

bowels. The power of life seemed now manifestly yielding to the force of the disorder; blisters were applied to the extremities, together with a catalasm of bran and vinegar to the throat. Speaking, which was painful from the beginning, now became almost impracticable; respiration grew more and more contracted and imperfect, till at half after eleven on Saturday night, retaining the full possession of his intellects--when he expired without a struggle!

He was fully impressed at the beginning of his complaint, as well as through every succeeding stage of it, that its conclusion would be mortal; submitting to the several exertions made for his recovery, rather as a duty, than from any expectations of their efficacy. He considered the operations of death upon his system as coeval with the disease; and several hours before his death, after repeated efforts to be understood, succeeded in expressing a desire that he might be permitted to die without further interruption.

During the short period of his illness, he economized his time, in the arrangement of such few concerns as required his attention, with the upmost serenity; and anticipated his approaching dissolution with every demonstration of that equanimity for which his whole life has been so uniformly and singularly conspicuous.

James Craik, Attending Physician
Elisha C. Dick, Consulting Physician

P.S. The signature of Dr. Gustavus Brown, of Port-Tobacco who attended as consulting Physician, on account of the remoteness of his residence from this place, has not been procured to the foregoing statement.

Finis.²⁷

End of part I.

Historic Photographs Needed

by Barbara Couchenour

The Charles County Community College is requesting history-minded Charles Countians to "rummage through their attics" and search their photograph albums to find anything relative to our maritime history and of the Potomac River. If anything of interest is found, please bring it to the Southern Maryland Room Library at the college.

Especially wanted are scenes of the:
Marshall Hall wharf.

McGhiesport wharf (near Fenwick).

The **Chapman Point** fisheries.

Glymont wharves and the Japanese Pavillion ashore.

Indian Head wharves and naval vessels.

The wharves in **Mattawoman** creek (Winthrop, Grinders, Mattinglys, Nelson, Dent, Proctors, Sweden Point, Rum Point).

Chickomuxen creek wharves, Linton wharf, and Posey wharf.

Budds Landing on Goose Bay.

Sandy Point wharf.

Mallows Bay; any photographs of the salvage operations during the 1930's and the 1940's.

Liverpool Point; the caviar factory there, and the summer resort.

Blue Banks and the "digging of marl" for fertilizer there.

Clifton Beach summer resort with the 500 person dancing pavillion.

Riverside wharf and the **Nanjemoy** Store.

Upper Cedar Point Light House.

Chapel Point summer resort, wharf and skating rink.

Brents Landing wharf.

Popes Creek wharf for salvage operations.

The **SS Freestone**, the slot machine vessel on the Virginia shore.

Morgantown ferry wharf (going to Potomac Beach).

Morgantown Hotel and steamboat wharf.

Cobb Island bridge across Neals Sound.

Rock Point wharf and oyster factories.

Rock Point Hotel.

Newport Run wharf.

Any steamboats, ferry boats or sailing ships, which visited the County.

The photographs which are brought to the College will be copied and returned to the owner. If used, the owners name will be credited accordingly.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Articles of historic interest to Charles County are welcome for possible publication in **The RECORD**. Please send contributions to: Editor, **The RECORD**, Box 273, La Plata, Maryland 20646.



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George C. Dyson, President

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Charles G. LaHood, Jr., Editor

DR. JAMES CRAIK George Washington's Physician and Friend

by Robert R. Adams*

Introduction

It would be difficult to find a youngster in the United States today who has not been introduced to George Washington as the father of our country. For many of us, what we learned of this man in grade school has long seemed adequate. However, I am happy to report that there is more--much more!

George Washington, like most of us had friends. Among his circle of friends was Dr. James Craik, who throughout their many years of friendship served Washington as his personal physician. Reflecting this, Washington referred to Dr. Craik in his will as "my compatriot in arms, an old and intimate friend."¹

There can be no better way to appreciate the work, life and times of George Washington than to see these things through the eyes of his friend and doctor, James Craik. What follows is a sketch of this important man.

