MOUNT VERNON
SHRINE of AMERICAN PATRIOTISM

BY EDWARD B. CLARK

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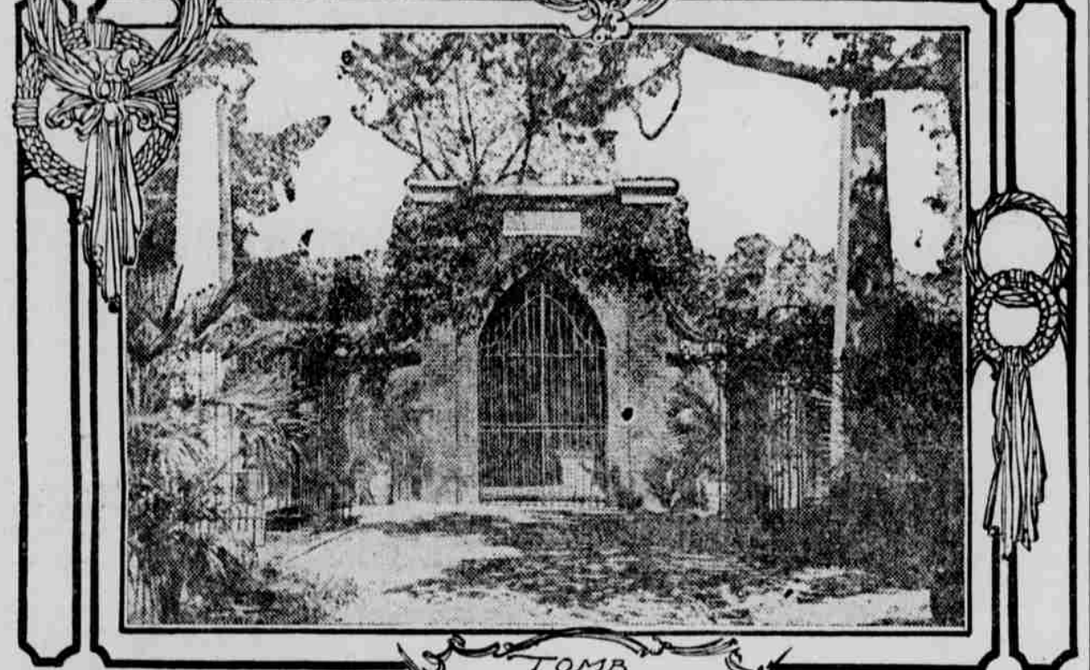
WASHINGTON'S HOME, MOUNT VERNON

WASHINGTON AND HIS FAMILY



TOMB OF WASHINGTON

MOUNT VERNON

WASHINGTON.—In the novel of "Ivanhoe," Isaac the Jew tells the knight that he knows it is the custom of the Christians to put on pilgrims' garb and to walk barefooted for miles to worship dead men's bones. There is something of a sneer in Isaac's tone and Ivanhoe rebukes him with a truly heroic, "Blasphemer, cease!" I don't know how many thousands of Americans go yearly to Mount Vernon to pay a visit to the repository of a dead man's bones, but the number is something enormous.

If George Washington never had lived at Mount Vernon, never had visited there, never had died there, and had been buried in the antipodes there would be excuse enough for the visits to the place of seventy times seven the number of the pilgrims who go yearly down the Potomac to stand on the towering hill and to look off down the valley.

It is with an utter shame that it is confessed that after four years' residence in Washington one man American born and with some lurking pride of patriotism in his make-up never until recently went to the place where the father of his country and the exponent of the American school teacher's ideal of truth lies buried.

Mount Vernon is the ultimate object of the voyage down the Potomac. There are other objects every paddle-wheel stroke of the way, for the hills on either side are hills of rare beauty crowned with trees that saw the revolution and that in the fall are wearing the raiment which belongs to the kings of the forest.

