

A Summary Report
on the historical basis
for the partial refurnishing of the
Assembly Room, Independence Hall,
scheduled for completion by
May 1955

Submitted, for consideration and approval, to the
Furnishings Advisory Committee (Mrs. Francis P.
Crowninshield, Mr. Charles Nagel, and Mr. Charles
F. Montgomery)

Prepared by:
History and Interpretation Branch
Independence National Historical Park
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

January 1955

ATTENTION:

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FORWORD

In considering the overall program for the restoration and refurnishing of the first floor of Independence Hall (made possible by the General Federation of Women's Clubs) of which the current project is the initial phase, the three conclusions and three recommendations made by the National Park Service in its initial report of May 1954 bear repetition. These are:

Conclusions:

1. It is fairly certain that the furnishings of 1776, with the exception of the silver inkstand, no longer exist, or if by chance any do survive, they cannot be identified or authenticated.

2. That there is neither sufficient information, nor much prospect of accumulating any, on the furnishings of 1776 for a satisfactory or acceptable reproduction of the 1776 scene; therefore, barring unexpected discoveries, this period can be represented by only a few objects---specifically, by the original inkstand and reproductions of the Penn coat of arms and the captured colors of the British 7th Fusiliers, all of which are known to have been in evidence in this period.

3. That, finally, the furnishings in the Assembly room at the present time (and for the past 78 years) are for the most part historically inappropriate and therefore should be replaced by authentic pieces of the period or by correct period reproductions. In brief, a virtually complete job of refurnishing is necessary.

Recommendations:

1. To refurnish and restore as of the period 1775-87; that

is, of the entire period of the second Continental Congress and the Constitutional Convention, with the bulk of the furnishings necessarily representing the period 1778-87.

2. To follow a conservative policy in making architectural changes, and then only on the basis of exhaustive documentary research and architectural investigation.

3. To begin partial refurnishing as soon as funds become available. We should rely heavily on period pieces, and only utilize modern duplicates or reproductions, made on the basis of accurate specifications, until authentic period pieces which may be in private collections or museums become available. By so doing, we shall recreate the historic scene, making it of the highest order of authenticity, in keeping with the priceless character of the building and the great national tradition it embodies.

These conclusions and recommendations are as pertinent now as they were when originally formulated. This summary report, therefore, covering the historical bases for the proposed partial refurnishing of the Assembly Room of Independence Hall, scheduled for partial completion by May of this year, should be examined by the Committee accordingly.

The brevity, arrangement, and format of this report are intended to facilitate the Committee's task of reviewing our findings. Presented first is a list of furnishings scheduled for completion, or partial completion, by May 1955. Then follows under separate headings (1) summarized findings for each of these objects and (2) the principal documentary data upon which they are based. At the end of the report will be found illustrative material supplementing the text.

List of Furnishings Proposed for Completion by May 1955

Bar or Balustrade

Chairs - Delegates

Chair, "Rising Sun"

Coat of Arms - Penn Family

Green baize

Inkstand, Syng

Peale's "Washington"

Tables, delegation

Tables, Secretary's and Speakers'

II. BAR OR BALUSTRADE

A. Summary Report

This subject relates properly not to furnishings but to the architectural details of the Assembly Room (to be discussed in a future report). However, since the restoration of the "bar" is an integral part of the current refurnishing project, its discussion here is warranted.

The "bar," as it was called in the eighteenth century, was simply a barrier or railing extending from one end of the room to the other, dividing it into sections of unequal size. The larger section was reserved for the use of the legislative body, the small (called "gallery") for the public. In contemporary parlance these enclosures were referred to, respectively, as "within the bar" and "without the bar."

Although probably antedating our period by many years, the earliest reference to the bar is for 1776. Gerard mentions it in his letter of August 7 (see note 1) and in the accompanying diagram (Fig. 14) indicates its location near the west end of the Room. The precise location of the bar, however, cannot be established on the basis of the diagram alone, which determines it in relation to the windows of which there are eight. In point of fact, there are only six windows in the Assembly Room. It is hoped that architectural investigation now in progress will resolve this problem as well as the further ones respecting the composition, appearance, and dimensions of this vital feature of the historic scene.

B. Documentary Data (Bar or Balustrade)

1. [Aug. 6, 1778] ...Our President was seated in a Mahogany armed chair on a platform raised about two feet, with [a] large table covered with green cloth and the secretary along side of him. The Members were all seated round within the bar and a large armed chair in the middle opposite the president for the Plenipotentiary....

[Letter, Gerard to Vergennes, Aug. 7, 1778, in H. Boniol, Histoire de la Participation de la France a l'etablissement des Etats-Unis d'Amerique (Paris, ca.1888), III, 311-313]

2. [Aug. 6, 1778] ...Within the bar of the House, the Congress formed a semicircle on each side of the President, and the Ministers: the President and the Minister: the President sitting at one extremity of the circle, at a table upon a platform elevated two steps--the Minister sitting at the opposite extremity of the circle in an armchair, upon the same level with the Congress. The door of the Congress chamber being thrown open below the bar, about 200 gentlemen were admitted to the audience, among whom were the Vice President of the Supreme executive council of Pennsylvania, the supreme executive council, the Speaker and members of the house of assembly, several foreigners of distinction, and officers of the army....

[The New York Gazette and the Weekly Mercury, August 24, 1778]

3. [May 13, 1782] ...The president and council of the State of Pennsylvania stood without the bar on the right as they entered and facing the president....The rest of the audience stood without the bar....

[Report, Secretary of Congress (Charles Thomson), in Burnett, ed., Letters of Members of Continental Congress, VI, 348-350]

4. [1782] It seems [seems] necessary to assign the reason why the debates of the general assembly are not given in this evening's paper.

Mr. Carey's situation renders it dangerous to expose himself to the cold in the gallery; and as he formerly took notes; he therefore, through the medium of the hon. the speaker endeavored to prevail on the house to indulge him with permission to sit within the bar, near one of the fires. But some members, who are displeased with the publication of the debates, so far discountenanced this application, that it was fruitless to press the matter....

[Pennsylvania Evening Herald, February 25, 1786]

5. X138 ...50 members present seated on chairs inclosed by a balustrade. Behind the balustrade, is a gallery for spectators....

J. P. Brissot de Marville, New Travels in the
United States of America (1788), (Bowling
Green, Ohio, 1919) 213

(4) Bar or rail. Mr. Grossman went over the historical evidence on this item with the committee, then showed it the preliminary studies he had prepared for such a railing. Everyone agreed that his approach was highly satisfactory and appropriate, recommended that he proceed with it and take up the subject again with the committee when his design has been approved by the Service.

(5) Penn Coat-of-Arms

The committee, after reviewing the historical evidence regarding the presence in the Assembly Room of this item as presented by Mr. Kurjack, agreed that it was an appropriate item for the refurnishings program. It agreed, too, that it should be carved unless future study proves definitely it was painted on a wooden panel.

However, since the size and position of the coat-of-arms above the Speaker's chair hinges to a considerable degree on the architectural treatment of the paneling, etc. of this end of the room (as explained by Mr. Grossman), Mr. Nagel suggested that the restoration of this item be deferred until a firm decision has been reached regarding the restoration of the broken pediment seen in the Pine-Savage painting. Consequently, the committee recommended that the architectural research on the room be continued, and that until a definite conclusion is reached regarding this matter, that Mr. Lewis' suggestion that a plaster cast of the coat-of-arms be displayed but not carved or installed be followed.

(6) "Rising Sun" Chair. The committee agreed that the historical evidence justifies the retention of this chair in the historic scene in the Assembly Room, where it will be in pleasing contrast to the plainer Windsor chairs, discussed immediately below.

(7) Windsor Chairs. This subject, because of its importance, received considerable attention. After reviewing the available evidence the committee agreed on or recommended the following:

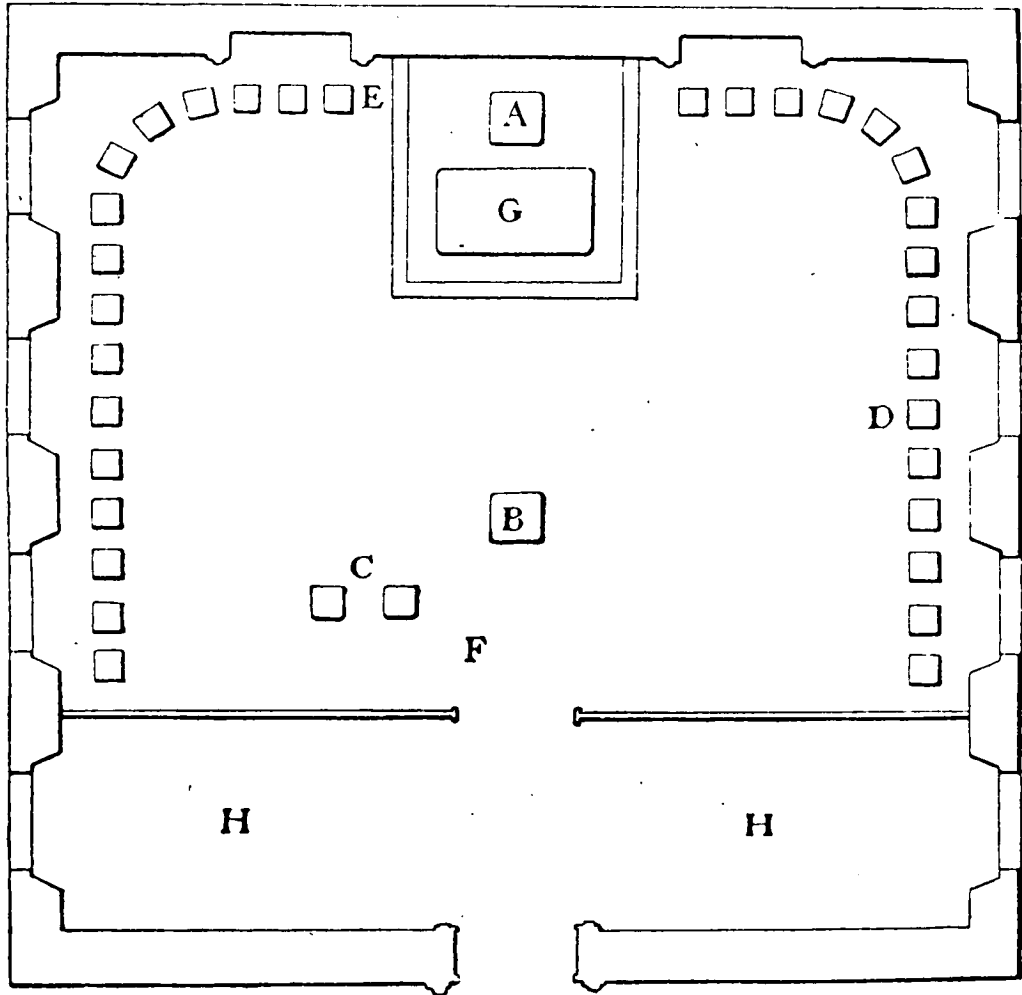
(a) That there were about 40-50 Windsor chairs in the Assembly Room, some with arms.

(b) Messrs. Montgomery and Nagel believed that the Windsors in the Pine-Savage painting were a few years too late in period; that the Trumble chair shown in Fig. 9 is more suitable in respect to period and character.

(c) That a nucleus of period chairs similar to the Trumble chair in Fig. 9 be acquired, from which copies can be made to round out the historic scene until such time as additional appropriate period pieces can be acquired. It was agreed, however, that copies should be kept to a minimum; that the main effort should be put into acquiring suitable period pieces.

PLAN

*de la Séance du Congrès des Etats-Unis de l'Amérique
lors de la remise des lettres de créance
du Ministre Plénipotentiaire du Roi.*



RENVOI.

- A. Fauteuil du Président.
- B. Fauteuil du Ministre Plénipotentiaire.
- C. Sièges du Comité.
- D. Membres du Congrès.
- E. Secrétaire du Congrès.
- F. Secrétaire de Légation.
et cortège debout.
- G. Table couverte d'un tapis vert.
- H. Public debout.

IV. WINDSOR CHAIRS

1. Summary Report

The evidence is conclusive that the representatives of the thirteen states in the second Continental Congress, meeting at the State House, and the Constitutional Convention of 1787, meeting there, too, sat in Windsor chairs. Every record of purchase of chairs for the State House between 1775 and 1787, with the exception of the chairs for the presiding officers, show this. Moreover, the practically complete official records of the State still extant in Harrisburg for the years 1778-1790 exclude the possibility of significant gaps. Most of the items, indeed, can be easily confirmed through the several accountings: the votes of the Assembly, minutes of the Supreme Executive Council, Papers of the Governors, and the fiscal records of the Treasury and the Comptroller-General's office.

Our major problem respecting these chairs is to determine the specific type of Windsors used. Here the evidence is limited. However, there are good reasons for believing that the chairs were sack-backs. Undoubtedly, too, some were elbow chairs; we know, for instance, that the chair in the Assembly Room, on which Major General Gates sat on June 18, 1777, was an elbow chair. Even more important, we have the pictorial evidence of the Pine and Savary painting, "Congress Voting Independence," which is rich in details and shows several Windsors. Mr. Wilcshy's definitive study of this painting leaves little doubt as to its essential reliability as a source of information. Furthermore, every item of furniture in the painting is supported by documentary evidence.

This painting shows sack-back chairs (see Fig. 8). A surviving example of one such is in the David Stockwell collection (Fig. 9); and while there are differences in a few details, the general appearance of this chair is almost identical with that of the chair shown in the painting. Equally interesting is the fact that this chair was made by Francis Trusble, who supplied the State House with all its Windsor (about 67 in all) in 1778 and 1779.

B. Documentary Data (Windsor Chairs)

1. [Oct. 8, 1775] Ordered That one dozen and an half of Windsor Chairs be immediately procured for the Use of the House.

[Pennsylvania Archives, 8th Series, VIII, 1308]

2. [May 31, 1776] Dr. Cash.... Francis Trumble for 2 tables and 12 chairs May 31, 1776.... 16.14.0

[Cash Book (MS), Dec. 1, 1775-Feb. 11, 1780, 36, in Division of Public Records, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg]

3. [June 18, 1777] ...He [Major General Gates] was accordingly ushered in, and after some awkward ceremony, sat himself in a very easy cavalier posture in an elbow chair, and began to open his budget.

[Ms. Letter to Gen. Schuyler, June 19, 1777, letters, 1776-1780, Philip Schuyler, Hancock Collection, MS, New York Public Library]

4. [July 21, 1778] Ordered, That the Secretary procure eighteen Windsor Chairs for the Council Room.

[Colonial Records, Minutes of the Supreme Executive Council, XI, 535]

5. [Aug. 22, 1778] /168/ Contingent expenses for the years 1777 and 1778, etc. paid Francis Trumble for 19 Windsor chairs at the State House.... 164.2.6

[Comptroller General Financial Accounts, Journal "A-1," (1775-1796), 45, Division of Public Records, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg]

6. [Aug. 6, 1775] ...The members of Congress, to the number of 32...the body being composed of 35 members present...were seated in a semi-circle,

to the right and left, on chairs on the floor; these chairs were less impressive than the armchairs of the President and the Minister Plenipotentiary, which were identical [of equal importance]...

[Letter, Gerard to Vergennes, Aug. 7, 1778, in H. Lottol, Histoire de la Participation de la France a l'etablissement des Etats-Unis d'Amerique, (Paris, ca.1888), III, III-IV]

7. [1778] [28] Windsor chairs made by Francis Trumble, costing 184.15.0.

[Journal of the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania 1776-1781, (Philadelphia, 1782) 298-299; Comptroller General Financial Accounts, Journal "A-1," 46, 85-86, Division of Public Records...Harrisburg]

Date	Name of Chairmaker	No. of Chairs	Type or Description	Cost (£)
Aug. 9, 1733	Caleb Salen	12	?	1.16.0
[1733]	?	?	?	100. 0.0
Aug. 29, 1753	Phunket Fleeson	1	"Bottom for Speaker's Chair"	1. 2.0
Dec. 24, 1760	Thomas Acharly	12	Rush Bottom	3. 0.0
Oct. 18, 1775	?	18	Windsor	?
May 31, 1776	Francis Trumble	12	Windsor	?
July 21, 1778	Francis Trumble	19	Windsor	64. 2.6
Aug. 21, 1778	Hymen Taylor	2	"large chair seats"	(27.30)
Aug. 27, 1778	Francis Trumble	[28]	Windsor	84.15.0
Nov. 27, 1778	Francis Trumble	20	Windsor	(6. 0.0
Dec. 27, 1779	John Polwell	1	Speaker's chair	200. 0.0
[Mar. 4, 1780	John Polwell	?	"Work as Cabinetmaker"	575. 5.0
May-Dec. 1785	James Lee (Lay?)	?	?	25.13.4
1790-91	Thomas Affleck	?	"Large Mahogany Elbow chair" "Speaker's"	12. 0.0
Dec. 15-30, 1790	Thomas Affleck	?	?	10. 0.0
1790-91	Joseph Hansey	[20-30]	?	61. 5.0

For	Comments	Documentation
"Assembly Room"		Notes of Assembly, Gen. Loan Office Accts.
?	Thos. Leech, Supt., paid "toward Furnishing State House"	Notes of Assembly ⁷
Assembly Room	Indicates presence of special chair for Speaker	Notes of Assembly
For Use of Assembly	The intended use would indicate the Assembly Room	Notes of Assembly; voucher, Gen. Loan Office Accts.
"For Use of House"	"Ordered"	Notes of Assembly
?	Included with other purchases	Cash book, 1775-1780, Hrsberg.
Council Chamber		Min. of Exec. Council Compt.-Gen'l's Accts.
Assembly Room	"For Use of Congress at public re- ception of French minister"	For descrip., see letter, Gerard to Verremes, Aug. 4, 1778 & plan
"Assembly Room"	"For use of the Assembly." This was probably for the 2nd. fl. east room	Compt. Gen. Jn. 1775-1786
"For Use of the Assembly"	Very probably east room, 2nd. fl.	Compt. Gen'l's, Jn. 1775-1786
"Assembly Room"	For the second fl. or new Assembly Room	Jn. H. of R. of Pa., 1776- 1784, Compt. Gen'l's. Accts.
?	This large item might, possibly, include chairs. ⁷	Ibid.
?	"chairs & mending chairs"	Cost. Rev. Papers, Hrsberg.
Senate Chamber	2nd fl., for Pa. Senate (Pa. Legis- lature bicameral after 1790)	Jn. H. of R. of Pa. 1790 Reg. Gen'l's. Accts., Pa. Archives, IX Ser.
Senate Chamber	State Senate	
Senate Chamber	State Senate. The estimated no. of chairs based on 43 per chair, Affleck's usual price.	Reg. Gen'l's. Accts., Jn. H. of R. of Pa. 1790 Jn. of Senate, 1791

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(c) That a nucleus of period chairs similar to the Trumble chair in Fig. 9 be acquired, from which copies can be made to round out the historic scene until such time as additional appropriate period pieces can be acquired. It was agreed, however, that copies should be kept to a minimum; that the main effort should be put into acquiring suitable period pieces.

