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# Maryland Historical Magazine

Fresh Perspectives on Maryland's Past:  
The Seventeenth-Century Experience



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# MARYLAND HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

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Special 350th Anniversary Issue  
"Fresh Perspectives on Maryland's Past:  
The Seventeenth-Century Experience"

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This Special Issue is underwritten by a grant from the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Maryland.

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“Ark and Dove—Arrival, March 25, 1634” by Ben Neill, American Society of Marine Artists, 1981, acrylic on wood, 20 inches × 30 inches. In the possession of Maryland Bank and Trust, Lexington Park, Maryland. (Reproduced courtesy of the Rev. Michael diTeccia Farina, Director, The Paul VI Institute for the Arts of the Archdiocese of Washington.)

“In the beginning,” wrote the influential philosopher, John Locke, “all the world was America.” This recent painting, the latest and one of the best examples in a long line of historical artwork commemorating early Maryland, symbolizes the mystery and sense of expectation that must have gripped Englishmen and Indians alike as the *Ark* approached landfall in Maryland waters. We are grateful to artist Ben Neill, a.s.m.a., of Sandwich, Massachusetts, for his beautiful, sensitive portrayal of this historic event.

This special issue is underwritten by a grant from the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Maryland.





*WHEREAS, It is desirable that there should be adequate celebrations commemorative of the events of Colonial History which took place within the period beginning with the settlement of Jamestown, Va., May 13, 1607, and preceding the battle of Lexington, April 19, 1775;*

*Therefore, The Society of Colonial Wars is instituted to perpetuate the memory of those events, and of the men who, in military, naval, and civil positions of high trust and responsibility, by their acts or counsel, assisted in the establishment, defence, and preservation of the American Colonies, and who were in truth founders of the Nation. To this end, it seeks to collect and preserve manuscripts, rolls, relics, and records; to hold suitable commemorations, and to erect memorials relating to the American Colonial period; to inspire in its members the fraternal and patriotic spirit of their forefathers; and to inspire in the community respect and reverence for those whose public services made our freedom and unity possible.*

So states the preamble to the Constitution of the General Society of Colonial Wars. The Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Maryland, of which I am privileged to be Governor, is an integral part of the General Society, as are the several State societies across the nation.

Over the years since its founding in 1893, the Maryland Society has overwritten dozens of projects related to the Colonial era . . . an historical marker for "Waverly" in Howard County, a gift of colonial silver to the Maryland Historical Society, the flags which fly from the *Dove*, a contribution to Preservation, Inc. in Chestertown, a replica of an antique firearm for St. Mary's City, a grant to help restore Westminster Presbyterian Church in Baltimore.

Last year, with the approach of the 350th anniversary of the founding of the Palatinate of Maryland, we proposed to the Maryland Historical Society to underwrite the publication of a special issue of the quarterly to be devoted to the early history of Maryland. Our offer was gladly accepted. Dr. J. Frederick Fausz, a highly respected colonial historian on the faculty of St. Mary's College of Maryland, agreed to serve as guest editor and proceeded to assemble a panel of his colleagues whose impressive effort you will find on the pages following.

It is the hope and belief of the Society of Colonial Wars and of the Maryland Historical Society that this publication will cast light into dark and obscure corners of 17th Century Maryland and that it will earn a respected place among the chronicles of the Old Line State.

H. MEBANE TURNER



## PROLOGUE

But for all these, the nameless, numberless  
Seed of the field, the mortal wood and earth  
Hewn for the clearing, trampled for the floor,  
Uprooted and cast out upon the stone  
From Jamestown to Benicia.  
This is their song, this is their testament,  
Carved to their likeness, speaking in their tongue  
And branded with the iron of their star.  
I say you shall remember them. I say  
When night has fallen on your loneliness  
And the deep wood beyond the ruined wall  
Seems to step forward swiftly with the dusk,  
You shall remember them. You shall not see  
Water or wheat or axe-mark on the tree  
And not remember them.

Now, in full summer, by the Eastern shore,  
Between the seamarke and the roads going West,  
I call two oceans to remember them.  
I fill the hollow darkness with their names.

—Excerpt from “*Western Star*” by Stephen Vincent Benét (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.), “Invocation,” pp. vii–viii. ©Copyright, 1943, by Rosemary Carr Benét. Copyright renewed, 1971, by Thomas C. Benét, Stephanie B. Mahin, and Rachel Benét Lewis. Reprinted by permission of Brandt & Brandt Literary Agents, Inc., New York.

The main currents of colonial progress . . . are to be found only in the daily and yearly round of actual colonial experience, in the working out of the problems which confronted the colonists in their various communities, and in the conflict of old ideas and practices . . . with the later needs and notions arising from contacts with new conditions in a new environment.

—Charles McLean Andrews, *Our Earliest Colonial Settlements* (1933)

## “The Seventeenth-Century Experience”: An Introduction

J. FREDERICK FAUSZ, Guest Editor

**F**IFTY YEARS AGO, ON THE EVE OF MARYLAND'S 300th anniversary, Historian Charles McLean Andrews observed that only through a comprehensive investigation “of all phases, all men, and all constructive thought” from the far-distant past could Americans “hope to fathom the depths of colonial conduct and to penetrate the mysteries of colonial action, and only thus. . . expect to comprehend the great issues that were at stake in this long and notable period of our national history.”<sup>1</sup> In 1957, as Virginia celebrated its 350th anniversary, an equally-distinguished historian of his generation, Oscar Handlin, wrote that “a commemorative occasion is a time for retrospection—for looking backward from the present to take account of the way we have come. . . . [I]ts true value arises from the opportunity it offers us to acquire perspective on the present and the future.”<sup>2</sup>

It was with both perspectives in mind that this Special 350th Anniversary Issue was commissioned and organized. The essays that appear below—Lois Green Carr's on political developments, John D. Krugler's on religion, and Russell R. Menard's on social and economic trends—offer us a broad, thematic, and inter-related analysis of the formative years of the seventeenth century so better to enrich and inform a wide readership about the present as well as the past. Considering that historians usually restrict their subject matter to one event or a single decade in journal articles, our contributors to this present-day “noble design” have performed a rare feat in this

Special Issue. Much like the colonial adventurers three-and-a-half centuries ago, they have daringly departed from the familiar and the narrowly-circumscribed in time and place to embark upon investigative and interpretative frontiers with few guideposts and almost limitless boundaries and have arrived at their “destinations” with a refreshing, insightful enthusiasm. It is hoped that this presentation of new and innovative perspectives on a Maryland long-since vanished will serve as a fitting and lasting intellectual commemoration of the original breadth of vision that laid the foundation of our common and distinctive heritage 350 years ago.

This issue of the *Maryland Historical Magazine* is indeed a special one, for not only does it mark a meaningful anniversary for all Marylanders, but it also reflects in a broader sense the renaissance of seventeenth-century Chesapeake studies that has occurred in the historical profession over the last decade-and-a-half. Not since the 250th anniversary of Maryland have historians been so interested in the earliest years of the Chesapeake colonies, and *never* before have scholars been so well-equipped to study and re-evaluate all aspects of the seventeenth-century experience. Unlike the older accounts that concentrated on a few great men and grand events or on the localized and personalized minutiae of the past, historians in the vanguard of the current Chesapeake renaissance study colonial societies, in all their breadth and depth, as complex, ever-changing organisms.

Committed to approaches that are integrative and interdisciplinary, holistic and processual, these scholars use eclectic, imaginative methods and sources to retrieve and unravel the separate threads of the seventeenth-century experience and then weave them into a comprehensive, interpretative tapestry of the past.

Nineteen-Eighty-Four finds early Chesapeake studies in the forefront of Colonial American History, and Maryland has contributed substantially to this emergence through the productivity of scholars like those featured in this issue and through activities associated with the St. Mary's City Commission, the Hall of Records, and the Maryland Historical Society. As the citizens of this state prepare to commemorate an important historical milestone, scholars on both sides of the Atlantic are discovering the hidden treasures and vital secrets, obscured by neglect and hidden by topsoil, that reveal Maryland's signal contributions to a distinctive seventeenth-century Anglo-American world. Historian John M. Murrin wrote recently that the colonial Chesapeake "harshly challenges most of the categories of historical development by which American social thought has tried to comprehend the emergence of the modern world" and argued that early Maryland and Virginia represented the more consistent, common experiences of New World colonization than did Puritan New England.<sup>3</sup>

In 1957, Professor Handlin observed that "social disorder, the acceptance of risk, and the precariousness of life that developed in the seventeenth century long remained characteristic of America. It was the significance of the seventeenth century to bring into being peculiarities of character and institutions, the influence of which was long thereafter felt in the history of the United States."<sup>4</sup> In the essays below, our contributors recognize and reveal varying degrees of "disorder, risk, and precariousness" that helped shape Maryland in the seventeenth century. Similar patterns and common observations emerge from reading the essays together, confirming for a twentieth-century audience what our forebears took for granted: that religion and politics, economics and demographics, were inter-

related and interdependent parts of the social organism. Although the separation of individual parts and components from the whole is a necessary function of modern scholarly analysis, we should remind ourselves as we read these essays that colonial society was a complex, interconnected whole of many layers and dimensions, analogous to the transparent overlays of human anatomy in medical textbooks or to those clear, multi-tiered chess boards that appear so intimidating.

Seventeenth-century Maryland society was simple, crude, basic, and "small," compared to the larger, more sophisticated, and aesthetically-influential one of the eighteenth-century "golden age." Those early years constituted a period roughly equivalent to human development between infancy and adulthood, revealing all of the characteristics—naivety, lack of coordination, disproportionate growth, susceptibility to accidents and mistakes—that are associated with the painful, tortured time known as adolescence. Seventeenth-century colonization to the Chesapeake featured a halting, often haphazard, adjustment of an English population (vulnerable to disease, disaster, and premature death), and of ideas either too old to be useful or too new to be trusted, to a new environment filled with strange people and products, pitfalls and potentialities.

As our contributors argue in this issue, catalysts to learning and growth in the New World came from a variety of sources, as the early colonists and their embryonic society discovered that they were not alone and would not be left alone. Seventeenth-century Marylanders quickly discerned that they were not in complete control of their destinies, as personalities and events in Virginia and in England repeatedly influenced the evolution of the province. Boundaries and loyalties were equally flexible and susceptible to outside manipulation, and colonists soon learned that pragmatic interest-group alliances often made a mockery of traditional religious, national, and cultural allegiances. While certain ambitious Virginians had a hand in shaping Maryland's future, the influence of the mother country had the greatest, longterm impact. Linked to the Stuart kings during one of the most revolutionary eras in Brit-

ish History, the Calverts and their colony knew all too well the ill winds and occasional gales that blew across the Atlantic. Factionalism and rebelliousness on both sides of the water—the Potomac as well as the Atlantic—made Cecil Calvert one of the steadiest but most threatened tight-rope walkers of that or any age.

Like the lord proprietor, the colonists of Maryland came to accept and expect conflict and change in their lives. In order to eventually reach goals and live lives that were beyond their grasp in England, the early settlers had to adapt to a world that was institutionally and intellectually less well-developed than the homeland they left. Initially, they lived in the lodges of the Yoacomacos, hunted and fished as much as they farmed, grew Indian maize instead of English wheat, and organized their new world around the impermanence of wood structures and an equally-impermanent social structure that was riddled with death and jeopardized by loosened kinship ties. In the process of adapting and adopting, the colonists received inestimably valuable assistance from the native population, the great teachers of the American woodlands, and together these merging peoples and cultures produced a hybrid, emerging, Chesapeake world that was truly new to all.

All sorts of “mergers” were required in this early colonial environment. The expedient merged with the idealistic, as religious toleration and political compromise saved Maryland from its enemies, attracted settlers, and prevented internal dissension. Indians “merged” with Englishmen, Protestants with Catholics, free laborers with servants, blacks with whites, the rich with the poor, as new human relationships were fashioned out of common interests and the need for mutual preservation, largely irrespective of race or culture, color or creed. The English of Maryland allied with the local Piscataways and Patuxents while fighting with their countrymen in Virginia, and the English in Virginia befriended the Susquehannocks, who fought both the Indian allies and the colonists under Lord Baltimore’s protection. For a time in this “naive” society, Catholics and Protestants lived and labored together in peace and harmony as in no other place on earth during an age of hate and intolerance.

When Puritan Massachusetts expelled Catholics and Anglican Virginia expelled Puritans and Catholics, all found their way to Maryland. Free blacks and Jews, European “foreigners” and the destitute from England arrived here to thrive as farmers and merchants before the laws of a larger, later society restricted them to artificial categories and servile roles. For a while, Maryland welcomed all into its culturally and racially diverse society, struggled mightily with internal dissidents and external enemies, and emerged stronger and more distinctive because of the risks and adversity.

Survival, success, and then growth, maturity, and sophistication came to Maryland as it moved and changed through time toward the eighteenth century. But as all the essays in this issue suggest, the maturation of colonial Maryland may have been purchased at too great a cost. While disease and early death ceased to be as devastating as they once had been, and while much of the “disorder,” risk, and precariousness of colonial life were dealt with successfully, human relationships became more rigid and inflexible, favoring a few at the expense of many. As the “golden age” of the eighteenth century emerged, all Indians came to be seen as savages, all blacks as slaves, all Catholics as tyrants, and all poor whites as transients.

The eighteenth-century age of grand brick mansions, large plantations, cultured gentlemen, international commerce, and Enlightenment ideas transformed the Chesapeake into a sophisticated and influential part of the Anglo-American world. It is admired and appreciated because it is fascinating, recognizable, and familiar to us, glamorous, closer in time to the Age of Revolution and nation-building, and in most senses, more “modern.” And yet, in admitting that, we must also realize that the eighteenth-century standards of prejudice and injustice—against the poor and racial, religious, and ethnic minorities—are also quite familiar and recognizable to us today, although we have recently become less comfortable and complacent about them. It is both, then, as curious students of Maryland’s past *and* as interested citizens of the 1980s that we are long overdue in rediscovering the “cruder” of the two

colonial centuries, and perhaps more than idle curiosity should compel us to become more familiar with a time when Maryland was establishing notable precedents in human relationships within a pluralistic society, when our forebears were at once more innocent and innovative.

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1. Charles M. Andrews, *Our Earliest Colonial Settlements* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959 [orig. publ. 1933]), p. 167.

2. Oscar Handlin, "The Significance of the Seventeenth Century," in James Morton Smith, ed., *Seventeenth-Century America: Essays in Colonial History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), p. 3.
3. Review of *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century: Essays on Anglo-American Society*. ed. Thad W. Tate and David L. Ammerman, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., XXXVIII (Jan. 1981), 116, 120-21. See also Tate's essay, "The Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake and Its Modern Historians," in that volume, pp. 3-50.
4. Handlin, "Significance of the Seventeenth Century," in Smith, ed., *Seventeenth-Century America*, p. 12.

# Present At the "Creation": The Chesapeake World That Greeted the Maryland Colonists

J. FREDERICK FAUSZ

ON 30 MARCH 1634, AFTER SOME THREE weeks of reconnoitering in the Potomac River, the first Maryland colonists established St. Mary's City, in peace and with the permission of the native population, among the villagers of Yoacomaco, in the land of the Piscataways. "Is not this miraculous," wrote Father Andrew White, "that a nation . . . should like lambes yeeld themselves, [and be] glad of our company, givinge us houses, land, and liveings for a trifle?"<sup>1</sup>

Less than one month later, Captain Cyprian Thorowgood sailed north from St. Mary's City to the mouth of the Susquehanna River and there encountered Captain William Claiborne's beaver traders from Kent Island doing a brisk business with the Susquehannocks. "So soone as they see us a comeing," he reported, "Claiborn'es men persuaded the Indians to take part with them against us . . . but the Indians refused, saying the English had never harmed them, neither would they fight soe neare home."<sup>2</sup>

In case they needed reminding, these two episodes convinced the first Maryland col-

onists that they were not alone in the vastness of the Chesapeake. Strange and dangerous men, jealous and suspicious of Lord Baltimore's colony, were never far away, ever-threatening to offer violence to the embryonic settlement at St. Mary's. Such men were Virginians, not Indians, and those English enemies living to the south of Maryland would intermittently plague and harass their northern neighbors from 1634 to 1658, while the Piscataways remained the consistent allies and helpmates of Cecil Calvert's colonists. To understand why this was so, we need to survey the history of the Chesapeake for several decades prior to the arrival of the *Ark* and *Dove*.

The Maryland colonists of 1634 were only the latest in a long line of Europeans to penetrate the curtain of aboriginal life in the northern Chesapeake. French and Spanish explorers visited the Bay in the sixteenth century, and conquistadores from Florida had already designated the Chesapeake the "Bay of St. Mary's" by the 1570s. When Captain John Smith made his famous exploration of the Potomac and Susquehanna rivers in June–July 1608, he discovered that the Tockwogs of the Eastern Shore and the Susquehannocks already possessed European trade goods and desired more. Smith reported that sixty of the "giantlike" and fur-rich Susquehannocks greeted him enthusiastically, showered him with presents, and covered him with a huge bearskin cloak in the hopes that he would consent to be their "gouvernour" and defend them against their Iroquois enemies from lands near Lake Erie. Preoccupied with other matters, and anxious to return to the vulnerable outpost at Jamestown, Smith missed a prime opportunity on that occa-

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J. Frederick Fausz is Assistant Professor of History at St. Mary's College of Maryland. He completed his Ph. D. in 1977 at The College of William and Mary, writing a dissertation on Anglo-Indian relations in the early Chesapeake, 1580–1630. His publications include essays in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, *The Maryland Historian*, and other journals, as well as contributions to collected works such as *Struggle and Survival in Colonial America*, ed. David G. Sweet and Gary B. Nash (1981), *Europeans and Native Americans: Early Contacts in Eastern North America*, ed. William Fitzhugh (forthcoming), and *The Scholar and the Indian*, ed. William R. Swagerty (forthcoming). Dr. Fausz also has training and experience as an historical editor, having worked on *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith*, 3 vols. (forthcoming), and *The Papers of Benjamin Henry Latrobe* (in progress).

sion to enlarge Virginia's contacts and to make the Chesapeake the fur trade capital of English America.<sup>3</sup>

While no other Englishmen renewed contacts with the Susquehannocks for some twenty years, other Europeans were active in the northern Chesapeake. Over the winter of 1615–1616, the French interpreter, Etienne Brûlé, lived with the Susquehannocks and explored the upper Bay while on a mission from Samuel de Champlain. Brûlé convinced the Susquehannocks to join a French–Huron–Algonkin alliance against their common enemies, the League Iroquois, which revealed how interest groups transcended ethnic and racial differences and spread their influence over much of eastern North America in the early seventeenth century.<sup>4</sup>

Between 1610 and 1621, several Englishmen from Virginia, including Captain Samuel Argall and the boy-interpreters, Thomas Savage and Henry Spelman, visited the Potomac and Patuxent river basins, and at least one former resident of Jamestown, Robert Marcum, or “Moutapass” as the Indians called him, went “native” and lived among the Patuxents for over five years. The Patawomekes of the south bank of the Potomac, along with the Accomacs and Accohannocs of Virginia's Eastern Shore, proved especially friendly and helpful to the English during food shortages and wars with the Powhatans to the south. But it was not until the mid- to late 1620s that Englishmen from Virginia would have the inclination and the opportunity to establish and maintain longterm,



The first “authorized” map of Colonial Maryland, bound in copies of *A Relation of Maryland* (London, 1635), between pages 19 and 20. “Augusta Carolina,” referring to the tract of land between the St. Marys River and the Bay and “St. Maries [City]” are two of only a few English placenames north of the Potomac. The major Indian habitations are carefully, albeit incompletely, listed, but Virginia is made to look like an unoccupied wasteland and William Claiborne’s Kent Island is recognized only as “Monoponson.” (Photo courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.)

mutually-beneficial relations with a host of Indians in the northern Chesapeake.<sup>5</sup>

The inclination came as a result of the Virginia Company of London's long-overdue interest in establishing a fur trade in the Bay, but, ironically, the opportunity came to the colonists and not to their sponsors and as a result of the worst Indian uprising ever suffered by Englishmen in the seventeenth century. On Friday, 22 March 1622, Opechancanough and his Pamunkey-Powhatan alliance attacked dozens of English homesteads along a one hundred mile stretch of the James River and slaughtered some 330 colonists, one-fourth of Virginia's population. However, in doing so, the Indians unwittingly created new opportunities for a few powerful English survivors. Men like William Claiborne, Samuel Mathews, and William Tucker quickly emerged as dominant, opportunistic leaders and made the best of a bad situation.<sup>6</sup>

Turning the Second Anglo-Powhatan War (1622-1632) to their advantage, members of the governor's council and the military commanders they appointed gained leverage and grew wealthy by conducting twice-annual raids—called "harshe visitts" or "feedfights"—against the Powhatans, who were both their avowed enemies and the best maize farmers of the area. Thus, instead of launching a genocidal war of holy revenge as so many in England counseled, the Virginia militia, led by opportunistic entrepreneurs like "Colonel," later "Major General," Claiborne, transformed the Powhatans into "red peasants." In a single expedition in 1622, colonial raiders captured over a thousand bushels of Powhatan maize, fresh from the field, worth an estimated £500-£1000 sterling in those hard times. Several leaders became wealthy through war, selling captured maize for the tobacco of others and generally turning public distress into private profits. Virginia's most successful raiders were called "Chieftaines" by the poor colonists they exploited—a fitting title, since they assumed the functions of tribute-collecting Powhatan *werowances* they sought to defeat.<sup>7</sup>

While Indians provided food for the colony, Virginia's leaders had English servants grow tobacco exclusively to keep alive Lon-

don's interest in the Chesapeake and to enlarge their fortunes. The 1622 uprising had forced many free farmers to "forsake their houses . . . [and] to joyne themselves to some great mans plantation" for protection and sustenance, and those hungry and defenseless souls who "scarce [had] a hole to hide their heads in" became "coerced cash-crop labor" for the rich and powerful "Lords of those Lands." Organized into efficient, all-male work gangs and placed on southside plantations secure from Indian raids, these servants were kept alive by Powhatan maize and kept in line by masters who never let them forget what the Indian enemy would do to stragglers and deserters. That this emergency reorganization of Virginia's labor force worked efficiently was demonstrated at harvest time, 1622, when, only five months after the Powhatans had reduced the colony's population by one-fourth, the English exported 60,000 pounds of tobacco, Jamestown's largest crop to date. Two years later, with only a few more hands available for work, Virginia exported 200,000 pounds of that profitable weed and fully committed its immediate future to a one-crop economy.<sup>8</sup>

Virginia was able to prosper in the 1620s because the war against the Powhatans went well, and that war went well largely because the colonists formed alliances with key tribes based on mutual self-interest. The Patawomekes of the Potomac River and the Accomacs and Accohannocs of the Eastern Shore welcomed the opportunity that war provided to join with the English against the Powhatans, who had tried to dominate them over the years. All three tribes provided essential services to the colonists, including military intelligence, safe bases of operation, and additional supplies of food. The Virginians built a fort adjoining the Patawomeke village in 1622, joined them in raids against their Indian enemies, and worked in league with them to assemble and then poison a large delegation of Powhatan war chieftains at a meeting along the Potomac in May 1623. The following November, Governor Sir Francis Wyatt took ninety soldiers and military commanders to the Potomac for the avowed purpose of "setling . . . trade with some of the neighboring Savadges in the Bay."

Seeking strategic advantage and revenge for an English expedition nearly annihilated earlier that year, these Virginians indeed “settled” something: they laid waste by fire and sword a village of the Piscataways in the Accokeek area in order to protect the Patawomekes from their traditional neighboring enemies. The English did such a thorough job of slaying the enemy and scorching the earth that tribes from north of the Potomac joined Opechancanough against the colonists in 1624.<sup>9</sup>

That so many Englishmen would journey so far and fight so fiercely for Indian allies reveals the existence of a mature and stable inter-ethnic interest group. The Patawomekes, who had assisted the colonists in the capture of Pocahontas over a decade before, were obviously one group of Indians who could be “good” without being dead, and the vital role they played in English policy is indicated by the overly-scrupulous manner in which the colonists dealt with them. A few months after Wyatt’s expedition to the Potomac, the governor sent a trading ship to the Patawomekes for maize, and he cautioned his subordinate not “to compel by any waies or meanes any Indians whatsoever to trade more than they shalbe willing to trade for; or to offer any violence to any except in his owne defence.”<sup>10</sup>

The Anglo-Powhatan War brought many changes to the Chesapeake and hastened the acculturation of Englishmen in Virginia. War had taken them to the Potomac and exposed them to willing Indian allies; trade would keep them there and encourage new discoveries and still more Indian alliances. The colonial leaders who prospered during the fighting by monopolizing laborers, ships, interpreters, munitions, and tobacco profits used those commodities to advantage in the mid- to late 1620s to become the first English fur traders of the Chesapeake. In autumn 1624, George Sandys, courtier-poet and treasurer of Virginia, sent interpreter Robert Poole to the Potomac and Patuxent rivers on the region’s first recorded fur expedition of consequence. Poole paid some 20,000 blue beads (perhaps made at the Jamestown glass house by Sandys’s “damned crew” of Italian glass-blowers) to the Indians for intricately-woven, native-grass mats that he needed to seal his leaky ship. But he

also traded twenty-three arms’ lengths of native shell beads (*roanoke*) and other goods for seven bear skins, six deer skins, two wildcat skins, nine otter skins, 29 muskrat skins, and one “Lyone skin.”<sup>11</sup>

Sandys was not the only Englishman to realize that there was an Indian-related activity even more intriguing, and potentially more lucrative, than “feedfights,” and soon a host of ambitious entrepreneurs experienced in raiding and trading directed their attention to the upper Chesapeake when the war with the Powhatans became less pressing and profitable.

Henry Fleet and William Claiborne, who arrived in Virginia in 1621 from well-connected Kentish gentry families, quickly became the real pioneers and promoters of the Bay fur trade in its heyday. Fleet began his trading activities in 1627 following a five-year captivity with the Nacotchtanks (Nacostines, Anacostans) near present-day Washington, D. C. He had been one of the few survivors of the Indian attack that Governor Wyatt had gone to avenge in 1623. After being ransomed and released from his captors, Fleet returned to London, where one commentator reported that he “hath left his own language” because of his captivity. However, Fleet remembered enough of the mother tongue to allure listeners with his tales of “plenty of black fox, . . . the richest fur” that he had allegedly observed among the villages of his native hosts. In September 1627, Fleet convinced the prominent merchant, William Cloberry, to entrust him with the 100-ton *Paramour* on a trading voyage to America. By 1631 he was the factor for Griffith and Company’s 80-ton *Warwick*, recently returned from New England waters. When Fleet entered the Potomac on 26 October 1631 aboard that ship, he initiated what would become one of the most intriguing and incredible series of intercultural encounters in early American History.<sup>12</sup>

Stopping at the village of the Yoacomacos near the site of the future St. Mary’s City, Fleet discovered, to his horror, “that, by reason of my absence, the Indians had not preserved their beaver, but burned it, as the custom is.” Fleet wrote that the Indians of southern Maryland had “no use at all for it [beaver], being not accustomed to take pains to dress it and make coats of

it." However, in the next year, Fleet would teach these "savages" the fine points of pelt preservation, so that the "civilized" citizens of England could have the hats and collars they craved.<sup>13</sup>

When Fleet returned to the Potomac the following spring, as he had promised to do, he found that a rival trader, Charles Harmar/Harman of Accomac, had just "cleared both sides of the river," taking some fifteen hundred pounds of pelts back to the Eastern Shore. After receiving 114 pelts as a goodwill offering from the Piscataway *tayac*, Fleet journeyed up to the Nacotchtanks and traded for eight hundred pounds of beaver. This Iroquoian tribe was allied with the Massawomekes ("Cannyda Indians," almost certainly the League Iroquois) and acted as middlemen for them in the Potomac trade. From May to August 1632, Fleet obtained a wealth of ethnographic information while anchored near the Nacotchtank village. He learned that a week's journey beyond the falls of the Potomac lived a tribe of thirty thousand people, divided into four towns (Tonhoga/Tohoga, Mosticum, Shaunetowa, Usserahak), and possessed of an "infinite store" of the richest coat beaver. Fleet managed to trade for eighty pelts from this unknown tribe before the Nacotchtanks jealously blocked his access to the bounty from the hinterland. In July 1632 he was approached by representatives from a still stranger, and equally-unknown, tribe called the "Herekeenes." Wearing beaver coats and shirts with red fringe, the Herekeenes also came from a fur-rich land and seemed willing enough to trade.<sup>14</sup>

Fleet had stumbled upon the pelt-man's Eldorado in 1632, but, although he sowed the seeds for future friendships, he was prevented from capitalizing on his contacts because of local jealousies—those of the Nacotchtanks and of the Virginians. In August Fleet's trade was interdicted by Charles Harmar and his friends on the governor's council at Jamestown. Taken there after collecting "only" £200 worth of pelts, but with the expectation of getting six thousand pounds the next year, Fleet found "divers envious people" on the Council of State. Although he was "not minded to adventure my fortunes at the disposing of the Governor," Fleet discovered that all

the officials were "desirous to be a partner with me." One in particular—Governor John Harvey—treated Fleet with "unexpected courtesy" and secured for him a special trading license, giving him "free power to dispose of myself." Harvey perhaps joined with Fleet at this time in a partnership that sponsored voyages to New England, Madeira, and Teneriffe, as well as the Bay, for Harvey authorized him to keep (i.e., steal) the *Warwick*. The trade goods and the bark that Griffith and Company had entrusted to Henry Fleet in 1631 were never returned to them, thanks to the special circumstances and alluring opportunities of the Chesapeake.<sup>15</sup>

Claiborne's involvement with the fur trade began as early as 1627. In April of that year he obtained a commission from Governor Yeardley to launch an expedition "for discoverie of the Bottome of the Bay" and to trade with any Indians for "furs, skinns corne or any other comodities." This is the first Virginia document that places furs before maize in the list of desired commodities, revealing the confidence of Jamestown officials that the colony was no longer in imminent danger of famine. In 1629 Claiborne received the exclusive right from his fellow councilors to treat with the Susquehannocks, the keys to a vast northern fur network. That Claiborne appreciated the essential role that Indians had to play for a successful fur trade is revealed in his attempts to monopolize native interpreters in Virginia. In 1626 he had been granted a patent of sorts by the Council because he had "invented [a method] for safe keepinge of any Indians . . . and . . . [a way] to make them serviceable."<sup>16</sup>

Having attained a knowledge of the Bay and the potential for trade, the support of his colleagues on the council, and the confidence of the Susquehannocks, Claiborne lacked only a source of capital. He had little difficulty obtaining that in late 1630 or early 1631 while on a trip to England. Claiborne's timing was perfect, for in 1629 the English had captured Quebec in a war with France, and beaver fever spread throughout the London merchant community after the Canada Company brought home some three hundred thousand pounds of pelts in 1630. Two men prominent in that Canadian trade—William Cloberry, Fleet's old

sponsor, and Maurice Thomson, a former resident of Virginia and brother-in-law of councillor William Tucker of Kecoughtan—now became Claiborne's principal partners in a joint stock association for Chesapeake furs.<sup>17</sup>

Claiborne began his trade on a grand scale in 1631. He and his London connections had invested £1319 in hiring and outfitting the *Africa*, stocking it with provisions, trade goods, and twenty indentured servants for the initial voyage. He had a liberally-worded trading license (dated 16 May 1631) under Charles I's signet of Scotland, secured from Sir William Alexander, secretary for Scotland, proprietor of Nova Scotia, and a principal figure in the capture of Quebec. And he had four islands in the upper Bay that would become the basis of his fur empire: Kent Island, the largest, was located some 120 miles from Jamestown and would serve as Claiborne's "capital"; Palmer's Island, located at the mouth of the Susquehanna River, was a long-favored trading ground for the Susquehannocks and would be the focus of exchange with them; and Claiborne's and Popeley's islands, located near Kent Island, which were used to store hogs.<sup>18</sup>

Claiborne's was a most ambitious endeavor. He had several dozen people working out of, and living on, Kent Island at any one time. Traders, sailors, interpreters (including a black man who lived with the Susquehannocks), and rangers—enough to man four vessels simultaneously—followed the seasonal cycle of the American beaver, collecting furs from March through June that had been taken the winter before. The men in the field were supported by farmers, shipbuilders, coopers, millwrights and millers, hog-keepers, cooks, washerwomen, and at least one Anglican clergyman. Kent Island had a fort, storehouses, cabins, two mills, the first Anglican church north of the James River, and a shipyard, where Claiborne's people built the trading pinnaces, *Long Tail* and *Firefly*, and the shallop, *Start*.<sup>19</sup>

The Susquehannocks welcomed Claiborne's operation because they could market their furs in the relative safety of the Chesapeake without fear of interference from the League Iroquois to the north, and over the years, they remained predictable

and profitable partners. While Kent Island was occasionally attacked by Eastern Shore tribes jealous of the trade that passed them by, nothing of the sort had to be feared from the Susquehannocks. They and Claiborne's men formed an intercultural interest group based on a mutually beneficial trade and enjoyed the most positive Anglo-Indian relationship in the early seventeenth century. According to one of Claiborne's interpreters, the Susquehannocks originally suggested that the English establish a permanent base on Palmer's Island. When the Virginians from Kent Island finally did so, the "king of the Susquehannoes . . . did come with a great number of his Councillors and great Men and with all their consents did give . . . Claiborne . . . Palmers Island with a greate deale of Land more." In addition, the "king did cutt some trees upon the said Iland, and did cause his people to cleare some ground for . . . Claiborne to plant his corne upon that yeare." Many observers reported how the "Indians exceedingly seemed to love . . . Clayborne" and "would sooner trade with . . . [him] then with any other." Over several decades, the Susquehannocks remained ever-faithful to Claiborne, long after his active trading ended. As late as July 1652, Claiborne's supporters would arrange a treaty with the "Nation and State of Sasquehanogh," in which the Susquehannocks signed over extensive territory to the English, "Excepting the Ile of kent, and Palmers Islands which belongs to Captaine Clayborne."<sup>20</sup>

The Chesapeake beaver trade brought Englishmen and Indians together in the most direct and intense form of cultural contact short of war, and yet it allowed, in fact demanded, that Indians remain Indians pursuing the skills they knew best without fear of territorial dispossession and that Englishmen remain Englishmen performing the services they understood without pressure to become Christian crusaders. The quest for the thick and heavy pelts of *Castor canadensis* created a trans-Atlantic network stretching from the beaverdams of America to the docks of London. The crucial point of exchange between *Castor* and the capitalist occurred when the Indian trapper met the English trader, and for at least once in a season, they spoke a mutually-intelligible language that tran-



A Susquehannock warrior, from Theodor de Bry's 1634 engraving of Captain John Smith's original and more accurate 1612 map of the Chesapeake. European engravers took more liberties with Native American subject matter in each new edition and with every new rendition, but the awesomeness of the fierce, proud Susquehannocks is still conveyed by this portrait. From *Historiae Americanae: Decima Tertia Pars* [Frankfurt, 1634]. (Photo courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.)

scended cultural differences. The fur trade united Englishmen and Indians in a cooperative, symbiotic partnership of mutual benefit across a contact frontier with no territorial or cultural boundaries; ironically, however, it divided Englishmen from other Englishmen and Indians from other Indians in a fiercely competitive struggle for lands, markets, and trade goods.

