

WILLIAM GRAYSON OF VIRGINIA  
THE MAKING OF AN AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY

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This article was inspired by the work of Thomas Balch, Esq., and an article that was edited by that gentleman and published by the Seventy Six Society of Philadelphia in 1857. \*

Thomas Balch was born in Leesburg on 23 July 1821, a son of Judge Lewis P.W. Balch. Outside of Loudoun County, Thomas Balch is best remembered as the father of international arbitration and the grandfather of the International Court of Claims. With hopes of creating "a perpetual Memorial to the memory of Thomas Balch," his descendants collaborated with residents of Leesburg and founded the Thomas Balch Library. During 1997, Balch Library celebrated its 75th Anniversary. In the spirit of that celebration, this article is intended as a tribute to both the library and the individual who was the spiritual and intellectual inspiration for that worthy institution. \*\*

For two centuries, scholars have identified William Grayson among the greatest of the Anti-Federalist leaders of the Constitutional debates - a peer to Patrick Henry, George Mason and James Monroe, and the skilled debating opponent of James Madison and John Marshall. ' Why is it, then, that we know and hear so little of Virginia's Colonel William Grayson - one of our true heroes of the American Revolution?



COLONEL WILLIAM GRAYSON (1742 - 1790)



Difficulty in accessing primary sources of information may have something to do with Col. Grayson's disappearance from our histories. After his death, William Grayson's children removed to the newly opened West. The family papers were thereby either dispersed or lost. Barely two dozen of Col. Grayson's letters and papers have been identified, and they are scattered among seven different repositories.<sup>2</sup>

A second factor may be the intellectual bias that writers of the "Federalist" ilk established on paper. William Grayson should never, under any circumstance, have been characterized as either "Anti-Administration," or as a "typical" Anti-Federalist. Grayson was thoroughly "Pro-democracy," and a "Free Trader." However, like Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee and George Mason, Col. Grayson's contributions were diminished or ignored by the popular press of the Federal period.<sup>3</sup>

Thomas Balch made a first attempt at the resurrection of William Grayson's memory; then the Civil War intervened to put the study of Virginia's Revolutionary heroes into the deep freeze. Hugh Grigsby renewed the effort when he described Col. Grayson's role in the Constitutional debates of 1788.<sup>4</sup>

Two "modern" writers, Weston Bristow and James DuPriest, bypassed the depths of Col. Grayson's family and youth and, in so doing, saved their energy for detailed studies of Grayson's incredible activities in the years following the Revolution. They recounted his political struggles and national service: Grayson's election to the Virginia Assembly of 1784, his service in the Continental Congress from 1784 to 1788, election to the Virginia Assembly again in 1788, active debate of the U.S. Constitution in Virginia's Convention of 1788, and his election to and service in the first session of the United States Senate, from 1789 until his death on 12 March 1790.<sup>5</sup>

A decade ago, Joseph Horrell broke new ground by revealing the Loudoun County accounts of Grayson's guardian - exposing inaccuracies in the "accepted" history of Col. Grayson. Aside from that work, two decades in Grayson's short life, the period from 1754 to 1776, have heretofore been given rather short shrift. The present effort may correct that situation.<sup>6</sup>

The Grayson family was English in origin - one William Grasson, possibly the first American ancestor, arrived in the Virginia colony in 1635. Col. Benjamin Grayson, the father of our Col. William Grayson, grew up near Irvington in Lancaster County, and moved to Spotsylvania County with his parents around 1720. Shortly thereafter, Benjamin moved north, across the Rappahannock river to Stafford County, settling near the Potomac in the section that became Prince William County. By 1730, Benjamin Grayson was established at Dumfries, a small but active international port on Quantico creek that was, for a time, the county seat of colonial Prince William. He was a planter and a merchant, and involved himself in the acquisition and resale of large tracts in the then-frontier area that would become Loudoun County. He encouraged the establishment of Colchester, a new port on the Occoquan, with the design of improving commercial access to his "back" properties.<sup>7</sup>

Benjamin Grayson married Susanna Monroe, a beauty from a powerful Westmoreland County family, who would have been a great-aunt of James Monroe. Col. Benjamin and Mrs. Susanna Grayson resided at "Belle Air," a thousand-acre plantation situated between Quantico creek and the Occoquan. Belle Air was "furnished with a large and stately mansion on the brow of a fine hill which overlooked the Potomac river for many miles." Benjamin Grayson was appointed as a member Justice of the Prince William County Court shortly after its creation in 1731. By the mid-1750s he had advanced to the position of a Senior Justice and was presiding at monthly court sessions. He also served as a Captain of the Prince William militia in the 1730s, was promoted to Major by 1743 and attained the rank of Colonel of the militia by 1751.<sup>8</sup>

Col. and Mrs. Benjamin Grayson had four children: three sons, Benjamin Junr., Rev. Spence (named for his uncle, Spence Monroe) and Col. William (our subject); and one daughter, Susanna. The Grayson children were apparently born at Belle Air between 1728 and 1742. Mrs. Susanna Grayson died in 1752, when her youngest child, William, was ten years old. At the time of her death, her brother, Col. Andrew

Monroe, was Chief Justice of the Westmoreland County Court. The role that Col. Monroe played during the formative years of William Grayson's youth remains a matter of conjecture.<sup>9</sup>

