THE MOTHER OF "MARY, THE MOTHER OF WASHINGTON."

BY CHARLES H. BROWNING.

In Mr. Hayden's monumental work, entitled "Virginia Genealogies," 1891 (pp. 43, &c.), may be found an almost exhaustive genealogy of the celebrated BALL family of Virginia, the family of the "Mother of Washington." In Mr. Hayden's sketch (pp. 56-58) of Colonel Joseph Ball, of "Epping Forest," in Lancaster Co., Va., he states that the Colonel was born in England, 24 May, 1649, and died at his seat, and that his will, signed 25 June, was proved at the Lancaster Co. C. H., 11 July, 1711, and gives the will in full (pp. 58-59). But as to the wives of the said Col. Ball, who was the father of Mary Ball (his only child by his second wife), who married 6 March, 1730 (his second wife), Augustine Washington, of Stafford Co., Va. (died 12 April, 1743), and was by him the mother of General Washington, he is not so certain (see pp. 56-7). Admitting, according to Mr. Hayden, and others, that Col. Ball had a first wife, named Elizabeth, "who died prior to 1703," Mr. Hayden is uncertain as to particulars concerning his second wife, the mother of Mary Ball, and one of the grandmothers of Washington. He states she was "Mary Johnson, widow, of Lancaster Co., Va., born in England, died in Lancaster Co., Va., 17—." Mr. Hayden admits that this is but slight data and that "history of his (Col. Ball's) first and second wife is more or less traditional." However, passing by his identification of the first wife, of the second wife, the grandmother of Gen. Washington, Mr. Hayden says that the proof that Col. Ball married the widow Johnson in 1707-8, "is based on the fact that Mary Ball, his daughter by this union, died in her 82d year, on 25 Aug., 1789,
which places her birth at 1707-8," and that Col. Ball was a widower on 7 Feb., 1707, for on this date he executed a deed, his wife not joining him in it must have then been deceased. And further, "that he (Col. Joseph Ball) married the widow Johnson in Lancaster Co., appears from a deed recorded in that county, 12 Feb., 1703, from said Col. Ball to one of his sons-in-law (Raleigh Chinn, husband of a daughter by his first wife), which deed was witnessed by 'Mary Johnson,' who, it is presumed, was the widow he subsequently married.

I am pleased to be able to supplement Mr. Hayden's brief account of Gen. Washington's Grandmother Ball, and supply the companion will to that of Col. Joseph Ball, his grandfather (printed in full in "Virginia Genealogies," p. 58), by the following copy of the will of the mother of "Mary, the mother of Washington," found last summer.

CHARLES H. BROWNING.

Ardmore, Pa.

"In the name of God, Amen. the seventeenth day of December in the year of Lord God, one Thousand seven hundred and twenty, I, MARY HEWES, of St. Stephens Parish in Northumberland Co. Widdow, being sick and weak in body but of sound and perfect memory, thanks be to Almighty God for the same, and calling to mind the uncertain state of this transitory life and that all flesh must yield unto death, when it shall please God to call, Do make and ordain this my last Will and Testament.

1 Because "Mary Johnson" was a witness to a deed of Col. Ball, her future husband, Mr. Moncure D. Conway presumed ("Washington and Mount Vernon," pp. xlv and xxv) that she was his housekeeper at that time, and a "plebeian," and that when Col. Ball married her, he conciliated his children by his first wife with gifts of land before the marriage took place. (See Mag. of Am. His., Vol. xvii, p. 197, note, and Hayden, p. 57.) Mr. Conway and Mr. Hayden agreed that "history is silent" as to the Widow Johnson.
First.—I give and bequeathe my soul to God that gave it me, and my body to the earth to be burried in decent Christian burrial at the discretion of my Executors, in these Presents Nominated, and as touthing such worldly estate which it hath pleased God to bestow upon me.

I give devise and dispose of in the following manner and form ———

Impr.—I give and devise unto my daughter MARY BALL, One young likely negro woman, to be purchased for her out of my estate, by my executors, and to be delivered unto her, the said MARY BALL, at the age of eighteen years, but my Will is, if the said MARY BALL should Dye without issue lawfully begotten of her body that the said Negro woman with the increase shall return to my loving son JOHN JOHNSON to him, his heirs and assigns for ever.

