

Part of it was pack'd up last Week, & sent to Maryland, where yr. Brother Thomas, & yr. Sisters now are . . .

Who is to say the repairs on the Duckwall, or "Maryland Table", as it is called today at Gunston Hall, weren't necessitated as a result of trips back and forth across the Potomac River? At any rate, the table is lovely and has been placed to advantage in the Southern Maryland Room of the Charles County Community College. Do come to see the table and through it get to know George Mason, American Patriot and the Author of the Virginia Bill of Rights, one who has been designated THE PEN OF THE REVOLUTION.

REFERENCES

Papers of George Mason, 1725-1792. Vol. II, 1779-1786. Rutland, Robert A., Editor. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1970.

File on the MARYLAND TABLE, Gunston Hall. The Historical Society of Charles County File, SOUTHERN MARYLAND Room, Charles County Community College, La Plata, Maryland.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Historical Society of Charles County Annual Meeting and Dinner will be held on October 25, 1980 at the VFW Hall in

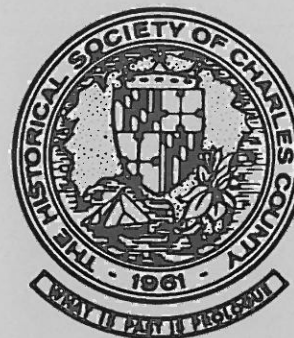
Indian Head. The Hall will open at 6 p.m. with dinner scheduled for 6:30. New Officers and Board Members will be elected during the Annual Meeting.

The program features an illustrated lecture on Victorian Gardens by Richard E. Slavin III. Mr. Slavin has recently been appointed as Administrator of Lyndhurst, a Property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The lecture details the garden reconstruction of Olana Historic Site and documents the garden and grounds of Lyndhurst. Lyndhurst overlooks the Hudson River's Tappan Zee from a promontory below Tarrytown, N.Y. The 67 acre estate contains magnificent specimen trees, lawns, gardens, woodlands, meadows and rockeries. The Gothic Mansion was designed by Alexander Jackson Davis (1803-92), one of American's most influential architects.

Gertrude Wright is serving as chairperson for dinner arrangements. For more information, call: Mrs. Dyson 743-7558 or Mrs. Jones 375-9179.

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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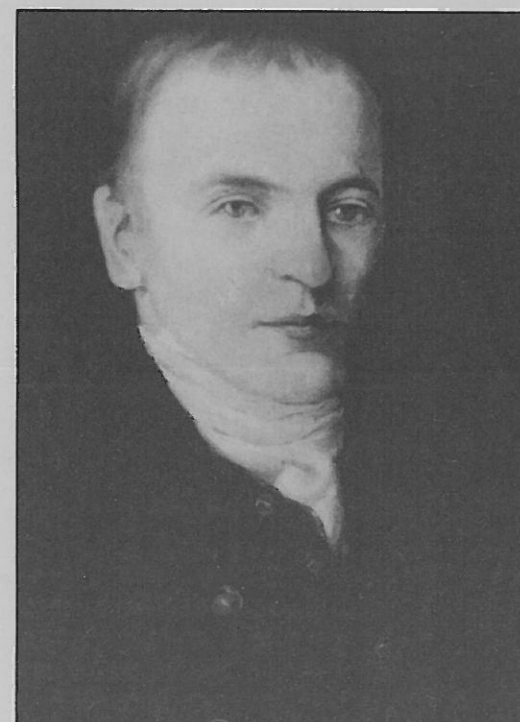
DR. JAMES CRAIK George Washington's Physician and Friend

PART II*

By Robert R. Adams

Retirement

Dr. Craik lived for fifteen years after the death of Washington, the latter part of this time being spent living in retirement at Vancluse, a country home seven miles from Alexandria. Here he resided with his wife and the widow and son of their son, George W. Craik. James Craik was last remembered by his grandson as "a stout, hale, cheery old man, perfectly erect, fond of company and of children, and amusing himself with light work in the garden."²⁸



Copy of a portrait of Dr. James Craik
Courtesy of National Library of Medicine
(negative # 79-103)

