WASHINGTON

George Washington, The Last Will & Testament of.... George Washington, 1800.
(The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC07425)

THE

LAST

Will & Testament,

OF

General *George Washington.*

WORCESTER:
PRINTED BY ISAIAH THOMAS, JUN.
February——1800.

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groes are held, to manumit them. *And whereas*, among those who will receive freedom according to this devise, there may be some, who from old age or bodily infirmities, and others, who on account of their infancy, that will be unable to support themselves, it is my will and desire, that all who come under the first and second description, shall be comfortably clothed and fed by my heirs while they live; and that such of the latter description as have no parents living, or if living, are unable or unwilling to provide for them, shall be bound by the court until they shall arrive at the age of twentyfive years; and in cases where no record can be produced, whereby their ages can be ascertained, the judgment of the court, upon its own view of the subject, shall be adequate and final. The Negroes thus bound, are (by their masters or mistresses) to be taught to read and write, and to be brought up to some useful occupation, agreeably to the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, providing for the support of orphan and other poor children. And I do hereby expressly forbid the sale or transportation, out of the said Commonwealth, of any Slave, I may die possessed of, under any pretence whatsoever. And I do moreover, most pointedly and most solemnly enjoin it upon my Executors hereafter named, or the survivor of them, to see that *this* clause respecting Slaves, and every part thereof, be religiously fulfilled at the epoch at which it is directed to take place, without evasion, neglect or delay, after the crops which may then be on the ground are harvested, particularly as it respects the aged and infirm; seeing that a regular and permanent fund be established for their support, as long as there are subjects requiring it; not trusting to the uncertain provision to be made by individuals: And to my mulatto man, *William*, (calling himself William Lee) I give immediate freedom, or if he should prefer it (on account of the accidents which have befallen him, and which have rendered him incapable of walking, or of any active employment) to remain in the situation he now is, it shall be optional in him to do so; in either case, however, I allow him an annuity of Thirty Dollars during his natural life, which shall be independent of the victuals and clothes he has been accustomed to receive, if he chooses the last alternative; but in full with his freedom, if he prefers the first; and this I give him, as a testimony of my sense of his attachment to me, and for his faithful services during the Revolutionary War.

Item.—To the Trustees (Governors, or by whatsoever other name they may be designated) of the Academy, in the town of Alexandria, I give and bequeath, in trust, Four Thousand Dollars, or in other words, twenty of the Shares which I hold in the Bank of Alexandria, towards the support of a Free School, established at, and annexed to, the said Academy, for the purpose of educating such Orphan Children, or the Children of such other poor and indigent persons, as are unable to accomplish it with their own means; and who, in the judgment of the Trustees of the said Seminary, are best entitled to the benefit of this donation. The aforesaid 20 Shares I give and bequeath in perpetuity; the dividends only of which are to be drawn for, and applied by the said Trustees, for the time being, for the uses abovementioned; the Stock to remain entire and untouched, unless indications of failure of said Bank should be so apparent, or a discontinuance thereof, should render a removal of this fund necessary. In either of these cases, the amount of the Stock here devised is to be vested in some other bank, or public institution, whereby the interest may with regularity and certainty be drawn and applied as above: And, to prevent misconception, my meaning is, and is hereby declared to be, that these Twenty Shares are in lieu of, and not in addition to, the Thousand Pounds given by a missive letter some years ago; in consequence whereof, an annuity of Fifty Pounds has since been paid towards the support of this institution.

Item.—WHEREAS by a law of the Commonwealth of Virginia, enacted in the year 1785, the Legislature thereof, was pleased, as an evidence of its approbation of the services I had rendered the public, during the Revolution, and partly I believe, in consideration of my having suggested the vast advantages which the community would derive from the extension of its inland navigation under Legislative patronage, to present me with One hundred shares, of One Hundred Dollars each, in the incorporated Company, established for the purpose of extending the navigation of James' River, from tide water to the mountains;—and also with Fifty shares of £100 sterling each, in the corporation of another company likewise established for the similar purpose of opening the navigation of the river Potowmack, from the tide water to Fort Cumberland; the acceptance of which, although the offer was highly honorable and grateful to my feelings, was refused, as inconsistent with a principle which I had adopted, and had never departed from—viz. not to receive pecuniary compensation for any services I could render my country in its arduous struggle with Greatbritain for its rights; and because I had evaded similar propositions from other States in the Union. Adding to this refusal, however, an intimation that, if it should be the pleasure of the leg-

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and above the ſums furniſhed by their eſtate, which ſum it may be inconvenient for them or their father's eſtate to refund---I do for theſe reaſons, acquit them and the ſaid eſtate from the payment thereof---my intention being that all accounts between them and me, and their father's eſtate and me ſhall ſtand balanced.

