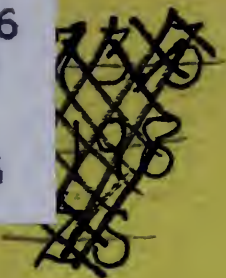


E  
302.6  
.H27  
S78  
1956



# THE STRANGE STORY OF JOHN HANSON, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

By HERBERT J. STOECKEL



A GUIDE TO OXON HILL MANOR  
AND  
MULBERRY GROVE IN MARYLAND

1956

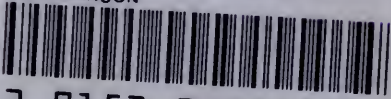
HANSON HOUSE

427 MAIN STREET, HARTFORD 3, CONNECTICUT



973.3  
H198  
ZS

BOOK 973.3.H198 ZS c.1  
STOECKEL # STRANGE STORY OF  
JOHNHANSON



3 9153 00051889 6





302.6

.H27

578

1956

~~973.3~~

~~H148~~

~~25~~

# JOHN HANSON, OUR FIRST PRESIDENT

Only six miles due south from the National Capitol in Washington—or less than a 20-minute drive on a highway that leads straight to the very historic shrine itself—is Oxon Hill Manor.

Here, just over the District of Columbia line, in his native Maryland is the last resting place of John Hanson, first President of the United States. (For route, see Appendix A.)

“How can this be?” the reader, somewhat startled and not a little puzzled, is very likely asking as he opens this little handbook. “I’ve always thought until now—in fact, was so taught from childhood—that George Washington was the first President of the United States. How about clarifying your astonishing statement? Where are your facts?”

To prove our assertion, let us first tell how in 1925 two Connecticut journalists began to delve into what was to develop into the strangest story in all American history, a story without parallel or precedent in the chronicles of world republican government. It is the story of a nation—the republic of the United States of America, no less—which for nearly a century and a half had entirely forgotten its first President!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

“Have you ever heard of John Hanson, first President of the United States?”

Thirty-one years ago this year 1956, the late Seymour Wemyss Smith (1896-1932) of Hartford, Connecticut, was asking this intriguing question, not only locally but nationally and internationally.

Recent important happenings in Port Tobacco, Charles County, Maryland, where John Hanson was born, and at Oxon Hill Manor, Prince George’s County, where he died and is buried, justify asking the question again. At the same time one may inquire objectively whether during the intervening three decades more light has been shed on what was once considered an addition to the annals of American history very decidedly on the sensational side.

The John Hanson-First Presidency thesis—that George Washington was not the first President and that the real honor should go to John Hanson—was first publicized in Hartford in the April, 1925 issue of *The Financial Digest*. This was a monthly business and financial magazine which Smith had started in Hartford after he had served for a lengthy period on the editorial staff of *The Hartford Courant*, founded in 1764 and, to quote from its masthead, “the oldest newspaper of continuous publication in America.”

Smith’s initial presentation of his claims for Hanson took the form of a typical *Digest* feature article. Smith was aided in his research by the writer, a former *Courant* man associated with Smith in this magazine venture. We captioned this most provocative of historical articles *John Hanson—First President: Was Forerunner to Washington and Leading Factor in Establishment of the United States*.

There followed a second article in the December, 1928 issue of *The Digest*. The caption was *John Hanson, Our Forgotten First President: Recent Election Recalls Story of Executive Who Preceded Washington by Eight Years But Was Lost in History’s Rush*.

### FIRST BOOK ON HANSON

The two articles attracted nation-wide attention, were reprinted and widely commented upon by the American press. (*The New York Times* reprinted the entire 1928 article.) Despite the considerable negative criticism which arose, the authors realized that their painstaking research had furnished animated copy for newspapers and magazines both here and abroad. Thus Hanson’s name and that of Seymour Wemyss Smith leaped the Atlantic and became known elsewhere throughout the world.

Smith’s last step in his battle to win recognition for Hanson was his book, *John Hanson, Our First President*, on which the writer collaborated. The book was published in March, 1932 by Brewer, Warren & Putnam of New York City, only a few months after Smith’s untimely death in New York City on January 4, 1932 at the early age of 35.

In our two previous articles and the book Smith and the writer admitted freely that Washington was the first President under Constitution II, our present constitution. On the other hand, we stoutly maintained that John Hanson was the first President under Constitution I or the Articles of Confederation which was superseded by Constitution II.

### A 1781 “FLASH BULLETIN”

Incidentally, not only did *The Courant* print as news the texts of the Declaration of Independence and Constitutions I and II but when the report of John Hanson’s election on November 5, 1781 reached *The Courant*, that newspaper, then a weekly, on November 20, 1781 featured the story

as a "flash bulletin," as newspapermen would say today, with printer's rules above and below the bulletin to emphasize its deserved importance.

Following publication of *The Digest* articles, the encyclopedias were to discover John Hanson. For instance, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* took cognizance of Hanson for the first time in its 14th edition, having even failed to mention his name in its former editions. The first biographical sketch of Hanson did not enter *The Encyclopedia Americana* until the 1942 edition. Today such stalwarts of the reference shelves as the *Britannica*, *The Americana*, *The Columbia Encyclopedia* and *Webster's Biographical Dictionary*, just to cite a typical foursome, plainly state that John Hanson was the first President under Constitution I, although adding the somewhat cautious reservation that he did not possess the same powers Washington held under Constitution II. This is beside the point since the Hanson thesis always has conceded that Washington held the greater power.

In 1925 the question was not whether John Hanson was first President. It was: Who was John Hanson? The few biographical sketches to be found about him gave no inkling as to the dramatic niche John Hanson occupies in our national history. His name was not in any school history, although today one finds John Hanson and his election mentioned in the textbooks used in Maryland schools.

The second *Digest* article was sent to the late Robert L. ("Believe-It-Or-Not") Ripley who made John Hanson and the little known fact about the first Presidency the subject of one of his cartoons. Thus the Hanson claim was given a further fillip of approval in the popular sense.

### "STARTLING CURIOSA"

Although *John Hanson, Our First President*, the first real biography of John Hanson and the first book to present and expound in detail the John Hanson-First Presidency thesis, was the target for a number of critical attacks in the press, the tenor of the favorable reviews may be epitomized in the succinct verdict of George Currie, *the Brooklyn Daily Eagle* columnist, who said: "Here is no debunking book, yet it belongs to the realm of startling curiosa."

There's a good story, and a true one, about our public relations efforts in behalf of our 18th century client. The editors of *The Financial Digest* sent the first Hanson article to the editors of *The Literary Digest* of yesterday, offering to substantiate every claim. The editors, puzzled and in doubt, asked for further supporting evidence and received it. Finally a letter came from the prominent weekly—accepted in its time as a gospel of accuracy, especially by professors, school teachers and educational institutions—returning the article and the additional data which, according to us, positively clinched the argument.

While the publication had found the story substantially true, the letter said in effect, it had decided not to quote from or comment on the article. *The Literary Digest* was used in the current events classes of schools throughout the country, the letter explained, and such an unprecedented and startling revelation would swamp it with hundreds of thousands inquiries with which it lacked the facilities to cope.

Summing up in capsule the changed viewpoint which obtains today, it is now conceded that John Hanson was the first President of the United States under Constitution I, although there are still captious critics, particularly of the professorial category, who deny it.

There is a considerable arsenal of factual ammunition to sustain the Hanson thesis. Frederick, Maryland, where Hanson moved in 1773 on the eve of the Revolution, proudly acclaim him as first President. The claim has since become a Maryland tradition.

### HANSON HOUSE IN FREDERICK

John Hanson House at 110 West Patrick Street, Hanson's residence when he was elected President, may still be seen in Frederick, although the 18th century house has been incorporated bodily into what appears at first glance to be a modern business block, known as the Chapline Building. A bronze plaque affixed on the front of the altered building by The Historical Society of Frederick County informs visitors and passers-by that "on this site (1773-1783) lived John Hanson, First President of the United States in Congress Assembled (1781-1782)."

Just before the 1948 Republican presidential convention in Philadelphia, Walter Winchell, the noted columnist, devoted his entire column in the New York *Daily Mirror* of June 18, 1948 to *Little Facts About a Big Job or Dope Sheet for the Conventions*.

At the very head of his column Winchell said:

"George Washington was not the first President of the United States. The first man to bear that title was John Hanson of Maryland . . . George Washington was merely the first to bear the title under the Constitution, but half a dozen men held the title before him under the Articles of Confederation."

### WHAT COOLIDGE SAID

On May 29, 1926, a year after the first *Digest* article, the John Ericsson Memorial in honor of the great inventor was dedicated in West Potomac Park, Washington.

President Calvin Coolidge, who delivered the chief address of the day, in reciting the contributions made to the United States by Americans of Swedish descent, concluded with these words:

“The title of ‘President of the United States in Congress Assembled’ was held by John Hanson of Maryland in 1781, and he became the first President under the Articles of Confederation.”

*The Dictionary of American History*, edited by the late James Truslow Adams, Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York, 1940, under Frederick, Maryland, sums up John Hanson’s pioneer presidential status even more tersely:

“John Hanson was chosen as the first President of the United States under the Articles of Confederation.”

The John Hanson-First Presidency thesis is based primarily on the following three premises:

(1) That the Articles of Confederation was Constitution I and was so considered while in force, even by Washington himself; (2) that the first federal year of the republic began on Monday, November 5, 1781, Hanson’s election day, and that the Congress which elected Hanson was therefore the first Congress of the Confederation, and (3) that there was no great dissimilarity between the ways Hanson and Washington were elected, respectively, in 1781 and 1789.

In an essay brief as this, only a few outstanding facts can be presented to sustain each premise. However, research has disclosed additional significant and revelatory data. For a more detailed summation of this supplementary evidence we refer our readers to *John Hanson, Our First President*.

That Washington himself regarded the Articles of Confederation as Constitution I is clearly proven by his letters to Benjamin Harrison (January 16, 1784), to James McHenry (August 22, 1785) and to Lafayette (May 10, 1786) in which he refers, respectively, to the “constitution,” “the present constitution” and “the federal constitution.” These letters were written, of course, long before Constitution II was anticipated or even dimly conceived.

### “A SOUND NATIONAL CONSTITUTION”

*The Dictionary of American History*, already quoted, also describes the Articles of Confederation (Vol. I, page 125) “as offering a sound national constitution.”

Regarding the second premise, the first Congress of the Confederation met at already historic Independence Hall, Philadelphia, on November 5, 1781, the first Monday in November, as specified by Constitution I.

Article 5 of Constitution I reads:

“For the more convenient management of the general interests of the United States, delegates shall be annually appointed in such manner as the legislature of each State shall direct, to meet in Congress on the first Monday in November, in every year . . .”

That the Congress of 1781-1782 represented a turning-point in American history is shown by the fact that the Second Continental Congress, before singing its swan song on its last day in session, Saturday, November 3, 1781, passed a resolution "that the several matters now before Congress be referred over and recommended to the attention of the United States in Congress Assembled to meet at this place on Monday next."

There was one striking difference, however, between Hanson's election and Washington's. When Hanson was elected, he became the President of a republic comprising the 13 Original States. When Washington was first elected, he became the President of a federal union *numbering only 11 of these states and he was elected by only 10 of them*. North Carolina and Rhode Island were foreign countries, and New York ignored the election.

Yes, it's true that John Hanson represented his native state of Maryland while President. Our federal system under Constitution I resembled that of present-day Switzerland. Between 1781 and 1789 we elected our Presidents almost identically as the Swiss have been choosing theirs for years. In fact, the Swiss may be said to have lifted their presidential electoral mode right out of Constitution I. Hanson and his successors were elected to serve the constitutional one-year term which covered each federal administrative year.

