

Note: ALL screen captures are downsampled to make a small pdf for emailing purposes, so they appear less sharp than actual.

Concepts for “Martha Washington: A Life” website

On the following pages appear mockups for the MW website, as well as logo variations.

The creative brief asked for jewel tones and a “worn” look that would evoke the life and times of Martha Washington for visitors. At the same time, the site should not look too feminine or lighthearted.

Requirements for the home page included:

- a place for a large image that would change on page refresh
- prominent linking to the central part of the site, Martha’s life narrative
- place for secondary navigation
- place for sponsors
- link to register for MyOmeka and a way to explain what that is

Additional requirements for section and subsection pages included:

- Clear within-section subnavigation
- Image gallery function
- Styling and location for a call-out box/sidebar that could include an image, a pull-quote, or both.

Both concepts address those needs:

- Use of a script typeface that mimics quill pens in use at the time
- Use of two typefaces for most of the rest of the content that are time-appropriate:
 - Baskerville for typographical head treatments (Baskerville was introduced to America by Ben Franklin and became quite popular, although it was unpopular in Europe)
 - Georgia for main text, navigation lists, captions, etc. Georgia is a serif font, again historically appropriate, and it was created specifically for screen/web use, unlike such familiar print fonts as Times and Palatino. Hence, it is highly readable.
- Use of historically appropriate color palette, drawn from research into Colonial colors
- Use of damask patterns for visual interest, accents, and backgrounds. Martha was known for her needlework, and many pieces of furniture had damask fabrics. This is a way to make a nod to the fact that the site focuses on a woman’s life, without being overly “feminine.”

Concept I Home page

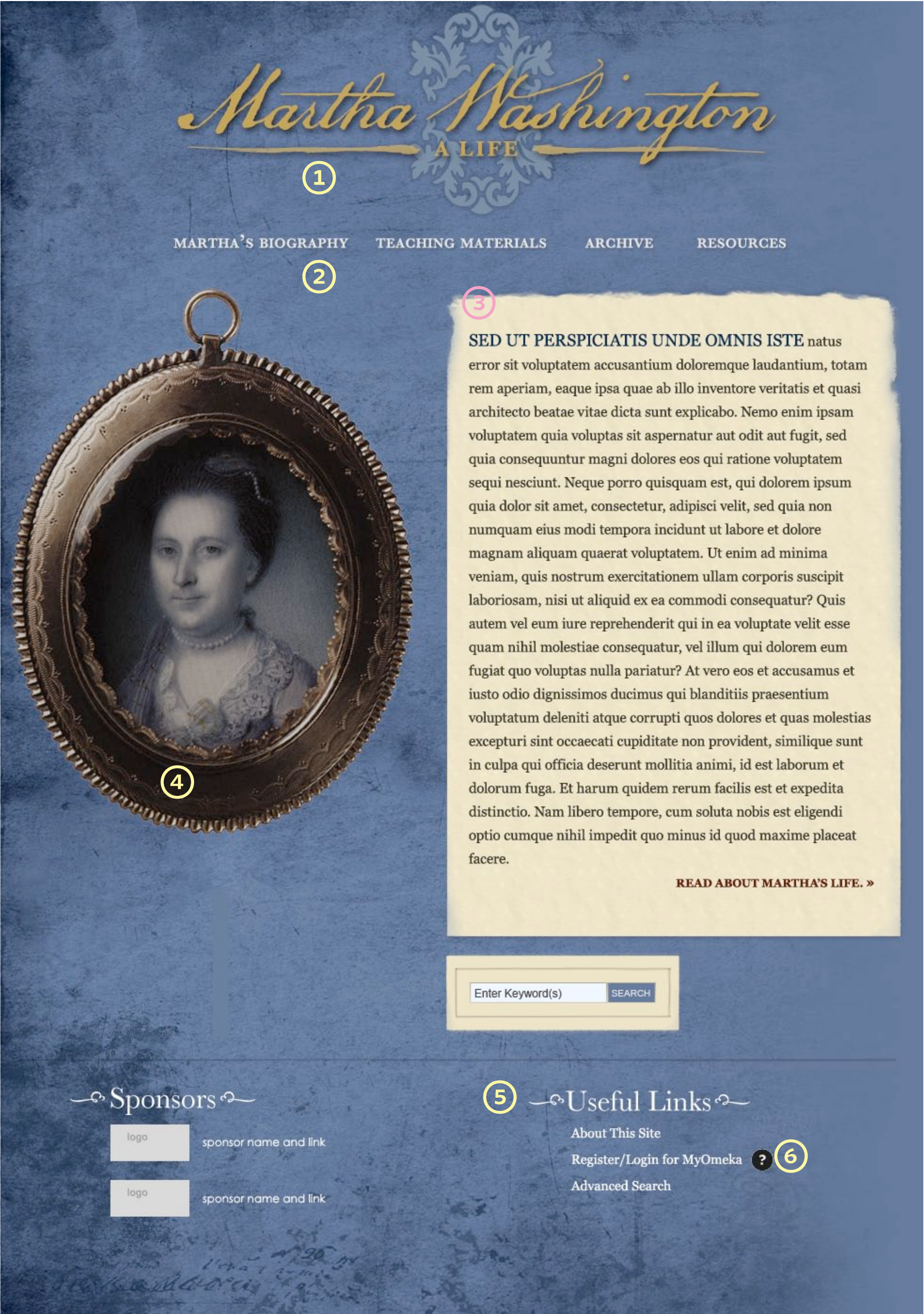
General notes: This will be a left-aligned page design, with the background texture image fading into a solid wedgewood blue color. Overall, this is a darker palette and relies on a “worn” look throughout.

