

General Meeting of the Members of the
Descendants of the Signers of the
Declaration of Independence Inc.
Washington Room, The Jefferson,
Richmond, Virginia.
22 October 1955

The meeting was called to order by the President-General Mr. Percy Hamilton Goodsell Jr. at 3.40 P.M.

In the absence of the Chaplain-General Mr. Goodsell offered the Society prayer.

It was moved and approved that the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting be dispensed with, since they were mailed to all members.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT-GENERAL

The President-General reviewed briefly the results of the meeting of the Board held in the morning at Virginia House. He called attention to the fact that it was resolved to publish the Year Book of the Society every three years and the next edition will be in 1956. A committee has been appointed to look into the matter of a new form of book and the cost of the same.

Mr. Goodsell expressed the deep appreciation and sincere thanks of the Board to Mrs. Dwight Harvey Day, President and to Mrs. Andrew J. Brent, Secretary and to the Virginia Society for the excellent arrangements made for the Board meeting at the Virginia House and the delicious luncheon which was served after the meeting. He also expressed the thanks of the Board to the Virginia Historical Society for the hospitality they offered us at Virginia House.

The President-General read a letter from the General Federation of Women's Clubs thanking him for his letter to them in which he spoke of the appreciation of our Society for the restoration work at Independence Hall undertaken by their organization.

Mr. Goodsell then read a letter from Mrs. Peyton Conway March the widow of our late distinguished member, General Peyton C. March, in which Mrs. March expressed her appreciation to the members of our Society for the resolution adopted at the 48th annual Congress commemorating the death of her husband. Mrs. March stated that mention of the resolution is being made in the next issue of the West Point publication "Assembly" and that the resolution will be included with General March's papers which will go to the Library of Congress.

He then announced that the Society was represented at the annual spring reception given by the President of the National Society of Colonial Dames in the State of New York and the Van Cortland Committee at the Van Cortland Mansion, New York City. Also on Monday, July 4th, the President-General represented the Society with the colors in the official celebration by the State of Connecticut of Independence Day in the Hall of Flags in the State Capitol at Hartford. On Saturday, June 4th, the President-General and Mrs. Percy H. Goodsell, Governor-at-Large, attended the exercises of the birthplace of Nathan Hale at South Coventry, Conn., commemorating the two hundredth anniversary of that patriot's birth. He saw the Hancock house replica at Ticonderoga.

SUMMARY OF REPORT OF REGISTRAR-GENERAL, MRS. J. HOWARD PATTERSON

Number of new members	6
Number of new Junior members	20
Resignation withdrawn	1
Deaths	4

REPORT OF THE HISTORIAN-GENERAL, MISS NATALIE LOLITA DENSMORE

In the absence of Miss Densmore, the Secretary-General read her report. In her report Miss Densmore called attention to the fact that on September 29, 1955 the Pidcock-Thompson-Neely House, one of the oldest in Pennsylvania, located at Washington's Crossing, was dedicated as a National Shrine. The rooms have been furnished in 17th and 18th century pieces and appear as they probably were when they served as General Washington's Headquarters before the crossing of the Delaware at Christmastime 1776. This old house is thought to have been the center of more historically significant drama than any other private home in America which has since been made a National Shrine. Many of the great Revolutionary leaders met there and in recent years it has been in the public attention because of the Christmas Day re-enactment of Washington's crossing of the Delaware. A visit to this beautiful and historic spot is well worth while.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER-GENERAL, MAJOR WILLIAM MCKENDREE SCOTT

The Treasurer-General read his report which was approved as read and a copy of the same is appended hereto.

REPORT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE, MISS MILDRED W. LEE

In Miss Lee's absence the Treasurer-General read a letter from Mr. Taylor F. Turner, Jr. of Fredericksburg, Virginia, our scholarship student at the University of Virginia. To summarize Mr. Taylor's letter, he expressed his appreciation of the help our Society is giving him and spoke of the work he is successfully doing at the University.

