

THE Holidays AT MOUNT VERNON

MEET THE 18TH-CENTURY GUESTS OF THE WASHINGTONS

During this special After Hours Tour, visitors will encounter three or four of the family, houseguests and staff who are in the Mansion awaiting the arrival of General and Mrs. Washington.

In the central passage:

SARAH GREEN, the wife of carpenter Thomas Green. Sarah was born at Mount Vernon, and her father and husband were long-term employees. Mr. Green proved to be a scoundrel and abandoned Sarah (he probably also torched the courthouse in New Kent County, Virginia). General Washington continued to provide her with support and has just helped her establish a small retail store in Alexandria. She is on a visit seeking additional help.

MARY PINE, the widow of the artist Robert Edge Pine, who painted the portraits of Martha Washington's four grandchildren that hang in the master bedroom. After her husband's death, she ran a boarding school in Philadelphia, where Nelly Custis, Martha Washington's granddaughter, was sent for "finishing." She is visiting to see Nelly and her husband's paintings.

ELIZA POWEL, the widow of Samuel Powel, former mayor of Philadelphia. Mrs. Powel was one of the Washingtons' closest friends in Philadelphia. She visited Mount Vernon on several occasions after the presidency, because of their closeness.

In the upper hall and on the third floor:

HARRIOT WASHINGTON, the orphan of George Washington's brother Samuel, who is visiting her uncle. Harriot was "passed around" the family a bit, and seemed a bit ignored. Her brothers, however, were educated by General Washington.

ELEANOR CALVERT, the widow of Martha Washington's son John Parke Custis, who will be visiting her children Nelly Custis and George Washington Parke Custis, known as Washy. She has remarried by this time and is in the midst of raising a large family. She seems to have been a very kind woman, but her situation became ever more difficult.

In the study:

ALBION RAWLINGS, the clerk who lived in the lodgings next to the storehouse on the circle in front of the Mansion. A man of modest means, Albion chose to work for Washington because of the honor (and accepted a very low salary). He will be talking about Washington's diligence in keeping up with his correspondence and running the plantation.

COLONEL DAVID HUMPHREYS, who served with Washington throughout the Revolution and Presidency. At this time, Colonel Humphreys is working on his biography of Washington, and relates to visitors a few stories from their years together.

In the kitchen:

ELEANOR FORBES, the housekeeper at Mount Vernon, who was hired after the Washingtons returned from Philadelphia at the end of Washington's second term as president. Mrs. Forbes lives in the room above the kitchen and is busy making preparations for the next day in her role as head of the household staff.

