

# The Common-place Book of Me

## The Diary of Margaret Lynn Lewis

Reprinted by The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Virginia

### **Foreword**

his publication is a bicentennial project of the Historical Activities Committee of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, which was designed to incover the writings of colonial women. This diary was prought to the attention of members of the Virginia and Vest Virginia Societies and is a dramatic and poignant tory of Margaret Lynn Lewis, a Scottish woman who exemplifies the indomitable spirit of pioneer women of America. Among the descendants of Margaret Lynn Lewis ind her remarkable husband John, is Ian Campbell, the present Duke of Argyll, who has most graciously provided is copy of the manuscript from Inverary Castle. Excerpts rom the diary, often referred to as the "Valley Manucript," were first published in "Virginia, Its History and Intiquities" by Henry Howe in 1845. They appeared again n an old Southern magazine, "The Land We Love" in 1869 nd also in 1940 in the Times Register of Salem, Virginia vith explanatory remarks by H. E. Van Gelder.

Compiled by: Mrs. William Roland Miller, Jr. Mrs. James Clifton Wheat, Jr.

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#### Inversray Castle Argyll. Inversray 2275.

22nd September 1976

Mrs. W.R. Miller, Jr., "Channel Points", 3193 Adam Keeling Road, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23454.

Dear Mrs. Miller,

The copy of the Valley Manuscript now in your possession to be published by the Colonial Dames in booklet form was originally given to my mother by her stepmother, Mrs. Henry Clews, in 1949. This copy was made by the mother of Lucy Madison Worthington Clews from the original which I believe to be lodged in the Historical Museum at Richmond.

Margaret Lynn Lewis, a true pioneer, along with her husband, wrote this diary which reflects so aptly the spirit of those who brought about the success of the American Revolution. It seems fitting in this Bicentennial Year to republish a reminder as to how your nation fought and strove so fiercely to obtain the dignity and achievement it enjoys today.

I am proud to say that I am a direct descendent of that fine woman, who was the first European settler in that part of Virginia now known as Augusta County.

Yours sincerely,



Margaret Lynn Lewis

"Your fivefold Greatgrandmother, as here told by her, should be an inspiration to you or any descendant who has her heroic blood in their veins."

Marie Osie Whelan Clews to Louise Morris Clews Campbell, Dutchess of Argyll

## **Excerpts from the Diary**

### Begun in Ireland

"The common-place Book of me, Margaret Lewis, nee Lynn, of Loch Lynn, Scotland, being a nest for my soul's repose in the troublous times which have befallen. Here nothing burthening myself with style or date, I can retreat where toil and turmoil of the day are past, speaking as unto a faithful ear, some of my woman's sorrow. So shall I not add to their weight who have Heaven knows, enough of woe to bear for themselves.

Bidding farewell to the bonny Loch and knolls of Lynn though along with the gallant Hugeunot I had taken for my husband — caused surely a woman's grief to my heart, nay, something like a child's, I might say. It was not for the hands of retainers, the powerful clans and castle splendors I had grown up with all surrounded, but I almost cried aloud for my mother, for good Dame Farley, our blessed English tutoress, and for old Elliot my nurse. I thought the first night I came to my husband's Mother's, and was set up as a Lady to receive court, I should blubber like a great child. This with the remembrance that at that very hour, my mother was taking her cup of comfort, as she called her tea, that the children were with her in their places and that my chair, the one which was my sainted Fathers, sat empty, I stood as long as endurance was good, then stole away to a more retired apartment. There they sought and found me, sleeping in a great chair like an overgrown baby - I did not like to give cause of offence, but I thought then, as I have often since, of the significance of the blessed Apostles sleeping for sorrow and heaviness of heart, as the Masters time drew nigh — Well, so be it — Loch Lynn and its rock crowned summits and purple heather are all passed by now like as to when one goes on a journey and bearith away in memory only impressions of the landscape. The crags to be sure had in them nothing loving, but that they grew by my home, and for the blue heather, the eyes of my two boys, Andrew and William and their sweet sister Alice, glad me more than acres of such. Poor Thomas my oldest son, he hath a defect in his sight, and for all this he looks into his mother's heart, deep down enough, leaving there which is better than the shade of blue heather — sunshine — He is a noble lad.

We have worse troubles come upon us now I say, than that of a young wench leaving her mother's fireside. My poor John is surely belabored in soul with the grevious malice of this same Lord of Clonwithgairn. The contentious noble hath said to the good Dean of Ulster a few nights ago how that my husband's leasehold on the estates of Clonwithgairn and Dunderry, should be revoked at next assizes or (and he took a vile oath) blood should be spilt between the contenders. My husband has amassed much means, but he does not choose (as what men of spirit would) to be driven to and fro in the matter of his rightful possessions.

So I play with my children and for John I have words cheery and careless like; but faithful Nora sees it is not in my heart. She essays compassionate sentences and looks, for me, and I tell to her many troubles, yet it is a foe to order and household authority when the heads thereof use to confiding greatly in even the best of servants. Now when a woman's tongue must not much wag, some corresponding member must take its place here then comes in this book of mine which at one times served John Lewis for tenantry account.

In this year of Grace 1730 what things are come to pass. Blessed Christ, pardon the souls of such wicked minded men as on the last Lord's Day would so rush to arms and blood making havoc and murder, and sacrifice to evil passion.

