

ALEXANDRIA HISTORY

FROM ALEXANDRIA TO ALBANY

The Journal of Mrs. Charlotte Brown
1754-1757

GENERAL EDWARD BRADDOCK

A Retrospective

THE ALEXANDRIA MARKET SQUARE

DOCTORING & FISHING
ON THE POTOMAC IN 1843

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FROM ALEXANDRIA TO ALBANY

The Journal of Mrs. Charlotte Browne

November 1754 - August 1757

by Ethelyn Cox

On Sunday, November the 17, my Brother and self a Man Servant and Maid, embark'd on Board the Ship London Cap.^t Browne, laden with Stores for the Hospital.

This was the first entry in the journal of Mrs. Charlotte Browne,¹ an English lady who accompanied her brother, a commissary officer in the army of Major-General Edward Braddock, on the campaign against the French and Indians. Her journal reveals that she was a widow with children left behind in England — a remarkable woman who suffered hardships with courage and reported intelligently on the places she saw and the people she met.

After a long and tedious passage, enlivened by occasional "squalls" among some of the male passengers, the ship arrived at Hampton Roads, Virginia on March 10, 1755, with all in good spirits. Four officers came on board and consumed fifteen bottles of port, "all in the Cabbin drunk (but Mr. Cherrington)."

The next day the captain received orders to set sail up the Potomac River in 28 hours. Mrs. Browne and her brother went ashore and breakfasted at the *Kings Arms* in Hampton. She found the town "A very agreeable Place and all the houses extremely neate." For dinner they enjoyed ham, turkey, breast of veal and oysters, all washed down with Madeira wine and "Punch of Cyder."

On March 21 they arrived at "Bellhaven" harbor. An unincorporated settlement had grown around a tobacco warehouse at the foot of Oronoco Street, and the early settlers had called it Belhaven. When the Virginia Assembly had passed an act establishing the town on May 11, 1749, the community was named Alexandria after land owner John Alexander.² The town's 60 acres, divided into 84 lots, extended from the swampy land adjoining Oronoco Street southward to midway between Duke and Wolfe Streets, and from the Potomac River westward to midway between Royal and Pitt Streets. The river curved in a gentle arc from Point West at the foot of Oronoco Street to Point Lumley at the foot of Duke Street, forming a good harbor.

In 1752 the Fairfax County Court was moved to Alexandria, and by 1755 a courthouse had been built in the marketplace on the half-block that today is the site of City Hall. A whipping post and stocks stood nearby. Several warehouses

and dwellings had been built, among them John Carlyle's new stone house, the showplace of the town, which became the lodgings and headquarters of General Braddock and his aides during their stay in Alexandria.

Mrs. Browne's lodgings were not as elegant. She probably found a room in a private house, as Army officers would have had the first choice of accommodations in the town's taverns or ordinaries, of which there were several at that time. There are a few references to these taverns in contemporary sources. In December 1749 the Fairfax County Court granted Hugh West a license to keep an ordinary at his house near the ferry at the foot of Oronoco Street. The *Virginia Gazette* (Hunter, editor) of November 10, 1752 mentioned "The King's Arms Tavern in Belhaven." In the *Maryland Gazette* of April 3, 1775, Nathanael Smith announced that he was going out as sutler to the camp and would sell his houses and lots in Alexandria, consisting of one acre on which there was a house suitable for a tavern, 82 feet long, with a kitchen, meat house and stable. This establishment was later known as the "Long Tavern." Alexandria tax records for 1802 [Volume 11, page 4] place the tavern on the northwest corner of Queen and Fairfax Streets. Charles Mason's ordinary, traditionally dating from 1752, probably stood on or near the site of the building known today as the Coffee House, or City Tavern, just south of Gadsby's City Hotel. There George Washington lodged in October 1775, as his account book [Ledger A, page 40] shows.

The following entries from Mrs. Browne's journal cover the period from her arrival in Alexandria on March 22 to her departure on June 1.¹ They are printed just as Mrs. Browne wrote them, without changes in spelling, capitalization, etc. They provide the earliest known account of life in the new town.

March the 22. Went on Shore to Bellhaven with Mr. Bass. Extremely hot, but as agreeable a Place as could be expected it being inhabited but 4 years. went with Mr. Lake to every House in the Place to get a Lodging and at last was Obliged to take a Room but little larger than to hold my Bed and not so much as a Chair in it. Went on Board at Night.

March the 23. Sunday was hurried on Shore with all my Baggage to my Lodging. My Brother took one the next Door. I now think myself very happy that I am at Liberty once more, having been a Prisoner in that wooden World call'd the London 4 Months and 4 Days. I have sail'd since I left England 3 Thousand Leagues.

March the 26. My Brother went to his Lodgings at a dutch Mans. 5 of the Doctors being at a Loss where to go, came to board with us staid 3 Weeks and then were order'd to Will's Creek [near the site of Fort Cumberland, Maryland].

April the 22. All the Troops march'd to Will's Creek left behind 1 Officer and 40 Men, my Brother and self in care of the Sick having 50 ill.

April the 29. Words cannot express my Joy received a letter from England being the first since I left them, my dear Children and all were well it was dated the 4 of February. My mind much more at ease.

May the 3. Major Carlile's Lady came to see me but I was at a loss to seat her not having a Chair in the House, she sent home for 3. [The caller was Sarah (1729-1761), daughter of William Fairfax of Belvoir and wife of John Carlyle.]

May the 4. This Day was oblig'd to quit our grand Parlour the Man of the House being at a loss for a Room for the soldiers to drink Cyder and dance Jiggs in.

May the 5. Removed into our first Floor it consisted of a Bed Chamber and dining Room not over large. The Furniture was 3 Chairs, a Table, a Case to hold Liquor and a Tea Chest.

May the 6. This Unhappy Day 2 years depriv'd me of my dear Husband and ever since to this Day my Life has been one continual Scene of Anxiety and Care.

May the 21. Extremely hot. discharg'd my Servant Betty, having found of mine in her Box a pair of Ruffles a pair of Stockings and an Apron.

May the 31. [sic] Mr. Wood gave my Brother and self an Invitation to go to see his Daughter. it was 4 miles up the River set of [sic] at 4 and came to her House at 6 but to great Disappointment she was out but her Mother receiv'd us with a friendly wellcome we stay'd till 6 and then with great difficulty got into our Boat it being a Shore and when we had got half way home our Cockswain run us a Ground and we were some Hours before we could get clear at 11 we got home, But I was much fatigued with my Journey. ["Mr. Wood" was James Wood, the clerk of Frederick and founder of Winchester, who, in 1754-55, served as assistant commissary of the Virginia Forces under John Carlyle. The name of Mr. Wood's daughter, who was living on Four Mile Run, north of Alexandria, is not known.]

May the 24. 5 Waggon's came in we wait for 4 more Mr. Napper sent us 2 markeys (marquee, or officer's field tent) very busy getting ready to march.

May the 25. Most of this Day was spent in making a Tilt (canopy) for my Waggon which is to be my Bed Chamber on my March to Wills's Creek.

May the 26. My new servant came sent a Letter to England by the Man of War Cap.¹ Deggs bound for Hampton.

May the 27. Went with Cap.¹ Johnson's Lady to Mr. Roshars in Maryland. we were receiv'd with great Politeness. the neatest House I have seen since I left England, and furnish'd in Taste. we stay'd till Night. ["Captain Johnson's Lady" was Sarah, daughter of Dennis McCarty of Fairfax County, and wife of George Johnson, an Alexandria lawyer, who, ten years later, was associated with Patrick Henry in condemning the Stamp Act. "Mr. Roshar" was Henry Rozer of Notley Hall in Prince George's County, Maryland.]

May the 28. Cap.¹ West's Lady came to see me and found me very busy packing up. spent the Evening at Cap.¹ Johnson's much intreated to stay all Night, but did not. ["Capt. West's Lady" was Margaret, daughter of Simon Pearson and widow of William Henry Terrett of Alexandria, who had recently made a second marriage with her cousin, John West, then a Burgess for Fairfax County.]

May the 29. Received a Card from Mrs. Salkeldat, with her Comp'ts and desired my Company to her Husbands Funeral at 2. he has been dead a Month. it is the custom of this Place to bury their Relations in their Gardens. ["Henry Saleald," or "Salkeld," was the purchaser of two lots at the first sale in Alexandria in 1749. His lots, Nos. 38 and 39, included the north side of the 300 block of Cameron Street and extended north on Fairfax and Royal Streets to midway between Cameron and Queen Streets. When his son and namesake, Henry Salkeld, advertised them for sale in the *Maryland Gazette* of July 18, 1771, there were buildings on a portion of the half-block fronting on the 200 block of North Fairfax Street.]

