

Teachers Institute, 2010

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Exercise: George Washington's Diary

Additional Primary Sources:

1. Exchange of Letters Between George Washington and John Hancock.

John Hancock to George Washington, October 21, 1789

George Washington to John Hancock, October 22, 1789

John Hancock to George Washington, Boston, October 23, 1789

George Washington to John Hancock, Weston, October 23, 1789

John Hancock to George Washington, Boston, October 26 [25], 1789 *

George Washington to John Hancock, Boston, October 26 [25], 1789 *

* These letters are dated October 26, but the Sunday was actually October 25.

As Washington approached Boston and after he arrived, he and John Hancock, the governor of Massachusetts, exchanged letters about arrangements for Washington's visit. (This is the same John Hancock who, as president of the Continental Congress in 1776, put his famously large signature on the Declaration of Independence.) The exchange became prickly: Hancock invited Washington to stay at his house in Boston; Washington turned him down. Hancock invited Washington to dinner; Washington agreed, but then refused to go when he learned that Hancock expected him to make the first visit. As president, Washington expected others to pay their respects to him first. Hancock's excuse: painful gout. (Not documented in these letters or in Washington's diary is a third dispute. This one was between Hancock as governor of Massachusetts and representatives of the city of Boston, who quarreled over who would meet Washington as he entered the city. The city won the argument. See: *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*. ed. Theodore J. Crackel, et al. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2007-. Hancock to Washington, October 26, note 1). Compare these letters to Washington's descriptions in his diary of his dealings with Hancock.

To Find The Letters:

In print:

The Papers of George Washington. ed. W. W. Abbot, et al. Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1987

Online:

Library of Congress, American Memory, *The George Washington Papers, 1741-1799*:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html>

This edition, digitized by the Library's American Memory project, consists of images made from microfilm of the George Washington papers at the Library of Congress. Tips: Since Hancock is sometimes identified by name, but at other times simply as "Governor," just enter the dates into the search box in order to find the letters. Be sure to specify: "Match all of these words."

The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition. ed. Theodore J. Crackel, et al.

Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2007-.

This, the Rotunda edition, consists of transcriptions of the Washington papers with editorial annotations and is only available by subscription at research libraries such as the Library of Congress: <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/FGEA.html>

You may look at it online while you are here at the Library.

Papers of George Washington Digital Edition, Mount Vernon Guest Version:

The Mount Vernon Guest Edition includes the same documents as the Rotunda edition, but without the scholarly annotations. Link to it at the bottom of the Mount Vernon website,

http://www.mountvernon.org/learn/meet_george/index.cfm

Click on Papers of George Washington Digital Edition at the very bottom of the page.

It is freely available on the web.

2. Jacques Pierre Brissot de Warville on Boston, John Hancock, Hancock's Gout, and Joseph Pope's Orrery.

Jacques Pierre Brissot de Warville, *Travels in the United States of America Performed in 1788* (Dublin, 1792). This book is available online at the Library of Congress at: "American Notes: Travels in America, 1750-1920," <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/lhtnhtml/lhtnhome.html>.

Brissot de Warville (1754-1793) was a French author, revolutionary leader, and active opponent of slavery. He was a member of the Girondin political faction in France during the Revolution, and, according to historian Robert Darnton, he may also have been a police spy. He was guillotined in 1793.

In 1788 Brissot de Warville traveled in the United States, visiting many of the same places and meeting many of the same people that Washington saw the following year. This book is the result. For his description of Boston, see Letter II, "Observations on Boston," pages 93-121. For his description of John Hancock and his gout, see page 119. On pages 111-113 he describes the orrery (a model of the solar system) Washington saw at Harvard, and his conversation with the maker of the orrery, Joseph Pope. Brissot de Warville's observations on American slavery, paper money, Quakers, and other subjects can be found throughout the book.

3. Letter of Joseph Barrell to Samuel Blachley Webb, November 1, 1789.

Samuel Blachley Webb, *Correspondence and Journals of Samuel Blachley Webb*, ed. Worthington Chauncey Ford (New York: Wickersham Press, 1893) Vol. 3, pages 142-144. This book is online at the Internet Archive, www.archive.org. A direct link to the book is: <http://www.archive.org/details/corrjournalssam03webbrich>
In the PDF version of the book the letter appears on pages 136-138.

Barrell, a Boston merchant, was a member of the three-man committee organized to arrange Washington's reception in Boston. In this letter to his friend, Samuel Blachley Webb, Barrell describes Washington's visit to Boston. He includes a description of Washington's visit to the "duck manufactory," (a workshop for making sailcloth - duck) in Boston. Barrell also mentions the cold Washington suffered with in Boston. (Washington mentions this cold himself in his diary entry for Monday, October 26, 1789.) Note that Barrell refers to the president as "His Majesty."