Conclusion

It is difficult to evaluate Dr. Craik's performance as an army medical administrator, country doctor, father, or husband because throughout his adult life these responsibilities were only rarely able to escape the historical shadow cast by his intimate friendship with Washington. Knowing little of these aspects of his life may tarnish our appreciation for James Craik's personality and his professional accomplishments. It cannot, however, erase the untold influence this man had on our embryonic nation through his friend, Washington. That Craik was filled with compassion for his country and Washington is clear from his words uttered upon Washington's death:

I who was bred amid scenes of human calamity--who had so often witnessed death in its direst and most awful forms, believed that its terrors were too familiar to my eye to shake my fortitude--but when I saw this great man die, it seemed, as if the bonds of my nature were rent asunder, and that the pillar of my country's happiness, had fallen to the ground.²⁹

Perhaps Dr. Craik has been slighted by history, for his friendship with our first President has been obscured. Ask those same youngsters whose teachers made them familiar with the initials G.W., cherry pie, and Mount Vernon to identify James Craik and most probably you will be answered with blank stares. Nonetheless, our appreciation of Washington and his part in our country's beginnings is made more nearly complete through what we know of Dr. Craik.

APPENDIX

Comment on Dr. Craik's Southern Maryland Estate (reference p. 5 of text)

It is generally agreed by Dr. Craik's biographers that he and Marianne Ewell married on 13 November 1760, at "Belle-Air" in Prince William County, Virginia.^{30 31 32} These same biographers also state that the bride and groom moved immediately to the Port Tobacco, Maryland plantation of Dr. Craik, which is presently known as "La Grange". However, Charles County, Maryland land records do not seem to concur with this view; William Smallwood deeded to Dr. Craik the first portion of what was to become a large estate on 24 February 1763. The author has been unable to resolve this apparent discrepancy, nor has any hint of where the Craiks lived during the early 1760's come to light.³³

The Historical Society of Charles County
Port Tobacco, Maryland 20677

Mr. Michael J. Mayes Jr.
Rt 1, Box 65
Indian Head, MD 20640

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Notes on Sources Used in Text

¹John C. Fitzpatrick (ed.), *The Last Will and Testament of George Washington and Schedule of his Property* (no place, Mt. Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union, 1972), p. 17.

²James Evelyn Pilcher, "James Craik, Physician General of the United States Army 1798-1800," *J. Ass. Military Surgeons*, XIV (1904), p. 189.

³J. M. Toner, "A Sketch of the Life and Character of James Craik," *Transactions of the Medical Society of Virginia* (Richmond), III, Part I (1879), pp. 96-97.

⁴Washington Irving, *The Life of George Washington*, Hudson Edition (New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1975), Vol. I, pp. 159-161.

⁵Pilcher, p. 189.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 189.

⁷Wyndham B. Blahton, *Medicine in Virginia*, (Richmond, no publisher, 1931), p. 302.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 302.

⁹Unsigned Pamphlet, *George Washington's Physician; Their Friendship and his Treatment During the President's Last Illness*, (no place, no publisher, no date; Library of Congress call number E 312.17/G35), p. 3.

¹⁰Irving, Vol. I, pp. 418-428.

¹¹Blahton, p. 302.

¹²Irving, Vol. I, p. 426.

¹³*Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 426-427.

¹⁴"Abstract of Title to a Tract of Land Located in the First Election District of Charles County, Maryland, Now Owned by James W. Wills, Known as 'La Grange' and Supposed to Contain 17 Acres More or Less." (Provided through the courtesy of Charles G. LaHood, Jr., present owner of "La Grange.") Items 1, 4.

¹⁵Toner, *Transactions*, p. 103.

¹⁶Pilcher, p. 191.

¹⁷Toner, *Transactions*, p. 98.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹⁹Pilcher, p. 192.

²⁰Joseph M. Toner, *Contributions to the Annals of Medical Progress and Medical Education in the United States before and during the War of Independence* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1874), pp. 105-106.

²¹Toner, *Transactions*, pp. 100-101.

²²Pilcher, p. 192.

²³Irving, Vol. IV, pp. 517-519.

