Tree on the public Ground fit for the purpose & the few that Could be obtained in the neighbourhood wood Come Higher than plank which may be Sold when the public have no further Use for it at Very little loss.

---

[16] Twohig (Vol. 4), pp. 381-382.

[17] These barracks were the same that housed Hessian prisoners of war during the Revolution, French sailors captured during the Quasi-War, again with British soldiers in 1812, then used as a hospital during the Civil War where both Union and Confederate soldiers were treated. Presently it houses the Maryland State School for the Deaf

..I Shall go to Frederick Town this day to examine into the State of The Barracks at that place in Case It should be found necessary to Quarter any of the Troops there.

To Washington from Tobias Lear[18]

Colonel Lear presents an excellent and thorough report of late October—early November which clearly summarizes the difficulties of insufficient timber, in spite of which exceptional progress is made. He describes the field alignment, and reports the disposition of the 8th and 9th Regiments to Harpers Ferry with two companies of artillery, and the 10th Regiment to winter at Carlisle.

Mount Vernon 4th Nov 1799

...The difficulty which appeared in getting plank &c. sufficient to cover the huts for three Regts at Harper's Ferry, and the doubt whether the public ground would afford even logs enough for the huts, determined Colo. Parker to go to Frederick town to examine the state of the Barracks there. We accordingly went over to that place on the 31st of Octr where we found the Barracks in the most ruinous condition—the naked walls standing without a roof or floor, which at once decided, that nothing could be done to render them habitable for Troops that winter. And here we learned with certainty, that a Battalion of Artillery (Major Hoops') was ordered from New York to take up their winter quarters at Harper's Ferry..and might be expected in about ten days.

...Under these circumstances Colo. Parker was of [the] opinion, in which I perfectly agreed, that it would be best to dispatch a Messenger to Colo. Moore of the tenth Regt at Yorktown, informing him that his regiment could not be accommodated at Harper's Ferry, and advising him that, according to orders he had, or might receive, from Genl Hamilton; it would be best to march his Regt to Carlisle and take up their quarters in the Barracks there.

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[18] Twohig (Vol. 4), pp. 387-392.

...To Colo. Hall of the ninth Regt another Messenger was dispatched with a letter for Colo. Parker, informing him that his Regt would be hutted at Harper's Ferry, and requesting that they should be ordered there without delay.

...Colo. Parker's encampment consists of two lines of huts for the Soldiers at 12 feet distant. The front line consists of 25 huts, and the rear will be according to the number of men, providing for such as may be expected to be enlisted this winter. Twenty feet in rear of the Soldiers, are the huts for the Company Officers—and the same distance in rear of these the huts for the Field Officers.

From Washington to Governor Benjamin Ogle[19]

This letter is probably the last correspondence Washington wrote regarding affairs at Harpers Ferry—a courteous note answering [Maryland] Governor Ogle's letter concerning the barracks at Frederick.

Mount Vernon, 11 November 1799

Sir: On my return home yesterday, after an absence of a few days, I had the honor to receive your Excellency's letter of the 2nd Instant, and am much obliged by your polite attention to my request respecting the Barracks at Frederick Town. But as they were found, upon Colo. Parker's inspecting them, to be so much out of repair as not to admit of their being put in order for the reception of Troops in due season, measures have been taken to provide other quarters. With great Respect, etc.

To Hamilton from Charles Cotesworth Pinckney[20]

Major General Pinckney, commander of the southern region, but long delayed from the field, finally arrived at Harpers Ferry in mid-November to resume command. He notes his headquarters and indicates the 8th and 9th Regiments are in place at Harpers Ferry as are two companies of artillery.

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[19] Fitzpatrick, p. 423.

[20] Harold C. Syrett (Ed.,) *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton, Vol. 24, Nov., 1799-June, 1800*, New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1976, pp. 96-97.

Head Quarters at Shephards Town on the Potowmac Virginia Decr. 12th 1799

...On my arrival at the Cantonment I found a small house had been taken at this place for my Quarters. I have ordered a Hut to be built for me at the Cantonment & shall go there from hence every Tuesday & return every Friday. Both the Eighth & Ninth Regiments require a good deal of drilling, but I have excellent materials to operate on, for the Soldiers appear to be all young.

General Washington died December 14, 1799 at age 67.

To Hamilton from Tobias Lear[21]

Colonel Lear informs Hamilton of General Washington's death.

Mount Vernon Decr. 15th: 1799

Dear Sir, With the most sincere grief do I communicate to you the information of the Death of our beloved General Washington.

After a short and severe illness of about twenty hours, he expired last evening, between ten and eleven o'clock. He had taken cold and complained of a sore throat on Friday; but considered it only as a slight disorder. On Saturday Morning about 3 o'clock, he became ill.

...But all the aid of Medicine had not the desired effect. Bearing his distressed situation with the fortitude of an Hero, he retained his composure and reason to the last moment, and died, as he had lived, a truly great man.

To Hamilton from Charles Cotesworth Pinckney[22]

General Pinckney expresses his sorrow on the loss of Washington. He notes writing to Secretary McHenry for calvary to complete his forces,

[21] Ibid., pp.100-101.
[22] Ibid., pp. 181-182.

complains of the drought, mentions guarding French prisoners at Frederick, and notes lack of ammunition.

Head Quarters at Shepherdstown Jany: 9th 1800

Dear Sir, I shall not expatiate on our great loss. Not a man in America has more severely felt it than myself.

... I have written to the Secretary of War to permit two Troops of Cavalry to be immediately raised and stationed here; they will be really necessary to enable us to form a perfect system.

...The great drought has greatly retarded the hutting as the Mills could not work for want of Water, and we have been obliged to haul some of the planks the distance of forty miles....There are one hundred and one French prisoners at Frederick Town. The guard belongs to my division, but they are within your district. ...The guard have no Ammunition and there is none at the Cantonment, so that I cannot send them any.

To Hamilton from Charles Cotesworth Pinckney[23]

In a copy of a letter sent to Secretary McHenry, Pinckney voices his strenuous objection to using troops to dig the armory canal which is of vital importance for water power to drive the armory machinery.

Head Quarters at Shepherds Town Feby:10:1800

Sir: Capn: Shepherd [in charge of construction] of this place ... informs me that it is contemplated to employ the Soldiers at the Cantonment the ensuining Spring and Summer in digging a canal. These Soldiers have hitherto been very little trained, having since they have joined their Regiments been almost constantly employed in fatigue work, and tho' that is now for the most part over, yet I have still have very little opportunity to train them....if the officers and Soldiers instead of learning their duty, are to be taken off to dig canals, I fear that any hopes of their making a considerable progress in the military art, will be delusive.

[23] Ibid., pp. 230-232.

To Hamilton from Charles Cotesworth Pinckney[24]

Pinckney reports illness of troops and movement of encampment to high ground where he plans to dig seven wells. The "Hill" and its surrounding area is undoubtedly what later and now is called Camp Hill.

Cantonment at Harpers Ferry April 25th. 1800

Dear Sir, ...We have been very sickly here, I enclose you a report I requested from the Medical Men. ...I shall remove next week to the Hill, where I flatter myself we shall obtain health. I am digging wells on the Hill, and have in two of them already come to water.... This is the only ground on the public land, where I can possibly encamp—The situation is beautiful, very high, and by every information, healthy.

To Pinckney from Edward Conrad, Samuel Griffith, and T. M. McDonald, surgeons' mates in the 8th Regiment.

The Disease that at present prevails among the Soldiers we are induced to believe from its symptoms is the bilious inflammatory fever; it originates from a variety of causes such as low and damp situation, exhalations from Morasses or Mill Ponds, exposure to a damp atmosphere, hard drinking, bad water, excessive fatigue, and a change in the mode of life. Our Situation [proximate to the banks of the Shenandoah River] is low and the exhalations from the river in the morning and Evening is considerable, the meredian Sun is powerfull and there is not that current of air (owing to the surrounding Montains) Sufficient to counteract its effects.[25]

To Hamilton from Charles Cotesworth Pinckney[26]

Pinckney reports the positive results of moving his troops from the cantonment near the Shenandoah River to Camp Hill.

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[24] Ibid., pp. 429-431.
[25] Ibid., p. 431.
[26] Ibid., p. 480.

Head Quarters at Shepherds Town May 13th 1800

Sir. ..Since I have removed the Troops near Harpers Ferry from the cantonment to the Camp on the high ground [Camp Hill], their illness has considerably decreased, very few new cases have happened, and those slight.

General Orders from Hamilton[27]

With the increased successes of United States Naval forces, the reduced threat of invasion and a land war, and the start of negotiations with France, General Orders from Hamilton are given to disband the Provisional Army.

New York, May 18, 1800

It is the Duty of Major General Hamilton to announce that an act of Congress passed the fourteenth instant which authorises the President of the United States to discharge on or before the fifteenth day of June next all such Officers, non commissioned Officers, and Privates as had been appointed commissioned or raised under and by virtue of the Act to augment the Army of the United States.

To Hamilton from Charles Cotesworth Pinckney[28]

Pinckney informs Hamilton of the disposition of the troops at Harpers Ferry in anticipation of the reduction of the Provisional Army.

Camp near Harpers Ferry May 30th: 1800

... I am busied in preparing for the reduction. Without I receive orders to the contrary by the next post, I shall direct the 10th: Regt: to march to Pennsylvania to be there disbanded; and the 9th Regt: to Maryland, for the same purpose.

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[27] Ibid., pp. 500-501.
[28] Ibid., pp. 541-542.

Although negotiations with France were initially deadlocked, the Convention of 1800 was concluded in Mortefontaine, France, October 3, 1800, ending the Quasi-War.[29] Washington's and Harper Ferry's quasi-war was over. Six decades would pass before a real war—a very real one—came to Camp Hill and Harpers Ferry.

Gene Wilkins along with his wife, Lennie, and daughter, Wil, are perennial "Volunteers-in-Park" at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. All three are retired and live in Central Texas.

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[29] Chernow, p 630.

Ward Hill Lamon

By Bob O'Connor

One of the county's most interesting historical figures remains obscure today, even though his friendship with Abraham Lincoln led to his being Lincoln's personal bodyguard in his years as President of the United States.

Ward Hill Lamon was born on January 6, 1828 "on the ridge" near Summit Point, Virginia. His parents were George Lamon and Elizabeth Ward.[1] His time there was short lived, as the family moved to a 220 acre plot near the Bunker Hill Mill in the village of Mill Creek, Virginia.[2]

The family built a log cabin on what today is the private property of D. L. Morgan Excavating Company. The original log cabin is still there. The company uses the Lamon family's frame house today as their office.[3]

Lamon and the family slave, Bob, moved to Danville, Illinois in the spring of 1847 so Hill (as most everyone called him) could study under his cousin Theodore Lemon to become a medical doctor. Dr. Lemon and his two brothers lived in Danville. Dr. Lemon was an interesting character. He had changed the spelling of his name to Lemon, even though his two brothers in the same town spelled their names Lamon.

It did not take Hill long to realize there were quite a few doctors already practicing in Danville. He chose instead to read to become an attorney. The fact that Danville was the county seat of Vermilion County and that attorneys were needed to do the business of the court at the county seat certainly helped sway his decision.

He read for Mr. Stuart, a former law partner of Abraham Lincoln's and attended law classes at the University of Kentucky with money lent him by a local judge, Mr. O. L. Davis.[4] He received a license to practice law in the Commonwealth of Kentucky on March 5, 1850.[5]

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1 Lamon family tree project, maintained by the Lamon House, Danville, Illinois. *www.lamonhouse.org*

2 Today Mill Creek, Virginia is known as Bunker Hill, West Virginia.

3 The Lamon houses are off-limits to visitors due to insurance considerations. D.L. Morgan maintains an extensive quarry on the site.

4 Lavern M. Hamand, *Ward Hill Lamon: Lincoln's 'Particular Friend,'* Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1949, pg. 28

5 Document #695, Ward Hill Lamon collection, The Huntington Library, San Marino California, copy of law license of the state of Illinois.



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Ward Hill Lamon

Following the receipt of his law license he returned to Shepherdstown to ask his girl friend, Angelina Turner, to marry him. Ehud Turner, Angeline's father, who lived in the Whitings Neck area of Jefferson County, did not think Hill was a worthy candidate for his daughter's hand and refuse to allow the marriage. Angeline and her slave Topsey ran off with Hill, and he and Angeline married on September 5, 1850.[6] They returned to Danville, Illinois to live.

His Illinois law license was approved on January 7, 1851[7] and he was assigned to the 8th Circuit Court of Illinois, the largest circuit in the country. The circuit covered 14 counties. Among the circuit's other attorneys was Abraham Lincoln.

Lamon and Lincoln, although quite unlike in behavior, habits and age (Lincoln was twenty years older) the two hit it off and became fast

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6 *www.ancestry.com*

7 Document #695.

friends. Mr. Lincoln enjoyed Hill Lamon's company and especially liked the fact that Hill played the banjo and sang off-color songs to entertain the legal team on the circuit in the evenings. Whereas Lincoln was quiet, virtually a teetotaler, and "honest Abe"—Lamon drank pitchers of whiskey every day, was loud and gregarious, and claimed to be only "basically honest."

In 1852, Lincoln asked Lamon to become his law partner[8]—a partnership that lasted four years and was dissolved in 1856 because Lamon was elected as the prosecuting attorney.[9]

Lamon was a part of the team of Republican supporters of Abraham Lincoln's nomination to the presidency at the Republican National Convention in Chicago in May 1960. William Seward was the favorite, but shenanigans, led by Lamon which included printing bogus "official" tickets to the Wigwam[10] blocked Seward supporters with legitimate tickets getting into the building. Lincoln was nominated on the third ballot.[11]

When Mr. Lincoln was ready to go to Washington to be inaugurated, he chose three men from Illinois to accompany him. He chose John Hay and John Nickolay, his two secretaries from Springfield, and Ward Hill Lamon.[12]

Lamon accompanied Mr. Lincoln on his train trip across the north to Washington. The train was a publicity stunt to allow the voters to see the man they elected. The schedule was published in the newspapers and at every little town the train passed through, Mr. Lincoln waved to the crowds. In the major cities he stayed overnight, attended parties, gave a major address and met with state government officials.[13]

In Indianapolis, Lincoln's friends addressed Lamon, telling him under no uncertain terms, that they "entrust the sacred life of Mr. Lincoln to your keeping. If you don't protect, never return to Illinois,

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8 November 10, 1852 — Announcement in *Illinois Citizen* newspaper of law partnership of Ward Hill Lamon, Danville, and Abraham Lincoln, Springfield.

9 November 4, 1856 — Lamon elected prosecuting attorney for the 8th circuit of Illinois. Defeated Mr. Packard of Bloomington, 8611 votes to 7479. His partnership with Lincoln dissolved shortly after that election.

