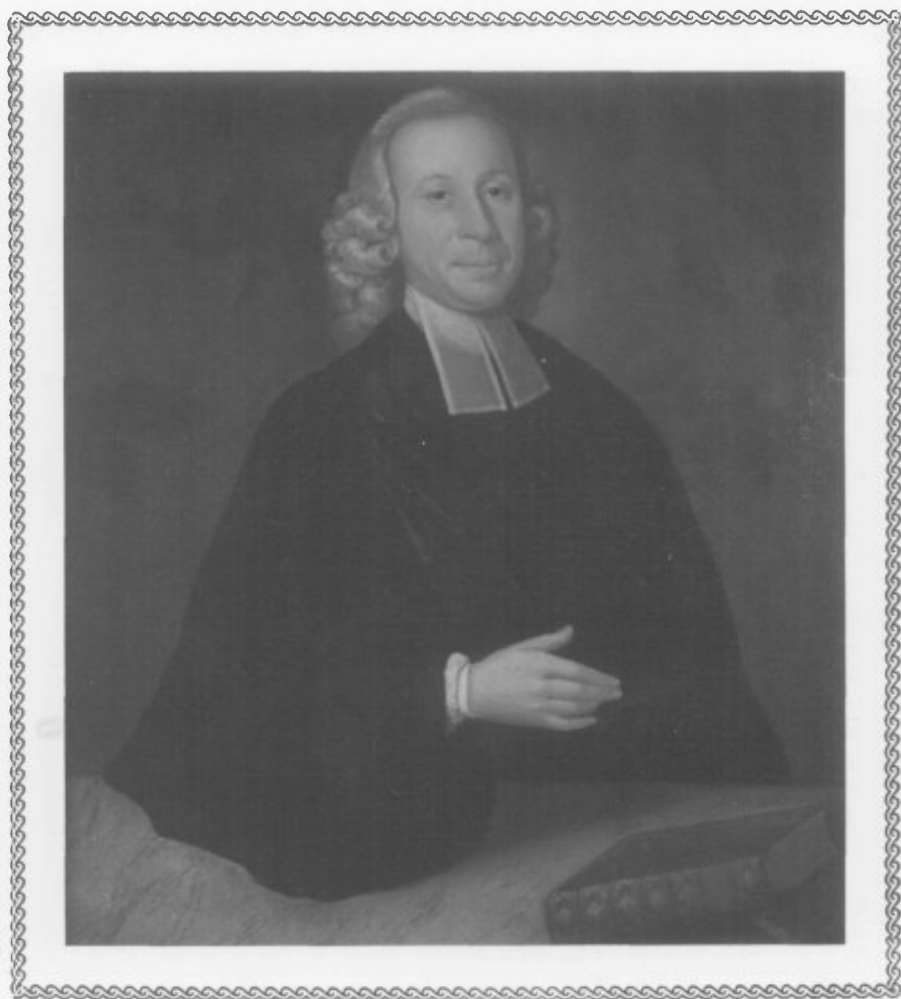


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# Maryland Historical Magazine



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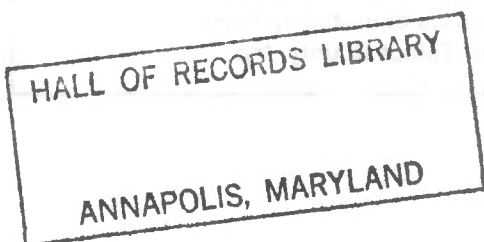
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The Reverend Doctor John Gordon (1717-1790). Rector of St. Michael's Parish, 1749-1790. Portrait attributed to John Hesselius (1728-1778). Probably painted in St. Michaels, Talbot County, Maryland, ca. 1762. The original is now owned by the Historical Society of Talbot County, 27 South Washington Street, Easton, Maryland, where it hangs in the Talbot Room. Oil on canvas, 38-3/4" x 32" plus a black and gilt bordered frame.

Publication of this issue of *Maryland Historical Magazine* has been aided by a generous contribution from The Historical Society of Talbot County, Inc.

# The Reverend Doctor John Gordon, 1717-1790

MARY M. STARIN

## FOREWORD

**I**NSPIRED BY ITS ACQUISITION OF THE REVEREND DOCTOR JOHN GORDON'S portrait, attributed to John Hesselius, the Board of Directors of the Historical Society of Talbot County decided to have a monograph prepared on the clergyman's life for its records and for those who, viewing the portrait hanging in the Society's Talbot Room would be interested in knowing more about the subject than the mere dates of his birth, incumbency in St. Michael's Parish, and death.

Therefore, John G. Earle and I, as co-chairmen of the Society's Research and Publications Committee, undertook the task of discovering as much as possible about the life of the Reverend John Gordon. Inevitably, it could not be isolated from the parish. As a result, the monograph includes vignettes of the history of the parish, and even bits of the county's history, for Gordon did not isolate himself from the community, but became very much a part of its educational, charitable, agricultural, political, even commercial, life, in addition to that of his parish.

First, in the course of our research, it was necessary to verify information already published about our subject in secondary sources, which in almost every instance proved to be incorrect. The primary sources consulted are to be found in the "References."

Documentation on the life of the Reverend John Gordon to 1745 was confounded by the number of clergymen named John Gordon. One was ordained in 1733; another, or the same man, was in Delaware in 1743; a John Gordon was a curate of the Church of England in Ireland who sought to obtain a license and an appointment to Philadelphia in 1743; in 1742, a testimonial of residents in Chester County, Pennsylvania, states that a John Gordon served St. John's Church for six and one half years; and there was a Reverend John Gordon in Virginia in 1746.

All of these references had to be examined, and were eliminated for lack of corroborative evidence. Invaluable was the information in *The Fulham Papers in the Lambeth Palace Library: American Colonial Section, Calendar and Indexes*, compiled by William Wilson Manross. (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1965).

E. G. W. Bill, Librarian, Lambeth Palace Library, London, England; the College Secretary, The Queen's College, Oxford, England; Colin A. McLaren, Archivist

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Mrs. Starin is Curator of the Maryland Room at the Talbot County Free Library.

and Keeper of Manuscripts, Aberdeen University Library, King's College, Aberdeen, Scotland; and C. R. H. Cooper, Keeper of Manuscripts, Guildhall Library, London, England, were all prompt in replying to inquiries and most helpful in sending information which permitted as sure an identification as possible of our Reverend John Gordon.

It was a temptation to pursue the Gordon family genealogy in an effort to determine the clergyman's immediate ancestors and to identify his relatives contemporary with him in Maryland, but such a project would be more time consuming than the scope of this monograph warrants.

Not included is a relation of the legendary horse racing which is said to have taken place after Sunday service during the incumbency of the Reverend John Gordon. There is no mention of it in the vestry minutes, as there is occasionally to the vestrymen repairing to Lowe's Tavern in Easton following a meeting. There is, though, some basis for truth in the legend, as Harvey S. Ladew wrote in his review<sup>1</sup> of *Racing in America*.<sup>2</sup>

"We learn, for instance, that in Maryland there was such a strong liaison between the church and the turf that one of the first, if not the first known mention of racing in that colony subsequent to the year 1700 records the resolution of a vestry in 1727 'to meet on Thursday at the race-ground near the Bensons.'"<sup>3</sup>

If the vestry of St. Michael's Parish did espouse horse racing, it does not follow that the Reverend John Gordon condoned it.

I am indebted to several persons for their assistance and encouragement. Among them is John G. Earle, who contributed a number of references and purchased photocopies of some of the documents from the Hall of Records in Annapolis for the Historical Society of Talbot County. He provided a copy of the plat survey made in 1709 of "Daniel's Rest," "Walker's Tooth," "Walker's Corner," and "Partnership," from the papers of Lowndes Johnson. Less tangible were the conferences Mr. Earle and I had about this project.

John Frazer, Jr. generously devoted considerable time and gave freely his expert knowledge of John Hesselius's subjects on the Eastern Shore, particularly those in Talbot County.

Walter E. Arps, Jr. kindly searched for certain information at the Hall of Records in Annapolis and in the State Library and Archives in Richmond, Virginia.

F. Garner Ranney, Historiographer of the Diocese of Maryland, who has an enviable knowledge of the Church of England and of the Protestant Episcopal Church, particularly in Maryland, was, as he invariably is, thorough and succinct in his responses to requests for information and interpretation. Having very kindly agreed to read the manuscript, he made some valuable suggestions and selected the quotation from the Reverend John Gordon's sermons which concludes the monograph.

Phebe R. (Mrs. Bryce D.) Jacobsen, Archivist IV, Hall of Records, Annapolis, never fails to give counsel generously and graciously.

Dickson J. Preston, author, and the then Public Relations Officer and Editor of the News Letter of the Historical Society of Talbot County, willingly read the manuscript and recommended some deletions and additions.

The Reverend George J. Cleaveland, Historiographer of the Diocese of Virginia, retired; Paul T. Heffron, Acting Chief, Manuscript Division, The Library of Congress; Drew N. Gruenburg, then the Assistant Manuscripts Librarian, the Maryland Historical Society; and Mrs. John K. Roberts, Sewickley, Pennsylvania, all kindly responded to requests for information.

It is hoped that this monograph, the sum of many sources of research, adds at least a small part to the knowledge, not only of the Reverend John Gordon, but to the knowledge of St. Michael's Parish, and Talbot County, as well.

Mary Elizabeth M. Starin

*Royal Oak, Maryland*  
*November 30, 1979*

#### REFERENCES

1. *Maryland Historical Magazine* 39 (December 1944): 349.
2. *John Harvey, Racing in America, 1665-1865*. (2 vols.; New York, 1944).
3. This cannot be the Talbot County Benson family, for the vestry minutes of St. Michael's Parish are not extant before 1731.

In colonial days, church-going was a social occasion, drawing people together from many parts of the parish, in addition to religious connotations, and vestries were elected on the basis of prominence in the community, not for religious zeal shown by vestrymen. Perhaps the Reverend John Gordon did like horseracing, those were latitudinarian times, but there was surely no official connection between the sport and the church authorities that I know of.

F. Garner Ranney, letter to Mrs. Arthur N. Starin, October 23, 1979.

## The Reverend Doctor John Gordon, 1717-1790

**J**OHNS GORDON, WHO WAS TO BECOME A RESPECTED CHURCH OF ENGLAND clergyman of St. Michael's Parish in Talbot County, was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1717, the son of a Dr. John Gordon.<sup>1</sup>

Educated in Scotland and in England,<sup>2</sup> John Gordon "... was ordained deacon, 4 August 1744, and priest the following day. He was licensed to Virginia, 6th August 1744."<sup>3</sup>

In compliance with the Church of England's requirement that candidates for ordination present testimonial and other documents, the ordination papers of John Gordon comprise three letters of testimonial. One is signed by John Gordon (his father?), minister of St. Paul's Chapel, Aberdeen, and others. In this letter, dated July 2, 1744, it is stated that John Gordon, the ordinand, "... is Master of Arts in the University of Aberdeen," and that he left the University in the year 1734. The second letter, bearing the same date and signatures, states that "... John Gordon the bearer hereof ... applies to your Lordship for Holy Orders with a design to go over to Virginia, being thereto encouraged by the Revd Mr. Morthland who came ashore at this place on his way from that country."<sup>4</sup>

The third letter, written July 21, 1744, signed by G. Charles, "St. Paul's", Aberdeen, states that "... he is encouraged to go to Virginia by a gentleman, whose health obliged him to leave his living in that country, and who had a commission from the principal persons of his congregation to send them a proper person to succeede him."<sup>5</sup> The Reverend David Morthland (Mortland) had come from Lunenburg Parish, Richmond County, Virginia, and was followed there by a Reverend Mr. Kay, instead of the Reverend John Gordon.<sup>6</sup>

The Archives and Manuscripts Section of Aberdeen University Library, King's College, Aberdeen, confirmed that a John Gordon "of Aberdeen" graduated A. M. from King's College on March 28, 1734.<sup>7</sup> The records there reveal no other information, but the date agrees with that in the ordination papers. In 1734 John Gordon was seventeen years old, a questionable age to graduate with an A. M., but the King's College Archivist stated that "... graduates of seventeen were by no means unusual."<sup>8</sup>

On July 14, 1737, John Gordon matriculated at The Queen's College, Oxford,<sup>9</sup> where, it is speculated, he studied for Holy Orders, but there is no record of his having taken a degree, which "... is only noted on the University Records if a graduate has actually attended a ceremony to collect the degree or had it conferred in absence."<sup>10</sup> Was Gordon continuing his education somewhere between March 28, 1734, when he left the University of Aberdeen, and July 14, 1737, when he went to Oxford? Could he have been at Oxford from 1737 until 1744, the year he was ordained? Was he a fellow, or tutor there or in some other university?



The ordination papers do not include the place where Gordon studied for Holy Orders, nor where he was ordained. English bishops of the Church of England are known to have performed the rite in Scotland, in particular at the English Chapel of St. Paul's in Aberdeen, where Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, could, therefore, have ordained John Gordon.

The vestry of Lunenburg Parish, having granted a Title to Orders to the Reverend Mr. Kay, seems to have left the Reverend John Gordon without a parish until he was inducted by Governor Thomas Bladen of Maryland to St. Anne's Parish, Annapolis, on April 22, 1745, and presented himself to the vestry on May 7, 1745.<sup>11</sup>

In *The Ancient City*, Elihu S. Riley wrote, "The clergy were commonly men of culture sent from England . . . men of excellent education and manners, seldom would one of a different character be tolerated by the high-toned men who composed the vestries."<sup>12</sup> The Reverend John Gordon must have embodied these qualities perfectly, to have been inducted rector of St. Anne's in Annapolis, the capital of Maryland.

His first recorded baptism at St. Anne's was for James, born March 24, 1745, son of James and Rebecca Reynolds.<sup>13</sup> If James was baptized the day he was born, as the wording of the Register indicates, the Reverend John Gordon was already functioning as a clergyman before his formal induction.

Other parishioners were Jonas Green, publisher of the *Maryland Gazette*, and his wife, Anne Catherine, whose daughter Mary, Gordon christened on January 31, 1746; John and Sarah Brice, whose son James he christened on August 26, 1746; the Hon. Benedict Calvert, Collector of His Majesty's Customs for the District of Patuxent, whose marriage to Elizabeth Calvert, daughter of the Hon. Charles Calvert, late Governor of Maryland, he solemnized on April 21, 1748; John Hammond and Ann Gaither, who were married by the Rev. Mr. Gordon the same year;<sup>14</sup> and Dr. Alexander Hamilton, a vestryman,<sup>15</sup> who gave security for the 100 pounds Gordon borrowed from the Provincial Loan Office in 1748.<sup>16</sup>

In 1746 the Reverend John Gordon preached a sermon before his Excellency Thomas Bladen, Governor of Maryland, at St. Anne's against the Rebellion of 1745, following the Battle of Culloden on April 16, 1746. Scotsman though he was, Gordon did not support the Young Pretender, Bonnie Prince Charlie. Titled "A Thanksgiving Sermon, On Occasion of the Suppression of the Unnatural Rebellion, in Scotland, by His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland," the sermon was printed by Jonas Green. Only an imperfect copy, owned by the New York Historical Society, is known to exist.<sup>17</sup> The text was from Exodus XIV. 13, "And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the Salvation of Jehovah, which he will work for you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them no more forever."

As the incumbent of St. Anne's the Reverend John Gordon was called upon by the Assembly to "read Divine Service" twice each day for the duration of three sessions, in 1745 and 1746.<sup>18</sup> The morning service was at seven, or eight, and the afternoon service was at five, or six, a rigorous schedule for the clergyman and the legislators alike.

The Reverend John Gordon was active in secular affairs in addition to his duties as a clergyman. On May 14, 1745, at the home of Dr. Alexander Hamilton,

the all male Tuesday Club was organized, with Gordon as one of its founders, several of whom, like Dr. Hamilton, the secretary, were fellow Scots. Hamilton bestowed facetious names upon each member; his own, "Loquacious Scribble, M. D.," and Gordon's "Rev. Smoothum Sly." All of the members, whose numbers reputedly grew to twenty-eight, counting honorary members, were distinguished men of Annapolis such as, Witham Marshe; Stephen Bordley; Jonas Green; who was voted a member upon the motion of Gordon February 2, 1747/48; Charles Cole, William Thornton; and the legislator, Robert Gordon. The Reverend Thomas Bacon was elected to honorary membership, partly because of his accomplishments as a fiddler, and dubbed "Signior Lardini." They were a convivial group of men who ate bacon and cheese, drank punch, smoked tobacco, sang, discoursed on a variety of subjects, such as Gordon's on "Ad libitum," composed and recited doggerels and lampoons, entertained the ladies occasionally at a ball held in the State House, and enjoyed jovial fellowship at their weekly meetings.<sup>19</sup> The Reverend John Gordon could not have been the "dour" Scotsman and a member of this lively group. In 1749, Gordon, the Reverend Thomas Bacon and Robert Morris were to form a similar club which they named the "Eastern Shore Triumvirate."

No doubt Gordon, as rector of St. Anne's Parish, was reasonably content in Annapolis, but when the living of St. Michael's Parish in Talbot County became vacant with the death of the Reverend Henry Nicols in February, 1748/49, Gordon must have been aware of the opportunity to succeed him. There were a number of reasons why Gordon probably was interested in the parish on the Eastern Shore, in addition to whatever motivated him as a clergyman. The parish had a glebe from which he could derive some income; his friend the Reverend Thomas Bacon was the incumbent of St. Peter's Parish; he knew Robert Morris, the factor in Oxford and an honorary member of the Tuesday Club who was christened "Merry Makefun;" he might have been acquainted with the Honorable Matthew Tilghman; and he undoubtedly already knew Henry Callister, for he, too, attended meetings of the Tuesday Club, was a close friend of Bacon, and assistant at that time to Robert Morris in Oxford.

Perhaps Gordon had crossed the Chesapeake Bay more than once to see his friends in Talbot County, which he found to be attractive. Too, Annapolis was not inaccessible, which meant he could see his friends there occasionally, including the two Robert Gordons, the legislator and the staymaker, one or both of whom might have been his kin, for he was an administrator of the latter's estate which was appraised by Thomas Bruff and James Benson in 1762.

Decisions favorable to the Reverend John Gordon were made, and Governor Samuel Ogle constituted and appointed John Gordon to be the Rector of St. Michael's Parish on March 1, 1749. On March 7, he produced his induction into the parish, and on Sunday, the 12th of March, following Morning Prayer, he declared his "assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the Book of Common Prayer."<sup>20</sup>

Thus began the Reverend John Gordon's incumbency of forty-one years, until his death in 1790.

His successor at St. Anne's, the Reverend Andrew Lendrum, was inducted on

April 14, 1749, "in the room of the Reverend and Ingenious Mr. John Gordon, who is removed to the great grief of his parishioners to St. Michael's Parish in Talbot County," reported the *Maryland Gazette*.<sup>21</sup>

The vestrymen present on March 7 were Robert Goldsborough, Nicholas Goldsborough and Fedeman Rolle, together with Thomas Bruff, registrar, and Robert Newcom, church warden.<sup>22</sup>

Other familiar names in the history of Talbot County soon appear in the church records as vestrymen, church wardens, registrars: Joseph Hopkins, Phillimon [sic] Hambleton, Jacob Hindman, Dennis Hopkins. On August 4, 1767, the registrar recorded that the vestry wanted accounts settled from the estates of William Thomas, Joseph Hopkins, Robert Newcom, James Dickinson, Joseph Harrington, Edward Tilghman, Wolman Gibson, Jacob Hindman, William Trippe, and John Bozman.<sup>23</sup> Through the years other parishioners are mentioned in the records, John Bracco, frequently, William Dawson, George Dawson, the Edward Lloyds, William Sherwood, J. Bruff, Mary Harrington, Jonathan Gibson, Matthew Tilghman, to name but a few.

Also among the Reverend John Gordon's parishioners was John Beale Bordley, whose wife, Margaret Chew, had, with her sister Mary, wife of William Paca, inherited Wye Island from their brother, Philemon Lloyd Chew, in 1770.<sup>24</sup> The Bordleys took possession of the western half, from where it was convenient for them to travel by boat across the Wye River to a landing on the Talbot County Shore, then by carriage to attend service at the parish's Chapel of Ease at Dundee, not far from the Lloyd plantation. Mary Burke Emory wrote of John Beale Bordley that "... Mr. Bordley's family were for many generations members of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Mr. John Gordon was his Eastern Shore Pastor."<sup>25</sup>

When Charles Goldsborough, of "Queens Town" (1744-1774), won the hand of Anna Tilghman, daughter of Colonel Edward Tilghman of "Wye", (now called "Wye Plantation"), he asked the Reverend John Gordon to perform the marriage ceremony, which was to take place on July 28, 1774. Gordon replied:

To Charles Goldsborough, Esq.

Queens Town

Sir

Well disposed to serve you on any but more especially on a particular Occasion, I shall be at Captain Love's Ship by eleven o'Clock on Thursday the 28th Instant. I dare say the Captain will set me over as soon as the Carriage appears.

With the heartiest Wishes for Your Success and Happiness in the World & with my most respectful Compliments to Mr. Tilghman and his Family, I remain

Sir, Your most Obedt. Servt.

John Gordon

28 July 1774<sup>26</sup>

Charles Goldsborough, Esq.

A few months after his marriage Charles was killed by an accidental discharge of his gun.<sup>27</sup> Having so recently performed Charles's marriage ceremony, perhaps Gordon was asked to officiate at his funeral service.

Soon after coming to Talbot County, the Reverend John Gordon earned the respect of his parishioner Edward Lloyd III, who made his will on March 6, 1750,

in which he desired:

... my worthy friend, the Rev. Mr. John Gordon to as often as he sees fit to examine the Child (his son Edward) and observe the progress he makes in Learning: and to report his thoughts to my Executors, and advise them what may be best for the Child's benefit. And it is my express Will and Request that they do pay due deference to his opinion and follow the advice he may give . . . .

The Reverend John Gordon was bequeathed £50 for a suit of mourning. Young Edward was to remain under the tuition of Ralph Elston until he arrived at the age of twelve years, when he was to be sent "home to England to such school as may be most fitting . . ." <sup>28</sup> Although Edward Lloyd did not die until 1770, his will remained unchanged in regard to the Reverend John Gordon.

Edward Lloyd's funeral was held on February 1, 1770 "at Wye". ("Wye House"). The unsigned manuscript of the sermon preached that day was presented to his son, "To/Edward Lloyd Esquire/This Sermon/Preached on Occasion of the Death of his Honble Father/Edward Lloyd Esquire/is/with great Respect/Inscribed." The text of the sermon, from Ecclesiastes XII. 7, ("and the dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it") was developed into a long formal dissertation, but included are a few personal remarks which suggest that Gordon was the author, "... Some of us mourn the loss of a near relation, others that of an esteemable acquaintance, and a good neighbor, . . . whilst his health remained, he attended, with his family, on the public worship of God, very constantly . . ." <sup>29</sup>

Nine months earlier, almost to the day, on May 6, 1769, the funeral of Edward Lloyd's wife, Ann (Rousby), took place. The sermon preached for her might also have been written and delivered by Gordon, for it includes this simply stated tribute, "She had a sound heart and was a sincere friend." <sup>30</sup>

The Reverend John Gordon had been in St. Michael's Parish a little over a year when he returned to Annapolis on Monday, June 26, 1750, to preach at St. Anne's before a Society of Free and Accepted Masons. His sermon, "Brotherly Love Explain'd and Enforced," dedicated to the Right Worshipful Alexander Hamilton, M. D., Master, was printed by Jonas Green and advertised in the *Maryland Gazette*, but no copy is known to exist. <sup>31</sup>

The Maryland Diocesan Archives owns a copy of Gordon's sermon on the subject of "man is born into Trouble; God's chastening . . ." This is a manuscript of 16 pages, and was the gift of Miss Mary Goldsborough of "Myrtle Grove" to the Reverend Ethan Allen in 1856. <sup>32</sup>

One young woman did not think much of the Reverend John Gordon's sermon on a hot Sunday in August, 1785. Mary Tilghman, sister of Col. Tench Tilghman, wrote to her cousin Polly (Mary) Pearce of Poplar Neck, Cecil County:

In the first place I broil'd 6 miles by water [from "Hope" where she was visiting] to the Bay Side Church in such a sun, it was enough to coddle common flesh. I was then so stupified with old Gordon's slow croaking, that I began to dream a dozen times before it was over, . . . . <sup>33</sup>

Katherine Scarborough wrote in *Homes of the Cavaliers* that the Reverend John Gordon's sermons were "dry as dust." <sup>34</sup> Perhaps she had read Mary Tilghman's letter.

Did Governor Horatio Sharpe also have the Reverend John Gordon in mind when he wrote to Frederick Calvert on July 10, 1764:

... I shall according to your desire provide for the Revd Mr. Love who seems I think to be a decent well behaved Man. I wish he may preach as well as he looks & pronounce English a little better than the Generality of our Scotch Clergymen who hold at present so many of the Benefices in the Province that near half the Inhabitants have some Room for saying they are obliged to pay their Minister for preaching to them in an unknown Tongue. It would be well therefore if you could now send us in a few from the English Universities since the Inhabitants do not seem fond of educating their Children for the Church.<sup>35</sup>

The Reverend David Love was a Tory, who in 1780 sought permission from General Washington through the State Council of Maryland for his license to go into New York City for obtaining passage to Great Britain. The Council's Journal recorded that he was not to return to Maryland without the leave of the Governor and Council.

The Reverend John Gordon, on the other hand, took the Oath of Fidelity to the State in 1778 and was a member of the Committee of Observation for Talbot County. On May 23, 1775, Gordon presided at the meeting of that Committee which appointed a deputation to call upon James Braddock with the request that he desist from landing or selling the cargo which was soon to arrive on the ship "Johnstone" from Liverpool. Braddock was the St. Michaels factor for the ship's owner, James Gildart. Gordon is believed to have presided also at the Committee's meeting on May 30, 1775, when the deputation reported that Braddock had agreed to give orders to return to Liverpool without unloading its cargo.<sup>36</sup> Thus Gordon early played an active role in support of the Continental Congress and independence from England. His Whig principles permitted him to function serenely in St. Michael's Parish throughout the Revolution.

But ten years before, when the Reverend Daniel Love was rector at All Hallows Parish in Anne Arundel County, he and Gordon were in accord on another matter. On October 11, 1770, the Rev Mr. Gordon wrote a letter, addressee unknown, regarding the church.

Sir,

Mr. Love and I, greatly disgusted with the late Addresses of some of our Brethren, praying y<sup>e</sup> Establishment [sic] of an American Episcopate, have judged it necessary to draw up a Counter Address, and we propose, if You approve of it, to present it (signed by as many of our Brethren as shall think proper to join us) to the Governor. I never was—I believe I never shall be, fond of Innovations, and particularly those made by the Clergy. I solemnly declare to You, Sir, that I despise and disdain every Interest, even that of what is called the Church, when considered as distinct and detached from the general Interest of Mankind. I have reason to say the same of Mr. Love, and am persuaded that neither He, nor I, as Clergymen, would propose any thing that might appear unreasonable for us to submit to as Laymen.

After we had agreed in the Sentiments, I proposed a very few Alterations in the Expression of our Address, which we entirely submit to You. We doubt not but You will treat us with Your usual Candor and Good Nature, and favour us with Your Advice in this matter.—That You and Yours may ever be defended from the hellish Machinations of High Church (or rather No Church) Ruffians, is the hearty Prayer, of, Sir, Your Obedient and most humble Servant,

John Gordon<sup>37</sup>

F. Garner Ranney, Historiographer of the Diocese of Maryland, interpreted this letter thus:

Gordon was evidently one of the many Anglicans who long opposed the establishment of an episcopate in this country—his closing reference to ‘the hellish Machinations of High Church (or rather No Church) Ruffians’ makes his sentiments quite clear . . . ‘High Church’ in those days did not refer to matters of ritual, or, strictly speaking, even of doctrine, but to ‘High’ opinions of the nature of the Church, the authority of bishops, Catholic tradition and the like.

Vehement as the Reverend John Gordon was against an American episcopate in 1770, the Revolution and the disestablishment of the Church of England must have caused him to re-evaluate his position. On August 13, 1783, Gordon was one of nine Maryland clergymen who signed “A Declaration of certain fundamental Rights & Liberties of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Maryland.”

They met that day in Annapolis, sanctioned by a vote of the General Assembly, and declared “. . . it to be an Essential Right of the Protestant Episcopal Church to have, & enjoy the Continuance of the said three Orders of Ministers (Bishops, Priests and Deacons) for ever . . .” They also declared it to be the right and duty of the Church when organized

to revise her Liturgy, Forms of Prayer & publick worship, in order to adapt the same to the late Revolution, . . . without any other or farther Departure from the Venerable Order and beautiful Forms of worship of the Church from which we sprung, than may be found expedient in the Change of our situation from a Daughter to a Sister Church.<sup>38</sup>

In signing, Gordon was recognizing, and accepting, the changed circumstances in America. The Reverend Doctor William Smith of St. Paul’s and Chester Parishes in Kent County, and the founder and first president of Washington College, was the first signer of the Declaration, for it was he who led the movement to revive the church and overcome the problem of ordination. In 1783 he was elected Bishop of Maryland, but the opposition caused him to withdraw, and he was never consecrated. American bishops, including the Reverend Samuel Seabury, who had been consecrated in Britain and Scotland after the Revolution, consecrated the Reverend Doctor Thomas Claggett the first Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Maryland, and the first to be consecrated on American soil.

