



Th Jefferson

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"We are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it". Thomas Jefferson to William Roscoe, December 27, 1820



Martha Jefferson

PROPOSED MA RESOLUTIONS ON THE HEMINGS ISSUE

"I believe based on the evidence available to me, that it is unlikely or unproven that Thomas Jefferson fathered any of Sally Hemings' children. I therefore vote not to admit any Hemings' or Woodson descendants into the MA, create a special category of membership for them, nor permit their burial in our Jefferson family graveyard at this time. If new evidence is put forward later (e.g. acknowledgment of paternity by Thomas Jefferson, DNA, or other legally admissible evidence) I would of course consider this issue again in the future."

"I do not support the MA officially sponsoring, forming, or participating in the "umbrella organization" or the "organizing committee", as recommended by the MAC. Of course I have no objection if individual members of the MA participate in any such activities, provided that they do not imply that they represent the MA."

"I do not support the EPC's recommendation that "specific" proxies be eliminated from our MA Constitution. As our Constitution provides, I wish to retain my right to grant another MA member a "specific" proxy to vote upon specific questions or the election of officers."

"I wish to join other Jefferson family members in thanks to the Hemings family who played an important role over many decades at Monticello which, through their loyal and able service, and the sacrifices of many other slaves, Thomas Jefferson was able to devote his energies to politics, science, and his many other contributions to this great nation, The United States of America."

MAC REPORT SUPPORTS SC CONCLUSIONS

The MA Executive Committee has accepted the recommendation of the Membership Advisory Committee ("MAC"), which agrees with The Scholars Commission, that it is not known whether Thomas Jefferson fathered any of Sally Hemings children. The MAC Report states: "A family association with wide diversity in the views of its membership cannot effectively hope to represent that family unless there is a strong consensus on the issues it addresses. It is the opinion of this

Committee that at the present time such a consensus on the question of whether Thomas Jefferson was the father of one or all of the children of whom Sally Hemings was the mother cannot be achieved. In our opinion only further historical and scientific research for new facts could give a more definitive answer to the question. *Therefore, we believe that there is not sufficient evidence for descendants of Sally Hemings to meet the criteria, as currently stated, for membership in The Monticello Association. . . . The Membership*

Advisory Committee recommends that no change be made at this time in the criteria for membership in The Monticello Association".



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- PROPOSED MA RESOLUTIONS ON THE HEMINGS ISSUE
- MAC REPORT SUPPORTS SC CONCLUSIONS
- KEYNOTE SPEECH AT JEFFERSON MEMORIAL
- NEW MONTICELLO SLAVE CEMETERY LOCATED
- "UMBRELLA" GRAVEYARD IS TOO SMALL.
- SALLY HEMINGS WAS NOT THE DAUGHTER OF JOHN WAYLES

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MAC EXCEEDED ITS MANDATE

The MAC was appointed in May 1999 by then-president of The Monticello Association, Robert Gillespie. This Committee, customarily referred to by Roberts Rules of Order as a “select” committee (e.g. one appointed for a specific purpose) as compared to a “standing” committee or a “committee of the whole”, had the following charge: “The Membership Advisory Committee shall prepare a recommendation to define the criteria for membership in The Monticello Association. The Committee should consider the use of historical data, DNA testing, oral histories, archaeological evidence, genealogical standards, and other sources to define such criteria. The Committee may consult with experts to develop its recommendation.

The Committee shall submit its report to the Executive Committee, and the Executive Committee shall submit a report to the membership, no later than the annual meeting in 2000.”

Both the 2000 and 2001 Annual Meetings agreed with the resolution to appoint a select committee and also approved a delay in submission of the MAC report to this year’s annual meeting. The MAC should be applauded for recommending in its final report that “no change be made at this time in the criteria for membership in The Monticello Association”. However, from a procedural point of view, the MAC was in error in reporting to the Executive Committee any recommenda-

tion beyond membership issues in The Monticello Association (e.g. the proposed “umbrella organization”). Fortunately, the Executive Committee had the wisdom to reject the MAC’s recommendation of an umbrella organization.

The MAC report regrettably reflects only unjustified feelings of guilt and reconciliation as justification for the appropriate membership decision. The fact is that the Hemings are never going to be content with anything less than full recognition as descendants of Jefferson and full credit for the house construction and maintenance, and a place in the family graveyard, even if their sole purpose is to “stick it” to Thomas Jefferson as

payback for some of the unflattering remarks he wrote and said about Afro-Americans (but see Newsletter article, “Jefferson’s Views on Slavery”)

The MA would get in way over its head if we get officially involved in forming this new umbrella organization. If individual members of the MA participate in any such activities, they certainly are free to do so, provided that they do not imply that they represent the MA.

“The Hemings are never going to be content with anything less than full recognition as descendants of Thomas Jefferson.”

“UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION” WOULD HIJACK THE MA

MAC report recommends that the MA “take the lead” in proposing the creation of an “umbrella organization” and a new graveyard for the “Families of Jefferson’s Monticello”. In Mr. James Truscott’s recent letter to our members he states: “This organization would not affect the Association in any way . . . [this new graveyard] would remain separate and distinct from our family graveyard.”

But lets look at the facts. Imagine if the Memorial Foundation gave the Hemings a new parcel of land, adjacent to our own MA graveyard, and this new group agreed on broader criteria for burial than the MA. The Hemings might apply to the MA as Jefferson descendants for burial in the MA graveyard, and if that is denied, then burial in

the new extension as “Sally is a half sister” descendant, and if that is denied, then as “Sally is a slave descendant”. Over a period of years, the line between the graveyards would blur, and it would be just a graveyard of Jefferson’s descendants, both real and imagined.

The MAC also recommends that new “Trustees” be elected by the MA to be approved by a court, to convert the MA into a corporate “graveyard association”. These new trustees, rather than the MA itself, would then be able to determine for themselves the criteria for burial in the graveyard. And of course if the umbrella organization is formed, then the MA would have little or no influence in who could be buried in the graveyard.

