

Courtesy of Earth Design Associates

NEWS FROM WESTON

SUMMER - FALL 2026

Letter from the President

For better or worse, the world is on the fast track for change—everything from climate change to AI. Thankfully not Weston, as it remains a special place not so different from what it was a century ago. This is not just happenstance but because of the hard work and dedication of the Antiquarians who preserve Weston and celebrate the Nourse family's important contributions. None of this would be possible without the wonderful support from you, our Friends.

This year has been busy and successful! Our committee chairs have been hard at work with support from the membership. Beth Lynn and Livia Mitchell, co-chairs of the house committee, have done an excellent job of overseeing repairs to the house. The landscaping chair, Mary Ashton, has worked hard this year to supervise and schedule maintenance of the Weston grounds. Both the house and Weston grounds look great! School tours have been very successful under the direction of Ellen Steiner and Beth Lynn, co-chairs of the education and tours committee. The docents for these tours deserve our thanks, as visitors are most appreciative of their preparation. Progress is being made with the kennel renovation. As the budget was strained, we approached our architect, Rick Shepherd (partner, Hinckley Shepherd Norden, Architects), for design changes that would save money. We have changes to the ceiling design and some electrical features, with completed plans awaiting the County's approval. Our public Open Meeting in March was a wonderful success with historian Bob Jacobs speaking on the American Revolutionary War. Last September, WAS visited historic "Salubria," in Stevensburg, Virginia, and in April, we visited the Cold War Museum at Vint Hill; both trips were arranged by Blair Lawrence. Mary Ashton has been working hard on research projects about the Nourse family and our archivist, Anne Van Ryzin, has been providing valuable information in support of Mary's research. These are some highlights of the year's past activities. Please enjoy the articles in this Newsletter for more on the research projects and other news of Weston.

The Antiquarians look forward to the future but, as with many non-profit organizations, funding will be a challenge. We are exploring ways to find funds that will keep us on track with our mission to preserve Weston and celebrate the Nourse family.

As always, without the support of the Friends of Weston, we would struggle and so many of these achievements would not be possible.

Butter Strother
President

Round Up – 2025 - 2026

Weston's New Sign



With the approval of the Virginia Department of Transportation, the stone posts, originally built by the Nourse family, will no longer keep the location of the Weston house and farm museum a secret. A bronze sign with Weston's address will be affixed to the right post by early fall. The photo to the left shows a mock-up of how the sign will look.

Mystery Shoes



A pair of 18th-century shoes with the scripted name "Nourse" was found in a trunk at Weston. Thanks to Meaghan Reddick, who wrote her graduate thesis on the history of shoes in America, it was quickly learned that this brocade pair was made in New York City during the period 1786 to 1802 by a master craft person. We are currently exploring for whom these shoes were made and why they might have been saved. For more information about this mystery and our findings to date, please visit Weston's website, www. historicwestonva. org/projects.

Wildflower Walks



From early spring to fall, Weston provides a visual bounty of native plants of the Piedmont. Five walks this year — from the main house to Turkey Run — acquainted dozens of visitors to these flowers, shrubs and trees along with the eco-systems that support them. Thanks to funding from the Virginia Native Plant Society, Piedmont Chapter, a guide to these plants is available. Please contact Mary Ashton if you would like a guide or information on upcoming walks, 540.229.0114.

Repairs to Antiques



Eight dining room chairs from the 1800s were repaired and reupholstered, and three of Constance Nourse's large oil paintings were cleaned, removing the accumulated smoke and dust from the past century. Many thanks to the generous Friend of Weston who dedicated funds to make these repairs possible.

April Open House



We love having children visit during our Open House at Weston. This year they experienced a new feature, a scarecrow. In addition to providing tours, presentations and games, children were able to learn about and dress up our two new scarecrows.



Treasures Rediscovered

What do a pair of brocade shoes and a 90-year-old obituary have in common?

