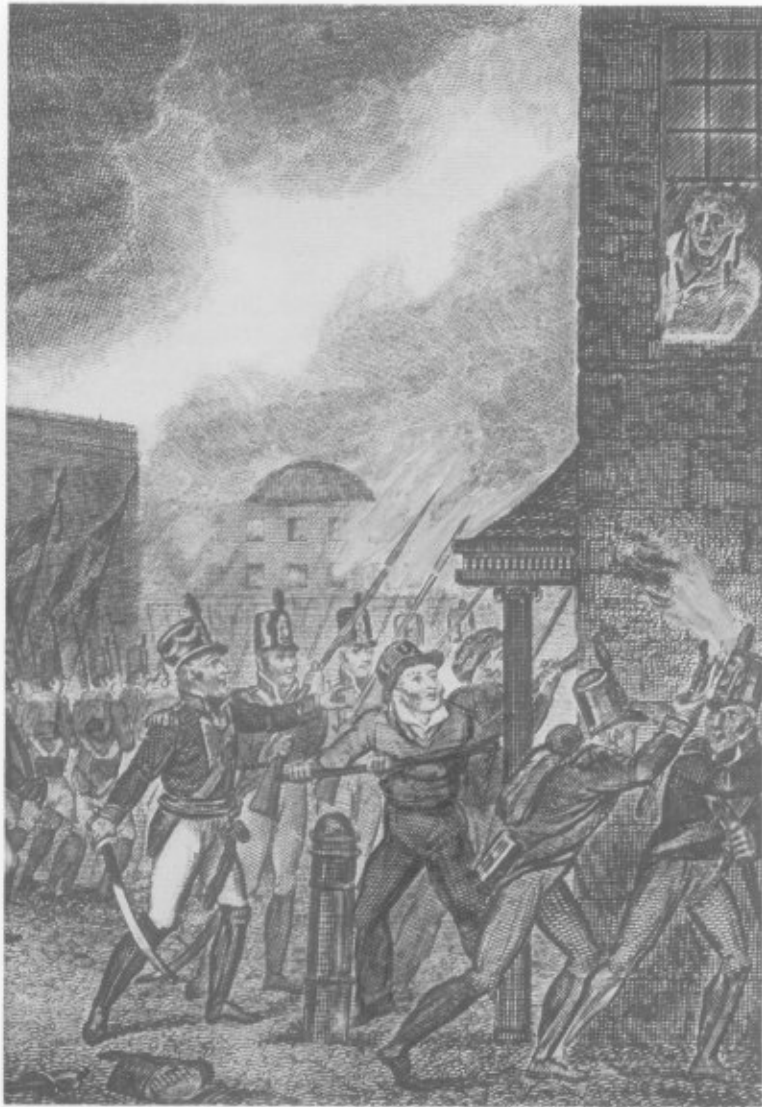


MSA SC 5861-1-352

Maryland Historical Magazine



Published Quarterly by the Museum and Library of Maryland History
Maryland Historical Society
Fall 1993

Maryland Historical Magazine

Vol. 88, No. 3

Fall 1993

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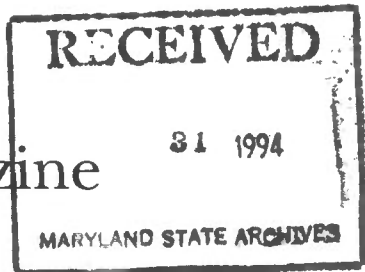
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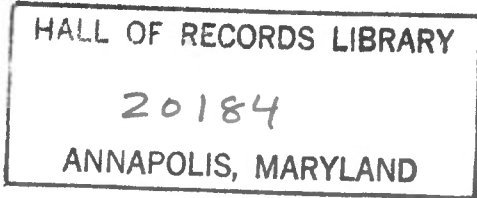
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Editor's Corner:

With this fall issue we welcome as our newest regional editor the Reverend Mr. Pegram Johnson III, history Ph.D. and rector at Christ Church, Accocek, Maryland. Mr. Johnson has agreed to scout articles for us on Southern Maryland. He is a devoted student of turf-sports history and will be a contributor to a special issue on that subject next spring. We also thank Elizabeth Cadwalader, one of our volunteer copyeditors and proof readers, whose keen eye and professional devotion have measurably benefited the magazine (and therefore readers) over the past several years. We can only hope to find a replacement for her.

