

THE ROMANCE OF  
HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA

Francis Johnston  
Alexandria  
Virginia

*"O town of old with changeless life,  
"With graves and memories dear,  
"Thy ways bear impress all of strife,  
"But ne'er with line of fear."*

## **THE ROMANCE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA**

**A Thrilling Narrative of Events  
Founded on Facts and Traditions**

**A Complete Guide to the Old City With Explanation and  
Map of Markers**

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By

**REV. EUGENE B. JACKSON, D. D.**

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**Revised and Enlarged Edition**

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## PREFACE BY AUTHOR

HOSE who know American history appreciate the position occupied by this historic city. Unfortunately the tourist has been disappointed in a very natural expectation of seeing many points of general and lasting interest, for such places have just been marked for the first time. Alexandria has neglected her greatest asset—her romantic past. Boston was her rival in Colonial days, and Washington was scarcely a dream; but neither of those cities possessed the historic interest of this home town of *George Washington*. There is a great accumulation of fact and generally accepted tradition, little known, which has not been properly sifted or correlated, and this has been used for the first time, to satisfy the average tourist. Much has been ignored because only of local interest and unsuited to make Alexandria *one of the real show places of America*. Only outstanding facts are given, which to a historian may have a “scattered effect” but it is to be remembered that there is no attempt at consecutive history of places of note. If her people will cherish the fact that *much valuable history was forged here*, a new sentiment will crystallize that will wrap her about in the veneration and esteem of every lover of liberty the world over. Alexandria was the stage on which was enacted the history of a continent and a nation, and the world’s historic figures moved familiarly upon her streets.

*Alexandria, Virginia,  
January, 1923.*

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By E. B. JACKSON

Alexandria, Va.

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## ALEXANDRIA REGISTERING A CHANGE OF SENTIMENT

*"The republican is the only form of government which is not eternally at open or secret war with the rights of mankind."—Jefferson.*

**V**IRGINIA was named after the "Virgin Queen" Elizabeth, and in the gigantic conflict of Cromwell with kingly tyranny the sympathies of the proud colony were with the Cavaliers. Indeed, when Charles I lost his head, the Burgesses expressed greatest respect for "the late most excellent and now undoubtedly sainted King"; his son, Charles II, in exile, was asked to become King of Virginia and actually accepted when he was invited to the throne of England. When Charles II was on the throne, in gratitude to Virginia, he caused her to be proclaimed an independent member of his empire, and thus she retained the title of "Old Dominion." There is little wonder that when Alexandria was founded by the Fairfaxes, the Washingtons and others, the naming of the streets indicated clearly that the people still loved royalty. Indeed Alexandria became for a while the metropolis of the British Empire in America.

### Streets Named for Royalty

Nine streets crossed each other at right angles in the naming of which the Royal family and Lord Fairfax were honored. Fairfax and Royal were crossed by Cameron, which was flanked on the south side by King, Prince and Duke, and on the north by Queen, Princess and what should have been Duchess, but Oronoco, a little stream, usurped its place and name. George Washington assisted in the survey.

Tobacco was then the most important product of the colony. Tobacco was transferred from the plantations by passing a bar through the hogshead of tobacco to which oxen were harnessed, by a frame to which a tongue was attached; and the original nucleus of the town at the foot of Oronoco street was three tobacco warehouses, later called Belle Haven. The "King's Highway" was built on an

Indian trail to Alexandria from the old Capital, Williamsburg, where a vice-regal court was held. This was originally the famous "Rolling Road," opened by the settlers, and used for rolling hogsheads of tobacco to market.

### The King's Highway

It has been described: "Beginning on the Chesapeake Bay between the York and the James rivers, this path of the aborigines led up the backbone of the peninsula, through the present city of Williamsburg, to New Kent Court House. From there by way of Bowling Green in Caroline County, Fredericksburg in Spotsylvania, Stafford Court House, through the old Scotch town of Dumfries in Prince William, it led to the crossing at the falls of Occoquan. Then bending slightly to the east it wound in a serpentine route by Washington's Old Mill, close by Mt. Vernon, through the ford at Cameron Run and down into the village of Bell Haven, now Alexandria."

The British government learned to count on Alexandria, and selected it as Braddock's headquarters. The Royal governors were of the opinion that New York should be the center of operations. Certainly the troops ought to have been landed in Pennsylvania where there were horses and wagons. But Braddock did not feel at liberty to depart from his instructions concerning the Ohio Valley campaign. Later the tide in Alexandria set against the ingratitude of royalty, and the marshes still to be seen in the northeast section, were called in derision "King George's Meadows," because George III had opposed a proposal to drain them, made in the House of Burgesses. She forgot her love for royalty, raising the standard of revolt under Washington, and thereafter named her new streets from conspicuous leaders in the Revolution.

### A Vision of Democracy

Virginia had once worshipped Charles I and had not taken kindly to Cromwell. Charles II became her ideal cavalier until he proved to her his faithless character. Governor Berkley possessed all the faults of royalty and tried to subordinate the Burgesses. When George III ascended the throne he might have won Virginia but for his determination to enjoy all royal prerogatives to the fullest extent. His veto power was used against the best interests

of the people. So it came to pass that Alexandria, the leading city in Virginia save one, lost her relish for royalty and named her streets thereafter for great revolutionists like Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Franklin, Henry and Lee. Wolfe street was named after the British general who had won a victory over the French at Quebec, unlike Braddock. Wilkes street was named after a member of Parliament who had suffered in stout defense of the Colonies. Pitt street was named after the British Premier who was a lover of liberty. St. Asaph street was named after the Bishop of St. Asaph, who wrote in favor of the liberties of the Colonies. It was in his house that Benjamin Franklin began to write his famous autobiography. So high was Patrick Henry esteemed by Alexandrians that they named two streets after him. In the testing days of the Revolutionary period she followed loyally the varying fortunes of Washington. Alexandria won the abiding love of "The General," as she affectionately called him, and Washington in every possible manner reciprocated that affection. Strangely, Lord Fairfax, a member of the British House of Lords, had been chief promoter of the fortunes of Washington. Alexandrians showed its appreciation of the Fairfaxes by naming a street after them. Let it be remembered that Lord Fairfax, Baron of Cameron, was once gayest of the young men of London society. Countesses permitted him to kiss their —— hands, and found in him a congenial companion in their intrigues and revels. One of the beauties of the time transfixed him. He would take his affianced away from the dangerous atmosphere to the provinces. He had expended the wealth of a deep nature on a coquette. Carelessly thrown overboard—he found retreat from sorrow in far-away Virginia.

### Fairfax and Washington

In the history of England these two names were associated, when Gen. Sir Thomas Fairfax joined Cromwell; and Rev. Lawrence Washington was evicted from his home at Sulgrave Manor, and his family pauperized for loyalty to the crown, and his sons driven to repair their fortunes in the new world in the colony of Virginia. A descendant of the evicted Lawrence was to marry a Fairfax and dwell at Mt. Vernon, while an officer in the English army; another descendant and brother—the immortal George (whose chief



patron was a Fairfax and who was demoted as an officer in the English army), was later to besiege and conquer England's army at Yorktown, and cause a Fairfax to withdraw into the seclusion of his American estate to die of a broken heart. Alexandria is destined to be a place of increasing historic interest as the years go by and ought to have monuments of the great figures who were her citizens.

## II

### A CONGRESS WHICH DEFEATED ITS MAIN PURPOSE

*"Tyranny is far the worst of treason. Dost thou deem none rebels except subjects? The Prince who neglects or violates his trust is more a brigand than the robber chief."—Byron.*

**T**HERE are a few historic houses in America that stand in a class by themselves, and the Carlyle House is one of these. The Carlyle House was said by some to be built upon an *Old Stone Fort*. There are no records of its birth, but some say it was built by the earliest settlers as a defense against the Indians. Within its recesses are narrow, damp cells which tradition says were originally used as slave pens and stables for cattle when settlers feared Indian raids. It ought to be added that the fortifications are now known to have been built as a retaining wall, when the hill about the Carlyle House was cut down. Captain Robert Howson brought some colonists here in 1669 under a Crown patent of land, and sold it to John Alexander. There is some evidence that the *Old Fort* was built as early as 1638, thirty years after the coming of Captain John Smith.

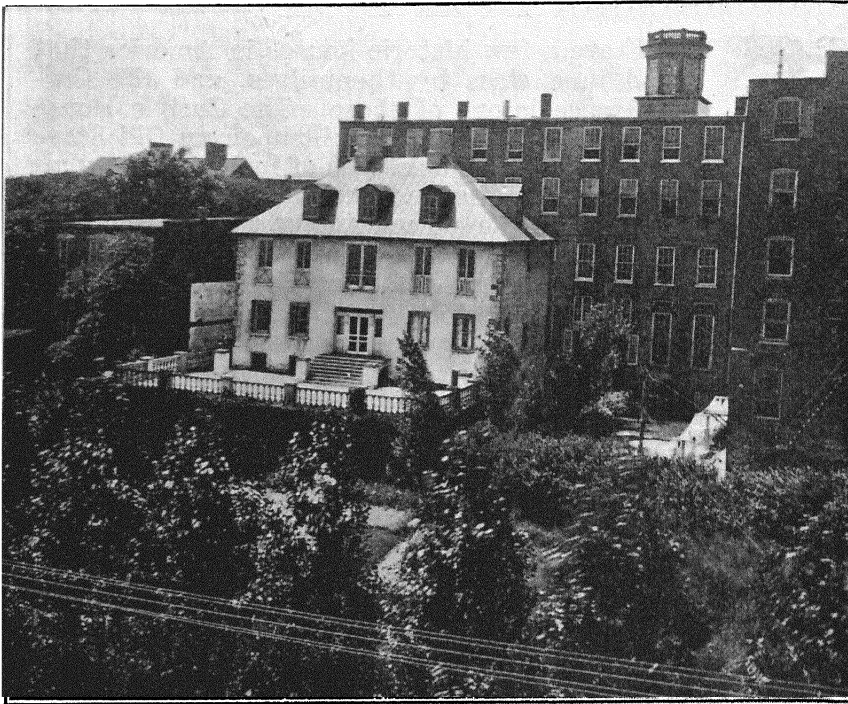
#### Captain John Smith

This bold and reckless adventurer with his little company of fourteen explorers cut the shining waves of the Potomac with the prow of his open pinnace, upward bound to the region of the powerful Piscataways and Mayonese on whose hunting grounds and war paths the cities of Washington and Alexandria now stand. From the notes and observations of this famous explorer, he made a map of the lands bordering the Potomac, with their numerous affluents and various Indian settlements, which is still extant in his quaint book of travels and exploration. He occupied the island, over night, just across the river.

#### Carlyle House

It was built in 1752 by a leading Scotch merchant, John Carlyle, who married into the Fairfax family. The home

became a center of social, and later of political influence. He permitted General Braddock to use it as headquarters in England's major campaign in the South against the aggressions of the French in America. According to Washington Irving it was simply a doubtful business transaction with an Indian tribe that made England claim rights in the Ohio Valley. Governor Dinwiddie was a stockholder in the Ohio Company and used his position to send Washington as envoy



THE CARLYLE HOUSE

Facing Lee Street, Between Cameron and King

to warn away the French. Indeed some of the Burgesses doubted Dinwiddie's claim to the disputed territory. The issue in any case was whether the Anglo-Saxon type of civilization should prevail in North America, and only the capture of Quebec by General Wolfe brought the desired consummation.

### Benjamin Franklin

In this mansion Benjamin Franklin, Postmaster General for America, consulted concerning mail facilities and wagons for Braddock's army, for communication with the Governors must not be cut off. This very remarkable man, with his marvelous wisdom, ought to be placed high upon the roll of honor as a patriot, with unassailable integrity. It ought never to be forgotten that he secured from the farmers, horses which did not measure up to representations and paid for them out of his own pocket, trusting to British authorities for a return. Later he was removed from his office of Deputy Postmaster General for the British Colonies because of his activities in behalf of the Colonies. Indeed it was his representations before the Commons that caused the obnoxious Stamp Act to be repealed. This great man tried while in England to prevent a disruption between the America Colonies and the Mother Country, but when this became inevitable he returned home and took an active part in promoting Independence. He was one of five appointed to draft the "Declaration of Independence." He had little sympathy in his marvelous intellectual efforts, on the part of his wife whose lack of culture unfitted her to appreciate his gigantic abilities. His son, William, was British governor of the Province of New Jersey and a rabid Tory, and referred to his father—the great Doctor—as "a misguided man." Here was introduced to the British General Braddock the former Adjutant General of the Virginia Colonial Forces (in training for service against the Indians) and George Washington was thus called providentially to save England from a disaster which might have turned the course of history backward. Significant it is that Benjamin Franklin, loyal to England now, was to influence the French court to send the fleet under Count Rochambeau, which cooperated with Washington at Yorktown and thereby broke forever the grip of England upon this Western world. This wily diplomat, later at the French court, is said to have hinted to the Bourbon King that by helping the Colonies against their traditional enemy, England, he might be able to win back from her some of his great possessions taken in the French and Indian War.

### "Congress of Alexandria"

In this old house was written the famous letter, still in existence and signed by Braddock and the Colonial Governors in the well-known "Congress of Alexandria," urging upon Lord North's government the taxing of the colonies in order to actualize England's colonial dream, and resulting in the despised Stamp Act. It was the representations of Franklin before the Commons that secured later the repeal of the Stamp Act. This famous "Congress of Alexandria" advised in the letter that it should be proposed to His Majesty's Minister "to find out some method of compelling the colonies to raise the proportion expected by His Majesty toward defraying the expenses of his service." It furthermore advised that "such a fund can never be established without the aid of Parliament." The aid came with the "Stamp Act." George Johnston, town trustee of Alexandria and member of the Burgesses and an able lawyer, thereupon prepared resolutions and placed them in the hands of Patrick Henry, who recast them, and Virginia thus was set on fire by this firebrand in old St. John's Church. By the strange irony of fate the old Carlyle House thus witnessed at the same time the presence of England's representatives who precipitated the Revolution and also the presence of the men who were most largely instrumental in leading her colonies toward the greatest democracy of all history. This house was one of the *great social centers of Virginia*.

#### A Notable Social Center

Carlyle drew around him statesmen who came to discuss laws for the country. General Washington, in his diary, makes frequent mention of dining at Colonel Carlyle's, where an open house was kept for all the gentry of that day, a society that for culture and refinement was unsurpassed. Besides Washington, Jefferson and Aaron Burr were often here. John Marshall, Charles Carroll and John Paul Jones partook of its hospitality. Here lingers the shade of James Rumsey, the inventor of the first steamboat, who was encouraged by George Washington and whose body lies in Westminster Abbey. On the balcony overlooking the river gallants whispered nothings in the moonlight. Legend tells of Washington's interest in little Sally Cary. As she came tripping down the glistening stairway her escort, George Washington, was awaiting her to take her

to a ball. History bequeaths the story that Washington loved Sally Cary, but that she loved George William Fairfax who was afterwards to own "Belvoir," just below Mt. Vernon. One of Washington's most serious romances was with Mary Phillipse, a Virginian, then living in New York. But though she admired and respected him she did not love him and gently turned him down. She married Col. Roger Morris of the King's Army. In 1776 Washington, when Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army, occupied the mansion, near New York, of Col. Morris, the Col. and Mrs. Morris being fugitive Tories. General Lafayette was infatuated with the beautiful daughter of General Roberdeau who had come from the West Indies to help the Colonies and whose father fled from France at the "Edict of Nantes." Here attractive Eliza Herbert trembled beneath the fascinating eyes of Aaron Burr. Burr later attempted to pay court to this young lady at her home (206 King St.), and she is said to have given him no encouragement, but went so far as to spurn his attentions.