REPORT OF THE GOVERNORS

Mrs. J. Howard Patterson reporting for the Pennsylvania State Society stated that a meeting will be held in November with a speaker supplied by Civilian Defense.

Mrs. Dwight Harvey Day reporting for the Virginia State Society stated that a prize of \$60.00 will be awarded to a school child submitting the best essay on the Declaration of Independence. The contest will take place in Richmond during the February term and the award will be made at the School during the last regular exercises. There will be considerable newspaper and radio publicity given to this very worth while event. (Again we have an example of Mrs. Day's splendid leadership of the Virginia Society and the excellent results that she is obtaining.)

Mrs. Joseph Fairbanks reporting for the District of Columbia stated that there were presently few members in the District.

Mr. Goodsell reporting for the New York State Society stated that a tea was held in the Spring. That Mr. Clarkson had been appointed Secretary and they were looking forward to an active year. They are in the course of looking for a new state flag. There were no new members and one death, Mrs. Hugh White Adams, Honorary President and Complimentary Member.

Mrs. William H. Suttentfield representing North Carolina sent her regrets.

Mrs. William Clifton Carson representing Georgia sent her regrets.

REPORT OF GOVERNORS AT LARGE

Miss Emily Gilpin Hopkinson reported on the Independence Day exercises. Together with the Secretary-General she attended preliminary meetings in the Mayor's office in connection with the exercises held at Independence Hall on the Fourth of July. Miss Hopkinson together with Miss Frances Anne Wister and the Secretary-General attended the celebration and the luncheon which followed at Old Bookbinder's. General Anthony J. Drexel Biddle, the new Adjutant General of Pennsylvania, was in charge of the affair and Senator Barclay of Kentucky formerly Vice President of the United States was the principal speaker. It was a very colorful and impressive occasion with units from the armed services attired in colonial uniforms led by the Philadelphia Police and Band.

The Secretary-General pointed out that the city will welcome a more active interest on the part of our Society and other patriotic organizations in this annual event. The President-General will address a letter to such organizations spearheading a movement to support the Independence Day exercises.

OLD BUSINESS

The Secretary-General reported the call which he and Miss Hopkinson had made on Judge Edwin Lewis, and his subsequent call prior to this meeting. It was felt that Judge Lewis who was largely instrumental in having the Federal Government and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania undertake the restoration of Independence Hall, the development of Independence Historical Park, The Mall and the creation of other national shrines in old Philadelphia such as Christ Church should be asked to intercede for us with the Superintendent of the Historical Park in our continued use of the Assembly room, in which was signed the Declaration, for the annual meeting of our Congress. Judge Lewis has promised to do so. If Judge Lewis is unsuccessful, consideration should be given by our membership to a petition to the United States Senate asking them to pass a resolution giving us the privilege of meeting in the Assembly room permanently. A further report will be made regarding this matter.

The Secretary-General reported that "Byberry", the Homestead of Dr. Benjamin Rush is in excellent condition. The property consists of fifty acres and improvements. Forty-five acres will be developed for housing. Five acres with the improvements and an entrance driveway will be set aside and the owner intends to use it as a home. The developer has promised to furnish an engineer's plan when executed and the same will be placed on file with the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. However, this does not assure permanency. The County Medical Society of Philadelphia have been advised of the situation and have requested further information with the thought that they might spearhead a national movement among medical societies to preserve this historic land mark for all time. A further report will be made on this matter.

NEW BUSINESS

The President-General reminded the meeting of the anniversary celebration at Jamestown where our Society was founded, which will take place in 1957.

It was moved, seconded and approved that our Society should endorse the book by Dorothy Horton McGee entitled "Famous Signers of the Declaration of Independence."

The President-General called attention to the fact that the Sons of the American Revolution honored the graves of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence each year on July 4th and that some thought should be given for further discussion at a subsequent meeting as to what action our Society might take regarding these graves, such as the placing of a wreath or some other mark of respect and remembrance. No other Society should take the lead regarding this observance to the Signers.

