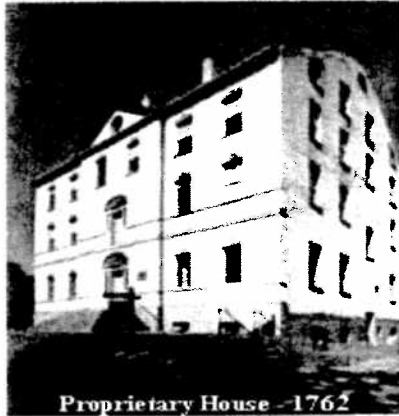




Volume 9, Issue 4

The Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance

Spring 2008



SUNDAY SERIES LECTURE/RECEPTION

Proprietary House 149 Kearny Avenue, Perth Amboy, NJ

May 18, 2008 3:00-5:00 PM

"Benjamin Franklin and His Son, The Royal Governor of New Jersey"

Visiting speaker, Willard Sterne Randall, Distinguished Scholar in History at Champlain College, Burlington, Vermont, is the author of twelve books, five of which are biographies of Founding Fathers, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, Benedict Arnold, and a dual biography, "**A Little Revenge: Benjamin Franklin at War with His Son.**" According to Princeton University author and professor, Arthur Link, "This is a major work about two of the most important men in American history, and why this story has not been told before I cannot know."

Nominated five times for the Pulitzer Prize, Randall's public speaking commitments nearby include Yale and Princeton Universities, Valley Forge National Park, the Old Barracks Museum, Trenton and previously at the Proprietary House, Perth Amboy. The suggested donation of \$10.00 will benefit the RMHA's **GUIDE TO HISTORIC SITES IN CENTRAL NEW JERSEY**. Reservations are not required.

Scotland at Perth Amboy by George Dawson

The first successful Scottish colony in the New World was launched in late 1682 in the northeast Lowlands region of Scotland, centered on Aberdeen County, on the Scottish North Sea coast; and led to the formation and settlement of the town of Perth Amboy.

Robert Barclay, 34, laird of the farm estate of Urie, near Aberdeenshire, Scotland, was a young Quaker, and friend of the wealthy English Quaker leader William Penn. Barclay was a relatively new recruit to the Society of Friends (as the Quaker church was formally called) the profession only crossing the English-Scottish border in the 1650s. But his friendship with Penn led to an invitation to invest in the new colony of Pennsylvania, granted to the English Quaker by Charles Stuart, King Charles II of both England and

Scotland, in settlement of a debt the King owed Penn's father (also called William), who had died in 1670.

The father, Admiral William Penn, had been First Lord of the Admiralty, commanding the Royal Navy; and had loaned Charles £16,000, which was still unpaid at Admiral Penn's death. Charles, subsequently, granted young Penn his request for a large piece of North America on the west side of the Delaware River, for settlement by Quakers and other colonists. Penn wondered if the Quakers of Scotland, a separate kingdom from England, although sharing the same king, might be interested in joining his Pennsylvania enterprise.

Barclay, whose estate was in Kincardineshire, next door to Aberdeen, talked with other

wealthy farmers of his region on the prospects, and came back with an alternative proposal.

Penn, also a trustee for bankrupt West Jersey proprietor Edward Byllynge, had recently joined with Byllynge and 10 other English Quakers to buy the Proprietary Colony of East Jersey from the estate of George Carteret, who had died in 1680. Barclay said that he and other Scottish estate owners with whom he had talked would like to join Penn instead in investments in East Jersey, where they thought their return would be higher. Penn was ecstatic at this offer, seeing in Barclay a strong leader for the East Jersey colony, allowing him to concentrate on Pennsylvania. He granted Barclay half of his own proprietary rights in East Jersey; and secured Barclay's

Next Scheduled Meetings of the

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(Alliance Sites are encouraged

To send their Representative)

INDIAN QUEEN TAVERN

MARCH 20, 2008 From 1:30-3:00 pm

East Jersey Olde Towne Village

River Road and Hoes Lane West

Piscataway, NJ

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF

LINCOLN GARDENS

MAY 15, 2008 From 7:30-9:00 pm

771 Somerset Street, Somerset, NJ

JACOBUS VANDERVEER HOUSE

September 18, 2008 From 7:30-9:00 pm

Rt. 202/206 South, Bedminster, NJ

SAVE THE DATE

THE ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, April 17, 2008

Between 1 and 4 pm

WILLIE'S TAVERNE

Route 202 & Hillside Avenue

Bedminster, NJ / Phone 908-234-1596

In the tradition and spirit of hospitality the Annual Meeting will be preceded by a luncheon. The main order of business will be the election of directors. The guest speaker will be the distinguished Superintendent of the Morristown National Historic Park, Randy Turner. Invitations will be mailed to all members shortly.