#### Nellie Custis

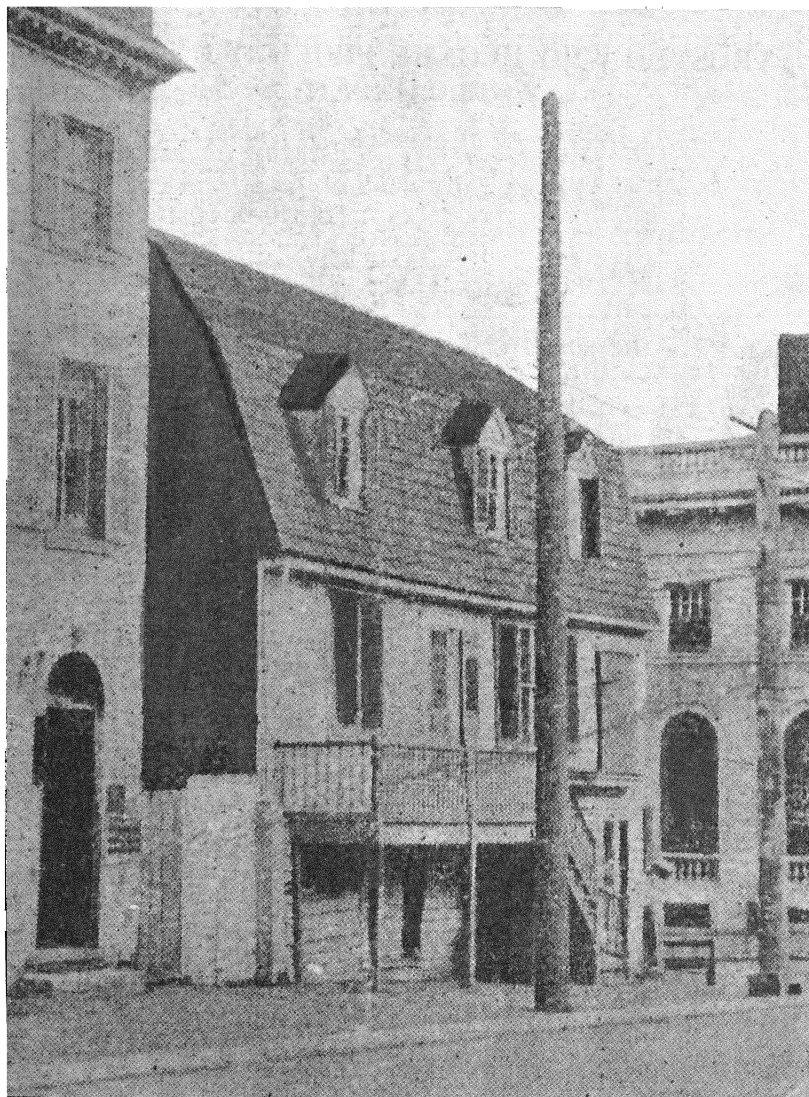
In Alexandria Nellie Custis had many friends, the Carlyles, the Ramsays, the Daltons, the Craiks, the Arals, the Fitzgeralds and the Johnstons, all of whom made frequent visits to Mt. Vernon and with whom at their hospitable homes in the then new town of Alexandria she was an oft-time guest. Two rival beauties of that day were Miss Woodroaw and Miss Fontenay, whose charms involved the young gentlemen of Alexandria nearly to the point of duelling. Many gay assemblies were held in the "Blue Room" during the passing years, lending entrancing interest to its more sober memories.

The Carlyle House owner could boast of his own bank located on the corner of Fairfax and Cameron streets, whose walls are part of the "Wagar," which was used by Washington as the first Federal treasury, and also a private dock at the foot of Cameron street with an underground passageway (still partly in existence), leading to the vaults below the Carlyle House, where wines and other commodities were stored, but likely used before as dungeons for Indian prisoners. It seems quite likely that the hired Hessian soldiers, who surrendered to Washington at Yorktown, were imprisoned in the old dungeons until work was secured for them in Alexandria in laying the muddy streets with the

cobblestones, still in evidence. Just across the street (north-east corner of Fairfax and Cameron) stands the afterwards famous home, built by John Dalton, partner of Carlyle.

### The Ramsay House

The house was built in 1751 and it remains today with its quaint architecture the oldest house in Alexandria. Mrs. Ramsay was Anne McCarty Ball, a cousin of Washington and noted for her wit and beauty and liberality. Jefferson said she was one of the most patriotic women in Virginia. She was the daughter of Dennis McCarty and Sarah Ball and her grandfather was Speaker of the House of Burgesses in 1715. The Ramsay house was the scene of much hospitality in Colonial and Revolutionary days. General and Mrs. Washington frequently dined there after service at Christ Church. The dancing class often met there and attending it were Patsy Custis (daughter of Mrs. Washington), Sally Carlyle, Jennie Dalton and Sally Ramsay. The young people were thus prepared for the dancing assemblies which were held at the "Royal George," located at the corner of Cameron and Royal streets, as far back as 1762. Washington attended these dances, which were lighted by tallow candles.



THE RAMSAY HOUSE  
Corner King and Fairfax Streets

## III

### A TRUSTEE WHO BECAME PROPHET OF A NEW WORLD ORDER

*"Here the free spirit of mankind, at length throws its last fetters off, and who shall place a limit to the giant's unchained strength, or curb his swiftness in the forward race."—Bryant.*

#### Mason's Office

**A**T the southwest corner of King and Royal Sts. stood the town office of the famous George Mason, the semi-recluse of Gunston Hall. Here it was that he carried on his private business and acted as trustee for Alexandria. He early became acquainted with George Washington and largely influenced both Washington and Jefferson in their conception of the government of a state. Probably no man produced works of greater importance to the human family, during the mighty struggle for American Independence. It seems likely that in this little office he consulted with the great leaders in perfecting the final draft of the "Fairfax County Resolves," which blazed the way for civil and religious liberty in this Western world, and which was forerunner of his famous "Declaration of Rights."

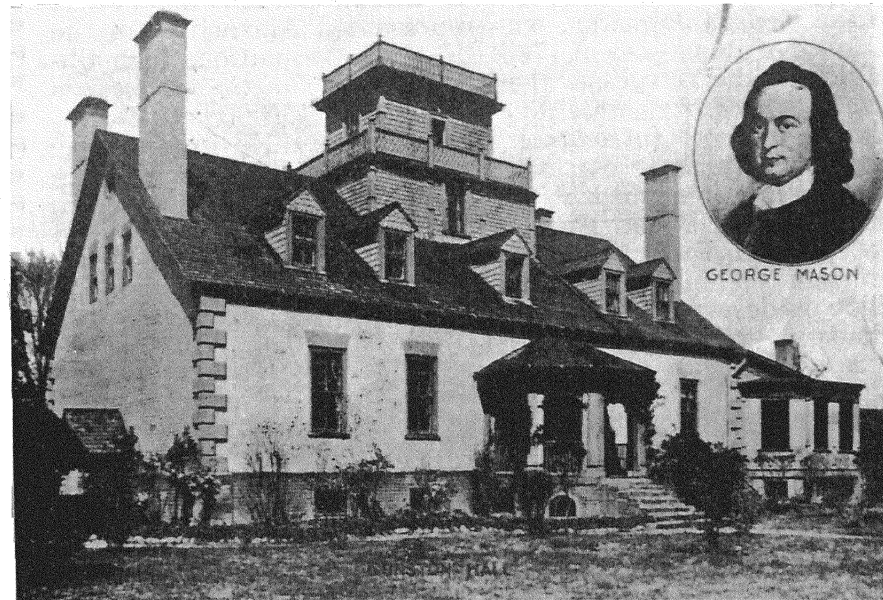
#### Statutory Law for Religious Freedom.

Mason was a farmer and lived not far from Mt. Vernon. He was author of the "Fairfax County Resolves" in 1774, and later was a member on the Burgesses with Jefferson, Pendleton and others, who prepared the bill there for religious freedom—the first statutory law for protecting man in his right to worship God according to his own conscience. This farmer-member from Fairfax was appointed to draft the Declaration of Rights and Constitution, both of which were adopted in June, 1776.

#### Magna Charter of America

A historian declares that the Bill of Rights may be called not only the Magna Charta of Virginia, but of Amer-

ica. In the Revolution Mason wrote: "I will risk the last penny of my fortune and the last drop of my blood on the issue." Again he wrote: "If I can only live to see the American Union firmly fixed and free government established in our Western World ... I shall be satisfied." The "Fairfax County Resolves" discussed, in the old Court House in Alexandria (which stood on Fairfax street, midway of Market Square), antedated the so-called "Mecklenburg Declaration," and was the basis of a speech delivered next year by Washington before the convention at Williamsburg;



GUNSTON HALL  
Home of George Mason

and was likewise the treasure house from which Jefferson drew his inspiration and even phrases, in his fight for liberty, and in framing the Declaration of Independence. Mason was said to be more religious than Washington. Only his clear thinking prevented the Commonwealth of Virginia from yielding to her leaders in providing for the ministers of all denominations by a general assessment of the people of the state when the establishment was done away with.

## Patrick Henry

Patrick Henry, in his defense of Jeremiah Moore, a Baptist minister (in 1773), in the same Court House, "for preaching the gospel without license," had probably argued the necessity for absolute separation of Church and State. Alexandria knew in her councils, therefore, Mason the man who *first proclaimed the principles of democracy*, and who was potent in the setting up of this government, making himself a great world figure.

The name of one other Alexandrian ought to be forever linked with that of George Mason, and it is none other than George Johnston, who represented Alexandria in the House of Burgesses in 1765. He wrote resolutions for nullifying in the Burgesses the Stamp Act. *Shortly afterwards he prepared the resolutions which Patrick Henry (after recasting them) introduced in the House.* He immediately seconded those resolutions, and when Patrick Henry spoke the memorable words: "Caesar had his Brutus, Charles I, his Cromwell, and George III . . . ." Johnson argued strongly in their favor. This was Alexandria's share that memorable day. George Johnston died the year following, but he deserves a monument. He was a great patriot and had the vision of a statesman.

## IV

AN ASSEMBLY HALL WHICH WITNESSED THE  
BIRTH OF THE AMERICAN UNION

"Sail on, O Ship of State!

"Sail on, O Union, strong and great!

"Humanity with all its fears,

"With all its hopes of future years,

"Is hanging breathless on thy fate."

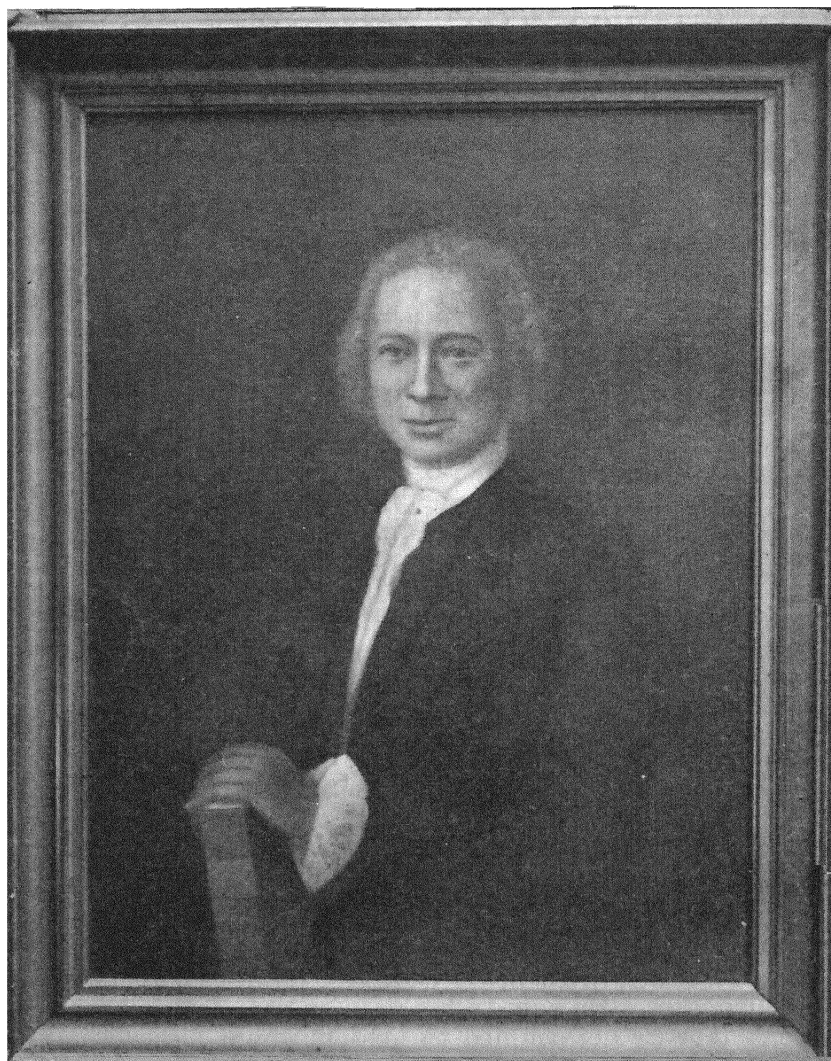
—Longfellow.



THE "Assembly Hall" of Alexandria stood at the northeast corner of Market Square, on the site of the present Clerk's Office. In 1759 a Town Hall was built by lottery, a generally accepted system of raising money in that day. The town trustees undertook the sale of the tickets, and in order to encourage subscriptions, resort was had to "treating." An old ordinance book contains this record: "To cash for treat at Summers, 2½ gallons rum and sugar." This carnival feature promoted enthusiasm, for this "Faneuil Hall, Alexandria" was soon completed, and was to become the scene of historic gatherings that affected the future history of a nation. The citizens of the town often voiced their feelings here in public meetings concerning the great issues of the day.

## George Johnston

It ought ever to be remembered in the annals of the town, that *one of the Town Trustees*, George Johnston (and a member of the Burgesses) prepared, at his home on the northwest corner of Prince and Lee streets, resolutions (mentioned before) nullifying the Stamp Act (1765) which were presented, with some changes, by Patrick Henry in the Burgesses. He said to his wife on completing the resolutions (for he determined to present them himself in the Burgesses): "This paper may cost me my life, yet it is the truth, and whether or not any one sustains me I will not turn back." It is generally conceded now that Patrick Henry wrote the final draft of the resolutions upon the fly leaf of an old law book, but certainly Johnston was one of the two with whom he consulted before their presentation,



GEORGE JOHNSTON

probably knowing his intimacy with George Mason. Thomas Jefferson who was present, declares that "Henry spoke as Homer wrote," but that Johnston maintained "the learning and the logic of the case." It may be confidently affirmed that the eloquence of Henry without the help of Johnston, would have been insufficient to cause the passage of the resolutions in the presence of so many strong leaders who were unswerving advocates of the crown. The joint efforts of these two men triumphed. George Washington voted with them on that memorable occasion and one vote would have turned the tide.\*

### Declaration of Independence

Alexandrians met in the "Assembly Hall" to reconsider the Stamp Act, and resolved that: "If Boston is forced to submit, we will not." Thus, before Patrick Henry's great speech in the Assembly of Virginia, the freeholders of Fairfax County, in 1774, intimately associated themselves with the spirit that led to the Declaration of Independence. An English writer of that time says: "Here it was that George Washington, amid the plaudits of its inhabitants, first stepped forth as the patron of sedition and revolt, actually subscribing fifty pounds in support of hostilities. *The birth of the Declaration of Independence may really be said to have taken place here.*† Boston's famous Liberty Hall must, therefore, take second place.

