

Washington *Papers*

WINTER 2017

Something to Celebrate

Mary Wigge, RESEARCH EDITOR

June represents a month of beginnings for us at The Washington Papers. Martha Washington was born on June 2, 1731—her birthday is always an occasion for celebration. We also recognize the creation of the Martha Washington Papers project in that month. So on June 30, 2016, we met to review our progress over the past year and to discuss how we will proceed.

Our first year has been one of exploration and discovery. We reached out to over 2,600 repositories, scouring every possible archive that might house a Martha Washington document. We found approximately 550 letters to and from Martha, around 130 of which have never before been published.

Many of the documents are located at major institutions—the Library of Congress, the Virginia Historical Society, the American Philosophical Society, and Mount Vernon's Fred W.

Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington. But, we also had uncommon success finding Martha documents in smaller, and thus often overlooked, repositories, such as the Cloud County Historical Society Museum in Kansas and the Henry Ford Museum in Michigan. In addition, we were fortunate to make archival visits to New York City, Ann Arbor, San Marino, and elsewhere to photograph documents.

We completed our document search, made note of characteristics (document types, their authors or recipients, etc.), and constructed a plan to move ahead. From our search, for example, we found the earliest Martha correspondence beginning in 1757, when she was

25 years old. We have yet to find any documents before that time frame. This discovery will require us to examine, in greater depth, her parents and siblings; the history of New Kent County, where she spent her youth; and women's history in colonial Virginia.

Researching these topics will provide us a greater understanding of Martha's childhood and her surroundings, as well as her idea of women's roles in the household.

The document search is just the beginning. Transcription, research and annotation, and publication are equally important in documentary editing. We are now rolling ahead with transcription and proofreading the document images. As we continue transcribing, we will begin preliminary research on the individuals, places, and topics that surface in the letters.

Already we have a general idea of the themes we will need to explore, because many of the documents revisit particular topics. For example, many of Martha's letters with family members focus on the health and welfare of George Washington, her children or grandchildren, nieces or nephews, friends, or herself. Home remedies and other means of alleviating ailments are often mentioned. This discovery will require further study of eighteenth-century medicine and exploration of doctor versus family care. Also, the topics of home and clothing maintenance appear frequently, especially in her letters to merchants; to George's secretary, Tobias Lear; and to her niece, Fanny Bassett Washington Lear.



Chestnut Grove,
the birthplace and childhood home of
Martha Washington.

[Continued on page 11.](#)

Big Conclusions and New Beginnings



This past year has been one of transition and growth. Former editor in chief Edward G. Lengel retired from the project in fall 2016, after putting into motion the project's expansion beyond the papers of George Washington to those of Martha and their family as well.

As we pursue these new avenues, we remain dedicated to the thorough and meticulous scholarship that has characterized The Washington Papers for decades. We are proud of our accomplishments of the past year and look forward to implementing plans for further exploration of the Washingtons and their words.

Among our goals for the coming year is a new documentary edition of the diary George Washington kept during his trip, at the age of 19, to Barbados. This journal, which includes a ship's log young George compiled as well as his impressions of the island, is one of the few surviving documents of any length from his youth. In a truly Herculean effort, editors Lynn Price and Alicia K. Anderson have turned a badly mutilated manuscript into an approachable record of Washington's journey. This authoritative edition will be the first complete transcription of this document in more than a hundred years.

Our Martha Washington Papers project has transitioned into the second major phase of its production. In June 2016, the team celebrated its completion of a comprehensive search for documents, which involved contacting more than 2,600 archival institutions and resulted in a catalog of nearly 550 letters. The team now eagerly turns toward completing the second half of transcriptions of Martha's papers. The volume is expected to be published in 2018.

The digital production team, under senior editor Jennifer Stertzter's leadership, has met great success as well. In December 2016, they debuted the George Washington Financial Papers website. Stertzter also serves as director of the Center for Digital Editing, which aims to help documentary editors and archivists develop innovative scholarly projects for a hyperlinked world.

Lastly, our Papers of George Washington team continues to produce highly regarded volumes. *Presidential Series* volume 19 was published in fall 2016; the manuscript for *Revolutionary War Series* volume 25 is in page proofs; and the *Presidential Series* volume 20 manuscript was submitted for in-house review. Work on the final volume of the *Presidential Series* already has begun, and the *Revolutionary War Series* volume 26 manuscript will begin in-house review in spring 2017.