His Beginnings

Dr. James Craik was born near Dumfries, Scotland at his father's estate, Arbigland, in 1730. Little is known of his youth, except that scenes familiar to him were shared by John Paul, the gardener of Arbigland, and his famous son, John Paul Jones. While Dr. Craik was born 17 years before this famous sailor, the rugged Scottish sea coast must have profoundly influenced these two boys as they unknowingly prepared to become men of the American Revolution.²

After James Craik graduated from the Medical College of Edinburgh he traveled to the New World as a British army surgeon. Arriving in the West Indies in 1750, he apparently

*Robert R. Adams received his B.S. (mechanical engineering) in 1973 and M.S. (biomedical engineering) in 1974 from Clemson University and will complete training for M.D. in 1982 at the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences, Bethesda, Md. The selection of this topic for an assignment arose from his interests in southern Maryland history and in the association of our first President with his physician James Craik. Lt. Adams' paternal ancestors have been traced back to the colonial period in Charles County; he is the great nephew of T. C. Martin who served as Superintendent of Charles County Schools from 1951 - 1954.

paused briefly, resigned his commission, and then sailed for Norfolk, Virginia, to establish a short-lived practice. By 1754 he had moved to the western frontier settlement of Winchester, Virginia. Here he became surgeon to the nearby fort, where Colonel George Washington was soon to command the regiment of 300 to 400 troops.^{3, 4}

Young Friends on the Frontier

On 7 March 1754 Dr. Craik was commissioned surgeon in the Virginia Provincial Regiment. Here, then, in the Virginia wilderness began a lifelong friendship between George Washington, a 22 year old colonel, and James Craik, a 24 year old physician.⁵

During this period, the French and Indian War must have been foremost in the minds of the frontier settlers, for this was a time marked with uncertainty and constant military activity. Craik was one of those made busy by these events--that first year of service found him rendering surgical aid to the wounded at the Battle of Great Meadows, where Washington was beaten in his defense of Fort Necessity by the French.⁶

During the following year, Craik and Washington were with General Braddock's army in an advance against Fort Duquesne (now Pittsburgh). This, the Battle of Monongahela, was a disaster for the British. Washington, the only aide-de-camp not killed or wounded, had four bullet holes through his coat and two horses shot under him. Falling back with retreating British Army, Craik treated the fatal wounds of Braddock and cured Washington of a fever. Afterwards, Dr. Craik was among those who were given thirty pounds by the Virginia Assembly "for gallant and meritorious service in battle."⁷

Washington continued as commander of the frontier forces from 1755 to 1758, with his headquarters in Winchester. Craik remained Washington's surgeon until the capture of Fort Duquesne (Fort Pitt), when with the war over, he resigned his commission.⁸

The Virginia Wilderness

Dr. Craik receives credit for bringing to light a remarkable story associated with the Battle of Monongahela.⁹ From 5 October to 1 December 1770, Craik and Washington were engaged in an exploration of western Virginia, in the region of the Ohio and Kanawha Rivers. The purpose of this trip was to select and survey land granted to the veterans of the French and Indian War, under the proclamation made by Virginia's



THE FORKS OF THE OHIO

Taken from: Fred W. Wellborn, *The Growth of American Nationality 1492-1865*, New York, Macmillan Co., 1947, p. 122.