The MA was organized to care

for our family graveyard. All of the “descendants” who are beneficiaries of the graveyard did not convey to the MA power to control who was a “descendant.” Please note that one of the “standing” committees of the MA is the “Committee on Interments”, which, under Section 8(b) of our By-laws, “shall undertake to determine space allotments in the graveyard desired by individuals and family groups, and shall advise members regarding locations for interments, to guide them in accordance with stated policy of the Association, and to promote an orderly and desirable plan of the graveyard.” (It should be clear from this provision that the Committee on Interments has no right to determine “who” is to be buried in our graveyard, only “space allotments”).

It is irrelevant that spouses have been buried in the graveyard, as well as relatives, and some unrelated to Jefferson. So what if the burial criteria has not been kept to a consistent definition of descendants? The MA did not have any discretion in controlling most burials because of control exercised in the past. Later a group of descendants formed the MA primarily to care of the graveyard, but there was nothing in that formation that created any kind of authority in the MA to set burial criteria.

Thus the MA is a group organized to care for the graveyard, but has no authority to say who is buried there. The Hemings still need an argument that permits their burial (e.g. an acknowledgment of paternity by Thomas Jefferson, DNA, or other legally admissible evidence) no matter who was previously buried there.

MAC LEGAL OPINIONS VERY WEAK

The legal opinions gathered by the MAC are very weak, and begin with the startling assumption that the Hemings are in fact descendants of Jefferson. They suggest that there is some sort of legal defect with one of the parcels that would permit the Hemings to be buried in one of the MA parcels.

As we know the first graveyard section was given to Martha Jefferson descendants and the second section to Thomas Jefferson's descendants. The right of burial therefore is a real property right and a restrictive covenant of use that cannot be waived by any descendants. Concerning the first graveyard, our own MA Constitution provides that "the property rights of the lineal descendants of Colonel Thomas Jefferson Randolph as owners of the original Monticello graveyard are affirmed and shall be defended by the Association; and no proposition looking to the transfer of ownership from said descendants shall be initiated or supported by the Association

until it shall have received the approval in writing of two-thirds of the adult descendants of said Colonel Thomas Jefferson Randolph having proprietary interest in the graveyard. Amendments to the Constitution shall require the affirmative vote in writing of a majority of the voting members of the Association." (e.g. as compared to 2/3 of those present at any annual meeting to amend the By-laws).

Please also note that as part of the parcel swap with the Memorial Foundation, the April 11, 1979 order naming new trustees did not designate them as trustees of the MA, but repeated the words of the deed, that they were trustees for the "descendants of Thomas Jefferson." Thus the MAC is attempting to elevate the MA as possessing some type of authority to make burial decisions, which it simply does not have. The Memorial Foundation also has no rights to enforce this restrictive covenant. In the deed from Commodore Uriah Levy to the MA, the Memorial Foundation

was required to be a signatory in order to duly acknowledge the conveyance. This does not give the Memorial Foundation some mutual interest in the purpose of our graveyard. They simply were required to sign it as notice of the ingress and egress easements, so that the Memorial Foundation could not then at a later time profess any notice that their acquisition of the Monticello estate was encumbered by a parcel totally contained within the boundaries of their property.

This was obviously to avoid the repeated occurrences exerting ownership by Jefferson's descendants of the MA graveyard when Monticello was owned by Jefferson M. Levy, a nephew of Commodore Uriah Levy, after an estate battle lasting over 20 years. "It was during these years that Jefferson's devoted grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph of Edgehill, as recalled by his grandson, Jefferson R. Kean, had on occasion "put his horse to the gate" and forced his way into the estate to assert his ownership of

the graveyard and his right of access to it." Collected Papers Volume 1, at 14, (original edition, 1965).

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REMEMBERING THE MA IN 1976

Reprinted from the MA Annual Report of 1976:

"Comments were made from the floor pointing out that we still have no category of membership for people who want to share in the work of the Association either because of pure friendship or because of collateral descent from Jefferson's ancestors. Frank Walker moved that the Executive Committee study the possibility of a "Friends" category. He was reminded by several members of

that Committee that the question had been discussed on October 18, 1975 (as requested during the 1975 Annual Meeting -see Annual Report for 1975, p.13) and the conclusion reached that such a class was not needed. Further discussion brought out the following points:

1. Membership in the Monticello Association is an inherited right, not an honor to be bestowed.
2. The purposes of the Associa-

tion are to take care of the graveyard, to protect and perpetuate the reputation and fame of Thomas Jefferson, and to exchange bonds of association and friendship among his descendants.

3. Friends and collateral descendants do not have to become members of the Association to share in these aims.
4. Members of the Association are entirely free to in-

vite, either as personal guests, or as "paying" guests, individuals who wish to be with us at Annual Meeting time. The Association does not officially extend such invitations.

During the discussion, various motions were made. John Byrd Taylor moved that all motions be tabled. This motion to table was seconded and passed by a vote of 28 for and 6 against. This ended the discussion."

NEW GRAVEYARD NOT WITHIN MA'S PURPOSES

If anyone wants to organize a new group of Hemings admirers or suggest a graveyard for them, that responsibility should be solely between the Memorial Foundation and the Hemings family. Then they can decide what to do with the Woodsons (who simply cannot be descendants of Thomas Jefferson based on the DNA evidence).

Many of us have witnessed with great sadness the shift in The Memorial Foundation's focus from memorializing the life of Thomas Jefferson to criticizing him and focusing on the contributions of his slaves as the "real story" at Monticello. Apparently, changing their name from The Thomas Jefferson MEMORIAL Foundation to just The Thomas Jefferson Foundation seemed to be accompanied by this shift in focus. At the very least, it regrettably should be noted that the agendas of The Memorial Foundation and The Monticello Association are not in accord with each other.

Unfortunately, The Memorial Foundation has altered its historic mission to preserve and promote Jefferson's legacy in favor of what it seems to perceive as a more socially viable course of "political correctness".

