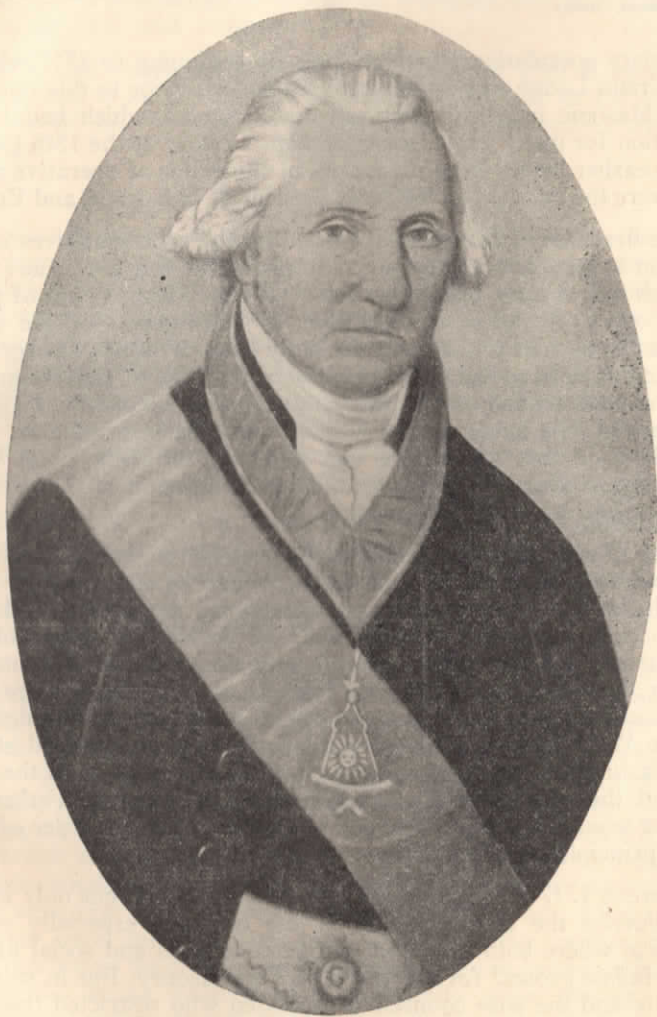


BICENTENNIAL of INITIATION of
GEORGE WASHINGTON

1752

1952



THE GEORGE WASHINGTON MASONIC BICENTENNIAL
COMMISSION OF VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, 404 Duke St., ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA.

George Washington - the Freemason

(Condensed from "Washington's Home and Fraternal Life," by Carl H. Claudy. Approved by the U. S. Government and published by the George Washington Bicentennial Commission, 1982.)

Modern speculative Masonry dates its beginning to 1717 when the first Grand Lodge was established in London. Prior to this time there were Masonic lodges in England and Scotland which had been in operation for many years, some, perhaps as early as the 15th Century. These earlier lodges were successors of the guilds of operative masons who were the builders of the great Cathedrals in Europe, and England.

The first Grand Lodge was formed by the representatives of four London lodges. It branched into the provinces and soon more of the English lodges came under its control. It took Masonry out of politics which were prevalent at that time. It substituted for the ancient charge "to be true to God and the Holy Church" a new charge which founded modern speculative Masonry on the rock of non sectarianism and the brotherhood of all men who believe in a common Father regardless of His name, or the way in which he is worshiped. It was this doctrine that must have had a strong influence upon George Washington when thirty-five years later he determined to petition for membership in the Masonic lodge.

That Washington was deeply and sincerely religious is doubted by none who read his diaries and letters. When he could not go to one church, he went to another, and worshipped apparently with equal satisfaction, no matter at what altar he kneeled. It seems obvious, then, that the Craft which offered only the doctrine of a universal Father, leaving to men to name Him as they would, a place where each brother might worship as he would, must have made mighty appeal to Washington by this very tolerant and broad-minded attitude. All Washington's life was a demonstration of his belief in the equality and the brotherhood of men under one common Father. The wonder would have been if he had not appreciated the Order of which those principles are foundation stones.

Between 1717 and 1751 the Craft spread rapidly, not only in England but on the continent and in the colonies, especially colonial America, where both time and people, conditions and social life provided fallow ground for the seeds of Freemasonry. But in spite of a new life and the wise counsels of brethren who restricted the acts if not the power of the new Grand Lodge, all was not plain sailing. Dissensions appeared. Causes of friction, if not numerous, were important and went deep. In 1751 a rival Grand Lodge was formed. And it was not until 1813 that a reconciliation took place and the present United Grand Lodge of England came into being.

