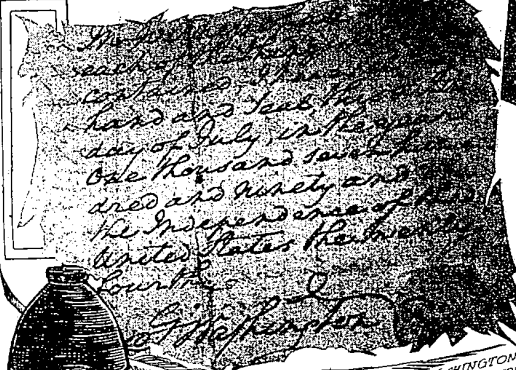


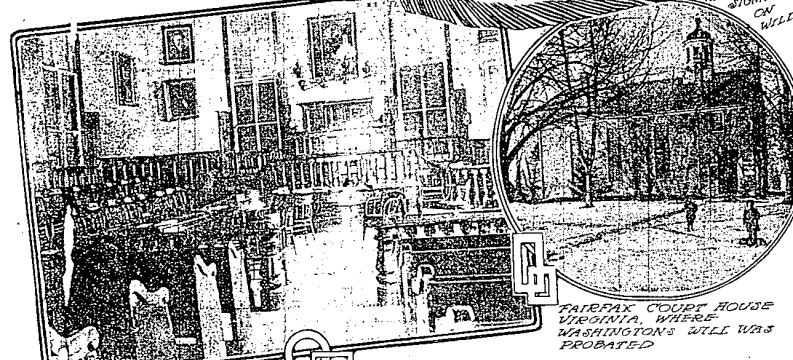
Restoring George Washington's Will

HE last will and testament of George Washington is perhaps the most precious and the most interesting of all the relics of the Father of His Country—has recently been saved to the nation. Moreover this rescue of the most significant document penned by our first president took place just in the nick of time. A few years more and the country might have had to mourn the loss of this priceless souvenir just as it has been mourning these many years past the disappearance of the original penned drafts of some of the famous speeches delivered by some of our most famous men on historic occasions.

It was not, in the present case, that fire or theft threatened the Washington relic—although it is admitted that there is a possibility of loss by either of these means so long as it remains in its present depository. However, the destructive agent that recently aroused some of the nation's most prominent officials to the peril of the Washington will is nothing more than the ravages of time. Until



PAGE OF WASHINGTON'S WILL AND BOX IN WHICH IT WAS KEPT



FAIRFAX COURT HOUSE VIRGINIA, WHERE WASHINGTON'S WILL WAS PROBATED

INTERIOR OF FAIRFAX COURT HOUSE WHICH APPEARS NOW JUST AS IT DID 100 YEARS AGO

within the past few years the pencils at large did not know of the whereabouts of the Washington will. However, the officials of the state department and the library of congress were getting busy in an obscure county, Virginia, and whereas they needed the facility of their ambition to ever get permission to transfer it to Washington, it was not to be a great national loss if they still had sufficient interest in it to be a watchful eye on it, so to speak.

Sometime ago it suddenly came to the ears of some interested parties that the will—long known to be in a poor state of preservation—in imminent danger of being entirely ruined. Obviously quick action and heroic measures were necessary and thereupon there was inaugurated that project which has lately witnessed the complete restoration of the will by means of a miracle of manuscript surgery and judgment restoration carried on by the greatest experts in the country in this highly specialized line of work.

Persons who are at all conversant with the care with which Uncle Sam's treasures and safeguards all the important state and private papers of historical value that are in his keeping—for instance, the Declaration of Independence which is never exposed to light—by naturally marvel that so precious a relic as the will of Washington should have been allowed to fall into decay. The explanation is found in the fact, above noted, that the will is not and never has been in the possession of the federal government. It was filed for probate in the year 1800 at the county seat of the county in Virginia where Washington reigned and in that state it has remained ever since. A century of wear and tear were expected to play havoc with almost any document and at some during this cycle the Washington relic saw some rather rough handling for so fragile an object. During the



NEW OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE COURT AT FAIRFAX WHERE THE WILL IS NOW PRESERVED

attempt to sew delicate sheets of paper. It transpired that subsequent handlings of the service sheets had caused the threads to wear and cut their way through the paper and ultimately the pages were literally in shreds. All the while the will was on display in an ordinary wooden box with a glass cover which permitted the will to be constantly exposed to the light while on exhibition at the county seat of Fairfax county and which would probably have faded out the handwriting entirely had not the document been penned with an exceptional quality of ink. It was at this juncture that the government officials who volunteered their services were allowed to take a hand to save the wreck. The work of restoration was placed in the hands of a federal expert who has made a life work of the saving of damaged papers and manuscripts. He devoted weeks to the work and what he has wrought is little short of a miracle. In so far as the casual observer can detect the will is in practically the same condition as it was when it left the hands of its distinguished author. It is only when a page is held to the light that one realizes that, technically, the document is but a ghost of its former self.