(d) Agreed to circulate photos of the Trumble chair to dealers, and in the event that they have suitable chairs, circulate photos of such chairs to the committee, which if it deems the chair appropriate will inspect it at first hand, expenses paid.

(e) Agreed that if a chair is unpainted, but is otherwise satisfactory, we should acquire it and repaint it.

(f) Agreed that Messrs. Montgomery and Mulcahy should visit Harrisburg to ascertain whether or not all the furnishings believed to have been in Independence Hall were actually returned there by the Commonwealth in 1876.

(g) Will attempt to procure side chairs as well as distinctive Windsors in order to have tasteful variety.

(8) Delegation Tables. All agreed that the only possible approach is to procure one or two period tables of the shape, size and height shown in the Pine-Savage painting and have copies of these made to make up the balance of the 13 tables needed.

(9) Green Baize. Suggested that swatches at Winterthur and Williamsburg be consulted to get appropriate type.

(10) Speaker's Table. It was agreed that the Speaker's table, or desk, now in the Assembly Room should be expertized to determine its period, etc. Messrs. Nagel and Montgomery agreed that it appeared to be about the right period.

(11) Peale's "Washington". Decided that the importance of this painting merits making approach to getting it now, and afterwards deciding the best location for it. Agreed, too, that a copy of the engraving of this painting shall also be procured.

(12) "Montgomery" Engraving. Since little is known of this engraving other than its actual presence in the Assembly Room, it will probably be difficult to obtain a copy. However, the possibility of so doing should be explored.

(13) Yorktown Flag. Time needed for research and actually making the flag almost certainly precludes a reproduction of it being ready by May. However, we should proceed in this item as time permits.

(14) American Flags (2). All agreed that regardless of the absence of evidence regarding its presence in the Assembly Room, an American flag of the Revolutionary period should be prominent inside the room; a modern American flag outside the room, perhaps flanking the door.

The two "Independence Hall" chairs presently owned by Mrs. Barbara H. Snyder (nee Ziegler), of 312 South Spruce Street, Lititz, Pa. were acquired by her in 1914 upon the death of her uncle, Amos H. Ziegler, and she remembers seeing them in his household from her earliest childhood.

According to the family tradition, the chairs were acquired by Conrad Ziegler, great-great-grandfather of Mrs. Snyder, in post-Revolutionary times, when he took wheat to Philadelphia, to sell, and bought the chairs at an auction at Independence Hall.

The successive owners of the chairs were as follows:

1. Conrad Ziegler, born in 1770, and who bought them.
2. Conrad Ziegler, son of the above, who built a mill in East Donegal Township, Lancaster County, in 1842.
3. John Ziegler, son of the second Conrad Ziegler.
4. Amos H. Ziegler, Son of John.
5. Barbara H. Snyder, niece of Amos H. Ziegler, and in whose home she was reared.

As far as is known, the chairs were never removed from Lancaster County after their original purchase. They were passed on from generation to generation, and members of the family were all conversant with the tradition.

John Ziegler used them on his porch, a fact which his son Amos regretted because of their historic value. Amos kept them in his attic for safe-keeping. When Mrs. Snyder acquired them they were red. She retained Ambrose Furlow, now deceased, of Lititz, Pa. to refinish them in the color of mahogany. Furlow said there were previous layers of green, yellow and red paint.

I certify that the above facts are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

/s/ Barbara H. Snyder
(Barbara H. Snyder)

Dated: March 10, 1955

David Stockwell
256 South 16th Street
Philadelphia 2, Pennsylvania

March 29, 1955

Mr. Murray Belligan
National Park Service
421 Walnut Street
Phila. 6, Pa.

Dear Murray:

As you requested, I enclose a list with descriptions of the twenty seven Windsor chairs, which I have been collecting over twenty five years.

Most of them as you know are signed by Philadelphia makers. The two Trumble sack backs, I have designated as gifts from me to the Custodians of Independence Hall (if that is the correct designation for your department). The Osterhuzy chair was purchased in Harrisburg from a family of that name, whose ancestor is believed to have purchased it at an auction of old furniture from the Capitol.

You have been good enough to suggest that this collection will be known as the "Stockwell collection". If this is agreeable to the committee, I would be happy to have them so designated.

The price of the collection is \$5,300.

If at a future time the committee is interested in purchasing tavern type tables, similar to that now on loan, perhaps I will have them or can find them. The present poplar table is \$375. Others of walnut may be more expensive. The smaller accessories are available as necessary.

Best regards,

w.

David Stockwell

(Copy to Mr. Melcany)

David Stockwell
256 South 16th Street
Philadelphia 2, Pennsylvania

1.

THREE SACK BACK WINDSOR CHAIRS

These large Pennsylvania comb back arm chairs with carved ears are painted black. One is signed at the lip "F or T Gilpin". We believe this chair may have been one of the twelve large windsors given to the Manager's Room of the Pennsylvania Hospital by Samuel Miller. They were purchased from Thomas Gilpin about 1770. The other two are unsigned.

TWO FAN BACK WINDSOR CHAIRS

A pair with fine ears signed on the bottom of the saddle seats "W. Cox" for William Cox, who is also believed to have made chairs for the State House.

FIVE SACK BACK WINDSOR CHAIRS

(Type resembling those depicted in the Savage painting of the signing of the Declaration of Independence).

- A. One stained brown with sturdy legs, flat arm and seven spindle back signed on the bottom "F.T." for Francis Trumble; the Asterhazy chair.
- B. Another, also stained brown with more rake to the legs, carved knuckle arms and eleven spindles, signed F. Trumble for Francis Trumble who supplied (12) windsors and (2) tables to the Pennsylvania Assembly on March 30, 1776, and (76) more "Round Top Scrol Arm Chairs, ditto plain do do, low back and back back windsors" for use of the Continental Congress in November 1778.

A and B are to be considered as a gift to the Custodians of the State House, and are to be considered separately from the main body of this list.

A third sack back windsor, similar to those above, signed J. Henzey for Joseph Henzey Jr. The Henzey family, father and son, are also known to have supplied windsors for the use of the United States Congress. Two other sack back windsor arm chairs similar to above, but both with carved knuckles. (Used, red)

David Stockwell
256 South 16th Street
Philadelphia 2, Pennsylvania

2.

ONE PAIR SACK BACK WINDSOR BENCH

This bench is of a design almost matching the preceding chairs. This undoubtedly was the type of the two benches supplied to the Supreme Court by John Sinkerton, Turner, in July 1779 at a cost of 50 pounds; and again for two more in January 1780 at a cost of 250 pounds; inflation having set in during the few intervening months.

SEE 10 BENCH, "HONORABLE SINKERTON"

This chair with saddle seat shows heavy vase turnings, and is the counterpart to the comb back and sack backs. It is considered to be one of the earliest styles made in the Philadelphia region.

WINDSOR CHAIR, SADDLE SEAT, TURNER, SINKERTON TO CHAIR (EVIDENTLY WITH
DATE FEBRUARY 1780)

An unpainted arm chair signed on the bottom of the seat T.S. Ackley, for John Brienthal Ackley, son of Thomas Ackley, Turner and Chair maker. The Assembly paid this firm on December 20th, 1763 for chairs for the State House. (They were probably rush bottom, flat back chairs at this early date). In the last decade of the 18th century, T.S. Ackley supplied the bamboo type of turned windsor to the Congress of the United States.

An unpainted arm chair signed on the bottom of the seat L. Letchworth, for John Letchworth, one of the best of the late 18th century windsor chair makers, who also billed the Federal Congress for chairs supplied to them in the final decade of the 18th century.

A stained windsor arm chair signed on the bottom of the seat L. Cox, for William Cox, who made eighteen dining chairs for Joseph Carson on August 30, 1784, and is believed to have supplied chairs to the State House.

WINDSOR CHAIR, SADDLE SEAT, TURNER, SINKERTON TO CHAIR

Pair of

Unpainted side chairs, deep saddle seats, exceptionally fine turnings, signed under the seat L. Benzey, for Joseph Benzey who supplied chairs to Congress Hall.

David Stockwell
256 South 16th Street
Philadelphia 2, Pennsylvania

3.

Pair of side chairs painted brown with contrasting yellow lines, signed on the bottom of the seat H. Gaw, for Robert Gaw who supplied chairs to George Washington for the East Portico of Mount Vernon in 1796.

Unpainted side chair with good turnings, signed on the bottom G. and H. Gaw, for Gilbert and Robert Gaw whose partnership supplied chairs to Washington. See above.

Unpainted side chair, signed on the bottom of the seat A. Steel, for Anthony Steel well known Philadelphia Windsor chair maker.

Unpainted side chair, branded on the bottom of the seat A. Bowen, for William Bowen Philadelphia Windsor chairmaker.

Unpainted side chair, signed on the bottom of the seat A. Bowen.

Painted black and signed I. S. Ackley. As noted previously, Thomas Ackley and his son I. S. Ackley are known to have supplied chairs to the State House.

A branch of the Ackley family, Philadelphia.

Unpainted, seven spindle side chair branded on the bottom "rentland" for the maker of that name.

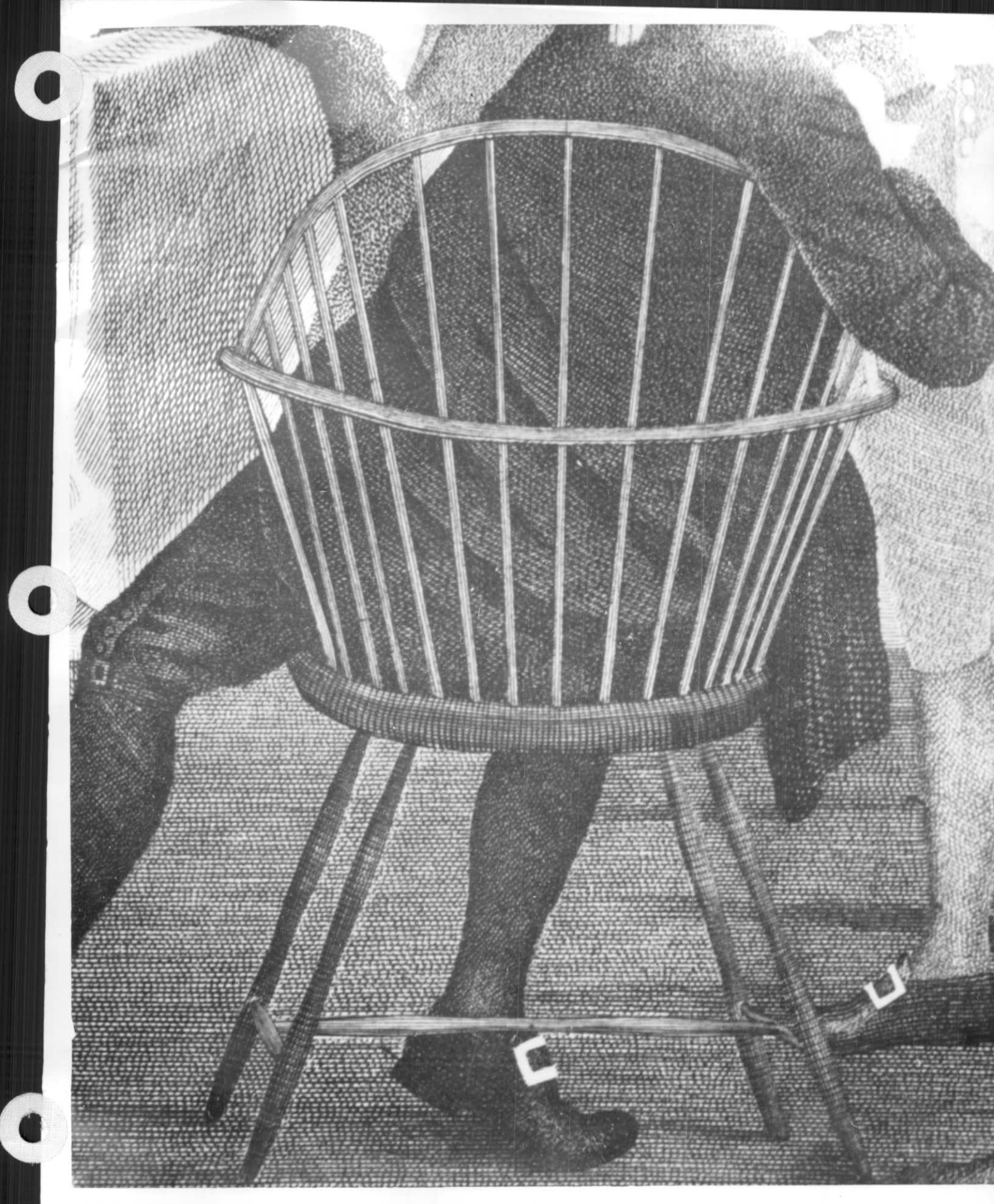
Green painted Windsor arm chair branded on the bottom "P. Benson" for the well known Philadelphia chairmaker.

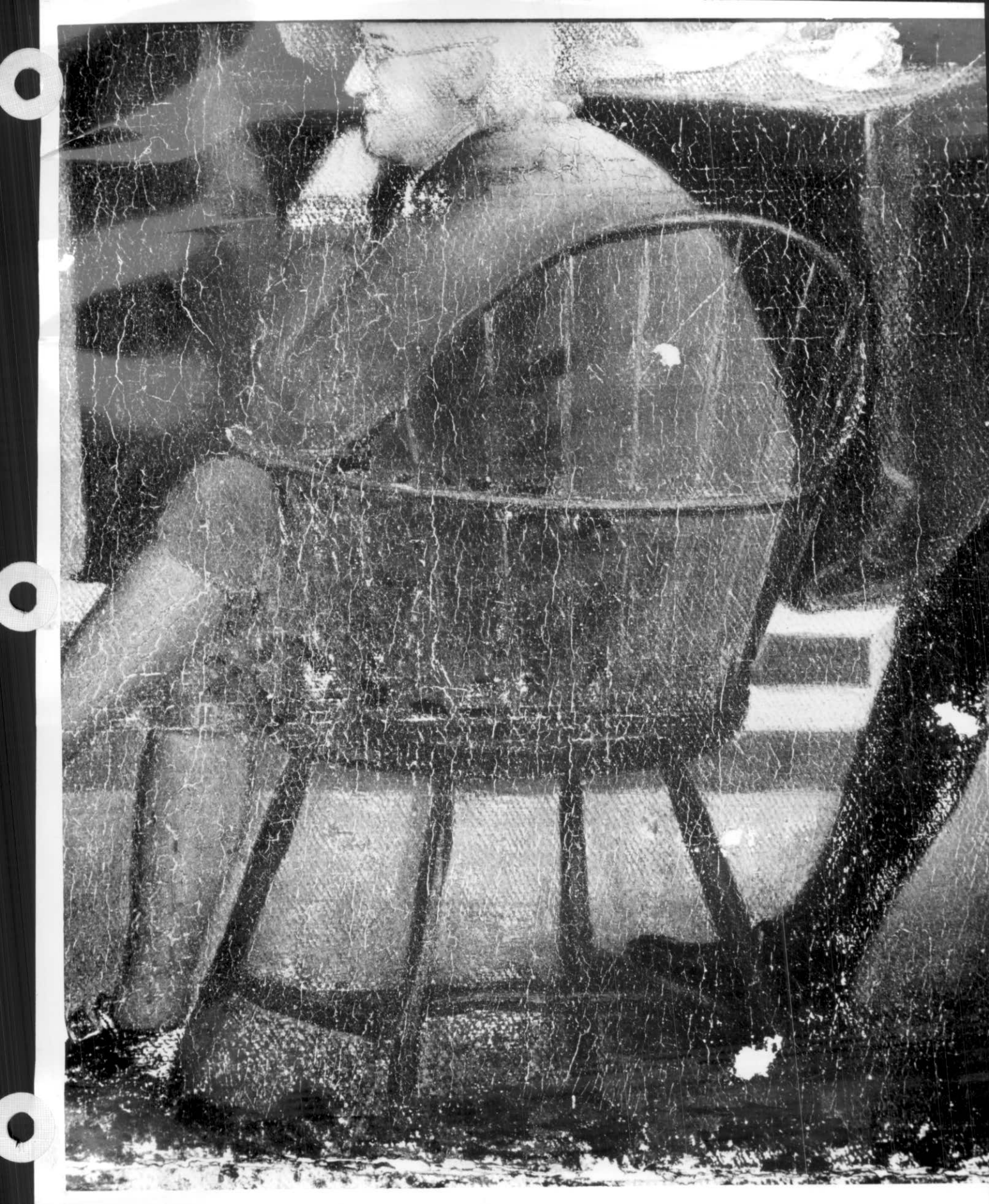
Unpainted long settee with rectangular steamed back, the corner marked by curved brackets, suggesting an earlier style.









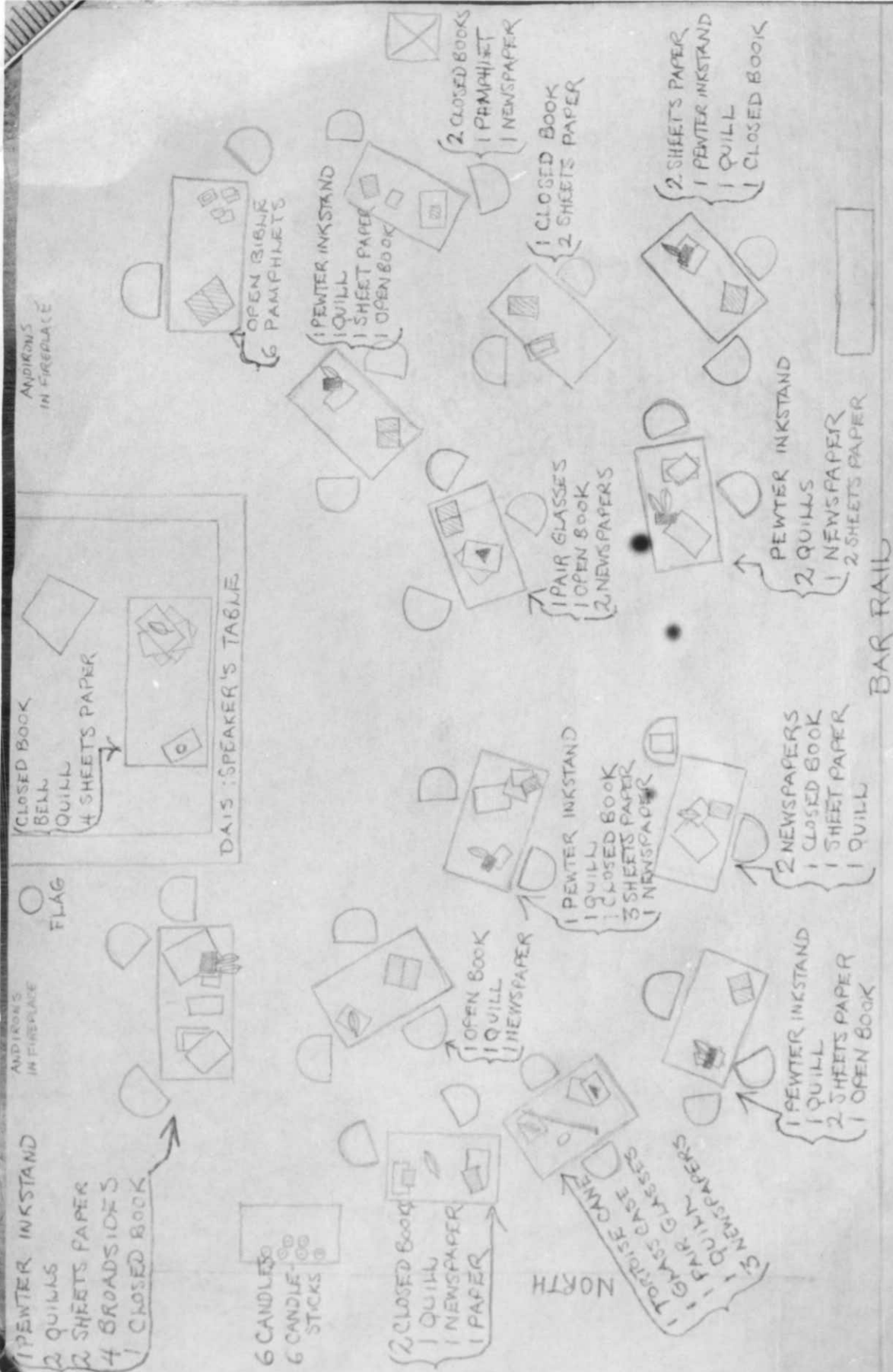












ASSEMBLY ROOM
JAN. 1952

III THE "RISING SUN" CHAIR (1779)

A. Summary Report

To eliminate possible confusion which might arise in discussing the "Rising Sun" chair, it will be well to indicate here these pertinent facts. First, the Assembly Room, in the period 1775-1787, served as the meeting place of three distinct legislative bodies: the Pennsylvania Assembly (to May 10, 1775, and from sometime in 1786 to March 29, 1787), the Continental Congress (May 10, 1775 to June 21, 1783, with important gaps), and the Federal Constitutional Convention of 1787 (May 14 to September 17). Second, the presiding officers of these bodies sat in chairs unlike and more imposing than those provided for the other members. Third, three different chairs are known to have been used during these years. Each of them will now be described briefly before considering more fully the third one, the "Rising Sun" chair, with which we are primarily concerned at the moment.