When Col. Benjamin Grayson died in 1757, he left an estate of thousands of acres scattered all over northern Virginia. Only Benjamin Grayson Junr. had reached his majority (age 21) by the time of their father's demise. The three youngest children were, however, over the age of fourteen and, under colonial law, entitled to choose their own Guardians. Second son Spence chose Prince William County's Deputy King's Attorney, William Ellzey. Susanna and William Grayson both chose their older brother Benjamin for their Guardian.<sup>10</sup>

A youthful Benjamin Grayson Junr., like his Potomac neighbor George Mason, found himself an heir to substantial property and extensive family connections. Evidence suggests that the latter facilitated his appointment to the Loudoun County Court in 1757. Following in his father's footsteps, Benjamin (Junr.) pursued the advancement of merchantile and trading ventures in Colchester and at the falls of the Occoquan. Ultimately, young Benjamin became over-extended through his investment in a number of unproductive commercial activities, and died an insolvent at about age forty. The reader would be well served to take note here of a likely connection between Benjamin's financial ruin and the impact of British Imperial policies of the time - restraint of colonial industry and increased taxation of colonial trade - experienced all over Virginia.<sup>11</sup>

According to family legend, brothers Spence and William were sent to England for a formal education after their father's death. William's guardian's account indicates that the brothers would have embarked for England early in April of 1760. Spence may have attended Oxford briefly, but he was back on the Potomac by February of 1761. William, apparently showing greater promise in the books, read the law under "Thomas Knox, Esqr." at the Inns of Temple Court in London.<sup>12</sup>

Shortly after his return from England, Spence Grayson completed a courtship and married his childhood sweetheart, Mary Elizabeth Wagener, a daughter of Major Peter Wagener.

The young couple had grown up together; from 1744 to 1752, the Graysons and Wageners had attended church at the old chapel on Quantico creek in Dettingen Parish. The union of Spence and Mary Elizabeth connected the Grayson, Wagener, Monroe, Linton, Tyler, Ewell, Robinson, McCarty and Lee families of northern Virginia in an extended cousin-ship.<sup>13</sup>

In 1766, Spence Grayson was appointed a Justice of the Loudoun County Court, where he served infrequently until 1768. The worsening finances of older brother Benjamin must have weighed heavily upon young Spence Grayson's mind. His first acts as an adult had included participation in the joint sale of properties to satisfy several creditors. The concern for a secure income may have had something to do with his final choice of a career. Ministers in Virginia had an annual salary of about £110, along with a number of incidental fees, a suitable residence and the income from the parish glebe. Spence Grayson returned to England to study divinity - taking orders of the Anglican Church and receiving the King's Bounty, which authorized his ministry in Virginia, on 26 June 1771.<sup>14</sup>

Rev. Spence Grayson assumed the ministry of Cameron Parish in Loudoun, where he served until 1777. For several years, he "commuted" back and forth between Belle Air and the Cameron Parish glebe. As war clouds loomed ominously over the Potomac in 1774, Rev. Grayson pressed for an immediate expansion of the residence on the Cameron glebe. Early in the Revolution, Rev. Grayson's family left Belle Air, where the British threat was omnipresent, and moved to the relative safety of the Cameron Parish glebe in Loudoun County.<sup>15</sup>

When his brother William was given command of a Continental regiment in January of 1777, Spence left Loudoun and went north with his brother. Many of the soldiers were from Loudoun County, and he was, in a sense, still ministering to his congregation. Rev. Grayson returned to Virginia for Christmas in 1778, and retired from his ministry with Washington's Army the following year. He appears to have maintained possession of the Cameron parish glebe, and must have resumed his ministry in Loudoun, until at least 1781.



After the Revolution, Rev. Grayson and his family returned to their home at Belle Air. He filled the ministry of Dettingen Parish from 1784 until his death in 1798.<sup>16</sup>

Susanna Grayson, William Grayson's sister, married a prosperous Scots merchant, John Orr, early in 1762 and that couple settled at Leedstown on the Rappahannock.<sup>17</sup>

William Grayson married Elenora Smallwood, a sister of William Smallwood, (who served as a Governor of Maryland and was a Major General of the Continental Line during the Revolution). William and Elenora had three sons, William Smallwood, Charles and George, and one daughter, Hebe.<sup>18</sup>

Throughout his youth, William Grayson observed the martial displays of militia companies that served in his father's command. During the early stages of the French War, from 1754 to 1757, when William Grayson was between ages twelve and fifteen, he witnessed the preparations of Captain Tebb's and Captain McClanahan's militia companies as they mustered to do battle with the Indians on Virginia's frontier. There is no evidence that William Grayson went on active militia duty at this time (he was underage), but we can be sure that his vicarious experience was shared by other young men who later had key roles in the American Revolution.<sup>19</sup>

Upon his father's death, when he was sixteen years old, William inherited 2,800 acres of land and a number of slaves. This inheritance was composed of 1,800 acres near Winchester along Opeckon and Abraham's creeks in Frederick County, 1,000 acres on Goose Creek south of Leesburg in Loudoun County, and a dozen lots in the town of Dumfries. His Loudoun property was not sitting idle. Two or more tenants paid rents totalling about £10 annually, and a slave "quarter" was in operation on the property by 1760. Twice in his life, William Grayson "cashed in" a portion of his patrimony. First, in 1766 when he was, in all likelihood, in need of "start-up" funds for his law practice, he sold half of his Goose Creek tract to Rev. Amos Thompson for £315. When post-Revolutionary finances were straining everywhere, in 1782, he sold a 500-acre

section along Opeckon creek to William Helm, for just £250. Over the years, slave quarters were maintained on both of his properties. The Abraham's creek tract, being the larger of the two, was eventually improved to manorial status, and served as Col. Grayson's residence at the time of his death.<sup>20</sup>

