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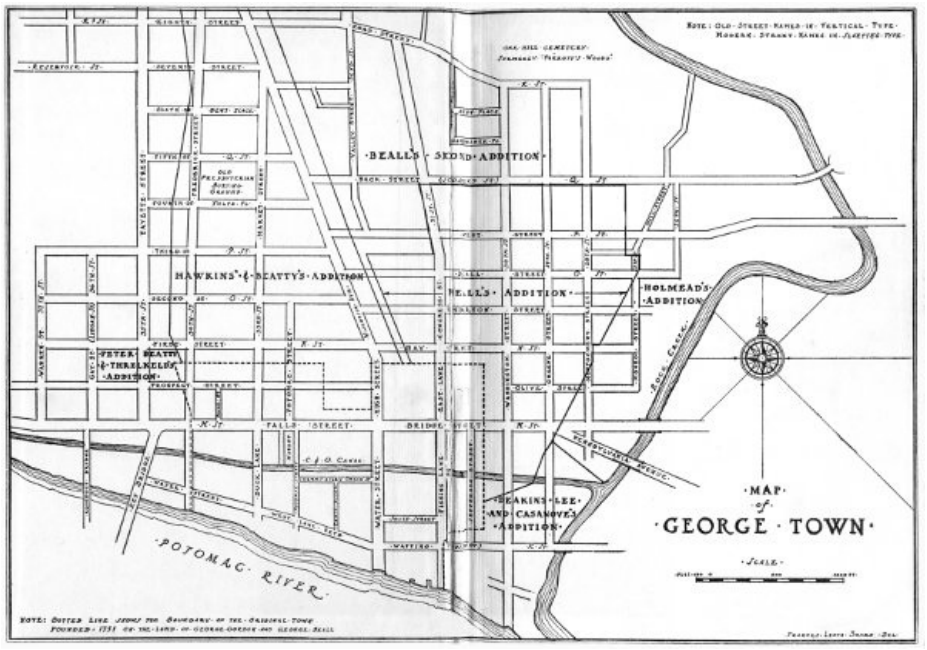

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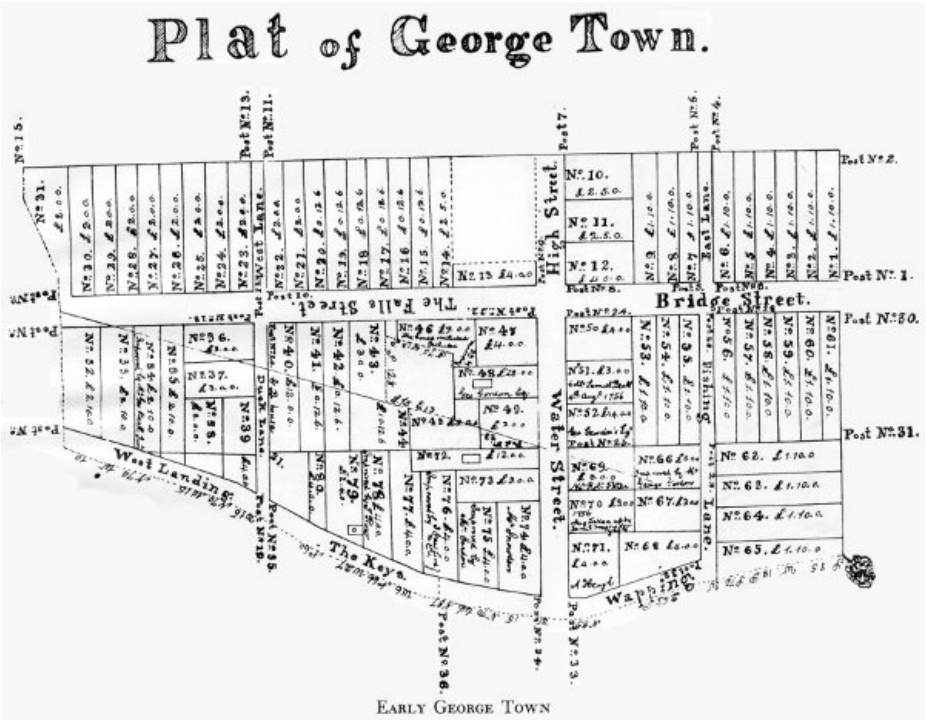
A PORTRAIT OF OLD GEORGE TOWN

[Pg i]

[Pg ii]



Early George Town

Early George Town
Higher resolution image

[Pg iii]

A Portrait of Old George Town

BY
GRACE DUNLOP ECKER

1951
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[Pg iv]

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[Pg v]

DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF
MY FATHER AND MOTHER
GEORGE THOMAS AND EMILY REDIN DUNLOP
AND
MY AUNT, ELLEN DUNLOP
ALL THREE OF WHOM LIVED LONG, USEFUL
AND UNSELFISH LIVES
IN GEORGETOWN

[Pg vi]

GEORGE TOWN GHOSTS

[Pg vii]

By William Tipton Tablott

The ghosts of Georgetown when they meet
In haunted house or moonlit street
With pride recall the functions gay
When down the Philadelphia way
The Federal City overnight
Moved to its bare and swampy site,
For Georgetown then a busy mart,
A growing seaport from the start,
Where a whole-hearted spirit reigned,
Threw wide its doors, and entertained
With wines and viands of the best—
The Federal City was its guest.

In memory of the good old days,
Whose ways to them were modern ways,
Congenial ghosts across Rock Creek,
With formal bows and steps antique,
Rehearse a spectral minuet
Where once in bright assemblies met—
Beruffled belles looked love to beaus
In powdered wigs and faultless hose;
Or merchant ghosts survey the skies
And venture guesses weatherwise
Regarding winds that will prevail
To speed their ships about to sail.

Still in the shaded hillside streets
A trace of old-time welcome greets
The passer-by who has a flare
For scenes of old. No longer there
A buoyant Georgetown stands alone,
The Federal City having grown
Until their boundaries overlap;
So that, deleted from the map,
Though once the Federal City's host,
Georgetown itself is now a ghost.

[Pg viii]

Foreword

[Pg ix]

IT IS not at all in my mind to write a history of Georgetown. Several have been written, but I do want, very, very much, to paint a portrait of this dear old town of my birth where my parents, my grandparents, great-grandfathers and one great-great-grandfather lived, and which I love so dearly.

A portrait, partly of its physical features, its streets, its houses and gardens, some of which still exist in their pristine glory but, alas, many of which have gone the way of so-called progress. In place of the dignified houses of yore, of real architectural beauty, stand rows of cheap dwellings or stores, erected mostly in the seventies and eighties when architecture was at its worst. In 1895 it was that the old names of the streets were taken away and from then on we've been just an adjunct of Washington.

Not only of its physical side do I wish to tell, but I want to paint a picture of the kind of people who lived here, from the beginning up through the gay nineties—nearly one hundred and fifty years. Of the kind of things they did, their work, their play, their thoughts and their beliefs, for the character of the town, like human beings, was formed largely by their beliefs, and these old Scotsmen—for they were greatly in the majority—laid a great deal of stress on their Presbyterian form of Christianity. Witness the oath that had to be taken by the Flour Inspector on February 24, 1772: "I, Thomas Brannan, do declare that I do believe that there is not any trnsubstantiation in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper or in the elements of bread and wine, at or after the consecration thereof by any person whatsoever."

[Pg x]

And yet, with this strong prejudice, they coöperated and lived on friendly terms with the Roman Catholics who, very soon after the taking of this particular oath, founded their college and established their convent for teaching young girls.

Dr. Balch counselled well when he besought his people: "Let us resolve to be social rather than fashionable, and generous instead of extravagant."

All down through the years and to this day I think that has been the hall-mark of the real

Georgetonian. A great deal of fashion has come to Georgetown, as in the early days of the bringing of the government when Washington City was a waste and almost entirely one big mud puddle, and the foreign ministers and many high in our government sought the comfort and dignity of this town, which was then far from young.

Again in later years there has been an exodus across Rock Creek of men and women high in the government; in the diplomatic corps; in industry; in literature and the arts; lured hither by the quiet dignity of the old-time atmosphere.

There are today living in Georgetown descendants of nearly every one of the original makers of the town, and all through these years the old friendships still persist and flourish.

* * *

It is impossible for me to express my thanks to all the people who have helped me and made it possible to write this book. I want to mention Mrs. Gilbert Grosvenor; Miss Williams of the Peabody Room of the Georgetown Branch of the Public Library; Miss McPherson and Mr. John Beverley Riggs of the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress; Mr. Meredith Colket and Mr. O. W. Holmes of the National Archives; Dr. H. Paul Caemmerer, Secretary of the Commission of Fine Arts; Miss Pennybaker, of the Real Estate and Columbia Title Insurance Company; the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association and Mr. C. C. Wall, Superintendent of Mount Vernon. Also the various people who did the typing and helped secure the photographs.

And last but not least the friends of the old regime who have given to me freely of the history and traditions of their ancestors. They are too many to name, but to each one I owe a real debt of gratitude. Especially to one, my life-long friend, am I indebted. Without her unceasing interest and encouragement this Portrait might never have been done.

[Pg xi]

GRACE GLASGOW DUNLOP ECKER. [Pg xii]

CONTENTS

[Pg xiii]

[Pg xiv]

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

[Pg xv]

[Pg xvi]

A PORTRAIT OF OLD GEORGE TOWN

[Pg 1]

[Pg 2]

Chapter I

[Pg 3]

Beginnings of a Town

THERE are many Georgetowns up and down the Atlantic seaboard in the original thirteen colonies, and even one in Kentucky, much like the Jamestowns and Charlestowns and Williamsburgs named for the sovereign of the time, but this George Town of which I write was in Maryland on the Potomac River, and because it was situated at the head of tidewater of that great river, it became important on account of the great amount of tobacco grown in that area and brought to this point to be carried across the seas.

The earliest knowledge we have of this region, which has become The Capital City of the great United States of America, concerns the Indians who were living here when the white explorers came.

The first of these we know of was the redoubtable Captain John Smith, who, in 1608, came up the Potomac River and made a map of his travels. He tells us in his *Historie of Virginie* of "the mildness of the aire, the fertilitie of the soil, and the situation of the rivers to the nature and use of man as no place more convenient for pleasure, profit and man's sustenance." He was referring to the confluence of the Potomac with its Eastern Branch and the then good-sized Rock Creek.

In 1634 another Englishman, Henry Fleete, sailed up the river as far as the Little Falls, trading furs with the Indians. Thus he wrote of the site of George Town: [Pg 4]

> "Monday, the 25th of June, we set sail for the Town of Tohoga, where we came to anchor two leagues short of the falls: this place is without question the most pleasant in all this country and most convenient for habitation; the air temperate in summer and not violent in winter. The river aboundeth in all manner of fish, and for deer, buffalos, bears and turkeys, the woods do swarm with them and the soil is exceedingly fertile."

Henry Fleete remained with the Indians about twelve years, whether of his own free will or as a captive is not quite certain, but evidently this writing of his was to good purpose, for, in the next decade, small parties of Scots and Irish began settling on the Potomac at the mouth of Rock Creek.

The Indians whom these white men found here belonged to the Algonquin Nation, which included many tribes. Thomas Jefferson says there were probably forty of these tribes between the Atlantic Ocean and the Potomac River. The tribe living within the limits of the present District of Columbia was the Nacotchankes or Anacostians, as the British called them, hence, the name given to the Eastern branch of the Potomac, where the largest village was situated, near what is now called Benning. West of Rock Creek was the village of Tohoga, on the site of what became George Town.

The Indian families lived on cultivated farms of a few acres, each strung out along the river. From it came a large part of their food, and, of course, it was their best mode of communication by canoe.

The most interesting activity of these Indians was the manufacture of all manner of tools from the stones which they found in the surrounding hills. These cobblestones had been washed down by the river ages before. In later years they paved the streets of Georgetown, but these Indians used them to form arrow-darts, knives, spear points, scrapers, and drills of all sizes. Traces of these quarries were found as late as 1900; the largest of them seems to have been on Piney Branch, where it is crossed by 16th Street. It is now obliterated. [Pg 5]

There was, also, in this region, soapstone, and from it and from clay, the Indians made pots and vessels for household use.

Scientists think that other tribes came from far away to barter their goods for these implements, and so, over three hundred years ago, this place was a sort of metropolis for the Indians.

It was, of course, by way of the river that the settlers came to this region after the grant of the Colony of Maryland to Lord Baltimore as Lord Proprietor. This colony of Maryland differed from the other colonies in the fact that all the land was the property of Lord Baltimore, to give or sell as he pleased. Another difference was the establishment of the Manorial System, by which the owner of one thousand acres or more became Lord of his Manor. (It was almost like the Feudal System.)

In 1703 a grant of 795 acres was made to Ninian Beall, beginning thus:

> "Charles, Absolute Lord and Proprietor of the Province of Maryland....
>
> Know yee that for and in consideration that Ninian Beall of Prince Georges County had due unto him 795 acres of land within our Province....

Rev. James McVean (See Chapter XI)

> We do therefore grant unto him the said Ninian Beall all that tract or parcell of land called Rock of Dunbarton, lying in the said County, beginning at the Southwest corner Tree, of a tract of land taken for Robert Mason standing by Potomack River side at the mouth of Rock Creek....
>
> To have and to hold the same unto him the said Ninian Beall, his heirs and assignees forever to be holden of us and our heirs as of our manor of Calverton in free and Common Soccage by fealty only for all manner of services yielding and paying therefor yearly unto us and our heirs at our receipt at the City of St. Maries at the two most usual feasts in the year—at the feast of Annunciacion of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Michael the Archangell by even and equal porcions the rent of one pound eleven shillings and nine pence half penny sterling silver or gold....
>
> Given under our Greater Seal of Armes, this eighteenth day of November, one thousand seven hundred and three, witness our trusty and well beloved Colonel Henry Darnell, keeper of our said Greater Seale in our said Province of Maryland."

Colonel Ninian Beall lived a long and interesting life. He had been born in Largo, Fifes Shire, Scotland, in 1625. There he had been an officer in the Scottish-English Army, which fought for the Stuarts' Army against Cromwell; he was made a prisoner at the battle of Dunbar, September 3, 1650, and sentenced to five years servitude in the Barbadoes, West Indies. Many gentlemen were so sentenced as political prisoners and sent out as industrial servants at that time. He was eventually sent to Maryland, where, after completing his term of servitude, he proved his right to 50 acres of land and received many hundreds more for bringing out immigrants and settling there.

He held many notable and honorable offices in the colony, and, in 1699, the General Assembly passed an Act of Gratitude for the distinguished Indian services of Colonel Ninian Beall.

As he was Commander in Chief of the Provincial Forces in Maryland, he probably visited the garrison at the Falls and so knew this region long before he was granted this tract of the Rock of Dunbarton. He previously had procured 225 acres on the east side of Rock Creek just opposite, called Beall's Levels.

Ninian Beall died in 1717 at his home, Fifer Largo, near Upper Marlboro, Maryland. From a description of him in the Records of the Columbia Historical Society:

> ... "He had a complexion characteristic of his nationality, with an unusually heavy growth of long red hair, and was over six feet in height, powerful in brawn and muscle and phenomenal in physical endurance."

He had twelve children, six sons and six daughters. In his will is recorded:

> "I do give and bequeath unto my son George, my plantation and tract of land called the Rock of Dunbarton, lying and being at Rock Creek, containing four hundred and eight acres, with all the stock thereon, both cattle and hogs, them and their increase, unto my said son, George, and unto his heirs forever.
>
> "I do also give and bequeath, unto my said son, George Beall, his choice of one of my feather beds, bolster and pillow and other furniture thereunto belonging, with two cows and calves and half my sheep from off this plantation I now live on, unto him and his heirs forever."

This son, George, was the eighth child of Ninian Beall. He had a son, Thomas, who always styled himself Thomas Beall of George; of him we shall hear more later on. The family was not limited to these, for many other Bealls, men and women, appear in the annals of George Town. [Pg 9]

George Gordon, the other of the two original proprietors of the lands which became George Town, was also a Scotsman and had a share in a manufacture at Leith, near Edinburgh, so it is evident that, when he came to this country, he had means which he invested in Prince Georges County and Frederick County, Maryland. He held the office of Sheriff of Frederick County and was a judge of the first County Court.

A deed to Gordon from James Smith, "planter," is dated November 13, 1734. In it, George Gordon is described as "merchant." The tract conveyed was one hundred acres, known as "Knaves' Disappointment," a part of three hundred acres called his Rock Creek Plantation. The consideration was one hundred pounds sterling or about five hundred dollars.

It is thought that the original Inspection House of George Gordon was built of logs not far from the mouth of Rock Creek, fronting on the Potomac, somewhere between 1734 and 1748. The main inspection house was built later on "the warehouse lot," an acre close to the southwest intersection of Falls and Water Streets (M Street and Wisconsin Avenue). He resided nearby at the site of 3206 M. Street. Later on, in 1745, George Gordon bought an estate for a permanent home; it is thought to have been near Holy Rood Cemetery or near the Industrial Home School on Wisconsin Avenue. After the death of his wife, George Gordon left his Rock Creek Plantation, and went to live at "Woodyard" with Stephen West.

The will of George Gordon is dated May 10, 1766. At the time of his death he had a son, John, and a daughter, who had married Tobias Belt. To his son, John, "mariner," who was in the East India service, he devised the dwelling house at Rock Creek Plantation on Goose Creek and the [Pg 10] waterside lot in Georgetown numbered 75.

In those days tobacco was, of course, the big crop, and an English writer called it "the meat, drink, clothing, and money of the colonists." Regulations were very strict in regard to the exportation of tobacco.

Inspection houses for tobacco such as that of George Gordon were also called Rolling Houses, from the fact that the hogsheads of tobacco had a hole bored in each head and an axle run through from one end to another. To this axle a shaft was attached, and drawn by a horse or an ox, so rolled along over the rough roads of that time to their destinations. Here was the one place in Frederick County for inspection; here was a natural site for a town, and so came the demand for one.

On June 8, 1751 the Assembly of the Province of Maryland appointed commissioners to lay out a town here in the county of Frederick, which had been formed in 1748 from Prince Georges County. The first appointed were: Captain Henry Wright Crabb, Masters John Needham, James Perrie, Samuel Magruder III, Josiah Beall, David Lynn. Appointed as their successors from time to time as vacancies occurred, were: Andrew Heugh, 1754; Robert Peter, 1757; John Murdock, 1766; Thomas Richardson, 1772; William Deakins, Jr., 1772; Bernard O'Neill, 1782; Thomas Beall, of George, 1782; Benj. Stoddert, Samuel Davidson, 1785; John Peter, 1789, and Adam Steuart. The last named gave up his American citizenship and went to Europe to live, as he was not in sympathy with the Revolution. His land was confiscated by the State of Maryland. The Surveyors and Clerks of the Commissioners were: [Pg 11]

> Alexander Beall, 1751-1757; Josiah Beall, 1757-1774; Robert Ferguson, 1774, and Daniel Reintzel, 1774-1782.

Meetings were held in private houses through all the years until 1789, when, at last, George Town was incorporated.

To return to the year 1752, when the first survey of ground for the town was made, among the tracts surveyed were the following with their names:

> Conjurer's Disappointment (Deakins)
> Frogland (Thomas Beatty)
> Knave's Disappointment (George Gordon)
> Discovery (Robert Peter)
> Resurvey on Salop (John Threlkeld)
> Pretty Prospect (Benjamin Stoddert)
> Beall's Levels and Rock of Dumbarton (George Beall)

The survey was completed on February 28, 1752 and Beall's and Gordon's land found "most convenient." Each gentleman was offered two town lots besides the price of condemnation. George Gordon chose numbers 48 and 52. George Beall had refused to recognize the proceedings of the commissioners in any way, so he was notified that "if he did not make his choice of lots within 10 days from February 28th, he could only blame himself for the consequences." After reflecting for a week he sent the following answer:

> If I must part with my property by force, I had better save a little than be totally demolished. Rather than none, I accept these lots, numbers 72 and 79, said to be Mr. Henderson's and Mr. Edmonston's. But I do hereby protest and declare that my acceptance of the said lots, which is by force, shall not debar me from future redress from the Commissions or others, if I can have [Pg 12]

the rights of a British subject. God save the King.

GEORGE BEALL.

March 7, 1752.

Can't you see how difficult it was for the old gentleman (he must then, by the records, have been about sixty years of age or more) to cooperate with the changes that were coming to ruin, as he thought, his comfortable and profitable plantation life?

Two hundred and eighty pounds were paid for the sixty acres of the original town. The southern boundary was the river, the western about where the college now stands, the eastern a few feet west of the present 30th Street, and the northern boundary was a few feet south of the present N Street. The only boundary stone still existing is the one that was No. 2 in the survey, the northeastern corner of the town, and is now in the garden of number 3014 N. Street. There were eighty lots in the original town.

The name has been variously attributed to George II, the King then reigning; to the two Georges from whom the land was taken, and to George Washington, which last is, of course, absurd, as he was then a young man of twenty, engaged in surveying the properties of Lord Fairfax.

Chapter II

[Pg 13]

The Original Town and Its People

GEORGE TOWN flourished and became more and more a busy port. Its population in 1800 was 2,993; by 1810 it was 4,948. Its wharves were thronged with vessels sailing across the seas laden with the "precious weed" and with wheat brought in from plantations for the "flouring mills" in great Conestoga wagons painted red and blue drawn by six-horse teams adorned with gay harness and jingling bells. Also, there was a thriving coastwise trade, up to old Salem and Newburyport where the clipper ships were built, and down to the West Indies. These ships brought back sugar, molasses, and rum, and from the old country came clothing, and furniture, and all sorts of luxuries, for the thriving merchants were building comfortable homes and furnishing them in elegance and taste.

General Edward Braddock, after a brilliant military career under Prince William of Orange, in Holland, had been made a major-general and put in charge of troops in Virginia against the French. He landed his troops in Alexandria, marched them up to where the ferry crossed to George Town, where they divided, part going through Virginia, and he, with the remainder, crossing the Potomac to George Town from whence he continued on his fateful march to Fort Duquesne, where he met his terrible defeat and lost his life.

He had come from Perthshire in old Scotland, so, of course, had received a warm welcome in this Scottish town. And thus he had written back to England to George Anne Bellamy, the gifted [Pg 14] actress, in 1755: "For never have I attended a more complete banquet or met better dressed or better mannered people than I met on my arrival in George Town, which is named after our gracious Majesty." If only he had mentioned in whose house the banquet was or the names of some of these agreeable people he met!

James Truslow Adams, in his fascinating book, *The Epic of America*, speaks over and over again of the culture of the pre-Revolutionary towns along the Atlantic seaboard, and what a high point it had reached. No better example could be found than this old town with its families who had come from well-to-do circumstances, not, as was the case with so many settlers of the new country, in order to escape trouble. They came mostly from Scotland; witness the names as time goes on. Indeed, to such an extent, that the little settlement had first of all been called New Scotland.

One of the very first to establish himself in the business of exporting tobacco, was Robert Peter, who is often spoken of in old records as "George Town's pioneer business man," and also as "The merchant prince and land owner." As a young man of about twenty he had come from Crossbasket near Glasgow, first to Bladensburg and thence to George Town, and in 1752 established himself in business, and in 1790 became its first mayor. He represented the firm of John Glassford & Company of North Britain, Glasgow, well known both in England and in Scotland. So much of the tobacco trade flowed into the Scottish city that the wealthy merchants there who dealt in it were known as the "Virginia Dons," and to this day there is in the old port of [Pg 15] Glasgow a Virginia Street.

James Dunlop, a cousin of Robert Peter, also had come from his home Garnkirke, near Glasgow, first to New York, then to George Town about 1783 and established himself in this same lucrative exporting business. He did a great deal of business in Dumfries, Virginia, near Fredericksburg.

These old letters give a picture of the times:

George Town, December 15th, 1788.

Gentlemen:

> Your favors of the 11th July duly received by Mr. Dunlop with the black cloth, which I am afraid I shall soon have occasion for, my old friend Mr. Heugh being now in a very dangerous way indeed, etc.
>
> GEORGE WALKER.

Andrew Heugh had been one of the Commissioners in the laying off of George Town. He owned one of the very first lots on the water front and High Street.

Here is another one of these letters:

> George Town, August 8, 1788.
>
> Gentlemen:
>
> The quantity of tobacco planted this year in the neighborhood of this place is vastly larger than ever was known. John Campbell and J. Dunlop are very backward in buying with all cash, but as Colonel Deakins is again in cash the price still keeps at a guinea ... from these causes I would not be forward in recommending speculation in the weed, especially as those of good information are holding off.
>
> GEORGE WALKER.

No less a person than General Washington himself wrote in 1791 that George Town ranked as the greatest tobacco market in Maryland, if not in the Union. [Pg 16]

Duc de la Rochefoucault Liancourt, traveling in the United States in 1795-'97, says that in 1791 tobacco exports from George Town were $314,864.00. They went even higher in 1792 and 1793, but in 1794 and the following years decreased considerably, which was attributed to two causes: a falling off in tobacco growing, and a diversion of the capital of the merchants to speculation in lots in the Federal City.

A prominent firm in this same business of exporting tobacco was that of Forrest, Stoddert, and Murdock, formed in 1783. Uriah Forrest was born in St. Mary's County, Maryland, in 1756. He served with distinction in the Revolution, was wounded in the Battle of Germantown and lost a leg at the Battle of Brandywine.

He was a delegate in the Continental Congress and served in the third Congress from March 4, 1793 to November 8, 1794, when he resigned. He was commissioned major-general in the Maryland Militia in 1795.

After the war he went to London on business for the Government at his own expense, but returned to enter business with his old friend, Benjamin Stoddert.

Born in Charles County, Maryland, in 1751, Stoddert was of Scottish ancestry, the son of Captain Thomas Stoddert who, while with the Maryland contingent, was killed in Braddock's defeat. Benjamin Stoddert had joined the Continental Army as a captain of cavalry and was in active service until the Battle of Brandywine where, after holding the rank of major, he was so severely wounded as to unfit him for active service. He had seriously considered settling in either Baltimore or Alexandria, urged by friends in each of these cities, but decided that George Town was a better venture. [Pg 17]

Colonel John Murdock was already living in George Town where his father, William Murdock, was in business.

Francis Lowndes also had a large warehouse, and John Laird was prosperous in this business, and as time went on, meant a great deal to Georgetown. Colonel Deakins, Jr., was prominent, for on his tomb was inscribed: "George Town, by the blow, has lost her most illustrious patron." He was only fifty-six when he died in 1798. In his youth, he had done surveying with George Washington.

Henry Threlkeld was born in Cumberland County, England, in 1716, came to America and bought an estate of 1,000 acres known as Berleith, bordering on the Potomac. It ran northward, and the present sites of Georgetown College and Convent are on part of this land. He seems to have continued to farm his estate, and died in 1781. His only child, John, became very prominent in all of the affairs of the town.

Joseph Carlton, also in the tobacco business, who died in March, 1812, when only fifty-eight years old, had held the office of postmaster in 1799.

General James Maccubbin Lingan, a tobacco shipper, who was the first collector of the port ... "1790 and before," had had a very remarkable career in the Revolution.

Colonel Charles Beatty owned a ferry which did a thriving business between the Virginia shore and the foot of Frederick Street at Water Street.

Ebenezer Dodge had come from Salem, Massachusetts, and built up a successful coastwise trade with the East Indies, his younger brother, Francis, coming in 1798, of whom I shall have a great deal to say in another chapter.

Peter Casanave was much in evidence in business deals. [Pg 18]

John M. Gannt was a prominent merchant; also, William King, whose name is still known in business here.

Among the lawyers were Philip Barton Key and Joseph Earle.

Doctor Magruder is spoken of over and over again. He seems to have been "the doctor" at that time. Doctor Weems also had a good practice.

From *The Virginia Gazette* of January 14, 1775, is taken this note in regard to a project much in the minds of the business men of George Town at that time:

> At a meeting of the Trustees for opening the navigation of the Potomack River held in George Town December 1, 1774, Thomas Johnson, Jr., Attorney at Law, Wm. Deakins, Adam Steuart, Thomas Johns, Thomas Richardson, merchants of George Town, appointed to hire slaves for cutting canals around the Falls of the River, etc.

Of course, George Town, like every other town in the country at that time, was peopled largely by negroes. Some owners hired out the ones they themselves did not need, either for work of this kind or for domestic service. A delightful story is told of how one of the shipowners sent a "likely" young negress back to Scotland on one of his vessels, as a present to his mother. Many weeks later when the vessel returned, on it was Chloe with a note thanking "my dear son" for his gift, but saying, "I have had her scrubbed and scrubbed, but as it is impossible to remove the dirt and stain, I am returning her."

In 1788 Thomas Corcoran, who that year came to George Town from Baltimore, intended to go on to Richmond, but instead stayed and established a business in leather, says: "There were then in harbor ten square-rigged vessels, two of them being ships and a small brig from Amsterdam taking in tobacco from a warehouse on Rock Creek." The mouth of the creek at that time was a bay, wide and deep, and as late as 1751 the tide ebbed and flowed as far up as the present P Street bridge. [Pg 19]

Near there stood the paper mill built about 1800 by Gustavus Scott and Nicholas Lingan, and described in an old advertisement as being 120 feet long, three stories high, the first story built of stone. Just beyond was Parrott's Mill, called the George Town Wool and Cotton Manufactory. Parrott also had a Rope Walk on the northern outskirts of the Town. A little farther north of Parrott's Mill at the bend of Rock Creek was Lyon's Mill, said to have been built in 1780.

Naturally all through these years during and after the Revolution there was a great deal of unrest, and trade was much affected.

The following is a copy of an authentic letter from the celebrated Dr. Franklin to a friend in England on the subject of the first campaign made by the British forces in America and, although not written from Georgetown, it shows the state of mind of many people.

> Dear Sir. I am to set out tomorrow for the camp and having heard of this opportunity can only write a line to say that I am well and hardy.
>
> Tell our good friend—who sometimes has his doubts and despondencies about our firmness that America is determined and unanimous, a very few tories and place men excepted, who will probably soon export themselves.
>
> Britain, at the expense of 3 millions has killed 150 yankees this campaign which is 20,000 pounds a head, and at Bunker's Hill she gained one mile of ground, half of which she lost again by our taking post on plowed hill. During the same time 60,000 children had been born in America.

Also this letter, which James Dunlop received in New York shortly before coming to Georgetown, gives, I think, a very vivid picture of both political and economic thinking of the time: [Pg 20]

> Glasgow
> January 31, 1783
>
> Mr. James Dunlop, Merchant, New York, c/o the Pacquet.
>
> Dear Sir:
>
> This comes by the pacquet which will bring you the Preliminary Articles of Peace which were signed at Paris on 20th and we had the account here on the 27th at 8 in the morning which was very quick. We have not yet seen the Articles, but we have reason to believe upon the whole it is as reasonable as could well be expected unless we had made another campaign in the West Indies with the Troops from America and our present great superiority at sea. We had reason to expect everything would have gone to our liking, and considering the great quantity of West Indies and American produce now on hand perhaps you will think we, as well as our neighbours, would had no objections to another Campaign.
>
> I have seen all your late letters, am sensible the news of Peace after the purchase you have lately made, will give you much uneasiness but the company are sensible you did it with a good intention and except the idea of peace, your reasons for the purchase were very good, however we thought that General Carletons declaration to you that Negotiations for Peace were open and that in the first place Britain declared the Independence of America, would have alarmed you or at least prevented you from exceeding the Company's limits so very much especially for so large a quantity. I suppose what made you so very sanguine that we should have another Campaign was the Rockingham party going out and Lord Shelbourne coming and on his first appearance declaring against American indenpendence, which speech deceived many here as well as with you. I am happy to inform you the Ruby arrived four days ago which

brought us the 100 Hhds Tobacco without a farthing of Insurance which is very luckie and will help to make the loss on the tobacco fall season. We have not yet heard any account of the Favorite. We have done 16 on the Tobacco on her and don't intend to do any more. [Pg 21]

If this Tobacco turned out good in quality and no great quantity comes home for six months I still flatter myself there will be no great loss upon the Sales. There has been no sale of any kind these five weeks past nor will not be till some time after we see the Articles of Peace which we now expect in three or four days, as they were to be laid before Parliment two days ago. I suppose in a short time after the receipt of this you will be going to visit our old friends in Virginia. It is very probable I may have the pleasure of seeing you there in a few months and as America has gotten her wishes I hope she will once more be a happy Country and we shall enjoy the blessings of Peace with our old Acquaintance and Brethern and I hope it will cement the friendship between the Mother and the Daughter to the mutual advantage of both Countrys.

I had the pleasure of seeing your Sisters all week—several nights at Mr. William Dunlop's.

Wishing you all the happiness and with compliments to all acquaintance I am, Dear Sir,

Your most humble servant

JAMES ANDERSON

Also in a letter from a young British Officer (also a Scotsman) who was a military prisoner in a camp at Lancaster, Pennsylvania who was trying to get to Petersburg, Virginia to see his father who was there on business from Glasgow, there is this addition.

P.S. I have this moment received a letter from Phila. informing me of a passport being procured for my going to Virginia. I shall set off immediately. Adieu.

Can't you picture his excitement after many trials to at last get in touch with his father! [Pg 22]

On March 18, 1783 Archibald Govan sends two letters enclosed to a friend in New York to forward to Virginia "by the safest, spediest conveyance. There is probally now a post direct from New York through the Continent."

In these days ships approached George Town by way of the Western Channel, as it was called, on the far side of Analostan Island, where the depth of the water was from twenty-seven to thirty-three feet—deep enough to admit the passage of an "Indiaman."

George Washington Parke Custis, the owner of Arlington, was much disturbed when a causeway was built across from the island to the Virginia shore, and prophesied the filling of the channel and the end of George Town as a port.

So up the creek to these mills for their produce, and up the great river to its wharves, piled high with hogsheads of tobacco came these ships and many more of which we have not the names:

The *Potomack Planter*, Captain James Buchanan, for London.

The brig *Brothers*.

The schooner *Betsey*, bringing rum, coffee, and chocolate.

The ships *Ritson* and *Felicity*.

The sloops, *Lydia* and *Betsey*, plying between George Town and New York. These ships from the North were laden with whale oil to be used for the lamps which, in 1810, were placed on the streets to "enable the citizens to go safely to and from evening service."

The *Columbia* from Martinique, and the ship *Lydia*, Lemuel Toby, master, for London, which on September 6, 1792 had this advertisement in *The George Town Weekly Ledger* : [Pg 23]

Will sail in twelve or fifteen days: such as may be desirous of taking passage in said ship may depend on being genteelly accommodated. For further particulars apply to Col. Wm. Deakins, or the Captain on Board.

Out beyond the northern limits of the Town, just opposite where Mount Alto Hospital now stands, high on a hill which has been dug away, stood in those days a tremendous oak tree which was used by the pilots coming up the river to guide them on their way. For a hundred years it stood, known as Sailors' Oak, but like so many other things, has had to go in the interest of Progress.

Chapter III

[Pg 24]

The Taverns, Shops, and Schools

WITH ships arriving and departing and the land travel passing from North to South and back again, besides the country gentlemen coming to town to sell their crops and tend to other business, there was need for many taverns, and plenty of them there were in George Town.

According to Mr. O. W. Holmes of the National Archives who has recently written a fine article on the Colonial Taverns of Georgetown for the Columbia Historical Society, which he read before the Society on January 16, 1951, the earliest tavern of which there is record was kept by Joseph Belt who was granted a license by the newly created Frederick County Court in August, 1751 "to keep a Public House of Entertainment at the Mouth of Rock Creek."

Previously Thomas Odell had petitioned for such a "Lyssance" in 1747 to Prince George's County for one year—but we hear no more of him so are not certain that he continued in business. But Joseph Belt did and in the *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis) for March 19, 1752, is this announcement:

> Notice is hereby given that the Land appointed by Act of Assembly to be laid out into a town, by the name of Georgetown, adjacent to the warehouse at the Mouth of Rock Creek, in Frederick County, is accordingly laid out, and the lots will be sold the 4th Monday in March, being the 23 of the month at the House of Joseph Belt, living in the said Town in ten of the Clock before noon.
>
> Per order of the Commissioner
> Alexander Beall, Cl.

[Pg 25]

In 1760 Mr. Belt bought two of the most desirable lots in town at the southeast corner of Water Street (Wisconsin Ave.) and Bridge (M) and apparently built on the southernmost one of them a tavern where real estate sales took place frequently—and again in the *Maryland Gazette* for September 19, 1771, is this insertion:

> Frederick County, Sept. 8, 1771
>
> The Subscriber continues to keep a House of Entertainment in George Town, at the Kings Arms, and as he is provided with Good Entertainment, Stabling, and Provender for Horses, would be obliged to all Gentlemen travelling and others for their customs and they may depend on kind usage, by their Most Humble Servant,
>
> JOSEPH BELT

So it is quite possible that it was still here and that General Braddock's soldiers attracted by the name and sign stopped to slake their thirst before continuing their long march to the West.

This Joseph Belt appears to have been the nephew of Col. Joseph Belt, the original patentee of Chevy Chase. He was a highly respectable man and well thought of.

Another tavern of that period was kept by John Orme who in his petition for a license promised as did others of that period "to keep Tavern in George Town, to keep good Rules and Orders and not suffer the loose and disorderly persons to Tipple, Game, or Commit other disorders or irregularities within his aforesaid House."

[Pg 26]

In the *Maryland Gazette* in September in 1760 is a notice of horse races to be held at George Town, the horses "to be Entered the Day before Running, with Messrs. Joseph Belt and John Orme in George Town."

The same notice again in 1761. I wonder where the races took place. John Orme was the son of the Rev. John Orme, a Presbyterian minister who served as pastor at Upper Marlboro from 1720 until he died in 1758.

His tavern was apparently on the northeast corner of the present M Street and Wisconsin Avenue, where the Farmers and Mechanics Branch of Riggs Bank now stands.

In the *Maryland Gazette* of September 29, 1768, Thomas Belt offers for sale "At the house of Mr. John Orme, in George Town ... part of a Tract of Land, called Chevy Chace, containing 200 and 300 acres about 5 miles from said Town."

After the death of John Orme in 1772 his widow inserted a notice in the paper—and added, "N. B. The Executrix will continue to keep Tavern for ready money only. Lucy Orme."

But they were not left in straightened circumstances, and the three Orme daughters married very well.

There is mention of a Cornelius Davies and also of John Wise keeping tavern for short periods. This may have been the same John Wise who later opened a tavern in Alexandria which became the well-known Gadsby's Tavern.

Also there was Christian Boncer, during the Revolution who like John Orme, before him, was likewise running a ferry over the Potomac.

And then in October, 1779, John Beall is referred to as occupying the home where Joseph Belt formerly kept tavern.

[Pg 27]

In November 1782, Mr. Beall announced that he was moving "into the large Stone House near the Square, the best calculated house in town for entertaining Gentlemen, Travellers, and Others."

And then Mr. Ignatius Simpson moved into the "House formerly occupied by Mr. John Beall," and the next year, 1783, the Commissioners record meeting at the "House of Mr. Ignatius Simpson." And in 1784 Mr. Simpson had no license issued and the Commissioners met "at the House of Mr.

John Suter." It would seem that this same house had been a tavern ever since Joseph Belt built a house there.

From then on Suter's Tavern became the best-known meeting place in town and even the birthplace of the District of Columbia for there was signed the agreement with the proprietors of the land for the Federal City.

Christian Hines says in his little book *Early Recollections of Washington* that Suter's Tavern was a one-story frame and stood on High Street, between Bridge and Water Streets, a little east of the canal bridge. Christian Hines as a youth of fifteen was an apprentice living with the Green family just across the street from this building, and although he wrote his Recollections when he was an old man, it is a well-known fact that old people remember happenings of their youth better than those of last month or last week.

It was a rather small building, a story and a half high, according to an old print, and had a large Inn Yard at the side and back for the accommodation of the coaches, wagons and steeds of its patrons. [Pg 28]

John Suter was a Scotsman who had been living out in Montgomery County but apparently from 1784 until his death in 1794 his tavern was a very busy place. Here it was that General Washington stayed when he was passing through.

This notice shows John Suter's standing in the community:

> Georgetown, August 21, 1790
>
> All persons having claims against the Estate of John Cornne, deceased, are desired to bring them in legally attested. Those indebted to make speedy payment to
>
> John Suter, Administrator

From the *Times and Potowmack Packet*:

> Meeting at Mr. Suter's Tavern in George Town, 14 December, 1790, for erecting a New Warehouse contiguous to the Old Inspection on Col. Normand Bruce's property in George Town.
>
> Edward Burgess
> Bernard O'Neill

> For Sale. On Monday the 3d of January next will be offered for sale at the House of Mr. John Suter in George Town that Lot or *Acre of Ground* whereon the *Old* Warehouse formerly stood.... A good title will be given agreeably to the last Will and Testament of Thomas Hamilton deceased of Prince Georges County.
>
> December 11, 1790 Andrew Hamilton

Then there is this little item from the same paper:

> The subscriber has for sale, by the Box, a small supply of fresh Lisbon LEMONS, imported in the Potomack Planter.
>
> Capt. James Buchanan
>
> George Town Sept. 7, 1790 John Suter

Fresh fruit was evidently an event.

After Mr. John Suter's death, his son John Suter, Jr., took over the tavern and ran it until he moved to the Union Tavern. [Pg 29]

It had been built in 1796 at a cost of $16,000, according to a newspaper of the day advertising it for sale: "It is a handsome substantial brick building of three stories, fronting 60 ft. on the most public street in town (Bridge Street), and running back 63 ft. on a wide and commodious street (Washington). The house is admirably calculated for a tavern." The advertisement tells the number and size of the rooms, cellars, passages and cross passages, and ends thus: "There are stables sufficient for the accommodation of 50 horses with commodious sheds for carriages ... and not twenty yards from the kitchen is a copious and never failing spring of most excellent running water." The main building differed but little from others, but north of this and running north upon Washington Street to the next street, was a wing, one or two stories high, and one room deep, the doors opening into a covered corridor supported by brick arches, beyond which was a large courtyard paved with stone. The rooms along this corridor were occupied entirely by gentlemen, many being planters from the lower river counties of Virginia and Maryland. They came up on the old *Salem*, which made weekly trips and stopped at all the river landings. On the opposite side of the courtyard was a large building in which was a fine ballroom known as Pompean Hall. This room must have been used for the following event:

> Birthnight Ball. The Ladies and Gentlemen of George Town and its vicinity are informed that there will be a Ball at the Union Tavern on Friday the 22nd instant (Feb. 22, 1799), in honor of Lieutenant-General George Washington. At request of the Managers. John Suter, Jr.

In addition to this very historic ball, the George Town Assemblies used to be held here. Mrs. [Pg 30]

William Thornton has recorded in her diary that on Monday, January 1st, 1810:

> A very crowded assembly at the presidents. We staid about two hours. President and Lady went to Georgetown Assembly. Chariot broke at night.

These august guests at the assembly were, of course, James Madison and the charming Dolly.

When Mr. Suter opened the Union Tavern in March, 1799, Francis Kearns put this notice in the paper:

> Sign of the Ship. The subscriber begs leave to inform his friends and the public that he has rented the tavern formerly occupied by Mr. Suter, called The Fountain Inn, where he has all kinds of liquors accounted necessary for travellers. Add to this a well of water not to be surpassed in Town. I am determined to spare no pains to render this situation agreeable and flatter myself from a desire to please that I shall meet with encouragement. I also will accomodate 6 or 8 gentlemen boarders on reasonable terms. A livery stable will be kept for a few horses.
>
> June 31, 1800 Francis Kearns

Francis Kearns having taken over the Union Tavern from John Suter, Jr.

Again, in 1802 this building changed hands, for in *The Washington Federalist* is the announcement of reopening, and assurance of best liquors, and begins: "Anchor Tavern and Oyster House (late the Fountain Inn), George Pitt, Proprietor of former Eagle Tavern."

Then there was the City Tavern, kept by Charles McLaughlin. Benjamin Lacy rented two brick houses from Charles Beatty on Water Street and called his The Sailors' Tavern. John Tennally had [Pg 31] a tavern (from him came the name of Tennally Town). Joseph Semmes's Tavern at the Sign of the Indian King, was very well known. It seems to have moved several times. In advertisements for houses for rent or for sale, they seemed always to be next door to or across the street from Semmes's Tavern or Dr. Magruder's.

From *The Museum*, January 1, 1802:

> The Subscriber begs leave to inform his friends and the public that he has removed from his late dwelling in the main street to that large and commodious three story new BRICK BUILDING, Sign of the Indian King, adjoining the Bank of Columbia, which he has fitted up at considerable expense for the accomodation of travellers. He embraces this opportunity of returning his grateful thanks to those gentlemen who have heretofore favored him with their custom and hopes by a faithful discharge of his duty to merit the countenance and support of the public.
>
> George Town, Joseph Semmes

The Museum, 28th of January, 1802:

> To be sold at Union Tavern, The BRICK HOUSE formerly occupied as a Tavern by Mr. Semmes.
>
> Philip Barton Key
> William Thornton

Do you suppose that Mr. Semmes had his tavern in this place for only one month?

Jane White advertises that she intends to continue her "house of entertainment" (Mrs. White's Tavern) on a more enlarged plan, asks for settlement of debts. Nov. 27, 1790.

George Stevens announces he has removed to the place lately occupied by Mr. William King, Merchant, of this place (the house where Col. William Deakins has lived for many years past). [Pg 32]

There are still, to this day, William Kings in business in Georgetown.

Mr. George Stevens also advertises:

> Any gentleman wanting to buy Ginseng may by giving a few days notice find a supply from said Stevens from One to Five Thousand weight.

And this from the *Times and Potowmack Packet*, April 21, 1790:

> Charles Fierer & Co.
>
> Gentlemen may have their Coats of Arms or other devices cut on Glass and fancy pieces executed by sending their orders.

Also these items:

> Doctors Beatty and Martin have just received from Philadelphia and Baltimore: Opium, Mercury, Jolap, Ipecacoanha, Nitre, Glanker Salts, Gum Kino, Columbo root, assorted vials, carts, etc. Red and other Bark.
>
> Dr. Magruder has lately received an elegant supply of most fashionable paper hangings—and

his usual Assortment of Drugs and Medicines.

He catered to various tastes of his patrons:

> Dr. Cozens has just opened a general assortment of Drugs and Medicines in the house formerly occupied by Mr. Andrew McDonald in Water Street, opposite to Mr. James King's Wharf, which he means to sell at a moderate price. He likewise offers his services to the public as a practitioner of physic, surgery and midwifery. Mrs. Cozens also informs the ladies that she practices Midwifery and from her experience and universal success she flatters herself she shall give satisfaction to all those who favor her with their commands.
>
> Mr. Gardette, Dentist, respectfully informs the public that he is arrived in George Town, where he proposes staying two weeks or thereabouts. He has taken lodgings at Mr. Semmes' Tavern. [Pg 33]

Another poor soul who was in trouble inserted this advertisement:

> It is terrible to my feelings, but I am compelled to give notice that I intend petitioning the next General Assembly for an act of Insolvency in my favor.

A few months later he advertised thus:

> Having taken the house in this place lately occupied by Mr. James Clagett, between the College and the River, a pleasant and healthy situation, I will take four or five boys as boarders at the usual rates, paid quarterly.

So let us hope he got "on his feet" again.

John Stevens, merchant, advertised himself thusly:

> My weights are good, my measures just,
> My friends I am too poor to trust. July 15, 1780.

Apparently they had plenty of newspapers. In 1789 *The Times and Potowmack Packet*; in 1790 *The Weekly Ledger* (an appropriate name for this town of counting houses); in 1796 *The Sentinel of Liberty*, a more high-flown name; in 1801, *The Museum*, and a great many more as time went on.

The first bank was the old Bank of Columbia, organized in 1793. Then, there was the Union Bank. I have seen a great many of its checks, smaller than the ones of today and very simply printed.

Business notes in those days were written on any scrap of paper, apparently. Many that I have seen had torn edges, but always the writing was regular and even, if sometimes hard to read. Very often it looked like copperplate engraving. The English pound was used as late as 1796. [Pg 34]

Plenty of schools there seem to have been. One famous man (he was William Wirt, the author of *The British Spy* and Attorney-General of the United States for twelve years under James Monroe and John Quincy Adams) was sent to George Town for his early training, and has written thus: "In 1779 I was sent to George Town, eight miles from Bladensburg to school, a classical academy kept by Mr. Rogers. I was placed at boarding with the family of Mr. Schoofield, a member of the Society of Friends.... I passed one winter in George Town and remember seeing a long line of wagons cross the river on the ice, attached to troops going South."

Thomas Kirk, an Irish gentleman, kept a school first on Washington (30th) Street, later at High (Wisconsin Avenue) and Cherry Streets. Reverend Addison Belt, of Princeton, had a school on Gay (N) Street, between Congress (31st) and Washington (30th) Streets. Christian Hines says: "In 1798 I went to school to a man named Richmond who kept school in a small brick house attached to the house of Reverend David Wiley, graduate of Nassau Hall, who had come in 1802 from Northumberland on the Susquehanna. He was a better mathematical than classical teacher. He was mayor, librarian, merchant, teacher, preacher and keeper of the post office at the same time."

Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Wiley advertised their "Boarding School for Young Ladies at George Town in the Vicinity of Washington." In the same year E. Phillips had "A School for Young Ladies on the north side of Bridge Street, nearly opposite the Printing Office." There were several teachers of French who advertised in the paper; Monsieur A. L. Jancerez, Monsieur Caille, "a French gentleman wishes to teach drawing, etc." To supply all these schools was "John March, Stationer and Bookseller, next door to Mr. Semmes's Tavern." [Pg 35]

And you see they could buy pretty baubles and delectable foods, for Dinsmore and Francis advertise their "New Grocery, Wine and Liquor Store, nearly opposite Burnet and Rigden's, Watchmakers and Jewelers." Another well-known merchant said his new line of spring clothing had just arrived. And John Dabney "had received and had for sale at his cabinet and chair factory a large quantity of Windsor chairs." West along Bridge Street, before 1790, William Eaton had "mahogany ware, chairs and tables, beds, etc., finished and unfinished." Another cabinet-maker was Mr. Schultz. James Welsh, cabinet-maker from London, opened a shop in 1790 and advertised for an apprentice. And there was a well-known silversmith, for S. Kirk and Sons, of Baltimore, have identified a tea service as having been made by Charles C. Burnett, who worked as early as 1793. Another silversmith who had a shop on Bridge (M) Street in 1833 was R. H. L.

Villard.

> Glass Store. The subscribers have opened and have for sale at their house next door to Captain Richard Johns a complete assortment of Window and Hollow Glass Ware, manufactured in this State and equal in quality and cheaper than that imported from Europe.
>
> Charles Frierer and Co., 1790

Thomas Beatty and Company called their store "The Sign of the Golden Fan."

> Manufactory of Tobacco. Henry Brand & Co. Respectfully inform the Public that they have removed from New York to this Town.

> George Town Academy. Madame de la Marche has for sale waters for sore eyes and various salves. [Pg 36]

There were public pumps here and there for common use, but many householders had springs or cisterns.

In 1803 the first fire engine was purchased. Every house owner was obliged to have as many leather fire buckets kept in the house as there were stories to his home, to contain not less than two and a half gallons of water each. The little oval metal placques one sees now and then affixed to houses in Georgetown were, in those days, put only on the houses of the members of the volunteer companies to denote that "here lives a fireman." Later, in 1817, *The Vigilant*, a new fire engine, was bought. Its house is still on High Street, just below Bridge. Set in the wall down near the pavement is a stone with this inscription:

BUSH
THE OLD FIRE DOG
DIED OF POISON
JULY 5TH, 1869
R. I. P.

Someone who remembers him tells me that he was a collie, and that he went to every fire along with the engine. I think the men whose companion he was, and who evidently loved him when they inscribed the "R. I. P.," must have believed, as I do, that like the Jim in the poem of that name by Nancy Byrd Turner, he would meet them joyously "on the other side."

Of course, the fire engines in those days—1817, I mean—were drawn by hand, and the old bucket-passing system was in vogue.

Farther uptown, on the corner of Gay and Market Streets, was the home of The Potomac Fire Engine Company. There was great jealousy between the two. While the fire was raging, both worked together beautifully, but as soon as it was over, there was usually a fight. [Pg 37]

South of the canal on High Street stood the Debtors' Prison. This was the only prison in the lower part of Montgomery County, although the county court was held at Rockville, and there the cases were tried. At one time the town clerk of George Town got tangled up in his money matters and was placed in this prison where he languished until his friends made good his debts. A report was made to the Town Council that he could not perform his duties because he was in jail! Nothing now remains but a part of the old stone wall.

Here is a description of some of the houses offered for sale:

> Together or separate, 2 handsome dwelling houses, situated in George Town on Potomack, they contain 5 rooms with fire place, four bed chambers, two closets, and have two handsome piazzas. A kitchen near the house, a bake house, two rooms for domestics, a stable, coach house, a beautiful (falling) garden, ornamented with terraces, well grassed, a large fish pond, a well and a spring of water, 150 young fruit trees, the whole finished and done in the neatest manner under a handsome and excellent enclosure containing three lots and a half, extending 170 ft. on Fayette Street and 192 on Third Street. Apply to John Threlkeld.

Here is one of the business places advertised:

> The warehouse and wharf on Water Street, lately occupied by the Naval Agent (this was in 1802). There are four floors in this house, with a room on the second and third with a fire place in each, one intended for a compting room and the other for a lodging room.
>
> W. S. Chandler.

Evidently a clerk had to sleep on the premises as guard. [Pg 38]

There were architects and builders to put up these fine and commodious houses, for these advertisements appear:

> William Lovering, Architect and General Builder—Begs leave to inform his friends and the public, that he has removed from the City of Washington to Gay Street, the next street above the Union Tavern in George Town, where he palns to estimate all manner of buildings, either with materials and labor, or labor only. Specimens of buildings suitable for the obtuse or acute angles of the streets in the City of Washington may be seen at his home. May 1, 1800.

> Henry Carlile, Architect, Carpenter and Joiner. Respectfully informs his friends and the Public in general, that he proposes to undertake all kinds of buildings, as formerly he hath done in Europe and this country; on the lowest terms, with or without material, as he has learned the theory under the first architects in Europe, also practice in first buildings there, and hath finished elegant buildings in Europe, with and without materials, and in this country hath always had the good fortune of having the patronage and friendship of his employees, and hopes by attention to please and to execute, that he will meet with the encouragement of a generous public. He also begs leave to return his sincere thanks to his worthy employers in this Town and Country, for the encouragement he hath met with since coming to this Town, and assures them nothing shall be wanting on his part to merit a continuance of their favors.
>
> George Town, September 8, 1790.

> Wm. Pancost—Architect and Carpenter, can by the asistance of David Willers, pump maker, late from Philadelphia, serve the public by supplying them with pumps, cove logs or girders, for any purpose on the shortest notice.
>
> George Town, near the Lower Ware Houses, Jan. 29, 1799.

Then in 1800, James Hoban, who was the architect and builder of the President's House, put this in a paper: [Pg 39]

> $2.00 per day will be given for good carpenters and joiners, at the President's House and in proportion for those less skilful, to be paid daily or weekly, as may be required.

Imagine! Now when the White House is being rebuilt hiring "good carpenters and joiners for $2.00 per day!"

Chapter IV

[Pg 40]

The Streets of George Town and Some of the Happenings

THE houses had no numbers, but the streets had descriptive names. Along the river, Wapping, changing to The Keys and East to West Landing where all the busy loading and unloading of vessels took place. Just above there running west off Water Street for a short distance was Cherry Lane (now Grace Street). What a pretty name! Once a fashionable neighborhood, later on a slum.

Running north and south there was first Fishing Lane which became East Lane and finally settled down to Congress Street and is now Twenty-first.

Then the Main Street up from the ferry, called Water Street until it got to Bridge running east and west where was the Square, also called the Center of the Town. Then Water Street became High and Bridge continued on its way as the Falls Street—both names typical, as one was climbing a hill and the other was the road to The Little Falls. Duck Lane became Market (33rd) Street; Bridge (M) Street; Frederick (34th) Street, for it was the road out to Frederick Town, forty miles away; Potomac Street, for the river; Fayette Street, certainly named in honor of the Marquis, but in that age of young democracy, de la was dropped from de la Fayette. Then there was Montgomery (28th) Street, Greene (29th) Street, and Washington (30th) Street, all named for Generals of the Revolution. Running the other way were Gay, Dunbarton, Beall, West, [Pg 41] Stoddert, this, for a long time was known as Back Street. West of High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) the streets became First, Second, Third, etc. Twenty-seventh Street, after being New Street for one block and Mill Street for another, finally was named for President Monroe. Madison had a street named for him too, but it was so far out, about 9th, in the far western corner, that it never amounted to much.

But the street that intrigues me most is Gay. There were two of them for a while, the one that is now N, and another, way up near the college, which was renamed in honor of General Lingan, after his tragic death. Who was Gay Street named for? It wasn't a local celebrity, for Baltimore also had a Gay Street, still has, way down in its old section. There was somebody the people of that generation admired and wished to commemorate.

Could it possibly have been the English poet, John Gay, (1685-1732) whose best known piece "The Beggar's Opera" was said to have made "The Rich gay and Gay rich"? He was buried in Westminster Abbey. His epitaph was by Alexander Pope, followed by Gay's own mocking couplet, "Life is a jest, and all things show it. I thought so once and now I know it."

The Beggar's Opera for a time drove Italian Opera off the English stage (1728) by its caricature of Sir Robert Walpole, Prime Minister of George II. These people were British subjects, you know, when these streets were named.

Somewhere in these quaint little streets in the early days before 1800, in one of these little brick houses, two stories with dormer windows, which the architects nowadays call the George Town [Pg 42] Type, lived a couple named McDonald who had marital difficulties, for in an old newspaper is this advertisement:

> Whereas my wife, Mary McDonald, has left me without any just cause or impediment. She is

about fifty years of age, lame in her right leg and snivels a little. It is supposed she went off with one Robert Joiner, an ill-looking fellow. If she returns to the arms of her disconsolate husband, she shall be received and no questions asked.

There was another advertisement:

Alexander McDonald, taylor, removed from Bridge Street to High Street, two or three gentlemen can be accomodated with board and lodging.

I wonder if Robert Joiner, with whom Mary eloped, was one of those two or three gentlemen, and what fascination she had that was strong enough to overcome all those physical disabilities her "disconsolate husband" enumerated!

A man in Boston wanted a wife, and had his advertisement copied from *The Boston Sentinel* into a George Town newspaper:

Wanted—A wife: Enquire of the Printer. April 23, 1801. Be pleased to inform applicants, that the advertiser wishes the lady to be neither too old nor too young. Taking 25 for a central point, she must not be more than 7 years distant either way. If of a sulky or fretful disposition; if sluttish, lazy, proud, ostentatious or deceitful, or of an ill state of health, she must have a pretty large share of property to recommend her. If on the contrary, she be of a cheerful, contented temper; of affable manners and benevolent to the poor; if in the habit of being attentive to her household when business commands attention, and gay and careless when pleasure is the pursuit; and of sound health and good constitution (for such only can produce strong and vigorous children), she need not possess a cent. If well-read, so much the better, provided she is not too fond of her book to neglect overseeing her affairs and suffering the hole in her stocking to go unmended. She must not be a pedant or a scold but must know enough of books to distinguish between a volume of history and a novel; and have sufficient spirit to prevent being imposed upon. Communication addressed to A. B. and left at the composing room, if originating in honorable intentions will be attended to with secrecy, honor and punctuality, and should the interview succeed, the advertiser will faithfully describe his situation and prospects.

[Pg 43]

Was this paragon discovered in old George Town and taken to Boston for keeps? No one knows.

But this might easily have been so, as witness these advertisements of the plays being shown in George Town in 1790, for on July 21 this appears: "The Theatre of this Town was opened by Mr. McGrath's Company of Comedians, with the celebrated comedy The Miser. This Company is by far the best that ever visited this town." Then on August 12 there was "The Beggars Opera and A Comedy of two acts, Barnaby Brittle or a Wife at her Wits End. Also in August Mr. McGrath's Company of Comedians gave The Tragedy of Douglas and Garrick's Comedy of Two Acts called The Lying Valet."

The curtain will rise at 7 o'clock Tickets at three quarters of a dollar each to be had at Mr. Suter's and Mrs. White's Taverns and at this Printing Office.

Another evening will be presented the "Tragedy of Jane Shore. Between the play and the farce a humorous dissertation of Jealousy to be delivered by Mr. McGrath to which will be added a farce called Cross Purposes, or Which is the Man. The doors to be opened at half past five and the curtain to rise at half past six."

[Pg 44]

For attendance at these performances and other social events, the ladies and gentlemen of George Town were naturally interested in this advertisement in the paper:

BY FASHIONS WE LIVE

JOHN JONES

Hair dresser for Ladies and Gentlemen. Begs leave to inform Ladies and Gentlemen of George Town and its vicinage that he intends carrying on his profession in all its different branches and fashions; he also carries on the Cushion, Perriwig, Curls, Braids, false curls and Gentlemen's Bandoe making. The highest price given for human hair.

George Town, at this time, was even favored by the presence of one of the greatest portrait painters of his time, Gilbert Stuart. About 1803 he spent two years here. He painted Jefferson and the men who followed him in the Presidency up through John Quincy Adams. He had, of course, previously been much at Mount Vernon while doing his famous portraits of General Washington. It is said that Washington was the only person in whose presence Stuart was ever embarrassed.

There were drawing teachers and dancing masters. "Mr. Carle, dancing master, may be spoke with on school days at Mrs. White's Tavern." "Dancing School of J. B. Duclaviacq at his dancing room back of Mr. Turner's Counting House."

Perhaps it was one of these two which advertised, "A night Dancing-School for the Reception of Gentlemen who are not at leisure to attend in the Day-time; will be kept the evenings of the School days; The Price to each Scholar will be Four dollars. A subscription is lodged with Mr. Peter Casanave."

Gaming at cards at private balls and parties and toddy at dinner date back to the earliest knowledge of society in this vicinity. Card playing, horse-racing and other sports were fashionable and popular and had not abated in 1800 when the Government came. [Pg 45]

In chronicles of Sir Augustus Foster, the British Minister in 1805 he notes the balls in Georgetown "Cards for everybody, loo for the girls—brag for the men."

But all was not play, for in the *Times and Potowmack Packet* is this newsnote:

> On the 13th inst. a daughter of Mr. Aaron Haynes of this town, a young miss in the tenth year of her age, spun 50 knots of good linen yarn, from sun-rise to sunset. An example of industry, highly honorable to herself and well worthy of imitation.

And speaking of youth here is an interesting item:

> This day were baptized three male children (the uncommon gift of Providence at one birth) by the names of George Washington, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin.

Then this sad and interesting advertisement:

> With regret and shame the subscriber finds himself under the necessity of advertising his wife. Although it is practised by some white people, yet he, though black, blushes at the thought of declaring to the world that his wife has run away. But disagreeable as it is, he does by these presents make known that Lucy, his wife, has eloped from his bed and board and forbids all persons harbouring or trusting her, as he will pay no debts of her contracting after this date.
>
> Prince Hull.

On June 30, 1790 there was this announcement in the newspaper:

> The gentlemen who have subscribed to celebrate the Anniversary of American Independency will be pleased to attend at Mrs. White's Tavern at Four O' clock tomorrow afternoon to choose Managers to regulate the proceedings of that day. [Pg 46]

Scheme of a Lottery:

> To raise the sum of One Thousand Five Hundred and Nine Dollars for the purpose of finishing the Church between George Town and Bladensburgh, called Rock Creek Church.
>
> All prizes not demanded in six months after the drawing, will be deemed generous contributions.
>
> 3000 Tickets at Two dollars each.
>
> As the above is laudable it is expected that it will meet with approbation and support of the public. As soon as the tickets are sold the drawing will commence at Mr. John Suter's at George Town and the Prizes paid immediately thereafter on application to Thomas Beall Treasurer, in specie.
>
> MANAGERS
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Col. Wm. Deakins | Robert Peter |
> | Benj. Stoddert | John Peter |
> | Brooke Beall | Bernard O'Neil |
> | John Threlkeld | Anthony Hollmead |
> | Thomas Cramphin | Col. George Beall |
>
> Thomas Beall of George
>
> Treasurer
>
> *The Times and Potowmack Packet.* November 25, 1789.

Five years before in September 1784 in the *Maryland Gazette* there was an advertisement for the George Town Academy lottery:

> Scheme of a lottery for raising $1,400 to be applied to the purchasing a house for the use of the George Town Academy.
>
> The right education of youth is an object of such vast importance of freedom and happiness that there needs no strength of reasoning to recommend the above scheme which is meant to promote it to the patronage and encouragement of a liberal public.
>
> Tickets may be had from Messrs. Robert Peter, William Deakins, Jr., Bernard O'Neill, Henry Townsend, John P. Boucher, Benj. Stoddert, Robt. Philips, Sam'l Davidson, Brooke Beall, and Dr. Walter Smith at George Town; [Pg 47]
>
> Wm. D. Beall at Bladensburg, Henry Lyles, Alexandria; Thomas Clagett, at Piscataway, Abraham Faw and Patrick Sim Smith, Frederick-town, and David Stewart and Cumberland Dugan and Mr. Henderson at Baltimore.
>
> David Crawford, Upper Marlboro; Alexander Clagett, Hager's Town.
>
> The drawing will commence at George Town as soon as the tickets are all sold.
>
> Managers are Robt. Peter
> Benj. Stoddert

> Who will faithfully execute the trust reposed in them.

Henry Stouffer advertised in 1789 his Stage to Annapolis, three times a week which took six or seven hours at the farthest. And in the same paper the Annapolis Packet run by Edward Thomas (of course by water) goes twice a week charging 7 shillings, 6 pence.

In the *Impartial Observer and Washington Advertiser* of June 26, 1795:

> George Town, Washington and Alexandria Packet—James Bull Master.
>
> Will leave George Town every morning at seven o'clock and call at this place (City of Washington) on her way to Alexandria. Leave Alexandria every evening at 4 and call on way to George Town. 17 cents from George Town to Greenleaf Point, 33 to Alexandria. Passages engaged at Mr. Suter's or Mr. Semmes' Tavern in George Town; at Mr. Ward's, Greenleaf Point, and Mr. Thomas Porter's Store, Alexandria.
>
> Ferry boats must not have pendent or any other colour flying or ring a bell on board so as to affrighten the horses and thereby endanger the lives of the passengers. Penalty of $20.

Sentinel of Liberty, June 27, 1800: [Pg 48]

> The Stages will leave Light-Lane Number 3 adjoining the Fountain Inn every day (Monday excepted.)
>
> Returning, leave Mr. Heiskell's, Alexandria, at 3 o'clock. Mr. Semmes' at George Town at 5.

There were also stages going out to Rockville and to Frederick.

In later years there was a conveyance running to Rockville spoken of as "The Hack."

The license tax list discriminated in license value of one-horse chaise and two-wheel coach.

This thriving town had of course to be regulated and governed, and there are copies in existence of the ordinances and by-laws for making it safe and agreeable. One passed on the 20th November 1791, related to "the going at large of geese and swine" and makes it "lawful to kill any such and give notice to the Mayor or one of the Aldermen, the offender to be sent to the public market house where the owner may claim within four hours, or if no claim in four hours, the finder take and apply to proper use. All goats running at large shall be forfeited to who ever shall take them up."

Also on August 4, 1795 an ordinance relating to garbage, glass bottles, or oyster shells in quantity 30 shillings fine. We are still having trouble keeping Georgetown neat and clean.

And they had trouble about speeding then as now, for there was passed an ordinance August 4, 1795 "that any person who shall by galloping, or otherwise force at an improper speed any Horse, Mare, or Gelding, shall if a free man, forfeit and pay for every such offence the sum of 15 shillings current money; if an apprentice, servant or a slave the master or the mistress shall [Pg 49] forfeit and pay the sum of 7 shillings and sixpence."

And in 1807 they passed an ordinance to "more effectually diminish the number of dogs in Gerogetown as they have become a public nuisance; on the first dog of the male kind owned by any one person, $1; on the second, $2; and on all over two, owned by the same person, $5; and on the first of the female kind, $2; on the second, $4; and on all dogs of the female kind over and above two, owned by the same person, $10."

Then they passed an ordinance, "that after the first day of May next no slave shall be permitted to sell any article whatever (other than fruit) on the Sabboth."

In 1811 the Mayor was ordered to appoint and hire eight men of good character to keep a night watch at the rate of $150 per annum, one of them to act as Captain at the rate of $250.

They probably officiated at these events.

> Ordinance passed 10th October 1796.
>
> Whereas many respectable inhabitants of Georgetown have complained that they suffer great inconvenience from the vast concourse of idle white and black persons that frequently assemble together for the purpose of fighting cocks, at which time they drink to access, become riotous, and disturb the quiet and repose of the good citizens, be it ordained by Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Common Council that any white person or persons or free negro or negroes who shall presume to fight any game cocks or dunghill fouls within the jurisdiction of the corporation for any wagers or for diversion shall for every offense pay $5. Also if having assembled in a disorderly manner for the purpose of fighting cocks, if they refuse to disperse, constables shall take such negro or negroes (being slaves) and give him, her, or them, due correction upon the bare back in some public part of Georgetown not exceeding 39 strikes.

An ordinance for regulating and licensing hackney carriages, billiard tables, theatrical and other [Pg 50] public amusements.

Another says,

> ... any person or persons who shall keep or maintain the common gaming house or open or set up any public gaming table shall forfeit and pay $20 current money.
>
> Provided always, that licensed billiard tables are not intended hereby to be prohibited or herein included.

Passed 4th October 1803.

The fire engines and fire buckets heretofore bought by the subscription of sundry inhabitants of the town have been offered for the use of the town.

In 1801 the corporation of Georgetown was concerning itself a good deal with the paving of the streets.

John Mason, Jesse Baley and Wm. H. Dorsey were a committee to report permanent systems for improving the streets and alleys, whether by paving or otherwise.

They determined to commence the work at the intersection of Washington (30th) and Bridge (M) Streets and carry the pavement up along the north side of Bridge Street to the intersection of High and Water Streets and thence, after paving with round stone the Center Square to continue it afterwards along the south of Fall Street ... to remove the earth and pave 5 ft. wide against the curb stone, where individuals would not pave, from Washington to High Street and to graduate and pave the Center Square.

There was a good deal more work of that kind to be done at that time and John Peter was appointed permanent superintendent.

Chapter V

[Pg 51]

Washington and L'Enfant in George Town

UCH was the town through which General George Washington passed in April 1789, on his way from Mount Vernon to his inauguration in New York as first President of the government which was trying out an experiment new to the world.

In the *Times and Potowmack Packet*, on April 23, is this insertion:

> George Town. Last Thursday passed through this town on his way to New York the most illustrious, the President of the United States of America, with Charles Thompson, Esq. Secretary, to Congress. His Excellency arrived at about 2 O'Clock on the bank of the Patowmack, escorted by a respectable corps of gentlemen from Alexandria where the George Town ferry boats, properly equipped, received his Excellency and suit, safely landed them, under the acclamation of a large crowd of their grateful fellow citizens—who beheld his Fabius, in the evening of his day, bid adieu to the peaceful retreat of Mount Vernon, in order to save his country once more from confusion and anarchy. From this place his Excellency was escorted by corps of gentlemen commanded by Col. Wm. Deakins, Junr., to Mr. Spurrier's Tavern, where the escort from Baltimore take charge of him.

Colonel Deakins was Justice of the Peace, a very high office in those days, (there was no mayor) besides being a large landowner and shipowner.

Among the prominent men who probably formed this escort were many of Washington's former officers of the Revolutionary Army, for when he came to George Town he was amongst old [Pg 52] friends: Colonel Forrest, Major Stoddert, General James Maccubbin Lingan, General Otho Williams, William Beatty (who had distinguished himself in the army and had attained the rank of Colonel), Thomas Richardson who, although a Quaker, was Captain of a company and won high repute; William Murdock, who had been a Colonel of militia raised for the defense of the Province of Maryland in 1776, and Lloyd Beall, who had been adjutant of the Staff of Alexander Hamilton, and General John Mason.

I quote freely from Dr. H. Paul Caemmerer's very interesting *Biography of Pierre Charles L'Enfant*. "Among the numerous problems of the first Congress in 1789, was the question of establishment of a seat of government or a National Capital. During the period of the Continental Congress and the subsequent period of the Congress of the Confederation, from 1774 to 1789, Congress had met in eight different town and cities—Philadelphia, Baltimore, Lancaster, York, Princeton, Annapolis, Trenton, and New York City, part of the time pursued by the enemy and part of the time attacked by disgruntled soldiers. It was found difficult for Members of Congress to find adequate quarters, and it was always a problem to move records and files. Thus it developed that Congress wanted a home of its own. The Constitution of the United States provided for a Federal District ten miles square (Art. 1, Sec. 8, Par. 17).

"On September 11, 1789, while yet the idea of locating a Capital City was still unsettled, L'Enfant wrote to President Washington asking to be employed to design the Capital of 'this vast empire.'" [Pg 53]

"It might be inferred from this letter that L'Enfant knew more about the controversy in the Halls of Congress on the subject of location of the Seat of Government than we know today. It was at its height, that we know. The question of size of the Federal District had been settled by the Constitution—it was to be ten miles square. Now the question of location predominated—the question of 'exclusive jurisdiction' to be exercised by Congress had been generally conceded.

The discussion was finally limited to two sites: first, a location on the banks of the Potomac at least as far South as Georgetown, Maryland, which was favored particularly by the Southern members of Congress as being the geographical center of the United States; second, a site on the Delaware River near the falls above Trenton, which Pennsylvania, Delaware, and the other States nearby favored. But on the whole it was deemed very important during the First Congress to give the National Capital a central location along the Atlantic coast. Southern members led by Richard Bland Lee and James Madison, of Virginia, argued for consideration for the question by Congress before adjournment, and recommended the Potomac River site near Georgetown."

"The burning question before Congress at the time was a bill for funding of the public debt and the assumption of debts incurred by the States during the Revolutionary War, amounting to about $20,000,000. Alexander Hamilton as the first Secretary of the Treasury had recommended the funding of both forms of indebtedness in obligations of the United States. His aim was to restore the value of the worthless continental dollar (a pound of tea sold for $90; a pair of shoes for $100; a barrel of flour for $1,500 in paper money) but it was pointed out that the assumption [Pg 54] of State debts by the Government would result in most benefits to the Northern States where there was most of the trade, while mostly agriculture was in the South.... Thus we come to the famous compromise proposed by Hamilton about the middle of June, 1790, when in consideration of locating the capital on the banks of the Potomac he hoped to secure enough votes to secure the enactment of the funding bill."

"Thus by the Act of July 16, 1790, it was definitely decided that the seat of government should be on the banks of the Potomac."

"Thereupon arose the question of design for the Federal City. Pursuant to the application received, President Washington chose Pierre Charles L'Enfant, 'the artist of the American Revolution,' for this work. No better choice could have been made. L'Enfant applied his ability to the task with enthusiasm; the approbation of 'his General' gave him supreme satisfaction.

"In accordance with directions from President Washington, Major L'Enfant proceeded to Georgetown for the purpose of making a sketch of the area proposed for the Federal City that would enable him to fix locations on the spot for public buildings. He arrived on March 9, 1791. L'Enfant carried with him a letter of instructions from Secretary of State Jefferson as follows:

> 'Sir: You are desired to proceed to Georgetown where you will find Mr. Ellicott employed in making a survey and Map of the Federal Territory. The special object of asking your aid is to have a drawing of the particular grounds most likely to be approved for the site of the Federal town and buildings. You will therefore be pleased to begin on the Eastern branch and proceed [Pg 55] from thence upwards, laying down the hills, valleys, morasses and waters between that and the Potomac, The Tyber, and the road leading from Georgetown to the Eastern branch and connecting the whole with certain fixed points on the map Mr. Ellicott is preparing. Some idea of the height of the lands above the base on which they stand would be desirable. For necessary assistance and expense be pleased to apply to the Mayor of Georgetown who is written to on the subject. I will beg the favor of you to mark to me your progress about twice a week, say every Wednesday and Saturday evening, that I may be able in proper time to draw your attention to some other objects which I have not at this moment sufficient information to define.'"

"*The Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser* of March 18, 1791, reported Major L'Enfant's arrival in Georgetown as follows:

> 'GEORGETOWN (Patowmac) March 12.
>
> Wednesday (March 9) evening arrived in this town Major Longfont, a French gentleman employed by the President of the United States to survey the lands contiguous to Georgetown, where the Federal City is to be put. His skill in matters of this kind is justly extolled by all disposed to give merit its proper tribute of praise. He is earnest in the business and hopes to be able to lay a plan of that parcel of land before the President on his arrival in this town.'

"L'Enfant reported to Secretary of State Jefferson, promptly:

> 'Friday March 11, 1791
>
> Sir: I have the honor of informing you of my arrival at this place where I could not possibly reach before Wednesday last and very late in the evening, after having traveled part of the way on foot and part on horseback leaving the broken stage behind. [Pg 56]
>
> 'On arriving I made it my first care to wait on the Mayor of the town in conformity with the direction which you gave me. He appeared to be much surprised and he assured me he had received no previous notice of my coming nor any injunction relating to the business I was sent upon. However next day—yesterday morning—he made me a kind offer of his assistance in procuring for me three or four men to attend me in the surveying and this being the only thing I was in need of, every matter has been soon arranged. I am only at present to regret that a heavy rain and thick mist which has been incessant ever since my arrival here, does put

an insuperable obstacle to my wish of proceeding immediately to the survey. Should the weather continue bad, as there is every appearance it will, I shall be much at a lost how to make a plan of the ground you have pointed out to me and have it ready for the President at the time he is expected at this place.'"

"In the meantime President Washington had begun his triumphal tour through the South. In Maryland he was escorted by his Excellency Governor Howard and the Honorable Mr. Kilty: Washington's Diary for March 28-30, 1791, reports:

'Monday 28th: Left Bladensburgh at half after six, and breakfasted at George Town about 8:—where, having appointed the Commissioners under the Residence Law to meet me, I found Mr. Johnson one of them (and who is Chief Justice of the State) in waiting—and soon after came in David Stuart, and Danl. Carroll Esqrs. the other two. A few miles out of Town I was met by the principal Citizens of the place and escorted in by them; and dined at Suter's tavern (where I also lodged) at a public dinner given by the Mayor and Corporation—previous to which I examined the Surveys of Mr. Ellicott who had been sent on to lay out the district of ten miles square for the federal seat; and also works of Majr. L'Enfant who had been engaged to examine and make a draught of the grds. in the vicinity of George Town and Carrollsburg on the Eastern Branch making arrangements for examining the ground myself tomorrow with the Commissioners.' [Pg 57]

'Tuesday, 29th

'In thick mist, and under strong appearance of a settled rain (which however did not happen) I set out about 7 o'clock, for the purpose above mentioned, but from the unfavorableness of the day, I derived no great satisfaction from the review.

'Finding the interests of the Landholders about George Town and those about the Carrollsburgh much at variance and that their fears and jealousies of each were counteracting the public purposes and might prove injurious to its best interests, whilst if properly managed they might be made to subserve it, I requested them to meet me at six o'clock this afternoon at my lodgings, which they accordingly did....

'Dined at Colo. Forrest's today with the Commissioners and others.' [Whose residence was at 3348 M Street.]

'Wednesday, 30th.

'The parties to whom I addressed myself yesterday evening, having taken the matter into consideration, saw the propriety of my observations; and that whilst they were contending for the shadow they might loose the substance; and therefore mutually agreed and entered into articles to surrender for public purposes, one half of the land they severally possessed within the bounds which were designated as necessary for the City to stand with some other stipulations, which were inserted in the instrument which they respectively subscribed.

'This business being thus happily finished and some directions given to the Commissioners, the Surveyor and Engineer with respect to the mode of laying out the district—Surveying the grounds for the City and forming them into lots—I left Georgetown, dined in Alexandria and reached Mount Vernon in the evening.'"

The "others," with whom he dined, were evidently the proprietors of the land, sixteen, who next day signed before witnesses the agreement drawn up that day. It is too long to quote in its entirety, but in effect these were the conditions: "that in consideration of the good benefits they were to derive from having the Federal City laid off upon their lands the President may retain any number of squares he may think proper for public improvements or uses at the rate of £25 ($66.66 in Penn. currency) per acre. For the streets they should receive no compensation. Each proprietor was to retain full possession of his land till it should be sold into lots." The men who signed, in order of signing, were: Robert Peter, David Burnes, James M. Lingan, Uriah Forrest, Benjamin Stoddert, Notley Young, Daniel Carroll, of Duddington; Overton Carr, Thomas Beall, of George; Charles Beatty, Anthony Holmead, William Young, Edward Peirce, Abraham Young, James Peirce, and William Prout. At a later date the following men joined in the agreement and are often counted among the original property holders: Robert Morris, Samuel Blodget, William Bailey, Samuel Davidson, William Deakins, Jr., James Greenleaf, Thomas Johnson, Robert Lingan, Dominick Lynch, John Nicholson, John H. Stone, Comfort Sands, Benjamin Oden, John P. Van Ness, George Walker, and the legal guardians of Elizabeth Wheeler. [Pg 58]

It was in this little town that the President issued his proclamation concerning the permanent seat of government of the United States. It reads thus:

Done at George Town, aforesaid, the 30th day of March in the year of our Lord, 1791 and in the Independence of the United States the fifteenth.

By the President,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Having satisfactorily accomplished this business, General Washington proceeded to Mount Vernon, whence he wrote on April 3, 1791, to the Commissioners to proceed at once with the Attorney-General in regard to deeds so that the sale of lots and public buildings might commence as soon as possible. He quotes a letter from Mr. Jefferson: [Pg 59]

... that on the 27th of March a bill had been introduced in the House of Representatives for

granting a sum of money for building a Federal Hall, a house for the President, etc.

At a meeting of the Commissioners on September 9, 1791, in reply to a letter from Major L'Enfant a letter was written saying:

> ... that the title of the map he was making was to be, "A Map of the City of Washington in the Territory of Columbia," and that the streets were to be named alphabetically one way and numerically the other, etc.
>
> (Signed by)
>
> THOMAS JOHNSON,
> DAVID STUART,
> DANIEL CARROLL.

L'Enfant aimed to make an original plan for the Federal City, adapted to the topography, but he endeavored to secure ideas from plans of great cities of Europe that might be found possible of adaptation so he wrote to Jefferson who sent his notable reply and plans of a number of cities that he had secured evidently while our minister to France.

"June 30th Washington noted, 'The business which brot. me to Georgetown being finished and the Comrs. instructed with respect to the mode of carrying the plan into effect, I set off this morning a littel after 4 o'clock, in the prosecution of my journey towards Philadelphia....'" [Pg 60]

"Thereupon the building site for the city took on intense activity."

Pierre Charles L'Enfant was the son of Pierre L'Enfant, an artist who painted battle scenes and also designed tapestries for the Gobelin Works. L'Enfant himself was an artist and it was his artistic temperament which caused him trouble. At the age of 22 he had come to America to volunteer his services in the war against England. He became an officer of engineers, and also helped Gen. von Steuben drill the Army at Valley Forge, and worked on fortifications. After the war he was a practicing architect in New York City for several years but when he heard of the Federal City to be created he longed to be the author of its plan and as I have said wrote to Washington asking for the job.

But it was his desire for perfection which eventually was his undoing. There was delay in submitting the Plan to President Washington, and also he refused to take orders from any one except Washington, whereas he was told to take them from the three Commissioners of the District of Columbia: Thomas Johnson, David Stuart, and Daniel Carroll. Dr. David Stuart had become the second husband of Mrs. John Parke Custis, daughter-in-law of Mrs. Washington. Things went from bad to worse when the nephew of Daniel Carroll the Commissioner, Daniel Carroll of Duddington, started to build a house which abutted into a street laid out on the Plan and Major L'Enfant had it demolished. Also there was delay in getting the Map engraved.

Major L'Enfant lived at Suter's Tavern during the months he was working in George Town. But where he actually did his work of drawing his famous Map, where Andrew Ellicott had his office as surveyor, and where the three Commissioners met for their business has never been settled. [Pg 61]

The tradition is that their office was The Little Old Stone House, now 3049 M Street, and known for many years as "General Washington's Headquarters." As General Washington never had need for military headquarters here, for there was no fighting nearby, this tradition has persisted that this was the office of the Commissioners.

On December 13th President Washington sent a letter to L'Enfant advising him that he must work under orders from the Commissioners.

"Then before leaving for Philadelphia to superintend the engraving of his "Plan" personally, L'Enfant wrote to the Commissioners asking for supplies for the winter work, as follows:

'Georgetown Dec. 25, 1791.

> 'Gentlemen: Mr. Roberdeau, on whose activity and zeal I rely in the execution of what is necessary to accomplish this winter, will communicate to you a statement of the business I committed to this care and I have to request you will make provision for the supply of 25 hands in the quarries and 50 in the city which in all will be 75 men kept in employment besides their respective overseers.
>
> 'There is an immediate necessity for a number of wheel-barrows and above 100 will be wanted early in the spring. Therefore I beg you will devise the mode of obtaining that number before the 15th of March next—These wheel-barrows ought to be made light and should be only roughly finished, though substantial, ...'

Next we find that L'Enfant addressed a long and comprehensive Report to President Washington 'for renewing the work at the Federal City' in the approaching season and giving an estimate of expenditures for one year in the amount of $1,200,000." [Pg 62]

"We have here to do with the idealism of L'Enfant that contemplated quite a completely built city before it was occupied and operated as a 'Seat of Government.' Unfortunately, L'Enfant did not realize the poverty of the Treasury; and the state of mind of national legislators, particularly of the North, who preferred to stay in Philadelphia to moving 'to the Indian Place' on the banks of the Potomac."

"It is generally thought that the trouble concerning the Daniel Carroll of Duddington House was the reason for L'Enfant's resignation from the Washington work in March, 1792, and the reason for the letter from Secretary of State Jefferson terminating his services that month. But a close analysis of L'Enfant's experiences reveals that this was simply a 'serious incident' in a chain of troubles to follow. This brings to light the names of L'Enfant's assistants Roberdeau and Baraof. There were also Benjamin Banneker; and Alexander Ralston."

"L'Enfant remained silent so far as arguments with President Washington and the Plan was concerned, until 1800 after 'his General' had died. In the meantime the L'Enfant Plan was engraved, the question of compensation to L'Enfant came up and he was reimbursed in part." But the question of payment to Major L'Enfant was never settled.

After leaving Georgetown he worked on a Plan for the city of Patterson, New Jersey, built a magnificent house for Robert Morris in Philadelphia which was never finished, and also Oeller's Hotel where the Philadelphia Assemblies were held. [Pg 63]

From 1800 to 1810 he spent most of his time and efforts trying to secure payment for his services in laying out the Plan of the Capital City of Washington. On July 7, 1812 Secretary of War Eustis appointed him Professor of Engineering in the Military Academy at West Point but he declined saying that he had not "the rigidity of manner, the tongue nor the patience, nor indeed any inclination peculiar to instructors."

In 1814 he was consulted in regard to the fortification of Fort Washington opposite Mount Vernon and did some work there.

After the war was over he continued to live there at Warburton Manor with Thomas A. Digges until 1824 when he went to live with a nephew William Dudley Digges at Green Hill nearby, where he died, June 14, 1825, and was buried on the estate.

In 1909 the U. S. Government at last honored him by burying him in the National Cemetery at Arlington, in front of the house, overlooking the city of his dream.

At twelve o'clock October 12, 1792, the corner-stone of the President's House was laid, but there is no record of any ceremony. There is, however, a long account in the newspapers of the laying of the corner-stone of the Capitol, which was personally performed by George Washington in his capacity as a Mason, on September 18, 1792, "amid a brilliant crowd of spectators of both sexes." Right at the head of the procession, immediately following "the Surveying Department of the City of Washington," is noted "The Mayor and Corporation of George Town." John Threlkeld was Mayor that year, and certainly that "brilliant crowd" must have been largely composed of [Pg 64] Georgetonians for the dwellers in the City of Washington at that time were few and far between. Witness General Washington's letter on the 17th of May, 1795, to Alexander White, one of the Commissioners: "I shall intimate that a residence in the City if a house is to be had, will be more promotive of its welfare than your abode in George Town." He was nursing along his namesake in every possible way. On February 8, 1798, he notes in his diary: "Visited Public Buildings in the morning." The day before, the 7th, he speaks of going to a meeting of the Potomac Company, dining with Colonel Fitzgerald, and lodging with Thomas Peter at Number 2618 K Street. This was only natural, as Mrs. Peter was, of course, his step-granddaughter. On that same trip he met the Commissioners again, this time at Union Tavern, and dined there. On August 5th his diary says: "Went to George Town to a general meeting of the Potomac Company. Dined at the Union Tavern and lodged at Mr. Law's." Thomas Law, an Englishman, had married Eliza Custis, Mrs. Washington's eldest grandchild, and had a home on Capitol Hill.

On August 11th he again spent the night at Thomas Peter's home, and that was the last night he ever spent in the city named in his honor. He was never to live to see the government established in the city over which he had worked so hard, and in which he had such absolute implicit faith.

"A century hence," he wrote, "if this country keeps united, it will produce a city, though not so large as London, yet of a magnitude inferior to few other in Europe."

Chapter VI [Pg 65]

Below Bridge Street

NEARLY all of the business, and most of the social life, up until 1800 took place below Bridge (M) Street. The island in the river below George Town, which was called, variously, Analostan, Mason's Island, My Lord's Island, and Barbadoes, was almost a part of George Town in those days. It belonged to the great plantation of George Mason, of Gunston, the brilliant statesman and author of the Bill of Rights.

His son, General Mason, had there an estate where he entertained in fine style. Louis Philippe of France, while a visitor in George Town, was feted there and said he had never seen a more elegant entertainment. Twenty-three kinds of fish were caught in the river in those days, besides terrapin and snapping turtles, so perhaps they helped to embellish the occasion.

The island was rich in forest trees, foliage, flowering and aromatic shrubs, orchards of cherry,

apple, and peach trees. Cotton was grown there which was the color of nankeen; it was spun, woven, and used in its natural color, without being dyed. Also, there was grown a variety of maize of deep purple color, used as a dye.

John Mason had also a town house which we shall mention later. He, like most of the men in this community, was engaged in the business of shipping tobacco. The majority of his trade seems to have been with France, from letters of his father to him, in which the great George offered to help out his son in his shipments by letting him have some of the hogsheads he had on hand. [Pg 66]

John Mason had been a general in the Revolution, and was at the head of the militia here, and also owned a ferry operating to the Virginia shore from the foot of High Street (Wisconsin Avenue). The ferry was worked by a great iron chain.

In 1835 Analostan Island was purchased by William A. Bradley, nephew of the Abraham Bradley who came to Washington with the Government in 1800 as Assistant Postmaster General. For many years it was a wilderness, with only traces showing of its once famous house, but not long ago it was purchased by the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Association.

Robert Peter's house stood on High Street (Wisconsin Avenue), about where Grace Church now stands. He owned the whole block between Congress (31st) Street and High Street (Wisconsin Avenue), up to Bridge (M) Street. It was called Peter's Square. At the age of forty, after he had lived nearly fifteen years in George Town, he married Elizabeth Scott, the daughter of George Scott, High Sheriff of Prince George County. They had eight children.

Their eldest son, Thomas, was married in 1795 to Martha Parke Custis, the second granddaughter of Mrs. Washington. The bride was sixteen, the groom twenty-seven. The wedding took place at Hope Park near Fairfax Court House, where Martha's mother, the former Eleanor Calvert (Mrs. John Parke Custis), had been living since she became the wife of David Stuart, one of the Commissioners laying out the City of Washington. Soon after their marriage, Mr. Peter gave to Thomas and his wife one of the six houses he had built for his sons on lots across Rock Creek in the new city. The one he gave them was 2618 K Street, and is still standing. It was there that General Washington stayed with the young couple so often. Martha was very lovely in appearance, and very devoted to her step-grandfather, and he, apparently, to her. [Pg 67]

Robert Peter's eldest daughter, Elizabeth, was married in 1787 to her cousin, James Dunlop. Mr. Peter's mother had been Jean Dunlop of Garnkirke. To this couple, the father also gave a house situated not far from his own, a block away, up High Street (Wisconsin Avenue). There they reared a large family.

No more interesting figure looms out of the mists of early George Town than the Reverend Stephen Bloomer Balch, the founder and first pastor of the Presbyterian Church. But, far more than that, he seems to have been pastor, "Parson," as he was affectionately called, for the entire community. It was in his church edifice that each denomination met until they procured their own.

Born on his parents' place in the Susquehanna region, graduated from Princeton in the same class with Aaron Burr, Dr. Balch went to Lower Marlboro, Calvert County, Maryland, to take charge of a classical academy in October, 1775. For two years he taught, drilled the students in military training, and studied theology on the side. His books were borrowed from the Reverend Thomas Clagett, who afterwards became the first Episcopal Bishop of Maryland, and now lies buried in the Washington Cathedral, not very far from his pupil in Oak Hill Cemetery. [Pg 68]

Not very long after Dr. Balch was licensed as a preacher, he came to George Town, about 1778, the only place of worship at that time being the Lutherans' small building, where their new church now stands on the corner of the present Q Street and Wisconsin Avenue. The lot was given in 1769 by Colonel Charles Beatty. Dr. Balch preached there on Thursday night and again on Sunday. He did not remain at that time, but, a year or so later, asked to come back, and at first used a little frame house on the north side of Bridge (M) Street, which was occupied on week days by a school. Just about this time he was made principal of the Columbian Academy, and the next year he married Elizabeth Beall, the daughter of George Beall. I wonder if he had, by any chance, met her on his first visit, and the memory of her bright eyes had followed him on his journeys down into the Carolines and lured him back.

At the wedding of Dr. and Mrs. Balch in 1782, tea was served in cups not much larger than thimbles. The ladies of George Town would not drink tea at all during the Revolution, and it was still not plentiful.

He was of a susceptible nature, for, after his wife's death in 1827, he was married the next year, when he was eighty-two, to another Elizabeth, one of the King family. She lived only eighteen days, and a little more than a year later, he again embarked on the sea of matrimony, this time with a widow, Mrs. Jane Parrott. By his first wife he had eleven children, the usual number in those days. [Pg 69]

In 1783, one year after his first marriage, he built his home on Duck Lane (33rd Street), which he called "Mamre," from the Old Testament. After Abraham and Lot had separated, Abraham giving Lot the first choice of location, "the Lord told Abraham to look over the whole land which He would give to him and his seed forever, and Abraham moved his tent and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, and built there an altar unto the Lord."

In 1799, when a street was graded through, it completely ruined his property and he was obliged to take refuge with neighbors. One of his neighbors was James Calder, who was a trustee of his church, and Mr. Crookshanks lived near by. Dr. Balch had an island on the river called "Patmos." This time he went to the New Testament and named it for Saint John's abode, where he wrote the Book of Revelations. This island supplied wood for his fires. He had, also, a little way out of town, a farm of ten acres.