As always, our goal is to make the edited documents and related historical insights widely accessible. Our editors continue to give special attention to public outreach and engagement. In the past year, we have addressed audiences around the world, including in Canada and Poland, as well as across the United States. In total, our editors gave more than thirty-two presentations.

These efforts would not be possible without the generosity of our donors (see page 11) and funding institutions. We are deeply grateful for the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the Packard Humanities Institute, the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, the Florence Gould Foundation, and the University of Virginia.

Washington Papers

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Ian Kahn of *Turn: Washington's Spies*

Kim Curtis, RESEARCH EDITOR

Lynn Price, ASSISTANT EDITOR

For three seasons, Ian Kahn has played George Washington on the AMC television series *Turn: Washington's Spies*. Washington Papers editors Kim Curtis and Lynn Price spoke with Kahn about his work on *Turn* and what George Washington means to him.

When he first heard about the role of General Washington on *Turn*, Kahn was surprised: "I thought how wild and wacky it was to play George Washington, but then I read the character description...and I thought, 'I think I've got an idea about how to do this.'"

After Kahn's first audition, the producers of *Turn* sent him historical research, which helped him to better comprehend Washington as a person. According to Kahn, "Research is a great tool for me or for any actor because it can really spark your imagination to understand what's really going on."

Turn's location shooting in and around Virginia's Richmond and Williamsburg areas also helps Kahn unlock the importance of Washington and his era: "There are times when I look around... and understand what it is that we were fighting for."

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As with most film and television portrayals of history, the question of how to balance historical accuracy with dramatic license remains on the minds of artists and audience alike. However, Kahn believes that "dramatic license on television can be fair." For example, the second season's Valley Forge episode,



Ian Kahn

Photo courtesy of Ian Kahn.

in which Washington played a major part, polarized *Turn's* audience because it showed Washington full of self-doubt. "I think that [the episode] was allegorical in a lot of ways to give some understanding of how challenging that time was," says Kahn.

When speaking to Kahn about Washington and *Turn*, it is easy to be struck by the actor's deep reverence for his character; Kahn always refers to Washington as "General Washington" or "The General," never "George."

"I always thought of him as the man on the dollar bill, and I didn't really understand everything that he did," says Kahn. As the actor's knowledge of General Washington deepened, so did his respect and admiration for the man.

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Read the complete interview with Ian Kahn
at gwpapers.virginia.edu/about/washingtonsquill.

An Introduction to Revolutionary War Series

Volume 25, March 10–May 12, 1780

William M. Ferraro, MANAGING EDITOR

Bad weather plagued General George Washington's army during its winter encampment near Morristown, N.J., far into the spring of 1780. Finances caused further woes for Washington. Commissaries lacked both cash and credit to obtain provisions, and food shortages meant restless troops. Only vigorous exertions by largely anonymous supply officers kept Washington's army intact. Recognizing these grave financial needs, Congress passed reform legislation in March, but any benefit from the new system lay in the future.

Washington tried to be optimistic as he tackled present challenges. Numerous officer resignations worried Washington, who felt the loss of such experienced men undercut the army's effectiveness. Sensitive about morale, he pursued negotiations for a general prisoner exchange. The talks broke down quickly because the British negotiators acted only on local military authority rather than for King George III. Washington required the British to recognize American independence and nationhood before any broad negotiations could proceed.

Armed conflict as well as administrative perplexities occupied Washington's thoughts. At no point could he escape the reality that soldiers fought, soldiers died, and survivors—both comrades and loved ones—grieved. Raids into the patrol areas generally east of Morristown caused significant casualties on March 22 and April 16. A larger confrontation unfolded around Charleston, S.C., where a British expedition from New York City encircled the city and its defenders under Major General Benjamin Lincoln. Washington sent additional reinforcements and encouraged the beleaguered Lincoln, but Charleston's surrender on May 12 eventually came as no surprise.