In fact, the purposes of the two organizations are quite different. As you know, our Constitution provides that the purposes of the MA are to: "(1) preserve, care for, and adorn the graves and grounds comprising the Monticello graveyard; (ii) endeavor in every practicable way to protect and perpetuate the reputation and fame of Thomas Jefferson; and (iii) encourage, by means of meetings of the Association, publication of annual reports, and appropriate activities, bonds of association and friendship among the descendants of Thomas Jefferson."

If the MA wants to form an umbrella organization, sponsor a new graveyard for Hemings admirers, etc., the MA's purposes necessarily would change. Any change in our purpose would therefore require a change

in our Constitution, which would require the affirmative vote in writing of a majority of the voting members of the MA (not just those attending an annual meeting).

The Memorial Foundation already has made several important changes to its program to recognize the Hemings family. Tours of the house now include considerable mention of the Hemings' contribution to the building of the Monticello's structures. Mulberry Row is in the process of rehabilitation. Monticello's "Getting Word" project has made the public aware of the overall contributions of the Hemings family. A recently discovered slave cemetery has been located at Monticello. The Memorial Foundation, not the MA, has the land necessary for a new graveyard. There also are probably more examples.

Therefore if any organization would be the sponsor of the umbrella organization, it should be a discussion between the Memorial Foundation and the Hem-

ings family, and the MA should have nothing to do with it officially. Instead, the MA should offer a public resolution of appreciation to these families recognizing that their contributions made it possible for Jefferson to devote his time to building our government and protecting our civil liberties.



NEW MONTICELLO SLAVE CEMETERY LOCATED

Recently The Memorial Foundation announced that a slave graveyard had been found on the grounds of Monticello. The site is a relatively flat tract of wooded land about 2,000 feet from the main house, near the southern end of Monticello's parking area for visitors.

On October 6, 2001 there was a commemoration ceremony whose featured speaker was Julian Bond, co-chairman of the NAACP, and a member of the all African-American

board of the Memorial Foundation's "Getting Word" project. Mr. Bond, quoting from John Hope Franklin, spoke about how all white people benefited from slavery whether they owned slaves or not, and how all African-Americans were victims of slavery whether they were slaves or not.

A permanent memorial later will be erected at the burial ground, based on a design concept to be selected from the more than 116 proposals that have been submitted. The

names of approximately 400 men, women, and children are known who lived as slaves at Monticello between 1770-1827 were read.

The enslaved community at Monticello averaged about 115 people per year, roughly half of them children, during the period 1774-1826. The Memorial Foundation intends to continue to honor the slave families at Monticello with their resurrection of the Mulberry Row structures and a memorial stone at their graveyard.

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“UMBRELLA GRAVEYARD” IS TOO SMALL

The MAC proposal, thankfully rejected by the Executive Committee, proposes that descendants of anyone who built and maintained Monticello (house, grounds, and the farm) during Jefferson's lifetime be included in this “umbrella” organization. This would include not only slaves but also hired workmen and craftsmen associated with the place for some 50-60 years.

Essentially the MAC proposes a burial place for the descendants of the greater Monticello family, including not only descendants of the slaves, and not just the Hemings, but also the white workmen who came from all over Europe and elsewhere to help build and run Monticello. This presents several new ques-

tions, namely:

- Does this include servants who worked Jefferson's adjacent farms?
- Did this include the Randolph and Marks family slaves who came to live at Monticello?
- What about the slaves who worked at Poplar Forest? Some of them were at Monticello briefly.
- Would slaves hired from other people be included?
- Did the Carr family have slaves who worked at Monticello from time to time too? What about the Woodson family who have not proved a descent from Thomas Jefferson, or that Tho-

mas Woodson ever lived at Monticello?

- Would slaves who belonged to hired workmen and assisted in constructing the house be included? It is not clear whether they have ever been identified. Other than slaves, there were a huge number of hired workmen, craftsmen, and overseers. Just one hired workman alone might have close to 2,000 family members living today.
- What about others who made contributions indirectly to the construction and maintenance of Monticello?

Many families have never traced their ancestries or at least not thoroughly. Genealogy takes a long time to research. In order

to be properly inclusive, all persons who made a contribution to Monticello for 50-60 years would have to be identified. Then their descendants would need to be identified and documented. Would their spouses be included? This would be a monumental task and could take forever.

And even the best experts can't say with certainty who really fathered the Hemings children even after devoting many, many man-hours and so much money to research that issue. It would take the entire mountain and all adjacent lands near Monticello to bury all the descendants which have multiplied from these contributors.



SLAVE LIFE AT MONTICELLO

The slaves who lived on the mountaintop lived an easy life compared to the ones who worked the farms. Thomas Jefferson wrote that they had nothing to do while he was away. Who built Monticello? More hired workmen were used to build the house than were slaves. Some of the workmen were assisted by their own slaves, too.

John Hemings was the primary slave who worked on the current house while learning his trade from a skilled craftsman. John Hemings received a small stipend for his work, and Jefferson provided for him in his will. Not only was he given his freedom, but he was given tools, land, a home, and the service of two apprentices, Eston and Madison

Hemings.

Isn't it presumptuous to think that the descendants of hired workmen would want to be grouped with the descendants of slaves in an “umbrella graveyard”, or vice versa? Some might well be offended. Some of the hired workmen were well educated and cultured as were their descendants.

Jefferson requested that hired “domestic servants” be of “superior intelligence”, and he especially preferred it if they played a musical instrument. Jefferson respected and trusted many of these workers and sought them for their talents

WHAT KIND OF GRAVEYARD DID JEFFERSON REALLY WANT?

Lets look at the facts:

December 1771 - Jefferson was unmarried and owned about 20 slaves that he had inherited from his father. He wrote in his Account Book, just 11 days prior to his marriage to Martha (which writings were possibly made at her home since they were written in his memo book), about a graveyard design which would "appropriate one-half to the use of my own family; the other of strangers, servants, & c."

January 1772 - He married Martha Wayles Skelton.

May 1773 - Dabney Carr died and was buried at Monticello in the current graveyard.

May 1773 - John Wayles died, and subsequently the Jeffersons inherited 135 slaves.

September 1774 - Thomas and Martha Jefferson's baby, Jane, died.

June 1777 - Thomas and Martha Jefferson's baby son died.