All proceeds benefit the

GUIDE BOOK TO HISTORIC SITES

IN CENTRAL NEW JERSEY.

Raritan-Millstone Heritage
Alliance

P. O. Box 5583, Somerset, N.J. 08875-5583

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The Board of Directors meets the third Thursday of March, May, September, October and November at Designated historic and museum member sites in the region.



YOUR LINK TO THE PUBLIC: The Link is on a quarterly publication schedule. News of major up-

coming events for possible placement in the newsletter may be mailed, emailed or faxed to the address below. Any questions, please contact: Donald J. Peck, Editor, The Clausen Company, P. O. Box 140, Fords, NJ 08863 or phone 732-738-1165, fax 732-738-1618, or E-mail clausenco@aol.com.

appointment as the new East Jersey Governor.

Thus was launched one of the most unusual colonization episodes in North American (and Scottish) history.

Barclay and many of his co-investors never physically traveled to America and its colonial province of East Jersey (although his younger brothers David and John Barclay did) administering the colony's affairs from his perch near the North Sea, over 2500 miles away.

Scotland, as a country, never officially governed its East Jersey colony, since it remained the possession of the English Crown. The kingdoms of Scotland and England, though sharing a king, did not merge into the single kingdom of Great Britain until 1703.

Barclay and his fellow Scottish Proprietors, although running the colonization effort for East Jersey, did not fully control it, since Penn and other Englishmen (and one Irishman) also retained their proprietries.

But Barclay, and the other Scottish investors he recruited, effectively ran the colony, and directed its settlement, for a period of eight years, until Barclay's early death in 1690. The East Jersey capital was moved from Elizabeth to the new Scottish town of Perth Amboy, named for James Drummond, the Earl of Perth, a prominent Scottish investor. Perth Amboy was chartered in 1683, 325 years



ago this year.

Much of the information presented in this report comes from a singular book, Scotland and Its First American Colony, published in 1985 by Princeton University Press. The author is Ned Landsman, who first wrote on the subject as a history doctorate student at the University of Pennsylvania.

Scotland, in the late 1600s, was essentially a rural land of mountains and sheep pasture of perhaps one- million population. Edinburgh, its largest town, had only 30,000 residents.

Scotland had spent much of the 1600s sharing its Stuart Kings with England, since the death of Elizabeth Tudor in 1603, with the exception of 1649-60, when the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell held sway in both countries. It insisted, for the most part, on its own Calvinistic Presbyterian brand of Christianity, resisting the ritualistic profession of the Church of England, and the congregationist governance schemes of Cromwell's Puritans.

Scotland's northeast Lowlands region of Aberdeen and neighboring counties, where Barclay and other large estate owners prevailed, however, was more hospitable to English teachings than the rest of Scotland. Here, the Church of England was largely successful. Here, also, the Quaker meetings of England's Society of Friends, gained their greatest acceptance. Landsman describes the northeast Lowlands as "Scotland's most Anglicized region."

Robert Barclay, his title as East Jersey Governor in hand, quickly recruited five other investors from the northeastern Scottish counties. These were:

David Barclay, a younger

brother, who would soon travel to East Jersey;

Robert Gordon, laird of Cluny, in Aberdeenshire, his uncle; Arent Sonmans, a Dutch merchant who had moved to Scotland two years earlier, and became a Quaker;

James Drummond, the Earl of Perth; and John Drummond, James' younger brother, who would later become Earl of Melfort.

Barclay named one of the English proprietors, Thomas Rudyard, as his deputy governor resident in East Jersey; and Rudyard, in turn, named Samuel Groom as the colony's surveyor-general. Both sailed to East Jersey together in November 1682.

