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# MARYLAND

## HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

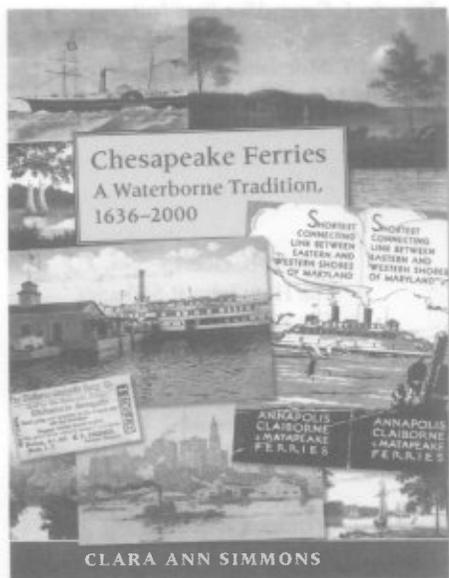
Spring 2009



# CHESAPEAKE FERRIES

A Waterborne Tradition, 1636–2000

By Clara Ann Simmons

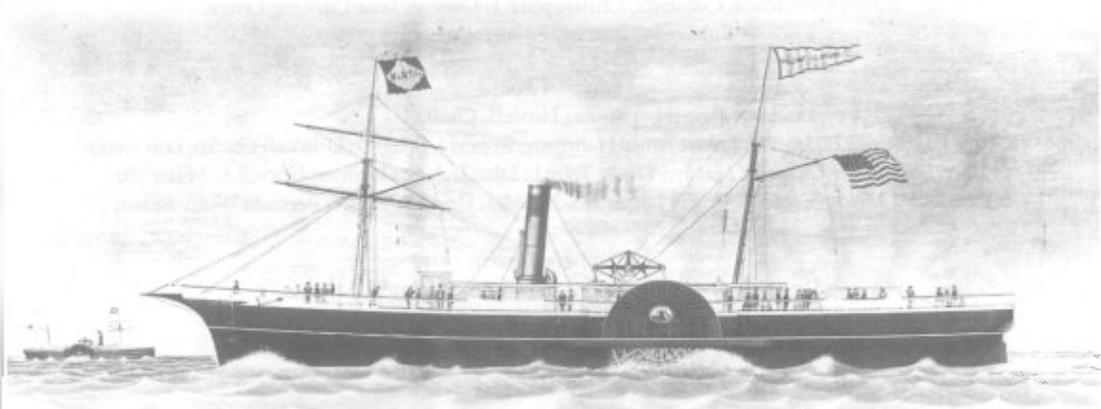


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Clara Ann Simmons moved to Maryland's Eastern Shore more than fifty years ago and marveled at this land of rivers and creeks and bays. A journalist by profession, she became fascinated with water travel in the Chesapeake region, that intricate network of connections "that set the traveler on his way so that he might continue his journey."

Thus opens an engaging and gracefully written narrative that takes the reader from the earliest days of colonial settlement when all who journeyed through the region crossed the waterways, to the age of bridge building that changed forever the way people reach their destinations.

Beautifully illustrated with dozens of photographs and maps, *Chesapeake Ferries* is a tribute to the region's maritime past.



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# MARYLAND

## *Historical Magazine*

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Cover: detail, “Adults and Kids at NAACP branch, May 1951.” The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People celebrates its centennial this year. (Maryland Historical Society.)

The *Maryland Historical Magazine* welcomes submissions from authors and letters to the editor. Letters may be edited for space and clarity. 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. Address Editor, *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore, Maryland, 21201. Include name, address, and daytime telephone number. Once accepted, articles should be on CDS (MS Word or PC convertible format), or may be emailed to [panderson@mdhs.org](mailto:panderson@mdhs.org). The guidelines for contributors are available on our website at [www.mdhs.org](http://www.mdhs.org).

## Editor's Notebook

Welcome to volume 104 of the *Maryland Historical Magazine*. These are challenging times for the Maryland Historical Society, and cultural institutions nationwide, as endowment funds drop, longtime members can no longer afford their annual dues, and our leaders are forced to make tough decisions. As keepers of Maryland's history we have an understanding of our past and how this organization has weathered earlier economic downturns. During the Panic of 1873, one of five major financial crashes of the nineteenth century, the slide began in Europe and reached this side of the Atlantic with the collapse of Jay Cooke and Company, the country's preeminent investment banking firm. Stocks plummeted nationwide, the New York Stock Exchange closed for ten days, banks failed, businesses and factories closed their doors, and countless numbers of people lost their jobs and their homes—in the age before the government insured deposits and offered unemployment insurance. Through all of these episodes, the MdHS adjusted its budget and services accordingly.

In fact, this journal came about as a response to financial challenges the society confronted at the turn of the last century. When the Peabody bonds, the core of the publications fund, decreased in value by 50 percent the officers reluctantly discontinued the practice of distributing free volumes of the acclaimed *Archives of Maryland* series to members. A quarterly journal, they reasoned, offered a practical way to provide those members with published papers and documents. In 1901, Publications Committee members Henry Stockbridge, Clayton C. Hall, and Bernard C. Steiner brought the idea of a magazine to the table, citing the success of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* (1877) and the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* (1893).

During the Great Depression the trustees and officers reduced the number of operating hours and staff time, froze vacant positions, and doubled their own workload in an effort to keep these doors open. Journal editor Louis Henry Dielman included society "proceedings" and committee reports, thereby condensing mailings and cutting costs. In the 1970s, the *MdHM* published slimmer volumes with austere blue covers, fewer photographs, and included the Annual Reports, a now-familiar pattern. Now, in March 2009, the leaders of the MdHS are working on how best to survive yet another economic recession. Some of these strategies will affect this journal.

Most importantly, the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, published uninterrupted since 1906, will continue its mission to bring forth the best new scholarship in Maryland history. In keeping with standard practice, all submissions are peer reviewed. We will also retain the chronological, topical, and regional balance in each issue and increase the number of book reviews. In an effort to reduce costs, printed copies of the *MdHM* are no longer included with a basic membership.

Basic member benefits, however, do include access to current and recent issues through the “Members” page on our website ([www.mdhs.org](http://www.mdhs.org)).

The changes in volume 104 are in the cover design, with thanks to our in-house designer Pam Jeffries for adding some “sizzle.” Plans are also afoot to launch a new Publications webpage in June with new features such as a “Scholar’s Corner” showcasing the work of our Lord Baltimore Fellows, highlighting select research projects of Maryland’s historians, and examining new and rediscovered treasures from our collections and those around the state.

Thus, in trying times, the MdHS seeks innovative and forward-thinking solution to the challenges of the moment. We remain confident in our legacy and our mission—“enduring in the present and hopeful for the future.” (*Proceedings of the Society*, February 13, 1933)

PDA

“Adults and Kids at NAACP Branch, May 1951,” (Maryland Historical Society.)



# Provision of Arms to Maryland's First Settlers: Part One, Private Initiative

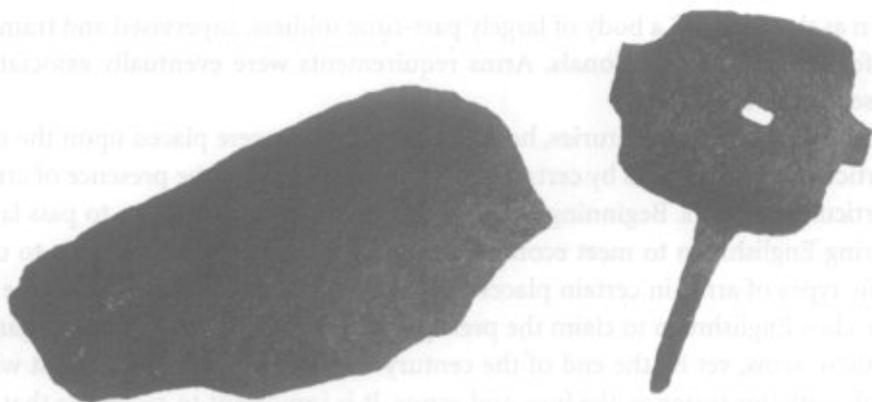
Gary Denis Ralph

How were the earliest settlers of the European colonies in North America supplied with arms? Some historians apparently assume that that it is simply enough to know that they had them. Daniel Boorstin, for instance, says that “in America the requirements of self-defense and food-gathering had put firearms in the hands of nearly everyone,” without deigning to specify who put them there.<sup>1</sup> For later periods, such as the eighteenth century, we can assume that colonials supplied themselves with arms imported from Europe or purchased them from area gunsmiths. Unfortunately, for the early decades of settlement, documentary evidence for the importation of arms from Europe is scarce.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, it is unlikely that colonials engaged in complex manufacturing activities such as the complete fashioning of firearms during this early period.<sup>3</sup>

Where there is evidence from an early period of the presence of European arms, those weapons certainly arrived in the ships that brought the settlers. The records of early settlement, however, are not so detailed as to give information about the arms that settlers carried. Most crucially, the records do not indicate the status of those weapons as property. In order to determine the means by which settlers were armed, we must be able to differentiate between arms that the settlers brought to America as their personal property and arms that might have been provided to them, either for sale or on a temporary basis, after they arrived. Although probate records generally list the property of men who died shortly after arriving in America they do not differentiate between what those men brought with them and what they obtained shortly after arrival. It seems unlikely that a man might have bought arms after arriving in America, but we cannot exclude the possibility. If a longer amount of time passed between arrival and probate, it is even less likely that estate records can be used to determine the way in which a settler obtained any arms listed.

Although little information exists concerning arms that the earliest colonists actually brought with them, historians can attempt to determine what sort of obligations had been established for arming settlers and upon whom those obligations fell. The intention expressed in the terms of these obligations is the best evidence we have for how they were armed. With reference to the early settlement

*Gary Ralph is an Adjunct Professor of History at the University of Delaware.*



*Seventeenth-century cannon fragment and cutlass hilt. (Courtesy Historic St. Mary's City.)*

of Maryland, interesting discoveries emerge about the government and the ways in which its principles departed from the precepts that one might expect to see fulfilled in an idealized form of proprietary management.

The question of the provision of arms to the first English settlers in North America is part of a larger question, concerning the ways in which those settlers were supplied with any or all of the tools and equipment they would need. The way in which investors supplied settlers with what they needed seems to have depended on their economic status as individuals and on the type of institutional arrangement under which they traveled to the New World. Any discussion of the ways in which economic class and institutional arrangement influenced how individual settlers in Maryland obtained their arms must be situated within the context of the evidence concerning whether Englishmen in the 1630s already owned arms, knew how to use them, and brought their arms to the Chesapeake colony.

## **Background**

The earliest national requirement for Englishmen to be armed seems to be the Assize of Arms of 1181, but the first statute to incorporate specific provisions for the punishment of defaulters is the Statute of Winchester of 1285.<sup>4</sup> Both the assize and the statute placed specific requirements upon defined groups of people that they be armed for reasons generally characterized as those of home defense and keeping the peace. The emphasis in national legislation encouraged Englishmen to be armed and to be practiced in the use of arms, with the hope that this would result in a body of men qualified to serve as soldiers in times of emergency, rather than (or in addition to) the English Crown maintaining a body of professional

soldiers at its own expense. This hope eventually resulted in the reliance of the Crown, for both home defense and service abroad, mainly on what came to be known as the “militia,” a body of largely part-time soldiers, supervised and trained by a few full-time professionals. Arms requirements were eventually associated with service in the militia.

Over the following centuries, however, prohibitions were placed upon the use of particular kinds of arms by certain groups of people, or on the presence of arms in particular contexts. Beginning in the early 1500s, Parliament began to pass laws requiring Englishmen to meet economic qualifications in order to be able to use specific types of arms in certain places.<sup>5</sup> These restrictions expressed the desire of upper-class Englishmen to claim the prerogative of hunting certain kinds of game with these arms, yet by the end of the century anyone could still hunt most wild animals with, for instance, the bow and arrow. It is important to recognize that in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, the hunting of game was generally considered a pastime rather than an accepted way of providing food for the table. Upper-class Englishmen engaged in the hunting of game for the fun of it and would probably have considered dishonorable the imputation that they had to kill game in order to feed themselves. Indeed, at the end of a successful hunt, those upper-class Englishmen often made a point of giving away the game they had bagged, perhaps to their inferiors who were not economically qualified to engage in hunting as a pastime.<sup>6</sup> It seems unlikely that Englishmen who came to America would have thought it necessary to know or learn how to kill game for the table, unless, of course, they had been driven to it by desperation. Only the most destitute found it necessary to engage in the hunting and eating of game in order to survive, and they were generally prohibited from using firearms in doing so.

Some upper-class Englishmen, therefore, might own a hunting firearm and be practiced in its use, others did not.<sup>7</sup> It is just possible that men who had not had practice in hunting game in England might nevertheless have brought a gun to Maryland with the idea that they would acquire some hunting skills. Yet one wonders how many planters or servants would have had the time to do so, given the work pressures involved in establishing themselves. In his *Character of the Province of Maryland*, published in 1666, George Alsop wrote that “every servant has a gun, powder and shot allowed him, to sport him withal on all holidays and leisable times, if he be capable of using it, or be willing to learn,” but Alsop’s habitual enthusiasm demands caution.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, there may have been upper-class Englishmen coming to Maryland who had already acquired hunting skills and brought hunting firearms with them. The possibility is specifically mentioned in the *Relation of Maryland*, published in 1635 but only as an option, not as a requirement that had to be fulfilled in order to obtain headrights to land.

The authors of *Robert Cole’s World* have pointed out that meat was more important in the diets of the seventeenth-century Chesapeake inhabitants than in

the diets of their contemporaries in England.<sup>9</sup> Yet in Maryland as in England, most people would probably have continued to rely on pigs, chickens, and cattle for their meat, at least as a first choice. By the time Englishmen arrived in Maryland wild pigs roamed through the forests. Although not officially considered “fair game,” these animals bore a complicated property status and were not as tasty as domesticated pigs.<sup>10</sup> As in England, men who survived by eating wild game that they had killed had probably been reduced to desperate straits. Archeological evidence confirms that wild game formed a substantial part of the diet of many Maryland settlers—and may not have been game they killed for themselves.<sup>11</sup>

On February 11, 1651, in reference to a legal dispute being pursued in the Provincial Court of Maryland concerning terms of employment, Vincent Atkinson, “aged about twenty years,” testified that in the course of his service to Robert Brooke he went into the woods with three of Brooke’s servants. They went “to kill venison or other provisions in respect of the present want in Mr. Brooke’s family, and that this deponent had a gun delivered him by Mr. Brooke for that purpose.”<sup>12</sup> It is not clear whether Atkinson was a servant hired for other purposes obliged to this particular activity under the press of circumstance, or whether the hunting of game was one of the duties he had been hired to perform. In March 1652, Atkinson testified that when he had been in England, before coming to America, he had talked with William Smith, who had bound himself to Captain William Mitchell for four years as a servant in “Virg[ini]a” (probably here used as a generic term for the English settlements in the New World) “to fish or fowl or be a bailey for husbandry or do any other work in the country.”<sup>13</sup> It is to be noted, however, that in 1651 Atkinson himself mentioned “the present want in Mr. Brooke’s family” as an excuse for engaging in the hunting of wildlife. One might note, in conclusion, that there were other ways of killing wildlife than with a gun. There is some evidence that nets were used in the pursuit of wild game, perhaps more often than firearms.<sup>14</sup>

It seems likely that most of those Englishmen who brought arms to Maryland, or supplied arms to those men they sent or brought, did so for reasons other than hunting game. Arming fulfilled the requirements that Lord Baltimore imposed on prospective settlers before they would be allowed to obtain headrights, or they anticipated that in Maryland, as in England, obligations to perform military service would be placed upon at least some of the men between sixteen and sixty. By the early 1600s, however, there was no longer any understanding that every Englishman falling within a particular class should be armed as prescribed by the standards that fell upon every member of that class, as had been the case with the Statute of Winchester.<sup>15</sup> Further, by the 1630s there was no longer any Parliamentary statute in effect that specified the particular kinds and quantities of arms with which an Englishman must provide himself.<sup>16</sup> Rather, arms requirements fell upon the communities and also (though by the early seventeenth century this second kind of requirement occurred less frequently) upon the holders of large landed

estates or of other types of economic resources, to provide quantities of weapons (swords, armor, pikes, muskets, etc.) that might be used to arm servants and tenants, or that might alternatively be drawn upon to supplement the resources of a community. After the repeal in 1603–1604 of the first of the two statutes of 1557–1558 that embodied many of these requirements, officials probably continued to impose requirements on an “ad hoc” and traditionary basis as an exercise of the Royal prerogative.<sup>17</sup>

The particular arms requirements placed on any community and the manner in which local officials met the resulting obligations seem to have differed from one circumstance to the next according to the requirements that the Crown placed upon that particular community (through the Privy Council) in response to a particular military exigency. One suspects that in practice, the only requirements actually enforced, for any particular Englishmen to be armed on an on-going basis, were those applicable to the members of a “train-band,” men chosen from the community for their particular suitability to military service and who engaged in regular military training and practice. These men might be required to purchase their arms, or they might be (temporarily and contingently) supplied from a corporately held body of arms, sometimes paid for with revenue from the “parish rate” and consequently referred to as the “parish arms.” Though technically possible that a muster-master could require every Englishman in a particular community be armed, the majority of men not considered suitable material for the “train-band” may have taken up arms only at infrequent “general musters.” Town officials supplied some of these men (particularly the poorer sort) with “parish arms” that would then be returned to the common stock.

An Englishman coming to America might therefore bring with him a musket, in anticipation that he would be required to be armed as part of his obligation to serve in the militia (except in ways that were unlikely to be enforced). Others, aware of the expectation, would not have owned a firearm. An Englishman traveling to Maryland, however, might expect that he would be called upon to defend the colony and himself. In anticipation of those increased likelihoods, he might have been inclined to buy a firearm to bring with him if he did not already have one—a firearm that he might not have thought to buy for himself had he stayed in England.

## Servants

Arms requirements fell on Englishmen after their arrival in the colonies. Unlike the arms requirements placed upon militiamen in England in the 1630s and later, those placed upon men in the British North American colonies often specified that every eligible man be armed in specific ways. The terms included the imposition of fines for default and other means of enforcement that certainly encouraged provision of arms (by one means or another). With the exception of one

possible avenue, little evidence survives concerning the means by which these early settlers obtained their arms after arriving in Maryland.<sup>18</sup> "Housekeepers" (e.g., householders or planters) took responsibility for ensuring that the servants on their plantations had arms. These special provisions support the presumption that of all of the Englishmen living in Maryland and "able to bear arms" servants would be least likely to have brought firearms or purchased them upon their arrival.<sup>19</sup>

Although Lord Baltimore, as part of the conditions of plantation, offered incentives encouraging planters to equip their servants, he did not require planters to bring sufficient arms to equip all their servants appropriately, only that headrights were to be rewarded on the basis of numbers of men appropriately equipped. There are also suggestions that planters had an informal or traditional obligation, at least, to make arrangements for all their servants to be adequately armed. Robert Wintour may or may not have been to Maryland by the time he wrote *Short Treatise . . . concerning the New Plantation now Erecting under . . . Lord Baltimore in Maryland* in 1635. He was related to Baltimore, however, and closely associated with him in the effort to settle the colony. His opinions certainly reflected the information and expectations he acquired from that association. He suggested that a planter "may very well have with him fifteen able laboring men, largely provided for a year's provision and more, of all things necessary to feed, clothe, work and fight," a suggestion made without any connection to the headrights that would presumably accrue in consequence. Wintour himself brought six adult male servants and one fifteen-year-old male servant (who in a year would be eligible to serve in the militia), and the arms listed in the inventory of his estate (to be discussed below) may have been intended to supply these servants with what they would need in order to fulfill their military obligations.<sup>20</sup>

At least one historian has insisted that it was an objective of colonial governments to keep servants unarmed on the chance that they might rise up in rebellion against their masters. Michael Bellesisles asserts that "unfree white laborers often had reason to resist the authority of the English elite," and that, presumably in consequence, "throughout the Colonial period, indentured servants in most colonies were not allowed to serve in the militia, an effective way of keeping them unarmed." There is little evidence from seventeenth-century Maryland to support this claim and much to refute it.<sup>21</sup>

In the sixteenth century, Parliament passed at least one law stipulating that masters had to provide arms for such of their servants as were "of tender age" to practice with, though the expenses for such provision were to be compensated out of the servants' pay. There were, however, no Parliamentary laws explicitly stipulating that masters were required to provide arms for their servants to use in fulfillment of the requirements imposed by such statutes as the Statute of Winchester.<sup>22</sup> It is worth noting, therefore, that in 1649 "An Order of Assembly for the

Defense of the Province,” the Maryland Assembly required “that every master of a family shall provide for himself sufficient arms and ammunition and for every hired servant or sojourner also residing and dwelling in his house . . . one fixed gun, two pounds of powder and eight pounds of shot,” without any specification or restriction as to age. The law allowed the master “to bring the same to account and recover the same upon every such sojourner, if he be not already provided therewith, and if [a] hired servant, every such master may account or deduct the same out of the wages of every such hired servant, if he be not already provided therewith as aforesaid.”<sup>23</sup> In effect, the master would recoup the expenses of arming his servants by selling them the weapons on credit.

Indeed, before 1649, an order of the council required housekeepers to confirm that all the other members of their household “able to bear arms” possessed firearms.<sup>24</sup> The possibility exists that masters who brought servants to Maryland or hired them in Maryland, even before 1649, could have made private arrangements with their servants to deduct the cost of firearms from their wages. Would the arms that servants paid for through wage deductions eventually become their property? This seems a reasonable conclusion. It seems unrealistic to suppose that the arms remained the property of the master. It is true that, within another context, the arms that Englishmen paid for through a “parish rate” did in fact remain the property of the parish.

With reference to the situation in Maryland, this would be one possible answer to the question of where former servants might get the firearms that as freemen they would be required to have as housekeepers in their own right. They might get them from their former masters, and have already paid for them through deductions, or, in the case of indentured servants, perhaps through extra time served. In the case of indentured servants, however, such an arrangement may have been entered as a term of the indenture.<sup>25</sup>

The requirements for masters to arm their servants continued through the 1660s, though the connection with military service became more explicit. The Puritan-dominated assembly of 1654 passed an act “Concerning the Militia” specifying that “all persons from sixteen years of age to sixty . . . [were to] be provided with serviceable arms and sufficient ammunition . . . and every master of families [was to] provide arms and ammunition as aforesaid for every such servant.”<sup>26</sup> In the assembly’s 1661 “An Act for Military Discipline, the militia system gained a more formal structure and specifically stating that “in case any of the aforesaid officers shall happen to enlist any servant in this province and that their master or da[me] shall refuse . . . to furnish such servant or servants with sufficient guns and ammunition, [the master or dame] shall be liable to such fine or fines as the aforesaid respective officers ought . . . to lay upon any freeman committing the like offense.”<sup>27</sup> In 1667 a calling-up of “a certain and considerable number of men to make a march against the Indian enemy” specified that “in case any servant or

hired person shall be . . . pressed . . . and not capable of furnishing himself as aforesaid [with the arms and accouterments earlier specified], the master of such person or servant is to provide the same for his said servant or hired person."<sup>28</sup> This specification, like that of 1649 but unlike those of 1654 and 1661, implied that some servants might be "capable of furnishing" themselves with firearms, but this may merely indicate a careless omission in some of the previous specifications rather than an increase among servants in firearms ownership or in the economic capacity of servants to purchase firearms for themselves.

One bit of evidence from the seventeenth century suggests that limitations were indeed placed in Maryland upon the arming of servants. In an act of 1664 the assembly specified "that no servant within this province . . . be permitted to enlist himself as a volunteer in any martial service," and thus to escape from his obligation to serve his master, a clear attempt to keep servants at their employments rather than to keep firearms out of their hands. They could still be pressed into service.<sup>29</sup> In the seventeenth century, Marylanders had no objection to arming their servants. In fact, masters felt an obligation to provide their servants with arms if they did not already have them.<sup>30</sup> It certainly seems that Lord Baltimore, in setting the terms upon which to assign headrights, counted on masters' acceptance of the obligation, on the planters consequently providing arms to their servants, and on his thus being relieved of the obligation of having to provide firearms to any of the colonists.

### Magazine

If Baltimore did not feel that obligation, he may nevertheless have believed it desirable, as a matter of practical convenience, to make arms available to the settlers, either for private purchase or on loan from the proprietary until they could supply themselves by private purchase. Did Baltimore himself or his agents purchase quantities of arms intended to supplement those that the settlers brought? One might assume that a "magazine" for the furnishing of arms and ammunition to the inhabitants of Maryland was not established before the assembly's 1664 "Act for the Providing [of] a Magazine."<sup>31</sup> It should be noted, however, that many references, dating from 1663 and before (though, alas, they are seldom clear or conclusive) seem to indicate the existence of a central repository of munitions under the management of the central government or of separate magazines in the various counties and hundreds, under the control of the local governments, perhaps comparable to the "parish arms" held and supplied by local governments in England, or both. Again, the best evidence is in the expression of intention.

