

S M 1-312

Unknown

Beverley Collins: House Site  
and Related History

Abell  
Private

This house of the waterman, Beverley Collins, has burned down, and no history of it was available. Since Beverley Collins was an important Negro waterman, his photograph ~~and other~~ related historical materials were copied since these are important fragments of the much larger history of Negro watermen in Maryland.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC **Beverley Collins: House Site and Related History**

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER **At end of lang drive on south side of Hachet's Thicket Rd., c. 0.25 mile west of its jct. with Abell Rd.**

CITY, TOWN **Abell** CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT **7**

STATE **Md.** COUNTY **St. Mary's**

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME **Mary Collins**

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER **Hatchet Thicket Rd.**

CITY, TOWN **Abell** STATE, zip code **Md.**

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC **St. Mary's County Courthouse**

Liber #: **Map # 46; p. 179**  
Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN **Leonardtwn** STATE **Md.**

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE **None**

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

*No pictures were taken of the site on which this house once stood, since nothing remains.*

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED    DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The house in which Beverley Collins lived burned down. My oral informant, Bernice Clark Sherman, said that nothing remained of it. She did have an old photograph of Captain Collins, as he was called since he was a waterman, and that was copied on slide film as part of this survey. This is one of the few photographs known to be available of Negro waterman of the 19th century and early 20th who owned and worked their own boats. In the attached copied pages from Life on the Potomac River by Edwin W. Beitzell (p. 67) are descriptions of the character, courage, and work of Capt. Collins.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
	<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			<b>Black History</b>

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

No history was available of the house itself since it has burned down and no informant was located to describe its past, but since Capt. Collins was an important waterman in the community, his photograph was copied and the brief descriptions of him xeroxed. These are important fragments of the much larger history of Negro watermen.

According to Mrs. Sherman, Beverley Collins was no known kin to his neighbor Robert H. Collins.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

George W. McDaniel, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Md. Commission on Afro-American History and Culture

DATE

STREET &amp; NUMBER

20 Dean St.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Annapolis

STATE

Md.

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

## APPENDIX "A"

<u>Master**</u>	<u>Home Port or Sailed From</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
-	Washington, D. C.	
-	Washington, D. C.	
James T. Waters & James Scott	Chincoteague, Va.	Changed to gasoline screw in 1914 and abandoned at Cape Charles 7-6-1953.
Ignatius Fenwick	St. Mary's River, Md.	Ocean-going vessel used in Revolutionary War.
A. C. Tenneson	St. Mary's Co., Md.	Abandoned at Baltimore, Md. 9-1-1896.
Howard Chesser	St. George's Island, Md.	
Joseph A. Lawrence	St. Patrick's Creek, Md.	Abandoned 9-27-1911.
John Twilley, Sr.	St. George's Island, Md.	Built by I. S. Somers.
-	Baltimore, Md.	
George Thomas	St. George's Island, Md.	
-	Washington, D. C.	
Ned Hayden	Canoe Neck Creek, Md.	Owned by W. E. Hopkins of Virginia. Rig changed to gasoline screw on 9-25-1915. Abandoned at Newport News, Va. on 12-29-1938.
Richard C. Miller	Colonial Beach, Va.	
Ned Hayden	Canoe Neck Creek, Md.	Rig changed to oil screw on 10-13-1938. Sunk near Key West, Florida on 1-7-1943.
William J. Stanford	Colonial Beach, Va.	Built by J. Branford.
Randolph Thomas	St. George's Island, Md.	Owned by James Hall.
-	Crisfield, Md.	
-	Norfolk, Va.	
Beverly Collins	St. Patrick's Creek, Md.	Built by R. E. Tyler.
-	Washington, D. C.	
Charles Chesser	St. George's Island, Md.	
Howard Chesser	St. George's Island, Md.	
Charles Edward Henderson	St. George's Island, Md.	Foundered at Crisfield, Md. 6-3-1934.
John Cumberland	Washington, D. C.	
Foster Thomas & Ned Henderson	St. George's Island, Md.	
Thomas Crowder	St. George's Island, Md.	Built by Thomas Crowder.
Walter L. Jackson	Charles Co., Md.	Abandoned at Washington, D. C. 12-5-1913.
James N. Morris	Charles Co., Md.	
S. Spearman Lancaster	Charles Co., Md.	
John W. Furbush	Charles Co., Md.	
-	Washington, D. C.	
-	Baltimore, Md.	
-	Tappahannock, Va.	
-	Washington, D. C.	
-	Washington, D. C.	
Charles Chesser	St. George's Island, Md.	Owned by - Webster, Baltimore, Md.
-	Alexandria, Va.	
-	New York	
Shill Simpkins	St. George's Island, Md.	
Solomon Foxwell	Bretton Bay, Md.	Abandoned and sunk at Annapolis, Md. 5-10-1955.
Matt Bailey	White's Neck Creek, Md.	Owned by Matt Bailey.
Tilton Hayden	Canoe Neck Creek, Md.	
Havie Bannigan	St. Patrick's Creek, Md.	Owned by Matt Bailey.