Cover design: Detail, "Capture of the City of Washington," from *Rapin's History of England* (Library of Congress/Francis De C. Hamilton.)

ISSN-0025-4258

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Capt. John Rodgers, by Costantina Coltoni, c. 1803. (U.S. Naval Historical Center.)

The Baltimore Merchants' Warships: *Maryland* and *Patapsco* in the Quasi-War with France

FREDERICK C. LEINER

The launching of the citizen-built sloop of war *Maryland* on 3 June 1799, from William Price's shipyard in Fells Point, "drew together an immense concourse of spectators, who filled the adjacent wharves, and occupied a number of vessels, which were moored in the channel for that purpose." At six o'clock, the 114-foot long *Maryland* slid down her ways and splashed into the water. Armed merchant ships in the harbor—and most merchant ships mounted cannon against the threat of French privateers in the state of Quasi-War between the two republics—the *Charming Betsy*, the *Isabella*, the *Industrious Mary*, the *David Stewart*, the *Olive*—all fired off "Federal salutes." Other cannon fired salvoes from the wharves and from the defensive entrenchments at Whetstone Point, just beginning to be called Fort McHenry. Not since the navy launched the frigate *Constellation* nearly two years before had Baltimore beheld such a scene:

The steady and majestic movement of the ship, the immense crowd of spectators which occupied the surrounding wharves and eminences, the continued roar of cannon, and repeated huzzas, which seemed to rend the circumambient air, formed a *tout ensemble*.

. . . In the evening, several splendid entertainments were given on board different vessels in the harbor, and the Select Company were munificently entertained, with a number of other citizens, at Mr. Price's house.¹

The spectacle at Fells Point had its sequel less than three weeks later. On 20 June 1799 the citizens of Baltimore launched a second sloop of war into the harbor, this one from the shipyard of the French emigré shipwright Louis de Rochbrune.² Called the *Chesapeake* (but renamed the *Patapsco* after the navy recalled that a frigate building at Norfolk was to have the bay's name), she too slid down the ways from Fells Point into the harbor "amidst the loud acclamations of a large concourse of spectators, the discharge of cannon from the new brig *John Brickwood*, and a ship at the fort, seconded by volleys from the volunteers and marines on board." De Rochbrune repaid the "patriotic gentlemen" who subscribed to and built the

Mr. Leiner, a lawyer in Baltimore, has published several articles on the American sailing navy.

Patapsco, the newspaper observed with obvious pride, with “a vessel judged to be as complete as any of her size in the American or any other navy.” The carving on her prow depicted a bearded Neptune; the *Federal Gazette* closed its account of the launch with the wish that “the thunder from his *ports* be a *death tribute* to the apostate Talleyrand and all his adherents.”³



Baltimore in the 1790s was a vibrant port town. The city, which in the 1790 census numbered a mere 13,758 (including 1,255 slaves), grew to 31,514 in 1800.⁴ Although within eighteen miles there were fifty “capital merchant” mills, a gunpowder mill, two paper mills, several furnaces, and two forges, the city owed its boom to shipbuilding, maritime trade, and its attendant service businesses, insurance and banking. The merchant-capitalists who were the city’s business elite were sophisticated assessors of risk and profit: Baltimore contained two banks, a factoring office, and a marine insurance office.⁵ The merchants developed the international contacts for trade, discounted commercial paper, ordered and owned merchant vessels, directed exports and imports, and invested in real estate, banks, and more shipping.