Item.—The balance due to me from the eſtate of *Bartholomew Dandridge*, deceaſed, (my Wife's Brother) and which amounted on the firſt day of October, 1795, to four hundred and twentyfive pounds, (as will appear by an account rendered by his deceaſed ſon *John Dandridge*, who was the acting executor of his father's will) I releaſe and acquit from the payment thereof——and the Negroes (then thirtythree in number formerly belonging to the ſaid eſtate, who were taken in execution, ſold and purchaſed in on my account, in the year *(blank)* and ever ſince have remained in the poſſeſſion, and to the uſe of *Mary*, widow of the ſaid *Bartholomew Dandridge*, with their increaſe, it is my WILL and DESIRE ſhall continue and be in her poſſeſſion, without paying hire, or making compenſation for the ſame, for the time paſt or to come, during her natural life; at the expiration of which, I direct that all of them who are forty years old and upwards, ſhall receive their freedom; and all under that age and above ſixteen, ſhall ſerve ſeven years and no longer; and all under ſixteen years ſhall ſerve until they are twentyfive years of age, and then be free—and to avoid diſputes reſpecting the ages of any of theſe Negroes, they are to be taken into the court of the County in which they reſide, and the judgment thereof, in this relation, ſhall be final, and record thereof made. which may be adduced as evidence at any time thereafter, if diſputes ſhould ariſe concerning the ſame —And I further direct that the heirs of the ſaid *Bartholomew Dandridge* ſhall, equally ſhare the benefits ariſing from the ſervices of the ſaid negroes, according to the tenor of this deviſe, upon the deceaſe of their mother.

Item.—If *Charles Carter*, who intermarried with my Niece, *Betty Lewis*, is not ſufficiently ſecured in the title to the lots he had of me in the town of Fredericksburg, it is my WILL and DESIRE that my Executors ſhall make ſuch conveyances of them as the law requires, to render it perfect.

Item.—To my nephew, *William Auguſtine Waſhington*, and his Heirs (if he ſhould conceive them to be objects worth proſecuting) a Lot in the town of Mancheſter (oppoſite to Richmond) No. 265, drawn on my ſole account, and alſo the tenth of one or two hundred acre lots, and two or three half acre Lots, in the city and vicinity of Richmond, drawn in partnerſhip with nine others, all in the Lottery of the deceaſed *William Byrd*, are given; as is alſo a Lot which I purchaſed of *John Hood*, conveyed by *William Willie* and *Samuel Gordon*, Truſtees of the ſaid *John Hood*, numbered 139, in the town of Edinburgh, in the County of Prince George, State of Virginia.

Item.—To my Nephew, *Buſhrod Waſhington*, I give and bequeath all the Papers in my poſſeſſion, which relate to my civil and military adminiſtration, of the affairs of this country—I leave to him alſo, ſuch of my private Papers as are worth preſerving; and at the deceaſe of my Wife, and before, if ſhe is not inclined to retain them, I give and bequeath my Library of Books and Pamphlets of every kind.

Item.—Having ſold lands which I poſſeſſed in the State of Pennſylvania, and part of a tract held in equal right with *George Clinton*, late Governor of Newyork; in the State of Newyork, my ſhare of land and intereſt, in the Great Diſmal Swamp, and a tract of land which I owned in the County of Glouceſter—withholding the legal titles thereto, until the conſideration money ſhould be paid—and having moreover leaſed, and conditionally ſold (as will appear by the tenor of the ſaid leaſes) all my lands upon the Great Kenhawa, and a tract upon Difficult run, in the County of Loudoun, it is my WILL and DIRECTION, that whenſoever the contracts are fully and reſpectively complied with, according to the ſpirit, true intent, and meaning thereof, on the part of the purchaſers, their heirs or aſſigns, that then, and in that caſe, conveyances are to be made, agreeable to the terms of the ſaid contracts, and the money ariſing therefrom, when paid, to be veſted in Bank Stock;— the dividends whereof, as of that alſo which is already veſted therein, is to inure to my ſaid Wife during her life, but the Stock itſelf is to remain and be ſubject to the general diſtribution hereafter directed.

