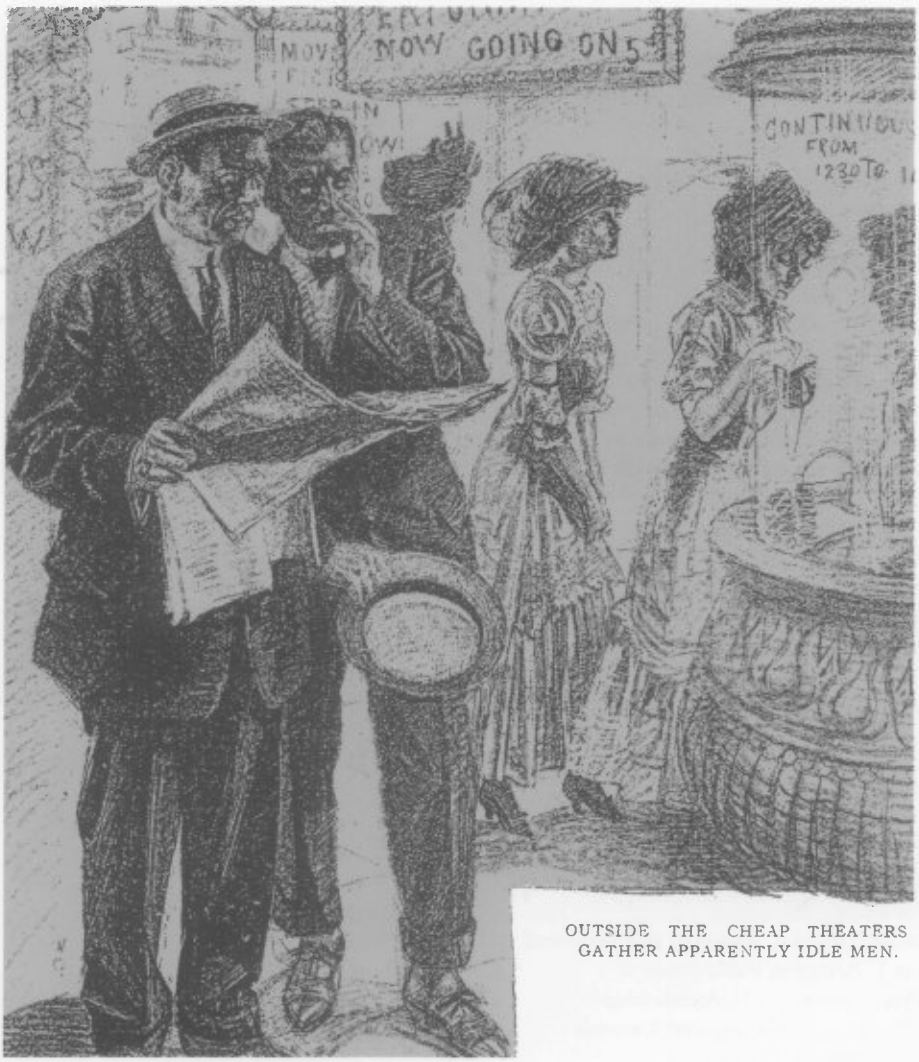
Maryland Historical Magazine



OUTSIDE THE CHEAP THEATERS GATHER APPARENTLY IDLE MEN.

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Editor's Corner: Students of the Progressive period continue to ask why it emerged when it did, how progressive it really was, why some people and not others took part in the movement, and who benefited from it. The essays in this issue of the magazine shed fresh light on Progressivism in Maryland. One of them asks why it took Baltimore—a resourceful city if ever there was one in American history—so long to undertake its modern sewer system. Two other articles closely examine documents from the period—the reports that surrounded the "rise and fall" of Maryland's turn-of-the-century prison warden and the volumes that followed a blue-ribbon panel's study of Baltimore prostitution in the early twentieth century. Careful readers will note that these essays also illustrate three quite different approaches to the writing of history: history as human-interest story or human-tragedy; political history as the resolution of structural-functional forces; social history as the "unmasking" or deconstructing of official sources. All these perspectives yield interesting (and discussable) reading.

This issue of the magazine inaugurates a new section comprised of letters to the editor. We hope this feature will encourage our audience to respond to, correct where necessary, and constructively comment on the pieces that appear in the magazine. Letters must be signed and to the point; given the limits of space, we reserve the right to shorten them as necessary. We also look forward to hearing from you.

Cover design: "Outside the Cheap Theaters Gather Apparently Idle Men." Illustration by William Oberhardt from "The Girl that Disappears: The Real Facts About the Social Problem—The Extent of the White-Slave Traffic," *Hampton's Magazine*, 25 (1910): 561. (Enoch Pratt Free Library.)

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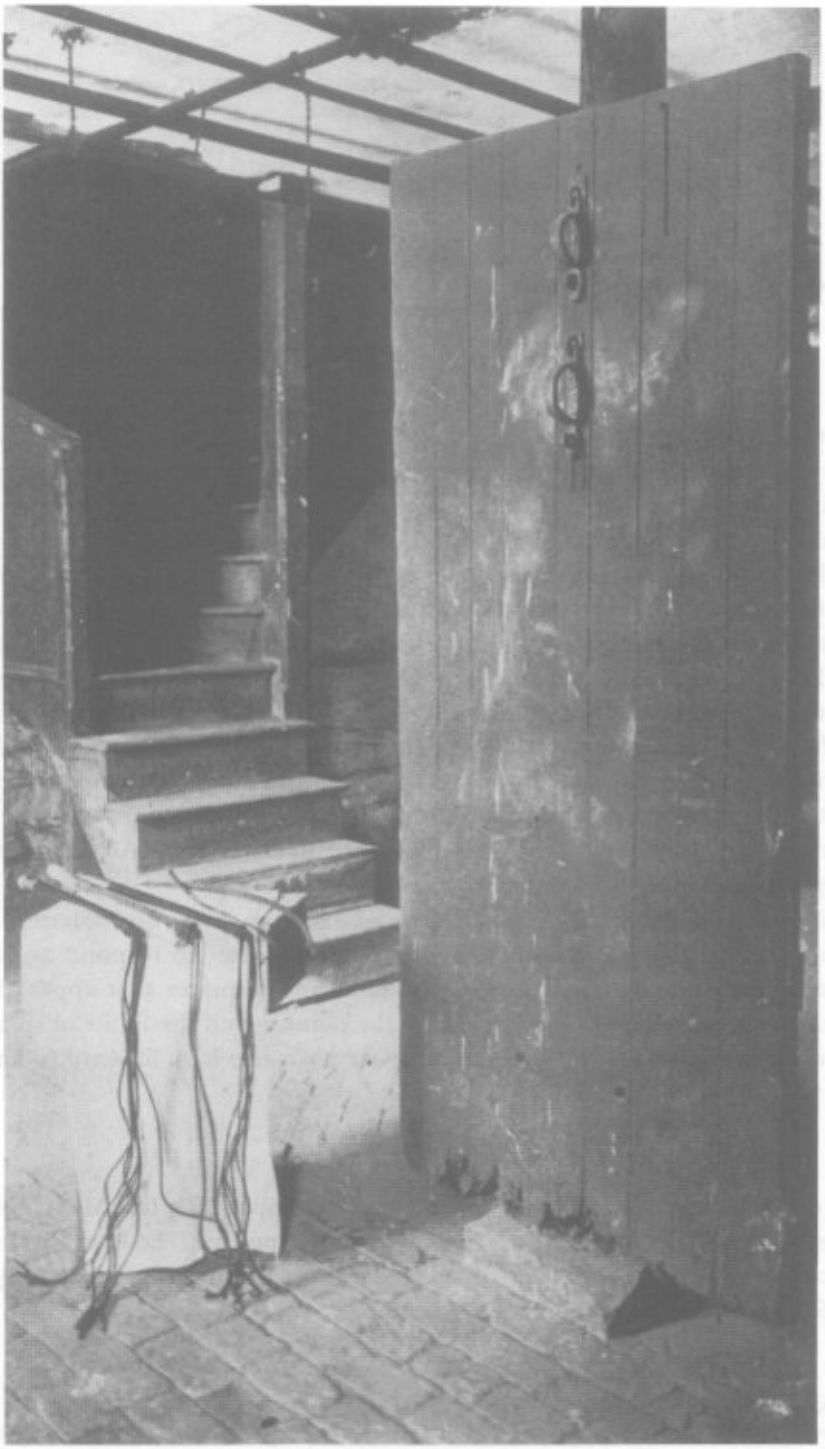


Whipping Board and "Cats" as illustrated in the 1913 *Maryland Penitentiary Penal Commission Report*. (Courtesy University of Maryland, Baltimore County.)

The Rise and Fall of Warden John F. Weyler at the Maryland Penitentiary, 1888-1912

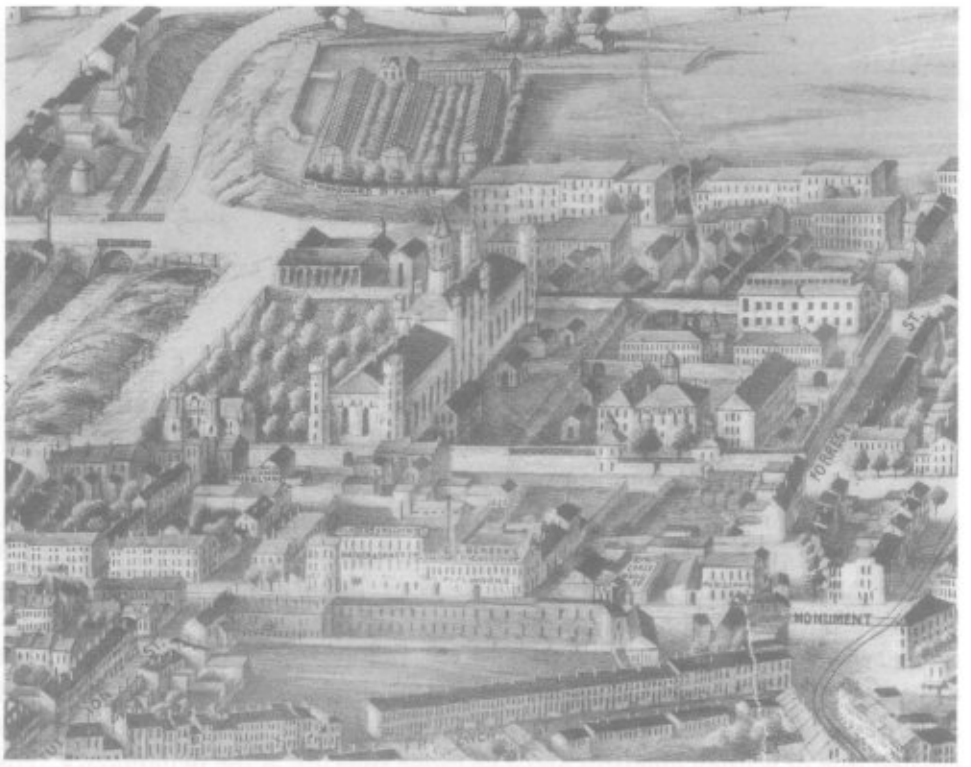
WALLACE SHUGG

"This is a walled kingdom and you know who the king is."
—Sidney Johnson, "colored" convict, testifying before the Maryland Penitentiary Penal Commission in 1912.[1]

On 31 May 1888 the president of the Baltimore City Council, John F. Weyler, was sworn in as warden of the Maryland Penitentiary.[2] He ruled there for the next twenty-four years, longer than any predecessor. During his long tenure he pushed through the construction of the massive granite penitentiary at the corner of Eager and Forrest streets in Baltimore and turned its annual operating deficits into surpluses—all the while acquiring power and prestige until at his retirement in 1912 a grateful General Assembly awarded him the specially created title of warden emeritus and a lucrative sinecure at the penitentiary. His reputation as a "model" warden was abruptly shattered less than a year later upon publication of the *Report of Maryland Penitentiary Penal Commission* (1913), charging his administration with mismanagement, cruelty, and corruption. It is a story with tragic overtones, about a man who guided the penitentiary through a crucial period in its evolution from a haphazard accumulation of nineteenth-century brick buildings into a planned modern prison with steel cell blocks and who operated it with machine-like efficiency. Ironically, this very efficiency—apparently achieved through harsh disciplinary methods and without regard to the rehabilitation of the convicts—ultimately led to his downfall and a self-imposed exile.

Born 8 February 1844,[3] Weyler was listed in the 1873 Baltimore City directory as a saloonkeeper living at 25 Brown Street, which ran along the south side of the Cross Street Market in Baltimore's 17th ward.[4] Undoubtedly the nature of his work eased his entry into the political life of this working-class community, and by 1876 he had achieved a position of considerable importance—he issued licenses for stalls as clerk of the Cross Street Market.[5]

Professor Shugg, a member of the English department at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, is writing a history of the Maryland penitentiary, 1811-1991.



Detail from E. Sachse & Co.'s 1869 *Bird's Eye View of the City of Baltimore*. The original Maryland Penitentiary complex is visible to the right of the Baltimore City Jail, located at the center. (Maryland Historical Society.)

His rise in the larger political world of Baltimore City came about through his early involvement in the Democratic party machine, whose boss, Isaac Freeman Rasin, ruled the city from the 1870s to 1895.[6] Rasin controlled the city council and picked its nominees from each ward. In October 1879, Weyler was elected to the second branch of the council from the 17th ward.[7] Unbeatable thereafter, he served on all the important standing committees, steadily gaining experience and political influence until in 1888 his colleagues named him city council president.[8] Early that same year, as he began his term, he was appointed warden of the Maryland penitentiary by Rasin's close ally, state party boss and U.S. Senator Arthur Pue Gorman.[9]

The appointment came as a surprise, and not just because of its timing. Completely innocent of prison experience, Weyler entered upon his duties, he admitted, "with some misgivings."[10] His long-time friend Frank Furst later recalled, "I thought it was a mistake and Weyler thought it was a mistake."[11] But it seems unlikely that Senator Gorman would have risked his own or his party's reputation by making a careless choice. As a successful party boss and shrewd judge of men, he must have recognized his appointee's administrative talent. Weyler's work in

the Democratic party had already earned him the reputation of being "a thoroughly practical politician"[12]—that is, one who knew how to keep the party machinery running smoothly. His rise in the city council hierarchy had also shown executive ability and leadership qualities. A forceful administrator was needed to replace the retiring warden, Gen. John W. Horn.[13] After the swearing-in ceremony on 31 May 1888, Weyler received no indoctrination from Horn other than a five-minute talk and a brief tour of the penitentiary. What Weyler saw was discouraging: "The buildings were a wreck and the discipline poor. Conditions were in a chaotic state."[14]

He did not exaggerate. Physically the penitentiary was essentially the same as pictured in the Sachse map of 1869. It occupied a four-acre site adjacent to the city jail, bounded by Truxton Street to the north, Forrest to the east, and Madison to the south. Within its twenty-foot-high walls lay a collection of brick buildings that had accumulated at random since the early nineteenth century.[15] In the upper yard, above the inner bisecting wall, were the workshops completed in 1837. In the lower yard, below the bisecting wall and fronting Madison, were the three original buildings: a square, three-story administration building (1811) flanked by two narrow wings, G dormitory (1829) to the east and B dormitory (1811) to the west, with a fourth building, C dormitory, added alongside the west wing in 1870.[16] The dormitory cells were small (three and one-half feet wide by nine feet long by seven feet high) and dungeon-like (some without windows and others with only six-inch slits), secured with iron-grated doors, having no wash bowls or toilets and furnished only with "filth buckets."[17]

Poor discipline adversely affected the penitentiary's financial health, which was already in a precarious condition. The institution was supposed to support itself by contract labor, a program still in wide use at penitentiaries throughout the nation but gradually being phased out because of labor-union opposition.[18] Under this system the state leased convict labor to private manufacturers, who then assigned prisoners a daily "task" or quota in the penitentiary shops. The system also was supposed to give convicts a chance to earn some money for themselves by exceeding the daily quota ("overtask"). Failure to reach the daily quota—either through convicts' laziness or rebelliousness (acts of sabotage were not uncommon)—meant the penitentiary operated at a loss.[19] The Davis Shoe Company recently had broken off its contract with the prison.[20]

Weyler took immediate steps to improve productivity by bringing in a new contractor, the Baltimore Boot and Shoe Company, and tightening discipline. He had prison rules revised and reprinted "so that now," he reported, "we are working under a perfect system which is rigidly enforced." He discouraged malingerers by requiring shopworkers to sign up for sick call ahead of time.[21] Prisoners who refused to work were whipped with the "cat" (cat-o'-nine-tails), as was still the practice at some other prisons in the country.[22]

Meanwhile, the antiquated facilities cried out for attention. In his first full year Weyler had inmates renovate and repaint the dormitories and shops. Now, he reported, "these old buildings present a creditable appearance." A new dining

room and kitchen boiler made it possible to give all the convicts an early breakfast, adding more time for work. Special quarters were fitted up in C dormitory for the insane, to give them "cheerful and healthy" surroundings. He renewed the plea, also made by his predecessor, for steam heat and electric lighting. He urged the renewal of the "fearfully dilapidated" boardwalks on top of the walls and the paving of the roadbeds and muddy yards with Belgian blocks "on account of their durability and cleanliness."[23]

But much more was needed, as Weyler was well aware, to match the new prison construction programs being carried out in the other older states in the East. Ours, he wrote,

> is one of the few which has held on to its antiquated Penitentiary buildings for generations, merely adding one cell house after another, with the multiplication of prisoners until to-day she has in one pile of bricks, three dormitories patched together in an unsightly heap, one reared against and overlapping the other, and shutting out effectively those elements so essential to health—light and pure air.... Further patchwork will only be a waste of money.[24]

He urged the immediate construction of a new penitentiary with modern cellhouses, designed by Baltimore architect Jackson C. Gott.[25]

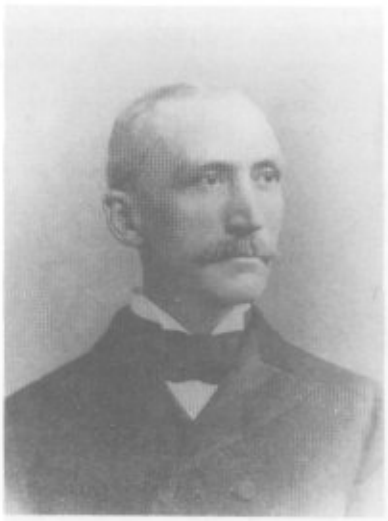
At its 1890 session the assembly already had appropriated a sum of $250,000 for the enlargement of the penitentiary northwards from the upper yard to Eager Street, but the money was to be doled out in installments of only $25,000 per year for ten years.[26] In response to Weyler's urgent appeals, the legislators in 1892 doubled the payments to $50,000 per year, thereby cutting in half the time needed for the new building program.[27]

Ground was broken for the new penitentiary buildings in 1894.[28] Two years later the large square administration building, centerpiece of the new complex, was completed, but not its two dormitory wings. Three years later the west (Eager Street) and south (Forrest Street) wings were also in place, though the latter wing stopped at only one-quarter of its planned length to Madison Street, probably because funds ran short. On 10 December 1899 the prisoners moved into their new cellhouses. The transferral was closely supervised by Weyler and took place without incident. At 10 A.M. 816 prisoners were assembled in the dining room, wearing tags with their new cell numbers and clutching their bundles of possessions. On command they marched silently across the yard in lockstep, left hands on the shoulders of the men in front, looking in their striped suits "like a waving mass of black and white bars." Little more than an hour later they were locked in their new cells, "delighted with the conveniences."[29]

Today a person looking at the grim castle-like structure, dark with the ingrained soot and dirt of nearly a century, might not believe it was once the subject of civic pride and grandiose language. Costing slightly more than a million dollars, the new penitentiary was hailed as a "massive and handsome structure" that would stand for all time as "an imperishable monument to the humanitarianism of the

View of the Fallsway and Penitentiary, 1915. (Maryland Historical Society.)

State." Its main features included the imposing central administration building, constructed in romanesque style of Port Deposit granite, rising four stories, with a three-story warden's residence on the Eager Street side. Blocks of cells—540 in the Eager Street wing and 280 cells in the Forrest Street wing—were constructed as interior steel cages unattached to the exterior walls ("a prison within a prison,... [which] makes escapes practically impossible") with enclosed balconies ("to prevent insane or dangerous prisoners from jumping over or throwing the turnkey from the upper stories"). Sliding cell doors replaced the old-style swing doors, and the cells were lighted, well ventilated, and larger (nine feet long by five and a half feet wide by eight feet high), each furnished with a large folding bunk and—for the first time in any penitentiary—a combination enamelled lavatory and flush toilet ("without crevice or crack to harbor germs") to replace the old "filth" bucket.[30] The new penitentiary's steel and granite construction supposedly ensured against fire, vermin, and escapes. A new two-story power house, built of granite in the same architectural style as the other new buildings, provided steam heat and electric power for the entire institution. A large one-story dining hall, built of brick, seated 1050.[31]



John F. Weyler at the age of fifty-five, from the 1899 *Annual Report of the Board of Directors of the Maryland Penitentiary*. (Courtesy Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore.)

The year 1899 proved to be Weyler's banner year, for besides the opening of this modern penitentiary, the *Annual Report* declared the largest surplus ever paid into the state treasury ($35,185.34) and the largest amount ($24,884.54) convicts ever earned for themselves through contract "overwork." The prison board of directors credited his "untiring efforts" toward completion of the new penitentiary and wrote that his "splendid executive work entitles him to the praise of the people of our State."[32]

As large annual surpluses continued to roll in, the directors became increasingly effusive in their praise. "The reputation of the institution, both at home and abroad, speaks volumes for his management, which it is our pleasure to endorse," they declared in 1901.[33] Five years later, they paid tribute to Weyler's "exceptional skill, ability, and fidelity" and said that despite his strict discipline and rigid economy, he "enjoys not only the respect and affection of his entire official family but the genuine love of the prisoners themselves." As evidence of the convicts' affection, the directors reprinted a description of the transfer of seven federal prisoners from Baltimore to Atlanta. They had bade goodbye to Weyler "with tears streaming down their cheeks," the newspaper said. "Nor was the usually stern Warden unaffected." After a brief farewell speech, Weyler extended his hand to each of the seven men then "turned away and, shoving his hands into his trousers pockets, walked to the window. Evidently he had a bad cold, for his eyes filled and he was obliged to use his handkerchief; and the cold must have affected his voice, for it was husky when he said another goodbye in reply to the broken goodbyes of the two colored and four white prisoners."[34]

A crescendo of praise came in 1911, which marked both the centennial of the penitentiary and Weyler's last full year as warden. Paying tribute to Weyler's twenty-four-year reign, the directors happily noted the near equality of the total surplus paid to the state ($547,918.70) and the total sum earned by prisoners for

themselves ($547,503.75) and credited the warden with "the almost scientific adjustment of the rights of both master and servant...." Calling his administration "phenomenally successful" and citing his international reputation and "the indisputable fact that he has converted the Maryland penitentiary into a model reformatory rather than a penal institution," the board recommended a special legislative enactment to retain Weyler after his impending retirement with the title of warden emeritus and a yearly salary of $3,000.[35]

The story of Weyler's retirement—really semi-retirement—clearly showed the extent of his power. He had handpicked the new warden, his assistant John F. Leonard. All other promotions or reappointments of officers and employees followed the recommendations of the warden emeritus. In addition to the honorific title he would hold the key position of purchasing agent with an annual salary of $3,000—$1,000 higher than that of the new warden.[36] At a testimonial ceremony he received a silver punch bowl inscribed with the name of every employee "as a token of affection." During his acceptance speech, his voice "was husky with emotion" and "his eyes were moist."[37]

Only a day before this sentimental scene, a newly hired guard quit at the end of his first day because he could not bear the outcries of three Negro prisoners being "cuffed up"—a punishment in which the prisoner's wrists were handcuffed together and then hauled up by rope until the tips of his shoes just cleared the floor. His story did not surface in the newspapers for nearly a month,[38] at which time an "amused" Weyler read his complaint and called the guard "a coward" for quitting his post.[39] But in the "muckraking" era, the story could not be dismissed so easily. Weyler became sufficiently concerned about aroused public opinion to write a special report (undated, but written sometime in June) to the prison board defending his disciplinary methods and revealing racial attitudes widespread at the time:

> Two-thirds of the inmates here are negroes, and many of these of the so-called Border-State type, confessedly the most difficult to handle and keep in subjection when confined.... It is seldom that a plain talk with a white prisoner is ineffectual, but there are colored men—the class that generally comes here—who cannot be made to understand anything unless it is beaten into them....

Soon afterwards, in July, Gov. Phillips Lee Goldsborough appointed a three-man commission to investigate "the methods of punishment and employment of convicts and the general administration of the Penitentiary."[40]

In charge of the inquiry was Eugene O'Dunne, a young lawyer filled with the reforming zeal of the Progressive Era.[41] Born 22 June 1875, O'Dunne graduated from the University of Maryland Law School in 1900 and soon after entered public life. Beginning in 1903, he became assistant and then deputy state's attorney, during which time he organized the Young Men's Democratic League and initiated a number of administrative, legal, and judicial reforms. Thereafter he ran for state's attorney three times unsuccessfully against candidates chosen by the powerful Democratic machine—in 1911, 1915, and 1919. Later, as a judge on the

The dining hall of the Jackson Gott designed penitentiary. This massive structure sat 1,050. As this photograph clearly illustrates, the prisoners all faced the same direction to discourage communication. (Maryland Historical Society.)

Baltimore City Supreme Bench for nearly twenty years, O'Dunne's caustic wit and colorful antics made frequent headlines. H. L. Mencken described him as seeming to have had "only an Irish frenzy to break heads—a kind of boyish delight in alarming sinners and stripping the falsefaces off the virtuous." But this was only on the surface, he added, "Deep down was a profoundly serious and earnest man—a diligent lawyer, a judge with a tremendous respect for common sense and equal justice." Throughout his long career, the reform-minded O'Dunne fought courageously against vice and corruption and political bossism.[42] Though only half Weyler's age at the time of the investigation, O'Dunne would prove a formidable adversary.

The commission[43] performed its task with thoroughness and dispatch. Along with examining every building and department of the penitentiary, it took nearly fifteen hundred typewritten pages of testimony from prison officials, guards, employees, and contractors. Its members collected over eight hundred sealed letters from the inmates regarding their treatment, allowing them to voice complaints without fear of reprisal. In addition, the commission sought the opinion of many wardens in the United States and Canada, visited eight other penal institu-

tions, and consulted various leading authorities on prison management.[44] Its report, which appeared only six months after the investigation began, had the usual minor faults of a work produced in haste. Still, it was a remarkable document, full of vivid and often unpleasant details, and clearly intended to correct the publicized view of the penitentiary and its management.

At the very outset the penal commission gave credit to Weyler for the erection of the new cellblocks and administration building. But it drew attention to the six "dark" punishment cells in the female department, measuring only four feet wide by eight feet long and eight feet high, without light or ventilation, completely bare except for washbowl and toilet, and closed by a solid steel door with a six-inch by ten-inch opening for food and drink. Moreover, it noted that one hundred male prisoners were still being housed in the dungeon-like cells in the upper four tiers of the old G dormitory, and that the use of the sixty dark punishment cells on the ground tier had been discontinued only shortly after the commission had begun its investigation.

As the commission moved on to criticize the penitentiary's management, its tone became sharper. Contrary to Weyler's statement in his last annual report ("the physical and sanitary condition of the entire Institution is almost perfect in every particular"), the commission found the cells throughout the penitentiary to be generally filthy and infested with bed-bugs everywhere, including the male and female hospital wards. "On some of the mattresses of the cells...hardly a square foot of ticking presented a surface free from the stains of blood from bedbugs." Sanitary conditions in the ancient G dormitory were "almost past belief"; the men undergoing punishment in the ground tier dark cells slept only on boards infested with bed-bugs and covered underneath with cobwebs and white rows of bed-bug eggs. And the man in charge, officer Buckley, admitted, "There are rats all through the place."

The sealed letters handed in by the prisoners abounded with angry complaints about the food, from which the commission later offered excerpts. One letter writer called the prison fare "vile and utterly unfit for human consumption." Another wrote, "The meat at most times had a bad smell so as to turn any man's stomach." Still another said, "This morning, Aug. 31, 1912 the breakfast was so bad that the men could not eat it, and the Warden [Leonard] came around [to] the shops distributing bread and molasses." One convict wrote, "I have found bugs [in the soup], but not being a naturalist, I cannot describe them with their college titles. I know one for a roach, but...[the rest] were just a bug and maggot menagerie in the soup and hash to me." Another letter writer noted some improvement in convict fare since the commission began its investigation and then asked, "Will we have to return to the old bill of fare, after you have finished your investigation?"[45]

On inspecting the kitchen, the commission found live cockroaches in the steam cauldrons, swarms of flies hovering about the uncovered garbage barrels, and no refrigeration for the meat, which soon turned rancid. Asked to identify the beef parts furnished the prisoners, the chief steward, officer Wollering, admitted he

could not distinguish a front leg from a hind leg: "I would have to see it on the cow first."

Censuring the inadequacy of medical care at the penitentiary, the commission noted—among other things—the following: for an average of one thousand inmates, one visiting physician (four hours a day), who endorsed corporal punishment ("cuffing up" or "the cat") to control the insane or feeble-minded; bug-infested hospital beds, having corn husk mattresses; medicines dispensed to the men by a convict pharmacist contrary to regulations; medicines dispensed to the women by the head matron, so ignorant that "she thought antiseptic tablets were strychnine."

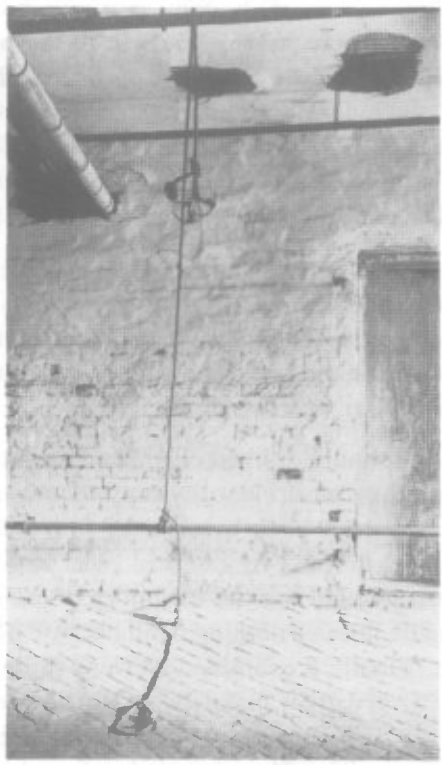
The penal commission's heaviest censure of penitentiary management came in the long section on discipline, heralded by a sardonic[46] marginal gloss: "How Sanitation Softened Discipline." Weyler had discontinued the cat-o'-nine-tails six or seven years previously, not because he thought the punishment inhumane but because he believed its use transmitted disease. When "the cat" was laid on a prisoner's back, Weyler explained to the commission, it

> of course became saturated with blood of the man, and as...[a majority of offenders] are more or less full of syphilis, I considered that to apply that cat to the next man...you would open his skin, and necessarily transmit whatever the first man had to the second ....

Another reason for discontinuing the use of the lash, he said, was that the man's back remained sore for two or three weeks and aroused "a bad spirit."

Weyler had substituted "cuffing up" for whipping as the official form of severe corporal punishment for male inmates, which the commission described in vivid detail: "Handcuffs are fastened on the wrists of the convict, a rope is attached to the chain of the cuffs, then the rope is run over a pipe close to the ceiling, and the offender's hands are drawn up taut above his head. Your Commissioners know from personal experience[47] that the pain caused by a very few minutes of this operation is excruciating." Though prison officials stated that the prisoner was never lifted clear of the ground, almost all the offenders complained about a "third pull" being used: "The first pull extends the man's arms straight above his head; the second drags him up upon his toes or upon the balls of his feet; the third pull swings him clear of the ground." To prevent the offender from climbing the rope and relieving the strain on his wrists, the third pull was most frequently inflicted by tying a rope to the man's ankles and attaching it to a nearby radiator pipe, thus leaving him suspended by his wrists and ankles—for as long as thirty to forty-five minutes, according to an admission by officer Buckley, the guard in charge of cuffing up.

The system of contract labor at the penitentiary, like that of its discipline, drew heavy censure from the commission. At the outset, it exonerated Weyler of accusations that he suppressed competition in the awarding of contracts and leased out convict labor at less than the going rate. Indeed, it paid tribute to Weyler's efficiency, saying that during his twenty-four years of management, the peniten-



For sanitary reasons, Warden Weyler substituted "Cuffing Up" for flogging. *Maryland Penitentiary Penal Commission Report*. (Courtesy University of Maryland, Baltimore County.)

tiary had stopped operating at a loss and had become "a highly organized money-making machine" that returned large annual surpluses to the state. But the state should not allow this to be done, the commission argued, by abandoning its obligation to rehabilitate its convicts: in leasing out their labor to private business firms, the state transfers its control to individuals naturally intent on obtaining cash profit with "no regard for the mental, moral or physical health of the prisoners." The contractors' employees in the penitentiary's shops were "solely interested in driving the convicts to the utmost limit." The prison guards assigned to the shops were their allies, as shown by the contractors' common practice of giving Christmas gifts (usually a $15 goldpiece) to each man. Indeed, the commission said, "the brutal and immoderate discipline at the Maryland Penitentiary may be fairly attributed to a desire to drive the convicts to nerve-wracking and excessive labor," as evidenced by the punishment records listing men cuffed up "with almost monotonous regularity" for failing to perform their assigned task.

The commission proceeded to demolish warden Weyler's defense of the contract system. First it examined his claim that the system yielded to the prisoners themselves an amount equal to the surplus paid to the state. Not only had their

earnings been "greatly exaggerated" by Weyler, it said, but he had also given "a totally false impression" of their financial benefit to the prisoners. As a case in point, the commission presented the testimony of the foundry's top earner, Negro convict Sidney Johnson. Under questioning by chairman O'Dunne, Johnson revealed that he averaged $50 per month but had to pay out $30 in "expenses"—for foundry helpers, for example, or for chewing tobacco to bribe the kitchen convict to steal extra food so he could get through the heavy work at the foundry:

> I have worked out there...until the blood would run out of my hands. You know I was in awful shape when Warden Weyler had to send and get me a pair of gloves to work with. My hands were broken open clean to the bone and the blood would come out and sand would get in there...and you have no idea how I would suffer with my hands.

As the "star man" in the foundry, Johnson had been used by Weyler as his "chief advertising medium" for the contract labor system whenever the grand jury visited the penitentiary and had even been coached by him before he talked to one investigative reporter.

Next, the commission pointed out the inequities of the contract labor system, when many convicts made little or nothing at all because of the particular kind of work assigned to them. Finally, it examined Weyler's contention that the contract labor system enabled "a very great majority" of discharged convicts to leave the penitentiary with "substantial sums" ($100 or $200) in their pockets that helped them get started in a better life. The commission found instead that of the 431 men discharged in 1911 (the year chosen by Weyler himself), that 67 percent had less than $10 to their credit. Weyler had "willfully garbled the records" and was guilty of "deliberate misrepresentation." In conclusion, "The culminating vice of the contract system is that it inevitably induces a money-making spirit on the part of the Warden." And although the commission did not mention Weyler by name, it clearly had the contract system's chief defender and advocate in mind when it spoke of how the prisoners suffered in their bodies and minds when the warden sought "the public applause that comes from turning a money surplus into the Treasury of the State." This same profit motive, the commission implied later, led Weyler to influence his colleagues on a special commission in 1906 to reject the proposed rehabilitative plan of the indeterminate sentence and its concomitant, the parole system, because it would interfere with the steady supply of convict labor in the shops.[48]

While the penal commission found no evidence to show that Weyler took any money for himself from the contract labor system, it had aired a possible motive for his defense of that system: a thirst for "public applause" or prestige. Another possible motive—the satisfaction in manipulating people and events—emerged in the story of his collusion with the contractors at the penitentiary. Asked by

chairman O'Dunne about his part in helping to defeat anti-contract labor legislation in Congress in 1900, Weyler testified on 14 September 1912 that acting as a member of a prison lobby, he paid $2500 from their fund to hire the law firm of Dudley & Michener to work against the bill; when the bill passed the House and went to the Senate, he obtained the help of his old political friend, former senator Gorman, which was given "wholly as a friendly matter and without one cent of compensation" and the bill was subsequently pigeon-holed. Pressed by O'Dunne for further details, Weyler admitted to having paid $4000 to an undisclosed party for help in the anti-prison labor fight. With still more prodding, he gave the other attorney's name: Arthur Pue Gorman, Jr., son of the former senator.

