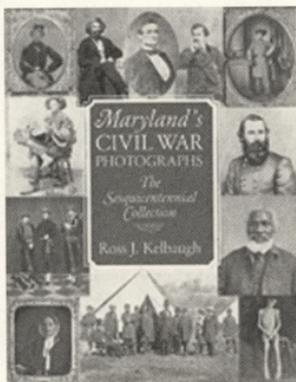


MARYLAND
Historical Magazine



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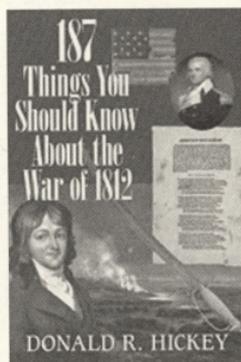
THE PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE continues its stalwart support of Maryland Historical Society books with the funding of two titles during this season of commemorating the sesquicentennial of the Civil War and the bicentennial of the War of 1812.



Ross J. Kelbaugh, *Maryland's Civil War Photographs: The Sesquicentennial Collection*, is a vast photographic record of the people, places, and events surrounding the war. It is also the largest collection of original Maryland-related Civil War photographs ever published.

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These books are numbers five and six of the Friends of the Press titles, continuing the society's mission to bring forth the best new Maryland history. We invite you to become a supporter, to follow the path first laid out with the society's founding in 1844. Help us fill in the unknown pages of Maryland's past for future generations. Become, quite literally, an important part of Maryland history. If you would like to make a tax-deductible gift to the Friends of the Press, please direct your gift to Development, Maryland Historical Society, 201 W. Monument Street, Baltimore, MD, 21201. For additional information on MdHS publications, contact Patricia Dockman Anderson, Editor, 410-685-3750 x317, or pdanderson@mdhs.org.



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Cover

Inauguration Day, 1881

George Washington knew that more important than his own inauguration as the first president of the United States was whether future leaders of the new nation could transfer power peacefully from one administration to the next. Striking cordiality defined the 2013 ceremony, in stark contrast to the depressing campaign tactics that defined much of the race. The respect and solemnity that defined Barack Obama's second inauguration embodies the ultimate triumph of that once-daring experiment in democracy.

This dance card from President James Abram Garfield's inaugural celebration—one of sixty pieces of political ephemera stolen from the Maryland Historical Society library in July 2011 and ultimately recovered—reminds us that transitions of power are inherently dangerous. On July 2, 1881, not quite four months after his inauguration, which followed another hard-fought campaign, Garfield was shot by Charles J. Guiteau, a deranged and disappointed office-seeker. He died on September 19, 1881.

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“Liberty to Them Is as Sweet as It Is to Me”: Slave Life in Allegany County, Maryland, 1789–1864

CONSTANCE M. MCGOVERN

On Tuesday, January 2, 1838, thirty-eight-year-old Eliza Kinner became a free woman. That same wintry day, Benjamin Tomlinson appeared in the Allegany County courthouse in Cumberland, Maryland, to record Eliza's deed of manumission. Her two youngest children, Henrietta, four years old, and Maria Elizabeth, a babe in arms at four months, were also freed. For Eliza, though, the day was one of mixed blessings. Five other children remained enslaved. Worse, when Tomlinson died the following September, Samuel Kinner, thirteen years old, went on the auction block, where a Cumberland innkeeper bought the rest of his thirteen-year term. The husband of Tomlinson's granddaughter bought ten-year-old Susan's sixteen-year term. Tomlinson's daughter Mary purchased Mary Ann, age eleven. James Henry, age six, and Zephaniah, nine, had been apprenticed out earlier to two different masters in nearby villages.¹

Benjamin Tomlinson was a slave master, Revolutionary War veteran, and owner of “Rural Felicity,” his farm located five miles north of Cumberland. Known for being “highly intelligent” and of “sterling character and pure life,” he clearly had decided to free all of his slaves who had reached the age of twenty-six. He set terms for the five Kinner children and another young slave, Peter Green, all of whom would be free when they reached that age. On the same day in January and in the same act, Edward, Camba, and Henry Purdy, all siblings and all over twenty-six, gained their freedom.²

Twenty years earlier, Tomlinson had seen slavery as a far more enduring institution. In 1818, out of “love and affection,” he had sold to his daughter Drusilla his thirty-one-year-old slave Perry for a token five dollars. He had also encouraged his friends to sell several of their slaves to Drusilla's husband, a slaveholder in Mississippi. Whether a last lingering illness, economic pragmatism, or some humanitarian sentiment influenced him, his change of heart significantly altered the lives of his remaining slaves, releasing some from bondage but not before they had experienced the isolation, family disruption, and insecurity that marked the lives of slaves in

Constance M. McGovern, Professor Emerita of History at Frostburg State University, is the author of Masters of Madness: Social Origins of the American Psychiatric Profession and of several journal articles on gender, class, and race in psychiatric practices.

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after the 1st day of February 1832 and shewed by the last Will & Testament of the aforesaid Benjamin Tomlinson having date on the 28th day of September 1808 Gustavus Deall & deo. Kellory & Andrew Pearce were appointed & selected and on the 27th April 1809 the Orphans Court of Allegany County and State of Maryland ordered that Gustavus Deall and deo. Kellory surviving Executors of Benjamin Tomlinson deceased sell at Public Sale the unexpired term of servitude of the said Susan Renner on giving Ten days previous notice and the said Gustavus Deall & deo. Kellory surviving Executors a fortnight after giving the Notice requires by the aforesaid Order did proceed to sell on the 5th day of May 1809 the above named Negro Girl named Susan Renner and Alexander King became the purchaser thereof Now know all men by these presents that the said Gustavus Deall & deo. Kellory surviving Executors of Benjamin Tomlinson deceased for and in consideration of the sum of Three hundred & forty dollars current money to them in hand paid by the said Alexander King the notes and for more than one year last past had been a bona fide resident of the State of Maryland and the receipt whereof they doth hereby acknowledge both bargained and sold appraised and transferred by these presents doth Benjamin sell appra and lease for unto the said Alexander King his Executors Administrators and assigns all the said deceased right and Interest in and to the said Negro Girl Susan Renner for one during the period or term of servitude that is to say from the 5th day of May 1809 to the 1st day of February 1834 which will be fourteen years and nine months and twenty three days to have and to hold all the right and interest of them the said Gustavus Deall and deo. Kellory surviving Executors as aforesaid in and to the said Negro Girl Susan Renner for and during the aforesaid term of servitude and hereby bargained and sold to the said Alexander King his Executors Administrators and assigns In Witness whereof the said Gustavus Deall & deo. Kellory surviving Executors as aforesaid the Grantors and Alexander King the grantee have hereunto subscribed their names and affixed their seals this 15th day of May 1809

G. Deall 
 D. Kellory 
 A. King 

Witness

State of Maryland. Allegany County to wit. Be it remembered that on this 15th day of May 1809 before the Subscriber a Justice of the peace in and for the County and State aforesaid personally appears Gustavus Deall and deo. Kellory the grantors and Alexander King the grantee mentioned in the foregoing Bill of Sale or instrument of Writing and who is personally known to me and he acknowledges the same to be their act & deed for the purposes therein mentioned according to the true intent and meaning thereof and the acts of Assembly in such cases made and provided acknowledged before me

J^r M. Carlton

At the request of Mary Tomlinson this Bill of Sale was recorded May 1809 Whereas Benjamin Tomlinson of Allegany County in the State of Maryland has by deed of Manumission bearing date on the 2^d day of January 1808 deceased acknowledged and recorded according to Law doth desire and did free his Negro Man named Peter Green who was born on the 3^d day of October 1771 and to take effect after the 5th day of October 1812 and his Negro Girl named Mary Ann Renner (who was born on the 15th day of December 1802) to take

Upon Tomlinson's death several months later executors of his estate sold the children. (Maryland State Archives.)

Allegany County. Nowhere else in the state were the slaveholdings so small, the people so scattered, or the sales so frequent.³

Allegany County (which until 1872 included Garrett County) is nestled in the Appalachian Mountains in far western Maryland. It shared a long border with the free state of Pennsylvania yet was perched atop a part of slave-owning western Virginia that was similarly frontier-like and rugged. The mountainous, rocky terrain still harbored bear and wolf dens when the county was created in 1789; the growing season was short and the winters severe. Along the county's southern border flowed the northern branch of the Potomac, navigable as far as Cumberland. At the first census in 1790, fewer than five thousand people had scattered themselves over some twelve hundred square miles; by 1860, their ranks had slowly grown to 28,000.⁴

From Sideling Hill in the east to Keyser's Ridge and beyond, pioneers first followed the promise of profit from the heavily forested military lots and then stayed for the farming, transportation, and mining opportunities. They cleared the land, established farms and mills, and built taverns and inns as the construction of the National Road began in 1811. The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad arrived in Cumberland in 1842 and the locks of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal in 1850. In the Georges Creek area near Frostburg, iron foundries flourished early and coal mines boomed once the railroad reached the county. Wheat farming dominated, although some farmers switched to growing tobacco when prices rose for a time in the 1840s. Bankers, lawyers, mercantile store proprietors, wagon makers, blacksmiths, stone masons, coopers, and livery stable operators gathered in Cumberland and Frostburg, as well as in smaller villages such as Old Town, Selbysport, Flintstone, and Lonaconing. Some relied on slave labor.⁵

Slavery had long reigned in Maryland by the time the earliest settlers trekked into Allegany County. Although the status of the first Africans to arrive on the shores of the Chesapeake had remained ambiguous for a time, by the middle of the seventeenth century tobacco had transformed Maryland into a solidly slave society. Plantations, some of them large, and a ruling class of slave owners defined Maryland for the next century or so. But as the demand for tobacco declined and the constitutional ban on slave importation took effect early in the nineteenth century, the economic and social foundations of Maryland shifted as well. The state grew to occupy more of a "middle ground," and much of it evolved into a society with slaves rather than a slave society. While southern Maryland clung to its tobacco and slave culture, Baltimore, quartering far more free people of color than slaves, became an "island of freedom." On the Eastern Shore and in northern and central Maryland, grain production and industry replaced tobacco, and a diversified seasonal workforce supplanted an enslaved one. Many Maryland planters, caught up in this agricultural revolution, salvaged their financial status by exporting their surplus slaves to the Deep South, creating a "Second Middle Passage" for tens of thousands of bondpeople. Others manumitted loyal servants, hired them out, or promised freedom at some future



Remote mountainous Allegany County held the smallest number of enslaved people in Maryland. Detail, Dennis Griffith, *Map of the State of Maryland*, 1794 [1795]. (Maryland Historical Society.)

date. Slave life in Maryland not only changed over time but also varied from region to region.⁶

The number of slaves in Allegany County was always small: 818 at most in 1830 in a total population of 10,000 or so. At slavery's height in the county, only one in six households (16.5 percent) ever included slaves. Slavery was on the decline in Allegany County even then; by 1860, slaves numbered only in the six hundreds and the percentage of slaveowning households had dropped to less than one in twenty (4.5 percent). That was far fewer than any other region in the state or even in the rest of Appalachia where a third of farmers owned slaves. Slaves constituted only 7 percent of the population of this far western county in 1830, whereas between 20 and 44 percent of the populations of the Eastern Shore and southern Maryland were slaves. In Washington County, immediately east of Allegany and most similar in economic and social characteristics, the slave population was triple that of Allegany, making up 11 percent of that county's population.⁷

The small size of slaveholdings dictated the nature of slave life in Allegany County. No slaveholder there ever owned even twenty-five slaves, and in 1830, two-thirds of them held fewer than five. Indeed, however one measures, Alleganians held the fewest slaves in the smallest numbers of any county in Maryland. Elsewhere the story was quite different. On the tobacco plantations in Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties, the median slave-holding was fifteen and on the Eastern shore,

eleven. But, in Allegany County, by far the largest number of slaveowning households (30 to 40 percent across the decades) contained a single slave living alone in the master's family.⁸

Relative isolation was one of the hallmarks of slave life in Allegany County. Indeed, Eliza Kinner's two young boys served apprenticeships in which each was the sole slave in his master's family and removed by several miles from his mother and siblings. Even two or three slaves in a household gave little respite from a sense of isolation. Nearly a third of Allegany's slave masters owned just an enslaved mother with a young child or two, and it was not uncommon to find a child under sixteen as the sole slave. They and other slaves living alone with a slaveholder's family experienced little or none of the emotional satisfaction of daily, weekly, or even monthly contact with family or relatives.⁹

Local chroniclers claim slavery in Allegany County to have been of the "mild and humane" type. Yet when they note that the "McHenry, Drane, Brooks, Lynn and Ridgeley negroes gathered" together and "joy was unconfined" as the "valley rang with music and laughter," they ignore the fact that an overwhelming number of these slaves had no kin with whom to gather and that others met only during the Christmas holidays. Even then they trekked up and down mountainsides across the ten to twenty miles between Buffalo Marsh, Accident, and the Glades, often facing howling winds and shifting snowdrifts. Residing in the most remote and sparsely settled region of the state and traversing the roughest terrain offered major obstacles to many a slave who sought the companionship of friends or family. Living in a territory of the smallest slaveholdings not only exacerbated that loneliness but distorted the very nature of family life—a second hallmark of slave life in Allegany County.¹⁰

Even before Benjamin Tomlinson's death, Eliza Kinner had experienced the vagaries of a slave's family life in Allegany County. Historians differ as to whether slaveholders encouraged slave families, purposefully disrupted them, or created them for their own economic reasons, but in Allegany County slaves confronted overwhelming odds against preserving a nuclear family. Eliza's seven children were enslaved; her two youngest boys already lived in distant households as they served their apprenticeships, and following Tomlinson's death each of her remaining five children had a different master or mistress. Eliza's husband undoubtedly had lived nearby (she bore her children at less than two-year intervals), but he was not part of the Tomlinson or Kinner household. Maintaining her family, rearing her children, and enjoying the company of her spouse were luxuries hard to come by for a slave woman anywhere in the South but especially in Allegany County, Maryland.¹¹

In Appalachia outside of Allegany County, where smaller slaveholdings also prevailed, nearly one-third of the slaves lived in two-parent households. In Allegany County, however, of the fifty-seven identifiable families in will inventories (eighty-seven people among 921 noted in those inventories), only eleven included husbands or fathers in the same household. More strikingly, those fifty-seven fami-

lies were themselves in the minority. For slaves who lived in the hinterlands beyond Cumberland or Frostburg, life in even a one-parent household was rare. Most slaves in Allegany County lived in households where they had no apparent connection to those with whom they resided. Two or three children under the age of fifteen (sometimes as young as three and five) with no adult black, slave or free, was a common configuration, as was that of a couple of young teenagers, or an elderly slave with a twenty-year-old. A father who lived some distance from his children skewed family life seriously enough; the absence of any parent at all created an emotional vacuum. Such household arrangements were endemic in this county of very small slaveholdings, but even more disruptive for those who managed to nurture family connections were other ways in which Allegany County slaveholders put their slaves' family life in jeopardy.¹²

Porous borders and speculative ventures coalesced to create an especially precarious environment for Allegany County slaves and their families. Profits and the need for labor drove many a slaveholder who owned property on both sides of the Potomac. Although Maryland had banned the importation of slaves in the late eighteenth century, the legislature exempted those who had inherited or married into slave properties in Virginia. They had only to register their Virginia slaves at the county court house in Maryland and refrain from selling those slaves for three years. Some circumvented the law. Fielding Shepherd, for one, attested that he had brought five slaves from Virginia "for my own use and for no other purpose," yet one month later he put up three of them for collateral to purchase a store in Oldtown. The court not only ignored his violation of the law (the ban on slave sales for three years) but also facilitated the rapid displacement of Lucinda, Daniel, and Caroline from master to master.¹³

The McCarty's of Black Oak Bottom near Oakland in the far western part of the county, on the other hand, were more scrupulous. Nevertheless, needing to staff their farms, horse-breeding establishments, iron foundries, salt factory, and mercantile outlets, they took full advantage of the law and duly listed the slaves they transported across the state line. Edward McCarty Sr. alone over three decades transferred fifty-five of his slaves from Hampshire County, Virginia, to Allegany County, Maryland, and back several times. At his death, although he had sold some eleven slaves to his son Isaac and others, he scattered his remaining forty slaves among his five children. Isaac eventually manumitted all his slaves "as circumstances permitted" and migrated to the free state of Iowa in the 1850s. Meanwhile he and his father not only had accepted a "negro woman slave" as payment for a debt but also sent off Sarah, Rebecca, and Harriet, ages eleven, five, and one, as collateral for their own debt. The McCarty's provided well for their slaves—Edward had hired John Shoemaker to make shoes for them, for instance—but still uprooted those slaves and their families as their labor needs changed and as their fortunes waxed and waned.¹⁴

Eli Swearingen was no different. In July 1833 he moved Charles Swather from

Virginia to Maryland, leaving behind Swather's wife and two sons, William and Washington. Later that year, he reunited the family in Maryland, but in the ensuing years relocated them back to his home in Frederick County, Virginia. In 1839, Swearingen once again interrupted the family life of the Swathers. He brought Washington, who was just ten at the time, and William, fourteen, back into Maryland, justifying his action by declaring that they "were born as slaves" and were "children of the family [of] negroes" whose ancestors the Swearingens "had held in servitude for more than forty years."¹⁵

The disregard for the disruption they wrought in their servants' lives as they tore apart parents and children, moving them from property to property across the border, was matched only by the heedless way in which they secured loans with human collateral. Over the course of half a century the fever of land speculation raged as road, railroad, and canal building enticed the more opportunistic, and the expansion of mining lured other entrepreneurial risk-takers. Many of these fortune hunters owned slaves and gave little thought to the havoc they wreaked when offering their slaves as collateral. The dollar value of the slave drove the bargain. In one 1813 deal, the seller of a 997-acre tract called Piney Plains asked five dollars an acre. The buyer, short on cash, translated the value of his slave Susan and three of her children at a price that would cover at least \$1,000 of his debt. He gave little or no consideration to the several miles he would put between Susan and her other children, nor did other speculators reflect upon the emotional burdens they placed upon their slave family members as a parent or child was shuffled from the household of one businessman to another.¹⁶

Several other entrepreneurial pioneers of Allegany County, the Bealls, Bevanes, Lamars, and Twiggs among them, regularly used their human chattel to garner similar capital profits and guarantee debt arrangements. Cumberland residents David Lynn, Roger Perry, and William McMahon, all prominent businessmen and politically active, endorsed notes for one another, altering the lives of twenty-three slaves in the course of a two-day transaction. On average, one in five slave sales in Allegany County involved transferring slaves to one's creditors as collateral for the debt incurred. When debts went unpaid, slaves suffered. Sometimes their conveyance was informal, other times more wrenching, as when the local constable "did seize and take" the slave of Charles Worthington to offer him "at public sale to the highest bidder" because Worthington had reneged on his debt. Stephen, Worthington's unfortunate slave, was the father of two young children left behind.¹⁷

Other slave children in this part of western Maryland often suffered as a consequence of their owners' risky land dealings. They simply had no defense against the foibles of their owners or their financial machinations. They were not safe from the horrors and humiliations of the public sale, or from the fears and uncertainties of the more private sale. The local sheriff "seized as servants," separated from their father, advertised, and sold to the highest bidder the seven- and five-year-old sons

of Charles Graham when Nathaniel Slicer, farmer and hotelkeeper, did not meet his debt obligations. Henry Kemp, another debtor, put up for collateral among other items a black horse, a cow, bedsteads and bedding, washstands, some greenware, a buggy and harness, two clocks, and three slave youths. By the time of his death in the mid-1850s, he was "an insolvent debtor" whose estate was auctioned at a public sale, all chattels "conveyed . . . for the benefit of his creditors." The three slave children, John, Maria, and Elizabeth, were on that selling block. Clearly, when local folklorists reveled in stories about the Hoye children frolicking in the local swimming hole with the Hoye slaves as a sign of their benevolence, they ignored how slave children as young as five years old commonly faced private sale or public auction.¹⁸

Whether on the auction block as chattel mortgage in a highly speculative market, or swapped about as laborers on either side of the Potomac, Allegany County slaves not only had to cope with exceptional hurdles to preserving their families but daily faced a life of uncertainty and instability familiar to all slaves throughout the South. The instability of their lives intensified when masters sold children away from their mothers, when they freed mothers but delayed manumission of their children, sometimes for decades, and when they themselves died intestate.

Most slaveholders in Allegany County kept mothers, infants, and children under the age of four together when transacting their business in human bondage, but few had qualms about seizing older children from the arms of their parents. Sometimes siblings were sold together, as were Howard and George Johnson, five and six respectively. At other times a child might be sold with her mother in an initial sale and then shifted off by herself as was the case with Jane, the four-year-old daughter of Cinny, slave of John Scott. Scott had sold Cinny, her infant Martha, and Jane to Benjamin Brown; the next day Brown turned around and sold the child Jane back to Scott, without her mother or sister. John Moritz's young slave Thomas, just five in 1834, had been sold three times by the time he was nine. Rachel, a teen-aged servant had two different masters within the space of five months. None of these children were depicted as "turbulent slaves," a legal characterization that would have allowed their owners to cast them into the domestic slave market because of their disorderly behavior; they all remained and worked in Allegany County but were shuffled about to meet the needs of their various masters. In areas of the South where slaveholdings were larger, owners regularly recognized slave marriages and kept children with their parents, even if for their own pragmatic reasons of facilitating food distribution or discouraging discontent. Not so in Allegany County.¹⁹

The practice of freeing an adult parent, usually the mother, at a stated age (twenty-two, twenty-eight, and thirty were favored milestones) and then providing for the children to be liberated at the same age caused a similar kind of havoc and insecurity. Although Maryland law effectively prohibited the manumission of children when legislators required that a freed black be "able to work and gain a sufficient maintenance, or livelihood," slave owners also often delayed such manumissions

to compensate themselves for the cost of rearing those children. Few slaveholders recognized the cruelty involved; mothers certainly valued their own freedom but their children served for decades before they cast off their shackles. Moreover, those children were not protected from the slave marketplace. Eliza Kinner and her children again are a case in point. Tomlinson had freed her in 1838, just a few months before his death. Still, her eldest, Samuel, was sold and not to be free until 1851. The terms of Mary Ann, Susan, Zephaniah, and James Henry were sold, too, and they remained enslaved until their twenty-sixth birthdays.²⁰

Untold numbers of slaves were also shifted about when an early or unexpected death occurred. In a remote area like Allegany County with a widely scattered population, many slaveholders wrote wills only as death loomed, and others simply never made it to the county courthouse. An owner who died intestate left his or her slaves at the mercy of the court-appointed executors. The slaves of someone like John Morrison, who ran a gristmill in Barton and owned twenty-four slaves in at least two distinct two-parent families, might have expected some assurance of stability. Yet when Morrison died intestate in 1834 his executors immediately sold three young people from each of those families to six different local slave masters. The youngest of those slave siblings, Vincent Bruce, was just nine years old. In another case, not unusual, William Sanford's son sold three of his adult slaves to three different owners, including the mother of two children. One, an eight-year-old girl, went to a fourth slaveholder and her brother, a four-year-old boy, to yet another stranger.²¹

Of the 207 Allegany County slaveholders who died between 1794 and 1864, nearly half died intestate. Each slave of an intestate owner faced an uncertain future—imminent sale gave rise to the anguish of leaving behind whatever few friends, family, or kin they had and the anxiety of confronting a new master or mistress. Written wills or not, neither the integrity of the slave family nor any stability of life were concerns of a slaveholder's heirs. Whatever the motivation for sale on the part of the slaveholder, it was the very act of the sale itself, indeed of any sale, that "gnawed at the heart of slave life" in the South and especially in far western Maryland. The confluence of financial risk-taking, flukes of geography, and high numbers of intestate deaths yielded a far higher rate of sales than in any other county in the state, creating an unusual instability of life for slaves in Allegany County.²²

Allegany slaveholders placed their slaves in far more jeopardy far more often than did their fellow Marylanders. At some time in their lives, more than a third of Allegany County slaves stood in public squares or private yards "with strange hands probing every crack and crevice of their bodies" as they awaited sale. In the rest of the state in the 1830s (at the very height of the domestic slave trade), for instance, only 10–14 percent of slaves faced the auction block. Thus, when Alleganians profess, "slaves in the county were well treated and very seldom sold unless 'they became vicious or got to stealing,'" they are simply wrong.²³

Unlike elsewhere in the state and in Virginia, most recorded sales in this part

of western Maryland were not only intrastate but intra-county. Alleganians usually sold their slaves to one another. They did not participate in the domestic slave market that sent those tens of thousands of enslaved Marylanders to the Deep South's cotton, rice, and hemp plantations. George Newman's slave Jerome, though, did not know that, nor did he know that slaveholders throughout the Upper South used the threat of selling slaves "for the Georgia market" more as a way to manage their slaves' behavior than as any plan of action. Thus, when Newman tried to extract more work from Jerome by threatening sale to Georgia, Jerome fled to Pennsylvania. There he passed as a white person, prospered, and returned fifty years later to dine with his unsuspecting former master. Others were less bold, or far less intimidated by such threats. They were, however, sold in the local marketplaces, conveyed by inheritances, or shifted about as laborers—all within county borders. But these local sales were no petty transactions, nor were they occasional. Such dislocations made life frustrating and unstable, tore families and communities asunder, uprooted individuals, and wrenched young children from their parents.²⁴

Between 1820 and 1850, one of every two bondspersons in Allegany County had their lives changed deliberately or capriciously. They were the slaves whom masters moved back and forth between Virginia and Maryland, whom owners conveyed to their heirs, and whose masters entered their sales on the public record. This is a tremendous undercounting, of course. Some slaves were simply transferred from family member to family member with no official recording of the transactions. Moreover, since there were no restrictions about the number of times a slaveholder might move slaves back and forth across that Maryland-Virginia border once the owner had registered the slave for the first time, these and other slaves surely experienced multiple, and uncountable, disruptions in their lives. Clearly, no slave could count on continuity in his daily life or tranquility in her family relations in Allegany County. The impact on others in their families and in the slave communities loomed even larger, for at any moment slave owners could easily destroy the tenuous kin and communal connections slaves worked so hard to maintain.

Living in isolation, in the company of a few fellow farmhands, or surrounded by others in Cumberland, in the coal mining towns of Georges Creek, or in the thriving inns on the National Road, Allegany County slaves lived with the peculiar isolation and nearly daily uncertainties of the local slave market. The harshness of slavery as practiced in the county, then, lay in the plight of the single slave in a household often separated by miles and mountains from the next farm, in the turmoil created in a family when a small slaveholder transacted a sale, and in the propensity of Allegany County slave owners to move or sell their slaves among themselves, sometimes repeatedly, at unparalleled rates.

Yet few owners in Allegany questioned the peculiar institution or the way it was practiced in their county. Some had arrived from a culture already steeped in slavery, others quickly acclimated themselves to an enslaved work force. Emigrating

from Scotland and Ireland, men such as Upton Bruce, John Trimble, Patrick Hamill, and John Lynn fell comfortably into using slave labor to clear their fields, cook their meals, and harvest their crops. Andrew Shriver, arriving from Germany, and Peter Devecom from France also quickly adapted to native Marylanders' use of slavery. Samuel Jamison, James Drane, and Samuel Semmes had moved west from the tobacco plantations of southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore, bringing with them their slaves and a long tradition of human bondage. By mid-nineteenth century, the Slicers, Robinettes, and McKaigs boasted of at least three generations of slaveholding in this western mountain region.²⁵

Whatever their origins, these slave owners carried with them attitudes that allowed brutality and degradation. The practice of identifying a slave simply by a given name, for instance, at once infantilized and dehumanized the person addressed. As Ira Berlin and others have ascertained, early slaveholders replaced their slaves' African names with European diminutives such as Jack, Sukey, Cato, or names from the Bible. Alleganians used Priss, Chloe, Bob, and Jim or Moses, Abraham, Rebecca, and Hagar. Replacing African names and eliminating surnames all together allowed slaveholders to obliterate their slaves' lineage and adulthood. While Berlin suggests that slave surnames did reemerge over the course of the eighteenth century and became widespread by the 1810s in most of the South, no such pattern developed so early in Allegany County. By the nineteenth century few traces of African names remained, but far more demeaning was the way slave owners ignored any American-acquired surnames for their slaves. Not until 1830 did even 10 percent of all the slaves mentioned in Allegany County land records (records that document thousands of sales, manumissions, interstate transfers, and certificates of freedom) include surnames. On the eve of the Civil War, more than half still stood on the record without a family name. Even those who liberated their slaves frequently called them by only a given name in manumission deeds, leaving one last insult on the official record of their freedom.²⁶

That kind of humiliation, perhaps, loomed less large in a slave's life than did the constant threat of punishment that arose from a deep disregard for the humanity of one's chattel. Allegany County had its share of heartless slaveholders. One Ryan's Glade farmer, Alexander Smith, once tied a young slave girl to a tree, "salted his cattle around the tree to attract the flies," and left her there overnight. In the morning she was bloodied from rubbing against the tree bark trying to ward off the insects. Smith was not an exception. "Queer Aunt Betsy" Hoye, after being thwarted by her father from eloping with a British sailor, lived in a log cabin and "tortured her slaves to hear them howl, pinching them with hot fire tongs." She is also said to have "pok[ed] to death with a broom stick a little negro boy who brought her meals to her room." Samuel Williams, upon his escape to the North, reported that in the house of his mistress the servants "were treated worse than dogs." When Samuel Cessna, proprietor of the Highland Hall House on the National Road, grew enraged at one

of his slaves for insulting his wife, he "proceeded to dispatch the negro without ceremony." A Cumberland jury quickly acquitted Cessna of murder, "public sentiment very generally acquiescing in the verdict of the jury." These anecdotes suggest that Allegany County slaves did not escape the brutality of the whip (or fire tong), or the humiliation of public exposure. Slave narratives attest that such practices were widespread. It seems that many other Allegany County slave owners, as they moved west, brought with them the same familiar methods of slave management.²⁷

Not every slave owner in the county was heartless or indifferent to the plight of servants, and a handful of slaves benefited from the munificence of their owners. Among the more generous were Philip Bray of Kitzmiller, who gave land and livestock to the five children of "Black Polly" Galloway; Joseph Robinette, who bequeathed ten acres of land in Flintstone as well as a house, livestock, tools, and cash to his six freed slaves; and William Moore, who provided shares of his real estate to all his former slaves and their children. Even more notably, Catherine Calmes of Frostburg freed all her slaves at her death, buying the sister of one of them first to keep the family intact, granted them \$100 to \$200 each, gave them two houses on Water Street, and arranged for assistance if they wanted it from the local Methodist Episcopal church. She explained, "I do not wish, from the long and deliberate conviction of my own heart and judgment, to leave this world with a servant—or servants . . . in bondage." "Liberty to them," she wrote, "is as sweet as it is to me."²⁸

But it was not the documented brutality or the benevolence of a few owners that determined how most Allegany County slaves lived their lives, nor did isolation, instability, or imminent family disruption alone define them. Slaves gained some degree of leverage from the early lack of enthusiasm for an enslaved work force among Alleganians, as well as from their shifting attitudes toward slavery itself and their disinclination to share the fervor of abolitionists or colonizers.

Although slavery flourished in the rest of Appalachia and the Deep South, it flagged in Allegany County. Indeed, it had never secured a firm hold there, and as the white population grew, the number of slaveholders and the number of slaves diminished. Slaveholding had rendered no notable class-consciousness among whites, nor had it brought political clout; as sectional conflict loomed, Allegany County grew ever more swathed in Union sentiment. By that time more than four out of five households owned no slaves. Sometimes that was because friends and neighbors expressed discomfort with the practice. Others could not have escaped the political arguments raging around them, or the scuffles that broke out on stagecoaches or in railroad cars. There were, as well, more subtle indications of changing attitudes and the precarious nature of slaveholding, as the lives of the Coddingtons in the westernmost rural area and the Hoyes of bustling, urban Cumberland indicate.²⁹

The three Coddington brothers had migrated from New Jersey in the 1780s and, Revolutionary veterans all, petitioned for military lots in Allegany County. For several decades, they raised large families and farmed successfully using slave labor in

Selbysport. When William died in 1827, he disposed of his slave property, much as his neighbors did at the time, with little regard for slave family unity. He owned Sophia, a thirty-seven-year-old mother, and her eight children. Sophia, her unnamed infant, eleven-year-old May, and sixteen-year-old Het went to his wife, and young Susan to one of his sons. Sophia's other four children, ranging in age from four to fifteen, his executors sold to three different slave owners who lived as close as Selbysport and as far as Frostburg, twenty or more miles to the east. His brothers Samuel and Benjamin lived into the 1840s and their testate arrangements reflected this growing unease with slavery and a sense of its fragility in Allegany County. While instructing his daughters to divide "my servants" to "render satisfaction to each child," Samuel asked that they not sell those slaves outside of their own families "unless for some capital fault." Benjamin also divided his seven slaves among his heirs; his ban on their sale outside of Allegany County was absolute, unlike his brother's more equivocal instructions. He also went a step further than his brothers when he granted all his slaves freedom, but not until the age of forty.³⁰

Even more illustrative of that economic pragmatism and the emerging, somewhat casual, attitude toward owning slaves was John Hoye. As a young man managing his family's considerable landholdings in the Washington, D.C., area, Hoye had blithely bought "a negro servant," William Lovely, and then sold him at a profit as he moved west. Arriving in Cumberland in 1813, he acquired the Dorsey and Roboson families and other slaves who served him and his new wife Mary Calmes as coachmen, cooks, and maids. Adept at land speculation, Hoye purchased property along the routes of the National Road and later the railroad and canal areas, and even had a hand in the development of coal mines in Frostburg. He became known as the "Land King of Allegany County," owning more than fifty thousand acres at the time of his death. As one business rival remarked: "I am sure there is no habitable land on the moon; if there were John Hoye would have patented it."³¹

From 1817 to 1834, Hoye transported slaves across the Potomac, sold others to settle his father's estate, and used slaves as collateral for his own debts. He put other slaves on the market when he found the transactions lucrative, as his sale of young Bill to a Kentucky slaveholder attests. In the mid-1830s, much like Benjamin Tomlinson and Benjamin Coddington, John Hoye had a notable change of heart. In late 1834, he sold one last slave outright. Before selling three others, Hoye transformed their "slave for life" status to term slavery, provided for their sons and daughters to be free in their twenties, and banned any sale of them outside Allegany County. After that, year by year, he manumitted slave after slave. Ten years later, Hoye freed the seventeen slaves he had inherited from his father-in-law and proclaimed that their children "whatever ages they may be[,] by whatever name they may be known or called[,] and wherever they may now be" were also free. At his death, he freed the rest of the Robosons and Lucinda Dorsey, wife of George Dorsey, although their children still had terms to serve.³²



Hoye School, Cumberland. The steps are all that remain of the Mary Hoye School House for African American children. Mary supported the African Missionary Society after her husband's death and released black servants before their terms of service expired. (Photograph by Al Feldstein, courtesy Western Maryland Regional Library.)