There seems to have been concern from the beginning of settlement as to whether the owners of plantations would have access to sufficient quantities of arms and ammunition. In 1638, Thomas Copley, the head of the Jesuit mission in Maryland, wrote a letter of complaint to Baltimore about some of the provi-

sions in a body of laws the proprietor had sent to Maryland for the assembly to pass into law. Among the provisions to which he refers is a requirement that “every lord of a manor . . . must in his own person, with all his able men and freeholders, be mustered and be subject to the fines and punishments of the muster-master, who may search his munition every month, and perhaps punish him for that which he could not possibly get.”<sup>32</sup> It would be imprudent to take the suggestion in the final clause of this quotation as an indication of actual shortages of arms in Maryland in 1638, but Copley’s complaint suggests at least an anticipation that laws considered perfectly reasonable in European England, requiring people to be armed, might not in future always be practically enforceable in Maryland, due to the distance from dependable sources of arms.

In 1639 the assembly considered a body of thirty-six bills that David Jordan has suggested may have been edited versions of the bills Baltimore had submitted for consideration the previous year. The requirements placed upon the lord of the manor in the 1638 bills did not appear in the bills considered the following year. It may be that in some other respects the changes in the provisions served as a response to Copley’s complaints. Among the legislation considered “An Act for Military Discipline” specified that the arms and ammunition “every housekeeper . . . within this province” was to “have ready continually upon all occasions,” for each person in the house “able to bear arms.”<sup>33</sup> These included:

One serviceable fixed [i.e., in good repair] gun of bastard musket bore; one pair of bandoliers or shotbag; one pound of good powder; four pound of pistol or musket shot; and sufficient quantity of match for matchlocks and of flints for firelocks.

The bill also specified that “before Christmas next” each housekeeper was to “find a sword and belt for every such person as aforesaid.” These requirements may be compared with the suggestions in the *Relation of Maryland* published four years before—a musket (no bore specified); a sword, belt, bandolier, and powder flask; ten pounds of powder and forty pounds of shot; and 2s 6p worth of match.

There follow provisions for the inspection of the required arms and ammunition by the “sergeant or marshal” of “the Captain of St. Mary’s band, or the Commander of the Isle of Kent . . . at every dwelling house within their several districts. Inspectors had the authority to impose fines for any “default” and the revenue would go to go “to the said sergeant or marshal to his or their own use,” presumably to compensate them for the trouble involved in going from house to house, though opportunities for abuse immediately suggest themselves. The act then specified that “the said Captain or Commander shall forthwith furnish or supply the party or parties deficient”—the law does not specify that this “party or parties” would be the housekeeper in question— “with all such necessary arms and

ammunition.” These men also imposed the price but could not extend the figure above “double the value of the said arms and ammunition, according to the rate then usual in the country.”

Consequently, the “said Captain or Commander” rather than the housekeeper (or other “party”) in default, bore responsibility for locating the arms or ammunition in question to supply the deficiency. The language in this section suggests considerable confidence on the part of those who devised the law and in the ability of the captain or commander to obtain or gain access to the arms and ammunition in question. The suggestion is strong that it might have been intended that the officers in question be able to draw these supplies from a central depository or magazine. The responsibility for establishing a magazine for each county or hundred might, however, fall to local officers rather than to the proprietary or central government. It seems clear that the purpose of such a depository would be to facilitate the purchase of arms and ammunition by the inhabitants, not to provide arms to the inhabitants gratis, as would have been the case with the arms purchased by a joint-stock company for the use of its employees. The language of the act failed to specify who it was that would have to pay for the arms.<sup>34</sup>

The question also arises as to why the act gave officials authority to charge the party in default up to double the going rate for arms and ammunition. If the arms in question were indeed drawn from a central depository there would be no necessity to ask the parties in default to pay a price for the arms and ammunition any higher than “the rate then usual in the country.” In fact, one might wonder why anyone would ever pay a price higher than the usual rate. The exception might concern arms purchased at a moment of crisis, but the purpose of the act seems to be to forestall the necessity for purchases under such conditions. The presumption of the act seems to be that regardless of how the officer obtained the arms in question “the rate then usual in the country” applied. The officer might then charge the “party or parties deficient” a price higher than the usual rate. If he did so, however, and after his compensating either the postulated central or local depository, or whatever other source it was from which the arms and ammunition were purchased, a surplus would remain in the hands of the captain or commander. The act does not indicate who ultimately received the additional revenue.

Several reasons might be proposed for the captain or commander to be able to charge a higher price. Since “the party or parties deficient” paid a fine for their “default,” it seems unlikely that the surplus functioned as an additional fine for non-compliance. The above-mentioned fines went to the sergeant or marshal, and the surplus may have been intended to compensate the captain or commander for his trouble or for any expense incurred in tracking down the arms and ammunition in question. The additional charge might, however, have routinely applied to any purchase from a depository (or through the government on some other basis), whether or not those inhabitants had defaulted on the requirements. The

charge may have been added to discourage Marylanders from relying on the government (except as a last resort) to provide them with arms rather than taking the responsibility to locate and purchase their own as the government had clearly intended. Finally, it may have been intended that the surplus be used to purchase supplies beyond those used for arms replacement and increase the numbers of arms at the depository.

One might speculate as to whether the author of the act also meant to compensate, by making supplies of powder and shot available from a central depository, for quantities of these items drastically reduced, per the requirements of the act of 1639, from the minimum quantities specified in the 1635 *Relation*. If this is the case, those who drafted the act may have intended that the housekeeper see that those in the household “able to bear arms” replenished those minimum quantities on an ongoing basis rather than keep large reserves in his house. The latter would have been an inconvenient and expensive proposition and add to the danger that in isolated areas Native Americans might seize the arms and supplies. The *Relation* does not mention supplementary supplies from public resources.

Although the act proposed in 1639 did not pass into law, there are various references from later periods that suggest the existence of a central depository, of local depositories in the counties and hundreds, or at least that the central or local governments had assumed the obligation to provide arms and ammunition to Marylanders.

In 1642, Maryland made its first organized preparations for a specific military action, including arming requirements that began with an order for all housekeepers to “provide fixed gun and sufficient powder and shot for each person able to bear arms.”<sup>35</sup> Housekeepers bore the primary obligation and supplemental responsibility fell to militia officers, local government, and the proprietary. Two other pieces of evidence from this same year support this conclusion. William MacFenin, in his commission as “Sergeant of St. Mary’s and St. George’s bounds,” was required “to train and to muster all men able to bear arms in St. George’s Hundred once every fortnight and provide all arms and ammunition if no inconveniency hinder.”<sup>36</sup> He provided, in advance of any particular training session, that the men under his command had the necessary arms and ammunition. When the men of St. George’s Hundred showed up for their fortnightly muster and MacFenin determined that all of them bore appropriate arms, he then met his obligation. He did not necessarily have to locate arms and ammunition, to buy them, or to sell, loan, or give them to the men at the muster—yet it is conceivable that if they did not already have the arms and ammunition necessary, he might ultimately be driven to any or all of these expedients.

The commission, however, limited MacFenin’s responsibilities to those associated with sergeants. In the never-ratified act of 1639 a “sergeant or marshal” was to determine any shortcomings in fulfilling the obligation to be armed and report

to "the Captain of St. Mary's band, or the Commander of the Isle of Kent," who would then "furnish or supply" the required arms to "the party or parties deficient." MacFenin's responsibility to "provide all arms and ammunition" extended only to the reporting of any deficiencies to his superior officer and perhaps also to the distribution among the men under his command of whatever arms might be delivered to him. The duties of a captain to supply arms and ammunition to under-officers such as MacFenin are not specifically mentioned in the commissions contemporaneously issued to Robert Evelin and William Blount. Yet the inherent responsibility rested in such boiler-plate phraseology as "to do all and every other thing, which unto the charge and office of a Captain of an army belongeth or hath accustomed to belong."<sup>37</sup>

### **Soldiers**

An act of assembly passed in September 1642 specified that soldiers should be "furnished and provided" with arms and ammunition "at the charge of the hundred." A similar instruction the following year instructed the counties and hundreds to "furnish" soldiers "with all necessaries according to the law in that behalf." These measures apparently placed an obligation upon the counties and hundreds limited to the furnishing of arms and ammunition only to those without them and in default of the obligations placed upon all housekeepers, to "provide fixed gun and sufficient powder and shot for each person able to bear arms," as specified in a separate order from earlier in 1642.<sup>38</sup> These stipulations suggest that the counties and hundreds had to purchase arms to make up shortfalls in the equipment and indicates that such purchases had already been made, possibly from each county's or hundred's small depository, similar to the "parish arms" kept in England. This suggestion is supported by the stipulation in the act that "if any thing be remaining in stock after the expedition [is] finished, it shall be returned to the counties proportionably, and from the counties to every hundred, and from the hundred to particular persons, proportionably to their charge."<sup>39</sup> This stipulation would seem to apply in particular to non-perishable items such as arms and ammunition and to suggest that the counties and hundreds might have been compensated for any arms and ammunition bought at their "charge," by having surplus arms and ammunition returned to them. That surplus might then go into the postulated central depository for each county and hundred (or be sold to the particular soldiers whose defaults had been thus supplied). Further provisions were made in 1642, authorizing "the Lord Proprietary or his Lieutenant" to impress arms at the expense of the colony, up to a specified amount, although presumably only when other means failed.<sup>40</sup>

Any provisions for the further supplying of powder and shot during the course of an expedition would have fallen upon the government. The provision of powder and shot for such purposes may have been another function of a central depository.

During the expedition of 1642, Captain Thomas Cornwallis apparently laid out 412 pounds of tobacco, used as currency, for powder, bullets and lead, for which he was reimbursed. Concurrently, John Lewger, the secretary of the province, served in the role later designated as “quartermaster general,” buying beef, salt, peas, corn, and eight more pounds of powder in addition to the ten that Cornwallis had bought, as well as a “case with lock and key to put shot in.”<sup>41</sup> These purchases would seem to indicate that if a central depository already existed before the start of the expedition, it did not hold sufficient supplies. A part of the inventory may have been held in reserve for further emergency. In two subsequently drafted proclamations, one issued, Leonard Calvert assured the inhabitants that “all possible diligence is and shall be used to furnish the country with ammunition,” which in this case probably meant powder and shot.<sup>42</sup> There may have been a popular perception on the part of Marylanders that the proprietary was coming up short in its obligation to provide arms and ammunition. These statements may comprise Calvert’s response to such a perception.

In April 1643, Giles Brent and John Lewger ordered James Neale “to press for the public use” up to ten pounds of powder, “where he sees it may be spared.” In the same month the governor and council ordered the raising of “a company . . . of ten choice shot, with boat, provisions, ammunition, arms, and all things necessary to seat and fortify upon Palmer’s Island.” Either the governor or the commanding officer whom he should appoint was “to take up all things necessary for the arming or providing them, at the colony’s charge. At least some of the things “thought necessary to be provided for them” are specified: thirty pounds of powder, one hundred pounds of shot, twenty barrels of corn, one wherry or shallop, two iron pots, one pestle, swords or half-pikes, and “necessary nails to build them a house.”<sup>43</sup> Timothy Riordan points out that “the proposal does not list any guns or cannon for the fort,” and suggests that “the soldiers had their own or were supplied from provincial stocks.”<sup>44</sup> If soldiers received firearms from other sources, it would have been only because they had failed to meet the arms requirements. The commanding officer may also have had the authority to add items to the list and bill the expenses to “the Colony’s charge” through impressments of arms and ammunition. The situation suggests that soldiers in a group as small as ten were expected to bring their own firearms, and the government supplied powder and shot.

Daniel Hartzler and James Whisker stated that “in 1643 Richard Ingle was an arms and gunpowder supplier to the St. Mary’s County militia. Among items he supplied were 400 pounds of shot and a barrel of gunpowder.” They cited H. W. Newman, who referred to a judgment against Ingle in which “divers suits and complaints of his Lo[rds]hip for divers and sundry crimes, . . . upon composition for the public good and safety were suspended” upon condition that he “leave in the country, to the public need at this time, one barrel of powder and four hundred pounds of shot.”<sup>45</sup> This one-time demand, made for either compensatory or

penal purposes, does not classify Ingle as an "arms and gunpowder supplier." It is unclear whether he supplied these items to the militia as there is no evidence of who received the powder and shot. It is unlikely, however, that anyone left the supplies moldering and unused in storage or that Calvert held them "as security."<sup>46</sup> Neither situation made these vital supplies available "to the public need." It is more likely that there was some place where arms and powder were kept, from which the inhabitants might help themselves (by purchase or otherwise) to supplies, though this may have been only a room in someone's house, and that this is where Ingle's powder and shot were deposited, to be distributed for "the public need at this time," along with the rest of whatever supplies were available (if any).

The provisions made in almost all of the above-mentioned acts and orders referred to particular expeditions rather than indicating or establishing a system meant to endure and operate on an on-going basis. The arms that fulfilled these provisions may nevertheless have been drawn from sources having an on-going administrative existence. Up to this point, however, the administration of such sources seems to have taken place on an informal, traditionary, or private basis, rather than through any mechanism such as an order of council or act of assembly established. This practice changed by the end of the 1640s, after the "plundering time" and Leonard Calvert's death, an indication that the governor had taken informal responsibility for providing powder and shot.

A 1649 order of assembly left to the discretion of a committee in each hundred, meeting monthly in that year for five months in succession, "such orders and ordinances as they shall judge meet and necessary for the defense of each p[ar]ticular hundred for the month next following," orders that may have resulted in purchases of firearms and ammunition by those hundreds.<sup>47</sup> A 1650 act provided for defraying "all charges . . . of defense of the province . . . by an equal assessment upon the persons and estates of the inhabitants thereof," a provision meant to defray expenses the colony incurred providing powder and shot to soldiers and not necessarily of the arms soldiers bore in service.<sup>48</sup> Another act passed in the same year required foreign vessels to "pay . . . half a pound of powder and two pounds of shot, and a considerable p[ro]portion of match [i.e., a quantity proportional to the amounts of powder and shot required, in other words, as much match as would have been used to fire off the specified quantities of powder and shot], or so much in value, for every ton of burden." Settlers used the powder, shot, and match at the fort, where vessels were required to stop, and for "any other necessary and general uses . . . as the Governor shall see cause or think fit."<sup>49</sup> Yet another 1650 act referred to "the ordnances, carriages for ordnance, guns, shot, powder or other ammunition . . . provided or to be provided from time to time hereafter for the public defense here." This definition might be so broadly interpreted as to include arms that inhabitants had brought to Maryland as their private property.<sup>50</sup> Court cases heard in 1650 and 1651 vaguely suggest that indi-

vidual arms might have been commandeered from inhabitants (rather than purchased from them by impressment) and “given” to soldiers for use on the government’s behalf although the status of those guns as property remained unclear.<sup>51</sup>

The commission issued to John Smith in April 1655, making him “chief commander” of the “soldiers of the trained band” chosen from those inhabitants living around the Patuxent River, authorized him “to procure arms” for those who did not have them, and who could not “at present provide themselves of sufficient arms.” Smith had the authority “either by buying arms upon the public account or furnishing that want from the public magazine,” suggesting that a public magazine existed before 1655.<sup>52</sup> The language of the commission (“at present”) indicated that the people who received such arms either eventually paid for them or returned them to the public when they were able to provide themselves.<sup>53</sup> The language in Smith’s commission that authorized him “to procure arms” by either of the two means specified reflects the wording in the act of 1650 mentioned above that authorized the defraying of “all charges . . . of defense of the province.” This may also indicate that the obligation “to procure arms” for those in his band who did not have them, much like that imposed upon captains in the unratified act of 1639 carried an implied responsibility that had always fallen upon commanders.

The distribution of obligation between the proprietary, the hundreds and counties, and the militiaman himself, remained essentially unchanged for several decades. In April 1661 the assembly sent a garrison to the “Susquehannock fort,” and the council required “every respective division . . . to provide, for every man” raised out of that division, various items including “two pound of powder, ten pounds of bullet or pistol shot . . . one good well-fixed gun, and a sword or cuttle-ax [i.e., cutlass] apiece.” At the end of 1661, Kent County reimbursed “Captain Leeds . . . for powder and shot for three soldiers,” presumably those pressed out of his company according to the specifications in the order of April.<sup>54</sup> The absence in the record of any other items purchased for these soldiers, and of any items at all in the surviving records of other counties, suggests that individual soldiers provided the remainder of the required supplies or drew them from existing magazines. The government provided the additional powder and shot. The same year, Philip Calvert bought large quantities of powder and shot for which the counties later reimbursed him per the 1650 act discussed above. In September of 1663, the Assembly reimbursed two parties for shot and powder.<sup>55</sup>

None of this evidence is conclusive, but it does suggest that before 1664 there was indeed some sort of on-going provision for supplying the people of Maryland with arms, powder, and shot for purposes other than specific expeditions. However, it seems at least possible that the basis for this provision of arms and ammunition to the inhabitants, either for sale or on loan, was informal and voluntary, and that the provision was made in response to a perceived need and not as part of an officially established and on-going obligation on the part of the government.

To the extent that it depended on taxation of the inhabitants and not on the generosity of the proprietary, the practice relied on acts of assembly only in the sense that certain terms of those acts, such as the act of 1650, might be construed as applying to and supporting such provision. It might, nevertheless, have relied on a traditionary or consensual understanding that such a system should be in place and that inhabitants owed their support through taxation or other contribution.

## Cannon

The preceding section provides evidence suggesting that Lord Baltimore may have taken steps to make arms available to settlers for purchase. Setting aside conjecture, however, the only bits of hard evidence we have that Baltimore believed he bore responsibility for providing arms have to do with his purchase of ordnance for his new colony. The term in this context refers to a group of gunpowder weapons that included cannon and other weapons too large to be carried by one person. The individual settler might be presumed, for the most part, not to be able to afford to purchase such large arms for himself. Lists addressed to “private families or single persons,” suggesting what items it might be thought necessary for them to bring to the New World, do not include ordnance. Clearly, an obligation fell upon a corporate entity such as the proprietary government or the local governments of the counties and hundreds—if not upon the Lord Proprietor himself—to purchase and provide the colony with such large arms. Members of the joint stock companies who financed such ventures certainly understood the obligation. For example, the Massachusetts Bay Company listed the following as necessary items, “eight pieces of land ordnance for the fort,” one whole culverin, two demi-culverins, three sakers and two iron drakes.<sup>56</sup>

The evidence that Calvert undertook such responsibility is more limited. The *Ark* and the *Dove* carrying the first Maryland colonists landed in the Chesapeake on March 25, 1634. In a “note of things delivered to my Lord Baltimore’s account, August 23rd 1633 aboard the *Ark*” are listed “four sakers ordnance” and four demi-culverins. The purser of the ship, John Bowlter, certified this note on September 28, 1633.<sup>57</sup> Bernard Steiner cites the records of a suit brought in the Admiralty Court against Baltimore in which he claimed that “on May 16, 1634, a certain Jones sued Baltimore” for payment for four sakers and four demiculverins.<sup>58</sup> This is the sum of the known evidence that survives on the possible provision of ordnance to the Maryland colony. The quantity of four sakers and four demi-culverins is comparable to the “eight pieces of land ordnance for the fort.” H. W. Newman suggests that the ordnance was meant “to protect the ships from pirates” but it seems more likely that the *Ark* would already be equipped for this contingency than that Baltimore would spend his own money to arm a ship in which, as far as we know, he

had no proprietary interest.<sup>59</sup> Much more likely is William Lowe's postulate that "they were probably not part of the ship's active armament. Rather, they were carried as cargo destined for a fort to protect the first settlement."<sup>60</sup> It should be emphasized, however, that we have no evidence that these arms in particular arrived in Maryland. Given the vicissitudes of the *Ark's* voyage (it did not actually make a successful departure for America until November) we cannot be sure that all the ordnance specified in these entries remained on board. There are indications, however, that some ordnance landed with the first settlers.

Father Andrew White, whose several descriptions of the early days of settlement provide most of the information, observed "our great ordnance was a great and fearful thunder" to the Indians, but this could refer either to the ordnance discussed above or the armament on the *Ark*. Later, in the course of describing the ceremony of carrying the colors on shore, he wrote "the *Ark's* great guns, to honor the day, spake aloud." *A Relation of Maryland*, providing a more circumstantial account of this ceremony contains the following description. The colors "were attended by all the gentlemen, and the rest of the servants in arms, who received the colors with a volley of shot, which was answered by the ordnance from the ships."<sup>61</sup> That the servants are spoken of as being armed, and not the gentlemen, confirms the general tenor of at least the later versions of the conditions of settlement. The gentlemen, of course, might also have borne arms.

The statement that ordnance from the ships answered the volley of shot implies that the only ordnance involved in the ceremony of bringing the colors on shore was that with which the *Ark* was permanently equipped. Later in the same report, however, White observed that "for our safety, we have built a good strong fort or palizado, and have mounted upon it one good piece of ordnance, and four murderers (a smaller type of arms, halfway between a cannon and a large hand-held firearm), and have seven pieces of ordnance more, ready to mount forthwith."<sup>62</sup> This fort was presumably one that the settlers built on St. Clement's Island. Father White referred to it in *A Brief Relation* as if it were still being planned, that St. Clement's Island "is not above four hundred acres, and therefore too little to seat upon for us: therefore they have designed it for a fort to command the river, meaning to raise another on the mainland against it, and so to keep the river from foreign trade, here being the narrowest of the river."<sup>63</sup>

It is more likely, however, that when White wrote this, the fort was at least under construction. In the *Relation* of 1635, the writer described a "court of guard" which the settlers "kept night and day upon St. Clement's Isle . . . partly to defend their men which were employed in felling of trees and cleaving pales for a palizado." Later the writer mentions the establishment of another "court of guard" upon the site of St. Mary's City.<sup>64</sup> This is probably the location to which Leonard Calvert referred when he wrote to Sir Richard Lechford on May 30, 1634, that "we have seated ourselves" on the east side of "a most convenient harbor . . . within a palizado



*Demiculverin found in the St. Mary's River near Fort Point. (Courtesy Historic St. Mary's City.)*

of one hundred and twenty yards square, with four flanks; we have mounted one piece of ordnance, and placed six murderers in parts most convenient.”<sup>65</sup> These are, just possibly, the “seven pieces of ordnance more” that Father White mentioned.

News that William Claiborne was stirring the Indians up against the new settlement caused the Marylanders “to finish their fort . . . within the space of one month, where they mounted some ordnance, and furnished it with some murderers, and such other means of defense as they thought fit for their safeties.”<sup>66</sup> Whether this fort was the one at St. Clement's Island or St. Mary's City is not clear, but I suspect it was the latter. It is tempting to assume that the “one good piece of ordnance, and four murderers, and . . . seven pieces of ordnance more,” refer, with the addition of four “murderers” not otherwise mentioned in the records, to the eight pieces of ordnance listed in the “note” cited above concerning the goods aboard the *Ark*. This assumption would be based on the belief that the only ordnance brought to America during these first months of settlement was that bought (but apparently not paid for) by Baltimore and placed aboard the *Ark*. The presence in Maryland of those four extra murderers invalidates such an assumption.

Ordnance was certainly present in Maryland in 1634, yet whether it included the ordnance Lord Baltimore had bought is impossible to say. In his discussion of the “plundering time,” Timothy Riordan suggests, on the basis of two cannonballs found at the site of a battle, which would fit, respectively, a saker and a demiculverin, and on the basis of his assertion that “such weapons were not easily imported and were not in the possession of the average planter,” that the “descriptions”

of the ordnance mentioned in the citations above as brought aboard the *Ark* in 1633 “fit the archaeological evidence,” and thus that “it would be safe to assume that the cannon” in question “were captured from proprietary control.”

Alternatively, three cannon that Richard Ingle seized from Thomas Cornwallis were smaller than those the *Ark* had carried to Maryland a decade earlier.<sup>67</sup> There were, however, among the wealthier settlers of Maryland, men who had the resources to buy considerable quantities of arms for themselves, including artillery. The extensive list of Captain Robert Wintour of St. Mary’s belongings, as they were appraised on September 4, 1638, included four chambers and two murderers at 200 pounds of tobacco, a carbine at eighty pounds, nine calivers at 270 pounds, and eleven powder-flasks and touchboxes at forty-four pounds.<sup>68</sup> Although these arms might have been provided for use in local militia activity, he apparently owned the weapons. During the period 1631–1637, William Claiborne attempted to establish a plantation on Kent Island. After losing Kent Island he moved to Palmer’s Island and attempted to establish another plantation there. When forced to remove from Palmer’s Island, the inventory of the property he had left behind included a chamber, ten guns, and “a harquebush crook”—the forked stick often used to support any firearm that was larger and heavier than one which could be fired unsupported.<sup>69</sup> These individual accounts of the ownership of firearms, or of parts of firearms, tell little about the prevalent situation of most with regard to firearms ownership. Most of the men who came to settle Maryland were not as wealthy as Wintour and did not have Claiborne’s English backing. They do suggest, however, that there might have been other ordnance available than what Baltimore is presumed, on scanty evidence, to have sent over on the *Ark*. They certainly encourage the historian to use caution in identifying any particular piece of ordnance mentioned in the records with any other piece of ordnance similarly mentioned elsewhere, or for which archaeological evidence is discovered.

