

THE PAPERS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON



Number 13

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2012

Gifts for the General

George Washington was known in part for the generosity of his character. He never gave ostentatiously, but his charity was persistent. Throughout his lifetime, Washington contributed money and goods in support of the poor, widows, orphans, educational institutions, and other worthy causes. But he often got as good as he gave. While Washington commanded the Continental Army from 1775 to 1783, his headquarters buzzed with activity from the comings and goings of officers, soldiers, politicians, dignitaries, and men, women and children bearing humble gifts. Every item he received, no matter how small, was recorded in his Revolutionary War expense account book.

In springtime, local farmers often visited headquarters bearing bundles of asparagus for the general's table, as word got around that he was fond of this vegetable. Farmers, their wives, servants, and small children also brought baskets of items such as cheese, nuts, peas and strawberries—and were handsomely tipped by the general. Washington particularly enjoyed fish, and he commonly received gifts of fresh or salted blackfish, rockfish, sturgeon, shad, and varieties of seafood. Successful hunters proudly supplied him with venison.

When ships from the West Indies docked

in North American ports, Washington's friends took care to secure delicacies such as oranges, lemons, and other tropical fruit, and sent them by express for George and Martha's enjoyment. Other gifts from the tropics were more unusual, such as a sea turtle that Major General Philemon Dickinson forwarded to Washington on June 10, 1778.

Washington was also always on the lookout for good wine, especially his favorite Madeira. On July 9, 1778, Providence, R.I. merchant John Brown wrote to the general that he had a stake in a prize brig captured by a Rhode Island privateer that had recently arrived in Boston. The brig was laden with 29,000 gallons of wine, so Brown carefully selected 157 gallons of the best Madeira and sent it to Washington as what must have been an especially welcome gift.

Admirers sometimes went so far as to procure fine horses as gifts for a man who was widely reputed to be the best horseman in Virginia. On 24 Nov. 1778, the Virginia general assembly voted to purchase and send to GW "four of the finest geldings that can be procured" in the Commonwealth. GW's friend Alexander Spotswood visited race courses in the spring of 1779 to procure the steadiest and sleekest animals he could find to bear the general through his arduous campaigns.

There was no end to the variety of gifts with which appreciative Americans and visit-

ing diplomats plied General Washington. He received books, wax, quill pens, pickled oysters, pistols, and pieces of finery for his uniform—in short, everything imaginable. On May 22, 1779, Spanish agent to the United States Juan de Miralles sent to GW a box of “trifles” that included items such as guava fruit, chocolate, crystal flasks, sweetmeats, and Havana cigars. There is no record of whether GW ever lit up and smoked one of the cigars, although the image inspires the imagination.

Some gifts left GW feeling rather awkward. On May 28, 1779, GW acknowledged receipt from Maryland estate owner Daniel Bowers of a large buffalo hide. While expressing his gratitude to Bowers, GW privately wrote to Brig. Gen. Mordecai Gist that such gifts “rather distress than please” when coming from strangers of unknown character. Fortunately, an inquiry by Gist into Bowers’s personal history established that he was an ardent patriot, allowing GW to keep the buffalo hide without embarrassment. Whether GW ever lounged on the hide or used it to furnish his quarters unfortunately remains unknown.

—Edward G. Lengel



Education and Washington’s Will

In December 1795 GW, understanding that a plan was “on foot for establishing a Seminary of learning upon an extensive scale in the Federal city” and wishing to assist the project, wrote to Edmund Randolph to ask that he and James Madison “endeavor to mature the measures which will be proper for me to pursue in order to bring my designs into view.” He enclosed to Randolph

“for consideration” an excerpt from his will as it existed at that time, wondering if “the enclosed, or sentiments similar to them are proper to be engrafted in the communications which are to be made to the Legislature of Virginia, or to the Gentleman who are named as Trustees of the Seminary.” The enclosure shows quite clearly that GW saw his will as a public as well as a private document, and it reveals his belief in the importance of education.

—David Hoth

Extract from GW’s Will

It has always been a source of serious reflection, and of sincere regret with me, to see the youth of these United States sent to foreign countries for the purpose of education (perhaps, before their minds are formed, or they have any correct ideas of the blessings of the country they leave)—Where, besides contracting habits of dissipation and extravagance—principles unfriendly to republican government, and to the rights of man, may be imbibed and found difficult to eradicate.

For these reasons, it has long been an ardent wish of mine, to see some plan adopted by which a general & liberal diffusion of learning could be dissipated, systematically, through all parts of this rising empire; thereby, and as far the nature of the thing will admit, and in itself would be proper, to do away local attachments, and state prejudices from our public councils.