Virginia in general and Claiborne in particular were two victims of this competitive struggle over the resources of the Bay. Both had succeeded too well in their activities and invited competitors who learned of their success. The colony of Virginia grew from the eight hundred or so survivors of

the 1622 Powhatan Uprising to some five thousand persons by 1634. In that latter year, the colonists had two thousand head of cattle, a surplus of maize for export to New England, regular tobacco harvests of a half-million pounds, and many fine estates that were the tangible symbols of success. Claiborne's elaborate preparations and largescale operation brought in 7488 pounds of beaver pelts (worth £4493 at 12 s./lb.), 6348 pounds of tobacco (worth £106 at 4 d./lb.), 2843 bushels of maize (worth £568 at 4 s./bushel), and £124 in cash from the sale of meat and livestock in the six years before Kent Island's takeover by Maryland in 1638.<sup>21</sup>

### KNOWING YOUR NEIGHBORS

*Those Indians that I have convers'd withall here in this Province of Mary-Land . . . are called by the name of Susquehanocks, being a people lookt upon by the Christian Inhabitants, as the most Noble and Heroick Nation of Indians that dwell upon the confines of America; also are so allowed and lookt upon by the rest of the Indians, by a submissive and tributary acknowledgement; being a people cast into the mould of a most large and Warlike deopartment, . . . treading on the Earth with as much pride, contempt, and disdain . . . as can be imagined from a creature derived from the same mould and Earth.*

*The Warlike Equipage they put themselves in when they prepare for . . . March, is with their faces, armes, and breasts confusedly painted, their hair greazed with Bears oyl, and stuck thick with Swans Feathers, with a wreath or Diadem of black and white Beads upon their heads, a small Hatchet . . . stuck in their girts behind them, and either with Guns, or Bows and Arrows. In this posture and dress they march out from their Fort, or dwelling, to the number of Forty in a Troop, singing . . . the Decades or Warlike exploits of their Ancestors, ranging the wide Woods untill their fury has met with an Enemy worthy of their Revenge.*

—George Alsop, *A Character of the Province of Mary-Land* (London, 1666)

Ironically, all the disasters that befell Claiborne were in some measure the result of his pioneering successes in the Chesapeake fur trade. As debates in the Maryland Assembly revealed, the profit potential from the Indian trade “was the main and chief encouragement of . . . [Maryland’s] Lord Proprietarie to undertake the great charge and hazard of planting this Province and to endu[c]e the Gentlemen and . . . first adventurers to come therein.” Early promotional tracts for Maryland advertised the fur trade, and it was the belief of many contemplating investment that “fures alone will largely requite . . . [the] adventure.” Father Andrew White, even before he sailed for America, in 1633 commented upon rumors that a Potomac River trader had, only the year before, “exported beaver skins to the value of 40,000 gold crowns, and the profit . . . is estimated at thirty-fold.”<sup>22</sup>

The granting of the Maryland charter to Cecil Calvert in 1632, and the subsequent arrival of the first colonists (at least partly encouraged by the beaver trade), was the most serious threat to the future of Virginia since the 1622 uprising. Confrontation and conflict would divide “Leah” from

“Rachel,” the sister colonies of the Chesapeake, for the next quarter century.

Contrary to all predictions emanating from London, the Virginians had created a successful society on the strength of addictive weeds and on the backs of forest rodents. Considered “odious or contemptible” by their countrymen across the ocean, Claiborne and his contemporaries had fashioned a hybrid value system based on the freedom of the self-made man and prided themselves in the belief that an immigrant could arrive in the Chesapeake “as poore as any Souldier” and earn “more in one yeare than [was possible] . . . by Piracie in seven,” provided he learned the important lessons that the Indians and the experienced colonists had to teach.<sup>23</sup>

It was such “Planters, who . . . [had been] constrained both to fight and worke for their lives, & subsistence,” and who had “thereby preserved the Colony from destruction and at least restored her to peace and plentie” that Lord Baltimore was forced to contend with in establishing Maryland. The level and longevity of hostilities between contending Englishmen in the Chesapeake can only be appreciated if the Virginians’ deep-seated feelings of un-

fairness and betrayal are understood. After they "had discovered and brought the Indians of those parts . . . to a trade of Corne and Bever . . . with expense of our bloud and estate," a king who had never seen America bestowed a princely grant of territory and authority on an English Catholic lord who would never visit, and knew little about, the Chesapeake.<sup>24</sup>

When the Maryland colonists arrived in the Chesapeake in February 1634, they "expected little from [the Virginians] but blows." Claiborne and the other powerful councilors, feeling "bound in duty by our Oaths to Maintaine the Rights and Privileges of this Colony," held out scant hope for reconciliation and preferred to "knock their cattell on the heads" than to sell livestock to Calvert's people. In July 1634, Governor Harvey arrested Claiborne and charged him with "animating, practising, and conspiring with the Indians to supplant and cutt . . . off" the Marylanders. A conference attended by Harvey, Leonard Calvert, Indian chieftains of the Potomac River area, and other principals was held to iron out the difficulties, but hostility from the Virginia beaver traders continued unabated. One contemporary reported that those angry men intended to "wring [Maryland] out of the hands both of the Indians and Christians . . . [and] become Lords of that Country." Thwarted at every turn and eventually thrown out of office by his powerful councilors, Harvey, too, by 1635 was convinced that members of the Claiborne clique "intend[ed] no less than the subjection of Maryland."<sup>25</sup>

To counter such overt hostility from other Englishmen, Lord Baltimore's colonists were quick to initiate, and careful to maintain, firm and friendly alliances with the Indians of the Potomac and Patuxent rivers. Survival in the face of powerful enemies made such a policy necessary, but current theories made it attractive. Considering the tragic failures of policy represented by the bloody Anglo-Powhatan War, Sir William Alexander, the royal official who granted Claiborne his trading license, in 1624 had advised that Englishmen should "possesse themselves" of American lands "without dispossessing . . . others," for the "ruine" of Indians "could give us neither glory nor benefit." The next year,

Sir Francis Bacon similarly advocated "plantation in a pure soil; that is, where people are not displanted, . . . for else it is rather an extirpation than a plantation."<sup>26</sup>

In approaching colonization with the careful introspection of philosophers, Cecil and Leonard Calvert chose to be tutored by a master of Indian diplomacy—Henry Fleet. Considering that his "hopes and future fortunes depended upon the trade and traffic that was to be had of this river [the Potomac]," Fleet threw his lot in with the first Maryland colonists and helped them get their relations with local Indians off to a promising start. Governor Calvert was careful to dispense gifts to, and hold conferences with, area *werowances* to avoid suspicion and misunderstandings, as was the custom with the beaver traders of the Bay, and his purchase of Yoacomaco lands upon which St. Mary's City was built followed the example of Claiborne in his earlier purchase of Kent Island.<sup>27</sup>

Information about and experience with the local conditions of the Chesapeake provided the main insurance against immediate disaster for the passengers of the *Ark* and *Dove*. Although Father White believed it mysterious or miraculous that the Indians of southern Maryland so easily "yeeld[ed] themselves" to the Calvert colonists upon their arrival, the reaction of the Yoacomacos was entirely predictable, as the experienced Fleet was undoubtedly aware.

The Yoacomacos, other Piscataways, the Patuxents, and the Maryland colonists desperately needed one other, for they had all experienced the hostility of the Virginians and had much to fear from powerful and fur-rich neighbors, both Indian and English. Piscataways and Patuxents looked to Calvert's colonists to protect them from the Susquehannocks and the Iroquois, while Maryland officials saw the local, peaceful tribes as buffers against a host of enemies. The alliance between peoples with a shared vulnerability worked well for many years, and the authors of *A Relation of Maryland* (1635) reported that "experience hath taught us that by kind and faire usage, the Natives are not onely become peaceable, but also friendly, and have upon all occasions performed as many friendly Offices to the English in Maryland . . . as any

neighbour . . . in the most Civill parts of Christendome."<sup>28</sup>

While the hostilities between Virginia and Maryland continued to demonstrate to what an extent the seventeenth-century Chesapeake was *not* one of "the most Civill parts of Christendome," relations between Marylanders and their trading Indians, and between Virginians and their trading Indians, were always peaceful and positive. The Chesapeake beaver trade continued to alter the perceptions and lifestyles of individual colonists for many years, accelerating the process of mutual adaptation and acculturation between Englishmen and Indians. Colonists fresh off the boat quickly discarded the idea of a "frontier" as the rigid, ethnocentric boundary between "civilized Englishmen" and "savage Indians" when honest, pragmatic commerce was at stake.

The Marylanders began their quest for furs almost immediately after arriving in 1634. Shares in a fur trading joint stock, known as "Lord Baltimore and Company," were quickly sold, and the Calverts established a system of licenses for independent traders, reserving ten percent of all returns to themselves. A supply ship arrived at St. Mary's City in December 1634 laden with a king's ransom in trade goods: one thousand yards of cloth, thirty-five dozen wooden combs and seventeen dozen of horn; three hundred pounds of brass kettles; six hundred axes; thirty dozen hoes; forty dozen hawks' bells, and forty-five gross of Sheffield knives, in addition to other items. Because they had an opportunity to learn from the mistakes of the early traders in the Bay, and because they had legal authority over the best fur areas, the Marylanders, for a few years at least, prospered as they had expected to.<sup>29</sup>

Henry Fleet, Leonard Calvert, Thomas Cornwallis, and Jerome Hawley were just a few of the prominent early colonists who entered the beaver trade. The Jesuit fathers also participated through their factors, Cyprian Thorowgood and Robert Clerke. In May 1638, Captain Thorowgood brought one hundred pounds of beaver pelts to Father Philip Fisher (Thomas Copley, Esq.) and was immediately sent out again with forty yards of trade cloth, valued at 1200 pounds of tobacco. Several colonists

owed Father Fisher sums as high as £200 sterling, and among the Jesuits' indentured servants were Henry Bishop, an interpreter, and Mathias de Sousa, the famous mulatto, who frequently traded with the Susquehannocks.<sup>30</sup>

Very quickly, beaver pelts and native beadwork, called *roanoke* and *peake*, found their way into the official records of estate inventories and court cases. They soon rivalled tobacco and maize as "country commodities" of great significance in the colonists' daily lives and give some indication to what an extent early Marylanders were adapting to their new environment. In 1643-44 alone, the Maryland records indicate that a total of six hundred arms' lengths of *roanoke* were demanded by creditors in seven separate debt cases. In those years, *roanoke* had a value of between 1s. 8d. and 2s. 4d. per arms' length, seven- to ten-times more valuable than a pound of tobacco. In 1643-44 also, over 5700 pounds of beaver pelts were mentioned in debt cases, at a time when *one* pound was worth between 12s. and 24s., or from 36 to 144 pounds of tobacco. Beaver prices in this two-year period were two to three times higher than they had been only five years before, whereas tobacco prices remained relatively stable (and low) at 3 to 4 pence per pound.<sup>31</sup> (See Table 1.)

Beads and beaver pelts were quickly adopted as popular currencies in the specie-poor Chesapeake colonies because of their value and portability. In 1643 Thomas Cornwallis specifically demanded 268 pounds of beaver pelts, 73 arms' lengths of *roanoke*, and 11 arms' lengths of *peake* from John Hollis for payment of a debt. Hollis in turn brought suit against a carpenter for 13 pounds of beaver pelts and 67 arms' lengths of *roanoke*, which the latter had purchased from an "Apamatuck Indian" for "hott waters" and an axe. On more than one occasion, colonists found themselves so deeply in debt for beaver pelts that they mortgaged, or had to put up as security, a large portion of their property.<sup>32</sup>

The country commodities associated with the beaver trade frequently appeared in inventories of the 1630s and 1640s. There was a certain irony in expressing the products of a "civilized" English existence

## ADAPTING TO THE "CUSTOMES OF OUR COUNTRY"

... [W]e usually trade in a shallop or small pinnace, being 6 or 7 English men encompassed with two or 300 Indians . . . Two or 3 of the men must looke to the trucke that the Indians doe not steale it, and a great deale of the trucke is often stole by the Indians though we look never soe well to it; alsoe a great parte of the trucke is given away to the Kings and great men for presents; and commonly one third part of the same is spent for victualls, and upon other occasions. And that the usuall manner of that trade is to shew our trucke, which the Indians wilbe very long and teadeous in viewing, and doe tumble it and tosse it and mingle it a hundred times over soe that it is impossible to keepe the severall parcells a sunder. And if any traders will not suffer the Indians soe to doe they wilbe distasted with the said traders and fall out with them and refuse to have any trade. And that therefore it is not convenient or possible to keepe an account in that trade for every axe knife or string of beades or for every yard of cloath, especiallie because the Indians trade not by any certeyne measure or by our English waightes and measures. And therefore every particular cannot be written downe by it selfe distinctly. Wherefore all traders find that it is impossible to keepe any other perfect account then att the End of the voidadge to see what is sold and what is gained and what is lefte.

—Court Testimony of a Kent Island beaver trader, High Court of Admiralty, 4 November 1639

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The 10th of July [1632], about one o'clock we discerned an Indian on the other side of the [Potomac] river, who with a shrill sound, cried, "Quo! Quo! Quo!" holding up a beaver skin upon a pole. I went ashore to him, who then gave me the beaver skin, with his hatchet, and laid down his head with a strange kind of behavior, using some few words, which I learned, but to me it was a foreign language. I cheered him, told him he was a good man, and clapped him on the breast with my hands. Whereupon he started up, and used some complimental speech, leaving his things with me ran up the hill.

Within the space of half an hour, he returned, with five more, one being a woman, and an interpreter, at which I rejoiced, and so I expressed myself to them, showing them courtesies. These were laden with beaver, and came from a town called Usserahak, where were seven thousand Indians. I carried these Indians aboard, and traded with them for their skins. They drew a plot of their country, and told me there came with them sixty canoes . . . I had but little [to trade], . . . and such as was not fit for these Indians to trade with, who delight in hatchets, and knives of large size, broad-cloth, and coats, shirts, and Scottish stockings. The women desire bells, and some kind of beads.

—Capt. Henry Fleet, "A Brief Journal of a Voyage . . . to Virginia," 1631—  
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in terms of raw goods right off a beaver's back. When John Baxter died in 1638, his possessions were sold at auction. His seven suits of clothes brought 46 pounds of beaver pelts, while his 28 pairs of shoes fetched another 14 pounds. A ream of writing pa-

per, symbolic of the superiority that literate Englishmen assumed over Indians and less-educated countrymen, was sold for a one-pound pelt, one half the value of Mr. Baxter's coffin. The 1638 inventory of William Smith of St. Mary's City revealed that

TABLE I.  
Beaver and Bead Values in the Chesapeake Relative to Tobacco

Year	Beaver pelts (price per lb.)	Peake (per fathom)	Roanoke (per arms' length)	Tobacco (per lb.)
1633 Va.	7-9s. (84-108d.)	—	—	4-9d.
1634 Va.	10s. (120d.)	10s. (120d.)	—	4-6d.
1636 Va.	6s. 6d.-10s. (78-120d.)	—	—	4-8d.
1638 Md.	7s. 6d.-8s. (90-96d.)	7s. 6d. (90d.)	1s. (12d.)	3d.
1643 Md.	12s.-25s. (144-300d.)	—	1s. 8d.-2s. 6d. (20-30d.)	2-3d.
1644 Md.	24s. (288d.)	—	2s. 4d. (28d.)	4 d.

Virginia values (all Eastern Shore) are found in Susie M. Ames, ed., *County Court Records of Accomack-Northampton, Virginia 1632-1640* (Washington, D.C., 1954), 16-17, 74.

Maryland values come from *Archives of Maryland*, III, 67-68, 73, 78; IV, 48, 84-89, 103-05, 214, 227, 274.

Tobacco prices are based on Russell R. Menard, "A Note on Chesapeake Tobacco Prices, 1618-1660," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 84 (Oct. 1976), 404-407.

his manservant, with 2½ years to serve, was worth £3—only half of what his seventeen pounds of beaver pelts were appraised at. When Capt. Robert Wintour died in Maryland, the largest single item in an estate worth 11,800 pounds of tobacco was his 28 pounds of beaver, valued at 1120 pounds of tobacco. Everything, and everybody, it seems, had a price in beads and beaver. In 1643 native beads perhaps entered the colonial bedchamber, as a Maryland widow accused her neighbor of having "lyen with an Indian for peake or roanoke." The following year, Richard Bennett, a Virginia Puritan, sold Thomas Cornwalleys, a Maryland Catholic, two black servants for 97 pounds of beaver pelts and some cash, giving new definition to the "skin" trade.<sup>33</sup>

Soon after the arrival of the first Maryland colonists in 1634, a local Indian informed Leonard Calvert that, as strangers to the Chesapeake, they "should rather conforme your selves to the Customes of our Countrey, then impose yours upon us." It was most valuable advice—advice that the beaver traders of the region knew and understood best. Those Englishmen who before and after 1634 were actively involved in intense, face-to-face trading relationships based on mutual trust and reciprocal kindnesses were the ones who most quickly learned to "conforme . . . to the Customes" of the region. The fur trade was the one arena in which the native population had the advantage and called the shots. Because it was a seller's market, based upon the skills of the Indian trapper and dependent

upon the satisfaction of the Indian "consumer," the beaver trade forced the English in the Chesapeake to adapt themselves to native ways, to learn "foreign" dialects in Algonquian and Iroquoian, and to adhere to the important "countrey" rituals of exchange.<sup>34</sup>

Decades of experience, of lessons learned, of innumerable human relationships that crossed ethnic and racial lines, of adaptation to the peoples and the products of the Bay, constituted the unseen, but infinitely important, resources of the Chesapeake that greeted the first Maryland colonists. All were present at the "creation" of the colony, all were part of a now-accepted routine of New World life that had to be grasped, appreciated, and adapted to. The purchase of the first beaver pelt and the first harvest of tobacco and maize were only small steps in a continuous series of adjustments that would determine success or failure in this old land new to the English, but crucial early steps among many adaptations that slowly, irrevocably transformed English colonists into Americans.

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# “With promise of Liberty in Religion”: The Catholic Lords Baltimore and Toleration in Seventeenth-Century Maryland, 1634–1692

JOHN D. KRUGLER

THE ORIGINS AND NATURE OF TOLERATION in Maryland were once controversial historiographical issues. Essentially, Maryland historians have put forth two mutually-exclusive interpretations concerning toleration. The more popular interpretation credited the Calverts with founding religious liberty in the New World. Indeed, religious liberty became Maryland's *raison d'être*. Generally, this interpretation maintained that as a Roman Catholic, George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore (?1580–1632), sought a religious haven for his persecuted Catholic brethren. In seeking his goal, he reflected Catholic thinking on religious toleration, most notably Sir Thomas More. Historians who argued for this interpretation seemed concerned with molding the events to fit the pre-conceived notion. Calvert's career in England was treated in a cursory fashion; it was sufficient that he had become a Roman Catholic. Relying primarily on the self-serving testimony of

Catholic priests and noting the apparently destructive penal legislation which aimed at curtailing Catholic activity, they presented a bleak picture of Catholic life in England. The Lords Baltimore founded Maryland as a refuge for their fellow Catholics who were, in the words of one priest, “persecuted, proscribed, and hunted to death for their religion.” In this interpretation, Maryland was primarily a “Land of Sanctuary.”<sup>1</sup>

A strongly contrasting interpretation also emerged. This interpretation denied any religious motivation on the part of the Calverts. These historians, frequently Protestant and usually hostile to the Calverts, played down the importance of religious toleration, ascribing it to mere expediency on the part of Lord Baltimore (as if doing something expedient were bad). In some instances, they attributed toleration to sources other than the Calverts.<sup>2</sup>

Neither interpretation of Maryland toleration is entirely satisfactory. But if the passions of the earlier polemics have dissipated, it is not because the contending disputes were resolved. Rather, Maryland historians turned their attention to other issues.<sup>3</sup> This essay explores how and why, and with what degree of success, the Catholic Lords Baltimore became involved in the struggle to free the religious conscience from the dictates of the civil government. By examining not only the history of events in Maryland, where the policy of toleration was worked out, but also the history of events in England, where the Calverts formulated their policy, an interpretation emerges that takes into consideration their religion and their economic interests.

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*Abra: Blooteling sculp*

*Effigies Illustrissimi*  
*Baronis BALTEMORE*  
*Hiberniae Absoluti*  
*Provinciarum Terrae*  
*Americae etc.<sup>a</sup>*



*Dni Ceciliij Calvert,*  
*de Baltimore in Regno*  
*Dni et Proprietarii*  
*Mariae et Avaloniz in*

Cecilius Calvert (1605–1675), Second Lord Baltimore (1632–1675), and First Lord Proprietor of Maryland. Mezzotint from life, Abraham Blooteling, 1657. (Courtesy, The Maryland Historical Society.)

## A CONTEMPORARY DESCRIPTION OF CECIL LORD BALTIMORE, 1635

*[H]e is a man of excellent parts, who though young hath given testimony to the world of a ripe judgm[en]t approved worth and solid vertue, noble, reall, courteous, affable, sharpe and quickwitted but not willfull, of a singular piety and zeale toward the conversion of those people, in his owne particular disinterested, but strickly solicitous of the common good, an excellent Master of his passions, of an innocent life and behaviour, free from all vices, nobly conceipted of the businesse, one that doth not with vaine ostentations and empty promises goe about to entice all sorts of adventorors to make prey or benefitt of them, he knowes such a designe [for Maryland] when rightly understood will not want undertakers, but rather cautious and wary whom he admits into so noble a society without good recommenda[tions] and knowledge of them to be free from any taints in life and manners, yet to those he thinke worthy he freely imparts him selfe and fortunes, making them so far as he can, his companions and free sharers in all his hopes: in fine such a man as all the adventorors may promise themselves with assured confidence all content and happines under this govern[en]t uch to confirme he intends to crowne their wishes with his presence by transporting into those parts his owne person wife and children wth a number of noble welborne and able gentlemen that know by experience both how to obey and command, every one fitted with a brave adventure of choice men well fitted, cattell, and all other necessaries to settle such a colony as so worthy a designe deserves[.]*

— From Robert Wintour's "Short Treatise . . . concerning the New Plantation Now Erecting under the Right Ho[nora]ble the Lord Baltmore in Maryland" (1635), modern edition edited by John D. Krugler.

Neither George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore, nor his son and successor Cecil (1605–1675), envisioned Maryland primarily as a Catholic refuge. Both Lords Baltimore fully expected that life for Catholics going to Maryland would be better than it had been in England; but they also expected that this would hold true for their Protestant settlers. Colonization, after all, could hardly be sold on the basis that the settlers would be less well off than they had been in England. As Catholic gentlemen, the Lords Baltimore set out to achieve a goal, namely, to found a successful and prosperous colony, first in Newfoundland and then in Maryland. They achieved this goal, only after years of struggle against overwhelming odds, by making toleration a reality in their colony.<sup>4</sup>

In their colonizing efforts, the Catholic Lords Baltimore were not attempting to implement a philosophical position for which they took their cues from Sir Thomas More or Cardinal Robert Bellar-

mine.<sup>5</sup> Toleration was not so much a philosophical posture as a practical one.<sup>6</sup> In the context of the alternatives they had, the Catholic Lords Baltimore saw religious toleration as a means to accomplish their goal of founding a successful colony, not as an end in itself. To succeed as Catholics, the Calverts recognized that every effort had to be made to minimize religious differences, and especially those which would call attention to their Catholicism. The Catholic Lords Baltimore sought to found a colony where Catholics and Protestants worked together to achieve an economically viable enterprise. In attempting this, they ran counter to the prevailing sentiments of their age.

Maryland was for most of the seventeenth-century a refreshing oasis in an age in which the state or civil authority advocated coercion and persecution to achieve religious uniformity. In England, as elsewhere in post-Reformation Europe, civil peace and political stability rested on the

belief that the subjects' religion must conform to that of the ruling monarch (*cuius regio eius religio*). After vacillating between Catholic and Protestant establishments under Elizabeth I in 1559, the English government sought to impose a degree of uniformity on the religiously-splintered nation. Parliament, through a series of laws, decreed that all English men and women must worship in the *Ecclesia Anglicana*. The broadly based national church created by the Elizabethan religious settlement embraced some of the theology of the more radical Protestant reformers, but also maintained much of the polity of the Catholic Church. Failure to comply with the religious penal laws subjected the violators to penalties ranging from small fines, to confiscation of property, to, in extreme cases, loss of life. Roman Catholic priests by their very presence in England were guilty of treason, a crime punishable by death. With the accession of James I in 1603, Parliament passed, at the first opportunity, the entire body of Elizabethan penal laws. After the Gunpowder Treason in 1605, Parliament added new laws, including the notorious oath of allegiance.<sup>7</sup>

Closely related to the principle of religious uniformity was another major tenet of Christian thinking, namely, that it was the duty of the magistrate, i.e., the monarch, to protect the true faith. Under English law, the monarch was the "supreme governor" of the church and was responsible for maintaining the church as it was established by law. It was the duty of kings, James I lectured his fellow monarchs in *The Trew Laws of Free Monarchies* (1598), "to maintaine the Religion presently professed within their countrie, according to their lawes, whereby it is established, and to punish all those that should presse to alter, or disturbe the profession thereof." In this way the ruler intimately bound together the religious and civil institutions.<sup>8</sup>

Not all parties in England accepted religious uniformity as the norm. The onus of the penal laws notwithstanding, a significant minority of English men and women refused to accept the necessity of worship in the established church. Some persisted in worshipping as Catholics, while zealous Protestants, i.e., Puritans, agitated for greater reformation than provided for by the Elizabethan settlement. But the con-

#### THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE, 1606

*I [name] do truly and sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify, and declare in my conscience before God and the world, That our Sovereign Lord King James is lawful and rightful King of this Realm and of all other his Majesty's dominions and countries; and that the Pope, neither of himself, nor by any authority of the Church or See of Rome, or by any other means with any other, hath any power or authority to depose the King, or to authorise any foreign prince to invade or annoy him in his countries, or to discharge any of his subjects of their allegiance and obedience to his Majesty, or to give licence or leave to any of them to bear arms, raise tumult, or to offer any violence or hurt to his Majesty's Royal Person, State, or Government, or to any of his Majesty's subjects within his Majesty's dominions. . . . And I do further swear, That I do from my heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as impious and heretical, this damnable doctrine and position, that princes which be excommunicated or deprived by the Pope may be deposed or murdered by their subjects or any other whatsoever: And I do believe and in my conscience am resolved that neither the Pope nor any person whatsoever hath power to absolve me of this oath or any part thereof, which I acknowledge by good and full authority to be lawfully ministered unto me, and do renounce all pardons and dispensations to the contrary: . . .*

**This oath of the reign of James I (1603–1625) was very similar in wording to that required of the first Maryland colonists before their departure from England in November 1633.**

tending parties, with few exceptions, did not advocate that all religious doctrines had a fundamental right to coexist with theirs. Rather each sought to establish the supremacy of its own brand of religion. Even among the groups that decried the established religion's supremacy, there existed no particular quarrel with the concepts of religious uniformity and the magistrates' duty to enforce the true faith.<sup>9</sup>

For toleration to flourish, the concept of religious uniformity, and its concomitant belief that it was the magistrates' duty to protect the true faith, had to be broken. The struggle for religious toleration persisted throughout the seventeenth-century. Like a great tidal basin, there were ebbs and flows as the tide for toleration came in and then rushed out. Those who sought to break the hold of religious uniformity were a disparate lot. Some wrote ponderous philosophical treatises to justify religious toleration but with small effect. Others, more practically minded, sought toleration through political activities. There were some successes. However, unlimited toleration was not to be established in the seventeenth-century. As demonstrated by England's 1689 Act of Toleration, passed as part of the settlement ending the Glorious Revolution, the gains were ephemeral. In some respects that statute marked a step backwards from the desperate practices of the abortive reign of the Catholic James II.<sup>10</sup>

Lord Baltimore's little colony in Maryland became part of the seventeenth-century struggle to establish religious toleration in the Western world. Maryland was the first permanent colony founded by the English to be based on the concept of toleration. The Lords Baltimore rejected *cuius regio eius religio* because they were English Catholics. Given the intense anti-Catholic prejudices of their age,<sup>11</sup> they knew that they could not establish Catholicism in Maryland and certainly evidenced no desire to do so. But beyond this they knew, based on the career of George Calvert, that political loyalty was not necessarily conditioned by religious preference. From his experience, the Lords Baltimore concluded that other means besides religious preference could be used to secure political loyalty.<sup>12</sup>

In order to understand Maryland toleration, the Calverts must be viewed as hard-nosed pragmatic Catholic entrepreneurs who were attempting to prosper in a world that was predominately Protestant.<sup>13</sup>

The condition of the English Catholic community on the eve of colonization was one of the important factors which brought the Calverts to their policy of religious toleration. Given the nature of the penal legislation that sought to ensure religious uniformity in England, it is perhaps remarkable that Catholicism survived at all. But contrary to the traditional picture presented by many Maryland historians, the English Catholic community was not a beaten and subdued minority looking only for a way to escape England. To be certain, the penal laws exacted a heavy toll. To dwell endlessly on this factor, however, is to overlook the remarkable transformation and viability of the Catholic community. Not only had Catholics survived the onslaught of the penal laws and the destruction of their Church, but their numbers grew significantly during the reigns of James I and Charles I. For example, a recent study indicated that the number of recusants (Catholics) may have almost doubled between 1603 and 1640. The community flourished to such an extent that one historian concluded that "English Catholicism would not experience such expansion again until the nineteenth-century." In casting their lot with Catholics, the Calverts joined a viable, rejuvenated community that had come to terms with its situation in England.<sup>14</sup>

Equally important was where and how Catholicism survived. For all intents and purposes, the penal legislation destroyed the Catholic Church in England. But to destroy the Church was not, as historian John Bossy so ably argued, to destroy Catholicism. With its hierarchial structure in shambles, English Catholicism survived as a sect. Individual Catholics, demonstrating great wit and cunning, survived because they were able to adapt to the new conditions in England. One reason that the Society of Jesus became the backbone of Catholic survival is because Jesuits recognized this development and became missionary priests.<sup>15</sup>

Functioning like itinerant preachers, the Jesuits carried their priestly office to the scattered families where the ancient faith had survived, notably among the gentry and nobility. For the most part Catholic survival was a function of social and economic standing. Among the lower social and economic elements, Catholicism disappeared. The exceptions were London, where in the very shadow of Parliament, Catholics pursued a rich variety of occupations, and in the countryside where many of the faithful survived in the service of the Catholic gentry or nobility. In these Catholic enclaves in the countryside, the gentry neutralized the impact of the penal legislation and made Catholic survival possible.<sup>16</sup> In turn, their sons, educated overseas, returned as priests to nurture the religion among the gentry, who protected them in their clandestine practices. Caroline M. Hibbard, in assessing the many local studies in recent years, concluded that the great value of these studies was to demonstrate how mistaken was the traditional picture of Catholic life in England and "how normal, even uneventful, was the life led by many English Catholics." A long tradition of civility and tacit understanding existed between Protestant and Catholic. Friendship and social standing prevented the penal laws from having full effect. Thus, while the occasional persecutions were real, they were not particularly effective against the gentry. On the eve of colonization, Catholics had made the necessary adjustments to survive. Their continued existence as Catholics was no longer in doubt.<sup>17</sup>

That Catholicism survived mainly among the gentry and nobility was of particular significance for the Calverts and the Maryland colony. Early in the seventeenth-century an English Jesuit noted the problems involved in attracting Catholic settlers to colonization. Father Robert Parsons (Persons) thought that it would "be a very hard matter" for Catholics to be drawn into a colonial enterprise because "the better and richer sort, in respecte of their wealth and commodities at home and of the love of the countrey and feare of the state, will disdayne commonly to heare of such a motion." Recognizing "the poor sort" were dependent on their betters, he argued that

they would not be an effective source for potential colonists either. The demography of Catholic survival worked against attracting significant numbers of settlers from the Catholic community. The inability to attract many Catholics to their colony profoundly influenced how the Calverts would manage their "Maryland designe." It meant that whatever their preference might have been, the Catholic Lords Baltimore would have to rely on Protestant settlers to succeed in the design.<sup>18</sup>

Only Charles Calvert, the third Lord Baltimore (1637-1715), made a direct statement concerning the origins of toleration in Maryland. While his 1678 assessment does not provide a full explanation, and is incorrect on at least one important matter, Calvert's statement merits a detailed examination. Replying to a set of queries from the Lords of Trade, he fairly described the situation his father confronted:

... at the first planteing of this Provynce by my ffather Albeit he had an absolute Liberty given to him and his heires to carry thither any Persons out of any of the Dominions that belonged to the Crowne of England who should be found Wylling to go thither yett when he came to make use of this Liberty he found very few who were inclyned to goe and seat themselves in those parts But such as for some Reason or other could not lyve with ease in other places . . . .<sup>19</sup>

During the eighteen months between the granting of the charter (20 June 1632) and the sailing of the *Ark* and the *Dove* (22 November 1633) from Cowes, Cecil Lord Baltimore actively recruited investors and settlers from his house in the predominately Catholic Bloomsbury district in London. Father Andrew White, S.J., who earnestly sought the opportunity to conduct an overseas mission, ably assisted Baltimore and wrote Maryland's first colonization tract in 1633.<sup>20</sup> Although the major effort concentrated on men and women with capital available for investment, considerable attention was given to attracting yeomen, artisans, laborers, and other poorer men who would provide the vast majority of immigrants. In spite of a seemingly attractive set of inducements, the campaign was not particularly successful in

attracting Catholics. Those who responded were primarily the younger sons of gentry families. Because of their position in their family and because there was little prospect of employment in England, they opted to join Baltimore. The presence and financial backing of those seventeen Catholic gentlemen and their retinues were significant for launching the Maryland design. However the bulk of the settlers would differ from the proprietor in the critical matter of religious beliefs.<sup>21</sup>

Venturing to America with a Catholic Lord Proprietor gave non-Catholics reason to pause. As Charles Calvert related

And of these [who considered throwing in their lot with the Catholic Baltimore] a great parte were such as could not conforme in all particulars to the severall Lawes of England relating to Religion. Many there were of this sort of People who declared their Wyllingness to goe and Plant themselves in the Provynce so as they might have a Generall Toleration . . . .

He then added, almost parenthetically, that unless certain conditions concerning toleration were met by his father, "in all probability This Provynce [would have] never beene planted."<sup>22</sup>

Several points made later in the century by Charles Calvert need to be explored, namely, the reliance on a heterogeneous religious population in order to secure the necessary settlers; the assertion that the impetus for toleration came from the people who "could not conforme in all particulars;" and that the idea that toleration was a precondition for emigration.