One Fourth of July, his son, Thomas, aged eight, as he tells us in his *Reminiscences*, wanted to deliver an oration which he had prepared—in Scotch Row, near by his home. All of his comrades had gone to see Captain Doughty's Company on parade with the fife-and-drum corps. But the little boy was not to be deterred. He went up on Bridge (M) Street, hunting an audience and a distinguished one he brought back with him. If small in number, it made up in quality, for he had General John Mason and Monsieur Pichon, a "bland and elegant" Frenchman sent by Napoleon to receive the $15,000,000 for the purchase of the Louisiana Territory. Mr. Pichon was a Huguenot from the city of Lyons and lived, while here, near the Bank of Columbia. This son followed in his [Pg 70] father's footsteps as a minister and did not have to go out always for his audience.

A short while after the death of General Washington, Dr. Balch gave notice that he was going to speak on the life and services of the great statesman. He preached in the open air to more than a thousand people.

The last years of Dr. Balch's life were spent at number 3302 Gay (N) Street, where a bad fire destroyed many valuable papers and the records of his church. He wrote to a friend: "Only the Parrott (his wife) remains!" Apparently, he never lost his sense of humor. Perhaps it was that which helped to make him so universally beloved.

Dr. Balch died on the 7th of September, 1833. Every house in town was hung in black, all the stores and banks were closed and the bells tolled as his body was carried to the church.

One block westward of Dr. Balch's original house lived another man, very influential in the religious life of the town in addition to his large business activities. Henry Foxall, a native of Monmouthshire, England, was born in 1760. He went to Dublin, where he was put in charge of extensive iron works and where he became a Methodist. On coming to this country, he first settled in Philadelphia, where, in 1794, he was a partner in the Eagle Iron Works of Robert Morris, the great financier and signer of the Declaration of Independence.

When Thomas Jefferson became President, he thought it advisable to have at the seat of government an ordnance plant, so Morris recommended Foxall, who came here in 1799 for that purpose. He built his foundry on the western outskirts of George Town, just behind Georgetown [Pg 71] College. He built also a large brick house, two stories, with dormer windows on Frederick (34th) Street, between Water (K) and Bridge (M) Streets. It was quite a pretentious house for that time, with its high ceilings, elaborately decorated cornices of minute workmanship, and mantels of carved wood. It had ample grounds, and in front stood two tall and graceful Lombardy poplars. He had also a summer home, a little farther out and higher up, called "Spring Hill," from whence he had a fine view of the Potomac and the Virginia hills.

A warm friendship sprang up between him and Thomas Jefferson, as they had many tastes in common. Both were performers on the violin and used to accompany each other, and both were fond of tinkering. Jefferson, you remember, was of a very inventive turn of mind. During this time he thought of an air-tight stove and got Mr. Foxall to make some according to his ideas, but they did not work out to please him.

Thomas Jefferson lived for a while in George Town on the little street bearing his name, between Washington (30th) and Congress (31st) Streets, running south below Bridge (M) Street, in a house demolished a few years ago. It stood immediately south of the Canal on the east side, and was in appearance much like the home of Francis Scott Key. It must have been during the time he was Secretary of State in John Adams's administration that he occupied this house.

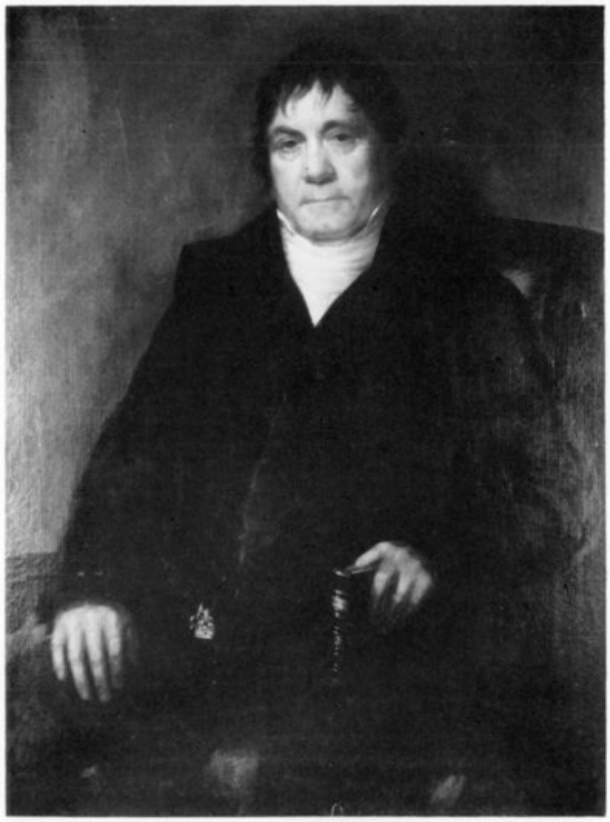
Mr. Jefferson was never happy living in a town. I found this interesting little tidbit about him in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*: "For eight years he tabulated with painful accuracy the earliest and latest appearance of 37 vegetables in the Washington market, and after his return from France [Pg 72] for 23 years he received from his old friend, the superintendent of the Jardin Des Plantes, a box of seeds which he distributed to public and private gardens throughout the United States." So I think we might easily call him the founder of the Garden Clubs of America, certainly of the Georgetown Garden Club.

Mr. Foxall was a convert to Wesleyanism, and a lay minister. He was in the habit of entertaining the members of the Methodist Conference at this home, and was once good-humoredly twitted by one of them in regard to his inconsistent roles of "proclaimer of the gospel of peace and forger of weapons of war." To this he replied: "If I do make guns to destroy men's bodies, I build churches to save their souls."

At this foundry (then the only one south of Philadelphia), cannon were cast for the American troops during the War of 1812. The artillery and indeed all the military arms of this country were then very imperfect. Foxall was the only founder in America who understood the proper mode of manufacture. Here began the first manufacture of bored cannon in this country, being vastly superior to the old ordnance. The abandonment and recasting of the old-style guns speedily followed.

Commodore Perry would have no others on the little fleet he built at Put-in-Bay on Lake Erie. The battle of Lake Erie was deferred until Foxall could fill an order from the government for guns, and transport them over the mountains on carts drawn by ten or twelve yoke of oxen to the scene of the engagement. From the deck of his flagship *The Lawrence*, manned by these guns from George Town, Perry sent his famous message, "We have met the enemy and they are ours!"

[Pg 73]



Henry Foxall

[Pg 74]

In 1814, when the British entered Washington and burned the Capitol and the White House, this foundry, upon which the country depended so largely for its supplies, was in imminent danger, and its owner vowed that, if God would spare it, he would build a church to His glory. The enemy had their face set in its direction when a sudden and violent storm turned them from their course. An old letter, written by George Bleig, afterwards Chaplain-General of the British Army, says: "On the 25th a hurricane fell on the city which unroofed houses and upset our three-pound guns. It upset me also. It fairly lifted me out of the saddle, and the horse which I had been riding, I never saw again."

True to his vow, Henry Foxall built the Foundry Methodist Church at the northeast corner of 14th and G Streets. It was sold some years later and the Colorado office building erected there. With the proceeds the very handsome grey stone church was built on 16th Street above Scott Circle. The trustees of the Foundry Church were Isaac Owens, Leonard Mackall, John Eliason, William Doughty, Joel Brown, John Lutz, and Samuel McKenney.

Methodism at that time was in a struggling condition. The first visit by a Methodist preacher had been one by the tireless Francis Asbury. He was an old friend of Foxall, had visited him often in Philadelphia, and preached in George Town December 9, 1772. But it was twenty years before regular services were held, and then only by a preacher who came up from Alexandria. It was not until after the arrival of Henry Foxall that any Methodist preacher was stationed in the District. William Watters was so appointed in 1802.

[Pg 75]

Home of Henry Foxall

[Pg 76] Mr. Foxall was instrumental in the erection of no less than four churches, the old church at George Town on Rock Creek, one at the Navy Yard known as Ebenezer, a colored chapel, and later, the Foundry Church. In 1814 was organized the first Bible society in the District of Columbia. Among its founders were Henry Foxall and Francis Scott Key, near neighbors.

Mr. Foxall was three times married, his first wife was Ann Harward, whom he married in England in 1780; his second was Margaret Smith, married in Philadelphia in 1799; his third, Catherine, whom he married in 1816 in England, while on a visit home. He had only two children and they were by his first marriage—a son who died when twenty-five years old and daughter, Mary Ann, who became the wife of Samuel McKenney, and for whom he built a lovely home.

In the summer of 1823 he went to England for a visit, and there in December of that same year he died, quite suddenly, in great peace. "He served well his country, his generation, and his God."

Mr. Foxall was said by one of his old employees to have been honest and just in his dealings, and although he did a large business, employing many people, he owed no man a dollar. He was prompt in paying off his workmen, usually making coin payments. He was a conscientious, earnest Christian, a real enthusiast in his religion. During his term of office as mayor in 1819 and 1820, the ordinances for the town which provided against profaning the Sabbath, were strictly enforced.

The old Sunday Laws (so-called Blue Laws), which George Town inherited from Maryland, were decidedly severe, and it took a man of Mr. Foxall's force of character to enforce them. A few of [Pg 77] the offenses against which he waged relentless war may be mentioned. Five dollars was the penalty for gaming, hunting, and fishing on the Sabbath. No trading was allowed on the Lord's Day, except the selling of "fresh fish, milk, and other perishable goods." Cock-fighting and drinking, when indulged in by free men, were punished by a fine of $5.00, but when a slave was the offender, he received thirty-nine stripes on the bare back in a public place.

The old gentleman was fond of buying slaves whom he would set free after teaching them a trade. Long years after, one of his old slaves boasted of having driven the Marquis de Lafayette to visit his old mistress, Mrs. Catherine Foxall, on his visit in 1824.

When the Potomac Canal was taken over and reorganized as the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, a great celebration was made of the event.

On Friday, July 4, 1828, President John Quincy Adams, accompanied by heads of Federal Government Departments, members of the Diplomatic Corps, the president and directors of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company and authorities of the three cities of the then District of Columbia: Washington, Alexandria, and Georgetown, assembled early at the Union Hotel. The procession formed and, to the music of the United States Marine Band, marched to the High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) wharf, where, on board the steamboat *Surprise* and other boats, they moved up the Potomac, until they reached the termination of the old Potomac Canal, landed, and marched a few hundred yards to canal boats prepared to receive them. They glided along until they reached the point of destination where the old powder magazine stood. On landing, they [Pg 78] formed a large circle. The president of the C. & O. Company addressed President Adams in a brief speech and handed him a spade. After making the speech, he attempted to run the spade into the ground, but struck a root. He tried it again, when a wag in the crowd cried out he had come across a "hickory root," (allusion to Andrew Jackson, "Old Hickory," and their political campaign).

He then threw down the spade, ripped off his coat, and went to work in earnest. People on the hills around raised loud cheers until their Chief Executive overcame the difficulty.

On July 4, 1831, water was let in the canal from the first feeder to the Columbia Foundry. The loan of $1,500,000 was obtained in Holland through Richard Rush on the credit of the citizens of

Washington, Alexandria, and Georgetown.

It is said that, with the probable exception of General Washington, he took more interest in the affairs of the District of Columbia than any other president. He was largely identified with its material prosperity; he owned and operated a flouring mill on Rock Creek, but the project he was most zealously interested in was the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. Of course, Mr. Adams had been here some during his father's presidency, though he was a man in his thirties then and was much abroad on diplomatic missions. He was also Secretary of State in Monroe's administration, and after his own term of office as President, served as a representative in Congress until his death. [Pg 79]

A flouring mill which stood at the point where the canal of the old Potomac Company entered the river, was owned by the Edes family. The fish caught there were much larger than those caught elsewhere.

On the bank of the canal opposite the mill, lived Bull Frizzle, noted for his enormous strength. One time, after there was an accident at the Little Falls (Chain) Bridge, he crawled under a large beam and prized it up by the strength of his back, saving the life of the man pinned underneath.

Chapter VII

[Pg 80]

Along Bridge (M) Street

THE bridge over Rock Creek at Bridge (M) Street, was built in 1788, and one night when a storm of wind and rain was raging, gave way while a stage-coach was passing over it. The coach was precipitated into the water but only the driver and the horses were drowned. Ever afterwards it was said that on stormy nights the ghost of the driver haunted the spot.

Peter Casanave had a stone house near the bridge and close by was the house of the French's. Mrs. French had been Arianna Scott, sister of Mrs. Robert Peter. The house, which is still remembered by many old residents, was a fine, large brick mansion of the prevailing type at that time.

It was surrounded by trees—some of them being cherries—and a garden. One large room was hung with very unusual paper representing scenes of Indian life. It is still remembered by a gentleman who lived there when he was quite young, who says he remembers passing when the house was being demolished and again admired the very handsome and remarkable paper. At that time the place was entered by a gate from the Pennsylvania Avenue side, and then there was a flight of steps to reach M Street on the other side.

Mrs. French evidently owned several houses nearby, for she advertised: [Pg 81]

> For sale or rent:
>
> The house opposite the Bank of Columbia lately occupied by Mrs. Suter, and the house lately occupied by John M. Gantt, Esqur., adjoining Dr. Weem's house are for sale or rent. The house opposite the bank is very eligibly situated for a commercial character having an excellent storeroom and counting room with every convenient compartment for a private family. The house adjoining Dr. Weems' can accomodate very comfortably a small family and from its situation will soon be very valuable. The terms of sale or rent may be known on application to Dr. Weems.
>
> 9th January 1799 A. FRENCH.

Also, Mrs. Pick had a millinery store just about here.

On the corner of Bridge (M) and Greene (29th) Streets, was where David Reintzel lived, who was mayor several times.

A block or two further west, on the north side of the street, stood the very modest home of Jacob Schoofield, the Quaker with whom William Wirt was put to board when he was sent in 1779 to George Town to attend school. He speaks of how Mrs. Schoofield comforted him the first night he was there, a home-sick little boy, by telling him the story, from the Bible, of Joseph being sold by his brother and carried off into Egypt. He said "I remember, also, to have seen a gentleman, Mr. Peter, I think, going out gunning for canvas-backs, then called white-backs, which I have seen whitening the Potomac and which, when they arose, as they sometimes did for half a mile together, produced a sound like thunder."

Just a few doors from this house was the famous Union Tavern, of which I have already said so much. The building was standing until a few years ago when it was replaced by a filling station. When it became Crawford's Hotel after John Suter, Jr., gave it up, again William Wirt comes into the picture: [Pg 82]

> Here I am at Crawford's. I am surrounded by a vast crowd of legislators and gentlemen assembled for the races, which are to commence tomorrow. The races amidst the ruins and desolation of Washington.

These gentlemen used to ride to and from the capitol in a large stage-coach with seats on top called the "Royal George."

Among the other notable guests of the old hostelry were Louis Philippe, Jerome Bonaparte, Talleyrand, ex-Bishop of Autun when he was driven from France, John Adams, when as President in the early summer of 1800, he came down to look over his new field; Anthony Merry, Minister from England to the United States; Washington Irving, Count Volney, Humbolt, the geographer; Robert Fulton, the inventor of the steamboat; Lorenzo Dow, the eccentric preacher; several young naval officers from the Tripolitan War; and John Randolph of Roanoke. I wonder if it was from this old tavern that that brilliant but erratic statesman went out across the Chain Bridge to fight his duel with Henry Clay? It is recorded by a marker, just at the end of the bridge on the Virginia side, and reads thus: "Near here Henry Clay and John Randolph of Roanoke fought a duel April 8, 1826. Randolph had called Clay a 'Blackleg' in a speech. Both men were unhurt, but Randolph's coat was pierced by a bullet."

John Randolph spent the night before the duel in quoting poetry and playing whist while his will was being amended.

John Randolph must have liked George Town, for years afterwards when he lay very ill in his boarding place on Capitol Hill, he insisted on his body servant, Juba, getting him some water from George Town, no other would do. He called it "The water of Chios." [Pg 83]

Joseph Crawford, the proprietor of this hotel, was the principal manager in the unloading of the records and furniture belonging to the government when the ships bringing it from Philadelphia docked at Lear's Wharf. Abraham Bradley, who, as Assistant Postmaster General, had charge of the removal of that department, and Joseph Nourse, who was Registrar of the Treasury, may also have stopped at Crawford's until settled in their homes.

Just opposite on the southeast corner of Bridge (M) and Washington (30th) Streets stood, until 1878, the Presbyterian Church, whose founder, Dr. Stephen Bloomer Balch, was its pastor for fifty-two years. When it was first built in 1782, it was only about thirty feet square. In 1793 it was enlarged by extending the north front. In 1801-'02, it was further enlarged by extending it on the west side. For this purpose Thomas Jefferson helped by subscribing $75.00. In 1806 the trustees of the congregation were incorporated by Congress. They were: Stephen B. Balch, William Whann, James Melvin, John Maffitt, John Peter, Joshua Dawson, James Calder, George Thompson, Richard Elliott, David Wiley, and Andrew Ross. The first and only elder for some time was James Orme, son of Reverend John Orme, of Upper Marlborough. In 1821 a new building was erected. When Dr. Balch died in 1833, he was buried there, but when the congregation moved in 1878 and the church was torn down, his remains were taken to Oak Hill, where, with the original gravestone, they lie not far from the chapel and just north of the grave of John Howard Payne.

[Pg 84]

Old Presbyterian Church

On the northwest corner of Bridge (M) and Washington (30th) Streets lived a Mr. Lee; probably Thomas Sim Lee, whose home was the gathering place for the Federalists. Just beyond here, still on the north side where the two lovely old carved doorways remain unchanged, are the houses once owned by Henry Addison, who served as mayor of the Town from 1845 to 1857 and again from 1861 to 1867. He was a hardware merchant, and in 1827 it was for him that the first steam fire engine was named. [Pg 85]

Mr. Hill lived in one of these houses and next door on the east lived Mr. Vanderwerken. He owned the line of omnibuses that ran along Bridge (M) Street and over to the city before there were street cars. The omnibuses bore the names of prominent people.

There was a pump in the back yard on the line between these two houses. On each side of the

fence was a handle on the pump so that it could be worked by both families. The water flowed smoothly until something caused a fuss between the two men, and one day, when Mr. Hill, who was a very large man, protruded over the fence, Mr. Vanderwerken got out his shotgun and peppered his shoulder!

Across the street at number 3012 lived John Abbott, who came from Philadelphia with the transfer of the government in 1800.

At number 3016 lived John Mountz who was Clerk of the Corporation for sixty-seven years, from the time of its beginning in 1789 up to 1856.

Across the street again is the quaint little Stone House which has caused so much discussion. For many years tradition had said it was there that Major L'Enfant had his headquarters while he was mapping the new capital city. Then, someone said it had never been proved. So now we are waiting for proof. From its looks it was most certainly standing in those early days. If only it could speak and tell its own history! [Pg 86]

We do know it was bought as lot 3 in June, 1762, by John Boone for one pound, ten shillings. Two years later, as he had not improved it, it was bought by Christopher Leyhman for the same amount, and presumably, a house was built about that time. Apparently, by inheritance, it came to Rachel Furvey (formerly Rachel Leyhman), and in June, 1767, by deed, it became the property of Cassandra Chew, who made it over to her two daughters, Harriot, who married Richard Bruce, and Mary, who first married Richard Smith, and later, Mr. Bromley. Mary's daughter, Barbara Smith, married John Suter, Jr., and they lived in this house. This is supposed to have something to do with the claim that has been made that this building on lot 3 was Suter's Tavern.

Almost next door on the west Mr. Claggett had a house. Again, across the street, on the southeast corner, is the building which, until recent years, housed the Farmers and Mechanics Bank. It was founded in 1814. When the Mexican War came, this bank enabled the government to pay the war debt. It has now been absorbed by the Riggs National Bank and moved further up the street. Before the building of the bank, John Peter, a nephew of Robert Peter, had a house on that corner. His house was a simple frame one, and back of it he had rabbit warrens and pigeon houses. He used to go often in the evenings the short distance to his uncle Robert's house for a game of whist, of which the old gentleman was very fond. [Pg 87]

Just above Bridge (M) Street on Congress (31st) Street stands the Georgetown post office, an imposing granite building. It is also the custom house of the District of Columbia.

Near the corner of Congress (31st) Street lived W. King, and at number 3119 was the house Thomas Corcoran built. He had come from Limerick, Ireland, to Baltimore in 1783 and entered business with his uncle, William Wilson, there. Soon after his marriage to Hannah Lemon, of Baltimore County, he came to George Town, intending to go on to Richmond, but being so impressed with the thriving little town, he decided to settle here. He first rented a house on Congress (31st) Street below Bridge (M) from Robert Peter, and started a business in leather. In 1791 he built this three-story house and there lived for many years. He was mayor five different terms from 1805, and also magistrate and postmaster for fifteen years until his death in 1830. It was in this house that a meeting was held in 1817 to found Christ Church.

The Union Bank was on the north side of this block.

On the southwest corner of Bridge (M) and High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) is the site of Gordon's Inspection House, and just west of here in 1791 were three large tobacco sheds covering three acres. Here was the "Warehouse Lot," used by circuses when they came to town.

Close by was the big warehouse of John Laird. It was after his death in 1833 that the trade in tobacco began to decline.

[Pg 88]

General James Maccubbin Lingan

Benjamin Stoddert

Uriah Forrest

From 1792 to 1795, number 3221 was the home of Dr. William Thornton, the architect of the Capitol; the Octagon House, built by John Tayloe; of Tudor Place, and also of Woodlawn. He was later the first Superintendent of Patents from 1802 until 1807. [Pg 89]

The old market stands where there always has been a market. Its upper stories used to be where the meetings of the Corporation of George Town were held.

At number 3300 was the home of Paymaster David Whann.

Midway between Market (33rd) and Frederick (34th) Streets, on the north side of Bridge (M) Street, General James Maccubbin Lingan had a large piece of property. I wonder if this advertisement inserted in a newspaper on April 22, 1801, describes this very place:

> The subscriber offers for sale the houses and lots where he now resides. The improvements are a commodious dwelling house, office, kitchen, wash house, meat house, carriage house, a stable for five horses, likewise a large and well cultivated garden and clover lot. He will also sell the upper wharf and warehouses, all of which have been lately built and well situated for receiving produce that may come down the river.
>
> J. M. Lingan.

General Lingan was of noted Scotch ancestry, the second child of Dr. Lingan. He was born in 1751, in Frederick County, Maryland. On his mother's side he was related to the Maccubbins, and to the Carrolls of Maryland. He came to George Town as quite a young man and went directly into the tobacco warehouse of a relative. In 1776 he was commissioned a lieutenant in the army. After the victory of the Battle of Long Island, he was captured at Fort Washington on November 16, 1776, his breast being pierced by a bayonet at that time. He was sent as a prisoner [Pg 90] aboard the *Jersey*—the "Hell," as she was called. The conditions on board were terrific, and many of the prisoners died. When the coffin was brought for the body of one of his friends, it was found to be too short—the guards started to decapitate the body to make it fit. Young Lingan stood over the body and said he would kill them with his bare hands. So they brought a larger coffin.

While he was still a prisoner there, his cousin, Admiral Sir Samuel Hood, of His "Satanic" Majesty's Navy, as Lingan called it, visited him and offered him £2,000 (pounds) and high rank in the British Army if he would return to his former allegiance. Lingan's answer was, "I'll rot here first!" And he almost did! He was cooped up in a space so short that he could not lie full length, so low that he could not stand erect. It was many months after his release before his cramped and agonized muscles allowed him to sleep except in an armchair.

The reasons for wishing to obtain his defection were, first, the pride, and perhaps, affection of his connections in England. Lord North, himself, was one of these, and his cousin, Zachariah Hood was *persona gratia* at the Court of St. James. Also, the affiliations and connections of his family in Maryland made his defection greatly to be desired. One of his sisters had married Thomas Plater, the son of Governor George Plater of Sotterley, and he was also related to the prominent Carroll family.

At the conclusion of the war, General Lingan returned to George Town and farmed two estates he owned, both named after battles in which he had participated—Harlem and Middlebrook. He also was appointed collector of the port by General Washington himself. He was one of the original [Pg 91] members of the Order of the Cincinnati.

In later years he moved over to the city, his house then being in the neighborhood of Nineteenth, M and N Streets. He had a wife and children, many friends, and all was going well with him until the election year of 1812. General Lingan was a Federalist in politics. The party organ was *The Federal Republican*, published in Baltimore and edited by Alexander Contee Hanson, whose wife was a near relative of Nicholas Lingan, the brother of James.

War with England was declared on Friday, the 19th of June, 1812, and next day an editorial appeared in *The Federal Republican*, which was like a match set to a powder train. On Sunday, public meetings were held advocating the suppression of the paper, and on Monday, three or four hundred men and boys assembled at the office of the paper at Gay and Second Streets, in Baltimore, and destroyed the furniture and the house.

The staff then removed to Georgetown where, although it was threatened from both Baltimore and Washington, it continued to publish the paper until July 26th, when Mr. Hanson went back to Baltimore to a small house on South Charles Street, accompanied by General Lingan, John Howard Payne, General Henry ("Light Horse Harry") Lee, and others. On the following day the paper was issued from that office, though it had been printed in Georgetown. It contained an attack on the State authorities for the outrage of June 22nd. This time the mob that gathered brought arms and ammunition. The twenty-seven gentlemen assembled in the office were also armed, "to defend the rights of person, and property, and the liberty of the press." At first only [Pg 92] stones were used by the assailants, answered by volleys of blank cartridges. After scenes almost fantastic in fury, the gentlemen were finally overcome and marched to gaol for safety. But after dark another mob gathered round the gaol, and overcoming the guard, broke in. Mr. Gwynn pushed his way through a group of fifty men to General Lingan who was being knocked down by clubs, then jerked up to be knocked down again, while the outside ring of men bellowed, "Tory! Tory!" The only word General Lingan spoke to the mob was, when tearing open his shirt, he displayed the mark of the Hessian bayonet, still purple, and exclaimed, "Does this look as if I was a traitor?" Just then a stone struck the scar and he fell. As the last breath left his body, he murmured to a friend near by, "I am a dying man—save yourself."

On this side of Bridge (M) Street, adjoining what was then Bank Street stood the Bank of Columbia, when it moved from a few blocks east. From old pictures, it looks much more like a stately home than a bank, and part of it was used as his home by William Whann, the cashier. Set far back on the hill, with columns on its façade and a Greek pediment, it was very handsome. Its first president was Samuel Blodgett; its second, General John Mason of Analostan Island. Across the street he had his town house.

To this bank one day late in 1814, while he was Secretary of State, came James Monroe, on horseback, and asking for William Whann, told him that the government was entirely out of funds, and wanted a loan with which to dispatch General Andrew Jackson to New Orleans. Mr. Monroe pledged his own private fortune that the debt would be paid, and the money was turned over to him. The government at that time was not strong enough to levy heavier taxes for the [Pg 93] conduct of the war with England, which was very unpopular in the New England States.

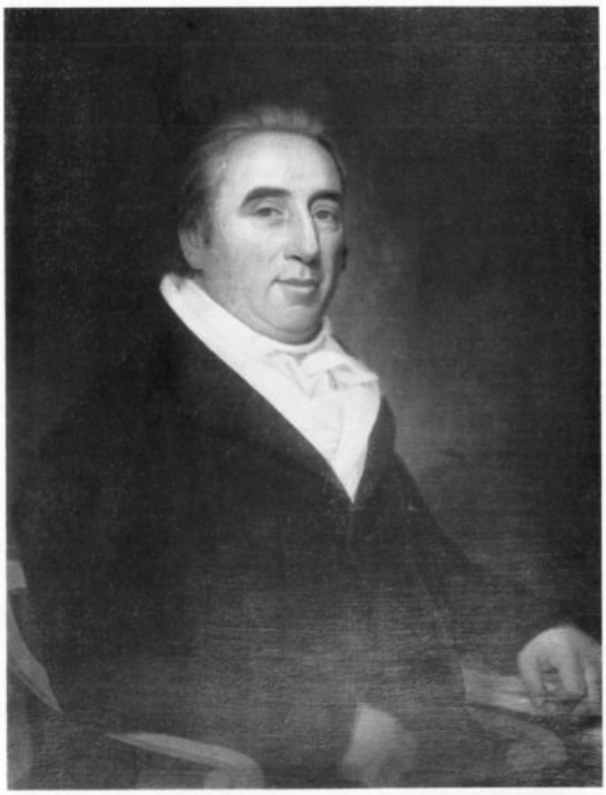
The Battle of New Orleans was fought on January 8, 1815—two weeks after peace had come—for a Treaty of Peace had been signed on Christmas Eve, and the great loss of life on the English side might have been avoided.

Just beyond here on the corner, Mr. Thompson had a residence, and still a little further lived Mr. Warren. Just opposite, at number 3350, is one of the oldest houses in Georgetown and one of the most notable, for here Colonel Uriah Forrest was living in 1791 when on March 29th he gave that memorable dinner, referred to by General Washington, when the arrangements were made for the purchase of land on which to build the new City of Washington.

What a scene that must have been! One can imagine the turtle soup, the fish and terrapin caught fresh from the river, wild ducks and ham with shoulders of mutton and all the vegetables and hot breads and other delectable foods for which Maryland is famous—for Uriah Forrest, himself a Marylander, had a Maryland wife, Rebecca Plater, the daughter of Governor Plater, whose home was Sotterley, in Saint Mary's County.

In 1792 Colonel Forrest was mayor of George Town. Not long after this, Colonel Forrest purchased a large tract of land lying north of the town and there he built a country home which he called Rosedale, and to which he eventually retired for his permanent home. His descendants, the Greens, lived on at Rosedale until not so very many years ago. One of them, Mr. George Green, sold to President Cleveland, in his first administration, a stone cottage on the Rosedale estate which the President remodeled and made his summer home. It was called Red Top, from its turreted red roof, but its real name was Oak View. From it, the suburb, Cleveland Park, derives its name.

[Pg 94]



William Marbury

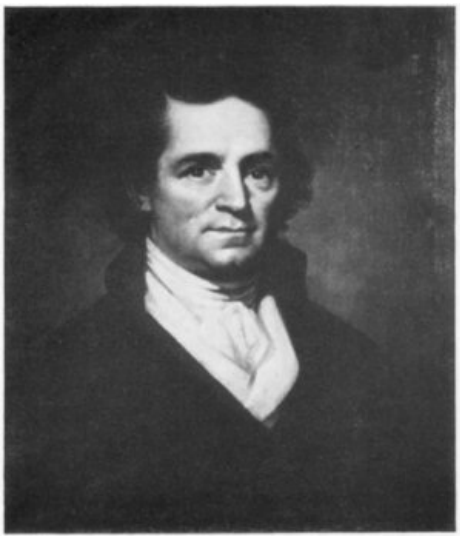
[Pg 95]

Mr. Cleveland, in his second administration, used Woodley for his summer home. It had been a part of the Rosedale tract, and the house was built by Philip Barton Key, a brother-in-law of Colonel Forrest, for he also had married a Miss Plater.

Mr. Key moved out of town and resided at Woodley, where he dispensed lavish hospitality until his death in 1817. Thomas Plater also had moved out from George Town and lived near by. He was the executor for Philip Barton Key. After Mr. Key's death, his widow went back into town and took up her residence on the corner of Gay (N) and Congress (31st) Streets.

After Colonel Forrest left the house on Bridge (M) Street, it was bought by William Marbury, who had come to Georgetown from Annapolis. He was a justice of the peace, a very responsible and honorable office in those days. It was in connection with his reappointment to the office that the controversy arose which resulted in the famous law case of Marbury *versus* Madison, as James Madison, in his capacity as Secretary of State to Thomas Jefferson, was the Madison involved. The prominence of the case was because it was the first of those great opinions handed down by Chief Justice John Marshall in which he decided that the Supreme Court has the power to declare an act of Congress unconstitutional.

[Pg 96]



Philip Barton Key

Mrs. Philip Barton Key
(elizabeth plater)

[Pg 97]

In 1814 Mr. Marbury became the first president of the Farmers and Mechanics Bank when it was organized; its cashier being Clement Smith, who, after the presidency of Thomas B. Beall, from 1817-1821, became the third president, and the only one in the history of that institution to be promoted to that office. Not many years ago, Mr. Marbury's picture, in his old-fashioned costume, was printed on the bank checks to impress the public with the antiquity of the institution.

He was a very imposing looking gentleman, as was his son, John Marbury, who was eight years old when the family moved to Georgetown. Some years ago, one of his great-grandsons heard the family talking about "Grandfather's Bourbon nose." A little later he was found standing, gazing intently at the portrait of the old gentleman, and when asked, "Why such sudden interest?" he replied, "Where is the 'burb' on his nose?"

John Marbury married and lived for some years on Gay (N) Street, near Market (33rd) Street. After his father's death, he moved to the old house on Bridge (M) Street in order to keep his mother company. He had a very large family, seven sons and six daughters. All of the daughters attended Miss English's Seminary, walking to and from school all winter wearing low-necked and short-sleeved dresses, covered only by a little cape. Not a case of poverty, I assure you, but of fashion! I was told this not long ago by a descendant, and of how they used to have to melt their gum shoes to get them on in cold weather. I think the names of a trio of their friends very amusing—Jerry Berry, Hetty Getty, and Jimmy Finney.

The house had a large garden in the rear and spacious rooms where they entertained a great deal. Not long ago, I saw a fascinating drawing of a party in Georgetown in the fifties. It [Pg 98] represented four musicians intent upon playing a bass viol, a cello, a violin, and a flute; a few of the company standing near by with curls and puffed coiffures, and among them a tiny man, side-whiskered, so short that he barely reached the shoulders of the ladies. He must, of course, have been Prince Iturbide. There was never anyone quite like him. He was a Mexican, here in the diplomatic service, and had married Miss Alice Green, a granddaughter of Uriah Forrest.

At a party one evening at the Marbury's, a dispute arose between him and Baron Bodisco, the Russian Minister, who was also a resident of Georgetown. It ended in the prince calling the baron a liar, whereby the baron immediately knocked Prince Iturbide down. The little prince sprang onto a sofa and bounced up and down, shouting over and over again, "He knocked an Iturbide down; he knocked an Iturbide down!" as if he expected Mr. Marbury to straightway haul the baron off to be beheaded, at least. It was the last party given at the old house for many a day, as Mr. Marbury considered that they had been disgraced by their guests.

Years after, when Madame Iturbide was left a widow in Mexico, the Emperor Maximilian wished to adopt her son, to which she gave her consent, but finding later that it meant complete separation from him, she kidnapped him and escaped to America.

For two whole days after the Battle of Bull Run, the "Damn Yankees," as the Marburys called them, poured over the nearby bridge from Virginia at a dog-trot and dropped from exhaustion on the steps of this house and the pavement. Mr. Marbury ordered all of the shutters to be kept [Pg 99] tightly closed during that dreadful time.

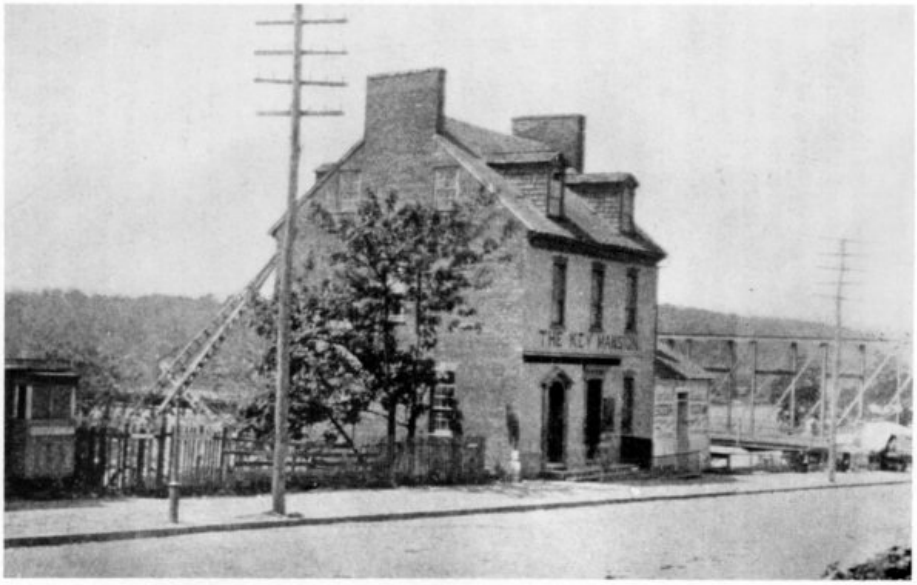
A little granddaughter of his, living there, went one day with a friend of hers to place flowers on the grave of a child of Jefferson Davis in Oak Hill Cemetery. They were arrested, and when it was discovered who she was, soldiers were sent to search the house. Mrs. Marbury had some letters from her nephews in the Confederate Army, and she hurriedly sewed them up in a chair, for she said the boys might be killed and she hated to destroy their letters. Many, many years after, on a summer day in the garret of an old house, not far from Leesburg, Virginia, three of Mrs. Marbury's great-grandchildren ripped them out of their long hiding place.

Just a few doors west of this interesting old house stood another, somewhat smaller, which, until a few years ago, was in its original state of preservation. Now it has gone! It was the home of the author of our National Anthem. Here Francis Scott Key lived for twenty years. Here his eleven children were born, while he served three terms as District Attorney and engaged in the private practice of law.

Everyone knows the story of how, hearing of the arrest of a friend, Dr. William Beanes, by the British, in the War of 1812, Mr. Key made the trip to Baltimore to see what he could do to help the old gentleman, who had done some very rash talking down in Prince Georges County. Mr. Key was a connection of Mrs. Beanes', who was a member of the Plater family.

Mr. Key went on board the British man-of-war, under the command of Admiral Cockburn, called *The Red Devil of the Chesapeake*, lying opposite Fort McHenry, but was told by the captain that he would have to spend the night on board as a bombardment was about to take place. Imagine his sensations all through the night—no wonder that he burst forth into such a poem of love for his flag when he came on deck in the early morning and saw it "still there!"

[Pg 100]



Home of Francis Scott Key

[Pg 101]

Poetry was only a side issue with Mr. Key. I have often thought how interesting it is that a man may work all the days of his life at his profession or vocation, and some avocation, like verse-making, may carry his name down to posterity; like Izaak Walton, who had an insurance business in London, but is remembered now only as a fisherman.

Don't you imagine Mr. Key would have been amazed if he could have had a vision of the years to come, when on parade grounds all over this great land at sunset, every day, troops stand immovable at attention while the emblem of their country is being lowered for the night, and the strains of the music of his poem thrill all who hear it? "The Star-Spangled Banner" was first read by Mr. Key at a meeting of the George Town Glee Club.

Francis Scott Key was a nephew of Philip Barton Key, and a vestryman, like his uncle, of Saint John's Church. He was a fine, humanitarian gentleman. In a recent book, called *Father Takes Us to Washington*, he is accused of having treated his dozen slaves in a terrible manner. His great-grandson has just come out with a refutation of such treatment and said that Mr. Key freed all of his slaves before his death in 1843 and that he was one of the founders of the American Colonization Society, which had for its purpose the freedom of the Negroes and their colonization on the West Coast of Africa. Of course, it was in James Monroe's administration that Liberia was founded and its capital named Monrovia.

[Pg 102]

Francis Scott Key

[Pg 103]

In later life, Francis Scott Key moved to Frederick, Maryland, where he lies buried. The beautiful new bridge, only a stone's throw from his home, bears his name. It replaces the aqueduct bridge which was built about 1880, and before that, there was a bridge which carried the canal across the river to continue on its way to Alexandria. I cannot remember it, but I have been told that, looking across from the Virginia side, it was a very picturesque sight with its long arches reaching above the bridge, carrying its dripping load beneath, and standing against the western sky, the towers of Georgetown College.

Chapter VIII

[Pg 104]

High Street, Prospect Avenue, the College, the Convent, and the Threlkelds

UP the hill from Bridge (M) Street on the east side of High Street (Wisconsin Avenue), a door or two above where the Farmers and Mechanics Branch of Riggs Bank now stands, was a fine old house where the Potomac Fire Insurance Company had its first home. But long before that, it was the home of Mrs. Caperton, whose son, Hugh Caperton, became a well-known lawyer here.

At the present 1239 Wisconsin Avenue, where Becker's Paint Store has been for a good many years, was the house which Robert Peter gave to his eldest daughter, Elizabeth, when, at the age of sixteen, she married her cousin, James Dunlop, in 1787. This old letter gives some news about the wedding.

It is addressed to: John Davidson, Esq., Merchant, Annapolis:

George Town
August 17th, 1787

Dear Sir:

Without any ceremony or preamble I have undertaken to enclose you the measure for a pair of Stays, not that I suppose that you are to make them, but that you may undertake to engage Mrs. Davidson's interest to undertake the direction of them.

They are for a daughter of mine who is tollerably nice, and she will not consent to trust the business entirely to the Staymaker, nor, it seems, to any other Lady in Annapolis but Mrs. [Pg 105] Davidson, so that you see what a deal of trouble I have brought her into, by having often observed in my daughter's hearing how that Mrs. Davidson seemed to me to be in all things about her Family, in short the Girl has taken it into her head that she is old enough to become a wife, and does not only beg of Mrs. Davidson to direct as to her Stays, but wishes she would take the trouble of procuring some Paterns of silks fit and suitable for what they call a Wedding Gown, with the prices paid or annexed to the Patterns, and when the choice is made I suppose the next favor will be of Mrs. Davidson to direct as to the making of it. Mrs. Davidson must take the cause of all this trouble to herself, for if she did not merit the charge she would not have had the trouble. I am just now interrupted by receiving a further commission, to wit for a crepe cushion made by the best and most fashionable Barber in Annapolis, and a lock of the color wanted is enclosed. I want everything good and fashionable, but you know we old Fellows like everything as cheap as they can be got to have them good. I leave everything to yours and Mrs. Davidson's good management, but, at the same time, it would appear as if there was some expedition. The samples and prices of the silk I will be obliged by your sending by post, the Stays and Cushion perhaps you may be able to forward by Miss Patty Lingan who will be coming down in nine or ten days, as I am informed. I am just now tortured with black guard consignment business and therefore I conclude by remaining Your Very Humble Servant,

ROBERT PETER.

They were married in October and had eight children, all but one of whom lived to maturity.

In 1792, five years after their marriage, James Dunlop bought an estate of 700 acres known as "Hayes," seven miles out in Montgomery County; this later became their permanent residence. It had been built in 1762 by the Reverend Alexander Williamson, rector of Rock Creek Church (now [Pg 106] St. Paul's), until he resigned in 1776, being a Tory. In history, he is called the "Sporting Parson" because of his love for fox-hunting and cock-fighting.

The back lawn of this house was the bowling green and the old balls are still in the attic there. Also, there is still there an old rose bush bearing small white roses, which was planted by Elizabeth Peter Dunlop. This was my summer home when I was a girl and is now in possession of my eldest brother.

Just above number 1239 is the crook in High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) and, until a few years ago, I never knew why it was that way: actually, it follows the line of the grant of the Rock of Dumbarton, which was surveyed that way. The reason the streets on the west side of High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) don't match those on the east side is because they were laid out by different owners.

Just about here is the Aged Woman's Home, standing high above the street. It was founded in 1868 with a gift of $15,000 from Mr. W. W. Corcoran. It houses fourteen women. In all these years there have been only three Presidents of the Board: Mrs. Beverley Kennon, Miss Emily Nourse, and the present one, Mrs. Louis Freeman. The back part of the house is what is left of the home of John Lutz, who had a good deal of land around his house when he built it nearly two hundred years ago.

In days gone by, the Aged Woman's Home was partly supported by contributions collected by women who were members of the Benevolent Society, who went from door to door with a book in which amounts to be given were subscribed. [Pg 107]

On the southeast corner of High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) and Gay (N) Street, just above here has been conducted, since 1861, the grocery business of H. W. Fisher and Son, first was the grandfather, known as Henry, whom I remember, with a long grey beard; then his son of the same name, known as Wellen, and now his son, Henry. I am told by an old resident that the first telephone in Georgetown was in the Fisher's store, as it is known, and that when people wanted to phone, they went there and used it.

I was fed from Fisher's all my young life, and I imagine my father was one of their best customers, as he had eleven children and multitudes of relatives in Maryland and Virginia, who came to stay whenever they wished to visit Washington City. So you can rather imagine the consternation of the elder Mr. Fisher when, one hot afternoon, as he was clearing out his crate of tomatoes just before closing time and, as was the custom in those long ago days, picked up a large, over-ripe one and threw it out, as he supposed into the gutter, that, instead, it landed on the stiff "boiled shirt" bosom of Mr. George T. Dunlop! I never knew of this occurrence until I was told of it many years after by Mr. Wellen Fisher, who said his father always said it never made any difference to Mr. Dunlop.

On the other side of High Street (Wisconsin Avenue), coming up from Bridge (M) Street, on the corner was the hardware store of Edward M. Linthicum; later Henry Addison had a dry goods store there.

A little farther up, in the nineties, was Joe Schladt's, the saloon of the Town. We all knew about it, but, of course, no lady ever entered it. There were, however, three or four very well-known gentlemen who entered it very frequently, and had a good deal of difficulty reaching their homes every evening. [Pg 108]

Then we come to 1254 Wisconsin Avenue, Stohlman's, which, ever since 1820, has dispensed a very different form of refreshment—ice cream. First it was Arnold's Bakery, then, in 1845, the business was sold to Mr. and Mrs. May; then, in 1865, to Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Stohlman, she being the niece of Mrs. May; then to J. William Stohlman, father of the present owner by the same name, and they are still serving the "élite of Georgetown" not only with ice cream, but other dainties. Back in my girlhood it was "quite the thing" to go down to Stohlman's and have a saucer of ice cream in the back parlor at one of the little marble-topped tables.

Right next door is Forrest Hall. Here, at one corner of the property, was one of the original stones marking the northern border of Georgetown when it was surveyed, No. 46. On this lot stood the Union Bank and then, in 1855, Bladen Forrest, (not a descendant of Colonel Uriah Forrest), built this large and very good-looking building.

The enlisted men of the battalion of the Second U. S. Infantry were quartered in Forrest Hall for a time at the beginning of the Civil War. Later it was used as a hospital for Union soldiers. After that, the Georgetown Assemblies were held there for several years, and various other affairs. I remember a fete called a "Chocolatère" when I was a little girl, and going to it with my mother, and seeing three pretty girls dressed in Japanese costume singing "Three Little Girls from School Are We." I think that was not so very long after the *Mikado* made its debut.

On the northwest corner of High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) and Prospect Street, the building which has an interesting cornice and roof is where W. W. Corcoran started his career, in the dry goods business. [Pg 109]

Just beyond was a market; I think it was called a "Farmers' and Butchers' Market," an offshoot of the old Market on Bridge (M) Street. I remember going there when I was a little girl with my mother, and her buying vegetables from a Dutch woman, Mrs. Hight. I have always remembered her rosy, smiling face, and her stall of gay, vari-colored vegetables. She had a farm out on the Rockville Pike, and I think of it sometimes when I pass.

High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) nowadays has become the center of antique shops, there are many of them, also now there are dress shops and accessories of all kinds.

Then we go along Prospect Street, which was named for the tract of land belonging to Benjamin Stoddert, called "Pretty Prospect."

On the corners of Potomac Street are two quaint, little houses. On the southeast corner of Frederick (34th) and Prospect Streets stands an apartment house, which, before a false front was added a few years ago when it was converted, was the dignified brick house where Benjamin Stoddert lived and entertained in most hospitable style.

