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PETER FRANCISCO.*

THE AMERICAN SOLDIER.

History, as presented to the popular mind, is necessarily biographical and ideal. The beginnings of American colonization are embodied in the lives of Gilbert and Raleigh; the American Revolution in those of Patrick Henry and George Washington; the history of steam navigation in those of Watt and Fulton, and the development of commerce in those of Maury and Morse. Each department of human effort has its type and hero, and no one fills the picture of the AMERICAN SOLDIER more completely than Peter Francisco, the subject of this article.

The accounts as to his origin conflict, but it is agreed that he was brought a child to Virginia by a sea captain, who intended to bind him to a planter as an apprentice. His dark complexion and name suggested some southern country of Europe as the land of his nativity, and it is commonly reported that he was of Portuguese origin. He was left upon the wharf at City Point friendless and alone, and after several days he was taken in charge by the parish authorities and bound out to Anthony Winston (uncle of Patrick Henry) who then resided on an estate called Hunting Tower, in Buckingham county. His immense physical strength, even as a boy, attracted the attention of his neighbors, and his honesty and frankness won the respect and confidence of his master.

At the time of the breaking out of the American Revolution Francisco was only fourteen years of age, but in the fall of 1776, at sixteen years, he joined the Tenth Virginia Regiment of

* For sketches of Peter Francisco see Howe, *Historical Collections of Virginia*, 1845; Campbell, *History of Virginia*, and N. B. Winston, *Peter Francisco, Soldier of the Revolution*.

In the records of Orange county is the will of Robert Terrill, dated February 13, 1786, and names sons Robert, John, William and Edmund, daughters Mary Hudson, Sarah, widow of Joseph Towles, and Elizabeth Rucker.

PETITION FOR CHARTER FOR LIBERTY HALL
ACADEMY.*

To the Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Delegates, the
Petition of the Trustees of Liberty Hall Academy most humbly showeth:

That your petitioners, very sensible of the great utility arising from the regular education of youth, have for some time been associated for that purpose, and finding our efforts attended with good success, are induced, from the experiment made, to believe that a Seminary may here be conducted to very general advantage. And we are the rather inclined to be more fully of this opinion when we consider the extensive fertile country around the place, the fine air and pure water with which it is blessed, contributing so powerfully to health of body.

Having also procured one hundred and twenty acres of land in the neighborhood of Lexington for the use of the Academy, a valuable library of well-chosen books, and a considerable mathematical & philosophical apparatus. Under these advantages, and many more that might be named, we doubt not, should we be so happy as to obtain the approbation & patronage of the Honorable house, of being instruments under the smiles of heaven, of conveying down to posterity, the most valuable blessing, and the surest pledge of true patriotism we are capable of.

We therefore pray the honorable Assembly to take the matter under consideration, and grant us an Act of Incorporation, with such powers and privileges as will enable us and our successors more effectually to carry on the laudable design and give all possible encouragement to a polite and solid education.

We hope also that a patriot Assembly will see the reasonableness of, and grant an exemption from militia draughts to the professors and Masters of the said Seminary, and to all students

* From the State Archives. Presented to the Legislature in Oct., 1782.

thereto belonging, under the age of twenty-one years. And your petitioners, as in duty bound, shall pray.

Signed in behalf of the Trustees.

Wm. Graham, C. M.
James Lyle, Jr., Clerk.

BRAY FAMILY.

1 JAMES¹ BRAY, of James City county, was living in Virginia in 1658, was a member of the Council in 1670, and died at Middle Plantation, October 24, 1691. (York County Records and Bruton Parish Register.) His shattered tombstone still rests in Bruton Churchyard, Williamsburg. He married Angelica ———, and in 1658 received a certificate from York Court on account of the importation of his wife "twice into Virginia." He had issue: (Hening, *Statutes at Large*, IV., 370; VI., 412) 2 *Thomas Bray*, 3 *James Bray*, 4 *David Bray*, 5 *Anne Bray*.

2 Col. THOMAS² BRAY (James¹) lived in New Kent county, and was dead before 1732 (Hening, *Statutes*, IV., 370). He married Sarah Fenn, daughter of Samuel Fenn, of Middle Plantation, Williamsburg (who gave two acres for a church), and widow of Capt. Thomas Claiborne, of King William county (*Va. Mag.*, I., 317; QUARTERLY, III., 77). His wife, Sarah Bray, founded a scholarship at William and Mary College. "Madam Sarah Bray departed this life October 18, 1716" (St. Peter's Register, New Kent county). They appear to have left no issue.

3 JAMES² BRAY (James¹) was a member of the House of Burgesses from James City county in 1688 and 1702, and married about 1697 Mourning, widow of Thomas Pettus, of "Littletown" (York County Records). He died November 25, 1725, and his wife, Mourning, January 6, 1711 (Bruton Parish Register). Issue: 6 *Thomas*, 7 *James*, 8 *Elizabeth*.

6 Col. THOMAS³ BRAY (James², James¹) lived at "Littletown," on James river, next to Kingsmill. He married Elizabeth Meriwether, born June 20, 1703 (died January 4, 1732), daughter of Col. Nicholas Meriwether, of New Kent, and died August 2, 1751 (QUARTERLY, VII., 151). Issue: 9 *Elizabeth*.