A precise statement of the religious affiliation of the early settlers is not possible. Lord Baltimore did not even know the exact number of settlers who sailed with the first expedition. He reported in January 1634 that he "sent a hopeful Colony into Maryland" with "two of the Brothers gone with near twenty other Gentlemen of very good fashion, and three hundred labouring men well provided in all Things." Baltimore was either misinformed or unduly optimistic, for the actual number falls far short of his estimation. Edward Watkins, searcher for London, reported that immediately before the departure of the *Ark* and the *Dove*,

he tendered the Oath of Allegiance "to all and every the persons aboard, to the number of about 128." Down river, the ships picked up some additional Catholic settlers, including two Jesuits. The most accurate count to date yields a range of between 132 and 148 settlers who participated in the founding of Maryland.<sup>23</sup>

Although English Jesuits reported to Rome that "under the auspices of a certain Catholic baron, a considerable colony of Englishmen, largely Catholics," had been sent to America, it is certain that the majority of the settlers were Protestant. Some of the settlers during the early years were Puritan leaning (i.e., those who "could not conforme in all particulars"). For example, the first significant dispute concerning religion involved the Catholic overseer of the Jesuit plantation and one of his servants. The servant had been reading aloud from the sermons of "Silver Tongued" Henry Smith, a particularly virulent anti-Catholic Elizabethan Puritan minister. Protestantism was strongest among the lower social and economic element in Maryland, while the leadership of the colony was predominately Catholic and would remain so until Baltimore appointed a Protestant government in the late 1640s. Governing a colony with a religiously mixed population in an intolerant age was no mean feat and pushed the resources of the Catholic Lords Baltimore to their limits.<sup>24</sup>

While it is doubtful that Cecil Calvert had a fully developed plan for governing his colony in the early 1630s, it would be incorrect, as Charles Calvert did, to attribute toleration to the dissenters. However imperfectly perceived, toleration was the foundation of the Calverts' overall strategy. The means by which toleration was to be accomplished must be viewed as having an evolutionary character. A number of points must be stressed. The first is the novelty of the "Maryland design": a Catholic colony founded "by the good grace and authority" of a Protestant monarch. The second is that, with the death of George Calvert in April 1632, execution of the design rested squarely with a young Lord Baltimore who not only lacked his father's long experience in government and colonization, but was untested as a leader. Finally, Cecil Calvert

had intended to move with his family to Maryland, where he expected to exercise close control over the conduct of affairs, especially as they related to religion. As it was, his "Adversaries" strenuously fought his effort to found the colony and forced him to remain in England. Having to exercise authority from England complicated Lord Baltimore's task and made all efforts at implementing toleration tentative.<sup>25</sup>

Initially Cecil Calvert thought in terms of keeping toleration as informal as possible.<sup>26</sup> By not relying on formal legislation, the Lord proprietor perhaps thought he could avoid any possible scrutiny of his practice of toleration, which ran contrary to the laws of England. Thus he implemented toleration through executive fiat. The substance of what Lord Baltimore promised Protestant settlers was embodied in the Instructions he issued to his brother Leonard, who was to govern the colony in his absence, and the Catholic commissioners, Jerome Hawley and Thomas Cornwallis. These Instructions, issued on 13 November 1633, required the Catholic leaders to be "very carefull to preserve unity and peace amongst the passengers on Shipp-board" and

... [to] suffer no scandall nor offence to be given to any of the Protestants, whereby any just complaint may hereafter be made, by them, in Virginea or in England, and

that for that end, they cause all Acts of Romane Catholique Religion to be done as privately as may be, and that they instruct all Romane Catholiques to be silent upon all occasion of discourse concerning matters of religion; and that the said Governor and Commissioners treete the Protestants with as much mildness and favor as Justice will permit. And this is to be observed at Land as well as at Sea.<sup>27</sup>

Whether or not Governor Calvert read his Instructions to the settlers, he apparently treated them as if they had the full force of law. During the first decade only two cases involving disputes between Catholics and Protestants became public. In both cases the Catholic government ruled in favor of the Protestants at the expense of the Catholics, who violated the intent of Baltimore's Instructions. In addition, Baltimore's government assiduously avoided any taint of a religious test for voting or holding office. All male residents, excluding servants and Jesuits, were eligible.<sup>28</sup> These practices were contrary to developments taking place in the Massachusetts Bay colony. There, for example, the General Court passed a law which made political freedom an attribute of membership in one of the churches. In that colony the magistrates took seriously their role as "nursing fathers" of the religious institutions. In common with the Anglicans in Virginia, the

#### AN EARLY CONTROVERSY OVER RELIGION

*On Sunday the first of July, william Lewis informed Capt: Cornwaleys that certaine of his servants had drawn a petition to Sir John Hervey [Harvey, governor of Virginia]; & intended at the Chappell that morning to procure all the Protestants hands to it. . . . The writing was of this tenor*

*Beloved in our Lord &c This is to give you notice of the abuses and scandalous reproaches wch God and his ministers doe daily suffer by william Lewis of St Inego's, who saith that our Ministers are the Ministers of the divell; and that our books are made by the instruments of the divell, and further saith that those servants wch are under his charge shall keepe nor read any books wch doth apperteine to our religion within the house of the said william Lewis, to the great discomfort of those poore bondmen wch are under his subjection, especially in this heathen country where no godly minister is to teach and instruct ignorant people in the grounds of religion. . . .*

— The Processe agst William Lewis . . . , June/July 1638, Proceedings of the Provincial Court

Bay colony Puritans moved toward religious uniformity and an established religion.<sup>29</sup>

Under the Catholic Lords Baltimore, Maryland would not have an established religion. The charter was written in such a way that the Calverts could have played a role similar to that of the English monarch, or for that matter, the governor of Virginia. The charter granted Baltimore "the Patronages and Advowsons of all Churches, which . . . shall happen hereafter to be erected: together with license and power, to build and found Churches . . . in convenient and fit places." within the colony. However, the Catholic Calverts made no effort to establish religious institutions, undoubtedly because the charter required that all churches be consecrated according to the ecclesiastical laws of England.<sup>30</sup>

In implementing his toleration strategy, Baltimore acted wisely. He recognized from the beginning that for Maryland to succeed, religious disputes must be avoided at all costs and that religion must be kept as private as possible. Rather than following the accepted pattern of establishing religious uniformity, Baltimore moved to the other end of the spectrum by attempting to use his authority to remove religion from the body politic. From the beginning, and without hesitation, he moved to implement this policy. For a Catholic founding a colony under the auspices of a Protestant nation, no one was more ideally fitted for the task than Cecil Lord Baltimore. A moderate man with a pragmatic outlook, he conscientiously rejected the role of protector of the "true faith." Baltimore survived because he recognized that, if he were to recoup the family fortunes in Maryland, provide an opportunity for Catholics to worship without fear or burdensome laws, and still attract a sufficient number of settlers, he had to keep religion out of politics. The degree to which this could be accomplished would determine the success of his "Maryland designe."

Although Baltimore made one unsuccessful attempt during the first decade of settlement to legislate in religious matters (his proposed "Act for Felonies") and the Assembly passed an ambiguous "Act for Church Liberties" in 1639, the proprietary government did little to provide for the

spiritual needs of the colonists. In marked contrast to the other colonies, religion was considered to be a private matter, of concern to the proprietor only if it became disruptive. As a result, the development of religious institutions in Maryland lagged far behind those of the other English colonies.<sup>31</sup>

Father White and the other Jesuit priests, whose presence in the colony was as a result of their own efforts, provided for the spiritual needs of the Catholic settlers. Cecil Calvert allowed the Jesuits to emigrate under the same conditions afforded the other colonists. Although the priests thought Baltimore drove a hard bargain in acquiring their services, they accepted his terms and sought private solicitations to finance their "pious undertaking." Many Catholics "showed great liberality," contributing both money and servants to secure a Jesuit presence. Once in Maryland, the priests quickly learned they could not expect "sustenance from heretics hostile to the faith nor from Catholics [who are] for the most part poor." In addition, the Jesuits, especially Father Thomas Copley, did not appreciate fully Baltimore's delicate position regarding toleration and pushed him for special privileges as Catholics. Risking alienation from some of his coreligionists, Cecil Calvert steadfastly refused and took steps to replace the Jesuits with secular priests.<sup>32</sup>

Nothing was done to provide for the special religious needs of the Protestant settlers. Although having full freedom to provide their own religious institutions, they lacked the means to do so and lived without benefit of formal religious institutions during the first decade. With the exception of Kent Island, where an Anglican minister briefly served the needs of William Claiborne's settlers, there were no clergymen from the Church of England in Maryland until 1650. Evidently some of the Protestants conducted lay services in the Catholic chapel at St. Mary's City. However, lacking an institutional basis, a number of Protestants succumbed to the proselytizing activities of the Jesuits and were converted to Catholicism.<sup>33</sup>

Considering the potential for religious animosities among the religiously diverse population, the first decade was remarkably

free of religious disputations. There were tensions; but the government ably diffused them. It is not possible to tell where Baltimore's novel experiment would have taken him had he been left to govern his colony in peace. Between 1645 and 1660 events over which he had little or no control intervened to destroy the harmony he sought. In order to maintain his policy of toleration, new tactics were needed.

Robert Wintour declared in 1635 that Baltimore "knowes such a designe when rightly understood will not want undertakers." He was wrong, and optimism soon gave way to despair. Writing from Maryland three years later, Father Copley lamented that "here certainly nothing is wanting but people." In the four years since its founding, Maryland's population had increased only slightly. Baltimore, having committed all his funds to colonization, was living off his father-in-law's generosity. His creditors brought suit against him at home, and his colony, racked by dissension, showed little prospect of profit.<sup>34</sup>

Throughout the 1640s Baltimore's greatest challenge was to get people to his colony. When his efforts to attract settlers from the mother country did not produce the required numbers, he turned his attention to other English colonies. What attracted him to New England, described by the Jesuits in their annual letter in 1642 as "full of Puritan Calvinists, the most bigoted of the sect," cannot be known. In 1643 Baltimore commissioned Cuthbert Fenwick to journey to New England in search of settlers. He carried a letter and a commission to Captain Edward Gibbons of Boston. As reported by Massachusetts Governor John Winthrop, Baltimore offered land in Maryland "to any of ours that would transport themselves thither, with free liberty of religion, and all other privileges which the place afforded, paying such annual rent as should be agreed upon." To Winthrop's obvious relief, "our captain had no mind to further his desire herein, nor had any of our people temptation that way."<sup>35</sup>

The English Civil War (1642-1649), a power struggle between King and Parliament, sidetracked Baltimore's efforts to attract settlers from other colonies. The polarization between Royalists and Round-

heads, between those Anglicans and Catholics who supported the King and those Presbyterians and Independents who supported Parliament, spilled over into the American colonies. In this charged religious atmosphere, Baltimore's task was rendered more difficult. His bold experiment with religious toleration received a severe testing, as his enemies plundered his little colony. When Baltimore lost control of the colony, toleration disappeared.

Using Maryland's close identification with Roman Catholicism and Royalism as a rallying point, "that ungrateful Villaine Richard Ingle," invaded Maryland in 1645 under letters of marque from Parliament. Driving Gov. Leonard Calvert from the colony, the captain of *The Reformation* came close to destroying the budding society that had been nurtured during the past decade under the Catholic leadership. Ingle's destructive machinations, later called "the plundering yeare," were aimed primarily at prominent Catholics, who, in addition to suffering the heaviest property losses, were dragged back to England. As a rationale, Ingle claimed that most of the people in Maryland were "Papists and of the Popish and Romish Religion" and supporters of the king. The invasion of Ingle's "enterprising heretics," as English Jesuit Provincial Henry More styled them, left Maryland in a sorry state and the Catholic proprietor open to legal attack against his charter in England.<sup>36</sup>

Leonard Calvert returned near the end of 1646 to restore some semblance of order in the wake of the anarchy that followed Ingle. His death in June 1647 left Baltimore without his primary agent in the colony. Temporarily, leadership went to a Catholic councilor, Thomas Greene, whom Leonard Calvert had designated as his successor. But the winds of change blew briskly through Maryland. Baltimore, in an effort to outmaneuver his adversaries in Parliament, fostered a revolution in his own government. In 1648 Baltimore commissioned a Protestant governor, William Stone, to replace Greene, gave the council a predominantly Protestant composition, and appointed a Protestant secretary. Although Protestants had held lesser offices in the colony, the governor, councilors, and the secretary had been Catholics.<sup>37</sup>

Why did Lord Baltimore revolutionize his government at this time? Originally, he had relied on Catholic gentlemen and especially on his brother for leadership in the colony. These two elements, religion and family, were noticeably absent in the wake of Ingle's invasion and Leonard Calvert's premature death. But of greater importance, Stone, as a Virginia Protestant and a supporter of Parliament, mitigated the chances that English authorities would step in to seize control of the colony. With changes made by Ingle against his colony still pending before Parliament, Cecil Calvert strengthened his position with that body by appointing Protestants to the major offices.

But equally important in naming Stone was Lord Baltimore's desire to build up the population of his colony, which had been dispersed with Ingle's invasion. As Stone's commission read, he "hath undertaken in some short time to procure five hundred people of British and Irish descent to come from other places and plant and reside within our said province of Maryland for the advancement of our Colony." Baltimore envisioned that his policy of toleration and the lure of rich lands would serve to attract those who suffered from intolerance in other colonies.<sup>38</sup>

That Stone's commission coincided with unrest among Puritans in Virginia was no doubt instrumental in their coming to Maryland. Virginia had passed a law against dissenters in 1639, "though as yet none" lived there.<sup>39</sup> Within three years a congregational church was formed and an appeal was made to New England for clergymen. In 1642 the new governor, Sir William Berkeley, executed his instructions "to be careful that Almighty God is served according to the form established in the Church of England." Under his leadership the Virginia Assembly required the conformity of all ministers to the "orders and constitutions" of the Church of England, and in 1643 compelled all nonconformists "to depart the Colony." In 1648 Berkeley again raised a "persecution against them" and dispersed the congregation at Nansemond. Some of these nonconformists were the first of many who would seek refuge in Maryland under the encouragement of Governor Stone. As one of the Puritan

emigrants put it, "In the year 1649, many, both of the congregated Church, and other well affected people [i.e., supporters of Parliament] in Virginia, being debarred from the free exercise of Religion under the Government of Sir William Barkely removed themselves, Families and Estates into the Province of Maryland, being thereunto invited by Captain William Stone, then Governor for Lord Baltimore, with promise of Liberty in Religion and Priviledges of English Subjects."<sup>40</sup>

With Protestants filling most of the principal offices, and with an influx of settlers traditionally hostile to his religion, Baltimore confronted a new problem, namely, how to protect his co-religionists in the exercise of their religion without jeopardizing his increasingly positive relationship with Parliament. As long as the colony was in the hands of Catholics and family members, there had been no special need for formal legislation. Events after 1645 dramatically altered the situation. Baltimore now sought more formal guarantees for his policy.

Baltimore first moved to secure safeguards for Maryland Catholics through a series of oaths to be administered to all of his principal office-holders, most of whom were now Protestant. Although religious considerations were not apparent in the many previous oaths required by Baltimore, their increasing importance was reflected in the new oaths prescribed in 1648. The governor, for example, had to swear not to "trouble molest or discountance any Person whatsoever in the said Province professing to believe in Jesus Christ and in particular no Roman Catholic for or in respect of his or her Religion nor in his or her free exercise thereof within the said Province so long as they be not unfaithful to his said Lordship or molest or Conspire against the Civil Government Established here." In addition the governor had to attest that he would not "make any difference of Persons in Conferring of Offices Rewards or Favours proceeding from the Authority which his said Lordship has conferred . . . in Respect of their said Religion Respectively," but merely as they are found "faithful and well deserving of his said Lordship." The governor also was to use his "Power and Authority" to protect

Christians in the free exercise of their religion from molestation (without Baltimore's "consent or Privy") by any other officer or person in the province.<sup>41</sup>

These oaths articulated the basic policy that Baltimore wanted to follow. The government would not interfere with the free exercise of religion on the part of Christian Marylanders, especially Roman Catholics; the government would not discriminate on account of religious preference in appointing persons to positions of authority; and the government would protect Christians from being harassed in the free exercise of their religion. All was posited on loyalty to the proprietor. As long as Marylanders remained faithful to his government, they could enjoy religious freedom.

Having dealt with his major appointive officers, Lord Baltimore turned his attention to the remainder of the inhabitants, who were to be dealt with through the assembly that convened 2 April 1649. The vehicle was "An Act Concerning Religion." This act, popularly known as the "Act of Toleration," had its origin in the same circumstances that produced the oaths. In part the Act also was a response to the growing anti-Catholic sentiments expressed during the second half of the decade. The will of Thomas Allen, a poor Protestant, exemplifies the fear and distrust evident in society. Although he left his children with little estate, he willed that "for the disposall of my children I would not have them to live with any Papist." Whether based on fear or on cupidity, there was a rising anti-Catholic sentiment in Maryland.<sup>42</sup>

The 1649 Act Concerning Religion was clearly the work of the proprietor. Although the Act may have been modified by the assembly, it originated in the same imperatives that led to the oaths for the governor and council. Cecil Calvert submitted "a body of laws . . . containing sixteene in Number" to the first assembly under a Protestant governor. He desired that the whole body be passed without alteration, declaring that the new code of laws would replace all existing laws for the colony. However, the assembly, asserting its independence, refused. Eventually the legislators passed a code of twelve laws, the first

being "An Act Concerning Religion," which they undoubtedly lifted from Baltimore's code.<sup>43</sup>

The Act was in keeping with the policy the lord proprietor had assumed from the beginning, namely, to use all means available to hold down religious disputes. This Act resulted not from the needs of the Protestant settlers, as Charles Calvert incorrectly suggested, but grew out of the necessity to reassure Baltimore's fellow Catholics. He still sought to keep religion out of politics, but with the altered nature of Maryland government and the heightened tensions regarding religious matters throughout the English world, formal legislation, as opposed to the informal "Instructions," was necessary to secure peace in the province. Baltimore wanted to unite the people of Maryland "in their affection and fidellity to us" while avoiding those things which tended toward factionalism. He sought the unanimous "and cheerfull obedience to the Civill Government . . . that as wee are all members of one Body Politique of that Province wee may have also one minde in all Civill and temporall matters." Herein lies the novelty of the "Maryland designe." Nothing was said about uniting all Marylanders in religion. What was important was loyalty to the head of the civil government, not to a religious doctrine. As Cecil Calvert summed up his thinking in 1650: "It being a Certaine and true Maxime which tells us, that . . . By Concord and Union a small Collony may growe into a great and renoued Nation, whereas by Experience it is found, that by discord and Dissention Great and glorious kingdomes and Common Wealths decline, and come to nothing." The Act of 1649 was designed to remove, as far as was humanly possible, religion from politics.<sup>44</sup>

Whether the assembly lifted "An Act concerning Religion" verbatim from Baltimore's original code or supplemented it according to its own needs, the legislation imposed severe penalties in an attempt to quell religious disputes. Any person under the authority of the "absolute Lord and Proprietary of this Province" who shall "blaspheme God," or "deny Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, or deny the Holy Trinity, or utter reproachful speeches against

the Holy Trinity" was to be punished with death and forfeiture of all lands and goods to Lord Baltimore.<sup>45</sup>

In similar vein, any person who used or uttered "any reproachfull words or Speeches concerning the blessed Virgin Mary the Mother of our Saviour or the holy apostles or Evangelists" was subject to fines and whippings, and for a third offense, banishment. The Act provided similar penalties for reproachfully calling any person a "heretic, schismatic, idolater, Puritan, Independent, Presbyterian, Popish Priest, Jesuit, Jesuited Papist, Lutheran, Calvinist, Anabapist, Brownist, Antinomian, Barrowist, Roundhead, Separatist," or any other disparaging epithet relating to religion. In addition, the Act made it an offense punishable by fine for profaning "the Sabbath or Lords day called Sunday by frequent swearing, drunkennes or by any uncivill or disorderly recreation, or by working . . . when absolute necessity doth not require it."<sup>46</sup>

The Act concluded on a more generous note. Because the "inforceing of the conscience in matters of Religion hath frequently fallen out to be of dangerous Consequence," and in order to procure more quiett and peaceable government of this Province . . . and . . . to preserve mutuall Love and amity amongst the Inhabitants thereof," the Act proclaimed that no one "professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall from henceforth bee any waies troubled, Molested or discountenanced for or in respect of his or her religion nor in the free exercise thereof." In Maryland no person was in any way to be compelled "to the beleife or exercise of any other Religion against his or her consent." The only condition imposed on this freedom was that the residents "be not unfaithfull to the Lord Proprietary, or molest or conspire against the civill Government."<sup>47</sup>

Lord Baltimore offered freedom of worship to Christians in return for their obedience to him and the civil government instituted by him. The reorganization of the government in 1648 and 1649 strengthened his belief that religion and religious disputes could only frustrate his efforts at controlling the colony. By imposing very severe penalties with regard to what the

inhabitants of Maryland could do or say about another's religion, Cecil Calvert intended to remove religion from politics. At the same time, by offering all inhabitants the free exercise of their religion, he insured the Catholics would be protected in their own religious worship.

Regarding the new Puritan emigrants from Virginia, Baltimore's policy was quickly put into effect. He promised liberty of religion and conscience in return for political obedience and land on the same terms given others, in return for a yearly rent and subscription to an oath of fidelity. If a 1650 document signed by the leading Protestants, including Puritan elder William Durant, means anything, the proprietary government fulfilled the bargain. An incident involving Walter Pakes, who accused Protestant Secretary Hatton of speaking evil about "Roman Catholickes," indicated that the Proprietor leaned over backwards to avoid trouble. He absolved his Secretary of any wrong doing, once again supporting a Protestant against a Catholic. In addition, Baltimore's officials erected a new county (Anne Arundel) to encompass the Virginia Puritans, allowed them to choose their own officers, and to hold their own courts.<sup>48</sup>

These extraordinary measures, however, proved insufficient to insure the civil peace Baltimore so much needed for his colony to prosper, as once more outside forces intervened to disrupt the colony. In 1651 Parliament, which had defeated and executed Charles I in the Civil War, dispatched a commission to reduce Virginia to the obedience of the Puritan Commonwealth. After accomplishing their mission in Virginia, the Commissioners, taking a broad interpretation of their instructions, decided to reduce Maryland to obedience also. Between 1652 and 1655, intermittent war raged between the commissioners and their supporters, mainly the recently arrived Puritans from Virginia, and Governor Stone and Calvert loyalists. When Governor Stone capitulated in 1655 and submitted to the presumed authority of the commissioners, Baltimore was again deprived of his province without benefit of legal proceedings.<sup>49</sup>

Having gained control of Baltimore's



**Freedom of Conscience Monument, St. Mary's City**

Designed by Baltimore sculptor Hans Schuler and erected by the counties of Maryland in 1934 to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the state, this large limestone statue honors the tolerant Act Concerning Religion of 1649. The figure, seemingly caught between a rock and a hard place, nicely symbolizes Maryland's geographical position in the 17th century, between the intolerant Anglicanism of Virginia to the south and the intolerant Puritanism of Massachusetts to the north. In another sense, the monument reminds us that the 1649 toleration act was philosophically and historically a midpoint between the successful, de facto Calvert policies of the early years and the drastic, restrictive era for Catholics from 1689 to the American Revolution. (Courtesy, The Maryland Historical Society.)

province, the Puritans set about to undo his policy of toleration. The "Act concerning Religion" of 1654, passed in an assembly that excluded all inhabitants who had supported the proprietor or who were Roman Catholic, stands in marked contrast to Cecil Calvert's 1649 Act. Considerably shorter than its predecessor, the 1654 Act differed in two significant ways. It dropped the extreme provisions against blasphemy and it excluded Catholics explicitly and Anglicans implicitly from protection in the profession of their faith. It is inconceivable that Lord Baltimore, the extensive grant of power he received in his charter notwithstanding, could have operated in a similar fashion by using religion as a basis for excluding persons of a particular faith from the full enjoyment of political privileges.<sup>50</sup>

Acting within the context of the anti-Catholicism of their time and sensing that Lord Baltimore's toleration policy reflected his weakness within the English Protestant world, the Puritans forgot their promises of fidelity and unseated the proprietor. At this point, supported by the commissioners and religiously in accord with the dominant elements in Parliament, the Puritans acted from a position of strength. What they did not reckon with was Baltimore's political genius and his ability to manipulate the Puritan government in England based on his legal right to Maryland. Much to their surprise, Cromwell eventually came out in support of the Catholic proprietor. By 1657 Calvert had reestablished control of his province. One of his first priorities was to

ensure that the 1649 Act Concerning Religion was thereafter "inviolably observed both in the Provincially and all inferior Courts of the Province." He returned to oaths as a means of insuring the religious freedom of the inhabitants, ordering justices in St. Mary's County, where most of the remaining Catholics lived, to swear not "to trouble molest or discountenance" any person "professing to believe in Jesus Christ for or in Respect of his Religion" nor in the free exercise of that religion.<sup>51</sup>

Of great significance is the provincial court case involving Father Francis Fitzherbert, S.J., who arrived in 1654. A "zealous missionary" who brought "aggressive leadership" to the Maryland order, the attorney general charged him in 1658 with four counts of "practising of Treason & Sedition & gyving out Rebellious & mutinous speeches" and endeavoring to raise distractions and disturbances within the colony. Two of the counts charged him with attempting to seduce and draw certain inhabitants from "their Religion," while another accused him of threatening Catholic Councillor Thomas Gerard with excommunication. His behavior, the attorney general maintained, was contrary to "a knowne Act of Assembly." The case was not settled until 1662. Father Fitzherbert entered a plea to dismiss the suit on the grounds that although the charges may be true, they were insufficient to sustain the claim. Basing his demurrer on the 1639 Act for Church Liberties and the 1649 Act Concerning Religion, he argued that active

#### THE "SECOND" ACT CONCERNING RELIGION, 1654

*It is Enacted and Declared . . . by the Authority of the present Generall Assembly That none who profess and Exe[r]cise the Popish Religion Commonly known by the Name of the Roman Catholick Religion can be protected in this Province by the Lawes of England formerly Established and yet unrepealed nor by the Government of the Commonwealth of England Scotland and Ireland and the Dominions thereunto belonging[.]*

*. . . Liberty [of religion] be not Extended to popery or prelacy nor to such as under the profession of Christ hold forth and practice Licentiousness.*

— "An Act Concerning Religion," Proceedings of the Maryland Assembly, 20 October 1654.

preaching and teaching was "the free Exercise of every Churchmans Religion." The court sustained his plea.<sup>52</sup>

The period thus ushered in, from Cecil Calvert's restoration in 1657 to his death in 1675, was perhaps the calmest period in terms of religious disputation in seventeenth-century Maryland. In 1666 Baltimore instructed his son and governor, Charles Calvert, to "most strictly and Carefully observe keepe and Execute and cause to be observed kept and executed" the 1649 Act Concerning Religion. This Act served as the basis for preserving the peace after 1660 and was in no small way responsible for the remarkable growth of the colony after that date. It is perhaps no coincidence that also in 1666 George Alsop, in a fit of hyperbolic exuberance, wrote that in Maryland "the Roman Catholick, and Protestant Episcopal, (whom the world would persuade have proclaimed open wars irrevocably against each other) contrary wise concur in an unanimous parallel of friendship, and inseparable love intayled unto one another." Further, he noted that the "several Opinions and Sects that lodge within this Government, meet not together in mutinous contempts to disquiet the power that bears Rule, but with a reverend quietness obeys the legal commands of Authority." If Alsop exaggerated, he did not err. Lord Baltimore's Maryland design finally began to grow and prosper in the fashion he had envisioned.<sup>53</sup>

It had taken Baltimore twenty-seven years to establish religious toleration on a firm basis, from the time he issued his Instructions in 1633 until he reaffirmed the 1649 Act Concerning Religion in 1660. For about the next twenty-seven years, religious toleration formed the basis of a flourishing society. There were two major success stories, involving the two most despised religious groups in the English-speaking world. Of all the Protestant sects, the Quakers were the most scorned and least welcomed in both England and the American colonies. Roman Catholics, increasingly a symbol of political absolutism, continued to excite fears among the English, and like the Quakers, were proscribed in their activities in England and in all the colonies but Maryland. These two disparate

groups gained the most from Lord Baltimore's policy, and, in turn, provided much of the leadership of the colony after 1660.

In 1677 Charles Calvert, the third Lord Baltimore, estimated that the "greatest part of the Inhabitants of that Province (three of four at least) doe consist of Praesbiterians, Independents, Anabapists and Quakers." Of all Protestant groups named, the Quakers were the most numerous. Entering Maryland in the turbulent late-1650s, the Quakers tested the substance of Baltimore's restored policy of toleration. Persecuted and expelled from other colonies, Quaker principles had yet to find a home in America. Initially, Maryland seemed to fit the intolerant pattern established in the other colonies. Maryland Quakerism began with the work of Elizabeth Harris, who in about 1656 succeeded in gaining converts among the recent Puritan immigrants. Other missionaries soon followed and enjoyed equal success. This rapid growth of the Quaker community, coupled with the unsettled condition of the government in 1658 and 1659, produced a brief but heavy persecution of that notorious sect. One of the problems was the Quakers' refusal to take oaths. Given the great emphasis Baltimore placed on oaths as a means of insuring loyalty, the move against the Quakers is not surprising. However, the persecution quickly abated as Cecil Calvert's government sought an accommodation with them.<sup>54</sup>

After 1660, Baltimore viewed the Quakers as less of a political threat, especially after they made concessions regarding attestations of their fealty to him as lord proprietor. As the Society of Friends rapidly increased in numbers and gained adherents among influential settlers, Calvert and his officers in Maryland saw them as a potentially useful addition to society. In extending toleration to the Quakers, Baltimore may have sought to gain their support in establishing his claim to disputed territory on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Whatever the basis of the accord, it worked to the benefit of both parties.<sup>55</sup>

The Quakers, zealous missionaries who were able to organize more effectively than other Protestant sects, increased rapidly under Baltimore's tolerant policy. When

the first Maryland General Meeting took place in 1672, Quakerism was wide-spread, with adherents in the majority of counties. In return, the Quakers provided much needed political leadership in the colony, serving through to the end of Cecil Calvert's proprietorship (1675) in all levels of government. During this period, Quaker representation on the governor's council was especially noticeable.<sup>56</sup>

The Quaker experience in Maryland was not without its rough edges, however. Questioning their previous acceptance of political oaths, Quakers began to withdraw from political office early in Charles Calvert's proprietorship. In the 1680s Quakers were markedly absent from the council. The lord proprietor turned against the Quakers in 1681, making their exclusion, partly voluntary, complete. However, as political circumstances changed in the late 1680s, Charles again courted the Quakers, indicating a willingness to accommodate their particular political scruples. The Quakers, having flourished under the Calverts' generally lenient policy of toleration, continued to support the proprietor. In the Protestant movement that overthrew proprietary government in 1689, Quakers were conspicuous by their absence. They also strenuously opposed the establishment of the Church of England in the 1690s.<sup>57</sup>

The other major beneficiary of Maryland's restored toleration policy were Roman Catholics, who after 1660 were able to enjoy the security of conscience and prosperity for which they had emigrated. Although they were the first to establish religious institutions in Maryland, Catholics still comprised only a small portion of the population during the second half of the century. Charles Calvert in 1677 estimated that they had the fewest numbers of all the many denominations in the colony.<sup>58</sup>

In keeping with past practices, Cecil Lord Baltimore did little after 1660 to provide for the needs of his fellow Catholics. He did, however, expect the Church hierarchy to do so, and was irritated by the weak effort put forth on behalf of Maryland. When Claudius Agretti visited Baltimore "at his villa near London" in 1669, the proprietor angrily repudiated the impression that he opposed the presence of reli-

gious orders in his colony. He criticized the Holy See, which, influenced by this false impression, had consigned no missionaries to Maryland in the course of twenty-four years. Baltimore lamented that there were but two ecclesiastics for about two thousand Catholics and that efforts to secure diocesan priests had been stymied because Maryland had been reserved for the Jesuits. After this meeting, Propaganda Fide sought to reach an accord with Baltimore in order to send "pious ecclesiastics" who met with his approval.<sup>59</sup>

Despite a flurry of activity as a result of Cecil Calvert's complaint, Maryland remained a Jesuit province. On board from the beginning, the Jesuits had persevered through the various disruptions and maintained their mission. In their annual letters they continued to claim converts among the Protestants, and in spite of their small number, to serve the needs of Maryland's Catholics. Roman Catholics, in accordance with the governing principles, were expected to maintain their own clergy without support of the government.<sup>60</sup>

If Catholics were a small minority of the population, they nevertheless had an importance which transcended their actual numbers. As was the case in England, Maryland Catholics tended to be found in the upper social stratum. After 1660, they assumed a political role far beyond what their numbers suggested, although never to the extent of the 1630s. With the appointment of his son Charles as governor in 1661, Cecil was able to reestablish a network based on familial and religious ties. In this way he expected to build a following that would remain "faithful" to him. Obviously there was a strain of thinking, although never institutionalized, that religion was a method of determining loyalty. Charles Calvert expected Catholics to vote as a block in the assembly in support of the proprietor as a matter of "their own interest."<sup>61</sup>

Unlike his father, Charles Calvert, as second lord proprietor, was not as sensitive to keeping his support as broadly based as possible. Under his leadership, the composition of the council changed from one having a significant Protestant representation to one dominated by Catholics and a few

Protestant relatives of the Calverts. Of the ten appointments made by Charles between 1677 and 1684, only one went to an unrelated Protestant. By confining his appointments to a relatively small portion of Maryland's population, namely, Catholics or Protestants who had married into the family, Baltimore made Maryland vulnerable to attacks from England. This was increasingly true in the wake of the Popish plot (1678) and the anti-Catholic Exclusion Crisis (1679–1681) in England, which attempted to eliminate James, Duke of York, who was an avowed Catholic, as heir to Charles II. Maryland was not lacking in disgruntled subjects who were willing to raise a hue and cry in England. Ironically, in the case of the Catholic population, toleration had succeeded too well, and, by not showing the sensitivity to religious sensibilities that his father had, the third Lord Baltimore sowed the seeds of his own undoing.<sup>62</sup>

The one group that seemed to have gained the least from toleration was the unchurched Anglicans. Although Charles maintained that their numbers were no greater than the Catholics, their population was rapidly increasing by the late seventeenth century. The immigrants of the 1670s and 1680s tended to be adherents of the Church of England and they found little in the way of institutionalized Anglicanism in Maryland. Under the proprietorship of Charles Calvert, Anglicans become a vocal and dissident minority, who made their complaints directly to English authorities.<sup>63</sup> In 1676 John Yeo, a Church of England minister in Maryland, wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury to inform him of the "Deplorable state & condition of the Province of Maryland for want of an established ministry." He claimed that there were only three ministers who were conformable to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England to serve the approximate 20,000 Anglicans scattered throughout Maryland. The result was that Anglicans "fell away" either to "Popery, Quakerism or Phanaticisme." In addition, he maintained that without an established Church "the lords day is prophaned, Religion despised, & all notorious vices committed," so that Maryland has "become a Sodom of uncleanness & a Pest house of

iniquity." Yeo wanted the archbishop to use his influence in the English government to lobby for the establishment of a Protestant ministry in Maryland. "A hue and crye," a particularly virulent anti-Catholic tract, was sent in the same year. Its anonymous author demanded to know why Anglicans must submit to Maryland's "arbitrary government" and thereby entangle "our innocent posterity under that tyrannicall yoake of papacy." Anglican unrest, combined with endemic anti-Catholicism, provided a real threat to toleration.<sup>64</sup>

The unchurched Anglicans seemed unwilling to accept the basic rules laid down by the Catholic Lords Baltimore. Given the relationship to which they were accustomed in England, Anglicans were quite uncomfortable with having their ministers "maintained by a voluntary contribution of those of their own persuasion," even though, as Charles Lord Baltimore pointed out, the situation was the same for "Presbiterians, Independents, Anabaptist, Quakers, & Roman Church." Lacking the missionary zeal of the Quakers and the affluence of the Catholics, Anglicans saw their only hope in a tax-supported institution. However, their efforts to secure legislative support for an established ministry failed. Dissatisfied on so many counts, the Anglicans were a continuing source of political unrest.<sup>65</sup>

Not all adherents to the Church of England were disgruntled. In an attempt to answer the charges that his government showed partiality "on all occasions towards those of the Popish Religion to the discouragement of his Majesties Protestant Subjects," in 1682 Baltimore produced a statement signed by twenty-five influential Anglicans. They acknowledged "the general freedom & priviledge which we and all persons whatsoever . . . enjoy" under proprietary government. From their own observation, they knew that Baltimore's favors were impartially distributed without any respect to religious persuasion and that Protestants were well-represented in the government. However, perhaps because so many of the signees were related to the proprietor by marriage, their protestation had little effect with English authorities. Charles Calvert's departure from the province in 1684 accentuated developments that could not be overcome by declarations. It

## CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES ON RELIGION IN MARYLAND, 1669, 1676

... [D]ivine goodnesse hath beene pleased to Land my foot uppon a province off Virginia called Mary-Land which is a Province distinct from the government of Virginia: of which the Ld Baltemore is proprietor and governor. Under his Ldships goverment we enjoy a greate deale of liberty and Pticularly in matters of religion, we have many that give obedience to the church of Roome, who have their publike libery, our governour being of that Pswasion: wee have many also of the reformed religion, who have a long while lived as sheepe without a shepherd [T]he last yeare brought in a young man from Ireland, who hath already had good successe in his worke: ... how many young men are there in England that want wages and worke too we cannot but judge itt their duty to come over and helpe us.