Faunce," built by J. T. Marsh, at Mill Creek, Solomons Island in 1887. She was a sharp stern and sharp rig ship of 25 tons, 60.7 feet in length. Captain Jake was quite a fabulous character on the Potomac and truly representative of the old-ers on the river. On June 5, 1896, the "George B. Faunce" was sold to Captain Brew Freeman Cheseldine of White's Neck Creek when Captain Jake decided to devote full time to trap net and seine fishing. Captain Jake later owned the small schooners, "Jacob D. Faunce," built in Washington in 1876 and the "Emma R. Faunce" built on St. Patrick's Creek in 1902 which were used in his seining operations.

Captain John Bryant was another to sail in the river trade out of St. Patrick's. Among his vessels was the "Edith Marcy," a sharp sail 60 ton bugeye he bought of Captain Dick Chesser of St. George's Island. He also sailed the "Winnie H. Windsor" which he bought from Captain Jerry Gibson and sold or traded to Captain Dick Chesser.

Captain Jimmie Dingee sailed the "Water Lily," a sloop, and Bernard Ellis had at least two boats out of St. Patrick's, the "Fanny Kemp" and the "Horn Point," a sloop.

In addition to the white masters in the oyster and general hauling trade on the river, there were several negroes out of St. Patrick's Creek who captained their own boats. Beverly Collins had a sharp sail bugeye, the "Mark Stevens," built by R. E. Tyler of St. Peters in 1888. She was 54.5 feet in length. Captain Collins displayed a great deal of courage when a January snow and sleet storm in the Bay carried away both of his masts during a trip to Baltimore. Though offered tows, Collins refused because he knew the salvage would eat up his ship. After two days and a night in terrible weather, Collins made it to port under a jury rig. A story is told that at one time Captain Collins had a boy, Fred Jones, as cook. Like most youngsters, Fred was always hungry. On this particular occasion Fred had cooked dinner and called to the Captain that everything was ready. The Captain was busy and several calls went unheeded. Fred couldn't stand the tantalizing odors of the hot cooked food and pitched in and ate his dinner. When Captain Collins came below, Fred was just finishing. It was said by the crew that the Captain's wrath was something to behold, although a good deal of it was simulated, it seems. After the Captain threatened to "keel-haul" him, to hang him from the bowsprit, to tow him by a rope from the stern, give him 30 lashes and the like, Fred promised on bended knee never again to even think about eating until the Captain had been served and then only after permission had been obtained.

Other outstanding colored men on St. Patrick's Creek included Henry Stewart who owned the bugeye, "Eva Clarence," built by L. Shores in Somerset County in 1887, a 50 footer. The "Willie Clarence," a bugeye, also was built in Somerset County at Oriole in 1892, probably by the same builder. This vessel was captained by James Dickerson and was 51.5 feet in length. Both were sharp sail craft. Captain Luke Clark bought the "Hiawatha" from Captain Tommie Morris and sailed her for many years. His brother, Joe Clark, also owned his own vessel. Richard Jones of Canoe Neck Creek had a reputation as an excellent riverman and while he did not own a vessel he sailed both bugeyes and schooners on a sharing basis.

