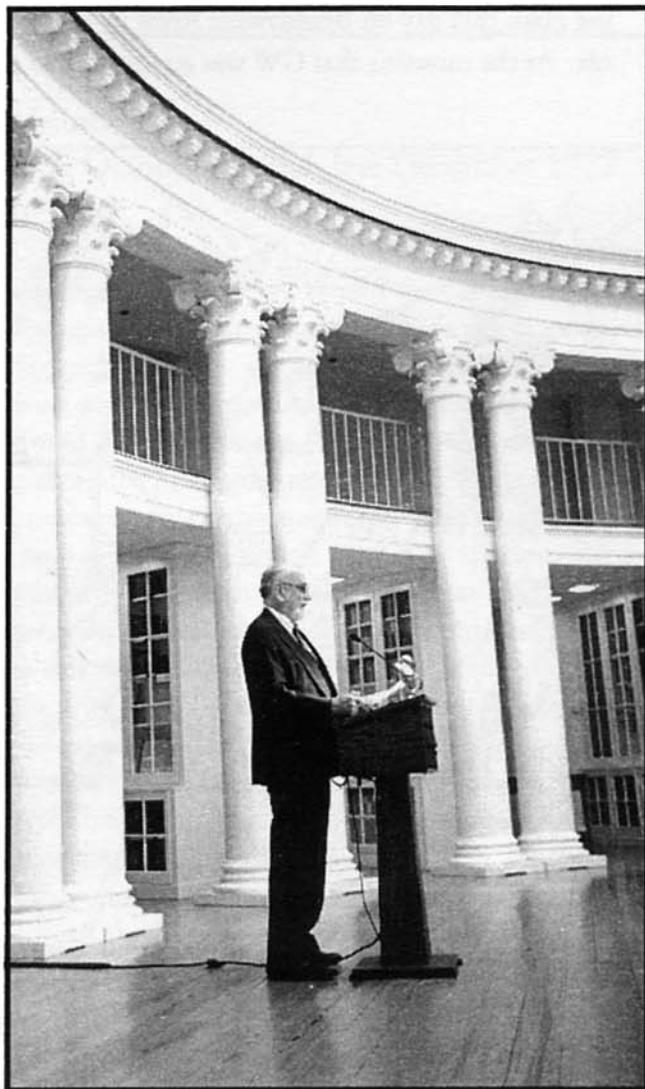


The Papers of
George Washington **NEWS**

Number 1 *Inaugural Issue* 1999

ABBOT OPENS BICENTENNIAL EXHIBITS



W. W. Abbot addresses a capacity crowd in the Dome Room of the University of Virginia's Rotunda. (Photo by Stephanie Gross)

Philander D. Chase
Editor in chief

It seems fitting that the bicentennial of George Washington's death falls on the eve of the millennium. As people remember Washington's contributions to America in particular and democratic society in general, they are reminded that future progress is built on the past achievements of leaders like Washington.

The exhibits "A Concert of Mourning: The Death of George Washington" and "In His Own Hand: Editing the Papers of George Washington" were presented by the Papers of George Washington and the Associates of the University of Virginia Library to honor the bicentennial of Washington's death. Editor Emeritus W. W. Abbot opened the exhibits on 11 February 1999 in the Dome Room of the University of Virginia with his lecture, "The Young George Washington and His Papers." A keepsake edition of his lecture and catalogs of both exhibits also have been published. By participating in a variety of activities to honor Washington's passing, the Papers of George Washington continues to preserve Washington's memory, ensuring that Washington will retain his prominence in centuries to come.

This inaugural newsletter is yet another means to inform and educate readers about the project's continuing efforts to transcribe, edit, research, and publish the thousands of letters and documents sent to and from Washington. With nearly twenty more years until completion, the project looks forward to the new opportunities the 21st century will bring.

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Papers' Projects

Summary

With the completion of the *Diaries* and the *Colonial, Confederation, and Retirement* series of Washington's papers, the project's editors are now focusing on the two largest series that remain, the *Revolutionary War* and *Presidential* series. Other initiatives include transferring the project's manuscript catalog from index cards to an electronic database that will be accessible on the Papers of George Washington website and producing a CD-ROM version of Washington's papers in cooperation with the Packard Humanities Institute of Los Altos, California.

