

# Washington Papers

WINTER 2018

## Fifty Years of The Washington Papers

William M. Ferraro, SENIOR ASSOCIATE EDITOR

As we celebrate The Washington Papers' 50th anniversary (more details on back cover), we reflect on our project's origins.

Virginia state archivist William J. Van Schreeven and University of Virginia (UVA) president Edgar J. Shannon, Jr., played critical roles in founding The Washington Papers. In a proposal dated Oct. 18, 1966, Van Shreeven called for a comprehensive edition of the papers of George Washington.<sup>1</sup> Shannon responded, forming a committee in January 1967 to explore the venture.<sup>2</sup>

The committee's endorsement prompted a search in early spring 1968 that targeted Donald Jackson, who then directed the University of Illinois Press. Jackson believed that he lacked a suitable background, but Shannon "and the search committee explained that they were seeking not so much a Washington scholar as someone who had experienced the trials of running an office filled with editors, typists, and bales of manuscript."<sup>3</sup> Having persuaded Jackson to join the undertaking, Shannon applied to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for financial backing. The application boldly predicted that a "definitive edition will not exceed 75 volumes," with "the final volume to be published in 1988."<sup>4</sup>

Needing money to match expected NEH support, Shannon successfully appealed to the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union to cosponsor the project. Appreciative of their commitment, Shannon delivered a speech at Mount Vernon on Oct. 26, 1968, to seek additional funding avenues. The project found long-term financial

support from the National Historical Publications Commission (NHPC), a federal agency that since has become the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC).<sup>5</sup>

Jackson assembled a staff in refurbished space in Alderman Library and directed efforts to locate, organize, and transcribe documents.<sup>6</sup> He also considered a plan to catalog documents, which were pouring

into the office, on a mainframe computer—only to abandon it later for being too complex.<sup>7</sup> Decades passed before friendlier software ended reliance on card files.

A consequential early decision was hiring Dorothy Twohig as associate editor because of her experience as an editor with the Papers of Alexander Hamilton.<sup>8</sup> Twohig joined the Papers of George Washington in summer 1969 and filled many roles until her retirement as editor of the project nearly 30 years later.

The first volumes of Washington's diaries appeared in 1976. Frances Claiborne Guy, then-regent of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, reported in 1977 that the new Papers of George Washington editor, William W. Abbot, planned "to bring out other volumes of the *Papers* on a more rapid schedule."<sup>9</sup> Abbot, an eminent historian on the UVA faculty, replaced Jackson, who retired as work wound down on the diaries.<sup>10</sup>

Abbot divided the edition into different series in order to speed progress. Philander D. Chase, who had joined the Papers of George



A writing desk on display at George Washington's Mount Vernon.  
Courtesy of Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.

Continued on page 11.

# Celebrating Fifty Years of Editing

My first year as director and editor in chief has been an exciting and eventful one. In addition to completing nearly three volumes, we are celebrating #50YearsOfEditing, a special campaign that marks our 50th year of work on The Washington Papers.

Editors for *The Papers of George Washington* have been working hard to finish our two remaining series. In one notable instance, assistant editor Adrina Garbooshian-Huggins devoted countless evenings to conclude the *Presidential Series*, meticulously completing editorial work on the final volume in less than a year. And associate editor Benjamin L. Huggins finished *Revolutionary War Series*, volume 27—his second editorial work completed in two years. Four additional volumes in the series are currently underway.

Editors on the Martha Washington and Washington Family Papers projects are celebrating the publication of the much-anticipated *George Washington's Barbados Diary*, as well as completion of a comprehensive and modern edition of Martha Washington's papers. Their attention is now focused on an edition of papers belonging to Bushrod Washington, George's nephew.

Our digital team—which has grown into a department of its own, known as the Center for Digital Editing (CDE)—continues to increase the accessibility of these papers as well as advance the goals of other

editing projects. As part of their partnership with The Washington Papers, CDE team members have created new visualizations, expanded *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*, and contributed their expertise to several other organizations.

Finally, our editors remain committed to sharing their insights and experiences with the public. Over the past year, we've published 40 blog posts on Washington's Quill ([gwpapers.virginia.edu/washingtons-quill](http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/washingtons-quill)) and answered the questions of more than 60 online queries, some from scholars outside the United States.

This work would not have been possible without the support of the Florence Gould Foundation, Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Historical Publications and Records Commission, and Packard Humanities Institute, as well as private individuals. We are especially grateful for their enduring generosity and support as we enter our 50th year of editing the Washingtons' papers.