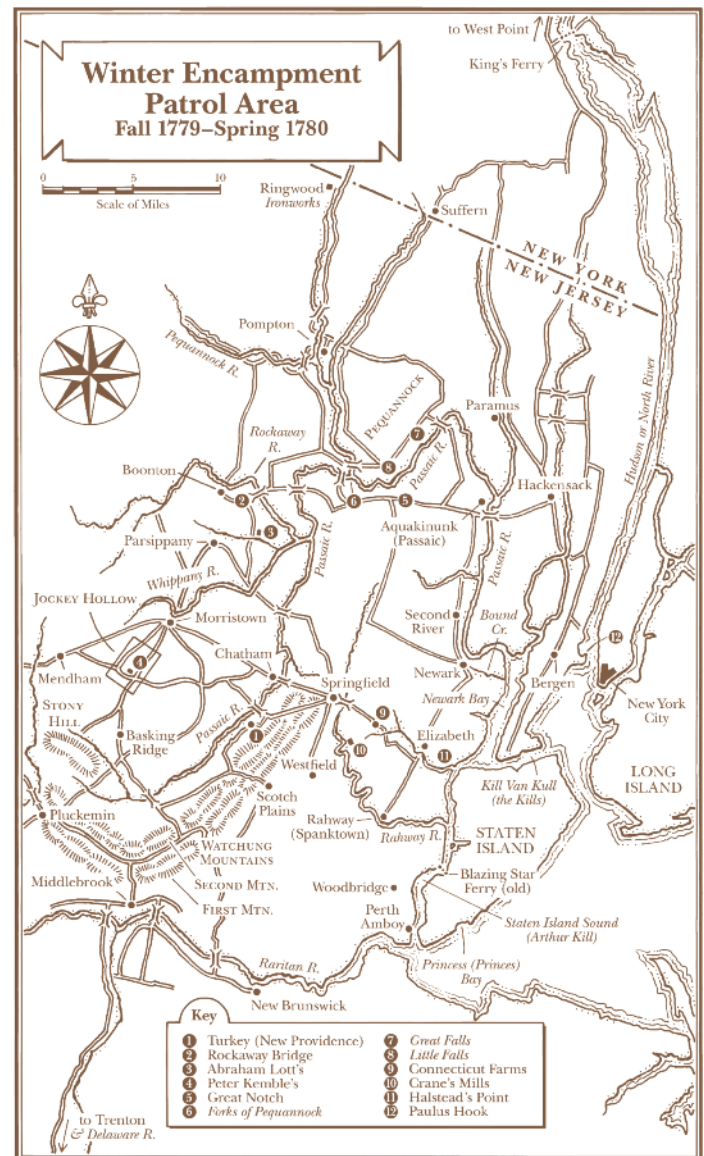
Washington hoped for better things from a congressional "Committee at Headquarters" appointed to deal directly with the principal army officers to solve vexing supply questions. Such an approach promised some good after previous verbal sniping. Additionally, Major General Lafayette returned to the United States from France to announce the coming of a French expeditionary army. The king wanted this force to serve under Washington. The possibilities for this allied command undoubtedly excited Washington, who only recently had extended himself to pay proper respect to French minister La Luzerne during that official's visit to Morristown.

Army responsibilities left Washington little opportunity to address his personal business, but he doted over a carriage purchase and offered the usual futile financial advice to his stepson John Parke Custis. Legal engagements undertaken years earlier for George William Fairfax and George Mercer provoked headaches. Despite Washington's conscientious efforts, these entanglements persisted until after the war.

Washington never quailed from a personal or public obligation. Very much the realist, he knew that his army faced steep odds. Determined to overcome all obstacles, Washington strode ahead, fully aware that he shouldered the heaviest burdens of the revolutionary cause.

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Revolutionary War Series, volume 25, will be made available in fall 2017.



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An Introduction to Presidential Series

Volume 19, October 1795–March 1796

David Hoth, SENIOR EDITOR

In late 1795 and early 1796, Washington faced continuing controversy over the Jay Treaty, which eventually prompted his assertion of executive privilege in response to a request for documents from the House of Representatives. At the same time, he was concerned with the negotiation of treaties with Spain and Algiers; Indian relations on the frontier; construction of the public buildings in Washington, D.C.; and relations with revolutionary France, which were complicated by Lafayette's imprisonment and his son's appearance in America. Despite the weight and consequence of these national and international concerns, it would be a mistake to skip over the more private letters in the volume.