Item.—To the *Earl of Buchan* I recommit the "Box made of the Oak, that ſheltered the great Sir *William Wallace*, after the battle of Falkirk". preſented to me by his Lordſhip in terms too flattering for me to repeat, with a requeſt "to paſs it, on the event of my deceaſe, to the man in my country, who ſhould appear to merit it beſt, upon the ſame conditions that have induced him to ſend it to me." Whether eaſy or not to ſelect the *Man* who might comport with his Lordſhip's opinion in this reſpect, is not for me to ſay; but conceiving that no diſpoſition of this valuable curioſity can be more eligible than the recommitment of it to his own cabinet, agreeably to the o-

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when living, who from his youth had attached himself to my person, and followed my fortunes through the vicissitudes of the late Revolution, afterwards devoting his time to the superintendence of my private concerns for many years, whilst my public employments rendered it impracticable for me to do it myself, thereby affording me essential services, and always performing them in a manner the most filial and respectful: For these reasons, I say, I give and bequeath to *George Fayette Washington*, and *Lawrence Augustine Washington*, and their heirs, my estate east of Little Hunting Creek, lying on the river Potowmack, including the farm of three hundred and sixty acres, leased to *Tobias Lear*, as noticed before, and containing in the whole, by deed, two thousand and twentyseven acres, be it more or less; which said estate, it is my will and desire should be equitably and advantageously divided between them, according to quantity, quality, and other circumstances, when the youngest shall have arrived at the age of twentyone years, by three judicious and disinterested men; one to be chosen by each of the brothers, and the third by these two. In the mean time, if the termination of my Wife's interest therein should have ceased, the profits arising therefrom are to be applied for their joint uses and benefit. THIRD—*And whereas* it has always been my intention, since my expectation of having issue has ceased, to consider the grandchildren of my Wife in the same light as I do my own relations, and to act a friendly part by them, more especially by the two whom we have raised from their earliest infancy, namely, *Eleanor Park Custis*, and *George Washington Park Custis*, and whereas the former of these hath lately intermarried with *Lawrence Lewis*, a son of my deceased sister, *Betty Lewis*, by which union the inducement to provide for them both has been increased——Wherefore, I give and bequeath to the said *Lawrence Lewis*, and *Eleanor Park Lewis* his wife, and their heirs, the residue of my Mount Vernon estate, not already devised to my Nephew, *Bushrod Washington*, comprehended within the following description, viz. all the land north of the road leading from the ford of Dogue Run to the Gum Spring, as described in the devise of the other part of the tract to *Bushrod Washington*, until it comes to the stone and three red or Spanish oaks on the knowl, thence with the rectangular line to the back line (between Mr. *Mason* and me) thence with that line westerly along the new double ditch to Dogue Run, by the tumbling dam of my Mill, thence with the said run to the ford aforementioned: To which I add, all the land I possess west of the said Dogue Run and Dogue Creek, bounded easterly and southerly thereby;

together with the mill, distillery, and all other houses and improvements on the premises, making together about two thousand acres, be it more or less. FOURTH—Actuated by the principle already mentioned, I give and bequeath to *George Washington Park Custis*, the grandson of my Wife, and my ward, and to his heirs, the tract I hold on Four Mile Run, in the vicinity of Alexandria, containing one thousand two hundred acres, more or less, and my entire square, No. 21, in the city of Washington. FIFTH—All the rest and residue of my estate, real and personal, not disposed of in manner aforesaid, in whatsoever consisting, wheresoever lying, and whensoever found, a schedule of which, as far as is recollected, with a reasonable estimate of its value, is hereunto annexed, I desire may be sold by my Executors, at such times, in such manner, and on such credits, (if an equal, valid and satisfactory distribution of the specific property cannot be made without) as in their judgment shall be most conducive to the interest of the parties concerned; and the monies arising therefrom to be divided into twentythree equal parts, and applied as follow, viz. To *William Augustine Washington*, *Elizabeth Spotswood*, *Jane Thornton*, and the heirs of *Ann Ashton*, sons and daughters of my deceased Brother, *Augustine Washington*, I give and bequeath four parts; that is, one part to each of them. To *Fielding Lewis*, *George Lewis*, *Robert Lewis*, *Howell Lewis* and *Betty Carter*, sons and daughters of my deceased sister, *Betty Lewis*, I give and bequeath five other parts; one to each of them. To *George Steptoe Washington*, *Lawrence Augustine Washington*, *Harriott Parks*, and the heirs of *Thornton Washington*, sons and daughters of my deceased brother, *Samuel Washington*, I give and beqeath other four parts; one to each of them. To *Corbin Washington*, and the heirs of *Jane Washington*, son and daughter of my deceased Brother, *John Augustine Washington*, I give and bequeath two parts; one to each of them. To *Samuel Washington*, *Frances Ball* and *Mildred Hammond*, son and daughters of my Brother, *Charles Washington*, I give and bequeath three parts; one part to each of them: And to *George Fayette Washington*, *Charles Augustine Washington*, and *Maria Washington*, sons and daughters of my deceased Nephew, *George Augustine Washington*, I give one other part; that is, to each a third of that part. To *Elizabeth Park Law*, *Martha Park Peters*, and *Eleanor Park Lewis*, I give and bequeath three other parts, that is, a part to each of them. And to my Nephew, *Bushrod Washington* and *Lawrence Lewis*, and to my ward, the grandson of my Wife,

