

# GEORGE WASHINGTON

## First President of the United States

### Was he a Freemason?

by  
Dr. Catherine Millard, © 2019.

In February, 2019, the *Rapid City Journal* published a front page article on “the Conference of Grand Masons of (Free) Masons in North America...when more than 800 (Free) Masons converged for four days of meetings and activities.” The article asserts that George Washington “proceeded to the level of Master Mason;” that “(Free) Masons are the world’s oldest and largest fraternity, roughly based on the constructed craft of stonemasonry of the middle centuries;” that “(Free) Masonry is about taking good men and making them better and trying to better humanity through philanthropic works;” that “there are 2 million freemasons in the United States, each State having its own independent jurisdiction headed by a Grand Master Mason;” and that “there is no hierarchy other than the Grand Master of each State.”

George Washington himself, in a handwritten, signed letter, addressed to Reverend G.W. Snyder dated September 25th, 1798 from Mount Vernon, refuted this assertion of his being a Master Mason by correcting “an error you have run into, of my presiding over the English lodges in this Country. The fact is, I preside over none, nor have I been in one more than once or twice, within the last thirty years.” (see original letter). Therefore, George Washington was not a Master Freemason of any lodge in the United States. Secondly, freemasonry is a hidden, secret society deriving its origins from the alchemists in Egypt, steeped in occultism; its official Minutes’ calendar commencing, for instance, “On the 30th day of April A.M. 5789” (corresponding to, “On the 30th day of April A.M. 1789.”) Each Freemasonic degree (1st - 33rd) requires the candidate to study the imbibe false religions of the world; Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Anointed One, Messiah, King of kings and Lord of lords, being numbered in freemasonry’s 2nd degree among the Greek philosophers, namely, Plato, Aristotle, etc. — which is blasphemy.

Freemasonry is thus clearly not a benign “fraternity, roughly based on the construction craft of stonemasonry in the middle centuries,” but a religious society, promoting false religions. Lodge 22 in Alexandria, Virginia continues to advertize George Washington as Grand Master of their Lodge, although Washington himself denounced the fallacy. Following is an exposé:

1. Life magazine’s June 12, 2012, Volume 12, No. 9 issue, distributed by Time, Inc., had an article entitled, *The Hidden World of Secret Societies*, which stated that, “Washington was never shy about his Masonic standing during his lifetime – he was quite proud of it, in fact – and all these years later, his Mason-ness remains on flagrant display... ‘The virtues that ennoble mankind are taught, nourished and fostered in the halls of the Freemasons,’ wrote our first Mason in Chief.” As Freemasonry is equated with sorcery, what evidence does Life magazine present to prove their



Statue of George Washington kneeling in Prayer as seen by Isaac Potts, the Quaker. Entranceway to Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Photograph: © Christian Heritage Ministries.

#### published statements?

The following correspondence between G.W. Snyder, Minister of the Gospel, and George Washington, disprove Life magazine’s allegations:

In August, 1798, **George Washington** received a letter from **G.W. Snyder, Minister of the Gospel**. The letter is hereunder quoted in its entirety:

“Frederick-Town (Maryland) August 22, 1798.

Sir,

You will, I hope, not think it a presumption in a stranger, whose name, perhaps never reached your ears, to address himself to you, the Commanding General of a great Nation. I am a German, born and liberally educated in the City of Heydelberg in the Palatinate of the Rhine. I came to this country in 1776, and felt soon after my arrival a close attachment to the Liberty for which these confederated States then struggled. The same attachment still remains not glowing, but burning in my breast. At the same time that I am exulting in the measures adopted by our Government, I feel myself elevated in the idea of my adopted country. I am attached both from the bent of education and mature enquiry and search to the simple doctrines of Christianity, which I have the honor to teach in public; and I do heartily despise all the cavils of infidelity. Our present time, pregnant with the most shocking evils and calamities, threatens ruin to our Liberty and Government. Secret, and most secret plans are in agitation: Plans, calculated to ensnare the unwary, to attract the gay and irreligious, and to entice even the well-disposed to combine in the general machine for overturning all Government and all Religion.