But by the beginning of 1798, the merchants’ entrepreneurial world faced ruin at the hands of French privateers. The French republic, angered by the *rapprochement* of the United States and Britain exemplified by the Jay Treaty of 1795, unleashed hundreds of loosely-controlled privateers to plunder or capture American cargo ships traveling to the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, even along the Atlantic coast. Of the five thousand American merchant ships employed in overseas trade, French privateers captured more than three hundred in 1797 alone. Imports declined from \$81 to \$75 million dollars nationally; exports sagged from \$67 to \$51 million. The United States had no navy, relying on its own goodwill and appeals to reason to maintain peace. President Adams sent three ministers to Paris in May 1797 to negotiate with Talleyrand, the French foreign minister. At the same time, Congress authorized funds for the completion of three frigates begun in 1794 during troubles with the Barbary pirates. As the winter of 1797 gave way to the spring of 1798, the American public heard nothing from the American negotiators, John Marshall, Charles Pinckney, and Elbridge Gerry. Robert Oliver, one of the leading Baltimore merchants, wrote his London agent that upon the safe return to Baltimore of his ship, the *Harmony*, “All our risks are now nearly determined and we don’t intend to adventure any more until we see how we stand with the French.” The same day, writing a contact in Virginia, Oliver advised that the “situation with France is a little short of war. Wheat & Flour must fall & we advise you to lay by until you see how matters are likely to turn. [You must not] run risks for the sake of doing business. The times are alarming & the People here seem disposed to do little or no business until a Change takes place.”⁶

The change, however, was not salutary. On 4 April 1798, newspapers published the dispatches of the American envoys in Paris: French intermediaries, diplomatically labelled X, Y, and Z, refused the American envoys access to Talleyrand without

a *douceur* of 50,000. To the naked demands for bribes the apoplectic Pinckney sputtered "No! No! Not a sixpence!" which the American press translated as "Millions for defense, but not a cent for tribute." The European disdain for the United States shocked Americans of all political stripes and classes. War suddenly appeared possible. Congress passed bill after bill, raising additional army regiments, organizing a provisional army, establishing a Marine Corps and a separate Navy Department, rushing to completion unfinished frigates, and authorizing twelve smaller ships.⁷

The popular response was unmistakable throughout the country. A gathering of five hundred young men of Baltimore sent an address to the president, expressing their confidence in him, their dismay that France received American overtures for peace with "abject contempt," and their pledge to vindicate the country's rights if war came. Old militia companies mustered and volunteer units organized and drilled in public spaces under colorful names like the "Maryland Sans Culottes" and the "Fells Point Light Dragoons." The threat from France seemed almost palpable: Mark Pringle, a Baltimore merchant, refused to insure a Philadelphia merchant's cargo, "as it appears there are two French Privateers cruising off the Capes of the Delaware." Robert Oliver could not find any American vessel willing to run the gauntlet of French privateers and the British navy's blockade to Cadiz, and a merchant vessel to Algeciras and Malaga could not be insured for under 50 percent of its value.⁸

Amidst the confusion and uncertainty, the fears of privateers and the advertisements for militia, the 2 June 1798 issue of the *Federal Gazette & Baltimore Daily Advertiser* contained a three-sentence article from Newburyport, Massachusetts, dated a week earlier. It noted that "patriotic citizens" of Newburyport had "opened a subscription for the purpose of building a 20 gun ship" that would be loaned to the government. The article ended prophetically, "An example this, worthy [of] prompt imitation." A week later the Baltimore newspaper noted that Newburyport citizens filled their \$20,000 subscription and let the contract for building the ship; and then the *Federal Gazette* reprinted an entire letter from the Newburyport citizens to their congressman, suggesting that their example lead to "proportionate exertions in larger and wealthier towns," with subscriptions exchanged for six percent government stock, payable at the government's convenience.⁹

Baltimore now had a blueprint for action. On 15 June the *Federal Gazette* printed a notice:

The Merchants and Traders of the city of Baltimore are requested to meet at the Exchange, To-morrow, at 12 o'clock, for the purpose of subscribing to purchase or build a Ship of War, for the use of the Government of the United States.¹⁰

Meet they did. One of the city's two magistrates, Thorowgood Smith, took the chair.¹¹ The meeting resolved to build two ships of war for the federal government and set as an immediate goal the sum of \$30,000, but those present pledged \$40,300 on the spot. The merchants selected a five-man committee consisting of Robert