Benjamin Grayson Junr. terminated his control of William's assets when he tendered accounts of his guardianship at the Loudoun County Court in Leesburg on 14 June 1763. Thereafter, for two years, William Grayson's activities are shielded from our view. For reasons that will become obvious, we know that William Grayson obtained a considerable legal education in his youth. If not in England before 1762, then he certainly obtained legal training between 1763 and 1765, when there is scant evidence of his presence in northern Virginia.<sup>21</sup>

William Grayson renewed his activity in northern Virginia in 1766, registering his protest against the Stamp Act by signing the Leedstown Resolutions. That summer, the young attorney "from Prince William" was admitted to practice law in four counties. Early in 1767, William Grayson obtained the Governor's Commission and qualified as the new Deputy King's Attorney (equivalent of a modern Commonwealth's Attorney) for Loudoun County. Grayson obtained a similar Commission for Fairfax County the following year. King's Attorney Grayson held both offices for nearly a decade, until the onset of the Revolution. This position placed Grayson in frequent contact with the County Court Justices of Loudoun and Fairfax - the likes of Francis Lightfoot Lee, George William Fairfax, George Mason, Francis Peyton, Leven Powell and George Washington. It was the perfect stage for the twenty-five year old William Grayson to display his eloquence, his statecraft, his integrity and his ability to think on his feet. He would be called upon to utilize all four in the service of his country.<sup>22</sup>

The British Parliament closed the port of Boston, effective 1 June 1774 - setting off a storm of protest throughout the colonies. In Virginia, nearly every town and county established a "Committee of Correspondence." "Inhabitants of the town of Dumfries" met on 31 May 1774, called for a



meeting for Prince William County to take place the following Monday, and appointed a small Committee of Correspondence, which included William Grayson. The Resolves they adopted that day labelled Parliament's actions as "unconstitutional ... [and] fundamentally subversive of our antient, legal and vital liberties." The same day, the Dumfries Committee issued a circular letter, advising their correspondents that:

*"... we have called the Inhabitants of the County together to warn them of the impending Danger ... [I]t is the determined Resolution of this town, that a total stop shall be put to every kind of Importation and exportation to and from Great Britain and the West India Islands."*<sup>23</sup>

"The Freeholders, Merchants, and other Inhabitants of the County of Prince William" met at their Courthouse, in Dumfries, on 6 June 1774. William Grayson was continued on the Committee of Correspondence, and we can be certain that he played a significant role in drafting the Prince William Resolves. That day, declaring that "no person ought to be taxed but by his own consent," Prince William became the first county in Virginia to call for a cooperative North American effort in stopping all colonial commerce with Great Britain.<sup>24</sup>

As the situation around Boston deteriorated, Virginians began to prepare for the worst. "Independent Companies of Volunteers" were springing up all over Virginia. These were, essentially, regrouped county militias who mustered without the Governor's blessing. The first of these units organized in Fairfax County in September, expressing a desire "to defend to the utmost of their power, the legal properties of our sovereign King George the Third, and the just rights and privileges of their country, their posterity and themselves, upon the principles of the British Constitution." William Grayson witnessed these developments and took the experience home to Dumfries. On 11 November 1774, an independent company of Prince William "cadets" formed with the 32-year old Grayson as their Captain, adopting a uniform that George Washington designed for them. Capt. Grayson mustered his company throughout the winter and drilled his troop in the practice of the Manual of Arms. The

motto of the company, "*Aut Liber, Aut Nullus*," translated roughly to the more easily recognized "*Liberty or Death*."

*"About the time when the war with the mother country was thought to be inevitable, and residents in the colonies were beginning to decide on which side of the strife they would stand, two young Virginians had made up their minds to run away to England and there await the issue of the struggle. [King's Attorney] Grayson, being a person of influence, was asked to interest himself in the matter so far as to aid the juvenile loyalists in obtaining suitable conveyance across the water. He was written to for this purpose, and a sufficient sum enclosed to defray the expenses of the voyage. He indignantly refused to assist the young renegades in their scheme of desertion, said they might get off, if they could, without his agency, and declared that, as the revolted Province was on the eve of an arduous contest, and would require all the available means and efforts of its citizens, he had put the money sent him into a fund then being raised for the war, and would be personally responsible for it whenever the owners might see fit to reclaim it."*<sup>25</sup>

On 20 October 1774, Delegates to the First Continental Congress adopted an "Association" for the stopping of all British imports beginning that December, urging "That a Committee be chosen in every County" to enforce the continental embargo. The freeholders and housekeepers (the colonial voters) of Prince William met on 9 December 1774 and William Grayson was selected as a member of another committee, this time the new Prince William County "Committee of Safety."<sup>26</sup>

In April of 1775, Governor Dunmore shocked Virginians into action by removing gunpowder from the public magazine in Williamsburg. Capt. Grayson wrote to George Washington on this occasion, for "advice" on the proper course of action. Grayson then marched his company to Fredericksburg, where they were joined by other units from all over northern Virginia, intent on marching on Williamsburg. By the first week of May, two thousand militiamen filled the streets of Fredericksburg. After receiving Washington's advice, the officers assembled and,



in a very close vote, determined to call off their march on the colonial capitol. Open warfare was averted, but Dunmore no longer felt safe in Williamsburg and he established his military headquarters in South Norfolk during the summer of 1775.

