



Times Photo by Brice Stump

HE ATE HERE. Mary Murphey owner of the Washington Hotel in Princess Anne holds a late 18th-century ledger noting charges for food and drink for Levin Winder. The hotel, an inn then, was the center for political and social discussions, and Winder even celebrated an election victory there.

Artist's notes reveal estate visits

By **BRICE STUMP**
Daily Times Staff Writer

The names of the many influential people of the day that came to Gov. Levin Winder's Bloomsbury estate to be entertained are not known, and there is no description of the plantation by visitors.

Doubtless they were impressed with the stately tree-lined lane leading to the mansion of the governor and his family. The spacious

lawn was accented with brick walks and perhaps even fountains as suggested in portraits of Winder and his wife painted in 1793.

Thanks to detailed notes left by famed Colonial artist Charles Wilson Peale, we know he was a guest at Bloomsbury.

According to Charles Coleman Sellers in his book *Portraits and Miniatures by Charles Wilson Peale*, "Peale dined with Col. Winder at Winder's plantation in Princess Anne,

Somerset County, on Aug. 10, 1791, and the Col. furnished him with letters of introduction to neighboring gentlemen who might desire his services.

From his own notes Peale said "As Col. Winder had a portrait in miniature of mine or my brother's painting which was damaged, I set to work to repair it and spent the remainder of the day very busily." The miniature is unlocated.

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Notes reveal visits

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It is also interesting to note that Levin Winder entered Revolutionary Service as a first lieutenant under Nathaniel Ramsay, Peale's brother-in-law.

Bits and pieces of Winder history are still to be found in Somerset County. At the famed Washington Hotel in Princess Anne, owner and operator Mary Murphey has a ledger she found tucked in an upstairs

closet almost 50 years ago and it lists business entries of the late 18th century. In the late 1700s the Washington Hotel was an inn, and the owner operated a tavern or inn, and in the late 18th century Winder frequented the establishment.

An entry in 1789 records his debts for entertaining friends to a "treat after election" and later for dinner and horse feed.

The inn is just a few miles from Winder's home, but was a central place for his friends to meet