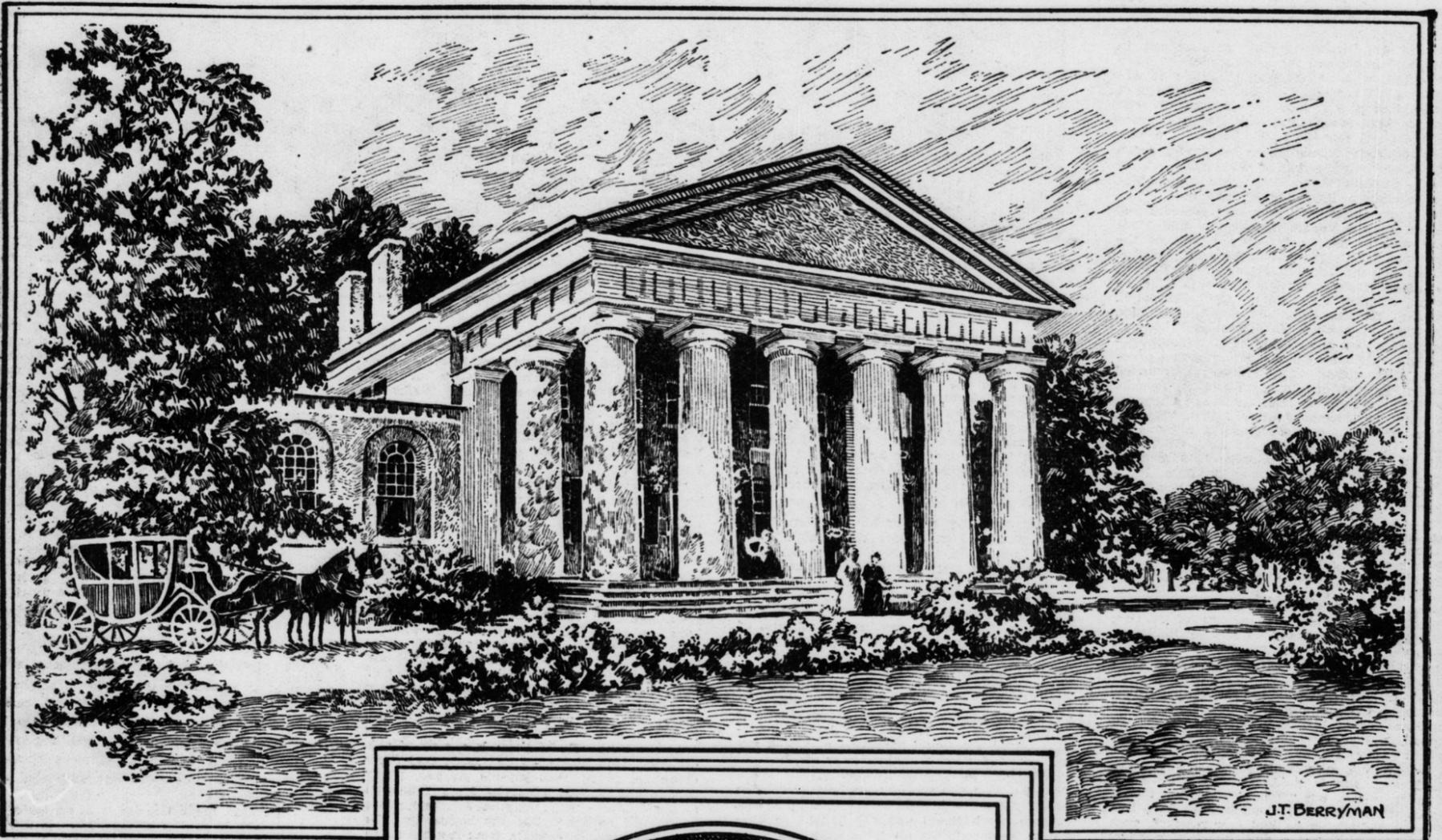


# Arlington Mystery Solved

*Identity of the Famous Lady Whose Grave Was the First in Arlington Comes to Light After Generations of Oblivion and Now Is No Longer a Mysterious Phantom.*



BY ENOCH AQUILA CHASE.

**M**RS. MARY RANDOLPH, whose ancient grave was made upon the front lawn of Arlington House Estate, adjacent to the great Custis mansion more than a hundred years ago, is no longer a mystery. The proud clan of Randolph, that famous family of the Old Dominion, has arisen to identify her and to proclaim her worth and virtues. They are proud of her, and well they may be, for she was an estimable woman, and of considerable importance in her day. So distinguished was her bearing and so great her personal charm that for many years she was known as "The Queen." Mary Randolph was a direct descendant of Pocahontas, the Indian princess, daughter of the great chief Powhatan, and in her veins flowed the best blood of old Virginia—of the Carys, the Pages, the Fitzhughs, the Lees, the Blands, the Harrisons, the Rolfes, the Jeffersons and Beverleys, as well as of the Randolphs—and, in fact, of nearly all the famous families whose names so profusely adorn the pages of American history.