It was some time since that a book fell into my hands entitled “*Proofs of a Conspiracy etc. by John Robison*,” which gives a full account of a *Society of Freemasons*, that distinguishes itself by the name of “*Illuminati*,” whose plan is to overturn all government and all Religion, even natural; and who endeavor to eradicate every idea of a Supreme Being, and distinguish man from beast by his shape only. A thought suggested itself to me, *that some of the Lodges in the United States might have caught the infection, and might cooperate with the Illuminati or the Jacobine Club in France*. Fauchet is mentioned by Robison as a zealous member: and who can doubt of Genet and Adet? Have not these their confidants in this country? They use the same reflection and are generally men of no Religion. *Upon serious reflection I was led to think that it might be within your power to prevent the horrid plan from corrupting the brethren of the English Lodge over which you preside.*

I send you the “*Proof of a Conspiracy etc.*” which, I doubt not, will give you satisfaction and afford you matter for a train of ideas, that may operate to our national felicity. If, however, you have already perused the book, it will not, I trust, be disagreeable to you that I have presumed to address you with this letter and the book accompanying it. It proceeded from the sincerity of my heart and

my ardent wishes for the common good.

May the Supreme Ruler of all things continue you long with us in these perilous times: may He endow you with strength and wisdom to save our country in the threatening storms and gathering clouds of factions and commotions! And after you have completed His work on this terrene spot, may He bring you to the full possession of the glorious liberty of the children of God, is the hearty and most sincere wish of your Excellency's very humble and devoted servant.

G.W. Snyder."

**George Washington's response to Reverend G.W. Snyder reads,**

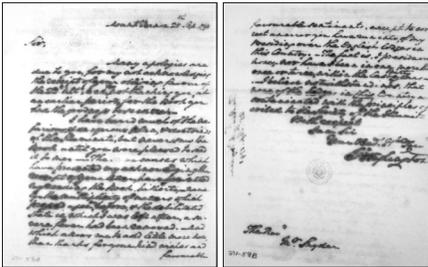
"Mount Vernon, 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1798.

The Rev. Mr. Snyder,

Sir: Many apologies are due to you, for my not acknowledging the receipt of your obliging favour of the 22d. Ulto, and for not thanking you, at an earlier period, for the book you had the goodness to send me.

I have heard much of the **nefarious, and dangerous plan, and doctrines of the Illuminati**, but never saw the book until you were pleased to send it to me. The same causes which have prevented my acknowledging the receipt of your letter have prevented my reading the book, hitherto; namely the multiplicity of matters which pressed upon me before, and the debilitated state in which I was left after a severe fever had been removed. And which allows me to add little more now, than thanks for your kind wishes and favourable sentiments, except **to correct an error you have run into, of my presiding over the English lodges in this Country. The fact is, I preside over none, nor have I been in one more than once or twice, within the last thirty years.** I believe notwithstanding, that none of the lodges in *this* Country are contaminated with the principles ascribed to the Society of the Illuminati.

With respect, I am, Sir,  
Your ob't humble servant,  
George Washington.



Original copy of George Washington's September 25<sup>th</sup>, 1798 response to Rev. G.W. Snyder. Library of Congress, Rare Book Collection.

Washington describes the plans and doctrines of the **Illuminati** as "**nefarious and dangerous**" in his above-quoted letter – emphatically stating in his 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to this Minister of the Gospel that the tenets of the **Illuminati** were "**diabolical,**" and the principles of **Jacobinism** – "**pernicious,**" adding, "if they are susceptible of separation," that is, one from the other:

Hence, Life magazine's June 12, Volume 12, No. 9 issue contains a **pernicious, diabolical and nefarious defamation** of the noble character and reputation of George Washington, "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

It is, in light of Washington's hand-written statement, "I preside over none (no Freemasonic Lodge), nor have I been in one more than once or twice, within the last thirty years" – abominably false – all under the guise of "freedom of speech," and, being a deliberate falsification of fact, **ought to be immediately recalled – banned**

*from all media outlets in the United States contaminating youth.*

2. **During a recent visit to the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., we were taken to the "House Cox Corridors" and shown a painting in the ceiling depicting George Washington dressed in Masonic garb, laying the cornerstone to the U.S. Capitol in 1793, as Grand Master of a Freemasonic Lodge, with masonic rituals. Does this not prove that George Washington was a Freemason?**

This painting was executed in 1974 by **Allyn Cox**, then official artist to the U.S. Capitol, under the direction of the Architect of the Capitol, George M. White, a 33<sup>rd</sup> degree Freemason.