On the boat going down there was a young German gentleman, who had married an American wife. He was much more interested in the beauty of the Potomac's banks and in the history of the country beyond the banks and in the life history of George Washington than was she. The German asked his American wife if George Washington was born at Mount Vernon. She answered that he was; which he wasn't, not by many miles. He asked her many other questions, to each and every one of which, but with unerring inaccuracy, she made answers. This was a traveled American girl. There is a fairly well-grounded belief that she met and captivated her German husband while she was doing Europe in an automobile or was thapsodizing on the Rhine.

Some day, perhaps—vedy likely, in fact—she will go back to her husband's land and will listen to his telling of his American trip, and in the enthusiasm of the nature which he made manifest on the Potomac he will tell the "historic truths" concerning George Washington which he learned from his American wife.

It may be that some of the Germans who know something of the life of the American general who was the friend and fellow soldier of Steuben will come to think, as some Americans have come to think before this, that a little American history might be included in the course of study of the average American girl, and that not a dollar should be spent on her passage money to Europe until she knows without stopping to think whether it was George Washington or Abraham Lincoln who crossed the Delaware, and who, something later, forced the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. This may seem to be a matter that is beside the mark, but, while the listener had none too thorough a knowledge of American history, there were some things said on the boat plying down the Potomac that if they had been said by an eighth-grade schoolboy ought to have brought him a flogging.

Mount Vernon has been written about by pretty nearly everybody who has seen the place. It hasn't fallen to the lot of everybody to see it in the fall. It is a noble place, a fitting resting ground for the first American.

It seldom falls to man's lot to see such heroic trees. There is a giant oak which stands sentinel over the first burial place of Washington. The body was removed from the base of the oak about 75 years ago. It never should have been removed.

It is said that Washington selected the place where his body now lies and left instructions that one day the change of sepulcher should be made. The oak which guarded the first grave must have been standing for three centuries. The view from the place is inspiring enough to enkindle the eyes of a dead man. The view from the new tomb is fine in its way, but it is as nothing to the grand sweep of river, hilltops and forests which moves before the eye from the place where Washington slept for 30 years.

Hundreds of visitors go to Mount Vernon daily. They peer into the tomb and then straightway go to the house. There is an interest, of course, which must attach to any of the belongings of Washington, but it seems to be a legitimate matter of regret that of the thousands who go to Mount Vernon the interest in the mirror which Washington used when he shaved and in the spoon with which he ate his porridge, if he ate porridge, is far greater than in the forest trees under which he walked and in the garden whose hedges of formal cut were planted with his own hand.

Indoors at Mount Vernon everything is dead; outdoors everything is alive. The forest and garden are instinct with Washington; the contents of the house are as dust.

There is a real interest, however, in the library of the old home. In the main the books are simply copies of those which were on the shelves in Washington's time. The originals, as I understand it, are in several libraries of the country. There are two originals, however, which are open at the title page, so that if the light be good, one may read Washington's name written in his own hand and the title of the book which he thought worthy enough to buy.

The light wasn't good on the afternoon in mind and all that one pilgrim could make out of a book's title, above which was written Washington's name, was the word "Sentimental." The wonder was, and the poor light was responsible for its remaining a wonder, if the father of his country had not in his quiet hours been reading "A Sentimental Journey." If the gentle Martha had peeped into the pages and had reproved George because of what she saw there one can imagine his ready answer that the book was written by a holy priest of her own chosen church.

The man with the megaphone on the Washington "rubberneck" wagons tells his audience of passengers as they roll by the Metropolitan club house: "This is the club of the nobs." In another minute, as the big sightseeing bus passes another clubhouse the megaphone man says: "And this is the club of the cranks."

"The club of the cranks," as this information howler calls it, is the Cosmos club, and a most interesting organization it is. Its membership is composed of scientists, some physicians and clergymen, a few lawyers and two or three newspaper men. The scientists are in the great majority.

It costs a pretty penny to join the Metropolitan club and to pay the dues and to live the life of the organization. The initiation fee at the Cosmos club is rather small, and the dues are light, but there are scores of members of the Metropolitan club, "the club of the nobs," who willingly would pay twice or thrice the Metropolitan's initiation fee and the Metropolitan's dues if the expenditure could gain them admission to the club where the "cranks" foregather.