May the 30. Extreem hot very busy making Bread and Ginger Bread and boiling Hams for our March, had Company to dine with us in our Anti Chamber which is as hot as a Bagnio [bathing house for steambaths] we are to march on Sunday for Will's Creek if Mr. Faulkner our commanding Officer does not get in his upper Rooms and forget it. [Fairfax Harrison's version is "does not get *lit* in his upper rooms," but "lit" is not in the manuscript.]

May the 31. Spent this Day in packing up and loading my Waggon and fixing my Tilt sup'd at Cap.¹ Johnsons and lay'd at Mr. Moxly's but had no sleep not having lay'd on a Bed since I left England. [An ordinary was sometimes identified by the name of the proprietor. Harrison suggests that "Mr. Moxly's" ordinary was at Cameron, west of Alexandria, and that Mrs. Johnson was at "Belvale," the Johnson's country estate. There is nothing in the journal entries to

indicate that Mrs. Browne left Alexandria before June 1. It seems equally, if not more probable that Moxly's ordinary was in Alexandria and that Mrs. Johnson was staying in their Alexandria house on the east side of what is now the 200 block of South Lee Street. It is possible that "Mr. Moxly" succeeded Nathanael Smith as proprietor of the Long Tavern.]

Mrs. Browne's Journal continues:

June the 1. At 4 in the Morning I was call'd up by Mrs. Johnson who came to take her leave of me and at 6 we March'd for Will's Creek with one Officer, my Brother, self and Servant, 2 Nurses, 2 Cooks and 40 Men to guard us, 12 Waggons with the sick, Lame, and Blind, my Waggon in the rear, my Equipage 3 Horses and a Mare good in Spirit but poor in Flesh which I mentioned to Mr. Gore (my coachman) who told me if they were right fat they would faint by the Way my Brother came padding on his Horse in the Rear but as my Friend Gore observ'd there was no fear of his fainting by the Way being very poor in Flesh we had march'd 3 Miles when my Coachman was for taking a better Road but the Sentries forbid it, but he said it was very hard if the other Waggons drove to the Old Boy he must follow them we halted at 3 and din'd on a Piece of salt Pork and Water to drink and at 6 we came to the old Court House 17 Miles from Bellhaven, laid in a Room with but 3 Beds in it.

Unfortunately there are no entries in Mrs. Browne's journals for the period between March 26 and April 22, 1755, and there is no description of the meeting in Alexandria of General Braddock and the governors of the five colonies to discuss the conduct and financing of the British campaign against the French and Indians on the western frontier. Nor did Mrs. Browne mention the general. We must turn to other sources to find out what happened during this interval.

As for Mrs. Browne, after she left Alexandria, her journal shows that her life continued to be a "Scene of Anxiety and Care." On the journey to Fort Cumberland, the roads were so bad that she was "almost disjointed." The travelers struggled through thunderstorms and heavy rains, and on June 13 arrived at the fort, "the most desolate Place" Mrs. Browne had ever seen. There she found letters from home, an old friend, Mr. Cherrington, whom she had met on the ship *London*.

She was in bed for ten days with a "Fever, Flux and other disorders," and her brother and her maid also became ill. On July 11 news arrived of the overwhelming defeat of Braddock's army, and a rumour of the General's death. Mrs. Browne noted "it is not possible to describe the Distraction of the poor Women for their Husbands." Her brother died on July 17 and her maid left to join her husband.

Alone and sick, Mrs. Browne made numerous references in her journal of her grief for her brother. Then Mr. Cherrington, "the only one I can call my friend," departed. Still suffering from her persistent illness, she traveled on

horseback, 150 miles, finally reaching "Frederick's Town" [Frederick, Maryland] on August 30.

On October 11 she had recovered enough to start on horseback for Philadelphia, escorted by Mr. Cherrington, who was traveling in a chaise. She noted that among the baggage stowed in the chaise was a "Dressing Box" of Mr. Cherrington's wife, the only journal entry that suggested that her "only friend" was married. When the travelers sought lodgings and asked for two beds:

the Mistress of the house said she presumed we were Man and Wife and that one would do. Mr. Cherr.ⁿ said it was true I was his wife but it was very seldom that he was favoured with part of my Bed she said she was sorry for it and at last complied. I was favoured with a Bed of Down and Mr. Cherr.ⁿ with one of Straw.

An entry of October 16 described their first quarrel:

Mr. Cherr.ⁿ and I not being of the same Opinion as to my Sex in general we had many Disputes several illnatured Truths were said on both Sides it ended with my telling him that he did nothing but to say and unsay and that he was so unaccountable a Riddle I knew not what to make of him he made me a low Bow and said he was much obliged to me and retired.

The next morning they met "with reserve." After proceeding on their journey for six miles, Mrs. Browne's horse refused to budge and she was obliged to walk. Mr. Cherrington came to her rescue and insisted she ride in his chaise. While they were going down a hill, the chaise upset. They were not injured, but the accident apparently restored her friend's good humor because he remarked that he "had the Honour of overturning" her.

Upon reaching Philadelphia, which Mrs. Browne described as "London in Miniature," they lodged at the *Indian King*, where some of the "People of the House" thought Mrs. Browne was Mr. Cherrington's wife, and others thought she was his mistress. Cherrington told them she was neither, and they then treated her "with more Respect."

Mrs. Brown was assigned a room in the Philadelphia hospital, where her duties included daily visits to the market for provisions. Her friend Cherrington did not call for two weeks, and then arrived at four and stayed until eleven. Mrs. Browne told him that "it was impolite for him to make his first visit so long." She did not see him until December 1, when, to her "great Surprise," she met him in church. Apparently they resolved their differences, as she noted two weeks later that he had presented her with a "tippet and Muf."

During the winter of 1755-1756, Mrs. Browne enjoyed the social life in Philadelphia and New York. In Philadelphia, Mrs. Franklin⁴ had been a frequent companion, and had given Mrs. Browne a letter of introduction to Dr. Bard at the hospital in New York. She traveled to New York on February 17, and during her stay there several of the "Town Ladies" called on her. Her friend Cherrington arrived from Philadelphia on February 25. On April 8 they

set sail for Albany on the sloop *Delancey*, with Mr. Cherrington the commanding officer. He assigned her the best cabin on the ship, and she found the journey up the Hudson River the "most romantic Scene" she had ever witnessed. She was "at a loss to tell the Mountains from the Clouds."

When they arrived in Albany on April 13, they saw Indians "adorned with Beads in their Noses and Ears and black Blankets being in mourning for their Friend [sic] who were killed in the last Campaign."

Among Mrs. Browne's callers in Albany was an Englishwoman, an old acquaintance, who told Mrs. Browne that some of the Dutch citizens of the town believed that she had been the mistress of General Braddock. Her caller assured them that her father had known Mrs. Browne as "Maid, Wife and Widow," and that no one could "say any thing bad" about her.

On July 26 there was a single entry in the journal: "This Day War was declared in America." (England actually declared war on France in May 1756 and France responded on June 9.)

The summer in Albany, where Mrs. Browne was assigned to the military hospital, was filled with the arrival and departure of troops. On August 10 sad news arrived from England — her daughter Charlotte was dead. Then, on December 1, Mr. Cherrington, "in whom I have lost all my Friends in one," returned to England. The weather added to her difficulties. January 18, 1757 was "the coldest day I think I ever knew." Infrequent entries that winter and spring were concerned chiefly with military maneuvers. On July 13 she wrote: "This Day was kept a Fast by order of Gen.^l Marcy." In late July urgent messages arrived from Fort Henry and Fort Edward, about fifty miles north of Albany, warning of the approach of the French. Then on August 4 an "Express" arrived advising that Fort Henry was "besieged with 1100 French" and imploring that "Expresses may be sent to New York and New England for all the Assistance they can send." On that day Mrs. Browne's account comes to a close:

"I here end my Journal having so much business on my Hands that I cannot write it."

Alexandria historian Ethelyn Cox became interested in local history in 1948 when she and her husband, the late Hugh Cox, purchased the Michael Swope House (circa 1785) on Prince Street. She is the author of two books on Alexandria, *Historic Alexandria Street by Street*, published by the Historic Alexandria Foundation, and, with Marian Van Landingham, *To Wit*, and of several articles of local history, including "The Founding of Alexandria," which appears in *ALEXANDRIA: A Composite History*, published by the Alexandria Bicentennial Commission in 1975.