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SCHEDULE *of* PROPERTY

Comprehended in the foregoing WILL, *which is directed to be Sold; and ſome of it conditionally is Sold: With deſcriptive and explanatory Notes relative thereto.*

In *VIRGINIA.*

	Acres.	*Prices.*	*Dollars.*	
Loudoun County, Difficult Run,	300	*Dolls.*	6,666	*a*
Loudoun and Fauquier, Aſhby's Bent,	2481	10	24,810	*b*
Chattin's Run,	885	8	7,080	
Berkly, South Fork of Bullſkin,	1600			
Head of Evans's M.	453			
In Wormley's line,	183			
	2236	20	44,720	*c*
Frederick, bought from Mercer,	571	20	11,420	*d*
Hampſhire, on Potowmack River above B.	240	15	3,600	*e*
Glouceſter, on North River,	400	about	3,600	*f*
Nanſemond, near Suffolk, one third of 1119 acres,	373	8	2,984	*g*
Great Diſmal ſwamp, my dividend thereof,		about	20,000	*h*
Ohio River, round bottom,	587			
Little Kenhawa,	2314			
Sixteen miles lower down,	2448			
Oppoſite Big Bent,	4395			
	9744	10	97,440	*i*
Great Kenhawa—				
Near the mouth, weſt,	10990			
Eaſt ſide above,	7276			
Mouth of Cole River,	2000			
Oppoſite thereto, 2950, Burning Spring, 125,	3075			
			200,000	*k*

MARYLAND.

Charles County,	600	6	3,600	*l*
Montgomery County,	519	12	6,228	*m*

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	Acres.	Prices.	Dollars.	
PENNSYLVANIA.				
Great Meadows,	234	6	1,404	n
NEWYORK.				
Mohawk River, about	1000	6	6,000	o
NORTHWEST TERRITORY.				
On Little Miami,	839			
Ditto,	977			
Ditto,	1235			
	3051	5	15,251	p
KENTUCKY.				
Rough Creek,	3000			
Ditto, adjoining,	2000			
	5000	2	10,000	q

LOTS, viz.

CITY OF WASHINGTON.		
Two near the Capitol Square, 634, coſt 963 dollars, and with buildings,	15,000	r
No. 5, 12, 13 and 14, the laſt three, water lots, on the Eaſtern Branch, in ſquare 667, containing together 34438 ſquare feet, at 12 cents,	4,132	s
ALEXANDRIA.		
Corner of Pitt and Prince ſtreets, half an acre laid out into buildings, 3 or 4 of which are let on ground rent at 3 dollars per foot,	4,000	t
WINCHESTER.		
A lot in the town, of half an acre, and another on the commons, of about ſix acres, ſuppoſed,	4,000	u

		Dollars.	
BATH OR WARM SPRINGS.			
Two well ſituated and handſome buildings, to the amount of £150,		800	v
STOCK.			
United States 6 per cents.	3746		
Ditto, deferred,	1873 } 2500	6,246	w
Ditto, 3 per cents.	2946		
Potowmack Company, 24 Shares, coſt £100 ſterl.		10,666	x
James River Company, 5 Shares, each coſt 100 dollars,		500	y
Bank of Columbia, 170 Shares, 40 dollars each,		6,800	z
Bank of Alexandria—beſides 20 in the free ſchool,	5	1,000	z

STOCK LIVING, &c.

One covering horſe, 5 carriage horſes, 4 riding horſes, 6 brood mares, 20 working horſes and mares, 2 covering jacks, and 3 young ones, 10 ſhe aſſes, 42 working mules, 15 younger ones, 329 head of horned cattle, 640 head of ſheep, and a large ſtock of hogs, the preciſe number unknown. ☞ My manager has eſtimated this live ſtock at £7000; but I ſhall ſet it down, in order to make a round ſum, at 15,658

Aggregate Amount, Dollars, 530,000

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NOTES.

