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By Margaret Goodwin Ballard
Written, perhaps, in the 1940's or
late 1930's.

I remember Captain Ballard as a white haired, white moustached old gentleman, whose flashing dark eyes lit up with a smile as he talked, and whose courtly manners marked him as 'a gentleman of the old school'. When there were guests in the house, or if he was away from home, he wore an artificial limb and used a heavy cane, but as a rule a wooden peg or a crutch was preferred as being less cumbersome. Rarely did he refer to the limitations induced by the loss of the leg. Maimed in the best of causes, the old Confederate soldier bore his wound gallantly and uncomplainingly. Many an acre did he plow hobbling along on the peg during the lean days following the War when it was difficult to get farm labor, and more difficult still to pay for it; and heavy farm chores with axe and pitchfork did he perform. It is no wonder that after the heavy work of the day was done his face was often drawn with pain that found vent in bursts of irascibility that were sometimes hard on his family; but there was no complaining, no self pity.

Captain John Newton Ballard was born near Meachem's River in Albemarle county on the old Ballard farm. His father was William Ballard, his mother Sarah Blackwell. His paternal grandfather was either William or John Ballard, - the names alternated for generations. His paternal grandmother was a Jarman. The genealogy, as recorded in a succession of Wills in Albemarle County, has never been accurately worked out. The lack of middle names and the repetition of Johns and Williams would make it a difficult but not impossible task. The line goes back to the two Thomas Ballards of Jamestown, Williamsburg, and Yorktown, whose history is thoroughly documented in old records of those localities, and has been authentically written up*. The first Thomas Ballard was Colonel of Militia in Jamestown under Governor Berkley. His son, the second Thomas, who lived in Yorktown the latter part of his life, was a Vestryman of Bruton Church, a Councilman, and a member of the committee that built the Capitol at Williamsburg. (Edward, by the way, is descended from all three men who composed that committee). He owned much land, and sold to the college of William and Mary the tract upon which his buildings were located. My own home in Williamsburg stands upon land once owned by him. Col. Ballard had a large family, but none of the sons or grandsons attained to the same place of prominence in Colonial affairs that did the father and grandfather. They seem to have settled upon land farther and farther west. One, in the next generation, went to Kentucky with Daniel Boone. This was Bland Ballard, who became famous as a hunter and pioneer. Another son or grandson migrated to the then pioneer country of Albemarle, and there until the Civil War his descendants lived the life of landowners in a raw new country. They were not near enough to the University to be associated with the more sophisticated society that gradually grew up around that center, though the story told me by Mrs. Ballard of her mother-in-law who refused to go to church at Fairfax because she would ride in nothing less suitable than the 'coach' to which she had been accustomed in the old days, would indicate that the standard of life which the family maintained was on a par with that of their well-to-do country neighbors.

I would like to know from what line the Ballards inherited their remarkably handsome eyes. I once asked Mrs. Ballard and she was inclined

* By James Branch Cabell in The Majors of Their Marriages. Also see L. C. Bell, Cumberland Parish, Lunenburg Co., VA, 1746-1806 (1930), pp. 172-177.

to think it was through the Captain's mother. This would coincide with the tradition I have heard of the distinguished appearance of the Blackwells. Dr. Blackwell, long time president of Fandolph-Macon College in Ashland and his brother, Dr. Carl Blackwell of Pichmond, were both very handsome men, and I have often heard of the beauty of the Blackwell girl who married the young John Marshall who was killed in the Civil War. The mother of Mr. Thomas Keith of Fairfax, a cousin of ours, was also one of these Blackwells of Fauquier Co.

Ballard

Captain was one of two brothers. William died young and unmarried, of typhoid fever. There were also two sisters. The elder, Ella, married a Poindexter and lived in Charlottesville. I knew her there in her blind old age, and was the last one connected with her family to see her before her death. She too, had the same bright dark eyes, wide open, though almost sightless when I knew her. The younger sister Bertrice, had married a plain countryman, and for many years had no contact with her brother or his family. She made her first visit to the Ballards in Fairfax after I was married, and I met her,--a short plump little lady, with the same large dark eyes and black hair. She was smiling and apparently entirely satisfied with herself. I do not remember her married name, nor the name of a married daughter who after the death of my husband wrote me a sweet sincere little note, which I appreciated and answered.