When the Kent County School at Chestertown was incorporated as Washington College in 1782, the Reverend John Gordon was one of the subscribers from Talbot County with a contribution of £9, in 1783.<sup>39</sup> In 1785 Washington College conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Gordon was generous with his money and time to all worthy causes. On September 10, 1760, he pledged 2,500 pounds of tobacco for the addition to the church of St. Michael’s Parish,<sup>40</sup> which was completed in 1762, when the subscribers, including Gordon, drew lots for the pews at a special meeting of the vestry.<sup>41</sup>

He collected money in 1760 from one hundred and twenty-two persons of St. Michael’s Parish, including Negro Esua and Negro Pegg, to aid the sufferers of the Boston fire, as did all of the clergymen in Maryland following the tragedy, at the request of Governor Horatio Sharpe.<sup>42</sup>

He was one of six Visitors of the Free School of Talbot County which had been established in 1727 by an act of the Maryland General Assembly, and, with the other Visitors, Jacob Hindman, Matthew Tilghman, Jonathan Nicols, Henry Hollyday, and William Nicols, he sanctioned a lottery in 1764 for its support.<sup>43</sup>

When his friend the Reverend Thomas Bacon, rector of St. Peter's Parish, began to organize a charity school "for poor children and Negroes" in 1750, the Reverend John Gordon subscribed £5, and was one of six trustees. Dr. Alexander Hamilton, his old friend and fellow member of the Tuesday Club, "... generously encouraged and supported the Reverend Thomas Bacon's scheme for a charity school in Talbot County, where poor children of both sexes were to be lodged, fed, clothed, and instructed 'in the Knowledge and Fear of God, and inured to useful Labour' before being put out as apprentices,"<sup>44</sup> and subscribed £2 annually to the school.

As his likeness in the portrait suggests, the Reverend John Gordon must have been a man of great kindness, thoughtful of the needs of others, and helpful in times of their distress. On November 15, 1779, he probably composed the petition to Governor Thomas Lee and the members of the Council for Rachel Gibson, wife of Woolman Gibson of Talbot County, which is thought to be in his handwriting.

That your Petitioner hath a Son, by a former marriage, named Jonathan Hopkins, who is well known to be deficient in his Intellect and scarcely fit to be trusted with the Government of himself—That the aforesaid Jonathan Hopkins, having, sometime last Winter, straggled from the House of your Petitioner, and met with some of Company of the Chester Gally [sic], was very readily induced by them to inlist himself to serve on board and said Gally—That his Silliness and Weakness of Understanding render him unfit for the Service, & expose him to the Mockery and Insult of the Sailors, and to the Hazard of being corrupted by their Example, and of learning their bad Words, to the great Grief and Disquiet of your Petitioner, no Stranger to the Feelings of a Mother. These things considered, your Petitioner flatters herself that from Your known Justice and Compassion, Ye will order her unhappy Son, the aforesaid Jonathan Hopkins, to be released and discharged and thereby save to the State the expense of a Man unfit to serve it and restore Ease and Peace of Mind to a distressed & afflicted Mother. And your Petitioner, as in Duty bound, shall ever pray etc.

Rachel Gibson<sup>45</sup>

The petition was signed first by the Reverend John Gordon, then by Jonathan Gibson, Joseph Bruff, John Bracco, Richard Parrott and Woolman Gibson, who swore they had known Jonathan Hopkins "from a child" and that in their opinion he "is indeed deficient in his intellect."

The Reverend John Gordon's kindness and generosity is expressed again in his letter to Henry Callister on January 1, 1757:

There is, I think, one Turn or Bent, in my mind which I trust, is no new or upstart Turn, but it's [sic] natural Growth; a disposition to assist my Neighbors. Robert Spencer, one of them has applied to me to make up his affairs with you. I am inclinable to do so, and if you will take Tobacco at the Market Price, I will pay you his Debts. I hope you will not deny me the pleasure of serving my Neighbor.<sup>46</sup>

If Robert Spencer was one of his parishioners, it is noteworthy that Gordon refers to him as his *neighbor*, rather than as a member of the parish.

Compassionate to a man in trouble, on June 7, 1769, Gordon addressed this testimonial to the Council of Maryland on behalf of Francis Baker who was accused of rioting with a gang in Cecil County.

I have been personally acquainted with Francis Baker these Nine or Ten years and as he lives on the Borders of my Parish had frequent Opportunities of conversing with him. I esteem him an honest Man myself and I believe he was esteemed such by others nor did I ever know or hear of his being Guilty of any Dishonest or Riotous Practices.<sup>47</sup>

Again, generous of his thought and time, Gordon wrote a letter on April 15, 1785, to recommend Jeremiah Colston for Talbot County surveyor.<sup>48</sup> The same year and month he recommended David Barrow as surveyor for Caroline County.<sup>49</sup> On February 7, 1784, pointing out the need of a magistrate in Tuckahoe, Gordon had recommended John Roberts, Jr., to a John Roberts for the post.<sup>50</sup>

By this time a creditor, rather than a debtor, to the state, the Reverend John Gordon, who had purchased Loan Office Certificates as an investment, was paid £90 2s 9p Specie by the Western Shore Treasurer on May 23, 1782, and on April 29, 1783, he was paid £66 5s 11p Specie.<sup>52</sup>

All of these petitions, testimonial letters and business transactions of a secular nature no doubt consumed a great deal of Gordon's time, but not, apparently, to the detriment of his clerical duties, judging from the length of his incumbency in St. Michael's Parish, whose vestry continued to renew his contract every five years.

It has been suggested that one of the attractions to St. Michael's Parish for the Reverend John Gordon was the glebe from which the rector could derive some income by farming the land and collecting rent from the tenants. During the incumbency of Gordon, "Forked Neck" was still in the possession of the vestry. It was a tract of 50 acres on the north side of St. Michael's River which had been given to the Reverend James Clayland for the church in 1672 by Andrew Skinner to be used as a glebe "... forever after to be holden ... and belonging to ye aforesaid Church of Christ there congregated."<sup>53</sup> This land had been surveyed for him on January 18, 1664. Some years later, the will of Thomas Smithson was proved on April 9, 1714.<sup>54</sup> He bequeathed "My dwelling plant" and adjacent lands, i.e. "Holden," part of "Holden's Add<sup>n</sup>", *bight* [a bend or a curve, especially of a shoreline] "Holden's Range," part of "Millroad" and part of "Millroad Add<sup>n</sup>" including Vaux's land, to Mary, my wife for her life and after her death to remain to ye Vestry of ye Parish where I live, with all buildings & improvements thereon, to be forever a glebe for ye church and a dwelling place for ye Rector ...

This condition I do annex to my devise of my land to the Church—that whensoever any Clerk (Rector) dies seized of this devised land in right of his Church leaves a Widow she shall have her thirds of all the negroes and land as if it and they were her husband's inheritance whilst she remains a widow but the widow of a second Clerk or Rector shall not be endorser while the first widow lives.

This stipulation was to cause controversy later between Mrs. Mary Gordon and the vestry.



When Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, assumed his episcopate in 1723 he sent printed queries to be answered by the colonial clergy about themselves and their churches.<sup>55</sup> Question 13 was, "Have you a House and Glebe? Is your Glebe in Lease, or let by the year? Or is it occupied by yourself?"<sup>56</sup> The Reverend Henry Nicols, then incumbent of St. Michael's Parish, replied on July 16, 1724 that the parish had lately, after long litigation, come into possession of a plantation left to it for a glebe and rectory, but the place was in bad shape, and he asked for a ruling from the bishop to determine who was responsible for its repair.<sup>57</sup> By 1749, when the Reverend John Gordon succeeded the Reverend Henry Nicols, the house might, or might not, have been repaired and made fit for a dwelling. From the fact that the vestry minutes record on May 2, 1749 giving notice to Sherman Spencer and Elizabeth Valiant to appear before the vestry on May 8 "at the late dwelling House of the Rev. Mr. Henry Nicols . . ." it can be concluded that Gordon did not as yet have a suitable place to live.

As the Reverend Henry Nicols had purchased 330 acres of the original "Maiden Point" on the St. Michael's River in 1712 for his home,<sup>58</sup> the house in question probably was rented, if indeed it had been made habitable. It cannot be determined, therefore, where Gordon lived when he first arrived in Talbot County. He did not purchase any property until 1760,<sup>59</sup> when he paid £20 current money and 5,500 pounds of tobacco to William Hughes and Henrietta Maria, his wife, relict of John Carslake, for her dower thirds of "Bartram" (or "Bartaram") and "Addition" (renamed "Carslake's Discovery"), a 50-acre tract bought by John Carslake from Tench Francis in 1738, on the north side of St. Michael's River. But did the Reverend John Gordon live there?

Yet, in 1757 Gordon was already farming, as he wrote to Henry Callister at Oxford on January 4 that year, "I am turned—Farmer! And if you have any . . . for . . . let the bearer have it cheap, for he will pay ready money."<sup>60</sup> Perhaps he was farming the glebe, "Forked Neck" or fields on the former Smithson property.

The rector of St. Michael's Parish did not have a free hand in farming the glebes. Rather, the vestry, many of them planters themselves, evidently kept a tight rein on the operations. An agreement was signed on July 5, 1779, between the vestry and the Reverend John Gordon, which renewed his contract to serve another period of years. The number of tenants on glebe lands was restricted, and

. . . the said John Gordon that in renting or leasing out the said Glebe and every of them he shall especially stipulate and agree with the Tennant or Tennants to whom they shall be let that after the 3rd day of January 1780 they do not in any case Tend Indian corn twice in immediate succession in the same Field but shall alternately sow wheat or use as Pasture such Fields every other year . . .<sup>61</sup>

There are many questions about the life of the Reverend John Gordon which cannot be satisfactorily answered as yet, if at all. Was he married in England, or in Scotland, before he left for the colonies? He was twenty-seven when he was ordained, and it seems not unlikely that he did marry about that time, but there is no evidence that he had a wife when he became rector at St. Anne's.

On August 3, 1752, the vestry of St. Michael's Parish gave the Reverend John Gordon the right to build a pew on the north side of the chancel ". . . and that it

be held and devised his property." Had he taken a wife or was he about to do so, or was the pew for his guests?

There is proof, however, that he was married at least twice, both times to widows.

On June 7, 1774, the will of Sarah Gordon was proved, or probated. It reads in part:

I Sarah Gordon, the wife of Rev<sup>d</sup> John Gordon, Rector of St. Michael's Parish in the County of Talbot and Province of Maryland being of sound mind . . . and by virtue of certain Powers and authorities to me reserved and secured by certain articles of agreement entered into and concluded upon, between my said Husband and me before our intermarriage bearing date 16 Oct. 1767 Do hereby make this my last will and testament. . . . To my Husband, the Rev<sup>d</sup> John Gordon, in Trust, for benefit of my daughter Elizabeth Cooper, the wife of Captain Thomas Cooper of Oxford in afs'd County—my negro man 'Harry' & my negro woman 'Maria' with 'Chesh,' 'Peggy' & 'Harry,' children of my negro woman 'Myrtilla.' Also to her my negroes 'Johnson' & 'Myrtilla,' my plate & household furniture at death of my said Husband—also to her all my wearing apparel; she to give my niece Rachel Wiles as she shall think proper & useful to her. To Isabella, wife of Mr. Thomas Affleck, Cabinet maker in Philadelphia, one negro child named 'Cato.' To my nephew John Gordon, Hatter in Philadelphia, son of Mr. Lewis Gordon, Clerk of Northampton County in Province of Pa.—one negro child 'Joe.' To nephew Thos. Gordon of Talbot County, Gent., one negro 'Jamon' now in his possession.

The Reverend John Gordon was named executor, and the witnesses were Joseph and Elizabeth Hobbs, on July 26, 1773.<sup>62</sup>

Regretfully, the "articles of agreement" have not been found, nor has the date of their marriage, although it must have taken place on or after October 16, 1767, the date of their articles of agreement. Sarah does not mention any real property in her will, but the fact that she had four adult slaves, their six children, plate and household goods makes her a woman of some substance, at least. Was she a communicant of St. Michael's Parish? It has not been possible to determine the name of Sarah's previous husband, or husbands, the name of her daughter Elizabeth's father, nor the date of Elizabeth's marriage to Thomas Cooper, whose will was proved the same year as Sarah Gordon's, in which he left £20 in dollars to the vestry of St. Peter's Parish "to be distributed among proper objects of charity."<sup>63</sup>

The Reverend John Gordon renounced as co-executor of Captain Thomas Cooper's will early in January, 1774, although he was a surety with John Markland for the testamentary bond of Elizabeth Cooper, executrix, in the sum of £1,500.<sup>64</sup> He probably refused to serve because he was already administrator of another estate, that of William Yates, and had been since he was appointed shortly after the deposition of Yates's nuncupative will on November 4, 1772.<sup>65</sup> Testamentary proceedings continued through 1774, 1775, and 1776,<sup>66</sup> which could not help but have taken much of the clergyman's time and thought, being one more example of his kindness and sense of responsibility. It is worth mentioning for that reason alone, but William Yates's will reveals that he was a ferryboat operator or owner in whom Gordon probably had a special interest. No doubt he was also one of his parishioners. With Gordon at the bedside of William Yates on Sunday, August 2,

1772, was Archibald McInnis, Planter, of Talbot County, who deposed Yates's wishes, including, "I desire the Ferry may be kept at the expense and for the benefit of my estate until November Court, there are provisions in the house for that purpose." William Yates did not mention any real property in his will, nor is his name to be found in the land records, but he seems to have been an independent operator of one of the several ferries in the county during this period.

On Friday, November 13, 1767, just about the time of his marriage to Sarah, the Reverend John Gordon and the justices of Talbot County agreed that "John Gordon would keep a good boat and two able men in order to transport without delay the inhabitants of the county and others who contribute toward the expenses and charges thereof with their horses and carriages over Miles River Ferry when any of them shall desire it . . ." <sup>67</sup> Gordon was to receive 7,000 pounds of tobacco per annum. It is reasonable to assume that the clergyman and his wife were then living conveniently near the ferry.

Only a few days after the testament of Sarah Gordon's will, a Reverend William Duncan was licensed to St. Michael's Parish as an assistant on August 5, 1773. <sup>68</sup> Did the Reverend John Gordon request a clergyman to help with his clerical duties? The parish was a large one, and he might very well have needed an assistant, but there is no mention of Duncan in the vestry minutes. Perhaps the protests in the colonies at that time against British policies and measures changed his mind about leaving England.

The day and month of Sarah Gordon's death and the place of her burial remain mysteries. The Reverend John Gordon did not marry again for five years, but on October 17, 1777, he and Mrs. Mary Gibson each signed and had recorded separate matrimonial contracts. <sup>69</sup> It is not unusual to find such a contract in the land records of Talbot County, but it was unusual for a clergyman to be party to two matrimonial contracts in his lifetime.

Mary Gibson's contract reads, in part:

John Gordon shall in case he survives her as her Husband hold Occupy and enjoy the use of the Plantation whereon she now resides in the same ample manner and including the same tracts . . . as her late husband James Gibson and she herself have held and Occupied the' same Together with the use of the Dwelling House and Furniture therein with the Outhouses Orchards Woods Gardens and every other Appurtenance during his Natural life only and the said Mary Gibson further covenants and agrees that the said John Gordon shall also have the use of all the Negroes belonging to the said Mary Gibson at the time of her decease during his natural life only. . . .

Gordon's stipulations were, by contrast, much more generous to Mary than hers to him.

. . . the said Mary Gibson shall after the Solemnization of the said Marriage and in case she shall survive the said John Gordon as his Widow in such case shall have right and title . . . and enjoy Nine of the Negroes she shall please to choose . . . as her absolute and undoubted property to her and to her heirs and assigns forever, . . . all his household Furniture and Goods Pictures and Plate (except his books) all his Kitchen Furniture with every Article and every sort of Goods that are contained in his dwelling house or in any of the Houses on his Plantation where he resides together

with all his horses Carts and Carriages, Cattle, Sheep, Hogs and Plantation Utensils . . . shall become the absolute and undisputed property of the said Mary Gibson in case she shall survive the said John Gordon as his Widow to hold the same to her and her heirs and assigns forever. . . .

But the Reverend John Gordon, while giving Mary Gibson life estate in his real property, reserved the right to dispose of it in his will. He renounced any right to "Angel's Rest" in Kent County, left to Mary Gibson by her husband, the late James Gibson. Mary Gibson saw to it that nothing was left to chance should her intended husband survive her.

The date of the marriage between the Reverend John Gordon and Mary Gibson is not known, but according to Edward Lloyd's *Answer*,<sup>70</sup> dated November 17, 1795, to a deposition, or bill of complaint, filed by Mary Gordon, Widow, August 30, 1791<sup>71</sup> they were married in the Spring of 1779. If this approximate date is correct, about one and one half years elapsed between the date of the matrimonial contracts and their marriage. But between March 28, 1777, the date James Gibson's will was proved, and October 17, 1777, the date of Mary Gibson's matrimonial contract with Gordon, is eleven days over seven months. This short period of mourning was not unusual at that time for either a woman, or a man.

Mary Gibson was born Mary Pickering, daughter of Francis and Margaret [?] Pickering.<sup>72</sup> She married first, John Willson, son of Robert, date unknown, by whom she had a daughter, Deborah. Deborah was bequeathed one Negro by her grandfather, Robert Willson, whose will was proved October 2, 1767.<sup>73</sup> In the will of her other grandfather, Francis Pickering, which was proved November 30, 1768,<sup>74</sup> Deborah was to inherit, after the death of Margaret, his wife, the remainder of his estate. His daughter Mary Willson inherited 6 head of sheep and 1,000 pounds of tobacco. There seem to be no probate records for this John Willson. He was living on July 15, 1767, when his father, Robert, made his will.

Mary Willson then married James Gibson, date unknown. Gibson's will, dated March 11, 1777,<sup>75</sup> was proved March 28, 1777. He stipulated that his land, "King's Neglect," (100 acres), one moiety of "Timberneck" tract, "Betty's Dowery," part of "Addition," also 33 3/4 acres that was included in the resurvey of "Betty's Dowery," tracts "whereon I now reside . . . may be sold within two years of my decease to pay my debts." To his wife, Mary, he left ". . . all my part of tract called 'Angel's Rest' containing 264 acres" in Kent County. The tract called "Doctor's Gift" on Long Tom Creek (also known as Pickering Creek and White House Creek) issuing out of Wye River, was to be sold within two years, also, "to pay my debts," reserving one acre "to be laid out and stoned for a burying ground."

James Gibson provided well for his wife. She did not have to sell any of the land to pay his debts. But the Reverend John Gordon was rich in land, too, and Mary probably thought he was a good prospective husband for that reason, among others. From her matrimonial stipulations, her apparent insistence on her dower rights to the parish glebe after her husband's death, and from her litigation with Edward Lloyd, both before and after Gordon's death,<sup>76</sup> over wheat and flax crops and tenants on land tilled by Lloyd and Gordon, she emerges as a shrewd woman who dominated her husband. If she had any attractive personal qualities

that appealed to three husbands and compensated for her passion for land and other possessions, they will probably never be known.

As mentioned, in 1760 the Reverend John Gordon bought "Bartram" and "Carlslake's Discovery." In 1762, he paid £500 current money to William Garey for 456 acres,<sup>77</sup> all on the north side of St. Michael's River, between Leed's Creek and Hunting Creek: "Fortune," 52 acres; "Dirty Weeding," (or "Weeden"), 100 acres; "Tod upon Dervan," on Bare Point Creek, 80 acres; "Garey's Delight," 100 acres; and "Garey's Security," 124 acres, together with all houses, orchards, trees, fences and other improvements and appurtenances, all of which he owned for the rest of his life.

Then, on October 12, 1762, there is a property transaction, indexed in the land records as a deed, between Thomas, James and William Bruff and John Gordon for "Walker's Tooth" and "Partnership," both inland, on the north side of St. Michael's River. It seems to be, actually, an agreement, or indenture.<sup>78</sup> These are two of the Bruff properties which were entailed.

In 1763 Gordon paid £700 current money of Pennsylvania to Thomas Bruff<sup>79</sup> for "Daniel's Addition," 100 acres, on the north side of St. Michael's River between Richard Austin's land called "Fishing Bay" and "Daniels Rest," "Daniel's Rest," 76 acres, which was also entailed; and "Walker's Tooth," 54 acres, including all houses and other improvements. But, "The pew in Dundee Church is declared not to be included in this deed but to continue the property of Thomas Bruff as formerly."

On March 11, 1760, Thomas Bruff mortgaged "Daniel's Addition," 100 acres; "Daniel's Rest," 76 acres; "Walker's Tooth," 54 acres, and divers Negroes and other personal effects to Edward Lloyd III for £157, 18s, 3p current money of Maryland and £144, 15s, 4p sterling money of Great Britain. In 1764 Gordon paid the mortgage money to Lloyd and took title to the land,<sup>80</sup> a total of 230 acres, which he had purchased in 1763 from Thomas Bruff.

On March 2, 1764, an indenture<sup>81</sup> was made in the Provincial Court which docked and barred the entail on "Daniel's Rest," "Walker's Tooth," "Walker's Corner" and "Partnership," and Gordon was granted the land on April 13, 1764, having paid an additional £500. By this time Gordon had paid over £1,500 for the Bruff properties.

In 1765, Gordon sold "Daniel's Addition," "Daniel's Rest," and "Walker's Tooth" to Anthony Banning for £700 current money of Pennsylvania, the same acreage and the same price as in the 1763 transaction, when he bought the land from Thomas Bruff. Gordon retained "Partnership" and "Walker's Corner," the former, inland, and the latter, on the St. Michael's River, two of the tracts which had been entailed.

There is another deed recorded on August 3, 1770<sup>83</sup> in which William Bruff conveyed to John Gordon "Daniel's Rest," "Walker's Tooth," "Partnership," "Walker's Corner" and "Walker's Corner" resurveyed "according to metes and bounds mentioned and described in a deed . . . on a recovery suffered in the Provincial Court . . . for the aforesaid Lands in order to Dock and bar the entail thereof 2 March 1764 . . ." Gordon paid an additional £500 for it. Obviously, there was some legal reason for this deed, but Anthony Banning had owned three

of the tracts for five years, which is rather a long time to elapse before a conclusion.

In 1797, seven years after his uncle's death, John Gordon, nephew of the clergyman, deeded "Partnership," "Walker's Corner" resurveyed, *part* of "Daniel's Rest," and *part* of "Walker's Tooth," a total of approximately 300 acres, to William Meluy,<sup>84</sup> subject to Mary Gordon's life estate.

On January 13, 1816, Robert Moore, executor of William Meluy's estate, sold these tracts, which Meluy had resurveyed and named "Springfield," to Samuel Roberts,<sup>85</sup> "... being the same land and tenements which a certain John Gordon heretofore granted and conveyed to the said William Meluy, as by deed of the said John Gordon to the said William Meluy." These were, therefore, tracts owned by the Reverend John Gordon at the time of his death, and part of the properties willed to his nephew.

It is not clear how the Reverend John Gordon recovered part of "Daniel's Rest" and part of "Walker's Tooth," unless there was an unrecorded deed.

When Benjamin Chew, son-in-law of Anthony Banning, and his wife Catherine, daughter of Anthony Banning and his only surviving heir, sold his holding to Jacob Lockerman in 1793,<sup>86</sup> the property is described as being *parts* of three separate tracts, "Walker's Tooth," "Daniel's Rest," and "Daniel's Addition," "late in the tenure of Robert Pickering" (brother of Mary Gordon) and "adjoining lands of the Rev. John Gordon, deceased."

It is thought that Gordon lived on one of these tracts, "Daniel's Rest," for about two years, from 1763 to 1765, in the genesis of the house now known as "The Anchorage," where a fire is said to have taken place which destroyed many of his books.<sup>87</sup>

In the 1783<sup>88</sup> state tax assessment Anthony Banning was assessed for *part* of "Daniel's Rest," *part* of "Walker's Tooth," and *part* of "Daniel's Addition." There was one dwelling house on Banning's part of "Daniel's Rest" with a kitchen adjoining it, two old dwelling houses, one store, one old grannary [sic], one old stable, one old barn, two old log dwelling houses, one smoke house, and one hen house. By 1783, Banning probably had erected a new house, or made extensive improvements, so that it is impossible from this description to identify the Reverend John Gordon's dwelling there as it was between 1763 and 1765.

In the same 1783 assessment, if the assessor was correct there were no improvements on Gordon's part of "Daniel's Rest," but there was a dwelling on the "Walker's Corner" tract, having two kitchens, one quarter and one old barn, one smoke house, one corn house, one hen house, one overseer's house, one old house, one necsary [sic] house. His personal property consisted of 28 slaves, including three slaves for Captain Peacock (probably his ferry captain) who evidently lived on the property, 68 pounds of plate, 13 horses and 43 head of cattle.

Sometime after the 1783 assessment, the Gordons might have built a new house on their part of "Daniel's Rest," for in the 1798 Federal Assessment<sup>89</sup> (eight years after Gordon's death) Mary Gordon's house was on this tract. It was a one story wood dwelling 32' x 30', one kitchen and pantry adjoining of one story, part brick and part frame, 34' x 18', one meat house, one carriage house, and one quarter (a cabin for slaves), "situate on Miles River." This is probably where the

Reverend John Gordon was living when he died. It can be deduced that this house on the "Daniel's Rest" tract was a little to the east and north of the now crumbling St. John's Church, about opposite Goldsborough Creek, and in sight of "Myrtle Grove."

It is interesting to note that in the 1804 Assessment Records of the Talbot County Commissioners<sup>90</sup> Mary Gordon was still living here "with the advantage of the Miles River ferry" for which she was assessed £10, as much as for her carriage house and stable together.

With all this real property, an income from the glebe lands, and, no doubt, income from Mary Gordon's real property, the Reverend John Gordon and his wife should have been fairly well off at the close of the American Revolution.<sup>91</sup> Although he continued to hold church services in the parish during the war, which had not been possible in many parishes due to the flight of the Loyalist rectors, the Reverend John Gordon's actual salary in cash was probably not as much as it once had been. The Church of England in the former colonies was no more, the Protestant Episcopal Church was in the process of being organized and the support of the communicants dwindled during this period of uncertainty, as it had during the war years. Although Gordon could no doubt have sustained himself and his wife with their personal income, a hint of dissatisfaction is sensed on his part in the vestry minutes of April 12, 1784.

He . . . prays the Vestry in consideration of the scantiness of the allowance made to him as Minister owing to the lowness of subscriptions by the Parishioners for leave to perform Divine Service every third Sunday at Wye Church the people there having offered an handsome Subscription for his attendance and to begin the said Service the second day of May next.

The Vestry Judging the Prayer reasonable and being disposed to give their Neighbors an Opportunity of having Divine Service give leave accordingly for one year commencing from the second day of May.

The "prayer" seems to be strangely out of character, or is the influence of Mrs. Gordon detected?

Evidently the vestry was not displeased with their rector over this request, for his contract was renewed for another five years, beginning July 5, 1784. When the Reverend John Gordon's contract was to be renewed in 1789, the terms of the new contract were for one year, probably at his request, beginning July 5, 1789, but he did not live out the year.

From his feeble handwriting, and the content of a note he wrote to Robert Goldsborough, Jr. in 1788,<sup>92</sup> it appears that Gordon's health might have been failing, at the age of 71.

Dear Sir

As notice has been given to several Persons, I cannot think of disappointing them—I do therefore propose to go to Church today, trusting that God, in his great Mercy, will enable me to go thro' the Service of it. May You and Yours may long be bless'd with Health and Happiness! I am very respectfully, Dear Sir, Yr most Obed. Servt.

John Gordon  
11th May 1788

The Reverend John Gordon died in February 1790, at the age of 73. Edward

Lloyd (IV) in his *Answer*<sup>93</sup> to Mary Gordon's deposition stated that "... the said John Gordon on or about the fourteenth day of February in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety did depart this life." In the vestry minutes of March 29, 1790, Mrs. Mary Gordon is referred to as the "relict of the late John Gordon," and on that day the Reverend John Bowie was elected to succeed him.

It is hoped that the burial place of the Reverend John Gordon will be known some day.

His will, dated January 13, 1790,<sup>94</sup> was proved on April 12, 1790. Befitting a clergyman, and reflecting his modesty regarding his attainments, his testament, following the customary preliminary words, begins:

First, I do most cheerfully resign and commend my Spirit into the Hands of my Gracious and bountiful Heavenly Father most heartily thanking him for his great and undeserved Goodness to me in this world and humbly looking for his mercy in that which is to come, earnestly praying and beseeching him to accept my poor and Imperfect services in his Church and on the Terms of the Gospel of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to pardon and forgive my manifold offences and defects, both as a man and as a Minister.

To his "beloved wife Mary Gordon in consideration of her very dutiful Behaviour to me and her Tender care of me in my old age" he bequeathed all his land for her natural life, faithful to the terms of his marriage contract. After her decease, the land was devised to his nephew, John Gordon of Philadelphia, who also inherited "the few books that escaped the Flames at the time my House was burnt," and a £200 bond. Mary Gordon was to have title to a note for the £90 lent to William Watts and a Loan Office Certificate in the amount of £66, 5s, 11p.

The four children of his nephew Thomas Gordon of Talbot County were left a total of 10 Negroes. Thomas Affleck, cabinetmaker of Philadelphia, whose wife (Isabella) was a sister of the clergyman's nephew John Gordon, was to receive £50 of the £200 bond from John Gordon.

All the rest and residue of his personal estate the Reverend John Gordon bequeathed to Mary Gordon, his wife, who was named executrix. As Gordon directed and ordered in his will "that there be no Appraisalment of my Estate," there is no record of his total worth at the time of his death.

After the Reverend John Gordon's death, the controversy began over his widow's rights to the glebe lands. If Dorothy Elizabeth Rowle, the second wife of the Reverend Henry Nicols, who is mentioned in his will, survived him (the date of her death is not known), there is no evidence that she claimed her dower thirds to the glebe lands following his death on February 12, 1748/49. But in 1790, the vestry had to contend with Mrs. Gordon, or she had to contend with the vestry.