Hoping that so desirable an object will ‘ere long be viewed in the important light I think it merits, my mind is unable to contemplate any measure more likely to effect it than the establishment of a University; where young men from *all parts* of the United States (after having passed through a preparative

course of education) may, under Professors of the first reputation in the different branches of literature—arts & Sciences—complete their studies; and get fixed in the principles of the Constitution—understand the Laws—and the true interests & policy of their Country, as well as the professions they mean to pursue. And moreover (which is not the least, among the advantages of such a plan) by forming acquaintances with each other in early life, avoid those local prejudices & habitual jealousies which, when carried to excess, are never failing sources of disquietude in the public mind, and but too pregnant of mischievous consequences.

Under these impressions I give and bequeath for ever, the shares I hold under an Act of the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Virginia in the navigations of the Rivers Potomac and James¹ towards the endowment of a University to be established within the limits of the Federal district, provided a well digested plan for the same shall be adopted for the purpose before the year 1800. If not then &ca &ca &ca.

AD, DLC:GW.

1. At this point GW placed an asterisk, which referenced the following note: "The shares in the James River navigation to be otherwise disposed of." In Jan. 1785 GW was given fifty shares of Potomac River Company stock and one hundred shares of James River Company stock by "An act for vesting in George Washington, esq. a certain interest in the companies established for opening and extending the navigation of Powtownmack and James rivers." When he declined that gift, the Virginia legislature responded by passing in their next session "An act to amend the act intituled An act for vesting in George Washington, esq. a certain interest in the companies established for

opening and extending the navigation of James and Potowmack rivers," which stated that "the said shares with the tolls and profits hereafter accruing therefrom, shall stand appropriated to such objects of a public nature . . . as the said George Washington, esq. by deed during his life, or by his last will and testament, shall direct and appoint." (*Va. Statutes* [Hening], 11:525–26, 12:42-44; Benjamin Harrison to GW, 6 Jan. 1785, and GW to Patrick Henry, 29 Oct. 1785, *Papers, Confederation Series*, 2:256-57, 3:326). By March 1795 GW had decided to give the James River shares to a seminary in Virginia (GW to Robert Brooke, 16 March 1795), and in his 1799 will he bequeathed those shares to Liberty Hall Academy in Rockbridge County, Va., a forerunner of Washington and Lee University (*Papers, Retirement Series*, 4:483).



Praise for Recent Volumes of *The Papers of George Washington*

Commenting on volume 15 (1 Jan.-30 April 1794) of the *Presidential Series*, noted political historian Van Beck Hall observed that it "continued the fine editorial work one has come to expect from this project." Hall adds that the "editorial accomplishments make this volume and the entire series a gold mine for historians and others interested in either George Washington or the history of the United States during the 1790s."—*Journal of Southern History* 77 (2011): 918-19. Foreign policy and agitation against the liquor excise tax in western Pennsylvania dominate the pages of this volume.

Charles W. Royster, prominent Revolutionary War and military historian, ended his review of volumes 18, 19, and 20 of the *Revolutionary War Series* with this observation:

"Edward G. Lengel, Philander D. Chase, and William M. Ferraro, editors of these volumes of the *Papers of George Washington*, have served well both Washington and those who study his career."—*Journal of Southern History*, 78 (2012): 150-51. The three volumes under consideration spanned 1 Nov. 1778-31 May 1779 and covered abandonment of a plan to invade Canada; development of the Culper spy ring; winter encampment at Middlebrook, N.J.; preparations for the Sullivan expedition; and an array of issues related to army administration.



Presidential Series, Volume 18
Forthcoming late 2013/early 2014

One of the issues that highlighted George Washington's second term as president concerned the ratification of the 1795 Jay Treaty, formally titled, the "Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation between His Britannic Majesty and the United States of America." Relations between the two countries had deteriorated to the brink of war in 1794 over numerous issues including occupation of forts in America's Northwest Territory by English military forces, British trade policies during its war with France that interfered with American claims of neutral shipping rights, and pre-Revolutionary debts owed by Americans to British merchants. When special envoy John Jay negotiated an agreement in London with British Foreign Secretary, William Wyndham Grenville, he knew that the United States possessed few bargaining options. Jay signed a treaty on 19 November 1794 that continued to recognize Great Britain's position as an economic and military power, but one that he and the Washington administration hoped would prevent a military conflict between the two

nations.

Rumors and speculations about the contents of the treaty appeared in American newspapers months before Washington received an official copy in March 1795. Even then, the public did not learn of the document's specific terms. The treaty remained secret until an unauthorized copy appeared in the *Aurora General Advertiser* on 29 June, not long after the senate debate to ratify the document. That body had narrowly approved the treaty, subject to a suspension and renegotiation of Article XII, which limited America's commercial access to the British West Indies to ships of seventy tons or less.