Groom immediately got to work subdividing house lots at Amboy Point, at the confluence of the Raritan River and the Dutch-named Arthur Kill, laying out 150 small lots in the town center, and 149 much large plots to the north and west. Groom's town plan for Amboy (later Perth Amboy) was the first for East Jersey. A copy of the map prepared from his survey was sent to Barclay in Scotland.

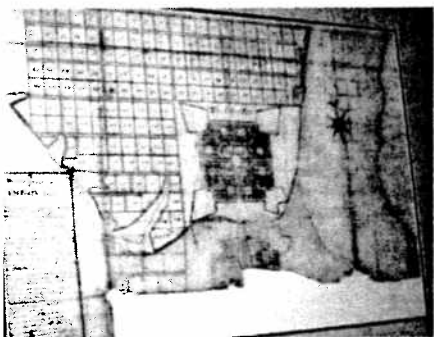
Groom was fired by Rudyard in a policy dispute in 1683; and died suddenly in late summer. Barclay, objecting to Rudyard's action, replaced him with Gawen Lawrie, a Quaker merchant in London with Scottish antecedents. Lawrie and his son-in-law, William Haige, came to East Jersey in early 1684; and Haige became the new surveyor-general.

Perth Amboy was the seventh town to be established in the English colony of East Jersey, following Elizabeth, Woodbridge, Piscataway, Middletown, Shrewsbury, and Newark. (The Dutch had previously established an eighth town, Bergen, within the present confines of Jersey City.) The six other English towns were

modeled on New England patterns of settlement, with small-lot village areas surrounded by outlying farm estates (called *plantations*).

Landsman, in Scotland and Its First American Colony, wrote that the Scottish Proprietors of East Jersey had different settlement concepts, insisting that land holdings be set out in large estate properties, generally 2,000 acres or more, with no lot smaller than 500 acres, modeled on the large estate settlements of northeast Scotland on the North Sea. This settlement pattern is hard to see in the present geography of New Jersey, but may have something to do with present situations in Morris County and the Somerset Hills region of Somerset County.

Perth Amboy, planned as the new capital and major city of East Jersey, however, had a different design, shown in the 299 small lots surveyed in 1682-83 by Groom. The map made from Groom's survey was recently acquired by New Jersey in a purchase at Christie's auction house in 2005.



Robert Barclay's 1684

Survey of Amboy Point

Deputy Governor Lawrie, during his 1684-86 term, oversaw Perth Amboy's development as a trading center, establishing markets, docks, and access roads in its vicinity. Lawrie also built a road from the south bank of the Raritan River opposite Perth Amboy

(present South Amboy) to West Jersey, near the town of Burlington on the Delaware. Lawrie's Road, appearing in part as present-day Bordentown Turnpike and the Amboy-Bordentown Road, put Perth Amboy on a sea-land trading route between New York and Philadelphia.

The plan and surveys at the start of settlement have brought Perth Amboy recognition as perhaps the first planned town in English North America. Landsman calls it "an early example of a Scottish planned village."

William Penn, with his vision of "holy experiments" and garden cities, arrived in the Delaware Valley with the first Pennsylvania colonists in 1682; and, while remaining an East Jersey proprietor, may have had a hand in these developments.

Landsman reports four major settlement voyages departing from Aberdeen and Edinburgh for Perth Amboy in 1683-85, as well as number of lesser Scotland-arranged sailings from other ports. He estimates that perhaps 700 Scots emigrated to East Jersey through Perth Amboy during this period, not a large number (Penn brought several thousand colonists to Pennsylvania during the same time period), but indicative of some success. Such Scottish estate names as *Plainfield* (John Barclay's estate) and *Spoteswood* show up in present-day places.

East Jersey was actually not the first Scottish colonization effort in North America. The Scottish playwright William Alexander, traveling to England with James Stuart in the early 1600s in the new Stuart role as King James I of England (and himself holding the title of Lord Stirling, as keeper of Stirling Castle, near Edinburgh), received patents from both James and his succes-

or, King Charles I, to settle parts of Atlantic Canada. Stirling succeeded in fixing the name of Nova Scotia to his settlement territory, but failed to attract settlers.

A Scottish Presbyterian settlement in the Carolina territory contemporaneous with East Jersey; and a later more ambitious enterprise to colonize the Darien peninsula of Central America (present-day Panama) also failed. Perth Amboy and other parts of East Jersey where Scottish colonists settled, however, have succeeded.