I can no more take this my book, my companion, to my nook of a private withdrawing room in Clonwall Castle, drawing there the crimson dark curtains shutting out the world and my noisy little ones, I liked that retirement where I could read or pray or talk to myself in writing. My home lies in ashes, but far worse ashes lie on my heart too. My best beloved John is a fugitive from the Law, and for me, I cannot say why my poor sight was not blasted by what it four days since beheld. My husband had his family around him as is the custom when we go not to evening service (indeed our Chaplain was home sick abed) expounding for the soul's health of children and servants text of Holy Scripture. Edward poor man! begged the reading should go on in the round tower room where he lay. Months he had been ailing, yet being somewhat on the mend, then he had come with his wife and infants to his brother's house. Strange to say as the passage "are you come out as against a thief with swords and staves," paused John's lips a rude shouting was heard without, on looking to the direction of the noise we percieved the drunken Lord of Clonwithgairn leading an armed force of ruffian clans. This to eject John Lewis from his rightful domains. The envious heart could not bear the sight of his neighbour's prosperity. Dark was the shadow on Clonwall that evening. My husband armed himself like a man, rallied our domestics around him, and even poor puny Edward got on his arms right speedily. Poor soul! he had as well not — may be better — for he was the first victim of their ferocious raid, ere he had come three steps one of the marauders cried out "Where will that white pigeon be going" then shot him through the head. He fell stark dead! Then John looked like an enraged tiger, surely. He wielded right and left when lo! first the obnoxious noble, then his favorite stewart were dispatched. Finally our men succeeded in driving off the interlopers, but some of our best were slain. More than this, a very great sorrow which we had not looked for, greeted us as the invaders dispersed, in the slain and trampled body of Edward's oldest son, poor little Eubank. He was only eight years old. Now he came among them we could not tell. His green tunic was stained

with blood and tramping feet, and his white marble face looked like a sculptured cherub, but on these nor the portly prostrate form of his Father must we stay to anger our eyes. Clonwithgairn was a man of power and weight and we must hurry away from the scene of that breif, bloody, battle. I and my little ones abide here (Dungavin) with good friends, while he, my best beloved of all roameth I don't know where. Servants have buried our dead long before this time, while I sit weeping tears from different fountains, of bitterest affliction for John, dear man! of gloom enough for Edward's double bereft widow and the two kin couples darkening the memory of our once happy home, tears of thankfullness that he, my life was spared, and may sweet Christ forgive me! tears of joy that the persecutor, the mover of this Devil's work, fell in his evil undertaking.

Last night about sun setting Lady Clara sang to her Kitar a low sweet song, this upon the south balcony. My soul seemed to leave the body as I listened, as though something strange should come to past to me or mine. By and by she sudden stopped and I recall myself, a white kerchief was waved slowly against the dusky park wood. News from my husband!

This was to be his signal. Lady Clara and I started off in the direction whence the sign had come, but John, poor soul, had hidden himself there, lest the sounds he heard might be other than friendly steps. I thought presently to speak aloud, tho' my heart was in my mouth, so he knew the voice and came to the edge of the wood again. We three sat talking as long as we dared and now I know my destiny and he is gone. He has been to Portugal, so he tells, but likes it not much for a living. The Virginia wilds holds out a safe asylum for our oppressed house, and thither we sail at once. The changed life we lead there is nothing to think of. Safety from injustice, if we shall find it, covers all the ground. So far, seeing the way clear the prospects darkens now with doubt and fear, lest some unknown evil

undertake and intercept or prevent our voyage.

### In America

That God is better than our fears is truly said. I look up at the top of my page and I see what I last wrote there, in the dear land I shall never see again and I say, Evil Heart why can we not trust more. Not only are we safe come hither, but John Lewis standeth clear before all the world of the death of Charles of Conwithgairn. My Lord Finnegal hath shown himself a good friend, and one worthy to be entrusted with the concerns of any proper man. When the right circumstances of the affray were made known according to the written statement my husband placed in his hands, witnesses whereto, were at last found and proved. His Majesty sent free and full pardon and also generous patents, grants of land in this Eden Valley of Virginia. John Mackey who has come all this way with us, gives good aid in erecting of our house, which I have some impatience to see done. This log cabin may do in times of peace, but should these savages change their policy of amity and good will, it will go evil if we have not where withal to meet them. It has been enough for me ever since to hear John Salling tell at Williamsburg when first we came to this country, how these people did ferociously entreat such as fell into their power. John Lewis was more taken with the newly free captives account of the land in this part, the beauty and abundance of which has not yet been told to say true. The broad prairies before our door at the front looks like miles and miles of gaudy carpenting, with its verdure and flowers.

Our cow Snow drop, as the children call her, is fastened each day on the meadow border by a tether, many a fathom long, they drive her in when required for the use of little Charles, our new world baby — and her feet are dyed red continually with wild strawberries. The new settlement begins to look quite lively now, with the gardens around

the cabins, the patches of grain and all. About thirty of our tenantry have clung to us through evil and through good report, and these are for the most part able and efficient work people. Joe Naseby hath a neat rail to his garden ground, and some sort of ornamental structure on the top of his house to entice the wild pigeons, a cupola like.

When our grey stone dwelling is done I shall feel something like ornamentation, it may be, and for my children's sake, especially Alice, I shall like to make things look enticing. I think people get beauty of soul with growing up among pretty things, particularly girls, but all indeed should have their home beautified so that they may love to stay in or come to it as the case may be. The holy Pascal said not much of any more worth than the words. "Meat of the evil of this world grows out of peoples discontent to stay at home." That is true. Now how shall they love home if home is not made lovely? Here then we have the key to our family's destiny. I will not wait for the new house for this. I will take Andrew, William and Alice (Thomas has gone a hunting with his father and John Mackey) and plant this day some of the prairie roses to run beside our door and on the roof.

