

## John Thomas Shaaff

( - 28 Apr 1819)

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**Shaaff.** On Friday, at his seat in this District, Dr. John T. Shaaff; a Physician of celebrity, and a gentleman of high standing in society. It is seldom that, within so short a space, so many valuable men have been lost to a community as small as ours.

*Will of Dr. John Thomas Shaaff, of Georgetown, D.C. (dtd. Mar. 22, 1819, probated June 9, 1819, Will Book 3)*

Debts due by me as administrator of my late brother Arthur Shaaff to be paid.

To son Arthur Shaaff, chest of plate deposited in the Fredericktown branch bank, gold watch chain and seals; gold sleeve buttons, gold headed cane, all books and arms that belonged to my late brother Arthur Shaaff.

To son John Thomas Shaaff, my gold watch chain and seals; my gold headed cane; gold sleeve buttons, my medical library, and surgical instruments.

To wife Mary Shaaff, my carriage and pair of bay horses, my coachman Paul, a slave for life and the breakfast service of plate now in use.

Residue to be equally divided between six children: Margaretta Jane Shaaff, Arthur Shaaff, Ann Shaaff, Mary Shaaff, Chas. Sydebotham Shaaff and John Thos. Shaaff.

It is my will that Plato, the confidential servant of my late brother should be manumitted and set at free liberty at the period my son Arthur Shaaff arrives at age, and receive \$100 as a mark of my respect for his integrity and good conduct.

Exrs.: Mary Shaaff, wife; friends Roger Brooke Taney, of Fredericktown, Md., and William Marbury, of Georgetown, D.C.

Wits.: Mary Hillim; N.W. Worthington; F.S. Key

### *History of the Medical Society of D.C., 1811-1909*

Born 1753, Frederick Co., Md. Probably not M.D.; Licentiate Med. And Chirurg. Faculty, Md. Incorporator of the Medical Society under the first charter. Died April 28, 1819. One of the founders of the Med. And Chirurg. Faculty; its Treasurer, 1799-1801; member of "Governor's Council" of Maryland, 1798-1800. Said to have been an alumnus of Univ. of Edinburgh, Scotland. Married Mary Sydebotham, of Bladensburg, Md., June 29, 1807, a public meeting was held at Annapolis, to denounce the attack of the British Frigate "Leopard" upon the U.S. Ship "Chesapeake," on June 22d off Norfolk, and to "support such measures as should be adopted by the Government." Dr. Shaaff was one of a committee of twelve, including the Governor of the State, "to carry out the resolutions." See Cordell's Med. Annals of Maryland, 1903, p. 564.

Castle, Guy, *"Life in Georgetown, 1819-1841, as Told in the Personal Correspondence of Ann Shaaff,"* Columbia Historical Society Records, 1960-62, pp.75-79.

The head of the Shaaff family, Dr. John T. Shaaff, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh, died in 1819 and was described by the Daily National Intelligencer as "a physician of celebrity and a gentleman of high standing in society."

Arthur, one of Ann's brothers, married Mary Forsyth, daughter of Senator John Forsyth of Georgia who was Secretary of State in both the Jackson and Van Buren Cabinets. The three sons of this marriage—John, Arthur, and Francis Key Shaaff—served as officers of the Confederate States Army.

Ann's sisters also married well. Mary became the second wife of Andrew Stevenson, Speaker of the House of Representatives for years and American Minister to the Court of Queen Victoria. Jane married John Johns who served a period as President of William and Mary College and was the Episcopalian Bishop of Virginia. During the Civil War Johns gave spiritual comfort to wounded and dying Southern soldiers on the battlefields.

...Ann herself never married.