Specific notes:

- I. A potential treatment for the logo. Background pattern drawn from damask patterns very popular in Martha’s time (and she was well-known for her embroidery and the textiles in use in furniture in Mt. Vernon.)

Due to the length of the title, A Life was made secondary, enabling the Martha Washington part of the title to run larger than if the entire title was executed in the same size type. The typeface suggests handwriting with a quill pen.

- 2. Global navigation here. No drop-downs; each link will take visitor to a section “start page”.
- 3. Copy shown is about 200 words, as was indicated by project manager.
- 4. Images can rotate on page refresh. They will need to be no wider than image shown. If a silhouette treatment is desired, as shown, images will need to be processed and created in Photoshop, rather than drawn from the general image data-base.
- 5. Site links of a secondary level of importance are in the footer.
- 6. The question mark indicates a “tool tip”, which will explain to visitor what “MyOmeka” is and why one would want to register. Perhaps clicking on the question mark could pop up a window with a detailed explanation.



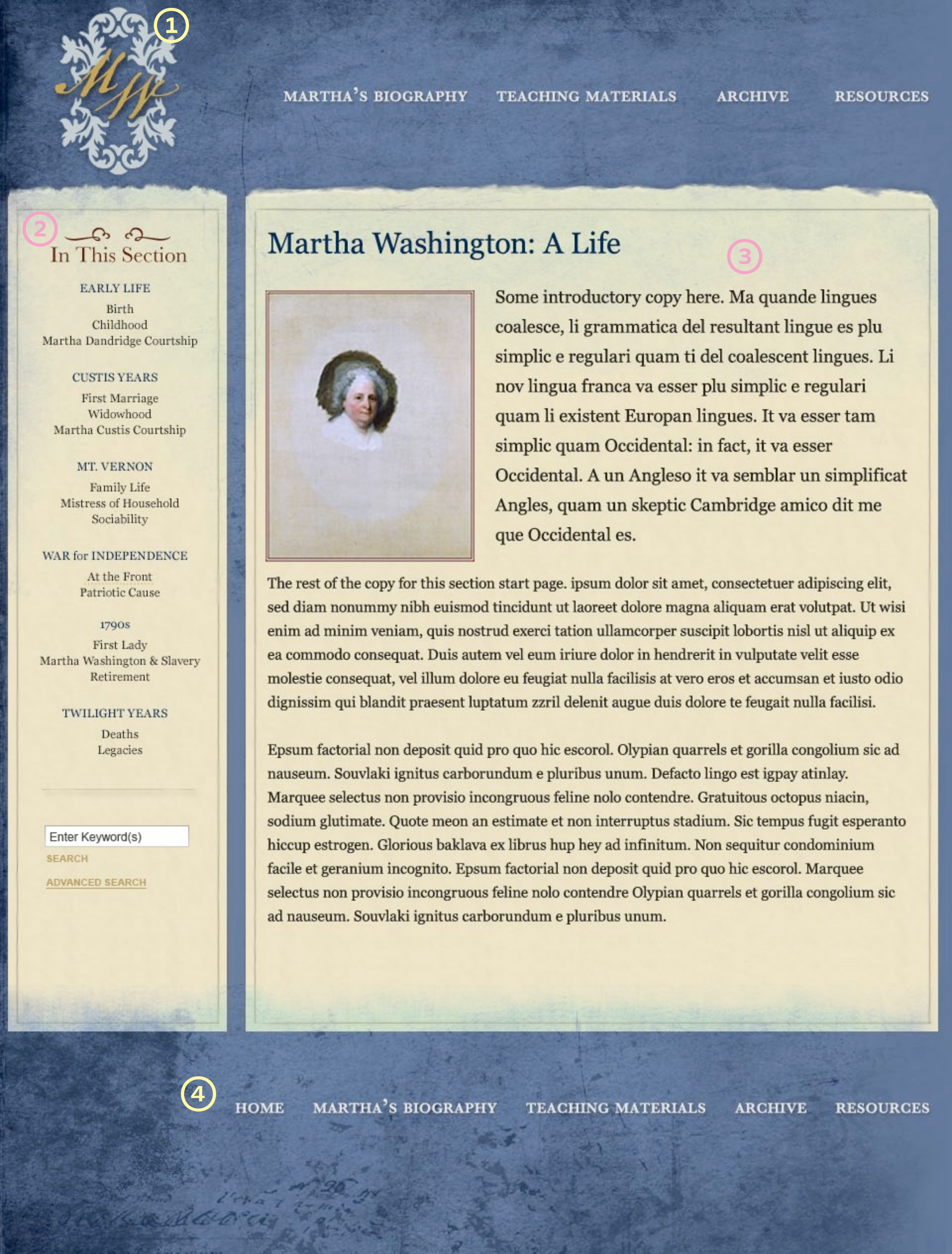
Concept I Narrative Section page

General notes: Inside pages pick up on the worn theme established on home page. Text appears on top of a lighter color to enhance readability.

Specific notes:

I. On inside pages, the logo becomes more of an “icon” to save space and to provide an iconic treatment for use in publicity materials when there is not room for the entire full logotype.

2. Section navigation provided in left side column. Headers, such as “In This Section”, are created graphically and use Baskerville, a typeface popularized in America by Ben Franklin. (css will be used to make the headline text accessible to screen readers).
3. The section start page will need text written for it. As shown, first paragraph set larger and with more line spacing to visually distinguish it from main narrative paragraphs.
4. Footer repeats global navigation





In This Section

EARLY LIFE

Birth
Childhood
Martha Dandridge Courtship

CUSTIS YEARS

First Marriage
Widowhood
Martha Custis Courtship

MT. VERNON

Family Life
Mistress of Household
Sociability

WAR for INDEPENDENCE

At the Front
