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# MARYLAND

## *Historical Magazine*

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*Fin-de-siècle*

Another Maryland spring is upon us, whether the first of the new millennium or the last of the old matters not to the flowers or the American League East. Around here, where we read, write, research, archive, exhibit, and otherwise manage the materials of history, the millennial change means relatively little, too. A shrug with the passing of the much over-hyped Y2K—"What'd you expect?" A change in volume number of the magazine. Turning on the air conditioner with the first crocus to cool our stuffy old office, the original publications room of the MHS, whose windows are locked shut lest a stray drop of humidity creep inside.

Yet those of us who have managed to live in two centuries, especially those of us who think about history, should take a moment to reflect upon what has just happened. We've left behind the most remarkable century in measurable time—one filled with hope, promise, and measurable progress, and unfortunately, too, with unprecedented carnage, bloodshed, and destruction. One can argue that it was the best century or the worst, but one cannot make a case that it was neither.

I suppose milestones like centuries bring on this kind of thinking, but what I find striking are the parallels between the beginning of the twentieth century in the United States and the arrival of the twenty-first. Railroads and burgeoning industries wrought change at what was then a furious pace, but it was nothing like the changes information technology is inflicting on us now. Flight, radio, and rocket science seem quaint beside the threat of having one's identity stolen, cities shut down by the flick of a hacker's "Enter" key, and nation-states rendered meaningless to the globally wired corporation. Immigration from eastern and southern Europe seemed threatening then, even as Asian and Latin immigration frightens many today. At the end of the nineteenth century, Populists and Progressives protested monopoly and worried about a growing gap between rich and poor; could they possibly have imagined a Bill Gates? Little wars—the Boer, Spanish-American, Russo-Japanese—flamed up across the planet; we witness much the same thing in Somalia, the Persian Gulf, Chechnya, and Kosovo. A hundred years ago really serious problems were shelved or ignored, things seemed manageable, progress and prosperity were assured. It was a gay time, full of discovery and exciting possibility. Many enjoyed the dazzling pace of change. A few daring souls even bought automobiles.

The Maryland of that day experienced progress unevenly. Baltimore was a smoky, grimy city, without a sewer system but with regional economic and

cultural leadership. The rest of the state lacked most everything “modern,” beginning with paved roads. Still, few Marylanders were concerned about larger issues. Progress and growth were good things. Seeing what now looks like a clear and present danger to the Maryland way of life, Johns Hopkins biologist William K. Brooks, almost alone, widely read but largely unheeded, warned that the Chesapeake Bay was in great peril, that progress was causing irreparable damage. Alas, he was right. A century later Baltimore has a sewer system but has lost its regional leadership, and much of this once-rural state has been or is likely soon to be paved over.

If a lesson is to be taken from the last century it is that Maryland cannot successfully resist larger developments. It is a small state with a relatively small population. Global and national trends will, more than ever before, dictate what problems we will face and what successes we will enjoy. On the other hand, we can take heart from an address Steven Müller, the president of the Johns Hopkins University, gave at a commencement ceremony many springs ago. We should strive for “excellence without bigness,” he said, referring to his university and its graduates. Commencement addresses are notoriously forgettable, but the crowd murmured approval long afterward, as well it should have. For the university—and for Maryland—he had uttered the words of the century.

Not the last one—this one.

R.I.C.

## Cover

### *Waverly, Baltimore 1913*

Bavarian immigrant Henry Jacob Aull first settled Waverly (then Huntington) in the early nineteenth century when he bought a gravel pit two miles north of Baltimore on the York Turnpike next to the tollgate. The village grew quickly after the Civil War and the citizens of the thirty-acre tract called Huntington, between the York and Harford turnpikes, applied for their own post office. The Postmaster General’s office replied that there were already “too many Huntingtons” and the villagers would have to choose another name. Local resident Henry Tyson suggested Waverly, taken from the popular novels of Sir Walter Scott. By the early twentieth century, Waverly had grown into a bustling family community, idyllically depicted in Lizette Woodworth Reese’s nostalgic local classic, *A Victorian Village* (1929). (Maryland Historical Society.)

P.D.A.



# “Such a Banditty You Never See Collected!”: Frederick Town and the American Revolution

ANDREW KRUG

In June 1776, Frederick County appeared to be in the forefront of the independence movement in Maryland. Samuel Chase excitedly wrote to John Adams on June 21, “be assured that Frederick speaks the sense of many counties.” On June 28, with Frederick’s help, the Maryland Convention decided to formally endorse separation from the mother country. Yet by 1782, in the county seat of Frederick Town, Revolutionary leadership could find so few guards to watch British prisoners that they arranged to employ invalids as a garrison. Frederick had experienced a sea change in attitude toward the war effort—from enthusiasm to what might best be called fatigue.<sup>1</sup>

Frederick Town, located just east of the mountain foothills in western Maryland, was a young urban area that served as a hub for the grain trade, a center for artisans and craftsmen, and a political center in that part of the frontier. The town’s origin corresponded to a larger growth in back country grain towns that took place between 1730 and 1760. Founded in 1745, Frederick Town was by 1790 one of just four cities in Maryland, Virginia, or the Carolinas with more than five hundred houses. Frederick’s early development came during a period when Maryland began to move down the path of revolution. Economic diversification, disputes with the proprietary government, and economic and political disenfranchisement all led the colony toward independence.

Assessing where Frederick—town and county—fit into Maryland’s move toward revolution is very difficult, given the limited writing on the subject. Obviously, the diversification of the economy away from tobacco culture discussed by Charles A. Barker was in large measure due to the Germans and English who settled Western Maryland during the eighteenth century. Other trends, though widely recognized elsewhere, are much more difficult to find. Much has been made of friction between tidewater and frontier, but in Maryland, Barker explicitly wrote, “there is only a little evidence of protest of resentment in the ‘old west’ against the institutions, the officialdom and the speculation which reached out from lower Maryland.” David Curtis Skaggs’ discussion of social, political, and economic disenfranchisement does not fit well either. Ralph Le-

*Mr. Krug was a co-winner of the 1999 MHS Undergraduate Essay Prize. This is an abridgement of his article.*

*Left: Muster Roll, March 3, 1777, 33rd Battalion of Maryland Militia recruited in Frederick and Washington Counties.*



*Map of Frederick and Washington Counties by Charles Varle, 1808. Maryland's western counties supplied men as well as local goods and services to the Revolution. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

vering claims that “Western Marylanders, had less need to fear divisive social and economic conflicts” than other parts of Maryland. While Germans were indeed politically disenfranchised, Dieter Cunz calls into question why this disenfranchisement would manifest itself as revolutionary behavior when Germans “had no more representation in Annapolis than in the Parliament in London.”<sup>2</sup>

Historians seem to agree that Western Maryland was a patriotic region. When in 1765 Parliament imposed the Stamp Act, stipulating (among other things) that court business was only to be carried out with stamped paper, local officials in Frederick Town rejected it. Rather than close court for a lack of stamps, Frederick County judges used unstamped paper in full defiance of Parliament, an act the recently formed Sons of Liberty followed with an elaborate mock funeral. The procession included a coffin representing the Stamp Act and an effigy of Maryland stamp distributor Zachariah Hood, both of which were bur-

ied.<sup>3</sup> A few years later, in response to the Coercive Acts leveled against Boston, Western Marylanders held a series of meetings that resolved to “[stop] all commercial intercourse with Great Britain” and demanded that “every other act oppressive to American liberty be repealed.” After war had broken out, Western Maryland still occupied a central role in the push toward independence, its delegates unanimous in their desire for nationhood.<sup>4</sup>

### The Early War: 1775–76

Actual fighting began in April 1775 at Lexington and Concord in Massachusetts, but the war did not begin in Frederick Town until later that summer. Following the requests of the Continental Congress, Annapolis asked the counties to supply forty companies of minutemen for service (Frederick County was to supply eight) and to register all eligible men for militia service. To execute this and other orders, each county was to organize a Committee of Observation to act as a government. Because of its huge size, Frederick was split into three districts, with Frederick Town designated as the capital of the middle district.<sup>5</sup> Town gentlemen Thomas Schley and Charles Beatty, the latter a member of the Committee of Observation, were appointed to register all eligible men as members of the militia. The committee then asked a number of citizens to form minute companies.<sup>6</sup> The next year, 1776, Frederick Town men had still more options for military service, as state and national forces including the Flying Camp and the German Regiment formed.

Jean B. Lee and others have identified the concept of *rage militaire*, demonstrating that early in the war men were swept up in revolutionary fever and enlisted for military service in very high numbers, a pattern seen in Frederick Town.<sup>7</sup> As war fever surged, most units filled up quickly, and in one case a commander had to ask special permission to expand his company to eighty men. Of four hundred men sampled from Frederick Town, eighty-five participated in military service at some time during the war, all but six having signed up by the summer of 1776.<sup>8</sup>

The concept of *rage militaire* sometimes obscures the true landscape. The eighty-five men who served at some point during the eight-year war constitute only 22 percent of the sample. Anecdotal evidence from the period reveals that many men were less than enthusiastic about military service. In September 1775, the Committee of Observation asked Frederick Town resident Jacob Young to recruit a company of militia. On three separate occasions, Young asked the committee for extra time, because he could not find enough men. Finally, on October 31, he reported that he had successfully filled his company. Some months later, in January 1776, Thomas Johnson wrote to the government in Annapolis complaining of recruiting difficulties and suggesting that one hundred pounds be disbursed to aid in the recruiting efforts, presumably for bounties.<sup>9</sup>

Military service, of course, is not the only way of measuring the extent to which people supported revolution. Frederick Town citizens were also asked to give of their time and possessions to aid the cause of independence. In December 1775 several men who had been asked to raise money reported back to the committee. Breeches maker Ludwick Weltner collected £27, committee member Baker Johnson collected £36, committee member Philip Thomas got £20, and Peter Hoffman got £12. These totals seem fairly impressive in light of the smaller amounts received from other areas, but one must remember that Frederick Town's revolutionary leadership was quite wealthy. The larger sums may have reflected the elite's support more than popular feeling. A letter from John Hanson indicates that the former position may be the correct one. In January 1776 Hanson and several others had been ordered to collect as much gold and silver as they could from throughout Frederick County. In March he reported that he had had little success because citizens were unwilling to part with their money unless they were immediately compensated with paper money.<sup>10</sup>

One should not assume that that attitude implied a widespread dissatisfaction with the revolutionary cause. Very few members (sixteen) of the sample of four hundred were charged with failing to enroll as eligible for militia duty. Those charged were leniently dealt with; fines ranged from five to six pounds and were often reduced after appeal. In October 1775 Jacob Houser attempted to exploit potential fears of loyalism to get others in trouble by claiming that three men, including Committee of Observation member Christopher Edelin, were plotting to blow up the gunpowder then being stored in Frederick Town. The committee did not believe him and ordered Houser to "acknowledge his fault, promise better conduct in future and beg pardon of the Gentlemen offended." When James Higginson was heard to "talk very disrespectfully of the Americans, ridiculed them and their warlike preparations, and asserted that 50 British soldiers would drive out all the Inhabitants in Frederick Town," the chairman simply reprimanded him.<sup>11</sup>

The committee took a tougher stance with those who actively opposed revolutionary actions. When Robert Gassaway confessed to having urged revolutionaries to lay down their arms, the committee "being of Opinion that his Offence is of a high and dangerous Nature and that his Behaviour tended as far as his Influence would extend to disunite the Inhabitants of this province in their present opposition, Resolved That the said Robert Gassaway be immediately sent to the Council of Safety at Annapolis under a Guard of four Men and that Capt Philip Smith and three Men to be procured by him be a Guard for that purpose." James Smith, who had not enrolled as an eligible soldier, was banished from the town because he had become too friendly with some British soldiers who had been sent to jail in Frederick Town.<sup>12</sup> The committee subse-

quently reconsidered their relatively lenient stance towards non-enrollers and issued an order preventing non-enrollers from talking to prisoners.

More drastic were the committee's actions against three loyalist plotters sent to Frederick Town for incarceration. During the summer of 1775 a number of loyalist partisans joined Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, British general Thomas Gage, and White Eyes, an Indian leader, in an attempt to raise an army of Ohio Indians to raid the western portions of Virginia and Maryland. The plan was discovered and three of the plotters, Allen Cameron, John Smith, and John Connelly, were arrested and brought to Frederick Town. Initially they were to be confined at a private home, but the committee soon moved them to Charles Beatty's house for its greater security. The committee then established very strict rules: the prisoners were kept under constant guard and forbidden to talk or write unless a committee member was present. Each was allowed precisely thirty minutes a day outdoors on the balcony, so long as two guards were present. Some townspeople did not share the committee's concerns about security. The company that had been guarding the troops "refuse[d] to perform that Service any longer without reasonable Satisfaction being made them," that is, until they were paid. The committee was forced to nominate two new company officers, town residents Nicholas Hissler and John Goff.<sup>13</sup>

The creation of an army may have alienated portions of the community, but it certainly benefited one group in this early period, the town gunsmiths. During the summer of 1775 the revolutionary government in Annapolis looked for places where supplies could be found or manufactured. They identified four gunsmith shops in Frederick Town and one near it. A few weeks later, Frederick Committee of Observation member Charles Beatty was authorized to contract for the manufacture and delivery of 650 muskets, which Beatty agreed to do. In December of that year, the legislature authorized the creation of a gunlock manufactory in town. In 1776, George Stricker wrote to Annapolis requesting that someone authorize payment to the town's arms manufacturers who had offered to arm his company of light infantry in a few weeks. A day later, Thomas Johnson made a similar request to Annapolis, saying that "considering the difficulty of speedily arming our troops I think with them & will [be] advisable to lodge a sum of money in the hands of somebody here, no body will do more justice to the public than C. Beatty, to purchase what rifles can be got." In surprisingly speedy fashion Annapolis responded, authorizing a total of £160 to Beatty for the purchase of gun locks and arms for Stricker's company.<sup>14</sup>

These investments by the government were not limited to armaments to be used by Frederick County soldiers—Frederick Town's gun industry helped supply the entire colony. By early 1776, Frederick Town guns had begun to make their way across the state. On March 10, the committee wrote that they had sent

Ordered that Alexander Mansfield be directed  
to give Deput<sup>y</sup> John Steveson & John Stephens  
Just<sup>s</sup> Notice of the within Orders respecting them  
Ordered that Nathl Keal give Mellem Sabatier  
Notice of the within Order respecting him -

On application of Capt<sup>y</sup> Haaps a Remand granted  
to levy \$250 of the Effects of Gussij Miller  
which sum he owes Capt<sup>y</sup> Haaps's Company for  
Fines imposed on him for Misbehaviour as a  
Member of that Company. George Miss Officer  
Committee adjourned Tuesday 16 Instant

July 5<sup>th</sup> 1776. The Committee met by special Order  
Present John Hanson, Just<sup>s</sup> Capt<sup>y</sup> in the Chair  
Messrs John Haaps, John Adlum, Adam Fisher,  
Philip Thomas, Christopher Edelen, George  
Mendock -

Jacob Coventry was brought before the Committee  
on Suspicion of being unfriendly to America  
and intending to join Lord Dunmore, and it  
appearing that a full Examination of the Charge  
& his Defence could not be had at this time  
for want of Witnesses, it was resolved that he appear  
next Sunday for the at New York

Ordered that Jacob Coventry enter into Bond with  
Security in the Sum of £500 Surety for his  
Appearance before the Committee on Saturday next

Loyalist Jacob Coventry answered a summons to appear before the Committee of Observation on "suspicion of being unfriendly to America." The committee deemed his behavior "highly reprehensible" and a threat to their growing movement toward independence. The date of his appearance was July 4, 1776. (Maryland Historical Society.)

Jacob Covert was made acquainted with the preceding Order, and on his not complying with it it was resolved that he be committed to the Tory Goal for a fortnight

An Application of Jacob Covert, ordered that a Warrant issue to James Hedges to summon James Holt Catharine Holt & Moses Hedges to appear before the Committee on Saturday next as Witnesses respecting the Charges exhibited ag<sup>t</sup> said Jacob Covert

Committee adjourns to Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July  
July 6. 1776. The Committee met  
Present John Hanson Jun<sup>r</sup> Esq<sup>r</sup> in the Chair  
George Maudock, Philip Thomas, Adam Fisher  
Christopher Edolew, John Raap William Blair  
John Adams & Conrad Geach

Jacob Covert was brought before the Committee according to the Order of the last Meeting, & the Witnesses attending agreeably to Summons, a full Examination of the Circumstances of his Behaviour was had after which the Committee being of Opinion that his Conduct had been highly Reprehensible, and considering him as inimical to America, Resolved that he enter into Bonds with Security in the Sum of £10 for his good Behaviour in future, and that upon giving the Security he require paying the Expences of his Confinement to be discharged

eighty-four muskets to Annapolis. Five days later, a Captain Nicholson trying to form a marine rifle company sent to Frederick Town to arm his men. Requests for arms continued throughout the spring, and soon supply outstripped demand. In August an unarmed Frederick rifle company was simply told to find their own weapons for which the government would compensate them.<sup>15</sup>

Frederick Town also served as a distribution center. Powder, much in demand across the region, was stored about town and in the market house. A western Pennsylvania committee requested some of it, fearing “the savages the Indians.” Soon after this letter arrived, another came to town leaders from a man who had been looking for powder in Philadelphia. Just how much war matériel Frederick town was called upon to distribute throughout the colony is demonstrated by an order of the Council of Safety in December 1775: “3000 wt powder be sent to William Lux in Baltimore Town, and 70 muskets, 16 bayonets, 12 bullet molds, 18 pistols, 40 broad swords, and 7 cutlasses be sent to Samuel Purviance in Baltimore town.”<sup>16</sup>

Gunsmiths were not the only artisans affected by the government’s war effort. Early in the war, merchants were subjected to strict price controls.<sup>17</sup> Merchants accused of selling above that price had to appear before the committee to explain themselves. Despite the potential negative impact of price controls, the government provided the artisans of Frederick ample opportunities to sell their goods. In early 1776, a gentleman purchased two hundred French Match Coat Blankets, and George Stricker wrote Annapolis to ask their permission to buy them. He also bought cloth at a price higher than was intended, although the troops he bought it for agreed to take the difference out of their pay. Shoemakers also benefited, as when in December 1776 the Council wrote to a general saying, “We will send up five hundred or a thousand pair of shoes by the first waggon we can get to be left at Frederick Town and delivered to you.”<sup>18</sup>

### **Transition: 1777–1780**

Not surprisingly, the first part of the war was a period of expansion for Frederick Town. The little evidence available suggests that the city’s growth rate had stagnated in the years leading up to the war. This writer located only four land transactions involving town lots in 1776, and one of those was the lot purchased for the gunlock manufactory. The number jumps to thirty-five transactions in 1777 and thirty-eight each in 1778 and 1779.<sup>19</sup> This considerable increase in transactions within the town itself was also accompanied by Daniel Dulany’s creation of a Frederick Town suburb, Long Acre.

A similar but less dramatic trend occurred in licenses for public houses of entertainment. Receiving court permission to operate an inn cost forty pounds and required three people to apply, not a low bar at all. In 1775 sixteen licenses

were issued to town residents, in 1778 twenty-eight were issued and twenty-five more in 1779 (data is incomplete for 1776 and 1777).<sup>20</sup> Economic expansion occurred in other areas, too. When the state closed down the gunlock manufactory in 1778, they received a total of £765 for the various portions of the shop, including £383 for the house and grounds, £25 each for two bellows, and about £30 a piece for several anvils. Most of the men purchasing the equipment were Frederick Town artisans like Nicholas White and John Shellman, indicating that they still regarded smithing as a profitable endeavor.<sup>21</sup>

As recruiting diminished, so did the work for Frederick Town's gunsmiths, but government spending in the city continued to be quite substantial. In July 1777 the supervisors of the gun lock factory paid out over three hundred pounds to "Sundry Persons for Materials." When itemized, the ripple effect gun smithing had on the Frederick Town economy becomes apparent (columns indicate pounds, shillings and pence):

To Samuel Boone for Boarding and Overseeing	100	0	0
To Thomas Neill for Sundries thereto	41	0	0
To Robert Moore for Maisoning and Plastering	31	10	0
To Nicholas Hower for Steel and Sundries	31	0	0
To Nicholas Hower Ditto for Ditto	1	15	0
To James Smith	26	18	0
To Peter Meem for Washing and Boarding	52	0	0
To Valentine Adams for house Rent	10	0	0
To John Hagerty Tailoring	6	0	0
To John Elender (illegible)	10	0	0

Obviously the government-run plant benefited not just those who worked there but also those who provided support services like tailoring and plastering.<sup>22</sup> However, for unknown reasons, the state decided to sell off the manufactory in 1778.<sup>23</sup> The requests for arms dried up at about the same time the manufactory was closed, suggesting that government investments did as well. Such was probably not the case, for as the war went on, a small shift occurred in how the government did business. Local leaders were increasingly given lump sums and allowed to spend according to their discretion. The gun industry may not have fallen off sharply at all—the shift to lump sums simply may have made it more difficult to discern.

Another sign that the government did not stop spending money in Frederick Town was the series of huge public building projects undertaken in and around Frederick Town during the war years. The first was the "Tory" or "log" jail, a prison built in anticipation of the town's role in Maryland's war effort. Not much is known about the erection of the structure, but what we do know is

interesting. When the idea was first proposed by the legislature, a debate stirred over where the jail should be located. The local committee argued that if public funds were used to build the prison, it should benefit the public “after our unhappy disputes are at an end.” They wanted the jail built on the lot intended for a school. Though the planned location is uncertain, the jail was built in the middle of town, at the corner of Second and Market streets, adjacent to the Market House, a center for commerce in the city. Construction was apparently easy and inexpensive.<sup>24</sup>

Another large project with something of a mysterious history was the powder magazine located just outside of town. Early in the war, the powder was held in the town’s market house. Later, it was removed from the market and distributed about the town to private citizens. However, there are also references to a “magazine” in 1775. Perhaps the term “magazine” simply referred to any building which contained a large amount of powder, rather than denoting a structure specifically designed to hold powder. Wherever it was, by December 1775 the “magazine” contained almost five thousand pounds of powder along with thousands of flints and lead bullets.<sup>25</sup>

In 1777 the state contracted to construct a proper powder magazine. In August, Abraham Faw reported “Good Success” in building one despite “the scarcity of Hands and the advance Price Every article is at with us.” He lacked shingles and sent some men off to Lancaster and Philadelphia to pick up glass, hinges, and workmen. When completed, the magazine handled fewer but larger orders for powder from around the state. In 1779, for example, Frederick received orders for 20,000 and 30,000 wt. of powder.<sup>26</sup> Like the jail, the magazine required a significant guard day and night, which was often very difficult to find.

At the same time Abraham Faw was building the magazine, he was also engaged in the final and most important project during the war years in Frederick Town—the barracks. These buildings represented a major investment for the state, at least £2,500. Built just south of the city, the barracks were originally designed to prevent the quartering of troops in private homes and did so during the winter of 1779–80.<sup>27</sup>

Despite the evident prosperity, it soon became clear that the strains of war had begun to take a toll on the city’s residents. Court minutes, previously occupied with assaults, bastardy, and other small crimes, saw a marked upturn in crimes like theft and selling liquors illegally. During the March 1778 court session, Nicholas Hower was accused of “engrossing and forestalling a large quantity of Butter.” Thomas Wilkes was charged with stealing gun locks and bacon and then concealing them in a “Heap of Dung.” Everyday items lifted during this period included onions and a pocketbook containing eighty pounds. As licenses for public houses increased, so did indictments for illegal liquor sales. In 1775 and 1776 there had been no indictments for that crime, but in the March

1778 session alone there were six. Crimes amongst townspeople were not the only ones committed; in August 1778, Thomas Taylor and Richard Richardson were each fined for not allowing government use of their wagons after the latter had been impressed by town constable Nicholas Hissler.<sup>28</sup>

Women whose husbands had gone off to war began to feel the pinch. Peter Grosh put in an application on behalf of Christianna Grosh, widow of Michael Grosh, killed at the Battle of Germantown. She was a resident of Frederick Town with two children, six and three years old. According to the Orphans Court entry, "they have sustained a very heavy loss by the death of the said Michael Grosh, though not left in indigent Circumstances but that it is just and necessary an Allowance for their support should be made." The court granted them five pounds a month for the next year. Similarly, German Regiment colonel and Frederick Town breeches-maker Ludwick Weltner requested aid for a number of women whose husbands were away at war. The court complied, giving out amounts based on how many children the women had to support.<sup>29</sup> The war had also begun to hurt the city itself, in the form of its roads. A number of men were accused of failing to keep them up. The court fined Frederick Town roads overseer George Schertzell fifty shillings for neglecting the streets and replaced him with Gutlope Miller.<sup>30</sup>

Wartime pressures helped to shrink interest in the war effort. Abraham Faw, building the magazine, needed labor.<sup>31</sup> Part of his difficulty stemmed from the fact that about one-quarter of Frederick men were then engaged in military service, but one could also make the argument that those who were not in the army were also not particularly interested in aiding the patriotic cause. When a detachment of British prisoners arrived in Frederick in December 1777, Charles Beatty could not find sufficient guards to watch over them in the tory prison and was forced to keep them in the smaller and less adequate public jail. The decision proved disastrous. On Christmas Day the prisoners set fire to the jail in an escape attempt. Though the uprising was quashed and the British removed to the tory jail, Beatty still could not get an adequate guard and was forced to watch them himself. Desperate, Beatty ordered the four militia captains in town to send him three men each. He got only six the first night, four the second. Beatty complained to the governor, "I have already lost the best part of three nights sleep & cannot stand it much longer" Four days later, Governor Thomas Johnson urged that a guard of sixty be raised for both the jail and the powder magazine, though Abraham Faw wearily warned them that men would probably not enroll without being paid a bounty.<sup>32</sup>

By February 1778 the prisoners were under control, but adequate help was no easier to find. Beatty wrote the council, asking them to allow the British soldiers out on work release so "they could get themselves some little necessities & be of great use in the neighborhood of this place; Then, I could manage

the turbulent, much better.” Again, he complained of being unable to find a guard.

the militia of this County refuse to stand guard any longer, knowing there is no power to compel them, except the Assembly. . . . [The militia] have resolved to do no more than their share, which has put me under the disagreeable necessity of being turnkey & guard myself. . . . I have done the Duty of Town Major, Quarter Master & Waggon Master at this place without fee or reward, but my slender fortune will not admit the continuation thereof. The glorious Cause which we are struggling in, has prompt me on, to greater lengths than I ought in Justice to my little Family.

He finished his letter by saying that he intended to leave Frederick in the spring, making Beatty a different sort of war casualty. The problems did not disappear for Beatty’s successor. In July 1780, Richard Haff complained that the magazine’s guards daily wanted to leave him, as they thought forty pounds a month was inadequate pay, given that the price of wheat was then seventy-five pounds per ct and that they had families to support.<sup>33</sup>

Much as Beatty and others found it difficult to procure men to guard prisoners or build buildings, so too did revolutionary leaders continue to find trouble getting material goods. Richard Haff wrote in 1779 that he could not get supplies for the magazine guard because the town’s merchants claimed that “they are kept out of their money so long.” Again the revolutionary minority came to the rescue. In June 1780, George Scott reported collecting over \$55,000 from sixty-three Frederick Countians, including \$10,000 from the Johnson brothers (Thomas, James, Baker, and Roger, the first three of whom lived in Frederick Town), and smaller amounts from many other prominent members of Frederick Town like John Adlum, Christian Stoner, Anthony Stoke, and Thomas Schley.<sup>34</sup>

Frederick Town’s importance as an urban center profoundly influenced its development during the early portion of the war, but as yet its largest economic role, that of grain exporter, had hardly been tapped by the revolutionaries. This began to change during the summer of 1780. Flooded by requests for wheat, purchasing commissary Thomas Price began asking Frederick County farmers to start threshing their wheat earlier than usual, offering them the generous sums of £67 per hundred for flour and £22 per bushel for wheat. By August he had contracted for five hundred bushels of wheat and one hundred barrels of flour. He also noted that he could get more if he could pay in cash instead of certificates. In September and October he reported that essential transportation services like wagons and barrels were unavailable without cash.<sup>35</sup> Money had become a problem that would only get worse as the war went on. But an-

other change was in the offing. The town's role as a grain exporter was to be short-lived; the arrival of thousands of prisoners during the next few years would turn the city into an importer.

### **The Late Period: 1781–1783**

In December 1780, Frederick Town learned that its military barracks would be used to house the "Convention Troops," British soldiers who had been surrendered at the American victory of Saratoga. The influx of prisoners, who eventually numbered more than seven hundred, meant this town of about seventeen hundred would have its resources stretched to the limit. Aside from the standard difficulties in feeding and clothing so many men, the revolutionaries also had to make the barracks into livable quarters. A shortage of labor was still a problem for town leaders, and they were forced to use the prisoners to chop firewood and to finish the barracks. Nor could they find enough men to constitute an adequate guard; they had to call upon officers from surrounding counties for troops.<sup>36</sup>

Even when guards were available, townspeople considered them part of the problem. Fielder Gantt, a sometime patriot, complained that "such a banditty you never see collected, they have been pilfering & robbing for several miles round the Town; steers, hogs, beehives & geas. . . . those stationed at the magazines have broak it open, what quantity of lead & powder has been carryed away is uncertain." Baker Johnson confirmed Gantt's accusations, writing "that the whole neighborhood is continually plundered, owing as it is thought in great measure to the prisoners & Guards being so badly supplied with provisions." Provisions were all the guards lacked; in early January many were without a place to sleep and spent their nights outside.<sup>37</sup>

Provisions for the "Conventioneers" and their guards were almost impossible to obtain. Even before the prisoners had arrived in town, the state council in Annapolis reported to the General Assembly that "we have not provisions to feed those Troops." In response, the council made George Murdock the purchasing agent and ordered a number of men to send what supplies they had to Frederick Town. Murdock was asked to use his "personal influence" to purchase what he could on credit. During the next couple of weeks, the town imported pork from Virginia, beef from southern Maryland and salt from Baltimore.<sup>38</sup> This initial scramble to acquire food seems to have worked for a couple of weeks.

In late January, though, Joseph Crockett reported that the troops had "drawn no meat for 4 days past." Four days later on February 3, the council described the situation in Frederick Town as "distressing" and again asked three southern Maryland counties to forward what they had to Murdock. The council concluded, "this business will not admit of Delay." These efforts seem to have fallen

7.  
 Caspar Fritchey  
 Conviction 46  
 High Treason

~~Warrant of Execution~~  
~~for Caspar Fritchey~~  
~~Execution on Friday~~  
~~August 17th~~

Warrant of Execution is.  
 11<sup>th</sup> August 1701 Execution to  
 be on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> Aug<sup>r</sup> 1701

Tory harness maker Caspar Fritchey led a failed conspiracy to capture the town's arsenal in June 1781. Fritchey, Yost Blecker, and Peter Sueman were hanged for treason, but Frederick Town's citizens stood divided on whether the others should also hang or be granted clemency. (Maryland Historical Society.)

flat, as two weeks later Baker Johnson reported that the convention troops had been without meat for fifteen or sixteen days. A week later, Murdock confirmed the shortage, reporting that he only had enough meat for the guard and that the prisoners “are 20 to 25 days defficient in meat.”<sup>39</sup>

A number of reasons lay behind the problem of provisioning. Few cities had infrastructures that could handle such an influx of stomachs. Another problem was the lack of currency. Murdock claimed that “scarsity of money” was the primary reason for the lack of food. When money was available it was often refused, as people would not take paper, only hard money. One could hardly blame them, given the skyrocketing level of inflation. The revolutionary powers at times resorted to seizing goods. Furthermore, the cycle of wheat farming meant that the harvest would not come in for about half a year. A last possible reason, but one with less evidence, was the provisioning of the southern Continental army. In March, just before the Convention troops left Frederick, Murdock was requested to seize all the fresh and salt provisions he could for Lafayette’s army and to procure the wagons to transport the food.<sup>40</sup>

Another crisis hit Frederick in June 1781. Several men reported a conspiracy led by Frederick Town harness maker Caspar Fritchie (father-in-law of Barbara Fritchie). The lieutenant of Washington County (immediately west of Frederick County) was ordered to arrest three conspirators including Fritchie, on June 9. By the twenty-first they had been captured and were ordered taken to Frederick Town for a special trial.<sup>41</sup> Some time in June (the letter is undated), Christian Orendorff testified against the conspirators, claiming that Fritchie intended to raise a fleet and six thousand men in New York. To arm them, the conspirators planned to capture the Frederick Town powder magazine.

Patriots in Washington County were nervous. They complained that the trial was to be held in Frederick Town, whereas they had “taken uncommon pains to bring the treacherous to Justice” and feared that they would not be able to get a right-minded jury in Frederick.<sup>42</sup> When the case finally came to trial, seven conspirators were charged with aiding British general Henry Clinton and the British soldiers, administering oaths of allegiance to the king, and desiring to bring “destruction and slaughter” to the people of Maryland. According to historian J. T. Scharf, three men sat in judgment of the conspirators: Alexander Contee Hanson, James Johnson and Upton Sheredine. The original documents show that Robert Hanson Harrison, William Murdoch Beall, and Philip Thomas also acted as justices. In addition, each trial had a jury, largely made up of prominent Frederick Town citizens.

Whoever the judges and jury were, they convicted all seven conspirators and sentenced each man to be hanged and “thereon that he be cut down to the Earth alive that his Entrails be taken out and burnt while yet alive that his Head be cut off and Body be divided into four parts and that his Head and Quarters

<sup>5</sup>  
 Adam Graves  
 Conviction 44  
 High Treason

~~Execution to be on Monday~~  
~~the 17<sup>th</sup> August 1781~~

Warrant of Execution ~~17<sup>th</sup> Aug<sup>r</sup> 1781~~  
 to be on ~~Monday~~ ~~the 17<sup>th</sup> Aug<sup>r</sup> 1781~~

Warrant of Execution ~~17<sup>th</sup> Aug<sup>r</sup> 1781~~  
 1701 Execution to be on Friday  
 31<sup>st</sup> Aug<sup>r</sup> 1701

Execution respite to Friday the  
 1<sup>st</sup> of Sept<sup>r</sup> 1701

Pardon granted 12 Sept. 1781 on condition  
 of his entering aboard one of his most Christian  
 Majesty's Ships of War during the present

Governor Thomas Sim Lee granted Graves and several others a pardon on the condition that they serve on board "his most Christian Majesty's Ships of War." The reference is to Louis XVI of France. (Maryland Historical Society.)