Item.—I give and bequeathe unto my said Daughter MARY BALL two gold rings, the one being a large Hoop and the other a stoned Ring.

Item.—I give unto my said Daughter MARY BALL one young Mare and her Increase which said Mare I formerly gave her by words of mouth ———

Item.—I give and bequeathe unto my said Daughter MARY BALL Sarftinent furniture for the bed her father JOSEPH BALL left her, viz: One suit of good Curtains and Vallens, One Rugg, One Quilt, one Pair Blankets.

Item.—I give and bequeathe unto my said Daughter MARY BALL two Diaper Table Clothes, marked M B,

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*In his will, Col. Joseph Ball, gave “unto my Loving wife, Mary Ball, the feather Bed, bolsters, and all the furniture thereto belonging, whereon I now lie in my own Lodging chamber, as it stands, and is now used, and all the chairs that is in the house that are single nailed.” And “I give to my daughter, MARY BALL, all my feathers yt are in ye Kitchen Loft, to be put into a bed for her.” He also devised to his daughter, MARY BALL, 400 acres of land in Richmond Co., Va., and also three negroes. He devised 100 acres of land lying in Lancaster Co., Va., to “Eliza Johnson, ye daughter of my beloved wife.”*
with Tuck, and one Dozen of Diaper Napkins, two towells, six plates, two puerter Dishes, two Basons, one large Iron Pott, one frying Pan, one large trunk.

"Item.—I give and bequeathe unto my said Daughter MARY BALL one good young pacing horse, together with a good Silk Plush side saddle to be purchased by my executors out of my estate.

"Item.—I give and bequeathe unto my Daughter ELIZABETH BONAM [Bonham] one suit of white and black Calico, being part of my own wearing apparel.

"Item.—I give and bequeathe unto my Daughter MARY BALL, and I do hereby appoint her to be under Tutelidge and government of Captain George Eskridge during her minority.

"Item.—My will is, and I do hereby oblige my executors to pay to the proprietor or his agent for the Securing of my said Daughter MARY BALL, her Land, twelve pounds if so much due.

"Item.—All the rest of my Estate Real or personal whatsoever and wheresoever, I give and Devise unto my Son JOHN JOHNSON, and to his heirs lawfully to be begotten of his Body, and for default of such Issue I devise the same unto MARY BALL and her heirs lawfully to be begotten of her Body, and for default of such Issue, I give and devise the said estate unto my Daughter ELIZABETH BONAM, her heirs and assigns for ever.

"Item.—I do hereby appoint my said Son JOHN JOHNSON and my Trusty and well beloved Friend George Eskridge Executors of this my last Will and Testament and also Revoke and Disanul all other former Wills or Testaments by me here tofore made, or caused to be made, either by Hand or Writeing, ratifieing and conforming this to be my last Will and Testament, and

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no other, in Witness where off I have here unto sett my hand and Seale the Day and Date first above written.

"The Mark and Seale of MARY (///) HEWES."

"Signed Sealed, Published and Declared by MARY HEWES to be her Last Will and Testament in the presence of us

his

"Robert (X) Bradley
mark
"The Mark of Ralph (R) Smith."

When she made her will, she was the widow and relict of Captain Richard Hewes, of St. Stephen's parish, Northumberland Co., Va., in which county, at Heathville C. H., her will as above was found. I do not know the date of her third marriage, but it was between 1711-1720, nor do I know at this writing when Captain Hewes died. It is supposed, and a tradition of long standing (Hayden, p. 57), that her maiden name was Montague, and that she was the daughter, or granddaughter, of Peter Montague, a burgess for Nansemond Co., Nov., 1652, and July, 1653; for Lancaster Co., March, 1657-8, and for Northumberland Co., March, 1659. (Hening's Virginia Statutes, Vol. i, pp. 373, 379, 431, and Neill's "Virginia Carolorum," pp. 230, 232, 262.) It is said, by proof from Burke's "Armoury," that the crest used by General Washington, in connection with the Washington coat of arms, was the one peculiar to the celebrated Montague family. (Hayden, p. 58.) Nothing definite is known of Mrs. Hewes's first husband, . . . . . Johnson.