Scotland-arranged emigration to East Jersey continued, in lesser numbers, into the late 1680s. But the enterprise faltered with England's forced abdication of James Stuart, formerly the Duke of York, after a brief 1685-88 reign as King James II. James, whose subjects objected to his conversion to Roman Catholicism, fled to France, taking the lords Perth and Melfort with him. A Dutchman, Prince William of Nassau, and Mary, his Protestant Stuart wife (James' daughter) acceded to the English (and Scottish) thrones.

Robert Barclay died in 1690, at the age of 41; and with his death, the Scottish colonization enterprise ended.

Scottish emigration to the region, however, continued to a certain extent. A Scottish emigrant to New York, James Alexander, a descendant of William Alexander of the Nova Scotia project, arrived in the 1690s; and became a proprietor of East Jersey, settling in Somerset County. His son, another William Alexander, served with the rank of Major General in George Washington's Army of the American Revolution. He fought under the title of Lord Stirling, although, by then, Great Britain no longer recognized it.

THE 325TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF PERTH AMBOY ESSAY CONTEST

By Susan C. Keating, RMHA Director, And Proprietary House Association Trustee

The Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance recognizes the historical importance of the City of Perth Amboy in the founding and growth of our state and nation. The historic Royal Governor's Palace, the Proprietary House, is the most historically significant site of this Bay City.

This year, Perth Amboy is celebrating the 325th Anniversary of its founding. The city has planned a yearlong series of events in celebration of this milestone. Kathleen Manning DePow, a RMHA director and Perth Amboy City Historian, is the Chairwoman of Perth Amboy's 325th Anniversary Committee.

The Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance, ever cognizant of the importance of highlighting such occasions, is sponsoring an essay contest for interested students in the Perth Amboy schools. One of the primary goals of the leadership of the Alliance, especially President Donald J. Peck, is to raise the awareness of the history of the Raritan-Millstone River region through educational initiatives. This is critical if we are to continue to preserve and enhance our historical treasures. As chairperson of this initiative, this is the motivation for the work of our committee whose members also include William Lynch, Thomas Keating, and C. Robert Kocek. The purpose of the committee, as directed by the Alliance, is to create a template that can be brought to neighboring communities to highlight, celebrate and, most importantly, educate young and old about the rich history that we are especially blessed with in central New Jersey.

Students in Grades 4 to 12 from all schools in Perth Amboy, including the Perth Amboy Public Schools, Perth Amboy Catholic Schools, and the Ukrainian Catholic School are eligible. Teachers are planning theme-based lessons to comprehensively present this historical event in a realistic and life-relevant manner to the children. Discovery of information that is pertinent to a specific topic is a popular pre-writing strategy that is highly motivational and produces quality student writing.

The topic of the essay will be "Describe a day in the life of a resident in Perth Amboy in 1683." The students will be asked to compare and contrast life in present-day Perth Amboy with that of our ancestors. Utilizing Bloom's Taxonomy, students will be judged on their ability to compare and contrast, draw conclusions, evaluate, analyze and synthesize the information of the period as related to our present day. It will be most interesting to read their findings. More so, their preference for life in 1683 or 2008 could be very revealing!

A \$100 United States Savings Bond will be awarded to the winners. These students, their parents and their teachers will be honored during the Sunday Series Lecture /Reception Program at the Proprietary House on May 18 from 3:00 – 5:00 PM. Following the presentation of the Alliance's First Student History Awards, Willard Sterne Randall, distinguished Professor at Champaign College, Burlington, Vermont and Best Selling Author, including *A LITTLE REVENGE – THE STORY OF WILLIAM AND BENJAMIN FRANKLIN*, will be the guest lecturer. The historic Perth Amboy mansion will be available for tours following the reception.

RMHA has received exceptional cooperation from the City of Perth Amboy, the Board of Education, Perth Amboy Catholic Schools and the Ukrainian Catholic School to prepare the Alliance's First Student History Awards. In so doing, the foundation for this initiative will be in place for future years to continue to aide our youth through other local, community celebrations to achieve a love and appreciation for the rich American heritage that we share.