A united Freemasonry agreed that forever more it would have no religious tests and would "welcome to her doors and admit to her privileges worthy men of all creeds and of every race."

In 1815 a new Book of Constitutions proclaimed to all the world forever the non-sectarian character of Freemasonry in this Charge concerning God and religion:

"Let a man's religion or mode of worship be what it may, he is not excluded from the Order, provided he believes in the glorious Architect of heaven and earth, and practice the sacred duties of morality."

IN THE NEW WORLD

Freemasonry came to America just before Washington was born, as an organization in which no religious tests were involved, except the fundamental belief in the Great Architect of the Universe. It taught morality, brotherly love, mutual help. It inculcated patriotism. It selected its members most carefully for character, reliability, manhood. It speedily became a meeting ground for men of diverse minds, characters, ideals, who found then, as men have always found, that in the lodge where all meet "on the level" the necessary social, monetary, and other distinctions of civil life could drop away and allow mind to meet with mind and man with man, untroubled by artificial barriers.

Naturally this appeal to Washington was great; Washington, who proved so well how democratic an aristocrat may be, how the qualities of heart and mind transcend those of influence and wealth.

FREEMASONRY IN WASHINGTON'S DAY

With the present Grand Lodges in every state, with Masonic Temples of beauty and permanency dotting the land everywhere, with a great body of Masonic literature, Masonic libraries, historians and research workers, with jurisdictional lines tightly drawn and a Fraternity organized, governed, and conducted the world over in unity in essentials, it is rather difficult to picture the Fraternity as it was in Washington's day. The brethren of the colonies necessarily conducted their affairs with due regard to the physical, governmental, and economic conditions which surrounded them. Travel was difficult. Roads were few, poor, and often dangerous. Railroads, telegraph, the telephone were unknown, and mail slow and often unreliable. The ties which bound the colonies to the mother country, strong in fraternal feeling and social intercourse, economically grew weaker as the Eighteenth Century passed its half way mark.

Unquestionably the conduct of the Craft when Washington was raised, as an organization, was far less formal than today. Meetings were often called by word of mouth. Expenses were borne as much

by fines and by contributions "for the expenses of the evening" from those present at the meeting as from fixed dues. Meeting places were often in taverns and inns (following the early custom of English lodges). During the Revolution lodge meetings were often held in tents in private homes, even in barns.

During the late colonial days (1750 to 1760) the colonies of Maryland and Virginia flowered to their full growth as the homes of aristocrats who carried into colonial life the principles and practice of the better classes of English society from which they sprang. *Noblesse oblige* was a watchword. Dignity, hospitality, mutual respect, and personal independence were considered of the highest importance.

The Freemasonry of the times naturally partook of the general character of the life surrounding it. Brethren lived well; Masonic brethren were convivial and Masonic banquets frequent. Society was exclusive and bound with the obligations of class and caste; the Freemasonry of Washington's time was small and select. Travel was difficult; the personal independence of planters was highly esteemed. Hence lodges met infrequently, and often with no better authority than the mutual desire of brethren living in the same neighborhood to foregather together about the Three Great Lights.

It was against this background that George Washington, aged twenty, became an Entered Apprentice, a Fellow Craft, and a Master Mason in 1752 and 1753.

From the minutes of "The Lodge at Fredericksburg" (Now Fredericksburg Lodge, No. 4) the following is quoted verbatim:

4th Novbr. Charles Lewis

George Washington

3rd March George Washington pass'd fellow Craft.

4th August 5753 Which Day the Lodge being Assembled present R. Wpl. Daniel Campbell, I. Neilson, S.W., Rot. Halkerston, J. W. George Washington, (*Sic*) James Strakan, Alex'r Wodrow, Secretary pro. Temp. Thomas. Robertson, William McWilliams, Treasr. Transactions of the Evening are: George Washington rais'd Master Mason; Thomas James Entd, an Apprentice.

(The date, "5753," is "1753" according to the Masonic chronology which adds four thousand years to the Christian era.)

"THE LODGE AT FREDERICKSBURG"

The first recorded meeting of the Lodge at Fredericksburg was held September 1, 1752 (o. s.) Modern lodges record in their minutes full information of their first meetings but, as has been noted, the practice

in the early days of Freemasonry in the colonies was to record only the barest essentials, and not always even these. Hence the first minutes show only a list of names of officers and members.