As Washington pondered his constitutional authority to approve the partial ratification of the Jay Treaty, Americans became increasingly vocal against it. Opponents of the treaty stipulated that it humiliated the United States, belittled the reality of independence, and permitted Great Britain to dictate policies of international trade. Petitions against the treaty and against Washington's decision in mid-August 1795 to approve the treaty, inundated the executive office during the summer and fall of that year. Individuals also voiced their arguments in letters and essays to the president published in newspapers, of which the following excerpt is an example. These letters signified a distinctive development in the politics of the Early Republic. A few such missives to the president had appeared in earlier papers, but not to the extent found in 1795. While they did not influence Washington's final decision to approve the treaty, they demonstrated the public's desire to participate in the formation of national policies—an act Washington considered reserved only to constitutionally-elected authorities.

The editors of The Papers of George Washington, Presidential Series, have organized a thorough search of historical newspapers to find these letters and essays, and are currently developing a plan to include them in the print and digital editions of that series, beginning with volume 18: 1 April-30 Sept. 1795.

—Carol Ebel

From Valerius

Sir, Saturday, August 22, 1795

IT is stated from authority which good sense does not justify me in questioning, that you have signed the Treaty negotiated by Mr. Jay. By this act, as far as by any act within your power, you have pledged your country to the performance of stipulations, the inevitable operation of which the benevolence of the good man laments, and the spirit of the proud man abhors. . . .

It is too true, Sir,—even you will not hazard the denial—that by a conduct wantonly precipitate, you have opposed the influence of your character to a stream of political light which had begun to set in upon you from every point of our extended Republic. You have, as far as in you lay, imposed a spell on that spirit of inquiry and discussion, which has heretofore been, and I trust ever will continue to be, the impenetrable panoply of American virtue.

While your signature was withheld, altho our liberties and our interests hung, in awful suspence, on the will of ONE MAN, yet they were supposed to be secure, when the mind of THAT MAN was enlightened by the knowledge, and his heart awakened to the patriotic sensations of a people, who think with the justness, and speak with the plain-

ness of truth. . . .

But let . . . the citizens of an enlightened and gallant Republic . . . view themselves as the arbiters of their own fate. Let them consider that the President and the Senate are *their* servants; and that though for the present they exercise certain delegated powers, yet these powers may be reclaimed by the people. Let them proclaim, to the dismay of ambition, the eternal truth, that, *salus populi suprema lex*, THE SAFETY OF A PEOPLE IS THE SUPREME LAW. . . .

That our country is at length arrived at a crisis, big with alarm, is a most solemn truth. Our government has taken a step, which has carried the nation from the calm retreats of peace and happiness, into the midst of war and desolation. This act of our government is *not deemed irrevocable*. If it were so deemed, we might cry with Othello, *put out the light! put out the light!* It would be a virtue to pray that the sun of heaven might never rise again on our dishonoured country.

It will not be affirmed with a shadow of reason, that even this Treaty, supposing it to go into full operation, will protect us in the unenvied state of degradation and submission in which we shall be placed by it. . . .

The political evils we deprecate have had their causes; these causes have arisen from the errors or the depravity of the administrators of our government; or they have arisen from that unforeseen and unavoidable state of things which, it is said, and said with truth, form a new æra in the annals of nations.

That our present equivocal situation has not arisen from this latter circumstance, unconnected with the former, I shall in the first place attempt to shew.

In the second place, I shall prove its genuine causes; and in doing this, I shall be from necessity, however painful that necessity may

be, compelled to enter into an exposition of your public character, the leading features of your administration, the motives which have swayed your mind in the discharge of the important duties of your station, the character of those men who have shared *your* confidence and imparted *their* counsel; endeavoring from an assemblage of these circumstances to form an impartial estimate of the judgment of a President of the United States, whose austere inflexibility of character has given to

an instrument, so far as on him depends, the force of *irrevocable law*, in defiance of the loud thunders of popular indignation. . . .

In discharge of the sacred duty, which I have undertaken, it may be the highest effort of patriotism to disturb, by the bold enunciation of truth, the feelings of individuals. But let it be recollected that there are times when the feelings of an INDIVIDUAL are not to be put in competition with the *interests*, the *happiness*, the *existence* of a NATION.

VALERIUS.