*Alexander Contee Hanson wrote to Governor Thomas Sim Lee opposing clemency for the traitors. (Maryland Historical Society.)*



be placed where his Excellency the Governor shall direct or appoint,” which was the standard sentence for treason. Three of the conspirators, Fritchie, Yost Blecker, and Peter Sueman were killed on August 17. Whether or not they were actually drawn and quartered remains a mystery, one not likely to be settled definitively. However, given Alexander Contee Hanson’s characterization of the sentence he issued as a “dreadful example,” the sentence was probably carried out in full.<sup>43</sup>

The other four conspirators were also sentenced to death, but public outcry soon erupted over their fate. Thirty-eight Frederick town residents, mostly names of strong patriots like Nicholas Tice, Jacob Steiner, and Jacob Boyer, wrote to the governor, asking for leniency. They cited the prisoners’ good behavior and the fact that “this is the first Instance of a Conspiracy being form’d in these Parts.” Their letter brought a strong reaction from around the region. A group of about a hundred Washington Countians signed a letter saying,

We highly disapprove of any such petition, as we cannot conceive that they would ever become of any use to the comm[unit]y but on the contrary think they would be very dangerous members of society in any Station, and that it would be the greatest encouragement to conserpation that so small an example should be made as for one only to be executed out of One hundred apprehended in this co[un]ty, we humbly hope that your Excy will not be influenced by the Tender-

ness of the Petitioner, whose humanity in other cases we should Esteem, but one fully of the opinion that the best cure for high Treason is a Rope.

Alexander Contee Hanson likewise wrote the governor, complaining that the Frederick Town petition for leniency had not been circulated among all its citizens, implying some people had a differing opinion. "To extend mercy to all would hazard the Loyalty and Affection of a considerable Number of valuable Subjects," he claimed. "An unreasonable, groundless, Apprehension has been excited among them, that the Government is inclined to favor the Tories and disaffected. . . . Shall the Lives of those Men, whom the Law has justly condemned, Stand in competition with the Loyalty and Affection of even a Small Number?" In the end, the governor sided with leniency and pardoned the four conspirators in exchange for their service on French warships.<sup>44</sup>

Leniency toward loyalist activity was not confined to the four conspirators. Daniel Fry, prosecuted for failing to show up for militia duty in 1781, was fined under a new, less punitive fee structure after it was revealed he was poor and had eleven children. Similarly, Washington County resident Henry Newcomer, who was convicted of pledging loyalty to the King, had his fine reduced by the town court.<sup>45</sup> Although the city's Revolutionary leadership had never been exceedingly harsh with loyalists, we have seen that at the outset of the war, they were sometimes very strict. Late in the war, the town was much less fervently patriotic.

As Frederick Town was dealing with the Tories, the removal of large numbers of prisoners meant that the town could once gain export food and other products. During the summer of 1781, Washington and Lafayette moved their forces south to confront Cornwallis's redcoats. Frederick County was called upon to supply them with four hundred cattle and salt. Two weeks later, Henry Knox requested that eight tons of powder then held at Frederick Town be sent south for the troops. At the same time, the city was also asked to transport wheat and flour to Georgetown and Baltimore. Despite the disappearance of the prisoners and the fact it was time to harvest winter wheat, Thomas Price had a hard time complying with all these orders, saying the maintenance of the "guards &c" had "greatly exhausted" his supplies.<sup>46</sup>

More requests for cloth, hats, and shirts came to Frederick Town, but state agents had to deal with two late-war economic developments: inflation and a lack of hard money. One order for hats demonstrates this trend very well. In March 1780, Abraham Faw wrote to Governor Thomas Sim Lee: "I have had an offer of 200 Hatts @ 30 dollars which is the Highest Price I have yet given." Then, during the summer prices shot up to between seventy and eighty dollars per hat. The hatters made other demands: "they must have the cash on the de-

livery of hats[.] they also will ingage to have five or six hundred more done in about four or five weeks if wanted[.] money is very scarce here which has induced the hatters to fall ten dollars on each hat[.] some of the shoemakers have offered to deliver shoes at from eight to seventy five dollars per pare[.]” Run-away inflation was so great that prices more than doubled in a couple of months, and it soon caught up with the state agents. In May 1781, John Reed reported that he was “ashamed” of the “shabby appearance” of the magazine guard but that he could not get any new clothes, as “as nothing can be purchased here without Hard money — paper money being generally refused.”<sup>47</sup> This was not an isolated development. Court fines also shifted at this point, as fees once charged in pounds were now to be paid in specie or tobacco.

A few months after Frederick’s brush with loyalist conspiracy, Cornwallis surrendered his army at Yorktown, Virginia. Many of these prisoners were sent to Frederick Town, and so began again the process of resupplying and refitting the town for a huge influx of new people. Food was again short, due in part to a continuing lack of money but also, this time, for slightly different reasons. Thomas Price identified the earlier period of export as having drained the supplies, as had the guards and soldiers who had been in the town. Frederick County farmers were also several months away from harvesting their winter wheat. The solutions were the same as they had been earlier: the town was forced to import much of its food from southern Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. When Price received cattle that were unfit for slaughter and were unwanted by local farmers, the need for provisions was so great that he put them out to fatten.<sup>48</sup>

Food was not the only scarcity. Philip Thomas, now in charge of the preparations for receiving prisoners, was authorized to seize anything he needed from the people of the town to get the city’s buildings in shape. On November 19, Thomas reported that he had “with great difficulty” managed to supply both the guard and prisoners. While they had been supplied with food, the guards were far from content. Currency problems, labor shortages, and grousing amongst guards continued to be problematic, as was made clear in a small dispute over wood-chopping. Frederick Town Revolutionary Montjoy Bayly complained that the guards in the city refused to cut wood as “they say they are soldiers and not wood cutters.” In response, the council in Annapolis recommended that the prisoners be used to chop wood, since the state did not have money to hire people for that purpose. Almost as soon as Cornwallis’s British troops had arrived, they departed; on December 26, the state ordered all of the prisoners removed to Pennsylvania.<sup>49</sup>

Any reprieve for the town was short-lived. Hessian troops who had also been captured at Yorktown were brought to Frederick in January 1782. Montjoy Bayly, the major in charge of the prisoners, issued an order in March declaring that only the sutler was to be allowed to sell liquor to the prisoners. It also ap-

pears that Bayly restricted all access to the prisoners without specific permission and gave Peter Meem the sole right to sell to those jailed in the barracks. Bayly says he established these restrictions because citizens were coming into the jail and “stealing” prisoners, presumably to use as workers. In addition, there was such chaos inside the barracks when multiple sutlers arrived to sell their goods to the Hessians that Bayly felt he had to reestablish order.<sup>50</sup>

A populace so desperate for labor that they would stoop to such levels could not have been expected to take Bayly’s edicts lightly. Indeed, the town became incensed at his actions and petitioned the governor to investigate. The governor eventually let Bayly off the hook, undoubtedly to the consternation of the townspeople.<sup>51</sup> The problem of stolen prisoners does not seem to have ended here, though. In June, a more draconian order was issued, stating that anyone caught supporting or providing quarter for prisoners was subject to a fine of five hundred pounds, three years’ service on a ship, or thirty-nine lashes.<sup>52</sup>

Just as the storekeepers had increasing difficulty finding workers, the town’s shrunken labor force and the general disinterest in public service continued to prevent the formation of an adequate guard. In April the Executive Council wrote to Continental general William Smallwood asking if he could spare some soldiers to act as a garrison. Their request resulted from the “great expence” of having to constantly mobilize the militia and “the Loss of so much useful Labour, and the great Aversion of our People to this Kind of Duty.”<sup>53</sup> About two months later in June, they made a similar request. With the guard’s term of service about to expire, Montjoy Bayly needed a replacement but felt that he would have little success finding the requisite numbers in Frederick County, given the complaints of the militiamen and the impending harvest. Bayly’s problems went unsolved, as a week later he reported that the prisoners were “almost without a guard.” These problems led to what can only be termed—given the history of British prisoners in Frederick Town—a desperate solution: the use of invalid soldiers as a garrison.<sup>54</sup>

Prisoners could now escape from the barracks and pillage both the local countryside and the town, causing locals to be “full of complaints.”<sup>55</sup> Lack of a proper guard was not the only problem; prisoners were scattered about the community. While the bulk of Hessians were kept in the barracks south of town, the sick lived in the poorhouse, and lawbreakers were placed in the Tory jail downtown. Usually, when soldiers got loose, they were recaptured and simply taken to the Tory jail. However, one afternoon an escaping soldier was shot “through the body” by the garrison. In response to the multitude of escapes, Bayly ordered a round-up of soldiers who had escaped, but by that time some of the Hessians had started families with American women.<sup>56</sup>

In September the Continental Congress ordered that all prisoners who had married American women were to be released in exchange for a fixed sum. Any-

one willing to swear allegiance to the revolutionary government would also be freed, following payment of a fee. Finally, Germans were offered thirty Spanish dollars bounty to enlist in the American army. Recruiters came into the barracks, not just with promises of money, but “with music, and [they] also brought women with them.” The offer applied only to Germans and not British soldiers, probably because Germans were perceived to be less loyal to Britain. The loosening of restrictions presented an opportunity for town merchants like Nicholas Hauer and an unnamed combmaker to purchase freedom for German soldiers and then use them as indentured servants in their shops.<sup>57</sup>

While some looked at the prison population as a potential economic boon, others were not so excited about their presence and still considered them a potential threat. In March 1782, revolutionary leader Dr. Adam Fischer and a gang broke into a house then occupied by a pair of paroled British officers. Fischer and his men dragged the soldiers about the town, finally leaving them in the street. Meanwhile, three Hessians who had been visiting the officers were beaten by a separate band of men. The officers went to magistrate Jacob Young, a former member of the House of Delegates, who ordered Constable Nicholas Hissler to put Fischer and his men under arrest. Fischer tried to take his case to people, placing a public advertisement asking for assistance, as he was “still for the rights of Maryland in America.” Whether or not his public relations campaign worked has been lost to history.<sup>58</sup>

Regardless, the Germans remained a constant presence in town until the end of the war. Indeed, it is a Hessian diarist who left us a vivid description of the end of the war. On April 22, 1783, Johann Conrad Dohla wrote:

Today, on orders of the city commandant, General Lincoln, the happy restoration of peace between England and America was announced, to the joy of all the residents of the city.

Thereupon a peace-celebration bonfire was built by the regular troops and the militiamen stationed here, and they paraded behind the resounding sounds of fifes and drums through all of the streets and ways of this place with white flags, green caps, and laurel wreaths on their heads, and firing their weapons. With each volley, old and young gave an extraordinarily loud cheer: “Hyroh for peace! Hyroh for the liberty! Hyroh for Washington! Hyroh for Congress! For Hancock! For Ourselves! God save the General Washington, our Master!”

An 18-pound cannon was brought here also, and this was fired more than thirty times from a height before the city.

At night a beautiful fireworks display took place, which was prepared for the Americans by our Artillery Captain [Nikolaus Friedrich] Hoffman and his artificers and cannoneers, for pay. It was very beautiful to see.

When this was all finished, a splendid ball was held in a large hall, attended by all the American officers and all of the gentlemen and rich merchants of the city. They ate, drank, and danced the entire night to the music of our and the Hessian hautboists. All the officers of the captive regiments were invited to this dance of joy and celebration of peace. All the Hessians attended, but from our two regiments, only Lt. von Ciriacy participated.”

Six days after learning of the Treaty of Paris, the Hessian soldiers were freed, prompting Dohla to express a sentiment undoubtedly shared by the rest of the war-weary town: “Now we too believe that peace has been made with England.”<sup>59</sup>

#### NOTES

1. The Revolutionary Era and subsequent formation of the new Republic has generated a substantial historiography, but few studies deal with how people experienced the war. See Adrian Leiby, *The Revolutionary War in the Hackensack Valley: The Jersey Dutch and the Neutral Ground, 1775–1783* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1962), Richard Buel Jr., *Dear Liberty: Connecticut’s Mobilization for the Revolutionary War* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1980), Jean B. Lee, *The Price of Nationhood: The American Revolution in Charles County* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994); Robert Gross, *The Minutemen and their World* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976), and Ronald Hoffman, Thad W. Tate, and Peter J. Albert eds., *An Uncivil War: The Southern Backcountry During the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia for the U.S. Capitol Historical Society, 1985).
2. Charles A. Barker, *The Background of the Revolution in Maryland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), 24; David Curtis Skaggs, *Roots of Maryland Democracy* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973), 18, 20, 33, 39, 44–48, 63, 65–70, 75–76, 89, 92; Ralph Levering, “John Hanson, Public Servant,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 71 (1976): 123; Dieter Cunz, *The Maryland Germans: A History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1948), 131.
3. T. J. C. Williams, *History of Frederick County* (Hagerstown, Md.: The Mail Publishing Company, 1910), 75–77.
4. Levering, “John Hanson, Public Servant,” 118–19, 124.
5. S. Eugene Clements and F. Edward Wright, *The Maryland Militia in the Revolutionary War* (Silver Spring, Md.: Family Line Publications, 1987), 6–7; William Hand Browne, ed., *Archives of Maryland*, 73 vols. (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1872– ), 11:29.
6. “Journal of the Committee of Observation of the Middle District of Frederick County, Maryland. Sept. 12, 1775–October 24, 1776,” *MdHM*, 10 (1915): 305.
7. Lee, *The Price of Nationhood*.
8. This sample population is derived from two sources: a 1775 membership list of the Frederick Town Evangelical Reformed Church found in Frederick S. Weiser, ed., *Maryland German Church Records – Evangelical Reformed Church, Frederick, Frederick County*, trans. William J. Hincke (Carroll County, Md: Historical Society of Carroll County) and the 1782 tax assessment of Frederick Town found in the Maryland State Papers, Series Z: Scharf Collection, Maryland State Archives (S1005-15213). The data for their military service is

found in Henry C. Peden Jr., ed., *Revolutionary Patriots of Frederick County Maryland, 1775–1783* (Westminster, Md.: Family Line Publications: 1995). Those people whose service indicates they were not living in Frederick Town at the time of the war's outbreak (e.g., they were a member of the militia in a different county) were left out of this calculation. It should be noted that this sample is biased against younger people who might have joined the war effort.

9. "Journal of the Committee," *MdHM*, 10 (1915): 304–10; Maryland State Papers: Red Books S989-5, fol. 6.

10. "Journal of the Committee," *MdHM*, 11 (1916): 62; *Archives of Maryland*, 11:199.

11. "Journal of the Committee," *MdHM*, 10 (1915): 307, 11 (1916): 314.

12. *Ibid.*, 11 (1916): 247; 12 (1917): 17.

13. *Ibid.*, 10 (1915):314–17, 319–20; 11 (1916):58, 158.

14. *Archives of Maryland* 11:65, 75, 81, 102, 108, 120; Frederick County Land Records 1775–1777, C 814-29, fol.. 471-5.

15. *Archives of Maryland*, 11:234, 253; 12:188.

16. "Journal of the Committee," *MdHM*, 10 (1915): 306, 11 (1916): 157; *Archives of Maryland*, 11:78, 81.

17. "Journal of the Committee," *MdHM*, 10 (1915): 309–10; 11 (1916): 317. It is doubtful that these price controls remained in place past 1776.

18. *Archives of Maryland*, 11:190; 12:556.

19. Frederick County Land Records 1774–1776, fol. 668; vol. B.D. fols. 243, 249–50, 471-5. My methodology here was to simply scan each page of the volumes for Frederick Town references, as all land records are organized by county, not town.

20. As with the land records, court records are organized by county rather than town. Therefore, determining whether an entry referred to something that occurred in the town or outside it is very difficult. My methodology has been to assume that any entry in the court records that involves a Frederick Town resident refers to a Frederick Town incident. Frederick County Court Minutes 1773–1775, C831-8; 1776–1779, C831-9; November 1777, C831-10; 1779, 831-11.

21. Red Books, 989-14, fol. 99.

22. Maryland State Papers, Series A, S1004-10, fol. 31A.

23. Red Books, 989-14, fol. 99.

24. "Journal of the Committee," *MdHM*, 11 (1916): 160–61; Red Books, S989-5, fol. 06. There is one reference to two hundred pounds being lodged with the committee for its erection. Furthermore, from inception to completion, it only appears to have taken about six months to build.

25. "Journal of the Committee," *MdHM*, 10 (1915): 60–61, 306. As will be explained, the powder magazine became a crucial part of Frederick Town's role in the war effort. Despite its importance the record never makes clear where the powder comes from. Frederick Town simply had massive quantities of it; I have located no requests from the town or orders from the state to send powder to Frederick. This indicates that the powder was being made in areas close to Frederick and that these facilities were dedicated to sending powder directly to the town, and thus did not need instructions from the state.

26. Maryland State Papers, Series A, S1004-8, fol. 44; *Archives of Maryland*, 21:516.

27. *Archives of Maryland*, 16:300, 418; John Walton, "Historical Review and Recommendations for Preservation - Hessian Barracks," unpublished manuscript, 8, Frederick County Historical Society.

28. Frederick County Court Minutes 1776–1779, C831-9, fol. 201, 204, 319.

29. *Ibid.*, March 1779, C831-11, fol. 23.
30. *Ibid.*, 1776–1779, C831-9, fols. 364, 377.
31. Maryland State Papers, Series A: S1004-8, fol. 44; John M. Walton, “Historical Review and Recommendations for Preservation,” 12.
32. Red Books, S989-25, fol. 01; *Archives of Maryland*, 16:451.
33. *Archives of Maryland*, 16:491; 45:1.
34. Maryland State Papers, S1004-14, fol. 121; *Archives of Maryland*, 43:520.
35. *Archives of Maryland* 45:16, 46, 94, 139.
36. *Ibid.*, 45:238, 300–301, 305–6; 47:41.
37. *Ibid.*, 47:45, 74, 3.
38. *Ibid.*, 45:203, 237, 238, 244, 258.
39. *Ibid.*, 45:300, 319-20; 47:42, 95.
40. *Ibid.*, 47:13, 42, 114, 255; 45:345, 599.
41. *Ibid.*, 45:467, 482.
42. *Ibid.*, 47:308.
43. The historical controversy over the execution is covered in Dorothy MacKay Quynn, “The Loyalist Plot in Frederick,” *MdHM*, 40 (1945): 201–10.
44. Frederick County Treason Papers, MS. 576. Manuscripts Department, Maryland Historical Society.
45. *Archives of Maryland*, 48:291, 307.
46. *Ibid.*, 45:590, 47:448, 430; Maryland State Papers, Series A, S 1004-38, 60B.
47. *Archives of Maryland*, 43:458; 45:46; 47:255.
48. *Ibid.*, 47:42, 553, 663; 48:14.
49. *Ibid.*, 45:66; 47:552, 567; 48:23, 32.
50. Johann Conrad Dohla, *A Hessian Diary of the American Revolution.*, trans. Bruce Burgoyne (Norman.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), 198–99. Maryland State Papers, Series A, S1004-48, fols. 53A, 53B, 53C, and 53D.
51. *Archives of Maryland*, 48:102.
52. Johann Ernst Prechtel, *A Hessian Officer’s Diary of the American Revolution*, trans. Bruce Burgoyne. (Bowie, Md.: Heritage Books, 1994), 240.
53. *Archives of Maryland* 48:138.
54. Maryland State Papers, Series A, S1004-49, fols. 28, 39; *Archives of Maryland* 48:202.
55. *Archives of Maryland*, 48:140; Dohla, *Hessian Diary*, 207.
56. Dohla, *Hessian Diary*, 202, 205–7.
57. *Ibid.*, 210–12.
58. Maryland State Papers, Series A, S1004-48, fol. 54.
59. *Ibid.*, 221.

# Laying Claim to Elizabeth Shoemaker: Family Violence on Baltimore's Waterfront, 1808–1812

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From time to time the *Maryland Historical Magazine* reprints excerpts from books that pertain to the region. In this issue, we are pleased to present with the permission of Routledge the following essay from *Over the Threshold: Intimate Violence in Early America*, edited by Christine Daniels and Michael V. Kennedy, published in 1999. James D. Rice is associate professor of history at the State University of New York, Plattsburgh.

In 1811, Baltimore had just passed the first bloom of youth, and was poised on the brink of economic and social maturity. In 1750 the town had been merely a sleepy village, but by 1790 it contained over 13,000 residents. Its population doubled in the next ten years, making it the third most populous city in the United States behind New York and Philadelphia. Baltimore's strategic location on a broad tributary of the northern Chesapeake Bay allowed it to capture much of the trade of America's first "breadbasket," the fertile crescent between Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. Yet the Atlantic grain trade, the very source of Baltimore's explosive growth, also made it highly vulnerable to changes in international markets. Baltimore's export-driven economy suffered terribly when warring France and England took steps to compel American sailing vessels to conform to their strategic goals, and suffered even more when the Embargo Act of 1807 restricted U.S. shipping to coastal trade. Lacking a mature, diversified economy, the city was hit hard by the embargo and other mercantile disruptions. The value of goods shipped from the port dropped by 75 percent between 1805 and 1808, with the consequences rippling outwards from the wharves and warehouses through the rest of the economy.<sup>1</sup>

Betsy Shoemaker, like her home town of Baltimore, was also just past the first bloom of youth in 1811. She too was reaching for maturity, and had been buffeted and hardened by recent events. Her parents, Catharine (Kitty) and William Shields, adopted her as an orphaned infant. She turned eighteen just as

## FREQUENCY OF REASONS GIVEN IN PARDON TEXTS AND SUCCESSFUL PARDON PETITIONS, 1789–1837

Reasons	Years			
	1789–1810		1811–1837	
	N	%	N	%
Equity (innocent/justifiable)	76	35%	302	28%
Character/connections	68	31	227	21
Reformable/youth	22	10	109	10
Sanity/health	19	9	63	6
Penitence/conduct	6	2	275	25
Dependent family/poverty	21	10	101	9
Informant	7	3	12	1
Total	219	100	1089	100

Source: Pardons database; Governor and Council (Pardon Record and Pardon Papers).

Note: N excludes persons for whom sex is unknown.

William, a mariner, struggled to support his family during the economic slump that hit their neighborhood of Fells Point, a maritime suburb of Baltimore, with exceptional severity.<sup>2</sup> In that neighborhood, full of underemployed sailors and maritime tradesmen and laborers, Betsy was constantly exposed to the rough culture of a port city. Kitty and William occasionally immersed themselves in that rough culture themselves, but attempted to shield Betsy from it. As soon as Betsy came of age, however, she dived headlong into waterfront society. Her repeated forays into what her mother called “those sinks of Iniquity where licentiousness is order, and Voluptuousness is Law” quickly took a toll on Betsy’s health. Ironically, however, it was her parents’ violent attempt to control her behavior that killed her.<sup>3</sup>

The disturbing story of Betsy Shoemaker’s death at the hands of her parents is a powerful tale of domestic violence. It is also a story about a waterfront community in which Betsy’s life was not entirely her own, nor even belonging entirely to her parents. Through her rebellious behavior, Betsy tried to lay claim to her own life. Her parents disputed that claim, as one might expect. More surprisingly, Betsy’s friends, the community and even the United States Navy also tried to exert their claims. The boundaries between family and community in a working-class area were thin, porous and contested, as neighbors, friends and agents of the state and national governments freely intervened in the Shields’ family life. Although only Kitty and William were charged with Betsy’s murder, their trials were as much about the family’s place in the community and the community’s place in the family as they were about the Shields’s treatment of their adopted daughter.

Accounts of Betsy Shoemaker's demise were bound to conflict at some points. Yet all parties agreed on one thing: Betsy suffered a horrible death. According to the coroner, Betsy died from "Cruel and inhuman" treatment, particularly at the hands of her mother. "Mrs. Shields," he asserted, "on the morning which she [Betsy] died gave and compelled her to drink one pint of Rum after whipping her overnight and very severely that same morning." Betsy drank all but a spoonful of the rum, which was followed by "a spoonful of Wine Drops, then a dose of Jollop then a dose of Castor or sweet oil then a pint of new milk, then a mixture of vinegar water and sugar about half pint, the same quantity of salt and water then three cups of coffee." Finally, Catharine Shields "made water, about one pint and made her drink that." Betsy downed these "several doses" between sunrise and noon, at which time she "Languished and Died."

All who knew about the incident, concluded the coroner, wanted to see Catharine and William Shields brought to justice.<sup>4</sup> A grand jury concurred with his report, indicting William Shields for the severe whipping he was said to have given Betsy on the night before she died and Kitty for administering the "several doses" that killed her. When Kitty was tried in January, 1812, the jurors convicted her of manslaughter; William had an alibi and was acquitted.

Had the jury been Kitty's last hope, she might have despaired. But as another pardon-seeker wrote in 1803, "Fortunately for the citizens of this Country, there is a tribunal of mercy, sitting superior to the tribunal of strict justice," namely the governor.<sup>5</sup> He did not exaggerate the governor's power to pardon even convicted criminals; indeed, the pardoning process amounted to a whole new trial, based on the same considerations as the original—empirical evidence and testimony of good character—but without the procedural and evidentiary restrictions required in formal proceedings. Counsel for the prosecution, jurors, members of the bar, complainants, clergymen, family members, local notables and, of course, defendants, also joined in petitions for (and against) pardons at their own initiative. The recommendations were collated and discussed by the governor and his council, which reserved special days for such business. Three options were possible: they could issue a full pardon, attach an alternative punishment to the pardon, or allow the sentence to stand.<sup>6</sup>

Maryland governors pardoned guilty convicts more often than they released people they deemed innocent (see Table 1). Indeed, over two-thirds of the lucky convicts were still guilty of capital offenses. In part this was because, before 1811, Maryland law imposed the death penalty for some relatively minor offenses. And penitence on the part of the condemned was considered a sign that reformation was possible; professed remorse was especially likely to be taken seriously when the convict seemed conducive to reclamation. The young offender Hanson Barnes, for example, was spared even a trial because "from his youth and inexperience there may be a prospect of reformation."<sup>7</sup> Youth, family

responsibilities and other incentives to reform were among the most frequently cited reasons for pardoning convicts; 10 percent of all pardons and pardon petitions cited the possibility of reformation.<sup>8</sup> In addition, over 20 percent of all successful pardons cited the character of the defendant, his family or his connections—considerations perfectly consistent with standards applied at every other stage of criminal prosecutions.<sup>9</sup>

Excessively severe punishments, moreover, eroded respect for the law. William Tilghman, member of a prominent planter family, worried that executing a convict would backfire because “his execution might rather tend to excite compassion, than answer the end for which examples of this kind are intended.” Executions were not meant to arouse sympathy, but terror of the state and its law. Petitioner George Plater proclaimed that “rogues” should suffer “punishment” as “examples to others.” Ideally, wrote another petitioner, executions created examples of “terrible” punishments.<sup>10</sup> Exemplary punishments were particularly designed to impress the poor and the black, who, it was supposed, comprised an identifiable criminal class. “It might seem expedient,” wrote one observer, “that there should be some examples of awful warning to check the atrocious wickedness and licentiousness of those poor unhappy black creatures, who appear to be influenced by no restraining tie but the dread of legal punishment.”<sup>11</sup> Governors had to choose between prisoners whose executions would make good examples and those who would simply gain sympathy if they were severely punished.

Successful petitions almost invariably portrayed convicts as fitting certain psychological profiles. They emphasized the defendant’s good character, social standing and reformability. Women also stressed their femininity, suggested their virtue and especially raised the implicit threat that a severe punishment would arouse sympathy for the convict instead of terror of the law.

Kitty Shields’s own pardon petition was finely crafted. She masterfully re-plotted the coroner’s story, agreeing with it in most details but placing Betsy’s death in the context of a long-term struggle for the girl’s soul. The coroner told a simple and compelling tale, drawing on the archetype of the wicked step-mother. Kitty rewrote the same events into a tragedy. In her version, a doting mother attempted to expel the corruption she saw taking root in her daughter’s soul, but made a single fatal mistake and brought ruin upon the entire family. As a loving and devoted mother, Kitty implied, she did not need to be reformed, although in conformity with the conventions of pardons, she displayed her penitence. God help the politician who allowed such a woman to suffer an exemplary punishment.

Shields began by artfully portraying herself as the reformer, not the person in need of reform; as the transmitter of virtue, not its corruptor. When she and

William took Betsy in as an orphaned infant, she stated, they hoped Betsy would become “a virtuous member of society and a consolation to them in their declining years.” But they were “fatally deceived.” Betsy left home shortly after her eighteenth birthday and returned several weeks later “in that deplorable situation which delicacy forbids your petitioners particularly to describe, but which your excellency may readily imagine” when he considered that she had wallowed in one of “those sinks of Iniquity . . . from which few ever return less contaminated in body than in mind.” No one would have blamed the Shields if they had barred the door to Betsy, but “being still anxiously solicitous for the welfare of their adopted child” and hoping “by their admonitions to withdraw her from the evil habits she had contracted during her association with those by whom she had been lured from the path of rectitude,” they took her in again. On October 19, 1811, however, Betsy once again left and “spent the night in riot and debauchery.” She returned the next morning “in a complete state of intoxication.”

Kitty “hoped” Betsy’s unusual actions were the result of “the wicked arts and contrivances of others” not “the impulse of an appetite naturally vicious and depraved.” Betsy’s mother then resolved “by one energetic effort to snatch her, if possible, from the career of prodigality into which she had so unfortunately hurried.” With that goal in mind, she administered a massive dose of the hair of the dog (rum) to Betsy, “having been taught to believe that the most effectual mode of correcting a destructive habit was by creating, if practicable, a disgust for it.” But this did not work as intended, for Betsy was willing to continue her drinking spree. Discovering that the alcohol produced “an effect different from what she contemplated,” Kitty tried to undo the first remedy by purging her daughter of the rum. She tried castor oil, salt water and other remedies calculated to induce vomiting. Unhappily, though, the effect of purgatives and rum on the “debilitated state” of Betsy’s health “produced by her overnights debauch” was so deleterious that she soon expired. Her parents, tender and solicitous to the end, gave her a decent burial.<sup>12</sup>

For all the artistry in her version of the story, the allegation that she forced Betsy to drink urine remained a problem for Kitty. Both the coroner and the Grand Jury were convinced she had given Betsy a full pint of the liquid. This accusation impugned Kitty Shields’s motives, suggesting a punitive aspect to her behavior completely at variance with her account of the episode. Thus in a second missive to the governor, accompanied by a series of depositions, Shields took pains to refute this particular charge; in doing so, she revealed the presence of other witnesses at Betsy’s deathbed. Several people testified that Anne Spearman and Sally Falkner, (two of Betsy’s tavern friends and corruptors) had “first suggested the propriety of administering Urine” to Betsy, and did so while Kitty was out of the room. As she spooned the noxious substance down her

friend's throat, Spearman said "if any Thing in the World would make her puke that would."<sup>13</sup>

Catharine Shields, in sum, had not tortured her adopted daughter to death. If anything, she tormented *herself* over Betsy's refusal to stay on the path of virtue. As a betrayed and bereaved mother she was "rather to be pitied than condemned." Her actions on the morning of Betsy's death proceeded from laudable motives; they demanded not exemplary punishment but compassion. Instead, Kitty nominated the "unfortunate" child Betsy as an example to others; "her fate and indiscretion" would serve as "a melancholy example to the young and credulous to reach them to avoid the snares of voluptuousness and the fascinations of vice."<sup>14</sup>

The Shields's correspondence with the governor demonstrates their attentiveness to conventions of pardon-seeking—the requisite remorse, while admitting no guilt, and the semblance of familial concern and good moral character. They were no less attuned to the conventions of family life, particularly to the acceptable use of violence within the family. In Kitty Shields's case, three distinct understandings about family life came together to make it possible for her to claim to have loved her daughter to death: traditional notions about the sweeping power of parents over their households, complex republican notions about innately virtuous yet corruptible women, and the increasingly intimate ideal of household relations.

During the mid- to late eighteenth century, middle-class families became increasingly sentimental as parents began to perceive children as "inherently good and pleasurable creatures" who occupied center stage in the family.<sup>15</sup> Accordingly, Kitty cast aside all subtlety as she portrayed herself as a doting mother who lived only for her child and would gladly sacrifice herself in order to attend to Betsy's needs. By the Shields's account, they acted out of the "purest motives of Humanity" from the moment they adopted Betsy until the day they buried her. Her death left them "afflicted with the keenest anguish that ever tortured the human breast." They asserted that parenthood gave them common ground with the governor, and appealed to him to "apply their unhappy case to yourself and to mete out to them, the same measure of mercy as you would think they ought to mete out to you were you in their situation and you in theirs." The Shields spoke the language of domesticity with impressive fluency.

The search for a new social and political order in the wake of the Revolution created a uniquely American variant of the intimate family. A post-Revolutionary uncertainty about the ability of ordinary people to play an active political role in society was often expressed in republican language, which in turn shaped ideas about how "republican" citizens ought to behave. The republican experiment raised parental stakes and placed new demands on children; despite their

concern for their children, republican parents expected more emotional and behavioral conformity from them than had been expected from the parents themselves. Betsy's failure to live up to parental expectations had serious consequences in the milieu of the new Republic; her parents' violent reaction was partly rooted, at least in their representation, in their sense of failure according to the standards against which republican parents and children measured themselves.<sup>16</sup>

Although the Enlightenment thought of the eighteenth century and the new romanticism of the nineteenth both undermined traditional notions about original sin and the innate depravity of man, republican ideology also emphasized the ease with which corruption fastened itself upon the soul. For the United States to survive, its ordinary citizens would have to be worthy of their expanded powers. They needed to resist the many temptations of corruption and remain on a virtuous path. If citizens became corrupt, the Republic would fail, or even become malevolent. If they lived virtuous lives, however, the United States would serve as a "cynosure of nations" leading the rest of the world by the force of its example. Or so argued the most ideological writers of the early Republic in their most breathless moments.<sup>17</sup>

Republican ideology imposed upon the Shields a more mundane and messier task: shaping Betsy into a woman capable of inculcating virtue in her own (prospective) husband and children. While the Shields did not live up to middle-class standards of republican morality themselves (more of that later), they spoke the language. Their petitions are shot through with the keywords of republican discourse, most notably "virtue" and "corruption." The first sentence of their first petition sets the tone: they had hoped when they adopted her that Betsy would become "a virtuous member of society." But to their infinite sorrow she instead chose a path which led to "iniquity," "licentiousness," "spoil," "voluptuousness," "contamination," "contagion," "degenerance," "indulgence," "excess," "vice" and similar destinations.

Betsy's behavior suggested a propensity for immoderation and vice which would affect her marital prospects. And to the extent to which she passed on these tendencies to her spouse and children, her behavior would have deleterious consequences for society as a whole. Because of the enthusiasm with which she threw herself into the rough culture of Fells Point's waterfront taverns, the Shields—particularly Kitty, who would bear most of the credit or blame for Betsy's development—appear to have felt acutely their impending failure as parents. Their extravagantly violent reaction to Betsy's last "debauch" may have seemed proportionate to the danger she faced from herself.

These two new phenomena of Euro-American family life in Baltimore in 1811—the increasingly child-centered climate of households and the particularly high moral stakes in the new Republic—coincided in the Shields-Shoe-

maker case with an older aspect of family life: the almost unlimited authority granted to heads of households by both law and custom.