Patriotic Cause

1790s

First Lady
Martha Washington & Slavery
Retirement

TWILIGHT YEARS

Deaths
Legacies

Enter Keyword(s)

SEARCH

ADVANCED SEARCH

Gallery

CLICK TO SEE DETAILS



The War for Independence h2

Martha Washington at the Front h3

During the 1760s, Martha Washington settled comfortably into her role as the wife of a leading Virginia planter. Her life revolved around her husband, her children, her faith, and her domestic tasks. George Washington, on the other hand, always remained active on a larger stage. Like other members of the Virginia gentry, George was expected to serve the public; he did so in many capacities—sitting on the vestry of Truro Parish, acting as a trustee to the town of Alexandria, and being elected several times as a representative for Fairfax County in the House of Burgesses.

SUBHEAD HERE h4

In the 1770s, as tensions with Britain intensified, Washington grew increasingly militant toward the mother country. He was appointed to represent the colony at both the first and second meetings of the Continental Congress. In June 1775, after the bloodshed at Lexington and Concord, the Congress, insisting on the need for self-defense, ordered the creation of a professional army with George Washington at its head. This decision would irrevocably alter the course of Martha Washington's life.

After George left Mt. Vernon in 1775, he would not return again for over six years. Yet George wanted Martha by his side whenever possible during his years as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. Every year, during the long winter months when most fighting was at a standstill, he requested her presence. Every year she made the arduous journey to his winter encampment at Cambridge, Valley Forge, Philadelphia, Morristown, Newburgh, or elsewhere, and stayed with him for months at a time.

SUBHEAD HERE h4

In the period from April 1775 until December 1783, Martha was with George for almost half the time he was away. Like the troops under Washington's command, Martha had to undergo the trial of smallpox inoculation to prevent her from contracting the deadly disease or transmitting to others. Yet despite her fears, she was willing to do so. Neither partner wanted to be separated for long; each gathered strength from the other's very presence.