10 Convention center and meeting hall located at Lake Street and Market Street near the Chicago River.

11 Hamand, pgs. 100-114.

12 Ward Hill Lamon, *Recollections of Abraham Lincoln, 1847-1865*, pg. 28.

13 Bob Withers, *The President Travels by Train*, Walsworth Publishing, Marceline, Missouri, 1996, pgs. 14-24.

for we will murder you on sight." From that day forth, Lamon unofficially became Mr. Lincoln's bodyguard.[14]

When the train reached Philadelphia on February 21, Allan Pinkerton, a railroad detective, told the president-elect that there was a plot to assassinate him when the train passed through Baltimore. Pinkerton offered to lead Lincoln through Baltimore as his protector. Lincoln instead entrusted the task to Lamon, who helped devise a plan to take Lincoln (dressed as a woman) and the train through Baltimore in the middle of the night.[15] The plan was successfully carried out and Mr. Lincoln arrived safely in Washington ahead of their planned itinerary.

In Washington, Lamon assumed his duties as "unofficial presidential bodyguard" as well as his official duties as United States Federal Marshal for the District of Columbia. Amongst Lamon's earliest duties was to travel to South Carolina on behalf of Mr. Lincoln to meet with Charleston officials regarding the status of Major Robert Anderson at Fort Sumter.[16]

When the Civil War began, Lamon organized a volunteer unit of Virginians for the Union army who became known as the Lamon Brigade. They were recruited from an office in Williamsport, Maryland.[17] Lamon was also in charge of the federal prisons in Washington, confronting two female spies who he had known from his roots in Virginia—Belle Boyd and Mollie Pultz both of Mill Creek (now Bunker Hill). Both were Lamon's "guests" at the Old Capitol Prison in Washington.[18]

Following the battle at Sharpsburg, Maryland on September 17, 1862, President Lincoln went to Sharpsburg to confront General George McClellan. The trip covered October 1-4. Lamon accompanied Mr. Lincoln and played the banjo for the president on the trip. Later, when McClellan and Lincoln squared off in the presidential campaign, pro-McClellan newspapers showed a cartoon of Lincoln and McClellan on the battlefield, walking among dead and wounded soldiers, and Lincoln asking Lamon to play a silly song. The event that did not happen with soldiers present (it was two weeks after the battle) became a political

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[14] Lamon, pg. 33.

[15] *The Life of Abraham Lincoln*, pg. 523, *The Eloquent President*, by Ronald C. White, Jr., Random House, New York, NY, 2005, pg. 58, and *The President Travels by Train*, pg. 24.

[16] Lamon, pg. 75-77.

[17] Hamand, pgs. 230-237.

[18] Ruth Scarborough, *Belle Boyd, Siren of the South*, Mercer University Press, Macon, GA., 1984, pg. 80 and Mollie Boltz, *The Story of Smithfield* (Middleway), Vol. II, Robert L. Bates, 1958.



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embarrassment to Lincoln, though he still won re-election.[19]

After the battle at Gettysburg in the early part of July, 1863, Lamon was invited by Judge David Wills of Gettysburg to be marshal-in-charge of the events on November 19 for the dedication of the National Cemetery. Wills' letter to Lamon is dated October 30, 1863. Lamon invited each northern state to send representatives, borrowed horses and buggies for the dignitaries, laid out the itinerary, the order for the procession, and introduced the president when he made his remarks that today we know as the Gettysburg Address.[20] The only known photograph of Mr. Lincoln at that event shows Lamon right next to him.

As the war progressed, Mr. Lincoln ignored Lamon's advise on how to stay safe on a more frequent basis. It was Mr. Lincoln's idea that if someone wanted to harm him, there was not much Lamon could do.

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[19] Rev. John Schildt, *Four Days in October*, self published, 1978; Library of Congress photograph by Alexander Gardner; William A. Frassanito, *Antietam—The Photographic Legacy of America's Bloodiest Day*, Thomas Publications, Gettysburg, PA., 1978, pg. 277, and *The Harpers Weekly* website *http://elections.harpweek.com/1864/cartoon-1864-medium.asp?uniqueid=31&year=1864*

[20] Document #176, Ward Hill Lamon collection, The Huntington Library, San Marino California, letter from David Wills and copy of official program for the Dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg on November 19, 1863.

Lamon on the other hand, carried with him at all times a small arsenal—consisting of two Colt .44 pistols, two Bowie knives, a black jack, a set of brass knuckles and a sword in his cane. He was also six feet four inches tall and weighed about 260 pounds. Earlier in his life, he had killed a man with his bare hands during a fight.

When Robert E. Lee surrendered on April 9, 1865, Mr. Lincoln sent Lamon to Richmond to help work out details of Reconstruction. Lamon protested, saying Lincoln was still in danger. Lamon urged Lincoln to stay in and specifically told the president not to go to the theater while he (Lamon) was not in town.[21]

Once again Mr. Lincoln did not take Lamon's advice. He went to Ford's Theater on Good Friday, less than a week after Lee's surrender. John Parker, a Metropolitan Police officer was brought in to guard Mr. Lincoln. Parker abandoned his post almost immediately after the President and Mrs. Lincoln were seated in their box as he moved his chair to get a better view of the play.[22] John Wilkes Booth gained access to the box and the rest is history.

Lamon believed for the rest of his life that if he was at Ford's Theater, John Wilkes Booth would have been the only casualty. And Lamon became forever known as: "the Virginian who might have saved Lincoln."

It was Lamon who was in charge of a large delegation who had to take care of the details of the Lincoln funeral and his eventual internment in Springfield, Illinois. The funeral train took virtually the same route Lincoln's train had taken to Washington, with the President's body being viewed by tens of thousands of people as he lay in state each night in a different town along the way.[23]

Afterwards, Lamon was asked by President Johnson to serve as Postmaster General, but he declined.[24] He became a law partner to Judge Jeremiah Black and his son Chauncey in Washington, D.C. In 1869, he acquired the Lincoln papers of William Herndon for four thousand dollars and hired Chauncey Black to "ghost write," "*The Life of Abraham Lincoln: From His Birth to His Inauguration as President.*"[25] That book

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[21] Lamon, pg. 280.

[22] Lloyd Lewis, *The Assassination of Lincoln*, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1929, republished in 1994 by University of Nebraska Press, pgs. 46 and 47

[23] Hamand, pg. 383

[24] Lamon, pg. xxxix.

[25] David Herbert Donald—Lincoln's Herndon, A Biography by David Herbert Donald, Da Capo Press, New York, NY, 1988 (Originally published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1948), pg. 252.

with Ward Hill Lamon listed as the author, published in 1872, caused great controversy. Three sections of the book were in question, particularly by Robert Todd Lincoln, the president's son, who unofficially had become the gatekeeper of all information about his father. Lamon had refused to let Robert Todd Lincoln edit the book. The president's son gathered up as many copies as he could and had them burned. (Several copies of the original book survived, including a copy that resides in the Berkeley County Historical Society's collection at the Belle Boyd House in Martinsburg, West Virginia.)[26]

In 1875-1876 there was interest, including an editorial in the Martinsburg, West Virginia newspaper, in supporting Lamon as the Republican candidate for Governor of West Virginia.[27] He dropped out of contention at the convention and threw his support behind General Goff.[28] He also ran for Congress in the fall of 1876, losing to B.F. Martin with the vote: Martin 1840 and Lamon 1618.

Around 1880, Lamon wrote a second book at the encouragement of his supporters. That manuscript, "The Life of Abraham Lincoln: As President," was never published.[29]

Ward Hill Lamon died at his brother Robert's home in Martinsburg on May 7, 1893.[30] His funeral on May 10 was held at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Martinsburg with internment in the Gerrardstown Presbyterian Cemetery in Gerrardstown, West Virginia.[31]

Bob O'Connor is a board member of the Jefferson County Historical Society and the author of "The Virginian Who Might Have Saved Lincoln" — the only book ever written about Ward Hill Lamon.

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[26] The book has been reprinted: ISBN 0-8032-7985X

[27] *Martinsburg Independent Newspaper*, Martinsburg, WV, June 5, 1875; *Martinsburg Independent*, January 29, 1876; *Martinsburg Independent*, February 26, 1876; and *Martinsburg Independent*, January 29, 1876

[28] *Martinsburg Independent*, August 5, 1876.

[29] The manuscript was edited by the author of this article and was published on December 28, 2010.

[30] The Martinsburg Herald, May 13, 1893.

[31] *Ibid.*

Battaile Muse: George Washington's Shenandoah Valley Land Agent

By Jane Rissler

A first-generation Virginian of British ancestry, Battaile Muse[1] was a noteworthy figure in the post-Revolutionary history of what is now Jefferson County. As a young man, he moved to the county where he worked for many years as an agent for George Washington and several other Tidewater planters who had established plantations in the lower Shenandoah Valley and Piedmont areas of Virginia. Subsequently, he bought large tracts of land in the southeastern portion of Jefferson County (then Berkeley County) where he established a farm and operated a grist mill, married into a well-to-do local family, and became a prominent member of the community.

Were it not for the preservation of his voluminous papers and his association with George Washington, little information on the life of Battaile Muse would be available today. A meticulous accountant and record keeper, Muse accumulated thousands of records relating to his business transactions, which his descendants preserved for several generations. The family gave most of his papers to Duke University where the "Battaile Muse Papers" are now part of the university's *Records of Ante-bellum Southern Plantations*.[2]

A few other papers have been deposited elsewhere, including the Jefferson County Museum.[3] The Battaile Muse Bible, on display in the county museum, gives considerable detail concerning the births, marriages, and deaths of Muse, his parents, his wife and her family, their children, and their descendants.[4] In addition, George Washington's correspondence and diaries shed light on Muse's business interactions

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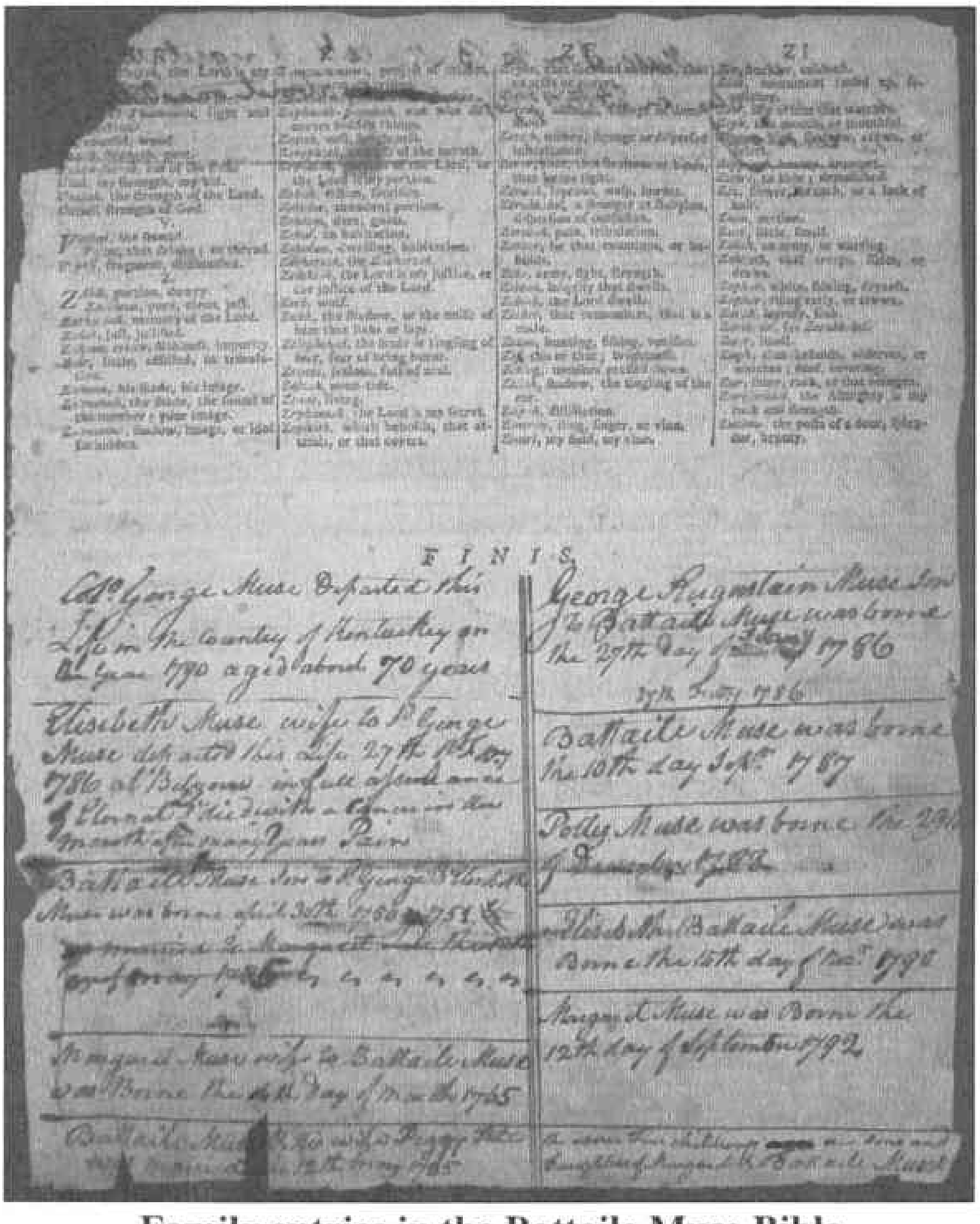
1 Battaile is pronounced as if it were spelled "battle."

2 Battaile Muse Papers, 1731-1891, *Records of Ante-bellum Southern Plantations: From the Revolution Through the Civil War*, Series F: Selections from the Manuscript Department, Duke University Library, Part 3, University Publications of America. Also in this collection are documents dating before Muse's birth and after his death.

3 For example, the University of Virginia Alderman Library has a Battaile Muse Rental Book, 1787-1793, Accession Number 10088, which contains rental accounts for Sarah Fairfax's plantations in Loudoun and Berkeley Counties. The Jefferson County Museum has three documents relating to Muse's local business transactions (T.T. Perry Collection JC-D-57, 107, 140).

4 Battaile Muse Bible (Edinburgh, Scotland: Mark and Charles Kerr, Printers, 1789).

with Washington and other prominent planters.[5] Though a topic well beyond the scope of this paper, Battaile Muse's papers and his correspondence with Washington offer a fascinating glimpse of late 18th century agriculture and commerce in this area.



Family entries in the Battaile Muse Bible

COURTESY JEFFERSON COUNTY MUSEUM

Muse's early life to arrival in Berkeley County. Battaile Muse was born April 30, 1750, the son of George and Elizabeth Battaile Muse.[6] His father was an officer under George Washington in the French and Indian

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[5] The George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress, 1741-1799 <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html/>.

[6] Although a handwritten entry in the Battaile Muse Bible gives April 20, 1750, or 1751, as the date of his birth, 1750 appears to be the correct year for the following reasons: another entry in the Bible notes Muse's death on March 29, 1803; a record of his headstone inscription indicates that he died at the age of 52 years and 11 months (Mrs. J.M. Miller, "Records of tombstones outside towns." [Charles Town, W.Va.: Charles Town Library, 1934]); and March 29, 1803, is about 52 years and 11 months from April 20, 1750.

