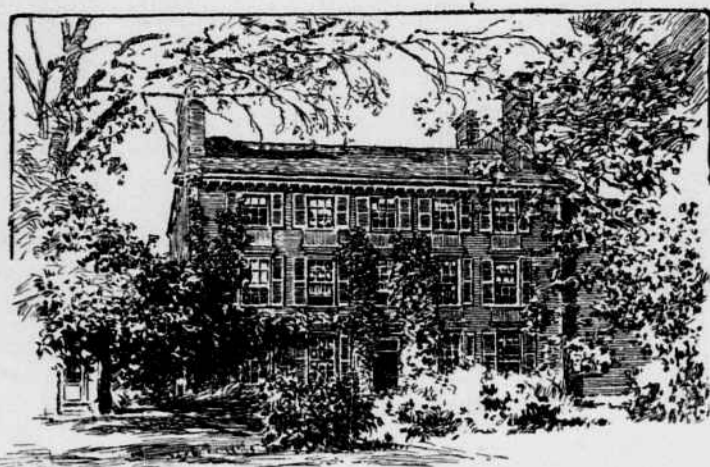


HISTORIC HOUSES PRESERVED

BY SOCIETIES OF AMERICAN WOMEN



Royall House at Medford, Massachusetts

By Bertha
Damaris
Knobe

southward, I will take the liberty of adding that it will always give me pleasure to see you at Mount Vernon as you pass and re-pass."

In Connecticut remains another Revolutionary structure, unpretentious in appearance, perhaps, but hallowed with the spirit of a boy-martyr. Who can look on the little Nathan Hale school-house at New-London without thrills? Though



Meadow Garden, Near Atlanta, Georgia

II.

FOUR months after the Colonial Dames had got well started the fair descendants of Revolutionary sires also set about in similar patriotic spirit; and through their societies, called Daughters of the American Revolution and Daughters of the Revolution, they have distinguished themselves, especially in the defense of ancestral homes against attacks of Father Time.

The Ellsworth House, latest of nine Revolutionary structures in keeping of the Daughters of the American Revolution—what a delightful "Indian summer atmosphere of the past" surrounds this old homestead at Windsor, Connecticut! where lived Oliver Ellsworth, close friend of George Washington, who made him Chief Justice of the United States and Plenipotentiary to France. Though this magnetic personage seemed, in public life, the rather austere New-Englander to be handled with diplomatic gloves—for when Napoleon sighted him in a crowd of foreign ambassadors he said promptly: "We shall have to make a treaty with that man"—a genial warmth pervaded his private life.

In remembrance of Washington's musical performance in the Ellsworth nursery one night, "Darby Ram" was sung on that auspicious day not long ago, when the front door-key of Ellsworth House was turned over to Connecticut Daughters of the American Revolution. Indeed, the Governor and many a military strap turned out alike to eulogize the fair patriots, Oliver Ellsworth and his fifty heirs who made the precious offering of their homestead to the society, while the speeches were applauded by two thousand spectators.

The heirs have been no less liberal in restoring the furnishings to the old fireside, and many an heirloom, including the silver coffee urn which offered up its cheering beverage when the President of the United States dropped in for a little visit, has returned to its old-time setting in the house.

A delightful side of the man is reflected in the letters he wrote his boys when in Paris. "Daddy is a great way off," he began in one epistle, "but he thinks about his little boys every day; and he hopes they are very good boys and learn their books well, and say their prayers every night, and then God will love them as much as daddy does. . . . The robbers came around the house where daddy lives the other night, and the gardener shot off his double-barreled gun and killed two of them; and daddy believes if the robbers come into his room they will get killed, for he keeps a gun and two pistols charged all the time; and when he comes home he intends to give his gun to Martin and his pistols to Billy and Harry."

But before the statesman concluded the letter he wrote a poem. One stanza commenting on French boys is:

The little boys are pretty spry,
And bow when daddy's paid them;
But don't think they'll ever die,
Nor can they tell who made them.

But such friendly letters, signed "affectionately yours," which Oliver Ellsworth, on the other hand, received from Washington! In one written just before the President was about to retire to Mount Vernon, he thus held out the latch-string: "As your official duty will necessarily take you

converted into a chapter-house for Daughters of the American Revolution, a hundred mementos suggest that distant day when the young schoolmaster, grown restless with the whiz of cannon-balls from blood-stained battle-fields, suddenly threw down his books. "I'm going to war!" he declared, and he did. At the front, his eagerness led him into the enemy's camp; he was caught, and sentenced to death as a spy. But the youth's courage did not forsake him, and with his last breath he cried out: "I only regret I have but one life to give to my country."