On March 29, 1790, the minutes show that:

The Vestry having taken into their Consideration the Will of Thomas Smithson by which they hold the several Glebe Lands in this Parish and Doubts having arisen whether Mrs. Mary Gordon, Relict of the late Rev<sup>d</sup> John Gordon is entitled to Dower in the same Glebe lands—Resolved that Jeremiah Banning, Hugh Sherwood and William Perry Esqs. do wait on Mrs. Mary Gordon and know from her whether She does claim Dower ... and if she does Claim that the said Jeremiah Banning, Hugh



Sherwood and William Perry expose to the said Mrs. Mary Gordon that the will of the said Thomas Smithson shall be laid before the Judges of the General Court and that the opinion of the said Judges or any two of them shall finally determine between the said Mrs. Mary Gordon and the Vestry whether . . . Mrs. Mary Gordon is legally entitled to Dower in the said Glebe lands but should . . . Mrs. Mary Gordon refuse to submit her Claim of Dower in the Glebe Lands to the Judges . . . then the said Jeremiah Banning, Hugh Sherwood and William Perry are requested to take in Writing the Opinion of the Attorney General respecting Mrs. Mary Gordon's claim of Dower in the Glebe lands and lay the same before the Vestry.

On April 12, 1790, the vestry ordered a survey of glebe lands and authorized arbitration bonds of £500 with Mrs. Gordon to abide by the final determination of the judges of the General Court respecting her claim. The judges were also to hear the vestry's claim to the glebe lands. The claims were still not settled by August 6, 1792, when the vestry ordered Hugh Sherwood and William Goldsbrough to "wait on" Mrs. Gordon for the purpose of settling her claim and the late clergyman's accounts against the parish. They were to produce the settlement at the next meeting of the vestry. The final settlement has not been found in the minutes, but after 1802 they show that the vestry was renting out the glebe lands and in 1805 the rector, the Reverend John Price, was receiving rents.

It is rather sad that the two or more years following the Reverend John Gordon's death were fraught with such controversy. Thomas Smithson's will seems to be clear in respect to the rights of a rector's widow. Was Mrs. Gordon more sinned against than sinning? From the sequence of the discussions the vestry instigated the controversy by casting doubts as to whether Mrs. Gordon was entitled to the dower.

The vestry had still another concern relative to Mrs. Gordon. For some time it had been searching for a replacement of the Chapel of Ease at Dundee which had been abandoned by 1781. As early as June 14, 1779 the vestry ordered that "the Ornaments at Dundee Chappel" were to be taken down and stored in Charles Gardiner's house "for the better preservation of them," although Gordon must have taken into his care the plate and chalice which the vestry had authorized him to purchase in 1749 from Samuel Sumain (Soumaien) in Annapolis for the chapel.<sup>95</sup> By 1786 a suitable place to rent for a chapel still had not been found, nor enough money raised to build one.

It is known from the vestry minutes that Gordon had a house near the Miles River ferry which he used as a chapel, for on April 12, 1790, several members of the vestry were delegated to "treat" with Mrs. Gordon "for the use of the house near Miles River Ferry which the late Mr. Gordon used as a chapel." There is no mention in the minutes that Gordon actually offered, or agreed, that his house be used for services, if indeed it was his house where the vestry "ordered" on July 23, 1781 "Divine Service (to) be henceforward performed at Miles River Ferry instead of Dundee Church under such Harbour or at such other place as shall be most convenient."

Whatever the circumstances were during Gordon's life regarding the use of his dwelling or some other house on his property (possibly the house on "Walker's Corner") as a chapel, after his death, Mrs. Gordon seems to have consented to the vestry's request of April 12, 1790. That she continued to give her permission

is evident in a vestry record of May, 1796, when the Reverend John Bowie could "attend at the Court House at Easton instead of attending the Chappel at Miles River Ferry—if he thinks proper."<sup>96</sup> Her house was still in use as a chapel in 1800, when, on April 21 of that year Deborah (Lloyd) Tilghman wrote to "My Dr. Madam" (addressee unknown) from "Hope,"

I am sure it will give you pleasure to know that Mr. Bowie intends to administer the Sacrament next Sunday at Miles River, least Mrs. Gordon shou'd not give you notice, or only trust to a *Message*, I have promised to Communicate the Matter, to you, hoping that the day will be good and your Health such as to permitt your coming out on that day . . . .<sup>97</sup>

Deborah gives the impression that Mrs. Gordon was not gracious, or entirely reliable about announcing when a service was to be held. By September 4, 1809, when she made her will,<sup>98</sup> Mrs. Gordon had moved to the house she purchased in 1802 on Washington Street in Easton from Bennett Wheeler.<sup>99</sup> Perhaps she continued to permit the use of her property by the vestry for a chapel until her death, which occurred before October 10, 1810, when her will was proved.

Would that there were extant some posthumous observations on the character and life of the Reverend John Gordon, the sermon preached at his funeral, or even an epitaph on his tombstone. His own writings, his portrait, and what little is known about his life beyond conjecture must suffice to reveal him to us.

What we do have, is his opinion of Marylanders. It was written in a letter to Henry Callister.<sup>100</sup> "Such is the happy Genius of the good people of Maryland, so fine their Parts, and so strong their Capacity, that without any antecedent Preparation, and just only by turning, they appear various as Proteus in any turn or Character you please."

That the Reverend John Gordon was intelligent, and well educated in both religious and secular subjects, is evident in his writings. Like John Donne, the dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, whose works the Reverend John Gordon no doubt knew, he was earnest, but perhaps without his wit, although he must have had a quiet sense of humor, becoming to a member of the Tuesday Club. J. A. Leo Lemay in his *Men of Letters in Colonial Maryland* refers to Gordon as ". . . the learned and suave . . . ."<sup>101</sup>

As Elihu Riley wrote, "These clergymen (from England and Scotland) did not abandon their classic pursuits when they crossed the sea, and familiarly wrote Latin notes to their boon companions . . . ."<sup>102</sup> We can imagine the Reverend John Gordon doing this.

Edward Lloyd, we know, had a high regard for his intellect, for he requested in his will that the Reverend John Gordon make sure, at frequent intervals, that his son was making good progress in learning from his tutor in all subjects. It is said that he was similarly in charge of the education of Tench Tilghman and Perry Benson, and probably other boys in his parish.

Surely it can be said of the Reverend John Gordon that he was devout, kind, generous, conscientious, and gentle, and that he had the courage to uphold his convictions.

For want of words by others about the Reverend John Gordon, let him speak for himself with this closing to his sermon on trouble which exemplifies his life

and personal beliefs:

Be it our firm Resolution, therefore, that our Journey through this World, shall be a Walk with God in the Course of a godly, righteous and sober Life, and that whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we may die unto the Lord. That so when Heart and Strength and all fail us, God may be the Strength [of] our Hearts, and our Portion for ever.<sup>103</sup>

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1. Records of The Queen's College, Oxford, England.
2. *Ibid.* Archives and Manuscripts Section, Aberdeen University Library, King's College, Aberdeen, Scotland.
3. William Dicks, comp., Lists of Ordinations, Licenses, Institutions and Collations During the Episcopate of Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, 1723-48, Lambeth Palace Library, London, England.
4. Guildhall Library, City of London: Ms. 10326C/9.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Edward Lewis Goodwin, *The Colonial Church in America* (Milwaukee, n.d.), p. 295.
7. Archives and Manuscripts Section, Aberdeen University Library, King's College, Aberdeen, Scotland.
8. Colin A. McLaren, Archivist and Keeper of Manuscripts, Aberdeen University Library, King's College, Aberdeen, Scotland.
9. Records of The Queen's College, Oxford, England.
10. College Secretary, The Queen's College, Oxford, England.
11. *Maryland Historical Magazine* 9 (March 1914): 47-49.
12. Elihu S. Riley, *The Ancient City, a History of Annapolis, in Maryland, 1649-1887* (Annapolis, 1887), pp. 127-128. Actually, not all of the colonial vestrymen were "high toned", rarely did they have much determination in a rector's appointment and some of the rectors were scoundrels, like the Reverend Bennet Allen, who was inducted into St. Anne's, Annapolis, in 1766.
13. St. Anne's Parish Register, 1708-85: Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Carl Bridenbaugh, *Gentleman's Progress, the Itinerarium of Dr. Alexander Hamilton 1744* (Chapel Hill, 1948), p. xviii.
16. William Hand Browne, et al, eds., *Archives of Maryland*, 72 vols., (Baltimore, 1883-), 52: 25.
17. Lawrence C. Wroth, *A History of Printing in Colonial Maryland* (Baltimore, 1922), p. 192.
18. *Archives of Maryland*, 14: 70, 255, 315.
19. Riley, *The Ancient City*. pp. 132-133.
20. Vestry Minutes (Christ Church) St. Michael's Parish, 1731-1801: March 7, 1749, March 12, 1749. Hall of Records.
21. Riley, *The Ancient City* p. 115.
22. Vestry Minutes, March 7, 1749.
23. *Ibid.*, August 4, 1767.
24. Gregory A. Stiverson and Phebe R. Jacobsen, *William Paca; a Biography* (Baltimore, 1976), p. 53.
25. Mary Burke Emory, *Colonial Families and their Descendants* (Baltimore, 1900), p. 237.
26. *Maryland Historical Magazine* 8 (June 1913): 194.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
28. Talbot County Wills. Liber WD No. 2, folio 474. Hall of Records.
29. The Lloyd Papers, microfilm #41. Talbot County Free Library. The original sermon is in the Lloyd Papers, MS. 2001. Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland.
30. *Ibid.*
31. Wroth, *Printing in Colonial Maryland*, p. 198.
32. Ethan Allen Collection. Maryland Diocesan Archives. Maryland Historical Society.
33. *Maryland Historical Magazine* 21 (June 1926): 130.
34. Katherine Scarborough, *Homes of the Cavaliers* (New York, 1930), p. 310.
35. *Archives of Maryland*, 14: 166, 167.
36. Oswald Tilghman, comp., *History of Talbot County, Maryland 1661-1861*, 2 vols., (Baltimore, 1915), 2: 66-70.
37. Dulaney Papers, vol. 5, MS. 1265. Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society. The

- manuscript bears no identification of the addressee. Its folder has the notation, "To Walter Dulaney?" Mr. Ranney's interpretation is quoted from his letter to Mrs. Starin January 25, 1979.
38. William Stevens Perry, *The History of the American Episcopal Church 1587-1883*, 2 vols., (Boston, 1885) 2: 3-4.
  39. Subscriptions were not received for less than £9 "... in specie of Gold or Silver & payable in Spanish Milled Dollars of the usual weight, or the value thereof as the same may be at the times of Payment in good Merchantable wheat or tobacco." *Maryland Historical Magazine* 6 (June 1911): 167, 170.
  40. Vestry Minutes, September 10, 1760.
  41. *Ibid.*
  42. Black Books, #1038, p. 152, Hall of Records.
  43. Tilghman, 2: 472. The Free School of Talbot County buildings were on land once part of "Tilghman's Fortune," which had been purchased in 1727 from John Sutton and Sophia, his wife. During the Revolutionary War the school is believed to have foundered for lack of financial support, and in 1783, after a fire which demolished the buildings, the Visitors, including the Reverend John Gordon, John Bracco, William Hayward, William Hindman, William Perry and Robert Goldsborough, were empowered by the Assembly to sell the 100 acres, which were purchased by John Stevens for £485. The £349 19s 6p left after paying the school's debts were consolidated with the funds of Washington College which had been founded the year before.
  44. Bridenbaugh, *Gentleman's Progress*, p. xix. For an account of Bacon's attempt to educate the poor and his failure to do so for lack of financial support see J. A. Leo Lemay, *Men of Letters in Colonial Maryland*, (Knoxville, 1972), pp. 320-322, 331.
  45. *Archives of Maryland*: 43: 367.
  46. Callister Papers, p. 276. Maryland Diocesan Archives.
  47. *Archives of Maryland*, 32: 327.
  48. Edward C. Papenfuse, Gregory A. Stiverson and Mary D. Donaldson, *An Inventory of Maryland State Papers*, vols., (Annapolis, 1977), 1: 650, 27621.
  49. *Ibid.*, 649, 27585.
  50. *Ibid.*, 6636-50-124/1 [26666], 624, 26666.
  51. *Archives of Maryland*, 48: 171.
  52. *Ibid.*, p. 404. The Western Shore Treasurer ordered to issue Certificates agreeable to the act proposing to the citizens of Maryland, creditors of Congress on Loan Office certificates.
  53. Talbot County Land Records, Liber 2, folio 11. Hall of Records.
  54. Talbot County Wills, Liber W53, No. 5, folio 649. Hall of Records.
  55. William Wilson Manross, comp. *The Fulham Papers in the Lambeth Palace Library* (Oxford, England, 1965), p. xiii.
  56. *Ibid.*, p. xxiii.
  57. *Ibid.*, Part III, Maryland, p. 36.
  58. Talbot County Land Records, Liber 13, folio 645. Court House.
  59. *Ibid.*, Liber 19, folio 30.
  60. Callister Papers. p. 276. Maryland Diocesan Archives. The manuscript is so damaged at this point that it is not possible to be certain what Gordon ordered, but it appears to be part of a harness.
  61. Vestry Minutes. July 5, 1779.
  62. Talbot County Wills, Liber WF, No. 1, folio 17. Hall of Records. Thomas Affleck's wife was Isabella, a sister of the Reverend John Gordon's nephew, John Gordon.
  63. *Ibid.*, Liber WD No. 4, folio 650.
  64. Testamentary Proceedings, Talbot County, Liber 45, folio 335. Hall of Records.
  65. Talbot County Wills, Liber WD3, folio 985. Hall of Records.
  66. Testamentary Proceedings, Talbot County, Liber 46, folio 149, 257; Liber 47, folio 63. Hall of Records.
  67. Talbot County Minute Book 1765-69. Hall of Records. The Reverend John Gordon succeeded Thomas Bruff as ferry boat owner. The justices of the Talbot County Court on November 12, 1760 "Ordered that Thomas Bruff doth not keep sufficient boat and hands to transport the inhabitants of this County over Miles River Ferry from Bruff's Landing to Barrow's Landing ... and give a good attendance at the said ferry, that his allowance next November Court shall be reduced to one-half." The allowance at that time was 6000 pounds of tobacco per year.
  68. Fulham Papers. 1773, Nos. 71, 73-74, Aug. 5, 1773.
  69. Talbot County Land Records. Liber RS21, folio 17-19. Court House.
  70. Talbot County Court Proceedings, #1890, November 17, 1795. Hall of Records. "The Answer of Edward Lloyd Esquire of Talbot County Defendant to the Bill of Complaint of Mary Gordon Executive of the last Will and Testament of the Reverend John Gordon deceased."
  71. Talbot County Court Proceedings, #1890, August 30, 1791. Hall of Records.

72. Margaret Pickering was the wife of Francis at the time he made his will, but, she was not, ipso facto, Mary's mother.
73. Talbot County Wills, Liber WD No. 1, folio 198. Hall of Records.
74. *Ibid.*, Liber WD No. 2, folio 59.
75. *Ibid.*, Liber WF No. 2, folio 402.
76. Talbot County Court Proceedings, #1890, May 9, 1789. Hall of Records.
77. Talbot County Land Records, Liber 19, folio 119. Court House. There was a James Weedon, Warrant Index 1667–1668, Hall of Records.
78. *Ibid.*, Liber 19, folio 166.
79. *Ibid.*, Liber 19, folio 210.
80. *Ibid.*, Liber 19, folio 249.
81. Talbot County Deeds, Liber DD3, folio 274–78. Hall of Records.
82. Talbot County Land Records, Liber 19, folio 361. Court House.
83. *Ibid.*, Liber 20, folio 105. In 1778 the Reverend John Gordon purchased from Hopkins Kinnimont [sic] one brown horse Faney with her colt, two cows and two calves. Talbot County Land Records, Liber 21, folio 42. Court House.
84. *Ibid.*, Liber 27, folio 455.
85. *Ibid.*, Liber 38, folio 77.
86. *Ibid.*, Liber 25, folio 181.
87. In his marriage contract of 1777, Gordon mentions "my books" as though referring to a complete library, but in his will he left to his nephew John Gordon "the few books that escaped the Flames at the time my house was burnt." This suggests that the fire might have occurred in another house conceivably on his "Walker's Corner" tract, after 1777, which might also have destroyed some St. Michael's Parish records.
88. Assessment of 1783, "An Act to raise the supplies for the Year Seventeen Hundred and Eighty-Three," Chapter 6, Acts of 1782. Microfilm copy, Talbot County Free Library.
89. Federal Direct Tax of 1798, or "Glass Tax," levied in anticipation of war with France. Microfilm copy, Talbot County Free Library.
90. Assessment Records, 1804, Talbot County Commissioners, District No. 2. Hall of Records.
91. Of the Reverend John Gordon and the Reverend Jacob Henderson Hindman of St. Peter's Parish during the Revolutionary War, Tilghman wrote, "... the vestries held glebes, in each of the parishes and other properties, which yielded an income for the partial support of the rectors, each of whom possessed also private means of no inconsiderable amount." Tilghman, *Talbot County*, 2: 113.
92. Ethan Allen Collection. Maryland Diocesan Archives.
93. Edward Lloyd, "Answer." *loc. cit.* No. 70.
94. Talbot County Wills, Liber JB4, folio 122. Court House. The rather effusive wording Gordon used in references to his wife in his will seems to be compatible with his writings, and more or less with the period. Note that he makes no reference in his will to Deborah Willson, daughter of his wife by her first husband, neither is she mentioned in the marriage contracts nor in her mother's will. It can be assumed that she died young. Sarah Gordon's daughter Elizabeth is also omitted from Gordon's will. Probably, he had, many years before, turned over to her the personal property left to him in trust for her, or, she might have died before he made his will.
95. Vestry Minutes, October 6, 1749. Samuel Soumaien was working in Annapolis from 1740–1754. He was a vestryman of St. Anne's Parish, Annapolis.
96. Divine Service of the Protestant Episcopal Church was held in the new Court House, completed in 1794, until the first Christ Church in Easton, at Harrison Street and Baldwin's Alley, or Church Alley, was ready for occupancy in 1807. (Tilghman, *Talbot County*, 2: 294, 296.
97. Vertical File: Tilghman, D. Maryland Diocesan Archives.
98. Talbot County Wills, Liber JP6, folio 341.
99. Talbot County Land Records, Liber 29, folio 233.
100. Callister Papers. Maryland Diocesan Archives.
101. J. A. Leo Lemay. *Men of Letters in Colonial Maryland*. (Knoxville, Tennessee, 1972), p. 250.
102. Riley, *The Ancient City*, p. 128.
103. Ethan Allen Collection. Maryland Diocesan Archives.

## John Hesselius—Limner 1728-1778

**L**IKE CHARLES WILLSON PEALE (1741-1827),<sup>1</sup> JOHN HESSELIUS TRAVELED about Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and possibly New Jersey, practicing the art of what was then called limning, from about 1750 to 1777. A limner was simply a painter. It was a common word in the eighteenth century particularly in reference to an itinerant portrait painter as Hesselius was for some years of his career.

But unlike Peale, who made copious records of his commissions, which are extant, Hesselius apparently made none, or none has survived, so that documentation, by means of letters, diaries, bills, of the unsigned, undated portraits thought to be by him is impossible. Only by a comprehensive, detailed comparison with his known works as to his use of color, his draftsmanship, composition and handling of perspective can an attribution be made, as Richard K. Doud, an expert on the work and life of Hesselius, has done with the portrait of the Reverend Doctor John Gordon, which he examined May 10, 1978.

Dr. Doud is of the opinion that although the composition is not typical of Hesselius, the coloring, and the stylized hand, possibly copied from an engraving, are like his other works, and he believes the portrait is, very probably by John Hesselius,<sup>2</sup> and that he painted it about 1762, when Gordon would have been 42 years old.

The portrait, an oil on canvas, measures 38  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches in height and 32 inches in width, plus a black and gilt bordered frame, typical of the period, which might be the original one. The painting is in good condition, having been cleaned, re-stretched and relined fairly recently. The rather somber green-brown background is without any depth or detail, less usual in Hesselius's works than is a landscape of foil for his sitters. Hesselius suggests perspective here by placing the figure behind the marble-topped table, and by the arm outstretched over the table, with the light on the open hand. A Bible and another book lie at random before him. His blue eyes and fair complexion indicate that his hair is probably blond beneath his wig, which completes the clerical garb in which he is depicted. His high, broad forehead is emphasized by the placing of the wig at his hairline. There is a slight smile on Gordon's lips and in his eyes, almost as though he was a little amused at having his portrait painted, or humoring the artist by sitting for him.

The Reverend John Gordon might have commissioned his portrait himself, or, perhaps one of his parishioners did so. Also, there is the possibility that Hesselius prevailed upon his friend the good rector to sit for him, with the intention of presenting the portrait to him, or to the vestry of St. Michael's Parish, although there is no mention of it in the vestry minutes, nor in the wills of Gordon and his wife.

The parishioner most likely to have commissioned Gordon's portrait to adorn his home was Robert Goldsborough (1704-1777) of "Myrtle Grove." Mrs. John Donoho (Margaret Henry),<sup>3</sup> who lives at "Myrtle Grove," and is a Goldsborough

descendant, knows that Gordon's portrait hung there for many years, until 1923, when in a division of family property after the death of Robert Henry Goldsborough, the portrait went to Winder Laird Henry, of Cambridge, son of Winder Laird and Martha (Adkins) Henry. It was purchased by the Historical Society of Talbot County in 1978, through an antiquarian, from Mr. Henry's widow. It now hangs in the Talbot Room of the Society's new building at 25 South Washington Street in Easton, on the wall facing the old paneling from "Locust Grove," another Goldsborough family property, not far from "Myrtle Grove."

In his "Catalogue of Signed Paintings of Maryland Subjects," by Hesselius Dr. Doud does not list any of Talbot County, and only one in his "List of Maryland Subjects Probably by John Hesselius," that of Mrs. Peregrine Tilghman (Deborah Lloyd) of "Hope," plus four subjects who were either born in Talbot County or had close family connections there, Anna Maria Lloyd (Mrs. William Tilghman) Colonel Robert Lloyd and Mrs. Robert Lloyd (Anna Maria Tilghman) of Queen Anne's County, and James Tilghman of Kent County.<sup>4</sup>

"There is (or was, in 1963) a portrait somewhat questionably identified as Margaret Robins in the Collection of (the late) Edgar William and (the late) Bernice Chrysler Garbisch, and I feel that it possibly was painted by John Hesselius,"<sup>5</sup> wrote Dr. Doud. Hesselius, at the age of seventeen, five years before he first signed and dated a portrait, is said to have accompanied his father to "Peach Blossom" the Robins estate on what is now Peachblossom Creek, but could he have painted Margaret's portrait at that time?

John Hesselius, a contemporary of Benjamin West, Robert Feke, Charles Willson Peale, and the lesser known Charles Bridges, all of whom were either born or trained abroad, was born in 1728, the son of Gustavus and Lydia Hesselius, who were probably living in Philadelphia at the time of their son's birth. We can imagine Gustavus giving the young John lessons in drawing and painting, but at an early age he became a follower of Robert Feke, who was active in the Philadelphia area, and with whom he might have studied and traveled into Maryland and Virginia, where, in 1750, Hesselius painted a portrait of Millicent (Conway) Gordon of Lancaster County, his first signed and dated work, which shows Feke's influence.

The following year he signed and dated twelve portraits in Virginia, Maryland and Philadelphia, where he made his headquarters for about three years.

Before his father's death in 1755, John had already made visits to Talbot County, where he painted portraits, made many friends, and fell in love. Writing to Henry Callister, the factor in Oxford, on June 26, 1755, he explained his absence from the county, and revealed his hope to marry,

Dear Sir-

I have been so hurry<sup>d</sup> in my Affairs since I came home (& much more so since the death of my dear Father) that I hope you will Excuse my seeming neglect of not writing to you before: as you may be well assur'd there is no person on Earth, whose friendship I so much Esteem & whom I am so desirous to Correspond with. My being Left Executor of my fathers Estate, has Oblidg'd me to stay much Longer in Phil<sup>a</sup> than I first Intended: but I hope in a fortnight now I shall be moving down to Virginia & as soon as I can dispatch the Business I have in hand there; I intend to Come to Maryland again were I have Already Left my heart & Coud I but Flatter myself that

it wou'd be Acceptable to A certain Lovely Girl in your Neighborhood with what pleasure Shou'd I devout the remainder of my Life to her Service. I hope I shall have the Pleasure of hearing from you by the next post in which (if you are not to much Engag'd in Business) shou'd be glad to know your present sentiments in regard to what we were speaking of when Last I had the pleasure of your Company. I promiss my self very Little pleasure till I have the Satisfactof Spending a few days in dear Talbot again, which I hope will be some time in the fall at the farthest. In the mean time believe me Dear Callister Your most Affectionate

Friend & Hbls<sup>t</sup> Sev<sup>6</sup>

The "Lovely Girl" did not marry Hesselius. Perhaps, as he does not seem to have returned to "dear Talbot" that fall, she was already married to another man by the time he did arrive. It was not until January 30, 1763, that Hesselius was married, to Mary Young, the widow of Henry Woodward of Anne Arundel County, and the daughter of Colonel Richard Young, a member of a prominent Anne Arundel County family.

Apparently Hesselius could not visit Talbot County often enough to please his friends. On January 1, 1757, the Reverend John Gordon, in a letter to Henry Callister, wrote, "... John Hesselius is turned careless (of his?) friends: He cannot expect the Ladies will turn ..." <sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, the balance of the sentence is a missing part of the letter. We can but guess at Gordon's meaning.

We know that Hesselius was in Talbot County again in 1759, when on November 25 Henry Callister wrote to him at Dover that he had hoped to see him on this visit, and conveyed the message that "the children thank you for the artificial flowers."<sup>8</sup> Hesselius must have taken care of some business transactions for Callister, as indicated in a letter he wrote to a creditor by the name of Wolstenholm on October 2, 1760:

I shall have the opportunity of paying you without trouble or risque of carriage, by my friend Mr. John Hesselius who is now at Newtown and is going to receive cash in Virginia, and on his return, which may be a month after your receipt of this, he promises to wait on you & pay you the enclosed order.<sup>9</sup>

The Reverend John Gordon's portrait is believed to have been painted circa 1762, in the fourth year of Hesselius's second style period. This began about 1758, when "... one feels for the first time Hesselius is attempting to portray the character of his subjects."<sup>10</sup> But during this period Hesselius came under the influence of John Wollaston, and for some reason emulated his peculiar treatment of eyes, which he saw as almond-shaped. In the portrait of the Reverend John Gordon, oddly, only his right eye is noticeably shaped in this manner.

During this period, also, in 1761, when Hesselius was established in Anne Arundel County, he painted the portraits of Elizabeth, her twin, Eleanor, Charles and Ann Calvert, children of his most important patron, Benedict Calvert, whose marriage to Elizabeth Calvert the Reverend John Gordon had solemnized in 1748. Fresh from this important commission, Hesselius must have returned to Talbot County, and while there, painted Gordon's portrait.

Following his marriage in 1763, Hesselius became involved in the settlement of Henry Woodward's estate, and he no doubt managed his wife's property, "Primrose Hill," which she inherited from her first husband. It was during this period



also that Hesselius became active in St. Anne's Parish. On April 4, 1763, he signed a Denial of Transubstantiation, "... an important step in his rise to a position of responsibility and authority in the church."<sup>11</sup>

When Hesselius died in 1778 his personal property was worth £3,400, and he owned nine hundred acres of land, not including his wife's "Primrose Hill." He left his wife and four surviving children ample legacies.

Little is known of the character of John Hesselius, although his letter to Henry Callister, the only one he wrote which is extant, reveals that he was a sensitive man, and one who valued his friendships. Unfortunately, he did not leave a self-portrait, as did his father, if he ever painted one.

He was "... a man who gave of his time and talents to his art, his religion, his family, and his plantation. Interested in both music and the mysteries of science, he was, perhaps, another example of the 'Renaissance Man' in eighteenth-century America."<sup>12</sup>

"That he was not a genius is not to his discredit. It should be enough that he was a competent painter, a good provider, a devoted family man, and a respectable member of society."<sup>13</sup>

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1. In his autobiography Peale related that Hesselius accepted his offer of a saddle as payment for lessons in painting. As the association was brief, and early in Peale's career, Hesselius did not permanently influence his work.
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3. Margaret (Henry) Donoho, daughter of Robert Goldsborough and Roberta (Bolling) Henry. Mrs. Donoho and her husband, John Donoho, are the present owners and occupants of "Myrtle Grove."
4. Richard K. Doud, "John Hesselius, Maryland Limner," in *Winterthur Portfolio* 5. Charlottesville, Va.: (c. 1969).
5. Richard K. Doud, letter to Mrs. Arthur N. Starin, March 26, 1979.
6. Papers of Henry Callister, p. 209, Maryland Diocesan Archives.
7. *Ibid.* p. 277.
8. *Ibid.* p. 334.
9. *Ibid.* p. 377.
10. Doud, *Winterthur Portfolio*, p. 137.
11. *Ibid.* p. 132.
12. *Ibid.* p. 143.
13. *Ibid.* p. 143.

#### A List of Some Portraits of Eastern Shore of Maryland Subjects Either Attributed to or Signed by John Hesselius (1728–1778)

1. Bordley, Judge John Beale (1727–1804). He married Margaret Chew, sister of Mary (Chew) Paca.
2. Bozman, Mrs. John (1728–1789). Née Lucretia Leeds, daughter of John Leeds (1705–1790) and his wife Rachel (Harrison) Leeds (d. 1746) of "Wade's Point," Talbot County.
3. Chamberlaine, Henrietta Maria (d. 1808). Daughter of James Lloyd Chamberlaine (b. 1732) and his wife, Henrietta Maria (Robins) Chamberlaine (b. 1737). She married William Hayward of Somerset County, the nephew of William Hayward of "Locust Grove," Bailey's Neck, Talbot County. (Identity uncertain).