Every Monday night is called "social night" at the Cosmos club. Of course the clubhouse is open at all times, but on Monday evening the members make a special effort to be present and there is always a large gathering in the great, sweeping rooms of the house where once lived Dolly Madison.

They don't intrude "shop" upon you in the Cosmos club. The members are a genial body of men and they have many guests from all parts of the world. They find out what the guest likes to talk about and then some one who knows the subject is promptly introduced to him. There are few world subjects upon which you cannot get an expert opinion in the Cosmos club.

The members, of course, have their hobbies and they ride them. In one corner of a room there will be an astronomical group, and there will be another corner with a fish group and another corner with a bird group and another corner with, it may be, a mushroom group. It isn't all science, however, in the Cosmos club. The members play billiards and pool and bridge, and they have a fine time of it generally and at no great expense, for it is one of the hard facts of earth that men devoted to science have little money. Learning doesn't bring high pay in the market.

A Double Repentance

By GEORGE T. PARDY

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It would be a difficult matter to say just what started the argument between Alice Ray and her fiance, Roland Everett. They simply differed on a point of view, and as both were self-willed, neither cared to admit being in fault.

"You are absurd, Roland," said the girl, petulantly. "Just because I don't agree with you, I'm to be accused of selfishness and obstinacy. If anyone is obstinate it certainly is yourself."

"Very likely," responded her lover, dryly. "Perhaps we'd better not talk of the matter any more."

The two young people were seated on the veranda of a country house, charmingly embowered in creeping vines and commanding a wide view of the Hudson river and the mighty hills through which it winds. The summer air was full of the fragrance of new-mown hay, and the drowsy murmur of insects lulled the ear, while ever and anon a thrush by the brook rippled into mellow song. Everything spoke of peace except the two in whose hearts, by right, the perfecting glory of love should have given the culminating touch, for they were engaged. Yet it so happened that a dispute, trifling in itself, had become magnified and embittered, after the sad human way, until both the man and girl were in a state where any moment might bring forth some act or word which the rest of their lives would be spent regretting. After Roland's last remark there was silence for several minutes. He leaned back in his chair and looked grimly down at the river. While Alice, having turned from him with a swift movement, stared nervously across the hills and blinked the tears from her eyes. When she spoke it was with a measured coldness which hid the hurried beating of her heart.

"If we have only been engaged a week, and have already found a topic on which we must be silent for fear of quarreling, I think there surely must be something wrong."

"If you can say such a thing as that, Alice, there surely is," replied her lover, hoarsely.

"Then—then—there's nothing to do but—" She stopped abruptly and glanced at Roland. But he still stared

She Started as She Realized What She Was Looking For.

at the river and scarcely seemed to have heard her. She sprang to her feet and an angry color dyed her cheeks.

"I'm sorry I've been so slow to understand you, Roland," she exclaimed. "It's evident we are not suited to each other. The best we can do is—is to forget we've ever been engaged."

Roland stood up and looked at her, pale as she was flushed. "Do you mean our engagement is broken?" he asked.

"Here is your ring!" and she tore it off and handed it to him.

"If your love for me cannot stand a slight disagreement, Alice, doubtless you are right."

He looked at the ring and then put it slowly in his pocket. Alice turned away and began to arrange magazines on a table. A moment or two passed. Then Roland, without another word, strode down the veranda steps and mounting his horse, which stood hitched at the foot, galloped off.

Alice listened to the beat of the hoofs until they died away. Then she went slowly into the house and up to her room. She felt as though she were carrying a great weight, and almost staggered as she reached her door. Tears blinded her as she entered. The perfume of the roses he had brought her that morning sweetened the air. There stood his photograph, manly, handsome, with the smile in his eyes that she knew so well.

