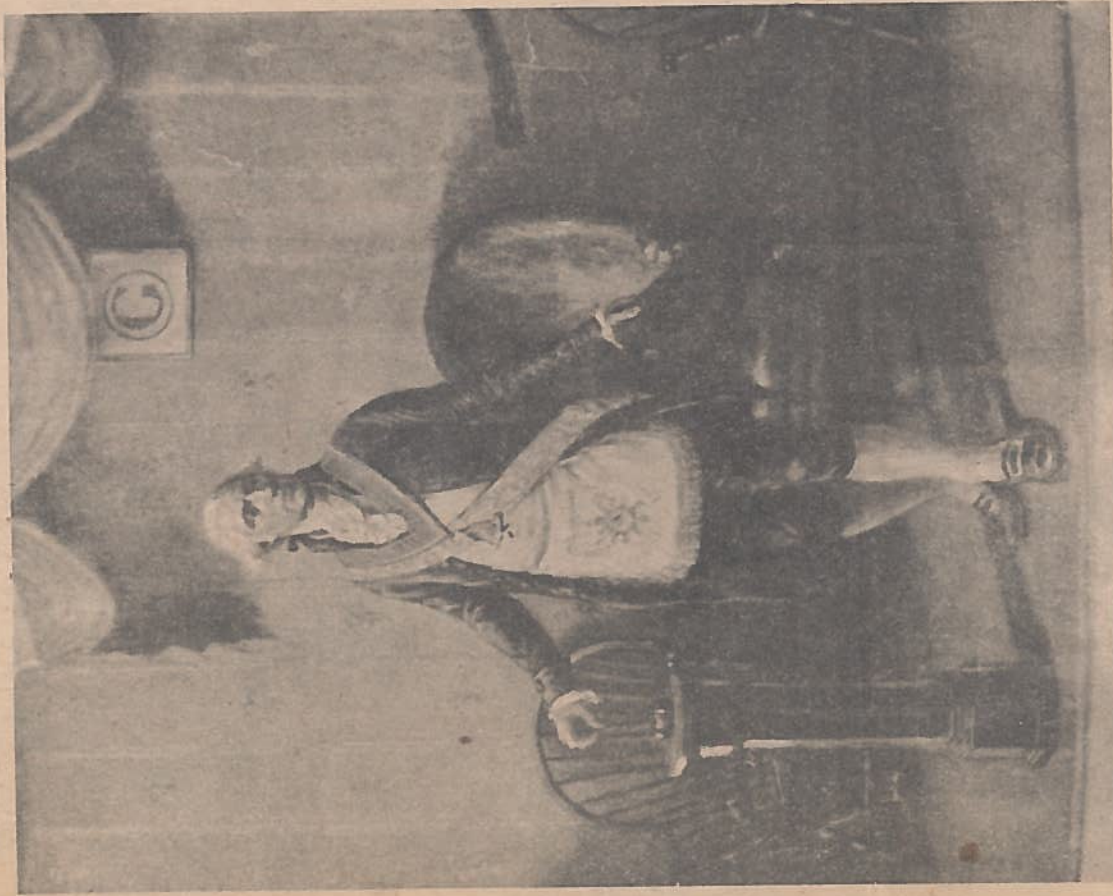


Rehinking of Old Orleans

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L. Monacelli Photo
GEORGE WASHINGTON
Father of his Country
Born February 22, 1732

Married Martha Custis January 5, 1759
Commander-in-Chief of the Army June 15, 1775
Became our First President April 30, 1789
Died December 14, 1799

‘It is doubtful if anyone outside of certain great religious teachers ever so thoroughly impressed himself on the heart of humanity as has George Washington.’ -- Calvin Coolidge

Two hundred fifty years have now passed since the birth of George Washington, the legendary hero, the devoted patriot, and the friend of mankind. Yet Washington remains immortal, his name a synonym of greatness - the founder of liberty. What schoolhouse has ever been without his portrait - what moment of our lives unaffected by his foresight and daring brilliance? In celebration of this great hero's birthday a very prized and treasured letter in Washington's own hand can now be seen on display at the Swan Library in Albion with other related memorabilia. The letter was written by Washington in 1784 to Jacob Morris thanking him for bringing a gift package from the Marquis de Lafayette.

A family in Westchester County owned the letter for 90 years when it came into the possession of Thomas Bell who presented it to the Hon. Noah Davis, a Justice of the Supreme Court, who once practiced law in Albion. Upon the death of Judge Davis his widow sent the letter to Mrs. Emma Swan wife of Wm. G. Swan benefactor of the Swan Library. Mrs. Swan in turn, presented this memento to the library. Seldom displayed, it is framed in a shadow box well over one hundred years old.

‘First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen! Indeed, he was all of that for under his command the Continental Army saw five British generals withdraw from these shores; for under his incensive the Continental Convention brought forth the Constitution framed to preserved our rights and peaceful privileges; while thirdly, because of his honorable and distinguished record, the hearts of a grateful people elected him first President of the United States!’ -- Robert Williams

Surely, this deserves some reflection as we observe a holiday to honor the greatest of patriots. The accompanying, and seldom seen portrait reproduced from a painting by John Ward Dunsmore is entitled ‘George Washington as Master of Alexandria Lodge, No. 22’. You will note the Masonic symbology and traditional Masonic apron he is wearing. This illustration was also used fifty years ago on the program cover for the third annual Washington Banquet held at Murray Lodge, No. 380 in Holley, New York. Throughout the years Murray Lodge has maintained this tradition and will again celebrate Washington's birthday for the 53rd consecutive time with a Washington Banquet held under the auspices of the Sprague Chapter No. 313 Order of Eastern Star.

His Godlike course of glory run
HEAV'NS ROYAL ARCH sublime....
IMORTAL MASTER, Brother, hail;
Adieu, farewell, adieu ... from ‘Masonic Hymn’

--George Richards 1799

And finally this thought by Rabbi Max Raisin fifty years ago:

‘America was to Washington what Israel was to Moses, a grand and Precious opportunity to bring about a new order of life, to create a better and happier civilization with the newly conceived ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity.’