The cornerstone of the U.S. Capitol was laid by **George Washington** on September 18, 1793. Washington, as President of the United States (the capital of the nation then being Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), was invited by the Commissioners of the City of Washington to lay it.

In a September 25, 1793 article, *The Colombian Mirror and Alexandria Gazette* newspaper reported that, from Georgetown (then Maryland), at about 10 o'clock, Lodge No. 9 were visited by that congregation, Lodge No. 22, of Virginia, with all their officers and regalia; and directly afterwards **appeared on the southern banks of the Grand River Potomack, one of the finest companies of Volunteer Artillery that has been lately seen, parading to receive the President of the United States, who shortly came in sight with his suite – to whom the Artillery paid their military honors, and his Excellency and suite crossed the Potomack, and was received in Maryland**, by the officers and brethren of No. 22, Virginia and No. 9, Maryland. The President headed the parade, preceded by a band of music and the rear brought up by the Alexandria Volunteer Artillery.

A list of those in the parade are given. The procession marched with dignity, music playing, drums beating, colours flying, and spectators rejoicing; from the President's Square to the Capitol, in the City of Washington; where the Grand Marshall ordered each file in the procession – the Grand Sword Bearer led the van; followed by the Grand Master P.T. on the left – **the President of the United States in the Centre** – and the Worshipful (Grand) Master of Lodge No. 22, Virginia, on the right, to the south-east corner of the Capitol; and the Artillery filed off to the destined ground to display their manoeuvres and discharge their cannon: **the President of the United States** – The Grand Master, P.T. and Worshipful (Grand) Master of Lodge No. 22, taking their stand to the east of a huge stone. The Artillery discharged a Volley. The Grand Marshall delivered the Commissioners a large **Silver Plate** with an inscription thereon, which the Commissioners ordered to be read, and was as follows:

This South-east cornerstone, of the Capitol of the United States of America in the City of Washington, was laid on the 18th day of September 1793, in the thirteenth year of American Independence, in the first year of the second term of the Presidency of George Washington, whose virtues in the civil administration of his country have been as conspicuous and beneficial, as his Military valor and prudence have been useful in establishing her liberties, and in the year of Masonry 5793, by the Grand Lodge of Maryland, several Lodges under its jurisdiction, and Lodge No. 22, from Alexandria, Virginia.  
THOMAS JOHNSON,  
DAVID STUART,                      Commissioners.  
DANIEL CARROLL,  
JOSEPH CLARK, R.W.G.M. – P.T. (Right Worshipful Grand Master)  
JAMES HOBAN,

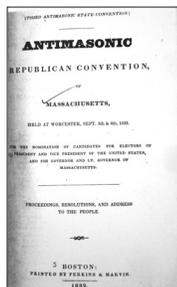
Architects.  
STEPHEN HALLATE,  
COLLEN WILLIAMSON, Master Mason.

The Artillery discharged a Volley. **The Plate was then delivered to the President**, who – attended by the Grand Master, P.T., and three most Worshipful Masters, descended to the cavesson trench – and deposed the plate, and laid on it the cornerstone of the Capitol of the United States of America.

**George Washington, President of the United States** and attendants ascended from the cavesson to the east of the cornerstone, and there the Grand Master P.T., elevated on a triple rostrum, delivered an Oration.

The event concluded with fifteen successive volleys from the Artillery, whose militia discipline and manoeuvres merit every commendation.<sup>12</sup>

The above original account of the *U.S. Capitol Cornerstone Laying*, makes it clear that, **George Washington, President of the United States** was invited by the Commissioners of the City of Washington to lay the Capitol cornerstone; that “Washington and his suite” crossed the Potomac River to Georgetown, Maryland (incorporated into the District of Columbia in 1895), where he was independently welcomed by a parade consisting of the Commissioners of Washington City; companies of Volunteer Artillery; Freemasonic Lodges of Maryland and Lodge 22 of Alexandria, Virginia; the Grand Marshall of the parade and a band of music; that in the parade, the **President of the United States** was placed “in the Centre,” with “the Grand Master, P.T. on his left,” and the “Worshipful Grand Master of Lodge 22, Alexandria, Virginia, on his right;” **that the President of the United States** was handed a Silver Plate, previously inscribed, extolling his virtues and valor, which the Commissioners ordered to be read – Washington being unapprised of its contents, bearing the names of the Commissioners of Washington City; James Hoban (architect of the White House; and Stephen Hallate, Architect); Joseph Clark, Right Worshipful Grand Master, P.T.; and Collen Williamson, Master Mason; and that the President was then requested, with “attendants,” to lay it on the cornerstone. This original account exposes the falsified Freemasonic records that George Washington “laid the cornerstone of the U.S. Capitol as Grand Master of Lodge 22, Alexandria, Virginia,” – **Washington’s own words testifying against the Freemasons’ claim that he was a Freemason, and that he laid the Capitol Cornerstone as Grand Master of the Freemasonic Lodge 22 in Alexandria Virginia: “I preside over no Lodges in the United States, nor have I been in one more than once or twice, within the last thirty years.”**