The progressive republic of Uruguay, after intensive observation of Switzerland's example, has adopted the Swiss form of republican government. When President Dwight D. Eisenhower arrived in Switzerland for the Geneva Conference of July, 1955, he was greeted—as an equal—by President Max Petitpierre of the Swiss Confederation. Again, when President Luis Batlle Berres of Uruguay visited the United States in December, 1955, at the express invitation of The White House, he too was welcomed by President Eisenhower in Washington as the United States President's equal in dignity, rank and status. Switzerland also has its counterpart to the American "log cabin to President" story in the person of the late Rudolf Minger who in 1935 was the first farmer to serve as President of Switzerland.

### **PRESIDENT HANSON'S SUCCESSORS**

The other Presidents after Hanson were Elias Boudinot (N.J.), Thomas Mifflin (Pa.), Richard Henry Lee (Va.), John Hancock-Nathaniel Gorham (Mass.), Arthur St. Clair (Pa.) and Cyrus Griffin (Va.).

As their biographies disclose, all these Constitution I Presidents, like Hanson, were eminent Revolutionary War figures. There were no "dark horses" under Constitution I as under Constitution II. The principle of rotation, so highly praised at the time by Thomas Jefferson, the third President under Constitution II, was followed as closely as possible to give

the various states representation in the Presidency. For instance, John Hancock previously had been a President of the Second Continental Congress but this post, irregularly filled from time to time, had none of the constitutionalized dignity of "the office of President" to which he was elected under Constitution I. What critics of the first Presidency claim for Hanson consistently overlook is that Constitution I distinctly provided for "the office of President," the incumbent being thus constitutionally elected for the specified one-year term which could have been extended by amendment. Thus when President Hancock, elected under Constitution I, was unable to serve because of illness, Nathaniel Gorham, also from Massachusetts or Hancock's state, let it be carefully noted, was elected to fill out Hancock's unexpired term until a new President was elected.

Constitution II provided an entirely new elective setup, both for the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency and the new Congress of 1789. Likewise, Constitution I provided an entirely new setup for the Presidency and for the election of Congressmen to the entirely new 1781-1782 Congress of the Confederation.

Regarding the third premise, the fact that Hanson was elected by the first Congress of the Confederation—the same mode followed in the election of his presidential successors—does not militate against the thesis. Neither Washington, Adams, Jefferson and succeeding Presidents under Constitution II were elected as we elect our Presidents today. Not until the 1830s were nominations for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency made at party conventions which procedure has survived to the present day, not always with the happiest results.

Viscount Bryce in *The American Commonwealth* thus neatly summarized the chameleon-like changes in our early presidential modes of election:

"At one time the congressional caucus played in American history a great part which it has now renounced. From 1800 to 1824 party meetings of Senators and Representatives were held which nominated the party candidates for the Presidency who were then accepted by each party as its regular candidates. In 1828 the State Legislatures made these nominations, and in 1832 the present system of national conventions was introduced."

### THE ELECTION OF 1789

The findings of the late Alexander K. McClure, noted journalist and political observer whose exhaustive study, *Our Presidents and How We Make Them* (1901), is a mine of information on the Presidency under Constitution II, including Washington's election in 1789, are especially illuminating, conclusive and authoritative from an intensive research angle.

"... the first election for President of the United States ... was an election in which the people took no part whatever in most of the States,"

says McClure, referring to Washington's election in 1789.

"None of the States had made any preparation for an election, and the only practical method for choosing electors was by the Legislatures, as the Constitution provided then, as it does now, that each State shall appoint Presidential electors 'in such manner as its Legislature may direct . . .'

"There had been no formal nomination of Washington for President and Adams for Vice-President in any part of the country . . . I cannot find a record of any formal presentation of either the name of Washington or Adams at the first Presidential election."

When Jefferson was elected for the first time, he was chosen by the House of Representatives, with each state casting a single vote. This was also true of the election of 1824 when John Quincy Adams became President by the same process. We will kindly draw the veil over the election of 1876. Let us also point out that Jefferson, the first President to be inaugurated in Washington, the new federal capital, was elected identically the same way as President John Hanson.

Thus we see there was little difference between the mode that elected John Hanson and Washington, twice in the latter's case, and that this equally applied to succeeding Presidents until the advent of the party convention, with Jefferson's first election and that of John Quincy Adams being noteworthy parallel examples.

Neither is there any difference between the title of the office held by John Hanson and his successors under Constitution I and the title of the office held by Washington and his successors under Constitution II. Hanson was the first chief executive to be designated officially "President of the United States in Congress assembled" which title by the loss of its rudimentary tail or only the deletion of the last three words, "in Congress assembled," became "President of the United States" in Constitution II. President Eisenhower is still "President of the United States in Congress assembled" under Constitution II—and this applies to his predecessors, Washington included—because his signature signs into law or vetoes bills whose enacting clauses still read that they were passed by the "Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled."

There are some remarkable coincidences in the respective lives of the two first Presidents. John Hanson and George Washington were close friends. The Hanson and Washington families were intimate socially. Both were prosperous planters, their plantations (before Hanson moved to Frederick) lying almost directly opposite each other on each side of the Potomac River, Mulberry Grove on the Maryland side and Mount Vernon on the Virginia bank. Both Hanson and Washington were Episcopalians, and Hanson has been described as having been a zealous communicant and church worker.

## HANSON'S SWEDISH BACKGROUND

Oddly enough, in the same way Hanson preceded Washington as first President, Hanson's ancestors also preceded Washington's in America. John Hanson was a direct descendant of Col. John Hanson of the Swedish Royal Guard, a close associate of the great Gustavus Adolphus, who was killed with his king on November 16, 1632 at the Battle of Luetzen in Saxony, one of the major events of the Thirty Years War.

Col. Hanson left four sons who became wards of the celebrated Queen Christina who succeeded her father on the throne of mid-17th century Sweden. The youngest son, also named John Hanson, looms largest in the romantic Hanson saga. He was the grandfather of President John Hanson.

Christina sent the four boys, orphaned by their father's death, to New Sweden in charge of Col. Johan Printz who headed a new expedition to Sweden's New World colony on the Delaware. Printz has gone down in our colonial history as the best known and most picturesque of all the governors of New Sweden.

As early as 1626 Gustavus Adolphus actually had contemplated sending Col. Hanson to America to found New Sweden and to be its first commandant but the German wars prevented this momentous decision. Had both the king and Col. Hanson—even the latter—survived at Luetzen, the history of New Sweden, we may assume, would most likely have been radically different. Likewise the history of the republic, we can as logically surmise.

The Printz expedition left Sweden on November 1, 1642 and, after touching at Antigua in the West Indies, landed at Fort Christina, now Wilmington, Delaware, on February 15, 1643 or 14 years before John Washington, George Washington's great grandfather, the founder of the American branch of the Washington family, emigrated from England in December, 1656 or early in 1657 and settled in Virginia.

In 1653—or a little more than three centuries ago—the four Hansons trekked over the border into Maryland or even before John Washington was in Virginia and before New Sweden was seized by the Dutch in 1655. In Maryland the Hansons flourished. Whence came Mulberry Grove.

## THE TRUE WASHINGTON STORY

It was only by the narrowest margin of circumstance that the Washington family became established in Virginia. The real story is missing in most Washington biographies. John Washington was mate and voyage partner of the ketch *Sea Horse of London* which had brought him to America for the first time. As the ship was about to return to England, it ran aground in the Potomac, was partly sunk by a storm and its cargo of tobacco ruined. In helping to raise the ship, John Washington became acquainted with Nathaniel Pope, a wealthy Marylander residing in Virginia.

A romance budded between John and Pope's daughter, Anne. John decided to remain in Virginia and asked to be paid off. His marriage to Anne followed.

What if the *Sea Horse* had not run aground on that shoal in the Potomac and John had returned to England? Would there have been a George Washington to lead the American army during the Revolution? Would there have been a President Washington under Constitution II?

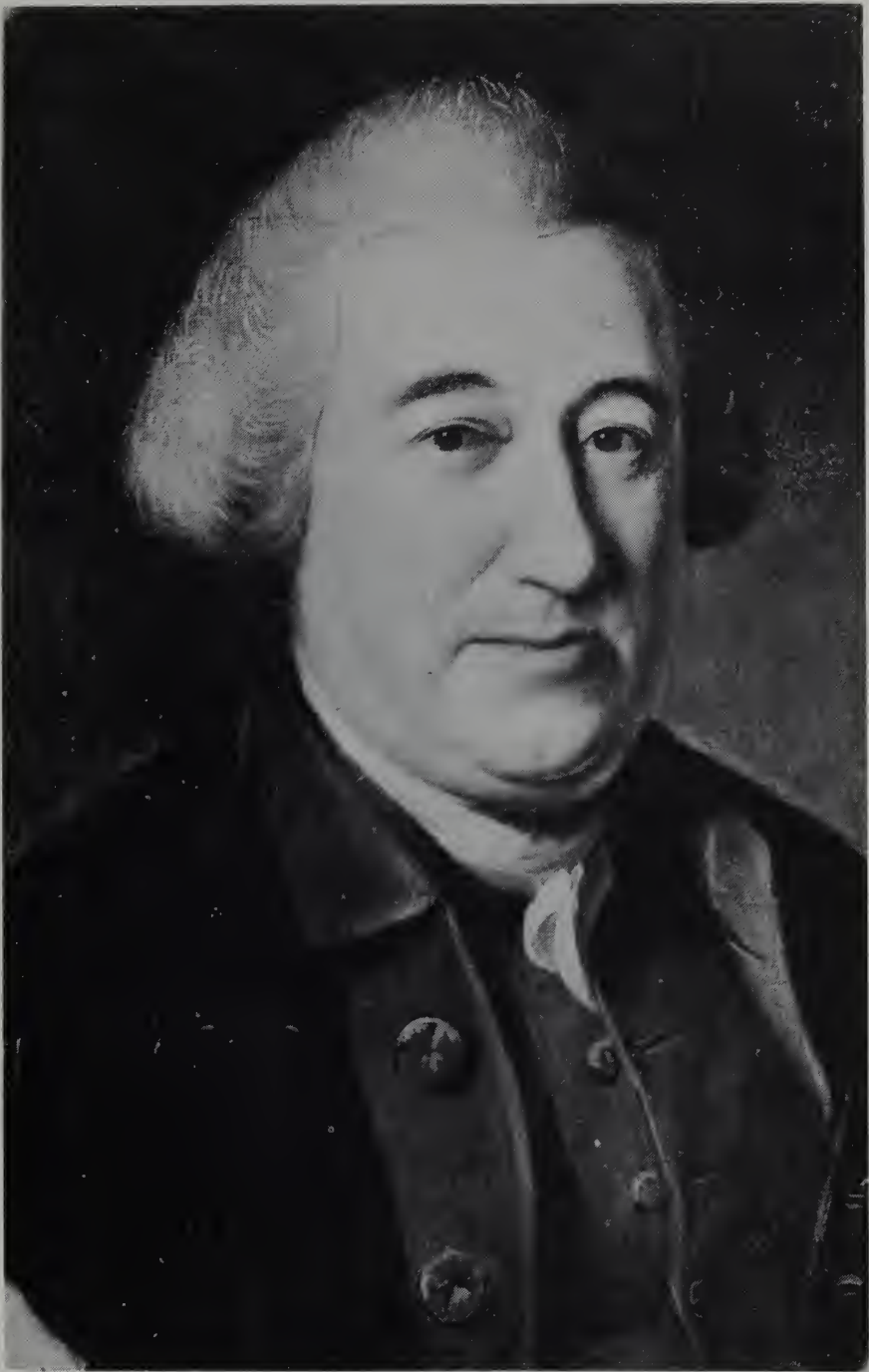
### HANSONLAND: 1781 AND TODAY

Why was John Hanson elected first President? It was partly in recognition of his impressive and untiring services during the Revolution. But, more importantly, because, as one of Maryland's elder statesmen, he was her chief spokesman, both back home in Maryland and on the floor of the Continental Congress, for the doctrine that the undeveloped western lands, beginning with the valuable Northwest Territory, should be the republic's first public domain.