We do not know by what authority the Lodge at Fredericksburg held its first meetings. Hayden, *Washington and His Masonic Compeers*, states that the lodge was organized "under authority from Thomas Oxnard, Provincial Grand Master at Boston." Thomas Oxnard was Provincial Grand Master at Boston when the Lodge at Fredericksburg first met, and an oral tradition has been handed down from generation to generation that the Lodge at Fredericksburg worked under a dispensation from the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

Whether the tradition reflects a fact, or whether the brethren in Fredericksburg met and formed a lodge by mutual consent, under what was then "immemorial usage," they did meet and did Masonic work for nearly five years before they felt the need for "an ample charter."

On April 4, 1757, the Lodge of Fredericksburg appropriated seven pounds to pay the expenses of obtaining this instrument, and on July 21 of the following year, the Grand Lodge of Scotland issued that historic instrument which is now so dearly prized by Fredericksburg Lodge, No. 4 and despite its 195 years of existence and its danger of destruction through the wars of 1776, 1812, and 1861-65, is in an excellent state of preservation.

The quaint by-laws (adopted 1769) reflect the character of the Masonry of Washington's time. They are short enough to quote in full:

Rules and Regulations for Fredericksburg Lodge.

"1. That the meetings in course be the first Friday of every month, from March to September at 6 o'clock in the evening, and from September to March at 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

"2. Every member of the Lodge shall pay three Shillings Quarterly for expenses thereof, Vist, at lady day, Midsummer, Michaelmas, and Christmas—Extra Expenses to be defrayed by such members as are present on these Occasions.

"3. Every new made Brother shall pay the fee of three Pistoles for being admitted to the first degree, The Fee of one Pistole for being passed to the Second and the same sum on being raised to the third. These Fees must be received the night of his admission, passing, or raising, or the Brothers who recommend to be responsible for them.

"4. Any Brother not made in this Lodge, Petitioning to become a member thereof, shall upon his being received as such (after due examination) pay the Fee of one Pistole. But Brethren made here

may become members without further Fee than that of their admission.

"5. No visiting Brother is to be admitted without due Examination, unless vouched for by a Brother present; nor more than once without paying One Shilling and Three Pence.

"6. No person to be admitted to become a Mason in this Lodge under the age of Twenty One years on any account whatever, being Contrary to the Constitutions of Masonry, nor without the unanimous Consent of the Lodge by Ballot.

"7. All Fees and Quarterages to be paid to the Treasurer for the time being. His Acc't to be Annually examined and Balanced on the Night his Office expires."

It is particularly interesting to note by-law Number 6, which provides that no one is "to be admitted to become a Mason" in the Lodge under twenty one years of age. Washington was only twenty when he received the degrees, sixteen years before these By-laws were adopted.

MASONIC LIFE

Any condensed history of Washington's fraternal life must necessarily omit most of his Masonic correspondence and many occasions which have Masonic significance, even if of minor importance.

Not much is known of Washington's Masonic life during the quarter century following his raising. Tradition puts him in various English Army Lodges during this time, but the paucity of early records prevents definite statements. While living at Mount Vernon he was miles from the nearest lodge, and travel was difficult in those days. Nevertheless his presence at several lodge meetings in Fredericksburg is recorded, and he attended a number of public Masonic functions, such as the Festival of St. John the Baptist, June 24, 1779, with American Union Lodge at the Robinson House on the Hudson, New York; the Festival of St. John the Evangelist, December 27, 1779, with American Union Lodge at Morris Hotel, Morristown, New Jersey; the Festival of St. John the Evangelist, December 27, 1782, with King Solomon's Lodge at Poughkeepsie, New York; the Festival of St. John the Baptist June 24, 1784, with Lodge No. 39 at Alexandria, Virginia, and the Masonic funeral of Brother William Ramsay, February 12, 1785, at Alexandria.

Most important Masonically is his acceptance of the Charter Mastership of the Lodge at Alexandria.

For Alexandria, Virginia, was the background for much of Washington's private life. Christ Church, one of the many in which he showed devotional interest was (and is) there. In 1766 Washington

was elected one of the trustees of the town; here lived many of his personal friends. Here, too, was organized Alexandria Lodge No. 39 (later to become Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22.)

In 1782 six brethren of Alexandria petitioned the Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania for a charter; in spite of the fact that the Grand Lodge of Virginia was organized in 1777-8, the Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, under the Grand Lodge of England, granted the charter.