Governor Dinwiddie. Since they were both to be recipients of this grant--15,000 acres awarded to each field officer--they had ample incentive to make good selections. Accompanied by only three slaves, and perhaps a pair of Indian guides, these two seekers of fortune traveled by horse and canoe into the lawless frontier. Reports of two white traders recently murdered by Indians along their anticipated route was surely cause for concern.¹⁰

Several days voyage from Pittsburgh by canoe on the Ohio River brought Washington and Craik to an Indian hunting camp by the mouth of the Muskingum River. Here a ceremonious visit with Chief Kiashuta, a vindictive warrior, was required. Washington and Kiashuta immediately recognized each other, though they had last met seventeen years earlier, during Washington's missions to the French in 1753. While camped with Kiashuta, Washington was visited by another Indian Chief, who recalled laying in ambush on the banks of the Monongahela for Braddock's army. This man declared that he and his men repeatedly directed their fire at Washington, as he made himself an easy target riding across the battlefield with the general's orders. Even so, their efforts to slay Washington were without success; this leading them to conclude that Washington was protected by the Great Spirit, unable to be killed in battle. The old Chief then prophesied that Washington would become "the founder of a mighty

nation."^{11 12}

This trip, the first of two such expeditions Washington and Craik were to make to this wilderness, ended uneventfully at the Great Kanawha River. From here they returned to Pittsburgh by canoe; then homeward they traveled by horse. But, the true nature of their hazard soon afterward became apparent: an uprising of the Ohio tribes--with one of the bloodiest scenes on the banks of the Kanawha. Here, Colonel Lewis and many of his men died in combat with the Indians.¹³

A Southern Maryland Patriot

After leaving the army, Dr. Craik purchased a track of land then known as "Mayday" in Charles County, Maryland, from William and Ledstone Smallwood. This property, later known as "La Grange" is less than a mile west of present day La Plata, Maryland. Here is where Dr. Craik built a mansion for his bride Mariamne Ewell and their soon-to-grow family.¹⁴

Craik was certainly a patriot during the years before the Revolutionary War. In 1774 the Doctor took an active role in a meeting of his fellow Charles County, Maryland citizens at what was then the county seat, Port Tobacco. Here a series of resolutions were passed demanding that the Parliamentary Act requiring a British blockade of Boston Harbor be repealed. Otherwise, the county's inhabitants would join with those elsewhere in the Colonies in severing all commercial trade with Great Britain and the West Indies. Dr. Craik and his friend Dr. Gustavus Brown were chosen by their neighbors to membership on the committee charged with carrying out these resolutions.^{16 17}

The Revolutionary War

Washington considered his friends, political, professional and social ties in southern Maryland so valuable to both Craik and the community that he found it difficult to ask for the doctor's enlistment in the army. This warm appreciation of Dr. Craik's interests is evident in General Washington's letter to him, dated 26 April 1777. (See Appendix for text of this letter.) In this letter Craik is offered his choice between two positions: "Senior Physician and Surgeon of the Hospital, with pay of three dollars and six rations per day, and forage for one horse." and "Assistant Director General, with the pay of three dollars and six rations per day, and two horses and traveling expenses found." Craik chose the latter position, and received the appointment later that same year.¹⁸

On 6 October 1780, Dr. Craik was appointed the senior Chief Hospital Physician and Surgeon as part of a reorganization of the army medical department by Congress. This promotion made him the third highest ranking Medical Corps Officer. Before five months had passed Craik was again promoted--this time to the office of Chief Physician and Surgeon of the Army. Now his position in the Medical Corps was second only to the Director General. Dr. Craik retained this position until the close of the war.¹⁹

Dr. Craik's rapid ascent in the Continental Army's hierarchy may be attributed to three specific circumstances. First, Craik was clearly a man whom Washington liked a great deal, for their friendship was long standing. Second, there were not very many physicians in the colonies when independence was declared. (It has been estimated that in 1776 the colonial population was a little more than 3,000,000, with physicians numbering 3500. Further, it is probable that less than one-tenth of those practicing medicine had received a degree of medicine.)²⁰ Third, and surely most important, Dr. Craik in 1778 saved General Washington from Conway's Cabal, a conspiracy to remove him as Commander-in-Chief by "... secret enemies, who would rob you of the great and truly good esteem your country has for you ... The method they are taking is by holding General Gates up to the people, and making them believe that you have had a number three or four times greater than the enemy, and have done nothing; that Philadelphia was given up by your management, and that you have had many opportunities of defeating the enemy ..."²¹ (See Appendix for full text of Craik's letter to Washington, dated 6 January 1778.)