NOTES

1. Charlotte Browne, Journal (November 17, 1754-August 4, 1757) (Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Photocopy of the original manuscript obtained from S. A. Courtauld, Esq., of the Howe, Halstead, co. Essex, England.)
2. Ethelyn Cox, "The Founding of Alexandria," Elizabeth Hambleton and Marian Van Lanningham, eds., *Alexandria: A Composite History*, Alexandria, Virginia: Alexandria Bicentennial Commission (1975) pp. 7-10.
3. Fairfax Harrison, ed. "With Braddock's Army: Mrs Browne's Diary in Virginia and Maryland," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 32, No. 4 (October 1924): pp. 305-320. (Harrison's footnotes to Mrs. Browne's entries are summarized in brackets; information supplied by the author is enclosed in parentheses.)
4. Mrs. Browne does not further identify her companion, but since Benjamin Franklin joined General Braddock in Frederick, Maryland (see following article), it seems safe to assume she was speaking of Deborah Franklin, Benjamin Franklin's common law wife.

Love

Williamsburg Feb: 20th 1735

I send this Express to acquaint You
of General Braddock's arrival at Hampton
last Night: & as I supposed You willingly
would wait on him as soon as possible, I
send this Messenger hoping he will meet
You at Fredericksburg. My services to
Mr. Pitcher. I am

Yours

Your most humble Servt.
R. O. Dinwiddie

GEN. EDWARD BRADDOCK: A RETROSPECTIVE

by Ethelyn Cox

The *Virginia Gazette* (Hunter, editor) announced on March 26, 1755 that the transports carrying English troops had safely arrived in Hampton and had "gone round" to Alexandria. The *Maryland Gazette* of April 3 noted that General Braddock, Commodore Keppel, Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia "and a good many other gentlemen" had arrived in Annapolis that afternoon. They were expecting to meet with Governor Sharpe of Maryland and three other governors — Shirley of Massachusetts, DeLancey of New York and Morris of Pennsylvania — but these three had not yet arrived. After waiting until April 7, Braddock and his entourage went on to Alexandria. The missing governors reached Annapolis on April 11 and 12, and left with Governor Sharpe for Alexandria on the afternoon of the twelfth.

One historian assumed that "Braddock and his military family received immediately the best welcome, the finest quarters and the choicest food and drink the Fairfaxes, the Carlyles and the other families of the Alexandria neighborhood could offer."¹ If this was true, the English were unappreciative. After Braddock's defeat at the Battle of the Monongahela River on July 9, 1755, and his death on July 13, John Carlyle wrote his brother in England that the visitors were "prejudiced against us" and "used us as enemy territory." The English "took whatever they wished," and when their actions were protested, "curst the country and its inhabitants," calling them "the spawn of convicts, the sweepings of the gaols, etc.,... which made their company very disagreeable." Carlyle was paid about fifty pounds for the use of his house, but complained that it and his furniture were "abused." He was, however, able to boast that the meeting of the five governors in his house was the "grandest Congress... ever held on this Continent."²

The governors, meeting on April 14 at the Carlyle House, agreed that since their requests to their assemblies for money to finance the campaign against the French were unsuccessful, they should ask His Majesty's ministers to compel the colonies to supply funds.³ Five days later, Braddock wrote to Thomas Robinson, one of George II's Secretaries of State, outlining the plans for the campaign, reporting the failure of the colonies to provide funds, and stressing "the necessity of laying a Tax on all His Majesty's Dominions in America for the Services and Interest of the Colonies in this important Crisis."⁴ Ten years later the Stamp Tax was imposed, one of the several taxes on the American colonies that caused the revolt against "taxation without representation."

While the governors were meeting, General Braddock's troops, Halkett's 44th and Dunbar's 48th regiments were living up to their bad reputation.⁵ The

Sir,

Ed. Braddock Maj. Genl. in 1754
Killed at Fort Duquesne ~~September~~
1755

I desire you should bring with
you from Hampton all the Money that the
Quarters Agent for the Contractors can furnish you
with, and as it is necessary for you to join the
Army with it as soon as possible, I think it is your
best way would be to bring it by water to
Swick Creek, where a Waggon shall be ready for you
and an Escort to conduct it to Frederick.

Alexandria April 8 1775

Yours Humble Servant
E Braddock

W. Johnston Deputy Paymaster

This letter, written by Edward Braddock to his deputy paymaster on April 8, 1775, is thought not to have been published previously. The document is also in the collection of the Lee-Fendall House, 429 North Washington Street, Alexandria.

main problem of the troops was drunkenness, as noted in the journal of Captain Orme, an aide to the general:

The General was very impatient to remove his troops from Alexandria, as the greatest care and severest punishment could not prevent the immoderate use of spiritous liquors, and he was likewise informed that the water of the place was bad.⁴

In Braddock's *Orderly Books*, the first entry under the heading "Camp at Alexandria" was dated March 27. It warned the troops that "Any soldier who shall desert tho he return again will be hanged without mercy." One order contained a promise and a threat:

As an Incouragement to the Men . . . every man will be allowed daily as much of fresh or salt Provision as it will be able to provide them, unless any man shall be found drunk, negligent or disobedient, in such case his gratuity shall be stopped.

The orders issued on April 7 related to an early effort on behalf of women's rights.

A Greater number of Women having been brought over than those allowed by the Government sufficient for Washing with a View that the Hospital might be served; and complaint having been made that a concert is entered into not to serve without exorbitant Wages, a Return will be ordered for those who shall refuse to serve for six pence per day and their Provisions that they may be turned out of camp and others got in their places.⁵

All this time George Washington was waiting in the wings. On March 22 Captain Orme had written to him from Williamsburg, informing him that General Braddock would be "very glad of your company in his family."⁶ Washington replied that he would call upon the general as soon as he heard of his arrival in Alexandria. Washington had resigned his commission as colonel in the Virginia Regiment in November 1754, and after some discussion, it was agreed that he would serve as a volunteer, without pay, rather than accept a commission as captain, the highest rank that Braddock could offer. Washington did not accompany Braddock and his troops when they left Alexandria, but delayed to make arrangements for the handling of his estates during his absence.

On April 22, when Mrs. Browne⁷ noted in her journal that the main body of the troops had left Alexandria, Braddock was in Frederick, Maryland, awaiting the arrival of wagons, carts and horses. With him was Benjamin Franklin, Postmaster General of the American colonies, who had been sent by the Pennsylvania Assembly, ostensibly to arrange for the delivery of messages between Braddock and the colonies, but also to advise Braddock what the Assembly had done, and would do, to aid the expedition. The Assembly knew that the general

had a "violent prejudice" against their colony.¹¹

When the results of the search for transport arrived — 25 wagons, and some of them in poor condition — Braddock angrily declared that the expedition was at an end, and berated the London ministers for landing his army in a country "destitute of Means of conveying their Stores and Baggage." Franklin agreed that it was unfortunate that the troops had not disembarked in Pennsylvania where every farmer owned a wagon, and within two weeks, had helped to assemble 150 wagons and 259 pack horses.

One historian claims that in the selection of Alexandria as the port of entry for Braddock's troops, the general was the victim of "definite chicanery." Long after Braddock's death, this charge had been made by a pamphleteer. A history of Braddock's expedition, published in 1855, says that Virginia was selected at the suggestion of John Hanbury, "a Quaker gentleman . . . whose connections were such that he happened to know a little about America, though nothing probably, of warfare."¹² On the contrary, Hanbury knew a great deal about warfare. He was an important dealer in munitions and an influential London lobbyist.¹³ He was also a partner in the Ohio Company, organized by prominent Virginians, including George Washington's half brother, Lawrence, to obtain grants of land on the western frontier. Hanbury was able to obtain a grant of 200,000 acres for the company.¹⁴ Lawrence Washington had guided the act establishing the town of Alexandria through the Virginia Assembly, thus providing for the development of a convenient port of entry for the European settlers the company hoped to attract. Lawrence died in 1752, so he could have had no part in the "chicanery."

In 1754, it was apparently John Hanbury who persuaded the King's ministers to designate Alexandria as the port of entry for Braddock's expedition. He foresaw the army opening and clearing a road to the frontier, thus aiding the Ohio Company. In defense of the King's ministers, they had reason to believe that officials in Virginia would aid the expedition more than would those in Pennsylvania. Dinwiddie, the Governor of Virginia, had attempted to stop the French incursions in 1753 and 1754, but the Quakers and Germans in Pennsylvania had shown no interest in fighting the intruders.