Oroon-ah came by while the children and I set the plants by our cottage. He shook his head "Wrong", he said, the Great Spirit put the herbs where he want um" and when Alice brought him a bowl of clabber, he turned away in great disgust the while uttering "rotten! no good." The child gets used to him and the other Indians better than I ever shall. She has many friends among them, (so have the boys too) and they call her a sweet name "White Dove", but for all that, they give me the same feeling as did those painted mountebanks of the Christian festivities at Darly. I am always startled when one of them appear before me. John Mackey is like many others, he is good in giving help to any outside of home. I think on the contrary all good offices should begin and spend their best strength there.

John Lewis prospered with his clearing his crops and his

building, and John Mackey helps him or anybody else who will hunt with him now and then, but he lays up nothing for himself, and his household might gather many comforts around, if he would act different. My husband had located one hundred thousand acres of good land but when he goes to explore and choose what is rich and best, poor Mackey will go along to hunt buffalo. John said to me a Thursday, "Peg" (he always call me Peg after dinner) yet I should say that he gets his bowl of toddy for dinner, a more sober man is not in the old Dominion — said he, "Mackey has laid up not a penny since he came to the settlement". Indeed I was very sure he had not. Well, if he lives at this gait, I suppose the Indian heaven will be good enough for him hereafter — broad hunting ground and plenty of deer and buffalo.

Our town of Staunton goes finely on, thanks to John Lewis' enterprises and energy. It shall descend to his posterity, that he has builded the first town in the valley. It is about four miles from our place of Beverly Manor here which some call Lewis Fort.

Un-gee-wah-wah and his tribe, we find are not friendly to us, but still, if they make farther demonstration, (they captured three of our men yesterday, who made them drunk and then got away) we shall be able to hold our own against them. Our fort is formed of block-houses, stockades, and the cabins. The outside walls are ten to twelve feet high. The blockhouses are built at the angles of the fort and project full two feet beyond the outer walls of the cabins and stockades. The upper stories of our houses are eighteen inches larger in dimensions every way, than the story below, an opening being left at the commencement of the second story to prevent any lodgment of the enemy under the walls. We have port holes in all, and the savages having no artillery, we should stand our ground if they offered assault. Oroon-ah or Tiger King's son, a lad of sixteen, has crowned my Alice with a prairie rose wreath. Queen of the White Doves, he calls her, and has given her

a fawn which has become domestic now. I did not like to hear Thomas say last night — he is older than Omayah — "suppose Sister Alice should grow up and marry Omayah." Youth is romantic and thinks strange thoughts. I hope that she may have none such. Then I set me to thinking, the child is fourteen years old in May and that's just two years younger than I was when I became a married woman. The reflection gave me pain, but I will think of it no more. There is nothing gained by shunning the fixed truth, whatever it be. Lock God's facts in the face whether agreeable or not. It's like going up to a white object in the haunting dark, taking hold of it and proving it no ghost.

Last Spring, and this is 1737 now, John Lewis visiting the seat of Government, Williamsburg, met there with one Burden, but lately come over as agent for Lord Thomas Fairfax. John was so pleased with his company, and with the accounts of this fertile land, that he must needs come back with him and explore and hunt. This was a gala time for John Mackey, but Burden was a more provident hunter than he. My sons took in the chase a young buffalo calf which the stranger much affected, and it was given to him. This was towards the end of his stay, for he made a pleasant inmate of our home some several months. He took the rude animal and made it a present to the most worshipful Governor Gooch, who never having seen so comical a monster in Lower Virginia, did promptly favor the donor by entering upon his official book full authority to Benjamin Burden for locating 500,000 acres of land nigh to the James River and Shenandoah waters, this on condition he should within ten years, settle at the least one hundred families within the limits. The Presbyterians of north Ireland, Scotland and adjacent portions of England do abide at home uneasily, and they will come freely to Burden's bidding for the peopling of this new settlement.

While our friends in Lower Virginia much carouse and keep up the customs of the old country, we beyond the mountains are for the most part a sober set. So much the

more does our departure from our usual way of doing make a great event among us. John Salling, one of the first explorers of this region hath his land about fifty miles off, down in the forks of the James River. A young nephew of his living with him hath seen and admired and made proposals of marriage to Joe Naseby's granddaughter. The girl has sometime said him Nay saying it is a poor comfort one will find in a hunter's home — so playing on the word, — for her name is Comfort — but he is a well looking lad enough — so turning his perseverence to some account in his favor, they have been married. Thomas Salling brought many attendants to his wedding, all riding barebacked and clad in raw-hide. I laughed to see the nuptial procession approach and said to my husband, and our Chaplain, the riders seemed to my eyes, something as did the Spanish Equestrians to the unsophisticated Mexicans — as though man and horse formed all one animal. It is a rare thing indeed, in any of the section, if there be a merry making without its attendant work. Weddings form nearly the only exception.

Sometimes the settlers come together to make arrangements for mutual safety against the Indians, for we have our own trouble with them from time to time, sometimes for reaping, building a cabin and so on, where they will have a repast of bear's meat buffalo steak or venison, topping off with a dance or games.