As a museum that was once the home of the Nourse family, Weston is filled with treasures. Some are currently displayed in the main house, such as the china Rebecca Nourse, Charles Nourse's mother, painted and sold to support the "free" church her dying daughter, Phoebe, left a purse of gold to build (St. Albans Church in Washington D.C.) or the samplers made by Nourse and Carroll women going back to the 1700s. Others have been stored away and only revisited when new information bring them back to our attention, sometimes with interesting details that should be shared.

Recently, Weston has rediscovered two new treasures: a pair of brocade shoes (ladies slippers) now known to be almost 250 years old and inscribed with the name "Nourse" on their linen lining; and an obituary of Annie Simpson Nourse, the wife of Charles Nourse of Weston and the mother of Constance, Mary, Walter and Charlotte. While information about these shoes and their remarkable history has been posted on our website, www.historicwestonva.org/Projects, Annie's excerpted obituary from the February 21, 1935 edition of the Fauquier Democrat has been included below.

This obituary, written by Constance Nourse, the eldest of the Nourse siblings, includes the recounting of Annie's memories of her childhood and the story of her life raising a family after the death of Charles Nourse in 1906. Research regarding the Simpson and Carroll families continues.



This photo is from a week-long house party at Weston in August 1909 with Nourse family cousins. Constance, Annie's oldest child, had previously visited the homes of relatives around the country – New York, Arkansas and along the Virginia coast where Annie grew up. Annie is seated in the middle with dark attire and hat.

Annie Carroll Simpson's Obituary from the Fauquier Democrat, Feb. 21, 1935

Written by Constance Nourse. Errors in spelling, punctuation, terminology and some historical data found in the original copy have not been corrected.



Annie Carroll Simpson Nourse (1858-1935), wife of Charles Nourse of Weston.

"Annie Carroll Simpson was born at "Ellerslie" Isle of Wight County, Virginia on September 17, 1858 in the high day of the gayety, hospitality and plenty of the Old South.

Her mother was Anne Constance Wrenn and her father was James Wallace Simpson, then owner of four James River plantations, "Siths Castle," "Ellerslie," "Lornes Creek," and "Hog Island." He was born and spent his youth at "Bacon's Castle," Surrey County, Virginia then owned by his mother. He was killed in 1860 while trying to train his fox hunting horse "White Stockings" to drill in the leading of a volunteer Company of Virginia Cavalry.

During the Civil War, James River plantations became untenable habitations for women and children and "little Annie Simpson" with her young mother, her little sister, five other children (cousins) and a colored driver, refugeed in a covered

Continued on Page 4



Ellersie, childhood home of Annie Simpson Nourse, in Surry, Virginia

Annie Carroll Simpson's Obituary

(Continued from page 3)

wagon to North Carolina, a section less a battlefield, to "Carrollton," the plantation of her great uncle Thomas Carroll, who, during the war gave home and refuge to many of the women and children of his less fortunate relatives. At the close of the war, she, still a little girl, returned to Ellerslie with her mother, where they, with only "Mammy Nellie" lived the first difficult days of a new order. Her mother died at "Ellerslie" July 7, 1868. At ten years old she had already lived so much, and everything of the heritage of love, happiness and material possessions to which she had been born was wiped away, but in these childhood days of bitter loss and personal tragedy, she had already the qualities of smiling loveliness and gallant courage that she carried with her to the end of the "tale that is told."

Then followed her growing up years, living in the home of relatives, and of these she loved "Shoal Bay" most dearly. With its deep green box and radiant crepe myrtles, and the view of the broad James River, it gave her memories of the peace and beauty that she carried with her all her days. It was there too, that she saw and loved the great comets of her youth.

When the Shoal Bay house was destroyed by fire, she was faced with the necessity of self support, and was governess to the grand-children of Bishop Boone, with relatives in North Carolina, and in 1883 came to Casanova, Virginia as governess in the family of Dr. Robert I. Hicks at "Poplar Springs." Out of the two years that she spent at "Popular Springs" there grew some of the closest friendships of her life. Her pupils there were the young Hicks, Carters and Randolphs who gave her admiration and love and to them she was known to the end of the way as "Miss Annie."