We have received page proofs from the press for volume 10 of the *Revolutionary War Series* and volume 9 of the *Presidential Series*. These volumes are currently being revised and indexed. The project's editors are also in the process of editing volumes 11, 12, and 13 of the *Revolutionary War Series* and volumes 10 and 11 of the *Presidential Series*. The following summaries highlight some of the most prominent themes and interesting finds in these upcoming volumes.

Revolutionary War Series

Volume 11

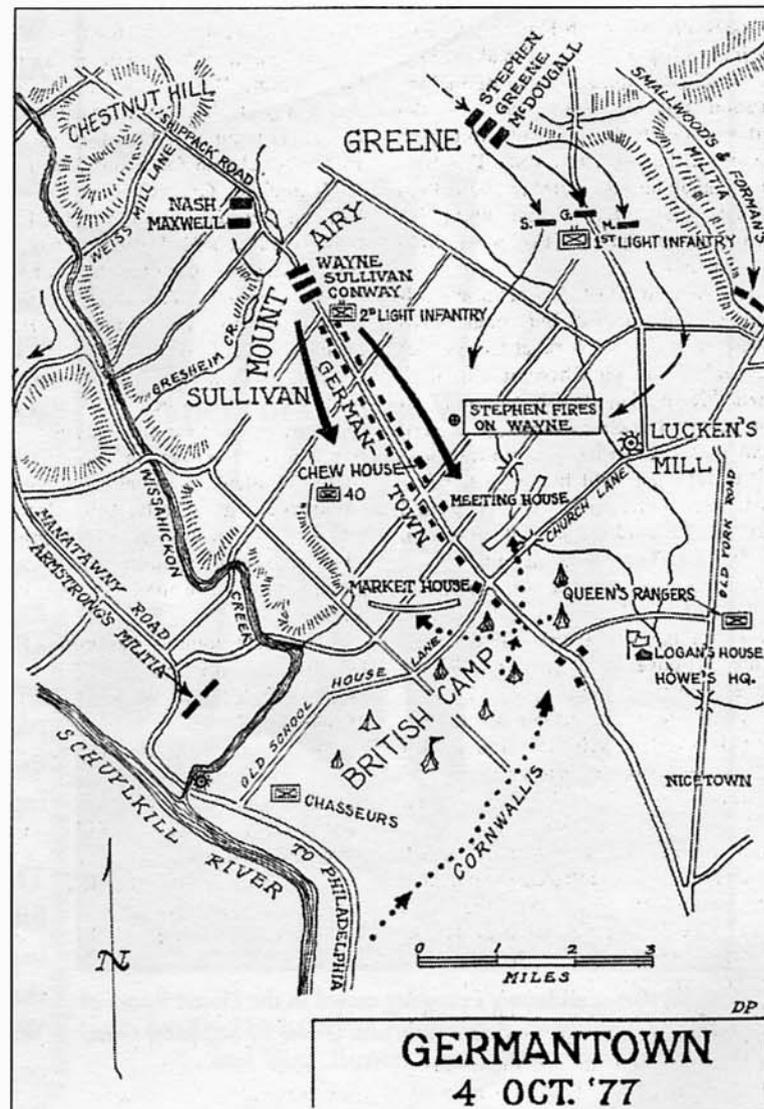
Late August through late October
1777

Volume 11 of the *Revolutionary War Series* covers what may have been militarily the most active period of GW's career. From the British landing at Elk Ferry, Md., on 25 August until the end of October the American army was in almost constant motion, fighting two major battles and several smaller engagements, as well as engaging in an ongoing struggle for control of the Delaware River. Sir William Howe's initial object was the capture of Philadelphia, which he achieved on 26 September after marching north from Head of Elk to defeat GW's army at the Battle of Brandywine on 11

September. After beating back an American surprise attack at Germantown on 4 October, Howe turned his attention to opening the river route to Philadelphia. Due to the brave resistance of American garrisons at Fort Mifflin, Pa., and Fort Mercer, N.J., however, he found this an exceedingly difficult task.