Truly, the Old Northwest of history, song and story, north of the Ohio River—today comprising the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan and almost a third of Minnesota—may well be called Hansonland. Maryland, the lone non-signer of Constitution I, refused to complete the first federal union until this domain was assured the United States of America. Only the ratifying signatures of John Hanson and Daniel Carroll, his Maryland colleague in Congress, made the union, so long delayed, a reality.

Interest in Oxon Hill Manor and Mulberry Grove is certain to mount as the John Hanson story becomes better known. Already that story has spread to every state in the Union and even overseas, particularly Scandinavia.

And let us remind our readers that November 5, 1956 will be the 175th anniversary of John Hanson's election as first President, a red-letter date bound to stimulate further curiosity in "The President We Forgot," as Seymour Wemyss Smith used to term John Hanson so graphically.



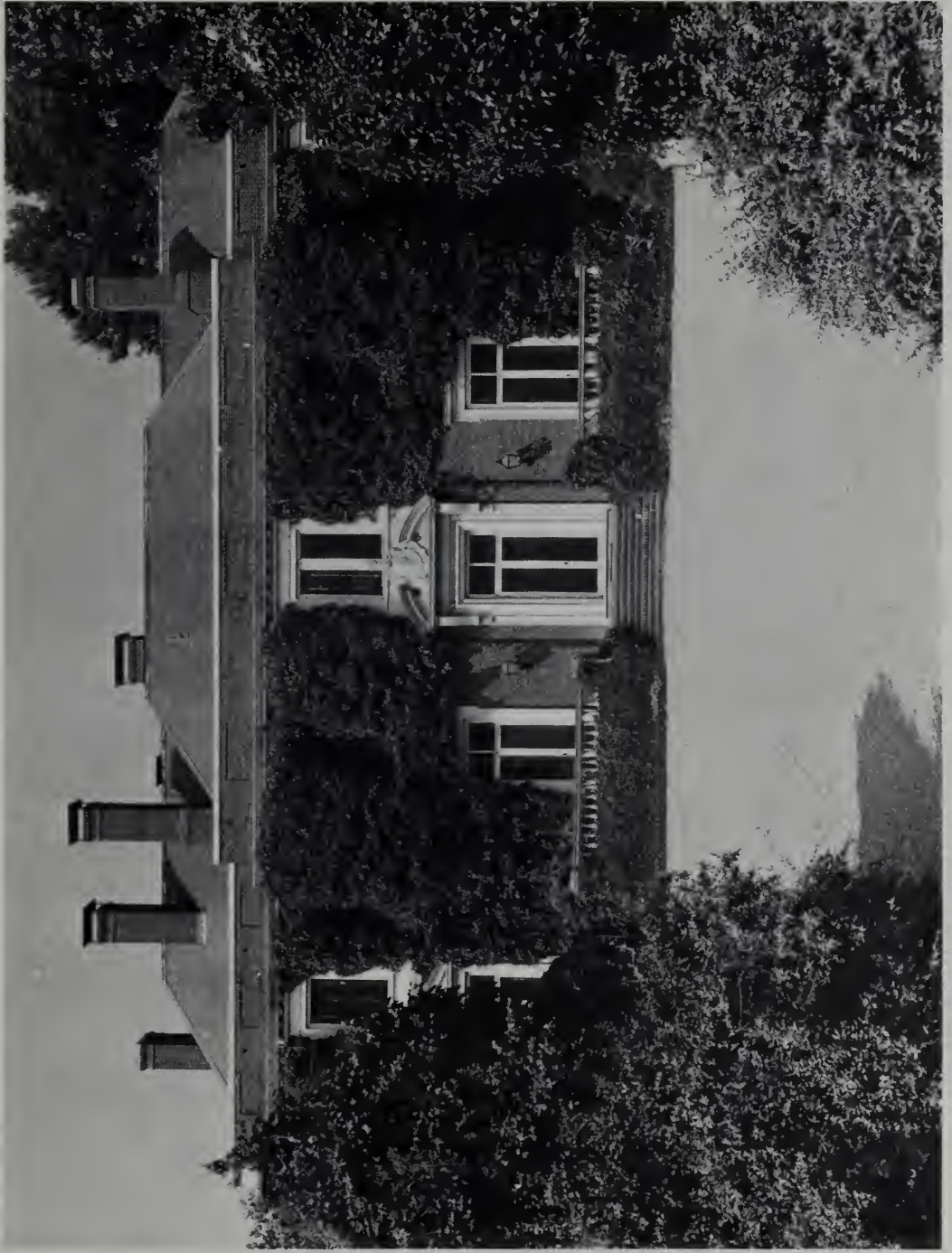
**John Hanson from the Charles Willson Peale portrait  
in Independence Hall, Philadelphia.**



**John Hanson, the future first President, as seen in his younger days by John Hesselius.  
A copy of this portrait is on the *M. S. Kungsholm*.**



**Jane Contee Hanson, the nation's first "First Lady," by John Hesselius, a companion  
portrait to the same artist's study of John Hanson. Also owned by  
Mrs. Robert H. Stevenson of Boston.**



Main entrance to Oxon Hill Manor's palatial Georgian mansion house.



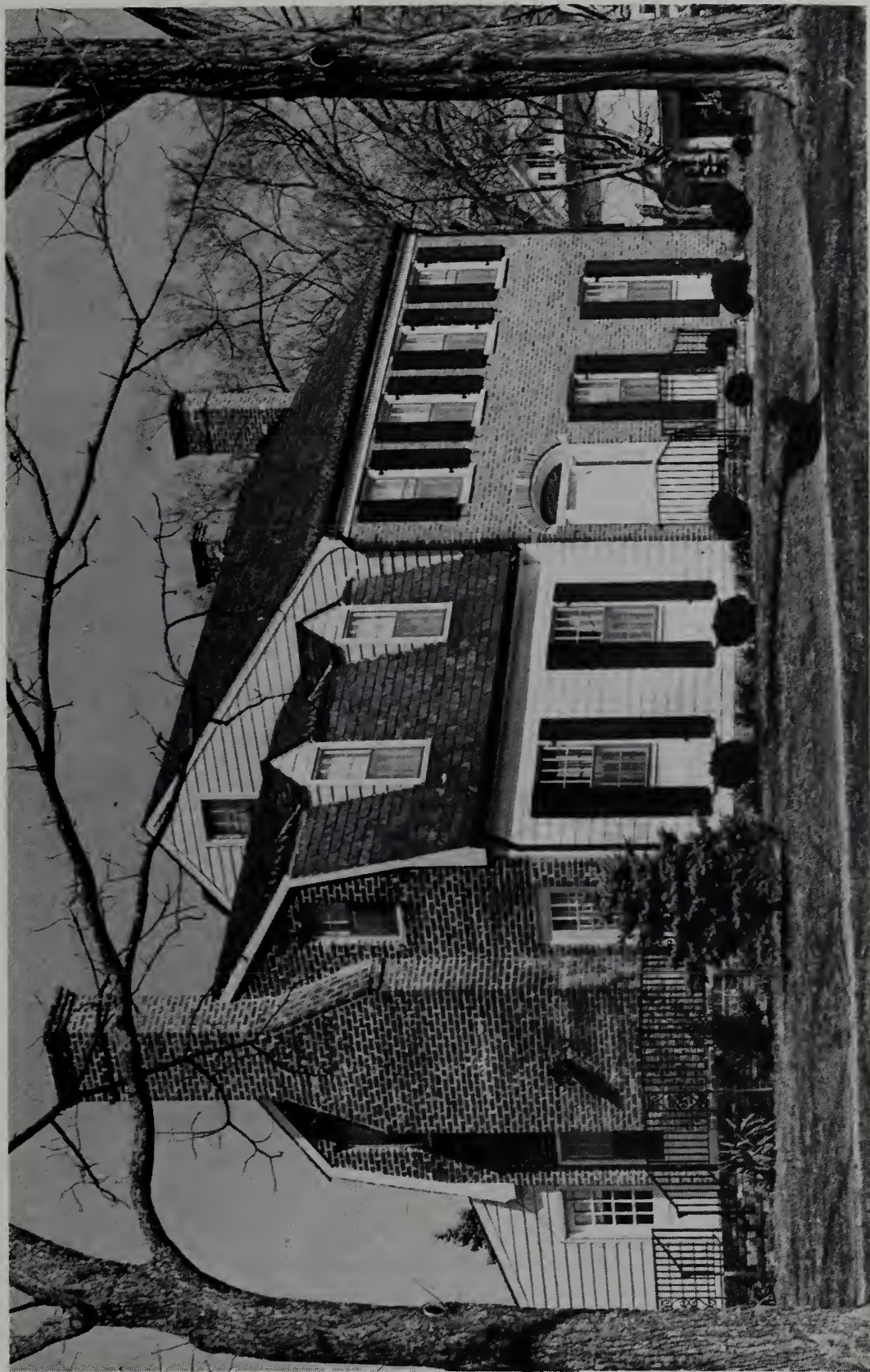
Fred N. Maloof of Oxon Hill Manor



The superb view of the Potomac from the terrace at Oxon Hill Manor.



The old Addison manse as it looked before the fire of February 6, 1895;  
(below), the grand staircase in the manse.



Hanson House, Mulberry Grove, Port Tobacco, Maryland.



**Mrs. Edward J. Edelen, the present-day "Lady of Mulberry Grove".**

## II

### JOHN HANSON AND OXON HILL MANOR

**J**ohn Hanson, first President of the United States, was born at Mulberry Grove, Charles County, Maryland, on April 3, 1715, Old Style, or April 14, 1715, according to the New Style calendar adopted by Great Britain and her American colonies in 1752.

He died on November 15, 1783 at Oxon Hill Manor, Prince George's County, the Maryland estate of his nephew, Thomas Hawkins Hanson, where he was visiting at the time.

Oxon Hill Manor from 1685 to 1810 was the ancestral seat of the aristocratic Addison family which for generations played a leading role in Southern Maryland life. The original land, which later became the hub of the manor, was a colonial grant to Col. John Addison. From the mid-18th century the manor has been a Maryland landmark and, since the organization of the District of Columbia, one of the most notable and handsomest estates in the vicinity of Washington.

There is a tie between Oxon Hill Manor and the Old World unequalled, so far as we know, by any other historic shrine in America. Col. Addison, before he came to America, fought for King Charles I in England's 17th century Civil War. His brother, the Dean of Lichfield, was the father of Joseph Addison, famous English essayist, author of *The Spectator* papers and creator of Sir Roger de Coverley.

What's more, his older brother was the Rev. Anthony Addison, chaplain to John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, the victor at Blenheim and direct-in-line ancestor of Winston Churchill, Britain's leader in World War II. Col. Addison was also the uncle of Gulston Addison, long in the service of the East India Company and governor of Madras, another son of Lancelot Addison.

Lord Macaulay, in his essay, *The Life and Writings of Addison*, mentions how Joseph Addison "inherited the fortune of a brother who died governor of Madras." It was this fortune that enabled the gifted writer of the celebrated Anglo-American family to espouse the Countess Dowager of Warwick, the lady of illustrious Holland House in Kensington.

## THE LONDON FIRE OF 1666

While still residing in England, Col. Addison engaged in shipping as a "merchant adventurer." All but wiped out financially by the great London fire of 1666, he, then 38, took the remainder of his fortune and sailed to Maryland. This was in 1667. He became prominent in Maryland affairs, served in the Indian wars as a colonel and was a leader of the Protestant Rebellion in Maryland. Marrying as he was nearing 50, he had one son, Col. Thomas Addison. While on a business trip, Col. John Addison died in London in 1706. He had returned numerous times to England on business, having built up with the mother country a considerable import-export trade in American tobacco and furs and such British trade goods as brandy, firearms and cloth.

