“Resolved, and it is the unanimous opinion:” Prince William County Resolves of 1774

In the summer of 1774, the Virginia Colony was reeling from the news from Boston, Massachusetts. In response to the Boston Tea Party on December 16, 1773, the British government had passed the Coercive Acts, known in the colonies as the “Intolerable Acts.” This act punished Boston for the overt opposition to the Tea Act and destruction of the tea in Boston Harbor. These acts included closing the harbor in Boston, possibly quartering of troops in private homes and businesses, dissolution of the Massachusetts elected colonial assembly and any British public officials accused of a crime in Massachusetts would face a trial in Great Britain, not Boston.

Many colonial leaders throughout the thirteen colonies saw these new laws as an affront to their liberty as British citizens. These punitive acts could be put in place anywhere in the colonies where the British authorities believed action was warranted. The Virginia House of Burgesses acted swiftly, albeit cautiously, in support of Massachusetts. They declared that June 1, 1774 would be a day of “fasting, humiliation, and prayer” as a show of solidarity with Boston. Soon after, the Virginia Royal Governor, Lord Dunmore, dissolved the House of Burgesses in response. Not to be outdone, most of the Burgesses met at Raleigh Tavern on May 27th to form a new, but extra-legal, legislature. They called for all the Counties to elect new members to attend a new “Virginia Convention” that would meet in August.

Soon after leaders here in Prince William County met on June 6th at the courthouse in Dumfries to discuss the County’s response to the events in Boston and Williamsburg. With the assistance of George Mason, the people present past anonymously the “Prince William Resolves.” This document, one of the first resolves past in Virginia, called on County residents to not import British goods, to support the city of Boston, push for the repeal
of the Coercive Acts and called on all Virginians to work with other colonies to ensure liberty and self-determination. This meeting also chose Henry Lee II of Leesylvania and Foushee Tebbs of Dumfries as Prince William County's representatives to the First Virginia Convention held in Williamsburg in August. Lee and Tebbs had also previously served in the House of Burgesses; both were recognized as prominent men in the County. Also, the meeting resolved to create a Committee of Correspondence, that would communicate with other neighboring counties to exchange news quickly and to allow them to communicate covertly.

The Prince William Resolves were a risky move for local leaders, being one of the first resolves they put themselves out in front. Soon other counties followed suit (Fairfax County passed their resolves on July 18, 1774). This document set a pattern that would lead up to Virginia's move for independence in 1775-1776. In June 1774, most saw themselves as British citizens, so independence was not considered. As time continued on, colonists began to see themselves as Americans. Though the resolves and founding documents did not take on the difficult topics of liberty and suffrage for non-landowners, women or African Americans, it began a long path to American independence and the process for a freer society.

Rob Orrison
Historic Preservation Division Manager
Prince William Historic Preservation

Text of the Prince William Resolves, June 6, 1774, Dumfries, VA

At a Meeting of the Freeholders, Merchants, and other Inhabitants of the County of Prince William, and town of Dumfries, in the Colony of Virginia, at the Court House of the said County on Monday, the 6th day June, in the year of our Lord 1774.

Resolved, And it is the unanimous opinion of this meeting, that no person ought to be taxed but by his own consent, expressed either by himself or his Representatives; and that, therefore, any Act of Parliament levying a tax to be collected in America, depriving the people of their property or prohibiting them from trading with one another, is subversive of our natural rights, and contrary to the first principles of the Constitution.

Resolved, That the city of Boston, in the Massachusetts Bay, is now suffering in the common cause of American liberty, and on account of its opposition to an Act of the British Legislature, for imposing a duty upon tea, to be collected in America.

Resolved, That as our late Representatives have not fallen upon means sufficiently efficacious to secure to us the enjoyment of our civil rights and liberties, that it is the undisputed privilege of each respective county, (as the fountain of power from whence their delegation arises,) to take such proper and salutary measures as will essentially conduct to a repeal of those Acts, which the general sense of mankind, and the greatest characters in the nation, have pronounced to be unjust.

Resolved, And it is the opinion of this meeting, that until the said Acts are repealed, all importation to, and exportation from, this Colony ought to be stopped, except with such Colonies or Islands in North America as shall adopt this measure.

Resolved, And it is the opinion of this meeting, that the courts of justice in this Colony ought to decline trying any civil causes until said Acts are repealed.
Before the invention of television or radio, newspapers were one of the main sources Americans had for both news and entertainment. The lack of competitors allowed for a larger market for newspapers in American cities, with large cities like Washington D.C. supporting numerous papers. Although only one paper from this time is still in print, Washington Post, at one point Washington Times, Washington Star, and Washington Herald all competed for readers in the nation’s capital.

Readership in the District was important, but with the suburbs slowly growing, some papers printed stories about Northern Virginia for both Washingtonians and Virginians. The Washington Star had a semi-regular contributor known as “The Rambler” explore Northern Virginia writing articles on the history of sites that he visited. Fortunately for us in Prince William County, the Rambler explored different parts of the county during the 1910s and 1920s.