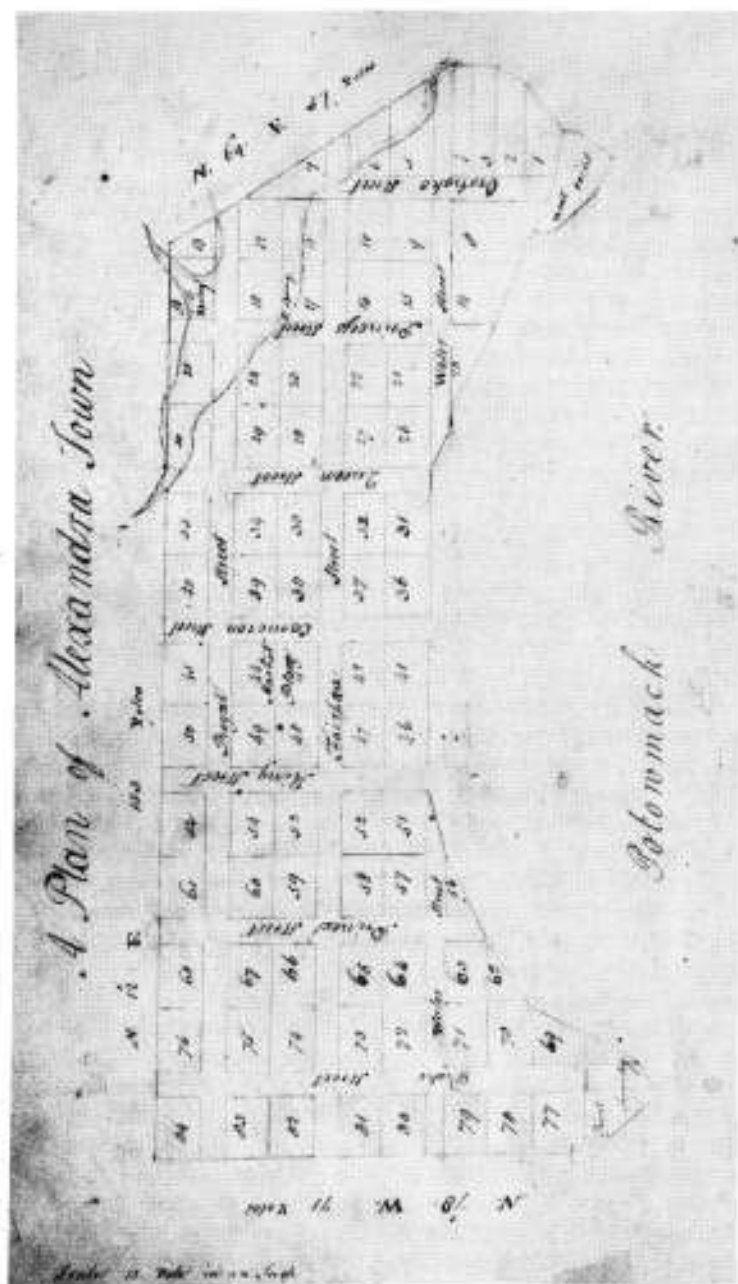
The assessment of Braddock's abilities as a general may be left to military historians, but comments on his character were made by some of his contemporaries. John Carlyle wrote his brother that Braddock and his staff "seemed to be afraid of nothing but that the French and Indians would not give them a meeting and try their courage, we that knew the numbers of the French, endeavored to set them right, but to no purpose." He added that Braddock was a man of "weak [sic] understanding, positive, and very indolent. Slave to his Passions, Women and Wine, as great an epicure as could be in his eating, tho a brave man."

Franklin made a similar judgment: "This General was I think a brave Man, and might probably have made a Figure of a good Officer in some European War. But he had too much Self-Confidence, too high an Opinion of the validity of English Troops, and too mean a One of both Americans and Indians. . . . In Conversation with him one day, he was giving some Account of his intended Progress 'After taking Fort Duquesne,' says he, 'I am to proceed to Niagara;

and having taken that to Frontenac, if the Season will allow time; and I suppose it will: for Duquesne can hardly detain me above three or four Days; and then I see nothing that can obstruct my March to Niagara.'"

Mrs. Cox extends thanks to Elizabeth Hambleton for editorial assistance in preparation of this and the preceding article.

1. Douglas Southall Freeman, *George Washington: A Biography*, vol. 2, *Young Washington* (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1948), p. 15.
2. John Carlyle's letter of August 15, 1755 to his brother in England (typed transcript), courtesy of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.
3. Mollie Somerville, *Washington Walked Here* (Washington: Acropolis Books, 1970), pp. 235-239.
4. Jacob Nicholas Moreau, ed., *A Memorial Containing... Facts Sent by the English Ministry to the Courts of Europe* (Philadelphia: James Chittin, 1757), pp. 223-232.
5. Freeman, p. 20.
6. Winthrop Sargent, *The History of an Expedition Against Fort Duquesne in 1755 under Major-General Edward Braddock* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Graham & Co., for the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1855), p. 297.
7. *Major-General Edward Braddock's Orderly Books from February 16 to June 17, 1755* (Cumberland, Maryland: Will H. Lowdermilk, 1878), p. v.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. xvii-xviii.
9. Freeman, p. 13.
10. Mrs. Charlotte Browne, see previous article, this journal, "From Alexandria to Albany."
11. Thomas Fleming, ed., *Benjamin Franklin: A Biography in His Own Words* (New York: Newsweek, 1972), pp. 143-145.
12. Frances Rufus Bellamy, *The Private Life of George Washington* (New York: Thomas J. Crowell Co., 1951), p. 97.
13. Sargent, p. 107.
14. Lois Mulkearn, comp. and ed., *George Mercer Papers Relating to the Ohio Company of Virginia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1954), p. viii.
15. *Ibid.*, p. xi.



1749 map by John West, Jr., Deputy Surveyor of Fairfax County, showing first town boundaries and lots. Lots number 43 and 44 are marked "Market Place." Map taken from *Alexandria Deed Book H, Alexandria Hustings Court*, p. 332. The book is at City Hall.

THE ALEXANDRIA MARKET SQUARE

by James D. Munson

The Alexandria Farmers Market meets every Saturday morning from five to nine. In the winter the wooden tables and metal bins are in the Cameron Street lobby of City Hall. In warmer weather Frank Winesett, Market Master, directs that they be lined up under the portico and on the plaza near the bandstand on the fountain side of City Hall. During mid-summer the market people set up their stalls even earlier, people like Mark Dove from Springfield, Richard Latham up from Culpeper, Leonard Dove and his mother, Virginia, from Franconia, and myself from Arlington. When the trade is brisk, we stay on until ten.

When I first came there, I asked the tall and congenial Clarence Devers when he had started. "Fifty years ago," he said. "When I was four my mother brought me with her to her stall. Her father had brought her since she was a baby, and *his* father had brought *him* since he was little. One way or another, there's been someone from our family here every week now for a hundred and fifty years."

Alexandria is a planned town, over two hundred and twenty-five years old. The energetic businessmen who petitioned Williamsburg for the town laid it out in advance on paper. They drew ten streets and named them. They drew eighty-four lots to be sold at public auction, except that on the plan they withdrew lots 43 and 44 and named them Market Place, in the center of the town-to-be.

The first lots were sold in July 1749, and building began right away. The choicest locations for commerce and residences were those hard by Market Square. After two and a half centuries of building, rebuilding, fires, wars, peace and careless and caring city officials and citizens, the city's center remains — Market Square.

This is part of its story.

Virginia's development was unique among the early colonies. Her major commercial undertaking was tobacco. Tobacco quickly exhausted the soil, and required enormous landholdings whose working was coordinated from a single point: the plantation headquarters. Unlike subsistence crops which are used locally in barter and exchange, tobacco was a cash crop to be shipped out of the locale. Waterborne transport was cheapest, and Virginia's access to the Atlantic via her rivers and the Chesapeake Bay made it easy as well. Virginia, then, became a crazy-quilt of huge patches of land, self-contained mini-towns made of plantation building complexes on or near river banks, and only a scattering of small towns. In the tobacco economy, the few roads which were developed served the handful of towns and the greater number of public warehouses where the crop was assembled, inspected, priced, sold and shipped.