As Washington anticipated retirement at the end of his second presidential term, he advertised a proposal to lease four of the farms at Mount Vernon, leaving only the Mansion House farm under his active management. His comments in letters about this proposal reveal much about his views on ecology and slavery.

To his farm manager, William Pearce, for example, he wrote on February 7, 1796, "My wish is to get associations of farmers from

the old countries, who know how (from experience & necessity) to keep the land in an improving state rather than the slovenly ones of this, who think (generally) of nothing else, but to work a field as long as it will bear any thing, and until it is run into gullies & ruined; & then at another, without affording either any aid."

On the same date, Washington wrote similar comments to his friend and familial connection David Stuart, but in that letter he revealed motives beyond a desire to ease his management burdens:

"I am making an essay to accomplish what I communicated to you in confidence, when I was last in Virginia. I call it an essay, because I have no sanguine expectation of ameliorating the plan so far as to carry it into complete effect in the course of next year. If I can succeed so far as to be enabled to give up the Dower Negros at all, and upon terms below what impartial men shall say their hire is worth, it will amount to the full extent of my expectation; and this I would wish to accomplish before the other part of my plan is attempted: and arduous enough it will be, when it is considered how much the Dower Negros and my own are intermarried; and the former with the neighbouring Negros; to part whom will be an affecting, and trying event, happen when it will. For which, and other reasons, I wish no mention to be made thereof until the way is a little more open; until I see what effect the Advertisement will have; and until, from these developements, I shall be able to take more decisive measures; or in other words, how I shall be able to support myself without these aids. If I can accomplish the first part of the plan, in any manner tolerably convenient & satisfactory to all that are interested in it, I certainly will do it. The other part must depend in some measure upon the succedaneum; & an eligible mode of carrying it into effect. The current of my wishes, set stronger to the second, than to the first part of the plan, but reasons of a political—indeed of imperious nature must make it a posterior operation."

These comments, taken in conjunction with his will, suggest that Washington hoped to emancipate the slaves he owned in his own right, even before his death.

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Presidential Series, volume 19, is now available for purchase through the University of Virginia Press.



A wide-angle view of the Mount Vernon landscape. Detail of lithograph of ink drawing by Henry Whately (1859).

Courtesy of Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.

The Reluctant First Lady

Martha Washington and the Role of Women in the Early Republic

Kathryn Gehred, RESEARCH SPECIALIST

In one of Martha Washington's most revealing letters, she described her time as first lady as "very dull." She wrote to her niece, "I think I am more like a state prisoner than anything else, there is certain bounds set for me which I must not depart from."¹ In the early days of George Washington's presidency, George and Martha were not permitted to take private invitations and socialized only at formal "levees." Martha, used to being plantation mistress and entirely in control of her domestic life, complained to her niece, "as I can not doe as I like I am obstinate and stay at home a great deal."² As the first lady of a struggling country with an experimental form of government, Martha Washington's social life was open to public scrutiny.

Alexander Hamilton suggested that Washington host levees as a way to avoid the appearance of political bias. As Hamilton wrote, "The notions of equality are yet in my opinion too general and too strong to admit of such a distance being placed between the President and other branches of government as might even be consistent with a due proportion."³ All members of government would have the same access to the president: thus, equality.

Martha wrote to her niece, "I think I am more like a state prisoner than anything else, there is certain bounds set for me which I must not depart from."

Martha's levees were meant to be more social. Women were invited, and "Ice creams & Lemonade"⁴ were served. However, as in George's levees, a strict protocol of bows and curtsies had to be followed, and there was a clear distance between the

Washingtons and their guests. Martha, in one candid invitation, even suggested that if her guest "preferred enjoyment to ceremony," she should not visit her on a levee day.⁵

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In the end, the levees backfired. The Democratic-Republican party viewed them as a barrier between the president and the people. As Edmund Randolph wrote, they gave the appearance that the country was "marching with furious rapidity, towards monarchy, as far as manners can work such an effect."⁶ John Adams noticed that the newspapers were beginning to "maul the President for his Drawing Rooms, Levees, declining to accept of invitations" and other perceived aristocratic tendencies. As frustrated as this made Adams, he took bitter enjoyment in it. He wrote to his wife, "I have held the office, of Libellee General long enough: the Burthen of it ought to be participated and Equallized, according to modern republican principles."⁷

The close scrutiny to which Martha was held brings up some interesting questions about the role of women in the early republic. The culture of the time maintained a strict split between the public world of politics and the private world of the home. Women weren't meant to rule with anything but "tender looks, tears and sighs."⁸ But it is a fact that domestic choices can be political: the clothes elite women wore, the food they served, and the people they invited to parties all held great political significance in the early days of the American republic.