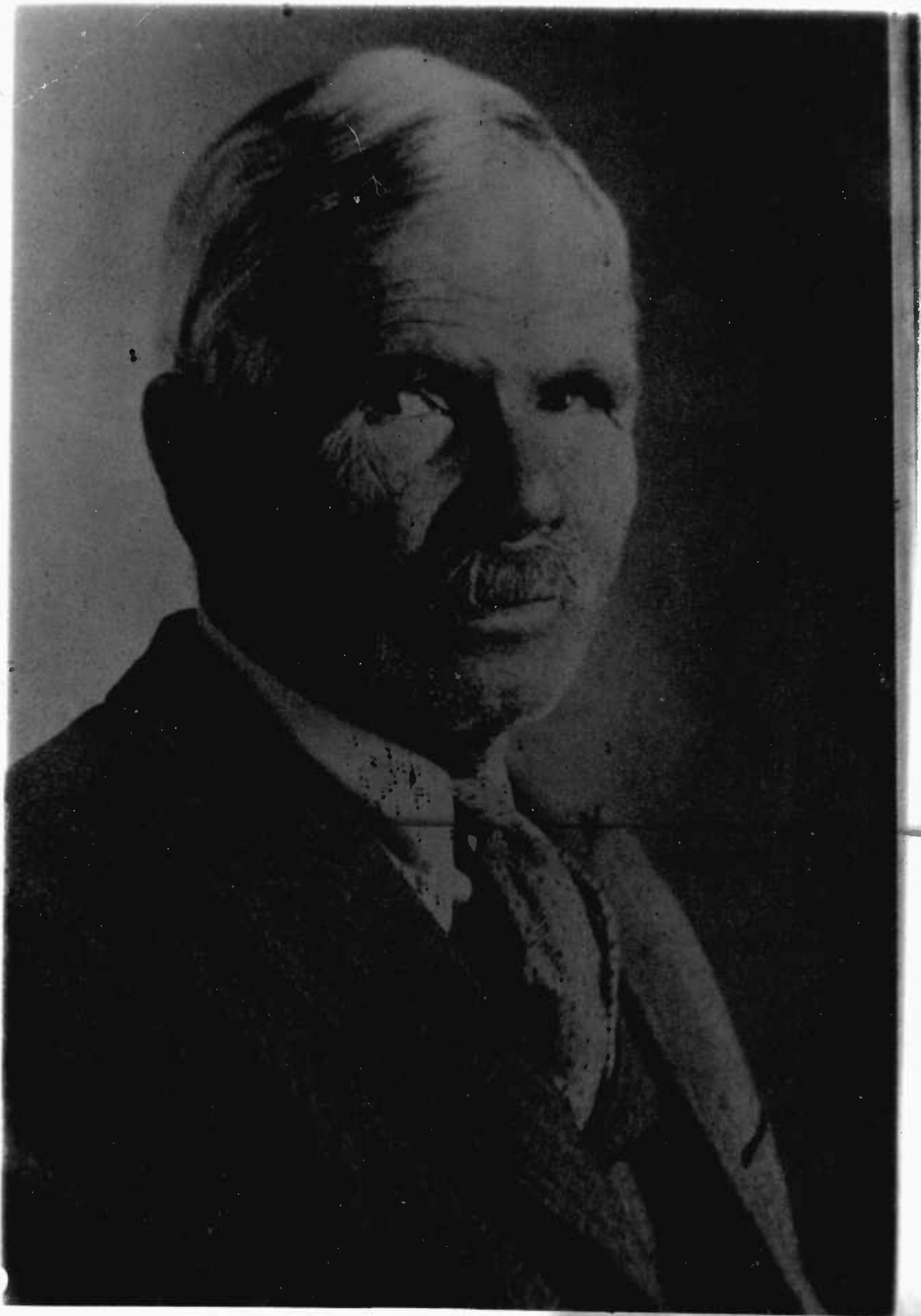
Other negroes who were well known on the Potomac were Taylor Green and Henry Branson. All of these men made good reputations on the river. Captain Collins and Captain Clark owned fine farms on the river front which are still in possession of their descendants.

In connection with the activities of Taylor Green, an interesting side light was furnished the writer by Mr. R. Johnson Colton, II, of St. Mary's County in reply to an inquiry regarding the bugeye, "Colonel R. Johnson Colton." Mr. Colton replied as follows:

"In reference to the bugeye, "Col. R. Johnson Colton," my father had the boat built for Taylor Green, a colored man. Green was a handy man around Colton's Point and bought produce up and down the river for the hotel, then run by my father and Uncle Bruce. My father esteemed Taylor so much for his honesty and faithfulness that he had the bugeye built and gave it to Taylor, who named it the "Col. R. Johnson Colton." He ran oysters each winter to Washington, D. C."

Prior to sailing the "Col. R. Johnson Colton," Taylor Green owned and sailed the sloop, "John Williams," (1880-1885), built by Captain Kenelm Cheseldine. Green was renown as the champion whistler of the area and the old-timers say that he not only whistled beautifully but also he could be heard at considerable distances. The writer's brother, Charlie, recently stated that one calm morning, when he and cousin Frank Lawrence were rowing a skiff up Canoe Neck Creek on their way to the old Oakley public school, Frank suddenly stopped rowing and said, "Listen to that fellow whistling -- that's Taylor Green, clear over on Newtown shore" (a distance of about 2 miles across St. Clement's Bay). Charlie said he listened but couldn't hear him but he didn't doubt that Frank did because Taylor "was a powerful whistler." Green lived many years in a log cabin on "Bluff Woods" at the mouth of Canoe Neck Creek. This was the last surviving log cabin in the area and was pulled down about 1911.

The "Col. R. Johnson Colton" was built at Solomons in 1886, probably by M. M. Davis, with a so-called patent stern. After passing through many hands, she was



Beverley Collins

STMA 312

Abell, Md.

GWM - 3/77