[Pg 110]

Benjamin Stoddert's House

He named his home "Halcyon House," and what a suitable and lovely name for one in his business, and one who had settled here after his service in the Revolution. For the halcyon was a fabled bird, whose nest floated upon the sea. It had the power of charming winds and waves, hence, "halcyon days" are days of tranquillity and peace. He had married Rebecca Loundes, the daughter of Christopher Loundes, of Bladensburg. They had several children. Mrs. Stoddert [Pg 111] writes thusly of them on a day when they must have been particularly trying:

> I wonder that you can be so anxious to see my children, for a parcel of rude, disagreeable brats as ever was born, except the two youngest.

She writes another letter on the 15th of December, 1799, in which she is evidently condoling with someone, and says she "hopes Nancy was not disappointed at having a fine girl;" she is sure of "Richard's feelings on the subject, for the men always are, if they would but own it, after having one daughter, all but sons are unwelcome." She goes on to say, "But they may comfort themselves, but I will be security that the next one will be a son."

What marvelous necromancy this lady must have possessed—in her own opinion—worth a gold mine if it could really be true!

From his southern dormer windows, tradition says, Major Stoddert used to watch with his telescope for the coming of some of those ships that he and Colonel Forrest and Colonel Murdock sent out across the ocean.

On May 17, 1798, he was appointed Secretary of the Navy, being the first to hold that position, and so remained until March 1, 1807.

On May 29, 1800, he wrote thusly from Philadelphia (where he was engaged by his cabinet duties), to his near neighbor, John Templeman, on the corner just one block west of him, the old house which stood for so many, many years unoccupied:

> Dear Sir:
>
> The Pres. will be at Washington by the time you receive this, or a day or two after. He proposes to stay but a little while. I wish he would remain longer. This and other good things [Pg 112] will depend on the manner of employing his time. I request, therefore, that setting Bashfulness at defiance, you will urge the Pres. to go to the balls, to ride with you in your coach, and to get Mr. Scott at least to go with you. Let the Pres. be pleased with the attention and with the country.
>
> I am resp. yrs.,
>
> Ben Stoddert.
>
> Barring accidents, I expect to be in Geo. Town the 14th of June.

After Benjamin Stoddert's death, this house was given by William Whann as a wedding present to his only child, Anna Maria, on her marriage to Benjamin Mackall, the son of Leonard Mackall. Their son, General William W. Mackall, was a graduate of West Point in the class with General Grant. He served with distinction in the Mexican War and later in the Confederate Army. Shortly after the close of the Civil War, General Grant gave a reception at the White House to the Aztec Society, composed of officers who served in the War with Mexico and their descendants. General Mackall went to it clad in his grey uniform and was most cordially received by his old comrades.

Still later than the Mackalls, this house was occupied by Mr. Martineau, Minister from the Netherlands, and then by the Pairo family.

To return to Mr. Templeman's house which he built about 1788. He was president of the Bank of

Columbia; also an owner of ships, and, as a side issue, had:

> For Sale—At John Templeman's Store.
> Whisky, Firkin Butter, Linseed Oil, and Flour.
> George Town June 20, 1800.

[Pg 113] Those ships which carried tobacco across 3,000 miles of ocean didn't fill their holds with bricks as ballast on the way back, as we used to be told; there were too many better things needed here. And there was plenty of clay right here to burn brick. Even in the early days of Jamestown there were brick factories of which there are records and "English Brick" meant made by specifications of English brick.

The Templeman family lived here for three generations until the Civil War. Then it belonged to Franklin Steele, whose three daughters were Mrs. Morris, Mrs. Arthur Addison, and Mrs. Edward Macaulay.

"Old Mrs. Morris," as she was called, lived there many years alone and was always complaining to my father that the new building of the Capital Traction Company was undermining her house and was knocking it down. It still stands firm. It was finally "done over" a few years ago, and eventually bought by James E. Forrestal, when he became Secretary of the Navy, and was still his home when he resigned as our first Secretary of Defense, and then ended his life tragically May 12, 1949, by leaping from a window of the Naval Hospital at Bethesda.

The house was leased for two or three years to the Government and called "Prospect House." It was used by the State Department as a "guest house," where such honored persons as the Shah of Iran, Monsieur Vincent Auriol, President of France, and several Presidents of Latin American countries, and other officials, stayed. The State Department often used it for dinner parties. Its garden which used to be terraced down to the river, and quaint little gazebo are still lovely. It has recently been purchased by Representative Thurmond Chatham of North Carolina.

[Pg 114]

Home of Dr. Charles Worthington

[Pg 115] Just across from Mr. Templeman's house on the northeast corner is one of the loveliest houses left in Georgetown. It stood for many years unchanged and unoccupied until a few years ago, when it was bought by Sir Wilmott Lewis, the representative in Washington for a long time of the *London Times*.

It was built by John Thomson Mason, (not General John Mason, whose home was on Bridge Street). It was acquired in 1810 by Dr. Charles Worthington, who came to George Town in 1783 from Sumner Hill in Anne Arundel County. He previously owned a house on the southwest corner of Bridge (M) and Market (33rd) Streets, and, later on, bought this house. He called his home "Quality Hill." His family lived there for many years until about 1856, when they moved up to the Heights and bought a house on Road Street. The family of James Kearney lived there then, until about twenty years ago. Dr. Worthington was one of the original members of Saint John's Church and first president of the District of Columbia Medical Society.

Dr. Charles Worthington was an austere man, very dignified and serious. To his latest day, he dressed in the old style; his hair in queue, knee breeches, long stockings, and buckles on his shoes. He drove a coach-and-four when going to his country place out on the Seventh Street Road near Brightwood. He was a man of great ability and zeal. He lived to be 76 years old, having practiced medicine 55 years. His son, Nicholas, followed in his profession.

[Pg 116] Another block westward on this street stood Prospect Cottage, a charming little home where Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth lived in the sixties and wrote her many novels—one for every year of her life. This house was for a time the home of the League of American Pen Women.

Just about a block northward stands Holy Trinity Catholic Church, referred to sometimes in old newspapers as The Roman Church. The present large edifice, facing on Lingan (36th) Street, was

first built in 1849, but the original church is the small building at the back of it, high up from First (N) Street. The earliest marriage recorded there is April 6, 1795; the first baptism, May 14, 1795, signed by Reverend Francis Neale, S. J., who was the first pastor. But the lot had been purchased some years before by Bishop Carroll.

The building was erected by Alexander Doyle, putting in his own means in addition to contributions from others. This church was virtually owned by the college and was used for the college commencements until 1832.

Georgetown College, now a university, stands like a fortress at the western boundary of the town. Its lovely chimes float out over the town at every quarter of the hour. Only one of the original buildings in old, red brick still stands behind the grey stone modern halls. The north building was put up first, and by 1797, students began to lodge in it. There were 57 boarders at that time. The college was opened in 1789—its founder being John Carroll, a member of the famous Maryland family, who was consecrated Bishop at Lulworth Castle in England, but returned immediately to this country. There is a fine seated statue of him just in front of the main building. In 1806 it passed under the control of the Jesuits, and in 1815, it was raised to the rank of a university. The observatory of Georgetown, founded by Reverend James Curley in 1842, is one of the oldest in this country. [Pg 117]

In 1830 Jonathan Elliot wrote of the college:

> On entering the College, every pupil shall pay ten dollars. He shall bring a mattress, a pillow, two pillow cases, two pairs of sheets, four blankets and a counterpane, or pay $6.00 per annum for the use of bed and bedding. He must also bring with him one suit of clothes, as a uniform—which is in winter a blue cloth coat and pantaloons with a black velvet waistcoat; in summer white pantaloons with a black silk waistcoat are used. He must likewise bring with him two suits for daily wear, for which no particular color is prescribed; six shirts, six pairs of stockings, six pocket handkerchiefs, three pairs of shoes, a hat and a cloak or great coat, also a silver spoon. These articles if not brought by the student will be furnished by the College and included in the first bill.
>
> The pension for board, washing, mending and mending materials, use of books (philosophical and mathematical excepted), pens, ink, and writing paper, slates and pencil, is $150. Medical aid and medicine, unless parents choose to run the risk of a doctor's bill in case of sickness, $3.00 per annum. All charges must be paid half-yearly in advance.
>
> With regard to pocket money it is desired that all students should be placed on an equality and that it should not exceed 12-1/2 cents per week; and whatever is allowed must be deposited in the hands of the directors of the College. Half-boarders are received on the usual terms, viz. $5 entrance and $65 for board per annum.
>
> Day scholars $5 for fuel and servants, as no charge is made for tuition. The College has been established 45 years and not a single death has taken place among the students.

This was in spite of the fact that the young men, winter and summer, washed at the pump!

Early in 1861 several volunteer regiments, including the 69th New York and the 79th Pennsylvania Regiments, arrived in Georgetown. The 69th was mustered into service in the grounds of Georgetown College, where it was afterwards quartered. The 79th Pennsylvania Regiment was clad in their distinctive Scottish kilts, plaids, and striped stockings, and had a band of pipers at their head. [Pg 118]

The Georgetown College students showed where their sympathies were by an ostentatious display of a badge fastened upon the lapel of the coat—tri-color for the Union, and blue for disunion.

Just west of the college used to be a pond which was a very popular resort for skaters in the winter season.

Not far away is another well-known Catholic institution, for the education of the other sex—the oldest Visitation Convent in the country—having on its list of alumnæ many well-known names.

When Father Neale came from Philadelphia to George Town in 1798 to become president of the college, he found living on Fayette (35th) Street, near by, three ladies belonging to the Order of Poor Clares. This order was founded in Assisi long ago by Sister Clare, a devoted friend of Saint Francis of Assisi, and is similar to the Franciscans. The three ladies were members of the French nobility who had been driven from their convent in France during the Revolution in 1793 and, coming to this country, had set up a little convent not far from the college. They attempted to keep a school as a means of support, but had a very difficult time. Once, it is told, they were reduced to such poverty that they had to sell a parrot, which they had as a pet, in order to save themselves from starvation. These women, barefooted, according to the rule of their order, came of noble blood and had been born to luxury. One of them was Mary de la Marche, who advertised in the newspaper salves and eyewashes for sale. [Pg 119]

In 1799 Father Neale sent back to Philadelphia for three devoted religious friends from Ireland, who wished to found a convent. They were Alice Tabor, Maria McDermott, and Louise Sharpe. For a few months they boarded with the Poor Clares, but a little later Father Neale bought a house and lot nearby and installed them in it. They became known as The Pious Ladies. On May 18, 1801, Mary de la Marche advertised the two houses of the Poor Clares for sale, but apparently they did not sell them at that time, for, in 1804, after the death of the Abbess,

Madame de la Rochefoucault, who succeeded her, sold the convent to Bishop Neale, and the remaining ladies returned to France.

The Pious Ladies slowly increased in numbers, keeping their school and struggling against poverty, all the time endeavoring to become established as members of the Visitation Order. At last their hope and ambition came to pass, and, in 1816, they were regularly established as the Georgetown Visitation Convent.

Across the street from the Convent grounds, a lovely big meadow until it was partly taken over in World War II for a housing project, are the Volta Bureau for the Deaf and two interesting houses.

Mrs. Gilbert Grosvenor, the daughter of Alexander Graham Bell, has very kindly given me this wonderful letter about them:

> My grandfather, Alexander Melville Bell, lived on the corner of 35th Street and Volta Place in the house since occupied by Mr. Walter Lippman, (but not at present).
>
> Following my father's removal to Washington in about 1879, his father and mother changed their residence from Brantford, Ontario, to Georgetown. With them were their three nieces, the Misses Symonds, who were my father's double cousins. At the back of the 35th Street property was an old stable which my father converted into a laboratory, and he carried on experiments there almost until the time of his death. He would come out nearly every afternoon to his laboratory and visit with his parents before returning home in the evening. [Pg 120]
>
> It was also our custom to have dinner with my grandfather and grandmother on Sundays. They were very jolly times and my grandfather always had a jar of candy for the grandchildren and games which we could all play. He was very popular with all the young people, being jolly, and looked a little like the usual idea of Santa Claus, with his gray beard and hair.
>
> Shortly after my grandfather came to live in Georgetown, his brother, Mr. David Charles Bell and Mrs. Bell, followed him from Brantford to Washington and bought the house next door. With them at that time, keeping house for them, was Miss Aileen Bell. She was noted in the family as having turned down Bernard Shaw's offer of marriage in her young days, Bernard Shaw having been a great friend of her brother, Mr. Chichester Bell, and having visited with the family when they lived in Dublin, Ireland. Mr. David Bell had in his young days moved to Dublin to carry on the career of his father, Alexander Bell, as a teacher of elocution. His wife had a school for young ladies. Another son of the family was Mr. Charles J. Bell, later president of the American Security and Trust Company, who later married my mother's sister, Roberta Hubbard, and came to reside in Washington.
>
> Mr. David Charles Bell was a very handsome man, but very irascible, and the young people were quite afraid of him. He and his brother had numerous vehement arguments as to whether Shakespeare or Bacon wrote Shakespeare's plays. My grandmother was eleven or twelve years older than her husband, so my grandfather did most of the marketing, and I understand it used to be quite a sight on Saturday morning to see the two old gentlemen, Mr. David and Mr. Melville Bell, going to market with baskets over their arms. Notwithstanding all their arguments, they were very devoted to each other. [Pg 121]
>
> Miss Aileen Bell was very musical and was one of the founders of the Friday Morning Music Club and other musical clubs. She was the organist and choir leader in Christ Church, Georgetown. She was always very punctilious in her attendance and I remember her talking about her church.
>
> Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bell and their family also used to come out on Sundays to see their parents, but they usually came to supper. The family as a whole were very devoted. Mr. Chichester Bell, you may recall, was the co-inventor with my father and Mr. Tainter of the phonograph. The wax records that are used today are their invention and their company, the Columbia Phonograph Company, operated under their patents.
>
> After my grandfather's death, the house came into my father's possession, and he gave it to the American Association to Promote the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf, now called the Volta Speech Association. It was used for a time as the home of the Superintendent. My father still continued to use his laboratory. Some years later, when the Association needed money, it was sold and the proceeds used to carry on the work of the Association. My father was very much interested in the work of the Volta Bureau and one winter, when my mother was away, he lived at the Volta Bureau, compiling some of his scientific data. He had a way when he became absorbed in work of forgetting to eat or sleep, and the person that brought his dinner tray would often find his luncheon tray untouched.

JOHN THRELKELD

Just north of the convent grounds is the site of the estate of Berleith, which had been built by Henry Threlkeld. He had, in 1751, married Mrs. Mary Hopkins, a daughter of Dr. Gustavus Brown of Maryland, and widow of Reverend Matthew Hopkins. Henry Threlkeld died in 1781, his widow in 1801. Their one child, John, was married in 1787 to Elizabeth Ridgely, of Maryland. Two years before his marriage he visited England, one object of his trip being to secure a legacy which he converted into gold and brought back with him. He landed in England at Dover, which he described as being "about the size of George Town," the voyage having taken nearly two months—from October 6th to December 3rd. In his journal he wrote of having gone to the House of Commons to hear "Mr. Pitt open the budgett, Mr. Fox followed, and then Mr. Sheridan replied to Mr. Pitt."

Of John Threlkeld, an old paper states that "he was well and very widely known as a fine scholar and a man of great benevolence." He was mayor of George Town in 1793 and a personal friend of Thomas Jefferson. He was remembered as a handsome figure on horseback, even in his late years, and his love of following the hounds is a family tradition. The comments made by him in this connection during his stay in England are interesting. After describing the journey by coach past fine estates with "one-half the fields as green as spring with grass," he added, "and but one horse have I seen in the course of thirty miles at pasture, and here I must take notice of their boasting in America of their hunters leaping the five-bar gates." He goes on to explain how the measurements were taken, and concludes, "but still their horses vastly surpass ours."

John and Elizabeth Threlkeld had four children, but the only son died in infancy, so the name disappeared, and the family is represented only by the descendants of their daughter, Jane, who married John Cox.

[Pg 124]

Colonel John Cox

Chapter IX

[Pg 125]

Along First Street (N) from Cox's Row to High Street (Wisconsin Ave.)

ON the northeast corner of First Street (N) and Frederick (34th) Street stands the row of houses which John Cox built. Colonel Cox was for many years most prominent in all the affairs of Georgetown, serving as its Mayor longer than any other one man from 1823 to 1845—22 years. John Cox was of English descent. He was born in 1775 during the Revolution, was the youngest of four children, and being left an orphan as a small child, was raised by an uncle who was a banker in Baltimore. He later lived for a while in Philadelphia, and from there came to Georgetown. He first married Matilda Smith, a sister of Clement Smith, well known as the first cashier of the Farmers' & Mechanics Bank, later its president. They had three children, one of whom was named Clement. By his second marriage to Jane Threlkeld he had seven children.

In the War of 1812 he served as a Colonel. He was a large property owner in Georgetown, besides being a well-to-do merchant. He built the row of houses on First (N) Street, called by his name and lived for a while in the house on the corner. That must have been during the period of his first marriage, for after Jane Threlkeld became his wife they built a lovely house on part of the Berleith estate, next door to the old Threlkeld which had been burned, and called it The Cedars. It stood where the Western High School now stands, and it is difficult to realize now that there, in [Pg 126] my memory, was a home surrounded by a mass of trees and vines and was most delightfully private and charming. It was a quaint and lovely old cream-colored mansion, a portico on its north front, two long piazzas as usual, along the south side of the house. In later years I myself went there to the private school kept by the Misses Earle, whose father, George Earle purchased the place.

Colonel Cox was celebrated as a dandy. "He would saunter down town in silk stockings and pumps, not getting a spot upon himself, while other men would be up to their ankles in mud, for in those days there were no pavements." Stepping-stones were placed at the corners of the streets standing rather high above the roadway to facilitate the pedestrians.

Colonel Cox had moved up to The Cedars when, as mayor in 1824, it fell to his lot to act as host for Georgetown to the Marquis de Lafayette, when he made his famous visit.

A new arrival was imminent in the Cox family, so it was not advisable to have the party, which he wished to give, at his home. Consequently, he used one of these houses which was vacant at that time, number 3337; had it furnished from top to bottom, his eldest daughter, Sally, acting in her mother's place as hostess for the distinguished party invited to meet the hero of the hour.

It is said that one young lady in her enthusiasm fell upon her knees before the Marquis and impressed a kiss upon his hands. There was a fashion in those days of decorating the floor by painting a pattern around the edges with colored chalks—garlands of roses entwined with the [Pg 127] flags of the two countries. A marvelous supper was served; it is said it included 600 reed birds. It is to be hoped it also included other things more substantial than this high-sounding but sparsely

covered game.

The coach of Colonel Cox was at the disposal of the honored guest during the period of his stay. When he made his formal entry into the District of Columbia, having come by way of Baltimore, he was escorted by a troop of cavalry from Montgomery County commanded by my grandfather, Captain Henry Dunlop, a Georgetonian, then farming the family plantation, Hayes, seven miles north of town.

Tradition says that number 3337 had a tunnel leading to the river. Some such large opening was discovered when the owner excavated recently to make a pool in the garden. In 1860 this house was the home of William A. Gordon, for many years chief of the quartermaster's department. It was from here that his eldest son of the same name left to enter the Confederate Army. William A. Gordon, senior, born in Baltimore, had gone to the Military Academy at West Point, and while there a terrible cry arose about the poor quality of food furnished for the cadets. Mr. Gordon was one of the three young men selected by the corps to go to Washington to interview the President on the subject. The answer he gave them was that he would see that conditions at the Academy were remedied, but his advice to them was to send in their resignations immediately, as there would be no career there for them after this.

From about 1865 to 1892 Mr. and Mrs. William Laird, Jr., made this house their home. Mr. Laird [Pg 128] was for forty years cashier of the Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank, and was greatly respected. When he resigned he was presented by the officials with a very handsome silver punch bowl, ladle and tray and a large silver loving cup. He died suddenly a month or two after giving up his business and his widow did not survive him long. Mrs. Laird was Anna Key Ridgely, a charming person. They had no children, nor had his brother, who never married, so this name, long so honored here, has disappeared from Georgetown.

To return to the corner house. It was for several years the home of Commodore Charles Morris, one of the eminent officers of the early U. S. Navy. He made a remarkable record in the War with Tripoli, his earliest achievement being on the occasion of the recapture and destruction of the frigate *Philadelphia* in the harbor of Tripoli in 1804. Midshipman Morris, then nineteen years old, volunteered for the service and was the first to stand on the deck of the *Philadelphia* and commence the work of destruction. At the beginning of the War of 1812 he held the rank of lieutenant—and became executive officer of the *Constitution*, Captain Isaac Hull being in command.

On the 17th of July, 1812, a very calm day, the frigate met a fleet of British vessels, and the enemy thought they had an easy prize, but by a combination of towing and kedging by means of the *Constitution's* boats and anchors, an extraordinary escape was made which, as Captain Hull stated at the time, was conceived by Lieutenant Morris. Its successful execution commanded the admiration of his countrymen and won the applause even of the British officers. [Pg 129]

Commodore Morris was chosen to escort Lafayette back to France on the U. S. S. *Brandywine*, and while on a visit to the general his portrait was painted by Amy Shaffer and sent back to Mrs. Morris as a gift from the Marquis.

In 1842 the property was bought by James Keith who was a great friend of General Washington, Mr. Keith's daughter married Mr. Forrest, and their son French Forrest was an officer in the United States Navy, but like many others in this part of the world, went into the Southern Navy during the Civil War. At the time of his funeral W. W. Corcoran, who was a very intimate friend, was a pall-bearer. In those days it was the style for the mourners to wear a long streamer of crêpe around their hats and hanging down a foot or two. Little Douglas Forrest, the son of the deceased, began to cry, saying he "wanted some funeral on his hat." Mr. Corcoran took him in hand and insisted that he should have his wish and be arrayed like the other mourners.

In the other houses of that row lived, at number 3335, just before the Civil War, a family named Semmes from New Orleans who had several daughters considered very beautiful. Cora Semmes became the wife of Colonel Joseph Ives, a brilliant young engineer officer of the United States Army, who, although of Northern birth, espoused the Southern cause. He was put on General Lee's staff, and later transferred to be aide-de-camp to Jefferson Davis where, in Richmond he and his wife became prominent and useful in entertaining distinguished foreigners, as she was noted for her charm as well as her beauty.

In number 3333 Judge Robert Ould resided. His father had been one of the founders of the [Pg 130] Lancastrian School. Mattie Ould, whose name still is a synonym for grace, beauty and wit, spent her childhood here. After the Oulds went to Richmond this house was for a time the home of Henry Addison, while he was mayor. Later on the Cropleys lived in it.

William Hunter lived for a great many years in number 3331, when he was Assistant Secretary of State. Women of my generation still remember him for his love of little children and his gifts to them of toys and goodies.

Across on the southeast corner of First (N) Street and Frederick (34th) Street at 3340 is the house which Harry Hopkins, the great friend of Franklin D. Roosevelt, bought and moved to with his new wife and his daughter Diana, when they left the White House where they had been living for a year or more. This was his home at the time of his death.

On this street used to live the Marburys before they moved to The Heights, and also the Wheatleys of whom there were several households in Georgetown in the latter part of the last

century.

A block eastward on the same side of the street is another row of charming old houses, built about 1800 by Colonel James Smith, "lately returned from the Revolutionary War." In the one on the corner of First (N) and Potomac Streets used to live Mrs. Gannt and her daughter Clare and Mrs. Gannt's sister Mrs. Smith. I think they were descendants of the builder of the row. Their old home was for a time occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Blair Thaw, the former a poet, the latter an artist.

Third from the corner at 3259, in the middle of the 19th century lived Dr. Lewis Ritchie who had [Pg 131] an extensive practice. I think he was the son of Dr. Joshua Ritchie. This house was the home of Hon. and Mrs. Lewis A. Douglas when he was the sole representative in Congress from Arizona. Later he was Director of the Budget and within recent years Ambassador to the Court of St. James. This house is now the home of Mrs. McCook Knox who is very well known in connection with the study of Early American Portraits and has been connected with the Frick Art Reference Library of New York since its inception. In the front room of the attic of 3259 were doors of rough hewn wood with old iron bolts leading into rooms of the two adjoining houses. The story is that in the War of 1812 this row of houses used to be watched. A soldier would be stationed on the corner, but the "questionable person" never emerged, he could escape through the attic rooms and come out at the end of the row.

No. 3257 is now the home of Hon. and Mrs. Richard B. Wigglesworth of Massachusetts.

The old home of the Shoemaker family was at 3261. While he was Assistant Secretary of War it was the home of Hon. and Mrs. F. Trubee Davison and is now the home of Hon. and Mrs. James J. Wadsworth of New York.

All of this part of Georgetown west of High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) used to be called Holy Hill, because of the great number of Irish who dwelt in the neighborhood. On Saint Patrick's Day there were parades and fights, and all kinds of excitement.

There were also a good many respectable colored Catholics, and near here, on Potomac Street, dwelt a family of Coakleys. Magdalen Coakley thought she was the reincarnation of the Virgin [Pg 132] Mary. She got herself up to look like the Virgin, in sweeping white robes and a sky-blue veil and cloak. She was not a very dark negress and had a fine countenance and striking figure. She used to go about the streets blessing little children and wanting to baptize them, followed, of course, by a string of boys making fun of her. She would go up to Trinity Church and stand by the door; but once she wanted to help the priest give Communion, so they had to forbid her coming. Of course the poor soul thought she was being persecuted, but she took it in a Christian manner and prayed all the harder, on the street and everywhere. She lived to be an old woman still wearing her picturesque costume.

Her sister, Frances, was nurse for three generations for the Hein family whose home was at number 3249 N Street, now entirely changed by its modernized roof and steps.

Samuel Hein had emigrated from Königsberg, Germany, as a young man, and had become an American citizen. He was fifty-six years in the Coast and Geodetic Survey, retiring as its disbursing officer. He was an ardent Union man, and during the four years of the Civil War kept the Stars and Stripes flying from one of his windows. All through the two terrible days after the Battle of Bull Run, when the Northern troops were streaming through Georgetown, Mr. Hein maintained a soup kitchen for the soldiers in his back yard. His wife was the daughter of John Simpson who lived on the corner of High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) and West (P) Streets. Her brother, James Alexander Simpson, was a rather well-known portrait painter. They were quite a musical and artistic family. [Pg 133]

One son Charles Hein was an artist and had his studio in a little frame house still standing on 31st (Congress) behind another house, opposite the post office. There he took pupils. He was very picturesque in appearance, tall and dark, wore a drooping mustache, low collar with flowing black cravat and wide-brimmed black hat and cape.

Another son Col. O. L. Hein in an interesting book called *Memories of Long Ago* tells this story:

> One day in the spring of 1861, as I was passing the residence of the pastor of St. John's Church, The Rev. Mr. Tillinghast, quite near our house, I was attracted by the sight of a dashing young Cavalry officer, who was showing off the paces of his handsome black charger to the Minister. I lingered nearby, greatly enjoying the equestrian performance, and upon its conclusion I was informed by the clergyman, that the name of the young officer was William Orton Williams, and that he was the military secretary of Lt. General Winfield Scott.
>
> In the following year I was shocked to read in a local newspaper the account of the trial and conviction of Williams and his cousin, Lt. W. G. Peter (resident of Georgetown) as spies under the assumed names of General W. C. Auton and Major Dunlop, of the Union Army, by a drumhead Court Martial, and their conviction and execution by hanging. In recent years I was informed by my wife's mother, Mrs. Ross, that she remembered Williams quite well, and that he was engaged to Miss Anne Lee, the daughter of General R. E. Lee; but that she died, on the outbreak of the Civil War. Mrs. Ross was a cousin of General Lee, and a freqeunt visitor at Arlington before the secession of Virginia.
>
> Williams was of distinguished ancestry, the son of Capt. William G. Williams, a graduate of West Point of the class of 1822, who was mortally wounded at the Battle of Monterey, Mexico, while serving on the staff of General Zachary Taylor, and his mother, America Peter was the daughter of Thomas Peter, a prominent citizen of Georgetown, whose wife Martha Parke [Pg 134]

Custis was the granddaughter of Mrs. George Washington and an aunt of Mary Custis the wife of General R. E. Lee.

Just next door to this house is the site where, even before 1780, stood the Columbian Academy of which Mr. Rogers was the principal and of which Dr. Balch became the head in 1781. It was a large, two-story frame building, having a high entrance porch, where hung the bell. It stood on a hill which commanded a fine view of the river from the study rooms upstairs. Adjacent to the schoolroom was a large garden in the middle of which was a jessamine arbor. Two of General Washington's nephews were students of the school and lived with the principal.

Here was housed the Columbian Library which was opened in 1803. In later years the present building was erected but having a very different appearance. Here lived Hugh Caperton a well known lawyer.

I myself lived here as a very small child when I was two or three years old and one of my very first memories is being dared by my brothers and sisters to jump off the stone wall fronting the street, about four feet high. I felt as if I had to jump from the Washington Monument, but I did it, with no ill effects.

It was after that the home, for many years, of the Barbers. Old Mrs. Barber moved there with her grandchildren when she sold her home where the United States Naval Observatory now stands. She was the daughter of Major Adlum whose home was The Vineyard where the Bureau of Standards is now. His place was well named for he was a great horticulturist, the first to domesticate the Catawba grape. It grew wild in North Carolina.

Chapter X

[Pg 135]

Gay (N) Street—East to Rock Creek

ACROSS High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) along Gay (N) Street on the northwest corner of Congress (31st) is the Baptist Church which has just celebrated its 75th anniversary. It was originally a small frame building, up on a bank. The present building was erected in 1890.

On the southwest corner of Gay (N) and Congress (31st) Streets stood, not so very many years ago, an attractive old white house with long porches, tiers of them, across the back overlooking a garden. I think the present building is what it was converted into in the period that did the best to rob Georgetown of all its charm.

Here, in 1795, Dr. James Heighe Blake built his home. He was a very eminent citizen, a member of the first vestry of Saint John's Church, one of the very first to advocate schools of the Lancastrian system and a reformatory, and the very first person to suggest a health officer for the City of Washington. He moved over to the city and became its third mayor from 1813 to 1817. His daughter, Glorvina, married William A. Gordon, senior, of whom I have already spoken.

Here, at one time, lived Judge Walter Cox, grandson of Colonel John Cox. His wife was a daughter of Judge Dunlop. Still later, the school of Miss Jennie and Miss Lucy Stephenson was here, which was well attended in the seventies and eighties. In the spring of 1875, a romantic elopement took [Pg 136] place. A young girl of sixteen, an orphan, who was said to be "an heiress," went off to Baltimore very early one morning with the son of a minister who taught Latin in the school.

When the pupils came that morning, they sensed the excitement and gathered in groups in the gallery. Eventually, the news leaked out and the chief topic was that the young lady took no baggage, not even a nightgown, in her flight.

Just below here, on Congress (31st) Street, in the latter part of the last century lived a lady much beloved by rich and poor. She was the first person to conceive the idea of a diet kitchen for the needy. She had not much of this world's goods, so she went daily to the different butchers who gave her scraps of meat which she cooked, and had continually on hand jars of "beef tea." All the doctors knew where to apply when they had patients who were in need of it. She was the widow of Captain Charles Carroll Simms, an officer of the old navy who went with the Confederacy, and at the famous battle in Hampton Roads, was second in command of the *Merrimac*, and in command after the chief officer was killed. She was Elizabeth Nourse, daughter of Major Charles Joseph Nourse, of The Highlands.

Next door, below Mrs. Simms' house, stands the Methodist Protestant Church which not long ago celebrated its one hundredth anniversary. The lot for it was purchased in April, 1829, but the founders for a year or two previous to that had been worshipping in the Presbyterian Church building, Saint John's or the Lancastrian schoolroom. It is now a Christian Science Church. [Pg 137]

Across the street from the church, next door to the Post Office, the tall brick house is where a family lived which in the nineties was a mystery to Georgetown—the Oueston family—father, mother, and daughter. No one knew what was the father's business, and no one ever saw the mother out, but it was rumored that she came from South America, was of royal blood, and had a throne on which she sat, dressed accordingly. The daughter was known then, and for many years

afterwards, as "the girl of a thousand curls." She was tall and slender, and her magnificent suit of dark hair was a mass of curls, making her head look like "a bushel basket." She wore ankle-length dresses of a style totally different from what every other girl wore: white stockings, when all of us wore black, and black slippers, laced up with narrow black ribbons.

And then up to the northeast corner of Gay (N) and Congress (31st) Streets, to the tall yellow house, now an apartment house. For many years it was at the home of the Snyders. Dr. John M. Snyder died at the age of 36, in the enjoyment of a fine reputation in his profession, of an unusual accident.

The story is told by Dr. Samuel Busey, in his *Personal Reminiscences*:

> Dr. Snyder had bought a farm called "Greenwood" a little way out of town toward Tenallytown, and one afternoon at Dr. Busey's home, "Belvoir," now the Beauvoir School, was telling Dr. Busey how he was enjoying pruning the old oak trees on his place of dead wood. Dr. Busey warned him that he was engaging in a dangerous amusement and related the story of how a hired man of his, doing such a job, had had a bad fall, but, fortunately, without injury.
>
> Two or three days later, Dr. Busey was summoned to "Greenwood," where he found Dr. Snyder dying from just such an accident. The branch of the tree he had been sawing off was hanging by a splintered sliver, too weak to support its weight and, in swinging to the ground, had knocked away the ladder on which Dr. Snyder was standing.

[Pg 138]

His wife was Sophy Tayloe, a member of the well-known family of the Octagon House in Washington, and beautiful old Mount Airy in Virginia. As a widow in her old age, she had a steady admirer, a general, who came every afternoon at the same time in his Victoria, and took her to drive. I can see her now, a small, slight figure in her cape, and little black bonnet tied under her chin, and holding one of those quaint little ruffled sunshades to keep the sun out of her eyes.

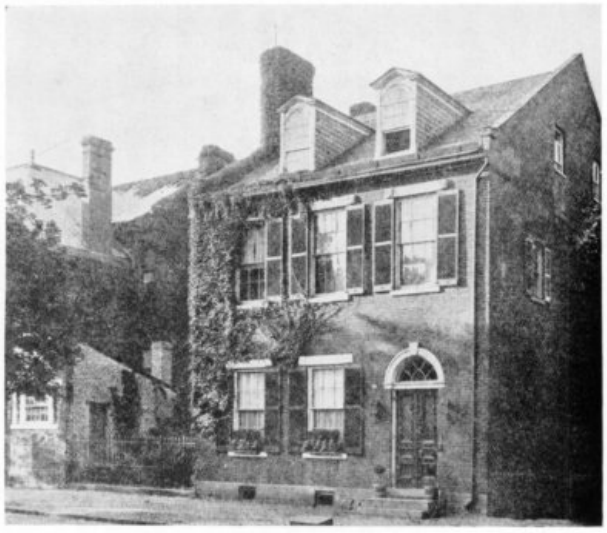
She had one daughter, Miss Annie, who had the loveliest rosy cheeks (no rouge in those days), who never married. One son, Bladen, was an artist, and he used to be a familiar sight with his camp-stool and easel on the streets, painting.

Georgetown was not so "arty" in Bladen Snyder's day, unfortunately, so he was considered very "odd."

The other son, Dr. Arthur Snyder, was a fine surgeon, and an ardent horseman.

Not long ago I was being shown photographs of belles and beaux of the eighties and nineties in Georgetown. Among them were several pictures of the crews of the Columbia Boat Club, and one of the "four" was young Dr. Snyder, whose home this was.

[Pg 139]



Old Dr. Riley's House

There were two boat clubs in those days which were great rivals. The Columbia was at the foot of High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) and the Potomac was at the foot of Congress (31st) Street. I have more recollections of the latter, especially the dances held there on summer evenings, and the porch overhanging the river, with the moonlight on the water.

[Pg 140]

We used to have tug parties, starting from there, going several miles down the Potomac and back, eating our supper on board and singing "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean," and "On the Road to Mandalay," which at that time was quite new.

Across the street, at number 3038, is the house that I have always heard called "old Dr. Riley's." It was sold on the 24th of March, 1812, by James S. Marshall to William S. Nicholls and Romulus Riggs. Mr. Riggs owned the house until 1835. He was born near Brookeville in Montgomery County, Maryland. He was married in 1810. Somewhere between 1812 and 1835 he went to live in Philadelphia where he was a prosperous merchant and influential citizen. I think it probable he lived in this house during some of that time and sold it to Dr. Joshua Riley.

Dr. Riley had several students of medicine whom he taught. Among them was Dr. Armistead

Peter, Alec Williams, "the handsomest man in town," and the two nephews of Baron Bodisco, who also spent much time here. His office, a quaint little one-story brick building, on part of his lot, was torn down a few years ago, to the great sorrow of us old-timers, for Georgetown had lost one of its most distinctive antiques.

Dr. Riley practiced medicine for 51 years and died beloved in the community at large as well as by his patients. He had a good word and pleasant salutation for everybody. He was a man of marked personal appearance, tall, slim, gaunt, awkward in manner, with a quick emphatic style of speech. [Pg 141]

Dr. Riley had married a daughter of Colonel Fowler, who lived on West (P) Street, and on the 10th of June, 1851, his wife's niece, Juliet Murray was married in this dear old house to John Marbury, Jr. Dr. Riley's daughter, Miss Marianna, and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Riley, occupied this house for many years until her death, when it was sold for almost "a song." Since then it has been resold several times.

Across the street, at number 3043, now the home of Vice-Admiral Laurence Du Bose, was the home of another well-known admiral, Theodore Wilkinson, when he returned from the Pacific. He and his wife started off on a motor trip. At Norfolk, Virginia, as they were landing from a ferry, his car got out of control; he signaled to his wife to jump and her life was saved, but he and the car ran off into deep water and he was drowned.

The cream-colored brick house with wings out on each side, now number 3033 N Street, is one of the very oldest houses in Georgetown. It was the home of Colonel George Beall, son of Ninian Beall, and bequeathed by him at his death in 1780 to his daughters, Elizabeth and Ann, the same Elizabeth who became the wife of Dr. Stephen Bloomer Balch shortly after her father's death.

Adjoining the house on the east was the garden. All the land between this house and the one at 3017, built by George Beall's son, Thomas Beall of George, as he always styled himself, was made his two "Additions to Georgetown," was part of this estate. Many years afterwards, the little summer house and the fruit trees were still there. And, as was the custom in those long-ago days, here was the family burying-ground. I know people who remember it. Among the gravestones removed to the old Presbyterian burying-ground were two which bore these inscriptions: "Here lieth Colonel George Beall, who departed this life March 15, 1780, aged 85." And the other, "Here lieth the body of Elizabeth Beall, who departed this life October 2, 1748, aged about 49 years." She was Elizabeth Brooke, daughter of Colonel Thomas Brooke and Barbara Dent. [Pg 142]

In 1809 these two sisters sold this house to John Peter, and the next year he sold it to Mrs. Robert Peter, who was then a widow. She came here to live with her younger daughter, Margaret, who had become the wife of Thomas Dick, of Bladensburg. Here Mrs. Peter lived until her death in 1821, at the age of seventy-eight. Mrs. Dick's husband had died while on a trip to the West Indies and had been buried at sea. She lived on here the rest of her life with her only child, Robert, and he lived there many years and died there—an old bachelor. He was buried in Oak Hill on Christmas Eve, 1870. During these years there was a much-beloved old cook, Aunt Hannah, who was famous for her gingerbread and cookies. I have seen her photograph "all dressed up to have her picture took."

Robert Dick had a big black dog who always came to the gate to greet the newsboy and took the paper in his mouth to his master.

After Robert Dick's death, Thomas Cox bought the place and it was the home of his family for a good many years. The eastern wing was put on at that time and used as a conservatory. Since then the house has changed hands many, many times, and the western wing been added. [Pg 143]

The two houses at numbers 3025 and 3027 were built in the seventies by Oscar Stevens for his family and that of his brother-in-law, Dr. John S. Billings. Their wives were sisters, and very dependent upon each other. Dr. Billings was a pioneer in the introduction of indirect heating in buildings, and became an authority on that subject, and on ventilation. His textbooks on the subject were used in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and when Johns Hopkins Hospital was built, he was consulted. Because he had made such a fine record in creating the Army Medical Library, he was asked to come to New York and create the new Public Library there from the Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, which were consolidated.

Across the street, at number 3032, where now is a large, modern brick house, there used to be, before I can remember, a quaint, frame structure. It was supposed to be one of the first houses built on the grant of the Rock of Dumbarton, and was intended for the "overlooker" of that part of the grant. It was a very plain but comfortable house, and was the home in the early part of the century of Hezekiah Miller who, like many of the gentry in those days, was in charge of government work. His department dealt with the Indians, and he had the distribution of money and supplies to certain tribes to whom he went from time to time, and also looked after them when they came to Washington. They always called him "Father Miller." Mr. Miller's wife was Miss Middleton, from Brooke Court Manor, in Maryland. Hezekiah Miller was a devout member of Christ Church. His daughter became the wife of the Reverend George Leakin, an Episcopal clergyman of Baltimore. She was to have been a bridesmaid at the wedding of Harriet Williams and Baron Bodisco, but was prevented by the sudden death of her brother by drowning. He was one of twins, born just at the time of General Lafayette's arrival on his visit in 1824, who were named Washington and Lafayette at the request of the townspeople. It was the latter young man who drowned, at the age of twenty-five. [Pg 144]

Number 3028 was the home, for a long, long time of the Reads, three sisters. One married Dr. Post, who was a missionary to Syria, but Miss Jane and Miss Isabella lived here many years after. The house next door still has its old-time doorway, but, unfortunately, one owner in the eighties spoiled its quaintness by adding a corner tower. It was here, I think, that Dr. William Barton Rogers, first President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, lived at one time.

The two big houses, numbers 3014 and 3017, standing opposite each other on this block are very closely connected in their history. The early part is all tied up together. Although number 3017 has been somewhat changed in appearance, it is still, I imagine, a good deal like it was when Thomas Beall built it in 1794. Of course, the street has been cut down and left it higher up than it originally was, and also the old bricks have been covered with paint, and now a modern addition has hidden its lovely little wing.

[Pg 145]

3017 N Street. The House that Thomas Beall Built

The building of this house was evidently quite an event in those days, for in old advertisements of the sale of houses, many of them are "Between the Union Tavern and Thomas Beall's house on Gay Street." John Laird had a frame house on the lot, immediately across the street, now number 3014, but he was becoming exceedingly prosperous and wanted a handsome house. He married first, Lucinda Dick, sister of Thomas Dick, of Bladensburg, and, after her death, her elder sister, Mary. While he was building his brick house at number 3014, he rented and occupied Thomas Beall's house. No reason is given as to why Mr. Beall was not occupying it himself.

[Pg 146]

About 1800 Mr. Laird moved into his own new mansion. At that time only the central part of the large building was there. Several wings have been added and the little portico at the front door. John Laird's eldest daughter, Barbara, married James Dunlop, Junior, the eldest son of James Dunlop; and his only son, William Laird, married two of James Dunlop's daughters at Hayes, first Helen, by whom he had three children, William Laird, Jr., James Dunlop Laird, who went to California in 1848 and never married, and Helen Laird, who also never married. After the death of his first wife, William Laird, Sr., married his sister-in-law, Arianna French Dunlop. She was very lame, and the marriage took place only a short time before her death.

The miniatures reproduced of John Laird and James Dunlop represent them both in scarlet coats, with lace ruffles and powdered hair.

John Laird was always very much interested in the Presbyterian Church and its affairs, and his descendants have remained so.

He came to this country at the age of seventeen and was active in Georgetown from its early days, and it is a pity that none of his children had a son to carry on his name.

JOHN LAIRD

JAMES DUNLOP, SENIOR

His son, William Laird, Jr., who had children, but no grandchildren, was clerk of the town for a great many years, longer than any other man. He is said to have had no superior as an accountant in this country. [Pg 148]

After John Laird's death in 1833, his house became the property of his daughter, Margaret. She never married, and lived there for a great many years with her aunt, Miss Elizabeth Dick. They were always known as "Miss Peggy" Laird and "Miss Betsy" Dick. My mother, as a little girl, remembered them. They used to sit by the front windows a great deal, and the turban which Miss Betsy wore on her head was, of course, very intriguing to a young girl in 1850. They were both almost always dressed in Scotch gingham of such fine quality that it seemed like silk. They were both ardent supporters of the Presbyterian Church and workers for the Orphan Asylum. Miss Betsy Dick died first, of course. Thomas Bloomer Balch dedicated to her one of the lectures he gave in Georgetown in the fifties called "Reminiscences of George Town."

When Miss Peggy Laird died, she left the house to her sister, Barbara, Mrs. James Dunlop. They had been living on the southeast corner of Gay (N) and Greene (29th) Streets. From that time on, number 3014 was always known as the Dunlop house.

Judge Dunlop was always very prominent. As a young man he was secretary of the Corporation of Georgetown, which fact is recorded on the keystone of the little bridge on High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) over the canal. He was for some time a law partner of Francis Scott Key, and later was appointed Chief Justice of the Circuit Court of the District of Columbia. He was holding this office at the outbreak of the Civil War and, being a Southerner in his sympathies, was, very naturally, removed from office by President Lincoln. An interesting thing is that about 1915 this place was bought from the heirs of Judge Dunlop's son by Robert Todd Lincoln, son of President Lincoln. [Pg 149]

An anecdote is told of a dinner party long ago where Judge Dunlop was a guest, when one of the other guests was making puns on the names of all those present. Judge Dunlop said, "You will not be able to make one on my name." Quick as a flash came back the rejoinder, "Just lop off the last syllable and it is dun."

Judge Dunlop and all of his brothers, except one, were graduates of Princeton College, he being valedictorian of his class. A portrait of him hangs in the courthouse in Washington. His son, William Laird Dunlop, lived for many years as a bachelor in the old house before his marriage to his cousin, Miss Sallie Peter, in Rockville. An interesting story is told of their neighbor, Dr. Tyler, coming home one evening and saying to his wife, "I'll have to go over and see what is the matter at Mr. Dunlop's; the house is lit up from top to bottom." When he returned, he was laughing heartily. "It's only that Mr. Dunlop is going to be married and is inspecting the house thoroughly." The bride he brought there was a very lovely person and very much beloved.

William Laird Dunlop always kept up his custom of keeping his own cow and killing his own hogs in the fall. The little square, brick building covered with vines between the house and the stable was the meat house. It is in the garden of this house that the only remaining stone marker used in laying off the original George Town stands, protruding about eighteen inches from the ground. [Pg 150]

Now to return to number 3017 across the street. In 1811 this house was bought from Thomas Beall by Major George Peter. He was the youngest son of Robert Peter. He was born in George Town on the 28th of September, 1779. When only fifteen years old he joined the Maryland troops against the Whisky Insurrectionists (1794), but his parents sent a messenger to camp and General Washington, hearing of the matter, ordered him home. His youthful ardor was gratified five years later in July, 1799, by his appointment as second lieutenant of the Ninth Infantry, United States Army, by President Adams, and he enjoyed the distinction of receiving his commission from the hands of General Washington at Mount Vernon. While in command at Fort

McHenry, Baltimore, during the administration of President Jefferson, he organized the first light-horse battery formed in the United States service, and he always referred to his "Flying Artillery" with a special pride, in that he was specially selected by President Jefferson for that purpose.

In April, 1805, Lieutenant Peter accompanied General Wilkinson to the West and took part in the organization of the Territorial Government of Missouri. Arriving at St. Louis on the Fourth of July, he established the first cantonment on the banks of the Missouri at Bellefontaine and fired the first salute on the return of Lewis and Clarke from their expedition to the Pacific. He also served under General Wilkinson during Governor Claiborne's administration before Louisiana was admitted to the Union and he was present as a witness at the trial of Aaron Burr.