"Roland, Roland, Roland!" she sobbed and threw herself into a big arm-chair in a passion of tears. "How can it have happened? What was the matter with us? You know I love you, Roland—yes, and I know you love me. And yet—if we had hated each other we couldn't have been more cruel. Can't a love like ours cast out misunderstanding and vanity and selfishness? I would die gladly if my death could save him from pain. And yet I could not yield a worthless point to him—to him who is worth more than the whole world to me. We did not mean what we said—and yet we have given each other a deadly wound—have insulted our love—have trampled a holy thing in the dust."

The hours slipped by and at last Alice aroused herself. She sat up, feeling absently at the fourth finger of her left hand. She started as she realized what she was looking for.

"Even my finger misses him," she whispered, with a pitiful smile.

Behind the house a narrow, winding path made its way between the apple trees and past a yellow field of rye, through a green wood, and over a brook by a rustic bridge. Beyond that point it wandered on, with many a lovely turn, giving now and again an enchanting glimpse of the great river, until, a mile or more farther, it joined the highway. It had been the custom of the lovers to meet at the little bridge every evening, and then to saunter along the path, and home by a short cut across the golf links. Alice knew that the hour when she generally started for the trysting place was at hand, knew, hesitated, and finally arose.

"He won't be there to-night," she murmured, "and I think my heart will break; but I will go—I cannot stay away."

The shadows were long under the apple trees as she walked out and the robins fluted joyously. The evening seemed too lovely to belong to earth. Meant for heaven, it had somehow lost its way and dropped, by a fortunate chance, on our world. As Alice moved slowly along the fragrant path, seeing in the sky the wonderful ever changing shades of rose and green and purple, hearing music from a hundred happy birds, breathing the balmy air, an indescribable peace entered her troubled heart. What though anger and misunderstanding lay behind? She knew it was all right now. Roland would be waiting for her, waiting with a look of perfect comprehension, and she would not even need to speak. But speak she would, and as she never had before—to tell him how deep, how great her love was, and that never more should a shadow darken it. Never, never! The birds sang always more sweetly, and the wind among the branches made tender harmonies that chimed with the love in her heart.

And now she passed the yellow grain, and now entered the woods, and there, indeed, midway on the bridge, where the sun sent a mellow gleam through the overarching branches, stood her lover awaiting her. A wave of happiness surged over her, taking her breath for an instant. She stopped and then ran forward with hands outstretched, calling in a voice low but of piercing tenderness:

"My dearest, I knew that I should find you—I knew you would be here. If you had not, I think I should have died."

In a moment they were in each other's arms, and at his kiss the last faint doubt or lingering veil of bitterness, if any there was, passed utterly out of Alice's heart, and it seemed to her that in that instant for the first time she knew happiness—supreme, divine.

"Have you waited long, Roland?" she asked.

"Not long, dear."

"And you forgive me?"

"The fault was as much mine as yours, Alice," he whispered. "And, after all, there is nothing real except our love."

With their arms about each other they sauntered on down the path. The dying radiance of the sun made a glory about them, the trees whispered and swayed over their heads, and it seemed to Alice as though she scarcely touched the ground. What indeed was real beside their love? These lovely things about her—these singing birds and fragrant flowers and murmuring leaves—they were only a sort of picture, a reflection of the happiness in her heart. As long as this beautiful happiness lasted—and she felt as though it could never end—so long too would this delightful, blossoming world surround them. It must always be glorious summer where they two were!

How He Made a Cuddle.

A gentleman went into a pipemaker's shop with the intention of seeing the method of making pipes. The proprietor, who was a Scotchman, had arrived from Edinburgh a few weeks ago.

When the Philadelphian got in the shop he found only a boy back of the counter, so without more ado he thus addressed him:

"Well, my callant, I'll give you a quarter if you show me how you make your pipes."

"I canna mak' a peer, sir," replied the lad. "I ca' only mak' a cuddle."

"A cuddle! What's that, my hinney?"

"It's a short peep," replied the boy, "sic as men and women smoke oot on."

"I'll give you a quarter if you show me how to make that."

"Gie's yer quarter furst," was the reply.

The gentleman gave the boy the quarter, and he took a long pipe and broke a piece off it, saying:

"There, now sir, that is the way I mak' cuddles."—Philadelphia Times.