According to the *Proceedings, Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania* February 3, 1783:

"A petition being preferred to this Grand Lodge on the 2nd Sept. last, from several brethren of Alexandria, in Virginia, for a warrant to hold a Lodge there, which was ordered to lie over to the next communication, in consequence of Bro. Adams, the proposed Master thereof, being found to possess his knowledge of Masonry in a clandestine manner, since which the said Bro. Adam, having gone through the several steps of Ancient Masonry in Lodge No. 2, under the Jurisdiction of this R. W. Grand Lodge, further prays that a warrant may now be granted for the purposes mentioned in said petition.

"Ordered, That the prayer of said petition be complied with, and that the Secretary present Brother Adam with a warrant to hold a Lodge of Ancient Masons in Alexandria, in Virginia, to be numbered 39.

"Bro. Robert Adam was then duly recommended, and presented in form to the R. W. Grand Master in the chair, for installation as Master of Lodge No. 39, to be held in the borough of Alexandria, in Fairfax County, Virginia, and was accordingly installed as such."

ALEXANDRIA LODGE CHARTERED BY PENNSYLVANIA

The lodge at Alexandria was chartered in 1783 and met for the first time on February 25, when four of the petitioners and two members of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania opened on the Entered Apprentice's Degree, read the charter giving them life and the number 39, and proceeded to exercise jurisdiction "in the borough of Alexandria or within four miles of the same."

In a very few years the brethren of Alexandria Lodge No. 39 were informed that the Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania was initiating steps to become sovereign and independent of the Grand Lodge of England. Alexandria Lodge was intensely interested in the proposal, but somewhat doubtful as to its Masonic propriety. The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania stated, as one reason for the proposed step, that as this country was independent of all other countries, Masonic

lodges should also be independent, in order that Masonic obligations might never conflict with those owed to the mother country. To this Alexandria Lodge No. 39 returned this fine and spirited answer:

"That we are as separate and independent of Great Britain, as of Denmark, is politically true, and as we owe them no subjection as a State or Nation, how can the subjects of the one owe any of the subjects of the other? If it is answered, none; then, query, how this political truth may, with propriety be applied to the Masonic Order, who, as they do not intermeddle with State matters, ought not to draw arguments from thence to dismember themselves from the jurisdiction of those they hold under, except from similar burdens, or impositions exacted inconsistent with Masonry. But those, no doubt, are the matters to be discussed. We have only to request, (In case we should stand unrepresented,) that you will inform us of the result of your deliberations."

The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania dissolved and reformed, a Sovereign and Independent Jurisdiction (1786). The new Grand Lodge required all charters issued by its predecessor turned in, that new ones might be issued. This did not suit Alexandria Lodge, No. 39. The Grand Lodge of Virginia had been formed shortly before (1778). At first holding aloof from the new Virginia Grand Lodge (several other lodges in Virginia did the same, to satisfy themselves that the Virginia Grand Lodge would live and grow) but now faced with the parting of the ways, Alexandria Lodge decided to petition the Grand Lodge of its own state for a charter, rather than receive a new one at the hands of Pennsylvania.

CHARTER WORSHIPFUL MASTER

Right here occurred that step in the affairs of Masonry which was to have so far reaching an effect upon the Fraternity. Desiring to honor the man and brother Mason who had delivered the nation from bondage and become the foremost citizen of the new country, the brethren of Alexandria asked Washington's consent to name him as their first Worshipful Master under the new Charter.

The Masonic world knows the result. On April 28, 1788, Edmund Randolph, "Governor of the Commonwealth aforesaid and Grand Master of the Most Ancient and Honorable Society of Freemasons within the same, by and with the consent of the Grand Lodge of Virginia," issued a charter to the petitioning brethren, constituting them a lodge of Freemasons "by the name, title and designation of Alexandria Lodge, No. 22." George Washington was named as the Worshipful Master and was unanimously elected Worshipful Master to succeed himself December 20, 1788, serving in all about twenty months. He was inaugurated as President April 30, 1789, thus becom-

ing the first and so far the only brother to be President of the Nation and Master of his Lodge at the same time.

After Washington's death, the brethren desired to change the name to Alexandria-Washington Lodge, No. 22. The Grand Lodge of Virginia consented, and asked for the old charter, in which was named George Washington, "late General and Commander in chief of the forces of the United States of America" as the first Master, so that a new charter might be issued.