In 1685 Col. Addison erected a frame dwelling on his land at Oxon Hill. The first parish meeting in Maryland of the Church of England, later the Episcopal Church of America, was held in 1692 at Col. Addison's estate. The meeting was followed three years later by the erection of a church at Broad Creek, a short distance south from the estate, which became the "mother church" of the Episcopal Church in Maryland, including what is today Washington or the District of Columbia.

Historic St. John's Church, more commonly called "the Broad Creek Church," built in 1723 and still used for worship, is the third church on the site. A pew, occupied by George Washington, is preserved, with a marker. The "Broad Creek Church," as the reader will learn, figures importantly in our narrative.

It was Col. Thomas Addison, Col. John Addison's only son, born in 1679, who in 1710 replaced the paternal frame structure of 1685 with the stately brick mansion which, until destroyed by fire on February 6, 1895, was one of the finest manor houses on the tidewater Potomac.

In 1709, Col. Thomas Addison married Eleanor Smith, his second wife (*see Appendix B*), bought the ship *William and Mary* and sailed to London on his honeymoon. He and his bride returned with the plans and skilled workmen with which to build the manse. This splendid baronial hall was the chief establishment of the Addisons for 100 years or from 1710 until its sale in 1810.

The Rev. Jonathan Boucher, the widely traveled Royalist Anglo-American cleric, who for a time was curate at St. John's Church, wrote in his *Reminiscences* that the residence was "the most pleasantly situated and circumstanced, and in all respects the most desirable of any I have ever seen in any part of the world."

## “OXON HILL MANOUR” BORN

Oxon Hill, however, was not the title of the original land grant to Col. John Addison. In 1767 Thomas Addison, his great grandson and the fourth proprietor of the grant (*see Appendix C*), patented some 3,663 acres of land, consisting of five or six variously named tracts lying chiefly along the Potomac's Maryland riverfront, and called the resurvey “Oxon Hill Manour.” This Thomas Addison became the “lord” of the manor by virtue of Frederick, the last Lord Baltimore of Maryland. He was the only Addison to bear the title “Lord of Oxon Hill Manour” since the American Revolution abolished such titles and landed prerogatives.

“Lord” Thomas Addison died on September 27, 1774 at Oxon Hill Manor, and on March 21, 1778 his widow, Rebecca Dulany Addison (who, incidentally, was also his cousin), married Thomas Hawkins Hanson (1750-1810) which advantageous marriage made President John Hanson's nephew the squire of the manor. At the beginning of the Revolution, Thomas Hawkins Hanson, with the rank of captain, had commanded a company of the Maryland flying camp in the fighting around New York. (*See Appendix C.*)

Oxon Hill, previous to the assembling of the manor, had been the Addison family reference to the mansion of 1710 which overlooked the Potomac to the west and “Oxon Creeke” (or Oxon Run) to the north.

The community of Oxon Hill, in which the manor is now located, took its name from the manor in the 1920s when it was so represented on the automobile maps printed for the public. Oxon Creek is spanned today by a bridge near the District of Columbia line.

The manor's name, so unusually spelled, is also curiously interwoven with the English antecedents of the Addisons and their friends. Oxon is an abbreviation for Oxfordshire, England, also for a graduate of Britain's Oxford University. Many Oxford graduates were granted land in Maryland by Lord Baltimore after the Restoration in 1660. Oxford had been a Royalist stronghold. While “Oxon Hill” is likely of local origin, it received added inspiration or permanence because of the Oxford University background of so many landed proprietors in the province. *The Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* gives the derivation of England's Oxford as “ford for oxen.”

## PRESENT MANSION HOUSE

The present palatial mansion house at Oxon Hill Manor was designed by the late Count Jules Henri de Sibour, the well known architect, who, however, did not use his hereditary French title professionally in the United States. The mansion is considered one of the finest modern examples of a Georgian brick manor house in America. The extensive gardens, the

landscaped approaches to the manor house, and the superb view of the Potomac River from the terrace at once impress the visitor. The gardens embody the best of classical formal planning of which English box is the main theme.

Because of the box and the beautiful garden vistas which surround the mansion house, the annual Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimages, sponsored each spring by The Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland, have included visits to Oxon Hill Manor. The wrought-iron inner gates are from Charleston, South Carolina.

On the doorstep of the District of Columbia, Prince George's County, with its army of commuters, is today a suburb of Washington. Oxon Hill Manor is only a short drive from the National Capitol, as has been stated, and only a few minutes beyond the District line. The manor can also be reached from Washington by buses marked "Oxon Hill" which take passengers as far as "The Crossroads," at the junction of Oxon Hill Road and Livingston Road, Oxon Hill, from which point it is not a far walk to the manor.

### **SHORT DRIVE TO MULBERRY GROVE**

It is also only 28-odd miles (20 miles as the crow flies) from Oxon Hill Manor to Mulberry Grove in adjoining Charles County. The Indian Head Highway, which passes through Oxon Hill, is the first section of a speedy and direct connection by car between the scene of John Hanson's death and his birthplace. (To follow what has been popularly nicknamed "The John Hanson Trail" from Oxon Hill to Port Tobacco, also the U.S. Highway 301-La Plata-Port Tobacco route from Washington, *see Appendix D.*)

Oxon Hill Manor, like Mulberry Grove, is on the Maryland shore of the Potomac, the river boundary between Maryland and Virginia, and is directly opposite Alexandria, the same Alexandria mentioned so frequently in George Washington's life because of its nearness to Mount Vernon. The new Potomac River bridge, which will connect Maryland and Virginia at or near Oxon Hill Manor with Alexandria, will furnish another direct approach to the manor from Virginia and the South.

### **"THE BARON OF DARE COUNTY"**

In Fred N. Maloof, its present owner, Oxon Hill Manor has found a Maecenas whose plans for the elevation of the historic estate into a permanent John Hanson national historic shrine, with the stately Georgian mansion transformed into a museum, are sweeping in their scope.

Despite Mr. Maloof's modesty as to his accomplishments, we have been able to gather enough facts from his fabulous business career to compile

the following brief biographical sketch of the man whose many valuable works of art grace the mansion house at Oxon Hill Manor.

Mr. Maloof, an American of distinguished Lebanese descent and a member of a family prominent throughout the world, owned until several years ago what was widely known as "the Maloof Barony." This was a vast primitive area of about 200,000 acres, comprising the greater part of North Carolina's famous peninsula-shaped Dare County, named after Virginia Dare, the first white child born in English America on August 18, 1587.

Within Dare County, called "The Cradle of American Birth," are Roanoke Island and Kitty Hawk. On Roanoke Island is the site of Sir Walter Raleigh's pioneer English colony in the New World (first settled in 1585 or 35 years before Plymouth) and whose enigmatic fate—the oldest of American historical mysteries—is annually immortalized by Paul Green's epic pageant, *The Lost Colony*. It was also on Roanoke Island that Reginald A. Fessenden, the great American physicist, perfected his wireless telephone experiments, divulging from the island on April 3, 1902 (President Hanson's birthday, Old Style) "the good news" that he could telephone "across the Pacific Ocean if desired." Also on "the Dunes of Dare," at Kitty Hawk, the Wright brothers on December 17, 1903 made the first powered airplane flight, thereby ushering in the age of aviation.

"The Baron of Dare County"—a title bestowed on Mr. Maloof by the press—offered the huge, almost primeval Maloof tract, the largest of its kind east of the Mississippi, to the federal government for a national park and wildlife preserve. Mr. Maloof has been a lifetime conservationist and protector of patriotic historic shrines. Only after the government declined to accept Mr. Maloof's very generous terms, did he arrange to sell his "barony," with its wealth of timber, to the West Virginia Pulp & Paper Co. The latter, in line with Mr. Maloof's conservationist creed, has taken every measure to preserve the huge forested area and its abundant wildlife. Mr. Maloof is fond of enthusiastically recounting how, by selling the huge domain to Westvaco, he succeeded in removing the immense tract from the intrusive influence of politics.

Mr. Maloof, who also owns Grasslands at Linden in the Skyline section of Virginia, once the property of Chief Justice John Marshall, and which he is planning to preserve as a historic landmark, again rose nobly to the occasion when he learned that Oxon Hill Manor was in danger of being sold as a unit for a large real estate development which would have wiped out its historic character for all time. Stepping into the picture at the critical moment, Mr. Maloof, by his purchase of the main residence, the outbuildings and 60 acres, saved the most important part of the 245-acre estate for the nation and posterity.

## JOHN HANSON MEMORIAL

Mr Maloof, who was originally an art dealer in his native Boston and later in New York City, is an authority on American art and culture, ranging from the prehistoric or pre-Columbian era through the colonial and federal periods to the present day. Although he is familiar with the works of most of the world's great artists, his favorite field, as antiquarian, researchist and collector, covers, however, with particular emphasis, that period which saw the genesis and evolution of constitutional government in the 13 Original States and in our federal government as exemplified in Constitutions I and II.

"I have been acquiring such colonial, early federal or constitutional period art, as I like to call it, for many years, and it comprises a most important part of my collection," he told the writer. "When everything is ready for exhibition, Oxon Hill Manor, its museum and grounds, including the John Hanson Memorial, will be open to the public on certain days to be announced."

A handsome bronze of Leif Ericson presides over the section of the Maloof library at Oxon Hill Manor reserved for his Hansoniana which its patron intends to make the most complete in America. The library also houses 8,000 volumes, many of them rare, which Mr. Maloof has gathered over the years and which cover the entire history of art.

Mr. Maloof intends "to arrange the art collection at Oxon Hill Manor in such a manner that it, and the mansion there, will be a lasting tribute to the farsight and patriotism of the men who fought for the independence of our country and established it on a firm constitutional foundation."

Guiding us on the grand tour of the mansion house, he continued;

"Several rooms will be set aside for the exhibition of portraits and statuary of the Founding Fathers to instill in young Americans a higher respect and regard for the precepts and wisdom of these distinguished characters."

Mr. Maloof feels that we have so completely departed from these "precepts and wisdom" that we are in danger of losing "our great heritage," adding:

"I would like every American mother to bring her sons and daughters to Oxon Hill Manor to see and study at close range, in its perfect setting, a symbol of the highest level of culture our nation has ever attained or when such monumental estates were built by individuals who were able to establish great fortunes under our private enterprise system. This individualistic system pioneered and developed our great American nation, and it is a disturbing sign of the times that such noble estates are fast disappearing, as in England, because of a prohibitive tax structure."

At "The Crossroads" in Oxon Hill is a marker erected during Maryland's Tercentenary by The John Hanson Society of Maryland and dedi-

cated on November 11, 1933. It reads: "John Hanson, President of the United States in Congress Assembled, 1781-2. Died November 15, 1783 at Oxon Hill, 1½ miles west of here. The original mansion house, built by the Addison family, was burned February 6, 1895."

### MORE HONORS FOR HANSON

John Hanson's memory will be further honored in Oxon Hill by the new \$1,000,000 John Hanson Junior High School on Oxon Hill Road near the Indian Head Highway. The school will be completed in the fall of 1956 and will likely be dedicated on November 5, 1956, the 175th anniversary of John Hanson's election as the first President of the United States. There is also a possibility that the new Potomac River bridge may be named the John Hanson Bridge, another tribute to the nation's first "first citizen."

One of Maryland's great highways also bears the name of the republic's first President. The dual-lane expressway connecting Annapolis, the capital of Maryland, and Washington, the federal capital, has been named The John Hanson Highway.

At its 1953 session the General Assembly of Maryland adopted a resolution sponsored by former Senator John Raymond Fletcher of Prince George's County, now Associate Judge of the Seventh Judicial Circuit of Maryland, requesting that the expressway be so known officially. On August 11, 1954, the Maryland State Roads Commission passed an order changing the name of the highway from "Annapolis-Washington Expressway" to "The John Hanson Highway." At the Washington end (Kenilworth Interchange) The John Hanson Highway links in with the Baltimore-Washington Expressway, opened to the public in October, 1954.