War.[7] We know little of Battaile Muse's whereabouts, education, or activities between his birth and arrival in Berkeley County in the late 1770s. According to the Battaile Muse papers, Warner Lewis wrote a "glowing letter of recommendation," dated December 18, 1775, for the work Muse had done as an agent for Lewis' father in Gloucester County, Virginia.[8] Subsequently, Muse served briefly with Virginia troops during the American Revolution and was discharged in October 1777, "being unable to perform the duties of a soldier."[9] According to his great-grandson W.M. Walton, Muse appeared to be "a man of frail constitution and his health broke down during the first year of the Revolutionary War."[10]

Agent for George Washington and other Tidewater planters. Through grants and purchases, many wealthy Tidewater planters obtained vast tracts of land in the Piedmont and lower Shenandoah Valley in the 1700s. Although most did not move to their western properties, they needed income from them, particularly as tobacco production gradually exhausted their coastal plantations. To profit from afar, they usually adopted one of two land-management models, quarters or tenancies, both dependent upon local agents.[11]

Under the first model, owners divided their land into quarters, around 500 to 1000 acres per quarter, which were worked by enslaved people and managed by an overseer. For plantations with a number of quarters, owners hired local agents to direct the overseers according to their orders for planting, harvesting, milling, and marketing.[12]

Other owners, including George Washington, divided their land into tenancies, typically of much smaller acreages than quarters; rented them to the growing number of German, Scot, Irish, and English farmers moving into the area; and hired local agents to collect rents, remove tenants who failed to pay rent, and engage new tenants.[13]

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7 Douglas Southall Freeman, *George Washington: Young Washington* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949) Volume 1, 338-339.

8 Battaile Muse Papers, introduction, 30.

9 Anne Mays Miller, 1949, her handwritten copy of W.M. Walton's 1904 notes of a visit the previous year to the home of his great-grandparents, Battaile and Margaret Muse, includes a handwritten copy of Muse's Revolutionary War discharge paper, signed by Brigadier General G. Weedon, October 12, 1777.

10 Anne Mays Miller, W.M. Walton's notes on Battaile Muse's Revolutionary War service.

11 Warren R. Hofstra, *A Separate Place: the Formation of Clarke County, Virginia* (Madison, Wisconsin: Madison House Publishers, 1999) 9-11.

12 Hofstra 10-11; Battaile Muse Papers, introduction, 30.

13 Hofstra 9-10; The George Washington Papers, letter from George Washington to Battaile Muse, September 18, 1785.

Aware of his business acumen, industry, and integrity, many prominent Virginia planters, including George Washington, George William Fairfax, John and James Mercer, Warner Lewis, and Hugh Nelson, hired Muse to manage their western plantations, some as quarters and others as tenancies.[14]

George Washington and Battaile Muse. At the end of the American Revolution, George Washington returned to Mount Vernon and resumed active management of his properties. He turned to Muse to reverse the decline in income from tenancies established years earlier on his land in several western counties, including what is now Jefferson County.[15] Washington knew of Muse's abilities through his close friend George William Fairfax, who had employed Muse as an agent.[16] Even though he was not trained as a lawyer, Muse's papers reveal that he was well acquainted with contemporary legal instruments and their execution and was, as well, a master of many aspects of the production, processing, and marketing of agricultural goods.[17]

In 1785, Washington issued a power of attorney to Muse empowering him to manage his tenancies in Berkeley, Frederick, Loudoun, and Fauquier Counties.[18] For the next few years, Muse acted on Washington's directions and reported frequently on his activities.[19] Washington's diaries also mention two Muse visits to Mount Vernon to discuss land and tenant matters.[20]

Muse was apparently successful in reversing Washington's fortunes with respect to his western lands because "[b]y the time Muse was ready to turn over the collection of rents to Washington's nephew in 1791, the rental payments of these tenants had come to represent a significant part of Washington's income."[21]

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[14] Battaile Muse Papers, introduction, various receipts, letters, logs.

[15] The George Washington Papers, letter from George Washington to Battaile Muse, September 18, 1785.

[16] Battaile Muse Papers, receipts, letters, logs; Washington also undoubtedly knew of Battaile Muse through his association with Battaile's father George during the French and Indian War.

[17] Battaile Muse Papers, introduction, legal documents, letters, logs.

[18] The George Washington Papers, power of attorney from George Washington to Battaile Muse, September 20, 1785.

[19] The George Washington Papers contain 75 letters exchanged between George Washington and Battaile Muse between 1784 and 1797. There are references in their correspondence to additional letters not contained in the collection.

[20] The George Washington Papers, diary entries for October 27, 1785, and April 20, 1786.

[21] "The Will of George Washington: Schedule of Property," Footnote 2, The Papers of George Washington, University of Virginia http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/will/property.html/ .

Transcription of the September 20, 1785, Power of Attorney from George Washington to Battaile Muse giving Muse authority to act on Washington's behalf:

Power given to Mr. Battaile Muse. —

I do hereby authorize, constitute and appoint Mr. Battaile Muse to be collector of my rents in the Counties of Berkeley, Frederick, Loudon and Fauquier: _ and do by these presents empower him to settle with the Tenants, and to make distress for the rents on all cases where it shall be found necessary.—I also empower him to rent any of my Lotts which are now vacant; and where he shall find the covenants of the Leases which have already been granted, __ unattended to by the Tenants—& a disregard of that mutual interest which induced me to dispose of my Lands on the terms therein mentioned, whereby forfeitures are incurred; that he will use every just and proper means to set them aside, and rent them to others on the most advantageous terms for my use, and in my behalf.

Given under my hand at Mount
Vernon this 20th day of Septemr 1785.
Geo. Washington

Marriage and family. On May 12, 1785, when he was in his mid-thirties, Muse married twenty-year-old Margaret (Peggy) Tate,[22] daughter of Magnus Tate II and Mary McCormick Riley Tate.[23] Margaret, born in 1765, was the third of seven children of the Tates.[24] Both the Tates and McCormicks were locally prominent families. Magnus Tate was active in the affairs of the county and Charles Town.[25] He and his descendants built Belvedere, which remains today near Charles Town.[26] Mary McCormick was the daughter of Dr. Charles and Ann

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[22] Battaile Muse Bible, handwritten entry.

[23] "The Family of Magnus Tate and Mary McCormick," no date http://www.geocities.com/dalemorrow/tat150.htm?200828/.

[24] Battaile Muse Bible, handwritten entry.

[25] For example, Tate was a trustee of the new town of Charles Town (Millard K. Bushong, Historic Jefferson County [Boyce, Virginia: Carr Publishing Co., Inc., 1972] 43) and the Charles Town Academy ("Old Charles Town Academy," *Spirit of Jefferson Farmer's Advocate*, Charles Town, West Virginia, 4 October 2007).

[26] Jefferson County Historical Society, *Between the Shenandoah and the Potomac: Historic Homes of Jefferson County, West Virginia*, (Winchester, Virginia: Winchester Printers, Inc., 1990) 4.

McCormick who settled in the Summit Point area, established White House farm,[27] and built the farm house that still stands today.[28]

Between 1786 and 1797, Margaret and Battaile Muse had seven children, four daughters and three sons.[29] All four daughters married and had children. The oldest, Mary (Polly), married John H. Lewis and lived at the Rocks, a farm adjacent to the Muse farm. Members of the Lewis family lived there until it was sold by Battaile Muse's great-granddaughter, Anne Payne Lewis, in 1940.[30] Their three sons, George Augustine, Battaile, and Magnus Tate, all died before they were 30.[31] None married or had children. As a result, none of the Muses' descendants carry that family name.

Marsh Farm and Muse Mill. In 1789 and 1795, Muse purchased large tracts of land in the southeastern part of the county, mostly west of the Shenandoah River, from James and Arianna Randolph Wormeley.[32] At his death, Muse owned nearly 2400 acres.[33] In his letters and other records, he referred to his land as "Marsh Farm."[34] Later the name was changed to the Moorings.

Although the house Muse built on Marsh Farm is no longer standing, 19th century maps show a house between two forks of Long Marsh Run, almost due west of the intersection of Kabletown Road and what is now Ann Lewis Road.[35] The 1809 Varle map of Frederick, Berkeley, and Jefferson Counties places the name M. Muse, Battaile Muse's widow Margaret, at the house[36] while the 1852 and 1883 S. Howell Brown maps of Jefferson County show the names James B. Lewis, grandson of Battaile and Margaret Muse, and his heirs, respectively.[37] The site of the house indicated on these maps is a hill with a commanding view of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

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[27] The Family of Magnus Tate and Mary McCormick

[28] Jefferson County Historical Society 82.

[29] Battaile Muse Bible.

[30] "Dr. Roy A. Barlow of Minnesota Buys 'The Rocks', County Home" *Spirit of Jefferson, Charles Town, West Virginia*, 10 April 1940, 1.

[31] Battaile Muse Bible

[32] Louise Singleton Kemp, "Battaile Muse," *Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society* XI (1945):21-23.

[33] Michael D. Thompson, *Calendar and Index to Recorded Survey Plats in Jefferson County, West Virginia (Virginia) Courthouse, 1801-1901* (Shippensburg, Pennsylvania: Beidel Printing House, Inc., 1984) 1, 2.

[34] Battaile Muse Papers, letters and receipts.

[35] Ann Lewis Road is named for Muses' great-granddaughter Anne Payne Lewis, the last Muse descendant to live at the Rocks.

[36] Varle.

[37] S. Howell Brown, "Map of Jefferson County, Virginia," entered in the Clerks Office of U. States Court for the Western District of Virginia at Staunton, 1852; S. Howell Brown, "Map of Jefferson County, West Virginia," J.L. Smith, Lithography, Philadelphia, 1883.

Writing in 1904, W.M. Walton, Muse's great-grandson, described the house as "very massively built and time has apparently made no impression upon it."[38] As to its setting, he noted "[b]efore me as far as my eye can reach in every direction are the acres which belong to 'The Moorings.'"[39] However, by the 1930s when Mrs. J.M. Miller was surveying the county's rural graveyards, she wrote that "[t]he home is in ruin."[40]

Muse also purchased and then operated the Wormeley grist mill, subsequently known as Muse Mill,[41] along Long Marsh Run just east of Kabletown Road near its intersection with Ann Lewis Road. The mill and mill pond appear on the 1806 Varle and S. Howell Brown maps of 1852 and 1883.[42] Today, the only visible remnant of Muse Mill is a depressed area along the run on the west side of Kabletown Road corresponding to the site of the mill pond.

Three surveys of local graveyards mention a family burial plot on the Muse farm.[43] While its exact location is not known because the headstones were removed years ago, two of the surveys place it back of the barn.[44] According to a plaque on the nearby Wickliffe Church, where the Muse-Lewis family worshipped, all the headstones were destroyed except Margaret Muse's. Her headstone stands just outside a small enclosed graveyard at the back of the church.

In addition to Margaret, nine other family members were buried in the graveyard: Battaile Muse; their three sons; one daughter, Mary Muse Lewis; and three Lewis grandchildren.[45]

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[38] Anne Mays Miller, W.M. Walton's notes on the Moorings.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Mrs. J.M. Miller.

[41] Battaile Muse papers, inventories, legal documents, receipts.

[42] Varle; S. Howell Brown, 1852 and 1883.

[43] Mrs. J.M. Miller; Bee Line Chapter National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), "Lewis-Muse Graveyard," *Tombstone Inscriptions, Jefferson County, West Virginia* (Hagerstown, Maryland: HBP, Inc., 1981) 272; Graveyard Committee, "Graveyard on 'The Moorings', the Old Lewis Farm," *Proceedings of the Clarke County Historical Association* II (1942): 7. (The report of the Graveyard Committee included the Moorings graveyard in its survey of Clarke County, Virginia, graveyards because even though "a large portion of the farm on which this graveyard is located lies in...West Virginia, ... [a]ll the names found in this burying ground are so closely connected with Old Wickliffe Church [in Virginia] and its surroundings ....")

[44] Mrs. J.M. Miller; Graveyard Committee.

[45] Mrs. J.M. Miller; Graveyard Committee; Bee Line Chapter NSDAR; Mrs. Miller's survey and the Wickliffe Church plaque indicate that others were buried there in addition to the 10 Muses but the two sources differ in who they were.



PHOTO BY DOUG PERKS

Margaret Muse's headstone at Wickliffe Church

SACRED
to the memory of
MARGARET MUSE.
widow of Battaile Muse:
and daughter of Magnus Tate:
who was born on the 4th day
of March, A.D. 1765: and
departed this life on the 25th
day of June, A.D. 1830:
Aged 65 Years, 3 months,
and 21 days.
An exemplary wife, mother
and mistress, and the friend of
the poor
she lived and died a
sincere christian.

Inscription on Margaret Muse's headstone

When the current owner purchased the property years ago, an old, badly deteriorated barn stood not far from the burial plot. It is not known whether this barn, which no longer exists, was the original Marsh Farm barn or a replacement.

Prosperity. Over the years, the Muses accumulated considerable wealth, as the following examples illustrate. According to Berkeley County's "1798 House Tax and Slave Tax," Muse was among the top three percent of homeowners and the top 17 percent of slave owners in terms of taxes owed.[46] Except for one year between 1802 and 1807, Battaile Muse or his heirs ranked third in the amount of personal property tax owed in the newly formed Jefferson County.[47]

In 1802, Muse bought the Rocks house and farm east of Marsh Farm along the Shenandoah River. However, a protracted legal battle with Ferdinando Fairfax delayed the Muse family's possession of the property

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[46] Berkeley County Historical Society (BCHS), *1798 House Tax and Slave Tax of Berkeley County Virginia*, (Martinsburg, West Virginia: BCHS, 2003).

[47] Patricia B. Duncan, *Jefferson County Virginia 1802-1813 Personal Property Tax Lists*. (Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, Inc., 2003). Tax assessments were based on the number of black males and horses owned.

until 1810.[48] Mary Muse Lewis and her descendents owned the farm for 130 years.

Muse figured prominently in the establishment of two local schools. He helped finance the building of the Charles Town Academy, founded in 1795,[49] and, along with three other landowners, established the Union School, which was built on his property, also in 1795.[50]

After Muse's death, his widow Margaret and her two sisters inherited a home in Charles Town from their father Magnus Tate II.[51] The house, known today as the Tate-Fairfax-Muse house, stands on the southeastern corner of Samuel and East Washington Streets.[52]

Death at 53. Battaile Muse died March 29, 1803, just a month shy of his 53rd birthday, and five days after signing his will. He was buried in the Marsh Farm family graveyard—the first to be interred there. His wife and children, ranging in age from 6 to 17 years at the time of his death, survived him.[53] Muse's will divided Marsh Farm among his three sons.[54]

His will also directed that a brick house be built according to instructions contained in the will on a knoll near the mill on the portion of Marsh Farm inherited by his son George.[55] Soon after his father's death, George sold the land to Hierome Opie, who had married George's sister Margaret. The Opie family lived in the house until the 1860s.[56] Now known as Woodbyrne, the house still stands today.

Two centuries later. In the nearly two hundred years since his death, Battaile Muse and his relationship with George Washington have largely faded from local memory. Yet, through his papers and correspondence with George Washington, he remains alive in the late 18th century history of Jefferson County.

