



# FRIENDS OF THE HOLLOW

*News*



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## **Major Cache Of Important Letters Found By Marshall Descendant**

In the papers of the late Mary Douthat Higgins, her son Ralph Higgins found a cache of letters written in 1937 by the late Rev. Norman Fitzhugh Marshall (1859-19??) (Paxton No. 1504) to Ellen Harvie Smith (1891-1961).

In his own hand, he positively identified (with pictures) The Hollow as the second (boyhood) home of Chief Justice Marshall, his great grandfather. The letters include all kinds of other references to The Hollow including photographs, drawings and an etching. Relying on his memory while he was at a retirement home outside of Richmond, he provided sketches and details in several letters, which focus almost exclusively on The Hollow. These letters are quite a find and will be used to bolster the evidence of Marshall's occupation of the Hollow.

Rev. Marshall confirms the important early chimneys and most of the doors and windows, as well as the basic configuration and layout of the house. He says it had

"four rooms, two up and two down." He shows the correct location for the stairway. His room sizes are quite close to the actual. Further, he states that he personally "stored sucrose [sugar] in 'the cabin'" in "the charming summer of 1876."

The letters were written apparently in response to inquiries from Ms. Ellen Harvie Smith, who was never married and had no issue. Ms. Smith was the aunt of Mary Douthat (Smith) Higgins, which is how Ms. Higgins inherited the letters.

## **Virginia Historic Landmark Application To Be Submitted in April**

The application for Virginia Historic Landmark and National Register designation of The Hollow is currently expected to be submitted in April for decision of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources State Review Board in June. The Virginia and National Register Nomination (NRN) will request that The Hollow be approved by Virginia and proposed to the U.S. Department of the Interior for its independent architectural significance *and* its clear association with Chief Justice John

Marshall and his father, Col. Thomas Marshall.

Once this important step is complete, restoration may commence.

### **Archaeological Survey Of The Entire Marshall Leasehold Shows No Other Site**

After obtaining landowner permission for most of the land encompassing the original 1765 Thomas Marshall 330-acre leasehold where The Hollow was built, we commissioned the Center for Historic Preservation at Mary Washington College to conduct a broad investigative archaeological survey of the entire property, much of which has not changed substantially in the intervening 238 years. The goal of this investigation, which was costly, was to determine if there are any other sites on the leasehold that hold artifacts from the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century as does the site of The Hollow.

The survey, conducted during 2002, required dozens of Shovel Test Pits (STP's) throughout the original leasehold, which was established through a professional land survey overlaid on a present-day tax map of the Markham, Virginia area. The archaeological survey concluded that everything about The Hollow site resembles other 18<sup>th</sup>-century sites examined by the archaeologists, and it is the most likely location for 18<sup>th</sup> Century occupation within the leasehold area.

More specifically, there were only four significant concentrations of early artifacts on the leasehold. One, on the Goose Creek floodplain, produced wrought nails, but the location suggests a mill or some similarly specialized use rather than a reasonable location for the Marshall house. The second, in the fields to the northwest of the house, is a very light density scatter (ca. 3 test pits with artifacts out of about 35) of artifacts that probably date to the 19<sup>th</sup>

Century. The third is Rose Bank, which looks primarily like a mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century site, though some Pearlware (1790-1830) was recovered. Thus, The Hollow is the only location found that matches an 18<sup>th</sup>-century house site.

### **Marshall Descendant Reunion Planned**

A reunion of the descendants of Chief Justice John Marshall is being planned for September 26-28, 2003 in Richmond. The reunion is sponsored and coordinated by the John Marshall Foundation and will include several events including a barbeque, tours of historic sites, and a Fauquier county Marshall homes tour.

For further information about the reunion, contact:

Dick Carlton  
Carlton Communications  
2607 E. Broad St.  
Richmond VA 23223  
804-788-1199  
[info@CarltonCom.com](mailto:info@CarltonCom.com)

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The Friends of the Hollow, Inc. is a Virginia non-stock, non-profit charitable corporation formed in 1981 with the express purpose of preservation and restoration of the boyhood home of Chief Justice John Marshall known as The Hollow. Basic membership dues are \$10.00 per year and sustaining membership is \$25.00 per year. Additional donations are welcome. Dues and contributions are fully tax deductible. Please make checks payable to Friends of the Hollow, Inc. and mail to Friends of the Hollow, 4283 N. 38<sup>th</sup> Street, Arlington, VA 22207.

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