This essay presents all of the available evidence located to date pertaining to the arming of the settlers of Maryland by what might be called private initiative. The arms thus put into their hands included those brought over by private individuals on their own initiative or imported after they arrived. Whatever purchases of arms the colony and local governments made were not the result of formal, ongoing obligations placed upon them by Act of Assembly. There are suggestions that inhabitants were sufficiently well armed, at least during the first years of settlement. Father Andrew White claimed that the Yacomoco Indians feared the neighboring Susquehanna Indians, “yet seeing we came so well prepared with arms, their fear was much less, and they could be content to dwell by us.”<sup>70</sup> White attempted to encourage settlers to come to Maryland and he consequently painted a rosy picture, but there is no reason to believe he covered up a startling deficiency in the numbers of available arms.

## Notes

Spelling, capitalization and punctuation have been modernized and regularized in quotations. All dates are given for the modern calendar year but otherwise unchanged.

1. Daniel Boorstin, *The Americans: The Colonial Experience* (New York: Vintage Books, 1958), 353.
2. Some documentary evidence for quantities of arms having been imported to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1634 (in distinction from arms that were brought to Massachusetts Bay as the personal property of those who intended to settle there) may be found in "Winthrop in the London Port Books," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 47 (January, 1914), 179–83. This evidence, and other evidence for such importation of arms and arms components to Massachusetts Bay in the 1630s, is discussed in Gary Denis Ralph, "A Nation in Arms: The Provision of Arms to Englishmen in Europe and North America" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Delaware, 2005), 818–30 (hereinafter cited Ralph, "A Nation in Arms").
3. For a discussion of the unlikelihood of the manufacture of firearms (at least from raw materials) in seventeenth-century British colonies in the New World see Ralph, "A Nation in Arms," 752–70.
4. The Assize of Arms and Statute of Winchester may be found in David C. Douglas and George W. Greenaway, ed., *English Historical Documents: 1042–1189* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1981), 449–51 (Assize); Harry Rothwell, ed., *English Historical Documents: 1189–1327* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 461–62 (Statute).
5. For example, 9 Henry VII, c. 4, of 1503–1504 (*Statutes of the Realm* [London: Dawson's of Pall Mall, 1841, reprinted 1963], 2:649–50); 3 Henry VIII, c. 13, of 1511–12 (*ibid.*, 3:32–33). For a discussion of these laws see Ralph, "A Nation in Arms," 223–28.
6. People who fancied the taste of game and wanted to eat it might be more likely to buy it from a professional game-hunter (who would have a special license to kill game by means otherwise reserved to the economic elite), or from a middleman who bought game from the professional game hunter for resale in a market. During the period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, Englishmen moved away from reliance on wild animals and towards domestic animals for the supply of meat. For a discussion of this movement, and some of the changes in English culture that might have been responsible, see Roger Manning, *Hunters and Poachers: A Social and Cultural History of Unlawful Hunting in England, 1485–1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 10–11, 133–34.
7. John Winthrop's anguished contemplation of the pros and cons of hunting as a pastime, written down when he was still in England, appears in the *Winthrop Papers* (Boston: The Massachusetts Historical Society, 1929–), 1:163–64, discussed in Ralph, "A Nation in Arms," 172–79.
8. "A Character of the Province of Maryland, by George Alsop, 1666," in Clayton Colman Hall, ed., *Narratives of Early Maryland, 1633–1684*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), 357.
9. Lois Green Carr, Russell R. Menard, and Lorena S. Walsh, *Robert Cole's World: Agriculture and Society in Early Maryland* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 217.
10. The question of whether it was legal to hunt wild pigs in seventeenth-century Maryland is vastly complicated, Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* (Oxford: The University Press, 2004), 121–22, 135–39.
11. Henry M. Miller, "An Archaeological Perspective on the Evolution of Diet in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1620–1745," in *Colonial Chesapeake Society*, ed. Lois Green Carr, Philip D. Morgan, and Jean B. Russo (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 176–99.

12. William Hand Browne, et al., ed., *Archives of Maryland*, (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1883-1972), 10: 57 (hereinafter cited *Arch. Md.*).
13. *Arch. Md.*, 10:252.
14. Ralph, "A Nation in Arms," 283-85; *Arch. Md.* 3:89-90.
15. For a discussion of the meaning of the Parliamentary statutes of 1557-1558 regarding military obligation (4 & 5 Philip and Mary, c. 2 and 3, *Statutes of the Realm* 4 [Part 1]:316-22) and the extent to which they required the individual Englishman to be armed, see Ralph, "A Nation in Arms," 352-430.
16. For the repeal, *Statutes of the Realm*, 4 (Part 2): 1239 [21 Jac. 1, c.28]; Ralph, "A Nation in Arms," 523-26.
17. Ralph, "A Nation in Arms," 523-26.
18. In America these requirements are supplemented with means for stringent enforcement. However, that these requirements and means for enforcement would be implemented is not mentioned in any of the early promotional materials for the colony of Maryland and might therefore not have been anticipated by settlers who read those materials.
19. Recent scholarship has pointed out, however, that not all servants were necessarily completely destitute or from backgrounds unable to provide them with any resources at all when they entered into servitude. A short bibliography of relevant scholarship may be found in James Horn, *Adapting to a New World: English Society in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 32, note 16.
20. John D. Krugler, ed., *To Live Like Princes: 'A Short Treatise Sett Downe in a Letter Written by R. W. to His Worthy Freind C. J. R. Concerning the New Plantation Now Erecting under the Right Ho[nora]ble the Lord Baltemore in Maryland,'* reproduced in facsimile from the original document in the Hugh Hampton Young Collection of the Enoch Pratt Free Library (Baltimore: The Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1976), 30-31. See Krugler, *To Live Like Princes*, 9-10, for an analysis of the problems in determining whether Wintour had been to Maryland by the time he wrote the "Short Treatise," and 18, for the servants Wintour brought with him.
21. Michael A. Bellesisles, *Arming America: The Origins of a National Gun Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 75, 474 note 18.
22. 3 Henry VIII, c. 3, passed in 1511-1512 (*Statutes of the Realm*, 3: 25-26); made perpetual by 6 Henry VIII, c. 2 (ibid., 3:123-34), discussed in Ralph, "A Nation in Arms," 215-16, and other Parliamentary laws regarding servants and arms, 252-56.
23. *Arch. Md.*, 1:254-55.
24. *Arch. Md.*, 3:103.
25. I have never seen an indenture containing such terms, but few actual indentures survive from seventeenth-century Maryland.
26. *Arch. Md.*, 1:347.
27. *Arch. Md.*, 1:413.
28. *Arch. Md.*, 5:23.
29. *Arch. Md.*, 1:540. This clause was included in the act despite objections expressed by the Upper House on two separate occasions, objections which made it clear why servants were being excluded. First, the Upper House declared that it was "not necessary to insert that clause" because "this house doth not conceive that any servant can be admitted as a volunteer because he is not master of himself till free from his master," *Arch. Md.* 1:526; after the Lower House had apparently modified the clause to include the phrase "without his or their master's or mistresses' consent," the Upper House further complained that "this last clause is thought inconvenient because the officer that accepts of volunteers for this service cannot tell, when any person offers himself as a volunteer, whether he be not a servant runaway from some master afar off and so [the officer] may be a liable to be questioned by this Act," *Arch. Md.*,

1:531. In other words, it was feared that the modification shifted the responsibility from the servant to the enlistment officer. The act, as finally passed, simply prohibited servants from volunteering. In October 1671 a question raised by the Upper House concerning the drafting of soldiers for a proposed expedition "whether servants or housekeepers shall be sent out" suggests that under normal circumstances servants would not be exempted, since there is no indication elsewhere that housekeepers were ever exempted, except perhaps informally (through not being chosen by militia officers for service), *Arch. Md.*, 2:314.

30. An act of Assembly of 1678 seems to have been the first to raise the question of whether this principle applied equally to African slaves. The "Act for the Ordering and Regulating the Militia of this Province and for the better Security and Defense thereof" states "that all negroes and slaves whatsoever shall be exempted the duty of training or any other military service," *Arch. Md.*, 7:56.

31. *Arch. Md.*, 1: 535–36.

32. *The Calvert Papers: Number One*, Maryland Historical Society, Fund Publication no. 28 (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1889), 160.

33. *Arch. Md.*, 1: 77–78.

34. The exception involved the sword and belt, which the act said each housekeeper was to "find," i.e., pay for. The sword was an implement which Marylanders could not use otherwise than in combat. This suggests that the drafters expected that asking Marylanders (other than "householders") to spend money on one would meet with resistance. It would not be provoked to the same degree by the demand that they purchase a firearm, which, after all, they could also use for hunting. The later rise of the bayonet would make any decision between the two weapons less complicated."

35. *Arch. Md.*, 3:103

36. As is often the case with English words, the meaning of the word "provide," as it was used in the seventeenth century, was closer to the meaning of its Latin root than it is in modern usage. *Providere* means "to see beforehand." *Arch. Md.*, 3:104.

37. *Arch. Md.*, 3: 102–103.

38. *Arch. Md.*, 1: 196 (act of 1642); 3: 103 (order in 1642), 132 (instruction in 1643).

39. *Arch. Md.*, 1: 197.

40. *Arch. Md.*, 1: 198.

41. *Arch. Md.*, 3: 116, 119, 121–22.

42. *Arch. Md.*, 3: 127–28, see marginal note, "Proclamation never published." There is no evidence that Leonard Calvert followed through on these declarations.

43. *Arch. Md.*, 3: 133 (order to Neale), 133–34. I have found no indication that this was done, or if so, by what means the owners of the powder were reimbursed. There seems to be an elision in the text of the order, as it survives. It seems to have been considered, on the other hand, that there were adequate supplies of firearms, without its having to be specified in the order in question that more needed to be obtained or purchased "at the Colony's charge."

44. Timothy Riordan, *The Plundering Time: Maryland and the English Civil War, 1645–1646* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2004), 111.

45. Daniel Hartzler and James B. Whisker, *Maryland Longrifles* (Bedford, Pa.: Old Bedford Press, 1991), 171; Harry Wright Newman, *The Flowering of the Maryland Palatinate* (Washington, D.C.: By the author, 1961), 139; *Arch. Md.*, 4:261.

46. Riordan, *Plundering Time*, 141.

47. *Arch. Md.*, 1: 253–54. The act may have been identical or similar to a clause "touching defense of the Province" that formed part of an "Act for Settling Government in the Province as the Present State of Things Will Permit," apparently passed in the assembly of 1648 but not preserved in that form. *Ibid.*, 1: 225–29.

48. *Arch. Md.*, 1: 302–303.
49. *Arch. Md.*, 1: 293.
50. *Arch. Md.*, 1: 303.
51. *Arch. Md.*, 10: 24, 40–41, 129.
52. *Arch. Md.*, 3: 315–16. At the same time, Smith was being appointed muster-master general (*ibid.*, 3: 315), but it seems that his duties, as I have described them here, pertained to his office as captain. See also *ibid.*, 10: 412–13.
53. *Arch. Md.*, 3: 317. An order from August 1655 refers to “guns lent unto” inhabitants in this area “from the public,” but this may refer to guns lent to individuals for use in the protection of their families, rather than for use in military service.
54. *Arch. Md.*, 3: 411; 54: 231. The amount of tobacco reimbursed to Captain Leeds, 108 pounds, might be seen as corresponding roughly to the price at that time of six pounds of powder and thirty pounds of shot it was required that the three soldiers be furnished with. The records for the expenses from the expedition of 1642, nineteen years earlier (*ibid.*, 3: 119, 121) give prices of twenty pounds of tobacco per pound of powder, and two pounds of powder per pound of “bullets and lead.” At these prices, the amounts of powder and shot being required for three soldiers in 1661 would cost a total of 180 pounds of tobacco. Even taking into account variations in price between 1642 and 1661, this suggests that Price could not have bought much more than the minimum amounts with which these soldiers were supposed to be supplied.
55. *Arch. Md.*, 1: 474, 541. The much larger quantity of tobacco involved, 1,112 pounds, suggests that Calvert’s purchase was of an essentially different nature from Captain Leeds’s.
56. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England* (Boston: William White, 1853– ), 1:26.
57. “The Ark and Dove,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 1 (1906), 353–54 (hereinafter *MdHM*).
58. Bernard C. Steiner, “New Light on Maryland History from the British Archives,” *MdHM*, 4, (1909), 251–52. In the “note” of August 1633, there is also listed an item of “deals [presumably boards of deal wood] and other provisions” at £28 5s. This is not mentioned in Steiner’s report of the Admiralty suit, but it (or some other item of similar cost) would have to be included, in order to bring the value of the items listed up closer to the sum for which Baltimore was being sued. With that inclusion, and deducting, from the total expenses listed in the note, £43 10s for the price of a tun and a half of wine listed in the “note,” but for which Baltimore had presumably duly paid, and which was not therefore included in the suit, Jones should be suing for £310 16s 6d, but instead he is suing for £309 14s 6d. Perhaps Baltimore had paid £1 2s to Jones, over the cost of the wine. It should be noted that, notwithstanding the optimistic and sentimental assertions of Frank L. Howard, “The Guns of St. Mary’s,” *Chronicles of St. Mary’s* 6 (September 1958), 1–14, and Donald G. Shomette, “The Guns of St. Mary’s,” *MdHM*, 93 (1998), 476–96, we have no way of knowing whether the pieces of ordnance found off the coast of the Chesapeake in the early nineteenth century are among the ordnance referred to in these citations, though it is certainly possible that they are. Steiner, “New Light,” 252, in referring to the setting up on State House Hill in Annapolis of one of the cannon so discovered, much more prudently “wonders whether the cannon . . . is a part of this armament.”
59. Newman, *Flowering*, 16.
60. William W. Lowe, “The Master of the *Ark*: A Seventeenth-Century Chronicle,” *MdHM*, 95:3 (2000), 267. He incorrectly describes the sakers as “of 2,500 pounds each.” Since I do not have access to all of his cited references, I have not been able to determine the source of his assertion that “these guns were purchased for Lord Baltimore from an English dealer in used ordnance.”

61. *A Relation of the Successfull Beginnings of the Lord Baltemore's Plantation in Maryland* (Annapolis, Md.: Maryland State Archives, 1990), 4–5; “A Relation of Maryland,” in Hall, *Narratives*, 75.
62. *Relation of the Successful Beginnings*, 9.
63. “A Briefe Relation,” in Hall, *Narratives*, 40.
64. “A Relation of Maryland,” in Hall, *Narratives*, 72, 74. Hall, in a footnote, defines a “court of guard” as a “guard-house,” but it might more precisely be defined as an area under regular patrol that might or might not be demarcated by a structure to enclose it.
65. *Calvert Papers: Number Three*, Maryland Historical Society, Fund Publication no. 35 (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1899), 21.
66. “A Relation of Maryland,” in Hall, *Narratives*, 76.
67. Riordan, *Plundering Time*, 232–33.
68. *Archives*, 4: 86.
69. *Arch. Md.*, 3: 76 for quote, 5: 173 spelling “crocke.” See Ralph, “A Nation in Arms,” 776–77, for further evidence concerning Claiborne and the possibility that he may have manufactured guns.
70. *Relation of the Successful Beginnings*, 5; “A Briefe Relation,” in Hall, *Narratives*, 42. In “A Brief Relation of the Voyage Unto Maryland,” a probably later redaction of the same story of settlement, White says that the Indians “do indeed like us better for coming so well provided, assuring themselves of greater safety by living by us,” making no mention of arms in particular.

# Domestic Bagatelles

No 6<sup>th</sup> February 1<sup>st</sup> 1805

We give the following not on account of its beauty, as poetry (for it has but little of that,) but to keep up the old maxim "Omne tibi punctum qui miscuit utile, dulce".

'Twas once on a time, when red was blue,  
I've heard it told, and think it true  
That ghosts, and witches, they combined  
To tease and torment all mankind;  
First on old women they began,  
Then went to youth, and so to man,  
But listen ye all, whilst I relate  
A story that's short, sad, and complete!  
In Ireland dear, (the province Connaught)  
Jemmy was bred, (a fool, and a sot,)  
Jemmy was stout, and good-natured too,  
But he'd shrink when the candle burnt blue.  
A cow, Irish potatoes, and he,  
Dwelt with his mother, next to the sea;  
Their hut was small, a barrel the door,  
As to thier bed, they laid on the floor.  
One night the woman was just in her bed,  
When Jemmy began to think of the dead.  
Good mother quoth he, pray can you tell  
Whence are the ghosts, from Heaven or Hell?  
Ough quit now Jemmy, will you be done,  
Come to your bed, and sleep with the sun;  
Why will you ask, you know it's not right  
To speak of ghosts or goblins, at night?  
Go cover the fire, put by your cup,  
And pray <sup>fasten the door</sup> for us both, while you are up.  
~~Then to show how on prayer he relied~~  
~~Blundering thus, at once he complied~~  
~~Good father forgive our sins which are great & many~~  
~~Forgive them all O Lord or forgive not any.~~

# “Domestic Bagatelles”: Servants, Generations, and Genders in the McHenry Family of the Early Republic

Karen Robbins

In 1805, James McHenry and his son Daniel of Baltimore, Maryland, decided to hold a weekly “family” entertainment, at which they expected all members of the immediate family to play their part. Everyone was to contribute a written piece, in any form—letter, essay, poetry, lecture, short story, anything could be included—although each contribution would end with a short description of the weather. The family titled their year-long project, bound and addressed to their descendants, “Domestic Bagatelles.” The McHenrys assembled the collection with the intention of helping their children create their own happy families.<sup>1</sup>

The meaning of the word “bagatelles” belies its privileged history in early American literature. Although the word is defined as “an unimportant or insignificant thing; a trifle,” by no less a luminary than Dr. Benjamin Franklin who excelled in this type of lighthearted and humorous essay. In these bagatelles, “[a]ttention is given to setting, plot, point of view, characterization and dialogue. Comic detachment is created through rapid transitions, or ‘bifocality,’ as the action shifts from near to far, from reality to fantasy. The cast is depicted with gentle humor.”<sup>2</sup> Bagatelles often, although not always, contained some moral point. This was the genre into which the McHenrys plunged and out of which emerged three main foci—relations between the McHenrys and the servants, dealings between the generations, and interaction between the genders. Other axes cut through as well and brought into the discussion issues of hierarchy, power, education, opportunity, and more subordinately, the transatlantic nature of their society.

## Family Life

James and Daniel could hardly have chosen a better year to write these pieces. The family was intact, healthy, and reasonably happy. In fact, James repeatedly expressed his pride in his four children and nephew and in his sense of good fortune. Yet we also see other images of the early republic in which young men tried to find their own paths in a society so open to them and of young women seeking to understand their place. In both cases, a picture of a caring father emerges who constantly

*Karen Robbins is an Assistant Professor of History and Co-Director of Women’s Studies at St. Bonaventure University. She is a past contributor to this journal, has published in the Journal of the Early Republic, and is working on a biography of James McHenry.*

*Left: Excerpt from the McHenry family’s “Domestic Bagatelles,” 1805. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

tried to impart his wisdom to the next generation, one that often thought it knew better. With one exception, the family's servants and slaves are visible at the beginning of the project but revert to the background. Regardless of the fact that the McHenrys initially used the term "family" to include everyone in their household, the reader quickly sees that all of the resources (and hence power) revolved around the whites.

Scholarship on families in the early republic is growing, yet the "Domestic Bagatelles" remains unique as a project in which two generations engaged and the voices of each, male and female, are heard.<sup>3</sup> The McHenrys first presented themselves in true bagatelle style, humorously but self-consciously addressing future progeny, until they relaxed and the writings gave way to weekly relations among themselves. At times they used the bagatelles as a way to communicate with each other. As a result, an unusually intimate "snapshot" of life in a well-off Baltimore family of the early republic emerges, revealing the complexity of their lives. We see a new generation quite aware of their parents' roots and life decisions who embraced their transatlantic origins and, with regard to the boys at least, who took for granted the freedom they felt to create their own lives regardless of the always-present possibility of future failure. Indeed, the young McHenry men possessed this freedom in large part due their parents' status and financial well-being.

This family also lived caught between different worlds or mental constructs, at once retaining colonial elements while simultaneously abandoning them. James, a modern or perhaps enlightenment head of the household, constantly attempted to guide his children through the use of reason. Conversely, he did expect this reasoning to result in an old-fashioned obedience, from the boys while young and from the girls both to him and their future husbands. His own marriage, one of early republican and even revolutionary companions, functioned as one in which each partner generally accepted their gender-designated authority in managing the home or in dealing with the outside world and the children's education. James and Peggy believed that the boys needed liberal educations, and the girls should be trained as good wives.

James's own coming-of-age transition was certainly more difficult than that of his children. In 1771, more than thirty years earlier, he had left northern Ireland for Philadelphia. Although family legend holds that he emigrated in search of a place that would improve a physical constitution purportedly diminished by too much study, it seems likely that he also may have served as an advanced scout for his family. During the time he spent finishing his education at Newark Academy in Delaware, James wrote to his family encouraging his parents and younger brother John to move to the colonies. He ultimately chose the younger and up-and-coming town of Baltimore, Maryland, for their new address. Here he found opportunities not available in Ireland.

James, as did many Scots-Irish, viewed the British North American colonies with hope, if not envy. For example, "William Drennan, then a young [Scots-Irish] medical student at Edinburgh, [who] enthusiastically sympathized with the Americans," saw America as "the promised land [he] would wish to view before [he] died . . . and the place he intended to emigrate to should he fail an examination." For most of the eighteenth century, the Scots-Irish flooded the American colonies in search of that Promised Land. They had, after all, been losing position in Ireland to the English. Presbyterian churches and schools had been outlawed, and all officeholders had been forced to swear allegiance to England and the Anglican Church. Although the worst of the seventeenth-century abuses had disappeared, the legality of Presbyterian marriages remained ambiguous and excluded many from governmental offices. The Scots-Irish keenly felt these constrictions. Thus the McHenry's journey followed a path well worn by their people and they could depend on their countrymen receiving them, particularly as they owned property.<sup>4</sup>

James met his future wife Peggy Caldwell immediately upon his arrival in the colonies as her family hosted him when he arrived in Philadelphia. Neither knew that they would someday marry, for he was eighteen and she was nine. James did, however, teach her penmanship and encouraged Peggy's writing for the rest of their lives together. Curiously, she did not contribute to "Domestic Bagatelles."

Peggy's parents, David Caldwell and Grace Allison, had also emigrated from northern Ireland after their marriage. They had three children, but David did not live to see his youngest, Margaret (Peggy). Fortunately, David had been a successful merchant and left Grace well-provided for, placing the estate in the hands of her cousin William Allison. William did indeed take good care of Grace. One year and a suitable mourning period later they married. By the time Peggy was old enough for suitors, her share of the estate had grown enough for her to express concern that men might choose her for her money.<sup>5</sup>

By 1781, when James and Peggy married, they had both become desirable partners. Her miniature depicts a lovely young brunette with ivory complexion and oval face, and she brought wealth to the marriage. James, also a brunette, with regular features and brown eyes, had served in the Revolutionary War, first as a physician and later as Assistant Secretary to General George Washington. The position had opened political doors and led him to serve in both houses of the Maryland legislature, the Continental Congress, Constitutional Convention, and then as Secretary of War under both presidents Washington and Adams. Thus the couple's personal ties to the British Isles, and the family they created, reflected the mobility of the Atlantic peoples, both voluntary and involuntary.<sup>6</sup> James and Peggy were not the McHenry household members whose roots extended beyond the Atlantic—their servants also hailed from distant lands.



*Margaret Caldwell McHenry (1762–1833). (Bernard Christian Steiner, The Life and Correspondence of James McHenry, Secretary of War under Washington and Adams [Cleveland, Oh.: Burrows, 1907].)*

## Servants

These servants' roles within the family appeared as early as the second week's bagatelle. Son Daniel, with wit and a sense of humor probably inherited from his father, proclaimed that the McHenrys had adopted a set of rules for a happy family and proceeded to enumerate them:

The first, or principal, rule upon which all the rest depend is, that the servants do what they please. The second which is like unto it, is, that they do as they please. The third teaches that all are made of dust, that servants are on a footing with thier [sic] masters, and may contradict, argue and swear with impunity. The fourth requests them to leave thier other work on Sunday, and wait at table, that they may learn to be more expert next Friday [a fast day] when company is expected to dine. The fifth forbids thier paying respect to the younger part of the community, either in word, or deed. The sixth allows them to take the life of thier master, or at least to threaten it if he provokes them, by exercising authority. The seventh permits thier frolicking at thier will, and pleasure. The eight [sic] regulation, suffers them to steal. The ninth exhorts them to lye, and bear false witness against each or any of the community. The tenth provides silent admiration for the honorable act of despoiling our neighbours. You may observe according to the extent of these commandments, that they are well calculated, to make good servants, than which nothing can be more conducive to the peace & tranquility, of a happy & united family [emphasis in the original].



James McHenry (1753-1816,  
(Maryland Historical Society.)