When the commission arrived at young Gorman's office the next morning, it discovered that Weyler had departed only minutes before. Through personal interviews and correspondence with Gorman, chairman O'Dunne then tried repeatedly to obtain further information but ran into a stone wall. Gorman claimed he could not remember details about the eleven-year-old transactions and that the records probably had been destroyed in the great Baltimore fire of 1904. He admitted receiving a fee of $4000 from Weyler but haughtily denied kicking back any of it to him, "as neither myself nor the firm...found it necessary to obtain clients in such a manner." He denied that his father had anything to do with defeating the anti-prison labor bill.

Here the commission paused to characterize Weyler's testimony thus far as "dissembling...grossly deceptive...misleading...artful and elusive," adding yet another illustration: his emphatic denial of any knowledge of Christmas gifts presented by the contractors to the guards assigned to their shops. But according to the shirt contractor, "It was done openly...for eleven years," and the shoe contractor testified, "We could not have turned a wheel without him [Weyler] knowing it."

Weyler had feathered his retirement nest at state expense. On 16 August 1909, toward the end of his long tenure at the prison, he had purchased a sixty-seven-acre farm near the Timonium fairgrounds.[49] From the time of its purchase, a steady stream of building materials, goods, and services flowed from the penitentiary northward to improve what Weyler proudly called Crystal Farm. First came the 2800 pounds of discarded radiator piping appropriated by the warden for making fence posts two years or so before the investigation began. When the commission questioned Weyler about this matter on 14 September 1912, it was told immediately after by the prison bookkeeper—to its "utter amazement"—that Weyler had paid him for the piping less than an hour before the interrogation. Although later questioned relentlessly by the young chairman about his cover-up, Weyler denied any wrong-doing. The warden also had appropriated the services of the penitentiary's engineer, former convict Frank Hare, who had gone out to the farm on several occasions and worked on both the windmill and the greenhouse. Summoned to testify before the commission at the penitentiary on 14 September 1912, Hare called in sick. The commission subsequently discovered that the supposedly sick man conferred with the warden at his farm the very next day, at which time he was paid for the work done there in the past.

The warden's alleged appropriation of penitentiary food waste—especially bread crumbs for his chickens—proved a large item. Weyler had "habitually" violated sections 556, 596, and 607 of article 27 of the Code of Public General Laws (1904), which prohibited perquisites and required the sale of slop and offal by the institution or their use in raising livestock for the benefit of the prisoners. A meticulously compiled list of railroad waybills showed that from 12 August 1910 to 26 July 1912, he had shipped bags of toasted bread crumbs out to his farm "in quantities ranging from 500 to nearly 3000 pounds a week," for a total of 40,000 pounds over the two-year period.

Further details of "Weyler's Toasted Bread Industry" came later on 13 September 1912 from the warden's trusty, Charles S. Henry:

> The baker puts it in the oven and toasts it. It will mould, you know, if you do not do something to it. And he browns it up a little. I used to tie the bags up at times. They generally ship it on Fridays. At times there are thirty to fifty bags of bread go out in one week.... This has been going on ever since the damn farm was out there.

However, his testimony made clear that the operation had been halted by officer Benjamin Kohler, the warden's nephew shortly after the penal commission began its investigation.

Having risen under Weyler's management to become the penitentiary's "most trusted convict" and its "general handy man," Charles S. Henry knew more than any other inmate about the alleged institutional graft and corruption and proved to be the key witness in the penal commission's investigation. At first he was reluctant to talk, eager to preserve his privileged position and fearful of retribution ("strange things happen here"). But after repeated assurances of protection and immunity by chairman O'Dunne, Henry at last broke down and told how Weyler had siphoned off manpower and materials from the penitentiary to refurbish his farm.

Working in the penitentiary along with several other convicts, Henry had constructed twenty to twenty-five chicken houses, a duck house, an engine house, and a greenhouse out of materials appropriated from the stores of contractors and of the penitentiary. Engineer Hare was "the main gazook," in charge of the project. Some of the convicts had been "pardoned out" by Weyler to serve as farmhands. According to Henry, engineer Hare would be absent from the penitentiary's powerhouse for days at a time, doing construction work on Weyler's farm. Hare also had a truck built for the farm, the wheels being cast in the foundry and the body made in the yard out of lumber. Henry's recitation of goods and furnishings sent out to the farm lasted until his memory ran dry: chicken crates, kitchen dresser and sinks, radiator piping for the greenhouse, rubber trees, storage boxes, parts for the windmill, tools, wire screens and roofing for the chicken houses, leather meat buckets, and a large table made of coffin lumber.

With some further prodding from O'Dunne, the witness agreed to tell the commission the story of graft and corruption inside the penitentiary as well,

This Atlantic City photograph postcard depicts Eugene O'Dunne as the colorful dandy he reportedly was. (Courtesy of David O'Dunne.)

including his own dealings with its officers. "My God!" he said, "I could write a bookful about it.... The whole shooting match is crooked, from beginning to end." At his post in the powerhouse, the trusty took part in Weyler's conspiracy to sabotage the electric plant. "It was a put-up job all the way through to put the Brush Electric Company out of the building and put the Gas Electric Power Company here." Also, as Weyler's trusty and therefore able to move freely about the institution, Henry stole shirts, brushes, and other items for the officers and was rewarded with food, daily newspapers, and whiskey. He stole lumber and iron from the foundry for the penitentiary's use while the guards looked on. "The men on the wall...saw me coming out of there and they stood there and laughed." From the brush contractor's shop he stole varnish, paint and turpentine for penitentiary use because his predecessor had "learned" him. "Now Charlie," he said, "if you want to hold this job you go ahead and do as I am doing. Just save all you can for the State and they [the officers] will look out for you." At Christmas time, Henry testified, the inmates were allowed to order groceries, which were delivered a week before distribution and stored in the penitentiary bathroom. "Well, of course those groceries are always short...the officers had the key to the bathroom and they would swipe those groceries out of there and then make the grocery man make them good. There was a whole damn wagon load short here once, and the sugar and condensed milk and everything was taken out."

When the penal commission called Henry up again to testify four months later, it learned that during the interval he had been deprived of his privileged position as trusty and transferred to the shirt shop. "They did not give no excuse," said Henry, and he told the commission how he had been taken out of his comfortably furnished cell, stripsearched, and locked up in the ancient G dormitory. "They said they would get me and they did."

But the commission kept its word and arranged for Henry's pardon, which was delivered 23 January 1913. That same afternoon, Henry, now a free man, repeated for the commission—at chairman O'Dunne's specific request—what he had been told by assistant engineer Foote (not a convict) upon learning that he (Henry) had testified:

> O'Dunne is not nothing.... The s— of a b—— ain't no good at all; he could not get elected State's Attorney; he could not get elected for president of a s—- house.... You will be sorry as soon as you leave because you can not get a job in the City of Baltimore if it is found out that you ever said anything against Weyler.

One last illustration of Weyler's attempts to withhold and suppress evidence came when chairman O'Dunne tried unsuccessfully by letter and telephone to obtain an inventory from Weyler of the tools on his farm. Shortly thereafter Weyler's nephew, officer Benjamin Kohler, admitted reluctantly that acting at Weyler's request, he had instructed area hardware stores not to furnish the penal commission with copies of the warden's accounts.

The commission delivered a scathing denunciation of the still-powerful warden emeritus, calling him "a man who has not been able to distinguish between property belonging to the State and that belonging to himself, and one on whom truth's virtue rests so lightly." The penitentiary cannot reform its inmates, it said, by setting such a poor example before them. "Owing to his habitual contempt for the provisions of statutory law and to the vicious conditions surrounding his administration, the integrity and welfare of the Institution imperatively demand his immediate and final elimination."[50]

Weyler's removal proved unnecessary, however. On 4 February 1913 he tendered his resignation to the board of directors, carefully pointing out to them that he had only stayed on until the penal commission had finished examining him, "for any other action I thought might be interpreted as being unmanly, if not cowardly."[51]

Three days later the penal commission filed its completed report with Governor Goldsborough, who immediately released a summary to the press. The story appeared that evening in the Baltimore *Sun* with the sensational headline "PEN PROBERS FLAY WEYLER IN REPORT—Cruelty And Law Violations Are Charged Against Him." While the newspaper account quoted extensively from the report, it omitted the commission's one favorable comment about Weyler's effectiveness in bringing to completion the new penitentiary buildings. The warden's large annual surpluses—his other source of pride—appeared as the product of a man obsessed, achieved at the expense of "the moral, mental, and physical welfare of the convicts." Then came the major reforms recommended by the commission: the abolition of the contract labor system, the adoption of the indeterminate

sentence and parole for prisoners, and the creation of a central state prison board to oversee all penal institutions—reforms that had been opposed by Weyler but already carried out by the more progressive penal institutions in the nation.[52] The next day was Weyler's sixty-ninth birthday, which "He celebrated...by coming to the city...and consulting several of his friends in reference to the answer he will make to the commission's report."[53]

His response, like the penal commission's report, was a remarkable document—but for different reasons. In a thirteen-page statement the former warden presented an artful defense based on the theme of persecution. The report, he said, was aimed at "crushing out the life of an old man who has spent his best years in caring for the unfortunate and in working for the best interests of his native State." The expected "gigantic case of graft" was not found because "John F. Weyler in his conduct of the Maryland Penitentiary for twenty-four years never had his palm tickled by a dishonest dollar." Clearly, Weyler regarded O'Dunne as his personal adversary. He referred to him over a half-dozen times in the first two pages as "the Chairman" but—as when speaking of the devil—without once mentioning his name. According to Weyler, the chairman had sent private detectives to his farm "to see what loot I had and where I kept it"; had visited the farm himself with a stenographer on a Sunday, while Weyler and his wife were entertaining guests; had sent an agent out to take an inventory of his farm property; had terrorized witnesses with threats of the grand jury; and had granted pardons to witnesses who did testify against him—namely, "Sidney Johnson, colored, a murderer, and Charles S. Henry, white, a horse thief."

After adroitly referring first to his role in the construction of the new penitentiary buildings, to his international reputation as a prison administrator, and to the large annual surpluses turned over by him to the state, he addressed himself to some of the specific charges. The bedbug problem was exaggerated by the report, he said, "though some bedbugs are there and always will be in dormitories of small cells inhabited by 1,000 men, of whom two-thirds are colored persons of the lowest type." Other charges—poor laundry work, rats in G dormitory, lack of proper refrigeration, and bad or inadequate food—he either denied or downplayed. "As to roaches, what hotel kitchen does not have them?"

However, he defended his disciplinary methods at length, claiming that bad conduct "must be nipped in the bud." To illustrate, he cited the case of "a colored convict" whom he ordered lashed (when whipping was still practiced) on two successive days—the first day for misconduct and the second day for coming to his punishment with a concealed knife. From then on, according to Weyler, the offender was a good convict and when discharged "shook my hand and thanked me," saying, "Your treatment has thoroughly reformed me; something that my father tried hard to do and couldn't." The punishment of "cuffing up" was substituted for whipping "for hygienic reasons." Female offenders were punished merely with solitary confinement—"A bad woman, especially a negress, is a worse prisoner than a bad man, because she can maintain her stubborn opposition the longer." No corporal punishment is used on them "because of their sex and the

bad ones presume upon it." After dismissing several more charges as "utterly groundless," he paused to deliver a rhetorical blast at the penal commission: "How clear it is, then, that they are mistaken in their premises, deluded as to their deductions, warped in their conclusions, utterly unreliable all around and deeply culpable in their pursuit of a man who never tried to do anything but his whole duty!" This passage is impressive for its command of language, all the more so considering Weyler's limited formal education. In the final pages Weyler defended his appropriation of bread crumbs, saying "I did not believe that it was a crime to save goods of no commercial value.... Since the wickedness of it has been made plain to me [by the penal commission], the crumbs go once more into the sewer." His last paragraph returned to the theme of persecution and his (once again) nameless adversary: "One thing is certain.... Every act, every query, every inflection of the voice of the chairman of the inquisitors showed to me and others that there was a conviction of me before the trial and that the effort of the inquiry was 'to get Weyler.'"[54]

Weyler's spirited reply to the charges against him was backed to the hilt by the penitentiary board of directors, of which his old friend Frank Furst was president.[55] The board called the O'Dunne report "a sweeping and unqualified arraignment of John F. Weyler," based "almost exclusively" on charges made by convicts, thereby depriving Weyler of "a square deal." Members of the penal commission, according to the board, undertook their investigation "with their minds already inflamed, their judgment already warped and with the purpose to apply to their work certain standards and measurements, based upon purely theoretical and sentimental premises." The board then turned to some of the specific charges. "The entire sum of the so-called grafting of Mr. Weyler is trivial," it said, compared to the riches he could have gained by accepting kickbacks from the contractors who employed the convicts. No real graft was found, said the board. A man with Weyler's opportunities "does not content himself with the petty pilfering of garbage and useless junk"—his use of breadcrumbs and discarded piping and his acceptance of the services of employees and of convicts were "merely improprieties." The board criticized the commission's handling of its convict witnesses, all but accusing its members—and chairman O'Dunne, in particular—of "the kind of coaching...of lawyers who suborn witnesses to commit perjury." Then, like Weyler, the board downplayed the charge of unsanitary conditions at the penitentiary and defended the painful punishment of "cuffing up" as necessary in dealing with the convicts, "many of them...desperate characters." In fact, said the board, discipline at the penitentiary was so undermined by the commission's ongoing investigation "that the use of the cat-o'-nine tails had to be resumed as the only adequate punishment for offenses such as murderous assaults by convicts upon guards and fellow convicts."[56] Other charges the board either denied or called matters of opinion. In its concluding statement, the board blamed the penal commission for "setting in the public pillory, labeled with charges of falsehood, graft and cruelty a faithful public official, who was for more than a score of years at the head of the Maryland Penitentiary ...."

Both the statements of Weyler and of the penitentiary board were headlined by the local press in a way that surely must have been heartening to the embattled former warden: "PENAL REPORT FLAYED," read one, while another declared somewhat misleadingly, "MR. WEYLER EXONERATED."[57] It was, of course, only the penitentiary board that had exonerated Weyler. It was the best he could expect, short of an acquittal in a court of law.

In fact, Weyler by now had little reason to fear that he would be prosecuted. His departure had already satisfied the commission, and the state's attorney had no evidence that would justify action.[58]

Nevertheless the man once hailed as the penitentiary's "model warden" suffered severely from charges of mismanagement and cruelty. He lost no time in putting Crystal Farm up for sale, disposing of it in April 1913.[59] He then left Maryland for parts unknown, never to return.[60]

Weyler's self-imposed exile is reminiscent of tragedy and invites a search for a tragic flaw, a somewhat difficult undertaking because of the seventy-five year interval and because he left behind no personal papers that might reveal his innermost thoughts. Basically, Weyler's flaw seems to have been a craving for power and prestige, which paradoxically was served by an undeniable talent—his administrative skill. He had found the penitentiary in 1888 ailing financially and its buildings in poor condition. Within a few years he had it turning out ever-increasing surpluses and had implemented a building program that resulted in the magnificent granite pile at the corner of Eager and Forrest streets. His success had earned him not only "public applause" but apparently allowed him to dominate the board of directors and become a "king" within the walls of the penitentiary.

His single-minded pursuit of this success, however, apparently led him to resist major prison reforms taking place across the nation.[61] He had not only lobbied against anti-contract labor laws in 1900, but he had fought the rehabilitative plan of the indeterminate sentence and parole system proposed for the penitentiary in 1906 because he believed it would interfere with the steady supply of convict labor in the workshops. Even his alleged cruelty seems to have arisen out of his overzealous management of the contract labor system at the penitentiary. O'Dunne had paid tribute to Weyler's productivity. But he had done this through "brutal and immoderate discipline," primarily by "cuffing up" those inmates who failed to perform their assigned daily task, as extensively documented in the prison's punishment records.[62] Weyler, then, appears to have regarded the inmates merely as objects to be manipulated, as cogs in his penitentiary machine. Here it is important to remember that he had substituted the punishment of "cuffing up" for whipping not for humane but for practical reasons. The blood-soaked lash could transmit disease; it also left a man with a sore back for two or three weeks, which aroused "a bad spirit in him." In either case, it reduced a man's productivity.

Although semi-retired at the time of the investigation, Weyler undoubtedly still exerted a powerful influence on the administration of his hand-picked successor, Warden Leonard. This remaining power ended with his final resignation. And although the commission failed to turn up a "gigantic" case of graft, it had exposed to public view its charges against him of mismanagement and attempts to subvert the investigation. Now without power or prestige, Weyler may well have thought the time had come for him to leave the scene of his former triumph. It could not have been easy for him to give up his retirement home, Crystal Farm, and sever all his old social and political connections in the City of Baltimore. The investigation—headed by a man young enough to be his son—must have been a particularly galling experience and dealt a heavy blow to his self-esteem.

In later life O'Dunne claimed the investigation had made the penitentiary "a better place to live in," that it "introduced the newfangled 'prison reform' to the Commonwealth of Maryland."[63] Indeed, that same year penitentiary discipline eased considerably. After inspecting the management of sixteen other prisons in the United States, Warden Leonard (whom the state kept at his post) abolished the lock-step and cropped haircut, and changed the prisoners' clothing from stripes to dark gray. Instead of the dark cell, whipping, and "cuffing up," offenders were disciplined with a bread and water diet, loss of all privileges, and forfeiture of earned "good" time (days off sentence for good behavior). "In extreme cases," the prisoner was locked in his cell and compelled "to stand at the door, without tension, during working hours." Prisoners were now allowed to talk in the dining room "in a low tone," to smoke at certain hours, and to take exercise daily in open air. Parole became available for prisoners in 1914. By 1916 they were classified according to their behavior into three grades and granted corresponding privileges. At this time the board of directors gave credit to Leonard for having introduced "a new dispensation of humane and liberal treatment" of prisoners during the previous four years.[64]

The O'Dunne panel had urged the abolishment of the board of directors and the creation of a central state prison board to oversee all penal institutions, a recommendation in part aimed at preventing future wardens at the penitentiary from dominating the board of directors and acquiring too much power. In the fall of 1916, control of the penitentiary passed from the board of directors to the newly created State Board of Prison Control.[65] Never again could a warden dominate the affairs of the institution as Weyler had done. Maryland had at last joined the nationwide movement for the centralization of prison control at the state level.[66]

The contract system of labor—called by the penal commission "the root of all evils" at the penitentiary—did not disappear but did change for the better. A more liberal policy of managing prisoners working in the shops allowed them to earn more money for themselves. This policy was preferable "to win[ing] applause because of larger apparent returns to the Treasury."[67] In 1916 and 1918 two legislative acts authorized the State Board of Prison Control to eliminate the contract labor system and find other ways of using convict labor, including work on state roads, bridges, and quarries. But difficulties arose. All the contracts had

not expired, and some of the contractors insisted on their full quota of convict workers. Moreover, outside work tended to be seasonal, and the number of prisoners required by the State Roads Commission was always uncertain.[68] The contract labor system lingered on at the penitentiary until the onset of the depression in the 1930s, when it was gradually eliminated in Maryland and all other states by the passage of three increasingly restrictive federal statutes.[69]

Though not all of the O'Dunne panel's reforms could be carried out immediately, Weyler's departure had clearly opened the way for a more enlightened penal philosophy at the penitentiary, one that was more in keeping with its magnificent modern buildings and that also allowed Maryland to join the ranks of progressive prison administrations across the nation.

NOTES

1. Maryland Penitentiary Penal Commission, Stenographic Record of Testimony (1912), 1:285, Maryland Room, Enoch Pratt Free Library. Hereafter cited as Penal Commission Testimony.

2. Baltimore *Sun*, 1 June 1888.

3. According to the Baltimore *American*, 9 February 1913, Weyler celebrated his sixty-ninth birthday on the previous day. However, the 1880 census, taken 8 June, listed him as being aged thirty-nine—that is, born in 1841. This appears to have been a clerical error.

4. His background was not only humble but somewhat obscure. A search of the sacramental books of churches in the vicinity has turned up no record of his baptism or of his marriage to his wife, Louisa (listed in the 1880 census as being aged thirty-three). Having been born in 1841 or 1844, Weyler could have served in the Civil War but is not listed in Daniel Hartzler's comprehensive *Marylanders in the Confederacy* (Silver Spring, Md.: Family Line, 1986) or in L. Allison Wilmer's *History of the Maryland Volunteers Civil War* (Baltimore: Guggenheimer, Weil & Co., 1899).

5. WPA File, 1876 document #2406, "Market Stall," Baltimore City Archives. On 1 May 1879, Weyler issued a license slip (document #524-C) to his wife, Louisa, for a permanent stall, presumably—with his growing political importance—in a good location inside the market house, not outside under the eaves.

6. In 1912 Frank Furst, president of the board of penitentiary directors, told the Maryland penitentiary penal commission that he had first known Weyler forty years previously, when the Democratic party was being formed in Baltimore City (Penal Commission Testimony, 1:205). The formation of the Democratic machine in Baltimore and rise of Rasin are described by James B. Crooks in *Politics & Progress: the Rise of Urban Progressivism in Baltimore 1895-1911* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), pp. 6-13.

7. WPA File, document #159, "Judges of Election," Baltimore City Archives. According to former city archivist Tom Hollowak, second branch members of the council were junior to those designated first branch. The distinction between the two branches was somewhat vague, being originally based on property qualifica-

tions, but in any case by Weyler's time a member could move easily from one branch to the other.

8. *Officers of the Corporation* (1888), p. 6. At the time, city council presidents were elected not by the public but by the other members of the council.

9. For Weyler's appointment by Senator Gorman, see Frank Furst in Penal Commission Testimony, 1:205. On the alliance of Rasin and Gorman see Crooks, p. 11, and John R. Lambert in *Arthur Pue Gorman* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1953), pp. 31-37.

10. Annual Report of the Warden, 1888, p. 2, Maryland State Archives.

11. Penal Commission Testimony, 1:205.

12. Frank R. Kent, *The Story of Maryland Politics* (Baltimore: Thomas and Evans Co., 1911), pp.77, 117.

13. John Watt Horn (1834-97) served in the Union army and for a total of eleven years was warden of the Maryland penitentiary (from 16 May 1867 to 15 May 1872 and from 4 May 1882 to 30 May 1888). See *The Biographical Cyclopedia of Representative Men of Maryland and District of Columbia* (Baltimore: National Biographical Co., 1879), pp. 411-12.

14. *Sun*, 2 May 1912.

15. John H. B. Latrobe, *Picture of Baltimore* (Baltimore: F. Lucas, 1832), p. 86, and J. C. Myers, *Sketches on a Tour through the Northern and Eastern States, the Canadas & Nova Scotia* (Harrisonburg, Va.: J. H. Wartmann & Bros., 1849), p. 35.

16. Both the sixty-foot-square administration building and its adjoining west wing (B dormitory) were completed and ready to receive the first convicts in 1811 (Thomas W. Griffith, *Annals of Baltimore* [Baltimore: Printed by William Woody, 1824]), pp. 197-98. The east wing (G dormitory) was completed in 1829, the workshops in 1837 (*Testimony Taken Before the Joint Commission of the Legislature on the Penitentiary* [Annapolis, 1837]), pp. 9, 12. The fourth building (C dormitory) was added alongside the west wing in 1870 (J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Baltimore City and County* [Baltimore, 1881]), p. 203.

17. *Annual Report of the Board of Directors* (1913), p. 10. Hereafter *Board of Directors Report*.

18. Blake McKelvey, *American Prisons: A History of Good Intentions* (Montclair, N.J.: Patterson Smith, 1977), pp. 250-51.

19. The contract labor system was introduced at the Maryland Penitentiary in the mid-nineteenth century but did not earn enough for the institution to become fully self-supporting until the third year of Weyler's administration. See *Report of the Maryland Penitentiary Penal Commission* (Baltimore: State of Maryland, 1913), appendix B, p. 311. Hereafter *Penal Commission Report*.

20. *Board of Directors Report* (1887), p. 3.

21. *Board of Directors Report* (1889), pp. 11-12, 30-1.

22. McKelvey, *American Prisons*, p. 189. In the nearby state of Delaware, flogging persisted longer than in any other state, over 1600 whippings being administered between 1900 and 1945 (Robert Caldwell, *Red Hannah: Delaware's Whipping Post*, [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1947], p. 1).

23. *Board of Directors Report* (1889), pp. 9, 12. Nearly a hundred years later, some of the blocks remain in place after a contractor making renovations lost money trying to remove them (Capt. William Jednorski, Maryland Penitentiary, 4 November 1987).

24. *Board of Directors Report* (1893), pp. 10-11. For a summary of the new prison construction programs in the other eastern states, see McKelvey, *American Prisons*, pp. 176-82.

25. Jackson C. Gott (1828-1909), F.A.I.A., was a life-long citizen of Baltimore, who planned both public and private buildings, among them the Johnson Building on North Howard Street and a structure for the Crown Cork and Seal Company at Highlandtown. See Henry F. Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*, (Los Angeles, Calif.: New Age Publishing Co., 1956, p. 242). Withey strangely omits Gott's most conspicuous achievement, the new Maryland penitentiary.

26. *Laws of the State of Maryland* (1890), chs. 200 and 202, pp. 217, 229.

27. In the *Board of Directors Report* (1892), Weyler thanked the assembly for speeding up the payment of the appropriated money, as well as for following his recommendations regarding the transfer of insane convicts to asylums in the area and adoption of the (then) new Bertillon system of identifying habitual criminals (p. 14).

28. *Board of Directors Report* (1899), p. 25.

29. *Sun*, 11 December 1899.

30. McKelvey, *American Prisons*, p. 181. While an undoubted improvement over the old "filth" buckets, these flush toilets would prove a source of future trouble. Rebellious prisoners could stop up the toilets and flood their cells and the adjoining walkways on each tier. Over the years, the steel framing has become badly rusted and no longer able to support the heavy slate slabs of the walkways. In the fall of 1988, three slabs on a third tier walkway in the south wing broke through their rusted steel framing and fell to the tier below, a structural failure brought on by inmates purposely "jumping up and down in cadence, creating additional stress" (*Sun*, 3 November 1988).

31. *Board of Directors Report* (1899), pp. 20-38, 40-1, 43.

32. Ibid pp. 12, 6-7.

33. *Board of Directors Report* (1901), p. 5.

34. *Board of Directors Report* (1906), pp. 6-8.

35. *Board of Directors Report* (1911), pp. 6-7.

36. To Weyler's credit, as his own retirement approached, he carefully groomed Leonard for the job over a two-year period, thus ensuring a smooth change of command (*Sun*, 2 May 1912). He had known Leonard at least from the time of their service together on the city council (*Officers of the Corporation*, 1888, p. 6.).

37. *Sun*, 1 May 1912.

38. The ex-guard, Harley Warfield, age forty, had gone back to oystering on the Eastern Shore. He was finally tracked down by a cub reporter from the Baltimore *News*, which then used his story "to start a crusade for a political housecleaning and correction of the prison's methods of punishment and of handling prison labor"

(William Engle, "Torture in the Big House," Baltimore *American*, 14 March 1948, vertical file, Maryland Room, Enoch Pratt Free Library). The editorial policy of the newspaper had been established by former owner Charles H. Grasty, one of Baltimore's leading Progressives (Crooks, *Politics & Progress*, p. 227).

39. *Sun*, 26 May 1912.

40. *Penal Commission Report*, p. 3 and appendix C, pp. 328-29.

41. O'Dunne's opposition to political machines and bossism is everywhere apparent in his scrapbook and in his unpublished autobiography, "Mr. Jurisprudence" (1938), both owned by his son David O'Dunne of Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania. The first newspaper clipping (*Sun*, 19 April 1911) in his scrapbook contained Grasty's remarks on "The Modern Newspaper." Grasty expounded at length on the duty of a newspaper to remain independent of politics and not help the "spoils-hunting and corruption" of "unclean and dishonorable" party machines and bosses. In his autobiography, O'Dunne told reporters after his first defeat by the Democratic machine candidate in 1911, "What we need in public life today is not so much a new party, as intellectual honesty and intellectual independence" (p. 39). Elsewhere he characterized himself as a "reform judge" (p. 2) and as a person who "did not mix well with the chemistry of organization politics" (p. 73).

42. See H. H. Walker Lewis, "Baltimore's Judicial Bombshell—Eugene O'Dunne," *American Bar Association Journal*, 56 (1970): 650-55, and O'Dunne's obituary (*Evening Sun*, 30 October 1959).

43. The other two members were Redmond C. Stewart and George L. Jones, described by O'Dunne in his autobiography only as "both citizens of good standing, one a lawyer, the other a social worker" (p. 121). Stewart (1873-1936) received his law degree from the University of Maryland in 1894 and practiced law in the local firm of Stewart & Pearre. See Matthew Page Andrews, *Tercentenary History of Maryland* (4 vols.; Baltimore: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1925), 2:43-44.

44. These authorities included Dr. Orlando F. Lewis, General Secretary of the New York Prison Association and the future author of the pioneering historical study *The Development of American Prisons and Prison Customs, 1776-1845* (Prison Association of New York, 1922; repr. Montclair, N. J.: Patterson Smith, 1967).

45. *Penal Commission Report*, pp. 117, 21, 118, 120, 108.

46. Written by O'Dunne, who edited the material for publication ("Mr. Jurisprudence," p. 136).

47. Only O'Dunne had himself cuffed up, "to see how it felt" (see "Mr. Jurisprudence," p. 130).

48. *Penal Commission Report*, pp. 208, 212, 216.

49. Court Record 30, 747, deed #410, folio 365, Maryland State Archives.

50. The *Penal Commission Report* continued for 135 more pages (pp. 206-341): Part VI (pp. 207-224), "The Indeterminate Sentence;" Part VII (pp. 225-230), "General Recommendations;" Part VIII (pp. 231-243), "Summary of Findings and Recommendations;" plus miscellaneous exhibits and appendices.

51. *Penal Commission Report*, appendix E, pp. 240-41.

52. See McKelvey, *American Prisons*, p. 255.

53. Baltimore *American*, 9 February 1913.

54. *Statements of the Board of Directors of the Maryland Penitentiary and John F. Weyler, Warden Emeritus, In Reply to the Report of Maryland Penitentiary Penal Commission to Hon. Phillips Lee Goldsborough, Governor of Maryland* (Baltimore, 1913), pp. 20-32.

55. Weyler's letter and the board's statement were published together; see above.

56. Although discontinued at the penitentiary later that same year, whipping was still used at the city jail for wifebeaters, in accordance with a law that dated from colonial times and remained in force until April 1953. The last whipping in Maryland took place in Anne Arundel County in 1948 (Harry E. Barnes and Negley K. Teeters, *New Horizons in Criminology* [3rd ed.; Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1959], p. 290).

57. *Sun*, 6 March 1913 and *American*, 6 March 1913.

58. *American*, 9 February 1913.

59. Court Records 30, 747, deed No. 410, folio 365, Maryland State Archives.

60. The Baltimore City directory for 1914 listed Weyler as living at Walnut and Second avenues, Rognel Heights (just north of the present-day Edmondson Village Shopping Center). Thereafter he is not to be found in any of the city directories. A search at the Maryland State Archives has turned up no record of his will ever having been probated.

61. During this period, the movement for the indeterminate sentence and parole for convicts was spreading throughout the country, and by 1915 these reforms had become established in all state prisons except a few in the South (McKelvey, *American Prisons*, pp. 159, 241, 245-47).

62. *Penal Commission Report*, Exhibit D.

63. O'Dunne, "Mr. Jurisprudence" [1938], p. 140.

64. *Board of Directors Report* (1913), pp. 8, 14 and *Board of Directors Report* (1916), pp. 7 and 12, and Robert H. Gault, "The Parole System as a Means of Protection," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 5 (1915): 800.

65. *Penal Commission Report*, p. 228 and *Board of Directors Report* (1916), p. 6.

66. McKelvey, *American Prisons*, pp. 239-40.

67. *Board of Directors Report* (1916), p. 5

68. *Second Annual Report of the State Board of Prison Control* (1917/18), pp. 5-8.

69. On the Hawes-Cooper Act in 1929 (in effect 19 January 1934), the Ashurst-Sumners Act in 1935, and an act of 14 October 1940, see Barnes and Teeters, *New Horizons in Criminology*, p. 534.

The Politics of Urban Expansion: Baltimore and the Sewerage Question, 1859-1905

CHARLES C. EUCHNER

In the spring of 1905 Baltimoreans took part in one of their greatest public debates. Voters considered three referenda for improvement of the city's built environment, the most important and expensive of which permitted a $10 million bond issue to build a municipal sewer system.[1] The campaign marked a period of sudden public activity, highlighted by the downtown rebuilding efforts that followed the Great Fire of February 1904. Politicians and neighborhood associations held public rallies. Newspapers described complicated financing schemes and printed pieces explaining "What It Means to Women." Ministers exhorted their congregations. Many landlords and managers ordered tenants and workers to vote for the loans. No major organization publicly opposed the referenda. Senator Isador Raynor, a powerful figure in the city's Democratic Party, declared that:

> If these loans are rejected we cut loose from every progressive city in the Union and proclaim not only to our own people, but to every stranger who visits our gates and has business interests in our midst, that we have reached a stage of completion and that we do not propose to take a single step that will improve our environment or promote our success.[2]

All the referenda carried, the sewerage measure winning by the largest margin, 37,177 to 25,253. Within months Mayor E. Clay Timanus appointed a commission that decided on a plan of dual and connected sewers, one for storm water and one for human and industrial wastes, and began planning a sewage treatment plant on the Back River. Over the next eleven years, as the system took shape underground, city officials posed for group pictures with automobiles and buggies inside huge drain pipes. Visitors came from all over the world to inspect not only the emerging "city beneath the city" but also Baltimore's up-to-date sewerage plant.