A memorable event in 1953 served to bring the John Hanson-First Presidency story into still sharper focus, both internationally and nationally. By a most noteworthy coincidence Oxon Hill Manor is deeply etched, both historically and romantically, against the narrative background of that event.

On December 3, 1953 Scandinavia's largest liner, the 22,000-ton, 800-passenger *M. S. Kungsholm*, the new luxury flagship of the Swedish American Line, steamed up New York harbor to her Manhattan pier. She had left Gothenburg, her home port, on November 24. It was the *Kungsholm's* maiden voyage and the gaily bedecked liner was saluted by harbor craft and greeted by New York's officialdom and other dignitaries.

The feature of the *Kungsholm's* artistic appointments is a trio of portraits—a sort of triptych—of three outstanding 18th century personalities: President John Hanson, President George Washington and H. M. Gustavus

III, the reigning monarch of Sweden when that nation—the first neutral power to do so—recognized the infant republic of the New World.

The prominent display of John Hanson's portrait on Sweden's greatest passenger liner is both a signal honor and a Scandinavian maritime salute to our nation's first constitutionally elected President.

The portraits are certain to stir the interest of the innumerable trans-atlantic passengers who will make the *Kungsholm* their temporary home. This will apply as well to the countless visitors who will flock to the steamer on sailing days to bid their relatives and friends bon voyage and at the same time inspect the new pride of the Swedish merchant marine. Expressly designed for cruises, the *Kungsholm* has made cruises around the world and South America and to the West Indies, with others scheduled.

### JOHN HANSON, WORLD TRAVELER

Presidents Hanson and Washington and H. M. Gustavus III—in the person of their portraits and in spirit too—are bound to enjoy these cruises under warm, sunny skies to the same satisfied degree as the other SAL passengers. In time all three will have been practically everywhere on the globe, not including the many crossings they will make between New York and Europe.

The John Hanson portrait also may be said to possess a hardy perennial value as a public memorial on the high seas—in fact, the Seven Seas—to our first President. The original, of which it is a faithful copy, is in the Back Bay residence of Mrs. Robert H. Stevenson of Boston, President John Hanson's great-great-great granddaughter. This *Kungsholm* portrait of John Hanson was copied especially for SAL by Bernard M. Keyes, Boston artist.

The original portrait was painted by John Hesselius (1728-1778), son of Swedish-born Gustavus Hesselius (1682-1755), both outstanding American colonial portraitists. John Hesselius, like John Hanson, was both of Swedish descent and a native of Maryland. Hesselius was probably born in Prince George's County, the same county, let us point out again, in which John Hanson died on November 15, 1783 at Oxon Hill Manor while the guest of his nephew, Thomas Hawkins Hanson.

Until his death in 1778 Hesselius lived at Bellefield, his 1,000-acre plantation on the Severn River near Annapolis, Maryland. The *Dictionary of American Biography* tells us that "he died in his 50th year, leaving a widow, one son, and three daughters and is buried on his plantation."

### HELSELIUS-ADDISON

Another unusual angle of the John Hanson story, already so replete with historical curiosities, is that Elizabeth Hesselius, daughter of John Hesselius, was destined to become the lady of Oxon Hill Manor.

For on June 1, 1792 Elizabeth Hesselius was married to the Rev. Walter Dulany Addison (1769-1848), son of "Lord" Thomas Addison and the great-great grandson of the original Col. John Addison.

The Rev. Mr. Addison, who sold the estate in 1810, not only served as rector of Oxon Hill's St. John's Church (the "Broad Creek Church") but he also stands out in the city of Washington's history as the founder, also at intervals the rector, of historic St. John's Church (1794), the first Episcopal church in Georgetown and hence the oldest church of that denomination in Washington and the District of Columbia. While serving at St. John's, Georgetown, he numbered Francis Scott Key as one of his vestrymen.

About 1830 he became nearly blind and retired to the Baltimore home of his son, William, where he died in 1848 at the age of 80. The graves of both Elizabeth (Hesselius) Addison, who died in 1808, and her husband, who survived her for 40 years, are in the Addison burying ground at Oxon Hill Manor, the site of President Hanson's grave. The ruins of the old manse of the Addisons, cited on the marker at "The Crossroads," are nearby.

The cemetery is some distance from the manor's present mansion house which, contrary to printed misstatements in guidebooks and elsewhere, was not built on the foundations of the old Addison manse. Mr. Maloof intends to construct an entirely new path from the mansion-museum through the still thickly wooded part of the manor's parkland so that the site of President Hanson's grave and that of the old manse will be more conveniently accessible to visitors.

It is interesting to note that 18th century Potomac River pilots used the old manse as a guide—and as a beacon at night when the manse was lighted—in steering their ships through the deep-water channel which existed in those times. On a manuscript map of the Potomac, made in 1712 by Baron Christoph von Graffenried of Switzerland while a visitor in America, the manse is clearly marked. It also appears on Walter Hoxton's navigational "Mapp of the Bay of Chesepeack and the Potomack," prepared in 1735 for "the merchants of London trading to Virginia and Maryland." Both maps are in The Library of Congress.

There are several other odd and curious angles to the John Hanson story as regards our first President's burial at Oxon Hill Manor. Congress authorized President George Washington by law to select the site of the federal district for the permanent capital of the United States. The size of the area, Constitution II specified, was not to exceed "10 miles square." Washington's choice at first was limited exclusively to the east bank of the Potomac between the mouth of the Anacostia River, then known as the Eastern Branch, and the mouth of the Conococheague River, a tributary

of the Potomac, some 75 miles upriver in Washington County, Western Maryland.

After six months Washington decided upon a tract in Maryland, now the District of Columbia, and a small section across the Potomac in Virginia, including the town of Alexandria.

By the amendatory law of March 3, 1791, Congress, without debate, gave Washington, if he cared to exercise it, as wide a latitude of selection south of the Anacostia in and about Oxon Hill as he had been permitted to assume, at his own suggestion, in and about Alexandria and elsewhere in Virginia. It was just a ferry ride from Alexandria over to Oxon Hill Manor. Washington knew that ferry well and the terrain on the Maryland side. In fact, he took the ferry on that red-letter occasion in his life when he went north in 1775, first as a Virginia delegate to the Second Continental Congress at Philadelphia and later to assume command of the American forces at Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Had Washington included Oxon Hill in the federal district (and why he did not do so has never been clear), the grave of John Hanson today would be within the actual municipal limits of the city of Washington. And the grave would be there by the decision of no less than George Washington himself, Hanson's lifelong friend!

Here again we have another paradox—so typically Hansonian—since, in a very definite sense, President Hanson's grave *is* in Washington. Oxon Hill has been within the postal limits of Washington, D. C., ever since Washington has been the national capital. An excellent example is the address of Mrs. Brooke Kerby of Oxon Hill, who, incidentally, has organized a "John Hanson Club" in Oxon Hill to keep green the memory and local associations of the first President. For many years the Kerby family address has been 6757 Livingston Road, S.E., Washington 22, D. C., although the Kerby residence and farm on the Indian Head Highway are in Prince George's County and much farther south of the District line than Oxon Hill Manor. Recently the Kerby address was changed to 7095 Indian Head Highway, S.E., Washington 22. The Oxon Hill High School on the Indian Head Highway is also in the Washington 22 postal zone.

It can therefore be said that, despite Washington's unexplained decision not to include Oxon Hill in the federal district, our first President's ashes, like Washington's, *do* rest on the banks of the Potomac. However, there is a marked contrast, almost startling when soberly considered. John Hanson's remains are in what is virtually a part of the city of Washington, the area so carefully chosen by Washington himself to be the nation's capital forever. On the other hand, Washington's remains are *not* in the national capital which bears his name but at Mount Vernon, 16 miles from Washington. The entire annals of the republic reveal no weirder or enigmatic

quirk of destiny than this unfathomed chapter in American history.

Again, on the curious side, Thomas Hawkins Hanson, John Hanson's nephew, and his lady, "Lord" Thomas Addison's widow, after their marriage in 1778, lived at Oxon Hill Manor until 1784 or 1785 or until a year or two after President Hanson's death there. During these years Thomas Hawkins Hanson served as "regent" of the manor. The Hansons then leased the manor to Nathaniel Washington (*see Appendix E*), a relative of George Washington. Whereupon the Hansons moved to a place up the Anacostia River within the future site of the city of Washington.

Nathaniel Washington stayed at Oxon Hill Manor until 1793 when the estate reverted to the Rev. Walter Dulany Addison who was actually the owner of the manor during this "Washington period," having inherited it from his father, "Lord" Thomas Addison. Only a boy at the time of the lease to Nathaniel Washington, Walter Dulany Addison was legally precluded at such a tender age from claiming his rightful inheritance. Which explains the "regency" of Thomas Hawkins Hanson.

### A MYSTERY WITHOUT A KEY

We can logically assume therefore that George Washington visited Oxon Hill or was a guest there during the manor's so-called "Washington years." And, as we've told, it is known that Washington worshipped at St. John's Church at Broad Creek, the church of the Addisons, in which parish Oxon Hill Manor was and is still located.

In *The Life and Times of Walter Dulany Addison, 1769-1848* (Philadelphia, 1895) by Elizabeth Hesselius Murray, his granddaughter, appears the following pertinent paragraph:

"The traditions of the neighborhood tell us that General Washington used occasionally to worship in this old church (which is nearly opposite Mount Vernon), coming across the river in his eight-oared barge with his family, and that after service he might be seen taking snuff with the parson in the churchyard or discussing the crops or the profits of the seine with the farmers."

That Washington was well aware of the existence of John Hanson's grave in the Addison burying ground at Oxon Hill Manor and very likely visited it—since the cemetery was only a few paces from the manse—is another obvious conclusion. Why there is no mention of such a visit or visits to John Hanson's grave in Washington's meticulously kept diaries or in his voluminous correspondence and other writings is a mystery to which there seems to be no key.

Washington's lack of mention regarding John Hanson's grave is especially puzzling considering his intimate relations with both the Addison and Hanson families.

As shown by his own diaries (see index of the definitive Fitzpatrick edition), Washington was on extremely neighborly terms with the third, fourth and fifth owners of Oxon Hill Manor; namely, Col. John Addison, "Lord" Thomas Addison and the Rev. Walter Dulany Addison, also with "Regent" Thomas Hawkins Hanson and the numerous other Hansons thereabouts.

The above successive squires of Oxon Hill Manor, including "Regent" Hanson, visited, or were Washington's guests, sometimes overnight, at Mount Vernon. In 1760 Washington acquired "Clifton's Neck," immediately adjoining Mount Vernon, the largest single acquisition in his 47 years as a Potomac River planter. To clear the title completely, Washington paid Col. John Addison (1713-1764) a sizable sum to liquidate a prior financial claim Addison held on this large and highly desirable farm of 1,806 acres. Noteworthy among Washington's diary entries is John Hanson's three-day stay at Mount Vernon on April 20-22, 1772, while he was still residing in nearby Port Tobacco. Just before Christmas, 1785, "Regent" Hanson and his brother, Maj. Samuel Hanson, spent December 21-23 at Mount Vernon, fox-hunting with its master.

A friendship between Washington and the Rev. Jonathan Boucher, the previously mentioned Church of England clergyman and schoolmaster, who numbered among his pupils "Jacky" Custis, George Washington's stepson, extended over many years despite the latter's pronounced Loyalist views. In 1772 the Rev. Mr. Boucher married Eleanor Addison, "Lord" Thomas Addison's sister. On this occasion Washington wrote to Boucher: "I sincerely congratulate you upon the prospect of happiness; as I think there is a fair Field of it opening to your view from the judiciousness of choice." Eleanor (Addison) Boucher died in England in 1783 or 1784, having returned there with her refugee Loyalist husband.