Such a warehouse was built on the Potomac, below Great Falls, at the con-

fluence of Hunting Creek and the river. It was also near the confluence of Oronoco Creek, Oronoco coincidentally being the Indian name for tobacco. Until the warehouse was built, there was no other reason for settling there, judging by the comments of Robert Thomas. Mr. Thomas died at the age of 107 on the 2nd of July, 1821. Among other things, his obituary in the *Alexandria Gazette* for 14 August 1821 says: "... He would relate that he knew when the spot where Alexandria now stands was a howling wilderness, only inhabited by the wild deer and wolf. Although Mr. Thomas' habits were unrestrained, complying with the proverb 'eat, drink, and be merry,' he was never known to call for medical aid during his life."

Once the warehouse was built, a small community did develop, settled mainly by the young Scots factors for merchants in Scotland. It was Scot country. Six thousand acres had been granted by King Charles II to Robert Howsing in return for his bringing 120 persons to Virginia to settle. Howsing, who signed his name in several ways, sold most of the land to the Scotch Virginia family of Alexanders. Philip Alexander, John Alexander and their brother-in-law, Hugh West, conceived with young John Carlyle and William Ramsay the idea to create a town nearby, putting up some sixty acres of Alexander land at auction. To this end they petitioned the General Assembly in Williamsburg.²

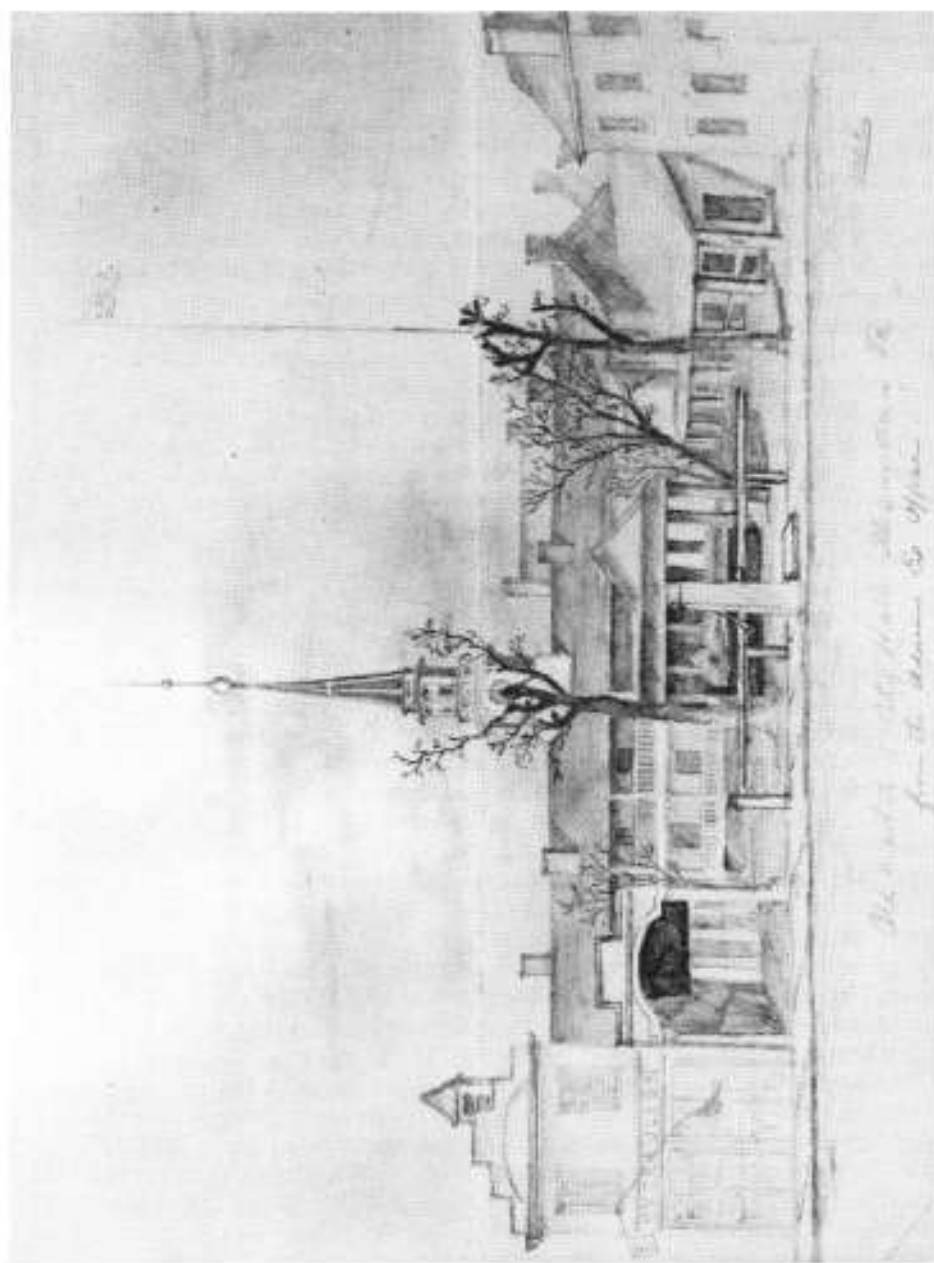
They were joined in this petition by others of their contemporaries whose Virginia standing must have guaranteed approval. Among them: the Right Honorable Lord Fairfax, Sixth Baron of Cameron, Proprietor of the Northern Neck of Virginia; the Honorable William Fairfax, agent for his cousin, Lord Fairfax and father-in-law of John Carlyle; Colonel George William Fairfax, son of William and agent for Lord Fairfax; Lawrence Washington, son-in-law of William Fairfax and half-brother of George Washington; and John Carlyle, Scots merchant factor and William Fairfax's son-in-law.³

The petition was approved and granted in April 1749, and directed that within four months the property be surveyed, a plan drawn, land set aside for a market place and public landing, and then an auction held to sell the land. The proceeds of the auction, of course, would go to Hugh West and to the Alexander family, after whom the new town would be named.

The survey, done by Hugh West, was completed by mid-July and forwarded to the Fairfax County authorities. The plan was used for the auction July 13 and 14, and years later entered into the town records. (A copy of all this appears on the following pages.)

A look at this plan gives the impression of being aboard a ship in the Potomac River, and indeed this is the point of view which the town planners had. As most of Virginia's main settlements and towns, this was to be a port. It is centered on the "bay" between two points, with its center street, Cameron, starting at the water's edge at the center of the bay's arc. And, although a marketplace could have been located anywhere on the plan, it is logically placed at the center of town — the intersection of the center and the main streets, Cameron and Fairfax. Thus they planned a civic center of consequence on what had heretofore been just a "howling wilderness: on the Potomac."

The enabling legislation for the town, as drafted in Williamsburg, explicitly stated the purpose as to be "commodious for trade and navigation." We have



Old Trinity Church, New York City, N.Y.
from the street to the left

noted how the alignment and divisions of the plan validated this. So did the auction. If this were to have been an industrial site, for example, or a residential area, or for social institutional use, we would expect the inland areas of the town closest to overland road to be choice. As the sponsors of the plan were merchants and shrewd land investors, their choice was related to dock space and the mercantile heart of the town, Market Square.

The mid-July auction, in 1749, set a limit of two lots per buyer. The record of sale for the first day of the auction shows that members of the sponsoring group snapped up all the pairs of lots which lay between the river and Market Square. Lots 56 and 57 went to William Fairfax; Lawrence Washington acquired 51 and 52; John Carlyle's close friend, William Ramsay, bought 46 and 47, and Carlyle himself got 41 and 42. Gerald Alexander of the Alexanders purchased 31 and 32.

Building began immediately: residences, residences with first floor businesses, retail and wholesale stores, professional offices, docks and warehouses. The lots designated as Market Square were cleared of trees and stumps, and on it the town trustees arranged coordination of civic affairs and the supply of civic services and marketing.