Maryland statutory law provided no special protection for children against their parents, nor was the common law much help. William Blackstone, whose *Commentaries on the Laws of England* had achieved wide circulation in Maryland by 1812 and was often cited in briefs and decisions, included “Wife, [or Children] battery of” in his volume not in the section on “Public Wrongs” but under the heading of “Private Wrongs,” along with divorce and other domestic concerns. Children merited attention mostly as servants and orphans, though Blackstone highlighted “Children, their duties” in his volume on “The Rights of Persons.”<sup>18</sup>

By custom, even these legal barriers against domestic violence were rarely enforced. An examination of over 7,000 criminal prosecutions, in Maryland’s courts between 1748 and 1837 reveals only a handful of cases of violence between family members. (Prosecutions involving violence between unrelated householders were more common, but differing surnames make it difficult to pinpoint the exact number of cases.) The silence speaks more clearly of public attitudes than household behavior.<sup>19</sup> This low prosecution rate certainly did not result from an absence of domestic violence, but from an unwillingness or inability to prosecute or convict most offenders. And although relatively few well-documented cases of domestic violence have survived from Elizabeth Shoemaker’s Maryland, those that do reinforce the impression of a widespread and deep-seated reluctance to use legal sanctions against perpetrators of domestic violence. The law limited violence within the household, but also justified its existence—it recognized the right of a household governor to enforce discipline through violence—and Marylanders took the justifications more seriously than the limitations.<sup>20</sup> In the case of the Shields, the sweeping power granted to parents by law and custom, coupled with the raised stakes in the intimate household in the new Republic, made it possible for Kitty Shields to claim plausibly to have loved her daughter to death.

Moreover, the Shields’s treatment of their adopted daughter was of a piece with everyday life on the waterfront. The Shields did not have to peek into neighbors’ houses to witness violence; they could see it in their neighborhood streets, wharves and inns.<sup>21</sup> Baltimore itself was in the process of winning the nickname of “mobtown” for its periodic episodes of collective violence over political issues and rivalries between fire companies. And within Baltimore, Fells Point contained a remarkably high concentration of crime-prone single men, sailors and taverns—a potent combination that created a volatile, exuberantly masculine and rough society.

The Shields, then, moved in crude circles—particularly William, who as a sailor experienced the brutality of shipboard life. They also encountered the

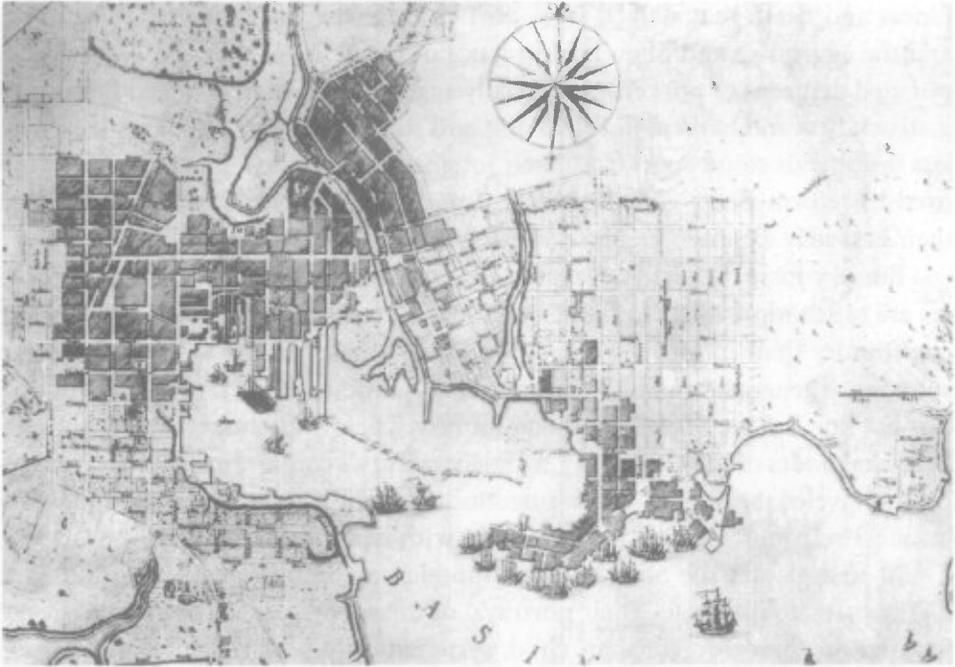
illness and death that stalked large port cities in the early nineteenth century, and the aggressive and often fatal practice of medicine of that era. Yellow fever pursued denizens of port cities especially aggressively; when it visited Baltimore it struck first and hardest in Fells Point and surrounding neighborhoods.<sup>22</sup> Unless the Shields stood apart from their tough seaport milieu, the correctives they used to reform Betsy—the beatings, rum and purgatives—were drawn from their everyday experiences of personal violence, illness and medical practice.

But of course they had never stood aloof from their neighbors. While scholars are much more likely to shape questions in terms of the family's place in the community than in terms of the community's place in the family, the correspondence generated in Shield's search for a pardon reveals a very thin and indistinct line between family and community. Their household formed but one of several nodes of its inhabitants' social lives. Kitty's connections with her neighbors unraveled the intimate circle surrounding the Shields family, as did William's business relations and Betsy's socializing with her young friends.

At first glance, the Shields's correspondence comports with the ideal of a highly private family life. Their portrayal of themselves as devoted parents, ever focused on their poor orphan child, systematically obscured the presence of other onlookers. Their first and fullest pardon petition gave the impression that only three family members set foot in the house during Betsy's troubles, and that only Kitty was present on the morning of her death. Kitty's second petition introduced Anna Spearman and Sarah Falkner to the deathbed scene, but only for the limited purpose of demonstrating that "the Urine, that is to say about a Table Spoon full thereof was administered by them to the deceased and not by your petitioner." Spearman and Falkner had initiated prosecution against Kitty and William Shields, testifying that Kitty had administered the urine; it was, therefore, necessary to place them at the scene in the second petition.

But the room was still more crowded than the Shields let on; a justice of the peace recorded depositions when several other onlookers entered the debate over who gave Betsy urine. Mary Anne Fischer, a neighbor woman aged at least seventy years, swore she was present in Betsy's room when Spearman and Falkner fed Betsy their urine, and implied that Elizabeth Downing, another of Betsy's friends, was at the scene. Frances Wilson, a 36-year-old neighbor, also witnessed the scene and corroborated Kitty's story.<sup>23</sup> Thus, at least five people who were not kin surrounded Betsy's deathbed.

Other nonrelatives, moreover, lived under the Shields's roof. Contrary to the impression created by their correspondence, the Shields household numbered not three but eight. William had apparently taken up shoemaking during the hard times of the Embargo Act. At least two apprentices lived with him in 1812 and other nonrelatives may have joined the household. The Shields's correspondence mentions no children besides Betsy, but the 1810, census-taker



*Plan of the town of Baltimore by A. P. Folie. The Shoemaker family lived in Fells Point, the boot-shaped peninsula at left center. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

counted one boy aged 10 to 16, one aged 16 to 26 and William (aged at least 45), as well as one girl under 10 years old, one aged 10 to 16, Betsy and one other woman aged 16 to 26 and Kitty (less than 45 years old). Some of those aged 16 to 26 may have been boarders; others, employees or older apprentices. It seems unlikely that the Shields had any other children. They took such pains to document their doting, child-centered ethic of family life, and understood the pardoning process so well, that they would never have passed up the opportunity to showcase other children as examples of parental fitness.

The Shields household, therefore, was thoroughly infiltrated by unrelated members of the community. Betsy's friends, neighbor women, and as many as five live-in nonrelatives freely penetrated the inner sanctum of the Shields household. The privatization of family life, a staple of historical writing on the middle-class family in this period, had not yet arrived in the Shields's Fells Point, although it doubtless had in the homes of the governor and his councillors.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps this disjuncture between the Shields's well-peopled world and that of the gentlemen to whom they appealed accounts for their reluctance to mention the presence of nonfamily members in their home; they knew their audience.

The Shields family possessed no private "inner sanctum." The family was

but one axis of their social existence, thoroughly intersected by other vectors of social life: the network of friends around Betsy (or her favorite haunts), a cluster of neighborhood women who included Kitty, and the mariners' world to which William still belonged. Before Betsy's death, her friends and her parents competed for her allegiance, although all groups generally deferred to the Shields when they disciplined her. The contest continued after her death, but because of the allegation of homicide the controversy spread through the community to include ever more people.

The events leading up to Betsy's death reveal the community's place in the Shields's household, but the events unfolding afterward speak more to the Shields's place in the community. Although the family had apparently moved to Baltimore only four years before Betsy's death, they compiled quite a history in their brief stay. Every year between 1808 and 1812, William, or Kitty, or William and Kitty together, went before the Baltimore City Court of Oyer and Terminer to answer assault charges. In 1808, their first year in Baltimore, William was charged along with two other men with having assaulted one John Karnes. In 1809 William and Kitty were both indicted and convicted for an assault on William McKee. The court fined each \$20, plus costs. In 1810 William again paid a \$20 fine plus fees, this time for assaulting George Rogers. Later in 1810, both Kitty and William were convicted on still another assault charge. The next time they faced the court, Betsy was dead.

Two of the cases are particularly revealing. When Kitty and William faced assault charges in the summer of 1809, they stood shoulder to shoulder with some familiar figures. Their codefendants included Anne Spearman, the woman later named as one of Betsy's corruptors and charged with giving her urine to drink. Charges against Anne and another defendant were dropped before trial, but she testified for Kitty in her trial. So did Betsy Shoemaker herself, along with Fanny Wilson, who would later attend Betsy's deathbed. A year later, when the Shields again made their annual pilgrimage to the criminal court, they called Mary Fischer as a defense witness, another attendant at Betsy's deathbed. Justice of the Peace Henry Fischer—probably Mary's son—took the recognizance (bond) that ensured the Shields's presence at court, then testified at their trial. Prosecution witnesses included George Rogers of Back River, an agricultural and watermen's district east of Fells Point, the victim of the assault. Jacob Mull, a Sailing Master in the U.S. Navy, also testified against Shields; he lived in Fells Point but patrolled the Back River. Captain Alexander Murray of the U.S. Navy, a powerful and well-known officer of national stature, also weighed in.<sup>25</sup>

Several patterns emerged from this series of complaints against the Shields. First, for better or worse, the Shields had made a name for themselves in local society. Given their well-established propensity for violence, the coroner who examined Betsy's corpse could with some justification assert that "no two can

be under worse characters than they are, and every body is wishing them to be brought to punishment." The Shields's brief but notable history of encounters with the legal system surely created a presumption of malevolence against them.

Second, an examination of the people involved as complainants, defendants, witnesses and justices of the peace in the Shields's several trials revealed that the couple was very much enmeshed in the world from which they claimed to be trying to save Betsy. Anne Spearman, a villain in the Shields's pardon petitions, had been an ally in an earlier fight. Similarly, Mary Fisher and Fanny Wilson played some part in the Shields's earlier violent episodes, then gave exculpatory testimony regarding Betsy's death. Had the Shields genuinely wished to protect Betsy from the rough waterfront society of Fells Point, they would have had to disown their own experiences and behaviors: virtually all of the complainants, codefendants and witnesses in the Shields's prosecutions lived in or near Fells Point.

Third, a clear majority of litigants and witnesses whose occupations can be identified depended upon the sea for their livelihood: William Shields, mariner, William Hill, rigger, James Hooper, waterfront innkeeper and Mull and Murray of the U.S. Navy. Only a tailor and a painter disturb this pattern, consistent with Fells Point's specialized function as a maritime district concerned with shipbuilding and long-distance trade.<sup>26</sup> Mariners, artisans and laborers dominated this "distinctly plebian" neighborhood, for merchants, capitalists and professionals preferred to live west of Fells Point at the mouth of Jones Falls, near the inner harbor.<sup>27</sup>

The Shields moved into a crude milieu when they settled in Fells Point. Far from avoiding rough characters, they routinely roughed up other people. But eventually they went too far, exceeding even the loose bounds of propriety in live-and-let-live Fells Point. When Betsy died, the Shields discovered neighborhood limits for tolerance in cases of domestic violence. Taken individually, their previous encounters with the law would not have effected long-term damage to their reputations. Even after Betsy's death, given the widespread reluctance to convict anyone of domestic violence, and given the plausibility of Kitty's claim that Betsy's death was an accident, it seems likely that most cases would have ended with a generous ruling by the coroner or the Grand Jury. But through sheer repetition of violent acts the Shields had established a reputation that predisposed the coroner and others to believe the worst. Thus the coroner, the state's attorney, the Grand Jury, and ultimately the trial jury agreed that Kitty was capable of killing her daughter. On January 11, 1812, a trial jury huddled without leaving the courtroom. Its members accepted William Shields's alibi (the nature of which went unrecorded) and acquitted him of having beaten Betsy the night before she died. Kitty, however, charged with beating Betsy and feeding her a deadly mixture of potions, was convicted of manslaughter.

With the trials, the state encroached upon the domestic affairs of the Shields, but the definition of unacceptable violence remained very local. While participants in the trials acted on behalf of the state, according to rules laid down by central political and legal authorities, the coroner, the jurors and the witnesses were residents of the same city, often of the same neighborhood, and acted according to local understandings of who the Shields were and how they fit into society.

But with their petitions to the governor, the Shields invited the highest officials in the state into their home. By crafting an effective letter according to conventions that political elites found compelling, they sought connection with still another node of social existence. The state, in the persons of the governor and his councillors, therefore, also had a claim on Betsy Shoemaker. Her posthumous fate and the fate of her mother became entwined with considerations of public policy. This was particularly true in 1812, as concern over criminality and public order in the city of Baltimore mounted. The governor and council's deliberations in Betsy Shoemaker's case followed a watershed decision to combat a perceived crime wave in Baltimore City by transforming the criminal justice system. The number of pardons granted dipped sharply in 1812, as the opening of a new penitentiary raised hopes that prisoners who once might have been hung or perished on a chain gang might instead rehabilitate themselves. This perceived crisis doubtless shaped discussions of Kitty Shields's pardon petition, which received particularly close scrutiny because of its timing, amplifying the intrusion of the state into the Shields household.<sup>28</sup>

One final twist to the story suggests the extent to which Betsy's, Kitty's and William's social lives intersected multiple, even competing levels of social existence, of which the household was but one. William, a mariner by trade and resident in one of the early Republic's major ports, enjoyed especially good connections in the U.S. Navy. At least two high-ranking naval officers testified at his earlier trials: Captain Alexander Murray and Sailing Master Jacob Mull. Within weeks of Kitty's manslaughter conviction, Commodore Stephen Decatur, the celebrated hero of Tripoli, offered William a position as a naval recruiter in Virginia, if only the governor of Maryland would make it possible for him to move by pardoning Kitty. The governor acceded to this request, and by March the Shields had packed up and were selling their belongings to prepare for the move. After all the uproar, after numerous court appearances and one terrible tragedy, after all the struggles and negotiations between Betsy, her parents, their neighbors, the legal system and the state over Betsy's fate, the U.S. Navy authored the end to the story. William knew the waterfront, and the Navy needed sailors in the looming war against the British. The navy got William; Kitty got her pardon.

During their years in Baltimore, the Shields left an unusually wide paper

trail through public records. After 1812 they disappear, and we are left to speculate about their fortunes. It is possible that the struggle over Betsy's legacy was definitively won by the navy; when it engineered a pardon for the person convicted of her murder, the navy effectively wrote the posthumous conclusion to the tale of Betsy Shoemaker. The matter was almost certainly not settled so easily, however. The Shields could not have shed all the rough ways that contributed to Betsy's death, especially in another maritime milieu. Betsy's story was ultimately shaped as much by Fells Point as it was by the internal dynamics of the Shields family.

#### NOTES

1. Robert Bruggen, *Maryland, A Middle Temperament* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press for the Maryland Historical Society, 1988), 141, 152–60; Ronald Hoffman and Carville Earle, "The Urban South: The First Two Centuries." in Blaine A. Brownell and David R. Goldfield, eds., *The City in Southern History* (Port Washington, NY: 1977), 23–51.
2. Lawrence A. Peskin, "Of Ships and Suburbs: Fells Point as Maritime Community and Manufacturing Suburb," paper presented at the Mystic Seaport Museum Conference on Race, Ethnicity and Power in Maritime America, July 1995.
3. Unless otherwise noted, all quotes are from correspondence relating to the Shields's pardon file in Governor and Council (Pardon Papers), folder 106 [MSA S 1061–15, Maryland State Archives (MSA), Annapolis (hereafter Pardons). The file includes a formal pardon petition circulated in late 1811 and presented to the governor before the trials in January 1812 (hereafter "First Petition"); a follow-up letter elaborating on certain matters in the first missive (hereafter "Second petition"); a summary of witness depositions given before the trials began (hereafter "Deposition of [deponent's name]"); and a counterpetition written by the coroner who investigated Betsy Shoemaker's death (hereafter "Coroner's letter").
4. Coroner's letter.
5. Emphasis in original, John [illegible] to Governor Robert Bowie, Pardons, 12/10/1803, folder 44; Pardons, 12/17/1803.
6. Governor and Council (Minutes), 1777–1828 [MSA S 1073]; William Hand Browne, ed., *Archives of Maryland*, 73 vols. (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1872– ) 28:446–47, 13:119. For more on the pardon process, see T. Stephen Whitman, "I have got the Gun and will do as I Please with her": African-Americans and Violence in Maryland, 1782–1830," in this volume.
7. Quote from Pardons, 4/3/1786. Statistics from "Pardons database," a Paradox SE file of all surviving records of *nolle prosequis*, pardons and executions in Maryland between 1748 and 1837. Sources: Pardons; Browne, *Archives of Maryland* (volumes of the Governor's office and Council proceedings); Governor and Council (Appointments List), 1792–1837; Governor and Council (Commission Record), 1733–1837.
8. Maryland figures resemble Peter King's findings for a similar study of English cases in 1787 and 1790. When his results are rearranged to match the categories used here, previous good character (38 percent) and reformability (28 percent) top the list of favorable petitions and judges' reports, with equity third (15 percent). Differences may be due to the

larger number of cases available to King, or different sources available for Maryland and England. King's figures are based on petitions and judge's reports; mine are drawn on pardons themselves. King, "Decision-Makers and Decision-Making in the English Criminal Law, 1750–1800," *The Historical Journal*, 27 (1984): 43.

9. James D. Rice, "The Criminal Trial Before and After the Lawyers: Authority, Law, and Culture in Maryland Jury Trials, 1681–1860," *American Journal of Legal History*, (Fall 1996): 455–75.

10. Quotes from Tilghman to John Eager Howard, Pardons, 5/19/1789, folder 88; Plater to Horatio Sharpe, 6/22/1766, *Archives of Maryland*, 32:156–57; Pardons, 1787, folder 81. Dr. Ephraim Howard, Pardons, 9/9/1781, folder 80, urges a dual hanging as an "exemplary punishment." Similarly, petitioners for John Engles, a horse thief sentenced to death by a Frederick County jury, argued his execution would be justified only if it had deterrent value, Pardons, 1782, folder 13. Petitioners for John Selby argued that the execution of his two codefendants "Will be sufficient to deter others from similar heinous crimes," Pardons, 10/5/1782, folder 4.

11. John Done to Governor John Scone, Pardons, 11/7/1797, folder 60; George Plater to Governor Sharpe, 6/22/1766, *Archives of Maryland*, 32:156–57; Douglas Hay, "Property, Authority, and the Criminal Law," in Hay, et al., eds., *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England* (New York, 1975), 17–63; Joanna Innes and John Styles, "The Crime Wave: Recent Writing on Crime and Criminal Justice in Eighteenth-Century England," *Journal of British Studies*, 25 (1986): 380–485; J. A. Sharpe, *Crime in Early Modern England, 1550–1750* (New York, 1984), 68–70, chap. 7.

12. First petition.

13. Depositions of Mary Anne Fischer; Ruth Lawrence; Frances Wilson (quote); Second petition.

14. Second petition.

15. Although the causes, completeness and timing of this shift have provided ground for debate, a near-consensus has emerged that such a change took place. Quote from Daniel Blake Smith, *Inside the Great House: Planter Family Life in Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 26. Also Phillippe Aries, *Centuries of Childhood*, trans. Robert Baldick (New York, 1962); Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1500–1800* (New York, 1977); Stephanie Grauman Wolf, *As Various as Their Land: The Everyday Lives of Eighteenth-Century Americans* (New York, 1993), chap. 4; Helena Wall, *Fierce Communion: Family and Community in Early America* (Cambridge, MA, 1990), "Afterward"; Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750–1800* (New York, 1980); Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution Against Patriarchy* (New York, 1982); Barry Levy, *Quakers and the American Family: British Settlement in the Delaware Valley* (New York, 1988); Steven Mintz and Susan Kellogg, *Domestic Revolutions: A Social History of American Family Life* (New York, 1988). For a sharp critique, John Demos, *Past, Present, and Personal: The Family and the Life Course in American History* (New York, 1986), 15–17. On problems of periodization and causation, Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory* (Ithaca, NY, 1992), 53–55; Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York, 1987); David Cartwright, "New England Families in Historical Perspective," in *Families and Children*, ed. Peter Benes (Boston, 1987), 21–22.

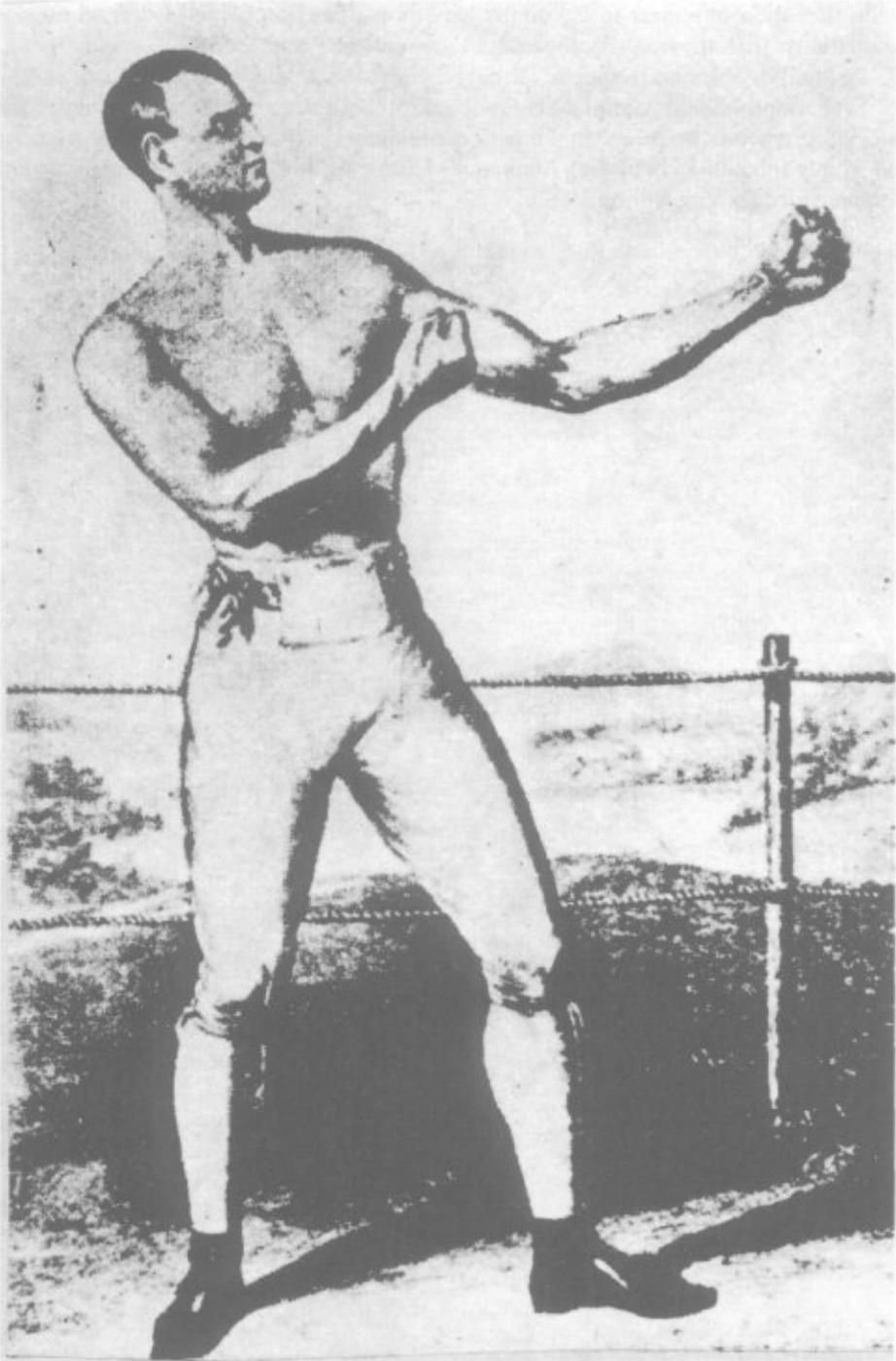
16. Demos, *Past, Present, and Personal*, 33–34; Daniel T. Rodgers, "Republicanism: The Career of a Concept," *Journal of American History*, 79 (1992): 11–38.

17. Catharine Beecher, *A Treatise on Domestic Economy* (1841), in David Hollinger and Charles Capper, eds., *The American Intellectual Tradition: A Source Book* (New York, 1989) 1:233; Kirk Jeffrey, "The Family as Utopian Retreat from the City: The Nineteenth-Century Contribution," *Soundings*, 55 (1972): 21–41.
18. It was possible to prosecute parents for assault, homicide and other offenses against children, but such prosecutions rarely occurred. William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (Oxford, 1765–1769), 3:140; 1:453.
19. Elizabeth Pleck, *Domestic Tyranny: The Making of American Social Policy against Family Violence from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York, 1987), 30–31, 45; Peter Hoffer and N. E. H. Hull, *Murdering Mothers: Infanticide in England and New England, 1558–1803* (New York, 1981), 46.
20. John Demos has correctly pointed out that evidential and definitional problems prevent historians from measuring the precise extent in the past of child abuse, and by extension other forms of domestic violence, Demos, *Past, Present, and Personal*, chap. 4; Mary Beth Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society* (New York, 1996), 116.
21. Even in Baltimore's rural hinterland, prosecution rates, which can be created as minimum crime rates, far exceeded what one might expect in the apparently bucolic countryside. See James D. Rice, "Crime and Punishment in Frederick County and Maryland, 1748–1837: A Study in Culture, Society, and Law," (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1994), 86–97; David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York, 1989), 768–71, 815.
22. Douglas Stickle, "Death and Class in Baltimore: The Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1800," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 74 (1979): 282–299; Brugger, Maryland, A Middle Temperament, 144–47.
23. Depositions of Mary Anne Fischer and Frances Wilson.
24. Aries summarized the link now commonly drawn by historians: when the eighteenth-century family reorganized itself around the child, it "raised the wall of private life between the family and society," Aries, *Centuries of Childhood*, 143. Colonialists adopting this view include Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740–1790* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1982), 72, 76, 302–310; Smith, *Inside the Great House*, and Wall, *Fierce Communion*. Historians of the nineteenth century usually link privatization to some combination of urbanization, commercialization, industrialization and class formation; Harry L. Watson, *Liberty and Power: The Politics of Jacksonian America* (New York, 1990), 32, 178; Mary P. Ryan, *The Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790–1865* (Cambridge, MA, 1981); Jeffrey, "The Family as a Utopian Retreat," 38–39; Paul Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester New York, 1815–1837* (New York, 1978), 43–48. Some scholars have commented on the class dimensions of this change. Wolf, *As Various as Their Land*, chap. 4; Tamara Hareven, "Introduction," *Family and Kin in Urban Communities, 1700–1930* (New York, 1977), 4–5; Mintz and Kellogg, *Domestic Revolutions*, 50–51; Demos, *Past, Present, and Personal*, 30; First Petition. The evidence for the Shields's social status is mixed. They kept apprentices, but did not appear in the real property assessments of the era; few shoemakers rose to the lower ranks of the "middling sort." The Shields's behavior also suggests a non-middle-class ethic.
25. Baltimore City Directory, 1807–1813 (Baltimore, annual); David Long, Gold Braid and Foreign Relations: Diplomatic Activities of U.S. Naval Officers, 1798–1883 (Annapolis, MD, 1988), 19–21.
26. Mariners often stayed in boardinghouses or taverns while ashore; as nonheads of house-

holds, they did not appear in the annual city directories from which I derived litigants' occupations. Thus the list probably understates maritime connections.

27. Peskin, "Of Ships and Suburbs"; Brugger, *Maryland, A Middle Temperament*, 14–15.

28. Even the prominent young lawyer Francis Scott Key, author of "The Star-Spangled Banner," was prosecuted for assault in this period. Also James D. Rice, "This Province, so meanly and Thinly Inhabited': Punishing Maryland's Criminals, 1681–1850," *Journal of the Early Republic* (forthcoming, Spring 1999).



Native-born prizefighter Tom Hyer fought Irishman James "Yankee" Sullivan in a spectacular, illegal, and highly publicized match in Kent County during the winter of 1849. This fight gave the once outlawed ritual its place in the modern sporting world. (Maryland Historical Society.)

# “This Great Test of Man’s Brutality”: The Sullivan-Hyer Prizefight at Still Pond Heights, Maryland, in 1849

WALLACE SHUGG

On February 7, 1849, two hundred mostly top-hatted spectators gathered in the bitter cold around a hastily constructed ring on an isolated farm eight miles northwest of Chestertown to witness a bare knuckle, illegal fight between Irish immigrant James (“Yankee”) Sullivan and native-born Tom (“Young America”) Hyer for a prize of \$10,000. All but forgotten today, this prizefight is worth a closer look because it was the greatest match of its time and helped give rise to modern boxing in America. It also provides a vivid picture of ethnic rivalries as well as social and cultural tensions in the young republic.

Boxing originated in ancient Greece as an event in the Olympiad. The participants wore leather straps to protect their hands, and it was a bloody spectator sport. But it also celebrated physical prowess and moral and spiritual values and was considered an important preparation for warfare. Taken up by the Romans, boxing became even bloodier, when gladiators wore heavy leather straps embedded with metal spikes. With the decline of the Roman Empire and the coming of the Christian Era, boxing disappeared until revived in England along with other rough amusements, such as bullbaiting and cockfighting, during the 1560s. It continued thereafter in its crude form until it was refined and systematized in the early eighteenth century by the founding of boxing schools by men like James Fig and Jack Broughton. The latter gave the sport its first rules in 1743, prohibiting strangling holds, low blows, striking a fallen opponent, and introducing rounds, with pauses for the fighters in between and seconds to assist, umpires for disputes, and referees to render final decisions. By the end of the century, supported by the gentry and working-class men, pugilism became England’s most popular sport.<sup>1</sup>

English pugilism did not begin to take root in America until the 1830s.<sup>2</sup> The young republic resented the power of the mother country and despised much of her social life as being corrupt. In particular, the puritanical Northeast frowned

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James "Yankee" Sullivan wears the top hat, the badge of an Irish street fighter, in the "Plug Uglies," from New York's Five Points slum. (From Elliott Rudwick, *Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prizefighting in America* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986].)

on "riotous" amusements and the associated gambling and drinking. Although prizefighting was illegal in most areas, the few staged pugilistic events were clandestine to avoid police interference, and went unreported by the newspapers. But along with the growth of cities, industries, and the working class, its increasing proportion of immigrants, came the demand for amusements of all kinds, including boxing.<sup>3</sup>

The first full coverage of an American prizefight appeared in the *New York Post* on July 30, 1823, of a match between a native-born butcher and a "foreigner," probably an Irish immigrant from another neighborhood. The most important fights of the 1820s also involved ethnic rivalry. Both the first fight on October 14, 1824, and the rematch two years later were fought in violation of the law by two immigrants, Ned Hammond, from Dublin, and George "The Irish Boy" from Liverpool, and drew crowds inflamed by Anglo-Irish enmity. In the 1830s, round-by-round reports of prizefights became common. Without a legal sanction to support it, however, prizefighting in the young republic ended in the "wild" days of the 1830s, and was not revived until the 1840s.

*Native-born, working-class Tom Hyer dressed as an urban dandy. (From Gorn, The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America.)*



The man known to the American public as “Yankee” Sullivan was probably born James Ambrose on April 12, 1813, near Cork, Ireland. As a youth he sparred to develop his boxing skills and fought prize matches in England, but he also associated with criminals. Charged with burglary or murder, he was sent to the penal colony in Botany Bay, Australia, before his twenty-fifth year. He escaped to America and returned to the London prize ring under the name of “Yankee” Sullivan (probably to capitalize on national and ethnic rivalry as much as to conceal his past). Back in America once more, he ran a saloon in the Bowery popular with working-class boxing fans and—urged on by Irish patrons—resumed prizefighting. He also remained loyal to his Irish heritage by joining the Spartan fire brigade made up of Irish volunteers and serving as a “shoulder hitter” at election time for Tammany’s Empire Club.<sup>5</sup>

While a fighter of undeniable courage, Sullivan often used trickery and dirty tactics to make up for his modest build (five feet, nine and three-quarters inches, 156 pounds). When overmatched in London, he defeated the Englishman Hammer Lane by aiming his blows at his opponent’s broken arm. In a fight near Philadelphia with English fighter Vincent Hammond on September 7, 1841, Sullivan swallowed blood from a cut inside his mouth long enough to split his opponent’s cheek in order to win for his friends the money they had bet on “first blood.” On January 24, 1842, he defeated native-born Tom Secor in a sixty-five-round match lasting one hour, Sullivan peppering his opponent and then falling to the ground at the slightest blow to end round after round, all the while taunting and laughing at him. He won his match with the English immigrant

William Bell on August 29, 1842, by feigning fatigue, then surprising him with a counterattack. By now Sullivan was the darling of Irish-immigrant boxing fans, who celebrated his victories with rowdy behavior in the streets and saloons of the largest cities.<sup>6</sup>

His future opponent, native-born Tom Hyer, was six years younger, stood six feet, one inch, and weighed 180 pounds. A butcher by trade, he took after his father, Jacob, also a butcher and renowned as one of America's pioneer pugilists. Like his father, Hyer entered the ring to uphold native honor.<sup>7</sup> His nickname, "Young America"<sup>8</sup> came from a slogan of the nativist Know-Nothing movement forming at this time, which—among other aims—opposed the increasing political influence of "idolatrous" Catholic immigrants (German and Irish, especially the latter) swarming to these shores and posing the economic threat of cheap labor.<sup>9</sup> Like Sullivan, Hyer was active in local politics, joining a rival neighborhood fire brigade made up of nativists and working for the Know-Nothings at election time.<sup>10</sup>

Challenged in September 1841 by Sullivan's friend John McCleester, Hyer won a 101-round battle lasting almost three hours and became champion of the nativist sporting crowd, who looked on him as the man to beat Sullivan. The expected match with Sullivan was long delayed, however, principally by the death of Thomas McCoy in a fight against Christopher Lilly on September 13, 1842, at Hastings, New York: the first fatality in the American ring. Lilly fled the country. Sullivan, who had served as one of Lilly's seconds, was tried along with his friends George Kensett and John McCleester, convicted of fourth-degree manslaughter, and sentenced to two years in the penitentiary at Ossining. He was pardoned out within a few months on condition he give up the ring, but McCoy's death dampened prizefighting for the next five years.<sup>11</sup>

Then Sullivan's victory over former English champion Benjamin Caunt before a large crowd at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, on May 11, 1847, rekindled the desire of boxing fans—especially among the new wave of Irish immigrants—for a match between Sullivan and Hyer, considered the best of their day. Matters came to a head one evening in April 1848, when Hyer pummeled the half-drunk Sullivan in an impromptu brawl in a New York saloon at Broadway and Park Place (on the west side of the present City Hall Park). Hyer was persuaded by a policeman to leave the scene before the arrival of a mob of Sullivan's friends, intent on revenge. In the weeks following, streetfights broke out between their partisans. On July 1, 1848, Sullivan issued a challenge in the *New York Herald*, in which he made Hyer out to be a liar, coward, and poor boxer and sportsman. In turn, Hyer advertised his readiness to settle their quarrel in the ring.<sup>12</sup>

On August 7 the friends of both fighters initialed the articles of agreement stipulating, among other things, that each side would put up \$5,000 and that the fight would take place within six months in Virginia or Maryland (presum-

ably making it easier to avoid interference by the authorities). New rules published in *American Fistiana* (1848) would govern the fight, prohibiting foul blows (but not wrestling throws) and falling without receiving a blow (to end a round). The rules meticulously spelled out the construction of the ring and behavior of the fighters, referee, umpires, seconds, and bottleholders. As boxing historian Elliott J. Gorn points out, "The rules were concerned, in sum, not only with safety and fairness but with ritual. They prescribed stylized actions, demanded patterned behavior, emphasized ordered procedures. In this way they made a fight into a special expressive event, a dramatization of larger social events." At the time the *National Police Gazette* argued this fight would serve as "a safety valve" for neighborhood and ethnic tensions.<sup>13</sup>

According to the *New York Herald*, the upcoming prizefight generated an anticipation "similar in some respects to the agitation produced in the public mind by the first accounts of the Mexican War." The *National Police Gazette* "estimated that three hundred thousand dollars in wagers hinged on the outcome, and for a halfyear a man could scarcely enter a saloon without being asked his opinion of the two gladiators."<sup>14</sup>

Two months before the fight Sullivan and Hyer began intensive training, following similar regimens: rising at dawn, running a half-dozen miles, then sparring and punching the heavy bag, followed by a high protein breakfast (lean beef, mutton, or chicken—no vegetables or starches) with a little ale or wine, rest, followed by another long run, then the second and last meal of the day (same as breakfast), rest, more sparring and punching the bag, a long walk, and retiring to bed by 9:00. No tobacco, liquor, or sex.<sup>15</sup> By mid-January 1849 both men were at the peak of their fighting form and agreed on the time and place of the match.<sup>16</sup>

"This great test of man's brutality," the *Baltimore Sun* told its readers on Monday February 5, 1849, "is publicly announced on our streets as to come off on Wednesday next, at Pool's Island, near the mouth of the Gunpowder river." While obliged to report the upcoming event as part of the daily news, the newspaper's language made clear its distaste: it noted that three steamboats had been chartered to carry the fight crowd to the island, referring to them as "these violators of the laws of God and man," and expressed the hope that state authorities would prevent "so great an outrage" from taking place. Its condemnation of the fight, shared by most non-sporting newspapers in the nation, showed through its coverage of unfolding events in the following week.

