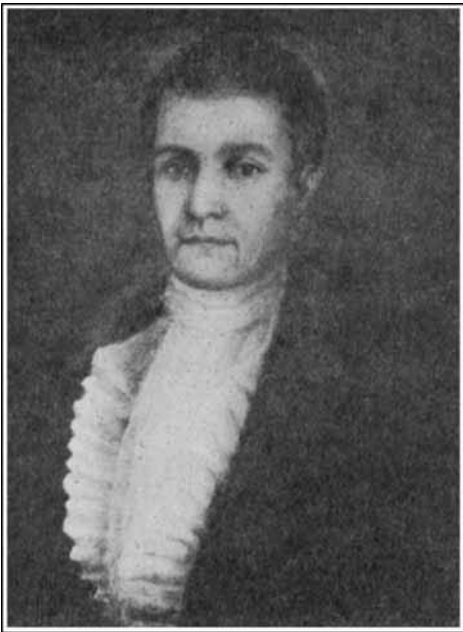


# THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF PHARMACY

DR. WILLIAM BROWN, PHYSICIAN-GENERAL TO THE AMERICAN  
ARMY.\*

BY HIS GREAT 3RD GRAND-DAUGHTER, BESSIE WILMARTH GAHN.

In the churchyard of old Pohick Church a few miles south of Alexandria, Virginia, on the road to Fredericksburg, is a modest tombstone marked with the name of William Brown who was born, in 1748, in Haddingtonshire, Scotland. In that country, the family estates had been bequeathed by William's father to



WILLIAM BROWN, M.D.<sup>1</sup>

Author of first American Military Pharmacopœia.  
(The Lititz Pharmacopœia.)

Gustavus, William's older brother. In America, the old home at Rose Hill was in the possession of Dr. Gustavus Richard, whose mother was the second wife of Dr. Gustavus Brown. Therefore, upon William's graduation from Edinburgh (as Doctor of Medicine) he settled and began medical practice in Alexandria, Virginia, where he married his cousin, Catherine Scott. He soon attained a high professional rank, and became intimate with many of the leading men of the day, among whom were Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Dr. Hosack and others.

Upon the outbreak of the War of Independence, Dr. Brown left his practice and entered the service of the Colonies as Surgeon of the Second Virginia Regiment (Colonel Woolford's), raised in 1775. From September 19 to December 1, 1776, he served as Assistant Surgeon of the Flying Camp. On May 13, 1777, he was elected by the Continental Congress to be Surgeon General

of the Middle Department (between the Hudson and the Potomac rivers) to superintend the practice of surgery in the Army hospitals. In January 1778, Dr. Brown was placed in charge of all the Continental Army hospitals in Lititz, Pa., and its vicinity. By this time, 1778, he had written the famous "Pharmacopœia

\* This sketch, largely a reprint from the *Military Surgeon*, August 1926, was presented by Lyman F. Kebler to the Section on Historical Pharmacy, together with other data; he also had a photo made of an oil painting of Dr. Brown, for the Historian, and later, will prepare a more extended article for publication in the JOURNAL. It is printed at this time for record; Col. J. R. Keane, the Army Medical museum, the author and Dr. Kebler are entitled to credit for the contribution and the Historian thanks them.

<sup>1</sup> This photograph was taken from a life-size painting by Miss Alce Swann, who painted it from a miniature ivory painting. Artist unknown.

for the Use of Army Hospitals." This was the first American pharmacopœia. A cherished copy is to be found in the Library of Congress.

On February 7, 1778, General Brown was promoted by the Continental Congress to the office of Physician-General to superintend the "Practice of physic" in the Army Hospital of the Middle Department. Though but a young man, he held this office for over two years during the most critical period of the Revolution. A firm patriot, he gave his services to his country at great personal sacrifice. Up to that time, the Continental Congress had been able to make but few provisions for the maintenance of the Medical Department of the Army, causing the duties of the Physician-General and his subordinates to be very arduous; and it was largely due to the "personal attention and private influence" of Dr. Brown that the sick and wounded received medical treatment. On July 21, 1780, he resigned and returned to private practice in Alexandria, Va. By resigning, in 1778, his commission as Regimental Surgeon with the Virginia troops, in order to accept appointment by the Continental Congress, as Physician-General, Dr. Brown forfeited his right to pay in bounty-lands from the State of Virginia; but so highly were his services esteemed that the General Assembly made an exception in his case, and in October 1782, decreed that he be granted a bounty of 6000 acres of land in the State of Virginia. This is recorded in the Virginia Land Office at Richmond.

General Brown was a charter member of the Society of Cincinnati, which was formed upon the close of the Revolution by officers of the Continental Army and the French Legion.

Upon his death, December 20, 1792, General William Brown was quietly buried at "Preston" the estate of his kinsmen, the Alexanders, in Fairfax County, Va. In 1921, the land at Preston was purchased from descendants of the Alexanders by the Pennsylvania Railroad, and all the seventy-five bodies interred therein were transferred to the old cemetery at Pohick. It is here, therefore, that lie the remains of this great man, who took so large a part in the making of our country.

Concerning the grant of land to Dr. William Brown, for services in the Revolution, the Register of the Land Office, Richmond, Va., states:

"I find William Brown of record as having received Military certificate for 6000 acres of land for services as Regimental Surgeon for three years, which warrant was issued the 2nd day of June 1783, and of record in *Book No. 1*, page 145.

"I also find grants to William Brown for twelve hundred and one hundred acres for and in consideration of the above-mentioned warrant, situated in the forks of the Cumberland and Ohio Rivers (no County mentioned in either of the grants) and dated 10th day of May 1786, and of record in *Grant Book No. X*, pages 50 and 52."

EDITOR'S NOTE: A picture of the Moravian Brother's House, where the "Lititz Pharmacopœia" was prepared by Dr. Brown, is printed in JOURNAL A. PH. A. for 1920, p. 1132.

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#### DECREE PROHIBITING AMERICAN PURCHASE REVOKED BY MEXICO.

The decree of the President of Mexico, directing that government officials abstain from purchasing supplies in the United States has been revoked by a subsequent executive order dated October 28th. The previous de-

cree did not prevent government officers from purchasing American goods in Mexico but only American goods from the U. S. The new decree authorizing government departments to import from the U. S. or any other country necessary commodities, provided they cannot be acquired in Mexico.