Jane Rissler is a native of the county and is particularly interested in the history of the Kabletown area.

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[48] Louise Singleton Kemp, "Correction—Re 'The Rocks,'" *Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society* XXII (1956), 43.

[49] Old Charles Town Academy.

[50] Ella May Turner, "The Union School," *Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society* XI (1945): 24-27.

[51] Magnus Tate [II], Sr., will, April 11, 1806, Jefferson County Will Book Number 1, 432-434.

[52] Jefferson County Historical Society 41.

[53] Handwritten inscription in Battaile Muse Bible.

[54] Battaile Muse will, March 24, 1803, Jefferson County Will Book Number 1, 49-55.

[55] Battaile Muse will.

[56] Louise Singleton Kemp, "Old Mills: Muse Mill," *Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society* XXI (1955):23.

James Rumsey Steamboat Inventor or Pioneer in Steam Navigation?

By David G. Allen

James Rumsey will forever be considered as the inventor of the steamboat by the people of Shepherdstown. George Beltzhoover, Jr., a member of the second Rumseyan Society, published "James Rumsey—Inventor of the Steamboat"[1] to secure Rumsey's own claim as inventor. Rumsey's steamboat was certainly the best-built and most-advanced of all the steamboats in that era, and Rumsey's mechanical genius is unquestioned. Miss Ella Mae Turner, Rumsey's biographer, began her book on a mission to prove that Rumsey was the steamboat's inventor, but in the end, she retreated slightly and titled her work "James Rumsey: Pioneer in Steam Navigation."[2]

The title, "Pioneer in Steam Navigation," may actually be more flattering to James Rumsey than that of "Inventor of the Steamboat." We laud our pioneers, those few who find their way to the prize without benefit of maps. Inventors are praised, but not so warmly as are our pioneers. Upon completing her study, Miss Turner was canny indeed to use the words "steam navigation."[3] Rumsey's work did influence the whole of steam power, including the future development of the turbine engine, not just one watercraft.

Christopher Columbus is credited with discovering the New World. However, Leif Ericson sailed to Newfoundland in 1000, and his expedition lived there for over one year. Columbus still gets the credit because European colonization began in earnest after his voyage.

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1 George M. Beltzhoover, Jr., *James Rumsey—Inventor of the Steamboat* (WV Historical and Antiquarian Society, 1900).

2 Ella May Turner, *James Rumsey: Pioneer in Steam Navigation* (Scotdale, PA: Mennonite Publishing House, 1930).

3 A. D. Kenamond, Secretary-Treasurer of the Rumseyan Society, *James Rumsey and His Steamboat*, Historical sketch delivered before the History Section of the WV Education Association at Clarksburg, WV, November 5, 1937. "Miss Turner had no intention of denying full credit, nor did she consciously hit upon a title that had been used at least twenty years earlier. I find that the late Senator William Campbell, of the Rumseyan Society, in 1910 gave Rumsey the title of 'the Pioneer of Steam Navigation' and had it printed in quotation marks."



James Rumsey

In much the same manner, Robert Fulton gets credit for inventing the steamboat. Fulton's boat, the Clermont, launched steam-powered passenger service on the Hudson River in 1807, and that is the event that has drawn history's focus.

Dr. Edwin Layton wrote that "Rumsey became a pioneer in attempting to found his inventions on science rather than craft knowledge,"[4] and further, "It was the task of inventors such as Rumsey to find a way to overcome the limitations of traditional technology and to find a way to meet national needs in transportation, power, and other fields vital to America's development."[5]

James Rumsey claimed that he invented the steamboat, and that he was the first to sail a steam-powered boat on December 3, 1787. To announce his achievements, he quickly commissioned the printing of his pamphlet, "A PLAN wherein the power of STEAM is fully shewn,"[6] which he distributed throughout the region. The importance of claiming this feat

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[4] Edwin T. Layton, Jr., James Rumsey: Pioneer Technologist, West Virginia History, Vol. XLVIII (State of West Virginia, Department of Culture and History, 1989) 8.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] James Rumsey, *A PLAN wherein the power of STEAM is fully shewn, By a new constructed Machine, for propelling Boats or Vessels, of any burthen, against the most rapid streams or rivers, with great velocity*, pamphlet (Berkeley Co., VA: January 1788). Re-titled: *A Short Treatise on the Application of Steam*, pamphlet (Philadelphia, PA: Joseph James, Printer, May 1788)

had little to do with a science or engineering honor. Whoever could win the sole patent for the steamboat could then establish steamship routes and be guaranteed of non-competitive rights to haul freight or passengers.

At the time of Rumsey's voyage, the Articles of Confederation gave each of the thirteen states the power to grant patents. The patent process was greatly influenced by parochial politics, and as such, states granted patents to native sons or favorites whenever possible. For example, in 1784, Rumsey garnered boat patents from his birth state of Maryland and his adopted state of Virginia. John Fitch, Rumsey's principal competitor, later convinced Pennsylvania (where he built his steamboat) to grant him a patent as steamboat inventor.

There are complications with Rumsey's 1784 patents. He patented a boat propelled by poles (the Mechanical Boat), not by water jet propulsion which he incorporated in his successful 1787 steamboat (the Flying Boat).[7] Rumsey designed the Mechanical Boat as a way to navigate the Potomac River's shallows without using a canal and lock system. General George Washington envisioned the Potomac as a gateway to the west, and he saw Rumsey's boat as a cheap alternative to building a canal system.[8]

Once built, however, the Mechanical Boat was a practical failure when it came to navigation. The boat would lurch to port or starboard when the poles dug into the uneven riverbed.[9] Rumsey also was unable to demonstrate the Mechanical Boat on the Ohio River, a feat that would have won him a considerable land grant.[10] The Mechanical Boat, as demonstrated for General Washington, was a "streamboat, and not a steamboat."[11] Rumsey's 1784 patents do nothing, then, to advance his claim as inventor of the steamboat.

In early 1788, Rumsey received patents for his Flying Boat from New York and New Jersey. But John Fitch followed that by writing his own pamphlet[12] which rejected Rumsey's claim. Fitch won patents in Pennsylvania and Delaware for his steam-powered, oar-propelled boat that he claimed he sailed on the Delaware River in August 1787, some

7 Turner, 81.

8 Turner, 13.

9 Turner, 74-75.

10 Andrea Sutcliffe, *STEAM: The Untold Story of America's First Great Invention* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) 7. Congress offered a land grant of 30,000 acres if the boat could travel fifty miles per day for six days.

11 Turner, 14.

12 John Fitch, *The Original Steam-Boat Supported* (Philadelphia: Joseph James, printer, May 10, 1788)

three months prior to Rumsey's launch at Shepherdstown.

Just when he needed to mount a serious rebuttal to Fitch, James Rumsey left for England in May 1788. He had persuaded influential members of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia to back his inventions. Some eighteen members of the Society, including Benjamin Franklin, formed the original Rumseian Society on May 9th to finance Rumsey in securing patents in England and Europe.[13]

Rumsey did succeed in England, receiving four Royal patents for various mechanical inventions. But the patent for inventing the steamboat eluded him. Rumsey's English version of the Flying Boat, the *Columbian Maid*, did not sail until February 1793, about two months after his death from a stroke.

The United States Constitution, adopted in July 1788, transferred patent authority to the Federal Government. The Patent Act of 1790 codified this authority by appointing three commissioners—the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War and the Attorney General—to approve patents. Administration of the Patent Office was handled by the Department of State.[14]

For two years, the patent process was in limbo. States did nothing as their role in the patent process had become meaningless. And the Federal Government could do nothing until Congress gave it legal authority.

Rumsey, in London, could do nothing but fret and stew. On June 6th, 1789, Rumsey wrote Thomas Jefferson in Paris (then Ambassador to France but soon to become our first Secretary of State) that the new patent laws needed to include patents for principles, not just a specific invention. Rumsey had been haggling with New York over his boiler patent. New York would only allow Rumsey a patent for the boiler he submitted in a drawing; the state refused to patent Rumsey's revolutionary new boiler design. Rumsey beseeched Ambassador Jefferson: "... Cause them to Strip the world in art & Seeing and knowing you Could throw great light on this Subject upon your return to America ..."[15]

When the United States Patent Office opened in 1790, Jefferson was conflicted by the steamboat patent applications he received. Quite ironically, Jefferson was not a believer in monopolies of which patents are an operating instrument. Jefferson never saw fit to patent any of his own inventions which ranged from a moldboard plow to a cipher wheel to

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[13] Turner, 118.
[14] Sutcliffe, 107.
[15] Turner, 166-167.

encode secret messages.[16]

Jefferson was also frustrated by the patent process that Congress passed—it was taking forever to examine an application. And third, the patent process gave weight to the "first and true inventor" rather than who first delivered a working invention.[17]

This last consideration was almost laughable. All of the steamboat inventors had been extremely secretive to prevent industrial espionage. Indeed, an incognito John Fitch was discovered snooping around Shepherdstown in April 1789.[18] But when the Patent Office opened, the inventors had to put their cards on the table; then the men all boasted about when they first got the idea of steam-powered boats, each trying to prove by solicited affidavits that he had the idea first.

Secretary of State Jefferson was left to decide who invented the steamboat amongst the competing claims of James Rumsey, John Fitch, John Stevens and Nathan Read. Jefferson threw up his hands, and he awarded all four men a non-exclusive patent (signed on August 26, 1791).[19] Thus, none of the inventors gained an advantage.

The United States Patent Office burned in 1836 with only the index books surviving. Historians never had the opportunity to examine the documents presented to Secretary Jefferson. Had these documents survived, we would see the full picture of American steamboat development in the late eighteenth century. James Rumsey's claim would have received more attention by historians had the patent applications survived.

Although Rumsey's technology (boiler, piston-pump and water jet drive) was as much as fifty years ahead of its time, he was held to comparison with John Fitch's boat which was propelled by banks of oars powered by a steam engine.

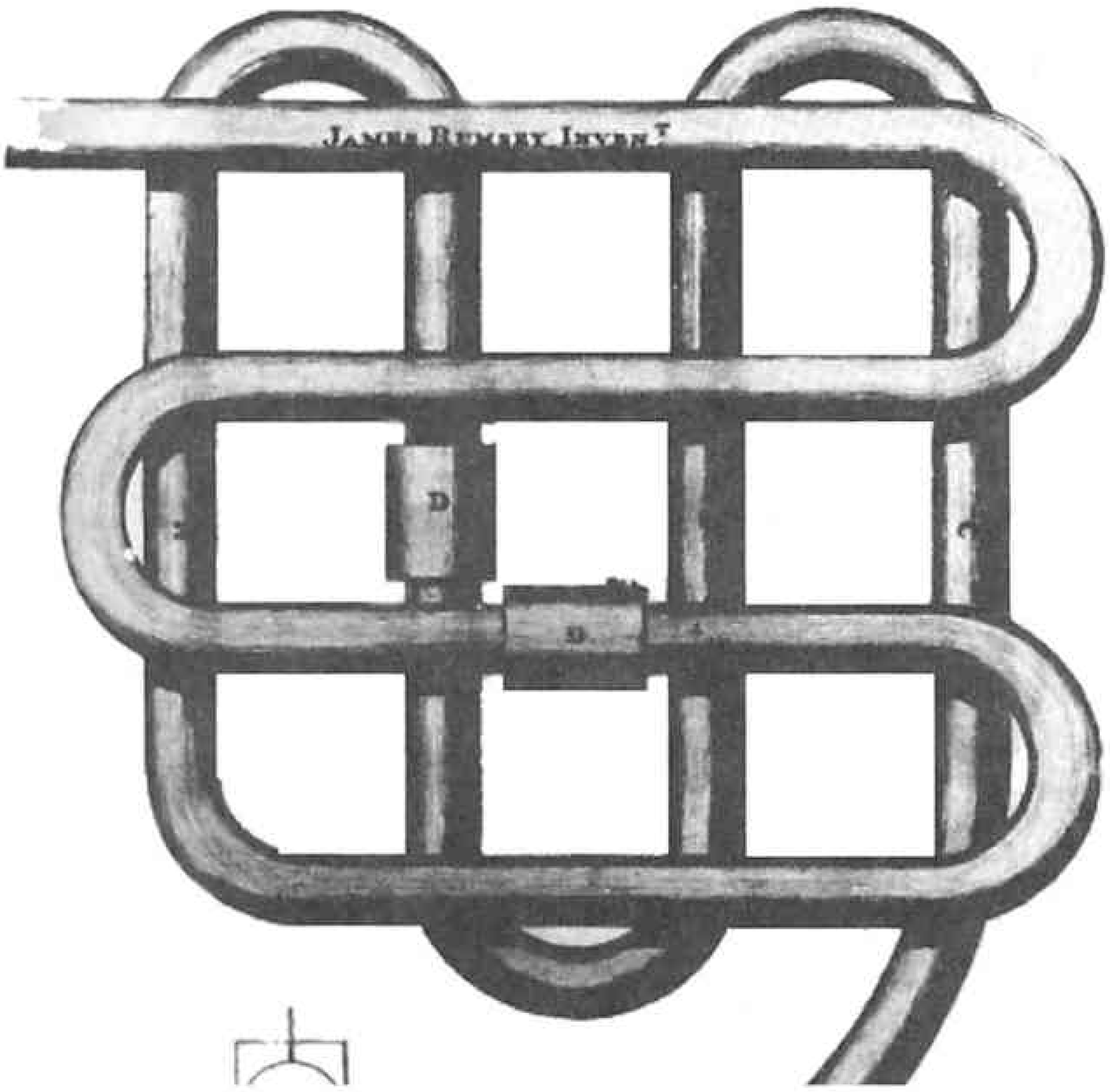
- Rumsey's boiler made operating steam by heating a mere twenty pints of water (See description at end). Fitch had to heat 500 gallons to make steam.[20]
- Rumsey's single-shaft piston-pump would not be patented in America until 1840.[21]

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[16] Sutcliffe, 104.
[17] Sutcliffe, 114.
[18] Turner, 126.
[19] Sutcliffe, 114-115.
[20] James Rumsey, A Short Treatise on the Application of Steam, pamphlet (Philadelphia, PA: Joseph James, Printer, May 1788). Affidavit No.12
[21] Brooke Hindle, *James Rumsey and the Rise of Steamboating in the United States*, West Virginia History, Vol. XLVIII (State of West Virginia, Department of Culture and History,

- Prior to the Flying Boat, a water-jet propelled boat was just a theory.[22] The Flying Boat sailed at three miles per hour, the same speed that the steam-powered, paddleboat Clermont made on her maiden voyage twenty years later.

Thomas Jefferson wrote that James Rumsey was the "most original and the greatest mechanical genius I have ever seen."[23] Had Jefferson not been hamstrung by the patent law, he might very well have crowned James Rumsey the "inventor of the steamboat."



SOURCE: ELLA MAY TURNER, *JAMES RUMSEY: PIONEER IN STEAM NAVIGATION* (SCOTDALE, PA: MENNONITE PUBLISHING HOUSE, 1930) 71-72.