— Letter of Matthew Hill to Richard Baxter, from Charles County, Maryland, 3 April 1669

\* \* \* \* \*

O yee reverent Bishops in England Here lays the Keye of the work, and the popes service, why doe ye not take care for the sheep in Maryland, and send protestant pastores, as the pope doth to his papists, in America?

...

Wee confess a great many of us came in servants to others, but wee adventured our lives for it, and got our poore living with hard labour out of the ground in a terrible Willdernes, and som have advanced themselves much thereby: And so was my Lord Baltemore but an inferior Irish Lord, and as is sayth one of the Popes privy Agents in England.

— From “Complaint from Heaven with a Huy and crye” (1676)

is understandable that he would entrust his government to a group of deputy governors who were either relatives or Catholics. However, with the death or departure of a number of Protestants by 1688, his government seemed to fit the image projected by disgruntled Protestants.<sup>66</sup>

The Calvert design was based on gaining the loyalty of Marylanders of differing religious affiliations and tying them to the proprietary government. The Calverts had been successful to a remarkable degree among the Catholics and Quakers and to a lesser degree among Anglicans and other Protestant sects. But the success and visibility of the Catholics in the late 1680s, and the increasing anti-Catholicism of this period in England and America, worked against the continuation of their policy of toleration. Too many Marylanders were left out. For them Maryland had become a closed society that could only be opened by force of arms. The Protestant Revolution

in Maryland destroyed the Catholic Calverts' bold experiment in religious toleration. With the final establishment of the Church of England in 1701, both Quakers and Catholics were excluded from full membership in Maryland society.<sup>67</sup>

Daring and resourceful, the Catholic Lords Baltimore had consistently ventured to rise above their age. Their effort to implement religious toleration cannot be diminished by its ultimate failure, for they pointed to the future. Their failure brings to mind a comment on recent politics by Richard N. Goodwin. “Of all human activities,” Goodwin wrote,

politics—the process of acquiring and using governmental or official power—is among the most responsive to shifting values and situations, always reflecting the dominant and visible themes of the human turbulence which creates it and which it attempts to govern. Hence politics cannot be understood or analyzed apart from the wider society which give it coloration and direc-

tion. An artist may be an age ahead of his time. Even the greatest politician can only be a step or two ahead of his. . . . Actions and public words based on a more profound vision than this may suit a prophet, but not a politician. His material is the desires and attitudes of living people.<sup>68</sup>

Marylanders, and for that matter English men and women, were not ready for broadly-based religious toleration in the seventeenth century. English History provides comparable examples in the efforts of both James I and James II, who attempted to extend toleration to Catholics and other dissenters through executive power. But neither of these Stuart kings, popularly identified with absolutism, could establish toleration, a concept which ran so contrary to public opinion. That the Catholic Lords Baltimore established and maintained toleration for as long as they did attests to their skills as proprietors of their colony. The failure of religious toleration came because too many of their subjects no longer saw the value of it. And this no Catholic Lord Baltimore could overcome.

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The author wishes to express his appreciation to Mary Croy for her research assistance and to the Reverend Eric McDermott, S.J., who generously shared his extensive research collection on early Maryland with the author.

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21. Russell R. Menard, "Economy and Society in Early Maryland" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1975), 32-36.
22. *Md. Arch.*, V, 267-268. Catholics also sought guarantees. Catholic Thomas Cornwallis wrote that Baltimore knew that "my Security of Contiens was the first Condition that I expected from this Government" (Cornwallis to Baltimore, 16 April 1638, *The Calvert Papers*, 3 vols. [Baltimore, 1889-1899], I, 172-173).
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25. *Narratives of Early Maryland*, ed. Hall, 118; Baltimore to Wentworth, 10 January 1633/34, *Strafforde's Letters*, I, 178; "The Lord Baltimore's Declaration to the Lords," *Calvert Papers*, I, 223-225; *To Live Like Princes*, ed. Krugler, 36.
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  33. Lawrence C. Wroth, "The First Sixty Years of the Church of England in Maryland, 1632-1692," *MHM*, XI (March, 1916), 4, 12; George B. Scriven, "Religious Affiliation in Seventeenth Century Maryland," *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, XXV (September, 1956), 221, 222. There were only twenty-two Anglican clergy in Maryland before 1692 (Wroth, "First Sixty Years," *MHM*, 16; *Records of the Society of Jesus*, ed. Foley, III, 369-371).
  34. *To Live Like Princes*, ed. Edward Krugler, 38. Copley to Cecil Lord Baltimore, 3 April 1638, *Calvert Papers*, I, 21; Thomas Lord Arundel to Secretary of State Sir Francis Windebanke, 17 February 1638/39, P.R.O. State Papers 16/413/17; Krugler, "Lord Baltimore, Roman Catholics, and Toleration," *Catholic Historical Review*, 65-73. For a study very critical of the political leadership of Baltimore and Gov. Leonard Calvert, see Steven Douglas Crow, "Left at Libertie": The Effects of the English Civil War and Interregnum on the American Colonies, 1640-1660" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974), 18-20, 23, 24.
  35. *Records of the Society of Jesus*, ed. Foley, III, 381; John Winthrop, *The History of New England From 1630 to 1649*, ed. James Savage, 2 vols. (2nd ed., Boston, 1853), II, 72, 149; *Md. Arch.*, IV, 103, 204. The first encounter between the people of Massachusetts and the sailors of the *Dove*, who had been sent in 1634 to trade corn for fish, established something less than cordial relations. Winthrop reported that some of the Bay settlers aboard the Maryland vessel were reviled by the Maryland sailors who called them "holy brethren" and by cursing and swearing "most horribly" (*Journal*, ed. Savage, I, 172). Gibbons eventually relocated in Maryland. On 20 January 1650/51 Baltimore appointed him to the Council and named him "Admiral of our Province" (*Md. Arch.*, III, 261-262).
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  43. Baltimore to Gov. Stone, 26 August 1649, *Md. Arch.*, I, 262-263. The extant records of the 1649 Assembly are incomplete. Only the results of the last day of the three week session remain. This means that any assessment of the Act must be tentative (Krugler "Puritan and Papist," 272-276).
  44. Baltimore to Gov. Stone, 26 August 1649, *Md. Arch.*, I, 272. On the negative impact of this letter, see Crow, "Left at Libertie," 134-135.
  45. *Md. Arch.*, I, 244. Much of the earlier historical literature is partisan in nature. Exponents of Catholic and Protestant viewpoints have claimed credit for the "liberal" aspects of the Act while attempting to pin the more severe aspects of the other religion (Smith, *Religion under the Baltimores*, 319; Russell, *Land of Sanctuary*, 201, 205). This assembly was not under a Puritan influence. The majority of Puritans were yet to enter Maryland. As far as the religious make-up of the assembly, it is probable that Catholics still dominated, but "an accurate reconstruction of the membership is impossible" (Falb, "Advice and Ascent," 309). This part of the Act should be compared to Baltimore's "An Act for Felonies," presented to the assembly in 1639 (*Md. Arch.*, I, 71-72).
  46. *Md. Arch.*, I, 245-246. Baltimore undoubtedly added this last section to induce further Puritan migration. He may have been already negotiating with Robert Brooke, "a well-to-do English Puri-

- tan" who intended "to transport himself his wife Eight sons and family and a Great Number of other Persons" to Maryland (*ibid.*, III, 237-241).
47. *Md. Arch.*, I, 246-247.
  48. The document was signed on 17 April 1650 and was printed in John Langford, *A Just and Cleere Refutation of a False and Scandalous Pamphlet Entitled Babylons Fall in Maryland &c and a true discovery of certaine strange and inhumane proceedings of some ungratefull people in Maryland, towards those who formerly preserved them in time of their greatest distresse . . .* (London, 1655), in *MHM*, IV (March, 1909), 63; *Md. Arch.*, I, 318-319; III, 257.
  49. *The Lord Baltemore's Case, Concerning the Province of Maryland . . .* (London 1653), in *MHM*, IV (June, 1909), 171-172; *Md. Arch.*, III, 264, 271, 276, 311-312; "A Surrender of Virginia to the Parliamentary Commissioners, March 1651-52," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, II (July, 1903), 34; Krugler, "Puritan and Papist," 281-288.
  50. *Md. Arch.*, I, 340-341. How many Catholics remained in Maryland at this point is a matter of conjecture. John Hammond maintained "they are but few." *Hammond versus Heamonds or an Answer to an audacious Pamphlet, published by an impudent and ridiculous Fellow, named Roger Heamans* (London, 1656), in *MHM*, IV (September, 1909), 239.
  51. *Md. Arch.*, III, 384, 424; Falb, "Advice and Ascendancy," 380-388.
  52. *Md. Arch.*, XLI, 132-133, 144-146, 170-171, 566-567; Edwin Warfield Beitzell, *The Jesuit Missions of St. Mary's County, Maryland* (privately printed, 1959), 29.
  53. *Md. Arch.*, XV, 13; George Alsop, *A Character of the Province of Mary-Land. Together with a Collection of Historical Letters* (London, 1666), in *Narratives of Early Maryland*, ed. Hall, 349.
  54. *Md. Arch.*, V, 133; Kenneth L. Carroll, "Elizabeth Harris, the Founder of American Quakerism," *Quaker History*, LVIII (Autumn, 1968), 96-111, and "Persecution of Quakers in Early Maryland (1658-1661)," *ibid.*, LIII (Autumn, 1964), 78, 80.
  55. Kenneth L. Carroll, "Quaker Opposition to the Establishment of a State Church in Maryland," *MHM*, LXV (Summer, 1970), 153. David W. Jordan, in describing Baltimore's willingness to extend religious freedom to the Quakers, called it "another calculated effort" to broaden his support ("'Gods Candle' within Government: Quakers and Politics in Early Maryland," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd. ser., XXXIX [October, 1982], 632).
  56. J. Reaney Kelly, *Quakers in the Founding of Anne Arundel County, Maryland* (Baltimore, 1963), 1.
  57. David W. Jordan, "Maryland's Privy Council, 1637-1715," in *Law, Society, and Politics in Early Maryland*, ed. Aubrey C. Land, Lois Green Carr, and Edward C. Papenfuse (Baltimore, 1977), 76; Jordan, "Quakers and Politics," *WMQ*, 636-637, 645; Carroll, "Quaker Opposition," *MHM*, 155.
  58. *Md. Arch.*, V, 133. Richard Shepherd, an English captain who traded in Maryland, dramatically overstated the situation when he claimed in 1681 that "there are thirty Protestants to one Papist" (*ibid.*, 301).
  59. *United States Documents in the Propaganda Fide Archives: A Calendar*, ed. Finbar Kinneally, 1st series, 8 vols. to date (Washington, D.C., 1966-), III, 109, 203. For the politics of Propaganda Fide in the period of George Calvert's Newfoundland colony, see Codignola, *Terre d'America E Burocrazia Romana*. Agretti was on a special mission to examine the condition of ecclesiastical affairs in England. His report was dated 14 December 1669. The two Franciscans who arrived in 1673 may have been as a result of Baltimore's complaint (*Records of the Society of Jesus*, ed. Foley, III, 392).
  60. Calvert to Lord Baltimore, 2 June 1673, *Calvert Papers*, I, 281-282. For the years 1671, 1672, 1673 and 1674 the Jesuits claimed 184 converts and 299 infant baptisms (*Records of the Society of Jesus*, ed. Foley, III, 392).
  61. Commission to Charles Calvert, 14 September 1661, *Md. Arch.*, III, 439; Charles Calvert to Baltimore, 26 April 1672, *Calvert Papers*, I, 264-265.
  62. Lois Green Carr and David W. Jordan, *Maryland's Revolution of Government, 1689-1692* (Ithaca, 1974), 221; Miller, *Popey and Politics*, ch. 8.
  63. *Md. Arch.*, V, 267. David W. Jordan, "Political Stability and the Emergence of a Native Elite in Maryland," *Chesapeake in Seventeenth Century*, ed. Tate and Ammerman, 248.
  64. *Md. Arch.*, V, 130-131; 143.
  65. *Ibid.*, I, 404, 406; II, 86; V, 133. For a different perspective, see Wroth, "First Sixty Years," *MHM*.
  66. *Md. Arch.*, V, 300, 353-355; Jordan, "Privy Council," *Law, Society, and Politics*, ed. Land, Carr, Papenfuse, 75.
  67. Carr and Jordan, *Revolution*, 212-214, 218-219. For the petitions of eighteenth-century Maryland Catholics for equal participation with all other subjects "in All the Rights and Privileges" of government, see "Popery in Maryland," *The American Catholic Historical Researcher*, n.s., IV (April, 1908), 258-276, and the anonymous statement, "Liberty and Property or the Beauty of Maryland Displayed," in *United States Catholic Historical Magazine* III (1890), 237-263.
  68. "The Shape of American Politics," *Commentary*, 43 (June 1967), 25.

# Sources of Political Stability and Upheaval in Seventeenth-Century Maryland

LOIS GREEN CARR

THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CHESAPEAKE was frequently the scene of political turmoil. In the first twenty-seven years, Maryland colonists experienced armed clashes with Virginians in 1635, an "invasion" and local rebellion in 1645, a pitched battle in 1655 between Lord Baltimore's forces and those of a rival government established by Parliamentary commissioners, and a second attempt at rebellion in 1660. Nearly thirty years of mostly peaceful development after 1660 were interrupted by the overthrow of proprietary government in 1689, which brought royal authority to Maryland for the next twenty-five years. In Virginia, the council temporarily ousted the royal governor in 1635, Parliamentary commissioners took control of the government in 1652, and in 1676 an armed rebellion led by Nathaniel Bacon resulted in the burning of Jamestown and a number of executions before the royal governor, Sir William Berkeley, restored authority.

Recently scholars have begun to argue that seventeenth-century Chesapeake society was inherently unstable, even chaotic,

and have suggested that political "times of troubles" were the likely outcome of this social disruption.<sup>1</sup> Milder assessments have suggested that at the very least the absence of a ruling elite—conscious of its obligations and right to govern as part of the natural order of things, and identified with landed wealth held for generations in a particular locality—was an underlying cause of these breakdowns of authority. Seventeenth-century Chesapeake leaders, this argument goes, were not born to power but had to earn their positions. Consequently, the social and political structure "was too new, too lacking in the sanctions of time and custom, its leaders too close to humbler origins and as yet too undistinguished in style of life" to provide real political stability.<sup>2</sup>

Colonists came to the Chesapeake to make their fortunes, the argument continues, and those who could afford the labor on which the acquisition of major wealth depended unmercifully exploited their servants. Masters "looked out for number one," while those who emigrated as servants (some 70–85 percent of all seventeenth-century arrivals) faced major difficulties in establishing themselves once they were free of their four to five years of service. They worked as laborers or short-term tenants, moving from household to household or farm to farm. As immigrants they usually had no kin in the Chesapeake and severely unbalanced sex ratios—three men immigrated for each woman over most of the century—forced many to postpone marriage or prevented them from marrying at all. Since life expectancies were short, due to the lethal disease environment of the early Chesapeake, many of these ex-servants died before they could save enough to

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acquire land and become settled members of a community.<sup>3</sup>

Short life expectancies had other consequences for stability in this society. Early death created high turnover among office-holders and hence curtailed the benefits that might otherwise arise from experience. This was particularly important where there was a shortage of men whose birth and education would have qualified them for such leadership in England. Men of humble English origins, "long livers" whose ability and good luck had brought success, often rose to positions of power but then failed to live much longer. There was a quick turnover of able but uneducated, untrained, and sometimes unscrupulous men who occupied public office.<sup>4</sup> Thus there was instability from the bottom to the top of Chesapeake society.

Most of the facts on which this interpretation is based are not disputed. In the first century of settlement, life was short; most immigrants came as servants (although there is some disagreement about the extent of opportunities);<sup>5</sup> immigrants mostly arrived without kin and lacked the family and community ties that ruled their behavior in England; and ill-trained and uneducated men held public office. Nevertheless, other facts and the inferences drawn from them allow a somewhat different picture of Chesapeake society to emerge.

This essay will examine seventeenth-century Maryland society and politics in the light of these contentions. The essay first will argue that this society was not chaotic, although the standards of what constituted "order" may not be those that we would accept. Informal community networks and formal institutions of local government, as they developed over the century, provided the services essential to maintaining order. Second the essay will attempt to explain the causes of the more serious political disruptions of the seventeenth century.

What do we mean by political stability and social order? Political stability has been defined as "the acceptance by society of its political institutions and of those classes of men or officials who control them."<sup>6</sup> But such a definition cannot easily

fit the circumstances in a new and growing society trying to develop institutions appropriate to its needs. Better suited is one that focuses on transfers of political authority. When men negotiate their differences and transfer authority by orderly and agreed-upon procedures without dependence on force, their institutions and society reveal political stability; when force is used, we have political disorder.<sup>7</sup> Social order is harder to define, since conceptions of what constitutes order are likely to be high in cultural or ideological content. In the context of the seventeenth-century Chesapeake, social order, as here used, will mean the existence of generally-accepted norms of behavior that protect persons and property and that are, in fact, enforced. Enforcement can occur through informal community sanctions as well as through the operation of governmental institutions that inhabitants support for the sake of order.

Recent research, much still unpublished, illustrates how community networks substituted for English kinship connections and provided aid, comfort, and selfhelp in areas of the seventeenth-century Chesapeake where few or no native-born adults had yet appeared. This work makes clear that "looking out for number one" was by no means the only, and probably not the primary, daily rule by which Maryland colonists lived.<sup>8</sup>

A study of St. Clement's Manor and environs in Maryland reveals the pattern of personal contacts as an area became settled. By 1661, about 28 families lived there, fewer than two per square mile, but ten years later, the number of households had doubled. For each family, the territory within a five- to six-mile radius—representing a two hour walk or an hour's horseback ride, and an additional half hour of rowing if St. Clement's Bay had to be crossed—was an area accessible for neighborhood contact. About 1661 a typical household on St. Clement's was within two-and-a-half miles of fifteen other households and within five or six miles of about twenty-five, some of them across St. Clement's Bay. By 1671 most families were within two-and-a-half miles of twenty-five households and within five or six miles of sixty. These distances could be traveled

by everyone, and the majority of all contacts took place within them. However, rich people traveled farther than did the poor and had a more distant network of connections.<sup>9</sup>

Within these bounds, families established networks of neighborhood selfhelp without which life would have been much more difficult and bleak. The transmission of news was of great importance in a culture that was mostly oral. Families exchanged tools and labor. Neighbors nursed one another in illness and joined together in mourning—sometimes carousing—at a funeral. They took in or assisted orphaned children who had no kin to help them and stood as godparents to the children of neighbors, an important substitute for family connections. Of course, differences in wealth and status affected these relationships, but even Thomas Gerard, the lord of St. Clement's Manor and creditor to many small planters in the area, nursed a more humble neighbor in his sickness.<sup>10</sup>

One of the most important acts of neighborliness, in England as well as in Maryland, was to bear witness in various circumstances. Although few men and fewer women at St. Clement's Manor could read or write, they could listen and remember. When wills or deeds required the signature of witnesses, illiterates made their marks; but their unwritten witness often had even greater importance. If men made oral agreements, the presence of neighbors was an essential part of the proceedings in case of future dispute. In 1667, for example, Richard Foster and John Tennison asked Peter Mills and James Green to witness their efforts to partition manor land they had purchased together. Twelve years later, when the decision was disputed in court, Mills and Green testified to the events that had occurred that day.<sup>11</sup> People often asked neighbors to take note of boundary markers, usually trees. Trees could die, and later generations needed information as to where they had stood. A kind of community memory had to be developed in an oral culture, and we can see it emerging in Maryland neighborhoods, despite the rapid turnover in population caused by death and immigration.<sup>12</sup>

Gradually, kin connections developed

over time. A woman usually outlived her first husband and brought his children to the household of her second husband. The new couple then had children of their own. Stepparents, half-sisters, and half-brothers began to extend the family network. Moreover, Maryland-born girls married when very young (primarily because women were so scarce), and the immigrant man who married a young native acquired kin along with a wife. Given that only about half the children born survived to marry and that the influx of newcomers was continuous until late in the century, kin networks expanded slowly in proportion to the total population. Although the density was slight compared to that of an English village, these networks did grow and were of critical importance for supplying godparents, guardians for orphans, family credit, and general assistance in time of need.<sup>13</sup>

Watching and warding was another part of the community network. There was no police force in any seventeenth-century community, whether in England or the Chesapeake, and the watchfulness of neighbors was a necessary element in maintaining law and order. Livestock ran freely in the St. Clement's Manor forest, protected only by their brand marks. A housekeeper who killed a steer or a hog was expected to keep the ears to prove the marks were his, and anyone had the right to question the source of the meat. Even the lord of the manor had to produce ears to prove that he had not killed another colonist's hogs.<sup>14</sup> People knew the belongings of their nearer neighbors, and a missing garment or table cloth or tool could not appear in someone else's house and go unnoticed. Neighbors intervened when servants were beaten beyond that was considered allowable, when family quarrels led to violence, or when orphan children bound out for their keep were improperly cared for or abused.<sup>15</sup>

In general, then, as in England, neighbors required conformity to community norms that protected person and property, and violators took a dangerous risk. Their neighbors could refuse to be their securities. Without men willing to stand security—that is, to agree to pay a sum of money or tobacco if the person they were standing for failed to perform a promise—a man

could not borrow money, purchase on credit, administer an estate, or stand guardian to an orphan. Worst of all were the consequences if he fell into debt or ran afoul of the law, for, lacking security, he might end up in jail.<sup>16</sup>

Neighborhood oversight and pressure to conform did not produce the same norms of conduct in every place and time, nor did they cover every person. Where immigrant communities were young and thinly settled, neighbors could ill afford to reject one another unless the provocation was very strong.<sup>17</sup> The inhabitants of such areas were probably more tolerant of deviant behavior than people were where settlement was denser and a Maryland-born adult population was growing. Nor was neighborhood protection extended to all. Strangers were suspect, since an unrecognized man or woman without a permanent home might be a runaway servant, a felon escaping justice, or worst of all, someone who might become a public charge. Without a resident to vouch for them, strangers thought to be vagabonds might find themselves publicly whipped and "warned out" of a neighborhood. In such ways, innocent people could fall through the safety net of neighborhood watchfulness and aid. Luckily, labor shortages in the Chesapeake were so severe that most people found work and a home. The roving, jobless poor of England were not a major problem in the early Chesapeake.<sup>18</sup>

Indeed, until the 1680s, Maryland, at least, was good poor man's country for those who did not die too soon. The proportion of laborers and sharecroppers who lived in the households of others was always sizable at any one moment, but this status was usually temporary. The majority of householders acquired land, and most of those who did not at least became recognized members of a community network.<sup>19</sup>

In both England and the Chesapeake, neighborhood sanctions and the willingness or refusal of neighbors to support one another underlay the formal institutions for keeping law and order. Any one summoned to appear in court to answer a complaint, or even to be a witness, could be required to offer securities to ensure his appearance and would be put in the sheriff's custody if he could not. The court could demand bond

to keep the peace or good behavior as well as for payment of a fine from those found guilty of an offense, unless jail or death were mandatory. A bond for good behavior was an especially serious matter that no one took lightly. The security required was often high, and breach of the bond meant not only prison for the offender but, ultimately, the loss of considerable property. His friends would have to pay but would then seek redress from him. The whole system of law and order depended heavily on the willingness of neighbors to take this kind of responsibility for one another and on the sanctions that the threat of their refusal provided.<sup>20</sup>

Government institutions, of course, provided the necessary framework through which formal penalties were imposed to protect life and property and to enforce contractual obligations, and the effectiveness of government was fundamental to a "well ordering" of neighborhoods.<sup>21</sup> In Maryland the county courts and their magistrates, appointed by the governor, were the first level of government to which inhabitants related. The St. Mary's County Court was in existence by early 1638, four years after the founding of the colony. Shortly afterwards a court was functioning on Kent Island,<sup>22</sup> and as the colony grew and the need arose, more counties were created.

The justices of Maryland's county courts had the basic powers and responsibilities of those in England. Their powers were based on their commissions and the Common Law, which, from the beginning of settlement, was assumed to be the law in Maryland. Justices were conservators of the peace. A colonist could take his suspicions or complaints of wrongdoing to the nearest justice, who would order the constable, appointed by the county court, to bring the accused before him. If the constable had trouble, he could impress any inhabitant to help him, since under Common Law, all citizens were obliged to help quiet an affray or pursue a suspected offender. Once the accused was on hand, the justice examined him/her, and if he found sufficient cause, he bound over the accused to appear in court. Men with such powers needed to be

scattered widely so that everyone could have access to the peace-keeping services they provided.

When the justices sat together in full county court, they had all the powers of English quarter sessions, plus some additional jurisdiction in civil causes. The court could investigate all crimes and conduct trials for those offenses that did not carry penalties entailing loss of life or limb. (Felonies in which conviction led to death or mutilation were sent to the Provincial Court, the chief court of Common Law in Maryland.) But unlike quarter sessions, the county courts could also try civil actions, so long as the case did not concern land titles. At first, jurisdiction was limited and only selected justices could exercise it; however, from 1679 until the early eighteenth century, it extended to all civil actions and to all justices. One of the county court's main contributions in a society in which people often could not read or write was to keep a record of local indebtedness. In this economy tobacco played the role of money, and tobacco in the field was money locked in the ground, making credit essential to any planter until he had harvested his crop. Thus in both criminal and civil matters, county courts brought order to the localities and offered poor planters cheaper and more convenient justice than did the Provincial Court at St. Mary's City.

The Maryland county courts performed administrative duties that in effect made them function as local governments. The court granted liquor licenses; kept the standards for weights and measures; deter-

mined and recorded the length of service due from servants who arrived without indentures or who ran away or bore a bastard child. The justices heard complaints from servants against their masters. The court also provided public services by appointing and overseeing guardians for orphans; supplying relief for the poor; and ordering the construction and maintenance of roads, courthouses, and jails. Since these services entailed expenditures, the courts levied poll taxes to pay for them.

The justices had the help of paid administrators, the sheriff and the clerks. Of these, the sheriff, also appointed by the governor, was the most important. In some ways he was a competing power in the community. Unlike the justices he took fees for his services, and the position was highly profitable. He served process, made arrests, took bail for appearance, ran the jail, impaneled juries, collected and paid out officers' fees, and collected and disbursed taxes not only for the county court but within the county for central government courts and agencies. He also conducted elections to the Assembly. Above all, he represented the proprietor as keeper of the county, with power to raise a posse to quell disturbances.

Also essential to the functioning of the county courts were several unpaid local officers and various kinds of juries. The courts yearly appointed constables, who broke up fights, reported offenders, and kept tax lists; highway overseers, who impressed inhabitants and directed their work on the roads; and pressmasters, who requisitioned goods for the use of the militia

#### LOCAL COURTESIES

*"Yet are the Inhabitants generally affable, courteous and very assistant to strangers . . . and no sooner are they settled, but they will be visiting, presenting and advising the stranger how to improve what they have, how to better their way of livelihood.*

*Justice is there duly and daily administred; hardly can any travaile two miles together, but they will finde a Justice, which hath power of himself to hear and determine mean differences, to secure and bind over notorious offenders, of which very few are in the Country."*

—John Hammond, *Leah and Rachel, Or, The Two Fruitfull Sisters Virginia and Mary-Land* (1656)

when needed. The sheriff selected juries—grand juries, petit juries, and various kinds of juries of inquiry.

What is striking to the modern eye about this structure of local government was that it depended on unpaid conscripted service of county inhabitants. Everyone was obligated to serve according to his station. Men of wealth and education (or as much of either as the time and place could muster) served as justices, and with the sheriff, acted as county rulers with power and authority. Others, lower in position, performed the thankless tasks of constables and highway overseers. In addition, every free man, regardless of status, was liable to selection for some kind of jury service. Refusal to serve or neglect of duty were subject to penalties as an offense against the community. These notions of community obligation, based on status, underlay the functioning of local institutions in England at the manor, parish, borough, and shire levels and were transported to Maryland as part of the cultural baggage from the homeland.<sup>23</sup>

Such a system of local government could keep order, mete out justice, and provide public services only if everyone played his part in accepting office, in undertaking necessary tasks, and in recognizing the authority of those who gave and carried out commands. Did scattered settlements, early death, absence of kin, and shortage of well-born leaders create conditions that brought disorder, failure of justice, and the breakdown of needed services?

Recent studies suggest that local government in seventeenth-century Maryland contributed to stability.<sup>24</sup> One reason was that participation in county government in this period was extraordinarily broad. In filling unpaid, conscripted local offices and juries, the justices and the sheriff thought less of efficiency and experience and more of equality in rotating the burden among all the eligible inhabitants. In two Maryland counties studied in some detail, heads of household of any economic status were likely to have served as constables or highway overseers or on juries at some point in their careers. About 1700, every resident landowner in newly-formed Prince George's County served at least once in one

of these positions during his lifetime, unless he had earlier been appointed to higher office or, as a Catholic, was by that date ineligible.<sup>25</sup> Although county office began to be more restricted to landowners as the seventeenth-century progressed, as late as 1700 some 67 to 75 percent of householders at any one time owned land, and many tenants continued to be selected for service. Nearly all the permanent householders in each county would likely be asked at some point to contribute their time and energy to local government, and almost all accepted the obligation to do so.

This is not to say that individuals never misbehaved. Men refused to obey constables, who had to call on the sheriff for assistance. Even the sheriff could meet defiance and had to raise the power of the county to help him. Men who lost their cases could lose their tempers, and the justices had to set them in the stocks to cool off. Men drinking together could become loose-tongued and ridicule or attack the justices. The courts fined such offenders for contempt, then often accepted their apologies and remitted all or part of the penalty. The courts were perhaps more lenient than their English counterparts would have been. So it seemed, at least, to the English royal governors of the 1690s. But none of the seventeenth-century records suggest that many settlers habitually flouted the orders of the county courts or their authority.<sup>26</sup>

Although the Maryland governors made every effort to appoint justices and sheriffs whose birth and education would command the respect of the neighborhoods they served, the number of men qualified to hold such positions was much smaller than the need. Men of low social origins who had become successful planters were appointed in the absence of those better qualified. Many had arrived as indentured servants. Through the 1680s, in most counties there was very often at least one illiterate justice, and at first even sheriffs were sometimes illiterate, despite their fiscal responsibilities.<sup>27</sup>

Given these circumstances, most of the county rulers gained status through appointment to office, the reverse of the practice in England. They were not born to

power, but learned by doing. In Maryland, local office was an honor to be welcomed, not a burden to be endured or resented because it interfered with goals of personal progress. While inhabitants occasionally asked to be excused from serving, Thomas Long of Baltimore County was certainly more typical. In 1686, after being dropped from the bench, he complained of the "scandall, ignominy, and reproach" he had received from "his neighbors as a person not worthy to serve."<sup>28</sup>

Justices who proved to be of vicious character were dismissed, but otherwise, once appointed, they were usually recommissioned and served until retirement or death. There was little opportunity for political maneuvering in making appointments because of the shortage of qualified men and rapid turnover from high mortality. Very few men obviously qualified by birth or wealth—those who had acquired, say, one thousand acres or more of land—failed to be appointed. The county rulers might quarrel among themselves, and occasionally complain about particular appointments, but narrow and long-term factions did not grow around rivals for the office.

From the bottom to the top of county government, then, we find broad participation in local affairs by men with a visible commitment to the communities, from the former servant leasing land to the planter who had already made his fortune. This wide participation in itself contributed to social stability. The need for law and order and public services gave everyone the incentive to cooperate, so long as no one, by community norms, carried an unfair burden or exercised unreasonable power. Community respect accorded humble men compensated for the time and trouble they could otherwise ill afford. Holding offices of power improved the social position of men with rising fortunes. Every man who contributed time and effort advertised to himself and his neighbors his commitment to social order and strengthened the authority of government.

Were the county rulers conscientious? Did local governments carry out their intended functions? The answer is yes, by the standards of the time and place. County courts sometimes had to be post-

poned because of "vehement coldness of the weather" or because so many justices were sick that a quorum could not be had. But in counties for which records survive, the court always met several times a year. The Charles County Court, for example, held fifty-five sessions in a nine year period from 1666 to 1675.<sup>29</sup> The clerks issued process, the sheriffs delivered it and ensured the appearance in court of defendants and witnesses. The sheriff was warned only three times for failing to produce parties whose bail he had accepted, and all eventually appeared. No proceedings were stopped because witnesses failed to appear on subpoena. Grand juries were regularly convened and made presentments for criminal offenses. The procedures necessary for orderly conduct of a court of justice were in place and working.

The administrative duties of the court also functioned as needed. Of course, the very nature of a system that depended on untrained and unpaid service put little emphasis on efficiency. Highway overseers were not necessarily good road engineers or illiterate constables very accurate in listing taxables. Nevertheless, roads were grubbed and a bridge built over Zachia Swamp to improve communication with adjacent St. Mary's County. Tax lists were made and taxes were collected. Guardians were appointed for orphans and the old and sick received assistance. Servants' ages were judged and their complaints were heard. And a contract was let for building a courthouse and a jail. These were the perceived needs of the times, and they were met.<sup>30</sup>

The question remains, did county rulers abuse their power? There are isolated examples of men who evidently inspired fear and who remained in office, despite notorious acts. In 1659 a jury refused to convict Simon Overzee, a wealthy merchant and justice of St. Mary's County court, for murder in the death of his recalcitrant slave Antonio. Racism may have affected this verdict.<sup>31</sup> In 1661 on far away Kent Island, Sarah Taylor won her freedom from Justice Thomas Broadnox because of his mistreatment. That same year Broadnox was accused of beating a servant to death but died before the case came to trial. His wife, also accused, produced witnesses to show that

the poor creature had died of disease, not the punishments he had suffered when he could not work. Mrs Broadnox was acquitted.<sup>32</sup> Neither man committed these acts in the course of exercising his powers as a magistrate, but his position may have influenced the juries' verdicts. On a later frontier in Cecil County, the court acted outrageously in ordering an eleven-year-old girl, a Protestant orphan, seized from her Catholic aunt and then allowing a fortune hunter to marry her.<sup>33</sup> Only in this county, farthest distant of any from the central government, do we find any real signs of unbridled exercise of magistratical power and conflicts over who should exercise it.