This piece, clearly a bagatelle in the general fashion of Benjamin Franklin, contains the moral that a happy family lets the servants do as they please. It makes fun of the haplessness of the master, positing that the true power lies in the hands of the servants. The social relations are absurdly topsy-turvy. (If this were a theatrical piece it would be a farce, with exaggerated characters and absurd events).<sup>7</sup> This production, and its cast of servant characters, is light and superficial fun—and quite revealing.

Only a member of the upper or upper-middle class would have written such a composition. Nor is it a surprise that a youth wrote it for his current and future family. It never seems to occur to him that the striving of servants might portend a social mobility that went both ways. Indeed, the definition of "servant" and its status underwent change in the early republic. In England an ancient classism prevailed resulting in a number of "servant" positions, but in the United States the Revolution had challenged this tradition and only two such "legal" categories existed, indentured servants and apprentices (although slaves were included in colloquial euphemism).<sup>8</sup> Daniel did not question the hierarchy and apparently assumed that his future family would also have servants. There is also a subtle racism inherent to the bagatelle. The word servant did not refer solely to hired whites but also to African slaves, and the word "servant" functions as a euphemism, behind which masters hid the reality of the power structure. If the relationship is challenged in this bagatelle, perhaps that is not merely harmless (as the humor suggests) but also an indication that Daniel challenged the status quo.

Although the "servants" were clearly part of the family, the power structure in

the home shifted during these years of the early republic, no longer the hierarchy posited long before by Robert Filmer, in which the father stood at the pinnacle, unquestioned authority in the household, the wife came second (until her male children were grown), children third, and servants last. If this hierarchy was ever in effect during the early colonial period, such deference had become a “delusion” over time. By the 1790s reliable servants in Philadelphia had become so difficult to hire that the hotel trade emerged for those who did not wish to come and set up homes that would require domestic help. Many servants challenged authority and these bagatelles reflect that change in the fifth and sixth rules above—servants respected neither master nor children. Nor did they respect the property of others. In short, they were rude, disobedient, thieving vandals. Written in straightforward prose, the humor disappears.<sup>9</sup> There seems, then, to be an unquestioning classism and even racism at work in Daniel’s mind. For his part, James had at one time questioned racism, but time, convenience, and economy must have set these concerns aside, and there is no surviving record that he opposed the master-servant hierarchy.<sup>10</sup>

Ten servants worked in the McHenry household, three from Europe and seven African Americans. On February 16, James described each person, anticipating that another member of the household might write about them in the coming year. In doing so, he unwittingly described each person’s methods of coping with their subservient status. The descriptions began with twelve-year-old James Holden, an Irish boy described as “a smart boy, slovenly in his dress, perverse occasionally, and [who] will sometimes forget to tell the truth.” James had paid \$80 for seven years’ of the boy’s service. This child had been caught up in the wars emanating from the French Revolution, as he had accompanied British troops in their unsuccessful invasion of Holland under the Duke of York sometime prior to 1802. He could not have been more than nine-years-old at the time. The English soldiers had left him in Holland, where he seems to have been thrown in with a group of poverty-stricken Dutch who sold up to seven years of their service for passage to Maryland. Known as redemptioners, their circumstances bore great similarity to the more familiar indentured servants.<sup>11</sup>

In fact, colony boosters had been encouraging immigration from the German speaking areas of Europe for almost a century. Acting like carnival barkers, “neulanders” praised the colonies to those in need. Those people above the poverty level sold whatever they owned for passage to America but often spent so many weeks detoured or detained in port that they had no money at sailing time. At this point agents encouraged them to sign contracts by which they exchanged four to seven years labor for fare. The ships’ captains then owned the contracts and sold them upon arrival at port. If no individual bought their contracts, a middle-man ferried the emigrants from port to port until someone finally purchased their time. Illustrating the poignancy of their plight, these men were called

"soul drivers." This practice may also explain the presence of the two Dutch sisters in the household, Margery and Kitty Hyderback. They arrived in the McHenry home in the same year as young Holden and it seems likely that they, too, were redemptioners, victims of larger historical forces.<sup>12</sup>

Perhaps the women had entered into their contracts voluntarily, as some Dutch did to avoid being thrust into a foreign country completely destitute, ignorant of the local ways and language. If one found a kind master, the years of service might be of help to the immigrant. But such thinking seems to have persisted only among the Germans, for the English, Irish, and Scots had all but abandoned indentured servitude by the eve of the Revolution.<sup>13</sup>

Why, however, had the McHenrys purchased indentured servants rather than additional slaves? One can only conjecture. Had the redemptioners found James McHenry and pled their cause? Or had McHenry decided to try another form of labor? He had surely seen such cases during his years in Philadelphia, particularly during his time as Secretary of War. He had not, in fact, been legally able to take his slaves to that free state without first committing them to their own indentures, an obvious benefit for the enslaved—freedom became a possibility. In 1805, then, McHenry may well have wondered if slavery would gradually disappear. Perhaps indentured servitude seemed like a forward step away from slavery. If so, he did not give up on slavery entirely. Taking up redemptioners may have struck him as a viable option.<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, McHenry considered these women to be "stupid," with an "utter inaptitude to benefit by instruction." He claimed that "they cannot distinguish between a clean swept and a dirty room. They are good natured, but will never learn anything." Although they may indeed have been dim-witted, they surely had little incentive to sweep. This "dullness" may have helped them manage their condition, factors the McHenrys never acknowledged.<sup>15</sup>

Interestingly, at this point McHenry began to descant "On national errors." McHenry believed there was a "vulgar error" leading to a popular stereotype that the Dutch and Germans were obtuse. For his part, however, McHenry did not wish to imply

that the Dutch and Germans are a stupid people. It does not appear to me, that there is any intrinsic difference, in the intellectual powers of men, inhabiting different countries or born in different latitudes, or that man because born in one country must ever remain dull and stupid, while his fellow man, born in a different country shall become civilized and learned.

Indeed, he proceeded to list the various Germanic accomplishments and the famous persons with whom he was familiar. Clearly, McHenry vented conflicting thoughts. He tried to debunk the popular stereotype but he also wished to express

an enlightenment belief in equality while simultaneously dismissing old English aristocratic attitudes toward the Irish and colonials. Regardless, he continued to think of Margery and Kitty as dim-witted.<sup>16</sup>

The other servants in the McHenry household were African American slaves who “lived in families but also with families.” James’s above-mentioned belief in the equality of people held for American blacks as well, and one could consider it quite ironic that he even owned slaves given his history. In 1789, while seated in the Maryland Assembly, McHenry had favored a gradual emancipation bill (based on Pennsylvania’s), yet the legislature passed a milder version that recommended humanity toward slaves, servants, and apprentices. James had also opposed freeing infirm elderly slaves considering it proper that masters should care for those who had served them, yet he thought their widows or children ought to be freed and encouraged this in wills. Moreover, he knew Benjamin Banneker, the famed African-American mathematician and almanac-maker and McHenry wrote a laudatory introduction to the book:

I consider this negro as a fresh proof that the powers of the mind are disconnected with the color of the skin, or, in other words, a striking contradiction to Mr. Hume’s doctrine, that the negroes are naturally inferior to the whites, and unsusceptible of attainments in arts and sciences. In every civilized country, we shall find thousands of whites liberally educated and who have enjoyed greater opportunities for instruction than this negro, his inferiors in those intellectual acquirements and capacities that form the most characteristic features in the human race. But the system that would assign to these degraded blacks an origin different from the whites, if it is not ready to be deserted by philosophers, must be relinquished as similar instances multiply; and that such must frequently happen, cannot well be doubted, should no check impede the progress of humanity [emphasis in the original], which, meliorating the conditions of slavery, necessarily leads to its final extinction. Let, however, the issue be what it will, I cannot but wish on this occasion to see the public patronage keep pace with my black friend’s merit.<sup>17</sup>

Assuming he wrote what he truly believed, McHenry apparently owned household slaves as a convenience, like so many others of the time, and he managed to reconcile his beliefs and his practices.

Equals or not, McHenry had the same complaint against Sarah the cook that he had against the Dutch women. “She is good tempered, but not very active, nor yet much to be commended as a plain cook. What she is taught one day, she is too apt to forget the next.” He did not question her intelligence, however, instead noting that she was “married” with a child named Jenny. Her husband Edward, or Ned, earned McHenry’s respect, not for hard labor, but for his “steady habits.”

Although his single day's output might not be great, Ned accomplished a fair amount in a week and for this reason earned a fair amount of responsibility.

He has the care of the cows, of the Hot-house, of the garden, of the Pidgeons, of the rabbits, of the guinea pigs, of the fowls, and, lately of a monkey. He assists to saw wood, waits table on Sundays, and on days of company . . . . He is also employed in miscellaneous business, goes regularly to chapel, keeps lent and observes the fasts and holydays of his church.

Ned had evidently found the personal resources to work, but did so at his own pace.

Also a "tolerable" worker was a girl named Emma, who had been hired out as a "seamstress and lady's maid" by a Dr. John Murray. Perhaps Emma also helped with little six-year-old Rachel, used mainly as messenger from one part of the house to another.<sup>18</sup>

Augustus, on the other hand, was well-made and strong and so took care of the carriage and the horses, "but cannot be praised for order attention or regularity in his business." Nor would one apply the word steady to fourteen-year-old George, but James did think him "cunning." He also lied and stole, classic measures of resistance and even resilience. James wrote of George that he "suspected [him] of a propensity to consider small articles, which do not appear to be under the immediate protection of their owners, as belonging to himself."<sup>19</sup>

It may have been George who figured at the center of the following mystery that emerged through a series of bagatelles from early February to late April. The story began with James reporting that although the hens were suddenly barren, the old cock had taken a shine to the two chickens that had survived a recent round of pip, a poultry disease. There was still hope, then, for eggs. But soon the cock himself disappeared leaving no signs of "fowl" play. Naturally Daniel and James suspected theft, the eighth rule of a happy family. Still, evidence of the old cock's activities emerged with a fine brood of chicks that managed to produce a young cock. Daniel now suspected that a breeding plot had been underfoot and predicted that the young cock would disappear by Easter. Although James reported its presence that morning, Daniel triumphed with its disappearance by that evening—surely on his way to a cockfight!<sup>20</sup>

Daniel had been right. At eighteen-years-old he was the age his father had been when he crossed the Atlantic in search of a new home. Daniel did not have to make such a journey for unlike northern Ireland during James's youth, Daniel's world offered countless opportunities for free white men with education and property. As the son of well-off parents, Daniel McHenry could choose his future, although opportunity certainly did not guarantee success. Failure pervaded the nineteenth century for people of all backgrounds. One of the problems that could befall a man and lead to ruin was ill-health and this might have been a problem

for Daniel. His constitution, like his father's, had not held up well to rigorous study, and he now learned at home with guidance from his father. But, over the course of this year, it would become apparent that Daniel was becoming interested in farming rather than some scholarly pursuit.<sup>21</sup>

But Daniel did not express this interest at first. His early bagatelles were often fanciful and humorous, as when he wrote satiric missives about going to a party in unfashionable clothes to escort his mother and sister Anna home and nearly wound up in a duel. He wrote another in which he described a card party and the novel fashions that had led women to such new roles that they were even driving sleighs and cracking whips.<sup>22</sup> Ireland also fired his imagination. Daniel clearly had a relationship with the emerald isle he had never visited. He wrote, for example, a comic poem about a simple and superstitious Irish mother and her grown son from Connaught, who grew frightened in the dead of night and wound up knocking each other out through a series of comical missteps. He also wrote that he dreamt about an Irishman named Patrick, who found himself in front of a tavern with a shilling:

[T]here was a lady close by me do you see, now as I said before, the Irish girls are the girls for accepting a treat, so I thought the American girls were the same... I made bold to ask this very lady if she'd accept of a treat, and that in the most civil manner too, for I called her honey and deary, but to be sure she would not let me touch her at all, at all, but she set up such a baw[l]ing and squalling, that by the soul of my shoe, I believe she thought I was some Devil or other. Now up runs a gentleman in a thundering hurry...he gave me this cut over the eye and laid me speechless...But Jemmy and Teague two good hearted fellows picked me up out of mercy, and gave me a little bit of consolation in the shop.... You know an Irish man never fights till he's drunk, and then the liquor fights for him, and for that reason do ye see I'm after posting my antagonist like a coward, and no gentleman.

Daniel certainly felt close to his Irish heritage, particularly the Blarney stone. Even so, he could not help noting cultural differences between Ireland and Baltimore. A sense of humor seemed essential to breech the gap. Yet writing these weekly essays became so time-consuming that by early April he apparently felt the need to accomplish two things at once and began contributing his astronomical studies to the bagatelles.<sup>23</sup>

But by June his interest in agriculture began to show. Daniel took the family's produce (peas, balm, sage, thyme, parsley, and new potatoes) to market and apparently became excited by the sale. Father James seems to have become concerned enough to warn his son that "[m]oney is useful, and industry commendable. Let, however, the young projector be cautious how he commutes, for a few

dollars, the precious hours of study." Even Margaretta, the youngest sister, grew alarmed and insisted that Daniel stop talking about selling her pets. Daniel replied, "I thank my little sister for her kind instructions to my prattling tongue, which shall henceforth observe stricter silence when conversation turns on guinea pigs."<sup>24</sup>

By July 13, however, Daniel, clearly smitten, suggested the family move to a farm about five miles away. James seriously considered the proposition but thought it much more reasonable to cultivate the fifty acres around them and then improve the seventy more he expected in about four years. He went into a lengthy account of how the land could be divided up and utilized. The following week Daniel became quite serious, listing his objections to staying where they were:

1<sup>st</sup> Our soil is not naturally good, much of it being more proper for brick makers than farmers. 2<sup>nd</sup> It is not well watered. 3<sup>rd</sup> It is not conveniently situated, one lot lies at a distance from another, all are out of the immediate observation of our house, and all are subject to the depredating hands of a most worthless set of free negroes, and abandoned wretches, who are closely settled round them. 4<sup>th</sup> The fencing is much more expensive, than if the lots were contained in one general inclosure . . . 5<sup>th</sup> There are not houses &c. built for sheltering and confining the cattle and their food. 6<sup>th</sup> The only means of watering them would be by a pump, an expensive and troublesome machine. 7<sup>th</sup> More servants must be kept at a greater expence than on a farm. 8<sup>th</sup> These servants must all in a greater or less degree partake of the thief, the rogue, the liar, the rascal, the scoundrel, the villain and everything that is bad.

Daniel met his father on serious ground, and his analysis was considered and honest, if also racist and classist. Despite his extended arguments, Daniel admitted that he would not wish to take the blame if the family followed his wishes, moved to the farm, and lost money. The family did not move, but eventually Daniel did become a farmer.<sup>25</sup> By the end of the year, Daniel admitted that he could not continue the bagatelles and keep up with his studies. He reminded the family to no avail that all were supposed to contribute. Understandably, his studies took priority and consequently limited the bagatelles to a one year project.

Younger brother John had not had as much trouble with his studies. In fact, at 14 (or 15) John was attending the local "french institution," St. Mary's College in Baltimore, chartered that very year, 1805, as a civil university.<sup>26</sup> Interestingly, Protestants would not found their first seminary, Andover, until 1807. James had given some thought to whether or not he should send his son to a Catholic school, and an acquaintance asked him this very question. The question, of course, reflects the centuries of European conflict between Catholics and Prot-



*St. Mary's College, Baltimore, cartouche from Thomas L. Poppleton, Plan of the City of Baltimore, 1822 [1852]. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

estants and Maryland's own historic founding as a refuge for Catholics that was, ironically, settled largely by Protestants. The tension remained, so it was natural that issues might exist:

Is there no danger, I was interrogated, as the preceptors are Priests, that they will make Roman Catholics of our children. I see no sound reason for such an apprehension, I replied. The Superintendants of the institution must be aware of the delicate ground on which they stand, and fully sensible, of the consequences which would follow the conversion of a single American pupil. They would immediately loose the scholars whose parents entertain a different mode of faith, and find themselves, in future, limited to the children of persons of their own communion. Besides, it is understood, that pupils not of their faith, will not directly or indirectly be practiced upon, while they are left at liberty to attend divine worship in the churches to which they belong or of which their parents or guardians are members.

James apparently convinced both himself and his interrogator yet the concerns remained—Sulpicians, an order devoted to the development of priests, ran the school.<sup>27</sup> It was, indeed, a transatlantic world.

The education did appear effective in John's case. He lived at school even though it was close to the McHenry home. John wrote often and Daniel identified letters written in five languages, English, French, Latin, Greek, and gibberish. Indeed, the school's rigor required that the students not speak in their native tongues. James was pleased. A "liberal education," he wrote, was "more important to children than the greatest wealth, which any parent could leave them."<sup>28</sup>

John did well and according to Daniel:

On the 13<sup>th</sup> our Brother John was crowned at St. Mary's College. Several others were also crowned, for every one who has behaved well and been [a] diligent scholar is honored in public once in each year. John bore off four laurel crowns, three of which were rewards for studious application during the year past but the fourth more valued and more glorious than the rest, entwined with white satin ribband, was gently placed by our high magistrate the mayor, upon our little hero's head amidst the applause of his fellow students, and admiration of nearly one thousand spectators. He also obtained a book as a premium, bestowed on him with one of his literary crowns. He held a part in a dialogue and to speak without partiality, surpassed his colleagues, for he spoke with clearness, and precision; — in action, emphasis, and cadence he too excelled; in fine he was the greatest orator on the stage. The dialogue lasted an hour and a half, after which the crowned went to a handsome feast prepared for them and the next morning returned home, where John is heartily welcome to enjoy his holydays.<sup>29</sup>

Clearly, even ancient European traditions continued to thrive on this side of the ocean, as both the oratory and the celebration of the best with crowns of laurel wreaths was a conscious imitation of the ancient Greeks.

The question before the young men was "whether our intellectual attainments are not purchased at the expence of our moral qualities."<sup>30</sup> John appears to have taken the position that college did not rob its students of morality. He argued against his opponent that parents, blinded by love, were not the best suited to finish the job as they could not see their children's failings. Although teachers may be deceived, it was less likely, he argued. Also, with a college education, one was less likely to simply affect knowledge, and more readily detect such affectation in another. John additionally maintained that the family, more likely to indulge a child rather than draw its ire, would produce the outspoken, churlish cynic who contributed nothing positive to society than public education. Nor did he see vice in the competitive ambition for excellence that education encouraged. The daily discipline found in school life would be necessary in life as well. And uniforms, although they distinguished students from non-students, did not create superiority, but leveled those within the school itself by not allowing for costly distinction in dress.

To some extent, the debate appears to represent an issue at work in the early republic itself as this new society confronted the implications of Enlightenment and Revolutionary ideas. It is in many ways a dispute over a Rousseau-like "nature" or the natural education one would receive at home versus what might be perceived as an aristocratic educational institution—aristocratic insofar as it fos-

ters hierarchy. Interestingly, both sides agreed that this last would be undesirable, opposing anything they thought truly “hostile to the principles of equality, which we prize so dearly.” But even within the framework of an egalitarian society, they agreed, laws remained necessary, as were collegiate rules and discipline:

Let us then hear no more ... that Colleges are calculated either to warp the understanding or impair the morals. They are on the contrary of all other systems of education, best adapted to the culture of an understanding liberally endowed and even of minds to which nature has been less prodigal of her favours.

This is the position the new egalitarian society determined to approve. Nonetheless, James could not help reminding all of his children that education does not simply happen in school. It is possible to learn something from almost everyone. Because Lady Montague willingly learned from the Turks, he opined, the powers of inoculation against smallpox were discovered.<sup>31</sup>

Despite John’s accomplishments, he remained a normal and impatient youth, prompting James to write one of his numerous didactic bagatelles. In mid-January the weather had been perfect for sleighing, and John hoped to join his friends in the activity. When James refused the horse and sleigh, John expressed his disappointment so keenly that James decided to address the matter in one of these family pieces. He had not, he argued, lightly refused the use of the horse but had done so to allow the animal time to recover from lameness. To do otherwise would have been “cruelty to an useful animal.” James was, however, concerned with what he perceived as John’s excessive reaction. He decided to turn this into a life lesson, maintaining that “we should always be prepared to encounter disappointments, with patience and fortitude.”

James periodically returned to character-building themes such as this, warning of bad tempers and attaining happiness. He believed that no true Christian could be really unhappy, as they would maintain a clear conscience and trust in God. But it was also necessary to have both regular work and times of ease, to indulge in culture, govern one’s passions, and cultivate habits of thought and recollection. Interestingly, he also warned against expecting too much from one’s friends, or trusting them too far. Instead, one should “unite the innocence of the dove with the wisdom of the serpent!”<sup>32</sup> Edification was indeed more than one learned in school.

For her part, eleven-year-old Margaretta grew tired of hearing about her brothers’ educations, “I wish papa would choose girls education, as a subject for his next bagatelle.” It took James a month before he decided how to address this comment. Whereas the boys were encouraged in Latin and Greek, James’s immediate concern with Margaretta was encouraging her to be a desirable marriage partner:

I shall only observe, that a religious education, or a due sense of religion, is best calculated to inspire the fair sex with energy and resolution, to perform the duties of their station, however severe its exactions, with patience, and without murmuring.<sup>33</sup>

From a twenty-first century point of view, it was not an auspicious beginning, with its emphasis on duty and lack of complaint. Indeed, James decided to include two letters on the subject of woman's role within marriage, he claimed "without venturing to stamp any particular value upon them." But this was disingenuous. Had he disagreed with their contents, he would surely not have reproduced them for his daughter. Perhaps his lack of enthusiasm came from remembering that as a young man he had argued for the equality of women's intellect. Now fifty-two, he apparently felt uncomfortable not preparing his daughter for the potential hardships of marriage. James chose not to say how the following letters came into his possession, but he certainly valued the content as he included them in the bagatelles. The first, written by Augustus to Maria, and was followed by her reply. Augustus wrote:

Your duty, my dear, is comprised in a narrow compass. Obey this mighty master, and hold yourself subject to his orders. What, in everything? Yes, in everything. Whether you sail in temperate latitudes, freeze near the pole, or melt under the tropic, bear everything, and think everything, done for the best. . . . This law is irrevocable. It may be contended against, but never will be altered or abrogated . . . two persons possessing co-ordinate powers, [cannot rule] without its being productive of contests between them . . . and almost perpetual disorder and distraction.

It is fortunate that Maria had the last word. She indicated her dissatisfaction with his position, not, however, arguing against a wife's submission, but instead reminding Augustus that Eve was created from Adam's rib, so that "God indicated clearly, that the woman was to be ever held and considered, as a part of himself [emphasis in the original], and treated accordingly." His power was not capricious, then, but existed merely for the sake of a unitary authority. She bade him remember "that no tyrant can be happy." The lesson was clear—Margaretta was to be religious and duty-oriented, ready to submit to her husband's will at all times. She would sadly miss the revolution in female education that was already in its early stages. Advocates of female education had by this time advanced beyond the at-home dame schools for young children or even public grammar schools to establishing female academies throughout the states. Girls' minds needed to be shaped both for the good of the country and for the happiness of their marriages. Margaretta would be expected to become both a Republican mother, one who

raised good citizens with values such as virtue and fortitude, and a companionable wife. Mothers needed sufficient education to accomplish the task, but still, the majority of girls from her generation learned not to push too far. Patriarchal familial authority was slow to lose its power, and obedience was inculcated in the young and subordinate.<sup>34</sup> This advice may have been all too practical in an era in which divorce was rare, but from this great distance that lesson seems heartrending for a bright and spunky young girl.

At sixteen, older sister Anna had already taken on a certain self-possession indicating her entry into young womanhood. She only contributed two bagatelles, one a speech written to convince Richard III to spare the lives of the young princes and the other a poem about the peaceful Nile growing stormy and overflowing its banks. This serious young woman occasionally took on “temporary government of the household,” surely in order to prepare her for her woman’s role. The word “government” here is telling, indicating that the move to women controlling the household so that it would become “woman’s sphere” was already occurring. But even this young woman craved more, as she soon tried to convince her parents to let her travel to an unnamed city one hundred miles and eighteen hours away, with only a hand fan to fight the city heat.<sup>35</sup>

Mother Peggy appears to have been too busy to contribute anything, but she did read the bagatelles to the assembled group, which sometimes included cousin John who had just passed the bar and been admitted to the General Court. James and Peggy had taken him in after his father, James’s brother, had died. One should probably assume that the family encouraged Peggy to make her contribution. Since their youths James had urged Peggy to write, and she had. During their separations Peggy had, of course, written letters, but she also joined in the family love of poetry. Hers tended to be religious and revealed little about her except that this facet of life was truly important to her. In any event, she included nothing in this family project.

In truth, 1805 did stand as a good year for the McHenry family as reflected in the bagatelles, with references to poems, sleighing, parties, classical authors, and a recording of the weather. The servants and slaves, of course, lived another life, one of privation with little incentive to accomplish anything. Still, they clearly found ways of making life more interesting, cockfights and all.