4. Chamberlaine, Samuel (1697-1773) of "Plaindealing," Talbot County.
5. Chamberlaine, Samuel (1697-1773) as a younger man.
6. Chamberlaine, Thomas (1658-1757). John Hesselius's copy of the portrait which Samuel Chamberlaine, his son, of "Plaindealing," brought to Maryland in 1723 from "Saughall," the family home in Cheshire County, England.
7. Chamberlaine, Thomas (1762-1786). Son of Thomas Chamberlaine and his wife Susannah (Robins) Chamberlaine. Painted c. 1775.
8. Goldsborough, William (1709-1760). He married (1) Elizabeth Robins (d. 1746), and (2) 1747, Henrietta Maria (Tilghman) Robins, widow of George Robins.
9. Goldsborough, Mrs. William (1707-1771). Née Henrietta Maria Tilghman, daughter of Col. Richard Tilghman (1672-1738) of "The Hermitage," Queen Anne's County, and sister of Matthew Tilghman of "Rich Neck," Talbot County. She married (1) 1731, George Robins (1697-1742) of "Peach Blossom," Talbot County, and (2), William Goldsborough. Painted with her is her grandson, Robins Chamberlaine, son of James Lloyd Chamberlaine and his wife Henrietta Maria (Robins) Chamberlaine, of "Plaindealing."
10. Gordon, The Reverend Doctor John (1717-1790), Rector of St. Michael's Parish, Talbot County, 1749-1790. He married (1) 1769, Sarah \_\_\_\_\_ (d. 1774), and (2) 1779, Mary (Pickering) Willson Gibson (d. 1810).
11. Grundy, Ann (1690-1732). Daughter of Robert Grundy (d. 1720) of Talbot County and Deborah (Shrigley) Grundy. She married (1) 1709, James Lloyd (1680-1723) of "Hope," Talbot County, and (2) The Reverend Edward Fottrell. Hesselius must have copied an earlier likeness of Ann, perhaps a miniature painting of her head and shoulders, for he was only four years old when Ann died. In this half-length portrait, Hesselius depicted Ann wearing a gown similar to the one worn by her daughter Mrs. William Tilghman (Margaret Lloyd) in her portrait by Hesselius.
12. Hayward, Judge William and Son. Judge Hayward married Margaret Robins (b. April 20, 1734), the daughter of George Robins (1697-1742) and his wife Henrietta Maria (Tilghman) Robins (1707-1771). Judge Hayward and his wife lived at "Locust Grove," Bailey's Neck, Talbot County.
13. Hayward, Mrs. William, Sr. (b. April 20, 1734). Née Margaret Robins, daughter of George Robins and his wife Henrietta Maria (Tilghman) Robins. She married Judge William Hayward of Somerset County who settled at "Locust Grove," and became the first of the name in Talbot County.
14. Hemsley, Col. William (1736-1812) of "Cloverfields," Queen Anne's County. He was a member of the Continental Congress 1782-84; Provincial Treasurer for the Eastern Shore in 1773; and step-son of Col. Robert Lloyd (1712-1770) of "Hope."
15. Hollyday, Henry (I) (1725-1789) of "Ratcliffe Manor," Talbot County. Son of Col. James Hollyday and his wife Sarah (Covington) Lloyd Hollyday of "Readbourne," Queen Anne's County.
16. Hollyday, Mrs. Henry (I) (1732-1804). Née Anna Maria Robins, daughter of George Robins and his wife Henrietta Maria (Tilghman) Robins.
17. Leeds, John (1705-1790), the astronomer, of "Wade's Point," Talbot County. (Identity uncertain).

18. Lloyd, Col. Robert (1712-1770) of "Hope," Talbot County. Painted c. 1761.
19. Lloyd, Mrs. Robert (1709-1763). Née Anna Maria Tilghman, widow of William Hemsley, Sr. (1703-1736) of "Cloverfields," Queen Anne's County, and mother of Col. William Hemsley (1736-1812), of Deborah (Lloyd) Tilghman (1741-1811), and of Anna Maria (Lloyd) Tilghman (Mrs. William Tilghman) of "The White House," Queen Anne's County. Painted c. 1761.
20. Nicols, Jeremiah (I) (d. 1753). Son of The Reverend Henry Nicols (1678-1748/9) and his wife Elizabeth (Gatchell) Nicols. He married Deborah Lloyd, daughter of James Lloyd and his wife Ann (Grundy) Lloyd of "Hope," Talbot County. Painted in 1751.
21. Nicols, Mrs. Jeremiah (I) (b. 1719). Née Deborah Lloyd. Painted in 1751.
22. Robins, Margaret (b. April 20, 1734). Daughter of George Robins (1697-1742) of "Peach Blossom" and his wife Henrietta Maria (Tilghman) Robins (1707-1771). She married in 1760 William Hayward, the first of the name in Talbot County, who settled at "Locust Grove," Bailey's Neck. (identity uncertain).
23. Rozer, Thomas Whetenhall (1758-1786) of Prince George's County. He married Eleanor Hall (1765-1821). Their daughter, Eleanor Martha (1785-1803) married Matthew Tilghman, Jr. Thomas Rozer was buried at "Bowlingly," Queen Anne's County. Signed and dated 1775.
24. Tilghman, James (1716-1793). Three quarter length portrait.
25. Tilghman, James (1716-1793). Half length portrait.
26. Tilghman, Mrs. James (1727-1771), (née Ann Francis) and Son, William Tilghman. (1756-1827) of "Fausley," Talbot County.
27. Tilghman, Matthew (1718-1790) of "Rich Neck," Talbot County. He married 1741, Ann Lloyd (1723-1794), daughter of Col. James Lloyd and his wife Ann (Grundy) Lloyd of "Hope."
28. Tilghman, Mrs. Matthew (1723-1794). Née Ann Lloyd.
29. Tilghman, Mrs. Matthew (1723-1794) and Her Daughter, Anna Maria Tilghman (1755-1843) who married Lt. Col. Tench Tilghman (1744-1786).
30. Tilghman, Mrs. Peregrine (1741-1811) of "Hope." Née Deborah Lloyd, daughter of Col. Robert Lloyd (1712-1770). She married Col. Peregrine Tilghman (1741-1807). Painted c. 1755.
31. Tilghman, Mrs. William. Née Anna Maria Lloyd, daughter of Col. Robert Lloyd (1712-1770) of "Hope," and his wife Anna Maria (Tilghman) Hemsley Lloyd. She married William Tilghman (1745-1800) of "The White House," Queen Anne's County. Painted c. 1761.
32. Tilghman, Mrs. William (b. 1714/15). Née Margaret Lloyd, daughter of Col. James Lloyd (1680-1723) of "Hope" and his wife Ann (Grundy) Lloyd (1690-1732). She married William Tilghman of "Gross's Coate," Talbot County.

Note 1: With the exception of portrait no. 23, which is signed and dated, all of the paintings listed are of sound attribution to John Hesselius, save no. 22, which is questionable.

Note 2: For a full account of subjects 2, 4-6, 9, 11, 20, 21, 27, 29, and 32, see: John Bozman Kerr, *Genealogical Notes of the Chamberlaine Family of Maryland* . . . with a new introduction by John Frazer, Jr. Cottonport, Louisiana: Polyanthos, 1973.

# Chestnutwood, 1694-1978

MARION PARSONS SINWELL

**T**HE NEW PROPERTY OF THE ROLAND PARK COUNTRY SCHOOL HAS A LONG history involving a number of families and a variety of different uses.

The earliest record is a patent survey for "Fox Hall" or "Vauxhall", dated October 12, 1694, and consisting of 200 acres on the "North side of the Patapsco River in the woods".<sup>1</sup> The owner was a Stephen Benson of Talbot County. His land bordered that of Job Evans who was later to own Fox Hall.

In 1770, Job Evans deeded part of Fox Hall to his son Daniel for five shillings sterling money. The deed consisted of 50+ acres on both sides of what is now Roland Avenue and included the present "Dohme property".<sup>2</sup> In the Maryland Tax List for 1783, Daniel Evans' taxable assets included 6 horses and 11 black cattle.<sup>3</sup>

Robert Strawbridge, in 1764, formed a society of Methodists "at the house of Daniel Evans near the city", now the property of Gilman School.<sup>4</sup> When the congregation outgrew Evans' house, they decided to build a log Chapel across the farm road. The road was then called Evans' Chapel Road, later Maryland Avenue, and today Roland Avenue. But a small fragment of Evans' Chapel Road still exists, running behind the Water Tower between Cold Spring Lane and 41st Street. The story goes that the neighborhood was invited to help build the chapel, and as the men were hard at work, General Ridgely of Hampton passed by:

Seeing his neighbors hard at work, he accosted them and inquired, "Why are you building that house in the woods?" "We are building a 'Meeting House'", was the reply. "What kind of a 'Meeting House'?" "A 'Methodist Meeting House'", responded the builder. "You had better pull it down, and save your labor—make a stable-pig pen—or corn crib out of it: for in a short time a corn crib will hold all the methodists", replied that distinguished citizen of the County.<sup>5</sup>

Francis Asbury, first American Methodist bishop preached here in 1772 and<sup>6</sup> Richard Owens (Owings), the first native Methodist minister, preached a sermon in Evans' Log Meeting House July, 1773.<sup>7</sup>

When Daniel Evans died in 1812, he left his house and 1/3 of his property to his wife Hannah.<sup>8</sup> The other 2/3 of the land was divided equally between his sons, Daniel and William. The Methodist Meeting must have been prospering, for in March, 1824, Daniel Evans deeded a parcel of land for one dollar to John Kelso and others "in trust that they shall erect and build . . . a place of worship for use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. . . ."<sup>9</sup> Isaac P. Cook,

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Mrs. Sinwell was formerly Director of Education for the Peale Museum, Baltimore, and a member of the Board of Trustees of Roland Park Country School, and is now with a public relations firm.

Methodist minister and historian wrote that "Evans' Church was a gem of beauty, handsomely arranged, with recess pulpit, and servants' gallery".<sup>10</sup> The site of the chapel was on the highest rise above the high stone wall which is on Roland Avenue, under two large trees. During the Dohme ownership, there was a summer house or pavilion on the site which took advantage of the coolest summer breezes.<sup>11</sup>

For twenty years Evans' Church was part of a "circuit" of churches served by a traveling "preacher on horseback" and included in its congregation important people such as Joseph Merryman and John Stevenson, Baltimore County Sheriff.<sup>12</sup> However, in 1850, the congregation moved away into a new church on the York Road, site of today's Govans Methodist Church, taking the pews from Evans' Chapel with them.<sup>13</sup> In 1853, Elijah Taylor, Joseph Merryman, and others, Trustees for the Methodist Episcopal Church, sold, for \$600, to Augustus Bradford, part of Vauxhall containing Evans' Meeting House, "buildings and improvements",<sup>14</sup> and ended one major chapter in the history of the Dohme property.

Bradford sold the property a year later to Freeborn G. Waters and it is<sup>15</sup> during Waters' ownership that a new use was made of the land. A spring had been dammed to make a reservoir in the westernmost part of the property, with water rams to push the water uphill. When James S. and Andrew G. Waters, Executors for Freeborn G. Waters, sold the land to Edwin L. Parker in 1859, both parties retained the rights "to the use of water flowing from the springs on the land . . . for the purpose of working their respective Water Rams" and that the Waters family could have "peaceful ingress and egress to and from the land . . . for the purpose of repairing and keeping in order said Water Ram, Reservoir, and fixtures. . . ."<sup>16</sup>

There is a gap in the records at this time, but a 1934 article in the *Evening Sun* by B. Latrobe Weston recounts that "Lewellyn [sic] Parker. . . purchased the ground upon which Evans Chapel stood, tore down the chapel, and using the stones for a foundation, erected a residence. Not long afterwards he died and his son sold the property to Charles J. Bonaparte [sic]. . . ."<sup>17</sup>

It was, in fact, Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte who bought the property from Parker's executors in 1869. Jerome was the son of Betsy Patterson and Napoleon's younger brother, Jerome. Since Betsy Patterson was alive until 1879, she probably visited the house from time to time although we have no direct proof of it.

Jerome wrote in a letter:

I am delighted with my country seat. The house is admirable, the grounds beautiful, any number of magnificent forest trees—oaks, chestnuts, tulip trees, etc.—I am satisfied it would cost more than three times the amount I paid for it, for the improvements alone. . . .<sup>18</sup>

According to the Record of Perpetual policies of the Baltimore Equitable Society, August 4, 1869, the property included a two-story Mansion house (stone) on the west side of Evans Chapel Road (now Roland Avenue),

twenty two feet by forty five feet with a two story addition at the east side twenty two feet by thirty feet having a one story circular projection of nine feet and a verandah at the north and south side and a two story addition to the main building at the west side seventeen feet by twenty six feet. Containing ice house and kitchen all tin roofs.<sup>19</sup>



FIGURE 1. Chestnutwood

Also included in the policy were a thirteen feet square privy, a two story frame gardener's house, a two story frame carriage house, and a two story frame wagon house, stable, and chicken house. The entire property was valued at \$5,200.<sup>20</sup>

Jerome only lived a year after he purchased his "country seat" which was inherited jointly by his sons Jerome Napoleon and Charles Joseph. Since he was living in Newport, Rhode Island, in 1872, Jerome sold his rights to his brother.<sup>21</sup> Charles married Ellen Channing Day in 1875, and after a honeymoon in Bermuda, the couple moved into his mother's house in town "while their country house, called 'Chestnut Wood' was being made ready for them. This was situated about four miles out of the city and was occupied by them for several years."<sup>22</sup> Substantial improvements were made to the property at that time, as shown in the new Equitable Society Policy, 1879, now valued at \$7,250. The house was

lengthened by 10 feet, another story is added to the addition, and there is a two-story frame stable filled in with brick, with two wings. A one-story frame ice house is west of the stable and on the east side of the pond. There is a one-story brick dairy west of the gardener's house, and even a one-story calf pen! Two one-story frame cottages were used as servants' dormitories. A two-story frame barn was rebuilt on the brick and stone foundation of the original carriage house and wagon shed. East of the mansion was a summer house.<sup>23</sup>

The coming of the trolley cars brought new neighbors; the Bonapartes had enough of the encroaching city and moved further out in the country. The property was sold in 1892 to Edward H. Bouton, general manager of the Roland Park Company.<sup>24</sup> Three months later, Bouton sold the property to the Forest Heights Company of Baltimore City of which he was president.<sup>25</sup> Money was tight at this time and the company defaulted on its mortgage. In 1897 the property was placed in the hands of trustees headed by Charles Morton Stewart, who was a cousin of Charles Bonaparte.<sup>26</sup>

Nine long years passed before the house was to know its last family, Dr. and Mrs. Alfred R. L. Dohme.<sup>27</sup> Dr. Dohme was the first head of the Board of Trustees of the fledgling Roland Park Country School, so it seems fitting for the school to make its new home on his estate. In order to make room for his growing family, Dr. Dohme added a back wing, thus enlarging the kitchen and providing more bedrooms for children and servants. The entrance was made more welcoming by opening up the stairwell which had been previously boxed in.<sup>28</sup> For a generation two other families lived on 1 3/4 acres in the northwest corner of the property which Roades Fayerweather purchased in 1909 from Dr. Dohme to build a house.<sup>29</sup> On Bromley's 1915 map two wooden buildings are shown on Fayerweather's property, presumably a house and one outbuilding.<sup>30</sup> Provision in the deed was made for ingress and egress via the "Lower Road" and right of way for telephone, electricity, and a water pipe to the "Roland Park Company's water main in the bed of Deep Dene Road."<sup>31</sup> In 1941, the property changed hands from Roades Fayerweather to Emlen Littell and his wife, Mary, who, ten years later, became sole owner.<sup>32</sup>

After Dr. Dohme died in 1952, his widow sold the property to her next-door neighbors, the Associated Professors of St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore City.<sup>33</sup> That same month Mrs. Littell sold her 1 3/4 acres to the Associated Professors, and the multiple pieces of property came together under one owner again.<sup>34</sup> In May, 1972 the deed was retitled to the Associated Sulpicians of the United States.<sup>35</sup> From 1952 on, Chestnutwood was home to priests spending a year in retreat in the Solitude Program.

Then in May, 1978, the property was bought by Roland Park Country School for its new campus. With the addition of the back wing, the house stands today substantially as it was when Charles Bonaparte took his bride to it 100 years ago. Another chapter in the saga of Chestnutwood is ready to unfold, that of focal point in a school of over 500 active young people, the Roland Park Country School.

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# Almira Lincoln Phelps: The Self-Made Woman in the Nineteenth Century

ANNE FIROR SCOTT

**T**HE NOTION OF THE "SELF-MADE MAN" IS A COMMON ONE IN OUR CULTURE, and was especially so in the nineteenth century. But what of the self-made woman? At first glance it would seem unlikely that such a phenomenon existed in a society committed to the view that woman's appropriate sphere was the domestic one. Yet there were an increasing number of such women as the nineteenth century progressed and their path to achievement was necessarily different from that followed by men.

Since teaching was the one profession to which women had access, it is not surprising to find a teacher—Almira Lincoln Phelps—not only providing an archetypal example in her own person, but diligently instructing her pupils as to how they might rise in the world through their own efforts.

Though a New Englander by birth and instinct, Mrs. Phelps made her career and her reputation in Maryland. In 1841 she took charge of the Patapsco Female Institute which she directed until 1865. For the ensuing nineteen years she was a pillar of Baltimore, presiding over a salon devoted to literary and scientific subjects, working for the St. Bartholomew's Mission Church and founding its women's society as well as a number of other voluntary associations. Her son Charles Phelps, graduate of Harvard Law School, represented Maryland in the Thirty-Ninth and Fortieth Congresses, and was thereafter a judge and law professor in Baltimore.

If we look closely at the concept of self-making as it was viewed by restless nineteenth-century Americans it was not quite what the cliché suggests. The term "self-made man" usually evokes images of a rags-to-riches career, yet we now know that most of the truly rich did not begin in rags, and did not create their success unaided.<sup>1</sup> A much wider definition of the term would encompass not only the tiny handful who began poor and ended their lives rich, but the much larger number who, beginning their lives on farms or in agricultural villages, exerted themselves to acquire some degree of education, and became the ministers, doctors, lawyers, social reformers, teachers, public officials and merchants, often of modest means, who shaped the emerging town and city culture. They used the word *character* to sum up the combination of qualities required for this change.

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*Amira Lincoln Phelps.*

The process of developing the necessary character and achieving a new status is reported over and over in the biographical sketches in which nineteenth century men told their own stories or those of their contemporaries. The beginning was usually discontent with life on the family farm. Some, of course, chose to find new farms in the west, but the most ambitious turned their feet toward the town or city. The first quality which they found essential was a high degree of adaptability. Self-reliance and perseverance were almost as vital. Character building, as they saw it, required constant effort, and the capacity to seize each

opportunity that presented itself. Neither the training nor the certification for any particular profession were yet firmly fixed: a fact which widened opportunity on the one hand, but led to anxiety-producing uncertainty on the other. Disappointments and set-backs were seen as part of the game, and were often welcomed as tests of resilience and strength, or at least were said to have been welcomed once they had been overcome. For many men religious commitment reinforced the strength of character they were seeking to develop.

Many began with meager material resources, though the cooperation of members of an extended family might make the most of what did exist. In the process of becoming a professional and attaining some degree of local or even national eminence, a man might try three or four careers. Some practiced more than one profession simultaneously, some kept one foot in the older rural culture by continuing to live on a farm while practicing law or medicine. "Success," when it came, might arrive late in life, and in a field far from the one in which the young man had begun.

Similarities amounting almost to a pattern emerge when one dips randomly into the biographies of nineteenth-century male achievers. Mark Hopkins worked as a farm hand in order to go to school, then taught in the South to save money for college. He had a go at theology, law and medicine before a tutorship at Williams almost accidentally opened the career in which he became famous. J. Marion Sims began practicing medicine so inadequately trained that his first two patients, both children, died. Yet, braced by the experience, he returned to more diligent study and became in time the leading gynecologist of his generation, founder of the New York Woman's Hospital. Francis Wayland had begun to practice medicine when a religious experience turned him to theology. Poverty forced him out of Andover Seminary and into a menial tutor's job at Brown University, where his own study and reflection launched him on a notable career as a moral philosopher and reformer of collegiate education. William Woodbridge was licensed as a Congregational minister and thinking of becoming a missionary when a trip to Europe turned his attention to geography. He began to search for better methods of teaching geography, which concern led on to an influential career in pedagogical reform. Amos Eaton read law, worked as a land agent for Stephen Van Rensselaer, became interested in plants, began to study botany and launched a scientific career by the simple expedient of giving public lectures on the subject to anyone willing to pay a small sum to listen. In time he went on to study geology, created the first *Index* to the geology of the northern states, and joined the small group of scientists who were making science a serious field of study in the colleges.<sup>2</sup>

It would be possible to pile up example after example of this pattern of trial and error, resilience in the face of set-back, belief in the virtues of adversity, and a strong reliance upon self-education, but enough has been said to show the general pattern followed by self-made men. How did women differ?

"Rising in the world," the stated goal of so many energetic young Americans of both sexes, was, for a woman, most readily accomplished by good sense or good luck in the choice of a husband. If she happened upon a man who had found the complex key to success, she would automatically rise with him, sharing his identity and reflecting whatever glory he might provide. A handful of women, by

contrast, set out to achieve eminence on their own. Instead of waiting for fate to provide a husband whose life experience would shape their own, such women boldly set out to shape independent careers by a process of self-making similar to that of ambitious men, but modified by the social constraints summed up in the term "woman's place."

The contrast between the social expectations of the two sexes was dramatic. Men were encouraged, applauded and rewarded for diligent self-improvement. A woman who followed the same pattern ran the risk of being seen as deviant, labeled "strong-minded," caricatured and scorned or even rejected by respectable society. So powerful were the cultural definitions of woman's role, so fixed the restrictions upon educational and professional opportunity, that an ambitious woman had to become adept at appearing to conform to the cultural prescriptions at the very time she was seeking to defy them. Achieving women often spoke with pain of the deviousness they felt in themselves brought on by this necessity.<sup>3</sup>

The career of Almira Hart Lincoln Phelps offers an instructive example of a woman who paid constant lip service to the idea of a special woman's sphere while stretching the boundaries of that sphere beyond recognition.

"Mrs. Phelps" as she was casually referred to in the press of her time, upon the evident assumption that her name was universally recognized, provides yet another illustration, if another were needed, of the transience of human fame. One of the best known women in America during a good part of the nineteenth century, the second woman ever to be elected to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a textbook author who introduced several generations to the study of botany, an influential pedagogue who played a major role in two pioneering female seminaries and helped to bring Pestalozzian methods into American education, a woman of letters sought after by literary editors,—her name now brings blank stares even from American historians. She is known, if at all, as the sister of Emma Willard, whose own fame, though much diminished, has been somewhat preserved by the fact that the school she founded still bears her name.<sup>4</sup>

A sketch of Almira Phelps' life shows how one woman created a career, and from her writings it is possible to discover how she justified her ambitious achievements and attempted to guide young women who might wish to follow her example.<sup>5</sup> She carefully instructed her pupils in the methods of making themselves into strong characters and taught them how to elude the restrictions of "woman's sphere" without ever admitting they had done so.

Almira Hart was the seventeenth and last child in her family; a family descended on one side from the founder of Hartford, on the other from Massachusetts Bay Puritans. Her father had fought in the Revolution. Being seventeenth might have been a disadvantage—the parents were old, money for educating children would have been exhausted—but in her case, it was quite otherwise. Her much older brothers were able to help pay for schooling, and her sister, Emma Hart, already embarked on her own self-made career, was a useful mentor. Both sisters had been precocious children, encouraged by their father who was said to have read Milton and Shakespeare in his spare time, and to have shared his enthusiasm for such reading with his daughters.<sup>6</sup>

Almira was a forceful young person. At fourteen, accused of some dereliction of duty and placed for punishment in the teacher's chair at the district school, she used that vantage point to deliver a spirited critique of a recitation in progress, and then wrote her weekly composition, in the form of a protest, on the subject of fitting punishment to crime. The reaction of the teacher to these assaults on his dignity is not recorded, but her behavior was a good forecast of things to come.

Two years later she began teaching in a country school and "boarding around" with local families, few of them as cultivated as her own had been. Though speaking well of the discipline this experience afforded, she decided that she would have to move up in the world to find a more congenial environment. For a young woman setting such a goal in 1810 there were two options: she could marry well, or she could prepare for a more ambitious teaching career. Since no suitable alliance had yet been offered, Almira took the second path and repaired to Middlebury, Vermont, where her sister had just taken charge of a female academy, and where three young men, students at Middlebury College, were willing to include her in their study sessions.

In an effort to go still further in her education, she moved for a while to Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where her cousin Nancy Hinsdale ran a highly respected academy. Living with high Federalist relatives did not prevent her from expressing Jeffersonian convictions in public, sometimes with dramatic intensity. The Hinsdale connection put her in line to be examined for a job as teacher of the winter school at New Britain, the first time a woman had been considered for that post. Confronted with a difficult question in astronomy she covered her lack of precise knowledge by offering to read to the examiners an original essay on "The Duties and Responsibilities of Teachers." This device, she said, allowed her to exhibit her technical knowledge of reading, writing and orthography as well as her appreciation of the office for which she was being examined. It need hardly be added that she got the job.<sup>7</sup> After New Britain she briefly conducted a private school in Berlin where she enjoyed a lively social life, but when a better job, the headship of a school in Sandy Hill, New York, was offered, ambition took precedence over pleasure. She moved again, telling herself that it was her duty to do the hard rather than the easy thing. "May the thought of having sacrificed my wishes to a conviction of duty inspire me with that firmness which my situation demands," she noted, somewhat self-righteously, in her diary.<sup>8</sup>

At Sandy Hill she hit upon a new tool for developing her mental skills, and took to making written abstracts, "in condensed, logical form . . ." of each book she read. She was soon teaching her pupils to follow her example. It was also about this time that she came across Lydia Sigourney's *Moral Pieces in Prose and Verse* which inspired her to think that she, too, though a woman, might become a writer.<sup>9</sup>

Thus far her life had been a steady series of small triumphs, as she prepared herself for better and better teaching posts, and experienced the excitement that accompanied the acquisition of knowledge, the development of mental skills, a spreading reputation as a teacher.

In 1817, when she was 24, an opportunity for a more traditional female career presented itself in the form of a proposal of marriage from one Simeon Lincoln,

editor of a Federalist paper in Hartford. His personal charm and their shared pleasure in literature overcame the disadvantage of his politics, and she retired for the time being to domestic life. Three children were born before her husband's sudden death in 1823 threw her upon her own resources to support herself and the two surviving children.

She returned almost at once to the district school at New Britain, but before many months a better chance came. Three years earlier Emma Hart Willard had opened the Troy Female Seminary in New York State in an effort to provide something closer to higher education for women than anything hitherto available. Now, she asked her widowed sister to join the enterprise. In the atmosphere of intense intellectual effort Emma Willard fostered at Troy, Almira Lincoln launched herself upon the study of Latin, French, Greek, Spanish and higher mathematics. Her greatest excitement came when Amos Eaton invited her to learn botany under his tutelage. "A new world seemed opened to her imagination in pursuit of the natural sciences," she wrote.<sup>10</sup>

Eaton, delighted with so apt and diligent a pupil, was soon calling her his "scientific assistant," and encouraging her to apply Pestalozzi's methods of inductive learning to the teaching of botany. None of the existing textbooks were designed to train pupils to work directly with plants, as Pestalozzian theory required, and so with Eaton's help she began to compose such a book. *Familiar Lectures on Botany* or "Lincoln's *Botany*" as it was generally called, became a standard text used in schools and colleges in every part of the country for half a century. It was destined to be many times revised and reprinted, and to introduce several generations of youngsters to the study of science. In time various college professors of botany, some eminent, would attribute their first love for the field to an early encounter with this book.

Exhilarated by the favorable response to her botany text, she next undertook to translate from the French Vauquelin's *Dictionnaire de Chemie* and was rewarded with an encomium from Eaton's good friend, Benjamin Silliman, professor of Chemistry at Yale, who called her translation "learned, judicious and able." She continued to grow in competence and self-confidence, and doubtless more than family loyalty was involved when Emma Willard left Almira Lincoln in full charge of the Seminary when she herself departed for a long visit to Europe in 1830. The acting principal took to administration as readily as she had to scholarship, and the seminary proceeded on its accustomed way quite as well as when the head was in residence.

People who were not frightened by Almira Lincoln's forceful personality often found her magnetic. In 1831 John Phelps, the widowed father of two Troy pupils, came to visit his daughters and was immediately attracted to the thirty-eight year old widow. After a courtship largely conducted by mail she agreed to marry him, upon the condition that she would continue the various activities she subsumed under the phrase "my literary labors." She moved to Phelps' home in Guilford, Vermont, where the amount of work she accomplished was prodigious by any standard. With full responsibility for the household, with two children of her own and several of her husband's to care for, she nevertheless revised her botany text, wrote three similar books to introduce students to chemistry, natural philosophy and geology, edited the manuscripts of the weekly lectures she had

given at Troy into *Lectures for Young Ladies*, wrote several articles for the *American Ladies Magazine* and *Godey's Lady's Book*, organized a new church, a sabbath school, a library and a Female Society for the Promotion of Religious Knowledge. She conducted a three week "normal course" for teachers in her home while she was pregnant. She bore a son in 1833 and a daughter in 1836. During the infancy of the first she kept a meticulous record of his day-by-day development and behaviour, which was published as an appendix to a book she had translated from French and which constituted one of the first American contributions to descriptive developmental psychology.<sup>11</sup>

John Phelps was a strong figure in his own right, a self-educated lawyer who had served in the constitutional convention of Vermont and was still a member of its legislature where his involvement on the losing side of a heated argument over slavery increased his willingness to pull up stakes when his wife was asked to take over a female seminary in West Chester, Pennsylvania. She accepted the post with due sensitivity to the mores, writing a friend: "There is great danger that injustice may be done in the public mind to a gentleman whose wife makes herself conspicuous; we must do all we can to prevent this. . . ." <sup>12</sup> And lest posterity be misled, she made a note in the family Bible: "He was gratified in seeing his wife successful and honored, never imagining that this could detract from any distinctions to which he felt himself entitled."<sup>13</sup>

The West Chester Seminary fell victim to the Panic of 1837 and the Phelps, after a brief stay at Rahway, New Jersey, moved on to take charge of the Patapsco Female Institute, a faltering school under the control of the Episcopal diocese of Maryland.