James Rumsey's Boiler

1989). 38. "This was an invention he [Rumsey] never sought to patent, but years later, in 1840, Henry R. Worthington obtained an influential patent for a direct-coupled pump."

[22] Edwin T. Layton, Jr., *The Most Original*, (Invention and Technology Magazine, Vol. 2, Issue 3, Spring 1987) 50-56. "In December 1785, after his return from France, [Benjamin] Franklin gave a paper before the American Philosophical Society in which he reported the conclusions of Daniel Bernoulli, [...] that a boat might be advantageously driven by the force of reaction of a jet of water shot backward from it. Franklin added his own suggestion that the jet of water might be produced by a steam engine. Rumsey evidently heard about Franklin's proposal, and he designed a steamboat based on this plan."

[23] Thomas Jefferson, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 14:699: "Jefferson to Joseph Willard" (March 29, 1789)

The May 1788 issue of *The Columbian Magazine* featured James Rumsey's drawing and detailed description of his pipe boiler which he invented in 1785.

The conventional boiler of this period consisted of a large, closed tank of water heated by a single fire tube. James Rumsey reversed this concept, using the large tank as a fire chamber and circulating the water inside a 2" diameter tube. Rumsey's design greatly increased the surface area to heat the water. Using elbow bends, Rumsey was able to fit 200' of tubing in the fire chamber.

Whereas a conventional boiler heated 500 gallons of water to make steam, Rumsey's boiler heated approximately two and one-half gallons to make the same steam output. Rumsey's efficient coiled tubing design would be the model for future steam boilers.

As there was no pipe available, the boiler tubing was forged by area blacksmiths Michael Entler and Jonathan Osborn from iron supplied by nearby Antietam Forge. Blacksmiths Philip Entler and Jacob Haynes also helped build Rumsey's boiler and steam engine.

David Allen resides in Clarksburg, WV. His interest in blacksmithing has led him to write several articles about the early iron industry in West Virginia including "Jefferson County Ironworks," Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society, *Vol. LXX, December 2004, pp. 94-103.*

Mr. Allen is editor of the Appalachian Blacksmiths Association Newsletter and also served as president of the group. He is an economist and writes a monthly column for the West Virginia State Journal *newspaper.*

"Dear Uncle . . ." The correspondence between General George Washington and his nephew George Steptoe Washington of Harewood

By Walter Washington

[NOTE: The source for all letters and diary entries cited in this article was *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*, ed. Theodore J. Crackel, Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2008.]

Samuel Washington moved from the Chotank Creek area, in Stafford County (now King George County), Virginia, to his new home, Harewood, in Frederick County in September, 1770. With him were his wife Anne Steptoe Allerton Washington, their three year old son Ferdinand, their infant daughter Lucinda and Samuel's son from a previous marriage, Thornton, who was about 12. Anne was Samuel's fourth wife.[1] Thornton was the son of his second wife, Mildred Thornton.

The trip to their new home was made by way of Mt. Vernon. George Washington recorded in his diary on September 1, 1770, "[i]n the Evening my Brothr. Saml & his wife & children came hither from Fredericksburg in their way to Frederick." The young family stayed as guests at Mt. Vernon for just over two weeks. The day after their arrival, George recorded that he was "[a]t home all day with the Company before Mentioned." On September 3, he "[w]ent in the Evening fishing with my Brothers Saml. & Charles." On September 10, "[m]y Brothr. Saml. & self rid to the Mill & Back to Dinner," and again on the 14th, "[r]id to the Mill and Ditchers in the forenoon with my Brother. In the Afternoon went a fishing." On September 16, Samuel and his family left for Harewood,

[1] Samuel suffered from tuberculosis, the disease from which he died at age 47, and it is thought that he infected several of his wives, two of whom died in weakened condition either during or shortly after childbirth.

their host recording, "[a]t home all day. My Brothr. Sam. and his wife set of in my Chariot for his House in Fredk."[2]

Two months after their arrival at Harewood Lucinda died, less than a month before her first birthday. In August, 1771, Anne gave birth to another son, George Steptoe. In 1774, a third son, Lawrence Augustine was born and in 1776, a daughter, Harriott.

In March, 1777, Anne died of a faulty smallpox vaccination. Her four surviving children were Ferdinand, George Steptoe, Lawrence Augustine and the infant Harriott. The following year, their father, by then in declining health, remarried for the fifth time, to Susannah Perrin Holden. In 1780, she bore a son, John Perrin Washington. On September 26, 1781, Samuel died from tuberculosis and was buried at Harewood. Within two years, Susannah and John Perrin were also dead. The four children of Anne Steptoe were then left orphans at Harewood: Ferdinand was 16, George Steptoe, 12, Lawrence Augustine, 9 and Harriott, 7.[3]

Samuel in his will appointed as executors of his estate his three brothers George, John Augustine and Charles, "together with my esteemed friend James Nourse," his neighbor at nearby Piedmont. In 1781 George was commanding the Continental Army and John Augustine lived distantly at Bushfield in Westmoreland County. Charles, who had moved to Happy Retreat, his home near Harewood, in 1780, and James Nourse qualified as executors of Samuel's estate.

Following the death of their stepmother in 1783, George Steptoe and Lawrence Augustine were placed in school in Alexandria, where they lived with the Reverend David Griffith,[4] arrangements presumably made by James Nourse, who was guardian of the young orphans.

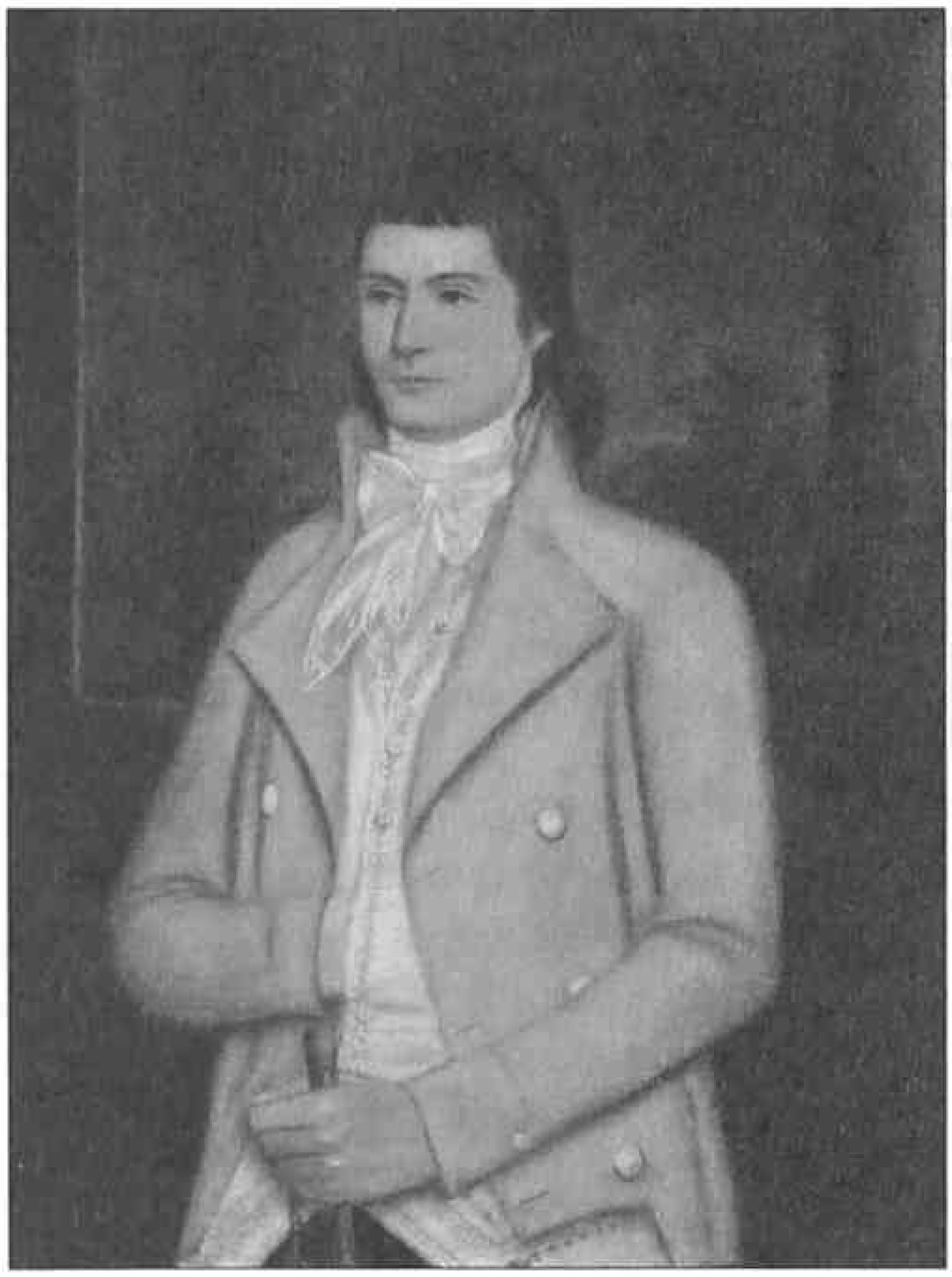
After nearly nine years' absence, George Washington returned to Mt. Vernon from the Revolutionary War on Christmas Eve, 1783. A letter from Nourse on January 11, 1784 informed him of the condition of his brother Samuel's estate. By letter dated January 22, 1784 Washington responded. Regarding Samuel's estate, he wrote, "[i]t would give me great pleasure to render any service to his children; & as far as I can do it by paying attention to those two who are in my Neighbourhood with Mr.

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[2] Samuel soon repaid the hospitality to his older brother. On October 6, 1770, en route to the Ohio Valley, George, accompanied by Dr. James Craik, "arrived at my Brother Samls. On Worthington's Marsh a little after they had dind. . ." This was the first of several visits George made to Harewood.

[3] Their older half-brother Thornton had married in 1779 and presumably had established himself elsewhere on Samuel's large real estate holdings in the county.

[4] The Reverend David Griffith was the minister at Christ Church in Alexandria.



PORTRAIT BY JOHN DRINKER

George Steptoe Washington of Harewood

Griffith, I will; but to concern myself in the smallest degree with the management of their estates, I cannot." The two in the "Neighbourhood" of Mt. Vernon were George Steptoe and Lawrence Augustine.

Reverend Mr. Griffith wrote Washington on July 12, 1784 about his two young charges:

> Mr Nourse, an Executor of your Brothers will, and the guardian of your Nephews George & Lawrence, has given me instructions to furnish them with clothing and every necessary, without any restrictions, and discharges the Bills brought him, for this purpose, with very great punctuality. It is true, they were but badly supply'd, in many respects, when they first came to me; but I have the satisfaction to inform you that, at this time, they have a sufficiency of clothing for growing Boys, & that, in that respect, they are much better off

than any of the young Gentlemen who are with me. The whole of Mr Nourse's conduct, towards his Wards, seems friendly and affectionate—manifests a disposition to do them all the Justice in his power, and an earnest sollicitude for their improvement in Morals Manners and learning. With great truth and Sincerity I am, Dear Sir Your most huble Servt.

In August, 1784, Washington arranged to have the boys enrolled at "the Academy at Georgetown" run by the Reverend Stephen Bloomer Balch.[5] In October, 1784, their guardian James Nourse died. Benjamin Stoddert, a Georgetown merchant, wrote Washington on June 21, 1785 that he had undertaken to supply George Steptoe and Lawrence Augustine

> upon the Death of their Guardian Mr Nourse, without any authority, merely because at that time no other person could be instructed to do it... & indeed, neither expected, nor wished to continue supplying them longer than 'till arrangements could be made for their accomodation by the Gentleman upon whom the care of them devolved.

Stoddert informed Washington that the boys "now board with Mr Wm Bailey of this Town, who has a Store—being continually under his Eye, he can much better Judge than I can, what will be really necessary for them—like all Boys, they are apt to want too much . . ."

Washington was apparently not satisfied with these living arrangements. He immediately wrote Reverend Mr. Balch this letter dated at Mt. Vernon, June 26, 1785:

> Sir,
>
> My Nephews are desireous of going to the Dancing School in George town kept by Mr Tarterson (I think his name is)—and as it is my wish that they should be introduced into life with those qualifications which are deemed necessary, I consent to it. Sometime ago I expressed my approbation of their learning French, & a wish that when you had got your House in order to receive them, they might again board with you: Altho' I have no occasion [to doubt] the care, attention and kindness

[5] Balch was a graduate of Princeton University and founder of the first Presbyterian Church in Georgetown in 1780.

> of Mr Bailey to them, I conceive they can board at no place so eligably as at their Preceptors; for it is my wish that their morals as well as educations may be attended to; & tho' I do not desire they should be deprived of necessary & proper amusements, yet it is my earnest request that they may be kept close to their studies. I am Sir &c.
>
> G: Washington

A few weeks later, Washington wrote to Bailey, thanking him for supplying the boys with necessities from his store, but cautioning

> that they may not be endulged in any extravagance, or with any thing improper—school boys of their size & growing, should have decent, but not expensive things; their inclinations too often prompt them to the latter, which grows upon them in proportion as they are indulged: nor should they have pocket money given them, unless the necessity is apparent & the application approved of.

By November, 1785, Washington concluded that continuing the boys' education in Georgetown was too expensive. On November 22 he wrote Balch "[t]he expense attending the residence of my Nephews in Georgetown so far exceeds the idea I was led to entertain when they went there, that in behalf of their Guardian, I am compelled to remove them."[6] He entered in his diary the following day: "Sent Mr. Shaw through Alexandria, to agree for the Schooling & Board of my Nephews George & Lawrence Washington now at the Academy at George Town & thence to the latter place to conduct them to the former for the purpose of going to School at the Alexandria Academy." On November 25 his diary records: "Mr. Shaw returned, having removed George & Lawe. Washington to the Alexandria Academy & fixed them at the Widow Dades."

Washington's diaries report that the two boys were frequent visitors at Mt. Vernon during their school days in both Georgetown and Alexandria, often arriving in time to have dinner with their uncle.[7]

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[6] In a letter to William Bailey the same day, Washington recounts that he had already paid to Bailey and Stoddart "£125.11.0" on the boys' account for "fourteen months residence" and that still more was owing for board and clothing.

[7] E.g., on Saturday, February 19, 1985: "My nephew Geore Steptoe Washington came here to Dinnr. From the Academy at George Town." He returned to school on Monday morning.

In late 1786 Washington moved the boys to the home of Samuel Hanson in Alexandria. George Steptoe was fifteen; Lawrence Augustine was twelve. Hanson shared Washington's concern for frugality, assuring him in a letter on January 12, 1787, that he had

> taken Acct of the cloathes they brought with them, and shall take care that they are neither lost or abused. I had advised them to send their Shoes to be mended at Mount Vernon, as the Tradesmen charge nearly the first cost of the shoes for the slightest repairs. If my proposal meet with your approbation, I shall see that they are sent; as also any of their cloth cloathes that require the Tailor—I think it my duty to promote your views relative to their frugality, and shall endeavor to check any inclinations they may discover of a contrary.

George Steptoe's first surviving letter to his uncle at Mt. Vernon was written March 2, 1787, in response to a letter not found.