The Republican Court (Lady Washington's Reception Day), painted by Daniel Huntington (1861).

Courtesy of Brooklyn Museum, Gift of the Crescent-Hamilton Athletic Club, 39.536.1.

Some worried that American women would copy the aristocratic ways of English and French women. A “characteristic French trifle, or bagatelle,” as one author put it, symbolized an undemocratic social hierarchy.⁹ The highly visible Martha Washington, another author believed, could influence the education of American women in “the genius of the government,” something less exclusive and more inclusive.¹⁰

Martha Washington understood the importance of her role, but she was a reluctant public figure. She liked nice clothes, good food, and spending time with her friends. “I do not concern [sic] my self about [politics],” she wrote shortly before her husband became president. Still, she was willing to sacrifice her own desires for the good of her husband’s image. She wrote to a friend that she had “been so long accustomed to conform to events which are governed by the public voice that I hardly dare indulge any personal wishes that cannot yield to that.”¹¹ Martha attempted to take on the role the public demanded of her, and as such she has been somewhat obscured by history. In her personal letters, the true Martha begins to shine through.

1 Martha Washington to Frances Bassett Washington, New York, 22 Oct. 1789 (Historical Society of Pennsylvania).

2 Ibid.

3 Alexander Hamilton to George Washington, New York, 5 May 1789, *Founders Online*, National Archives.

4 Abigail Adams to Mary Smith Cranch, Richmond Hill, 9 Aug. 1789, *Founders Online*, National Archives.

5 Letter 783: Judith Sargent Murray to Winthrop and Judith Saunders Sargent, New Rochelle, 14 Aug. 1790, Judith Sargent Murray Society.

6 Edmund Randolph to James Madison, Williamsburg, 23 July 1789, *Founders Online*, National Archives.

7 John Adams to Abigail Adams, Philadelphia, 2 Jan. 1793, *Founders Online*, National Archives.

8 “Characteristic Differences of the Male and Female of the Human Species,” *Salem Gazette*, Salem, Massachusetts, 8 Feb. 1791, p. 4.

9 ANTI-XANTIPPUS, “For the City Gazette,” *The City Gazette, or the Daily Advertiser*, Charleston, South Carolina, 10 Nov. 1790.

10 Enos Hitchcock, *Memoirs of the Bloomsgrave Family. In a series of letters to a respectable citizen of Philadelphia. Containing sentiments on a mode of domestic education, suited to the present state of society, government, and manners, in the United States of America: and on the dignity and importance of the female character. Interspersed with a variety of interesting anecdotes*, vol. II (Boston: Thomas and Andrews, 1790), 31.

