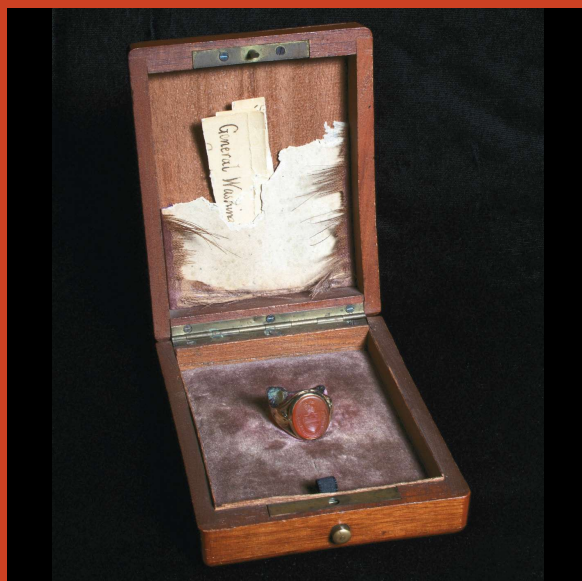
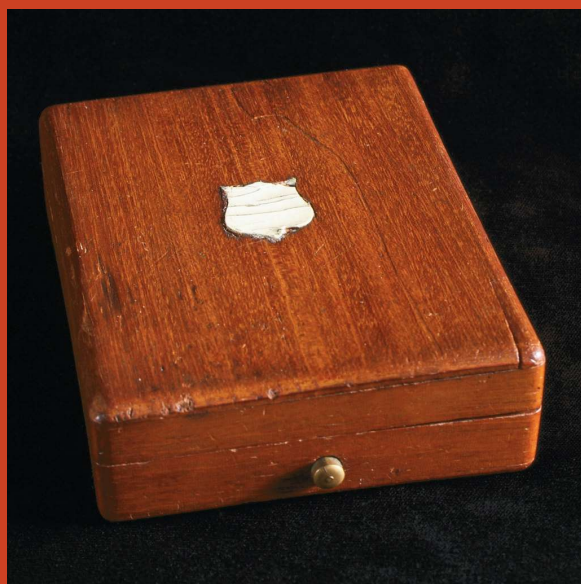


Winter 2013-14
Vol. 108, No. 3



Washington's Ring?



Did the signet ring owned by the SAR ever belong to George Washington? Maybe.

Commemorating the Battle of Point Pleasant

BY ROBERT L. "BOB" BOWEN, PAST HISTORIAN GENERAL

Battle Days is celebrated annually the first weekend in October at the confluence of the Ohio and Kanawha rivers in West Virginia. The weekend celebration commemorates the Battle of Point Pleasant, fought there on Oct. 10, 1774.

This past Oct. 4-6, eight state societies joined with President General Joe Dooley and Vice President General Lance Carter to help celebrate the 239th anniversary of the battle, in which more than 70 Virginia militiamen of the Augusta County Regiment were killed while fighting a force of Indians led by Shawnee Chief Cornstalk. The Indians lost 33 fighters in the day-long battle.

The three-day celebration began on Friday with nearly 450 fourth-graders from surrounding county schools gathering at Tu-Endie-Wei State Park for Education Day. That night, visitors attended a Candlelight Ceremony featuring re-enactors who told of their involvement in the battle. Saturday was devoted to a parade, Governor's Reception and Colonial Ball at the town's American Legion Hall. Sunday featured a Colonial Church Service, followed by lunch and the Memorial Service.

More than 50 wreaths were presented during the Memorial Service. Societies represented included California, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. The DAR and SAR were represented, as were a few other patriotic organizations.

President General Dooley served as grand marshal of the Saturday parade down Point Pleasant's Main Street, and he delivered the keynote address during the Memorial Service

on Sunday.

"All of us here today would likely regard the Battle of Point Pleasant as the first battle of the American Revolution," Dooley said.

"But I suppose most of you know that not everyone would agree with us. Many historians look upon Point Pleasant, which is also sometimes called the Battle of Kanawha, as a battle in Lord Dunmore's War.

"But I'm not sure this distinction matters. Let's put this battle into some historical context and consider what are the issues associated with the Battle of Point Pleasant.

"This conflict can be confusing. There are many 'moving parts,' so to speak, and it can be difficult to keep them straight. You might think this battle was just the British and the Americans on one side, and the Indians on the other. But when you examine this conflict closer, you discover that the relationship between the British and the Americans was already strained, and that while the Anglo-Americans were fighting some Indians, other Indians just sat on the sidelines, either passively supporting the British, or remaining neutral.

"The Battle of Point Pleasant was fought on Oct. 10, 1774. Let's consider what else had been going on.

"Eleven years earlier, King George III had issued the Royal Proclamation of 1763, forbidding American settlement and acquisition of land beyond the Appalachian Mountains. The proclamation probably contributed to the growing divide between the Colonies and Great Britain. Even though the boundary of where Americans could migrate and claim land was pushed westward in subsequent treaties, the British government refused to permit many new Colonial settlements for fear of instigating a war with Native Americans, and this angered Colonial land speculators.

"So what culminated here was the result of Britain's effort to lay claim to the Ohio Valley and extend its influence into Ohio and Kentucky. Britain sought to manage—really to control—Native Americans and to limit the migration of Anglo-Americans.

"But did Britain seek to gain a firmer grasp on this land for the use and benefit of its American subjects? Did Britain seek to manage the Indians so as to protect its American subjects? Or was the king more concerned about securing this land and clearing it of any inconveniences that might get in the way of his bestowing large grants of land to his favorites?