Hyer was already in "Govanstown" outside the city, sparring to stay in shape for the fight. This same issue of the *Baltimore Sun* warned readers to steer clear of "rowdies . . . following the fortunes of the prize fighters," who had already assaulted and robbed "an old citizen" one evening on their way home from watching Hyer train. Its long excerpt from the *New York Express* also revealed that a



Sullivan, Hyer, their entourages, and fans intended the fight to be held on Poole's Island, in the bay. (Maryland Historical Society.)

large delegation of “New York Loafers” was expected to attend the fight, most of them from the immigrant-heavy Lower East Side (Corlear’s Hook, Park Row, and the infamous Five Points<sup>17</sup>) as well as some of the “swell mob” from New York’s suburbs. The weather was bitter cold, and the ice-clogged Susquehanna had stopped the train ferry for a while, a possible delay for those fight fans travelling by rail. But those who arrived in time would have found the city in a rising pitch of fight fever, with Sullivan heavily favored to win.<sup>18</sup> On the evening before the fight, the Philadelphia boat arrived, according to a warning notice in the *Baltimore Sun* (February 7), with “a great number of blackguards to attend the prize fight. . . . Look out for incendiaries [rowdies], pick-pockets, and all sorts of thieves.” Indeed, a subsequent item noted that “two or three gentlemen” on this steamer “were lightened of their pocket books, by some of the crowd who came on to witness the fight” (February 8).

As the early stories in the *Baltimore Sun* make clear, the authorities took prompt measures to repel this invasion of undesirables. A bench warrant was issued on Monday for the arrest of Sullivan and Hyer (February 6). On Tuesday, at the governor’s direction, Attorney General George R. Richardson alerted police and militia companies to hold themselves in readiness. The city court forbade the owner of the steamboat *Boston*, one of the three chartered, to carry

fans to the fight. Instead, the state itself hired his boat to carry the militia, the sheriff, and a posse to Poole's Island to arrest the principals and prevent the fight from taking place (February 7).

The result, according to Jacob Frey, a schoolboy at the time, was "a laughable fiasco, the talk of Baltimore."<sup>19</sup> The loading of the steamer *Boston* proceeded that evening: two militia companies (the Independent Blues and Greys) with their officers, a surgeon with instruments in case of need, plus the sheriff of Baltimore County and a posse—in all about one hundred and ten men. The steamer would also tow a scow loaded with "bateaux," rowboats to land the troops. From the deck of a schooner moored nearby, a reporter from the *Philadelphia Times and Keystone* watched the scene with amusement as the *Boston* finally set forth bravely at a quarter to midnight, "with all the soldiers, police, drums, fifes, shooting irons, batons, maces, &c. &c." Through bad luck or poor seamanship, the scow swamped, casting adrift several batteaux, and the steamer lost an hour in retrieving them.<sup>20</sup>

Meanwhile, according to the *Baltimore Sun* (February 8 and 9), fight fans crowded the taverns and streets of the city that Tuesday evening, and rumors were "thick as blackberries," raising "a feverish anxiety." Hyer and several of his friends had been sighted at Carroll's Island near the mouth of the Gunpowder River, sixteen miles east of Baltimore. A police force of thirteen men under the command of Captain Gifford arrived by land conveyance at 2:00 A.M. and found "their bird had flown." They commandeered a boat, set forth for Poole's Island and "had a bitter time of it, the wind . . . from the northwest, and the spray occasionally dashing over their persons and glittering in the bright moonlight as if they were . . . armored and their whiskers adorned with diamonds." Nearing the island, they were almost run down by the steamer *Boston*, which ignored their hails. Gifford and his party reached shore at about 3:00 A.M. and went directly to the lighthouse.

At about this time, the schooner bearing the Philadelphia reporter arrived off the lighthouse and dropped anchor. Hitching a ride ashore in a small boat, the reporter was on the scene when the police knocked on the door of the keeper's house and "demanded the body of Hyer aforesaid, in the name of the Commonwealth of Maryland and so on." Told that Hyer was in bed upstairs and would need time to dress, the police waited, and were then admitted and introduced to Hyer's trainer, George Thompson, as "the identical chap." Hearing the commotion, Hyer, who was on the first floor, opened a rear window and departed, "without leaving his card." A similar escape was then enacted at a nearby farmhouse, the island's only other dwelling, with the police mistakenly arresting Sullivan's second, Thomas O'Donnell, dressed in Sullivan's clothes.<sup>21</sup>

The steamer *Boston*, still at anchor with the militia and posse aboard, saw another anchored steamer, the *Cumberland*, loaded with fight fans from Phila-



*Panoramic view of the fight scene looking south and east. Rock Point lies just to the right of the treeless patch on shore in the left photograph.*

delphia, suddenly get underway, even cutting adrift a small boat in tow. Believing Sullivan and Hyer to be aboard her, the *Boston* started in pursuit and overtook her off North Point, then stopped and searched her without success. Realizing the vessel had acted as a decoy, the *Boston* turned back to the island to search the two schooners that had brought the fighters but managed to run firmly aground near the lighthouse, thus leaving the schooners free to cruise about the bay looking for a new site for the match. For a time it was rumored the fight would take place near Dover, Delaware. "If this be correct," the *Baltimore Sun* told its readers scathingly, "Maryland has the gratification of having prevented her soil from being desecrated by so foul and brutal [an] exhibition, which had drawn together the scum and villainy of all the Northern cities, as principals, participants, and spectators."<sup>22</sup>

But matters turned out otherwise. Around 8:00 Wednesday morning, the two schooners bearing the fighters and their entourages came within hailing distance, according to the Philadelphia reporter now aboard Hyer's boat:

One of Sullivan's friends appeared on the deck of the latter [boat] and in a tantalizing manner said, "Show us Hyer and we'll show you Sullivan." . . . In a moment after, Hyer showed himself on our deck. Presently Sullivan appeared on the deck of his own boat, and shouted to Hyer, "You \_\_\_\_\_ big lubber! I'll knock \_\_\_\_\_ out of you, before I've done with you." Hyer merely smiled, but said nothing. He went down again, and while lying down on bed, said to his friends: "I want



*Plum Point (above) and Poole's Island barely visible in the distance. (Photographs taken by the author, courtesy of Walter B. Harris.)*

to have this fight come off to-day. If you fail in that, to-night is a beautiful moonlight night, and let it come off then. If not, why to-morrow. Here, there, or anywhere—wherever they say, agree to it.”

They cruised along the heavily wooded eastern shoreline for a suitable landing place until, around 2:00 P.M., they found Rock Point, a convenient ledge at the mouth of Still Pond Creek. Here the parties landed in small boats, ten at a time.<sup>23</sup>

From Rock Point they marched inland about three quarters of a mile until they came to a large green yard in front of a log farmhouse belonging to one W. A. Gibson, who was then absent. “It was certainly a pretty place,” the Philadelphia reporter wrote, “but as it was right on the point was very much exposed and bleak—the wind all the time blowing away, keen, cutting, and ill-natured.” The spectators hastily constructed a ring, using stakes cut from the nearby pine woods roped off with topgallant halyards from the schooners.

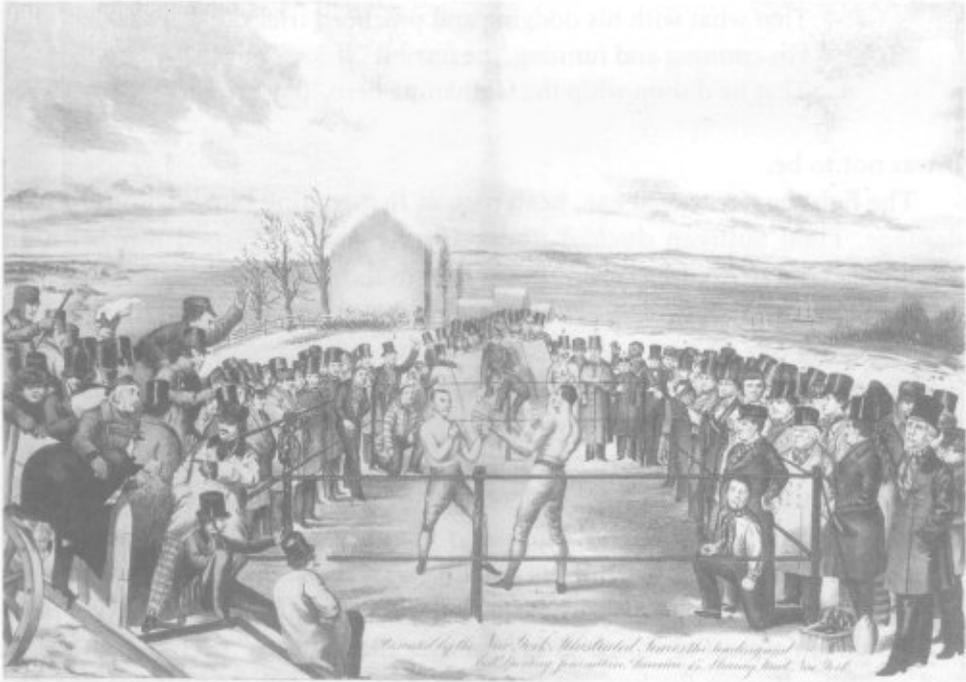
At 4 o'clock precisely, Sullivan was brought in on the back of his second. In about four minutes after Hyer was brought in like manner. They tossed up for choice of positions, and Sullivan won. The winning party chose a position which threw the rays of the setting sun directly in Hyer's face. Time being called, both men appeared and touched hands—it was such a quick motion it could not be called shaking—then instantly stood back in position. They both looked, I thought, remarkably well.



*Rock Point, where the fighters came ashore, has considerably eroded. Long-time residents recall it being approximately eight feet high. (Photograph by the author.)*

The long-awaited grudge fight, on which the passions and money of so many people were riding, was about to begin.<sup>24</sup>

Let us pause here for a close look at the lithograph of the whole scene, famous in its day, by the artist James Baillie.<sup>25</sup> In the background on the bay are two schooners that apparently carried the fighters and entourages and spectators to the piney knoll, then the farmhouse with an aproned female domestic keeping a discreet distance from the violence about to erupt. The ring is bracketed by two carts that bore the fighters part of the way, the ground swept clear of snow for the ring to be erected. At ring corner left a fan points his finger to close a last-minute wager with a bookie. The many top-hatted spectators surrounding the ring are drawn in stiff poses, some with faces disproportionately large and turned unnaturally toward the viewer, as in a picture gallery. The more important people are numbered and include some of the most famous fight figures in early American boxing: #4—"McCluskey" (John McClester, defeated by Hyer September 8, 1841, in a one-hundred-and-one-round fight lasting three hours); #12—George Kensett (fought the two most important battles of the 1820s with Ned Hammond); and #14—"G.B. Over" (immigrant boxer, George Overs, the "Manchester Pet," an early mentor of Sullivan). Kneeling in each corner is a



James Baillie's lithograph of the great fight shows the taller "Young America" Tom Hyer squaring off against James "Yankee" Sullivan on windswept Still Pond Heights, February 7, 1849. (Maryland Historical Society.)

bottleholder wearing his fighter's colors—emerald green with white spots for Sullivan and stars and stripe for Hyer—with a knee extended for his man to rest on between rounds. And facing us ring center, the easily recognizable "Yankee" Sullivan, "heavy-jawed, beetle-browed," squaring up to the much taller (by three and a quarter inches) and heavier (by twenty-four pounds) "Young America" Hyer, with his "immensely long reach." Both men wear their hair close cropped, to deprive the other of a handhold during combat.<sup>26</sup>

The wily Sullivan expected to defeat his taller, heavier, and younger opponent through superior ring craft and wrestling ability, by which he could throw Hyer to the ground and fall upon him heavily, thus weakening him.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, Sullivan was favored to win, not just by fans on the streets of Baltimore, but elsewhere, as shown by this piece of mock-heroic verse from the sporting newspaper *Spirit of the Times*:<sup>28</sup>

The "Yankee" 'tis true, was a great deal the smaller,  
Tom Hyer being heavier, stouter, and taller,  
But still it was thought, and asserted by many,  
The odds were in favor of "Yankee"—if any;

That what with his dodging and practiced tricks,  
 His cunning and funning, the terrible "licks,"  
 That he'd soon whip the Gothamite hero "like bricks."

It was not to be.

The fight began at 4:20 P.M., both men at first trading blows without much damage. Then Sullivan ducked under Hyer's guard, grasped him with an underhold, and strove mightily to throw him to the ground—in vain. Hyer then caught Sullivan in an upperhold, threw him down, and fell upon him heavily, ending round one.<sup>29</sup>

Thereafter, the fight proceeded in a rapid succession of rounds as one man or the other was knocked or thrown to the ground. One time Hyer was struck in the throat and knocked down. Another time Sullivan caught a rabbit punch on the back of his head "with such violence that it was thought his skull was fractured as he dropped apparently lifeless to the ground." Sullivan nearly closed Hyer's right eye with his fist, but the swelling was lanced during the half-minute break, allowing Hyer to see again. With his "immensely long reach," Hyer punished Sullivan almost at will, hitting him over the left eye, "lacerating the scalp and so lifting it from the bone of the forehead that it fell over his eye and obscured his sight. This caused a minute's delay, while it was fastened up with sticking plaster." By now both men were covered with blood, most of it Sullivan's.<sup>30</sup>

After a severe knockdown in the fifteenth round, Sullivan came out groggily for the sixteenth, walked up to the scratch line<sup>31</sup> in a "limpsey" manner, and raised his left arm feebly. Hyer "struck down Sullivan's guard, caught his head under his left arm, and dealt him with his huge right fist a torrent of blows on the face, and over the head, until as Hyer released his hold, he dropped senseless and bleeding to the earth." So ended the great prizefight in seventeen minutes and eighteen seconds, with actual fighting time less than ten minutes.<sup>32</sup>

While Sullivan's seconds looked after him, no time was lost in unthreading the halyards from the stakes in order to hoist sail for their departure. When the sheriff and his posse arrived from Chestertown, he found his quarry had "made tracks." Hyer's boat proceeded northward to Philadelphia by way of Delaware. Sullivan and his party turned back to Baltimore and, passing the grounded steamer *Boston* at Poole's Island, cheered the soldiers aboard "as compensation . . . for neither arresting the principals nor getting a peep at the fight."<sup>33</sup>

The battered Sullivan spent that night resting and lying low in Fells Point. The next day, while his second, Thomas O'Donnell, and Hyer's trainer, George Thompson—both arrested on Poole's island through mistaken identity—were arraigned in court for their involvement in the prizefight, Sullivan evaded the authorities, journeying to York, Pennsylvania, and eventually to New York.<sup>34</sup>

In Philadelphia, Hyer was arrested Saturday morning at the telegraphed re-

quest of Maryland's attorney general George R. Richardson. Examined by the judge, he admitted to his part in the affair, but added:

He had been followed from city to city by Sullivan, for the purpose of provoking a fight. Insult upon insult had been heaped upon him; his family had been injured by that man, and even his old mother insulted and abused by him, and the privacy of his house invaded. His acts had been those of self-defense, after repeated insults and injuries. He asked to be admitted to bail.

The judge was impressed by "the manly admissions of Hyer, and statements he had made in extenuation of his conduct in engaging in this fight," but was obliged to detain him. As he was led to a hack waiting in the street, a crowd "made the welkin ring with their repeated huzzas for Hyer. The excitement in the mob was intense; but no attempt at rescue was made, as Hyer was as cool as a man could be, and would not have permitted it. He was then driven to prison." He was released the following Monday when the Maryland authorities did not follow through with his extradition.<sup>35</sup> Perhaps, given the fiasco that characterized their efforts to prevent the fight, they preferred to forget the whole matter.

Meanwhile, the *Baltimore Sun* (February 10) was trying to put the best face on the failed expedition. It saluted the "daring band" of police headed by Captain Gifford, who on Tuesday night had rowed the seven miles to Poole's Island in bitter cold and "the raging wind which blew almost a hurricane, to arrest Sullivan and Hyer in the presence of at least two hundred desperate characters, armed to the teeth."

The same issue carried a long and turgid editorial, whose pious-sounding writer took some comfort in the "very general denunciation" of prizefighting by the citizens of Baltimore, in contrast to the attitude in England where "the odious practice" originated. There, he said, it flourished during the eighteenth century with the connivance of the gentry and nobility—to keep the working class in a degraded state—and grew so popular as to become a national sport. There is no reason, he said complacently, to fear that the system of sparring and prizefighting could attain the same popularity "in a really civilized and enlightened country," despite the fully attended sparring exhibitions given in Baltimore before the fight that included "many" socially prominent citizens. "We have before us," he said, "the names of several persons whose presence at Washington Hall on the occasions referred to, was observed and commented upon by the lowest blackguards in the room, with profound astonishment but with infinite relish." If by their presence these respectable citizens expected to encourage this degrading amusement in the manner of the English aristocracy, without themselves being besmirched, they were mistaken: "There is no rank with us by which

to delude the popular mind and redeem the individual [for his] depravity of taste." The socially prominent spectator becomes "a participator in its degradation."

Be that as it may, we have no evidence that any socially prominent fight fans of Baltimore ever heeded the *Sun* writer's warning about moral contamination or risking their reputations. But if they felt secure enough about their position on the social ladder, they doubtless continued to show up at ringside. Working-class patrons, of course, had less reason to be concerned about loss of social status and therefore continued to make up the majority of spectators, here and elsewhere in the country.<sup>36</sup>

News of Hyer's victory had reached his favorite saloon in New York, the Fountain House in Park Row, on the evening of the fight, thanks to the wonderful invention of the telegraph. There fireworks were set off, "culminating with the hanging of a brilliantly lighted transparency displaying the words, 'Tom Hyer, the Champion of America,' something new, a single, unified title owned by the one man who unequivocally could best all others." More important for the future of boxing, the fight received more coverage in the popular press than any previous match. "From the time of the Hyer and Sullivan match," according to one sporting editor, "may be dated the actual rise of pugilism in America, into anything like importance."<sup>37</sup> "As a grudge fight barely sublimating profound economic and ethnic tensions between rival urban factions," wrote boxing historian Elliott J. Gorn in aptly summarizing the great fight's cultural significance, "the contest focused amorphous social conflicts into the crystal clear image of two great fighters battling for an enormous amount of money." And despite increasing interest in pugilism and ringside attendance by more or less respectable men, "boxing really belonged to working-class males who rejected bourgeois standards of value, laborers dispossessed by new economic alignments, and men who lived in the netherworld of gambling, bootlegging, and petty crime."<sup>38</sup>

After losing to John Morrissey on a technicality in October 1853, Sullivan never entered the prize ring again. He migrated to San Francisco where on May 26, 1856, he was captured by a group of vigilante businessmen and charged with disturbing the peace and interfering with local elections. Convicted and sentenced to deportation, he was found in his cell on May 31, having bled to death from a gash in his forearm. He was forty-five years old. The vigilantes called it a suicide, but the newspapers believed it to be a forced suicide or outright murder.<sup>39</sup>

Less dramatic, but no doubt painful to watch, was the slow decline of Tom Hyer. Never again did he fight in the prize ring. For a while he remained active in local politics and ran a saloon in New York, but it failed financially. The temptation to drink with his customers while reliving past glory must have been irresistible. The early 1860s found him destitute and on crutches, with a diseased liver and enlarged spleen. He died of heart failure in June 1864, at forty-five.<sup>40</sup>

The people of Maryland would not soon forget all the excitement of the sudden invasion of fight fans from the North, the frantic and failed attempts by land and sea to arrest Sullivan and Hyer, the brief ritual of violence enacted in bitter cold on a remote farm on Still Pond Heights, and the sudden exodus of the invaders, leaving the streets and saloons of Baltimore relatively quiet once more.

And though the great fight was overshadowed by more important matches in America during the next half-century, "Sullivan and Hyer continued to square off in lithographs that hung from the walls of working-class taverns." In the late 1950s this writer saw James Baillie's famous lithograph of the great fight hanging in McSorley's (est. 1854), New York's oldest saloon. It is still there.<sup>41</sup>

#### NOTES

1. Elliott J. Gorn, *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986), 22–24, 27–28. This well-written and exhaustively researched book is a must for any serious student of early boxing history. Gorn has drawn on scarce and virtually inaccessible materials, such as a scrapbook of nineteenth-century sports clippings in the New York Public Library Annex (267, n.2), and Paul Magriel's History of Boxing collection of nineteenth-century newspaper and periodical clippings and other documents, in private hands (258, n.1).
2. According to a recent writer, however, bare-knuckle boxing was "a routine skill of young Virginians [of the planter aristocracy] a hundred years" before—Ron Powell, *Dangerous Water: A Biography of the Boy who Became Mark Twain* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 144.
3. Jeffrey Sammons, *Beyond the Ring: the Role of Boxing in American Society* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 4, 6.
4. Gorn, *Manly Art*, 39–42, 46.
5. *Ibid.*, 69–70, 84–85, 110, 134–35.
6. *Ibid.*, 70–72. Sullivan's height and weight came from the lithograph by James Baillie, "The Great Fight Between Tom Hyer and Yankee Sullivan (For \$10,000). Maryland, February 7, 1849," in the Maryland Historical Society Library.
7. Gorn, *Manly Art*, 124, 38. Hyer's height and weight likewise came from the Baillie lithograph of "The Great Fight."
8. The sobriquet "Young America" was applied freely at this time: by Samuel L. Clemens in a playful reference to U.S. Senator Stephen A. Douglas in 1854 (Powell, *Dangerous Water*, 233); proudly, as the name of a Chesapeake Bay tugboat in 1859 (Wallace Shugg, "The Cigar Boat: Ross Winans's Maritime Wonder," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 93 [1998]: 436); and as a place-name in Minnesota.
9. The Know-Nothings basically supported political reform and expansionist policies of the young republic. See Jean H. Baker, *Ambivalent Americans: the Know-Nothing Party in Maryland* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 31–32, 38, 40–41.
10. Gorn, *Manly Art*, 84–85, 110. He discusses the importance of fire brigades, clubs, saloons, and street gangs as rallying points for political factions on pages 134–35. See also Benjamin G. Rader, *American Sports: From the Age of Folk Games to the Age of Spectators* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1983), 31–32.

11. Gorn, *Manly Art*, 70–71, 73, 76–78, 80–81.
12. *Ibid.*, 83, 85–87.
13. *Ibid.*, 87–89.
14. *Ibid.*, 83.
15. A scene comes to mind from the film *Raging Bull* (1980), in which Jake LaMotta, while training, dallies with his wife, then stops abruptly and pours a pitcher of cold water on himself, to stay tough for the upcoming fight.
16. Gorn, *Manly Art*, 90–91.
17. Five Points: the intersection, just west of today's Chinatown, of five tiny streets (later known as Baxter, Worth, Park, Water, and Mulberry), leveled in 1913 to make way for the courthouse. The intersection is now part of Columbus Park.
18. In 1851, Five Points was the worst slum in the city, some said in the world. It had "the largest Irish community outside of Dublin" and was "supposedly the most densely populated spot in North America," ridden with gambling, prostitution, and begging. "Gangs with names like the Dead Rabbits, the Shirt-tails, and the Plug-Uglies—so-called because of the oversized plug hats they wear virtually resting on their ears—battle with each other and keep the population cowed through terror and extortion"—Bruce Edward Hall, *Tea That Burns: A Family Memoir of Chinatown* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), 29–32.
19. J. Thomas Scharf, *Chronicles of Baltimore* (Baltimore: Turnbull Brothers, 1874), 528–29.
20. *Reminiscences of Baltimore* (Baltimore: Maryland Book Concern, 1893), 82.
21. *Baltimore Sun*, February 9, 1849, plus the undated account of the reporter from the *Philadelphia Times and Keystone*, reprinted in the *Baltimore Sun*, February 12, 1849.
22. *Baltimore Sun*, February 12, 8, 9.
23. *Ibid.*, February 9, 8.
24. *Ibid.*, February 12.
25. *Kent County News*, February 10, 1849; *Baltimore Sun*, February 12, 1849; and Paul Magriel, "A Famous Maryland Prize Fight," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 46 (1951): 294.
26. The lithographer James Baillie does not appear in any of the standard biographical dictionaries of American artists. The Yale University Center for British Art has no information about him. The National Portrait Gallery has three of his hand-colored lithographs but not his birth or death date. The Library of Congress catalog states he flourished 1838–1855 and lists ten of his works, among them scenes from the Bible and Mexican War, which suggest that he was not present at the great fight but worked from eyewitness accounts.
27. Gorn, *Manly Art*, 71, 40–41, 90, 92, and Frey, *Reminiscences of Baltimore*, 82.
28. Gorn, *Manly Art*, 92, Magriel, "A Famous Maryland Prize Fight," 295, and John Grombach, *The Saga of the Fist* (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1977), 10.
29. Scharf, *Chronicles of Baltimore*, 528–29, and Gorn, *Manly Art*, 95.
30. Gorn, *Manly Art*, 92.
31. *Baltimore Sun*, February 9, 1849.
32. The scratch line divided the ring into two halves. "At the start of the contest the boxers 'toed the line,' an expression in general use to this day." At the beginning of each new round, each boxer had eight seconds to toe the line again or 'come up to scratch,' yet another expression—Grombach, *Saga of the Fist*, 10–11.
33. Magriel, "A Famous Maryland Prize Fight," 295–96; *Baltimore Sun*, February 9, 1849; and Gorn, *Manly Art*, 94. I have tried to reconcile the somewhat differing accounts of the fight's last moments from these sources.
34. *Kent County News*, February 10, 1849, and the anonymous *Life and Battles of Yankee*

Sullivan (Philadelphia, 1854), quoted by Magriel, "A Famous Maryland Prize Fight," 296.

34. *Baltimore Sun*, February 9, 1849.

35. From the account in the *Philadelphia Bulletin* (n.d.), reprinted in the *Baltimore Sun*, February 12, 1849; *Baltimore Sun*, February 13; and Gorn, *Manly Art*, 94.

36. The real growth of boxing as a respectable sport in which middle and upper class men could also participate (outside the prize ring, of course) came after the widespread adoption (ca. 1892) of the Marquis of Queensberry rules (published 1867), which required gloves and prohibited wrestling holds and throws, along with other modifications. President Theodore Roosevelt enjoyed sparring with former middleweight champion Mike Donovan while in the White House (Gorn, *Manly Art*, 197). Here in Maryland, boxing was not taught to future naval officers at the Naval Academy (est. 1845) until 1919 and became a varsity sport between 1920 and 1941. See Jack Sweetman, *The U.S. Naval Academy: An Illustrated History*, 2nd ed., (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1979, 181).

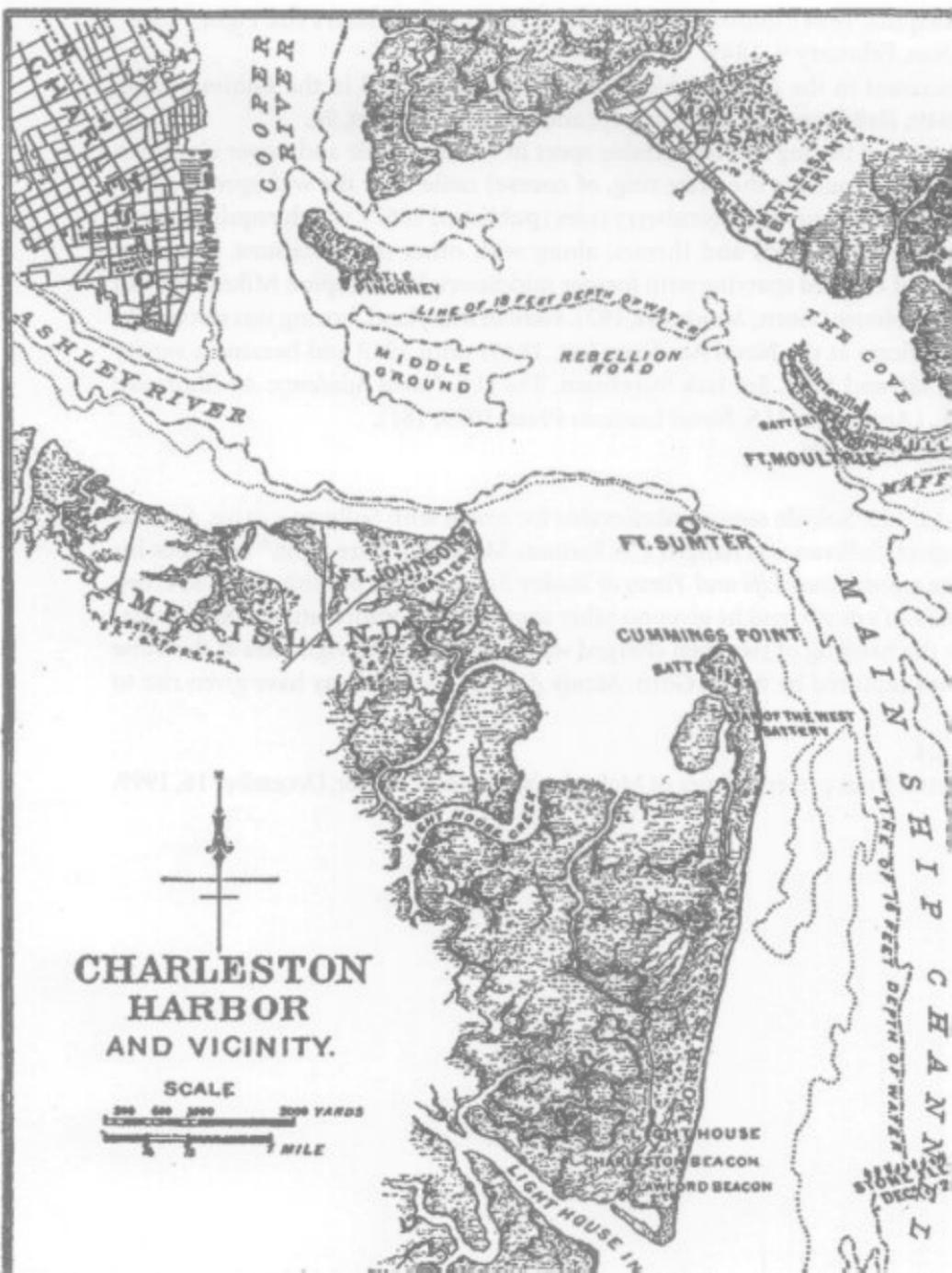
37. Gorn, *Manly Art*, 94–96.

38. *Ibid.*, 96.

39. *Ibid.*, 111–12, 123. Suicide seems unbelievable for a man with Sullivan's drive. According to Paul Magriel, Sullivan was hanged ("A Famous Maryland Prize fight," 296), but his main source, the anonymous *Life and Times of Yankee Sullivan*, was published in 1854, two years before Sullivan's death, and he gives no other source for his information. The newspapers did report the hanging of two men charged with murder by the vigilantes at the same time Sullivan was captured by them (Gorn, *Manly Art*, 123), which may have given rise to Magriel's error.

40. *Ibid.*, 123–24.

41. *Ibid.*, 97. Letter from present owner of McSorley's, Matthew Maher, December 16, 1999.



# Whose Cause Shall We Embrace?

## Maryland and the Fort Sumter Crisis

CHARLES W. MITCHELL

**F**our federal forts ringed Charleston harbor in 1860. In keeping with the general state of the nation's military readiness, none was battle ready. Castle Pinckney, occupied by Sergeant Skillen and his wife and fifteen-year-old daughter Kate, lay less than a mile offshore from the city proper. The sergeant was charged with oiling the post equipment so it wouldn't rust. Fort Moultrie sat on Sullivan's Island, five miles due east, on the north side of the harbor, and housed a small contingent of soldiers, regimental musicians and workmen. Across the harbor from Moultrie, almost due south of Castle Pinckney, was Fort Johnson, a small, decrepit Revolutionary-era fort that had been abandoned. In the middle of the harbor loomed the behemoth Fort Sumter, unfinished despite construction that had begun in 1829.