Jennifer E. Steenshorne



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Congress, Mount Vernon Ladies' Association,

New York Public Library, Supreme Court  
of the United States

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# Becoming Director

## An Interview with Jennifer E. Steenshorne

Katie Blizzard, COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST



Washington Papers director and editor in chief  
Jennifer E. Steenshorne.

Photo by Katie Blizzard.

“Why is this nation like this? These structures, these institutions—how did we get here?” These are questions that Jennifer E. Steenshorne wants to address in her new position as director and editor in chief of The Washington Papers, a role she assumed in January 2018. “There’s this sort of sense that the nation emerged fully formed, but it didn’t,” she explains. “There was a process of becoming.” Some insight can be found, of course, through examining the papers of George Washington and his family. But for Steenshorne, these questions of “becoming” guide more than just historical inquiry.

Trained in trans-Atlantic history (with an emphasis on the mid-eighteenth century) at the University of California-Irvine, Steenshorne is knowledgeable about an era that clearly impacts understanding of American society and its evolution. Years later, she returned to that world as an associate editor for *The Selected Papers of John Jay* at Columbia University.

Describing her professional trajectory, Steenshorne admits she has accrued “a strange combination of skill sets.” Before joining *The Selected Papers of John Jay* in 2005, she worked in a variety of fields, including publishing, archival management, and even music. Over the past 13 years as an editor and a council member of the Association for Documentary Editing, Steenshorne has made connections between her current and previous roles. Her prior experience has helped her shed light on publication, content management, and audience engagement—some of the greatest challenges facing documentary editing today.

Of these challenges, Steenshorne is especially aware of the possible misconception that editing is not scholarly work. She hopes to improve the public’s understanding that the value of editing is not just in research but also in increasing appreciation of the humanities.

In her role as the new director of The Washington Papers, Steenshorne plans to involve editors and scholars in conversations within and outside of their work. The Twitter conversations developing through the hashtag “Vast Early America” in particular inspire her. (It should be noted that Steenshorne is an avid Twitter user.) “There’s so much amazing content that we need to make people aware of,” she stresses. “How can we get everyone and everything to talk to each other?”

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A version of this article originally appeared as a blog post on Washington’s Quill, [gwpapers.virginia.edu/washingtons-quill/](http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/washingtons-quill/), where you can find more great content about our project and editorial work.

## THE WASHINGTON PAPERS IN THE NEWS

- A July 2018 article from Politifact, which explored George Washington’s experiences with “fake news,” featured senior associate editor William M. Ferraro. Explaining how Washington was not unfamiliar with fabricated letters being misattributed to him, Ferraro said, “It got Washington incredibly upset. It was one of the major reasons he wanted to leave politics.”
- Research editor Kathryn Gehred appeared in two articles from March 2018 about George Washington’s probable use of teeth from enslaved individuals in his dentures. An article from The Root cited her October 2016 blog post on the topic, and Live Science interviewed Gehred for more details.
- In celebration of George Washington’s birthday in February 2018, associate editor Benjamin L. Huggins was quoted in the online journal All Things Liberty (to which he is a frequent contributor). “Among our national holidays, Washington’s birthday, especially for those who do not receive it as a work holiday, is too little taken notice of,” said Huggins.

# Fifty Years of Technological Innovation

Jennifer E. Stertzer, CENTER FOR DIGITAL EDITING DIRECTOR

Since the project's beginning, Washington Papers editors have experimented with technology. Reports dating back to 1969 describe computer-cataloging instructions and coding strategies; subsequent reports detail the project's "thorough but disappointing brush with the world of computerized information storage." Despite these initial challenges, The Washington Papers would go on not only to successfully adopt an array of technical solutions but also to develop cutting-edge digital resources and tools. Of the numerous advancements, three in particular warrant highlighting: *The Papers*

*Since its inception, the Center for Digital Editing has sought partnerships with projects that share a vision of strong editorial standards, a desire for wide-ranging and meaningful accessibility, and an interest in engagement with students, whose experiences with all aspects of developing a documentary edition, from transcription work to platform development, benefits all involved.*

—Jennifer E. Stertzer, CDE director,  
in a June 2016 article from Cumberland University

of *George Washington Digital Edition*, the George Washington Financial Papers Project, and the Center for Digital Editing.