At the beginning of the War of 1812, President Madison tendered him a brigadier-generalship, which the condition of private affairs compelled him to decline, but in 1813 he volunteered his services and commanded a battalion of "Flying Artillery." [Pg 151]

Among the privates in this battalion were George Peabody and Francis Scott Key, besides others who afterwards became distinguished citizens. In writing of this battalion, W. W. Corcoran says the list of its membership represented the wealth, worth, and talent of the town at that time.

In 1815, he was elected to Congress from the Sixth District of Maryland, but his seat was contested on the ground that he was not a resident of the Congressional District. At that time he was a resident of Georgetown and a member of the Town Council, but had large farms in Maryland. The House of Representatives, however, decided in his favor, and admitted him to take his seat. He was the first Democrat ever elected to Congress from the Sixth District of Maryland and was re-elected in 1817, and again in 1828. He served several terms in the State Legislature and in 1855 was elected by the Democratic Party a Commissioner of Public Works for the State of Maryland.

He was a man six feet in height, straight as an arrow, and of splendid physique.

He was married three times. His first wife was Ann Plater, daughter of Governor Plater of Maryland; his second, Agnes Freeland, and his third, Sarah Norfleet Freeland of Petersburg, Virginia.

Major Peter was one of the largest landowners and farmers in Montgomery County and carried on those farms up to the date of his death, which occurred at Montanvert, near Darnestown, June 22, 1861. He was nearly eighty-two.

[Pg 152]

Major George Peter

Judge James Dunlop

William Redin

His three sons by his third marriage were: George, who became an eminent lawyer in Rockville; [Pg 153]
Alexander, who lived and farmed near Darnestown; Armistead, who practised medicine many years in Georgetown; and Walter Gibson Peter, who met the heroic and tragic death I have already spoken of. Dr. Peter had been sent to Georgetown to live with his aunt, Mrs. Dick, to receive his medical education under Dr. Riley.

In 1827 George Peter sold this house, 3017 N Street, to John Laird, evidently for his son, William, who made it his home until 1834, when it was bought by Miss Elizabeth Dick, but she apparently changed her mind and decided to live with her niece, for she sold it the same year to William Redin.

Mr. Redin was an Englishman from Lincolnshire, who had come to America about 1817. He was an attorney, and I have heard very old people refer to him as "Lawyer Redin," and speak of the green baize bag which he always carried back and forth to his office, the forerunner of the present-day brief case, and I know an old lady who can remember him in his pew in Christ Church. He had five daughters and one son. The young man, Richard Wright Redin, soon after his graduation from Princeton, fell a victim to cholera, that terrible disease brought to George Town in its ships. It also carried off a young sister, Fanny, who was a little beauty, and only about eighteen.

Mr. Redin was a friend of Henry Foxall, and named his youngest daughter Catherine Foxall.

During the Civil War, Mr. Redin was a Union sympathizer, and when President Lincoln removed [Pg 154]
Judge Dunlop from the bench, he offered the Justiceship to Mr. Redin, but he refused to take the office of his old friend and neighbor across the street. In 1863, he was made the first Auditor of the Circuit Court of the District of Columbia.

One of his married daughters was living, during the Civil War, not far from Culpeper, Virginia, almost on the battlefield. She died when only thirty-seven, from the fact that no medicines could be gotten for her; nor could a minister be found to bury her, so her eldest daughter, seventeen, read the burial service over her mother.

There were seven of these motherless children left—the eldest three all very pretty girls. It was quite impossible for them to remain in their home, so their grandfather got permission for them to come to Washington. They came, wearing sunbonnets, and traveling all day long in a box-car from Culpeper to Alexandria, a distance of only fifty miles. There they had to spend the night at a hotel until they could pass through the lines. The Union officer in charge of them slept outside their door that night.

Not very long after their arrival, Martha Kennon, of Tudor Place, came to see the eldest girl. They had been at school together a few years before, at Miss Harrover's. She suggested that they should go "over to the city" together. On the way down to Bridge (M) Street to take the omnibus, they found they had no small change to pay their fare, so Martha said: "Never mind, I have a cousin in a store near here. He will change our money or lend us some." They went to him and she introduced my father to my mother!

This was the old Vanderwerken omnibus that ran along Bridge (M) Street and Pennsylvania [Pg 155]
Avenue, which became the Capital Traction Company, and now the Capital Transit Company.

I have often heard my mother tell of how the Southern girls would not walk under the Stars and Stripes hanging out from the hospital in the Seminary. They would cross to the other side of the street, and when the Union officers passed, they held aside their skirts. She has also described to me how the city was hung with black when Abraham Lincoln was killed.

Mr. Redin bequeathed his house to his only unmarried daughter, Catherine. She married later, and sold the house in 1873 and regretted it bitterly, to such an extent that she went into melancholia and committed suicide by taking poison. For a while it was Miss Lipscomb's School for Young Ladies, then it was bought by John D. Smoot, and his family lived there many years.

In 1915 Colonel W. E. P. French purchased the property. He leased it during the World War I to Honorable Newton D. Baker, then Secretary of War. At that time Georgetown had hardly begun to be fashionable again, and on first coming to Washington and hunting for a house, Mrs. Baker told a friend she was discouraged trying to find one with a yard where her three children could play, and that she thought they would have to go to Fort Myer. The friend answered in a tone of deep commiseration, "Too bad! You will have to pass through Georgetown!"

Another anecdote of somewhat the same tone was told me by an old lady who has lived all her life in one of the loveliest old Georgetown houses. Many years ago, while the street cars were still drawn by horses, she was in a car sitting opposite two women, one of whom was pointing out the [Pg 156] sights to the other. They passed Dupont Circle, where she showed the Leiter house, etc., and as they crossed P Street Bridge, she said, "Now we are coming into Georgetown where nobody lives but colored people and a few white people who can't get away."

On the next block east is a little house, entirely changed now, which used to be very quaint in its appearance when it was covered with white plaster and approached by a sort of causeway from the sidewalk. It had belonged to Henry Foxall, though, of course, he never lived there.

On the southwest corner of Gay (N) and Greene (29th) Streets stands the house that was originally the property of John Davidson. Then Mrs. Williamson, a daughter of old Dr. Balch made her home here, followed by her daughter, Mrs. Hasle. Next door, on the west, lived the son, Joseph Williamson, whose wife was Marian Woods. Then the Howell family lived there, and from them, Colonel Harrison Howell Dodge, who was superintendent of Mount Vernon for over forty years, got his name. Later the house was rented to Mr. and Mrs. John Worthington, whose daughter, Lilah, married Mr. Henry Philip in April, 1865. She went to live at 3406 R Street.

A few years ago a gentleman who was an artist bought the house and changed the windows on the first floor front—to give more light for his studio, I was told.

The picturesque house on the northeast corner is always called "Admiral Weaver's house." The back portion is very old, and "they say" there is a ghost somewhere about. In the spring the hedge of Japanese quince here is a thing of beauty with its flaming color. [Pg 157]

On the next block eastward at number 2812 is the house with a very beautiful doorway and a very interesting association. It was built in 1779, and was at one time the home of Judge Morsell, but it was called the Decatur house. There is the Decatur house on Lafayette Square in Washington, but we know that Admiral Decatur's widow left it after he was killed in the duel with Commodore James Barron, near Bladensburg, on March 22, 1820, and came to live in Georgetown. Tradition has persisted that this was the house she lived in. These parts of two letters written by Mrs. Basil Hall, in 1827, are from a volume called *The Aristocratic Journey*, being her letters home to her sister in Edinburgh:

> January 4: ... I had a note to-night from a lady whom I had considerable curiosity to see, Mrs. Decatur, the widow of Commodore Decatur. I brought a letter to her from Mrs. MacTavish at Baltimore and sent it yesterday along with our cards. In this note she acknowledged the receipt of it, but excuses herself from calling upon me, "as peculiar circumstances attending a domestic affliction she has suffered makes it impossible for her to come to Washington." She asked us to spend the evening of the tenth with her, or any other evening that suits us better, a very kind note, in short, and we have promised to go on the eleventh. I knew that she would not return my visit before I came. The reason of this peculiarity is that her husband was killed in a duel, and she fears if she were to go into company either morning or evening she might meet his second, who she considers as having been very much to blame, or his antagonist. Now all this is very natural, and I only object to it because somehow she appears to have made her reasons too much the subject of conversation, which is very unlike real feeling. She sees a great deal of company at home. Her note smells so detestably of musk that it quite perfumes the room and was like to make me sick, so we had sealed it up in an envelope, but it shall go along with the next of the scraps. [Pg 158]
>
> January 6: We have had today weather much more like June than January, most extraordinary for this climate, where at this season there is generally severe frost and snow. I went out with a cloak on but speedily returned and exchanged that for a silk handkerchief tied round my throat, which was as much as I could bear. Yesterday, the fifth, we walked off by eleven o'clock to visit Mrs. Decatur, who lives at Georgetown, which is separated from Washington only by a little creek, across which there is a shabby enough tumble-down looking wooden bridge. There is so thick a fog that we could not see three yards before us, "quite English weather," as our friends here tell us, but not disagreeable to my mind as it was very mild. At the door of Mrs. Decatur's house we met General Van Rensselear, "the Patroon," who with his wife and daughter is now here. He went in with us and introduced us to the lady of the mansion, who we found dressed in very becoming weeds, and she gave us an extremely cordial reception. She is a pretty, pleasing-looking person and very animated, with no appearance of woe except the outward sign of cap and gown. We sat some time with her and walked home....

If only Mrs. Hall had been able to say where the house was to which they walked from across Rock Creek on that balmy day in January!

These other letters which follow are written to a young man then beginning to make his way in

the world, who certainly was possessed of a most attractive personality, and it is not surprising that the widow might have been rather "setting her cap" for him.

My dear Mr. Corcoran:

If you should find yourself destitute of amusement this evening, while the belles are at church, I beg you to come and listen to some of my lamentations.

Yours sincerely,

S. Decatur.

My dear Mr. Corcoran: [Pg 159]

I am happy to say that I can take you under my wing today, on the way to heaven, and I pray you to call for me at ten o'clock.

Yours sincerely,

S. Decatur.

Union Hotel, Monday morning.

My dear Mr. Corcoran:

The Iturbides have deferred their visit until Wednesday evening and I hope you will be able to come and meet them, with your sister and Colonel Thomas.

Yours sincerely,

S. Decatur.

If you have a moment to spare this evening I pray you to come and tell me how your brother's family are after this dreadful alarm.[A]

[A] The destruction of Mr. J. Corcoran's dwelling by fire.

As we know, it was of no avail, for he seems to have remained "fancy free" until he met and married Louise Morris.

About 1828 Mrs. Decatur became a convert to the Roman Catholic Church through her close acquaintance with the Carroll family, it is thought. The latter part of her life was spent in a frame house on the brow of a hill about one hundred yards from Georgetown College, which she rented from Miss Hobbs. Here she died about 1860.

Among the souvenirs of the college is the portrait of Commodore Decatur by Gilbert Stuart, his ivory chess-board and men, and his jeweled toothpick box. The grave of Mrs. Decatur was discovered some time ago in the cemetery of Georgetown College. It had been overgrown and [Pg 160] neglected and forgotten.

So had this part of Georgetown, until Admiral and Mrs. Spencer Wood bought 2808 and brought it back to its pristine glory. This house was built by John Stoddert Haw, nephew of Benjamin Stoddert, one of the founders of Christ Church, of which many of his descendants are still pillars. When the Woods lived here, there was at the back of the house a very lovely, unusual green garden, which gave a feeling of restfulness not always produced by a riot of glorious colors, opening off a paved area under a wide porch, like so many houses used to have.

The old house at 2806 is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Walker. He is the curator of the National Gallery of Art. Thomas Beall of George sold the land to John M. Gannt in 1804, who may have built this lovely house. It was purchased by Elisha Williams in 1810; also owned by Thomas Robertson and Thomas Clarke in the first decade of the nineteenth century. In the 1920's it was the home of Mrs. Hare Lippincott.

Across the street, at number 2723, a good many years ago, was where Thomas Harrison and his sister lived for a long time. Miss Virginia kept a little school for several years and her brother was a translator at the Naval Observatory until he was well up in his eighties. When he was over ninety he used to go out calling on Sunday afternoons, as spry as could be, and with his cheeks as rosy as pippins. They were a couple much beloved and typical of old-time days.

Chapter XI [Pg 161]

The Three Philanthropists

GEORGE TOWN produced three eminent philanthropists: one whose benefactions were solely to Georgetown; a second, who became the greatest benefactor the City of Washington has ever had, and inaugurated the tremendous gifts to schools and colleges that have since become the fashion among men of great wealth; the third started his gifts at home, then crossed the ocean and made enormous contributions to the largest city in the world.

The first one, Edward Magruder Linthicum, had a hardware store on the northwest corner of High (Wisconsin) Avenue and Bridge (M) Street, the business hub then, as now, of Georgetown. He was a trustee of the Methodist Church and member of the Town Council.

He built the home at number 3019 P Street, which has such a beautiful doorway, and lived there until in 1846 he moved up on the Heights to The Oaks, for which he paid $11,000. William A. Gordon, in his book *Old Houses in Georgetown Heights*, says of him:

[Pg 162]

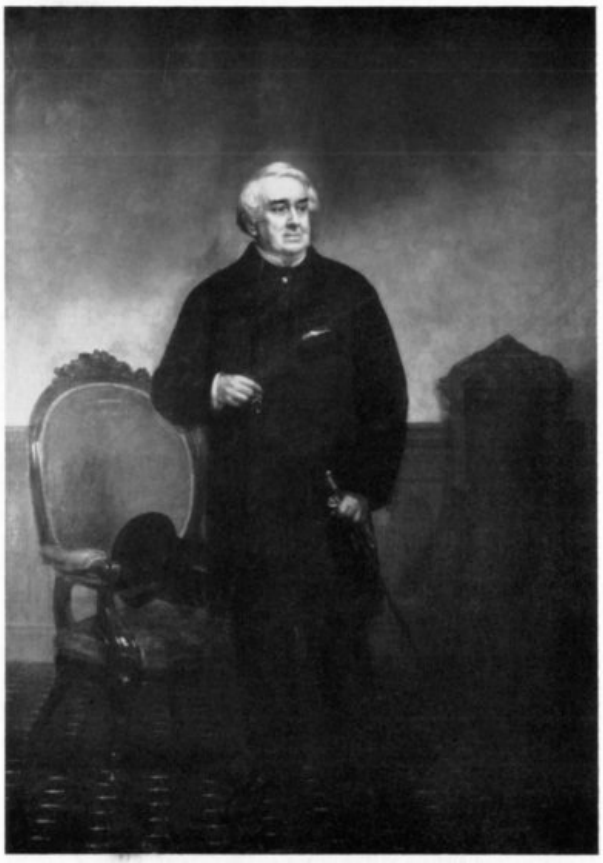
Edward Magruder Linthicum

> Mr. Linthicum was a prominent and prosperous merchant of the highest type, a man of great civic activities, and deeply interested in everything which tended to beautify the community. In his will by a legacy of $50,000 he provided for the endowment of a school for the free education of white boys of Georgetown in useful learning and in the spirit and practice of Christian virtue being, as he expressed it, convinced that knowledge and piety constitute the only assurance of happiness and healthful progress to the human race and devoutly recognizing the solemn duty to society which develops in its members, and entertaining a serious desire to contribute in some manner to the permanent welfare of the community, amongst whom my life has been spent.
>
> [Pg 163]
>
> As a commentary on the length to which partisan feeling went in the years succeeding the War Between the States, it may be stated that efforts to have the Linthicum Institute incorporated by Congress were prevented by Charles Sumner, Senator from Massachusetts, for the reason that the benefits were confined to white youths.

The Linthicum Institute began its career in the lower floor of one side of the Curtis school building on P Street, opposite Saint John's Church. The name in large gold letters used to be there. The present building was erected about 1890 on the south side of O Street near 31st, the school occupying the lower floor, and Linthicum Hall, considered by the belles of the nineties to have the "best floor 'par excellence' for dancing anywhere," being the upper portion. I have been told it was the first night school in the District of Columbia.

Mr. Linthicum was a very imposing looking gentleman, was married, but had no children. He and his wife adopted a daughter, Kate, who became Mrs. Dent, and I think it was in honor of her or her son that the little street called Dent Place, just below R and between 30th and 31st Streets was named when that part of Georgetown, then nicknamed "Cooke Park" was developed.

[Pg 164]



William Wilson Corcoran

William Wilson Corcoran, the third son of Thomas Corcoran, was born in George Town on December 27, 1798, in his father's home on Bridge (M) Street. He attended Mr. Kirk's school, later Reverend Addison Belt's, in between, having been for a while a day scholar at Georgetown College. [Pg 165]

Contrary to his father's wishes for him to complete a classical education, at the age of seventeen he went into a dry goods store belonging to his brothers, James and Thomas. Two years later they established him in a small store of his own on the northwest corner of High (Wisconsin Avenue) and First (N) Streets. Again, two years later they all purchased a two-story brick house on the corner of Bridge (M) and Congress (31st) Streets and commenced a wholesale auction and commission business.

In the depression of 1823, when very many firms went to the wall, they too had to give up and settled with all their creditors for fifty cents on the dollar.

I think the aftermath of this story (which is the reason I have given it in detail) is most encouraging to this generation, struggling in the grip of the present depression, for the young man of twenty-five, after giving up four or five years to taking care of the business of his father, who was growing old, finally became connected with the Bank of Columbia, and in 1837 began a brokerage business in Washington in a little store 10 x 16 feet on Pennsylvania Avenue near 15th Street. He was so successful that he eventually took into partnership George W. Riggs, also of Georgetown, and changed the name to Corcoran and Riggs. In 1845 this firm purchased the old United States Bank on the corner of 15th Street and New York Avenue. And so the Riggs National Bank, today one of the strongest banks in the United States, was born. A little later George W. Riggs retired and Elisha, his brother, was made a junior partner. [Pg 166]

In 1847 Mr. Corcoran sent to all people to whom he had been able to pay only 50% in his failure of 1823, the full amount due them, with interest, amounting to about forty-six thousand dollars, to their great surprise, as evidenced by letters I have read from them to him. Of all his great benefactions, this seems to me to have been the very finest thing he ever did.

He must have been a man of very remarkable personality, witness his going to Europe, the first of the very, very many trips he made in his life, on one day's notice, and against much discouragement, persuading Thomas Baring of the great London banking firm of Baring Brothers, to assist him in a sale of five millions of government bonds. At that time the firm of Corcoran and Riggs took, on its own account, nearly all the loans made by the United States.

On his return to New York he was greeted by everyone with enthusiasm, as this was the first sale of American securities abroad since 1837—eleven years.

In April, 1854, Mr. Corcoran withdrew from the firm, thinking he had made enough money, and spent the rest of his long life of ninety years—forty-five years more—spending his money in a manner unknown before that time.

Apropos of his money-making faculty, I have often been told by my aunt how her father, Henry Dunlop, when a boy, was walking along the street with young Corcoran, just his own age, when

Henry, whose family was rather well-off in those days, seeing a penny lying on the pavement, kicked it ahead of him in his stride, as boys will do, but young Corcoran, stooping down, put it in his pocket saying, "Henry, you will never be a rich man." That prophecy came true, for Henry spent his life in farming, and you know what that means! [Pg 167]

Among Mr. Corcoran's very first benefactions were gifts to the town of his birth. First of all a fund of $10,000 to be spent for firewood, etc., for the poor. It was left to the town authorities, but was administered by the Benevolent Society.

In 1849 he gave beautiful Oak Hill Cemetery, lying along the northern limit of the town. To me no other cemetery that I have ever seen in this country or abroad has the same natural beauty of slopes and trees—in the spring bedecked like a bride in flowering white shrubs; in the fall its towering oak trees aflame with shades of crimson.

I suppose what impressed on him the need of a cemetery for Georgetown so deeply was the death of his beloved wife in 1840. It had been a very romantic marriage. She was Louise Morris, the daughter of Commodore Charles Morris. Mr. Corcoran met his wife when she was sixteen and he was thirty-six. On the 23rd of December, 1835, they eloped, accompanied by Mr. Corcoran's sister-in-law, Mrs. James Corcoran, who later became the second wife of John Marbury, senior, and to the day of her death was greatly beloved by Mr. Corcoran. When she was lying in her coffin on 14th Street, he came there and although somewhat lamed by paralysis and nearly ninety years of age, he insisted upon climbing the long flight of stairs to the room where she lay, saying over and over as he toiled up the many steps: "I must see Harriet once more!" I suppose in his mind he was living over the great event in his life when she helped to secure for him the only love of his life. And so pitifully short a time he had her, for only five years afterwards, when she was twenty-one, she died of tuberculosis. In those short years she had had three children, Harriet Louise, Louise Morris, and Charles Morris. Of these the middle child, Louise, was the only one to grow up. [Pg 168]

Although Commodore Morris had greatly disapproved of his daughter's marriage, which was very natural as at that time he was one of the most eminent officers of the United States Navy, and Mr. Corcoran had not then entered on the career which eventually made him the most distinguished private citizen of the capital of the nation, he grew to greatly admire and respect his son-in-law. For there are preserved in *A Grandfather's Legacy*, a collection of letters received by Mr. Corcoran, and compiled by him before his death, several letters from Charles Morris, showing the deepest trust and affection.

I suppose there was never a daughter more beloved and petted than Louise Morris Corcoran. Her father seemed to expend on her all the affection of his great big heart, and she seems to have been a very lovely character. When she was about ten years old she fell overboard from a vessel and was only saved from drowning by the quickness and skill of Gurdon B. Smith. Among these letters are several in regard to this incident, for Mr. Corcoran, in his gratitude for this merciful deliverance, sent through an agent, $1,000 to Mr. Smith, an artisan, who was very grateful and considered he had received a fortune. But, not satisfied with that, Mr. Corcoran secured an appointment as lighthouse keeper for Mr. Smith at a point not far from his home, a life position with a good salary, but Mr. Smith refused it as he seemed perfectly satisfied with his circumstances. [Pg 169]

Mr. Corcoran's money doubled and trebled and quadrupled, and the following letter shows how his judgment was sought on political as well as financial questions:

> My dear Sir:
>
> I wish you would come to my house about 8 this evening and tell me, in five words, what are the best reasons to be given to friends of the administration for not passing the sub-treasury bill at present.
>
> Yours,
>
> D. WEBSTER.

He had a close friendship with Edward Everett, senator from Massachusetts, who was frequently his guest. He and ex-President Fillmore traveled abroad together. The letters he received from many of the great of the earth make very interesting reading. By the middle of the nineteenth century this Georgetown boy of rather modest parentage was living in a very fine house in Washington, in great elegance, entertaining everyone of any importance who came to the capital. There is on record now a letter from a gentleman in England, bringing to his attention the coming of the new Minister and his wife from Great Britain, Lord and Lady Napier. Although, as he had said "he knows he will receive a great deal of attention, yet he wishes Mr. Corcoran, particularly to honor them." He was consulted by presidents for his opinion on financial matters. Baron Humboldt, the great German geographer, kept up a correspondence with him to the day of his death.

After a brilliant girlhood, Louise Corcoran had married the Honorable George Eustis of New Orleans, representative in Congress. When the Civil War came and shattered all existing social ties, Mr. Eustis, of course, took the Southern side, as did Mr. Corcoran. Mr. Eustis, who had been appointed Confederate Secretary of Legation at the same time that the Honorable John Slidell was appointed Minister to France, after being held a prisoner in Maine, went over to France, where he was joined by his wife. Neither ever returned to this country. They made their home [Pg 170]

there, their three children were born there, they died there, were finally brought back and buried in Oak Hill under the beautiful little Doric temple Mr. Corcoran had erected for his first Louise.

Those three grandchildren then became his pride and joy. But more and more he absorbed himself in his benefactions. It is impossible to tell all of them. Beginning with his gift of Oak Hill to Georgetown in 1849, in 1850 a loan to the Roman Catholic Church there which, like all of his loans, he eventually turned into gifts; in 1851 he gave an organ to the Lunatic Asylum in Staunton, Virginia, saying he knew of nothing better than to give music to those whose souls were so troubled. About this time he gave the lot for the Washington City Orphan Asylum, and a little later the one for the Y. M. C. A. For many years he had been collecting painting and sculpture, both on his trips to Europe and from the various persons who wrote to him soliciting his patronage. These were at first kept in his own house, but then he decided to build a gallery and give them to the City of Washington, so he erected the building on Pennsylvania Avenue at the corner of 17th Street, directly opposite the State, War and Navy Building. It was just nearing completion when the Civil War began and was taken over by the United States Government as an annex to the War Department, so that it was not until 1869 that it was opened as the Corcoran [Pg 171] Gallery of Art. In 1897 the collection was moved to the beautiful new building lower down on 17th Street and was formally opened on February 22nd by a brilliant reception at which were President and Mrs. Cleveland and all of their Cabinet.

Above the doorway of the old building, in the stone, is still seen a carved medallion with W. W. C. intertwined.

Just about that time, also, Mr. Corcoran began to build another of his beneficent gifts to the city. His beloved daughter had died, and the city and the country was filled with ladies who had been made penniless by the cruel fratricidal war. In 1871 he turned over to the trustees the Louise Home on Massachusetts Avenue, between 15th and 16th Streets, as a home for gentlewomen, the only requirements being enough money to furnish their own clothes and their burial expenses, even lots in Oak Hill were reserved for them after the Louise Home failed to suffice. It was very natural that for a long time its clientele was largely made up of Southerners, as there were very, very many more of them impoverished at that time, and also Mr. Corcoran was himself in sympathy with the Confederates. It is said he saved his house from confiscation by renting it to the French Minister.

Many, very many, were the letters he received thanking him for the help he had sent to widows and orphans of soldiers of the South. He founded homes of that kind in Charleston, South Carolina, and in other places, besides rendering assistance most tactfully in many private cases. Many of these letters are very touching in their gratitude.

His friendship for James Mason, of the Mason and Slidell affair, was close, as was his very real association with General Robert E. Lee, witnessed by letters from General Lee during his life in [Pg 172] Lexington, Virginia, after the war, and from Dr. William Pendleton, General Lee's rector there, and from Mrs. Lee in regard to General Lee's death.

He and General Lee spent several summers at the "Old White," as the Greenbriar White Sulphur Springs was then affectionately known. As the years rolled on, Anthony Hyde, a Georgetown man, was kept busy administering the benefactions of his employer. He has told how during a trip through the South after the war, with Mr. Corcoran (he was his secretary), he had difficulty in keeping Mr. Corcoran's gifts within bounds. I was told not long ago by a man in the employ of Oak Hill, how an old street-car conductor had described to him the sight of Mr. Corcoran going to his office, and on the sidewalk in front of it each morning was a line to which he always dispensed "green money," as the old man called it.

The business of his life then was judiciously giving away his money. Here are some of the ways he did it: colleges had always appealed to him, and he was for many years Rector of Columbian University in Washington, now renamed George Washington, and gave freely to it. His name is now borne by one of their largest and best buildings, Corcoran Hall. He gave to the Maryland Agricultural College, to the College of William and Mary in Virginia, loaned money to the Virginia Military Institute and when the bonds came due, tore them up—a little way he had. To Washington and Lee University, also in Lexington, he gave $20,000 besides the library purchased from the widow of Nathaniel Howard, thus, it helped in the getting as well as in the giving. [Pg 173]

His portrait hangs in the little chapel in Lexington where lies the body of his friend, Robert Edward Lee. To the University of Virginia he gave $100,000 which endowed two chairs, also giving $5,000 to resuscitate the library which had suffered during the war and the period following, from being unable to procure any new books.

He was one of the first people to subscribe to the fund being raised by certain ladies to purchase Mount Vernon, after the Washington family found themselves unable to keep it up and offered it to the United States Government, which refused to buy and preserve it.

The Episcopal Church of the Ascension on the corner of 12th Street and Massachusetts Avenue was built almost entirely with his money. William Pinckney, its rector when it was begun, was very devoted to Mr. Corcoran. He afterwards became Bishop of Maryland. It worried him exceedingly that Mr. Corcoran had never become a confirmed member and communicant of the church. Many are the long and eloquent letters he wrote to him on the subject. Finally, in his old age, the old gentleman did come forward and be confirmed. The friendship between these two seems to have been very sweet. The Bishop was a simple soul, a great lover of flowers and birds.

He was always sending gifts of grapes to his wealthy friend, from Bladensburg. He now rests not far from his friend in Oak Hill. The inscription on his stone, which is surmounted by his statue reads thus:

WILLIAM PINCKNEY, D. D., L L. D.
April 17, 1820
July 4, 1883
Guileless and fearless.

All through his life Mr. Corcoran was a very sociable person. He always loved to play whist and in [Pg 174]
the last years of his life his nephews and nieces and great-nephews and great-nieces used to go often to play with him and pass the long evenings. A friend of mine remembers being taken as a little girl, with her grandmother, to call on him. She was fascinated by the room where he sat, which had medallions of children's heads, set at intervals into the paneling of the walls. She said he told her they were his grandchildren. She loved looking at them and was distressed when told to go out in the garden to play.

That garden to the house where he lived for many years and where he died, stood on H Street at the corner of Connecticut Avenue. Daniel Webster had lived there before him. The flowering trees in the spring hung over the high brick wall on the Connecticut Avenue side and gladdened the hearts of all who saw them. It was a sad day for Washington, historically, when that whole square was reconstructed. If only one could endow old houses!

At last, on the 24th of February, 1888, W. W. Corcoran, as he was always known, was laid to rest in his own beautiful Oak Hill. I remember as a little girl standing at the window of my home facing 31st Street and hearing the bell of near-by Christ Church toll ninety strokes as carriage after carriage passed slowly up the hill. My brother and I counted them, and there were ninety-nine.

George Peabody, the third of my trio of philanthropists who got their start in Georgetown, was born in Danvers, Massachusetts, on February 18, 1795. He was descended from an old yeoman family of Hertfordshire, England, named Pabody or Pebody. At eleven years he was an apprentice in a grocery store, and at fifteen, by his father's death, he was left an orphan and was cheerfully helping to support his mother and sisters. He soon after left Danvers and became an assistant to [Pg 175]
his uncle in his business in Georgetown. When he was seventeen he served as a volunteer in the War of 1812 in the artillery company of Major George Peter against the British, which is interesting, as in later life he was offered a baronetcy by Queen Victoria, which he refused.

George Peabody

After the war, when he was about nineteen, he became a partner with Elisha Riggs in a dry goods store in Georgetown and through his energy and skill the business increased tremendously. They moved to Baltimore, and when his partner retired, about 1830, he found himself, according to *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, at the head of one of the largest mercantile concerns in the world. About seven years afterwards he established himself in London as a merchant and money-broker [Pg 176]
at Wonford Court in the city, and in 1843 he withdrew from the American business.

He was never married. He was a very intimate friend of Mr. Corcoran's, and in several letters to him speaks jokingly of himself as a confirmed old bachelor, and in one flouts the idea that he is attentive to a certain lady, saying that he never but once seriously thought of marriage.

Of course, he and Mr. Corcoran were near the same age and were both making their way as young men here in Georgetown at the same time, and it is very interesting to follow, from many letters, how their friendship continued through all their lives.

Mr. Peabody made frequent visits to his homeland, and used often to visit Mr. Corcoran at his

home in Washington, and to spend the summers with him at the White Sulphur Springs.

When hearing of the beginning of the great gifts of his friend on this side of the water, he wrote in October, 1851:

> However liberal I may be over here, I can not keep pace with your noble acts of charity at home; but one of these days I mean to come out, and then if my feelings regarding money don't change and I have plenty, I shall become a strong competitor of yours in benevolence.

He certainly made good his words. In London he entertained in princely style. The following letter is one of the many telling of his parties there:

London, May 16, 1853.

My dear Corcoran:

On the 18th I am to give a grand banquet to the American Minister and about sixty-five English and eighty-five American ladies and gentlemen, and have invited about fifty more for the evening. Mr. Van Buren will be of the party and I hope to make it the best dinner party I have ever given, as I have the Star and Garter, Richmond, and the proprietor has no limit. I enclose you the programme of music during and after dinner. [Pg 177]

I have taken the house—Star and Garter—for a Fourth of July dinner to gentlemen only, and expect about 150. I hear from Mr. Ingersoll that your friend, Mr. Buchanan, will leave in June. Now, although I only know Mr. Buchanan from his high character and what you say of him, particularly as he is unmarried, and I would like to invite the party for the fourth of July to meet "the American Minister, Mr. Ingersoll, and the new Minister, Mr. Buchanan." Will you confer with Mr. Buchanan on receipt of this and try to get me permission to give the invitations as I propose? If Mr. Buchanan leaves 13th or 16th June, he will arrive in ample time.

Very truly,

GEORGE PEABODY.

In 1867 he gave $15,000 to found the Peabody Library in Georgetown. A large donation was given by him to the second Grinnell Arctic Expedition. The museum in Salem, Massachusetts, called by his name, is a fascinating collection of historic relics. To his birthplace he gave 50,000 pounds ($250,000) for educational purposes; for the Peabody Institute in Baltimore 200,000 pounds ($1,000,000.00); to the trustees of the Peabody Educational Fund to promote education in the Southern States (part went to Washington and Lee University in Lexington). A dear old cousin of mine has told me of his visit to the White Sulphur to confer with Mr. Corcoran and Mr. Peabody on this subject. The thing he is remembered for in London is the erection of a huge block of model houses for working people at a cost of 500,000 pounds ($2,500,000). I suppose it was then that Queen Victoria wished to do him honor. [Pg 178]

His true nature remained untainted by success, and Gladstone said of him: "He taught the world how a man may be master of his fortune, and not its slave."

In 1867 the Congress of the United States awarded him a special vote of thanks, and two years later, when he died in London on the 4th of November 1869, his body was brought home to America on a British warship, to be buried in Danvers, the town of his birth, now renamed Peabody in his honor.

Chapter XII [Pg 179]

The Seminary, Washington (30th) Street and Dumbarton Avenue

NOWADAYS, all to the east of here bordering on Rock Creek has been made into a park and playground, and some attractive houses built overlooking them.

On the southeast corner of Montgomery (28th) Street and Dumbarton Avenue, the large brick building now used as a colored Temple of Islam was where Henry Addison, who had been mayor, was living when he died in 1870.

This house later was the home of General Christopher Colon Augur. One night he came out on his porch to remonstrate with a crowd of negroes gathered on this corner and making a disturbance. He was promptly shot by one of them.

Just east of here on Dumbarton Avenue at number 2720 is the home of the Alsop brothers, the well-known columnists, and a new Roman Catholic Church has been built for the colored people. There are six colored churches in the region hereabouts: This Catholic one, three Baptist churches, and two Methodists. Mount Zion Methodist on Greene (29th) Street is over a hundred years old. In the nineties, there were two men in the choir there, one an exceptional organist and the other, who had a very fine bass voice; he later went to Paris.

From this point to Rock Creek is the district that was known as Herring Hill, a synonym in the minds of old residents for the negro district. It got its name from the fact that in the spring great [Pg 180]

quantities of herring came up this far into the creek from the river, and were caught in large numbers.

I think this account, by Mr. William A. Gordon, of some of the customs of the negroes in the years gone by is very attractive and interesting:

> Christmas was the great time for the negroes. Ordinarily, they were not allowed in the streets after the town bell rang at nine o'clock at night, but at Christmas this restriction was removed, and as midnight approached, bands of them would go through the streets singing hymns and carols before the houses of their white friends. The next morning the leader of the band called at the house and received a token of appreciation in the way of small coin.
>
> On May Day there was a parade of the negro drivers; many drove carts, drays and wagons, for on that day they had holiday, and paraded with wagons and horses adorned with ribbons, flowers and bright papers, the drivers wearing long white aprons, and headed by a band. They would then go to the woods and feast, dance and sing.

At the southeast corner of Dumbarton Avenue and Greene (29th) Street, the four little yellow houses made into one make the home of Drew Pearson, the widely-known columnist and commentator—co-author with Robert S. Allen of the original "Washington Merry-Go-Round."

A block west, on the southeast corner of Washington (30th) Street is a fine old house where Mrs. James Cassin lived as a wealthy widow during the 1850's. She was Tabitha Ann Deakins, of that old family so prominent in the making of the town. [Pg 181]

James Cassin had come from Ireland to the City of Baltimore when he was about twenty years of age, on account of religious troubles, the motive which sent so many emigrants to the new country. He then moved over to this thriving seaport, married and settled, leaving his wife a very young widow with three sons. One of them, John, went far from home to live, and his mother's letters to him contain a great deal of interesting gossip. In one she tells that Margaret McVean has gone to Baltimore to buy her wedding dress, and, horror of horrors, has allowed the groom, Dr. Louis Mackall, to accompany her. Of course a chaperone was in the party, but what an indelicate thing for the groom to know anything about the wedding clothes! She ends with, "What are the young people coming to?" How often have we heard those same words in recent years. Of course in those days, a bride went into deep retirement for a week before the fateful day, not going out into the street at all, and as for seeing the groom on the day until she met him at the altar, that was simply unthinkable!

Margaret McVean was the daughter of the Reverend James McVean, who was born near Johnstown, New York, in 1796. He was a graduate of Union College in 1813, and of Princeton in 1819. It was said that he spoke seven languages with fluency and that the chair of Greek at Princeton was always open to him. He came to Georgetown about 1820 and married Jane Maffitt Whann in 1828. For twenty years he was the principal of a classical seminary for boys in Georgetown, the same one founded by Dr. David Wiley. There a large number of young men were prepared for college, who afterwards attained distinction in various professions or government positions of trust and honor. He was for twenty-five years superintendent of the Presbyterian [Pg 182] Sabbath School. He died July 8, 1847, and as a testimonial of respect, the Board of Common Council and Aldermen, of which he was a member, suspended business for eight days, and crêpe was worn on the arm for thirty days.

Another of these letters of Mrs. Cassin's tells that her son, William Deakins Cassin, has just become engaged to "that harumscarum Mittie Tyler." She fears for their future. Mittie (Mary) Tyler was the daughter of dear old Dr. Tyler across the street.

The mother-in-law's fears certainly did not materialize, for Mrs. Cassin, junior, lived a long and honored life. I remember her faintly when she was about eighty years old, with hair parted in the middle and combed down over each ear as "coal black as a raven's wing," as the old saying goes.

They all seemed to marry their neighbors in those days, for Sue, another daughter of Dr. Tyler's married Granville Hyde across the street.

The Hyde's house was next door to the Cassin's on the south. One can see that it is quite old, and it seems that it was built about 1798 by Charles Beatty, one of our old friends of the early days of George Town. He ran one of the ferries across the river to the Virginia shore. About 1806 he had sold the house to Nicholas Hedges; then it went to James Belt in 1822, and to Joshua Stuart in 1832. Later, it was bought by Mr. Thomas Hyde, one of the early merchants of Georgetown. His son, Anthony continued to live there and was for many years secretary to Mr. W. W. Corcoran. Anthony Hyde was very musical and was part of the orchestra which furnished the music in [Pg 183] Christ Church before it had an organ. Here grew up Mr. Thomas Hyde, who was very prominent in Riggs Bank and an early president of the Chevy Chase Club. He was a very distinguished looking man to the day of his death.

On the northeast corner of Washington (30th) and Gay (N) Streets is where tradition says Ninian Beall built his hunting cabin when he landed here. That could be borne out by the fact that a very fine spring of water was on that property. Many, many years later the family of Judge Dunlop at 3014 N Street used to send for pitchers of water from that spring, as they had an inherited right to do so.

The long, red building there, now the Colonial Apartments, is still spoken of as The Seminary. It

was there that Miss Lydia English conducted her fashionable school for young ladies for many years before the Civil War. This was the school to which Andrew Johnson, while senator from Tennessee, sent his daughter. Years after, when he was being criticized for his defense of Roman Catholics, his enemies brought against him the fact that he had sent his daughter to a "convent" in Georgetown. They had confused the Visitation Convent with Miss English's Seminary. It is said that the roster of the patrons of this school in those *ante-bellum* days included the names of the most famous men in the country.

[Pg 184]

Miss Lydia English

Among those names was that of Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, nicknamed "Old Bullion," on account of his opposition to paper currency. He was one of the supporters of President Andrew Jackson in his war on the United States Bank. One of the pupils at the Seminary was his daughter, Jessie Benton, who afterwards became the wife of General C. Fremont, known as "The Pathfinder of the Rocky Mountains." [Pg 185]

Miss English had large means of her own, which enabled her to keep her school going in spite of "ups and downs." But, when in need of advice, she would always turn to her near neighbor, James Cassin.

At one time she had nine teachers besides herself. In 1835 she had 130 pupils. It is said she was a stern headmistress, but she stood for all that was fine, and meant a great deal to Georgetown.

There is a story told of old "Aunt Abby," whose business it was to sit behind the parlor door whenever the young ladies had gentlemen callers, and how reassuring was the sound of her deep snores. Another story goes that the young bloods of Georgetown used to gather on the opposite corner where there was a pump and pretend to be getting a drink of water, while they were really serenading the hidden charmers, and that sometimes billet-doux and sweetmeats were drawn up in baskets unbeknownst to the "powers that were."

In 1859, Miss Harrover took over the school. The catalogue for that year calls it the Georgetown Female Seminary, and in the front is printed the following letter from Miss English:

> To my former Pupils and their Parents, and to other Friends:
>
> At the request of Miss Harrover, who, for two years past, has satisfactorily conducted the Institution, over which I so long presided, and the care of which I relinquished, only because the condition of my health and hearing made it imperatively necessary. I would state, that my interest in its prosperity is undiminished, that I earnestly desire to see it flourish, and that as far as I have it in my power, it is my wish to extend its usefulness. [Pg 186]
>
> In renting the Seminary, I retain my own suite of apartments, and have never withdrawn my residence from it. So far as I have influence, and opportunities, I endeavor to promote the improvement and comfort of the inmates of this establishment. I can not but feel a special interest in the children and other relatives of those who in former years were under my care and instruction, and it affords me much pleasure to see them pursuing their education within the same establishment. I shall rejoice to see the number of these, in the coming year greatly increased.
>
> With kind greetings, and best wishes, I remain,

Yours respectfully,

June 20, 1859. L. S. ENGLISH.

Among the names of the pupils I find that of my mother, and many more familiar to me all of my life.

When the first battle of Bull Run was fought, with such disastrous results to the Union Army, this building was immediately taken over by the United States government as a hospital, and Dr. Armistead Peter, although a Southern sympathizer, was drafted to be in charge of it. An old lady has told me how she was brought by her nurse on that Monday in July, the day after the battle, to watch the unloading of the wagons full of maimed and bleeding soldiers.

The row of frame houses across the street, on N Street, was built at that time as barracks for the non-commissioned officers on duty at the hospital.

Apparently, after the war, Miss Harrover never resumed her school, as, in 1870, it was being used as an apartment house. I rather think it must be the oldest apartment house in the District. [Pg 187]

The part of the building on the corner was torn down several years ago and the Edes Home built. It is a home for Georgetown widows. As the money for it was left by Miss Margaret Edes, who was certainly never a widow, and the wording of her will said "for the indigent widows of Georgetown," many people think it was a mistake and was meant to read "the indigent women of Georgetown."

Just across the street from the Seminary stands the house which was "Old Dr. Tyler's" home. First of all, it was the home of George W. Riggs; after that, for many, many years, that of Dr. Grafton Tyler, the beloved physician. He was a native of southern Maryland, and a cousin of President Tyler.

During his long life Dr. Tyler enjoyed many honors of high professional distinction and was the intimate friend and companion of distinguished statesmen, jurists, and scholars.

In those days doctors took families at "so much" a year, including the slaves. Not long ago I heard this story about the dear old doctor. For years and years he had attended a family where there was an addition almost annually, and he had never sent a bill. Finally, when they were all nearly grown, the father inherited a nice little sum of money. Not long afterwards Dr. Tyler was called in for a slight illness. When the first of the year came round Dr. Tyler sent a bill. The morning after its receipt the father burst into the doctor's office in a rage, "What did he mean by sending him a bill? Tut, tut!" And there the matter ended.

[Pg 188]

DR. GRAFTON TYLER

For a great many years Dr. Tyler was the physician for Georgetown College. It is still a tradition in the family about the turkeys and the very delicious raisin bread that came every Christmas from the priests. [Pg 189]

His son, Dr. Walter Bowie Tyler, followed him, but not for long, as he had consumption, as

tuberculosis was called in those days. He was asked to be pall-bearer at the funeral of a young lady who, as a dying request, asked to be carried up to Oak Hill because she had a horror of being put in a hearse. Dr. Tyler struggled along for two or three blocks when my father, who was very fond of him, stepped in, pushed him aside and finished the journey.

On the block above, on Washington (30th) Street, in a white, frame house on the west side of the street, lived Captain de la Roche, who was the architect of Oak Hill Cemetery and of Saint John's Church where he was a vestryman when it was remodeled in 1840. Apropos of that, several years ago while I was living away from Georgetown for a short period of years, on one of my return visits, I was standing on the corner of Dumbarton Avenue and 31st Street waiting for a street-car. The wait was long and I looked about me up and down the streets, to the westward, above the tree tops was an object totally strange to my Georgetown eyes, a church steeple of the somewhat Bulfinch type. I reasoned that it could not be anything but the steeple of Saint John's, but I knew I had never seen it look like that—it had always resembled a large pepper pot more than anything else. Upon inquiry, I found that not long before the vestry of Saint John's had found that some repairs were necessary on the tower, so one of their number, a civil engineer, ascended with an architect and while hunting around, they discovered part of the original tower still there, inclosed in the more modern square building. It was torn away and the old church now bears part of its [Pg 190] original headdress. Only the lower story of the tower remains as the smaller ones which used to surmount it had, of course, been lost.

Captain and Mrs. de la Roche had three daughters; two of them had married officers in the United States Army. When the Civil War came their sympathies were with the South. One husband promptly resigned and went with the Confederates. The other would not resign but his wife, being a very resourceful person, kept after him, not being able to stand having a husband in the hated Yankee army, until, during a temporary illness, she got him discharged as not fit for marching.

Captain de la Roche having died, his widow was forced to take boarders at her table, and several of the Union officers availed themselves of the bountiful Southern fare. After a while the youngest daughter, who was a red-hot rebel, found herself deeply in love with a young Yankee doctor. I wonder if he was on duty at the hospital in the Seminary down the street? An engagement followed and the marriage was imminent, but she could not bring herself to confess to her friends that she was about to become the wife of one of the despised soldiers. Finally her mother told her she must at least tell Mrs. Cassin, their neighbor on the corner, who was very devoted to her. So she summoned all her courage and marched down the street. After a great deal of humming and hawing, she finally got out the news and asked Mrs. Cassin to come to the quiet wedding at the home next day, but said, "Please don't tell Mittie until it is over."

Around the corner from Washington (30th) Street, at 3018 Dumbarton Avenue, is the house that Mr. George Green built for his large family, when he sold his place, "Forrest Hill," which was part [Pg 191] of Rosedale, to President Cleveland for his summer home. This is now the home of Justice Frankfurter.

Going westward along Dumbarton Avenue on the northern side of the street, now high up above it, stands the house where lived Jeremiah Williams, a prominent merchant, whose daughter married Paymaster Boggs. It is still sometimes called The Old Boggs Place.

The great bank of earth there shows what a deep cut had to be made when the street was leveled in the days when Alexander Shepherd, as Governor of the District, performed the office of surgeon on the streets of the city. He made of it a wonderful job, but was roundly hated by many of the property owners whom he left sitting way up in the air, or contrariwise, down in a hole.

The house is now divided into two houses—the one on the east, 3035, is the home of that fine commentator, Richard Harkness.