At the age of twenty, Captain Ballard went to the University of Virginia. In less than a year the war had begun, and he immediately left the University, in company with some of his fellow students and went to Columbia South Carolina where he enlisted in Co. A. Bat. C. R-egiment 43. Later he served in a Virginia regiment. His father was a colonel, in what command I do not know. He was killed in the Seven Days Battle, and is buried among the hundreds of nameless Confederate dead in Hollywood. Captain Ballard was wounded three times, and almost lost his life once with typhoid fever. The wound which cost him his leg was received near Manasses Va. A brother Kappa Sigma, here at the college when Edward was, told us that one of the stories he had often heard from his grandmother, was of the young soldier brought wounded to her home, who uttered no groan or sound while, without anesthetic, his limb was amputated. The operation was performed by the light of an oil lamp, the dining room table served as operating table, and she stood beside him, holding wet cloths to his head. Wallace said that from the time he was a small boy, if he was hurt and inclined to make an undue outcry, his grandmother would check him with the words, 'Remember Captain Ballard!' With one limb gone he could no longer march behind Lee, but he could still sit on a horse. So nowise daunted, the young Confederate joined the Ranger captain, Mosby, Battery 43 of the Cavalry. For a year he served as a captain in Mosby's Command, though it seems he never actually received the rank of captain; and he took part in many of the daring raids that made Mosby famous. It must have been during this time that he first met Mrs. Ballard, then a girl in her early teens, for during this last year of the War Mosby was operating in this part of Northern Virginia.

Mary Reid Thrift was born in Fairfax County about 1852. She was the only child of James Thrift and Lucretia Reid. Col. James Thrift became a very real figure to me through hearing so many stories of him

* Wallace Lynn

from Mrs. Ballard who adored his memory. He was born in Westmoreland County, the eldest of a large family. His mother was Mildred Ball of the same family of Balls to which Mary Ball Washington belonged. When James Thrift was still a boy his father took his own life, in despair, so the story goes, at the loss of his religious faith, after much reading of the then popular Tom Paine. After his death, Mildred Ball Thrift sold the Westmoreland farm and the servants that went with it; and in the days of the covered wagon she migrated with her family to Ohio, then a raw pioneer country. Here she bought land, and managed to rear her children and to give every one of her sons a college education. James was a soldier in the Mexican War, and it was while in the army, I believe, that he met Colonel Reid of Fairfax County. When the war was over he came to Fairfax and practiced law in the office of Col. Reid whose daughter Lucretia he later married.

Col John Reid was one of a long line of Reids that came to this country from Scotland in the seventeenth century. They settled in New Jersey, and a Reid of the same family was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. I do not know in what generation the first of them came to Virginia; but I have the genealogy dating from the first couple in this country, which was copied from an old family Bible which my husband kept at our house during his lifetime, and which, at her request, I gave back to Mrs. Ballard's keeping. I do not know where it is now.

Andrew Reid _____ Elizabeth---

Coleman Reid-----Ruth Bond
(1686)

Joseph Reid----- Barbara Walker

John Reid----- Nancy Botts

Col. John Reid----- Mary Hally

Lucretia Reid.

About four miles from Fairfax Court House is the very old farm of 'Fruitvale'. It belonged to Mrs. Ballard's forebears since it was part of the 'Fairfax tract', and there is no deed telling when it came into their possession. I do not know the name of the first owners it may have been Berkley, for the Berkleys lived on the adjoining place which at one time was part of the same ~~farm~~. The house on the Berkley place--Millan, when I knew it--is much more pretentious, and I am under the impression that the Ballard house we know was built as a tenement house. But it was there that Col Reid lived with his sister Molly when James Thrift came to Fairfax. I have heard the story somewhere of the two friends riding home on horseback after Court Day, when toddies had been plentiful, and making the welkin ring with their songs and whoops.