September 1782 - Martha Wayles Jefferson died and was buried in the Monticello graveyard, and so on.

Sometime between December 1771 and May 1773 Jefferson scrapped the original plan and instituted a private graveyard for his family and a few close friends. We do not know why he changed his mind or if it had anything to do with the large number of slaves he inherited from Wayles.

But regardless of why Jefferson decided to have the slaves buried on the opposite side of the mountain from his own family – he did, and it remained that way during his lifetime and beyond.

Thus any proposed change made to our family graveyard would not be in accordance with Jefferson's own wishes.



JEFFERSON'S OWN VIEWS ON SLAVERY

Henry Steele Commager was a very distinguished historian who taught at Amherst, Columbia, Cambridge, Oxford, and other schools. He was probably one of the 2-3 most respected historians of the last half of 20th century.

In his book, *Thomas Jefferson and the Character of America*, "Thomas Jefferson: The Garden and Farm Books" (Robert C. Baron, ed. 1987) p. 24, he wrote that "at the time he published the Notes on Virginia no one had contributed more to the struggle against slavery in his own state, and perhaps even in the nation, than Jefferson"

What distinguished Jefferson from his contemporaries was not that he owned slaves, but that he understood that slavery was evil and fought hard to eliminate it. He thought it would be done through the democratic process, and in the interim thought that his own slaves were better off under his guidance than they would be if turned loose to fend

For themselves in a hostile Vir-

ginia - a view reinforced when his most skilled slave was freed and committed suicide (James Hemings).

Thomas Jefferson did remark about the natural inferiority of Afro-American slaves. For example, in 1785, just 3 years after he wrote "Notes", Jefferson wrote to Chastellux: "I have supposed the black man in his present state might not be [equal to the white man], but it would be hazardous to affirm that equally cultivated for a few generations, he would not become so."

However, please note that he qualified his tentative judgments by noting his observations might be explained by the environmental effects of bondage and by hoping he would be proven wrong. But even when Jefferson believed Afro-Americans were intellectually inferior, he emphasized that that should not affect their rights in a free society. Jefferson was strongly opposed to slavery. The fact that he did

not free his slaves was because he died deeply in debt and they therefore became subject to the claims of his creditors. Thus, it was beyond his legal power to free them.

What distinguished Jefferson from most around him was his realization that slavery was an evil institution. He fought hard against it. As a "scientist," he drew some primitive conclusions based upon first-hand observations of his slaves. He said their apparent inferiority to whites might be explained as a consequence of their enslavement and lack of education opportunity, but then noted that Greek and Roman slaves had produced evidence of considerable intellect.

So he tentatively proposed a scientific conclusion that Blacks might lack the intellectual capacity of whites, emphasizing at the time: (1) that his sampling was so small that his observations might not be typical; (2) that the observed differences could be

explained by the conditions of slavery; (3) that he hoped he would be proven wrong as more knowledge was gained; and (4) that any such difference was irrelevant to the issue of rights, which were God-given to all persons

For his era, that was a very liberal viewpoint. No other Founding Father's actions can match Jefferson's actions to eliminate slavery, and at no time did Jefferson ever defend the institution of slavery. Note Jefferson's letter in 1814 to Edward Coles: "My opinion has ever been that, until more can be done for them, we should endeavor, with those whom fortune has thrown on our hands, to feed and clothe them well, protect them for ill usage, require such reasonable labor only as is performed voluntarily by freemen, and be led by no repugnancies to abdicate them, and our duties to them."

ELECTION OF NEW MA OFFICERS

The following MA members have announced their intention to run for office:

President—Nat Abeles (our current Vice President)

Vice President—Pat Crouch

Secretary—Betsy Mackey (our current Secretary)

Treasurer—Jacques Walker

Historian—[]

Brief biographies on many of these candidates are in this Newsletter. If you agree, please vote for them, or otherwise if you cannot attend this year's Annual Meeting, then please send in your "specific" proxy. Forms will be mailed out by the MA soon.

Also please note that last year (for the first time) each candidate for Vice President was asked to make a brief statement to the membership so that we all could be better informed about the qualifications of the candidates.

Finally, neither the MAC nor the

Executive Committee may publicly announce the results of their deliberations on the Jefferson-Hemings issue unless and until the membership at an Annual Meeting approves. This resolution came about because it became clear that the MAC wanted to announce the results of its deliberations this past Fall and then hold a press conference, before due consideration by the family at an Annual Meeting (as would be customary practice), and certainly before any written or other ballot about the Jefferson-Hemings issue is proposed and mailed to our entire membership.

We have all taken great pride in our descent from one of the greatest of all Americans, the man columnist George Will once called the "Man of the Millennium" in *Time* magazine. We have maintained our membership in The Monticello Association and come together year after year to celebrate this connection. Now we have to take a stand. It may be painful and unpleasant, but it is our duty

each to seek the truth and to stand up and be counted.

This year's Annual Meeting may well be the most important in our history, and if Thomas Jefferson's own descendants conclude that he sexually exploited this child entrusted to his care - then the world will accept it as fact no matter what the most eminent scholars conclude.

Thomas Jefferson was deeply concerned about his reputation and cherished a desire for the love and respect of his daughters and his family. The Scholars Commission observed, "yet we are asked to believe that Jefferson would have entrusted his reputation to the discretion of a 15 or 16 year old child, Hemings' age when the relationship is said to have started, who in the judgment of the respected Abigail Adams required more care than Jefferson's 8 year old daughter, and who was presumably in daily contact with his young daughters. If he did that, he was essentially a child-molesting rapist, and that is far from that

we know of him."

Our test is whether or not we are "cowards". Are we so afraid of being called names based on the false charge against Thomas Jefferson that we are willing to turn our backs on the truth and upon the legacy of our famous ancestor? Or did we perhaps inherit at least a small measure of his courage that allowed him to write the Declaration of Independence, stand up for religious freedom, and even denounce slavery again and again?

And if this year we refuse to show up or send in a "specific" proxy because it is an unpleasant issue and we really don't want to get involved, how are we going to respond in future years when our own family and friends (and probably the public) all ridicule us either for our cowardice or for the very idea that such a despicable ancestor is deserving of celebration?