11 Martha Washington to Janet Livingston Montgomery, Philadelphia, 29 Jan. 1791 (Boston Public Library, Main Branch).

New Projects Highlighted at Prominent Slavery Conference

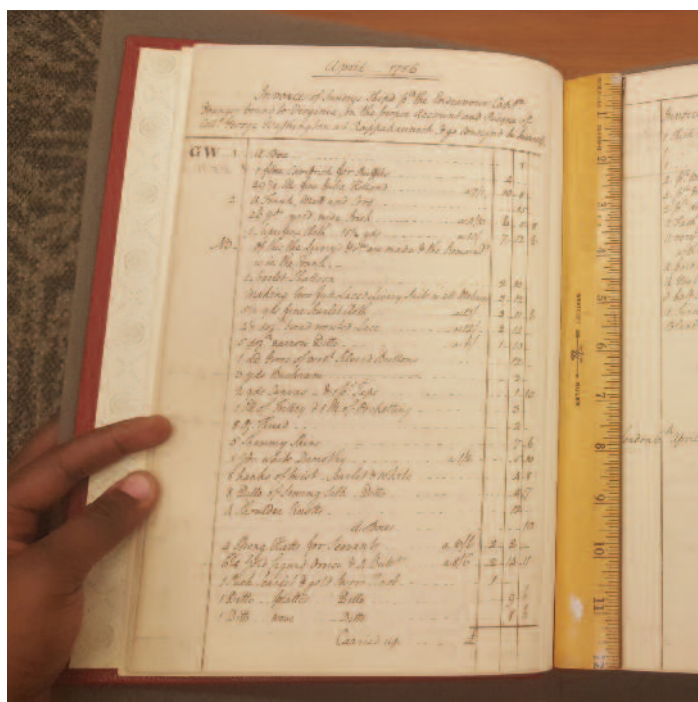
Lynn Price, ASSISTANT EDITOR

At the beginning of October, The Washington Papers presented several of our recent projects at a Mount Vernon conference titled “Region and Nation in American Histories of Race and Slavery,” cosponsored by the Omohundro Institute and the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington. Several of our editors joined eminent scholars and historians from across the nation to discuss the contributions of regional history to national narratives.

The Washington Papers team members William Ferraro, managing editor of the Papers of George Washington, and assistant editor Lynn Price joined Neal Millikan, digital projects editor for the Adams Papers, for “Documentary Editing: Behind the Scenes Roundtable.” All three editors discussed ways in which documentary editing can

bring to light otherwise obscure or oblique references to slavery. For example, Ferraro observed that indirect references to slavery in the diary volumes of The Papers of George Washington generally lacked annotation and could be easily overlooked. The project’s digital edition will eventually remedy the earlier oversight. Millikan pointed to the role of indexes in discovering references to slavery that may not immediately be apparent in a volume’s text. Finally, Price noted that infrequent references to slavery in George Washington’s diary of his journey to Barbados require editorial commentary on the reality of slavery that he chose not to record, to avoid misleading the modern reader. Following the discussion, the audience offered their thoughts on the value of documentary editing and posed questions to the panel.

Research editor Erica Cavanaugh presented “The Exploration of New Tools for the Research and Study of Slavery Using George Washington’s Ledgers and Data Visualizations.” Cavanaugh discussed the George Washington Financial Papers, a project of the



Research editor Erica Cavanaugh studies the size of one of Washington’s financial record books for reference.

In addition to offering new avenues for quantitative analysis, the Financial Papers project reveals and provides access to relational data previously untapped by scholars.

Center for Digital Editing, and the myriad research possibilities that have opened up through its digitization process. In addition to offering new avenues for quantitative analysis, the Financial Papers project reveals and provides access to relational data previously untapped by scholars. In the realm of slavery, information such as slave names, family members, work, and location can be examined in dynamic ways. As Cavanaugh explained, the potential for new lines of inquiry into the stories of enslaved persons and the history of slavery stands as only a small segment of the vast possibilities presented by the digital project. The Financial Papers can be accessed online at <http://financial.gwpapers.org>.

News and Announcements

Respected Editor David Hoth Retires

After a distinguished career of seventeen years at The Washington Papers, senior editor David Hoth will retire at the end of February 2017. Hoth came to the project in early 2000 after fourteen years as an editor for The Papers of Andrew Jackson. In his time at The Washington Papers, Hoth edited five volumes in the *Presidential Series* and three volumes in the *Revolutionary War Series*. We will miss his calm and careful approach to research as much as his gentle humor and passion for volleyball.

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Editors Get Firsthand Look at the World of the Washingtons

Last summer, editors for the Martha Washington and Family Papers project visited New Kent County, Va., and James Madison's Montpelier. Invited to New Kent County by the area's local historians, our editors had the opportunity to view the place where Martha Dandridge Custis spent the first twenty-six years of her life. The tour included the sites on which Chestnut Grove, Martha's childhood home, and White House, the home of her first husband, John Parke Custis, once stood; Eltham, the home of her sister Nancy and brother-in-law Burwell Bassett; and the site of her son John Parke Custis's memorial.

A month later, the team visited Montpelier for a special tour of the home and grounds. Through this visit, our editors not only learned more about the peers of the Washingtons and the lives of enslaved people, they also got a glimpse into the historic home's current archaeological work.