²⁴Stanhope Bayne-Jones, *The Evolution of Preventive Medicine in the United States Army, 1607-1939*, ed. by Col. R. S. Anderson, MC, USA (Washington, D.C., Office of the Surgeon General, Department of the Army, 1968), pp. 61-62.

²⁵Louis C. Duncan, *Medical Men in the American Revolution 1775-1783* (Carlisle Barracks, Pa., Medical Field Service School, 1931), p. 389.

²⁶Pilcher, p. 192.

²⁷Hezekiah Woodruff, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Death of Gen. George Washington* (To which is attached an appendix giving an account of Gen. Washington's death by Doctors James Craik and Elisha C. Dick) (Stonington Port, Conn., Samuel Trumbell, 1800), pp. 14-16.

²⁸Pilcher, p. 193.

²⁹"Obituary (Dr. James Craik)," *Alexandria Gazette, Commercial and Political* (10 February 1814), p. 3.

³⁰Toner, *Transactions*, p. 97.

³¹Unsigned, pp. 1-2.

³²Pilcher, p. 190.

³³Abstract of Title, Item 1.

Correspondence Between
George Washington and James Craik

"To Doctor James Craik:

Morristown, 26 April, 1777.

Dear Doctor, I am going to address you on a subject which may lay some claim to your attention, as I do to your candor in deciding the proposition. In the hospital department for the middle district, which district includes the States between the North or Hudson's River and the Potomac, there are at present two places vacant, either of which I can obtain for you. The one is Senior Physician and Surgeon of the hospital, with pay of four dollars and six rations per day, and forage for one horse; the other is Assistant Director General, with the pay of three dollars and six rations per day, and two horses and traveling expenses found (according to Doctor Shippen, the Director General's account), who also adds, that he thinks this latter more honorable and desirable of the two.

Had I expected that Congress would proceed to appointments in this department, at the time they did, I have no doubt that it might have been in my power to get you any other place, except that of Director General; but that is now over, and the matter in which I claim your candor is, that you will not let my introducing the present proposition to you have any undue influence. You know the extent and profit of your present practice; you know what prospects are before you; you know how far you may be benefited or injured by such an appointment; and you must know whether it is advisable and practicable for you to quit your family and practice at this time. All these matters I am ignorant of; and request, as a friend, that my proposing this matter to you may have no influence upon your acceptance of it. I have no other end in view than to serve you; consequently, if you are not benefited by the appointment, my end is not answered. I have only to add, therefore, a request that you will let me know the result of your determination by the return post, or as soon as possible, as the places will be kept vacant till I hear from you.

My best respects to Mrs. Craik and your family, and believe me to be with the sincerest regard and esteem, dear Doctor,

Your affectionate and obedient servant,

GEO. WASHINGTON."

"James Craik to George Washington:

Port Tobacco, Maryland, 6th January, 1778.

Dear Sir, Notwithstanding your unwearied diligence, and the unparalleled sacrifice of domestic happiness and ease of mind, which you have made for the good of your country, yet you are not wanting in secret enemies, who would rob you of the great and truly good esteem your country has for you. Base and villainous men, through chagrin, envy or ambition, are endeavoring to lessen you in the minds of the people, and taking underhand methods to traduce your character. The morn-

ing I left camp, I was informed by a gentlemen, whom I believe to be a true friend of yours, that a strong faction was forming against you in the new Board of War and in Congress. It alarmed me exceedingly, and I wished he had informed me of it a day or two sooner, that I might have taken an opportunity of mentioning it to you.