Virginia Assemblymen, in "Convention," called for the organization of one battalion in each of fifteen military districts, for "Minute Service." Fairfax and Loudoun were part of the Prince William District. William Grayson, a prominent resident of Prince William and the King's Attorney for both Fairfax and Loudoun, was the obvious choice for command of the battalion; he was selected as Colonel. He had the fellowship and services of several Loudoun officers in his Minute Battalion. Leven Powell served as Major of the Battalion, Francis Peyton was the Paymaster, and the Rev. Dr. David Griffith (from Loudoun's Shelburne Parish) became Surgeon and Chaplain. Years and years of association, in and out of northern Virginia's courts and churches, must have made their collaboration an easy one.<sup>27</sup>

During 1775 and 1776, Virginia's Minute Battalions were activated in staggered shifts, each for service of three months at a time. Grayson's Battalion was called up in December of 1775, and dispatched to Hampton Roads, replacing Culpeper Minutemen (who had been in service since October and fought in the Battle of Great Bridge on 9 December 1775). Several Loudoun and Fairfax minute companies were sent to Hampton, to protect naval stores and resist British attempts at resupply, arriving on station in the dead of winter. At this time, a close working relationship developed between Grayson and Patrick Henry, who was in command of patriot forces at Williamsburg. This was the origin of a life-long association and friendship between the two. Col. Henry consolidated the various minute companies stationed at Hampton under Col. William Grayson's command and, in mid-February of 1776, reviewed plans for an "Entrenchment at Hampton proposed by Colo. Grayson."<sup>28</sup>

On 21 March 1776, with his tour of duty at Hampton near its end, William Grayson resigned "his appointment as Colonel of the Minute Battalion of Prince William District." Grayson then approached Col. Henry, who directed his powers

of persuasion at General Charles Lee. Lee, then in command at Williamsburg, wrote to George Washington as requested, recommending Washington's former foxhunting companion, "William Grayson, as a man of extra credit." On 21 June 1776, three months after leaving his command at Hampton, Grayson joined Gen. Washington's personal staff as an assistant secretary. On 24 August 1776, Col. Grayson was promoted to the post of Aide-de-Camp to Washington. He was in New York and New Jersey with the army throughout the campaign of 1776, at the Battles of Harlem Heights, White Plains and Fort Lee, in the American retreat across the Jerseys and, at the close of the campaign that year, at the Battle of Trenton.<sup>29</sup>

In December of 1776, Congress authorized sixteen additional regiments of the Continental Line which were to serve at Gen. Washington's direction. On 11 January 1777, Washington appointed his chief Aide, William Grayson, to his own command, and Col. Grayson returned to northern Virginia to recruit. Grayson's first thought was his second in command, and he immediately selected an old comrade, Loudoun's Leven Powell. The Continental Congress supplied clothing and nearly \$15,000 for regimental arms, equipment and enlistment bonuses. Grayson and Powell had considerable success in the enlistment of recruits, and companies from Fairfax, Loudoun, Fauquier, Prince William and Frederick Counties were rapidly organized. In March of 1777, Congress forwarded another \$400 to Lt. Col. Leven Powell "for the use of that part of the Virginia Regiment commanded by Colonel Grayson, now on their march to join the main army." The lead element of Grayson's regiment joined Washington's army that spring. Col. Grayson and his men fought, and took casualties, at the battles of Brandywine on 21 September 1777, and Germantown on 4 October 1777.<sup>30</sup>

The "full complement" of Grayson's regiment, led by Lt. Col. Powell, arrived at the American camp near Philadelphia in November of 1777. The regiment was in Lafayette's command at Valley Forge, and suffered the cold and privations of that place along with the rest of the army. Col. Powell wrote home in January of 1778, but said nothing of the following incident,



which apparently took place at "the house of John Rowlands ... an able farmer,"<sup>31</sup> and may have been the plan of Col. Powell himself, and the trusty Rev. Dr. David Griffith:

*"When action was required, [William Grayson] was active enough; but he was otherwise fond of repose and hard to move. He was sleeping one night, at Valley Forge, during the terrible winter when the army was quartered at that place. Some of his brother officers, knowing his averseness to stir when he had once composed himself to rest, had attached a string to the bed clothes, and removing out of sight, pulled away at the cord. Presently the cold began to tell severely on Grayson's sensibilities. He awoke and found every stitch of covering lying outside of the bed and several feet beyond his reach. He called lustily to his Negro boy, Peter, but Peter was fast asleep in a corner of the hut and made no sign. The cold increased, but Grayson lay shivering, loathe to budge a limb in that dire extremity, until at last, nature being capable of no further endurance, he slid from his couch, gathered up the bedding, and, with a good-natured growl, declared he would so arrange matters, that whoever made the next attempt to disturb him should find it necessary to move body, blankets, bed, and all."*<sup>32</sup>

At the Battle of Monmouth on 28 June 1778, Grayson's regiment led the advance under General Charles Lee. Thomas Balch recounted an interesting story about the incident that took place at Rhea's Ridge on Tennent Road, during the battle, which eventually resulted in Gen. Charles Lee's court martial:

*"Captain Thomas Washington ... was ... in Grayson's regiment and it so happened that ... he commanded the leading platoon [and was with] Col. Grayson ... when General Washington rode up and upbraided General Lee for his dastardly retreat. [Capt. Washington] was frequently heard to repeat the very words used. General Washington demanded of General Lee the reason of the retreat, to which General Lee replied: 'Sir, these troops are not able to meet British Grenadiers.' 'Sir,' said General Washington, much excited, 'they are able, and by G-d they shall do it!'"*<sup>33</sup>