Among the several letters in GW's correspondence dated 11 September, almost all relate to the battle taking place that day on Brandywine River in Pennsylvania. At the moment that GW was attempting to fend

off the British advance on 11 September, almost all relate to the battle taking place that day on Brandywine River in Pennsylvania. At the moment that GW was attempting to fend



Battle of Germantown Map (from *Encyclopedia of the American Revolution* by Mark Mayo Boatner III, 1966.)

off Howe's advancing forces, however, Martha Washington's son John Parke Custis was at his aunt and uncle's estate in Eltham, Va., writing a letter to GW. On the rear of Custis's letter is a small note in another hand: "My love the silver cup I mentioned to you in my letter by the last post—Wt 113 ouz" (Virginia Historical Society, Richmond). This is one of only two surviving letters from Martha Washington, who also was visiting Eltham, to her husband, and its existence was unknown until discovered in preparation for this volume.

-Edward G. Lengel

All quoted documents include a citation.
DLC:GW indicates that the original document is in the Washington Papers at the Library of Congress.
Editors often use the abbreviation GW when referring to George Washington.

Volume 12

Late October through late December 1777

During the late fall of 1777 GW had to decide several important issues. First, should the Continental army attempt to duplicate Horatio Gates's recent victory at Saratoga through an assault on the British forces ensconced in and around Philadelphia? If not, where would it be best for the Americans to establish winter quarters? The lengthy replies that GW's generals sent him in response to his queries on these subjects, which were often littered with historical allusions to the military campaigns of both ancient and modern generals, make for some of the most interesting letters in this volume. In the end GW decided to follow the majority of his generals in their contention that he should not undertake a winter campaign against the British. He did not, however, agree with the majority in the belief that it would be best for the army to winter between Reading and Lancaster, Pa. Nor did he adhere to the opinion of one-third of his general officers that Wilmington, Del., was a suitable place to canton the army. GW finally decided to station the Continental army at Valley Forge in order to protect the people of the countryside from British ravages.

Volume 12 also includes a fascinating exchange of letters between GW and Brigadier General James Mitchell Varnum in late November 1777. With the British closing in on Fort Mercer at Red Bank, N.J., Varnum reported in his letters of 20 and 21 November to GW (found in DLC:GW) that in

preparation for the evacuation of the fort his soldiers had spread a layer of gunpowder all over the installation. Upon reconsideration, Varnum and his fellow officers decided that, because the least accident within or the first shell from outside the fort would blow up both the fort and its garrison, it should be evacuated immediately. When GW received word that Fort Mercer had been abandoned even before the British had come into sight and that its powder had been wasted in such an ill-considered manner, he testily replied to Varnum on 22 November that he was "at a loss to determine upon which Principle the Powder was strewed over the fort of Red bank as I expected that if an Evacuation was found necessary it might be brought off and if that was impracticable I conceived the best mode of destroying it was to throw it into the River unless it was determined to blow up the Works with it which could never be effected by the mode which was adopted" (DLC:GW).

-Robert F. Haggard

For more information on the *Revolutionary War* and other series, as well as links to on-line versions of the bicentennial exhibits and other useful information on Washington, please visit

The Papers of George Washington on the World Wide Web at

<http://>

www.virginia.edu/gwpapers

Volume 10

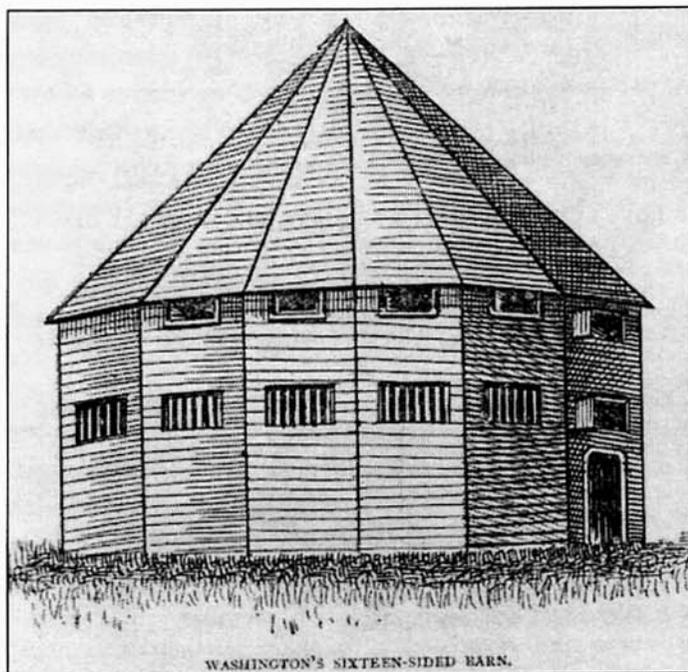
March through 15 August 1792

This volume includes such topics as the arrangements for a new expedition, under Anthony Wayne, against hostile Indian nations in the Northwest Territory; the visit of Iroquois chiefs to Philadelphia; the first congressional investigation, which investigated Major General Arthur St. Clair's defeat on 4 November 1791; the first use of the presidential veto; a boundary dispute with the British on Lake Champlain; the establishment of the U.S. Mint; and GW's contemplation of retiring after his first term.

