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Mount Vernon

Mount Vernon is situated in the state of Virginia, located just 24 kilometers from the US capital Washington. The first work to expand the Mount Vernon mansion continued from 1757 to 1759. The original name of the estate is 'Little Hunting Creek' (by the name of the river next to it). However, Washington's older half-brother, having inherited the estate, named it in honor of Vice Admiral E. Vernon, under whose leadership he had once served. George Washington retained this name. According to Washington, the central lobby of the house was assigned a dual role. It was not just a front door but also a spacious and elegant hall with an exit from the back of the house. Going through from the main entrance and through the whole house, in the hot summer months, it was a real paradise, thanks to the natural ventilation that opened when the doors opened onto the Potomac. On the other hand, to the pastoral, idyllic and bowling green lawns. This central part of Mount Vernon's home is a classic example of Virginian architecture (18th-century). It is one of the most elegant and graceful walnut staircase.

Mount Vernon was the small homeland of the first president of the United States. Here, at the foot of the hill, he was buried in a well-protected crypt after grave robbers attempted to abduct his remains. All the peaceful years of his life have passed here. He returned here every time to find peace of mind after difficult trials. So it was after the victorious end of the war for independence. From here he went to the then capital of New York to take the first presidential oath in national history in April 1789.

After the war, Washington returned to Mount Vernon in 1785-1786 and worked a lot on its further development. Over the years spent, President Washington spent only 434 days on his estate. He began to give a lot of his time, dealing with issues of building repairs, raising livestock, and growing crops. Among other things, Washington in Mount Vernon was founded and whiskey production, which soon became one of the largest in the United States. Overview of the house-museum of the first US President George Washington - Mount Vernon Estate, in which Washington lived for 45 years and in which he died and where his tomb is located.

The chores on the estate were mainly made by slaves. Their living and utility rooms, including a smokehouse, laundry, restroom, can be seen on the estate now. Slaves who reached old age, Washington bequeathed to provide the necessary care at the expense of the owner - as was customary in the American South in those days (Thompson)

George Washington remained a slaveholder all his life. But there is reason to believe that in his declining years he began to recognize the perversity of slavery. Almost half of the 318 slaves received freedom after the death of Washington, in accordance with his will, and the rest a few years later.More than a million people annually come Mount Vernon estate to visit the house, where for 45 years there was lived a man who was called the father of his country. And before we begin our acquaintance with Mount Vernon estate, we give a short story that has a direct relation to this estate. In 1674, John Washington and Nicholas Spencer became the owners of the land on which the estate is located. John Lawrence’s son shared the estate with Spencer’s heirs: that got most of the 5,000-acre plot of land, and Washington received land along Little Hunting Creek and, in compensation, 2,500 pounds of tobacco.

In 1726, the estate went to the father of George Washington - Augustine Washington. He transferred his second wife and family to him, but in 1739 he gave the land to his son from his first marriage, Lawrence. He began to expand the site, buying up the Spencer lands, then went to war in the Caribbean on the side of England (as part of the American regiment) and wrote home that if he manages to survive the fighting, he would like to settle in the city of Fredericksburg. After that, Augustine Washington began the construction of a small house on the spot where the mansion now stands; around this time after Lawrence's letter, the estate was named “Mount Vernon” (Dalzell Jr, Robert F., and Lee Baldwin Dalzell, 45).

In 1742, Lawrence returned home, in 1743 buried his father, a little later began the expansion of the house built on the estate. In 1752, Lawrence died; most of the estate went to George Washington. Then, when he bought back from the widow of Lawrence her share, he became the sovereign owner of Mount Vernon. In 1757, Washington began the first of two rebuilding's of the mansion, resulting in more than quadrupling its area. It is not known precisely who led the work, but there is a reason to believe that it was the architect John Ariss, a close friend of George Washington. From 1759 until the war, Washington increased its estate and, being an excellent agronomist, achieved an excellent return on it (Miller, Angela L., et al, 96-120).

The ashes of George and Martha Washington rests in 'Mount Vernon', in the family tomb, completed, in fulfillment of the will of George, by 1831. George's heirs failed to maintain the estate, and in 1848 it was put up for auction. 'Virginia and the United States refused the purchase, and only in 1858' Mount Vernon 'was bought by the' Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union'; she literally saved the estate from neglect and neglect of him.