### Cradle of the Constitution

It was in this old "Assembly Hall" likewise, according to unpublished records of the "Patowmack Company", (1785) that was held the first Conference, probably fathered from Mt. Vernon, concerning the navigation of Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac River. In this conference Washington, scenting the dangers likely to arise from the separate interests of the Colonies, *introduced for the first time the question of a Federal Constitution* (though this was previously considered informally at Mt. Vernon). This conference adjourned to meet at Annapolis the follow-

\* It ought in fairness to be said that Jefferson did not like Patrick Henry and that this well-known fact may have accounted for apparent bias against Henry's part on a momentous occasion.

† It is claimed by some that the Carlyle House witnessed these beginnings of the struggle for liberty, with Benjamin Franklin present.

ing Fall (1786) and only because of a minority representation there the subsequent convention met at Philadelphia. Alexandria rightly claims, therefore, to be "*the Cradle of the Constitution.*" It is a matter of not a little pride historically that *the Carlyle House witnessed the first suggestion of Colonial taxation, and that the old "Assembly Hall" of the town witnessed the first concerted movement against British tyranny, as well as the beginning and development of the feeling that led to the Declaration of Independence.* All this was crowned by the crystallization, in meeting here, of a sentiment that resulted in the making of our Constitution.

### Opposition to Slavery

It seems likely that in the early part of last century, when Alexandria was part of the District of Columbia, that the "Assembly Hall" witnessed the historic occasion of a gathering of Alexandrians to protest to the government at Washington, *against the institution of slavery.* The Federal authorities failed to heed this voice from the home town of Washington and Mason, but preferred rather to compromise; and later, by the logic of events, Alexandria was forced, with Virginia, into the position of defending by war a system which her leaders had always disapproved.

## V

### A CHURCH WHICH SAW TWO MORTAL SOUL STRUGGLES

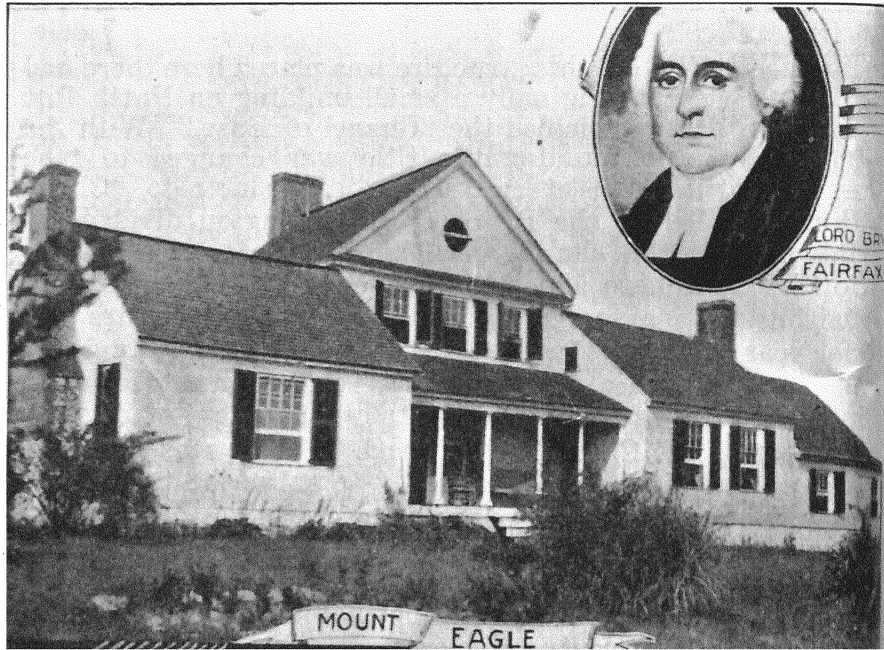
*"No iron chains, or outward force of any kind, could ever compel the soul of man to believe or disbelieve; it is his own indefensible light, that judgment of his own; he will reign and believe there by the Grace of God alone!"—Carlyle.*

**B**EFORE this structure was placed here there had been originally a small building on North Pitt Street named the "Chapel of Ease." With the new building the title was changed to "the Church at Alexandria" and later to "Christ Church." Before the Revolution Washington divided his time between this church and Pohick, but after the Revolution he came here almost exclusively. Crowds have been visiting it as a sacred shrine through all the years and last year about eighteen thousand passed through its gates. Washington was a member of its vestry for a brief time, in 1765. He was interested in its construction, while yet a member of the Church of England. But he was liberal in his religious ideas and was ready to subscribe to the construction of buildings of non-conforming congregations. Most of the landed gentry of this region attended either this church or that at Falls Church, but naturally the parishes of the Establishment were somewhat under ban after the Revolution for twenty-five years. During the ministry of Rev. William Gibson some of its members temporarily attended the old "Presbyterian Meeting House" now to be seen on South Fairfax street, on account of some difference with the rector.

### Lord Bryan Fairfax

In 1790 Rev. Bryan Fairfax, who was afterwards Baron of Cameron and who lived across Hunting Creek at Mt. Eagle, became rector of Washington's church. They had always been good friends, which friendship was undisturbed by the Revolution though Fairfax remained a Tory.

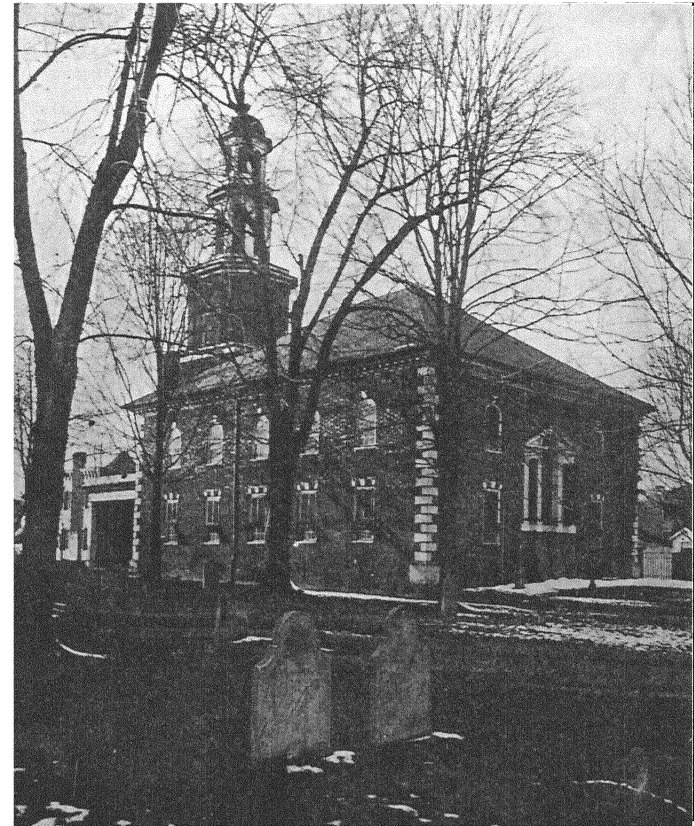




**MOUNT EAGLE**  
South Side of City, Across Hunting Creek

### Parsons Weems

The biographer of the youthful Washington (whose book had a greater sale than all other combined) was suggested as his assistant but was not acceptable. Weems was exceedingly eccentric, both in his style and his sermon subject matter. Indeed he was too shockingly informal for the



**CHRIST CHURCH**  
Corner Cameron and Columbus Streets

ecclesiastical authorities. It is significant that when the glebe lands were taken from the Episcopal Church in Virginia, Edmund Lee, brother of "Light Horse Harry," was able to save such lands to Christ Church though these were later sold for the benefit of that church. Edmund Lee was

an ardent Christian and vestryman, but "Light Horse Harry" while a great patriot and soldier gave little attention to such matters and rarely was seen at church.

### Bishop Meade

Christ Church suffered greatly, according to Bishop Meade, from the "professional parson," but with the coming of this good man it began greatly to prosper spiritually and ministered to all classes. It is interesting to note that ministers of various denominations preached in Christ Church previous to its consecration, in 1814. Within these walls the gifted and brilliant John Randolph, of Roanoke, worshipped. This great politician trembled before the preaching of Rev. Mr. Meade. Afterwards he wrote him: "Give me your prayers. ... What must I do to be saved? ... Help Lord or I perish. ... Your afflicted friend, John Randolph, of Roanoke."

### Notable Service

A notable service was held here after the Revolution, at the departure of the last British redcoat from these shores. The then rector, Dr. Griffith, who had followed Washington as chaplain and had warned him of the treachery of Gen. Charles Lee, conducted the service. That a clergyman so closely connected with the Revolution should have been unanimously chosen as rector, shows this church to have been in thorough sympathy with the patriotic cause. (Indeed the leaders in battle and in council, were almost to a man, Episcopalians.) The church was garnished with flowers and evergreens. Over the pulpit was the figure of a white dove bearing an olive branch. The rector used as his text a verse from the 128th Psalm: "Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children and peace upon Israel." The reverence of the British soldiers for this and other churches, in the two British occupations was marked.

### Washington's Death

At the time of Washington's death the bell of Christ Church was said to have been tolled almost continuously till the hour of his funeral in which Alexandria took such conspicuous part. An English woman (Mrs. Anne Ritson, who cordially despised the city), was a poetaster, and happened to be in Alexandria at the time of Washington's sickness

and tells how the event overshadowed everything else. "Washington adored of all, was sick, and had sent to town for Dr. Dick," and "The hero to the grave consigned, to other thoughts I gave my mind."

### Washington's Religion

The seat shown as Washington's was evidently selected that the light of the window might fall on his prayer book. When it was the fashion of the day, among leading men, to profess infidel views, Washington might have been silent on the subject but he seems to have taken special pains to impress on the nation his opposition to the skepticism of the age. He was indeed recognized by the political and military men of his day as a true believer in Christianity. John Marshall testifies that he was a sincere believer and a truly devout man. Probably no man suffered more from misrepresentation in political battles, and he was silent under them. For many years he partook of communion and then ceased, because he felt that it might subject him to fresh storms of abuse. Certainly his religious experiences were deepened by the crises of the Revolution. It was very natural that Col. Robert E. Lee, then a distinguished officer of the Federal Army, should decide to bring his family from Arlington, built by a Custis, to worship in Christ Church. He had attended Sunday School there in boyhood and was confirmed there in 1853.\* Dr. Randolph McKim, the rector, preached a most striking memorial sermon at the time of Lee's death.

### Momentous Decisions

Two momentous decisions were witnessed, at wide intervals, under the shadow of Christ Church. Washington in the summer of 1774 (year of the "Fairfax Resolution"), surrounded by his friends standing at the door, advised the renunciation of King George III and declared that he would fight for the Independence of the Colonies. Lee, 87 years later in the same place (after being offered command of the Federal armies), when intimation was made that he would ultimately command the Confederate armies, knelt here in prayer with a heavy heart, loyally determined

\* R. E. Lee was one of the boys who helped decorate this church with evergreens at Christmas time. Here he dedicated to God a life already glorious and became Christ's faithful soldier.

to follow the fortunes of his beloved State, thus carrying into effect literally, according to Henry Cabot Lodge, the provisions of the Constitution, which Washington had helped create and whose influence, almost alone, caused Virginia reluctantly to adopt it.

The statue of the first was placed in London amidst the acclaim of admiring Britishers; and that of Lee in Statuary Hall, Washington, and he will yet become a national hero.

### A Striking Incident

The old Christ Church was taken possession of during the first summer of the war—St. Paul's remained open. The spirit of the times is illustrated by an incident. The rector of St. Paul's was bidden to read the ritual in which prayer was made for the President of the United States. The captain of Illinois cavalry advanced to the front of the chancel one Sunday morning, and finding no attention paid to his injunction to read the omitted prayer, began reading it himself. A vestryman seized the first one who entered the chancel and threw him over the railing. A squad of soldiers charged up the isle with fixed bayonets and the clergyman was arrested. The release of the rector, Rev. Kenzie Johns, was accomplished on instruction from Washington. The Alexandria Gazette gave an account of the incident and that very night the office was burned to the ground by Federal soldiers. This church then, with others, was used as a hospital during the war.

### World War

The World War brought to this country in conference former Prime Minister Arthur Balfour, who worshipped on a Sunday morning in the very place made sacred by the memories of Washington. General Pershing came here in October, 1920. Upon the return of the soldiers of Alexandria from the immortal battlefields of France, Christ Church witnessed a notable memorial service participated in by ministers of all denominations. The enthusiasm of the town of Washington was at white heat on account of the mighty struggle for democracy.

## VI

### A SQUARE WHICH WAS THE THEATRE OF WORLD WAR PREPARATIONS

*"March to the battlefield,  
The foe is now before us;  
Each heart is Freedom's shield,  
And heaven is shining o'er us."*

—O'Meara.

### Market Square

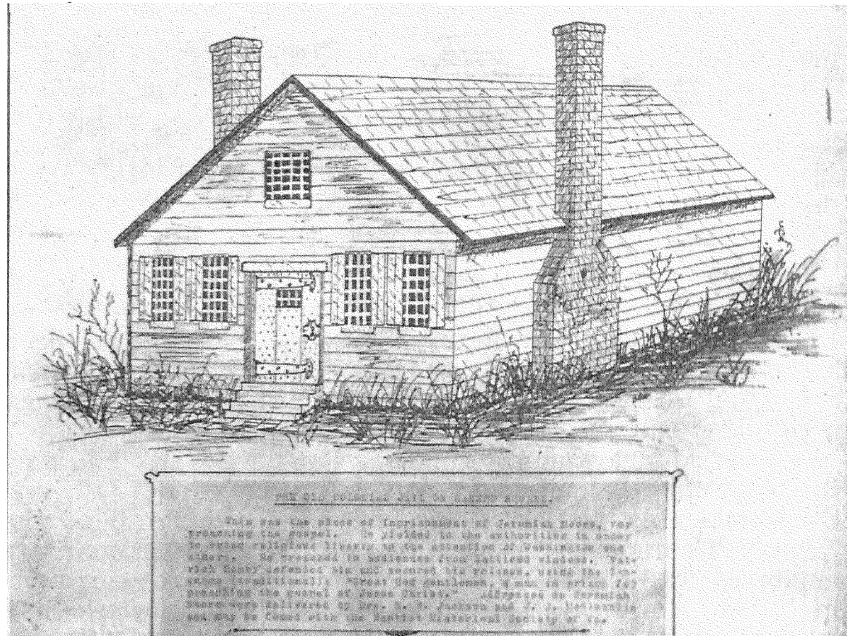
**F**ROM the first the market square has been the center of historic interest. Of course it has always been a place of barter and sale, and Washington interested himself in having a fresh supply of vegetables there, as well as the use of proper weights and measures by the dealers. Many a county fair was held here. There is a tale concerning a fine deer that found its way from the park at Mt. Vernon to the market and was promptly identified by General Washington and the poachers summarily dealt with.

This square was a "Commons" and for years had only three small buildings, the Court House, the old Jail, and the "Assembly Hall." It probably is as historic as the "Boston Commons." Here it was the Virginia troops were mustered into service and trained for the great campaigns in North America when England and France were in a death grapple for the supremacy of a continent. (Washington was sent, from his headquarters hard by the "Commons," by Governor Dinwiddie, to warn the French against encroachment upon the English in the Ohio Valley, and because they did not heed they lost a Continent.)