Work on *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition* (PGWDE) began in 2004, when staff from the Papers of George Washington and Rotunda, the digital imprint of the University of Virginia Press, met to discuss the design, workflow, and production

of the new digital edition. At present, the landmark PGWDE includes 69 volumes and a massive cumulative index.

Years later, work on the George Washington Financial Papers Project (GWFP) responded to an early goal of The Washington Papers: to make George Washington's business and household records accessible. Given the complexity of these documents and the means of publication available at that time, very little was done. Several cash accounts from the ledgers were published in print during the 1980s as part of the *Colonial Series*, and other accounts have been published occasionally as stand-alone documents or as part of annotations. But in 2013, comprehensive publication of the financial papers became a real goal as work began on the GWFP. Funded by a grant from the NHPRC, the GWFP's two main objectives were to prepare a freely accessible digital edition of Washington's three main ledger books of accounts and to develop an open-source editorial platform. The resulting digital project not only met those stated outcomes, but also activated new ways of thinking about accessibility methodologies, editorial and publication technologies, and the benefits of collaboration.

The expertise gained from these efforts presented a new opportunity and resulted in the creation of the Center for Digital Editing (CDE) in 2016. The path to conceptualizing the CDE was both challenging and exciting. Discussions entailed the discoveries and advancements made over the years at The Washington Papers; consideration of the state of the field of documentary editing; exploration of the immense potential of collaboration and shared resources; reflections on how editorial projects engage with their users; and experimentation with tools and platforms. The CDE is currently partnering with nine projects and has received funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the NHPRC, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.



You can learn more about the CDE's innovative work by subscribing to the e-newsletter at [centerfordigitalediting.org](http://centerfordigitalediting.org).

# An Introduction to Revolutionary War Series

Volume 27, July 5–Aug. 27, 1780

Benjamin L. Huggins, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Three major themes dominate George Washington’s correspondence in volume 27 of the *Revolutionary War Series*: the arrival of a French expeditionary army and navy, the urgent need to prepare the Continental army for a joint Franco-American offensive to take New York City, and the cultivation of Washington’s relationship with Lieutenant General Rochambeau, the commander of the French army.

The expeditionary force from France arrived off Newport, R.I., on July 11. But just two days later, a British naval squadron arrived at New York City, giving the British the advantage at sea. Hopes for a Franco-American offensive dimmed. But Washington went forward with preparations for the siege of New York City in hopes that a promised second division of French forces would soon arrive. When the British moved troops out of the New York City area to assemble a corps to strike the French, Washington decided to threaten now lightly defended New York City as the best way to aid Rochambeau. But the British commanders, unable to coordinate their forces for an attack, withdrew to the west end of Long Island to better defend New York City, forcing Washington to retreat.

*Perhaps the most important and consequential theme of this volume is Washington’s developing relationship with Rochambeau.*

Preparing the army involved raising troops, increasing stocks of ammunition, and gathering wagons and horses to move the army’s baggage and supplies. But finding food for his hungry troops remained Washington’s most pressing task. Urgency and vigor typified Washington’s approach to these challenges. To the Committee of Congress at Headquarters he wrote, “So much is at stake—so much to be hoped—so much to be lost—that we shall be inexcusable, if we do not employ all our zeal and all our



Rochambeau (Jean Bapte. Donatien Vimeur, Comte de),  
Maréchal de France, engraving by Contenau.

From the New York Public Library.

exertion.” Seeking provisions, he wrote to the state executives: “it may be foreseen that this Army cannot possibly remain much longer together; unless very vigorous and immediate measures are taken by the States to comply with the requisitions made upon them.” The army remained together—but only barely.

Perhaps the most important and consequential theme of this volume is Washington’s developing relationship with Rochambeau. At the outset, the two established a cordial relationship. By the final weeks covered by this volume, the two were also learning that they possessed similar views on campaign plans and other military matters. The continuing maturation of their relationship would prove highly important for the victory at Yorktown in October 1781 and the successful conclusion of the Revolutionary War.

# Editorial Justice for Bushrod Washington

Alicia K. Anderson, ASSISTANT EDITOR

He was George Washington’s “favorite” nephew,<sup>1</sup> the law student of George Wythe and James Wilson, and the lifelong friend of Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall. During a brief stint in the army, he witnessed Cornwallis surrender at Yorktown, and following George and Martha Washington’s deaths, he inherited Mount Vernon and the General’s voluminous papers. He was the youngest and, by the end of his career, the longest-tenured Supreme Court justice of his day, authoring about 80 opinions in three decades. Sought for in civic matters, he was president of the American Colonization Society and a vice president of the American Bible Society.