Alexandria Lodge No. 22 did not wish to give us this historic instrument, nor did the plea it made fall upon unsympathetic ears. The Grand Lodge of Virginia permitted the Lodge to retain the old charter, and yet change its name; the Grand Lodge Resolution effecting this unusual act reads:

"Resolved, That the said Lodge be permitted to assume the said name, and that it be henceforth denominated the Alexandria-Washington Lodge, No. 22, and that an authenticated copy of this resolution be attached to their said Charter." And Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22, it has remained from that day to this.

LAYING THE CORNER STONE OF THE U. S. CAPITOL

George Washington was always a busily occupied man. The cares of the Presidency, the duties of his military service, the direction of his personal fortune and his estate at Mt. Vernon, his large correspondence, his home life and church associations left him little leisure. The wonder is not that he attended Masonic functions so seldom, but that his complicated and much-engaged life permitted him to foregather so much with his brethren, write so many Masonic letters, consider his Freemasonry so important.

That it was vital in his eyes has been shown in a hundred ways, but perhaps never more than on that occasion which links together Washington, the Mason, and Washington, the President, the laying of the cornerstone of the United States Capitol, September 18, 1793.

This ceremony, so important both historically and Masonically, was conducted by the Grand Lodge of Maryland, which body invited President Washington to act as Grand Master *pro tem*. It was reported in the *Columbian Mirror and Alexandria Gazette* of September 23, 1793, as follows:

"On Wednesday, one of the grandest Masonic processions took place, for the purpose of laying the cornerstone of the Capitol of the United States, which, perhaps, was ever exhibited on the like important occasion. About ten o'clock, Lodge No. 9 was visited by that congregation so graceful to the craft, Lodge No. 22, of Virginia, with all their officers and regalia; and directly afterwards appeared on the

southern banks of the grand river Potomac, one of the finest companies of Volunteer Artillery that has been lately seen, parading to receive the President of the United States, who shortly came in sight with his suite, to whom the artillery paid their military honors, and his Excellency and suite crossed the river and was received in Maryland by the officers and brethren of No. 22, Virginia, and no. 9, Maryland, whom the President headed, preceded by a band of music; the rear brought up by the Alexandria Volunteer Artillery, with grand solemnity of march, proceeded to the President's Square, in the city of Washington, where they were met and saluted by No. 15, of the city of Washington, in all their elegant badges and clothing, headed by Brother Joseph Clarke, Rt. Wor. G. M. p. t., and conducted to a large lodge prepared for the purpose of their reception. After a short space of time, by the vigilance of Brother Clotworthy Stephenson, Grand Marshall p. t., the brotherhood and other bodies were disposed in a second order of procession, which took place amidst a brilliant crowd of spectators of both sexes, according to the following arrangement, viz.: The Surveying Department of the city of Washington.

Mayor and Corporation of Georgetown.

Virginia Artillery.

Commissioners of the city of Washington, and their Attendants.

Stone-cutters—Mechanics.

Masons of the first degree.

Bible, etc., on grand cushions.

Deacons, with staffs of office.

Masons of the second degree.

Stewards, with wands.

Masons of the third degree.

Wardens, with truncheons.

Secretaries, with tools of office.

Past Masters, with their regalia.

Treasurers, with their jewels.

Band of music.

Lodge No. 22, Virginia, disposed in their own order.

Corn, wine, and oil.

Grand Master *pro tem.* Brother George Washington,
and Worshipful Master of

Grand Sword Bearer.

No. 22, of Virginia.

“The procession marched two abreast, in the greatest solemn dignity, with music playing, drums beating, colors flying, and spectators rejoicing, from the President's Square to the Capitol, in the city of Washington, where the Grand Marshall ordered a halt, and directed each file in the procession to incline two steps, one to the right and one to the left, and face each other, which formed a hollow oblong square, through which the Grand Sword-Bearer led the van; followed by the Grand Master *pro tem.* on the left, the President of the United States in the center, and the Worshipful Master of No 22, Virginia, on the right; all the other orders that composed the procession advanced in the reverse of their order of march from the President's Square to the southeast corner of the Capitol, and the artillery filed off to a destined ground to display their maneuvers and discharge their cannon. The President of the United States, the Grand Master *pro tem.*, and the Worshipful Master of No. 22, taking their stand to the east of a large stone, and all the Craft forming a circle westward, stood a short time in solemn order.