A Snapshot of Washington's Thoughts on His Finances

Charles Carter (1733–1796) of Ludlow had served with GW in the Virginia legislature; the two men had exchanged visits; and Carter had supplied GW with experimental seeds. So in 1793 when he requested that GW make a short term loan of \$100 to his sons Walker Randolph Carter and Charles Landon Carter in Philadelphia during the yellow fever epidemic of that year, GW was happy to oblige (Carter to GW, 15 and 29 Sept. 1793; GW to Carter, 25 Sept. 1793, *Papers, Presidential Series*, 14:92-93, 133, 141).

However, in February 1795 Carter, whose youthful extravagance had earned him the nickname of “The Blaze” and who had been forced by creditors to sign the title to his property over to trustees in 1788, wrote GW that Walker had begun a carriage business but found himself short of funds because of “the impossibility of selling slaves, for ready money.” Walker was unable to obtain money from local money lenders since “Speculation, & exorbitant premiums absord all the Cash,” so would GW “impower him . . . to draw on some person for 1000 Dollars” until October?

GW's reply exposes the financial insecurities of the man whom some have called our wealthiest president (<http://www.foxbusiness.com/politics/2012/02/17/ten-richest-us-presidents/>) and precisely how far he was willing to go to assist his friends. Oddly, at about the same time Carter's other son independently applied to GW for a loan of up to \$600 (Charles Landon Carter to GW, 3 March 1795, DLC:GW) and was given \$200.

—David Hoth

To Charles Carter of Ludlow

Dear Sir, Philadelphia 10th March 1795

Your favor of the 23d ulto came duly to hand. I wish, sincerely, it was in my power to comply with your request in behalf of your son; but it really is not, to the extent of it.

My friends entertain a very erroneous idea of my pecuniary resources, when they set me down for a money lender, or one who (now) has a command of it. You may believe me, when I assert that the Bonds which were due to me before the Revolu-

tion, were discharged during the progress of it—with a few exceptions in depreciated paper (in some instances as low as a shilling in the pound). That such has been the management of my estate, for many years past, especially since my absence from home, now six years, as scarcely to support itself. That my public allowance (whatever the world may think of it) is inadequate to the expence of living in this city; to such an extravagant height has the necessaries as well as the conveniencies of life, arisen. And, moreover, that to keep myself out of debt, I have found it expedient, now & then, to sell lands, or something, else to effect this purpose.

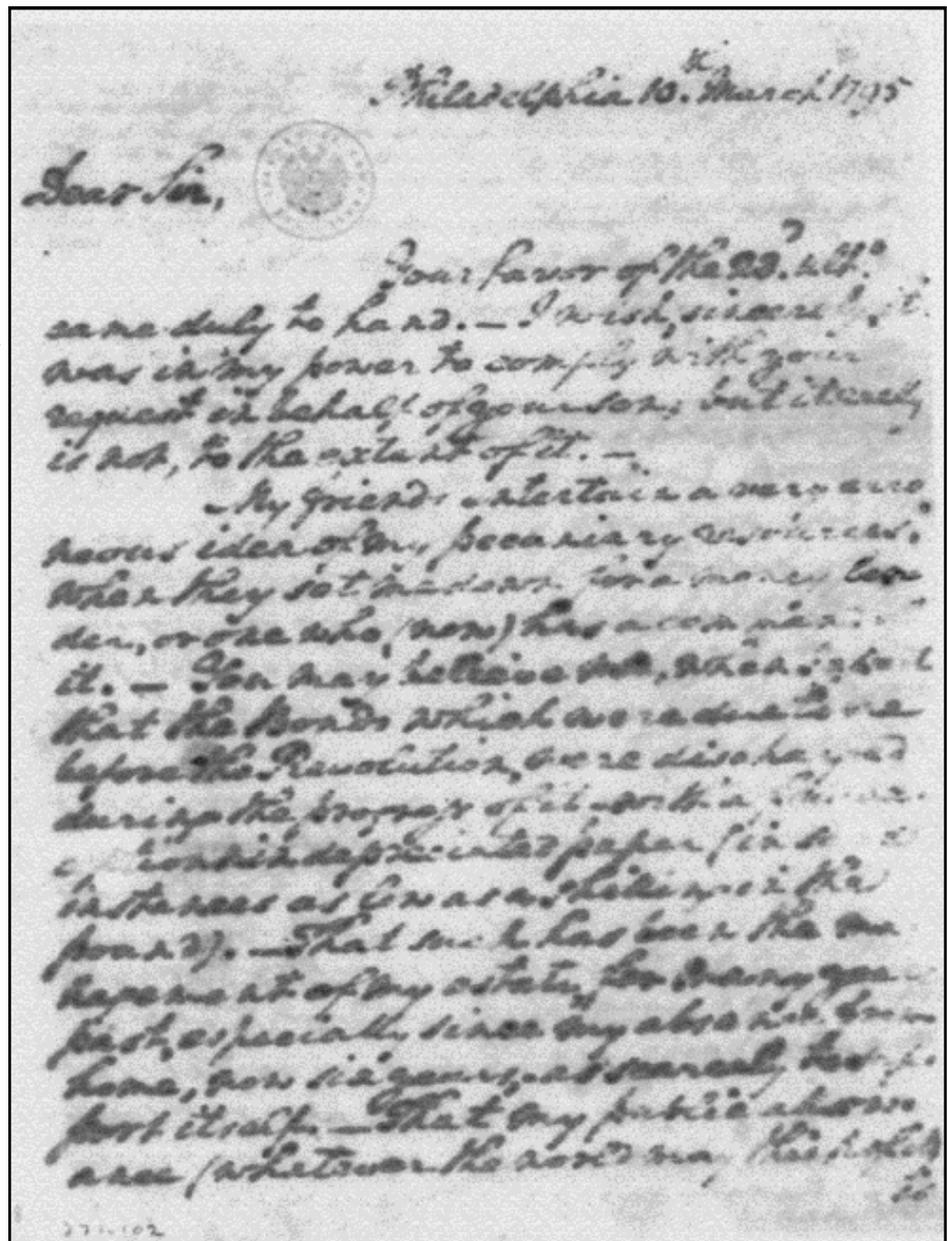
These are facts I have no inclination to publish to the world, nor should I have disclosed them on this occasion, had it not been due to friendship, to give you some explanation of my inability to comply with your request. If, however, by joining with nine others, the sum required can be obtained—notwithstanding my being under these circumstances—and notwithstanding the money will be to be withdrawn from another purpose—I will contribute one hundred pounds towards the accomodation of your wants, without any view to the receipt of interest therefrom.¹ With very great esteem & regard. I am—Dear Sir Your Affecte Servant