We do not know what happened to those who worked in the household, but the future turned bittersweet for the McHenrys. Margaretta would die of consumption only four years later at the age of fifteen, too young for the teachings on duty in marriage to make a difference. Daniel would become a farmer and marry, but a few months after the birth of his only child, he would be thrown from a horse, break his neck, and die at twenty-eight. James died in 1816, but only after years of suffering a painful paralysis caused, he thought, by a combination of rheumatism and gout. John would take advantage of the possibilities before him

and choose his cousin's route, becoming an attorney, marrying, fathering one son and dying at the age of thirty-two. Peggy passed away at seventy-one, outliving all but one of her children. Only Anna would survive her by four years, having married and borne four children of her own. Sadly, her husband would go mad and be of little support. Anna, then, would need to follow her father's advice and tolerate her wifely afflictions with Christian forbearance.

The bagatelles offer an unusual insight into a Baltimore family of the early Republic, illustrating that McHenry family life revolved around servants, generations, and genders. The servants belonged to a world of slavery and indentured servitude that would one day be rejected. But a clearly strong and loving bond, sometimes tested, existed between the generations. As the offspring of a well-off Baltimore family, the boys' options in life reflected the social freedom created by the American Revolution as well as the future of the American upper-middle-class, while the girls' restrictions mirrored the life American women would only slowly break free of, not experiencing similar choices with men until the late twentieth century.

Moreover, their society was woven of transatlantic threads and their bagatelles reflect this clearly. The word itself has French origins, and humorous (as well as serious) pieces of this sort were written on both sides of the ocean. People from all around the sea contributed to this new life in this new place—James, Peggy's parents, and the servants (the last being victims of large international forces such as the Atlantic slave trade and the Napoleonic wars). Interestingly, they understood it, or at least James did when he wrote, "It will occur from this short detail of our domestics, that our little world is like the great one, of different characters, possessing a full share of the imperfections of human nature."<sup>36</sup>

## Notes

1. The McHenry Family, January, 12, 1805, "Domestic Bagatelles," McHenry Family Papers, MS 647, Box 4, Maryland Historical Society (hereinafter cited "Domestic Bagatelles"). All quotes not attributed come from these writings.
2. *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language: Fourth Edition*, 2000. The Cambridge History of English and American Literature in 18 volumes (1907–1921), volume 15, "Colonial and Revolutionary Literature; Early National Literature, Part I," vol. 6, Franklin, section 10, 14. Among his most famous are *The Ephemera* (1778) in which a wise, old fly of seven hours lectured to those around him on the vicissitudes of life, and *The Dialogue Between Franklin and the Gout* (1780) wherein gout becomes a person who has come to

teach Franklin to change his ways and eat less while exercising more. Benjamin Franklin to Madame Brillon: "The Ephemera," *Benjamin Franklin Papers*, <http://www.franklinpapers.org>; Benjamin Franklin, *Dialogue Between Franklin and the Gout*, <http://www.4literature.net>. Dorothy Medlin, "Benjamin Franklin's Bagatelles for Madame Helvétius: Some Biographical and Stylistic Considerations," *Early American Literature*, 15 (1980): 45.

3. As early as 1987, Paul Nagel studied *The Adams Women: Abigail & Louisa Adams, their Sisters and Daughters* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), exposing the female relationships between siblings and, to a lesser extent, between generations in the famous New England family of President John Adams and his wife Abigail. The following year, Steven Mintz and Susan Kellogg provided a good introductory text overview of the transformations families experienced in *Domestic Revolutions: A Social History of American Family Life* (New York: The Free Press, 1998). In 1995, Alan Taylor did describe inter-generational relations in his award-winning *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995). An impressive tome, the book accomplishes much as Taylor dug into all that he could find on William and James Fenimore Cooper and their family and brought to life an important part of the early republic. Yet it is a world Taylor evoked, rather than two generations discussing matters with each other as in the "Bagatelles." Anya Jabour compellingly described *Marriage in the Early Republic: Elizabeth and William Wirt and the Companionate Idea* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), with the children emerging as matters of parental concern. Joyce Appleby contributed her findings regarding what the generation after the Revolution made of themselves and their society in *Inheriting the Revolution: The First Generation of Americans* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000). Appleby's use of "first generation" autobiographical essays tells us much about the possibilities envisioned and pursued by that generation, in fascinating retrospective summaries. See also, *Family and Society in American History* was published, edited by Joseph M. Hawes and Elizabeth I. Nybakken (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001). This is an illuminating collection of essays on the American family ranging from Early America through the twentieth century and showing the shift in roles from that of patriarchy to an entity designed to nurture individualistic children. Timothy Kinslea, *The Sedgwicks in Love: Courtship, Engagement and Marriage in the Early Republic* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2006) draws a wonderful and intimate portrait of two generations of a New England family as they maneuver their lives and loves.

4. Robert B. McDowell, *Irish Public Opinion, 1750–1800* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1944), 41; R. J. Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, 1718–1775* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), 17; and David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 613.

5. Bernard Christian Steiner, *The Life and Correspondence of James McHenry, Secretary of War under Washington and Adams* (Cleveland: Burrows, 1907), 1, 75, 78; Will of David Caldwell, 1762, Book M: 209, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; "A Register of Marriages, Baptisms and Communicants kept by and for the use of the First Presbyterian Church in the City of Philadelphia from the Year 1760 to the Year 1806," 73, 107, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Poem enclosed with letter from James McHenry to Margaret McHenry, November 13, 1782, The Papers of James McHenry, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

6. The transatlantic nature of early American society has also had its contributors. See, for example, David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed*. concentrating on the various British migrations to the colonies, Fischer provided a cultural and social overview that attempted to

explain how people from such a small geographical area, Great Britain, could bring such different attitudes with them, transmitting them to ongoing generations and resulting in differing regional reactions to the American Revolution. On the other hand, Ira Berlin's *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998) described the Africans who lived around the ocean, carried themselves or were involuntarily carried across the water, worked within this hugely transformative multi-cultural context and contributed their talents wherever they landed.

7. January, 12, 1805, "Domestic Bagatelles." The definition of farce is from *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Sixth edition, 2001–2007.

8. Jeffrey S. Kahana, "Master and Servant in the Early Republic, 1780–1830," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 20 (2000), 57.

9. Michael Zuckerman, "Tocqueville, Turner, and Turds: Four Stories of Manners in Early America," *The Journal of American History*, 85 (1998), 24. Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, a Division of Random House, Inc., 1991), 185, writes about changes to the master-slave or servant relationship and the "whimsical" nature commented upon.

10. Karen Robbins, "Power Among the Powerless: Domestic Resistance by Free and Slave Women in the McHenry Family of the New Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 23 (2003), 47–68.

11. February 16, 1805, "Domestic Bagatelles."

12. John Van Der Zee, *Bound Over: Indentured Servitude and American Conscience* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985), 249–59.

13. To prevent possible exploitation, the United Kingdom required contracts be fully resolved before the immigrants boarded ship, which left the ship's captain with little room to maneuver for greater profit, so the ships chose to head to the continent instead. The Germans continued as redemptioners—resolving their contracts in the new world ports—until 1820. Aaron S. Fogleman, "From Slaves, Convicts, and Servants to Free Passengers: The Transformation of Immigration in the Era of the American Revolution," *Journal of American History*, 85 (1998), 43–76. Carole Shammas, *A History of Household Government in America* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002), 62; Farley Grubb, "The Auction of Redemptioner Servants, Philadelphia, 1771–1804: An Economic Analysis," *The Journal of Economic History*, 48 (1988), 602, argues that there was a good deal of flexibility experienced by redemptioners, and most have given him credit for showing more of the issue's complexity, but historians generally consider the system to have been a difficult one for many, and even exploitive.

14. This was so because Pennsylvania and Massachusetts had both passed emancipation laws. Other northern states were slowly taking this step but the real abolition effort would not begin until the 1830's. Robbins, "Power Among the Powerless."

15. February, 16, 1805, "Domestic Bagatelles."

16. *Ibid.*

17. Hawes and Nybakken, *Family in American History*, 1. William Sumner Jenkins, Maryland, Lower House, December, 9, 1789, *Records of the States of the United States of America: A Microfilm Compilation* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress Photoduplication Service, 1949). A complete version of McHenry's introduction is in Silvio A. Bedini, *The Life of Benjamin Banneker* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1972), 178–81. This is also treated in Robbins, "Power Among the Powerless." For more information on the gradual emancipation of slaves and slavery, see the following, Thomas D. Morris, *Free Men All: The Personal Liberty*

*Laws of the North, 1780–1861* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974); Don E. Fehrenbacher, *Slavery, Law & Politics, The Dred Scott Case in Historical Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), “An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery” in James Dallas Alexander, *Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, (Philadelphia: 1797), 838–43; Paul Finkelman, *Slavery and the Founders: Race and Liberty in the Age of Jefferson* (New York and London: M.E. Sharpe, 1996); William M. Wiecek, *The Sources of Antislavery Constitutionalism in America, 1760–1848* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977; and A. Leon Higginbotham Jr., *In the Matter of Color, Race & the American Legal Process: The Colonial Period* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

18. February, 16, 1805, “Domestic Bagatelles.” Saragh and Ned were lucky. Slaves had, when possible, established two-parent families by around the time of the American Revolution, but doing so was still difficult, Mintz & Kellogg, *Domestic Revolution*, 35.

19. February, 16, 1805, “Domestic Bagatelles.”

20. February 2 to April 20, 1805, “Domestic Bagatelles.”

21. Scott Sandage, *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), chapters 2 and 3 concentrate on the early republic and relate many of the ways in which a man might fail.

22. February 23 and March 10, 1805, “Domestic Bagatelles.”

23. December 14 and February, 9, 1805, *ibid.*

24. June, 5, 8, 1805, *ibid.* Daniel thus illustrated the entrepreneurial spirit of the dawning market oriented age and so was part of the generation that would lead the country into tremendous growth. See W. J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 181.

25. July, 13, 1805, No. 29, “Domestic Bagatelles.”

26. The school had existed since 1791, as the first Catholic seminary founded in the United States.

27. Natalie A. Naylor, “The Theological Seminary in the Configuration of American Higher Education: the Antebellum Years,” *The History of Education Quarterly*, 17 (1977), 17–30; March, 16, 1805, “Domestic Bagatelles”; “Sulpician Tradition” at St. Mary’s website, [http://www.stmarys.edu/sot/sot\\_sulpician2.htm](http://www.stmarys.edu/sot/sot_sulpician2.htm).

28. April, 27, 1805, “Domestic Bagatelles.” McHenry was not alone in these sentiments; some Southern planters had become convinced that “education and character were better for a child than a bequest,” Jan Lewis, *The Pursuit of Happiness: Family and Values in Jefferson’s Virginia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 154.

29. August, 17, 1805, “Domestic Bagatelles.”

30. August, 23, 1805, *ibid.*

31. October 26, November 2, 23, 1805, *ibid.* Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic*, 180–81.

32. January, 19, August, 10, November 11, and December 7, 21, 1805, *ibid.* Was this a hard-learned lesson instilled by James’s friend Alexander Hamilton? On more than one occasion Hamilton had misled McHenry or even opposed him in ways that could not hurt a man of honor. See the disagreement between McHenry and Hamilton over William Perry in Ch. 8, or Ch. 12 wherein Hamilton attempted to take over the War Department from McHenry or Ch. 15 when Hamilton published McHenry’s account of his loss of office without the latter’s consent, Karen Robbins, “James McHenry: His American Experience” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1994).

33. June 8, July 6, 1805, *ibid.*

34. July 6, 1805, *ibid.*; Mintz and Kellogg, *Domestic Revolutions*, 9–11, or Nagel, *The Adams Women*, 76. Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty’s Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of Ameri-*

*can Women, 1750–1800* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), ch. 9. Nancy Woloch, *Women and the American Experience*, 4th ed. (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2006), 116–25. A good treatment of women's education can be found in Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780–1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), ch. 3. Hereinafter cited as Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*. For more on family hierarchy see Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), chapter 4. For an interesting take on women and household government, see Carole Shammas, "Anglo-American Household Government in Comparative Perspective," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 52 (1995), 104–44, esp. 128–29. For another example of an early republic family in which women were valued for what they contributed to the home (and were expected to stay in the home), see Jan Lewis, "The Blessings of Domestic Society: Thomas Jefferson's Family and the Transformation of American Politics," *Jeffersonian Legacies*, ed. Peter S. Onuf (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), 109–46. The emphasis on obedience is covered by Mary Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790–1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 31–33.

35. June 8, 13 July 13, 1805, "Domestic Bagatelles"; Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*, 73–74.

36. February 16, 1805, "Domestic Bagatelles."

## Research Notes and Maryland Miscellany

### George Plater: Patriot for Independence

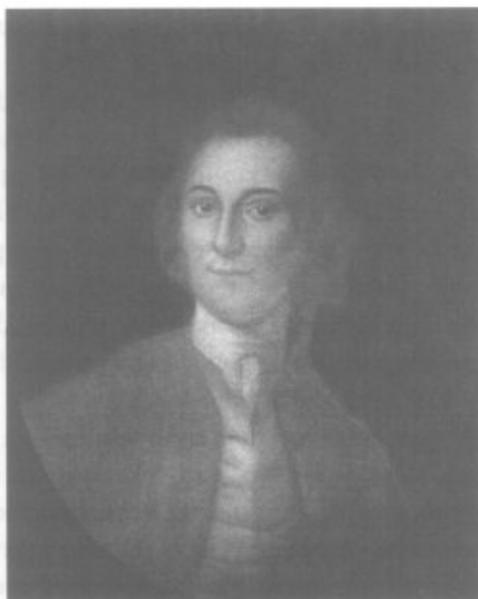
David Brown

Although Maryland's signers of the Declaration of Independence justly deserve much of the credit for the colony's decision to support independence, many other figures played significant roles in the early resistance against British policy and in the decision for independence. One of those other figures, George Plater III, owner of Sotterley and the scion of a prominent gentry family, subsequently went on to serve as the state's sixth governor. Writing a century later, respected local historian J. Thomas Scharf characterized Plater as one of about a dozen early supporters of independence.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, Scharf did not document or explain why Plater deserved such credit. This paper explores Plater's role in the years leading up to Maryland's decision for independence.

An observer at that time would not have been thought amiss for expecting Plater to become a loyalist. His family had served in high positions in Maryland's colonial government for three generations. In the years since entering public life, he had an established record of supporting Lord Baltimore's interests and consequently gained appointment to the Governor's Council in 1771. Plater also served as the Naval Officer of the Patuxent, a position of profit in the colonial administration. He had not played a visible role in earlier controversies over British policy, and there is no record of his having written in opposition to British policies. In 1765, during the Stamp Act confrontation, Plater served as a member of the Lower House and joined that body's unanimous decision to send delegates to the New York meeting to organize resistance to the act. Other than this one instance, nothing in the surviving records indicates Plater's inclination to support the patriot cause.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, he did come to play a significant role in the revolution. Unfortunately, only two of his letters from this period have been found. Both are to his business agent in London. Neither a diary nor correspondence with colleagues in Maryland explaining his thoughts or actions has survived. Consequently, his de-

*David Brown is a Trustee of Historic Sotterley and an adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.*



*George Plater III (1735–1792).  
(Courtesy Sotterley Plantation.)*

cisions need to be considered from an understanding of what was happening in Maryland and then examining what Plater did in that context.

### **British Policy**

Maryland's awareness of a new round of British policy measures aimed at the colonies began in October 1773. Parliament's imposition of a tax on tea had aroused opposition throughout the colonies, much as the Stamp Act had done in 1765. On October 25, the Lower House of the Maryland Assembly established a "Committee of Correspondence and Inquiry" on matters affecting "the British Colonies in America."<sup>3</sup> As a member of the Upper House, George Plater had no role in this decision as the Lower House had acted on its own without involving the Upper House, Governor Robert Eden, or the Governor's Council.

In December 1773, following the Boston Tea Party, Britain adopted the so-called Coercive Acts, including the Boston Port Act, in another effort to enforce their asserted right to tax the colonies. The Boston Port Act closed the port of Boston to all traffic until Massachusetts paid the tax on the tea and reimbursed the East India Company for the destroyed cargo. The act was widely perceived as excessively punitive. In response to the Coercive Acts, prominent citizens meeting in Annapolis resolved to support Massachusetts. The first unauthorized Maryland Convention met in June 1774 and chose delegates for the first Continental Congress scheduled to meet in Philadelphia that September. The convention's leadership came primarily from members of the Popular Party in the lower House who had long struggled against proprietary privilege. The Maryland Assembly,

including the Upper House in which Plater served, did not meet again following its adjournment in April 1774.

Over the next two years, the Maryland Conventions met frequently and gradually usurped powers from the colonial administration. For example, the second Maryland Convention in November 1774 called for the creation of a new militia independent of the governor's control. The third Maryland Convention in December 1774 adopted a major economic policy by implementing the import embargo that had been recommended by the Continental Congress. In August 1775, the fifth Maryland Convention appointed its first Council of Safety to serve as its executive arm. The council exercised its fiscal power and authorized the issuance of bills of credit to raise funds.<sup>4</sup>

During this period, as the convention asserted its ever-greater authority, Plater continued to serve as a member of the Governor's Council. Unfortunately, the records of the Governor's Council for the years leading up to independence have not survived, eliminating a valuable source of information on Plater's role. Scattered references to the council do exist and offer a glimpse of its work. One important action occurred in April 1775. After Virginia Governor Lord Dunmore had removed arms and ammunition from the magazine, or armory, in Williamsburg for his use in protecting British interests, the Maryland Convention approached Governor Eden with a request that he turn over powder and munitions to the convention. Eden decided, on the advice of his council, on a compromise by which he agreed to turn over the powder and munitions to the colonial militia.<sup>5</sup> The colonial militia technically existed under the governor's control, but many of its members had by this time gone over to the new independent militia being raised by the convention. Writing at the time, William Eddis said this compromise maintained the dignity of the government while preserving public tranquility.<sup>6</sup> Lacking records, we cannot be certain that Plater attended this council meeting. Endorsing this compromise, however, would have been consistent with actions he later took, designed to maintain both social order and a degree of civility between the convention and governor.

In August 1775, Governor Eden convened his council again. The fifth Maryland Convention had just adjourned and published its proceedings including the proclamation of the Association of Freemen of Maryland, which all citizens were to sign. That Plater's name was not on the list of associators published that August indicates that he was not then ready to publicly endorse the patriot cause.<sup>7</sup> Eden again sought the council's advice on whether to issue a proclamation against the association. Opinions divided, the council did not support the idea and Eden dropped it. Once more, there is no surviving record of the advice Plater may have offered. In his confidential report to Lord Dartmouth, Eden mentions that two members of the council had gone over to the rebels, naming Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer and John Bordley. The letter does not mention Plater.<sup>8</sup>

Just two weeks later, however, on September 12, St. Mary's County elected Plater as one of its delegates to the sixth Maryland Convention.<sup>9</sup> Had Plater joined the patriot cause or did this indicate that the county's leading citizens wanted to enlist Plater, the most senior local colonial official to their cause? Perhaps some had an inkling he might be willing to join. The answer is unknown, and the records of this convention indicate that Plater never attended.<sup>10</sup>

A few months later on February 2, 1776, Maryland's Council of Safety appointed Plater, along with Richard Barnes and Hanson Briscoe, to collect gold and silver to support the Continental Congress's dispatch of a delegation to sound out Canada's willingness to support the patriot cause.<sup>11</sup> In this instance, Plater responded positively. On March 5, Plater reported that he sent the gold and silver he collected to the Council of Safety.<sup>12</sup> Thus, by February 1776 and perhaps as early as late 1775, Plater had decided to work for the patriot cause, and that his willingness was well known to others.

Whether to support the patriot cause or not was a risky and difficult decision. For Catholics such as Charles Carroll of Carrollton, who had been barred from public office, support offered a first chance for political leadership. For the Popular Party leaders, who had been in the opposition in the Lower House, supporting the cause offered the possibility of exercising greater power and influence. Those in the British establishment, however, faced the most difficult choices. Supporting the cause offered a way to continue exercising leadership in changed circumstances, but at great risk. If the British prevailed, as many assumed they would, apostate officials would be treated as traitors and lose not only their positions but possibly their lands and lives as well. Most of the top leadership in the colonial administration either returned to England or retired from active involvement in politics. Plater took a different course.

### **Why a Patriot?**

What factors during 1775 may have contributed to Plater's fateful decision to support the patriot cause? In January 1775 he had written to James Russell, his business representative in London.<sup>13</sup> Plater noted that "the Americans" have "just rights" which they will never allow to be transgressed and he warned Russell that, if Great Britain persisted in its position, the destruction of both Britain and the colonies would result. Plater expressed the hope that Parliament would adopt some gesture as a means to bringing about reconciliation. From these comments, it is clear that Plater believed in the justice of the colonies' cause well before he was prepared to act in support of it.

Another factor may have been the sharpening conflict between Britain and the colonies, symbolized by the fighting in Lexington and Concord in April 1775 and King George's proclamation on August 23 declaring the colonies to be in rebellion. The text of the King's proclamation and his subsequent address to Par-

liament in October had reached the colonies by the end of the year. The King's proclamation had an important impact on others in Maryland and perhaps influenced Plater.

These events polarized Maryland and made it increasingly difficult to adopt a neutral position. In March 1775, William Eddis wrote, "Those who are not ardent supporters of resistance are considered enemies and branded with opprobrium."<sup>14</sup> The Association of Freemen organized in August intended to force men, including Plater, to choose sides and by fall some of the governor's prominent supporters, and many other loyalists, returned to England. This was not a time in Maryland for timid souls or indecisive action.

The burning of the *Peggy Stewart* in October 1774 and the *Totness* in July 1775 raised fears of mob rule among the gentry elite, to which Plater belonged. Some, such as Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, Plater's colleague on the Governor's Council, calculated that by joining the patriot cause they could shape the future in a way that would preserve the leading role of the gentry in Maryland.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps this was part of Plater's calculation. In 1776, however, Plater played a role in drafting the first constitution for the new State of Maryland—a document with no provisions for preserving the gentry's leading role.

Another factor may have been the deteriorating economic conditions. The Continental Congress's non-importation agreement had taken effect in December 1774. That month, William Eddis wrote that trade was at a standstill and that commodities were becoming scarce and expensive. More importantly, the non-exportation agreement, which banned all shipment to England and the West Indies, including tobacco, went into effect in Maryland on September 10, 1775. In an earlier letter to Russell in June 1774, Plater had predicted that the colonies would adopt both import and export bans.<sup>16</sup> On December 22, 1775, Parliament passed the Prohibitory Act that banned all trade with the colonies and subjected colonial commerce to confiscation. News of that act reached the colonies in February 1776 by which time Plater had made his decision.

The interruption of trade affected tobacco, Plater's main source of income. It also meant that the fee income he had been earning on the entry and departure of ships and on tobacco exports in his capacity as Naval Officer of the Patuxent would have been severely reduced if not eliminated by late 1775.

In contemplating his options, Plater certainly weighed the prospects for the success of the patriot cause. Conditions had changed since the Stamp Act struggle of 1765. Fighting had occurred, the Continental Congress had created an army, and the King was dispatching immense forces to quell the rebellion. Plater and others had to weigh the prospects for prevailing against Britain.

Many who became loyalists, particularly those who returned to England, had property and family interests that bound them to Britain, yet there is no evidence that Plater had close relatives or owned land or homes in England. Fi-

nally, in late October, Virginia Governor Lord Dunmore issued a proclamation granting freedom to any slaves who would support the British. This declaration aroused concerns through the Chesapeake, yet the decree had greatest effect in places where British military operations occurred. Military action did not touch St. Mary's County until late 1776, and its impact on Plater's thinking is uncertain.

What combination of these factors produced Plater's decision to support the patriot cause remains unclear, yet he actively supported the colonial resistance by February 1776 and his role only became more active thereafter. In March, the Council of Safety appointed Plater and John Dalton to serve as Commissioners to work with like colleagues from Virginia to erect a series of beacons along the Potomac to warn of British movements. Plater accepted the responsibility and by April 30, Dalton reported that they had reached agreement with the Virginians to erect twenty beacons and had advanced money for their construction. The seventh Maryland Convention met in May 1776 and Plater had again been elected to represent St. Mary's. At this session he took his seat.<sup>17</sup>

The seventh convention confronted three main issues, whether to censure Samuel Purviance for challenging the convention's authority—how to respond to a call from the Continental Congress to create a new legal government for Maryland, and how to deal with Governor Robert Eden. In April 1776, letters from Secretary of State Lord Germain to Governor Eden were intercepted in Virginia. The letters indicated that Eden might be called upon to support military forces being sent from England. Under the urging of General Charles Lee, Washington's Deputy Commander, and Continental Congress President John Hancock, Samuel Purviance, a populist leader in Baltimore took it upon himself to launch an effort to arrest Eden. The Council of Safety in Annapolis blocked the move and in May the seventh convention censured Purviance mildly for acting without the authorization of the council.

