

ANNUAL FALL MEETING,  
Descendants of the Signers of the  
Declaration of Independence, Inc.  
At the Colonial Capitol -  
Williamsburg, Virginia - Nov. 7, 1964.

Softly and beautifully lighted by tapered candles in the chandeliers and wall sconces was the Capitol of Colonial Virginia as members of the Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence debouched from their busses - which had brought them from the Lodge - for their 1964 Fall Meeting in the Assembly Room of the House of Burgesses at 5 p.m.

President General Marsden Churchill Smith, standing perhaps, where Patrick Henry stood, and certainly where the Patriots of 1776 had voted their Resolve for Independence on May 15, called the meeting to order, and all stood while Percy H. Goodsell Jr., Honorary President-General, offered the Society's prayer in the absence of the Chaplain-General. A reading of the minutes of the previous session was dispensed with by vote, in the absence of the Secretary-General, Mr. Thomas Graham, who was unable to be present. The President-General appointed Mr. Clinton Axford to serve as secretary pro-tem, who proceeded to do so, using a goose-quill pen into which he had surrepticiously inserted a ball-pen filler.

Presentation of the Treasurer-General's report, in the absence of Miss Natalie Densmore was by Mrs. Raymond Whitney. It showed the assets of the Society \$8,140.76, including: Cash in checking account, \$2,022.89; Wm. McK. Scott Scholarship Fund, \$57.50; Bi-Centennial Fund, i.e., deposited in a savings account, \$1,239.81 and three U.S. Savings Bonds, \$1,594, for a total of \$2,740.75; and Scholarship Fund, 57 shares of American Telephone & Telegraph Co. stock, (at cost several years ago) \$3,319.62. Expenditures during the year included \$125 continuing scholarship grant to Miss Lucy Day. Receipts, May 1, 1964 to October 31, 1964 totaled \$2,438.75 and disbursements \$1,357.06, permitting an increase in the total assets from \$7,049.07 to the above listed figure of \$8,140.76. However, unpaid bills and prospective printing of the membership list is expected to reduce this total substantially, it was remarked by the President-General.

The President-General, in his report for the year concentrated on urging every member to bring in new members by interesting members of their families and others in "the great work of our Society in honoring the ideals and principles of their ancestors as set forth in the Declaration of Independence."

The President General noted the sad passing of Mrs. Richard Bruce Light, who was elected to serve as Registrar-General at the May D.S.D.I. Congress in Philadelphia, and called upon Mrs. William Ward III, whom he had asked to resume that office temporarily, to present the Registrar's report. She read the names and ancestors of:

New Members .....	5
New Junior Members .....	1
Deaths .....	6
Resignations .....	4
Reinstatements .....	3

Reports of the State Governors included: Miss Juliana Paca, for Delaware: That the graves of Signer Cesar Rodney and William Paca had been honored on July 4, also that the State of Maryland had appropriated \$145,000 for the restoration of the Carroll Mansion in Baltimore, but that Carvel Hall, in Anapolis, Paca home, was threatened by possible sale and demolition. Mrs. Carrington Williams, for Virginia, reported on plans for the evening dinner and Sunday pilgrimage to Carter's Grove.

A rising vote of thanks and appreciation for the work of Mrs. Williams, as President of the Virginia State Society D.S.D.I., in arranging for the Fall Meeting was moved by Honorary President-General Goodsell, and unanimously followed by the members. A move to present \$10 to the Capitol maintenance fund was amended to raise it from \$10 to \$15, and unanimously adopted.

A resolution of regret and sympathy for the family of Mrs. Richard Bruce Light, Registrar General, who died in a hospital fire October 27, was offered by Mr. Goodsell, and unanimously adopted. A copy to be prepared by the secretary pro-tem is to be sent to the family.

The secretary pro-tem offered a report on the organization of "Declaration of Independence House and Library, Inc.," a Pennsylvania non-profit organization formed to reconstruct the Graff House on Market Street in Philadelphia, where the Declaration of Independence was drafted by Thomas Jefferson and his Committee of Five. The Federal Government has appropriated \$200,000 for purchase of the site, and the new corporation plans to raise \$500,000 for the restoration of the three-story mansion-boarding house owned by the Graffs. Our own Secretary-General, Mr. Thomas Graham, and a member, Edward Hopkinson, Jr., are among the 12 incorporators, and the president of the incorporators is Judge Edwin O. Lewis, of Philadelphia, president of Independence Hall Association, which sparked the Independence National Historical Park program. Treasurer is Mr. Earl K. Mueller, of the Central-Penn National Bank, the chairman of which bank, Mr. Casimir Sienkiewicz, is also an incorporator. The structure, when finished, will be a part of the Independence National Park. The Secretary pro-tem reported that the D.S.D.I. Board of Governors had voted endorsement of the Project at its morning meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6.15 p.m. for return to the Lodge by bus, and the members had the interesting experience of walking from the Capitol to the street down paths illuminated only by flickering candles in iron colonial lanterns.

Respectfully submitted,

C. B. Axford, Secretary pro-tem.

Addendum I:

At the evening dinner at the Lodge, the D.S.D.I. members were addressed by Mr. John Neville Jennings, Curator of the Virginia Historical Society, who spoke on "The Making of a Signer - Thomas Nelson". He outlined the background of aristocratic living and leadership which the Plantation Owners of Virginia had created, and which infused their spirit of independence. Signer Nelson, he said, was "born into ranks of an aristocracy which were probably more difficult to enter than English aristocracy itself." Nelson, he said, was a leader in moves to put the Colony of Virginia in a State of Defense, and later he, with Jefferson and Henry, was a leading supporter of the resolution for independence from Great Britain. It was Nelson who took the resolution to Philadelphia for presentation by Richard Henry Lee to the Continental Congress on June 7, 1776. The speaker was introduced by Winston Holt, of Virginia.

The Roll Call of Signers, called by Member Goodsell, brought to their feet members as follows: Wolcott, 1; Floyd, 1; Livingston, 1; Hopkinson, 1; Hart, 2; Morton, 2; Chase, 1; Paca, 2; Lee, 2; Jefferson, 2; Harrison, 2; Braxton 1); Middleton, 3.

Enthusiastic applause greeted an expression of appreciation for the hospitality of Mrs. Carrington Williams and the Virginia Society for the Fall meeting.

## Addendum II:

Following service at Bruton Parish Church Sunday morning, members lunched informally, and in the afternoon gathered once again for a visit to Carter's Grove Plantation, where a magnificent mansion of Colonial and pre-Civil War history has been restored in all its beauty and grandeur by Colonial Williamsburg.

## Addendum III:

The Secretary General calls attention to the fact that addresses are needed for the following, whose notices have been returned:

- # 1117 - Mrs. William R. Klein, 1412 Eighth St., New Orleans, La.
- # 1254 - Mrs. Theron Oscar Worth, 238 East 82nd St., New York 28, N.Y.
- # 1183 - Mr. Harry Corbin Bray, P.O. Box 2002, Pine Log Road, Aiken, S.C.

The Secretary General also has received an appeal for assistance by the members of the Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence for badly needed repairs for the Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge, which may cost \$125,000. The stained glass windows need repair, and the stonework of the Cloister of the Colonies is badly weathered.

These two latter addenda were received from the Secretary-General by the Secretary pro-tem, too late for report to either the D.S.D.I. Board meeting or the general meeting of the Society.

C. B. Axford, Secretary pro-tem.