On this wedding occasion it was an odd array of toilettes. Lindsey and brocade mingled grotesquely. Some old world relics placed beside the ornaments picked up here, produced a mingled effect of Savage life and civilisation struggling one with another. I had given Comfort who is a much smaller woman than I, the yellow brocade I wore the day the surveyors located the town, which was for me an unlucky day. No sooner had we set to dinner than Mr. Larks who was one of them, growing animated in his talk, made a gesture which overset the gravy-boat upon my lap. I laughed it off all right well,

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though my heart was ill at ease with thinking I had no French chalk to remove the soil, but there a woman early learns such lessons of self-command. I forgive Mr. Parks heartily, and do not even wish, while he gives us such a racy paper that any one may so misplace his ink as to soil his hose or/breeches. I hope the men will be going down in a few weeks and fetch another paper.\*

It is a common practice now to make whiskey an intoxicating drink, from the Indian-corn, and a part of the wedding entertainment is a race for a bottle of the stuff. When the guests are approaching the house of the bride, two of the young men most interested in horsemanship are singled out to run for the bottle, the victor in the race is met at the door by someone in the family who confers the prize. He hurries back to the cavalcade, who are halting about a mile off, and gives first to the bridegroom, then to the other company a dram, then after forming again they ride on to the destined place. Our steeple chases are no more trials of fearlessness and good riding than those bottle races, seeing the competitors do come through mud, mire, woods, brush and over hill and dale.

Great mirth prevailed at Joe Naseby's though the wedding table was only a rude board — this was spread with pewter and Queensware, and covered with a substantial repast of meat and vegetables and fowls and bread. The company sat down to it as soon as the wedding ceremony was over, and there was little more ceremony of any kind. I wished to take leave at dinner and bring Alice away. I do not like her to join in these sports but she begged, and her father said better wait and see the end, and I felt some curiosity myself to know what rare things would at last befall. These new world manners are making queer innovations among our people. At dark I knew I was wanted here, so Alice agreed to come, though Thomas stayed dancing and John Lewis went back after conveying us home. He tells me that shortly after he returned a

deputation of young girls stole the bride off and conducted her to her bed in the loft, by and by some young men took away the bridegroom and safely deposited him there also, and late in the night refreshments of bacon, beef and cabbage and such like things were set up to them, and along with all this "Black Betty" which meaneth a bottle of whiskey.

By this time Burdens settlement is fast filling up. There be some of the Established Church among them, but mostly our neighbours are Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. It soundeth like the gathering of the clans to call over the McKeese, McCues, McCampbells, McClungs, McKowns, Caruthers, Stuarts, Wallaces, and Lyles together with the Browns, Prestons, Paxtons, and Grigsbys with them associated. I am led to think of them the more now by an incident which occurred here last night. About sundown, a traveller in hot haste tracked out in the rough costume of the country, rode up and asked lodgings. This was readily granted, together with such entertainment as we had on hand. He was an ungainly looking person though setting his horse well. An hour afterwards another horseman came clattering up and rushed afoul of this first stranger who happened to be without doors, looking after his horse for there was quite a good light from the moon. I heard from my seat by the fireside hilarious voices and the words "Confess"! Confess!" echoed in a roughly jocose way. "We have been seeking you some days"! I then heard and knew not what to think, but this story which the pursuers told as they came into the house - and to which the culprit did good naturedly attest - with somewhat of shame too, explained all.

When Ben Burden the younger came to make deeds to such of the settlers as held cabin rights, the name of Mulhollin did so often appear as to be a matter of wonder to him. He set about making inquiry and so found that Mulhollin had been a person most efficient in deeds of enterprise among them. So far it was well. Inquiry was now

<sup>\*</sup>Virginia Gazette first published by Wm. Parks at Williamsburg, August 6th, 1734.

made for one Polly Mulhollin, who, to pay her passage from Ireland, had sold herself to James Bell, who advanced the money for her. She served his family in all honesty, the time out — then disappeared. Now it turns out that this same Polly Mulhollin did put on man's gear hunting shirt moccasins, etc, and go into Burden's grant for the purpose of becoming a landed proprietor and erected thirty cabins. The thing hath caused much merriment wherever known. Polly with much chagrin and some meekness hath gotten on woman's attire, borrowed from someone in the settlement and will betake herself henceforth to womanly pursuits.

Our neighbours in the valley are people of the most staid principles and habits and are very diligent in business. They commence their Sabbeth on Saturday when the sun goes down, while I think it not a shame to have a hot turkey for my Sunday dinner. Craig's wife was here a Sunday, one of my children was sick and she kindly came to inquire if she could aid in any way. She is a good soul, and yet like many other good people hath charity too narrow to believe but that religion is confined to the poor and obscure to such as herself in other words. A handsome book of Common Prayer lay on the child's bed. I had been reading. The book was presented by our Governor Gooch who was my father's friend and it is handsomely clapt about with golden claps. She sneered saying "The thought of Governor Gooch's giving a present of a prayer book"! This because he lives in what seems to her much gayety and splendor, the which many who condemn, like her, would condemn if they could, but as they to practice self denial of compulsion, they think it is accorded to them for piety. For my part I hesitate not in affirming, I have seen as much sheer vanity go along with a grograin suit as ever with ermine and velvet, and more indeed of that spirit which says "Stand aside for I am holier than thou". Like worm in the bud, so doth human nature early develop its unlovely aspects. Today I bethought to go to our

chamber's west window and shut in the shutter, for the sun was putting the fire out. I heard our two boys, Charles and his Uncle Thomas' little son Edward discoursing beyond, "I gave you my possum for your pile of plums", - this fruit takes to the soil and grows abundantly since first planted) and now you should give me Job (the possum) back again". "Why so" Charles asked who is always reasonable. and I am glad to find conscientious about taking any undue advantages - "Because now I have nothing", the little rogue remarks — "neither possum nor plums, "Nor will I have, rejoins Charles, "if you take Job back. You have my plums" — "Yes" (Edward follows up) then you had my possum, but now that I have nothing of yours, you must have nothing of mine, that is fair", he added. Charles could not well see through the argumentation, but he will not contend with the little ones and so gave up Job. I had two minds, then, one to inflict a grievious correction on the baby he should not soon forget, but I thought next, Satan comes to him by rightful heritage from his grandmother and I let it pass, then resolved to watch my opportunity and bring the matter before them some day telling his mother of the same. There have been distractions to draw me yet awhile therefrom.

