



ESCAMBIA ECHOES



August, 1995

ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. Box 276 Brewton, Alabama 36427

GEORGE WASHINGTON

John Washington was the great-grandfather of George Washington. He was an Englishman of good family who came to Virginia in 1657 and founded the American branch of the family. He obtained a grant of 150 acres in Westmoreland County on the Potomac River. He soon saw a future in the wilderness upriver. In 1674 he and a partner secured a second grant of 5,000 acres about 18 miles below the modern city of Washington, D.C. This was the site of Mount Vernon. John Washington was a well known planter, businessman, and military leader. The hostile Indians called him Conotocarius—"destroyer of villages."

Little is known of John's son Lawrence, but his grandson Augustine left a clear record. He had many holdings. He was a man of great energy. He added to the Westmoreland plantation until it included the whole peninsula between Popes Creek and Bridges Creek, small streams emptying into the Potomac.

Augustine Washington had four children by his first wife. His second wife was Mary Ball Washington. Her family had been settled in Virginia about 1650 by her grandfather, Col. William Ball. She was born in 1708 and was orphaned at 13.

George was the eldest child of Augustine and Mary Washington. He was born on Feb. 22 (Feb. 11 on the calendar used then), 1732, at the Bridges Creek plantation, later called Wakefield. His five younger brothers and sisters were Elizabeth, Samuel, John Augustine, Charles, and Mildred (who died in infancy). George's two half brothers, Lawrence and Augustine, were 14 and 12 years older than he, but the three boys liked and respected each other.

When George was 3 the family moved to the larger plantation farther up the Potomac. It was called Epsewasson, or Little Hunting Creek. George grew to love this estate.

The letter A probably started as a picture sign of an ox head, as Egyptian hieroglyphic writing and in a very early Semitic writing used in about 1500 BC on the Sinai Peninsula. In about 1000 BC, in Byblos and other Phoenician and Canaanite centers, the sign was given a linear form, the source of all later forms. In the Semitic languages this sign was called aleph, meaning "ox."

The Greeks had no use for the aleph sound, the glottal stop, so they used the sign for the vowel a. They also changed its name to alpha. They used several forms of the sign, including the ancestor of the English capital A. The Romans took this sign over into Latin, and it is the source of the English form. The English small a first took shape in Greek handwriting in a form similar to the present English capital letter. In about the 4th century AD this was given a circular shape with a projection. This shape was the parent of both the English handwritten character and the printed small a.

"All men make mistakes, but married men find out about them sooner"

Meeting News

Meeting time: Tuesday August 22, 1995 at 3:00 P. M.

Meeting Place: Jefferson Davis Community College; Thomas E. McMillan Museum

Hostess: Evelyn Jernigan

Program: Come see; come hear!

FROM THE EDITOR: December will end this term of officers. In the coming year I am planning to do some traveling, so, while thinking of new officers for the Society, be thinking of someone for Publications. I have enjoyed serving as publications chairman, but now wish to pass the job on to someone else.

Editor:
Barbara Jones
334-867-4549

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:
MARY E. STALEY OF MOBILE, ALABAMA
MILLARD PEACOCK, BYRON, GEORGIA

WE STILL NEED WORKERS IN
THE ALABAMA ROOM!
THERE IS A LOT TO BE DONE.