### Washington Loyal to England

Washington, as envoy, on this first trip selected a place for a fort at the confluence of the Alleghany and Monongahela Rivers, which French engineers subsequently chose for the site of Fort Duquesne. At the behest of Dinwiddie he set out a second time for the new fort on the Ohio with about 150 men. It ought not to be forgotten that Dinwiddie raised the troops for the expedition by proclaiming a bounty

of 200,000 acres of land about the fort, to be divided among the officers and soldiers. Washington wrote this word to Lord Fairfax: "I had no view of acquisition but that of honor, *by faithfully serving my King and country.*" On this expedition he engaged in the fight at Great Meadows (in the center of which was Fort Necessity) from which he was forced to retire because of superior numbers, but with honors of war. Washington was under a cloud, how-



THE OLD COLONIAL JAIL

ever, from having surrendered Fort Necessity and later was demoted from the rank of colonel to that of captain, and reigned in disgust, retiring to Mt. Vernon till the coming of Gen. Braddock. Washington wrote to his brother Lawrence (who was a British officer in England's previous contest with Spanish world aspirations): "I have been on the losing order since I entered the service, which is two years." His failures were to become stepping stones to great success.

### Washington's "Failures"

It is an interesting fact that "of the eighty-nine engagements in the eight years of the Revolution, General Washington personally commanded only nine. He really won only three decisive battles—Trenton, Princeton and Yorktown. Several of the others were drawn and in some he was badly defeated. Most of the general engagements were won by Washington's subordinates. A royal army, splendidly equipped, however, was not the worst of his many formidable enemies. Treachery, intrigue and misrepresentation of himself were his daily experience. Despair had seized the leaders but this wonderful man, like some tall mountain, rose serenely above the raging storm.

### The Rangers

Washington had been in intimate touch with military preparations here ever since he was Adjutant General of the Virginia Forces, in training against the Indians. On these "Commons" Washington, while Braddock was making preparations, trained the "Virginia Rangers" for that disastrous campaign. (The name had been given the Colonials because of the peculiar coats furnished.)

It ought to be remembered that John Washington, great-grandfather of the first President of the United States, in consideration of valuable services rendered to the colony, received from Lord Culpeper the original grant of land to the Washington family which is now known as Mt. Vernon. When Governor Berkeley refused permission to Nathaniel Bacon to guard the border settlements against raids of the Indians, then it was that John Washington boldly came to the front. He became Lieutenant-Colonel of the provincial military and commanded the joint forces of Maryland and Virginia Rangers, which broke the backbone of Indian power east of the Blue Ridge. Indeed, the last stand of the Indians before this intrepid leader was made on the Mt. Vernon estate. After the disastrous Braddock campaign and the ignominious retreat of the British regulars to Philadelphia, the beautiful Valley of Virginia was again threatened by all the horrors of savage warfare. George, the grandson of John the pioneer, was employed by Dinwiddie in this frontier defense, and built large fortifications—one of which was Fort Loudoun at Winchester.

### Politics

A historic incident occurred in an exciting political contest between Mr. Fairfax and Mr. Ellzey for the House of Burgesses. The young surveyor could not forget ties of blood and friendship with his patrons, the Fairfaxes. Washington supported Fairfax with possibly too much zeal, and Payne supported Ellzey. High words passed between Washington and Payne. Payne, by a heavy blow, brought Washington to the earth. Troops rushed out from the barracks and would have made short work of Payne had not Washington pacified them. Everybody felt that a duel was imminent. Next morning Washington sent for Payne and said to him: "Mr. Payne, to err is human; I was wrong yesterday, but if you have had sufficient satisfaction let us be friends." Weems says that Washington became Payne's ideal of manhood, and certainly his son was pall bearer at Washington's funeral.

### Story of Heroism

Out of twenty men from Alexandria in Braddock's expedition *only four returned to tell the story*. Three months after Braddock's departure a courier came riding into Market Square and announced to the hastily gathered crowd the news of Braddock's defeat and death, and that many Alexandria boys had fallen. Affection was manifested for Washington and his Colonial troops as the crowd learned how they had saved the day.

No previous event in the history of the town had so stirred the people; the country people came crowding in to learn the disastrous tidings that many of Alexandria's bravest sons had fallen. Two companies had been sent from Alexandria and vicinity. Only thirty of these returned from the field of battle. When we tell our school children of the story of Sparta and Balaclava they should know the story of the little remnant of Virginians that returned from Braddock's ill-fated expedition.

The former respect in which the British "regular" was held was then turned into indignation and contempt, because they had acted (as Washington afterwards described it) "like sheep pursued by dogs and it was impossible to rally them." Three British regulars, ever afterward, were counted in Alexandria as about equal to one Colonial soldier. Among the men of Alexandria who returned to be

mustered out, probably in Market Square, were John Carlyle and Dr. James Craik. Washington was honorary captain of the "Alexandria Independent Blues" when he was made Commander-in-Chief of the Colonial Forces, and wrote them not to relax their discipline, on June 20, 1775.

### Lord Dunmore

In 1776 when Lord Dunmore, the treacherous Colonial Governor, was ravaging the Potomac, three British war vessels came within a few miles of the town and the townsmen mustered for defense on Market Square. Colonel Fitzgerald, who was probably left in charge by Washington, hastened with the "Blues" from the Square to a small stone fort nearby.

### Colonel Fitzgerald

The flag was to be kept flying from Market Square and a militia officer was left in command by Fitzgerald. Meanwhile a solid shot was fired at the flag and the officer in charge struck the colors. Fitzgerald returned the fire from the fort, which was located at *Jones' Point* and called Fort Columbia, a small stone bastion, armed with guns left behind by Braddock. Most of the great stones now at the end of Jones' Point are the remains of that fort. This fort was the first attempt of the government to guard the river approaches to Alexandria. The vessels of the enemy sailed down the Potomac. Fitzgerald later learning what the officer had done, indignantly returned to the Square and gave him a sound thrashing. Fitzgerald was specially attached to the young Colonel, having been seen at times weeping for fear when Washington was in great danger. He is said to have been the creator of Washington's Life Guard.

### "Fort Columbia"

This was a fortification of wood and earthwork, mounting some heavy guns, among them the cannon left by Braddock's army in 1755, as too cumbersome to transport over the mountains. It was an attempt by the government to guard the river approaches during the Revolution. It was dismantled about 1798. The heavy stones remain still and some of the guns which made its armament are stuck as posts at street corners along the river front. The site of a new fort to displace this one was selected by General Wash-

ington on a knoll nearly opposite Mt. Vernon—Fort Washington.

### “Washington’s Own” Company

An artillery company was gathered in June, 1798—“The Independent Blues”—under William Harper, captain, to get ready for the expected war with France. They were drilled in Market Square, and Washington’s last military order was given this company from Gadsby’s by the newly made “Lieutenant General George Washington.” Two members of this company, William Gregory and George Davis, lived till 1875 and 1877, respectively, and enjoyed the distinction for years of being the sole members of “Washington’s Own” company.

### Battery Rogers

“Battery Rogers,” some years since dismantled, stood a few hundred yards above the *Point*, and was made during the Civil War a strong earthwork—during the occupation of Alexandria by Federal troops.

The *pillory* stood near the jail on the square, but a writer of the day says he never saw anybody in the pillory except a negro boy, punished for killing a child on the street of the town by careless driving. The *whipping post* occupied a conspicuous place likewise on Market Square. The executioner of such sentences was known as “Bobtail Bowie,” who administered a lecture between stripes and permitted boys to throw rotten eggs at the prisoner.

### Daniel Morgan

Tradition says that, among others publicly whipped was none other than Daniel Morgan, then a wagoner under Braddock, but who afterwards became famous as a Revolutionary cavalry general, and over whose dust the government has erected a monument in Winchester Cemetery. The Alexandria “Commons” witnessed political gatherings before and after the Revolution, and famous preachers of that day discoursed here to large audiences. The Court and the Town Council were called together by the ringing of a bell suspended on three posts. Previous to the installation of this bell notice was given by the Town Sergeant, who made his proclamation by the beating of a drum. The Court House constituted the municipal building. Market Square was indeed the arena for the military training of men who played an heroic part in changing the ideals of the Old World, and thus stamping the New World.

## VII

### A MEMORIAL TO A SILENT PROCESSION OF BYGONE CELEBRITIES

“Gone—glimmering through the dream of things that were.”—Byron.

**T**HIS famous hostelry was as popular in its day with the great leaders, as is the “New Willard,” in Washington City. At first it was called “Old City Tavern” till after the corner addition in 1792, when it became known as “Gadsby’s.” It was the stopping place between the North and the South, when stage coaches lumbered along the King’s Highway. (The first turnpike was built from Alexandria to the lower Shenandoah in 1785, and was known as the Loudoun Turnpike.)

### The Court Yard

From the court yard went all the coaches for Georgetown, Philadelphia and New York and Boston (before Washington was anything but swamp and forests and not even laid out); and for Williamsburg, Richmond, Charleston and New Orleans, as soon as a regular road was opened through the wilderness. In those days Alexandria was considered a central place of importance to which the fashions were sent from Philadelphia. During Braddock’s stay many persons of distinction were quartered at Gadsby’s.

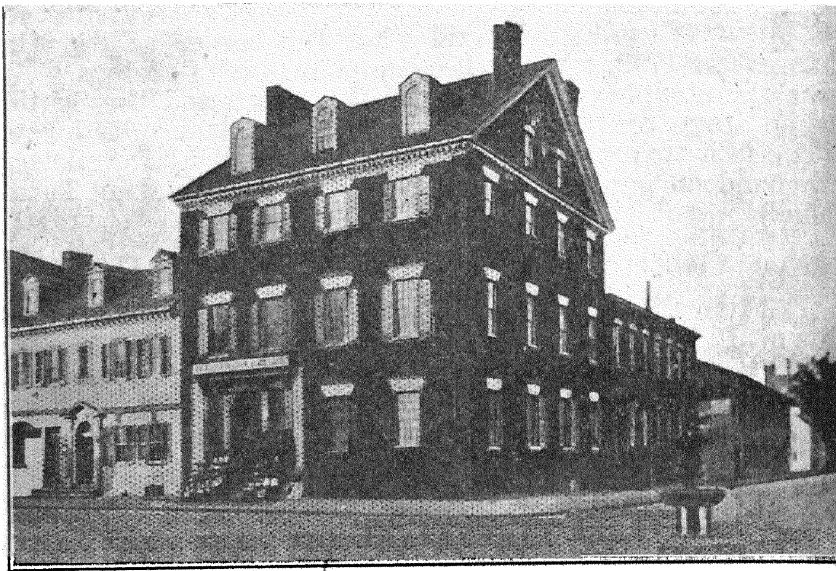
In the rear of Gadsby’s, upon the ground covered by Duncan Garage, were to be found coaches and horses and outriders, who had found temporary refuge there in carrying important personages from Colony to Colony. Here LaFayette and Baron DeKalb, on their way to join Washington’s army, first met John Paul Jones in 1777.

### Important Personages Guests

A writer has told how LaFayette and DeKalb, with other French officers, landing at Georgetown, S. C., and en route to Philadelphia (April 19, 1777), stopped in Alexandria. The first two could speak English very poorly and became mixed in ordering the relay of horses at “Gadsby’s.”

A stranger came to their rescue in the person of John Paul Jones, and an intimacy was thus formed with LaFayette which continued until the death of Jones in 1792.

Here famous statesmen, unless entertained at Mt. Vernon or the Carlyle House, stopped over night. Washington had made his headquarters in the older part of this tavern in 1754, a year before Braddock's arrival, when Adjutant General of Virginia. It was from here that he started upon his first expedition to the Western border to confer with the French and Indians. The complete lack of success of



GADSBY'S INN AND WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS  
Corner Cameron and Royal Streets

this expedition led the British government to plan the Braddock campaign. This hostelry witnessed the first celebration of the adoption of the Federal Constitution on June 28, 1788, which is described by Washington in a letter to Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. Washington responded to an address by the Mayor, Colonel Denis Ramsay, from its doorstep, on his way to his inauguration in New York as first President.

### Significant Balls

After its enlargement it entered upon an era of great social and political importance. Once it was the scene of the famous "Birthnight Balls," in honor of the King and Queen, which were first instituted here. Washington danced at these balls in honor of royalty with no feeling of disloyalty to country. These were superseded in 1798 by the *very first celebration of Washington's birthday*, with Washington present. From the doorstep of this tavern Washington gave his very last military order to the "Independent Blues," just before his death. A French teacher visiting this country in 1801 speaks of Gadsby's Tavern as "the best in the United States." Washington frequently took a meal at Gadsby's when in Alexandria, and gave his last order for dinner in these words, after having been assured that there was a good store of canvas-back ducks: "Very good, sir, give me some of them with a chafing dish, some hominy, and a bottle of good Madeira and we shall not complain."

Here died the celebrated actress of that day, Anne Warren, then filling an engagement at the well-known theatre, "Liberty Hall," on Cameron street, just opposite the tavern. She was called the "Ornament of the American Stage," and was cousin of the likewise famous Joseph Jefferson. Her interment in 1808 was one of the last in old Christ Church yard.

### The "Female Stranger"

The room in Gadsby's in which the noted "Female Stranger" died, in 1816, is shown today. In St. Paul's Episcopal graveyard is to be found an iron railing surrounding a tomb upon which can be read the following inscription: "To the memory of a Female Stranger." It is one of the unsolved mysteries of the world. The only facts known about this singular tomb is that in September, 1816, a gentleman, accompanied by a lady, very ill, arrived in Alexandria and put up at Gadsby's. The husband was very taciturn and gave no information as to himself or his family. After the death of the lady he purchased a lot and erected the tomb, giving in payment drafts on England which were said to have been returned dishonored. He then disappeared and was never again heard of, though some claimed that he had been seen in prison in the North. Upon that tomb he had inscribed these lines:

"How loved, how valu'd once avails thee not,  
To whom related or by whom begot,  
A heap of dust alone remains of thee,  
'Tis all thou art and all the proud shall be."

and this scripture:

"To Him gave all the Prophets witness that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins."

Some conjecture that she was of royal blood, and an attempt was made in "Harpers" some years ago to connect her with the daughter of Aaron Burr, whom he mourned as lost at sea.

Here LaFayette on his triumphal tour of America in 1824, was entertained by Alexandria-Washington Lodge of Masons.

Gadsby's today stands as a silent memorial of a passing procession of celebrities of a bygone day, at a time when Alexandria was an outpost of civilization.

#### The Stabler-Leadbeater Drug Store

This old store, corner of King and Fairfax Streets, was patronized by General Washington as shown by the old account books, and it was popular with these celebrities through the years. At times Webster, Clay and Calhoun, "the great Triumvirate" in the Senate, were seen here conversing earnestly, with an increasing crowd gathered to listen to the brilliant conversation. Probably they had just been entertained by Phineas Janney, Quaker, a large importer and merchant, whose home is that of the "Nurses" of the City Hospital, on South Washington Street. They had come over to test the wonderful wines which his ships have brought from the West Indies.

A courier from the War Department found Col. Robert E. Lee in Leadbeater's with an order commanding him to get in readiness to proceed to Harpers Ferry to deal with the John Brown Raid. Lee turned to the proprietor and read it to him, remarking that he feared it portended serious trouble between the North and South.

