

Dedication of Grave Marker for Founder John Lewis

On Saturday, June 5, 2021, the Virginia Society of the Order of the Founders and Patriots conducted a grave marking ceremony for Founder John Lewis in the Lewis Family Cemetery in the town of Shacklesford, King and Queen County, Virginia. Of the 23 people in attendance, 12 were from the King and Queen County Historical Society, while two of those present were direct descendants of Founder John Lewis



Founder John Lewis was born about 1594 in Monmouthshire, England. He immigrated to Virginia circa 1650 with his wife Lydia and his three sons, and settled on Poropotank Creek, King and Queen County, Virginia, where he died August 21, 1657.

His wife Lydia is mentioned in a land patent dated July 1, 1653 as having been a headright of John Lewis, together with William Lewis, Edward Lewis and John Lewis, Jr., John's three sons. John Lewis' gravestone shows a portion of the Lewis Family Coat of Arms, which proves a relationship to the prominent Lewis family of Warner Hall in Gloucester County. Also in the cemetery are the stones of other Lewis family members.

A plaque in the cemetery also points out that John Lewis had some descendants of note during the early history of our Republic. One of his descendants was Colonel Fielding Lewis, member of the house of Burgess and manufacturer of arms during the Revolution. The Virginia SAR Chapter in Fredericksburg is named after him. He was also a brother-in-law to George Washington.

Another of John Lewis' descendants was Meriwether Lewis, the man chosen by President Thomas Jefferson to lead the Lewis and Clark expedition to explore the Louisiana Purchase, all the way to the Pacific.

Virginia Society President Michael E. Weyler was the master of ceremonies. After the invocation by Past Governor Jerry Hubbard, greetings were brought by Dr. Dan Warren, Past Governor General of the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America, and Cynthia Carter, President of the King and Queen County Historical Society.

The guest speaker was Dr. Augustine Lewis, a direct descendant of John Lewis who still resides in King and Queen County. He described the Lewis family tree, including those other family members buried in the family cemetery.



L/R, Dr. Augustine Lewis and Associate Jim Russell unveil the VA OFPA Marker

The meeting program included an Unveiling of the Marker Ritual, a dedication ceremony with Governor Weyler and Registrar Rich Rattan offering a narrative and prayer of dedication, after which the marker was uncovered by two direct descendants of John Lewis; Dr. Augustine Lewis and OFPA Associate Jim Russell, seventh great grandson of John Lewis.



Presentation of Wreaths

Two wreaths, one from the General Order of the OFPA and one from the VA Society of the OFPA, were presented, plus a floral spray from the King and Queen Historical Society. After the playing of taps, the benediction was given by Associate Ken Hawkins.