(a) THIS tract, for the size of it, is valuable, more for its situation than the quality of its soil; though that is good for farming, with a considerable proportion of ground that might very easily be improved into meadow. It lies on the great road from the city of Washington, Alexandria and Georgetown, to Leesburgh and Winchester. At Difficult Bridge, nineteen miles from Alexandria, less from the city of Georgetown, and not more than three from Matildaville, at the Great Falls of Potowmack there is a valuable seat on the premises, and the whole is conditionally sold for the sum annexed in the schedule.

(b) What the selling prices of lands, in the vicinity of these two tracts, are, I know not; but compared with those above the ridge, and others below them, the value annexed will appear moderate; a less one would not obtain them from me.

(c) The surrounding land, not superior in soil, situation or properties of any sort, sell currently at from twenty to thirty dollars an acre. The lowest price is affixed to these.

(d) The observations, made in the last note, apply equally to this *tract*; being in the vicinity of them, and of similar quality, although it lies in another country.

(e) This tract, though small, is extremely valuable. It lies on Potowmack River, about 12 miles above the town of Bath or Warm Springs, and is in the shape of a horseshoe; the river running almost around it. Two hundred acres of it is rich low grounds, with a great abundance of the largest and finest walnut trees; which with the produce of the soil might, (by means of the improved navigation of the Potowmack) be brought to a shipping port, with more ease, and at a smaller expense, than that which is transported 30 miles only, by land.

(f) This tract is of second rate Gloucester low ground; it has no improvements thereon, but lies on navigable water, abounding in fish and oysters. It was received in payment of a debt, (carrying interest) and valued in the year 1789, by an impartial gentleman, to £800. N. B. It has lately been sold and there is due thereon a balance, equal to what is annexed in the schedule.

(g) These 373 acres are the third part of undivided purchase made by the deceased Fielding Lewis, Thomas Walker and myself; on full conviction that they would become valuable. The land lies on the road from Suffolk and Norfolk, touches, (if I am not mistaken) some part of the navigable water of Nansemond river; the Rich Dismal Swamp is capable of great improvement; and from its situation must become extremely valuable.

(h) This is an undivided interest, which I held in the Great Dismal Swamp company, containing about 4000 acres, with my part of the plantation and stock thereon, belonging to the company in the said Swamp.

(i) These several tracts of land are of the first quality, on

the Ohio river, in the parts where they are situated; being almost, if not altogether, river bottoms. The smallest of these tracts is actually sold at ten dollars an acre, but the consideration therefor, not received. The rest are equally valuable, and sold as high; especially that which lies just below the Little Kenhawa, and is opposite to a thick settlement on the west side of the river. The four tracts have an aggregate breadth upon, the river of sixteen miles, and is bounded thereby that distance.

(k) These tracts are situated on the Great Kenhawa river, and the first four are bounded thereby for more than forty miles. It is acknowledged by all who have seen them, (and of the tract containing 10990 acres, which I have been on myself, I can assert) that there is no richer or more valuable land in all that region; they are conditionally sold for the sum mentioned in the schedule, that is, 200,000 dollars; and if the terms of that sale are not complied with, they will command considerably more. The tract, of which the 125 acres is a moiety, was taken up by General Andrew Lewis and myself, for, and on account of a bituminous spring which it contains, of so inflammable a nature as to burn as freely as spirits, and is as nearly difficult to extinguish.

(l) I am but little acquainted with this land, although I have once been on it. It was received, (many years since) in discharge of a debt to me from Daniel Jenifer Adams, at the value annexed thereto, and must be worth more. It is very level; lies near the river Potowmack.

(m) This tract lies about 30 miles above the city of Washington, not far from Kittoctan. It is good farming land, and by those who are well acquainted with it, I am informed that it would sell at twelve or fifteen dollars per acre.

(n) This land is valuable on account of its local situation, and other properties. It affords an exceeding good stand on Braddock's road, from Fort Cumberland to Pittsburgh, and besides a fertile soil possesses a large quantity of natural meadow, fit for the scythe. It is distinguished by the appellation of the Great Meadows, where the first action with the French in 1754 was fought.