4. The Diary of William Bentley

William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1905-1914), Volume 1, page 130. Internet Archive, www.archive.org
Or link directly at:
http://www.archive.org/stream/diaryofwilliambe01bentl/diaryofwilliambe01bentl_djvu.txt

William Bentley (1759-1819) was a Unitarian minister who lived in Salem, Massachusetts. He is remembered today for his diary. On October 29, 1789 he recorded George Washington's visit to Salem.

5. Newspapers

Boston Gazette, October 26, 1789
Pennsylvania Packet, November 13, 1789

Newspapers in Boston and around the country reported on Washington's New England tour. These two contain extensive descriptions of Washington's reception in Boston. Note the participation of the workers in the sailcloth factory in the procession of tradesmen held in Washington's honor, reported on by the *Boston Gazette*. Parades of tradesmen, marching with their trades, were traditional. There were similar processions in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and other cities to celebrate the ratification of the federal Constitution in 1787-1788.

To Find Them: The newspapers are available online at the Library of Congress on the database *America's Historical Newspapers*, listed on Databases and E-Resources at the Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/rr/ElectronicResources/>
These are only available at the library. See the diary footnotes for additional references to newspaper reports of Washington's tour, then see if you can find them in this and other newspaper databases.

6. Textile Manufacturing in New England as Described by Washington in his Diaries.

Even before mechanized industry took root in New England in the first decades of the nineteenth century, people in New England towns, including many women and children, were spinning yarn and thread and weaving cloth both in their homes and in centralized workplaces - “manufactories.” Washington, who like his Treasury secretary Alexander Hamilton, was interested in developing the economic capacity of the United States, remarked on textile manufacturing wherever he saw it during his New England trip.

Washington would also have remembered the importance of American-made cloth during the boycotts of the revolutionary era. At his inauguration on April 30, 1789, he wore a suit of brown cloth manufactured in Hartford, Connecticut. See Washington’s letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox, April 10, 1789, about the suit:

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/images/in0001s.jpg>. Search the manuscript and published editions of the George Washington papers (see above) for the rest of the January - April, 1789 correspondence between Knox and Washington about the suit.

For more on Alexander Hamilton, see: “Alexander Hamilton: A Resource Guide,” <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/hamilton/related.html>. It includes links to Hamilton’s 1791 “Report on Manufactures” and to images of the Ipswich lace that Hamilton collected for his report. For the lace see also: “Top Treasures of the Library of Congress,” <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trm157.html>.

For more of Washington’s observations on textile production during his New England tour see his diary entries for: October 17, (Stratford, CT, duck manufacturing); October 18 (New Haven, CT, linen); October 19 (Wallingford and Mansfield, CT, silk cultivation); October 20 (Hartford, CT, wool spinning and weaving). The diaries are at:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwseries1.html#D>

7. Presidential Protocol, Etiquette, and Civility

“Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation.”

Long before he became president, Washington was concerned about appropriate behavior. As a teenager he copied 110 “Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation” into a notebook. The notebook is in the George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress. You can see it online at: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwseries1.html>. For a transcription, and to learn more about it, see: Charles Moore, “Washington’s Copy of ‘Rules of Civility & Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation,’” University of Virginia, *Papers of George Washington* - Documents: <http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/civility/index.html>

Letter, Alexander Hamilton to George Washington, May 5, 1789

Because George Washington was the first president of the United States, he knew that he would have to establish the norms of presidential behavior. This would not be easy - as the leader of a new country he had to uphold the dignity and authority of his office, but as the head of a republic he did not want to be kingly. Immediately after his inauguration on April 30, 1789, he wrote Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury and a powerful member of his cabinet, for advice. Hamilton replied in this letter. The letter is in the Alexander Hamilton Papers at the Library of

Congress, but it is not online. A transcript of the letter is online in the Mount Vernon Guest Edition of the *Papers of George Washington, Digital Edition*. Go to the Mount Vernon Website: http://www.mountvernon.org/learn/meet_george/index.cfm, then click on Papers of George Washington Digital Edition at the very bottom of the page. A letterbook copy of Washington's reply to Hamilton, May 5, 1789, is in the George Washington papers, and it is online at *The George Washington Papers, 1741-1799*: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html>

Thomas Jefferson's "Canons of Etiquette."

Like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), the third president of the still-new United States, worked to establish presidential etiquette and protocol. In November or December, 1803 Jefferson composed a list of rules called "Canons of Etiquette to be Observed by the Executive." Jefferson's rules determined who visited whom and in what order, among other things. The relative egalitarianism of these rules and the informality of Jefferson himself (he sometimes greeted White House guests in his slippers) affronted Anthony Merry, Britain's new minister to the United States, and his wife, when they arrived in Washington soon after Jefferson composed the rules. To see the "Canons," go to the Library of Congress's Thomas Jefferson Papers online: http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/jefferson_papers/ and search for: "December 1803, Note on Etiquette for President" (or just search "etiquette"). The direct link is: http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/P?mtj:3:./temp/~ammem_1OQT:: They have been published in *The Works of Thomas Jefferson* ed. Paul Leicester Ford (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1904-1905), 10: 47-48.