After his marriage to Lucretia the young couple settled in Fairfax, in a comfortable brick residence which I knew well when we lived there. But their married life was a short one. Just one year after the little daughter, Mary was born, the mother died of tuberculosis. The baby was taken back to 'Fruitvale' and placed under the care of 'Aunt Mollie' and the father turned his back on his broken life and joined one of the parties then trekking west in search of gold. But when Mrs. Ballard was still a small girl the claim of his little child brought him home again, and he took up his abode at the old homestead and again practiced Law at the Court House. Mrs. Ballard remembered him from this time with utmost devotion. It was he who gave her the name Lillie because of her fair coloring. She was surrounded by him and the old aunt with indulgence and affection that might have spoiled a child of less tractable and sweet nature. When the War between the States began, Col. Thrift was among the first volunteers, and was soon a major in the Army of Virginia. He had been cited for promotion to the rank of Colonel just before he was killed during the Seven Days Battle. He, too, is buried at Hollywood, in the same rows of unmarked graves where Capt. Ballard's father, killed in the same battle, found a resting place.

Before he left for the war, Col. Thrift had provided well for his daughter. The old place, of three hundred acres, would be hers and a considerable income from other sources. But he made a sad mistake in his choice of a guardian for her. ^{The husband} ~~her~~ first cousin of her mother's, ^{who was} ~~had~~ married an Englishman, lately come to the neighborhood, a man of an ingratiating personality, but utterly untrustworthy. After the death of her father, Mrs. Ballard went to live with her guardian and was happy in the company of four cousins near her own age. She remembered with special affection and gratitude the kindness and understanding sympathy of the oldest of these cousins, who made her her special charge. She attended for several years a boarding school at Fairfax Court House, where she was a schoolmate of Mrs. Moore, mother of F. Walton Moore of Fairfax. The school was located next the church, and was a rambling old white house, among large old trees. This was the home of the Loves, our next-door neighbors when we lived in the Pectory in Fairfax. Here she was taught those subjects considered necessary for young girls of her day. Beside the English subjects, she had French and music. The delicate handwriting which she retained to the end of her life, was then thought to be an essential accomplishment for a young lady.

Mrs. Ballard's grief at the loss of her father was deep and lasting. She loved to recall little incidents that she remembered of his life. and it was part of her special pride in her oldest son, that he inherited, so she thought, many of his grandfather's qualities. Though only thirteen years old at the time of his death, she put on deep black and became so accustomed to wearing only black that she told me she had had only one or two colored dresses in her life since. She had once bought a brown suit or cloak, and felt so uncomfortable in it that she gave it away. During her girlhood she spent some time with her father's brothers and sisters, now at the head of homes of their own in Ohio. It was here that she came under the influence of a highly emotional type of revival, and was baptized into the Baptist Church. She had, of course, been baptized as an infant in the Episcopal Church at Fairfax. Her loyalty to the denomination of her choice never swerved, and she tried hard to make good Baptists of her children.

When Mrs. Ballard became of age, it was discovered that nothing was left of her estate except the farm. Principle and interest had been used for her 'board and support'. The case was taken to Court in an effort to get some redress, and Mr. Moore of Fairfax was Mrs. Ballard's attorney. However, after working up the case for his client he prevailed upon to switch over to the other side and won the case for the guardian. There was no one really to fight the case for her, so everything was lost. It was not long after this that she and Capt-Ballard became engaged.

For a year after they were married they lived in Richmond where Capt. Ballard, after reading Law for awhile in the office of Judge Lacy, father of our Uncle Hugo, ~~he~~ had found a job more to his liking than the Law. But when their first child, named James William for his two grandfathers, was a year old, they moved to Fairfax and into the old farm house at 'Fruitvale'. Here they lived out their long married life.