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Yet today, Bushrod Washington (1762–1829) is little-remembered. The scholarship on his life and legacy is slim, with only a handful of articles and one dissertation featuring the man. In 1998 political scientist James R. Stoner, Jr., observed that Judge Washington’s “modern obscurity is such as never to have earned him a book-length biography.”<sup>2</sup> But the conundrum of his famous connections and important contributions on the one hand and his relative “obscurity” on the other is not surprising: a comprehensive edition of Bushrod Washington’s papers has never before been published.

Attorney Lawrence B. Custer lamented this fact in 1960: “Such biographical studies, it should be emphasized, are not without their difficulties,” he claimed, “for original sources, where and if they exist, are generally widely scattered and difficult to discover.”<sup>3</sup> At the time, he explored about ten major archives for the correspondence of Bushrod Washington and John Marshall and came up short. Indeed, it would take the next few decades for two modern editions,

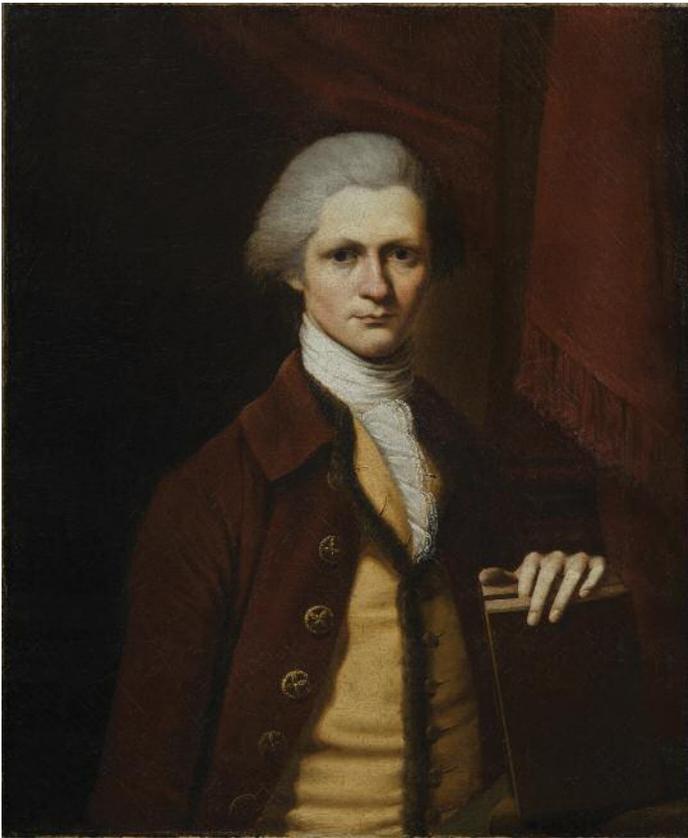
*The Papers of George Washington* (University of Virginia Press) and *The Papers of John Marshall* (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill), to begin shedding light on a portion of Judge Washington’s papers, about 150 of his letters. The rest, however, remained scattered or, Custer concluded, were destroyed.<sup>4</sup>

Historian David Leslie Annis conducted perhaps the most thorough document search in the early 1970s for his PhD dissertation, “Mr. Bushrod Washington, Supreme Court Justice on the Marshall Court” (University of Notre Dame, 1974). Focusing on major repositories and numerous Virginia libraries and historical societies, Annis turned up “over 600 letters” in about 30 institutions. Though he was able to obtain copies of most of the manuscripts, the project of collecting these papers for public consumption ended there.<sup>5</sup>

The Washington Papers, with the advent of the Washington Family Papers project in 2015, aims to remedy this problem. Furthering both Custer’s and Annis’s document searches, the project has, to date, contacted about 500 repositories nationwide and in the United Kingdom. The result has been to triple—twice—the literature made available by the *George Washington* and *Marshall*

*More than 950 documents to, from, or about Bushrod Washington have been located at approximately 70 different institutions.*

editions: more than 950 documents to, from, or about Bushrod Washington have been located at approximately 70 different institutions. Over 700 of these are publishable, with the remainder providing valuable context. Never before have all these documents been fully assembled nor examined in the light of their main subject. And the search is ongoing.



Bushrod Washington,  
painting by Henry Benbridge (1783).  
Courtesy of Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.