There was still another strong Hanson-Washington family tie, particularly linking Oxon Hill Manor and Mount Vernon. George Washington placed his two orphaned nephews, George Steptoe Washington (1773-1809) and Lawrence Augustine Washington (1774-1824), sons of the general's brother, Samuel, as boarders in the home and under the supervision of Col. Samuel Hanson of Alexandria. This was during the Constitution I period, approximately 1786-1789, while the Washington boys were attending historic Alexandria Academy and Oxon Hill Manor was under lease to Nathaniel Washington. Col. Hanson, who commanded a body of Southern Maryland militia during the Revolution, was no less than the brother of President John Hanson and the father of "Regent" Hanson of Oxon Hill Manor and Maj. Samuel Hanson who also served in the war. George Washington named George Steptoe Washington an executor of his will, indicating the high regard and affection the uncle felt for this nephew.

The writer is indebted to Guy Castle, a descendant of the Addisons, for much of the preceding and following genealogical data, based on Mr. Castle's study of the Addison family records and his intensive researches in related fields. Mr. Castle, long resident in Oxon Hill, now lives with his wife, the former Countess Franca Battaglini di Gailgallo of Florence, Italy, and their four children near Oxon Hill Manor, the old home of his forbears.

Considerable of the data in the appendix of this book is also from Mr. Castle's pen. This material, published for the first time, adds some entirely new and valuable documentation to *Hansoniana* and *Washingtoniana* as well. Appendix C is particularly aimed to clarify in the reader's mind the various identities of the Oxon Hill Addisons whose similarity of names mentioned in our text may tend to be somewhat confusing.

"There is an old Addison family tradition that the Rev. Walter Dulany Addison, then only 14 years old, and his younger brother, John, then only 13, were present at President John Hanson's funeral and interment at Oxon Hill Manor," Mr. Castle informs the writer in a personal memoir.

"I early heard the story of President Hanson's death from my grandmother, Mrs. John H. Bayne, who clearly remembered events both before and after the Civil War and who died in 1932 at the age of 86 at Salubria. (*See Appendix F.*) She had it from her mother-in-law, Harriet Addison who in turn had it from her father, John Addison, who had told her about how he and his brother, Walter, had witnessed the burial service for President Hanson in the old Addison cemetery at the manor."

The Rev. Walter Dulany Addison was the first deacon of the Protestant Episcopal Church to be ordained by Bishop Thomas J. Claggett of Maryland, the first Episcopal bishop to be consecrated in the United States. He is also number 123 on Burgess' list of those ordained to the diaconate of the American Episcopal Church after its separation from the Church of England. He was one of the four Episcopalian clergy who officiated at George Washington's funeral at Mount Vernon in 1799. Thus we see that the Rev. Mr. Addison was present at the funerals of the two first Presidents of the United States of America, another distinction—and a most novel one—for this benevolent gentleman of the cloth. Another significant Washington-Addison coincidence is that the Rev. Mr. Addison's youngest brother, Thomas Grafton Addison, the lawyer, was a surety for George Washington's will when it was filed in the District of Columbia.

### THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

There is still another unusual angle to the John Hanson story. Before President Hanson's death at Oxon Hill Manor, he was most likely attended by the Addison family physician, Dr. William Baker, a neighbor of the

Addisons and their practitioner from 1774 until after the year 1802. Doubtless the skilled surgeon, Dr. William Beanes of Upper Marlboro, was also called in as consultant on the case.

Now Dr. Beanes was the husband of John Hanson's niece, Sarah Hawkins Hanson, who was married to the Prince George's County doctor on November 25, 1775. There was no issue. Dr. Beanes hence was "Regent" Hanson's brother-in-law since Thomas Hawkins Hanson and Sarah Hawkins Hanson were the son and daughter of Col. Samuel Hanson of Alexandria, President John Hanson's brother, whose wife was Ann (Hawkins) Hanson.

Dr. Beanes was a noted surgeon of the Continental Army during the Revolution and a prominent citizen of Upper Marlboro, the county seat of Prince George's County. His seizure and confinement, although a civilian, aboard the British fleet in the War of 1812 set in motion the chain of circumstances which gave birth to *The Star-Spangled Banner*. Francis Scott Key, who was born in 1780 near Frederick, then John Hanson's "home town," had gone boldly to the flagship of the British fleet off Baltimore to seek Dr. Beanes' liberation. Although successful in his daring quest, he was temporarily detained by the British. Witnessing the fleet's futile bombardment of Fort McHenry near Baltimore, he was inspired, in his exultation, to write the patriotic verses which became the lyrics of our national anthem.

Francis Scott Key was the lawyer and family friend of the Addisons. At least two Addison boys were named after him. Key even secured one of them an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point. One of the legible gravestones to be seen in the Addison cemetery at Oxon Hill Manor is that of Francis Key Addison, 1817-1849.

There has survived an Addison family manuscript memoir of "Regent" Thomas Hawkins Hanson in his Oxon Hill Manor days, written by Dr. Edmund Brice Addison, son of the Rev. Walter Dulany Addison, and furnished us by Mr. Castle. It reads as follows:

"... My grandmother married Thomas Hanson, a gentleman of good family, agreeable address and some accomplishments. I have heard him play on the piano which was not then a common instrument and on the violin. I remember well I liked him much. He was an enthusiastic sportsman. I remember his dogs and guns. He would go off on hunting expeditions and remain a week, returning loaded with game. I remember well the partridges, canvasbacks and the big silver tankard of ale and big bowl of apple toddy. Except when pursuing his sports, Mr. Hanson was a very indolent man, and of extravagant habits..."

Which prompts Mr. Castle to observe:

"Thomas Hawkins Hanson's uncle, John Hanson, was of a much more serious turn of mind but doubtless he found much diversion in his nephew's convivial company. Which was why he was visiting Oxon Hill Manor, very

likely seeking recuperation, after a serious illness which finally resulted in his death while under his nephew's roof."

### THE FIRST "FIRST LADY"

To pile Pelion on Ossa, the John Hanson story, with its dramatic Oxon Hill Manor finale, becomes even "curiouser and curiouser"—to quote Alice of *Alice in Wonderland*—when the close genealogical tie between the nation's first "first lady" and the Addisons of Oxon Hill is revealed.

But first let us give several tenable reasons why President John Hanson was buried at Oxon Hill Manor. It was mid-November, and the 18th century winter, which had set in, was more severe than the winters of today, even in Maryland. To have transported John Hanson's body to Frederick where his wife, Jane Contee Hanson, was buried when she died in Frederick in 1812, would have involved difficulties. Besides, embalming, as we know, was not practiced in those days.

There was, however, another significant reason, a family one. Surprising as it may seem, Jane Contee Hanson was the great granddaughter of the original Mrs. John Addison. The latter had first been the wife of Thomas Dent by whom she had a daughter, Barbara Dent, born after her husband's death in 1676. She then married Col. Addison in 1677 by whom she had their only son, Col. Thomas Addison, the builder of the Addison family manse. Her children, Barbara Dent and Col. Thomas Addison, were brought up together in the Addison home at Oxon Hill.

Barbara Dent married Col. Thomas Brooke, and their daughter, Jane Brooke, married Alexander Contee. Jane Contee, the daughter of the Alexander Contees, married President John Hanson.

Thus both Mrs. John Hanson's great grandmother (Mrs. John Addison) and her grandmother (Barbara Dent Brooke) had lived at Oxon Hill at one time, another most unusual and typical Hansonian coincidence.

From the above it is evident that Mrs. John Hanson was not averse to having her husband buried with the Addisons, her relatives. It is also possible she gave her assent then and there since she had likely accompanied her husband on his visit to Oxon Hill Manor and was with him when he died. Nor would such interment have been considered odd by the Addisons themselves since Thomas Hawkins Hanson had made the ties even more intimate by marrying into their family.

### OXON HILL MANOR'S NEIGHBOR

On Oxon Hill Road, opposite Oxon Hill Manor, is Salubria, another noted Oxon Hill estate, once part of the extensive Oxon Hill Manor tract. It was purchased in 1817 by Ebsworth Bayne and later became the home of his son, Dr. John Henry Bayne. It received its quaint name in 1827 when Dr.

Bayne started to practice medicine there and because of his interest in health. Although Ebsworth Bayne was not a physician, his son, grandson, great grandson and great-great grandson were. The house, a charming frame structure with a long portico, is remindful of Mount Vernon.

Dr. Bayne, surgeon and famed horticulturist, is credited with having been the first to perfect the cultivation of tomatoes after realizing their commercial possibilities as an annual crop and to have put them on the market for popular consumption. He was a friend of Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War in President Abraham Lincoln's cabinet, and, together with Surgeon General Joseph K. Barnes, attended Stanton in his last illness.

In pre-Civil War days Salubria was the scene of a tragedy to which Lincoln alluded in his famous Cooper Union address of February 27, 1860 when he referred to "occasional poisonings from the kitchen . . . the natural results of slavery." Three of Dr. Bayne's children—Catherine, John and George—were poisoned to death by their slave girl, Juda, who was hung for her crime in 1834 at Upper Marlboro. She was only 14 years old when executed and has since enjoyed the dubious fame of having been the youngest female in all American history, colonial or federal, ever officially put to death.

### III

## JOHN HANSON AND MULBERRY GROVE

**O**n Port Tobacco River in colorful Port Tobacco Valley—not far from Oxon Hill Manor, as has been noted in both text and appendix—is Mulberry Grove, John Hanson's birthplace in Charles County. Here John Hanson lived for the first 58 years of his 68-year life before his final 10 years as a resident of Frederick during which he served as first President in Philadelphia.

For directions how to reach Mulberry Grove from Washington via Waldorf and La Plata on U. S. Highway 301, see *Appendix D*. Highway 301, which passes through La Plata, the county seat of Charles County, is popularly known as "The Tobacco Trail." It is the main route traveled by motorists from Maine to Florida and directly links Baltimore and Washington with the key cities of the South of which Richmond is the first after crossing the Potomac River Bridge from Maryland into Virginia. The big bridge is only 13 miles from La Plata. The convenient location of Mulberry Grove to this important major artery of travel is readily apparent.

The Hanson homestead, built in 1700 by Samuel Hanson, John Hanson's father, the Maryland-born son of John Hanson, the youngest of the four Hanson boys who emigrated to New Sweden in 1642, was entirely destroyed by fire during the night of July 25, 1934, thereby suffering the same fate as the old Addison manse at Oxon Hill Manor in 1895.

### MULBERRY GROVE AND WAKEFIELD

With slight modifications, the house today at Mulberry Grove is a replica built on the same site by Dr. and Mrs. Edward J. Edelen, present owners of the former Hanson estate. Hanson House (as it is also called) may be compared with Wakefield, George Washington's birthplace in Westmoreland County, Virginia, on the other side of the Potomac to the south.

The house in which Washington was born in 1732 is no longer standing, having been destroyed by fire on Christmas Day, 1779. It was never rebuilt. The eight-room Memorial Mansion, erected on the site in 1930-31,

instead of being a replica of the original modest dwelling, represents allegorically an 18th century Virginia plantation house which has been furnished by The Wakefield National Memorial Association to portray living conditions as they were at the time of Washington's parents.

Hanson House, on the other hand, was faithfully reconstructed from authentic exterior and interior photographs of the old Hanson plantation mansion house furnished the Edelens by Charles County residents and the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Old materials were used almost exclusively by the Edelens in rebuilding John Hanson's birthplace. Into Hanson House went bricks and woodwork from the Bates-Lincoln House in Washington, demolished in 1950. The Bates-Lincoln House, a large mansion at 1775 N Street, N.W., was built in 1883 by Maj. A. E. Bates, later Paymaster General of the Army. After Maj. Bates' death, it was the home of Robert Todd Lincoln, the patriarchal son of President Abraham Lincoln, until 1915 when he moved to the Dunlop-Lincoln House, still standing in Georgetown, Washington, and where he lived out his ripe old age.