John Hoye's widow Mary released Eliza and William Henry Dorsey early from their terms, had only white servants by 1860, and, in the postwar years supported the African Missionary Society and built the Mary Hoye School House for African American Children in Cumberland. Yet her husband had provided that his remaining slaves must reach the age of twenty-two before they attained their freedom and one, Jim, was to remain a slave for life. Much like Benjamin Coddington, he kept tethers on many of his slaves for a number of years. For all their magnanimity toward some of their slaves, neither Benjamin Coddington nor John Hoye was an abolitionist.³³

Indeed, Alleganians, slaveholders or not, held abolitionists "in detestation" according to the local newspaper, the *Alleganian*. When "four men dressed in Quaker garb" visited Cumberland in 1845, for instance, they "excited suspicions by their familiarity" with free and enslaved blacks. Warned to "make their stay short," they left the next day. Methodist agitators were equally scarce. Isaac McCarty, a pillar of St. Paul's in Oakland, had only gradually freed his bondpeople, slave by slave, as it fit his financial needs. Others, who offered religious reasons for freeing their slaves, nevertheless were hardly radicals. James McCarty, a nephew of Isaac's, "for good

cause and especially to be as testimony before God and the world of the injustice and evil of slavery," decided to free his slaves John and Fanny, but he waited a year to do so and deferred their children's freedom. And Garrett McLaughlin, who had inherited the "use, labor, hire and profits" of Jack for a term of fifty years, "from motives of benevolence" freed Jack but not until Jack had labored for McLaughlin for another six years.³⁴

The *Alleganian* kept readers aware of the potential for disruption by activists and wrong-minded enthusiasts, regularly reporting items about abolitionists in other states who duped slaves and threatened the peace of local communities. The editors had only disdain for the "wretched controversy got up by a set of fanatical demagogues of the north about abolition" and regretted the "never ending babbling nonsense uttered in Congress," but they reported no other activities of Quakers, Methodists, or their sympathizers in Allegany County.³⁵

The American Colonization Society received a bit more press once the Maryland legislature lent its support to their venture. Large numbers of free blacks in Maryland (more than in any other state) combined with the Nat Turner uprising in 1831 intensified fears about the incendiary influence of free blacks living among the enslaved. Within months, the House of Delegates incorporated a board of managers, ordered a census of free blacks, and allocated \$200,000 over ten years "to oversee the Removal of Colored People." Yet, though the occasional article about agriculture in Liberia, settlers in Monrovia, or transportation to Africa appeared in the *Alleganian*, when James Reid, the Maryland Colonization Society's, representative, arrived in Hagerstown in neighboring Washington County, he "found many unaware" of the society or its work. No traveling agents were even assigned to Allegany County because it "had too few Negroes and too sparse a white population to make the effort seem worthwhile."³⁶

Those few Alleganians who did show interest in the colonization movement acted irresolutely. One exception was Alexander Smith, that Ryan's Glade slaveholder who had tormented his young slave girl. He met the letter of the law when he promised manumission to all his slaves *only* "on the condition that they shall remove permanently to Liberia in Africa." On the other hand, John Jacob, Helen Bruce, and John Layman let their freed slaves decide whether to remain in Maryland or remove to Liberia. Moreover, none of the slaveholders who registered their manumission deeds with the society ever sent those former slaves to Africa. No one else expressed much interest in sending his or her slaves off either.³⁷

Free or enslaved, county blacks exhibited little interest in uprooting themselves to go to Africa. One traveler, after listening to a lecture about colonization in Hagerstown, explained that "their love for their homes and their suspicions about Liberia will always hinder substantial emigration." Isaac McCarty's slave Bill confirmed that observation. Bill had chosen Maryland over Liberia, telling McCarty: "Marse Isaac, if that was such a good country, would not the white men take it for themselves?"

Colonization simply did not catch on in western Maryland, and by 1840 the society was "moribund" throughout the state.³⁸

Hostility toward abolitionists and apathy about religious enthusiasts and promoters of colonization occurred in part because Allegany County was far removed from more populated seats of agitation. Distance from the centers of power allowed Alleganians to be selective about enforcing laws that did not suit their interests. When in 1860 the House of Delegates prohibited all manumission some, like James Magruder, rushed to free their slaves in the three months before the law was to take effect, and John McCulloh simply defied it when he freed Casian Yorker several months before manumission was restored in 1864.

To most Allegany County slaveholders, laws emanating from Annapolis with a view of regulating the lives of black Marylanders, free or enslaved, were of far less interest than the help they sought in keeping their slaves from absconding northward. As early as 1815, Alleganians had joined petitioners from Washington and Frederick counties in complaining to the legislature that their slaves were escaping to Pennsylvania. They were already deeply involved in devising some strategies that would keep their slaves dutiful, tied to their owners, and loath to escape.³⁹

For escape they did. Allegany County stretched seventy miles along the Mason-Dixon Line, which was a mere seven miles from Cumberland. As John Hope Franklin and Loren Schwenger have demonstrated in their comprehensive study of runaways, rebellious slaves dominated the thoughts of every southern slave owner, and Allegany County slaveholders were no exception. They knew that their slaves thought about escaping, tried to escape, often repeatedly, or succeeded. Some described this propensity to run away as an affliction "to which the negro race is peculiarly subject," and that long border with Pennsylvania was a reality far more stark than for most southern masters.⁴⁰

Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Thomas Henry, and James Pennington escaped Maryland slavery by going north. Others who fled experienced what William Still called "Hardships, Hair-breadth escapes and Death struggles" in "their efforts for Freedom" in his 1872 account, *The Underground Railroad*. Still, whose headquarters were in Philadelphia, reported only one escapee from Allegany County, which is not surprising since county runaways were more likely to have headed for Pittsburgh. Recorded numbers are hard to come by, but hundreds of advertisements about runaways appeared in the local newspapers, and when the federal government finally made a desultory attempt in 1849 to track fugitives, it reported that 279 slaves had escaped from Maryland in that year alone—the largest number of all the slave states. Forty-seven had been recaptured and jailed and others may have died en route, but one out of six remained unaccounted for and were presumably living somewhere in Pennsylvania, Ohio, or Canada.⁴¹

Far western Maryland offered advantages that eased escape for a determined slave. In the Cumberland area the C&O Canal towpath, one of many Underground

Railroad routes verified by historians, provided a direct route into the city where slaves easily mixed with the residents of Shantytown for a time. No one could, or did, distinguish between free or slave in this "roughest, toughest spot along the Canal." Protected by anonymity and able to gain temporary work, fugitives eventually walked the few miles north from the Queen City to Somerset or Bedford, Pennsylvania, and then on to Uniontown and points north and west. In the 1850s, Samuel Denson, who had escaped from Mississippi, and his activist minister at Emmanuel Episcopal Church made the journey easier by ringing a church bell in a special way to signal the waiting slaves that it was safe to begin the next leg of their escape.⁴²

Others set out on their own to help family or friends flee slavery. In 1863, James Harris, a former slave of Joseph Hilleary and whose children and grandchildren were still owned by the Flintstone farmer, Elias Wilson, "hailed a stage coach" with his family aboard and paid their fare to Uniontown, Pennsylvania. He was caught and sent to the state penitentiary, but his plight elicited considerable sympathy from his white neighbors and even from members of the jury. They found that Harris "was guilty of the charge," but, given the circumstances and the "revolutionary character of the times," they voiced "strong sympathy for this victim of paternity & revolution." More than one juror "did not feel like punishing him for what every body else seemed now to be doing."⁴³

Community after community had secret stations and tunnels to aid escapees. Hocking House in Frostburg was one. Farther west in what is now Garrett County, people placed candles in windows to signify the safe routes. John Mathews had runaway Phil cut flax all day, but he fed Phil well and warned him "to go and hide himself behind a basket" so as not to be seen by neighbors on the road. Stephen Willis Friend of Sang Run regularly gave refuge to slaves, loading them into his wagon at night and transporting them across the border. More often than not he was successful, even though his neighbor hunted down fugitives for the rewards.⁴⁴

Awaiting fugitives right across the Pennsylvania line were other sympathetic whites like William Willey of Somerfield and Benjamin Walker of Pleasantville. Willey "aided more fugitive slaves than any other man on the National Road," harboring "as many as eight or ten in a single night." Walker kept fugitives secreted on his property for weeks and, when the opportune moment arrived, mounted his white horse and set out along the road. The fugitives trudged through the woods keeping Walker in sight as they made good their escape. So successful was this ploy that descendants of the Underground Railroad agents in the area remembered, "Never was a slave caught . . . after it passed into Benjamin Walker's hands."⁴⁵

But the southwestern Pennsylvania countryside also had numbers of slave catchers, a "despicable set" who "drank whiskey, chewed tobacco, played cards, and loafed around village taverns," posted handbills and lay in wait for the runaways. Local free black families, determined to thwart their efforts, hid slaves in black enclaves like Baker Alley and Turkey Nest in Uniontown, concealed them under the floorboards

\$25 REWARD.

RAN AWAY from the subscriber living in Cumberland, on Thursday morning, the 31st of January last, a black man named



JERRY,

about 25 years old, of a dark complexion, about 5 feet 5 or 6 inches high, and tolerably well built. He is a tolerable good rough Carpenter—a good cook, and can do almost any kind of farming work: No particular body marks or scars recollected. He took with him a fur Hat, a drab cloth Roundabout, one pair of brown and one of blue cloth Pantaloon. No other clothing particularly recollected.

The above reward of 25 dollars will be given for his apprehension and confinement, so that I can get him again **GEO. DENEEN,**
For **FRED'K BOWER,**
Feb 5, 1833 tf.

Runaway ads such as this one for an enslaved man named Jerry contained detailed physical descriptions. (The Advocate, Cumberland.)

of their homes, and guided the escapees along old Indian trails and through mountain passes to points north.⁴⁶

Slave-catchers made flight desperate. Fugitives did not want to be remanded to slavery, nor did they want to meet the fate of the sixteen-year-old boy from just south of Cumberland whose feet had frozen after the slave catcher had tied them under the horse he was riding. "When his boots were pulled off, the skin and soles of his feet came with them." When three escaped slaves were spotted on the road by the Stone House Inn near Little Meadows, they fractured the skull of an innkeeper and inflicted a "fearful" cut on the face of the local constable who had tried to capture them. Another slave escaping along the route of the National Road,

after feigning compliance, "drew a dirk knife from his pocket, struck it into his pursuer's heart, and made good his escape."⁴⁷

Several Allegany County owners offered rewards in the local newspapers for their absconded servants, although they were more likely to have posted handbills north of the border. Mary Barnes escaped from her owner as he transported her along the Hagerstown Road; Butler Price and Harriet clearly planned their getaway as a twosome; and Thomas Greenwell's two slaves, Adam and Plummer, also had plotted their flight together. Even more daringly, Caleb, George, Israel, and a second George conspired to desert their three different Oldtown masters on the same day. Hundreds of such reports preyed upon the minds of slave owners, and, however unenthusiastically, many were willing to strike deals with more loyal slaves, allowing some to mitigate the loneliness, insecurity, and family dislocation that marked their lives.⁴⁸

Over four decades, 136 slaves walked away free when fifty-eight slave owners manumitted them immediately and without restrictions. As a reward for remaining loyal, many had been promised freedom upon the owner's death. What part any Allegany slave played in seeking out such an agreement is unknowable, but in this land

of single-slave households and very small holdings, individual slaves clearly had far more daily and intimate contact with their masters than slaves on larger plantations. Mary Edwards, who owned three slaves, although two of them were children under the age of ten, manumitted her servant Flora "as a token of her faithful service to me." Levi Hilleary, who owned only one slave at his death, not only freed John but also ordered that his heirs provide John with \$100, a certificate of freedom, and lifetime support in case "by sickness, accident, or old age" John might be "unable to support himself." Nelson, who had belonged to William Ridgeley, received \$500 upon his manumission for "his past good conduct and for his faithful service," and his fellow former slaves, Noble and Grace, gained annuities of \$25 and \$20 each until their deaths.⁴⁹

William Moore devised an even more elaborate scheme to reward his faithful slaves. One of a handful of slave owners to be moved by the Revolutionary spirit, Moore manumitted Amos Harris, his wife, and their eight children in 1792. When Moore penned his will some twelve years later, he arranged for his wife Hannah to "enjoy the whole of his real estate during her natural life," but at her death his former slaves and their children were to receive their share of the profits from the sale of his lands. Still in possession of several slaves when he died in 1805, Moore added those to his list of beneficiaries. Moore's wife lived on for another decade, but his former slaves did not forget his promise. In 1815, James Harris, son of Amos, appeared in court to claim his inheritance, soon to be followed by his brother Samuel and John Waugh, son of Joseph, another Moore slave. The two Harris men and Waugh had bided their time well; James Harris pocketed \$70 in 1815, Waugh received \$200 in 1816, and Samuel Harris \$75 in 1822. Whatever Moore's initial motivation, the sons of his faithful slaves understood that a bargain had been forged and that they were equal collaborators in that bargain and in the eyes of the law.⁵⁰

By the time they claimed their inheritances, the Harrises and Waugh had been free for some years, and thus had some standing in court. Slaves had no such standing, except in the cases that would determine the status of their freedom. Yet, with the help of white sponsors, many an Allegany County slave devised strategies to use the courts to advantage, inserting a small wedge between the absolute authority of the slave owner and the slave's struggle to survive with some modicum of dignity, to say nothing of freedom. "Mulatto Judith," who knew she was the "dau[ghter] of a mulatto woman named Luck who was the dau[ghter] of a free white woman," sued for and attained her freedom in 1795. Robert, Jemima, Lydia, and Lewis, whom Joseph Mounts had claimed were slaves when he indentured them, won their freedom in the courts as well. And London, forty-five years old and "nearly jet black in colour, slow and loud in his speech," but "stout and well proportioned in his limbs," alleged that his previous owner had violated the law when she initially brought him from Virginia to Maryland and kept him beyond the legal limit. With the help of his attorney, Beal Howard, London claimed that his current owner's possession of him was illegal.

The suit spanned several months of testimony and five years of court appearances, including testimony from London himself. Finally, in 1816, London became a free man when a jury, including several slave owners, declared in his favor.⁵¹

Most slaves of course had no such claims to freedom but concocted other strategies to gain concessions from their masters, to lessen the disruptions to their families, or simply to garner relief from the austerity of their lives in Allegany County. Slovenly work, refusals to be abjectly obedient, and prolonged absences were common ploys, but slaves always had to be wary of pushing their masters past irritation to reprisal. The passive resistance Priscilla McKaig experienced when she found her servants "dull and lazy" or slow at their work was inconvenient but not deemed rebellious behavior. Samuel Semmes's slaves, who had worshipped as Roman Catholics along with their master, exhibited a bolder non-compliance. Because a priest refused to baptize one of his slaves, Semmes had left the Catholic congregation in Cumberland and joined the Episcopalians. He paid for the construction of a "slave balcony" at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, thinking his slaves would be better provided for there, but his slaves disagreed and continued to worship at St. Patrick's. Others took still greater risks in thwarting their owners' wishes through individual acts of disobedience, such as the body servant of Thomas Drane who refused to venture out two hundred yards to the well on an icy night to fetch water. Semmes and Drane recognized that their servants were defiant but not mutinous.⁵²

John McHenry of Buffalo Marsh, a "man of retiring disposition" and one who had established an academy where he taught "white and black, slave and free," was especially vulnerable to manipulation by his servants. One of McHenry's slaves, preferring his old master, "had gone off," an act McHenry felt "was as unexpected to us as it was ungrateful in him." McHenry should not have been surprised. Slaves from as far away as Prince George's County wandered along the C&O Canal path to visit a father or brother or wife, leaving their masters in a quandary. One local slave, who had been working for George Devecom of Oldtown, meandered from that village to Georges Creek to visit his wife. Meanwhile, Thomas Cresap's heirs sued Devecom over the ownership of "this negro man." When the claimants appeared in court, although they "had heard" that the wanderer had been seen at Shaw's store and all parties were certain he would return, no one knew where he was now or when he would show up. Maintaining that balance—waywardness that begat indulgence, loyalty that yielded concessions—was part of the dance of the slave-master relationship. Free blacks exhibited a similar shrewdness about black-white relations when they entered into negotiations to bring family members out of bondage.⁵³

The small number of blacks, enslaved or free, in Allegany County imposed a special burden on free black family life as well. It was not uncommon for free black men to marry enslaved women. Joseph Cooper, for instance, had arrived in Allegany County as a free black and found work in Frostburg sometime between 1832 and 1836. He had married Jane, a slave of John Shaffer; their young daughter Charlotte

also belonged to Shaffer. In 1836, Cooper "paid in full" for his wife's freedom, but because the law determined the status of a child by the status of the mother, Charlotte remained enslaved, as did their son John. Cooper and his wife had five more children over the next nine years, all born free now that Jane was free. At some point, the Coopers purchased John. Meanwhile, their daughter Charlotte was sold to two different county slaveholders during that same decade of the 1840s. She was a slave in the household of Henry Smouse of Grantsville, a village fourteen miles west of Frostburg, when he died in 1849. Cooper clearly had negotiated a deal with Smouse much as he had with Shaffer; Charlotte was to "be disposed of" to Cooper for \$450, "two hundred dollars down and the balance in one or two years without interest." For three more years, Joseph Cooper labored to save enough to pay off the debt to free Charlotte. By 1850 he had reunited his family in freedom.⁵⁴

John Johnson bargained as hard as Cooper to rescue his family from slavery. Johnson's wife Lydia belonged to Levin Shipley. When Shipley wrote his will in 1836, he left his "negro woman Lidia and her offspring . . . forever" to his daughter. Shipley did not die until 1842, but he had relented when Johnson approached him in 1839 with \$250 to purchase Lydia's freedom. Within two years, Johnson also purchased his son John and set him free. His other children, Eliza Jane, Charles, and Lydia Ann, he explained, had been born since Lydia's manumission.

Well aware of the laws that restricted the lives of newly freed blacks in Maryland, Lucinda Crawford, an especially astute mother and a free black living just across the border in Pennsylvania, negotiated with William Price to buy her son John Thomas. She officially recorded his manumission and immediately tied him to her with an indenture on her Pennsylvania farm. Risking her own freedom by traveling to the courts in this slave state on two separate occasions, Crawford shrewdly secured her son's freedom and guaranteed his livelihood.⁵⁵

As a rule, though, slaveholders surrendered little and did not always capitulate easily to their servants' pleas. Susan Dorsey, for instance, was unsuccessful in gaining freedom for her husband. For ten years she struggled to salt away enough of the wages John McHenry paid her now that she was free, yet her husband Jim was still a slave in 1864 when Maryland abolished the system. Jim's owner, a widow and mother of twelve, however benevolent she might have felt, simply had no latitude in her finances to set Jim free. Benjamin and Harriet Carter made an equally valiant effort. Benjamin "executed a note" and paid the agreed upon \$150 in 1848 to William Thompson of Frostburg to guarantee the freedom of their two sons. Thompson drove a hard bargain. George Carter was six and John five in 1848; they would not be free until 1870 and 1871, on their twenty-eighth birthdays.⁵⁶

When masters negotiated with free blacks about their enslaved family members, when they manumitted faithful slaves, or converted life slavery to term slavery, they sought obedience and loyalty. When slaves passively resisted, manipulated their masters, or used the courts on their own behalf, they created a role that gave

in the State of ~~Virginia~~ in the County of ~~Allegheny~~ *West*
 created by me, on the *13th* day of *Sept* 1800. *J. Driley* Ass't Marshal.

1	2	3	SEX AND AGE			7	8	9	10				13
			4	5	6				10	11	12	13	
The Name of every Person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1800, was in this family.		SEX AND AGE			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each Male Person over 15 years of age.	Place or Birth. Naming the State, Territory, or County.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, lame, idiotic, insane, or idiotic.						
The Name of every Person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1800, was in this family.		Age	Sex	Color	Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each Male Person over 15 years of age.	Place or Birth. Naming the State, Territory, or County.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, lame, idiotic, insane, or idiotic.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, lame, idiotic, insane, or idiotic.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, lame, idiotic, insane, or idiotic.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, lame, idiotic, insane, or idiotic.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, lame, idiotic, insane, or idiotic.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, lame, idiotic, insane, or idiotic.	
127	128	Lyons, Brantley	23	M		Maryland							
		John Hardy	22	F									
		Lucas	2	F									
		Charlotte	2	F									
127	128	Henry Brantley	20	F									
		Mary Ann	16	F									
		Elizabeth	12	F									
		Adeline	11	F									
		Philip Kirby	19	M		Maryland							
129	130	George Kille	23	M		Prussia							
		Amanda	22	F									
		Laura	16	F									
		Mary J.	12	F									
135	136	Thomas Foster	57	M		Prussia							
		Mary	40	F									
		Charlotte	21	F									
		Harriet	23	F									
		Esther	16	F									
		Mary	14	F									
		Ely	12	F									
		William	10	F									
		Thomas	8	M									
		Charles	6	M									
136	137	Thomas Blair	39	M		Prussia							
		Phoebe	38	F									
		Lucas Blair	30	F									
		Joseph Rumsey	15	M									
137	138	Joseph Cooper	42	M	B	Prussia	1800						
		Lena	23	F	B								
		John	19	M	M								
		Charlotte	18	F	M								
		Rebecca	12	F	B								
		Abigail	10	F	M								
		Moses	9	M	M								
		David	8	M	M								
		Charles	5	M	M								
139	140	James Randolph	35	M	B								
		Ely	20	F	B								
		William	8	M	B								
141	142	Benjamin Kirby	65	M		Prussia	1800						
		Charlotte	63	F									

Charlotte Cooper, age 18, reunited with her family by 1850. She remained in Frostburg as late as 1870 (facing page). (Maryland Historical Society.)

them considerable purchase in those negotiations, albeit a role that was always circumscribed by the willingness of their owners to enter into them. Slave owners in Allegany County, however, did relinquish a powerful card in those discussions, one that may have been a part of their strategy to maintain slaves' loyalty: They did not sell them South.

The change from tobacco to cereal agriculture in the Chesapeake coincided with the Deep South's expansion into cotton, sugar, and hemp. Slaveholders in eastern Maryland and Virginia plunged into this new market, feeding their slaves into the traders' coffles as cotton and sugar plantations consumed the lives and labors of hundreds of thousands of slaves.⁵⁷

Though slave traders roamed the Maryland countryside looking for opportunities, Allegany County's sparse population, harsh climate and terrain, the small size of its slaveholdings, and the reluctance of slaveholders to sell made it barren ground. While those slave owners had familial, financial, and political ties in Baltimore and Washington, both of which supported large slave markets where they could have sold some slaves not recorded locally, there is little evidence that they did so. Some historians contend that Appalachian slave masters viewed their human property as "investment commodities" and "only secondarily as workers," but the evidence in Allegany County suggests otherwise. Analyses of slave sales and estate inventories indicate that Alleganians passed their slaves on to family members or to neighbors who bought estate slaves with little profit for the deceased's family.⁵⁸

Domestic slave traders were primarily interested in slaves between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five and in children. In Allegany County, there is no consistent evidence to support that pattern. One slight and fleeting dip in the 20-29 age group occurred in the 1830s and another in the 1840s for the 30-39 cohort, but the numbers are so small that the sale of a slave or two by one owner could have skewed the percentages. Nor was there a dearth of very young slaves; the numbers of slave children from infancy to their teens remained consistent across the decades. An aging slave population in Maryland and Virginia suggests that slave owners decimated their holdings and collected the profits offered by the slave traders, yet no such pattern took shape in the county. There simply is no discernible pattern of missing age cohorts among Allegany County slaves.⁵⁹

During the seven decades of slave holding there, owners did sell 128 slaves out of the county, either to owners in Washington or Frederick counties or nearby Virginia. Of those forty transactions, half concerned slaves sold to family members or to residents of free states, not a likely market for the slave trader. Another thirty-nine slaves were sold "down river." Benjamin Tomlinson's daughter and son-in-law account for eight slaves transported to Mississippi in 1818, and one man brought another fifteen to Missouri in the 1840s, but they are exceptions.⁶⁰

Indeed, aware of the perils of slave life on the large plantations of the Deep South, Alleganians increasingly admonished their heirs either to keep all their slaves in the

family or not to sell them out of the state. Susannah Cresap was even more adamant; she wanted her children to “take bond and security” of any purchasers lest they renege on her reproach to “not remove or sell [my] slaves out of this state.” Most, though, specified that their slaves were to remain in Allegany County.⁶¹

Marylanders in general, some historians of the domestic slave markets suggest, had a distaste for slavery that is evident in their high rate of manumissions, both immediate and especially those that resulted in term slavery. More importantly, in Allegany County the number of recorded future manumissions, an action that changed lifetime slavery to term slavery, increased just as the domestic slave trade did. Masters interested in profit would have been foolish to enter into such agreements because Maryland had banned the sale of term slaves out of state. More likely the slaveholders of Allegany County viewed their promises of future freedom as a means to gain faithful service and as a tactic to deter runaways.⁶²

Additional evidence that these slaveholders were more interested in persuading their slaves to remain and serve loyally lies in the age at which they promised freedom. Seventy percent of Allegany County slaves whose “slave for life” status was changed to term slavery received their freedom when they were under the age of thirty. In Baltimore and its seven surrounding counties, only 60 percent of women and 50 percent of men were liberated at such a young age. Indeed, T. Stephen Whitman found that the modal age in the Baltimore area was forty, an age when it was commonly assumed that men could no longer labor effectively nor women bear children. Female term slaves in Allegany County gained their freedom at just over the age of twenty-eight. While they may have borne several children by that time, years of fertility lay before them. Had these local slave owners thought only in terms of financial gain, they would have been better served by postponing their slaves’ freedom or selling them off to the southern markets. They did neither.⁶³

Slave life in Allegany County, then, differed significantly from slave life in other parts of Maryland, the Atlantic seaboard, or the rest of the Appalachian South. There was nothing like the Baltimore experience, where slaves hired themselves out or found refuge in free black neighborhoods. Nor were there large plantations where slaves could find extended families and fictive kin. Nearly two-thirds of Allegany County slaves lived in an isolation that could expose them to unmonitored brutality, to say nothing of depriving them of opportunities for social or sexual fulfillment. Family life in the more settled areas offered a bit more satisfaction, at least for mothers and some of their children—for a while. But even in thriving and densely populated communities such as Cumberland or Frostburg, the “fear of sale gnawed at the very heart of slave life.”⁶⁴

The reward for examining a local area such as Allegany County lies in the ability to see the nuances in the master-slave relationship. Large quantitative analyses yield patterns that are important to our understanding of the systemic callousness and brutality of slavery, but they hide the peculiarities that made differences in many

a slave's life. For all of the hardships experienced by Allegany County slaves, and especially those exacerbated by the remoteness of the region and the loneliness of life, a slave in Allegany County was not likely to be sent into the Deep South, have a term extended, or be sold out of the state. Slaves in Allegany County also had greater opportunities to flee, the proximity of Pennsylvania and Ohio enhancing their chances of success and strengthening their bargaining position with their masters. These advantages played a far smaller role in the lives of slaves on large plantations, in the cities, or even in much of the rest of Appalachia. And while those intra-state and intra-county sales did tear apart families, the distances between Flintstone in the easternmost part of the county and the Glades in the west (and, far more likely, those twenty miles between Oakland and Selbysport) were far shorter than that between Maryland and Mississippi. Life, indeed, was different for the slaves who lived in Allegany County, but, ultimately, those differences did little to loosen the shackles of slavery itself.

Thus, whatever their obstacles, Eliza Kinner's twenty-year delay in reuniting her family, Benjamin Carter's long wait for his sons, or James Harris's penitentiary stint, nary an Allegany County slave rested content in bondage. When, in October 1863, Lincoln authorized the recruitment of slaves and Maryland followed suit four months later, Allegany County slaves responded. William Johnson and Frank Murphy walked away from their owners to join the 30th U.S. Colored Troops in February 1864; Robert Johnson, Lewis McIntire, Joseph Harris, and Charles Trimble were not far behind. The three Jackson brothers of Frostburg—Hezekiah, Benjamin, and Thomas—joined those marching off. At least thirty more Allegany County slaves served either in the 30th or 39th U.S. Colored Troops and saw battle in Virginia and North Carolina.⁶⁵

Enlistment in the Union army served as the ultimate rebuke to those who thought slavery mild or humane. Blacks put their lives on the line for what was for them a war for freedom. A southern sympathizer such as Priscilla McKaig called it an "unjust unrighteous war," that was "brought on by the Abolitionists to free the Negroes of the South," but for those former slaves-turned-soldiers this was a war "to free the Negroes of the South." Returning to the mountain town of Frostburg at war's end, Hezekiah, Benjamin, and Thomas Jackson settled down, married, and began their families—free at last.⁶⁶

NOTES

1. Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, Benjamin Tomlinson, deed of manumission, January 2, 1838, Liber T, pages 446–47; Benjamin Tomlinson, estate sales to George Mattingly, Alexander King, and Mary Tomlinson, May 14, 1839, Liber W, pages 560–61, 558–59, and 559–60, Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, MSA CE 77, Maryland State Archives; Benjamin Tomlinson, September 26, 1838, Liber A, pages 426–28, Allegany County Register of Wills; and Inventories, Benjamin Tomlinson file, 1837–1843, Allegany County Courthouse.
2. For Tomlinson, see Betty VanNewkirk, “Remembering the Tomlinson Family,” *Cumberland Times-News*, February 7, 2002; Will H. Lowdermilk, *History of Cumberland* (Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1971), 270, 278; “Jesse Tomlinson of Little Meadows,” *Glades Star*, 1 (1943): 69–70; Marion Viola Broadwater, “Grantsville, Maryland,” *Tableland Trails*, 2 (1956): 84–85; Jacob Brown, *Brown’s miscellaneous writings upon a great variety of subjects* (Cumberland, Md., 1896), 40–41, 97–98, 131–32; and Charles E. Hoye, *Hoye’s Pioneer Families of Garrett County* (Parson, W. Va.: McClain Printing Co., 1988), 536–38.
3. Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, Thomas Cresap sale to W. D. Baker, August 22, 1818, Liber K, page 13; Thomas Thistle sales to W. D. Baker, September 4 and 7, 1818, Liber K, pages 8 and 9; and Benjamin Tomlinson sale to Drusilla Baker, September 23, 1818, page 20, MSA CE 77.
4. U.S. Census, 1790 and 1860; Charles E. Hoye, “Drane Family,” Drane family file, Garrett County Historical Society.
5. In 1777, the Maryland General Assembly passed a law to encourage recruits for the Continental Army, granting 50 acres to soldiers and four 50-acre lots to officers; the grants were to be west of Fort Cumberland. James D. Dilts, *The Great Road: The Building of the Baltimore and Ohio, The Nation’s First Railroad, 1828–1853* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 279–93; Walter S. Sanderlin, *The Great National Project: A History of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1946); Ella E. Clark, ed., “Life on the C&O Canal: 1859,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 55 (1960): 82–122; Thomas F. Hahn, *George Washington’s Canal at Great Falls, Virginia* (Shepherdstown, W. Va.: American Canal and Transportation Center, 1976); Evelyn Guard Olsen, *Indian Blood* (Parsons, W. Va.: McClain, 1967), 89–97; Katherine Harvey, *The Best Dressed Miners: Life and Labor in the Maryland Coal Region, 1835–1910* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), 79–80; and Ronald L. Lewis, *Coal, Iron, and Slaves: Industrial Slavery in Maryland and Virginia, 1715–1865* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979), 47–51.
6. See, for instance, Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1998), *Generations of Captivity: A History of African American Slaves* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2003), 161, for the quote on the “Second Middle Passage,” and *The Making of African America: The Four Great Migrations* (New York: Viking Press, 2010). See also Barbara Jeanne Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland during the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), T. Stephen Whitman, *The Price of Freedom: Slavery and Manumission in Baltimore and Early National Maryland* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997) and *Challenging Slavery in the Chesapeake: Black and White Resistance to Bondage, 1775–1865* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2007), and Max L. Grivno, “‘There Slavery Cannot Dwell’: Agriculture and Labor in Northern Maryland, 1790–1860” (Ph. D. diss. University of Maryland, 2007).
7. U.S. Census, 1800–1860. That number 818, of course, reflects only the moment of the

census taking. In 1840 the census counted 812 slaves in Allegany County but those 812 were not the same 818 of the previous decade. Many different slaves lived, loved, worked, escaped, or were sold, bought, born or died in the county over the course of those ten years. For the comparative statistics, see Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*, 6, and Grivno, "There Slavery Cannot Dwell," 73 and 111.

8. Folklore has it that one slave owner, William Ward, owned twenty-nine slaves, but the 1860 Census lists him with only eighteen. For median slave-holding sizes, see Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*, 25, and for a quantitative approach to the entire Appalachian South, see Wilma A. Dunaway, "Diaspora, Death, and Sexual Exploitation: Slave Families at Risk in the Mountain South," *Appalachian Journal*, 26 (Winter 1999): 128-149.

9. These circumstances of life for Allegany County slaves are derived from the 1850 and 1860 Slave Schedules of the U.S. Census. Although the 1800-1840 censuses used age ranges and not specific individual ages, it is clear the patterns were the same. Also, see Orlando Patterson's *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), in which he notes: "Slavery was the most brutal and exploitative in those societies characterized by small holdings."

10. Charles E. Hoye, *The Hoyes of Maryland* (Sang Run, Md.: The author, 1942), 87-88.

11. Slave owners sometimes assigned given as well as surnames. See Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*. Former slaves often changed their names upon gaining freedom, making it difficult to trace the fate of many bondpeople. Additionally, husbands and wives often did not share the same surname. Eliza Kinner's husband remains unnamed in the records. Eliza Kinner did appear again in Pennsylvania in 1860, with her youngest child, now twenty-two, see U.S. Census, 1860. What happened to her husband between 1838 and 1860 remains unknown. She bore no more children, although that would not have been unusual for a woman her age.