Oliver, David Stewart, George Sears, John Stricker, and James Barry to raise more funds.¹² The money poured in: from \$40,300 the first day, 16 June; to \$65,000 by 19 June; to \$76,100 by 20 June; to \$84,200 by 22 June; to \$92,000 by 23 June; and in the end, over \$100,000.¹³

On 16 June the merchants reconvened and selected a committee to superintend the construction of the Baltimore subscription ships. The merchants retained Oliver, Stewart, and Sears from the fundraising committee, and added Jeremiah Yellott,¹⁴ Robert Gilmore,¹⁵ William Patterson,¹⁶ Thomas Cole,¹⁷ Archibald Campbell,¹⁸ and Mark Pringle¹⁹ to form a building committee.

Who were the subscribers to the Baltimore sloops of war? The official list that survives is fragmentary:²⁰

William McCreary ²¹	500	
Dr. Moore Falls ²²	2300	
Margaret Sprigg ²³	1500	
John E. Howard ²⁴	4700	Society of
& John Swan ²⁵		Cincinnati in Maryland
John McDowell ²⁶	400	
Benjamin Harwood ²⁷	5300	
Dr. Moore Falls	500	

In addition, the newspapers noted that John O'Donnell contributed \$4,000.²⁸ The total of the eight known contributors, \$19,200, is only about one-fifth of the approximately \$100,000 raised overall. Of course, the great merchants of Baltimore who sat on the committees and oversaw the construction contributed substantially. But the local newspapers display a republican modesty about the extent of the merchants' contributions, and even the personal papers and letters of Mark Pringle and Robert Oliver reveal nothing.

Clearly, many of the contributors were merchants, with shared mercantile, banking, and militia ties. These men were the grandees of Baltimore. Many were Federalist politically: David Stewart, Thorowgood Smith, Robert Gilmore, Archibald Campbell, Mark Pringle, James Barry, Robert Oliver, John Swan, George Sears, and Jeremiah Yellott signed a public letter in support of James Winchester, the Federalist candidate for Congress in the 1798 election against Gen. Samuel Smith, the incumbent Republican.²⁹ The identical set of men (except Sears) composed the board of the marine insurance office. Three of the committeemen, Stewart, Stricker, and Thorowgood Smith, sat on the board of the Bank of Baltimore; and six others—Patterson, Campbell, Oliver, Yellott, Gilmore, and O'Donnell—were officers or directors of the Bank of Maryland. In the militia the Federalist cast broke down: Swan was a brigadier general, O'Donnell a lieutenant colonel, and Gilmore a brigade-major, but Samuel Smith, the Republican congressman, was the major general in overall command and Stricker a colonel. Despite the notation of Swan's and Howard's contribution as "Society of Cincinnati" (the organization of Washington's ex-officers which was coincident with Federalist party organization),

the known committee members and subscribers do not otherwise appear represented in that group.³⁰ Indeed, the Federalist complexion of subscribers should not be overstated. Colonel Stricker, Mr. McCreary, and Mrs. Sprigg were contributors, and after the initial meeting at the Exchange, a Baltimore gentleman wrote a New York friend, "So far for the *doubtful city* of Baltimore. I admit a most extraordinary change has taken place amongst us, many who were reckoned in the first rank of Jacobins [i.e., Republicans] are among the highest subscribers."³¹

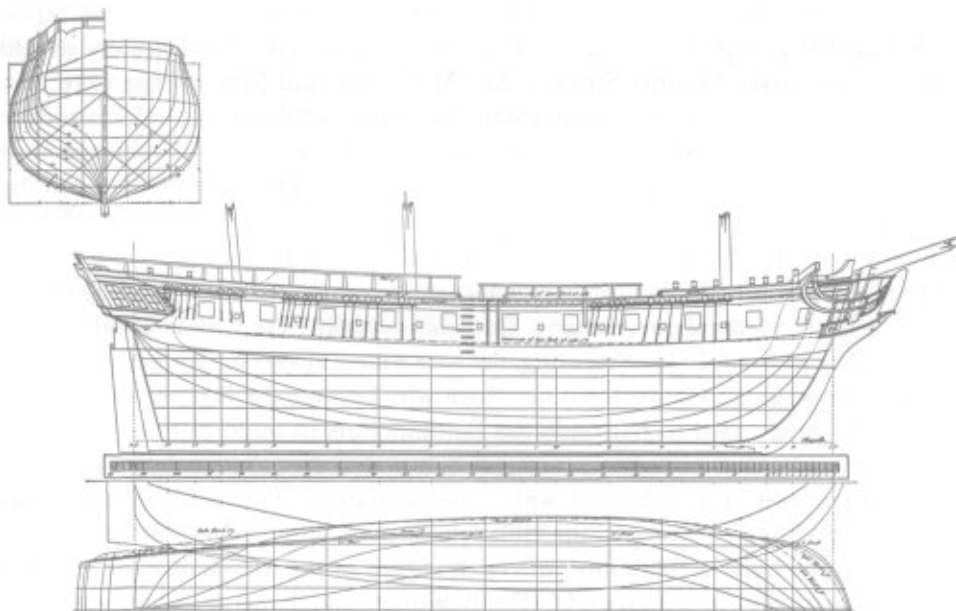
In any case, the Baltimore merchants had a subscription of more than \$100,000 and a committee of experienced merchants set to superintend the building of two warships for the federal government. But what actually were they to build?

Beginning with the 16 June meeting, the subscribers always envisioned two ships. Benjamin Stoddert, a Georgetown merchant who became the first secretary of the navy on 19 June, tried to persuade the Baltimoreans to build one larger ship, a frigate, instead. After noting to navy agent Yellott that the money subscribed by the merchants would be reimbursed with 6 percent stock,³² he referred to a one-thousand-ton frigate building by the Philadelphia merchants and hoped "one at least as large can be built at Baltimore, where the Spirit of the Merchants and Citizens has been so patriotically displayed." The Baltimore merchants remained steadfast. Stoddert tried again, writing David Stewart that if they insisted on "small ships in Baltimore, I must acquiesce—Tho I fear we shall have ample occasion for the largest size Ships." The enabling act provided that the department might accept five frigates, and Stoddert counted on Baltimore to furnish one. On the same day he wrote Stewart, Stoddert tried his hand again with Yellott, entreating that his "Native State, not less Federal, & not less in earnest to defend the rights of the Country, than any in the Union, will afford one of these [frigates];" the navy secretary believed Yellott could alter the committee's stand, but "despair[ed] of getting the Ship & soon if you do not concur."³³ The Baltimore merchants did not budge from two ships. Perhaps they recognized that ferreting out French privateers required smaller, faster ships. The navy secretary wanted larger, more powerful ships to engage French warships. Although Baltimore's reluctance to build a frigate dismayed Stoddert, in the end he had his five frigates.³⁴

When Archibald Campbell wrote the department for drawings and plans on which to build the Baltimore vessels, Stoddert gave the merchants wide discretion. He requested that each Baltimore vessel be "rated" to carry eighteen cannon so as not to offend the statutory authorization. As to plans, Stoddert replied breezily:

As to a draft, and every thing relating to these Vessels, the subject is as well understood at Baltimore as here. It is desirable, that they should be fine Sailors, so as to suffer nothing to escape them, & to be taken by nothing. This can be done at Baltimore, if any where.³⁵

The merchants turned to two local shipwrights, William Price and Louis de Rochbrune. William Price's shipyard was on Pitt Street (now Fell Street) in Fells Point. He was one of the great Baltimore shipbuilders between 1794 and 1833 and the largest Baltimore slaveowner, using more than twenty slaves in his yard. After



Draught of an unidentified twenty-gun ship, 1799, much like the design of the Baltimore-built vessels *Maryland* and *Patapsco*. (From Howard I. Chapelle, *The History of the American Sailing Navy* [New York, 1949].)