MA CONSTITUTION ALLOWS PROXIES

Proxies are well known and commonly used in body politic proceedings. In this day and age, with faxes and emails, everyone can be properly informed before a meeting if they wish. Last year, the proxies that were offered went only to the election of officers, not to endless debate on resolutions that is prohibited by our existing Constitution. That is why our Constitution prohibits "general" proxies, as it is unfair to give voting power to someone without a specific instruction on a specific issue.

Our Constitution does allow for "specific" proxies—"specific

questions upon which they may desire to record a vote in case such questions may be brought before the meeting." And it also allows for the election of officers by proxies (again, because specific names are spelled out - it would be out of order for someone to give a proxy to another with the power to vote for whomever that person wanted). Therefore there is no need to eliminate our proxy provisions.

In fact, if the MA was a Virginia "Nonstock" Corporation (e.g. a Non-profit corporation), proxies would in fact be expressly allowed unless otherwise prohib-

ited by our Constitution or By-laws. (See Article 13.1-847 of the Virginia Code).

According to the Virginia Code, proxies must be in writing by any reasonable means, including, but not limited to, by facsimile signature, telegram, cablegram or other means of electronic transmission (e.g. email) to the person who will be the holder of the proxy.

The EPC proposal seems designed to disenfranchise MA members who for any reason—including health, physical infirmity, or lack of funds—cannot

attend every annual meeting in person. The move seems both anti-democratic and intended to increase the power of family members who live near Charlottesville and are healthy and otherwise readily able to attend every meeting. While the case against "general" proxies is a reasonable one, when an MA member is not able to attend yet cares enough about the MA and a specific issue to send a "specific" proxy, surely the presumption ought to be that they not be disenfranchised.

MA OFFICER CANDIDATES

CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT



Nathaniel Abeles is the current Vice President of the MA. Over the last year he has worked hard to add balance to the Executive Committee and ensure that specific agendas do not overwhelm the mission and sentiment of the MA and its members. Prior to the 2001 Annual meeting Mr. Abeles helped to organization a coalition of concerned members to ensure that The Scholars Commission Report was brought to the attention of the membership and explained by the Commission Chair, UVA Professor Robert Turner. He also pushed for the report to be included in the body evidence being considered in the MAC's deliberations.

Many members may remember the heavy-handed attempt last year by the Executive Committee to elect an unbalanced slate of officers to positions beyond the traditional two year cycle, by omitting the proposed slate in the Annual Meeting Notice package. With the help of John Works, Pat Crouch and others, they were able to coordinate a voting effort in one day. While some members may feel uncomfortable with the proxy voting process, it is specifically mentioned in our Constitution for situations exactly like the one we currently face.

Mr. Abeles has been following

the Jefferson-Hemings controversy since the Foster DNA study was first published in Nature in 1997. After reviewing all the evidence, he now believes that no relationship ever existed between Jefferson and Hemings beyond what was appropriate between a house servant and a Virginia planter. Mr. Abeles supports the MAC's conclusion that there is not enough evidence to prove or disprove a relationship. He does not support the creation of a "Families of Jefferson's Monticello" organization since it will serve to blur the line between descendants and descendant wannabees, as it could possibly influence policy over our own graveyard.

Mr. Abeles hopes to improve the current MA web site, communications and annual meeting registration processes. It is important to communicate with the more than 1600 descendants of Jefferson who are not members of the Association. He also wants to ensure that the genealogy records for the MA are finally placed in a computer database.

Nat is a lineal descendant of Thomas Jefferson through the Martha Jefferson Randolph line. He holds a Master of Business Administration, from The American University and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Virginia.

CANDIDATE FOR VICE PRESIDENT



Patricia Crouch is a great-granddaughter of General Jefferson Randolph Kean, one of the founders of The Monticello Association. She grew up in a military family and has traveled extensively throughout the US and Canada. She holds an Associate Degree in Human Services from Piedmont Technical College in Greenwood, SC. She also attended Lander College in Greenwood, SC, where she majored in Fine Arts. An entrepreneur and business owner, she has been self-employed in both the auctioning and retail sale of art and antiques for many years. She also is certified in Feng Shui, the Chinese art of color and placement and has also studied the Ayurvedic health care tradition of India. She is co-owner with her husband Richard of Broad St. Antique Mall in Clinton, SC. Her other interests include American and Medieval European history, genealogy, and gardening. She is a homemaker and the mother of six year old Gabrielle and grown children Josh and Elena Bowling.

CANDIDATE FOR TREASURER



Jacques Walker is an 8th generation descendant of Thomas Jefferson through Martha Jefferson and is a native of New Orleans. He received a Bachelor's Degree in History from the University of Louisiana and a Master's Degree in Management from Troy State University. Jacques is a life member of the Monticello Association and belongs to numerous patriotic and lineage societies including the Sons of the American Revolution (Secretary-George Washington Chapter), The Society of the War of 1812 in Louisiana, the Jamestowne Society (First Louisiana Company), the Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence, the Baronial Order of the Magna Charta, and the Order of the Crown of Charlemagne. In addition, Jacques' experience on non-profit boards of directors includes, the Washington Artillery Board of Managers (current vice-president- past secretary and treasurer), the Washington Artillery Veterans' Association (past vice president and current board member), the Louisiana Historical Association (board member), and Memorial Hall Museum (New Orleans' Confederate Museum- board member). Jacques is an independent museum projects consultant, who is currently deployed, since October 2001, as a task force commander under the Homeland Defense Act.

KEYNOTE SPEECH AT JEFFERSON MEMORIAL

Mr. John H. Works, Jr. has been invited by the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution to be the keynote speaker at the annual wreath-laying ceremony at the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. on April 13, 2002. That day is the 259th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Jefferson. The popular event is expected to be broadcast live by C-SPAN and to be carried in part by most major networks.