The enthusiasm of 1905 was a stark contrast to the city's sluggish movement on sewers the previous four decades. Almost every major city in the world had built a comprehensive waste disposal system, but Baltimore balked.[3] At a time when

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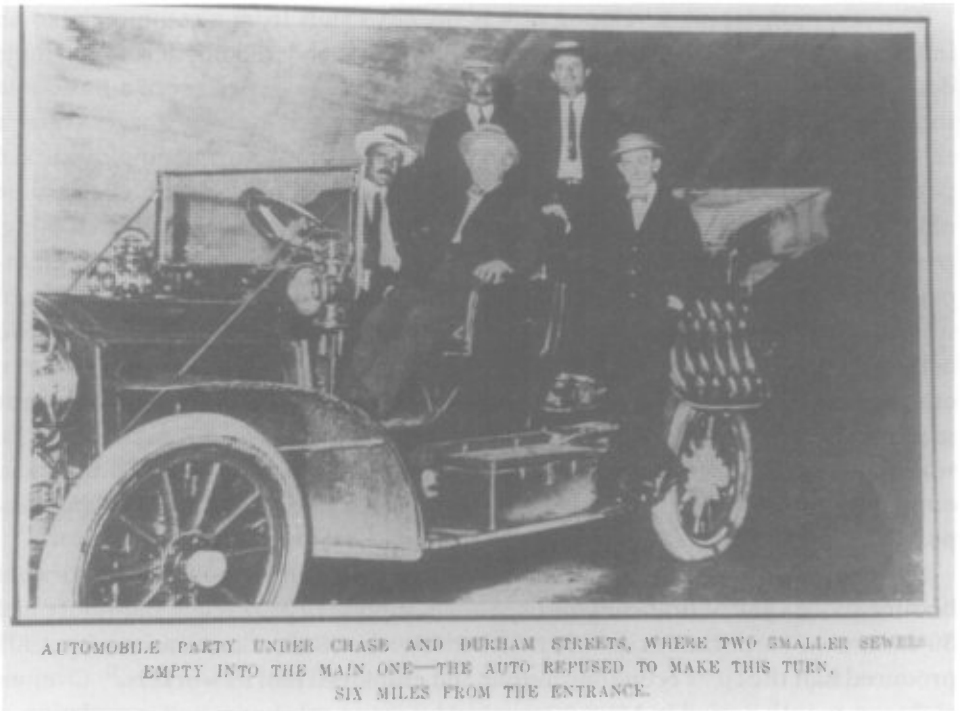


AUTOMOBILE PARTY UNDER CHASE AND DURHAM STREETS, WHERE TWO SMALLER SEWERS EMPTY INTO THE MAIN ONE—THE AUTO REFUSED TO MAKE THIS TURN, SIX MILES FROM THE ENTRANCE.

Automobile Party Under Chase and Durham Streets, Where Two Smaller Sewers Empty into the Main One—the Auto Refused to Make this Turn, Six Miles from the Entrance, photograph by Mrs. Sadie Miller for an article "In the Sewers of Baltimore." (*Leslie's Illustrated Weekly,* 16 September 1909.)

economic expansion required cities to offer businesses modern infrastructure, Baltimore rejected proposals for a city-wide system by three public commissions (in 1859, 1881, and 1897) and one private philanthropy (1893). It is a puzzle why Baltimore, a famously resourceful community in the early nineteenth century, later proved so sluggish on so important a civic issue.

As the twentieth century approached, explosive growth in population and economic production put pressure on Baltimore to improve its infrastructure—including construction of a city-wide sewerage system. Baltimore's position on the strategic Chesapeake Bay and the construction of railroads to key American midwestern markets already positioned the city to import and export raw materials and finished products to markets as varied as South America, Western Europe, and the American South and Midwest, as well as the rest of Maryland. Baltimore improved from the fifth to the third most active foreign trade center in the United States between 1870 and 1900 with an increase in commerce from $33 million to $130 million.[4]

The most important development was the city's shift from a commercial to an industrial economy. Between 1870 and 1900, although it did not develop a single dominant industry like Detroit or Pittsburgh, Baltimore experienced a three-fold increase in the number of manufacturing interests and factory workers, and a six-fold increase in capital investment.[5] By 1890 manufacturing employed 38.6 percent of the labor force, and the value of manufactured goods exceeded the value of foreign trade for the first time.[6] Baltimore became a national leader in clothing, particularly men's shirts, as well as iron and steel production.[7] The size of enterprises and the amount of resources they used grew dramatically. The number of workers employed at an average firm increased from about twelve to twenty-two between 1880 and 1900. H. Sonneborn and Company, a clothing manufacturer, employed 2,500 workers in an eight-floor building in 1902, while two other shirt manufacturers employed a total of 2,600 workers. The Sparrows Point steel works, with four blast furnaces, a Bessemer plant, rail mill, and steel shipbuilding plant, employed 2,000 workers. Matthai, Ingram and Company, a tinware plant, employed 1,200 workers, as did the Martin Wagner Company, a canning concern.[8]

Baltimore previously thrived on home-grown, relatively immobile industries but became more a site of branches for enormous, mobile firms. While Baltimore had 39 industrial corporations in 1881, it had 200 in 1895. Corporations by 1905 produced half the city's economic output and employed half its workers.[9] Over an eighteen-month period in 1898-99 marked by econo-mic boom and speculation, a host of national firms took over Baltimore firms. Baltimore's financial system shifted also from small, neighborhood concerns to large city-wide firms. In the years after the Civil War, Baltimore boasted 1,600 neighborhood building associations with an average capitalization of $100,000 to $200,000. Only 15 of 710 association officials were affiliated in any way with the city's major banks. As the century passed, a small number of the associations gained hegemony over the home-financing business; by the 1904-14 period, six associations accounted for half of the residential financing.[10]

In short, Baltimore was becoming part of a national and even international economy. The city had to compete with other cities to attract and retain capital, and one way to do this was to provide municipal services like a sewerage system. Businessmen told civic leaders they would not locate in Baltimore until sewage and other improvements were made in the city's physical plant.[11] The Baltimore *Sun* captured the urgency of attracting outside businesses:

> Baltimore now wants outside capital to be critical, for she knows that...an underlying bond or a strong investment is not lessened in value by reason of speculative manipulators.... Baltimore knows she has something to offer capital that she is not afraid of.... Baltimore wants more influential business connections....[12]

This civic appeal at once took a defensive and an aggressive posture; it suggested a certain awareness of Baltimore's growing dependency within the new national economy.

Perhaps even more than increased economic activity, the sheer rise in population boosted Baltimore's demand for services such as water and sewerage. In the early part of the nineteenth century, the city's population stood at around 25,000. But a 25 percent growth rate per decade changed the city's makeup. By 1905 600,000 persons lived in Baltimore, and civic leaders expected a population of one million in the early twentieth century.

A quantitative analysis of Baltimore between 1900 and 1930 shows a strong correlation between population levels and the city's operating expenditures. The study says in part: "As citizens had more money to spend, the demand for certain items, including urban services, increased. Over the years the growth of expenditures did exceed population growth...."[13] As Baltimoreans increased disposable income, they were more willing to spend lavishly on bathing facilities and water closets, which increased waste water.

In its early years, when wells and other local sources supplied the city's water needs, Baltimore used three to five gallons of water daily per capita. But with the introduction of piped-in water, usage skyrocketed so that by 1890 the city used ninety-four gallons per capita each day.[14] Water use became more or less automatic and unconscious. Water and wastes make up the "metabolism" of modern cities, with industries accounting for one-half of the inputs and outputs.[15] As the city relied more on large-scale industry, wastes multiplied.[16]

The city expanded its water supply with the construction of the $4 million Gunpowder facility in 1881, the $1.5 million Lake Clifton reservoir in 1886, and the $2 million Annex System in 1894. In the boom years of 1866-73 production of garbage, dirt, and sewage increased by 40 percent.[17] In the five-year period starting in 1900, the city issued 288,858 permits for cesspool cleaning, as well as an increasing number of rebukes to businesses and residents for failing to dispose of wastes properly.[18] In the absence of storm sewers, winter runoff into streets and alleys froze, creating more frequent and urgent reports of ice blocking the city's 430 miles of streets and 115 miles of alleys. Ice blocks impeded the movement of business vehicles and firemen trying to get to the scenes of blazes.[19]

Increased population density put pressures on the city's land. With a population of 434,439 in 1890, Baltimore had a density of 14,739 people per square mile with an average 92,537 people per square mile in its densest ward. One indicator of the growing demand for real estate was the decline in vacant buildings from 8,000 to 2,872 in the three years before the successful 1905 referendum. Another indication is the rise in mortgages from 6,301 in 1904 to 9,649 in 1905.[20]

Land values skyrocketed, making the land-intensive cesspool system increasingly inefficient. In some areas—near the new railways, for example—real estate prices trebled and quadrupled in a matter of a few years.[21] One important mark of the city's increasing land values is the construction of skyscrapers, which reveal the pressure to squeeze every bit of use out of a parcel of land. In 1907 Baltimore had twenty-seven seven-story buildings and twenty-four buildings of eight or more floors; the average in the rest of the city was between two and three stories.[22] Adding to all the more or less "natural" increases in land values, the reconstruction

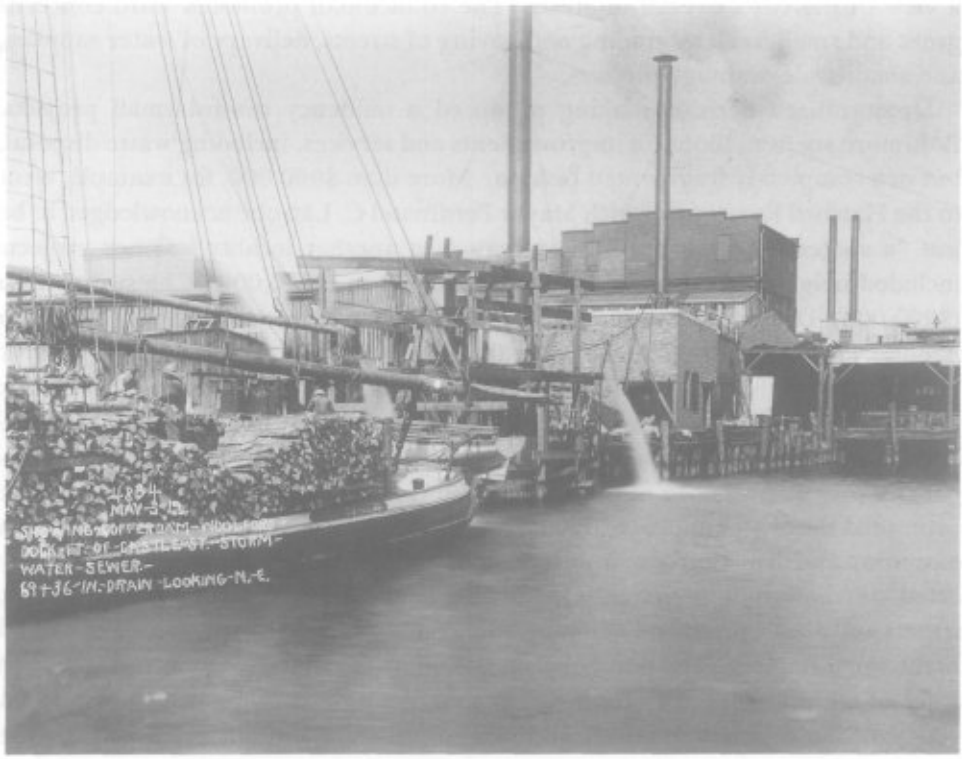
of the downtown area destroyed by the 1904 fire almost doubled the value of that property from $13 million to $25 million.[23]

The cesspool system exacerbated the land-use inefficiencies and confusion.[24] Under this system, almost all property owners sacrificed part of their plots to cesspools. The city health commissioner estimated that the cesspools took up more than fifty acres of land, rendering useless as much surrounding space. The city government was deluged with frequent, urgent reports of basements severely damaged by cesspool overflows and leakages. Cesspools allowed wastes to "percolate into the subsoil, there to exercise deleterious effects upon our health," Mayor Thomas G. Hayes lamented in 1901.[25] Such ill treatment of valuable property did not make sense; it raised the cost of conducting business in the center of the city, which for a variety of agglomeration and transportation reasons, was still extremely important. The city's territorial limits also argued for city-wide sewers. Travel distances for nightsoil disposal grew larger and larger as the city expanded. Transportation costs were to become more and more prohibitive.

Increased manufacturing, population, and density contributed to a health crisis in the city. Concerns about public health contributed to the sewerage debate. National efforts to quarantine people with communicable diseases, in fact, spurred the creation of the 1893 Baltimore Sewerage Commission.[26] Health officials had difficulty sorting out the variables that contributed to respiratory diseases, especially in an era that gave credence to the unfounded "gas theory" of disease. But outbreaks of disease regularly resulted in renewed calls for a cleaner city. Baltimore experienced three major smallpox epidemics. Some 700 people died of smallpox in 1864, 600 in 1872, and 1,100 in 1882 and 1883. As late as 1915, intestinal disease was rampant in the city's low-elevation areas and in the narrow streets and alleys where the poor lived.[27] Baltimore was notorious for its smells, especially during the hot and humid summer days, and increasing numbers of civic leaders warned of the health evils the city was inviting with its poor system of waste disposal.

Baltimore was the site of a great deal of health-related activity. The Johns Hopkins Hospital, founded in 1889, initiated major research and treatment efforts for typhoid and other communicable diseases. Speaking in 1897 of the city's failed efforts to get approval for a sewer system, the prominent physician William Osler said plaintively: "The penalties of cruel neglect have been paid for 1896, the roll of victims for 1897 is near complete, the sacrifices will number again above 200. We cannot save the predestined ones in 1898, but what of the succeeding years?"[28]

Baltimore's governmental and electoral systems did not respond to the need for a major city-wide project. The city government lacked the fiscal capacity, technical expertise, and social vision for large projects. The government was organized along geographic rather than functional lines, and the mayor rarely succeeded in spurring the city council to action on behalf of the whole city. The Democratic



The coffer dam and storm-water/sewer drain at the foot of Castle Street, Canton; in the foreground heavily-laden lumber schooners await unloading. Photograph by Alfred Waldeck, 1912. (Courtesy Baltimore Public Works Museum.)

Party machine exploited the city government's fragmentation to serve its own petty needs. The government was a feudal system of neighborhood fiefdoms, with all the attendant material selfishness and jealousy.

When the city approved a new charter in 1898, the local government finally gained coherence. The new system gave the mayor significant power over the council. Just as important, agencies operated along functional lines that allowed experts to develop and implement large-scale projects. Once the city developed a more rational, bureaucratic government and overcame narrow geographic and interest-group barriers, the decision to sewer the city became a matter of time.

Before the new charter, however, Baltimore's political system was captive to parochial interests. Between 1880 and 1895 the Democratic organizations of Arthur Pue Gorman and Isaac Freeman Rasin dominated Maryland and Baltimore politics. The city council conducted municipal business; it responded to an array of issues of interest to the wards, which fell under machine control. Where a modern Baltimorean brings his concerns to a city agency with purview over a specific governmental function, the nineteenth-century Baltimorean brought his concerns to his council member. No city administrator coordinated projects with

a view of the city's overall interests. The councilman promoted ward concerns great and small, such as grading and paving of streets, delivery of water supplies, and small-scale drainage projects.

Decentralized decision-making produced a tendency toward small projects. Baltimore spent millions on improvements and services, including waste disposal, but in a completely fragmented fashion. More than $600,000, for example, went to the Harford Run sewer which Mayor Ferdinand C. Latrobe acknowledged to be just "a successful transfer of this nuisance to another locality." Other projects included neighborhood sewers for Schroeder's Run ($240,000), Chatsworth Run ($200,000), Druid Hill Avenue ($150,000), Alluvian Street ($140,000), Arlington Avenue ($60,000), Light Street ($51,000), and Ogler's Run ($35,000). Mayor Hodges argued that a city-wide system was "impractical" but did not hesitate to ask the council for $1 million for incremental improvements in a single year.[29] The city developed waste-disposal policy in a reactive rather than planned way. Emergencies such as overflows of drain pipes and cesspools and extensive soil damage prompted the city to approve, on an ad-hoc basis, plans for construction and then extension and diversion of many drain pipes.[30] The council and city commissioner acted on thousands of requests involving neighborhood drains and cesspools, streets and alleys, pipes and mains, grading and toting of wastes, water closets and night-soil dumping. The parochialism was so strong that the city first envisioned a set of eight sewerage systems rather than a single comprehensive system. A report of the first city sewerage commission, in 1862, did not even consider the benefits of a comprehensive public system.

Building a city-wide system depended on a rational organization of city offices that Baltimore was just beginning to develop. The city council held sway over major political decisions. The council usually followed the general budget plan set by its ways and means committee, but then "supplemented [that budget] in the interval between adoption of the budget and the close of the fiscal year by the passage of special appropriations bills."[31] By the end of a fiscal year, a budget burst through its own limits with an array of fragmented, parochial programs.

The overload of the city council eventually enabled the gradual development of a more rational system. The council started to feed citizen demands for physical projects to the city commissioner, who became an unofficial director of public works and attempted some coordinated planning. With the 1882 appointment of specialized assistants and the later geographic division of responsibilities, the city commissioner became a policy initiator. The increasing use of governmental commissions and outside bodies like the Municipal Arts Society improved the planning and coordination of large civic projects. But until the complete overhaul of the city government structure with the new charter, large-scale projects such as the sewage system failed to attract attention and expertise.

Uncertainty about questions of management, maintenance, financing, and medical research marked the debate over sewers. Between 1880 and 1892 Mayor Latrobe tried and failed to create a special department of public works to supervise planning and construction. Planning a city-wide system based on gravity required

knowledge of the city's terrain. But until the twentieth century, when the Topographic Survey Commission canvassed the city, Baltimore had no comprehensive maps. An 1857 Board of Health report stated: "No one can now tell the forms, sizes, grades of descent, connections, nor directions of the sewers."[32] At one point, the sewerage commission relied on "a gentleman who consented to give up his private map."[33] City officials used crude maps drawn without scale when considering some projects.[34] The situation worsened with private laying of pipes and shoddy reconstruction of ripped-up streets. When business and political leaders planned reconstruction of the downtown area after the Great Fire, confusion and conflict ensued about land ownership and how the tangle of underground infrastructure affected public-private relations.[35]

Fiscal crisis undermined the drive for a city-wide sewer system. Because of growing urban needs like streets, water, police, fire protection, schools, and parks, as well as the patronage practices of the city council, Baltimore's budget was often in the red. The city's floating or short-term debt varied wildly in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, with a low of $29,000 and a high of $1.38 million. The floating debt rose from $82,000 in 1892 to $473,000 in 1893, $1.1 million in 1894, $1.3 million in 1895, and $1.4 million in 1897. In 1880 Baltimore allocated 24 percent of its operating budget to interest payments; by 1899, the interest payments took up 11 percent of the budget. The city took out a $1.6 million loan in 1898 just to cover debts; the floating debt became so large that the city had to refinance it with long-term loans four additional times. The onetime Baltimore mayor and comptroller, Joshua Vansant, said: "It cannot be said that the financial system which brings about such results is erroneous, because system has no part or lot in it."[36] Baltimore's faulty budget practices included inadequate tax analyses, appropriation of funds after the budget passed, overestimation of municipal receipts, and "rolling over" debts.

Baltimore had the worst of both worlds with its fiscal concerns and need for general improvements. Even though it did not make major improvements, the city "frittered away" millions on minor projects. After one particularly bitter battle between the mayor and the city council over taxes in 1897, mayoral aides complained that "while the Council has succeeded in unnecessarily taxing the people of Baltimore $381,000, they are no nearer new schools or repaved streets than they were before."[37] The same could be said of the sewerage system. It was a common complaint: Baltimore was adept at approving small-scale projects, but terrible at initiating major projects.

In 1899 Mayor Hayes underscored the reluctance to spend large sums on improvements when he proposed using funds from the sale of the Western Maryland Railroad for sewers. After investing $12 million in the enterprise, the city sold it for $4.2 million.[38] Mayor Hayes in November 1902 urged using the receipts to build sewers: "Can anyone doubt my duty as mayor? I am told by experts—in whose ability to speak I have full confidence—that the system can be built for $4.2 million. There are no experts, in my humble judgement, in the country more capable...."[39] The Hayes plan, however, was out of the question

given the city's repeated rejections of dumping wastes into the Chesapeake Bay, the only method affordable with the receipts from the railroad sale.

The municipal government's subservience to the state government in Annapolis also slowed the drive for a city-wide system. Antagonism is typical of state-local relations in the U.S. From the nation's founding, legislatures have been arenas of often bitter conflict between urban and rural interests. Cities have struggled to gain authority to rule their own affairs. Baltimore's relationship with the Maryland legislature in Annapolis has been stormy; for most of the city's history, for example, the state controlled the police department. During Baltimore's consideration of sewerage systems, the city never had complete control over the issue. Before Baltimore officials could make important decisions on such a large enterprise, they needed approval from Annapolis, and the state legislative process proved tortuous.

The legislature delayed action on sewers several times. In 1902 the Baltimore delegation clashed with other legislators over how much eminent-domain power the city ought to have to build its collection and treatment facilities.[40] Interest groups like the shellfish industry and labor unions also blocked state approval of a sewer system. The legislature even got involved in the makeup of the sewerage commission—an involvement that was justified on the grounds that some people from other parts of Maryland had a special interest in the city because they owned land there.[41] A newspaper editorial on the eve of the 1905 referendum underscored the difficulty of getting the necessary state and local actors to agree on a large project: "In 1904 it happened that there was a Democratic governor, both houses of the General Assembly were Democratic, and there was a Democratic mayor in Baltimore. It may be many years before this happens again."[42]

Struggles between the Democratic Party machine and reform organizations set the parameters of city politics in the late 1800s. Baltimore's machine exerted impressive control over elections and patronage, even if it did not have the top-down authority of the Cleveland, Detroit, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis machines. The machine-reform battle marked each election, major appointment, major public works project, and negotiation over taxes and budgets. The stakes for the sewer system exceeded the stakes for other projects because of the expense and scale of the project.

Patronage was the big concern of both machine politicians and reformers. The particularistic, divisible awards of jobs and contracts to faithful party members was, of course, the lifeblood of the machine. Until 1895—when the reform candidates of the Republican party handed the Democratic machine its biggest defeat in municipal elections—the machine's patronage extended from the city to the state and federal governments. The unusual longevity of the Baltimore and Maryland machines attested to their ability to work with a wide variety of groups—from

railroad and oyster moguls to humble Irish working stiffs who would flock to Rasin's funeral in 1907.[43]

Machine politics reinforced the decentralized tendencies of the city's government. By organizing voters on the ward level, the machine encouraged politicians and citizens to concentrate on neighborhood rather than city-wide matters. Incrementalism was the way of the machine, as it was of the outdated city government. It was difficult to bring these disparate fiefdoms together for a large, coordinated project.[44] Winning elections obviously involved some coordination, but the process of getting out the vote and promoting party men was more a collection of local efforts than a single integrated effort. The vision of the whole was missing from the machine.

A number of incidents displayed the machine's strength and solidarity. Democrats in the 1901 state legislature were in perfect accord on the sewer bill that would be defeated by the voters of Baltimore later that year. First the Democrats did not show up in the legislative chambers. Then they marched into the legislative chambers en masse to vote for the bill. The Democrats reportedly backed the bill in Annapolis only because they already had organized its defeat in Baltimore to embarrass Republican Mayor Hayes.[45] On other occasions the Democrats simply were absent at crucial times, or they would ignore matters like commission nominations. Even after its defeat in 1895, the machine was able to mobilize its apparatus for important elections and votes.[46] Only when gubernatorial and mayoral candidates pledged in 1903 to support a city-wide sewerage system did the project appear a real possibility.

With the machine's decline after its 1895 electoral defeat—and with the *News* and *Sun* applying anti-machine pressures[47]—both the machine and the reform movement fought to prevent the other from taking over the system. Jealousy over patronage came to the surface during repeated disputes over the makeup of sewerage commissions. At one point the state legislature named the men it wanted to serve on the commission, and at another point it left appointment power to the mayor and council. When the legislature appointed the commission, local politicians, mostly members of the Democratic organization, complained about usurpation of local authority. When the Republican mayor got authority to appoint the commission in 1905, Democrats attacked him for delaying his appointments until after the voter referendum on the $5 million loan. He maintained, however, that the only way to assure passage of the referendum was to delay his appointments: "To name the commission now would mean its defeat."[48]

The Progressive movement's response to the machine reinforced the city's fragmented politics. In the late 1800s, some thirty improvement associations gained an increasingly strong voice in civic affairs.[49] The associations, however, organized by neighborhood and pressing parochial concerns, warred with each other over distribution of city resources. The correspondence files of the mayor and council are filled with association requests for help on limited projects like road repairs, park improvements, and drain-pipe and sewer improvements. When the Democratic machine oversaw a series of local projects in the 1880s and 1890s the

associations fought for their fair share and sought to improve their position rather than develop a larger urban vision.[50] As late as 1905 the Southeast Baltimore Association vowed to fight the city-wide sewerage system unless the city government provided funds for road improvements as an enticement.[51] Movement toward a comprehensive system picked up as these organizations allied with each other and city-wide organizations such as the Municipal Arts Society, Reform League, Real Estate Exchange, and Board of Trade.[52]

Elections and referenda exacerbated the parochialism of city government. The northern parts of the city—its wealthiest areas—gave the 1905 referendum its strongest support. Ward 11, a fashionable section built around North Charles Street, supported the loan by a 2,370-to-417 vote, and Wards 12 through 16, also well-off, gave strong support as well. The areas dominated for years by the machine, Wards 1, 2, 6, 7, and 10, rejected the referendum. True to the observation by the local journalist Frank Kent that political machines thrive only in areas of low voter turnout,[53] the reform-oriented referendum enjoyed the greatest success where vote totals were high.[54]

In addition to the parochial and stubborn political style of the local government and the Democratic party, several interest groups impeded the drive to sewer the city. The major groups objecting to a city-wide sewerage system included the shellfish industry, cesspool interests, businesses opposed to higher taxes, and residents of the annex. In addition, wealthy Baltimoreans who could provide for their own private waste disposal opposed the municipal system.

The state's oyster industry might have had enough clout by itself to block approval of any sewage system that dumped wastes into the Chesapeake Bay. All of the early sewer proposals called for such dumping, which the shellfish industry feared would kill their crops. Only after the General Assembly passed legislation in 1903, prohibiting bay dumping, could pro-sewer forces develop a coalition broad enough to promote sewers.

The oyster industry in the late 1800s was an important but declining part of Baltimore's economy. The industry employed some 50,000 workers and produced millions of dollars worth of produce. Deciding whether the city could release wastes into the Chesapeake was, with the possible exception of fiscal and tax concerns, the most frequent sticking point in sewer debates. The 1902 legislature haggled over two bills whose only difference was whether sewage could be dumped in just the south side or both the north and south sides of the Patapsco River.[55] Each time a commission recommended a system based on "dilution," or dumping, the oyster industry initiated protracted debates about the repercussions. Claims and counterclaims about possible damage to the oysters' safety were supplemented with reams of statistics and testimony from scientists.[56] The oyster interests in 1903 successfully lobbied the assembly to forbid dumping wastes into natural waters. Mayor Ferdinand Latrobe summed up the sentiments of the confusing

Bracing and manhole construction for storm drains and sewers. Photograph by Alfred Waldeck, 1907. (Courtesy Baltimore Public Works Museum.)

debate: "Personally I hardly think that the sewage would injure the oysters and fish. But a dog might as well be useless as have a bad name, and if the people who buy oysters were to hear that Baltimore is dumping [sewage],...it would absolutely ruin our oyster and fish trade."[57]

A nascent ecology movement complemented the shellfish interests. Environmentalists expressed concerns about the dangers of dumping sewage and pointed to possibilities of recycling. C. A. Leas, a Baltimore physician, pleaded passionately for recycling wastes. "Solemn is the obligation," Leas said, to reuse wastes in an ecological fashion rather than simply flush away and forget about the problems of contemporary life. Night soil and garbage, he added, offer "the most valuable manurial properties." Nothing was fundamentally wrong with the cesspool system, he argued; the problem was the city's failure to regulate it.[58] Baltimoreans showed that they could gather wastes in an orderly fashion. The garbage system—with carts that separated garbage according to possible later uses—was, in fact, a model for other cities.

Baltimoreans listened to authorities like Leas because of the health problems of sewered cities. Chicago and Boston suffered devastating outbreaks of typhoid fever. Baltimoreans expressed suspicions about sewer systems. One reader wrote to the *Sun*: "'The Almighty God is to be especially thanked for delivering us from pestilence.' What pestilence—from the product of the sewers: Typhoid, diarrhea, scarlet fever, smallpox, and the other diseases concomitant with sewers? Yes."[59]

Some held out hope that Baltimore would never need sewers, that somehow technology might enable the city to avoid the expense and risks of a city-wide system.

The firms that cleaned cesspools and carted away the wastes also had a stake in the old system.[60] Chief among the excavators—who went from house to house with wagons to collect the wastes—was the Odorless Excavating Apparatus Company, O.E.A., the Baltimore firm that received a patent for the pumping apparatus and enjoyed a near monopoly on the business from the city council. O.E.A. employed hundreds of workers at low wages to collect the wastes for disposal or sale on the periphery of the city.[61] The O.E.A.'s leadership included George Padgett, member of a leading family in Democratic politics.[62] The number of permits issued to clean these wells rose from 50,168 to 63,491 between 1899 and 1901, undoubtedly an understatement of the financial stake of the old cesspool system. By the time Baltimore finally approved the sewerage system, it had 90,000 cesspools. The expenditures generated by these vaults included not only waste collection, but also initial construction.[63]

The excavating interests were also connected with another large Baltimore business—the fertilizer industry. "Night soil"—the euphemism for cesspool wastes—was never vital to the industry, but it still provided a livelihood for some. Isaac Freeman Rasin had an interest in the business because of his brother's fertilizer firm, J. W. L. Rasin and Company.[64]

Several other interest groups decided whether to support sewerage construction strictly on the basis of taxes. Business and real estate interests argued that any sewerage system dependent on property taxes or other charges would be tantamount to "double taxation" and would raise rents, impose hardships on the owners of modest dwellings, discourage outside businesses from coming into Baltimore, and strangle businesses already in the city. Property owners argued that the system's main purpose was public well-being, not the improvement of property values. In 1904 the Real Estate Exchange adopted a resolution stating: "This exchange is opposed to, and will do all in its power to defeat, both in the Legislature and before the people, any bill that charges...sewer rentals."65 Businessmen argued that Baltimore could not attract outside investment unless it maintained or reduced its tax rate. Since the business elite was central to Baltimore progressivism, civic improvements had to fall within the confines of its anti-tax sentiment.[66]

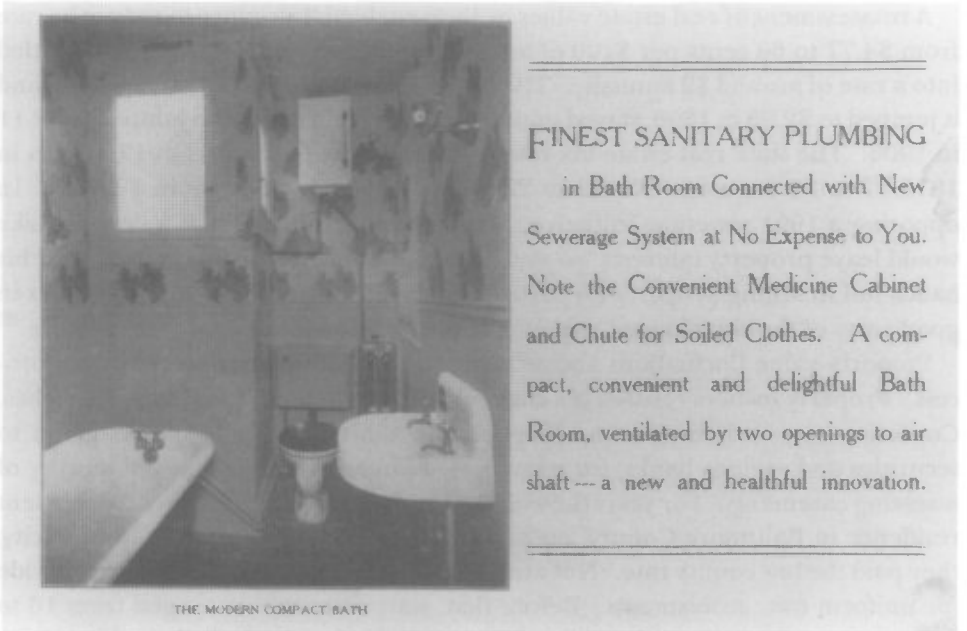
Baltimore's tax rate during the twenty-five years before the sewerage approval was steady but higher than that of other cities like New York and Philadelphia. It was, therefore, a constant concern; at no time did it fall low enough to ease the concern of business-conscious citizens. While Baltimore hovered around a tax rate of $2 per assessed valuation of $100, other cities held their taxes lower due to state limitations. New Orleans, St. Louis, and Kansas City, for example, had rates of $1. Philadelphia had a rate of $1.85; Cleveland taxed at the $1.85 level; and New York City taxed at the $1.92 rate.[67]

A reassessment of real estate values in 1835 enabled Baltimore to reduce its rate from $4.77 to 66 cents per $100 of assessed value, but the city eventually settled into a rate of around $2 annually. The tax rate rose from $1.76 to $2 in 1896, and it jumped to $2.25 in 1898, stayed under $2 for several years, then jumped to $2.11 in 1906. The state real estate tax rate was less stable, moving from 17.5 cents in 1876-77 to 30 cents in 1901-03 to 22 cents in 1904 to 16 cents in 1907-10. In opposing a 1901 sewerage initiative, Mayor Latrobe warned that a new tax hike would leave property interests "so slaughtered that the [tax] collector will have his hands full in selling property for taxes." Latrobe claimed that property values in good parts of the city plunged to a fifth of their values of just a few years before.[68]

Property-value fluctuations and arbitrary assessments distorted the policy process. Property owners resisted tax changes for fear they would lose special niches. Confusion resulted from many loopholes in the tax system—breaks given to securities and savings banks, for example—and uncertainty about the legality of assessing easements. For years the wealthy evaded taxes by listing their permanent residence in Baltimore County; no matter how many assets they had in the city, they paid the low county rate. Not until 1914 did the state tax commission provide for uniform state assessments. Before that, state assessments ranged from 10 to 100 percent of actual market value. Before 1896 the city lacked significant authority to assess its own property, and the Appeals Tax Court, the city body with some assessment powers, was criticized for failing to follow accepted standards. Lax tax collection also created confusion: between 1870 and 1896 the percentage of property taxes actually collected ranged between 50 and 75. A wide range of separate levies for highways and bridges, road reconstruction, internal improvements, courts, the poor, and sinking funds also contributed to confusion.[69]

The property-tax system created disincentives for improvements such as sewers because of the doubling or trebling of assessments that inevitably followed the improvements. Baltimore acknowledged the problem when it taxed burnt-district properties at a 20 percent rate in the first year after the area was rebuilt. "Needless to say, whatever the size of the [property-value] increase, the additional tax burden permanently increased carrying costs, while creating no offsetting revenue-producing improvement of the property itself."[70] Not until the use of systematic zoning policies, starting in 1915, did land-use patterns overcome the tangle of conflicting imperatives involving taxes, depreciation, and mixes of residences and businesses.

One of the interest groups blocking the sewer system was new to the city. In 1888 Baltimore annexed seventeen square miles of surrounding Baltimore County. The city lured county residents with a package that included a low property tax rate and provisions for the construction of roads, parks, and utilities (city and state bosses Isaac Freeman Rasin and Arthur Pue Gorman put the package together).[71] The deal led to uneven development and a strange Alfonse-and-Gaston political relationship between the annex and the rest of the city. On the one hand, the annex's lower tax rate—in conjunction with a lag in the assessment of properties—provided great incentives for private developers to subdivide their vast plots and



"The Modern Compact Bath," from the E. J. Gallagher Realty Company's advertising brochure for newly-built rowhouses in the 2900 block of McElderry Street, east Baltimore, ca. 1916. The builder boasted that his new houses were connected to the recently-opened city sewerage system. (Baltimore City Life Museums.)

develop the land.[72] But the city lagged in its development of the annexed area, largely because of resentment toward the annex residents' tax breaks. Measures in the state legislature and the courts challenged the deal. Tax-conscious Baltimoreans did not want to develop the annex until annex residents paid a full tax rate. Such reluctance was self-defeating, however, since the annex did not have to pay the full rate until adequate roads were built.

Well-to-do neighborhoods, with access to private sewers and good cesspools, also felt no urgency to build a city-wide system. They afforded cleaning charges easily. Their homes were located in the city's hilly parts, apart from the foul odors of the open drains, and their cellars did not overflow. As one labor leader stated: "While the larger houses are on larger lots, most of the residences of workers are built upon ground that brings the cesspools much closer to the house."[73] Until the old system's evils spilled over to wealthy turf, and the economies of an integrated city-wide system became more apparent, the wealthy had no incentive to promote improvement.