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Ballard had had any training or equipment for the life that confronted them. Although both had grown up on a farm, it was in the days when labor was the cheapest and most easily had of all commodities, and where methods were wasteful and expenditure of farm products lavish. Now, however, trained labor was scarce and must be paid. It was from the first, a constant struggle to make ends meet. Never in Virginia were there leaner years in which to rear a family. Food was sufficiently plentiful as was firewood, for by hard labor the farm would provide them. But when potatoes brought only twenty-five cents a bushel, and prices for other products were in proportion, the things that it took money to procure were scarce indeed. It was a problem during most years to raise the money for taxes, for farm equipment, for necessary clothing. Captain Ballard procured such jobs as he could do during those months when he could be spared from the actual work in the fields. For years he was tax assessor for the County, and during each spring traveled around the county over the muddy roads in his open buggy. Mrs. Ballard too, worked untiringly all her life. With such help as she could afford, often none at all, she did the work of the straggling old house, cared for her seven children, raised chickens and made butter for the local markets, and during some of the short winter terms when her mother-in-law lived with them, even taught in the neighborhood school. She never learned how to make her work easier, in fact it never seemed to occur to her to try to spare herself any labor or inconvenience. I think I never knew a person so entirely and unselfconsciously unselfish in her every attitude as

she was. She was a tiny little woman, not five feet tall, but sturdily built. Exactly the opposite in temperament of her choleric quick tempered husband, her natural mildness and sweetness of disposition carried her through the hard and lean years as no other endowment could have done. Though his occasional outbreaks sometimes made things difficult for his wife and children, the Captain was devoted to his family. In the lavish old days he would have been the typical genial and generous head of the house, beaming upon his family from the head of the traditionally laden board. To the end of his days his eyes would soften when they fell upon his wife. After they were both whiteheaded I have seen him beckon her from across the hearth, where the family sat in a circle around the wide open fire. 'Come over here and sit by me', he

would say, and his eyes would speak as only those Ballard eyes could.

There was little social life in this particular neighborhood. The occasional trips to the Court House for shopping, to service at the Episcopal Church, or to a Memorial Day Commemoration were relatively few and far between. For Captain Ballard the highlight of the year was the Confederate Reunion, and when it was possible Mrs. Ballard accompanied him to these meetings. Here for brief days the beloved of their southland again were heroes in grey, listened to by old comrades, admired by their ladies, while the days of romance and high adventure were recounted and lived over in song, in story, and in impassioned oratory. Stories of heroism connected with 'the War' left a strong imprint upon the minds of the children of the family. The military tradition had always been strong in the Ballard line, it was their boast that since the first Colonel Thomas Ballard had come to Virginia a Ballard in direct descent had responded to every call to arms during the colonial and federal periods of Virginia's history. A devoted patriotism, a strong sense of obligation for the maintenance of home and family, and of duty towards the community were outstanding traits of my husband's character which I am sure were impressed upon him by his parents from his earliest years. They were traits shared by most Virginians in a day when such words as chivalry, gallantry, and duty, were held more in honor than in this more sophisticated time.

As in most country homes in Virginia the Ballard children were taught by a governess at home, and when this rudimentary instruction was outgrown pupils were usually sent away to school. But there was no money in the Ballard exchequer for this added expense, so at twelve or thirteen years of age James was sent to the little public school in the neighborhood, where his mother had sometimes taught. Now there presided as teacher a young man known to the family who had had some college experience and was a good teacher. He first awakened in the growing boy the desire for an education and gave him two years of good training in the elementary branches, and because of personal interest, carried him on into Latin and Algebra. With this meager preparation, at the age of sixteen he was entered at William and Mary College. The two years spent there were not happy. He never liked to refer to them. Hampered from the start by inadequate preparation, he nevertheless worked hard and conscientiously, and learned at least, how to use his mind and acquire knowledge for himself.

The next three years were spent almost entirely in the country near his home. From his boyhood years his own hope for his future had been that he might follow in his grandfather's footsteps as a lawyer. But first he must in some way carry himself through the years of preparation. So he set himself to earn-

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