The father of Omayah has sought the father of White Dove, as he calls our sweet Alice) for his son's wife. He says that the Tiger King's oldest born appears to hear her voice cooing among the wild pines about his cabin. It made me tremble to hear him speak, almost as though John Lewis could be persuaded thereto, and give away my tenderly reared lamb. He wishes to treat it as a joke though and seated Alice at the spinnet, whereon I had taught her to play with some skill. "That, said he is all white women are good for" You don't want them — bah"! "Fingers fast! fingers jump quick, said Tiger King — get fish"! My husband still joked with him, which perhaps was the better policy, but Oroonah retired discomforted I could see — Thomas is a man of books albeit his sight is defective and

he makes out but poorly at hunting, his brothers are stalwart hands though, in all matters of strength, as indeed he is too, but they have sleight of hunting, fishing and all employments common to the country which he, for his infirmity, hath not.

Heavenly Father give strength to bear what is come upon us now. Last Monday was a holiday, and many of our young folk and their elders did take a repast along in their baskets and go up to see the Tower Rocks, (as we called them) afew miles off. I being a stay at home body remained with my domestic occupations, while John Lewis did take Alice, her older brothers also going along to join in the frolic. Omayah was there, sad and silent and brooding, as he hath been of late He has much attached himself to our race, as seemed also his father intended to do. The men and maidens went strolling about, and my daughter went with the young Indian across a branch of the little stream, Lewis River to gather Good Luck plant, as we call it — but woe betide the luck to us and her, poor dear lost one! No doubt it was a preconcerted signal, but as the last rockstepping stone was passed, a savage yell broke forth, a band of red men sprang from the woods and they and Alice and Omayah disappeared in its thickness. Our men fired and ran, but the tangle and bush and deep forest, which they will never learn like the Indians, all combined to make the pursuit passing difficult. The females of the party returned home under the escort of some of the men, for there was terror stricken to the hearts of all by what had befallen, and my child's father and brothers, frantic with rage and distress dashed off after the artful enemy.

At night fall John Lewis came home alone for he feared to leave me longer, seeing what news the returning party had brought me. I had never shown him much grief until then. No not when he made that little grave on the prairie, and piled the white rocks upon it. I was striding the floor, as he surprised me, wringing my hands, and may Heaven forgive me, almost reproaching the Most High that he had

mocked me so to hear my prayers and raise her up from that dreadful fever, when she lay, a little one, tossing in my arms — getting ready for flight, I thought, He soothed me, poor man, as well as he could, his own heart was nigh bursting, and the next morning scarce dawned ere he set off again, with more of the men to overtake the marauders. Alice's brothers nor the men that were with them have never yet all these four days turned to come home. I cannot work - save what duty absolutely demands, I cannot talk, only here may I ooze out the suppressed stream of my sorrow - carefully indeed, lest it take possession of me. I had thought Omayah above the cunning artifices of his subtle race, but they may not be trusted as individuals or in the mass and all my instinctive dread of them from the beginning, was but a forerunner of what I was destined to suffer at their hands. Oh! my Alice! White Dove indeed in a vultures nest!

There is a terrible warfare going on between our settlers and the faithless Indians. What of my gentle child I cannot tell. Last night our fort was assailed for the second time since this dreadful business broke out, but there was little damage done for they have no artillery. John Lewis and his boys are still away on the search but those left at the fort managed manfully. I could feel no fear, and their wild cries waked no terror, for one strong feeling keepeth another at bay and I was already possessed with dread and anguish. Toward day, long after the savages had departed, our men still having one eye open for them, did see creeping on all fours from the wood and towards the settlement, nay (indeed close to my house where it had been permitted to come so far, then Joshua Grant fired upon it) what seemed to be a stout Indian, all painted and bedecked in full war array. The creature groaned and fell, dropping its bow and arrow on the ground. They all lay still, till some one should run up. William Stuart first, and the victim turns out to be Greenlees mad sister. Some deem her mad, that is, to say, some a witch. She rideth all

over the country alone at will, and talks strangely at times. Months she has been missing from Burden's Grant, where her brother lives, no one can tell ought of her . . . She has been a captive she says. Indeed she will be more angel in my sight, than flesh and blood, if she talks not idly in the news she bears me. She can bring Alice if I but give her a swift horse. Her wound was not deep though some painful. I could not entreat her to stay for its better healing, but dressed it tenderly as I could and gave her our best animal and prayed her speed.

I can see Nora thinks the pony gone for no profit. The woman does to be sure talk wildly of the palace under the earth where she has hidden White Dove. She knows something of her, giving proof that far, in calling her by Indian bestowed name, that gives me hope while I ponder again upon her disconnected harangue of silver palace walls and pearly floors. She hath an apartment there, so she tells, where she holds communion with the dead, and their voices answer her. Her language is very good, and she commences to talk with so rational and plausible air, that you find yourself listening most intensely, and rapt, indeed, then she becomes so excited that mind and tongue run riot together, and a brain of only healthy velocity can keep up.

I can write no more.