Organized labor played a minor part in delaying the sewer system. Whenever proposals for a system percolated, the Federation of Labor insisted on day labor, with its higher hourly wages.[74] Many politicians feared that labor's stance would

Construction of a storm drain at Pecks Branch. Photograph by Alfred Waldeck, 1908. (Courtesy Baltimore Public Works Museum.)

doom the 1905 proposal. After the referendum passed, however, city leaders quickly rebuffed the workers and paid the lower scale of wages.

The timing of the 1905 referendum was propitious. By the April vote, Baltimore had a streamlined system of government, an improving fiscal posture, a civic spirit renewed by the efforts to rebuild the downtown after the fire of 1904, and an increasing sense of urgency to compete with other cities for economic development.

Under the new 1898 charter, the mayor gained strong appointment and removal powers. The charter created a Board of Estimates to manage fiscal affairs. The board—comprised of the mayor, two mayoral appointees, the comptroller, and the president of the second branch of the council—was responsible for formulating the budgets of the city's streamlined bureaucracy. The council's powers were limited to reducing expenditures or raising taxes; the charter made the council into a reactive body. The charter also increased the bureaucracy's independence. Now insulated from manipulation, the city bureaucracy had eight departments, with functional divisions within each department. Agencies had the luxury of pursuing projects that made sense to them rationally.[75]

Part and parcel of the new professionalized municipal administration was the emergence of a strong engineering profession and the development of detailed procedures for bidding and oversight. Pro-sewer forces repeatedly assured voters

that the new municipal apparatus would ensure that the job was done professionally, honestly, and efficiently.

The timing was right for Baltimore to take advantage of new construction methods and the lessons of other cities' mistakes in constructing and operating sewer systems. Chicago's disastrous dumping of wastes into Lake Michigan proved to be an important warning to Baltimore. New construction materials like concrete, new engineering processes like filtration treatment of wastes, and better management techniques enabled Baltimore to develop a model system.

Proponents were quick to point out that the city's assumption of a sewerage debt would come just as the city was shedding other financial obligations and gaining new revenues. When in 1916 sewerage payments reached a peak, the city's $6 million water loan would be paid off. Sewerage proponents also estimated that the new assessments of the property in the burnt district and the annex would increase the city's taxable basis by $22 million to $35 million, depending on court resolution of annex tax issues.[76] The loan payment schedule of seventy-five years stretched the city's obligation so far into the future that Baltimoreans would not bear a noticeably greater burden.[77]

Numerous other public improvements that the city undertook in the aftermath of the 1904 fire enlarged the civic vision of many Baltimoreans. The city's General Improvements Conference in December 1904 demonstrated a new willingness to pursue large projects.[78] A year after the 1904 fire, the *Sun* published a special edition lauding the civic response to the great disaster. The newspaper account, which included a poetic celebration of Baltimore's rise from "that fiery ordeal," stressed the unprecedented sums of capital investment in what it called "New Baltimore." The city spent $9 million just for fire rehabilitation. With $100 million in capital improvements and the city's locational advantages, the newspaper said, "foreign capitalists and heads of manufacturing interests will come to the conclusion that...Baltimore can...yield a large return for capital invested."[79] Such accounts, repeated again and again in the speeches and in-house publications of improvement associations, industries, and political parties, indicated development of a larger vision of urban politics. For the first time, a $10 million loan for sewerage seemed modest.

Baltimore's efforts to rehabilitate the burnt district after the fire involved a good share of bickering, blackmail, and bribery. But in comparison with other fire-ravaged cities like Chicago and Boston, Baltimore was skilled at overcoming local and private barriers. The Burnt District Commission, for example, eventually took over eighty acres of land—which contained hundreds of competing claims of ownership and control—for development.[80]

One additional event improved the timing for the sewerage loans. In 1904 after months of frustration dealing with special interests in the rehabilitation of the burnt district, Mayor Robert McLane committed suicide. Leading Baltimoreans urged speedy passage of all city improvements as a sort of memorial. Interest groups did not suddenly abandon petty claims, but McLane's death produced profound shock

about just how destructive those claims could be. That shock shamed some interests into softening demands during the city-building debates.

The choice Baltimore faced in the 1905 vote—as industrialists, reformers, and allies of the city's political machine all argued—was either retooling for the new industrial era or losing out in the competition for new business investment. One businessman's words were typical of the arguments made on behalf of the system:

> We have got to look out for the manufacturing industries. Our commerce is gradually falling off. The coal and grain trade has dropped considerably, and we have almost entirely lost our coffee trade. Now we have got to encourage manufacturers to come to this city, so that we will be able to provide employment for our men. And to do this we must be an up-do-date city in every respect.[81]

Mayor Timanus reported that one businessman, upon hearing mention of Baltimore, said: "Oh, yes, that's the place where sewage runs in front of people's houses."[82]

Baltimore got its sewer system and was able to shake its malodorous image as the city of open sewers. Today, Baltimore's system remains one of the nation's finest. Unlike Chicago and Boston, which still suffer indignities from their early and crude systems, Baltimore acted only after other cities suffered from the mistakes of the "learning curve" of new technologies. Such a strategy is not always wise for cities competing with other cities, but it seems to have served Baltimore well in at least this one area.

NOTES

1. The other referenda asked voter approval for a $2 million loan for improvements in a recently annexed portion of the city and a $1 million loan for public parks.

I would like to acknowledge the help and encouragement of several people. Professor Matthew A. Crenson of the Johns Hopkins University suggested the research and offered good academic advice throughout. The late Abel Wolman, also of Hopkins, encouraged me and offered detailed criticism and warm encouragement. Joel A. Tarr of Carnegie-Mellon University and an anonymous reader provided valuable critiques. Special thanks to Rachel Freed.

2. Baltimore *Sun*, 1 April 1905.

3. Baltimore had 44 disconnected miles of sewers at the turn of the century, compared with Chicago (1,529 miles), New York (1,467), Philadelphia (951), Boston (852), St. Louis (522), and Buffalo (434). See Jon Teaford, *The Unheralded Triumph: City Government in America, 1970-1900* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), p. 220.

4. Charles Hirschfeld, *Baltimore, 1870-1900: Studies in Social History*, Johns Hopkins University Studies in History and Political Science, no. 59 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1941).

5. Ibid., p. 37.

6. Ibid., p. 39.

7. As a study of eight turn-of-the-century Baltimore communities suggests, the city's isolated areas slowly integrated with the rest of the urban area. Self-contained communities survived, but large industries broadened the spheres of economic activity. One of the city's earliest settlements, appropriately named Oldtown, typified the integration of local communities with the larger urban and national economies. Once an autonomous community of mill workers, skilled artisans, sweat-shop workers, and white-collar workers, by 1900 the community was but a part of the ebb and flow of the rest of the metropolis. A majority of Oldtown's residents commuted to jobs elsewhere in the city, and the area experienced regular residential "invasions" and "successions." Other neighborhoods remained more self-sufficient, but no neighborhood could remain an island. See D. Randall Beirne, "Late Nineteenth-Century Industrial Communities in Baltimore," *Mary-land Historian*, 10 (1980): 39-40.

8. Hirschfeld, *Baltimore, 1870-1900*, pp. 46-54.

9. Sherry Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), p. 238.

10. Martha J. Vill, "Immigrants and Ownership: Home Mortgage Financing in Baltimore, 1865-1914," in Robert D. Mitchell and Edward K. Muller, eds., *Geographical Perspectives on Maryland's Past* (College Park, Md.: University of Maryland Department of Geography, 1979), p. 157.

11. Olson, *Baltimore*, p. 239.

12. *Sun*, 7 February 1905.

13. Alan Anderson, *The Origin and Resolution of an Urban Crisis: Baltimore, 1890-1930* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), p. 48.

14. Teaford, *Unheralded Triumph*, p. 221. Some figures on water use in later industrial processes provide an idea of just how important the use and disposal of water is for an industrial city. The production of viscose rayon requires 180,000 to 200,000 gallons of water per ton of the product, while rayon requires 250,000 to 400,000 gallons, woolens and worsteds require 140,000 gallons, and rolled steel requires 110 000 gallons; whiskey requires 80,000 per 1,000 gallons of whiskey; and synthetic gas requires 1.05 billion gallons per 1,000 barrels. See Alfred H. Katz and J. S. Fenton, eds., *Health and the Community* (New York: The Free Press, 1965), p. 94.

15. Ibid., p. 93.

16. Abel Wolman, "The Metabolism of Cities," in *Scientific American, Cities* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), p. 158.

17. Olson, *Baltimore*, p. 166.

18. *Sun*, 17 December 1903 and 1 January 1905.

19. Ibid., 15 April 1905. See also the many letters in the City Archives in the two decades before the turn of the century.

20. *Sun*, 21 April 1905; Anderson, *Origin and Resolution of an Urban Crisis*, p. 65; *Annual Report, Real Estate Exchange*, 1905 and 1907.

21. Olson, *Baltimore*, pp. 156, 169-70.

22. Anderson, *Origin and Resolution of an Urban Crisis*, p. 57.
23. *Sun*, 7 February 1905, 21 April 1905.
24. Olson, *Baltimore*, pp. 221-2.
25. *Sun*, 14 January 1901.
26. City Archives, WPA Files, 1893 (99).
27. Olson, *Baltimore*, p. 570.
28. Ibid., p. 237.
29. Mayor's Report, 1883, 1886, 1888; *Sun*, 19 April 1895.
30. City Archives, WPA Files, 1878 (1123), 1885 (544 and 856), 1889 (631), 1894 (64).
31. Jacob H. Hollander, *The Financial History of Baltimore* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1899), p. 206.
32. Hollander, *Financial History of Baltimore*, p. 213.
33. *Sun*, 21 January 1894.
34. City Archives, WPA Files, 1879 (830).
35. Christine Meisner Rosen, *The Limits of Power: Great Fires and the Process of City Growth in America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 292-94.
36. Hirschfeld, *Baltimore, 1870-1900*, p. 37.
37. *Sun*, 9 January 1897.
38. Ibid., 9, 26 September 1902.
39. Ibid., 2 November 1902.
40. Ibid., 21 January 1902.
41. Ibid., 29 March 1902.
42. Ibid., 12 April 1905.
43. Mary Anne Dunn, "The Life of Isaac Freeman Rasin" (M.A. thesis, Catholic University of America, 1949) p. 102.
44. See Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965).
45. Baltimore *News*, 18, 20, and 22 January 1901; 20 February 1901; and 6, 8, 26, and 28 March 1901.
46. *Sun*, 28 March 1901; 26 April 1 1905; 3 May 1905.
47. The Baltimore *News* came into the reform fold when Charles Grasty arrived from Kansas City to become its editor. The *Sun* shifted toward the reform movement when Senator Gorman, the state Democratic party boss, squeezed the *Sun*'s owner, George Abell, out of a prominent post in the administration of President Grover Cleveland. See James B. Crooks, *Politics and Progress* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), pp. 17-23; and Paul Winchester, *The Men of Maryland Since the Civil War* (Baltimore: Maryland County Press, 1923), p. 75.
48. *Sun*, 29 March 1905.
49. See the *Sun* series on neighborhood associations that was published each Sunday between 1 January 1910 and 10 April 1910.
50. Joseph Arnold, "The Neighborhood and City Hall," *Journal of Urban History* 6 (1979): 11.
51. *Sun*, 21 April 1905.
52. Crooks, *Politics and Progress*, pp. 129-32.

53. Frank R. Kent, *The Great Game of Politics* (New York: Doubleday-Page and Co., 1924), pp. 1-13, 28-40, 46-50.

54. *Sun*, 3 May 1905.

55. Ibid., 21 March 1902.

56. Ibid., 20 November 1887; 10, 28 December 1887.

57. Ibid., 6 January 1902.

58. C. A. Leas, "On the Sanitary Care and Utilization of Refuse in Cities," in Daniel Worster, ed., *American Environmentalism* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973), pp. 151-8.

59. *Sun*, 24 November 1903.

60. Conversations with Abel Wolman were helpful for this section.

61. Olson, *Baltimore*, p. 166.

62. Robert Padgett was described in his obituary was part of the machine's "royal family," who formed the city's ruling clique with Rasin, John J. ("Sonny") Mahon, John S. ("Frank") Kelly, and Daniel J. Loden (*Sun*, 11 April 1932). According to one sewer contractor, the cleanup cost for Baltimore's private cesspools in 1902 was $502,928—and rising.

63. *Sun*, 23 March 1902.

64. Dunn, "Life of Isaac Freeman Rasin," p. 57.

65. *Sun*, 14 January 1904.

66. See the listing of Baltimore's leading progressives and their social backgrounds in Crooks, *Politics and Progress*, pp. 224-36.

67. Teaford, *Unheralded Triumph*, pp. 294-5.

68. *Sun*, 27 March 1901.

69. Ibid., 14 October 1902, 14 January 1905; Hollander, *Financial History of Baltimore*, pp. 261-63, 268-72, 256; Baltimore *Evening Sun*, 16 February 1939.

70. Rosen, *Limits of Power*, p. 17.

71. Joseph Arnold, "Suburban Growth and Municipal Annexation in Baltimore, 1745-1918," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 72 (1978): 114-17. 72. In the twelve years after the 1888 annexation—in which annex residents were required to pay, at most, 60 cents per $1,000 of land values—the new parts of the city were the site of unprecedented development. Records for development after 1888 are scanty, but there are some good indications of the amount of activity. In 1895, there were 1,025 new improvements and 198 additional improvements in the annex. The next year, there were 1,081 new improvements and 61 additional improvements at a value of $1.815 million. The numbers of 1897 were 1,286, 50, and $1.815 million, and the numbers for March to October 1898 were 1,150, 64, and $1.667 million (*Sun*, 30 December 1899). In addition, a women's college was founded, and streetcar facilities stretched out to all corners of the Annex. Neighborhoods like Walbrook and West Arlington were started, and Waverly and Hampden greatly improved. The private development was so great that talk about further extension of the city boundaries began.

73. *Sun*, 27 April 1 1905. One graphic example of the class indignities was the dumping of night soil on the grounds of the Bay View Asylum—an illegal act that

prompted sustained complaints but only a delayed action. See City Archives, WPA Files, 1879 (769, 1099).

74. *Sun*, 6 March 1901.

75. Gerald MacDonald, "Politics and Public Works: Baltimore Before Progressivism" (Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering, 1985), p. 39.

76. *Sun*, 2 May 1905.

77. The average per-capita cost of building the sewers was $4, cheaper than cesspool services. For a cost-benefit analysis of public improvements, see Edward H. Meeker, "The Social Rate of Return on Investment in Public Health, 1880-1973," *Journal of Economic History* 34 (1974): 392-421.

78. Crooks, *Politics and Progress*, pp. 145-46.

79. *Sun*, 7 February 1905.

80. Rosen, *Limits of Power*, pp. 271-82, 283, 307.

81. *Sun*, 1 May 1905.

82. Ibid., 29 April 1905.

"Commerce in Souls": Vice, Virtue, and Women's Wage Work in Baltimore, 1900-1915

PAMELA SUSAN HAAG

Baltimoreans animated the summer of 1915 with lurid talk of urban vice and the "ways of immorality." An elite, fourteen-member Maryland Vice Commission[1] had spent three years plumbing the sexual "underworld" of Baltimore's young working women and then cautiously meted out its hefty report to the public. The Maryland commission and forty-three similar committees zealously convened across the nation between 1900 and 1917 ostensibly sought to investigate only "commercialized vice." Yet Maryland's investigators, at least, found that "the new methods of dress and make-up on some women's and girl's faces, together with their actions," prevented the commissioners from differentiating "the streetwalker from the respectable girl."[2]

Consequently members of the commission cast a probing eye across the entire landscape of women's work and leisure. They diligently catalogued not only the unabashedly "fallen" brothel "inmate" who "loved the society of real sports" and was "just out for the coin," but also the seventeen-year-old salesgirl "E.S.," who merely "flirted with every man in sight" and had "plenty of new clothes." They recounted trips to "questionable" shore parks that boasted vaudeville stages, well-supplied drinking pavilions and Turkish theaters—hang outs for girls who worked in day time and went out at night—where "all sorts of smutty and suggestive dances are permitted" and girls eventually "wander out into the woods for sexual relations." They expressed outrage at the novel practice of throwing "parties," where women and men would drink a great deal and engage in "unrestricted and promiscuous behavior." In short, the commission "exposed" a robust sexual tableau that seemed to involve virtually all young women and gave Baltimoreans much to whisper, worry, and write about.[3] Baltimore's eight-hundred-page vice report contributed modestly to the almost one billion pages written on "vice" nationwide between 1900 and 1920. Never before had prostitution ignited such an explosion of widely-circulated, sensational tales. As an observer noted in 1921, "it was not until the early years of the twentieth century that the whole country awoke to the disgrace of a system of commercialized vice."[4] A pattern of polite neglect had prevailed through most of the previous century.[5] What suddenly prompted reformers' interest in the plight of a marginalized, socially alienated element of Baltimore's

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Ms. Haag, a Baltimore native, has begun work on her doctoral dissertation in history at Yale University.

population; why did the Maryland vice commission construe "prostitution" and sexual commerce in such inclusive—and imprecise—terms?

Progressive reformers "discovered" prostitution when a growing and flamboyant population of middle-class, "respectable" young women—often newly-emigrated from Maryland's rural regions—began to engage in wage labor for consolidated industries and postpone reproductive labor expected in marriage. For a generation of elite reformers who defined "respectable" femininity rather rigidly as motherhood and wifehood and suspected laboring women of being promiscuous or dangerously sexual,[6] the difference between earning a wage in a factory and earning a fee for prostitution was by no means obvious. Indeed, Progressives in the early 1900s attempted to clarify and redefine, by such means as Baltimore's vice crusade, virtue in a "modern manner."

Victorian conceptions of the "scarlet woman," foundered in the drastically transformed urban culture that reform-minded Baltimoreans confronted in the early twentieth century. With a population of 450,000—a 100 percent increase from 1870—Baltimore in 1913 displayed a panoply of cultures and "public women," female wage earners who walked the streets, socialized in dance halls and alleyways, adorned themselves with make-up and, with these traits, complicated the urban middle class's attempts to understand their morality with the anachronistic nineteenth-century terms of virtue and vice. As one Baltimorean observed in 1914, "the street is the social meeting place... It is the playground...its glitter and glare, its lights and shadow...attract boys and girls.... The call of the street is irresistible."[7]

Progressive reformers—all college-educated, predominantly of the professional or entrepreneurial classes, dramatically represented in Baltimore's *Social Register*—found Baltimore's newly incorporated economy and the "lights and shadows" it generated profoundly disturbing and compelling. To the professional or independent businessman, the industrial sector embodied simultaneously the city's hopes for healthy development and the threat that the consolidation of capital through incorporation and the profits of mass production would deny the middle class financial and, by extension, political or social sovereignty. Hence Progressives envisioned a militaristic opposition between themselves and retailers such as Louis Stewart, who had amassed fortunes rapidly, even mercilessly, in the waning days of Gilded age prosperity and speculation. The father of Stewart's department stores, Eliot Samuel Posner, first established a neighborhood notion and dry goods store in 1875. By 1891 he was able to open a new store downtown, for which he gratefully thanked the public in a newspaper advertisement. "We are, have always been, the devoted servers of your interest," Posner declared. "We deem it a duty to confer with you, since your best good is interwoven with our own far more than the vine is wound about the oak."[8] When in 1901 Louis Stewart purchased and incorporated Posner's downtown store, however, the vine loosened from the public

oak until in 1902 the store had become a subsidiary of the Associated Merchants Company and, fourteen years later, the National Dry Goods Association. As Baltimore's elite realized, the number of "independent businessmen" in the city had dwindled. This distressing trend colored almost every reform effort of the Baltimore Progressive alliance, including the anti-vice campaign.

During the tumultuous economic expansion of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Baltimore's industrial and corporate growth lagged behind that of New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, yet daunting socioeconomic changes did occur in the city. By 1900 Baltimoreans had invested an estimated $100 million in Southern railroads (Baltimore had been dubbed the commercial "Gateway to the South"), streetcars, cotton mills, coal, iron, and municipalities. Twenty-three oyster-packing companies formed the first Baltimore corporation in 1878, intent on abolishing price-cutting and competition. Between 1881 and 1890, the number of corporations soared from thirty-nine to ninety-seven. By 1905 17.3 percent (374) of all industrial establishments had incorporated. Together they produced 52 percent of the city's goods and employed 50 percent of the working population.[9]

Particularly vibrant industries included tobacco foundry work, tobacco processing, canning, and clothing production. As these businesses relentlessly competed with New York for the West Coast market, they mushroomed into many-storied factories with hundreds of workers. H. Sonneborn and Company, clothing manufacturers, employed roughly 2,500 workers in an eight-story downtown factory; Bethlehem Steel engaged 2,000 male workers; tin manufacturers Matthai, Ingram and Co. operated a 617-acre factory in South Baltimore, and A. Booth and Co., another clothing manufacturer, employed 1,100 workers. Sprawling industrial plants "developing in a haphazard way," according to one 1915 survey, supplanted the waterfront homes of "old seafaring families" who had evacuated to the upland districts. As with the Stewart's retailing chain, local companies also came under national jurisdiction, an even more ominous trend than local consolidation. Standard Oil, for example, effected an 1877 merger of almost every city refinery into the Baltimore United Oil Company, further mocking the community's capacity to regulate its economic and political future. The reordering and consolidation of Baltimore's social and economic landscape led reformers to ask, "would a fairly simple soul who tended to a machine all day long...be the same...lover of his God that he had been when he patiently carved or fashioned a pair of shoes?" An 1897 Baltimore *Sun* editorial answered negatively that monopolies were hostile to the "best interest of American life."[10]

The Sun's idealized "American life" included a world in which middle-class women, at least, escaped wage labor and the sentence of "becoming only machine[s] capable of so much net product." In addition to immigration, 11 mechanized production sparked an exodus—especially in Maryland—of women from rural regions into the city and factories where they became menial laborers. By 1900 48 percent of Baltimore's industries had been mechanized, and most of these businesses employed women as machinists. Known as "working girls," "women adrift," or "homeless women," white female laborers assumed a visible role in Baltimore's

"public" sphere during the early 1900s. Thirty percent of Baltimore's female workers were women who had left their families to find room and board in the city. Supporting themselves and often sending money to their families, these women were to be found in any industry where the work was light and consisted of a series of regular, simple operations. In canning factories women far exceeded the number of men due to the simplicity of mechanized can production and labelling. Similarly, the use of a cigar mold to streamline production opened the way for Baltimore tobacco factories to employ women as a cheap source of labor. The female to male ratio in Baltimore's tobacco factories leapt from 1:10 in 1880 to 1:2 in 1900, and by 1912, women occupied 40 percent of the cigar and cigarette making jobs. The largest Baltimore industry, men's apparel, usurped a high percentage of the female labor force as the city embraced the "Boston system" of production by which whole garments were manufactured in one factory. Shirt manufacturers divided production into fourteen discrete operations performed by a population of 14,000 working women and girls. Alluring department stores and office buildings employed over 1,500 women as well.[12]

Seasonal employment for women included oyster shucking. "The oyster shucking women are a very hard working, good tempered, not very clean community," commented one observer. "Their morals are not very strict, if their conversation is a criterion." For most unskilled jobs the average daily wage hovered around $1.25, although women uniformly earned less than men.[13]

The immigrant woman might have preferred working for exploitative wages as low as $1.00 per day to conditions in Europe. One Baltimore woman recalled, "The Polish women practically worked for nothing. But they were doing a hell of a sight better than in Poland...they all said so!" In winter and spring the women shucked oysters on Fell Street, and in summer they skimmed tomatoes brought in from Pennsylvania. To the native woman, work outside of the home, however monotonous or taxing, might have inspired ambitions of economic achievement. For older women with children to support, prospects for economic security appeared bleaker, as they struggled to integrate the care of their children with wage work. In one vegetable industry where men, women, and children—"laughing and singing"—worked together, women often nursed their offspring "while hulling peas for their own living."[14]

Although many of Baltimore's native-born working girls continued to board with their parents, often at a cost of one to three dollars a week, an increasingly noticeable percentage took up residence with friends or alone, perhaps in one of the city's "furnished rooms" that the commission feared encouraged immorality. "E.B.," for example, a twenty-two-year-old sales clerk, had emigrated from rural Maryland because her parents opposed her engagement. She never married her fiancé, however, and earned six dollars a week at a department store, out of which she paid three dollars and fifty cents for a furnished room. Her workday ran from 8:00 A.M. to 8:25 P.M., broken by a half-hour lunch break in which employees used to dance until they became "so free and vulgar in their movements" that management put a stop to the ritual. One-third of E.B.'s colleagues were recent im-

migrants, and there were a few older, divorced or married women. According to one exasperated investigator, "clothes formed the principle object of conversation (punctuated with vulgarity) among them, with men for an occasional change." In the evenings and on Sundays E.B. and her counterparts frequented public and private shore parks as well as the much-talked-of dance halls, where the commission surmised that E.B. supplanted her income by going out with men: "She says she would rather starve than not dress well."[15]

It is important to place the 1913 Maryland vice investigation in historical context because the social reformers' goal in the anti-prostitution campaign mirrored and stemmed from their larger goal of battling the reign of capital and the "parasitic" urban structures that made its acquisition so easy. As the Baltimore Women's Civic League proclaimed in its opening meeting on 5 April 1911, the Progressives had initiated the "Crusade Against Ugliness: The organization of the Civic Association marks an epoch in American development, the coming of the time when the reign of the almighty dollar is to be disputed by the love of beauty." To the Progressive sensibility, nothing provided a more effective or lurid object lesson on the general tyranny of the "almighty dollar" in the age of consolidated capital than the corruption of female virtue endemic to the red-light district. The prostitute's world had changed in step with the industrialist's, and by 1900 a system of commercialized vice had permanently displaced the unorganized, comparatively solitary solicitation of centuries before. Progressives feared that a "corporate merger" between saloon owners, merchants, dance hall workers, cab drivers and so on had created a protective wall about the "commerce in souls" and blurred the boundaries between respectable and illicit female labor. Baltimore's reformers sustained an interest in vice precisely because they conceived of prostitution on the one hand and female, waged labor in massive, impersonal work environments on the other as structurally identical examples of femininity commodified and feminine virtue corrupted.[16]

The Maryland Vice Commission included four doctors—chairman George Walker, J. M. T. Finney, William Howell, and Women's League member Lillian Welsh—lawyer Louis Levin and several Baltimore businessmen, including Frederick Gottlieb and Simon Stein. Other participants included Anna Herkner, Jesse Brown, Walter Denny, George Dimling, J. W. Magruder and Howard Schwarz. Rockefeller Foundation member George Kneeland, chairman of the "Committee of Fourteen" that investigated prostitution in New York City, wrote the precedent vice commission report (*Commercialized Vice in New York City*) and in 1913 piloted the Maryland Vice Commission as well. Kneeland construed vice in New York as a corporate malaise, a social evil organizationally and structurally linked to the greediness of "big business." His report sensationally concluded not only that prostitution had become a business, its "army of women" exploited in "a thoroughly business-like way," but that "no legitimate enterprise is more shrewdly managed" or adjusts more promptly to conditions. The hierarchy of managers, owners, and prostitutes

Women at work, office of Gardiner's Dairy, Baltimore, ca. 1917. (Maryland Historical Society.)

in a certain vice district of Manhattan, in Kneeland's description, produced extraordinarily high returns for the man who proved capable of maintaining business conditions. "The King," as Kneeland described him, presided over a group consisting of thirty-eight men who owned and operated twenty-eight one-dollar houses. The profits collected from the prostitution cooperative, Kneeland calculated, "are sufficiently staggering," hovering somewhere around $325 per week per house in the region. If the houses investigated comprised even half of the total number, roughly $2 million each year would be paid to the inmates, half of which was turned over to the house.[17]

Conditions in Baltimore were not so extreme, yet they grew in proportion to Baltimore's corporate-industrial development. Perhaps due to Kneeland's presence on the Maryland Vice Commission, the theme of repudiating the corporate structure that defined the New York report anchored the Baltimore study as well. The commission noted that in Baltimore, too, vice had become a consolidated enterprise. In the eastern and western red-light districts, situated on Fleet and Josephine streets, respectively, one man owned thirteen brothels at an average cost of twenty-two dollars a month, two other men jointly owned five houses, two women owned four houses, and one woman owned two houses. Between 1900 and 1903, in contrast, Baltimore had sported 350 separate houses with a total of 1,400 "inmates."[18]

Maryland's vice commission exhibited an obsessive interest in the apparent lawlessness generated by the simultaneous consolidation of the vice enterprise and

Baltimore's "legitimate" industries and viewed the regions as geographically interlocked. Investigators surmised that places of female employment in Baltimore—chiefly clothing, canning, or cigar factories and department stores—dotted the path to the vice district. Baltimore Progressive journalist E. Cookman Baker described what he perceived as the perilous merger of the female laborer's and the prostitute's world: "The streets upon which these houses of shame are located are near the playgrounds of the poor...and through these streets the factory girls pass to and from their work.... Many fall, to rise no more to the things that are pure and good." Baker and his contemporaries objected not primarily to the existence of vice but to its reconfiguration as an inescapable fixture of Baltimore's geography, one that their idealized "virtuous young woman" confronted each day and to which she would invariably succumb.[19]

The commission feared, however, that structural similarities between vice and women's work extended beyond the geographic. Investigators finally condemned both the corporate boss and the brothel madam for "capitalizing" on commodified womanhood. The Maryland commission reported that "there are many safe and 'respectable' persons and institutions who, as this investigation shows...contribute to the existence of the system." Madams, in short, were only as successful as the "legitimate" entrepreneurs they cajoled into supporting their trade. Like the business profiteer, madams who colluded with merchants to effect mergers in the red-light districts most "willfully and maniacally converted the wretchedest of all bargains between men and women into an organized industry."[20]

The vice commission portrayed the madam—usually thirty to fifty years old and "herself a former inmate"—as a figure entirely beyond redemption. "We are disposed to believe that there does not exist a more shrewd, callous and rapacious type," the commission stated, although it gestured at the few madams they judged "kindly and motherly." The madam attended to the daily operation of the house, an endless routine that allowed for few activities "outside of [her] miserable trade," and remained in the trade until forced to retire due to sheer decrepitude. "One," the commission noted,"a poor fat, old rheumatic, [was] still hobbling about with painful stiffened joints and grabbing at the few quarters which the girls hand her." If not begging their subsistence, they might "marry worthless men and spend the rest of their lives quarreling." Paradoxically, the commission also surmised that madams frequently became solvent through their profession. Out of her career, the investigators estimated, a madam might save as much as $100,000 if she operated one of the better houses that cleared up to $200 to $250 a week. One madam who owned three houses with ten girls claimed that each prostitute averaged four men a night and earned $20 per day, of which the madam exacted one-half of the total earnings. Fifty-cent or one-dollar houses cleared $75 a week after they paid $6 in rent, $14 for a servant, and $5 for gas and electricity.

In their greedy indifference to the "cost in humanity" of financial profit, admonished the commission, madams embodied in a more dramatic form the values of a corporate economy and society at large, kept running by (male) profiteers. National commentators tended to poise an unprincipled male alliance

FASHIONABLY GOWNED WOMEN FACILITATE THE ENTRANCE INTO THIS COUNTRY OF GIRLS WHO TRAVEL SECOND CLASS ON THE BIG ATLANTIC LINERS.

"Fashionably Dressed Women Facilitate the Entrance into This Country of Girls Who Travel Second Class on the Big Atlantic Liners." Illustration by William Oberhardt from "The Girl that Disappears: The Real Facts About the Social Problem—the Extent of the White-Slave Traffic." *Hampton's Magazine*, 25 (1910): 563. (Enoch Pratt Free Library.)

of pimps, merchants and liquor dealers against the victimized "girl" who produced barely a subsistence from the "cold-blooded traffic." In contrast, Baltimore's investigators ascribed the commercial structure of vice to the madam's cunning, yet they simultaneously preserved their belief in a naturally gentle—and easily beguiled—feminine disposition by treating the shrewd madam as a mutant strain of womanhood: she appeared most often as the ominous androgyne who snared girls into lives of debauchery. Whereas the prostitute was the "girl," the madam was the "old rheumatic," one of the "more intelligent few," one of a "few individuals," a "former inmate," or the "most rapacious type." In effect, she was the (male) "overseer," evocative of exploitative entrepreneurs more broadly construed.[22]

The starkest links between the "legitimate" economy and the sex economy surfaced when the madam sought to procure fresh "inmates" for the brothel. It was "her business to acquire and to exhibit the youngest and most innocent girls," the commission said, because the greater the girl's "charm or delicacy, the greater profit she can yield." Once under her "sinister subjection" the madam ensured that "captured" girls were on hand for clients. The commission did not specify the means of procurement, although one madam, who "had no reason to tell anything which was not true," recalled that during her career in the brothel six to eight men

came to her house every week and offered to furnish girls at a price ranging from ten to fifty dollars. In keeping with the rapid in-state migration to Baltimore in the 1910s, the Maryland commission speculated that madams might procure inmates from rural areas by "picturing to the country girl the ease of the life to which they invite her."[23]

The commission surmised, however, that most recruitment took place at the confused intersection of legitimate wage work and the "underground" economy with its allure of rapid profit, and in so theorizing conflated the persona of the madam with that of the corporate boss. In some cases, madams apparently cultivated literal bonds with managers or owners of factories and stores employing young women. Two men in an unnamed Baltimore "firm," the commission reported, colluded with a madam who had "free reign over department store girls. Recently she came twice on one day and openly admired one of the young girls and complimented her on her beauty." Alternatively, a madam might wander through stores and lure saleswomen into "the life" with promises of fingers "loaded with diamonds" and "rich men who would give her money and presents,"[24] according to the commission's report.

Even if owners or managers did not explicitly create partnerships with madams, the commission implicated them in the vice enterprise, insofar as any suspected sexual transgression or interchange between female employee and boss constituted either a form of prostitution or a prelude to the girl's eventual demise. By this device, the commission identified all bosses as madams, all employees as potential if not actual prostitutes, and all madams as paradigmatic of exploitative bosses. One firm, for example, consisted of five men, two of whom "very much frightened" the female employees: "As soon as one of these men entered the store," the commission reported, "word is passed around among the girls and they are all on the lookout." In several department stores employers purportedly tried to induce "nice girls" to go out with them, sometimes under the promise of presents or increased wages. Floorwalkers and buyers, especially, raised suspicions. "Floorwalker X" had been married three times and called department store girls "dearie or sweetie," although the girls "do not seem to think anything is meant by this freshness, and say he treats them kindly."[25]

Before even confronting the perils of the licentious department store, girls might have fallen victim to unscrupulous employment agencies or middlemen that for a fee of one dollar, would help convert "an innocent girl into a prostitute." The commission concluded, perhaps hastily, that above-ground agencies in the city only placed male workers—employment agencies presumed that women who inquired for "work" implicitly meant or would accept the job of prostitution. The commission accused hotel and office workers, particularly "negro janitors," as independently facilitating procurement as well. One hotel janitor maintained a list of girls on whom he could call when he had a guest or customer at the hotel who requested a prostitute. Bellboys offered similar lists, one commenting, "last year there were a number of...women who came to the hotel and gave their names and addresses, so that [I] might arrange a meeting with a man for them."[26]

A motley cast of secondary exploiters shared the ill-gotten profits of commodified womanhood—male procurers, female procurers, cab drivers who lured visiting women into the district, merchants who colluded with madams to overcharge prostitutes, and druggists who offered fraudulent remedies for pregnancy or venereal disease. As with the division of labor in the factory, each of these characters (the "bosses" in the vice system) reaped some profit from the ignorance of female underlings and the abuse of women's productive energies.