Go: Washington

ALS (letterpress copy),
DLC:GW; LB, DLC:GW.

1. No record has been identified of any loan from GW to Walker Randolph Carter at this time.

First page of
Washington's
letter to Carter.
Library of Congress.



Project News

A Companion to George Washington

Several current and former staff members of the Papers of George Washington have contributed essays to *A Companion to George Washington*, edited by Editor-in-Chief Edward G. Lengel, to be published by Wiley-Blackwell in May 2012. This important new contribution to Washington scholarship brings together thirty-four essays by as many historians on different aspects of the Founder's career and character. All of the essays are based heavily on primary research in published volumes of the Papers of George Washington, along with unpublished manuscript copies in our collection.

Essays in this volume include: "The most unlimited Confidence in his Wisdom & Judgement?: Washington as Commander in Chief in the First Years of the French Alliance," by Assistant Editor Dr. Benjamin L. Huggins; "One Cause, One Purpose, One Nation: George Washington, the Whiskey Insurrection, and Executive Authority," by Assistant Editor Dr. Carol S. Ebel; and "George Washington's Mind" by Associate Editor Dr. William M. Ferraro. Other current and former employees of our project contributed: "The Youth of George Washington," by Jessica E. Brunelle; "The Unlikely Success of a Provincial Surveyor: George Washington Finds Fame in the American Frontier, 1749-1754," by Jason E. Farr; "A Provincial Goes to War: George Washington and the Virginia Regiment, August 1755-January 1759," by Peter C. Luebke; "Administrator in Chief," by Cheryl L. Collins; and "Securing the Revolution: The American Economy and the Challenge of Independence," by Dana John Stefanelli.

Edward G. Lengel edited *A Companion to George Washington* (Wiley-Blackwell, May 2012)

and published an article, "An Ignoble Profession: Forging George Washington," in *American Heritage*, Fall 2011. Lengel is also a regular columnist—"Great Decisions in Military History"—for *Military History Magazine*. Over the past year Lengel spoke on George Washington at the Virginia Historical Society; the Mount Vernon Teaching Ambassador Program in Reno, Nevada; the Goochland, Va., Historical Society; and the David Library of the American Revolution, Washington's Crossing, N.J. He also continued his yearly participation in the Mount Vernon Teachers' Summer Institute.

Carol Ebel co-edited volume 16 of the Presidential Series with David Hoth, published in March 2011 and is currently working on volume 18 which will cover April-September 1795. She wrote "One Cause, One Purpose, One Nation: George Washington, the Whiskey Insurrection, and Executive Authority" for *The Blackwell Companion to George Washington*, edited by Edward Lengel, forthcoming in spring 2012. In May 2011 Carol presented "An American Legacy: The Papers of George Washington," for the "Descendants of 76" Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, who met at Mount Vernon. Carol also stayed busy traveling to conduct research for the Presidential Series and to attend the fall conference of the Southern Historical Association, which met in Baltimore, Oct. 27-30, 2011.