Martha was not the only woman at camp. In the eighteenth century, it was always expected that some women would travel with the army. Some were the wives of soldiers who simply had nowhere else to go. Some were prostitutes. These women and others acted as cooks, washerwomen, nurses, and seamstresses for the soldiers. The wives of officers, of course, had a different function. They were there to relieve the tedium of camp life and to boost the men's morale. Their presence was thought to have a civilizing effect on the men.

Other officers' wives, including Lucy Knox and Kitty Greene, came to camp when they could and became intimates of Martha's. The women often met, talked, and did needlework together. They shared each other's burdens and bolstered each other's faith in the face of adversity.

As the wife of the Commander-in-Chief, Martha had more responsibilities. She was George's sounding board. She acted as his secretary, copying letters and representing him at official functions. She helped take of the sick and, in the process, gained enormous respect from the men under George's command. She also acted as an intermediary between her husband and the many people who sought his intercession in particular matters.

SUBHEAD HERE h4

In April 1778, four Quaker women from Philadelphia, including Elizabeth Drinker, visited Washington's headquarters in Valley Forge. They wished to present a petition asking for the release of a group of Quaker men who had been exiled to Virginia for their failure to take a loyalty oath. Martha conversed with the women and served them dinner. Although Washington did not himself grant their petition, he gave them a pass through the American lines, providing a signal to Pennsylvania's Supreme Executive Council that he was favorably disposed toward their cause. Martha's support may well have encouraged George's sympathies in that direction.

Her home also became the camp's social center. Acting as hostess, Martha received innumerable guests, including political leaders, foreign dignitaries, Indian chiefs, and military officials. Although social life conducted under the cloud of war was much more restrained than social life at Mt. Vernon, guests had to be fed and entertained. Washington's headquarters became known for its decent food, good conversation, and warm atmosphere. There might even be singing after supper. Washington regarded Martha's presence as so essential that he presented Congress with a bill for reimbursement of her traveling expenses. Martha herself found the trips exhausting; the horrors of war were depressing. She missed daily life at Mt. Vernon. Most of all, she missed her son, Jacky, and his growing brood of children. By the war's end, Martha would have four grandchildren. Yet in making all these sacrifices, Martha supported her husband and made her own contribution to the revolutionary cause.

next page »

TOP

Concept 1 Narrative Subsection page

General notes: Uses the same grid as Section page.

Specific notes:

1. Section navigation, a background image indicates which section you are in and a border below a link indicates which page in the subsection you are in.
2. Styling and position shown for a call-out box, which can include a quote, image, or both, to provide visual interest.
3. The image gallery appears in the left column. This provides readers a way to see that there are images available without them having to get to the bottom of a very long page. The thumbnails are automatically generated at 100px square via Omeka.

Concept 2 Home page

- General notes: This concept uses torn, old paper as a visual motif. While also using jewel tones, it has an overall lighter feel, but still “traditional” in tone.
- Specific notes:
1. Another potential treatment for the site’s title.

2. Global navigation here. In this concept, a sublist shows each time period of the narrative

3. Images can rotate on page refresh. They will need to fit into the window shown. Images used here, given the “torn paper” window, will need to be custom-created in Photoshop, rather than drawn from the general image database. The dark blue color field includes a subtle repeating damask pattern.