In addition to his remarks on the Jefferson-Hemings issue and Jefferson's own views on slavery, Mr. Works is expected to say that "Despite lingering questions whether Thomas Jefferson fathered any of Sally Hemings' children, we have to find a way to let the American people and the whole world know that it is still acceptable to respect and admire Thomas Jefferson."

The annual wreath laying ceremony has been sponsored by the DC Chapter of the SAR for at

least 5 decades, shortly after the Jefferson Memorial was commissioned by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt during World War II.

Mr. Works is the President of The Thomas Jefferson Heritage Society, a lineal descendant of Thomas Jefferson, (8th generation), a life member of The Monticello Association, and one of its former Presidents (1987-88). He also is a life member of The Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independ-

ence and the Sons of The Revolution in the State of New York (Board of Governors 1994-97)).



AMERICAN HERITAGE PRAISES SCHOLARS COMMISSION



In its February/March 2002 issue, *American Heritage* magazine wrote: "In November 1998, the scientific journal *Nature* ran a headline that would have seemed more at home in *The National Enquirer*: *Jefferson Fathered Slave's Last Child*. After the Memorial Foundation report came out,

The Heritage Society appointed its own committee, and last Spring, to virtually no public attention, that committee released its findings. . . . It is important for the public to realize that the purported Jefferson-Hemings liaison remains a disputed possibility, not an established fact."

"The purported Jefferson-Hemings liaison remains a disputed possibility, not an established fact."

SOME HISTORIANS STRETCH THE TRUTH

Recently, Stephen Ambrose has been accused of stealing material. Doris Kearns Goodwin admits she copied language from other texts. David McCullough acknowledges he misquoted Thomas Jefferson. Joseph Ellis confesses he lied about his own past.

Ellis also co-wrote an article that declared that new DNA evidence proved Thomas Jefferson fathered a child by his slave Sally Hemings. It didn't.

From Ellis' "Founding Brothers" to McCullough's "John Adams: to Ambrose's "The Wild Blue," historians have

enjoyed great success over the past year, proving that a large readership exists for lively non-fiction narratives. While the examples range from the isolated carelessness of McCullough to Ellis' personal dishonesty, they all involve best-selling historians.

Ellis' downfall began with an interview he gave in 2000 to *The Boston Globe*. The historian claimed that he had gone to Vietnam as a platoon leader and paratrooper and served on the staff of Gen. William C. Westmoreland. In June 2001, after reviewing public records and interviewing some of Ellis' friends and colleagues, the *Globe* contradicted

his assertions. The author, a professor at Mount Holyoke College who had just won a Pulitzer Prize for "Founding Brothers," said he had lied and was suspended for a year without pay.

Professor Ellis fabricated not only service in the Vietnam War, the peace movement, and the civil rights movement, but even told the press he caught the winning touchdown on a football team he was never even on. A month later, McCullough was criticized in *Harper's Magazine* for writing in "John Adams that Thomas Jefferson

had called the second President a "colossus of independence." The only problem? Jefferson never said it.

McCullough admitted he had erred. At least five books by Ambrose, a retired history professor, have been cited for material lifted from other sources. The historian has both apologized and defended himself, saying he footnoted the passages in question (yet did not put them in quotation marks), a policy most of his peers consider inadequate. What's going on here? Conclusion: sex and scandal still sells.

Doctored Ellen Coolidge Letter

An important first-hand account by Thomas Jefferson's granddaughter, Ellen Randolph Coolidge, was written for the purpose of explaining to her husband (and through him to others) that Thomas Jefferson could not have been sexually involved with Sally Hemings.

Ellen Coolidge wrote a letter dated October 24, 1858 to her husband, Joseph Coolidge, during a visit to her brother Thomas Jefferson Randolph. Her point obviously was that some say it was Peter Carr, some say it was Samuel, but in any case it was not Thomas Jefferson. No one at that time knew who the father was with certainty. Ellen Coolidge was presenting all the evidence that she was aware of, not expressing an opinion of who she thought was the father.

Yet in Professor Annette Gordon-Reed's award winning book *Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings: An American Controversy*, she transcribed Ellen Coolidge's easily legible handwritten letter from "no female domestic ever entered his chambers except at hours when he was known not to be there and none could have entered without being exposed to the public gaze," into "no female domestic ever entered his chambers except at hours when he was known not to be in the public gaze."

This does not appear to be just a small "typo" - turning "that" into "than" or even dropping an entire line of text in the transcription process. While none of us are perfect, this alleged "error" involved altering more

than a dozen words. Thus it is very difficult to believe that the changing of more than a dozen words in the key sentence of the letter - in such a way as to produce a grammatically-correct new sentence that has the effect to reverse the evidentiary value of the original letter - was a simple "mistake."

The issue is what are the odds that Professor Gordon-Reed would "mistakenly" changed more than a dozen words in the original sentence (which is the most important sentence in the letter for the issue she was addressing). These words were either changed or moved around so that a new sentence, supporting the thesis of her book rather than refuting it, was created.

It is hard to envision a scholar of Ms. Gordon-Reed's training and ability transcribing this document, getting to the key sentence, and suddenly, without her realization, her fingers just typed in an entirely different sentence, that just happened to transform a document that clearly weakens her case to one of her most persuasive bits of evidence. And yet in her transcription of less important parts of the letter she doesn't seem to have "erred" in a similar way.

In discussing this matter with literally scores of people - lawyers, professors, and others - it is the uniform consensus that the odds of such a change being made inadvertently, by hitting the wrong keys and yet still producing a grammatically-correct and lucid sentence, reversing in the process the evidentiary value

of the most important sentence in the document - must be in the billions-to-one. The two obvious explanations that come to mind are either that the inclusion of this document reflects very poor scholarship or dishonesty.

If one examines the original, the handwriting is easy to read. Any neutral observer is not going to look at this and dismiss it as a simple "mistake" by a scholar possessing her impressive credentials. However, when Professor Gordon-Reed and her Dean were asked by me to provide even a single example where she, or any other scholar with comparable training, made a comparable "mistake" that involved a complete rewrite of the critical sentence in a document to produce a complete sentence with the opposite meaning of the original, she was unable to do so, despite repeated requests.