While her husband took charge of the business affairs of the school, Mrs. Phelps ran the educational program, speedily establishing the "order" and "system" which had been her by-words at Troy. She set up a three year course, required pupils to study mathematics, philosophy and languages, announced that no one was to enter late or leave early, and established a curriculum to train teachers. As fast as she was able she tightened requirements, extended the curriculum, provided for instruction for some who were post graduates, and developed the public examination as a method of encouraging diligence on the part of pupils and respect on the part of the community. In a short time Patapsco was making a name in the south comparable to that which Troy enjoyed in New York, the middle states and the Ohio valley.

Mrs. Phelps perceived southern women, especially daughters of slaveholders, as presenting special problems for an educator. She worried lest they never really learn to work, and felt she had to cajole them into undertaking the difficult subjects which she held to be essential for the full development of the mind. She never concealed her high regard for New England ways and Puritan values, a regard which did not always endear her to southern pupils or their parents. One disgruntled student accused her of wanting only to make money, and of spying on her pupils. A dissatisfied North Carolina congressman whose daughters were enrolled at Patapsco criticized her strong-minded behavior and thought her inadequately attentive to the development of feminine charm. On the second point she would have agreed with him; it was her pride that Patapsco provided women with advantages corresponding to "those enjoyed by young men in the

colleges" and she said she was more interested in training good women than fine ladies.<sup>14</sup>

Other pupils praised the school and its preceptress and though Patapsco's student body was never as large as that of Troy, it was soon sending trained teachers south and west to become part of the spreading women's educational network which Emma Willard had inaugurated four decades earlier.<sup>15</sup>

In 1849 John Phelps died, and for seven years Almira Phelps ran the seminary alone. In 1856, stricken by the death in a railway accident of her oldest daughter, Jane Lincoln, a remarkable young person whose life had exemplified her mother's ideal of what the educated woman should be, she retired from the school. She was 63.

"Retirement" did not connote a diminution of activity. Though Phelps took part in Baltimore high society, she continued to read, write, talk, engage in politics, and take delight in new challenges. In 1870 she addressed a passionate document to the Senate and the House of Representatives urging them to support Cuba's fight for independence. At 81, speaking to the Maryland Academy of Sciences, she made a spirited attack on the theory of evolution, though honoring Darwin for "all the good he had done in the search for truth. . . ."<sup>16</sup>

Along the way she organized and presided over various voluntary associations including the St. Bartholomew's Mission church in Baltimore, and its Woman's Aid Society. She firmly excluded the rector from meetings of the latter. This show of sturdy feminism was at odds with her decision to join the anti-suffrage forces and to argue publicly, with her usual vigor, against the wisdom of granting the vote to women. The fear of her influence was enough to inspire the *Woman's Journal* to an acerbic comment: "Years of teaching give to dogmatic natures an increase of arrogance, which it is hard to keep in subjection."<sup>17</sup>

She continued to revise her textbooks, except for the one in geology since she felt that field had left her far behind, addressed the American Association for the Advancement of Science twice, supervised the education of her grandchildren, and advised her son, a member of Congress, on matters of public policy. After the Civil War she created a Society for the Liberal Education of Southern Girls to help young women from the impoverished states resume their education. Sixty-seven women were able to go to school under its auspices, a number of whom, in the best Phelps tradition, went back south to teach.<sup>18</sup>

The very substantial income from her textbooks provided her with comfortable surroundings; she continued to preside in matriarchal splendor over a three generational household, and over a *salon* for the Baltimore intelligentsia, until she died at ninety-one, in full possession of her faculties.

In two published volumes of lectures, as well as in a novel and various essays, Almira Phelps left a record of her efforts to instruct young women on a wide variety of topics, among them the art of self-education and the method of building an autonomous identity. Didacticism was an integral part of nineteenth century culture, and young men, too, were the recipients of a vast amount of advice on self-improvement. However, the task which Mrs. Phelps undertook was somewhat more complicated than that faced by the assortment of philosophers, college professors, and medical men who tried to instruct men on the ways and means of getting ahead in the world. Her purpose was to help young women find their way



to an independent identity, whether they married or not, and to help them prepare for achievement. In order to do this she had to help them call into question the firm net of cultural doctrines which, on the face of it, were quite at odds with her purposes. These doctrines were based on the assumptions that:

1. women were created to be wives and mothers, helpmates for men, and took their identity from their *relationships* to husbands or male children.
2. women's innate abilities lay in the emotional rather than in the intellectual realm.
3. God had appointed men to be the decision makers, and fathers were to families as God himself was to believers.
4. women who did not marry had failed to fulfill their destiny, though this error could be partly rectified if the woman spent her time serving some man, a father or brother, or in a pinch, a brother-in-law.

How could a woman, surrounded with these cultural restraints, shape herself into a strong character capable of living, if she chose, an independent life? While achieving men were admired and held up as models to the young, women were admired for self-sacrifice and piety, and were often despised for asserting themselves. Thus Mrs. Phelps and others of her persuasion had first to show young women that individual achievement was possible for a woman, then had to help them prepare for intellectual independence by building their own characters, and finally had to teach them to use the cultural expectations to their own advantage. It was a formidable task.

Reduced to essentials, what Phelps offered young women, in three overlapping categories, was first, her understanding of the relationship of education to the process of character development; second, her firm belief that self-education was possible and, indeed, desirable, and finally instruction in how to deal with the dangers involved in stepping out of the prescribed "Woman's sphere."<sup>19</sup>

Her intellectual starting point was a combination of Descartes and Locke. The mind is the basis of identity; all knowledge comes through the senses. Human beings are born with potential which can only be developed by exercise. Since knowledge is expanded by careful and purposeful observation and minds are developed by use, it follows that each person makes his or her own identity. Perhaps Almira Phelps herself did not realize how radical these assumptions were when applied to women, whose identities had for so long been seen as being formed by a relationship to a man.

She believed the purpose of education was to create an individual equipped to deal with whatever, in the providence of God, life should present. She called this goal "elevation of character." Learning and morality she believed to be complementary necessities: learning without moral principles could be dangerous; morality without an educated mind would be ineffective. Her ideal young woman was both learned and pious.

The process of creating one's own character required unremitting effort. While teachers could be helpful to the very young, self-education was "after all the great business of life," and the sooner a woman cut loose from teachers and took full responsibility for her own education, the sooner was a desirable maturity likely to be acquired. "Think what you want to be and then strive to render yourself such," she told her pupils, advising them to make a written plan for their lives.

Almira Phelps' enthusiasm for intellectual growth was visible despite her

conventional nineteenth-century sentimental style. She emphasized the sheer joy of mastery, and quoted approvingly a French author who urged women to learn to reason so they could enjoy the greatest minds, though he did suggest that such enjoyment be kept secret. Her recommendations for reading made no concessions to the supposed weakness of the female mind: Gibbon, Hume, Robertson, Voltaire, Locke, Paley were among the authors she praised. Nor did she believe that any field of study was beyond woman's range. "No kind of knowledge of literature or science is useless to a teacher. . . . Almost anything you can learn by observation may at one time or another aid in your educational labors," she told them. Formal schooling was the barest beginning: when you leave school "far from considering that you know everything, you must think you have almost everything to learn." She thought the female mind peculiarly suited to developing scientific theories.

Having established the general framework, she proceeded with specific instructions for developing powers of reasoning. Begin by studying mathematics, she said, then learn to observe carefully, make detailed investigations of subjects which interest you, then think, compare and examine your own judgment. The last was important, for she had a strong belief in the virtue of independent thinking, which, combined with her faith in the potentialities of inductive reasoning, led to her constant emphasis upon self-reliance. For her own part, she did not hesitate to offer a critique of Aristotlean logic, or to make emendations to a celebrated work in moral philosophy. None of this advice would have been remarkable had it been directed to young men. Directed to young women in the 1830s it bordered on the revolutionary.

She stressed the need for women to study psychology ("philosophy of mind") and instructed them to observe carefully the functioning of their own minds in order to work out the general principles of mental operations. She recommended that each keep a private journal "in which the moral tenor of your actions and the bent of your minds should be scrupulously noted. This journal should be for your own inspection only; for such is the deceitfulness of the human heart, that it is very apt to suggest a too flattering picture of itself, where it is made with the design of being seen by any but the original," adding that "Man, know thyself, is a precept as important as it is difficult in practice."<sup>20</sup>

Phelps provided a whole series of precepts on the art of study. Concentration, she told her pupils, was of the first importance. Do one thing at a time, and give it your whole attention. Practice writing concise summaries of books you read. Try to explain what you are learning to other people. And so on. She was a proponent of what is nowadays called the inquiry method. Her stern insistence on concentration was at odds with the whole pattern of the usual female life which perforce called for doing many different things and turning rapidly from one to another. Yet she insisted "Attention is indeed everything; without it nothing requiring mental effort can be well done." And, in another place: "It is the most difficult task of young students to gain that command of their trains of thought which scientific research requires."

The Greek ideal of the sound mind in the sound body appealed to her, and in light of the widespread ill-health and physically constrained life of many nineteenth-century women, her preaching about health takes on greater significance. If you want to make something of yourself, she told her pupils, you must get

regular exercise, enough sleep, and take food and drink in moderation. She had studied physiology and passed on precepts drawn from that study which, like all the rest of her advice, rested on a bedrock of belief in the possibility of self-control and self-help. She advised her pupils to pay close attention to their own physical natures and their particular reactions to medications in order to take care of their health themselves in preference to depending upon often ineffective medical doctors.

In lecture after lecture she held up an ideal of intellectual growth and character development to be achieved by women's own efforts, an achievement which would not only admit them to the company of the greatest minds, but would help them become strong, resilient individuals capable of dealing with any problem. She was sure life would offer plenty of vicissitudes to test their capabilities.

Indeed she thought the world was harder for women than for men, and that they had greater need for strong characters. But, she assured her pupils, "as an intelligent being woman is not different from man," and she urged them to make their lives a constant refutation of the assertion that a woman must be ignorant in order to be useful.

She assured them that marriage was not essential to a productive life and that they should prepare to be self-supporting. ". . . It is of great importance to our sex, that they be secured against the sad necessity of marrying for the sake of maintenance." In her novel *Ida Norman*, Phelps tended to dispose of husbands so that her exemplary women would have to rely upon themselves and, as she delicately put it, "exhibit masculine resolution at variance with the delicate susceptibility of [their] nature [s]." The only women in the novel who demonstrate force of character are those who had applied themselves to serious study, and had overcome some obstacle or misfortune.

She offered young women female models to admire and emulate, and advised them to search history for strong women. She told them they were responsible for the future of the Republic: "On [women] depend in great measure the destinies of nations, as well as of families." She praised famous women who were also distinguished for domestic virtues, and bowed regularly in the direction of society's definition of womanhood—"There is also a degree of delicacy expected from a lady in the use of her acquirements, which should not be lost sight of. . . ." At the same time, she suggested ways to by-pass the constraints of social expectation:

. . . Should you chance to become sufficiently acquainted with any branch of science to enable you to impart information, I know of no law either of morality or propriety, which would be violated by your modestly communicating that knowledge to others, neither do I think any man of real science would be displeased to find a lady capable of supporting conversation on scientific subjects.<sup>21</sup>

Upon one occasion she waxed even bolder, and suggested how she had justified her own strong commitment to a public life.

The sphere of woman's duty is to be looked for in private and domestic life; and although she may and ought to do all in her power to elevate, refine, and embellish all that comes within her own circle, she should be cautious of suffering her desires to extend beyond it. If genius, circumstances of fortune, or I might better say, the

providence of God, assigns to her a more public and conspicuous station she ought cheerfully to do all that her own powers, aided by the blessings of God, can achieve; and as far as human feelings will allow, act fearlessly of human censure, looking to a higher tribunal for the reward of her labors.<sup>22</sup>

What could be a more effective rationale for leaving the “private and domestic life?” Neither genius nor the circumstances of fortune are easy to define, and the providence of God is almost impossible to argue with.

In the end, at least as important as her precepts was her example. Moving as she did, cheerfully and fearlessly in a “more public and conspicuous station,” doing “all that her own powers . . . can achieve” she was still a respected and respectable lady. It was a complicated and demanding prescription she offered young women as she taught them to maintain the outward behavior of perfect ladies while building a strong individual personality, engaging in demanding intellectual endeavor, preparing for self-support, and adopting a life-long commitment to self education. Few people of either sex have the stamina to live up to all that Almira Phelps thought a woman ought to do.

Her lectures provide insight into the puzzling way many achieving nineteenth century women tended to present themselves. No reader of the numerous biographical statements such women wrote about themselves and each other can fail to be struck by what seems to be the hypocrisy of the surface presentation in which so many were described as gentle, good, pious, self-abnegating, and an inspiration to those who came within their orbit. Perhaps this relentless facade of propriety and success in the assigned woman’s role was necessary protective coloration for any woman who wanted to do more than perform the duties of wife or mother or beloved maiden aunt. Almira Phelps pointed out in one lecture that the social expectations were apt to make women devious. Contemporary biographies of achieving women suggest that the less one lived up to the prescriptions of true womanhood in daily life, the more one claimed to have done so for the record.

Neither in those documents of her own life which she permitted to survive nor in public statements to younger women did Phelps discuss the darker side of this effort to carry water on both shoulders, to be a true woman as society defined that condition and at the same time an independent achiever capable of shaping the society as well as of being shaped by it. Since there was no broad social support for ambition and achievement, women like Phelps and her sister reinforced each other and developed close relationships with younger women who followed their example and their advice. The didacticism and self-assurance noted by her critics may have stemmed in part from the insecurity which goes along with defying the cultural mores. The defensive tone of her notes about John Phelps’ full support of her career, the care with which she shaped her biographical materials for public view, all point to the high cost of self-making. Yet the surviving evidence also indicates that her zest for life was far from destroyed by the Victorian context and it seems likely that whatever the cost, she felt it worthwhile.

About all this, one can only speculate.

What is much clearer is that in her life and teaching she exemplified a truly self-made woman. In order to become one she had fulfilled all the social expect-

tations summed up in the catch phrase "true womanhood": she was a wife and many times a mother; she was kind, compassionate and intensely pious; she chose outstanding men as mentors and flattered them by close attention. At the same time she had taken her destiny in hand, educated herself, developed administrative skills, created and run several institutions, spoken out on political and social questions, attained recognition from men as well as women, and—to top it off—made a fortune by her own exertions. "What our hands find to do let us do quickly. Let us apply ourselves to the work of improvement. . . ." she had told a group of women in Guilford in 1836.<sup>23</sup> It was the theme of her own life.

As a single case Almira Phelps' life would be interesting but perhaps not worth this much elaboration. Its significance lies in its exemplary nature: in the women she and her sister influenced to go and do likewise.<sup>24</sup> Tracing "influence" is a problematical thing, but we should note that beyond the considerable number of young women whom Phelps reached directly at Troy and Patapsco, *Lecture for Young Ladies* was many times reprinted, was required reading in many female seminaries, and was published in a special edition by the Massachusetts Board of Education for use in the public schools. Those who had ears to hear had a chance to learn what they wanted to know: how a woman could rise in the world. More did than we yet have any notion of, and with consequences for the society we can so far only dimly discern.

#### REFERENCES

1. In a number of studies Edward Pessen has demonstrated that most of the well-to-do in New York, Boston and Philadelphia in the "age of the common man" were far from common men, but had begun life in families of property and standing. See for example his *Riches, Class and Power Before the Civil War* (Lexington, Mass., 1973). See also Lee Soltow, *Men and Wealth in the United States 1850-1870* (New Haven, 1975).
2. Brief lives of all these men are in the *Dictionary of American Biography*. See also Jonathan Messerli, *Horace Mann* (New York, 1972); Frederick Rudolph, *Mark Hopkins and the Log* (New Haven, 1956); and for other examples, *The Remains of the Reverend James Marsh D.D. . . . with a memoir of his life* (Boston, 1943); Anne Eliot Ticknor, *Joseph Green Cogswell* (Cambridge, Mass., 1874); Vincent P. Laramie, ed., *Henry Barnard: American Educator* (New York, 1974). Edward Pessen warns me to be aware that I am talking about a tiny minority of all the young men alive in these years, though their part in shaping the emerging culture was out of proportion to their numbers.
3. Numbers of brief biographies of self-made women can be found in Frances Willard and Mary E. Livermore, *American Women: Fifteen Hundred Biographies*, 2 vols., (New York & Chicago, 1897); in Jennie June Croly, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America* (New York, 1858); and in Edward and Janet James, eds., *Notable American Women*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1971).
4. One incentive to the examination of Almira Phelps' life is this *sic transit gloria mundi* quality; another is the image created in the mind by her grandson's description of her at the age of 91: "Conscious of her own rectitude, she was always ready to lay down the law for others: her firmness and strong personality made her a leader in any circle in which she moved." See Emma Bolzau, *Almira Lincoln Phelps* (Philadelphia, 1936), p. 461.
5. The biographical information used here was collected forty years ago by an extraordinarily diligent scholar who compiled as complete a record as the surviving materials permit. See Bolzau, *Almira Lincoln Phelps*.
6. Except where otherwise indicated, the statements of fact in this section come from Bolzau.
7. "Mrs. Almira Lincoln Phelps," *American Journal of Education* 17 (September 1868), an essay based on Mrs. Phelps' notes. The distinction between the summer school, usually attended by girls and taught by a woman, and the winter school attended by boys and young men who had been busy in the fields during the summer, may not be familiar to the twentieth century reader. In 1814 it was still unusual for a woman to teach the winter school.
8. Bolzau, *Phelps*, p. 38.
9. A. L. Phelps, *Reviews and Essays on Art, Literature and Science* (Philadelphia, 1873), p. 221.

10. *American Journal of Education*, p. 613.
11. Albertine A. N. de Saussure, *Progressive Education Commencing with the Infant* (Boston, 1835).
12. Phelps to Lydia Sigourney, October 16, 1838, Lydia Sigourney Papers, Connecticut Historical Society.
13. Bolzau, *Phelps*, p. 67.
14. Mrs. I. M. E. Blandin, *History of Higher Education of Women in the South Prior to 1860* (New York, 1910), p. 177; Letters of Congressman David Outlaw to his wife, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina; A. L. Phelps, *The Educator or Hours With My Pupils* (Philadelphia, 1859).
15. See Anne F. Scott, "What Then Is The American, This New Woman?" *Journal of American History* 61 (December 1978): 679-703, for a description of this network.
16. Bolzau, *Phelps*, p. 366.
17. Bolzau, *Phelps*, p. 454; *Woman's Journal*, 1874, p. 84.
18. Bolzau, *Phelps*, p. 455.
19. The sources for what follows are Almira Lincoln Phelps' writings in which she offered guidance to young women: first, *The Female Student or Lectures for Young Ladies* (New York, 1836) which was made up of talks given at Troy Female Seminary in 1830-31. This volume was reissued in a series published by the Massachusetts Board of Education for use in all the public schools of that state. It went through nine editions, including three in England and was very widely read in female seminaries as well. *The Educator or Hours with My Pupils* was composed of similar talks given to her Patapsco pupils. Finally, *Ida Norman or Trials and Their Uses* (New York, 1855) purports to be a novel. Composed originally to be read aloud to pupils, it is a didactic moral tale, ludicrous in many of its characterizations and plot, but, revealing of her values and methods.
20. I have had many harsh thoughts about Mrs. Phelps' son Charles, who, after her death, burned the diary she had kept for 75 years. In light of this passage, however, I must concede that she may have told him to do it.
21. Phelps, *Lectures*, p. 275.
22. Phelps, *Lectures*, p. 395.
23. Almira Lincoln Phelps, "The Influence of Women on Society," *American Ladies Magazine* 9 (1836), p. 563.
24. Anne Firor Scott, "The Ever-Widening Circle: The Diffusion of Feminist Values from the Troy Female Seminary 1822-1872," *History of Education Quarterly* 19 (Spring 1979): 3-25.

# An Early Commuter: The Letters of James and Mary Anderson

GEORGE M. ANDERSON

**B**Y THE MIDDLE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, THE GROWING BUREAUCRATIC machinery of the federal government required the services of more and more lower-echelon employees to keep it functioning smoothly. Most made their home in Washington itself; but others, with homes in nearby counties of Virginia and Maryland, chose to rent rooms in boarding houses and travel back and forth at periodic intervals. The latter can thus be regarded as forerunners of the present-day commuter.

Among these early commuters was James Wallace Anderson (1797–1881), owner of a farm in Montgomery County called Vallombrosa. (The name is from a wooded area in Tuscany mentioned by Milton in *Paradise Lost*.) It was located two miles north of the center of Rockville, on the site of what is now Montgomery Junior College. In 1854, to earn extra cash to meet the needs of his large family, James took a position as an auditor in the Auditor's Office of the U.S. Post Office. He held the position for seven and a half years, until he was dismissed in 1861 for refusing to sign the loyalty oath presented to all federal employees at the beginning of the Civil War.

During his time in Washington, James was ordinarily able to go home only every other weekend or so. The stage coach was costly to one who already had to pay \$25 a month for room and board in the capital, and in wintertime the trip of nearly three hours could be bonechilling for a man over fifty. As a result, frequent letters were written to bridge the periods of separation. Since James' deal mostly with boarding house life and the events of the city; and those of his wife Mary with domestic concerns on the farm, together their letters—about 400—provide an unusually full picture of urban and rural existence in mid-nineteenth century America.

James was a grandson of Richard Anderson of Charles County, a planter who moved to Montgomery County in 1754. The Vallombrosa property passed into the hands of Richard's son, Dr. James Anderson, and thence to the James of the letters. By the 1830s, James was practicing law in the county. In 1840 he was appointed Register of Wills, and from 1848 until 1850 he served as chief judge of the Montgomery County Orphans Court.

In 1850 James was chosen as delegate from Montgomery County to the Constitutional Convention in Annapolis. Letters written from Annapolis during

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George M. Anderson, a Jesuit priest who teaches in a school for Hispanic teenagers in New York, is the great grandson of James and Mary Anderson. The letters are in Father Anderson's possession.

the winter of 1850–51 suggest hopes of continued advancement in a political career, but these hopes were never realized. The job at the Auditor's Office, taken solely because of financial need, offered little opportunity for furthering his aspirations.

In 1830 James had married Mary Minor (ca. 1810–1865), daughter of Colonel George Minor of Mount Pleasant in Fairfax County. Mary kept in close touch with her Virginia relatives; she and the children often visited Mount Pleasant, and both her parents were frequent visitors at Vallombrosa. Since two daughters married Virginians, it is not surprising that the Andersons considered themselves Southerners.

James and Mary had eight children who survived infancy: James (1831–1920), Mary (ca. 1833–1910), Virginia (ca. 1834–1913), Thomas (1835–1900), Richard (1837–1855), Edward (1841–1917), Lily (1850–1868), and George (1857–1927). All the children were at home during the 1850s. Their wide age span—from James, who was already in young manhood, to the baby, George Minor Anderson, not born until 1857—lends additional interest to the accounts of their comings and goings and their development.

The letters of both James and Mary are marked by an easy, conversational tone, but they were very different people. Mary was strong and self-assured, and one suspects that she was the harder working of the two. James tended to be more complaining, especially when it came to the boredom of his work and the inconveniences of boarding house life.

The inconveniences were real, but there were compensations in the way of a conviviality which he obviously enjoyed. He details some aspects of it in a letter written from his office on a day in mid-November:

“I have not kindled a fire in my room yet, and so spend the greater part of my evening in the parlor which is quite crowded, there being not less than twenty persons there after tea, and the number is on the increase. We are to have Mrs. Weed's piano brought there, so we will have music to add to the charms of checkers and backgammon . . . They struck up a dance last night and pushed me out to the hand of a Miss Heard, a descendant of old General Morgan, to whom I had not been introduced; and then I danced another with Mrs. Bradford, and then ran a reel in partnership with Miss Weed. The parson, Pleasants, complimented me upon my being the youngest dancer in the room.

Don't you feel jealous?” concludes James, adding: “Why don't you come then and join us, and let the girls come.”<sup>1</sup>

Mary was far from being jealous—their love was deep and sure—and so could reply teasingly: “I really believe you are forgetting all about home and plain people with all your fine boarding house ladies. Have a care or I will dress up very fine and take board in some fashionable house and try to make a sensation.”<sup>2</sup>

If there was jealousy on any score, it might have been with regard to the meals served at the boarding house. One Monday in the spring of 1856 James gives an account of the day's main meal, served, as was usual at the time, at 3 p.m.: “We had today for dinner cold ham, fried chicken, veal-fried shad, and boiled crabs; potatoes, asparagus, peas, lettuce, cabbage; strawberries and milk.”<sup>3</sup> Apart from the fresh vegetables and strawberries, Mary would not have been able to spread



her own table with such lavish variety. What delicacies there were, were of a more homely nature. "Ma started out this morning early looking for mushrooms," the oldest daughter informs her father. "We had a first-rate mess today. Ma was just wishing you were here to help us eat them. Excuse this scratching; I burnt my finger roasting chesnuts yesterday and can hardly hold a pen."<sup>4</sup>

Mary and some of the older children did occasionally visit the boarding house for short stays. But for Mary, the visits were necessarily infrequent, not only because of the expense, but also because, with her husband in Washington, she was left with the entire responsibility of looking after the family and managing the affairs of the farm. Always with small children to care for, it was she who had to oversee both the indoor and the outdoor work, everything from cooking and sewing to planting and harvesting.

The amount of sewing alone that she did was prodigious. Long before the advent of the sewing machine, she made many of the clothes for the whole family. She cuts short one letter by saying:

"I am so hurried that I can say no more just now. I have to finish a pair of tweed pants commenced this morning, for James to wear to Will Thompson's this evening, where he is to survey—have made both him and Tom a pair each of those linen plaid, and intend making Ned a pair this week."<sup>5</sup>

Most of the material for clothing was bought by James at Perry's, a large dry goods store which, according to a description on a bill dated 1861, also sold "carpets, curtains, and house furnishing goods in the upper rooms." The building, a five-story Victorian structure with long gothic windows, still stands on the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 9th Street. Rockville shops had meager wares in comparison to Perry's; it is little wonder, then, that Mary should tell James: "The children and servants have no summer clothing and they are all unwilling that I should get them anything in Rockville."<sup>6</sup>

"Servants" was the family euphemism for slaves. There were approximately six, and their names appear in the letters with regularity. One, Dick, often hand-delivered letters to James at his office when he took the farm wagon into the city to sell produce from Mary's large vegetable garden. (In a letter written in the spring of 1859, she speaks of setting out 450 cabbage plants.)<sup>7</sup>

The same wagon brought back fertilizer and the larger supplies, but the smaller purchases James brought himself when he went home on the stage. A considerable amount of his spare time was spent in taking care of these "commissions" of Mary's. Her shopping requests were varied: osnaburg calico for dresses, seeds for the garden, shoes (a pair of French calf shoes for nine-year-old Lily cost \$1.25),<sup>8</sup> snuff ("I had not taken a pinch for three weeks"),<sup>9</sup> and "a bottle of Hagan, as my hair is getting very white."<sup>10</sup>

James attended to the requests cheerfully enough, though there is an occasional grumble—when, for example, Mary wanted some butter sent up in the stage:

"I got two pounds at 30 cts. a pound; it is cheaper and better fresh if you can get it in the neighborhood. It looks strange, too, to send butter in a small trunk. I hope you won't tell anybody about it; it is almost as funny as carrying a fresh shad in an umbrella."<sup>11</sup>

Since this letter was written in April, the reference to shad is timely; shad were running in the Potomac, and it was one of James' diversions to go to Chain Bridge where fishermen took up positions to catch them with nets attached to long poles.

He spent little on his own needs, especially with regard to clothing. "Have you a new hat?" asks Mary. "Don't walk the street a single day with that old mashed affair."<sup>12</sup> She was concerned that he make a presentable appearance before his peers, and so there are frequent inquiries about his supply of clean collars and shirts.

James obtained his job through the help of a judge in Washington who had influence at the Treasury Department. Nevertheless, he still had to pass an examination. The account of it in a letter to Mary dated February 4, 1854, provides an interesting contrast with presentday Civil Service procedures.

"I went after 12 o'clock on Tuesday to the Examiners and saw the chief clerk of the Auditors, Mr. Johnson . . . who fixed 9 o'clock, Wednesday morning, for my examination. He gave me a memorandum containing certain queries for me to answer in a letter to be addressed to the Auditor and handed by me next morning . . . On Wednesday morning I presented my letter to Mr. Johnson in the absence of the Auditor, and he sent me up to Mr. Offutt, who is the third member of the board. I waited about an hour until he had disposed of his other business, and then [he] pointed me to a long column of figures to add up in dollars and cents, the dollar columns containing 3 figures except 2 places of 4. That was easily dispatched, as you may suppose. I then had a sum of interest to calculate, at 5 percent for 1 year 5 mo. and 28 days, and [he] shewed me a printed return of a postmaster in which was given the 40 percent he was entitled to and the balance due the government, \$20.12 cts, to find the gross receipts, which I did by simple equation by algebra, which seemed to strike the examiner. Upon reference to the answers which he had by him, he found my work to be correct, and carried me to the Auditor's room where they were then all three assembled, and Mr. Offutt reported to his colleagues that I was quite an adept in figures. The three put their heads together and declined any further examination, and I was directed to apply at the Treasury the next day, where they would send their report. I accordingly presented myself to Mr. Washington today and received my commission . . . Tomorrow I shall present my credentials, take the oath of office and my seat, trusting to the almost certainty of soon being put at 1200, at least by Congress, which pay will of course relate back to the date of my qualifications."

James' work involved completing a certain number of accounts which were apportioned to the auditors on a quarterly basis. The amount of time he could spend on the farm depended on how rapidly the accounts could be completed. "I am at work morning and evening," he tells Mary in midsummer of 1858, "and determined to get through so that I may have some time to spend at home. You must save some of those fine roasting ears for me. I should like very much to spend 2 or 3 weeks at home; I am truly sick of this dull town."<sup>13</sup> The flow of accounts into his box at the office was not always even, however. Early in January of the same year, he was irritated on returning to Washington after the holidays to discover that there was no work: "I was mad yesterday when I had to leave you all, and find nothing to do here. If I had a way, I could go up tomorrow and stay some day, but the roads are very bad."<sup>14</sup>

On the other hand, too much time at home could mean long days of catching up when he did return: "I sat up till about 12 last night and shall have to do it

very often yet. The whole time I have stayed at home from the office this quarter is at least a month."<sup>15</sup> Clearly, he had considerable latitude with regard to absences from his desk so long as the quarterly allotment of work was completed.