JOYCE KILMER CENTENNIAL COMMISSION CELEBRATES 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Of the marriage of Alfred Joyce Kilmer and Aline Murray Kilmer At St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Metuchen, NJ from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm, Monday, June 9, 2008

The President's Column

Today New Jersey, as the Cross-roads of the American Revolution, is becoming more and more recognized for its historic, cultural and environmental importance in winning the war for independence. Pivotal in understanding the whole truth of this story, truth more unlimited than one can imagine, is the importance of the City of Perth Amboy in both Middlesex County and Central New Jersey.

When William Penn first saw Perth Amboy, he described it as the "garden on earth most like to paradise," and had seriously considered putting his City of Brotherly Love, Philadelphia, here. Named for James Drummond, the Earl of Perth, Scotland, it became the capital of the first successful Scottish Colony in North America.

Middlesex County is one of East Jersey's four original counties, having been so designated in 1683. Perth Amboy, intended as a major urban center and county seat, was also founded in 1683, three hundred and twenty-five years ago. Quaker Governor Robert Barclay's original survey of streets and property lots, the first known map of an American city drawn up in the New World, was formal befitting the government center of East Jersey. A copy of this map is on display at the Proprietary House.

Situated on the terminal moraine of the last Ice Age, a wall of ice 300 feet high ended here. Both the Raritan River, which drains over one thousand square miles of fertile valleys, and Raritan Bay were non-existent until the ice melted back north some 20,000 years ago. It was this favorable situation, opening onto Raritan Bay, which first attracted the Scottish settlers.

The great days of Perth Amboy's commercial seaport survive no more. The waterside streets that had once thronged with ships and wharves are gone as are the famous inns and taverns where fishermen and pilots gathered to tell their flock of tales, one better than

the last. The mansions of Water Street and High Street are abundant signs of a livelier culture and the oriental spoils brought home by navigators, naval heroes, and merchants. In the nineteenth century, Perth Amboy became a popular summer resort as well as a yachting center.

Like the three giant English elms that still survive in this East Jersey Capital (1683-1790), only a few of the high-style architectural building examples of Middlesex County and Perth Amboy remain. They include the City Hall, the former Colonial and State Capitol Building and the Proprietary House, built by the East Jersey Proprietors and the only official Royal Governors Palace still standing in the Thirteen Colonies.

According to the "Middlesex County Inventory of Historic, Cultural and Architectural Resources" (1977-79), contributed to by Perth Amboy residents Jack Dudas, Anton Massopust and William Pavlovsky, who identified Perth Amboy's historic and aesthetic resources with inventory lists of sites, buildings and landscapes from what remains of Perth Amboy's overall cultural heritage, the Historic District of Market Square contains over 100 notable eighteenth and nineteenth century vernacular structures. And, while for the most part public and commercial buildings in Middlesex County follow national trends, with no distinguishing regional characteristics, Perth Amboy is a notable exception with a large number of buildings designed to display the clay products of brick and terra cotta trim in both residential, commercial and civic buildings. Nineteenth-century railroads and industrialization have left an enduring mark on the urbanized appearance of this city. New construction obliterated many older buildings. New ethnic strains have left their imprint as well on churches and other buildings erected to serve them.

Home to the resident East Jersey

Proprietors and early Provincial Governors whose mansions remain no more, during the American Revolution Perth Amboy was a Loyalist center. It served as a permanent garrison for British troops in 1776 and 1777. Perth Amboy's most famous citizen, Royal Governor William Franklin, together with his wife, Lady Franklin, resided at the Proprietary House during 1774-1776. When relations between the Crown and the colonies deteriorated, William Franklin's loyalty to Great Britain's King George III caused a tragic rift with his famous patriot father. While Benjamin chose to reject his mother country, his son chose to disobey his father. The elder Franklin never forgave his estranged son for his disloyalty.

Prior to its major role in the American Revolution, New Jersey played a relatively minor part in the decade of protest that preceded the outbreak of war. But by 1775, the colony-wide New Jersey Provincial Congress with its Committee of Safety and Observation had taken charge of the affairs of the colony in place of the increasingly isolated Royal Governor, William Franklin. It was against this background that Benjamin Franklin, during a nine-day visit in September of 1775, strongly urged his son to join the rebel forces, a decision that William never made. The pain of their bitter and angry conversation at the Proprietary House exemplified a war that was also a civil war, one in which fathers fought sons, neighbors fought neighbors, a war which split families, communities, congregations, and generated levels of hostility and brutality that changed lives forever.