On May 10, the Continental Congress requested Maryland (and other colonies that had not already done so) to suppress their royal administrations and establish new governments to replace them. The leaders of the convention interpreted this as an indirect effort to pressure Maryland into endorsing independence and they expressed their concern that disestablishing the legal framework of British rule would contribute to the social chaos that they feared. Some also viewed this request as a congressional effort to trespass on the convention's authority to decide policy for Maryland. Consequently, on May 21 the convention responded to Congress that conditions in Maryland did not warrant steps to establish a new government. The convention reiterated instructions that its delegates could not agree to independence, to a compact between the colonies or to enter into foreign alliances without first getting new instructions from the convention. Plater was in attendance during these decisions, but as there is no record of votes taken or of debates, the best one can assume is that Plater did not disagree



*Sotterley, the Plater family home, c. 1920s. (Courtesy Sotterley Plantation.)*

with these actions.<sup>18</sup> So even though independence was being hotly debated in Philadelphia and remained under discussion in Maryland, in late May 1776 the convention had reaffirmed that it was still seeking reconciliation with Britain on terms acceptable to the colonies.

Plater did play a leading role on the third issue, how to deal with Governor Eden. After Lord Germain's letters to Eden were intercepted in Virginia a delegation from the Council of Safety met with Eden to request copies of his earlier correspondence with London. Eden claimed not to have copies, but he did give assurances that he would remain in Maryland until the convention reconvened to consider his status. On May 14, the body elected Plater chairman of a Committee of the Whole to consider the implications of Germain's letters to Eden.<sup>19</sup> No contemporary explanation for Plater's selection is available. As a close friend of Eden's and a member of the Governor's Council, it would have been difficult to view him as a disinterested observer. Nevertheless, or perhaps because of those associations, Plater was chosen as chairman.

After deliberations over ten days, Plater reported the committee's three recommendations to the convention on May 24.<sup>20</sup> The committee recommended that the convention endorse the Council of Safety's handling of issues related to the letters to Eden, implicitly reaffirming the Council of Safety's earlier decision to block Purviance's attempt to arrest the governor. Second, the committee concluded that the available evidence about Eden's correspondence did not show any

“unfriendly intent” on his part. Nevertheless, the committee, recognizing that the governor would have to obey the orders to support British forces if they were dispatched to Maryland, recommended that the peace of the province required that the governor depart. The committee noted that as the governor’s powers would devolve to the President of the Council, his departure would not lead to dissolution of the existing form of government in Maryland.<sup>21</sup> This decision reflected the convention’s continuing priority of maintaining order over a belief that any effective administration would continue after Eden’s departure. Just how large a role Plater played as chairman in drafting these recommendations was not recorded, but if he had disagreed with the recommendations, it seems unlikely that he would have continued as chairman and reported the recommendations.

The idea of a peaceful, safe, and honorable departure for a governor who remained personally quite popular in the colony reflected the moderate nature of the Convention’s, and Plater’s, approach to an extremely sensitive political issue. The recommendation received votes of approval from twelve of the total sixteen counties. Plater and the other attending delegates from St. Mary’s County all supported the recommendation.<sup>22</sup> The dissenting counties were from the Eastern Shore, where loyalist sentiment was stronger.

That evening Plater went with four other delegates, convention president Matthew Tilghman, William Paca, Thomas Johnson, and James Hollyday, to convey the decision to Eden.<sup>23</sup> Members had also approved a short address for the delegation to present to the governor:

We are commanded by the Convention to wait upon your Excellency, and to communicate to you the resolutions they have this day entered into; and we are instructed to assure you, Excellency, that the Convention entertains a favourable sense of your conduct, relative to the affairs of America, since the unhappy differences have subsisted between Great-Britain and the United Colonies, as far as the same have come to their knowledge, and of their real wishes for your return to resume the government of this province, whenever we shall happily be restored to peace and that connection with Great-Britain, the interruption and suspension of which have filled the mind of every good man with the deepest regret. From the dispositions your Excellency has manifested to promote the real interests of both countries, the Convention is induced to entertain the warmest hopes and expectations, that upon arrival in England, you will represent the temper and principles of the people of Maryland with the same candour you have hitherto shown, and that you will exert your endeavours to promote a reconciliation, upon terms that may be secure and honorable both to Great-Britain and America.<sup>24</sup>

It is possible that Plater, as chairman, drafted this address. At a minimum, it

is reasonable to assume that its tone and substance reflected his views. As Eden had earlier approached Charles Carroll of Carrollton seeking assistance in arranging a safe passage out of Maryland, Eden was probably relieved to hear the convention's decision.

It took a month to arrange for a British warship, the *Fowey*, to come to Annapolis, and Governor Eden boarded on June 23. The Council of Safety, of which Plater was then a member, took "an affectionate leave of their late supreme magistrate" and conducted him to his barge "with every mark of respect."<sup>25</sup> Scandal marred the felicitous parting when Annapolitans discovered the following day that Captain Montague, the commanding officer of the *Fowey*, had given refuge to persons unconnected to his mission of evacuating Eden.

The convention's handling of the Eden question generated controversy and contributed to grass roots criticism of the convention and Council of Safety. The *Maryland Gazette* contained a letter signed "an American" in which the author attacked the Council of Safety for abusing its power.<sup>26</sup> The letter criticized the council for including men who had earlier supported Eden. That accusation clearly applied to George Plater and Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, the only two members of the Council of Safety who had been members of the Governor's Council. Consequently, the warm farewell Plater and the others on the Council of Safety gave to Eden reflected a moderate approach that represented the views of the leaders of the convention but not of all in Maryland.

### The Final Day

The seventh convention held its final meeting and on May 26 elected nine members to its Council of Safety. They elected Plater and he took the oath as a member two days later.<sup>27</sup> His election to this group confirms that by May of 1776 he had emerged as one the leaders of the resistance in Maryland and the council commissioned him to prepare a chart of Smith's Creek, which he submitted on June 15.<sup>28</sup>

In Philadelphia pressures to declare independence were growing. In the spring of 1776, North Carolina and Virginia had joined those supporting independence. On June 7, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia moved his famous resolution in Congress that these colonies "are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states." As delegates from a few colonies, including Maryland, still did not have instruction to support independence, Congress postponed a vote on Lee's resolution. They asked Maryland and the other holdouts—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware—to provide new instructions. Maryland's delegates recommended that a new convention be convened to consider the issue of independence. The Council of Safety had already summoned a new convention to meet on June 21 at which time its leaders would consider the issue. Plater, along with Richard Barnes, Athanasius Ford, Jeremiah Jordan, and John Reeder represented St. Mary's County in the eighth Maryland Convention that convened on June 21,

1776.<sup>29</sup> On its first day, the convention elected Thomas Johnson, James Hollyday, George Plater, Jeremiah Chase, and Robert Goldsborough to serve on a committee to consider various resolutions from the Continental Congress including the requests that delegates be given new instructions concerning independence.<sup>30</sup>

Before considering the substance of the issue, the convention decided to reconsider its voting procedures. Support for Britain remained strong on the Eastern Shore, which contained eight of Maryland's sixteen counties but far less than half of the province's population. On June 24 the convention considered a resolution to switch from voting by counties to voting by individual delegates. A move designed to clear the way for a vote on independence, this procedural vote was a crucial test of sentiment. With two counties absent, one from each shore, the vote produced seven counties in favor, all from the western shore, four counties against, all from the Eastern Shore, and three counties divided evenly, also all Eastern Shore. The St. Mary's County delegates, including Plater, voted unanimously to adopt voting by delegate.<sup>31</sup>

With this key procedural issue resolved, the convention moved four days later to make a decision on independence. There is no record that the five-member committee on which Plater served made a report or recommendation to the convention. Much must have happened behind the scenes, for on June 28, the convention unanimously adopted a short resolution for independence. Some historians believe Charles Carroll of Carrollton drafted this resolution in which a key portion rescinded the delegates' earlier instructions and authorized them to concur with a majority of the other colonies:

. . . in declaring the united colonies to be free and independent states, in forming such further compact or confederation between them, in making foreign alliances, and in adopting such other measures as shall be adjudged necessary for securing the liberties of America. . . provided, the sole and exclusive right of regulating the internal government and peace of this colony be reserved to the people thereof.<sup>32</sup>

In attendance, Plater supported this momentous decision, yet the strength of his behind-the-scenes role remains unclear.

What had changed in the four weeks between the seventh and eighth conventions to bring about this policy reversal?<sup>33</sup> In early June, opinions on the council of Safety remained divided.<sup>34</sup> One important factor rested in the return of two avowed advocates of independence, Samuel Chase and Charles Carroll of Carrollton. King George's proclamation had made Chase a supporter of independence, and the Prohibitory Act had convinced Carroll that reconciliation could not be achieved. Although several months ahead of most of their colleagues in advocating independence, Chase and Carroll had been members of the small

delegation that the Continental Congress had dispatched to Canada in March and thus did not attend the May convention. They returned to Philadelphia the day after Congress postponed action on Lee's resolution and then proceeded promptly to Maryland.

Chase and Carroll threw themselves into the campaign for independence. Maryland's delegates in Philadelphia, including Mathew Tilghman and Thomas Stone, had recommended that the counties be urged to give instructions to their delegates bound for the June convention, a directive recommending public pressure on the leadership. Chase reported a general dissatisfaction to John Adams, represented in part by Samuel Purviance, leader of the new "Whig Club" in Baltimore, and militia units in various counties. Chase circulated a written appeal to counties to support independence.<sup>35</sup> Tilghman, Carroll, and Thomas Johnson actively encouraged counties to elect convention delegates who would support independence.<sup>36</sup> Whether Plater played any role in this campaign is unclear as no evidence on this has survived. In explaining the convention decision in letters to Adams and Richard Henry Lee, Chase emphasized the influence that the new county instructions had on the delegates.<sup>37</sup> When Captain Montague gave refuge to unauthorized persons on June 23, his action fed anti-British sentiment just as the June convention began its consideration of independence.

Information from Philadelphia and elsewhere gave those attending the June convention a new awareness of how opinion was rapidly shifting in the other colonies. To make this point and probably to give Chase ammunition for his campaign, Adams wrote Chase on June 14 reporting evidence that New Jersey and Pennsylvania were moving in favor of independence. Adams ended saying that, if Maryland did not act, it would be alone in not supporting independence, clearly an exaggeration as the remaining holdout colonies had not revealed their plans.<sup>38</sup> By June 28 the changing attitudes elsewhere and the need to make a choice gained clarity.

The delegates to the June convention included thirteen members who had not participated in May. Twelve of these thirteen voted for the crucial procedural vote to adopt voting by individual delegates rather than by counties.<sup>39</sup> Whether this reflected the influence of new members or of changed attitudes is uncertain, as we cannot know what their views may have been in May.

Plater had supported the patriot cause since early 1776, perhaps sooner. His support for independence at the convention is evident in his vote for the procedural resolution on voting and is confirmed by his participation in the unanimous resolution for independence. But just when he became an advocate of independence remains unclear as does the question of whether he moved ahead of, or in tandem with, other leading members of the resistance in his support for independence.

Nevertheless, his support for resistance and eventually independence is re-



*Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer (1723–1790). (Maryland Historical Society.)*

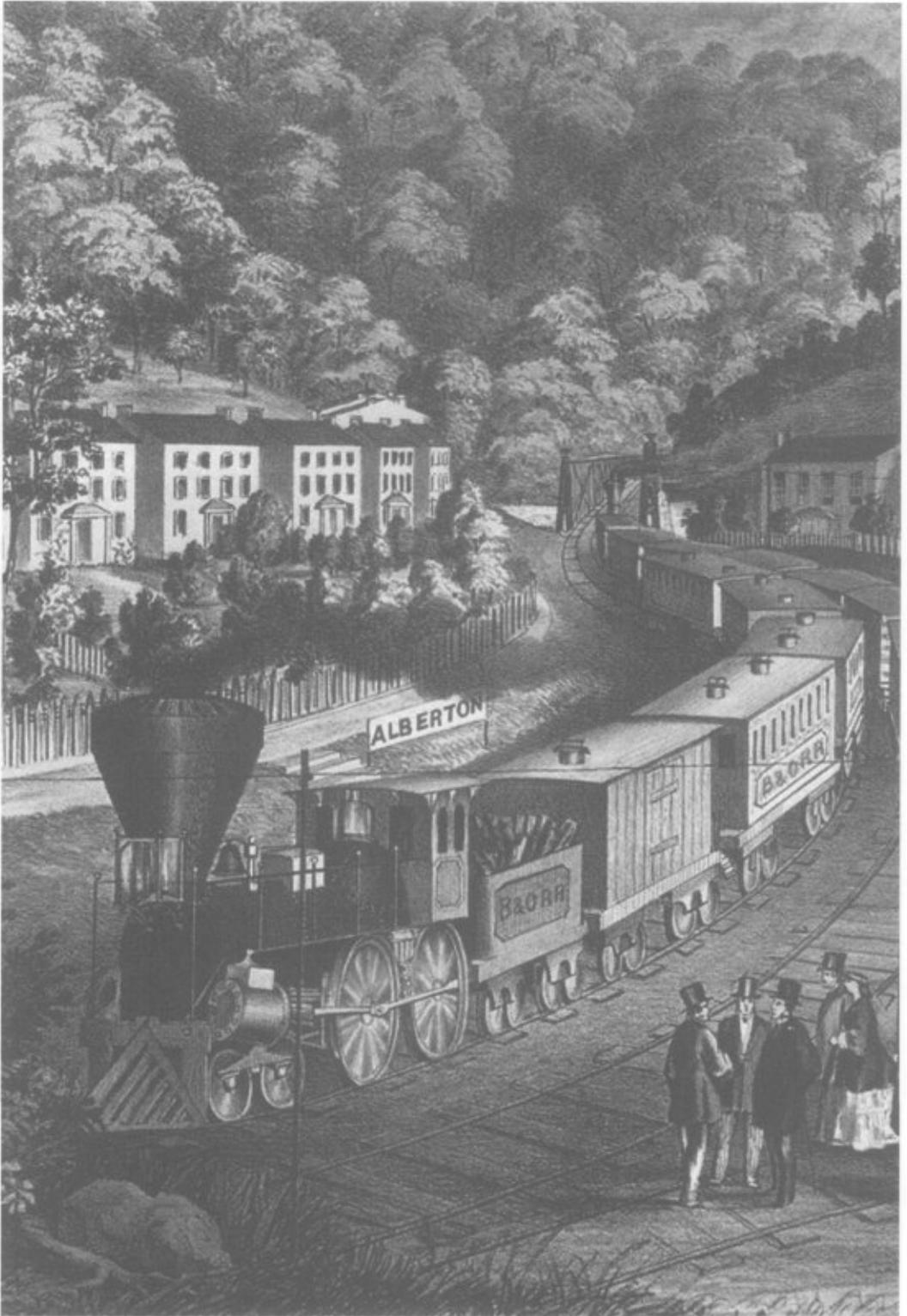
markable when compared with his twelve colleagues on the last colonial Governor's Council. Of the twelve, only two, Plater and Daniel of St. Thomas Jennifer, supported independence and worked for the patriot cause both before and after Maryland's fateful decision. Thomas Beale Bordley left the Governor's Council in 1775 but declined to work for the patriot cause. After the Declaration of Independence voters elected William Fitzhugh, Plater's stepfather-in-law, to the new House of Delegates where he supported the war. The remaining councilors either returned to England or retired from their public roles while remaining in Maryland.

George Plater, perhaps tentative at first, ultimately made bold and potentially dangerous choices as the Maryland colony moved toward independence. The absence of a diary or journal leaves many unanswered questions, such as whether the lack of his voice in the official record indicates reluctance. Regardless, from the documents that do survive, Plater emerges as one who chose to walk away from Britain and in so doing his leadership experience in the upper tier of the colonial government clearly aided the patriot cause. He went on to serve as president of the state convention that ratified the constitution and won the election for governor in 1791, but he died in Annapolis just three months later. The editor of the *Maryland Gazette* wrote that he "was distinguished by a warm and zealous adherence to the principles of the American Revolution."<sup>40</sup> Plater is buried at Sotterley.

## Notes

1. J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Maryland* (1879, repr. Baltimore: Tradition Press, 1967), 2: 228.
2. Later endorsed by the Upper House; for a discussion of Plater's role before 1773 see David G. Brown "George Plater: Getting ahead in Colonial Maryland," *St. Mary's Chronicles*, 54 (Spring 2007).
3. "Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly 1773-1774," William Hand Brown, et al., editors, *Archives of Maryland* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1883-1972), 64: 23-24, (hereinafter cited as *Arch. Md.*).
4. For a thorough explanation of the conventions gradual usurpation of authority in Maryland, see John A. Silver, "The Provisional Government of Maryland, 1774-1776," *Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science*, 10 (October 1895).
5. Bernard C. Steiner, "Life and Administration of Sir Robert Eden," *Studies*, 13 (1898), 90.
6. William Eddis, *Letters from America*, Aubrey C. Land, ed. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1969), 108.
7. Fifth Maryland Convention, 1775, *Arch. Md.* 11: 67.
8. The text of Eden's letter is in Scharf, *History of Maryland*, 2: 187-89.
9. *Calendar of Maryland State Papers*, (Annapolis: Hall of Records Commission, 1958), 5: 26.
10. Proceedings of the Conventions of Maryland Province, held at Annapolis, 1774, 5 & 6 (Baltimore: James Lucas & E K. Deaver, 1836), 39-118 (hereinafter cited *Proceedings* 1836).
11. Council of Safety, 1775-1776, *Arch. Md.*, 11: 132.
12. Council of Safety, 1775-1776, *Arch. Md.*, 11: 202.
13. Plater to James Russell, January 7, 1775, University of Virginia Alderman Library, Virginia Colonial Records Project, Coutts & Co. James Russell papers, Reel 556 bundle 15.
14. Eddis, "Letters," 100.
15. David Curtis Skaggs, *Roots of Maryland Democracy 1753-1776* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972), 175.
16. Plater to James Russell, June 30, 1774, Russell Papers.
17. Council of Safety, 1775-1776, *Arch. Md.*, 11: 262-63, 291, 394; "Proceedings of the Convention of the Province of Maryland," May 1776, 131, M3145, MSA SC, Maryland State Archives.
18. "Proceedings," May 1776, 143.
19. "Proceedings," May 1776, 137.
20. "Proceedings," May 1776, 150.
21. The text of the committee's recommendation is in "Proceedings," May 1776, 150.
22. "Proceedings," May 1776, 150-151. At this point voting in the conventions was by counties with each county having one vote.
23. "Proceedings," May 1776, 151.
24. "Proceedings," May 1776, 151.
25. Eddis, "Letters," 162.
26. *Maryland Gazette*, June 26, 1776.
27. Council of Safety, 1775-1776, *Arch. Md.*, 11: 449.
28. Council of Safety, 1775-1776, *Arch. Md.*, 11: 493.
29. "Proceedings of the Convention of the Province of Maryland," June-July 1776, 160-61, M3145, MSA.
30. "Proceedings," June 1776, 162.
31. "Proceedings," June 1776, 162.
32. Proceedings June 1776, 169.

33. My understanding of Maryland politics in this crucial month owes much to James Haw, "Politics in Revolutionary Maryland: 1753–1788" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, 1972).
34. Herbert E. Klingelhofer, "The Cautious Revolution, Maryland and the Movement Towards Independence 1774–1776," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 60 (1965), 305. Klingelhofer states that Plater was one of three members of the council who then supported independence. However, the sources he cited for this statement appear to have been misreported, as they do not mention Plater.
35. Samuel Chase to John Adams, June 14, 1776, excerpt in Chase Papers, MS 1234, Maryland Historical Society.
36. Silver, "Provisional Government," 42–43.
37. Chase Papers.
38. Skaggs, *Roots of Maryland Democracy*, 178.
39. Klingelhofer, "The Cautious Revolution," 312–13.
40. *Maryland Gazette*, February 14, 1792.



# Lock, Stock, and Barrel: The Sale of Alberton, Maryland

Elwood L. Bridner Jr.

On November 23, 1940, the entire mill town of Alberton, Maryland, including a textile mill, two churches, a recreation hall, a post office, and 118 surrounding homes, was sold at a public auction. Local and regional newspapers carried several articles about this event. These news reports typically stressed the unusual nature of this transaction, the potential benefits that new ownership might bring to the region's economy, and highlighted the impact that the sale could have on the village's residents. The purpose of this article is to trace the events that led to this sale, summarize the actual auction, and briefly describe the continued existence of the village until its demise as a result of hurricane Agnes in the summer of 1972.<sup>1</sup>

Alberton, as did many antebellum-era company towns thrived in response to the country's growing dependence on domestic textiles. The roots of this village can be traced to the Ellicott family, Joseph Evans and his wife, Ann Ellicott Evans, lived on the Patapsco River valley property on the border between Howard and Baltimore Counties.<sup>2</sup> They built a mill on the northern bank of the river that they maintained until Joseph's death in 1833. Ann then sold the property to Thomas Ely who found the waterpower at the existing mill site insufficient and decided to construct a second mill on the south side of the Patapsco River on his property. He built a three story stone mill on the flat land located between the new mainline of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and the Patapsco's riverbed. Located four miles north of Ellicott Mills, this new factory ran on water power that a man-made dam directed to the building. Ely named the town for himself and eventually constructed a store, a church, a school, and housing for one hundred and six families. In 1856, Ely sold the town and 182 acres to the Okisko Company for \$25,000. Within four years, that firm went bankrupt and sold its assets to the Alberton Manufacturing Company. At the time of the sale, 106 people lived in the village.<sup>3</sup>

Jacob Albert, who owned this company, changed the name of the town to Alberton. Within a few months, he decided to sell the textile complex to the Sagoman Manufacturing Company, yet after a short period of time that firm sold

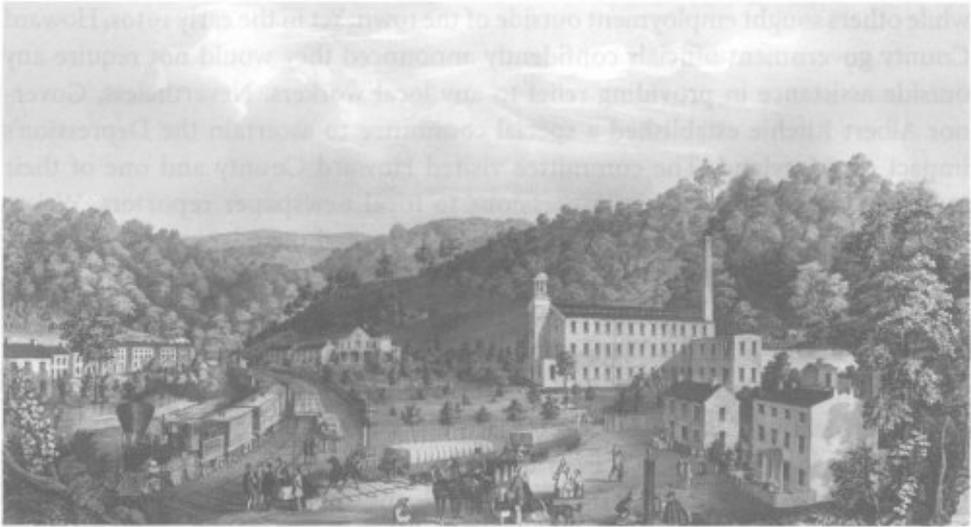
*The author is an assistant principal in the Howard County Public School system, an adjunct member of the History Department at Howard Community College, and a longtime contributor to this journal.*

*Left: detail, Alberton Cotton Factory, Howard County, Maryland. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

the entire village to one of its directors, James S. Gary in 1860. Gary, who had moved from Massachusetts with his family, had the financial resources to expand the mill and take advantage of its prime location including its easy access to abundant waterpower and its proximity to an effective transportation network.<sup>4</sup> At this time the mill employed 170 people working with twenty looms and three thousand spindles. These modifications helped the mill reach its potential and produce a variety of cotton products that the company shipped throughout the country in the months before the Civil War.<sup>5</sup>

Untouched by the hostilities of war, Alberton produced tenting for Union troops and continued to prosper and grow in the late nineteenth century. Eventually James Albert Gary assumed control of his father's company and took an active interest in village affairs. In 1879, he donated land and gave \$750 to local Catholic officials to build a church, Saint Stanislas Kostka, in the Baltimore County portion of Alberton. Local Catholics used the dwelling for worship services until 1926 when lightning caused a fire that destroyed the roof.<sup>6</sup> That same year, Gary commissioned the construction of a second church and instructed it be built as a memorial to his father. A gothic-style brick and granite structure rose to completion on one of the town's highest hills in the Howard County segment of the village. Appropriately named Gary Memorial Church, Alberton residents continue to attend religious services in this still-active church. During the same era they built the church, the Gary family also tried to encourage cultural development in Alberton. The family gave the town residents \$300 to purchase the necessary instruments to start a Cornet Band. Fourteen men soon joined this new musical group and started performing concerts in a new bandstand built on the village green near the mill complex. Wearing their blue and white uniforms, the band also marched through the town in the evening hours and serenaded the residents. The band members briefly experimented with wearing special hats with gaslights attached to improve their vision and to extend the length of their evening concerts.<sup>7</sup>

With an increased demand for its cotton products after the Civil War, the Alberton mill required a larger labor force in order to fill its new contracts. The company often sent representatives to southern states to recruit new workers and particularly encouraged families with children to move to their Maryland location. Young children had great potential as "bobbin feeders" for the mill's looms. One retired worker recalled being a "bobbin boy" in the late nineteenth century and receiving \$10 a month for working sixty hours a week in the mill.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, James A. Gary found his attention being drawn away from his company as he became more involved in state politics. Active in the Republican Party, he worked with legislators in Annapolis to adopt new political and social reform measures in the General Assembly. Specifically, he actively worked to block disenfranchising the state's African American voters.<sup>9</sup> Aware that he could



*Alberton Cotton Factory, Howard County, Maryland, c. 1853. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

not continue his political career and concurrently provide the necessary leadership for the Alberton complex, Gary installed his son, E. Stanley, as the company's leader in 1885.

