

Mem.^y

Friday June 1833 — Went to Mr. Vernon
to meet Major Lewis & Ludwell Lee Esq. who dined
there — Mem.^y from Major Lewis Conversation —

" We were sitting one evening (said Major L.) in this little
parlour when a large heavy back log fell from its place
and rolled on the hearth — The Genl. took up the log &
without any ~~effort~~ extraordinary effort replaced it — Its
size and the facility with which he handled it attracted
our notice and after he left the room — We each tried
to raise the log with out effect, until one took the log &
another the shovel — There were present several strong
and athletic young men, and among them — who
valued himself much upon his strength. — This was
after he had retired from public life. "

" The circumstance struck me (Major L.) and a
few days after I asked (Isaac, I think) his carpenter
if he had ever witnessed ~~the scene~~ an exhibition of his
master's strength " Indeed have I " said he " for it was
only the other day I was hewing out some logs to build
the with — some of great size and the hea-
viest timber to be found in the woods. — Master, you

know, always 'scribes off every thing to be done with his own hands - He rode out at his regular hour, and there was a great log that he had scribed off on one side and marked where the mortises were to go. So, say, he, now turn over the log. So, I called to ~~the~~ ^{who was close} by, to fetch the crow bar & ~~help~~ help me: for I could not move it - So master says, you worthless fellow, what are you good for? & puts his hands under it and turns it over as if it had been a half inch plank - He then scribed the other side, & told me ~~where~~ ^{when} I had cut the mortises half through to turn the log over again and make them on both sides - So I went to work and cut them half through but the hands were all away and I could not turn the log over by myself, though I thought myself a pretty strong man - and as I undertook to cut the mortise right through from that side, but missed by about ~~half~~ ^{an} ~~inch~~ ^{quarter} of an inch - I was scared when I found out what I had done, but hoped master would not notice it - Next morn^g: he came out - and the very first thing I heard was Who cut this mortise? - I did sir, but the log was so heavy I could not turn it over to cut it as you directed - He never said another word but gave me such a clout side of the head as turned me round like a top, and before I knew when I was master was gone - (This man died this spring 1833)

The general enjoyed a joke as much as any one - On one occasion (says Major L) Judge Washington who then resided at Rich^d? rode in company with Judge Marshall to Mt. Vernon on horseback from that city - They rested on the way at Col. Blackburns, near Dumfries, & reached Mt. Vernon drenched to the skin by a heavy rain that had fallen - They repaired to their chamber to change their dress & the Genl had so much to say and ask about that he went with them - The saddlebags were produced and opened when Judge W. running his hand into one side in great surprise drew forth a black bottle, next a twist of tobacco, next a ^{* corn} ~~chunk~~ of ~~pone~~ ^{pone} bread and next & next the complete outfit of some dragoon, with whom they had by some chance changed saddlebags, at some of the road side inns - The next thing was to raise an outfit and they made their appearances in strange misfits for there were no cloaths in the house that the meager ~~left~~ limbs of either would half fill - The general rallied them severely on their appearances, as well as the pretended mistakes they had made - figured the effect of the exchange with the other party, when he should find the man of law had made off with his pone, his tobacco & his bottles -

* Corn-pone is a sort of bread made of Indian corn meal, baked in an oven of liberal dimensions - common among the negroes & lower orders in V^a -

24
Judge Bracht and I (say Major L) sat on
this settee for more than an hour on that very day - while
the Genl. & Judge Marshall promenaded their portico in
earnest conversation - The general urging and Marshall
evading his arguments that he (Marshall) should devote
himself to public life - at last he yielded - "I have your
promise then," said the Genl. - and we joined the family
- I believe "said Major L" this visit was made at
the instance of the Genl. - with a view to this purpose -

(Memo^{da} - I intended afterward to ascertain from Major L
the exact date of this incident, but the opportunity was
never presented - Lbl)

Major Lewis gave me an account of the circum-
stances under which he received the news of the Genl's death.

- "It was a bright frosty morning, when I saw the Genl.
for the last time - I had to go to Westmoreland on business
and... Dr. (Dr. Stewart I think) accompanied me
as we rode from the door, the General stood on the steps
of the front door to take leave of us, he had taken his usual
(* - I forget who it was, but think it was either Dr. Stewart or Mr.
Custer (Lbc))

Mem^d made at Mt. Vernon - June 1833.

In the management of his estate and domestics he was remarkably exact - No negligence on the part of his overseers or domestics was ever passed over unnoticed - He kept his own accounts and looked after every thing himself - He seldom used many words on the subject of his plans and intentions, but once determined upon went directly and silently to their execution - He rarely asked advice, with regard to his own concerns, and seldom or ever was persuaded from a project once begun.