## VIII

### A CITY WHICH PUT PATRIOTISM ABOVE SELF INTEREST

*"Who dared to love their country, and be poor."—  
Pope.*

**A**LEXANDRIA had celebrated in Christ Church the departure of the last British "Redcoat" after the Revolution, but she was to witness his return in the War of '12. When that storm was approaching she made preparations for the contingency by raising a regiment of militia under Major Lawrence Hooff, Jr. The corporation of Alexandria, always loyal, loaned the general government \$35,000.00 on condition that it be expended on defenses below Alexandria, and the militia company was drawn off to the defense of Washington City.

#### Loyalty in War of 1812

The defenses at Fort Washington, in charge of Captain Dyson, however, were voluntarily blown up, though the commanding officer was court-martialed. The able-bodied men and the guns were sent to Washington to protect that city, and the town was thus left without means of resistance. A small part of the militia of Alexandria, however, was said to have remained under Captain Griffith, and with their artillery fought the enemy's fleet with six-pounders till the ammunition gave out. When Admiral Cockburn was asked about the treatment of Alexandria in case of surrender he gave assurance that private property would be respected. Commodore Gordon drew the ships in line before the city and one hour was given for decision. In the negotiations Gordon, with his staff, marched to the Mayor's office, then standing near the northeast corner of Duke and Pitt streets. Colonel Charles Sims, the mayor, readily yielded his authority to British occupation. Plunder was indiscriminate but confined principally to flour, cotton and tobacco. The terms of surrender were considered very degrading.



**Foolish Midshipmen**

Some stir was made at the wharf by two young captains of the U. S. Navy (Porter and Creighton) who foolishly seized a midshipman and ran. Immediately the ships were prepared for action, and with probable disastrous consequences, but for Colonel Sims' poise in placating the British. He gave the impetuous officers a lecture, calling them cowards for fleeing. Colonel Sims later wrote in a letter that if that neckerchief had not broken and the midshipman had been killed or carried off, the town could not have been saved from destruction. Probably the Mayor's suave diplomacy saved Alexandria from the fate of Washington City. Years later, in the hurly-burly of politics in Andrew Jackson's administration, another incident happened at the Alexandria wharf. A certain Dr. Randolph believing that "Old Hickory" had unjustly expelled him as surgeon from the Navy, boarded the President's yacht, lying here, and forcing himself in his private apartments, pulled Jackson's nose. Before the officers knew what had happened Randolph had fled beyond the reach of the law. The incident only added venom to the tongue of John Randolph of Roanoke, in his criticism of the administration in Congress. During the first occasion a launch from the British ship "Pender" accidentally sank, drowning several sailors, on the site of the Naval Torpedo Station.

**A Small Sea Fight**

After the destruction of the White House and the Capitol in Washington, a plan was perfected to prevent the escape of the frigates, loaded with plunder at Alexandria. Captain Porter, who previously commanded the "Essex," evidently would retrieve the recent disgrace of running, and together with Captain Perry (afterwards Commodore Perry of Lake Erie fame) set up batteries at "White House," an old building standing till recently below Mt. Vernon. Sharpshooters were placed near. There was brisk firing at the fleet but the enemy got off without the loss of a vessel and returned to England. Only a cow was killed, and that accidentally, by an American soldier who misconceived an order.

In this war Alexandria was represented by nearly all her able-bodied citizens. There were four companies in service. The War of '12 was not glorious but Alexandria played her part well.

## IX

**A HILL THAT JUST ESCAPED HAVING THE LEADING CAPITOL OF THE WORLD**

*"Where all are selfish, the sage is no better than the fool and only rather more dangerous."—Frowde.*

**Shooter's Hill**

**T**HE hill at the head of King street was probably named after Shooter's Hill in London, concerning which Dickens makes reference in his "Tale of Two Cities." It is to be held in mind that there is no Revolutionary history connected with the City of Washington save only that part known as Georgetown. It is claimed that the selection of the location of the new Federal City was largely the result of a political deal between the North and the South. By a favoring word from Washington the Nation's Capital might have been placed at Alexandria. Indeed, Shooter's Hill had been selected as the site of the Capitol building by James Madison, then chairman of the Congressional Committee of 1793, appointed to name the site. Jefferson felt that this hill afforded one of the finest sites in the United States. Washington at that time was President and one of the richest men in the United States, owning property, still to be seen, on the northwest corner of Prince and Pitt streets, and likewise at the corner of Cameron and Pitt streets and all about Alexandria. Because of this fact he caused the Nation's Capital to be placed on the Maryland side of the Potomac.

**Washington's Unselfishness**

Though Washington loved Alexandria, yet even for her sake he would not allow a thing that might be a reflection on his unselfish patriotism. He had been bitterly assailed by Jefferson as desiring to centralize the power of the general government, and a new outbreak must be warded off by refusing to allow his large properties about Alexandria thus to be enhanced in value. Washington was known personally to have superintended the building of the two frame houses, standing at the northwest corner of Prince and Pitt streets. It is to be noted that though Washington

showed a personal interest in improving this city, he never seems to have conceived the idea of laying out broad streets, nor indeed of placing houses, with yards about them, but the mistake was not repeated in Washington City.

### "The Town House"

There is an interesting tradition concerning Washington's "Town House" located on the now unoccupied site on the south side of Cameron street a little west of Pitt, to the effect that when Lord Dunmore was ravaging the Potomac with his war vessels, Washington seriously contemplated moving his family to Alexandria, and enlarging the "Town House" sufficiently for the comfort of his family, to escape possible danger from the exposed position of Mt. Vernon. General Gage, who knew Alexandria well, urged the capture of both Alexandria and Mt. Vernon, but Lord North's government never favored making war on Washington personally, as its military officials did on Jefferson then Governor of Virginia; since the hope was still strong that the government might enter into negotiations with this influential man to save the Colonies to the Crown of England. But certainly Washington gave his unalterable decision against royalty as early as the spring of 1774.

Washington frequently in his diary speaks of spending the night in his "Town House" on Cameron street. He slept here and took breakfast next morning at half past six, with his cousin, Mrs. Anne McCarty Ramsay, just before leaving for Philadelphia where he was to be offered command of the American forces. The widow of George A. Washington, nephew of the General, occupied the "Town House" till her marriage to Tobias Lear, Washington's private secretary, after which they moved to Wellington, about 3 miles below Alexandria.

## X

### A MEETING HOUSE WHICH RECALLS THE NON-CONFORMISTS

*"Calvinism established a religion without a prelate, a government without a King."—Bancroft.*

#### The Presbyterian Meeting House

**T**HIS building on South Fairfax street was constructed in 1774, though restored in the next century after a fire. Before that time the Presbyterians held their meetings in the "Assembly Hall," located on the site of the present Clerk's Office. This present building contained the first steeple in the city, and the members held their services under a license from the County Court, having subscribed to the conditions imposed for worship. It was required that their doors be opened and remain open. Presbyterianism was founded here before the incorporation of the town, with a charter under the Toleration Act. Contributions were made to this and other non-conforming buildings by Washington, and he sometimes attended their services.

#### Conformity

It must not be forgotten that the Scotch immigrant was a most important factor in pushing back the boundaries of civilization from the Chesapeake. He established himself all along the foothills of the Alleghanies. The Carlyles, the Craiks, the Ramsays came to Alexandria with the tide of immigration. The congregation of Presbyterians in Alexandria were granted no special favors save only to be allowed to hold meetings in the Town Hall. There was no contest with the authorities, as in England, concerning submission to the "orders and constitution of the Church of England and the laws therein established." It is to be remembered that the Presbyterian Church was the established church in Scotland, whence they had come. They were willing to conform in Alexandria.

In October, 1790, an Act was passed by the General Assembly authorizing a lottery "to raise the sum of 500 pounds to complete the building of the church in Alexandria

for the use of the members of the Presbyterian Society," and thereto is appended a list of the managers of said lottery.

### Conspicuous Names

The old graveyard of the "Meeting House" is of especial interest. Here lies, under the church floor, the body of Dr. James Muir, who officiated at Washington's funeral, as chaplain of the Alexandria Lodge of Masons. Here lies the body of John Carlyle (Braddock's Quartermaster); and possibly his son, who lost his life at Eutaw Springs, S. C., fighting for the Colonies in the Revolution. (Alexandria was little troubled with Tories). Here reposes the dust of the grand old surgeon-soldier, Dr. James Craik, one of the most intimate personal friends of Washington in Alexandria, who followed his fortunes from the beginning of the Revolution to Yorktown. Among the outstanding names of persons buried here are the Hepburns, Logans, Lindsays, Douglasses, Hunters, Ramsays, Allisons, Balfours, Cranstons, Kincaids and Kennedys. It is doubtful whether any spot in Alexandria contains *so many sacred associations*.

This church was made necessary by the many Scotch Presbyterians who early settled in Alexandria. It was at first under the jurisdiction of the Northern Presbytery, till about fifteen years ago, when it was turned over to the Presbyterians of the South. It ought to be preserved as *one of the sacred memorials of the heroic days of our country*, as well as a monument to the sturdy Calvinists who stood against George III, as their predecessors had stood against Charles I.

### Covenanters

It ought never to be forgotten that the Scotch Covenanters had always resisted religious tyranny in England and that Presbyterians were largely in sympathy with the Roundheads. In the contest between Charles I and his Parliament, the Presbyterians (or Puritans as they were called) had a parliamentary majority. When Cromwell took charge of Virginia the Scotch form of worship was sanctioned here. These two churches in Alexandria, however, always were in the heartiest accord, Carlyle and others having rented pews in Christ Church. Some promi-

nent members of Christ Church attended here for a time after the Revolution, though Washington was not among them.



"THE PRESBYTERIAN MEETING HOUSE"  
(Now First Presbyterian Church) Fairfax St. between Duke and Wolfe

## XI

### A BURGHER WHO BECAME THE WORLD'S FIRST CITIZEN

*"Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world*

*"Like a Colossus, and we petty men*

*"Walk under his huge legs and peep about*

*"To find ourselves dishonorable graves."*

—Shakespeare.

#### Washington, the Boy

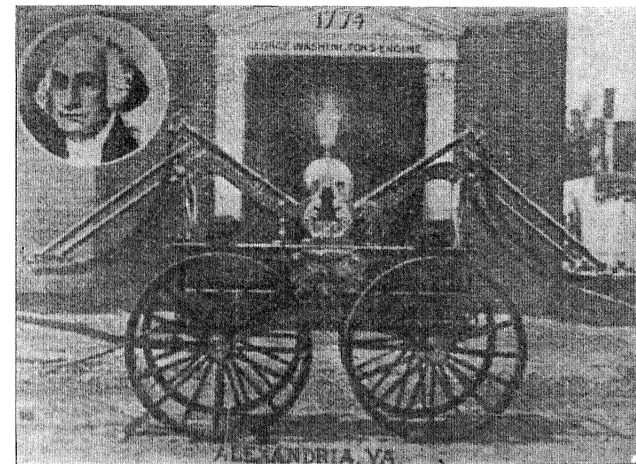
**A**LEXANDRIA was the home town of George Washington, and as a young man he was frequently to be seen on her streets riding a spirited colt. All the traditions are of a tall, wiry, sun-burned young man always on horseback. Before he was fifteen he had conceived a passion for some unknown beauty, so serious as to make him unhappy, according to his own letters. This "Lowland Beauty," is now known as Miss Betsy Fauntleroy, who lived fifteen miles below "Wakefield." He complains of his "poor, restless heart, wounded by Cupid's dart." Before his marriage, probably at the time he wrote of the "Lowland Beauty," he frequently attended social functions at the home of his cousin, William Ramsay, in the house now standing at the northeast corner of King and Fairfax streets.

#### Washington, the Man

John Nitingill, an old gravedigger, who died in 1863, often recalled for his friends the dignified and stately tread of "The General" upon the streets. He used to say that the small boys viewed the great man with reverence and awe. Washington always declared that he voted for "measures, not men." Alexandria was his post office, his place of voting and his market. When his last vote was cast in the old Court House, some citizens of Alexandria, when they saw his difficulty in ascending the front steps, eagerly reached out and assisted him to the polls. The last vote cast by Washington was for Col. Levin Powell, for Congress.

#### Washington's Vision for Alexandria

It ought to be said that Washington was willing to go to any limit in helping Alexandria to a higher vision in material prosperity, but it ought also to be recorded that Alexandria's citizens did not respond as they ought, as witness the wandering at will of hogs and geese upon her streets till November, 1773, when public notice was given that any person had liberty to kill swine running at large. He interested himself in the establishment of a great canal which should connect his home town with the Ohio Valley. As trustee of the city he would project its future on pro-



OLD FRIENDSHIP FIRE ENGINE

gressive lines. Indeed, he took pride in every mark of progressive spirit and honored Alexandria to the day of his death, by magnifying every little courtesy she extended. He was so much interested in making this a first-class market that he furnished vegetables from his own garden at Mt. Vernon, much to the disgust of his close friends. He demanded that the weights and measures be tested by the *standard scales*, still to be seen in the City Hall.

#### Friendship Fire Company

Washington did more than any other in laying the foundation for the present very efficient fire department.

When he was a member of the Continental Congress in Philadelphia in 1774, he purchased and presented to the *Friendship Fire Company*, the very best engine than made. They elected him honorary captain, and in the very last year of his life (1799), happening to be in the city when a fire was in progress near the market, he leaped from his horse and helped pump the engine. Seeing a party of gentlemen looking on, he said: "Why are you idle, gentlemen? It is your business to lead in such matters."

Washington was for a time member of the City Board of Trustees, 1766). Washington had an exalted sense of civic pride and did all in his power to make *this city a model municipality*.

## XII

### AN OLD JAIL CONNECTED WITH THE STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

"Aye, call it holy ground,

"The soil where once they trod!

"They have left unstained what there they found—

"Freedom to worship God."—Mrs. Hemans



Where may see the spot where the jail stood, and a picture of it is to be found in this book. It was built in 1753 and was used for convicts and French prisoners captured on the Western border. It stood on the site of the present Police Headquarters, on North Fairfax Street.

#### Jeremiah Moore

But curiously this old jail was used to imprison a well-known preacher of that period—Jeremiah Moore, once lay-leader in the Church of England at Acquia Creek. Though other itinerant preachers were willing, in Washington's home town, to subscribe to the Established Religion and obey the law against non-conformists, this man refused. The vestrymen of Fairfax Parish, who had been elected by freeholders, seemed determined to exercise civil and religious authority, and no one thought of questioning a law of the Virginia Assembly, enacted in 1643. The law which Jeremiah Moore flagrantly violated, reads as follows: "All ministers should be conformable to the orders and constitutions of the Church of England and the laws therein established, and not otherwise to be permitted to teach or preach publicly or privately." One day some members of the vestry and the rector found Moore preaching near Alexandria and arrested him for "preaching the Gospel without license." The mittimus (to the authorities) has been found: "I send you, herewith, the body of Jeremiah Moore who is a preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and a *stroller*."

#### Union of Church and State

It ought to be said that the Establishment represented the union of Church and State, and that civil jurisdiction

had been forced upon the church in return for financial support. Sometimes a rector was found who had little vision. Drastice measures were taken and Jeremiah Moore felt the heavy weight of his former connection, and he was told: "You shall lie in jail till you rot, or obey the law." All other non-conformist preachers obeyed the law but the young preacher stood firmly against a law which permitted such an outrage, and rather than retract, he remained in jail and preached, like Bunyan, through the latticed door. He attracted crowds by the very novelty of the situation. Washington and Mason frequently came to Alexandria, and must have known of his imprisonment. No protest could be made against a well-understood law.\* (It is not unlikely this determined young preacher felt that by remaining in jail the question of *religious liberty* would not be ignored in the issues of the Revolution.)

### Patrick Henry

But a significant thing happened: Patrick Henry, who at that time was in frequent communication with Washington (on the authority of a well-grounded tradition in the Moore family) was brought to Alexandria for the defense of Moore. Col. Charles Broadwater, neighbor and friend to Jeremiah Moore and likewise to Washington, was then Justice of the Peace. Mr. Henry is said to have made, probably in the Court House nearby, a great impassioned speech, using these traditional words: "Great God, gentlemen, a man in prison for preaching the gospel of the Son of God!" Moore was released and told he would not be disturbed again.

### Memorial of Imprisonment

The record of this event is not to be found in the vestry book of Fairfax Parish, yet in 1803 Jeremiah Moore founded the First Baptist Church of this city as a *memorial of his imprisonment*, and there has been placed upon the walls of that church a tablet to his memory, appropriately inscribed. Moore was first pastor of this church in 1803.

\* Certainly these and many other great leaders of the Episcopal Church later were chiefly instrumental in writing religious liberty into the Constitution.

It is probable that Washington heard of Patrick Henry's speech and that the question of *Religious Liberty* became a vital one in the minds of Washington and Mason and other leaders thereafter. The next year (July, 1774) the same Fairfax freeholders came together in the old Court House, where Moore was tried for preaching, on Market Square. The famous case against the "Parsons" had already been won by Mr. Henry, in which the contention was successfully carried against the support of the "Parsons" by the dissenters.

### Specious Religious Liberty

About seven miles below Alexandria are the frowning battlements of Fort Washington. At the foot of the heights, just under the walls where the waters of the Piscataway enter the Potomac, as early as 1634, Governor Calvert with 200 followers of Roman Catholic gentlemen came to raise the standard of old England and to proclaim the Catholic faith. Later, as a matter of discretion he descended the Potomac and entered the river now called St. Mary's. So in March, 1634, under the authority of a Protestant English king, *religious tolerance* (not religious liberty), then obtained a home, the only home in the world.

### Tories in Alexandria

It is curious that at this meeting proclaiming the "Fairfax Co. Resolves" a letter was passed, written by Bryan Fairfax in opposition to the avowed purpose of the meeting. Indeed, the few Tories in Alexandria were under his leadership. Washington was so influenced by personal esteem for the man that he actually urged him to become his associate as delegate to the *Patriotic Convention* at Williamsburg, and opposed Colonel Broadwater, who was an outspoken advocate of resistance. Washington afterwards wrote Fairfax concerning this letter: "As no person seemed in the least disposed to adopt your sentiments, and as gentlemen advised me not to read it . . . I forebore to offer it."

Moore was thus forcing the issue for a principle which should eventuate in the first amendment to the Constitution. Similar occurrences were witnessed in the jails of Fredericksburg, Culpeper, Warrenton, and in many counties of Virginia and religious liberty became a live question.

The old jail later witnessed the incarceration of the

Hessian prisoners who surrendered at Yorktown, and whom the city employed, pending final disposition, to pave the streets of Alexandria with cobblestones. The old jail likewise held the prisoners of the French and Indian War. It thus held those who fought for liberty, and those who fought against it.

## XIII

### PHYSICIANS WHOSE CAPACITY FOR FRIENDSHIP IMMORTALIZED THEM

*"Great souls by instinct to each other turn,  
"Demand alliance and in friendship burn."*

—Addison.

#### Dr. Craik—a Faithful Achates

**W**ASHINGTON gave his confidences to but few, and tradition tells of some, near here who betrayed those confidences, but the story is not pleasant to relate. The first Lord Fairfax will always be conspicuous in history on account of his friendship for Washington. There lived a man *at 210 Duke street* who, in his intimate association with Washington as a friend, likewise never faltered. This Dr. James Craik was a Scotchman and a physician, and saw the human side of the immortal man. He had nursed Washington, sick, on the ill-fated Braddock expedition into the Ohio Valley, and thereby Washington was able to retrieve somewhat the disaster in the South which the British suffered against the French at Great Meadows. When Washington was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Colonial Forces he prevailed upon Dr. Craik to leave his practice and his family to attempt with him a hazardous undertaking.

Dr. Craik's friendship for Washington carried him into untold sacrifices throughout the period of the Revolution. This great-hearted physician had charge of the hospital at Yorktown, and though the evidence is not entirely clear, he is said to have been made by Washington the first Surgeon General of the United States Army. One thing is sure, this man knew Washington intimately in his personal life, and it was he who reported that, in the disastrous defeat of Braddock, Washington escaped, as he believed, only by the "protecting care of a great over-ruling Providence." When the Revolution was over Washington rode with his "Faithful Achates" over the route of that ill-fated expedition. What must have been recalled in the intimacy of such a friendship! Very often afterwards, during many years, Washington mentions visiting with "my old friend,

Dr. Craik." Indeed, he claimed the privilege of educating Dr. Craik's son.

### Was It Discourtesy?

When an unnamed young man was studying medicine in the office of this veteran and distinguished surgeon of the Revolution, a stranger to the student came to visit the physician. He arrived in a handsome coach, with every mark of wealth, "dressed in a velvet suit and carrying a short stick in his hand." The youth admitted the stranger and showed him every courtesy, as to a patient. There was a lively conversation for an hour or so. When the stranger had gone the youth asked who it was, and Dr. Craik replied: "Don't you know? Why, that is the greatest man in the world. That is General Washington, and he was particularly impressed by your courtesy."

It has been claimed by a descendant of this young man that this story has been idealized, in order to soften the real facts of the case, and that on the other hand the young man kept his seat, with his feet elevated, when Washington entered the office of his old friend, and Washington made some reflections on the boy's impolite manner, which he requested should be conveyed to the boy by Dr. Craik.

When Washington knew he was dying, Craik was at his bedside, and Washington said to him: "Doctor, I die hard but I am not afraid to go." Craik pressed his hand but could not utter a word.

### Dr. Dick

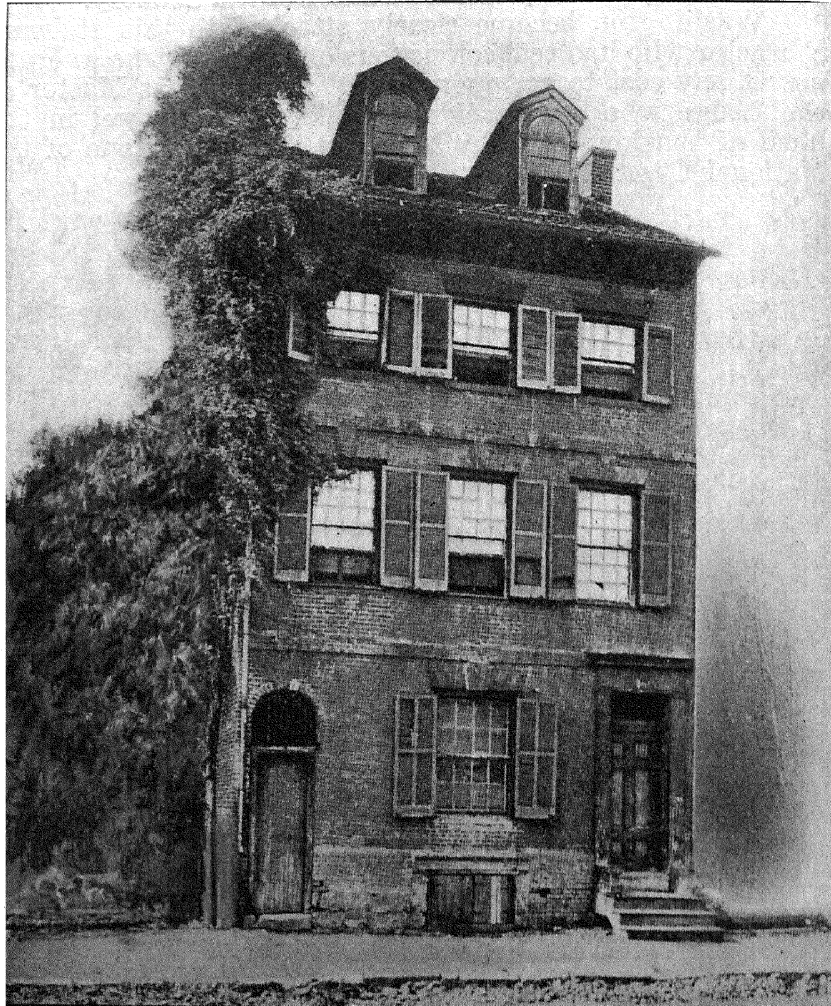
The home of Washington's family physician,\* Dr. Elisha Dick, is still standing at 209 Prince street, and his office building is still to be seen at 508 Queen street, whither it had been moved some years ago. Dr. Dick was a Pennsylvanian and at first was said to be infidel in his views, though he was a nominal member of the Church of England. One day he saw the "new light" of Fox and became a Quaker. It is said that he proceeded at once to the banks of the Potomac and threw his duelling pistols into the water. This "pacifist" volunteered, however, to follow "Light Horse Harry" Lee against the "Whiskey Rebellion" in his native

\* If the advice of Dr. Dick had been followed in Washington's last illness, bleeding would not have been practiced and his life prolonged.

state. He is buried in an unmarked grave in the Quaker Cemetery on Queen near Washington street. He was Master of the Masonic Lodge at the funeral of Washington, and likewise a loyal friend to the "Father of his Country."

Washington became closely attached to this stalwart character who had real convictions of duty and who swerved not at any cost to act upon them. It was he as Master of the Lodge who stood aside and placed the trowel in the hand of Washington, who thus laid the cornerstone of the National Capitol.





THE HOME OF DR. CRAIK  
Duke Street, Between Fairfax and Lee

## XIV

### ALEXANDRIA HONORING AN OLD-WORLD FRIEND OF LIBERTY

*"The remaining liberty of the world was to be destroyed in the place where it stood."—Lucan.*

**L**A FAYETTE received great ovations in Alexandria during his tours of 1784 and of 1824, on the first occasion Washington participating and showing the tenderest tokens of affection. The very first time that LaFayette saw Alexandria, in 1777 on his way to join Washington's army, he was entertained at Gadsby's, and on his last visit in 1824 he was entertained in the house now standing on the southwest corner of Duke and St. Asaph streets, which may well be a memorial to this heroic lover of liberty in America, and as well a memorial to this same martyr to human liberty later in Europe, for LaFayette lay in an Austrian dungeon for some time and Washington used his influence to secure his release. Alexandria made elaborate preparations in 1784 for entertaining this noble friend of Washington who had passed away a quarter of a century before.

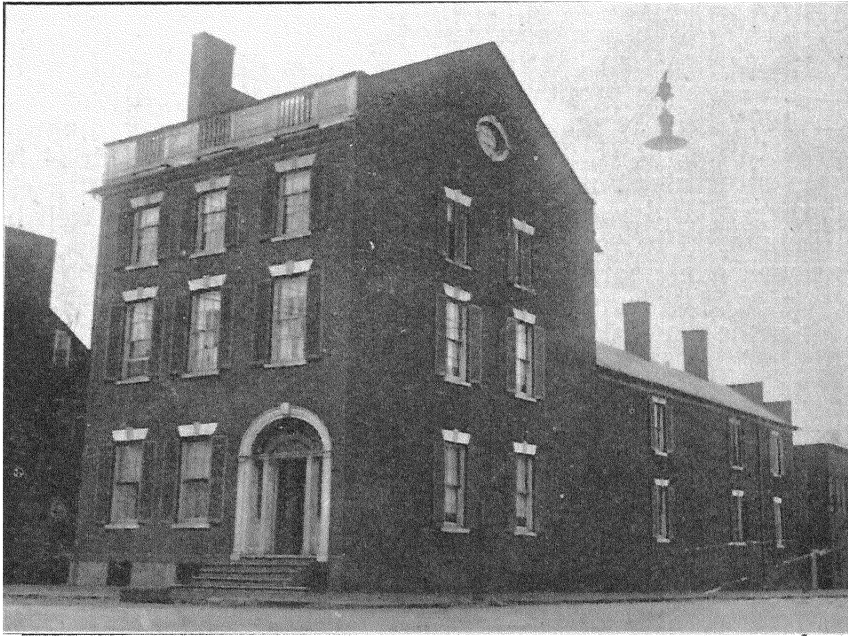
#### LaFayette and Liberty

It is always to be remembered that a Revolution in France had taken place between the two visits of LaFayette and in it he was one of the chief actors. He was like Washington, the friend of ordered liberty, and he received the abuse of the friends of hereditary rule on the one hand and on the other of sanguinary Jacobins or Bolsheviks. The opening scenes of the French Revolution promised the erection of a Republic in Europe and the consequent recognition of the rights of man over the world, and this was the earnest purpose of this friend of Washington. LaFayette would have saved fair France from the foul tragedy that followed.

Indeed this marvelous patriot submitted, in the National Assembly, a "declaration of rights" and probably the sentiment of it was borrowed from Mason and Jefferson. The people rose in insurrection and levelled the Bastille, the key of which was sent by him to Washington at Mt. Vernon.

It was LaFayette who coolly faced the mob in Paris in a vain effort to save from the guillotine Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. When Napoleon came to a place of power he would have made LaFayette one of a new order of peers, but this he declined because it was opposed to his conception of liberty.

It was Benjamin Franklin who had aided the English General Braddock in the French and Indian War in the conference in the Carlyle House, who was now commissioner



LAFAYETTE HOUSE, Duke and St. Asaph Streets

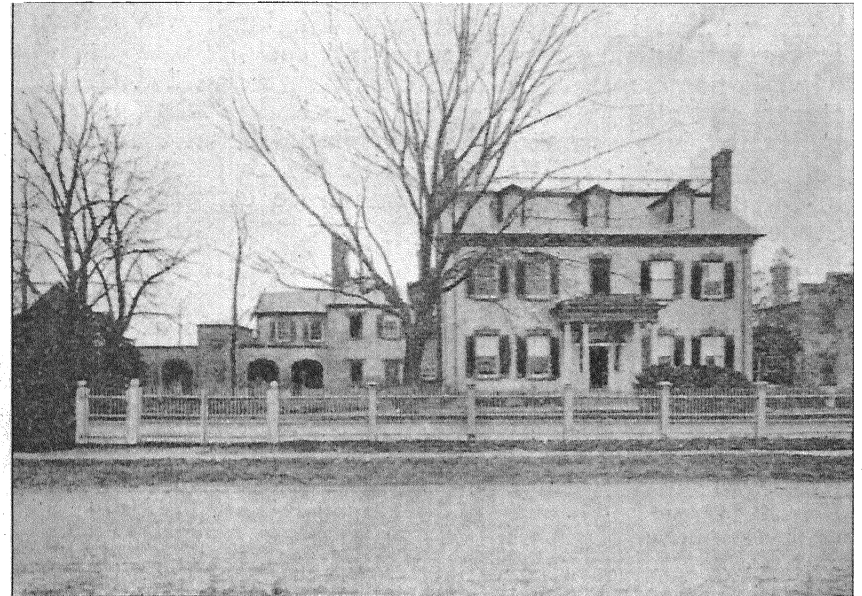
in France aiding LaFayette in his desire to help free the American Colonies from the yoke of England. LaFayette was willing to expose his entire property to confiscation by the laws of France, to be placed under the category of criminal against the laws of Great Britain and an offender against those of his own country. Vessels were dispatched with orders to arrest him in the West Indies. He considered the cause of America "not only just but sacred."

LaFayette was visibly affected by every memory of this "Burgher of Alexandria." An arch was placed on

Washington street, just in front of the Methodist Protestant Church, and Virginia sent great crowds to greet him. Just as LaFayette passed under the arch an American eagle, placed on the top of it, spread its wings and gave a loud screech, which must have impressed the famous Frenchman. Later it became known that a boy was concealed in the arch with the pleasant duty of sticking a pin in the eagle at the opportune time.

### General Roberdeau

A companion-at-arms of LaFayette, General Roberdeau, may have been present on that occasion. His father had been driven from France, as a Huguenot, by the "Edict of Nantes," to the West Indies, and the son had responded to the call of liberty and was invited to join Washington's staff. He was a Member of Congress in 1777-79, and had built a home at 418 South Lee street after the Revolution. It is said that the officer in command of the famous "Louisiana Tigers" in the Civil War was a direct descendant of Roberdeau. The married daughter of General Roberdeau lived at "Colross," one of the typical colonial residences to be seen in Alexandria.



"COLROSS", Gronoco Street between Henry and Fayette Street

## XV

### A FAMILY WHICH VIRGINIA WILL NEVER ALLOW TO BE FORGOTTEN

*"Who hath not own'd, with rapture-smitten frame,  
"The power of grace, the magic of a name."*

—Campbell.

#### "Light Horse Harry"

**T**HIS old city has been closely associated with the famous Lee family of Virginia, established here for three centuries. Though most of the outstanding men of Virginia lived upon estates, yet branches of this family lived here at various time. After Washington's death *General Henry Lee* ("Light Horse Harry") came to Alexandria from "Stratford" in Westmoreland County (1811), in order to educate his children. (Queen Anne had built "Stratford" for his ancestor, Col. Thomas Lee, a distinguished officer of the Realm). But of course the old hero was interested in events rapidly leading up to the second war with England. He occupied at various times several houses, but certainly he dwelt in what is now the rectory of Christ Church, at 111 Oronoco street, and also at 611 Cameron street. He was an ardent Federalist and warmly defended his old Chief against the political attacks of Jefferson and others, and he was Washington's Cavalry General. (Some have compared him to Stonewall Jackson).

#### Bootlegging

In 1794, during Washington's administration, the famous Whiskey Rebellion broke out in Western Pennsylvania. The Bootleggers of that day were treating with contempt a law passed by Congress that year, as they do now. The Federal government might have dallied with what was rapidly becoming a menace of lawlessness. "Light Horse Harry" Lee was then Governor of Virginia, and Washington persuaded his old cavalry general to command a body of militia with orders to suppress this mob rule. The military argument was effective and the insurgents dispersed at the magic name of the old veteran.

This man delivered the most famous eulogy on Washington at his death, in the German Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, using the expression: "First in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen." When the tide of political passion was running strong against the Federalists this great soldier went to Baltimore to protect an editor against the threats of a mob, and suffered such bodily in-

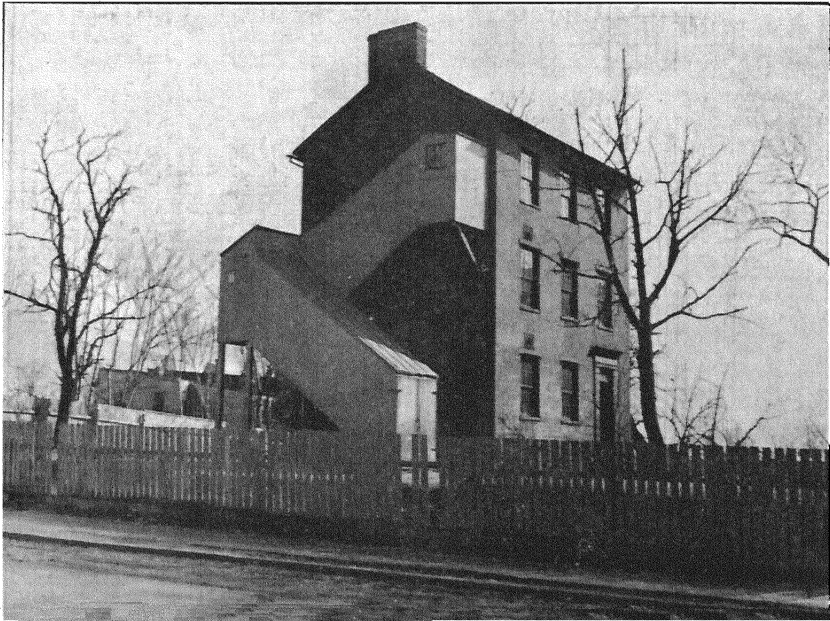


HOME OF "LIGHT HORSE HARRY" LEE, 611 Cameron Street

jury thereby as ultimately to bring on his death, *in defense of the liberty of the press*. Traveling for his health, he died in Georgia, though his body reposes now at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, in his loved State. When he died he left a young son who was destined to be immortal—*Robert E. Lee*—whose mother carried him to live at 111 Oronoco street (near Washington street).

### Robert E. Lee

Probably because of his father's influence, Robert E. Lee, having secured an appointment to West Point, received his first training at the Public Academy on South Washington street at the rear of Washington School, which contained a department for orphans of Revolutionary soldiers (and was founded by Washington from his private purse). Lee later attended Hallowell School, where many distinguished Virginians received their training. The son be-



WASHINGTON FREE SCHOOL, Washington and Wolfe Streets

came such an ardent States' Rights advocate that Virginia claimed his first consideration. Lee, then a young Federal colonel living at Arlington, attended Christ Church, which he knew so well as a boy, and his wife was directly descended from the Widow Custis, who, as Washington's wife, often attended with him Christ Church, after the Revolution. Lee was confirmed at Christ Church in 1853. It was while stopping at the *Lloyd House* (southwest corner of Washington and Queen streets) as was his custom, that he

learned of the commission of the Virginia Legislature offering him the command of the Army of Virginia.

A delegation of gentlemen came from Richmond to persuade him to place his sword at the service of the State, and met him after service in Christ Church, that fateful Sunday. They stood there a long time in earnest conversation with Robert E. Lee, who the day before had resigned his commission in the United States Army. The ordinance



EARLY HOME OF ROBT. E. LEE, Oronoco and St. Asaph

of secession of Virginia had just passed, and "Rooney" (W. H. F.) Lee (his son), had been heard to say the day before that the State had made a "terrible mistake," though the people were jubilant. Second in interest to "what will Virginia do?" was "What will General Lee do?" That morning in April was decided the issue of a *mortal struggle*, as much more terrible than any known to the din of battle as the human soul is greater than shot and shell. The Alexandria Riflemen had just passed resolutions to the

effect: "Our first allegiance is due \* \* \* to Virginia." Christ Church had long before witnessed another decision, momentous in the history of America, for Washington is said to have stood on the same spot consulting with Colonial leaders just before he was offered the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Colonial Forces.

Just in front of the War Department may be seen the house where Lee was offered (not long before his resignation from the Army), the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Federal Forces. Dr. Randolph McKim, the rector, preached a striking memorial sermon on Lee, in Christ Church, at the time of Lee's death. General Lee's brother, Captain *Sidney Smith Lee*, lived at 111 Oronoco street (with his father, "Light Horse Harry" Lee), and resigned from the United States Navy likewise to join the navy of the Confederacy. Sidney Smith Lee was father of a boy who was destined to play his part in the Civil War, and likewise to become famous in the Spanish War—*Fitzhugh Lee* (who later lived at 219 North Washington street).

#### Fitzhugh Lee

He was confirmed in Christ Church and sang in the choir for many years. He happened to be Consul-General at Havana, and controlled there an exceedingly delicate and dangerous situation, when the battleship "Maine" was blown up. This brigadier general of the Confederacy now becomes a Major General of the Federal army in the Spanish war.

So we have the remarkable spectacle of three men of the Lee family, of three generations, at times residents of Alexandria, standing forth prominently in crucial periods of our history. "Light Horse Harry," Washington's "right arm" in the Revolution; Robert E. Lee, who conquered America by his splendid character, in spite of military defeat; and Fitzhugh Lee, who had a conspicuous part in ridding the Western world of the last remnants of the tyranny of the land of Pizarro and Cortez. (Perhaps it ought to be noted that Charles Lee, severely reprimanded by Washington for disobedience to orders, was in no way connected with the Lees of Virginia).

## XVI

### A CITY WHICH WAS VICTIM OF A SYSTEM

*"I never mean, unless some particular circumstances should compel me to do it, to possess another slave by purchase, it being my first wishes to see some plan adopted by which slavery in this country may be abolished by law."—Washington.*

#### The Shadow of Slavery

**T**HE institution of slavery as forced upon Virginians by British rule, and the treatment of slaves in Colonial days was thoroughly repellant to Alexandrians. Before the Revolution an uprising of slaves against their masters had been summarily quelled and the heads of the slaves were long suspended upon spikes over the old jail, as a warning to all offenders among them. A townsman of Alexandria, George Mason, was soon to write in Virginia's famous "Bill of Rights" that "all men are by nature equally free and independent," and today this is part of her organic law. Immediately after the Revolution, in 1778, Mason, representing Alexandria in the Burgesses, introduced a bill prohibiting the further importation of slaves. Then laws were passed encouraging their gradual emancipation. When Alexandria later became part of the District of Columbia a benevolent society was formed here to promote their freedom, and a petition to this effect, presented to Congress, was ignored. Men like Washington, Mason, Jeremiah Moore and others, would have liberated their slaves, but the problem was how not to make a bad matter worse, because of no special provision for such under the law, although history records more than thirty thousand free negroes in Virginia in 1810. Henry Clay and other native Virginians were the founders of Liberia in 1816.

The attempt of the "Old Dominion" to get out from under the dangerous slavery compromise written in the Constitution (against the protests of the representatives from Virginia in the Continental Congress) amounted to nothing. Alexandria's voice was thus silenced and she must submit to the slave trade.

### "Slave Pen"

The building still standing at 1318 Duke street, and now known as "The Norman," was used as a place to bring slaves preparatory to sale or hiring. Some citizens now living in Alexandria can recall these unhappy days. There were no such dispicable characters known in Alexandria, however, as those painted in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The old "Slave Pen," as it was called, witnessed the fact that a system had been fostered by the Federal Government rendering local opposition vain, and the city authorities were submitting to it patiently. Slaves, however, were carefully trained in the truths of Christianity, as is witnessed by the many colored churches in Alexandria today.

### Virginia Over a Mine

But *Virginia had been dwelling over a mine* from the days of Nat Turner to those of John Brown. In 1859 the "Alexandria Riflemen" escorted the Governor of Virginia to Harpers Ferry to suppress the John Brown raid (an unsuccessful attempt to incite the negroes to insurrection and war upon their masters). The War Department at Washington, realizing the lawlessness of a situation created by this fanatic, sent Col. Robert E. Lee, of the United States Army (and a townsman of Alexandria), to take charge of the desperate emergency. With Lee on this historic occasion was "Jeb" Stuart. Lee had little sympathy with slavery but still less with lawlessness.

The slavery issue, thus forced on all Virginians, was to precipitate a conflict that made Virginia, unwillingly a great battle ground, which finally settled by the sword what she had attempted to settle in a peaceful manner long before.

### XVII

## A CITY WHICH NEVER DODGED A PATRIOTIC DUTY

*"The brazen throat of war."—Milton*



HE Confederate Soldiers' Monument on South Washington street may be looked upon as typical of the martial spirit of Alexandria, in the great struggle for human liberty at various periods of our history. In every war of that history she promptly responded in men and resources, though "slack-ers" elsewhere were not uncommon even in the days of the Revolution.

### The French and Indian War

Alexandrians were found among the "Virginia Rangers," and at least two companies of Alexandria Militia made an imperishable record at Fort Duquesne under their beloved Colonel Washington, whose headquarters was at *Old City Tavern*. The failure of Washington in these expeditions against the French caused the British Government to send General Braddock and Admiral Keppel to Alexandria. In accepting his commission as captain on Braddock's staff Washington wrote: "I am not a little biased by selfish considerations, as I earnestly wish to attain some knowledge of the military profession." This expedition contained a number of Alexandrians. Besides Washington were Dr. Craik, John Carlyle and Daniel Morgan. The former Colonel of Virginia Militia, George Washington, had been demoted with other Colonials by Governor Dinwiddie, and now he was to save the British expedition in the South from complete annihilation. Very many Alexandrians did not return with him. Washington was honorary captain of the "Alexandria Blues," and on the 20th of June, 1775, wrote them not to relax their discipline now that he was Commander-in-Chief of the Colonial Forces. Indeed, he had spent days in 1775, in personally drilling independent companies for the Revolution on Market Square. Alexandria furnished her quota in that great conflict, though there was no fighting upon her streets strangely. After Braddock's defeat it was commonly felt here that one Colonial

soldier was equal to three Redcoats. Washington himself wrote of the cowardice of the British regulars on that occasion, though they had once been highly regarded by the Colonies.

### Raising Money for the Revolution

The old Ramsay House (cor. King and Fairfax streets), was the scene of much activity during the Revolution. Col. William Ramsay was too old to take active part in Revolutionary military operations, but he was intensely patriotic and used his technical knowledge in placing obstructions in the Potomac River against England's fleet. His wife, Mrs. Anne McCarty Ramsay, cousin of George Washington, was appointed treasurer of the town of Alexandria and county, for the reception of money for the use of the soldiers, and an extant letter notes her sending more than *seventy-five thousand dollars on one occasion, collected from the citizens of Alexandria* and thereabout. Thomas Jefferson speaks of her as one of the patriotic women of Virginia. Her son, Col. Denis Ramsay, was an active officer in the Revolution and was pallbearer of his relative, George Washington. So it is to be noted that when the Continental Congress failed to furnish money, Mrs. Anne McCarty Ramsay rose to the emergency in Alexandria, as did Morris in Philadelphia. Her grandfather McCarty was speaker of the Burgesses from 1715 to 1720.

### Expected War With France

In 1798 there were eight military companies in Alexandria, beside the "Black Cockades," a company of half-grown boys. At least one additional company was formed in that year, with William Harper as captain, to prepare for expected war with their former ally, France. Washington allowed himself to be appointed Lieutenant General, and on his departure was given special honors by the militia of his home town. He gave his last military order the next year from the steps of Gadsby's to the militia of Alexandria. (It was from the steps of the *Old City Tavern* that, at the age of 23, he had received his commission as Colonel of the Virginia Militia, and two years later he made this his headquarters when commissioned a Major on Braddock's staff). The "Alexandria Blues" had a conspicuous part at his funeral, and were under Captain Henry Piercy (Col. George De Neale was in command of the militia).

In the second war with England Alexandria raised several companies, with artillery, for the protection of Washington; and Alexandria troops under Captain Griffith fought the enemy fleet bravely with six-pounders till their ammunition gave out.

### Mexican War

In 1848 the "Alexandria Volunteers" in the Mexican War returned, under *Capt. M. D. Corse*, whose home still stands at 414 North Washington street. In the Civil War Captain Corse became colonel of the 17th Virginia Regiment and Brigadier-General in Pickett's Division. The fame of the *gallant "17th Virginia"* was honored throughout all the State. *Kemper's Battery* likewise won enduring fame at Manassas. The blood of Alexandria's soldiers stained many a battlefield.

