

Bio: Mary Bolling Fleming

Pamela Hutchison Garrett, 2017, 2018

Mary Bolling Fleming was the youngest daughter of William Fleming and Elizabeth "Betty" Champe of Goochland (later Chesterfield) county Virginia. She was born about 1779, and grew up in a family of four girls. Mary was named for her paternal grandmother, Mary Bolling who married John Fleming.

Little is known of life in the Fleming household, but evidence suggests that they were moderately wealthy, able to live comfortably. The daughters were all educated, and "accomplished". When Mary was in her infancy or young years her mother died, and her continuing care and maintenance fell completely into the hands of her father – a job he performed admirably. Her father, Judge William Fleming, never remarried. Evidence points to his careful and diligent attention to his daughters throughout their lives.

The Fleming "girls" received a generous inheritance from their uncle William Champe in his Will probated in 1784 in Culpeper county Virginia.

My will is that my nieces the daughters of Colo. Wm. Fleming now living have the tract of land in King George County known by the name of "The Farm" with all the slaves that was on the said land at my Father's death, & their increase together with the stock & Tools of all kinds, to be equally divided to them & Their heirs &c.

Mary Fleming married Beverley Chew Stanard, February of 1798 in Chesterfield county Virginia. Mary and Beverley were both about age twenty one.

Beverly Chew Stanard and Mary Bolling Fleming, dau of William Fleming who consents; 6 February 1798; surety Beverly Stanard; wit Erasmus Reams.

[source] Marriages of Chesterfield County Virginia; Knorr.

It is one of those interesting circumstances that Mary's sister, Jane Fleming, was married two months earlier to another Beverley Stanard. Mary Fleming's niece, Martha Markham, reported in a 1905 letter, "My other two aunts both married Beverly Stanard. They were own cousins."

In that same letter, Martha Markham tells this story:

When Uncle Beverly asked Grandpa for Aunt Mary, he told him he had no objection to him, but if he married her, he should never take her from him. He had to come there, which he did. They raised their family there, lived and died at dear old Summerville.

Most lists of children for Beverley Stanard and Mary Fleming indicate five children – Robert Beverly Stanard, Elizabeth Fleming “Eliza” Stanard, John Champe Stanard, Julia Ann Stanard, and William Fleming Stanard. To this list is added Mary Bolling Stanard who appears among their children in the Will of their grandfather, William Fleming, written in 1823.



The Stanard family must have brought a bright busyness to “dear old Summerville” – six children being born between about 1800-1810. Mary Fleming Stanard’s sister, Caroline Fleming, never married and remained at Summerville during her lifetime. It seems likely that, despite her “mental malady”, Caroline was a helpful influence on the Stanard family.

It must have been a tremendous blow to the household at Summerville when Mary B Fleming Stanard died in January of 1812. She was about thirty-two years of age, and left behind six young children.

Died - Mrs Mary B Stanard, consort of Beverly C Stanard, esq, and dau of Judge Fleming at Summerville, in Chesterfield county, on Tues (28 Jan 1812).

[source] Richmond Enquirer (Richmond Virginia); 30 Jan 1812; and Virginia Argus (Richmond Virginia); 3 Feb 1812; from Marriages and Deaths from Richmond Virginia Newspapers 1780-1820; Henley.

Just over a year later, Beverly Chew Stanard remarried to Elizabeth Smith, the widow Watts.

Beverly Chew Stanard and Eliza M Watts; 7 April 1813; surety David Weisiger; wit Seigniora T Smith.

[source] Marriages of Chesterfield County Virginia; Knorr.

Elizabeth Smith was the daughter of Col William Smith and Elizabeth Mayo; and the widow of George Washington Watts. She and Watts had three children. Beverly Stanard and Elizabeth Smith added two more children to the family. It is not certain exactly who took on the care and guidance of all of these children.

According to family records Beverly Stanard served as a Captain and Adjutant in the Brigade of General John Hartwell Cocke, during the War of 1812. The primary duty of these forces was the defense of Richmond Virginia during 1814 and early 1815. They did not see action.