On the whole the justices, despite their often humble origins, exhibited a basic sense of responsibility. Since they received no fees, they did not have much direct opportunity in any case to exploit the people they served. True, a justice could see to it that convenient roads served his plantations. He could make himself guardian to a rich orphan whose estate he could then use until the orphan was of age. He could ensure that his business at court was scheduled to suit his convenience, and his servants might fear to complain against him. On the other hand, caring for an orphan's estate entailed trouble and risk. It is doubtful, furthermore, that a justice's position, rather than the facts, often determined the outcome of litigation, and, after all, Thomas Broadnox's servant did persuade his colleagues on the court that her complaint was justified. There were undoubtedly advantages that the position of justice conferred when it came to doing business, but the justices could not use their power directly. Outright opportunities for misuse of the position for gain were missing.<sup>34</sup>

The sheriff had much greater opportunities to misuse power and exploit his position. He could exact illegal fees; he could set unreasonable bail; he could grant or refuse credit to men who owed taxes or fees to public officers; he could delay payments to public creditors, delays that could be critical to them. He had the major police power of the county in his hands with the power to raise a posse, and he could be gentle or brutal in its exercise. Complaints against the seventeenth-century sheriffs

suggest that some of them felt invulnerable. In 1681, for example, Edward English of Cecil County stated that, "since his Lordshipp had given him Comand of the County, the people must and should love and fear him," and he threatened to damage the crops of those who petitioned against him.<sup>35</sup>

To keep the sheriff under control without reducing his effectiveness, the county justices and the assemblies attempted to limit his term and control his appointment. A law allowing the justices to nominate the sheriff was in effect during the 1660s but the proprietor then disallowed it as an infringement of his charter rights. During the 1670s and early 1680s, sheriffs often served for several years, and it is over this period that the chief complaints appear. From 1678 through most of 1686 a law required that no sheriff could be reappointed without the approval of the county justices, and in 1692 the first royal assembly established a two—later three—year limitation. On the whole, these measures kept sheriffs in check. Furthermore, sheriffs usually had been and would again be justices and felt a community of interest with the other county rulers. By the 1690s in Maryland, the royal governor, Francis Nicholson, was far more concerned about the efficiency of the sheriffs as servers of process and collectors of fees and taxes than about extortions or abuse of power.<sup>36</sup>

In Maryland a critical test of the ability of the county courts to maintain order occurred during the Revolution of 1689 and the three years of provisional government that followed before the first royal governor arrived. Only in Cecil County, again, did disagreement among the magistrates disrupt normal proceedings. Elsewhere the local justices and sheriffs provided normal county services and awaited the crown's decision as to who should rule the province. The first thought of all was to maintain order and avoid bloodshed and destruction of property. The strength of county government as an institution was basically responsible. The justices were still usually immigrants, and some were men of humble origins who had achieved success. Turnover was still high on the benches; mean length of service in 1689 was only seven years. But

all knew the meaning of magistracy and put the charge of their commission to provide justice ahead of disagreements over the political changes to come from the "revolution of government." Such institutional strength could develop because the inhabitants of Maryland wanted the safety of order and cooperated with one another to obtain it.<sup>37</sup>

Of course, seventeenth-century Maryland was not a utopia. Servants and slaves sometimes died of abuse, and they sometimes murdered their masters. Guardians beat or starved their wards; mothers murdered their bastard infants; men got drunk and maimed each other.<sup>38</sup> Violence of this kind occurred on occasion everywhere in seventeenth-century England and America. But was it more common in the Chesapeake than in England or in colonies where demographic disruption was less severe?

As of the moment, systematic comparisons of reported offenses per unit of population at risk to commit a crime have not been done.<sup>39</sup> I suspect that if we speak primarily of premarital sex, drunkenness, and other disorderly conduct, a higher level of disorder was tolerated in the Chesapeake than in most parts of New England or the mother country. No prosecutions for bridal pregnancy ever occurred in Maryland. Drunkenness and fighting or drunkenness and contempt of court usually were prosecuted together. There were not many prosecutions for drunkenness alone, which suggests high tolerance of such behavior if no additional breach of the peace occurred.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, indictments for fighting usually concerned events that occurred in the view of magistrates or resulted in serious injury, a fact that arouses suspicions that many more fights occurred than reached official ears.<sup>41</sup> Finally, the shortage of women probably encouraged fornication, since many women were servants unable to marry before completing their terms.<sup>42</sup>

The system of bound labor, furthermore, may have contributed to a greater amount of physical abuse than elsewhere. When a man bought an indentured servant or a slave, he had an investment to recoup. If the servant were lazy, or ill, or stupid, much of the investment could be lost. Men could

sympathize with the anger and frustration of a neighbor whose servant did not work. And they could share the sense of alienation that Englishmen felt when they could not cope successfully with an African slave. There was probably greater tolerance for beating servants and slaves than for mistreating other people in the community. Even when the death of a slave resulted, his abuser might be excused.

Nevertheless, serious crimes of violence or destruction or theft of property were not ignored, and the mechanisms for dealing with them were securely in place. Even if seventeenth-century Chesapeake standards of what was disorder differed somewhat from ours, or even from those of contemporary England and other colonies, there were standards and they were enforced, both informally in neighborhood support systems and through the institutions of government. The settled, free white population wanted protection for person and property and supported institutions that provided it.

However Maryland's stability cannot be tested alone by the success of community networks and local governments in meeting the needs of everyday life. Other kinds of tests came with the political upheavals and sudden changes in the central government that occurred between 1645-1647, 1652-1658, and 1689-1692. We should now examine these three periods to see how local institutions met the challenges to order and when and why provincial government failed the inhabitants under crisis conditions.

Before 1661, there were several elements that contributed to political disruption in Maryland. The Civil War and its aftermath in England were underlying events that had repercussions everywhere in England's growing empire. From 1642 to 1649, this war wracked England and ended in rule by Parliament. Parliament beheaded Charles I, abolished the House of Lords, established a Commonwealth, and forbade the practice of Anglican as well as Catholic rites. But Parliament could not bring unity to England. In 1653, Oliver Cromwell seized power and established a Protectorate that collapsed at his death in 1658. In 1660 Englishmen invited back the son of the ex-

cuted monarch and restored Charles II to his throne.

In Maryland these events added to other conflicts that led to political disruption. Most important was the determined opposition of Virginia leaders to what they saw as an illegal and unjust grant to the Calverts of territory that was rightfully theirs. To this external threat were added internal stresses: tensions between Catholics and Protestants in Maryland that separation of

church and state could not dispel and failures in the Maryland leadership. All these elements came to a head at the end of Maryland's first decade in the episode called Ingle's Rebellion and did not subside until after the Restoration of Charles II.<sup>43</sup>

From the beginning, Virginia interests did their best to block the grant of Maryland to Lord Baltimore. The northern Chesapeake had originally been part of the Virginia Company grant of 1606, but the



King Charles I (1600–1649), King of England, Scotland, and Ireland (1625–1649). Engraving by Robert Strange after Antonius, 1782. (Printed by permission of the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution.) The beheading of this patron of the Calverts in 1649 precipitated a crisis in Maryland.

dissolution of the company in 1624 had left the status of the area ambiguous. Virginia leaders gained enough support to eliminate from the Maryland grant the already settled portion of the lower Eastern Shore; but they did not succeed in excluding Kent Island, where William Claiborne, a member of the Virginia council, had established an outpost in 1631. Conflict with Claiborne over control of Kent resulted in armed encounters in 1635, and Lord Baltimore did not establish his authority there until 1638. Even then his victory was uneasy and the loyalty of men on Kent Island remained in question for another twenty years.

By continuous politicking in England, Lord Baltimore retained his rights to his grant. But when warfare broke out between Charles I and the Long Parliament in 1642, the proprietor's position weakened. Years of carefully cultivating his connections at court rapidly lost value. The possible victory of the Parliamentary party, dominated by Protestant dissenters from the Church of England, raised spectres of more severe persecution of English Catholics and the recall of the Maryland charter.

Enter then Richard Ingle, a ship captain who had been trading to Maryland since at least 1639. He made no bones about his allegiance to Parliament, whereas the Maryland Catholics, like all English Catholics, supported the king. Early in 1644, Giles Brent, acting governor of Maryland while Leonard Calvert was absent in England, arrested Ingle briefly for treason to the king. A year later, after the battle of Marston Moor had subjected Charles I to a major defeat, Ingle returned to the Chesapeake armed with letters of marque issued in the name of Parliament. With this excuse, and probably with tacit support from Virginia leaders, he attacked and looted the St. Mary's County settlements and took two Catholic priests and other Catholic leaders as prisoners back to England. Leonard Calvert escaped to Virginia. He did not return to reestablish Lord Baltimore's authority until late in 1646.

Ingle evidently had the support of many Maryland Protestants. In Maryland it had been policy that Catholics and Protestants could not criticize each other or interfere with one another's religious practices; but such toleration had not led to much ac-



## THE CHARTER OF MARYLAND.

**C**HARLES By the  
Grace of GOD, King of  
England, Scotland, France,  
and Ireland, Defendor  
of the Faith, &c. To all  
to whom these Presents  
shall come greeting.

WHEREAS Our right Trusty and  
Wellbelovd Subje& Cecilius Calvert, Baron  
of Baltmore in our Kingdom of Ireland, Sonne  
and heire of Sir George Calvert Knight, late Ba-  
A 2  
ron

Title page of the printed version of *The Charter of Maryland* distributed in the promotional book by John Lewger and Jerome Hawley, *A Relation of Maryland; together with a Map of the Countrey, the Conditions of Plantation, with His Majesties Charter to the Lord Baltmore, translated into English* (London, 1635). The strongly-worded charter that granted extensive powers to Lord Baltimore proved a mixed blessing in an age of religious and political factionalism, but in the end, various English governments always respected the property rights that the charter bestowed on the Calverts. (Photograph courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.)

ceptance of religious differences. Furthermore, in a population of perhaps four to five hundred people (exclusive of Kent Island), the handful of leaders and owners of large land grants were mostly Catholic, since the Calverts had had little success in gaining major Protestant investors, while the majority of the settlers—servants, former servants becoming planters, and a

sprinkling of free immigrants—were Protestants.<sup>44</sup> It is not certain that the settlement, unprepared for attack and with its fort decayed, had any possibility of resistance against the well-armed Ingle unless its leaders had been willing to accept severe risks to life as well as property. But the cooperation of many Protestant colonists made his victory certain and quick.

Was there a major failure of leadership in the Calvert settlement that led to this catastrophe? Perhaps. The failure, if any, was not tied to the leaders' humble origins; over the first ten years Maryland leaders were men of birth and education. The problem was more that they did not work together. Many put their private interests ahead of the welfare of the colony. They did not feel the identity of interest with Lord Baltimore's enterprise that long association with Maryland and long-term economic and political investment might one day produce. The records show ample evidence of quarrels among the leaders over trade, over appointments, over who should do what, and of friction between them and Lord Baltimore. Turnover, furthermore, was high. By the end of 1638 only four of the seventeen gentlemen who had mounted and led the first expedition were still in Maryland; the others had died or returned to England.<sup>45</sup> New leaders, such as Giles Brent, had replaced these first pioneers, but any esprit de corps that participation in the first venture had created was gone. So long as Leonard Calvert was on hand, he kept some control over disagreements, but his year-and-a-half absence in England shortly before the rebellion sent matters from bad to worse. In any case, he clearly lacked the charisma that might have reduced friction and retained Protestant loyalties in a time of crisis.

On the other hand, the first ten years of Maryland settlement had seen considerable success. In 1644, immigrants, servant and free, were continuing to arrive, former servants were becoming planters, planters were growing and marketing tobacco, community networks were forming, courts and assemblies were functioning. Quarreling leaders did work out compromises. From this point of view there is no reason to suppose that the colony at Ingle's arrival was close to collapse (although as Russell Menard in

this issue points out, major social and economic changes were coming in response to pressure from the growing number of ex-servants to acquire land). By this interpretation, Ingle's Rebellion was an offshoot of the English Civil War that happened to wreak havoc in a small settlement where religious tensions were inevitably severe.<sup>46</sup>

What happened in Maryland from the time of Ingle's departure until Leonard Calvert's return is something of a mystery. No records for the period remain. Later the inhabitants referred to the "time of troubles" and "the plundering time." Evidently there was a certain amount of livestock stolen and killed, and various goods were pillaged from Catholic households. On the other hand no rapes or murders were reported, and Maryland was not laid waste. Over the months the inhabitants must have established some kind of order among themselves. The provincial secretary, John Lewger, captured by Ingle, found it safe to return early in 1646, yet some of the Protestant ringleaders were still in Maryland and remained until Leonard Calvert returned.<sup>47</sup>

What is certainly true, and what made the rebellion a disaster from which the colony might not have recovered, is that most of the Protestant population of Maryland departed. In 1645 there were probably four hundred or more settlers in St. Mary's County. Once Leonard Calvert had restored his authority, there may have been fewer people left there than had arrived on the *Ark* and the *Dove*. Most moved across the Potomac River to Virginia to become the earliest settlers in the Northern Neck. They did not perceive Maryland at that moment as an orderly place where their hard work might gain them property and community recognition. Luckily for Lord Baltimore, a boom in the tobacco industry of the late 1640s and early 1650s brought replacements, and Maryland began to grow once more.<sup>48</sup>

The moral, then, of Ingle's Rebellion lies in the evidence it supplies of the value people put on order. When they found it not forthcoming or feared that it would further disappear, those who could afford to simply left.

After Ingle's Rebellion, Lord Baltimore reevaluated his strategy. In England, Lon-

don tobacco merchants associated with the Calverts' enemies in Virginia had petitioned Parliament to rescind the Maryland charter. Lord Baltimore needed to dissociate himself from his former royalist-Catholic connections and make friends in the Protestant merchant community. Following the death of Leonard Calvert early in 1647, the proprietor seized the opportunity to appoint a Protestant governor, William Stone of Accomack-Northampton, Virginia. Not only was Stone a Protestant, his uncle, Thomas Stone, was a prominent London tobacco merchant.<sup>49</sup> The proprietor also sought more Protestant settlers, especially Protestants of substance. With Stone's assistance, he induced a Puritan community suffering persecution in Virginia to move to Maryland, where they took up land in what today are Anne Arundel and Calvert counties. With these changes he also created more explicit guarantees for Catholics than had before seemed necessary. He drafted and sent to Maryland the famous Act Concerning Religion. Stone's first assembly, with representatives from the Puritan settlement, passed the act, but with changes that confined its benefits to trinitarian Christians. Sad to say, these Puritans were no different from their brethren in New England in their hostility towards those who did not share their beliefs. They agreed to the act, but future events would show that they did not wish to extend its toleration to Catholics.

Unfortunately for Lord Baltimore, the triumph of Parliament in England greatly strengthened the hands of Virginians who hoped to force him out of Maryland. In 1650 Parliament appointed commissioners to establish the authority of the new Commonwealth in Virginia, where Governor William Berkeley had supported the royalist cause. The commissioners included Lord Baltimore's enemy, William Claiborne, and also Richard Bennett, a chief leader of the Puritan migration to Maryland and the new governor of Virginia. Both men belonged to the group of Virginia leaders who hoped ultimately to bring Maryland under Virginia rule. Lord Baltimore, who had already acknowledged the new Commonwealth, had managed to have Maryland excluded from this commission. However, its wording, which referred to "all

plantations" in the Chesapeake, allowed the commissioners to assert their authority in Maryland.

Early in 1652 Bennett and Claiborne appeared in Maryland. Stone and his councillors—some Catholic and some Protestant—were ready to acknowledge the Commonwealth but insisted on issuing writs and proceedings in Lord Baltimore's name on the grounds that his charter allowed this and had not been rescinded. The Commissioners thereupon removed the proprietary governor and council and appointed a new council. However, both sides then reconsidered. Three months later, in July 1652, Bennett and Claiborne reinstated Lord Baltimore's officers on the understanding that writs would issue in the name of the "Keepers of the Liberties of England" until word from the English government could clarify matters.

Over the next two years, friction mounted. Lord Baltimore insisted that his courts still operate in his name, as his charter allowed, and that no one be granted land without taking an oath of fidelity to him. Finally in July 1654, Bennett and Claiborne, backed by hostile Protestant groups in Maryland, once more removed the proprietor's men and appointed an entirely Protestant council dominated by the Puritans. Lord Baltimore ordered Stone to restore proprietary authority, by force if necessary, but Kent Island and the Puritan settlements in Anne Arundel County refused to submit. In March 1655 Stone attempted to force the issue. With about 130 men he sailed to the Severn River and there suffered ignominious defeat and heavy casualties. Both sides later claimed that the other had begun the fighting. The new government imprisoned Stone and executed three of his associates.

This government ruled Maryland until 1657. It was based, not in St. Mary's City, but in Providence on the Severn River and at Patuxent in Calvert County. The first assembly of this regime abrogated the 1649 toleration act and excluded Catholics from voting or holding office. After the first excesses of the Battle of the Severn, all prisoners were released, but the Puritans confiscated considerable property of Stone and others as damages. On the other hand, there was no further armed conflict or gen-

eral attack on Catholic property rights. Bennett and the Puritans knew that they stood on weak ground were Cromwell to uphold Lord Baltimore's charter. Both sides wished to keep the peace until a settlement came from England.

Lord Baltimore and his opponents carried on the next stages of the conflict in England. Lord Protector Cromwell's government agreed to hear both sides, but busy officials kept postponing a final decision while anxieties in Virginia and Maryland mounted. In the end, Cromwell's govern-

ment never acted. Instead, what we might call a treaty made in 1657 between Lord Baltimore and Virginia leaders ended these years of Maryland-Virginia conflict. This agreement not only restored Lord Baltimore to full authority in his province but stated that he would never permit a change in the religious policies laid down in 1649. Virginia interests had lost, Puritan rule was over, and Lord Baltimore was in full control once again.

Lord Baltimore was ultimately victorious, not only because of his political skills,

#### LORD BALTIMORE'S "TREATY" WITH THE VIRGINIANS, 1657

...  
*Whereas there hase bin of late viz in the yeare 1652 & since som Controversies betweene the Right Honble Caecilius Lord Baltemore Lord & Proprietary of the Province of Mary-land & Richard Bennett Esq & other People in Maryland nowe or late in opposition to his Lordships Government of the said Province upon wch have unhappily followed much bloudshed & greate distempers there endangering the Vtter ruine of that Plantation . . . & in the meane time the inhabitants of the said Province remaine in a very sad distracted & unsetled condition by reason of the said differences toucheing the sd Governmt there Therefore the said Lord Baltemore upon a treaty with the sd Richard Bennett & Coll: Samuel Mathews occasioned by the freindly endeavours of Edward Diggs Esqr . . . hath for the good of the inhabitants of the said Province condescended & is willing to do as followeth, viz*

...  
 2. *Item that the said People in opposition as aforesaid shall have Patents from his Lordship for such land in the said Province as they can claime due unto them by his said Lordships conditions of plantacon & in the same manner & with all the same rights as they might have had if the said Controversies & differences had not hapned . . .*

...  
 4. *Lastly the Lord Baltemore doth promise that he will never give his assent to the repeale of a lawe established heeretofore in Maryland by his Lordships Consent . . . whereby all persons professing to beleeeve in Jesus Christ have freedom of Conscience there and doth Faithfully promise upon his Honor to observe and performe as much as in him Lyes the Particulars above mentioned . . . In witnesse whereof the said Lord Baltemore hath heereunto sett his hand & seale the 30th day of November 1657*

*Signed and sealed in the Presence of*

*C: Baltemore*

*Edward Diggs      Samuell Mathews*

*John Harris*

*Richard Chandler*

*A. Sanford*

*William Barrett*

—Proceedings of the Council of Maryland, 1657–1660, Liber HH, ff 10–12, MdHR 3823.

but because of English devotion to property rights. He had a charter—a charter George Calvert had written and Charles I had granted—and the English government needed a strong rationale for rescinding such a grant. The Calverts had invested most of their fortune in Maryland settlement, and no one could prove serious misgovernment there. Grand issues of imperial policy would have been needed to justify abrogating the charter. Over the years of Maryland-Virginia conflict, the English government was too distracted with disruptions at home to develop any overall imperial organization. Neither the crown, nor Parliament, nor the Protectorate governments could find arguments or energy to undo what Charles I had done.

External events clearly had a major impact on political events in Maryland over this period. Conflicts over who should exercise power did not originate within the colony, although the introduction of a large Puritan population from Virginia made it easy for the Parliamentary commissioners to establish an alternative government. There were, furthermore, no signs of unusual internal stress. Population increased, tobacco was shipped, everyday life functioned as it always had.<sup>50</sup> In the years between 1654 and 1658, Catholics were excluded from office, but their property rights were not attacked. On the other hand, the first bloodshed over who should rule had occurred since an encounter with Claiborne's men two decades before in 1635. Could the Battle of the Severn have been prevented?

Clearly the answer is yes. In part the fault must be laid at Lord Baltimore's own door. At a distance of three thousand miles, he did not comprehend the position of Stone and his councillors. His reaction to the events of 1652-1654 was to insist too strongly on maintaining his charter privileges, and he failed to understand that Stone did not have the power to overthrow the alternative government once it was created. It would have been wiser to let Maryland remain a divided colony while Lord Baltimore lobbied the Cromwell government and everyone waited for its decision.

However the difficulties of finding reliable leaders were an underlying cause of

Lord Baltimore's mistakes. He needed most of all what he did not have: a family member on hand in Maryland with the ability to protect the Calvert interest. With the death of his brother Leonard, he had had to entrust his colony to men he did not know, men who were mostly Protestants, and whose loyalty to him he could not easily ensure. Protestant men of standing who could bring credibility to his government had to be invited from outside Maryland; no Protestants of such calibre were there in the late 1640s and early 1650s, except among the hostile Puritans. He supplemented these appointments with the selection of Maryland settlers of humble origins but long-term success, whose loyalty he could seal with opportunities such promotion offered. Some of the outsider Protestants, including Stone, served him well. Others never came, while some proved disreputable or of doubtful loyalty. The most humble councillors, John Price and Robert Vaughan, were among the successes. But over all, the absence of a settled cadre of secure leaders at the top was a severe handicap to a distant ruler. Lord Baltimore's early failure to attract Protestants of birth and "quality" who would commit their lives and fortunes to his enterprise left him without the securely established leadership needed for the trials of the 1650s.<sup>51</sup>

Despite these problems, Maryland grew from 1646 to 1660. A population of under two hundred people increased to one of nearly six thousand. Indeed, this time, which might be considered one of turmoil, represents the period in the seventeenth century when immigration of people to Maryland in family groups was largest.<sup>52</sup> The institutions in place continued to provide services necessary to make growth possible. Courts met, assemblies convened, and taxes were collected, despite political change-overs in who held the offices. This growing population needed and wanted peace and prosperity, not disorder. When a settlement was finally reached, most inhabitants of Maryland accepted it with relief.<sup>53</sup>

Although the next thirty years were a time of relatively peaceful development, trouble broke out once again in 1689. A Protestant-led rebellion overthrew the

Catholic proprietor and successfully petitioned for crown rule. The Church of England was then established and English laws that forbade Catholics to practice their religion in public and denied them political rights were put in force in Maryland. Charles Calvert, the third Lord Baltimore, retained his right to Maryland as a property—showing once more the importance of property rights in the English mentality—but lost his right to govern until a Protestant should succeed to the title.<sup>54</sup> Why this collapse of proprietary authority and the policy of toleration it supported? What happened over these years that undid what had earlier survived far more troubled times?

The very population growth that spelled success for Lord Baltimore's colony helped create conditions that contributed to the downfall of the proprietor and his policies. The nature of the growth itself was part of the problem. Until late in the seventeenth century, population increased by immigration of adults from England, not from natural increase in Maryland.<sup>55</sup> This fact had major consequences for Maryland society over the second half of the seventeenth century. Immigrants were mostly Protestant and had lived in a society in which Catholic services were never held in public and Catholics could not hold office. If the Maryland adults of the 1670s and 1680s had been largely native born and hence raised where toleration was practiced, they would have set the standard to which newcomers were required to adjust. Instead, continued heavy immigration after 1660 not only kept the English born and their prejudices dominant but greatly increased the Protestant majority in the population.

A serious flaw in the thinking that underlay the Calvert toleration policy helped make the continued influx of English Protestants a threat. Catholics supported toleration as a political expedient in a Protestant country, not as a moral good. But where Protestants were a great majority, they needed to be persuaded that toleration in itself was a good if they were going to accept it fully. Why else should they support it? Unfortunately few people anywhere accepted such ideas. To Protestant and Catholics alike, toleration was a device for

co-existence rather than a moral framework for a better world. In countries where Catholics were a majority, Protestants suffered disabilities. And in Maryland, when the Protestant majority acquired the power to destroy toleration, they did so.

A second underlying problem also arose out of Calvert policy. In the absence of taxation to support ministers and churches there were few of either for Protestants in Maryland. The Jesuit priests had land to support them, granted to the first mission fathers in return for the large number of settlers they had brought to Maryland in the early years. Quakers did not need ministers. But Catholics and Quakers were probably at best a quarter of the population in 1689. Most Protestants most of the time were without access to the sacraments. This was not an acceptable outcome in the seventeenth-century English world, and Protestants blamed the proprietor for this gap in the social fabric.

Other problems were less directly related to religion. A difficulty for the proprietor had always been objections to his princely powers. His charter gave him rights that in England belonged only to the king or his deputy. Lord Baltimore appointed all magistrates or other officers needed for his government. He could raise an army to put down rebellion or make war beyond his province. He could establish courts; writs ran in his name, not that of the king; and no appeal to England was provided. The main protections against the tyranny of a man with such power lay first in the stipulation that all English settlers were to be considered Englishmen with the liberties and privileges of that status; and second, that an assembly of freemen or their deputies was to consent to all laws, which were to be "as agreeable as may be" to those of England. But no royal review of Maryland laws was mentioned and all disagreements over the meaning of any wording of the charter were to be decided in favor of the proprietor. Any proprietor with such powers would have had to face opposition, but a Catholic was especially vulnerable.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that the assembly was the forum in which attempts to adjudicate conflicts over proprietary policies surfaced. The assembly

had very early established its right to initiate, as well as consent to, laws. By 1660 it had become a two-house body, with a lower house of elected representatives and an upper house appointed by the proprietor. The lower house was predominantly Protestant and many of its members were men from humble social origins who had achieved success. By contrast, the upper house was usually at least half Catholic and by 1676 had become a Calvert family network based on strategic marriages. Members of the upper house also sat on the council, were judges of the Provincial Court, and held all the offices of profit in the growing colonial bureaucracy. Consequently they were a powerful group tied closely to the Calvert interest.

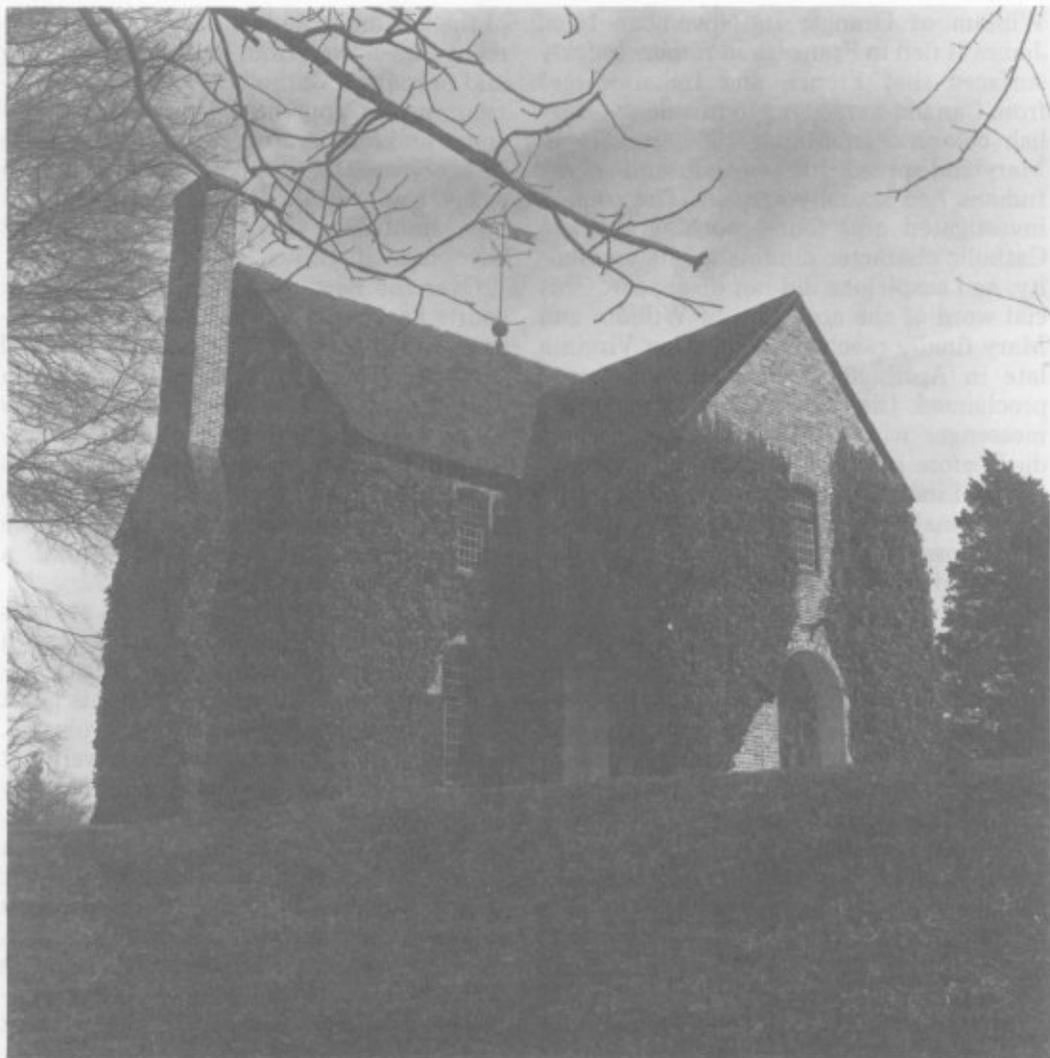
The conflicts that arose in the assembly were basically constitutional and fiscal, but they were heightened by religious anxiety. The proprietor wanted to call only two delegates per county to sit and insisted on control of procedures for electing and convening the assembly; the delegates wanted four delegates per county and procedures based on statute. They finally lost this battle. Like other lower houses in the English colonies, the Maryland Assembly fought for the privileges of Parliament, with some degree of success. But the delegates had only a partial victory in another major aim—a short time limit on proprietary veto of laws. Cecil Calvert had occasionally disallowed laws years after they had been passed and in effect. In 1681, Charles Calvert, third Lord Baltimore, at first conceded an eighteen-month time limit, but when he was obliged to leave the colony for England in 1684, he insisted on a three-year limit. At his departure, the lower house also lost a battle to make the assembly, not the proprietary courts, the judge of what English laws should extend to Maryland. In addition, debates occurred over severe punishments for sedition to the proprietor and the absence of a clause in the oath of fidelity reserving allegiance to the crown. Concern with proprietary power was at the bottom of these conflicts, but the fact that the proprietor was a Catholic prince added to their bitterness.

Taxes and arrangements for defense against Indian incursions raised other difficult issues. In 1670 the assembly granted

the proprietor an export tax of two shillings per hogshead of tobacco, provided he spent half on defense or other costs of government. But no procedures for accounting were part of the act, and as taxes for military expenditures mounted, feeling ran high that the proprietor had not kept his bargain. Quarrels also arose over control of arms and munitions. The proprietor wanted a central magazine, the better to control loss and spoilage. The lower house wanted these supplies sent to the counties, where inhabitants would have quicker access to them. Here again there were anxious undertones. A central magazine would be Catholic controlled.

Another issue, not capable of debate in the assembly but clearly of increasing importance, was the Calvert policy of plural appointments that concentrated power in the small group of relatives who composed the council.<sup>56</sup> As population grew across the second half of the seventeenth century, the pool of men who had achieved wealth and appointments as local magistrates increased, but their opportunities for acquiring greater power or status were blocked. While Lord Baltimore was generally careful to ensure that Protestants as well as Catholics shared the patronage he dispensed, he failed to realize that his method of controlling the men at the top of his government had dangerously narrowed the road to power. Catholics as well as Protestants were subject to such frustrations, but they surfaced most strongly in Protestant protests that appeared as early as 1676 and were carefully crafted in 1689 to justify rebellion. Lord Baltimore had left himself open to charges that justice was hard to obtain from a government in which everyone was related to everyone else and in which the court of final appeal, the upper house of assembly, consisted of the same men who sat as judges on the Provincial Court from which the appeals had come.

The issue of council membership became more serious after Charles Calvert left Maryland in 1684 to defend his charter in England. By then he had been third Lord Baltimore for nine years and was facing attacks on his charter both from William Penn, who was claiming Maryland territory as part of Pennsylvania, and from the crown, which was tightening its control



**The Reconstructed State House of 1676, St. Mary's City**

Reconstructed by Herbert Crist, James Edmunds, Jr., and Horace Peaslee in 1934 as part of Maryland's Tercentenary celebration, this exhibit stands only a few dozen yards from the foundations of the original State House of 1676. That structure, in the shape of a cross with a width of 61 feet, cost 300,000 pounds of tobacco to build and remained standing until 1829. When it was new, St. Mary's City was in its heyday as the village seat of provincial government. But on 27 July 1689, John Coode and his armed Protestant rebels invaded St. Mary's City and captured the State House from Lord Baltimore's forces without a shot being fired. Within six years, the capital was moved to Annapolis, and the ancient seat of government fell into decay, while the State House became a chapel of ease for the Anglican parish of William and Mary, symbolizing the joining of church and state that the Lords Baltimore had always resisted. (Photograph courtesy of the St. Mary's City Commission.)

over English colonies. Charles Calvert made his councillors deputy governors with power to act jointly; but over the years 1684 to 1689, death and departure from Maryland reduced the Protestant membership of this group. By 1689 all councillors but one were Catholic. In addition, in the absence

of Lord Baltimore's control, some proved to be corrupt, and as a group, they were inept.

The spark that set off rebellion was the Glorious Revolution in England, which deposed the Catholic James II in favor of his Protestant daughter Mary and her husband

William of Orange. In November 1688, James II fled to France, and rumors quickly surfaced that French and Indian forces from Canada were going to invade the English colonies. In March 1689, rumors in Maryland spread that ten thousand enemy Indians had actually arrived. The council investigated and found nothing, but its Catholic character diminished its credibility, and suspicions did not disappear. Official word of the accession of William and Mary finally reached neighboring Virginia late in April, and Their Majesties were proclaimed there; but Lord Baltimore's messenger with similar news and orders died before reaching Maryland. In the absence of instructions, the deputy governors did not make a similar proclamation. These events provided a small group of malcontents, led by John Coode, with an opportunity to organize rebellion. They took advantage of the growing unrest to persuade the militia of the southern Maryland counties, where Catholic population was centered, that the Catholic deputy governors were conspiring with the French and Indians. Late in July 1689, the militia marched on the capital and forced the deputy governors to surrender.

The rebel leaders then followed the precedent set by the leaders of the English revolution and called for an elected convention to take control. Catholics, of course, were excluded. This convention, which met in late August and early September, sent an address to the crown asking for a Protestant government. With this went a justification of the rising in arms based on the supposed conspiracy and backed by a legalistic litany of grievances. These emphasized the absence of Protestant churches, Lord Baltimore's refusal to expand the powers

of the assembly, and charges of misgovernment that flowed from plural officeholding and purported Catholic tyranny. The convention also appointed Protestant magistrates and militia officers to keep the peace in every county, reappointing incumbents as much as possible. It then adjourned without establishing any central government beyond itself.

Over the next nine months, ten county courts kept order as if they were ten separate governments, as all anxiously awaited word from England. This finally arrived on May 30, 1690. The Associators, as they called themselves, were to exercise authority until further orders came from the crown. The interim government—consisting of the elected convention and the county courts—ruled Maryland until a royal governor arrived in April 1692.

What is remarkable about this story is that there was little disorder or disruption of daily life as a consequence of this bloodless coup and its aftermath, and this point is basic to an assessment of the revolution. Catholics were disarmed but they were not otherwise harmed, nor was their property despoiled. Although many Protestant leaders opposed the revolution, neither the men on the county benches nor those who sat on the sidelines as proprietary supporters sought to make trouble for one another. Courts met and carried on the peacekeeping services and other governmental responsibilities that they had always had without much undue use of magistratical powers. Everyone awaited a decision from the crown as to who should rule in Maryland.