For further discussion of the roles of slave husbands and fathers, see Brenda Stevenson, "Distress and Discord in Virginia Slave Families, 1830-1860" in Carol Bleser, ed., *In Joy and Sorrow: Women, Family, and Marriage in the Victorian South, 1830-1900* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 103-24, and classics such as Herbert Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1976), Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), and John Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), among others.

12. Wilma A. Dunaway, "Slavery and Emancipation in the Mountain South: Evidence, Sources, and Methods," Virginia Tech, Online Archives, Table 7.3 (Family Structure Experienced by Appalachian Slaves).

13. Jeffrey R. Brackett, *The Negro in Maryland: A Study of the Institution of Slavery* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1889), 49-52, and Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, Fielding Shepherd, list of slaves, September 9, 1833, Liber Q, page 420 and October 4, 1833, Liber Q, page 427, MSA CE 77.

14. For the McCarty's, see Capt. Charles E. Hoye, "Early History of Oakland," *Glades Star*, 1 (December 1947): 265-66; Hoye, *Pioneer Families*, 366-76; William W. Wolfe, *History of Keyser, West Virginia, 1737-1913* (n.p.: Keyprint, Inc., 1974); Daniel McCarty, "A Sketch of History of the McCarty Family," McCarty file, Garrett County Historical Society, and Clara McCormack Sage and Laura Sage Jones, compilers, *Early Records, Hampshire County, Virginia* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1969).

McCarty moved those fifty-five slaves between 1798 and 1823; see the various lists of slaves he registered in Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, MSA CE 77. In the same records, see Edward McCarty sale to Isaac McCarty, November 20, 1820, Liber L, page 97,

and Isaac McCarty sale to Robert Swan, George Calmes, and George Devecorn, September 4, 1829, Liber O, pages 465–66, as well as Hoyer, *Pioneer Families*, 370–71 and Wolfe, *History of Keyser*, 4.

15. Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, Eli Swearingen, list of slaves, May 3, 1833 and July 9, 1833, Liber Q, pages 317 and 353, and April 17, 1839, Liber W, page 526, MSA CE 77.

16. Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, Thomas Stallings, sale to Barton Carrico, June 3, 1813, Liber G, page 142, MSA CE 77.

17. Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, Roger Perry sale to David Lynn and William McMahan, April 28, 1821, Liber L, pages 133–34; William McMahan sale to David Lynn, April 30, 1821, Liber L, pages 135–36; and Charles Worthington sale to Brice Howard, March 8, 1823, Liber M, pages 78–80, MSA CE 77.

18. Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, Nathaniel Slicer estate sale to Christian Krepps, January 17, 1823, Liber M, pages 51–52, and Henry Kemp estate sale to Joseph Getzandener, December 8, 1855, Liber 13, pages 442–43, MSA CE 78. Interestingly, Henry Kemp was the only Alleghanian to have petitioned for an exception to the law banning the out-of-state sale of term slaves, although he ultimately withdrew that request. See Digital Library on American Slavery, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Petition 20983613, Henry Kemp March 8, 1836, and Hoyer, *Hoyes of Maryland*, 87–88.

19. Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, Levin Shipley sale to Harrison Black, September 12, 1839, Liber AA, page 2; John Scott sale to Benjamin Brown, March 29, 1822, Liber L, page 345; Benjamin Brown sale to John Scott, March 30, 1822, Liber L, pages 345–46; John Moritz sale to James Prather, June 12, 1834, Liber R, page 97; John Moritz gift to his children, September 5, 1835, Liber R, page 533; John Moritz sale to John Mitchell, December 11, 1838, Liber W, page 326; Asa Beall sale to George Thistle, October 10, 1800, Liber C, page 253; and George Thistle sale to Edward Ward, May 11, 1801, Liber C, page 344, MSA CE 77.

20. For a review of the laws regarding free and enslaved blacks in Maryland, see Brackett, *The Negro in Maryland*. At least some in the Kinner family were reunited. Samuel Kinner, who was to be free on February 8, 1851, according to Benjamin Tomlinson's 1838 deed of manumission, did gain his freedom as promised. On April 1, 1851, he appeared in court as a free man, petitioned for, and was granted permission to leave the state for up to six months. In 1880 he was living in Pennsylvania and working as a waiter. His household included his eighty-year-old mother Eliza (now Elizabeth), his sister-in-law, two nephews (one of whom was a miner), and a boarder. Allegany County Register of Wills, Allegany County Courthouse (Orphan Court Proceedings) April 1, 1851, Liber E, page 157, and U.S. Census, 1880.

21. Allegany County Register of Wills (Inventories), Allegany County Court House, John Morrison file, 1834.

22. For the quote, see Berlin, *Generations of Captivity*, 215.

23. Berlin poignantly describes the "humiliation of having their persons inspected in the most minute and intimate ways, with strange hands probing every crack and crevice of their bodies" in *Generations of Captivity*, 171. Fields, in *Slavery and Freedom*, 24, discusses the frequency of sales in the rest of the state, and Hilleary F. Willison, "History of the Pioneer Settlers of Flintstone, District #3, and Their Descendants," as cited in Harry Steigmaier Jr., David Dean, Gordon Kershaw, and John Wiseman, *Allegany County: A History* (Parsons, W. Va.: McClain Printing Co., 1976), 168, expressed the idea that slaves were well treated in Allegany County.

24. See Jacob Brown's "Jerome, the Runaway Slave," *Glades Star* 2 (March 1951): 74–75 and Grivno, "There Slavery Cannot Dwell," 217 for a discussion of how slave owners used the threat, as merely a threat, with their slaves.

25. Brown, *Miscellaneous writings*, 52, 116, 148–52, 156–58 (for Hamill, Bruce, Slicer); Hoyer, *Pioneer Families*, 326–28, 361–66, 489–90 (for Jamison, Lynn, Slicer); Schlosnagle, *History of Garrett County*, 66–67, 73 (for Hamill, Drane); Helene L. Baldwin, Michael Allen Mudge, and Keith W. Schlegel, eds., *The McKaig Journal: A Confederate Family of Cumberland* (Cumberland, Md.: Allegany County Historical Society, 1984); Samuel S. Shriver, *History of the Shriver Family and Their Connections, 1684–1888* (Baltimore: Press of Guggenheim, Weil, & Co., 1888); “The Drane House,” *Journal of the Alleghenies*, 25 (1989): 76–77; “Selbysport” and F. A. Walker, “Peter Devecom,” *Glades Star* 1 (September 1943): 85–89 and 91–92; J. Samuel Slicer, “Some Descendants of Nathaniel Slicer,” *Western Maryland Genealogy*, 7 (1991): 105–10 and (1991): 156–60; D. E. Keene, “Evergreen: The Trimble on Federal Hill” (typescript), “A Family History of the Harden, Trimble, Skidmore and Miller Families as related to David Harden” (typescript), and Augustine Robinette, “Aunt Kate’s Log Cabin” (typescript), all in Appalachian Collection, Allegany College of Maryland; H. Maunsell Richardson, *The Church on the Fort: 150 Years of Emmanuel Parish* (Cumberland, Md.: n.p., 1953); and Drane and Slicer files, Garrett County Historical Society.
26. On slave naming practices, and the choices slaves made about those names, see Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*; Gutman, *Black Family in Slavery and Freedom*; Cheryl Ann Cody, “Naming, Kinship, and Estate Dispersal: Notes on Slave Family Life on a South Carolina Plantation, 1786–1833,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 39 (1982): 192–211; and John C. Inscoe, “Carolina Slave Names: An Index to Acculturation,” *Journal of Southern History*, 40 (1983): 527–54.
27. Hoyer, *Pioneer Families*, 493, for Smith and 313–16, for “Queer Aunt Betsy”; William Still, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia, 1872), 123; and Thomas B. Searight, *The Old Pike: A History of the National Road with Incidents, Accidents, and Anecdotes Thereon* (Uniontown, Pa.: The author, 1894), 10. For remarks on brutality, see Stevenson, “Distress and Discord,” 115–16.
28. Allegany County Register of Wills (Wills), Allegany County Court House, Philip Bray, November 31, 1844, Liber A, pages 540–42; Joseph Robinette, June 10, 1834, Liber A, Pages 356–58; (Inventories) William Moore file, 1805; and (Wills) Catherine Calmes, May 20, 1858, Liber B, pages 131–33.
29. Isaac W. Thompson, “My Pioneer Grandmother” (Sang Run, Md.: Privately published, n.d.), Garrett County Historical Society; Philip D. Jordan, *The National Road* (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1948), 210; and Thomas J. Brandt, “Boyhood Memories of Oakland, Maryland, Fifty Years Ago,” *Tableland Trails* (Summer 1956): 178–79.
30. Schlosnagle, *History of Garrett County*, 47, 51, and 387; Hoyer, *Pioneer Families*, 145–49; and Allegany County Register of Wills (Wills), Allegany County Courthouse, William Coddington, June 26, 1827, Liber A, pages 266–67; Samuel Coddington, February 13, 1844, Liber A, pages 527–28; Benjamin Coddington, January 9, 1840, Liber A, pages 463–66; (Inventories) William Coddington file, 1827; and Samuel Coddington file, 1840.
31. Hoyer, *Pioneer Families*, 309–16; Hoyer, *Hoyes of Maryland*, 84–89, 101–17, 238–47; and Lowdermilk, *History of Cumberland*, 294, 303, 326–27, 339–41.
32. Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, John Hoyer list of slaves, April 9, 1835, Liber R, page 394; Paul Hoyer estate sale to Elie Beatty, April 28, 1821, Liber L, pages 127–29; Samuel Thomas sale to John Hoyer, November 12, 1822, Liber M, pages 11–12; Thomas Dowdes sale to John Hoyer, April 23, 1834, Liber R, page 57; Benjamin Edmunds sale to John Hoyer, May 16, 1833, Liber Q, page 337; John Hoyer sale to William Cotton, January 25, 1828, Liber N, page 570; John Hoyer sale to Thomas McKaig, November 4, 1834, Liber R, page 254; John Hoyer sale to Eli Ridgeley, November 28, 1834, Liber R, page 275; John Hoyer sale to Archibald Thistle,

December 1, 1834, Liber R, page 272; John Hoye sale to William Hayes, December 9, 1834, Liber R, page 285; John Hoye deeds of manumission to Phoebe Roboson, February 2, 1836, Liber S, page 182, Margaret Roboson, August 7, 1837, Liber T, page 273, William Roboson, May 9, 1838, Liber T, page 544, and July 15, 1848, Liber 4, pages 264–65 MSA CE 77. Allegany County Register of Wills (Wills), Allegany County Courthouse, John Hoye, July 10, 1849, Liber A, pages 697–705.

33. Allegany County Register of Wills, (Wills), Allegany County Courthouse, Mary Hoye, November 5, 1875, Liber D, 245–48; Hoye, *Hoyes of Maryland*, 115; and 1860 U.S. Census.

34. The story of the Quaker sojourn into western Maryland is cited in Stegmaier, Dean, Kershaw, and Wiseman, *Allegany County*, 168; for Isaac McCarty, see F. A. Walker, "The Isaac McCarty Family," *Glades Star*, 31 (June 1965): 374–75 and Lawrence Sherwood and Rev. Joan A. Grant, "The Churches in Garrett County," *Glades Star*, 4 (June 1972): 286–95; for the manumissions, see Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, James McCarty deed of manumission, September 13, 1827, Liber N, page 497, MSA CE 77, and Garrett McLaughlin deed of manumission, March 6, 1853, Liber 10, pages 325–26, MSA CE 78.

35. *Alleganian*, April 3, 1846, September 8, 1849, August 30, 1851, and August 31, 1850.

36. "An Act Relating to the People of Color in this State," passed March 12, 1832, Maryland General Assembly, Session Laws, vol. 213, chap 281; *Alleganian*, August 30, 1851, April 17, 1846, and September 21, 1850; and Penelope Campbell, *Maryland in Africa: The Maryland State Colonization Society, 1831–1857* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 102 and 189.

37. Allegany County Register of Wills (Wills), Allegany County Courthouse, Alexander Smith, April 15, 1839, Liber A, pages 436–38; John Jacob, July 9, 1839, Liber A, pages 442–47; John Layman, November 1, 1845, Liber A, pages 572–76; and Helen Bruce, June 9, 1841, Liber A, pages 484–86. See also, Jerry H. Hynson, abstracter, *Maryland Colonization Society Manumission Book, 1832–1860*, vol. 3 (Westminster, Md.: Willow Bend Books, 2001).

38. Frederick Trautmann, ed. and trans., "Maryland Through a Traveler's Eyes: A Visit by Samuel Ludvigh in 1846," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 78 (1983): 69; Walker, "Isaac McCarty Family," 375–76; and Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 190. Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974) also discusses blacks' resistance to colonization.

39. Brackett, *Negro in Maryland*, chap. 4, especially 85–86 for the 1815 petitions and Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, James Magruder, deed of manumission, May 23, 1860, Liber 18, pages 683–84 and John McCulloh, deed of manumission, March 12, 1864, Liber 21, pages 549–50, MSA CE 78.

40. Franklin and Schwenger, *Runaway Slaves*. They also cite Frederick Law Olmsted's characterization of a slave's propensity to escape.

41. See Still, *Underground Railroad*, 123, for the one Allegany runaway, Samuel Williams. Dunaway, on her website, "Slavery and Emancipation in the Mountain South," lists all of the Washington and Frederick County escapees from Still's account. Several historians, including Elwood L. Bridner Jr., "The Fugitive Slaves of Maryland," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 66 (1971) and Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground* note these census trackings of escaped slaves from Maryland.

42. See Vernon Roberts, "Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Cumberland, Maryland," Legacy of Slavery in Maryland, Case Studies, July 12, 2010, available online from the Maryland State Archives at <http://www.mdslavery.net>; and Richardson, *The Church on the Fort*.

43. State of Maryland vs. James Harris, filed October 15, 1863, box 49, Allegany County Circuit Court Papers, MSA T1784, MSA No.: & 1784–51.

44. Betty VanNewkirk, "Historic Frostburg, Maryland," pamphlet published by Allegany

County Tourism and Public Relations; Jeanne M. Cordts, "Historic Frostburg Homes," *Journal of the Alleghenies* 5 (1968): 3-7; Hoye, *Hoyes of Maryland*, 86; Schlosnagle, *History of Garrett County*, 216; and Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, deposition of Elizabeth Brown, November 26, 1796, Liber B, page 413, MSA CE 77. Interestingly, John Mathews was also the subject of a court judgment in 1794 when he tried to keep Minta as a slave illegally. She was granted her freedom. See "Allegany County Judgment Records: Liber A," *Western Maryland Genealogy*, 5 (October 1989): 152.

45. *History of Bedford, Somerset, and Fulton Counties, Pennsylvania with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Chicago, 1884), 282-87; James Hadden, *A History of Uniontown: The County Seat of Fayette County, Pennsylvania* (Akron, Ohio: New Werner Co., 1913), 609-16; William H. Koontz, ed., *History of Bedford and Somerset Counties, Pennsylvania with Genealogical and Personal History*, vol. 1 (New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1906), 375-82; Winona W. Barbrick, ed., *The Kernel of Greatness: An Informal Bicentennial History of Bedford County* (n.p.: Bedford County Heritage Commission, 1971), 69-79; and Hiram Blackburn letter to I. H. Betz, January 29, 1904, Bedford County Historical Society.

46. William J. Switala, *The Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania* (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 2001), 29-53; R. J. M. Blackett, "'Freedom, or the Martyr's Grave': Black Pittsburgh's Aid to the Fugitive Slave," in Joe William Trotter Jr., and Eric Ledell Smith, *African Americans in Pennsylvania: Shifting Historical Perspectives* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 148-65; William M. Hall, *Reminiscences and Sketches: Historical and Biographical* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Meyers Printing House, 1890), 56-61; West Middleton, "Mark on History," article based on a sketch written in 1880, *Uniontown Herald-Standard*, April 25, 1982; James G. Johnston, "History of Uniontown's Old Colored People," *Uniontown Morning Herald*, August 4, 1920; and Fred Adams, "Slavery as a Moral Issue," *Uniontown Tribune-Review*, December 13, 1981.

There are no advertisements for runaway slaves in the Bedford, Somerset, or Uniontown newspapers. Pennsylvania had banned slavery in 1780 and had passed anti-kidnapping statutes and personal liberty laws and bounty hunters therefore relied almost exclusively on posted handbills; see Grivino, "'There Slavery Cannot Dwell'" for references to Pennsylvania laws regarding slavery. As Hall remembers in *Reminiscences and Sketches*, 58: "Handbills . . . were received and treated with the same respect as those giving information of a stolen horse."

47. Hall, *Reminiscences and Sketches*, 59-60; Schlosnagle, *History of Garrett County*, 216-17; Searight, *The Old Pike*, 223-24; and Bridner, "The Fugitive Slaves of Maryland." Not all escaped successfully. For an account of some who chose death over a return to slavery, see David Bradley, *The Chaneyville Incident* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981). Bradley's fictional account is based on true events.

48. *Maryland Herald*, February 2, 1815; *Hagerstown Mail*, March 21, 1829; *Cumberland Civilian*, November 5, 1831, and June 21, 1829.

49. Allegany County Register of Wills (Wills), Allegany County Courthouse, Mary Edwards, September 22, 1863, Liber C, pages 28-29; Levi Hilleary, November 11, 1856, Liber B, pages 99-102; and William Ridgeley, November 13, 1847, Liber A, pages 626-29.

50. Allegany County Register of Wills (Wills), Allegany County Courthouse, William Moore, February 15, 1805, Liber A, pages 71-73; Allegany County Circuit Court, Land Records, William Moore, deed of manumission, April 26, 1792, Liber A, page 184; James Harris, deed, May 22, 1815, Liber H, pages 150-52; John Waugh, deed, September 16, 1816, Liber IJ, pages 51-52; and Samuel Harris, deed, October 14, 1822, Liber L, pages 534-35 MSA CE 77.

51. "Allegany County Judgment Records: Liber A," *Western Maryland Genealogy*, 6 (1990):

34; Donna Valley Russell, "Allegany County Indentures, 1794–1846," *Western Maryland Genealogy*, 9 (1993): 180; and Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, London certificate of freedom, September 10, 1816, Liber JJ, pages 64–66, MSA CE 77.

52. The most recent works on slave strategies include Whitman, *Challenging Slavery in the Chesapeake* and Gabor Boritt and Scott Hancock, eds., *Slavery, Resistance, Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). See also, Baldwin, Mudge, and Schlegel, *McKaig Journal*, Richardson, *The Church on the Fort*, and R. Getty Browning, "Brief Outline of the Settlement of the Drane Family at Accident, Md.," typescript, Drane family file, Garrett County Historical Society.

53. John McHenry letters (typescript), June 10, 1813, and April 11, 1815, Garrett County Historical Society. For similar attitudes throughout the McHenry family, see Karen Robbins, "'Domestic Bagatelles': Servants, Generations, and Genders in the McHenry Family of the Early Republic," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 104 (2009): 31–51. *National Intelligencer*, January 16, 1812, and April 20, 1852 and *Maryland Republic*, March 30, 1816; and Allegany County Register of Wills (Orphan Court Proceedings), Allegany County Courthouse, Thomas Cresap estate vs. George Devecom, May 14, 1850, Liber E, pages 92–93.

54. Joseph Cooper was not listed in Allegany County on the 1832 census of free blacks ordered by the Maryland legislature in the wake of the Nat Turner rebellion and thus arrived in Frostburg after that date but before he purchased his wife. See Jerry M. Hynson, *Free African-Americans of Maryland, 1832* (Westminster, Md.: Heritage Books, 2007), 1–2; Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, John Shaffer sale to Joseph Cooper, October 12, 1836, Liber FF, page 483; John Shaffer sale to Henry Thomas, September 17, 1842, Liber CC, pages 620–21 MSA CE 77; Henry Smouse estate sale to Joseph Cooper, April 1, 1852, Liber 8, page 312, MSA CE 78; Allegany County Register of Wills (Wills), Allegany County Courthouse, Henry Smouse, March 14, 1849, Liber A, pages 685–94; and 1850 U.S. Census where it is clear that Charlotte had joined the family as a free person, although her father took two more years to pay the full amount of her purchase. As late as 1870, Charlotte Cooper was still in Frostburg; she was a laundress and had two children and three boarders living with her, U.S. Census, 1870. The financial sacrifice was great; Schlosnagle, *History of Garrett County*, 91, suggests that free white farm laborers received \$7 per month and 50 cents a day at harvest time, far more than a free black earned.

55. Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, Levin Shipley sale to John Johnson, March 20, 1830, Liber W, page 496; John Johnson deed of manumission, February 14, 1842, Liber CC, pages 114–15, MSA CE 77. Johnson specifically mentioned that he had purchased his son John from Archibald Shipley and that his children Eliza Jane, Lydia Ann, and Charles had all been born since his wife's manumission, although he expressly manumitted all the children anyway. See also, Allegany County Register of Wills (Wills), Allegany County Courthouse, Levin Shipley, May 6, 1842, Liber A, pages 503–5 and William Price sale to Lucinda Crawford and Lucinda Crawford deed of manumission, March 5, 1828, Liber O, page 35; and Lucinda Crawford indenture, March 7, 1828, Liber O, page 36, MSA CE 77.

Lucinda Crawford's choice of residence in Pennsylvania and the ease with which Eliza Kinner made a similar move may account for the relative imbalance between the slave and free black populations in Allegany County. By 1860, the county was the only northern district that had more slaves than free people of color.

56. Hoyer, *Hoyes of Maryland*, 86–87 for the story of Susan and Jim Dorsey; Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, William Thompson sale to Benjamin Carter, November 9, 1848, Liber 4, page 619, MSA CE 77. Whitman, *The Price of Freedom*, chapter 5, recites many similar efforts of Maryland blacks to reconstitute their families.

57. Berlin, *The Making of African America* and Alan Kulikoff, "Uprooted Peoples: Black Migrants in the Age of the American Revolution, 1790–1820," in Ira Berlin and Ronald Hoffman, eds., *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983), among others, briefly discuss the domestic slave trade market. For studies focused on those markets, see William Calderhead, "How Extensive was the Border State Slave Trade? A New Look," *Civil War History*, 18 (1972): 42–55; Ralph Clayton, *Cash for Blood: The Baltimore to New Orleans Domestic Slave Trade* (Bowie, Md.: Heritage Books, Inc., 2002); Steven Deyle, *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Robert H. Gudmestad, *A Troublesome Commerce: The Transformation of the Interstate Slave Trade* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003); Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); and Michael Tadman, *Speculators and Slaves: Masters, Traders, and Slaves in the Old South* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

58. See Dunaway, "Diaspora, Death, and Sexual Exploitation," 132, for the characterization of Appalachian slave owners.

59. Several historians discuss the demographic characteristics of the slaves most sought after by slave traders that would indicate heavy internal trading. See, for instance, Brenda E. Stevenson, *Life in Black and White: Family and Community in the Slave South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 182–83, and Berlin, *Generations of Captivity*, 169ff. Berlin documents the aging slave population in Virginia where slaves over the age of 45 represented 11 percent of the slave population, whereas in Alabama they constituted only 7 percent. In Allegany County from the 1820s through the 1840s, that older age group represented just 6.5 percent of Allegany slaves.

60. Of those sixteen slaves who were sold South (excluding the Drusilla and W. D. Baker slaves and the Missouri sale of fifteen), eleven slaves were sold to Kentucky slaveholders, and only one each to a master in Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina, again, not a pattern of exploitation and profit. Moreover, most historians do not consider Kentucky or Missouri as having practiced the same type of slavery as in the Deep South.

61. Allegany County Register of Wills (Wills), Allegany County Courthouse, Susannah Cresap, August 31, 1851, Liber B, pages 33–34. For others who specified Allegany County as the limit of sale, see Jacob Stump, March 10, 1863, Liber C, pages 20–22; Sarah Twigg, June 30, 1851, Liber B, pages 35–37; Isaiah Frost, December 27, 1847, Liber A, pages 672–80; and Christian Stotler, March 15, 1859, Liber B, pages 154–55.

62. Calderhead, "How Extensive Was the Border State Slave Trade," 53–55; Brackett, *Negro in Maryland*, 60–64 and 144–147, and Christopher Phillips, *Freedom's Port: The African-American Community of Baltimore, 1790–1860* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 52.

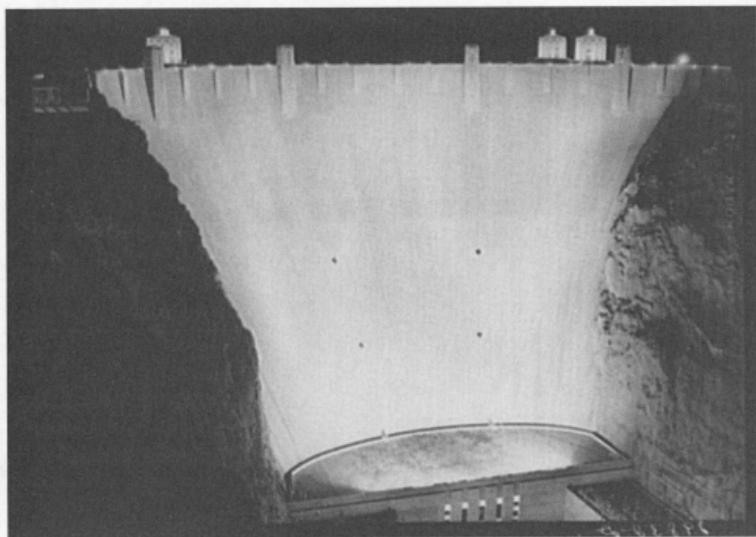
63. Whitman, *Price of Freedom*, chapter 4.

64. Those isolated slaves were the people who lived outside of Cumberland or Frostburg and were scattered across the county. For the quotation, see Berlin, *Generations of Captivity*, 215.

65. Slaves received \$50 for enlisting; slave owners gained bonuses of up to \$400 when they agreed to manumit slaves who joined the Union army. For general studies of blacks in the Union army, see Ira Berlin, Joseph P. Reidy, and Leslie S. Rowland, eds., *Freedom's Soldiers: The Black Military Experience in the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); James M. McPherson, *The Negro's Civil War: How American Blacks Felt and Acted During the War for Union* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991); John David Smith, *Black Soldiers in Blue: African American Troops in the Civil War Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina

Press, 2002); and Dudley Taylor Cornish, *The Sable Arm: Negro Troops in the Union Army, 1861–1865* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1966). For the Maryland experience, see John W. Blassingame, "The Recruitment of Negro Troops in Maryland," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 100 (2005): 350–58; Adjutant General (Muster Rolls), Maryland State Archives; and Allegany County Circuit Court Land Records, William Johnson deed of manumission, December 5, 1864, Liber 22, page 247; Frank Murphy deed of manumission, November 21, 1864, Liber 22, pages 223–24; Robert Johnson deed of manumission, November 25, 1864, Liber 22, page 189; Lewis McIntire deed of manumission, November 5, 1864, Liber 22, page 189 (the dates seem odd, but the actual recording often took place later than the court appearance); Joseph Harris deed of manumission, March 19, 1864, Liber 22, page 98; Charles Trimble deed of manumission, April 25, 1864, Liber 21, page 431; H. A. B. Jackson and Benjamin Jackson deeds of manumission, September 30, 1864, Liber 22, pages 57–58, MSA CE 78; and *Alleganian*, "The Draft," July 6 and 13, October 5 and 12, 1864.

66. For the quote about the purpose of the war, see Baldwin, Mudge, and Schlegel, *McKaig Journal*, 21. The causes of the war are, of course, still argued, but for a more current commentary similar to McKaig's, see Edward Ball, "Gone With the Myths," *New York Times*, December 19, 2010. Ball cites the secession declarations of several southern states to illustrate that those legislators knew they were fighting the war against abolition and for slavery. For the return of the Jackson brothers to Frostburg, see 1870 U.S. Census.



Boulder Dam, 1940. The Arundel Corporation placed the second-lowest bid for the Boulder Dam construction project, losing the job to Six Companies, Inc., and pushing the local company to forge national partnerships. (Library of Congress.)

Going National: The Arundel Corporation and the Challenge of Growth

EDWARD H. FEEGE JR.

The call to the offices of the Arundel Corporation in Baltimore on December 4, 1931, carried the bad news. Phoning from Denver, company president Joseph Hock informed chairman of the board Frank Furst that Arundel had placed the second-lowest bid to build the Boulder Dam on the Colorado River between Nevada and Arizona. A joint venture dubbed Six Companies, Inc., had submitted the lowest bid. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which was overseeing the contest, was recommending that the Department of the Interior award them the contract to build the dam.¹

For almost a century, Arundel Corporation and its predecessor companies were major fixtures on the Baltimore business scene. At the time of the Boulder Dam bid, Arundel had established a significant market position in the construction materials business in the mid-Atlantic region, and throughout the entire eastern United States in the areas of dredging and civil construction. Now, however, Arundel had been spurned in its most significant foray into the western United States, despite its record in handling large construction projects in the East, including Maryland's Conowingo Dam.

The Arundel Corporation was the offspring of Baltimore entrepreneur, financier, and Democratic Party stalwart Frank A. Furst. That fact had a significant business effect in the years leading up to and immediately after the company's formation in 1919 and as the company first moved into the dam construction business, but the overlapping business, political, and personal ties that aided Furst early in his career would benefit Arundel less and less as it attempted to become a force nationally.

Arundel's loss of the Boulder Dam work marked a watershed in the life of one of Maryland's most important engineering and construction enterprises. The combination of patronage, friendships, and basic competence that had allowed the company to thrive in state and East Coast markets into the early 1930s would no longer suffice. Now, federal "mega-projects" associated with President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal policies dominated a civil construction market otherwise diminished by the ongoing Depression. The wide-open bidding for these projects generated intense

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competition among groups of national-level companies, and it was becoming increasingly clear that Frank Furst's firm would have to ally itself with one of the larger ventures if this critical part of its business was to survive and grow.

Alliance-building, though, would not be a straightforward process. Only after Furst's death did the company find the right mix of partners and projects that would make it one of the best-known dam constructors in the United States.

Building Arundel

Officially incorporated in August 1919, Arundel Corporation was an amalgamation of successful companies that Frank Furst had established or acquired during the preceding thirty-five years.² As such, Arundel reflected the entire range of Furst's business interests, particularly those he had pursued during the second half of his life.

The story of Furst's rise from "rags to riches" was well documented in the Baltimore press and other local publications during his lifetime. Born in 1845 in Baden, Francis Anthony Furst and his family emigrated to the United States and Baltimore when he was three years old. In his youth, Furst's family lived in Fells Point, and he attended St. Michael's Parochial School. His father died in 1852, which soon would require Furst to take up various jobs to help support the family. During the Civil War, the sixteen-year-old attached himself to a New York regiment passing through Baltimore and subsequently was badly injured in a wagon accident before the first battle at Bull Run in 1861. After his convalescence in a Washington hospital, Furst obtained a position with a Union army engineering unit.³

Furst's adventures continued as he headed west after the war. According to one account he was wounded in a skirmish with an Amerindian band in the Montana Territory. He subsequently settled briefly in St. Louis, Missouri, after finding employment with a grain elevator company. Furst used that experience to enter the grain business in Baltimore upon his return to the city in 1866. He spent the next thirty-five years in that industry, during which time he worked for several companies and the inspection department of the Corn and Flour Exchange. By the time he retired in December 1901, he was manager of the Northern Central Railway's Baltimore elevators.⁴

As that aspect of the fifty-six-year-old Furst's professional career was ending, another was expanding. In 1884, Furst had joined with Captain Daniel Constantine and two other partners to form the Baltimore Dredging Company. The new firm purchased Constantine's outdated dredging vessel fleet for \$43,780 and gradually modernized it. The well-connected Constantine—who also served on the city council from the First Ward, and at different times held the positions of port warden, port inspector, superintendent of the Bayview Asylum, and warden of the city jail—remained the titular head of the company, while Furst was superintendent. During the next sixteen years, Baltimore Dredging Company won substantial business, mainly in Baltimore harbor, on Eastern Shore waterways, and on the Susquehanna River.⁵

After Constantine died in 1899, Furst and several partners established the Maryland Dredging and Contracting Company (MD&C) to expand upon the Baltimore Dredging Company's essentially local business base. In its first ten years of existence, the MD&C successfully obtained dredging work up and down the East Coast. The company also grew by absorbing other East Coast operations such as D. L. Taylor of Philadelphia and the International Contracting Company of New York.⁶

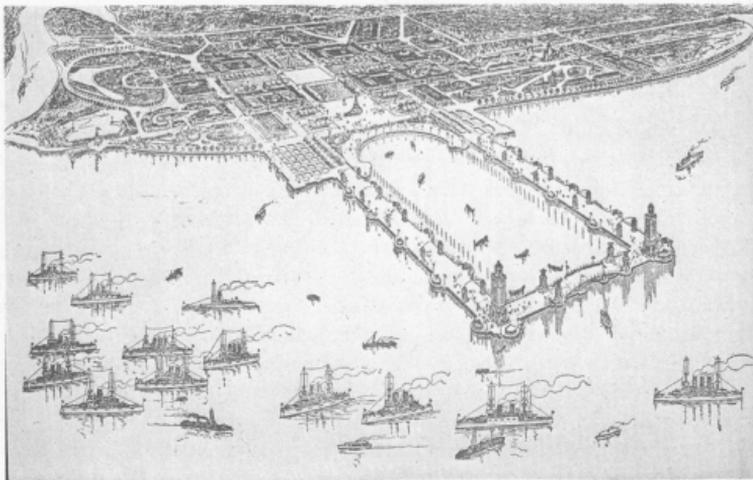
Furst's company now became a prominent operator in the Chesapeake region and beyond. Close to its home base, the MD&C dredged twenty-eight miles of Patapsco River channel and deepened the channel to the Maryland Steel Works piers at Sparrows Point. Farther south, the company dredged sections of the Potomac River below Washington, D.C., the channel between Capes Henry and Charles at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, and other sections of the Hampton Roads channel. In North Carolina, Furst's dredges pushed through a mucky, stump-studded, eight-mile tract near Beaufort, N.C., while in New York the company won an \$800,000 contract to dredge a four-mile section of the State Barge Canal near Utica.⁷

The entry of the United States into World War I provided the MD&C with a major boost. The company won a \$2.5 million contract to construct a large drydock at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. It also won construction contracts for the U.S. Army camp at Annapolis Junction (Camp Meade, later Fort Meade) and the War Department's proving grounds in Aberdeen. The former, at the time considered one of the largest construction projects ever undertaken in Maryland, involved extensive site grading, road-building, and the erection of more than a thousand buildings. The latter, the result of a \$7 million federal contract, directed Furst's company to dredge and build wharves, buildings, railroad lines, sewers, roads, and concrete pads for artillery.⁸

As important as the war contracts were in bolstering the MD&C's fortunes, they merely added to a reputation that had been built years earlier by another Furst enterprise. In February 1905, the Furst-Clark Dredging Company was established in Baltimore as a subsidiary of the MD&C. The "Clark" side of the company name, Robert P. Clark of Galveston, Texas, headed the Bowers Southern Dredging Company, one of the largest such concerns on the Gulf Coast. He also held a patent on the design of a large, advanced hydraulic dredge that the combined venture had built.⁹

Within five years the new entity became well known for taking on large, often difficult reclamation and canal-digging projects. Furst-Clark helped drain the grounds of the 1907 Jamestown Exhibition in Virginia, and reclaimed four hundred acres of shoreline in Cape May, New Jersey. The firm's greatest claims to fame, though, were the construction of the Cape Cod Canal in Massachusetts and construction of a network of drainage canals, locks, and low dams in the Florida Everglades.

