

7 Jul 2005

Excerpt from the diary of George Washington

In 1791 President George Washington decided to tour the southern states. In his diary Washington stated, *“In this tour I was accompanied by Major Jackson, my equipage and attendance consisted of a Chariot & four horses drove in hand – a light baggage wagon and two horses – four saddle horses besides a led one for myself and five – to wit – my Valet de Chambre, two footmen, Coachman & postilion.”* The outriders wore bright livery of red and white which gave a touch of distinction to the procession. His carriage was described as a “white chariot”.



Trumbull Painting - 1792

Washington went on to record, *“Wednesday 27th. Breakfasted at Willm. Gause's a little out of the direct Road 14 Miles--crossed the boundary line between No. & South Carolina abt. half after 12 oclock which is 10 miles from Gauses. Dined at a private house (one Cochrans) about 2 miles farther and lodged at Mr. Vareens 14 Miles more and 2 Miles short of the long bay. To this house we were directed as a Tavern, but the proprietor of it either did not keep one, or would not acknowledge it. We therefore were en[ter]tained (& very kindly) without being able to make compensation.”*

Washington had left William Gause's at Ocean Isle, NC and entered South Carolina just north of Little River on April 27, 1791 where he dined with a Revolutionary War veteran named James G. Cochran who resided in Little River. A bay behind the Food Lion store in Little River is named “Cochran's Bay”. He was traveling the well established coastal road which had become known as the King's Highway. Washington's mileage estimates were a little high. Just south of present day North Myrtle Beach he lodged overnight with either Jeremiah Vereen, Jr. or Sr. Vereen resided about 2 miles north of Singleton Swash. The next day Vereen guided the President safely across Singleton Swash. From there they traveled down the strand for 16 miles and then turned inland and went 5 more miles to the home of George Pawley which was probably in the inland area of present day Surfside Beach.

Washington wrote, *“Thursday 28th. Mr. Vareen piloted us across the Swash (which at high water is impassable, & at times, by the shifting of the Sands is dangerous) on to the long Beach of the Ocean; and it being at a proper time of the tide we passed along it with ease and celerity to the place of quitting it which is estimated 16 miles. Five Miles farther we got dinner & fed our horses at a Mr. Pauleys a private house, no public one being on the road; and being met on the Road, & kindly invited by a Docter flagg to his house, we lodged there; it being about 10 miles from Pauleys & 33 from Vareens.”*

For more information on George Washington's diaries visit:

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mgw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(wd06T000\)\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mgw:@field(DOCID+@lit(wd06T000))):