The Rambler’s articles are a valuable source on Prince William County history, but they must be viewed with a critical eye. Written in a time of legal segregation the Rambler focused almost exclusively on then popular narrative, history of elite white men. The contributions of free and enslaved black Virginians, women, or poor whites were rarely mentioned in the articles penned after his site visits. Sometimes the actual history that was related to him was factually wrong, with the owner’s oral history of the site emphasizing, downplaying, omitting, or in some cases creating out of whole cloth certain stories.

As problematic as the articles can sometimes be, they are still incredibly useful to modern historians. The articles are a snapshot in time, showing how a generation chose to view and remember their history. These articles are also important since the accompanying photographs are some of the earliest that we have of particular buildings while some of the oral history stories related are sometimes only found in the Washington Star.

Bill Backus
Preservationist, Curator – Historic Preservation Division

Washington Sun Star, Oct 24, 1920
Washington Sun Star, Apr 7, 1921
Washington Sun Star, May 1, 1921
Rediscovering a Patient of the Pringle House Hospital

Discovering more information and stories about our historic sites is a never-ending process. Take Ben Lomond, for example, and the Pringle House Hospital established there from July 21 to August 25, 1861. Hospital Steward Edward Craighill recalled on the night of July 21, “There was no place under shelter for a well man,” informing us that the house was filled with wounded soldiers. Yet we could only identify twelve men by name who were patients there.

Several months ago, staff at Ben Lomond discovered the final report issued from the Pringle House Hospital by Assistant Surgeon Isaac Tanner. Incredibly, the report revealed two additional patients at the hospital: George Miller, 2nd Virginia Infantry, and Paul Miller of the 33rd Virginia Infantry, both members of the Stonewall Brigade. Much of George Miller’s story remains shrouded in mystery but research into Paul Miller’s life after August 25, 1861, has shed new light into the humanity of the patients of the Pringle House Hospital.

Paul Miller and his twin brother Solomon were born in Page County, Virginia, on October 6, 1840. At the age of twenty, he enlisted into Company H, 33rd Virginia Infantry, on June 1, 1861. With the rest of the soon-to-be-named Stonewall Brigade, Miller and his comrades reached Henry House Hill on the First Manassas battlefield after a grueling march that carried them past the Pringle House. While waiting to charge into battle, “a ball came along bounding on the ground and caught Paul Miller in the lower leg,” recalled Peter Sours, Miller’s messmate and brother-in-law.

Hospital attendants carried Miller to the Pringle House, which Confederate surgeons had transformed into a hospital. There, Dr. Hunter McGuire amputated Miller’s left leg below the knee. Miller’s discharge from the army arrived the next month, and he returned home to Page County to make a living, a piece of his former self.

Before the end of the war, Miller applied to the Confederate government to receive a prosthetic limb, preferably one from a manufacturer in Staunton, he wrote. Despite his disability, Miller remained “an industrious and hardworking man,” noted a local newspaper in Luray, Virginia. In either 1875 or 1876, the state of Virginia granted Miller a replacement limb. However, his working nature made the prosthesis “almost entirely worn out and that it will in a short time be useless,” said an 1882 affidavit Miller received to procure a new limb. By 1884, Miller still fought to obtain $60.00 from the state to personally purchase a new prosthetic leg. It is unknown when
Miller received the new limb, but it is presumed that he did.

Paul Miller carried on his life with the scars of First Manassas until the night of June 25, 1907, when he died at his home in Luray, Virginia. A week earlier, he “was at work in his garden, and getting quite warm, went to the house to get a drink of water, after which he was taken suddenly ill, and continued to grow worse to the day of his death,” said his obituary in The Page Courier. “He suffered greatly, and remedies failed to afford relief.”

Besides his hardworking nature, those who knew Miller noted that he “was a most excellent citizen. He was ever kind and genial, and very popular.” While admittance to the Pringle House Hospital or countless other Civil War hospitals unfortunately ended many lives, it only marked the beginning of Paul Miller’s.

Kevin Pawlak
Site Manager
Ben Lomond Historic Site & Bristoe Station Battlefield Historical Park

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**Historic Preservation now open for Phase 3!**

Ben Lomond Historic Site, Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre, Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park and Rippon Lodge Historic Site are now open as part of the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Phase 3 re-opening plan. Our tours will be limited to 11am, 1pm and 3pm Thursday through Monday. Tour size will be limited to seven individuals. Per the Governor of Virginia’s order, face masks will be required and social distancing of 6 feet will be maintained. Our grounds are open dawn to dusk with proper social distancing. We are also bringing back Summer Camps, so check out [https://www.pwcgov.org/government/dept/park/summercamp/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.pwcgov.org/government/dept/park/summercamp/Pages/default.aspx) for more information. We will be conducting small public programs during Phase 3, so please visit [www.pwcgov.org/history](http://www.pwcgov.org/history) for updated schedules and follow us on social media. We are excited about opening up your historic sites again and ask, if you visit, please do so in a safe manner.