His habits were regular - He arose before or at the dawn of day & lighted his own candle and went to his study - Mr Washington used to say to his domestics, but of this none knew, for no one ever dared to intrude upon his privacy at that hour - When he extinguished his light he rang his bell and the servant appeared with his boots which he invariably turned around and carefully examined - if in order - they were drawn on in silence - if not the servant most likely got them about his head without a question, with but a momentary excitement on the part of the General - a minute after and he was as calm and collected as before -

When he laid off the beautiful lawn in front

of the house, the servants and others often passed and repassed without regard to the pathways, to the injury of the beauty and regular growth of the grass - An order was issued that no one should walk on the grass or off the paths and walks - One morning the General discovered the recent marks of footsteps out of place - The servants were summoned, a shoe was found fitting the footprints to a nicety and unquestioned its owner met a severe punishment - The offence was never repeated.

He kept a receipt book in which were noticed the smallest payments - One of these books I have seen here, in his own hand writing.

The present mansion at Mt. Vernon was enlarged from the original house by Gen Washⁿ. The portico* fronting the river, ~~cupola~~ cupola, large N.E. room the library with the rooms above it, were added by him.

The old house contained four rooms down stairs, with a broad passage in the center, and measured outside ft. long by 32 ft. 6 in in breadth - The lawn, offices, etc. were arranged by him.

A long Avenue of cherry trees ran in front of the house and it was thought by his neighbors a great sacrifice when he had them cut down. They diminished the beauty of Mt. Vernon ruined.

* The portico fronting the river is 94 ft 9 in

When Gen^l W^h retired into private life his name and deeds threw around him a reverential awe that often pained him, especially as he saw its effect among the young and gay - Once on a visit to Col. Blackburn, who resided near Dumfries (Col B. was the father of Mr. Washington now minister of Mt. Vernon) he was unusually cheerful but whenever he made his appearance among the other young, the dance was suspended or lost its animation and silence took the place of boisterous mirth - In vain he joined in their conversation, the spell around him was unbroken & he sadly retired to an adjoining room among the elders, and expressed the pain he felt that he should be thus excluded from participating in the enjoyment that was going on so near him - After sitting some time, and the joyful voices ~~again~~ were again heard, he arose ~~cautiously~~ cautiously from his seat and went on tip-toe to the door that was ajar and stood looking as if delighted at the scene for about a quarter of an hour.

It was his habit to note the events and transactions on his farm in an almanac that was interleaved - in one of 1782 one found in his own hand writing remarks of this kind.

" Killed this 27 of Jan: 18 hogs of ab: 15 months old, and for an experiment weighed them alive, after they had fasted about 36 hours, they turned out - 2147

When killed nett wt was 1774
 Haskitts 63 1837
 310

Difference allowing noth. for gut fat. —

By which it appears that the odds between gross & nett pork should be at 15 pt. C: — "

" March 29. Engaged my ferris at Fredericksburg by the year of Mr Jas. Hunter

Apr 14- Inspected 20 bds Tobacco

Apr. 22. Hovings running in great quantities

July 7- Broached pipes of wine

26. Opened cask bottled porter cont: as follows

6. 1 full bottles	} also 3 casks Dorset beer as follows	29. 6 full bot.
3. 4 pieces		1. piece
1. 11 empty		2. 7 broken
9 broke		
<u>12.1 in all</u>		<u>31.8 in all</u>

Nov: 10 Set off for Williamsburg —

(Geo Frankington. is named with Geo. Meier as member of the House of Delegates of Va from Frederick Co: in the same almanack-

95
rides and the more than common bloom upon his cheeks,
and healthy glow that animated his face elicited
the remark from one of us as we closed the gate "I
never saw the General look so well in my life" and
it was the subject of our conversation for some miles -
"The General I have some times thought" said Major
Lewis "the handsomest man I ever saw -"

Some days after we were on our way homeward &
speaking of home when I noticed a servant riding
rapidly towards us -

"As I live" said I "there is one of the servants -"
Vernon -

"You are always ready to find subjects of uneasiness
at every Trife" said "and I dare say
you imagine some illness, or even more, at home,
already, at the sight of a negro riding on a horse
- In the next moment I recognised the man - I dared
not ask a question - he handed me a letter - I
broke the seal - the General was dead -"

During the visit of Dr Stewart we walked with the
general over the grounds & he was pointing out the many
changes he intended to make - The back lawn was

to be extended down to the river in the direction of
the old vault; which was to be removed and he pointed
out the spot ^{where} he designed to build the new one which
was even then begun — "First of all" said he "I shall
finish this that I may connect want" — His words
were sadly ~~repeated~~ brought to mind by the work
that quickly followed —