South Carolina cared little for the idea of a network of U.S. forts surrounding its capital and controlling access to its harbor. For decades the state had long challenged federal power. In 1828, Palmetto men reacted strongly to the third in a rapid burst of federal tariffs on imported goods, levied by a national government needing to raise money in a pre-income tax era. (The first tariff had come in 1816, the second in 1824.) The 1828 levy of 50 percent became known as the Tariff of Abomination. South Carolinians had been outraged: Where in the U.S. Constitution, they demanded, lay the power to declare such taxes on the states? In Article One, Section Eight, parried federalists, wherein Congress had the right to "lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States." Indignant Carolinians, led by native son and vice president John C. Calhoun, retorted by appointing a state convention to nullify this malignant tariff before it could grow.

Their Nullification Doctrine, Calhoun and others theorized, would enable the minority to thwart the enactment of unfair laws. More important, it would prevent "some future northern majority from abolishing slavery by giving the southern minority power to veto Yankee fanaticism." Following four years of congressional debate, the abominable tariff became law in 1832, though at the lesser rate of 25 percent. In November of that year, South Carolina's convention voted to nullify it as unconstitutional. Radicals screamed for secession. The state's

*Charles W. Mitchell is writing a history of Maryland in the Civil War, from which this is excerpted.*

legislature began to raise a military force and arms to equip it. Calhoun resigned the vice presidency. On March 1, 1833, President Andrew Jackson received congressional approval for both the reduced tariff and the use of military force to collect tariff revenue from South Carolina. Later that month the Carolinians' Nullification Convention rescinded its original action and, as it did so, took smug satisfaction in nullifying Jackson's "Force Bill."<sup>1</sup>

But a secession notion had taken life in South Carolina, and by the end of 1860 it had reached feisty adolescence. Carolinians had been chafing under the federal yoke for decades, and now an antislavery "Black Republican" had been elected to the White House. Some Charleston citizens even had cheered Abraham Lincoln's November election—"Lincoln was elected & our fate sealed," wrote Charleston socialite Mary Boykin Chesnut in her diary—for secession at last seemed within their grasp. The undermanned Fort Sumter, the noxious symbol of federal power so easily seen from Charleston's Battery promenade, had people of the Palmetto state gleefully rubbing their hands. Minute Men marched in Charleston and Columbia. On November 7, the day after Lincoln's victory, a Charleston grand jury announced its withdrawal from a federal court proceeding. The presiding federal judge removed his black robe and, tossing it aside, seceded from his federal job.<sup>2</sup> His state would follow suit on December 20.

In the autumn of 1860, Captain John Foster arrived in Charleston to oversee fortification of Forts Moultrie and Sumter. In short order he sent for a group of skilled workmen from Baltimore who had worked for him at Fort Carroll, at the entrance to Baltimore's harbor. There was plenty of work to do, despite the fact that more than \$1 million had already been spent on Sumter, built to accommodate 650 men and 146 guns. Foster, a West Pointer and Mexican War veteran, believed his Baltimore men to be good unionists, but wondered if they could be trusted to bear arms in defense of the forts.

Lincoln's election and close Carolina scrutiny of the U.S. arsenal in Charleston made the tension more palpable. (The new president would not be inaugurated until March.) Late in November, Major Robert Anderson assumed command of U.S. forces in Charleston Harbor. Anderson, a West Point graduate and thirty-five-year army officer, had served with distinction in the Mexican War. He counted Jefferson Davis among his friends and had sworn Abraham Lincoln into the army in 1832 to fight in the Black Hawk War. His father had fought the British from Fort Moultrie, and after Charleston fell, served nine months in prison for his trouble. On December 11 President James Buchanan's War Department instructed Anderson

to avoid every act which would needlessly tend to provoke aggression . . . but you are to hold possession of the forts in this harbor, and if attacked you are to defend yourself to the last extremity. The small-

ness of your force will not permit you, perhaps, to occupy more than one of the three forts, but an attack on or attempt to take possession of any one of them will be regarded as an act of hostility, and you may then put your command into either of them which you deem most proper to increase its power of resistance. You are also authorized to take similar steps whenever you have tangible evidence of a decision to proceed to a hostile act.

It was left to the Major to figure out how to defend three forts—two of which were under construction, each separated from the others by at least a mile of water—with a total of sixty-five trained military men and their musicians and a ragtag bunch of day laborers, some of whose loyalty he suspected. Anderson had his doubts about the Baltimore workmen: “Some days ago the commanding officer at Fort Sumter inquired of the laborers lately brought from Baltimore if they would defend the place in case of attack? They answered unanimsly that they came to work, not to fight, and rather than oppose the South they would immediately return to Baltimore.” Just before Christmas Anderson received further orders from Secretary of War John Floyd:

You are directed to hold possession of the forts in the harbor of Charleston, and if attacked to defend yourself to the last extremity. Under these instructions, you might infer that you are required to make a vain and useless sacrifice of your own life and the lives of the men under your command upon a mere point of honor. This is far from the President’s intention. . . . It is neither expected nor desired that you should expose your own life or that of your men in a hopeless conflict in defence of these forts. If they are invested or attacked by a force so superior that resistance would in your judgment be a useless waste of life it will be your duty to yield to necessity and make the best terms in your power. This will be the conduct of an honorable brave and humane officer and you will be fully justified in such action.<sup>3</sup>

It was left to Anderson to determine exactly how to “hold possession” of three forts simultaneously while defending himself “to the last extremity” without making a “vain and useless sacrifice” of himself and his undermanned force.

### Whose Cause Shall Maryland Embrace?

As the news of Lincoln’s election spread, South Carolinians began arming themselves, much to the benefit of Baltimore hardware firm Magruder, Taylor & Roberts. In November a resident of the town of Sumter sent a check for \$226

Mount Pleasant                      April 17/60  
 Laurens Dist S.C.

Magruder Taylor & Roberts

You find check on  
 N.Y. for \$100<sup>00</sup> Exchange cost 25 etc you can  
 please to say to you will please send me a shot  
 gun like the last one you sent us Double Loop 5/8"  
 Bore 39 Long pr. \$17 and Tell E. Graham Payson  
 same to fill bill <sup>below</sup> and send the gun with them  
 and say to them I think I will be able to pay them  
 some money before long                      Yours Respectfully  
 A. H. Flowers

South Carolinians ordered weapons from Baltimore's MacGruder, Taylor, and Roberts hardware firm after receiving news of Lincoln's election. (Maryland Historical Society.)

for a package of pistols, flasks for "Colts Navy" pistols, and caps. Another ordered "a Dirk knife with six-inch blade & belt & scabbard" and requested prices of "good short guns" and "Colts Pistols," though he later cancelled his knife order: "Some time ago I ordered a Bowie knife with belt . . . please inform [Adams Express] that it has not been received and request them to pay for it. The gentleman for whom it was ordered was shot dead in the court house square the other day in a street fight." A third buyer beseeched the Baltimoreans to "please forward the above (four) Pistols in haste." A South Carolina firm ordered "three double barrel shot guns . . . for shooting birds," adding a postscript: "Send us six Colts Repeaters six shooters at as low figgers as you can." Other fortifications were also sought: "You will please send us one Pound *strong* essence Jamaica Rum by Adams Express Co. as we . . . can not get it in Charleston nor Columbia." Banking difficulties in the south reverberated in Baltimore: "We received your[s] this morning and are indeed quite sorry that things have run to the point they have," wrote a small firm to Magruder. "We had invested in cotton just ready to draw it and pay it, when the banks closed down and even could not get our own. In two weeks we will be able to remit."<sup>24</sup>

Sympathetic Marylanders rushed to aid the Carolinians. "We desire to have some Palmetto flags made here. Please send us immediately a copy of one drawn in colors, or a small flag. We appreciate the pluck of the gallant little South Carolina. Send us her flag—we are ready to defend it!" pleaded Baltimoreans in mid-November. The Maryland supplicants were obliged when the *Charleston*

*Courier* announced that “a Palmetto tree, drawn in colors by Col. E. B. White, was sent to Baltimore on Thursday . . . this handsome token of amity and friendship . . . will be placed, as we understand, alongside the Colonial flag of Maryland.” South Carolina reciprocated with praise of Maryland footwear: “Baltimore made boots and shoes are noted in the Charleston papers as superceding similar Northern manufactures.” Marylander Washington Yellott, brother of southern-leaning state senator Coleman Yellott, resolved on November 23 that, though his organization, the National Volunteers, favored a complete Union, any southern state should be able “to absolve herself from all governmental association with the other members of the Federal union,” and that the Volunteers stood ready to send any aggrieved state at least a thousand soldiers. Philip Harry Lee, claiming descent from Light Horse Harry Lee of “*revolutionary memory*,” offered the governor of South Carolina 1,300 Light Horse National Volunteers from Baltimore: “We promise to show, like the old and famous *Maryland Line*, that our soil can produce a few more men whose metal will prove too hard for the digestion of a certain class of people.”<sup>5</sup>

On December 26, Anderson broke the stalemate in Charleston harbor. His men spiked Fort Moultrie’s guns and burned its gun carriages, then abandoned the unfinished fort and slipped into Sumter under the noses of South Carolina militiamen, whose vigilance was at low holiday ebb. According to a fanciful dispatch in the *Charleston Mercury*, Anderson had dined ashore that evening with Charleston dignitaries and “was duly carried back to Fort Moultrie by early moonlight, apparently very much overcome by the good things drinkable set before him. Those in charge of the steamer posted in the channel to watch his movements in the fort, therefore, thought it would be safe for them to relax their vigilance and themselves take a Christmas night frolic. . . . the apparent intoxication of Anderson was but a feint to have the very effect it did have.”<sup>6</sup> The major, with little direction from an indecisive and inexperienced administration, had acted on his own, intoxicated or not, and for the moment controlled the harbor and its other forts.

Charlestonians fumed. Anderson’s move into Sumter violated a pledge they thought they had from President Buchanan not to alter the status quo in the forts around their city. And South Carolina’s commissioners were furious. Anderson’s action, they wrote to Buchanan, “was not a peaceful change from one fort to another; it was a hostile act in the highest sense . . . by your course you have probably rendered civil war inevitable. Be it so.”<sup>7</sup>

An uneasy quiet hung over Fort Sumter and the harbor. Both Anderson’s men and the Carolina militia encircling the fort sought target practice, in readiness for the day that the stalemate would turn to war. Bruce Catton described how the sides

maintained polite relations while they got ready to kill each other . . . Anderson's men mounted a ten-inch Columbiad as a mortar in the parade ground, pointing it at Charleston's fabled park The Battery; to see if the alignment was correct, they got Major Anderson's permission to fire one shot with a greatly reduced charge. The reduction in the charge was insufficient; the gun threw its projectile in a soaring parabola that almost landed it in downtown Charleston, and there was a flurry of intense excitement, with officers coming out under flag of truce to ask the major if he was really starting the war. Explanations and an apology followed, and the excitement died down.<sup>8</sup>

Throughout the autumn Marylanders had been closely watching events in South Carolina. "In the political world I regard the aspect of things very squally indeed," wrote Daniel M. Thomas in November. "I look upon a general break up, as pretty nearly inevitable and I cannot see what will be the end of it all. I can scarcely hope that it will be anything but disastrous, but we must trust to Providence and hope for the best." The *Frederick Herald* noted that "While (Marylanders) do not think that the election of Lincoln to the Presidency is sufficient cause for any Southern State to secede, they will oppose the use of measures to coerce a State into the Union . . . though Maryland should assume a position of neutrality, it should be one of *armed neutrality*." A Baltimorean expressed anger over the refusal of Maryland's governor, Thomas Hicks, to convene his legislature, then not in session. "The exciting news by telegraph has just reached here of the burning of Fort Moultrie by the U.S. troops to their occupation of Fort Sumpter . . . what this will lead to God only knows. . . . We have a wicked Know nothing Gov. in this state, who refuses all solicitations to call our legislature together."<sup>9</sup>

John D. Roberts of Magruder, Taylor & Roberts, travelling in the south, advised his colleagues not to expect the good business of the early autumn to continue. On December 9 he wrote from Marietta, Georgia, that "things look very gloomy out here selling goods is out of the question but I will do my very best and send you every dollar that can be had . . . as our banks have suspended I have thought it best to take notes. I am refusing orders for pistols except for cash." The next day he wrote that "business is almost entirely suspended nearly every man is for secession and a fight." Two weeks later he described the reaction in Atlanta to Anderson's move: "Men are forming around all seem anxious for a fight. I am sorry." The situation was not entirely bleak, however, for though "business is at a 'perfect stand still' no person wants goods except Colts and other pistols which I am [placing] orders for daily."<sup>10</sup>

Elizabeth Blair Lee was the daughter of prominent Maryland unionist and Lincoln confidante Francis Preston Blair, and sister of Lincoln's Postmaster Gen-

eral, Montgomery Blair. In a letter to her husband, naval officer Samuel Phillips Lee, she exalted in the union sentiment around her: "South Carolina ordained herself on the 20th out of the Union whereupon the stocks rise. Patriotism is now above par," she wrote on Christmas Day of 1860. "The Union Flag streams from nearly every house top—Father returned home from the [Washington] City last night singing & happier about politics than I've seen him since the election—Still he & all thinking men are sure that peaceable secession is a fallacy." In Baltimore Captain Thomas Bowers organized a Union Zouave company called the Law Grays, whose members "have been undergoing a severe drilling. . . . A gray uniform, pretty much after the style of the Zouave uniform, is being proposed, and the company expect to make their first parade in ten days or two weeks." Daniel Thomas had determined that Maryland should move in a southerly direction. "Matters are frightening here—at one time I thought we were sold to the North, but the feeling which has manifested itself here recently makes me hope everything is not lost yet," he wrote to his sister in February. "We are going on now to stir the matter in the wards by ward meetings & speeches and so forth. Nearly Everybody here has given up all hope of compromise, and the only question is, whose cause shall Maryland embrace, that of the North or that of the south. I am satisfied that not only our sympathies and honor but also our material interests require us to side with the south. If Maryland does go North I for one go south." Baltimorean William Welch entrusted matters to Providence. "I do not know what will become of us but hope and pray that God will bring all things wright," he wrote to Father John Hershey of the Jarrettsville Methodist Church, in Baltimore County. "There is a considerable commotion in our church at this time and how it will terminate the Lord only knows."<sup>11</sup>

Marylanders were calling for Governor Hicks to convene the state legislature into special session. St. Mary's County citizens met on November 20 in Leonardtown, in southern Maryland, and petitioned him to summon the lawmakers "at an early day to consider what steps it is right, proper and necessary for Maryland to take in the present position of affairs." Hicks's reply, to a similar plea from state legislator John Contee of Prince George's County, called for the sanctity of southern rights and repeal of the Personal Liberty Laws enacted by northern states to counteract the Fugitive Slave Law. Just before Christmas Governor Hicks told five visitors that he would await action by the legislatures of Missouri, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia before convening Maryland's lawmakers. His action was endorsed by the "Friends of the Union."<sup>12</sup>

Hicks disapproved of secession in principle, and he opposed South Carolina's. "Should I be compelled to witness the downfall of that Government inherited from our fathers, established, as it were, by the special favor of God?" he wondered. "I will at least have the consolation, in my dying hour, that I neither by



*Elizabeth Blair Lee, sister of Postmaster-General Montgomery Blair, rejoiced in Maryland's strong union stance. (Courtesy, J. Wayne Lee.)*

word or deed assisted in hastening its disruption.” The governor’s strategy was endorsed by the Episcopal Bishop of Maryland, William Whittingham, who explained that he had recently met with leaders of ten Maryland counties and “without any exception, I have found convictions of the present duty and policy of Maryland, in the main agreeing with those expressed by your address. . . . may I be allowed to say that in my own opinion your forcible, frank, manly and true-hearted statement of your policy, and the grounds on which it has been adopted and will be maintained, cannot but be attended (under the Divine blessing) with the happiest results?” Hicks’s friend Anna Ella Carroll, a prominent Eastern Shore woman who would later advise Lincoln’s War Department, reminded him that “although you were opposed to the election of Mr. Lincoln, you are for maintaining this Union.” A newspaper correspondent applauded the governor’s “firmness in not consenting to call an extra session of the Legislature. To do so at this particular time . . . would not be in accordance with the wishes of the People . . . and, in all probability, [would] in the end bring ruin upon us all.”<sup>13</sup>

*South Carolina governor Francis W. Pickens, who maintained pressure against Fort Sumter while delaying an attack against it, urged Maryland and Virginia to seize Washington. (From Battles and Leaders of the Civil War.)*



Citizens of Maryland and South Carolina were not the only ones unnerved by Major Anderson's Sumter gambit. Buchanan had been negotiating with South Carolina representatives to avoid war, or at the least put it off until inauguration day on March 4, when the whole Charleston mess would slide into Lincoln's lap. The president considered ordering Anderson back to Fort Moultrie but stiffened when news came that Carolina militiamen had seized the empty federal forts in the harbor. Had South Carolina's Governor Francis W. Pickens left the forts alone, Buchanan likely would have so ordered Anderson, and the Carolinians could have sailed unmolested into Sumter. Now they would have to fight for it.<sup>14</sup>

Buchanan and Pickens both wished to postpone decisions that could trigger war. Old Buck, only weeks from the sanctity of his Pennsylvania farm, was not about to enter history as the man who started an American civil war. Daily he prayed for the congressional committees working feverishly for a rapprochement with the Deep South, and he gave thanks when he heard Virginia calling for a peace conference to convene in February. Pickens, who now fancied himself head of a sovereign state, was simultaneously being pushed to attack Sumter immediately and delay until the other seceded states could organize themselves sufficiently to negotiate with the U.S. government. The governor had another reason to play for time: South Carolina's fortifications around the harbor were incapable of mounting much challenge against Sumter; though engineers and slaves were working around the clock, time was needed to get them battle-ready. But the hopes of both men evaporated as the winter days passed, and reinforc-

ing or resupplying Anderson's Spartan crew became an increasingly difficult and dangerous proposition.<sup>15</sup>

In Washington, committees from the House and Senate were devising ways to keep the other Deep South and border states from going over the edge. An *ad hoc* group of fourteen border-state congressmen—including Maryland's J. Morrison Harris of Baltimore, a leading southern unionist who served as secretary and kept its notes—met three times, on December 28 and January 3 and 4. This "border-state" plan attempted to reassure the south on slavery by strengthening the Fugitive Slave Law and prohibiting Congress from interfering with slavery where it existed.<sup>16</sup> Tempers of the times led to fisticuffs between a U.S. Senator and the nation's top military official. "Mr. [Robert] Tombs & Genl Scott had a *bout* at No. 4 (John R's)," recounted Elizabeth Blair Lee. "The first called the Old Hero a liar—whereupon the Genl rushed into him—but they were promptly parted—it was at a dinner party—Civil War seems inevitable—even at friendly dinner parties."<sup>17</sup> It was no doubt fortunate for the good senator that the dispute went no further, for the aging General Scott tipped the scales at close to three hundred pounds.

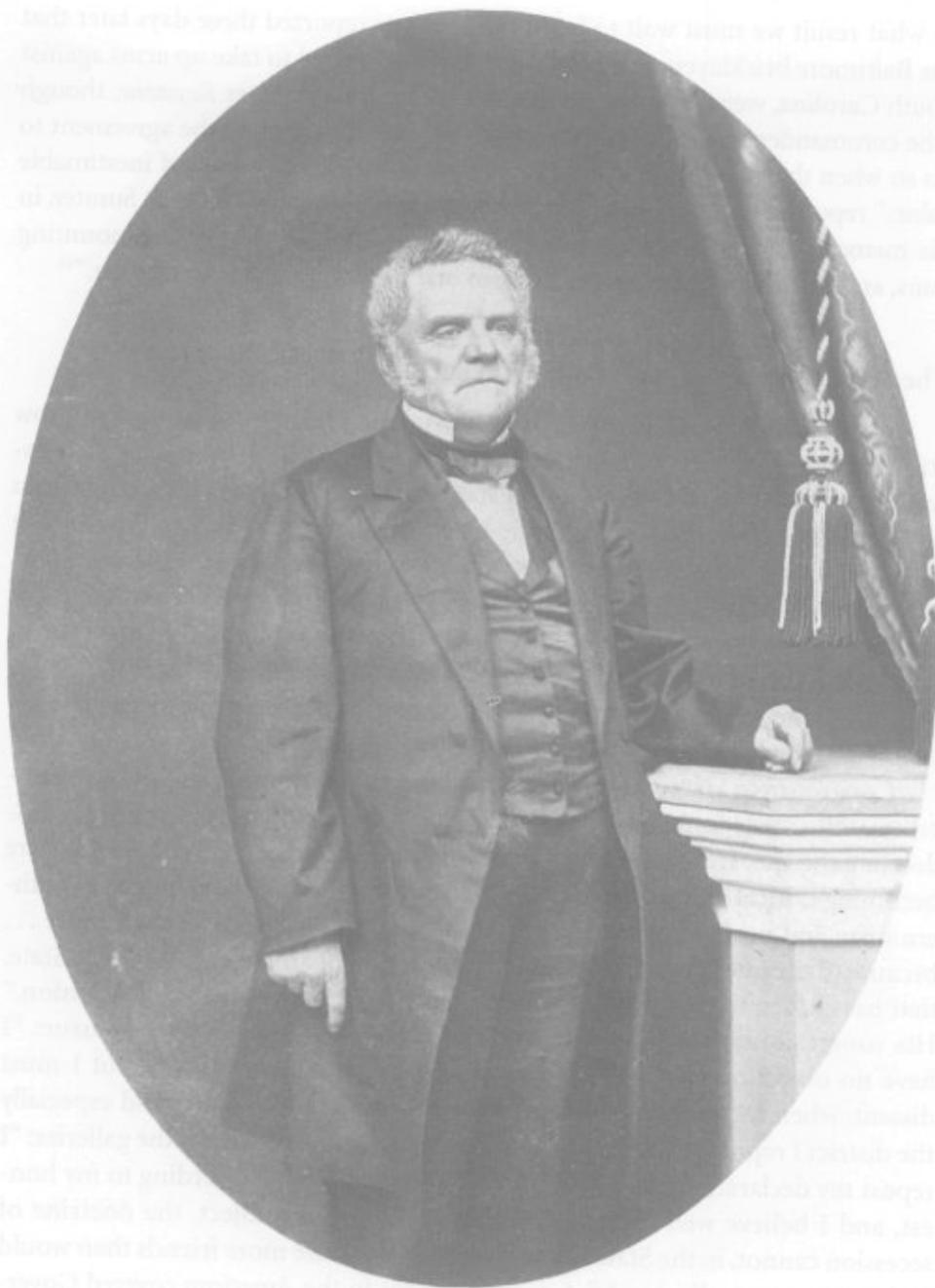
Major Anderson was becoming a hero of mythic stature in the north. "We must own that the news of the transaction in Charleston harbor was learned by us yesterday with a prouder beating of the heart. *We could not but feel once more that we had a country.* . . . It is a decisive act, calculated to rally the national heart," exalted the *Boston Courier* over the move to Sumter. "This rapid, unexpected manoeuvre has disconcerted treason, and received the highest military commendation in the country," waxed the *Boston Atlas and Bee* in late December. "Brave Major of Artillery, true servant of your country, soldier of penetrating and far-seeing genius, when right is endangered by fraud or force, at the proper time the needed man is always provided. The spirit of the age provides him . . . WASHINGTON, GARIBALDI, ANDERSON." Baltimore newspapers joined the chorus: "The announcement of the evacuation of Fort Moultrie and the occupation of Fort Sumter, was received with various expressions of opinion; but the predominant one was a feeling of admiration for the determined conduct and military skill of Col. Anderson in abandoning an indefensible position . . . which has reversed the whole position of affairs," praised the *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*. The *Exchange* endorsed Anderson's move, knowing he could not defend both Sumter and Moultrie: "We can, as at present, say little. But whether he acted in pursuance of orders from head-quarters, or consulted merely his own judgment, the step he has taken must be conceded to have been a wise and prudent one." The *Sun* was more cautious: "The news from Charleston yesterday caused somewhat of a sensation even in Baltimore. It seems an initial movement, but of its necessity and propriety we cannot judge. That it will tend to excite the people of the South is very certain, but

to what result we must wait to learn.” The paper reported three days later that the Baltimore bricklayers and carpenters, having refused to take up arms against South Carolina, were departing Charleston aboard the steamer *Keystone*, though “the commander refused to pay their passage, notwithstanding the agreement to do so when they left home.” Some remained, however, and were “of inestimable value,” reported Captain Abner Doubleday, a company commander at Sumter, in his memoir. “They did an immense amount of labor in the way of mounting guns, and moving weighty materials from one part of the work to another.”<sup>18</sup>

### The Stars and Stripes Ain’t Doing Their Duty

As calendars turned to 1861, signs of Maryland unionism seemed to grow stronger. From a meeting of all Maryland counties early in January came a resolution that “Maryland is this day, as she ever has been, true to the American Union; that she will exert all her influence for its peaceful preservation . . . the people of Maryland will accept the proposed constitutional and legislative guarantees known as the Crittenden compromise, as a fair and proper settlement of the fatal controversy which is now distracting the republic.” A meeting in Frederick resolved to prevent any effort “to commit ‘noble old Maryland’ to any sectional issue” that would expel the state from the “broad aegis of the Constitution and the laws.”<sup>19</sup>

Congressman Harris announced that “the movement in some of the southern States . . . has none of my sympathy, and no particle of my approval.” Addressing the U.S. House, he allied himself with the southern unionists who were becoming critical in the border states such as Maryland. “I stand here as a southern man; and my State, a southern State, hangs upon the brink of a precipice . . . because of the intemperate, the unnecessary action of an extreme southern State, that has chosen to realize her dream of thirty years in this matter of secession.” His congressional colleague, George W. Hughes of West River, took issue: “I have no objection to my colleague speaking for his own district; but I must dissent, when he undertakes to speak for the State of Maryland, and especially the district I represent.” Harris’s retort drew great applause from the galleries: “I repeat my declaration; and say now, that at this moment, according to my honest, and I believe well-informed judgment upon the subject, the doctrine of secession cannot, in the State of Maryland, to-day raise more friends than would make up a corporal’s guard.” A correspondent in the *American* covered Governor Hicks in reflected glory. “The determined stand taken by the Governor of Maryland, in his resistance of the pressure made on him to involve his state in the disunion programme, has coupled his name with that of the gallant Major Anderson.”<sup>20</sup> The reputation of the gallant Anderson grew when it became known that on January 11 he had refused a demand to surrender Sumter.



Maryland Governor Thomas Holliday Hicks. (Maryland Historical Society.)

Men were hopeful as the Washington Peace Conference opened on February 4 in Washington. One hundred and thirty-two of them had made their way into Willard's Hall amid rumors of conspiracies to seize the capital. Former president John Tyler, a slaveholder, sat in the chair. Some of the seven Maryland delegates appointed by Governor Hicks—who collectively gave the state's presence a unionist mien—believed Maryland could mediate the crisis. Former senator and attorney general Reverdy Johnson of Baltimore opposed secession, but cautioned against “any effort by the Federal Government to coerce in any form the said States to reunion or submission, as tending to irreparable breach, and leading to incalculable ills.” John Crisfield, a moderate Eastern Shore congressman, announced that “we wish to stay the hand of the extremists on both sides. We wish to stand by the Union.” The conference proposed a thirteenth amendment to the constitution that would have permanently left slavery's future to the states, and the Maryland men voted unanimously for all seven sections. But this last struggle for compromise was crushed on the floor of the U.S. Senate in the early dawn of March 4, the day of Lincoln's inauguration.<sup>21</sup>

Scott is strengthening Washington by pouring in federal troops under circumstances of the deepest degradation of Maryland and Virginia. . . . I am sure the only way to secure fort McHenry and Fort Monroe is for Maryland and Virginia . . . to seize immediately Washington, and . . . to get possession of Fort Monroe and Fort McHenry in the convulsion. This would force Lincoln to seek another point for the inauguration, and thus throw the Northern states into apparent revolution. . . . I sincerely believe it would be the most certain mode of saving the country from a permanent, bloody and civil war.

Others pressed Maryland to collaborate with the rebels. “Can there not be found men bold and brave enough in Maryland to unite with Virginians in seizing the Capitol at Washington?” wondered the *Richmond Enquirer*. “The States of Virginia and Maryland having grown together in prosperity, they should cling together in adversity,” proclaimed a St. Mary's County speaker at a celebration of Washington's birthday. “Like the Siamese Twins to divide them, would be to kill them both.” A Bladensburg doctor opined that “Noble South Carolina has done her duty bravely. Now Virginia and Maryland must immediately raise an armed force sufficient to control the district, and never allow Abe Lincoln to set foot on its soil.”<sup>22</sup>

But Lincoln was ready to put his foot down firmly on Washington soil. By refusing to receive South Carolina's commissioners, he thereby removed the legitimacy Buchanan had so graciously granted the Confederacy by seeing them. The new president had troubles at home, too. Secretary of State William Henry

Seward, a former governor and senator from New York, had decided he was better qualified than the prairie lawyer to run the nation's affairs. Seward began quietly assuring the Carolina commissioners that the Sumter garrison would be withdrawn, his claim bolstered by the assent of most of the Cabinet and General Scott himself. But Lincoln would not be pushed. He began to consider reinforcing Sumter as an alternative to evacuating it.<sup>23</sup>

Public opinion fortified Lincoln's instinct to make a stand at Sumter. His inaugural address had, after all, promised to "hold, occupy and possess" the federal forts, and its original draft had been even stronger on this score, pledging also to "reclaim the public property and places which have fallen." The president received plenty of advice about what to do in Charleston harbor. Letters poured in to the White House. One suggested that Sumter be resupplied via a "submarine vessel"; another thought balloons the ideal vehicle for dropping supplies. A fellow Republican from New York advised Lincoln to hold firm: to "give up Sumpter, Sir, & you are as dead politically as John Brown is physically. You have got to fight." Another correspondent advised him to hold Fort Pickens, on Santa Rosa Island in Pensacola Bay, and "if it be *possible* (no matter what the cost of money or life)—*Fort Sumpter* should be *supplied with provision . . . afterwards*, it could be re-enforced with troops. But it will be better, thousand times, that the Fort be attacked, *Captured*, and Anderson and his men be made prisoners of war, or all killed—than that it be *evacuated!*" A fellow Springfield citizen wrote of his

pain and regret that you are debating about Evacuating Sumter lowering our Glorious old Flag that Washington through so many trials and Privations unfurled and sustained to be trampled on by traitors and to be made the hiss and scoff of the World . . . say the word By the Eternal, Fort Sumter *shall* be reinforced and that glorious old Flag sustained and my word for it 100,000 good and true men with Jim Hill amongst them will at once respond to the call.<sup>24</sup>

As Lincoln weighed his options in Charleston harbor, southern rights men made themselves known in Maryland. In late February, Captain John C. Robinson took command of Fort McHenry and recounted that "the officers at the post were on friendly and visiting terms with some of the leading families of Baltimore, but when secession became the harbinger of war, they found many of these acquaintances were intensely Southern in their feelings, and ready to unite with the seceding States in their efforts to destroy the Union." Texas senator Louis T. Wigfall abandoned his far-fetched idea of kidnapping Buchanan and began openly recruiting in Baltimore for the Confederacy. "The Union of the South for the sake of the South," intoned Captain Edwin J. Coad of the Clifton

Guards, at that St. Mary's County celebration of Washington's birthday. Attending the same event, Major John Milburn expressed the attitude of many a southern-rights Marylander: "Our rights in the Union, if we can, but our rights in or out of the Union." The National Rifles of Washington was made up largely of Maryland men itching to protect their state from Yankees passing through to fight the south. "*We Southerners* are settled in the belief that the North will do nothing and it is time for us to help ourselves. 'Self preservation is the first law of nature,'" wrote a member of the Shriver family of Union Mills. "The Stars and Stripes ain't doing their duty and we must disown them."<sup>25</sup>

The times pushed one Maryland unionist into the abyss. On February 8, navy captain Edward G. Tilton retired to an upper floor of his home and shot himself in the head. His wife, Josephine, and their five children heard the shot one floor below. "I was grieved to the heart to learn by the city papers that Capt Tilton had committed suicide yesterday," Elizabeth Blair Lee confided to her husband. "The paper says it was owing to the Countrys troubles—forgetting that there is a 'better country' for which we ought to work. . . . oh the bitter pang to his wife . . . the amount of unhappiness to result in such a deed is fearful to think of[.] May God be more merciful to him than he has been to himself. . . . His State was still in the Union & all prospect of Md. seceding is given up by the frantic fire eaters."<sup>26</sup>

In Washington Seward remained certain that Lincoln would order Fort Sumter evacuated, and he so advised the southerners. "I myself, my brothers and sisters, have been all secessionists," he proclaimed in late March. "We seceded from home when we were young, but we all went back to it sooner or later. These states will all come back in the same way." In Charleston, Mary Chesnut took the secretary at his word. "They say positively Fort Sumter is to be relieved. Too good to be true," she wrote on March 12. Chesnut would seem to know. Her husband James, who had resigned his U.S. Senate seat upon South Carolina's secession, knew all the important people. "There will be no war, it will all be arranged," he explained confidently. "I will drink all the blood shed in the war."<sup>27</sup>

Lincoln continued to grapple with the dilemma at Sumter. On March 15 he posed a question to his Cabinet: "Assuming it to be possible to now provision Fort Sumter, under all the circumstances is it wise to attempt it?" He asked for written replies. Most advised withdrawal. Surrender was inevitable, said Seward, and a peaceful evacuation would stoke southern unionism and hold the upper south and border states while avoiding bloodshed. "Every one is tired of the long-banded assertions about the evacuation of Fort Sumter," opined the *Baltimore Sun* on April 4. "Now that the spring elections in the republican States are over, Fort Sumter will, no doubt, be evacuated." The *Philadelphia Bulletin* predicted in mid-March that "in a week's time . . . Fort Sumter is to be given up."