Due to sickness and battle losses, Grayson's regiment never reached full strength. Heavy casualties at Monmouth wasted the unit, which was disbanded long before Grayson's resignation became effective 22 April 1779. Col. Grayson eventually accepted an appointment to the Continental Board of War, where he served out the balance of the Revolution. On 10 September 1781, William Grayson requested "that Congress would now be pleased to accept this resignation."<sup>34</sup>

This brought Grayson's military career to a close, but not his career in public service. In 1783, Col. Grayson took an active role in founding The Society of the Cincinnati and was elected to the National Standing Committee of that body of worthies. Grayson represented Prince William County in the Virginia Assembly of 1784, and is credited with sponsoring the bill that established George Washington's Potowmac Canal Company. He was sent to the Continental Congress that year but, in a foreboding development, poor health delayed his arrival. Grayson would be plagued by severe gout, which is attributed as the cause of his death five years later.<sup>35</sup>

Up until the time of his last illness, the balance of Colonel Grayson's life was played out in the spotlight of the public assemblies of our infant Nation. Free trade for the American States was an ideal that Col. Grayson cherished. He never forgot the fact that British over-regulation of trade had led to the financial ruin of his older brother and many other honest Virginians. In 1786, Grayson obtained Congressional adoption of a resolution that declared the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence, "and the carrying places between the same ... to be, common highways, and to be forever free ... without any tax, duty, or impost therefore." Grayson was also instrumental in the adoption of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.<sup>36</sup>

While he did not use the term "manifest destiny" during the debates, Col. Grayson expressed his opinion that "those now living will see the [American] Republic extended far beyond the Mississippi river, both to the South and to the West." This was one of many indications of Grayson's prescience. The concern he expressed over the greed of the northern "carrying states"



was a harbinger of the American Civil War in the next century. And, after Col. Grayson's election to the U.S. Senate in 1788, his efforts resulted in Virginia's instruction of its Congressmen to obtain the American Bills of Rights. Unfortunately, Grayson's health began to fail again. The first session of the U.S. Senate was well underway before William Grayson was able to take his seat, and he had to take a leave of absence from the Senate in August of 1789, to retrieve his health.<sup>37</sup>

Col. Grayson spent the last winter at his home on Abraham's creek near Winchester, in Frederick County, in the company of his children and a host of fellow veteran officers of the Revolution. Leaving home to attend the second session of the first Congress, Grayson stopped in Dumfries to visit with his brother, the Rev. Spence Grayson, and his sister Susanna Orr. Instead of recuperating, William Grayson died on 12 March 1790, and was buried in the family vault at Belle Air.<sup>38</sup>

"Col. Grayson was about six feet high and robust in proportion. He had black hair and eyes, with a florid complexion and remarkably fine teeth. He was fond of society, possessed of brilliant colloquial powers and adorned with all the graces and accomplishments of a high bred and high toned gentleman ... of the 'Old Dominion.'" <sup>39</sup>

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#### ENDNOTES

- \* Thomas Balch, editor, "Col. William Grayson of the Revolution and the Grayson Family of Virginia," *Papers Relating Chiefly to the Maryland Line During the Revolution*, The Seventy-Six Society, Philadelphia (1857), pp. 99-110. The frontispiece proclaims that only "One Hundred and Fifty Copies" of the original tome were printed. Thomas Balch ascribed the primary sources of his 1857 article to be "the MSS. of Mr. Peter Grayson Washington and Mr. Frederick William Grayson," two of the many prominent descendants of the Rev. Spence Grayson. Ibid., p. 108.
- \*\* "Addresses Delivered at the Presentation Exercises on the 13th of May, 1922," *Thomas Balch Library*, Leesburg (1923), pp. 2-7 and 38-39.
1. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, "George Mason - His Lasting Influence," Donald J. Senese, editor, *George Mason and the Legacy of Constitutional*

- Liberty*, Fairfax County History Commission, Fairfax (1989), p. 119; and, William Peters, *A More Perfect Union*, Crown Publishers, Inc., New York (1987), p. 232. And see, Benjamin F. Wright, editor, *The Federalist*, Barnes & Noble, Inc., New York (1996), p. 72.
2. This document count does not include the "Correspondence of George Washington's Headquarters, 1776-1781," at the Library of Congress, or the public correspondence reprinted by H.W. Flournoy, editor, in *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, Richmond (1890). See, Karen Dawley Paul, compiler, *Guide to Research Collections of former United States Senators*, Government Printing Office, Washington D.C. (1995), p. 237.
  3. James E. DuPriest, Jr., *William Grayson; A Political Biography of Virginia's First United States Senator*, Prince William County Historical Commission, Manassas (1977). Grayson argued stridently that "Congress should have the power of preventing States from cheating one another, as well as their own citizens." In the final days of his political life, Colonel Grayson worked with remarkable energy for the adoption of an American Bill of Rights, to obtain the protection of citizens against the abuses of an over-reaching central government. Peters, supra, p. 154.
  4. Hugh B. Grigsby, *The History of the Virginia Federal Convention of 1788*, R.A. Brock, editor, Richmond (1890-91).
  5. Weston Bristow, "William Grayson: A Study in Virginia Biography of the Eighteenth Century," *Richmond College Historical Papers*, Richmond College, Richmond (1917), Vol. II, pp. 74-117; and, DuPriest, supra.
  6. Joseph Horrell, editor, "New Light on William Grayson; His Guardian's Account," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond (1984), Vol. 92, pp. 423-443. The source for Horrell's seminal work is Loudoun Guardian Accounts, Book A, pp. 4-10. Horrell was unaware of Balch, referring to inaccuracies as "the Grigsby residue." Restating the Grigsby residue, see, Marilyn Nehring, *William Grayson; An Overview of the Life of One of Virginia's First United States Senators*, Historic Dumfries Virginia, Inc., Dumfries (1978). Revisiting DuPriest, see, Joseph A. Esposito, "William Grayson of Prince William County," *Northern Virginia Heritage*, Fairfax (1988), Vol. X, No. 2, pp. 15-20.
  7. James D. Evans, "Grayson Family Addenda," *Tyler's Quarterly Historical & Genealogical Magazine*, Richmond Press, Inc. (1931), Vol. XII, pp. 181-189; generally, Northern Neck Grants, Books C, D and E; and, Edith Moore Sprouse, *Colchester: Colonial Port on the Potomac*, Fairfax County Office of Comprehensive Planning, Fairfax (1975), pp. 26-27.
  8. Wilmer L. Hall, editor, *Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia*, Virginia State Library, Richmond (1967), Vol. V, p. 394. "Monroe Family," *William & Mary College Quarterly*, William & Mary College, Williamsburg (1907-1908), Vol. XVI, pp. 65-67 and 192-195. Balch, supra, p. 100. Prince William County, Minute Book (1753), p. 117.