At times, however, it was not possible to finish on time, and then James had to pay someone to help him. "I doubt if I can get through the quarter," he says one day in mid-December, "so I shall likely have to hire a man to do some of my accounts. I am anxious to get through by the end of the quarter, to get home the first of next month. Otherwise I might lose my holiday altogether."<sup>16</sup> Because of the extra cost, this expedient was seldom resorted to.

Compared to its present complexity, Washington in the 1850s could have an agreeable air of informality. Most places of interest were accessible on foot from the several boarding houses at which he lived, and chance meetings with his superior on the street could be a pleasant opportunity for stopping to chat.

He speaks of such an encounter while he and a friend were on their way to a free outdoor concert on an evening late in May:

"Harrison and I started out yesterday at 5 p.m. to go to the music at the President's. We were overtaken at a few steps by our Auditor, who hailed me and said he did not often see me on the Avenue [Pennsylvania Avenue]. I told him that I sometimes saw him sitting at the United States Hotel and that I was often on the Avenue; that I boarded at the corner of 4th and the Avenue at the best eating house in the city, where we had good society and sometimes a game of whist and sometimes a dance. 'Do you ever dance?' said he; I told him I had. 'Well,' said he, 'let me know when you dance again, as I would like to see it.' I promised to let him know."<sup>17</sup>

Yet for all its sociableness the boarding house had its small jealousies too, which could affect the mood of the whole establishment: "There has been no dancing for some time," James writes, "and there seems to be a general suspension of the cordiality that prevailed most of the winter."<sup>18</sup> The cause of this suspended cordiality was a private party in one of the boarder's rooms:

"Major Blake had a little oyster supper with champagne etc. some day last week, and invited a number of the boarders. The exclusion of some seemed to produce bad feeling, as it does in all villages and small neighborhoods. I attribute the supposition of our satiety [sic] to that cause. There were some people in neighboring rooms whom it was represented it had disturbed; I was of the party and heard some singing—part of it in somewhat loud tones, but not enough to cause mischief."<sup>19</sup>

Not everyone, in any case, chose to participate in wintertime parlor activities: "Some don't honor us with their company at all, and others seldom."<sup>20</sup> Several who did come to the parlor preferred to maintain a mood of taciturnity; there is reference to a senator who "sits awhile" and whom a Miss Lizzie "sometimes galvanizes into a smile."<sup>21</sup>

The variety of social strata at the boarding house was considerable. James speaks of a judge from Louisiana and his wife as "high people."<sup>22</sup> The same designation would apply to the senator. But besides these there was a clothing store clerk, and also a journeyman craftsman—a young man who "follows engraving on silver as a business . . . He and his partner make small plates of silver and German silver and cut any name through with the graver."<sup>23</sup>

Since it was to the financial advantage of the proprietress to keep her house as

full as possible, crowding was not uncommon. James speaks of the five dining room tables at Miss Davidson's being rearranged to give "more room to servants and everybody."<sup>24</sup> He goes on to provide a droll picture of himself, after the rearrangement, "at the right hand of our landlady, where I sit enveloped in coffee and teapots."<sup>25</sup> To save money he shared a bedroom with another boarder; life on the upper floors was much more Spartan than downstairs: "O! had I not a cold time this morning before breakfast in shaving with cold water in a cold room."<sup>26</sup>

Besides the open-air concerts in summertime, James took advantage of other kinds of amusements that could be enjoyed without charge. "We had a beautiful balloon ascension by Elliot yesterday evening at 6 o'clock," he writes. "I would not have missed seeing it for a good deal more than it cost me—which was nothing."<sup>25</sup> Talks at the recently built Smithsonian were another source of inexpensive recreation:

"I heard last night a very interesting lecture at the Smithsonian by Dr. Felton, the Greek professor of Cambridge College, on the subject of modern Greece. He is to give another next Wednesday upon the ruins and monuments of ancient Greece . . . I wish some of you could be here with me to enjoy them."<sup>28</sup>

The farm had its own enjoyments too, though, especially during the long winter months when little could be done in the way of outside work. The reading aloud of a Dickens novel during the winter of 1858 was an experience of considerable intensity. James is told that "the children had a great treat this week in the reading of *David Copperfield* . . . Mary read it aloud to Jinny, Lily, and Margaret. It occupied them two whole days and nights. They all say it is Dickens' greatest work."<sup>29</sup>

The magazines and newspapers of the day also furnished welcome reading matter. James sent them home regularly: *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, *The Living Age*, *Chambers Journal*, *The Ledger*, *The National Intelligencer*, and *The Union*. They were not read and then immediately discarded. Telling Mary of his plans to send copies of *The Intelligencer* to the younger James, James expresses the hope that he will "take good care of them, as there is a good deal of reading in them, some of which I should like to keep."<sup>30</sup>

Chess was much played, although mainly among the boys. "The chess mania prevails to a considerable extent in the family," Mary informs her husband. "They have learned all the moves. James and Edward play a good deal. Ned takes the lead greatly so far, and promises to be a good if not brilliant player."<sup>31</sup> But Mary also notes that both sexes could enjoy a February evening's "frolic of taffee making."<sup>32</sup>

It was visiting, however, which provided the most consistent form of entertainment. While she seldom had the leisure to pay visits herself, Mary often received them. In answer to a query of James as to needs at home, she replies: "I do not know of anything I want in particular, [but] . . . we have company so constantly that anything in the eating line is always acceptable."<sup>33</sup>

Country visitors, especially men, were not always models of neatness. Mary provides an amusing description of a neighboring widower, Mr. England, who paid a call on the eldest daughter while another, better dressed visitor was present:

“Mr. E. was, as usual, very affectionate in his manner to Mary, and *very dirty* in his person. Mr. Fairfax seemed exceedingly amused by his manner and appearance. On my observing after he left that I thought him a neat man, Mr. Fairfax said I ought not to object to the *soil of old England*. Pretty good, wasn’t it?”<sup>34</sup>

While religion in terms of regular attendance at church on Sundays did not play an important part in the family’s life, camp meetings in the summer months provided an opportunity for outings that were both religious and social. “Are you going to camp meeting?” James asks. “It is to be held on Washington Waters’ place on the Brookeville Road, about a mile this side of Brookeville in the woods near Henry Harris’.”<sup>35</sup> The social nature is clear in Mary’s linking together a camp meeting and a circus as “amusements”: “The girls have been kept from all the amusements by the illness of the boys: the Baptist grove meeting, the circus, which came off yesterday and which was well attended.”<sup>36</sup>

James’ own favorite pastime at home was fishing, and he speaks of it longingly from his Washington office at the beginning of June, 1858:

“This hot season makes me wish to be home, and I hope to be with you for a few weeks at the end of this month. I got some fishing lines and fish hooks today, so you may look out to take a tramp with me down to the purling streams and over the verdant meads in true poetical style.”<sup>37</sup>

Travelling to and from home may not have been arduous in the warm weather, but during the cold months it was an ordeal. Following a trip back to Washington by stage, James writes of “mud being nearly up to the hubs”<sup>38</sup> as they approached Georgetown; and in another letter he speaks of arriving “in a crowded stage, thirteen including the driver.”<sup>39</sup> Occasionally the trip was made on horseback, but it was none the easier for that: “I had a cold, solitary ride on Monday, and feel a little sore and not much fit for work, although I found a pretty large pile.”<sup>40</sup>

James’ dream was to have a buggy: “If I could get a buggy of my own and a pony likewise, you might see me very likely twice a week at least.”<sup>41</sup> Although he exaggerates with regard to the frequency of visits, a buggy would undoubtedly have made a great difference. But the money was never available, and at times even the stage was beyond reach: “I have not the money to travel with, only about \$2.00. I am sorry I have nothing to send you and it makes me feel mean.”<sup>42</sup>

Similarly, amusements in the capital that were not free often had to be foregone: “Tomorrow there is an oratorio at the new Catholic church of St. Aloysius, where the Creation of Hayden will be played by a large number of singers and a string orchestra. Two of our boarders will be there, but I have no dollar to spare for it. Indeed, my exchequer is pretty low.”<sup>43</sup> With a yearly salary of \$1200, there was little left after board and the cash needs of the family had been attended to. Mary herself did what she could to economize, taking the opportunity whenever possible to send her letters “per Dick,” or by friends travelling into Washington, “as this costs me nothing in the way of postage.”<sup>44</sup>

Various expedients were tried in an effort to enlarge the family’s total income. Mary was able to add a little to it through accepting occasional boarders. A German immigrant friend, Dr. Alexander Falk, suggested that she take “George, the little German boy, to board.”<sup>45</sup>

Seeking James’ advice, Mary continues:

"He pays three dollars at the end of every week, two weeks, or month, just as I may want it; and he says I could not miss what he could eat at my table. What do you think of it? I should make one hundred fifty-six dollars easier than I could make it any other way. I think I shall try him."<sup>46</sup>

For his own part, James hoped to earn extra money by raising sugar cane and producing sugar products on the farm. In the fall of 1857 he writes optimistically:

"I believe we could make 100 dollars an acre by sirup for some years at 50 cts a gallon, if we succeed on a large scale as well as we have already done . . . Who knows but we may meet with powerful aid? The Government spends considerable sums in promoting the cultivation of new agricultural products, and next to the cereals, in our latitude nothing is of greater importance than sugar, nor now more a necessary of life."<sup>47</sup>

James was encouraged by a favorable reception from Mr. Brown, the head of the Agricultural Bureau who, on being shown the home-produced sugar, molasses, and syrup, "seemed much pleased and considered it the genuine article."<sup>48</sup> But on the same day in 1859, the Commissioner of Patents, while impressed with the results too, "doubted if sugar could be made to profit here."<sup>49</sup> Since neither federal aid nor private capital ever became available, the sugar-making attempts came to an end with the Civil War.

The limited financial situation made a costly education for the older children out of the question. The younger James thought of attending the University of Virginia, but the idea had to be given up. He taught school at the Rockville Academy—within walking distance of the farm—and then turned to surveying until the outbreak of the war, when he enlisted and later became a captain in the Confederate army.<sup>50</sup>

Thomas and Edward attended the Academy and in addition were tutored at home by Dr. Falk. "Dr. Falk talks of returning to Germany," writes James in 1854. "I hope the boys will be perfect in German before he goes."<sup>51</sup> In the same letter he refers to the education of Jinny (Virginia): "What do you say to Jinny's going to school? She must learn something. Would it do to go to Rockville to learn the piano, or go to Fairhill?" But apart from music lessons, the girls received the basic elements of their education from their mother. If the quality of writing in their own letters is any criterion, it was a good education by the standards of the time.

James himself had had an excellent education. The comparative affluence of his own father, a country doctor in Montgomery County for over forty years, made it possible for him to attend Princeton for two years, and then to study law in the office of Augustus Taney, brother of Supreme Court Justice Roger Brooke Taney.

Although the tenor of life both for James in the city and Mary and the eight children on the farm was generally tranquil, there are many references to sicknesses which struck at one or another member of the family, from minor complaints to conditions that proved fatal. Boils, sometimes a sign of diabetes, were chronic with the oldest daughter: "She has a boil on the side of her mouth quite bad," Mary tells James. "She seems afraid of its leaving a scar."<sup>52</sup> James

too, writing from his office, complains that “these biles [sic] have prevented my going out at all since I left home, and I have enjoyed nothing but hard work.”<sup>53</sup>

Mary’s particular affliction was migraine headaches. She speaks of suffering with them for days at a time, unable to raise her head from the pillow. “Indeed,” she notes in one letter, “this has been the worst spell I have had for years. I have not been able to write before, and hardly feel able to write now from the effects of this last spell.”<sup>54</sup>

Of the standard medicines of the day, a few receive constant mention. For worms, another persistent family ailment, vermifuge was the usual remedy. Speaking of Jinny, Mary says with satisfaction that “one dose brought up a good many worms. I could not prevail on her to take any more until last night, which dose has not operated yet.”<sup>55</sup> Jinny’s reluctance to accept a second dose is perhaps understandable.

Blue mass, a mercury product, was regarded as a useful antidote for colds, and was often taken in conjunction with an opium-based sedative called Dover’s Powder. After informing Mary of “the worst cold I have had for a long time,” James says that he “will take some blue mass and Dover’s powder tonight and hope to be better tomorrow.”<sup>56</sup> With the opium to help, his sleep must at least have been sound.

The state of medical knowledge in the mid-nineteenth century was such that diagnosis and treatment of the more complicated illnesses were doubtful ventures at best. Unidentifiable pains were viewed as being of more or less mysterious origin. “Mary [the daughter] has been complaining of a severe pain in her breast for some time,” James is told. “I do not know what to make of it.”<sup>57</sup>

When physicians were called in, the types of diagnosis they gave were not of a kind to inspire confidence. James is informed that a Mrs. Braddock has mumps and is suffering severely because, according to the doctor, “they have fallen on her lungs.”<sup>58</sup> At his boarding house, the young silver engraver became troubled by a persistent cough and was “much reduced.”<sup>59</sup> The craftsman thought he had consumption. James urged him to see a Dr. Hall, who subsequently said that he was suffering not from consumption but from “heart disease.”<sup>60</sup>

But there were ravaging diseases which, well recognized, were all the more feared because no remedy was known—such as “the new disease called diphtheria. You may have seen something mentioned in the papers about it,” James remarks. “It attacks the throat and terminates in a few days if not checked in time.”<sup>61</sup> For scarlet fever, which was also prevalent, close confinement was thought to be helpful. James’ co-worker, Mr. Addison, “who has some children getting better of the scarlet fever, does not intend to let them leave the house for a month. He mentioned the case of a child of one of his friends who was getting well, and someone took it to an adjoining room. It was a corpse that night.”<sup>62</sup>

During the summer months, yellow fever was also a source of fear, and flight was sometimes seen as the only recourse.

“It is said in the papers that a number of persons have come to Washington to escape the yellow fever. It is prevailing at Norfolk and Portsmouth, and they say they are leaving Old Point Comfort on account of it; and it is likely it will be at most of the watering places on the rivers and sea coast. It is even rumored that there is a case on Capitol Hill.

There's no place," James ends gratefully, "like our quiet county yet."<sup>63</sup>

But the air of Montgomery County was no protection against the most feared disease, smallpox. Mary, the eldest daughter, tells her father early in 1858 that "Mrs. Adamson and two of her children were taken with the smallpox a day or two ago. The folks of Rockville seem really frightened."<sup>64</sup> Writing the next day, Thomas adds the further information that the younger of Mrs. Adamson's children "cannot possibly survive," and that "the smallpox is spreading through the county."<sup>65</sup>

All the children were vaccinated, but methods were crude. When Lily was a year old, in 1851, Mary speaks of her Uncle Jimmy's bringing "matter" for inoculating the baby; but it was decided not to make use of it because "the child from whose arm he took it had whooping cough . . . He will come up as soon as he gets a good one and attend to her, if it is not done before."<sup>66</sup>

As with most other infectious diseases, the cause of smallpox was unknown. Thomas writes to his father that as a safeguard, his brother Ned and Dick "carried out all the manure from the back yard; it was Dick's suggestion. He was afraid it would produce smallpox."<sup>67</sup> Any precautions were considered worthwhile, particularly after the death of the third son, Richard, who died at eighteen in 1855 of an unnamed illness which struck him down in August. Since sickness of one kind or another was common in the family ("It seems almost impossible to have all well at the same time," Mary complains),<sup>68</sup> there was an initial reluctance to send for James because it seemed the boy would recover. Richard himself, however, "was impressed with an idea that he would die from the first moment he was taken [sick], which notion has kept his fever up. He talked a great deal about you," Mary continues, "and wanted you to come up, that he might see you once more . . . He seems much more quiet now."<sup>69</sup>

Within a few days, however, he was dead. In her next letter to James, who had come home and returned after the burial, Mary describes herself as "stunned and stupefied . . . I miss him more each succeeding hour, yet I feel that I do *not feel* in full force my insuperable loss."<sup>70</sup> Bereavement was not new to her; two children—a previous Lily and a previous George—had died before James took his job in Washington.

Death among neighbors was of such frequent occurrence that some letters record not one but several in close succession, often in connection with childbirth. Writing a few months after Richard's death, Mary mentions that "there is a great deal of sickness around us. Young Mrs. Mullican had a baby a week ago and died on Tuesday. Mrs. Brewer's woman, the cook, died the same day. Charly Anderson's wife is probably dead by this time; she is near her confinement and has had a great many convulsions—a bright prospect for me,"<sup>71</sup> she concludes, thinking of her own approaching confinement with her youngest child.

The suddenness with which death could come was dramatic. "I went home to dinner at 3," James writes, "and heard there that Mrs. Wallace [his landlady-cousin] had gone to see Mrs. Schwartz's family upon hearing this morning of the sudden death of Mrs. Schwartz. She fell while at the breakfast table this morning."<sup>72</sup> As frequently and suddenly as death occurred, however, resignation on the part of the survivors was not achieved with any greater ease. On losing his wife in 1851, the unkempt Mr. England, of whom Mary could joke a few years



later, "fastened himself up in a room upstairs for three days without speaking to anyone or eating anything."<sup>73</sup>

When the persons involved were not well known to the family, notice of a death could be given simply as an aside to the recounting of daily concerns. Mary sandwiches the news of Tom Garrett's daughter's burial into information about bills and expenses: "I owe a blacksmith bill which I promised to pay this month, and Tom Garrett 15 dollars for hay (Mr. Garrett's daughter, Rose, will be buried at 3 o'clock tomorrow), besides buying potatoes, so you see we will not have much money for dress until next month."<sup>74</sup>

In addition to the infectious diseases which often proved fatal, there was another illness which could have equally lethal consequences over a long period—alcoholism. Among the men of the period, it was rampant. Mary mentions a local party at which the fiddlers were "too drunk to play much."<sup>75</sup> With a certain wry amusement, she tells James of receiving a visit from a neighbor, Henry Wootton, who had attended a wedding the day before. He could give little account of the reception, though, "except that the groom and almost every other gentleman were tight, particularly H. Wootton."<sup>76</sup>

In a letter from Thomas, then twenty-three, there is a description of an early version of the drunken driver; he tells his father of a harrowing midnight ride back to the farm from Washington in the buggy of an intoxicated Rockville man, Mr. Fields. In Washington Mr. Fields

"stopped at Dorsey and Ernest's store, where he took something to drink. We then went up to Tenelytown, where he drank again. We rode on quite pleasantly from there until we got to Tom Rabbit's where he drank several times. It was with greatest difficulty that I could induce him to leave Rabbit's, and when I did succeed at last, I had good cause to wish that I had not attempted to get him off. As soon as we got into the buggy, he took a tremendous pole and with both hands gave it to his horse as hard as he could. The horse, which is quite a high mettled one, ran as fast as it possibly could for about two miles. I succeeded in getting hold of the reins just in time to prevent his jumping down a bank with us, and by jumping over the wheel, I escaped from my perilous position. There was, at first, a strange excitement for me in this daredevil drive, and I enjoyed it very much, until the danger became so imminent. I walked from where I got out all the way home [about four miles] and carried my trunk with me. I will never ride with a drunkard again if I can help it."<sup>77</sup>

Drinking to excess was common among James' acquaintances in Washington too. "I called to see Frank a short time yesterday evening, and found four persons in the room with him . . . A bottle of brandy was on the table, and some of them had been drinking. Some talked as if they had, and some could not talk."<sup>78</sup>

James himself had no problems with drinking, but a wealthy young Virginian who was later to marry into the family, Charly Rozer, was decidedly alcoholic. In the late 1850s there are references to him in conjunction with phrases like "spreeing it finely"<sup>79</sup> and "as tight as he can be to walk."<sup>80</sup> When Charly visited James in June of 1859, he was so inebriated that James had to put him up for the night at the boarding house: "I found a room upstairs and left him to his repose. I found him the next morning at six. He went out and got something to drink, and breakfasted with us, and proceeded during the day to drink."<sup>81</sup>

That evening Charly paid unwelcomed attention to a widow in the boarding house parlor: "He gave the widow his card yesterday evening, beautifully written with his name, and the words, 'On a Drunk.'" Displeased, the widow offered some advice on his drinking, but "I am afraid it is thrown away upon him from his appearance in the office here in the middle of the day."<sup>82</sup> James ends by cautioning Mary to say nothing of the matter to Charly; even with his sprees, his affluent circumstances made him desirable as a son-in-law.

Early in 1861, the letters express increasing concern about the coming war between North and South, and the consequences of the loss of James' job. "I hope you will not lose your office directly," Mary tells him, "for I do not know what we would do without it."<sup>83</sup> But the question of their sympathies is never in doubt. "The boys are all for going South,"<sup>84</sup> she says later, in a letter in which she expresses her negative opinion of Lincoln: "I think from old Lincoln's speeches, he must be a very foolish old man."

By April of 1861 it appeared certain that the employees in James' office would all be required to take the loyalty oath. "I understand," he says, "that it will be submitted in the form of a proposition, and we are to subscribe our reasons for refusing if we don't sign it."<sup>85</sup> By mid-May he has a new trunk "to hold my things in case I leave,"<sup>86</sup> and on May 20th the oath is finally presented. That night he begins his letter home by saying that

"this is perhaps the last letter you may receive from me. The long-expected test oath was presented to each of us at our desks this morning and I let it pass. Some fifteen in this bureau also declined it . . . The consequences will be resignation or dismissal. It is therefore probable that you may see me at home in a few days."<sup>87</sup>

The actual dismissal, however, did not come for another two weeks. "When I got to the office this morning, I found the Treasury [Department] missive on my desk by which my services were dispensed with."<sup>88</sup> But even in the midst of the personal upheaval caused by the loss of James' job and the beginning of the war, the correspondence continues to be filled with domestic details of purchases Mary has asked him to make. In the same letter in which he announces his dismissal, he tells her: "I would like to bring the tomato plants, but doubt whether I can. You have sent down twice this week and the boys ought to have got them, which they easily could have done in Georgetown at some of the market gardens."<sup>89</sup>

Several incidents occurred that spring which emphasized the closeness and reality of the war. James tells Mary of seeing the arrival of troops in Washington, and in late May her elderly father, Colonel Minor, was arrested near Washington and temporarily detained: "Your father was at the Chain Bridge a day or two ago and some of the soldiers there asked him some questions, and he told them he was a secessionist and voted for secession; they told him he must consider himself their prisoner."<sup>90</sup>

A more sinister incident took place when the younger James was shot at near the farm. Mary was thoroughly alarmed:

"James was riding up the road from Rockville last night after dusk when a rifle ball whizzed by his head a second or two before he heard the crack of the rifle. He then came on two boys belonging to the company who were practicing. He asked what they meant by shooting in the road. They said they shot in the air, but it was not so."<sup>91</sup>

Perhaps the two youths, part of a company of Union troops, suspected that James was a Southern sympathizer.

Neighbors who were slave-owners grew apprehensive as the repercussions of the war's approach began to be felt by the slaves themselves: "About 10 or 11 last night," Mary informs James,

"I heard a firing of guns and sent down to wake James up to enquire if he could think what it meant. Will told me this morning that he heard last night that a parcel of negroes collected at Tom Rabbit's with arms, and that Tom R. came up for the company to come down and disperse them . . . I expect we shall trouble with them."<sup>92</sup>

Once James left Washington in June of 1861, the letters between him and Mary came to an end, except for a few written later that summer while she was in Virginia on a long visit to Jinny, by then married to the alcoholic Charly Rozer's more stable brother Frank (Charly himself would marry the oldest daughter), and expecting a child. Writing from Vallombrosa, James speaks of a possible position with the Confederate government. After seven years in Washington, for all his professed homesickness while there, he now found unrelieved country life dull: "It may be better perhaps to accept a subordinate place in the Confederate government, if it can be got, and which could be relinquished when occasion should require me to be here . . . I must, however, engage in some business, and cannot endure my present state of inaction."<sup>93</sup>

But nothing came of his wish for a position, and he and Mary stayed on the farm with the remaining five children (Mary, Thomas, Edward, Lily, George) while young James served in the Confederate army. Mary died soon after the end of the Civil War, in 1865; James lived on at the homestead until his death in 1881. The letters had always been kept in a brass-bound trunk, and as letters between James and the grown children passed back and forth, these were kept there also.<sup>94</sup> Impoverished by the defeat of the Confederacy, Mary and Charly Rozer moved back to the farm and were the last to live at Vallombrosa. When the house was dismantled after their death, the trunk was taken to the home of the youngest child, George Minor Anderson, who by then was a lawyer in Rockville. Its contents have been a link not only with the thoughts, feelings, and attitudes of forbearers long since dead, but with their daily comings and goings too. It can be argued that the latter are what impart to the letters their sense of continuing life. "The small things are often to me the most interesting,"<sup>95</sup> James once told Mary in a plea for more news from home, and so they are for present-day readers as well.

### *Postscript*

Although Richard and Lily died before reaching adulthood, the other six children survived into old age, remaining in the same general area. In 1868 young James married Sally Thrift<sup>96</sup> of Madison Courthouse, Virginia. They settled in Rockville, and had six children. James served as treasurer and examiner for the Montgomery County public schools. In 1885 he was elected clerk of the Montgomery County Circuit Court.

Jinny and Frank Rozer apparently moved from Virginia to Washington. Their daughter, "Dudee," married a Mr. Adams from Brooklyn. Dudee became the mother of the poet, Leonie Adams.

Thomas became a lawyer. After entering into partnership with William Veirs Bouic in 1862, he practiced in Rockville until his death in 1900. His two marriages, to Martha Wooton and Ella Darne, were childless.

Edward studied medicine at the University of Maryland in Baltimore, and subsequently set up practice in Rockville across the street from the house built by Thomas. (More funds seem to have been available for the education of the younger sons, probably through the financial help of the two oldest, who were by then established in professions.) He married Alice Lawn Thompson, a widow from Washington, D.C. Their son, Lawn Thompson, also became a physician and practiced in Washington.

The youngest child, George—or Minor, as he is referred to in the letters—attended St. Johns College in Annapolis and then West Point, from which he was graduated in 1882. Deciding against a career in the Army, he did surveying work on the Mississippi until a severe illness from typhoid fever led him to give up surveying for law. He studied at the National Law School in Washington and practiced in Rockville. In 1892 he was elected to the Maryland House of Delegates, where he served one term. Later he took a position as an attorney with the Justice Department in Washington, while continuing to make his home in Rockville. Around the turn of the century his older brothers and sisters deeded the 261 acre farm to him, although Mary continued to live there until her death in 1910.

George married Julia Prout Vinson, daughter of Circuit Court Judge John T. Vinson of Rockville. They had one child, Thomas Minor Anderson, who himself became a judge on the Montgomery County Circuit Court and later a judge of the Court of Special Appeals in Annapolis. Judge Anderson, now retired, still lives in Rockville in the house built by his uncle Thomas. The fourteen-room Vallombrosa homestead was torn down in the 1930s, but the farm remained in the family until 1960.

#### REFERENCES

James dated his letters with month, day and year, but in her own letters Mary often indicated only the day of the week, if that. In the following references, consequently, many of hers have been assigned approximate dates based on context.

1. James to Mary, November 16, 1859
2. Mary to James, November 23, 1859
3. James to Mary, May 26, 1859
4. Mary (daughter) to James, October 17, 1858
5. Mary to James, ca. 1855
6. *Ibid.*, ca. 1857
7. *Ibid.*, May 7, 1859
8. *Ibid.*, June 8, 1859
9. *Ibid.*, March 3, ca. 1860
10. *Ibid.*
11. James to Mary, April 30, 1860
12. Mary to James, February 5, ca. 1860
13. James to Mary, July 26, 1858
14. *Ibid.*, January 3, 1858
15. *Ibid.*, September 4, 1860
16. *Ibid.*, December 14, 1857
17. *Ibid.*, May 26, 1859

18. *Ibid.*, February 12, 1861
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*, November 23, 1860
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*, February 29, 1860
23. *Ibid.*, November 23, 1860
24. *Ibid.*, January 1, 1861
25. *Ibid.*
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*, May 19, 1854
28. *Ibid.*, January 30, 1858
29. Mary to James, February 12, 1858
30. James to Mary, February 3, 1851. This letter was written while James was delegate from Montgomery County to the Constitutional Convention in Annapolis.
31. Mary to James, October 31, ca. 1860
32. *Ibid.*, February 20, ca. 1861
33. *Ibid.*, March 28, ca. 1858
34. *Ibid.*, August 17, 1857
35. James to Mary, August 12, 1857
36. Mary to James, August 29, 1855
37. James to Mary, June 10, 1858
38. *Ibid.*, January 20, 1860
39. *Ibid.*, September 15, 1858
40. *Ibid.*, November 17, 1858
41. *Ibid.*, August 7, 1854
42. *Ibid.*, November 15, 1860
43. *Ibid.*, June 16, 1859
44. Mary to James, ca. spring, 1860
45. *Ibid.*, August 29, 1855
46. *Ibid.*
47. James to Mary, October 22, 1857. James wrote an article about his experiments with sugar-making for *The National Intelligencer* of October 24, 1857, p. 1.
48. *Ibid.*, October 20, 1859
49. *Ibid.*
50. He was captain of Company D, 35th Virginia cavalry. James senior held the rank of colonel in the Maryland state militia; writing to him in Washington, Mary ordinarily addresses her letters to him as Col. James W. Anderson.
51. James to Mary, May 1, 1854
52. Mary to James, August, 1850
53. James to Mary, \_\_\_\_\_ 21, 1857
54. Mary to James, ca. spring, 1860
55. *Ibid.*, January 22, 1856
56. James to Mary, November 9, 1857
57. Mary to James, December 20, 1860
58. *Ibid.*, spring, 1858
59. James to Mary, November 23, 1860
60. *Ibid.*
61. James to Mary, April 30, 1860
62. *Ibid.*, December 14, 1857
63. *Ibid.*, August 14, 1855
64. Mary (daughter) to James, January 30, 1858
65. Thomas to James, January 31, 1858
66. Mary to James, February 12, 1851
67. Thomas to James, January 3, 1858
68. Mary to James, February 12, ca. 1858
69. Mary to James, August 25, 1855
70. *Ibid.*, September 9, 1855
71. *Ibid.*, January 22, 1856
72. James to Mary, November 12, 1856
73. Mary to James, January 11, 1851
74. *Ibid.*, ca. 1857
75. *Ibid.*, December 31, ca. 1858
76. *Ibid.*, October 31, ca. 1860

77. Thomas to James, March 2, 1858
78. James to Mary, September 20, 1854
79. Mary to James, August 24, ca. 1858. The Rozers owned a plantation near Gunston Hall where they raised tobacco.
80. *Ibid.*, June 16, 1859
81. James to Mary, June 16, 1859
82. *Ibid.*
83. Mary to James, February 14, 1861
84. *Ibid.*, February 23, 1861
85. James to Mary, April 24, 1861
86. *Ibid.*, May 14, 1861
87. *Ibid.*, May 20, 1861
88. *Ibid.*, June 1, 1861
89. *Ibid.*
90. *Ibid.*, May 29, 1861
91. Mary to James, spring, 1861
92. *Ibid.*, March 6, ca. 1861
93. James to Mary, July 15, 1861
94. The letters and other family papers were kept with some deliberateness. While James was delegate to the Constitutional Convention, he wrote to Jinny—then in her mid-teens—playfully but with a note of seriousness: “You are the curator . . . and I shall expect you carefully to preserve all our correspondence” (April 23, 1851). To his wife he had written a few months earlier: “I received a ticket Wednesday to an evening party at the Governor’s, where I believe all the members of the Convention are to attend . . . I enclose you my card of invitation, to be put away with all other important documents, and I expect to have quite a collection” (January 25, 1851.)
95. James to Mary, November 12, 1856
96. The Thrifts and the Minors were related.