In Smithfield, Virginia on August 12, 1885, Annie Carroll Simpson married Charles Joseph Nourse and came to live at "Weston," Casanova, Virginia. Mr. Nourse was the son of Rebecca Morris of Philadelphia, and Major Charles Joseph Nourse, Adjt. Gen. U.S. Army, early vestryman of St. John's Church, Washington, and builder of the "Highlands." Mr. Nourse was born in Washington and spent his childhood at "Bolon" in Pennsylvania, the home of his grandfather, Anthony Morris. He was a graduate of Princeton University and spent many active years in New York where he was also a vestryman of Trinity Church.

At the death of her husband in 1906, Mrs. Nourse was again faced with the problem of making a support not only for herself, but also for her four children. While carrying on the business of farming at "Weston" she then organized the Weston Home School, of which she was Principal, with boarding and day pupils from this and other localities, for the purpose also of educating her own three younger children and preparing them for college entrance. Mary Pemberton Nourse entered Vassar in 1910 and graduated there with perhaps the greatest honors ever given, and then began the study of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. The Mary Pemberton Nourse Fellowship at Vassar is a memorial to her brilliant mind, radiant personality, and the greatness of her spirit.

In 1915 Mrs. Nourse organized a branch of Belgian Relief and under her leadership the women of Casanova made many little black aprons and other garments for the children of devastated areas.

In 1917 she organized at Casanova the first Red Cross branch in Northern Virginia, and this branch becoming later subsidiary to the later organized Warrenton chapter, and of this branch Mrs. Nourse was chairman until 1925.

In 1918 and '19 she was Receiving Hostess at the Y.M.C.A. Hostess House at Camp Lee, Virginia.

Continued on Page 5

The loss of Mary Pemberton Nourse. *According to records provided to WAS by Vassar College, Mary Pemberton was recognized for "a life of such promise." In 1916, the fall after her death, an "In Memorium" written by a classmate states the following: "Already there had been real achievement,—she had managed almost entirely by herself her preparation for college, … she had been a most efficient editor-in-chief of the Miscellany (Vassar's newspaper), ... she had won the Borden Fellowship, had completed two years of study in the medical school of the University of Pennsylvania, had won a Sutro Scholarship for the coming year, and had planned to complete her medical work at the University of Chicago. It was all preparation, ... for effective public service, and both her comtemporaries and her friends ... looked confidently for the work she would do. "She was the person in our class," said one of her classmates "who, we were sure, would do fine and big work." … It was all too quickly lived." Mary's classmates and fellow alumni established a Mary Pemberton Nourse Fellowship which still exists today and provides funding for graduates of Vassar and others to attend medical school and/or graduate work in Public Health.*



Photo of Mary Pemberton from Vassar's 1914 yearbook. The yearbook verse describing her reads as follows: "Ernest, persevering, and level-headed, too. We're very glad that we could give the Borden Fund to you."

(Continued from page 4)

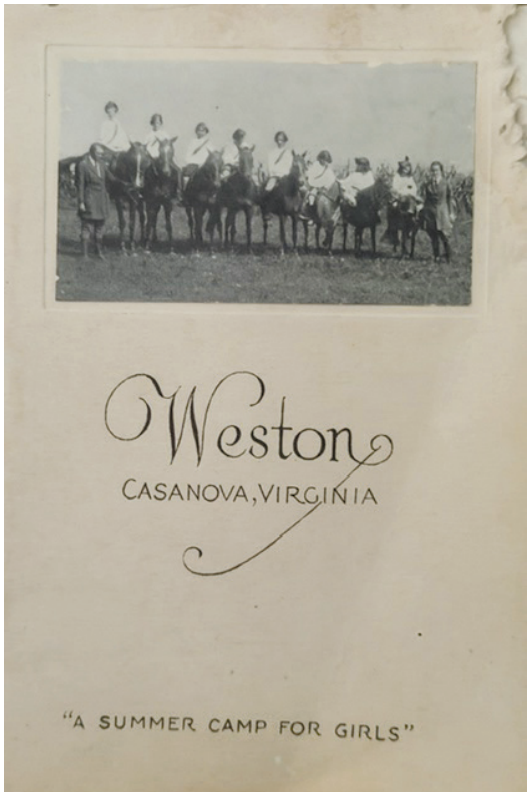
In 1922 Mrs. Nourse organized at Weston a summer camp for girls, which made much happiness for many children during the summers of 1922–23–24. ...