William M. Ferraro completed a chapter titled "James Monroe in the 1790s: A Republican Leader" for the Blackwell Companions to American History series volume devoted to James Madison and Monroe. GW's stormy relationship with Monroe during that decade receives extensive treatment. Ferraro also has prepared "Engagement Rather Than Escape: Ulysses S. Grant's Trip around the World, 1877-1879" for the Blackwell Companions to

American History series volume on Reconstruction era presidents. He shared some of his knowledge about Grant in a Power Point presentation at the Charlottesville Senior Center on May 18, 2011. The talk focused on Grant's generalship during the Civil War. For a podcast, go to: www.cvillepodcast.com In a panel at the annual meeting of the Society for Military History in Lisle, Illinois, June 9-12, 2011, that also featured Edward Lengel and Ben Huggins, Ferraro presented a paper titled "Active, Aggressive, and Aware: George Washington's Response to the Raids on Connecticut, July 1779." His paper drew heavily on material to be published in volume 21 of the *Revolutionary War Series*.

Dorothy Twohig, former editor-in-chief of the Washington Papers, passes away.

Dorothy Ann Twohig, born 10 May 1927 in Charleston, W.V., to David and Nell Twohig, died on 5 October 2011 in Charlottesville. She received her B.A. summa cum laude from Morris Harvey College in Charleston in 1952; and her M.A. from Columbia University in 1954. She continued her studies at Columbia 1955-58 while working on the staff of the *Dictionary of American Biography* at that institution, and then worked from 1958-1969 as an Assistant Editor at the *Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, also at Columbia. Editor-in-Chief Harold C. Syrett called her an "indispensable" member of that project. In July 1969 she joined the recently formed *Papers of George Washington* project at the University of Virginia as Associate Editor under then Editor in Chief Dr. Donald Jackson, and after January 1977 under Editor in Chief Dr. W.W. Abbot. Over the following years she played an instrumental role as, in Dr. Abbot's words, "de facto managing editor" of the project. She became Editor-in-Chief of the Washington Papers upon Dr. Abbot's retirement in July 1992, and served in this role until her own retirement in June 1998. During her

almost 30-year tenure at the project, Dorothy Twohig managed the preparation and publication of over 30 volumes of the *Papers of George Washington*, covering Washington's life before and immediately after the Revolution, and the first term of his presidency. She also taught courses on documentary editing for many years at the University of Virginia; and she edited a one-volume abridged version of Washington's Diaries, published in 1999 by the University of Virginia Press with funding from a special grant by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. In retirement, she continued her work, perhaps most notably as editor of the Magazine of Albemarle County History. Throughout her life, Dorothy enjoyed the company of dogs, and several generations of spaniels and various smaller breeds, Yorkshire terriers, Shi Tzus, and Papillons, formed a beloved part of her household and family. Her friends in Charlottesville felt special pleasure in being able to find a good adoptive home for Dorothy's last canine companions. Ms. Twohig was a superb scholar and a wonderful colleague, and she will be sorely missed by two generations of historians worldwide who benefited from her work and by the host of friends across the nation privileged to enjoy her wisdom and humor.

Papers of George Washington at the Society for Military History

Editor in Chief Edward Lengel and assistant editor Benjamin Huggins will be participating in the upcoming Society for Military History annual meeting in Alexandria, Virginia, May 10-13. The theme of the meeting is "War and Politics," and Lengel will chair a panel titled "War and Politics in the American Revolution." Huggins will present a paper titled "Cultivating a Good Understanding: General George Washington's Relations with the Governors."

Giving Washington Credit When Due: The Capture of Stony Point, New York, July 16, 1779

The capture of the British garrison at Stony Point, N.Y., shortly after midnight on July 16, 1779, stands out as one of the war's thrilling military successes for the Continental army. Commentators long have lauded Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne for his valor in leading the light infantry's silent bayonet attack that stunned the defenders and credited that fighting officer--known to history as "Mad Anthony"--for that victory.

Documents in *The Papers of George Washington: Revolutionary War Series*, volume 21 (1 June-31 July 1779), reveal GW's pivotal, and essentially unknown, role in planning Wayne's memorable assault. Besides coordinating reconnaissances while Wayne was returning from leave in Pennsylvania, GW devised the plan for the attack. Presented to Wayne for his modification, the subordinate officer only increased the reserve to boost confidence among the soldiers. GW's central place has not been recognized perhaps because his commendations after the Stony Point's capture praised the officers and men involved without mentioning his own efforts.