There promises to be little peace between us and these savages ever again. Scarce a day passes now but chronicles some new depridation. Still they do us the justice to acknowledge the red man was the agressor. The Great Spirit they say, is on the side of the white man and indeed our mode of warfare hath been destructive enough. My husband has imported the pink clover into the country, but they will have it is their wild white clover which Lewis and his men have dyed red with the blood of the Indians. My poor Alice looks infant-like and innocent with her bald head. A threatening fever followed the excitement and terror of her stealing away by the savages and her roses in

her cheeks are scarce recovered yet. Mary Greenlee was as good as her word in bringing the lost baby to us and for Alice, she told the strangest tale, the which did I not have proof better, might almost make me think the child mad as Mary Greenlee, this latter was with the Indians in their assault the night before her discovery of herself to us. They had truly taken her captive, and she, the more readily to pave the way to escape when time should offer, feigned dislike to the whites, and that she had run to them of her own will. She painted her skin like them, and dressed like them, but the very night they brought White Dove a captive, her heart was stirred for her race. She watched her opportunity seized the pony they had captured with her, and taking the fear distraught child behind her, set out at speed of wind, so Alice tells, and so deftly did she manage that they were not pursued or they were not conscious of pursuit.

The witch (as some call her) betook her rescued prisoner and herself to a strange great cavern somewhere, which none have since been able to find trace of, then she let the pony go so the red men might follow its tracts, nor halt at her retreat, which indeed it is a question if it is known to them. I tell Alice she has become daft, what with her capture and the reading of the Arabian nights for she talks of the grand marble palace under ground, of its interminable galleries its statues and its fountains and withal of stars and moon peeping through its roof. Now every one knows no human head could contrive anything so silly as a princely hall of this gait, with any of its roof open to the sky. It must be a wierd ediface truly, and worthy the keeper who feedeth herself and her chance guests on dried haws and chinquepins. But none of the Lewis name can forever more carp at Mary Greenlee what she does. Blessed creature I would walk on hands and knees to serve her to the latest day of my life.

That day of the last seige of our fort, while Alice was lost, as she did demonstrate to us afterwards, she showed

more wit to give us tidings of our stolen one, then we to make good use thereof. She had shot over the wall, fastened to her arrow the words scratched in berry juice upon a piece of white rag "The White Dove is safe". She sought for and found the same afterwards. How this strange being fell in with the savages again, after liberating herself, it hath been her freak not to tell, but she comes and goes like a spirit, and some do say indeed, they are beginning to regard her with a sort of superstition.

My sons do get great praise for their bravery in combating the common enemy. Such we must regard them. They have been a long time coming to this, and the pretended affront of refusing, intermarriage with them, was only a pretext for what they had long ago considered. Omayah came with downcast looks to visit us again after the carrying away and restoration of Alice. He protests and we are inclined to believe, truly, he had nothing to do with the treachery thereof. He too was surprised he said. He adds that he saw Mary Greenlees contrivance for getting the White Dove away and kept his mouth bang up (shut tight). She bears him out in this, but we cannot tell from her evidence, at any rate I am willing and glad to think the boy was not at fault. He has been the play-fellow of my son so long, I can but feel attached to him. Tiger King professes great penitence, but in him I have less faith. In the old I look for more stability, to the young I look for more truth, this for red man and white man. Omayah comes rarely.

The Rev. Morgan Morgan who hath been chiefly instrumental in erecting the first church in this Virginia Valley takes much interest in civilising and Christianising the savage race and his labors among them have not been altogether discouraged, indeed if he might but win one to the light of the Bible it would be great gain. Yet I cannot be disabused of my thoughts that it is an uphill work, and that a preacher may always be prepared for an ambush even where he thinks he has gained both ear and heart.

Charles (my new world child as I call him) being the first

born here, is a daring spirit the boys lives in the chase and in war. Among the Alleghanies he was captured some time since by a party of Indians who took the child on barefoot some two hundred or more miles, his poor arms girded behind him, and he driven on by threats and brandishing of knives, by his vile tormentors. Travelling along a bank some twenty feet high, Charles suddenly and by intense muscular force snapped the cords by which he was bound, dashed himself down the precipice into the bed of a mountain torrent below, and thus effected his escape. Not but they followed him fast enough, yet he had some little the advance of them. So leaping the trunk of a tree which chanced to lay prostrate in the way a sudden failing of strength did come over him and he sank in the weeds and tall grass which surrounded it. His pursuers bounded over, sundry almost touching him as they sprang, but God be thanked, they did not slacken speed and hurried on still seeking him. As soon as he deemed it safe, he essayed to rise from his grassy bed, but here was a new adversary to cope withal, a huge rattlesnake, lying in deadly coil, so near his face he even must hold his breath, lest the bare movement caused by inspiration bring the monster's fangs and his own nose (of which he had a goodly allowance) in fatal contact. Once indeed as he waved to and fro, his huge rattle rested on Charles' ear, let him but wink, let him but move one muscle and lo! the terrible thing would be upon him. He lay there in painful movelessness many minutes, when the beast supposing him dead, crawled over the lads body and went his way. It is a noble characteristic that they will not attack that which hath not life and power to get away.

I wonder if it be not a token of my death that today wiping my spectacles and putting them on I have taken up this book after so long laying it aside. I feel indeed like a traveller whose way was lain by a devious and uphill road, now in some peaceful sweet day, when there are no clouds in the sky, turns to survey the way he has come before

entering into his rest and closing the door behind him. I see my children here and there settled around me - sons and my daughter. Dear Andrew who is known as Gen. Lewis, still follows the fortunes of his great chief Washington. Thomas is in the honorable House of Burgesses. My Alice bears her matronly honors well, and sometimes tells her oldest child, how the dying Indian boy Omayah, Christianised at the last, did wildly crave the songs of the White Dove to bear him up to the home of the Great Spirit. There is a grave by Great Kanawah's side which tells where Charles Lewis, my blue eyed American child fell, bravely fighting, honored and beloved in the fierce affray of Point Pleasant, God Rest him! The gentle at home are the bravest in war ever. A little hillock on the prairies with its white mound of stone is not overlooked, though an insignificant object in the landscape to any but mother eyes.

