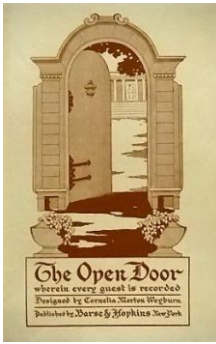


Yorktown and World War I
Meeting of the Yorktown Preservation Society
Sunday, November 4, 2:00
Grace Church Parish Hall, Yorktown



A presentation of recently discovered historic information in “The Open Door”, a guest book kept by Mrs. Conway Sheild from 1915-1945 at the Sessions House in Yorktown

In 1901, Conway Sheild bought one of the original colonial homes in Yorktown, a house on Main Street that was built in the 1700’s, later called the Sessions House. His wife, Mrs. Catherine Sheild, kept a Guest Book of all Yorktown visitors to her home. These signatures included many prominent names including 4 presidents: Woodrow Wilson and his wife Edith, Warren Harding and his wife, Florence Kling Harding, Franklin Roosevelt, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Herbert Hoover along with the signatures of Naval officers from ships that were anchored in the York River in 1917. The Guest Book has been in the possession of the Sheild family ever since.

Recently, Letty Best, granddaughter of Mrs. Conway Sheild, loaned the Guest Book to the Yorktown Preservation Society to make a copy of the original that will be donated to the York County Historical Museum. New information about early 20th century Yorktown could then be made available to the public.

At the Nov 4, 2018 meeting of the Yorktown Preservation Society meeting, Letty Best and the YPS presented the copy of the Guest Book to the York County Historical Museum. Lois Winter, Yorktown historian, and Ross Patterson, a Naval warfare scholar, explained what was revealed about Yorktown’s past by examining the remarkable list of visitors from 1915 to 1921. Catherine Sheild’s Guest Book provides evidence that Yorktown played a significant role in the preparation and conclusion of World War I.