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Editor Advances in Field after Attending "Camp"

In August 2016, assistant editor Lynn Price attended the Association for Documentary Editing's Institute for the Editing of Historical Documents, affectionately known as "Camp Edit," a highly regarded workshop on documentary editing for both new and experienced editors. By participating in the workshop, Price says she not only gained a stronger grounding in the field, but also got the chance to meet a variety of editors from projects big and small. She welcomed the opportunity to learn from some of the best teachers in the field, including Washington Papers colleague Jennifer Stertz. Price reflects, "It was an honor to experience the strong community of documentary editing and to expand my skills as they apply to The Washington Papers."

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Editors Elected as Leaders in the Documentary Editing Field

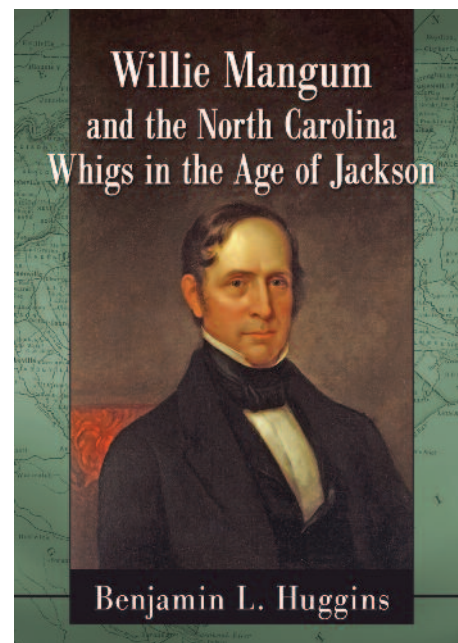
In August 2016, senior editor Jennifer Stertz and research editor Erica Cavanaugh assumed new roles within the field's professional organization, the Association for Documentary Editing. Stertz was elected as president, a platform from which she hopes to encourage discussion on the role of technology in making documentary editions more engaging and accessible. Her colleague Cavanaugh was appointed to be webmaster and chair of the Website Committee. A joint goal is the unveiling of a new and updated website for the association.

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Associate Editor Benjamin Huggins Publishes New Book

In May 2016, McFarland Books released *Willie Mangum and the North Carolina Whigs in the Age of Jackson*, by associate editor Benjamin L. Huggins. Focusing on prominent early nineteenth-century Carolina congressman Mangum, Huggins explores an exciting moment in history and politics that should not be forgotten. Mangum's story offers insights into the rapid rise and fall of the North Carolina Whigs, who espoused a unique blend of old and new republican principles.

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Willie Mangum and the North Carolina Whigs in the Age of Jackson

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George Washington and Benedict Arnold

Nathaniel Philbrick, AUTHOR OF *VALIANT AMBITION*

The name Benedict Arnold has become a byword for treason and villainy. At the beginning of the Revolutionary War, however, he was one of America's greatest generals, with brave and brilliant performances at Valcour Island on Lake Champlain in 1776 and,



Nathaniel Philbrick

Photograph by Kit Noble

most famously, at Saratoga in 1777. George Washington is rightly regarded as our country's savior, but at the start of the struggle, he experienced significant failures, particularly the losses of New York in 1776 and Philadelphia in 1777.

In the years that followed, Washington emerged as the only American military leader capable of holding the country together, while Arnold determined that it was his destiny to tear that same country apart. What I found particularly fascinating during the research and writing of *Valiant Ambition* were the ways in which

Washington's personal growth

as a leader could be tracked by his interactions with Arnold.

Over the four years leading up to Arnold's unsuccessful attempt to surrender the fortress at West Point to the British in September

1780, Washington honed his strategic thinking and learned to take a longer view of the war. What follows is just one example.

In the months after the Battles of Trenton and Princeton during the winter of 1777, Washington began to realize that, given the inadequacies of his army, he needed to adopt a more defensive approach—what he would term a “War of Posts.” This so-called “Fabian” strategy (in reference to the Roman leader who defeated Hannibal through a war of attrition) did not come naturally to Washington, who was aggressive by temperament. But it was the only way, he'd begun to realize, to avoid a potentially catastrophic encounter that might result in the destruction of his army and the loss of the war.

On March 3, 1777, he wrote a revealing letter to Arnold about whether he should mount an attack on the British at Newport, Rhode Island. “Unless your strength and circumstances be such, that you can reasonably promise yourself a moral certainty of succeeding, I would have you by all means to relinquish the undertaking, and confine yourself in the main to a defensive.”