"Long before men took up arms to claim



Color Guardsmen and Camp followers from eight states assembled at the Point Pleasant Monument at Tu-Endie-Wei State Park following the annual Battle Days Parade; top right, President General Joe Dooley delivered the keynote address during Sunday's Memorial Service.

the land and remove the Indians, the British Indian Department under Sir William Johnson negotiated with various tribes of Native Americans, so that by the time of Lord Dunmore's War, the Shawnees were diplomatically isolated from most other American Indians. British diplomacy was conducted without any coordination with Americans, nor for the benefit of Americans, but for the benefit of the king and his favorites.

"Let's consider even further the historical context of the Battle of Point Pleasant. Only one month before, the First Continental Congress had met in Philadelphia. The Boston Tea Party had occurred only 10 months before, and the Boston Massacre was only four years earlier. Within the previous decade, the British Parliament had passed the Stamp Act, the Townshend Acts and the Coercive Acts.

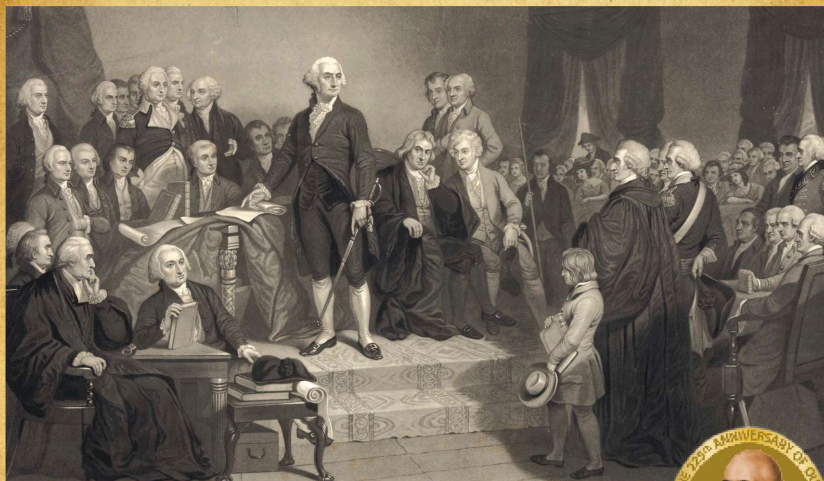
"Tensions between the British and the Americans were high, and the relationship was becoming more strained every day. By October of 1774, the storm clouds of revolution had already begun to gather. Dunmore could hear the rumblings of rebellion. Many Virginians suspected Dunmore had intentionally arrived late at Point Pleasant so as to isolate the Virginia militia under Andrew Lewis. Did Dunmore really want the Shawnees to destroy the Virginians before the British regulars arrived? Many Virginians would later wonder whether Dunmore had hoped to eliminate the militia so that if revolution took root here, he could crush it more easily.

"Only six months after the Battle of Point Pleasant, the shot heard round the world would be fired on Lexington green. Fourteen months after Point Pleasant, Dunmore would be driven out of Virginia by some of the same militiamen who fought under him here. Before he was driven out of Virginia, Dunmore would court Native Americans to become British allies—including some of the same Indian tribes the Virginia militia had defeated at Point Pleasant.

"Whether we regard the Battle of Point Pleasant as a battle of Lord Dunmore's War, or as a battle of the American Revolution, what it seems to underscore is that British interests and American interests were not aligned, that they were becoming increasingly misaligned, even at cross-purposes, and that the gulf between Britain and its American subjects was becoming wider than the Atlantic Ocean.

"Today we honor the men who fought and died here. These men may not have known they were fighting for American independence, but they were determined to accept nothing less than their freedom."

The 225th Anniversary of our First President



The **SAR Foundation** is proud to offer our 2014 lapel pin in commemoration of the 225th Anniversary of the Inauguration of George Washington as our first President on April 30, 1789.

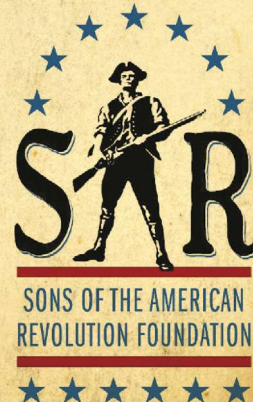


This lapel pin is the fifth in a series that have been offered in recognition of a donation of \$100 or more to the SAR Foundation. These and other donations will be used to help renovate the headquarters of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution on West Main Street in Louisville. The SAR Foundation, Inc. will also be housed there. The SAR Center for Advancing America's Heritage is the means by which the SAR conducts educational outreach. When the SAR headquarters is completed, the SAR Center will be better able to provide educational programs – on-site and throughout the country as more programs are developed.

Sworn in by Robert Livingston, the Chancellor of New York, Washington became the first President of the United States following the ratification of the Constitution.

The inaugural ceremony took place at noon on April 30, 1789 at Federal Hall in New York City, where the first United States Congress was meeting. Washington took the oath of office on the second-floor balcony, in view of throngs of people gathered on the streets. Chancellor Livingston proclaimed, "Long live George Washington, President of the United States!" which was followed by cheers from the crowd and a 13-gun salute.

For additional information about the SAR Foundation, please visit www.sarfoundation.org. Donations may be made on-line or mailed to the SAR Foundation, 1000 South Fourth Street, Louisville, KY 40203. We appreciate your continued support, which will allow us to complete the construction of the SAR Center's new home. In a longer view for your legacy, please fit the purposes of the SAR Foundation in support of the SAR Center for Advancing America's Heritage into your estate plans and include it as a bequest into your will or trust. Please call our office for any assistance required at 502-315-1777.



The SAR Foundation is recognized by the IRS as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.