# Dr. Peregrine Wroth (1786-1879) and Chemistry at Washington College 1846-1854

JOSEPH H. MCLAIN

**D**R. PEREGRINE WROTH, THE SON OF KINVIN AND PRISCILLA BLACKISTON Wroth (nee Worrall), was born in Kent County on April 7, 1786 and like so many of his contemporaries was educated privately until he entered the Academy of Washington College in 1794. He was awarded his baccalaureate in 1803 and studied medicine at the University of Pennsylvania where he earned his M.D. in 1807, at which time he became the partner of Dr. Morgan Browne (Washington College 1788) and practiced his profession in Chestertown until February 1, 1857, a period of almost fifty years.

Dr. Wroth was a member of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland and was once its President. He was also an honorary member of the Philadelphia Medical Society and frequently cites in his prolific writings events of scientific discovery and advancement that were discussed at their meetings.

The Wroth family in America began with James Wroth who emigrated from England in 1660. Peregrine Wroth was of the fifth generation after James, and at the age of ninety-one he wrote a letter to Horace Wemyss Smith, noting with pride that he was baptized when only a few days old by Dr. William Smith, the first principal and founder of Washington College. This fact seems to have inspired an interest in the College which continued unabated through his long life.

During the War of 1812 he offered his services to the nation and was a surgeon's mate in the 8th Regimental Cavalry of Kent and Cecil Counties. In 1842 he wrote and published a book of 217 pages entitled "Clinical Aphorisms: a contribution toward the history and treatment of the endemic bilious fever of the Eastern shore of Maryland: designed for the use of the young practitioner." This work is commonly called "Wroth on Bilious Fever."

Dr. Wroth served as a member of the Visitors and Governors of Washington College for more than thirty years and at the death of Judge Ezekiel Foreman Chambers in 1867 succeeded him as President of that body. In 1868 he moved to Baltimore where he died in 1879 in his 94th year. He is buried in the family cemetery about 2-1/2 miles from Chestertown.

Much more of a personal nature could be said about Dr. Wroth which would shed some light on the character and personality of this truly remarkable son of the Eastern Shore. Two examples should suffice. He was a close friend and valued

Dr. McLain, a chemist, is President of Washington College.

correspondent to Mary C. Lee (Mrs. General Robert E. Lee). His letters and her replies could very well be the subject of a separate and fascinating study, but are beyond the scope of this work. A second example comes from a letter to a grandson from which I paraphrase 'As you know, I've been married four times and had I known I was going to live so long after losing the fourth, I would have married again.'

All of the above although seriously incomplete and regrettably abbreviated serves as an introduction to the main thrust of this article. Dr. Wroth was appointed Professor of Chemistry at Washington in 1846 and through the interest and friendship of Mrs. John George I was presented with his notebook containing the introductory lecture in chemistry given at Washington College January 10, 1846. I thanked my good friend and fellow student and probably said something quite jejune such as 'very interesting' and 'I will be sure to put it with our other treasured Washingtoniana in the Miller Library archives.' I did not realize its importance and genius until I started to read it and my desire to share its exceptional contents has led to this writing. Without exaggeration I must have mirrored the feelings of John Keats when he first looked into Chapman's Homer.

First, however, it must be understood that chemistry as such is a very young science. Sir William Tilden in his book on famous chemists states, "It is well to remember that at this time (ca. 1760) and for long afterwards Chemistry, as a subject of study in the universities, was regarded merely as subordinate to medicine, and served to supply materials which were used as remedies in the treatment of disease." The first departure from this subordination was when Dr. Joseph Black who was originally appointed professor of anatomy and lecturer on chemistry at the University of Glasgow in 1756 moved to Edinburgh. In 1777 Black published "Experiments upon Magnesia Alba, Quick Lime and other Alkaline Substances." On that occasion he titled himself, Joseph Black M.D., Professor of Chymistry, University of Edinburgh and the first real department of chemistry was founded.

In order to provide a time perspective for Dr. Wroth's lecture a calendar of important events in chemistry and the chemists responsible is given below:

#### Chemistry Calendar

Year	Event	Personage
1777	Discovery of manganese Chemistry Department at University of Edinburgh	Gahn Joseph Black
1784	Discovery of tungsten	d'Elhujars
1789	Discovery of molybdenum Thomas Charles Hope succeeded Joseph Black at Edinburgh and was the first to teach Lavoisier's antiphlogiston theory.	Hjelm
1794	Joseph Priestley emigrated to Northumberland, Pa.	
1798	Discovery of tellurium	von Richenstein
1803-04	Discovery of rhodium, palladium, osmium and iridium Peregrine Wroth graduated from Washington College Justus von Liebig born.	Wollaston
1808	Announcement of Atomic Theory	John Dalton
1810-1850	Invention of the electric furnace Mercury cathode Rock blasting apparatus (plunger type) Blow pipe	Robert Hare of Philadelphia
1811	Robert Bunsen born	



1813	Benjamin Rush, Professor of Medicine and Chemistry, University of Pennsylvania (native of Cecil County, Md.) died.	
1827	Atomic Theory, Its Usefulness and Application,	J. Dalton
1828	Making urea without kidneys or any animal	F. Wöhler
1834	Dmitri Mendeléeff born	
1840	Proof that animal heat and energy are produced by combustion of food in the body	J. von Liebig
1846	Ira Remsen, 1st professor of chemistry at The Johns Hopkins University was born.	
1852	Henry Moissan born who later isolated the elements fluorine, uranium, tungsten and vanadium in pure state.	
1858	Cannizarro publishes, "Sketch of a Course of Chemical Philosophy" which popularized, explained and won acceptance for Avogadro's hypothesis	
1859	Pierre Curie born.	
1868	Professor Charles W. Eliot at Harvard—"The existence of atoms is itself an hypothesis and not a probable one."	
1871	Address by Alexander Williamson to the London Chemical Society seeking to convince chemists of the "physical reality of atoms."	
1876	The Johns Hopkins University founded in Baltimore.	
1897	Discovery of electrons	Joseph John Thomson
1899	Isolation of radium	Marie S. Curie
1912	Law of Atomic Numbers	Henry Moseley
1919	Covalent bonding theory—the octet rule	Irving Langmuir Gilbert N. Lewis

It is hoped that by providing the above time scale, it will be seen what a remarkable man Peregrine Wroth was and I will cite portions of his introductory lecture.

In discussing Phlogiston he said, "Stahl asserted that fancied something called phlogiston. This doctrine, so groundless in fact, held long and tyrannical sway over the minds of succeeding chemists." As a matter of fact Joseph Priestley, whom Wroth might have known in Philadelphia scientific circles, went to his grave in 1804 believing strongly in Phlogiston.

He had this to say about John Dalton—"The splendid experiments of Dalton, illustrating his discovery of *Ultimate Atoms* and his theory of *Definite Proportions* have fixed Chemistry on an immutable basis and have rendered it one of the most useful and interesting of the Sciences. (The italics are his.) This was at Washington College in 1846! Dr. Charles Eliot at Harvard, some twenty-two years later was describing it to his students as "only an hypothesis and not a probable one."

Dr. Wroth had this to say about a very recent theory of Justus von Liebig.

The various tissues of the animal body, with all our organs and their secretions have been analyzed by Professor Liebig and others. Processes heretofore supposed to depend upon peculiarity of organization—under the influence of the vital principle, such, for instance as digestion etc. are now proved to be connected with play of Chemical Affinity. An undoubted theory of animal heat—an inquiry which taxed the ingenuity and baffled the skill of Crawford, Haller, Richerand and other physiologists has been established—and the animal machine may now be considered as a natural laboratory in which the most intricate and interesting operations are performed and exhibited.

To me, the most striking part of the lecture was his application of chemistry to

agriculture in which he points out the efficacy of animal fertilizers, rain water and the importance of the chemical make-up of soils.\* I know of no better way than to quote most of it at some length.

The connection between Chemistry and Agriculture is more intimate than was formerly supposed. That 'experience is better than science' is a maxim which is only partially true. It may be readily concluded that the mere chemist, totally unused to the practical details of Agriculture would fall short of that success in management of a farm which his pride of learning would lead him to anticipate. But how much more rapid would be the improvement of our farm land if practical farmers were also practical chemists?—if he who knew the best mode of turning up the soil and incorporating with it fertilizing materials could also analyse this soil and thus ascertain its constituents? It is a well known fact that different species of grain delight in soils widely different in earthy ingredients. For example—wheat flourishes in a soil containing a certain quantity of an [?]illaceous and calcereous matter. Indian corn delights in that which abounds in Silix and barley will grow well in places where shale and granite predominate. Chemistry teaches the farmers to naturalize the various grains in all these diversities of soil by directing him to that manure which will supply the defective ingredient. Nor do the achievements of chemical science stop here. The farmer, by its aid, not only analyses his soils but their vegetable productions. He discovers that four bodies—oxygen, nitrogen, carbon and hydrogen constitute 99/100ths of all the productions of the vegetable kingdom. By the use of a few chemical tests he ascertains the existence of excess or deficiency of these ingredients in the soil he cultivates by his various combinations applies the remedy.

The great differences in the effect produced by showers of rain and the irrigation of the land by the water of springs and wells has been observed by all who are in the habit of thinking. Chemistry alone reveals the secret of this difference. The ultimate constituents of all organized bodies (as has been remarked before) whether of the animal or vegetable kingdom are carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen and oxygen. When the vital principle ceases to act in all bodies the consequence is their decomposition. Their component parts separate and form new combinations. The carbon unites with a portion of the oxygen and forms carbonic acid. Water is produced by the union of another portion of the oxygen with the hydrogen, and a portion of the hydrogen seizes the nitrogen and ammonia is the product of their union. In consequence of the extreme levity of this gas it diffuses itself around the decomposing body and rises in the air to the higher regions of the atmosphere—is absorbed by the aqueous vapours and descends with them to the earth in the form of rain. Now when we remember the immense sources whence ammonia is derived—viz the putrefaction of all organized bodies and animal excretions, we shall not be surprized at the fact that the atmosphere is a grand reservoir of ammoniacal gas and shall admire the wisdom and goodness of providence of carrying off these offensive gases beyond the cognizance of our senses and returning them to the earth in fertilizing showers. Thus these products of decomposition are again united to living bodies and contribute to their growth and maturation.

The spectacle exhibited to the contemplation of the chemical philosopher (the mere farmer knows nothing of these things) by the destruction and reproduction of animal and vegetable life is sublime! The decay of vegetable substances—the putrefaction of animal bodies—the oxidation (rusting) of metals and the vital process of respiration consume such vast quantities of oxygen that the purity of the air would be destroyed unless there existed a source from which this prodigious waste could be

\* His discussion is very close to emphasizing the importance of trace elements that we now know to be all-important.

repaired. That its purity is *not* affected is a fact fully established by accurate experiments. De Saussure has proved that the air of woods and plains—of marshes and mountains and even of a jar found in a closed subterranean apartment at Pompei consists of the same ingredients and in the same proportions. There must be then a source of supply and this has been ascertained to exist in a vital process of the vegetable kingdom. Dr. Priestley has proved by the most satisfactory experiments—and these experiments have been repeated and confirmed by Ingenhouz and others, that the leaves of trees and the blades of grass absorb carbon from the carbonic acid which is known to exist in the atmosphere and the oxygen of the acid is thus set at liberty. This interesting experiment will be exhibited to you in a future lecture.

Thus we see—and seeing we admire the beautiful order and harmony which prevail in the works of Creation. The destruction of one thing leads to the reproduction, the life and health of another—and by a law established by the Creator, alternate life and death, restoration and decay will succeed and contribute to each other to the end of time!

Much more might be said concerning the intimate connection between chemistry and agriculture. One or two important points must not be omitted. The grain of all the (Casalia) is rich in the earth phosphates and carbonates. Hence it follows that a long succession of crops must exhaust the most fertile soil. Chemistry has taught the Farmer that the best possible manure to regenerate such exhausted soils are bone dust and ashes—the first a phosphate of lime, the latter a carbonate of potash. The external appearance of all the varieties of wheat produced in different countries and on different soils would leave no doubt in the mind of a common observer that all the varieties possessed the same proportion of ingredients but nothing is further from the truth. Proust, Vogel, Davy and Boussingault have proved that French wheat contains 12 per cent of gluten; Bavarian wheat 24 per cent, Sicilian wheat 21 per cent and wheat from Barbary 19 per cent. These great differences cannot arise altogether from the varied modes of culture. It is an established fact that the application of animal manures not only increases the quantity of the grain, but the proportion of gluten in the grain; and the principal ingredient in the gluten is nitrogen—which exists abundantly in animal manures. Now *that* grain which contains the most gluten is the most nutritious—and it is worthy of the attention of consumers that one barrel of flour from wheat manured by guano, or the animal manures contains nearly as large amount of nutritious matter as two barrels from wheat not manured at all or only with the vegetable manures in common use.

It can be seen from the above that Peregrine Wroth was not only remarkable for his analytical ability but also for the scope of its applications. Here was a man and a teacher whose formal education stopped in 1803 but whose active mind continued to keep him in the forefront of chemical thought. All this in a day when communications were difficult and delayed. There was no American Chemical Society with its manifold publications to spread the word.

How did he keep informed? How did he know within a year or so that Justus von Liebig had proven the role of food and its digestion in the metabolism of animals? The key to Peregrine Wroth and indeed to any good teacher and chemist can be found in his discourse on chemistry and agriculture. He said, and I quote again, “The great differences in the effect produced by showers of rain and the irrigation of the land by the waters of springs and wells has been observed by *all who are in the habit of thinking.*”

I hope I have been able to communicate my feeling of awe and pride in this remarkable physician, teacher and scientist who so obviously was in the habit of thinking.

# A Bibliography of Articles, Books, and Dissertations on Maryland History, 1979

RICHARD J. COX

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Stormy Patriot: The Life of Samuel Chase.* By James Haw, Francis F. Beirne, Rosamond R. Beirne, and R. Samuel Jett. (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1980.)

How long we have waited for a full biography of Samuel Chase, that enigmatic, colorful, and in many ways most interesting of Maryland's signers of the Declaration of Independence! That Samuel Chase was a seminal figure in the early political history of the State of Maryland and of the nation cannot be disputed; that the paucity of personal papers concerning him and the apparent aberrations in thought and action that characterized his life would make a balanced and fair biography difficult, if not impossible to write, was acknowledged by all who lamented its lack but declined the opportunity to undertake the task. The biographer of Chase had to be someone with uncommon abilities, a person who had an intimate understanding of the political and social history of the time, a wide familiarity with Chase's contemporaries, and a sensitivity to the effects human emotion can have on causing what might seem like irrational convolutions in human behavior.

How disappointing, then, at first glance to see a multi-authored biography of Chase, especially when it is learned from the Preface that the manuscript upon which the book is based was begun by two persons now deceased and has since been passed about like an orphaned child with the accretions added by each succeeding guardian contributing to the final pages. What a happy occasion it is for a reviewer, given such a negative initial reaction, to find that despite the difficulties posed by the subject, compounded by the obstacles to coherent, readable prose presented by co-authorship, that this is a very good book. For the student of Maryland history, *Stormy Patriot* must be viewed as something of a landmark event: Samuel Chase is at last subjected to the scrutiny of a full biography, and he is treated extremely well.

*Stormy Patriot* has much to offer both the scholar and the layman. Neither profoundly (read ponderously) scholarly nor flippantly popular, it is written in an engaging, and for the most part highly polished, style. The authors claim at the outset that their goal is to describe, rather than judge, Chase, but the character that emerges is, despite his overabundance of human foibles, likeable and understandable. Close students of Chase will not find in these pages a resolution of the festering dispute over his birthplace, and the hint of illegitimacy concerning Chase's birth is ignored altogether. Family historians might wish for more detail on Chase's ancestry and progeny, and those interested in the creation of personal fortunes, a pursuit in which Chase constantly, but unsuccessfully, engaged, will be disappointed with the brief and incomplete discussion of Chase's financial speculations and his frequent appearances in court on his own behalf over business dealings. Ample documentation in notes and a full bibliography provide guidance for those who wish to pursue further specific aspects of Chase's life and career, however, and what remains is a balanced picture, and a very *good* story, in which the authors refuse to judge a man so easily judged and concentrate instead on portraying him as judiciously as possible.

Perhaps the most engaging characteristic of this book is its balance and its consistent, readable prose. That this can be said is probably due to, rather than despite of, the co-authorship of the volume. The chapters concerning Chase's early career benefit from Haw's expertise in the field of Maryland politics before and during the Revolutionary period. Chase's tenure on the federal bench, culminating in his impeachment, was a natural subject for Jett, a Luther Martin scholar and lawyer. The Beirnes' broad experience in the prose depiction of early Maryland and its events and people provided a viable



superstructure for revision and augmentation by the other two subject experts. The result is eminently satisfying, and although the reader can still see merit in Alexander Contee Hanson's characterization of Chase as a "strange inconsistent man," it is likely that even old "bacon face" himself would have been pleased with the result.

*Maryland Hall of Records*

GREGORY A. STIVERSON

*The Eastern Shore of Maryland: An Annotated Bibliography.* Edited by the Enoch Pratt Free Library (Queenstown, Maryland: The Queen Anne Press, 1980. Pp. 233. \$29.95).

The Enoch Pratt Free Library and the Queen Anne Press of Wye Institute can be proud of this profusely illustrated and annotated bibliography of the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Editors Morgan Pritchett and Susan Woodcock have made an excellent contribution to the field of Maryland bibliography. With over 1200 entries divided into nine categories, the bibliography offers the researcher and general reader interested in the Eastern Shore a fine overview of the history of and works relating to the Eastern Shore. Each of the major headings (Eastern Shore Panorama, Geographical Setting, Economic and Social Structure, Historical Issues, Genealogy, Personalities, Cultural Life, Religion, and Imaginative Literature) is introduced by a brief historical essay followed by the listings of books, monographs, and official state publications. Library locations are also included for each entry. That the bibliography is restricted mainly to books is, however, a major drawback. By excluding dissertations and periodical articles, the bibliography makes little mention of some of the major research that has been carried out on the region. Although the editors did not attempt an exhaustive bibliography, I find the omission of articles from the *Maryland Historical Magazine* disconcerting. The *Maryland Historical Magazine* has published an abundance of articles on both the history and genealogy of the Eastern Shore, and if limitations of time and space prevented the editors from systematically checking the periodical for relevant material, they should have mentioned the magazine more prominently as a major research resource for the area.

The annotations are mainly descriptive and not critical and some of the annotated entries are inconsistent with the purpose of the book. The editors claim that only works treating the Eastern Shore are included and those written by local authors on matters extraneous to the Shore are not listed. I am bewildered then by the ten entries on Anna Ella Carroll which state "The Eastern Shore is not the subject of this work. This item is included because of its historical importance." The inclusion of some of Luther Martin's writings is a similar case in point. I am sure that if historical importance is a criterion, then the editors could have tripled the number of entries!

My criticisms are dwarfed, however, by the importance of this book. The editors have done a fine job within their defined limits and have offered the public a vast guide to materials that are readily accessible to the public at area libraries. The appearance of a bibliography concentrating on this important Maryland region will stimulate further research and, it is hoped, will eventually lead to a comprehensive bibliography not only of the Eastern Shore but of other Maryland regions. Perhaps most important, the book is one of the rare bibliographies that the non-specialist can pick up and enjoyably read or browse through. This quality will surely generate a greater interest in Maryland history, and for this alone the bibliography is a great success. The book is handsomely printed and illustrated with excellent photographs, maps, and drawings. The Queen Anne Press should be congratulated on its first venture into the publishing business.

*Maryland Historical Society*

LARRY E. SULLIVAN

*Geographical Perspectives on Maryland's Past*. Edited by Robert D. Mitchell and Edward K. Muller. (Occasional Paper No. 4 of *Occasional Papers in Geography*.) (College Park: Department of Geography, University of Maryland, 1979. Pp. x, 187. \$6.50, paper.)

This fascinating, timely, and well executed series of eight essays fills in important chinks in our knowledge of Maryland's history. The format of the volume is well-conceived: following a foreword by Edward Papenfuse, Maryland State Archivist, the first essay surveys various interpretations of Maryland's past and sets the stage for the subsequent seven essays. The seven that follow are well written explorations of original sources of Maryland's history, and we learn several new things. Moreover, the fact that these seven essays are the products of students in the Geography Department testifies to the excellence of that faculty.

Robert Mitchell and Edward Muller's essay that surveys our current knowledge about Maryland's historical geography should be on everyone's reading list. It outlines the changing configurations of Maryland's development by historical periods. I know of no finer encapsulation of our state's material development over the course of three centuries, nor one that is so clearly and scholarly written.

Janet Gritzner's essay on place names on the Eastern Shore follows. Her concern with the perception of landscape through the medium of language fixes people with a place in unusual ways. Basically, she finds that what later evolved as place-names originated as descriptions of geographic places by seventeenth-century settlers.

Basel Brune next looks at the changing spatial structure of tobacco marketing in the Patuxent River basin. Superior in quality to other Western and Eastern Shore tobacco, the continued importance of the Patuxent tobacco region down to our own time has been remarkable. Brune focuses on its early development and how it was gradually absorbed into the Baltimore market over the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. From the Patuxent River basin we veer across the Western Shore to western Maryland during the 1720s. Here, Frank Porter examines the development of that portion of Maryland between the fall line in the east and the Catoctin Mountains in the west. He stops in 1732 when Lord Baltimore proclaimed western Maryland open for settlement. Porter concludes that the proclamation was inopportune because Maryland's environmental and physical factors coincided with the political interplay between Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania to thwart westward expansion.

We next encounter Bayly Marks' profile of emigrants from St. Mary's County to Kentucky from 1790 to 1810. She concludes that the emigrants tended to be landless or have insufficient land for competing in St. Mary's tobacco economy. They also tended to be non-slaveholders or hold less than average. And they tended to have little capital. In short, the emigrants were marginal members of St. Mary's social economy.

Sallie Ives then calls our attention to the black community in Annapolis from 1870 to 1885. Her focus is upon the development of a separate black residential pattern against the changing social, political, and economic conditions of the period. Essentially, she finds that increasing social and spatial segregation forced blacks to act collectively—i.e., to develop black institutions, and that these institutions functioned with various success. The Annapolis story, she suggests, might typify a pattern found in other small, slowly growing Southern towns.

A pioneering essay on home mortgage financing in Baltimore from the Civil War to World War I follows. In this provocative essay, Martha Vill focuses upon building and loan associations and how immigrants acquired real property. Concentrating on a fifty-block area of East Baltimore where many German immigrants lived, Vill finds that the sources of mortgage money for immigrants and others of modest means were highly fragmented among a large number of small lenders. The building associations were the single-most important small lender, and their lending was closely tied to the neighborhood around

them. Unfortunately for us, Vill's conclusions are tentative; but we hope she will continue her line of inquiry, for we know very little about the men who literally built Baltimore.

The last essay is a fine study of residential stability among urban workers in the Hampden-Woodbury district of Baltimore from 1880 to 1930. Its author, D. Randall Beirne, Chairman of the Sociology Department at the University of Baltimore, takes the unusual tack of explaining worker persistence rather than their movement; and we learn several new things from it. The main reasons for their persistence were three: the close proximity between residence and place of employment; employee fringe benefits from employer paternalism; and the evolution of community attitudes and traditions from linkages between specific industries and the neighborhood.

Everyone should profit from reading this fine collection of essays about various aspects of Maryland's past.

*University of Maryland Baltimore County*

GARY L. BROWNE

*Community Leadership in Maryland, 1790-1840: A Comparative Analysis of Power in Society.* By Whitman H. Ridgway. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1979. Pp. xxi, 414. \$19.50.)

Ridgway's analysis of *Community Leadership* focuses on the political leaders in Baltimore City and Frederick, Talbot, and St. Mary's counties. Taken together these communities reflect the diversity and complexity of the political experience in Maryland. Sensitive to geographic considerations and demographic trends, Ridgway compares the first and second party systems in the dynamic and commercial Baltimore, the traditional and homogeneous rural St. Mary's and Talbot counties, and the more ethnically and religiously diverse rural Frederick county.

Appropriately insisting on the need for an "explicit research design" (p. 209) in a general attempt to call attention to historians' persistent neglect of a systematic methodology, Ridgway employs Robert A. Dahl's decisional method in order to understand who governed in these four Maryland communities between 1790 and 1840. Aware of certain limitations in Dahl's model, Ridgway devises a scoring technique in order to gauge levels of leadership participation in partisan activities as well as uses the concept of strategic elites in order to appreciate more fully the parameters of power within a community. And, because his is a study of elites, decisional, propertied, positional, and commercial, he duly notes in one of the appendixes the problems inherent in collective biography.

Yet, despite his interest in careful research design and his intention to "ask new questions about old problems" (p. 209), Ridgway leaves definitions of such terms as "homogeneous community" muddled and merely revives the old issue of pluralism *v.* elitism in the first and second party systems. Moreover, this is particularly unfortunate for his study could have been a necessary corrective to the "new political" emphasis on voting behavior, which has served, according to Richard Latner and Peter Levine, to divert attention from the relationship between political elites and the electorate.

Ridgway has, however, amassed considerable data on elite groups in the four communities and does provide excellent descriptions of the various oligarchies. Using decisions that involved political recruitment, internal improvements, and state and federal patronage, Ridgway convincingly demonstrates the persistence of traditional oligarchic control in St. Mary's and Talbot counties and successfully explains why, especially in St. Mary's, the commercial elite failed to challenge the hegemony of the county's traditional decisional oligarchy. Paths to power in these counties remained clear and predictable, as wealth and status combined to insure a place among the decision makers. Ridgway also notes that by the second party era oligarchic control declined in the more heterogeneous communities like Baltimore and Frederick, where ethnic and economic diversity compelled traditional

elites to share their community power. Yet Ridgway's own evidence suggests that the homogeneous societies were not as closed nor the heterogeneous as open as he claims.

Ridgway's division between open and closed communities represents, in part, an attempt to vindicate the pluralist model and demonstrate that by 1840 "American political society was democratic, egalitarian, and pluralistic" (p. 193). But using Ridgway's own definition of democracy, even the "modernizing" Baltimore of the 1830's fails to conform, for, as Ridgway notes, the traditional "oligarchy provided an important continuing portion of community leadership in Baltimore" (p. 123). Furthermore, Ridgway's assertion that continued elite domination in the homogeneous communities does not contradict the tenets of pluralism but merely reflects the absence of competition and the prevalence of tradition obscures more than it explains; we are left with an unclear picture of society and its members. According to Ridgway, for example, during the Revolution the lower groups in society, disturbed by the maldistribution of wealth, unsuccessfully challenged the traditional elite. Thereafter, Ridgway argues, the "local society" (never defined) was "sufficiently unified" (never explained) to allow the maintenance of oligarchic control "despite the continued unequal distribution of property and wealth" (p. 22). Obviously a more useful term than "homogeneous community" could be applied to these rural areas. At the very least and despite his conclusion to the contrary, he never demonstrates the existence of egalitarianism.

Underlying his entire pluralistic perspective is a disturbing ambiguity concerning the role of the voters in the transition from tight oligarchic control to a more open, shared basis of community power. Ridgway declares that the tension between the democratic urges of the lower classes and the efforts of the elite to frustrate them characterized politics from the Revolution through the second-party era. But he also argues that all leaders, regardless of party, were forced to "treat" the public and perfect organizational devices in order to combat "voter indifference" and awaken the "somnolent mass of society" (p. 47). In Baltimore, for example, Ridgway simultaneously argues that political leaders had to contend with the problem of voter apathy and that they proved incapable of "resisting the democratic impulse that permeated the first and second party eras" (p. 40). Finally, the erosion of oligarchic control had less to do with a popular challenge than with mobility, mortality and infecundity among the elites themselves. Analysis of voting behavior is seriously needed to understand the various dimensions of community leadership—"how leaders, organizations, and voters interacted" (p. 77).