All sorts of obstacles were encountered in connection with the restoration of the will. It was at first planned to have the old salvage work undertaken by the department of state, but the manuscript surgeons of which branch of the government had already worked wonders with the Constitution of the United States. However, in order to get the best of the skill of the state department's experts preserved. It is constructed of two or three layers of bricks set in asphalt and covered with a thick coating of asphalt.

King Nabonid, it is proved, built his fortifications out of the ruins of works constructed by his predecessors, as the excavators found brick with a four lined inscription of Hieroglyphs. In which this ruler, whose inscriptions have hitherto been missing, described himself as "the accumulator of good deeds."

The excavations made in Assur by Dr. W. Andrae in the season April to October yielded still more important results. The complete ground plan of the Temple of Assur was laid bare, and the history of the great building pushed back to the third millennium, B. C. This makes it the oldest Mesopotamian temple so far discovered.

The temple was renewed by the King Sams-Adad about 1900 B. C. and it was burned down 600 years later under Salmassar I., who, however, reconstructed it on exactly the old lines.

Many important finds were made by Dr. Andrae. Near the door in the southern front were found remains of a relief of a bull three

parts it would be necessary to remove the will to Washington for the interim while the work of restoration was in progress, and the county officials at Fairfax who had the say in the matter refused flatly to allow the document to leave Virginia. It looked for a time as though this might block the whole plan, but finally the officials of the library of congress, who have on their staff a manuscript surgeon almost as skillful as the one at the state department, offered to send this wizard to Fairfax Courthouse and have him carry on the work there. This was done and the outcome has been as satisfactory as though the work of rejuvenation had been conducted in the well-equipped plant at the national capital. However, there were many handicaps and not the least of these was found in the necessity for transporting to Fairfax a heavy press and other paraphernalia needed for the intricate piecing of the torn and ranged pages and mounting them on the cardboard mounts on which has been provided for each page of the will.

Unquestionably the gratifying success which has attended this attempt to restore the Washington will to the appearance it bore one hundred years ago has been due to small measure to the aid afforded by a number of blank sheets of paper made especially for George Washington and watermarked with his name. When the government officials first inspected the original they will with a view to applying their ingenious "first aid" treatment they at once realized that an inordinate amount of piecing and patching would be necessary and they were in a quandary where to obtain material that would match the original, for, of course, the will was written on very distinctive paper and to patch it with ordinary paper of present-day manufacture would have resulted in only partially concealing the wounds made by time and careless handling.

There was a long search for paper that could be used with confidence that no person examining the restored document without the original being held side by side, where the aid of a magnifying glass would be necessary, could detect a patch. Finally the officials discovered in a second-hand bookstore in Washington a number of sheets of the writing paper which General Washington had manufactured especially for his personal use and which he used whenever work issued that he drafted on the original document, with the result that the appearance of the original has been simulated so as to defy detection. Each sheet of the will has been backed or mounted upon "rescue" paper that it will stand any reasonable amount of handling and the ink of the will has been "set" so that there is little danger of further fading.

However, for all that the portions of the will has been put in condition to stand another century of strenuous existence if need be, it is not likely that it will ever again be called upon to suffer such neglect or abuse as in the past. The county officials who are the custodians of the will appear to be aroused to the necessity of giving it more intelligent care than it enjoyed in years gone by. To that end the pages of the will have been bound in the form of a book with handsome red leather cover and a special proof, burglar proof steel safe, made especially for the purpose under the supervision of the government officials will henceforth be the repository of this relic.

