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The Marshall-Wythe School of Government and Citizenship

College of William & Mary

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The Marshall-Wythe School
of Government and Citizenship

Designed to lay the Foundation in American Education for the Proper Teaching of the Advantages and Obligations of American Citizenship; a Living Memorial to the Great Chief Justice and his Preceptor.

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AND they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”

—Daniel, 12:3.
An Open Letter to the American Bar

THE MARSHALL-WYTHE SCHOOL
OF GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP
AT THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY IN VIRGINIA

"Next after that truth on which the eternal welfare of man depends, what study can be so important to the youth of this republic as that of our own institutions? What work of man deserves so much to engage your attention as those charters in which your rights and your duties are alike defined? What philosophy so worthy of your profoundest thoughts as the philosophy of government? ... The function of a sovereign citizen is an affair not of right alone but of duty also; and he who presumes to act in that exalted character, far from being subject to no law but his own will, no reason but his own caprice, is exercising a high duty to which he is called by God Himself, whose unworthy instrument he is, in his great work—the moral government of man."—JUDGE BEVERLY TUCKER, to his Law Class at William and Mary, in 1845.

To inculcate sane views of our form of government is conceded to be an important function of education. The intelligent exercise of American citizenship, as a patriotic duty, must be regarded as a subject of major importance in our colleges.

The establishment of such a school at the ancient College of William and Mary, founded in 1693, at Williamsburg, Virginia, is contemplated. No bet-
ter site could be selected than this, midway between Jamestown and Yorktown, where many stirring scenes in our colonial and revolutionary drama were staged. The very atmosphere is an education in the science of government—like a laboratory to the physical sciences.

No college has higher claims upon the Nation. She educated Thomas Jefferson, who drew the Declaration, Edmund Randolph, the able coadjutor of Madison in the Federal Convention, and James Monroe, who gave us the Monroe Doctrine.

Founded in 1779, and continuing to the Civil War, William and Mary’s Law School was the oldest in this country. Its sole predecessor in the Anglo-Saxon world was the Vinerian Chair at Oxford, where Sir William Blackstone lectured. Chief Justice Marshall, the expounder of the Constitution, was a law student at William and Mary, under George Wythe, Signer of the Declaration, and father of legal instruction in America.

This law school educated four justices of the United States Supreme Court, more than half the judges of the Virginia Court of Appeals, and countless incumbents of nisi prius courts, both State and Federal.

In 1862 the College was burned by Northern
troops. It was the only college in the South that was intentionally destroyed, being the exception that proved the rule. The act was earnestly condemned by the leading Northern commanders, but the result was the same. It so impoverished the College that it was necessary to suspend until 1888.

The great need of present-day education is to train the coming generation to a conception of the duties of citizenship as well as its privileges. The treatment for anarchy should be prophylactic rather than curative. This school is intended, not for expectant lawyers alone, but for expectant citizens; though the full course will have in view an adequate preparation for public life in legislative, educational, or diplomatic lines, as well as legal. It is, however, an academical course, designed to lead to the A. B. degree. The preliminary subjects are already being given at the College, as follows:

First year: English, Mathematics, Science, Latin.

Second year: English, Latin, French (with Spanish or Italian as electives), Political Science, History, Psychology.

Third year: History, Economics, Philosophy, Finance and Commerce.
The plan is to enlarge the foregoing by adding two chairs:

1. **John Marshall Chair of Constitutional History and Law**

   Designed as a memorial to the great Chief Justice. It would show the gradual evolution of government from the very beginnings, teaching history from its economic and political rather than its military side. It would review the Greek forms of government and leagues, which were familiar to the draftsmen of our Constitution (and had been taught to a number of them at William and Mary), and on which some features of our Constitution were modeled. (Fiske, "Political Ideas," p. 76; Freeman, "History of Federal Government," Ch. 5.)

   It would discuss the Roman form and subsequent European developments therefrom, and follow with a series of lectures on the English Constitution, to which special attention would be paid.

   The different colonial governments would then be taken up, with the successive steps toward union, followed by the Confederation and culminating in the Constitution.

   Then would follow a discussion of its develop-
ment along the paths blazed out by Marshall, and a political history of the country to the present day.

Attention would be given to state constitutions, especially to the management of municipalities, which is one of the problems of the day.

The subject of parliamentary law, so useful to the large number who may be called on to preside at directors’, stockholders’ or public meetings, will be treated.

2. **George Wythe Chair of Governmental and International Law**

This would be a memorial to the first professor of the first chair of law in any American college, the preceptor of Jefferson, Marshall, and Clay. Its course of study would supplement the first course by treating specially of our international relations and obligations, and by comparing our government with other forms.

As this is necessarily tentative, it would be subject to such modifications as experience might dictate.

It is impossible to overemphasize the value of such a school. The tendency to overlook the fundamentals of government is largely responsible for present-day difficulties. The proposed Marshall-
Wythe School of Government and Citizenship offers to all who are interested in the maintenance of American institutions a channel for productive investment. It is the serious, constructive effort of the college which produced such men as Marshall, Jefferson and Monroe, to equip its students for the problems of today.

A survey shows that a large number of students now at William and Mary will teach in the public schools. They will help to mould the next generation. Under this system of training, each can be made a centre for the diffusion of true governmental principles in the community where he teaches.