I am unable to improve on Nettie Allen Voges' colorful and imaginative account of the early Market Square:

During the 25 years between the beginning of Alexandria and the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, Market Square was the center of dawn to dusk activity. Construction was going on all around it. Ox-drawn carts were rutting the unpaved streets as they brought in loads of lumber and brick. News spread "on the wind" from downriver vantage points of the arrival of vessels from abroad. The docks were crowded with workmen unloading and reloading. Wagons jostled through the muddy, and if not muddy, dusty streets. They were loaded high with crates of frying-size chickens, geese, and ducks, squealing young pigs and country cured hams, baskets of cabbage and other vegetables and fruit, sides of freshly killed beef, and wooden casks of cool butter and cheese. Work horses shared the hitching rails with impatient thoroughbreds whose riders had business in the court house or bank and the carriages of ladies intent on shopping. The air was always flavored with pitch and tar, wet sail cloth and hempen rope, oakum, and fertilizer which was the by-product of the waterfront fishing industry and with which farmers loaded their empty wagons before returning home from a day in town.*

FACING PAGE

The 1816 Market House with clock and steeple, beyond which rise the flagpole and Gadsby (City) Tavern chimneys. The view is from the Adams Express Company on Fairfax Street, toward Royal. From the left, the Hydraulion Fire Company, roofed market benches (center), and the porticoed row of enclosed stalls along Cameron for dealers in fish, poultry and meat. (Pencil sketch by unknown artist, signed MAC, circa 1865. From the collection of Government Services Savings & Loan, Bethesda, Maryland.)

The developments to support all this activity are dealt with piecemeal in the standard sources,¹ so I have essayed an (as far as I can tell) unique summary plan of Market Square's first 50-60 years. If we came up to the square from the docks, here is what we would see as we looked from King Street across to Cameron:

- The Market Square is bounded on the near side by Sharpshin Alley, about twenty feet wide. Legend insists its name comes from pie-shaped clipped coins used to satisfy the need for fractional currency, nicknamed "sharpshins." As they cut through purse and pocket linings, they could be found along this alley, whose upper end debouched opposite taverns and hostelryes on Royal.
- Market Alley runs horizontally from King to Sharpshin. Although the birthdates of these alleys are not recorded, they were in use until the 1965 plaza project obliterated them.
- There was a horse market between King and Sharpshin.
- There were two houses on the corner formed by Sharpshin and Fairfax, in one of which was Richard Arell's tavern, as mentioned (and frequented) by George Washington in his diaries, 1768-1774.
- On the other side of the alley from Arell's tavern stood stocks and a whipping post from 1752-1835, in turn next to the first town jail built in 1752.
- Next to the jail, on the corner of Fairfax and Cameron, the townspeople built a Town House in 1760. The first floor was the Alexandria School, and the second floor had meeting rooms. These were used Sundays by the Presbyterians for services, and monthly for meetings of the town trustees. Many of the worthies of this one group were likewise distinguished members of the other: Carlyle, Dalton, Ramsay, the Alexanders, Macrae.
- Next to the Town House, but on Cameron, the Court House was built in 1752, and for some years was the county seat.
- In 1774, apparently between the Court House and Royal, was one of at one time three fire engine companies. It moved elsewhere in town in 1855, but there seems to have been a firehouse on the square for at least the first hundred years.
- The market area initially covered all of the open ground in the "courtyard" formed by the municipal buildings. There is an unsubstantiated account of a covered, indoor space — possibly the ground floor of the Court House — in the 1700s. In any case, a prop-

er Market House was built on the corner of Cameron and Royal, and ran from Cameron all the way to the alley. On its ground floor were market spaces and stalls, entry to which was through several huge doors opening both to the courtyard and to the three thoroughfares: Cameron, Royal and Sharpshin. The second floor was used by the Masons and the top floor had rooms used as a museum for Alexandria Masonic memorabilia. It was topped with a steeple and clock.

The area between Sharpshin and Cameron remained given over to municipal offices and services. Alterations were made in some of the buildings on Fairfax, and when a fire destroyed the two major buildings — the Market House and the Court House — in 1871, all were rebuilt as part of one huge, integrated complex. However, the original functions left their imprint. Until recently, the site of the 1752 jail was the town lock-up. The spot where the Town House stood is still the Clerk's Office. Although the county seat was moved west into Fairfax, the central section of the complex will have court chambers until 1981. The Market House had its market spaces gradually pre-empted to house city offices, but the upper floors of the new building (1872) still have rooms once used by the Masons.

The area between Sharpshin and King, at least in the 20th century, was built up with one- and two-story businesses. In 1965 they were all torn down for urban renewal, but market vendors and the Market Master could in 1977 recall Hullfish Hardware and the *Alexandria Gazette* on King, law offices at the corner of Fairfax and King, and on Royal between Sharpshin and King: Chauncey's Meat Market, the Royal Cafe and a shoe store.⁶

The Court House not only drew daily activity, but was also the site of important periodic events. Local historian Effie C. Dunstan describes one:

Election day in Alexandria was an important event, but it also was a rough, rowdy gathering of men from all over the county. Freeholders from the northern and western mountains sometimes spent two or three days traveling to vote at the county court house, the only polling place in the county. Seeking old friends, talking politics and land, and drinking an alcoholic punch called bumbo, were the makings of a lively holiday. Candidates routinely furnished food and bumbo, often served from barrels, to the general public. Taverns became gathering places for political discussions, trades, compromises, and at times, fights. Ladies were strictly advised to stay off the streets on election day.⁷

Mrs. Mary C. Powell, a genteel lady whose history of Alexandria was published in 1928, tells the locally famous election day story involving George Washington:

At that time (the 1750s) Washington, who was in command of the Virginia Rangers, drilled his men upon the market space, having his headquarters directly opposite on Royal Street at the City Tavern.

(This would later be known as Gadsby's.) Election for members of the Virginia House of Burgesses from Fairfax County was then going on and both candidates, Fairfax and Ellzey, had many friends at Alexandria. . . . Washington supported Fairfax, while young William Payne was equally zealous for Ellzey. As they stood near the courthouse high words passed between them, and Payne, who was very quick tempered, suddenly struck Washington with a blow which felled him to the ground. The troops quartered in the jail, hearing the noise, rushed out, and there seemed every prospect of a fight, but Washington soon convinced them that any interference was unnecessary. It was a time when duels were frequently the result of such encounters, and people looked forward anxiously. But the noble spirit of the young soldier asserted itself. He felt his responsibility in the matter, and forthwith retired to his lodgings and sent for Payne to whom he made what he considered the proper acknowledgement of his fault. The veneration of posterity is not lessened by the knowledge that Washington was a man of impulses and some of the infirmities of the human family. The two young men became firm friends, and Payne afterwards distinguished himself in the Revolution. The story of this encounter, however, rests solely upon the authority of Parson Weems, who was wont to embellish his histories with spirited anecdotes of which he seems to have been the sole custodian.⁸

Town life centered in and around Market Square. Its mix of the personal, professional and civic is reflected in the square's surroundings, a sampling of which still exists.

The market was never allowed to operate willy-nilly. From the first the town trustees legislated its administration and prescribed rules of operation.

The biggest events of the early years were the fairs. Legislation was enacted in 1752 that the fairs were to be held in Market Square every year in October. The legislation went on to allow for those two five-day periods:

Persons coming to, being at, or going from the same, together with their cattle, goods, wares and merchandise will be exempt and privileged from all arrests, attachments, etc. except for capital offenses, breach of the peace or for any controversies, suits and quarrels that might arise and happen during the time.⁹

Probably even more important were the weekly market times. From 1751 to the present there have been all kinds of arrangements: Wednesdays and Saturdays, six days a week (but not Sundays), Saturdays only, mornings only, all day, and so on. As they changed they were enforced by the Market Master.

The Market Master was once an appointed official, salaried, whose duties included those now divided among several city offices. For example, official wine measures, dry measures, weights and a lumber measure were sent from England in 1744. Once a year the Market Master took them to each merchant in town

and checked the merchant's measures. Those found wanting he punctured or broke. The town Board of Health, headed at one time by Washington's physician, Dr. Elisha C. Dick, required the Market Master to keep the Square clean and to condemn all produce unfit for sale.²⁰

A fine précis of the regulations up to 1876 appeared that year in the *Alexandria Gazette*. I note with much interest that the one surviving rule still enforced in today's market is now phrased: "to sell it here you got to grow it or make it at home." (See reprint from the *Alexandria Gazette* below.)

Five years after *The Gazette* published the regulations governing the market, fire destroyed so much of the building complex between Sharpshin Alley and Cameron that total rebuilding was necessary. The Market House, a total loss, was rebuilt as a copy of the original, even to the ornate Benjamin Latrobe steeple. The city buildings were united, and the market and city offices, court chambers and jail put under one roof. This massive pile ran from Sharpshin along Royal to Cameron, down Cameron to Fairfax, and along Fairfax to

ALEXANDRIA, VA.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1876.

MARKET REGULATIONS.—The market held at the market square before the Revolution seems to have been an entirely free market, regulated by the common custom of those who attended, or by the moral power which rank and station gave. It was not until the charter of 1779 that the city authorities became vested with power to regulate the market matters. In that year the Mayor and Council were given power "to hold and keep within and town annually two market days in every week of the year, the one on Wednesday and the other on Saturday, and to appoint a clerk of the market." All the stalls of the market originally rented at an equal rate—four pence Virg. per cartage—equal to \$22.15 per annum, and the town burgess collected the rents. In 1799 all the days of the week except Sunday were filled as market days. The market closed from April to October at 2 o'clock a. m., and during the residue of the year at 11 o'clock a. m. From the time the market was established the usual regulation in relation to market stall was adopted. It was provided that "no person shall, during market hours, make sale of, or offer to sell or for sale, nor shall any person purchase or purchase meat, fowls, butter, cheese, eggs or vegetables at any place within the corporation except at the market house. This gave the market dealers, during a portion of the day, a monopoly of the sale of these articles with a view of attracting country people to bring their wares to the market. While to prevent previously purchased wares from competing with the fresh provisions which it was supposed would be brought in by the country people, it was provided that "no person should sell or offer in the market house any provisions which had been before purchased there, or at any other place within the town." It was fur-

ther provided that "no butcher or other person was to sell any provisions for the purpose of selling same at any market day, and during market hours, purchase at the market house any greater quantity of provisions than he should be able to sell, what shall be sufficient for the use of his own family." In 1808 Sunday market was begun, no butchers being, however, allowed to market on Sunday, and the Sunday market continued until about 1840 when Monday night market was substituted. It was usually attended by the colored people from the surrounding country, who then brought their garden stuff and wild gatherings to town. The Sunday market was thought to be superior to the "week day" market. In the winter of 1841 the market hours were extended to eleven o'clock and then to midnight. The extension of hours was transferred to the clerk of the market in 1843. These regulations continued to exist, although not always enforced, until about the late war, when the City Council thinking perhaps that the conditions of marketing had greatly changed, repealed all the laws which prevented the sale of market stuff elsewhere than in market, and at the same time forbade the butchers and market dealers to buy and sell as they chose. The following provision was, however, left in the market law: "It shall be the duty of the clerk of the market to exclude from the market all persons who shall be charged or condemned to raise the price of produce and of such articles as are usually brought to the market for sale, and the clerk of the market shall forthwith report to the Mayor the names of all persons engaged in any of such practices. Whereupon the Mayor or any Justice of the Peace may cause the offender and he or she who shall be found guilty of any of said offenses, shall be liable to a fine of ten dollars for every such offense." This provision is now deemed sufficient for the protection of the public.

Sharpshin, forming a hollow square or courtyard open on the alley side. In this courtyard at least one long shed was built, its long axis parallel to the Cameron City Hall building. The shed (or sheds, photos are not too clear) was open on the sides, sheltering long double rows of back-to-back wooden tables, or stalls.

The market was still immensely popular. In the 1920s there were farmers bringing produce in from as far away as Winchester. One rowed across the river from Maryland. In the summer they held forth in the shade; in the winter, warmed themselves around woodfires in metal drums. There were fifty to sixty vendors, with fresh fruit and produce, flowers and potted plants, salt and smoked meats, sweetenings, live poultry cleaned and drawn on purchase, fresh fish, domestic and wild rabbits and other game, baked goods, confections, items knit, crocheted, appliqued and sewn, jams, jellies, condiments, and seasonal items such as Christmas greens.¹¹

But the city's office force kept growing and one by one the market spaces in the Market House were closed off and turned into offices. The large doorways were bricked in. Finally, the vendors were completely moved out of the Market House, and it was no longer even referred to by that name.

The 1940s and 1950s saw the burgeoning of the suburbs in America, resulting in the loudly declared "decay" of the downtown areas of countless cities. Alexandria was one of them. The same changes which centrifugally moved commerce to the suburbs decreased trade at the market. The city fathers, as in so many cities and towns at the time, wanted to revitalize the downtown area in the hope trade would be lured back. At the same time, the role and responsibilities of the Alexandria city government increased; it needed still more staff and still more room to house it.

The result of several plans for expansion, stubbornly but unsuccessfully resisted both by market vendors and preservationist city groups, was a move to clear and remodel all of the Market Square area, starting with Sharpshin Alley and continuing completely across the square to King Street. At the same time the market shed in the court would be razed, and the open area filled in completely with office spaces. The plans would be approved and funded; the work began.

The market shed was razed, and the vendors moved indoors to a city property, formerly Chauncey's Market on Royal Street, then outdoors on the Cameron Street sidewalk against the city hall walls, then inside the building in a foyer, and finally, in good weather, under twin porticos overlooking the newly landscaped fountain plaza.

It seemed as though the market would surely disappear. The number of vendors dropped to about twelve. They honored the traditions and kept the memories alive, memories shared by the customers who have been coming to the market for as long as fifty years. Mrs. Powell epitomizes them in this passage from her book:

What native townsman can forget Hammerdingers horsecakes, peculiar to Alexandria, and consumed in droves by the juvenile population. Delicious were those stout two-legged beasts, fresh from the oven, and whose microscopic tails were scornfully awarded to

over-smart children. The twisted sticks of yellow taffy were also most popular, and were sold by Aunt Airey, who seasoned them to taste, peppermint, cinnamon or wintergreen, by passing over them a feather from a bottle of essence. . . . It was a busy scene, and what a privilege the children considered it to be allowed to go . . . to the market on Saturday mornings. How well one recalls the chinquapins, persimmon beer and apple pone, the fascination of "Washington Pie" . . .

In retrospect it seems to be the blossoming days of spring, among the stalls laden with lilac, mock orange, with hyacinth, daffodil and wallflower, while the odor of fresh vegetables and fragrant bunches of thyme, sweet basil, and marjoram perfume the air. The peeping of chickens is heard, and the bleating of calves in the pen, with the rolling of wheels down Sharpshin Alley, while above all is heard the auctioneer's bell, calling a sale at the Market House door. . . . Prosaic sights and sounds all, but with them comes a flood of tender memories of childhood and old market square.¹²

So long do customs endure that, by consulting 19th and 18th century books on food and cooking later I have been able to find recipes for all the delicacies Mrs. Powell describes.

To begin with, chinquapins are a shrubby chestnut, whose nuts were widely eaten until the American chestnut tree family, of which this is a group, was all but wiped out after the turn of this century by a blight. Clarence Devers, at the market, recalls bringing them in as late as the early 1930s.

Hammerdinger's horse cakes were probably gingerbread cookies cut out in a horse shape rather than as a gingerbread man. The horse-shaped cookie cutter is a standard, a classic, with both forelegs and both hindlegs as one. The tail is but a small pointed afterthought. Gingerbread cookies made with molasses have an excellent shelf life, and are enjoyed stale as well as fresh. The ginger-molasses taste is a universal favorite.

Aunt Airey's taffy was probably molasses taffy. The basic recipe is centuries old: a cup of molasses and a cup of sugar, with a tablespoon of vinegar all being cooked to the hardball stage, cooled in a pan until the mixture can be handled, then pulled into slender, pale yellow ropes, clipped to short lengths, and twisted together by twos and allowed to harden. The subdued molasses flavor would marry well with the flavored essences.

Pone is the generic name for cornbread. Sandra Oddo, in her book of recipes from the 19th century (*Home Made*, New York: Antheneum, 1972, p. 309), gives a recipe for Apple Johnny Cake: Mix in the order given 1 pint of white corn meal, 2 tablespoons sugar, a half teaspoon each of salt, soda and cream of tartar, milk enough to mix quite soft, and three pared and sliced apples. Bake in a shallow cake pan for thirty minutes.

In her book *Home Life in Colonial Days* (Stockbridge, Massachusetts: The Berkshire Traveler Press, 1974, a reprint of the 1898 edition), Alice Morse Earle confirms that "In Virginia whole plantations of the honey-locust furnished

locust beans for making metheglin. From persimmons, elderberries, juniper berries, pumpkins, cornstalks, hickory nuts, sassafras bark, birch bark... various light drinks were made" (page 163). Celebrating the late 19th century country cooking in Virginia, Edna Lewis talks of persimmon beer (from *The Taste of Country Cooking*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976, page 156):

In the spring we would make a dandelion wine, whereas in the fall there was an abundance of persimmons, which we valued for a kind of beer we could make with them. We would gather the persimmons only after a heavy frost because that was said to sweeten them. We would... trim off their caps, and stir them into a medium soft batter made from the bran of white cornmeal mixed with water... spoon it into a large bread pan and bake it in the oven. After it had baked and cooled, the cake was placed in a stone crock or wooden keg with twice as much spring water, then covered and left to ferment until Grandfather decided it was ready for drinking — usually in late winter.

Elizabeth Hambleton brought to my attention that in the 1930 edition of *The Boston Cooking-School Cook Book* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, page 671), Fannie Merritt Farmer prints a likely recipe for Washington Pie as a variation of her Boston Cream Pie. She says to make it "using raspberry jam between the layers instead of cream filling. Sprinkle with powdered sugar. Cut in pie-shaped pieces." This certainly would be properly portable by the piece for the market point of sale.

One morning last Fall I stood near my stall in the bright Indian summer sunlight. Behind me were the gray eminences of the Carlyle House and the Ramsay House. From where I stood, in the vanished track of Sharpshin Alley and Market Alley's intersection, I could see one warm red brick corner of Gadsby's across Royal. I had been talking with Mark Dove, in his eighties. He has been coming for sixty years, in the beginning by horse and wagon from his Springfield farm. He'd spun a lot of fine tales about the market. Then, as he so often did, he unconsciously slipped into keening over his fearfully painful arthritis. "Crippling arthritis," he matter-of-factly called it.

"Well then," I ventured, "you've come here all your life, eh?"

He stopped, looked around the square, his eyes resting on the neighboring buildings and the cheerful crowd of customers who seem to regard the market as their own delightful secret.

"Not yet, son," he said. "Not yet."

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NOTES

1. Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Americas: The Colonial Experience* (New York: Random House, Vintage Books, Caravelle Edition, 1958), pp. 99-110.
2. G. M. Moore, *Seaport in Virginia* (Richmond: Garret and Massie, 1949), pp. 3-9.
3. *A Composite History of Alexandria*, ed. by Elizabeth Hambleton and Marian Van Landingham (Alexandria: The Alexandria Bicentennial Commission, 1975), pp. 11-12, 21-28.
4. Nettie Allen Voges, *Old Alexandria* (McLean, Va.: EPM Publications, Inc., 1975), p. 71.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 66-72
Composite History, pp. 29-49
 Ethelyn Cox, *Historic Alexandria Street by Street* (Alexandria: Historic Alexandria Foundation, 1976), pp. x-xx, 2-7, 37, 152.
 Mary G. Powell, *The History of Old Alexandria* (Richmond: William Byrd Press, 1928), pp. 34-37, 42-43, 58, 212, 234-235.
6. Interviews with Frank Winesett, Market Master; Mark Dove; Virginia Dove; Eva Baber; Clarence Devers, October 1977.
7. *Composite History*, p. 17.
8. *Op. cit.*, p. 43.
9. Voges, *Old Alexandria*, p. 69.
10. Powell, *The History of Old Alexandria*, pp. 39, 54.
11. This and the account following is based mainly on interviews with market vendors, conducted October-November 1977, and supplemented in part by newspaper clippings on file at the Lloyd House, City of Alexandria Public Library.
12. *Op. cit.*, p. 59.

DOCTORING AND FISHING ON THE POTOMAC IN 1843

Warwick Price Miller was born September 26, 1824 "in a two story brick house... on the south side of Wolfe Street about midway between Fairfax and Royal." He was the son of Robert H. Miller (1798-1874) and Anna Janney Miller (1802-1885). In 1848 he married Ann Moore Stabler (1828-1892). We print here excerpts from a reminiscence he wrote in 1896, 15 years before his death in 1911. The events with which these excerpts are concerned began in his 19th year. The original document is in the collection of Mrs. Robert H. Miller III of Olney, Maryland. We are grateful to T. Michael Miller for bringing it to our attention.

...One of father's intimate business friends was Geo. H. Smoot, lumber merchant, who also carried on a large fishery on the Potomac... In 1843 Smoot took me with him as clerk and Doctor! I was rather "taken aback" at the latter but he told me to learn how to use a spring lancet — and get a stock of medicine. Richard Stabler⁷ showed me how to use the lancet by practicing on the ribs of a cabbage leaf. I laid in a supply of salts, oil, No. 6 and composition⁸ and while on the subject may I say I was a very successful practitioner — whiskey and black pepper for cholic, bleeding and castor oil followed by a big dose of composition for colds.

I felt rather nervous at the first attempt at bleeding but soon became an expert. On first days I always had several to bleed as it was soon noised in the country that there was a Doctor at the landing that did not charge and the colored people, men and women, patronised me. I used a turtle shell to catch the blood so as to determine when I had taken enough.

We went to the shore the last of March, it took some time to get ready for fishing as the "berth" that is the part of the river to be fished had to be dragged with ropes to remove logs and other obstacles. Capstans of which there were eight along the beach had to be repaired, seine to be tarred, vats in which the fish were salted to be repaired. About 60 men, white and black, were employed.

The boat with which the seine was laid out packed 22 oars under command of the foreman who was a Baltimore fisherman — a certain Joe Chaney one of the most profane men I ever met, but he had a hard lot to manage. The balance of the force was called the land wing directed by another foreman.

About 600 fathoms of rope was first coiled very carefully in the boat, then 800 fathoms of seine, finally 600 fathoms more of rope. The boat would start from the upper capstan going up the river until the first rope was run out and then slowed until the tide was right which was a very nice point, the object being

to have just enough of the ebb to take the seine opposite the landing at slack water so as to draw it in while that lasted. If too much tide was taken the seine would be swept down the river where the boat had to follow and the catch was lost. When the foreman decided the tide was just right the boat started, the men pulling a very quick stroke with all their strength; it was a fine sight, the 22 oars flanking in perfect time; woe to the man who missed a stroke, he would be jeered by the crew and hear language more forcible than polite from the foreman.

Two lookout boats followed the seine boat, one stopping at each end of the seine to see that pumping vessels did not run into it. . . . When the big boat was near the lower capstan she was swung around with stern to the shore and all hands jumped on land or in the water as it happened and rushed the rope to the capstan which I should have said was an upright one, then it was wrapped around a band and a horse trained for the purpose galloped round until the slack was taken in. When the strain came on the rope the men manned the capstan arms. The landing wing commenced taking in slack as the seine boat started from the anchorage and both wings would "flit" from one capstan to another until if all went well the seine would be opposite the sheds. When the two ends of the seine were landed the lookout boats would take out "quarter lines" as they were called and attach to the seine. These were put to the capstans to draw the seine and when it was near the shore the "seine-cleaners" had to wade out to the back of it sometimes up to their necks (in water) and pull at and clean it. If any sturgeons were in the seine men with a slip noose in hand would rush in (and) catch them and drag them ashore to prevent their tearing the net. . . . I once saw 17 sturgeon from 4 to 7 feet long taken out.

When the fish were well bunched up scows were taken to the back and the fish taken up with scoop nets and thrown in. When the scow was full it was taken to the "runboat" which took the fish to Alexandria or Washington. Four run boats were employed each managed by three men. If there were more fish than the boats could carry or if the price was too low a dozen men would get in each scow, start a song and dance over the fish until the scales were rubbed off. They were then put in tubs, washed and placed in the vats and salted. I think the vats held about 500 barrels.

I enjoyed the life very much though it was rough and expossing [sic]; hours for sleep very irregular as we had to fish as the tide served and that was two hours later every day. A great many fish were sold to the planters who came to the shore with ox teams; part of my duty was to see to the sales; another was to attend to the supplies sold — the men's shoes, flannel shirts, cakes and tobacco being the staples. It was a severe life for the men were always wet while fishing and early in the season often very cold; they lived in two large shanties where they had immense fires. The allowance of whiskey was 13 jiggers ($\frac{1}{2}$ gill) a day.*

The greatest number of shad and herring I ever saw caught was about 150,000 but once we had so many in the seine that after taking out all they could manage the seine was opened and allowed the balance to escape. The work always went better when the men were singing, one man leading and the rest joining in chorus. One colored man, Nace Smallwood, had a splendid voice and made great fun improvising; on the land wing were many Germans who sang well.

NOTES

1. An instrument used for bleeding.
2. A local pharmacist.
3. F. Edward Early of Timberman's Drug Store, 106 N. Washington St., identifies — No. 6: Tincture of capsicum (cayenne pepper in an alcohol base) and myrrh (this preparation was also called hot drops). Composition: compounded powder of bayberry, bayberry bark, Jamaica ginger, capsicum and clove.
4. If a jigger was $\frac{1}{2}$ gill (2 ozs.), the daily allowance was 26 ozs.