1. The Speaker's or "Hancock" Chair (ante 1775-1777)

Very little is known about this chair. It was probably part of the original furnishings of 1742; in 1753 it was provided with new "bottoms." The Speakers of the Pennsylvania Assembly used this chair until the spring of 1775, and the President of the Continental Congress until September, 1777---when the imminent occupation of Philadelphia by the British forced Congress to abandon the City. This chair disappeared without trace (see "Independence Hall Project" report of April, 1954). In the absence of other information about it, this chair must necessarily be eliminated from consideration, at least for the time being, in plans for the refurnishing of the Assembly Room.

2. The "Congress" or "Laurens" Chair (1778)

Shortly after Congress returned to Philadelphia, in July of 1778, it purchased two large mahogany armchairs. The immediate occasion for the purchase was the public reception by Congress for the French minister, Gerard Alexandre Gerard. This took place on August 6. The President of Congress (Henry Laurens) sat on one chair, and Gerard on the other. These chairs were distinctive and more imposing, we learn from both Gerard's and another eyewitness' description, than the Windsor chairs in which the members of Congress sat. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, we may assume that both continued in use, one of them, no doubt, being used by the various Presidents of the Congress, until 1783. Details as to the appearance of these chairs, however, are incomplete, and until more are forthcoming---and we are hopeful that they will be---their restoration should be postponed.

3. The "Rising Sun" or "Washington" Chair (1779-1787)

As part of the refurnishing of the State House following the departure of the British from Philadelphia, and for its own use on the second floor, the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1779 ordered a Speaker's chair to be made by John Folwell, a local cabinetmaker. This chair, it should be emphasized, was never used by the Continental Congress, in fact had no direct association of any kind with that body. Calling it the "Hancock" or "Congress" chair, as many did in the nineteenth century (as may be seen in the appended notes) is an example of the errors that often creep into traditional accounts of historical events. This Speaker's chair---to use the correct appellation---served the Pennsylvania Assembly exclusively except for a brief but notable exception, from 1779 until well into the nineteenth century.

The notable exception was the Federal Constitutional Convention of 1787 which met in the Assembly Room from May 14 to September 17. The State Legislature, which had returned to its old quarters, the year before, had conveniently adjourned for the summer on March 29. The Speaker's chair, therefore, was available for the historic Convention and was used by its presiding officer, George Washington.

We propose to include this chair in the refurnishing plan for the Assembly Room for the following reasons:

First, the chair on hand is believed to be an original piece. Evidence for its authenticity, while not ironclad, is very strong, as witness:

(a) In 1799 the State government moved to Lancaster, and in 1812 to Harrisburg, in each instance taking along most, if not all, its original furniture.

(b) Some of this furniture remained in use as late as 1826, and apparently even beyond. According to tradition, the Speaker's or "Rising Sun" chair was still in use in 1852. In that year, too, a formal inquiry respecting the "ancient furniture of Independence Hall" elicited a reply from City of Philadelphia officials that the Speaker's chair was still in use in the House of Representatives, in Harrisburg. This was the chair which in 1867 was brought back to Philadelphia, and formally presented to the City on Washington's birthday. Placed on exhibition in the Assembly Room, it has remained there ever since. (See notes 7 to 10.)

(c) The chair has carved on the back the symbol, a rising sun (see Fig. 4), mentioned in James Madison's notes of the Convention as being on the back of the chair in which Washington sat.

The second justification for our proposal that the "Rising Sun" chair be included in the refurnishing plan for the Assembly Room is that it provides tangible representation of the Constitutional Convention, a major facet of the story of American Independence and the establishment of our national government. As an authentic "conversation piece," it provides the opportunity to introduce into interpretive talks the highly dramatic summary of the whole Constitutional Convention story, Benjamin Franklin's famous anecdote of the rising sun (see note 2) as recorded by James Madison.

B. Documentary Data (Rising Sun Chair)

1. Dec. 3, 1779 Paid John Folwell per order of Assembly for Materials
for Speaker's Chair 4200.00

[Comptroller General, Financial Account,
Journal "A-1", (1775-1785) 119, Division
of Public Records....Harrisburg]

2. March 4, 1780 By cash paid by order of Assembly...By John Folwell,
cabinet maker...[L] 575-0-0.

[Journal of the House of Representatives of
Pennsylvania, 1776-1781, (Philadelphia, 1784),
636; Comptroller-General Financial Accounts,
Journal "A-1", (1775-1785), 119, Division of
Public Records, Pennsylvania Historical and
Museum Commission, Harrisburg]

3. Monday, Sept. 17, 1787 ...The members then proceeded to sign the
instrument [Constitution of the United States].

Whilst the last members were signing it Doctr. Franklin looking towards
the Presidents Chair, at the back of which a rising sun happened to be
painted, observed to a few members near him, that Painters had found it
difficult to distinguish in their art a rising from a setting sun. I
have, said he, often and often in the course of the Session, and the
vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that be-
hind the President without being able to tell whether it was rising or
setting; but now at length I have the happiness to know it is a rising
and not a setting Sun.

The Constitution being signed by all the Members except Mr. Randolph,
Mr. Mason, and Mr. Gerry who declined giving it the sanction of their
names, the Convention dissolved itself by an Adjournment sine die ----

[Madison's Notes, in Max Farrand, ed., The
Records of the Federal Convention of 1787,
(4 vols., New Haven, 1937), II, 443-449]

4. Apr. 3, 1799 Contingent Expenses To Commissioners for removing the
Seat of Government to Lancaster Act 3rd April 1799

To Matthias Barton	\$2273.86	
Less	67.84	\$2166.02
To Thomas Bourne	\$1056.54	
Less	287.25	\$ 769.29
To Jacob Strickler	\$ 966.98	
Less	212.17	\$ 754.81
		\$3710.12

[Comptroller General Financial Accounts
Journal Jan. 1, 1799-Dec. 31, 1802, 1017]

5. [Mar. 29, 1813] ...Resolved, By the Senate and House of the Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, That for the deficiency of the sum of two thousand dollars heretofore appropriated for that purpose, the state treasurer be and he is hereby directed to pay to the Clerk of the House of Representatives the sum of 590 dollars, to enable him to defray the expense incident to the removal of the records and furniture of the Legislature from Lancaster to Harrisburg, and of the necessary alterations and repairs of the court-house in Harrisburg for the accommodation of the Legislature.

Journal of the Twenty Third House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
..., (Harrisburg, 1812), 681/

6. [Jan. 12, 1826] A motion was made by Mr. Ogile and Mr. Duncan, and read as follows, viz.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met. That the clerk of the Senate, and the Clerk of the House of Representatives shall have the chairs repaired which were occupied by the sages of '76 when they declared the people of the United States free and independent, and have them deposited in some safe place as relics of the birth of our independence. Laid on the table.

Journal of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1825-1826, 165/

7. [Jan. 17, 1826] The Senate resolved itself into a committee of the whole. Mr. Fowler in the chair, on resolution no. 17 entitled "Resolution relative to the preservation of the chairs occupied by the signers of the declaration of independence." And after some time, The committee rose, the chairman obtained leave to sit again on Wednesday the twenty second day of February next.

Journal of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1825-26, 171/

8. [July, 1852] Revolutionary Relics - During the sessions of the Memorial Conventions, which sat last week, repeated inquiries were made by the delegates from abroad, as to the whereabouts of the ancient furniture of Independence Hall. They were informed by the Committee, that the chair in which John Hancock sat when he signed the Declaration of Independence, has been taken to Harrisburg, and was used in the House of Representatives as the Speaker's chair, while other articles of less importance, but still interesting, from historical associations, had been removed, and were in the possession of individuals. The delegates from other states appeared to be surprised that the authorities

of the city should have parted with that which would have added so much additional interest to the Hall, and which really was almost a part of the sacred building. It has been suggested that it was owing to this circumstance that Mr. Spence introduced into the report and resolutions passed by the Convention, [See Public Ledger, July 7, 1852 for details on resolutions and the report]....measures should at once be taken by the Committee in City Property of Councils to recover the possession of the old chairs above referred to, and as many other objects of interest as can be traced to the custody of others. The visitors to the hall have been long enough hushed into the belief, that the morocco covered chairs now in the hall, were used by the patriots of the revolution.

[Public Ledger, July 12, 1852]

9. [Feb. 22, 1867] On Feb. 22, 1867, celebration of Washington's birthday was held in the Assembly Room in Independence Hall at which time the so-called "Hancock chair" [Rising Sun chair] and the "Declaration of Independence Table" were presented formally to the City of Philadelphia by authorities of the State of Pennsylvania.

[Identified clipping, newspaper, Feb. 23, 1867, and file]

10. [Mar. 21, 1867] The receiving of the Hancock Chair and Testimonials from the Harrisburg delegation cost \$365.85 in expenses.

[Journal of Common Council, 1867 I, App. 521]

11. [Mar. 28, 1871] State of Pennsylvania

Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth

Col. Frank M. Atting
Dear Col:

Harrisburg, Pa. March 28th 1871

On the chair matter are you aware that in the winter or spring of 1867, one (if not two) chairs & a table were sent down from here to Independence Hall, & deposited there with some ceremony, including a speech from the Speaker of the Senate & a response by the Mayor? One of these chairs had been in use by the Speaker of the House here for years. A reference to the receipt [?] for deposit of this may throw some light on the subject; & satisfy you that your suggestions were complied with, in your absence from the State. If not, and you can indicate what I shall do, I will cooperate with you.

The Governor concurs in these suggestions, and hopes you will accept them as a reply from him also.

Hastily & Truly

Yours &c.

F. Jordan

[Letter, F. Jordan to Frank M. Etting,
March 28, 1871, in small volume label-
ed "Independence Hall Restoration," 15,
Etting Papers, Historical Society of
Pennsylvania]

(4) Bar or rail. Mr. Grossman went over the historical evidence on this item with the committee, then showed it the preliminary studies he had prepared for such a railing. Everyone agreed that his approach was highly satisfactory and appropriate, recommended that he proceed with it and take up the subject again with the committee when his design has been approved by the Service.

(5) Penn Coat-of-Arms

The committee, after reviewing the historical evidence regarding the presence in the Assembly Room of this item as presented by Mr. Kurjack, agreed that it was an appropriate item for the refurnishings program. It agreed, too, that it should be carved unless future study proves definitely it was painted on a wooden panel.

However, since the size and position of the coat-of-arms above the Speaker's chair hinges to a considerable degree on the architectural treatment of the paneling, etc. of this end of the room (as explained by Mr. Grossman), Mr. Nagel suggested that the restoration of this item be deferred until a firm decision has been reached regarding the restoration of the broken pediment seen in the Pine-Savage painting. Consequently, the committee recommended that the architectural research on the room be continued, and that until a definite conclusion is reached regarding this matter, that Mr. Lewis' suggestion that a plaster cast of the coat-of-arms be displayed but not carved or installed be followed.

(6) "Rising Sun" Chair. The committee agreed that the historical evidence justifies the retention of this chair in the historic scene in the Assembly Room, where it will be in pleasing contrast to the plainer Windsor chairs, discussed immediately below.

(7) Windsor Chairs. This subject, because of its importance, received considerable attention. After reviewing the available evidence the committee agreed on or recommended the following:

(a) That there were about 40-50 Windsor chairs in the Assembly Room, some with arms.

(b) Messrs. Montgomery and Nagel believed that the Windsors in the Pine-Savage painting were a few years too late in period; that the Trumble chair shown in Fig. 9 is more suitable in respect to period and character.

(c) That a nucleus of period chairs similar to the Trumble chair in Fig. 9 be acquired, from which copies can be made to round out the historic scene until such time as additional appropriate period pieces can be acquired. It was agreed, however, that copies should be kept to a minimum; that the main effort should be put into acquiring suitable period pieces.



Fig. 1

The Speaker's (Rising Sun) chair in the Assembly Room, State House. Made in 1779 by John Polwell for use of the Pennsylvania Assembly, it was also used by George Washington as President of the Federal Constitutional Convention. National Park Service photo.

CHANDELIER

A. Summary Report

The use of candles to light the rooms of the State House after dark, in the eighteenth century, and even the kind of candles used, is fully established by documentary evidence. As to fixtures for the candles, however, the records are silent except for one year, 1777, when a pair of plated candlesticks and a pair of double sconces were purchased for the Council Chamber on the second floor. Not even a shadow of evidence can be adduced in support of the modern tradition that chandeliers were used.

There are good reasons for believing that the Assembly Room probably had no permanent lighting fixtures. The Assembly met in the daytime when ample natural light was afforded by the six large windows, and upon those infrequent occasions when sessions extended into the night candles were brought in by the doorkeeper. These candles were on candlesticks, no doubt, kept in a closet probably in the tower room.

Thus we find in the Votes of the Assembly for the years 1743, 1749, 1753 and 1754, the identical entries: "Ordered, that candles be brought in. And they were brought in accordingly." Again, we find for a night session in 1755 this entry: "The House agreed to wait till they should hear from the Governor; and ordered Candles to be brought in, which was done accordingly." It is interesting to note, finally, in the Register of Pennsylvania for 1830, this recollection of Samuel Hazard, a diligent recorder of the eighteenth-century scene:

It was the practice in the House of Assembly to have candles lighted at dark. The Speaker would then call "Candles," and the Door-Keeper would immediately bring them in....

Had there been permanent or stationary lighting fixtures in the Assembly Room, there would have been no occasion for the Speaker to order that candles be "brought in." The candles would have been there already and the order simply to light them.

This condition apparently prevailed, also, for the period of the Continental Congress, from 1775 to 1783, for there is a complete absence of evidence to the contrary in contemporary records, official documents, or travelers' descriptions of the Assembly Room.

That so attractive and prominent a fixture as the present chandelier, had it been present, should have escaped the attention of travelers who at the same time noticed other details (de Broglie in 1782, for instance, even a "bad engraving of Montgomery") is implausible; it constitutes in itself evidence against the probability of its presence.

What, then, is the history of the present chandelier, ascribed by modern tradition to the period of the Revolution? The known facts are these.

In the summer of 1824, with the approach of Lafayette's visit to Philadelphia, the Assembly Room was completely refurbished and refurnished. It had been for many years prior to that time an exhibit hall, a court room, and in the words of contemporaries, even a "lumber room." The furnishings were purchased specifically for the occasion of Lafayette's reception, who was

to use the Room as a "levee room" during his week-long stay, and these included a chandelier which cost \$200. That this chandelier must have been an expensive fixture may be seen from a comparison with the cost of other furnishings purchased, as for examples: 12 mahogany sofas---\$420; 8 mahogany armchairs ---\$120; 60 mahogany chairs---\$516; carpet---\$442.70.

All the furnishings were removed from the Assembly Room sometime after Lafayette's reception and apparently sold. Certainly, by 1832 the Room was again bare except for a few court room fixtures which replaced them. The Assembly Room had reverted to its inglorious status as a "lumber room."

Then in 1846 came the second rehabilitation of the Room, in connection with its formal opening on July 4 as a public museum. We know from contemporary newspaper accounts that the furniture installed was new. We know, too, that at this time an old chandelier was produced from somewhere and also installed. First notice of the latter appeared in the Public Ledger for February 19, 1846:

"We are informed that the old cut glass chandelier, used in the hall during the sitting of the great liberating Congress, is still in good preservation, although thrown aside as worthless lumber, and might be replaced in the hall to much advantage."

There is no positive proof as yet that this chandelier, which has survived to the present day, is the one first installed in 1824; and until the hiatus of 22 years in the evidence is filled, an element of doubt will remain.

Notwithstanding, the fact that tradition associates it with the State House, and that a leading authority on early American furniture dates the original features of the present chandelier as of about 1810 or later, constitute strong evidence in support of the belief that the two chandeliers are one and the same.

This chandelier has been in the Assembly Room ever since except for a few occasions when it had to be taken down for servicing and renovating. The earliest view of it may be seen in an engraving of the Assembly Room which appeared in the New York Illustrated News for July 9, 1853 (see Fig. 1). This and several later views (prior to 1875), however, reveal a chandelier which in most of its details appears unlike the one of the present. Part of the difference undoubtedly can be ascribed to artistic license, each of the several artists in his own way simplifying what after all was but one of the features of the Assembly Room. This we know from a comparison of details in the several views.

But the principal difference lies in the many changes made to the chandelier in the years following 1875, particularly in 1923-24 when the New York firm of Edward F. Caldwell & Co. repaired and "restored" it. The "restoration" involved not simply the replacement of missing and damaged parts but also the addition of new features---prisms, pendants, glass arms, and cut stars---the basis for which apparently was supplied in part by the then curator of Independence Hall, in part by the firm, neither of whom seems to have recorded any historical justification. The physical details of these changes, however, are known.