During the Civil War, Mount Vernon remained a neutral territory for both warring parties, no matter how hostilities unfolded very close to its borders. In 1960, Mount Vernon was named a historical landmark on a national scale, then entered the National Register of Historic Places and currently belongs to the same Association and is independent place of the state.

Washington, which was distinguished not only by its excellent taste, but also by its extreme practicality, found repeated use for the old staircase. Now they would say that he re-settled this staircase, connecting it with the second floor and the superstructure of the third. After the revolution ended, General Washington and his wife often received guests at the Mount Vernon estate home, and receptions took place in the so-called The "Big Dining Room", whence, sometimes when dancing was arranged, the bulkiest furniture was carried out. The taste of George Washington was manifested in all the details of the decoration of the "Big Dining Room" and, above all, in its color scheme. Green was Washington's favorite color, and in the Big Dining Room, green was delightfully pure, one might say "clear green", creating a festive high spirits. Personally, he, Washington, looked for a drawing of a Palladian window in one of the books of that time (the Venetian (Palladian) window - a wide, three-part arched window, and he also ordered twenty-four chairs and two sideboards from the famous Philadelphia carpenter cabinetmaker John Aitken (Nakhla, and Sanders, 306). The paintings adorning the walls of the Great Dining Room were also selected by George Washington. Basically, this is landscape and genre painting.

Work on improving this banquet hall, which began in 1774, was fully completed only in 1788. But the game, as they say, was worth the candle - this hall became the most beautiful and representative part of the Mount Vernon mansion. But, perhaps, the most important thing is not how this hall looks, but what its walls were a witness of. It was here that the history of the American presidency began on April 14, 1789, when Charles Thomson, secretary of the congress, notified George Washington that he was unanimously elected the first president of the United States.

George Washington served two presidential terms - from 1789 to 1797. And although he could remain in power for the rest of his life, he decided to be president only twice. He, like other founders of the nation, was afraid of the idea of ​​the emergence of a monarchy, when someone would take over all the government. (According to the 22nd amendment to the United States Constitution, adopted in 1951, the same person can be elected president of the United States no more than twice. However, until 1951, US presidents were not legally restricted in their right to be re-elected more than twice, but usually they didn't do this, following the example of George Washington.

After leaving office, Washington returned to his private life, at his favorite Mount Vernon estate, where he lived until his death. He studied and introduced new agricultural technologies. Washington had a seven-year crop rotation plan, while other planters had only a three-year plan. On the Mount Vernon estate, George Washington had over 300 slaves. However, he realized the injustice of slavery and promised to ensure their future after the death of his wife Martha (Martha Washington survived George Washington for three years, passing away in 1802. Note Portalostranah.ru). Washington allocated funds so that young slaves who were illiterate could learn to write and read. He also allocated pensions for elderly slaves.

George Washington Mount Vernon House Museum is on the list of the most popular attractions in the American capital. Now visitors can get acquainted with the living conditions of the local slaves, their homes were open to the public after a long restoration. Shortly after George Washington became president, he added large rooms to the greenhouse — they were divided into four large rooms, including one room for men and one for women. Each room was heated by a fireplace. Speaking at the opening ceremony (recreated former slave rooms at Washington's Mount Vernon House Museum), archaeologist Dennis Pogue noted that twenty years of research preceded restoration work. This allowed expanding the exposition; now it presents reproductions of clothing and utensils: mugs and glasses, brooms and baskets used by slaves. Mount Vernon attracts tourists not only with its historical value, but also with the entourage of the estates of the second half of the eighteenth century, as well as with beautiful landscapes.

Each year a million tourists come to the estate to imbue the spirit of 250 years ago - a time when high ideals still moved people. Today, historical festivities are held annually at the estate, and on the Independence Day, the oath of office is taken by new US citizens. In 1960, Mount Vernon was inscribed on the U.S. National Historic Site. It is no exaggeration to say that Mount Vernon is the focus of American patriotism. American residents come here to feel the spirit of that time, a time when high ideals moved people, for the sake of which they did not spare themselves and voluntarily sacrificed their lives.

Works Cited

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