Dear Uncle

I receiv'd your letter dated 27th Feby the contents of which give me great concern, sensible of the usefullness of a good education and the many advantages which result from it I have always made it a primary consideration nor have I allowed a thought of dress and plasure to engross my attention prejudicial to it. I believe I am rather defective in the spelling and writeing of english as I always paid more attention to my lattin but I shall make it my particular study, with every other peice of advice you shall be kind enough to give me. Your letter seems to insinuate that I make my brother Ferdinand the object of my immitation I am very sensible of his unbecoming conduct and altogether disapprove of it: I have other relations who have afforded me a better example and which would be more agreeable to me to follow.

The letters I have sent to you were wrote in a hurry and without much attention I shall here after be more particular. Your affectionate et dutifull Nephew

Geoe S. Washington

The next correspondence between the two is a May 5, 1788 letter from Washington to his nephew expressing his displeasure at a report from Samuel Hanson that George Steptoe had slept away from Hanson's home on several nights.[8] The letter suggests the demanding but affectionate hand Washington exerted in the shaping of the young seventeen year old's character, warning him away from "those customs which may tend to corrupt your manners or vitiate your heart."

Dear George,

I yesterday received a letter from Mr Hanson informing me that you slept from home three nights successively and one contrary to his express prohibition. Complaints of this nature are extreamly painful to me, as it discovers a degree of impropriety in your conduct, which, at your time of life your good sense & discretion ought to point out to you and lead you to avoid. Altho' there is nothing criminal in your having slept with a companion of good manners and reputation as you say you have, yet your absenting yourself from your own lodgings under that pretence may be productive of irregularities and disagreeable consequences—and I now insist upon it, in the most pointed terms, that you do not repeat it without the consent and approbation of Mr Hanson.

One strong motive for my placing you in your present lodgings was that you might, in your conduct out of school, be guided by Mr Hanson's advice and directions, as I confide very much in his discretion & think that he would requ[i]re nothing of you but what will conduce to your advantage; and at the age to which you have now arrived you must be capable of distinguishing between a proper and improper line of conduct and be sensible of the advantages or disadvantages which will result to you through life from the one or the other.

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[8] In an accompanying letter to Hanson, Washington reflected that George Steptoe "has now advanced to that time of life when it is absolutely necessary that his conduct should be regulated by some means or other. Coertion would be extreemly painful to me, but if advice, remonstrance and gentile methods will not answer the purpose others must be taken."

> Your future character and reputation will depend very much, if not entirely, upon the habits and manners which you contract in the present period of your life; they will make an impression upon you which can never be effaced. You should therefore be extreemly cautious how you put yourself into the way of imbibing those customs which may tend to corrupt your manners or vitiate your heart. I do not write to you in this style from knowing or suspecting that you are addicted to any vice, but only to guard you against pursuing a line of conduct which may imperceptably lead on to Vicious cources. Mr Hanson has done you and Lawrence Justice in saying that your behaviour since you have been last with him has been unexceptionable except in this instance and one more which he has not mentioned, and I hope this is the last complaint I shall ever hear while you remain in your present situation at least, as it will prevent me from using means to regulate your behaviour which will be disagreeable to us both. I am—Yr sincer[e] friend & affectionate Uncle
>
> Go. Washington

Unfortunately, this was not the "last complaint" the boys' behavior brought about. Later that summer, George Steptoe earned his uncle's even greater displeasure when he intervened to protect his younger brother Lawrence Augustine (now age fifteen) from a thrashing at the hands of Samuel Hanson. The stern letter from Mt. Vernon is dated August 6, 1788:

> Dear George,
>
> It was with equal pain and surprize I was informed by Colo. Hanson on Monday last, of your unjustifiable behaviour in rescuing your brother from that chastisement which was due to his improper conduct; and which you know, because you have been told it in explicit language, he was authorized to administer whensoever he should deserve it.
>
> Such refractory behaviour on your part, I consider as an insult equally offered to myself after the above communications and

I shall continue to view it in that light, till you have made satisfactory acknowledgments to Colo. Hanson for the offence given him.

It is as much my wish and intention to see Justice done to you and your Brother as it is to punish either when it is merited—but there are proper modes by which this is to be obtained, and it is to be sought by a fair and candid representation of facts which can be supported—and not by vague complaints, disobedience, perverseness, or disobliging conduct, which make enemies without producing the smallest good.

So often, and strenuously have I endeavoured to inculcate this advice, and to Shew you the advantages which are to be expected from close application to your studies, that it is unnecessary to repeat it. If the admonitions of friendship are lost other methods must be tried which cannot be more disagreeable to you than it would be to one who wishes to avoid it who is solicitous to see you and your Brother (the only remaining Sons of your father) turn out well, and who is very desirous of continuing your Affecte Uncle

Go. Washington

This admonishment brought a quick reply from George Steptoe on August 8, attempting to explain, if not justify, his intervention on his brother's behalf. His tone balances contrition with youthful resoluteness.

Dear Uncle

I received your letter from Col. Hanson, and after considering the contents, think it necessary to transmit to you an account of the late occurrence, in which you have been informed I acted an improper part; my object in writing this letter is not to exculpate m[y]self, it is only to state matters as they really were; whither my conduct was justifiable in doing what I have, I am not a judge, but with pleasure leave it to be determin'd by you when made acquainted with the circumstances of the case. You have been informed that

Laurence has attended divine servise but once or twice, if the information was received from Col. Hanson I wish not to contradict him, but of late he has attended pretty constant, and the reason of his absence from Church that day, was on account of his coat, but of this also I am not to judge, if Col. Hanson thinks proper to correct him I acknolidge it is not my business to interfere, neither would I have had the least idea of doing it if it had been done in an orderly manner, especially since I know it to be your desire; but it was the manner in which it was done and the instrument with which it was to be performed that caused my interference; when it happened, I was in my way to school, but was recalled by the cries of Laurence (which drew the attention of the neighbours) calling me to his assistance; upon my spedy return I found him on the floor with Col. Hanson on the top of him and a cowhide laying on the table, alarmed at this unexpected sight, I enterposed, without thinking on what I was about to do, and even then I offered no insult to Col. Hanson, but hindered my brother from being beat with an instrument which I deemed improper to inflict a punishment for so small a crime. This was what I did but no more, it was not to deny Col. Hansons authority, it was not to call in question the justise of his punishment. but I was driven to it by brotherly affection; If it has meet with your disapprobation, I am sorry for it, and if you continue to be of that opinion, I will make any concessions to Col. Hanson, and as what is done cannot be undone, I shall persue that only method of atonement for folly, to be sorry for it, and do so no more.

It ony remains that I should express my thanks for your kind advise and assuring you that I will never deviate from any instructions which I shall be favoured with from you; these are the unaltered intentions. Of Dear Uncle Your most Obedient Nephew

George S. Washington.

The burden on Washington of the never ending expense of supporting his nephews was a constant aggravation. He complained in numerous

letters to others of his frustration with the responsibility of shouldering the cost of their care brought about by the insufficiency of his deceased brother Samuel's estate to maintain them. George Steptoe was clearly aware of this burden when on February 19, 1789 he wrote his uncle to request money for clothes.

> Dear Uncle
>
> Impeled by necessity I now set down to write you the following lines, in which I am obliged to inform you of the great want we are in for a few things, which I would not have troubled you with could they have been dispensed with; for knowing the embarrassment under which our estates labour at present upon account of that debt which it owes to Mr Alexander; and that it is intirely by your goodness that we are enabled to remaine in Town; I should think my self very unjustifiable in requesting any thing but what was really necessary. The above mentioned articles are as follow a pair of breeches apiece a hat a pare of shoes and buckles for me, and a few pocket handkerchiefs. Dear Uncle I remain your humble and dutifull Nephew
>
> George S. Washington
>
> P.S. please to desire the first of your Servants who comes to Town to call at Mr Hansons as there is some things which I would wish to have repaired.

Washington's response is not known.[9]

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[9] In his will, Washington forgave the debt of "near five thousand dollars" owed for the amount he advanced for the support and education of his two nephews:

> And whereas, two other sons of my said deceased brother Samuel, namely, George Steptoe Washington & Lawrence Augustine Washington, were, by the decease of those to whose care they were committed, brought under my protection, and in conseqe. have occasioned advances on my part for their education at College, and other Schools, for their board, cloathing & other incidental expenses, to the amount of near five thousand dollars over and above the Sums furnished by their Estate, wch. sum may be inconvenient for them, or their father's Estate to refund. I do for these reasons acquit them, and the said estate, from the payment thereof. My intention being, that all accounts between them & me, and their father's estate and me, shall stand balanced.

The Electoral College met on February 4, 1789 to elect Washington first President of the United States. The vote was not official until the ballots were opened before both houses of Congress, which was to meet in New York on March 4. However, a quorum was not present until April, and Washington was not formally notified of his election until April 14. It was while waiting for Congress to confirm his election—a foregone conclusion—that Washington wrote George Steptoe from Mt. Vernon on March 23, 1789. Written as "your Uncle & friend," the letter imparts guidance more of a father to his son—from a man who was himself childless to a young man, now eighteen, who had been fatherless since age ten. Even as he contemplated the leadership of the new nation he took care to instruct George Steptoe on the conduct necessary to "giving you respectability."

Dear George,

As it is probable I shall soon be under the necessity of quitting this place, and entering once more into the bustle of publick life, in conformity to the voice of my Country, and the earnest entreaties of my friends, however contrary it is to my own desires or inclinations; I think it incumbent on me as, your Uncle & friend, to give you some advisory hints, which, if properly attended to, will, I conceive, be found very useful to you in regulating your conduct and giving you respectability not only at present but through every period of Life.

You have now arrived to that age when you must quit the trifling amusements of a boy, and assume the more dignified manners of a man. At this crisis your conduct will attract the notice of those who are about you; and as the first impressions are generally the most lasting, your doings now may mark the leading traits of your Character through life. It is therefore, absolutely necessary, if you mean to make any figure upon the Stage, that you should take the first steps right. What these steps are—and what general line is to be pursued to lay the foundation of an honorable and happy progress, is the part of age and experience to point out. This I shall do, as far as is in my power, with the utmost

chearfulness; and I trust, that your own good sense will shew you the necessity of following it.

The first and great object with you at present is to acquire, by industry and application, such knowledge as your situation enables you to obtain, and as will be useful to you in life. In doing this two other important objects will be gained besides the acquisition of knowledge—namely, a habit of industry, and a disrelish of that profusion of money & dissipation of time which are ever attendant upon idleness. I do not mean by a close application to your Studies that you should never enter into those amusements which are suited to your age and station. They may be made to go hand in hand with each other—and, used in their proper seasons, will ever be found to be a mutual assistance to each other. But what amusements are to be taken, and when, is the great matter to be attended to. Your own judgement, with the advice of your real friends who may have an opportunity of a personal intercourse with you can point out the particular manner in which you may best spend your moments of relaxation, much better than I can at a distance. One thing, however, I would strongly impress upon you, viz., that when you have leisure to go into Company that it should always be of the best kind that the place you are in will afford; by this means you will be constantly improving your manners and cultivating your mind while you are relaxing from your books; and good Company will always be found much less expensive than bad. You cannot offer, as an excuse for not using it, that you cannot gain admission there—or that you have not a proper attention paid you in it; this is an apology nemade only by those whose manners are disgusting, or whose character is exceptionable; neither of which I hope, will ever be said of you.

Much more might be said to you, as a young man, upon the necessity of paying a due attention to the moral virtues; but this may, perhaps, more properly be the subject of a future letter when you are about to enter into the world. If you comply with the advise herein given to pay a diligent

attention to your studies, and employ your time of relaxation in proper company, you will find but few opportunities and little inclination, while you continue at an Academy, to enter into those scenes of vice & dissipation which too often present themselves to youth in every place, & particularly in towns. If you are determined to neglect your books, and plunge into extravagance & dissipation nothing I could now say would prevent it—for you must be employed, and if it is not in pursuit of those things which are profitable it must be in pursuit of those which are destructive.

As your time of continuing with Mr Hanson will expire the last of this month, and I understand Doctor Craik[10] has expressed an inclination to take you & Lawrence to board with him, I shall know his determination respecting the matter; and if it is agreeable to him & Mrs Craik to take you I shall be pleased with it, for I am certain that nothing will be wanting on their part to make your situation agreeable & useful to you. Should you live with the Doctor I shall request him to take you both under his peculiar care—provide such clothes for you, from time to time, as he shall judge necessary—and do by you in the same manner as he would if you were his own children; which if he will undertake, I am sensible, from the knowledge which I have of him, and the very amiable Character & disposition of Mrs Craik, that they will spare no proper exertions to make your situation pleasing a[nd] profitable to you; should you or Lawrence, therefore, behave in such a manner as to occasion any complaints being made to me—you may depend upon losing that place which you now have in my affections—and any future hopes you may have from me. But if, on the contrary, your conduct is such as to merit my regard you may always depend upon the warmest attachment & sincere regard of Your affectionate friend & Uncle

Go: Washington

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[10] Washington's old friend Dr. James Craik and his wife Margaret Ewell Craik agreed to board George Steptoe and Lawrence Augustine. The two boys moved to the Craik's Alexandria home in April.

The final surviving letter from Washington to his nephew, dated February 5, 1790, sets plans for George Steptoe and Lawrence Augustine to join their uncle in Philadelphia, the new seat of government, to study at the University of Pennsylvania.

Dear George,

Agreeably to the promise which I gave to you in Virginia, I have made the necessary enquiries respecting the course of studies and expences, which would enable you and your Brother Lawrence to finish your education at the college in this place, provided you are Masters of those books and studies, which you informed me you had passed through.

The enclosed account of studies and expences, which I wish you to return to me, you will see is under the hand of the reverend Dr Smith Provost of the College, and may therefore be relied upon for its accuracy—After you and Laurence have carefully perused and well considered the enclosed statement, I wish you to determine whether you will come or not—If your determination should be in favor of coming on, I must impress this upon you both in the strongest manner viz.— That you come with good dispositions and full resolutions to pursue your studies closely, conform to the established rules and customs of the College—and to conduct yourselves, on all occasions, with decency and propriety. To you, George, I would more particularly address myself at this time, as from your advanced age it may be presumed that such advice as I am about to give will make a deeper impression upon you than upon your Brother, and your conduct may very probably mark the line of his; But, at the same time Laurence must remember that this is equally applicable to him.

Should you enter upon the course of studies here marked out you must consider it as the finishing of your education, and, therefore, as the time is limited, that every hour mispent is lost forever—and that future years cannot compensate for lost days at this period of your life. This reflection must shew the necessity of an unremitting application to your studies. To point out the importance of circumspection in your conduct, it

may be proper to observe that a good moral character is the first essential in a man, and that the habits contracted at your age are generally indelible, and your conduct here may stamp your character through life. It is therefore highly important that you should endeavor not only to be learned but virtuous. Much more might be added to shew the necessity of application and regularity, but, when you must know that without them, you can never be qualified to render service to your country, assistance to your friends, or consolation to your retired moments, nothing further need be said to prove their utility.