In considering appointments for the command of the new military expedition, GW prepared a memorandum sometime around 9 March 1792, which is interesting for its candid opinions of some of the generals who had fought under him during the Revolutionary War: "Major General [Benjamin] Lincoln. Sober, honest, brave and sensible, but infirm; past the vigor of life . . . Majr Genl Baron de Steuben[.] Sensible, Sober & brave; well acquainted with Tactics & with the arrangement & discipline of an Army. High in his ideas of Subordination—impetuous in his temper—ambitious—and a foreigner. . . . Majr General (by Brevet) [Anthony] Wayne. More active & enterprizing than judicious & cautious. No œconomist it is feared. Open to flattery—vain—easily imposed upon—and liable to be drawn into scrapes. Too indulgent (the effect perhaps of some of the causes just mentioned) to his Officers & men. Whether sober—or a little addicted to the bottle, I know not. Majr Genl (by Brevet) [George] Weedon. Not supposed to be an Officer of much resource though not deficient of a competent share of understanding; rather addicted to ease & pleasure; & no enemy it is said to the bottle; never has had his name brot forward on this acct. . . . Brigadier General [Daniel] Morgan. Has been fortunate, & has met with eclat. Yet there are different opinions with respect to his abilities as an Officer. He is accused of using improper means to obtain certificates from the

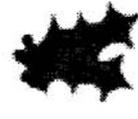
Soldiers—It is said he has been [(]if the case is not so now) intemperate; that he is troubled with a palpitation which often lays him up. And it is not denied that he is illiterate. Brigadier General [Otho Holland] Williams. Is a sensible man, but not without vanity. No doubt, I believe, is entertained of his firmness—and it is thought he does not want activity . . . But a material objection to him is delicate health . . . Brigadier General Rufus Putnam. Possesses a strong mind—and is a discreet man. No question has ever been made (that has come to my knowledge) of his want of firmness. In short, there is nothing conspicuous in his character—And he is but little known out of his own state, and a narrow circle. Brigadier Genl (by brevet) [Charles Cotesworth] Pinckney. . . . In this Gentleman many valuable qualities are to be found. He is of unquestionable bravery—Is a man of strict honor, erudition & good sense: and it is said has made *Tactic's* a study . . . The capture of Charleston put an end to his *Military Services*" (New York State Library, Albany). After much deliberation, GW appointed Anthony Wayne to command the new expedition.

-Mark A. Mastromarino



Washington's sixteen-sided barn (from
*Some Old Historic Landmarks of
Virginia & Maryland* by W. H.
Snowden, 1901)

A Holiday Recipe



The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union in its 1990 annual report featured an article entitled "Christmas at Mount Vernon." One of the more elaborate holiday dishes included in this article was the "Christmas pie," a dish served regularly for the Washingtons' holiday dinner. In a letter written to David Humphreys the day after Christmas in 1786, for example, George Washington wrote in reference to Humphreys's absence from Mount Vernon on Christmas day, "Although I lament the effect, I am pleased at the cause which has deprived us of your aid in the attack of Christmas Pyes. We had one yesterday on which all the company (and pretty numerous it was) were hardly able to make an impression" (see the *Confederation Series* 4:477-81 of the *Papers of George Washington*).

The following recipe for "Yorkshire Christmas pie" is from the 1765 edition of one of the most popular cookbooks in eighteenth-century England and the colonies and one that Martha Washington owned, Mrs. Hannah Glasse's *The Art of Cookery*. This fascinating cookbook is one of the many rare books available for perusal in the Special Collections Department of Alderman Library at the University of Virginia.

"To make a Yorkshire Christmas pie.