Justice Bushrod Washington,  
painting by Adrian Lamb,  
after the 1828 portrait by Chester Harding (1971).  
Collection of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The documents, while conveying details about Bushrod Washington's personal and professional life, reveal larger themes, from the development of the U.S. legal system and contemporary political events, to the memory of George Washington, the management of Mount Vernon, the history of slavery and manumission, and myriad other subjects. In one document from the Office of the Curator of the U.S. Supreme Court, Bushrod advises his nephew's sons in the study of law. Another, from the New York Public Library, details an enemy invasion up the Potomac River during the War of 1812. A letter discussing Bushrod's involvement in the publication of George Washington's papers hails from the Boston Athenaeum, while Mount Vernon—with the largest and

most comprehensive collection of Bushrod Washington's papers by far—offers documents highlighting his uncle's character and legacy, family connections, and the history of the Virginia estate. The rich combination of these papers promises a most compelling and enlightening edition.



*The Papers of Bushrod Washington* (University of Virginia Press)  
is slated for publication in 2021.

Own a Bushrod document or other Washington family papers?  
Contact the author at [aka5h@virginia.edu](mailto:aka5h@virginia.edu)

1 Joseph Story, *The Miscellaneous Writings, Literary, Critical, Juridical, and Political, of Joseph Story, LL.D.* (Boston, 1835), 204.

2 James R. Stoner, Jr., "Heir Apparent: Bushrod Washington and Federal Justice in the Early Republic," in Scott Douglas Gerber, ed., *Seriatim: The Supreme Court before John Marshall* (New York and London, 1998), 322.

3 Lawrence B. Custer, "Bushrod Washington and John Marshall: A Preliminary Inquiry," *American Journal of Legal History* 4, no.1 (January 1960): 35.

4 For the question of destroyed papers, see especially David Leslie Annis, "Mr. Bushrod Washington, Supreme Court Justice on the Marshall Court" (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 1974), 10-11, n.22.

5 *Ibid.*, 12-13.

# Connecting the Papers of Washington, Jay, and Hamilton

Jennifer E. Steenshorne, DIRECTOR AND EDITOR IN CHIEF

One of the interesting things about working on two editorial projects grounded in the same era of history—The Selected Papers of John Jay and now The Washington Papers—is seeing the same event through different eyes. George Washington’s Farewell Address is one such topic.

In 1811, following a claim made by Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton that her husband Alexander Hamilton wrote the Farewell Address, questions of authorship came up for debate. Pennsylvania lawyer and politician Richard Peters, who regarded this charge as denigrating Washington’s abilities and historical contributions, wrote John Jay. In a private letter of March 29, 1811, Jay explained that he had discussed the draft with Hamilton “paragraph by paragraph” before it was sent to Washington. “Some amendments were made...but none of much importance.”<sup>1</sup>

The issue came up again in 1818, when Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton visited Jay at his home, Bedford, and claimed once more that her husband had written the address. Jay reported the conversation to Peters and permitted Washington’s nephew Bushrod, who was entrusted with his uncle’s papers, to make a copy of Jay’s 1811 letter to Peters.<sup>2</sup>

*Jay explained that he had discussed the draft with Hamilton “paragraph by paragraph” before it was sent to Washington. “Some amendments were made...but none of much importance.”*

In November 1820, around the time Joseph Hopkinson planned a biography of Alexander Hamilton, Peters wrote Jay once more on the subject. Jay further explained that he had never seen Washington’s original draft and instead had reviewed Hamilton’s revised draft.



Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton, engraving by unknown artist, after the 1787 portrait by Ralph Earl.

From the New York Public Library.

Jay added, “Whether the President adopted all or only some of the proposed Corrections, or added others, are questions which my memory at this late Day does not enable me to answer—nor do I recollect having read the printed address, with an eye to those Circumstances.”<sup>3</sup>

Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton continued to insist her husband had written the address. In 1825 sought to regain ownership of portions of her husband’s correspondence. As a result of an ensuing lawsuit, the issue of authorship became public, prompting the printing of Jay’s 1811 letter to Peters in the *New York American* newspaper.<sup>4</sup>

Still to be explored are the 11 documents (so far) that concern Hamilton’s correspondence, which will be published in our forthcoming edition of Bushrod Washington’s papers. These letters, included in *Presidential Series* volumes 20 and 21, and the Bushrod Washington Papers, will allow scholars to analyze George Washington’s legacy from several different perspectives.