As to your clothing, it will, I presume, cost much the same here as in Alexandria—I shall always wish to see you clothed decently and becoming your stations; but I shall ever discountenance extravagance or foppishness in your dress. At all times, and upon all occasions I shall be happy to give you both such marks of my approbation, as your progress and good conduct merit.

If you determine to come on, you had better do it immediately, and Major Washington will furnish you with such money as may be necessary for the Stage and expences from Alexandria to this place.

But I must repeat what I have before enjoined, That you come with good dispositions and determined resolutions to conform to establishments and pursue your studies.

Your Aunt joins me in love to you both, and best wishes to Dr Craik and family. I am dear George, your sincere friend and affectionate Uncle.

G. Washington.

P.S. The Gentleman at whose house you can board, as mentioned in the enclosed paper, is, I am informed, well acquainted with Dr Craik, from which circumstance you may be able to learn something of him.

Although the "enclosed paper" has been lost, it may have directed George Steptoe and his brother to the rooming house run by the Payne family, where they lodged while studying at the university. Both of them graduated in 1792, and the following year George Steptoe married Lucy, one of the Payne daughters. The newlyweds soon settled at Harewood, where the following year Lucy's older widowed sister Dolley Payne Todd and James Madison came to be married.

George Steptoe Washington died from tuberculosis on December 10, 1809. He was 37 years old.

Walter Washington is an attorney who lives and practices law in Charles Town.

"My lot has been cast. I am a son of Virginia. & Her destiny shall be mine."

Logan Osburn[1]
"Avon Bend" Jef Co. Va June 6th, 1861

By P. Douglas Perks

In 1810 the first census taken in Jefferson County, Virginia recorded 11,851 residents. By 1860 Jefferson County was home to 14,535 inhabitants a twenty-three percent increase. Of that number roughly seventy percent were free white citizens. Twenty-six percent of the population was enslaved. There were just over 500 free blacks, about four percent of the total.

Charlestown, the county seat, had finally become the largest town in the county by 1860. Harper's Ferry was a close second in size followed by Shepherd's Town. Bolivar with its growing population of armory workers was next. The village of Middleway was the smallest.[2]

The economic engine of Jefferson County, Virginia was agriculture. In 1860 there were 463 farms in this part of the Lower Valley and they included some of the most productive in the commonwealth. Most were small farms with no more than 500 acres.[3] There were only twelve farms that cultivated more than 500 acres. None were larger than 1,000 acres. As testimony to its rich farm land, Jefferson County was the leading wheat producing county in Virginia in 1860.[4]

The 1860 census report included a demographic snapshot of the United States. One category recorded the number of white men between the ages of 20 and 59, roughly the productive years of a white male in the mid-nineteenth century. In Jefferson County there were 2,125 men in this category.

Jefferson County residents were citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia in November 1860. In less than five years Jefferson County found itself included in the new state of West Virginia. This is the first in a series of articles that will examine the events that occurred in the

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1 Logan Osburn was a successful farmer and owned approximately 1,300 acres in the Kabletown area that included the farms *Avon Bend*, *Avon Hill*, and *Avon Wood*.

2 1810 and 1860 population figures from existing United States census records.

3 1860 census records for Jefferson County indicate that 356 farms (seventy-seven percent) had between 100-500 acres.

4 Jefferson County farms produced 422,514 bushels of wheat in 1860.

transition from Jefferson County, Virginia to Jefferson County, West Virginia.

On Tuesday, November 6th, 1860, 1,857 Jefferson County men went to a polling place to cast their vote. A number of local and statewide political positions needed to be filled, but by far the office that was on everybody's mind was who would be the next man to reside in the White House.

Reflective of the divergent opinions over what course the nation should set, there were four, not the usual two, presidential candidates. With fifty-two percent of votes cast, John Bell and the Constitutional Union Party won in Jefferson County. The Southern Democrats and John Breckinridge garnered twenty-five percent of the vote. Surprisingly Stephen Douglas got the support of twenty-three percent of the electorate.[5] Although Abraham Lincoln and his Republican party received eleven votes in next door neighbor Loudoun County, he got no support in Jefferson County.

At the end of the day Berkeley, Hardy,[6] Loudoun, and Morgan counties joined Jefferson in support of Bell. Clarke, Frederick, and Hampshire[7] threw in with Breckinridge. Aside from a respectable show of support in Jefferson, Douglas gained little traction in the Lower Valley. There were no votes cast for Lincoln.[8] Virginia followed the lead of Jefferson County, and Breckinridge won her fifteen electoral votes.

Bell's victory in Virginia was by the slimmest of margins. John Breckinridge came within a whisker of winning in Virginia.[9] The presidential election of 1860 made it crystal clear that Virginians were equally divided on the States' rights issue—roughly one-half of her people supported Bell and his belief in the Constitution and a continued union of the states and one-half supported Breckinridge and his belief in the sovereignty of a state.

The election of Abraham Lincoln as the 15th president added fuel to the fire of the national debate over the issue of States' rights. The fire eventually burned out of control until it seemed to some that the union of states had failed, and that the proper course was to return to the days when

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5 Most of these votes came from the Harper's Ferry precinct—a long-time Democratic stronghold.

6 Included present day Grant County.

7 Included present day Mineral County.

8 Abraham Lincoln received a total of 1,887 votes in Virginia.

9 In the 1860 presidential election, Bell won Virginia with 74,481 votes to Breckinridge's 74,325 a margin of 156 votes.

sovereign states were joined voluntarily in a confederation. On December 20, 1860 South Carolina became the first state to repeal its approval of the adoption of the Constitution.

Soon Mississippi, then Florida and Alabama followed South Carolina out of the Union. But, the question on the collective mind of a now divided nation was, "How goes Virginia?"

The answer to that question would soon be forthcoming. Governor John Letcher called for a special session of the Virginia General Assembly to be held on Monday, January 14th, 1861. The purpose of the session was to determine Virginia's position on the issue of secession from the Union. The General Assembly decided that Virginia's position would be determined at a state-wide convention to be held on Wednesday, February 13th, 1861. Each county would elect delegates to attend the convention. The convention was empowered to debate the issue of secession and make a proposal which then had to be ratified by a statewide referendum.

According to Millard Bushong, "the most important meeting ever held" in Jefferson County occurred on Monday, January 21st, 1861.[10] On that date the same men who had just two months earlier cast their votes in the presidential election met at the Jefferson County Court House. They assembled at a public meeting to determine who would represent Jefferson County at the upcoming Virginia Secession Convention.

The results of the meeting were announced in the *Alexandria Gazette*:

> *The Southern Rights party in Jefferson Co., Va., has nominated the Hon. Wm. Lucas and Andrew Hunter, esq., as candidates for the State Convention. The Union party in the same county have nominated Col. A. M. Barbour and Logan Osborne, esq.*[11]

The men who supported States' rights were represented by two men well known in Jefferson County. William Lucas was a member of one of Jefferson's oldest families. Born on November 30th, 1800 at *Cold Spring* just south of Shepherd's Town, Lucas studied law under Henry Berry of Shepherd's Town and Judge Henry St. George Tucker in Winchester.

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[10] Millard Bushong, *Historic Jefferson County*, Jefferson Publishing Company, Charles Town, West Virginia, 1972, p 144.

[11] *Alexandria Gazette*, Friday, January 25th, 1861 Page 2, column 2.

Lucas married Sarah Rion and in 1826 they inherited *Rion Hall* and oversaw its expansion. Upon Sarah's death, Lucas married Virginia Bedinger, the daughter of Daniel Bedinger. They were the parents of Judge Daniel Bedinger Lucas. Lucas practiced law first in Shepherd's Town then in Charlestown. He was a delegate to the Virginia General Assembly in 1837-1838 and represented Virginia's 15th Congressional District in 1839-1841. Lucas was a delegate from Jefferson County to the Virginia Constitution Convention held in 1850-1851.[12]

Lucas' running mate was local attorney Andrew Hunter, well known in the county for his role in the prosecution of John Brown. Hunter was born March 22nd, 1804 in Berkeley County the son of Colonel David H. and Elizabeth Pendleton Hunter. Hunter graduated from Hampden-Sydney College and then studied law. In the 1850s, he built *Hunter Hill* on the east border of Charlestown. Hunter practiced first in Harper's Ferry then in Charlestown. He was a Whig presidential elector in 1840, a member of the Virginia General Assembly in 1846, and the Virginia Constitution Convention in 1850-1851.[13]

Lucas and Hunter were running opposite two men who represented the Union Party. Alfred Madison Barbour was born April 17th, 1829 in Culpeper County, Virginia into one of Virginia's oldest families. Barbour was a graduate of the University of Virginia and Harvard University School of Law. He began his practice of law in Charlestown. On December 24th, 1858 Barbour was appointed superintendent of the United States Armory at Harpers Ferry. He was immediately faced with severe budget cuts, but Barbour handled the crisis well and earned good marks from his superiors at the Ordnance Department. In October 1859 at the time of John Brown's attack on the armory, Barbour was in New England visiting the Springfield Armory and the Ames Manufacturing Company. He learned of the raid while visiting Samuel Colt in Hartford, Connecticut. He hurried home to Jefferson County and arrived back in Harper's Ferry on October 21st.

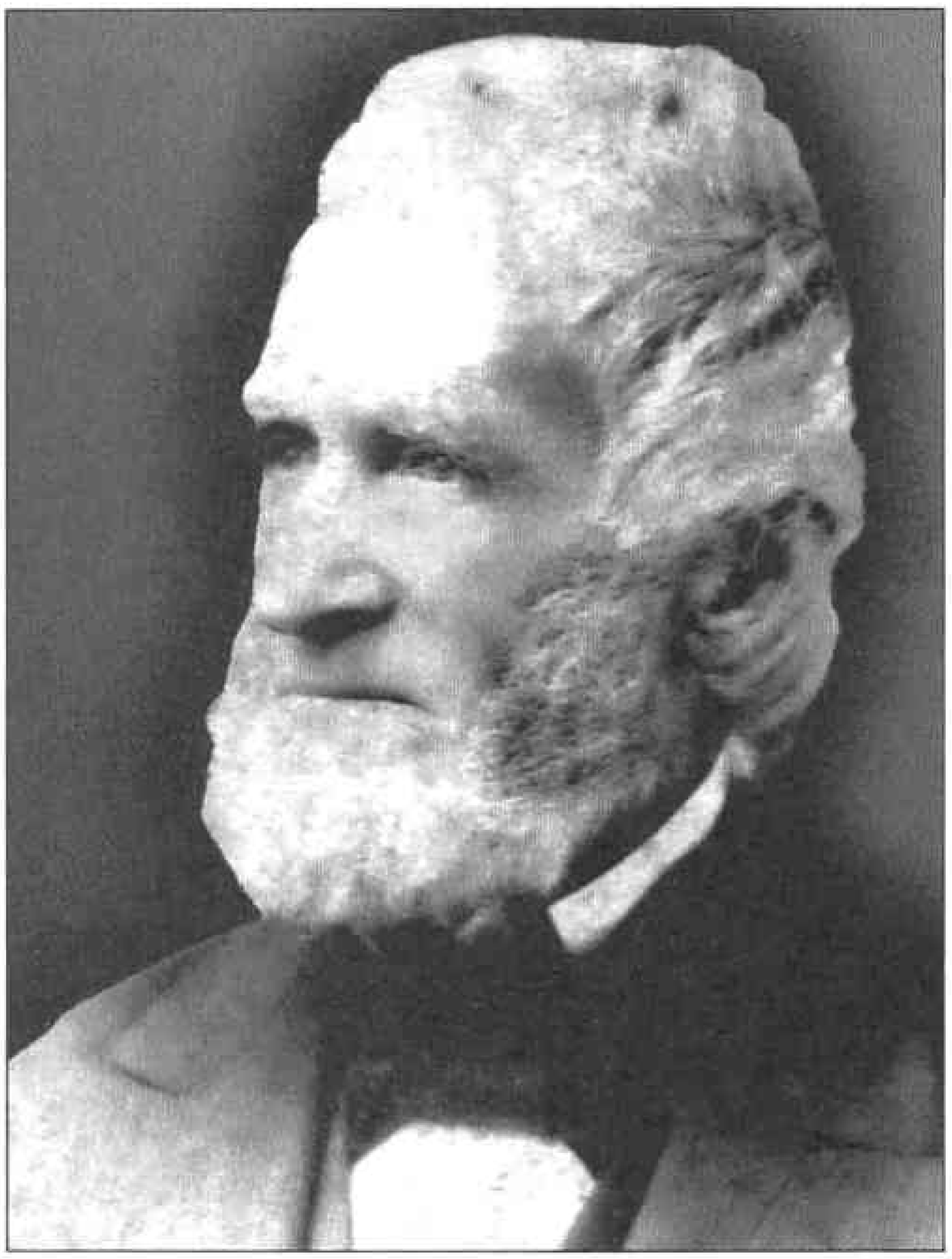
Archibald Kitzmiller, the acting superintendent, Master Armorer Benjamin Mills, and Master Machinist Armistead Ball had all had been held hostage by Brown and his men. Barbour was left with the task of restoring calm and order after the three day siege.[14]

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[12] Bushong p 431.

[13] Bushong p 423.

[14] Merritt Roe Smith, *Harpers Ferry Armory and the New Technology*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1977, p 303-304.



COURTESY OF DON AMOROSO, SHEPHERDSTOWN

Logan Osburn

The other pro-Union candidate was Logan Osburn. Osburn was born March 23rd, 1810 in Loudoun County, Virginia. He received his education at the Catoctin Academy located in Loudoun County. In the 1830s after he married Hanna Leslie the Osburn's moved to Ohio. There he pursued a number of vocations including newspaper editor and hotel operator. After the death of his wife, Osburn returned to Virginia where, in 1840, he married Margaret Chew Osburn. In 1843, the Osburn family moved to Jefferson County. Osburn bought the property in the Kabletown district known as *Avon Bend*. While the house was being renovated Osburn owned and operated a store in Kabletown. The Osburn family moved to *Avon Bend* in 1848. From 1851-1852 he co-owned *Shannondale Springs*. In 1856, Osburn built and moved his family to Avon View. Osburn represented Jefferson County in the Virginia General Assembly from 1857 to 1858.[15]

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[15] Adeline Osburn Palmer's hand-written biography of her uncle Logan Osburn. In the document collection of the Jefferson County Museum, Charles Town, West Virginia.

Monday, February 4th, 1861 was the day designated by the Virginia General Assembly for each county to select its delegates to the Secession Convention. Jefferson's electorate once again went to the polls. Consistent with the results of the presidential election, the men of Jefferson County voiced their support of the Constitution. Barbour and Osburn captured 1,433 votes and 1,350 votes respectively. Hunter's 467 votes and Lucas' total of 430 votes confirmed that in early February 1861 Jefferson County wanted to remain in the Union and would send two men to Richmond who would vote in opposition to secession.[16]

The three month period from the first of February to the end of April in 1861 is arguably the most important 90 days in our Nation's history. During those 2,160 hours, men from around the Commonwealth met to debate and to decide Virginia's fate.