While the Ellen Coolidge letter "mistake" is significant, and certainly the most egregious, it is not the only instance where Professor Gordon-Reed altered a document. She added and omitted words from the Wetmore interview with Madison Hemings as well. These two altered documents considered together make the point most strongly that this was not a transcription error but part of a pattern of academic dishonesty in enhancing primary documents to strengthen her case.

It is curious why neither of these errors were detected by the experts at Monticello, when we know that Professor Gordon's

Reed's manuscript was reviewed by Cinder Stanton and others (including Professor Joseph Ellis - see related article in this Newsletter), who we presume have read them both in their original correct versions many, many times.

It is interesting to note that the original Ellen Coolidge letter was publicly released by one of our own members at an MA Annual Meeting in 1974.

"One of the stated purposes of The Monticello Association is "to protect and perpetuate the reputation and fame of Thomas Jefferson". During the past twenty years only one such issue was brought to a business meeting. In 1974, Harold Jefferson Coolidge explained to the membership the reasons for his release to the public of a letter from Eleanora (Ellen) Wayles Coolidge to her husband Joseph Coolidge in 1858, during a visit to her brother Thomas Jefferson Randolph.

The letter analyzed the allegations concerning the "yellow children" at Monticello. Because the allegations had been the subject of a recent book by Fawn Brodie, Mr. Coolidge had made the letter public after discussion with Walter Muir Whitehill and Dumas Malone.

No action was asked or taken by the Association, mindful that the allegations dated back to Mr. Jefferson's own lifetime, but Mr. Malone and Virginius Dabney have since used the letter in demonstrating why, in their judgment, there is no foundation to the charges against Mr. Jefferson." (*Collected Papers*, Volume 2, 1t 13 (original version 1984).

HEMINGS REFUSE TO HAVE NEW DNA TESTED



The grave of William Hemings, the son of Madison Hemings and the grandson of Sally Hemings, has been located in the Leavenworth National Cemetery in Kansas. While Thomas Jefferson died in 1826, William Hemings

died in 1910, providing hope that his remains may contain usable DNA.

The William Hemings gravesite had long been forgotten by other Hemings family members. At first the Hemings claimed not to know its location. Then the Hemings questioned whether this was really William's grave, until irrefutable evidence was provided. If the Hemings oral histories are so good, why don't they know where their ancestors are buried?

The collateral descendants of William Hemings currently refuse to have his body DNA

tested, despite the fact that his grave has been located and scientific testing might yield some important results. The lack of the Hemings' family cooperation must mean that they are not as confident in their paternity claim as they insist. Surely if they continue to conceal potentially relevant evidence, then there is little reason to add credence to the myth that Thomas Jefferson fathered any of Sally Hemings' children.

This particular scientific inquiry on the son of Madison Hemings would be interesting because results from the DNA tests should confirm 1 of 3 things:

1. As in the case of Madison's brother, Eston, who was found to have a match with "some" Jefferson descendant (not necessarily Thomas), this match could repeat that finding;
2. It could show a Carr/Madison descendant match, thus the claim would be valid that one of the Carr brothers is the father of Sally's children (at least for Madison), or
3. There is no match, then their claim that Madison is a descendant of Thomas Jefferson would be invalid (and then this would fall into the same category as the Woodson oral history which DNA indicated there was no Jefferson/Woodson match).

SALLY HEMINGS WAS NOT THE DAUGHTER OF JOHN WAYLES

When Madison Hemings stated that "John Wales" was the father of Sally Hemings, he was almost certainly wrong. While this cannot be proven absolutely, the verifiable data that has recently been gathered makes a strong case against that notion.

A new book in press, *Anatomy of a Scandal: Thomas Jefferson and the SALLY Story* (White Mane Publishing Company), by Rebecca L. McMurry and James F. McMurry, shows how the legend began with another scandal in 1766. Our ancestor John Wayles, while working as an attorney on a murder case, became the scapegoat in a Williamsburg political scandal. He was publicly humiliated in the newspapers by his enemies, but no one suggested he was consorting with any slave woman.

He was slandered posthumously in 1802, after his namesake and grandson, John Wayles Eppes, announced his candidacy for

Congress. The John Wayles Eppes political and family affiliation with President Jefferson was viewed with alarm in the Boston Gazette that fall. It did not catch on as a rumor, until 1805 when John Wayles Eppes became prominent in Congress and Thomas Jefferson had won his second term as president. At that time, a letter to a Boston newspaper from "Thomas Turner" of Virginia alleged that John "Wales" was the father of Callender's SALLY and that she was Thomas Jefferson's "concubine." The letter was likely written by David Meade Randolph, using the pseudonym of "Thomas Turner."

David Meade Randolph had been in court against Jefferson over family debts and he had been fired as marshal of Virginia as soon as Jefferson became president. Thomas Jefferson penned a denial of the "federalist calumnies" just 12 days after this

"Thomas Turner" letter was reprinted in Washington, D.C. in the Washington Federalist. Israel Jefferson and Madison Hemings may well have believed the newspaper stories - the newsprint of that day lasted longer than what we use now.

The 1873 newspaper article on Madison Hemings uses the name "John Wales." While these stories were placed into print by scandalmongers in 1802 and 1805, they were not honest, nor is what they said factual. In fact, it is easy to demonstrate that the 1873 newspaper article on Madison Hemings contained many statements that easily can be proven false.

History professor David Mayer wrote a Forward to the book and notes that the McMurrays, while not professional historians, seem to have "bested" the historians with their work. The book should be in print and available this April 2002.

Some historians felt that Jefferson giving special care to his wife's half sisters children painted Jefferson as a nobler person so they championed this "half sister" idea. If the charge was true, it could provide an independent basis for Jefferson being "nice" to Sally and her children, as they would have been "family".

The fact that sex between 14-year-old girls and 46-year-old men may have been "acceptable" in the late 18th century does not make it moral by today's standards. Slavery was viewed as "acceptable" in Virginia by most of Thomas Jefferson's contemporaries. Unfortunately, the MAC raises the "half sister" argument as a way of making the Hemings relatives of Jefferson and therefore qualified for their proposed new extension under the "umbrella organization". This is simply wrong.