“The artillery discharged a volley. The Grand Marshal delivered the Commissioners a large silver plate, with an inscription thereon, which the Commissioners ordered to be read, and was as follows:

“This southeast corner-stone of the Capitol of the United States of America in the city of Washington, was laid on the 18th day of September, 1793, in the thirteenth year of American Independence, in the first year of the second term of the presidency of George Washington, whose virtues in the civil administration of his country have been as conspicuous and beneficial as his military valor and prudence have been useful in establishing her liberties, and in the year of Masonry 5793, by the President of the United States, in concert with the Grand Lodge of Maryland, several Lodges under its jurisdiction, and Lodge No. 22, from Alexandria, Virginia. Thomas Johnson, David Steuart and Daniel Carroll, Commissioners. Joseph Clark, R.W.G.M. *pro tem.*, and James Hoban and Stephen Hallate, Architects. Colin Williamson, Master Mason.’

“The artillery discharged a volley. The plate was then delivered to the President, who, attended by the Grand Master *pro tem.* and three Most Worshipful Masters, descended to the cavazion trench and deposited the plate, and laid it on the corner-stone of the Capitol of the United States of America, on which were deposited corn, wine and oil, when the whole congregation joined in reverential prayer, which was succeeded by Masonic chanting honors, and a volley from the artillery.

“The President of the United States, and his attendant brethren, ascended from the cavazion to the east of the corner-stone, and there the Grand Master *pro tem.*, elevated on a triple rostrum, delivered an

oration fitting the occasion, which was received with brotherly love and commendation. At intervals during the delivery of the oration, several volleys were discharged by the artillery. The ceremony ended in prayer, Masonic chanting honors, and a 15-volley from the artillery.

"The whole company retired to an extensive booth, where an ox of five hundred pounds weight was barbecued, of which the company generally partook, with every abundance of other recreation. The festival concluded with fifteen successive volleys from the artillery, whose military discipline and maneuvers merit every commendation. Before dark the whole company departed with joyful hopes of the production of their labor."

Some confusion has resulted in the minds of many Masonic students at the apparent contradictions in this account of just who acted as Grand Master *pro tem*. But there need be none. George Washington, President of the United States, and Past Master of Alexandria Lodge No. 22, was invited by the Grand Master *pro tem* of Maryland to act as Grand Master and lay the corner stone of the capitol.

The Grand Lodge of Maryland was represented by R.W. Brother Joseph Clark, as Grand Master *pro tem*, and he delegated his authority during the actual cornerstone laying ceremonies to Worshipful Brother George Washington, who thus became Grand Master of Maryland, *pro tem*.

The confusion has resulted from the last line but one in the list of those "in the second order of procession," which some have taken to mean that George Washington was the *only* representative of the Grand Lodge of Maryland at the corner stone laying. It would have been most unusual, and most discourteous to the President, had this been so. It was not so. R.W. Brother Joseph Clark acted as Grand Master *pro tem* for the Grand Lodge of Maryland, until the actual ceremony of corner stone laying commenced, when, as we read, "the plate was then delivered to the President, who, attended by the Grand Master P.T. and three Most Worshipful Masters, descended to the cavazion trench and deposited the plate, and laid it on the corner stone of the Capitol of the United States, etc."

HISTORIC GAVEL

The marble gavel used by Washington on this occasion was presented by him to Brother Valentine Reintzel, then Worshipful Master of Lodge No. 9 of Georgetown (now Potomac Lodge No. 5) who later became the first Grand Master of the District of Columbia. The gavel is the most treasured possession of Potomac Lodge, as are the silver trowel, the square and level made for the purpose by John

Daffey with which the corner stone was laid and the Watson and Cassoul Apron and also the sash, worn by Washington at this ceremony, among the chief jewels in the collection of Masonic treasures of Washington, in the possession of the Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22.

WASHINGTON'S MASONIC LETTERS

Washington wrote many Masonic letters to lodges, Grand Lodges and brother Masons, on Masonic matters. Many of these documents are the priceless possessions of the nation, housed with loving care in the Library of Congress.

Space forbids lengthy quotations from these letters, which breathe a spirit of love, admiration, and respect for the Craft he honored, and which honored him. A few expressions, however, may serve to show the general tenor of the whole.

On December 28, 1783, he wrote to Alexandria Lodge No. 39:

"I shall always feel pleasure when it may be in my power to render service to Lodge No. 39, and in every act of brotherly kindness to the Members of it."

On June 19, 1784, he wrote again:

"With pleasure, I received the invitation of the master and members of Lodge No. 39, to dine with them on the approaching anniversary of St. John the Baptist. If nothing unforeseen at present interferes, I shall have the honor of doing it."

Washington did attend this dinner at Wise's Tavern, and, returning to the lodge room was elected an Honorary Member of the lodge over which he was later to preside as its Master under a new charter from the Grand Lodge of Virginia.