Significantly, the commission cited their interviews with local merchants as "one of the most surprising and painful discoveries of the whole investigation" because "most of the merchants in the city [proved] willing to enter into an agreement...whereby a defenseless group is outrageously cheated." Investigators posing as madams proposed to all the leading merchants of the city that they overcharge prostitutes for clothes on a kick-back basis. Of the interviews conducted, only seven out of sixty merchants "flatly refused" the offer, thus substantiating the reformer's pervasive fear that Baltimore's collective quest for the "almighty dollar" had superseded "the love of beauty." One investigator reported that merchant "M.B.Y." "said if she didn't accept my offer, somebody else would, probably some rich Jew who did not need the money as badly as she did. She herself was a perfectly moral woman, but in a strictly business matter she thought her dealing with my class of women was justified." M.A.M. responded that "he would add 20 percent to all gowns made. He asked me whether the girls looked and acted like ladies, because he would not want his fashionable trade to know he did business with the 'sporting class.' He said of course one person's money is as good as another and he would be glad to have my trade."[27] From these exchanges the commission surmised that leading merchants colluded with madams to such an extent that their "legitimate" business interests had seamlessly fused with the corrupt.

The vice commission's investigation of "business conditions" in Baltimore suggested that institutions buttressing vice embraced the entire spectrum of the consolidated urban economy, and that employers who utilized female productive energies for profit often explicitly colluded with madams in "shamelessly exploiting women" for illegitimate financial gain. More interestingly, however, the commission situated female wage work along a continuum of vice-related activities, such that the salesgirl who endured a floorwalker's "suggestive comments" was judged to be involved in an exploitative sexual transgression vaguely linked or preparatory to prostitution. Finally, it shifted the definitional boundaries of "vice" from a sexual barter or exchange for explicit financial reward to any morally or sexually ambiguous interaction that occurred as women participated in the wage or market economy. In sum, the reformer's treatment of employment conditions in Baltimore both literally and figuratively conflated structures of "legitimate" business enterprise with the illegitimate red-light industry.

Reginald Kauffman's *The House of Bondage*, a muckraking novel that went through four editions in the early 1900s, explicitly and sensationally made the connection between feminine virtue, prostitution, "wage slavery," and an unprotective, corporate culture which the Maryland commission described in more

cautious terms. "Anything like financial independence was...impossible" in the brothel, Kauffman wrote, for "the slaves of [the madams] were as much slaves as any mutilated black man of the Congo or any toiling white man of the factory.... The social system was too mighty. [The prostitute] could not prevail against it."[28] Although Progressive reformers averred from any explicit critique of capitalism, they consistently characterized prostitutes as ensnared in the same expansive net of social ills that entrapped the working girl, and more generally assumed that any female productive labor commodified women's sexual nature and thus paid a "wage of sin." Reformers cared about the prostitute in large part not because they viewed her as metaphorically similar to female workers but rather because they did not perceive many meaningful, literal distinctions between the structures of urban sexual commerce and other degrading forms of women's wage work.

Young women's uses of their bodies as marketable objects, whether in the brothel or the factory, profoundly disrupted Victorian, middle-class gender identities, which were predicated on a separation between the "public," where men labored, and the privatized feminine domain of the family—a haven from the heartless world of the labor market. Because reformers had few means by which to understand the moral implications of "respectable," middle-class women "working out," they tended to evaluate and define women's experiences in all work environments through the prism of prostitution, assuming that any wage-paying work for young women entailed their sexual commodification and subsequent "dehumanization." Social reformer Anne Brown, for instance, characterized the "evil" of both prostitution and women's work as one of "impersonality—the regarding of persons as things."[29]

In the act of utilizing their labor power for discrete, mechanical tasks, women relinquished what to the Victorian sensibility had always made them human—their identities as mothers and wives rather than laborers. As Margaret Drier charged in 1914, the working girl, modelling herself after the prostitute, "found it easy to do as the unmoral kind had always done—she entered into the barter and sale of [herself] for an income."[30]

Because they viewed prostitution as the metaphor for women's work in the public sphere, members of Maryland's vice commission devoted two volumes of their report solely to the "industrial conditions" in Baltimore that purportedly encouraged vice and nebulous "moral lapses" among women workers. Without question, below-subsistence wages in department stores and tobacco factories prompted many young women living away from home to at least occasionally accept money or gifts from "fellows" in order to make ends meet or simply to enjoy an evening of "city pleasures" that would break monotonous work routines. Baltimore's investigators explicitly rejected primarily attributing young women's moral failings to dangerously unfair wages, however. Instead the commission

"exposed" subtler causes of vice they viewed as intrinsic to the types of work and work environments created by factory production and consolidated industry.[31]

The commission conducted an exhaustive investigation of places employing women to illustrate what they saw as the conflation of overt prostitution and "respectable" work. Office work especially outraged Baltimore's reformers as an insidiously-disguised prostitution. "We found nothing more reprehensible than some of the immoral practices of a number of Baltimore's esteemed and prominent business men," the commission reported. "The practices of the red-light district are pale and mild compared to the acts of these Christian gentlemen." An "attorney of some prominence," for example, had told an investigator that he would not hire a girl unless he could "have relations" with her, and female office workers interviewed often reported having affairs with executives. "S.O.N.," a private secretary earning seven dollars a week, "had additional income from a businessman in her building," who gave her money and sent her roses. "They have been together to dinner at the Madison," an investigator recounted, and the "girl knows all about the private places in Baltimore."[32] An employer's "seductive" behavior toward a secretary might today constitute sexual harassment because the meanings of women's jobs are more carefully drawn and distinguished from the explicitly sexual labor of prostitution. Baltimore's reformers in the early twentieth century, however, made few meanigful distinctions between women's work and sexual barter. Investigators characterized the office affair as indigenous to the work environment itself—a "commercial bargain [in which] one buys what the other has to sell...until the commodity diminishes in value." By the same logic, waitressing appeared a dangerously imprecise profession to investigators, who speculated that the ambiguous meanings of "tips" and "gifts" from customers presented "an open door to immorality." Waitress "R.B.N." had been taken out twice for "immoral purposes" by men who frequented her restaurant, and she knew about contraception.[33]

Waitressing and office work, however, absorbed a comparatively select subgroup of Baltimore's female working population. By 1915 Baltimore boasted several mammoth department stores that satisfied an extravagant array of needs and whims. The commission examined three stores, each employing from six hundred to seven hundred young women, who would parade out of work at 10 P.M. on Saturday nights "all dolled up to meet men at the front door to accompany them to dance halls." Department stores "seduced and endangered" Baltimore's young women, the commission theorized, because they chaotically confused social boundaries. The salesgirl each day fondled beguiling, luxurious merchandise she could ill afford, women worked closely with male store managers, "the colored help ate in the same room with white people," women's dressing rooms were congested, and "on bargain days there is a rush of all kinds of people" who exposed young women to relentless sexual temptation. "The men are seen, more or less openly, to handle the girls in the most disgusting and vulgar fashion and are never called down," the commission decried. Telephone exchanges in public places, similarly,

threw "the operator into contact with a number of men," such that the women "are known to be more or less immoral."[34]

Even sex-segregated, enclosed work environments ignited investigators' suspicions. Baltimore's tobacco factories, employing over three thousand women, permitted "hardened" older women to mingle with—and finally corrupt—the young. "A woman employed in the factory says that she has worked with common prostitutes but has never heard them talk as do these young girls," the commission reported. Nearly all the girls adorned themselves with jewelry that they wore very conspicuously and tirelessly recounted "which pieces were given them by individual men in much the same fashion as an Indian displays the scalps in his belt." By conflating the tobacco operative's "leisure" activities—her mercenary "scalping" of men—with her factory labors, the commission underscored that even work as regimented and ostensibly unambiguous as tobacco processing existed along a spectrum of urban sexual commerce, and that the blending of classes and moral "types" in the workplace encouraged eventual overt prostitution.[35]

It bears emphasis that Baltimore's reformers did not enthusiastically endorse the popular and statistically evident conclusion that low wages encouraged women's "bartering" with men for dinners, gifts and, sometimes, explicit monetary reward. Instead, investigators condemned the very phenomenon of women's wage work—however generously remunerated—produced by consolidated capital and large-scale industry. Office workers, waitresses, salesgirls and telephone operators often fulfilled such diffuse and ill-specified tasks for employers that the commission probably correctly identified a nebulous grey area between wage work and sexual work characteristic of Baltimore's emerging "service" industries in the early 1900s. Significantly, however, investigators defined "pay" in such all-inclusive terms (e.g., from explicit wages to "gifts" such as dinners and roses) that they effectively erased differences between "legitimate" wages and the "wages of sin." Along these lines, they also described all premarital sexual relationships as entailing some form of economic exchange in which the woman accrued a wage, however intangible, for her "services." Office worker "Miss N," for example, who worked for a prominent businessman downtown, reported that her boss had given her a diamond ring and taken her out several times to dinner.[36] Because Baltimore's elite reformers had difficulty envisioning a sexual practice—today recognized as "dating"— between the extremities of prostitution and the wifehood-motherhood tandem, they could only view "Miss N's" affair as a commercialized sexual exchange. The practice of dating may have begun with the urban working class in the early 1900s, but it would not emerge as a sanctioned cultural institution until the late 1920s.

Although reformers generally did not recognize distinctions between prostitution and dating, or leisure activities and the "workaday world," Baltimore's young working women upheld their own criterion of vice and virtue, one that distinguished between prostitution and having a "fellow" on precisely the grounds that if a woman labored, her wage derived only from her job, and her activities in amusement parks, dance halls, and saloons constituted a realm of pleasures distinct from "work" altogether.

One investigator, stationed at an amusement park on the Back River, recorded the nuances of an exchange with a "charity girl," the commission's label for women who consented to sexual relations for little or no reward aside from perhaps an "ice cream or a glass of beer." The woman invited the investigator to go out with her one afternoon, and when he "asked her price," she seemed quite upset, and said, "I'm no common whore. I'm not looking for money," and hinted that she might accept a dress. For this young woman, "gifts" and presents constituted morally legitimate tokens of affection from men, stridently demarcated from monetary payments gained through the woman's "real" work in a department store. In distinguishing between salaries and gifts or "treats," women construed their sexual relations in terms subtler than the Progressive's dichotomy. For them, Baltimore's dance halls and parks created a third, sexually exciting realm separate from both the (private) family and the (public) workplace. Mazie, a twenty-one-year-old cigar maker, assured an investigator that although her "fellow" might buy her a drink or treat her, "she had never taken a cent in [her] life" and merely had a "regular Saturday night friend to dance with." "O.R.Y," employed as a hatter, went with boys two or three times a week, and saw that she'd never get a dance partner if she "went around prim." She underscored, however, that she "could not pick up the nerve to ask for money," because then—and presumably only then—"the fellows put you down as a 'whore.'"[37]

In their analysis of the sexual economy, Baltimore's reformers assigned moral meanings to various forms of female labor and leisure in an economically transformed city. Their tales of moral peril and demise implicitly reaffirmed marriage and motherhood as appropriate, "safe" arenas for women's labors. Meanwhile, their conflation of various forms of female wage labor, from prostitution to retail sales, redefined "prostitution" as a phenomenon endemic to any contractual relations between men and women outside of the marital contract. Significantly, the Progressives depicted the difference between legitimate and illicit female employment as one of degree rather than kind. Although the prostitute was more dramatically marginalized from proper society, the working woman also suffered the demoralizing effects of "industrial" prostitution. The anti-vice investigation of Baltimore's most marginalized women, then, ironically led reformers back to the heart of the city's socioeconomic transformation—it expressed larger anxieties concerning the implications of women's wage work in the transitional period from a Victorian middle-class morality based on the "cult of domesticity" to a sexual morality more characteristic of life in the "modern manner." As the Maryland vice crusade illustrates, a city's response to economic change and class reconfigurations always involves an attempt to reconcile pre-existing notions of social order—principally, ideas of appropriate gender roles and gendered notions of "work"—with material exigencies that often render these ideals unrealistic and contestable.

NOTES

1. The Maryland anti-vice campaign was part of the larger "progressive" political agenda. Progressives, both in Baltimore and nationwide, were a comparatively elite group of businessmen and members of the emerging professional classes concerned with the erosion of traditional sources of economic and moral authority in the cities. Although profoundly ambiguous, Progressives tended toward anticorporatism and proclaimed themselves champions of the struggling entrepreneurial classes. Their social causes included fair wages, black rights, labor reform, public utilities laws and pure food acts. Although the Baltimore Social Register listed only 1.2 percent of the city's total population, it provided 59 percent of the Progressive reform leaders, 77 percent of whom were "old stock" (at least third-generation) Americans. All white and 73 percent Protestant, Progressive leaders in Maryland were mostly native Baltimoreans. Seventy percent had college degrees and 68 percent advanced degrees—often in law and medicine—in an era when only 4 percent of American people attended any college at all. Of the twenty-eight women predominant in the movement, 61 percent were listed on the social register and had careers as doctors, nurses, teachers or social workers. See James B. Crooks, *Politics and Progress: The Rise of Urban Progressivism in Baltimore, 1895 to 1911* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), and Nicholas Burckel, "Governor Austin Crothers and Progressive Reform in Maryland, 1900-1912," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 74 (1979): 184-201.

2. The Maryland Vice Commission Report, 1915, 5 vols., Enoch Pratt Free Library Archives, 1:375. Hereafter referred to as *MVCR*.

3. *MVCR*, 2:4; 4:68; 3:102.

4. Quoted in Barbara Hobson, *Uneasy Virtue* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), p. 140.

5. A few scholars have perceptively examined prostitution in the nineteenth century, including Timothy Gilfoyle, "Strumpets and Misogynists: Brothel 'Riots' and the Transformation of Prostitution in Antebellum New York City," *New York History*, 68 (1987): 43-67; Christine Stansell, "Men,Women and the Uses of the Streets," *Feminist Studies*, 8 (1982): 311-33; Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1780-1860* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1986); Hobson, *Uneasy Virtue*; and Anne Butler's study of prostitution on the western frontier, *Daughters of Joy, Sisters of Sorrow* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985). Stansell emphasizes prostitution as one of many improvisational means of securing a subsistence practiced by poor women in antebellum New York City. Gilfoyle provides an analysis of prostitution as the locus of middle-class fears concerning women's public persona in mid-nineteenth century New York.

6. On middle-class definitions of femininity and the Victorian "cult of true womanhood," see Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Women's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York 1790-1860* (New York:

Cambridge University Press, 1981); Ryan, *Women in Public* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), and Carroll-Smith Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). Although domesticity, as described in these studies, was idealized by the middle class as the proper feminine realm and indeed the defining characteristic of respectable femininity, women converted this ideology as well to legitimize political and social reform work, an aspect of Victorian gender definitions that this paper will not explore.

7. Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), discusses the geographic and sexual transformation of working-class urban culture in New York City at the turn of the century. My own analysis of working-class leisure in Baltimore draws on some of her observations but will attempt to explain, more precisely, what class-specific ideas of wage work enabled reformers and young working women to develop sometimes radically divergent ideas about sexual virtue and vice. See also William Trufant, *The Social Emergency* (New York: Doubleday Page and Co., 1914), p. 83.

8. Suzanne Ellery Greene, *Baltimore: An Illustrated History* (Woodland Hills, Calif.: Windsor Publications, 1980), p. 82.

9. Charles Hirschfeld, *Baltimore, 1870-1900: Studies in Social History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1941), p. 41.

10. Hirschfeld, *Baltimore*, pp. 77, 82. Gary L. Browne, *Baltimore in the Nation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), argues that the move to upland districts occurred in the early nineteenth century, although observers in 1915 ascribed much of this demographic shift to the sprawl of consolidated industries (Baltimore *Evening Sun*, 2 July 1897).

11. Changes in the corporate-industrial structure spawned population and class reconfigurations as well. From 1870 to 1900, Baltimore's population increased by 100 percent to 450,000. Less than 10 percent of the population had been born abroad, a characteristic unique to Baltimore. Of the immigrant population, Germans predominated until the 1910s, when the "new" immigration from southern and Eastern Europe became evident. The state Bureau of Industrial Statistics in 1912 reported that of 28,357 immigrants to arrive at the Port of Baltimore, 15,105, or 53 percent, were Russian. Significantly, comparatively few immigrants actually settled in Baltimore—most sought greater economic opportunities in the larger northern cities or the West. Only 2,552 immigrants arriving in 1912 gave Baltimore as their final destination, 666 of whom were categorized as "Hebrew" and 323 "Russian."

12. Hirschfeld, *Baltimore*, p. 47, Linda Weiner, *From Working Girl to Working Mother* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), p. 13; State of Maryland, Bureau of Industrial Statistics, *Report*, 1912, p. 74. For more information on women's labors in Baltimore, see Roderick Ryon, "'Human Creatures' Lives': Baltimore Women and Work in Factories, 1880-1917," *Maryland Historical Magazine, 83 (1988): 346-65.*

13. Hirschfeld, *Baltimore*, p. 59; Bureau of Industrial Statistics, *Report*, 1912, p. 64; see also State of Maryland, *Industrial Survey of Baltimore*, 1915.

14. Theodore W. Durr, *Baltimore People, Baltimore Places* (Baltimore: University of Baltimore, 1980), p. 60.

15. MVCR, 2:11, 15, 17. On working women in the early 1900s more generally, see especially Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), and Sarah Eisenstein, *Give Us Bread But Give Us Roses* (London: RKP, 1983).

16. "The Women's Civic League, 1911" scrapbook, box 17, Warfield Papers, Johns Hopkins University Archives, Baltimore. Ruth Rosen, *The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), and Mark Conolly, *The Response to Prostitution in the Progressive Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), are the two most comprehensive studies of Progressivism and anti-vice. Neither discusses Baltimore specifically. See also Vern Bullough, *Prostitution: A Social History* (New York: Crown Publishing, 1978), p. 200, and "Man's Commerce in Souls," *McClure's*, 41 (August 1913): 137.

18. *MVCR*, 1:9, 1.

19. E. Cookman Baker, "The Victim" (Baltimore: privately published, 1916).

20. *MVCR*, 1:10.

21. *MVCR*., 10, 12, 13, 9.

22. Clifford Roe, *The Girl Who Disappeared* (Chicago: American Bureau of Moral Education, 1914), p. 72; "The Ways, Wages and Wherefores of the Scarlet Woman," *Hearst's*, 24 (1913): 173; *MVCR*, 1:98, 13.

23. *MVCR*, 1:10, 11, 16, 18.

24. *MVCR*, 2:48; 1:18.

25. *MVCR* 2:14, 3, 27, 37.

26. *MVCR* 2:30, 37.

27. *MVCR* 2:46, 44, 57, 56.

28. Reginald Kauffman, *The House of Bondage* (New Jersey: Gregg Press, 1910), pp. 69, 372.

29. Elizabeth Butler, *Women in the Trades* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1909), p. 61; Anne Brown,"Sex Education at the Y.W.C.A.," *Journal of Social Hygiene*, 1 (1914): 582; Helen Campbell, *Prisoners of Poverty* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1890), p. 354.

30. Margaret Drier, "One Aspect of the Menace of Low Wages," *Journal of Social Hygiene*, 1 (1914): 596.

31. See Kathy Peiss, "'Charity Girls' and City Pleasures," in *The Powers of Desire*, ed. by Christine Stansell and Sharon Thompson (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983), pp.74-87.

32. *MVCR*, 2:95, 97, 99.

33. *MVCR* 2:128, 115.

34. MVCR 2:39, 32, 76.

35. MVCR 2:56.

36. MVCR 2:104. There are numerous other references to "office romance" in volume two.

37. *MVCR* 1:331, 198; 2: 74.

Research Notes & Maryland Miscellany

Gleanings from the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company's Oral History Collection: A Celebration of One Hundred Seventy-Five Years

JOHN T. KING III, Compiler

(*Editor's note*: In the summer of 1816—as many Baltimoreans remember from school-day lessons—Rembrandt Peale advertised in the local newspaper that he had rigged a gas lighting device at the Peales' museum on Holliday Street. Amazingly enough, read the notice, this invention worked without oil, tallow, wicks, or smoke; paintings at the establishment instead were illuminated by a "beset with gems of light." Rembrandt invited the public to visit as often and as long as it took to gratify its curiosity. Among the curious were some persons who were willing to gamble on the long-term value of the flickering gas lights. A group of prominent gentlemen in the city—a newspaper editor, two bankers (one of whom was also a builder), an architect—soon gathered about the young Peale and formed a company to supply Baltimore with this latest convenience, and in February of the following year the General Assembly chartered the Gas Light Company of Baltimore—the country's first gas-utility firm.

The history of the company makes quite a tale of technological improvement, economic clout, and social change—not quite as dramatic, perhaps, as the story of the B&O or the Sunpapers, but equally as important in terms of the everyday lives of people. One can imagine the tricky business of establishing such a company on a profitable (and safe) basis at a time when water piping was made of drilled logs, the practical problems of distance and depth that early workmen had to overcome, and the close relationship between the company's directors and city government. We can suppose that efficient gas lighting led to considerable changes in local industry and in the way Baltimoreans approached and spent time in the evening. How did street lighting affect the city's night life (as well as vice, crime, etc.)? Did after-hours reading increase when one could take up a book without suffering from eyestrain and lantern fumes? How did the leadership of the company steer it

through the rocks and shoals of the Civil War? How exactly did the company manage its merger with the purveyors of electrical power early in this century? How did the revolution that followed in electrical and gas consumer products influence the relationships between men and women and parents and children? How did Consolidated Gas Electric Light and Power (as it was known until April, 1955) adjust to (or encourage) increased demand, keep books and collect bills during the Great Depression, fit itself for the stresses of World War II, and keep pace with rapid change after the war?

These questions and better ones await someone's writing a scholarly history of BG&E. In the meantime, fortunately for us, the company long has been interested in Maryland history, the experience of Baltimore, and the mark the company itself has made in the region. In 1950 the firm published Thomson King's closely focused but highly readable *Consolidated of Baltimore, 1815-1950: A History of Consolidated Gas Electric Light and Power Company of Baltimore*. Thirty years later John T. King III, then executive assistant to the chairman of the board of BG&E, began work on updating the standard account. In talks with the Maryland Historical Society's Betty McKeever Key, who at the time was actively promoting the systematic creation of an oral history archives, Mr. King set about to interview some of the "oldtimers" who had played large roles in the company's history in the early and middle years of this century. He approached executives, engineers, and managers—twenty-two persons in all. He recorded their answers to careful questions and then had the tapes transcribed. A few years ago, Mr. King generously turned over the transcriptions to the library of the society, where they remain available to researchers.

In the pages below are some samplings from this oral history archive, selections that I have chosen to give a flavor of the material and suggest some of the riches it offers persons interested in the technological and social history of the firm. All members of the society owe Mr. King a deep debt of gratitude for his painstaking work in conducting the interviews—pleasant though they no doubt proved to be—and to the Baltimore Gas & Electric Company for its strong, longtime support of research in local history. Congratulations on 175 years!)

Ray C. Dannatel graduated from Baltimore Polytechnic High School in 1920 and then took a job with the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, hoping that fall to enter the Johns Hopkins University engineering school on a senatorial scholarship. He scored first in the qualifying exam, he said in the interview, but because of political "misadjustments" the grant went to another. To his pleasant surprise, the university afterward awarded him a trustees' scholarship. He finished at Hopkins in 1923 and immediately began work at the Gas and Electric Company as a "student electrical" in the Electrical Engineers Department.

King: What drew you to the Gas and Electric Company after you graduated from Johns Hopkins? Why did you come to the Gas and Electric Company? Was

there something that attracted you particularly? You didn't go back to the B&O after you left Johns Hopkins. Did you know anybody here that said there's a job open or something?

Dannatel: No. I made inquiries regarding some of the people that were involved with the then Consolidated Gas Electric Light and Power Company of Baltimore, Incorporated, but I did not know any of them personally. I had references from Dr. Christie, who was our professor in mechanical engineering. He had some indications of the fact that our company would expand. He thought that with the training I had at Hopkins that I might find the Gas and Electric Company an ideal place to apply some of the things that I had learned.

King: So Professor Christie then suggested the Gas and Electric Company to you as a prospective employer.

Dannatel: This was essentially the picture as I remember it. Obviously I was a Baltimore boy, born and raised here, and I wanted to stay in town.

King: That's a consideration.

Dannatel: I had several other suggestions, interviews by representatives of manufacturers like Bailey Meter Company of Cleveland, some of the equipment manufacturers such as General Electric Company, and so forth. But I probably had cemented in my mind that I was going to stay a Baltimorean. Of course, in addition, the lady in whom I was very interested and hoped to make my wife was a Baltimorean. As another interesting sidelight, I was pressured quite strongly by the dean of the engineering school at JHU, Dr. Joseph Ames, to join in research work in aeronautics at the Civil Aeronautic Administration's facilities at Langley Field, Virginia. He was the chairman of the CAA, and as an added enticement he assured me that he would arrange to fly me back to Baltimore every weekend to pursue our courtship. Being aware of the many hazards in air flight at this early time (1923), Dr. Ames generous offer was still insufficient to convince me to join him in this research work....

King: You're now employed by the Gas and Electric Company. I think it would be interesting to know, because your history goes back to 1923, what the developments have been in added generating capacity in our system from 1923, let's say up until about 1940 for the first bite. I know you've prepared some interesting notes on that. Could you put them in the record?

Dannatel: I might start by saying that in the middle half of this twentieth century, we have seen a phenomenal growth in the installation of generating capacity by the company and by all other electric utilities in the United States. As an interesting example, our company's system has grown from about 150,000 kW [kilowatts] of twenty-five-cycle capacity in 1923 to over 5,000,000 kW of sixty-cycle capacity now in service. Today's capacity includes twenty-three steam units and twenty-two relatively small-capacity gas-turbine units and will increase further to over 6 1/4 million kW when the two Brandon Shores units now under construction go into service by the mid '80s, a ratio of more than forty to one. Incidentally, the

maximum size of units installed on the system during this period has also increased more than forty times, from the 20,000 kW Westport units of the '20s to the 825,000 kW nuclear units at Calvert Cliffs in the '70s. With the exception of two units retained for emergency service, all nine units...comprising the 150,000 kW of twenty-five-cycle capacity in 1923 have long since been retired and dismantled.

King: Could I go back a little? When you first came with Baltimore Gas and Electric, Danny, you worked with a Mr. Alden, on some Holtwood work. And I've never really been clear about Holtwood. We were interconnected with them apparently back around 1910 and they added some circuits three or four years later. They put up a steam generating unit there, to use the coal dredged up from the river bed of the Susquehanna. What became of our relationship with Holtwood? You mentioned that we owned two thirds of Safe Harbor; did we ever have any ownership in Holtwood as such?

Dannatel: No, we had no ownership. We contracted back in 1910 for output from the Holtwood Hydro Plant. It was strictly hydro unit generation. This affiliation continued through the years. About the time when we were starting to think about installing a couple of units in a new station at Gould Street, in 1924, more or less coincident with placing nos. 13 and 14 units at Westport into service, we had to interrupt our plans by instructions from our interlocking directorates of the CGEL&PC of Baltimore, Inc., and the Pennsylvania Water and Power Company. We were directed to proceed immediately with design, and assist in many other ways in the installation of a two-unit steam plant adjacent to the hydro station at Holtwood, these two units to be provided with three boilers capable of firing pulverized river bottom anthracite, and also to be capable of quick emergency start-up.

King: Danny, had any other utilities in this country, to your knowledge, reclaimed coal and used it after taking it off river bottoms? Up until Holtwood, that is?

Dannatel: I am not certain whether any other utilities had at that time used river bottom anthracite for power generation.

King: I wondered whether we had anything to guide us, or whether you were essentially doing pioneering engineering work.

Dannatel: It was more or less common knowledge at the time that the practice in the mining of anthracite coal in Pennsylvania, in the vicinity of the Susquehanna River, was such that a lot of the fines resulting from the coal mining operations were not acceptable for domestic consumption. When I say domestic consumption, I mean that in those days many households provided all of their heat by burning anthracite coal.

King: Lumps though, rather than powder?

Dannatel: That's right. And this fine coal was strained out at the mine and was disposed of in enormous culm banks. When we got heavy rains, this culm over the years would wash down into the Susquehanna River and it would come down the river. Finally, it would meet an obstacle like the dam at the Holtwood Steam Station

and later the dam at the Safe Harbor Station. Investigation indicated that there were many thousands of tons of this river bottom anthracite deposited in the Susquehanna River at the Holtwood location, and destined later to be at the Safe Harbor dam. It was the intent of the steam station at Holtwood to use it as a fuel.

King: And your assignment was to do the engineering design and calculations for such a steam station which would burn the fines?

Dannatel: That is correct.

King: When did they complete the steam station?

Dannatel: At the moment I am not sure as to the exact date, but I am going to make a guess that it was either in 1925 or 1926 that the two 12,500-kW units and the complement of three pulverized-coal-fired boilers went into operation at the Holtwood Steam Station.

King: Was that a firming-up operation, so to speak? In other words, did they use the coal operation only when they were not running the water turbines?

Dannatel: Well, in a sense, but with the amount of river-bottom anthracite available, it was probable that these units could be visualized as performing some base-load operation.

King: Whatever happened to that coal burning plant? I guess they've run out of coal by now, haven't they? The environmentalists would never let you release fines into the Susquehanna.

Dannatel: Well, I'm not sure. But later, with opposition by our company and without our permission, and in defiance to our contract with them, which required permission if they were going to extend the plant, they proceeded with the purchase and installation of a third unit at Holtwood Steam Station, which was 60,000 kW in size. As to the Holtwood Steam Station as it exists today, I am not sure whether or not the two 12,500-kW units, which were later stepped up in capacity to an operating rating of 15,000 kW each, are still in service. Holtwood, of course, is now a part of the Pennsylvania Power & Light Company of Allentown, Pennsylvania.

King: Well, certainly the coal in the bottom of the river is running low by now.

Another Baltimore native, Walter H. Volker attended City College and graduated from the electrical engineering program at Johns Hopkins. He joined the company in 1919 and nine years later had risen to foreman of the Kelvinator installation and repair shop. By 1935 he was in charge of the electrical refrigerator and range section—one of the firm's busiest sales departments.

King: Were electric refrigerators the really popular thing that people were buying then?

Volker: You're 100 percent right.

King: Really. It was proved by later experience.

Volker: Mr. Tillman was a brilliant man.

King: And he really emphasized these sales, no doubt.

Volker: First they put Mr. W. C. Walke in charge of that. He was from the power and fuel department and also from the south, a perfect gentleman. He was about your size. Really one of the truest gentleman that I've met in my life. Now, how did they get started? There was a Kelvinator Corp. that opened a distributorship in Baltimore on South Charles Street in about 1924. They were the distributor and we were the dealer. Dorsey Smith was in the picture, because they were going to do this job. I think the story of appliance sales is the most interesting story in the whole Gas and Electric Company from the load building standpoint.

King: Yes. It just skyrocketed.

Volker: It's unbelievable. I don't know what the kilowatt-hour consumption of the average home was in Baltimore, prior to 1920s. You can get that, I'm sure, if you want it.

King: It's probably in Thomson King's book; he has a lot of statistics like that. But it's undoubtedly up by a great multiple of whatever it was then.

Volker: Because in those days most people had about two lights in the house, twenty-five-watt bulbs hanging down on a piece of cord in the kitchen and another in the living room.

King: Single circuit, and it went for lighting, and that was about it. A family might have had a radio, and they might have had an electric iron, and they were just getting into refrigeration.... Then we have Richard Tillman's comments that we had 485 installations of domestic electric ranges. It just sounds like absolutely nothing, but he had confidence in that, too. He thought the design should be improved, and that the cost was rather high compared to other fuels and the cost of other stoves. He thought those would come down and would be good load builders. So he was a good estimator. Did you want to say a little more about refrigeration business? We got into Kelvinators; you were the Kelvinator expert.

Volker: They created a special sales department in the merchandise department to go door-to-door selling refrigerators.

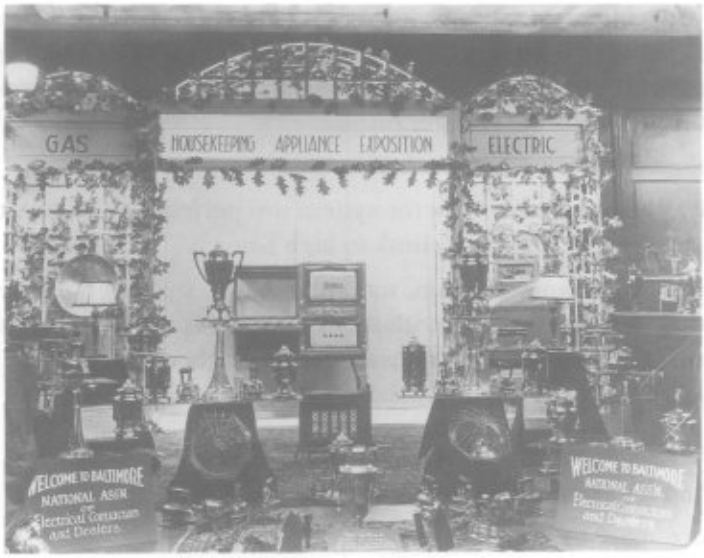
King: This was the cold canvass? You'd ring the doorbell, "Are you interested in a refrigerator, madame?" That sort of selling?

Volker: They consummated the deal with Kelvinator, and Dorsey Smith was a great one for buying carload lots.

King: Did he head the merchandise department at that time when he bought carload lots?

Volker: Yes. They called him Dorsey R. "Discount" Smith because he always had the lowest price. He'd buy a carload of electric fans. It was unheard of. A carload of electric irons.

King: Where did he put all these things?



Housekeeping Appliance Exposition, 1920s. (The Peale Museum, Baltimore City Life Museums.)

Volker: In fact, you couldn't believe it. Well, he bought a great many irons and they drew one thousand watts. People would plug them into the light socket in the kitchen to do their ironing, and they'd burn the wire up that supplied the lights.

King: Sure. It wasn't designed for that kind of resistance.

Volker: It was very dangerous. So Dorsey Smith couldn't do anything about the wire immediately, but he got the manufacturer to make a five-hundred-watt iron. A little slower to finish your ironing, but perfectly safe.

King: It didn't overload the inadequate electric system.

Volker: And you could buy it on your G&E service bill at fifty cents a month. We sold them by the thousands.

King: It's interesting because that's one of the earlier things the company did. We allowed customers to put appliances on their service bills. That goes way back. A lot of people, I'm sure, couldn't buy appliances elsewhere, and would buy them from us for that very reason. Because we were interested in the load building.

Volker: We set a lot of standards. Then back to the refrigerators which in those days were all remote-type jobs. The icebox or refrigerator part of it sat in the kitchen. Then you ran copper tubing from the copper cooling coil in it to the compressor unit that was in the basement.

King: So they were physically separated.

Volker: Oh yes. It took two men a full day to install one of these things. They were all remote jobs, and they were the best that we really ever had in some respects. We'd have to go out and run a separate electrical circuit and also run the

tubing. If you had a good refrigerator, we could put in what was called a brine tank which was filled with what amounted to salt water. It was an antifreeze with no odor because of the refrigeration. Then we hooked that to the compressor. We used sulphur dioxide as the refrigerant.

King: Before freon, or whatever is now used?

Volker: Way before freon. Now the system was perfectly good, but it had to run on a vacuum. When it leaked, it stunk to high heaven.

King: And you lost your vacuum, too. It would've smelled horrible. Well, did this mean that the heat that was withdrawn from your refrigerator was given up in the basement, so it didn't tend to overheat the kitchen?

Volker: Right.

King: So that was an advantage in a way.

Volker: And it gave it much more capacity.

King: More space to use for your refrigeration.

Volker: We put one-quarter horsepower motors on them and they ran an average of about eight hours a day.

King: When did they begin to become an integrated unit? I can remember the ones with the big coil sitting up on the top of the refrigerator.