William is confined by sickness as we hear today also that his wife, noble woman! has sent off her last three sons, the youngest, thirteen, to repel the British at Rockfish Gap. "Go my children, (this Roman mother said) I spare not even my youngest, my fair haired boy, the comfort of my declining years. I devote you all to my country, keep back the invaders foot from the soil of Virginia or see my face no more." Men with such mothers, are the men to form the nation. But the wrangle of wars sound faint to me now, and I say to the one who standeth hand in hand with me on this height, who hath been a helpmeet every step of the way, only a little longer, John Lewis, and the Lord of the mountains will open to us and we enter his doors together.



The equestrian statue of George Washington surrounded by early American patriots, one of whom is Andrew Lewis, son of Margaret Lynn and John Lewis. This statue is on the grounds of the State Capitol in Richmond, Virginia. The statue was begun by Thomas Crawford and completed by George Rogers.



Andrew Lewis, born 1720, a well-known Indian fighter and later a general in the Continental Army. On October 10, 1774 Colonel Lewis and a group of Virginia militiamen won the decisive battle against the Indians at Point Pleasant, where the Kanawha enters the Ohio River.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>George Washington, Vol. III, Douglas Southall Freeman. Both pictures courtesy the Virginia State Library.

### \*HISTORICAL SKETCH

John Lewis was a native of Ireland, and was descended from French Protestants who emigrated from France to Ireland in 1685, at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, to avoid the persecutions to which the Protestants, to which sect of religion they belonged, were subjected during the reign of Louis XIV. John Lewis intermarried with Margaret Lynn, also a native of Ireland, but descended from Scottish ancestors — the Lynns, of Loch Lynn, so famous in Scottish clan legends.

John Lewis, in Ireland, occupied a respectable position in what is there called the middle class of society. He was the holder of a freehold lease for three lives upon a valuable farm in the County of Donegal and Province of Ulster, obtained upon equal terms and fair equivalents from one of the Irish nobility, who was an upright and honorable man, and the owner of the reversion, this leasehold estate, with his wife's marriage portion, enabled the young couple to commence life with flattering prospects. They were both remarkable for their industry, piety and stern integrity. They prospered and were happy. Before the catastrophe occurred which completely destroyed the hope of this once happy family in Ireland and made them exiles from their native land, their affection was cemented by the birth of four sons, Samuel, Thomas, Andrew and William, About the period of the birth of their third son, the Lord from whom he had obtained the lease - a landlord beloved by his tennants and neighbors suddenly died, and his estates descended to his eldest son, a youth whose principles were directly the reverse of his father's. He was proud, profligate and extravagant. Anticipating his income, he was always in debt, and to meet his numerous engagements he devised a variety of schemes, and among them one was to claim of his tennants a forfeiture of their lease upon some one of the numerous covenants in instruments of the kind at that day. If they agreed to increase their rents, the alleged forfeiture was waived; if they refused, they were threatened with a long, tedious lawsuit. Many of his tennants submitted to this injustice rather than be involved, even with justice on their side, in a legal controversy with a rich and powerful adversary, who could, in this country, under these circumstances, devise ways and means to harass, persecute and impoverish once in moderate circumstances.

Lewis, however, was a different man from any who thus tamely submitted to wrong. By industry and skill he had greatly improved his property, his rent had been punctually paid, and all the covenants of his lease had been complied with faithfully. To him, after seeing all the others, the agent of the young Lord came with his unjust demands. Lewis, peremptorily dismissed him from his presence, and determined to make an effort to rescue his family from this threatened injustice by a personal interview with the young Lord, who, Lewis imagined, would scarcely have the hardihood to insist before his face upon the iniquitous terms proposed by his agent. Accordingly, he visited the castle of the young Lord. A porter announced his name. At the time the young Lord was engaged in his revels over the bottle with some of his companions with similar tastes and habits.

As soon as the name of Lewis was announced, he recognized the only one of his tenants who had resisted his demands, and directed the porter to order him off. When the porter delivered his Lord's order, Lewis resolved at every hazard to see him. Accordingly he walked into the presence of the company — the porter not having the temerity to stand in his way. Flushed with wine the whome company rose to resent the insult and repel the intruder from the room. But there was something in Lewis' manner that sobered them in a moment, and, instead of advancing, they seemed fixed to their places, and for a moment there was perfect silence, when Lewis calmly observed.

"I came here with no design to insult or injure anyone,

but to remonstrate in person to your Lordship against threatened injustice, and thus to avert from my family ruin; in such a course I have not regarded ordinary forms or ceremonies, and I warn you, gentlemen, to be cautious how you deal with a desperate man." This address, connected with the firm and intrepid tone of its delivery apparently stupefied the company. Silence ensuing, Lewis embraced it to address himself particularly, in the following words, to the young Lord;

"Your much respected father granted me the lease-hold estate I now possess. I have regularly paid my rents, and have faithfully complied with all the covenants of the lease. I have a wife and three infant children whose happiness, comfort and support depends, in great degree upon the enjoyment of this property, and yet I am told by your agent that I can no longer hold it without a base surrender of my rights to your rapacity. Sir, I wish to learn from your own lips whether or not you really meditate such injustice, such cruelty as the terms mentioned by your agent indicate; and I beg you before pursuing such a course, to reconsider this matter coolly and dispassionately, or you will ruin me and disgrace yourself."