Ridgway's sophisticated methodology deserves a more sophisticated ideological framework. Rather than bend or twist his data to fit the pluralism of Dahl, he should attempt to construct a more appropriate political model.

*Dickinson College*

JO ANN E. ARGERSINGER

*Talbot's Hidden Heritage: Catalog of the Exhibition, 1980.* By Norman Harrington. (Easton, MD: The Historical Society of Talbot County, 1980. 57 pp. Illustrations. \$5.00, paper.)

The seventeenth-century tobacco economy of Maryland's Talbot County gave rise to a landed planter class whose wealth was based upon the accumulation of land and labor, and perpetuated through marriage and inheritance. Though the economy later became diversified, economic mobility, social position and political influence were increasingly consolidated in native-born, inter-related families. This insularity was also geographically enforced: many of the larger estates had been built along the waterways of the Eastern Shore, and as systems of transportation changed from water- to land-orientation, those homes were removed from passing view. An exhibit and the catalog here under review were designed by the Talbot County Historical Society to reacquaint or, in some cases, to

introduce us to a "hidden heritage" of seventeenth- through nineteenth-century architecture and related artifacts from Talbot County.

Broken into three sections, the catalog illustrates homes which remain in their ancestral families (some now for over two centuries), some which have been demolished, and a final group which have undergone restoration in the hands of new owners, for a total of fifteen in all. The first group is comprised of Wye House, Gross' Coate, Myrtle Grove, the Fountain House, Wade's Point and Old Bloomfield, ancestral and present-day homes of members of the Lloyd, Tilghman, Goldsborough and other well-known Maryland families. Happily, new owners have restored Crooked Intention, Troth's Fortune, Fairview, Otwell and Rich Neck Manor to their former grandeur, but only photographs remain of Crosiadore, The Villa and the Rev. Thomas Bacon's Charity Working School. A rambling, anecdotal text describes each of the houses, placing them in proper architectural and biographical context.

A variety of architectural styles and periods are represented, including two vernacular houses, and yet a narrowness of focus persists: the "stars" of the exhibit are the homes of families we already know a great deal about. Where are the houses and artifacts associated with the lives of the not-so-well-known slaves, laborers, servants and small proprietors who were numerically (if not socially) superior among Talbot County's population? What might they teach us about an even more hidden heritage?

The catalog nicely combines evidence from a rich assortment of artifacts and manuscripts with the beauty of the architectural record. Nearly one hundred black-and-white photographs accompany the text. The photographs are of excellent quality, and though the reader may occasionally wish for more information than is supplied in the captions, the catalog as a whole is attractively and informatively put together. Readers in the Baltimore area will be especially pleased to learn that the exhibit will travel to the Maryland Historical Society in the fall of 1980.

*Maryland Historical Society*

KAREN A. STUART

*The Making of a Feminist. Early Journals and Letters of M. Carey Thomas.* Edited by Marjorie Housepain Dobkin, with a Foreword by Millicent Carey McIntosh. (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1979. Pp. xvi, 314. \$15.00.)

Most readers of this documentary volume will follow with fascination the development of a vigorous feminist to her 28th year, but those interested in Maryland history will enjoy it for an extra dimension: M. Carey Thomas grew to maturity in a Quaker, Baltimore milieu. If her name is inextricably linked to Bryn Mawr College, there is special interest in the place of her early years and the family and religious background that allowed her to develop her views and pursue them so effectively. Her good friend, Mary Garrett, was a member of a great Maryland family. Together they later made a vital contribution in opening the study of medicine to women at Johns Hopkins.

The young Thomas grew up fully aware of her antecedents in Maryland for more than two centuries before her birth in 1857. The Friends of her youth included a number who were relatively liberal in their views. There were happy holidays and summers with grandparents and other relatives in New Jersey. Her father was a reputable physician who, as a board member, spoke in favor of admitting women to the Johns Hopkins University. Later the president of the university, D. C. Gilman, came to tea not long before Thomas left for her college studies at Cornell University. And Thomas' family was willing, though with misgivings, to have her pursue graduate studies in Europe that led to a doctorate at the University of Zurich.

The editor has worked her way through the documentation left by Thomas, organized it, selected from it, and given us an easy to follow, pertinent, documentary record of the

future college president. The foreword by Thomas' niece, Millicent McIntosh, is sprightly and invaluable. The volume concludes with a coherent autobiographical account by Thomas, pieced together from fragments written at various times.

For those who wonder about the rest of Thomas' papers, it can be answered that the whole corpus of them will be available in a microfilm edition to be issued by Bryn Mawr College this year.

*Kensington, Maryland*

FRED SHELLEY

*Wildflowers of Delaware and the Eastern Shore.* By Claude E. Phillips. (Hockessin, Delaware: Delaware Nature Education Society, 1978. Pp. xi, 305. Photographs, illustrations, index. \$16.00 cloth, \$8.95 soft cover. Obtainable from the Delaware Nature Education Society, Box 700, Hockessin, Delaware 19707.)

This is the first wildflower guide for the Delmarva Peninsula. Even though Delaware and the Eastern Shore region is small, being 200 miles north and south and in the widest part only 70 miles east and west, it is a transitional zone and botanically richly endowed, with more than a thousand wildflowers identified since the early 1800's. Claude E. Phillips' book describes 768 different wildflowers and provides color photographs of exactly half that number, all made by the author in a dozen years after his retirement as head of the Agronomy Department of the University of Delaware in 1965.

Wildflower books may be organized in various ways—by flower color, season, classification, family, or some combination. They may be illustrated by drawings, paintings, or photographs in black-and-white or color, and aids may include glossaries, sketches of plant parts and structures, and other explanatory matter. This book carefully and elaborately organizes plants by visual characteristics (growth habit, habitat, flower structure) into 15 major divisions subdivided into a total of 93 groups. Typical examples are illustrated with excellent, clear little pen drawings. There are also drawings by the same artist, Jane H. Scott, of flower parts and leaf shapes and arrangements on the endpapers, and a list of terms is provided. (This glossary is not as complete as it might be; the term "bract," for example, is missing, but this feature is illustrated in one of the drawings.) The photographs, reduced to fit eight to an approximately 4¼ by 7¼ inch page, are mostly remarkably clear and the color true, but there is nothing to help the reader with respect to size.

The author assumes a serious interest on the part of the reader. This is not the book for the casual flower-picker who flips impatiently through a wildflower book looking for the right picture. The user will need fresh specimens, patience, close attention to detail (a good habit for the beginner to foster anyway), familiarity with a basic botanical vocabulary, and quite likely a magnifying glass. The user should also be aware that, although the author's first interest was in weeds, this is not a weed book, in the sense that "drab and inconspicuous flowers . . . are not included." But the difference between a weed and a wildflower has got to be pretty arbitrary, and such "wildflowers" as purslane and galinsoga (can there be a weedier weed than galinsoga?) are included.

But let us try the system and imagine a springtime beginner who has collected a weed/wildflower and wants to learn its name. The specimens are cone-shaped sprigs with overlapping leaves, some increasingly purplish toward the tip, and at the top whorls of tiny flowers in the lavender-orchid-magenta range. (Henbit, of course, but this is what our learner doesn't know and wants to find out.) The first thing to try, naturally, is the pictures and the 50/50 chance that the one needed is there; but the henbit photograph is one of the few that are poor and unhelpful. Thence to the Key to Wildflower Groups and the process of elimination. The first three divisions are easily eliminated ("Plants without green color," "Vines climbing by tendrils or by twining," and "Plants growing in shallow water or mud"). But IV looks promising: "Flowers alike each side of a center line, one petal, usually the

lowest, modified as a lip, center column . . . ; leaves with veins running lengthwise. . . .” Here the magnifying glass becomes essential. Having found it inadequate, the searcher would then resort to the descriptions under the referenced Group 10, which turns out to be the Orchid Family. Here color standards, flowering season, and other characteristics would eventually eliminate all. If by this time our searcher had not decided that the flower was probably to be considered a weed, perseverance would finally lead to the last division, XV; “Flowers alike each side of a center line (without lip and column as described in IV).” And here, under B. “Leaves in pairs, stems four-sided,” 1. “Flowers in upper leaf axils only,” b. “Flowers blue, violet, or purple,” is Group 69, which proves to be part of the Mint Family (Labiatae) and includes Henbit (*Lamium amplexicaule*). On his slow way to this identification our beginner will have learned a lot about the complexity and subtlety of plants, certainly among their most interesting qualities. Nature never designed them for the convenience and easy satisfaction of the mildly curious.

For any really interested Delmarvan, and for Western Shore plant lovers too, this book will be a welcome and much used addition to the home nature library. The more advanced users will appreciate the supplementary information in the appendixes giving keys to the violets, the goldenrods, and the asters of the region. For all readers, Professor Phillips’ comment about the alarming disappearance and increasing rarity of many wildflower species on the peninsula will, unhappily, be no surprise, and they will be all the more appreciative of the service the Delaware Nature Education Society has performed in publishing this good-looking field guide. Unfortunately, the publisher chose to send for review the soft cover version, which might not stand up to hard field use, and so it is impossible to comment on the hard cover at almost twice the price. A footnote following the Preface states: “The Delaware Nature Education Society is grateful to the author for the gift of his manuscript and to those many individuals whose support made this publication possible.” Readers and users of this work—and there should be many—will be grateful too.

*Savage, Maryland*

VERA RUTH FILBY

*A Biographical Dictionary of the Maryland Legislature, 1635-1789. Volume 1: A-H. Studies in Maryland History and Culture. Edited by Edward C. Papenfuss, Alan F. Day, David W. Jordan, and Gregory A. Stiverson. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press for the Hall of Records Commission of the State of Maryland, 1979. Pp. xvii, 477. \$18.50.)*

*A Biographical Dictionary* is an enormous boon for researchers in Maryland history. Resulting from the efforts of many researchers, the information gathered here comes from a wide variety of repositories in the United States, France, and Great Britain, and is presented in an easily accessible format. The front matter contains several maps of Maryland’s different counties at different time periods; we also have session lists of the members of each government, a discussion of the elements that formed the basis for the biographical collection, a list of abbreviations and notes used in the biographies, and an introduction. This volume takes us through the last names beginning with H and is unindexed. Presumably, the index to this volume will be incorporated into the index to the subsequent volume(s).

Though standing on its own merits, the *Dictionary* was designed as the basis for a more ambitious project: an essay in Maryland collective biography. Quoting Lawrence Stone’s definition of prosopography as “the investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives,” the unnamed author of the introduction writes: “It might be argued that a new word, ‘profilography,’ understood as the writing of biographical sketches or profiles, more

appropriately encompasses what we attempted here" (p. 3). What we have, then, are not full biographies: "we omitted embellishments that would color, but not add substantively to, a profile. . . . Such miscellany are in the working files of the project, which are organized in such a way as to encourage corrections and additions as well as further study" (p. 3). And, finally: "The biographies are thus not definitive, but they are as rounded as available material and self-imposed constraints allowed" (p. 3).

These biographies are meant to serve as a data base for three monographs yet to be written. One will analyze Maryland's political history to 1715; the second to 1774; and the third to 1789. They will not narrate the narrow development of our political institutions, but will "correlate [the] legislators' professional and economic interests, social status, family background, political experience, education, national origin, religious affiliation, geographic distribution, and other variables, in the hope that a broader vision and interpretation of the Maryland political process will be made manifest" (p. 4). To summarize: "In the truest sense, then, this book represents only a beginning" (p. 4).

It is an auspicious beginning. Generally speaking, each biography details personal and family background, the subject's private and public career, and his wealth during his lifetime and at his death. The biographies vary in length depending upon the amount of information available, but they usually occupy about one of the two columns on each page. We are not told how many biographies are included in this volume, but no matter; this is an excellent start toward what should prove to be an important and pathfinding project.

*University of Maryland Baltimore County*

GARY L. BROWNE

Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, [1980]. 451 pages. \$19.50.)

"Among the political ideas of the revolution," says Dr. Royster, who teaches history at the University of Texas/Arlington, "civil supremacy over the military achieved one of the most nearly complete successes, in practice as well as in allegiance. Of all the principles of 1775, it came nearest to full and lasting implementation" (p. 52). Under the benefit of hindsight today's reader might take that quotation as platitudinous. Or this one: "The army's growing capacity to flourish amid hardship and to face the enemy more effectively helped make the Continentals the center of wartime resistance to British power. The army experienced a unique depth of sacrifice and intensity of service to the revolution" (p. 246).

But, when taken against the wealth of data this elaborate overview of its subject presents, the statements in fact emerge as reasoned conclusions to a protracted, sometimes involuted argument. For what Dr. Royster has put together is a disarrayed, contentious, on the whole compelling jigsaw interpretation of the state of the country during its first great crisis. Officer alienation from the populace, *aperçus* on the nature of patriotism, recruiting as a corrupter of morals, the back-wash from the Great Awakening as a factor in the matrix of national character—these and related topics are discussed with an amplitude and an assurance somewhat surprising in a young scholar working out of a doctoral dissertation.

And the author can turn a phrase. Referring to parade-ground drills, he tells us that "the only uniform step in the army was the quick step—diarrhea" (p. 144). The volume is buttressed with a topical and nominal index, thirty well-chosen illustrations, and a hefty annotation gleaned from the "more than five hundred pages of notes, as well as a bibliography," to be found in his dissertation at the University of California/Berkeley. No manuscript collections are cited, but a few doctoral dissertations have been utilized. Occasional "cameo" sketches of individuals serve to point up a conclusion; the one treating Janet (Livingston) Montgomery is particularly good.



In sum, here is an absorbing contemplation of, and an informed commentary upon, the complicated, flawed, inspiring thing that became the American Revolution.

Baltimore, Maryland

CURTIS CARROLL DAVIS

*Engraved Glass and Other Decorated Glass.* By Robert T. Matthews. (West Friendship, MD: By the author, 1978. Pp. viii, 157. Illus. \$10.75, paper.)

For many of those blessed with the urge to collect, the excitement lies not only in the acquisition and study of artifacts, but also in the sharing of information about the collection with others. Some of the best publications in the art world have been written by collectors about their collections. Robert T. Matthews is obviously an enthusiastic collector of early glass, but neither is his collection important enough, nor his knowledge of engraved glass profound enough, to recommend *Engraved Glass and Other Decorated Glass* for the bookshelf of the serious glass collector.

The text is loosely organized and unevenly written, in large part because the author quotes extensively from other publications. His technical sections on glassmaking and decoration are unreliable and incomplete. The discussion of enameled glass, for example, makes no mention of the process involved, while the subject of cut glass is virtually ignored.

A major portion of the book is devoted to the New Bremen Glassmanufactory of John Frederick Amelung, in operation in Frederick County, Maryland, between 1785 and 1795. This emphasis is justified, because the Amelung venture is known chiefly through a group of engraved, documentary presentation pieces—the most ambitious and important glass objects to survive from America's eighteenth-century industry. Matthews adds nothing new to our understanding of New Bremen; indeed, it is obvious that he has relied very little upon the most recent Amelung scholarship.

In 1976 the Corning Museum of Glass held an exhibition of New Bremen glass and published, as volume 18 of the *Journal of Glass Studies*, a scholarly catalogue that included a history of the factory and a report of the archaeological excavation of the site.

While the author discusses and illustrates a few objects from public and other private collections, it is apparent that his opinions are drawn largely from his own collecting experience. His descriptions of the glass are adequate but not catalogue entries. Many of his attributions, particularly to Amelung, are highly questionable. As part of his emphasis on the process of collecting, Matthews has included a section on "study sources" where he describes important museum displays of decorated glass. His list is incomplete but it is nonetheless a useful guide for the reader. Handsome line drawings embellish the book but the quality of photographic reproduction is poor.

Winterthur Museum

ARLENE PALMER

John McCardell, *The Idea of a Southern Nation: Southern Nationalists and Southern Nationalism, 1830-1860* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1979. Pp. xi, 394. Illus., index. \$16.95.)

Professor McCardell describes his book, which has won the Allan Nevins Award of the Society of American Historians, as "a study of the origins, development, and impact of the idea of a separate Southern nation prior to the Civil War" (p. 5). Much scholarly writing has, of course, been offered previously on this subject, and McCardell admits that his book is largely an attempt at synthesis, an effort to pull together and make sense of the many strands in an extremely complex tale. He insists, however, that he also has something new to offer, "fresh conclusions about the nature of the secession movement" (p. 8). He believes

that the South's tortured road to secession may be explained as an ideological struggle between two distinct groups of Southerners: sectionalists and nationalists. Both groups, before 1830, took pride in the South's place in the greater American Union. But as Southern Rights and security seemed increasingly threatened by the Northern states, these two groups reacted quite differently to the crisis. The sectionalists, who, says McCardell, comprised the majority of Southerners, hoped that Southern rights could be maintained within the existing Union. They viewed secession as a last resort. Southern nationalists believed that Southern rights could be protected only within a separate Southern nation. They viewed Southern and Northern interests as being totally incompatible and insisted that secession was a necessity. It was the growing popularity of the nationalist ideology that finally won Southern consensus.

McCardell presents his view of this nationalist-sectionalist division in a convincing manner. His seven topically-arranged chapters analyze seven specific avenues of advancing Southern nationalist thought between 1830 and 1860: the slavery issue, economics, literature, religion, education, geographic expansionism, and politics. Beginning with the nullification controversy in South Carolina, where, as he sees it, the first clear divisions between nationalists and sectionalists appeared, McCardell traces the evolving ideas of representative nationalist spokesmen on each selected topic. He also attempts to show the significance of shifting geographic patterns of Southern leadership during the period. Political leadership, especially, he says, came to reside in western states like Alabama and Mississippi rather than in older eastern seaboard states like Virginia and South Carolina. The young, *nouveau riche* planters of the developing western states, he submits, became the spokesmen of Southern nationalism.

Yet, in telling his story, McCardell leaves some loose ends, all of which need to be neatly trimmed if the fabric of his narrative is to withstand close scrutiny. For example, he never clearly demonstrates the "impact" of the Southern nationalists in moving the South towards secession. He does a first-rate job of explaining the evolving ideas of individuals and showing how sentiment in support of a Southern nation was aroused during this period. But he fails to demonstrate how the ideology of the nationalist minority became the opinion of the majority. He assumes that because the South did secede in 1861 those people who had been urging secession for the previous thirty years had finally converted everyone else to their position. One feels that McCardell has missed a step in explaining this process, that he has over-generalized and allowed himself too many leaps of logic. Nor can his judgments be accepted for the whole South. He concerns himself primarily with Virginia, South Carolina, Alabama, and Mississippi. Nationalist-sectionalist divisions in other states receive scant attention. Some states, including Maryland, which he defines as a Southern state, are barely mentioned.

McCardell's methodology (explained on pages 351-53) in selecting nationalist and sectionalist spokesmen might be questioned, too. Although McCardell maintains that he has been, if anything, overly cautious in selecting his nationalists, it seems to this reviewer that he has only used good common sense. "Anyone for whom I could locate no hard evidence of Southern nationalist sympathies," he states, "I eliminated summarily." How is this being "too cautious?" Indeed, it may be that McCardell has not been cautious enough. His reasons for eliminating James Chesnut from the nationalist ranks lead one to wonder how many people have been included on the strength of a single statement.

Other, smaller issues decrease the reader's confidence. In writing of Southern territorial ambitions, McCardell seeks to show that Southern nationalists were the principal advocates of expansion. Yet, in concluding his discussion of this issue, McCardell admits that during the secession crisis, the real test for nationalist ideology, "expansionism was dormant" (pp. 275-76). If this is true, how can the issue be used to demonstrate the influence of Southern nationalism? Similar contradictions appear in the complicated course of events. For example, McCardell reverses himself in the span of just a few pages

concerning the reliability of J. D. B. DeBow as an "indicator" of Southern thought (pp. 133-40). At times, as when discussing the nationalist-sectionalist debates over economics and education, he relies too much on semantics. And he is not beyond folly, as when suggesting that advocates of Southern "distinctiveness" favored reopening the slave trade because, by increasing the South's slave population, they could make the section "even more unlike the rest of the United States" (pp. 133-34).

All this is not to say that McCardell has not made a contribution to Southern history. Anyone interested in the development of Southern sectionalism and/or nationalism should read this book. It is well written and exhaustively researched, and, despite some unanswered questions and unproven assertions, it offers a comprehensive and stimulating interpretation of a controversial era.

McNeese State University

DANIEL E. SUTHERLAND

#### OTHER BOOKS RECEIVED

- Bailyn, Bernard, and John B. Hench, editors. *The Press & the American Revolution*. (Worcester, MA: The University Press of Virginia for the American Antiquarian Society, 1980. Pp. viii, 384. Indexed. \$24.95, cloth.)
- Bibliographic Guide to Black Studies: 1979* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Company, 1979. Pp. v, 220. \$60.00, cloth.)
- Bibliographic Guide to North American History: 1979* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Company, 1980. Pp. v, 622. \$75.00, cloth.)
- Carr, Roland T., with Foreword by Richard Walsh. *32 President's Square: Part I of a Two-Part Narrative of the Riggs Bank and its Founders*. Acropolis International Business History Series. (Washington, D.C.: Acropolis Books, Ltd., 1980. 322 pp. Illustrations, index. \$8.95, cloth.)
- Clemens, Paul G. E. *The Atlantic Economy and Colonial Maryland's Eastern Shore: From Tobacco to Grain* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980. 249 pp. Tables, illustrations, index. \$15.00, cloth.)
- Dann, John C., editor. *The Revolution Remembered: Eyewitness Accounts of the War for Independence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980. Pp. xxvi, 446. Illustrations, index. \$20.00, cloth.)
- Ethnic Heritages and Horizons: An Expanding Awareness* (Baltimore: Ethnic Affairs Committee of Baltimore County, 1980. Pp. viii, 165. Paperbound.)
- Haynes, James Percival. *Thunderbolt: Champ of the Patowmack* (Smithtown, NY: Exposition Press, 1980. Pp. xi, 249. \$11.00, cloth.)
- Juergensen, Hans. *Major General George Henry Thomas: A Summary in Perspective* (Tampa, FL: American Studies Press, 1980. Pp. iv, 31. \$3.00, paper.)
- McGrain, John W. *Grist Mills in Baltimore County, Maryland* (A Baltimore County Heritage Publication. Towson, MD: Baltimore County Public Library, 1980. 40 pp. Illustrations, maps, index. \$4.95, paper.)
- Raimo, John W. *Biographical Directory of American Colonial and Revolutionary Governors, 1607-1789*. (Westport, CT: Meckler Books, 1980. 521 pp. Indexed. \$60.00, cloth.)
- Rundell, Walter, Jr. *Military Money: A Fiscal History of the U. S. Army Overseas in World War II* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1980. Pp. xvii, 271. Illustrations, index.)
- Stapleton, Darwin H., editor. *The Engineering Drawings of Benjamin Henry Latrobe. The Papers of Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Series II, Volume I*. (New Haven: Yale University Press for the Maryland Historical Society, 1980. Pp. xx, 256. Illustrations, plates, index. \$62.50, cloth.)
- Suran, Frank M., compiler and editor. *Guide to the Record Groups in the Pennsylvania State Archives* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1980. Pp. vi, 84. Indexed. \$5.00, paper.)

## NEWS AND NOTICES

**AUTHOR'S QUERY.** On January 19, 1782 the actor John Henry gave a performance of "The Lecture on Heads" in Spanish at the newly erected theatre in Baltimore. The original broadside is in the Randall Collection (MS 2415, No. 81) at the Museum and Library of Maryland History. I am preparing a book-length study of the history of the Lecture and would greatly appreciate any information that would explain the presentation of the Lecture *in Spanish* at this time and place. Dr. Gerald Kahan, Dept. of Drama, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602.

The Regional Economic History Research Center, Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation, will sponsor a conference on October 31, 1980 at 1:45 p.m.

**PROGRAM:** Agriculture in Europe and America

**CHAIR AND** Diane Lindstrom, University of Wisconsin-Madison

**COMMENT:**

**PAPERS:** Andrew B. Appleby, San Diego State University

"The Difficulties of Increasing Agricultural Output in Western Europe, 1650-1750"

Richard L. Bushman, University of Delaware

"Subsistence and Security in the Transition from Farm to City, 1750-1850"

Joyce O. Appleby, San Diego State University

"The Changing Prospect of the Family Farm in the Early National Period"

For further information contact:

William H. Mulligan, Jr.

Regional Economic History Research Center

Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation

P.O. Box 3630

Wilmington, DE 19807

The Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation and the University of Delaware History Department jointly sponsor a program of graduate study for students interested in one or more of the following academic specialities: American business and economic history, the history of technology, and related museum studies. The M.A. degree leads to careers in museums and historical agencies; the Ph.D. program to careers as scholars and teachers. A stipend consisting of \$4,000 per year, full tuition and a small research travel fund is available. An additional allowance of \$1,200 per year is available to students with dependent children. These awards are renewable for one year beyond the initial year for students enrolled as M.A. candidates and for three years beyond the initial year for those pursuing the Ph.D. The deadline for application is February 7, 1981 for the academic year 1981-82. For further information write: Coordinator, Hagley Graduate Program, Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation, P.O. Box 3630, Greenville, Wilmington, Delaware 19807.

The nonprofit, educational Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation is devoted to the study of American economic and industrial history. It administers the Hagley Museum and the Eleutherian Mills Historical Library, both located on the Foundation grounds near Wilmington, Delaware.

The Great Lakes History Conference will hold its seventh annual meeting April 23-24, 1981. Topics in all fields of history are invited. The deadline for all offers to participate is December 1, 1980, and should be addressed to me.

John L. Tevebaugh  
Program Committee Chairman  
Great Lakes History Conference  
Grand Valley State Colleges  
Allendale, Michigan 49401

The Forest History Society will hold its thirty-fourth annual meeting, November 13-15, 1980, at the Atlanta Biltmore Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia. The Society will be meeting concurrently with the Southern Historical Association.

For further information contact the Forest History Society, 109 Coral Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060, 408-426-3770. The Forest History Society is a national nonprofit educational organization whose purposes are the collection, interpretation, and dissemination of the history of the North American forests and forest related activities.

The nonprofit educational Southeastern Mills-Hagley Foundation is devoted to the study of American economic and industrial history. It administers the Hagley Museum and the Southeastern Mills Historical Library, both located on the Foundation grounds near Washington, Delaware.



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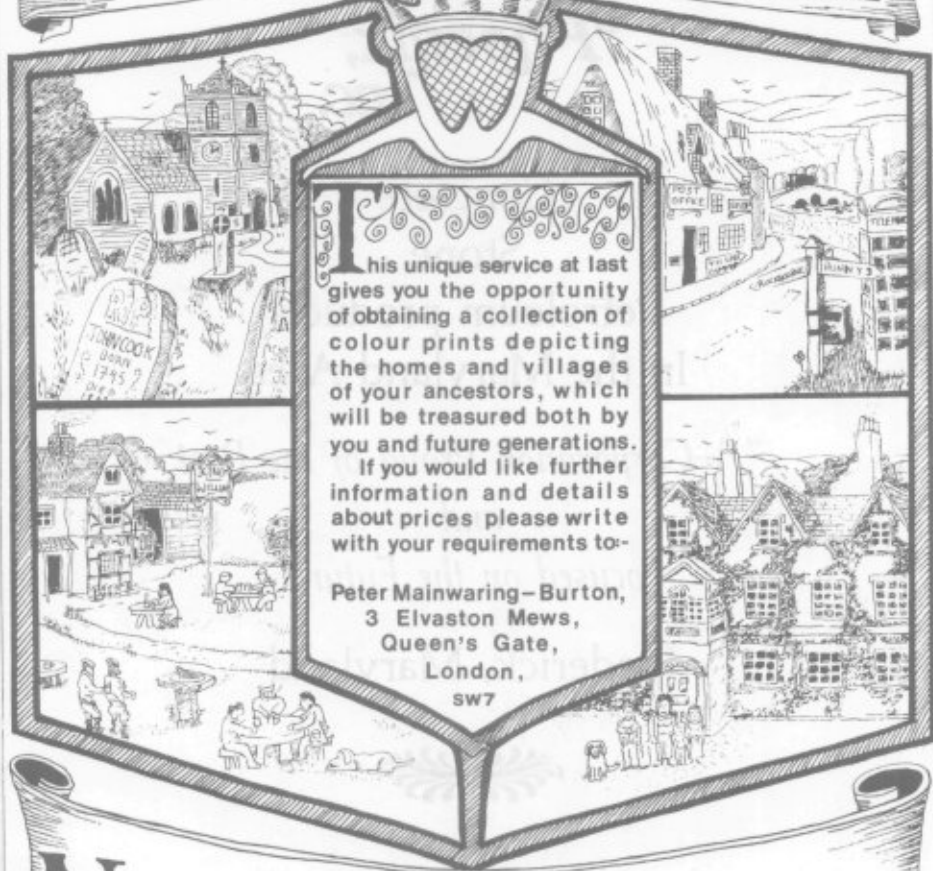
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## GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH OFFERED

For some time now, the Maryland Historical Society has offered genealogical research on a limited basis. For \$15.00 per hour, a staff member, well-versed in research methods and familiar with the Library's extensive genealogical holdings, will attempt to locate information on individuals and families from the recent as well as the distant past. The research, however, is confined to the Society's Library.

This service is by no means available only to Marylanders. Many of our requests come from out-of-staters with Maryland roots; and since the Library's collections include source records and published family histories from other states, we are able to accommodate clients whose families originated elsewhere.

One bit of advice to potential customers: please be as specific as possible in your request. A more successful research is done for the person who asks for the names, say, of the parents of John Smith, born circa 1750 in Harford County, than for the one who simply wants information on a family named Smith living in Maryland in the 18th century.

We cannot, of course, guarantee 100% success, and we do not often find "that famous ancestor," but we have received many, many letters of thanks from clients who have been able to fill in blank spaces on their family charts as a result of our work. And there are those who are so happy with what we have found that they have written back asking us to continue for another hour, sometimes two or three.

Your check for \$15.00 authorizes us to begin the search. Since this has become an extremely popular feature, we hope you will wait patiently for the results.

For more information, contact Gary Parks at the Maryland Historical Society.

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