Title page of the September 5<sup>th</sup>, 1832 Antimasonic Republican Convention of Massachusetts. Library of Congress, Rare Book Collection.

From the above-cited facts, the 1974 *U.S. Capitol House Cox Corridors’* painting of *George Washington Laying the Capitol Cornerstone as a Grand Master Freemason*, by Allyn Cox, under the jurisdiction of Architect of the Capitol, George M. White, Freemason, being false, ought to be **immediately erased from the walls of the U.S. Capitol**, having contaminated millions of Americans since 1974 – youth in particular – with its “**pernicious, nefarious and diabolical**” defamation of George Washington’s

true character and identity.

### 3. The King David’s Freemasonic Lodge in Newport, Rhode Island published letters purportedly from George Washington, claiming him as a fellow-Grand Mason. Are these letters authentic?

*The Antimasonic Republican Convention of Massachusetts*, held at Worcester, September 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 1832, for the nomination of candidates for electors of President and Vice President of the United States and for Governor and Lt. Governor of Massachusetts, exposed these letters as non-existent, as follows:

“Mr. Hallett said, that having disposed of this false assertion of Masonry, he would now put to rest another, and a much more impudent falsehood, upon which Freemasonry had plumed herself more than upon any single point in her defense against the charges with which Truth was overwhelming her. **It was the assertion that General Washington was a devoted Freemason; a presiding Master of Lodges, and GRAND MASTER OF MASONS, in North America, or somewhere else.** For fear that Masonry will deny she ever claimed WASHINGTON as a Grand Master, after the proofs I shall now produce, said Mr. Hallett, I will first show what pretensions Freemasonry has made to the father of his country.

The **American edition of Preston’s Masonry**, asserts “that the Society of Freemasons in America, continued to flourish, under the auspices of General Washington, who continued his patronage to the Lodges, till his death.” (Page 242.)

At the funeral obsequies “of the illustrious brother WASHINGTON,” solemnized by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, February 11, 1800, “a Masonic dirge, written by the Brother Harris, (now Dr. Harris of Dorchester), was sung by brother Eaton and the choir.”

On the same occasion “the Honorable Brother Timothy Bigelow,” pronounced a Masonic Eulogy upon WASHINGTON. In that eulogy are the following, among other equally untrue assertions:

“He (Washington) cultivated our art with *sedulous attention*, and never lost an opportunity of advancing the interest, or promoting the honor of the *Craft*.”

“He found *frequent opportunities to visit the Lodge*, and thought it no derogation from his dignity there to stand on a level with the brethren.”

“The information received from our brethren who had the happiness to be members of the Lodge *over which he presided many years, and of which he died the Master*, furnishes abundant proof of his persevering zeal for the prosperity of the Institution.”

“*Constant and punctual in his attendance, scrupulous in his observance of the regulations of the Lodge*, and solicitous at all times to communicate light and instruction, *he discharged the duties of the Chair with uncommon dignity and intelligence in all the mysteries of our art*.”

“We see before us the very attire, which *he often wore as a Mason*.”

Such are the declarations of Hon. Timothy Bigelow.

In 1830, a pamphlet was published in the City of Boston, by Freemasons, entitled, “*the Masonic character and correspondence of General WASHINGTON*.” Among other assertions in that publication, are these:

“WASHINGTON died while holding one of the most responsible offices in the gift of his brethren, and while a member of the Grand Lodge of his own State.”

“*He was borne to the grave, by Brethren of the Lodge of which he had previously been Master*.”

“At the time of his death, Gen. WASHINGTON was Master of Alexandria Lodge.”

