Using the George Washington Financial Papers Site

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What are Financial Documents?
An explanation of George Washington's business and household accounts

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An explanation of George Washington's business and household accounts.

Explore the Financial Papers
Learn how to use the search and explore features.

financial.gwpapers.org
The home page for The George Washington Financial Papers Project provides a dynamic way to interact with the site's content. Clicking on any of the panels reveals the entire image in addition to details about that particular section. To see all of the panels again, click the black circle marked with an X in the top right corner. To enter the site, use any of the menu items in the topmost section.
In order to navigate through the George Washington Financial Papers Project website, use the Main Menu located at the top of every page. Each menu item will be explained in full throughout this instructional book. For now, it is important to note that some menu items (About, Documents, Search, Explore, and Resources) contain additional sub-menu items, all of which lead to interesting information related to the site and its content.
ABOUT

LEARN ABOUT THE PROJECT

HISTORY

The About page contains a description of the George Washington Financial Papers Project as well as information about its background and funding, from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). Also included is a timeline illustrating the conception and development of the project and related presentations and publications. A page of acknowledgments provides a list of individuals and organizations who are currently working on or have contributed to the project, as well as a list of image credits.
Currently, the George Washington Financial Papers Project has digitally published the following: Ledger A, 1750-1772; Ledger B, 1772-1793; and Ledger C, 1790-1799. Also included in the site is a Gouverneur Morris account (Cash Book, 1811-1816) to illustrate that other accounts can be entered into this system.
Ledgers A and B are housed at the Library of Congress as part of Series 5 of the George Washington collection; Ledger C is at Morristown (N.J.) National Historical Park. Together, the three ledgers are composed of almost 800 folio pages. Each folio page includes a page of debits (the left side) and a page of credits (the right side). While the three ledgers contain a vast amount of information, there are several account books of various types not yet available on the site.

In order to view the contents of each of these account books, go to the Documents link in the Main Menu and select the appropriate ledger. Some basic information, including a link to the Library of Congress collection, will be displayed. A list of each folio page within the selected ledger will also appear. The teal title link goes to the actual folio page where the transactions for that page can be found. Below the folio page titles is the name(s) of the account holder(s) for that page. The names are linked to biographical information, which will be discussed later.

Twenty folio page titles are listed at a time. To view additional folio pages, use the pager at the bottom of the page. When a folio page title is selected, the transactions, images, and other metadata for that page are presented.
Each folio page is composed of a debit and credit side, along with associated transaction lines, which are displayed on the right. Images of the original pages of both the debit and credit sides have also been provided, with an image viewer that allows for zooming. Links to the Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations, a calculator to add and subtract of pounds, shillings, and pence, and links to the next and previous folio pages are also provided.

On the left side of each folio page, a page overview details the account name, people, places, occupation/title, etc., mentioned on the page.
GW had several account books. Many of them are housed at the Library of Congress, and others are located at a number of other repositories. The GWFPP team has focused on GW’s three main ledger books. The document catalog provides a listing of financial documents related to GW. Currently, the list includes only those at the Library of Congress, but future plans include its expansion.
A key element to the GWFPP is the ability to search through the transactions. This is possible due to the metadata that is applied to each transaction line. In order to make this resource truly beneficial, abbreviations are spelled out; references are added to dittos; missing dates are added when possible; and transactions are linked to relevant information. The basic search interface allows for text searching that to finds the matching text across any field of a transaction line.
Also available is the ability to perform advanced search queries. Combining any of the advanced filter options allows for a more granular search. These options will search only their associated fields to find matching information. More advanced search options are planned for the future, including the ability to search by pounds, shillings, and pence.

Both search options allow for the export of search results into either .csv or .xls spreadsheet formats. Exporting a large number of transactions may take a little bit of time: a progress bar will indicate how much has been completed. Sometimes, newer versions of Microsoft Excel includes a warning message when opening the .xls file. The files are safe to open; however, some users may find this disconcerting and this issue is being addressed. The GWFPP team recommends using OpenOffice to open and work with .csv files. This software is free and can be downloaded from the software website (https://www.openoffice.org).
The George Washington Financial Papers Project site currently displays transcriptions of GW’s ledger books of accounts. People, places, and ships mentioned in the documents are identified for user convenience. The site also includes controlled vocabulary lists for occupations, services, food & beverages, agriculture, and place types.

