

## George Washington's Battle Sword and Scabbard

Date: c. 1778



### *Dimensions / Weight*

Dimensions: 3.5" H x 36.25" W x 1.25" D

### *Physical Description*

Hanger-type sword of forged steel with grooved blade. Grip of green dyed ivory with silver strip decoration. Leather scabbard with silver trim.

### *Maker*

John Bailey

Around 1777, **Fishkill, NY** became the primary depot of the American forces in the Revolution.

John Bailey was an immigrant cutler from Sheffield, England who arrived in New York in 1755, at the age of 19. He became a prominent silversmith who made hundreds of swords of very fine quality. The leather for the scabbards came from hides which were tanned on his 200 acre **Fishkill** farm. Alongside him, Bailey's (2nd) wife, Ann, stitched together the leather for the scabbards. This work was done in a small shop along Forge Brook in **Fishkill, New York**. Bailey is probably most known for making General Washington's battle sword, which was carried by Washington throughout the Revolution. It is the sword pictured in the *Emanuel Leutze Painting* of Washington Crossing the Delaware.



### *Specific History*

George Washington wore this simple hanger as his battle sword while serving as commander of the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. The sword has a slightly curved, grooved steel blade, silver mounted cross guard and pommel, and a green ivory grip.

The sword was inherited by Washington's nephew, Samuel T. Washington, an army captain. In his will, Washington admonished his nephew to draw the sword only "in self-defense or in the defense of [the] country and its rights." Samuel's son donated the sword to the United States government in 1843.

### *Historic Marker*

Stands at the entrance to Geering Park or Route 52 in Fishkill, New York..

