

legal practitioner in London, and having married a Miss Ravenscroft, made England his permanent home.

In 1853, Mr. Harvey made personal inquiries at Cookham, ascertained that the Washingtons had really lived there, that several members of the Ball family had resided and been buried there. But the Baptismal and Marriage Register of the parish had disappeared—having been taken away by a lawyer and, while in his possession, destroyed by a fire. A fragment of a letter written by Miss Lizzie Burwell to Miss Nelly Car, on the 15th of May, 1728, gives it to be understood that "Molly Ball" was then going on a visit with her brother Joseph to the latter's home in England. Mention has already been made of Augustine Washington's visit to England in connection with the estate there.

It seems, on the whole, not improbable that the marriage of Augustine Washington and Mary Ball took place in England, and it is, at least, possible that George Washington was born there. It is true that, when in 1792, being then President of the United States, he sent to Sir Isaac Heard a genealogical table of the Virginia Washingtons, he gave Westmoreland County, Virginia, as his own birth-place. But, if there was any doubt on the subject, he would naturally give the country of which he was already the reputed father, the benefit of it. It is more in harmony with the nature of things that the great and successful leader of the American Revolution should be an American than that he should be an Englishman. On the other hand, there is a good deal to be said in favor of the English birth-place. As to his baptism, if the suggestion of the missing cipher in his own Bible record be correct, and the date of the christening be April 30, and not April 3, it is possible that his parents may have crossed the Atlantic just as soon after his birth as his mother's health permitted, and that their son George was baptized in his Virginia home.

I am inclined to think, however, that in ascribing