The attention which this restoration of the will is receiving is expected to result in the visits in future of considerable numbers of tourists and sightseers to Fairfax Courthouse, the Virginia hamlet where the will has its home—this more so since the historic spot can now be reached by trolley from the national capital. The county seat of the county where Washington lived and died has many picturesque and interesting features which are the marks not only of the past but of the future. This relic of the past was not only a great honor to the county but it is a great honor to the state. The will is not kept in the courthouse but in the office of the clerk of the court, which occupies a separate building. The work of restoring the Washington will had it been entrusted to any manuscript surgeon outside the government service, and there are not a few such in the country—would have cost \$200 to \$300 at least and it is probable that several times the latter sum might have been demanded for the service for which the government made no charge.

times larger than life size. Another find was an inscription of Sennacherib to the effect that he had "built a house to the God Ninib." This is probably a reference to an extension of the temple at the seat center, of which little now remains, but the temple well built by Sennacherib is intact.

The Temple of Assur is shown to have been of vast extent. The excavations reveal a courtyard surrounded by rooms and two immense halls. The excavators found here fragments of enamelled brick dating from modern Assyrian times and showing markedly the influence of Babylon. This brick depicts a bull, a lion, and a woman on march and the destruction of fortresses.

CANADA GETS \$1,500 TROPHY.

NATIONAL CORN EXPOSITION AT COLUMBUS, OHIO, AWARDED TROPHY FOR PECK OF KATCHEWAN.

Again Canada is to the fore, and has secured at the National Corn Exposition just closed at Columbus, Ohio, the magnificent Colorado silver trophy valued at \$1,500, for the best peck of oats. These oats were grown by Messrs. Hill & Son, of Lloydminster, Saskatchewan, and, as may readily be understood, were of splendid quality to have been so successful in a contest open to the world, and in which competition was keen. At the same Exposition there were exhibits of wheat and barley, and in all these competitions, the grain shown by Canada secured a wonderful amount of attention, and also a number of awards. During recent exhibitions at which grain from Western Canada was given permission for entry, it always took first place. At the Spokane Interstate Fair, last fall, where the entries were very large, and the competition from the Province of Alberta carried off the silver cup, given by Governor Hay, for the best state or province display, and a score of prizes was awarded Canadian exhibitors for different exhibits of wheat, oats and barley threshed and in the sheaf. Vegetables also received high awards. A pleasing feature of these exhibits was they were mostly made by farmers who had at one time been American Citizens and were now farming in Canada. The Department of the Interior is just in receipt of a magnificent diploma given by the 74 State Board of Examiners at the Fair held in Cincinnati last fall for agricultural display by Canada.

The Surveyor-General of Canada has just completed a map showing that a large area of land was surveyed last year in the northern portion of Saskatchewan and Alberta in order to be ready for the rush of homesteaders to that district during the coming spring and summer. It is understood that surveys covering several hundreds of thousands of acres will be made in addition to those during the coming summer.

A return just issued by the Dominion Lands Branch shows that 48,257 homestead entries were made last year as compared with 27,661 in 1909; in this 14,794 were made by Americans. North Dakota comes first with the list with 4,810, Minnesota gives 2,523, South Dakota 1,133, Wisconsin 746, Washington 730, Michigan 706, Iowa 645, while other states show less, but with the exception of Delaware, District of Columbia and the Indian Territory, every state and territory contributed.

The prospects for an abundant crop in all parts of Western Canada for 1911 are said to be excellent. In those districts that required it there was an ample rainfall last autumn, and the snowfall during the present winter is greater than in many previous years. Both are essential factors to the farmers, who look upon the moisture that these will produce as being highly beneficial.

A large immigration from the United States is expected, and the demand for statistics and information from the various Government Agencies located at different points in the States is the greatest it has ever been.

Since the above was written word has been received that in addition to honors won at Columbus, Ohio, Canada won first and second on wheatland first and second on oats, as well as diplomas.

Norman Cherry of Davis, Saskatchewan, who was in the reserve for first on wheat, secured the award, with G. H. Hutton of Lacombe, Alberta, second; J. C. Hill & Sons of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, besides the silver trophy. G. H. Hutton took second in oats.

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Temples of Babylon

The Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft gives an interesting account of the past year's excavation work in three different parts of Babylon. In the quarter known as Kasr were laid bare several hundred meters of a wall about 10 feet thick, broken by numerous door openings which were originally flanked by towers. The most interesting find here was a coffin of burned clay, on the lid of which was a relief of a bearded head.

Near the north wall of the quarter known as Sac p was discovered a system of drains, built of brick, laid in asphalt. Here were also found several fragments of tablets with cuneiform inscriptions from the time of Nebuchadnezzar. This discovery enabled the excavators to complete fragmentary tablets discovered some time before.

The legend proved to refer to the building of the Zigurat, the temple tower of Babylon. The beginning reads as follows: "Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, reverer of the great