There were pockets of serenity in Baltimore. "We are very quiet here at present," wrote Daniel Thomas. "Business is pretty much as usual. Political excitements have died out. Mr. Dent and myself have exhausted that subject and are looking around for something new." Another man reported his distaste for politicians and that he would "cling to the hope, that all will be well when the *people* are allowed to speak instead of politicians. . . . I have never yet been hopeless of a settlement of the question on honorable terms. . . . A higher destiny awaits our country—when the fanatics are silenced—& the extremists of both sections are controlled." Elizabeth Patterson Bonaparte, who had briefly been the wife of Emperor Napoleon's younger brother, Jerome, received a letter early in March from her property manager in Baltimore, venting frustration at collecting her rents. He had "never experienced such difficulty as at present. Our Country is in such a state that it is almost impossible to get money, owing to the fact that no business is doing. I have been compelled to take dribs on account . . . and in some instances to take Virginia money which is at 6 per cent discount, for fear I should get none if I refused, the discount being more than my commission."<sup>28</sup>

Late in March President Lincoln received a letter that must have warmed his heart:

I take the liberty of writing to you & making the following request for my little daughter, now about seven years old, which is, that you will send her your likeness. She is a very strong supporter of yours & has been ever since your nomination. Although all her little playmates are Democrats & almost every inducement has been used to make her turn she holds firm. . . . one gentlemen offered her a pound of Candy if she would only hurra once for Bell & Everette or Douglas, it was a great temptation but it was of no use . . . [she] takes every occasion to defend you against all attacks from every source. A good many have tried to make her opposed to you but she sticks to you and tells them it will be all right now you are President. She has always been very anxious to have a Lincoln Medal but as I was unable to get her a good one here I have taken the liberty to make this request of you. . . . Enclosed I send you Two Dollars to defray the expense.<sup>29</sup>

To the men trapped in Fort Sumter the silence from Washington was deafening. The garrison had been subsisting on a barren diet of salt pork and stale bread, leavened only by an occasional shipment of fresh vegetables and fruit from Charleston. Loud grumbling was heard when the tobacco supply ran out and the men had to chew spun yarn. Precious shirts and wool socks were being made into cartridge bags. As the men dismantled Sumter's wooden structures for fuel, they had no inkling that the administration in Washington was giving their plight great attention, nor that Anderson's southern roots were giving rise

to suspicions about his loyalty. The major continued dutifully sending his reports north to Colonel Samuel Cooper, the army's adjutant general—unaware that Cooper had gone south to join the Confederate army. Rumors of a federal departure from Sumter were given life by headlines in Charleston newspapers. On March 8 a Carolina cannon boomed, landing a shot close to the fort's wharf. "The garrison was immediately alive with excitement. The guns facing the point were readied, and the men itched to blaze away at the enemy responsible for their troubles." Their hopes sank, however, when a black-bearded major was rowed to the fort to apologize for the accidental firing.<sup>30</sup>

The Carolinians were pressing Seward hard now on his promises of a Sumter evacuation. By All Fool's Day Lincoln had the secretary off-balance, and he now could offer little beyond a pledge that Governor Pickens would be notified of any plan to *resupply* Sumter. Neither side was budging, and it seemed that the dwindling supply of food in the fort would determine if there would be war, and when. Marylanders rushed to the ramparts. Steamships from Baltimore laden with Confederate recruits departed for Charleston in early spring. Sixty-four Baltimoreans arrived in Charleston on March 23, followed by twenty-eight more on April 5, aboard the *Thomas Swann*, and a third batch on April 11—though some failed their physical examinations and were sent home. Two New York papers sent the nation's first war correspondents to take Charleston's temperature, which they quickly found to be well above normal.<sup>31</sup>

### Sustain Yourself

On April 8 Lincoln advised Governor Pickens that Fort Sumter would be reprovisioned. The president promised to send no troops or arms as long as Pickens did not resist, placing the burden squarely upon South Carolina to permit the supplies through or start a war by resisting a humanitarian effort to keep men from starving. And the new secretary of war, Simon Cameron, at last took a moment to introduce himself to his beleaguered commander in Charleston harbor:

Your letter of the 1st instant occasions some anxiety to the President. . . . he had supposed you could hold out till the 15th instant without any great inconvenience; and had prepared an expedition to relieve you before that period.

Hoping still that you will be able to sustain yourself till the 11th or 12th instant, the expedition will go forward; and, finding your flag flying, will attempt to provision you, and, in case the effort is resisted, will endeavor also to re-inforce you.

You will therefore hold out, if possible, till the arrival of the expedition.

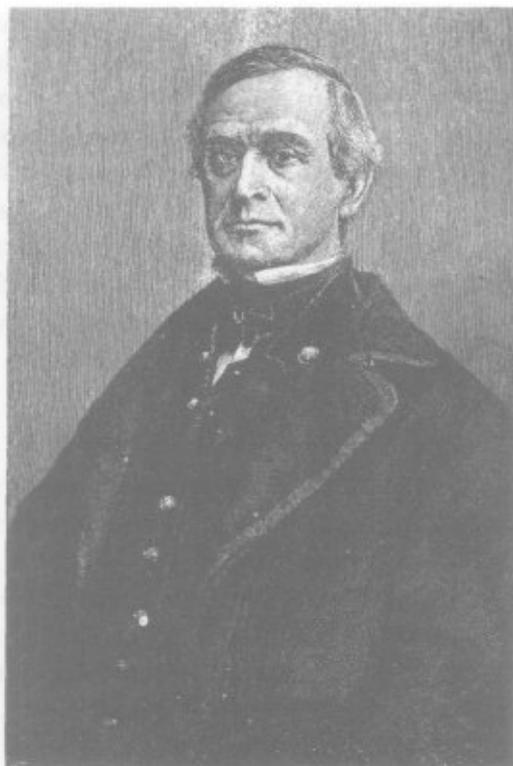
Lincoln did not wish Anderson and his men undue hardship, explained Cameron. “Whenever, if at all, in your judgment, to save yourself and command, a capitulation becomes a necessity, you are authorized to make it.” Anderson was stunned at this turn of events, given Seward’s very public assurances to the South Carolina commissioners that Sumter would be evacuated. “I fear that its result cannot fail to be disastrous to all concerned,” he replied the next day. “Even with his boat at our walls the loss of life . . . in unloading her will more than pay for the good to be accomplished by the expedition. . . . We have not oil enough to keep a light in the lantern for one night. The boats will have, therefore, to rely at night entirely upon other marks. . . . We shall strive to do our duty, though I frankly say that my heart is not in the war which I see is to be thus commenced.” This first correspondence from Anderson to Cameron landed on the desk of General Pierre G. T. Beauregard, commanding the shore batteries trained on Sumter, who—having stopped Anderson’s mail on April 8—intercepted the reply. On April 12 the *Baltimore Sun* took Anderson’s view of the situation, noting that the resupply effort was doomed to fail.<sup>32</sup>

Conflict now appeared inevitable and imminent. Pickens countered Lincoln’s resupply notice by demanding that the fort be evacuated or surrendered outright. On April 11 the last of Sumter’s bread was eaten; only salt pork and a handful of broken crackers remained. Blankets and clothing were requisitioned for cartridge bags, though with but six needles in the fort, the going was slow. A February 22 cannon salute to George Washington had thrown glass fragments from broken windows into the rice stocks; the glass had been sifted out but the rice, lain out to dry, was moldy. “D [Doubleday?] found a potatoe today, and put it away,” noted a Sumter diarist. “He said somebody had tramped on it, but had not hurt it much.”<sup>33</sup>

Lincoln had other worries. Threats that spring against him and the capital had been mounting. A man in the know wrote to him from Baltimore. “Dear Friend I take this method of informing you that you better prepair yourself for an asailing mob that is organizing in Baltimore as far as i can inform myself is about 12000 m. strong they intend to seize the Capitol and yourself and as they say that they will tar & put cotton on your head and ride you and Gen Scot on a rail this secret organization is about 70000 m members in Maryland and Virginia.” Governor Hicks was also being told of intrigues against Maryland:

I take the liberty of apprising you . . . that the Disunion leaders in this city intend to make Maryland the basis of their operations during the next two months. . . . they hope to bring Maryland into the line of the “seceding States” *before the 4th of March next*. To this end they will stimulate your people by every variety of appeal calculated to undermine their loyalty to the Constitution; will, if necessary, resort to threats

Major Robert Anderson, commander of the federal troops in Charleston Harbor. (From *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*.)



of violence . . . if they can succeed in bringing Maryland out of the Union, they will inaugurate the new “Southern Confederacy” in the present Capitol of the United States . . . [by] divesting the North of the seat of Government, and by retaining in their possession the public buildings and the public archives.

The writer urged him to stand firm, but the *Sun* continued to profess little faith in Lincoln. “We have very little to hope from the wisdom, sagacity or forbearance of the administration. In its hesitation and vacillation there is either the confession of weakness, or trickery.” The president did receive an obliging, if impractical, offer from New York: “In the present crisis, and distracted state of the country,” wrote Levin Tilman, “if your Honor wishes colored volunteers, you have only to signify by answering the above note at 70 E. 13 St. N.Y.C., with instructions, and the above will meet with prompt attention, whenever your honor wishes them.”<sup>34</sup>

For Baltimorean John Pendleton Kennedy, a former Maryland congressman and secretary of the navy, the Sumter situation threatened his state’s Union ties. In March he wrote to a friend that Maryland “is as true to the Union today, as she was to the cause of the colonies in 1776. Three fourths of our people are

against secession in any event—nine tenths against it in the present state of the question.” Early in April he wrote to another that “we, of the Border States, are drifting southward, and it may soon be too late to arrest that movement.” He confided in his journal his worry over Lincoln’s Sumter strategy, which “strengthens the secession men and may end in driving us all out of the Union. I learn, however, that our Union majority in this state is still strong.” With conflict looming, men from seventeen Maryland counties gathered on April 9 at Barnum’s Hotel in Baltimore and agreed to send delegates to a Union meeting there on May 21—by which time circumstances would have gone far beyond anyone’s imagination.<sup>35</sup>

### If We Never Meet in This World Again

On April 11 General Beauregard sent two aides out to the fort to demand that Major Anderson vacate it immediately. (Anderson had taught the art of artillery to Beauregard at West Point, a delicious irony of many to come.) Beauregard offered his former teacher and his men surrender terms that included safe passage to any destination in the United States and permission to salute the U.S. flag as it was lowered. The major, under orders to hold the fort, refused. Courteous letters were exchanged, and Beauregard’s aides—not knowing how much food the Sumter men had and unwilling to risk a resupply by Yankee warships thought to be lurking outside the harbor—crossed the Rubicon. In the polite, chivalrous language of that time and place, they announced the start of the Civil War: “By authority of Brigadier General Beauregard, commanding the Provisional Forces of the Confederate States,” they intoned, “we have the honor to notify you that he will open the fire of his batteries on Fort Sumter in one hour from this time.” Anderson, wrote one of the Beauregard aides, “seemed to realize the full import of the consequences, and the great responsibility of his position. Escorting us to the boat at the wharf, he cordially pressed our hands in farewell, remarking, ‘If we never meet in this world again, God grant that we may meet in the next.’” It was 3:20 on the morning of April 12, 1861.<sup>36</sup>

“The republican press of the North is engaged in whetting the appetites of their party for blood and spoils,” blared the *Baltimore Sun* in editorial overstatement the next day. “No great difficulty do they seem to find in preparing the Northern mind for war . . . their enemy consists of quiet citizens, old men, as well as young, of women and school boys, clergymen and physicians, and faithful domestic slaves—for such is the character of the force which is engaged in the defense of Charleston, and against which the United States government send the boasted veterans of its army and navy.” For days Charleston had been abuzz over a surrender of or attack against Sumter. Anderson’s men anxiously studied their watches and awaited the 4:30 A.M. bombardment. At that moment a ten-

*General Pierre Gustav Toutant Beauregard, commander of South Carolina troops in Charleston Harbor. (From Battles and Leaders of the Civil War.)*



inch signal mortar was fired from Fort Johnson, and guns on all sides of the harbor opened fire on the old fort. Many of Charleston's finest took to the Battery, wharves, and rooftops to watch. Mary Chesnut clambered with friends onto the roof of the Mills House and, finding her dress on fire, discovered that she was sitting atop a chimney. Out in Sumter, Captain Doubleday "showed his contempt for the slave oligarchy by staying right in bed," despite a shell fragment that bore into the masonry barely a foot from his head.<sup>37</sup>

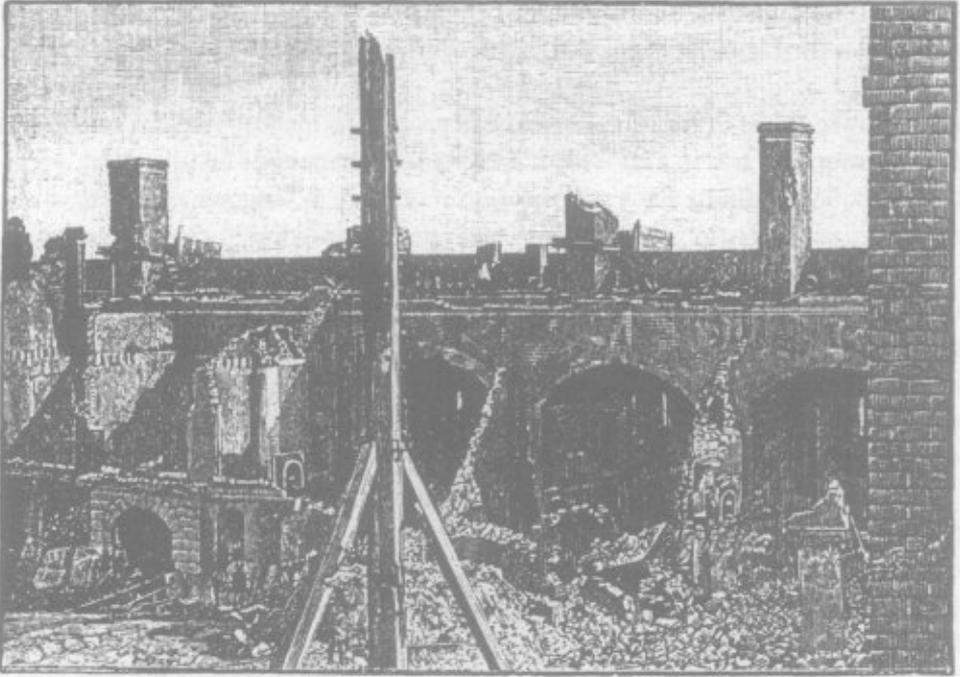
Anderson had but forty-eight guns (of 140) ready for use. He conserved ammunition by awaiting first light to return fire, by which time his men had been shelled for more than two hours. Early that afternoon excitement spread amongst the embattled federals when two U.S. warships were spotted in the mouth of the harbor—though as the mere vanguard of a seven-vessel expedition whose vital four never arrived, they did no good. The next morning, April 13, Confederate cannons set Sumter's barracks afire, and as the conflagration grew it threatened the magazine. The garrison frantically tried moving barrels of powder to higher ground, but the hail of burning debris grew so intense that the remaining powder was left to the mercies of Providence. Thick smoke at one point forced the Union men off their guns. The Confederates poured more fury into Sumter and cheered the mettle of men who would fire out of a burning fort. The workmen from Baltimore eased any doubts about their loyalty by leaping into the fray; they "had been watching our motions, and had thus learned the duties of a cannoner," related Doubleday, who was amazed to hear blasts from a battery ordered abandoned because of its exposure to withering Carolina fire. "They could not resist the fun of trying their hand at one of the guns. It

was already accurately pointed, and the ball struck the mark in the centre. The men attributed it to their own skill and when I entered they were fairly in convulsions of laughter . . . after this first attempt, each of them was desirous of trying his skill at aiming. The result was, that we soon had them organized into a firing party."<sup>38</sup>

On the afternoon of April 13 the men of Fort Sumter surrendered. The thirty-four-hour bombardment ended on a comic note, as a Sumter cannoneer "going to the muzzle of his piece to reload, saw a strange fellow looking in the embrasure—a burly civilian with a swarthy, piratical face, red sash and sword belt incongruously belted about his middle, a naked sword with a white flag knotted about the blade gripped in one hand." It was Louis Wigfall, just returned from Baltimore, and he demanded to be hauled into the fort to see Major Anderson, to whom he offered terms. Anderson accepted them. Shortly thereafter Beauregard, seeing a hospital sheet flying from the remnants of Sumter's flagpole, dispatched three aides to the fort. The incredulous Southerners explained that Wigfall had no authority to offer terms, whereupon Anderson, considering his surrender invalid, announced "very well, gentlemen, you can return to your batteries." The stalwart federal commander was persuaded not to resume the battle. As the situation was being discussed, former Virginia congressman and Beauregard aide Roger Pryor gulped from a bottle and discovered that he had downed iodide of potassium in a likely fatal dose. Sumter's surgeon pumped his stomach—"Some of us questioned the doctor's right to interpose in a case of this kind," chortled Doubleday. "It was argued that if any rebel leader chose to come over to Fort Sumter and poison himself, the Medical Department had no business to interfere with such a laudable intention. The doctor, however, claimed, with some show of reason, that he himself was held responsible to the United States for the medicine in the hospital, and therefore he could not permit Pryor to carry any of it away."<sup>39</sup>

### **We Declare War Against the War Spirit**

The next day Major Anderson and his weary men sailed out of Charleston harbor, bound for New York, unaware that their valor had spurred passions in the north. "Their desperate battle for a doomed fortress had performed a mass miracle, unified overnight a formerly divided North, made Sumter a new Lexington, transformed Anderson's name into a rallying cry of fierce Union inspiration that blew down doubters and peacemakers in a surge of unanimity from 'Penobscot's waters to San Francisco's Bay' that meant one thing: War." Anderson's heroics also breathed life into Maryland unionism. Southern unionist William Wilkins Glenn of Baltimore related that "Fort Sumter fell, after nearly two days bombardment. There was great excitement in Baltimore. The general feeling



*The interior of Fort Sumter after Anderson's surrender. (From Battles and Leaders of the Civil War.)*

however was against the action of South Carolina." William T. Walters, a Baltimore liquor dealer who would flee to Europe to avoid arrest, marked the occasion by "collecting subscriptions for the purpose of firing a salute in honor of the occasion," reported Glenn. "No man in Maryland can lay his hand upon his heart and say that this Government of ours has ever done him wrong," wrote John P. Kennedy. "Maryland . . . must soon become a Free State, and she will then be found to be wholly ungenial to the principle upon which the Southern Confederacy is established."<sup>40</sup>

The reaction to Sumter's fall also brought forth feelings of caution and resignation. "It is enough to say that we are on the Border, where all experience proves that the greatest aggravations of war's evils do congregate," warned the *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*.

We are in favor of fighting to the death in defense of our rights and liberties. Life loses its value if we are in bondage, and no form of tyranny is more galling than a military despotism. This is precisely what we are drifting into, and here we should take our stand. We declare war against the war spirit . . . we will not fight in this senseless quarrel

except in defense of our firesides . . . the tone of public sentiment all over the Union, it is decidedly against bloodletting.<sup>41</sup>

Allen Bowie Davis of Montgomery County wrote to his son William to tell him that Sumter had fallen, and with it Maryland's chances of avoiding the inevitable war. "A Southern army will meet no resistance in Virginia as they have too many Sympathizers in Maryland—Washington would therefore be an easy pray . . . I think as Marylanders we should if possible keep out of the contest—but this may not be practicable." He closed with fatherly advice for young William to not let these events interfere with his studies. Bravado, however, ruled the day at the Maryland Club in Baltimore, where many members were said to be "elated at the news" of Sumter's fall. A visiting London newspaperman described an April 14 dinner at the club as a "secessionist evening."<sup>42</sup>

The battle for Sumter stirred some Southern feeling in the all-important border states. Kennedy wrote in his pamphlet, *The Great Drama*, that "the unnecessary bombardment of the starving garrison of Sumter was intended to stimulate the reluctant mind of Virginia to secession." The assault against the fort, he believed, was part of a campaign to sever the border states from the Union, with the seceded states actively "spreading panic . . . and thus stirring the population of the Border into sudden revolt against the Government." Kennedy saw this plan playing into the hands of Maryland secessionists, "an active, intelligent and ardent minority in the State who are bent upon forcing her into the Southern confederacy." He suggested the state legislature convene a convention to consider putting the question before Maryland's citizens. Baltimore hardware merchant Augustus J. Albert pronounced the Sumter campaign a success at stoking pro-southern sentiment. "Notwithstanding the John Brown raid, the people in both states [Maryland and Virginia], the best of them especially were enthusiastically in favor of the Union, and in Baltimore were parading the streets with Union flags . . . then came the first gun at Sumter, then the change." The *Baltimore Sun* went further, casting the aggrieved Palmetto State in the role of the American colonies at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War:

Now is the time for every good citizen to use all his influence to stay the onset, push back the advancing and furious contestants, and insist upon a peaceful adjustment of the cause of the strife . . . the war spirit of the North, that war spirit which it is so difficult to arouse against a foreign foe, is instantly inflamed versus the members of our national household. . . . And for what? . . . because they have captured a fortress within their own territory. . . . In the attack upon Sumter they have done just what the United States would have done with respect to

England at the opening of the revolutionary war, just what any nation would do under the same circumstances.<sup>43</sup>

There was no unanimity on Baltimore's streets and sidewalks. "The excitement consequent upon the stirring news from Charleston Harbor was, until about noon of Saturday, much more intense than demonstrative," related the *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, attributing the popularity of its April 15 edition to "sadness and gloomy apprehension . . . which the news of war, and of a probably bitter civil war, appears to have created even among the sober people of the north." The day following the surrender was "marked with alarming exhibitions of personal feeling or of partisan rancor. The predominant sentiment was, however, unmistakably one of devotion to the Union." A workman home from Sumter was "beset by eager listeners," who peppered him with questions about the fort and its commander's loyalty. A crowd seeking news at Baltimore and South streets encountered "a large, knatty looking individual, dressed in an orange colored jumpsuit, and hailing, it was said, from North Carolina . . . a secession cockade conspicuously displayed in his hat." The man "was bent on proselytism, and, running counter to the excited sympathies of the Unionists, soon provoked an ebullition of dislike . . . which, but for the prompt interference of the police, who escorted the stranger to his hotel, followed by a shouting throng, might have led to a serious collision." Similar incidents occurred during the day, but thanks to the police and afternoon hail the size of "well-formed peas," nothing "more serious than curses loud and deep" was heard. Crowds abated about midnight, when "earnest Union loving men returned to their [h]omes, many of whom doubtless vainly sought to 'draw around an aching breast the curtain of repose.'" A large American flag unfurled across a street in Havre-de-Grace proclaimed: "By the Eternal, the Union must and shall be preserved," while "fifteen guns were fired by the lovers of equal rights and the South at Funkstown, last night, in honor of the southern victory at Fort Sumter," reported the *Sun* on April 18. "The Sumter business is no sufficient cause for war. . . . We trust our readers will consider this subject dispassionately, even in the midst of great provocation. We are all doubtless for the Union, but the cry of Union is a barren, worthless thing." Citizens of St. Mary's County exalted at the fall of the fort. "The wildest enthusiasm broke forth among our people . . . the bells rang out a merry peal and [Riley's] 'Rifles' fired several volleys in honor of the event," related the *St. Mary's Beacon*. "We have never witnessed an excitement more general and intense . . . it indicates in the most unmistakable manner that the sympathies of our people are exclusively with the South."<sup>44</sup>

Capt. Doubleday praised the loyalty and courage of the Baltimoreans in



*Raising the Union flag once again over Fort Sumter in 1865. (From J. Clement French, The Trip of the Steamer Oceanus to Fort Sumter and Charleston, S.C. [Brooklyn, 1865.]*

Fort Sumter. "The Baltimore workmen were, at first, rather reluctant to take hold. But before long they were, if anything, more determined than any of the garrison to fight for their flag," he told the *New York Commercial* aboard the steamer *Baltic*. "We had abandoned one of our guns owing to the close fire kept upon it. Hearing a gun fired from that direction, I hastened to the spot and found the abandoned gun in active service; a party of the Baltimore men were serving it with good effect."<sup>45</sup>

Major Anderson returned to Sumter four years later to the day, on April 14, 1865, as the guest of honor at a ceremony in which the American flag was raised over the fort. He had not favored the militaristic tone of the event marking the defeat of the Confederacy and was present under order of the secretary of war. Lincoln had declined the invitation to attend. At dinner that evening Major Anderson offered a toast to the president:

I beg you, now, that you will join me in drinking the health . . . of the man who, when elected President of the United States, was compelled to reach the seat of government without an escort, but a man who now could travel all over our country with millions of hands and hearts to sustain him. I give you the good, the great, the honest man, Abraham Lincoln.<sup>46</sup>

In Washington the President and Mrs. Lincoln were at that moment setting off for an evening at Ford's theater.

#### NOTES

1. The federal tariff had been 25 percent in 1816 and 33 percent in 1824. For the nullification crisis and its background, see William W. Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816–1836* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), considered a standard work on the topic; William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion: Secessionists at Bay, 1776–1854* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 254–86 (quote on p. 259); and Irving H. Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1993), 177–201.
2. W. A. Swanberg, *First Blood: The Story of Fort Sumter* (New York: Scribner, 1957), 10 (Columbia Minute Men), 15 (cheering for Lincoln and Charleston Minute Men), 17 (grand jury and judge); C. Vann Woodward & Elisabeth Muhlenfeld, *The Private Mary Chesnut: The Unpublished Civil War Diaries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 3–4.
3. D. C. Buell, assistant adjutant-general, to Anderson, December 11, 1860, and John B. Floyd to Anderson, December 21, 1860, in *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Congress, 1881–1901) [hereinafter OR], Series I, 1:89, 103. A facsimile of Floyd's letter is in Eba Anderson Lawton, *Major Robert Anderson and Fort Sumter 1861* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1911), 6–7. There are slight differences in punctuation between the actual letter and the version

given in OR (Lawton was Anderson's daughter). Anderson sent army adjutant-general Samuel Cooper a clipping about his visit from Buell from the December 13 *Charleston Mercury*, "to show you the almost impossibility of keeping anything secret." See OR, Series I, 1:92. Laborers in *Baltimore Sun*, December 19, 1860.

4. C. T. Mason, Sumter, South Carolina, November 3, 13, and 21; Thomas Steed (or Steen), Greenville, South Carolina, November 20 and December 27, 1860; Joel Smith, Brewerton, South Carolina, December 29, 1860; Steele & Co., Rock Hill, South Carolina, December 2, 1860; Moores & Major, Anderson Courthouse, South Carolina, October 4 (emphasis theirs) and December 4, 1860, all to Magruder, Taylor & Roberts, Magruder, Taylor & Roberts Papers, MS 553, Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore.

5. *Baltimore Sun*, November 16, 19, 22, and 24 (Yellott resolution), 1860, and December 5, 1860 (P. H. Lee, emphases Lee's). Harry Lee served George Washington in the Revolutionary War and was father to Robert E. Lee. (P. H. Lee's employment of "mettle" would have assured a clever *jeu de mot*.)

6. Anderson feint credited to *Charleston Mercury* in *Baltimore Sun*, December 31, 1860.

7. Robert Barnwell, J. H. Adams, and James L. Orr to James Buchanan, January 1, 1861, in OR, Series I, 1:120–24.

8. Bruce Catton, *The Coming Fury* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1961) 304–5. Anderson was left to twist in the winds of Charleston harbor by a indecisive President Buchanan and an incompetent and corrupt secretary of war, John B. Floyd, who refused to give him detailed instructions. Anderson's move to Sumter and its far-reaching implications are thoroughly and engagingly examined in Swanberg, *First Blood*.

9. Daniel M. Thomas to Sister, November 25, 1860, Thomas Papers, MS 1970, and Thomas J. Hanson to John L. Manning, December 27, 1860, MS 1860, both in Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society; *Frederick Herald* in *Baltimore Sun*, November 28, 1860. The Maryland legislature met semi-annually and was not in session in 1860.

10. John D. Roberts, December 9, 10, 28, and 30, 1860, all to Magruder, Taylor & Roberts, Magruder Papers, Maryland Historical Society. Roberts also complained, in a letter from Newman, Georgia, on December 23 that "the currency of this country is so much disarranged that it is almost impossible to get exchange."

11. Virginia Jeans Laas, *Wartime Washington: The Civil War Letters of Elizabeth Blair Lee* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 19 ("no political event"); "Law Grays" in *Baltimore Sun*, November 13, 1860; Daniel M. Thomas to Sister, February 10, 1861, Thomas Papers, MS 1970, and William Welch to "Dear Brother" Hershey, January 26, 1861, Rev. Fletcher E. Marine Papers, MS 1016.3, both in Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society. Francis Preston Blair built Silver Spring, a home six miles north of the White House; Zouaves were French colonial troops who fought in Algeria, and some regiments in both Union and Confederate armies emulated their colorful dress and military drill.

12. St. Mary's citizens and Contee/Hicks in *Baltimore Sun*, November 24 and December 21, 1860; *Baltimore Sun*, December 27 (visitors) and December 28, 1860 (Friends of the Union). Article IV of the U.S. Constitution directed that slaves escaping to so-called free states be returned to their owners. Because the wording was vague, Congress enacted a number of fugitive-slave laws, beginning in 1793. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 (part of the Compromise of 1850) was the most expansive of those. Personal Liberty Laws, designed to counteract the Fugitive Slave Act, were enacted by ten northern states sanctioning the refusal of their citizens to return slaves to their owners, as required by the Act—a rare example of "states' rights" in the North.

13. Frank Moore, *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events*, 12 vols. (repr. Arno

Press, 1977), volume I, Diary, 9, Documents, 17–18 (“should I be”), quoted in Catton, *The Coming Fury*, 194; Whittingham to Hicks, January 9, 1861, in William Francis Brand: *Life of William Rollinson Whittingham II* (New York: E. & J. B. Young & Co., 1883), 10; John G. Stone in *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, January 8, 1861 (“firmness in not”); A. E. Carroll to T. H. Hicks, November 1860, Carroll papers, quoted in Janet L. Coryell, *Neither Heroine Nor Fool: Anna Ella Carroll of Maryland* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1990), 47.

14. *Official Records*, Series I, 1:115–18; Swanberg, *First Blood*, 123. On December 27 South Carolina occupied Fort Moultrie and Castle Pinckney, and Fort Johnson on January 2.

15. A half-hearted attempt to resupply and reinforce Anderson was made in early 1861, when Buchanan sent an unarmed merchant ship, the *Star of the West*, into Charleston harbor on January 9—“the opening ball of the Revolution,” said the *Charleston Mercury* the next day (quoted in Maury Klein, *Days of Defiance: Sumter, Secession, and the Coming of the Civil War* [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1997], 202). The *Star of the West* was frightened away by Carolinian guns fired from Fort Moultrie and Morris Island, and Anderson—given his vague orders to act “defensively”—kept Sumter’s cannons quiet during the exchange. The first shots of the Civil War were thus fired by Citadel cadet George E. Haynesworth of Sumter, South Carolina, who despite his poor aim enjoyed a brief moment of fame. See *Charleston Courier*, January 23, 1861, cited in Swanberg, *First Blood*, 146. In July Elizabeth Blair Lee described Buchanan thus: “The people in Pa[.] treat [Buck] with great contempt,” and “Buchanan sat for four years in Washington like a large, white milk and bread poultice drawing rebellion to a head.” See Laas, *Wartime Washington*, 31 n17.

16. The Border State Plan also proposed amending the Missouri Compromise line by extending it through existing territories, and—in a nod to the popular sovereignty of Stephen A. Douglas—allowing people of the territories to choose how they would deal with slavery. A resolution offered by Roger A. Pryor of Virginia that preserving the union “by force, would be equally unconstitution[al], impolite and destructive of republican liberty” was not adopted. Harris’s notes also include—as far as this writer knows—the only list of delegates to this meeting of the border states. See J. Morrison Harris Papers, December 27, 1860, and January 3–4, 1861, MS 2739, Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society, and appendix therein for his delegate list. See Daniel Crofts, *Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 195–214, for a succinct account of the Senate Crittenden Committee, the House Committee of 33, and the Border State Plan—all compromise efforts designed to defuse the crisis by coaxing back the seceded states or, failing that, forestalling further secessions by the upper-south states.

17. Laas, *Wartime Washington*, 23. “John R.” was John R. Thomson, Democratic senator from New Jersey. Laas notes on page 24 n3 that “Scott at this time was seventy-five years old and in such poor health that he could not mount a horse or even enter his carriage by himself,” so his weight may have actually offered no advantage over Toombs, who would briefly serve as the Confederacy’s secretary of state before joining its army, where he was badly wounded at Antietam.

18. *Boston Courier*, *Boston Atlas and Bee*, *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, and *Baltimore Exchange* all quoted in Moore, *Rebellion Record*, Vol. 1, Document 9, p. 9 (emphasis *Courier’s*); *Baltimore Sun*, December 28 and 31, 1860; Abner Doubleday, *Reminiscences of Forts Sumter and Moultrie in 1860–’61* (New York, 1876, repr. Charleston: The Nautical & Aviation Publishing Company of America, 1998), 97. Guiseppe Garibaldi, an Italian patriot and soldier who in the mid-nineteenth century fought for a united Italy, was a revered figure among American federalists at the time.