The College of William and Mary now admits women. It is imperative that these new voters be given opportunity to prepare themselves for intelligent use of the ballot.

"I became acquainted with Mr. Wythe," said Mr. Jefferson, "when he was about thirty-five years of age. He directed my studies in the law, led me into business, and continued until his death, my most affectionate friend. No man ever left behind him a character more venerated than George Wythe. Of warm patriotism and devoted as he was to liberty and the natural and equal rights of man, he might
truly be called the Cato of his country, without the avarice of the Roman, for a more disinterested person never lived."

The foregoing has its appeal not merely as a tardy reparation to this College; such a school in such surroundings would exert an incalculable influence in the direction of stability in government. If we keep the fountain unpolluted, we need devote no energies towards purifying the stream.

The foundation of such courses of instruction has been endorsed by the Executive Committee of the American Bar Association. Resolutions of approbation have been passed by the Board of Directors of the National Security League and other organizations.

The plan should appeal especially to our brethren of the bar, whose influence has always been on the side of sanity in government.

Such a school, to succeed, must have men of the highest type as instructors.

It will require an endowment of two hundred thousand dollars to secure two such men, and subscriptions are solicited. A form of contribution is annexed.

Alton B. Parker, Chairman.
Opinions

"The seat of literature at Williamsburg has ever, in my view, been an object of veneration. As an institution important for its communication of useful learning, and conducive to the true principles of national liberty, you may be assured that it shall receive every encouragement and benefaction in my power toward its re-establishment."—George Washington, in 1781.

"William and Mary will again resume her place in the front rank of the Colleges of the Country."—R. E. Lee, in 1867.

"I am satisfied, on examination of the facts of the case, that the destruction of the buildings of William and Mary College by our troops was not only unnecessary and unauthorized, but was one of those deplorable acts of useless destruction which occur in all wars.

"In this view, and believing that its reconstruction will tend to cement and strengthen the bonds of union and to give encouragement to the growth and spreading of Union principles, I take great pleasure in recommending the appeal of Professor Ewell to all those who have the means and the disposition to assist him in the good work in which he is engaged."

—George G. Meade, in 1872.

"It was in the atmosphere of this town and college where the spirit of liberty was so fanned into a consuming flame that caught up all the country. Here was the famous Raleigh Tavern, immortalized by the direction of such men as Patrick Henry, who frequently led the conversations which grew into heated debates. It was here while Jefferson was attending college he went to the crowded courthouse to hear, if possible, for the first time the prophet of the Revolution. Although he could not get closer than the door, he was so stirred that he left the crowd with the observation, 'Gracious God, what an orator.' Could some power repeat today the wonderful utterances and revive the uncontrolled feelings at various times heard and felt within the range of this historic seat of learning we would live over again the emotions which stirred the Colonies into final resistance in the war for American inde-
pendence, which declaration of principles was written by a son of William and Mary. We would see anew the workings of a stupendous brain, which gave to the world her greatest modern judicial mind, which early in our national existence became the strong arm of nationality. In fact, a recital of the power and influence of this seat of learning would go far to write the growth and early development of the great Republic."


"Dear Sir:

'I cannot but approve your idea of sending your eldest son, destined for the Law, to Williamsburg . . . the pride of the institution is Mr. Wythe, one of the Chancellors of the State and Professor of Law in the College. He is one of the greatest men of the age, having held without competition the first place at the Bar of our General Court for 25 years, and always distinguished by the most spotless virtue. He gives lectures regularly, and holds Moot Courts and Parliaments wherein he presides, and the young men debate regularly in Law and Legislation, learn the rules of Parliamentary Proceeding and acquire the habit of public speaking. Williamsburg is a remarkably healthy situation, reasonably cheap, and affords very genteel society.'—THOMAS JEFFERSON.

"Virginia is called the mother of presidents, but the College of William and Mary, the alma mater of statesmen, is only another name for Virginia."

—HERBERT B. ADAMS, late professor of history, Johns Hopkins University.

"Its genius for drawing close to the spirit of the times, for always contributing greatly to the leadership of great affairs, has been the abiding glory of William and Mary. The spirit of human liberty—of that liberty that dares to build, to experiment, to found new institutes of association and conduct—has always thrived here. Here, I think we may safely infer, where the campus was the common ground between the old State House and the college structures, is to be found the oldest inspiration of the State university system which has done so much for liberal and truly democratic education. Here came Jefferson, author of the immortal Declaration, to expand a medieval
college into a modern university on lines as broad as his own concept of human rights; here he found an atmosphere in which to develop those noble sentiments of mankind's fraternity which enabled him, years after writing our own Declaration of Independence, to become one of the moral inspirations and intellectual counsellors of the French Revolution. Here Washington was granted a degree, and here he served as chancellor. From this institution were graduated three Presidents—Jefferson, Monroe, and Tyler. The great lawgiver of the young Republic, John Marshall, was another alumnus; and so was George Wythe, signor of the Declaration and preceptor to Marshall and Jefferson."—Warren G. Harding.
FORM OF CONTRIBUTION

To aid in establishing the Marshall-Wythe School of Government and Citizenship, I hereby agree to donate the sum of $__________________________.

Payable immediately, or as follows:

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$__________________________ Cash herewith.

Please fill out this form, detach and mail with check to J. A. C. Chasman, President, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia.