



Mary Donnell Tilghman

April 13, 1919 - July 27, 2012

Mary Donnell Singer Tilghman, age 93, died after a short illness on July 27, 2012, at her home on the Wye House property in Talbot County, MD.

Mrs. Tilghman was the daughter of the late Joanna Leigh Lloyd, of Talbot County, and the late John Addison Singer, of Pittsburgh, PA. She married Richard Carmichael Tilghman, MD, in 1945, a prominent Baltimore physician who died in 1999.

Mrs. Tilghman was born in Pittsburgh in 1919. After her parents divorced, she lived with her paternal grandmother in Pittsburgh during the school year and on the Eastern Shore during the summer. She graduated from Ellis School in Pittsburgh and George Washington University in Washington, DC. After college, she moved back to the Eastern Shore and lived with her mother near Easton until she married Dr. Tilghman upon his return from active duty in World War II. She met her future husband in 1938 at a family Christmas party at Gross Coate Farm in Talbot County. She was particularly proud of her service during the War as a plane spotter in Tunis Mills.

Soon after her marriage, she moved with her husband to Baltimore where he resumed his practice of medicine, which he had suspended during the War while he served in the 18th General Hospital, one of two Hopkins medical units in the South Pacific. He was discharged in 1946 as a Lieutenant Colonel

in the Medical Corps. Dr. Tilghman was affiliated with The Johns Hopkins Medical School for nearly 50 years, and the Tilghmans regularly entertained medical faculty and students at their suburban Baltimore home. They raised their four children in this home.

Mrs. Tilghman inherited the Wye House property from her Great Aunt, Elizabeth Lloyd Schiller, in 1993. Soon thereafter, she and Dr. Tilghman moved to Wye House. After her husband's death, she moved into the "Captain's House" on the property so that her son, Richard, and his wife, Beverly, could live in the main house on the property. Mrs. Tilghman was the 10th generation member of the Lloyd family to own the Wye House property. She was a direct descendant of Edward Lloyd, a Welsh Puritan, who came to Maryland in the early 1650's. He acquired the Wye House property in 1659 and moved to the property in 1660.

Mrs. Tilghman devoted the last 20 years of her life to preserving Wye House, its many outbuildings and gardens. She also actively promoted research on the history of the Lloyd Family and Wye House and gladly opened the house to numerous and varied groups for tours, most of which she personally conducted until she was well past 90 years old. She encouraged charitable organizations, such as Preservation Maryland, Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, and the Historical Society of Talbot County, to hold fund raising events at Wye House. In 2005, she invited archaeologists from the University of Maryland, College Park, to conduct archaeological digs on the property, which they have done for the past seven summers. She commissioned the Maryland Historical Society to catalogue the many Lloyd and Tilghman family papers so that they could be more easily used as research tools by historians and others interested in plantation life in Maryland during the past 300 years. She received a number of awards for these efforts, including being named "Marylander of the Year" by the Maryland Historical Society in 2010.

Dr. and Mrs. Tilghman were active travelers and true lifelong learners during their adult lives. In 1958, they spent the summer with their four children on a motor trip to the National Parks of the Western United States. In 1963, they took their children on a motor trip throughout the British Isles. Following Dr. Tilghman's retirement, they found more time to travel, visiting Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Africa and Asia. Mrs. Tilghman was an avid reader and researcher and would read voluminously about the places they planned to visit. Her knowledge of American and European history was incredible, due not only to her extensive reading but to her nearly photographic memory for names, dates and places. She and her husband also had a deep love of music and were long time subscribers to the Philadelphia Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and Baltimore Civic Opera.

Dr. and Mrs. Tilghman devoted much of their energy to a wide range of charitable and civic organizations, giving freely of their time and support. Mrs. Tilghman was a volunteer and board member of such organizations as the Children's Aid Society, Bryn Mawr School, St. Paul's School for Girls and the National Society of Colonial Dames. The Tilghmans endowed a traveling fellowship at The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and a scholarship fund at Gilman School in honor of Henry Callard, the school's headmaster for many years. Mrs. Tilghman was a member of the Harbor Club in Easton as well as the Mt. Vernon Club and the Elkridge Club in Baltimore.

She is survived by her daughter, Helen Tilghman Gordon (William), of Keene, Virginia; her son, Richard C. Tilghman, Jr. (Beverly), also of Wye House; her grandchildren, Elizabeth Lloyd Tilghman and John A.S. Tilghman, Jr., both of Baltimore, MD, William S. Gordon, Jr. (Charlotte Lee), who also lives at the Wye House, Mary Donnell Gordon Montague (Carter) of Schyler, VA, Charles C. T. Gordon (Josie) of Keene, VA, and Chip Tamplin, III, of Annapolis, MD; and five great-grandchildren. In addition to Mrs. Tilghman's husband, Richard

Carmichael Tilghman, MD, she is preceded in death by her daughter, Joanna Lloyd Tilghman, who died in 2011; and son, John A.S. Tilghman, who died in 2007.

Funeral services and burial will be at Wye House, but will be private.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions to Preservation Maryland, 24 West Saratoga Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201.

Cemetery Details

Wye House

Easton, MD

Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Donnell Tilghman*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *Mary Donnell Tilghman*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *Mary Donnell Tilghman*

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM



“ *Mrs. Tilghman was my sixth grade teacher at Elkridge Elementary School in Elkridge, Maryland. I'll never forget her sense of fairness and truth. On one assignment, we were asked to gather leaves from the trees in our yards and label them. My father helped me with mine and one leaf he said was from a Poplar tree. Mrs. Tilghman said it was incorrect -- that it was a Tulip tree -- and I talked to her about it later. I said, "My father is from the country and knows trees and he says it's a Poplar. Mrs. Tilghman went home that evening, checked all her reference books and came back to me the next morning with this comment, "Your father was right ; it is actually a Tulip Poplar !" She was never afraid to admit she was wrong (or partially wrong in this case). She gave me an A for the assignment. I'm 65 years old now and still have fond memories of this incident. She was a great lady and I have never forgotten her. Linda Lou Fox (nee Joy)*

Linda Lou Joy Fox - August 01, 2012 at 08:03 AM

DS

“ Donald Schultz sent a virtual gift in memory of Mary Donnell Tilghman



Donald Schultz - July 30, 2012 at 06:34 PM

NW

“ Nat And Sandy Walton lit a candle in memory of Mary Donnell Tilghman



Nat and Sandy Walton - July 30, 2012 at 07:57 AM