By the time this address was closed, the young Lord seemed to have recovered partially (in which he was greatly assisted by several heavy libations of wine) from the effects produced by the sudden, solemn and impressive manner of this injured tennant. He began to ejaculate:

"Leave me! Leave me! You rebel! You villain!" To this abuse Lewis replied calmly as follows:

"Sir, you may save yourself this useless ebullition of passion, It is extremely silly and ridiculous. I have effected the object of my visit; I have satisfied my mind, and have nothing more to say. I shall no longer disturb you with my presence."

Upon which he retired from the room, apparently unmoved by the volley of abuse that broke forth from the young Lord and his drunken comrades as soon as he

turned his back. After they had recovered from the magical effect which the calm resolution and stern countenance of Lewis produced, they descanted upon what they called the insolence of his manner and the mock defiance of his speech, with all the false views which aristocratic pride, excited by the fumes of wine, in a monarchial government were so well calculated to inspire. During the evening the rash purpose was formed of dispossessing Lewis by force.

Accordingly, the next day the young Lord, without any legal authority whatever, proceeded at the head of his guests and domestics to oust Lewis by force. Lewis saw the approach of the hostile army and conjectured the object of the demonstration. He had no arms but a shelalah, a weapon in the possession of every Irish farmer of that period. Nor was there anyone at his house but a brother, confined to bed by disease, his wife and three infant children; yet he resolved to resist the lawless band and closed the door. The young Lord, on reaching the house, demanded admittance, which not being granted, the possee attacked the house, and after being foiled in several attempts to break down the door or to effect in any other way an entrance, one of the party introduced the muzzle of a musket through an aperture in the wall and discharged its contents - a bullet and three buckshot upon those within, Lewis sick brother was mortally wounded, and one of the shots passed through his wife's hand.

Lewis, who had up to this time acted on the defensive, seeing the blood stream from the hand of his wife and his expiring brother weltering in his blood, became enraged, furious and, siezing his shelalah he rushed from the cottage, determined to avenge the wrong and to sell his life as dearly as possible.

The first person he encountered was the young Lord, whom he dispatched at a single blow, cleaving in twain his skull and scattering his brains upon himself and the posse.

The next person he met was the steward, who shared the fate of his master. Rushing, then, upon the posse, stupefied at the ungovernable ardor and fury of Lewis' manner, and the death of two of their party, they had scarcely time to save themselves, as they did, by throwing away their arms and taking to flight.

This awful occurrence brought the affairs of Lewis in Ireland to a crisis, though he had violated no law, human or divine; though he had acted strictly in self defense against lawless power and oppression, yet the occurrence took place in a monarchial government, whose policy it is to preserve the difference in the ranks of society. One of the nobility (Sir Mungo Campbell) had been slain by one of his tenants. The connections of the young Lord were rich and powerful, those of Lewis poor and humble.

With such fearful odds, it was deemed rash and unwise that Lewis should, even with law and justice on his side, surrender himself to the officers of the law. It was consequently determined that he should proceed on that evening disguised in a friend's dress to the nearest seaport and take shipping to Oporto, in Portugal, where a brother of his wife was established in merchandise. Luckily he met a vessel just ready to sail from the Bay of Donegal, on which he took passage.

After various adventures, for the ship was not bound for Portugal, in different countries, he arrived in Oporto in 1729. Upon his arrival there, he was advised by his brother-in-law, in order to elude the vigilance of his enemies, to proceed to Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania, and there to await the arrival of his family, which, he learned, was in good health, and which his brother-in-law undertook to remove to America.

Lewis, following this advice, proceeded at once to Philadelphia. In a year his family joined him and, learning from them that the most industrious efforts were being made by the friends of the young Lord to discover the country to which he fled, he determined to penetrate deep into the American forest. He moved then immediately from Philadelphia to Lancaster (Penn.) and there spent the winter of 1731 and 1732 and in the summer of 1732 he removed to the place near Staunton in the County of Augusta, Virginia now called Bellefonte, where he settled, conquered the country from the Indians, and amassed a large fortune.

John Lewis (son of Andrew Lewis and Mary Calhoun) Margaret Lynn\* (descendant of the Laird of Loch Lynn)

### their children

m

- 1. Thomas b 1718 in Ireland d 1790 at Port Republic on Shenandoah m. Jane Strother of Stafford County and had thirteen children (3 of whom served in the Revolutionary War) Thomas was County surveyor in August Co., member of House of Burgesses, member of the Va. Revolutionaries Convention and the state convention which ratified the Constitution.
- 2. Andrew b 1720 in Ireland d 1781 on route from Yorktown home m. Elizabeth Given. Andrew was Capt. in August Co. Militia 1742, a colonel in 1752. In 1754 raised a company and was with Washington on the frontier; was wounded at Fort Necessity and at Fort Dusquesne where he was also captured, fought at the battle of Point Pleasant. Commissioned a Brig. General in Revolutionary Forces and was a member of the General Assembly. Settled in Roanoke Valley at "Richfield" near Salem later moved to Botetout County.
- 3. William b 1722 in Ireland and died 1811 married Ann Montgomery called the "Civilizer of the Boarder". Served in the French and Indian wars.
- 4. Margaret b 1726 m first William Long and second William Crow
- 5. Charles born in Virginia in 1736 married Sarah Murray died at the battle of Point Pleasant. He had four children (John, Andrew, Elizabeth and Margaret)
- 6. Anne DSP.

<sup>\*</sup>From "Virginia Historical Register, Vol. 4, P. 211 as told by Col. William Lewis to John H. Peyton.

<sup>\*</sup>Brother of Margaret Lynn, Dr. William Lynn, also immigrated to Virginia from Ireland and settled in Fredericksburg.