The letter to Wayne that GW signed, now in the Wayne Papers at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, serves as the copy text for the following transcription. GW penned most of an earlier draft, which is in the Washington Papers, Library of Congress.

—William M. Ferraro

To Brigadier General Anthony Wayne

Dr Sir,

New Windsor 10th July 1779

Immediately upon receipt of your letter of this date I ordered the Q.M. Genl to furnish the Espontoons you wrote for, and presume you will get them in a day or two.

My ideas of the enterprise in contemplation are these.

That it should be attempted by the light Infantry only, which should march under cover of night and with the utmost secrecy to the enemys lines, securing every person they find to prevent discovery.

Between one and two hundred chosen men and Officers I conceive fully sufficient for the surprise, and apprehend the approach should be along the water on the south side crossing the Beach & entering at the abbatis.

This party is to be preceded by a van guard of prudent and determined men, well commanded who are to remove obstructions—secure the Sentries & drive in the guard—They are to advance (the whole of them) with fixed Bayonets and Muskets unloaded. The Officers commanding them are to know precisely what batteries or particular parts of the line they are respectively to possess that confusion and the consequences of indecision may be avoided.

These parties should be followed by the main body at a small distance for the purpose of support and making good the advantages which may be gained—or to bring them off in case of repulse & disappointment. other parties may advance to the works (but not so as to be discovered till the conflict is begun) by the way of the causey & River on the North if practicable as well for the purpose of distracting the enemy in their

defence as to cut off their retreat. These parties may be small unless the access and approaches should be very easy and safe.

The three approaches here mentioned should be well reconnoitered before hand & by persons of observation. single men in the night will be more likely to ascertain facts than the best glasses in the day.

A white feather or cockade or some other visible badge of distinction for the night should be worn by our troops, and a watch word agreed on to distinguish friends from foes.

If success should attend the enterprise, measures should be instantly taken to prevent if practicable the retreat of the garrison by water or to annoy them as much as possible if they attempt it—and the guns should be immediately turned against the shipping & Verplanks point and covered if possible from the enemy's fire.

Secrecy is so much more essential to these kind of enterprises than numbers, that I should not think it advisable to employ any other than the light troops—If a surprise takes place they are fully competent to the business—if it does not numbers will avail little.

As it is in the power of a single deserter to betray the design—defeat the project—& involve the party in difficul[t]ies & danger, too much caution cannot be used to conceal the intended enterprise to the latest hour from all but the principal Officers of your Corps and from the men till the moment of execution—Knowledge of your intention, ten minutes previously obtained, blasts all your hopes; for which reason a small detachment composed of men whose fidelity you can rely on under the care of a judicious Officer should guard every avenue through the marsh to the enemy's works by which our deserters or their spies can pass, and

prevent all intercourse.

The usual time for exploits of this kind is a little before day for which reason a vigilant Officer is then more on the watch, I therefore recommend a midnight hour.

I had in view to attempt Verplanks point at the same instant that your operations should commence at stoney point, but the uncertainty of co-operating, in point of time and the hazard thereby run of defeating the attempt on stoney point, which is infinitely most important—the other being dependent—has induced me to suspend that operation.

These are my general ideas of the plan for a surprise, but you are at liberty to depart from them in every instance where you think they may be improved or changed for the better. A dark night and even a rainy one if you can find the way will contribute to your success—The Officers in these night marches should be extremely attentive to keep their men together as well for the purpose of guarding against desertion to the enemy as to prevent skulking.

As it is a part of the plan, if the surprise should succeed to make use of the enemy's cannon against their shipping & their post on the other side, it will be well to have a small detachment of Artillery with you to serve them—I have sent an order to the Park for this purpose and to cover the design have ordered down a couple of light field pieces—When you march you can leave the pieces behind.

So soon as you have fixed your plan and the time of execution I shall be obliged to you to give me notice.