### Civil War

The *Confederate Monument* (Washington and Prince streets) was erected to the memory of the Alexandria soldiers who fell in a struggle for what they conceived to be a correct interpretation of the Constitution. They had started for the front from this very spot of May 24, 1861, and they had never faltered in following their own *Robert E. Lee*. The monument contains a beautiful bronze figure of a Confederate soldier looking toward his beloved South, and it is very significantly called "Appomattox."

### Spanish War

The "Alexandria Light Infantry" entrained on Henry street for the *Spanish-American War*. The same company entrained from the same place for the great *World War*, and, together with volunteers and drafted men, they received on their return a notable welcome in a special service held in Old Christ Church, participated in by all the ministers in Alexandria. The reputation of her sons for faithfulness and courage had repeatedly been maintained in this greatest war of all history, fought to maintain the principle of human liberty.

## XVIII

## WHERE THE DOGS OF WAR WERE UNLEASHED

*"And the stern joy which warriors feel  
"In foemen worthy of their steel."*

—W. Scott

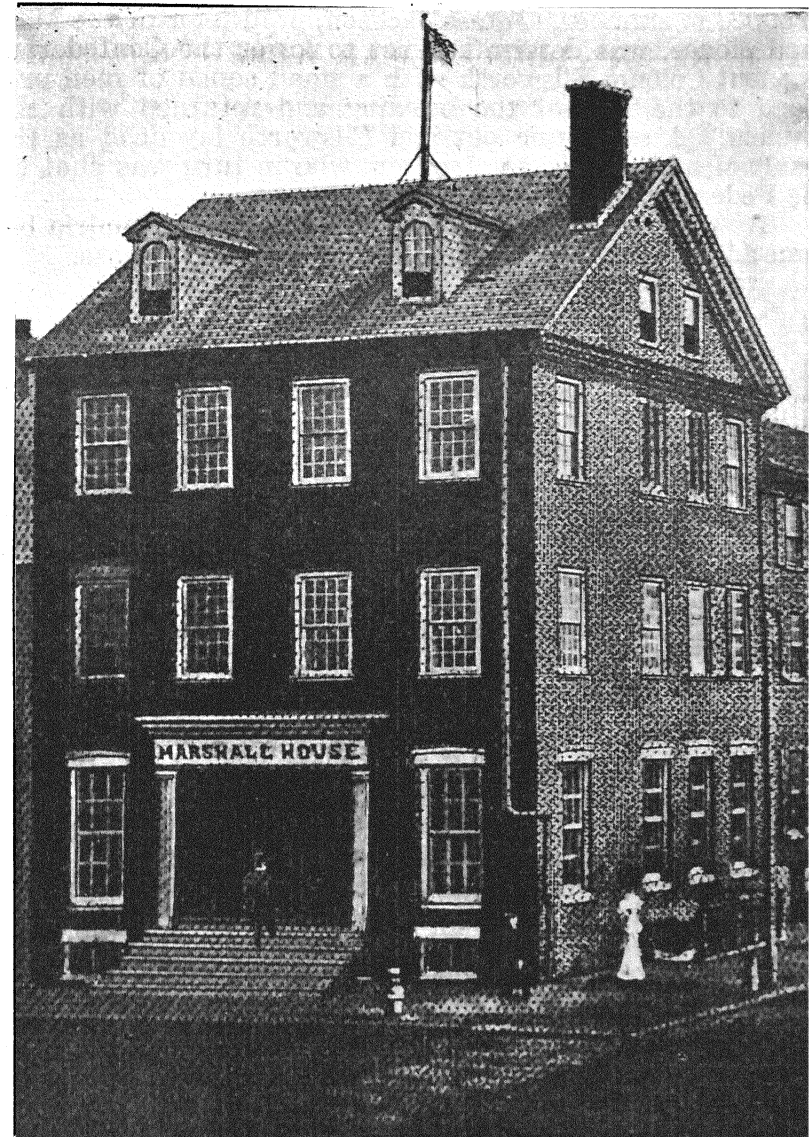
## The Marshall House

**T**HE original walls of this historic building stand as in the days of the "irrepressible conflict." Here was drawn the very first blood of the war, which attracted the attention of the entire country to this spot. Relic hunters have been busy ever since because of the vital historical interest.

## Story of a Tragedy

Alexandria was still in the hands of the Confederates, and both sides of the river were picketed, when one day President Lincoln and his Cabinet, with others, viewed the flag of the Confederacy floating defiantly from the roof of this building, in this old Colonial city across the Potomac.

A curious story, well authenticated, hangs about this incident. When Lincoln was a struggling country lawyer he employed in his office a boy by the name of Ellsworth, to sweep out his office and to do other menial work. When the future President was called to larger fields of activity the man drifted to New York and became interested in military affairs. (Even before in the West he had gained reputation as a military officer and commanded a "crack" regiment which had a national fame.) He was elected Colonel of the New York Fire Zouaves, and soon after the beginning of the Civil Conflict the regiment was sent to Washington for the defense of the Capital City. Ellsworth had free access to the White House because of his former friendship with the President, and was in the company that day viewing the flag of defiance. He said to Mrs. Lincoln: "If the President will allow my regiment to enter Alexandria first, I will bring that flag to you as a souvenir." The President gave consent to the request made by his wife. That flag was lowered, and on May 24, 1861, a silent move was made which resulted in the capture of Alexandria, whose occupation continued during the period of the war. The New York



MARSHALL HOUSE DURING THE WAR  
King and Pitt Streets



"Zouaves," with other regiments, reached the foot of Cameron street by water while nearly all of the inhabitants were wrapped in slumber. James Jackson, proprietor of the Marshall House, was determined not to lower the Confederate flag, but Colonel Ellsworth with a small squad of men proceeded to the roof of the building and returned with the emblem. A shot rang out and Ellsworth lay dead as the result of a shot fired by Jackson, who in turn was shot by the Federal soldiers.

As a climax of this unfortunate episode Alexandria became for a time a place of unusual partisan bitterness.

### A Southern Sympathizer

The then pastor of the First Baptist Church was Dr. C. C. Bitting, a Pennsylvanian by birth, but a sympathizer with the aspirations of the South, and lovingly recognized by such in the region round about. (He was for a time preacher for several congregations here). This pastor was subjected to many indignities, even in his family circle, and when raiding parties were sent out on the Virginia Midland Railroad the Federal authorities would frequently place Dr. Bitting and other leading citizens upon the "cow-catcher" of the train, knowing that the Confederates would not fire upon or wreck it.

### The Zouaves at Bull Run

The command of the "Zouaves" after the death of Ellsworth developed upon Colonel Farnham. These rough fire-fighters from New York City were later to receive a baptism of fire at the "First Battle of Bull Run." They stood face to face with the soldiers of Alexandria, who had retired upon their occupation of the city, and likewise face to face with the "Black Horse Cavalry," commanded by General Payne (a direct descendant of the man who had the altercation with Washington concerning an election, before the Revolution). In this terrific conflict, where "Stonewall" Jackson was immortalized, the "Zouaves" suffered greatly, and the remnants straggled back into Alexandria, with other survivors, in a most demoralized condition. It is said that as they passed under the tunnel at Wilkes and Fairfax streets an old woman gathered stones in her apron and threw them at the panic-stricken soldiers, pressing on to the protection of the gunboats. Certain it is that many prominent citi-

zens of Alexandria forgot the bitterness of the moment and opened their homes to the enemy thus scattered. It is a curious fact that in obeying an order to raise the flag of the invaders, for the first time near Market Square, a young soldier fell to the ground and was killed.

The Marshall House may be looked upon as a memorial to the beginning of the greatest fratricidal conflict of history, whose bitterness is fortunately gone forever.

The "Zouaves" became good friends of Alexandria during the entire war, though this is questioned by some. These Federal forces learned to esteem Alexandrians highly.

## XIX

## A MONUMENT TO A MAN WHO IS THE WONDER OF THE AGES

"Because he needs no praise, will thou be dumb?"

"Excuse not silence so, for it lies in thee

"To make him much outlive a gilded tongue,

"And to be praised of ages yet to be."

—Shakespeare.

### The Masonic Memorial

**W**ASHINGTON thought highly of Masonry, as bolstering up the principles of democracy which he had done so much to establish. The inception of this mammoth memorial lies with Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22, and the convention thus drawn together represented constituencies of Masonry in the United States and its insular possessions. William H. Taft, President of the United States, esteemed it a "pleasure and a privilege" to lay aside his august duties and gave it his earnest support. It might be interesting to notice just a few of the priceless relics\* that will be kept in this shrine, to have sentimental value for all time. Old records will be kept that tell of participation in mighty events in a Nation's history.

### The Pocket Compass

We look upon *The Pocket Compass* of the youthful surveyor which he carried with him, while in training for the stirring events in which he was to take part. His exact work with it brought him in contact with his chief benefactor, Lord Fairfax, who was first to discover in the boy the elements of greatness which are a continual astonishment to the world.

### The Pocket Knife

We see here his *Pocket Knife* which played an important part in a critical period of his career. It was presented by his mother, who had dissuaded him from accepting a

\* These and many more relics at present are to be seen in Masonic Temple in the Market Building.

position of midshipman in the English navy and who gave it as a reward of submission to her will, thus changing the current of his life. At Valley Forge when the Continental Congress failed to provide for his starving army, though food was abundant about them, he actually wrote his resignation as commander-in-chief. General Knox reminded him of this little knife and his mother's injunction always to obey his superiors. Half an hour later he had torn up his resignation determined to win freedom from King George III. This little knife was the means by which he was incited to do his duty at a most crucial time when the leaders were half-hearted, and this determination changed the map of the world and resulted in the foundation of the best government the world has ever seen.

### The Famous Trowel

We see here the *Trowel* used by Washington at the laying of the cornerstone of the National Capitol. This historic building became later the permanent home of a government which has been a model for every democratic government since. Can you imagine the feelings of the chief actor in events that led to such a happy consummation? Was there a new vow then to consecrate the remainder of his life through bitter and venomous criticism, to the firm establishment of those principles?

### The Old Clock

Here is to be seen the *Old Clock*, which marked time in his bedroom, to the very moment when this mighty man of destiny passed into the great Beyond. Dr. Dick, one of the attending physicians, cut the pendulum cord and stopped this timepiece at the exact moment of his death.

Thus we look upon the object marking an event, which at its announcement, produced in Alexandria "general disorder, wildness and consternation," according to the local paper. It marked the end of a life but only the beginning of a World-wide influence that grows with the years.

### The Alexandria Gazette

The Alexandria Gazette, which has been publishing the events of the day since shortly after the Colonies threw off the bondage of the Mother country, is among the points



ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE, 317 King Street

### HISTORIC PLACES IN ALEXANDRIA

1. Christ Church (1783-8). 2. Lee's boyhood home. 3. Hollowell House. 4. Friendship Engine House (1774). 5. Carlyle House (1752). 6. City Hotel. 6. Washington Headquarters. 7. Relics in Washington Masonic Lodge. 8. Oldest House in Alexandria (1751). 9. Lloyd House (1792). 10. Lafayette House. 11. Washington Free School (1785). 12. Site of Old Colonial Jail. 13. Site of Old Colonial Courthouse. 14. Site of Washington's Town House. 15. Albert Pike House. 16. First Presbyterian Church (1774). 17. House of Dr. Elisha C. Dick. 18. House of Dr. James Craik. 19. Marshall House. 20. Anne Lee Memorial. 21. Home of "Light Horse Harry" Lee. 22. House of General Robedeau. 23. Washington's Tenement Houses. 24. Site of George Washington National Masonic Memorial.

(See Map )

of interest in connection with the history of the city. It has a record of publication reaching as far back as 1784, and is the oldest daily now published in the nation.

# ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

"GATEWAY TO THE SOUTH"

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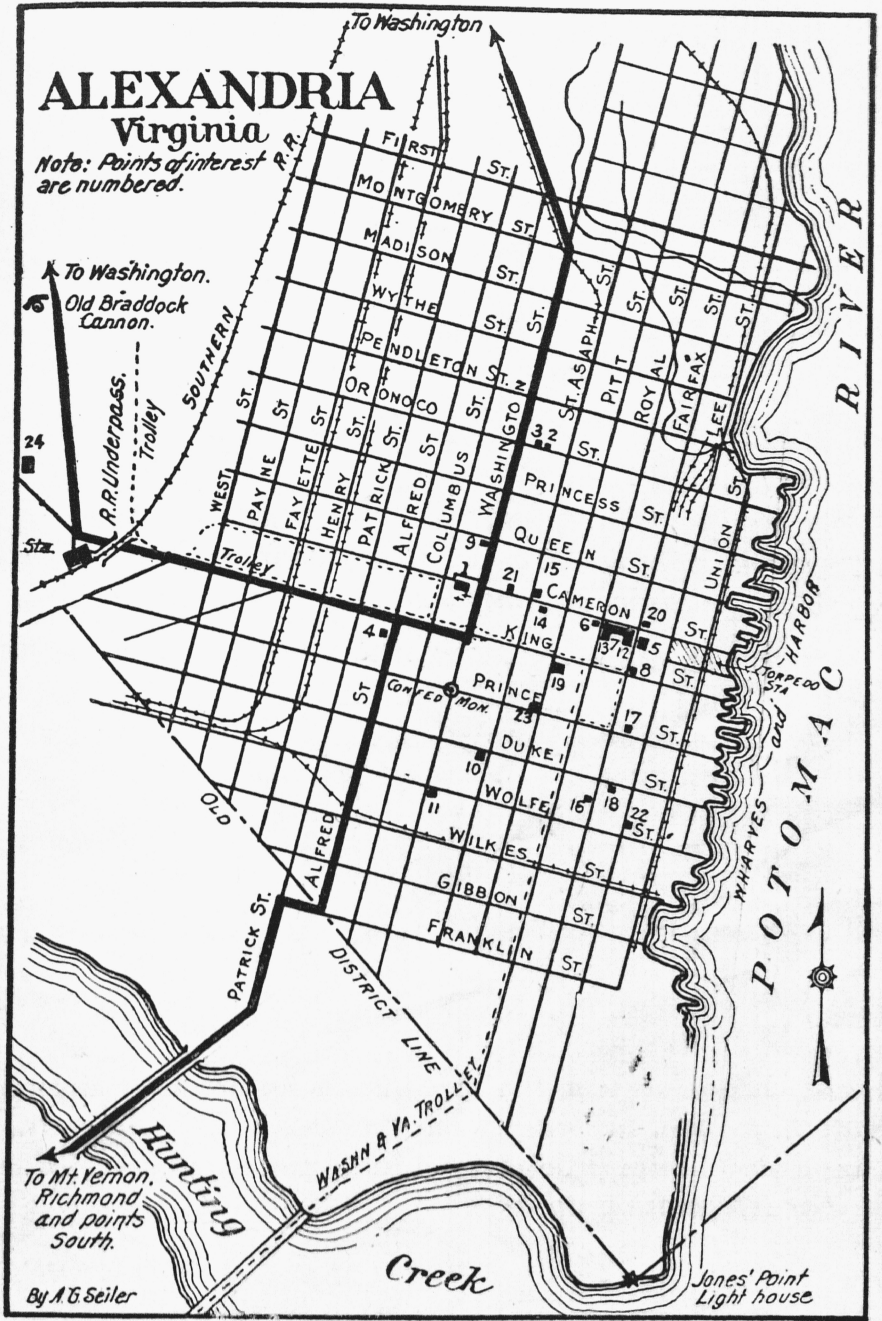
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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## ALEXANDRIA Virginia

Note: Points of interest are numbered.



By A. G. Seiler

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