Mrs. J. Howard Patterson offered a resolution which was unanimously passed expressing the regret of the Society that Mrs. Percy Hamilton Goodsell was unable to attend the meetings and expressing our sympathy and best wishes for a speedy recovery and Mrs. Joseph Fairbanks was instructed to forward this resolution to Mrs. Goodsell.

A resolution was unanimously adopted expressing the sincere appreciation of the Society to Mr. William Cook Fitch for his loyalty and generosity to the Society through his contribution to our fall meeting. The Secretary-General so advised him.

Mr. Edward Barnwell Walker moved that we consider, at the New York Meeting to be held in the winter, the President-General's suggestion that the Society honor the graves of the Signers on Independence Day with some form of remembrance. This matter will be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

There being no further business to transact a motion to adjourn was made and at 5.00 P.M. the general meeting of the Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence adjourned to be followed by a cocktail party and dinner at the Rotunda Club in the Jefferson. At the dinner Mr. Edwin Hemphill delivered a most interesting talk on George Wythe.

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The cocktail party and most enjoyable dinner was further evidence of the hospitality of the Virginia State Society and the thoughtful and painstaking effort that Mrs. Day and Mrs. Brent gave to the entertainment of members and guests. In the course of the dinner the Secretary-General read the names of the Signers and thirty-six descendants answered to the name of their ancestor as follows:

Josiah Bartlett	2	Robert Morris	1	William Paca	1	Carter Braxton	7
Oliver Wolcott	1	Benjamin Franklin	2	Richard Henry Lee	2	John Penn	4
Francis Hopkinson	2	John Morton	2	Benjamin Harrison	2	Thomas Heyward Jr.	2
John Hart	4	George Ross	1	Thomas Nelson Jr.	2	Arthur Middleton	1

The following Sunday morning the Society attended services at St. John's Church, Richmond, the beautiful and historic church where Patrick Henry kindled the torch of liberty with his inspired words "Liberty---or Death". After the service the members inspected the graveyard and the grave of the Signer George Wythe.

The final occasion was a wonderful luncheon at the handsome Country Club of Virginia and all those who attended these meetings are looking forward to next year when they will again have the great pleasure of meeting with the members of our splendid Virginia State Society.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Graham
 Thomas Graham
 Secretary-General

Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence, Inc.

Report of the Treasurer-General

May 1, 1955 to October 5, 1955

Balance on hand May 1, 1955

Cash in City Bank, Washington, D.C.	\$	1357.06	
(Of this amount 471.04 in Bi-Cen. Fund and 500.00 U.S.Bond)			
U.S. Treasury Bond		500.00	
U.S. Treasury Bond		500.00	
Scholarship Fund (15 shrs., A.T.& T.)		2436.53	4793.59

Receipts, May 1, 1955 to October 5, 1955

Interest and Dividends		93.05	
Miscellaneous		1.50	
Dues and Enrollment Fees		1983.00	2077.55
Total			6871.14

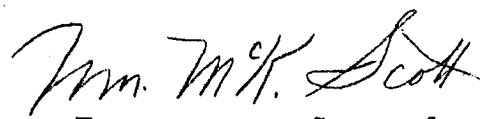
Disbursements, May 1, 1955 to October 5, 1955

Printing		632.97	
Officers' Expenses		115.48	
Donations including Scholarship		175.00	
Miscellaneous		.50	
Expenses Phila. Congress (Receipts 278.50)		64.68	
General Expense, Lithoplate		218.50	1207.13

Balance on hand October 5, 1955 5664.01

Accounted for as follows:

Cash in City Bank		2227.48	
(Of this amount 570.19 in Bi-Cen. Fund and 500.00 U.S.Bond)			
U.S. Treasury Bond		500.00	
U.S. Treasury Bond		500.00	
Scholarship Fund (15 shrs. A.T.& T.)		2436.53	5664.01


Treasurer - General