FIRST make a good standing crust, let the wall and bottom be very thick; bone a turkey, a goose, a fowl, a partridge, and a pigeon. Season them all very well, take half an ounce of mace, half an ounce of nutmegs, a quarter of an ounce of cloves, and half an ounce of black pepper, all beat fine together, two large spoonfuls of salt, and then mix them together. Open the fowls all down the back, and bone them; first the pigeon, then the partridge, cover them; then the fowl, then the goose, and then the turkey, which must be large; season them all well first, and lay them in the crust, so as it will look only like a whole turkey; then have a hare ready cased, and wiped with a clean cloth. Cut it to pieces; that is, joint it; season it, and lay it as close as you can on one side; on the other side woodcocks, moor game, and what sort of wild fowl you can get. Season them well, and lay them close; put at least four pounds of butter into the pie, then lay on your lid, which must be a very thick one, and let it be well baked. It must have a very hot oven, and will take at least four hours."

Staff Activities

- In the early spring Philander D. Chase hosted two presentations in the Charlottesville community: a special screening of *George Washington, Founding Father*, from the Arts and Entertainment Network's Biography Series, and a slide show and lecture with William Rasmussen as part of the Fifth Annual Virginia Festival of the Book.
- Frank Grizzard at the end of 1998 chaired a session on Washington's death at Mount Vernon for the kickoff of Mount Vernon's commemoration of the 200th anniversary of Washington's death, and he discussed "Editing *The Papers of George Washington*" at the Greensville County Historical Society in his hometown of Emporia, Virginia, in September 1999. His article entitled "George Washington and Nineteenth-Century Culture" has been accepted for publication in the *Encyclopedia of the United States in the Nineteenth Century*.
- Edward G. Lengel gave a presentation on "The George Washington Papers and the Battle of Brandywine" to the American Revolution Round Table (AART) of the District of Columbia's meeting in September.
- In celebration of Washington's birthday, Mark A. Mastromarino read *The Joke's on George*, by Michael O. Tunnell with pictures by Kathy Osborn, to students at B. F. Yancey Elementary School in Esmont, Virginia. The Papers donated books about Washington to the school library.
- Christine S. Patrick gave a presentation on "Washington and the Constitution" at Mount Vernon's inaugural *George Washington Teacher Institute* held on the estate in July. In October she discussed "George Washington: An Advocate for a Strong Central Government" during the College Hour at Piedmont Virginia Community College.
- Together with the James Madison and the William James Papers, the Papers of George Washington hosted the Association for Documentary Editing's annual conference, held October 7-9 in Charlottesville.

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The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association
Robert C. Neibling
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Joseph Rubinfine
Guthrie Sayen
Samuel N. Stayer

Announcements

Dorothy Twohig's one-volume *Abridgment of Washington's Diaries* has been published.

Volumes 1 and 2 of *The Diaries of George Washington* are now out of print. Requests for these volumes must be made directly to the University Press of Virginia.

With the recent publication of the 3d and 4th volumes of the *Retirement Series (1797-1799)*, this series is now complete.

New hires/Promotions: Robert Haggard and Christine Patrick were appointed assistant editors in January; Frank Grizzard was promoted to associate professor of the UVA general faculty in February; Lisa Medders became the project's copy editor in March; and Libby Murphy was hired as the administrative/editorial assistant in June 1999.

Copies of "In His Own Hand: Editing the Papers of George Washington" and "A Concert Of Mourning: The Death of George Washington" catalogs are available. Requests can be made via e-mail at "gwpapers@virginia.edu" or by calling the project at (804) 924-3569. A small donation would be appreciated.

Major funding for *The Papers of George Washington* is provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, as well as by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association and the University of Virginia. Your gift, regardless of size, is important to the project in enabling it to meet the matching requirements of many of its grants and to maintain its high standards of quality and productivity.

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Staff Farewells

Mary Anne Andrei is now pursuing a doctoral degree in the History of Science at the University of Minnesota. We are grateful to her for designing and installing the bicentennial exhibits.

Marlena DeLong is now living in Fredericksburg and continuing her research on Madame de Lafayette. We extend a special thanks to her for her work on transcriptions and the pamphlet file.

Mark A. Mastromarino is now completing his doctoral dissertation on American agricultural fairs for the College of William and Mary. We greatly appreciate his editing, annotating, and researching of volumes in the *Presidential Series*.

Newsletter staff: Lisa Medders
and Libby Murphy

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