(o) This is the moiety of about 2000 acres, which remains unsold of 6071 acres, on the Mohawk river, (Montgomery county) in a patent granted to *Daniel Coxe*, in the township of Coxeborough and Carolinas, as will appear by deed from *Marinus Willet* and wife, to *George Clinton*, (late Governor of Newyork) and myself. The latter sales have been at six dollars an acre, and what remains unsold, will fetch that or more

(p) The quality of these lands and their situations, may be known by the surveyors' certificates, which are filed along with the patents. They lie in the vicinity of Cincinnati; one tract near the mouth of the Little Miami; another seven, and the third ten miles up the same. I have been informed that they will command more than they are estimated at.

(q) For the description of these tracts in detail, see *General Spotswood's* letters, filed with the other papers relating to them.

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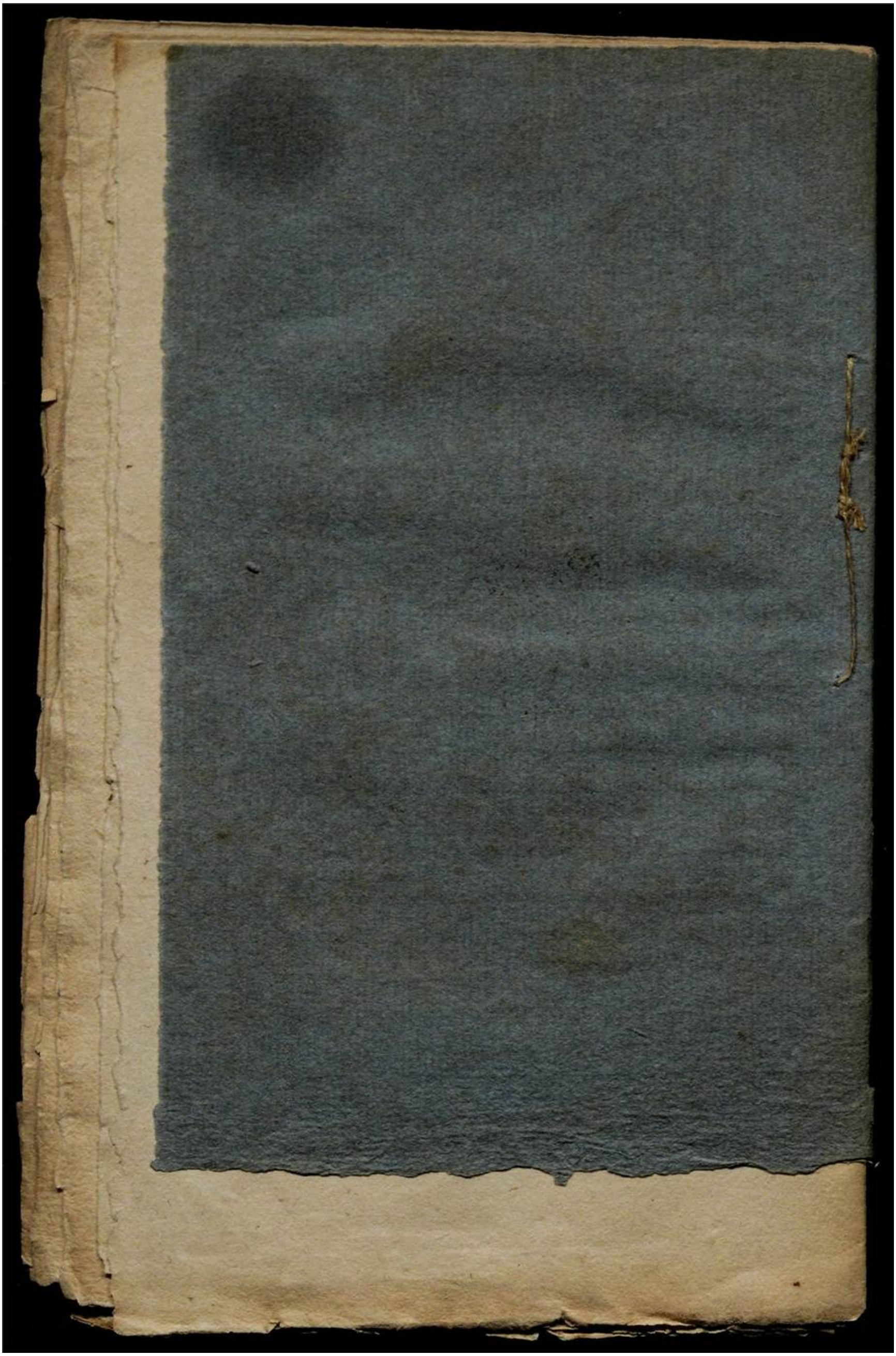

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