In 1924 Mrs. Nourse was desperately ill. In the time of this illness she laid by the care and responsibility, the fret and hurry of ordinary life, but tho the possibility of physical activity was gone and never returned, she did not lose her intense interest in life. ...

One of her greatest and most lasting interests in later years was the Casanova Hunt. Her long inheritance of the love of fox hunting, and early memories of the sound of horns at dawn, in the dearly loved James River country of her youth, gave her a love of those beautiful things that brought her much keen happiness. ...

Long ago someone wrote of the "ever widening circle those who love Weston," and in a recent letter there is this — "My heart is full of the spirit which fills Weston." That spirit has always seemed to be so beautiful and so peaceful, and the source was Mrs. Nourse. ...

Mrs. Nourse died at the closing of the day a little before 6 o'clock on Thursday, January 24, 1935. She was buried at Grace Church, Casanova, Virginia in the morning of Saturday, January 26. "How beautiful it was at the Grace Church, the earth, white with snow, chased and hushed, the peace and beauty of the little church, so loved so long the high challenge of the service to great living; it all seemed just as she would've had it. It was as if Mrs. Nourse directed our steps again to that high pathway toward which she always guided." ■



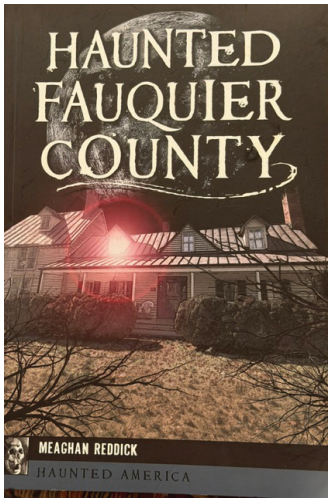
Two New Books About Weston

The first new book, Triumphant in Spirit, is a comprehensive collection of primary source letters, journal entries, and historical notes chronicling the lives of Walter Nourse (son of Charles Nourse of Weston), his wife, Jessie Dennett Nourse, and their daughter Joan Winsor Nourse. The narrative spans from the late 19th century through the mid-20th century, capturing their personal experiences intertwined with the major events of World War I, the interwar years, and World War II. The content offers intimate insights into wartime love, family tragedy, public service, and philosophical reflections on life, war, and society, all set against the backdrop of their home in Casanova, Virginia where Walter grew up. This book extends the story of the Nourse family's history of public service, beginning with Joseph Nourse's to George Washington and five following Presidents. Written by Ron Hoffman, it is scheduled to be published and available for purchase in 2027.



Walter Nourse and his daughter, Joan, in WW II uniform

The second book, Haunted Fauquier County, by Meaghan Reddick, has been reviewed by Christina Roderick, teacher, herbalist and resident of Casanova.

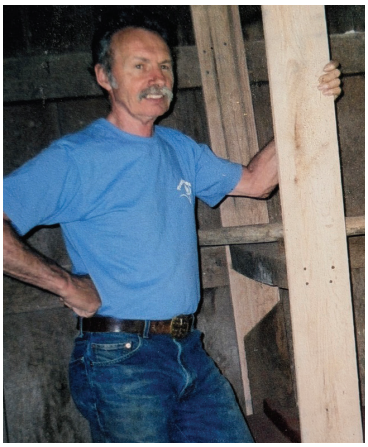


Strange noises can be explained away, but apparitions, orbs and items falling off tables can be hard to understand. These mysterious happenings and more are part of Meaghan Reddick's book, Haunted Fauquier County. Reddick, who is a local historian, brings the history of our county to life with stories from the past, while offering first-hand accounts of odd occurrences that cannot be explained. She begins by sharing a variety of mysterious experiences at Weston that are told by our very own Casanova resident, Antiquarian, and former caretaker of Weston, Betsy Anderson. Next, Meaghan travels throughout the county to places that include Grace Church, Vint Hill, Blantyre, and the Old Jail in Warrenton and gives us insights from the past that help to explain some modern-day hauntings. Bumps in the night may take on new meaning after reading this book. Copies are available online through retailers such as Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and the Old Jail Museum in Warrenton. ■

Blacksmithing at Weston

By Laurie Starke

For decades, starting in the 1990s, the Antiquarians have opened the many doors of Weston's outbuildings for student tours. We don't have an exact count but educated guesses estimate that many hundreds of children have visited the farmstead. By far, one of the most popular stops on the tour is the Blacksmith Shop. During the Open House last year, a young girl came through the front gate to sign in with her parents and sister. She had been on a recent visit with her classmates from P. B. Smith Elementary School in Warrenton. As she gazed around the property, she suddenly exclaimed, "I hear him! I hear him!" She was excited to introduce her family to Mr. Alex O'Dell, our volunteer Blacksmith who was working away at the forge and whom she had watched the previous spring. With hammer and heat, he was making nails for the children to see and perhaps finish.



Nol Putnam

O'Dell, who recently retired after 27 years as principal at Mary Walter Elementary School in Fauquier County, Virginia, has been blacksmithing for 43 years, starting at age 19. He says that he was influenced by such TV shows of the 1970s as Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone. Then, after watching a video from Williamsburg he became "completely hooked." While in college he started working at blacksmithing seriously, spending his weekends learning the craft. His focus then was on Colonial-period gun works, reproducing tools and methods, and learning how to make the parts of a gun—barrels, locks, and the "furniture"—all the metal attached to the wooden stock that's not part of the firing mechanism.

At Weston's blacksmith's shop, O'Dell says, he "allows kids to try to hammer something" if the student shows interest in seeing what they can do themselves. "Forge and fire can inspire," he added, but said that not a lot of people are getting into 18th-century house hardware or tooling, "especially since it takes years to learn hammer and eye coordination."

Weston's Blacksmith Shop, which dates to 1870, was used to forge iron farm and kitchen tools, horse shoes, decorative items, machinery parts, hinges, nails, as well as to sharpen knives, sickles and mower blades. The forge, anvil, bellows, fire pit, chimney, and grindstone are housed in a wooden building with a dirt floor, to help prevent fires, a metal roof, and windows to provide fresh air. In the 1870s, farmers in the area —and much of Virginia— didn't produce iron themselves, most often obtaining it from local blacksmiths, who in turn got it from regional suppliers or rail-delivered shipments. The spread of railroads post-Civil War made it easier to source pig iron or iron bars for small towns and rural areas such as Fauquier County. Warrenton's spur connecting to the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, ran right through Casanova. Charles Nourse may have had thoughts about running a commercial forge at Weston but no records exist showing that he did. Fuel for blacksmith forges in that era typically came from charcoal and coal, depending on availability, cost, and type of forge.

Three other men have also helped us with blacksmithing at Weston. Early on, Nol Putnam, a master blacksmith and iron artist of the White Oak Forge in The Plains (and later in Rappahannock County, Virginia), came to Weston to help Edward Ashby, our stonemason, figure out how to best repair the chimney and get the bellows working. Mr. Putnam, who died in 2023, is well known for having shared his craft with the National Cathedral in Washington DC, including the wrought-iron Folger Gate in the Columbarium in the Cathedral's crypt. Photo of Nol here.

Steve Crist, who had worked off and on with Mr. Putnam and considers him his mentor, helped Mr. Putnam install the bellows which the latter had rebuilt for the Weston forge. Mr. Crist, a 35-year veteran of the telecom industry, volunteered as our first "full-time blacksmith." Starting in 2008 after he retired, Mr. Crist focused on making the shop safe for children. He also provided historic advertisements of blacksmith equipment to help confirm the dates of vintage items, and donated a large post drill—a hand-cranked mechanical drill press—now housed in the workshop building. Mr. Crist also made tools for the Weston forge, including a shovel and rake, and made brackets for the black-powder rifle which hangs in Weston's log living room. "I forged them, rusted them and used screws from an old chair from 1900 that my Grandma had," he says. Mr. Crist, who has been forging for 44 years, originally started out in woodworking but couldn't find the right tools. He found out about the Blacksmith Guild of the Potomac, visited a forge in Arlington, Virginia, which he joined, later becoming their librarian, a position he held for 19 years. He is also a member of the Blacksmith Guild of Central Virginia and the Artist-Blacksmith Association of North America. In the blacksmithing community, he says, "if you know how to do it, they expect you to share and teach."



Alex O'Dell

Most recently the hammer and heat have been in the hands of Terry Mitchell, married to Antiquarian Livia Mitchell who saw a vacancy and need and suggested he give it a try. Terry, who worked with horses while growing up in Montana and is now retired from the Army and government service, loves teaching and says "hands-on" experience is the best teacher. Terry has written about his experience as a docent in the Blacksmith Shop at Weston (Page 7).

The Blacksmith Shop will be open again for school tours in the coming year. The Warrenton Antiquarian Society is very grateful to these four men for sharing their time and expertise teaching children the history, artistry, and science of blacksmithing. ■



Steve Crist making a shovel blade for the forge

A Docent in the Blacksmith Shop

By Terry Mitchell

While I cannot claim any formal experience as a blacksmith, I was exposed to the trade working on a cattle ranch in Montana and owning horses. When I learned there was a need for a docent in the Blacksmith Shop, I decided to give it a try. I have always enjoyed history, working with my hands, and spending time with children, so the opportunity seemed like a natural fit. It has been a rewarding way to share the history and craftsmanship of the blacksmith's trade with visitors while continuing to learn something new myself.

My goal in the Blacksmith Shop has been to make history come alive by combining hands-on activities with practical lessons that reinforce concepts the students are already learning in school. I also try to help them understand what everyday life on a farm was like during the 1800s and early 1900s.



Terry Mitchell with school children from P.B. Smith Elementary School

The Blacksmith Shop and Its History
The shop itself is full of history. Nearly every tool has a story to tell—the forge, bellows, anvil, vise, sharpening wheel, antique side saddle, and the different styles of horseshoes—all provide opportunities to discuss how people lived and worked before modern machinery.

The Anvil and Newton's Third Law
I explain that the anvil is extremely dense and provides a solid surface that allows the Hammer's energy to be transferred efficiently into the hot metal. It is a good example of Newton's Third Law of Motion—every action has an equal and opposite reaction—which many students are learning in science.

Heating Iron
I first ask the students to try bending a cold iron bar. They quickly discover that it is almost impossible. I then explain that when iron is heated, the atoms vibrate more rapidly, allowing the metal to become softer and easier to shape. Once the metal cools, it hardens again and retains its new shape. This provides a simple introduction to thermal energy and the effects of heat on materials.

The Forge and Bellows
We discuss both the traditional hand-operated bellows and the mechanical blower, and how they force air into the fire. More oxygen allows charcoal to burn much hotter, producing the heat needed to work iron. I often let the students operate the bellows so they can see how increasing the airflow changes the fire. We also discuss the shape of the forge chimney and how it creates a draft that carries smoke away while helping maintain an efficient fire.

Hands-On Blacksmithing
Whenever possible, I let the students use the anvil, hammer, and vise, with safety glasses, a smaller hammer, close supervision, and plenty of coaching to finish nails that I have already started. It gives them a chance to experience what a blacksmith actually did and helps keep them engaged throughout the demonstration.

The Corn Seeder and Simple Machines
Outside the shop is an old corn seeder that provides an excellent example of a compound machine. It incorporates several simple machines, including the wheel and axle, levers, wedges, and inclined planes. I connect these components to what the students are learning in school, and occasionally one of the teachers expands on the discussion, which makes the lesson even more meaningful.

The Wooden Jack
The wooden jack is another favorite teaching tool. The corn seeder probably weighs over 400 pounds and, with a couple of teachers sitting on it, the combined weight can approach 800 pounds. I ask the students whether they think they could lift it. Even the teachers usually cannot move it by hand. Then I demonstrate how the lever on the wooden jack provides mechanical advantage. Suddenly, even some of the smallest students can lift the seeder—and the teachers sitting on it. It is a memorable demonstration of how simple machines multiply force, while also giving the students confidence in what they can accomplish. Every child who wants to participate gets a chance, and I closely supervise the activity to ensure the jack handle cannot spring back unexpectedly.