Under the younger Gary's leadership, the Alberton mill continued to prosper for the next two decades. He made several improvements to the amenities provided to the village residents, among them two public schools and a bowling alley and library added to the community meeting hall. Town residents received free firewood and the rental rates for each of the three-story company owned homes remained extremely low. The company sponsored picnics and parties in celebration of major holidays and Gary gave all of the children in his town Christmas presents. Alberton did not have an official police force. Rather, the mill's manager handled all disputes and legal issues. In 1878, the Gary Company conducted a "census" and counted eight hundred residents living in their mill town.<sup>10</sup>

The Alberton mill complex started to experience problems in the early twentieth century. Larger and more modern textile factories were being built through much of the southeastern sections of the United States. More modern than the Howard County mill they also had the geographical advantage of sitting closer to raw cotton supplies. The decline in the number of contracts persisted through the first two decades of the new century. Business actually improved somewhat with the nation's entry into World War I, but the downturn in production resumed after the conclusion of hostilities in 1918 and the plant's economic health continued its downward spiral in the 1920s. By 1933, during the depths of the Depression, the factory operated an average of four days a month. The number of employees had fallen from several hundred to twenty-six. Many workers went on welfare

while others sought employment outside of the town. Yet in the early 1930s, Howard County government officials confidently announced they would not require any outside assistance in providing relief to any local workers. Nevertheless, Governor Albert Ritchie established a special committee to ascertain the Depression's impact on Maryland. The committee visited Howard County and one of their members summarized their impressions to local newspaper reporters. Walter Kirkman, a State Purchasing agent shared "We learned there is very little distress at present and what there is occurs in the mill towns such as Savage and Alberton."<sup>11</sup> In 1935 the company obtained two loans from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) for a total of \$200,000. The firm immediately recalled furloughed workers and tried to run the mill at full capacity. However, without orders to sustain this activity, the Gary Corporation soon started to miss payments on its government loan and the RFC eventually declared the company in default. When the company had received their government loans, they had tendered the mill as collateral for the RFC's appropriation. Toward this end, in 1940, the RFC instructed the First National Bank of Baltimore to act as its Trustee and liquidate the assets of the Alberton complex.<sup>12</sup>

The bank retained Ellicott City attorney James Clark to arrange for the sale of Alberton and he filed the necessary papers in the Howard County Circuit Court to authorize the sale of the Alberton property to satisfy the government's lien. On September 30, 1940, the Circuit Court responded to Clark's request and approved a public auction to be held on November 23, in the village, to meet the terms of the agreement with the RFC. Within a few days of this announcement, a New York firm, the C. R. Daniels Corporation, contacted the bank and asked for permission to lease the mill from the Gary Corporation until a sale was finalized. The bank agreed and Clark continued his preparations for the liquidation with an elaborate written description of the mill, the surrounding village, the local utilities servicing the community, and the land included in the auction.<sup>13</sup> His extensively detailed narrative allowed readers to determine how many homes had wooden exteriors and how many dwellings had brick facades. One could also learn of the number of rooms each home contained. Clark also compiled an extensive list of the milling machinery that would be included in the sale and concluded with the announcement that Charles Hobbs of Glenwood, Maryland would serve as auctioneer. This document appeared in regional newspapers as a "legal notice."<sup>14</sup>

The announcement of Alberton's pending sale met with a variety of responses from the village's residents. Many wondered who would purchase the property and some expressed hope that the C. R. Daniels Corporation would buy the complex. These individuals noted that 125 furloughed employees had been recalled to their former positions since that company had leased the mill from the Gary Corporation. Others wondered if a new owner would evict them from their homes. Would the village's churches be impacted by the sale? Would the

town's store remain open under the new ownership?<sup>15</sup> In November 1840, Baltimore's newspapers started sending reporters and staff photographers to Alberton to interview the townspeople about these questions and to photograph longtime residents.

The news media's coverage of Alberton's pending sale increased during the week preceding the auction. On November 16, just seven days before the sale, the *Baltimore Sun* printed a full-page montage of the village, its more prominent buildings, and long time residents. The photo essay was accompanied by a two column story that summarized the origins of the mill town under the leadership of the Gary family and compared the town's appearance to a toy village. The reporter also included short profiles of long-time residents and talked about how some believed that their town was unique since it experienced "two sunsets" each day. During the summer the sun disappeared behind the tallest hill to the west of the village and reappeared later above a shorter adjacent hill.<sup>16</sup>

On Saturday morning, November 23, a crowd gathered on the village green near the Alberton cotton mill. The news media estimated that most of the village's adult residents were present, in addition to newsreel cameras and reporters from the Baltimore and local newspapers. E. Stanley Gary Jr. whose family owned the mill, also stood in the audience. At 11:15 A.M., attorney James Clark stepped onto a temporary platform, a soap box, and read a copy of the legal notice that had been printed in newspapers in October. When he finished, Charles Hobbs, the auctioneer, replaced Clark on the makeshift platform and began the public sale. He addressed the crowd "We are going to sell for the high dollar today the entire village of Alberton. Who's going to start it? Don't start it way down because it is a valuable property. Who'll give me \$100,000?"<sup>17</sup> At that moment, Edward A. Trumbour, Treasurer of the C.R. Daniels Corporation, countered with a bid of \$65,000. Hobbs responded, "Now folks you all know \$65,000 is no price to pay for this property. It's foolish for me to stand here if you are not going to bid. I'll play with you to sundown if that's what you want. If you don't think I can do it, just wait." He actually only waited for a minute or two. He then called, "Fair warning! Don't go home and say, 'I just was ready to bid when he knocked the price down,' Fair Warning!" The auctioneer then rapped his gavel three times and the sale was complete. Witnesses estimated the entire process took about ten minutes.<sup>18</sup>

Edward Trumbour turned and presented James Clark a certified check for \$5,000. Before leaving the village, the Daniels official agreed to talk with the news media for a few moments. First, he announced that E. Stanley Gary had agreed to join the C.R. Daniels management team. Next, he shared that the Alberton mill would be modernized at an estimated cost of several hundred thousand dollars, including a new spindle and a different distributor system. Recently secured government contracts deemed these "necessary" purchases. In conclusion, he predicted the labor force at the mill would soon be expanded and suggested that

approximately 250 people would be employed at the site before the year ended in five weeks.<sup>19</sup>

In the aftermath of the sale, the townspeople of Alberton seemed happy about the outcome of the auction. Villager J.A. Robey said, "I didn't think it would go as cheap as it did. It went for a song." A second resident, Louise McDonald, added, "We were all pulling for them." Trumpbour's promise to improve the village's houses and rework the existing leases for each home encouraged her.<sup>20</sup> An editorial writer for the *Baltimore Sun* tried to build on this mood when he speculated on the probable benefits of the mill's new ownership. He thought the promised upgrades would return the mill to profitability and thereby benefit not only to the mill workers and their families but also the merchants in nearby Ellicott City and the treasury of Howard County's government. In conclusion he wrote, "we congratulate the people of Alberton on a change which gives every indication of marking the beginning of better, brighter, and happier days."<sup>21</sup>

The happier days continued in the village for about two decades as the size of the mill dramatically increased. The residents of Alberton underwent several lifestyle changes, most of which they viewed favorably. In early 1941 the new owners changed the name of the town to Daniels and moderately reduced the existing rents for the company-owned homes.<sup>22</sup> Compared to housing in the surrounding area, the people of Daniels paid significantly lower rents. In 1952, the *Baltimore Evening Sun* reported that the highest rent for a house in village was \$3.75 a month.<sup>23</sup> The company also provided free land to residents who wanted to plant vegetable gardens and allowed interested townspeople to keep chickens and rabbits in out-buildings near their homes.

This tranquility ended abruptly in 1967 when the village's ninety families received notification from the corporation that they would have to vacate their homes—company management planned to demolish their homes. According to a letter that the company distributed that same year, the company planned a gradual change that would not be completed until 1971. The notice did not include any explanation for the decision and company officials seemed reluctant to offer an explanation.<sup>24</sup>

The news surprised and consequently worried many of the village's residents. At least twenty townspersons were retired and had limited incomes from pensions or social security checks. Understandably they felt apprehensive about their ability to find affordable housing outside of Daniels. At that time, the typical tenant paid \$4.50 a month to rent an eight-room house in the village.<sup>25</sup>

Eventually, an official of C. R. Daniels agreed to talk with the news media about the corporate decision to destroy the rental units in the village. He prefaced his remarks by stating "The welfare of all the employees of C. R. Daniels, Inc. was taken into consideration when rendering this decision." First, he noted that only one-fourth of the company's employees lived in these houses and benefited from

the low rents, implying that the majority of mill workers might perceive this arrangement as unfair. In addition, the aging dwellings, constructed during World War I, increasingly required costly maintenance and the company was losing money on these rental properties.<sup>26</sup> Recent housing and environmental legislation, the spokesman continued, brought additional expenses. An inadequate water supply also posed a problem and for the past four years company officials “shut off” the flow for ten hours a day. Many of the houses did not have indoor bathrooms and relied on outhouses. The septic system, where it existed, was archaic and was not in compliance with required building codes. Only one house in the entire village, the parsonage for the local church, had central heat. He closed the interview with a summary of the four options the company had considered—provide minimal maintenance for the existing dwellings, bring the houses up to current codes, demolish the homes and build new houses, or tear down the existing homes. As bringing the buildings into compliance with new requirements would prove cost prohibitive, C.R. Daniels deemed the last option as the most practical.<sup>27</sup>

Production in the mill continued as the residents moved from their homes and the company demolished the houses until July 1972. The remnants of hurricane Agnes wrecked havoc in central Maryland during the third week of that month and dealt Daniels a particularly hard blow. Torrential rains fell through much of the area over a two-day period. The resulting runoff from local watersheds and streams caused officials to worry about the structural integrity of Liberty Dam on the upper Patapsco River above Daniels. Baltimore City officials in the Public Works department made the decision to open additional floodgates on the dam to reduce the increasing pressure on the structure. As a result, the increased water flow compounded by additional precipitation caused extensive flooding. On July 21 floodwaters cascaded over the river’s banks, engulfing the entire valley, including the Daniels mill complex.

Rising waters trapped five people in the village, including two security guards and a company electrician (who had a permanent residence in the town), his wife and teenage daughter. One of the guards waded through the water and climbed one of the surrounding hills. With difficulty, he reached the top and traveled overland to a county road and caught a ride to the nearest emergency center. There he repeated his story to the local authorities who then requested that the Coast Guard send a small boat to rescue the people who remained trapped in Daniels. The flood currents proved too strong for the rescue boat and those trapped had to wait until the next day for a National Guard helicopter to evacuate them from their rooftop refuge.<sup>28</sup>

As the floodwaters receded, local and state government officials joined management representatives to visit the devastated buildings at the mill site and determined that the extensive damage prohibited repairing or replacing the mill. The

company relocated to a new industrial site outside of nearby Ellicott City and the State of Maryland eventually bought much of the original village property and incorporated it into the park system. In 1978, a Washington D.C. firm bought the remaining segments of the original mill structure and opened a specialty lumber mill on the site of the former village square. Today, only the Gary Memorial Church and the “Daniels Band” still exist. All other traces of the once thriving community are gone but far from forgotten. Former residents still hold annual reunions in their former homes.<sup>29</sup>

### Notes

1. *The Baltimore Sun*, November 16, 1940.
2. Barbara Feaga, editor, *Howard's Roads to the Past* (Ellicott City, Md.: Howard County Sesquicentennial Celebration Committee, 2001), 52. At this time, the area that would become Howard County was still part of Anne Arundel County.
3. *Ibid.*, 52–54. “Elysville,” *Maryland Genealogical Society* (Middletown, Md. Maryland Catoclin Press, 1984), 29, 52–53, *The Baltimore Sun*, November 23, 1940.
4. Lois B., McCauley, *Maryland Historical Prints: 1752 to 1889* (Baltimore: The Maryland Historical Society, 1957) 106. A contemporary lithograph of Alberton shortly after Gary's purchase showed that the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad has constructed a new spur line into the complex and that a new “carding” building had been built to the east of the main structure. *Howard Sun*, June 29, 1980.
5. *Columbia Times*, May 23, 1967, Feaga, *Howard's Road to the Past*, 51–53, *The Baltimore Sun*, January 6, 1980.
6. *Columbia Times*, May 23, 1967; Laura Rice, *Maryland History in Prints, 1743–1900* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2002), 202.
7. Feaga, *Howard's Roads to the Past*, 51–53. *The Baltimore Sun*, January 6, 1980.
8. *The Baltimore American*, November 24, 1940.
9. Richard Walsh and William Lloyd Fox, Editors, *Maryland A History: 1632–1974*, Maryland Historical Society (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1974), 597, 659.
10. Feaga, *Road to Howard's Past*, 52–53.
11. *The Baltimore Sun*, August 10, 1932.
12. *Ellicott City Times*, November 1, 1940; *The Baltimore Sun*, November 17, 1940. The actual agreement was effective as of October 5, 1940.
13. *The Baltimore Sun*, November 16, 18, 1940; *The Baltimore American*, November 24, 1940.
14. *Ellicott City Times*, November 1, 1940.
15. *The Baltimore Sun*, November 16, 18, 1940, *The Baltimore American*, November 24, 1940.
16. *The Baltimore Sun*, November 16, 1940.
17. *The Baltimore Sun*, November 23, 1940.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*, *The Baltimore American*, November 24, 1940.
20. *The Baltimore Sun*, November 23, 1940.

21. Editorial in *The Baltimore Sun*, November 24, 1940.
22. Interview with Ms. Catherine Sauter, November 5, 2003. Ms. Sauter's father, Vernon Able, managed the mill in the 1940s after its purchase by the Daniels Corporation.
23. *The Baltimore Evening Sun*, March 10, 1952.
24. *The Baltimore American*, June 26, 1983.
25. Ibid, *Howard's Roads to the Past*, 53, *The Columbia Times*, May 23, 1967.
26. *The Columbia Times*, May 23, 1967.
27. Ibid.
28. Joan Collins, "Daniels: A History of a Lost River Village," *Ellicott City Heritage*, 6 (November, 1979) 1. The mill town had suffered flood damage in the past, in 1866 and more severely in 1868. During that disaster Gary and his daughter survived by leaping from the top floor of their mansion and clinging to floating debris until they reached a tall oak tree, Rice, *Maryland History in Prints*, 202.
29. Ibid. 2, *Howard Sun*, June 29, 1980.

## Book Reviews

*Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore.* By Seth Rockman. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009. 368 pages. Notes, essay on sources, index. Cloth, \$50.00)

Although the New Labor history of an earlier generation offered the promise of uncovering the experiences of the common worker, Seth Rockman's eloquent, path-breaking study vividly demonstrates that at least for the early republic, those earlier studies failed to dig quite deep enough. Instead of delivering history from the bottom-up, the New Labor history provided a history of working people from the middle-up by seeking an "understanding of the subjective experiences of working people" through the lens of "male artisans as universal workers" (352). Yet artisans were a minority of the working population, and for every proud craftsman parading down the avenue in the early republic, there were many unskilled wage earners standing on the side of the street watching the parade, uninvited and unwelcome to participate. *Scraping By* reminds us that a real understanding of work and labor in the early republic must include the stories of those who carted, hauled, paved and dredged. And while this impressive study admirably succeeds in filling that historiographical gap, it accomplishes much more. When the stories of the unskilled are included in the narrative of the early republic's economy, many conventionally held beliefs about the origins of the American working class, the social structure of the early republic, and the nature of American capitalism itself must be revisited.

The "artisans-into-workers" thesis is a well-worn axiom of the early nineteenth-century economy, but one that fails to consider those who were already earning wages when the supposed transition took place. Unlike artisans, wage earners "possessed no link to an idyllic past. Their encounter with wage labor predated the decline of the artisan workshop . . . [and] had never been shrouded in the 'art and mystery' of a craft" (77). Wage earners were not part of the decline of a premodern artisanal economy—indeed, "artisan identities were typically constructed *in opposition* to the majority of laborers, who were female, black, immigrant, and enslaved" (9). Instead, Rockman argues, "early republic capitalism thrived on its ability to exploit the labor of workers unable fully to claim the prerogatives of market freedom" (8). In this way, artisans were not victims of market forces raging against them, but full participants in developing an exploitative model for American capitalism. Entrepreneurs who were best able to "assemble, deploy, and exploit the physical labor of others" achieved prosperity in the early republic (2–3). They did so by taking full advantage of the "micropolitics of difference" and translating those social differences into "specific power over workers of varying race, sex, ethnicity, age, and legal status" (68). While "elite cultural production ad-

vanced the free-labor ideal," it was also the case that "of all the voluntary associations contributing to the notion of labor as a commodity, none played a larger role than the trade unions of skilled artisans" (242–43).

Rockman's study also demonstrates that the privations so many wage earners faced was not an aberration from the broader narrative of upward economic mobility in the early republic. Instead of the Revolution throwing off the artificial constraints of European society in favor of free society that rewarded hard work and talent with prosperity, Rockman argues that the "early republic's economy opened up new possibilities for some Americans precisely because it closed down opportunities for others." American prosperity, enjoyed by many within the new nation, was built on the privations of others, and the United States achieved prosperity because a segment of its population remained "chronically impoverished, often unfree, and generally unequal" (3).

This view of the nation's development is not generally appreciated according to Rockman, thanks to the conflation of wage earning with the idea of free labor—a myth created by capitalist boosters like Hezekiah Niles and supported by both American elites and middling artisans. According to the myth, employers and laborers met in a metaphorical marketplace as equals where workers freely negotiated and exchanged their labor at wages set by the impartial forces of supply and demand (241). The reality, Rockman argues, was "the absence of negotiation, the persistence of coercion, and the disparity in power between those buying labor and those performing it." This illiberal situation was not an anomaly within America's economic development, but "the very foundation of capitalism in the early republic" (8).

Rockman's thesis, which turns the traditional views of the working class and the early republic's economic development on its head, certainly sets the bar high, and that means for the study to succeed, it needs the evidence in spades. Digging down much deeper than the stories of republican artisans presents a daunting task. Yet in eight chapters, including two on working men, two on working women, two on surviving poverty in the early republic, and one on slavery, Rockman has managed to put together enough individual stories and has made use of overlooked civic and business records, especially those at the Baltimore City Archives, to recover the history of the Monumental City's unskilled, wage-earning laborers. And while it could have been very easy to let numbers and statistics cloud the study, Rockman insures that whatever aspect of Baltimore's infrastructure or American prosperity comes to mind, the reader can smell the sweat and feel the backbreaking effort of the laborers who made it all possible. *Scraping By* is an impressive, eloquently written study that provides a seminal history of Baltimore's working class, and makes a fine addition to the already outstanding list of titles in the Studies in Early American Economy and Society series.

RICHARD CHEW  
Virginia State University

*Here Lies Jim Crow: Civil Rights in Maryland* by C. Fraser Smith. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008. 344 pp. 24 halftones, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth, \$29.95)

To historians, Maryland was the Upper South, with good reason: Maryland was a slave-holding state; the State song “Maryland My Maryland” urged support for the Confederacy; Union troops were attacked in Baltimore; and President Lincoln feared an assassination attack as he travelled through Baltimore in 1861. Smith’s book shows us Maryland’s civil rights history and the state’s image as one of the Upper South comes through clearly.

Smith takes us up from the time of slavery, showing us Roger Brooke Taney and Frederick Douglass. It is ironic that both are Marylanders, one from the western Maryland area of Frederick County and the other from the Eastern Shore and Baltimore City. We learn the complexity of Taney’s thinking and can understand his reasoning as he, Supreme Court Chief Justice, ruled against Dred Scott—even if we disagree with the outcome. We read again about Douglass’ mission to end slavery.

As time passes, we view the struggles of Marylanders up through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. Black Marylanders would not have been able to integrate amusement parks, restaurants, department stores, movie theaters, and city facilities without white Marylanders, and Smith has the political acumen to analyze the negotiations that enabled many of these civic and legal victories.

Smith used as sources many of the people who, in fact, integrated Maryland. In reading the list of people Mr. Smith interviewed, I noticed more than a few who have since died. Rev. Chester Wickwire, Ruby Glover, Parren Mitchell . . . all have left us, as have several others of his oral history sources. Oral histories of others, long since passed, are in the Maryland Historical Society’s library (Lillie Mae Carroll Jackson, Thurgood Marshall) and their voices make this book crucial to an understanding of civil rights in Maryland. Luckily, it’s not the only thing.

The earlier chapters lay the ground work and bring to life people who were little more than names to me. The chapters about Taney and Douglass tend to blend philosophy and history with biography and politics. Smith explains the reasoning behind the Dred Scott decision and places it in the context of Taney’s life and the times—and it makes sense. And how ironic that Taney, Douglass, and William Lloyd Garrison (the abolitionist) all lived in Baltimore at the same time.

Once Smith arrives in the twentieth century, the depictions leave the page and combine with my own memories to create truly 3-D images (no glasses necessary). Our respect for such people as Lillie Mae Carroll Jackson and her daughter Juanita Jackson Mitchell is renewed. Smith, in a lecture at Towson University in March, 2009, pointed out that one reason so many women worked in the forefront of the civil rights movement is that they were less likely to be lynched. And, yes, there were lynchings in Maryland.

Smith's discussions of the post-Brown era are alive with many testimonies of those who were there. Although in 1954 Maryland's schools were integrated immediately (instead of moving more judiciously) because Theodore McKeldin made sure of it, other barriers were not so easily felled. "The English actor Rex Harrison refused to perform in Baltimore" (105). We don't like to think of things like that happening in Maryland—the Upper South again.

In the demonstration to integrate Gwynn Oak Amusement Park in Baltimore hundreds of clergy and other volunteers were jailed before the park—on the same day as the 1963 March on Washington—allowed African-American children to enter (other than on the once-a-year All Nations Day).

And it was also in 1963 that the events portrayed in the cover photo of Gloria Richardson occurred, and the image says it all. Richardson, a thin woman in her 40s, is confronted by gun-wielding troops. Her hand is pushing away the bayonet as if to say, "Don't bother me." Richardson, a strong woman, and her group had invited Martin Luther King to help them; he declined. Later, when violence erupted in Cambridge, King volunteered his services, but Richardson and her group decided that they had gone too far for non-violence and declined his offer.

Smith continues his account into the new millennium, discussing the affairs of Baltimore City under administrations led by black people and by white people. Racial politics influenced city, state, and national elections, and Smith lets us feel that we are in the smoke-filled rooms (when people smoked indoors) listening to the wheeling and dealing.

He doesn't confine himself to political changes, though. Vivien Thomas, about whom much has been told in book and film, perfected the technique for operations on "blue babies." His story, too, is here. Students of the era are fortunate that so many other things contribute to the book's value. Smith's well researched book adds texture to what we have learned or what we remember about the people and incidents he discusses. It is because Smith had access to so many people who remembered those times and episodes that this book lives. Once Smith talks about events in living memory, we are all flies on the wall. Maryland's southern heritage shines through strongly, even in twenty-first century events.

TRACY MILLER  
*Towson University*

*The Mind of Thomas Jefferson.* By Peter S. Onuf. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007. 282 pages. Cloth, \$49; Paper, \$19.50).

Peter Onuf, the Thomas Jefferson Foundation Professor of History at the University of Virginia, has been writing about the Founding Fathers and the origins of American constitutional development for most of his adult life. His publications range from studies of the Continental Congress to Federalism and the American

West to Empire Building during the Age of Revolution. He has also written or edited several volumes on Thomas Jefferson, many of which have enriched our understanding of the Master of Monticello. His latest and most exciting study to date is his *The Mind of Thomas Jefferson*, which builds on a collection of essays he published in 2000 called *Jefferson's Empire: The Language of American Nationhood*. In these elegant essays Onuf examined the roots of the new American nation, arguing that Jefferson envisioned an empire of liberty that would not be ruled by force and fear but by a large conglomeration of free republican states bound together by a shared language, a shared history, and a shared commitment to liberty. In *The Mind of Thomas Jefferson*, Onuf brings his formidable talents to bear once again, this time situating Jefferson in his life and times and offering a blistering counterpoint to those who would make him a saint or a sinner.

The book is divided into four parts, each written in clear, rich prose. In part one, "Jefferson and the Historians," Onuf explores the ways in which historians have seen Jefferson. The first two essays (one co-written with Jan Ellen Lewis) examine Jefferson as a referent point for understanding modern America—those, Onuf tells us, who would "make Jefferson represent American in order that we may judge the country right or wrong" (62). Onuf shows that Jefferson's rhetoric of "natural rights" was often at odds with his public and private life, thus making it difficult for historians to "make sense" of him (19-21). The third essay, "Declaration of Independence for Diplomatic Historians," puts Jefferson's hallowed document in a larger international context, asserting that "if the birth of the American nation was inadvertent, its implications would be far-reaching," both for European diplomacy and "for the new world of nation-states that emerged from its ruins" (76).