HISTORY OF THE SALLY HEMINGS CONTROVERSY

For more than 190 years following the publication of an allegation in 1802 that Thomas Jefferson had fathered children by Sally Hemings, serious Jefferson scholars who bothered to take note of the allegations rejected them as false. The one exception was Fawn Brodie, who in fact was not a serious Jefferson scholar and whose book was deservedly ripped apart by reviewers after publication. As recently as 1996, Dan Jordan of the Memorial Foundation himself agreed with one of Jefferson's contemporaries who thought it was "morally impossible".

Since 1993, the Memorial Foundation inaugurated a research project called "Getting Word", to locate the descendants of Monticello's African American community and to record and preserve their stories and histories. In the process the Memorial Foundation discovered that many of the Sally Hemings descendants have oral histories linking them to Thomas Jefferson and their ancestor.

In the Appendix to his 1996 book, *American Sphinx*, Joseph Ellis wrote "After five years mulling over the huge cache of evidence that does exist on the thought and character of the historical Jefferson, I have concluded that the likelihood of a liaison with Sally Hemings is remote." But when the DNA results came out in 1998 (some 2 years later), he reversed field and became the point man among senior scholars in the anti-Jefferson campaign. Because of his reputation (or perhaps fame), other scholars quickly joined the effort without really studying the facts independently themselves.

Annette Gordon-Reed came out

with her book in 1997, which became almost a cult classic among politically correct scholars anxious to denigrate yet another 'dead white male'. While she pretended to admire Thomas Jefferson, it now seems clear that Ms. Gordon-Reed was deeply offended by his critical comments about the talents of African-Americans, and her real goal appeared not to seek the truth but to repay Jefferson for his offensive comments by destroying his reputation. It is also clear that she ignored much of the relevant evidence, and that she used doctored evidence to make her case, as with the transcription of the Ellen Coolidge letter and the reversal in meaning of some of its key sentences.

On November 5, 1998 the journal "Nature" placed an inaccurate and misleading headline based on the DNA study which read, "Jefferson Fathered Slave's Last Child". Most of the mass media and many others assumed the headline to be correct. At the time Daniel P. Jordan, Ph.D. and President of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, stated that "Dr. Foster's DNA evidence indicates a sexual relationship between Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings."

Subsequently Dr. Jordan admitted that "after the initial rush to conclusions came another round of articles explaining that the study's results were less conclusive than had earlier been reported." Dr. Foster also later admitted that "it is true that men of Randolph Jefferson's family could have fathered Sally Hemings' later children. The title assigned to our study was misleading in that it represented only the simplest explanation of our molecular findings: namely, that Thomas Jefferson, rather than one of the Carr brothers, was

likely to have been the father of Eston Hemings Jefferson. We know from the historical and the DNA data that Thomas Jefferson can neither be definitely excluded nor solely implicated in the paternity of illegitimate children with his slave Sally Hemings."

The Memorial Foundation released its findings on January 26, 2000 and communicated them to multiple audiences, including its staff, visitors, scholars, and the media as well as to possibly revise its interpretive programs at Monticello. The report contained a mere 10 pages with 43 additional pages of annexed material. Contrary to assertions that it would be prepared by independent experts, the report was prepared by the Memorial Foundation's own staff. It concludes that "the currently available documentary and statistical evidence indicates a "high probability" that Thomas Jefferson fathered Eston Hemings, and that he was most likely the father of all 6 of Sally Hemings' children."

The Memorial Foundation committee was composed of 4 Ph.D.'s and an M.D., but all were staff members of the Memorial Foundation. The committee met as a whole 10 times from December 1998 to April 1999. Only 1 meeting is reported outside of Monticello and that was back in February 1999. The report was not released until 26 January 2000, some 11 months later. Why?

Because the original DNA tests (results released November 1998) concluded that the Woodson line of Hemings' offspring are not descendants, subsequent DNA tests were performed on the Woodson line. In results released on March 22, 2000, no match was confirmed again.

In May 2000, the Thomas Jefferson Heritage Society was formed under the leadership of Mr. John H. Works, Jr., a descendant of Thomas Jefferson and past President of The Monticello Association (1987-88). One of the purposes of The Heritage Society is "to undertake an independent and objective review of all the facts and circumstances surrounding the possible paternity of Sally Hemings' children by Thomas Jefferson."

The Heritage Society published a collection of articles on this subject, entitled *The Jefferson-Hemings Myth: An American Travesty* (ed. Eyer Robert Coates, Sr., May 2001). The Heritage Society also established a *Jefferson-Hemings Scholars Commission* to make an independent and thorough examination of all the facts.

Its *Report on the Jefferson-Hemings Matter* was released April 12, 2001 and stated, "With the exception of one member . . . our individual conclusions range from serious skepticism about the charge to a conviction that it is almost certainly untrue."

Some have complained that there is no new information in The Scholars Commission Report. The "nothing new" argument originated the day The Scholars Commission report was released, by the people at Monticello, days before they had even seen more than 35 of the more than 500 page report.



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POSSIBLE SLAVE MEMORIAL PLAQUES

In addition to offering a resolution of thanks to the Hemings family, the MA could donate some plaques - one to this new-found slave graveyard with the inscription Jefferson chose originally for the slaves (see below) – with a resolution plaque thanking all the Monticello slaves that could be placed along Mulberry Row. And another plaque could be designated to thank the hired white workers noting their contributions – especially their major roles in building the houses.

Jefferson wrote an “Inscription for an African Slave”. (Memorandum Book, p. 247 [Footnote 57: These are the last two stanzas of William Shenstone's Elegy xx (Shenstone, Works, I, 76)].

”Shores there are, bless'd shores for us remain,
And favor'd isles with golden fruitage crown'd
Where tufted flow'rets paint the verdant plain,
Where ev'ry breeze shall med'cine ev'ry wound.

There the stern tyrant that embitters life,
Shall vainly suppliant, spread his asking hand;
There shall we view the billow's raging strife,
Aid the kind breast, and waft his boat to land.”