The War Ends

At the war's end James Craik returned to his family and his Port Tobacco home. Later the doctor moved his family and medical practice to Alexandria, Virginia, a move most probably influenced by a desire to live closer to his dear friend at Mount Vernon.²² Unfortunately, the exact date of this relocation is difficult to establish since it was not until later, on 8 July 1796, that Dr. Craik deeded his estate, La Grange, to his son, William.

Regardless of the actual date of Craik's move, he and Washington continued enjoying each other's companionship. But, growing old together left them little idle time; more adventure was yet to come.

Return to the Virginia Wilderness

During the late summer and early fall of 1784 Washington again invited Craik to join him on a trip to the Ohio and Kanawha River to visit the land granted them before the Revolution. This trip, like the one in 1770, took them to the wilderness west of the Appalachians. Memories of their previous adventure must have filled their conversations along the way, for as before, their journey was made in hardy style. This time, however, warnings of restless Indians along their planned route were heeded; they detoured from the route to their wild, and then probably worthless, land. Instead of continuing west after traveling the Monongahela River to another tract of Washington's property, they continued southeast and crossed the Alleghenies to the Shenandoah Valley near Staunton, Virginia. Whether a success or failure, the trip was certainly a tribute to the vigor of these two: Craik was 54 and Washington 52 years old.²³

Dr. Craik—Physician General

Because war with France seemed unavoidable in May 1798, Congress authorized an army of 10,000 men with George Washington as commander. General Washington made the appointment of Dr. Craik as Physician General (Director General) and the appointments of others a condition of his acceptance of command. Craik's commission entitled him to the pay of a Lieutenant Colonel, but without rank. Fortunately, the threat of war vanished and most of the never truly organized force was discharged by 15 June 1800. This peacetime segment of service ended Dr. Craik's disjointed military medical career, but not without tragedy.^{24 25 26}

Washington Dies

On Saturday, 14 December 1799, Dr. Craik was summoned to Mount Vernon--his friend was dying. An account of the events during Washington's fatal illness, authored by Dr. Craik, best describes those difficult last hours:

An appendix, giving a particular account of the behavior of Gen. Washington, during his distressing illness, etc. by two of his Physicians. Alexandria, (Virginia,) Dec. 30.

Some time in the night of Friday the 13th inst. having been exposed to a rain on the preceding day, General Washington was attacked with an inflammatory affection of the upper part of the windpipe, called in the technical language Cynache Trachaelis. The disease commenced with a violent ague, accompanied with some pain in the upper and fore part of the throat, a sense of stricture in the same part, a cough, and a difficult, rather than a painful deglutition, which were soon succeeded by a fever, and a quick and laborious respiration. The necessity of bloodletting suggesting itself to the General, he procured a bleeder in the neighbourhood, who took from his arm in the night 12 or 14 ounces of blood. He could not by any means be prevailed on by the family to send for the attending physician till the following morning, who arrived at Mount-Vernon at about 11 o'clock on Saturday. Discovering the case to be highly alarming, and foreseeing the fatal tendency of the disease, two consulting physicians were immediately sent for, who arrived, one at half after three, and the other at four o'clock in the afternoon: in the mean time were employed two pretty copious bleedings, a blister was applied to the part affected, two moderate doses of calomel were given, and an injection was administered, which operated on the lower intestines, but all without any perceptible advantage, the respiration becoming still more difficult and distressing. Upon the arrival of the first of the consulting physicians, it was agreed, as there were yet no signs of accumulation in the bronchial vessels of the lungs, to try the result of another bleeding, when about 32 ounces of blood were drawn, without the smallest apparent alleviation of the disease. Vapors of vinegar and water were frequently inhaled, ten grains of calomel were given, succeeded by repeated doses of emetic tartar, amounting in all to 5 or 6 grains, with no other effect than a copious discharge from the