- Northern Neck Grants, Book F, Folio 126 and Book H, Folio 90.
9. Hall, *supra*, p. 395. Evans, *supra*, p. 187.
  10. Loudoun County Court Orders, Book A, pp. 130, 237 and 292; Fairfax County Court Orders, 1756 Book, p. 422; and, Horrell, *supra*, p. 441.
  11. There may have been three Benjamin Graysons in northern Virginia at this time, causing a great deal of confusion. Specifically, see, Loudoun County Orders, Book A, pp. 148 and 613. Both confirming and contra, John T. Phillips, II, *The Historian's Guide to Loudoun County, Virginia; Volume I, Colonial Laws of Virginia and County Court Orders, 1757-1766*, Goose Creek Productions, Leesburg (1996), pp. 51, 64, 470 and 474. For the ruin of Benjamin Grayson (Junnr.), see Sprouse, *supra*, pp. 26-27. Benjamin Junr.'s widow, Elizabeth Grayson, remarried around 1773 with Reverend James Marye. Loudoun County Court Orders, Book F, p. 409.
  12. The family legend first appears in Balch, *supra*, p. 100. William Grayson's journey to England is first referred to 11 February 1760, while the ledger of his activity on the Potomac tails off on 3 April 1760. By 25 September 1760, a bill for expenses, paid by "Thomas Knox, Esqr., since [William] was in London," arrives on the Potomac. These records imply William's arrival in London by mid-June. William completes his studies in London and returns to the Potomac in July of 1762, when he refits his wardrobe. Horrell, *supra*, pp. 434-439. In the 1760s, "Esq." was applied, almost exclusively, to attorneys practicing law. The exceptions were usually individuals who regularly acted as an agent under a power of attorney. In other words, Thomas Knox, Esqr. was most certainly a London attorney, in power or in fact. Horrell's analysis fails us in this instance. *Ibid.* Spence Grayson was keeping regular company with the Wagener family in September of 1758 - thereafter, he disappears from records for several years. On 13 February 1761, Spence witnesses a deed that conveys "Belmont," on Mason Neck, to his brother Benjamin.
  13. Fairfax County Deeds, Book D, pp. 550, 633-637 and 873. Major Wagener moved his family to the north bank of the Occoquan in 1752, built his "Stisted" manor house, assumed the Clerkship of Fairfax County, and founded the town of Colchester. Fairfax Harrison, *Landmarks of Old Prince William*, Prince William Co. Historical Comm., (1924, 1987), pp. 292-293 and 433-434; and, Sprouse, *supra*, pp. 19-24.
  14. Fairfax County Deeds, Book F, pp. 113 and 356. Phillips, *supra*, p. 448.
  15. Phillips, *supra*, pp. 53, 64 and 450-451; Loudoun County Orders, Book C, p. 235; Margaret Lail Hopkins, *Cameron Parish in Colonial Virginia*, Lynchburg (1988), pp. 74-75 and 77; and, Loudoun County Tithables 1772-1777, List of Justice Samuel Love (1776-1777).
  16. During their long and fruitful marriage, the Rev. and Mrs. Grayson had seventeen children. Most of their sons emigrated to the West and Southwest. Hopkins, *supra*, pp. 74-75. Loudoun County Tithables, 1781

- List of Justice Hardage Lane. Thomas Balch, devoted considerable attention to the accomplishments of the descendants of Rev. Grayson. Balch, *supra*, pp. 100-101; and, Frederick William Grayson, "The Grayson Family," *Tyler's Quarterly Historical & Genealogical Magazine*, Richmond Press, Inc., Richmond (1924), Vol. V, pp. 196-197 and 261-268. In the light of evidence revealed in the Loudoun County Court records, the latter is, unfortunately, very mistaken in a number of instances.
17. John Orr was a son Col. Alexander Dalrymple Orr and Lady Agnes Dalrymple of Ayr, Scotland. Evans, *supra* p. 188. Benjamin Grayson Orr, son of Susanna and John Orr, was a Mayor of Washington D.C.. William Grayson, in his Will of 11 March 1790, named nephew Benjamin Grayson Orr as an Executor. See, Grayson's Will, *infra*, footnote #18.
  18. Elenora Grayson predeceased her husband. The Colonel's Will is brief, which affords the opportunity to give it here in full:

*"In the name of God amen. I, William Grayson, do hereby make my Will agreeable to the present laws of Virginia. That is, an equal division of my Estate Shall be made amongst all my children with this only exception - that I Will all my Slaves [who were] born Since the Independence of America Free; and that the Honorable Robert Hanson Harrison and Benjamin Grayson Orr, with all my Children are hereby appointed Executors. All my Lands and estate are lyable to all my just debts. Given under my hand and Seal this 11th day of March 1790. William Grayson. /S/"*

- Spence Grayson and Susanna Orr were at William's death bed, and witnessed the Will along with James Wallace and Richard Graham. William Smallwood Grayson refused to qualify as Executor of his father's estate. Frederick County Wills, Book 5, p. 295. At the time of Col. William's death, his three younger children, Charles, George and Hebe had not reached majority. They were still under age on 11 August 1792, when their older brother petitioned as "their next friend" in claims arising from their inheritance of Colonel Grayson's interest in the Indiana Company. One of the children may have been as young as age 5 in 1790. Flournoy, *supra*, Vol. VI, pp. 1-33. Nehring, *supra*, p. 11. This information embarrasses earlier repeaters of Grayson's family history. Nehring, *ibid.*, and Grayson, *supra*, p. 207. The initial mis-identification of Col. Grayson's sons may lie with Lund Washington. Bristow, *supra*, p. 76. William Grayson Carter and Alfred G. Carter, were two sons of Col. Grayson's daughter, Hebe, who married John Carter of Loudoun County. In 1827, William Smallwood Grayson inherited the entire landed estate of his grandfather, General Smallwood. Balch, *supra*, pp. 101-102.
19. William W. Hening, editor, *Statutes [of Virginia] at Large*, University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville (1969), Vol. VII, pp. 229-230. Among



- William Grayson's boyhood friends were two sons of other officers of the Prince William militia, Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee - son of militia Col. Henry Lee, and Thomas Tebbs - son of militia Capt. William Tebbs. The Revolutionary service of Light Horse Harry is quite well known. Lt. Tebbs was recognized for gallantry in 1775 in an early skirmish of the Revolution, days before the Battle of Great Bridge. "Orderly Book of the 2nd Virginia Regiment, Continental Line," *Virginia Mag. of History & Biography*, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond (1977), Vol. 85, p. 162.
20. Col. Benjamin Grayson's Last Will and Testament has been lost. Substantial circumstantial evidence confirms the location of real estate that William Grayson inherited. Northern Neck Grants, Book H, Folios 90 and 99, and Book N, Folio 87. Fairfax County Deeds, Book D, pp. 307-310. Loudoun County Deeds, Book E, pp. 208-213, Book G, pp. 353-356, and Book H, pp. 25-28. Frederick County (Virginia) Deeds, Book 19, pp. 378-380, and Book 22, p. 190. Henning, supra, Vol. X, p. 102. Guardian accounts show that William inherited at least seven slaves, paid quitrents on 2,800 acres, and that a "Loudoun Quarter" was in cultivation. Levies were paid for 8 tithables, assessed at 38 lbs. of tobacco ("lbt.") for the county levy and 47 lbt. for the parish levy in Prince William in 1761. Loudoun Guardian Accounts, Book A, pp. 8-10; and, Horrell, supra, pp. 435-441. Loudoun County Tithable Lists (1774-1781). He is "William Grayson of Frederick County" in his deed of mortgage to Isaac Zane dated 11 January 1790. Frederick County Deeds, Book 22, p. 190.
  21. Phillips, supra, pp. 485 and 487. Benjamin Grayson tendered an initial account of his guardianship in Loudoun County Court on 9 June 1761. Loudoun County Orders, Book A, pp. 130 and 454, and Book B, p. 160.
  22. Hugh West, who held the post of Deputy King's Attorney for Loudoun and Fairfax, died in 1767. Phillips, supra, p. 99; Loudoun County Court Orders, Book C, p. 261, and Book F, p. 249; Fairfax County Court Orders, 1768 Book, pp. 18, 29 and 68, and 1772 Book, pp. 146 and 312.
  23. Resolves were adopted as news from Boston swept down the Potomac. Alexandria was the first to appoint a Committee of Correspondence and call for local "Resolves," on 29 May 1774. The inhabitants of Fredericksburg acted similarly, the day after Dumfries. Among the other worthies on the Alexandria Committee, we find Robert Hanson Harrison - who served with Grayson as Aide-de-Camp to Gen. Washington in the 1776 campaign. William Grayson named Col. Harrison as an Executor of his estate. Cuthbert Bullitt and Andrew Leitch were on the Dumfries Committee with William Grayson. Flournoy, supra, Vol. VIII, pp. 52-55; footnote #18, above. Bullitt was elected, with Grayson, to represent Prince William in both the Constitutional Convention and the Assembly of 1788. Leitch, after serving as a Captain in Grayson's Minute Battalion in 1775-1776, left the Battalion in February of 1776 for a Captaincy in the

- Third Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line. Leitch was promoted to Major and transferred to the First Virginia Regiment, but he marched to New York with the Third Regiment, and fought with them at Harlem Heights, where he was mortally wounded. E.M. Sanchez-Saavedra, *A Guide to Virginia Military Organizations in the American Revolution, 1774-1787*, Virginia State Library, Richmond (1978), pp. 22, 29 and 39; Richard M. Ketchum, *The Winter Soldiers*, The Easton Press, Norwalk, Connecticut (1973), pp. 164-165, 195 and 409.
24. Peter Force, *American Archives*, Washington, D.C. (1837), 4th Series, Vol. I, col. 388. On 8 June 1774, the citizenry of Frederick County adopted Resolves that established a boycott on the purchase of East India Company tea. *Men and Events of the Revolution in Winchester and Frederick ...*, Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society, Winchester (1975), pp. 1-2, ["*Revolution in Frederick ...*"]. The following Tuesday, 14 June 1774, the inhabitants of Leesburg and Loudoun County went further. The Loudoun Resolves set up a ban on the purchase of all East India Company products, and asserted "That we will have no Commercial intercourse with Great Britain until the ... right of regulating the internal policy of N. America by a British Parliament shall be absolutely and positively given up." The Loudoun Committee included Francis Peyton, Leven Powell and John Thornton, each of whom served as a Lt. Colonel in one of Col. Grayson's commands during the Revolution. Harrison Williams, *Legends of Loudoun*, Garrett & Massie, Inc., Richmond (1938), pp. 123-126; Sanchez-Saavedra, supra, pp. 22 and 74. King's Attorney Grayson may have been in Leesburg when the Loudoun Resolves were adopted. See, Loudoun County Court Orders, Book F, p. 484.
  25. Sanchez-Saavedra, supra, pp. 7-11 and 22; and, Balch, supra, pp. 106-107.
  26. Cuthbert Bullitt and Andrew Leitch, who have been mentioned previously, were also chosen members of the Committee of Safety. Charles Washington Coleman, "The County Committees of 1774-75 in Virginia," *William & Mary College Quarterly*, Williamsburg (1896), 1st Series, Vol. V, pp. 94-100 and 248. See, footnote #23, above.
  27. Sanchez-Saavedra, supra, pp. 12, 22 and 197. Francis Peyton and Leven Powell were Justices on the Loudoun County Court, and served on the 1774 Committee of the Loudoun Resolves. Francis Peyton was the County Lieutenant (militia commander) of Loudoun before and during the Revolution. When Col. Grayson's regiment of the Continental Line was organized in 1777, Leven Powell was selected as his Lt. Colonel. Ten years later, Powell founded Middleburg. See, footnote # 24, above.
  28. Flournoy, supra, Vol. VIII, pp. 79, 86, 116-117 and 130.
  29. Flournoy, supra, Vol. VIII, pp. 86 and 131; Bristow, supra, p. 80; John C. Fitzpatrick, editor, *The Writings of George Washington*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. (1931), Vol. 5, p. 481;



- Ketchum, supra, pp. 164-165; and see, Force, supra, Vol. I, p. 1141. Major Leven Powell assumed command of the Battalion, upon Colonel Grayson's resignation, in March of 1776. Sanchez-Saavedra, supra, p. 22.
30. Grayson's nephew, Hebard Smallwood, was the Captain of one company. Bristow, supra, pp. 81-82; and, Sanchez-Saavedra, supra, pp. 73-74.
  31. Here, you are asked to assume that all of the senior officers of Col. Grayson's regiment shared housing at Valley Forge. "Leven Powell," *John P. Branch Historical Papers of Randolph-Macon College*, Richmond (1901), I, pp. 22-24; David G. Martin, *The Philadelphia Campaign*, Combined Books, Conshohocken (1993), pp. 170 and 251.
  32. Balch, supra, p. 107-108. After William Grayson's death, accounts of his estate detail the "Sale of one Negro man [slave named] Peter ... £37, 10 [shillings]." For some reason, Peter was not listed in the initial estate inventory. Frederick County Wills, Book 5, pp. 417-420 and 478.
  33. Balch, supra, p. 103-104. Transcripts of Gen. Lee's court martial did not record Gen. Washington's use of profanity. Martin, supra, pp. 216-225.
  34. Sanchez-Saavedra, supra, pp. 73-74.
  35. Edgar Erskine Hume, *Sesquicentennial History and Roster of the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Virginia, 1783-1933*, Society of the Cincinnati, Richmond (1934), pp. 264 and 281; DuPriest, supra, p. 16. From Congress, Ed. Carrington wrote: "Mr. Grayson is much indisposed, and has been so for sometime ..." Flournoy, supra, Vol. IV, p. 199.
  36. DuPriest, supra, pp. 24-50; and, Bristow, supra, pp. 89-93 and 101.
  37. Balch, supra, p. 105; and, DuPriest, supra, pp. 72-77 and 93-94.
  38. Among his dealings in January of 1790, Col. Grayson purchased land from Col. John Smith, and obtained a loan from Isaac Zane. During the Revolution, Smith was the County Lieutenant (commander of militia) of Frederick County. Isaac Zane, the founder of the Marlboro Iron Works on the Shenandoah, served on the Frederick County Committee of Correspondence beginning in June of 1774. Frederick County Deeds, Book 22, pp. 190 and 434; Sanchez-Saavedra, supra, p. 122; *Revolution in Frederick ...*, supra, p. 1. For Col. Grayson's Will, see footnote #18, above. For a controversy surrounding Col. William Grayson's tomb, see, Donnel Nunes, "Plan to Restore Patriot's Grave Stirs Opposition," *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C. (2 November 1975), pp. A-19, A-22.
  39. Balch, supra, p. 106. In 1792, while the memory of America's great Revolutionary leaders was still active, the Virginia Assembly honored a new County in the southwest part of the Commonwealth with William Grayson's name. Hening, supra, Vol. XIII, p. 559. In 1813, Kentucky followed suit. The headwaters of the New River, which flows west into the Mississippi, are in Grayson County, Virginia.