As for the tradition of the chandelier, we have already noted its first appearance in 1846---a newspaper statement associating the fixture with Independence Hall and the Continental Congress, unsupported by documentation or even an explanation. No doubt someone in 1846 recalled that the chandelier had once been in the State House, which is quite plausible since 1824 was only 22 years removed, well within the memory of living persons. From this it seems the uncritical writer, unaware of the circumstances of Lafayette's visit, jumped to the conclusion that the association of the chandelier with the State House must have occurred at the time of the Continental Congress---far removed from the realm of actual recollection to all but a possible few in 1846, and to these, if any, but a dim memory at best. Other writers, in the years following, simply perpetuated the initial statement without question. Yet down to the present time, not a single shred of evidence has been produced to support it.

From the foregoing, several conclusions seem inescapable:

First, that there is no evidence for the presence of a chandelier in the Assembly Room during the period of its greatest historic importance; that the present chandelier is an intrusion on the historic scene, and viewed from the standpoint of our re-furnishing program, should be removed.

Second, that the chandelier, or that part of it which is original, is very probably the one purchased in 1824 on the occasion of Lafayette's visit. This historic association

warrants its preservation and future exhibition in the Independence National Historical Park, though in a place other than the Assembly Room of Independence Hall.

Third, that the present chandelier is in fact but partially original, having been altered through the years by replacements and the addition of new features to such an extent that we may safely say it now bears but superficial resemblance to the original. Before it is placed on exhibit, therefore, as the "Lafayette" chandelier, it should be restored as far as possible to its original condition.

B. Documentary Data (Chandelier)

1. [Aug. 21, 1824] A Committee of the City Councils have directed the Room in the State House, in which the Declaration of Independence [was signed] to be fitted up, under the direction of Mr. Strickland, as a levee room for the General [Lafayette].

[Sat. Eve. Post, Aug. 21, 1824]

2. [1824] Permanent furniture for State [House---or Hall] of Independence

Sofas. Chandeliers portrait of Penn etc	2708
Permanent Repairs	
to Hall	270
Governor Exp.	1669
Lafayette "	7707
	<u>12314</u>

[Marquis de Lafayette Reception]

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|---------|
| 3. [1824] Carpet | 442.70 | |
| Curtains - Hangings | 634.78 | |
| 12 mahogany Sofas | 420 | |
| 8 " Arm Chairs | 120 | |
| 60[?]" Chairs | 516 | |
| Portrait of Wm. Penn--- | 76 | |
| Chandelier | 200 | |
| sundry ornamental work | | |
| gilding &c | <u>299</u> | 2708.48 |

[Ibid.]

4. [Oct. 9, 1824] We understand the City Councils have determined to remove the costly furniture with which the Hall of Independence was adorned for the suitable reception of the Nation's Guest, and intend using the Hall, as at former elections, a receptable for votes.

[Sat. Eve. Post, Oct. 9, 1824]

5. [1828] Poalk offers McAllister a sofa his father purchased when the City Council put up for sale items they purchased for General Lafayette's Reception.

[Edward L. Poalk to J. McAllister,
n.d., McAllister Papers]

6. [ca. 1832] Future ages will regard this room with an humble sentiment of veneration. It is to be lamented that the whole interior of the room has been changed. The floor, ceiling, panels, and furniture, have all been removed or destroyed, and the desks placed for some inferior courts of justice. It has

been proposed to restore this hall to its original state; for, if there is any place in America which, more than any other, may be considered a fit residence for the Genius of Liberty--it is this Council Hall.

[John Finch, Travels in the U.S.,
p. 81]

7. [Jan. 28, 1836] From Report of Committee on City Property

Your committee have also to suggest that Independence Hall should not be permitted to remain in its unfurnished state: but that it should be neatly fitted up with such furniture as would be consistent with the venerated Hall. A resolution was adopted by Councils two years since, directing it to be furnished in the manner it was at the time of the declaration; but the Committee finding it impossible to execute the direction, it has since remained without furniture, and almost as a lumber room. It could then be occupied by the Mayor, when not engaged in the office, and our own citizens as well as strangers, would at all times be enabled to visit a place of deep interest.

[Journal of Common Council, I (1835-36, 83]

8. [Feb. 19, 1846] We are informed that the old cut glass chandelier, used in the hall during the sitting of the great liberating Congress, is still in good preservation, although thrown aside as worthless lumber, and might be replaced in the hall to much advantage.

[Public Ledger, Feb. 19, 1846]

9. [July 7, 1846] The Hall of Independence - This time-honored place has been open since Saturday last to visitors, and now presents a more respectable appearance than it has for many years. The interior has been thoroughly painted; the old chandelier restored in all its original freshness and beauty, new carpets laid and new sofas introduced. The Committee of City Property under whose supervision these improvements have been made, deserve the thanks of the community for their efforts....

[Public Ledger, July 7, 1846]

10. [Oct. 26, 1866] The Chandelier now pending from the centre of the ceiling is made of cut glass drops. It was stowed away among some rubbish many years since, but it was finally brought forth from its hiding place, readjusted and put up in the place it occupies. It is the original chandelier used by Congress

during the deliberations immediately before and at the time of the Revolution, and on the night before the passage of the Declaration of Independence of America. The quality of the glass is said by ladies of the article to be very superior. It is probably English flint glass. It is seldom lighted, but when under the influence of artificial light, the glass drops reflect all the prismatic colors of the rainbow, from the pale yellow tints to deep, red, scarlet, blue and emerald.

[Phila. Scrapbooks, III, unidentified newspaper clipping, Oct. 26, 1866, Ridgway Lib.]

11. [Nov. 1, 1923] EDWD.F. CALDWELL & CO. INC.
36-38-40 West 15th Street
New York

November 1,
1923

Mr. Harry T. Baxter,
Bureau of City Property,
117 City Hall,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

RE: RESTORING CRYSTAL CHANDELIER IN
INDEPENDENCE HALL - PHILADELPHIA

Dear Sir:

In response to your letter of October 31st; we quote you in detail our price for restoring the above crystal chandelier.

Taking down, taking apart and transportation
of chandelier to our factory.
Supplying and fitting with the following
different members and making changes:

Top pan, 3 cut stars added.
Large top pan, 2 prisms added.
5 new glass arms supplied for top tier.
Small middle metal band - 3 prisms to be added.
Upper tier of arms, 12 small pendants and missing
crystal drapery supplied.
Bottom metal ring of fixture, 3 small pendants added.
12 metal arms with draped chain, removed and re-
turned to owners, as same are to be discarded.
New pendants to supply missing ones hanging from
arm pans.
9 new candle sockets to match old ones on ends of
arms
New arm pans and candle sockets will be supplied
with new arms on upper tier of lights.

Metal pan for gas arms, to be discarded and
glass pan underneath moved up.
Metal parts on chandelier to be resilvered and
all glass parts to be thoroughly cleaned.
9 new pendalogues from ends of bottom arms to
replace missing and broken ones.
4 arm pans on bottom arms.
Glass and metal stem on upper part of fixture
to be added, ball joint to be retained to
allow fixture to hang plumb.
Nipple from ceiling to be cut close to ceiling,
with ball joint to fit as close to the ceiling
as possible.
Fixture to be arranged for real candles to be
supplied by owners.
Chandelier to be returned to Independence Hall
and installed.

For the above work we quote a price of \$950.00.

Respectfully submitted,

(signed) Edward F. Caldwell & Co.

G. P. Hutchins

[Copy of letter in INHP files]

12. [Nov. 22, 1923]

A. 703
S. 63,003

Date NOV 22 1923

Received of Curator, Independence Hall, boxes of crystals
which have fallen or become loose and were removed. also
Broken

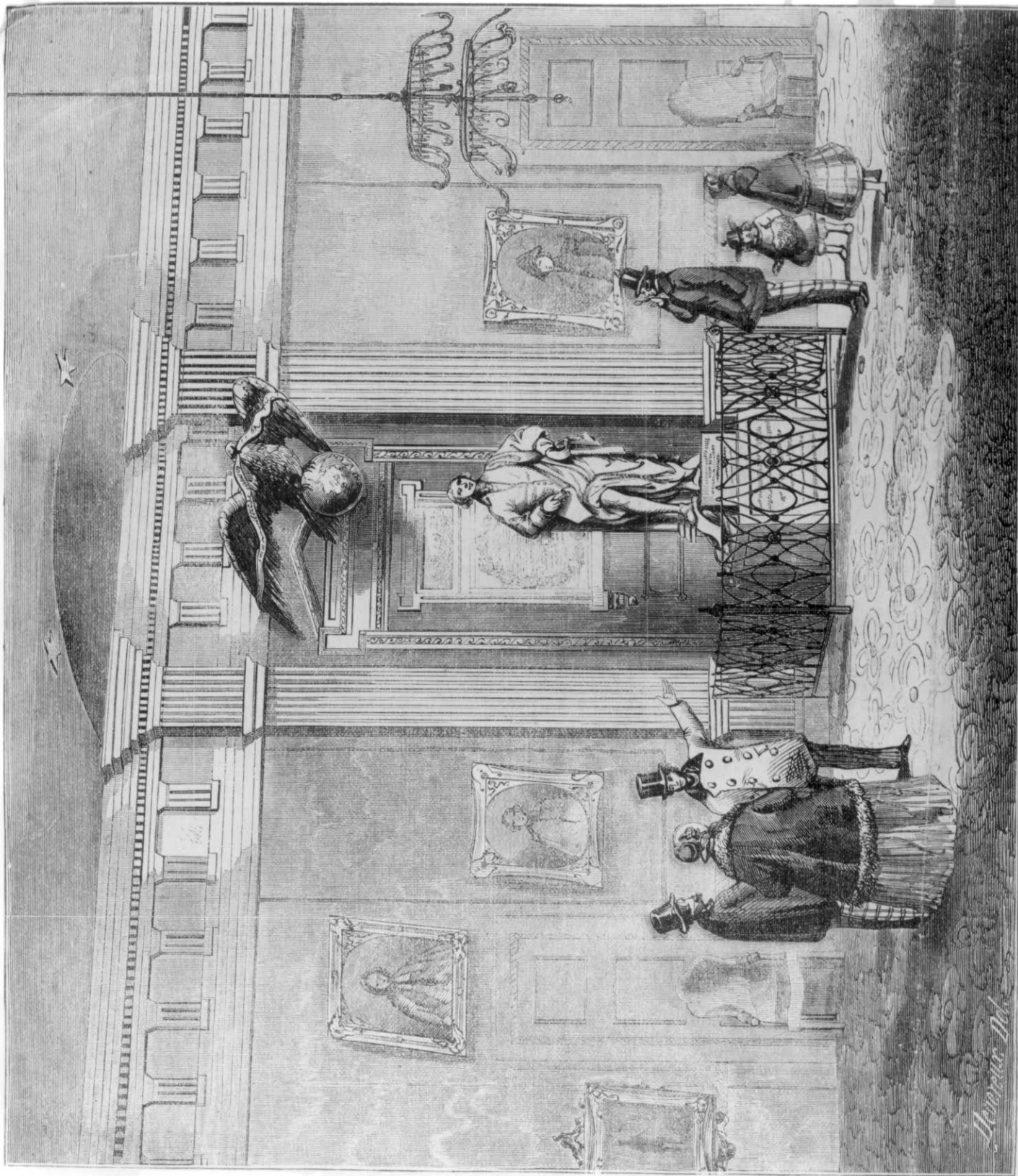
EDW'D. F. CALDWELL & CO., INC.
36-40 W. 15th St., N. Y. City,
By /s/ Daniel J. Lynch

63,003
703

Received of Bureau of City Property, Independence Hall
Division, one (1) crystal chandelier and metal parts complete,
removed NOV 22 1923 by Edw. F. Caldwell & Co., Inc., 36-40
W. 15th Street, New York City.

/s/ Daniel J. Lynch

[Receipts in INHP files]



EAST ROOM—INDEPENDENCE HALL. PHIL A. DETMOLD

Detmold Del.

Fig. 1.

The earliest view of the Assembly Room showing
the chandelier. From the N.Y. Illustrated News
July 9, 1853. Photo.; National Park Service



23850

2-18-1927

I PENN FAMILY COAT OF ARMS

A. Summary Report

The historical evidence for the presence of the Penn coat of arms in the Assembly Room comes from a letter by John Penn, Lieutenant-Governor of Pennsylvania, written on March 17, 1764, to his brother, Thomas Penn, in London. In this letter, describing the latest manifestations of anti-proprietary sentiment in the Provincial Assembly, John Penn wrote that "Some of the members the other day, were for pulling down the Arms over the Speakers Chair and putting up the Kings Arms in their place (see documentary data below.)" That "Arms" meant the Penn coat of arms, there can be little doubt, for the only alternative, the "King's Arms," is expressly mentioned as the intended replacement. The desire to supplant the Penn arms with that of the King symbolized the internal political struggle in the Pennsylvania Assembly of this period and the desire of some to release Pennsylvania from the proprietary control of the Penns and transform it into a royal province.

Though the year 1764 is not in the period of our immediate interest; nevertheless the Proprietary government remained in control into the second half of 1776, and in the absence of evidence to the contrary (either in the voluminous Penn Manuscripts which cover the entire period, or in the many other pertinent sources examined to date) there is no reason for supposing that the family device was removed prior to that important year.

The location of the arms, given as being above the Speaker's chair, is where one would have expected it to be. While not entirely

precise, it is perhaps close enough for practical purposes. Certainly, the area of possibility is limited within rather narrow confines by the architectural features of the central portion of the east wall.

As to the appearance and dimensions of the coat of arms, there is at present little evidence. We know the appearance of the arms (see Figures 1, 2, and 3), but cannot say whether the arms were carved or painted, were on wood or some other medium, or what size they were. While we are inclined to believe that the Penn coat of arms was carved in wood and of dimensions in harmony with the overall dimensions of the room, similar to that in the House of Burgesses, at Williamsburg, would be most effective, we suggest that the subject be fully explored with the committee and otherwise given further study before a final decision is reached.

B. Documentary Data

The letter cited above, our only source of information, is in the Penn MSS, IX, 216, at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

(4) Bar or rail. Mr. Grossman went over the historical evidence on this item with the committee, then showed it the preliminary studies he had prepared for such a railing. Everyone agreed that his approach was highly satisfactory and appropriate, recommended that he proceed with it and take up the subject again with the committee when his design has been approved by the Service.

(5) Penn Coat-of-Arms

The committee, after reviewing the historical evidence regarding the presence in the Assembly Room of this item as presented by Mr. Kurjack, agreed that it was an appropriate item for the refurnishings program. It agreed, too, that it should be carved unless future study proves definitely it was painted on a wooden panel.

However, since the size and position of the coat-of-arms above the Speaker's chair hinges to a considerable degree on the architectural treatment of the paneling, etc. of this end of the room (as explained by Mr. Grossman), Mr. Nagel suggested that the restoration of this item be deferred until a firm decision has been reached regarding the restoration of the broken pediment seen in the Pine-Savage painting. Consequently, the committee recommended that the architectural research on the room be continued, and that until a definite conclusion is reached regarding this matter, that Mr. Lewis' suggestion that a plaster cast of the coat-of-arms be displayed but not carved or installed be followed.

(6) "Rising Sun" Chair. The committee agreed that the historical evidence justifies the retention of this chair in the historic scene in the Assembly Room, where it will be in pleasing contrast to the plainer Windsor chairs, discussed immediately below.

(7) Windsor Chairs. This subject, because of its importance, received considerable attention. After reviewing the available evidence the committee agreed on or recommended the following:

(a) That there were about 40-50 Windsor chairs in the Assembly Room, some with arms.

(b) Messrs. Montgomery and Nagel believed that the Windsors in the Pine-Savage painting were a few years too late in period; that the Trumble chair shown in Fig. 9 is more suitable in respect to period and character.

(c) That a nucleus of period chairs similar to the Trumble chair in Fig. 9 be acquired, from which copies can be made to round out the historic scene until such time as additional appropriate period pieces can be acquired. It was agreed, however, that copies should be kept to a minimum; that the main effort should be put into acquiring suitable period pieces.



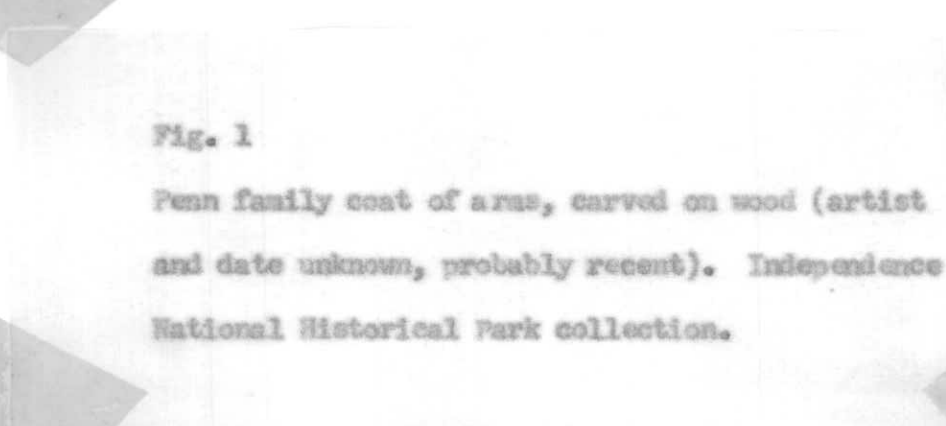


Fig. 1

Penn family coat of arms, carved on wood (artist and date unknown, probably recent). Independence National Historical Park collection.





Fig. 2

Wax impression of the seal of Thomas and John Penn,
joint proprietors of Pennsylvania during the years
1771-1776. Courtesy of Historical Society of
Pennsylvania.



Fig. 3

Great Seal of the Province of Pennsylvania (August
21, 1756). Courtesy of Historical Society of
Pennsylvania.



Fig. 4

View of east wall of Assembly Room, State House,
1925. The Penn coat of arms occupied the space
between the pilasters, probably just below the
frieze. National Park Service photo.

VII GREEN PAINT FOR TABLES

A. Summary Report

There is ample proof that all the tables in Congress were covered with green paint. As to the manner in which they were covered as well as the shade of green used, we have again as our source the Pine and Savage painting. (For a careful analysis of these and other particulars, see Mr. Mulcahy's study following this report.) With these details at hand, it should be possible to achieve a high degree of authenticity.

(d) Agreed to circulate photos of the Trumble chair to dealers, and in the event that they have suitable chairs, circulate photos of such chairs to the committee, which if it deems the chair appropriate will inspect it at first hand, expenses paid.

(e) Agreed that if a chair is unpainted, but is otherwise satisfactory, we should acquire it and repaint it.

(f) Agreed that Messrs. Montgomery and Mulcahy should visit Harrisburg to ascertain whether or not all the furnishings believed to have been in Independence Hall were actually returned there by the Commonwealth in 1876.

(g) Will attempt to procure side chairs as well as distinctive Windsors in order to have tasteful variety.

(8) Delegation Tables. All agreed that the only possible approach is to procure one or two period tables of the shape, size and height shown in the Pine-Savage painting and have copies of these made to make up the balance of the 13 tables needed.

(9) Green Baize. Suggested that swatches at Winterthur and Williamsburg be consulted to get appropriate type.

(10) Speaker's Table. It was agreed that the Speaker's table, or desk, now in the Assembly Room should be expertized to determine its period, etc. Messrs. Nagel and Montgomery agreed that it appeared to be about the right period.

(11) Peale's "Washington". Decided that the importance of this painting merits making approach to getting it now, and afterwards deciding the best location for it. Agreed, too, that a copy of the engraving of this painting shall also be procured.

(12) "Montgomery" Engraving. Since little is known of this engraving other than its actual presence in the Assembly Room, it will probably be difficult to obtain a copy. However, the possibility of so doing should be explored.

(13) Yorktown Flag. Time needed for research and actually making the flag almost certainly precludes a reproduction of it being ready by May. However, we should proceed in this item as time permits.

(14) American Flags (2). All agreed that regardless of the absence of evidence regarding its presence in the Assembly Room, an American flag of the Revolutionary period should be prominent inside the room; a modern American flag outside the room, perhaps flanking the door.

furnishings, and presumably the inkstand, in the Assembly Room for use by the Congress.

2. Again, there is no evidence of Congress having purchased furnishings for its own use prior to 1778.

3. In 1778, however, Congress bought a glass ink pot "for the President." From this it would appear that prior to 1778 Congress probably used the silver inkstand, and that thereafter it used the glass ink pot.

4. Lastly, we must mention here the strong tradition associating the inkstand with the Continental Congress. While traditions must always be considered critically, they may not be disregarded, for very often they have at least some factual basis. Such appears to be the case in the present instance.

To summarize, it is reasonably certain that the inkstand was in the Assembly Room during at least part of the historic period, and therefore it should, we feel, be included in the proposed refurnishing plan.

E. Documentary Data (Silver Inkstand)

1. [1752] To Philip Syng, his account for a Silver Inkstand for the Use of the House,.....[175.16.0]

Pennsylvania Archives, 8th Series, IV,
3531/

2. [Oct. 20, 1778] That there is due to Robert Patton, his pay as door-keeper to Congress, from 16 June to the 13 October, 1778, inclusive, two hundred and forty dollars:²

²This report, dated October 16, is in the Papers of the Continental Congress, No. 136, II, folio 625. Patton specified "a glass Ink Pott for the President, two thirds of a dollar."

[Ford, Journals of the Continental Con-
gress, III, 1029, note 2]

3. [April 19, 1849]
To His Excellency
John F. Hartreft
Governor

I have the honor to place in your hands an ancient Ink Stand and Sand box the history of which is as follows:

In the year 1849 there was placed in my custody a Small Silver Tray, containing an Ink and Sand holder of the same material, at that time tradition held that this was the Ink Stand used by the President of the Continental Congress, at the time the Declaration of American Independence was signed.

I took great interest to obtain as much information as was possible to establish its identity and made inquiries on the subject during several years succeeding 1849, from then, aged public men and the result of my investigations resulted in convincing me of the identity of this one with that used by the first Congress.

The late venerable Thomas H. Burrows, afterwards Superintendent of Common Schools, told me that he had made minute inquiries regarding this Stand many years previous, and that no doubt that it was the same that held the ink used by the signers of the Declaration.

The late Honorable Thomas Nicholson, who will be remembered as a man who required the most positive and conclusive evidence to convince his mind, was an enthusiastic believer in the fact. That this was the "Independence Inkstand."

This Ink Stand has been in my custody uninterruptedly ever since 1849, and I can vouch for it being the one referred to by the gentleman I have named.

It was used very many years prior to 1849 by the Speakers of the House of Representatives.

I have been particular, in thus establishing its identity, in order that others who may have information regarding it from 1776 to 1849 may be assured that this is the same one used to my certain knowledge at that period by the Speakers of the House, and reputed to be the "Independence Inkstand."

The near approach of the Centennial Anniversary of our Independence, renders it particularly appropriate that the interesting relic, be placed in your custody for such disposition as Your Excellency may deem proper.

Harrisburg, Pa.
Apr. 19, 1875

With much respect
I am Yours &c. &c.
Jno H. Small

[Letter, John H. Small to John F. Hart-
ruff, Apr. 19, 1875, in "Independence
Hall Restoration," I (Corresp), 120,
Etting Papers, Historical Society of Penn-
sylvania]

4. April 21, 1875
Frank N. Etting Esq.
Chm. Com. on Restoration of Ind. Hall
Dr Sir

I have yours of 18th inst. The old Silver Tray with Ink Stand & Sand Holder (illegible) it, has been preserved by me safely until this time. There is no doubt, at all in my mind about its being the one used at the Signing of the Declaration.

I have placed it in the hands of the Governor, accompanied with a letter vouching for its identity for Twenty-six years, and stating facts to prove the correctness of my views.

I have had an interview with the Governor on the subject of placing it in your charge, and would suggest that you address to him a letter, stating that the Committee are making efforts to restore the furniture &c. of Ind. Hall to its original place, and requesting him to place the Ink stand there also.

I am much gratified to have been of service in [illegible, preserving?] this most interesting relic. Once it was stolen for a few days, but I

succeeded in getting it again, since that time I have not allowed it to be exposed.

It has been my intention to have it placed, where it could be made prominent during the Centennial, and I am pleased that you have opened the way for me.

Very Truly Yours

Jno. A. Small

[Letter, Jno. A. Small to Frank M.
Etting]), Apr. 21, 1875, in Ibid.]

5. [June 1, 1875]

Executive Chamber
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania,
June 1, 1875

Frank M. Etting Esq.

Chairman Committee on Restoration of Independence
Hall, Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sir:

In reply to your letter inviting my attention to the existence of the original Silver Inkstand used in signing the Declaration of Independence, which, ordered for the Assembly of Pennsylvania shortly after the occupation of their Chamber in Philadelphia, was transferred with other portions of their furniture to Harrisburg, I have the honor to state that the inkstand alluded to has this day been forwarded to you per express. The inkstand was kindly placed at my disposal by Mr. Small with a letter containing its history which I enclose herewith, and I take great pleasure in transferring it to your custody to be restored to its old stand upon which the table which the chart of our Independence was signed.

In forwarding this inkstand, as a citizen of Pennsylvania I cannot refrain from expressing to you my thanks for the zeal and industry you have displayed in your efforts to restore Independence Hall, and the extended and elaborate research you have made to establish the identity of the articles reclaimed.

With great respect, I am.
Your Obt. Servant

J. F. Hartranft

[Letter, J. F. Hartranft to Frank M.
Etting, June 1, 1875, in Ibid.]

6. [June 7, 1875] "The Committee on Restoration of Independence Hall repaired to the chamber yesterday, where, in the presence of the Mayor, Hon. William S. Stokley, and a number of distinguished citizens, Col. Frank M. Etting, chairman of the committee, presented to the city, in presence of the Mayor, a Revolutionary relic of great value and significance...."

"The Mayor received the inkstand, and deposited it upon the table where it was so long used...."

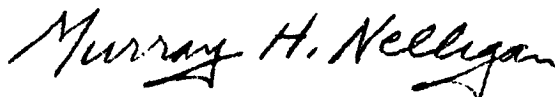
[The Philadelphia Press, June 8, 1875,
in Frank M. Etting, An Historical Account
of the Old State House... (second edition,
Philadelphia, 1891), 168-169]

(15) Miscellaneous Minor Furnishings

(a) Inkstands. All agreed that the inkstand in the Pine-Savage painting is of pewter. If a similar period piece is obtained, copies of it could then be made for the other delegation tables.

(b) Miscellaneous furnishings---paper, quills, etc. These to be accomplished as time and opportunity permits.

At the end of the session, it was agreed that no date for another formal meeting of the refurnishings committee would be set for the moment.



Murray H. Nelligan
Chief Park Historian



In CONGRESS. June 4. 1776.

John Cooper
Jacob Hester
John Brown

Wollaston
Lyon Wollaston
Wollaston

Edw. May
James L.
Arthur

II. C. W. PEALE'S PORTRAIT OF WASHINGTON

A. Summary Report

Evidence for the presence of Charles Willson Peale's famous portrait of Washington in the Assembly Room during the historic period rests on a single contemporary reference. The Marquis de Chastellux, visiting the meeting place of Congress on December 4, 1782, noted that "its handsomest ornament is the portrait of General Washington, larger than life." His description fits exactly the great painting acquired by the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania in 1779, and now on exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (see notes 7 and 9, and Fig. 5).

We must, however, allude here to a somewhat confusing element introduced by another French visitor's comments that same year. The Prince de Broglie, visiting the Assembly Room just a few months earlier, noted that the room was "without any other ornament than a bad engraving of [General Richard] Montgomery, one of Washington, and a copy of the Declaration of Independence." This statement suggests that the representation of Washington was not a portrait but an engraving. In point of fact, a mezzotint of the painting was executed by Peale in 1780, a copy of which he "humbly inscribed to the Honorable the Congress of the United States of America" that same year (see note 5 and Fig. 6).

Both Chastellux and de Broglie were acute observers of the American scene and their published accounts impress one with the comprehensiveness, the attention to detail, and the general accuracy of their observations. It seems as unlikely, therefore, that Chastellux would have described a half-length engraving measuring 14 inches by

10 inches as a "portrait...larger than life," as that de Broglie would have confused the magnificent full-length portrait with a small engraving. Consequently, it can only be inferred that both men described accurately what each saw, and that the painting must have been placed in the Assembly Room sometime between August 18 and December 4, 1782.

The history of Peale's masterpiece, for which we are indebted to Charles Coleman Sellers, noted authority on the life and works of Peale, bears out this supposition. According to him, the painting was commissioned by the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania on January 13, 1779, and Washington sat for it in Philadelphia between January 20 and February 2. Peale completed the painting in another month or so, following a visit to the Princeton and Trenton battlefields for background, and it was duly hung in the Council Chamber (on the second floor) of the State House. For it, Peale submitted a bill to the State for £2021 5s. Then, on the night of September 9, 1781, vandals damaged the painting by slashing it six times in the upper background. The damage, which can still be traced on the canvas, apparently was repaired by Peale himself.

The story for the next 21 years, except for its appearance in the Assembly Room in 1782, as mentioned above, is not clear. However, in 1813 we find it listed in the catalogue of Peale's gallery of portraits as No. 212. A note identifies it and acknowledges that it belongs to the State. It is interesting that this year, too, State authorities requested that the painting be returned to Harrisburg, and this Rufus Peale, Director of the Museum, promised to do. However, no action was taken at the time, and the matter was apparently forgotten. Finally, at the sale of Peale's gallery in 1834, the

painting was purchased by Henry Pratt McKean, whose heirs in 1943 presented it to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, where it is today.

B. Documentary Data (Peale's Portrait of Washington)

1. [Jan. 18, 1779] Whereas, The wisest, freest, & bravest nations, in the most virtuous times, have endeavored to perpetuate the memory of those who have rendered their Country distinguished services, by preserving their resemblances in Statues & Paintings; This Council, Deeply sensible how much the liberty, safety & happiness of America in General, & Pennsylvania in particular, is owing to His Excell'y General Washington & the brave men under his Command, do resolve, That His Excell'y Gen'l Washington be requested to permit this Council to place his Portrait in the Council Chamber, not only as a mark of the great respect which they bear to His Excellency, but that the contemplation of it may excite others to tread in the same glorious & disinterested steps which lead to public happiness and private honor, And that the President be desired to wait on his excellency the General, with the above request, and if granted to enquire when & where it will be most agreeable to him for Mr. Peale to attend him.

[Colonial Records, Minutes of The
Supreme Executive Council, XI, 671-
672]

2. [Jan. 20, 1779] TO HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES HAMILTON, PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF PENNSYLVANIA Head Quarters, Philadelphia, January 20, 1779. Gentlemen: The liberal testimony of approbation which you did me the honour of transmitting by hand of His Excellency the President, coming from so respectable an Assembly, cannot but make the deepest impression on my mind. However conscious I am that your generous sensibility attributes infinitely too much to me, my respect for you leads me to acquiesce in your request and gratefully to subscribe myself
Gentl. etc.

[John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., The
Writings of George Washington...
1745-1799, (40 vols., Washington,
1936), XIV, 33]

3. [1779] "Charles Willson Peale's Account with the State of Pennsylvania," The Portrait of his Excellency General Washington, ...
2021.5.0.

[Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series,
III, 575]

4. [1779] Canvas, 94 x 59. Full length. Powdered hair. Gray eyes.
Buff and blue uniform with blue ribbon across breast. Gilt epaulettes

with three gilt rosettes. Hessian flags at lower right. Red British ensign on right foreground. View of Princeton College buildings in left foreground, with blue-coated Americans guarding red-coated prisoners. Blue flag with circle of white six-pointed stars upper right. PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS, PHILA.

[Chas. C. Sellers, Portraits and Miniatures by Charles Willson Peale, (Phila., 1952), 228]

5. [1780] Item 916. On Aug. 26, 1780, Peale announced in the PENNSYLVANIA PACKET his third venture as an engraver and publisher.

The subscriber takes this method of informing the Public, That he has just finished a Mezzotinto PRINT, in poster size* [*14 inches by 10 inches, besides the margin] of his Excellency GENERAL WASHINGTON, from the original picture belonging to the state of Pennsylvania. Shopkeepers and persons going to the West Indies may be supplied at such a price as will afford a considerable profit to them, by applying at the South-west corner of Lombard and Third-streets, Philadelphia. N.B. As the first impression of this sort of prints are the most valuable, those who are anxious to possess a likeness of our worthy General are desired to apply immediately. CHARLES WILLSON PEALE.

Later advertisements give the price, "two dollars, or the value thereof in current money" (PENNA. PACKET, Jan. 2, 1781). The print shows the pose reversed, the figure facing to the right rather than to the left. There is no ribbon across the breast, and the epaulettes carry each the three stars, specified in the new orders issued from headquarters, June 18, 1780. According to Russell W. Thorpe (ANTIQUARIAN 8:29, 1927) there were then only five known impressions of this print. 1780. Mezzotint, 14 x 10. Three-quarter length. Inscribed: "Chas. Willson Peale print. et fecit 1780/His Excellency George Washington, Esquire, Commander in/Chief of the Federal Army./This Plate is humbly Inscribed to the Honorable the Congress of the United States of America,/by their Obedient Servant,/Charles Willson Peale." IMPRESSIONS ARE OWNED BY THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA, PHILA., AND THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, NEW YORK, N.Y.

[Chas. C. Sellers, Portraits and Miniatures by Charles Willson Peale, (Phila., 1952), 231]

6. [1782] ...Congress meets in a large room on the ground floor. The chamber is large and without any other ornament than a bad engraving of Montgomery, one of Washington and a copy of the Declaration of Independence. It is furnished with thirteen tables each covered with a green cloth. One of the principal representatives of each of the

thirteen states sits during the session at one of these tables. The President of the Congress has his place in the middle of the hall, upon a sort of throne. The clerk is seated just before him....

["Narrative of the Prince de Broglie, 1782," translated by L. A. Halch, in Magazine of American History, I, Part I (1877, Part 10, 231-235)]

7. [Dec. 4, 1782] ... Mr. Huntington having informed me, that the next day [Dec. 4] he would show me the hall in which the Congress assembled, I went there at ten o'clock and found him waiting for me accompanied by several Delegates. The hall is spacious, without magnificence; its most prominent ornament is the portrait of General Washington, larger than life; he is represented on foot, in that noble and easy attitude which is natural to him; warm colours, and all the attributes of war form the accessories of the picture....

[Barthelemy de Chestollux, Travels in North America, in the years 1780, 1781, and 1782, ... "translated from the French by an Englishman, who resided in America at that Period," ... (2 vols., London, 1787), Vol. I, 222-223]]

8. [Oct. 6, 1854] No. 151. WASHINGTON, with the prisoners and trophies taken at Princeton. This fine picture in the East Library of the Illustrations Washington that ever was taken. It is a full length, representing the General in the uniform which he actually wore, leaning on a field piece taken at Princeton, while the British prisoners, &c., are seen in the background. It was taken by request of a Committee of Congress, then sitting in Philadelphia, and the price agreed upon was eight thousand dollars. The picture when executed under the eyes of those who were intimate with the original, was universally admired; but some doubt being expressed in Congress as to the propriety of paying so large a sum for a picture, at the time when the country was embarrassed for money, Mr. Willing declined delivering it, and it remained in his hands, the chief ornament of his Gallery, and to the American historian and antiquarian, the most valuable painting extant. It is an uncoloured original, having passed directly from the possession of the Artist and his descendants to the present owners. It represents Washington in the prime of manhood, in his actual costume of General-in-Chief, and was painted on the eve, that is shortly after the battle of Princeton....

[Woolbe's Picture Gallery of all Paintings ... Catalogue..., (Phila., 1854), 1-9]]

9. [1952] [Below Charles Coleman Sellers describes the painting more accurately---Author.]

Jefferson spoke of Washington as "easy, erect and noble," and it is so that Peale describes him here. The figure is standing, as convention required in a formal portrait of a public figure, but in a perfectly natural pose, the surroundings, too, both conventional and realistic. We see him just as he might have appeared for a moment after the battle had been won. One hand rests on the barrel of a cannon. A second cannon directly behind it symbolizes the fact that two battles are here celebrated. At his feet, on the right, are stacked the captured British battle flags of Trenton. The British ensign lies fallen on the ground at the left, and above it is shown the battle of Princeton, a file of red-coated prisoners being marched away by men in blue, and, in the distance, the College buildings. Behind the General a soldier holds his horse and muffled bayonets appear, symbolizing his readiness to strike again.

[Chas. C. Sellers, Portraits and Miniatures of Charles Willson Peale, (Phila., 1952), 225]

(d) Agreed to circulate photos of the Trumble chair to dealers, and in the event that they have suitable chairs, circulate photos of such chairs to the committee, which if it deems the chair appropriate will inspect it at first hand, expenses paid.