He begged that I would do it before I went away; but, upon consideration, I thought I had better defer it until I reached home, as I might perhaps make some further discoveries on my way. At my arrival in Bethlehem, I was told of it there, and was told that I should hear more of it on my way down. I did so, for at Lancaster I was still assured of it. All the way down I heard of it, and I believe it is pretty general all over the country. No one would pretend to affix it on particulars, yet all seemed to believe it. 'It was said that some of the Eastern and Southern members were at the bottom of it, particularly one, who has been said to be your enemy before, but denied it, Richard Henry Lee,' and that General Mifflin, in the new Board of War, was a very active person. This last I am afraid is too true. I have reason to believe that he is not your friend, from many circumstances. 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; and as many other things as ungenerous and unjust. These are the low artifices they are making use of. It is said they dare not appear openly as your enemies, but that the new Board of War is composed of such leading men as will throw such obstacles and difficulties in your way, as to force you to resign. Had I not been assured of these things from such authority that I cannot doubt them, I should not have troubled you with this. My attachment to your person is such, my friendship is so sincere, that every hint which has a tendency to hurt your honor, wounds me most sensibly, and I write this that you may be apprised, and have an eye towards these men, and particularly General Mifflin. He is plausible, sensibly popular, and ambitious, takes great pains to draw over every officer he meets with to his own way of thinking, and is very engaging.

The above, I can with sincerity say, I have written from pure motives of friendship, and I have no enmity towards any of these men, any further than they are enemies to you. If they are your enemies, every honest man must naturally conclude they are enemies to their country, and the glorious cause in which they are engaged, and will, no doubt, most strenuously exert every nerve to disappoint their villanious intentions. That God, of his infinite mercy, may protect and defend you from all open and secret enemies, and continue you in health to finish your glorious undertaking, is the sincere prayer of your most devoted and obliged humble servant."

THE MARYLAND TABLE

by Louise B. Turner
Regent to Gunston Hall from Maryland

The Historical Society of Charles County has recently been given an American made, mohogany, Hepplewhite style

table. The donor is Mrs. Isabel Willard, past Regent to Gunston Hall from South Carolina. The reason for, and the history of this gift makes and interesting story.

In 1961 a Miss Katherine Duckwall died, providing in her will:

"To COLONIAL DAMES - to be placed in Gunston Hall Tip top mahogany card table and three antique chairs which belonged to my grandmother, Virginia Mason Bronaugh Duckwall, (great granddaughter of George Mason). These chairs and this table I have been told by my family were originally at Gunston Hall."

Despite the above bequest, in June 1978 this table was bought by the Gunston Hall Furnishings Committee from Mr. Richard K. Fliss of Annapolis who verified the table had belonged to Miss Duckwall.

Upon close examination by an expert from Williamsburg and one from Washington, the table was reported to have had extensive repair through the years. The woods of the top and folding leaf and the hinges are 18th century. The repair to the base is late 19th and, some of it, possibly 20th century.

After much discussion the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall voted not to keep the table "solely because its period is a little late for Gunston Hall". At this point Mrs. Willard bought the table and wanted to return it to Maryland. Charles County was its logical home for many reasons. George Mason's wife was Ann Elibeck of Araby. George Mason had spent much of his childhood visiting his grandparents at their home Gunston Hall. This was the first Gunston Hall in America which is located off Route No. 6 near Welcome.

As a matter of fact, this may not be the first time the table has been in Charles County. In the papers of George Mason is a letter he wrote at the time of the Revolutionary War to Pearson Chapman of Chapmans Landing.

"Dear Sir: Gunston Hall, Thursday Afternoon, May 31st, 1781. The rapid march of the enemy obliges me to send as many of my effects, as I can readily remove, to Maryland, and I expect to follow immediately with Mrs. Mason and my daughters. I must therefore beg the favour of you to permit all the things I send to be put into your dwelling house, for safety, until I can carry them up to my son William's house [Araby] at the head of Mat-tawoman, which I shall do with all possible expedition. I expect Mrs. Mason and the girls will be over early tomorrow."

Another letter of interest is one George Mason wrote in 1781 from Gunston to his son George who was in Paris.

"... This Family has not yet lost any Tobo, Slaves, or other Property, by the Enemy; altho their Ships have been as high as Alexandria; but we are in daily expectation of sharing the same Fate with our Neighbours upon this, & the other Rivers: where many Familys have been suddenly reduced from Opulence to Indigence, particularly upon James River; the Enemy taking all the Slaves, Horses, Cattle, Furniture, & other Property, they can lay their Hands on: and what they can't carry away they wantonly destroy. We have removed our Furniture, backwards & forwards, two or three times, upon different Alarms, by which it is very much damaged: great