



J. FOSTER
HISTORIC SIGNS

*Hand-crafted signs
- in the style of
18th & 19th
century artisans.*

CHARLES JULIAN COFFEE HOUSE, 1784

Charles Julian, a baker in Norfolk, Virginia, was granted an ordinary license to open a coffee house in 1751. When he joined the new Masonic lodge in 1756, the meetings were held 'at brother Julian's' until the lodge meetings were moved to the new Town House in 1763 in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

The coffee house in America grew out of the demand for "exotic" beverages which included coffee, tea and chocolate. However, coffee-houses were not always a socially acceptable place for everyone. Celebrated by some, deplored by others, these stimulating brews gave rise to a number of important social institutions, such as the coffeehouse, the tea garden, and the ritual of afternoon tea. By the mid-1700s, coffee and tea were becoming staple drinks for early Americans. Colonial coffeehouses, following the London model, became powerful social catalysts; centers for trade and politics.

George Washington was at Julian's on Christmas Eve of 1771 to confer with the overseer of the Washington Farm, just across the Rappahannock River and known today as George Washington's Ferry Farm.

As a Revolutionary War hero, George Washington was honored at a public dinner at Julian's in 1784. Thirteen toasts were drunk, with a discharge of 13 rounds of artillery for each toast. The toasts began with "The Thirteen United and Sovereign States of America" and concluded with "The memory of all our gallant heroes who have bravely fallen in defense of American liberty."

Sign painters often painted over old signboards, so one might faintly see lettering behind primary sign information, simulated here on this sign.