As if still commanding attention, the long parade of East Jersey Proprietors and Royal Governors in Perth Amboy has ended. But the Proprietary House in Amboy, the monument to their rule, our British and American heritage, endures as it has for centuries.

HISTORY & MYSTERY

What ever happened to William Franklin? By Donald J. Peck

Born in Philadelphia in 1730, the illegitimate son of Founding Father, Dr. Benjamin Franklin, at 21 years of age he fought with the Pennsylvania Company in the French and Indian War attaining the rank of Captain of the Grenadiers. Earning a master's degree from Oxford, he was accepted at the bar. While in London he met, courted and married Elizabeth Downes, daughter of a wealthy Barbados sugar-planter. And at the age of 32, during the critical years of 1762-1776, he became the 13th and last Royal Governor of New Jersey.

At the height of his political career and personal success the Continental Congress declared him "an enemy to the liberties of this country" in June 1776. Arrested, he was held in solitary confinement for 250 days. Later exchanged as a prisoner in November 1778, Franklin went to New York and founded the Board of Associated Loyalists organizing resistance activities in Northern New Jersey and Long Island.

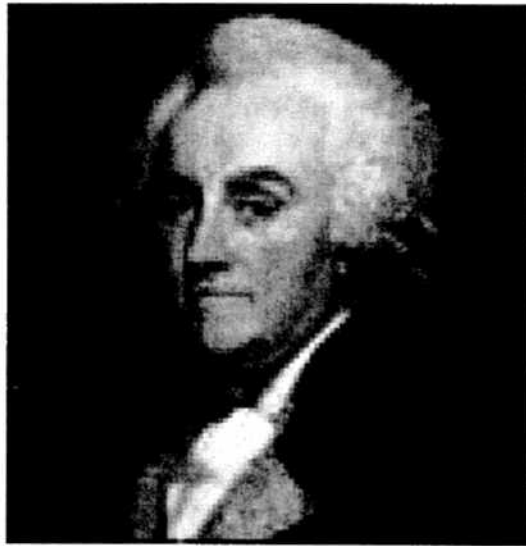
With the war all but lost in August 1782, he left for a London suburb in Middlesex County, England, and was placed on a pension of 800 pounds per annum by the English Government. Disinherited and never fully reconciled with his father, Franklin lived with his second wife, Mary Johnson d'Evelyn, in relative obscurity working for a while as an agent for Loyalist claims. His son, William Temple Franklin, predeceased him in 1803. He died in the care of his grand daughter, Ellen, and was interred in nearby St. Pancras Old Churchyard, Camden Town in November 1813.

Charles Dickens, as a boy, lived two blocks from this churchyard and at age 12 worked in a boot-blackening factory there. Evidence of the neighborhood in which William Franklin lived, Dickens' descriptions of the shocking impressions and conditions under which working class people lived here became major themes of his later work **DAVID COPPERFIELD**.

The burial grounds of St. Pancras were closed in 1854 as the Midland Railway Company constructed its tracks directly through St. Pancras Churchyard into Pancras Station (the new London terminus for the Eurostar service through the Channel Tunnel to Paris.) The railway obliterated hundreds of graves. Of the many whose remains were removed and now lie in unmarked

spots, is that of William Franklin. All that remains of William Franklin is the church burial record "William Franklin, Colonial Governor and son of Benjamin."

Things are definitely not what they seem to be. There is much more to mystery than there is to fact. As a showcase of wealth and power, in 1762-1764 the Proprietors of East Jersey built their great Royal Governors Palace to attract William Franklin to Perth Amboy. To this day it is an edifice more full of human interest than any gray European feudal castle.



William Franklin

Macabre as it may seem, like some silent dismembered form waiting to materialize as a chilly cold breeze out of a long closed vault, William Franklin has returned to his Proprietary House. His ghostly image seems to infect the Grand Parlor with his psychic energy. Quietly he leaves a footprint-less path with the tread of his backward and forward steps across this room as he steps into those same luminous footprints of his vibrant past. Departing his solitude of death, frustrated and angry, his earthly remains no longer existent, this bodiless phantom man, like some ectoplasmic vapor, summons himself here to relive his decision to remain loyal to the Crown. You may feel his ghostly chill. And if you listen closely, you may even hear him moan. William Franklin is here and he is waiting to meet you!