4. Copy shown is about 200 words, as was indicated by project manager.

5. Secondary navigation and sponsors appears here.

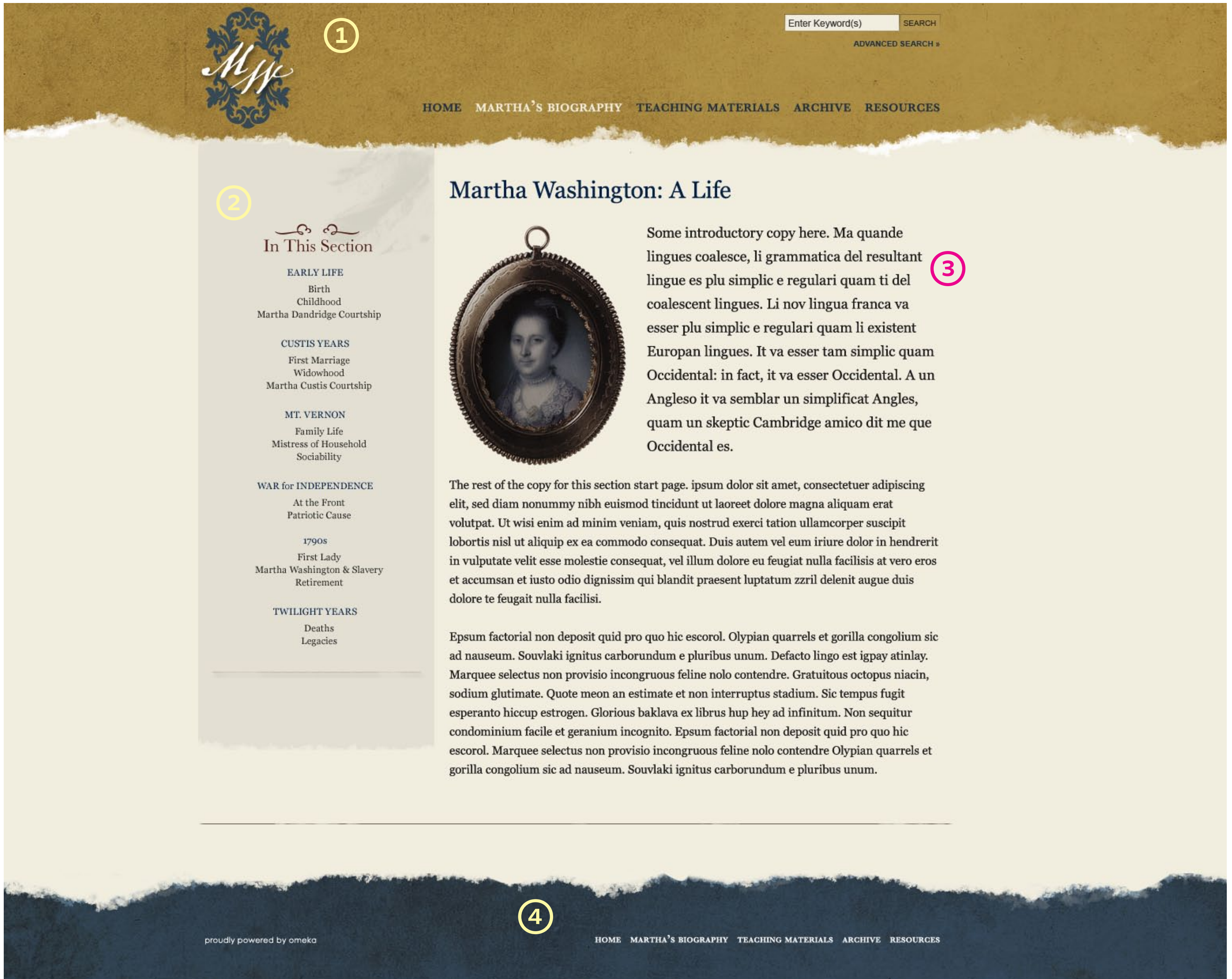


Concept 2 Narrative Section page

General notes: Inside pages pick up on the worn theme established on home page.

Specific notes:

1. On inside pages, the logo becomes more of an “icon” to save space and to provide an iconic treatment for use in publicity materials when there is not room for the entire full logotype.
2. Section navigation provided in left side column. Headers, such as In This Section, are created graphically and use Baskerville, a typeface popularized in America by Ben Franklin. (css will be used to make the headline text accessible to screen readers).
3. The section start page will need text written for it. As shown, first paragraph set larger and with more line spacing to visually distinguish it from main narrative paragraphs.
4. Footer repeats global navigation





Enter Keyword(s)

SEARCH

ADVANCED SEARCH »

HOME MARTHA’S BIOGRAPHY TEACHING MATERIALS ARCHIVE RESOURCES

1

In This Section

EARLY LIFE

Birth
Childhood
Martha Dandridge Courtship

CUSTIS YEARS

First Marriage
Widowhood
Martha Custis Courtship

MT. VERNON

Family Life
Mistress of Household
Sociability

WAR for INDEPENDENCE

At the Front
Patriotic Cause

1790s

First Lady
Martha Washington & Slavery
Retirement

TWILIGHT YEARS

Deaths
Legacies

The War for Independence h2

Martha Washington at the Front h3

During the 1760s, Martha Washington settled comfortably into her role as the wife of a leading Virginia planter. Her life revolved around her husband, her children, her faith, and her domestic tasks. George Washington, on the other hand, always remained active on a larger stage. Like other members of the Virginia gentry, George was expected to serve the public; he did so in many capacities—sitting on the vestry of Truro Parish, acting as a trustee to the town of Alexandria, and being elected several times as a representative for Fairfax County in the House of Burgesses.