The Cape Cod project was driven by famed financier and horse-racing aficionado August P. Belmont Jr., who also had financed the construction and operation of New York City's first underground subway lines. In 1909 a Belmont-affiliated company, the Cape Cod Construction Company, awarded a \$12 million contract to the Degnon



Frank Furst's company helped drain the grounds for the 1907 Jamestown tercentennial exhibition. (Library of Congress.)

Cape Cod Construction Company, a joint venture between Degnon Construction Company of New York and Furst-Clark. The venture then parceled out the breakwater and stone work to Degnon, and excavation work to Furst's company.

The Cape Cod Canal work, which began in 1909, turned out to be some of the most challenging that Furst's companies had seen to date. As Furst himself noted, "Many thought that Cape Cod was a sort of sand bar that would be play work to plow through. We discovered that it is in reality almost solid rock, the result of tremendous glacial drift."¹⁰ The company ultimately employed eight dredges, eight tugs, and nearly five hundred men to complete the massive job. Yet despite some triumphant crowing in the Baltimore press, Furst-Clark was unable to finish its work in the allotted time, proved less than adept at performing large-scale, land-based excavation on rocky Cape Cod, relinquished its final contract in 1914 while there still was follow-up dredging to do, and lost approximately \$700,000 on the project.¹¹

Just as the Cape Cod project was beginning in earnest in 1910, the board of the Everglades Drainage Commission and the trustees of Florida's Internal Improvement Fund awarded Furst-Clark another large civil project. This resulted from a competitively bid contract to excavate 184 miles of drainage canals in the Everglades, part of a grand scheme to reclaim swampland and to control flooding around Lake Okeechobee. The initial project garnered revenues of between \$3 million and \$4 million for Furst-Clark by the time of its completion in 1913.¹²

This first contract also led to follow-on Everglades work for Furst companies in

the ensuing years. Furst-Clark won a second contract to excavate a canal from Lake Okeechobee to the St. Lucie River in 1915, while in 1920, Furst's Arundel Corporation acquired part of Bowers Southern Dredging and assumed their contract for the excavation of another 116 miles of canals. More contracts would follow in 1925 and the mid-1930s.¹³

The MD&C—and Furst-Clark—and their projects accounted for only part of the growing Furst empire. Another piece of what was to become the Arundel Corporation, Arundel Sand and Gravel Company, was formed early in the twentieth century. This enterprise formed after Colin McLean of McLean Contracting Company of Baltimore engaged in a vicious price war with a company controlled by his erstwhile friend, Michael Horner. With both their businesses in danger of failing, the two men appealed to their common friend, Frank Furst, around 1900. Furst urged them to combine their companies and then became the president of the resulting firm. McLean and Horner became vice-president and secretary, while Joseph J. Hock was named general manager and later president.¹⁴

Expanding his budding conglomerate even further, Furst combined the original Arundel Sand and Gravel with five other sand, gravel, and paving outfits from Baltimore in 1913, and then added his own real estate company to the mix in 1915. Sixty acres in the Brooklyn area of Baltimore and a Potomac River gravel bed near Cedar Point were just some of the assets of the new conglomerate that by 1917 would grow even more by acquiring new quarries and companies in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.¹⁵ In 1916, Furst also established the Arundel Shipbuilding Company in the Fairfield section of Baltimore to construct barges and other vessels to move these materials.

This collection of Furst companies, of which Arundel Sand & Gravel was one of the best known, were often informally referred to as "Arundel," but Furst expressed no public interest in consolidating them until 1919. The amalgamation was consummated by August of that year, and the Arundel Corporation was born with a capitalization of \$7 million. Furst became president, and remained in that position until January 1922, when he assumed the chairmanship of the company's board. The latter move allowed Hock to ascend to the president's position.¹⁶

Furst brought other officers and board members into the Arundel fold with whom he had worked or associated for years. In addition to Hock, they included men such as John T. Daily, who had been with Furst since his Baltimore Dredging Company days; W. Bladen Lowndes, the son of former Republican governor Lloyd Lowndes, who joined Furst on the boards of Arundel and the Fidelity & Deposit Company; and Richard A. Froehlinger, recruited originally into Furst-Clark. Several, like Froehlinger or the director of dredging John T. Waldhauser, were related to Furst.¹⁷

Arundel's outside board members were drawn from Baltimore's business and political elite. They included Seymour Mandelbaum, a founder of Fidelity & Deposit; Charles M. Cohn of Consolidated Gas Electric Light and Power Company (named

president in 1942); and attorney Charles H. Knapp, later president of the International Baseball League's Baltimore Orioles. Another was Edwin Warfield Jr., whose father had been the forty-fifth governor of Maryland, a co-founder of Fidelity & Deposit, and the treasurer of Furst-Clark after leaving office.

Furst's ties to Fidelity & Deposit Company and other financial institutions—and their principals—figured prominently in his businesses. Furst served for many years as a director on the board of Fidelity & Deposit and then brought his colleagues onto the boards of Arundel and its predecessors. In turn, Fidelity & Deposit served as vital source of the surety bonding his companies needed to compete on major contracts. Furst likewise was the president of the Assurance Savings Association and at one time or another served on the boards of the Continental Trust, Canton National Bank, and Metropolitan Savings Bank, among other financial firms.¹⁸

Political Advantages

As he established the businesses that would later coalesce into the Arundel Corporation, Furst also was building political influence within the state's Democratic Party. Indeed, in 1922 the *Baltimore American*, with tongue only slightly in cheek, wrote, "Whether he belongs to the Democratic party, or the Democratic party in Maryland is one of Frank's many enterprises is a matter of opinion depending on the point of view." Referring to his "king-making" influence, the paper also dubbed Furst, "the Warwick of Maryland Democracy." At the time of his death, *The Sun* called him "the patron saint of the Democratic party of Maryland."¹⁹

Furst's political career had begun long before the 1920s. As was the case with many of his associates, Furst was a personal friend and close ally of Arthur P. Gorman, who along with Isaac Freeman Rasin dominated Maryland politics from the 1870s until nearly the turn of the century. When Gorman led the Maryland delegation to the 1888 Democratic national convention, Furst joined him for the first time as a delegate from the Third District; future governor and Furst friend Albert C. Ritchie was the district's other delegate.²⁰

Alternately citing the constraints of being a city contractor or his health, Furst never ran for office during his active political life. As ward boss and "machine" politician, Furst played an important behind-the-scenes role in backing candidates and initiatives, particularly between 1900 and 1920. For example, he threw critical support to gubernatorial candidate Emerson C. Harrington in 1915, and then to his successor, Albert Ritchie.

Furst maintained his firm support for his friend and political ally Ritchie in subsequent elections. In 1923, for example, his close friendship with John Walter Smith, former Maryland governor, U.S. Senator, and state party leader reportedly headed off a bruising primary between the governor and John M. Dennis, whom Smith preferred. Furst also rallied his supporters behind Ritchie's subsequent runs, although he did voice some reservations when the governor announced his inten-

tion to seek a fourth term. Nevertheless, when state senator David G. Macintosh expressed interest in running, Furst and other party stalwarts again intervened, helping Ritchie obtain an unopposed nomination. In addition, Furst protégé, chairman of the Baltimore board of elections, and Arundel Corporation lobbyist Robert B. Ennis served as longstanding member of Ritchie's state and national campaign organizations.²¹

Furst likewise campaigned vigorously for legislation and referenda. The latter including the unsuccessful attempt in 1905 to pass a constitutional amendment, the so-called Poe Amendment, authored by John P. Poe of the University of Maryland law school at Gorman's behest, which aimed at disfranchising black voters. As journalist and author Frank Kent noted:

Mr. Frank A. Furst took charge of the fight for the amendment in the city. Mr. Furst was heart and soul in favor of the amendment. He was also a warm friend of Mr. Gorman. He consented to take charge of the amendment campaign committee, and the work that he and this committee did was practically all the work done for the amendment in the whole city. . . . Mr. Furst raised the money, gave up his time and put his heart into the fight.²²

Ironically, vital to the amendment's defeat was the opposition of Governor Edwin Warfield, who as noted would be treasurer of Furst-Clark only a few short years thereafter.

The intertwining of Furst's business and political interests can be seen in several other areas as well, perhaps the most obvious being Baltimore's public utilities. As the *Sun* put it in his obituary, "Furst was a director in practically all of the public utility enterprises in Baltimore."²³ In 1902 he formed a syndicate to establish the Baltimore Sanitary and Contracting Company, which was awarded a ten-year contract for the collection and reduction of garbage. The company voluntarily gave up the ostensibly lucrative contract in 1907, however, after it was bombarded with complaints about the stench from its South Baltimore incinerator and, as Furst put it, "constant and irritating public criticism" that the company was making a killing on its franchise.²⁴

The sanitation company was a prelude to other forays into the public utility world. Furst ensconced himself deeply in the electricity and electric streetcar businesses, serving as vice president and director on Baltimore's United Railway and Electric Company from 1906 through 1915. He also sat on the board at Maryland Telegraph & Telephone Company, which was merged into the Baltimore Electric Company in 1907. That translated one year later into a board seat with Consolidated Gas Electric Light and Power Company after the latter swallowed Baltimore Electric. Furst resigned from the Consolidated board in 1910, immediately after Boston financier and Consolidated chairman James E. Aldred replaced former Baltimore mayor Ferdinand C. Latrobe as president.²⁵

Not surprisingly, Furst's political and business efforts in Baltimore often reinforced each other. Sherry H. Olson inferred in her city history that Furst's public utility businesses were aimed at helping him build his political influence. "Taken singly," she wrote, "these enterprises were modest, but they were political franchises, secure monopolies, and they allowed Furst to hand out laboring jobs and fill the coal hods of the poor, reinforcing his political base."²⁶

Those enterprises, though, were not always unalloyed successes for Furst and his partners. Public complaints eventually drove Furst from the sanitation business. In addition, the United Railway and Electric Company labored under a heavy debt load, a portion of it resulting from reconstruction and rehabilitation costs after the 1904 fire. The streetcar company also contended with the city over track extensions, street maintenance, taxes, and the regulation of fares.²⁷

Moreover, as its annual report for 1910 noted, the company plowed most of its operating profits back into its system instead of paying out dividends. Hence, expansion and improvements were made "at the expense of the common stockholder, who has not yet received a dividend upon his stock."²⁸ The directors of the United Railway pointed to this sacrifice as evidence of their public spiritedness, which helped Baltimore grow and thrive.

For his own part, Furst proclaimed that he had "a real and vital interest" in Baltimore's welfare, an assertion he backed up with a range of public-service efforts. These included his participation on the sixty-three-member Citizens' Emergency Committee appointed by Mayor Robert McLane to recommend a reconstruction plan after the 1904 fire. As chairman of two subcommittees, Furst actively campaigned for the bond issues that the committee proposed. He also contributed cash to and served on the executive committee of the Industrial Corporation of Baltimore, which was formed in 1915 to attract new businesses to the city. On the state level, he spent many years as chairman of the board of directors of the Maryland Penitentiary.²⁹

His public-spiritedness notwithstanding, Furst's web of personal and political ties also could protect his business interests from political heat. In 1917, for example, J. Charles Linthicum leapt to his defense in the U.S. House of Representatives when Wisconsin Congressman James A. Frear accused the Maryland Dredging & Contracting Company of having a monopoly on public work in Baltimore harbor. Frear was quoted as saying that the MD&C "possessing so many exclusive Government contracts, some at questionably high prices, has for its president the same gentleman whose name purports to have been signed as president of the board of directors of the Atlantic and Gulf Coast Dredge Owners Association, which association in past years secretly allotted Government contracts to its various members."³⁰ Linthicum lambasted Frear, pointing out that MD&C had lost federal bids in Baltimore, and that the only work Furst's company had won recently was the dredging of the Craighill Channel. Linthicum further argued that the dredge owner's association had been

defunct for more than ten years, ignoring the fact that it had been superseded by yet another dredging trade association and not addressing whether the old association had indeed engaged in the fixing of contracts.³¹

First Dams

In the mid-1920s, the same personal and political ties that aided Furst in Baltimore appeared to play a role in moving the Arundel Corporation into the dam construction business. Arundel won a major share of the work on the Conowingo Dam project on the Susquehanna River in 1925, followed in 1929 by a contract to be the sole builder of the Safe Harbor Dam, also located on the Susquehanna in Pennsylvania. Furst's political allies, personal friends, and business acquaintances from Maryland were intimately involved with both these projects. In 1927, however, Arundel also obtained work on the Saluda Dam in upstate South Carolina, suggesting that while Furst's Maryland connections may have helped get his company into dam construction initially, the company's hard-won technical capabilities were vital in obtaining and expanding the business.

For its part, the Conowingo project was a lightning rod for controversy before, during, and after its construction. When built, this concrete gravity dam was the third largest in the United States, after Niagara Falls, New York, and Muscle Shoals, Alabama. Commissioned by the Pennsylvania-based Philadelphia Electric Company, its electrical output was intended primarily to serve that city. The structure itself was located in Maryland, but most of the pool behind the dam lay in Pennsylvania, requiring the company to obtain the approval of the public service commissions in both states. The Federal Power Commission (FPC) also had to weigh in, given that the Susquehanna was navigable in places.³²

As a Conowingo supporter, Albert Ritchie, as well as Maryland's Public Service Commission (PSC), which approved the dam's construction, endured persistent criticism for relinquishing Maryland's rights to the project. Critics such as the Baltimore Federation of Labor insisted that Maryland should be developing the dam to provide publicly owned power to its cities and towns, just as states such as New York were considering doing. Failing that, low-cost, hydroelectric power from Conowingo should be directed to Baltimore to provide competition for the Consolidated Gas Electric Light and Power Company.³³

As it was, the Consolidated was receiving more than 40 percent of its electricity from the McCall Ferry Dam (later renamed Holtwood Dam), also located on the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania. McCall Ferry was owned by the Pennsylvania Water & Power Company, which in turn was controlled by the aforementioned James E. Aldred. In 1910, in a bid to ensure that McCall Ferry's capacity could be used to its greatest extent, Aldred also had bought a controlling stake in the Consolidated. Named president of both companies, Aldred oversaw a power sale agreement between Pennsylvania Water & Power and the Maryland utility soon thereafter.³⁴

Ritchie responded to his Conowingo critics after being reelected to a third term. Writing in the *Sun* in November 1926, the governor explained that Maryland would have had to take on more than \$50 million in new debt to finance a dam itself, debt that would have had to have been paid off in fifteen years, according to the state's constitution. Moreover, Conowingo would generate more power than Baltimore could use, and the electricity generated by the Maryland dam would be more expensive than that supplied by McCall's Ferry. Also, Ritchie wrote, if in the future Baltimore needed power from Conowingo, the PSC could abrogate a 1908 agreement with McCall Ferry's original developers, and which had been inherited by Aldred's company, that gave it exclusive rights to supply the city.³⁵

One criticism Ritchie did not address specifically was the fact that Philadelphia Electric had awarded his key political ally's company a significant portion of the Conowingo work.³⁶ Slightly more than a month before a combined session of the Maryland and Pennsylvania public service commissions and the FPC, Philadelphia Electric's chief engineer, W. C. L. Eglin, assured the *Sun* that Maryland firms would be among those obtaining work on the dam, mentioning only the Arundel Corporation by name. The paper previously had reported that the contract might be let solely to Stone & Webster, Inc., which had already worked on many Philadelphia Electric projects and was one of the leading power project engineering, construction, and financing firms in the country.³⁷

In the week following the combined regulatory meeting, the utility announced that Arundel would construct the concrete body of the dam as well as relocate a sixteen-mile, double-tracked section of the Columbia & Port Deposit Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad that would be inundated by the new dam's pool. Stone & Webster, as it turned out, would only handle design and engineering work, construct the dam's associated powerhouse, and act as the owner's agent. Arundel estimated that the total award amount would fall into the \$16 million to \$21 million range at a time when the company pegged its existing backlog of unfinished work at \$9 million. In nominal dollar terms, Conowingo was by far the largest single project that Arundel or any its predecessors had yet undertaken.³⁸

Addison Mullikan, Ritchie's Republican challenger in the 1926 election, criticized Ritchie's overall handling of the dam issue during his campaign. Republicans took up the cudgels again early the next year in the House of Delegates, with Paul Berman of Baltimore calling for an independent investigation. Among the points Berman wanted examined were all "conferences held at the office of Frank A. Furst and the Arundel Corporation relating to contracts looking to the building of the Conowingo dam" and any conference at Furst's offices "when any of the members of the Public Service Commission were present when the contracts of the building of the Conowingo dam were discussed." Berman also wanted Arundel's and Stone & Webster's contracts investigated as well.³⁹

Berman's investigation demands never went very far. Ritchie shrugged off the

issue, saying "I must be getting along pretty nicely if this is all they can rake up against me."⁴⁰ By that time, construction of the dam had been ongoing for almost a year.

Work at Conowingo began on March 8, 1926, with the movement of materials needed to build two camps for construction workers—Stone & Webster's on the west bank Susquehanna, Arundel's on the east—on a site forty miles from Baltimore. Arundel workers subsequently built a siding from the Pennsylvania Railroad's main line and a rail yard to receive a steady flow of construction materials. They also commenced work on the nearly eighteen-month rail line relocation effort. The construction of the first cofferdams allowed work on the dam's foundation to start in late April. Bedrock on the river bottom was excavated and used to make concrete, and the first of the 435,000 cubic yards of concrete used in the dam was poured in August.⁴¹

From a financial and operational perspective, the Arundel Corporation seemed well prepared for the challenges of dam construction. Pointing to Arundel's ample working capital, Furst squelched rumors that the company would have to issue additional stocks or bonds to acquire the necessary equipment and machinery for the Conowingo project. Likewise, the firm had sufficient engineering and supervisory talent and skilled labor, and it could tap a large pool of semi- and unskilled workers through a network of Baltimore hiring offices. When overall construction manpower at Conowingo peaked in August 1927, Arundel had 837 workers on its portion of the dam site, and another 1,400 working on the rail line.⁴²

It also helped to have an experienced engineering and construction overseer such as Stone & Webster on the scene. Despite numerous challenges, including a November 1927 flooding that overtopped Arundel's cofferdams, the dam was substantially complete and delivering electricity to Philadelphia by March 1, 1928, six months ahead of schedule and slightly more than two years after work began.⁴³

As it turned out, Conowingo was not Arundel's last Susquehanna dam. Grappling with the need for new electrical generation after agreeing to provide power to the Pennsylvania Railroad's Maryland lines southwest of the Susquehanna, Consolidated—along with Pennsylvania Water & Power—concluded that another hydroelectric dam would be required. This dam would be located at Safe Harbor, approximately eight miles north of Holtwood Dam, on the "hard-working" Susquehanna. The two companies formed a new joint venture, the Safe Harbor Power Corporation, in January 1930. Consolidated owned two-thirds of the new entity's common stock and acquired title to two-thirds of the dam's output.⁴⁴

By that time, Arundel was deep into preliminary work on the project. Men and material had begun arriving on the site only days after the October 1929 stock market crash. Overall, there had seemed to be little question that the firm would get the Safe Harbor construction contract. Arundel had a proven track record from Conowingo and other high-profile public works projects, and it was financially sound going into a period of increasing economic uncertainty. Although construction and dredging

revenue was notoriously "lumpy" due to the timing and mix of projects, Arundel as a whole boasted a record net income of more than \$2 million in 1929, had more than \$1 million in cash on hand at the end of the year, and paid out more than \$1.1 million in dividends.⁴⁵

Frank Furst's personal ties likely carried some weight in the Safe Harbor win, just as they were suspected of doing at Conowingo. Significantly, Arundel's chief was well acquainted with the principals planning the Safe Harbor project. As noted earlier, Charles Cohn of Consolidated had been on Arundel's board for years, and Furst himself had served on Consolidated's board until 1910, when Aldred bought a controlling stake in the utility and assumed both the chairmanship and the presidency. Similarly, when Aldred bought his way onto the board of the United Railway and Electric Company in 1915, Furst resigned from both his board and vice president positions.

Whether those moves had been agreed to amicably by the two men is unclear. What is certain is that they knew each other and at least at times worked at common purposes. Both Furst and Cohn, for example, were on the executive committee of the Industrial Corporation of Baltimore (Cohn became chairman in 1919). That organization, in turn, resulted from the findings of a 1914–1915 industrial survey that Aldred organized.⁴⁶

Whatever the primary reasons for its contract award were, in 1929 Arundel again faced the challenge of building a dam, powerhouse, and tailrace on the often fickle Susquehanna River. This project, too, required the relocation of nine miles of Pennsylvania Railroad line and the construction of residences for the dam's operators and their families. All told, the entire contract amount was nearly \$16.7 million.⁴⁷

In some respects, constructing the Safe Harbor dam presented even greater challenges than had Conowingo. The Susquehanna was approximately one mile wide at this point, with steep, rocky banks on each side. That left little room for materials storage, concrete mixing plants, worker dormitories, and administration buildings, all of which had to be built farther from the river. Likewise, the layout of the dam construction site required Arundel to build about twenty miles of temporary railroad track to move rock, crushed stone, sand, cement, steel, and equipment to and from the site.⁴⁸

Despite the obstacles, Arundel—under the direction of longtime Aldred construction superintendant George Henry Angell, who also had overseen construction of the Holtwood and other major dams, and who had been on Philadelphia Electric's team at Conowingo—substantially completed the Safe Harbor project nine months ahead of schedule, and the dam began supplying electricity in December 1931. Costs also were cheaper than anticipated, as the accelerating economic downturn that became the Great Depression cut down on demand for construction materials and labor elsewhere.⁴⁹

In between winning the Conowingo and Safe Harbor work, Arundel also signed

a contract to build a massive new dam on the Saluda River in South Carolina, approximately ten miles from the capital, Columbia. The circumstances under which Arundel won the Saluda work differed from those of its previous dam projects, at least on the surface. For one, the owner of the project, the General Gas and Electric Company of New York, had fewer apparent connections to Frank Furst's business and political network in Maryland. Arundel, however, did perform substantial dredging, sewer, and highway work in New York and northern New Jersey in the years after its 1919 establishment. Moreover, at that point most of the capital for the growing U.S. electrical system—just as for earlier infrastructure projects such as the Cape Cod Canal—came from New York-based investors. Furst undoubtedly knew his way around that community, particularly given his earlier connections with financiers such as August Belmont and the years he spent as director at the Fidelity & Trust Company, which had a major New York presence.

The man Furst would have had to know on the Saluda project was William S. Barstow, a former protégé of Thomas Edison who formed W. S. Barstow & Company in 1901 to engineer, build, and manage public utility properties. Barstow subsequently brought numerous smaller electrical utilities and electric streetcar companies in the Northeast, Midwest, and the South into the General Gas & Electric/Barstow & Co. fold. General Gas and Electric was itself acquired in 1929 by Associated Gas and Electric, a holding company in which Barstow assumed an engineering and construction management role.⁵⁰

Barstow announced the Saluda dam construction award to Arundel in August 1927, but his company retained responsibility for much of the associated work, including the powerhouse, machinery installation, site clearing, and housing. Moreover, for this work Arundel signed a "guaranteed unit price" contract, commonly used on large civil construction projects. Under this type of contract, the company quoted per-unit prices for certain quantities or activities, such as the amount of soil excavated. Barstow & Company still faced the risk that its estimates for the overall quantities were incorrect and that it thus would end up paying more than expected. That differed from Arundel's Conowingo and Safe Harbor contracts, which were "cost plus fee" and which left even more of the risk of cost overruns with the projects' owners.⁵¹

The Saluda project also represented a new type of construction challenge for Arundel. It was the largest earthen dam in the world at the time of its completion, standing 208 feet high, stretching almost 1.5 miles, and having a maximum width of nearly one-quarter mile at its base. Its construction required the placement of 11 million cubic yards of soil, as well as the laying of 60,000 feet of trestle and 30 miles of on-site railroad tracks to facilitate the dumping of earth carried from nearby pits. On average, 2,000 soil-laden railcars dumped material onto the dam site each day, from where it was sluiced into a large pool. The deposits in the pool then settled and hardened into the core of the emerging dam.⁵²

Like the Susquehanna, the Saluda River conspired against Arundel's project. Rains from the remnants of two back-to-back hurricanes in September 1929 caused flooding that damaged the partially completed powerhouse. Nevertheless, the dam was completed 100 days ahead of schedule in June 1930, allowing Arundel to collect a \$100,000 early-completion bonus from Barstow & Company. Overall, the project garnered more than \$5.7 million for Arundel; by way of comparison, construction work on the Conowingo Dam alone (without the associated railroad relocation) paid the company more than \$7.7 million.⁵³

With the completion of the Safe Harbor Dam at the end of 1931, the Arundel Corporation had completed three major dams in six years. These efforts entailed the mobilization of thousands of men, hundreds of pieces of machinery, and enormous amounts of materials—always to rural sites, where access was rudimentary at best—as well as significant upfront financial investment.

The company likewise pursued a variety of innovations to increase its productivity during these projects. One, which Arundel devised and used on both Susquehanna dams, involved the use of a temporary steel construction bridge running the length of the dam. A traveling derrick, gantry cranes, and a concrete elevator tower moved along the bridge, allowing the rapid erection of steel and formwork and the pouring of cement. One customer, Philadelphia Electric, noted appreciatively that this arrangement allowed the erection of 4,600 tons of structural steel "at a remarkably low cost."⁵⁴

Moving West

With its experience on the eastern dams, Arundel seemed well positioned to expand farther afield in search of new opportunities, but the landscape for large construction projects was changing as the nation moved deeper into the Depression. Much prospective dam construction work was moving to the West, the result of state lobbying for a greater federal role in irrigation and flood control projects in the region. That dynamic, along with the economic downturn, made the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Army's Corps of Engineers two of the biggest issuers of heavy construction contracts by the early 1930s. Those agencies awarded contracts using a time-tested, relatively transparent competitive bidding process.

With an estimated cost of \$177 million, the Boulder (later Hoover) Dam, was the largest federal contract ever put out to bid up until 1931. Designed to tame the Colorado River and provide water and power to Southern California, the project drew the interest of potential bidders from throughout the United States, including Arundel. Ultimately, the Maryland firm went head-to-head with four other bidders, two of which offered the most serious competition. Arundel ultimately lost to the Six Companies, a joint venture of mostly major western construction firms that included the venerable Utah Construction, Bechtel, Morris Knudsen, and Henry J. Kaiser companies, among others.⁵⁵

The difference between the Arundel and the Six Companies bids was \$5 million, almost all of it concentrated on one item in the contract, the placement of 3.4 million cubic yards of concrete in the dam. That gap may have reflected the presence of Frank Crowe, former long-time dam constructor with the Bureau of Reclamation, on the Six Companies team. Otherwise, almost all of Arundel's other pricing on the bid was similar to that of the Six Companies.⁵⁶

The loss of this work undoubtedly was a major disappointment for Furst and the rest of the company's leadership, since revenue-wise, Boulder Dam would have been Arundel's largest project ever. Without an experienced superintendent such as Crowe, though, there is no guarantee that the project at Boulder would have been profitable for Arundel. The dams Arundel had built in the East were lower and stretched across broad, mile-wide rivers, while the Boulder Dam was built in the relatively narrow Black Canyon with high, nearly vertical walls. The river bottoms upon which the dams' foundations were built differed between east and west as well. At the very least, the Maryland company's learning curve doubtless would have been steep.

Arundel also took more risk in going into the Boulder Dam alone, unlike the Six Companies, which had joined together to pool their resources. Multi-party joint ventures in the construction industry, while not unheard of, were still relatively rare before the 1930s. Construction methods, costs, and people were often considered trade secrets that, if widely known, could undermine a contractor's competitive position. Yet, as projects—in particular federal projects such as the western dams—grew in size and scope, many companies found themselves unable to obtain the surety bonds they needed to bid on these contracts. Alliances between multiple companies became an important method for spreading risk and thus obtaining bonding.⁵⁷

For the Boulder Dam bid, Arundel initially allied itself with Lynn H. Atkinson of Los Angeles, a member of the family that had spawned the successful and growing construction firm Guy F. Atkinson Company, but the two later parted ways. Consequently, a contract award would have required Arundel to bear significant upfront investment costs on its own. As it was, the company had to secure its own \$2 million surety bond required to bid on the contract. Fidelity & Deposit probably provided some of the coverage for Arundel, as it did for almost all the construction company's work. The Baltimore surety, however, also was one of four companies that together furnished a bond for the Six Companies.⁵⁸

The loss of the Boulder Dam bid did not hurt Arundel's immediate business prospects. Work continued on several major projects, including Safe Harbor. Income from operations, which encompassed all Arundel's business lines, hit \$3.5 million in 1932, the second highest in company history to date, and dividend payouts remained above \$1 million.⁵⁹ The company continued to win construction contracts in the early to mid-1930s that, while not generating the revenue that dam projects did, at least brought in a stream of income. In the firm's home market, a contract let by Baltimore city government even helped Arundel stay connected with the dam construction

business by giving the firm a supervisory role in the building of Prettyboy Dam in Baltimore County.⁶⁰

These continuing awards could not keep the deepening U.S. economic decline from affecting Arundel's financial results, which began a gradual decline in 1933. By 1935, income from operations was only 20 percent of what it had been in 1932, and the dividend had been cut to less than \$500,000. All the company's businesses were suffering at this point, including construction.⁶¹

The company also was undergoing profound internal change. After growing Arundel and its predecessors for almost fifty years, the eighty-eight-year-old Frank Furst died in his Baltimore home in January 1934 after several months' illness. Joseph Hock assumed the leadership of the firm, but less than five months later he too passed away at the age of fifty-four. Next in line for the presidency was the Cornell-educated Joseph V. Hogan, who had served as chief engineer with D. L. Taylor, Arundel's manager in New York and as special assistant to Furst since the late 1920s.⁶²

Under Hogan, the company continued to look nationwide for new business, but their early experiences in the West had left its managers wary. That changed in early 1938, when representatives from Pacific Constructors, Inc. (PCI) contacted Hogan and Arundel's chief engineer, C. Warren Black, to gauge Arundel's interest in joining the venture. PCI was a group of eight companies—six were based in California—formed in 1937 at the instigation of William A. Johnson, president of Los Angeles-based American Pipe and Construction Company. The new joint company was designed specifically to obtain the Bureau of Reclamation contract to build the Grand Coulee Dam in the state of Washington. After losing that bid, the company tried its luck in the East by competing for work on a Delaware River water tunnel, again to no avail.⁶³

Undeterred, PCI set its sights on winning the contract for the Shasta Dam on the Sacramento River in California. A larger structure than even the Boulder Dam, Shasta was a central component of that state's Central Valley Project, a system of dams, canals, tunnels, and bridges to increase irrigation water available in the Sacramento and San Joaquin river valleys, reduce periodic flooding, and generate electricity. The state legislature applied for emergency federal assistance in 1933, and the Roosevelt Administration approved the project in 1935 and in 1937 placed it under the cognizance of the Bureau of Reclamation. The bureau subsequently solicited construction bids on April 1, 1938.⁶⁴

Shasta Dam, considered a plum contract for Depression-era contractors, drew the interest of some of the Six Companies and PCI, among others. For this bid, PCI's directors thought it best to expand their pool of partners. They reached out to five additional companies in the East and Midwest, including Arundel. Four agreed to join in short order, but as PCI's official history phrased it,

It took a little selling to get Joe Hogan of Arundel interested, as several years before they had bid on a Pacific Coast project and had their low bid rejected. Joe figured they had been "euchred" out of it by the native sons, and the memory of that experience still rankled.⁶⁵

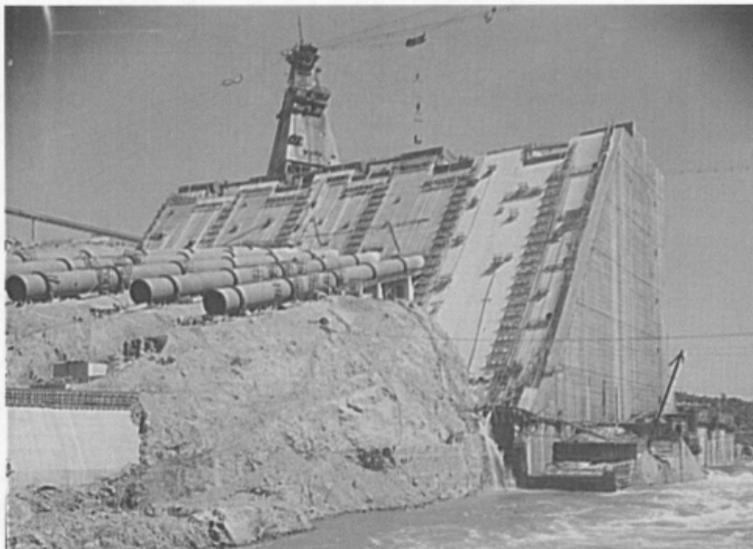
Whether that "low bid" was on Boulder Dam or another project is not clear. Nevertheless, the leadership of the Maryland company, "native sons" in the East, now decided to join a new set of partners to compete in the West. A reorganized PCI was capitalized at \$3 million, as demanded by the sureties (the Shasta project in total required \$9.5 million of bid, performance, and payment bonds), with the six largest companies, including Arundel, paying in a 10 percent share. Arundel engineers and estimators joined those of PCI's western members, who had been scouring the Shasta site and plans for months. The combined company set up their headquarters in the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles.⁶⁶

When first joining PCI, Arundel and the other new members of the joint company had argued for a conservative proposal on the Shasta Dam project, preferring not to structure their bid in a way that would help them win the contract but also expose them to losses. After the individual companies had each developed their own estimates and submitted them to their partners for consideration, though, Hogan of Arundel surprisingly sided with those pushing for a lower bid. His argument was that any bid of more than \$34 million would be a waste of time. Many of the supposedly less risk-averse western members wanted a higher figure. The PCI principals ultimately compromised on slightly more than \$35.9 million.⁶⁷

Even as the joint company hammered out its bid, members also engaged in psychological warfare against their competitor, Shasta Construction Company, which included several of the original Six Companies. That combination of firms, along with others, had beaten the earlier manifestation of PCI handily for the Grand Coulee Dam work. This time, PCI kept a low profile and as much as possible feigned indifference to the Shasta Dam competition, as if expecting their bid to lose.

That ruse may have worked. When Bureau of Reclamation officials opened the bids in June 1938, PCI had bested Shasta Construction's submission by less than 1 percent and was declared the winner. Henry Kaiser of SCC—who would go on to build the Kaiser construction, manufacturing, and health care empire—immediately noticed a phrase in PCI's bid stating that prices were valid only if PCI won the entire contract (the bureau had the option of breaking up the work between bidders). Kaiser declared that PCI's bid was thus "irregular" and should be thrown out.⁶⁸

What happened next highlighted how the heavy construction business was changing from Arundel's and its predecessors' earlier years, when Frank Furst's political and personal ties played—or at least appeared to play—as much of a role in winning work as the company's construction capabilities. SCC's protest went first to the Bureau of Reclamation's Denver office, then to the bureau's headquarters



in Washington, D.C. PCI's principals followed the paperwork to each location in an attempt to plead their case. Hogan met them in the capital. In Denver, a bureau engineer politely told PCI's management that their case was reasonable but their continued lobbying was not greatly appreciated. In Washington, a bureau commissioner told them the case rested solely in the hands of the Interior Department's legal department. All PCI could do was wait for a decision.

That decision finally came on July 2, when Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes announced that PCI's bid had survived the challenge. The official notice to proceed followed in September. By that time, PCI was already organized to begin work. A fortuitous addition to their team came in the person of Frank Crowe, who had recently completed another Six Companies dam. Just as PCI was struggling to find the right manager for the huge Shasta project, Crowe applied for the job of general superintendent. As PCI's history noted:

Here was the outstanding dam builder of the nation, with an organization picked and chosen over the years, ready to move on the job and go to work. Crowe had spent months studying the job and had a complete plan worked out for the operation. This was a windfall that none of us expected.⁶⁹

Arundel's Hogan joined PCI's board of directors, which assumed strategic oversight over Crowe and the project. That activity—as well as the company's in-



Above and opposite: Shasta Dam, 1942. The federal Bureau of Reclamation issued a call for bids on California's Shasta Dam project. Arundel joined Pacific Constructors, Inc. and the group won the job. (Library of Congress.)

itial investment and its estimating and engineering input to the bid—constituted Arundel's direct involvement in the construction of Shasta Dam. Meanwhile, other directors such as L. E. Dixon, who headed the board's engineering and construction committee, scrambled to purchase and lease the equipment and plant needed for the massive project.⁷⁰

Work on the project, located fifteen miles from Redding, California, began in August 1938 with the construction of housing for workers and their families, a mess hall, and a hospital. During the next two years, Crowe's men diverted the Sacramento and erected a huge steel headtower to facilitate the movement and pouring of concrete. Crews also erected a 9.5-mile conveyor belt, one of the longest ever built to date, to carry aggregate from quarries to the dam site.

Even with slight delays and the obligatory flooding, work continued apace. In June 1945, slightly more than 2,500 days after the project began, the U.S. government formally accepted the 600-foot high, 3,500-foot long structure and its powerhouse. As construction wound down, the joint company began to liquidate itself, paying out dividends to its constituent companies. For its part, Arundel ultimately received \$591,145 on its original \$300,000 investment.⁷¹

The success of the Shasta Dam project made Arundel less reticent about pursuing

western work. Indeed, long before Shasta was completed, Arundel and PCI partner L. E. Dixon formed a decades-long partnership that would take both companies into the upper ranks of the country's dam builders and lead to other heavy construction contracts as well.

Lucius E. "Dick" Dixon had originally joined the Edwards and Wildey Company in Los Angeles in 1916 as chief engineer and managing partner. The company became the Edwards, Wildey, and Dixon Company in 1919, the same year the Arundel Corporation was formed, and the L. E. Dixon Company in 1928 after the last of its original founders died. Like the Arundel Corporation, L. E. Dixon had undertaken numerous civil construction projects including dams, but it also engaged in residential, commercial, and other building work as well. The Los Angeles Coliseum, the Shrine Auditorium, and the Spreckels Building in San Diego were just some of the projects of which Dixon could boast.⁷³

Dixon got along well professionally and personally with Arundel's management, particularly Richard Froehlinger, who assumed the presidency of Arundel in October 1941. As noted, Froehlinger had been with the MD&C and Furst-Clark since 1911, and had been executive vice-president at Arundel since January 1940. He also became acting president when Hogan fell ill later that year.⁷³

Arundel made Dixon its vice-president for western operations and a company director in 1941. Thus joined, the two companies plotted a course to win an array of new western construction contracts. The first was a \$2.6 million Army Corps of Engineers contract to build the Upper Narrows (now Englebright) hydroelectric dam on the Yuba River in California in 1939, followed by a \$1.8 million contract with San Diego's city government to construct the San Vicente Dam. Moving to the Pacific Northwest, the venture contracted with the city of Tacoma for the Alder and LaGrande dams and powerhouses on the Nisqually River in Washington State, the former for \$5.4 million. All of those projects were completed before Shasta.⁷⁴

The early success of this joint venture was probably due in large part to Dixon's knowledge of the West Coast market, including the area's subcontractors, its labor situation, and available plant and equipment. His company's track record obviously helped as well. In the ensuing years, Arundel and Dixon expanded well beyond California and Washington. Dam contracts in Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, and New York followed in short order, won by Arundel-Dixon by themselves or as part of broader ventures with other construction firms.

Dixon and Arundel did not cooperate on all their many and varied construction projects. Arundel continued to perform most of its own non-dam, civil construction work in the eastern United States. Likewise, the two companies did not share Arundel's largest contract, a federal government award let in 1939 to construct naval airfields, piers, and other defense facilities in Puerto Rico and the Antilles in cooperation with Consolidated Engineering of Baltimore. Arundel also exclusively built the Liberty Dam on the Patapsco River, again adding to the city of Baltimore's water supply.

Nevertheless, where Arundel and Dixon did partner on construction contracts, either by themselves or in conjunction with other companies, award amounts totaled more than \$625 million. Dam and reservoir work accounted for almost 70 percent of that total.⁷⁵ In 1964, Dixon and Arundel even returned to the Susquehanna River where Arundel's dam work had begun thirty-nine years earlier, to build the Muddy Run pumped storage generating plant for Philadelphia Electric. Unlike Arundel's earlier dam projects, that work was marked by delays and a contentious relationship with their customer as the utility struggled with the federal permitting process and issued numerous design changes.⁷⁶

The two construction firms were also part of other, less successful ventures, including one that entailed digging New York City's Water Tunnel #3. Their six-company joint venture won the bid in 1969, the year that an aging Dixon left Arundel's board, although he remained a vice president. The New York project eventually devolved into years of acrimonious claims and counterclaims between the contractors and a fiscally strapped city and put considerable financial strain on Arundel and its partners.⁷⁷

Problems with some projects notwithstanding, by 1970 Arundel was known as one of the "top dam constructors" in the country, in no small part because of the approach it had reluctantly agreed to in 1938. The company ultimately worked on more than twenty-five major dam and reservoir projects in the United States and Canada during its corporate lifetime. The list is even longer if hydroelectric and water supply projects are included where the company did not work on the dams themselves but only on "appurtenances" such as tunnels or powerhouses. Locks and dams built for Army Corps of Engineer river navigation projects added still more to this total.⁷⁸

In its pursuit of civil construction projects in the 1930s, the Arundel Corporation had stumbled upon new, highly capable partners. With these partners, the company found a reliable way to compete for civil work, including dams, across the United States. Moreover, for the most part it did so profitably, despite facing formidable competition. In hindsight, Frank Furst's Maryland ties may have helped get Arundel into the dam-building business in the 1920s, but competence—and, perhaps just as importantly, the serendipitous offer from PCI in the 1930s—helped keep it there for more than fifty years.

NOTES

1. J. S. Armstrong, "Bids Are Opened on Boulder Dam," *Baltimore Sun*, March 5, 1931, p. 17.
2. Maryland Dredging and Contracting Co., D. L. Taylor & Co., Arundel Sand and Gravel Co., Baltimore Transportation Co., Patapsco Ballast Co., and Arundel Shipbuilding Co., were the six companies Furst fused to form the Arundel Corporation.

3. "Simple Rites Friday for Frank A. Furst," *Baltimore Sun*, January 24, 1934, p. 22; Felix Angus, ed., *The Book of Maryland: Men and Institutions* (Baltimore: Maryland Biographical Association, 1920), 30; various authors, *Baltimore: Its History and Its People*, vol. 2 (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1912), 213.
4. "35 Years in Grain Trade," *Baltimore Sun*, December 29, 1901, p. 7.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 7; Arundel Corporation *Annual Report*, 1958, 3; "Local Matters," *Baltimore Sun*, September 20, 1884, p. 6; "Captain Constantine Dead," *Sun*, August 30, 1899, p. 7. *Annual Report of the Secretary of War for the Year 1887*, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1887), 829, 837; U.S. House of Representatives, 56th Cong., 2d Session, Doc. 2, *Report of the Chief of Engineers for the Year Ended June 30, 1900* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), 1645-59.
6. Angus, *The Book of Maryland*, 214; "Incorporated in Delaware," *New York Times*, November 8, 1899.
7. "Notable Feats in Dredging," *Baltimore Sun*, May 9, 1910, p. 5, *Baltimore: Its History and Its People*, 214.
8. *Engineering and Contracting*, April 18, 1917, p. 26; "\$25 million to be Spent on Camp," *Baltimore American*, June 25, 1917, p. 11; "Has Proving Grounds Job," *Baltimore Sun*, October 18, 1917, p. 5.
9. "To Build Mammoth Dredge," *Baltimore Sun*, February 7, 1905, p. 7.
10. "Baltimore Dredges Dug the Cape Cod Canal," *ibid.*, July 12, 1914, p. 2.
11. Degnon Cape Cod Canal Company was dissolved in April 1912, and contracts given directly to Degnon Contracting Company and Furst-Clark, see *ibid.*; Cape Cod Canal, Letter from the Secretary of War, House Documents, 65th Congress, 3d Sess. Dec. 2, 1918-March 4, 1919 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1919), 38; William Barclay Parsons, "The Cape Cod Canal," Papers and Discussions, *Proceedings of the American Society of Civil Engineers*, 48 (August 1917): 1050-1089.
12. *Minutes of the Trustees Internal Improvement Fund of the State of Florida*, vol. 8 (Tallahassee: State of Florida, 1910), 413-14; Junius Elmore Dovell, "A History of the Everglades of Florida," unpublished manuscript, 1947, 242, Chapel Hill, N.C. Online at <http://sofia.usgs.gov/memorials/dovell/thesis/pdfs/chapterVII.pdf>.
13. Dovell, "History of the Everglades," 378-79; "Company to Build 100 Miles Canals," *Miami Herald Record*, July 11, 1920, p. 7; Arundel Corporation, *Annual Report*, 1941, Baltimore Museum of Industry (BMI).
14. McLean et al. v. Maloy et al. (No. 18), Court of Appeals of Maryland, June 17, 1920, in *The Atlantic Reporter*, vol. 111 (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing Co, 1921), 91-92; Statement of Mr. Joseph J. Hock, Baltimore, Md., representing the Arundel Sand & Gravel Co., in *Hearings before the Committee on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries, U.S. House of Representatives, 64th Congress, First Session, on H.R. 9678, February 1, 1916* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1916), 48.
15. "\$6,000,000 Sand Merger," *Baltimore Sun*, January 25, 1913, p. 14; "Arundel Co. to Expand," *ibid.*, November 21, 1915, p. 16.
16. "Furst studies merger," *ibid.*, May 30, 1919, p. 20.
17. Author's interview with Richard A. Froehlinger Jr., June 9, 2010.
18. Angus, *The Book of Maryland*, 215.
19. "Warwick of Maryland Democracy," *Baltimore American*, June 30, 1922, p. 10; "Simple Rites Friday for Frank A. Furst," *Baltimore Sun*, January 24, 1934, p. 22.
20. Frank Richardson Kent, *The Story of Maryland Politics* (Baltimore: Thomas & Evans Printing Co., 1911), 162.

21. "Simple Rites Friday for Frank A. Furst," p. 9; *Baltimore Sun*, March 13, 1899 (untitled), p. 10; Jame Levin, "Governor Albert Ritchie and the Democratic Convention of 1924," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 66 (1971): 110; Steve Neal, *Happy Days Are Here Again: The 1932 Democratic Convention, the Emergence of FDR—and How America Was Changed Forever* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 134.
22. Kent, *Story of Maryland Politics*, 336.
23. "Simple Rites Friday for Frank A. Furst," p. 9.
24. "Complaint about Garbage Plant," *Baltimore American*, August 1, 1905, p. 14; "Mr. Furst Would Quit," *Baltimore Sun*, January 19, 1907, p. 14.
25. Thomson King, *Consolidated of Baltimore, 1816–1950* (Baltimore: Baltimore Gas & Electric, 1950), 165–66; "Mr. Frank Furst Elected," *Baltimore Sun*, April 15, 1908, p. 12; "Aldred at Head of Gas Company," *Sun*, December 15, 1910, p. 13.
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27. For example, see *Eleventh Annual Report to the Stockholders of the United Railways & Electric Co. of Baltimore for the Year Ended December 31, 1909* (Baltimore: Baltimore Sun Job Printing Office, 1910), 13.
28. *Twelfth Annual Report to the Stockholders of the United Railways & Electric Co. of Baltimore for the Year Ended December 31, 1910* (Baltimore: The Sun Job Printing Office, 1911), 17.
29. Robert J. Brugger, *Maryland: A Middle Temperament, 1634–1980* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 417; James B. Crooks, *Politics and Progress* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), 143–44; "Public Improvement Campaign," *Baltimore American*, February 5, 1905, p. 10; "Mr. Furst Would Quit"; "No Glance Backward," *Baltimore Sun*, April 17, 1905, p. 12.
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33. "Labor Group Votes Boycott on Governor," *Baltimore Sun*, January 14, 1926, p. 26; "Conowingo Reviewed by Governor Ritchie," *ibid.*, November 5, 1926, p. 15.
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44. King, *Consolidated of Baltimore*, 262-63.
45. The Arundel Corporation, *Annual Report*, 1929, BMI; J. S. Armstrong, "Officers Chosen By New Power Company," *Baltimore Sun*, January 26, 1930, p. S10.
46. "Baltimore Reaching Out for New Industries," *The Iron Age*, vol. 95, no. 21, May 27, 1915, p. 1172; King, *Consolidated of Baltimore*, 207-8.
47. King, *Consolidated of Baltimore*, 263; "Obtains Contract to Construct Dam," *Baltimore Sun*, October 25, 1929, p. 3; The Arundel Corporation, Completed Construction Projects in "Engineering, Construction," February 29, 1960, p. 18, Box AC-21, BMI.
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53. "Associated Gas & Electric System, 29, 31; "Arundel Gets \$100,000 Bonus," *Baltimore Sun*, July 18, 1930, p. 19; Arundel Corporation, "Completed Construction Projects," 18-19.
54. Philadelphia Electric Company, *Conowingo Hydro-Electric Development*, 47; Black, "Construction of the Safe Harbor Development."
55. "Contractors Request Hoover Dam Specifications," *New Reclamation Era*, 22 (February 1931): 38; Donald E. Wolf, *Big Dams and Other Dreams* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 4, 16.
56. "Boulder Canyon Project Notes," *New Reclamation Era*, 22 (April 1931): 80.
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59. Arundel Corporation, *Annual Report*, 1932.
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61. Arundel Corporation, *Annual Reports*, 1932-1935.
62. *Cornell Alumni News*, vol. 36, no. 31, June 7, 1934, 369.
63. PCI, *Shasta Dam and Its Builders*, 23-29.
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66. *Ibid.*, 31-36.
67. *Ibid.*, 30, 38.
68. Donald E. Wolf, *Big Dams and Other Dreams*, 58; PCI, 38, 40. ??
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72. PCI, *Shasta Dam and Its Builders*, 53-54.
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77. In 1980 a hyper-competitive civil construction market, raging inflation, and problems on other projects led Arundel's management to leave the construction business. *Annual Reports*, 1970-1980.
78. "All Bids Top Estimate for Hannibal Dam," *Engineering News-Record*, September 17, 1970, p. 138.

Arundel Corporation Dam and Reservoir Projects*

Project Name	Location	Project Owner	Start/ Complete	Joint Venture	L.E. Dixon Participation
Conowingo Dam (Susquehanna River)	Md.	Susquehanna Power Co.	1926-1928	No**	-
Saluda Dam (Saluda River)	S.C.	Lexington Water Power Co.	1927-1930	No	-
Safe Harbor Dam (Susquehanna River)	Pa.	Safe Harbor Water Power Corp.	1929-1932	No	-
Shasta Dam (Sacramento River)	Calif.	Bureau of Reclamation	1938-1945	Yes	Yes
Upper Narrows/ Englebright Dam (Yuba River)	Calif.	Corps of Engineers	1939-1941	Yes	Yes
San Vicente Dam (San Vicente Creek)	Calif.	San Diego City Government	1941-1943	Yes	Yes
Alder Dam (Nasqually River)	Wash.	Tacoma City Government	1942-1944	Yes	Yes
LaGrande Dam (Nasqually River)	Wash.	Tacoma City Government	1943-1945	Yes	Yes
Horseshoe Dam (Verde River)	Ariz.	Phelps-Dodge Salt River Valley Water Users Assoc	1944-1945	Yes	Yes
Allatoona Dam & Power Plant (Etowah River)	Ga.	Corps of Engineers	1946-1950	Yes	Yes
Narrows Dam (Little Missouri River)	Ark.	Corps of Engineers	1947-1950	Yes	Yes
Mount Morris Dam, (Genessee River)	N.Y.	Corps of Engineers	1948-1952	Yes	Yes
Elk River Dam	Tenn.	Corps of Engineers	1950-1952	Yes	Yes
Chief Joseph Dam, (Columbia River)	Wash.	Corps of Engineers	1951-1955	Yes	Yes
Liberty Dam (Patapsco River)	Md.	Baltimore City	1951-1953	No	No
Mayfield Dam (Cowlitz River)***	Wash.	Tacoma City	1955-1957	Yes	Yes

Project Name	Location	Project Owner	Start/ Complete	Joint Venture	L.E. Dixon Participation
Tulloch Dam (Stanislaus River)	Calif.	Oakdale & San Joaquin Irrigation District	1955-1958	Yes	Yes
Rocky Reach Dam, Stage I, (Columbia River)	Wash.	Public Utility Dist. #1, Chelan Co., Wenatchee, Wash.	1956-1958	Yes	Yes
Rocky Reach Dam, Final Stage (Columbia River)	Wash.	Public Utility Dist. #1, Chelan County, Wenatchee, Wash.	1957-1961	Yes	Yes
Sutton Dam (Elk River)	W.Va.	Corps of Engineers	1958-1961	Yes	Yes
Tuscarora Pump - Generating Plant (Niagara River)	N.Y.	Power Authority of New York	1958-1961	Yes	Yes
Water & power facilities on Feather River (tunnels, reservoirs, three diversion dams, power houses)	Calif	Oroville-Wyandotte Irrigation District	1960-1963	Yes	Yes
Muddy Run Pumped Storage Generating Plant (Susquehanna River)	Pa.	Philadelphia Electric	1964-1967	Yes	Yes
Mica Dam (Columbia River)	B.C.	British Columbia Hydro	1967-1973	Yes	Yes
Hannibal Dam (Ohio River)	W.V.	Corps of Engineers	1970-1974	Yes	Yes
Lower Granite Dam (Snake River)	Wash.	Corps of Engineers	1970-1975	Yes	Yes
New Melones Dam (Stanislaus River)	Calif.	Corps of Engineers	1974 1979	Yes	No

* Power and water storage projects only; list does not include work on navigational lock and dam systems. Hannibal Dam had both water storage and navigational objectives.

** Arundel was selected separately by Philadelphia Electric.

*** Work ended due to state jurisdictional dispute.

Baltimore and the Historiography of the Early Republic: A Roundtable Discussion

In the spirit of commemorating the bicentennial of the War of 1812, the Society for the Historians of the Early American Republic (SHEAR) chose Baltimore for their annual meeting and gathered July 19–22, 2012, a short distance from Fort McHenry, site of the Battle of Baltimore and Francis Scott Key's inspired verse, "The Star-Spangled Banner." Frank Towers, senior nineteenth-century political scholar and longtime friend of this journal, organized a roundtable discussion of the city's written history. Punctuated with animated, critical, and salutatory conversation, participants and audience rewalked well-trodden ground and identified missing pieces of the story. Herewith, in the hope of continuing the dialogue, are two of those presentations.

PROGRAM

Tracy Melton, Independent Scholar, Presiding

"Public and Academic Audiences for Baltimore History"

Patricia Dockman Anderson, *Maryland Historical Magazine*

"Recent Scholarship on Slavery and Emancipation in Baltimore"

John "Sean" Condon, Merrimack College

"Books on Baltimore: The Long View"

Robert J. Brugger, Johns Hopkins University Press

"Baltimore in a Global/Comparative Context"

Mariana Libânio de Rezende Dantas, Ohio University

"Democracy in Mobtown: Looking at Antebellum Politics from Baltimore"

Frank Towers, University of Calgary

Comment: The Audience

Mobtown's Impact on the Study of Urban Politics in the Early Republic

FRANK TOWERS

Early republic Baltimore offered Americans two contrasting images of democracy. On one hand, the city earned its nickname "mobtown" for its bloody anti-Federalist riots of 1812, an identity reinforced by a string of riots that ran through the 1830s up to the outbreak of the Civil War. These riots gave expression to democracy's rough edges, self-declared bodies of "the people" taking sovereignty into their own hands to pursue goals that went well beyond a formal politics of elections and government. On the other hand, fourteen of the early republic's twenty-four presidential nominating conventions were held in Baltimore, including the first ever, the Anti-Masonic convention of 1832.¹ Presidential nominating conventions exemplified the orderly, deliberative quality of antebellum democracy, manifested by the greatest voluntary associations of the age, self-governing political parties pursuing a legislative and electoral agenda that reinforced constitutional norms rather than undermining them. Depending on when one looked at Baltimore's version of American democracy, the experiment in self-government either seemed like a disorderly free-for-all that subverted legal and bureaucratic rules to the needs of the powerful, or a well-organized, law-abiding negotiation between contending interests mediated by the institution of mass parties.

These competing images of antebellum democracy form the bedrock on top of which historians have built an impressive and diverse body of scholarship on Baltimore politics in the early republic. Rarely the primary focus of a particular study, the fundamental question of how best to characterize antebellum democracy nonetheless runs throughout these works and will likely continue to shape future studies.

The first histories of Baltimore's early republic politics were written by the participants, usually as memoirs that drew heavily on politicians' speeches.² They were followed by more ambitious urban histories written for an audience of paid subscribers and consequently filled with small biographies of likely contributors. The most influential was J. Thomas Scharf's history of Baltimore, which appeared in multiple editions in the 1870s and 1880s.³ Scharf was a Confederate veteran and Democratic Party politician whose accounts of the pre-war era reflected those sympathies. Describing the anti-Whig mob that destroyed the homes of Bank of Baltimore proprietors in 1832, Scharf wrote "there was certainly great reason for their indignation, for an outrageous wrong was done, which fell heaviest on those who were least able to bear it."⁴

Baltimore drew the attention of historians who had been professionally trained in the United States. The subjects of Progressive-era scholarship included some staples of that age, such as Thaddeus Thomas' reformist history of municipal government, but the two most popular topics were the secession crisis and Know-Nothingism. These studies emphasized objective analysis of primary sources but continued to focus on the partisan debates embedded in the primary accounts, such as, was local support for the federal Union strong enough to carry the city and state without the aid of federal military coercion? And, were the anti-immigrant Know Nothings sectarian bigots or reform-minded patriots?⁵

Between 1930 and 1960, historians wrote comparatively little about Baltimore's pre-Civil War politics. It is nearly impossible to prove why something did not happen, but we can speculate that this fallow period corresponded with scholars' interest in what made the United States exceptional in a world torn apart by ideological extremism, war, and economic chaos. A mix of North and South, slave and free, and far from the frontier, Baltimore was a poor fit with either an exemplary American character or a distinctively regional one.

In the 1960s and 1970s, historians were still not writing books focused solely on antebellum Baltimore politics, but the topic reappeared in journal articles and in state studies of Maryland politics in conjunction with the so-called "new political history." These scholars saw political parties as critical institutional supports to the nineteenth-century state that connected distant state and federal governments to ordinary voters. Armed with statistical methods for analyzing the electorate, and a new theory of parties as long-term structures that acted independently of a few leading figures, Jean Baker, William Evitts, and Whitman Ridgeway made connections between the social and economic cleavages in the state electorate and party platforms of the major parties. They found systematic continuity across the ups and downs of particular election cycles that linked the era of Whigs and Democrats to the 1850s contests between Know Nothings and Democrats and beyond. In line with this emphasis on parties as orderly structures for democracy, these scholars downplayed the significance of political violence, which they saw as having a minimal impact on the patterns of voter allegiance and party strength in any given election.⁶

In 1980, Sherry Olson and Gary Browne published separate urban histories of Baltimore, with Browne ending his study in 1861 and Olson extending hers into the present day. Interested in Baltimore's development into a modern industrial city, Browne gave more credit to the development of mass politics in the Jacksonian era as a means for reconciling increasingly complex and varied social interests. Olson and Browne emphasized the Know Nothings' role as government modernizers who professionalized police and fire-fighting, improved the water system, and expanded the courts.⁷

The new political history and the urban histories that discussed city politics shared a focus on long-term patterns and stable structures. Those tendencies led

them to highlight not only the orderliness of city politics, but also Baltimore's role as a modernizing, industrializing city at the forefront of social changes that undermined Maryland's colonial past as a slave society dominated by tobacco plantations. That general perspective on Baltimore as the engine of modernization informed two influential studies in the 1980s, Charles Steffen's *The Mechanics of Baltimore* and Barbara Jeanne Fields' *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*. Reflecting histories of labor that emphasized the agency of workers as well as scholarly interest in the concept of republicanism, Steffen argued that "the politicization of the mechanic population represents perhaps the major change in Baltimore politics from the Revolution to the War of 1812." Over that time, Steffen argues that the mobilization of artisan and journeyman voters had turned Baltimore from a Federalist to a Jeffersonian city and, as manifest in the anti-Federalist riots of 1812, gave voice to the urban masses' opposition to planters and their urban allies.⁸

That same basic premise of Baltimore's working-class voters as inherent opponents of slaveholders and of the city's larger political economy as "more closely integrated with free labor than slave labor" informed Fields' argument that in the 1850s "the city's turbulent masses and ambitious politicians, feeling the strength of numbers, might soon decide to reduce the political power of the planter class."⁹ Like other historians of city and state politics, Fields interpreted Baltimore as Maryland's leader in developing modern, bureaucratic, and free-labor politics. Recognizing the role of violence and coercion in elections, the scholarship of the 1970s and 1980s nonetheless fit city politics into a framework of progressive change from the tradition-bound personal politics of the colonial era to a more modern-looking institutional and impersonal politics of voting blocks, partisan ideologies, and rational free choice at the ballot box.

More recently, that perspective has come under criticism from several different angles. The first challenge to the idea of Baltimore democracy as an orderly process that built civic consensus came from historians of collective violence who presented riots as defining features of city politics. In his investigation of the 1812 riots, Paul Gilje maintained that early republic mobs replaced the consensus-driven, moral economy crowds of Anglo-American tradition with a more violent pursuit of narrower interests grounded in social divisions. Mob violence also marked a limit on civil disagreement between parties, notwithstanding parties' role as legitimate vehicles for political opposition.¹⁰ In the same vein, David Grimsted argued that the 1835 riot against the managers of the Bank of Maryland expressed the anger of small businessmen and artisans at "the more aggrandizing and shoddy aspects of the burgeoning capitalism from which they, like other Americans, intended to benefit."¹¹ Rather than a sideshow to ideas hammered out in legislative debates, in Robert Shalhope's 2009 history of the riot, this event was the crucible of party ideology. Ideas put forward by Democrats and Whigs in elections after 1835, he said, "made up the fundamental core of two powerful social and political persuasions rooted in

both the causes and the consequences of the bank riot." Democrats stood for the "sovereignty of the people" as expressed in popular demonstrations, constitutional conventions, and majority rule as a general principle of governing, whereas Whigs advocated the rule of law, written and unchanging constitutions, and protections for minority interests against majority tyranny.¹²

Recent studies of Baltimore's 1850s election riots argue for the importance of violence as not only a manifestation of social and ideological conflict but also as an integral part of the political process in that decade. Tracy Melton and this author have both looked at the role of political violence in helping the Know Nothings hold onto office in the late 1850s. Party leaders' need to mobilize street gangs as election-day muscle encouraged other types of political organization, such as the use of patronage to recruit gang members, and the counter-strategy of professionalizing police and fire services to keep gangs out of city government.

Looking at the gangs' long-term impact on Baltimore, Melton shows that the effort to curb their independence contributed to the professionalization of municipal services and "reconfigured the city's political structure, laying the groundwork for the emergence of a political machine in the years immediately following the Civil War."¹³ Where Melton identified the struggle for party victory as the driving force behind professionalizing city services and reigning in political violence, Amy Greenberg has argued for a struggle between a rising ethic of restrained manhood tied to the ideal of domesticity in family organization as opposed to a more traditional republican version of "classless masculinity" that emphasized aggressiveness, sociability, and independence, all qualities that encouraged the violence of the volunteer fire companies.¹⁴

Greenberg's emphasis on gender as a counterweight to class in city politics stands in contrast to studies by William Sutton and Seth Rockman. For Sutton evangelicalism rather than ethnicity or sectionalism was the driving force behind skilled workers' support for Jacksonian democracy in the 1830s.¹⁵ Focused on unskilled workers of the city, a group that was more female, non-white, and foreign-born than the artisans, Rockman emphasizes the consensus among white men with the franchise to uphold a social order that privileged their status against those on the outside. Whiteness, a commitment to the supremacy of whites over blacks, was a critical common theme of Whigs and Democrats as "politicians found a powerful weapon in the notion that blacks and whites were trapped in a zero-sum game."¹⁶

When applied to the secession crisis, the importance of violence, coercion, and racial exclusion complicates the story of Baltimore as inevitably bound to support the Union and emancipation. In Nelson Lankford's 2007 blow-by-blow account of the secession crisis, Baltimore and the riot against Union troops on April 19, 1861, are critical to explaining the outcome. Rather than seeing Baltimore as a city solidly in the Union camp, Lankford emphasizes tense negotiations between state, federal, and local leaders to stave off further violence and allow Union troops within city

lines. Only skilled statesmanship saved Maryland for the Union, not the logic of social forces.¹⁷

In reference to political violence, Grimsted, Melton, and Towers agree with earlier scholars that Know Nothing gangs were strong supporters of the Union. Melton and Towers see more conflict between pro-Union gang members and Union authorities in federal and state government over the issue of political autonomy, with the gangs ultimately losing out. Finally, the local, partisan origins of allegiances to the Union and the Confederacy help explain some anomalies in the story of free-labor Baltimore backing the Union, namely the presence of a few thousand unlikely Confederates drawn from the city, many of them wage-earning immigrants from Ireland and Germany who hated the Know Nothings more than slavery.¹⁸

Scholarship on Baltimore politics published since 1990 has taken a more pessimistic view of the vibrancy of the city's democracy. Coercion and violence did influence election outcomes and were essential to the process rather than a curiosity on its margins. Those who claimed to represent the working class opposed political rights for the majority of the city's manual laborers (women, slaves, free blacks). There was nothing certain about the city's support for the Union, and that support was not identical to the broader mission of freedom and equal rights.

The newer scholarship also shares an interest in broadening the definition of politics to look beyond legislative halls and election campaigns. A prime example of this approach is Mary Ryan's 2010 article on Baltimore's public commemoration of Washington and the War of 1812, yet more needs to be done.¹⁹ Aside from Janet Coryell's biography of Anna Ella Carroll, little scholarship exists on women's involvement in Baltimore politics. Similarly more can be said about enslaved people, free blacks, immigrants, and others with limited or no access to the franchise. Current interest in transnational and comparative politics will likely produce new insights for Baltimore, as will the turn towards geographic analysis. New arguments for the strength of the nineteenth-century American state at all levels might be useful for re-examining the role of popular politics in carrying out state policy. Such a focus might bring back the urban history scholarship exemplified by Browne and Olson thirty years ago and with a better integration between political and urban history.

Whatever new directions historians of Baltimore politics take, they will likely still have to grapple with the paradoxes that the city presents for understanding American democracy at large. How did slavery and freedom interact in a system of majority rule? What place did cities play in an overwhelmingly rural society's experiment in self-government, and how much popular rule was there in a political system that vacillated between the orderly world of the party convention and the riots in the streets of Mobtown?

NOTES

1. "United States Presidential Nominating Convention," online at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_nominating_convention#Lists_of_political_party_conventions.
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3. J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Baltimore City and County from the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Sketches of their Representative Men* (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1881). Also see Scharf, *The Chronicles of Baltimore: Being a Complete History of Baltimore town and Baltimore City from the Earliest Period to the Present Time* (Baltimore: Turnbull Bros., 1874), and *History of Maryland from the Earliest Period to the Present Day* (1879; repr., Hatboro, Pa.: Tradition Press, 1967).
4. Scharf, *History of Baltimore City and County*, 784.
5. George L. P. Radcliffe, *Governor Thomas Hicks of Maryland and the Civil War in Baltimore* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1901); Bernard C. Steiner, *The Life of Reverdy Johnson* (Baltimore: Norman, Remington, and Co., 1914); Steiner, *Life of Henry Winter Davis* (Baltimore: N. Murray, 1916); Matthew Page Andrews, "History of Baltimore: From 1850 to the Close of the Civil War," in Clayton Coleman Hall, ed., *Baltimore: Its History and Its People*, Vol. I, *History* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1912): 151-237; Matthew Page Andrews, "Passage of the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment Through Baltimore, April 19, 1861," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 14 (1919): 60-73; Andrews, *Tertiary History of Maryland*, vol. 3 (Baltimore: S. J. Clarke, 1925); Carl M. Frasure, "Union Sentiment in Maryland," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 23 (1929), 210-24; Lawrence Frederick Schmeckebier, *History of the Know Nothing Party in Maryland* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1899); Benjamin Tuska, "Know-Nothingism in Baltimore, 1854-1860," *The Catholic Historical Review*, 15 (1925): 217-51; Mary Patrick McConville, *Political Nativism in the State of Maryland, 1830-1860* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1928).
6. Jean H. Baker, *Ambivalent Americans: The Know-Nothing Party in Maryland* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 131 (on insignificance of political violence); Baker, *The Politics of Continuity: Maryland Political Parties from 1858 to 1870* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); William J. Evitts, *A Matter of Allegiances: Maryland from 1850 to 1861* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 1-2, 81, 117, 190; Whitman H. Ridgway, *Community Leadership in Maryland, 1790-1840: A Comparative Analysis of Power in Society* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979). Also see Charles H. Boehner, *John Pendleton Kennedy: Gentleman from Baltimore* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1961); Frank O. Gattell, "Secretary Taney and the Baltimore Pets: A Study in Banking and Politics," *Business History Review*, 39 (1965): 250-27; W. Wayne Smith, "Jacksonian Democracy on the Chesapeake: Class, Kinship and Politics," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 63 (1968): 55-67; Mark H. Haller, "The Rise of the Jackson Party in Maryland, 1820-1829," *Journal of Southern History*, 28 (1962): 307-26; Gerald S. Henig, *Henry Winter Davis: Antebellum and Civil War Congressman from Maryland* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1973).
7. Gary L. Browne, *Baltimore in the Nation, 1789-1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 90, 210; Sherry Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City*

(Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 137–39. For a forerunner of these studies see Thaddeus P. Thomas, *The City Government of Baltimore* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1896).

8. Charles G. Steffen, *The Mechanics of Baltimore: Workers and Their Politics in the Age of Revolution, 1763–1812* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983), xiii (quotation), 282.

9. Barbara Jeanne Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland during the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 57.

10. Paul A. Gilje, "The Baltimore Riots of 1812 and the Breakdown of the Anglo-American Mob Tradition," *Journal of Social History*, 13 (1980): 547–64.

11. David Grimsted, *American Mobbing, 1828–1861: Toward Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 10.

12. Robert E. Shalhope, *The Baltimore Bank Riot: Political Upheaval in Antebellum Maryland* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 147.

13. Tracy Matthew Melton, *Hanging Henry Gambrill: The Violent Career of Baltimore's Plug Uglies* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2005), 404.

14. Amy S. Greenberg, *Cause for Alarm: The Volunteer Fire Department in the Nineteenth-century City* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), 164.

15. William R. Sutton, *Journeymen for Jesus: Evangelical Artisans Confront Capitalism in Jacksonian Baltimore* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997).

16. Seth Rockman, *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 255.

17. Nelson Lankford, *Cry Havoc! The Crooked Road to Civil War, 1861* (New York: Viking, 2007).

18. Grimsted, *American Mobbing*, 243; Melton, *Hanging Henry Gambrill*, 398–99; Frank Towers, *The Urban South and the Coming of the Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004), chapter 6.

19. Mary Ryan, "Democracy Rising: The Monuments of Baltimore, 1809–1842," *Journal of Urban History*, 36 (2010): 127–50.

Recent Scholarship on Slavery and Emancipation in Baltimore

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In recent decades, historians have remained consistently interested in exploring the causes and consequences of one of the central dynamics of the early American republic: the decline and slow death of slavery in northern states and its survival and expansion farther south. For many good reasons, historians have found Baltimore to be a compelling and fruitful place to examine the evolution of slavery and the uneven process of emancipation. First, Baltimore's dramatic growth took place on the border between slavery and an emerging system of wage labor. Second, because of relatively robust manumission activity and migration from the countryside the city became home to the largest free black population in the antebellum United States. Finally, Baltimore is an important place in which to examine the evolution of slavery because it provides a context in which slave owners and slaves both had—in relative terms—more room in which to negotiate. Unlike their counterparts to the north, slave owners never faced the enactment of state-sponsored gradual emancipation, and they always had the legal ability to sell slaves out of the state (unlike slave owners in Delaware). At the same time, in contrast to the situation in most other southern cities, slave owners in Baltimore had the de facto ability to emancipate their slaves with relatively few restrictions until the late antebellum period. For their part, enslaved men and women faced the constant threat of sale away from friends and family, but their proximity to "free soil" and a diversified economy offered them opportunities often unavailable to enslaved men and women farther south.

In short, Baltimore has been a fruitful place in which to examine the complexity of interactions between enslaved men and women and those who claimed to own them and their labor, and in the last quarter-century many historians have tried to highlight the causes and consequences of these negotiations. This paper will examine how the literature on slavery and emancipation in Baltimore has informed and reflected the larger historiography of slavery and emancipation in the early republic and offer some modest suggestions about where that local literature might go from here. It will focus on the three topics that have been the subject of much scholarly work on Baltimore: the general nature of slavery in the city, the process of manumission, and the contours of nominal freedom.

The Nature of Urban Slavery

The general trajectory of slavery in Baltimore is clear. In the years following the American Revolution, the slave population kept pace with the city's dramatic growth. Slaves constituted 9 percent of the city's population in 1790, and over the next twenty years both the slave population and the total population more than tripled. In that time, as T. Stephen Whitman has explained, many enslaved men and women were sold by owners from the surrounding countryside and purchased by artisans in the city.¹ However, according to the census, 1810 was the high-water mark for the city's slave population, even as the total population continued to grow throughout the antebellum period. The city's growth was fueled at first by white and free black migrants from the countryside, and later by immigration from Europe, while slavery became more and more peripheral. On the eve of the Civil War, slaves were barely 1 percent of a city of more than two hundred thousand people.²

Although there is general agreement that slavery in the city declined, the reasons for and the significance of that decline have been subject to debate. Writing more than a quarter-century ago, Barbara Jeanne Fields took a long-term perspective that emphasized the differences between wage labor and slavery, and argued that the two were ultimately incompatible. She noted that the urban environment of Baltimore presented slave owners with powerful challenges: labor was seasonal and casual, and slaves were surrounded by potential allies and employers, which made the likelihood of successful escape much greater. Slaveholders responded by allowing slave hiring, self-hiring, and even provisional manumission; for Fields such actions put slavery in the city on a path to dissolution. In addition, these actions were taking place in an urban environment that had a large and growing population of recent migrants who were compelled to sell their labor, and as a result wage labor came to dominate. Slavery continued to exist in the city, but Baltimore "was a city with slaves, not a slave city," whose commitment to the institution was questioned by slave owners in southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore. For Fields, slavery's decline in Baltimore was especially pronounced, but it also suggested the place of slavery in other southern U.S. cities.

In the quarter-century since *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*, historians have been less intent on highlighting the differences between slavery and wage labor and instead have been more interested in appreciating the commonalities between those two systems and the hybrid arrangements that existed between the two ideal types.³ Two historians in particular have investigated the ways in which slavery and wage labor coexisted in Baltimore. Steve Whitman has closely explored urban slavery, especially through a case study of the Maryland Chemical Works in the 1820s and early 1830s.⁴ This manufacturer relied on a combination of purchased slaves, hired slaves, and wage laborers, and Whitman revealed the strategies the employer used to ensure high productivity and keep costs low and reconstructed the relative costs of the different kinds of labor. Whitman argued that the adaptations

made by slave owners in Baltimore illustrated slavery's flexibility, not its inherent incompatibility with a wage labor system. "Bound labor's eclipse by wage labor was not an inevitable product of historical forces somehow embodied in the 'rise of capitalism' but . . . a contingent outcome flowing from a particular interaction of local, regional, and international economic and social events and processes."⁵ Whitman's close study of industrial slavery in Baltimore does not continue past the mid-1830s, but he suggests that what caused the erosion of slavery in the city was its continued decline in the Maryland countryside. "Individual slaveholders in Baltimore could, and for a time did, transform the outlines of slavery without discarding it. . . the struggles of Baltimore's masters to maintain control and African Americans' efforts to win autonomy may have been working toward a dynamic equilibrium in which a modified form of slavery would have thrived."⁶ This did not occur because slave owners in the countryside continued to engage in manumission, and legally free African Americans continued to migrate into the city, which not only enlarged the pool of potential wage laborers but also provided slaves with more potential allies in their efforts to gain their own freedom.

Although Whitman has provided a detailed portrait of industrial slavery, Seth Rockman has more recently placed slavery in the context of labor generally in the city. Rockman finds slaves working side-by-side with people nominally free and emphasizes the similarities rather than the differences between nominally "free" wage laborers and slaves. "Although positioned in different ways by race, sex, nativity, or legal status, all these workers experienced the exigencies of the labor market, navigated underground economies, and developed inventive survival strategies that were usually more alike than different."⁷ Given the casual and seasonal nature of much of the city's work, slavery was only a modest part of a hybrid labor system, but it did play a role throughout the antebellum period. Rockman not only details the extended period in which a hybrid labor system operated, he also explains why slavery continued to exist up to the Civil War, even after large numbers of immigrants poured into the city after 1830 and therefore lowered the cost of wage labor. In keeping with a powerful trend of slave historiography in the early republic, Rockman identifies the interstate slave trade as the mechanism that kept slavery alive in late antebellum Baltimore. "Distant purchasers on the cotton frontier gave Baltimore slaveholders a powerful incentive to hold firmly to slavery even after it had been supplanted by other sources of labor in the city."⁸ Rockman also suggests that slavery was more a part of the city than suggested by the census, because some slaves escaped, were manumitted, or were travelling between the city and the countryside; in other words many more enslaved people were in the city in the last two decades of the antebellum period than the census-takers enumerated.⁹

Whitman and Rockman exemplify the basic trend over the last couple of decades in which historians have deemphasized the distinction between slavery and wage labor. Employers wanted to keep their options open, and they wanted the largest

number of potential laborers possible. For that reason, Rockman finds that employers in Baltimore opposed any legislation that threatened to place restrictions on the kinds of laborers they could hire. "From street-leveling projects in the 1790s through construction projects in the 1830s, Baltimore employers hired enslaved, free black, immigrant, and native-born whites and paid them the same wages to do the same work."¹⁰ Although Rockman, like Whitman, focuses on the period up to the 1830s, he argues convincingly that employers of labor wanted, and were able to, maintain a variety of labor options even as the politics of slavery became more heated. According to Rockman, despite increasing calls to reform the hybrid nature of work in the city by the late 1820s, "the decisions of Baltimore's employers attested to the durability of the status quo."¹¹ In other words, the arguments of political economists and politicians had little practical effect on individual decisions about the kind of labor one employed in Baltimore.

Whitman's and Rockman's painstaking reconstructions of employment practices has made it clear that the actual practice of employing laborers in the early republic was more complicated than a simple choice between slavery and wage labor and was therefore more complicated than the abstract principles would suggest. In the case of Baltimore, it would be interesting to see these detailed examinations carried through the late antebellum period. Although we are aware of the basic composition of the enslaved population in the late antebellum period—for example, female slaves outnumbered male slaves more than two to one by 1860—it is not as clear who owned these slaves.¹² Did urban slaveholders tend to have inherited slaves (and thus make urban slavery by the late antebellum period a remnant of a dying institution), or were slave owners created through the purchase of slaves, as had occurred earlier in the nineteenth century? Also unclear is the extent to which the political debate over slavery impacted slave owners and those contemplating slave ownership in that period. We know more about how changes during the Revolutionary Era sparked political and ideological concerns that shaped the decisions of at least some slave owners, though those considerations also combined with economic imperatives for the individual and that individual's family.¹³ Did the ideological debates over slavery in the late 1840s and 1850s affect individual slave owners? This is always difficult to answer, and most efforts to do so have focused on the decisions of wealthy and prominent slaveholders who left some evidence regarding their decisions. One piece of evidence that deserves a closer look is the difference between city and countryside. Christopher Phillips found that manumissions in the city of Baltimore essentially ceased by the 1850s, and Max Grivno discovered that in rural northern Maryland manumissions continued throughout the antebellum period.¹⁴ Did the social climate of the city make it increasingly difficult for urban slaveholders to turn to manumission, even though it continued to be utilized in at least certain parts of the rural Maryland countryside?

The Process of Manumission

The works of Christopher Phillips and especially Stephen Whitman have argued convincingly that manumission can best be understood not as the fruit of antislavery sentiment but rather as another arena of conflict and compromise between slave and master.¹⁵ The changing nature of slavery in much of Maryland and especially in the city of Baltimore, including the need for greater slave mobility and the increased likelihood of successful escape, meant that slaves were in a better position to bargain or buy their way out of enslavement and into nominal freedom. As a result, slave owners paradoxically used manumission as a strategy for securing labor by exchanging perpetual ownership for an increased assurance that they would have a relatively dependable worker for a period of years. In this view, manumission in Baltimore operated much as it did in other parts of the Atlantic world: it should not be viewed as a straightforward index of antislavery sentiment but as a tool a minority of slaveholders used to enhance the flexibility of the institution.

Many histories of slavery in the early republic have been influenced by the work on manumission in Baltimore.¹⁶ But while this interpretation is persuasive, it does raise a couple of important questions. First, if manumission was primarily a tool slave owners resorted to in those contexts in which slaves might have been more likely to cause disruption through escape, then why does it appear that manumission was less likely to occur in other urban edges of the upper south, such as Louisville and St. Louis?¹⁷

Second is a question that comes into sharp relief when manumission is viewed from the perspective of the enslaved. As slaves and their loved ones looked to gain their legal freedom, they had to convince their owners to agree to participate. Unlike slaves in Spanish colonies who had the ability to set their freedom price through the process of *coartacion*, slaves in Maryland could not appeal to any outside authority to set manumission in motion.¹⁸ Relative to other slave states in the early republic, manumissions did occur more often in Maryland, but they still were relatively rare. As more work is done, we are learning more about annual rates of manumission in certain places, but it would be illuminating to take those averages and see if we could estimate what chance an enslaved person had over the course of a lifetime to gain legal freedom through manumission. Furthermore, historians recently have established without doubt that the interstate slave trade was a central component of slavery in the antebellum United States. Additionally, provisional manumission sale or even the threat of sale was an important tool that Maryland slave owners used to control and discipline slaves. Were slaveholders who used manumission as a motivational tool also open to the possibility of selling slaves out of the state? Or were there distinct differences between slave owners who engaged in interstate sales and those who were willing to engage in manumission? If there were differences, it may suggest that a cultural or ideological opposition to interstate sale may have made some slave owners more open to the possibility of manumission as a motivational

tool, and if this were true, it could also have shaped the strategies of slaves themselves as they searched for a path to freedom.

The Contours of Nominal Freedom

In addition to detailing the nature of urban slavery and the possible avenues of obtaining legal freedom, scholars of Baltimore in the early republic have also enriched our understanding of the contours of nominal freedom for African Americans. The best known work is Christopher Phillips' *Freedom's Port*, a study of the formation of a legally free African American community in the city between the Revolution and the Civil War. Phillips argued that over time a relatively cohesive free black community developed in Baltimore, and that cohesiveness was a necessary response to the city's deteriorating racial climate in the 1850s. Since Phillips' work appeared in the mid-1990s, historians have been less interested in outlining "community" writ large and more focused on teasing out the boundaries and dynamics of more distinct and contingent communities.¹⁹ Such work has not focused on Baltimore, but the city would be a compelling place to look for it again, especially in the late antebellum period. For example, Phillips found that the free black population of Baltimore barely grew in the 1850s, even as the free black population in the state as a whole grew by more than 12 percent.²⁰ What seems to have happened is that in addition to fleeing the state altogether, part of the free black population of the city moved to the countryside. Recently, studies have emerged of enslaved and free blacks in the Maryland countryside, most notably Max Grivno's work on the decline of slavery in northern Maryland, and Jennifer Dorsey's on legally free African Americans on the Eastern Shore.²¹ These works show that the dynamics of slave hiring delayed manumission and that mixed labor systems also operated in the rural communities surrounding the city. Such work could be a starting point for a deeper examination of the movement of nominally free African Americans between urban and rural settings. To what extent did extended families have a foothold in both the city and the countryside? In other words, is it more accurate to see late antebellum mobility as many individual decisions or is it more accurate to see it as part of a strategy employed by kinship networks?

In conclusion, a great deal of work has been done in recent years examining the institution of slavery on the margin, so much in fact that some scholars of slavery have responded that historians might be underemphasizing the central role played by the plantation complex in shaping most experiences of enslavement in the Americas.²² In their minds, areas where slavery was peripheral should be peripheral to the study of slavery. Their concern is warranted, although some scholars have pointed out that in the United States, at least, the interstate slave trade bound all areas where slavery existed together. What happened in the cotton belt mattered in the Chesapeake. But in seeking to understand the limits of slavery, in terms of when and where it declined as well as why it survived in areas where it appeared to be moribund, the

periphery necessarily takes on a more central role. Because slave owners and slaves both had relatively wide latitude in the marginal slaveholding site of Baltimore, the dynamics of their interactions were often complex and dramatic. Continuing to pay close attention to these relationships, especially for the late antebellum period, should continue to prove illuminating and fruitful.

NOTES

1. T. Stephen Whitman, *The Price of Freedom: Slavery and Manumission in Baltimore and Early National Maryland* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 9–22.
2. Barbara Jeanne Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 62.
3. This can be seen in a number of ways. First, for a direct comparison of wage and slave labor in the iron industry, see John Bezis-Selfa, “A Tale of Two Ironworks: Slavery, Free Labor, Work, and Resistance in the Early Republic,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 56 (1999): 677–700. For works that emphasize the ways in which a market or capitalist sensibility shaped antebellum slavery in the South, see Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001) and Mark M. Smith, *Mastered by the Clock: Time, Slavery, and Freedom in the American South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).
4. Whitman, *Price of Freedom*; and Whitman, “Industrial Slavery at the Margins: The Maryland Chemical Works,” *Journal of Southern History* 59 (1993): 31–62.
5. Whitman, *Price of Freedom*, 160.
6. *Ibid.*, 165. Another important recent work that illuminates the ways that slavery could be flexibly adapted to an urban environment is Mariana L. R. Dantas’s comparative *Black Townsmen: Urban Slavery and Freedom in the Eighteenth-Century Americas* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
7. Seth Rockman, *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 11.
8. *Ibid.*, 240.
9. *Ibid.*, 234.
10. *Ibid.*, 47.
11. *Ibid.*, 233.
12. University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, “Historical Census Browser,” <http://mapservr.lib.virginia.edu/collections/> (accessed May 15, 2012).
13. Henry Wiencze, *An Imperfect God: George Washington, His Slaves, and the Creation of America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003); Melvin Patrick Ely, *Israel on the Appomattox: A Southern Experiment in Black Freedom from the 1790s Through the Civil War* (New York: Knopf, 2004); Eva Sheppard Wolf, *Race and Liberty in the New Nation: Emancipation in Virginia from the Revolution to Nat Turner’s Rebellion* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006); Phillip Hamilton, *The Making and Unmaking of a Revolutionary Family: The Tuckers of Virginia, 1752–1830* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008).
14. Christopher Phillips, *Freedom’s Port: The African American Community of Baltimore, 1790–1860* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 236. For Frederick County in northern Maryland, for example, see Max Grivno, *Gleanings of Freedom: Free and Slave*

Labor Along the Mason-Dixon Line, 1790–1860 (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 79, table 3.

15. Christopher Phillips, "The Roots of Quasi-Freedom: Manumission and Term Slavery in Early National Baltimore," *Southern Studies*, 4 (1993): 39–66, and Phillips, *Freedom's Port*; T. Stephen Whitman, "Diverse Good Causes: Manumission and the Transformation of Urban Slavery," *Social Science History*, 19 (1995): 333–70, and Whitman, *Price of Freedom*. Scholars of Maryland slavery are also starting to explore the gendered dimensions of the process of manumission. See, for example, Jessica Millward, "'That All Her Increase Shall be Free': Enslaved Women's Bodies and the Maryland 1809 Law of Manumission," *Women's History Review*, 21 (2012): 363–78.

16. Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000), and Eva Sheppard Wolf, *Race and Liberty in the New Nation: Emancipation in Virginia from the Revolution to Nat Turner's Rebellion* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009).

17. The legal framework for manumission was fairly similar in Missouri, Kentucky, and Maryland, and in general it was less restrictive than states farther south. See Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York: The Free Press, 1974), 29–30, 138–39.

18. "Coartacion" was a legal concept that operated in some Spanish American colonies beginning in the eighteenth century. Enslaved persons had the right to ask a local court to set their freedom price, and if they could acquire that sum, they would be granted their freedom. See for example Jennifer M. Spear, *Race, Sex, and Social Order in Early New Orleans* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 100, 109–10.

19. Two examples of this trend would be Anthony E. Kaye, *Joining Places: Slave Neighborhoods in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), and Dylan C. Penningroth, *The Claims of Kinfolk: African American Property and Community in the Nineteenth-Century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

20. The free black population in the state as a whole grew from 74,723 in 1850 to 83,942 in 1860, while in the city it declined. The rural free black population grew from 49,221 to 58,262 in the same period, a growth of 18 percent over the decade. University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, "Historical Census Browser" <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/collections/> (accessed May 15, 2012).

21. Jennifer Hull Dorsey, *Hirelings: African American Workers and Free Labor in Early Maryland* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011); Grivno, *Gleanings of Freedom*.

22. Philip D. Morgan, "Rethinking American Slavery," in *Inequality in Early America*, Carla Gardina Pestana and Sharon V. Salinger, eds. (Hanover, Conn.: University Press of New England, 1999), 241–42.



Baltimore from Howard's Park, 1796. The city's population grew from 13,000 at the time George Beck painted this view to upward of 50,000 during the Battle of Baltimore, 1814. (Maryland Historical Society.)

Research Notes & Maryland Miscellany

A View of the War and the World from Baltimore, 1813–1815

JOHN GORDON FREYMANN

Few clues to the life of newspaper writer George Douglas remain, yet the thirty-four letters transcribed and annotated below offer informative personal snippets as well as an engaging look at world events, national politics, and the Battle for Baltimore. Douglas wrote for the *Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*.¹

The little we know about him is culled from clues in his letters. He was well educated and could read the Gospels in Greek. Several apologies to his daughter Catherine for “bringing you to this country” indicate that he was an immigrant, and frequent allusions to Ireland make that his most likely homeland. An 1805 Baltimore newspaper mentions a George Douglas as secretary of the “Benevolent Hibernian Society.” Since Douglas is a Scottish name, he was most likely Scots-Irish from Ulster. With a grown daughter in 1813, he must have been in his late forties. A George Douglas married Grace Beall in Baltimore on July 6, 1802, but if this was the journalist, it would have been a second marriage. Douglas never mentioned a wife in this country. He did mention Ann Douglas, a family member still abroad, presumably in Ireland. She was most likely another daughter. The abrupt cessation of this correspondence in November 1815 raises the possibility that Douglas might have died shortly after that date. (There was no Baltimore death register at the time.)

George Douglas’s first letter was written shortly after he returned to Baltimore from New York City in the summer of 1813. While in New York he had become a close friend of Henry Wheaton, who might have employed him at the *National Advocate*, the newspaper Wheaton edited. Scion of a moderately wealthy family, Wheaton was born in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1785. A graduate of Rhode Island (later Brown) College in 1802, Wheaton was admitted to the Rhode Island bar in 1804 at age nineteen. He spent 1805–1806 in Paris and London, where he met two men who later figure prominently in these letters: Gen. John Armstrong,

John Gordon Freymann is a retired physician now living in Providence, Rhode Island.

the American minister to France, and James Monroe, the American minister to the Court of St. James. Returning to Providence, he practiced law there from 1806 to 1812, when he moved to New York City. He intended to practice law there, but out-of-state lawyers had to be residents for three years before being admitted to the New York bar. It so happened that the Tammany Society, the local focus of Republican power, had abandoned its newspaper because the editor was backing Madison's opponent in the 1812 election. Because Wheaton was a known quantity—he had delivered the Fourth of July oration before the Tammany Society of Providence in 1810—he was recruited to edit a new daily paper, the *National Advocate*. It appeared on December 15, 1812, and "PROSPECTUS," a long editorial in the first issue, promised, "this print will be devoted to the support of the republican principles of the American government. . . . it will present a firm front to the assaults of faction." "Faction" was a code word for Federalists in this early stage of political parties. Wheaton and his paper were Republicans, partisans of Madison and Jefferson. Wheaton would leave the paper in 1815, but it was still publishing after 1820.²

Douglas continued to write Wheaton at fairly regular intervals until November 1815. His fondness for the younger man, who was only twenty-eight in 1813, shows through all the letters, although he is at times wont to preach about what Wheaton should or should not do. The letters are also news dispatches, particularly before and during the Battle of Baltimore, but Douglas's political opinions and complaints about his family are often interspersed. No trace of Wheaton's letters to Douglas, which must have been equally informative, has been found, but Douglas's letters speak for themselves in their day-by-day commentaries on a tumultuous era in American and European history.

Douglas has just returned to Baltimore after a five-year absence. He had probably been in New York for at least the past year and developed a fast friendship with Wheaton. The United States had declared war on Great Britain on June 18, 1812, and on December 26, 1812, the Royal Navy had been ordered to begin a blockade of the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays. A British squadron commanded by Rear Adm. George Cockburn sailed into Chesapeake Bay in February 1813 and had been marauding up and down the bay ever since. Kent Island and Frenchtown were only two of many places where British marines and sailors landed, often looting and sometimes burning the towns. The only resistance they encountered came from poorly trained and armed local militia and citizens bearing fowling pieces and antique weapons. Douglas's mention of "their first appearance at the mouth of the Patabsco" probably refers to the fleet's appearance at the entrance to Baltimore harbor on April 16. Cockburn sent an officer ashore under a flag of truce, ostensibly to deliver a letter to Secretary of State James Monroe. Although he only got within four miles of the city, he apparently saw enough of Baltimore's preparations to dissuade Cockburn from attacking. Since April,

Baltimore had continued to prepare and strengthen its defenses. The Americans feared an attack on Baltimore on August 8, just sixteen days before this letter was written. As of this writing, the fleet had moved south in Chesapeake Bay. Not until November did Cockburn sail to Bermuda for the winter, leaving a few ships to patrol the bay.³

Henry Wheaton, Esq. National Advocate Office, New York
Tuesday Morn. 24th Aug. [1813]

...
My travel from New York to Phila. was as agreeable as would reasonably be expected – a pleasant country, tolerable roads, & decent company; was such as should have not have been displeasing to any man in tolerably good humour with himself. You, I think, will be pleased with the general appearance of the towns, villages, and country – will think the bridge at Trenton a fine picturesque object – and will be gratified at the sight of Phila. It is surprisingly grown, improved, & decorated since I knew it. If it cannot be called a *Princely City*, it may fairly be denominated as a respectable *Republican Town*. You will stay some day[s] in it, & take an opportunity of examining, at least, of viewing the bridges, &c. on the Schuylkill. My journey from Phila. to Baltimore was far from being agreeable – few towns (after leaving Wilmington), vile roads, & a badly improved country. On entering the state of Maryland, sloth, indolence, & poverty, seem to be the ruling powers. On toping [*sic*] the hill above Baltimore, you are all at once thrust with a full view of this city, lying round the margin of a basin of water, surrounded by hills, forts, camps, numerous country houses, a variety of streams, and a distant prospect of the Chesapeake. In variety of ground & water, Baltimore has infinitely the advantage of Phila. It may literally be called a *new town*, & it has considerably advanced in size & the number of handsome houses since I was here in 1808. But I observed a “plentiful scarcity” of people in the streets. The people here are hard put to it in the Military way. Besides strong weekly detachments for the fort & different camps, they are obliged to furnish nightly parties, to watch the enemy. I am credibly informed, that if the British had sent but 500 good men at their first appearance at the mouth of the Patabasco, they might easily have taken Baltimore; they could not keep it, but they might have destroyed it. That can't be done now; 5000 of their best troops might possibly take it, but I don't think a man of them would get back again.

The heat of the weather, the badness of the roads, & the rapidity of the journey; have exceedingly weaken'd me. My spirits are bad, & my whole frame is in a state of agitation & irritation. The weather here also seems to be more close & sultry than in New York. If I had had time & opportunity – I mean convenience – I should have rested myself in quietness & coolness for a week. . . . G. Douglas

P.S. 12 o'clock. Since yesterday, we have had reports of the retreat of the enemy's fleet down the Bay; it is so far confirmed this day that a wood boat has come in, and we hear, that the Frenchtown packets propose again to ply tomorrow. It is said they

have desolated Kent Island – but I have fears, that they are not finally gone, & that they may again come suddenly upon us. The sickness of their crews is assigned as the cause of their present movement – indeed they could scarcely have been in a worse place, except Batavia. . . .

Sometime after he wrote to Wheaton on August 24, Douglas secured employment at a Baltimore newspaper, the American and Commercial Daily Advertiser, which he always referred to as "The American." He was there throughout the two years of this correspondence and never ceased to complain about his niggardly salary and the paper's principal owner, W. Pechin. Nevertheless, this day's (September 14) issue of the paper contains a long editorial signed "Viator" which could have been written by Douglas. Entitled "Republican Virtue," it contains numerous classical references (Montesquieu, Burke, Shakespeare, etc.) Douglas was wont to use and concludes, "We must either adopt . . . a government which can afford us protection in time of war; or, such a government will be forced upon us, by the ambitious leader of a victorious faction." This theme appears often in his letters.

Henry Wheaton, Esq. Office National Advocate, New York
Tuesday, 14th Sept. [1813]⁴

Dr. Sir,

...

In my last letter, I endeavored to give you some idea of my conversation with Mr. B. I continue to think, it will be proper for you to write to that gentleman, & learn from himself his thoughts on your proposal of trying your fortune in this place. If the project of your being joined to Mr. P[inkney] could be accomplished, I should think it a circumstance highly favorable to your view. I learn that he is rather a *proudish* man, & that he lords it with no sparing hand over the little fry of common man in his profession in this place. Since I wrote, I have learned that he is the author of a series of letters published in the Whig, subscribed *Publius*. You will therefore have an eye to them, they will show you his style & interests. If he really is the author of them, as I am credibly informed he is, he cannot be called a *half-way man*, as in these letters, he has taken a decided part in politics, & is not a Federalist.

Meanwhile, I take every opportunity of havin[g] your editorial articles inserted in *our Papers*, because I think they will serve your interest in case you should come among these people who want a gentleman & a man of talent to take a lead among them whether as a firm Republican, or as a sound constitutional lawyer. On this subject, however, I shall say no more till I hear from you.

As to my own situation in this place, it is not a laborious one. I find, as yet, much comfort in the help & society of Mrs. [illegible] who has more sound sense & discretion in her little body, than can be found in many men three times her size, but both often find it a difficult task to keep on decent terms with the principal proprietor Mr.



Frenchtown, on the Elk River. The British raided numerous towns along the Chesapeake. On April 29, 1813, they struck Frenchtown, in Cecil County. (Maryland Historical Society.)

P[echin], a wavering unsteady creature, strongly attached to the Smith party, whose credit is every day sinking in the eyes of the public. In the affair of [Turreau's?] Letter, we have had cobbling: "we would & we would not." In some articles in which I have freely spoken my sentiments, and the sentiments of any impartial man, they were either omitted, or so sadly mangled, as to make them complete nonsense, like Burke's [illegible] parliament, here a bit & there a bit, but without a particle of his grace & elegance. Further, as I cannot wait every night till 11 or 12 o'clock, my little articles are so badly printed, badly spelled, or alter'd by another hand, that I am generally ashamed of them next morning. Mr. Norvell, the late editor, absolutely quarreled with Mr. P. on this account, & then left him. He now writes for the Whig.

I do assure you, I do not set any great value on my little editorial remarks, but I do not like to have them mangled. This morning he omitted an article entirely which I had written about the Swedish mission, because it hinted pretty broadly at the conduct of certain Senators. I was not displeas'd at this omission; better to have it not appear at all, than to have it altered & turned into nonsense.

Have you seen certain publications in the *Richmond Enquirer* relating to blockades, the law of nations, &c. I think them ably done, & have thought they might be of use to you in your intended work.⁵ If you have not got them, I can send them to you. I am desirous of hearing of your movements, & those of Mrs. W. & C. Douglas. I am fearful that Catherine's going both to Newburgh & Providence will take up too much of her time, and yet I am desirous that she should see as much of the country as possible, both for her health & information. I am glad to [illegible] that she was

not here, as our weather has been uncomfortably hot & sultry, insomuch that it is a more than common sickly person in Baltimore. The last spell of hot weather has much discomposed my nerves; but this may be owing very much to the depression of my spirits, to "the sickly hue of my mind," which makes me now look on my circumstance in desponding colors. There is nothing can so well keep up my spirits, as the frequent [tidings?] of my friends in New York. Adieu. G.D.

Saturday, 25th Sepr. [1813]

Dr. Sir,

...

I shall never desire you to depart from the character of a Gentleman, but, as a *Lawyer*, I am inclined to object to the thing called *delicacy*. That admirable woman, Lady Montague, who was qualified to govern an empire, in her admonitions to her husband, who was troubled by the same delicacy, told him, "that there are *three* things necessary for a man who is desirous to push himself forward in the world: the 1st is impudence; the 2nd is impudence; and the 3rd is impudence." For the word *impudence*, substitute the word *assurance*, and then you will know what I mean.

In one of my letters, I gave you some idea of the confused state of *this* office. We want order & correctness. As I cannot wait every night till 12 o'clock, almost every paper makes me ashamed of continual mistakes & blunders. I had been watching for an opportunity of introducing your name as the Editor of the *N. Advocate*, &c. Accordingly I did something of the kind in an introduction to Lord W. Bentinck's intercepted Letter when, next morning, besides several literal mistakes, the bungler had put in the word *trials* instead of "*Travels* in Europe." Nor could I prevail upon them to make an *Errata* in the next paper. You may easily imagine how much I was mortified. You must have thought very unfavorably both of the writer & of the printer.

I have to congratulate you, which I do most sincerely, on the great business on Lake Erie.⁶ Surely our other Commanders, both by sea & land, will now exert themselves, and make an impression on Upper Canada with all their powers & all their energy. It is a most glorious opportunity; they *must* follow up the blow, satisfy the nation, and both confound & conquer the enemy.

I do not write to Catherine, supposing that she has gone to Newburgh. I thought she would have gone up in the steam boat. She may be a week on the water, and she has no time to lose. I am forever thinking of this girl; day & night, & in my dreams, I think of her. If you ever have children, you will be able to account for *my* feelings. The feelings of a fond parent, they are the most acute & the most important of all other emotions.

She speaks in high terms of your & Mrs. Wheaton's kind attentions, for which may God bless you.

Mr. Pinkney has completely developed himself.⁷ Besides writing the letters

signed *Publius*, he is now making a tour thro' the State, attending the county meetings, haranguing with all his energy, & he has a deal of it, in English to one set of electors people, in Dutch to another, and in French when it is necessary, to the terrible annoyance of the Hansonites whom he literally tramples under his feet.⁸ Judge Martin, who it was said had given over drinking brandy, & become religious, the other day, gave a charge to a grand jury, exceeding in madness and disaffection, any thing before delivered from any bench. He said, that Mr. Madison was suffering the pains of Hell in this world, & that he would suffer all its torments in the next to all eternity, &c. Please write to me soon, letting me know how you are all, & what you know about C.D. Adieu, G.D.

Baltimore, 27th Sepr. 1813

Dr. Sir,

...

Yesterday we were agreeably surprised by an account from Charleston, S.C. of another *Naval victory*, the particulars of which you will see before this shall reach you. There is a mistake, it is thought, as to the name of the captured vessel. We believe here, that she is a fine brig formerly belonging to this place, called the *Herald* &c.

I am yours respectfully, G. Douglas

P.S. – Next Monday, *our* elections begin. Mr. Pinkney is still in the county seats combating our “internal foes” with all his might. We impatiently look for news from the Lakes. If *our* fleets and armies don't do something now, they ought, in the language of *What you call [kims?] curse*, be damn'd to all eternity, and longer, if it were possible.

I am vex'd at the trouble that must be taken to keep the people here right. If the people of Maryland, and any other part of the United States, are so extremely ignorant as not to know, by this time, what they ought to do, and how to act, in such times as these, they are a damn'd ignorant, venal set, and are not worthy of being reclaim'd. I think of all this with pain. I think how much I have risk'd, how much I have suffer'd – and almost wish . . . Remember me kindly & most affectionately to your good Lady. In haste to the Office.

Thursday, Sept. 30 [1813]

Dear Sir,

...

I thank you for your letter of news. I hope it is true. The Boston folks strive hard to prove it false. To prevent mistakes, in future, direct to me at *The Office of the American*. I should have told you this before.

Great struggles are going on here about the Election.⁹ The great aim seems to be, to *recover* Frederick county as, next [to] Baltimore, being the most important

in the State. You will see Mr. Pinkney's speech in the Whig. If they can *reclaim* four counties, they will then be able to "bell the cat" with the Federal[ist] faction.

What brutes must these Electors be, who, at this time of day, and at this most important crisis, must be told, must be bribed, into their duty!

What are they about on Lake Ontario? Surely they will strike a decisive stroke in that quarter before the enemy recovers from his surprise & consternation caused by Perry's glorious victory. I am all fear and anxiety, lest some d—d blunder should be committed on that side.¹⁰

After having a deal of hot weather here, we are suddenly surprised by the contrary extreme, and I along with many others am unguarded. I have been very unwell for some days, but am now getting better. If Mrs. Wheaton writes to C. Douglas, let her say I am very well, that I wish her to enjoy herself as long as she can, and when she comes to New York, to take care to provide herself with any thing necessary for a winter campaign, &c.

Continue to send me good news soon and a great deal of it. And may God bless you both. G. Douglas

. . . Let Catherine bring with her a map of the seat of the war, such as yours. Is the last No. of the Edinburgh Review interesting, &c.

Thursday, 7th Octr. [1813]

Dear Sir,

. . .

If the fate of America is to depend on the *virtue* of the people of Maryland, it is a lost cause. Already we have accounts of the loss of two out of the four counties so sanguinely expected to be *reclaimed*. Both Cecil & Frederick are gone, and Mr. Pinkney's oratory & energy have been exerted in vain. The beasts, The Hansonites have out-numbered the Republicans in both places. The Dutchmen voted against the *Democrats*, because, they said, "*they* had raised the price of sugar to 30 cents a pound." You talk no more of the *enlightened* Citizens of America.

I had thought that the subject of *Secret Service Money*¹¹ was a proper subject to dwell upon occasionally, the more so, as I am convinced that it is plentifully distributed over this county. You will scarcely believe me, when I tell you, that I recd. a caution from a certain quarter, "*not to say any thing more on that head.*" If ever we meet, we will have some talk on this subject. "There is something rotten in the state of Denmark."

We do not get your paper very regularly. I do not recollect the article you mention about *War with Spain*, &c. I should like to see it, as I endeavor to get as many of your productions inserted in the *American* as I can. I think you are improved both in your style and *energy*. The latter was said to be wanting in your first writings. I think, upon the whole, that your editorial productions may be of service to you on the long-run. At least, I hope they may. . . . Your's, &c., G.D.

Thursday, 14th Octr. [1813]

Dr. Sir,

The Maryland election, if we are to believe accounts, has turned out better than we at first expected. The *Irishmen* decided the election of Allegeny [County]; and even if that for St. Mary's is confirmed, the Republicans will have a majority of 3 on a joint ballot, so that, as they tell me, a Republican Governor will this time be secured to the State. Two of the Counties were lost by many of the Democrats being absent in the Army.

We are again in the dumps about Chauncey's success on Lake Ontario, and fear it has been only a partial success, if it happened at all.¹² What gives me good hopes of the business, is the observations made by your friend the Editor of the Evening Post. If there had been any doubt of the affair, I think that *he* would have brought it forward. We are all anxiously looking for Com[modore] Chauncey's official letter.

...

What an interesting scene is now opened to our view! How grand, how vast, and how important! Never since the year 1793, has it been more so. If Bonaparte is able to overcome his present difficulties, he may be said to be more than mortal.¹³ For my part, thinking that he is fighting *our* battles, I do wish him success to a certain extent. And I cannot help wondering, that *all* the people of America don't think as I do.

As I am much at a loss for a map of *the seat of war*, such as your's, I believe it will be best, to send it to me by post. By marking it as a *single sheet*, and leaving one end of it open, I suppose it will come to me at the usual postage. I don't like to wait for it coming by Catherine, as I at first intended.

Inform Catherine, that I have received the two trunks and box. I have no keys for them, nor do I know what is in them. I wish not to open them until she comes in proper person. Shall I hear from her, or about her, tomorrow? Our hot weather has been suddenly superceded by uncommonly cold weather, in that every body is shivering. But they tell me, that the "Indian Summer" is to come shortly. I wish it would come, for this cold blast does not agree with my feelings. I fear it will fall heavily on our soldiers in or near Canada, and I now feel a double interest in their comfort and success. As I have nearly filled this sheet with "something or other," I bid you Adieu, hoping to hear from you or Catherine to-morrow. G. Douglas

Sunday eveng. 26th Octr. [1813]

Dr. Sir,

Not having heard from you for some time, I have *guessed* that you might have gone on a journey with Mrs. Wheaton, &c but I think I have seen something like your editorial remarks continued in the Nat.l Advocate, and therefore *guess* you have not gone on a long journey, but that you are stationary in the grand city of N. York.

...

With respect to the Maryland election, all I have gathered from a chaos of re-

ports, is that the Fed[eralist]s have [illegible] the Demos in Allegany by the known omitted legal forms in qualifying one of the Judges. There is little doubt, that the House of Delegates, having a Federal majority, will sanction any thing that comes before them. It remains with the Members of the Senate, to shew their steadiness, by opposing an election of a Governor, &c if it shall appear, that there are Delegates illegally & unjustly elected. For my part, I have taken up a foul opinion of these people, & look upon them with a jaundiced eye. I shall not be surprised, if there has been foul play, that we should have some thing like a little bit of a civil war in this part of the continent as the Demos are in high passion.

I have relinquished all hopes.¹⁴ They never were sanguine of obtaining any thing in Washington. It appears, that a chief Collector is, or is to be appointed in my District, who is to have the appointment of his own Officers. As it is not yet known who is to be the Collector of this District, and as, of course, he will protect & promote his own friends, be he whom he may, I do not see any chance of doing any thing in that way. If I had obtained any situation, I should like to have got it from the higher powers at the seat of Government. I have neither impudence, nor assurance, nor perseverance, to obtain it from the lower, or second-hand process, and as there is an end to the business, "Blessed are they who expect nothing, for they shall not be disappointed."

Please to let me hear from you, whether by post, or by Mr. Young, and tell me all about C[atherine] Douglas, &c.

Respectfully, &c, G. Douglas

Send by Mr. Young the maps of the seat of war. Why don't we hear from Wilkin-son, Hampton, &c?¹⁵

Thursday, 11th Novr. [1813]

Dr. Sir,

... I have relinquished all expectations of looking for any thing from Washington, because I do not know any one of sufficient consequence to make interest for me, nor am I of sufficient consequence myself to make personal application. Mr. Gales has informed me, that all the minor appointments are entirely left to the direction of the Collector of Districts, and who they are I have not heard.

I read your disquisitions on the affairs of Germany always with interest, & always with fear & trembling. It is a ticklish & uncertain ground you go on. Duane, who was clever in that way, over shot the mark, & prophesied things that never happened.¹⁶ Too uncertain are the movements of armies, & the fate of war, that even if you were on the spot, you might readily be deceived in your calculations. Having obtained Editorial reputation, it is my anxiety for your maintaining it, that makes me speak to you with freedom, which, I am sure, you will ascribe to the sincere friendship which I entertain for you.

I need not tell you, how much we are mortified with the failure of Gen. Hampton,

and the base conduct of your Militia. I fear the capture of Montreal may be given up for this season, and probably during the war, as the British will soon have such a force of regular & well-disciplined troops in Canada, as our raw & undisciplined & *disaffected* men will never be able to face. It is said here that there is a personal disagreement between Hampton & Wilkinson, who drive contrary ways. Why does not Armstrong settle their matters?¹⁷ We want very much the good old Roman military law, *decimation*.¹⁸ If Bonaparte is beaten in Germany, we shall lose the game, & Republican armies into eternal disgrace. When opportunity offers, which seems to me, principally on Sunday, be so good as write to me, when, by the arrival of the steam-boat on that day, something may seem worthy of particular notice.

I occasionally take a peep into the Court now sitting in this place, & I cannot conceive of any thing more *undignified*. They must appear so to every man who has seen Courts of Justice in other places, particularly in "the olden country." In one Court, there presides that beast L. Martin, who has lately made a figure in his Charge to the Grand Jury, for which see the American, & the Jury's answer. This was a *Federal[ist]* appointment, as if they had a mind to throw any thing sacred & solemn into contempt & ridicule to vex the Democrats. In another Court, sits a man of the name of H—th, whose aim is to tell stories & crack jokes, in order to set the Lawyers, the Jury, & the spectators into bursts of laughter. You may imagine the looks & gestures of Mr. Pinkney before such Judges. Mr. P. is a man of tolerably high passions, but a lover of decorum & dignity in any thing belonging to his profession.

...

Yours sincerely, &c. G. Douglas

P.S. – Be pleased to call at Mr. Collins the bookseller in Pearl-street & inform him, or them, that I wish to have the Nos. of the *Edinburgh Encyclopedia* delivered to me by Mr. Jenkins of Baltimore. Other wise they will have on their hands an incomplete set, and I shall be deprived of the continuation of the work. You forgot to send the maps of the war in Canada.

Thursday, 23rd, Decr. [1814]

Dr. Sir,

...

I have nothing new to communicate. All that is worth knowing, you have an opportunity of seeing & of judging better than I can. From all I can see & hear in this community, Gen. A[rmstrong], is not a popular man. All the people I have seen from the Western Country, are divided in opinion about Gen. [William Henry] Harrison. In short, since the failure of the Canadian campaign, *all* our Generals have sunk in the article of reputation. I think with those who think, that they made a capital blunder in not sending all their force against Kingston, before they proceeded against Montreal.

Now that we have got another embargo, it remains to be seen how it will be obeyed.¹⁹ I must own to you, that every day I have a worse opinion of the virtue of this people, I mean public virtue. The trading & commercial classes have little or none. Some of the upper sort, have, I believe, some Republican spirit, but they are too few in number to be able to check & control the insatiable spirit of traffic which has become so general & so inveterate a disease. It is too true, that we want, as yet, a middle class of people to keep the other two in order. I think we want a little wholesome despotism to set us right, but, if it were in my power, I do not know the man I would appoint *Dictator* until the completion of the war. And here ends the [illegible].

May God bless you G. Douglas

[Dec. 31, 1813]

Dr. Sir,

Our town is all in a bustle, occasioned by the unexpected arrival at Annapolis of his Majesty's sloop of war *Rattler*, Capt. Wallace. We are told this vessel has brought offers of an accommodation of all differences with the English Govern't. & this has set our nest of *Speculators* all in confusion. I cannot vouch for the truth of this news, but it is much spoken of and much believed. We will not know the truth till we hear from Washington.²⁰

If the accounts brought by the *Rattler* be true, Bonaparte is once more done up, & that not by a Russian frost, but by hard fighting. The following is the substance of these accounts: His B. M. sloop *Rattler*, Capt. Wallace, arrived yesterday at Annapolis. She brings English papers to the 6th of Nov. She had papers to the 14th but they were given to the Captain of the *Dragon*.²¹ Bonaparte has been defeated at every point, with immense loss of men, cannon, &c. On the 17th of Oct. he lost 12,000 men in one engagement. On the 18th his whole line was attack'd, when he lost 40,000 men, &c. Dresden taken with the King of Saxony & all his officers, &c. *Liepsic* (*sic*) was taken by storm, in which place were 30,000 wounded French; from this place, Bonaparte it is said made his escape. 17 whole battalions of Germans deserted from him in a body, to the Allies, &c.

If I can get an Extra sheet, just going to be published, I shall send it to the N. Advocate.

I will leave you to make your reflections on these accounts, which, to my mind, have an unfavorable aspect to America. Altogether, we have concluded the year in a most unpleasant manner.

Yours in haste, G. Douglas. Baltimore

Saturday, 8th Jany. 1814

Dear Sir,

By yesterday's New York papers, we had a short account of the late fire in Beek-

man-street. I immediately tho't of you. This day's paper gives a full account of that disastrous calamity, by which I find that Mrs. Baker has been a sufferer. I recollect, when looking out of your windows, that I had set it down in my own mind, that a fire would some time or other sweep these ugly Wooden buildings from the face of the earth, but I had then no fears either of Mrs. Baker's house or the church being destroyed. I am very sorry they have been destroyed. Did you continue to lodge in Mrs. B.'s. How did you exert yourself, & what have you lost? Mrs. Wheaton must have been dreadfully alarm'd at the account. It was so far fortunate that she was then absent.

...

Yesterday afternoon, we recd. from Washington the important papers respecting the negotiation for peace which have ended as I suspected in some thing like smoke, and our high expectations are deferred to a distant day in a distant country.²² I did not think it probable that the English Ministers would offer reasonable terms in the hour of their prosperity. The whole is calculated to nourish that wild spirit of *faction* which infects, & which, I fear will at length ruin the Republic.²³ If I were to believe all I hear & see, this Faction is gaining instead of losing strength, no where more so, than in the State of Maryland.

It is time for us to hear from France. I [wish?] much to hear the French account of the late battles in Germany, & if things be really so bad as have been reported. I think that you or some of your friends in New York or on to the Eastward, must soon have intelligence from that quarter.

I am glad you discontinued your observations on the war in Germany. You will now see how uncertain the events of that nature are. Even Bonaparte it appears cannot control them. Duane's very well described Geographics are gone for nothing.

Gen Armstrong's reputation seems to be sinking every day, & that of Gen. Harrison is on the rise.²⁴ But I will say nothing more on these disagreeable subjects, as I now look on every thing going on whether political or warlike with a jaundiced eye. It would seem to me as if every thing was going wrong.

Yours sincerely, G.D.

Please to let me hear from you —

Mr. P[inckney] openly says, "that Gen. A[rmstrong]. is a damn'd rascal." I fear there is a schism in the cabinet as well as in the nation.²⁵

Henry Wheaton, Esq. Post Office Washington City

Monday, 10th Jany. 1814

Dr. Sir,

...

Last Saturday, on seeing the particulars of the fire in Beekman-street, I wrote to you, supposing you were still in New York, expressing my anxiety for your

safety, & hoping that you had not been a loser by the misfortune. I now find, that you were then in Phila. & that you have not been in any manner a sufferer by the calamity.

As you are now at the seat of Government, no doubt you will have all your eyes & all your ears open to what is going on amongst the rulers of the nation.²⁶ It is a new & important scene to you, and you will make use of all your wisdom & all your discernment, in judging of men & measures. I fear there is a schism in the cabinet as well as in the nation. Gen. Harrison is rising, here, in reputation, while that of Gen. A[rmstrong] is sinking. Indeed it never was very high with either of the parties. For what reason I cannot tell, he is a *suspected* man. Mr. P[inkney] as I am told, openly says "that he is a damnd rascal." This gentleman, I am told, is in the habit of making use of "broad language."

I have already told you, that I had given up all idea of making application for a situation under the Government. I found that every man had his favorites & his friends. I am extremely backward in soliciting favors, and I observe a dislike in both parties to men who are called *foreigners*, &c.²⁷

In the stay you intend to make in Washington, perhaps you may have opportunities of seeing & hearing more about these matters, than one at a distance from the circle of politics, & the cabals of place-hunters, who, I hear, are beyond number.

There is one gentleman in Washington, on whose words and discernment I could depend as to the probability of success, namely Judge Duvall, who has long known me & my family. After a little delay & observation, if you thought that a letter to that Gentleman would be any way useful as to information, I would send you one. At all counts, he would be a useful & a reputable acquaintance in the capital.

Expecting to hear from you in the course of a few days, I say no more at present, but that I am your very sincere friend, &c. G. Douglas

P.S. – It may not be amiss to caution you as to the *editorial* remarks in the American, if you see it. Mr. Pechin, who is called the Senior Editor, & who in fact is the Lord of the whole establishment, takes upon him to alter, amend and mangle every thing in that way. For his style & his temper, see his answer to L. Martin, Esquire. He is called here the *Little Italian*.

Henry Wheaton, Esq. Mrs. Dowson's, Capitol Hill, Washington City
Sunday even. 9th Febr. [1814]

...

The chief, indeed the principal figure of the establishment where I now am, is not one to be depended, and, *sub rosa*, not very reputable. Upon the whole, my present situation is one of a very precarious tenure.

We have not yet been able to obtain a lodging that meets our taste, & comes within the compass of our abilities. And when we do get one, neither C[atherine] nor

myself are well calculated, as the saying is, "to push our way in the world." Whether it be Scotch pride, or Irish pride, certainly it is a very marring quality.

I think you will agree with me, that neither *here* nor *there* is our political prospect a pleasant one. If Mr. Madison be a man of feeling, I don't think he can sleep soundly at night. If he were a virtuous man of the nation, &, I think, there must be some of that kind in the nation, must have gained more experience, as Politicians, in the last 20 months, than in the former 29 years. To my mind, it is obvious, that either the Govern. wants more power, or the People more virtue. I am clearly of opinion, that our Govern. both in peace & war, more especially the latter, should be invested with more power. If not, the bundle of rods will separate & fall in pieces.

Look well about you. "Mostly learn, or inwardly digest." To a young man, your's is a noble opportunity. Make the proper use of it.

Please to write either to C. Douglas, or to G. Douglas

According to present appearances, Boney is done up, & Duane's fine essays are gone for nothing, worse than nothing.²⁸

Henry Wheaton, Esq., Mrs. Dowton's, Capitol Hill, Washington City
Baltimore, Monday eveng. [Probably February 10, 1814]

Dr. Sir,

By good luck, I hope, we have met with our good friend Thos. Wright of John-street, New York, who is on his way, with three other *friends*, to the capital of the United States, & who has been so good as say he would carry to you a small package from C[atherine] Douglas. It is directed to you at Mrs. Dowton's, Capitol Hill.

I am in haste to have the packet at Gadsley's for Mr. Wright. I recd. your letter from "the centre of intelligence," where, I doubt not, you are observing, with a keen eye, "men & manners." Lay in a store of information, & be *not too modest*. You ask, if you can be of any service to me? I leave this thing to yourself. *If* you can hear or see of any thing in my way, to keep C.D. & myself from sinking spirits, you will do what you can to serve us, either here or in New York, as the place I am in is poor in recompense & of most uncertain duration.

In haste, Yours, &c G.D.

Henry Wheaton, Esq. New York
Monday, 18th April [1814]

Dr. Sir,

We have not heard from either yourself or Mrs. Wheaton for some time. Are you both well? This will be delivered by your friend Mr. Buckley, with a small package, either for Mrs. [Miss?] D. or to her care. It is said, that our Mr. P[inkney]. is going to New York to oppose your Mr. Emmot in a certain prize cause. I hope he may, if it were only somewhat to lessen his vanity. It is said, that he has made 25,000 dollars in the last nine months.

The British fleet is about 60 miles down the Bay, & give us some uneasiness. In case they should make a dash upon us, I don't think we are very well prepar'd for them. The wheels of this Govern't. go on as sluggishly as those of those of the general Govern't. There is something wanted among us; either new wheels, or a new machine altogether. If a Presidential election was to take place next week, I don't think Mr. M[adison] would be re-elected. I begin to think, that Bony will be able to keep his ground *in* France. If he does, he will be doing a thing for us, which we don't seem to be capable of doing for ourselves.²⁹ I long exceedingly to hear from the other side of the Atlantic.

Remember me very respectfully to Mrs. Wheaton, and am yours, &c. in haste,
GD

Henry Wheaton, Esq. New York
Sunday Morn'g. 1st May 1814

Dr. Sir,

. . . You ask me something about politics. I am become so sick & disgusted with them, that it gives me pain to think of them, & much more to write about them. Would to God I could earn a living without them. I wonder how you get on, for, even with your nimble pen & prolific imagination, I think you must sometimes be puzzled to manage your editorial business. There seems to be a general discontent, among the real Republicans, with *the whole set of Executive Men*, ever weaving, fluctuating, & unsteady.³⁰ Armstrong is down; & as to Wilkinson, it is hard to say, which most to blame, the gasconading of this vain braggadocio after his late abortive attempt, or the want of foresight & firmness of *him* who placed him in that situation.³¹ It is needless for me to say any thing more on so unpleasant a subject. Fortunately for America, Bonaparte is doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves.³² According to my opinion, if that man had been put down, the very existence of the United States, as a Republic, would have been in jeopardy, not so much by the power of Britain, as by the base & unmanly conduct of a Faction in the very bowels of the country, eager to destroy Liberty in order to promote their nefarious projects. As a native of the country, & as a man of principle, you must be both ashamed & mortified. . . .

Your's, G.D.

Wednesday - 1 o'clock, A.M., [June 22, 1814]

Dear Sir

Mrs. Wheaton is this moment arrived. Poor girl, she has had her troubles on this little voyage. She left Phila. on Monday & has ever since been confined on board a filthy boat, surrounded by rats & mice & *other vermin*. She came to us under the care of Mr. Higginbottom, who fell into the hold of the vessel & has hurt his leg. Mrs. W. declares "she will never undertake another voyage unless her husband is along with her." I believe nothing but the want of rest is the matter with her. Tomorrow, I

expect, she will be able to give you an acct. of her adventure under her own hand & seal.³³ As the Eastern mail closes here at exactly 2 o'clock, I must be in time to deliver this for your satisfaction.

G.D.

At present, the war rages on the banks of the Patuxent, about 70 or 80 miles from Baltimore, & much nearer to the seat of Govern't. We are not quite at our ease in this place, as Commodore Barney's flotilla was intended for the defense of this important harbor, but somehow or other, he got himself hemmed in in the Patuxent. He is a good seaman, is as brave as a lyon, & has beaten the English, who lost a deal of men, besides deserters. The enemy, however, is spreading over the country on both sides of the [bay?], burning & destroying wherever they go, and have eased the planters of a number of their *black* cattle of both sorts.³⁴ A number of soldiers & artillery have gone to Barney's assistance, & we hope to hear that the enemy will suffer for his temerity. We have bad accounts of the conduct of the militia, whose officers, some of them at least, are *not what they ought to be*.

...

Mr. Henry Wheaton, New York
Baltimore, Wednesday 6th July, in the year of our Lord 1814 AD, *perhaps*, the
last year of American Independence.

...

Mrs. W. talks as if you are desirous of coming here [illegible] for her. As we are all very comfortable in our present situation, & as we like her company more than common, I [illegible] have to suggest to you, if you can abstain from the society of your wife but a few weeks, not to be in a haste to come to Baltimore. If any danger appears, I shall give you the earliest notice. At present, I see none from the enemy. If he gets strong reenforcements, I will not answer for his movements. As yet we hear of none. [Commodore] Barney gave him a bitter pill on the Patuxent, but this may stimulate him to revenge, &c.³⁵ We long to hear all about *your* Oration. We heard an Orator on Monday, but such an Oration as did no honor to the Washington Society. I would have given a dollar to have heard G. Morris. What do your Critics think of it? Won't you be down upon it? Yesterday we had a very ugly report, viz. that both the Russian & Swedish Minister have taken offense at the American Govern't. & were both going to leave the country. I am unwilling to believe the report. If it be true, we shall have bloody work & great difficulty in maintaining the Republic. If it be true, we shall all hear it with a vengeance.³⁶ More soon. GD

Friday, 19th Aug. 12 o'clock [1814]

Dear Sir,

...

This morning, we had an *alarm of another kind*. The whole town is in a bustle, not of the most agreeable kind. An express has come from Governr. to Gen. Smith,³⁷ informing, that a fleet of 47 British vessels, 6 or 8, or so, men of war, one of them with an Admiral's broad pennant, having arrived in Lynhaven Bay.³⁸ The General's orders have been printed, & dispatched to every home in the city. The whole of our troops of any description are to parade this evening, & to continue in arms till further orders: alarms, guns, videttes, &c &c in short every preparation for war. As yet we cannot tell where the blow will fall, on Norfolk, Washington, or Baltimore. Copies of these orders have been sent off to alert P[illegible] in N. York, of course, one to the N. Advocate. I leave the rest of this paper to Mrs. Wheaton. God bless you. D.

Henry Wheaton, Esq. Post Office, Philadelphia.

Monday, 1 o'clock, Aug 29 [1814]

I have flattered myself with believing, that you all arrived safe "bag & baggage" last evening at Phila. You can go at your leisure, & at perfect ease, to New York, & be safely lodged in *the Bowery*.

Yesterday it was said, that the enemy had precipitately left Washington, leaving behind them their sick & wounded. This day it is said, that they have taken Fort Washington on the Potomack, and Alexandria, a nest of Scotch & English Tories.³⁹ I give you these as reports of the day. Meanwhile, the people here seem to have recovered a new spirit, something like a confidence in their strength & resources. A great number of county corps are arrived & are hourly arriving. Yesterday afternoon, I was delighted with the scene on the hills & high grounds above Fell's Point, & to the Eastward of this city. They are completely covered with tents, cannon & troops of all descriptions. I was particularly pleased with the *Marine Corps* under Capt. Stiles. The multitude collected around them, saying "These are the men on whom we can depend." Com[modore]s Rodgers, Porter & Perry are on the field, and on every spot were corps & regiments & artillery busily exercising. Yesterday, from 7 in the morning to 6 in the evening, a vast entrenchment, at least a mile long, was raised, as if by magic; vast numbers were busily at work, old & young, black & white. It was a most cheerful & animating scene.⁴⁰ Certainly we had hands & hearts enough. All we want are heads. Every heart is burning with shame and indignation at the disgraceful business at Washington, where there has been the most shameful want of prudence, foresight & management. One party curses Armstrong, the other blames Winder. Among them they have left an everlasting stain on the nation. It is evident, that the Naval gentlemen have given a new turn to the spirit & exertions of our citizens. In another week, our whole city will be circumvallated, & all we shall want are some *heads* to conduct the business properly if an attack on us be made. Yesterday, with a large plough, as much work was done in an hour as 100 men could do in a day. Tomorrow, we expect a reinforcement from Phila. which will increase our force and animate our hopes.



The British victory at Bladensburg and the destruction of Washington D.C. horrified and embarrassed Douglas. (Maryland Historical Society.)

The next time I write, I will address you at N. York, to which place, I expect, you will set out tomorrow.⁴¹ Let me hear how you go on, as I feel deeply interested in your prowling. Kiss Mrs. W. & salute Catherine. And my God have you in his holy keeping. D.

The Editor of the *The National Advocate*, New York
Tuesday, Aug. 30 1814, 1 o'clock

The affair at Bladensburg, which has reflected so much honor on a few ill disciplined volunteers from Baltimore, and more especially Com[mandant] Barney and his brave seamen, has shown us what might & what ought to have been done *with proper management*. The destruction of the beautiful edifices at Washington, whilst it heaps eternal infamy on the British barbarians has left a deep stain on the character of those men who ought to have prevented so disgraceful a disaster, and still more, *in permitting these worse than Goths & Vandals to return to their ships without one effort to harrass them in their hasty & confused retreat*. Every American heart is bursting with shame & indignation at the catastrophe.⁴² The people of Baltimore were at first surprised & confounded & expected at any moment to be attacked, not knowing the real strength of the enemy, but the agony is past, the panick is dissipated, and they now appear as they ought always to have been. We have recovered from our consternation, all hearts & hands have cordially united in the common cause. Every day, almost every hour, bodies of troops are marching in to our assistance. At

this moment, we cannot have less then 10,000 men under arms. The whole of the hills & rising ground to the Eastward of the [illegible] are covered with horse, foot, & artillery, exercising & training from morning till night. They present an extensive & beautiful prospect of a multitude of tents, baggage, & cannon in every direction. Last Sunday, at least a mile of entrenchments, with suitable batteries, were raised, as if by magic, at which are now working all sorts of people, old & young, white and black, insomuch, before Saturday next, we expect that every vulnerable point will be strongly fortified. The marine corps under Com[modore]s Rodgers, Porter & Perry, & Capt Styles, make a distinguished figure in these noble exertions. Already we feel confident, of our safety, and of beating the enemy if he does attack us. *The horrible mismanagement at Washington* has taught us a most useful lesson, & we must be worse than stupid, if we do not make a proper use of it. We have hearts & hands in abundance; all we want is *heads* to conduct us.

Make what you please of the above. You may depend upon its authenticity.

Henry Wheaton, Esq. New York
Wednesday, Aug. 31, 1 o'clock [1814]

I have been much disappointed in not hearing from you today from Phila. Excuse my anxiety. I hope you are all well. I shall certainly hear from you tomorrow. Beside our public wars, we have our private broils. There is a violent schism in the Am[erica]n camp. P[echin] & M[urphy] don't agree. How it will end I do not know. If it were to come to a poll with the public, I think the latter would have a considerable majority. In future, please to direct to *me at the Post Office*.

Since you left us, there appears to be a considerable change for the better; great preparations for defense & we reckon on a force of about 10,000 men, such as they are. As if by magic, an entrenchment has been raised from the top of the hill above Fell's Point all round to the Fall's river near the gaol,⁴³ and there is a seeming determination at present, to defend the town. I think we have hearts & hands in abundance for the task, but I still fear the want of some *heads* to direct the operations with skill & spirit. You have heard, no doubt, by this time, of the ignominious surrender of Alexandria. Their *avowed Toryism* seems to be of no use to them. The same sort of conditions have been put to Washington & Georgetown, namely, to leave them nothing but their wives & children & the walls of their houses.⁴⁴ The inhabitants of these places have unanimously determined to defend themselves. Accordingly, yesterday the Commodores, with all their sailors, marched off to Washington, and this day, all the U. States' regular troops have followed them.⁴⁵ The people of Baltimore are not quite pleased with this measure, as they depended more on the Seamen than on all the other troops.

The President & all his Officers have returned to *the City*, except for Gen. Armstrong. He past thro' this place last night on his way to New York, & we are told "that he either resigned, or has been dismissed in disgrace." On hearing this, I

immediately thought of *you*. Have you been confirmed in your situation, what do you know about it?

In this day's American, you will see Gen. Winder's account of the *battle of Bladensburg*. The people here are as little pleased with Gen. W. as they are with Gen. A[rmstrong]. The Governor talks of having 5000 men in the field. Where were they? Not in the battle; they were either in the moor, or hidden in the woods. None fought but the Baltimore men, one company of militia & Barney's men. Barney has justly acquired the applause of all parties. Every account confirms most horrible mismanagement in that ill conducted affair. In the precipitate retreat of the British, if there had been 400, or 300, or even 100 light infantry or cavalry to hang on their rear, at least one half of them would have been taken prisoners.

This day we are told that the troops which were coming to our assistance from Phila. have been stop'd at Wilmington. This is another discouragement to us. Certainly Baltimore is far more vulnerable than Phila. which, of all the seaport towns, seems at present to be safest from an attack. There is still a secret hankering among some people here for a surrender, but, it is now thought, that the ignominious conditions imposed on Alexandria, fear will spur them & all parties to make a bold defense. Try to get a sight of the Nat. Intelligencer, as I presume that *our* people have omitted several parts of what it contained.

Yesterday I wrote a hasty sketch to the Nat. Advocate, desiring that he might make a judicious use of what I said. In this letter, there is nothing new, except about Washington & Georgetown, & about Gen. Armstrong.

I repeat my anxiety to hear from you. I think of you all day & all night. I send this to New York, supposing you will be in that place on Friday or Saturday. God bless you all.

Thursday forenoon [1 September 1814]

...