***“He presided over the Grand Lodge of his native State; he encouraged the organization of a Lodge in his own army, at the meetings of which he was often present, and in which he often officiated.”***

General Talmadge, a distinguished citizen of New York, asserted in a letter which he wrote last winter to a Committee of Antimasons, that ***“Washington had often presided in Poughkeepsie Lodge.”***

Masonic newspapers have been full of similar claims upon WASHINGTON. **The Providence Journal**, for instance, in June, 1831, said,

**“WASHINGTON held the highest offices in the Lodge.”**

Such is Masonic assertion, made under the most solemn circumstances, and published to the world, on the authority of men whose veracity on other subjects, was never called in question.

“Now then,” said Mr. Hallett, “let us confront this Masonic falsehood, as we have every other pretense it has set up, by Masonry itself. I hold in my hand a certified extract from the Records of King David’s Lodge, in Newport, Rhode Island. The authenticity of these records is thus proved. In 1812, a difficulty arose between the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island and Dr. Benjamin W. Case, then Master of St. John’s Lodge, in Newport, the successor of King David’s Lodge. Dr. Case was set aside upon some sovereign pretense of the Grand Lodge, which the civil tribunals, as a matter of course, confirmed in several lawsuits that followed. In one of these lawsuits, Judge Pitman of the United States District Court for Rhode Island, who was appointed sole referee, gave an opinion at length, in favor of the Grand Lodge. That opinion, though written, he has ever since concealed from the public, and the party against whom it was given, have been wholly unable to procure a copy of it, on which to found further proceedings.

One of the suits was an action of trover, by the new St. John’s Lodge, against Dr. Case and his Masons, who claimed to be old St. John’s Lodge, and held the records, regalia, etc. In this action the records were proved to be the original records, and Dr. Case was ordered by the Court to restore them to the new St. John’s Lodge or pay \$300 damages. He paid the damages and kept the records, and has since seceded from Masonry. The judicial proceedings of the Courts of Rhode Island, therefore, establish the authenticity of the records, from which the following extract is taken:

**(Extract from the Records of King David’s Lodge.)**

“Regular Lodge night, held at the house of Mr. James Tew, Wednesday evening, the 7<sup>th</sup> February, 1781. 5781.

A motion being made that as our worthy brother, his Excellency General WASHINGTON, was daily expected amongst us, a committee should be appointed to prepare an address in behalf of the Lodge, to present him. Voted, that the Right Worshipful Master, together with brothers Seixas, Peleg Clark, John Handy, and Robert Elliot, be a committee for that purpose, and that they present the same to this Lodge at their next meeting for their approbation.”

“At a Lodge held by request of the Right Worshipful Master, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1781, 5781,

The committee appointed to draught an address to our worthy brother, His excellency General WASHINGTON, report, ***that on inquiry they find General Washington not to be Grand Master of North America; as was supposed, nor even Master of any particular Lodge.*** They are, therefore, of opinion that this Lodge would not choose to address him as a private brother – ***at the same time, think it would not be agreeable to our worthy brother to be addressed AS SUCH.***

Voted, That the report of the committee be received, and that the address be entirely laid aside for the present.

At a Lodge called by request of several brethren, on Tuesday

evening, the 17<sup>th</sup> August, 5790. (26 brethren present).

An Entered Apprentice’s Lodge being opened in due form proceeded to business, when it was proposed to address the President of the United States. The Right Worshipful Master, (Moses Seixas), Henry Sherburne, and the Secretary, (William Littlefield), were appointed a committee for that purpose.”

(Then immediately on the record follow the two subjoined letters, viz.)

“To George Washington, President of the United States of America.” and the following reply, “To the Master, Wardens, and Brethren of King David’s Lodge in Newport, Rhode Island.” (There is no date recorded to either of these letters.)

***“These letters, it will be seen,”*** continued Mr. Hallett, ***“bear no date, and George Turner, Esq, and Mr. Case, certify that on searching the old documents and papers, now in possession of Dr. Case, the original of Washington’s letter, or the copy of that addressed to him, cannot be found!”***

It will be seen by the statement of King David’s Lodge, through their Committee, derived unquestionably from GENERAL WASHINGTON himself, that in 1781 ***he was not Grand Master, or Master of any Lodge,*** and further, that instead of being devoted to Freemasonry, ***it would be disagreeable to him to be addressed as a brother Mason!***

In 1790, nine years after this, it would seem from this record, that General WASHINGTON had consented to receive and answer the very letter he declined receiving in 1781. What could have produced this change in his views? That he stood in 1790, as it regards Masonry, in precisely the same relation he did in 1781, is proven by Washington himself...”

***In conclusion, these published “letters” bear no date nor place of origin, in contrast with George Washington having always dated his letters and prefaced them with a place of origin.*** Nor can Freemasons produce the originals. In agreement with the 1832 *Antimasonic Republican Convention of Massachusetts’* exposé, these letters do not exist – and are ***at antipodes to Washington’s written statement, “I preside over none (Freemasonic Lodges) in the United States, nor have I been in one more than once or twice within the last thirty years.”***

4. A visiting Lecturer recently spoke on ***“George Washington’s Presidential Inaugural Bible,”*** stating that it was Masonic – belonging to St. John’s Freemasonic Lodge in New York. ***Is this not proof that George Washington was a Freemason?***

***This is not George Washington’s Bible.*** Shortly before General George Washington’s arrival at Federal Hall in New York City on Inauguration Day, April 30, 1789, members of Congress discovered that no Bible was on hand for the inaugural ceremony. They searched through the building in consternation, and without success.

New York State Chancellor, **Robert R. Livingston** (a close friend of Washington) was visibly concerned, until the Marshall of the Inaugural Parade, Joseph Morton, stated he could find one. Morton went to his Masonic Lodge a few blocks away, where he secured the Masonic Lodge’s bible, and brought it to Federal Hall.

While Secretary Otis of the Senate held the Bible upon a red velvet cushion, Chancellor Livingston administered the oath of office to Washington, whose left hand rested upon the opening – Genesis 49-50 – having been opened at random due to haste; his right hand upraised. When the oath was completed, Washington added the phrase, “I swear, so help me God!” and bending down, kissed the open page.

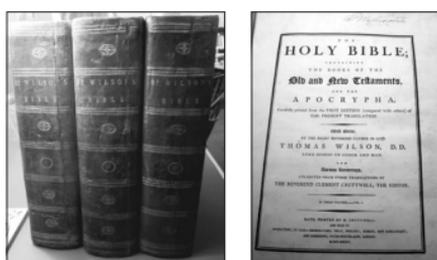
While Chancellor Livingston proclaimed Washington President,

Joseph Morton stepped forward, folding down the corner of the opened page, to preserve a record of the opening Washington had saluted, and returned it to his Lodge.

Not long after this historic event, members of St. John's Lodge, No. 1 inserted a page into the Bible to commemorate the important part it played in the installation of President Washington. This page follows the frontispiece and precedes the engraved title. Written in the style of an engraver, is the following text, headed by an engraving of Washington after the Vaughan portrait by Gilbert Stuart:

“On This Sacred Volume  
On the 30<sup>th</sup> day of April A.M. 5789  
In the City of New York  
administered to  
George Washington  
THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF  
AMERICA  
The Oath  
To support the Constitution of the United States.”

**George Washington's** personal, three-volume, hand-autographed **Bible** is housed in the Rare Book Collection, Library of Congress. Additionally, the *Mount Vernon Archives* contain: *The Washington family Bible* (wherein is recorded the birth of George Washington); The Book of Common Prayer (bearing Martha Washington's signature); A concordance to the Holy Scriptures, 1760; Martha Washington's personal family Bible (containing the Lewis family genealogy), autographed by her.



George Washington's three-volume, hand-autographed Bible.  
Library of Congress, Rare Book Collection.

In possession of *Pohick Episcopal Church*, Washington's parish Church, is another of **George Washington's** personal **Bibles**. The inside cover has the following inscription by George Washington Parke Custis, his adopted grandson, who presented it to the Church:

Presented to **Truro Parish** for the use of **Pohick Church**, July 11, 1802. With the request that should said church cease to be appropriated to Divine worship, which God forbid, and for the honor of Christianity, it is hoped will never take place. In such case I desire that the vestry will preserve this Bible as a testimony of regard from the subscriber after a residence of 19 years in the Parish. —  
George Washington Parke Custis.

Washington purchased a large, leather-bound **Bible** and **Psalter**, for use by Pohick Church, his parish Church. It also contains the **Book of Common Prayer**. At the end of the Book of Malachi, this inscription is found:

“This Bible was used in Pohick Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, when in that ancient temple which is yet in use, ‘the father of this country’ worshipped the God of his fathers.”