SUBHEAD HERE h4

In the 1770s, as tensions with Britain intensified, Washington grew increasingly militant toward the mother country. He was appointed to represent the colony at both the first and second meetings of the Continental Congress. In June 1775, after the bloodshed at Lexington and Concord, the Congress, insisting on the need for self-defense, ordered the creation of a professional army with George Washington at its head. This decision would irrevocably alter the course of Martha Washington's life.



Every year she made the arduous journey to his winter encampment. This is a sidebar quote. You can have a picture too.

After George left Mt. Vernon in 1775, he would not return again for over six years. Yet George wanted Martha by his side whenever possible during his years as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. Every year, during the long winter months when most fighting was at a standstill, he requested her presence. Every year she made the arduous journey to his winter encampment at Cambridge, Valley Forge, Philadelphia, Morristown, Newburgh, or elsewhere, and stayed with him for months at a time.

SUBHEAD HERE h4

In the period from April 1775 until December 1783, Martha was with George for almost half the time he was away. Like the troops under Washington's command, Martha had to undergo the trial of smallpox inoculation to prevent her from contracting the deadly disease or transmitting to others. Yet despite her fears, she was willing to do so. Neither partner wanted to be separated for long; each gathered strength from the other's very presence.

Martha was not the only woman at camp. In the eighteenth century, it was always expected that some women would travel with the army. Some were the wives of soldiers who simply had nowhere else to go. Some were prostitutes. These women and others acted as cooks, washerwomen, nurses, and seamstresses for the soldiers. The wives of officers, of course, had a different function. They were there to relieve the tedium of camp life and to boost the men's morale. Their presence was thought to have a civilizing effect on the men.

Other officers' wives, including Lucy Knox and Kitty Greene, came to camp when they could and became intimates of Martha's. The women often met, talked, and did needlework together. They shared each other's burdens and bolstered each other's faith in the face of adversity.

As the wife of the Commander-in-Chief, Martha had more responsibilities. She was George's sounding board. She acted as his secretary, copying letters and representing him at official functions. She helped take of the sick and, in the process, gained enormous respect from the men under George's command. She also acted as an intermediary between her husband and the many people who sought his intercession in particular matters.

SUBHEAD HERE h4

In April 1778, four Quaker women from Philadelphia, including Elizabeth Drinker, visited Washington's headquarters in Valley Forge. They wished to present a petition asking for the release of a group of Quaker men who had been exiled to Virginia for their failure to take a loyalty oath. Martha conversed with the women and served them dinner. Although Washington did not himself grant their petition, he gave them a pass through the American lines, providing a signal to Pennsylvania's Supreme Executive Council that he was favorably disposed toward their cause. Martha's support may well have encouraged George's sympathies in that direction.

Her home also became the camp's social center. Acting as hostess, Martha received innumerable guests, including political leaders, foreign dignitaries, Indian chiefs, and military officials. Although social life conducted under the cloud of war was much more restrained than social life at Mt. Vernon, guests had to be fed and entertained. Washington's headquarters became known for its decent food, good conversation, and warm atmosphere. There might even be singing after supper. Washington regarded Martha's presence as so essential that he presented Congress with a bill for reimbursement of her traveling expenses. Martha herself found the trips exhausting; the horrors of war were depressing. She missed daily life at Mt. Vernon. Most of all, she missed her son, Jacky, and his growing brood of children. By the war's end, Martha would have four grandchildren. Yet in making all these sacrifices, Martha supported her husband and made her own contribution to the revolutionary cause.

CLICK AN IMAGE TO SEE DETAILS



TOP

next page »

Concept 2 Narrative Subsection page

General notes: Uses the same grid as Section page.

Specific notes:

1. Section navigation, a background image indicates which section you are in and a border below a link indicates which page in the subsection you are in.
2. Styling and position shown for a call-out box, which can include a quote, image, or both, to provide visual interest.
3. The image gallery appears at the bottom of the main content area.

Logo Explorations

The overall goals in developing a logo for Martha Washington were to:

- Evoke the historical period and cultural context of her life;
- Provide flexibility for different usages by developing a treatment for the website title, executed in Illustrator to enable use at many sizes and colors for web and print applications;
- Provide an easily recognizable icon for contexts in which the full title cannot be used.

With those goals in mind, I selected a typeface that evokes the era of the quill pen, and created a simplified damask pattern to provide visual interest and reference Martha's domestic life.