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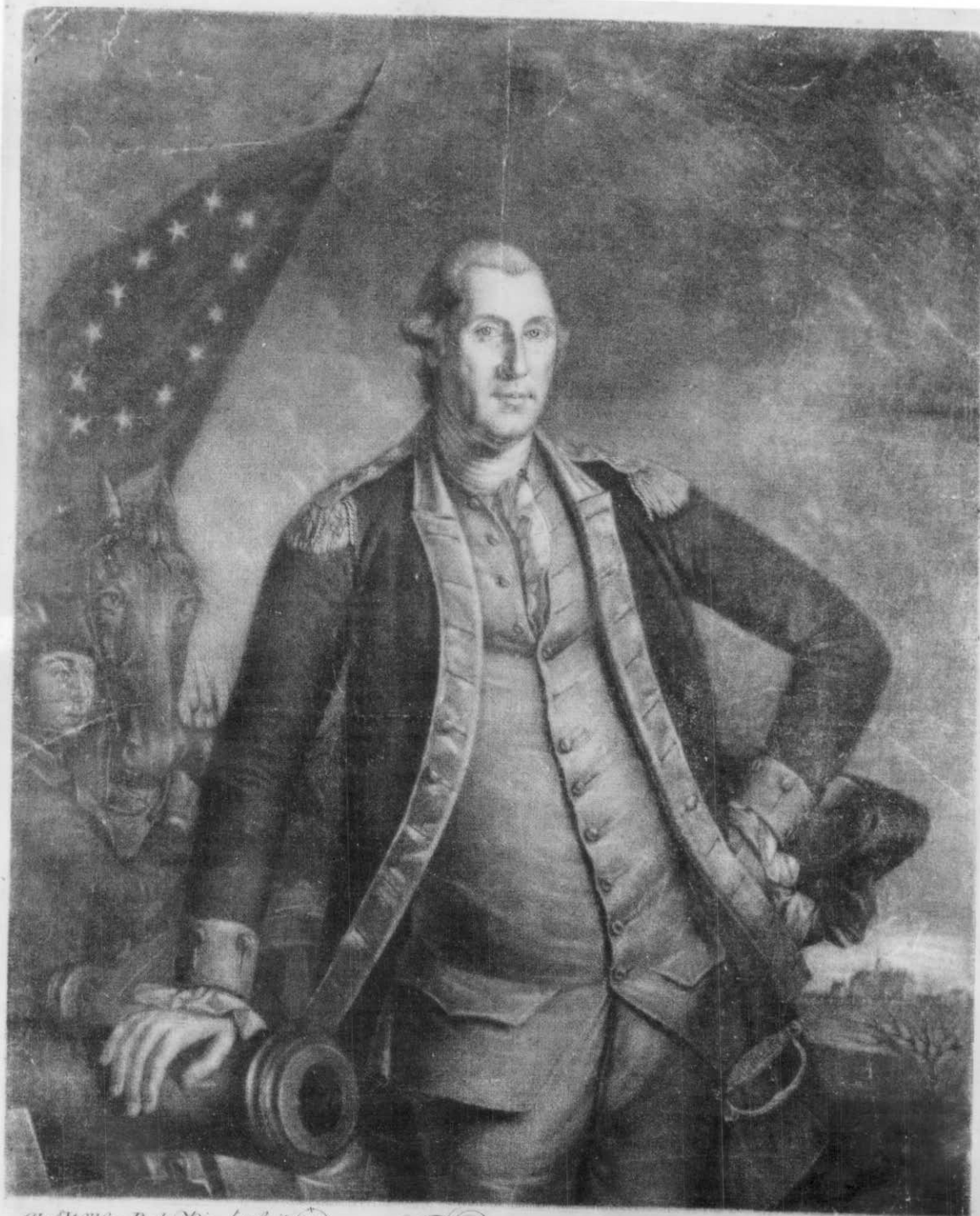


Geo. Washington
(standing & cannon)
by
Chas Willson Peale

PHILLIPS STUDIO
1237 MARKET ST.
PHILA., PA.

Fig. 1

Charles Willson Peale's full-length portrait of George Washington, 1779. The painting described by Marquis de Chastellux on his visit to the Assembly Room, State House, December 4, 1762, answers the description of this one. Photo by Phillips Studio. Courtesy of Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.



Chas. Willson Peale Pinx. et fecit 1795.

His Excellency **George Washington** Esquire Commander in
Chief of the Federal Army.

*This Plate is humbly Inscribed to the Honorable the Congress of the United States of America,
By their Obedient Servant? Chas. Willson Peale.*

Fig. 2

Charles Willson Peale's mezzotint engraving of his 1779 portrait (Fig.5) of George Washington, 1780.

This probably the engraving seen by the Prince de Braglie during a visit to the Assembly Room, State House, in August of 1782. Courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

B. Documentary Data (Green Table)

1. Aug. 8, 1778 ...He gave the Sieur Gerard his public audience. The Ceremony as follows: Our President was seated in a Mahogany armed chair on a platform raised about two feet, with large table covered with green cloth and the secretary along side of him....

Letter, Elias Boudinot to Mrs. Boudinot, Aug. 8, 1778, in Barnett, ed., Letters of Members of the Continental Congress, III, 383

2. May 9, 1782 Sir.

It is the desire of Congress that the table before the president and the tables before the Members be covered with green cloth on the day of the public Audience. Mr. Patton waits on you to receive your directions, respecting this matter.

Letter, The Secretary of Congress to the Superintendent of Finance (Robert Morris), in Barnett, Letters of Members of the Continental Congress, VI, 346

3. May 13, 1782 ...The house was arranged in the following order---The President in a chair on a platform raised two steps from the floor with a large table before him. The members of Congress in chairs on the floor to his right and left with small tables before them. The tables were all covered with green cloth....

Report, The Secretary of Congress (Charles Thomson), in Barnett, Letters of Members of the Continental Congress, VI, 348-350

4. Summary Report

We are as yet uncertain as to whether or not the furnishings of the Assembly Room on July 4, 1776, included benches, or desks, other than the two provided for the President and the Secretary.

However, there is reason to believe that the principal delegates of each of the thirteen colonies, normally, sat before small tables. One delegate, writing to his wife a few months after the Declaration of Independence, stated that he was writing in the "Congress Chamber" because he had no time to go to his lodgings. These early Congress was ribbity at the time, because the delegate was interrupted in his writing by "Mr. Hancock" who called him into the "other room" (probably the Committee Room). And because Congress was in session, it appears highly unlikely that he might have been writing at either the President's or at the Secretary's desk. Furthermore, two years later, on July 9, as the Articles of Confederation were being signed by the delegates of eight states, Samuel Adams wrote to his wife that he was at the moment working at a "table in Congress," having "just put [his] hand to the Confederation". Almost certainly, this was a delegates' table.

The earliest conclusive evidence is that on May 13, 1782, the day of the public audience for the French minister, the seating plan found in the detailed report of Charles Thomson, reveals that the members of Congress sat "with several tables before the," and that the tables were "all covered with green cloth" (see note 4). Regarding their number, we have it from de Meville's account that there were thirteen of these tables, each for one of the principal delegates (see note 5).

As to their dimensions, we have only the evidence of the
Pine and Savane paintings (Fig. 1-2), from which it should not be dif-
ficult to estimate approximate dimensions for reproducing them.

B. Documentary Data (Declarations: Tables)

1. [Oct. 7, 1776] ...I write this in Congress Chamber not having time to go to my lodgings....

[Letter, James Smith to Mrs. Eliza Smith, Oct. 7, 1776, in Janet Collection #3001, New York Public Library]

2. [Oct. 7, 1776] [Another sheet of this letter has at the bottom of the page the following postscript: "Also Mr. Hancock call[ed] me to the other room. Adieu. JS"]

[Ibid., #1605]

3. [July 9, 1778] My dear Betsy

...[Received your letter and heard you are in good health] I now work at the Table in Congress, having just put my hand to the Confederation with my Colleagues and the Delegates of seven other States---North Carolina and Georgia whose Delegates are absent have acceded to the Confederation-Mr. W. - has just obtained the Leave of Absence and is going home on account of his ill state of Health & the great weakness of his Family - He tells his wife he can scarcely sit---

Adieu my dear
S A

[Letter, Samuel Adams to Mrs. S. Adams, July 9, 1778, in Samuel Adams Papers, Hancock Collection, New York Public Library]

4. [Nov 13, 1782] ...The House was arranged in the following order--- The President in a chair on a platform raised two steps from the floor with a large table before him. The members of Congress in chairs on the floor to his right and left with small tables before them. The tables were all covered with green cloth....

[Report, The Secretary of Congress (Charles Thomson), in Purshott, Letters of Members of Continental Congress, VI, 343-350]

5. [Aug. 18(.), 1782] ...Congress meets in a large room on the ground floor [of the State House]. The chamber is large and without any ornament than a bad engraving of Montecary, one of Washington, and a copy of the Declaration of Independence. It is furnished with thirteen tables each covered with a green cloth. One of the principal representatives of each of the thirteen states sits during the session at one of these tables. The President of the Congress has his place in the middle of the hall, upon a sort of throne. The clerk is seated just before him....

[Narrative of the Prince de Broglie, 1782," translated by A. . Balch, in Magazine of American History, I, Part I (1877), Part II, 231-235]

(d) Agreed to circulate photos of the Trumble chair to dealers, and in the event that they have suitable chairs, circulate photos of such chairs to the committee, which if it deems the chair appropriate will inspect it at first hand, expenses paid.

(e) Agreed that if a chair is unpainted, but is otherwise satisfactory, we should acquire it and repaint it.

(f) Agreed that Messrs. Montgomery and Mulcahy should visit Harrisburg to ascertain whether or not all the furnishings believed to have been in Independence Hall were actually returned there by the Commonwealth in 1876.

(g) Will attempt to procure side chairs as well as distinctive Windsors in order to have tasteful variety.

(8) Delegation Tables. All agreed that the only possible approach is to procure one or two period tables of the shape, size and height shown in the Pine-Savage painting and have copies of these made to make up the balance of the 13 tables needed.

(9) Green Baize. Suggested that swatches at Winterthur and Williamsburg be consulted to get appropriate type.

(10) Speaker's Table. It was agreed that the Speaker's table, or desk, now in the Assembly Room should be expertized to determine its period, etc. Messrs. Nagel and Montgomery agreed that it appeared to be about the right period.

(11) Peale's "Washington". Decided that the importance of this painting merits making approach to getting it now, and afterwards deciding the best location for it. Agreed, too, that a copy of the engraving of this painting shall also be procured.

(12) "Montgomery" Engraving. Since little is known of this engraving other than its actual presence in the Assembly Room, it will probably be difficult to obtain a copy. However, the possibility of so doing should be explored.

(13) Yorktown Flag. Time needed for research and actually making the flag almost certainly precludes a reproduction of it being ready by May. However, we should proceed in this item as time permits.

(14) American Flags (2). All agreed that regardless of the absence of evidence regarding its presence in the Assembly Room, an American flag of the Revolutionary period should be prominent inside the room; a modern American flag outside the room, perhaps flanking the door.

V. SECRETARY'S AND SPEAKER'S TABLES

A. Secretary's Report

Both the Secretary of the second Continental Congress (Charles Thomson) and the several presidents sat before tables. The President's table stood on the dais, at the east end of the Assembly Room, and the Secretary's on the floor, a foot or so to the right of the President's.

More than this, however, we do not know. The two desks, or tables, in the Assembly Room today are ascribed by tradition to the Continental Congress. Of them, we know only this: that the so-called "President's" or "Declaration of Independence" desk was returned from Harrisburg in 1867 and on February 22 was again presented to the City of Philadelphia along with the "Windsor" chair. However, some experts believe that this desk dates from the 1790's. In respect to the other desk, nothing is known. Our first record of it is a photograph taken about 1898, showing it in the Assembly Room near the so-called "President's" table.

In spite of the limited evidence, it seems desirable and practically to reproduce the Secretary's and Speaker's tables as part of the current reconstruction program. In view of the fact that the historic tables were covered with green baize, which probably concealed most of their details (see Fig. 5), and that a fairly close approximation of their dimensions could be arrived at independently, their reproduction seems warranted. Or, if the exact details of shape, which are on hand, conform to these dimensions, they might be covered with baize and used, thereby eliminating the need for their own.

B. Documentary Sources (Secretary's and Speaker's Tables)

1. [Aug. 9, 1778] ...We gave Sieu Gerard his public audience. The Ceremony as follows: Our President was seated in a large arm and chair on a platform raised about two feet, with large table covered with green cloth and the secretary along side of him. The members were all seated round within the Bar and a large arm and chair in the middle opposite the President for the Plenipo....

[Letter, Elias Boudinot to Mrs. Boudinot, Aug. 9, 1778, in Edw. G. Linnett, ed., Letters of Members of the Continental Congress, (8 vols., Washington, 1923), VI, 363]

2. [Aug. 15, 1778] Ordered, That Mr. Poore be introduced, and a seat be prepared for him at the end of the lower table, on the President's right hand.

[Mortimer C. Ford, ed., Journals of the Continental Congress, (34 vols., Washington, 1906), XI, 79]

3. [Feb. 22, 1867] On Feb. 22, 1867, celebration of Washington's birthday was held in the Assembly Room in Independence Hall at which the so-called "Wancock chair" [Elisha W Hancock] and the "Declaration of Independence Table" were presented for gifts to the City of Philadelphia by the authorities of the State of Pennsylvania. A description and history of the two items are included in the newspaper account.

[Unidentified newspaper clipping, Feb. 23, 1867, III, 2208]

(d) Agreed to circulate photos of the Trumble chair to dealers, and in the event that they have suitable chairs, circulate photos of such chairs to the committee, which if it deems the chair appropriate will inspect it at first hand, expenses paid.

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CONGRESS VOTING INDEPENDENCE
as a guide to the refurnishing of the Assembly Room

I. Recommendations

By way of preface, the writer wishes to point out that while he does state definite conclusions, the evidence upon which they are based is in his opinion incomplete. Continuing investigation may modify or reverse some of the opinions and theories advanced here. It is unlikely, however, that the main thesis of this paper will be seriously affected by such changes.

The fundamental conclusion of the investigation of "Congress Voting Independence" is that it can serve as a guide in refurnishing the Assembly Room. The close agreement between the furnishings of the Room as shown in the painting and those described by Mr. Kurjack as a result of his documentary research is enough to establish the picture's value as an aid to refurnishing. It is, moreover, the only painting of the subject known to this investigator whose details do not come into conflict at some point with established historical data. Indeed, the amount of credence given any of its details must be measured against other documentary evidence.

II. Why We Use the Print as well as the Painting

Print and painting are in general agreement. Their differences lie in the restrictions inherent in each medium as well as in minor changes made by the artist-engraver either by design or through lack of skill. Generally, we find that the painting gives us otherwise unattainable color notes while the print clarifies the artist's intention in the painting. In the case of Windsor armchairs in the

foreground, for example, the two pictures agree. The painting establishes their color as green. While the print clarifies the number and weight of the spindles, the simplicity of the turning of the legs and stretchers. Details which might well be lost or badly defined because of the closeness of values in the painting.

III. Inventory of Objects in "Congress Voting Independence"

Object: Books
Number: 5
Source: Print only
Comments: Four of the books are close to quarto size, the fifth appears about 2 1/2" x 3 1/2". Independent research reveals the titles of eight books which were available to the Assembly.

Object: Chairs
Number: 5
Source: Print and painting
Comments: Print and painting agree substantially in the details of the chairs shown. The print, however, clarifies some details and rectifies some omissions in the painting, for example, the case of the chair in which Robert Morris is seated. The painting leaves its identity in some doubt, while the print clearly reveals it as a Windsor side chair, similar to the one in the background. The remaining two Windsor chairs are of the familiar sack-back elbow variety. The color is green of a middle intensity and rather low value. Again, independent documentation bears out the artist's fidelity to fact. For the records show that the Assembly bought Windsor chairs from Francis Trumble and comparison of a photograph of a Trumble chair show points

of agreement although the chairs in the painting display simpler turnings. The fifth chair is documented only in part; we know such a chair existed but there is no documentary evidence as to whether it was upholstered in red leather with brass tacks as the painting shows it.

Object: Tables
Number: 3
Source: Print and painting
Comments: The picture communicates little specific information about the tables. Due to the somewhat eccentric perspective, it is difficult to estimate the size of the tables beyond the fact that they seem small. It may well be that the close grouping of delegates around the tables shown does not necessarily indicate a customary seating arrangement, but is a compositional device employed by the artist to include as many portraits as possible. All details of the construction, material and style of the tables are concealed (see next item, green baize). Research confirms the presence of tables in the Assembly Room.

Object: Green Baize
Source: Print and painting
Comments: The painting shows the shade of green characteristic of baize. In the pictures the material is draped to the floor. Again, a note of caution. This may well have been the case, or it may have been Savage's means for concealing the legs (human and table) which could have turned his work into a "shin piece." Whether green

baize was used daily or employed for special occasions is also a subject for further study. Documentary research confirms the use of green baize in the Assembly Room.

Object: Writing Materials
Source: Print and painting
Comments: Documentary evidence indicates that letter-writing, the official function of the Clerk, took place in the Assembly Room. "Congress Voting Independence" exhibits a variety of writing materials, inkstand, quills, papers of assorted sizes.

* * * * *

The significance of the objects which are not shown merits additional discussion. For example, there are no visible means of heating or lighting the Assembly Room. The most likely place for heating apparatus are almost concealed by the figures in the composition, which may explain its omission. Lighting, however, seems to be a different matter. It is odd that if the crystal chandelier (which is undeniably overwhelming) were hanging in its present position, it would have escaped the notice of Savage. It is strange, too, that neither wall sconces nor candleholders appear in the picture.

The Assembly Room

A study of its representation in the Trumbull and Pine-Savage paintings of Congress Voting Independence.

I

At the outset it should be made clear that neither the aesthetic values nor the accuracy with which the event or characters are portrayed in the painting are of prime importance in this investigation. What we seek to do here is to establish the degree of literalness with which first the furnishings and accessories have been rendered, and secondly the architectural detail. Briefly, we want to know which of these paintings presents the more accurate picture of the Assembly Room as it was in 1775-1787.

In our discussion we shall generally ignore the fact that there are three versions of the Trumbull painting unless a reference to a specific one becomes pertinent to the argument. In respect to the Pine-Savage painting, references to the print may be confusing. However, if we keep in mind that all known proofs were pulled in fairly recent times from the unfinished copperplate in the Massachusetts Historical Society, it will be clear that all references must be to the present state of that plate. In view of the wide acceptance of "Congress Voting Independence" as the work begun by Robert Edge Pine and finished by Edward Savage, it will be necessary to go into some detail concerning the provenance of the painting and to establish a number of hypotheses. The writer will try to keep the reader informed where evidence ends and speculation begins. With this in mind, let us now examine the reliability of Colonel John Trumbull's "Declaration of Independence."

II

The Case for Trumbull

When Colonel John Trumbull conceived the idea of painting a series of historical pictures to preserve the great moments of the American Revolution, conditions were nearly ideal for such an undertaking.

First, many of the participants were still vigorously alive. Trumbull himself had participated in the war. He had been appointed an aide-de-camp of Washington in 1775 and continued in that capacity for a short time. (Autobiography of Col. John Trumbull, p. 22-23 Sizer ed.) Later as deputy adjutant general he had been with General Gates at Ticonderoga and with him had gone south into Pennsylvania. His acquaintance with the prominent figures of the day was wide. As the son of the legendary "Brother Jonathan," Revolutionary Governor of Connecticut, he had a claim on the affections of all patriots. His eldest brother Joseph was the commissary general, while another brother Jonathan, was "pay master of the forces for the New York department" from 1775, a secretary of Washington and a member of the first, second and third congresses under the new Constitution. So that Colonel Trumbull by his own and his family associations was in a position to know and understand the events he wished to portray. Furthermore, Colonel Trumbull was no mere craftsman. He was a man of broad cultural background, the recipient of a degree from Harvard (Ibid. p. 11), and later the vice president of the New York Historical Society. (Ibid p. 355).

Thus in point of time, in family and educational background, in the very bend and inclination of his mind, Colonel Trumbull would seem to embody the ideal qualities of a historian whose chosen medium was paint and canvas.

In London under the tutelage of Benjamin West, Trumbull painted "Battle of Bunker's Hill" and "Death of General Montgomery, in the Attack of Quebec." Both pictures were finished in 1786; and Colonel Trumbull was embarked on a forty year course of triumphs and disasters in his attempt to create a pictorial history of the American Revolution.