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**HPD partners with PWC Summer School!**

This year Historic Preservation Division was asked to partner with Prince William County School System to generate history-based lessons for the 2020 summer school session. With a wealth of historical resources to pull from, the Historic Preservation team used examples from local history to create distance learning modules for mathematics and language skills for K-8 students. The lesson plans incorporate learning & development’s WEBINAR TUESDAYS as well.

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**Conferences, Meetings & Training**

In April & May, Kevin Pawlak, Site Manager for Ben Lomond Historic Site in Manassas, and Jessica Alicea, Site Manager for Rippon Lodge Historic Site in Woodbridge, participated virtually in the PWC’s Individual Development Leadership Training. Jessica Alicea also took the opportunity to watch PWC’s Human Resources Learning & Development’s WEBINAR TUESDAYS as well.
digitized documents, images and maps of local and regional origin to promote primary source comprehension.

**New Gates at Rippon Lodge!**

Rippon Lodge’s new gates are almost complete! The masonry was finished in early May and posts for the new motorized gate are now in the ground. The new entrance will improve visitor access and security for the site while looking good in the process!

**A Shout Out to the PWC Communications Team!**

Over the last few months as the Historic Preservation team increased the division’s efforts to virtually reach the public, we partnered with the Prince William Communications team to help streamline our existing social media outreach. Already working together on various online and print media projects, the teams collaborated to design and edit content to more effectively serve our community. Historic Preservation would like to give a shout out to the hard-working communications staff and acknowledge their help during this challenging work environment.

For up to date information about our programs and events check our online calendar: www.pwcparks.org/HistoricCalendar

Subscribe to our monthly email calendar which will highlight what we are offering each month.

Sign up on: www.pwcparks.org/subscribe

Learn about the Division’s many events throughout the year, see candid photos, get up to the minute accounts through Facebook Live and Twitter as well as find out interesting facts about Prince William County
Visitors to Rippon Lodge are familiar with one of these pictures, the other might be a surprise! Both were taken by J. Harry Shannon, “The Rambler”, in 1921. A newspaper correspondent and photographer his column featured local places of historical interest. On his visit, he met with the then current owner, Thomas Marron, an old friend from DC now living the rural life. The second picture, however, is one that hasn’t been on display before! It shows the original ‘front’ of the house as it was in 1921. Look close to for the Marrons animal friends on the stoop!

Nathan McDonald
Historic Interpreter
Rippon Lodge Historic Site

Brentsville Jail

This spring the Historic Preservation Division is working with Capitol Exhibits to install new, state of the art exhibitions in the Brentsville Jail to showcase the history and the artifacts of Brentsville. As the project is nearing completion, we thought we would take a look back at some of the images of the Brentsville Jail before the restoration project began! Images Courtesy of Morgan Breeden, June 9, 2004.

Paige Gibbons Backus
Site Manager – Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre & Lucasville School

The upstairs hallway facing towards Bristow Road. The stairs were restored to their original location, so they are on the other side of the upper northwest room was converted into a bathroom. Notice the bars remaining on the window.

The two rooms that served as the jailor’s office and quarters were combined into one room that served as a living room when the building was a private residence.

In many places of the jail, plaster deteriorated exposing lath as well as brick. Much of the original materials were deteriorating and so a lot of restoration work was needed.
Join in the Historic Preservation Division’s “At Home Scavenger Hunt” Challenge!

Looking for things to do this summer?! Then here is an indoor scavenger hunt for you to complete. Families should work together to gather the items. The challenge is these items should be from a historic site, house, park or museum you have visited in Virginia!

See if you can find the following items in your home:
2. A fictional book about a historic figure.
3. Five magnets from historic places you’ve been.
4. Two tee-shirts commemorating an event or person, like George Washington.
5. A historic period toy, such as a top, yo-yo or bilbo catcher.
6. A tricorn or Civil War hat, lady’s bonnet, or historic period costume.
7. Tea, coffee, candy or wine purchased from a historic site.
8. Passport to Your National Parks stamp books.
9. Four key chains from different historic locations.
10. A car sticker or magnet from a historic site.
11. The weirdest item purchased from a historic place.
12. Board or card games.
13. A Virginia nature or trail guidebook.
14. Mugs, to-go tumblers, soap, or postcards.
16. A replica of a historic household item.
17. Building blocks or Legos of a historic building.
18. A musical instrument, such as a harmonica or fife.
19. A CD of historic period music or DVD documentary of a historic location.
20. A doll or action figure.

Jessica Maria Alicea
Site Manager
Rippon Lodge Historic Site,
King’s Highway Heritage Park