This metadata enhances the transcriptions, providing a number of ways for users to access information: people and places mentioned in the documents; what was being bought and sold; and types of work being performed. Additional lists will be included in the future.
PEOPLE CAN BE FOUND BY:

1. First and last name
2. Birth year
3. Death year
4. Occupation/Title
5. Gender

Any of the above options can be combined in order to create a more robust search. Additionally, an alphabetical glossary display allows alphabetical browsing. Lastly, the results of any search performed can be exported into an .xls or .csv file for download (button at bottom of page).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>Death</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abraham Hake &amp; Company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres, William</td>
<td>1734</td>
<td>1789</td>
<td>Sheriff, Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acton, John</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam, James</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam, Robert</td>
<td>1731</td>
<td>1789</td>
<td>Sheriff, Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adams, Abednego</td>
<td>1721</td>
<td>1809</td>
<td>Planter, Sheriff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adams, Daniel Jenifer</td>
<td>1751</td>
<td>1796</td>
<td>Sheriff, Supercargo, Lieutenant, Major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

William Acres was retained by George Washington as a three Spanish dollars each for services as ferryman for the crossing to Mount Vernon, 1747–1750. Robert Adam (1731–1789) entered the Virginia militia in 1755 and was appointed Sheriff of Albemarle in 1760. Robert Adams (1731–1812) was the son of Robert Adam, and was a planter and soldier. Daniel Jenifer Adams (1751–1792) was a naval officer and merchant, and was a partner in the firm of William Hake & Company.
From the people search and interface, users can select an individual and access biographical information, including: ID, birth/death dates, occupation/title, and related names and places. This page also lists other account pages and documents in which the individual is mentioned, linking to those pages as well as to the relevant correspondence on both Founders Online and The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition on Rotunda.

In order to see other people with the same occupation, click the link. Links to other individuals with the same occupation, as well as to related individuals or places, are also provided.
PLACES CAN BE FOUND BY:

1. Place name
2. County
3. State
4. Country
5. Place type

Any of the above options can be combined in order to create a more robust search. The alphabetical glossary feature also allows for alphabetical browsing. At this time exportation into an .xls or .csv file is
Clicking the link to a place name provides information about the place (if any), as well as additional metadata associated with it: county, state, country, and place type. Moreover, clicking the links to county, state, country, and place type provides a list of places associated with the selected option, resembling the results of selecting an occupation/title under people. Much like a person’s ID, place IDs link to the documents in which that place is mentioned.

An additional aspect of the place IDs is mapping. Countries, states, cities/towns, counties, and rivers have been located on the map. Other places, such as farms and estates, have been placed on the map based on the county in which they were located.
SHIPS CAN BE FOUND BY:

1. Ship name
2. Text

Ships are treated similarly to people and places. Where possible, textual information is provided as well as links to related people (ship captains, ship owners, etc.). This section is still under development and was released in order to illustrate information that can be captured; new ships and related information will be added periodically.
CATEGORIES:
1. Agriculture and Horticulture
2. Food and Drink
3. Government
4. Health and Medicine
5. Horses and Livestock
6. Hospitality and Entertainment
7. Legal
8. Management
9. Masonry
10. Mercantile and Business
11. Metalwork
12. Military and Supporting Services
13. Publishing
14. Real Estate
15. Religion
16. Servants, Slaves, and Personal and Household Services
17. Teaching and Education
18. Textile, Leather, Clothing and Accessories
19. Trades
20. Transportation
21. Woodworking

OCCUPATIONS AND TITLES

**Occupations & Titles**

- **Agriculture and Horticulture**
  - Cradler
  - Farmer
  - Harvester

- **Food and Drink**
  - Baker
  - Butcher
  - Cook
  - Brewer

- **Government**
  - Attorney General
  - Commissioner
  - Justice
  - Tax Collector

- **Health and Medicine**
  - Apothecary
  - Doctor
  - Negro Doctor
  - Dentist
  - Midwife

- **Horses and Livestock**
  - Farrier
  - Horse Breeder
  - Saddle

- **Hospitality and Entertainment**
  - Fiddler
  - Hostler
  - Stabler
  - Tavern Keeper

- **Legal**
  - Attorney General
  - Lawyer

**Additional Categories:**

- Agriculture and Horticulture
- Food and Drink
- Government
- Health and Medicine
- Horses and Livestock
- Hospitality and Entertainment
- Legal
- Management
- Masonry
- Mercantile and Business
- Metalwork
- Military and Supporting Services
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- Textile, Leather, Clothing and Accessories
- Trades
- Transportation
- Woodworking
As with people, pages regarding specific occupations will contain an assortment of information. Take, for example, the category “Health and Medicine” and the term “doctor,” depicted to the left. The category details the more specific terms related to it as “Narrow Terms,” followed by a list of the people and pages associated with the category. Using the provided examples, this would mean that all the people and pages associated with apothecary, doctor, negro doctor, dentist, and midwife would be displayed here.