Volker: Well, about 1930 General Electric came out with their famous birdcage refrigerator. The unit sat on top of the refrigerator. It was an odd looking thing but didn't look too bad. The motor and compressor were enclosed in a steel shell, and around the outside of it were spiral coils which made up the condenser. That's where they got rid of the heat. Then it was mounted on the platform, and the top of the refrigerator itself had no ceiling in it. It had an open hole.

King: So the motor-compressor unit was sunk into the refrigerator. The cooling unit within the refrigerator and the motor and compressor above it were unitized. And the entire top assembly or unit could be removed as a single piece and replaced by another assembly unit. When would that have been?

Volker: 1930. At that time Dr. Sebastian Karrer was the manager of the research department of the company. We had our own research department.

King: Did he do some work on refrigeration? Design and so on?

Volker: Yes. They did a lot of work down there because the compressor seals on the Kelvinator were very troublesome. They would leak gas out, suck air in, and corrode the entire system. Then you had an expensive repair job. If the Kelvinator stayed gas-tight, it would run forever because the bearings were big enough for a two-ton truck. It was built that way.

King: It was built to last for a long while.

Volker: The weakness was that damn seal.

King: So your service calls were maybe predominately the seal problem, the loss of seals?

Volker: When they corroded the system it affected the expansion valve which was the device that metered the refrigerant into the cooling coil as needed. So then the whole thing stopped working.

King: The system collapsed?

Volker: It was like cancer. It spread, and you couldn't get it out. That got worse and worse, and we get some very nasty complaints. Management got quite upset about it, and they were putting the pressure on Mr. Smith. So he got with Dr. Karrer, and I'm sure there was a lot that went on behind the scenes that I didn't know anything about.

King: But at any rate it was referred to him.

Volker: Finally those two men went up to New York to sit down with the top officials of the General Electric Company. They must have had the top officials at that meeting. Sebastian Karrer was the most interesting scientist I've ever met in my life. He went on to work on the atomic bomb, incidentally.

King: Did he really? Manhattan Project and all of that?

Volker: He was great. He talked about the science people in the past as though they had gone to school with him. He made everything sound so natural. You understood everything he said.

King: Old Alex Graham [Bell] did this, or Tommy Edison did that, and this sort of thing.

Volker: He was great. He went back to the Greek people.

King: The discovery of fire. Prometheus messing about.

Volker: Well several suggestions were made at that meeting with General Electric. One was that their model was a very gawky-looking thing, up on these high legs.

King: Why on the high legs?

Volker: So the people didn't have to stoop to get into the refrigerator. It had to be up off the floor, and it couldn't be too high because the top would be too high.

King: Right.

Volker: So aesthetically it didn't look like anything. Everybody would kid about them but they worked. So now, if you can just take this off the top and put it down here at the bottom, and raise it just a little bit more to make the whole thing more usable by the customer, the housewife, then we think you'd have a box that would really sell.

King: And look a lot better at the same time.

Volker: Yes. They accepted it. Within a year, they brought out the first bottom-mounted GE sealed-unit refrigerator.

The modern kitchen, pictured in an Ednor Gardens sales brochure, 1929. (The Peale Museum, Baltimore City Life Museums).

King: We should've gotten a commission on it, a royalty.

Volker: And that revolutionized the home refrigerator business.

King: When did that occur, Walter? Was that in the late '30s, or am I all mixed up?

Volker: Late '30s.

King: I think you once told me that that was the great change—the sealed unit in refrigeration. With that, the service calls on refrigeration dropped dramatically off.

Volker: We dropped Kelvinator. Oh, we went out to Kelvinator, a group of us. I was low man on the totem pole, of course. But we had Dorsey Smith and the manager of customer relations, Mr. Bonsal; we had top brass there. I was out there as a hatchet man.

King: You were allowed to carry the papers or something like that?

Volker: Yes. And to make all the complaints.

King: And turning to you to make the complaints.

Volker: They could have killed me. They could've thrown me from the top floor of that Kelvinator building. It was a huge factory out there. But we dropped Kelvinator and took on GE. In the meantime Westinghouse had gotten on the bandwagon. They too came out with the bottom-mounted refrigerator so we then

Electric Range Department, 1927 (The Peale Museum, Baltimore City Life Museums.)

handled GE and Westinghouse. And as you just pointed out about service calls, all of a sudden we didn't have any work for the men to do.

King: They weren't having problems.

Volker: It was just unbelievable. By that time, I guess we had at least twenty thousand Kelvinators out.

King: So you're getting a fairly respectable number in service. Were we servicing out of Baltimore for the whole territory? Would you go up to Belair, or Westminster or Annapolis?

Volker: Later on we did station two men at Annapolis and one man in Belair. But basically it was all Baltimore.

King: At the outset at any rate. I had one other thing I took out of Thomson King's book. And now let's see why I did this. This was 1930, and this is Thomson King, the writer, talking about the rapidly growing popularity of electric household appliances in 1930 that was helping to bring in new customers. And more important, it was "doubling and tripling the amount of electricity used by customers." All this had begun with nothing but a few lights. "The first of these to come into extensive use were fans and electric irons." I was surprised by that. The latter was leading in the number sold in 1930. Next in number of sales came vacuum-cleaners and electric washers, and so on. "Electric refrigerators were becoming a household necessity, and the number of electric radio sets were over seven million."

Lamp and appliance department, 1930s. (The Peale Museum, Baltimore City Life Museums.)

I can't believe that it was seven million, since that would mean about ten radios per capita. Electric percolators, toasters, health lamps, and clocks were all finding their way into general popular favor. I guess I noted this to ask you whether we were servicing all of those different kinds of appliances. Were we servicing only electric ranges and electric refrigerators, and a limited number of other things? Did we service any electric appliance that the company sold?

Volker: That varied and changed constantly. Originally, going way back to let's say '25, we'd service anybody's electric range or water heater.

King: Whether they bought it from us or not?

Volker: Yes. Because they were really load builders.

King: Right. Just to keep the load up.

Volker: In refrigeration, fortunately, we did not get involved. We serviced only what we sold. Under duress, of course, we went out occasionally.

King: Right. But normally not.

Volker: Yes. On the plea that we didn't have the parts or that we didn't understand the machines. As I said in the beginning, the history of the appliance department is a history of load growth with the domestic customers.

King: Somewhere I once saw a picture of the typical appliances owned by a customer in 1930. All of the electric appliances were out on the front lawn, and here were the things they had in 1930, and there were the things they had in 1960

or '65. That was perfectly astonishing to see what had come in the electrically driven appliances. I guess the second question I wanted to ask about this bit I just read was: Were we testing all the appliances before we sold them in those days?

Volker: I'm glad you brought that up. Yes. The company, as far back as I can remember, would not sell any electrical appliance unless it had been passed by the electric test department.

King: Did that continue all through your days as superintendent?

Volker: Yes. As far as I know, they still do it.

King: Well, I think they probably still do. I didn't know whether there was any break in the history of that. But it always seemed to me to be a very enlightened policy to have. You were just storing up problems for yourself otherwise.

Volker: It was amazing, as time went on, how the big manufacturers were very happy to send their service personnel in to us to check with the testers and to learn what they were finding.

King: Smart. Then they could engineer it out, whatever the problem was.

Volker: Yes. Half the trouble-shooting was done for them.

King: I wish Detroit had done that with American automobiles a long time ago. They'd have made a better quality product.

Volker: Yes, you can't over emphasize that in your report—the expense and trouble that the company went to in order to provide, as far as humanly possible, only good, safe, trouble-free appliances. I really mean that.

King: It didn't hurt if the appliances used a certain amount of electricity in the bargain?

Volker: Yes. Now we're getting into the automatic washer field.

King: When did that really begin to pick up, in the thirties sometime? Do they follow the electric range and the electric refrigerator, and their wave of washer popularity came later?

Volker: Yes. Bendix's automatic washer was the first one on the market. That model had to be bolted to the floor. And believe it or not, because of the centrifugal force of the revolving tub in the spin cycle, when you had maybe ten pounds of clothes that weighed at least fifty pounds because of the water being thrown around centrifugally, it would cause such vibration that it would tear the bolts out of a concrete floor.

King: It would just walk off and tumble over or something?

Volker: I used to say "Walk over to the basement steps and meet the customers."

William E. Russell, born in Baltimore in 1905, finished at Poly in 1923 and in 1929 received a bachelor of science degree from Johns Hopkins. Four years later he found himself chief of the chemical laboratory at Consolidated when the incumbent "engaged in activities the company didn't like." Throughout the Depression, Russell noted, the staff worked shorter

Air-raid operating headquarters, Baltimore Gas and Electric Company, 1942. (The Peale Museum, Baltimore City Life Museums.)

hours so that no one had to be let go. "Everybody had some income, which I think was remarkable," he said in this interview. By 1950 Russell served as superintendent, gas manufacturing. He retired in 1971.

King: What was the effect of World War II on the operations at Spring Gardens?

Russell: Jack, I don't have any bad recollections about that in the sense that we had no great difficulties with manpower or getting materials to carry on, except that we were very carefully guarded. We had a tremendous fence, illuminated at night, with armed guards around it in sight of one another. I had a pistol in my desk; goodness knows what I would have done with it. But I had it. I don't have any recollections of any great hardships because the government realized our importance as a defense industry. They saw to it that we didn't have any great difficulties.

King: They did not hit as hard on taking personnel away. I guess your workers would have had a priority in essential defense industry.

Russell: Yes. They were the same as I was. And I was of draft age.

King: With all these guards was there ever any indication that Spring Gardens was a target for a sabotage or anything of the kind?

Russell: No. The only target was that the kids outside would play ball. When their ball came over the fence, they could go over that fence, get the ball, and be back over it again before the guards could even get to it.

Ethel F. Riggin, born in Baltimore in 1921, graduated from Catonsville High School in 1938. Both her parents had worked for the B&O; she chose employment with the gas and

electric company's sales force. After the war she attended McCoy College (the evening school) of Johns Hopkins University.

Riggin: Then World War II began, with immediate curtailment of the manufacturing of appliances.

King: All that went into the war effort, I guess.

Riggin: With sales so limited, there was no further need for my services.

King: Were all the sales people reassigned during the war years? The outside sales people?

Riggin: Just a skeleton force was retained, as I remember, because we did stock as many as the manufacturers would furnish us.

King: And we kept our stores open?.

Riggin: Yes, we did. I don't know that we had as many stores as we do now.

King: No, I would think probably not.

Riggin: But we did keep them open. And there were sales, because of course there was a constant need. But I think things were rationed, and we were very selective about distribution of them.

King: We would have made an effort, I'm sure, to keep appliances in good working condition. We probably kept our repair facilities up, if you brought something in to be fixed, we would have fixed it.

Riggin: Yes. Shortly thereafter I left the department, so I wasn't too familiar with what transpired after I left.

King: So you left merchandise, and then what was the next step?

Riggin: On January 12, 1942, I became a stenographer in one of the power production stations. It was the only job offered me, and I took it because I needed the job. I reported to Mr. J. E. Rogers, at Westport, who was the chief clerk.

King: So you were in the clerical unit?

Riggin: Yes. I began with stenographic work, but with the exodus of the younger clerks and plant men into the service, I was assigned to time-keeping, exclusively. I did this for five years. I had a payroll of around five hundred, covering all the power and steam stations. It required manual paper work, accuracy, all dictated by strict time schedules each week. I developed skill in handling the plant men and I had good rapport with the payroll department personnel.

King: You became, obviously, the expert on any questions people had about their pay. They would come see you.

Riggin: That's what I meant....

King: Since you have mentioned this strictness of the schedule and the need for accuracy and all this kind of thing, and we're now about the year '42, and you are in payroll work, I want to ask you—-and I can ask now, how you would contrast the

work standards and employee attitudes in 1942 with those as you observe them in 1982, forty years later?

Riggin: Well, my answer about the conditions then is that I was only aware of the effect in that small world of Westport station. "Uptown" was very remote. Conditions at Westport were casual with all those men and only five women in that office. So you can see that my observations of what was really going on economically-wise and so on, I just wasn't aware of. I had all I could do to keep up with time reporting for the five hundred men.

King: I bet you did. Very favorable ratio of men to women.

Riggin: I remember during that time the air-raid drills that were conducted regularly at the power plant, when all the station employees, including the five women in the office, were all sent to the shelter points within the plant. It was frightening to look around at that massive, noisy equipment and wonder whether it was actually safe there at all.

Would you be interested in the major effect upon my own personal life?

King: Yes, I would be.

Riggin: The loss to war of all the eligible men occurred just as I became the marriageable age of twenty. Although I was surrounded daily by hundreds of men there, most were either married or 4F. So I had to find my husband outside of the company after he returned from army service in Italy. As a result, I was not married until age twenty-seven.

King: Well, World War II delayed more than one marriage. I was engaged during all of World War II, at least from '42 to '45. Ethel, you mentioned the air-raids, the drills, and you went into the power station itself at Westport. Did you go into some areas below ground? Where were these shelters? What were they like?

Riggin: Yes, they were below ground, and they were designated as being safe from big steam lines or equipment that could have any explosive nature.

King: Fall on you, or something.

Riggin: But, they very carefully selected these areas, and we had regular routes that we followed. And we went in regularly.

King: Like once a week, or once a month or something?

Riggin: I'd say once a month.

King: And you had to leave a skeleton crew to operate the plant, obviously. Everybody can't go down. Operators couldn't leave their turbines.

Riggin: It was designed, I think, for the office employees' safety. The office was across the street from the main Westport powerhouse.

King: I remember the set-up, I've been down there a couple of times. Were there any other effects of World War II on operations that you recall? Did we have

periods when coal was hard to get? Or equipment or any of those things? Did that impinge on your job in any way?

Riggin: No. And I wasn't aware of those conditions.

King: You had to black-out at night, I think, at least they did at Spring Gardens, I know. Did they do that at Westport? Spring Gardens had a different problem; they use to blow those gas-making machines off, and that made a terrific light in the sky. There was nothing they could do to avoid that, but other than that, they had to black-out....

Riggin: I can't recall anything specific to any duties that I had in that respect.

King: Did you drive cars with normal headlights on during World War II, at night?

Riggin: Yes.

King: Because in Europe you drove around with these little blue lights, you couldn't see anything.

Riggin: I think, at the time there was an air-raid drill you were supposed to be off of the street. I mean, I'm speaking as an ordinary citizen.... I'm sure the emergency vehicles moved, and that was all.

Born in Baltimore in 1911, Paul F. Hlubb went to work at the age of fourteen, attended evening high-school classes and then completed the evening college course at Johns Hopkins. Hlubb's drive and determination led him to the company's financial department and then, in 1937, to the position of statistical clerk in the statistical department.

King: I was curious as to the effects of the war on your operations and on the availability of qualified people.

Hlubb: The billing department consisted of about 275 people. There were about 85 men and 190 women. During the war we lost to the services 50 out of the 85 men. And the department rose from 275 to 325 because of extra duties imposed during the war. So it meant we had only 35 men left out of a total employment of 325. So much experience was lost. We had to give information to the contact departments about customers who owed bills, those who were moving, and certain conditions on the premises. We were running a very complicated bookkeeping and billing system, with all the detail of millions of transactions every month. While some of the activity was performed mechanically or semi-electronically, much was done manually. When you lost someone who had been doing this for years and replaced him with a newcomer it was difficult. That's why we needed more people. Also during the war we couldn't get enough tires and gasoline, and automobile use was restricted for meter readers.

King: How did you solve that? Did they all go on foot?

Hlubb: For all the accounts that were not on public transportation lines where cars had been used, estimates were prepared for two months and then meters read the third month.

King: The PSC said this practice was OK?

Hlubb: The Public Service Commission had to go along with it since only one-third gasoline and one-third tires were allowed by the War Board. There wasn't any way you could have handled the accounts in the remote areas. We were covering the 2,300 square miles of our service territory. The meters on public transportation continued to be read monthly. You didn't have electronic equipment to retrieve past readings. Clerks had to get prior meter reading books, analyze past usage, and relate the findings to the most recent readings available and develop an estimate for the current period. Of course that caused more work because the estimates at times were found to be out of whack.

King: But that was one major effect of World War II.

Hlubb: Commercial service activity was reduced sharply because of the decrease in people moving from one address to another. There were rent freezes so you couldn't change rents and traffic was way down on turnover. Also no new construction was taking place.

King: That's true, because of the material shortage and labor shortage.

Hlubb: Concurrent with an excess of commercial servicemen (CSM) there was concern about being bombed. What would happen if downtown was bombed and our records were destroyed? We wouldn't know who our customers were. We wouldn't know what facilities were on the premises. We wouldn't know who owed us $20 million in accounts receivable. So we had to set up a duplicate records group, using some of these temporarily excess commercial servicemen plus some of the extra people who had been hired for emergencies. A former bank building was rented on Liberty Heights Avenue, the old Union Trust Building beyond Gwynn Oak Avenue. The duplicate records group was established there as was a smaller operation in our Westminster office.

King: Somewhere there was a vault and a good strong building.

Hlubb: One hundred percent duplicate records were not kept, but enough so that customers information could be reconstructed, if the downtown were destroyed. We did start photographing some data and moved it to Westminster. That was far enough away so that in case the Liberty Heights office was also destroyed we'd have a means of reconstruction, even though it was more costly and more work was involved. Insurance policies were taken to cover the cost of doing the reconstruction work if needed.

King: Which fortunately we never had to cash in on.

Hlubb: Commercial servicemen go out when people move and turn services off or turn them on. They check gas lines to make sure they're all safe. And if people don't pay bills, the CSM turn off the services. These fellows made forty-two or forty-three dollars a week. Nearly twenty of them were in the Liberty Heights group. Working with them was about an equal number of new girls who were getting about fourteen or fifteen dollars a week.

King: These men were getting forty-two dollars.

Hlubb: After they had been out there about six months, a group of them came in one day and said, "Mr. Hlubb, we want to talk to you." They said, "Well, you know we've been out there for a while, we've got a lot of experience and know all the work and are wondering whether or not we could get a raise." I said, "Well, gee, that's certainly a nice thought, but let me tell you something just to keep the record straight. You fellows are getting forty-two dollars a week and you're not used to this type of office work. It's a good thing we had it to enable you to get your full pay. Actually since you're not used to this kind of work and you don't have the finger dexterity for flipping papers, paperwork alertness, etc., you are doing somewhere around 75 percent as much work as these youngsters are doing and your pay rate is forty-two dollars. The girls are getting fifteen dollars." I said, "You fellows don't know how lucky you are." I never heard a thing more from them. They didn't know we kept records of how much each individual did and how many mistakes he made. That had always been done in a big operation like customers' accounts. You had to get a line on which people were suited for this kind of work and which people weren't.

We also went on a six-day week by working a full day on Saturday. The whole company assumed the new schedule providing more man-hours with the same number of employees. At times special mailings were sent to customers concerning use of service in black-outs and brown-outs. A brown-out was cutting down on commercial lighting and similar steps.

King: Voltage reductions these were?

Hlubb: Well, I don't think we had voltage reductions then.

King: Well, what do we mean by brown-out? We had browned-out areas?

Hlubb: Not areas but individual customers. Commercial advertising wasn't thought to be necessary by the War Production Board. It was a waste of energy.

King: Oh, they simply turned it off.

Hlubb: You informed the customer to turn if off or limit his use. The law was to turn it off, but the company's only responsibility was to notify the customer, not to enforce the order.

King: Oh, right. It wasn't half on then half off.

Hlubb: Our records were reviewed to determine the nature of the use of service. As an example, barber shops and retail stores were to reduce lighting and eliminate advertising. Plants were to limit lighting in storerooms, etc.

King: And this, of course, was for fuel saving among other things.

Hlubb: That's right, for energy saving, to cut back on the use of fuel, that is the coal we were using for electric generation at that time.

King: Paul, I don't know whether this is a good time to bring it out, but you mentioned an incident with the commercial servicemen, involving rates of pay and

so on. Do you recall any incidents affecting our meter readers? It seems to me there used to be great stories about meter readers and the kinds of things they used to run into in customers' homes. Are any of those worth recording, do you think? They'd see a terrific slice of life in that job, I'm sure of that.

Hlubb: Yes, they did. They would break in on people's love scenes and that sort of thing. Occasionally, they'd find people who had committed suicide, by taking gas, etc.

King: Or hanging in the basement or something like that.

Hlubb: Yes. The commercial servicemen, though, had the most onerous job because of denying services for non-payment of bills, especially to the poor people. It's a heck of a job. In such homes kids are crying, they're hungry and it's cold. And you have to take them out of service, it's your job. That's why I fought tooth and nail about merging this job with the gas service or other operating people. I know those fellows just wouldn't do it.

King: It takes a pretty strong mental discipline to do it.

Hlubb: Well, our fellows had been doing it all their lives. They grew up that way. It was their job. If men couldn't perform properly they were transferred. And of course the CSM are threatened now and then. In the last twenty-thirty years, they've been spit on, cursed, kicked at, threatened, etc. "You S.O.B., you get out of here or I'll slit your throat," all that kind of talk. Of course, that's a threat, you could take them to court. A company cannot bring a charge, it is the individual who is assaulted.

King: He must bring the charge.

Hlubb: That's right, because it's a crime against the state and not against the company. Well, anyhow we've had a number of cases where commercial serviceman were hit and injured bodily, not seriously, but injured. And they brought suit with our encouragement. We told them that we'd stand behind them and any costs incurred would be taken care of. After seeing a number of cases, where a woman was raped, or somebody cut a person from ear to ear, or another one where a man would come in with an eye hanging out, the judge would say, "Now what is yours?" "Well, he hit me because I wanted to turn his service off." "Get out of here." It was almost like that. By comparison this wasn't a serious criminal charge. It was just an ordinary police court matter.

King: Ordinary citizens getting in trouble.

Hlubb: You weren't getting very far. But we still encouraged them to bring charges and have it brought to light, because it would get in the paper—"Assaulting a Gas and Electric man." The legal department always had an attorney on hand to coach the CSM but he could not participate in the court case.

King: And it was something of an inconvenience to the person who had attacked our man to be dragged into court.

Hlubb: Fortunately no CSM were ever killed or very seriously hurt. Meter readers go in cellars full of dog droppings, flooded places and other problems.

King: Dangerous steps and spider webs.

Hlubb: Yes, in a lot of buildings. I know that during the war they used to tell us that some customers who rented would burn the cellar steps as furnace fuel. You'd go in the house and there weren't any cellar steps.

Born in Norfolk, Virginia, Charles B. Bechtel moved to Baltimore and graduated from Poly in 1938. He finished the Johns Hopkins University electrical engineering program three years later, immediately joined the gas and electric company, and after World War II became a mainstay on its technical staff. In the passage below he describes a hometown engineering breakthrough that followed a 1955 meeting in New York City, Baltimore's rival in many things.

Bechtel: I was [in New York] attending a seminar or meeting. During one evening in a hospitality room, the chief engineers of the three biggest cable companies with which we dealt were talking about the trouble that Con Ed was having in finding pipe-cable faults. Con Ed having most of the pipe cable had, of course, most of the faults. I couldn't believe that there should be any major difficulty but there was, and a thought struck me, which I openly threw into the conversation. That was, "Why don't we find pipe-cable faults as the fault trips?" Immediate interest was there and I went ahead with this idea. Let the trip-out of the pipe cable start two interval times simultaneously and use the fault-created pressure wave to separately stop the timers through transducers coupled to the coil at each end of the circuit. The sum of the times that these timers would display is proportional to the length of the pipe. One time taken as a percentage of the sum and multiplied by the known circuit length will tell you exactly how far from the reference terminal the fault is. The chief engineers separately contacted me expressing a "let's work together" interest in acoustic wave timing as a pipe-cable fault locating system. I returned to Baltimore and went to Penniman and said, "I know full well you have patents. Those that I get through the company don't make any money. I would like to take a chance on this one. If you want to be the first company to have this system, let's install a prototype on our first pipe cables, Westport-Center (1956) and Center-Erdman (1958). "Fine, go right ahead, we'll put it in." It was installed and never had to work. Around 1970, we removed the systems to make room for substation changes, being convinced that our standard equipment could locate pipe-cable faults. And it has. Two failures were located in the last five years with ease.

King: Did Con Ed, as far as you know, make any modifications in their systems as a result of our experience?

Bechtel: I have no idea. We had many visitors.

Book Reviews

Black Mosaic: Essays in Afro-American History and Historiography. By Benjamin Quarles (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988. Pp. 213. $12.95 paper, $27.50 cloth.)

For Benjamin Quarles, history is truth—a way of knowing the world and a way of changing the world. Yet, both as a source of knowledge and a source of liberation, Quarles finds history a peculiarly uncertain and undependable instrument, for it can blind as well as enlighten, destroy as well as create, imprison as well as free. Quarles's essays, collected in *Black Mosaic: Essays in Afro-American History and Historiography*, bear witness to his Janus-faced understanding of the past and study of the past. By their powerful themes and subtle constructions, these essays reveal a lifetime of learning by a scholar who looked deeply into Clio's countenance and saw both friend and foe.

Quarles's ambivalence derives from the destructive effects of history's misuse. From the end of Reconstruction to the middle of the twentieth century, no scholarly discipline was more complicit than history in the legitimation of racism and the triumph of white supremacy. Arguing that slavery was a school for civilization, that emancipation was hasty and ill-considered, that Reconstruction was a tragic error, and that Redemption, segregation, and disfranchisement marked a return to normalcy, the nation's most distinguished historians—bearing advanced degrees and honored by chairs at prestigious universities—helped imprison black people in the nightmare of inequity and injustice.

In the history books of Quarles's youth, black people had no independent past. They were ciphers at best, whose history was a timeless primitivism of the African jungle or an endless—if unattainable—assimilation to the white man's ideal. Those historians who dissented from this conventional wisdom were labeled charlatans, special pleaders, and provocateurs—unprincipled by definition, troublemakers by profession. There was no place for them in the academy. Their books—if reviewed—were ridiculed and their papers—if delivered—went unheeded.

Benjamin Quarles, the son of a Boston subway porter, stood against the doubters and cynics by dint of intellect, energy, and iron determination. Educated in Boston public schools and at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina, Quarles showed no initial interest in scholarly pursuits. But he had even less taste for the menial jobs that frequently befell college-educated black men. He applied for and received a fellowship at the University of Wisconsin, where he worked first with Carl Russell Fish and later with William Best Hesseltine. In 1940, at age thirty-six, he received his doctorate and began teaching at a series of small black colleges, not unlike his own undergraduate alma mater. He ended an illustrious career as full professor at Morgan State University in Baltimore.

Black colleges like Morgan survived on the handouts of penurious philanthropists and tight-fisted state legislators. There was no presumption that their faculties would—or should—do anything more than prepare the next generation of black schoolteachers and ministers. Long hours in the classroom were the rule and sabbaticals the exception. Fellowships and funds for research were nonexistent.

Yet within four years of graduation, Quarles had published his dissertation, a biography of Frederick Douglass. Then in quick succession—despite growing teaching and administrative responsibilities—he issued a series of studies of black people in the American Revolution and the American Civil War. At a time when "definitive works" are superseded within years—sometimes months—of their publication, Quarles's histories have remained standard works. No one has yet written a more complete account of black participation in the American Revolution or a more insightful history of blacks in the Civil War. The publication of the multi-volume *Black Abolitionist Papers* only supplemented Quarles's pioneering *Black Abolitionists*. More than forty years after its publication, Quarles's biography of Frederick Douglass remains the place to begin the study of that great man.

Originally published between 1959 and 1983, the essays in *Black Mosaic* offer a sample of Quarles's numerous contributions to the study of Afro-American life. Meticulously researched and clearly written, Quarles's essays meet every standard of the best historical scholarship. Subjects are carefully defined. Judgments are always judicious. Evidence is complete, even overwhelming. Beginning with analysis of black participation in colonial militias and ending with his study of A. Philip Randolph, Quarles's work astounds in both its breadth and virtuosity. *Black Mosaic* is one of those books that everyone learns from, specialist and novice alike.

Yet it is not so much the particular arguments—most of which have been incorporated into the wisdom of the day—as their presentation that commends the essays in *Black Mosaic*. By their subject, method, and tone, these essays are rent with tensions—political, professional, and personal—that supersede their particular contributions to Afro-American historiography. *Black Mosaic* tells as much about black life in the twentieth century as in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, revealing a good deal about the development of the historical profession and providing a glimpse of a private man who is much to be admired.

The tension is ubiquitous. Quarles writes with objective impersonality. The "I" is vanquished, as are all personal references. Indeed, Quarles's reluctance to enter into the narrative leaves *Black Mosaic* without an introduction or even a preface by the author, a breach only partially filled by August Meier's thoughtful appraisal of Quarles's scholarship. Personal modesty and scholarly mastery—of which these essays exhibit much—do not fully account for Quarles's choices. Instead, they suggest that Quarles, like other pioneer black scholars, wrote against the background of accusations of racial self-interest. To counter the omnipresent—if often unspoken—charges, Quarles took to the high ground, giving his work—particularly his early work—a stiff, formal texture. Exquisite craftsmanship, close adherence to the rules of evidence, and the suppression of anything that smacked of opinion

would keep the doubters and cynics—his own dissertation advisor among them—at bay and gain his work and Afro-American history generally entry into the mainstream of historical scholarship.

Quarles trimmed his work to fit the procrustean bed of American academic and racial politics, but he would not compromise his political and professional beliefs. In his essays, as in his larger work, Quarles balked at the view that black people were bit players in the white man's history—participants to be sure, victims perhaps, but no more than that. Quarles demonstrated otherwise: In answering the muster of colonial militia units, rallying to Lord Dunmore's standard, reaching into their own pockets to support the abolitionist cause, and conspiring with John Brown black men and women tossed aside the proscriptions of status and race to make their own world. In so doing, they determined their destiny and that of the nation as well.

Black people, Quarles argues in a theme that runs like a red line through his work, became the true bearers of American nationality. Others might espouse to the idea that "all men were created equal" at their own convenience; black people maintained it with consistency born of necessity. Against all comers, they articulated and expanded the universal principles upon which the American nation rested. It is with no sense of irony or paradox that Quarles declares the American Revolution "a Black Declaration of Independence" or antebellum free blacks the "keepers of the spirit of 1776."

Tension between medium and message give special importance to *Black Mosaic* as both a work of history and a landmark of historiography. Over time the tension was, to some degree, resolved. As Quarles gained confidence in his craft and—more importantly—as his own work and that of others legitimated the study of Afro-American history, the distance between the message and the medium began to shrink. Quarles's later essays, particularly the free-swinging "Black History Unbound," reveal a historian eager to hack through the ideological thicket—nationalist and integrationist—that has ensnared some of the best works of Afro-American history. Quarles's critical evaluation of his profession remains fresh as well as refreshing twenty years after it was written. In a like fashion, "Black History's Diversified Clientele"—standing at the end of *Black Mosaic*—reveals a man fully at peace with himself and his work—willing to concede the problematic nature of the historian's craft while defending its transcendent importance.

Thus Benjamin Quarles does more than inform; he educates. What better way to understand the work of Benjamin Quarles and something of the man himself?

IRA BERLIN
University of Maryland, College Park

Foundations of Representative Government in Maryland, 1632-1715. By David W. Jordan. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. Pp. 256. $29.95.)

In this book David Jordan traces the slow growth in influence of the "popular element" in colonial Maryland—as represented by the lower house of the legisla-

ture—at the expense of the proprietary element, represented by the governors and other political protegés of the lords Baltimore. In the years from the assembly's establishment to the proprietors' resumption of power after a short hiatus in 1715, legislators established legal precedents for subsequent exercise of power by maximizing tradeoffs with the proprietor: votes of revenue in exchange for sacrifices of power. They also improved their internal organization under the leadership of members increasingly well educated and enjoying increasingly long tenures in office. The electorate itself was gradually narrowed by the imposition of property qualifications for voting at a time when property was becoming harder to obtain, but the disenfranchised appear to have acquiesced in the changes.

Jordan thus writes about the Maryland legislature's "quest for power." He acknowledges the inspiration of Jack P. Greene's book of the same title and sets out to do for Maryland what Greene did for the other southern colonies, giving the study a fuller social and economic context. (The chronological connection is clear: Greene's book appeared in 1963 and Jordan's book originated in a dissertation completed in 1969.) Jordan is certainly well qualified to achieve his objective: he can draw upon his extensive experience as an editor of the *Biographical Dictionary of Maryland Legislators* and his association with the St. Mary's City Commission researchers who are contributing so extensively to our knowledge of social and economic conditions in the colonial period.

He succeeds very well in moving from the historians' traditional emphasis on narrow constitutional precedents to a discussion of legislators reacting to pressures sometimes with strong emotions, discussing issues among themselves and the proprietary representatives. Jordan does a good job with the interplay of personality and issues, and with the changing "moods" of the assembly. He also makes a good faith effort at explaining the interplay between local and provincial issues and in so doing incorporates recent social, economic, and demographic studies into his work, though here he understandably runs into a pair of related problems. We have moved beyond the questions on which Greene and the older institutional historians concentrated to ask new ones: what were the changing grass-roots needs of constituents, for example, and how responsive were the assemblies to them? How might the assembly's work have been perceived at the constituent level? These questions are particularly hard to answer for a colony like Maryland, where the remarkably complete legislative records stand in such stark contrast to the remarkably skimpy local ones. Of necessity, Jordan is sometimes driven back to examining the legislature only through its own eyes.

These problems aside, Jordan has done a commendable job in bringing together a mass of material, explaining it to us clearly, and putting seventeenth-century Maryland politics back on the historians' agenda. This book will be welcomed by any student working in early Maryland history.

ALISON G. OLSON
University of Maryland, College Park

The History of the Ancient and Honorable Tuesday Club. By Dr. Alexander Hamilton. Edited by Robert Micklus. (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1990. 3 volumes. Pp. 1:444, 2:423, 3:421. Introductions, notes, illustrations, appendixes, index. $150.00 set.)

Publication of *The History of the Ancient and Honorable Tuesday Club* marks a major addition to the corpus of colonial British-American literature—-perhaps the most important in the past half century. Although long known to the devotees of the colonial Chesapeake region as a significant manuscript, its reputation never achieved its deserved status in a field dominated by novanglophiles. Now that dominance should be corrected and *The History* should enter the canon of major colonial writings.

Founded in 1745 by Dr. Alexander Hamilton (1712-1756), the Tuesday Club was at the center of colonial Annapolis intellectual life for the next eleven years, expiring at the death of its founder. For most of its existence, Hamilton served as the recording secretary of the Tuesday Club, and the various manuscripts consist of four different holdings mostly in Baltimore archives: (1) the "Minutes of the Tuesday Club"; (2) the revision of these minutes edited by Elaine Breslaw and published by the University of Illinois Press in 1988 as *The Records of the Tuesday Club of Annapolis, 1745-56;* (3) the draft "History"; and (4) *The History of the Tuesday Club* reviewed here. A detailed study of the musical contributions of the organization appeared in John Barry Talley, *Secular Music in Colonial Annapolis: The Tuesday Club, 1745-56* (University of Illinois Press, 1988). Combined with the Breslaw and Talley volumes, Robert Micklus's edition of *The History* provides unprecedented opportunities to inquire into the mindset of the colonial British-American middle class in a way hitherto unavailable.

The key to our understanding of this edition is Micklus's painstaking attention to reproducing Hamilton's manuscript with all its imperfections. In her edition of the *Records,* Elaine Breslaw corrected the errors "as they would have been if an eighteenth-century printer had been publishing the records" (*Records,* p. xxxv). Micklus, on the other hand, published not what he thought was the author's final intent, but rather the final manuscript form. His "intention has not been to lend the History a consistency that the manuscript itself does not possess, but to maintain its inconsistencies and, at the same time, to keep Hamilton's prose from appearing silly or cumbersome in ways he clearly did not intend" (1: xlv-xlvi). This may make for a little more difficult reading, but it constitutes the latest in editorial procedures. That does not mean there are no changes in the conversion from manuscript to typescript, but they have been minor and they are explained in detail in the "Editorial Method" section of the first volume and in the fifteen pages of "Punctuation Changes" that appear in the final one.