Across the street at 3040 is where Dr. and Mrs. Louis Mackall, Senior, lived and their daughter, Miss Sally Somervell Mackall who wrote her book about Georgetown called *Early Days of Washington*.

Before them the Edes family had lived there. The story is told of Miss Margaret, she who left the money for the Edes Home, one night, when she went up to her chamber, as they were called in those days, that she saw a man's boots protruding from under the bed. Instead of losing her head, she began whistling a little tune as she walked about the room, pulled out the bureau drawers as if looking for something, then went out of the room, closed the door and softly locked it, sent for [Pg 192] the police and captured the burglar.

On the northwest corner of Dumbarton Avenue and Congress (31st) Street was the home of Judge Henry Henley Chapman, who came to Georgetown from Annapolis in the early twenties. He married Miss Mary Davidson, daughter of Colonel John Davidson whose brother Samuel was the owner of Evermay. Two of Judge Chapman's daughters married Francis Dodge, junior; first Jane, then Frances Isabella. His son, Edward, lived on in the home until his death when Mrs. Frances Isabella Dodge took it, had it remodeled somewhat, and entertained there a great deal. After her death it was bought by her stepson, of course also her nephew, Henry Henley Dodge, and I myself remember going to lovely parties given by his children in the big, old rooms.

The house was pulled down about 1900 and a row of brick houses built in its place. It was a handsome house, facing on Dumbarton Avenue, painted a greenish tan, with long porches running along the back building overlooking the yard which extended back to Christ Church. In

this yard were two very handsome trees, one a horse chestnut and one a magnolia. It was enclosed by an iron fence, one of the kind despised and pulled down in the nineties, and now being eagerly sought and replaced in doing over old houses.

[Pg 193]

Home of Judge Henry Henley Chapman

There is a delicious story of how, in the long ago, when all five of the daughters were still at home, a wandering cow got in at the gate, and at four o'clock in the morning (I hope it was the summer time) Aunt Peggy Davidson roused all the girls to go out and get the beast out of the garden. An old colored man was passing, delivering milk, and was heard to exclaim, "Good Gawd, Mis' Chapman's yard is full of ghoses!"

[Pg 194]

Immediately across from this house stood, and still stands, the old Berry house. It, too, shows how it was hoisted above the street when its level was changed. It was built by Philip Taylor Berry in the early 1800's and no other family had ever lived there until his last daughters died, ripe in years.

There were four of them, all old maids (Georgetown had five or six houses of four old maids in my childhood). These were in two sets, but the two older ones far outlived the two younger, who were always very retiring and delicate. When the last two were up in their nineties, being bed-ridden, one on one floor, the other on another, each with a nurse, they used to send messages to each other and exchange the novels which they read over and over again. At last, one night in the winter, the old house caught on fire and when the firemen got there it was so far under way that both old ladies had to be carried down ladders to the street, quite a perilous trip, which they both survived, however, and lived for several years thereafter.

The two older sisters were descendants of John Stoddert Haw; the two younger, of Samuel McKenney and thereby, of course, of Henry Foxall. One of them, I heard all of my childhood was very, very pretty, but, although they were both great friends of my mother, I never saw her face, for she never went out of doors without a heavy, blue barège veil. It is said her eyes were weak but there was, too, a romantic story of her having been "disappointed in love," as they said in those days.

[Pg 195]

Old McKenney House

A little farther west on Dumbarton Avenue on the north side of the street, above its stone wall topped with a white picket fence, is the old McKenney house. This is the house that Henry Foxall gave to his only daughter, Mary Ann, when she became the bride of Samuel McKenney in 1800. Until a few years ago, there lived here her granddaughter, Mrs. McCartney and her children and grandchildren, the fifth generation to live in the old house. [Pg 196]

It was such a dear, sweet old house and the garden, too. At the marriage of the daughter of Mrs. McCartney, the lace wedding veil was the same that was worn long ago by Mary Ann Foxall, whose namesake she was.

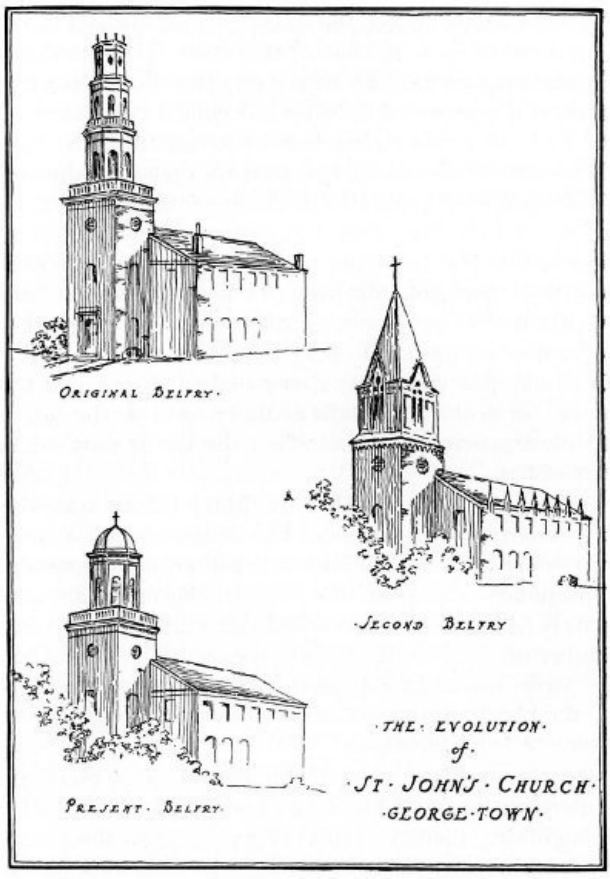
The old house was full of treasures and curios, an exquisite little white marble clock which once upon a time ticked off the hours for Marie Antoinette, that beautiful and tragic queen. It was presented to Henry Foxall by his friend and partner, Robert Morris, who had gotten it from Gouveneur Morris, he having bought it in Paris. Also there was lots of lovely old Spode china, and there is a story told of how Aunt Montie was found one day feeding the cats from the priceless dishes. When reprimanded, she explained she didn't want to use any of the "nice new china."

In 1840 a maiden lady from Philadelphia came one day to have lunch, or midday dinner as I imagine it was in those days, and was planning to take the stage-coach for her return journey soon after the meal. She had been telling stories to the children and when the time for her departure neared, little Henrietta McKenney burst into tears; she didn't want such a delightful story-teller to go. Mrs. McKenney urged her to stay, so she agreed to stay for a day or two, at the [Pg 197] end of that time, for a week or so. The time passed and she stayed on. Her visit lasted forty years, and was ended only by her call to another world. She had asked soon after her settlement into the home life for some duties so she took over the charge of the linen of the household and the making of the desserts. She had one fetich, the candles must be extinguished at ten o'clock. She had her way, even if guests were present—they were put out. She went to bed—they were relit. One night after her death, a young son of the house, about thirteen or so, was put to sleep in her room; at ten o'clock the candle just went out. Every night it happened; they hunted for drafts. No drafts could be located; the candles just always ceased to burn when the clocks reached the hour of ten.

In this block about 1820 Mrs. Mary Billings, an Englishwoman, opened a school where she started to teach both colored and white children together, but a great deal of prejudice arising on the subject, she devoted herself entirely to the colored race and continued to do so for a number of years until she moved over to the city. Later, Mr. Street's school for boys stood here. It was just opposite the old McKenney house with a yard running down almost to High Street.

The Methodist Episcopal Church on this block was formerly located on Montgomery (28th) Street. It had its beginning there in 1800. The church on the present site, which has a modern façade, was used as a Federal hospital during the Civil War, Dr. Peter being in charge of it as well as the Seminary.

[Pg 198]



St. John's Church

On the other side of High Street stands St. John's Episcopal Church, the lot for which was given in 1796 by the Deakins' family. Reverend Walter Addison of Prince Georges County, Maryland, [Pg 199]

had visited George Town in 1794 and 1795 and held occasional services, so a movement was started to build a church. Among the subscribers were Thomas Jefferson and Dr. Balch. The first rector was Reverend Mr. Sayrs of Port Tobacco in 1804. Five years later he died and was immortalized in an epitaph in the church, written by Francis Scott Key:

JOB: J. SAYRS

HU: EEL

RECTOR PRIMUS

HIC

(QUO CHRISTI SERVUS FIDELITES MINUS TRAVIT)

SEP: JAO

OB: 6 JAN. A. D. MDCCIX

AET XXXV

HERE ONCE STOOD FORTH A MAN, WHO FROM THE WORLD
THOUGH BRIGHT ITS ASPECT TO THE YOUTHFUL EYE,
TURNED WITH AFFECTION ARDENT TO HIS GOD,
AND LIV'D AND DIED AN HUMBLE MINISTER
OF HIS BENIGNANT PURPOSES TO MAN.

HERE LIES HE NOW—YET GRIEVE NOT THEN FOR HIM
READER! HE TRUSTED IN THAT LOVE WHERE NONE
HAVE VAINLY TRUSTED—RATHER LET
HIS MARBLE SPEAK TO THEE, AND SHOULDST THOU FEEL,
THE RISING OF A NEW AND SOLEMN THOUGHT
WAK'D BY THIS SACRED PLACE AND SAD MEMORIAL
O LISTEN TO ITS IMPULSE! 'TIS DIVINE—
AND IT SHALL GUIDE THEE TO A LIFE OF JOY,
A DEATH OF HOPE AND ENDLESS BLISS THEREAFTER.

In 1807 the vestry included Charles Worthington, Washington Bowie, Thomas Corcoran, John Mason, Thomas Plater, Benjamin Mackall, Philip Barton Key, and William Stewart. A little later, in 1811, an old writer says: "At that time the church was thronged to an over flow with all who were most elevated in station and in wealth from the Capital; the pews in the gallery were rented at high rates and to persons of great respectability. The street before the church was filled with glittering vehicles and liveried servants." [Pg 200]

In 1831 the vestry failed to elect a rector as successor to Reverend Mr. James. For seven years, the church was closed, worse than closed, for it fell into disrepair to such an extent that the birds and the bats made their nests in it, so that it was called "The Swallow Barn." A sculptor rented it for his studio, which scandalized many of its old-time worshippers who hated to think of the statues of heathen gods and goddesses in the temple of the Lord. At last, in 1838, a vestry was elected, and from that time, St. John's has always flourished.

In its chancel are paintings of the four evangelists done by the Reverend Mr. Oertel. He was also a wood-carver and a musician, and was from Nuremberg in Germany which, I suppose, explains why he was always called Master by his wife. They lived for a good while on Gay (N) Street. Mr. Corcoran bought several of his pictures for his gallery. His best known work was called "Rock of Ages," and represented a female figure with long hair and floating white garments clinging to an enormous cross. This picture was often used on Easter cards. [Pg 201]

Several years ago a large boulder was placed on the bank of the churchyard, bearing this inscription:

COLONEL NINIAN BEALL
BORN SCOTLAND 1625 DIED MARYLAND 1717
PATENTEE OF ROCK OF DUMBARTON
MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF BURGESSES
COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF PROVINCIAL FORCES
OF MARYLAND
IN GRATEFUL RECOGNITION OF HIS SERVICES
"UPON ALL INCURSIONS AND DISTURBANCES
OF NEIGHBORING INDIANS"
THE MARYLAND ASSEMBLY OF 1699 PASSED
"AN ACT OF GRATUITY"
THIS MEMORIAL ERECTED BY THE SOCIETY OF
COLONIAL WARS IN THE DISTRICT
OF COLUMBIA, 1910

Just behind the church and adjoining it on little Potomac Street, is a house where, fifty years ago, used to live two old maid sisters who were absolute hermits. Their food was drawn up in a basket which they let down to an old family retainer containing the money with which to do their purchasing. Whenever the organ was played in St. John's, they used to take a hammer and beat

upon the wall as long as the music continued.

The large yellow house at the southwest corner of Market (33rd) and Second (O) Streets is where Thomas E. Waggaman lived in the nineties. He built an addition on the west as an art gallery for his collection of pictures. It is now a separate house. Here, some years ago, lived Jouett Shouse at the time he formed his Liberty League. Recently, Colonel and Mrs. Alf Heiberg made it their home. They placed an eagle over the door and called it "Federal House." [Pg 202]

Right across the street stood a dear old house some years ago. It was white, with double piazzas all the way across the front. The yard was enclosed by a paling fence and from the gate a double border of box led to the door. It was the home of Dr. Hezekiah Magruder.

About 1833 the family of Admiral James Hogan Sands lived there. William Franklin Sands, author of *Undiplomatic Memories* was one of his sons. The old house was torn down about 1890.

Across the street, at number 3318, is the home of Mr. and Mrs. David E. Finley. He is the Director of the National Gallery of Art.

Number 3322 is the interesting old house where, in the forties and fifties lived Baron Bodisco, Minister from Russia to the United States. He had a very romantic marriage of which I shall tell later. Just before the marriage he purchased this house from Sally Van Devanter, who had inherited it in 1840 from her husband, Christopher Van Devanter, apparently, the builder of the house. Baron Bodisco, the same day he bought it, gave it to his fiancée, Harriet Beall Williams. Whether it was a wedding gift or whether, as a foreign envoy, he could not hold property, I do not know. She kept the property for twenty years until her remarriage to Captain Douglas Scott, when it was bought by Abraham H. Herr. During the Civil War, it was headquarters for the officers of the Second U. S. Regiment, whose enlisted men were quartered in Forrest Hall.

[Pg 203]

Bodisco House

But to return to the period when it was owned and occupied by the Van Devanter family. During these years, they apparently had a most interesting guest, Mrs. Henry Lee, the widow of "Light Horse Harry," and the mother of Robert E. Lee. In Dr. Douglas Freeman's book *R. E. Lee*, he quotes two letters from Mrs. Lee written not long before her death from "Georgetown." She did not specify where she was, but Mrs. Beverley Kennon, many years afterwards, said that this was the house in which she resided. [Pg 204]

Also, the Van Devanter family, a few years ago, found among old books two books with inscriptions of names of the Lee family, evidently left there during this time.

Here, at a ball one night, a young man who was making his entrance into Washington society under the care of a senator had the following experience. (The account is taken from *Harper's Magazine*):

> This was my first entrance into fashionable life at one of Madame Bodisco's birthnight balls. I was under the care of Senator ——. As we entered the house, two tall specimens of humanity, dressed very much like militia generals, in scarlet coats trimmed with gold lace and white

trousers, met us at the door. Thinking them distinguished people, I bowed low and solemnly. They stared and bowed. "Go on," said the Senator, "don't be so polite to those fellows, they are servants; give them your cloak." I hurried in pulling off my cloak as I went. Just within the first door of the drawing room stood a fat, oily little gentleman, bowing also, but not so magnificently gotten up as my first acquaintances. Certain of my game now, I, in superb style, threw over him my cloak and hurried on. Senator —— pulled me back, and to the astonished little fellow now struggling from under my broadcloth, I was presented. I had nearly smothered the Russian Minister who, however, laughed merrily at the mistake. He hardly knew what I would accomplish next, and left me as soon as he possibly could, to my fate. I [Pg 205] wandered about rather disconsolate. The lights, music, dancing, fun and laughter, were all novelties and charming for a while, but I knew no one after an hour's looking on, hunted up the Senator and begged him to introduce me to some of the young ladies. He hesitated a moment, and then consented, and I was led up to and presented to a magnificent creature I had long looked upon with silent admiration. Miss Gennie Williams, who was seated in an easy, nonchalant manner, conversing with a circle of gentlemen, and favored me with a gracious nod. As I stood wondering whether this was the end of my introduction, a mustached dandy came between us and said, "Miss Williams, permit me to relate the joke of the season." To my horror he began the story of the cloak. My first impulse was to knock him down, my second to run away; on my third I acted. Interrupting the recital I said: "Begging your pardon, sir, but Miss Williams, I am the only person who can do justice to that joke," and continuing, I related it without in any way sparing myself. She laughed heartily, as did the circle, and rising from her chair, took my arm, saying kindly that I must be cared for or I would murder some one. With a grace and kindness I shall never forget, she placed me at my ease.

Next door to this house, at one time, lived Hamilton Bronaugh.

Just across the street, the big red brick Victorian house is where James Roosevelt and his family were living in his father's first administration.

Around the corner on Frederick (34th) Street, the house which has a walled garden on the corner was the home of John G. Winant, when he was here before going as Ambassador to the Court of St. James.

A block or two north of here, at 1524 Market (33rd) Street, was the old Yellow Tavern, much used by those going to and fro to Rockville and Frederick Town. [Pg 206]

On Fourth Street (Volta Place), where the playground is now, was where the old Presbyterian burying-ground used to be, which was the principal graveyard until Oak Hill was given to the town in 1849. Among the tombstones moved from there, when it was given up, were those of James Gillespie, member of Congress from North Carolina, who was the first member of that body to die after the removal of the seat of government, and John Barnes, who had been collector of the port, and who, in his will, left money for a poorhouse for Georgetown. He died in 1826 at the age of ninety-six.

On Sixth Street (Dent Place), between Market (33rd) and Frederick (34th) Streets, was the house which Francis Deakins sold on February 8, 1800 to Old Yarrow, as he was called, one of the most mysterious and interesting characters of the early days. It is not known whether he was an East Indian or a Guinea negro, but he was a Mohammedan. He conducted a trade in hacking with a small cart, and his ambition in life was to own a hundred dollars. Twice he saved it and each time ill fortune overtook him. The first time he gave it to an old groceryman he knew to keep for him. The old man died suddenly and Yarrow had nothing to prove that he had had his money. So the next time he picked a young man to keep it for him. Then this one absconded. Some of the gentlemen of the town became so interested that they took up a collection and started an account for him in the Bank of Columbia. He must have been quite a figure in his day, for his portrait was painted by James Alexander Simpson, and is now owned by Mr. E. M. Talcott, who inherited it from Normanstone. [Pg 207]

Quite a number of attractive houses have been built in this neighborhood in the last few years and a good many "done over," all of them, fortunately, in the style suitable for Georgetown.

They are very largely owned and occupied by people connected with the Government, many of them in the State Department. In one of these houses, a few years ago, lived the writer, Michael Strange, who had been the wife of John Barrymore. [Pg 208]

Chapter XIII

Third Street, Beall (O) Street, West (P) Street

ON the southeast corner of Third (P) Street and Frederick (34th) Street, the attractive, low, white frame house is where Doris Fleeson lives, who writes such interesting articles for *The Evening Star*.

At 3327 is a fine tall old brick house painted yellow, which has for many years, until very recently, been the home of Hon. and Mrs. Balthasar Meyer. On the second story it has a lovely long music room used for dancing and by Sylvia Meyer, their daughter, the talented harpist of the National Symphony Orchestra.

Some of the Key family lived here years ago, I suppose, of course, relatives or descendants of those two famous lawyers here, Philip Barton Key and his nephew, Francis Scott Key. And nearby lived another *real* Marylander named Mary Ritchie.

And speaking of names, the strangest woman's name turned up in the title of 3321, which in 1818 was owned by Harry McCleery. He had five daughters and in his will left $3,000.00 to each of four of them; among these, one named Zerniah. To Clarissa, the fifth, he left the house he lived in (this house) and the stone houses on the corner adjoining, with all thereto belonging to be held in trust for her by her two brothers. I wonder if Clarissa was an invalid or if it was the law that, at that time, a woman could not hold property! [Pg 209]

This house later on in the eighties and for twenty years or more was the home of the Humes. Mr. Thomas L. Hume and his wife, Annie Graham Pickrell left a large family of children when they died early.

Mr. Hume also owned a place a little way out of town. One day when General Grant, who was a friend of his, was there Mr. Hume said he couldn't think of a name for the place. General Grant looked around and noticing the walnut trees said, "Why not turn walnut around and call it "Tunlaw"?" And so Tunlaw Road came into being, back behind Mt. Alto Hospital.

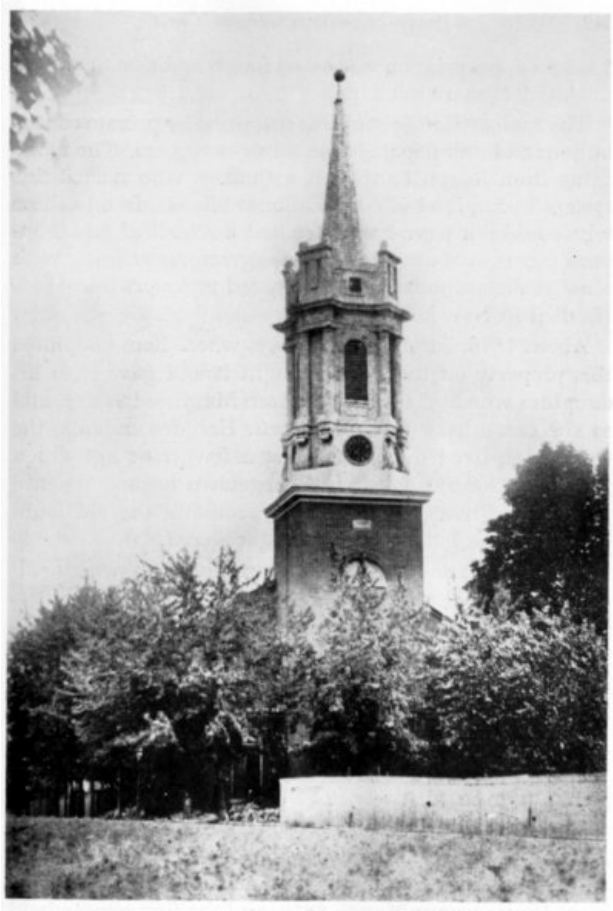
Just to the east of 3321 P Street was the old Lutheran burying-ground. About the time of the Civil War it seems to have been abandoned and the records lost. And near here stands the Lutheran Church, the fourth building on this site, for this church dates back to 1769, when it was a little log building. According to tradition, Dr. Stephen Bloomer Balch preached his first sermon here when he came to be Pastor of the Presbyterians. A prized possession of this church is a very old German Bible printed in Tübingen in 1730. Another treasured possession is the bell, over a hundred years old, which, at one time, was purchased by a congregation in West Virginia, but after twenty-five years, was reclaimed and brought back by a faithful church Councilman and housed under a small stone structure of its own. It is believed to have been cast in Europe.

Crossing High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) and cutting down to Beall (O) Street, one comes to what used to be Hazel's stable—his initials, "W. C. H." are in the bricks up in the peak at the top of the building. Here the doctors kept their carriages, here "hacks" were hired when needed for [Pg 210] parties or funerals, and here was kept for a month or so every fall and spring my little bay mare, *Lady Leeton*, and the red-wheeled runabout which was brought in from Hayes for my use.

I can see Mr. Hazel now in his buggy, he weighed about three hundred pounds and his side of the buggy almost touched the ground as he drove about town.

At 3131, at the home of his daughter, is where General Adolphus Greeley was living several years ago when a very interesting event took place one spring afternoon, in 1935. I was walking down 31st Street when I heard the strains of "The Star-Spangled Banner." I wondered if I was hearing a radio but when I reached the corner of O Street I noticed a policeman and an Army sergeant chatting in the middle of the street and coming up O Street was Justice of the Supreme Court, Owen J. Roberts, bareheaded, with a lady, to whom he said, "They are probably saying, 'Some old geezer named Greeley'!" So I glanced west down O Street and there, drawn up along the southern sidewalk, was a company of U. S. Cavalry, red and white guidon of Company F from Fort Myer. Then I realized that it was the day of days for General Greeley. At last, on his ninety-first birthday, he was being decorated with the Congressional Medal of Honor. It had been many a year since his fateful expedition to the Arctic in search for the North Pole.

Just across the street from here now lives Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and a little farther on, the old house up on a low terrace is where the Lancastrian School was opened in November 1811 under Robert Ould. In a few weeks there were 340 boys and girls under tuition, and in 1812 an [Pg 211] appropriation was asked for an addition to accommodate 250 more scholars.



Christ Church

The Lancastrian School was sustained by private contributions and municipal aid for thirty-two years. The name came from Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker, who started this system in England of coeducational schools, free to those who could not pay. Lancaster had a school of one thousand pupils in Southwark, but disagreements arising with some of the authorities, he emigrated to America in 1818. He died in New York in 1838.

About 1840, Samuel McKenney, whose house adjoined this property on the south, bought it and gave it to his daughter who had gone to southern Maryland to live, and so she came back to Georgetown. Her descendants, the Osbournes, lived there until just a few years ago when the "cult" for old houses in Georgetown began. When a garden was made there recently, some of the old foundations of the schoolroom were uncovered.

Almost next door is the Linthicum Institute, which still conducts its night school for white boys, and above it is the hall where the old Georgetown Assemblies are still held. Here also Mrs. Shippen has her Dancing Classes, and here now my grandchildren are learning where I had my first lessons in the same art. The old hall looks just as it did in my day.

Then at 3018 is Christ Church Rectory, where I happened to be born; it was not the rectory then.

Christ Church, as you recall, was founded in 1817 in Thomas Corcoran's house. The illustration shows the first church building of the three which have stood on this spot. It was begun May 6, 1818, and the first service held at sunrise on Christmas Day that same year, the rector being the Reverend Ruel Keith, who was Professor of Theology at the College of William and Mary, and later, in 1823, with Dr. Wilmer, founder of the Theological Seminary, near Alexandria. [Pg 213]

Among the founders of Christ Church were Thomas Corcoran, William Morton, Clement Smith, Francis Scott Key, John Stoddert Haw, John Myers, Ulysses Ward, James A. Magruder, Thomas Henderson, and John Pickrell. The present building of Christ Church was erected about 1885. The windows which were made especially for it in Munich, Germany, are very beautiful. The big one in the north end was put there by W. W. Corcoran in memory of his father, Thomas Corcoran.

I have heard from the daughter of one of the belles of the fifties, whose family were Christ Church people, that in those days the beaux might join a lady after church and escort her home, but under no circumstances did they entertain callers on Sunday. All of the food for Sunday use was prepared on Saturday.

It was during the fifties that Dr. William Norwood was the rector of Christ Church. He was a Virginian and very outspoken in the expression of his political views in that day of heated opinions. So violent was the feeling that, although he had a brilliant mind and a saintly character, he was obliged to resign. He returned to his native State and was for many years the revered rector of St. Paul's, Richmond. I remember hearing that as a young man he had a classmate at college, Clement Moore, who one night came into his room, saying, "Norwood, I'd like to read you something I've written to see what you think of it." He sat down and read to him "The Night Before Christmas," that beloved old poem without which Christmas hardly seems like Christmas [Pg 214]

to me, even now.

Dr. Norwood was followed several years later by Reverend Albert Rhett Stuart, under whose leadership the present church was built. I remember the big basket which was carried around by a fine-looking, tall colored woman with articles for sale for the benefit of the Ladies' Aid Society of Christ Church.

The interesting white house over on the northeast corner was at one time the home of the Godeys, then of the Curtis family. When they lived there, "music filled the air," for a son and a chum of his used to sit out on the long, side gallery and play for hours on the violin and 'cello. It was for several years the home of Justice and Mrs. Owen J. Roberts.

Only two houses on this block are of any age. The little white cottage near the corner of Washington (30th) Street was the home of three Miss Tenneys and their sister, Mrs. Brown, who had a school for small boys and girls. Then the garden ran to the corner. The father of these ladies and of William H. Tenney had come to Georgetown from Newburyport, Massachusetts, in the early part of 1800.

Just across from it, the large yellow mansion was the home of Commodore Cassin, built by him, I think, in the early 1800's. In 1893 Mr. and Mrs. Beverley Randolph Mason, of Virginia, opened here their school, Gunston Hall, named, of course, for Mr. Mason's ancestral home, which continued in Washington as a flourishing boarding school for girls for fifty years. After that, this building housed the Epiphany School, an Episcopal institution. [Pg 215]

The property along 30th Street here was all owned at one time by the Matthews family. Henry Cooksey Matthews came to Georgetown some years before 1820. He had been born in 1797 on the farm near Dentsville, in Charles County, Maryland, where his forbears had lived for four generations. He married his cousin, Lucinda Stoddert Haw, whose home, you remember, was on Gay (N) Street, and they built the large house on the southeast corner of Washington (30th) and West (P) Streets.

Mr. Matthews and his wife were devoted members of Christ Church and named their son for one of its rectors, the Reverend Charles McIlvaine, who later became Bishop of Ohio. Mr. Matthews used to play the flute in the orchestra in Christ Church.

Mr. Charles M. Matthews also married his cousin, who was a daughter of Thomas Corcoran, junior, and niece of W. W. Corcoran. Mr. Matthews, until his death, managed the estate of Mr. Corcoran. He built his home on the southern part of his father's lot at the northeast corner of Washington (30th) and Beall (O) Streets.

Back in the eighties Miss Charlotte and Miss Margaret Lee came from Virginia and opened The West Washington School for Girls, sponsored by several of the gentlemen of Georgetown, in the old home of Henry C. Matthews. There, in the last year of its existence, I learned the beginnings of the three R's.

Nearby, at number 3014 P Street, in the fifties and sixties, William R. Abbott conducted a well-known school for boys. At that time it was only a one-story building. Mr. Abbott was the son of John Abbott, whose home was on Bridge (M) Street. The Abbotts lived in the house on the west next door to the school. In later years it was occupied by the Lyons, Hartleys, and Parris families. [Pg 216]

In one of these houses was the school for boys founded by Dr. David Wiley and continued for twenty more years by Dr. James McVean.

There is a fine row of houses just beyond here where have lived, at various times, the Magruders, the Kenyons, the Yarnalls, and, long ago, in the early 1800's, Colonel Fowler, who came from Baltimore and whose wife was a sister of Dr. Riley's wife, made his home at number 3030 West (P) Street.

For many years this house was used as the rectory of Christ Church. There lived Dr. Norwood and his large family of daughters, all of whom left their impression on the City of Richmond in after years. Also, Dr. Walter Williams, and Dr. Albert Rhett Stuart, of South Carolina, who was for twenty-five years rector of Christ Church.

The end house was the Morton's home for a great many years. Four unmarried sisters lived there long, long after their parents had gone. But parental influence was strong in those days, for one of them in her late seventies was still "engaged" to the love of her youth, disapproved of by her father. Once a week she met him and had lunch with him down town. He came sometimes to Sunday dinners, swathed in his long, black cape.

During the fall great droves of cattle and flocks of sheep from western Virginia were driven through the streets and gathered at Drovers' Rest, two miles west of town. Some days many thousands filled West (P) Street from morn to eve, and, occasionally, a wild steer ran amuck and then there was great excitement. Also, large flocks of turkeys, hundreds of them, were driven up from lower Maryland and passed through the streets to pens on the outskirts of town, where one could go and pick out his own bird. [Pg 217]

Across the street at number 3019 is the house Mr. Linthicum built in 1826. Thomas Corcoran, junior, made it his home from then until 1856, when it was bought by John T. Cochrane for his sister, Mrs. James A. Magruder, who brought up there her three nieces and one nephew. Two of the nieces, Miss Mary Zeller and Mrs. Whelan, lived on there all their lives. Miss Mary used to

tell me many tales of old-time days and ways. The old house remained entirely unchanged until about twelve years ago, when it was bought and done over inside. It had a lovely stairway and dignified, square rooms.

The row of three quaint little brick houses here seem to be an unknown quantity to even some of the oldest inhabitants and nearest neighbors. In number 3021, long ago, lived Horatio Berry, the brother of Philip Taylor Berry. In number 3025, the quaint locks on the doors all have on them a small, round brass seal, bearing the coat-of-arms of Great Britain, the lion and the unicorn rampant, also the name "Carpenter & Co.", and in the cellar are crossbeams hewn by hand.

Next we come to a pair of cottages, changed from their pristine loveliness—now the "Mary Margaret Home," for old ladies. The one at 3033 P Street in my girlhood was the home of Mrs. James D. Patton, the former Jennie Coyle. She gave me piano lessons for four years, but she gave me much more! She formed a group of girls into a King's Daughters' Circle, "The Patient Workers," which met at her house on Saturday mornings when we sewed and made articles [Pg 218] which we sold at a Fair in the Spring. The proceeds were divided between the Children's Country Home and the Children's Hospital. There is still a brass plate in the hospital bearing the name, "The Patient Workers" for a bed we named.

The two big houses on the northeast corner of West (P) Street and Congress (31st) Street were built by Joseph H. Libbey, a well-to-do lumber merchant. They continued to be in his family for a long time. The one on the east now is the Catholic Home for Aged Ladies. In front of it is the largest and most beautiful elm tree in Georgetown. The two houses at 1516 and 1518 Congress (31st) Street, Mr. Libbey built about 1850 as wedding gifts for his two daughters, Martha, Mrs. Benjamin Miller, becoming the owner of number 1516. It is still owned by her descendants. Number 1518 has changed hands several times. It was where Richard V. Oulahan, the well-known newspaper correspondent, lived until his death several years ago. At that time it was said of him: "He gathered news like a gentleman and wrote it like a scholar."

Back in the eighties, a party was given at number 1518 one night for the young niece of two maiden ladies whose home it then was. The guests were about sixteen and seventeen years old, and the boys had all just arrived at the age where their most treasured possessions were their brand new derby hats. When the party broke up and the guests trooped upstairs to get their wraps, the young gentlemen found, on entering their dressing room, that on one of the beds reposed the crowns of all their derbies, while on the other, neatly laid out, were all the brims. The culprit was never caught. Only the other day one of the long-ago guests was told by the [Pg 219] offender that he had been the originator of the diabolic idea.

If you look west along the next block of West (P) Street, you notice how different are the north and south sides. Along the south side are houses of an absolutely different period. All those on the north side were built in the seventies or later, including the Presbyterian Church, except the one on the corner of Congress (31st) Street, which was the residence of General Otho Holland Williams, a Revolutionary officer, who was in the same company with General Lingan. His house has, of course, been completely changed and made into two houses. It was never beautiful, but it was a dignified old mansion, with high steps leading up to a quaint doorway.

Across Congress (31st) Street, at number 3108 West (P) Street, the house with the high steps going up sideways was built by Judge Morsell about 1800. For a while, the Barnards lived there. Then the Marquis de Podestad, Minister from Spain to this country, made it his residence. After the Civil War, General George C. Thomas resided there. Next door is where the Shoemakers have lived for many years.

The house with the nice, old hipped roof was at one time owned by a Captain Brown. In the eighties and nineties the Misses Dorsey of Virginia had here a school for girls called "Olney Institute." Afterwards, Reverend Parke P. Flournoy, once a chaplain in the Confederate Army, lived here up into his nineties with his family.

Still a little farther on, and incorporated with the old Tenney house, now owned by Mrs. Stephen Bonsal, is where Miss Jennie Gardiner had a school for little children about the same time as the [Pg 220] Dorseys' school. For some time before the Civil War it was the home of the Reverend Mr. Simpson, whose wife was Miss Stephenson from near Winchester. Her father, whose home was Kenilworth, near there, made her a present of the house. Following the Civil War, it was for a long time the home of William H. Tenney, who had a prosperous flour mill.

Just across the street from it, the imposing looking yellow house with the mansard roof is the one that Elinor Glyn bought and "did over," and then never lived in, as she decided to go back to England to her mother, who was in delicate health. Later it was the residence of Mrs. Isabella Greenway, Representative in Congress from Arizona.

A block from here just above Q Street on what is now dignified by the name of 32nd, but will always remain to old Georgetonians, Valley Street, lived a very interesting character, still remembered by some people in Georgetown as "The crazy man of Valley Street."

Among other shabby houses, one which was quite different in appearance and stood a little back from the street, with a tree in its tiny patch of a yard, was where he lived. It looked as if it had a story—and it had. It was told me not long ago by an old friend. I call him a friend, for whenever I went to the institution where he was a doorkeeper, I went back in memory to the years when he was our postman. In those days your postman was your friend. You thought over what your Christmas gift to him would be as much as a member of your family. Not like it is nowadays,

when he drops your letters through a slit in the door. You don't know his name, you don't know what he looks like, you don't even know whether he is white or colored. [Pg 221]

This is the story of "the crazy man of Valley Street." During the Civil War, Captain Chandler was in command of a United States vessel cruising in the Chesapeake Bay searching ships carrying contraband. He was accused of making a traitorous remark and dismissed from the service. His family was living at the Union Hotel, but they left and went to New York to live. He took his savings and built for himself the little house on Valley Street. Its interior was made to resemble exactly the cabin of a ship.

My friend told me that his first encounter with the old gentleman was one Monday morning about nine-thirty when, having been changed to this new route, he stopped to open the gate to deliver a letter. It was locked. He knocked. At last a window was thrown up and the old man's head emerged. He said the captain looked very much like the pictures of General Robert E. Lee.

Seeing it was the postman with a letter, he said he would open the gate, so he pulled a rope—and presto! open it flew. He said he never opened it until ten o'clock in the morning and wanted to know if his mail could be delivered after that, which the carrier obligingly offered to do, by changing his route somewhat.

After that, for years, Mr. Postman was a friend to the old man, though he never really entered the house. Each month a check for twenty dollars would come from a nephew in Chicago, which the postman would take to Mr. Berry with a note from the captain, asking to have it cashed, and specifying the number of dollar bills, fifty-cent pieces, quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies. A [Pg 222] little colored boy who lived nearby was commissioned occasionally to purchase necessary food, but the old man himself never went out except after dark.

Finally, one day when the little boy came to do the errands, he could get no answer to his knock, so he got a man to lift him up where he could peer over the high board fence at the side and look into an open window. Through it he saw the old gentleman, sprawled out in a big chair, immovable. They broke into the house and found that he was paralyzed. He could not speak, but shook his head when they said they wanted to call help from the police. He was laid on a mattress on the floor, and before long, all his troubles were over.

His nephew came from Chicago, bought a lot in Rock Creek Cemetery and had the old gentleman decently buried. But not long after, his son in New York, reading of it in the paper, came down and had his father reinterred in the family lot in Oak Hill. So, in death, the old gentleman was accorded the honor of two funerals.

[Pg 223]

Courtesy Frick Art Reference Library.
Washington Bowie

Chapter XIV

[Pg 224]

Stoddert (Q) Street

COMING east from Valley (32nd) Street is the lovely old house which the Seviers bought in 1890. It has never had a name. It was built by Washington Bowie, another of the shipping barons. His wife was Margaret Johns before becoming Mrs. Bowie. This whole block was his estate and was

entered in his day through the double iron gates on West (P) Street. The carriages passed up and around a circle of box to the path, bordered with box leading to the porch with its lovely doorway. The doors opening into the hall that runs right through are of solid mahogany with big old brass locks. In the dining room is an especially beautiful white wood mantel, carved with a scene of sheep and shepherds. The tradition is that L'Enfant planned the garden, and also left his spectacles lying on the piano.

[Pg 225]

The Sevier House (Built by Washington Bowie)

In 1805 the place was bought by William Nicolls of Maryland, whose wife was Margaret Smith, a descendant of Captain John Smith. They had two daughters, Roberta, who married William Frederick Hanewinckel of Richmond, and Jennie, who married Colonel Hollingsworth. The Hanewinckels used to come back to the old home sometimes in the summer, even to the grandchildren, and the descendants still love the old place and consider it their ancestral home, for they had it longer than any other family. Colonel Hollingsworth was the superintendent of [Pg 226] Mount Vernon before Colonel Dodge. I remember Colonel Hollingsworth well, a tall, fine-looking old gentleman, with a long, white beard. Of course, in those days we went to Mount Vernon by way of the river, on the steamer *W. W. Corcoran*. It is still, I think, by far the most pleasant way to approach the dignified old mansion, and Captain Hollingsworth would often be on the boat and talk with us. I've never forgotten the dear old-fashioned nosegay he picked and gave me from Mrs. Washington's garden. Mrs. Hollingsworth was a tiny little old lady. I can see her now with her snow-white hair and her big, black bonnet. Poor soul, it was a terrible trial to her when the place had to be sold after her husband's death.

It was put up for auction in 1890, and Mr. and Mrs. John Sevier, who happened to be visiting Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dodge in Georgetown at that time, though they spent a great deal of their time in Paris, heard of the sale and bought the house on the spot. Mr. Sevier was a descendant of the famous Tennesseean of that same name. Later they added the wings extending far out on each side, which are really two charming little houses. The old garden is still full of wonderful box, and besides, there are lots and lots of lovely roses, the pride of their stately mistress.

Mrs. Sevier told me of being at a spa in Germany one summer when she was young, with Mr. Sevier. When they asked for the first floor apartment instead of theirs on the second, they were told by the proprietor that it was engaged for "some Englishman; he did not know whom." It turned out to be the then Prince of Wales, Edward VII. The prince, on seeing her, asked to be presented. She was very beautiful then, tall and fair. She met him three times, in the garden or at [Pg 227] the spring. When he was leaving, he asked to say good-bye. She, unthinkingly, stood on the step above him, (a terrible *faux pas*, she learned afterwards), gave him some roses, and he presented her with a bouquet surrounded by lace paper; it was the custom, always, on leaving a place.

When my father built his house in 1884 on the southwest corner of Stoddert (Q) Street and Congress (31st) Street, it was in part of the orchard of the old Bowie place. Some of the pear trees were still there. Today there are six houses on the lot where his house stood with its big gables and its many porches, surrounded by a fine lawn in which he took great pride. This house caused a good deal of comment at the time of its building from the fact that it had a bathroom on every floor, one being, of course, a "powder room." But to have a bathroom in the basement for the servants in those days was unheard of. It was just as good as the others, a tin-lined tub, of course, would be horrible to the present generation!

[Pg 228]

Courtesy Bolling-Fowler.

The George T. Dunlop House

The house was always brimming over with people, young and old, for occasions both grave and gay. One very grave one happened about two years after we moved there, and another "first" in Georgetown was there—the first trained nurse in Georgetown. Early in the month of May diphtheria seized the eldest daughter, then about fifteen. Two days later, another succumbed, a beautiful little girl of five. There was no anti-toxin in those days. In four days little Eleanor Hope was dead. Two days later a little cousin visiting there, was taken, and two days later still, the three remaining well children were sent out one afternoon for a drive with Grandpa in the Dayton-wagon, an old-time version of the present-day station wagon. We thought it was kind of [Pg 229] strange to go to drive in the rain, but it wasn't really raining hard, so we stopped where the Cathedral Close is now and picked bluets and violets. When we got home we were told we had a new little brother! Wildly excited, we rushed upstairs and assaulted the door of mother's room. It was opened by old Aunt Catherine, the colored mid-wife, who had been told not to admit anyone, but mother called us and in we went. An hour or so later I was the fourth victim of diphtheria! I still have vivid memories of it all, and of Miss Freese, the trained nurse.

She wore a uniform of blue and white striped cotton, long to the floor, but, strange to say, her hair was short, unusual for those days. I can still see the animals she cut out of paper—elephants, horses, and cows. Dear Aunt Ellen and Auntie helped with the nursing, and father even stayed home some days to help!

These were some of the grave days, now to come to the gay. I remember the big reception for father's and mother's silver wedding anniversary, when I and my two chums, I in red, one in white, and one in a blue dress, stood back behind this fine couple, thinking we were so wonderful! My best friend lived right across the street, and we rigged up a line from my window to hers on which we sent little notes by pulling the line around.

My two elder sisters had many beaux, and I mean, "many." I can remember when some times twenty young gentlemen came to call on Sunday evening. Of course, there were not many "dates" in those days, unless to go to the theatre or a party of some kind, dancing or euchre. [Pg 230]

One Sunday night when the butler was off duty, my brother, home from Princeton, answered the door bell. A gentleman entered, asking if the ladies were at home; he handed his silk hat to John, then his cane, then his coat, and then, he said "Now, announce me!" He was announced! As he sat on the sofa by my cousin, a visitor from Kentucky, a real Kentucky belle, a horrified expression came over his face. She, thinking he had been attacked by the new disease, appendicitis, which she had heard was very painful, asked what was the matter, to which he replied, "I have just discovered I have on blue trousers instead of black!" He was in his full-dress suit.

On our side of Congress (31st) Street was one of the houses holding four old maids, the daughters of John Davidson, one of the oldest names in Georgetown: Miss Adeline, Miss Nannie, Miss Kate, and Miss Martha. Their mother had died on her knees in Christ Church from a stroke.

Across the street lived four maiden ladies by the name of Mix—one of their brothers married a Miss Pickle!

Of course, before Stoddert (Q) Street was cut through, the Bowie house adjoined the property of Tudor Place, and they were on a level. I can remember when the street was paved, and now that it is one of the busiest boulevards of the city, it seems almost impossible to believe that back in the nineties a houseful of charming-girls, real old-fashioned belles, used often to "erupt" with their many beaux from their home on the neighboring corner, at eleven o'clock some evenings, and have a dance right in the middle of the street—two-steps and waltzes galore!

[Pg 231]

Home of Francis Dodge

[Pg 232]

On the southeast corner of Congress (31st) Street and Stoddert (Q) Street stood, until 1893 or 1894, the very interesting old house where Francis Dodge and his large family lived for many, many years. The illustration does not do justice to the dear old house, but I wanted to give some idea of it as a whole, so selected this one. The long, southern side overlooking the garden had tiers of white wooden galleries and the face of the house under them was plastered white. In the center of the long stretch of wall was a lovely, big doorway with a fanlight, of course, and at the end of the porch, a smaller door which entered a projecting wing of the house.

The place was enclosed by a low, brick wall topped with a white picket fence, and standing near the corner was a gorgeous horse-chestnut tree. Whenever I see one now, I recall this particular tree with its lovely blossoms in the spring and their delicious fragrance. A flight of wooden steps led from a brick walk at the gate to the gallery, and another flight from the same walk down into the garden. Under the porch was a brick pavement where was the pump, and then there was the garden—a wonderful old garden adorned with a maze of box which, of course, enclosed flower-beds.

The whole square, bounded by Congress (31st), West (P), Washington (30th), and Stoddert (Q) Streets, belonged to this estate. It was originally the property of Nicholas Lingan who owned the mill on Rock Creek, and who was a brother of General Lingan. At that time, these big places really were farms, with stables for horses, cows, pigs, and chickens.

[Pg 233]

Francis Dodge, Senior

In 1810 the property was bought by Francis Dodge, who, as I have said before, had come from

[Pg 234]

Salem as a lad of sixteen to join his brother, Ebenezer, who was established in a prosperous coastwise shipping trade, dealing largely with the West Indies.

One of the first experiences young Francis had, after his arrival in 1798, was one afternoon when he returned from a row up the river, and as he was mooring his boat, he noticed an elderly gentleman hurrying down the street and out onto the wharf. The gentleman asked if the ferry was in yet, and when the boy turned to answer him and looked into his face, he saw that it was General Washington. Francis replied that the ferry had gone and, noting the terrible disappointment of the great man, offered to row him across the river in his own little boat. The General gladly accepted, and during the crossing asked the young man his name. "Francis Dodge, sir," the boy replied, at which the General exclaimed, "By any chance related to Colonel Robert Dodge, who served so gallantly with me during the War?" "Yes, General, he was my father." "Oh, indeed!" said he, "I am greatly pleased to know you, young man. You must come to Mount Vernon some time to see me."

Whether or not Francis Dodge got to Mount Vernon before the General's death the following year, I do not know, but for over forty years his grandson, Colonel Harrison H. Dodge, was the honored superintendent there.