The first Hanson House, like so many examples of Maryland colonial architecture, was of frame construction with brick foundation. In the reconstruction, however, brick was chosen for the main part of the house. Bricks salvaged from the old house were used in the west wall and chimney. The double chimneys with pent on the east end—a feature of the old house—are typical of old mansions and houses which still abound in Southern Maryland.

On the second floor the door frames and oak flooring are from the former Martha Washington Seminary, a well-known Washington boarding school for girls, also demolished in 1950. Only the flooring on the first floor, although chosen with equal care, may be said to be modern. Here random-width pegged black walnut from Hagerstown, Maryland, was used. The dining room mantel, which closely resembles the original, came from the Bates-Lincoln House. The matching fanlights over the front entrance and between the drawing rooms are of exceptional interest as are the other decorative features of the house.

### AN UNFORGETTABLE VIEW

Hanson House is on a high bluff overlooking Port Tobacco River, a short tributary of the Potomac. Gazing below and toward the Potomac, one obtains an unforgettable view of Port Tobacco River. Time was when deepwater ships came up Port Tobacco River to unload their foreign cargoes and reload tobacco and other exports for England, the West Indies and elsewhere. Port Tobacco ceased to be an important Maryland Potomac River port when Port Tobacco River silted up from erosion.

Shading the house is the grove of old gnarled mulberry trees, lineal descendents of the original grove that gave the Hanson estate its name. To the west of the house where the lawn extends to the edge of the bluff that faces the river are the terraced gardens, famous in their day and now being gradually restored to their former beauty.

In the hall at Hanson House hangs a photographic reproduction of the aforementioned portrait of John Hanson by John Hesselius, also one of Hanson painted by Charles Willson Peale, the celebrated American portraitist who, like Hesselius, was a native of Maryland. The original Peale is in Independence Hall, Philadelphia. Hanson very likely sat for Peale while serving his pioneer presidential term in Philadelphia, then the nation's first federal capital. There is also a print at Hanson House which depicts the Presidents of the First and Second Continental Congresses and the eight Constitution I Presidents, headed by John Hanson, who served successively under the Articles of Confederation.

Mulberry Grove is now a 300-acre plantation, although in John Hanson's day, according to Port Tobacco tradition, it was nearer 1,000 acres in extent. In 1949 its area was 600 acres of which the Edelens bought one half. Of these 300 acres 125 acres are farmed. The plantation is in the heart of Port Tobacco Valley which, on both sides of Port Tobacco River, is five to seven miles long and about two miles wide. The valley is ideal tobacco land, now as when John Hanson was squire of Mulberry Grove. True to valley tradition, the Edelens each year plant many acres in tobacco. Like much of the tobacco grown in the valley and Charles County, the Edelens' annual crop finds its way into the popular and ubiquitous American cigarette.

### HANSON AND THANKSGIVING

It will be six years this November, 1956, that the Edelens moved into rejuvenated Hanson House shortly before Thanksgiving Day, 1950. The date was a most coincidental one and enables us to recount, as did Seymour Wemyss Smith and the writer for the first time in *John Hanson, Our First President*, how the first American national Thanksgiving actually began.

On October 11, 1782 in the latter days of his administration, President Hanson uncannily selected the fourth or last Thursday of November, 1782—or “this coming November 28,” as set forth in the proclamation—as the first national or federal Thanksgiving Day of the new constitutionalized republic.

Searching back into the beginnings of a great American holiday—one that Americans hold in such sentimental and nostalgic affection—we discover again the shade of John Hanson curiously looming up to offer another “believe-it-or-not” historical oddity for inclusion in the unorthodox annals of American history.

For years observed on the last Thursday of November, Thanksgiving Day, by fiat of Congress, is now always the fourth Thursday of November which is invariably the last Thursday of the month. In appointing November 28, 1782, President Hanson was hence right both ways. The Fourth of July, 1782, was likewise observed federally for the first time during John Hanson's administration.



Because of its romantic associations with John Hanson, Mulberry Grove is now a main attraction of the spring Charles County Tour, the regularly scheduled event of the annual Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage, held under the auspices of The Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland.

Other points of interest may be seen in Port Tobacco Valley and Charles County if the visitor's Charles County tour is extended. In the valley alone are Mount Carmel Monastery, St. Thomas' Manor and Chandler's Hope, outstanding among the earliest landmarks of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States; Habre de Venture, the home of Thomas Stone, the Maryland signer of the Declaration of Independence, often cited as one of the most unique colonial residences in Maryland; Rose Hill and La Grange, equally classic examples of 18th century Southern Maryland architecture. Habre de Venture (built on an arc of an imaginary circle) always has drawn visitors because of its novel construction. Col. Peter Vischer, the present owner, has brought added fame to Habre de Venture by breeding race horses and raising quality livestock and choice poultry.

### CHARLES COUNTY SHRINES

La Grange, named after the Marquis de Lafayette's country estate in France in honor of the great friend of American independence, was built about 1765 by Dr. James Craik, Washington's confidant of many years and family physician, who lived here until his removal to Alexandria in 1783. Dr. Craik was Surgeon General of the Revolutionary Army. Built about 1730, Rose Hill was the home of Dr. Gustavus Brown, also Washington's intimate associate and physician, who is buried on the magnificent estate.

Nothing shows more clearly the proximity of Mulberry Grove and Mount Vernon than the comparative short distance between Rose Hill and La Grange and Washington's estate. As Washington lay dying at Mount Vernon, just before Christmas, 1799, Dr. Brown was one of the three physicians hastily summoned. The two others were Dr. Craik and Dr. Elisha Dick, both of Alexandria. After this hurry call, Dr. Brown—as did Dr. Craik when he was summoned to Mount Vernon before 1783—only had to cross the Potomac by ferry and he was soon in consultation with his brother physicians at Washington's bedside.

Chandler's Hope (1639), built by Job Chandler, first settler in Charles County, and the birthplace of Leonard Neale, second Archbishop of Baltimore and at the time the highest ranking Roman Catholic prelate in the United States, sheltered the first four Carmelite nuns in the United States on their arrival from Europe in 1790. Mount Carmel Monastery, the first Carmel in the United States and also the first monastery established in this country by a contemplative order, was founded on October 15, 1790 by the same nuns (three of whom were Charles Countians and descendants of the Maryland colony in 1634) whose temporary nunnery was Chandler's Hope.

The chapel at St. Thomas' Manor (probably 1662) is one of the oldest surviving edifices of worship in the United States. The manor house was built in 1741 and the manor's St. Ignatius' Church in 1798. The manor played a significantly active role in initiating the Diocese of Baltimore from which sprang the whole Roman Catholic hierarchy of the United States. Here too lived the first Jesuit community of the restored Society of Jesus in the United States.

In the heart of Port Tobacco Valley are Stag Hall, another interesting 18th century house (about 1732), and Plenty, an ante-bellum estate dating back to 1787 whose house was built in 1824. Retreat, the home of Daniel St. Thomas Jenifer whose unusual name makes him one of the outstanding framers of Constitution II and who signed that document for Maryland, is only a few miles from Port Tobacco.

A pilgrimage guide is available from the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage, Room 217, Sheraton-Belvedere Hotel, Baltimore 2, Md.; The Society for the Restoration of Port Tobacco, Inc., Port Tobacco, Md., or the Chamber of Commerce, La Plata, Md. There is a map showing how to reach Mulberry Grove.

### **TO REBUILD PORT TOBACCO**

The first "Fall Tour of Port Tobacco Valley" was inaugurated in 1954 by The Society for the Restoration of Port Tobacco, bent on rebuilding Port Tobacco's famous colonial courthouse, destroyed in 1892 by a mysterious fire of political origin, it is said. Similar tours will be held annually until the necessary funds are realized for the courthouse's restoration. The reconstruction in replica of other notable buildings which once faced the old central square will follow successively until the village of Port Tobacco as it was in John Hanson's day—when it was a bustling seaport and a picturesque center of Southern Maryland social and cultural life—is entirely recreated. Details regarding the fall Port Tobacco Valley tours may be obtained by addressing the society in Port Tobacco. Mulberry Grove is also included on these fall Port Tobacco Valley annual tours.

Although tobacco has been a most important commodity in Charles County since the dawn of the white man's civilization in Maryland, Port Tobacco does not owe its name to the magic weed. The name is a perversion of an Indian word variously anglicized to Portofaco, Portopaco, Potobac and Portobatto and descriptive of the town's location between the hills. A marker on Port Tobacco Road, encountered on the way to Mulberry Grove, reads that "the Indian village of Potobac, visited in 1608 by Captain John Smith, occupied this site."

The sign also adds that Port Tobacco was the county seat of Charles County from 1658 to 1895 and that George Washington visited here frequently. On his journeys to lower Virginia, Washington found it much easier to cross the Potomac by ferry from or near Mount Vernon to Marshall Hall in Charles County on the Maryland side.

Washington's itinerary would then take him through Port Tobacco. Recrossing the Potomac by ferry farther down and, back in Virginia again, Washington would thereby avoid considerable rough and tedious travel. For the Chopawamsic Swamp made the road south of Mount Vernon well nigh impassable. On his travels, coming and going via Port Tobacco, Washington likely found Mulberry Grove a pleasant place to relax for a spell. Port Tobacco is frequently mentioned in Washington's diaries.

#### CIVIL WAR DRAMA

Port Tobacco is otherwise rich historically. Here was born the original Uncle Tom (Josiah Henson) of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Rose O'Neal Greenhow, the South's most glamorous and baffling woman secret agent, who actually resided in Washington during the conflict, was a native of Port Tobacco. Ishbell Ross' biography of Mrs. Greenhow describes Port Tobacco "as a small Maryland town brisk with shipping and commerce in the days before the Civil War but today a rural community."

Then there is the legend of "the blue dog," said to roam the hills around Rose Hill, a countryside tale that smacks of A. Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Rose Hill is also allegedly haunted by the ghost of Miss Olivia Floyd, said to have been another spy in hoopskirt for the Confederacy.

Toward the end of the Civil War there was a well formulated plot, headed by John Wilkes Booth, to kidnap President Lincoln and bring him to this part of Charles County so that he might be spirited across the Potomac, using boats hidden by Port Tobacco residents in Port Tobacco River.

The plot was represented in part by George A. Atzerodt, a Port Tobacco coach painter. He was one of the four persons hanged in Washington for complicity in President Lincoln's assassination.

Whatever parts its residents may have had in the kidnapping plot, Port Tobacco was unprepared for the tragedy which followed. Federal troops descended upon the town in search of Booth who was supposed to be hiding there. This was true, for Thomas A. Jones, a Charles County farmer who, undetected, had operated as a Confederate courier and undercover agent throughout the war, had Booth and his companion, David Herold, safely hidden in a thicket near what is now Bel Alton, south of Port Tobacco. In a few days Booth, broken leg and all, slipped safely across the Potomac, to be killed later in Virginia.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

To reach Oxon Hill Manor from the National Capitol, drive south on South Capitol Street, over the South Capitol Street Bridge, past Bolling Field. At the District line South Capitol Street becomes the Indian Head Highway. After passing through Forest Heights, turn right at the top of the hill into Oxon Hill Road where Rosecroft Farm and the new John Hanson Junior High School are readily recognized landmarks on the left. On the right, just before the main gate to Oxon Hill Manor, is Battery D, 601st AAA Battalion, U. S. Army.

### APPENDIX B

The first wife of Col. Thomas Addison (1679-1727) was Elizabeth Tasker by whom he had a daughter, Rebecca. The latter first married James Bowles of Sotterley on Patuxent and then, when left a widow, Col. George Plater by whom she had a son, George Plater (1753-1792) who was elected governor of Maryland in November, 1791 by the Maryland Assembly.