The above discussion of mundane editorial problems should never obscure the true literary contributions of *The History.* In 1824 James Carroll wrote of the manuscript: "When you take it in hand begin in the middle of the book and read

backwards, then forwards & skip about; I think now & then you will find something that will set you a roaring" (*Records*, p. xxiv). Over a century and one-half later, this reviewer can find no better advice to prospective readers. Very few will ever read *The History* completely through. Instead they will dive into its pages and follow the delightful episodes of "Loquacious Scribble" (Hamilton's pseudonym), "Sir John Oldcastle" (Mayor John Bullen), "Jonathan Grog" (printer Jonas Green), "Slyboots Pleasant" (proprietary official Walter Dulany), "Philo Dogmaticus" (the Rev. Alexander Malcolm), "Crinkum Crankum" (Annapolis merchant William Lux) and a host of others as they meet every second Tuesday at the home of one member for a convivial evening of punch, puns, poetry, ribaldry, satire and laughter. At the center of it all, the butt of the jokes, is the club president, merchant Charles Cole, known in *The History* as "Nasifer Jole," and the subject of elaborate exaggerated praise by club members.

And what is the meaning of all this? Professors of literature like Micklus and his mentor J. A. Leo Lemay see it as "a comic novel" (1: xxvii) in the tradition of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*, which Hamilton had read. But since there is no plot to *The History*, an historian like Breslaw sees its digressive style and its attacks on luxury, pride, and aggrandizement, as a means by which men of diverse economic, social, and political orientations satirized the foibles of contemporary Maryland life. There may have been a bit of both. Why, except for some desire to publish it, did Hamilton take the bare-boned *Record* and turn it into a sophisticated if incomplete 1,800-page manuscript that often ignores and probably modifies what actually transpired in the bi-monthly meetings, or "sederunts" as they were known to club members? Surely there was some larger literary intent that was interrupted by Hamilton's untimely death. On the other hand, those with a detailed knowledge of Maryland politics are immediately taken by the obvious parallels between the quarrels over President Jole's powers and those waged in the wider world of Maryland's proprietary establishment. Thus the club's "gelastic" rule—that members must laugh at any attempt at seriousness in sederunt proceedings—allowed members of the proprietary and anti-proprietary political factions to treat with humor the far more serious clashes in the provincial capital.

Whatever *The History*'s intent, scholars have another addition to colonial culture available in a superbly edited and richly documented edition that complements several other recent publications in Chesapeake literature, especially the writings of William Byrd, Landon Carter, Thomas Cradock, Robert Munford, and Edmund Pendleton. One should not dismiss the intellectual contributions of the political leadership of the young nation embodied in the definitive editions of the papers of Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, John Marshall, and George Washington. Collectively this enlarged corpus reinforces the conclusions relative to a "Golden Age in the Chesapeake Bay Country" examined in three works published by the University of Tennessee Press, Leo Lemay's *Men of Letters in Colonial Maryland* (1972), Richard Beale Davis' prize-winning *Intellectual Life in the Colonial South* (3 vols., 1978), and Micklus's *The Comic Genius of Dr. Alexander Hamilton* (1991). The combination of new documentation and creative scholarship embodied in these

efforts constitutes a call to revise the all-too-common wisdom of the Puritan dominance of the American character and to look for a more pluralistic and more comprehensive trans-Atlantic cultural heritage of the eighteenth-century Anglo-American intellectual community. Following Dr. Micklus's skillful editing of the cosmopolitan Dr. Hamilton, we now await a scholar of genius who can test for the literary community what Johns Hopkins's Jack P. Greene hypothesizes for the social and economic communities in his *Pursuits of Happiness* (1988): "that, far from having been a peripheral, much less a deviant, arena, the southern colonies and states were before 1800 in the mainstream of British-American development" (p. 5). Before that golden age arrives, open *The History of the Ancient and Honorable Tuesday Club* and enjoy a classic of colonial American literature.

DAVID CURTIS SKAGGS
Bowling Green State University

General John H. Winder, C.S.A. By Arch Fredric Blakey. (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1990. Pp. xvi, 275. Introduction, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. $29.95.)

Biography can be a treacherous literary form: an author risks condemnation for excessive adulation of a popular subject or for being an apologist for an unpopular one. Blakey attempts to explain why John Winder was unfairly deemed to be a detestable man by both his contemporaries and by historians. That his effort may be unsuccessful does not discredit him or render this book unworthy of attention by readers who want to learn more about the failure of the Confederacy to deal humanely with its prisoners of war.

As a scion of a prosperous and honored family of Maryland plantation owners, lawyers, and statesmen and son of the unfortunate General William Winder, blamed for the debacle called "the Bladensburg races" because his troops turned and ran from the British forces marching on Washington in 1814, John Winder might have led a conventional life in Maryland. Despite Bladensburg, William Winder was admired, even revered, as a patriot in the eyes of Maryland citizens. Blakey's thesis, however, is that the shame John Winder felt as a cadet at West Point when the battle occurred led to his resolve to be a military hero to redeem the family name.

After his student days at West Point John remained in the army, serving in scattered posts from northern Maine to Florida. He returned to West Point briefly as an instructor but was relieved from his position for losing his temper in an altercation with an unruly cadet. His marriages, the first shortened by his wife's death and the second to a North Carolinian from the landed gentry, permitted him—insofar as military life allowed—to become a devoted family man. Believing that only battle service could lead to advancement and recognition, Winder managed to obtain a company command in the Mexican War, where he did indeed perform creditably. He was on sick leave in Baltimore when the Civil War began.

Winder then chose to return to North Carolina, where he hoped for advantageous treatment as an experienced officer. While he was slated for an important post, it was given to another, and the irate Winder repaired to the new capital at Richmond where an old friend, Adjutant General Samuel Cooper, interceded on his behalf.

Commissioned as a brigadier general, Winder was made inspector general of military camps in the Richmond area. He applied himself diligently and later became the provost marshal general of Richmond. His temperament, zeal, and offensive manners earned him a reputation as a "dictator," despot, and worse. Southern newspapers accused him of undue leniency toward prisoners housed in warehouses converted to prisons, while the Northern press vilified him for inhumanity, dishonesty in handling property of prisoners, and all manner of evil committed by his staff.

Lincoln's 1863 suspension of prisoner exchange cartels created an urgency to move prisoners farther south, and Winder was assigned to establish new detention centers. Lacking facilities, construction forces, or manpower for guards, the new prisons soon became hellish death camps. Lines of posts were fixed inside the stockades to keep prisoners away from the fences, and guards were pressured to prevent escapes; this led to the shooting of prisoners who strayed beyond the line of posts; thus the origin of the word "deadline" which was to be forever associated with the Winder name.

Of the camps established in the deep South, none achieved notoriety as fierce as Andersonville, Winder's last assignment, which at its peak contained 33,000 prisoners lacking shelter, sanitary facilities, or any means for even rudimentary health care. The death rate by 1864 shocked even General Cooper, who attempted to assist Winder by dispatching additional personnel. On an inspection tour around the prison circuit Winder was stricken with a heart attack. He died on 6 February 1865, saving himself the agony of a court-martial. One of his loyal assistants was hanged by a vengeful federal court-martial.

Blakey contends that while Winder was a stern and humorless martinet, he was a fair, considerate, and determined officer who simply ruled "by the book." Winder's efforts to be humane to his staff as well as the prisoners were frustrated by his vain calls for adequate provisions, clothing, and other essentials. His failures, according to the author, were the same as those which doomed the Confederacy; he was arrogant enough to think he could succeed, and foolish enough to fail to foresee the problems that he encountered from West Point onward.

The book is compact, but readable only with difficulty. The arrangement of chapters departs from all chronological sequence, apparently to show how problems at one point in Winder's life led to disaster at others. The flashbacks fail to prove satisfactorily the reasons for Winder's crucial decisions. Why did Winder choose to remain in military service in 1861 at age sixty-one, when he could have remained in Maryland? Why did he elect to join the Southern cause when he was not a dedicated slave owner, secessionist, or opponent of Union philosophy?

Notwithstanding Blakey's scholarship, the disjointed narrative fails to immerse the reader in the human side of Winder's life. Lacking the usual biographical scenes and family anecdotes, the reader feels no warmth despite the author's attempts to explain the subject's problems. Has history been unkind to Winder as Blakey asserts, or was Winder simply the victim of his own poor judgment and innate shortcomings?

ROBERT L. WEINBERG
Baltimore

Then Again . . . Annapolis, 1900-1965. By Mame Warren. (Annapolis: Time Exposures Limited, 1990. Pp. xxiii, 215. Chronology, interviews, photos, bibliography, narrator and photograph credits, index. $42.00 cloth; $27.50 paper.)

Mame Warren has masterfully matched photo images with living voices in a local history of wide appeal. Many photographers lent their vintage shots, and seventy long-time Annapolitans told their stories to her, Sharie Valerio, and Beth Whaley. Others joined them in an overall project, which, besides *Then Again*, produced a successful theatrical production called "The Annapolis I Remember." *Then Again* is neither a captioned picture book nor an illustrated history. It is a fine prototype for local historians wherever they can rally whole-hearted participation from long-time citizens. Reference to an introductory chronology informs the reader where the dated photos fit into the sequence of events.

Ms. Warren, who is photographic curator at the Maryland State Archives, has collaborated with her photographer father, Marion E. Warren, in four photographic histories. Unlike the earlier Warren books, dwelling heavily on the landscape, she focuses *Then Again* on people. The unedited recollections of Annapolitans replace the contemporary newspaper and journal feature articles about Annapolis that are the text of the earlier Warren histories.

Her achievement is a successful merging of oral history with vintage photos. We agree with her that "at times the connection between the spoken word and the visual image is uncanny" (p.xii). Wry, yet appreciative of their heritage, these old Annapolitans are good story-tellers. Thomas Baden's photos show a thriving black community, whose members, when interviewed, expressed loving respect for the teachers who taught them in their segregated schools. The white population was like the "League of Nations" (p. 143), and at their segregated schools classmates who had lived overseas with their navy parents enlivened geography lessons. Front porches were popular all over town. The two most charming pictures in the book are front porch scenes, one on Prince George Street, the other on Clay Street.

Thanks to steady employment at the naval academy, Annapolitans scarcely felt the Depression. Fish, oysters, and crabs abounded in the surrounding creeks and harbor where inhabitants fished, swam and floated their boats unmindful that "the City Dock was a great cesspool" (p. xii). "Cars were a long time catching on in Annapolis" (p.68), but by 1950 they had replaced the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis train that Annapolitans had welcomed in 1910 and that they wish they

had today. On Colonial Day 1928 President Coolidge and Governor Ritchie posed on the Chase-Lloyd House steps surrounded by Annapolitans in colonial costume. A diverse population began to live out a colonial fantasy. In "Reflections" (p. xi) Ms. Warren tells how she arrived at the concept of blending pictures and stories. Twenty years after the last photo in the book was shot, she and her father lament the loss of the downtown and waterfront to tourists and the encroachment of government buildings on their residential areas. What they chiefly regret is a loss in neighborliness. "If, after perusing the following pages, a few readers are inspired to pull the old rocking chairs out onto the front porch and invite the neighbors over for a chat," Ms. Warren writes, "I will consider my mission accomplished" (p. xvii).

CHARLOTTE FLETCHER
Annapolis

Lion in the Lobby: Clarence Mitchell, Jr.'s Struggle for the Passage of Civil Rights Laws. By Denton L. Watson. (New York: William Morrow, 1990. Pp. 846. Notes, bibliography, index. $24.95.)

As a biography of Clarence Mitchell, Denton Watson's massive study is disappointing; as a detailed account of the struggle for civil rights legislation, on the other hand, and of the NAACP's central place in that struggle, it is impressive and amply rewarding. Maryland readers may be especially interested in the early chapters, which include an account of a lynching on the Eastern Shore (which Mitchell covered as a cub reporter for the Baltimore *Afro-American*) and a portrait of race relations in the Baltimore of Mitchell's childhood and youth.

After Mitchell's marriage in 1938, Watson follows Mitchell's career through a brief period with the National Urban League and then with the Office of Production Management, and finally to the NAACP, which he served first as labor director and finally from 1950 to 1978 as director of the Washington Bureau. For most of the book, Watson gives us less about the man and more about the NAACP's legislative program in which Mitchell played such a leading role, culminating in the omnibus Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Watson's heavily documented and sometimes painfully detailed account of these efforts reminds us again (in case we need reminding) of the pervasiveness and tenacity of racial discrimination. Every victory is the beginning of another battle. First the effort to win legislation (or a presidential executive order) requires endless demonstration of a need, then equally persistent lobbying for the action itself. Next comes the daily, sometimes tedious, often frustrating battle for enforcement, a battle that provides material to prove the need for new legislative or executive action, after which the process begins over again, and over again. At the end of the Reagan decade, it is fitting to recall the intransigence of the opposition to racial equality, as well as the degree to which those who are committed to it nonetheless allow it to be eclipsed by other priorities.

The book also dramatizes the bewildering complexity and subtlety of governmental processes, especially the legislative process. Philosophical and political positions become less important than relatively arcane legal principles and formal rules of parliamentary procedure. These in turn often are subordinated to the bureaucratic minutiae of executive action and the informal rules and traditions governing legislative action, which are themselves sometimes overshadowed by the personalities and interests of individual politicians and bureaucrats.

From following Mitchell's negotiation of this mine field of principles, priorities and personalities, one cannot help but emerge with a sharpened awareness of the centrality of the NAACP and its friends. By 1954, they had already labored for years to establish among the political elite an intellectual and moral climate that would be relatively receptive to the more dramatically presented demands of the following years. They also established a conceptual framework within which new laws could be formulated. In addition, finally, they created essential formal and informal organizational infrastructures to support those laws politically when the opportunity came.

The major weaknesses of the book result from the author's failure to delineate carefully his purposes. At first the focus seems to be on Mitchell himself, on assuring the lobbyist's rightful place in history, but instead of letting his importance emerge from his story, Watson repeatedly intrudes to insist on that importance, as well as upon Mitchell's general virtue, his loving family and so on, so that the biographical thrust of the book veers dangerously toward hagiography.

More importantly, the author does not define clearly the relationship between the biography and his second purpose, the story of "fundamental change in social and institutional attitude" with which Mitchell, according to the foreword, entrusted him. There are long stretches where Mitchell himself is mentioned only in phrases such as "Mitchell knew . . ." or "Mitchell saw . . . ." It is as if Watson wanted to remind us that the book is about Mitchell during long sequences where Mitchell is more witness than participant. The basic problem, which Watson does not seem to have faced, lies in the structure of his task: he is trying to write someone else's memoirs.

Perhaps the fundamental purpose of the book, however, is to shift our historical focus to the legal and political thrust of the movement and away from the moral appeal of direct action, which in Watson's view historians have excessively emphasized. The problem is that his zeal to redress the balance seems to have led him into a false dichotomy, as if we cannot recognize the efforts of Mitchell and his colleagues without diminishing the importance of direct action in creating a positive political climate.

This is nowhere more clear than in the otherwise excellent chapter on the 1964 Civil Rights bill. In sharp contrast to 1957 and 1960, everything now seemed to fall into place. The priorities of the various progressive forces were, if not identical, at least compatible; obstructions (and obstructionism) were swept (or compromised) away, and the legislation sailed through, albeit through very rough waters and very dangerous shoals. It is an exciting story, and much of the credit

is given, quite rightly, to President Johnson's leadership. But that credit becomes an almost embarrassing adulation, attributing the president's support almost exclusively to his admirable "sincerity" rather than to a fundamental shift in the political climate, a shift produced in large measure by the "moral appeal" of direct action.

Perhaps because of his background as a journalist, finally, Watson often has difficulty in presenting large blocks of material in clearly pointed, coherent narrative or analysis. He frequently seems to shift topics and periods abruptly, without transition, and the reader can easily get lost in a maze of quotation and anecdote.

The weaknesses of this pioneering work are nonetheless overshadowed by the wealth of information it provides, the new directions it opens up for future scholarship, and a perspective that will lead eventually to a more complete picture of this fascinating and inspiring struggle.

JOEL ROACHE
University of Maryland, Eastern Shore

Harvesting the Chesapeake: Tools and Traditions. By Larry S. Chowning. (Centreville, Md.: Tidewater Publishers, 1990. Pp. xii, 284. $28.95.)

Harvesting the Chesapeake: Tools and Traditions is a recent addition to the rapidly growing body of books relating to the Chesapeake Bay. It consists of thirty brief, richly-illustrated chapters, each devoted to a particular aspect of the Chesapeake fisheries in the past or present. *Harvesting the Chesapeake* is based on the author's visits and interviews with watermen, including several from his native Urbanna, Virginia, and others he met through his work as field editor for *National Fisherman* magazine. A number of those featured are African-Americans, a group that has been under-represented in studies of Chesapeake Bay watermen.

Each chapter combines general historical information about the fishery under discussion with the personal experiences of those who worked in them. These experiences, by and large, are told in the words of the people themselves, which underscores the volume's authenticity and adds an aural dimension to the work. Readers who have spent any time around Chesapeake natives will hear the gentle rhythms of regional speech throughout *Harvesting the Chesapeake*. Each chapter also blends descriptions of tools and technology with accounts of the knowledge and skills of the people who employ them. Readers will find chapters on such familiar topics as hand tonging for oysters, trotlining for blue crabs, and building a crab pot. But the majority of chapters address topics that are not so familiar—harvesting sturgeon and sheepshead; fishing for eel with bobs and gigs; life in the oyster camps and watch houses; and crafting hickory oyster mops and white oak sculling paddles. It is apparent throughout the book that Chowning has a wide circle of watermen-friends who are happy to share their knowledge and experiences. Chowning introduces each chapter with a journal-like entry that describes his relationship to the individuals featured and reveals his profound admiration for

them. Chowning's portraits of these people provide the most delightful aspect of *Harvesting the Chesapeake*. The portraits convey a sense of the values, perspectives, creativity, and wit of watermen.

Harvesting the Chesapeake will be of special interest to students and scholars of Maryland and Virginia history, folklore and folklife, American Studies, and fisheries technology. Chowning's readable style and the structure of the book itself—short chapters that need not be read in sequence—will make the volume appealing to a general audience as well. Teachers and maritime museum educators should take special note of the chapters on how to make gear, like crab nets, crab pots, and oyster mops. Detailed explanations are juxtaposed with photographs or drawings illustrating the process of construction from start to finish. These chapters are reminiscent of the popular *Foxfire* books and can be adapted for classroom or workshop use.

For all its strengths, there are two key shortcomings with *Harvesting the Chesapeake*. The volume has no footnotes, bibliography, or index. References would be especially welcome in Chowning's historical overviews of the fisheries in which he derived his accounts from government documents and other sources. These sources should have been identified in both footnotes and bibliography to assist future researchers and students.

Secondly, the photo layout does little to enhance this volume. The work is amply illustrated, but many of the photographs, especially those of people, are too small. More creative sizing, cropping, and placement of the photographs would have added substantially to the comprehensibility and visual appeal of this book. This complaint is offset only slightly by the cover photo of waterman Dink Miller. Featuring Miller on the cover was a brilliant idea: readers will know what I mean when they find Chowning's story of Virgil and Dink, the Miller twins.

PAULA J. JOHNSON
National Museum of American History

Georgetown at Two Hundred: Faculty Reflections on the University's Future. Edited by William C. McFadden, S.J. (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990. Pp. xviii, 353. Notes. $14.95.)

This book comprises seventeen thoughtful essays on the state of Georgetown University, past, present, and future. The papers were originally written for a faculty seminar led by William C. McFadden (Department of Theology) and Dorothy M. Brown (Department of History) that was held in 1989. Seminar members had been challenged by then-president Timothy S. Healy, S.J., to "take a good, hard look at [the university]" in the hope that "we [will] have something helpful to say to ourselves and to others as we enter our third century" (p. xi).

The papers explore a wide range of topics: post-Vatican II ecclesiology, international relations, the study of philosophy, science education, religious instruction, diversity and pluralism, women's studies, graduate programs, the professional schools, architecture, and others. Most essays contain a thorough historical survey

of the subject, followed by a discussion of the present situation and a consideration of prospects for the future.

Georgetown has become a "hot" college in the annual admissions race, especially over the last decade or so. What effect will this kind of success have on the school? What impact, in particular, will a more heterogeneous student body and faculty have on the traditional character of Georgetown? Will the secularizing "academic revolution" that transformed hundreds of religiously rooted Protestant colleges begin to work similar changes among Roman Catholic institutions? These questions point to a theme that runs through many of these essays. As Georgetown becomes more and more "respectable," must it simultaneously become less and less Catholic? Its bicentennial found Georgetown—and Catholic higher education—at an important crossroads, and the authors of these papers grapple with the pertinent issues clearly, perceptively, and honestly.

The chief audience for this book has to be the faculty, administration, and students of Georgetown itself. A good bit of the work—detailed accounts of the history of changes in curriculum, for example—would not appeal to very many others (although historians of education might find portions of these careful studies of some use). Beyond the Georgetown audience, educators at other Roman Catholic colleges and universities will discover a fair amount in this volume that could prove valuable for their own in-house stock-taking. In addition, individual essays will interest instructors within particular disciplines. John F. Haught (theology) and Joseph F. Earley (chemistry) square off on the question of how best to teach science to undergraduates who are not science majors. Haught proposes that science teachers exploit more fully and explicitly the narrative characteristics of science: make it more of a story of discovery. Earley is sympathetic but points out some of the problems with such an approach and provides some other models. Similarly, the sections on the teaching of philosophy and religious studies could also engage a wider audience. Finally, graduate- and professional-school deans would probably find it worth their while to peruse the chapters related to their work.

What these papers indicate above all is that Georgetown, despite recent changes and in part because of them, remains an extremely vital institution that is also distinctive, with tremendous riches to offer its own students and with much of value to give to the larger educational scene, too.

DAVID HEIN
Hood College

The Fighting Liberty Ships: A Memoir. By Adolph A. Hoehling. (Kent, Ohio; Kent State University Press, 1990. Pp. 166. Index. $22.00.)

All of the great commanders of World War II—the admirals, generals and political leaders—have long since written their memoirs and passed into history. Most of the surviving participants were quite young when the war ended and had served, generally, in the enlisted ranks or as junior officers. Few of them have

written memoirs of much consequence or quality. In *The Fighting Liberty Ships* we find an exception. Here we have a professional journalist, author of twenty-six books, who has a unique story to tell about his participation in the war. As the commanding officer of a naval armed guard unit aboard several merchant ships from 1943 to 1945, he held a rather unusual assignment, about which little has been written.

All ships of the American merchant marine carried a contingent of naval personnel who manned the defensive armament and performed signalling duties for the vessels. They were called the Armed Guard, and the vast majority of these men were reservists fresh out of high school, in a unit commanded by an ensign or Lt(jg). These officers and men lived and fought in an environment totally foreign to that of the regular navy. Their shipmates were civilian merchant seamen, and their ships were thin-skinned, relatively defenseless merchant ships which plodded, in convoy or independently, across all the sea lanes of the world. Because their duty was performed far from the mainstream of naval activity, it has largely been ignored by historians. But without the merchant marine, Allied victory would have been impossible.

Hoehling pays particular attention to the contribution of the Liberty Ships to the war effort. Two of his three ships were Libertys, and he understands the importance of their role. Two-thirds of all the cargo which left the United States during the war was carried aboard the 2700 mass-produced ships that President Roosevelt referred to as "Ugly Ducklings." Their ugliness is debatable, but their contribution is not.

Although *The Fighting Liberty Ships* is rather brief at 166 pages, it is extremely well written, mingling humor with the pathos of war. Hoehling skillfully weaves his own story into that of the broader view of the war—the battles and strategies that shaped the various theaters of operation into which his ships sailed. While historians look upon the last two years of the war as relatively safe for merchant shipping when compared with the early years, Hoehling clearly communicates the feeling of dread that pervaded his ships as they ventured into the war zones. Though the odds on their survival were improving, no ship was ever really safe as long as U-boats lurked beneath the seas. Losses were high. Only the Marine Corps sustained a higher casualty rate than the Merchant Marine. The Armed Guard sailors and their merchant seamen shipmates faced the threat of enemy action as soon as they left port, as well as the ever-present dangers of storm and collision, which are graphically portrayed in this finely crafted book. Just when we think "Dolph" Hoehling and his gunners would finish the war unscathed, disaster strikes.

A few minor technical errors (reference to T-2 tankers as twin screw ships, calling a certain merchant ship a Liberty when it was actually another type) are all that mar Hoehling's effort. His illustrations are quite good and, surprisingly, have not been widely published.

As a junior officer, Hoehling can shed no new light on why battles were fought, but his memoir is a valuable record of life aboard wartime merchant ships and in

the ports they visited. Baltimore area readers who wish to learn more about Liberty Ships and those who manned them are fortunate, because one of the two surviving Libertys, S.S. *John W. Brown,* is berthed at Pier One, Clinton Street in Baltimore Harbor. With all her guns mounted and a fresh coat of grey paint, she seems to stand ready for Hoehling and his crew to report aboard and help "deliver the goods" to wherever their sailing orders might carry them.

BRIAN HOPE
Project Liberty Ship, Baltimore

Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia. By Dell Upton. (Cambridge, Mass., and London: MIT Press, 1986. Pp. xxii, 278. Appendix, notes, glossary, index. $40.00)

This is a book about people as well as buildings—a study in cultural history using a unique approach. In *Holy Things and Profane* Dell Upton really has chosen architectural history as a point of departure for a much wider study. While he focuses on the thirty-seven colonial churches that survive today in Virginia (of some two hundred fifty standing in 1776), the author's main subject is the pervasively hierarchical society within which the Anglican church thrived before the Revolution.

By simply thumbing through this book, one can learn much from the many illustrations and captions. They give an excellent feel for the churches of colonial Virginia, both inside and out. The author himself did most of the photographs, plans, descriptive drawings, and maps. His several tables and diagrams help summarize much of the quantified data, and a few period illustrations offer a glimpse of churches through the eyes of old.

And while Upton's creative use of a variety of illustrative forms is pleasing, his writing is exceptional. The seamless inter-weaving of fact, story, and analysis is refreshing. Throughout the text one is constantly reminded of the variety of perspective that an inter-disciplinary approach can offer. This work's three main sections are entitled "Power," "Hospitality," and "Dance"—terms not generally associated with architecture. This, I think, is precisely the author's point—to get the historian to look with new eyes at the institution of the Anglican church in colonial Virginia. Fresh, if not startling categories are necessary, in Upton's words, "to avoid the narrowness that most architectural historians have brought to their studies of colonial buildings" (p. xxii).

Most of part 1 deals with church structure, but it begins with discussions of early Virginian ecclesiastical and social structures. The processes of deciding to build, of choosing a builder, and constructing the church are all essential to the resultant physical structure. The author draws his arguments from surviving buildings and from descriptions of vanished buildings, as well as from parish records, newspapers, private journals, and secondary sources. His arguments become all the more convincing as he freely draws upon these differing sources. Parts 2 and 3 lead the reader to Upton's ultimate thesis, i.e., that colonial churches in Virginia, while

initially descendent from English models, with time and the evolution of a peculiar social system became the pawns of the uppermost class as it strove to assert itself. "The gentry used the church, the courthouse, the plantation complexes, and the connective tissue of the landscape all equally as important tools of social assertion" (p. 215). Church pews and private balconies were sold to the highest bidder. Private windows and even wings were added by the wealthy, and poorer people sat in the back on bare benches. Upton maintains an impressive devotion to detail which is not overshadowed by addressing social and political concerns. In part 2 he discusses communion sets, chalices, and other interior furniture, as well as door, window, and chancel arrangements. He analyzes structure and function, showing how churches built after 1750 look (and function) increasingly more like courthouses and the great manor houses of the gentry. He demonstrates how the use of height, line, and space helps create the physical (not just psychological) distance used by the gentry to ensure respect from the "lower sorts."

But the domination of the colonial parish by the gentry was short-lived. In 1776 the Anglican church quickly declined from state-sponsored religion to an underdog competitor among stronger evangelical rivals. That "the activity of churchgoing [had become] predominantly secular" (p. 205), made Methodism more attractive to many, even before the Revolution (when both political and social upheaval became more acceptable). In its heyday the Anglican church in colonial Virginia was an important component of a delicate social order. Upton admits his own lack of admiration for the way that the gentry dominated church affairs, but he understands and describes this domination well. After all, deference was a matter of course. Until this book was published, though, historians did not look at church architecture for evidence of a vanished, deferential social order.

The established churches in colonial Maryland and Virginia had many similarities. It was fascinating for me to review the vestry minutes of St. Anne's Parish and to find the same sorts of practices in Anne Arundel County that Upton described in Virginian counties. One has to be careful drawing parallels between the colonies, though, since church-related laws and practices differed somewhat. Nonetheless, this book should be required reading for those interested in Maryland church history.

History—whether architectural, political, or even musical—has meaning only within a human context. *Holy Things and Profane* is a well-crafted, thoughtful and very innovative approach to a field of study in which the human element has often been overlooked in favor of bricks, mortar, and line drawings. Dell Upton has made a significant contribution to the understanding of many aspects of early Chesapeake life.

DAVID HILDEBRAND
Annapolis

Sixty Million Acres: American Veterans and the Public Lands Before the Civil War. By James W. Oberly. (Kent, Ohio, and London: Kent State University Press, 1990. Pp. xii, 222. Appendices, notes, index. $28.00.)

Between 1847, when Congress passed the Ten Regiments Act to encourage enlistments during the Mexican War, and 1855, when it passed the Old Soldiers Act in response to intensive lobbying by veterans of the War of 1812, the government of the United States gave away some 60,000,000 acres to over 500,000 of its military veterans. James Oberly's book meticulously reconstructs the history of this policy, from its origins as legislation to the actual use of land warrants by settlers in the upper Mississippi Valley. Oberly notes that his work is the first full-length study of antebellum military bounty land grants, which is not surprising given the nature of the topic. The history of land policy is often difficult and tedious business. But, if this book does not succeed in making the topic lively, it does make a strong case for its centrality to our understanding of nineteenth-century American politics and frontier development.

Following the argument of Michael F. Holt about the ideological bankruptcy of the second American party system, Oberly begins by demonstrating that the traditional Whig-Jacksonian division over the public lands had lost its relevance by the early 1850s. In the decade before the Civil War, Congress shifted away from viewing federal lands as a source of revenue to seeing them as a means of furthering national economic development. Military bounty grants were part of this transition. By giving veterans warrants for a specific number of acres of the public lands, the government avoided spending money it did not have and encouraged western settlement. In a part of his book with significant implications for our times, Oberly shows how national organizations of veterans, in particular the United Brethren of the War of 1812, were able to exploit the political confusion of the 1850s for their own ends. In the absence of a strong, well-defined two-party system, congressmen were often eager to satisfy the demands of well-organized, single-interest groups with lots of potential voters. Had partisan conflict not fallen into such disarray, veterans likely would not have been as successful in winning such large concessions from their national government.

In his last four chapters, Oberly moves from political to economic history and from the national to the local level. Here his work on the market for military warrants and their actual location confirms the conclusions of historians such as Allan Bogue and Robert Swierenga. After detailing the bureaucratic process through which veterans obtained their warrants, Oberly describes the national network of brokers who frequently bought the warrants and then resold them in frontier areas. He rejects the notion that this system was unfair. Rather, the sale of warrants benefitted veterans by providing them with a one-time pension from the government. And, as for frontier settlers, he believes that the system "may have encouraged some additional speculation, but [it] also effectively lowered land prices" (p. 160). In a phrase, "markets worked" (p. 166).

The great value of Oberly's book lies less in the familiar conclusions he reaches than in his lucid description of the workings of both the federal government and land markets in the 1850s. *Sixty Million Acres* will not revolutionize our understanding of the past any more than its prose will inspire its readers. Simply put, this is a straightforward example of the kind of book historians often call for but rarely write. Oberly shows us how things worked—how legislation originated, how lobbyists behaved, how federal agencies dealt with citizens, how brokers operated, how land warrants were located, and most important, how decisions made in Washington, D.C. eventually, if circuitously, affected the shape of the landscape in Iowa and Wisconsin. When other scholars attempt to construct more ambitious arguments about the political, economic, and territorial development of the United States in the nineteenth century, they will build their work on foundations laid by careful and thorough historians such as James Oberly.

ANDREW CAYTON
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Stonewall Jackson at Cedar Mountain. By Robert K. Krick. (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1990. Pp. xiii, 472. Illustrations, maps, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. $29.95.)

Abandoned by Lincoln: A Military Biography of General John Pope. By Wallace J. Schutz and Walter N. Trenerry. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1990. Pp. xiv, 243. Illustrations, 9 maps, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. $32.50.)

These two books deal, in different ways, with the events of high summer 1862, when the Union army in the east, in disarray following McClellan's abortive Peninsula campaign, was about to be subjected to a series of hammer blows that would not end until Gettysburg. As scholarship they form part of the continuous river of works, beginning almost as soon as the conflict ended, which testify to the enduring hold of the war over Americans.

In early 1862 John Pope, the newly minted commander of the Union's Army of Virginia, hung for a brief moment at the apogee of his military career. At the same time and in the same area of Virginia southwest of Washington, Confederate general Thomas J. Jackson was at the beginning of a whirlwind period that saw him emerge as arguably America's greatest combat general and culminated in his apotheosis at Chancellorsville, his and Robert E. Lee's tactical masterpiece. Jackson's famous nickname is ironic since, while it does connote his steadfastness and determination, it does not reflect the basis of his military genius: Rather than standing still like a stone wall and taking a blow, Jackson relied on speed of movement to accelerate and enhance the striking power of his troops. In the campaign of Second Manassas Jackson developed and exercised his striking ability in a way that would become legendary.

If Jackson's success was based on his ability to move, John Pope's failure derived from the hobbles placed on him. First, his ability to counter Jackson was limited

by the priority, imposed by Lincoln, that he defend Washington. But Pope was fatally hindered by a confused and demoralized command structure in which political and personal factionalism in the service of divergent interests further hamstrung a warmaking effort already notable for its lack of strategic clarity. Pope did the best he could in this situation and came close to winning the battle of Second Manassas. But he never had the confidence of his own army nor could he match Confederate moves on the battlefield. With his defeat the unfortunate Pope, relieved of command on the return of McClellan, was exiled to Indian country; he would serve out his career honorably in peripheral commands in the west and south.

Abandoned by Lincoln is a solid biography by two nonacademic historians who briskly recount Pope's career. One of the heartening aspects of Civil War historiography is the active participation of non-specialist, non-guild historians, and *Abandoned by Lincoln* provides worthy evidence of the vitality of that involvement. The authors acknowledge that Pope will be forever known as the man who lost Second Manassas and attempt to redress the balance by detailing Pope's career both before and after 29 and 30 August 1862. However, the battle inevitably is the center of the book as it was in Pope's life. The authors convincingly demonstrate the ways in which the Union's political situation generally, and within the army specifically, undermined Pope, making his failure almost foreordained. The title derives from Pope's belief, which is supported by the authors, that he never received adequate backing from either the army or the politicians and that as a Republican he was betrayed by a Republican administration overly solicitous of its Democratic generals. More specifically, on the field at Manassas Pope was fatally undercut by Fitz-John Porter's failure, through either incompetence or wilful disobedience caused by his enmity of Pope, to attack on the battle's first day when events hung in the balance and a Union victory looked possible. Porter was court-martialed for his inaction and spent much of his subsequent life seeking vindication by exculpating his own actions while blaming Pope for his handling of the battle. The authors relegate their discussion of the Porter case in all its detail and political ramifications to an appendix but it might have been better to discuss it in the body of the book since it was such an essential and important element in Pope's life; to a large degree, for Pope the battle of Second Manassas lasted until he died.