Here we see Washington counseling not only a subordinate, but himself as well, articulating the approach that he knew was best for his country, even if contrary to his own impulses. Despite subsequent missteps at Brandywine and Germantown, where Washington's predilection for aggression once again got the better of him, he would ultimately commit himself to the strategy he so eloquently expressed to Benedict Arnold in 1777.

IN THE NEWS

■ In a March 2016 podcast for *Ben Franklin's World*, research editor Mary Wigge discussed what our expanded Family Papers projects have learned so far about Martha Washington.

■ *Richmond Magazine* covered the Virginia Historical Society's April 25, 2016, event, which featured assistant editor Lynn Price as a speaker. The public viewing of the third season premiere of *Turn: Washington's Spies* was followed by a panel discussion in which Price shared a historian's perspective on the show.

■ In May 2016, author Flora Fraser's work on George and Martha Washington's partnership, titled *The Washingtons: George and Martha, "Join'd by Friendship, Crown'd by Love,"* was announced as the recipient of the 2016 George Washington Book Prize. In her book, Fraser acknowledged the Papers of George Washington Digital Edition as a noteworthy source of information and particularly thanked now managing editor William M. Ferraro for his help.

■ In a July 2016 article for OZY, an online magazine, assistant editor Lynn Price commented on Martha Washington as a partner to George Washington: “He felt she was essential to his job.... He started out saying ‘she'll miss me,’ and it turned out he couldn't live without her.”



Detail of a watercolor painting of a house, completed by Martha Washington's granddaughter Eleanor Parke Custis Lewis (c. 1794).
Affectionately known as "Nelly," Eleanor benefitted from the careful attention of her grandparents,
whose unique social station provided her access to an exceptional education, including drawing classes.

Courtesy of Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.

Continued from page 1.

Martha's most frequent correspondents consist of her close family members. Letters to her sister Anna Maria Dandridge Bassett and, especially, to her niece Fanny predominate. Most, if not all, of the 19 documents we have found from the year 1794 are from Martha to Fanny, demonstrating Martha's care for and dependence on her niece. Her correspondents also include contemporary ladies in Martha's public sphere: Abigail Adams, Elizabeth Willing Powel, and Mercy Otis Warren. We've found that, depending on the recipient, Martha would change her style of writing. Whereas she might be more formal

with acquaintances and friends, Martha would write more openly, almost in a stream-of-consciousness fashion, with her close family members.

Through our discussion of discoveries and document characteristics, we constructed our workflow for the future: one year will be dedicated to transcription and research, followed by preparation of annotations; our expected publication date for the Martha edition will be within two years. To celebrate our progress and first year as a project, we shared an afternoon feast of tea, cookies, and cake.

Thank You to Our Supporters

These generous supporters of The Washington Papers have advanced the long-standing work and new initiatives of the project. We thank them for their faith in our mission:

Theodore L. Ferraro
Florence Gould Foundation
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Lisa Moore
Mount Vernon Ladies' Association
Packard Humanities Institute
Joseph Rubinfine

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Public support is vital to The Washington Papers' ongoing operations. It ensures we can:

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Washington *Papers*

The Washington Papers, a grant-funded project, was established in 1968 at the University of Virginia, under the joint auspices of the University and the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union, to publish a comprehensive edition of Washington's correspondence.

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A Framework for the Future *The Center for Digital Editing Announces Mission and Vision Plan*

Directed by Washington Papers senior editor Jennifer Stertz, with support from Washington Papers staff, the Center for Digital Editing (CDE) at the University of Virginia has a mission: to advance the practice of editing by creating and encouraging the growth of innovative project solutions. It aims to help projects accomplish the twin goals of documentary editing—scholarship and accessibility—by taking full advantage of the possibilities of our hyperlinked world. Over the past year, the CDE has identified four elements essential to advancing that mission:

- technology research and development
- public engagement
- project consultation and development
- education

This mission and its four supporting elements are informed by ongoing work on the digital components of The Papers of George Washington, as well as by conversations with colleagues in the fields of documentary editing, digital humanities, and publishing.

As the CDE continues to navigate the intersection of documentary editing and digital humanities, our editors look forward to the conversations and collaborations that will help chart the course for future digital editing projects.

For more information about the CDE, visit centerfordigitalediting.org.

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