Young Francis was taken into his brother's counting house, and a few years later, in 1804, was sent to Portugal to investigate trade conditions in Europe. In 1807 he married Elizabeth Thomson, a daughter of William Thomson, of Scotland. They first resided below Bridge (M) Street, west of High (Wisconsin Avenue), probably in Cherry Lane, where lived also, according to tradition, Philip Barton Key, the Maffits, and other families of distinction. [Pg 235]

Mr. and Mrs. Dodge had the usual large family of those days, six sons and five daughters, and all grew to maturity. While they were still small children, however, the British came to Washington, causing great alarm to the citizens of George Town also. Mr. Dodge apparently sent his family out somewhere near Rockville, for this is a letter he wrote to his wife at that time. It gives an interesting picture of those exciting days:

Georgetown,
Aug. 26, 1814,
12 o'clock A. M.

Dear Wife:

We have positive information that the British have left the City on the Baltimore road, and passed the toll-gate last night. Some of their pickets are still around the city.

We believe they are either going to their shipping on Patuxent or direct to Baltimore; or that they received information of an intention to attempt to cut them off. At all events I am satisfied you would be perfectly safe here, and much more comfortable than where you are. I wish yourself, the child, Emily, Frank, and Isabella, to come home and bring, if you can, one bed. Peggy and Betty can come if they please.

Not one Englishman has been in this town or within sight of Ft. Warburton below. They have burnt all public property in the city. It was a dreadful sight. The rope-walks in the city are destroyed. The General Post Office and Jail stand. I hope they will not return here again and can't think they will, they behaved well.

The town was very quiet last night and I got a good sleep for the first time. I hope you are well.

Yours affectionately,

F. Dodge.

[Pg 236]

Aug. 27, 7 o'clock A. M.

After preparing yesterday to send this, William came and advised to postpone till today. You can all come now in the stage, bringing all the books and what else you can.

We have no news today but expect the British are near their shipping. We have escaped wonderfully.

The stage ran daily from George Town to Rockville. I think it was also called "the hack," for, in old letters from my own ancestors at Hayes, out in that direction, they write of "sending the seamstress out by the hack."

As the boys approached years of discretion, not having been spoiled by sparing the rod, their father gave to each an identical circular, setting forth what should be their "guide through life." His admonition to "read the Bible daily and regularly," was based upon his own remarkable habit in that respect. That he managed to read five chapters consecutively every morning and thus encompass the whole in seven months, is borne out by the periodic notations in his Holy Book. The circulars read as follows:

My practice (and my advice to all) is: if you wish to appear decent shave every morning below ears and nose, cut your hair short all over the head, wear white cravats, no boot-straps or pantaloon straps.

If you expect or desire to live in old age with few pains, and in the meantime be clear headed and well, and thriving in your business, rise before the sun, retire early, taking seven to nine hours in bed. Eat regularly and moderately of plain food, plainly cooked; no desserts except

green fruit, drink no kind of liquor except water and the like; use no tobacco in any way.

Read five chapters in the Bible regularly through, before breakfast, support religious societies and go to church twice every Sabbath Day. Take moderate exercise, attend to your business and keep it always in order and under your Government, never over-trade, hold your word as binding as your bond, be security for no one, seldom any good comes of it, but often miserable distress. [Pg 237]

Be as liberal as you can, consistently, to your kin, if in need and worthy, perform all your duties to your family and neighbors.

The above I practice almost to the letter.

F. Dodge.

P. S.—Again, say little or nothing about yourself, your family, or your business. Talk but little—listen.

Speak as well as you can of all, expose faults only when you believe it well to do more good than harm, all have foibles and few are free from faults, most, some good traits of character.

This post script I am endeavoring to practice.

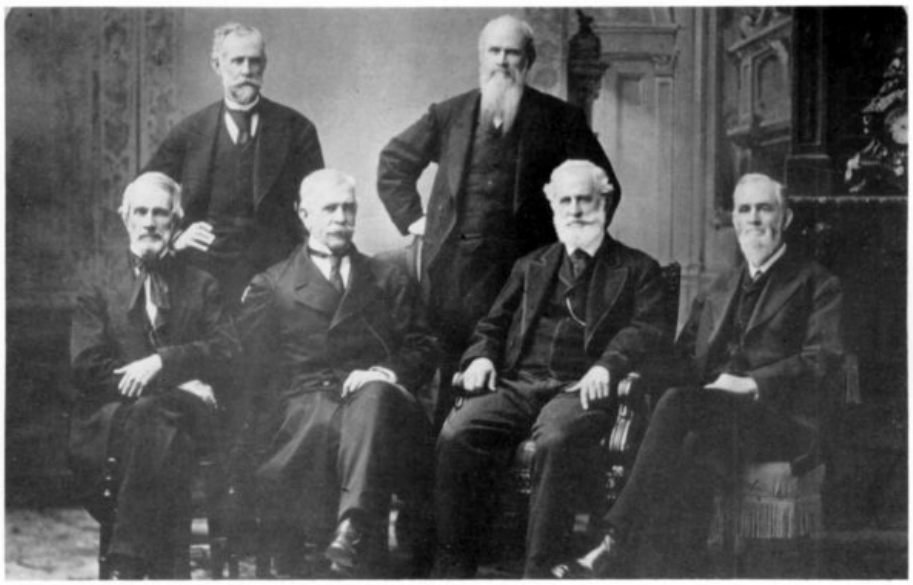
F. Dodge. 1847.

Act well your part, there all the honor lies,
Read, heed!

The above attended to with strict economy, industry and like, will carry you through this life with honor and credit.

The education of the two oldest sons, Francis, junior, and Alexander Hamilton, seems to have been planned to fit them specially for commercial life, to succeed their father in his well-established business. Francis was sent to Georgetown College and Alexander to Princeton—he graduated in 1835. Robert Perley Dodge graduated from Princeton in two years, standing fifth in a class of seventy-six. He then entered a school of engineering in Kentucky. In six months he completed a major course. He rated so high that he was offered a professorship in mathematics, but declined, and became a civil engineer.

[Pg 238]



The Sons of Francis Dodge, 1878

William and Allen Dodge received special practical training in agriculture and animal industry at the Maryland Agricultural College. Mr. Dodge bought William a farm near Hagerstown, and for [Pg 239] Allen one near Bladensburg, but, due to the Civil War and the abolition of slaves, both of these highly developed ventures failed, and the farms were sold. Charles, the youngest, attended Georgetown College, and took up commercial and export business. In 1862 he was offered command of a Confederate regiment but declined, being a Unionist. He accepted, instead, the rank of major and paymaster in the Federal Army and served throughout the war. For a time he was interested in gold mining in Maryland, and in 1889 succeeded his brother Frank (then deceased) as collector of customs of the District of Columbia.

On the twelfth of June, 1849, a remarkable event took place in this old house—a wedding ceremony at four o'clock in the morning of four of the children of Mr. and Mrs. Dodge. Adeline was married to Charles Lanman; Virginia to Ben Perley Poore, a well-known correspondent of *Harper's Weekly* in those days; Allen Dodge to Miss Mary Ellen Berry, and Charles Dodge to Miss Eliza G. Davidson of Evermay. The weddings were celebrated at this unusual hour so that the bridal couples could take the regular stage leaving Georgetown for Baltimore at five o'clock. At least it was a cool time of day for the celebration, and how beautiful it must have been with the dew lying on the box and the roses, and the birds twittering their sunrise notes. What a jolly time these four couples must have had, starting off together. Let us hope their spirits were not too much dampened by the fact that their father would not witness the ceremony, as it was at variance with his religious scruples that it was not conducted in a church. Reverend N. P. Tillinghast, then the rector of St. John's Church, must have officiated, as the Dodges were always [Pg 240]

ardent supporters of St. John's.

The only two members of the family who did not marry were Miss Emily and Miss Elizabeth Dodge. They were the eldest of the girls, and I imagine that practically no one could get up the nerve to ask the old gentleman for their hands. Major Ben Perley Poore used to say that the most momentous hour he could remember was the one spent in Mr. Dodge's office waiting to see him to ask for the hand of Virginia, and he had faced guns when he said that.

In 1851 Francis Dodge died at the age of sixty-nine. He was a very good citizen; his judgment was sought on all matters of public interest connected with the town, besides exercising a controlling influence over commercial transactions. At that time tropical fruits such as oranges and bananas were luxuries, and it is remembered that Mr. Dodge used to send baskets of them around to his friends whenever one of his vessels would arrive from the West Indies.

When I was a little girl, living across the street on the opposite corner from this house, it was always spoken of as "Miss Emily Dodge's." I can remember her well when she would come out on the gallery and walk up and down. She seemed never to go away from the house. She was rather small, had snow-white hair in long curls about her face, and was usually wrapped in a white shawl. I have been told that she was terribly afraid of fire and burglars, so slept fully dressed. Each morning she bathed and re-clothed herself. At night she lay down and slept as she was. At the time I remember, Miss Emily occupied part of the big wing of the enormous house and Allen Dodge and his wife were living in the lower floors of the wing. His wife was quite an invalid, and I [Pg 241] do not recollect ever seeing her.

The main part of the house was occupied for one winter by Dr. Stuart, the rector of Christ Church, and his family while the new rectory at number 1515 31st Street was being built.

After the death of Miss Emily Dodge, the place was sold to close the estate, and pulled down, thereby deleting from Georgetown one of its most distinctive and charming features which today would have been invaluable. I remember weeping bitterly when I heard it was to be torn down; even then, a half-grown girl, I loved old houses.

The two cottages on West (P) Street at numbers 3033 and 3035, were built by Mr. Dodge. In the latter, until her death, lived Mrs. Charles Lanman (Adeline Dodge). Mr. Lanman was a native of Newburyport, Massachusetts. He was a very scholarly man, wrote *A Life of Daniel Webster*, who was his friend, and other books, and for a long time was connected with the Japanese Legation.

For many years they had a young Japanese girl, Ume Tschuda, making her home with them while she was being educated in this country. The Lanmans had no children of their own, and looked upon her almost as an adopted daughter. She has had a very remarkable career as head of an important school in Japan.

Another house built by the Dodges on their farm is the one on 30th Street, now doubled in size and occupied by Dr. Gwynn. Here Henry H. Dodge lived until he moved into his mother's former home, the Chapman house, on Congress (31st) Street and Dumbarton Avenue. [Pg 242]

On the southeast corner of Stoddert (Q) and Washington (30th) Streets, what is now Hammond Court, an apartment, was the house built by Francis Dodge, junior. In the group picture shown, he and Alexander Hamilton Dodge are the two seated in the middle of the front row. A. H. Dodge is the only brother not adorned with a beard. Was there ever a more wonderful display of six stalwart handsome brothers? In fact, good looks are to this day inherent in the Dodge family.

I have already told a good deal of the history of Francis Dodge, junior, of his marriage to the two daughters of Judge Chapman. He had a son and a daughter by each wife.

In 1851, at the death of Francis Dodge, senior, his splendidly established West Indies business continued under the management of the eldest sons, the name being changed to F. & A. H. Dodge. On the basis of their business alone, Georgetown was made a port of entry and a custom house was established here.

Each year there was a sale for buyers from large cities in the North on the Dodges' wharf. It was quite an occasion. The counting house was capacious, and decorated with all sorts of curios from the tropics: sharks' jaws, flying fish, swordfish and sawfish; elaborate lunches were served to the patrons, with cigars and drinkables; chairs and benches were placed out on the platform overlooking the river. On summer afternoons, this was a great meeting place for the friends of the two Dodges.

Many bidders assembled on these advertised dates, hauling commodities away as purchased, some to the rail depot, some to storage, which kept the firm officials and stewards busy. One of [Pg 243] the faithful employees was Richard McCraith, a newly arrived Irishman from Cork. He had that noted propensity of his race for getting orders twisted, but his endeavors to do right were so earnest and conscientious that his unintentional errors of judgment were condoned. One urgent order from a patron asked for delivery to bearer of two sacks of coarse salt. For its hauling the bearer had a cart. "Here, Richard, go with this man to the warehouse on High Street and see that his cart is backed up close to the door. The salt is stored in the third floor. Load it carefully on the hand truck, wheel it to the window and let it down 'by the fall'—do you get that straight?" "Yis sir, yis sir!" Presently a man burst into the office, exclaiming excitedly, "That wild Irishman of yours has raised hell up the street. He dumped a sack of salt weighing 200 pounds from the third story to the cart underneath, broke both wheels, and the horse has run away with the wreck."

(Enter Richard!) Said the angry boss, "Now, what the devil have you done?" Richard: "Yis sir. Didn't you tell me to let it down 'by the fall'? I did, sir."

In 1867 Francis Dodge, junior, sold this fine house to Henry D. Cooke. In 1877 he was appointed collector of customs. He was quite an old gentleman by that time, and the glories of Georgetown's maritime trade were beginning to be a thing of the past. In fact, with the coming of the railroads, the huge business of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal was injured, and from then on the commercial importance of the town began to dwindle.

Henry D. Cooke, who purchased this house, was the brother of Jay Cooke, and came to Washington to manage a branch of his brother's large banking enterprise. He was an intimate [Pg 244] friend of General Grant, and I have read that the general was so fond of his company that he would sit in his carriage for an hour outside Mr. Cooke's place of business, waiting for him to go driving.

Claude Bowers, in his most interesting book *The Tragic Era*, speaks of a brilliant ball given the night before the "breaking of the bubble of the Credit Mobilier" in 1873, by Henry D. Cooke. It was in this house that the ball took place. Can't you picture the coaches as they rolled up to the door, discharging the ladies in their crinolines, laces, satins, and flowers, attended by the gentlemen wrapped in the long cloaks of that period? Kate Chase Sprague was in the height of her beauty and power at that time and was, of course, among the guests on that fateful night.

Mr. Cooke was the first governor of the District of Columbia when that new form of municipal government was begun, to last through only three terms. There were twelve children in the Cooke family then living in this house. They were ardent members of St. John's Church—the font there being in memory of one little son. Mr. Cooke built Grace Church, the little gray stone church down below the canal near High Street (Wisconsin Avenue). It was intended for the canal people of whom there were many at that time.

Governor Cooke bought a great deal of property and built four sets of twin houses along the north side of Stoddert (Q) Street, which were called, until a few years ago, Cooke Row. In Number One, near Washington (30th) Street, lived one family of his descendants, one of whom, a young man, played the piano very well. In Number Three, lived Mrs. Shepherd from Philadelphia, a widow, who had one son. He was the first person I ever knew to commit suicide. It was a [Pg 245] terrible shock to the town when we heard one morning that he had shot himself the night before. It was not such a common event in the nineties as nowadays.

In one of these houses lived Commodore Nicholson, and in another lived Admiral Radford, whose lovely daughter, Sophy, became the bride of Valdemar de Meisner, secretary of the Russian Legation. In Number Four, lived Mrs. Zola Green with her daughter and her two sisters, named Pyle—one of them was called Miss "Chit-Chat." Mr. Green, who was a descendant of Uriah Forrest, had been given the name of Oceola after the Indian Chief who had saved the life of his father years ago out West.

At Number Five Cooke Row, now 3021 Q Street, lived during the nineties, Dr. Walter Reed, of the United States Army, whose name is honored by being given to the huge General Hospital in Washington because of his association with the discovery of the cause of yellow fever. I recall a most delightful party at the Reeds on St. Valentine night in 1899, given for friends of their son. When the invitations were sent out, we were told the name of the young man or girl to whom our valentine was to be written. It was at the time of the tremendous blizzard of that year, and we walked to the party between drifts of snow piled higher than our heads. But it was anything but cold when we got inside—open fires and jollity! Dr. Reed read aloud the poems, one by one, and we had to guess the authors and to whom they were addressed. In the library, ensconced in mysterious gloom, seated in a corner on the floor was a fortune-teller. It was a perfect party!

Next door, at Number Six Cooke Row, for a great many years, lived William A. Gordon, junior, [Pg 246] and his family. Mr. Gordon wrote some very valuable brochures of historical interest about Georgetown and his memories of it from his childhood. This house is now the home of Mrs. Henry Latrobe Roosevelt. During World War II, this was the home of Sir John and Lady Dill, when he was here representing Great Britain on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

At Number Seven lived the Misses Trapier—four old maids again!

J. Holdsworth Gordon, brother of William A. Gordon, built a house across the street. For him the Gordon Junior High School has been named, he having been for a long time on the board of education.

Next door to him on the east, at number 3020, is an attractive old house, and in the nineties it was filled with a family of four charming daughters. They were related to the Carters of Virginia, and so had given two of the most imposing names of that great family to two small fox-terriers that they adored, "King Carter," and "Shirley Carter." The latter had met with an accident and had to have one of his hind legs amputated, but he got about very nimbly on his other three. They always accompanied Colonel B. Lewis Blackford, the head of the house, on his trips about town. One day as he was nearing home, an old lady who walked with a cane was just about to pass him when "Shirley Carter" hopped immediately across his path; "Get out of my way, you damn tripod!" he said, in his exasperation, just escaping being tripped up. The old lady, thinking the "tripod" referred to her adjunct of a cane, was quite infuriated, even to summoning across the street a gentleman who was passing, and to wishing him to "call the Colonel out!" [Pg 247]

A little further eastward along Stoddert (Q) Street, on the northeast corner is the house Mr. Joseph Nourse built in 1868, and where his daughter, Miss Emily Nourse, lived all her life. After her death, it was sold and somebody put two old lamp-posts at the foot of the entrance steps with gas flickering in them continuously—and now there is a story around that they were "always" there, and some foolishness about the lights "never had gone out" or "must never go out."

Across the street, where the Stoddert Apartment now is, used to be an old house, in appearance quite like the one of Judge Chapman's on Dumbarton Avenue and Congress (31st) Street, except for the long, side porches. Here lived in the seventies and eighties General Henry Hayes Lockwood and his family. His son, James Lockwood, accompanied General Greeley on his trip to the North Pole, and was lost there in the Arctic, holding the record at that time of having reached farthest North.

A block south, on the northeast corner of Greene (29th) and West (P) Streets, is where Alexander Hamilton Dodge lived, who was a partner with his brother, Francis, in the shipping business. He was the father of Colonel Harrison H. Dodge.

In the days when his children were young, he had a big Newfoundland dog which he had raised from a puppy. One rarely sees one now, as tall and as big as a half-grown calf, with a coat of wonderful black, curly hair. Such pets used to be quite popular, but only once in forty years have I run across another. The Dodge's dog was named Argus. So strong and docile was he that two children could ride him at the same time. He loved the children, took them to school, and gave them "lifts" over wet or muddy ground. Do you remember "Nana," in *Peter Pan*? She was a [Pg 248] Newfoundland dog—just so she nursed her master's children. Returning from escort duty in the morning, a locked container was fastened to his collar and he would be given the word "office," which was enough. Off he'd go, proudly bearing luncheon to his master, who, in return, would send back to the family the daily mail (no postmen to deliver in those days), perfectly confident of its reaching its destination safely, as everybody knew the big dog, and also that he would resent any attempt to stop him or take things from him.

One day the cook complained to Mr. Dodge that somebody had evidently been robbing the hen's nests, as she was getting fewer eggs than usual. Mr. Dodge, going to investigate, met Argus coming down the path from the barn wagging his tail majestically, as was his wont when approaching his master. Mr. Dodge stopped and held out his hand, saying, "Argus, give me that egg," whereupon the obedient dog opened his mouth and out rolled an egg, to the great surprise of Mr. Dodge. Did he punish Argus for that? Not at all, but he told him he was sorry he was a robber and hoped he'd never have cause to scold him again. And he never did!

[Pg 249]

William A. Gordon

The interesting-looking house to the east of Hamilton Dodge's, 2811 P Street, was built in 1840. That is where the Gordon family were living when William A. Gordon, junior, came back from the Civil War. Certainly, that must have been a joyous occasion, and there were happy hearts within the old walls that night. His sister Josephine (Mrs. Sowers), Margaret Robinson (Mrs. Thomas Cox), and Elizabeth Dodge (Mrs. John Beall), all exceedingly handsome women, were belles in [Pg 250] their youth, and a trio of great friends to the end of their lives.

The family of Admiral Sigsbee were living here when the U. S. battleship *Maine*, of which he was the captain, was blown up in the harbor of Havana in 1898. His wife was a daughter of Admiral Lockwood. It is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Ihlder.

At 2805 P Street lives Honorable Dean G. Acheson, now Secretary of State. For a while, in the latter part of the last century, a quaint and very well-known lady made this house her home—Miss Emily V. Mason, of Virginia, from whom Mr. Corcoran received friendly and grateful letters, thanking him for contributions to her work for "her children," as she called them. The letters were written from Europe. She evidently had groups of Southern children in various cities for whom she provided, using for that purpose money made by her writings, to which she refers. I remember how picturesque she was in appearance: a lovely face, surrounded by long, white curls, crowned by a wide-brimmed, black bonnet tied with a wide ribbon. She seemed to have quite a salon during her residence here, serving tea and substantial refreshments to all her friends who called in the afternoons.

The iron fence around these houses is made of old musket barrels, used during the Mexican War, and was put there by Reuben Daw, who owned a large part of this block.

Just across the street from Mr. Acheson used to live a lady, the widow of Mr. Hein, the artist, who like "Anna" in the Bible spent all her days in the "courts of the Lord," the Catholic Church. She always wore a long black coat and a crêpe veil to her heels, rode a bicycle back and forth to [Pg 251] church, the long veil floating out behind. One evening she was struck by an automobile and killed instantly. The niece to whom she had left her little house had made an arrangement with a middle-aged woman living there that if she took care of "Aunt Martha" she could have the house tax free all her days. Her days are still continuing—and with all the advance in prices of houses, the niece can't do a thing about the house!

The dear little white frame cottage just above here on Montgomery (28th) Street, was built about 1840, and occupied by Benjamin F. Miller, who came from Saugerties, New York, as an engineer, to construct the Aqueduct Bridge which carried the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal across the river to Virginia. And, on the corner of Montgomery (28th) and Stoddert (Q) Streets is the last of the big Dodge houses on the corners of Georgetown. It is the one built by Robert Perley Dodge in 1850. He and his brother, Francis Dodge, junior, used practically the same plans for their houses. Robert Dodge was a civil engineer, and, I think, had something to do with the planning of the Aqueduct Bridge.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Robert Dodge became a paymaster in the Union Army. After the war, he became identified with the government of the District of Columbia, serving as treasurer and auditor for several years until he died. It is said he planted the enormous maple trees that adorn this block of 28th Street.

During the first World War, when this house had stood a long time untenanted and sad, it was opened up as a night club called "The Carcassonne," and postals were sent out advertising "Coffee in the Coal Bin." These were the days of prohibition. Somebody who lived there played [Pg 252] the piano, incessantly. The Ballengers had lived here; the Powells, and Major Gilliss; and then Mrs. Ruth Hanna McCormick (now Mrs. Albert Simms), lived here until she bought three houses down on 30th Street below N Street, and made them into one very attractive house with an unusual and lovely garden.

Later Honorable Warren Delano Robbins, a first cousin of Franklin D. Roosevelt and one of the ushers at his wedding, and at one time Minister to Canada, bought this house, changed it somewhat and made it very lovely in its new dress of yellow paint on the old plaster.

When he went to Ottawa he leased it to Honorable Dwight F. Davis, former Secretary of War, once Governor-General of the Philippine Islands, and also donor of the Davis Tennis Cup.

It has now for several years been the home of Mrs. William Corcoran Eustis. She is the daughter of one-time Vice-President Paul Morton.

Just across the street from here is the house that Honorable and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss bought when they gave their fine estate, "Dumbarton Oaks," to Harvard University. This house was built by Mr. Thomas Hyde and was where he and Mrs. Hyde lived till the end of their days. She was Fannie Rittenhouse and had grown up in the old house close by, known for a hundred years as "Bellevue," but renamed "Dumbarton House," when the National Society of Colonial Dames of America bought it for their Headquarters in 1928. It is one of the finest, most beautiful, and most interesting of the old places of Georgetown. It has always been somewhat shrouded in mystery, as to its builder and owner. We do know, of course, that this was part of the grant of the Rock of [Pg 253] Dumbarton to Ninian Beall and, through his son, George, descended to Thomas, who, in 1783 made his first Addition to George Town. Thomas may have built a small house here, but this was not the house where his father, George, was living when his wife died and was "buried nearby"—that was on Gay (N) Street at the house now 3033 N Street.

In 1796 Thomas Beall of George sold this property to Peter Casanave, who, two months later, sold it to Uriah Forrest. He kept it for a year—never lived there—and sold it to Isaac Pollock. There was wild speculation in real estate at that time on account of the new Federal City being located here. After one year Pollock sold the property to Samuel Jackson.

It seems that it was then that Samuel Jackson started to build this mansion, but got into financial difficulties and it was mortgaged to two or three people and finally foreclosed. In 1804 the place

was bought by Gabriel Duval, then Comptroller of the Currency of the United States, afterwards a Justice of the Supreme Court.

In 1805 Joseph Nourse, Registrar of the United States Treasury, who had been until that time living on Congress (31st) Street in George Town, bought it and lived there until 1813. He had this position from 1789 to 1829 and was in charge of moving all the records of the Treasury Department when the Government moved from Philadelphia to the new capital in Washington.

Mr. Nourse had been born in London in 1754; came to Virginia and fought in the Revolution. He was secretary to General Charles Lee and Auditor of the Board of War. His wife was Maria Louisa [Pg 254] Bull of Philadelphia, and they had two children, Charles Joseph Nourse, who became a Major in the Army, and Anna Maria Josepha, who was a lovely girl and took part in the prominent social affairs of the new city. She is spoken of in the diary of Sir Augustus Foster, British Minister of that period.

When the National Society of Colonial Dames had this house restored, a penny bearing the date 1800 was found in one of the front walls where such an identification was often placed, and architects think that Samuel Jackson began to build this house, using perhaps the little house that was on the property as a wing, and that then Joseph Nourse took it over and was really the builder of this fine mansion. It was probably intended for entertaining for his beloved daughter, for, after her death, which occurred at one of the Virginia springs one summer, he sold the place and moved out to a small frame house on a high hill overlooking the Federal City. He called his new home "Mount Alban," because it reminded him of the place of the same name in England. It was there that the first British martyr, Saint Alban, was killed. Mr. Nourse was a very religious man and used to walk about in the grove of oak trees surrounding his house and pray that some day a House of God might stand upon that spot; that is exactly where the Washington Cathedral is now being erected.

Mr. Nourse had many famous guests visit him in his modest home there—among them: Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, and John Quincy Adams.

[Pg 255]

Dumbarton House

Mr. Nourse's son, Major Charles Joseph Nourse, married Rebecca Morris whose father, Anthony Morris, of Philadelphia, was an intimate and life-long friend of Dolly Madison. Major Nourse built the old stone house out on the road to Rockville and called it "The Highlands." Tradition says that [Pg 256] a large box bush at "The Highlands" has grown from a tiny sprig of box which Mrs. Madison plucked from her bouquet at the inauguration of her husband and gave to Mr. Morris.

"The Highlands" was a large household, for Major and Mrs. Nourse had eleven children, and Mr. Morris resided there also. They have been a very remarkable family, noted for their longevity, their steadfast, noble character, and their loyalty to the Episcopal Church. It was from the prayers and savings of Phoebe Nourse, who died as a young girl, that St. Alban's Church has risen on that ground which she wished to dedicate to the glory of God.

"The Highlands" many years later became the home of Admiral and Mrs. Gary T. Grayson.

But to return to the old house which blocked Stoddert (Q) Street or Back Street, as it was sometimes called. Mr. Nourse sold this house, his Georgetown home, in 1813 to Charles Carroll, who gave it the name of Bellevue, and thereafter always styled himself "of Bellevue." He was a nephew of Daniel Carroll, of Duddington. He also was a great friend of Mrs. Madison's, and helped her in her dramatic escape from the White House when the British were on their way to burn and plunder it. There has always been a story that Daniel Carroll brought her over the road to Georgetown, crossing at the P Street bridge, and that she stopped by Bellevue. There she is supposed to have met Mr. Madison whom she had not seen since early morning. This was the day of the Battle of Bladensburg when confusion reigned supreme. At the meeting Mr. and Mrs. Madison agreed on the routes and rendezvous of retreat. [Pg 257]

From old letters it seems that she continued on out of town to "Weston," the estate of Walter S. Chandler, which was situated near the present junction of Massachusetts and Wisconsin Avenues. I can dimly remember the quaint white, frame house and the legend of Dolly Madison being there. She then went on to the encampment at Tenally Town, where she slept in a tent that night under guard, and the next day crossed into Virginia.

Mr. Carroll and his brother had not long before become owners of the paper mill on Rock Creek just south of Bellevue, so that must have been his reason for making it his home.

In 1820 he leased the place to Samuel Whitall, of Philadelphia, whose wife was Lydia Newbold. Mr. Whitall was a distinguished-looking old gentleman, and used to drive around in a high, two-wheeled gig, the last of its kind in the town.

When Charles Carroll died in 1841, the place was bought by the son of Mr. and Mrs. Whitall. A daughter, Sarah Whitall, was born at Bellevue in 1822 and lived there for over seventy years. She married Mr. Rittenhouse of Philadelphia. The place remained in the Rittenhouse family until 1896, when they sold it to Howard Hinckley. In the intervening years, its appearance had been greatly changed by a coat of plaster over the old bricks, which Mr. Hinckley removed. It was very lovely, both inside and out, during the years that Mr. and Mrs. Hinckley made it their home. Some very delightful parties were given there. Then candlelight was the only illumination, and even the flowers used were redolent of colonial days. The rooms were filled with furniture of the [Pg 258] right type; and I remember that the bedrooms even had the old washstands with holes in the tops for bowls and pitchers which also were exactly "right" in their period.

After that, Colonel Langfitt leased the house, and a very lovely wedding took place out of doors under an enormous tree, when his daughter married an officer of the United States Army.

In 1912 it was bought by John L. Newbold, a relative of the Lydia Newbold of long ago. After a great deal of agitation on the subject of cutting Q Street through, and putting a bridge across Rock Creek to connect with the city, the District government in 1915 moved the old house to its present location, for it had been sitting exactly in the path of progress all these years, there being a George Town Ordinance that a street could not be cut through without consent of the owner. I only wish progress could have made a circle around the old mansion and left it in its setting of stately, primeval trees.

Miss Loulie Rittenhouse, who had been born and reared there, worked untiringly for the opening of the street, the bridge, and also for Montrose Park, with the salvation of the glorious old oak trees it contains.

Slowly, very, very slowly, old Bellevue was placed on huge rollers, horses were attached to a windlass, and it almost took a microscope to see the progress made day by day, but at last it reached its present site, safe and sound. It was necessary to pull down and rebuild the wings, as they had no cellars. Of course, the wall is also new.

It was leased during World War I to various people of importance in Washington for war work, and finally, in 1928, bought by the National Society of Colonial Dames of America. It has been [Pg 259] handsomely and suitably furnished as a house of the Federal period, and is open to the public as a museum house. A beautiful house it is; the usual wide hall through the middle, with vistas through the two big doors, four rooms opening off it, the two back ones being rounded out at the northern ends.

[Pg 260]

Tudor Place

Chapter XV

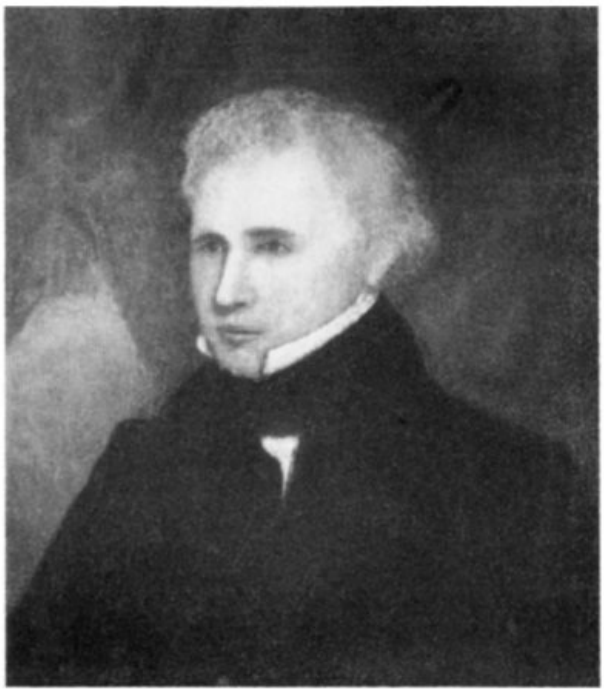
[Pg 261]

Tudor Place and Congress (31st) Street

LIKE the brightest jewel in its crown of old houses, Tudor Place, now the home of Armistead Peter, junior, sits high and aloof on the heights of Georgetown. Its southern front, shown here, is the one most familiar to everyone, and it is the view that I looked out on every day of my life for more than a score of years from my father's house on Stoddert (Q) Street.

As Mrs. Beverley Kennon, its owner during my youth, was my cousin and had her motherless grandchildren living with her, some of my earliest recollections are of running round and round the old circle of box in front of the north entrance, playing "colors." I never, to this day, smell box that I am not back at Tudor Place and see the cobwebs in the old bushes bright with raindrops, as box, of course, is really fragrant only after rain. Also there were lovely times in the fall when the leaves were being raked up by old John, the colored gardener, who would let us climb on top of the brilliant load in a wheelbarrow with a crate on top of it. Such rides! Old John was a character (and one we loved dearly), not much over five feet tall, with grizzled hair and goatee, and always wearing an apron tied around his waist and a derby hat on his head.

Tudor Place was purchased by Francis Lowndes, one of the prominent tobacco merchants and shippers, in 1794, from Thomas Beall of George who made a large addition to George Town in 1783, called by his name. Mr. Lowndes started to build a mansion, but in 1805 he sold the property to Thomas Peter and his wife, the former Martha Parke Custis. [Pg 262]



THOMAS PETER

When the Peters moved to their new home in George Town they used the western wing, already built, with its addition on the east, as their home, and the eastern wing was their carriage house and stable. This fact has been proved by finding below the floors the signs of the old stalls, and up in the rafters the corncobs of long ago. I have known people who remembered the old yellow coach which often stood out in the stable yard, and I've been told that if one dug deep enough its cobblestones would still be found. [Pg 263]

Mr. and Mrs. Peter decided to use the fortune left her by her grandmother, Mrs. Washington, to build a stately mansion. They certainly succeeded. They engaged as architect Dr. William Thornton, whose plans for the Capitol had been accepted in the second competition, as the first yielded none sufficiently good.

Dr. Thornton and his wife were intimate friends of the Peters, and a beautiful miniature of him, done by her, is now in the possession of one of the family. Mrs. Thornton was with Mrs. Peter when the British soldiers set fire to the Capitol in 1814, and the two ladies sat at the window of what is now the dining room of Tudor Place—the low part between the main building and the western wing—and watched the conflagration. You can imagine their grief as one saw the work of her husband destroyed, and the other, the building which had been so much in the mind and heart of her revered grandfather.

There is in existence a very lovely painting of Mrs. Peter at about the time of her marriage; a sweet, young girl with light curls, and the embodiment of daintiness. Suspended about her neck is, I think, the miniature which General Washington had painted for her as a wedding gift. When he asked her what she wanted she replied "a replica of himself." He was much pleased that a young girl would want a portrait of an old man! The photograph reproduced of Thomas Peter is from a portrait done by him by his son-in-law, Captain William G. Williams.

Mrs. Thomas Peter (Martha Parke Custis)

While on a visit to Tudor Place occurred the death of Mrs. Peter's mother, the former Eleanor Calvert. She was fifty-three years old, and had borne twenty children.

Mr. and Mrs. Peter had a family of eight children. Three of the daughters had striking names: America, Columbia, and Britannia.

When General Lafayette paid his visit to Georgetown in 1824 it was, of course, most natural that he should be entertained at Tudor Place, as Mrs. Peter had known him in her childhood at Mount Vernon. At that time America met her husband, Captain Williams, who was acting as an aide for the Marquis. In later years, as chief of engineers on the staff of General Zachary Taylor, Captain [Pg 265] Williams was killed at the Battle of Monterey. On that same visit Lafayette presented the youngest child, Britannia, a little girl of nine, with a lovely little desk, now in the National Museum in the loan collection of her grandson, Walter G. Peter. On its under side it has an inscription in the handwriting of Martha Custis Peter, telling her daughter its history.

Britannia Wellington Peter was born on January 27, 1815. She died the day before her ninety-sixth birthday, and this editorial, from *The Baltimore Sun*, gives a fine picture of the changes in the world in the years covered by the span of her life:

A Long and Interesting Life

> Mrs. Britannia Wellington Kennon, who died at Tudor Place, her historic home in Georgetown, on the 26th instant, and who will be buried today, was for many years a most interesting figure in the social life of Washington. She was the last in her generation of the descendants of Mrs. Martha Washington. John Parke Custis, Mrs. Washington's son, left four children. One of his daughters, Martha, married Thomas Peter, and Mrs. Kennon was their daughter. She married Commodore Beverley Kennon, of the United States Navy, whose father was General Richard Kennon, of Washington's staff, a charter member of the Society of the Cincinnati, and a grandson of Sir William Skipwith. Commodore Kennon was killed in 1844 by the explosion on the U. S. S. *Princeton*, so Mrs. Kennon was a widow for more than sixty-six years.
>
> Tudor Place, Mrs. Kennon's home, was famous for the distinguished guests that were entertained there, among them being General Lafayette, who visited there in 1824. She was the center of an intellectual and cultivated society, and was always in touch with the progress of events in the world.
>
> Mrs. Kennon was born three weeks after the Battle of New Orleans, and several months before [Pg 266] the Battle of Waterloo. Her life spanned the period of the great advance in the appliances of civilization in this and the last century. It was very important that the news of the battle of Waterloo should reach London without delay, and yet with every appliance and speed then known, it took three days for the news to reach England. Indeed, when Mrs. Kennon was thirty-two years of age, it required eight months to travel from New England to Oregon. At the age of fifteen she could have been a passenger on the first passenger railroad train that was ever run; until she was five years old, there was no such thing as an iron plow in all the world, and until she was grown up, the people were dependent on tinder boxes and sun glasses to light their fires. She had reached the age of twenty-three years when steam communication between Europe and America was established, and when the first telegram ever sent passed between Baltimore and Washington she was still a young woman. If all the advances in civilization which took place during the lifetime of this remarkable lady were catalogued, they would make a singularly interesting list.

Mrs. Kennon was left a widow when less than thirty years of age, with her one child, Martha Custis Kennon. To Mrs. Kennon and her daughter Mrs. Thomas Peter bequeathed Tudor Place, having long survived her husband, and her other children having received their inheritance.

Martha Custis Kennon married her cousin, Dr. Armistead Peter, the son of Major George Peter, and so the original surname came back to the place, which has never been out of the one family.

Until the death of Mrs. Kennon when they were, of course, divided, there was at Tudor Place a very large and valuable collection of Washington relics, fascinating things, among them Mrs. Washington's seed-pearl wedding jewelry and dress, a set of china made for and presented to [Pg 267] General Washington by the French government, the bowl given him by the Order of the Cincinnati, and numberless other interesting things. In a corner of the central room, the saloon, as it is called, was the small camp trunk always used by the General. The room on the east, off of which opens the conservatory, is the drawing room; that to the west, the parlor. The saloon opens out onto the temple, the round porch on the south. The two large rooms at each side have lovely cornices, beautiful marble mantels and handsome crystal chandeliers; long group windows to the floor and very unusual doors of curly maple. At the debut tea of Mrs. Kennon's granddaughter, I was helping to serve, when, seeing two dear old ladies, one very short, the other very tall, both dressed in simple black with big bonnets and long veils, looking about in the crowd as if they were trying to see something particular, I went up and asked them if I could bring them some refreshments. They said, "No, thank you, we really don't want anything, we are just trying to see if there are the same ornaments on the table as when Britannia was married." I found out afterward that the ornaments were three beautiful alabaster groups of classic figures. The two old ladies were Miss Mary and Miss Rosa Nourse, of The Highlands.

Britannia Peter was a first cousin of Mary Custis, of Arlington, and was one of the bridesmaids at the wedding there which united the daughter of George Washington Parke Custis to the handsome United States army officer, Robert Edward Lee. The friendship was an enduring one, and General Lee visited Tudor Place when he paid his last visit to Washington City in 1869.

Britannia Peter was bridesmaid for another first cousin, Helen Dunlop, when she was married at [Pg 268] Hayes to William Laird.

From the descendant of another one of those bridesmaids at that famous wedding at Arlington who, as a young girl, paid long visits to Mary Custis, I heard this delicious story: "There being no telephones, when the girls at Arlington and at Tudor Place wanted to get together they had a series of signals. Hanging a red flannel petticoat out of the window meant 'come on over'. A white one had another meaning. This method was not popular with the owners of the two mansions, but persisted, nevertheless." To prove this, not long ago I went to Arlington with the person who told me the story. The room there used by the girls of those days does look toward Georgetown. There is a forest of tall trees there now but trees can grow very tall in a hundred years.

When my father built his house at the foot of Mrs. Kennon's place, she told him she was so glad to have him near by, but chided him for cutting off her view of the river.

Until only a few years before her death, Mrs. Kennon sat perfectly erect in her chair, never touching the back, and I can remember her as quite an old lady, almost flying up the hill of Congress (31st) Street, always, of course, in bonnet and long, crêpe veil. She was a member of Christ Church, and once many, many years ago when a parish meeting was announced to decide some important question, the rector and gentlemen were very much surprised on entering the vestry to find Mrs. Kennon there waiting for the meeting. She said she wished to have a say in the matter, and having no man to represent her, had come herself. So she was the original suffragette! Mrs. Kennon was one of the early presidents of the Louise Home, and was the first [Pg 269] president of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America in the District of Columbia.

Before the day of country clubs there used to be a very fine tennis court at Tudor Place, on the flat part to the north of the house not far from Congress (31st) Street, and it was much used. The Peter boys were champions of the District several times. In the first administration of President Cleveland, Mrs. Cleveland, a bride, used to drive her husband in from Oak View or, as it was popularly called, Red Top, to his office at the White House nearly every morning in a low, one-horse phæton. No secret-service entourage in those days! In the evenings she came again in style in a Victoria, and frequently they would stop opposite Tudor Place and watch the game in progress. There was a good deal of intimacy between Tudor Place and "Red Top" in those days.

The only football I ever heard of being played at Tudor Place was by a team of which my youngest brother was a member. They had nowhere to play, so he walked up there one day, and being a very engaging young man of about ten years, with big, blue eyes and a charming smile, he asked the old lady for permission, which she gave. She used to sit by the long window in the parlor and watch them with great interest and pleasure. Some other boys thought they would like the same privilege and asked for it, but she told me she always asked, "Are you a friend of my little cousin?" Only his friends could play there.

Mrs. Kennon lived all her long and active life at Tudor Place, with the exception of two brief periods. The first was the year and a half when she was living at the Washington Navy Yard with her husband while he was stationed there. And the second was when her daughter was at [Pg 270] boarding school in Philadelphia, just before the Civil War, and she leased the place to Mr. Pendleton, a Representative in Congress from Virginia. Of course, after the secession of that State, Mr. Pendleton left Washington City—but very hurriedly. Mrs. Kennon heard that her home was to be taken over by the United States government to be used as a hospital so she hastened back and occupied it herself. She took as boarders several Federal officers on the one condition that the affairs of the war should not be discussed.

The last time I saw her was not many months before her death, sitting in a chair in her bedroom and very, very feeble. When I told her good-bye, she kept saying something to me over and over, which I couldn't understand. Finally I leaned down very close, and heard, "Be a good girl." I was then the mother of two children, but to her, just a little girl and the daughter of my father and mother, of whom she was very fond.

Opposite Tudor Place, where now is a twin apartment house, was until the nineteen-twenties a simple old brick house somewhat like the old Mackall house on Greene (29th) Street, only minus a portico. When I knew it it was the home of the Philip Darneilles—and I remember hearing my mother say, "But Mrs. Darneille was a Harry!" Which meant nothing to me until I looked up the title to this place, and there I found that all this land went right back to Harriot Beall, Mrs. Elisha O. Williams, one of the three daughters of Brooke Beall, who was among those wealthy shipping merchants who were responsible for Georgetown's early prosperity.

Mrs. Harriot Beall Williams left this property, all the way down to Back (Q) Street, to her daughter Harriot Eliza Harry. Through her it passed to Harriot Beall Chesley, and then to her daughter, Emily McIlvain Darneille. The old house stood untenanted for several years until bought for the erection of the apartments. [Pg 271]

Mr. and Mrs. Darneille had three daughters, the eldest really a beauty (the youngest inherited the old name of Harriot), and they had a great deal of gaiety there in the nineties. I remember especially the New Year's Day receptions they used to have, the many "hacks" overflowing with young men, that used to climb the hill. It was the custom in those days for the ladies of each household to receive on the afternoon of that day. Only gentleman callers came, all dressed in their very best, and left their cards for all the ladies of their acquaintance. If you weren't receiving (attired in your best, sometimes to the extent of real low-necked evening dresses, the dining room table loaded with salads, old hams, biscuits, ices, candies, tea and coffee—and always a punch bowl on the side) you hung a basket on your front door bell, and the callers just deposited their cards and went on to the next place.

What fun the children had, watching the front doors and counting the cards; and there was a real thrill when the caller happened to be an Army or Navy officer, attired in full-dress uniform with gold braid and feathers, having earlier in the day paid his respects at the White House.

On part of the Darneille property stands an intriguing frame house. It is quite an old house and stood originally several hundred feet to the eastward in Mackall Square, the property owned by Christiana Beall Mackall, who was the sister of Harriot Beall Williams. So you see one sister sold it to the other and it took a trip across Washington (30th) Street to reside on Congress (31st) Street. I wonder how they moved it in those days, for it was a long, long time ago. [Pg 272]

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dodge lived there after they left Evermay.

In the 1880's this house, 1633 31st Street, was the home of a very interesting and eminent person, John Wesley Powell, American geologist and ethnologist. I now quote from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*: "He was born at Mount Morris, N. Y., March 24, 1834. His parents were of English birth, but had moved to America in 1830, and he was educated at Illinois and Oberlin colleges. He began his geological work with a series of field trips including a trip throughout the length of the Mississippi in a rowboat, the length of the Ohio, and of the Illinois. When the Civil War broke out he entered the Union Army as a private, and at the battle of Shiloh he lost his right arm but continued in active service, reaching the rank of major of volunteers. In 1865 he was appointed professor of geology and curator of the museum in the Illinois Wesleyan university at Bloomington, and afterwards at the Normal university.

In 1867 he commenced a series of expeditions to the Rocky Mountains and the canyons of the Green and Colorado rivers, during the course of which (1869) he made a daring boat-journey of three months through the Grand Canyon; he also made a special study of the Indians and their languages for the Smithsonian Institution, in which he founded and directed a bureau of ethnology. His able work led to the establishment under the U. S. Government of the geographical and geological survey of the Rocky Mountain region with which he was occupied from 1870 to 1879. This survey was incorporated with the United States geological and geographical survey in 1879, when Powell became director of the bureau of ethnology. In 1881, Powell was appointed director also of the geological survey, a post which he occupied until 1894. He died in Haven, Me., on Sept. 23, 1902." [Pg 273]

On two panes of glass in the front windows of this old house are names etched by a diamond—on one is "Genevieve Powell," under it "Louis Hill" and under that "1884." She probably was the daughter of Mr. Powell.

On the other pane of glass is etched "Moses and Mary." To the owners of the house that means nothing, but to me it means "Moses Moore," who was not a man but a woman (whose real name was "Frank"), and Mary Compton, both of whom I knew and still know.

In the nineties it was for awhile the home of Mrs. Donna Otie Compton, who was the daughter of Bishop James Hervey Otie, first Episcopal Bishop of Tennessee. She was a picturesque figure, attired in her widow's cap and long crêpe veil. Mrs. Compton had four daughters who were great belles.

Then for a good many years it stood there looking quite deserted, for old Mr. Arnold, its owner, was almost a cripple and one rarely saw him making his way up the street with great difficulty.