Pope is not an especially likable character—he was given to loud talk and pompous pronouncements—but he was personally brave and it is hard not to sympathize with a commander who had to face Jackson and Lee at the head of a command which included men who disdained him. Few men can ever have suffered a more disheartening moment than the defeated Pope when on the retreat to Washington his own staff, hearing of Pope's replacement by McClellan, raised a cheer which echoed down the line of march. *Abandoned by Lincoln* is a solid and useful addition to the list of biographies of both Union and Confederate commanders. It cannot be called definitive only because nothing is definitive in Civil War historiography; the old battles are constantly being refought and we can expect some partisan of Fitz-John Porter to weigh in shortly.

Stonewall Jackson at Cedar Mountain is a meticulous recounting, largely from the southern point of view, of the prologue battle on 9 August to the major engagement of Second Manassas. Cedar Mountain was a meeting engagement at which, during the general maneuvering of both armies, Jackson cut off Pope's tentative attempt to move southward with the Army of Virginia. The Union troops at the battle were commanded by Nathaniel Banks, who was nothing if not impetuous and who gained an early advantage in part because Jackson moved his troops unusually slowly and inefficiently. Banks appeared to be winning, but after its initial success the Union became overextended. Lacking reserves and operating in isolation from other elements of Pope's army, Banks was driven off, defeated by a stout Confederate defense rallied by Jackson himself and bolstered by one of A.P. Hill's patented late arrivals to augment the line. The battle was a near run thing for Jackson but his ultimate success blunted any further Union notions of leaving the immediate defence of Washington and going on the offensive in southern Virginia. It was crucial, then, in fixing the Army of Virginia in place so that it could be defeated at Second Manassas.

Krick has mined the magisterial *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion* and a myriad of other primary sources and materials to provide a minutely detailed, almost microscopic, recapitulation of the engagement. However, it is not the final word on the battle because it does not treat both sides evenly: it focuses most heavily—as the title indicates—on Jackson's troops. This is the author's choice but it might have been better, especially since the battle was of short duration and not overly complicated, if he had analyzed the Union as well as the Confederate side. Another problem is that the author tends to deify Stonewall Jackson: at Cedar Mountain Jackson was not yet a great general, but Krick still tends to treat him as the legend he became. Coming off a desultory campaign on the Peninsula, Jackson had not yet developed his full power as a fighting man; this is shown in his uncertain and inefficient handling of his troops (and generals) in the maneuvering before Cedar Mountain. But Jackson learned from his experience and Cedar Mountain was an important milestone in his growth. Unlike Jackson, John Pope probably never would have developed into anything more than an average general. He was never given the chance in a Union army desperate for victory but with, in 1862, little idea about how victory might be obtained.

DAVID C. WARD
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The American South: A History. By William J. Cooper, Jr. and Thomas E. Terrill. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990. Pp. xxiv, 835. Photographs, maps, bibliographical essay, index. $50.00.)

Although this book deals with an old topic, long the subject of both scholarly and popular books and of studies that sometimes praise but more often criticize the American South, it happily combines both old and new information. In fresh new words and in sentences carefully wrought to keep the reader's interest, the authors

have provided a book to be read chapter by chapter, with rests between to reflect on both facts and style. Witness: Eliza Pinckney "made a rousing success of indigo farming." Or Henry Clay "emigrated to Kentucky as a lad." He was "a tall, lanky fellow with a captivating personality." Such descriptive words surface throughout the text and convince the reader that the authors really know the people to whom they are introducing us.

They also know and present well the facts of Southern discovery, settlement, and development. Their understanding of the region gives them the ability to portray both its strengths and its weaknesses. Throughout this book, in keeping with new interests in history, there are appropriate references to the contributions of women, blacks, and Indians. The authors also point out instances where the past perception of the South by outsiders has been wrong. For example, at his funeral in 1904, Confederate Gen. John Brown Gordon was hailed by the national press as the "very embodiment of the Lost Cause." He had, indeed, played the role of Confederate hero for many years. At the same time, however, as a politician and a businessman, he had taken an active part in shaping the New South.

In dealing with recent times this book is especially interesting. In many respects it is a pioneer in its inclusion in a regional survey history of many nearly contemporary events. Such assorted topics are considered as the southern literary renaissance, World War II, integration, civil rights, the rise of the Republican party, the voting rights act, labor, unionization, and industrial diversification. The furniture industry, however, is virtually ignored, and it seems strange that neither the Korean War nor the Vietnam War receives mention.

The colonial history of Maryland is covered in a section of its own as is that of the Carolinas and Georgia. It also is cited elsewhere in the text in connection with broad topics such as population, the economy, slavery, government, and the ratification of the United States Constitution.

The American South is a book that happily combines a readable text and a variety of factual information suitably organized and indexed for quick reference.

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The Sanitarians: A History of American Public Health. By John Duffy. (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1990. Pp. 332, bibliography, index. $32.50.)

From 1611, when the governor of the Virginia colony forbade anyone "to doe the necessities of nature" within "a quarter of mile from the palisade lest the fort be choaked, and poisoned with ill aires," (p. 11) until quite recent times, the history of public health in America was one of combat between Cleanliness and Filth. Heroic, often isolated, public-spirited citizens took the side of Cleanliness, braving rivers of excrement, pestilential miasmas, bacilli-laden milk, and mountains of putrefying garbage to create a healthy, which is to say sanitary, America. They struggled in the face of ignorance of the cause of epidemic diseases and against the apathy of their fellow citizens, who cared little for quarantines that interfered with

trade or for refuse removal if it raised taxes—except when terrified by yellow fever, smallpox, or cholera. The irony is that the sanitarians based their crusade on an erroneous theory of disease, but their long clean-up campaign, together with improved living standards, did create a healthier America.

The Sanitarians: A History of American Public Health is a fit companion for the author's *The Healers: A History of American Medicine*, and like the earlier book provides a comprehensive, chronological survey of the step forward, step backward progress of the quest for better health. This is not a book about physicians and curative medicine, however, but about communities learning to keep whole populations healthy through prevention. In nineteen chronologically organized narrative chapters, Duffy describes and analyzes how American society dealt with or ignored challenges to public health. National in scope, *The Sanitarians* examines small towns and rural areas as well as major cities, giving fair measure to the various regions of the country. The founding of the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, a national rather than purely local event, is given due attention. Otherwise, Maryland and Baltimore (like most places) are mentioned mostly to give examples of poor conditions. (There are more references to Baltimore than those listed in the index.)

This is an important and useful book. *The Sanitarians*, like *The Healers* before it, places the scientific and organizational developments of the public health movement in their larger social context. Though Duffy tells his tale primarily by examining the "organized and institutionalized efforts to improve community health" (p. 2), the issues raised involve multiple categories of social history (e.g., labor, immigration, urban history) and large themes in American history (e.g., conflicts between individual liberty and public welfare, federal-state relations, developing mechanisms to deal with large and complex problems). Urban historians will find this volume particularly useful, but every instructor of American history would find this book helpful, if only to enliven lectures with such lines as "Keep in mind that dead horses, like abandoned automobiles today, were simply left in the streets" (p. 176).

Unfortunately, in what may be a variation of the phenomenon that vice makes livelier reading than virtue, that which is being crusaded against is often more interesting than the success of the crusader. Public health success is sometimes dull, as much progress came through the creation of government agencies and it is difficult (though not impossible) to make accounts of bureaucracy exciting. Further, since public health efforts were sporadic, advancing and retreating as interest and fear lost or gained ground against apathy and parsimony, Duffy sometimes has to retell similar stories In separate chapters. The advantage, of course, is that a reader with a specific chronological interest can go directly to the chapters on the Civil War or the New Deal for accounts of those periods. Still, it must be said that, like a lurid novel, the dirty parts of *The Sanitarians* are the most fun. Duffy's own language takes wing, and he finds wonderful quotations: "an observer in Milwaukee in 1889 commented that the garbage remained so long in the streets that

it eventually attempted to remove itself 'by crawling away, in the shape of active little worms'" (p. 176).

The authorial voice is heard in other ways, as when Duffy illustrates the health-education movement of the 1920s with a recollection of his grade-school theatrical debut as "the third germ in a health play about tuberculosis" (p. 210). More significantly, his voice is evident in the conception of public health as a chapter in the history of social justice. It is clear that Duffy thinks that concern for the less fortunate is not only prudential but is the right thing.

In his vigorous concluding chapter, Duffy calls for a national health system, and stresses the importance of promoting health education and of healthy personal habits on the one hand and of improving social and economic conditions on the other. Despite his pessimism at the persistence and underlying tragedy of a permanent American underclass, Duffy remains optimistic that social concern, diligent public health personnel, rising economic conditions, and higher moral standards will continue to improve public health. But progress is not inevitable, he warns, and the struggle for public health is a continuing one.

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Review Essay

The Creation of Washington, D.C.: The Idea and Location of the American Capital. By Kenneth R. Bowling. (Fairfax, Va.: George Mason University Press, 1991. Pp. 310. Notes, index. $24.95.)

Through A Fiery Trial: Building Washington, 1790-1800. By Bob Arnebeck. (Lanham, Md.: Madison Books, 1991. Pp. 682. Illustrations, notes. $29.95.)

Washingtonians in this decade will be celebrating a bicentennial of sorts. This year, for example, marks the 200th anniversary of the L'Enfant plan; 1992 that of the cornerstone laying of the White House; 1993 the cornerstone of the Capitol; and so on to the year 2000 when Congress and the federal establishment will celebrate the bicentennial of the arrival of the government in its new capital. Due to the unfortunate and well-publicized problems of the District of Columbia, little has been done by the local government to prepare for these celebrations. Whatever plans the federal government may have will most likely proceed with minimal acknowledgement of the local government. Whatever tangible legacies are to be left will have to be produced by private initiatives. Fortunately, the effort is off to a propitious beginning with these two new books. In very different ways, Bowling and Arnebeck have set high standards for those working in the field of Washington studies.

Kenneth R. Bowling's study of the debate over and the decision to locate the capital on a Potomac site is a model of historical scholarship. The result of twenty years of study, this long-awaited book provides the definitive text on the subject. The research is staggering. (Bowling has spent over a decade as researcher and co-editor of the *Documentary History of the First Federal Congress* project at George Washington University.) No one has examined in such detail the debates in Congress, the personal papers of the participants, and the response in the newspapers. The book's one deficiency is the lack of a bibliography and list of manuscript collections consulted.

Previous accounts of the debate over the location of the capital have stressed regional and local factors: the desire of Northerners and Southerners for an easily accessed seat of government. Bowling's major contribution is that he provides an interpretive framework that transcends the sectional analysis. The debate over the capital was an integral element in the debate over the very nature of the national government and its relationship to the states. "The debate," Bowling writes, "reflected, and can be seen as a metaphor for, the constitutional struggle over federalism which dominated politics throughout the thirty-year American Revolution" (p. ix). If the United States was to become the great empire supporters of a strong central government envisioned, it needed a suitable capital to reflect its glory. The narrative reveals how the debate over the capital site was shaped by the growing influence of the centralists in the 1780s.

Bowling provides new light on a number of topics. One is the question of exclusive jurisdiction. Centralists argued that the national government needed exclusive jurisdiction within the seat of government if it was to prevent such insults to national dignity as the 1783 mutiny in Philadelphia, which, although mild for a mutiny, did impress upon them the Confederation Congress's dependence upon the state of Pennsylvania. Such dependency comported ill with centralist visions of a new American Empire. Opponents feared that exclusive jurisdiction would encourage aristocracy, the trappings of monarchy, and generally anti-republican corruption. Federalists prevailed at the constitutional convention, and the principle of exclusive jurisdiction was embodied in article 1, section 8.

A second issue illuminated by Bowling is the motivation of advocates of the Potomac site. The happy fact that George Washington lived there was but one advantage. The Potomac also marked the geographic center of the union. Centrality, however, was more than a symbolic advantage. For Southerners, a capital in the South meant easy access, and moreover, added insurance that Southern views on slavery would be protected. But most of all, for men such as Washington, Jefferson, and Madison, the location would facilitate the economic development of the interior. The Potomac, not the Hudson or the Susquehanna, would become the preeminent American river of empire. "Potomac fever," Bowling makes clear, is no recent development. Other sites had equally passionate advocates, but none had George Washington, who until 1789 was the president of the Potomac Navigation Company. Because of his stature and position, Washington could afford to be

quiet during public debate, but no one failed to understand where his sentiments lay.

Men such as Washington, Jefferson, and Madison were no mere agrarians seeking a pastoral Southern capital. Rather, they were men imbued with the commercial ethos of the Chesapeake; the same drive for economic development that created Baltimore. This insight sheds new light on the Compromise of 1790. Jefferson and Madison agreed to find votes for Hamilton's assumption plan in return, not for votes for the Potomac site, but simply for no interference from New England in the deal the South had engineered with Pennsylvania to locate the temporary capital in Philadelphia for ten years before moving to a permanent Potomac site. The compromise, Bowling suggests, marked the end of the American Revolution, "for it resolved the two most difficult and lingering issues: what to do about the war debt and where to establish the capital" (p. 206). The seat of government bill also profoundly affected the building of the new capital. The president was empowered to appoint the commissioners of the federal city without senatorial consent, but most ominously, no funds were appropriated for construction. The president and the commissioners could thus have a free hand in building the city, but they also would have to devise schemes to finance it.

The Creation of Washington, D.C. is an important addition not only to the literature of the history of the federal city, but also to historical scholarship on the American Revolution and the early republic. Few scholars have integrated an analysis of congressional debate and personal correspondence with larger categories of interpretation with as much skill as Bowling. It is a mark of the author's mastery of the subject that a tale with so many characters, motivations, and levels of meaning can be told with such clarity. It is also a credit to the author that his interpretive framework illuminates the narrative in a manner that both scholars and non-scholars alike can appreciate.

It is just such an analytical framework that is most noticeably missing from *Through A Fiery Trial: Building Washington, 1790-1800*. Arnebeck, a Washington writer, has taken up the story where Bowling's ends. He has examined more than any other writer the primary and secondary literature, archival, and manuscript sources pertaining to the building of the federal city. Unfortunately, he employs a footnoting style sure to frustrate a generation of scholars and graduate students who try to trace his sources. Several citations are bunched in block footnotes, necessitating a careful reader to discern which source refers to a given quotation, anecdote, or assertion in the text. Moreover, Arnebeck has adopted a semi-documentary style of narrative history. The story is told in an apparently straightforward chronological narrative, with chapters proceeding season by season grouped in sections year by year.

The author argues for objectivity. "I have tried to show readers what a good story the history of Washington is, rather than tell them what to think about it," he writes (p. 629). Yet the author does have an agenda. The "good story" he tells is one that emphasizes the folly, greed, and ineptitude of the politicians, financiers, lawyers, and engineers involved in building Washington. Taking his cue from

Benjamin Latrobe who referred in 1806 to the founding of the city as "this Gigantic Abortion," Arnebeck's narrative echoes throughout with complaints against the founders, such as those made by the frustrated wife of one settler that the city was afflicted with "dolts, delvers, magicians, soothsayers, quacks, bankrupts, puffs, speculators, monopolizers, extortioners, traitors, petit foggy lawyers, and ham brickmakers." Arnebeck even goes so far as to make the preposterous suggestion that "the dismal state of the embryonic capital (in 1799) so dampened Washington's spirits that a case may be made that the city killed him" (p. 1). Such statements may sell books, but they are not good history.

The history of the period is indeed replete with examples of incompetency and greed. A machine reputed to make bricks does not work; a wall of the Capitol under construction collapses; barges loaded with building stone sink in the Potomac; a lottery devised by Samuel Blodget to finance construction fails; and most centrally to Arnebeck's narrative, the grand scheme of Morris, Nicholson, and Greenleaf to sell lots in the District through the creation of the North American Land Company proves to be a colossal boondoggle.

Elements of this story are fascinating, and they are well told. Arnebeck is particularly good at illuminating the personalities and rivalries involved, from the haughty French demeanor of Pierre L'Enfant to the passionate Irish enthusiasms of Thomas Law. His depictions of the jealousies between contending architects and builders are exceptionally good, though well-known to scholars; for example, Thornton's problems as commissioner with the various men involved in building the Capitol he designed—Hallet, Hadfield, and Hoban. The author also emphasizes the struggles between the competing interests of commissioners, the original proprietors, and speculators. The rivalries between the Georgetown interests and settlers in the Eastern, or Anacostia area are also well-described.

Brief but enticing glimpses are also provided into the city's social history. Slaves hired by the year from neighboring planters, it should be clear by now, did the heaviest and dirtiest work, from hauling stone to digging drainage ditches. Working conditions for free labor were often little better, with housing in crude huts or barracks sometimes made from boards nailed around tree stumps. Wages, though advertised so as to attract labor, were subject to the commissioners' constant need to economize. The commissioners even ran out of town one woman suspected of keeping a "disorderly" house. Workers, however, were occasionally rewarded. L'Enfant provided his men with two ounces of chocolate per day; later supervisors fortified the labor force with liquor.

Was the building of Washington the failure Arnebeck describes? Given the rivalries, incompetence, and greed that the author chronicles in such detail it is amazing that anything was ready for the federal government when it arrived in 1800. Yet, when it did arrive, Congress was greeted by one finished wing of the Capitol, and the president found a completed executive mansion. John Quincy Adams's wife, Louisa, described them in 1801 as "the two most superb buildings and well worth coming to see." By European standards, the city was not a seat of empire, but neither was the United States a flourishing empire in 1800. After all,

in the 1790s it had had to pay tribute and ransom to pirates and could barely maintain an army on the frontier.

The District of Columbia—the ten mile square—was huge by eighteenth-century standards. Other than a small settlement in Georgetown and scattered farms, it was a wilderness of woods and marshes in 1790, if not the swamp that some later claimed. The area was rural and agrarian. No local industry or commerce of note favored urban development in such a vast area. The existence of slavery, in fact, hindered the development of a thriving mechanic and artisanal population. Other problems were not unique to the District. The North American Land Company, for example, was only one of many land speculation schemes throughout the United States. But most importantly, the building of Washington reflected the problems created by federalism. The commissioners exercised exclusive jurisdiction on behalf of the president, but they had to rely for financing upon grants from Maryland and Virginia, loans from Congress, and various schemes to sell city lots. The efforts of men from George Washington and Thomas Johnson to James Greenleaf and Thomas Law to make money off the federal city was not evidence of corruption. The eighteenth-century mind saw no such conflict of interest, especially when principle and expediency so clearly intersected as they did when one could both profit and promote the growth of the nation's capital.

The author has been ill-served by his editors. The book could easily have been condensed by a third. The story is told in such numbing detail that all but the most dauntless of readers may become discouraged. Most disappointing of all, the book lacks an index. For a work of this depth of research, such an omission is inexcusable.

Through A Fiery Trial is a book that should be read for its wealth of information on the early history of the federal city. It will become an important sourcebook, but its limitations will preclude it from becoming the definitive study it could have been. *The Creation of Washington, D.C.*, on the other hand, should remain the definitive study of the debate over the location of the federal city site for some time to come.

DONALD R. KENNON
U.S. Capitol Historical Society

Books Received

"In Readiness To Do Every Duty Assigned", edited by Gregory A. Stiverson, relates the role of the Frederick militia during John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, 17-18 October 1859, as told by Col. Edward Shriver, commander of the 16th Regiment, in his report to Brig. Gen. James M. Coale. Stiverson provides an informative introduction to the events of those two days and insight into the character of John Brown. The remainder of the booklet contains the report written in Shriver's hand along with a transcription and footnotes.

Maryland State Archives (paper) $5.

Another booklet, *A Walking Tour of Historic & Renaissance Baltimore* by Donald T. Fritz, describes a three-mile tour of Baltimore that begins at the Otterbein neighborhood on Conway Street and ends in Little Italy at Pratt and Albemarle Streets. Inside the front cover is a map of the area with each of the eighty sites numbered and the route indicated in red. The text provides background information on the sites and some photographs. Designed to be a tour of short duration, the Inner Harbor area, the Walters Art Gallery, and the Lexington Market are left for another day. A booklet for the tourist or the Baltimore native.

Donald T. Fritz, Baltimore, Maryland, $9.

A Hagerstown resident, Allan Powell once visited Fort Frederick and looked in vain for a booklet explaining the old outpost's significance in eighteenth-century regional history. So he went home and started one, using a variety of published sources on the period, and published it in 1988. Since then, devoted as he is to the military history of the French and Indian War, Powell has written similarly readable and nicely illustrated small volumes on Fort Cumberland, Maryland, and Fort Loudon, Virginia, near Winchester. These colorful paperbacks will appeal to history lovers from high-school age to senior citizen.

McClain Printing Co., $5 each.

Letters to the Editor

Your illuminating article on Maryland rye whiskey in the Winter 1990 issue of the Maryland Historical Magazine contributes an interesting chapter to our social and commercial history. It also helps to envision the habits and customs of an era which is rapidly receding into the past and soon will be as completely forgotten as the Rennert Hotel or Mosam Coffee and other Maryland monuments once thought to have been eternal.

I can contribute a footnote that indicates that the heyday of Maryland rye whiskey did not end without a bang—literally.

When the XVIII Amendment to the Constitution of the United States was ratified, it was implemented by the passage of the Volstead Act which put an end to the production and sale of alcoholic beverages. When the act went into effect it naturally found the Maryland distillers of rye whiskey with substantial stocks of their superior liquor in the process of aging in their warehouses. This was the case at the distillery of Outerbridge Horsey in Frederick County, which you have so well described.

The Volstead Act was administered by federal officials appointed by the President, and in Maryland Amos W. W. Woodcock was put in charge. All the stocks of whiskey on hand were placed under bond and trustees were given the responsibility for their security until they could be lawfully liquidated. My father, Charles McC. Mathias, was the trustee for the Horsey Distillery.

Outerbridge Horsey had established his distillery on his farm located in a part of Frederick County known as the Merryland Tract. It was a picturesque area lying just to the east of the Blue Ridge and included a circle of substantial houses occupied by well known Maryland families including the Lees, the Claggetts as well as the Horseys. It was a neighborhood celebrated for its hospitality, high living and aristocratic pretensions. One reason that it developed its own social patterns was that it was relatively isolated, and that fact is pertinent to events at the Horsey Distillery.

The barrels of "Old Horsey" were locked up in a strong warehouse built of field stone, the walls of which are still visible. It was formidable, but was also remote from surveillance and from assistance if any should be necessary. My father, who lived twenty miles away in Frederick, put the keys to the warehouse in the hands of a local lieutenant, a Mr. Myers.

The large stock of famous whiskey of high quality and reputation was a lure that attracted the attention of the "Mob" or whatever passed for organized crime in those days. The isolated warehouse with its valuable contents seemed to be a target for a raid that would richly reward the bold and the lawless. A gang, reputed to be "from New Jersey" decided to risk a raid and invaded the Merryland Tract. Through circumstances of which I am not presently aware, there must have been

some sort of warning because Mr. Myers recruited a defensive force and occupied the warehouse. The Mob attacked with live gunfire, but were finally defeated and beaten off. I have no record of casualties, but "Old Horsey" survived intact.

In the fullness of time the "Old Horsey" stock was sold, still under bond, for export to the British Isles. It was hauled to Baltimore and loaded on board a merchant ship bound for Scotland. My father had grave doubts that it ever reached its destination and suspected that the ship might have off-loaded the rye as it passed the New Jersey coast and that the raiders may have been successful in the long run.

The association with the Outerbridge Horsey Distillery created an aura that persisted for many years. The "Drys" among my father's political opponents charged him with having sequestered several barrels of "Old Horsey" and accused him of storing it in our basement. His consistent retort to such critics was "I only wish that I had!"

Sincerely,
Charles McC. Mathias

Notices

Undergraduate Essay Prize Awarded

The Education Committee of the Maryland Historical Society congratulates the winner of the second annual undergraduate essay contest, Mary O. Klein of Salisbury State University for "Some Inquiries into the Position of Blacks in Somerset Parish, Maryland, 1692-1865." As the winner she will receive the prize of $250. The deadline for next year's contest is 29 May 1992.

Maritime History Contest

The Maritime Committee of the Maryland Historical Society and the University of Baltimore are pleased to announce the third annual Maryland Maritime History Essay Contest, the purpose of which is to stimulate research in Maryland maritime history. Subjects that prospective authors might consider include all aspects of seafaring between 1600 and 1800: ships, boats and their equipment; cargoes, catches, or passengers carried on Maryland vessels and the economic systems they operated within; their officers and crews; naval activities; and maritime law. Papers should rely on primary source materials and not exceed 6,000 words in length. The deadline for submission will be 24 January 1992 with the winners being announced in the late spring of 1992. Cash awards will be given to the top three papers in the amount of $300 for first place, $125 for second, and $75 for third. Participants must submit four copies of their papers; since it is hoped that winners will submit their essays to the *Maryland Historical Magazine* for possible publication, they are requested to follow the magazine's contributors' guidelines (see pages 98-100 of the spring 1989 issue or write to the editor for a copy). Mail papers to the Maritime Essay Contest, The Maryland Historical Society, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201.

Parker Genealogical Contest

In 1946, Mrs. Sumner A. Parker presented the Maryland Historical Society with a sum of money in memory of her husband, Sumner A. Parker, with the suggestion that the income should be used to furnish cash prizes for an annual contest to determine the best genealogical works concerning families of or originating in Maryland.

Rules

1. Entries must be typewritten or in printed form and include an index.
2. References to sources from which information was obtained must be cited.

3. Entries will be judged on quality of content, scope and organization of material, and clarity of presentation.

4. The decision of the judges will be final.

5. Entries for the contest for any given year must be received by 31 December of that year to Parker Genealogical Contest, Maryland Historical Society, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201.

6. All entries will become the property of the society. Publication rights and/or copyright remain with the author.

Norris Harris Genealogical Source Record Contest

Mrs. Norris Harris, a member of the Maryland Historical Society and the Maryland Genealogical Society as well as a number of lineal societies, has established a monetary award for the best compilation of genealogical source records of Maryland. This prize, to be awarded annually, was established in memory of the late Norris Harris who was an ardent genealogist for many years.

RULES

1. All entries must be submitted in typewritten or published form and include an index if not arranged in alphabetical order.

2. Entries will be judged on scope, originality of the project, volume, and value to the genealogical researcher.

3. Entries must be original work, i.e. never before abstracted for public use or published in any other work, serially or otherwise.

4. Entries should be submitted to the Norris Harris Genealogical Source Record Contest, Maryland Historical Society, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201, and must be received by 31 December of the contest year.

5. All entries will become the property of the Maryland Historical Society. Publication rights and/or copyright remain with the entrant.

Parker and Harris Prizes Awarded

The Genealogy Committee of the Maryland Historical Society herewith announces the winners of prizes for the best genealogical works received in the society's library during the fiscal year 1990-91, but printed in 1990.

The first prize in the Sumner A. and Dudrea Parker contest for the best work on Maryland families was awarded to Jane Cassedy for *Swingle, Swengel, and Swingley. Descendants of Johann Nickel Schwingel, 1698-1786...including related families* (1990). Sharing the second prize will be Nancy Mae (Little) Randers-Pehrson and Glen Randers-Pehrson for *The Robert and Elizabeth (Hamilton) Little Family of Harford County, Md.* (1990) and David Andrew Snyder for *From Bavaria to Baltimore* (1989).

The Norris Harris prize for the best genealogical source work on Maryland was awarded to Karen Mauer Green for *The Maryland Gazette, 1727-1761: Genealogical Historical Abstracts* (1990). Second prize went jointly to V. L. Skinner, Jr., for

Abstracts of the Inventories of the Prerogative Court of Maryland, 1751-1756 and 1760-1769 (1989 and 1990) and John J. Winterbotton, compiler, for *Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Baltimore, Md. Caretaker Records* (1989). Honorable mention was awarded to Agnes Kane Callum for *Colored Volunteers of Maryland Civil War 7th Regiment, United States Colored Troops, 1863-1866* (1990), Martha and Bill Reamy for *History and Roster of Maryland Volunteers, War of 1861-1865* (1990), Mary A. and Stanley G. Piet for *Early Catholic Church Records in Baltimore, Md., 1782 through 1800* (1989), and F. Edward Wright for *Anne Arundel County Church Records of the 17th and 18th Centuries*.

Genealogical Note Corrects Sewall Family History

Mr. Carson Gibb of Annapolis, Maryland, has located information that clears up an error apparently unchallenged for more than thirty years. The *MdHM*, 53 (1958): 100, asserts that Basil Sewell of Talbot County, Md., (will probated 1802) was the son of William Sewall, son of Maj. Nicholas Sewall. In fact, Basil was the unbaptized son born on 20 December 1741 mentioned in the will of James Sewall (or Sawell) of Calvert County, Maryland, executed on 24 May 1743 and proved on 18 July 1749 (Wills 27: 28 Maryland State Archives). Mary, James's widow and administratrix, married, by 18 May 1757, Benjamin Hunt of Calvert County (Inventories 41: 163; Accounts 41: 124, ibid.), who died by 20 August 1773 when his personal estate was appraised (Inventories 121: 51, ibid.), leaving Mary, once again, widow and administratrix. Her account of his estate includes payments to James's four sons: Capt. William Sawall, John Sawall, James Sewall, and Bassel Suvall (Accounts 72: 297, ibid.). James was the son of James (will proved 22 May 1702; see Wills 11: 193, ibid.), who was the son of John (will proved 23 October 1677; see Wills 5: 316, ibid.).

Evidence confirms that Basil of Talbot County and Basil of James were the same. Two deeds of gift from Edward Elliot of Talbot County—one made 11 September 1766 to his daughter, Dorothy Elliot, another made 27 November 1767 to his daughter, Dorothy Snell, wife of Basil Snell (Talbot County Land Records 19: 406 and 463, ibid.)—imply that Basil and Dorothy were married in 1766 or 1767, when Basil of James was twenty-five or twenty-six. Basil and Dorothy named their son William Elliot, evidently after Dorothy's brother, and a deed of 5 May 1807 identifies him as her only heir (Talbot County Land Records 32: 175, ibid.) Basil named his second son James. He made his will on 18 November 1801, and it was proved on 28 September, when Basil of James was almost sixty-one years old (Talbot County Wills JP5: 475, ibid.)

Picture Puzzle

Challenge your knowledge of Maryland history by identifying the location and date of the Baltimore street scene below. Which buildings (if any) are still standing? Please send your answers to:

Prints and Photographs Department
Maryland Historical Society
201 W. Monument St.
Baltimore, Md., 21201

The summer 1991 puzzle shows the outdoor bowling alley of the Atlantic Hotel in Ocean City about 1935. This structure replaced the 1875 hotel of the same name, which burned in 1925. The bowling alley is now gone and boardwalk shops have replaced the screened porches.

No reader has been able to identify the location of the subject of our spring 1991 puzzle, the mansion Grace Hill.

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* CALLCOTT, GEORGE H. *Maryland Political Behavior.* 64pp. 1986. $4.50 ($4.05)
* COLWILL, STILES T. *Francis Guy, 1760-1820.* 139pp. Illus. 1981. (paper) $15.00 ($13.50)
* COLWILL, STILES T. *The Lives and Paintings of Alfred Partridge Klots and His Son, Trafford Partridge Klots.* 136pp. Illus. 1979. $9.50 ($8.05)
* ELLIS, DONNA; STUART, KAREN *The Calvert Papers Calendar and Guide to the Microfilm Edition.* 202pp. Illus. 1989 $17.95 ($16.15)
* FILBY, P. WILLIAM AND HOWARD, EDWARD G. *Star-Spangled Books.* 175pp. Illus. 1972. $17.50 ($15.75)
* FOSTER, JAMES W. *George Calvert: The Early Years.* 128pp. 1983. $4.95 ($4.45)
* GOLDSBOROUGH, JENNIFER F. *Silver in Maryland.* 334pp. 1983. $30.00 ($27.00)
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* HAYWARD, MARY ELLEN. *Maryland's Maritime Heritage: A Guide to the Collections of the Radcliffe Maritime Museum.* 31pp. Illus. 1984 $3.00 ($2.70)
* KAHN, PHILLIP JR. *A Stitch in Time The Four Seasons of Baltimore's Needle Trades.* 242 pp. Illus. 1989 $25.00 ($22.50)
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* KEY, BETTY MCKEEVER. *Maryland Manual of Oral History.* 47pp. 1979 $3.00 ($2.70)
* KEY, BETTY MCKEEVER. *Oral History in Maryland: A Directory.* 44pp. 1981. $3.00 ($2.70)
* LEVY, RUTH BEAR. *A Wee Bit O'Scotland: Growing Up in Lonaconing, Maryland at the Turn of the Century.* 67pp. 1983. $8.00 ($7.20)
* MANAKEE, BETA K. AND HAROLD R. *The Star-Spangled Banner: The Story of its Writing by Francis Scott Key at Baltimore, 1814.* 26pp. Illus. $1.00 ($.90)
* MANAKEE, HAROLD R. *Indians of Early Maryland.* 47pp. 3rd printing,1981. $3.00 ($2.70)
* *The Mapping of Maryland 1590-1914: An Overview.* 72pp. 1982. $6.00 ($5.40)
* MARKS, LILLIAN BAYLY. *Reister's Desire: The Origins of Reisterstown . . . (Reister and allied families).* 251pp. 1975. $15.00 ($13.50)
* *Maryland Heritage: Five Baltimore Institutions Celebrate the American Bicentennial.* Ed. by J. B. Boles. 253pp. Illus. 1976. (soft cover) $7.50 ($6.75) (hard cover) $15.00 ($13.50)
* *MARYLAND HISTORICAL MAGAZINES.* $4.00 per issue.
* MEYER, MARY K. *Genealogical Research in Maryland—A Guide.* 3rd Ed. 80pp. 1983. $8.00 ($7.20)
* News and Notes of the Maryland Historical Society. $2.00 an issue.
* *(Peale Family) Four Generations of Commissions: The Peale Collection of the Maryland Historical Society.* 187pp. Illus. 1975. $4.00 ($3.60)
* PEDLEY, AVRIL J. M. *The Manuscript Collections of the Maryland Historical Society.* Supplemented by #13 390pp. 1968. $20.00 ($18.00)
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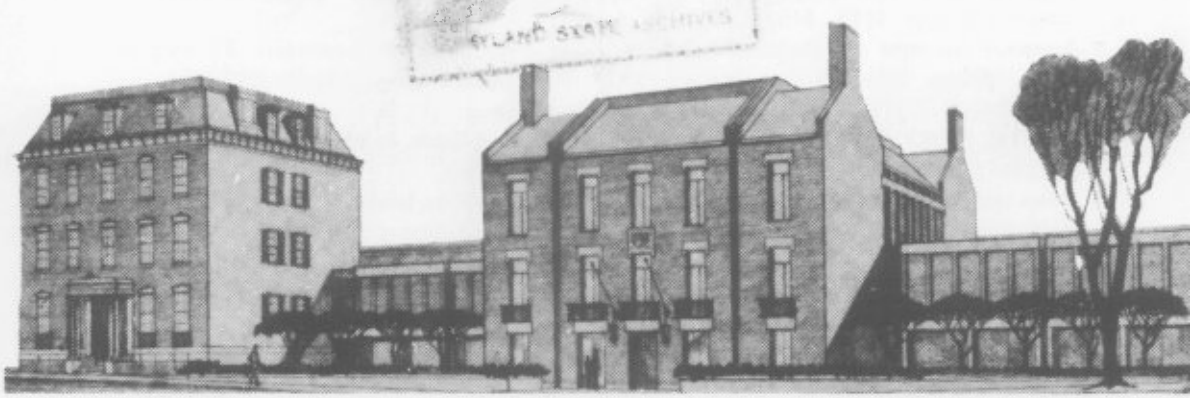

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