His patriotic spirit, in turn, survives in the trim little school-house, saved by Daughters of the American Revolution, assisted by Sons of the Ameri-



Hendrick Hudson House, Hudson, New-York

can Revolution, who turned over the keys to the immediate care of Lucretia Shaw Chapter, D. A. R. of New-London. This ceremony was, indeed, an auspicious event in the town, being celebrated with a military, naval and civic parade, and concluding with the unveiling of a tablet on the school-house by no less a distinguished descendant of the patriot schoolmaster than his great-grandnephew, the two-and-one-half-year-old Nathan Hale of to-day. Over the fireside, bearing on one side the D. A. R. seal and on the other S. A. R. insignia, reads this tribute to "Nathan Hale, Teacher, Patriot, Martyr": "Any service necessary for the public good becomes honorable by being necessary."

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Then Royall House. This stately three-story mansion at Medford, Massachusetts, which Daugh-

ters of the American Revolution maintain as a public museum, immediately reminds one of the luxurious life of a country gentleman in pre-Revolutionary days.

Though the house was built in 1631, the last Royall to occupy it was Colonel Isaac Royall, whose hospitality consisted in sumptuous dinners and entertainments for the *bon-ton* of Boston. Back of the house remain the slave-quarters built by his father.

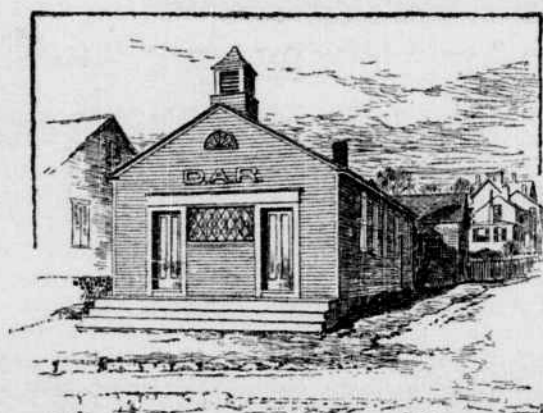
But Colonel Isaac Royall, as it happened, had leanings toward Toryism, and when the "Committee of Safety" made things hot for him he fled to England, "for his health," he told his friends. As estates of refugees were appropriated promptly by the commonwealth, this residence, handsomely paneled and carved, was converted into headquarters for General Stark until after the battle of Bunker Hill. The fair custodians of the house will recount that this Revolutionary General exclaimed, when his eyes first fell on the British: "See there, my men! There are the Redcoats! Before night they're ours, or Molly Stark's a widow!"

After the war the house passed from one owner to another, until the Sarah Bradlee Fulton Chapter D. A. R.—named after the Revolutionary heroine who disguised her brothers for the "Boston Tea Party"—secured a lease with the intention, some prosperous day, "to have and to hold it" forever. Though open to the public, it is maintained in the meantime as an old-fashioned residence, and the dark cellar full of passages, the great garret with its odd corners, make it curiously attractive to the sight-seer.

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Thus "D. A. R. houses" spring up everywhere. The society, under the presidency of such notables as the late Mrs. Benjamin Harrison, Mrs. Adlai E. Stevenson, Mrs. John W. Foster, Mrs. Daniel Manning, and at present, Mrs. Charles W. Fairbanks (wife of the Vice-President of the United States), has been, indeed, a worthy caretaker of them all, though "Meadow Garden," quaint home of George Walton—signer of the Declaration of Independence, who entertained Washington and Lafayette—remains nearest most hearts, perhaps, as it was the first house preserved by Daughters of the American Revolution, and in this single case contributions came from chapters all over the country. Situated near Augusta, Georgia, it naturally comes under the immediate care of that chapter, which once a week during the winter opens it to tourists.

Then come back to the North to a little building at Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts, looking for all the world like a country school-house—as, indeed, it was in Revolutionary days—but labeled with the three big letters of D. A. R. The liberty-pole in front of the building wherein the society treasures Revolutionary relics bears a tablet telling a tale, for three women—Polly Daggett, Maria Allen and Parnell Manter—once promptly blew up a liberty-pole to keep the British from using it as a much-needed mast for a ship; and when this tablet was unveiled, it is interesting to add, three women descendants of



Revolutionary School-house, Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts



Nathan Hale School-house, New London, Connecticut