Beverley Stanard was a lawyer, and served several terms in the Virginia House of Delegates.

A recently discovered website titled "Patients' Voices in Early 19th Century Virginia" presents "the correspondence and daybook of Dr. James Carmichael and his son, Dr. Edward Carmichael, of Fredericksburg, Virginia". It provides some insight into the goings-on of the Stanard family during the early years of the nineteenth century. This well-developed web project makes for fascinating reading, and is recommended. Between July of 1820 and January of 1821, four letters are written to Drs Carmichael by Beverley C Stanard. He describes in detail a miserable "bowel condition" he is suffering from, and requests "a box of anodyne pills which I will take care to use with great caution."

Beverley Stanard died in 1823, when his children by Mary Fleming were in their teens and early twenties. He was about forty-five years of age. Elizabeth Smith Watts Stanard died before 1829.

Mary Bolling Fleming Stanard, like many women of her time, died young. She left a legacy in her six children, three of whom married and went on to honor their parents with thirteen identified grandchildren. Mary Fleming Stanard does have living descendants today.

This lovely obituary for Mary B Fleming Stanard was discovered by Pamela Hutchison Garrett in the Journal Book of Mary Brown Williams Dunbar, located in the Mississippi Archives at Jackson Mississippi. Mary Fleming Stanard was the sister of Lucy Fleming Markham and the great-aunt to Mary Brown Williams Dunbar. Mary Fleming Stanard died in January 1812 and it is believed that this obituary clipping was probably left to Mary Williams Dunbar, by her grandmother, Lucy Fleming Markham. The Dunbar Journal was compiled in 1853-54. The newspaper is not identified, but date appears to be 25 January 1812.

Communication---Departed this life, at Summerville, in Chesterfield county, on Tuesday evening about 7 O'clock, Mrs Mary B Stanard, consort of Beverly C Stanard, esq, and daughter of Judge Fleming, after an illness of several months, which she sustained with patient fortitude. In her death, her husband, children, father and friends sustained an irreparable loss, for in those several relations she stood pre-eminently distinguished. United to her higher virtues were all those soft and finer feelings which beautify and adorn the feminine character, and render it more amiably interesting --and truly can we say:

*Sweet as the blossoms of early morn,
Her beauties budded and as sweetly blew,
And sweet the mind that did those charms adorn
Softened by feelings mild instructive dew.*

*Wyapt to the skies the parting spirit fled,
From her pure breast the virtue's loved abode,
Where gently were the meek affections led
By conscience, pilot to the soul, to God.*

*She as a daughter, as parent, wife,
Fulfilled the duties that to each belong,
And as a Christian, meekly passed thro' life
Where flowers and thorns bestrew the path along*

*Ah! could not virtue pure as Alpine snow
Virtue that moulds the softened mind to peace:
Could it not blissful length of days bestow
And from poor Mary's mid-day life, death chase*

*No mend for virtue oft receive we here,
... it here we bliss unchanging find,
Tis ours, to bow before our God in fear
To bear a patient and a suffering mind.*

*Then rest, sweet spirit, softly rest in peace,
Escaped from life's uncertain, various sphere;
Where length of days our sorrows oft increase,
And tinge with deeper black the funeral bier.*

Do you want to know more?

Link to Mary Bolling Fleming in the database

<http://markhamchesterfield.com/getperson.php?personID=13975&tree=mkchest>

Beverley Chew Stanard in the database

<http://markhamchesterfield.com/getperson.php?personID=13979&tree=mkchest>

Further Reading:

Patients' Voices in Early 19th Century Virginia: Letters to Doct. Carmichael & Son; online exhibit of Historical Collections & Services of the Health Sciences Library, University of Virginia.

<http://carmichael.lib.virginia.edu/>

About the image:

Hildebrandt, Theodor; Children Expecting the Christmas Feast; c.1840; Hermitage (St Petersburg); in the public domain.

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