Among the document archives at the Jefferson County Museum is a collection of Logan Osburn's correspondence. Included in the collection are several letters written by Osburn during this critical time in history. Reading Osburn's observation of how events transpired during Virginia's convention affords us a front row seat as history is being made.

The Virginia Secession Convention opened on Wednesday, February 13th, 1861 in Richmond, Virginia. The Mechanics Institute at the foot of Capitol Square was selected to be the convention site. John Janney, delegate from Loudoun County, was elected president of the convention. Janney's opening remarks set the tone for the convention:

> *It is our duty on an occasion like this to elevate ourselves into an atmosphere, in which party passion and prejudice cannot exist—to conduct all our deliberations with calmness and wisdom, and to maintain, with inflexible firmness, whatever position we may find it necessary to assume.*[17]

From the opening day the debate over Virginia's future was both passionate and sometimes heated. On February 21st, 1861 Waitman T. Willey, delegate from Monongalia County, spoke to the convention. As the debate progressed the issue of loyalty had been equated with support for secession. Willey asserted the loyalty of the citizens of his part of the state, western Virginia, and invoked the memory of Virginia's greatest men:

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[16] Bushong p 144.

[17] West Virginia Archives & History. *http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/ordinanceofsecession.html*. September 2nd, 2010.

Sir, there exists not within the broad limits of this great State any people more loyal to its interests than the people of the North-western part of the State—any people readier to defend her rights to the death. When did we not come up to the full demands of justice to the East on all questions? Never; but, sir, we have a record upon this subject—a record written in blood. I stand here representing the sons of sires who fell in your defence in the war of 1812. ...Your soil is consecrated with the memories of the loyalty of the West, because it contains the honored remains of some of her bravest and noblest sons. Why, sir, your honor is her honor; your interest is her interest; your country is her country; your faith shall be her faith; your destiny shall be her destiny.

But sir, it seems that we love the Union too well. That seems to be the measure of our offence. If it be treason to love the Union, we learned that treason from you, sir—we learned it from your great men—from your Jefferson's, from your Madison's, your Monroe's, and from others of equally illustrious dead; and we have learned it from the living, little less distinguished men who are recognized as leaders at the present day, and who need but the consecration of death to place their names on the same roll of immortality. Above all, we learned it from the Father of his Country, the greatest of Virginia's sons—the greatest man that ever stood upon the tide of time. As I passed down by his monument the other day, and gazed upon it with the reverence with which every American heart must contemplate his memory, I could almost imagine that I heard falling from his sacred lips the admonitions he gave us in his Farewell Address, bidding us beware of sectional dissensions, bidding us beware of geographical divisions, and instructing and conjuring us to regard the Union as the palladium of our liberties; to look with distrust upon any man that would teach us any other doctrine.[18]

Willey certainly brought out the big gun by admonishing his fellow delegates to recall the words of The General in his "Farewell Address." Who would argue with that?

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[18] Ibid.

But, argue they did. Vivid proof of the pressure brought to bear on pro-Union delegates is clear in the following letter sent by Logan Osburn to his father-in-law Balaam Osburn who was back home in Kabletown. The letter has been transcribed just as it was written on March 11th, 1861 while Logan was still in Richmond. There are no changes to spelling or grammar:

Great excitement continues to exist in our councils. The outside purpose is exceedingly offensive. The sensation dispatches repulsive to conservatism. All manner of means resorted to affect our action. Threats have been made to drive our body from the convention hall at the point of the bayonet if we fail to pass an ordinance of secession. We are threatened with civil war, by timultuos uprising of the people, if we hold out much longer in our efforts to preserve the union.

A delegate of high respectability approached Robt Y. Conrad & myself last night as we walked the hall of the hotel & inquired of Mr. Conrad, if any important vote would be taken today? And assigned as the reason of his inquiry that his constituents were about taking steps to withdraw him from the convention, with a view of defeating its ultimate action, & if it was commenced no one could tell where it would end. He desired of course to go home and arrest it. T J Randolph of Albemarle is here & says the entire county is now for secession. That they do not look to the action of this convention for any relief, but the spring election will secure a great majority of secessionists to the legislature. They will then call an extra session thereof, order an election for another convention, secede &c. &c. You must therefore lookout for reliable union candidates for the legislature.

I really think the secession party are <u>seriously</u> <u>damaged</u>. It cannot be possible that sensible men (as I know many of them are) of sane minds could rejoice (as they do publicly) about the hotels at every indication of collision between the federal authorities and those of the seceded states. Rumours have reached here this evening that the authorities at Washington will withdraw Major Anderson from Fort Sumter & (I trust in

God it is true) it is regarded as a signal of peace & really the secessionists are gloomy and desponding & regard it as a trick to delude & deceive the people.

Wm C. Rives delivered an address at the African church in support of the report of the peace congress at Washington on Friday night last, which was characterized by distinguished ability and irresistible arguments. He is an accomplished orator and gentleman. Geo W. Summers commenced his exposition & defence of the report before the convention to day. He looks & talks like Hector, reasons cogently argues with sledge hammer force & clinches it with ten penny wrought nails as he goes. He gave way to a motion to adjourn without finishing will resume in the morning and has already proven to every man open to conviction that better guarantees are provided for the institutions & interests of the South by the support of the peace conference than by Crittendon's amendments. I spent an evening at I. M. Betts last week, I regretted your absence. His independent manner of speaking, honesty, candor, & frankness almost captivated me. He is possessed of an extra-ordinary mind, unequaled simplicity of manner—and conversational talent. One of Virginia's noblest sons & one whom she will yet rejoice to honor. I am proud of his acquaintance, for it has entirely removed an ill-founded prejudice I honestly entertained. His views are not ultra, but based upon sound constitutional doctrine, maintained by conclusive argument. Yours &c.

"Threats have been made to drive our body from the convention hall at the point of the bayonet." With one sentence Osburn communicates to his family the serious nature of the convention's proceedings. Surely there was similar sentiment on behalf of pro-Union forces. But, Osburn affords us the opportunity to view the frenzy that swirled around the convention delegates, and he also made it clear that regardless of the pressure the pro-Union contingent was still holding strong.

There is clear evidence that pro-Union delegates dominated the secession convention. After weeks of debate the question of secession was finally put to a vote. On April 4th, 1861 an ordinance of secession was proposed and was soundly rejected. Forty-five delegates voted in favor of

the ordinance and eighty-five opposed it. True to their commitment made when elected, both Barbour and Osburn cast votes in opposition to secession. Following Jefferson's lead, the Berkeley, Clarke, Frederick, Hampshire, Hardy, and Loudoun delegations all voted "NO." The only "YES" vote from our area was cast by John Orrick from Morgan County.[19]

But delegates who assumed that the matter had been decided were in error. The convention did not adjourn. Instead, they continued to debate.

On April 4th, the eyes of the country were focused on Richmond, Virginia. Everyone awaited the answer to the question: "How goes Virginia?" After Virginia's resounding support of the Union and the Constitution, the hand on the anxiety gauge moved back a few notches. But the respite was to be short-lived.

At 4:30 A.M. on April 12th, 1861 the country's collective sigh of relief suddenly became a sharp gasp of distress. The Confederate forces at Charleston, South Carolina fired on the Union garrison at Fort Sumter. In response on April 15th President Abraham Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 three month volunteers, *to include 2340 men from Virginia*, to put down the "insurrection" in South Carolina.

With this news, the deliberations at the Virginia Secession Convention took a different tack. In a letter written on April 17th to his wife, Logan Osburn reflected both the mood at the convention and also the mood of pro-Union delegates:

> *It is now between ten and eleven oclock at night and the convention is still in session. I paired off with a gentle-man of the opposite side for the night to enable me to drop you a few lines and try to get a little sleep.*
>
> *The Convention went into secret session on tuesday, and its injunctions sealed the lips and silenced the pens of the whole body so far as its action is concerned until secrecy is removed.*
>
> *Whilst I will not divulge our actions I feel constrained to say that the last three days will form an epoch in my life that I fear I will never be able to refer to with composure.*

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[19] Encyclopedia Virginia. *http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Virginia_Convention_of_1861*. September 2nd, 2010.

I have often said to you in great seriousness in the last six months that I feared the days of our republic were about numbered, & that the Sun of our National liberty was about to set. It is with me now no longer a matter of doubt.

You will see by the papers that the authorities of our State have already inaugurated a revolution by the seizure of public property, vessels in our harbours, Gosport Navy Yard & Ex Gov. Wise told me to day a dispatch had been sent for the seizure of the armory at Harper's Ferry. Andrew Hunter is here, and told me he left home yesterday and all was quiet there then.

The City is full of strangers brought hither I suppose by the circular to which I have Heretofore alluded. All precipitation and Secessionists thrown upon us just as the action was made on Fort Sumpter, evidently made at the suggestion of Roger A. Pryor (who is there) with a view of drawing some rash act out of the President at Washington (like the proclamation) to spend its full force upon this Convention at a critical moment of its deliberations and at the very time of the assemblage of the multitude of secessionists.

The whole scheme was evidently matured long ago, and but a small part of it is yet developed, and that the least offensive of it.

Lincoln has committed an outrage on the Rights of the great, the gallant, and the conservative Union Party of Virginia, for which posterity must ever hold him responsible, the consequences of which will not only entirely destroy that noble party but rear over it a Red Republican Revolutionary party that will plunge our glorious country and recently happy people into all the horrors of civil war. Had he only evacuated the Forts Sumpter and Pickens (for which he had no use) and given positive assurances to our commissioners that his policy towards the seceded states would be entirely pacific.

I have no doubt the last card of the secessionists would have been played out and we could then have adjusted all

difficulties and thoroughly restored the union of all the states. He cannot be so blind as not to see a strong revolutionary spirit manifesting itself among the people. Why did he not therefore endeavor to cooperate with the conservatism of the Convention & work out the solution of this difficulty?

April 17th} In view of all the surroundings, I think I will probably come home in a few days. I am well aware of the intense excitement necessarily existing in your midst. I presume I cannot remain but a few days. I desire an interview with the Governor (Letcher) this morning to ascertain the condition of H. Ferry. I rejoice ~~you~~ that you are at home. If you were here you would be deranged, almost. I am no company either man or beast. I have sought consolation in the solitude of my chamber and in the Gents parlour, in long walks when an opportunity is offered, but without avail. The Solemn, Sad, and desponding countenances that characterize the union men in the hall of the Convention clearly indicates their wounded pride and patriotic devotion to this country's honour and the people's liberty. Brave men with stout hearts and trembling voices, with tears rolling down their cheeks, have stood up nobly in defence of the rights of the people, and earnestly appealed to their brother members to save them & theirs from the dim calamities of civil war, but in vain.[20]

Undoubtedly this is what Osburn had been sworn to neither speak nor write about:

Ordinance of Secession of Virginia

AN ORDINANCE to repeal the ratification of the Constitution of the United State of America by the State of Virginia and to resume all the rights and powers granted under said Constitution.

Now, therefore, we, the people of Virginia, do declare and ordain, That the ordinance adopted by the people of this State

[20] Logan Osburn to Margaret Chew Osburn, April 17th, 1861, Richmond, Virginia. In the document collection of the Jefferson County Museum, Charles Town, WV.

in convention on the twenty-fifth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight, whereby the Constitution of the United States of America was ratified, and all acts of the General Assembly of this State ratifying and adopting amendments to said Constitution, are hereby repealed and abrogated; that the union between the State of Virginia and the other States under the Constitution aforesaid is hereby dissolved, and that the State of Virginia is in the full possession and exercise of all the rights of sovereignty which belong and appertain to a free and independent State.

And they do further declare, That said Constitution of the United States of America is no longer binding on any of the citizens of this State.

This ordinance shall take effect and be an act of this day, when ratified by a majority of the votes of the people of this State cast at a poll to be taken thereon on the fourth Thursday in May next, in pursuance of a schedule hereafter to be enacted.[21]

In a fortnight the winds of fate changed direction. This time when the question was called the support for secession was there. On April 17th the delegates cast eighty-eight votes in favor of secession and fifty-five votes in opposition. The caveat was that the convention's vote must be ratified by a popular referendum to be held on May 23rd, 1861.[22]

The Lower Valley delegates held firm their belief that Virginia should remain in the union. With two exceptions they each cast a "NO" vote. Alfred Barbour had left the convention and had returned to Harper's Ferry —he would play an important role in the disposition of the U. S. Armory at Harper's Ferry.[23] Johnson Orrick again cast a "YES" vote.[24] By the time of the referendum on May 23rd, Virginia had left the Union and was preparing for war. Militia companies from the Valley were on the march for Harper's Ferry where they were mustered into the Provisional Army

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[21] West Virginia Archives & History
[22] Encyclopedia Virginia
[23] Smith, p 314.
[24] West Virginia Archives & History.

of Virginia. The vote on the 23rd became a mere formality as 132,201 Virginians confirmed their support of secession. Just 37,451 votes, many from the western counties of Virginia, were cast in support of remaining in the union.[25]

Only a total of 1,178 votes were cast in Jefferson County on May 23rd. Many of the men who had voted in November and again in February were now on the drill field. Of that total 813 men supported the secession resolution. There were only 365 "NO" votes.[26]

What caused men who so fervently supported remaining in the Union in February to change their mind in May? At the risk of oversimplifying I will offer one opinion. On June 6th, 1861 Logan Osburn was at his home *Avon Bend*. He wrote a letter to his good friend and fellow convention delegate Robert Y. Conrad who lived in Winchester. At first Osburn talks about his wheat crop. Then prophetically he explains his change of heart:

> *"I have earnestly (and perhaps obstinately) opposed the secession of Virginia for I voted against its ratification. I have regarded it as mischievous in its tendency, and destructive in its consequences to our best interests. Socially, politically and commercially. My opposition was based upon what I honestly believed to be my conscientious conviction of duty. But my opinions have been overruled by a large majority of the freemen of my state. My opposition is ended. My lot has been cast. I am a son of Virginia. & Her destiny shall be mine."*

P. Douglas Perks, a Native of Jefferson County, is Director of the Charles Town Library and Assistant Curator of the Jefferson County Museum. He is a frequent speaker on Jefferson County History, the author of "Mr. Jefferson's County" in The Guardian, *and a contributing author to* The Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society.

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[25] Bushong p 145.
[26] Ibid.

Summer Picnic



Beallair

The picnic was at Beallair, the house built by Thomas Beall in the late 1700s. It was the home of George Washington's great nephew Colonel Lewis Washington, whose mother was a Beall. Lewis added the classic front to the house after he moved there in 1840.

Colonel Washington was taken hostage by John Brown's men in 1859 and later testified at Brown's trial. Brown's men took weapons that belonged to The General from the home.

The house was completely restored by Mr. and Mrs. Donley Kennard after they purchased it in 1980. It is now owned by The Wormald Companies and is used as a clubhouse for their housing development. We thank them for the opportunity to have the picnic in such a great location in front of a beautiful Washington home.

Everyone had just about finished eating when a storm suddenly appeared. The heavy wind forced everyone to head for home as what was left of the food was blowing away. Luckily, the devilled eggs had already been consumed.





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