In part two, "Jefferson's World," Onuf expands his previous work on Jefferson's role in building the empire of liberty. Here he traces the Virginian's involvement in the Louisiana Purchase and the expansion of the American continent, emphasizing that Jefferson had a keen understanding of the threats the United States faced from both Napoleonic Europe and restless Indian tribes who resented encroachment on their ancestral lands. Further, Onuf posits that Jefferson was as much a "federalist" as he was a "republican," because he believed that federal unity was inextricably linked to republican liberties (103).

In part three, "Religion and Education," Onuf challenges modern writers who have championed Jefferson as an atheist to those who see him as a flag-waving, bible thumping evangelical Christian. Both accounts of Jefferson, Onuf rightly notes, are wrong. Instead, Onuf paints a more complex and nuanced view of Jefferson's religion. He explains that, although Jefferson was a "sworn enemy of unreasoning faith," he saw Christianity as a purveyor of republican principles as long as it was grounded in Enlightenment rationalism (159, 156-157).

The final section, which comprises part four, offers the most arresting set of

essays in the collection. In this section on "Race and Slavery," Onuf strives to understand how Jefferson could own slaves despite his fanatical aversion to the institution. Drawing on Query 14 of Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Onuf argues that "Jefferson thought racial differences were fixed in nature," which presented insurmountable obstacles to ending slavery and emancipating blacks (207). In addition, Jefferson feared a race war, Onuf writes, because he did not think slaves could live side-by-side with their former masters. They would rise up and kill them, making the grand experiment in nation-building a short-lived memory. In that vein, Jefferson supported a colonization scheme, whereby young African Americans would be sent off to Africa, while an older generation would eventually die out (214-215). This would satisfy Jefferson's urge to end slavery, while also avoiding the possibility of a race war if former slaves were to remain in the United States.

This is an engaging set of essays. It offers a clear and compelling case of why Jefferson is one of the most important architects in the founding of the United States. Beyond that, it shows that Jefferson's life and thought were tied together in ways that other scholars have ignored. In this regard, Onuf has solidified his reputation as one of the most imaginative scholars writing on Jefferson's life and times.

MATTHEW L. HARRIS

*Colorado State University-Pueblo*

*Lincoln Legends: Myths, Hoaxes and Confabulations Associated with our Greatest President.* By Edward Steers (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 2007.)

As Americans approach the celebration of the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth in 2009, it is more than ever important "to get right with Lincoln." The latter directive, first encouraged by Republican Senator Everett Dirksen in the 1950s, will mean different things to Americans in the coming months. The Currency Bureau is minting a new Lincoln penny, and there will be a new postage stamp honoring our 16th president. There will be seminars and symposiums, lectures and school programs. Already new books pour from the presses. Surely among the most engaging efforts "to get right with Lincoln" is Edward Steers's *Lincoln Legends*. Steers considers, evaluates, corrects, and when necessary, shreds the myths and legends that, like barnacles, have stuck to Lincoln about whom, even when he was alive, fictions accumulated.

Steers, the author of the well-regarded *Blood on the Moon: The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln*, is an indefatigable researcher with a wry sense of the absurd. He needs both talents as he unravels fourteen stories about Lincoln and his writing that prominently display human gullibility, commercial deception and mistaken advocacy. Certainly this book reveals the degree to which wanting something to be true often trumps reason and evidence.

Steers begins with the supposed *actual* birthplace of Lincoln outside of

Hodgenville, Kentucky, a simple log cabin structure now enshrined in an elegant marble temple that surely would have amused Lincoln in its grandiosity. The actual logs at this popular tourist attraction at one point may have been mixed with those of Jefferson Davis's birthplace in a traveling exhibition. In any case, they are not authentic. Yet durable myths always serve a purpose. As Steers notes, "the Lincoln cabin represents a shrine that accurately reflects the origin of our greatest president and a place where people can come and pay homage to his life and the heritage of our nation" —no matter the age and provenance of those logs.

Other myths have their origin in greedy duplicity. Among these is the myth of Anne Rutledge—Lincoln's supposed first love who died tragically of what the nineteenth century diagnosed as brain fever. Scholars still disagree about the facts of this relationship. There was never any documentary proof of a love affair until, miraculously, in 1928, Wilma King produced fourteen romantic letters supposedly written between Lincoln and Rutledge. The editors of the *Atlantic Monthly* purchased and published the letters and only later learned they had been duped by a woman who, after being challenged, claimed that the letters had been dictated to her mother who was in touch with a medium. King never did pay the money back.

Other chapters deal with the legend of Lincoln's three baptisms in 1860 (important for those who want Lincoln to get right with religion), his supposed homosexuality (significant for gays) and as well, Lincoln sayings that we attribute to the 16th President because they sound like him. Included among the latter is the ever useful "You can fool all of the people some of the time....etc," a phrase that, along with other inaccurate attributions, supports Steers's contention that Lincoln is the most misquoted individual in history. Steers also dissects the myths that have grown up about the origins and reception of the Gettysburg address. An authority on the Lincoln assassination, Steers shreds the myth of Dr. Samuel Mudd's innocence in the conspiracy and the associated hoax (or is it a confabulation?) that Edwin Stanton, the Secretary of War, was a part of that plot.

With the possible exception of Calvin Coolidge, Abraham Lincoln was our most close-mouthed president. And this vacuum of personal information has encouraged the legends associated with him. In the process of exposing what is not true about our 16th president, readers of *Lincoln Legends* will discover a great deal about Lincoln that is true. Both exercises are a good way to celebrate his 200th birthday.

JEAN H. BAKER  
*Goucher College*

*Causes Won, Lost, & Forgotten: How Hollywood and Popular Art Shape What We Know about the Civil War.* Gary W. Gallagher. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008. 274 pages. Illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, \$28.00.)

Professor Gallagher offers a valuable contribution to the growing field of the Civil War in popular remembrance with this short and interesting study of selected movies and limited edition art prints that have flooded the American market in the past several decades. The author offers his assessment of the extent to which these media adhere to or recede from what he describes as the four great traditions that participants set down about the Civil War in the post-war period. Gallagher argues that the themes in – or ignored by – the more modern media exert strong influence over how the American public remembers the war.

The four great traditions are: Union, The Lost Cause, Emancipation, and Reconciliation. Gallagher examines writings, speeches, artwork and other popularly-consumed Civil War veteran remembrances to discern what the Civil War generation remembered as being the war's central significances.

To northerners, the chief reason for fighting the war was preservation of the Union. Emancipation was a secondary issue that some embraced but others found of lesser importance. Southerners grasped at the glory of devotion to a noble, but doomed-from-the-start patriotic cause. African-Americans and civil rights advocates thought emancipation was the paramount result of the war. And, as the mists of time obscured the horror of the war, combat veterans from both sides eventually saluted one another as worthy, but reconciled, adversaries.

To assess the extent to which the four great traditions remain in the public memory, Gallagher reviews about 20 Hollywood films dating from D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* through *Gone With the Wind*, *Shenandoah*, *Red Badge of Courage*, to *Glory*, *Gettysburg*, and *Gods and Generals*. He concludes that, generally, preservation of the Union is largely ignored and its advocates often demonized, The Lost Cause is lionized, and both Emancipation and Reconciliation receive mixed treatment. Though often telling compelling stories, most films, the author points out, are flawed history. Nevertheless, he asserts, they shape the way the public remembers the Civil War, though he offers no proof that the movies' messages are indeed ingrained in the public's mind.

A better barometer of the public's tastes in Civil War remembrance, perhaps, are the subject matter and sales records of the plethora of limited edition art prints that have tumbled forth from various artists since the 1980s. Gallagher explores the relationship between the last cycle of Civil War movies, starting with *Glory* (1989) through *Gods and Generals* (2003), and finds the films were a tremendous slingshot for the success of the prints, the prints feeding off the themes stressed in the movies. The artwork of Don Troiani, Dale Gallon, Mort Künstler and others are closely examined, and the author reports extensive correspondence

(phone, e-mail and face-to-face interviews) with the artists, who were remarkably forthcoming with him about the nature of their work.

The bulk of this art may be described as *kitsch* (my word, not the author's) and enjoys great popularity among Civil War art collectors. Universally about military topics, the artworks' most revealing features, Gallagher shows, are the salability of various themes and subject matter. The artists, and sales records, tell him that Confederate subject matter outsells Union subject matter; eastern Confederate subject matter outsells western Confederate matter; anything with the Confederate battle flag in it (the more the merrier) outsells anything without it; and the second most popular flag is the green one occasionally carried by Irish-American Union units (less common than the artwork would suggest). Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson and Nathan Bedford Forrest by far and away outsell Ulysses S. Grant, William Tecumseh Sherman and Philip H. Sheridan. A noticeable exception to the salability of Union officers is Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, whose artistic sales record rivals anybody else's. Though not considered a major figure by the Civil War generation, Chamberlain (portrayed by actor Jeff Daniels) gets major play in *Gettysburg*, and *Gods and Generals*, thus, Gallagher argues, Chamberlain's disproportionate popularity in Civil War art.

The book offers numerous illustrations of both Civil War art and outtakes from the films. *Causes Won, Lost, & Forgotten* is strongly recommended for those interested in how modern media have – possibly – shaped modern America's conceptions of the Civil War and its significance in national history.

ROSS M. KIMMEL  
Maryland Park Service

*Burying the Dead But Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause.* By Caroline E. Janney. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008). xiii, 290 pages. Illustrations, bibliography notes, index. Cloth, \$35.00.)

In *Burying the Dead*, Caroline Janney offers a refreshing and important reappraisal of a major contribution to post-Civil War Confederate nationalism. Long have we known that the United Daughters of the Confederacy, founded in 1894, was the organization that held preeminence as the keeper of the Rebel flame. But, Janney, with splendid control of her exhaustive research, has disclosed that the UDC had a formidable predecessor which actually set the exaltation of a defeated nation into motion. The Ladies' Memorial Associations (LMAS) in Virginia spearheaded the movement, she convincingly relates, that we term the Lost Cause. It was a public fantasy fashioned to make more palatable the humiliation of Rebel defeat. The ladies had begun their mournful but intensely determined labor as early as the closing days of the war itself in 1865.

In a very perceptive article about the Petersburg chapter of the Ladies' Me-

morial Association, Janney had earlier recounted that the organization's members pestered husbands, neighbors, and civic leaders into cooperating with their goals. Municipal penny-pinching authorities presented an obstacle to the proper upkeep of their Confederate cemeteries, but the ladies eventually overcame the opposition. This endeavor was the single-minded work of scores of women in the once bustling but war-ruined railroad city.<sup>1</sup>

*Burying the Dead* expands on Janney's earlier findings, but the book does more than that. What is most persuasive is her argument that women of the post-Civil-War period were redefining their role in the public sphere. To be sure, they were scarcely such belligerent protestors for women's rights as the Yankee suffragists. In the Virginia women's view that radical approach could only result in anarchy and the disruption of the proper relation between men and women. Rather, they adopted their uniquely Southern conservatism to a different "form of women's political engagement," she writes (6). So long as the ladies confined their goals to charitable efforts within the woman's sphere, Confederate veterans and politicians could welcome their efforts. The ladies selected the cemetery sites, identified the dead, corresponded with surviving relatives when they could be located, arranged the funerals and burials, and landscaped the plots. Not surprisingly, such activity was chiefly in the province of women with education and relative financial stability. The wealthier among them took the leading roles. Nonetheless, the associations did provide the funerals, graves, and markers for common soldiers' families unable to afford the expense. By and large, Janney observes, few of the participants in the LMAS had lost a male family member in the fighting. That lucky circumstance, though, did not affect their almost fanatical participation in the cemetery work.

The undertaking, the author writes, proved most challenging. The women had to recover bodies from wherever they had fallen—some 72,520 in total. That figure came close to being almost a third of all the rebel soldiers to die between 1861 and 1865. It cost a dollar per cadaver to re-bury it, a sum highly dear in a penurious Virginia. The sight and sometimes the smell of the dead must have been hard to bear, even for women used to plantation living that often had its unpleasant moments. Given the number of bloody engagements, Virginia soil was bound to hold more than its share of the fallen.

Along with the historian Lisa Frank, Janney reaches a different interpretation from Drew Faust's problematic conclusion about Southern upper-class women and the war. Faust contends that they lost faith in the cause and urged its quick end to warfare, even at the expense of their fighting men's pride.<sup>2</sup> Instead, Janney argues, from first to last, Virginia women, like their compatriots in the Deep South, stood loyally behind the new slave republic and the soldiers at the front. In fact, their postwar efforts originated in their experience of organizing war drives, preparing clothing for the troops through their sewing societies, volunteering at hospitals, and similar activities. Horrified by the Union troops' looting, vandaliz-

ing, and rough treatment of women, Virginia's female Confederates allowed their hatred of the enemy to grow proportionately with the depredations for which the Yankees were responsible. That resentment was not easily assuaged when peace at last returned. Instead it found an emotional outlet in the energetic memorializing of the Noble Southern Dead.

Building on an antebellum tradition of female importunings to government officials, the memorialists badgered politicians for financial support for their work. Even the most conservative of men considered them "agent[s] of gigantic benevolence" (99). Yet, quarrels with men and rival chapters of the LMAS did crop up. A notable squabble arose about where to inter the remains of Robert E. Lee. Should it be Lexington, his last home, or Richmond where he would lie with so many of his subordinates in the Hollywood Cemetery? General Jubal Early, known for his misogyny, promoted the Richmond alternative. The Lexington ladies won that contest. Also, he and his opponents disputed over how and where statues honoring the hero were to be sculpted and located.

At the heart of the matter, Early and his allies were struggling with the women over control of the Lost Cause movement itself, Janney chronicles. Similar problems in this odd war of the sexes arose in the retrieval of the Gettysburg and Antietam Virginia's dead soldiers where they should be re-interred. These battles gradually sapped the morale of the ladies' associations during the 1870s and early 1880s, but their cause revived in the 1890s. Although properly and respectfully burying the dead was a worthy goal, the enterprise kept alive the wartime antipathies against the Yankee enemy and the lately freed slave. That resentment of the Union victory against what became a myth of antebellum grace and racial harmony helped to feed the social and racial prejudices that still haunt many parts of the South today. The author tells her story briskly and effectively. General readers no less than scholars will find it an enlightening narrative about a little known but significant movement.

1. See Caroline E. Janney, "To Honor Her Noble Sons: The Ladies' Memorial Association of Petersburg, 1866–1912," in Peter Wallenstein and Bertram Wyatt-Brown, eds., *Virginia's Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005), 256–69.

2. Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Lisa Tendrich Frank, "War Comes Home: Confederate Women and Union Soldiers," in Wallenstein and Wyatt-Brown, eds., *Virginia's Civil War*, 123–36.

BERTRAM WYATT-BROWN  
*University of Florida and Johns Hopkins University*

*Anacostia: The Death & Life Of An American River.* By John R. Wennersten. (Baltimore: The Chesapeake Book Company, 2008. 338 pages. Maps, illustrations, photographs, references, bibliography, chronology, index. Paper, \$20.00.)

*Anacostia*, John R. Wennersten's newest addition to his impressive scholarly output on the Chesapeake Bay, provides readers with a compelling and fascinating examination of the bay's historically most neglected and degraded tributary, the Anacostia River. Wennersten links the neglect and abuse of the river and its watershed to injustices suffered by the original Indian inhabitants of the Anacostia, by African-Americans, and by immigrants and blue-collar workers who lived and labored along the river from past to present. For readers unfamiliar with the Anacostia, it is the "other" river flowing through the District of Columbia. It originates in Maryland, enters the district from the east, and flows southwest joining the Potomac River across from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport to the west.

Wennersten presents the complex environmental, cultural, economic, historical, and political factors and forces which shaped the present watershed of the Anacostia River and imbue it with a unique sense of place and identity. The author "illustrates how impaired river systems become contested regions of class and race"(xi). In constructing his narrative and supporting his arguments, Wennersten draws upon an impressive body of primary and secondary sources. His analysis of the environmental and social history of the watershed is well informed by the research of reputable historians, natural and social scientists, and urban planners, and by interviews with community leaders, environmental activists, academics, and environmental managers familiar with the watershed and its people. He deftly analyzes and synthesizes data and information from disparate sources to produce a highly readable history of the Anacostia, a history which is inextricably linked to the founding of the United States and its capital city. The author explores "the historical connection in Washington, D.C., between forces of urban development, sanitation, race, and the Anacostia River"(xiv). The history of the Anacostia River was and continues to be played out over landscapes of power, disenfranchisement, and hope.

The book consists of an introduction, thirteen chapters, and an epilogue. The chapters are organized by chronology and topic. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the Anacostia's pre-history, Indian habitation of the watershed, and early European exploration and settlement. In the second chapter, the author critically examines the political economy which developed within the watershed and explores how the "European ecology of extraction" (18) and the emergence of tobacco as a cash crop with the ensuing exploitation of indentured servants and the enslavement of Africans initiated an inexorable ecological decline of the river. Herein are the historical roots of the striking environmental, racial, and economic inequalities that persist to this day within the Anacostia watershed. Re-

ferred to throughout the book are areas of natural beauty, affluence, and political clout, as well as areas of appalling environmental degradation, disenfranchisement, and social despair—all within short distances of the center of Federal power and authority.

Chapters 3 through 9 address the historical and social milieus of the watershed and Washington, D.C., from 1790 to the mid-twentieth century, exploring the commercial and economic development of the district via its ties to the Anacostia River. The subjects of these chapters include an early failure by district developers and planners to embrace L'Enfant's vision for the Anacostia waterfront, the impacts of the Civil War upon the river, poor sanitation and public health, river engineering, and the blunt exercise of power to advance and protect the economic interests of the district's elites. Wennersten documents the adverse environmental impacts of urban growth and the social and environmental injustices inflicted upon African-American, immigrant, and working-class communities within the watershed by indifferent politicians, real estate speculators, industries, including governmental facilities, indiscriminately discharging toxic wastes into the Anacostia, and by ill-conceived urban planning schemes.

Chapters 10 through 13 span 1970 to 2005 and focus upon the efforts of individuals and organizations to restore the river's environmental integrity and improve the quality of life for the watershed's population. Wennersten explores the emergence of environmental activists, African-American and white, who advocate and act on behalf of the river; he describes the formation of partnerships between grassroots organizations and government agencies to restore the river; and he critically examines reclaiming Anacostia's waterfront and promoting its amenity values to lure investors and encourage commercial, residential, and recreational development. He ends on a note of hope, optimistic that this once neglected river will become a vital part of the ecological, economic, and social fabric of Washington, D.C. and its environs.

*Anacostia* is a significant book employing the perspectives of history and political ecology to frame, understand, and to ultimately help resolve environmental and social problems produced by unquestioned growth, uneven development, and the legacies of discrimination and residential segregation based on race and class. *Anacostia* will appeal to a wide audience, academic and lay, both as a well conceived environmental and social history of the Anacostia River and Washington, D.C., and for the broad lessons it provides. It illuminates and re-envision the functions—ecological, economic, and social—of rivers in urban environments.

KENT BARNES  
*Towson University*

*Women on Their Own: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Being Single.* Edited by Rudolph M. Bell and Virginia Yans. (Rutgers University Press, 2008. 273 pages. Illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, \$49.95.)

Although images of unmarried men are often positive—the swinging bachelor or playboy—single women are generally seen as lonely, incomplete and pitiable. Looking to analyze such constructions, Rudolph Bell and Virginia Yans, who lead a yearlong seminar on single women at the Rutgers University Center for Historical Analysis, have edited a collection of essays that seek to identify singleness or “the condition of not being married” (1) as a social category appropriate for scholarly analysis. As they acknowledge, singleness is an unwieldy concept that includes women as different as widows, divorcees, unmarried mothers, single girls living alone, women who live with but choose not to marry their partners and lesbians who are legally unable to marry. Yet Bell and Yans argue that examining singleness as a category illuminates relationships between gender, sexuality and the state, through marriage laws and public policy, and shows how the meaning of singleness has been constructed cross-culturally and over time. To address these issues, the editors have assembled a volume that explores how single women in the U.S., Western Europe and the Caribbean have negotiated social and familial institutions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Early chapters chart the contours of singleness sociologically. Anne Byrne in “Single Women in Ireland” uses interviews to take a snapshot of how single women see themselves in contemporary Ireland. By focusing on individuals Byrne shows the multiple ways that singleness is lived, even within a small population sample. On the opposite end of the spectrum; Deborah Carr’s “Social and Emotional Well-Being of Single Women in Contemporary America,” uses data from a large-scale survey to dispute “the observation that being single is a less desirable state than being married.” (58) Carr shows that previous researchers, blinded by American culture’s pro-marriage bias, have ignored how age, sexuality and mental health impact one’s marital status and happiness.

Five chapters focus specifically on widows while Carr’s touches on the topic. These chapters are among the most interesting, perhaps because they draw on a long record of historical scholarship on the status of widows and how such women navigated around limitations on their gender. In particular, Susan Ingalls Lewis’ essay “Business Widows in Nineteenth-Century Albany, New York, 1813-1885,” is enlightening. She argues that “more than 2,500 individual woman...owned, operated, or managed business enterprises between 1813 and 1885” in Albany, an astonishing number that included a licensed plumber and a brewery owner. (115) While common discourse imagined widowhood as a sad state, these thousands of women utilized their formerly married status to become publicly active. Indeed, some women who called themselves widows were

probably not, while others continued to refer to themselves as widows even when they remarried!

Such tactics are the subject of a number of essays, which examine how women have worked the margins between their gender identity and their marital status to create a space for themselves. Of particular interest to southern historians, Jennifer L. Gross' "The United Daughters of the Confederacy, Confederate Widows, and the Lost Cause: 'We Must Not Forget or Neglect the Widows,'" examines how confederate widows used the "structures of southern femininity" to fight for memorials to their dead husbands, becoming public figures themselves (180). However, the preponderance of chapters on widows means that other topics, such as lesbianism or women who remain single by choice, are mentioned briefly, while the way that race intersects with singleness appears primarily in the concluding chapter on female-headed households in the Caribbean. Although many of the authors seek out ways in which women utilized singleness to their advantage, one of the most fascinating essays is Elaine S. Abelson's "The Times That Tried Only Men's Souls: Women, Work, and Public Policy in the Great Depression," which examines down-and-out single women. She shows that cultural images of the male breadwinner impacted how the federal government and states gave aid to the needy. Focused on helping men and families, such policies ignored single women, who were almost always economically marginal, further devastating them. Abelson cogently draws connections between gender stereotypes, the state and economics in a way that should be required reading for policymakers in these similar times of economic chaos.

*Women on their Own* is a solid contribution to the study of gender and singleness. While the looseness of singleness as a category makes it difficult to ultimately draw conclusions, the widows, unmarried women, and divorcees that populate this volume make it a fascinating read useful to those who research women's lives.

MARY RIZZO

*New Jersey Council for the Humanities*

*& The College of New Jersey*

# Maryland Historical Magazine

## Contributors' Guidelines

The editors welcome contributions that broaden knowledge and deepen understanding of Maryland history. The *MdHM* enjoys one of the largest readerships of any state historical magazine in the nation; over the years it has developed strong ties to the scholarly community. Despite the distance usually separating local and academic history, the magazine strives to bring together the “professional” and “popular”—to engage a broad audience while publishing the latest serious research on Maryland and the region.

We especially invite submissions that raise good questions, build on newly discovered or reexamined evidence, and make one's findings interesting and readable. We invite amateur historians to consider and make clear the significance of their work and remind scholars that they address not specialists alone but a wide, literate public.

**MANUSCRIPTS.** Please submit a dark, clear, typed or computer-printed manuscript, double-spaced on high quality, standard-sized (8 ½" x 11") white paper, leaving ample margins on all sides. Authors are invited to send their submission on disc or by email attachment. Please do not send faxed copies (particularly of book reviews). A stamped, self-addressed envelope will ensure the return of your submission. Because articles normally go to outside referees for blind evaluation, we ask that they arrive in duplicate, with the author's name on separate title pages.

Follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* (15th edition, 2003). In writing dates, the *MdHM* uses the form month/day/year. For questions about spelling and hyphenation, consult *American Heritage College Dictionary* (2007).

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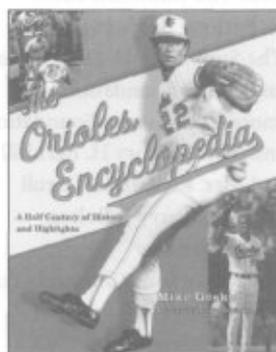
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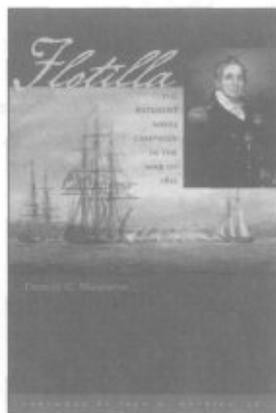
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