The Measuring Wheel (Waywiser)
If time permits, I finish with an old measuring wheel, historically known as a "waywiser" or odometer, which was used to measure the circumference of iron rims for wooden wagon wheels. I ask the students how they would measure a large circle without using a tape measure. They come up with some creative ideas, but very few think of a measuring wheel. This naturally leads into discussions about mathematics, measurement, and the origin of the automobile odometer.

These are just some of the lessons I try to share during the 10 to 15 minutes I spend with each group. It is not a long time, but I hope the students leave having learned something new while enjoying themselves. More importantly, I hope the experience stays with them long after they leave the museum.

One of the most rewarding moments has been seeing students return during their lunch break to finish making a nail or to start another one. I have also been pleased to see that many girls are just as eager to participate as the boys. Blacksmithing isn't just a "boy thing"; it captures the interest of anyone who enjoys learning by doing.

Terry Mitchell is the husband of Livia Mitchell, Antiquarian member since 2018 who is also co-chair of the Weston House Committee. After serving for 27 years in the U.S. Army, working in intelligence and technology, followed by another 14 years in government service, Terry moved with Livia to Fauquier County to return to a quieter country life. ■

Warrenton Antiquarian Society
Post Office Box 239
Warrenton VA 20188

Published by the
Warrenton Antiquarian Society

Butter Strother,
President

Anne Van Ryzin,
Archives

Lee Thompson,
Friends of Weston

Blair Lawrence,
Preservation and Restoration

Newsletter Committee:
Mary Ashton
Ellie Kay
Lauren Starke
Butter Strother

www.historicwestonva.org

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Warrenton Antiquarian Society is to preserve, interpret and share educational resources related to local artistic, agricultural and family histories.

In Celebration of Our 250-Year Anniversary…

Joseph Nourse, *grandfather of Charles Nourse of Weston, served as the primary financial officer during the Revolutionary War, first becoming Assistant Auditor General for the Continental Congress and then, in 1781, Register of the Treasury. Joseph, with his wife Maria, moved to the New York City area to serve in this position in 1785, shortly after their marriage. In 1789, President George Washington formally appointed Joseph Register of the Treasury under the new federal government, making him the country's first civil servant. From 1789 to 1829, he played a key administrative role in the early financial operations of the United States. Although not a military patriot, Joseph's knowledge, integrity and hard work contributed substantially to the new Republic's success. The letter below, from Joseph to George Washington, documents Joseph's desire to continue in his position under the new President.*

From Joseph Nourse to George Washington

New York the 16th June 1789

"Sir,
It being understood by the proposed arrangement for the Treasury Department that a continuation of the Office of Register is intended, I hope I shall be held excusable in your Excellency's esteem in expressing my wishes to be continued in that Office, and in thus early offering myself to your Notice whenever the nomination and appointment to that Office may come in Form before your Excellency.

Permit me Sir, to acquaint You that it is ten years since the keeping of the Books of the Treasury were committed to me; first as Assistant Auditer General; and lastly as Register (to which I had the honor of being appointed by Congress,) under the administration of the late Superintendant of Finance; and since his resignation, under the present acting Commissioners of the Board of Treasury—To every of my superiors in Office I cou'd refer your Excellency for information with what Zeal, diligence and to the extent of my Abilities I have endeavoured to fill my station.

I feel myself peculiarly happy in thus addressing myself; because I believe there is no one more sincere in his professions of rendering Your Excellency his best services, nor any one who will with more pleasure than myself, zealously diligently, and with the best of his Ability contribute his mite to the public welfare under the New Government over which You preside. I have the Honor to be Your Excellency's most respectful obedient & devoted servant

Joseph Nourse"

From Papers of George Washington, Presidential Series, vol.3, 15 June 1789-5 September 1789. Dorothy Twohig. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989, p.32 https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-03-02-0002