

Berkeley Plantation / Harrison's Landing

"Virginia's Most Historic Plantation"

Berkeley Plantation on the James River usually appeared on Civil War maps as Harrison's Landing.

Settled in 1619 – a year before the Mayflower left England - Berkeley was acquired by

Benjamin Harrison II in 1691.

In 1774, his great grandson Benjamin Harrison V, "the Signer," was elected to the 1st Continental Congress. While in Philadelphia he "roomed" with his brother-in-law, Peyton Randolph President of the first Continental

Congress in 1774, and Col. George Washington. By 1776 and the 2nd Continental Congress, Gen. George Washington had assumed control of the Continental Army, Peyton Randolph had died and had been replaced by John Hancock, and Benjamin Harrison V joined 55 other patriots in signing the Declaration of Independence.

In 1781, the traitor Benedict Arnold pillaged Berkeley as a way to hurt a signer of the Declaration and close friend of George Washington, the man he had betrayed. Arnold recognized the sensitive points of Virginia aristocrats. He removed all the ancestral portraits of the Harrisons from the walls and placed them on a bonfire in front of the mansion. That not only hurt the Signer's family – for the Virginia planters spent heavily on artists to preserve their likenesses into earthly immortality – but also future historians seeking portraits of the Harrisons.

In 1840, the Signer's son, Gen. William Henry Harrison (6th generation), was elected the 9th President of the United States. In 1862, during the Civil War, 140,000 Union troops occupied Harrison's Landing. President Abraham

Lincoln twice visited there to confer with General George B. McClellan about his lack of prosecution of the War.

It was during this 1862 occupation at Harrison's Landing that the haunting bugle call "Taps" was composed and first played. In 1888, William Henry's grandson, another Benjamin Harrison (8th generation) was elected the 23rd president of the United States.

Our founder, W. O. "Bill" Harrison, Jr. was a 12th generation descendant, and was very proud of his heritage.

He was born and raised in Corpus Christi, loved his hometown and all that he knew it could become.

His children William (Hank) Harrison III and Hannah Harrison Marsh are 13th generation direct descendants and Hannah's son Hayden William Marsh is a 14th generation direct descendant.

Bill's wife Cathy, Hank and Hannah are the owners of Harrison's Landing in Corpus Christi.