Col. George Plater acquired the Patuxent River property from Bowles' daughters and in 1730 built Sotterley, one of Maryland's renowned Georgian houses. However, credit for creating an estate in America, with all the refinements and elegance of an 18th century English country seat, should go largely to the four generations of Platers, including Gov. Plater, who lived at Sotterley from 1730 to 1822. Tradition avers that the governor's ghost drives up in a phantom coach and four to visit his old mansion. Shortly after George Plater became governor, negotiations were conducted between the federal government and Maryland which led to the location of the capital of the republic, then chiefly—later exclusively—on Maryland soil.

Sotterley was named after the English estate of the Plater and Satterlee families. Early in the 19th century, Sotterley passed from the Platers to the family of Dr. Walter Hanson Stone Briscoe, a descendant of President John Hanson. In 1910 it was acquired by Herbert L. Satterlee of New

York City, the lawyer, whose wife was a daughter of J. Pierpont Morgan, I, the noted financier. Interesting features at Sotterley are the Chinese Chipendale staircase, the shell cupboards and pine paneling, some of the finest woodwork in Maryland. The present owner is Mrs. Mabel Satterlee Ingalls.

## APPENDIX C

Five generations of Addisons, all men of wealth and distinction, were in turn the possessors of the Addison Oxon Hill property. Although, besides Oxon Hill, the Addisons owned other tracts and seats in Maryland, they regarded Oxon Hill as their home base. Friendship, one such a tract (originally 3,000 acres lying between Rock Creek and the Potomac), today survives in part as the 92-acre grounds and campus of The American University in the Wesley Heights section of Washington, Massachusetts and Nebraska Avenues, N.W. Friendship was owned by Col. Thomas Addison (1679-1727) of Oxon Hill and given as a wedding present to his daughter, Ann. and her husband, William Murdock, a Maryland delegate to the Stamp Act Congress of 1765. The price paid by the university for the 92 acres in 1895 was \$100,000.

The five successive owners at Oxon Hill were as follows:

I. Col. John Addison (1629 or 1630-1706); II. Col. Thomas Addison (1679-1727), both father and son serving as Privy Councillors of Maryland; III. Col. John Addison (1713-1764), a Justice of the Provincial Court; IV. Thomas Addison (1740?-1774), Lord of Oxon Hill Manor; V. The Rev. Walter Dulany Addison (1769-1848), the founder and rector of historic St. John's Church, Georgetown.

The brothers of two owners deserve mention because of their military merit and close association with the Washingtons. One was Maj. "Tommy" Addison, the younger brother of Col. John Addison, the third Oxon Hill proprietor. The other was Col. "Jack" Addison, the younger brother of "Lord" Thomas Addison, the fourth owner.

Maj. "Tommy" Addison (1715-1770) was a contemporary of Lawrence Washington, George Washington's half-brother, who built the original mansion house at Mount Vernon which George Washington inherited.

Lawrence Washington and "Tommy" Addison were educated in England. Both raised companies of American troops, outfitting them at their own expense, to engage in the "War of Jenkins' Ear." In that colonial war they jointly served as officers with the American forces in Adm. Vernon's 1741 Carthagena expedition to South America. After participation in that ill-fated campaign, they nearly died later from yellow fever in Jamaica.

By a strange fortune of war, "Tommy" Addison, who meanwhile had

fought in Europe as a regular British officer under the Duke of Cumberland at Fontenoy in Belgium (1745) and for George II at Culloden in Scotland (1746), was at the side of William Henry Fairfax when the latter fell mortally wounded from the same volley that killed Gen. James Wolfe during the capture of Quebec in 1759 in the French and Indian War as Europe's Seven Years War is known on this side of the Atlantic. Young Fairfax was Lawrence Washington's brother-in-law, he having married Ann Fairfax, daughter of William Fairfax of Belvoir on the Potomac, just a little below Mount Vernon.

Col. "Jack" Addison (1749-1806) was a gallant leader of Maryland troops during the Revolution and also served as aide to Gen. George Washington. Capt. Thomas Hawkins Hanson served under Col. Addison in the Maryland flying camp in the early years of the war and then married Col. Addison's sister-in-law, the widow Rebecca.

## APPENDIX D

We are indebted to Mrs. Brooke Kerby of Oxon Hill for the following data on "The John Hanson Trail," the quickest and shortest route between Oxon Hill Manor and Mulberry Grove.

On leaving Oxon Hill Manor, turn right on Oxon Hill Road and continue past historic St. John's Episcopal Church, the "Broad Creek Church." Oxon Hill Road leads into Livingston Road. Continue on this road through Silesia. This area was on the old Alexandria Road leading to the Oxon Hill-Alexandria Ferry, and many important characters, national and otherwise, passed over it. The noted White Horse Inn at what is now Silesia was host to countless celebrities and other important folk while the horses were being fed and rested. It has been said that the public affairs of the nation were discussed more frequently at The White Horse Inn than anywhere else in the neighborhood of Washington.

Hereabouts, besides Oxon Hill Manor, are such other notable places of interest as Harmony Hall, formerly Battersea; Fort Washington, formerly Warburton Manor, and Notley Hall. Harmony Hall was also built in 1723 by the same contractor who erected St. John's Church. The Rev. Walter Dulany Addison and his brother, John, brought their brides here in 1792 when Oxon Hill Manor was under lease to Nathaniel Washington. The two couples occupied the house for a year and gave it the present name, it is said.

Leaving Silesia, continue to the Indian Head Highway (Route 210); then turn right and follow the highway to Bryans Road. Here turn left on Route 224. Continue on Route 224 about two miles, watching carefully for the sign marked Route 227. Turn left on Route 227 to dead end of road.

Here turn right on road known variously as the Blue Dog Road, the Rose Hill Road or the Old Stage Coach Road. Continue on this road and cross over Route 225, straight ahead into Port Tobacco to Route 6. Turn left on Route 6 for about 100 yards, then turn right on Port Tobacco Road, past the historical marker and on to Mulberry Grove. The distance is about 28 miles, the driving time about 45 minutes. On the Blue Dog Road one passes Habre de Venture, the home of Thomas Stone, one of Maryland's signers of the Declaration of Independence, described in Part III of this guidebook.

Another route from Washington to Port Tobacco is first U. S. Highway 5, then U. S. Highway 301 via Waldorf and La Plata. On entering La Plata, about 25 miles from Washington and the county seat of Charles County, drive as far as "The Crossroads" at the junction of 301 and Port Tobacco Road. There is a Howard Johnson Restaurant on the southwest corner. Turn west and follow Port Tobacco Road past La Grange (see Part III) into Port Tobacco, a distance of about 4½ miles.

## APPENDIX E

Who was Nathaniel Washington, the squire of Oxon Hill Manor during its "Washington years"? In Part I we told how John Washington, the founder of the Washington family fortunes in America, by sheer chance met and married Anne Pope, the daughter of Nathaniel Pope, the Marylander who at the time was an affluent and influential planter of Westmoreland County, Virginia. John Washington decidedly improved his social status and chances for advancement by marrying Anne, and his descendants seemingly recognized this fact. For thereafter the name Nathaniel became a baptismal favorite through succeeding generations of Washingtons.

In 1759, John Washington's great grandson, Col. John Washington, married a cousin, Catherine Washington, who was descended from the original John Washington's brother, Lawrence. A son, born in October, 1762, was named Nathaniel in keeping with the Washington family's traditional respect for the memory of Nathaniel Pope. This Nathaniel ~~Pope~~ was a several degrees removed cousin of Gen. George Washington and also of Lund Washington, Gen. George Washington's estate manager. It was Lund Washington who, during the Revolution—following the general's instructions while in the field and absent from his estate—enlarged the Washington mansion house at Mount Vernon to its present dimensions. Lund Washington was descended from the original Lawrence Washington.

Nathaniel Washington's father died in 1782, leaving the son well fixed as to money and slaves. However, since he was not the oldest son, he did not inherit the family home. Several years later Nathaniel Washington

leased Oxon Hill Manor. Here he lived the happy and carefree life of an eligible bachelor, with an overseer—probably his younger brother—and 37 slaves.

He remained at Oxon Hill Manor until June, 1793, when he turned the estate over to the Rev. Walter Dulany Addison and his bride, the former Elizabeth Hesselius. Although the rector had inherited the manor at the age of five years, this was the first time he actually assumed ownership of his patrimony left him by his father, “Lord” Thomas Addison.

Nathaniel Washington seems to have developed a liking for Oxon Hill while the lessee of the manor. After acquiring a young wife, Margaret, and living for a time in Virginia, he returned to Oxon Hill and set himself up again in the old neighborhood. The census of 1800 reveals that in that year he was again residing in the Oxon Hill district with his wife and four small children, two boys and two girls. By that time his retinue of slaves had been reduced from 37 to 15. From this it can be surmised that he was no longer farming as intensively as before.

It is interesting to add that another Washington—Thomas Lund Washington—was associated with Notley Hall, another notable Prince George’s County estate which once adjoined Oxon Hill Manor to the south and which was mentioned in Appendix D. Since the beautiful brick structure may some day come into its own again, we believe the following facts have a pertinent value. A certain Notley Rozer (1673-1727) was the godson and principal heir of Gov. Thomas Notley of old Notley Hall which was located in another part of Maryland. Notley Rozer was raised at old Notley Hall by his grandmother, Lady Baltimore, and sometime after 1700 built his own Notley Hall on the Potomac.

When Francis Rozer, the fourth Rozer proprietor of Notley Hall on the Potomac, died in 1803, he left the hall and his 100 slaves to his young children, appointing his wife, Maria, as executrix and Thomas Lund Washington as trustee to aid her in executing the terms of the will. It is likely that Thomas Lund Washington and Lund Washington were closely related—perhaps first cousins. The above is cited as further evidence of the close association that existed between Oxon Hill, so conveniently reached from Mount Vernon, and the Washington family, including George Washington himself.

Oxon Hill visitors on their way to Mulberry Grove, or vice versa, will find Notley Hall’s large brick mansion, in an unrestored but habitable condition, still standing off Fort Foote Road in Oxon Hill, a mile north of old Fort Foote. The fort was built on the Rozer property by the Union Army during the Civil War to defend Washington. Two of the world’s largest muzzle-loading cannons ever built remain in the fort’s earthworks. Each cannon weighs 25 tons.

## APPENDIX F

Mrs. Thomas (Rebecca Dulany Addison) Hawkins Hanson (1750-1829), hostess at Oxon Hill Manor at the time of President John Hanson's death, following the death of her second husband (and sometime prior to November 10, 1810 when letters testamentary were issued) went to live with her son, John Addison, with whom she spent the rest of her life until her death in 1829 at his home. John Addison had resided in Georgetown, Washington, and at "Colebrooke," Prince George's County, Maryland. He died in 1835 and was buried at Oxon Hill Manor near his mother, Rebecca.

According to a memoir prepared by Guy Castle, Harriet Addison (1804-1879), her granddaughter, grew up in the constant company of her grandmother, Rebecca Hanson. Harriet heard all the stories of the old 18th century days at Oxon Hill Manor from Grandmother Rebecca's own lips, including the details of John Hanson's last illness, death and burial at the manor.

Harriet Addison in 1841 became Mrs. John H. Bayne and spent the rest of her life at Salubria. She repeated all Grandmother Rebecca's favorite recollections to her daughter-in-law, Mae Ashby Bayne, whose husband was Mr. Castle's grandfather. The latter, Dr. John W. Bayne, was president of the Washington Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution. Naturally keenly interested in the Revolutionary period, he encouraged his wife's reminiscences.

Mae Ashby Bayne was born in 1846 and died at Salubria in 1932. She too was fond of recalling the old bygone days and customs and telling her grandchildren all about them. It was thus that Guy Castle and her other descendants learned during their childhood at their grandmother's knee the story of John Hanson's death and burial at Oxon Hill Manor. Likewise other stirring tales of the old manor which have since become a part of Prince George's County established tradition.









University of  
Connecticut  
Libraries

---



39153029689439