Some of her great-grandchildren are living today, and have come forward to tell about the family; of her children and grandchildren, and how she came to be buried on the front lawn of Arlington House Estate. The oft-misunderstood words carved upon the century-old marble slab above her grave, telling that she died "a victim to maternal love and duty," are no longer an enigma. "As a tribute of filial gratitude" that monument, "dedicated to her exalted virtues by her youngest son," was erected by Burwell Starke Randolph, born 1800 and died 1854. As a midshipman in the United States Navy the unfortunate young man fell from a mast aboard ship and crippled himself for life by breaking both hips. The tradition among Mary Randolph's descendants is that the devotion and care she lavished upon that cripple son broke down her own health and hastened her death.

**M**ARY RANDOLPH married her own cousin, David Meade Randolph of Presqu' Isle, some time about 1781. He was a soldier of the Revolutionary War, and afterward United States marshal for Virginia by appointment of President Washington. He survived his wife by some two years, and died in 1830. He is buried in old Bruton Church yard at Williamsburg, Va., and the epitaph upon his tomb, although hard to decipher at the pres-



Above: Arlington Mansion in the old days. Drawing by J. T. Berryman from original painting by John Ross Key. Below: Mary Randolph. Drawing made from a photograph of an oil painting vouched for by Mrs. Albert Livingston Johnson, Mary Randolph's great-granddaughter. The original portrait is thought to be located in Richmond.

ent time, is given by the rector of Bruton Church as follows:

Under this stone is deposited the body of David Meade Randolph, second son of Richard and Ann Randolph of Curles in the County of Henrico. He died on the 25th of September, 1830, in the 78th year of his age. An active partisan officer in the War of the Revolution. Faithful in the duties of an important office con-

ferred on him by President Washington. And an upright man.

It is probable that David Meade Randolph died in the seventieth year of his age, not the seventy-eighth, and that the figures on the old tombstone, being now almost obliterated, could easily be misread. The figures seventieth would seem to agree with other dates pertaining to his life, more than "seventy-eighth." It is said that David Meade Randolph's ancestry

on his mother's side can be traced back in a direct line to Edward III of England.

The immigrant ancestor of Mary Randolph was Col. William Randolph of Turkey Island, on the James River, just below the present City of Richmond, who came to America from Warwickshire, England, about 1674. His date of birth is given as "circa 1651," and he died April, 1711. William Randolph married Mary, daughter of Henry Isham, and they had nine children, seven sons and two daughters. They are famous for the reason that they were the progenitors of the great clan of Randolph. From this union there came in succeeding generations a line of famous persons never exceeded and seldom equaled, at least in American history. Many of the most famous and prominent families of Virginia trace their ancestry back to these seven sons and two daughters of William Randolph of Turkey Island. To mention a few of them: Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, Secretary of State in Washington's cabinet and third President of the United States; Chief Justice John Marshall, Peyton Randolph, Speaker of the House of Burgesses, first president of the Continental Congress and Attorney General of the United States; Edmund Randolph, Attorney General and Secretary of State in Washington's cabinet; John Randolph of Roanoke, Representative, Senator from Virginia and Minister to Russia; Richard and Theodoric Bland, William Stith, president of William and Mary College and historian of Virginia; Richard Henry Lee, and five of his almost equally celebrated brothers; Gen. "Light Horse Harry" Lee, Washington's chief of Cavalry, and Gen. Robert E. Lee, his son.

William, born 1681, the first son of Col. William, who apparently inherited Turkey Island, married Elizabeth Beverley. Thomas, the second son, born 1683, married Judith Churchill. Isham, the third son, born 1684, married Jane Rogers. Richard, the fourth son, born 1686, married Jane Bolling. Henry, the fifth son, born 1687, died without issue. Sir John, the sixth son, born 1689, married Susanna Beverley. Edward, the seventh son, born 1690, married a Miss Grosvenor. Mary, the first daughter and eighth child, born 1692, married Capt. John Stith. Elizabeth, the second daughter and last child, born 1695, married Richard Bland.

Thomas Randolph, second son of the immigrant William, was the great-grandfather of Mary Randolph, the first person known to be buried in Arlington. Either before or after he married Judith Churchill he left the parental roof of Turkey Island and established a home