I shall immediately order you a reinforcement of light infantry—& more Espon-toons—I am with great regard Dr Sir Yr Most Obet, servant

Go: Washington

New Map of George Washington's West Point

The Paper's of George Washington cartographer Rick Britton has completed a new map of West Point's extensive and complex system of fortifications as they existed in the second half of the Revolutionary War. Based on input from editors William Ferraro and Benjamin Huggins, who conducted a personal survey of the remains of the Point's Revolutionary-War defenses, Britton has drawn what is probably the definitive map of the great fortress in these years (see image). Washington maintained his headquarters at West Point from 22 July to 29 Nov. 1779. After the British threatened to capture the fort with an expedition up the Hudson River in the summer of 1779, the American commander deployed his army in defensive positions in New York's Highlands to defend the fort, while the army's engineers, often working under Washington's personal supervision, strengthened and extended the defenses of the fortress. They added Redoubts 1 through 4, the North and South Redoubts, and strengthened Redoubts 5, 6, and 7 on Constitution Island. As the correspondence in Vols. 21 and 22 of the *Revolutionary War Series* will show, the expansion and strengthening of these defenses was critical to Washington's plans enabling his army to operate offensively without fear of losing the fort, and with it control of the vital Hudson River.

—Benjamin Huggins



The Papers of George Washington Financial Series—Update

Over the past ten months numerous advancements have been made in the Financial Series project. Our goal from the beginning has been to make George Washington's financial documents not only available (as a free online resource) but also accessible (the ability to interact with, search, and restructure the data). Washington's financial documents are rich in information about social, economic, demographic, family, and even political history. But the complexity and size of the documents have made them difficult to use. Washington's accounts range from receipts, invoices, and day books to double entry ledgers. Literal transcription is critical but inadequate, as historians will want to make comparisons, identify people and products, and follow threads and be able to convert currencies.

To accomplish our goals we have been looking for the appropriate technology. We are delighted that after several years of searching, we have found just such an instrument. In 2011 the Papers of George Washington teamed up with Bob Oeste (Johns Hopkins Press), Mary MacNeil (University of Virginia Press), and Holly Shulman (University of Virginia), to adapt their tool, DocTracker, for the needs of editors of financial docu-

Fortifications at West Point, 1779



ments. DocTracker is a content management database for documentary editions. It is part of Documents Compass, a digital humanities unit of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. Current development is being funded by the National Historical and Publications Records Commission, and the Papers of George Washington are deeply grateful for their support. The Project is also working with renowned economic historian John McCusker. Dr. McCusker's work on the economy of the Atlantic world during the eighteenth century has proved an invaluable resource to the project.

—Jennifer Stertzner

Page from Ledger A. Ledgers A, B, and C have been loaded into DocTracker and will be the first financial documents to be edited. Ledger A, page 1L, Library of Congress.

I

George Fairfax Esq^r Dr

1750			
April 2	To John Wellton's Order on you	4.10	
Oct 7	To Cash lent	2.3	
Nov 8	To Ditto paid Rob ^t Worthington & Mich ^l Inceim At Court	17.3	
	To Surveying a piece of Land for Mich ^l Inceim p ^o 300	2.3	
	To Cash received of Benj ^m Kutherford	2.3	
		<u>21.163</u>	
Jan 7 5	To Cash paid Doct ^r Lynn for the Ashhorn Ravings	0	
7 5	To Ditto paid M ^r Yates for 2 p ^r mens Shoes	1.1	
	To Ditto for a saddle cloth of Rich ^d Lewis	7.6	
July 6	To Ditto for Ditto of M ^r Yates	7.6	
	To Ditto for 600 brass Nails	6	
	To 2000 lb ^s Ditto of M ^r Hunter	7	
	To 2000 lb ^s Ditto of Ditto	11	
	To a tinsing of M ^r Jackson	4.6	
	To 2 Iron Combs and Brushes of M ^r Wunningham	7	
	To 6 Oz of Ohions Mineral of Doct ^r Lynns	7.6	
	To a Quarter built by my Carpenters for you on Park		
Dec 10	To Cash for Quittrents as p ^o Settlement	15.4	
15 9	To 1353 1/4 Park	2.16	
Aug 13	To 5 Lower dble Retind Sugar w ^t 28		
	To 5 ditto single ditto	55	
	To 2 lb ^s Tyson Tea	100	
		<u>100</u>	
Jan 17	To Smith's acct from Rich ^d Stephens Book	2.11	
Jan 17 9	To Ditto from M ^r Fosker	1.57	
	To 3 Tob ^o Wds of Humphrey Knight	9	
	To 100 ^o Tuckers Shipper for 2 a True Mus Sugar	7.9	
May 13	To Smiths acct since the first of Jan ^y last	3.3.7	
		<u>45.12.8</u>	
May 23	To Sundrys Credited in my acct p ^o Settlement of this date, not charged above	1.9	
	To Ball ^l acct - paid this day	14.10.8	
		<u>61.14.4</u>	
	To acct Carried to Folio (105)		

The Papers of George Washington are now sharing news and updates through social media outlets. Follow us on **Twitter @PapersofGW**, like us on **Facebook**, and read about the project's history and process on **Wikipedia!**



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