19. John Fulton, "The 'Southern Rights' and 'Union' Parties Contrasted" (Baltimore, 1863), 15–16; *Baltimore American*, January 10, 1861 (Frederick meeting).
20. *State of the Union*, Speech of Hon. J. Morrison Harris, of Maryland, U.S. House of Representatives, January 29, 1861, J. Morrison Harris Papers, MS 2739, Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society; "F." in *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, January 7, 1861.
21. Lucius E. Chittenden, *A Report of the Debates and Proceedings in Secret Sessions of the Conference Convention, for Proposing Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, held at Washington, D.C., A.D., 1861* (New York, 1864), 449 (Johnson), 295 (Crisfield), 385–87. Maryland called its own peace conference, which met on February 18 and after a brief session adjourned until March 12, to meet earlier only if Virginia were to secede. The conference did reconvene on March 12 but achieved little—see George L. Radcliffe, Governor Thomas H. Hicks of Maryland and the Civil War, Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, Series XIX, nos. 11–12 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1902), 41–42, for details. See Robert Gray Gunderson, *Old Gentlemen's Convention: The Washington Peace Conference of 1861* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961), 105–6, for a complete discussion of the Washington Peace Conference and its list of delegates.
22. Francis Pickens to J. Thomson Mason, February 7, 1861, Francis Pickens Papers, New York Public Library, quoted in Swanberg, *First Blood*, 192–93; *Richmond Enquirer*, December 25, 1860, in James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States, 1850–1877* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1910), 3:300; Thomas W. Gough in *St. Mary's Beacon*, March 7, 1861, cited in Edwin W. Beitzell, *Point Lookout Prison Camp for Confederates* (Leonardtown, Md., 1983), 5; Bladensburg man in Benson J. Lossing, *Pictorial History of the Civil War*, Vol. 1 (Philadelphia, 1866), 142.
23. Swanberg, *First Blood*, 234–35. Lincoln was impressed by a Sumter reinforcement plan prepared by his postmaster general, Montgomery Blair of Maryland, and Blair's brother-in-law, ex-navy captain Gustavus Vasa Fox of Massachusetts.
24. First Inaugural Address—Final Text and First Inaugural Address—First Edition and Revisions, both March 4, 1861, quoted in Roy P. Basler, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 8 vols. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 4:266 and 254; submarine and balloons in *Charleston Courier*, March 18, 1861, cited in Swanberg, *First Blood*, 235; "A Republican" to Abraham Lincoln, April 3, 1861, and J. H. Jordan, Cincinnati, to Abraham Lincoln, April 4, 1861, both quoted in Harold Holzer, *Dear Mr. Lincoln: Letters to the President* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1993), 144–45 (underscores Jordan's), and David C. Mearns, *The Lincoln Papers*, 2 vols. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1948), 2:516 and 523; James L. Hill to "Dear Old Abe," March 14, 1861, quoted in Mearns, *Lincoln Papers*, 2:484.
25. John C. Robinson, "Baltimore in 1861," *The Magazine of American History*, 14 (September, 1885): 260 ("the officers at"); Buchanan plot in Roy F. Nichols, *The Disruption of American Democracy* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 427; Coad and Milburn in *St. Mary's Beacon*, March 7, 1861, in Beitzell, *Point Lookout Prison Camp*, 5; C.C. [Shriver] to F[rederick] A. Shriver, February 2, 1861, MS 2085, Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society. Robinson cites as footnotes letters from Wigfall to General Beauregard and Confederate Secretary of War L. P. Walker concerning Wigfall's Baltimore recruiting activities.
26. Laas, *Wartime Washington*, 33, 35.
27. William H. Russell, *My Diary North and South* (London, 1863), 74–75, in Klein, *Days of Defiance*, 350; Woodward & Muhlenfeld, *The Private Mary Chesnut*, 34; A. Toomer Porter,

- Led On! Step By Step* (New York, 1898), 122, in Swanberg, *First Blood*, 134 (“there will be”).
28. Lincoln to Cabinet, March 15, 1861, in *OR*, Series I, 1:196; *Baltimore Sun*, April 4, 1860; *Philadelphia Bulletin* in *Charleston Courier*, March 18, 1861, cited in Swanberg, *First Blood*, 235. Daniel M. Thomas to “My Dear Sister,” March 25, 1861, Thomas Papers, MS 1970; “Howard,” West (or Nest) C. H., to Emily Barton Brune, March 25, 1861, Brune-Randall Papers, MS 2004 (“cling to the”); and [William] Mentzel to Madame [Elizabeth Patterson] Bonaparte, March 6, 1861, MS 142, all in Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society.
29. Joshua Whitney to Lincoln, March 23, 1861, in Holzer, *Dear Mr. Lincoln*, 77. Holzer notes that no copy exists of a reply, though noted on the letter is “Returned money & photograph May 23.” John Bell of Tennessee and Edward Everett of Massachusetts ran as the Constitutional Union Party’s presidential and vice-presidential nominees in 1860.
30. *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, 4 vols. (New York: Fairfax Press, 1979), 1:56 (yarn and cartridge bags); Swanberg, *First Blood*, 242–44 (Sumter evacuation headlines in *Charleston Courier* of March 13; “the garrison was”).
31. Henry G. Connor, *John Archibald Campbell* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920), 127–28 (Seward pledge re Sumter); Beauregard to Cooper, March 25, 1861, in *OR*, Series I, 1:281 (sixty-four Baltimoreans on March 23), 284 (recruits returned); *Baltimore Sun*, April 9 and 11, 1861 (Baltimoreans to Charleston); *Charleston Courier*, April 8, 1860. The New York correspondents were George Salter of the *Times* and F. G. Fontaine of the *Herald*. Campbell was an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court from 1853 to 1861.
32. Reprovision notices, 289, 291; Cameron to Anderson, April 4, 1861, 235; Anderson to Thomas, April 8, 1861, 294, all in *OR*, Series I, Vol. 1. Lincoln’s terse message to Pickens was not addressed and unsigned; his emissary, Robert Chew, was not authorized to accept a reply—no doubt reflecting the president’s view that Pickens and his seceded state had no standing to negotiate with the U.S. government. See summary in Kenneth P. Williams, *Lincoln Finds a General*, 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1949–1959), 1:43–45. Anderson letter intercepted in Swanberg, *First Blood*, 282.
33. “Journal of Captain J. G. Foster,” October 1, 1861, in *OR*, Series I, 1:17–18 (bread, blankets, clothing and needles); Samuel W. Crawford, *The Genesis of the Civil War: The Story of Fort Sumter, 1860–1860* (New York: Charles L. Webster & Co., 1887), 399 (rice); S. W. Crawford Diary, April 11, 1861, quoted in Swanberg, *First Blood*, 290 (potato).
34. Baltimore correspondent “To Abem. Lincon Esqr,” April 11, 1861, in Mearns, *Lincoln Papers*, 2:538; Unsigned to Hicks, *Baltimore American Commercial Advertiser*, January 1, 1861; *Baltimore Sun*, April 8, 1861; Levin Tilman to Lincoln, April 8, 1861, in Holzer, *Dear Mr. Lincoln*, 241–42. Holzer notes that no reply is known. Two years would elapse before Lincoln recruited black soldiers.
35. John P. Kennedy to George S. Bryan, March 15, 1861, Kennedy, *Letter Book*, 222–23; John P. Kennedy to Sir Charles Wood, April 6, 1861, 237–41, Kennedy, *Letter Book*; John P. Kennedy, “Journal, 1859–61,” George Peabody Library, all quoted in William C. Wright, *The Secession Movement in the Middle Atlantic States* (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1973), 50; Union meeting at Barnum’s in *Baltimore American Commercial Advertiser*, April 12, 1861.
36. James Chesnut and Stephen D. Lee to Anderson, April 11, 1861 (surrender demand and rejection), and April 12, 1861 (notice to open fire), both in *OR*, Series I, 1:13–14; *Battles and Leaders*, 1:76 (“seemed to realize”). The two aides were Colonel James Chesnut, a former U.S. senator from South Carolina, and Stephen D. Lee, a West Point graduate who had resigned from the U.S. Army and who would earn distinction as a Confederate officer (and

who is quoted here). Buchanan had removed Beauregard as commandant at West Point after five days, following Beauregard's vow to fight with Louisiana if it seceded. See Swanberg, *First Blood*, 166–67.

37. *Baltimore Sun*, April 13, 1861 (“the republican press”); Swanberg, *First Blood*, 299 (“showed his contempt”); Abner Doubleday, *Reminiscences*, 144 (shell fragment); Isabella D. Martin & Myrta Lockett Avery, *Mary Boykin Chesnut, A Diary from Dixie* (New York: Peter Smith, 1905), 76, both cited in Swanberg, *First Blood*, 299. (A 1949 version of *A Diary from Dixie* relates on page 36 the tale of Mrs. Chesnut's dress.) Doubleday's account of the shell near his head is also in *Battles and Leaders*, 1:47. He is frequently and mistakenly credited with inventing the game of baseball. See Harold Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. 1, The Early Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 5–12, for a succinct discussion of this myth's origin and the authentic story of the game's beginning.

38. Alfred Roman, *The Military Operations of General Beauregard* (New York, 1884), 1:46, cited in Swanberg, *First Blood*, 314–15 (Confederate cheering); Doubleday, *Reminiscences*, 152–53. Mary Chesnut noted the South Carolinian tribute to the bravery of Anderson's men. See Woodward & Muhlenfeld, *The Private Mary Chesnut*, 60.

39. Catton, *The Coming Fury*, 24 (Wigfall at Sumter); *Battles & Leaders*, 1:73 (Anderson quote); Crawford, *Genesis of the Civil War*, 442, cited in Swanberg, *First Blood*, 321, and Doubleday, *Reminiscences*, 170 (Pryor). The surrender had a note of tragedy when one of Anderson's gunners, firing a one-hundred-gun salute to the flag, was killed while loading a cartridge that exploded prematurely. The *Baltimore Sun* of April 16, 1861, states that three privates in Company E, 1st Regiment, U.S. Army, were killed by the exploding cartridge, and that three other privates from the same company were badly wounded in the incident. The paper identified two of the dead as Daniel Howe (given by some sources as “Hough”) and Edward Galway. See also Doubleday's account in *Reminiscences*, 171–72). One man was badly wounded during the bombardment, John Swearer, a mason from Baltimore. See *Battles and Leaders*, 1:52; Doubleday, *Reminiscences*, 166 (who gives the name as “Schweirer”); and a note referencing Swearer as the only man seriously wounded at Sumter (F. Seymour to Commander Foote, June 17, 1861, MS 1860, Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society). A letter from Edward Everett Warner to the *Baltimore Sun* dated May 12, 1890, refers to a wound sustained at Sumter by John Swearer, “a modest layer of bricks” who “rushed to the front” during the bombardment. Warner says he obtained a monthly pension of \$20 for Swearer, noting that there was “no pension provision by law for non-enlisted patriots, however daring.” (Warner letter in MS 1860, Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society.)

40. Swanberg, *First Blood*, 330 (“their desperate battle”); Bayly Ellen Marks & Mark Norton Schatz, *Between North and South: A Maryland Journalist Views the Civil War* (Cranbury, N.J.: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1976), 27 (Walters); John P. Kennedy, *The Great Drama: An Appeal to Maryland*, Baltimore (May 9, 1861, n.p.), 7 (“no man in”).

41. *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, April 13, 1861.

42. Allen Bowie Davis to William D. Davis, April 16, 1861, Allen W. Davis Papers, MS 1511, Manuscripts Division, Maryland Historical Society; William Howard Russell, *My Diary North and South* (London, 1863), 1:114, in Robert J. Brugger, *The Maryland Club: A History of Food and Friendship in Baltimore, 1857–1997* (Baltimore: The Maryland Club, 1998), 17 (“elated at”), and Martin Crawford, *William Howard Russell's Civil War: Private Diary and Letters, 1861–1862* (Athens, Ga., 1992), in Brugger, 21 (“secessionist evening”).

43. Kennedy, *The Great Drama*, 4 (“the unnecessary bombardment . . .”) 5, 16 (call for convention); Augustus J. Albert, *Civil War Experiences*, (Baltimore, 1861), 1; *Baltimore Sun*, April 15, 1861 (“now is the time”).

44. *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, April 15, 1861 (“the excitement consequent,” Sumter workman, “a large knatty,” and “well-formed peas”); *Baltimore Sun*, April 18, 1861 (Havre de Grace, Funkstown, “we say at once”); *St. Mary’s Beacon*, April 18, 1861, in Beitzell, *Point Lookout Prison Camp*, 5.
45. *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser*, April 22, 1861 (Doubleday interview).
46. Anderson toast in E. D. Townsend, *Anecdotes of the Civil War* (New York, 1884), quoted in Swanberg, *First Blood*, 339.

## Book Reviews

*Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America.* By Ira Berlin. (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998. 507 pages. Tables, notes, index. \$29.95 cloth.)

Ira Berlin's 1980 article in the *American Historical Review* (85:44–78), "Time, Space, and the Evolution of Afro-American Society on British Mainland North America," fundamentally reshaped the framework by which contemporary historians have characterized the variety of forms that slavery assumed in pre-Revolutionary British America. In his excellent new book, Berlin elaborates on his own now-familiar perspective that the development of slave societies during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was a complicated process, rife with conflict, and necessarily conditioned by the temporal and geographic space inhabited by European and African peoples alike. This impressive synthesis reminds us all that although slavery may appear on the surface to have been an ever-expanding, all-encompassing, oppressive institution, it was also challenged and reshaped by those very people it sought to exploit. In Berlin's hands, the story of early American slavery is not simply a saga of labor and physical domination, it is a thoroughly human tale of the emergence of an African-American people and culture characterized by self-assertion, social consciousness, and political activism.

American slavery was a constantly changing and remarkably adaptive institution. At root, however, much of the story of American slavery was conditioned by the transformation of the early colonies from "societies with slaves" to full-fledged "slave societies." As Berlin rightly emphasizes, slavery existed in every American colony, regardless of region, religion, or national origin. Yet, not all colonies became slave societies, where "slavery stood at the center of economic production, and the master-slave relationship provided the model for all social relations" (8). This transition question is at the heart of Berlin's work, but the author also adheres to his own emphasis on time and space by avoiding both a simple chronological framework and a crude North-South dichotomy. Rather, Berlin argues that the most productive way to imagine early North American slavery is to envisage the continent as four broad, admittedly generalized, regions—the North, the Chesapeake, the Lowcountry, and the Lower Mississippi Valley—during three distinct periods.

The first stage of slavery in North America was characterized by the experiences of the charter generations, or those who slipped into North America before large-scale plantations were normative. Many of these people were "Atlan-

tic creoles,” or highly skilled, multi-lingual, cross-cultural mediators who already had some knowledge of the Atlantic world and were therefore able to use their expertise to achieve some measure of success after their enslavement. The most famous example of this kind of individual was Anthony Johnson, the former Virginia slave who, in the course of a lifetime, married, gained his freedom, established a freehold on the Eastern Shore, and left a significant legacy to subsequent generations of free blacks. In the North, many “Atlantic creoles” were able to establish firm roots in port cities, where they managed to “incorporate themselves into the mainstream of northern life and enjoy many of the rights of free people” (54). Members of the charter generations were able to conduct their lives with a degree of dignity that would diminish in later years.

With the exception of the American North, charter generations were succeeded by the plantation generations. This transition was conditioned by the development of staple crop agriculture. Thus, tobacco cultivation fundamentally altered the nature of slavery in the Chesapeake during the final decades of the seventeenth century, while rice and indigo had the same effect on the Lower South and sugar and cotton in the Lower Mississippi Valley at different times during the eighteenth century. The growth of plantations degraded the life of slaves as their world was increasingly ordered by commercial production for the benefit of the newly emergent planter class. The results were catastrophic: manumission became more difficult to attain, violence increasingly typified master-slave relations, and racial ideologies began to support the construction of social castes that elevated all whites, regardless of class, at the expense of all black people, regardless of status. At the same time, the emergence of plantations signaled the rapid expansion of the African populations, particularly in the Chesapeake and Lowcountry. The new African arrivals were often the engine of cultural change, what Berlin refers to as the “reafricanization” of African-American culture, which often resulted in increased levels of resistance, a new solidarity, and a more fulfilling independent social life.

Finally, slavery was defined by the emergence of revolutionary generations, or those who shaped, and were shaped by, the ideological forces of freedom and liberty in the era of Atlantic revolutions—the American, French, and Haitian. If the strength of slavery during the eighteenth century rested on the unbridled power of the planter class, the American Revolution, and radical ideas like universal equality, gave slaves a new weapon in their ongoing struggle against their supposed masters. In the North, this spelled doom for the institution, albeit gradually. Slavery may not have perished in the Chesapeake or Lower South, but the war also modified these two core slave societies, although in different ways. For example, African-American society cohered in the Chesapeake while it fractured in the Lowcountry, where a small group of free blacks recognized that their fate hinged on the degree to which they assimilated the values of white

society. Also, Lowcountry planters chose to reopen the transatlantic slave trade after the war, introducing thousands of new African slaves into the region. Thus, while the Chesapeake continued to rely solely on American-born blacks after the war, the Carolinas and Georgia experienced another era of “reafricanization,” which encouraged the development of a regionally-specific variant of African-American culture in the nineteenth century.

Much of this work is synthetic in nature, drawing together the various strands of scholarship that have reinvented the study of early American slavery during the last few decades. Berlin’s most original argument—the existence of a generation of people most usefully imagined as “Atlantic creoles”—is an ingenious example of the way historical considerations of culture can usefully be reformulated within the confines of the Atlantic world. Nonetheless, Berlin generally maintains that African-American culture was primarily shaped by the new plantation economies and their unique labor requirements in the New World. This perspective contrasts with other recent studies, such as those of John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), and Michael Gomez, *Exchanging our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), that emphasize the perseverance of African cultural precedents, including the vitality of specific West African ethnic and national groups, in the formation and articulation of African-American cultural identity. While Berlin’s notion of “Atlantic creoles” remains open to further questions (i.e., Did they really characterize the majority experience of the charter generations?), the concept adds some welcome subtlety to the often overly-polarized characterizations of creolization that typify modern scholarship.

Berlin’s synthesis is at once highly structured yet deeply informed by the innumerable variations on his predominant themes. More than once the author emphasizes that the social processes and transformations that bind this work together were “neither automatic nor unreflective, neither uniform nor unilinear” (105). Yet, Berlin’s greatest achievement may be in the way he has provided a manageable structure for the variety of forms that slavery and African-American life assumed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. At the same time, by placing equal emphasis on marginal regions and exceptional individuals the work may actually underestimate the shared, and broadly similar, experiences of the vast majority of slaves who lived, worked, and died in core plantation areas during the eighteenth century. We should not ignore the story of slavery in the northern colonies and Lower Mississippi Valley, but it should also be remembered that roughly 90 percent of all Africans and African-Americans in the period under study could be found in either the Chesapeake or the Lowcountry.

It would be unfair to ask this already impressive work to do more than the author intended. Nonetheless, scholars may hunger for a comparative dimension reaching more broadly into other parts of the Atlantic world. Berlin's work provides an orderly and structured developmental model of racial slavery and plantation regimes in disparate settlements, initially controlled by different European nations, over a long duration of time. But for Berlin's thesis to have even greater significance beyond the parochial confines of "United States History," we still need to know whether or not "Atlantic creoles" played similar roles on Hispaniola, coastal Brazil, and the central valley of Mexico. Too, will it be possible to map a similar evolutionary process from charter through revolutionary generations, or is there something unique about the geography of mainland North America that warrants limiting this framework to the four regions Berlin details? These, of course, are questions for the rest of us to ponder. Ira Berlin has done quite enough. His work will be, and should be, required reading for specialists and nonspecialists alike for years to come.

MICHAEL J. GUASCO  
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*Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World.* By Alison Games. (Harvard Historical Studies, 133. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999. 335 pages. Tables, maps, illustrations, appendices, notes, index. \$45.)

In 1635, 7,507 people sailed from the port of London for England's American colonies or for the European continent. Port officials recorded the names of all who left, creating the largest record of embarkation from one English port during the colonial period. Almost 5,000 of these voyagers (along with another 5,000 who left from other English ports) were destined for the American colonies of Providence, Henrietta, Tortuga, Barbados, Bermuda, Nevis, Antigua, St. Kitts, Virginia, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Plymouth. In *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World*, Alison Games has undertaken the monumental task of attempting to trace each of these port of London travelers in the colonies as far as the records allow. She read archival and printed sources for all early-seventeenth century English colonies, and in so doing, found information about 1,360 of the 1635 travelers, about 27 percent of those who left from the port of London for America that year.

Games uses the information she has gathered to compare various aspects of migration to England's early-seventeenth century colonies; to compare the experiences of travelers in various locations; and, most importantly, to "measure the scope of the emerging English Atlantic world in the seventeenth century" (9). Because the records of her travelers are most numerous for the years immediately following their 1635 voyage, her focus is on the 1630s and 1640s, though

her information about these individuals spans the period from the 1610s to the 1680s.

By examining one cohort of travelers in such detail, Games is able to draw new comparisons between colonial experiences. She does an excellent job presenting the comparisons in numerous clear tables, covering topics ranging from age structure and sex ratio to persistence rates and material successes. One of Games' challenges certainly must have been organizational, and creating a coherent book out of a project such as this must have required leaving out a great deal. It is unfortunate that she did not supply fuller notes that would have provided her readers with further elaboration of evidence she could not include in the text.

While her information about New England and the Chesapeake is often familiar, what Games can tell us about other colonies is frequently new, and her ability to put the more familiar evidence in a broader Atlantic context commonly forces readers to reconsider its significance or representativeness. For example, her depiction of New England puritanism would not, if read alone, appear new, but by placing it in an Atlantic context that includes not only England but also the puritan colonies of Providence Island and Bermuda, she argues convincingly that New Englanders' attempts to form gathered churches were unusual even among American colonizing puritans. By exploring controversies over the definitions of puritan societies in all three places as well as in England, she suggests that the debates in New England during the 1630s were not unique, but that the outcomes of these debates in New England, when viewed in an Atlantic context, were indeed unusual. In other words, Games' broad Atlantic perspective is important not just because it insists that places like Bermuda and Providence Island were part of the seventeenth-century English colonists' world, but also because it forces us to change the way we need to think about seemingly familiar events in better-studied colonies.

Throughout the book, Games does an excellent job placing the 1635 travelers' transatlantic migrations within the context of other English migrations in England and Europe, reminding her readers that travelers to American mainland and island colonies faced an array of choices and were likely to have experienced migration already. They were not likely to consider their 1635 voyage as final, and in fact often did move on within or between colonies. In assessing the processes of migration and remigration, Games concludes that multiple migrations created a colonial populace that was not as provincial as we commonly imagine, and that this process of migration not only populated England's American colonies but created the English Atlantic world.

*Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World*, then, makes the point indisputably that individuals involved in colonial migration and remigration created a broadly conceived English Atlantic world, and suggests that that At-

lantic world provides a necessary context for understanding any more particular questions of early-seventeenth century English American colonization.

APRIL L. HATFIELD  
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*Chevy Chase, A Home Suburb for the Nation's Capital.* By Elizabeth Lampl and Kimberly Prothro Williams. (Crownsville, Md.: Montgomery County Preservation Commission, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Maryland Historical Trust Press, 1998. 168 pages. Appendix, notes, index. \$25.00 paper.)

Chevy Chase began as a streetcar suburb on the city limits of Washington, D.C., in 1893 when the capital's northern fringes were still woods and farmland. Chevy Chase is not only the name of a Scottish Ballad but also means a chase or a hunt in the Cheviot Hills. The project was the brainchild of Francis Griffith Newlands, who had married into a Nevada gold and silver fortune. Newlands developed late Victorian suburbs in both Reno, Nevada, and Montgomery County, Maryland. With more than 1,700 acres just outside the city limits of Washington, the Chevy Chase development was intended to be top of the line. Newlands envisioned a clientele drawn from "the leisure class," and the anticipated dwellings were to be on a very large scale on multi-acre lots. There was room for three golf courses and plenty of space for fox hunting based at the country club. Chevy Chase was not an Olmsted project but its actual designers were admirers of Olmsted the Elder; eventually, the fourth stage of planning was performed by the second generation of the Olmsted firm, who were the planners of Baltimore's Roland Park, another suburb started in a sparsely populated county adjoining a major city.

Development of Chevy Chase proceeded at a leisurely pace thanks to its comfortable capitalization backed up by Newland's fortune. The "leisure class" client pool proved to be less populous than imagined by the founders of this project, but lot buyers appeared from the start in the form of professionals and government administrators.

The authors trace the growth of the community from its origin when only electric streetcar service made the neighborhood accessible, down through the early age of the automobile, and on through the two world wars and their spurts of prosperity. Much of Chevy Chase was unmapped for subdivision when the affordable and reliable automobile appeared; the later sections of the suburb were laid out specifically to serve the automobile and its drivers. Such subdivisions have been undergoing alteration to suit the motor car for almost ninety years now.

House types in Chevy Chase gradually became more modest, and the last

sections platted in the decade after World War II included some unimaginative straight-line streets relieved by an occasional cul-de-sac. This community had sewer and water supply from its very beginning. Quality of life and aesthetics came before business, even before groceries. The company provided almost no space for commerce. Residents had to patronize stores on other developers' property across the line in the nation's capital.

The appendix presents biographies of architects who fleshed out the plan with comfortable and handsome houses. These architects seem to have confined their practice to the sphere of Washington, some of them credited with notable public structures, such as the Vice President's house, but they are little known to persons studying the careers of notable architects in Baltimore.

This is an informative and splendidly illustrated book in the tradition of the Maryland Historical Trust, with numerous street plans and plats, and some large blocks of sidebar text on interesting points. Trust books now cover most of the Maryland counties; individual volumes are not slavishly alike in format or style but are uniformly useful for historians, architectural historians, planners, and preservationists.

JOHN MCGRAIN  
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*Down the Ocean: Postcards from Maryland and Delaware Beaches.* By Bert Smith, with a Foreword by Jacques Kelly. (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999. 96 pages. \$29.95 cloth.)

On opening this book the reviewer was immediately transported back in time to the summers when he and his family would go to the ocean, to the "other" Ocean City, in New Jersey. The views of brown shingle and white clapboard houses and hotels, and scenes of the boardwalk, beach, and piers, evoked a sense of nostalgia. Anyone who has ever gone "down-y-ocean" will find this book a delight to read and a treasure to hold.

Bert Smith, who is the compiler of *Greetings from Baltimore: Postcard Views of the City*, teaches in the School of Communications Design at the University of Baltimore, and collects postcards. He has combined his professional and personal interests to produce a delightful volume of text and pictures that Marylanders and postcard collectors will want to have. The book's short chapters deal with topics such as major hotels, bathing rituals, vacation humor, boating, views up and down Baltimore Avenue, and with Fenwick Island, and Bethany and Rehoboth Beaches.

The cards pictured in the book are from Mr. Smith's own collection, and from the collection of Roland Forster. Each card is slightly enlarged and numbered so that serious collectors can study the details of the cards (type of card,

publisher, and date) as given in a chart in the back of the book. The text is informative without being intrusive, and helps to capture the spirit of days gone by. The combination of pictures and text presents a slice of local history that makes the book an excellent addition to anyone's library of books about Maryland or postcard design.

ROBERT BARNES  
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*Marylanders in Blue: The Artillery and the Cavalry.* By Daniel Carroll Toomey and Charles Albert Earp. (Linthicum, Md.: Toomey Press, 1999. 170pages. Endnotes, bibliography, index, illustrations. \$34.95.)

This is the first of a projected multi-volume study that will cover every regiment raised in Maryland during the Civil War. As the authors point out in the preface, Maryland contributed more white troops to the Union cause (46,672) than New Hampshire or Vermont. In addition, the state is rivaled only by Kentucky in the number of African-American soldiers (23,763) raised for "Mr. Lincoln's Army." Maryland Union units saw action in most of the major battles of the Eastern Theater of the war.

Despite an impressive combat record, very little has been written about these units. What has been written has generally remained out-of-print. The publication of the two-volume *History and Roster of Maryland Volunteers of 1861-65* in 1898 provided students of Maryland's martial deeds both rosters and thumbnail profiles of all the units raised in "The Old Line State" for union service. This cumbersome reference work, which may be found in some libraries, went through a limited reprint in 1997.

Even harder to find are C. Armour Newcomer's *Cole's Cavalry or Three Years in the Shenandoah Valley* (Baltimore, 1895) and Frederick Wild's *Memories and History of Captain F. W. Alexander's Baltimore Battery of Light Artillery U.S.A.* (Baltimore, 1912). These stand as the only book length studies of any Maryland Union artillery and cavalry.

Toomey and Earp begin their book with a chapter on the mobilization of troops in Maryland. Sensitive to the state's ties with the rest of the South and still reeling from the Baltimore riots, Governor Thomas H. Hicks wrote a letter to President Abraham Lincoln requesting that recruitment for the Union army in Maryland be postponed. Thus, no three-month regiments were raised, forcing pro-Union citizens to go to neighboring states such as Delaware and

Pennsylvania if they desired to enlist.

Lincoln's second call for troops, this time for three years' service, resulted in the enlistment of 9,355 men. These soldiers formed the backbone of Maryland's three-year regiments. They spent the longest time in the field and suffered the heaviest casualties.

The authors point out that “with a significant number of its war aged citizens in the Confederate Army (10,000 –15,000), [Maryland] was hard pressed to fill its quotas.” (2) Although a white soldier’s pay was only \$13 a month, generous bounties were offered in order to stimulate enlistments. For example, a recruiting advertisement for Alexander’s Baltimore Light Artillery offered federal and local bounties totaling \$502. This was a handsome sum in 1863, when the typical wage was somewhere in the area of fifty cents to a dollar a day.

The authors have made very good use of primary sources for this work. Indeed, both the narrative and the endnotes reflect many hours of work at the National Archives and other repositories. For example, the diary of Captain Alonzo Snow, Battery B, First Maryland Light Artillery was found in his pension file at the National Archives. A letter from 1st Lieutenant T. J. Vannerman to his wife provides a vivid image of Antietam. “Thank God that none of our battery were killed in the terrible battle of yesterday. . . . The rebels have suffered heavily. In one place not fifty yards from our right piece in a space not longer than [the] above are 33 dead rebel . . . and all around their dead bodies lie. You can not move in any way but what you will see them . . . their mangled forms look horrible. In one body there were seventeen bullets and others shot in all shapes and forms imaginable. Such a sight I never want to see again and I never want to spend another night on a battlefield.” (37).

Mounted units saw diverse service. The Purnell Legion Cavalry was in the battle of Gettysburg, and Cole’s Cavalry fought one of the last actions of the war on Maryland soil at Antietam’s “Middle Bridge” on August 5, 1864. Of all the Maryland Union units, perhaps the Third Cavalry had the most atypical tour of duty. Almost half of this command was composed of “Galvanized Yankees” recruited from among the Confederate prisoners at Fort Delaware. Once this regiment was organized, it was shipped off to Louisiana for duty in the bayous of that state.

One of the strengths of this book is its illustrations, many of which are from author Toomey’s personal collection. These include rare photographic images of Maryland soldiers and photos of artifacts such as swords and camp equipment. Earp and Toomey have provided students of Maryland in the Civil War with a very useful reference book.

TED ALEXANDER  
*Antietam National Battlefield*

*Confederate Admiral: The Life and Wars of Franklin Buchanan.* By Craig L. Symonds. (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1999. 312 pages. Photographs, illustrations, maps, notes, chronology, bibliography, index. \$32.95.)

Despite his rich lifetime of accomplishments in both the United States and

Confederate navies, Franklin Buchanan has remained without a modern biography, a seventy-year hole in the literature desperately in need of filling. (The last and only biography of Buchanan was Charles Lee Lewis, *Admiral Franklin Buchanan, Fearless Man of Action* [Baltimore: Norman Remington, 1929]). Craig L. Symonds marvelously fills this gap with a solid, well-researched, yet entertaining account of the life of one of America's most prominent naval officers and the Confederacy's greatest naval hero. Professor Symonds traces Buchanan's fifty-year career from his first service in the Mediterranean as a midshipman aboard the U.S.S. *Java* at the tender age of fourteen to his final command at Mobile Bay nearly fifty years later as the sole admiral in the Confederate Navy aboard his flagship, the ill-fated C.S.S. *Tennessee*. During those fifty years, Buchanan served throughout the world—showing the flag in the Mediterranean, chasing pirates in the Caribbean, and playing the role of diplomat in the Pacific—all the while slowly making his way up the promotion ladder, a difficult process as the navy had no retirement policy prior to the 1850s. Symonds pays particular attention to Buchanan's more notable accomplishments: the first superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy; second-in-command during Commodore Matthew Perry's famed mission to Japan in 1853 (Buchanan was the first American official to set foot on Japanese soil); his controversial actions in the mid-1850s as a member of the Navy Retirement Board; and, finally, his central role during two of the Civil War's most prominent naval battles—at Hampton Roads in 1862 aboard the C.S.S. *Virginia* and at Mobile Bay in 1864.

While his list of accomplishments suggests a career without major controversy, Buchanan did run afoul of both enlisted seamen and his brother officers. Known as a strict disciplinarian aboard ship with a "very low tolerance" for anyone under his command who "exhibited evidence of moral weakness" (i.e. drunkenness), Buchanan frequently applied the lash and criticized those officers who did not (55). Symonds describes Buchanan's views on discipline and moral order as a "curious combination of southern aristocrat and Yankee Puritan," an ironic blending as Buchanan would come to despise everything "Yankee" in his later years (55). While this comparison seems apt, Symonds does little to establish its validity, relying on stereotypes of Puritan behavior and using an extreme example, his father-in-law Edward Lloyd, from Maryland's Eastern Shore, as a model for the southern aristocrat.

Here lies the principal problem with Symonds's analysis—very little effort has been made to place Buchanan in the larger context of his times, whether in comparison to the southern aristocracy as a whole (Lloyd probably falls on the more cruel end of the spectrum of slave owners) or to Buchanan's fellow officers. Symonds gives the impression that Buchanan's maintenance of discipline was extreme by navy standards, but aside from the testimony of some enlisted men upset with their punishments, he presents very little evidence placing

Buchanan's actions in comparison with his contemporary officers. The same can be said for Buchanan's self-declared role as a reformer. Was Buchanan's effort to clear out the "indifferent worthless officers" (116) an anomaly among his brethren of the 1850s, or did it reflect a wider feeling within the ranks of the navy?

Along these same lines, Symonds also runs into trouble when it comes to determining much of Buchanan's views. "Would have" and "probably" pepper Symonds's analysis of Buchanan's life. Much of this speculation is quite logical and often supported by secondary evidence, but at times, particularly regarding Buchanan's personal views on the institution of slavery and his politics, this speculation can be problematic. Professor Symonds should not take all the blame for this situation; as much or more should be placed on Buchanan himself. Because he did not keep a personal diary or write a memoir and his correspondence with his wife Nannie perished in the fire that destroyed their home in Eastern Maryland in 1862, the private Franklin Buchanan has been difficult to uncover. Symonds has done a spectacular amount of research in the Naval Academy archives, drawing on Buchanan's journals (which he only kept at sea), his voluminous contact with the Navy Department, and his rich correspondence with fellow officer Samuel F. Du Pont.

These minor criticisms aside, Professor Symonds has crafted an enjoyable account of the life of one of America's greatest naval figures. The pressing need for a scholarly biography of Franklin Buchanan has been admirably fulfilled by this impressive work. *Confederate Admiral* will aid scholars and the general public interested in American and Confederate naval history.

WILLIAM B. MORSE III  
University of Virginia

*Lift Every Voice: Echoes from the Black Community on Maryland's Eastern Shore.* (Wye Mill: Chesapeake College Press and Friends of the Talbot County Free Library, 1999. 180 pages. Appendices, index. \$14.95.)

*Lift Every Voice* is as close to oral history as one can get without doing the actual interviews; therein lie both its strengths and its weaknesses. Billed as "a collection of stories, including photographs and poetry, about life in the black community of Talbot County and surrounding counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore" (v), the book comprises residents' reminiscences of life and tales handed down through generations. Because most of the authors have retired from their careers, the stories detail life during an era of racial segregation, before the Supreme Court ruling in *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*.

Kweisi Mfume, in an interview for *Maryland Magazine*, commented that, while never defending segregation, he thought that the spirit of community was greater during the pre-1954 days. "You look also at the communities, which

were so integrated in terms of class mix that you had black doctors and black attorneys and black school teachers living in the same neighborhood with black maids and black street sweepers. There was a different kind of community, and to some extent, a different sense of value in the community.” The black communities in the Eastern Shore counties certainly were closely knit individually, while maintaining bonds with other black communities throughout the other Shore counties. In reading the book, one can see the same family names recurring, even when the authors are different with different surnames, and the level of responsibility adults felt for the children was evident.

In describing her former teacher, Ruth A. Fields Early from the St. Michael’s Colored High School, Rosella B. Camper noted, “Miss Fields’ interest did not stop at graduation. She contacted my college professors and checked on my progress” (30). Miss Fields was not alone. Pamela Bailey remembers Thelma Jones, also a teacher, who “escorted a bunch of kids to the movies at her own expense. . . . Mrs. Jones invited us to her house for lunch. . . . Little did we expect that this was her chance to teach us correct table manners” (31).

Details like these creep into most of the stories, adding substance and depth to the facts that scholars typically report; surely, they signal a bygone era. Had a scholar been able to interview the various authors, he or she might have elicited more such specifics; unfortunately, many questions linger.

The stories allude to events without giving dates, and that can frustrate the serious researcher, as in the following paragraph: “But efforts continued and gradually integration came about. Dr. Hudson, owner of Hudson’s Drugstore (now Thrift) and the owner of another drugstore near the present Acme market, agreed to open their lunch counters to blacks, once each proprietor was assured that his competitor would do likewise” (14).