1 John Jay to Richard Peters, March 29, 1811, ALS, NNC.

2 Carol E. Brier. “Tending Our Vines: From the Correspondence and Writings of Richard Peters and John Jay.” *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 80, no. 1 (2013): 85-111.

3 Jay to Peters, Dec. 26, 1820, ALS, PHI: Richard Peters Papers.

4 Jeffrey J. Malanson, “If I Had It in His Hand-Writing I Would Burn It”: Federalists and the Authorship Controversy over George Washington’s Farewell Address, 1808-1859.” *Journal of the Early Republic* 34, no. 2 (2014): 219-42.

# Washington and Judaism

Philip Levy, PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

Washington's short letter of Aug. 18, 1790, to the Hebrew congregation of Newport, R.I., is seen by many people as one of the most elegant statements supporting religious diversity. For American Jews though, it is far more significant. The letter is a beloved statement of legitimacy for a people more used to being hounded than welcomed.

Even though Washington had no deep knowledge of Judaism, his letter nevertheless contained a few crucial words and passages that would have leapt off the page and rung with special meaning in Jewish ears. This is especially true because Washington's letter arrived during the month of *Elul*, during which observant Jews prepare for the upcoming holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur with daily prayers of repentance called *Selichot*. This is the holiest part of the Jewish calendar and one during which observant Jews see themselves as literally pleading with God for another year's survival.

Washington observed that it was "sweet" indeed to see the nation pass from times of "difficulty and danger" to "days of uncommon prosperity and security." Sweetness is a powerful metaphor during the holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Many Jews follow the custom of eating honey with their meals to symbolize their wish for sweetness in the coming year. Jews may also greet their friends and family with the wish *l'shanah tova u'metukah*, meaning "have a good and sweet year." Washington may not have meant it, but to his audience, he would never have sounded more Jewish.

Washington continued, "May the Children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants." The opening phrase directly quotes the Aug. 1780 letter from leader Moses Seixas that prompted this reply. But Washington's use of "merit" echoes an important Jewish concept expressed in the *Selichot* prayers and in the *Machzor*, the High Holidays' prayer book. In several prayers, Jews ask for mercy, not on their own behalf but for the "merit" of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the many righteous people over the centuries. Merit is thus a very important concept in Judaism, conveying that right-



The Touro Synagogue, home of the congregation whose address prompted Washington's famous letter of August 1790, as photographed by the Historic American Buildings Survey (1971).  
Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, HABS RI-278.

eousness and reward are linked. Almost certainly without knowing it, Washington had invoked this idea at the time of year when Jews see their merit as being weighed by the heavenly court.

Washington was no expert on Jews and Judaism, and even though it is also true that Judaism and Christianity share many central texts, they read them very differently. So, how do we account for the significant seasonal resonances in Washington's letter? When confronted with things that defied simple explanation, the rabbis of old referred to *hashgacha pratit*, which means the workings of the divine through mortals' action or the sense that when things mysteriously line up, it is because they were meant to be. Washington would have called this same sort of alignment "Divine Providence."

# Editors News and Announcements

## Editors in the Field

### Washington Papers Has Strong Presence at ADE Conference

In June 2018, Washington Papers editors attended the Association for Documentary Editing's (ADE) annual conference held in Olympia, Washington. Three staff members—**Katie Blizzard**, **Kim Curtis**, and **Dana Stefanelli**—started the week by attending the Institute for the Editing of Historical Documents, a five-day workshop that is also known as Camp Edit. The trio learned more about editorial tools and best practices at the workshop.

During the conference, almost all of our attending editors participated in panels or presentations. On the first day, research editor Kim Curtis designed and shared a poster on the Martha Washington and Washington Family Papers projects. Jennifer Stertzler, Washington Papers senior editor and Center for Digital Editing (CDE) director, presented an exhibit on Drupal, a technological platform that has become the CDE's primary choice for building digital editions.

At the Critical Issues Seminar the next day, Stertzler, along with four other panelists, responded to questions posed by communications specialist Katie Blizzard about how to reduce barriers to publishing digital editions.