Yesterday I informed you of the resignation or dismissal of Gen. Armstrong. There is every reason to believe, that he left the Government in wrath. Every heart is bursting with shame & indignation at the shameful affair of Bladensburg, which has left so deep a stain on the American character. But the question is, "Who is really in fault?" If Gen. Winder had the sole direction of that business, then the disgrace should fall on *his* head. If Gen. Armstrong interfered in the arrangements, then it is *his* fault. And if the President brought in his plan, *he* is to blame. But those matters are not yet cleared up. Meanwhile, Gen. A. will undoubtedly endeavor to vindicate his character, which, at present, is loaded with every species of reproach & obloquy.⁴⁶ Such as, that he is the sworn enemy of Mr. Madison & Mr. Monroe, of the latter in particular as being a candidate for the Presidency; that he worked the destruction of the Capitol. Remember you will see Gen. Armstrong in N. York. You will probably be able to discover his sentiments, what he intends to do, what part

you will take in the discussion, or if you will take any open part. Meanwhile, I am anxious hear, how you are situated as to *your* Office, if it be confirmed, or if you will be thrown out along with your disgraced patron. If Gen. A. meant to be a candidate for the Presidency, he took an unusual way to obtain popularity, for all agree, both friend & foe, that he was haughty, overbearing, and *unconciliatory* in his behavior to everybody. I shall wait for your opinion.

You have heard of the disgraceful surrender of Alexandria. The Toryism of that place has not been of any benefit to it. The enemy's terms are harsh in any point of view. We expect every moment to hear news from that quarter, as it is thought now our Govern. means to make a dash on that place, & endeavor to destroy the flour & tobacco, which the enemy is carrying off at his leisure. I hope it will succeed; for this purpose, all the Marine corps has been drawn off from this place. The Govern. has returned to Washington, & we are told, intends to defend that place & Georgetown. If they are in earnest, this will keep the war at a distance from Baltimore, at least for a while. We are going on with considerable spirit here, & seem to be determined on a stout defense. We cannot have less than 10,000 men, such as they are. We have hearts & hands, all we want are heads to conduct the business with skill & [harmony?]. The entrenchments go on with surprising speed. They already extend from the hill above Fell's Point to the Fall's river near the gaol. Another week will complete them from Howard's Park quite round to the Patapsco. All seem to be unanimous in the cause, and if we had a good General, I think we would make a good defense, but there seems to be little confidence in Gen. _____ [Winder]. Since the affair of Bladensburg, some even talk of shooting him, if he appears at their head.⁴⁷ Com[modore] Barney has established his fame at that unfortunate place. If we had *him* for a commander, every man would have confidence in his courage, his skill, & zeal for the country.

Last night & this morning it is reported, that the enemy has rec'd a reinforcement of some ships of war & ten transports, & that Lord Hill is coming with the main body.⁴⁸ If so, we shall have warm work, & we may expect no mercy from these English Goths & Vandals. I hope the affair at Washington will open the eyes of the American people & bring them out in a mass to oppose & destroy these barbarians.

Yesterday I wrote to you at N. York. I expect to hear of your safe arrival in the Bowery. Direct to me "at the Post Office." God bless you all.

Saturday, 3. Sept. [1814]

... We are going on here with great spirit & seeming unanimity. Our entrenchments have come across the Fall's river & are now progressing thro' Howard's Park. This morning 200 men began a work on Federal Hill, which in truth ought to have been one of their earliest objects. Against veteran troops I have no great faith in this extensive ditch, but it keeps a number of men employed, gives a fancied security, & will be a shelter for our Militia men *if they will fight at all*. To do the enemy justice,

they have given us timely warning to prepare for them; and unless they receive larger reinforcements, I am inclined to think, at least to hope, that they will not come & attack us this time. It is ascertained pretty correctly, that we have at least 15,000 men of various sorts. The men you met on your journey did not come here; they have halted somewhere on the road. Yesterday Govern[ment] sent us back all the regular troops, but we would rather have had the *seamen* than 10,000 militia. All have a firm reliance on *that* body of men. See Com[mandant] Barney's letter in this day's papers, he has justly won the laurel and we anxiously wish for him here. Something is expected from the Potomack from Com[modore] Rodgers & Co[mpany] who have gone, as we are told, to intercept the flour &c from Alexandria. It is openly asserted as a fact, that there is a collusion between that nest of Tories & the British, & that they are to be paid for the flour &c. As Rodgers & Co. have sunken vessels in the narrow part of the river, we flatter ourselves with hoping, that they will be able to intercept & destroy the plunderers.

I was wrong when I told you that Gen. A[rmstrong]. had passed thro' this place to N. York. He is still here, as I am informed, at Capt[ain] or Major Bartilou's, busily preparing his defense. If it be true what he says, he has been made the *Scape Goat* of the Faction at Georgetown, & the weakness & indecision of the P[resident]. I will tell you, in as few words as I can, what he says, & what I have from what I think tolerable authority. He had designed another officer for command of the Maryland District, but the P[resident] put in Gen. W[inder]. That he had full time & power to provide for the safety both of the Capitol & Baltimore, by collecting a sufficient number of troops for that purpose. On the day of the *route* at Bladensburg, he (A.) did not interfere either by word or deed with Winder's arrangements, but he suspects that Mr. Monroe did. You already know the disastrous consequences of the shameful day. After the return of the P—t to Washington, & when (too late) it was determined to defend that place & Georgetown, the Faction [Federalists] at the latter place refused to receive any orders thro' Gen A. When he heard this he immediately waited on the Pt. [President] and gave him two choices, either to crouch to the seditious demands of the Faction, or to accept his resignation. The Pt. was unwilling to do either, upon which Gen. A. threw up his commission, & left the Place. *If* this account be true, you will see what sort of a business has been carried on at the seat of Govern[ment]. & how much the public has been abused, & how the Executive is misled by the want of something he has not. You will say little either in public or private, until you either see Gen. A. in person, or his defense, & even then with caution. By the last account, the great body of the British force was at the mouth of the Patuxent,⁴⁹ but whether they will go up or down the Bay none can tell, or when the next attack will be made. We may readily suppose they will not be idle, but keep up the alarm. Ad[miral] Cockburn said at W[ashington] "that his Govern[ment] did not want to recolonize us, but to "cripple us for the next 50 years."

Monday forenoon, 5th Sept. [1814]

...

We seem to go on with great spirit in this place. We can scarcely have less than 15,000 men. We certainly have hands enough, if we have heads to conduct them. Some corps of cavalry have been dismissed, as being totally useless, unless to consume provisions. Barney's sailors have come to us, & we were glad to see them. Barney has immortalized [his] name; if he had been half supported in the shamefully conducted affair at Bladensburg, the Capitol had been saved. We any moment expect news from the Potomack, where, we are told, Rodgers, Porter, & Perry have blocked up the river by stones, trees, &c so that the British can not get away with the plunder of the Tories of Alexandria. There is no free press at present in this place; every truth is suppressed on one side or discolored on the other. See the Columbian of the 2nd for a tolerably fair account of the Bladensburg affair except that part with says, "that the retreat was ordered under the direction of the Secy. of War." That is false. The Secy. of War had no share whatsoever in the *honors* of that memorable day.

Gen. Armstrong is still here. The President did not accept his resignation,⁵⁰ but after his *Defense* appears, I think he will be discharged, if it be of the kind I am told it is. I hear it is to appear in this afternoon's Patriot. I went to that Office to get a copy of it to send to you, but they would not give it to me; so you must wait for tomorrow's paper, which will not reach you till Thursday. The City of Washington Gazette first ventured to defend the Secy. of War; & the *Nat. Intelligencer* has since said something in his favor. What are we to augur from their conduct? The tide seems to be turning in favor of the Secy. of War & if his defense be founded in fact, it would be still stronger. Every heart is bursting with shame & indignation at the horrible business of Bladensburg, but is it not a melancholy consideration that the Executive should have given way to the suggestions of the Tory Faction in Georgetown?⁵¹ Gen. W[inder] is extremely disliked by the military here, & some of them have gone so far as to say that they will shoot him, if he appears at their head. Gen. Smith, we are told, has at length got the chief command; whether for better or worse, time will tell. We begin to think that if the British do not receive a strong reinforcement, they will not attempt this place. Meantime, the transactions on the Potomack will engage their attention & give us more time to prepare for their reception.

Let Mr. Chambers know the general substance of this letter, that we are not now a desponding people, but look up to noble doings, & vindicate the character of Mobtown as to [illegible], etc. I hope to hear from you tomorrow. Adieu.

Baltimore, Wednesday, 2 o'clock [September 14, 1814]

I give joy, my dear friend. After a tremendous conflict, we have got rid of the enemy for the present. Baltimore has nobly maintained the country by shewing Phila.

& New York, & other cities, how to contend against the enemy with spirit, bravery and unanimity, all which have been shown on the memorable days & nights of the 12th, 13th, and 14th of Sptr. 1814. The night and morning of Tuesday & Wednesday were the critical & awful crises of our fate. I cannot describe to you the tremendous scene which presented itself in the dark hours of night, when the whole sky was illuminated by innumerable shells & rockets flying thro' the air; & the loud & horrible sound of the cannon shook every home in the city & neighborhood & awfully reverberated thro' the hills and vallies [*sic*]. The garrison of Fort M'Henry has nobly done its duty in withstanding the furious attacks of the whole of the British fleet, which enclosed it in a half circle, & kept upon it a furious cannonade for 21 hours without cessation.

Taking advantage of the darkness of the night, the enemy advanced a number of his bomb & rocket vessels past Fort M'Henry nearer to the city, from which place he meant to fire the city with his bombs & rockets, but, most providentially, he was met by a battery of only 7 guns under the command of Lieut. Budd and a party of his gallant seamen, who, after a conflict of about two hours continuance, obliged the British to retire, & this morning the whole of their fleet stood out of the Patapsco to the Bay. After this conflict, their army retired, but whether they have yet reembarked, we cannot yet say with certainty. The enemy has lost their hero, Gen. Ross & a number of their men, in the engagement of Monday. We have also lost some valuable citizens, but they have bled & died in a most noble cause. I cannot now give you particulars. I have given a hasty sketch of the most important facts, which you will use as you think proper. I wrote to you on Saturday, Sunday & Monday, but since that day, we have had no communication from any place, as all the stages have been stopped, and we are as yet ignorant of what is going on in the other parts of the country. If the stages begin to move again, I will write to you or Catherine tomorrow, to whom speak words comfort & consolation, &c.

[16 September 1814]

Mr. Wheaton. I have written the inclosed with a painful thumb to Catherine. You are welcome to read it if you can. After a hard, & it may be truly said, a dangerous struggle, we are once more in quietness, but, I fear, another attack if the enemy gets a reinforcement. Look to yourselves in New York, & profit by our success & by our errors. I hope to hear from you & Catherine, when the mails are brought from Ellicotts Mills. I long most anxiously to hear of you.

Note: Take care that your forts be provided with bomb-proof casements, or places of shelter. This was our greatest danger in Fort M'Henry here.

[The following letter was enclosed with this note. It is not signed, but it was undoubtedly written by George Douglas; his handwriting is distinctive. It lacks a salutation, but we know from the note that it was sent to Douglas' daughter Catherine. If she was not

actually living with Mr. & Mrs. Wheaton, she was closely associated with them during the present crisis. The directions to "show this to Mr. W[heaton]" and to "dress it up in his own words" indicate that the letter was intended primarily as a news dispatch.]

Baltimore, Friday, 16th Sept. 1814.

If I was wrong in bringing you to this country at war, distraction and trouble, I was right in persuading you to go to New York in the care of our kind friends. I have been witness to such scenes as must have struck you with terror & the most fearful apprehension, not only for your own safety, but for thousands of your neighbors. I hope in God, you never will witness such scenes.

The battle on Monday last was a much better contested one than that of Bladensburg & our loss has been proportionately greater, but it was out of sight, in the woods.⁵² The attack on Fort M'Henry, by the whole British fleet, was seen by all who chose to look at it from Federal Hill, & from the tops of the houses, which were covered with *men*, women & children. For 21 hours the Fort nobly withstood the attack of the enemy, but it was on the night of Tuesday, & the morning of Wednesday, till about 4 o'clock, that presented the most awful & fearful spectacle of shot & shell & rockets, shooting & bursting thro' the air, when, but for the brave & well directed fire of the little fort under the command of Lieut. Budd & his brave seamen, that checked the enemy in his approach, & saved the town from destruction in the dark hours of the night. It was on Monday afternoon, that our alarm began, when we learnt that our brave little advanced army had been beaten back by the enemy,⁵³ & the coming in of wounded men & flocks of fugitives, served to sink our spirits, & fill us with the most fearful apprehensions. That night, we every moment expected that the victorious enemy would break thro' the entrenchments, & carry fire & sword into the town in the dark, but few people that night in Baltimore either slept or went to bed. Next morning, Tuesday, discovered to us the whole of the B. fleet, above 30 sail, drawn up in a half circle, before Fort M'Henry. A few moments before 7 o'clock, they opened a most furious fire of shot, shells & rockets on the fort, which continued without interruption till next morning. The British fired at least ten shots for one from the fort. During the whole day, we were in most anxious expectation of the event, every moment fearing the Fort would surrender, but it stood out most nobly. The garrison was chiefly incommoded by the shells, which burst in & about the fort in every quarter, whilst the brave defenders had no bomb-proof shelter. As the darkness increased, the awful grandeur of the scene augmented. About 1 in the morning, the enemy contrived to pass a number of their vessels above the Fort & nearer the town. Here, most providentially, they were met by the well directed fire of Lieut. Budd's marine battery.⁵⁴ As this was the grand effort of the enemy, it was then that the scene became peculiarly grand & terrifying. The dark air was illuminated by shot & shells & rockets flying in every direction, & the horrible roaring of the cannon shook every house in the city & neighborhood to the foundation, & caused an

awful reverberation in the surrounding hills & vallies [*sic*]. At about 4 o'clock in the morning, the enemy being disappointed in his bold attempt, silently withdrew; & on Wednesday morn by daylight, we perceived that the whole fleet had withdrawn to a distance, & an awful silence succeeded a most tremendous noise, which can only be compared to the most terrible of thunder storms. During this conflict, the British army lay in the woods about two short miles from our entrenchments, waiting the success of their fleet. If the forts had been taken, then their army was to have rushed into town, & carried fire & destruction wherever they came. When the ships found they could not take the forts, they communicated with their army by rocket signals, when the British retired with considerable precipitation, leaving everything behind them in their hurry. It was then they ought to have been pursued with spirit, but *it was not done*. Why I cannot tell. Yesterday the B. fleet left the Patapsco, and relieved us from present danger; but, if they get a reinforcement, which they expect, I am confident they will try it again with double force & double fury, for "they have a marked dislike to Mobtown."

The manner of meeting the enemy soon after his landing was well conceived, but badly executed. The 5th Baltimore Regt. was again set in the front of the battle. It was to be supported by the 27th and that of the 57th. The two first did their duty as well as could be expected, but the third shamefully turned their backs on the enemy, & left the field in confusion, after having fired on their friends instead of the enemy, by which a number of valuable lives were lost. The same blunder was committed here as at Washington, by permitting the enemy to return to their ships without a rapid & well directed pursuit. The blame is laid by some on one General, by some on another General, & by some on both Generals. Indeed all the miscarriages that have taken place both here & there, are ascribed, & I believe with justice, to the total want of skilled Officers. As to the men in general, I am told, they were eager for battle on all occasions.

In Fort M'Henry, our loss entirely arose from the want of bomb-proof casements or shelter for the garrison. Mr. Moore is safe, as to Mr. B[illegible], I suppose he also is safe, as I did not hear his name mentioned in the list of killed and wounded. This little garrison has done nobly, as the British had calculated on taking it in less than an hour. The conduct of Lieut. Budd's party of seamen is beyond all praise; in fact it was this little fort that saved the town from destruction. On land, our loss has been severe in killed, wounded, & prisoners. T. Moore was wounded, I. L. Donaldson, & it is feared, Talbot Jones, are killed, both leaving wives & children. Miss Alexander had two brothers in the battle; one was killed, the other severely wounded. All our other acquaintances, as far as I can yet learn, are safe, either as having returned, or as prisoners with the British. Upon the whole, considering the raw & undisciplined state of our troops brought against the British veterans, without skillful officers to guide & direct them, they have done wonders. They have saved Baltimore, & perhaps America. Phila. New York, &c have now an example before them, how to profit by

our success, & how to avoid our mistakes & errors. But America must never go to war again without a well trained regular army, led by proper commanders.

Yesterday I gave to Mr. W[heaton] a short sketch of our proceedings, but as the stages have been stop'd, I do not know when he or you will get my letters. I look most anxiously to hear from you & him. We are told, that our P[ost] Master will return this day from Ellicott's Mills, when we may hope for a restoration of our regular communications from all parts of the continent. Read or shew this to M.

Henry Wheaton held the position of Chief Justice of the Marine Court of the City of New York for less than a year. He regarded it only as a stepping stone to the bar, and when an opportunity came, he took the step. He moved his family to Washington and in February 1816 was appointed Reporter of the United States Supreme Court. In this prestigious post he was responsible for publishing all the proceedings of the Court, which he did until 1821. John Marshall was Chief Justice.

Wheaton's book, *Digest of the Law of Maritime Captures and Prizes*, was the first of several classics of legal scholarship. The most important was *A History of the Law of Nations in Europe and America*, published in 1838. It was translated into French and used in Washington, London, Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg, and even China. He went on to a distinguished diplomatic career as American chargé d'affaires to Denmark (1827-1835) and then to Prussia where he was appointed full minister and served until 1846 when Secretary of State James Buchanan recalled him over a disagreement in foreign policy that ended his diplomatic career. Two years later, scheduled to lecture on international law at Harvard, Wheaton passed away at the age of sixty-three. His personal papers, including these remarkable letters, are preserved in the John Hay Library of Brown University.

NOTES

1. Ms. Holly Snyder, North American History Librarian at the John Hay Library, Brown University, provided access to two boxes of the papers of Henry Wheaton. Among them were the manuscripts of thirty-four letters from George Douglas to Henry Wheaton. The author and his wife transcribed them, and all thirty-four are presented here with his commentaries on their contents.

Henry Wheaton Papers (Ms. Wheaton), Box 1, Folders 1-12, John Hay Library, Brown University. Douglas's name does not appear in the 1800, 1810, 1820 or 1830 federal censuses of Baltimore, nor in the 1814-1815 Baltimore city directory.

2. Baltimore *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, March 20, 1805; International Genealogical Index, v5,0, Batch #7815603, Sheet 69, Source Call #1126319. Among the fewer than 100,000 people who lived in New York City in 1800, there was one George Douglas (United States Census 1800, New York City, Ward 7, pg. 212). He was older than 45, and there was one female less than 10 and one between 26 and 45 in his household. The latter was probably his wife; the little girl could have been 21 in 1813, about daughter Catherine's age. Whether this

was the journalist George Douglas is pure conjecture. He was not in the 1810 New York City census. E. F. Baker, *Henry Wheaton, 1785–1848* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1937); *Brigham's History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690–1820*.

3. C. G. Muller, *The Darkest Day: 1814, The Washington-Baltimore Campaign* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1963).

4. The first page of this letter is clearly dated "14 Sept'r"; the back (postal) page is clearly dated Oct 14, '13. I assume Douglas either wrote "Oct" by mistake or did not mail the letter until a month later. But in the latter case, the letter would not make sense, since it begins, "... the letter I wrote on Friday." It seems more likely that "Oct" was simply an error. Supporting this is the fact that Douglas dated and mailed another long letter on October 14, 1813.

5. Wheaton's "intended work" refers to a book he published in 1815, *Digest of the Law of Maritime Captures and Prizes*.

6. Douglas is doubtless referring to the American victory at the Battle of Lake Erie on September 10.

7. The "Mr. Pinkney" mentioned here and in following letters was William Pinkney, at this time a Maryland state senator. He had previously served in the Maryland House of Delegates and in Congress, been mayor of Annapolis, attorney general of Maryland, minister to Great Britain, and briefly attorney general in Madison's cabinet. In 1814 he became a major in the Maryland militia and was wounded at the Battle of Bladensburg. After the war, he again served in Congress, was U.S. minister to Russia, and died a U.S. Senator.

8. Douglas twice refers to a Maryland political faction, the "Hansonites," with distaste. Alexander Contee Hanson (1786–1819) had represented Maryland in Congress since March 1813. He was founder and editor of a strident Federalist newspaper in Baltimore. In it he denounced Madison's administration and the war so violently that a mob destroyed the paper's office on June 22, 1813, four days after war was declared. It is obvious why arch-Republican Douglas despised Hanson and his followers.

9. The campaigning in Maryland's statewide election was vigorous. Douglas was an ardent supporter of Madison's Republican (often called Democratic-Republican) party. The *Whig* was a newspaper.

10. Douglas is concerned that the U.S. naval forces on Lake Ontario have not followed up Perry's victory on Lake Erie two weeks before.

11. Apparently money used to buy votes.

12. Captain Isaac Chauncey (1779–1840) took command of the American naval forces on the Great Lakes in September 1812. Under his direction, 3,000 American workmen who had been sent to Sackett's Harbor, N.Y., on Lake Ontario built a fleet of warships in just a couple of months, giving him naval superiority on the Lake. Chauncey fought a number of skirmishes but no decisive actions against the British fleet in 1813. Douglas is probably referring to an action in York (now Toronto) Bay on September 28 in which the British flagship was partially dismasted. The British retreated to Kingston (now Ontario), to make repairs, while the Americans retained effective control of Lake Ontario for a few months. That enabled Chauncey to escort U.S. troops across the lake to the head of the St. Lawrence River for an attack on Montreal. (See letters of November 11 and December 23, 1813.) The action at York Bay was more than the "partial success" Douglas guessed it to be.

13. Douglas's reference was probably inspired by Napoleon's rapid recovery from his disasters in Russia and Spain in 1812. His army was down to a few hundred thousand men, but all through the summer of 1813 he had been fighting to maintain control over German territory. What Douglas would not know for at least another month was that the "Battle of the Nations" began at Leipzig four days after he wrote this letter. A total of 330,000 soldiers,

mostly from Austria, Russia, Prussia and Sweden, fought 190,000 men of the Grande Armée for three days. At the end, 54,000 were killed or wounded on the Allied side, 38,000 on the French, and Napoleon was forced to retreat into France. He would abdicate the following spring. Douglas seldom fails to mention that he supports Napoleon because he is fighting America's battles.

14. Douglas had hoped for federal patronage appointment in Baltimore but lacked the right connections.

15. For an explanation of "Wilkinson, Hampton, &c" see letters of November 11 and December 23, 1813.

16. Douglas still does not know of Napoleon's defeat at the Battle of the Nations but fears he may be beaten. Duane, editor of the Philadelphia *Aurora* and a strong supporter of Jefferson and Madison, has apparently predicted that Napoleon would be victorious.

17. John Armstrong was the secretary of war.

18. Maj. Gen. James Wilkinson and Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton led what was to be a two-pronged assault on heavily defended Montreal. Hampton, who despised Wilkinson and refused to take orders from him, was stopped at the Battle of Châteauguay on October 26, and Wilkinson was defeated at the Battle of Crysler's Farm on November 11, the day this letter was written, ending the campaign. Roman military discipline included decimation, executing every tenth man of a disgraced unit.

19. The federal government imposed an embargo on December 17 in an effort to stop New England and New York contractors from supplying the British army in Canada with provisions. It was lifted the following April.

20. In November, Lord Castlereagh sent a letter to President Madison proposing direct negotiations to end the war. Disheartened by American military ineptitude and British victories in Canada, Madison accepted, and nominated five peace commissioners, including John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay.

21. H.M.S. *Dragon*, 74, was the flagship of Captain Robert Barrie, in command of the British ships wintering on the bay. Admiral George Cockburn and most of the fleet had gone to spend the winter in Bermuda.

22. The reference to negotiations and the English Ministers is a follow-up to the arrival of the documents from England described in the December 31, 1813 letter. With Napoleon defeated (his escape from Elba was far in the future), the British were indeed in "the hour of their prosperity" and were not ready to offer terms, reasonable or otherwise. Douglas was correct in suspecting the negotiations went up in "smoke."

23. The "wild spirit of faction" he feared would be nourished by continuation of the war refers to the Federalists he hates. He was correct about that. Later in 1814, a Federalist-inspired conference would meet in Hartford to consider succession of the New England states and New York.

24. Gen. William Henry Harrison had recaptured Detroit, then routed a small British army at the Battle of the Thames on October 5, 1813, in which the Indian leader Tecumseh was killed. The Battle of the Thames re-established American control over the Northwest frontier and ended Indian resistance. Secretary of War Armstrong's reputation was sinking because he had replaced Harrison with a subordinate after the battle and attempted to reassign the hero to a backwater post. Harrison resigned from the army, and that was the end of his military career. He went on into a distinguished political career that culminated in the presidency in 1841.

25. There was indeed a "schism in the cabinet." Secretary of State Monroe, who had fought in the Revolutionary War, wanted to be, in addition, secretary of war and replace the inept

Armstrong. Monroe suspected (correctly) that Armstrong had presidential aspirations, as did Monroe.

26. Wheaton has gone to Washington briefly. He appeared as counsel before the Supreme Court in its February session in re: the case of the *Frances* (apparently a ship). William Pinkney was another counsel. Baker, *Henry Wheaton*.

27. Douglas's remark that he "observed a dislike . . . to men who are called foreigners" may allude to the fact that he was an Irish immigrant.

28. After Napoleon's defeat at Leipzig in October 1813, the allied armies captured Paris the following March. Editor Duane, an ardent Republican and Francophile, had apparently written optimistic editorials about Napoleon's prospects.

29. By early 1814, Napoleon was fighting for survival, had lost all his territory outside France itself, and faced invasion from several directions. Thus Douglas hoped that "Bony will be able to keep his ground in France." He could not have known that the Allies had captured Paris on March 31 and that Napoleon had abdicated on April 6.

30. Douglas distinguishes real Republicans like himself from those leading the federal government who certainly did not instill much confidence.

31. Secretary of War Armstrong made Wilkinson one of the commanders in the failed attack on Montreal in the autumn of 1813. After another debacle at LaColle Mills, Armstrong relieved him on April 11, 1814. Wilkinson was noted for his braggadocio.

32. Thirteen days after his last letter, Douglas still did not know that Napoleon had abdicated on April 6.

33. This graphic description of Mrs. Wheaton's two-day voyage from Philadelphia shows that travel by sea was not much better than travel by land. Having been married only three years, she was quite young, but we do not know her exact age.

34. Joshua Barney, a seasoned veteran of naval warfare and one of the best officers in the U.S. Navy, had taken command of the "Chesapeake Flotilla," small, shallow-draft barges propelled by oars and sail, with the intention of harassing the Royal Navy in the bay. On his way to the British base at Tangier Island, he was intercepted and pursued into the Patuxent River. He took cover in St. Leonard Creek and repulsed a British attempt to dislodge him in the First Battle of St. Leonard Creek, June 8–10, 1814.

To dislodge him, the British raided up and down the Patuxent, appropriating cattle and enticing slaves to join their ranks and fight against the Americans, all in an effort to turn the local populace against Barney. In that they were largely successful.

35. The people of Baltimore had reason to be nervous with a huge British fleet prowling Chesapeake Bay, but so far it seemed to be focused on Barney's tiny force. Barney's "bitter pill" refers to the Second Battle of St. Leonard Creek on June 26, after which the British inexplicably withdrew, thereby permitting Barney to escape the creek and sail up the Patuxent almost to Upper Marlboro.

36. The departure of the Russian and Swedish ministers, here to work on peace negotiations, appears to have been only a rumor.

37. General Samuel Smith, a hero of the Revolutionary War, had been given command of Baltimore's defenses.

38. The British fleet under Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane sailed into Chesapeake Bay on August 15. At the moment this letter was being written, 4,000 veterans of the war on the Spanish Peninsula under Maj. Gen. Robert Ross were landing at Benedict, Maryland, far up the Patuxent River. From there they could strike in three directions, as Douglas correctly observed.

39. A squadron detached from the main British fleet under Capt. James Gordon had as-

cended the Potomac to coordinate with Ross's attack on Washington, but they were still some distance down the Potomac when the night sky was lit by the fires in Washington. When they reached Fort Washington opposite Mount Vernon and began a preliminary bombardment, the garrison blew up the fort without firing a shot. This opened the way to Alexandria, which Gordon reached on August 27. Whether or not it was "a nest of Scotch & English Tories," as Douglas repeatedly claimed, Gordon exacted a humiliating treaty from the inhabitants, one that required merchants to load their merchandise upon their own ships, which the British would then take as prizes. The British took four leisurely days to loot the town of flour, tobacco, cotton, sugar & everything else of value. They started back down the Potomac on August 31.

40. Troops were arriving from neighboring states and counties, and it seemed like the entire population of the city was at work constructing a mile-long line of defense that extended from the harbor northeast to the Bel Air road. It was commanded by Commodore John Rodgers, one of three senior naval officers who apparently arrived along with the Marines. The others were Capt. David Porter, the "hero of Valparaiso," a naval battle in the South Pacific, and Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry of Lake Erie fame.

41. Wheaton had come to Baltimore to retrieve his wife and was en route to New York via Philadelphia, taking Douglas's daughter Catherine with them.

42. Two principals failed to provide "proper management" in the "affair at Bladensburg." One was Secretary of War John Armstrong. When President Madison appointed him to succeed acting Secretary of War James Monroe (who was also secretary of state) in February 1813, Monroe was distressed. He did not think a brigadier general on active duty who intended to stay in the field should also run the War Department and suspected Armstrong of a Napoleonic ambition to use these positions to vault himself into the presidency. Fixated on the Canadian campaigns and convinced that the British would not attack Washington because it was of no strategic importance, Armstrong refused to issue rifles, of which the War Department had plenty, to a Maryland militia company before the Battle of Bladensburg because they were reserved for the northern armies.

The other principal at fault was Brig. Gen. William Winder (1775-1824), who practiced law in Baltimore from 1798 to 1812 and who, when the war started, was commissioned a colonel in the U.S. Army although he had no prior military experience. He led a successful expedition from a place near Buffalo to the Canadian shore near Fort Erie, for which he was promoted to brigadier general in March 1813. In June he was taken prisoner at the battle of Stoney Creek but exchanged in time to become adjutant general of the Army in May 1814. Two months later Madison placed the thirty-nine-year-old general in command of the 10th Military District (Maryland, District of Columbia and northern Virginia) over the objection of Armstrong, who favored another general. Responsible in this position for the defense of Washington, with a single staff officer to assist him, he was in an impossible position. Furthermore, Winder was outranked by everyone in councils of war that included the president, the secretaries of state and war, and most of the other members of the Cabinet. None could agree on what actions Winder should take, and no one had confidence in him. Madison undermined his authority by saying Armstrong might render "useful assistance" to Winder on the battlefield and, if the two generals disagreed, he, the commander-in-chief, would settle it. In spite of all this, Winder managed to raise thousands of militia troops in his district, but he lacked the talent to organize all of them. Those he did he brought together at Bladensburg.

43. The Jones Falls, a stream that empties into Baltimore's harbor.

44. The British left Georgetown untouched, and surrender terms were not forced on this town or Washington.

45. The sailors and regulars who left Baltimore on August 30 were on their way to harass Captain Gordon's squadron as it made its way back down the Potomac from Alexandria on August 31. Captain Porter erected a battery below Mount Vernon on the Virginia side of the Potomac and Perry another one ten miles farther downstream on the Maryland side. Porter put Gordon through an uncomfortable four days. Not wanting to risk his booty-laden prizes, Gordon's warships dropped anchor upstream, and they bombarded each other until Porter's battery was finally silenced. Before this, Rodgers had floated fire ships—a lethal weapon against wooden ships caulked with pitch and carrying acres of canvas—down the river. Royal Marines in small boats managed to deflect them. Gordon got past Perry's position in one day because Perry ran out of ammunition. Gordon finally rejoined the main fleet on September 9.

46. Armstrong was in disgrace. Believing the command was divided, Douglas raises the question of whether Armstrong told Winder to order the retreat at Bladensburg. The president's servant thought so when he told Dolly Madison to flee. President Madison was present, at least early in the battle, but there is no evidence that he settled differences between his generals as commander-in-chief. There was no doubt that Armstrong's indolence and conviction that Washington would not be attacked were largely responsible for the humiliating British triumph. When Madison returned to Washington on August 27 (he had sought safety in the countryside since the battle), he suggested that Armstrong should leave the city and presumably asked for his resignation. Douglas's information in the August 31 letter was correct. Armstrong had arrived in Baltimore on August 30 and from there had submitted his resignation.

47. General Winder kept marching with the militia brigade he had led from the battlefield at Bladensburg all the way to Baltimore. Douglas displays understandable doubts about his taking over command of its defenses from Gen. Samuel Smith. As commander of the 10th Military District, which included Baltimore, Winder outranked Smith and was entitled to do so. Fortunately, he agreed that Smith had done well in preparing for the coming attack and should continue in command. The fortifications around Baltimore were almost complete. Winder would play an honorable part in the defense of Baltimore in September. He was later court-martialed for his actions at Bladensburg but acquitted.

48. Douglas was wrong about British reinforcements. Admiral Cochrane had requested 4,000 more troops but decided to go ahead with the attack on Baltimore without them.

49. Douglas was correct in that the main British force was at the mouth of the Patuxent when this letter was written. They were awaiting the return of Gordon from the Potomac expedition and deciding on their next move. One option was to sail up to Rhode Island and quarter their troops there until November, when the reinforcements Cochrane had sent for on August 28 should arrive. (A. J. Langguth, *Union 1812: The Americans Who Fought the Second War of Independence* [New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006].) The other was to attack Baltimore now. Cochrane & Ross decided on the latter. On September 10 the fleet sailed north toward the Patapsco, Baltimore's harbor.

50. Douglas was correct. Madison did not accept the resignation Armstrong submitted on August 30. Why he did not is difficult to understand. Armstrong had tarried in Baltimore for a week and would go on to New York, cutting himself off from the War Department and succeeding to some extent in turning public opinion in his favor. Madison finally accepted Armstrong's resignation on September 27 and appointed James Monroe Secretary of War. Monroe thus held two portfolios—state and war—until March 1815. After Armstrong's removal, Wheaton still rose to his friend's defense in the *National Advocate*, writing that he was "entitled to the gratitude of the nation for having put out of the way the superannuated

generals and for bringing forward a set of generals who rescued our country from eternal disgrace.”

51. Madison giving way to the “Tory Faction [Federalists] in Georgetown” comes from Armstrong’s highly dubious account and has no basis in fact.

52. The Battle of North Point.

53. A reference to the American withdrawal under fire at North Point.

54. A British diversionary force attempted a landing behind Fort McHenry but was stopped by fire from Forts Covington and Babcock.

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