These first two paintings of the series were shown to Jefferson certainly, and probably to Adams. It was with the aid of Adams and Jefferson that Trumbull selected the other subjects for his series. The only painting of this series with which we are immediately concerned is the "Declaration of Independence" since it purports to show the Assembly Room of the State House of Pennsylvania in 1776.

Our question: Is the Trumbull painting a true and accurate picture of the Assembly Room in July of 1776? He has, as far as this writer can determine, never made any claim to have seen the room during the Revolutionary period. And indeed while his Reminiscences place him in Pennsylvania briefly in 1776, they do not specifically mention in Philadelphia. In his own words "He crossed the Delaware at Easton and marched through Bethlehem to Newton, where he joined the commander in chief, a few days before his glorious success at Trenton. News had just been received that a detachment of the enemy had obtained possession of Newport and Rhode Island, and General Arnold and myself were ordered to hasten without delay to that quarter." (Autobiography Reminiscences & Letters of John Trumbull 1941 ed. p. 37.) Indeed we find no evidence to place Colonel Trumbull in Philadelphia before 1790; and his Reminiscences for the period make it quite clear that he confined his activities to New England until his departure for London in May 1780.

We must, therefore, conclude that Colonel Trumbull could not have seen the Assembly Room before 1790.

Since 1790 is the earliest that Colonel Trumbull could have seen the room, the following question arises: Did he paint the room into his composition prior to 1790? And this indeed seems to be the case. For the painting begun in 1785, must have been fairly complete by 1790, since by November 1786, Trumbull writes (Ibid. p.147) "I returned to London [from the Continent]....I resumed my labors, however, and...arranged carefully the composition of the Declaration of Independence, and prepared it for receiving portraits, as I might meet the distinguished men who were present at that illustrious scene." In view of this statement and recalling that the first two paintings in the series were finished in less than 2 years it seems probable that Trumbull completed "The Declaration of Independence" except for the portrait heads. This viewpoint is further supported by his painting in Jefferson and Adams before leaving Europe for New York.

There remains of course the possibility that Trumbull altered details of his background during his stay in Philadelphia. (His Reminiscences place him there in May of 1790 or that year) (Ibid. p. 164) and Jacob Hiltzheimer records that on December 10, he had breakfast with Mr. John Trumbull (Diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer p. 165.) A newspaper article by Col. Trumbull in the N. Y. Daily Advertiser, October 22, 1818, states that he spent the winters of 1792 and 93 in Philadelphia. Hence, it would seem that he had ample opportunity to see the Assembly Room and make such alterations as he thought advisable. However, the similarity of the small original at Yale and the compositional sketch and floor plan done in France in 1786 by Trumbull

and Jefferson respectively seem to prove that Trumbull made no alterations in his original painting. It seems unlikely that he would be inclined to change the details of the room since he wrote to Adams in December, 1817, "I preserve faithfully the costume of the day and the architecture of the room, which I very much regret to find has lately been destroyed by that restless spirit of Change, which so much prevails in this country. (Trumbull Letterbook, Dec. 16, 1817 as quoted by John Hill Morgan.) Since we have no recorded visit of Trumbull to Philadelphia between the winter of 1793 and 1817 and he was out of the country much of the time, it seems probable that "lately" refers to the visits of the early 1790's. And in this he is quite correct, as the research of Historian Dennis Kurjack, and others, clearly indicates the outlay of considerable sums for work on the State House in the 1777-1790 period, although more changes were made in the next thirty years. In either case, if Trumbull was referring to the room of 1790 or of 1817, it is unlikely that he would have thought the details of a room which had suffered from "the restless spirit of Change" merited much consideration.

If, as we have seen, it is unlikely that Trumbull painted even the altered Assembly Room from life, what were the sources of his picture?

Speaking of his visit with Jefferson, Trumbull states "... and during my visit I began the composition of the Declaration with the assistance of his information and advice. (Autobiography Reminiscences and letters of John Trumbull 1841 ed. p. 96.) As a further support of the statement that Jefferson helped Trumbull with his Declaration of Independence, there is at the Yale Gallery a sketch

already referred to called the "Declaration of Independence, Philadelphia, July 4, 1776, preliminary sketch 'First idea of the Declaration of Independence, Paris, Sept. 1786' pencil sketch by Trumbull and ink sketch by Thomas Jefferson, 'done by Mr. Jefferson to convey an idea of the Room in which congress sat...' (1st Silliman Sale No. 9) Yale 1926." The compositional sketch is very likely the finished painting. There are two other similar sketches both in the archives of the Historical Society, dated by TheodoreSizer as 1790. The present writer suspects from their similarity to the 1786 sketch that they may well have been done earlier, although the evidence is too scanty to produce a definite conclusion. At any rate, from a floor plan drawn from memory by Jefferson and from whatever verbal description may have been added, Trumbull composed his picture. It is well to remember, however, that both Jefferson and Trumbull had architectural interests and talents. Trumbull is credited with a meeting house in New Lebanon, Conn., The First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia and, of course, the Gallery at Yale. Indeed, Edmund Burke, on the occasion of Trumbull's second visit to England advised the young painter to adopt architecture as a profession (Autobiography of Col. John Trumbull: Sizer ed. p. 34.) So we see that Trumbull was in a position to interpret Jefferson's description more readily than the average painter.

We have here an apparently ideal situation for producing a picture of the Assembly Room in the collaboration of two men, both with architectural knowledge, one who had seen the room time and time again at the period of its greatest importance, the other an artist at the height of his creative powers. But again we run quite literally

into a brick wall. The wall in question is the west wall of the Assembly Room which Trumbull shows pierced with two doors. Architectural evidence (the result of Horace Wells Sellers' investigation during the restoration of the 1890's) shows quite unmistakably that only one, a center door, existed in the room at the time. Early floor plans and the plan for the reception of Gerard support the physical evidence of one door, and clearly destroy the value of Trumbull's painting as an architectural document.

It is, I think, a matter of considerable interest that many people who lived in the 1776-77 period were still alive when the painting was completed or sat for Trumbull when he painted their portraits into the composition of the Declaration of Independence. The showing of the painting in Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore excited considerable comment. A search of many of the newspapers of the period is enlightening in its reflection of the attitude of the people and the painter towards the picture, as well as towards the broader field of historical accuracy.

Most of the newspaper reports and correspondence reveal that the main interest was in the accuracy of the portraits of those who voted for independence. Writers with an interest in history debated the inclusion or exclusion of individual members of the Continental Congress on the grounds of their presence or absence on July 4, 1776 or of their being or not being signers of the document. Further discussion involved parliamentary procedure or the relationship between the importance of an individual signer in the composition and his service to his country. As example, Samuel Adams Wells' discussion in the

Boston papers about the relatively obscure position of Sam Adams in the Trumbull painting. One could cull from the reports enough excerpts to prove or disprove the merits of the painting, they range from "a bauble" (Boston Patriot and Daily Chronicle, Dec. 11, 1818) to "...as a work of art holds highest rank and vies in excellence with productions of the kind in any age or nation" (Democratic Press Jan. 21, 1819, Phila.) One would expect that when the picture was exhibited in the State House in Philadelphia, directly across the hall from the room in which the action took place, there would be considerable discussion about the rendering of the room itself. However, investigation to date reveals only one concrete mention of the physical appearance. This is a rather cryptic remark by Historicus (possibly A.P. Norris, Jr.) in the Daily Advertiser (Jan. 19, 1819) he says:

It is, however, more materially to be regretted in this national representation of the most interesting transaction in the brief and recent history of United America, that the Apartment in which it is represented, is not that in which it actually took place. It is well known here, to have occurred in the eastern Chamber of the State House, the former Hall of the Assembly of Pennsylvania.-- An Apartment that was then fitted up with every appropriate ornament of the Corinthian order, (though it has since been reduced to the fashionable nakedness of modern finishing, or rather want of finish.

There remains a doubt in this writer's mind as to Historicus' meaning. Is he regretting that the painting could not be displayed in the eastern or Assembly Room or is he charging Trumbull with having painted the wrong room?

The newspaper evidence remains inconclusive, except that it indicates great interest in the painting coupled with a curious disregard for the historical accuracy of the representation of the setting of the event.

Let us now briefly review Trumbull's attitude towards his painting. He was far from the conscienceless opportunism that characterized many printers and painters of topical scenes. He devoted himself wholeheartedly to gathering what he considered the significant data, the portraits for example or the color of the uniforms. We have some of his own statements bearing on the historical accuracy of his paintings.

He says in a letter (June 11, 1789) to Jefferson "no one can come after me to divide the honor of truth and authenticity, however easily I may hereafter be surpassed in elegance." (Autobiography, Reminiscences & Letters of John Trumbull, 1841 edition, p. 158.) In speaking of the "Declaration of Independence" he says further: (Ibid, p. 416)

The room is copied from that in which Congress held their sessions at the time, such as it was before the spirit of innovation laid unhallowed hands upon it, and violated its venerable walls by modern improvement as it is called.... In fact nothing has been neglected by the artist that was in his power to render this a faithful memorial of the great event.

In reply to criticism of the painting, Trumbull published in the New York Daily Advertiser for Thursday, October 22, 1818, a long description of his procedure in historical painting; for our purpose the pertinent part is;

[During the sessions of Congress in New York, Trumbull] made it his duty and his business to ask the advice and criticism of all who did him honor to sit for him; and...the Declaration of Independence...were very much advanced under the eye, with the criticism and with the approbation of men who had been the great actors in the several scenes.

It is, perhaps less, important here to recall that although the artist speaks of the room as it was before the "spirit of innovation laid unhallowed hands upon it," he could not have seen it until 14 years

after the event he depicts occurred, than, it is necessary to have in mind Trumbull's understanding of historical truth and his purpose in making the painting. We must remember that in the study of history, scientific truth, unbiased documented fact, is a relatively recent development dating from the German influence of the late nineteenth century. Trumbull, on the other hand, worked in a period when history consisted to a large degree of "recollections, personal accounts, gossip and hearsay." Nor was historical painting in any better case. Allegory played his part. A hero must be a hero even if he had to be depicted with laurel and in a toga to prove it. Against such a background it is apparent that Trumbull must have felt justifiably proud of the authenticity of his presentation, although in his own words he states things which make modern historians shudder (Ibid, p. 416).

In order to give some variety to his composition, he found it necessary to depart from the usual practice of reporting an act, and has made the whole committee of five advance to the table of the president, to make their report, instead of having the chairman rise in his place for the purpose....The artist took the liberty of embellishing the background by suspending upon the wall military flags and trophies; such as had been taken from the enemy at St Johns, Chambly, etc and probably actually placed in the hall.

In this last instance Trumbull showed considerable insight since the Chambly trophies at any rate were received by the Continental Congress.

If I may be permitted to indulge on speculation, it seems increasingly evident that for Colonel Trumbull the room and its accessories were important only as props and background, a stage set for the main action. This main action was ever uppermost in his mind. And he states his purpose clearly in his catalogue of 1841: "To preserve the resemblance of the men who were the authors of this memorable act, was an essential object of this painting" and further "Important difficulties

presented themselves to the artist at the onset,...Should he regard the fact of having been actually present in the room on the 4th of July indispensable? Should he admit those only who were in favor of, and reject those who were opposed to the act? Where a person was dead, and no authentic portrait could be obtained should he admit ideal heads? These were the questions on which Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson were consulted" (It is worth noting that he doesn't list as a "difficult" painting in England an American room he had never seen.) Add to these statements the evidence in the Autobiography and elsewhere of trips ranging along much of the Atlantic seaboard and parts of Europe in search of authentic portraits for the historical series, and I feel it is inescapable that Colonel Trumbull's real interest was in the dramatis personae and that the background was just that---background. This despite the fact that he did not go to the trouble to sketch the surrender field at Yorktown and other places if he was in the vicinity.

It might well be in exploring Trumbull's attitude towards historical painting to mention briefly some of his other paintings as evidence of that attitude. It is indeed unfair to Trumbull's reputation that this sort of a report must be written without balancing his many merits against his few defects and in fact, our viewpoint is necessarily warped when we consider any work of art from a view entirely divorced from the purpose of the artist. However, to halt the digression, there is evidence to show that Trumbull painted Cornwallis himself in the act of surrendering at Yorktown when it was well known that he deputized General O'Hara for that distasteful task. In the face of criticism the face of Cornwallis was altered and he was listed as General Lincoln in the key that accompanied the engraving. (John Hill Morgan in "Paintings By Trumbull at Yale University" discusses this vexing problem, p. 604.) Dunlap in his

History of the Arts of Design (1918 edition), p. 34ff, severely criticizes the historical accuracy of the Bunker Hill painting. The writer has not made a critical examination of the circumstances but while Dunlap is extremely unsympathetic to Trumbull personally, he seems just when he deals with the Colonel's works. Dunlap continues more generally with a criticism of Trumbull's attitude towards historical painting. In justice to both men, it must be said that Dunlap gives Trumbull full credit for preserving the portraits of so many characters in the Revolutionary drama.

When we examine the "Declaration" in detail, we find many instances that seem at the very least questionable. First there is the matter of the doors already discussed. Secondly, the platform as shown by Trumbull has three steps. We know from diagrams and written description that it had only two. In the Yale original the platform is uncovered, while the picture in the rotunda of the Capitol a rug covers it. If Trumbull were conscious of the importance of accuracy in details, isn't it reasonable to expect consistency from him? Again, over the doorways in the Yale picture there is some sort of entablature indicated, while the corresponding space in the Capitol version is unornamented. In the costumes of figures, the apparently high collars and padded shoulders lead one to believe that Colonel Trumbull painted his characters as he found them in the late 80's or 90's without questioning the possibility of a change in fashion. The chair in which the President, Hancock, sits looks of a later style than that likely used in 1776 and bears a remarkable similarity to one shown in "Washington's Resignation." To be authentic, the chair should date prior to 1776, probably at least from 1750. However the combination of upswep arm and turned tapered and reeded leg would scarcely have been produced in America before 1790.

When we consider the Trumbull "Declaration of Independence," in the Wadsworth Athenaeum, we find that the whole concept of the background has been changed. The two doors of the earlier version have been replaced by a single door crowned with a triangular pediment; the walls are enriched with moldings; the entire entablature has been drastically altered and the whole appearance of the room now reflects the Ionic order - and is in several ways similar to the treatment of the East wall in the Pine-Savage painting.

It is interesting to speculate upon the motives which urged Colonel Trumbull to make such sweeping changes. For when he had finished the Capitol version of the "Declaration" about 1819 he seemed perfectly satisfied with the authenticity of the interior. Now in 1831 he has abruptly repudiated his former position by employing a completely new background. Could there have been severe criticism of the earlier pictures which forced the dauntless Colonel into a belated retreat, as happened in the Surrender at Yorktown picture already discussed? Was he perhaps influenced by the use of the Ionic order in the Pine-Savage "Congress Voting Independence"? There is some support for this theory in the letter written to Trumbull by the son of Edward Savage offering the Colonel his father's unfinished copperplate of "Congress Voting Independence." However more research will be required in this interesting twilight period of Colonel Trumbull's life before any theory can be invested with the slightest degree of validity.

Nor is it absolutely necessary that we resolve these questions at this point. For the Athenaeum version as historical document is already invalidated by the passage of time. By 1831, the immediacy which makes an eyewitness report of the event valuable and valid, had long since

lost. The doubtful best that could be said for the painting as evidence is that it was based on the recollections of events long past---and such memories are notoriously weak and unreliable.

There remains, however, the distinct possibility that this Athenaeum picture of the Declaration of Independence contains information of considerable historic interest about the restorations, proposed or accomplished in the period 1820-1830 of the State House. And again further intensive research is needed to discover not only the motives for the changes Trumbull made but also for the information on which he based these changes. Indeed, the "Declaration of Independence" in the Hadsworth Athenaeum is one of the most provocative and challenging of all Trumbull's historical paintings.

To sum up the case for Trumbull, I feel first of all that further study of the paintings would be rewarding. Trumbull, it cannot be gainsaid, has made a great contribution to the iconography of the Revolution. Historians and others will always be in debt to him for his tireless efforts to preserve the features of important actors in the great events he portrays. His small canvas contains some of the finest miniature painting the writer has been privileged to see. However, while no tribute can be too high for the Colonel's skill and integrity in the matter of the portraits, the unfortunate fact is that the original material he may have gathered for his background and detail seems to have suffered rearrangement and alteration designed to aid the composition or underline the mood of the picture. Such a maneuver, while legitimate and almost mandatory from an artistic viewpoint, does great violence to the historical integrity of his work and makes suspect any reliance put upon it as evidence in matters of authenticity.

III The Case for Pine-Savage

Our knowledge of the painting "Congress Voting Independence" is limited almost entirely to the writings of its discoverer, Charles Henry Hart. Too much praise cannot be given the late Mr. Hart for his discovery and his pioneering work in the study of this important American painting. The present writer will, in the course of this discussion, differ with Mr. Hart on several points. He does so reluctantly, however, appreciating that without Hart's basic contribution, little or nothing might be known of the painting today.

In two articles ("The Congress Voting Independence," Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biography, vol. 29, p. 1 ff. and "Edward Savage Painter and Engraver and his unfinished copper-plate of "The Congress Voting Independence," Proc. of Mass. Historical Society, Jan. 1905), Hart told what he knew about the history of the painting. According to him, "Until a decade and a half ago [1890] [the picture] had been so lost sight of as to be virtually unknown, when, in a dark corner of the old Boston Museum on Tremont Street, the writer [Hart] discovered the painting of The Congress Voting Independence, begun by Robert Edge Pine and finished by Edward Savage, now in the hall of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania."

His basic premise, that the painting was begun by Pine and finished by Savage, he then proceeded to expand, as follows. Pine came to America from England sometime during the summer of 1704. By November 15, 1704 he had been given the use of the Assembly Room of the State House, and so had ample opportunity to paint a truly authentic background for "Congress Voting Independence."

Pine died in November 1783, and Hart quotes from the inventory of his estate the titles of several historical paintings: "The American Congress Voting Independence, Capture of Lord Cornwallis and the Colors laid before Congress, General Washington Resigning his Commission to Congress, General Washington under the Character of Fortitude." Hart assumes that the painting he found in the old Boston Museum is Pine's unfinished canvas, and continues to trace its history.

Quoting Hart:

After [Pine's] death his wife...petitioned the Legislature to be allowed to dispose of her husband's pictures at lottery. ...[The project failed.] The greatest number [of Pine's paintings] being purchased by Daniel Bowen, proprietor with Edward Savage, of Savage and Bowen's New York Museum...which Washington visited September 14, 1789. Later it was in Greenwich Street....Just when the sale to Bowen and Savage took place I do not know but it must have been subsequent to January 7, 1794....In 1795 the New York Museum was removed to Boston and called the Columbian Museum.

The Museum with the greater portion of its collections, was destroyed by fire January 15, 1803. [In 1807 the rebuilt museum was burned a second time.] It was [again] rebuilt and in 1825 passed to the New England Museum. Fifteen years later [1840] the New England Museum became the property of Moses Kimball, who maintained it as the Boston Museum for more than half a century....In the fall of 1892 he began the dispersal of the museum collection...and soon afterwards the writer acquired the painting of The Congress Voting Independence.

That, by and large, is the tenor of Hart's argument. He adduces further support for it from the presence in the picture of portraits derived from Pine originals. He is especially emphatic about the sensitively painted Franklin which he ascribes to Pine as contrasted with the crude figure of Morris as an exemplar of Savage's technique. He sums up his case with "It is my opinion therefore that the composition and details of the picture are entirely by Robert Edge Pine, painted in the very room in which the event commemorated was enacted...."

Now, let us examine Mr. Hart's argument. As a whole it is extremely logical and wholly plausible. Yet, when we inquire into some of the details, it loses strength.

First let us consider the matter of the fires. The first fire, that of 1803, which Hart admits destroyed the greater portion of the collection is reported thus in the Massachusetts Spy for January 19, 1803: "...in one hour the whole square of buildings, viz the Museum with all its valuable collections and improved as the dwelling house of Mr. William Doyle, the house occupied by Mrs. Pollard...fell prey to the devouring element." It is, of course, possible that in this fire and in the one four years later, someone saved this probably unfinished painting in preference to some of the hundred or more other pictures in the Museum, but it does seem unlikely. The writer has in the course of this study examined a number of broadsides of the Columbia Museum. None of them list "Congress Voting Independence," but they do imply that little, if any, of the museum's collection was saved from the fires. Of the 123 paintings listed in a broadside before the fire, only four of the 29 listed after the fire bear any resemblance to those in the original collection. Further, the physical examination of the painting, made recently by the National Park Service Museum Division revealed no conclusive evidence of its having been exposed to fire.

Closely linked to the possibility of the painting's survival of its ordeal by fire is the question of size. "Congress Voting Independence" is by most standards a small painting (approx. 26 7/8" x 19 1/2"), a size which lends itself nicely to tucking under one's arm while escaping a burning building. However, we can and must raise

the question whether the picture Pine painted was such a small one. Evidence again points in the opposite direction. Many of the paintings Pine did prior to his coming to America were life size, including his two prize-winners "Canute Reproving his Couriers" and "The Surrender at Calais." Without listing the individual pictures, so many of them being large suggests a relationship between size and importance in Pine's mind. This supposition is supported by Rembrandt Peale's account of a visit, with his father, to Pine's studio where he saw "walls covered with large paintings his own works in history and portrait...my imagination pictured a giant of art, but...I was astonished to find so small a man could produce such mighty works." (Lester C. Edwards, Artists of America, p. 202). Again, Washington, writing in 1785 about Pine's historical series, says "the pieces, which will be large..." (George Washington to George William Fairfax, June 30, 1785, Writings of Washington, edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, vol. 29, p. 163). Then, too, Pine writes to Washington in 1785, "I have been some time at Annapolis painting the Portraits of Patriots, Legislators, Heroes and Beauties to adorn my large pictures...." (December 16, 1785, in Washington Papers, Library of Congress).

To labor this important point further. The Pennsylvania Packet of December 25, 1790, carries an article on Pine's lottery in which, again, the size of his pictures is stressed. "His principal object was to record in eight very large historical pictures the principal events of the late American war;..." In the same newspaper, January 11, 1790, an advertisement of the Pine Lottery appears which is even more explicit. It lists among other paintings the "Allegory

of America" as 9 feet 6 inches by six feet 10 inches, the "Garrick Reciting an Ode to Shakespeare," as eight feet by seven feet, and others of similar dimensions. Daniel Bowen advertised his purchase "of all the Large and Elegant Paintings executed by the late celebrated Mr. Robert Edge Pine" (Pennsylvania Packet, August 17, 1793). In another advertisement, after Bowen had moved his museum to Boston, he mentions "100 paintings, Some of which are 8 by 10 feet,...they being original pieces, painted by the late celebrated Robert E. Pine."

It is of course possible that the painting in question is a study sketch for an intended larger work, but internal evidence makes this highly unlikely. If this were in fact a study sketch, which is fundamentally a device by which the artist arranges his composition, it is improbable that Pine would go to the trouble of reducing portraits he had already made life size to miniatures and then again have to enlarge them again for the finished composition.

It is also noteworthy, if unfortunate, that while Hart can and does document Pine's occupancy of the State House and his production of an unfinished painting, "Congress Voting Independence," there is no documentation of anything other than the subject. Hence, there is no certainty that the painting we are studying is the one that Pine started. Nor can the fact that many of the heads in the painting are based on known portraits by Pine be considered conclusive proof that he had a hand in the painting. Any painter could conceivably copy Pine's originals almost as readily as Pine could himself.

Another pivotal point in Hart's thesis, that Savage finished Pine's painting, hinges to a great extent on Edward Savage's partnership with Daniel Bowen, which supposedly provided Savage with that

opportunity. Hart says "the sale to Bowen and Savage...must have been subsequent to January 7, 1794...." (Pa. Mag. Hist. & Biog., vol. 29, p. 9, 1950). We have seen above that Bowen was advertising his purchase of Pine's paintings as early as August 17, 1793. Savage was still in London as late as October 6, 1793, as his letter to Washington attests. Nor is there any evidence that Savage reached Philadelphia much earlier than July 24, 1795, when he advertised the Panoram there (Aurora General Advertiser, July 26, 1795). By April 21, 1795 Bowen had closed his Museum in Philadelphia (Federal Gazette, April 17, 1794), and by early summer he was at 75 Broad Street in New York City (George P. McKay, A Register of Painters, Engravers, etc. in New York City, 1633-1820). December 24, 1795 (Mass. Mercury, December 29, 1795) finds Bowen opening his Columbian Museum at the head of the Mall in Boston. Savage was during this period and up until 1801 in Philadelphia (Phila. Directory lists his name in 1801, New York Directory, spring of 1801, also lists Savage). Again, a letter to Jefferson on March 1 places him in New York where he engaged in a considerable variety of museum enterprises until he opened the New York Museum in Boylston Hall, Boston, in 1812 (Art in America, v. 40, 1952: Louisa Dresser). By 1805, Bowen's name no longer appears in the Boston directory. The exact time of Bowen's reappearance in Philadelphia is not clear nor does it seem too important, for there is no evidence to connect him with Savage during his New York period. It thus appears unlikely that Savage and Bowen had a joint museum enterprise in 1795 as Hart suggests, or that Savage ever had an opportunity to complete Pine's unfinished painting.

If Pine didn't paint the picture "Congress Voting Independence," the question arises "Who did?" We may never know---but the evidence overwhelmingly favors Edward Savage. To establish this point, let us briefly review the evidence.

- 1892-3 - Hart discovers the painting in the Boston Museum.
- 1847 - In a manuscript "Catalogue of the Paintings etc. of the Boston Museum" number 27 is "Signers of the Declaration of Independence and a view of the Hall where it was adopted: E. Savage."
- 1811 - (The following exchange of letters between Edward Savage, the painter's son, and Col. John Trumbull was, as far as the present writer knows, first published by C. H. Hart.)

Boston, April 11, 1818

Sir

I take the liberty to write to you concerning the print of Congress '76 which my Father [sic] (late Edward Savag) had merely completed. the same subject I understand you are about Publishing. as the one will hurt the other I do propose selling the Plate and Paper to you on liberal conditions, which I wish you to name in your letter if you see fit to write on the subject. the Plate is now in a situation that it may be Finished in a few weeks

Yours etc, etc

Edw. Savage

Col Trumbull

P.S. direct yours to E.S. Boston

New York 30th April 1818

Mr. Ed. Savage

Sir

Your Fav. of the 11th offering me the plate and painting prepared by your Father of the Congress of 1776, came duly to hand. My painting of the subject was begun more than 30 years ago and all the heads were soon after secured, My composition is also nearly completed; so that the works of Mr. Savage cannot be of any possible use to me. My copper-plate cannot be finished in less than 2 or 3 years, so that as yours is nearly ready I shall not interfere with your publication

I am Sir your obt servt
J.T.

- 1809-13 - He [Savage] remained at my room...to copy a portrait of Roger Sherman...[used in "Congress Voting Independence"] (Reminiscences of the Rev. Geo Allen of Worcester, p. 55)
- 1803 - Savage writes Jefferson "the Print of the Declaration of Independence, which I intend to finish as Soone as Possable...." (Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress, vol. 129, p. 22327)
- 1802 - January 29 "Warm cloudy drizzly rain, Sat for my Portrait by Mr Savage in order to represent the Congress when passing the Act of Independence. "Diary of Robert Treat Paine," quoted by Louisa Dresser in Art in America, vol. 40, 1942.
- 1800 - A New Exhibition "...together with some original American Historical Paintings..." from Savage's advertisement in the Federal Gazette, April 3, 1800.
- 1800 - Savage is listed in the Philadelphia Directory as "historical painter South 4th bet. Chestnut and Walnut."

Savage is not generally regarded as an historical painter, and indeed it was not his prime occupation. Yet we do find him listed in the Directory as a "historical painter" and advertising "original American Historical Paintings" as early as 1800. We know further from Robert Treat Paine's diary that Savage was working on a "Declaration of Independence" as early as 1802.

One might speculate that Savage started the painting earlier, perhaps while living at South 4th Street, just a block away from the State House. This supposition is strengthened by the difficulties involved in carrying such a group portrait to completion at that period. The artist had no morgue of photographic clippings on which to base his likeness. He had either to find the live subject and persuade him to pose, or copy another artist's portrait or a print. The number of portraits reminiscent of other painters in

the picture now under study suggest that Savage may well have taken advantage of Pine's earlier effort to collect heads for his picture. Pine had a golden opportunity for such "head-hunting" with the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787. The portrait of Benjamin Franklin, which Hart singles out as "unquestionably from the hand of Pine" (Pa. Mag. Hist. & Biog., vol. 29, p. 12) is, according to Charles Coleman Sellers based on a silhouette done by Joseph Sanson in 1790, three years after Pine's death. All of which leads this writer to conclude that Savage began his painting in Philadelphia earlier than the first documented reference to it (1802), and took advantage of the wealth of portrait material in that city.

Again, since Pine never finished his "Congress Voting Independence," and since Col. Trumbull's venture in the field extended over a period of at least 30 years, it seems reasonable to assume that Savage must have started his picture well before 1803, to be able to write in that year to Jefferson concerning "one of my Proposals for Publishing the Print of the Declaration of Independence which I intend to finish as Soone as Possable...." (Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress, vol. 129, p. 22327). Another telling link between Savage and the picture is the exchange of letters between the artist's son and Col. John Trumbull in 1818, shortly after Edward Savage's death. The copperplate referred to, now in the Massachusetts Historical Society, was obviously done after the painting and is of almost the exact size. This can hardly be an accidental coincidence. Savage was following a customary procedure when he made his painting and plate the same size. Trumbull did the same thing, as did Birch, Kramel and others. It is interesting, too, to note

that Trumbull's reply rejects "the plate and painting" although no painting was offered, which strongly suggests that he knew of a Savage painting of that subject.

If Savage did paint "Congress Voting Independence," as we are inclined to believe on the basis of the evidence presented above, is it sufficiently reliable a historical document to use as a basis for the refurnishing program? In this writer's opinion, it is.

Of course no single document can tell us all we want to know with complete reliability. Any document can contain errors; or we can misinterpret parts of it. Even if "Congress Voting Independence" could be traced no further than Hart's discovery of it in 1892, it agrees so completely with the documentary evidence that it must be considered a source of prime importance.

Actually, however, the writer believes that the picture was painted by Savage, that Savage had first hand experience with the room, and that he had the opportunity to know the type of furnishings in it. Moreover, the internal evidence of the picture itself supports this viewpoint. It is not (as Pine would probably have painted it) a dramatic or allegorical presentation. It is a matter of fact statement of what he apparently saw. It could have been any group of eighteenth-century legislators talking over a proposal to widen a street. None of the trappings of allegory point to the importance of the event. Liberty does not break her shackles in the corner of the Assembly Room while crippled Commerce limps through the door. Indeed, there isn't a laurel leaf or toga in the

whole composition. The point I think is clear, and important. The painting itself looks genuine because of its very matter-of-factness.

Further, the writer feels that since Savage intended to market the composition with a wide distribution as a print, and unlike Col. Trumbull had considerable experience in publishing prints, he would have been extremely careful not to have any false notes or errors which might jar the sensibilities of actual participants or others who had lived at the time of the event portrayed.

To sum up. On the basis of the evidence here presented--- however incomplete that evidence is---the writer is led to conclude that "Congress Voting Independence," was painted by Edward Savage during the period 1796-1817, and that it presents as true a picture of the Assembly Room as we are likely to ever find. As such, it can well serve as a basis for its refurnishing.

February 8, 1955

To: Superintendent

From: Chief Park Historian

Subject: Refurnishing Advisory Committee Meeting in New York,
January 21, 1955

Friday, January 21, 1955, a formal meeting of the Refurnishing Advisory Committee and responsible Park Service officials was held at the Colony Club in New York City. The meeting was held at this time and place in order to arrive at as many decisions as possible before the departure of Mrs. Crowninshield for a 90-day world cruise. All members of the committee---Mrs. Crowninshield, Mr. C. Nagel, and Mr. C. Montgomery---were present, as were N.P.S. Chief Historian Kahler, and N.P.S. Museum Division Chief Lewis from the Washington Office, and Chief Park Historian Nelligan, Resident Architect Grossman, Supervising Park Historian Kurjack, and Museum Specialist Mulcahy from Independence.

The following matters were then taken up and decisions made as follows:

(1) Whether or not Chief Historian Kahler should continue to serve as chairman of this and future formal meetings. It was agreed that he should do so, and that Mr. Montgomery should serve as chairman of the Advisory Committee.

(2) Attendance of a representative of the General Federation of Women's Clubs "sitting-in" on future formal meetings. All were agreed that this would be most appropriate, and would serve a useful purpose in keeping the Federation apprised of the progress of the refurnishings project, the problems involved and the methods adopted for their solution.

(3) Refurnishings Reference Handbook. Dr. Nelligan explained that the contents, format, and organization of the handbook was designed to facilitate the work of the committee and the N.P.S. staff members primarily responsible for the refurnishing project by gathering under one cover all the pertinent information, documentary and otherwise, regarding each item of furnishing. By means of the loose-leaf binder, additional material can be incorporated from time to time, so that ultimately the handbook itself will be a historical record of prime importance since it will embody all the information, proposals and decisions in connection with the project. All agreed that it was a practical method of maintaining control over and facilitating the use of the multitudinous mass of material pertaining to the project. Dr. Nelligan also pointed out the prime significance of the extremely thorough study made of the Pine-Savage painting, "Congress Voting Independence," by Mr. Mulcahy.

(4) Bar or rail. Mr. Grossman went over the historical evidence on this item with the committee, then showed it the preliminary studies he had prepared for such a railing. Everyone agreed that his approach was highly satisfactory and appropriate, recommended that he proceed with it and take up the subject again with the committee when his design has been approved by the Service.

(5) Penn Coat-of-Arms

The committee, after reviewing the historical evidence regarding the presence in the Assembly Room of this item as presented by Mr. Kurjack, agreed that it was an appropriate item for the refurnishings program. It agreed, too, that it should be carved unless future study proves definitely it was painted on a wooden panel.

However, since the size and position of the coat-of-arms above the Speaker's chair hinges to a considerable degree on the architectural treatment of the paneling, etc. of this end of the room (as explained by Mr. Grossman), Mr. Nagel suggested that the restoration of this item be deferred until a firm decision has been reached regarding the restoration of the broken pediment seen in the Pine-Savage painting. Consequently, the committee recommended that the architectural research on the room be continued, and that until a definite conclusion is reached regarding this matter, that Mr. Lewis' suggestion that a plaster cast of the coat-of-arms be displayed but not carved or installed be followed.

(6) "Rising Sun" Chair. The committee agreed that the historical evidence justifies the retention of this chair in the historic scene in the Assembly Room, where it will be in pleasing contrast to the plainer Windsor chairs, discussed immediately below.

(7) Windsor Chairs. This subject, because of its importance, received considerable attention. After reviewing the available evidence the committee agreed on or recommended the following:

(a) That there were about 40-50 Windsor chairs in the Assembly Room, some with arms.

(b) Messrs. Montgomery and Nagel believed that the Windsors in the Pine-Savage painting were a few years too late in period; that the Trumble chair shown in Fig. 9 is more suitable in respect to period and character.

(c) That a nucleus of period chairs similar to the Trumble chair in Fig. 9 be acquired, from which copies can be made to round out the historic scene until such time as additional appropriate period pieces can be acquired. It was agreed, however, that copies should be kept to a minimum; that the main effort should be put into acquiring suitable period pieces.

(d) Agreed to circulate photos of the Trumble chair to dealers, and in the event that they have suitable chairs, circulate photos of such chairs to the committee, which if it deems the chair appropriate will inspect it at first hand, expenses paid.

(e) Agreed that if a chair is unpainted, but is otherwise satisfactory, we should acquire it and repaint it.

(f) Agreed that Messrs. Montgomery and Mulcahy should visit Harrisburg to ascertain whether or not all the furnishings believed to have been in Independence Hall were actually returned there by the Commonwealth in 1876.

(g) Will attempt to procure side chairs as well as distinctive Windsors in order to have tasteful variety.

(8) Delegation Tables. All agreed that the only possible approach is to procure one or two period tables of the shape, size and height shown in the Pine-Savage painting and have copies of these made to make up the balance of the 13 tables needed.

(9) Green Baize. Suggested that swatches at Winterthur and Williamsburg be consulted to get appropriate type.

(10) Speaker's Table. It was agreed that the Speaker's table, or desk, now in the Assembly Room should be expertized to determine its period, etc. Messrs. Nagel and Montgomery agreed that it appeared to be about the right period.

(11) Peale's "Washington". Decided that the importance of this painting merits making approach to getting it now, and afterwards deciding the best location for it. Agreed, too, that a copy of the engraving of this painting shall also be procured.

(12) "Montgomery" Engraving. Since little is known of this engraving other than its actual presence in the Assembly Room, it will probably be difficult to obtain a copy. However, the possibility of so doing should be explored.

(13) Yorktown Flag. Time needed for research and actually making the flag almost certainly precludes a reproduction of it being ready by May. However, we should proceed in this item as time permits.

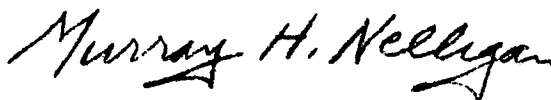
(14) American Flags (2). All agreed that regardless of the absence of evidence regarding its presence in the Assembly Room, an American flag of the Revolutionary period should be prominent inside the room; a modern American flag outside the room, perhaps flanking the door.

(15) Miscellaneous Minor Furnishings

(a) Inkstands. All agreed that the inkstand in the Pine-Savage painting is of pewter. If a similar period piece is obtained, copies of it could then be made for the other delegation tables.

(b) Miscellaneous furnishings---paper, quills, etc. These to be accomplished as time and opportunity permits.

At the end of the session, it was agreed that no date for another formal meeting of the refurnishings committee would be set for the moment.



Murray H. Nelligan
Chief Park Historian

Assembly Room Furnishing Plan - J. Mulcahy, April 1956