This success of the county magistrates provides a strong argument that the underlying causes of rebellion were neither inherent instability of the social order nor

#### REVOLUTION

*"Wee will take care, and doe promise that no person now in armes with us, or that shall come to assist us shall committ any outrage or doe any violence to any person whatsoever that shall be found peaceable and quiet and not oppose us in our said just and necessary designes, . . .*

*And wee doe lastly invite and require all manner of persons whatsoever residing or Inhabiting in this Province, as they tender their Allegiance, the Protestant Religion, their Lives, fortunes and Families, to ayd and assist us in this our undertaking."*

—The Declaration of the Protestant Association, 25 July 1689

the admitted absence of a secure officeholding class whose right to govern was based on long-established wealth and custom. Had either been the basic problem, the county governments could not have kept the peace during the long months of uncertainty. This very ability to maintain order without loss of life or much repressive use of magistratical powers helped give the revolutionary government its legitimacy, in England as well as in Maryland. If county governments had not been stable and well-functioning institutions, this outcome would not have been possible. There were Protestant leaders in every county who supported Lord Baltimore, or at least felt that nothing could justify rising in arms against a legally-constituted authority. But local leaders, whether pro- or anti-proprietor, whether sitting on the bench or on the side lines, refrained from engaging in local power struggles that could have led to violence and bloodshed. Instead they promoted the safe routines that would minimize tension and keep the peace while they waited for the crown's decision.

Recently scholars have suggested that the large numbers of unmarried and propertyless freed servants in Maryland and Virginia were a disruptive element that brought about disorderly episodes such as the coup of 1689. Nothing in the Maryland records suggest that such men were a large element in the Maryland revolution. Indeed, one proprietary leader spoke of his efforts to point out to men in arms that they were risking their estates. If a disorderly rabble had been the basis of Coode's army, these same men surely would have remained restless and made trouble during the long months that preceded crown approval of the change in government. Yet nothing in the county records or in accounts of the revolution sent to England suggests disorders of this kind.

This same absence of disorder suggests that the origins of the uprising did not lie in an irrepressible upwelling either of anti-popery or fear of Calvert tyranny, despite the many anxieties and conflicts over religious and constitutional issues that had characterized the preceding years. Such feelings and fears would surely have brought attacks on Catholics and disorderly

conflict between pro- and anti-proprietary Protestants that would have surfaced in surviving county records or in accounts of the revolution sent to England. Furthermore, the proportion of Protestants who refused to support the revolution was substantial. Thirty percent of the Protestants who were holding office when the revolution broke out were either excluded from, or refused to serve in the interim government. In every county there were Protestant leaders in open opposition, and in at least three counties, addresses to the crown denounced the revolution. But these disagreements were contained within orderly procedures that surely would have collapsed into serious violence had overpowering fear and anger motivated any significant portion of the Protestant population.

This division in Protestant reaction also indicates that constitutional conflicts over the powers of the assembly mostly fought before Lord Baltimore's departure had not been overpowering sources of discontent. The majority of Protestants still alive in 1689 who had served in the assemblies through 1684 failed to support the overthrow of Lord Baltimore. Only the last assembly, held in 1688 after four years of inept rule by the deputy governors, had a majority of members who became Associates. What had been emerging until Lord Baltimore was called away was a learning process between the delegates and the proprietor as they sought to adjudicate differences. Had Lord Baltimore been able to remain, the process could have continued. Later delegates might have also felt commitment to the process and helped make a revolution impossible.

The revolution, then, was not an inevitable result of religious anxieties, although these anxieties were real, nor were political problems necessarily insoluble. The social and political ingredients for continued Catholic-Protestant cooperation were present in Maryland society. Had the third Lord Baltimore been able to stay in his province, he very likely would have been able to keep control.

Nevertheless, changes were inevitable. Had there been no revolution, Lord Baltimore would have had to make them, or the crown eventually would have intervened.

The Associators who eventually achieved power under the royal governors did so through their contacts in the English government and merchant community. Had there been no revolution, they could have, and if necessary surely would have, made use of this influence to bring about essential changes. Charles Calvert would have been forced to give Protestants more access to power, both through expansion of the rule of the assembly and through appointment to high office. He would have had to accept greater crown supervision. He surely would have had to allow taxation in some form to support Protestant churches, and complete separation of church and state would have come to an end. Abandoning that experiment would have been the price of continuing toleration. And if he had refused to make such changes, he would probably have lost his charter in the end.

At bottom, the Maryland revolution of 1689 was once again a consequence of failure in leadership of the men at the top of Maryland society. In 1689 these were men who most closely fit the traditional criteria for rulers. The deputy governors were all men of good birth, supposedly bound to the lord proprietor by ties of kinship as well as the wealth and power he had entrusted to them. Yet when put to the test, they failed to perform. They misused their positions to build their fortunes. They showed poor judgment in dealing with political opposition. They were not dedicated to Lord Baltimore's interests. But underlying all were the failings of the third Lord Baltimore himself. He had not seen in time the necessity of somehow providing support for Protestant churches. He had been too unwilling to grant high office to Protestants of ability, preferring by plural officeholding to keep the reins of power in the hands of a tiny minority. He had been too tenacious of prerogatives he could have afforded to release, such as his refusal to include in the oath of fidelity a clause reserving allegiance to the crown. Such policies lost him support that could have made the revolutionary coup unable to succeed. At the beginning, most Maryland Protestant leaders simply allowed the coup to happen without actively participating. If more such men had instead actively disapproved of overturning

proprietary authority, Coode and his colleagues could not have carried out their plan and probably would not even have tried it.

As it was, Catholics lost political rights, and the Anglican Church was established. But otherwise the substitution of a royal for a proprietary governor brought little change beyond access to high office for a broader range of Protestants. By 1694 all the political divisions that the revolution created had disappeared, and Protestant leaders still alive who had supported the proprietor had been returned to power. Nor did royal government produce changes in the structure of government beyond allowing very limited appeals from Maryland courts to the crown and a royal review of Maryland legislation. The creation of vestries accompanied the Anglican establishment, but their functions remained primarily parochial and did not compete with, or replace, those of the county courts. Maryland already had a constitution that was suitable to its needs and there was no pressure in either England or Maryland for further change. Had the third Lord Baltimore made the necessary religious and political adjustments during the 1680s, it is doubtful that there would have been a revolution.

There was both continuity and progression to the episodes that threatened proprietary rule in seventeenth-century Maryland. Religious tension contributed to all of them. There were failures of leadership at the top in all, and both in the 1650s and in the 1680s the proprietor made mistakes that led to unnecessary conflict. Furthermore, there were always Maryland leaders who thought more of their own fortunes and careers than of the public interest. Opportunities at the top for making a killing apparently could provide overwhelming temptation to put self first and loyalty to the proprietor—especially in his absence—or to the public interest, second. But at the bottom and in the middle of that society, among freedmen striving to become planters and planters striving to secure estates they could leave to their children, public order was necessary to success. Such men invested time and energy in supporting the

institutions that would create such order. As the seventeenth century progressed, this order became more and more secure. In 1645 men left Maryland when order broke down. By 1689 its foundations were well established in functioning county governments run by conscientious magistrates who protected life and property even as they supported or opposed the overturn of the proprietor's government. This was a major achievement of seventeenth-century Maryland society.

Threats to order came from the top, but even here the legal legitimacy of government was always established as the issue when transfers of power were attempted. Unfortunately the issue of legitimacy was always embedded in religious differences that greatly heightened tension and helped justify a challenge of established authority. In the 1630s the Virginia leaders could not accept the idea that the crown would really authorize Catholic ownership and governance of territory they felt was rightfully theirs through earlier grants and prior occupation. In 1645 Ingle justified his raid not only as an attack upon supporters of the crown but as a rescue of Protestants from papist rule. In the 1650s Virginians and the Puritan immigrants from Virginia claimed legitimacy in part simply by being Protestant. In 1689 this position required bolstering with accusations of popish plots. The Calvert government by then had been too long in place to attack simply as a Catholic-led entity. But the accusations produced the desired result. The Catholic government of Maryland could not be legitimate if it supported a French and Indian invasion.

However, because of the very need felt by all to claim legitimacy, Lord Baltimore always won in the end. He had a charter, and the place of property rights in the English mentality protected his position. Even in 1689 he did not lose his right to Maryland as a property and eventually the Calverts regained nearly all their original powers. It took a real revolution—the one in 1776—to bring an end to Calvert ownership of Maryland.

So far this essay has argued that despite severe and long-continued demographic

disruption, Maryland inhabitants developed the informal and formal social and political institutions required for an orderly society, and that these were strong enough by 1689 to prevent bloodshed and destruction of property, even when rebels overturned a legally established government. How then can we account for Bacon's Rebellion of 1676 in Virginia? The stories of looting and burning there, and the encouragement to destruction given by leaders at the top—some of them members of the council—have no parallel in Maryland after 1645, if then.<sup>57</sup> Was Virginia society more disorderly? Was there less opportunity for the poor, less integration of former servants into community networks? Was there less participation of inhabitants in Virginia's local government? Was life more brutal, were leaders more self-serving than in Maryland?

This essay can only raise these questions, not answer them, but some comments are in order. Some very recent, and, as of this writing, unpublished work argues that Virginia society and government were not unstable. Social underpinnings developed quickly in the form of community networks and local governments based on wide participation of inhabitants. At the top, men with differing interests quarreled but learned to handle conflicts and work together. Transfers of power were orderly. By this interpretation, Bacon's Rebellion was an aberration that obscured important long-run developments in Virginia society.<sup>58</sup>

But supposing Virginia did generally resemble Maryland in its social development, there may have been other differences that contributed to differences in the behavior of Virginia leaders as opposed to those in Maryland. First Virginia was much larger than Maryland, and county courts had much more independence. For example, they made land grants and controlled probate of estates, both important powers over distribution of property that in Maryland could be kept under greater central government control.<sup>59</sup> There was thus more opportunity in Virginia for misuse of power. Second, the very religious tensions that brought trouble to Maryland may have also contributed to conscientious magistracy

there. Men in positions of authority, both in the counties and at the top, had to be circumspect. A Catholic proprietor or a Catholic governor controlled appointments of Protestants to power, while Catholic officials were under the scrutiny of a predominantly Protestant population with contacts in the English government. Neither Catholics nor Protestants could afford to be notorious for vicious conduct or outrageous abuse of power. Maryland's leaders, even the deputy governors, may have been less accustomed than Virginians to think of themselves as deserving of whatever they could grab.<sup>60</sup>

What certainly is true is that in both Maryland and Virginia the appearance of a native-born adult population early in the eighteenth century made a difference in the nature of leadership and the sources of stability. While the society was dominated by immigrants, men often died not long after achieving the power that years of effort had enabled them to acquire, and in any case, did not live to see a son come of age to replace them. In the later creole society, men achieved power at an earlier age, held on to it longer before they died, and bequeathed it, like their wealth, to their sons. No longer were men of small beginnings creating their wealth and power over the course of their lives and learning ways to use it responsibly as they reaped its benefits. They were born to wealth and position. Newcomers could enter the circles of power, especially if they married into it. But rising prices of land and bound labor—especially slaves—limited the opportunities to rise from the bottom.<sup>61</sup> Chesapeake leaders of the eighteenth century more closely fitted the traditional models of men fit for power than had their predecessors. Stability in its more traditional forms increased, but at the price of declining mobility and freedom to rise. On the other hand, mobility and freedom had also had their price in truncated careers, children left without kin, servants brutalized when they were too ill to work, and probably a generally higher level of what in England or New England would have been considered social deviance.<sup>62</sup> Who can say whether the people of Maryland and Virginia regretted the change?

## REFERENCES

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1. Edmund S. Morgan has provided the most persuasive presentation of this position in *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York, 1975), esp. chs. 11–14. See also, T. H. Breen, *Puritans and Adventurers: Change and Persistence in Early America* (New York, 1980), ch. 6: "Looking Out for Number One: The Cultural Limits on Public Policy in Early Virginia," pp. 106–126, and comments by John Murrin in a review essay, in *History and Theory*, 11 (1972), 229, 273.
2. Bernard Bailyn, "Politics and Social Structure in Virginia," in James Morton Smith, ed., *Seventeenth-Century America: Essays in Colonial History* (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1959), 90–115, quote on p. 102.
3. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*, ch. 11; T. H. Breen and Stephen Innes, "Myne Owne Grounde": *Race and Freedom on Virginia's Eastern Shore, 1640–1676* (New York, 1980); and Breen, *Puritans and Adventurers*, ch. 6, make the case for exploitation. For life expectancies, see Lorena S. Walsh and Russell R. Menard, "Death in the Chesapeake: Two Life Tables for Men in Early Colonial Maryland," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 69 (1974), 211–227 (hereafter cited as *MHM*); Darrett B. and Anita H. Rutman, "Of Agues and Fevers: Malaria in the Early Chesapeake," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., 28 (1976), 31–60 (hereafter cited as *WMQ*); Carville Earle, "Environment, Disease, and Mortality in Early Virginia," in Thad W. Tate and David L. Ammerman, eds., *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century: Essays on Anglo-American Society and Politics* (Chapel Hill, 1979), 96–125. On servant immigration, see Russell R. Menard, "Economy and Society in Early Colonial Maryland" (unpubl. Ph. D. dissertation, Univ. of Iowa, 1975), 217–218; Wesley Frank Craven, *White, Red, and Black: The Seventeenth-Century Virginian* (Charlottesville, 1971), 5. On sex ratios and marriage, see Russell R. Menard, "Immigrants and Their Increase: The Process of Population Growth in Early Colonial Maryland," in Aubrey C. Land, Lois Green Carr, and Edward C. Papenfuss, eds., *Law, Society, and Politics in Early Maryland* (Baltimore, 1977), 88–110.
4. For the education and social origins of officeholders and the turnovers in officeholding, see Lois Green Carr, "The Foundations of Social Order: Local Government in Colonial Maryland," in Bruce C. Daniels, ed., *Town and County: Essays on the Structure of Local Government in the American Colonies* (Middletown, Conn., 1978), 91 and Table 1.
5. For the arguments for opportunity, see references in footnote 19 below.

6. J. H. Plumb, *The Growth of Political Stability in England, 1675-1725* (Baltimore, 1969), 12.
7. This definition is similar to that used by David W. Jordan in "Political Stability and the Emergence of a Native Elite in Maryland," in Tate and Ammerman, eds., *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century*, 244.
8. Unpublished are James Russell Perry, "The Formation of a Society on Virginia's Eastern Shore, 1615-1655" (unpubl. Ph. D. dissertation, The Johns Hopkins Univ., 1980); Michael J. Graham, S.J., "Lord Baltimore's Pious Enterprise: Toleration and Diversity in Colonial Maryland, 1634-1724" (unpubl. Ph. D. diss., Univ. of Michigan, 1983), chs. 3-4; Lorena S. Walsh, *Women's Networks in the Colonial Chesapeake* (paper presented to the Organization of American Historians, Cincinnati, April 1983). About to appear is Darrett and Anita Rutman, *A Place in Time: Middlesex County, Virginia, 1650-1750*, 2 vols. (New York, 1984).
9. Unpublished research of Lorena S. Walsh to appear in Lois Green Carr, Russell R. Menard, and Lorena S. Walsh, *Robert Cole's World* (in progress). Dr. Walsh has plotted all the connections that the records show between members of manor households present in the 1660s and 1670s and other people whose location could be identified. Perry, "Formation of a Society," 97-98, tells us that 92% of all face-to-face contacts between landowners revealed in court records represented distances traveled of no more than 6 miles.
10. For a hilarious account of a funeral, although not on the manor, see William Hand Browne et al., eds., *The Archives of Maryland*, 72 vols. to date (Baltimore, 1883-), LIII, 194, 207-210 (hereafter cited as *Archives*). Administration accounts show expenditures for funeral dinners and reimbursements for "provisions in sickness." See, for example, *ibid.*, X, 311, 398; Testamentary Proceedings 12B: 5-9; 13: 217-219, mss., Maryland Hall of Records. (Unless otherwise noted, all manuscripts cited are located at the Hall of Records.)
 

Lorena S. Walsh discusses funeral practices and participation of neighbors in "Charles County, Maryland, 1658-1705: A Study of Chesapeake Social and Political Structure" (unpubl. Ph. D. diss., Michigan State Univ., 1977), 150-152. For an account of how guardians were appointed and supervised in Maryland, see Lois Green Carr, "The Development of the Maryland Orphan's Court, 1654-1715," in Land, Carr, and Papenfuse, eds., *Law, Society, and Politics*, 41-62. Lorena S. Walsh discusses the experience of orphans in Child Custody in the Early Colonial Chesapeake: A Case Study (unpubl. paper presented to the Fifth Berkshire Conference on Women's History, Poughkeepsie, June 1981), and in "Charles County, Maryland," 111-124. Luke Gardner looked after the St. Clement's Manor plantation and the children of his deceased friend, Robert Cole, for 11 years between 1662 and 1673, until the oldest son came of age (Testamentary Proceedings 6: 120-146, ms.). Walsh discusses godparents in "'Til Death Us do Part': Marriage and Family in Seventeenth-Century Maryland," in Tate and Ammerman, eds., *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century*, 147. For an example of manor neighbors as godparents, see Wills 1: 605, ms. On Thomas Gerard, see his file in Seventeenth-Century Career File, St. Mary's City Commission, Maryland Hall of Records, and *Archives* XLI, 169. Perry, "Formation of a Society," 100-104, 107-115, discusses all these varieties of neighborhood contacts.
11. *Archives* LVII, 33-34; Provincial Court Deeds, WRC no. 1: 121-122, ms. See also *Archives* X, 65-66.
12. Ejectment Papers and Chancery Court Proceedings abound with depositions showing how people transferred information from one generation to another.
13. On these points, see Lois Green Carr and Lorena S. Walsh, "The Planter's Wife: The Experience of White Women in Seventeenth-Century Maryland," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., 34 (1977), 542-571; Darrett B. and Anita H. Rutman, "Now-Wives and Sons-in-Law: Parental Death in a Seventeenth-Century Virginia County," in Tate and Ammerman, eds., *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century*, 153-182; Lorena S. Walsh, *Land, Landlord, and Leaseholder: Estate Management and Tenant Fortunes in Southern Maryland, 1642-1820* (unpubl. paper presented to the Conference on Washington, D. C. Historical Studies, Washington, D.C., March 1983); and Perry, "Formation of a Society," 71-92, 96, 105-107.
14. *Archives* XLI, 74.
15. *Ibid.*, XLIX, 166-167, 53, 628; Testamentary Proceedings 12B: 238-254; Perry, "Formation of a Society," 117-121.
16. Carr, "Foundations of Social Order," in Daniels, ed., *Town and County*, 78-79; Carr, "Orphan's Court," in Land, Carr, and Papenfuse, eds., *Law, Society, and Politics*, 42-44. Acts of Assembly required creditors who had obtained judgments in the courts to wait until the tobacco crop was ready before collecting, but the debtors had to find securities first (*Archives* II, 289, 323; XIII, 519). All court records abound with bonds securing payments to creditors.
17. Lorena S. Walsh makes this point in her portion of *Robert Cole's World* (in preparation); see fn. 9.
18. Lois Green Carr, "County Government in Maryland, 1689-1709" (unpubl. Ph. D. diss., Harvard Univ., 1968), Text, 363-364; *Archives* LIII, 628; Lois Green Carr and Russell R. Menard, "Immigration and Opportunity: The Freedman in Early Colonial Maryland," in Tate and Ammerman, eds., *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century*, 212-216.
19. Russell R. Menard, "From Servant to Freeholder: Status Mobility and Property Accumulation in Seventeenth-Century Maryland," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., 30 (1973), 37-64; Carr and Menard, "Immigration and Opportunity," in Tate and Ammerman, eds., *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century*, 233; Lorena S. Walsh, "Servitude and Opportunity in Charles County, Maryland, 1658-1705," in Land, Carr, and Papenfuse, eds., *Law, Society, and Politics*, 118.
20. Carr, "Foundations of Social Order," in Daniels,

- ed., *Town and County*, 78–79.
21. The discussion that follows of the structure and functions of county government and its relationship to the provincial government is based on *ibid.*, 72–91.
  22. *Archives* III, 61, 80–81.
  23. By the end of the 17th century, service on grand and petit juries was beginning to be confined to landowners, but many kinds of juries of inquiry were not so restricted. For discussion of Virginia county government, which was not dissimilar except that parish vestries had some responsibilities, see Robert Wheeler, "The County Court in Colonial Virginia," and William H. Seiler, "The Anglican Church: A Basic Institution of Local Government in Colonial Virginia," in Daniels, ed., *Town and County*, 111–159; Warren M. Billings, "The Growth of Political Institutions in Virginia, 1634 to 1676," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., 31 (1974), 225–244; Perry, "Formation of a Society," 186–205.
  24. Carr, "Foundations of Social Order," in Daniels, ed., *Town and County*, 72–110; Lois Green Carr and David W. Jordan, *Maryland's Revolution of Government, 1689–1692* (Ithaca, N. Y.: 1974); Carr, "County Government in Maryland, 1689–1709," *passim*; Walsh, "Charles County, Maryland," ch. 7; *idem.*, "The Development of Local Power Structures on Maryland's Lower Western Shore in the Early Colonial Period," in Bruce C. Daniels, ed., *Power and Status: Essays on Office-holding in the American Colonies* (Middletown, Conn., forthcoming). See also, Perry, "Formation of a Society," 186–205, 225–255.
  25. After 1689, Catholics could not hold any office for which the Test Oath—which denied transubstantiation—was required. By 1700 only the office of overseer of the highways did not require the taking of this oath (Carr, "County Government in Maryland," ch. 6).
  26. For examples of constables in trouble, see Charles County Court and Land Record F no. 1: 45, ms.; Y no. 1:92, ms. For defiance of a sheriff, see *ibid.*, F no. 1:189. I am indebted to Lorena S. Walsh for these references. On the sheriff, see also Somerset County Judicial Record, 1693–94: 144–147, ms; Provincial Court Judgments TL no. 1: 577–578, ms. For cursing the justices after losing a case, see Joseph H. Smith and Philip A. Crowl, eds., *Court Records of Prince George's County, Maryland, 1696–1699* (Washington, D.C., 1964), 75, 84. For the consequences of ridiculing the justices, see *ibid.*, 256–258. See also, Perry, "Formation of a Society," 225–230.
  27. Menard File, St. Mary's City Commission, Maryland Hall of Records.
  28. *Archives* V, 540–541.
  29. *Ibid.*, LX, contains the Charles County Court proceedings for the years 1666–1674.
  30. For warnings to the sheriff for neglect, see *ibid.*, 213, 237, 243; on the constables, 144, 356, 529, 590; for roads, 39, 40, 519; for the bridge, 564; for taxes, 40, 229, 347, 431, 596; for orphans, 55, 106, 142, 180, 207, 229, 230, 281, 417, 497, 509, 591; for poor relief, 21, 230, 431, 502, 563; for servants' ages judged, 61, 75, 114, 119, 127, 131, 139, 142, 179, 188, 196, 230, 242, 243, 256, 261, 262, 281, 317, 334, 358, 359, 364, 428, 498, 503, 504, 506, 527, 529, 551, 552, 564, 565, 575, 590; for servant complaints, 63, 108, 117, 142, 180, 344, 493, 495; for the courthouse and jail, 615–618.
  31. A good account of this incident is in Garry Wheeler Stone, "St. John's: Archaeological Questions and Answers," *MHM*, 69 (1974), 157–158.
  32. *Archives* LIV, 224–225; XLI, 500–505.
  33. *Ibid.*, VIII, 32–35.
  34. Carr, "County Government in Maryland," Text, 468–471.
  35. *Archives* XVII, 62.
  36. Carr, "County Government in Maryland," Text, 511–512, 520–526; Cyrus H. Karraker, *The Seventeenth-Century Sheriff: A Comparative Study of the Sheriff in England and the Chesapeake Colonies, 1607–1689* (Chapel Hill, 1930), 87–159. For the sheriff in Virginia, see *ibid.*, 72–73, 76–77.
  37. Carr and Jordan, *Maryland's Revolution of Government*, chs. 3, 4, 6.
  38. Raphael Semmes, *Crime and Punishment in Early Maryland* (Baltimore, 1938) discusses examples. Joseph Douglas Deal III, "Race and Class in Colonial Virginia: Indians, Englishmen, and Africans on the Eastern Shore during the Seventeenth Century" (unpubl. Ph. D. diss., Univ. of Rochester, 1981), 117–137, discusses harsh treatment of Eastern Shore Virginia servants.
  39. Very recently, Bradley Chapin has attempted to determine the incidence of ten types of crime per thousand population per year in the Massachusetts Assistants Court, the Plymouth General and Assistants Court, the Accomack–Northampton, Virginia, County Court, the Essex County, Massachusetts, Court, and the Kent County Court in Maryland for various years before 1660. The results would prove that the Chesapeake was not more liable to violent crime than New England were it not that, first, the Kent County, Maryland, population is probably exaggerated, and more important, the population used is not the population at risk to commit a crime. There were undoubtedly many more adults in the Chesapeake population than in those of New England. Capital crimes, furthermore, are excluded in the two Chesapeake counties (*Criminal Justice in Colonial America, 1606–1660* [Athens, Ga., 1983], Table 4.3).
  40. In the Charles County Court Proceedings, 1666–1674, there is only one prosecution for drunkenness (*Archives* LX, 429). Chapin, *Criminal Justice*, 140–141, finds that Essex County Court in Massachusetts prosecuted drunkenness at a rate per thousand of population 422 per cent higher than did the court of Accomack–Northampton in Virginia. Even given that differences in the age structure of the population are not accounted for, the differences in treatment of drunkenness are clear. See also fn. 41, below.
  41. In Charles County, Maryland, 1666–1674, there were three assaults prosecuted, all involving injury (*Archives* LX, 102, 396, 432). In 1679, the Charles County Court declared a non suit when witnesses testified that the plaintiff in an assault case, although attacked with fists and a hickory stick, "got a bump on his face" but no broken skin (Charles County Court and Land Record H no. 1:

- 211, ms; I am indebted to Lorena S. Walsh for this reference). In Prince George's County, Maryland, 1696-1699, there were three prosecutions for assault, two with injuries. The third was in court time and upon the lawyer of an opponent. There were two sets of presentments of fighting, both in court time and involving a number of people who had been drinking. These offenses occurred in view of the magistrates (Smith and Crowl, eds., *Court Records of Prince George's County*, 25-26, 458-465, 495-96). Of 349 participants in Prince George's County government, 1696-1709, 80 were prosecuted for an offense over the period 1696-1720. Thirty-four were prosecuted for assault or fighting (33 were guilty); 5 for mistreatment of servants (all guilty); 10 for theft (all but one concerned killing livestock in the woods, 3 guilty); 13 for contempt of court (all guilty); 8 for sexual offenses (6 guilty); 4 for being drunk on Sunday (but none for just drunkenness, all guilty); 3 for liquor license violations (all guilty); 6 for tax evasion (3 guilty); 1 for forgery (not guilty); 1 for blasphemy (guilty); and 5 for breach of Sabbath (4 guilty) (Carr, "County Government in Maryland," Appendix, Table 4). The 349 participants included nearly all resident landowners and many tenants and constituted more than 2/3ds of the heads of households. They were the most settled members of the community. But 30, or 11%, were prosecuted for violence against people, and of the 80 prosecuted for anything, nearly half were accused of violent behavior. Prosecutions included those in the Provincial Court, as well as in the county court.
42. On these points, see Carr and Walsh, "The Planter's Wife," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., 34 (1977), 542-571.
  43. For accounts of these events, 1635-1660, see Nathaniel C. Hale, *Virginia Venture: A Historical Biography of William Claiborne, 1660-1677* (Richmond, 1951), chs. 8-13; Russell R. Menard, "Maryland's 'Time of Troubles': Sources of Political Disorder in Early St. Mary's," *MHM*, 76 (1981), 124-140; Aubrey C. Land, *Colonial Maryland, A History* (New York, 1981), 11, 45-56; Charles M. Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History: The Settlements*, vol. 2 (New Haven, 1936), ch. 8; Clayton Colman Hall, ed., *Narratives of Early Maryland, 1633-1684* (New York, 1910), 147-275.
  44. On the investors, see Russell R. Menard and Lois Green Carr, "The Lords Baltimore and the Colonization of Maryland," in David B. Quinn, ed., *Early Maryland in a Wider World* (Detroit, 1982), 179-183.
  45. For biographies of all 17 men, see Harry Wright Newman, *The Flowering of the Maryland Palatinate* (Washington, D. C., 1961), 172, 179-184, 188-191, 200, 211, 213-218, 226-229, 236-238, 250-252, 271, 273-275. Newman's identification of Robert Wiseman with the Henry Wiseman of the first adventurers is probably an error. Only Leonard Calvert, Thomas Cornwallis, Thomas Greene, and John Metcalf appear in any Maryland records after 1638.
  46. Menard states that the colony at Ingle's arrival was on the brink of collapse ("Maryland's Time of Troubles," *MHM*, 76 (1981), 136). Garry Wheeler Stone argues the second interpretation in "Society, Housing, and Architecture in Early Maryland: John Lewger's St. John's" (unpubl. Ph. D. diss., Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1982), 47-53, 136-141.
  47. *Archives* III, 178-179; IV, 362, 370, 372, 375, 376, 423. During Ingle's Raid, itself, Thomas Cornwallis, the Brents, and the Jesuits suffered the chief loss of property. See "Richard Ingle in Maryland," *MHM*, I (1906), 125-140; transcriptions by Garry W. Stone and David B. Quinn of parts of Copley v. Ingle, Glover v. Ingle, and Ingle v. Looking Glass from HCA 13/119, HCA 2/106 no. 265, HCA 13/60, mss., Public Record Office, London; and a transcription of part of Cornwallis v. Ingle, C24 690/14, ms., Public Record Office, London, supplied by Noel Currer Briggs and Southside Historical Sites, Williamsburg, Virginia (all in the files of the St. Mary's City Commission). *Archives* IV, 418, documents Lewger's return to Maryland.
  48. On the revival, see Russell R. Menard, "Economy and Society in Early Colonial Maryland," 213.
  49. On Thomas Stone, see Robert F. Brenner, "Commercial Changes and Political Conflict: The Merchant Community in Civil War London" (unpubl. Ph. D. diss., Princeton Univ., 1970), 110-111, 112, 142.
  50. On Maryland economic development over these years, see Menard, "Economy and Society," 213-215.
  51. On these points, see David W. Jordan, "Maryland's Privy Council, 1637-1715," in Land, Carr, and Papenfuse, eds., *Law, Society, and Politics*, 65-72.
  52. Menard, "Economy and Society," 215, 218, 222-223.
  53. Early in 1660, the Protestant governor, Josias Fendall, tried to establish a Protestant "Commonwealth" in Maryland, but he appears to have had little support. There is little information on the event. See Andrews, *Colonial Period, II: Settlements*, 322-323.
  54. The discussion to follow of the revolution and its background is a summary of the narrative and arguments in Carr and Jordan, *Maryland's Revolution of Government*, esp. chs. 1 and 6.
  55. Menard, "Immigrants and Their Increase," in Land, Carr, and Papenfuse, eds., *Law, Society, and Politics*, 88-110.
  56. Andrews, *Colonial Period, II: Settlements*, 332-333, 376-378, first called attention to this policy. David W. Jordan discusses it in greater detail in "Maryland's Privy Council," in Land, Carr, and Papenfuse, eds., *Law, Society, and Politics*, 72-75.
  57. The most recent discussion is Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*, 250-270. See also Wilcomb Washburn, *The Governor and the Rebel* (Chapel Hill, 1957); T. J. Wertenbaker, *Torchbearer of the Revolution* (Princeton, N. J., 1940); John C. Rainbolt, *From Prescription to Persuasion: Manipulation of the Seventeenth-Century Economy* (Port Washington, N. Y., 1974), 91-98.
  58. Perry, "Formation of a Society," J. Frederick Fausz, *Authority and Opportunity in the Early Chesapeake: The Bay Environment and the Eng-*

lish Connection, 1620-1640 (paper presented to the Organization of American Historians, Cincinnati, April 1983); Jon Kukla, *Order and Chaos in Early America: Political and Social Stability in Pre-Restoration Virginia* (paper presented to same; accepted for publication in the *American Historical Review*). I have not had an opportunity to read Rutman and Rutman, *A Place in Time*, which will appear early in 1984, but I am told that it also defends this position (personal communi-

cation from Anita Rutman).

59. Wheeler, "The County Court in Colonial Virginia," in Daniels, ed., *Town and County*, 119, 121; Elizabeth Hartsook and Gust Skordas, *Land Office and Prerogative Court Records of Colonial Maryland* (Annapolis, 1946; repr. 1968), 17-19, 82-87.
60. I am indebted to discussions with Lorena S. Walsh for the development of this point.
61. See Menard's essay in this issue.

# Population, Economy, and Society in Seventeenth-Century Maryland

RUSSELL R. MENARD

**B**Y MOST MODERN MEASURES OF PERFORMANCE, the Chesapeake colonies generally, and Maryland in particular, registered impressive gains during the seventeenth century. Total population and settled area grew at rapid rates, while the amount of tobacco produced and exported to England and continental Europe increased substantially. Extensive growth was accompanied by notable gains in productivity and in the incomes and security of the inhabitants. That performance no longer commands unqualified enthusiasm. It was purchased at a high cost and built upon a brutal exploitation. Contemporaries too had doubts, although they worried little about the destruction of Indian peoples, the high death rate among European immigrants, or the enslavement of Africans. Instead they complained that the region was "ill-peopled," that it depended too heavily on tobacco, that it lacked towns, merchants, and artisans, that the inhabitants were parochial and lazy, without industry, imagination, or

grace. The historian of Maryland must confront a paradox: impressive growth on the one hand, contemporary disappointment on the other.<sup>1</sup>

## POPULATION GROWTH

"It has been universally remarked," Thomas Malthus reported in the first *Essay on Population* (1798), "that all new colonies settled in healthy countries, where there is plenty of room and food, have constantly increased with astonishing rapidity in their population." Among colonies, he continued, those of English North America "made by far the most rapid progress," achieving a rate of increase "probably without parallel in history."<sup>2</sup> Malthus ignored the decline of Native Americans (curious omission given his dismal theorem), but he accurately described the demographic history of Africans and Europeans, and Maryland proved no exception. The roughly 140 settlers who arrived on the *Ark* and *Dove* in 1634 grew to nearly 600 inhabitants by 1640. Progress was interrupted during the next decade as severe depression and political turmoil joined to produce a "time of troubles." By 1645, fewer than 200 inhabitants lived in the colony. Recovery began by the late 1640s, however, and despite occasional short-term disruptions, population grew rapidly for the remainder of the colonial period. There were perhaps 700 people in Maryland in 1650, 4000 by 1660, 20,000 by 1680, and 34,000 at century's end. (See Table 1)

The rapid increase of Maryland's population obscures a profound demographic failure. Over the years 1634 to 1680, between 25,000 and 42,000 people, black and white—34,000 can be taken as a "best estimate"—migrated to Maryland, yet fewer

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TABLE 1.  
Estimated Population of Maryland, 1640-1730

Year	Whites	Blacks	Total
1640	551	10	561
1650	682	19	701
1660	3,869	149	4,018
1670	10,731	709	11,440
1680	18,537	1,438	19,975
1690	23,587	2,621	26,208
1700	29,729	4,443	34,172
1710	35,804	7,879	43,683
1720	46,773	11,008	57,781
1730	64,602	17,220	81,822

Source: Russell R. Menard, "The Tobacco Industry in the Chesapeake Colonies, 1617-1730: An Interpretation," *Research in Economic History*, V (1980), 157-161, 165-166; Menard, "Five Maryland Censuses, 1700 to 1712: A Note on the Quality of the Quantities," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., XXXVII (1980), 616-626.

than 20,000 inhabitants lived in the colony in 1680. Clearly, immigrants were not able to replace themselves fully. That failure reflected both the characteristics of immigrants and the volatile disease environment they encountered once they arrived. Most immigrants were afflicted by what contemporaries called a "seasoning" upon arrival and many died as a result. The best evidence suggests that the number of seasoning deaths was very high indeed early in the century and declined sharply after 1650, to perhaps 5 percent, as settlement spread inland to healthier sites, as shipping patterns shifted so immigrants arrived in the fall rather than in mid- to late summer, and as diet and living conditions improved. The problem persisted, however, as recurring epidemics proved especially destructive of new settlers, and there may have been a reversal of the downward trend late in the century when blacks brought new, African diseases to the tobacco coast. Nor could immigrants who survived seasoning expect a long life in Maryland: during the seventeenth century, immigrant males who reached age twenty could expect to die in their early forties, and fewer than 30 percent celebrated their fiftieth birthday.<sup>3</sup>

While the death rate alone was a substantial obstacle to reproduction, the difficulties were compounded by the sex ratio

and by marriage patterns. Among English immigrants to the Chesapeake during the 1630s, men outnumbered women by about six to one. The proportion of women increased sharply around mid-century and slowly thereafter, but even in the 1690s, two to three men arrived for each woman. In some societies marked by severe sexual imbalance, people adjust marriage patterns to accommodate the disparity. There was some adjustment in Maryland, but the possibilities were limited by the ages and contractual obligations of immigrant women. Most women who came to Maryland during the seventeenth century were indentured servants in their early twenties, bound for four or more years before they were free to marry. The combination of high mortality, a severe shortage of females, and late marriage meant that among immigrants to the Chesapeake there were many more deaths than births.