Now General and Mrs. Frank R. McCoy have bought it and made it a charming house with a lovely garden.

Through the alley just north of here, described in the title as "a private road," we can reach another house built on that same property of the Harry's, but just who built it I do not know. It [Pg 274] also was vacant when I was a girl, for I remember going to a Fair there one night in the spring when it had been loaned for some charity. In 1930 the house was bought by Miss Harriet and Miss Mary Winslow, who have added a lovely music room at the rear, but have kept the old-time appearance of the house. A mammoth oak tree, the pride of the owners, stands near the house.

The next house on Congress (31st) Street has another fine oak tree in front of it, and used to have a companion even larger on the other side of the walk. This property also came through Mrs. Harriot Beall Williams to Mrs. Brooke Williams, senior, and her daughter, Mrs. Johns, who lived there with her family.

A romantic story is told of how Captain William Brooke Johns, of the United States Army, one day saw at a picnic the beautiful Miss Leonora de la Roche, and fell in love with her immediately. But, since it was not considered good form in those days to be presented to a lady at a picnic, he watched her from a distance all day. The next afternoon he went to call. It was a case of love at first sight for both, and the wedding soon followed, with all the military splendor. As was told before, when the Civil War came he left the Union Army. Captain Johns had quite a talent for carving, and did a very good medallion of General Grant, who continued always to be a true friend to him. He also invented a tent which was used during the Civil War by the Northern Army.

This house was, for more than a generation, the home of Colonel and Mrs. John Addison.

At that time it was a two-story house, with quite a different roof. It was a big, merry household [Pg 275] with four sons and four daughters. The daughters were reigning belles in those days, and the old custom of serenading was much in vogue. One lovely moonlight night four swains with their guitars stationed themselves under the windows of the handsome old house and sang plaintive love songs for an hour or more. Finally a shutter was pushed open very gently, and the four hearts went pitter-patter, anticipating the sight of a lovely young girl's face. Instead, appeared an old, black one, capped by a snowy turban, and these words floated down: "I'se sorrie, gen'le-men, but de young ladies is all gone out—but I sure is pleased wid you-all's music!" The quartet was composed of Summerfield McKenney, Frank Steele, and a young Noyes, of the family now for many years identified with *The Evening Star*, and another whose name I do not know.

It was while the Addisons were living here that Commodore Kennon was so tragically killed on the *Princeton*.

One afternoon the youngest member of the Addison family, a little girl, was swinging in the yard when a carriage came up the street and turned in at the gate of Tudor Place, across the street. In it she saw her older brother, John. Much mystified, she ran to her mother, telling her how strange it seemed for "brother John" to be coming up the hill in a carriage, and not coming home. It turned out that he had been sent to notify Mrs. Thomas Peter of the sudden death of her son-in-law.

In later years Brooke Williams, junior, lived here and, still later, George W. Cissel. The chapel of the Presbyterian Church on West (P) Street is named for this family. The house is now the home [Pg 276] of Mr. Alfred Friendly, the well-known newspaper man.

Next door, where there is now a big apartment house, used to be a large, double brick house, which was for many years the home of Abraham Herr, who with the Cissels conducted an important flour-milling business in Georgetown. His son, Austin Herr, was a fine figure of a man, and was, I think, a promoter. I distinctly remember as a little girl his return from a trip to China and the tales of all the treasures he had brought back with him—not so common then as now.

At No. 1669, in the eighties lived one of the oddest characters—Mrs. Dall. She had come from Massachusetts many years before to teach at Miss English's Seminary. While there she received frequent visits from young Mr. Dall who was an assistant at Christ Church while finishing his course at the Episcopal Seminary near Alexandria. The gentleman stayed so late sometimes—probably until eleven o'clock—that Miss English had to ask him to mend his ways. The courtship resulted in a marriage, but before long the bridegroom went off to India as a missionary to convert the heathen. After some years the news came that, instead, he had been converted to Hinduism. At last he was coming home. It was in the spring and, of course, there had to be a spring cleaning, which took several days. One night about twelve o'clock, when the peace of the old-time world, minus the automobile and blaring radio, lay over old Georgetown, the clop-clop of horses' hoofs was heard coming up Congress Street, stopping in front of Mrs. Dall's. Then there was a great knocking on the door—a window was raised and a voice called: "Who is that?" "It's Henry." Came back from the wife: "Well, I'm in the midst of house-cleaning. Go on down to the [Pg 277] Willard and stay until I send for you." A warm welcome, and one not approved of by the neighbors who had heard the conversation through their windows.

Mrs. Dall was not very popular in Georgetown, it being overwhelmingly Southern in its sympathies and she being an abolitionist. I can dimly remember her padding down 31st Street, for so her progress might be called from the form of footwear she wore, it had no form—the queerest, high, shapeless boots. She wore a little close-fitting bonnet and a long, loose, grayish cape. She was a most particular person in some ways. A lady who lived there as a housekeeper said she was never allowed to leave her thimble on the window sill for a few moments; and it was

well known that when a caller rang the front door bell the maid who answered had orders to scan the costume closely. If there was "bugle trimming" among its adornments the caller was shown into the parlor on the right side, where the furniture was all stuffed and no harm could be done, but if the clothes were devoid of the shiny, scratchy gear, she might safely be allowed to enter and sit upon the polished mahogany of the room on the left of the hall. She used to have a sort of salon for long-haired scientists and exponents of all sorts of "isms."

Another story I've heard was about her going out to Normanstone to stay for a rest. One morning after breakfast, having had a plentiful helping of oatmeal with lots of cream, her hostess remarked to Mrs. Dall how well she looked. "Yes," she said, she "felt well," and ended up with "a little starvation is always good for one." Is it a wonder she wasn't greatly beloved?

[Pg 278]

Lloyd Beall

A very handsome and imposing old gentleman, Mr. Joe Davis, who was a bachelor, lived here in the nineties. I remember him always, in his frock coat and high silk hat. This was where Mr. and Mrs. Fulton Lewis lived for many years and where their son, Fulton Lewis, junior, the noted radio commentator, grew up. [Pg 279]

The house has been for several years the home of the Honorable and Mrs. Francis E. Biddle. He was the Attorney-General under President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Mrs. Biddle, whose pen name is Katharine Garrison Chapin, is an eminent poet.

Adjoining Tudor Place on the north live the Bealls, descendants of Lloyd Beall, who sold his patrimony in southern Maryland and converted the proceeds to equipping and sustaining his company during the Revolutionary War. He was adjutant on the staff of General Alexander Hamilton and was wounded at Germantown. Later he was captured by the British, but escaped by swimming the Santee River. The effect of this performance is shown by the water-logging on his commission which he carried in his pocket.

After being mustered out of the army he came to live in Georgetown, but just where his home was I cannot discover. He served as mayor of the town three times—in 1797, 1798 and 1799.

Upon the reorganization of the army he was reinstated, and died in command of the arsenal at Harper's Ferry. The Bealls who live here are also descended from Francis Dodge and from William Marbury.

In the seventies Frederick L. Moore came in to Georgetown from the country and built his home next door, so as to be between his two friends, John Beall and Joseph H. Bradley. The Bradleys no longer own this house nor their ancestral estate which was Chevy Chase, where the club of that name now is. Abraham Bradley came with the government from Philadelphia, as Assistant Postmaster-General. He made his home in Washington City and then bought Chevy Chase as his country estate. He was living there in August, 1814, when the British came to Washington. It is said that several members of the cabinet took refuge with him there during those two or three dreadful days and brought with them valuable records. His old house was mostly destroyed by fire several years ago. [Pg 280]

His grandson, Joseph Henry Bradley, built the house at number 1688 31st Street. At the time of Lincoln's assassination he was living out in the country near Georgetown. He bore a remarkable resemblance to John Wilkes Booth and on April 15, 1865, the night after the tragic event in Ford's Theater, he was driving home in his buggy along a lonely road when he was held up by

policemen and arrested. When he protested, he was told that he was John Wilkes Booth and was taken to jail. He insisted he was not, but to no avail. After a good while he got in touch with friends who identified him and he was released and went home. His wife had thought that her colored servants had been behaving strangely all day, but though living not more than five miles from the scene of the great tragedy, she herself had no knowledge of it.

In later years Mr. Bradley and his father, Joseph Habersham Bradley, who practiced law together, served as counsel in the famous John Surratt trial.

This house is now the home of Robert A. Taft, Senator from Ohio. [Pg 281]

Chapter XVI

Evermay, the Heights, and Oak Hill

EVERMAY, on Montgomery (28th) Street, is one of the show-places of Georgetown. Its fascinating garden is shown every spring for the benefit of Georgetown Children's House by its owner, the Honorable F. Lamot Belin, at one time Ambassador to Poland. He removed the cream-colored paint from the old house, revealing the lovely old-rose brick, and built the wall and the lodge at the gate when he bought the place in 1924. Evermay used to extend all the way down to Stoddert (Q) Street. The original boundary is the little old stone in the corner of the property of Mrs. Thomas Bradley on Q and 28th Streets.

Evermay was built by Samuel Davidson with proceeds from the sale of property to the United States government. This included land for the northern part of the "President's Square," (the David Burns-Davidson property line passing directly through the White House) and adjacent Federal property including Lafayette Park. He willed his estate to Lewis Grant, a nephew in Scotland, upon condition of his assuming the Davidson surname.

Samuel Davidson is buried in the portion of Oak Hill Cemetery which was formerly part of the estate. Mr. Davidson must have been rather a strange person; certainly he was determined not to be bothered by people, for this is the advertisement he published:

Evermay proclaims,
Take care, enter not here,
For punishment is ever near.

[Pg 282]

Whereas, the height called Evermay, adjoining this town, is now completely enclosed with a good stone wall in part and a good post and rail fence thereto, this is to forewarn at their peril, all persons, of whatever age, color, or standing in society, from trespassing on the premises, in any manner, by day or by night; particularly all thieving knaves and idle vagabonds; all rambling parties; all assignation parties; all amorous bucks with their dorfies, and all sporting bucks with their dogs and guns.

My man, Edward, who resides on the premises, has my positive orders to protect the same from all trespassers as far as in his power, with the aid of the following implements, placed in his hands for that purpose, if necessary, viz:—Law, when the party is worthy of that attention and proper testimony can be had, a good cudgel, tomahawk, cutlass, gun and blunderbuss, with powder, shot and bullets, steel traps and grass snakes.

It is Edward's duty to obey my lawful commands. In so doing, on this occasion, I will defend him at all risques and hazards. For the information of those persons who may have real business on the premises, there is a good and convenient gate. But Mark! I do not admit mere curisoity an errand of business. Therefore, I beg and pray of all my neighbors to avoid Evermay as they would a den of devils, or rattle snakes, and thereby save themselves and me much vexation and trouble.

June 2, 1810 SAMUEL DAVIDSON.

Lewis Grant's daughter married Charles Dodge, they being one of the four couples who had the very early morning wedding at Francis Dodge's home on the corner of Stoddert (Q) Street and Congress (31st) Street. Apropos of this there is a prized letter of four closely written pages from Charles Dodge to his father, announcing that he had reached the age of twenty-one and asking the parental gift of what might be "his due." He ended by saying he "hoped he approved of his [Pg 283] engaging in the estate of Holy Matrimony, for without that blissful comsummation his life would be void of happiness forevermore." His father's concise reply was in four lines: "Attend carefully whatever business you engage in, put off your marriage as long as possible, and get religion!"

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dodge did not live always at Evermay. It was sold to Mr. John D. McPherson, and the Dodges went to live in the old frame house opposite the gate of Tudor Place.

For many years the McPhersons leased Evermay to Mr. William B. Orme and, certainly, during those years the spectre of the inhospitality of its first owner was laid, for the Ormes were noted for their delightful parties and there, too, were June weddings with charming brides.

One morning in 1905 a group of Georgetown ladies met at Evermay and formed a little literary club (which is still in existence) composed of thirty-five members. It still bears the name of The Evermay Club. It met there regularly once a month as long as it was the home of Mrs. Orme, but

nowadays the club moves from house to house. One summer the Ormes rented Evermay to a Hawaiian princess, who enjoyed it with her family.

Just across the street from Evermay is what is known as Mackall Square. The old mansion sits so far back in the middle of the square and is so embowered in trees that it is not easily seen from either Montgomery (28th) or Greene (29th) Street. It is a simple and lovely colonial brick with old wooden additions on the back, and has been there a long, long time. But it is not the first house that was on that spot, for the one that was there was the frame house which was moved over opposite the gate of Tudor Place. [Pg 284]

Benjamin Mackall married a daughter of Brooke Beall, and with the money inherited from her father's estate they bought this property and built the house.

In 1821 a trust was placed on the property, and in the title is recorded "no encumbrance except a small wooden house in which Mrs. Margaret Beall now lives, in which she has her life interest."

Benjamin Mackall was a brother of Leonard Mackall. Their father owned large estates in Calvert and Prince Georges Counties in Maryland, and his products were sent to the Georgetown market; so it happened that his sons met the daughters of Brooke Beall, one of the important merchants shipping grain and tobacco to England.

This land was part of the Rock of Dumbarton, and Benjamin's wife was named Christiana. I wonder if by any chance they could have given her that name in commemoration of another Christiana who is spoken of in an old, old surveyor's book thus:

> Surveyed for George Beall 18 January, 1720. Beginning at the bounded Red Oak standing at the end of N. N. W. tract of land called Rock of Dunbarton on the south side of a hill near the place where Christiana Gun was killed by the Indians.

[Pg 285]

The Old Mackall House

Louis Mackall, their son, was born in this house and inherited the place in 1839. He was a well-known physician, but a large part of his life was spent at the old country home of the Mackalls, Mattaponi, in Prince Georges County, and there his son, Louis, was born in 1831. His father brought him to Georgetown when he was under ten years of age, and entered him in Mr. Abbott's school, from whence he went to Georgetown College and Maryland Medical University. He established a large practice in Georgetown and married Margaret McVean. Their home was not here but on Dumbarton Avenue and Congress (31st) Street, and they had a son, again Louis, who also went into the medical profession. [Pg 286]

This house was vacant when I was a girl and I remember very distinctly going to a dance there one heavenly moonlight night in June when it was loaned to the O. T. That was a little club of boys about my own age—"Only Ten"—but the meaning of the name was a secret then. During the next two years they followed the example of the I. K. T. by giving dances in Linthicum Hall during the Christmas holidays.

The I. K. T. was a group of boys two or three years older than the O. T. My brother was one of them, and when I asked him a year or two ago what the letters meant he said he couldn't tell; it was still a secret, like a fraternity. They had a pin somewhat like a fraternity pin. I still have the engraved invitations that both clubs sent out for their dances, with the names of the members underneath.

After having been vacant for years this place was bought by Mr. Hermann Hollerith in the early 1900's. He did not make his home here but built a house farther down on Greene (29th) Street, where his family still live. They continue to rent the old house. Hermann Hollerith was the inventor of the tabulating machine which is used by the International Business Machine Corporation, and his work was done in a little house down on Thomas Jefferson Street. His wife was Miss Lucia Talcott.

Immediately opposite the steps on Greene (29th) Street which lead up to this dear old place are other high steps which lead to a place called Terrace Top. Here it was that in the winter of 1920-'21 two very charming people came to rest in what they considered the most attractive of American cities. They were Julia Marlowe and E. H. Sothern. [Pg 287]

While they were here Miss Marlowe was honored by George Washington University at its one hundredth anniversary, on February twenty-second, by receiving the degree of D. D. L., a most unusual honor for a woman. This house is now the home of Mr. Herbert Elliston, editor of the *Washington Post*.

All of this land was still, of course, Beall property, and somehow it all seemed to pass down through the women, for the next place to the west originally belonged to Miss Eliza Beall, a daughter of Thomas Beall of George, who married George Corbin Washington, great-nephew of General Washington. He was a grandson of John Augustine Washington and Hannah Bushrod. He was president of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company, member of Congress from Maryland, and a prominent candidate for the Vice-Presidency at the time Winfield Scott was nominated for President.

Their son was the Lewis Washington who was living near Harper's Ferry at the time of John Brown's raid, and was taken prisoner by him and held as a hostage until released by Colonel Robert E. Lee and his United States troops when they arrived on the scene.

Miss Eleanor Ann Washington, the daughter of the house, was skilled in painting and did miniatures of her mother and of other members of her family. She also used to sketch in the beautiful woods north of her father's home, which soon after became Oak Hill Cemetery, and she was the first person to be buried in its grounds. [Pg 288]

George Corbin Washington married a second time, a girl who had been almost like a daughter in his house, Ann Thomas Beall Peter, of whom his wife had been very fond. Both of the wives of George Corbin Washington were descended from the Reverend John Orme, a distinguished clergyman of Maryland in colonial days.

After the death of Mr. Washington the place was sold and became the home of Senator Jesse D. Bright, of Indiana, who was deprived of his seat in the Senate during the Civil War because of his sympathy with the South.

For a long time this place belonged to Columbus Alexander, but in recent years it has changed hands several times. It had been leased by the Honorable Dwight Morrow to be his home while Senator from New Jersey, but his sudden death the summer before of course changed that arrangement.

During World War II it was the home of General William (Wild Bill) Donovan, head of OSS, and is now the home of Mr. Philip Graham, publisher of the *Washington Post*.

All of this property of The Heights belonged, as I have said, to Thomas Beall, and after 1783 it was rapidly being "developed," as they say nowadays. It is interesting to follow out how it all happened and how relatives wished to live one another.

Directly across Washington (30th) Street, a large piece of land was sold by Thomas Beall in 1798 to William Craik, who was the son of that Dr. Craik who attended General Washington in his last illness. He evidently intended to build a home here, but Mrs. Craik died and he soon followed her. She was Miss Fitzhugh, a sister of Mrs. George Washington Parke Custis, of Arlington. [Pg 289]

How I wish there were in existence a picture of the house which David Peter built in 1808 when he bought this piece of land. The house must have stood among handsome trees, for it was called Peter's Grove, and we can look at the oaks still standing in near-by places and visualize those which surrounded this house.

David Peter was a son of Robert Peter. He married Sarah Johns, and had two daughters and one son, Hamilton. After his death Mrs. David Peter married John Leonard, and the place was sold, in the thirties, to Colonel John Carter, Representative in Congress from South Carolina. His wife was Eleanor Marbury, one of that large family of girls in the old house on Bridge (M) Street. The house was then renamed Carolina Place.

For a while it was occupied by the Honorable John F. Crampton, Minister from England. It was during this time that a treaty was settled by him with Daniel Webster concerning the Newfoundland fisheries. A little later Count de Sartiges, the French Minister, lived here.

About that time the house was destroyed by fire and the land was sold by John Carter O'Neal, of the Inniskillen Dragoons, son of Anne Carter who had married an Englishman, to Henry D. Cooke.

The western part of this square was bought in 1805 by Mrs. Elisha O. Williams. She was Harriot Beall, daughter of Brooke Beall, the third of these sisters to settle on The Heights, and she also bought her home with money inherited from her father's estate.

[Pg 290]

Home Of Brooke Williams

Six months after buying the property Mrs. Williams was left a widow. She built a home and lived there with her small children, and thirty years later gave the northern part of her land to her son, Brooke Williams and his wife, Rebecca. It was on the spot where the Home for the Blind now stands. [Pg 291]

Mrs. Rebecca Williams was a very beautiful woman and all her children inherited her beauty. The daughter who was named Harriot Beall for her grandmother became the most famous girl who ever grew up in Georgetown. The romantic story of her marriage to Baron Bodisco, the Russian Minister, runs thus:

> It all started with a Christmas party which the baron gave for his nephews, Waldemar and Boris Bodisco. To this party all of the boys and girls were invited, and great bonfires lighted the way, for there was little gas in those days.

Among those who came was Harriot Beall Williams, the beautiful sixteen-year-old daughter of Brooke Williams, senior. Baron Bodisco, a bachelor of sixty-three, became completely enamored of Miss Williams that evening, and it is said that the next morning he walked up the hill to meet and escort her to school—the school, of course, being the same Seminary of Miss English.

My story is copied almost entirely from Miss Sally Somervell Mackall's *Early Days of Washington*, for nothing could improve on that:

> Miss Williams' family were much opposed to the marriage, and at one time the engagement came near being broken. She told Mr. Bodisco that "her grandmother and everybody else thought he was entirely too old and ugly." His reply was that she might find someone younger and better looking, but no one who would love her better than he did. [Pg 292]
>
> They were married in June, 1849, at four o'clock in the afternoon, at her mother's home on Georgetown Heights. Only the immediate relatives and the bridal party witnessed the ceremony, after which there was a brilliant reception. The wedding party formed a circle and just back of them on a sofa sat a row of aged ladies in lace-trimmed caps, among them her grandmother, Harriot Williams and her three sisters, Mrs. Benjamin Mackall, Mrs. William Stewart, senior, and their cousin, Mrs. Leonard Hollyday Johns, senior, all of whom were between seventy and eighty years of age.
>
> The mariage ceremony was performed by her cousin, Reverend Hollyday Johns, the second. Her trousseau came from abroad, and her bridal robe was a marvel of rich white satin and costly lace which fell in graceful folds around her; the low-cut dress showed to perfection her lovely white shoulders and neck. On her fair brow and golden hair was worn a coronet of rarest pearls, the gift of the groom. The effect was wonderfully brilliant. As her father was not living, her hand was given in marriage by Henry Clay.
>
> The groom wore his court dress of velvet and lace. All the bridesmaids, seven in number, were beautiful girls about her own age. Their gowns were figured white satin, cut low in the neck with short sleeves and trimmed with blond lace; their hair was simply dressed without ornaments. The bridesmaids were: her sister Gennie Williams, Sarah Johns, Jessie Benton, Ellen Carter, Eliza Jane Wilson, Emily Nichols, Mary Harry, and Helen Morris, daughter of Commodore Morris. Each bridesmaid was presented with a ring set with her favorite stone. The groomsmen were Henry Fox, the British Minister in scarlet court dress; Mr. Dunlop, Minister from Texas; Mr. Martineau, Minister from the Netherlands; Mr. Buchanan, who had been Minister to Russia, and was then Senator, and afterwards President of the United States; Baron Saruyse, the Austrian Minister; Martin Van Buren; Mr. Kemble Paulding, whose father was Secretary of the Navy at that time; Mr. Forsythe, whose father was Secretary of State. Each minister had his own carriage and attendants dressed in livery. The house and grounds were thronged with noted guests, strolling amid sweet-scented flowers and lemon trees hanging with rich golden fruit. [Pg 293]
>
> Among the distinguished guests were President Van Buren; Daniel Webster; all the Diplomatic

Corps and a host of other notables, including James Gordon Bennett of *The New York Herald*.

The bride was taken to her new home in Mr. Bodisco's gilded coach with driver and footman in bright uniform, drawn by four horses. The same afternoon, Mr. Bodisco gave a dinner to just the bridal party. At nine o'clock the same day he gave a general reception for the families of the attendants. The morning after the wedding the bridesmaids took breakfast with the bride and, girl-like, as soon as breakfast was over, went on an investigating tour. In her boudoir they found many beautiful things, among them an old-fashioned secretary, with numerous drawers, one was filled with ten dollar gold pieces, another with silver dollars, another with ten-cent pieces, another with the costliest of jewels, and still another with French candy.

The next week Mr. Bodisco gave a grand ball, on which occasion Madame Bodisco wore her bridal robe. Shortly after the wedding, President Van Buren gave a handsome dinner at the White House in honor of Madame Bodisco and Mrs. Decantzo, another bride. To this dinner all the bridal party were invited. Madame Bodisco wore a black watered silk, trimmed with black thread lace and pearl ornaments. President Van Buren sent his private carriage and his son, Martin, to escort Ellen Carter (an adopted daughter of Jeremiah Williams who was an important shipping merchant of the town) to the dinner. The President thought Miss Carter like her Aunt Marion Stewart of New York, to whom he was engaged while Governor of that State. At the dinner table he drank wine with her, and again in the reception room. Miss Carter afterwards married Paymaster Brenton Boggs of the United States Navy.

[Pg 294]

Madame Bodisco

On another occasion at one of the diplomatic dinners given at the White House, Madame Bodisco wore a rich, white watered silk, the sleeves, waist and skirt embroidered with pale rosebuds with tender green leaves. Her jewels were diamonds and emeralds.

[Pg 295]

Alexander de Bodisco was born in Moscow on the 30th of October, 1786, and died at his residence in Georgetown on the 23rd of January, 1854, having filled the post of Russian Envoy to the United States for about seventeen years. He was in Vienna in 1814 during the famous Congress which settled the affairs of the continent, and was afterward charge d'affaires at Stockholm. At his funeral his two nephews, Boris and Waldemar, both very handsome and dressed in white uniforms, marched on either side of the hearse, accompanied by attachés of the legation and members of the household in uniform.

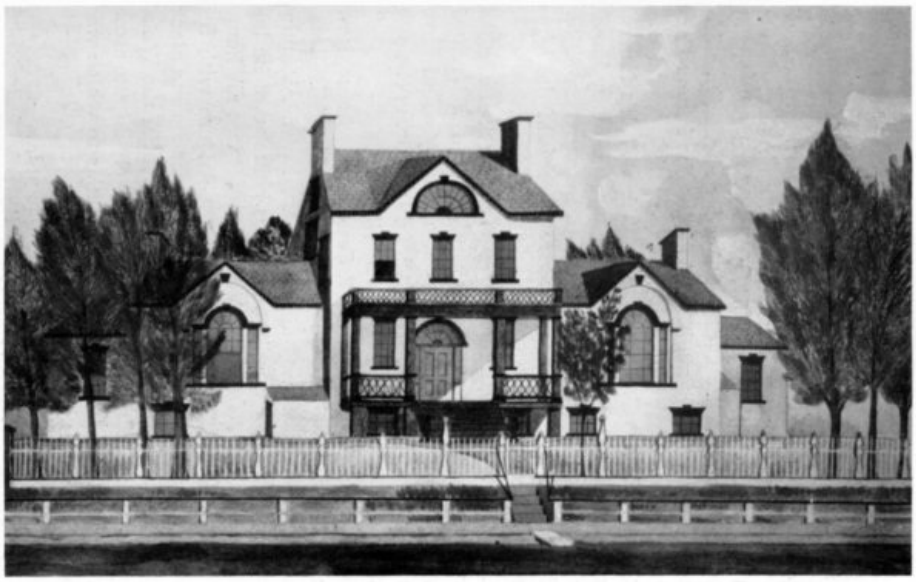
All during my childhood the Williams house stood gaunt and untenanted, the personification of a haunted house. If only a place with such a history could have been renovated and kept, instead of disappearing entirely from Georgetown.

On the next block at 3238 R Street is the house, now somewhat changed, where lived General H. W. Halleck, chief-of-staff of the army during the Civil War. After the war General U. S. Grant made it his home until he became president. Later, until about 1900, it was the home of Colonel John J. Joyce, a picturesque figure with his leonine head and long white hair and mustache and black sombrero. It was said he had been the Goat of the Whiskey Ring. In the last years of his life a lively dispute arose between him and Ella Wheeler Wilcox as to which was the author of the

lines

Laugh, and world laughs with you,
Weep, and you weep alone!

[Pg 296]



Mount Hope. The William Robinson House

It was much discussed in the newspapers at the time. Colonel Joyce's tombstone in Oak Hill bears a likeness of him carved upon its face. [Pg 297]

In the early days of the New Deal this house was rented by a group of young men, among them Tommy Corcoran and Ben Cohen, who were responsible for helping to frame much of the legislation of that eventful time. It was known then as the "Big Red House on R Street."

The southwest corner of Road (R) Street and High (Wisconsin Avenue) was the land owned by Thomas Sim Lee, who had been Governor of Maryland. Every winter he came from his estate, Needwood, to spend several months in Georgetown, in his house on the northwest corner of Bridge (M) Street and Washington (30th) Street, which was for a long time the headquarters of the Federal Party. He died in 1819 before he could build here the mansion he contemplated.

Until about 1935 the old reservoir sat here, high up like a crown, until the Georgetown Branch of the Public Library was built.

The little street below here which runs west from Valley (32nd) Street, now called Reservoir Road, was originally named the New Cut Road, due to the fact that it was cut through to connect with the Conduit Road, now renamed MacArthur Boulevard which covers the conduit bringing the water from Great Falls to Washington.

On the southwest corner of Road (R) Street and High (Wisconsin Avenue) stood the imposing mansion of Mr. William Robinson, who was a very fine lawyer in the middle of the nineteenth century. He was a Virginian who had settled in Georgetown. He called his home Mount Hope and a wonderful situation it had, commanding a view of the entire city and the river. At that time the western wing was the ballroom, with domed ceiling circled by cupids and roses. [Pg 298]

Mr. Robinson's beautiful daughter, Margaret, married Thomas Campbell Cox, son of Colonel John Cox, and they lived at Mount Hope until they moved to Gay Street. I remember Mrs. Cox as an old lady, still beautiful, and regal in bearing. The Weaver family lived there after that until the early 1900's, when this place was used as the Dumbarton Club. It had very good tennis courts, and for a while a nine-hole golf course where the suburb of Berleith is now.

Then Mr. Alexander Kirk, Ambassador to Egypt, bought the place and made a good many changes, including the addition of a swimming-pool.

Afterward Mrs. Evalyn Walsh McLean purchased it and renamed it Friendship, after the former estate of the same name out on Wisconsin Avenue, where many famous parties had been given. Here she continued her lavish entertainments and during World War II contributed generously to the pleasure of members of the armed services.

The large house, number 3406, in the middle of the next square, was built in the early 1800's by Leonard Mackall, one of the two sons of Benjamin Mackall of Prince Georges County, Maryland, who came to Georgetown. He married Catherine Beall, another daughter of Brooke Beall. Mr. Beall, as seems to have been the custom in those days, had given this square to his daughter and her husband. The place was bought by Dr. Charles Worthington's family when they left their home on Prospect Street and was held by his descendants, the Philips, for many years, although the latter part of the time none of them lived there, but rented the place. [Pg 299]

It has been for a good many years now the home of Mrs. Frank West, who has made a beautiful rose garden and christened it Century House. The house itself has charming rooms, all opening

to the south, as so many old-fashioned houses had, and several porches.

I have spoken of Colonel Cox and the row of houses he built on First (N) Street and Frederick (34th) Street, where he lived for a while in the house on the corner. That must have been in the period of his first marriage to Matilda Smith, who was a sister of Clement Smith, well-known as the first cashier of the Farmer's and Mechanic's Bank, later its president. Colonel and Mrs. Cox had three children, one of whom was named Clement.

After his marriage to Jane Threlkeld they built a lovely house on part of the old Berleith estate next door to the old Threlkeld home, which had been burned. They called their home The Cedars. It stood where the Western High School now stands, and it is difficult to realize that there, in my memory, was a home most delightfully private and charming.

Turning back eastward along Road (R) Street just opposite Mount Hope, the pretty old light brick house is where the Marburys lived after they moved up on The Heights. He called himself Mr. John Marbury, junior, to the day of his death, in spite of having a long, white beard. Although his family never moved from this house, in the course of a few years they had three different addresses. At first they were living on the corner of Road and High Streets, then on the corner of U and 32nd Streets, and finally on the corner of R Street and Wisconsin Avenue.

[Pg 300]

The Oaks (Now Dumbarton Oaks)

Montrose

[Pg 301]

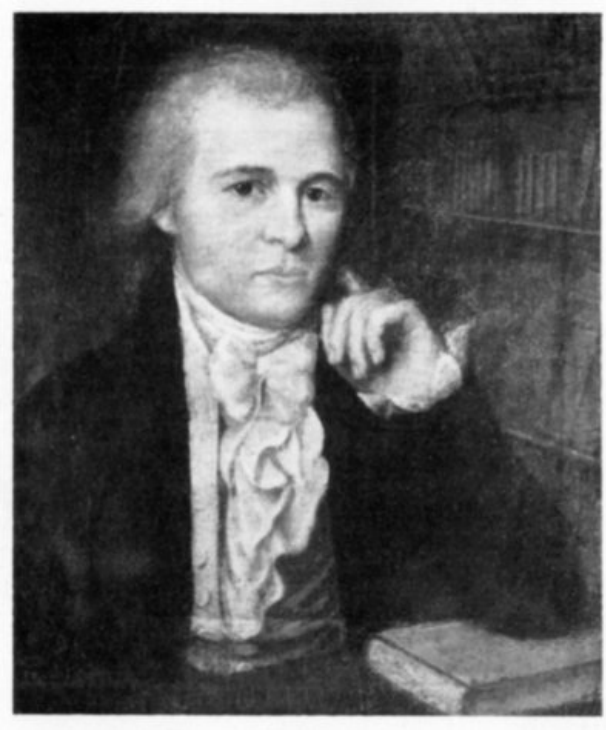
Across High Street (Wisconsin Avenue), the house sitting high on the bank was for many years the home of Mr. William Dougal and his family of one son and four lovely daughters. His wife was Miss Adler, and this house was built on part of her father's property. The old brick house, which was back of it some distance north, was the home of Morris Adler. A small frame house nearer Road (R) Street was where his son, Morris J. Adler, lived, until he built a house on West (P) Street.

A little way eastward on the same side of Road (R) Street is the famous Dumbarton Oaks. The

land was first bought from Thomas Beall in 1800 by William H. Dorsey, first judge of our Orphan's Court, who was appointed by President Jefferson. Mr. Dorsey had previously been living in the old part of the town, for I find an advertisement of the sale of his property before he came up here, and from the minutes of a meeting of the Corporation of Georgetown on October 24th, 1801, we find the following: "William H. Dorsey writes to ask if his removal to his present place of residence will disqualify him from serving on the Corporation. They are of opinion it does not disqualify him as a member thereof."

He built this house, named it The Oaks, and lived in it for four years. His first wife was Ann Brooke, the daughter of Colonel Richard Brooke, of Oak Hill, Sandy Spring, whose wife was Jane Lynn, the daughter of David Lynn. In 1802 Mr. Dorsey married Rosetta Lynn, who was the aunt of his first wife.

[Pg 302]



William Hammond Dorsey

William Hammond Dorsey was born at Oakland, in Howard County, and died at Oakley, near Brookeville, in 1818. He was a very handsome man and was nicknamed "Pretty Billy" by his Quaker neighbors of Sandy Spring.

In 1805 the place was bought by Robert Beverley of Essex County, Virginia. His wife was Jane Tayloe, a sister of Colonel John Tayloe, who built the famous Octagon House. Mr. and Mrs. Beverley owned the place until 1822. During that time their son James was married to Jane Peter, the daughter of David Peter of nearby "Peter's Grove," and this place became their home. They did not remain here long, but went back to Virginia and established themselves near The Plains.

[Pg 303]

The next owner was James E. Calhoun, of South Carolina. He loaned it to his distinguished brother, John C. Calhoun, who made it his home for some of the time he spent at the capital in the various offices he held. He was Secretary of War in the cabinet of President Monroe; Vice-President with John Quincy Adams, and Andrew Jackson, and Senator from South Carolina. From here he wrote that the leisure of the office of Vice-President gave him a good opportunity to study the fundamental questions of the day called "The American System." At this time the place was known as *Acrolophos* (Grove on the Hill), a most descriptive name. Later it became Monterey, after the war with Mexico made that battle so famous.

It was in 1846 that the estate was bought by Edward M. Linthicum, and I think it must have been during the time he owned it that the mansard roof was added which, fortunately, has been removed by the present owners. In Mr. Linthicum's day it is described thus:

> The house which has been changed, but not improved in appearance, by the addition of a mansard roof and other alterations, was a large, two-story brick, with hall from front to rear "wide enough for a hay wagon to pass through," on either side of which were great parlors beautifully proportioned. The east parlor opened into a bright, sunny dining room, which in turn looked out upon a well-filled greenhouse, with flower gardens on the east, wooded lawn in front, grove of forest trees on the west, and gently sloping well-sodded hills in the rear, all of which were kept in perfect order. During the life of Mr. Linthicum, "The Oaks" was the show place of the District.

Mr. and Mrs. Linthicum had no children so they adopted a daughter, Miss Kate Mitchell, of Lower Maryland, who became the wife of Mr. Josiah Dent. Their son, Edward Linthicum Dent, inherited the place. In those days it was known as "The Oaks," the name I always heard it called by in my girlhood.

[Pg 304]

In 1891 it was bought by Mr. Henry F. Blount, who had made a fortune and came to Washington. In 1920 it was purchased by the Honorable Robert Woods Bliss, Ambassador to the Argentine. He and Mrs. Bliss remodeled the house and created the gardens, which comprise over thirty acres and are marvels of beauty. Many more acres at the back were allowed to remain in a delightfully wild condition.

The place was renamed Dumbarton Oaks, a museum was built as a wing on the west to house a library and a collection of Byzantine and pre-Christian material, and in 1940 the estate was given by Mr. and Mrs. Bliss to Harvard University, with the exception of the part along the stream at the back, which was donated to the District of Columbia as a park. The Dumbarton Oaks Conference which led to the formation of the United Nations was held here, beginning August 21, 1944.

Part of the land at the back is where the Home for Incurables was until it was moved farther out of town. I used to go there to visit some of the patients who were my friends, and for the simple Sunday evening services.

Lover's Lane, at the east of Dumbarton Oaks, separates it from Montrose Park. It is still, as it has always been, I am glad to say, completely unimproved, unspoiled, sweet and rambling and quiet, wending its way along the brook that empties into Rock Creek at the beginning of Oak Hill. I suppose there is hardly a soul of middle-age living in Georgetown who has not fond memories of [Pg 305] Lover's Lane, for in the days of our youth we did walk with our lovers; no automobiles or movies filled our Saturday or Sunday afternoons, and very little golf.

Through Lover's Lane we went to Normanstone, the home of the two Misses Barnards and their sister, Mrs. Talcott. It was a quaint little house, which stood just about where the British Embassy now is. The name is commemorated by Normanstone Drive. Mr. Robert Barnard built Normanstone in 1830. It was a Devonshire cottage of clay, straw, and pebbles, with walls four feet thick.

The turreted stone mansion nearby was built by Mr. Elverson of Philadelphia. His daughter, Nelly, became the wife of Monsieur Patrenotre, the French Minister. This was in the days before our foreign envoys became Ambassadors.

Our first knowledge of the present Montrose Park was as Parrott's Woods. Richard Parrott conducted there a "rope walk." It seems that when they made rope it was necessary to have a long, even stretch where the rope-makers walked up and down manufacturing the hemp into rope. And, of course, in this town with all its ships, the making of rope was a lucrative business.

Mr. Parrott evidently was kind in loaning his property for picnics too, for again Mr. Gordon gives us vivid pictures of the Fourth of July annual picnic of all the Protestant Sunday schools. It seems to have been a huge affair, with flags and banners and rosettes of various colors adorning the scholars of the different schools.

In 1822 the property was bought by Clement Smith, of whom I have spoken before as being the [Pg 306] first cashier of the Farmers and Mechanics Bank, afterwards becoming its president. He called the place Elderslie. In 1837 he sold it to Mrs. Mary McEwen Boyce, whose daughter, Jane, married George Washington Peter, son of Thomas Peter of Tudor Place. In a railroad accident, both Captain Boyce and another daughter were killed. Mrs. Boyce continued to live here the rest of her life.

It was a very sweet, homelike house, but not a particularly handsome one. There was a conservatory opening off of one of the rooms, for Mrs. Boyce seems to have been especially fond of flowers. A sweet little story was told me the other day about her. A friend paused one day to admire the roses blooming in front of the house, saying, "How lovely your roses are, Mrs. Boyce!" "They are not my roses," said she. At the surprised look on her friend's face she continued, "I plant them there for the public." And still, today, there are lovely roses blooming at Montrose for "the public," for after many, many years a movement was set on foot to buy this place with its marvelous old trees of numerous varieties for a park for the people of Georgetown.

Two historic events have taken place in Montrose Park. The first was long ago, on September 1, 1812, when the funeral services were held here for General James Maccubbin Lingan, after his tragic death in Baltimore. No church could be found large enough to accommodate the crowds which wished to attend. There were representatives from three cities and five counties, in those days of travel by foot, by saddle, by rowboat and by coach. General Washington's tent was spread over the stand on which were four clergymen, other dignitaries, and George Washington Parke [Pg 307] Custis of Arlington, who delivered the oration.

The funeral cortege was escorted by Major George Peter's company. The General's horse was led behind the hearse, where his son walked as chief mourner, followed by two heroes of the Revolution, Major Benjamin Stoddert and Colonel Philip Stuart. Light Horse Harry Lee, who had been wounded at the time General Lingan was killed, was still too ill to be present.

General Lingan's widow was not able to be present because of a very unfortunate occurrence. While she was sitting by her window waiting for her carriage, a rough man, carrying a pike, stopped under her window and, thrusting up the weapon covered either with blood or rust, which had the same appearance, he let forth a torrent of brutal words. She was so overcome with an agony of shock and grief that she was obliged to remain at home.

The other historic event took place on the fifth of June, 1918, the day on which was inaugurated the draft for the soldiers of the World War I. All over this land that evening speeches were delivered on the subject, but I think none could have been more effective or impressive than the one staged in Montrose Park at sunset. Then Newton D. Baker, as Secretary of War, in charge of the whole operation, "elected to speak to his neighbors." A wonderful speech it was, and I shall never forget the sight as he stood outlined against the glow of the western sky.

Of Oak Hill Cemetery I have spoken again and again. It is almost like a refrain. It seems to be the natural resting place for Georgetonians when their work is done.

Its terraces leading steeply down the hill to Rock Creek are shaded by many stately oak trees and numerous gorgeous copper beeches, and are adorned in the spring by flowering shrubs. [Pg 308]

There is the little ivy-covered chapel which can be seen from the street, and farther back is the little white Greek temple where Oak Hill's donor, Mr. Corcoran, rests. Also the larger circular mausoleum where Marcia Burns Van Ness is interred.

Many besides Georgetonians have been laid to rest within its borders, for there are Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War for President Lincoln; James G. Blaine, and many more, all prominent in their days. There, too, lies Peggy O'Neale, who, as the wife of Andrew Jackson's Secretary of War, Eaton, kept the social life of the Capital in an uproar for many a year and, it is said, also greatly influenced political matters.

Her very first triumph took place in Georgetown, when, at a school exhibition at the Union Hotel, the little girl with dark brown curly hair and pert red lips was crowned the "Queen of Beauty" by Mrs. Dolly Madison. Peggy was the daughter of the Irish landlord of a hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue, and was married at sixteen to Mr. Timberlake, an officer in the United States Navy. He committed suicide in 1828.

After that began her career, when she was defended and supported in all that she did by Andrew Jackson, who had suffered bitterly from criticism of his own wife.

But the most famous person who lies buried in Oak Hill is the man whose song is known in every hamlet of this broad land: John Howard Payne, the author of "Home, Sweet Home." He had been in Georgetown in his youth, you remember, for he accompanied General Lingan on that trip to [Pg 309] Baltimore from which the General never returned but to his funeral. Mr. Payne was then a young man of twenty-one and excited over the adventure, I suppose, like any one of that age. He was sent in later life as a consul to one of those little states on the northern coast of Africa which in those days made so much trouble for the United States. There he died and was buried. Years later his body was brought back by Mr. Corcoran, and there was quite a ceremony for his re-interment.

The stone placed over him in that distant land and brought back with his body has the seal of the United States carved at the top and reads:

IN MEMORY
OF
COL. JOHN HOWARD PAYNE
TWICE CONSUL OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FOR
THE CITY AND KINGDOM OF TUNIS
THIS STONE IS PLACED
BY A GRATEFUL COUNTRY
HE DIED AT THE AMERICAN CONSULATE
IN THIS CITY AFTER A TEDIOUS ILLNESS
APRIL 1, 1852
HE WAS BORN AT THE CITY OF BOSTON
STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS
JUNE 8, 1792
HIS FAME AS A POET AND DRAMATIST
IS WELL KNOWN WHEREVER THE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE IS SPOKEN THROUGH
HIS CELEBRATED BALLAD OF
HOME, SWEET HOME
AND HIS POPULAR TRAGEDY
OF BRUTUS AND OTHER SIMILAR PRODUCTIONS

[Pg 310]

This slab lies flat upon the ground. Adjoining it is a circle in the center of which is a monument bearing a bust of Colonel Payne, and on it is the following inscription:

IN
MEMORY OF
JOHN HOWARD PAYNE
AUTHOR
OF
HOME, SWEET HOME
BORN JUNE 9, 1791
DIED APRIL 9, 1852
ERECTED ANNO DOMINI 1883

"Sure when thy gentle spirit fled
To realms beyond the azure dome
With arms outstretched, God's angel said
'Welcome to Heaven's Home, Sweet Home.'"

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[Pg 312]

INDEX

[Pg 313]

Transcriber's Notes.

The copyright of this work has been researched and no indications were found that the U.S. copyright was renewed.

Punctuation has been normalised, and hyphenation of words outside quoted material has been made consistent, without comment here.

Due to the large number of variant spellings in the material quoted in this work, the following possible typographic errors in quoted material have not been corrected:

Page ix: "trnsubstantiation."

Page 20: "American indenpendence, which."

Page 30: "June 31, 1800."

Page 38: "Union Tavern in George Town, where he palns to."

Page 38: "Carpenter, can by the asistance."

Page 49: "number of dogs in Gerogetown."

Page 133: "General Lee, and a freqeunt visitor."

Page 158: "Rensselear, "the Patroon," who."

Page 282: "I do not admit mere curisoity."

Page 283: "for without that blissful comsummation."

Page 292: "The mariage ceremony was performed."

On Page 7 "at the the feast of the Annunciacion" was corrected to "at the feast of the Annunciacion."

The following typographic errors outside quoted materials have been corrected:

Page 32: "Paquet" to "Packet," and on Page 32 and Page 51: "Potomack" to "Potowmack," to match other instances of the name of the "*Times and Potowmack Packet*."

Page 67: "Garnirke" to "Garnkirke."

Page 74: "Samuel McKenny" to "Samuel McKenney."

Page 109: "vari-clored" to "vari-colored"

Page 127: "Mr. and Mrs. Willliam Laird" to "Mr. and Mrs. William Laird."

Page 129: "many other in this part of" to "many others in this part of."

Page 157: "Artistocratic" to "Aristocratic," per Bibliography.

Page 172: "the Greenbiar" to "the Greenbriar."

Page 174: "ninety strokes as cariage" to "ninety strokes as carriage."

Page 175: "Encyclopedia" to "Encyclopædia," to match other references to "*The Encyclopædia Britannica*."

Page 280: "Lincoln's assasination" to "Lincoln's assassination."

Page 313: "Beavoir School" to "Beauvoir School"

Page 314: "Burres, David" to "Burnes, David" and "Calton, Joseph" to "Carlton, Joseph."

Page 317: "Hallerith, Hermann" to "Hollerith, Hermann."

Page 318: Indentation of Index entry for "Keith, Rev. Ruel," corrected.

Page 319 "Marsell, Judge" to "Morsell, Judge" and "McCloy, Mrs. Frank R." to "McCoy, Mrs. Frank R."

Page 320: "Queston family" to "Ouestion family."

Page 321: "Phillyss, E." to "Phillips, E."

Page 322: "Soyrs, Rev. Mr." to "Sayrs, Rev. Mr."

Page 323: "Thomsen, Elizabeth" to "Thomson, Elizabeth."

The Index has been re-ordered after correction so that entries are in alphabetical order.

Further it is noted that:

On Page 288, in "to live one another" one or more words is missing.

There is variation in the spelling of "Tenally Town", which is also given as "Tennally Town" on Page 31 where the name is related to that of its founder John Tennally. Both spellings appear to have been in common usage.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A PORTRAIT OF OLD GEORGE TOWN ***

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