In the remaining sessions of the conference, editors **Erica Cavanaugh**, **Kathryn Gehred**, **Lynn Price**, and **Mary Wigge** discussed their work during four different panels. Leading a roundtable on the challenges and strategies involved in identifying obscure individuals, Gehred shared examples from work on the upcoming edition of Martha Washington's papers. At another session, Cavanaugh explored how multimedia can supplement digital editions by demonstrating the visualizations she had created for The Washington Papers

and CDE partner projects. Price, in a panel on the "Diaries of the Founding Era," discussed the recent publication of *George Washington's Barbados Diary, 1751–1752*. And Wigge joined a group of panelists who shared their own documentary editing "Ah Ha!" moments.



## Technology

### Digital Projects Look to the Financial Papers Project for Insight



In May 2018, project developer **Erica Cavanaugh** presented to members of other archives-based digital projects at the Early Modern Studies Institute Workshop, hosted by the *William and Mary Quarterly*. Cavanaugh shared her insights from creating the digital edition for the George Washington Financial Papers Project, which was released in February 2017.



## Engagement

### Editor Meets with Teachers, Students, and Martha Monument Group



At various events last year, assistant editor **Lynn Price** shared her knowledge of Martha Washington with teachers, students, and even a commission seeking to erect a monument to the "first First Lady."

At the Mount Vernon Teachers' Institute in July 2018, Price showed attendees the many sides of Martha Washington. Splitting the teachers into four groups, Price gave each team a packet of primary sources written from one perspective, such as George Washington or Frances Bassett.

Price then had each group describe Martha Washington as she was portrayed by that particular point of view. According to some of the teachers, the exercise was not only a fun activity for examining Martha Washington's life, but also a way to show students the importance of gathering a variety of sources.

In October 2018, Price met with high school students at Virginia History Day in Fairfax, Virginia. She talked with the students about some of the challenges of historical work, such as how a letter may be catalogued in archives as to "Mrs. George Washington" rather than to "Martha Washington."

Price also spoke to the Virginia Women's Monument Commission in September 2018, about Martha Washington's various public roles. This event supported the goal to erect a monument to Martha at Capitol Square in Richmond, Virginia.



## Publication

### Washington's War 1779 A New Publication from One of Our Editors



A new book from associate editor **Benjamin L. Huggins** explores Gen. George Washington's bold plan to win the war of independence by the fall of 1779. Using primary source material, Huggins discusses Washington's idea of a joint attack by French and American forces on British-held New York City and why that strategy ultimately failed. *Washington's War 1779* was published in May 2018 by Westholme Publishing as part of a book series from the *Journal of the American Revolution*.



## 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:

Florence Gould Foundation  
Mount Vernon Ladies' Association  
National Endowment for the Humanities  
National Historic Publications and Records Commission  
Packard Humanities Institute  
Joseph Rubinfine

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Continued from page 1.

Washington in 1973, launched the *Revolutionary War Series*; Twohig undertook the *Presidential Series*; and Abbot oversaw the *Confederation and Retirement Series*. Publication reached two volumes per year, a standard largely maintained through the editorships of Chase (1998–2003) and Theodore J. Crackel (2004–2010).

Chase began and Crackel concluded discussions that brought into existence *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*, which serves as the cornerstone of Rotunda, the digital imprint of UVA Press. As a result of the project's increased interest in digital ventures, significant new financial support came from the Packard Humanities Institute. The Florence Gould Foundation made a substantial commitment to the project in 2015.

Now under Jennifer E. Steenshorne, director and editor in chief of The Washington Papers since January 2018, the project looks to fulfill the expectations of its founders. Besides *The Papers of George Washington*, the project now includes the Martha Washington and Washington Family Papers projects, which Mount Vernon initiated with a generous grant, and the Center for Digital Editing (CDE), which is pioneering a future for documentary editing under the leadership of Jennifer E. Stertz.

While the future unfolds, work continues on the landmark comprehensive edition of *The Papers of George Washington*, with completion expected in less than a decade.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

A version of this article originally appeared as a blog post on Washington's Quill, [gwpapers.virginia.edu/washingtons-quill](http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/washingtons-quill), where you can find more great content about our project and editorial work.

1 William J. Van Schreeven, "A Proposal for the Publication of the Papers of George Washington," Oct. 18, 1966 (The Washington Papers administrative files, University of Virginia; subsequently WPAF:UVA).

2 Edgar F. Shannon, Jr., to William W. Abbot, Jan. 6, 1967 (WPAF:UVA).

3 Donald Jackson, "Starting in the Papers game," *Scholarly Publishing* (October 1971): 30.

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8 Correspondence between Jackson and Dorothy Twohig, January–March 1969, in WPAF:UVA.

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