Such severe demographic conditions wreaked havoc on family life among immigrants. Long periods of servitude and the shortage of women led to frequent sexual abuse and to high rates of illegitimacy and bridal pregnancy. More than 10 percent of the children born to immigrant women during the seventeenth century were bastards, and about one-third of those women were pregnant when they married. Since immigrants married late and died young, marriages were short-lived. In Charles County, for example, the typical seventeenth-century marriage lasted only nine years before death ended it; in Somerset County, somewhat healthier, immigrant marriages were more durable, lasting thirteen years on average. Given the sex ratio, remarriage for women was common and quick, creating a marriage system perhaps best described as serial polyandry. Serial polyandry moderated the impact of the shortage of women on the opportunities for men to find wives, but at least a quarter of the adult males in early Maryland died unmarried. Families were small. Women who migrated to Maryland during the seventeenth century rarely had more than four children. At the prevailing rates of childhood mortality, this was hardly adequate to replace parents in the population, let alone compensate for the shortage of women and the frequency of death due to seasoning. In the face of

such high mortality it was a rare child who reached age twenty before being orphaned, a rare parent who became a grandparent.<sup>4</sup>

Immigrants did have some children, however, and they gradually transformed Maryland's demographic regime. Creoles (inhabitants of Old World descent born in the colonies) differed from immigrants in several important ways (see Table 2). For one thing, creoles—at least the adult males among them—lived longer than their immigrant forebears. The gains were not large, however; it is not clear that they extended to native born women; and childhood mortality rates were shocking by twentieth-century standards: nearly thirty percent of the children born in Maryland during the seventeenth century died by age one, nearly half before age twenty. For another, the sex ratio among those born in the colony was approximately equal, although as late as 1704—by which time there is firm evidence of reproductive population gain in the colony—men still outnumbered women by more than three to

two. Finally, and perhaps most important, creole women married at much younger ages than their immigrant mothers. The vast majority of women born in Maryland during the seventeenth century were married before their twentieth birthday, and the average age at marriage may have been as low as sixteen years. Such youthful marriages meant that creole women had enough children to ensure a growing population despite a continuing surplus of males and a persistent high mortality.

Creole family life was more stable than that of immigrants, but it was far from secure. Native-born women seldom had illegitimate children and, with the important exception of orphaned girls who wed immigrants, they were less likely to be pregnant when they married. Nearly all native-born men were able to find wives, and, since natives married earlier and lived longer, their marriages were usually more durable, lasting on average twice as long as marriages between immigrants. Their families were also larger: creole women who married in Maryland during the seventeenth century typically had six children, sufficient to reverse the direction of reproductive population change. Creoles were still unlikely to become grandparents, but they did so more often than had their immigrant forebears. Orphanhood, too, was less common, although it was hardly unusual, and children who lost their parents were more likely to have kin in the neighborhood to take them in. The gradual growth of a native-born majority brought more than biological population growth to early Maryland. It also brought a more durable and certain family life, a change with important material and emotional consequences.

Changes in the character of immigration joined with the beginnings of reproductive increase to produce a dramatic shift in the composition of Maryland's population. There is no enumeration of Maryland's inhabitants for the early colonial period, but it is possible to construct a rough census from tax lists and court records. In 1640, Maryland was a frontier society and a man's world. Men made up about two-thirds of the population and outnumbered women by more than four to one. Fewer than 20 percent of the inhabitants were children. In 1712, men were only 29 percent

TABLE 2.

Demographic Differences between Immigrants and Natives in Early Somerset County, Maryland

	Immigrants	Natives
Mean Age at First Marriage, Males	29.2 yrs.	23.0 yrs.
Mean Age at First Marriage, Females	24.7 yrs.	16.7 yrs.
Expectation of Life at Age 20, Males	23.9 yrs.	30.5 yrs.
Average Length of Marriage	13.3 yrs.	26.3 yrs.
Average Number of Children, All Families	3.9	6.0
Average Number of Children, Completed Families <sup>a</sup>	6.1	9.4
Rate of Bridal Pregnancy	34%	19%

<sup>a</sup> A completed family is one in which both partners to a marriage survive until the wife's forty-fifth birthday.

Source: Russell R. Menard and Lorena S. Walsh, "The Demography of Somerset County, Maryland: A Progress Report," *The Newberry Papers in Family and Community History*, 81-2 (1981).

of Maryland's white population. They still outnumbered women, but the sex ratio (men per hundred women) had fallen to only 122. Children show the most dramatic increase: in 1712, 47 percent of Maryland's white inhabitants were under age 16. At least by a demographic standard, Maryland was no longer a colonial frontier.<sup>5</sup>

### TOBACCO

"Tobacco," Governor Benedict Leonard Calvert noted in 1729, "as our Staple is our All, and indeed leaves no room for anything else."<sup>6</sup> Calvert exaggerated—there was much "else" to Maryland's economy—but he did not exaggerate greatly. Tobacco was "King" in the Chesapeake colonies, and to a much greater extent than cotton would be in the ante-bellum South. It thoroughly dominated exports and formed the link that tied planters to the larger Atlantic world. It provided the means to purchase servants, slaves, manufactured goods, and commer-



A hand of tobacco—the "stinking weede" that put the Chesapeake colonies on the map and helped define most social and economic relationships. Its longevity as a staple crop and a consumer item has long since disproved the seventeenth-century belief that colonial societies could not be built upon such a "Fumish foundation." (Photo courtesy of the St. Mary's City Commission.)

cial services. It attracted immigrants in search of opportunities and capital in search of profits. It shaped the pattern of settlement and the distribution of wealth, structured daily and seasonal work routines, channelled investment decisions and occupational choices, limited the growth of towns and the development of domestic industry. Even such intimate matters as the timing of marriage and conception did not escape its imprint.

The data will not permit a description of the growth of the tobacco industry in Maryland, but some evidence on prices, exports, and income is available for the Chesapeake region as a whole (see Figure 1). These data describe an enormous increase in exports to Great Britain (a good proxy for production) during the seventeenth century. From the time commercial tobacco cultivation began in Virginia in 1616 to the mid-1680s when planters sent 28 million pounds to Britain, exports expanded at a rapid but steadily decelerating rate over the long term, in a pattern punctuated by sharp, short-term swings. The short swings continued after the 1680s, but the long-term (secular) growth did not. Instead, tobacco exports stagnated for roughly thirty years before beginning another long period of expansion lasting to the Revolution. Tobacco prices, on the other hand, fell sharply to the 1680s before they too levelled out. The price decline was not as steep as the increase in exports, however, and the value of the Chesapeake tobacco crop rose impressively, reaching £100,000 by the last decades of the century.

The sharp decline in tobacco prices has been a source of confusion among historians. Falling prices, it is often argued, reflected: first, a restrictive mercantilist policy that kept the Dutch out of the trade and channeled tobacco through England no matter where its ultimate market; second, parasitic governments (both at home and abroad) which laid high taxes on tobacco and thus restricted its market; and third, overproduction by hard-pressed planters struggling to make ends meet. And low prices brought hard times to the Chesapeake. That interpretation is not completely wrong, but it misses the central process. Prices fell because planters and

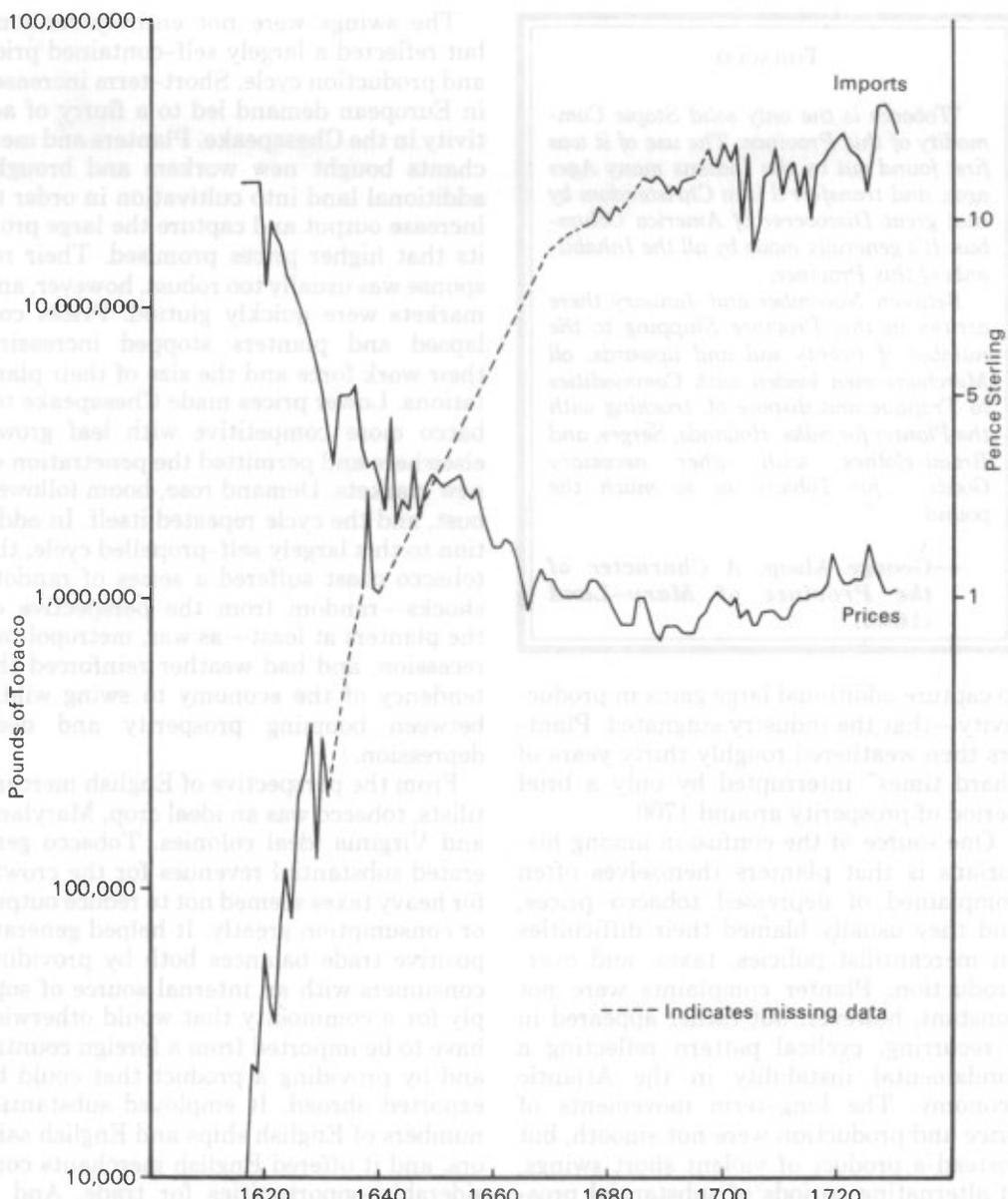


FIGURE 1.  
Farm Prices and British Imports of Chesapeake Tobacco, 1616-1730.

Source: Russell R. Menard, "The Tobacco Industry in the Chesapeake Colonies, 1617-1730: An Interpretation," *Research in Economic History*, 5 (1980), 111.

merchants improved productivity and lowered costs, found better and cheaper ways of making tobacco and getting it to market, captured a variety of scale economies and operated more efficiently. Lower costs meant lower prices, and lower prices meant more people could afford tobacco. More

customers meant larger markets, and larger markets fueled the substantial rise in the size and value of the Chesapeake tobacco crop. It was not until the 1680s when the long-term decline in prices stopped—a function of rising costs of land and labor and the inability of planters and merchants

## TOBACCO

*"Tobacco is the only solid Staple Commodity of this Province: The use of it was first found out by the Indians many Ages agoe, and transferr'd into Christendom by that great Discoverer of America Columbus. It's generally made by all the Inhabitants of this Province, . . ."*

*Between November and January there arrives in this Province Shipping to the number of twenty sail and upwards, all Merchant-men loaden with Commodities to Trafique and dispose of, trucking with the Planter for Silks, Hollands, Serges, and Broad-clothes, with other necessary Goods, . . . for Tobacco at so much the pound . . ."*

—George Alsop, *A Character of the Province of Mary-Land* (1666)

to capture additional large gains in productivity—that the industry stagnated. Planters then weathered roughly thirty years of "hard times" interrupted by only a brief period of prosperity around 1700.

One source of the confusion among historians is that planters themselves often complained of depressed tobacco prices, and they usually blamed their difficulties on mercantilist policies, taxes, and overproduction. Planter complaints were not constant, however, but rather appeared in a recurring, cyclical pattern reflecting a fundamental instability in the Atlantic economy. The long-term movements of price and production were not smooth, but instead a product of violent short swings, of alternating periods of substantial prosperity and profound depression as tobacco prices rose and fell. To most planters the fluctuations seemed random and unpredictable, beyond their ability to control or comprehend. Since the staple dominated the regional economy, the impact of the swings went beyond planter incomes to affect the pattern of immigration, the growth of population, the spread of settlement, the extent of opportunity, government policy, experimentation with other crops, the rise of manufacturing, and the level of material well-being in the colonies.

The swings were not entirely random, but reflected a largely self-contained price and production cycle. Short-term increases in European demand led to a flurry of activity in the Chesapeake. Planters and merchants bought new workers and brought additional land into cultivation in order to increase output and capture the large profits that higher prices promised. Their response was usually too robust, however, and markets were quickly glutted. Prices collapsed and planters stopped increasing their work force and the size of their plantations. Lower prices made Chesapeake tobacco more competitive with leaf grown elsewhere and permitted the penetration of new markets. Demand rose, boom followed bust, and the cycle repeated itself. In addition to this largely self-propelled cycle, the tobacco coast suffered a series of random shocks—random from the perspective of the planters at least—as war, metropolitan recession, and bad weather reinforced the tendency of the economy to swing wildly between booming prosperity and deep depression.

From the perspective of English mercantilists, tobacco was an ideal crop, Maryland and Virginia ideal colonies. Tobacco generated substantial revenues for the crown, for heavy taxes seemed not to reduce output or consumption greatly. It helped generate positive trade balances both by providing consumers with an internal source of supply for a commodity that would otherwise have to be imported from a foreign country and by providing a product that could be exported abroad. It employed substantial numbers of English ships and English sailors, and it offered English merchants considerable opportunities for trade. And it provided work for men and resources that might otherwise have gone unemployed, either in making tobacco along the Chesapeake or in the various linked industries at home. Finally, colonists spent the income they earned from tobacco on English goods, providing merchants and manufacturers with a lively and growing market. In short, the colonies along the tobacco coast played the role laid out for them in the mercantilist script.

Colonists were not always satisfied with their part. Planters felt subordinate and

dependent, unable to control or even fully understand the circumstances that governed their lives, expanded and restricted their opportunities, alternately swelled and shrunk their incomes. They felt so most acutely during the periodic depressions that buffeted the tobacco coast, and it was in the downswings that they acted most vigorously to increase their control. Their responses were both public and private. Depression regularly led to legislative efforts to raise tobacco prices, limit production, and control output, to diversify the economy by encouraging towns and domestic manufactures, to develop new markets, and to promote other staple exports. Individually, planters tried to lower costs and increase productivity in tobacco as well as to create more self-sufficient and diverse operations so they would be better able to ride out the storms. Eventually those efforts, especially the private efforts, erected a hedge, but the hedge proved low and it grew slowly. In large part the problem persisted because boom regularly followed bust, and when tobacco prices improved, planters again concentrated on the staple. "This is now our case," Virginia's Governor William Berkeley explained in 1663: "if the Merchants give us a good price for our Tobacco wee are well, if they do not wee are much better, for that will make us fall on such Commodities as God will blesse us for when we know not how to excuse fifty years promoting the basest and foolishst vice in the world." It is not clear that Berkeley's perverse wish for a long, deep depression pointed the way to a solution. The planters were trapped: when times were prosperous, colonists possessed the means to diversify but not the will; during depressions the will was there but not the means.<sup>7</sup>

#### WEALTH AND WELFARE

Analysis of the tobacco industry leaves open a wide range of questions concerning Maryland's economy. How did planters weather the recurring depressions and the long period of stagnation at century's end? Was income sufficient to provide comfort and a chance to get ahead, or did planters face only a grinding poverty and a struggle to hold on to what they had? Did wealth, income, and living standards increase over

time? And how were the rewards of the economy distributed among the inhabitants?

Fortunately, probate documents—the wills, inventories, estate accounts, and administrative records surrounding death and the distribution of property—provide an opportunity to address such questions. Fortunately, too, they are available in abundance for Maryland. A small cluster of inventories survives for the years around 1640, and there is a nearly continuous series from 1658 on. Unfortunately, they do not tell us exactly what we wish to know. Inventories report the wealth (or part of the wealth) of some recently deceased property owners. We are interested in the incomes of the living population. They do, however, report that wealth in exquisite detail, listing and appraising all a decedent's possessions except the real estate. And it is possible to build on them to estimate wealth per capita. Further, they yield insight into the dynamics of growth in early Maryland.<sup>8</sup>

Figure 2 reports mean and median wealth per probated decedent over the years 1638 to 1705 in four counties on Maryland's lower Western Shore—St. Mary's, Charles, Calvert, and Prince George's. Despite violent fluctuations about the base line, the long-term trends are clear. Between 1640 and 1660 mean wealth fell from slightly over £100 to well under £100. The pattern of change in the intervening period is now lost, for few inventories survive for the years 1643 to 1657. However, for reasons discussed below it is likely that a steep collapse in the mid-1640s was followed by a steady increase. Mean wealth rose steadily from 1660 to the early 1680s and then levelled out, fluctuating around £150 through the early eighteenth century. Median wealth, on the other hand, was much higher in 1660 than in 1640 and then rose slowly to about 1670 before it also levelled out, hovering at just over £50 for the next three decades. We can take the distance between the mean and median as an index of distribution; roughly, the greater that distance, the greater the inequality. Wealth, then, became much more evenly distributed among Maryland property owners between 1640 and 1660. Inequality then

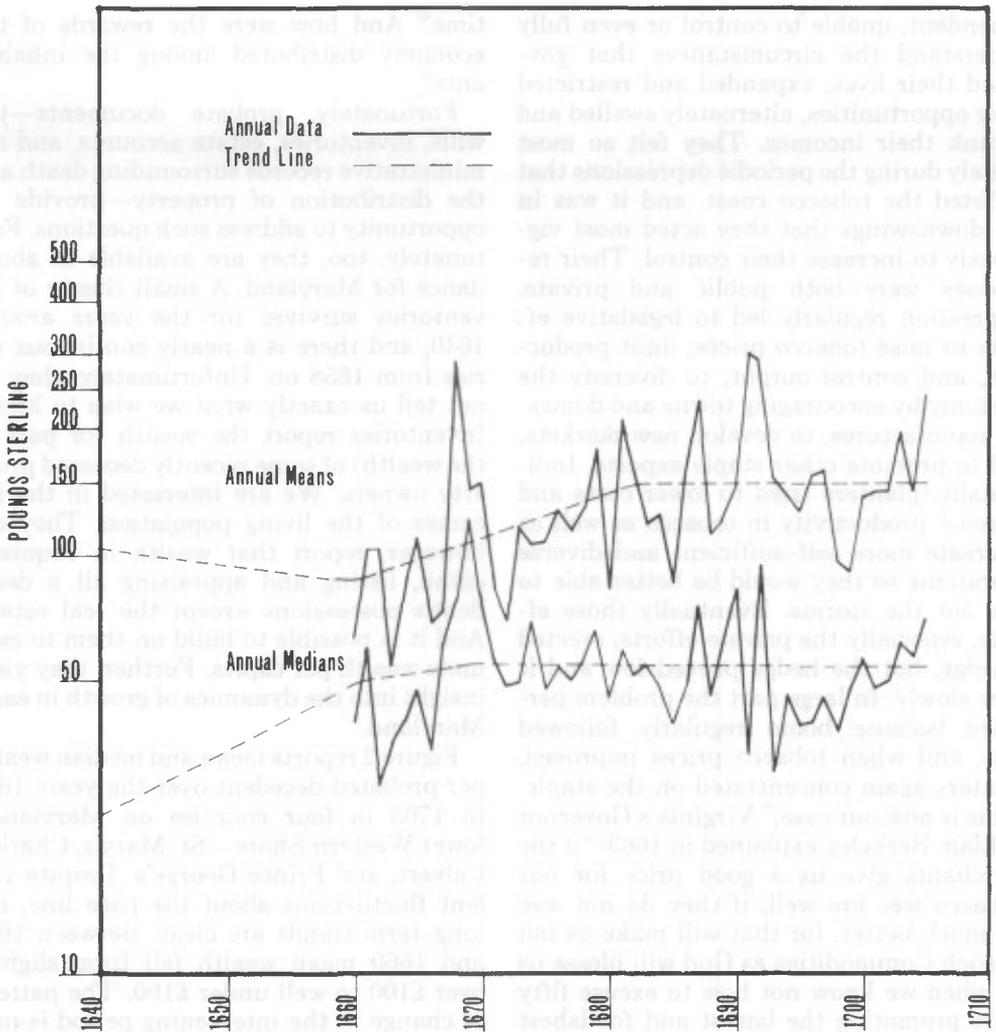


FIGURE 2.

Mean and Median Total Estate Value on the Lower Western Shore of Maryland, 1638-1705.

Source: Russell R. Menard, P.M.G. Harris, and Lois Green Carr, "Opportunity and Inequality: The Distribution of Wealth on the Lower Western Shore of Maryland, 1638-1705," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, LXIX (1974), 172.

increased as the mean first rose more rapidly than the median and continued to rise while the median remained level. From the early 1680s to 1705, neither mean nor median changed over the long haul and the distribution stabilized.

Table 3 takes the analysis a step further by reporting wealth per household and wealth per capita on the lower Western Shore for the years 1658-61, 1681-84, and 1703-5. These figures are very rough, for they rest on estimates—sometimes outright

guesses—of several parameters that cannot be measured directly. One should not place great confidence in the absolute numbers, but they capture the pattern of change. These data demonstrate that Maryland's economic growth was more than a simple extensive process reflecting only increases in population and settled area. There were impressive per capita gains as well. Wealth per resident grew rapidly—at an annual rate of 2.5 percent—from 1660 to the early 1680s before levelling out or perhaps de-

TABLE 3.

Estimated Private, Non-human, Physical Wealth per Household and per Capita on Maryland's Lower Western Shore, 1658-1705

Date	Moveables per Household	Real Estate per Household	Wealth per Household	Average Persons per Household	Wealth per Capita
1658-61	£67	£46	£113	7.8	£14.5
1681-84	£114	£46	£160	6.6	£24.2
1703-05	£137	£70	£207	8.7	£23.8

Note: The figures report all private wealth held on Maryland's Lower Western Shore—exclusive of servants, slaves, cash, and debts receivable—in local currency divided by a commodity price index to produce a constant value series. Details of their construction are available to interested scholars on request.

clining gently to the beginnings of the eighteenth century. Other evidence suggests that the pattern of stable or slowly falling levels of wealth per capita persisted for another forty years before beginning a sharp increase around 1750 that lasted to the Revolution.<sup>9</sup>

These figures describe an impressive achievement. If we assume a wealth to income ratio of three to one, per capita incomes had reached £8 currency in Maryland by the 1680s. This suggests that Marylanders were nearly as well off as residents of England and Holland in the late seventeenth century and substantially better off than the French. It also compares favorably to the estimate of £12 sterling reported by Alice Hanson Jones for the southern colonies in 1774, and it is higher than measured incomes in many of today's less-developed countries. However, per capita income in the United States is now some 25 times larger. Such numbers cannot be interpreted literally. It is not clear that residents of the early Chesapeake were wealthier than are Kenyans or Indians today or that we in the United States are 25 times richer than Marylanders of the 1680s. The economies of those places are too different and the measures too rough to support so exact a comparison. It is clear, however, that the economy of the tobacco coast performed handsomely by seventeenth-century standards.<sup>10</sup>

These data seem to support an export-centered interpretation of wealth and income levels in early Maryland. Up to the 1680s, the Chesapeake tobacco industry ex-

panded rapidly as planters and merchants discovered more efficient methods of making and marketing the staple. Apparently, improved productivity led to real gains in wealth and income. By the 1680s, the gains that flowed from "learning by doing" had about run their course, planters faced rising prices for land and labor, and a series of wars disrupted the Atlantic economy. The result was thirty years of stagnation in the tobacco industry and the end of growth in planter income. The tobacco industry began a period of renewed expansion just before 1720, but this growth was achieved without major gains in productivity and through the geographic extension of cultivation and was not of the sort that would produce rising incomes per head. Beginning in the 1740s, however, a shift in the terms of trade in favor of agriculture and rising demand for food in Europe and the West Indies created new opportunities for Chesapeake planters, especially in the production of grains and wood products; breathed new life into a once sluggish export sector; and drove per capita wealth to new highs. Here, it seems, are the beginnings of a powerful hypothesis capable of linking wealth and welfare to foreign trade and of confirming an export-led growth model for the Chesapeake economy.<sup>11</sup>

Or so it seems. However, efforts to push the model further quickly run into difficulties. In the first place, direct measures of income per capita from exports describe a markedly different pattern from that of physical wealth. Income per head from tobacco declined sharply to 1640 and then

fell slowly for the remainder of the seventeenth century. If tobacco shaped the course of wealth and welfare, its impact was indirect. The staple placed a floor under incomes in early Maryland, but it was an unstable floor with a gently declining slope. Further, the apparent coincidence of growing wealth and secular patterns in the tobacco trade during the seventeenth century was just that, a coincidence. If wealth data for the lower Western Shore as a whole are disaggregated into their several regional components, it becomes clear that each region went through a period of initially rapid increase for roughly twenty years followed by a levelling out, with the timing of change closely related to the date of settlement and the pattern at least in part a function of shifts in the composition of the population. By summing these discrete regional movements to a somewhat artificial unit, an illusion of convergence can be created and a false conclusion accepted.<sup>12</sup>

The increase in wealth during the seventeenth century is remarkable. It occurred despite falling per capita income from tobacco and in the face of demographic changes that reduced the share of the population in the work force. The best evidence suggests that the growth of wealth was a result of "farm building" or "pioneering," which was, as Percy Wells Bidwell observed, "a process of capital making."<sup>13</sup> New settlements in early Maryland were at first characterized by low wealth levels, but the process of carving out working farms provided ample opportunities for saving, investment, and accumulation. As a result, wealth grew rapidly in the early decades of settlement. Planters worked hard to clear land, erect buildings and fences, build up their livestock herds, plant orchards and gardens, construct and improve their homes, and the like. As they did so, their estates increased in value. There were limits to this growth process, however. Once enough land had been cleared and fenced to make a crop of tobacco and meet the household's need for food, once livestock herds had become large enough to satisfy meat and dairy requirements, once the plantation had a fruit-bearing orchard and a comfortable house, there was little most planters could do to further increase their

wealth. Thus, the initial growth spurt in per capita wealth levels was typically followed by a long period of stability lasting to the 1740s. World food shortages and shifts in the terms of trade in favor of agriculture then created new opportunities for planters and drove estate values to new highs.

It would be an error to assume too close an identification of wealth levels with income and living standards. Income to wealth ratios varied, and living standards changed in subtle ways not easily captured by summary statistics on total estate value. Income, it is clear, did not grow as rapidly as wealth during the initial growth spurt, and it is likely that living standards continued to improve, albeit slowly, once wealth levels stabilized. This does not mean that wealth measurements are a poor proxy for the performance of the Maryland economy or that changes in wealth per capita were unimportant for material welfare. In the first place, there were some income gains during the initial growth spurt; the point is not that income failed to grow, but only that it failed to grow as rapidly as wealth. Secondly, gains in wealth greatly increased the security and flexibility of Maryland's families, provided an important cushion against the sharp swings in the export sector, and gave planters opportunities to pursue a variety of strategies that could improve their standard of living.

Farm building was hard work, but the rewards were great. And once it was accomplished, once, that is, families had working farms in full operation, they could turn their hands to other tasks and purchase a few amenities that might help make life more comfortable. An adequate stock of cattle and swine, for example, made possible increased consumption of meat and dairy products, while orchards and gardens added variety and nutritional value to diets. Families could also, as the demands of farm work diminished, increase their self-sufficiency by weaving cloth, making clothes and shoes, processing food, and the like. And income that no longer had to be plowed back into the farm or spent on necessities could go to the purchase of minor luxuries—spices, ceramics and pewter, furniture, fine cloth, improved bedding—that

made life more pleasant. For most inhabitants, life in early Maryland was harsh and uncertain, but the process of farm building helped to make it less so.

#### THE AGE OF THE YEOMAN PLANTER

Changes in the composition of the migrant group and in the process of population growth joined with the expansion of the tobacco industry and with farm building to transform Maryland society. The first Lords Baltimore envisioned a structured, hierarchic society, an ordered world of landlords and tenants organized around a manorial system that evoked images of England's feudal past. At least in rough outline, the society that took shape in early St. Mary's reflected that vision. Baltimore recruited several "Gentlemen Adventurers" for the colony, most of them younger sons of prominent Roman Catholic families, and they dominated the settlement at St. Mary's. They owned the land, the capital, and the unfree workers, dominated local marketing and credit networks, and held the important offices. The majority of ordinary settlers lived and worked on the manors of the gentry as indentured servants or tenant farmers. A few poor men acquired land and set up as independent small planters, while crude material conditions imposed a rough-hewn equality on the new colony, but there was hierarchy, structure, and clear distinction between the local gentry and the great majority of settlers.<sup>14</sup>

There was little order, however. Early Maryland was plagued by conflict with Indians, London merchants, and the English in Virginia and on Kent Island. And it was wracked by internal dissension between the proprietor and the colonists, Protestants and Catholics, local leaders and more ordinary settlers, and, especially, among the gentry. Lord Baltimore's "Gentlemen Adventurers" proved an unruly lot. They pursued power, profit, and personal aggrandizement with a singlemindedness that disrupted public life and denied the colony effective leadership. As a consequence, Maryland collapsed into anarchy in the middle 1640s when Richard Ingle, a Protestant ship captain, and a motley crew of sailors and mercenaries invaded the settle-

ment and brought England's Civil War to the tobacco coast.<sup>15</sup>

Maryland survived Richard Ingle, but the structured, hierarchic society planned by the Calverts did not. Even without Ingle, it is unlikely that Baltimore's vision could have had more than a transitory impact. The vision was marred by a fundamental contradiction. On the one hand, Baltimore wanted a dynamic, growing economy; on the other, a stable, orderly society in which men would know their place and defer to their natural superiors. Growth meant opportunities and rewards for those with the talent, energy, ambition—and freedom—to make the most of Maryland's promise, a disorderly process incompatible with stability, structure, and "natural" hierarchies rooted in archaic images of social organization. A society sharply different from that intended by Lord Baltimore took shape around mid-century as Maryland entered what could be called "the age of the yeoman planter."

The new social order was a product of changes in the composition of the immigrant group and of the opportunities available to poor men in a rapidly expanding economy. During the first decade, most settlers had been either gentlemen or their servants, and they gave early Maryland its distinctive shape, its sharp inequalities and hierarchical cast. Few of the gentlemen were left in St. Mary's after Ingle's Rebellion, however. Most had died or returned home. As they disappeared, the substantial inequalities that marked the pattern of wealth-holding collapsed and a more egalitarian distribution emerged in its place. Indentured servants remained a majority among immigrants, but their numbers were supplemented by small farmers, men who arrived with their families and modest amounts of capital, some directly from England but most of them ex-servants who had gotten a start in Virginia. The new settlers transformed Maryland society: the small plantation replaced the manor as the typical unit of production, and the yeoman planter replaced the gentleman as the dominant citizen.<sup>16</sup>

Most of the indentured servants in Maryland after the mid-1640s worked for modest planters on small estates with only one or



sarily bleak. A few spent their days as laborers, sharecroppers, or tenant farmers, but even they sometimes married, held office, and accumulated modest estates. Most of those who did not buy land left quickly, however, doubtless in search of better opportunities elsewhere. Many of those who emigrated—especially if they moved to the edge of settlement—found what they sought.<sup>18</sup>

Life on a small plantation in seventeenth-century Maryland was harsh, impoverished, and uncertain (one is tempted to call it “nasty, brutish, and short”). Houses were small, dark, drafty, crowded, sparsely furnished, and ramshackle—“stragglng wooden boxes dribbled over the landscape without apparent design” in Gloria Main’s apt image. A small planter’s family typically lived in a 20- by 16-foot box frame structure sided with clapboards and roofed with shingles, with a wattle and daub chimney. Such a house would have a floor of beaten earth; usually a single room, at most two plus a loft; glassless, curtainless windows with shutters to keep out the cold; and unadorned, unpainted plank walls imperfectly chinked with clay against the elements. Furnishings were simple and crude; there would be a bed or two, a rough-hewn bench and table, some shelving for the pewter and the wooden trenchers that served as dishes, chests for both storage and sitting, tools, utensils, food, and spare clothing hanging from pegs. Such houses were cold in winter, hot in summer, wet when it rained, always dark and unattractive.<sup>19</sup>

Small planters may have been poorly housed, but they were amply fed. Corn was the staple of the colonial diet. Cooked into “hominy” or “pone,” it provided nearly half the calories for almost everyone in early Maryland. Beef and pork were also regular fare. Residents of the tobacco coast consumed roughly a third of a pound of meat per person per day during the late seventeenth century. This corn and salt meat base was supplemented by milk in the spring (few small planters stored dairy products by making butter or cheese), by vegetables and fruits when in season, and by fish and game, all washed down with a mildly alcoholic cider. Food was plentiful but monotonous, and the lack of variety

produced nutritional deficiencies that contributed to high mortality along the Bay.

The clothing worn by small planters and their families was, like their houses and diet, plain but adequate by the standards of the day. A man might own a hat or cap, a cloth waistcoat, a pair of shoes, and two “suits” of clothes consisting of canvas breeches, linen drawers, linsey-woolsey shirts, and knitted stockings. For women, “a simple linen shift . . . tucked into a full skirt that ended above the ankles composed the basic outfit.” Servants and slaves dressed in a similar fashion, as did children once out of the toddler stage.<sup>20</sup>

It was not the drabness of their lives that worried small planters, for material conditions among English common folk were no less plain, but the uncertainties. Despite their hard work—and carving farms out of Maryland’s wilderness was certainly that—unpredictable tobacco prices could leave them without the means to purchase necessities or, worse, unable to pay their debts and hold on to their home. Worse still, illness, accident, and early death might strike a man or woman down at any time, with severe consequences for the family members who remained. For those who managed to ride out the hard times and to stay healthy, however, life was not without its satisfactions or its prospects.