This search can become more specific by looking at the narrow terms. By selecting doctor, the user is able to see the people and pages associated with just the term doctor. Furthermore, a definition of the term from the Oxford English Dictionary (and citation) is often provided.
The other controlled vocabulary lists (Services, Food & Beverages, Agriculture, and Place Types) are structured in the same way as Occupations/Titles. The terms for these lists are organized under broad categories, with links to associated content. In some instances, terms are broken down with more granularity to give users greater insight into what information can be found. For instance, looking under “Agriculture” we have “Livestock” -> “Donkeys and Mules” -> “Knight of Malta.” Knight of Malta was the name of one of GW’s jacks, or male donkeys. Several transactions centered on this particular jack, which is why there are these links. The same can be seen for horses.

In the future, additional vocabulary lists will cover subjects ranging from currency and textiles to household items and medical terms. For any terminology that is unfamiliar, please consult the Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations.
Additional tools and resources include a section for articles and blog posts that are available online; visualizations created by the project team; and links to presentations and posters that the team presented at various conferences and events. These sections will continue to grow as more work is done.
This page includes links to articles and blogs centered on GW, the entrepreneur. All that have been identified so far, are freely available online to view, but should be cited appropriately. The project team would like to continue to add more content here and would appreciate any help in identifying more relevant articles and blog posts. Use the Contact Us page to suggest additional resources.
The various visualizations available on the website allow users to interact with the information found within the financial papers. Visualizations include an interactive map of the places the team has identified so far; word clouds and an interactive quiz that help illuminate the various types of material present within these documents; and interactive pie charts and a story map that provide insight into some of the accounts not currently available on this site. Additional visualizations will be added soon, highlighting staple crops, dry and liquid volume measurements, and eighteenth century medicine.
Similar to the map provided on the place IDs, this map displays all places identified so far. Place Type, County, State, and Country can each be used to find similar places. Selecting an icon displays identifying information about the associated place, and the name can then be used to navigate back to the individual place ID.
WORD CLOUDS

Word clouds highlight content within the documents. They focus on four words: cloth, doctor, mending, and subscription. These word clouds allow users to gain a better understanding of words and phrases associated with these themes.

Take for example “cloth.” The word cloud illustrates that “yards”, “making”, “broad”, “saddle”, “clothes”, and “weaving” all appear frequently with the word “cloth.” From this we can gather that cloth was woven and measured in yards, that the different types of cloth included broad cloth; and that it was used for various things such as saddles, and clothing.

While these connections may seem relatively straightforward, the word clouds also illustrate who may have been involved with cloth: merchants, weavers, and seamstresses. By presenting the document’s content in this way, users can gain a better understanding of what can be found in the records and how words and themes relate.
QUESTIONS INCLUDE:

1. Which of the following books did George Washington purchase?

2. Which animals could be found on his estates?

3. What forms of measurements are in the account books?

Other topics center on currencies, food, beverages, horse supplies, and ingredients used by apothecaries. Take the quiz and see how many of the ten questions you can answer correctly!
This visualization was built using StoryMap JS. It maps out GW’s route to Philadelphia, his return to Mount Vernon, and it includes a transcription of the overall expense pages from the account book. Based on the “Revolutionary War Accounts, Vouchers, and Receipted Accounts 3, 1784” held by the Library of Congress, this account records GW’s expenses to and from Philadelphia, a trip he took to attend a meeting of the Society of the Cincinnati. Clicking on the large arrows on the right and left sides advances and turns back the slides. For more information about a particular stop, click on the orange icon on the map.
The project team has delivered presentations on the GWFPP at a number of conferences at venues across the United States, as well as at the MEDEA (Modeling semantically Enriched Digital Edition of Accounts) conference in Regensburg, Germany, and at the DH2016 (the 2016 digital humanities conference) in Krakow, Poland. Some of the presentations and posters from these events are provided here in order to share different aspects of the project.
Several resources are included here to help users understand the project as a whole. The project's editorial introduction and methodology describes the types of materials included and the decisions made during the editorial process. A glossary of terms defines unfamiliar words. Finally, a list is provided of short titles, books, articles, and websites, either used on the site or that may be of use to someone else.
Developing this system has required and inspired creative solutions to various aspects of the editorial and publication process, resulting in innovative ways for users to explore, analyze, and interact with the documents. The team hopes to continue work on this project by adding more financial documents and features in an effort to make this an even greater resource.

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