While the famous sit-ins integrating lunch counters in Greensboro, North Carolina, occurred in 1960, demonstrations led mostly by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in Baltimore integrated downtown variety lunch counters in the mid 1950’s, and in 1955 Morgan State College students staged a sit-in to integrate the Read’s drugstore lunch counters. It is unclear when, exactly, the Eastern Shore communities integrated their facilities. Tantalizing bits of information appear—NAACP’s Roy Wilkins and Dr. Lillie Mae Jackson show up among the people discussed—but again, there are few dates to anchor the events.

*Lift Every Voice* is divided into four sections: “Individuals and Families,” “Community Life,” “Organizations and Institutions,” and “Poetry”; the organizational structure imposes an artificial order to the reminiscences. Some of the pieces in “Community Life” were, in fact, about people. Because the same names recur, the reader invariably flips back and forth through the book to find the other references to the person in question. As a scholarly work, then, *Lift Every Voice* falls short. Scholarship was never the intention of this book, though, and

as a charming collection of memories that preserve an era and tightly knit communities that no longer exist, it succeeds very well.

TRACY E. MILLER  
Towson University

*The Newspaper Indian: Native American Identity in the Press, 1820–90.* By John M. Coward. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999. 244 pages. Notes, index. \$19.95.)

This book covers the treatment of the American Indian in the popular press in the nineteenth century. The author asserts that the Indian identity during this period was “circumscribed by an active and powerful ideology of civilization and progress, a set of ideas about history and race in which Native Americans were understood primarily as obstacles to economic growth and national development” (228).

In the popular press Indian identity was routinely appropriated to serve specific needs at specific times. During the Civil War when the nation’s future was in doubt, the Indian was portrayed as a howling savage, capable of doing as much damage to the Republic on the Great Plains as the rebel armies were doing in the East. When made powerless and confined to reservations, Indians were idealized out of their villainous role into potential farmers and citizens of the West. At other times the theme of the “vanishing Indian” was popular with newspaper editors who liked to see the Indian as fading before the westward rush of white settlement. Indian identity was never explained in the press as something worthy of respect. Rather, the Indian’s identity and role was tied to specific political and ideological agendas which often had nothing to do with Native Americans. Thus Indians were mostly treated in the press as essentially passive objects who had no integrity or selfhood of their own. Only a few newspapers, such as Baltimore’s *Niles’ National Register* (1837–49) attempted to make sense of the Indian as a human being.

The development of the telegraph in mid-century made possible national transmission of Indian stereotypes and the creation of a standard Indian story designed more to frighten and excite than inform. While newspapers transmitted the stereotypical Indian story, American images of the Indian were already fixed in the American mind by novelists, missionaries, and ambitious politicians. No Indian had his identity more misappropriated than the Lakota chief, Sitting Bull. In the period after Little Big Horn, Sitting Bull’s image in the press followed an arc that began as the murderer of General Custer to popular entertainer in Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show to savage partisan of Ghost Dances at the time of his murder in 1890. In his examination of Indian stories in over seventy-five antebellum and post-Civil War newspapers, Coward provides an

interesting overview of how the press helped solidify identities for the Native American that were outside the norms of civilized society.

JOHN R. WENNERSTEN  
*Salisbury, Maryland*

*Political Terrain: Washington, D.C. from Tidewater Town to Global Metropolis.* By Carl Abbott. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999. 267 pages. Notes, essay on sources, index. \$39.95.)

Two cities most frequently visited by international travelers to the U. S. are New York and Washington, D.C. The one represents the center of financial and cultural power, and the other, political power. Neither of them is quite like any other city in the world, but it is Washington that is the most unique, while at the same time the one that is most often pointed to as representative of the nation. Throughout its two-hundred-year history visitors, residents, politicians, historians, and others have tried to describe Washington's distinctive character. Carl Abbott, professor of urban studies and planning at Portland State University, and himself a frequent visitor and sometime resident of Washington, has written a book that continues that effort to capture the development of the city's many identities.

"Where's Washington?" Abbott asks. "How does it fit into America's regional mosaic?"(xiv). Is Washington a southern city that has evolved into a modern, national, and perhaps international metropolis? How have the forces of modernization and northernization affected this formerly southern town that rose along the banks of the Potomac? He wants to know how the regional characteristics and identity of Washington have changed through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is this emphasis on the role of place in Washington's growth that makes Abbott's book different from the many that have preceded it.

Abbott's somewhat unconventional view of Washington's history is reflected in his selection of sources. Building on the research of the many historians before him, he tries to focus more on the popular or public images of the city. He adds information from popular literature, travel guides, magazine articles, and directories, as well as from business records and the papers of groups like the Chamber of Commerce to capture the regional and national identities of Washington. The result is a view of the city that breaks away from the conventional perspective.

When the author began his search for Washington's regional and national identity he expected to find a place that had gradually lost its southernness and local flavor as it grew into its prominent world position at the end of the twentieth century. Instead he found a much more complicated history in which new features and roles were added, without always losing the old ones. Northernization and globalization developed alongside the regional patterns and local sense of place that were there earlier.

The multiple identities that Abbott finds in Washington should be of interest to students of Maryland history, since the state shares in some of the conflicting and counter balancing historical events that the city went through. Primarily southern up through the 1850s, Washington experienced the “northern-izing” effects of the Civil War and the industrial expansion that followed it in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The large migration of blacks into Washington at the end of the century helped to give the city a more northern and national flavor, but the urban segregation that was strengthened during the Woodrow Wilson administration and the 1920s helped to maintain its southern characteristics. In the period after World War II, Washington not only moved into greater international prominence but also took on new leading roles in the civil rights and other national movements.

As Washington enters the next millennium the landscape has clearly changed. The city that L’Enfant planned, which emphasized the importance of the Potomac River, now spreads outward to pull together both North and South. The Baltimore-Washington region has merged into the fourth largest Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area in the U. S. But if Abbott is correct, this latest identity is just another stage in the city’s response to change. “What emerged each time was certainly not the old city, for northernization and nationalization changed the character of the city and its people. But each ‘new’ Washington was also a city that was southern in important and sometimes new ways” (61). Readers should enjoy this fresh look at Washington which brings together the importance of regional values and large-scale urban growth in the national capital.

DEAN ESSLINGER  
*Towson University*

*Public History: Essays from the Field.* Edited by James Gardner and Peter S. LaPaglia. (Malabar, Fla.: Krieger Publishing Company, 1999. 438 pages. Appendix, notes, index. \$39.50.)

Public history emerged as a distinct academic field in the late 1970s. While many historians had been practicing public history long before this, it was at this time, when the first major job crisis hit the historical profession, that academics and practitioners got together to define a new program of study to prepare young historians to practice their craft outside the walls of the university. Newly designed graduate programs in public history offered students training in traditional historical studies coupled with specialized studies in such areas as community history, historic preservation, documentary editing and publishing, public policy, archives and records management, oral history, and museum administration.

One of the earliest and most persistent problems faced by practitioners in this new field was the question of self-definition. Who exactly was a public his-

torian? Were public historians “real” historians since they worked outside the academy? What principles guided the practice of public history? Public historians began to address these questions with the publication of a distinguished journal, *The Public Historian*, beginning in 1978, and with the formation of a national organization, the National Council on Public History in 1980. Another important step in defining the field occurred six years later with the publication of *Public History: An Introduction*, edited by Barbara J. Howe and Emory L. Kemp (Malabar, Fla.: Krieger Publishing Co., 1986), a collection of thirty-one essays which explored a variety of careers in public history and the major institutions in which public historians worked.

More than a decade after the publication of this seminal volume, two new public historians have edited an updated survey of the field. In *Public History: Essays from the Field*, historical consultants James B. Gardner and Peter S. LaPaglia have gathered twenty-five essays from a new set of contributors to again survey the field as well as to measure its growth and achievements. Like its predecessor, it should be required reading for all students and practitioners of public history.

The volume begins with an important essay by a leading public historian on the issue of historians and professional identity. Patricia Mooney-Melvin traces the evolution of the historical profession and the emergence of the public history movement in the late 1970s. Citing the salutary influence of public history on a profession which had become insulated and aloof from American society, she bemoans the fact that many in the academy have failed to recognize this new field as legitimate. Mooney-Melvin harshly criticizes these historians for their rejection of public history, for in so doing, they have abandoned their professional obligation to the larger civic culture. Her call for professional “redefinition” to include public as well as academic history is deserving of serious attention.

Much of the rest of the volume describes various dimensions of public historians’ training and experience. Constance B. Schultz has contributed a valuable essay defining the distinctive elements in the academic training of a public historian. This is followed by a series of essays surveying differing careers in public history: historical administration, archives and records management, historical consulting, documentary editing, historical editing and publishing, historical preservation and cultural resource management, museum education, oral history, and policy advising. Of special interest among these essays is Nina Gilden Seavey’s discussion of documentary filmmaking. Seavey, a historian and documentary filmmaker, writes in a vein similar to that of Patricia Mooney-Melvin when she warns professional historians that they run the risk of being ignored by American society unless they begin to incorporate some type of “visual mode of communication” (118) into their work. Recognizing that there are numerous problems as well as enormous possibilities involved in presenting history on film, Seavey urges historians to engage in scholarly debate on the methodologi-

cal and substantive issues involved in this process in order to enable historians to “make the jump to the visual media” (128). The stakes are high, Seavey argues, because “the majority of Americans just do not read history books any more” (118), but instead acquire their history lessons from television and the movies.

The final section of essays examines public history from the perspective of historical institutions. These essays provide a fascinating glimpse of the dramatic changes which have occurred over the past twenty years in the way history is presented to the public in such venues as house museums, historical societies, and historic sites. No longer sanctuaries for only scholars and descendants of the founding fathers, these institutions have opened their doors to the broader society and encouraged new guests to enter with innovative programming and popular exhibits. Nowhere is this revolution more apparent than at the Virginia Historical Society which formerly dedicated itself to the needs of scholars and the Richmond elite, but now, as its director Charles F. Bryan Jr. explains, devotes its energies to “educational outreach, traveling exhibits, and electronic access” (331). This new approach to the past is also evident at Drayton Hall, a historic plantation in South Carolina where visitors learn of the experiences of blacks as well as whites, and of women and children as well as men. Drayton Hall Director George McDaniel observes that museum professionals are no longer content to simply lecture to visitors. Instead, they seek to inspire the historical imagination of their audience with the aid of well-trained living history performers, multi-sensory presentations, and carefully preserved landscapes. At the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan, William Pretzer, curator of Educational Programs, shares this pedagogical vision. Public historians, he argues, should facilitate learning by being sensitive to the needs and desires of the public. They should stimulate historical inquiry among visitors by providing appropriate “narrative opportunities for historical discourse” (267). Similar themes of facilitating historical inquiry, opening institutions to new audiences, and diversifying public programs are reiterated in other fine essays by Bruce Noble Jr. on historical parks; by Robert B. Patterson Jr. on local historical museums, and by Barbara Franco on urban historical societies.

The only note of distress sounded in these state-of-the-field reports emanates from historians working in federal offices and museums who, it seems, are not as attuned to the needs and desires of their audiences as their colleagues working at the state and local level. Jesse Stiller, historian for the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, examines the decline of employment opportunities for historians working in the various agencies of the federal government. Echoing the views of Patricia Mooney-Melvin, he attributes their shrinking numbers, in part, to the historical profession’s general “estrangement” from the American people (359). Lonnie Bunch III, associate director for curatorial affairs at the National Museum of American History, describes a crippling climate of

uncertainty and fear among historians in federal museums in the wake of a series of controversial exhibits, most notably, the National Air and Space Museum's planned exhibit on the Enola Gay and the end of World War II.

Despite these setbacks at the federal level, the overall impression conveyed by these essays is that public history is a thriving and dynamic field. Guided by innovative historians in creative collaboration with archaeologists, museum curators, exhibit designers, artists, computer technicians, and filmmakers, this field has already made great strides in bridging the gap between academic history and popular history. Readers of this magazine may feel some pride to learn from several of these essays of the important role of the Maryland Historical Society's 1992 Mining the Museum exhibit in revolutionizing the presentation of the past and stimulating the birth of this exciting era in public history.

TINA H. SHELLER  
Towson University

*Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812.* By C. Edward Skeen. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999. 229 pages. Maps, illustrations, notes, index. \$29.00.)

Why was the numerically superior American force routed at the August 1814 Battle of Bladensburg? Why is the Maryland Army National Guard's 175th Infantry so proud of its lineage to the Fifth Maryland Regiment, which fought in that engagement? *Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812* answers these and other questions about the American militia. Author C. Edward Skeen has provided some long overdue scholarship on this aspect of an often-overlooked conflict. While the importance of the militia to the development of the United States can not be disputed, its effectiveness as the primary defense force in the early days of the republic was largely a myth, and this book competently explains why.

Skeen introduces the reader to his thesis that the militia system, born of a traditional American fear of standing armies and preference for citizen soldiers, enjoyed unwarranted confidence. Even George Washington's well-known "want of confidence" (4) in militia, and his and others' recommendations to maintain a small national force and improve the state militias, went largely unheeded. As a result, when the United States was faced with mobilization in 1812, the "enrolled militia" was not equal to the crisis.

Militia in early nineteenth-century America consisted of three categories: enrolled, volunteer, and state-raised U.S. volunteers. The enrolled, or "regular," militia was composed of all able-bodied male citizens who belonged to geographically designated units as a matter of civic duty, and is the focus of the book. Meeting only once or twice annually for a muster that was more social event than training exercise, most militiamen, through no fault of their own,

were not very good soldiers, however, they represented most militiamen in this period. Although many in government sought to correct the system, with political influence and austere budgets at stake, all attempts at real reform in a system of divided federal and state responsibility failed. As a result, when enrolled militiamen were drafted to answer an alarm, there was frequent dispute over the authority of federal versus state officers, lack of cohesive force structures, shortages in supplies and arms, inadequate training, and a general lack of discipline.

There were some battles in which well-led volunteer militia and state-raised U.S. volunteers carried the fight and won, such as at Baltimore in September 1814. The "volunteer militia," unlike its enrolled counterpart, was composed of men who participated as an avocation, trained regularly, were somewhat proficient at drill, and served in units that often boasted a heritage from the Continental Army. The state-raised U.S. volunteers were the third militia element, and consisted of men who enlisted in federally funded units intended to supplement regular forces in periods of national emergency. Drawing largely from the volunteer militia, they too were usually adequate soldiers. Skeen maintains the performance of these two components, the predecessors of the National Guard and what most modern Americans envision as representing the entire militia, redeemed the reputations tarnished by the ill-trained, undisciplined drafts from the enrolled militia, who fled the field at Bladensburg and other battles.

Just as the Army was feeling the effects of wartime improvements and learning how best to use militia, the war ended. Victory at New Orleans and signing of the Treaty of Ghent prompted many who had been critical to praise the militia as a political expedient. As a result the "militia myth" persisted in spite of experience. Following the war, the regular army grew in professionalism, but not in size. Ironically, even as the militia was allowed to further decline, it was still viewed by many as a substitute for a standing army. It would take the experience of the Civil War and the labor unrest of the industrial age before significant reforms transformed the volunteer militia into the corps we know today as the National Guard.

Skeen thoroughly researched his subject and supports his thesis with evidence found in a wealth of primary source materials. Unfortunately, the narrative of the political process is somewhat tedious to read. Without it, however, one can not appreciate the problems faced by American field commanders who were required to rely on the drafted levies. The analysis of military operations is much more readable, and the campaign narratives help to illustrate the problems the political proceedings were attempting to correct. Because it enables the reader to understand how the militia system was left largely intact after the War of 1812 despite its shortcomings, the book accomplishes its purpose.

GLENN WILLIAMS  
*Catonsville, Maryland*

## Books in Brief

Artist James Drake Iams introduces readers to the fundamentals of watercolor painting through a tour of Delmarva's picturesque and memorable places in *Painting the Eastern Shore: A Guide to Chesapeake and Delaware Places and How to Capture them in Watercolors*. The author gives historical sketches of each town, park, and beach in this volume. Iams also provides the reader with a list of the art supplies they will need and step-by-step lessons for learning the art of watercolor painting.

The Johns Hopkins University Press, \$32.95 cloth

James A. Ramage's *Gray Ghost: The Life of Colonel John Singleton Mosby* is a full-length biography of the Confederate officer who forged his reputation on the most exciting of military activities—the overnight raid. For more than twenty-seven months, he led daring maneuvers behind Union lines in northern Virginia and Maryland. Mosby and his men lured the enemy into ambush situations, pretended to be Union soldiers in order to infiltrate pickets, and fired pistols and lit fireworks to keep Federal troops awake at night. This book offers an in-depth look at Mosby's war years and follows his post war career in Republican politics; a career that forced him into exile from his native Virginia.

The University Press of Kentucky, \$30.00 cloth

Richard E. Princes' encyclopedic studies *Atlantic Coast Line Railroad: Steam Locomotives, Ships, and History* and *Seaboard Air Line Railway: Steam Boats Locomotives, and History* are back in print. First published by the author in 1966, these volumes document the story of nineteenth and early twentieth century transportation, when American people and business moved and traveled by rail and ship. Each book has dozens of black and white photographs, schematic drawings, rosters, and manifests.

Indiana University Press, \$49.95 cloth

# Letters to the Editor

*Editor:*

Your Fall 1999 magazine covers the 115th Infantry in France, 1918. Enclosed are a few items written by my cousin Edward Harvey Rouzer born and raised by his father Harvey Rouzer, also born and raised in Maryland. Harvey was an attorney in Baltimore. Edward Harvey Rouzer was with the 1st Battalion, 113th Infantry. This battalion is mentioned in the above mentioned magazine (introduced by John G. Van Osdell).

*Thank you,  
William C. Birely*

(Letter from Edward Horten Rouzer [b. 1893; d. 1922] to Charles Webster Rouzer [b. 1873; d. 1930])

Hq., 1st Battalion, 113th Infantry American E.F., A.P.O. 765 Passavant,  
Haute Saone, France 4th February 1919

Dear Uncle Sox:

Have been putting off too long writing to you. Please pardon.

Received your letter telling me of Ma-Ma's illness sometime in the Fall. Can't just remember when. Think it was in October. Then not another word from Home until the 1st of the year when I received one from Uncle Arthur advising of her death. This news has had me feeling lost ever since. It seems that no matter how much a fellow roams and roughs it and all, he all the time has someone in the depths of his heart who is home to him, someone to write to and one who he knows has a little personal interest in him who cares whether he sinks or swims and who is sort of an anchor to windward for him. Since the death of my Mother, especially, Ma-Ma has of course been this to me and now that she has gone, I feel badly adrift and realize how much she meant to me. You have hit the wild and free yourself, Uncle Sox and although I have described myself badly, probably you find in your own experiences a like feeling. If you have and do, I pity you. It's a rotten feeling.

I am a damned lucky chap to have come through the War O.K. Anybody who was through the Argone scraps without a scratch don't need any insurance. He is just naturally a lucky bum. My Division landed in France, the 27th of June 1918 and were sent to a Training Area in northeastern France, where we stayed only three weeks, when we were sent into the trenches in the Alsace Sector about 12 Kilometers from Belfort. We were over the line there fighting in German

territory at the time. Mulhouse, Alsace, was in reach of our big guns. Belfort, France, was within reach of theirs. Neither city was bombarded though. They had a sort of gentlemen's agreement to lay off. Each city had large munition factories in it, and so it was to their mutual interest. This was not really War down there, as I after found out, although at the time it seemed unpleasant enough. Neither side ever attacked seriously with an idea of gaining any ground. Just business of laying there in the trenches watching each other, ever-y night sanding out patrols into No Man's Land for prisoners, a good bit of sniping, harassing fire from artillery and towards the last much gas from the Boche, which they threw over in shells 75's and 150's. It became rather warm the last of August and the French authorities ordered the evacuation of six of the front line towns, the inhabitants all moving back around Belfort. The Boche found it out, of course, right away and shelled and gassed us every night. Never in the daytime. They were very regular and systematic in their habits, those Boche in the Alsace Sector, and a fellow knew what to expect. I got so used to the mask that I would put it on when I hit the blankets at night and sleep for hours with it on. But this was a war that I expected from what I had read, and although we lost quite a few from the sniping, on patrols and from gas, I didn't mind it so much. However, on the 25th September we got orders to move, and on the night of the 26th were relieved by a Battalion of Blue Devils, entrained at Belfort two days later and detrained at a place by the name of Reevigny. A day's march to a large woods by the National Highway of France leading into Verdun. Here we laid for four days and three nights. It rained continuously and we couldn't have any fires on account of the enemy planes. We were then in Army Reserve.

The last big push of the War was on and at night could see the flashes from the guns at the Front and could hear the artillery at times. Take it from me they were putting over some barrage for those boys. However, we were all very anxious to get into it ourselves, and finally on the fourth night got orders to march towards the Front. We had already been laying out there in the wet for several days and all were cold and miserable and wet through. A good many went out with the Flu right here. We marched for five days and nights before we finally got into position going over to the extreme right of the American Sector, and finally went over the top on the morning of October 8th at 6:30 A.M. about 15 kilos north of Verdun. The Boche famous Kremhilde line and fortifications were along the right bank of the Meuse River and, we crossed this at night on pontoons and hit em on the jump. The preceding barrage from our guns was hellish. One Brigade of 75's, one brigade of 150's and I don't know how many French batteries were massed here on a narrow front and they all opened up at once and put down a two hour barrage. The noise was terrible and the front line Boche trenches were pulverized. We found only a few still living when we got into them and lost very few men here, and those few from their counter barrage.

But the second line, the line of resistance, was an entirely different matter. This lay along the line of woods on the heights of the Meuse. Concrete "pill boxes" on the grounds and machine guns in the trees in amazing numbers. Our 1st Battalion had been in the lead on the jump off, but after the first line was taken, the 2nd Battalion (my own) executed a passage of lines and stormed the second. Well we got Hell all right. They were ready and waiting. They were on the defensive and had the ground covered systematically by machine gun fire. We lost very heavily before we got to them and then after a short taste of the cold steel they lost heart and gave up. My Battalion alone took over 700 prisoners here. The German can't stand for the bayonet and when he sees a line of cold steel approaching, he will serve his guns to the last and then if he can't stop you will holler "Kamerad" and surrender. Up to this time we had been opposed mainly by Austrians, but after the second day found ourselves up against Saxons and Prussians. Their resistance stiffened greatly then and from then on it was question of paying dearly for every yard of ground taken. We were in a forest called the Bois de Consenvoye. Our objective (Divisional) were the heights of Grande Montange about seven kilos away. It was all up hill and a dense undergrowth and thick forest. If you will visualize for example, starting at the edge of Thumont and then working up through the mountains to Chimney Rock with the Boche in possession of all the ground in between, you will get a pretty close idea of what it was like. Their artillery was wonderful and I certainly must hand it to them on their liaison with their auxiliary arms. They had liaison and observation and used both to good advantage. They had us with our backs to the Meuse River and had our location spotted exactly and proceeded to shell us systematically and ceaselessly with everything they had, day and night. I think I feared this artillery fire worse than anything. There was never a let up and our Division was in there from the 8th to the 29th of October before relieved. Artillery fire is Hell on a man's nerves. It wears him down and after he has been knocked on his can a few times by the explosion of big ones nearby he is thinking of them all the time and wondering where the next one is going to hit. To make it a shade more hellish their planes had absolute mastery of the air in this sector and would come swooping down low over the tree tops, dropping bombs and giving directions to their artillery. We slowly pushed them back though and the woods became a shambles.

Their dead and ours lay everywhere. None were buried for about eight days. Finally burying details were gotten out and buried most of ours. The most of theirs were still there when I left. We had companies of about 230 men each on the start of the drive. When we came out, they averaged about 60 to 70. I am certain that no more terrible places have ever existed on this God's green earth than that patch of the Argonne Forest during the days of the drive. It was horrible and I would that I could put out of my mind some of the sights that I saw

there. You have probably seen men blown to pieces from artillery fire and also most of the other forms of wounds. But do not believe that you have seen any gas casualties. They kept the woods filled with gas all the time as much as they could. As it rained all the time, the gas hung close to the ground and each shell hole was a death trap. Many a poor devil sought shelter in a shell hole from the shell fire only to get that damned chlorine in his lungs and go out more horribly. I would that I had the power to adequately describe the horrors of that three weeks of my existence. I would shove it in front of the nose of every Junker in the world. I am still for a large Army all right but only as a preventative of such a horrible hellish ghastly war every occurring again. Men were there to be sacrificed and they were, by God. Many of my old friends from the Border and in the company went "west" up there and those of us who were left were like wild beasts intent only upon killing before we were killed. I never expected to come out of it. They were getting it so fast all around me that it seemed the law of averages made it only a question of time until I got mine too. I had several miraculous escapes. Narrow escapes were common. My Major went out on the eighth day with nerves on the fritz, my Adjutant was knocked loco from a big one and was taken to the rear a raving maniac. Men with slight shrapnel wounds or with a finger or two torn off were lucky. They were evacuated at once and considered themselves well out of it. The ambulance drivers did wonderful work up there, as the roads all the way back to Verdun were under constant artillery fire and they had to run the gauntlet both ways. The times when we actually advanced I didn't mind so much as was a relief to go forward. I can't say that I enjoy hearing the little bees sing around me but it is preferable to laying still under shell fire and waiting for orders, or for the unit on the left to come up.

Had we not outnumbered the Boche in this War, it is my opinion that we would never have beaten him. His organization was too perfect. He is a good fighter too. The Allies had to pay dear for the ground they gained but they had the men and they sacrificed them and overwhelmed him.

I am very very glad that it is all over with now, and my thoughts are of getting home *toute suite*. As far as I can see by the papers, not a single Combat Division has yet left France though and I can't help but think we are being kept here for a purpose. I do not now expect to get home until after the Peace Conference unless you people home make a kick for it. The squareheads have no stable government as yet and it is up to the Allies to hold a club over them ready to make them behave if they start 'anything again. However, France is demobilizing thousands daily and I see by the London Daily Mail that England has already demobilized over a million. Uncle Sammie is sending his casuals, wounded and sick, and S.O.S. organizations home but the Combat Divisions, nothing doing. I should not be surprised if we were not sent to Russia or Turkey or some other outlandish place before this damned thing is over with. If we have

a stay over here, I wish they would send us to the Army of Occupation. These little provincial cow villages get my goat.

I expect to go on furlough this next pay day. To London if I can. If not there, then to Paris and Nice. Everyone that goes to Nice on leave has wonderful tales to tell of it on returning. It is in southern France near Monte Carlo and the Italian Border and it is said that man can satisfy his every desire there. Me for the bright side of life there. I am in excellent health, am getting plenty to eat and in fairly good spirits but am awfully anxious to hit the States once more.

Well, must close and hit the hay.

Hope that you are getting along as prosperously as ever. Guess you have been stowing away quite a few shekels.

s / Horten

My Address: Bn. Sgt. Maj. Edw. H. Rouzer 1st Bn. Hqs., 113th Infantry American E.F., France A.P.O. 765

*Editor:*

In the fall 1999 issue of the "Maryland Historical Magazine" there is an article on the 119th infantry in France. In that article is a photograph from your files titled "The trip up to Bayville." The little girl in that photograph is my mother, Ann Shirley Carter (Cooke). I have a similar photograph with my mother and the man and the dog on the right in your photograph. They are in front of a camp tent. My mother has since passed away, but I have written on the back of my photograph what she said about it: "The camp was a few blocks from the Carter home in Olney, Norfolk, Virginia. I (Ann Shirley) was their little mascot." She would go for walks to the camp with her older sister, Virginia—the woman in the large hat in your photograph. Two of her older brothers were also in the 29th Division, although I don't know what regiment. They were William Danbrooke Carter (b. 31 May 1895) and Cecil McLean Carter (b. 30 Aug 1893). My mother was born 10 sep 1913, and her sister Virginia Lee Carter was born 17 Dec 1900.

I would appreciate finding out how I could get a copy of the photograph in the article.

Susan C. Soderberg  
Germantown, Maryland

*Editor:*

I would like to respond to the review of my book, *The Business of Charity: The Woman's Exchange Movement, 1832-1900*, in the Winter 1999 issue of *Maryland Historical Magazine*. I feel that the reviewer has misrepresented several important points that are made clear in the book.

I do not mind that in her brief recap of the founding of the New York Exchange in 1878 that she confuses the names, dates, and founders; this is minor. Of most concern to me are the following points, which undermine the thesis of the research:

The reviewer questions my findings about the income earned by the consignors, thereby throwing into question the whole credibility of the Exchange movement—and my research. This subject is more than adequately covered in the subchapter of Chapter 6, “Consignors: Incomes and Identities.” The reviewer notes that “most exchanges paid average earnings at levels well below what women needed to sustain their households” and that “in no instance do the figures suggest that more than a few women could have used the Exchange to become self-sufficient.” My analysis of the incomes states precisely the same and is made very clear in this subchapter, where I stress that “by comparison to jobs in the commercial workplace, those who were the highest paid must have been pleased with their annual incomes, although it is doubtful, even unrealistic, to assume that the majority of consignors did so well” (108). Further, I make clear that “it is likely that a select number earned an exceptional living” (p. 108). This point is also covered on page 35: “It is likely that a few consignors earned a respectable amount and the majority’s earnings were below average.” I also explained why there might have been discrepancies in interpreting the data concerning income earned from the Exchanges, since it is not made clear in any records if the Exchanges kept cumulative or annual lists of consignors (108). Despite the reviewer’s suspicions that the Exchanges were not a “weapon in a woman’s battle for financial independence,” the data clearly indicate that some consignors did quite well, which is more than likely why the Exchanges have continuously served a place in the female economy since 1832.

The reviewer finds that my use of the term “entrepreneurs” to describe the consignors is off-mark, for, she states, they “were neither in control of the transaction nor did they own any part of the process.” Yet, she finds, “there must have been some risks involved.” The very definition of entrepreneurship means to take risks in business. The consignors had much control over the sale of their items, from the production, pricing, quality, and volume of the items submitted for sale. I note that “the managers felt that the onus of entrepreneurship—the responsibility of producing and selling quality merchandise—fell to the consignors” (107).

By the very nature of the requirement of anonymity of the consignors, this history of the Exchange movement is taken from the perspective of the managers, who left behind the records and reports. This is made abundantly clear throughout the book, beginning in the introduction: “the story of the Woman’s Exchange movement, told from the perspective of the founders and managers, is one-sided. The voice of the consignors, who always remained anonymous, is

unheard" (p. 8). Although the reviewer finds that I rely on "too-celebratory" annual reports of the managers, I went to great effort to find the criticism of the movement in the nineteenth century and wherever annual reports seemed a bit "too-celebratory" I countered that information with reality. (Check the subchapter "Not Quite Professional" and the numerous references to historian Lucy Salmon, the most vocal critic of the movement in the nineteenth century.)

The reviewer finds that "Sander does not propose to tie her work into a larger historiography of women's philanthropic, political or economic life." The whole study is built on the fine work done by Kathleen McCarthy, Lori Ginzberg, and Anne Scott (who was an editor of the manuscript at the University of Illinois Press from start to finish), among others. All are trailblazers in the study of women's philanthropy and are quoted copiously throughout the book. And women's economic issues, far from being omitted from the study, are the very foundation of the research. Certainly, even the title of the book and of the introduction, "From Ladies to Working Women," would suggest this.

The reviewer's concern with the lack of class and race analysis is moot, given the sources of this study, although I did address this issue in the subchapter examining the incomes and identities of the consignors.

The reviewer is presumptuous to refute my point about the anonymity required of the consignors when she states that "not all women desired confidentiality, for patrons could request particular items." Nowhere in my years of research did I find any evidence of this. All sales were done through an anonymous numbering system ("all consignors were known by number and not by name," p. 109) and the anonymity requirement was fundamental to the Exchange mission.

Additional research on the study of women's business activities hardly makes the subject more "uneven," as the reviewer concludes. Rather, every new bit of information sheds light on a subject that for too long has been ignored, as historian Eileen Boris has recently pointed out in the December, 1999 issue of *American Quarterly*.

*Sincerely,*

*Kathleen Waters Sander*

# Notices

## Undergraduate Essay Contest

The Education Department and the Press at the Maryland Historical Society announce the annual College Undergraduate Essay Contest. Papers must concern a Maryland subject and make use of primary sources. Deadline for submissions is June 15, 2000. Please send entries (original and three copies) to the Education Department, Maryland Historical Society, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore Maryland 21201. The winner will receive a \$250 prize.

## MHS Book Prize

Anthony S. Pitch, *The Burning of Washington: The British Invasion of 1814* (Annapolis: The Naval Institute Press, 1998) and James Bready, *Baseball in Baltimore: The First Hundred Years* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998) are co-winners of the Maryland Historical Society's 1999 Book Prize. The authors will share the \$1000 award.

## Genealogy Prizes

The Library Committee has announced the 1999 winners of the Sumner A. Parker prize for the best genealogical work on a Maryland family and the Norris Harris prize for the best compilation of genealogical source material. Ms. Margaret Isabelle Board Obert won the Parker prize for *The Board Family Chronicle: from Maryland to Bedford County Virginia* (Baltimore: by the author, 1997). Jerry M. Hynson was awarded the Norris Harris prize for *Maryland Freedom Papers; Volume 1, Anne Arundel County* and *Volume 2, Kent County* (Westminster: Family Line Publications, 1996,1997).

## Museum Day at Historic St. Mary's City

Historic St. Mary's City will be open to the public free of charge on Saturday May 20 in recognition of International Museum Day. For further information call 1-800-SMC-1634 or visit their web site [www.smcm.edu](http://www.smcm.edu).

## London Town in Need of Volunteers

Archeologists and historians at Historic London Town in Anne Arundel County are in need of volunteers who are interested in fieldwork, historical research, and laboratory analysis. Contact the Lost Towns of Anne Arundel Archeology Project at 410-222-1919.

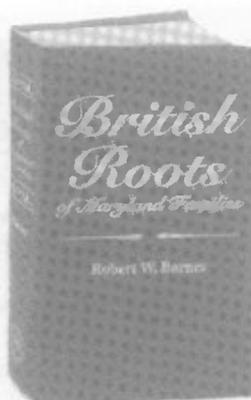
**AASLH Meeting**

The American Association of State and Local History will hold its summer workshops June 22–24 in Seattle, Washington, July 13–15 in Los Angeles, California, July 20–22 in Akron Ohio, and July 27–29 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. For agendas and presenters contact Lauren Batte, AASLH [batte@aaslh.org](mailto:batte@aaslh.org) or call 1-615-320-3203.

P.D.A.

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The *Maryland Historical Magazine* welcomes submissions from authors. All articles will be acknowledged, but only those accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope will be returned. Submissions should be printed or typed manuscript. Once accepted, articles should be on 3.5-inch disks (MS Word or PC convertible format) or may be emailed to [rcottom@mdhs.org](mailto:rcottom@mdhs.org). Guidelines for contributors are available on our Web site at <http://www.mdhs.org>.

*In this issue . . .*

“Such a Banditty You Never See Collected!”: Frederick Town and the American Revolution

*by Andrew Krug*

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*by Charles W. Mitchell*



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