Some former servants captured those prospects, moved beyond the ranks of the small planters to achieve a more comfortable and secure “middling” status. A fortunate few acquired great wealth by colonial standards, although most of the truly affluent planters were free immigrants who arrived with capital and good English connections. What is most striking about these more successful men is the absence of clear, sharp distinctions setting them off from their poorer neighbors. They, too, earned the bulk of their income from agriculture, although the richest among them managed plantations rather than worked them and often supplemented their earnings with profits from trade, an office, or a profession. At least before 1700, even the wealthy planters chose to live in a “plain” style, although there were a few exceptions. Their houses are best described as larger, more comfortable versions of those of small

planters, less crowded and better furnished, to be sure, but hardly grand. The stately mansions that we now associate with the great planters are products of the eighteenth century. Their diets too rested on a corn and salt meat base, although they ate a greater variety of foods. As planters built up their farms and improved their estates, they planted orchards, vegetable gardens, and small patches of wheat for bread and pastries, and they were more likely to make beer, butter, and cheese. Their larger incomes also permitted the occasional purchase of rum, molasses, sugar, spices, coffee, tea, chocolate, and the like. Their clothing resembled that of the lesser planters, but there was more of it and it often included a "greatcoat" against winter, while the well off usually kept a fashionable suit for special occasions. In sum, what we know about living standards in early Maryland suggests a broad homogeneity and an ab-

sence of sharp class distinctions, a society in which even those rich enough to have options chose the "country style" of a "sturdy yeoman farmer" over the formal elegance of a "planter oligarch." As Main has noted, "getting a living, rather than ornamenting it, was the order of the day."<sup>21</sup>

The open, relatively undifferentiated nature of Maryland society in the third quarter of the seventeenth century is perhaps best illustrated by the biographies of men who held positions of power in local government. Somerset provides an example, although the evidence could be drawn from any of Maryland's counties. Twenty-four men from Somerset County sat on the bench, in the Assembly, or served as sheriff between 1665 and 1673. None of them was born into a station that would have assured easy access to an office of power in England. As a group they were not sharply distinguished by wealth, birth, or education from the generality of Somerset planters. Henry Boston, and probably Stephen Horsey, Ambrose Dixon, and William Bosman, had started out in Virginia as servants. Dixon, James Jones, Randall Revell, and Nicholas Rice were illiterate. Horsey and Revell were coopers, Rice a carpenter, Dixon a caulker. Most earned their livelihood making tobacco; none were rich enough to escape work in the fields. Somerset was governed by small planters, former servants, and men who could not write their names, a group whose collective biography could be replicated in a random sample of household heads in the county.<sup>22</sup>

Somerset's rulers were not distinguished from their neighbors by wealth, birth, or education, nor did they think of themselves as members of a distinct group. Evidence on group consciousness is difficult to come by, but enough can be gathered to suggest that Somerset's office holders did not view those they governed as their social inferiors. There was intermarriage among the children of Somerset's rulers, but children married outside the group as frequently as they married within. For example, three of Justice William Bosman's four daughters married small planters of undistinguished backgrounds, while Justice John Elzey's eldest son Arnold married Major Waller, daughter of a small planter without an of-



Modern reconstruction of a 17th-century farmhouse (ca. 1680). The Godiah Spray Plantation, St. Marie's City. (Photo courtesy of the St. Mary's City Commission.)

fice of power. When writing their wills, Somerset's office holders appointed their neighbors as executors of their estates without regard to rank. Bosman, for example, named William Thorne, who was a justice, and Thomas Bloyse, who was not, to oversee the administration of his estate. Chief Justice and former sheriff Stephen Horsey named Michael Williams, Alexander Draper, and Benjamin Sumner, three small planters without positions of power. When Justice Nicholas Rice died childless in 1678, he devised his considerable estate not to the children of men with whom he shared a place on the bench, but to two of his servants, Richard Crockett and John Evans. The Boston family will furnish a final example. Shortly after Henry died in 1676, his three underage sons appeared in court to choose guardians. None chose from among Somerset's major officers. Isaac

chose William Planner, a small planter, Esau named William Walston, a cooper, and Richard, who was illegitimate, picked Richard Catlin, a shoemaker. Somerset's rulers and their families did not see themselves as a group apart.

It will not do to overstate the case. There was a small group of rich families who lived well in the Chesapeake during the seventeenth century. Before Ingle's Rebellion those at the top had almost all come from English landed families. There were still such men in Maryland after 1645, mostly members of the Calvert family, but by and large their place had been taken by men of mercantile origins. Men like William Stone, Edward Lloyd, Robert Slye, Benjamin Rozer, Thomas Notely, and William Stevens—the dominant figures in Maryland between 1650 and 1680—all began as merchants, sometimes as independent

#### TWO VIEWS OF SERVITUDE

*And therefore I cannot but admire, and indeed much pity the dull stupidity of people necessitated in England, who rather than . . . remove themselves [to Maryland], live here a base, slavish, penurious life; as if there were a necessity to live . . . so, choosing rather . . . to stuff New-Gate, Bridewell, and other Jayles with their carkessies, nay cleave to tyburne it selfe, and so bring confusion to their souls, horror and infamie to their kindred or posteritie, others itch out their wearisom lives in reliance of other mens charities . . . ; some more abhorring such courses betake themselve to almost perpetuall and restlesse toyle and druggeries out of which (whilst their strength lasteth) they (observing hard diets, earlie and late houres) make hard shift to subsist from hand to mouth, untill age or sicknesse takes them off from labour and directs them the way to beggerie, and such indeed are to be pittied, relieved and provided for.*

—John Hammond, *Leah and Rachel, Or, The Two Fruitfull Sisters Virginia and Mary-Land* (London, 1656)

To my Brother P. A.

Brother,

*I have made a shift to unloose my selfe from my Collar now as well as you, but I see at present either small pleasure or profit in it: What the futurality of my dayes will bring forth, I know not; For while I was linckt with the Chain of a restraining Servitude, I had all things cared for, and now I have all things to care for my self, which makes me almost wish my self in for the other four years.*

*Liberty without money, is like a man opprest with the Gout, every step he puts forward puts him in pain; when on the other side, he that has Coyn with his Liberty, is like the swift Post-Messenger of the Gods, that wears wings at his heels, his motion being swift or slow, as he pleaseth.*

Your Brother,  
G.A.

From *Mary-Land*,

Dec. 11

—George Alsop, *A Character of the Province of Mary-Land* (London, 1666)

traders, often as factors in a family enterprise. All invested in land and planting, a few practised law, most loaned money, but the basis of the larger fortunes was trade. Their wealth was not great by English standards. An estate of £1500 was more than enough to place a man near the top of the group, and that sum was less than the annual income of the leading London colonial merchants. Their wealth was sufficient to separate them from the great majority of settlers, but theirs was not a closed circle. Men such as Philip Lynes and Nicholas Gassaway, both former servants, or William Burgess and John Hammond, who started as small planters, were able to rise to the very top of the planter-merchant establishment. Dozens of others rose from the ranks of servants or small planters to the lower edge of the group. Men who began as merchants, furthermore, often experienced considerable social mobility. William Stevens, for example, was Somerset County's wealthiest man and most influential citizen. In addition to his extensive trading activities, Stevens operated three plantations and was one of the largest land speculators in Maryland. Stevens gained appointment to the Provincial Council in 1679, a position he held until his death eight years later. Yet he did not begin as a man of great wealth and status. Stevens had acquired a place in society that he would have found difficult to obtain had he stayed in England. Late in his life, Stevens described himself as "formerly of London Ironmonger now of Somerset County in the Province of Maryland Esquire," thus briefly summarizing a social process that marked his career and that of many of Maryland's leading men.<sup>23</sup>

#### TOWARD THE "GOLDEN AGE"

The yeoman planter's age was clearly on the wane by the 1680s, although there was a tendency for the social structure of mid-century to persist—more strictly, to be re-created—at the edge of Euro-American settlement. The most striking change was in the labor system. Before 1680, the great majority of unfree workers in Maryland were indentured servants who were not sharply distinguished from the planters they served and who could expect to become

masters in their own right. As the century progressed, however, planters found it increasingly difficult to obtain enough such workers to meet their need for labor. A declining population and slowly rising real wages in England created improved opportunities at home, while the opening up of Pennsylvania, the beginnings of rapid development in the Carolinas, and continued growth along the tobacco coast and in the sugar islands led to greater colonial competition for workers. The result was a labor shortage in Maryland and a change in the composition of the work force as planters purchased slaves to replace servants. In 1680, servants outnumbered slaves by almost three to one and blacks were only five percent of Maryland's population. By 1710 there were roughly five slaves for each servant and blacks were nearly twenty percent of the inhabitants, while in some counties the proportion approached one-third.<sup>24</sup>

The identification of blacks with slavery is so central to the history of the American South that it is difficult to remember that their status was not predetermined and that an alternative pattern of race relations was a possibility. Some historians argue that it was more than merely possible. During the middle decades of the seventeenth century, there were places along the Bay where English colonials and Afro-Americans lived together as near equals. The most dramatic example of such a multiracial community appeared on Virginia's Eastern Shore. The blacks who lived there came as slaves, but many—nearly a third by the 1660s—acquired freedom against imposing odds, built stable families, accumulated property, formed firm, sustaining ties with other blacks, and participated in local society in ways similar to that of their white neighbors.<sup>25</sup>

While the achievement of these Eastern Shore blacks is inspiring, it is not clear how much should be made of it. One difficulty is that we know little about the lives of blacks in the Chesapeake colonies during the early and middle decades of the seventeenth century. There were, it is clear, relatively few of them, the "20. and odd Negroes" who arrived at Point Comfort in late August 1619 on a Dutch ship having grown to between 300 and 400 by the 1650s. Most

blacks probably arrived in small groups, the by-product of privateering ventures, the coastal trade, the migration of British masters from one colony to another, and the brief period of intense Dutch activity in the Chesapeake trade during the 1640s and 1650s. Their origins were diverse, some coming directly from Africa, at least one by way of England, others by way of the British Caribbean, and, judging by their names, a substantial proportion from Spanish and Portuguese colonies. They were also clearly perceived as a group apart and discriminated against in a variety of ways; some, such as their description in legal records, were fairly subtle while others, like the prohibition against bearing arms, the taxing of black but not white women, and the powerful sanctions against interracial sex, were more blatant.<sup>26</sup>

What is not certain is that most blacks were slaves or that most whites assumed that slavery was the appropriate and usual condition for Africans in the Chesapeake. The issue has been the subject of a long and occasionally acrimonious debate that has so far yielded two important conclusions. First, and in sharp contrast to the situation in 1700, there was considerable ambiguity in the legal status of blacks in Maryland and Virginia during the first half of the seventeenth century. As Edmund Morgan has pointed out, blacks in the Chesapeake "occupied an anomalous position. Some were undoubtedly slaves . . . and it seems probable that all Negroes, or nearly all, arrived in the colony as slaves. But some were free or became free; some were servants or became servants. And all, servant, slave, or free, enjoyed rights that were later denied all Negroes in Virginia." Second, racism was much less powerful and pervasive among whites than it would later become. While there is clear evidence of racially-based discrimination, there is also evidence that an interracial society in which blacks would participate as something other than slaves was not inconceivable, that whites were able "to think of Negroes as members or potential members of the community on the same terms as other" inhabitants.<sup>27</sup>

Writing with precision on the legal status of blacks and the racial attitudes of whites

during the early seventeenth century is difficult, but penetration beyond such matters to the ways blacks adjusted to life along the tobacco coast is nearly impossible. The evidence is simply too thin to support firm conclusions. Still, it is possible to offer a few suggestions. The population was too small, spread too thinly across the region, and made up of people from backgrounds too diverse to support an independent, autonomous black culture distinct from that of English Americans. Blacks were overwhelmed, and the social context placed a premium on rapid assimilation. With racial prejudice as yet relatively weak and the law uncertain, blacks in the Chesapeake could capture tangible rewards through assimilation, by learning English, becoming Christians, and mastering European work routines. The evidence is that many quickly did so and that the willingness of whites to entertain the possibility of an integrated community was matched by a willingness (although, it is true, they had little choice) of blacks to Anglicize. At what price, we can only guess.

The ambiguities surrounding the position of blacks were resolved as the seventeenth century progressed. The legislatures of both Maryland and Virginia,—goaded by the efforts of blacks to win freedom in the courts, enticed by a steady growth in the number available for enslavement, encouraged by the strengthening of race prejudice, and perhaps inspired by the example of other British colonies—worked out the logic of racial slavery and established that logic as law. By the 1660s most blacks in the Chesapeake, perhaps excepting those of the lower Eastern Shore, were slaves for life, and the chance that they could achieve freedom was small. At the same time, the few who escaped slavery watched their freedoms erode and their position become ever more precarious as the identification of blacks with bondage made them slaves without masters.

How seriously, then, should we take the possibility that residents of the tobacco coast could have built a society with a greater degree of racial justice than in fact emerged? The answer, it would seem, is not very. A humane pattern of race relations and the growth of a free black peasantry

were possible only as long as blacks were few and only while a cheap alternative to African labor remained available. When white servants became scarce and expensive, planters bought slaves. African labor soon dominated the work force, racial lines hardened into a rigid caste system, and opportunities for blacks disappeared. The ease with which planters turned to slavery on a large scale—the quick response to changing prices, their lack of hesitation and failure to question the choice—suggests that prospects for a less oppressive system of race relations were never strong.

By the 1670s, then, when blacks began to arrive in Maryland in large numbers directly from Africa, their fate was sealed. Blacks would be slaves and they would face a harsh environment. Their demographic circumstances proved even more constraining than those encountered by whites. They too suffered from the volatile disease environment and a shortage of women sufficient to prevent reproductive growth. But they also had to endure a degrading slavery and abusive masters, isolation from other blacks on small plantations, and restrictions on their mobility that prevented them from taking full advantage of the few opportunities to form families left by the already severe demographic regime. Nevertheless, they experienced a transition remarkably similar to that among whites. Creole blacks, like their Euro-American counterparts, lived longer, “married” earlier, had more durable unions (despite their masters’ frequent disregard of their family ties), and produced more children than had their immigrant parents. By the 1720s there were enough native-born blacks in Maryland to create a naturally increasing slave population. Slavery remained harsh and oppressive, but demographic changes helped blacks give structure, meaning, and dignity to their lives, to build ties of affection, family, and friendship that made their oppression more bearable and their condition less desperate. The growth of a native-born slave population also fostered the rise of a distinctive Afro-American culture, built out of a common heritage and shared experience and articulated through kin networks, that ended the cultural homogeneity that prevailed in Maryland during the seventeenth century.<sup>28</sup>

The growth of slavery was only the most visible of the changes that worked to transform Maryland’s labor system after 1680. There were also significant changes in the distribution of labor, in the types of people who came as servants, in opportunities, and in master-worker relationships. When servants dominated the work force, unfree workers were widely distributed among Maryland households. Most small and middling planters owned servants, most laborers lived on small farms, and plantations manned by large gangs were rare—conditions which promoted the integration of laborers into the families they served. However, the labor shortage drove servant prices up, and slaves required a larger initial investment than poor men could manage, processes which joined to drive small planters out of the labor market and to concentrate unfree workers on the estates of the wealthy. Further, since slaves did not become free and did reproduce themselves, they proved easier to accumulate than did servants. In the 1660s, half the householders worth £30 to £50 sterling owned unfree workers and the majority of servants and slaves labored for men worth less than £200. By the 1710s, fewer than 10 percent of the planters worth £30 to £50 owned labor, and the majority of bound workers lived on estates appraised at more than £700. The transformation of the Chesapeake labor system promoted the growth of large plantations, a process with far-reaching consequences for the structure of Maryland society.<sup>29</sup>

Indentured servitude did not disappear with the rise of slavery, but it did decline in importance and it did change. Before 1680, a substantial proportion of the servants recruited to Maryland were drawn from England’s middling families, young men in their late teens and early twenties who often arrived with skills and prior work experience, men whose backgrounds resembled those of the planters they served. Such men continued to come after 1680, usually to work on large plantations as managers or artisans, but they no longer dominated the migration. Instead, servants were now drawn primarily from the depressed and disadvantaged of England’s inhabitants. They were more often female, more likely to be young, unskilled, inexperienced, and

illiterate, more frequently orphans or convicts, recruited in larger numbers from England's Celtic fringe. The shift in composition widened the gap between master and servant, reinforcing the impact of the concentration of workers on large plantations. Moreover, the change was accompanied by a sharp decline in prospects as the tobacco industry stagnated. Tenancy, sharecropping, and wage labor, once steps up an agricultural ladder leading to ownership of a plantation, became the life-long fate of a growing proportion of former servants. Late in the seventeenth century, Maryland exchanged a labor system that promised poor men eventual integration into the society they served for one that kept a majority of its laborers in perpetual bondage and offered the others a choice between poverty and migration.

Equally important changes occurred at the top of Maryland society. In the middle decades of the seventeenth century, several processes prevented the emergence of a planter oligarchy. The demographic regime was the major obstacle. Short life expectancies, late marriages, and an immigrant majority worked to keep early Maryland relatively open, unstructured, and homogeneous, without clear distinctions of class or caste (subjugated Indians excepted). Men in the process of accumulating fortunes were cut down before they acquired great wealth and before their sons were old enough to take their place. An absence of dense kin networks, the steady arrival of men from England with capital and connections, and the frequent success of those who began without such advantages forestalled the development of solidarity and group consciousness among those at the top.

It would be an error to call Maryland chaotic during the seventeenth century. On the whole, government functioned in an efficient and orderly fashion, despite occasional breakdowns, delivering essential services, providing for the administration of justice, and maintaining the rule of law. However, Maryland's ruling elite of the early colonial period exhibited a smaller sense of public responsibility and a less thorough identification with the province than would their eighteenth-century descendants. Too many rich planters "looked

out for number one" and pursued the (usually vain) dream of a retirement to England and the good life, while most eschewed social graces and fine living for investment and estate building. Provincial politics reflected social reality. There was little continuity in leadership and a shortage of able, experienced men to run the government. Institutional structures, while more sophisticated than most historians allow, remained primitive and "immature." People looked to England for solutions to local problems more willingly than they would in the eighteenth century, and public life was punctuated by occasional disorder as a few ambitious men, unrestrained by class discipline, a sense of obligation, or a commitment to the colony's future, scrambled for wealth and power.<sup>30</sup>

The character of those at the top began to shift around the turn of the century. Again, demography proved crucial. The growth of a creole majority meant longer lives, earlier and more durable marriages, dense and elaborate kin networks. In turn, these developments had a profound impact on wealth distribution and inheritance, on group consciousness among the great planters, and on public life in the colony. Longer lives gave men more opportunity to accumulate fortunes and led to a sharp increase in inequality. Main's study of probate inventories reveals that the top 10 percent of the wealthowners owned only 43 percent of the wealth before 1680 but 64 percent in the 1710s, a shift due largely to greater numbers of older men in the decedent population. Moreover, older men were more likely to have adult sons when they died and thus were better able to pass on their estates, their political power, and their social position intact.<sup>31</sup>

The impact of the rise of a native-born population went beyond wealth and inheritance. Wealthy creoles had a different conception of themselves, different relationships to each other and to Maryland than had their immigrant forebears. Their commitments were to the colony and, although many were educated in England, few thought of retirement there. Their homes and their futures lay in Maryland. They pursued the good life in the colony, built fine, elaborately-furnished homes, cultivated social graces, and adopted a "formal"

life style that distinguished them sharply from their poorer neighbors. They thought of themselves as a group apart as their frequent intermarriages, their friendships, and their social lives testify.

The rise of a class-conscious, native-born gentry transformed public life, as a small group of "First Families" assumed the responsibility (and captured the benefit) of government at both the local and provincial levels. Leadership became more continuous, experienced, and competent. The most capable members of the emerging oligarchy, having shown promise in private life and proven themselves in county government, the vestry, or the militia, won election or appointment to a provincial office and were then returned or reappointed for term after term. Better leadership led to greater institutional sophistication and maturity. In particular, the assembly, the focus of the "country party's" power, became more active in initiating legislation, assumed control over its own organization, created an elaborate committee structure, and acquired more influence over patronage and finances, all developments reflecting the local gentry's "quest for power." Planters became less inclined to look to England for solutions to local problems, although English connections remained invaluable assets, and proved more ready to pursue their own strategies. Factionalism persisted, but the networks of family connections made the factions more stable and less often disruptive. Leaders proved more willing to sacrifice short-term advantage to the long-term interests of their families and their class.

The rise of the gentry also had an effect on assessments of Maryland. Promotional tracts aside, public judgments in the seventeenth century were usually negative. Despite the impressive growth in wealth, population, and settled area along the tobacco coast, English commentators were often disappointed, sometimes dismayed, occasionally offended. They complained that the region was unhealthy and sparsely populated, that land had been engrossed by a handful of grasping officials, that the colonies lacked towns and industry and relied too heavily on tobacco. What proved most distressing, however, were the alleged

character defects among the inhabitants, particularly among the leadership. Englishmen described residents of the Bay colonies as "worthless idlers" and "moneygrubbers," lazy, ignorant provincials, incompetent to succeed at home, men too crude to recognize gentility, too self-serving to develop a sense of public responsibility. Planters lacked the social graces despite their pretensions, thought only of their estates, and looked forward to a time when they might, as one buffoonish caricature had it, "bask under the shade of my own Tobacco, and drink my punch in Peace." Many residents of the colonies shared the disappointment, although they were less shrill in their commentaries, more readily persuaded that economic opportunity was ample compensation for social and political failings. Still, there were few spirited defenders of Chesapeake society in the seventeenth century and frequent admissions that civil conversation was "seldom to come at except in books."<sup>32</sup>

Country-born gentlemen had a different outlook. They had a profound sense of their own worth and a firm belief in the region's future. They resented characterizations of themselves as ignorant boors and rejected the notion that American nativity condemned them to cultural inferiority. While they were sometimes exasperated with the social failings of the colonies, they were less likely to accept those defects with the stoicism of their immigrant parents, more likely to take remedial action. And they were quick to turn the tables, to condemn English luxury and decadence and to celebrate colonial simplicity. The rise of the planter oligarchy led to a more sanguine interpretation of Chesapeake society and toward the formation of an American identity.

It was not simply a change in interpreters, however. Maryland was a much different place in 1720 than it had been half a century earlier. For many, life was more secure and more comfortable. Mortality rates had declined, kin networks had flowered, farm building and diversification had erected buffers against the uncertainties of the international market, public life had lost its rough and tumble quality. But security and comfort came at a high price.

The open, undifferentiated society of the yeoman planter's age had disappeared. In its place there had emerged a society in which wealth and position were more often inherited than achieved and where poor men found few opportunities, a society with a social structure marked by clear (but not unbridgeable) class distinctions and a harsh caste barrier. Maryland's great planters were building their "golden age," an age that brought wealth and power to a few, comfort and security to others, poverty and oppression to many. There is an ambiguous legacy. It troubles us still.

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## EPILOGUE

End the song, end the song,  
For now the flood goes west, the rushing tide,  
The rushing flood of men,  
Hundred on hundred, crowding the narrow ships.

...

Exile, rebel, men against fortune, all  
Who are driven forth, who seek new life and new hope  
As the wheel of England turns, they are coming now  
To the exile's country, the land beyond the star.

...

A rolling, resistless wave of seeking men,  
Settling and planting, creeping along the coast,  
Pushing up river-valleys to the new ground,  
Winthrop and Hooker and Williams—Father White  
Who prayed to all the angels of the Americas,  
(For they must be there) as they settled Maryland.  
There was a wind over England and it blew.  
There was a wind through the nations, and it blew.  
Strong, resistless the wind of the western star,  
The wind from the coasts of hope, from the barely-known,  
And, under its blowing, Plymouth and Jamestown sink  
To the small, old towns, the towns of the oldest graves,  
Notable, remembered, but not the same.

...

—Excerpt from “*Western Star*” by Stephen Vincent Benét (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.), “Book One,” pp. 180–181. ©Copyright, 1943, by Rosemary Carr Benét. Copyright renewed, 1971, by Thomas C. Benét, Stephanie B. Mahin, and Rachel Benét Lewis. Reprinted by permission of Brandt & Brandt Literary Agents, Inc., New York.

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All that remains is to absolve everyone, except myself, from responsibility for flaws and errors that survived the editorial process. I selected the illustrations and wrote the captions and will accept the consequences, believing with that seventeenth-century "character," George Alsop, that "I am an Adventurer . . . [for] I have ventured to come abroad in Print, and if I should be laughed at for my good meaning, it would so break the credit of my Understanding, that I should never dare to shew my face upon the Exchange of (conceited) Wits again."

J. FREDERICK FAUSZ

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Early Maryland in a Wider World*. Edited by David B. Quinn. (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1983. 312 pp. \$18.50.)

This attractive and useful volume grew from a series of lectures delivered in 1977 and 1978 under the auspices of St. Mary's College of Maryland. The idea was to provide "a synoptic account of the background and early development of the colony in relation to its English background, the exploitation of the Atlantic Ocean, and the influence of Spain and its empire" (p. 9). Contributions were invited from experts in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century history who are among the acknowledged luminaries of the profession on both sides of the Atlantic. The result is a collection of essays, each revealing complete mastery of the subject, yet expounded with the simplicity and vigor befitting a public lecture.

The volume has an introduction by David B. Quinn that examines the grant of authority to Lord Baltimore, together with its precedents and implications. If there are no data here to surprise the professional historian, it is largely because Quinn's twenty or more years of scholarship and publication broke the new ground long ago. So too with essays by J.H. Elliott on Spanish imperialism and J.H. Parry on the Spanish presence in eastern North America. Together, they supply the international context for Maryland's founding that the volume seeks.

The English background is explored by G.R. Elton in a sparse but effective essay which rejects the notion that seventeenth-century Englishmen left home because of a well justified discontent. Rather, he argues that they actually tried to recreate in America "the essence of England, with which they were well content" (p. 118). From a slightly different perspective, David Quinn examines the shaping of overseas aspiration by the limited and frequently inaccurate perceptions of the New World available in Europe. Discussing some of the lesser known but characteristic colonial failures prior to 1607, Quinn aptly notes the chilling effect of these stories back home. An essay by John Bossy then analyzes the motives of English Catholics and their commitment to Lord Baltimore's enterprise.

A third group of essays discusses aspects of settlement. It opens with a paper describing the founding and early history of Maryland. Co-authors Russell R. Menard and Lois Green Carr enhance the political narrative with the intri-

guing demographic, social, and economic data now available. The Menard and Carr chapter, while not originally delivered as a lecture, is an important contribution from the new scholarship. So is the paper by Francis Jennings on Indians and frontiers in seventeenth-century Maryland. Jennings looks at frontiers as zones over which different interest groups ruthlessly competed. The use of force as a means to attain territorial influence, usually at the expense of the Indians, is seen by Jennings as an extension of the idea of holy war against unbelievers, and an application of feudal hegemony. A thought-provoking essay by Richard S. Dunn compares masters, servants and slaves in the Chesapeake and the Caribbean. He tests Edmund S. Morgan's interpretation of a symbiotic relationship between slavery on the one hand and the colonial predilection for freedom on the other. Dunn finds the Morgan thesis wanting when applied to the comparative data from the Chesapeake and Caribbean.

Two remaining essays, one at the beginning and the other at the end of the collection, use physical objects as a point of departure. Melvin H. Jackson's piece on ships and seafaring reconstructs a typical voyage from Europe to the Chesapeake. He describes the navigational instruments, sailing techniques, and predictable hazards. While some of the terminology may be obscure to the average reader, the essay contains fascinating information for those familiar with sailing. Finally, William P. Cumming's chapter on early maps of the Bay area is nicely enhanced by reproductions of some of the charts discussed.

The volume joins two other collections of essays on colonial Maryland: namely, *Law, Society, and Politics in Early Maryland*, edited by Aubrey C. Land, Lois Green Carr, and Edward C. Papenfuse, published in 1977, and *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century*, edited by Thad W. Tate and David Ammerman in 1979. But while these books are intended for the professional historian and focus on Maryland as a microcosm of change, Quinn's is directed toward the nonspecialist and views the colony in an international setting. It is therefore quite fortuitous that *Early Maryland in a Wider World* is available prior to the three hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the first settlement. It will be especially valuable for the general reader and the undergraduate student of history.

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*Tobacco Colony: Life in Early Maryland, 1650-1720.* By Gloria L. Main. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982. Pp. xvi, 328. Indexed. \$30.00.)

This is *not* Hollywood history. Life in early Maryland was tough, crude, fraught with constant perils of one kind or another, and it was short. *Rob of the Bowl* would have been horrified at its existence. Nor is Main's book a narrative, made for easy, bedtime reading; it is a classic scholarly monograph made up of meaty chapters which demand conscious intellectual effort from its readers. Nevertheless, it is a fascinating and important contribution to what we know about colonial Maryland—and Chesapeake, for that matter—civilization.

The book is a model of scholarship. To begin with, it builds upon the recent work of Lois Green Carr, Cary Carson, Paul Clemens, Russell Menard, Jacob Price, and Lorena Walsh among many others. Their work has informed us about the high adult mortality rate, the early break-up of families and the orphaning of children, the continuing demand for labor and the shift from servant to slave during the last two decades of the seventeenth century, and the boom-bust cyclical impact of the tobacco economy upon the social structure. Main's contribution is to cast what we know about these and other things into a more general framework that encompasses the period as a whole.

According to Main, Maryland remained a frontier society during its first century of existence. "Despite major changes in both the demographic and social structure of the colony, the daily life of ordinary men and women scarcely differed in 1720 from that in 1650. The material circumstances in which they lived had not altered at all." (pp. 7-8) Early Marylanders lived simply and frugally; in wooden houses that lasted ten years, eating from common trenchers mainly with their fingers, sometimes with a knife, seldom with a spoon, and very rarely with a fork. Main even discovered a decline in the usage of chamber pots! But Main has an even more interesting point: "The conclusion is clear that Maryland planters, rich and poor, placed investment ahead of consumption, and lived at a level that proved spare, crude, and unself-conscious." (p. 7). Early Marylanders thus led their lives by choice. Obviously, many of those choices (such as the shift from servant to slave labor) were influenced by changing economic circumstances. Likewise, the range of choices available changed with those historical circumstances. Main is by no means an economic determinist, and it is refreshing to read that people making choices are once again the center of history.

The book is a collection of seven essays (chapters), each dealing with a different aspect of the same subject. It is not a narrative. The first three chapters discuss the economy, population, and social structure. They are solid and their conclusions persuasive. The remaining four chapters discuss what Main calls the consumption side of colonial Maryland: housing, the poorer planters and their families, the middling and wealthier planters, and changing standards, styles, and priorities. Throughout all the chapters Main's heavy reliance on probate court records provides a rich mine of information that should serve as model for additional work in later Maryland history. Five appendices follow these chapters. They discuss the demographic effects on the wealth of colonial Marylanders, currency and price fluctuations, an essay on "Probate Records as a Source for Historical Investigation," and two glossaries of room names, one for Maryland and the other of English farmhouses in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. All of this fascinating information and well-argued conclusions are introduced by a succinct essay that places Main's conception of colonial Maryland into an even larger trans-Atlantic picture. It is an admirable work.

Readers should find Main's last four chapters particularly interesting, as much for the way that she arrives at a conclusion as for the new information that is found there. For example, where did the beer come from that loomed so large in the accounts of funeral expenses? Brewing beer was women's work in rural England and it was certainly present in colonial Maryland. But Main found few inventories mentioning malt, barley, hops, brewing vats, or beer barrels. She is remarkably adept at balancing traditional literary sources with the inventories.

Perhaps her most compelling argument is that poverty stimulated an increased reliance on tobacco production as a one-crop system that could only be broken by prolonged depression. The poorer planters were locked into a cycle of debt and dependence upon imported consumer goods. Only upper-class households contained the tools for making "home manufactures." Besides, home-made goods were not as finely made as imported ones and they consumed more time in the making of them, time that could be more profitably used in the making of tobacco. Rising levels of wealth and the creation of the upper classes furnished the means and people who produced home manufactures.

The chapter on housing particularly focuses our attention to the differences between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Frontier Maryland houses were wooden, dirty, simple, drafty and cold in winter, and insect-filled in

summer. They ranged from the simple one-room structure of the poorest people to the multiple rooms (and beginning room specialization) of the wealthier ones. But common to all was the lack of what we would call decorative arts as well as any order and symmetry among objects found in the housing inventories. The two-story, brick, "Georgian" homes with their specialized living, dining, and bed rooms—and usually built

atop a knoll affording an expansive view of the surrounding countryside and river—were a product of the wealthier eighteenth century, and even then only of the very wealthiest planters. Their seventeenth-century predecessors built out not up, in wood not brick, and only out of need rather than for display.

GARY L. BROWNE  
U.M.B.C.

have a special opportunity to visit the excavations and exhibits of the St. Mary's City Commission on the site of Maryland's first settlement.

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The Paul VI Institute for the Arts of the Archdiocese of Washington announces the availability of color prints and educational materials relating to Maryland's 300th anniversary. For the office at Loreau Mall, 3847 Lundy Avenue, Suite 118, Hillcrest Heights, MD 20712.

The Third Hall of Records Conference on Maryland History on the theme "Maryland: A Knot of Two Worlds" will be held at St. Mary's College of Maryland on May 17-20, 1984. The conference is co-sponsored by the St. Mary's City Commission, St. Mary's College, and the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg.

In conjunction with the 300th anniversary of the founding of Maryland, the conference will present the results of more than a decade of research into the seventeenth-century Chesapeake. Historical geographers, anthropologists, and archaeologists have joined forces in recent years to examine every kind of evidence—from legal records to oyster shells—and their conclusions are changing many of our perceptions of early America. Through papers, discussions, lec-

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tures, and informal gatherings, this conference will provide a forum for scholars to share their discoveries. Conference participants will also have a special opportunity to visit the excavations and exhibits of the St. Mary's City Commission on the site of Maryland's first settlement.

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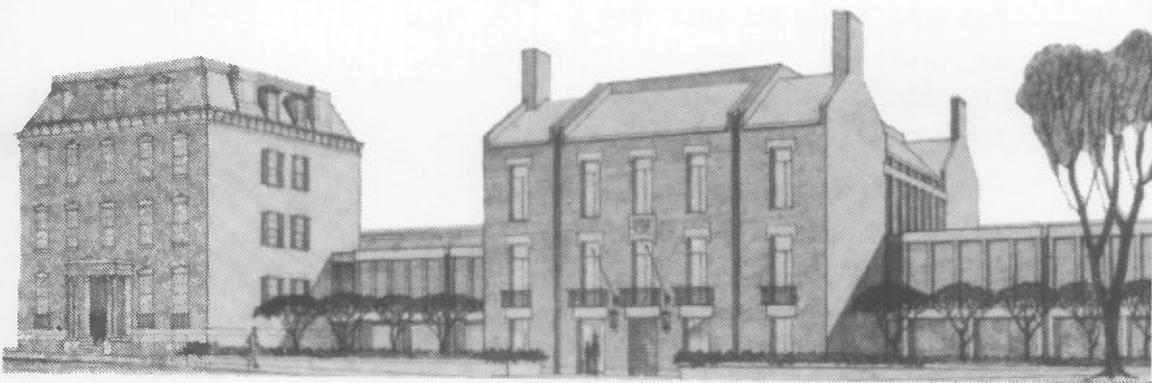
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