WASHINGTON'S MASONIC PORTRAITS

Many artists and engravers have given to the world their conceptions of Washington the Freemason but the most famous is this portrait in Masonic regalia by Williams painting, now the most valuable and cherished possession of Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22 of Alexandria, Va. (See front Cover). The portrait is not a flattering likeness, compared to the general conception of the First President. But it was undoubtedly a true portrait of the General at 64. It was ordered by the lodge and accepted by it; in other words, by Washington's Masonic brethren, his friends, men who knew him well. It is not thinkable that men who venerated, revered, almost worshipped the great Washington should have accepted a portrait which was not a faithful transcript of his features as he then appeared.

A portrait of "Washington the President-Mason" has been painted by Miss Hattie Burdette of Washington, D. C., one of America's foremost painters of colonial subjects, now in the Washington Masonic Memorial in Alexandria.

In the main hall of the Memorial in Alexandria is the magnificent heroic statue of Washington.

The great Mason is portrayed as standing in the old Lodge Room in Alexandria, Virginia, wearing the Watson Cassoul apron, the jewel and the regalia which were the personal possessions of the renowned patriot and which are now cherished heirlooms of the Lodge. The General is represented as having just called the Lodge to prayer and is standing in front of the old chair which he presented to the Lodge upon his election, with his right hand holding the gavel and resting on the original pedestal.

WASHINGTON MASONIC BIBLES

Freemasons revere the Holy Bible—"The Great Light in Masonry"—not only for its religious but for its Masonic significance. American Freemasons especially venerate two Bibles intimately associated with Washington; that on which he received his degrees, and that on which he took the oath of office as President.

Fredericksburg Lodge has carefully preserved the original Bible on which Washington was obligated as a Freemason. It has traveled much, always with a guard of honor from the Lodge; perhaps its most significant journey was to the Grand Lodge of New York, November 4, 1920, when, on Washington's Masonic birthday, the historic old volume (printed in 1668) lay side by side on the Altar with the Bible of St. John's Lodge, on which Washington took the oath of office as President. This ceremony took place in New York City, April 30, 1789. Chancellor Robert R. Livingston, then Grand Master of Masons in New York, administered the oath. General Jacob Morton, Worshipful Master of St. John's Lodge, No. 1, brought the Bible from his lodge to Federal Hall, where Washington, his hand upon the Holy Book, obligated himself as First President of the United States.

WASHINGTON'S MASONIC APRONS

That his brethren delighted to pay honor to their distinguished brother in Masonic as well as political, social and military ways, is evidenced by many documents, addresses, dedications, and gifts. Among the latter, the two Masonic aprons which have such Masonic historical importance are particularly to be noted.

The first of these (chronologically) was the gift of Brothers Elkanah Watson and M. Cassoul, of Nantes, France. These men

were confidential agents of the American government during the Revolution. This apron (now in possession of Alexandria-Washington Lodge, No. 22) reached General Washington when in camp at Newburgh, New York. Washington wore this apron at the laying of the cornerstone of the Capitol at Washington.

Another famous apron is the Lafayette Masonic apron, a treasured possession of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. It was embroidered by Madam Lafayette and presented by her distinguished husband, Washington's brother Mason on Aug. 1784, when he visited Mt. Vernon.

PROPOSED AS GRAND MASTER

Washington was proposed as the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, on June 23, 1777, but declined.

He was thrice proposed as General Grand Master of Masons in the United States, first by American Union (Military) Lodge, at Morristown, New Jersey. December 15, 1779; next by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, on December 20, 1779 and again by the same body on January 13, 1780.

SPRIG OF ACACIA

Brother George Washington passed to the Celestial Lodge Above at twenty minutes past ten o'clock P. M. on Saturday December 14, 1799, in his sixty-eighth year.

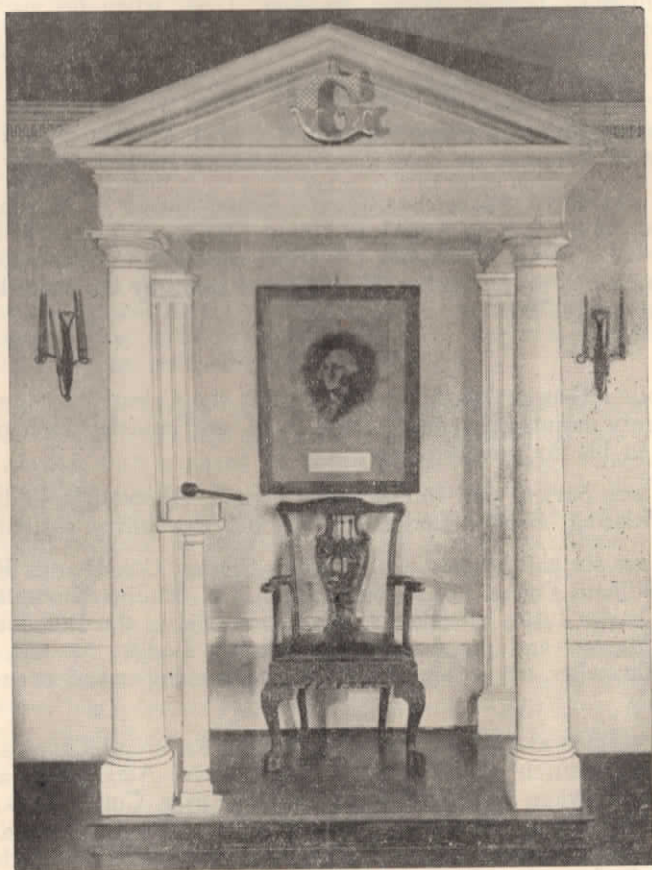
He was buried with full Masonic honors, Alexandria Lodge, No. 22 officiating. Brooke Lodge No. 47, of Alexandria, assisting.

Of the six pall bearers, Col. Charles Simms, Col. Dennis Ramsey, Col. William Payne, Col. George Gilpin, Col. Phillip Marsteller, and Col. Charles Little, all officers who had served in the Revolution, all were Masons and members of Alexandria Lodge, No. 22, except Col. Marsteller, whose son, Phillip G., was a member and attended the funeral.

The sermon at the tomb was preached by Reverend Thomas Davis, of Christ Church—Washington's own church—Alexandria, and the Masonic services were conducted by Dr. Elisha Cullen Dick, Worshipful Master of Alexandria Lodge No. 22, and the Reverend James Muir, D.D., Chaplain of the Lodge. Dr. Dick retired from the East of the Lodge when it was rechartered, to allow Washington to be named as the Charter Master, remained again a year out of the East when Washington was unanimously reelected and again became Master after Washington retired as a Past Master. To Dr. Dick fell the solemn duty of interring the distinguished dead with the Lambskin Apron of the fraternity and its Sprig of Acacia of immortal hope.

1952

The George Washington Masonic Bicentennial Year



Canopy of Fredericksburg, Va. Lodge No. 4 back when Washington was initiated Nov. 4, 1752

GENESIS CHAP. XLIX.



GENESIS 49. Verle 12.

And thou shalt dwell in the haven of the haven, for thou shalt be for an haven of ships, and the haven shall be unto thee.

GENESIS CHAP. XLIX.



GENESIS 49. Verle 14.

And he shall be a fruitful branch, and it shall be fruitful brought by a well, and it shall rest over the well.



And he shall be a fruitful branch, and it shall be fruitful brought by a well, and it shall rest over the well. And he shall be a fruitful branch, and it shall be fruitful brought by a well, and it shall rest over the well.

And he shall be a fruitful branch, and it shall be fruitful brought by a well, and it shall rest over the well. And he shall be a fruitful branch, and it shall be fruitful brought by a well, and it shall rest over the well.

The Bible on which George Washington took the Oath of Office

First Congregational Church

POST AND MASON STREETS
SAN FRANCISCO

The Bible on which George Washington took the oath of office as President of the United States on April 30th, 1789, and on which Warren G. Harding, 132 years later, was sworn in as President, is the property of St. John's Lodge No. 1 of New York City. General Joseph Morton, who was Grand Marshal of the inaugural exercises, was Worshipful Master of St. John's Lodge and Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of New York. At Washington's request, he brought the Bible from the altar of his Lodge, with its cushion of crimson velvet, and upon this sacred volume, the oath was administered by Robert R. Livingston, Chancellor of the State of New York and Grand Master of its Grand Lodge. At the inauguration of President Harding, also a Mason, he requested that the same Bible be used. The above illustration shows the Bible open at the page which Washington, and later Harding, kissed when taking the oath of office. It was printed in London in 1747, and was presented to St. John's Lodge by Jonathan Hampton on November 28th, 1770, the night he was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason.

Picture furnished by Harry L. Todd, President Past Masters Association, F. & A. M., of California.



*George Washington Laying the Cornerstone
of the United States Capitol, Sept, 18, 1793*