the *Maryland*, Price became the navy's major Baltimore shipwright, building the schooners *Experiment* (1799) and *Vixen* (1803), the sloop of war *Hornet* (1805), and Gunboat No. 5 (1805). Renowned locally as a builder of topsail schooners later called Baltimore clippers, Price by 1798 held advanced building ideas.³⁶ De Rochbrune's yard on Thames Street, east of Caroline Street, in Fells Point, existed from 1796 to 1803. Little is known about de Rochbrune. A refugee from Toussaint's slave revolution in San Domingo, he probably arrived in Baltimore in 1793. De Rochbrune launched the sixty-eight foot, 160-ton brig *Swallow* with "Indian head, quarter galleries" for Mark Pringle in April 1798, as well as the sixty-five foot, 159-ton schooner *Nancy* in June 1798 for Louis Noailles, Lafayette's brother-in-law, then living in Philadelphia.³⁷

By 24 July 1798 Price and de Rochbrune had contracts to build four-hundred-ton ships. Apparently, de Rochbrune had no qualms building a warship to fight his former countrymen. The two shipwrights laid keels and began building the sloops of war immediately. With the permission of the secretary of the navy, the committee helped themselves to naval stores, timber, and other materials—at cost—from David Stodder's yard on Harris Creek, where the *Constellation* had been built. The merchants could not find or manufacture locally the three tons of copper sheathing and the three tons of copper bolts and eight-inch copper spikes necessary to build the vessels, and the Navy Department promised to furnish them. The merchants operated independently from the department's direction: Robert Oliver wrote

Stoddert that "Our vessels"—the two Baltimore ships—"will be larger than you mention" but would conform to the Act of 30 June and carry nine-pound or twelve-pound cannon. The committee intended "to expend the whole of the Money subscribed" which they hoped would cover the ships, completed, with their guns.³⁸

Although Howard Chapelle purportedly found a letter written by Yellott—now apparently lost—which provided dimensions of the two Baltimore subscription vessels,³⁹ only scraps of documentary evidence exist. When the navy sold the *Maryland* in December 1801, she measured 114 feet in length, 30 feet, 4 inches in beam, and slightly more than 464 tons.⁴⁰ The *Patapsco*, by contrast, was smaller, measuring 418 tons.⁴¹ Who drew up the plans for the Baltimore ships remains open to conjecture.⁴²

The secretary of the navy kept President Adams, summering in Quincy, abreast of naval developments. Stoddert wrote at the end of July that two of the eighteen-gun sloops of war authorized by statute "are building by the Merchants of Baltimore," and would be at sea in three months. Robert Oliver wrote the navy secretary a month later, "Our carpenters go on rapidly and I expect we will have two complete Ships Launched in December." The merchants were not sure if their subscriptions would suffice to pay for the cannon and reminded the overwhelmed Stoddert that the two sloops of war lacked them, offering to find cannon or contract for them. Oliver suggested that at least one of the ship's captains be appointed to superintend the rigging and outfitting of the ships.⁴³

As for armament, Stoddert at first left the merchants to find cannon for the vessels. Samuel Hughes, owner of the *Principio Furnace* near Havre de Grace, offered to contract for the guns at \$370 per pair, but Charles Ridgely, whose metal Oliver considered "the best in this country," wanted only \$350 per pair, although he did not have a model and refused to bore his cannon. Oliver and Yellott thought Ridgely's "as good as Mr. Hughes cast solid," but were willing to contract with either. In the end, the secretary sent most of the cannon from Philadelphia. Yellott, the navy agent, laid out \$2602.18 for "18 pieces 9 lb. cannon" for which he was later reimbursed by the government, signifying that the merchants' money had indeed run out, after supplying only one vessel's guns.⁴⁴

The other concern was finding appropriate captains. Stoddert informed the committee that "When the Citizens furnish Vessels for the public, it is the wish of the President to consult them—Indeed to pay very great respect to their recommendation, in the choice of Officers." Would-be officers deluged the merchants committee. Even George Washington lent his support to one candidate. The committee did not strongly endorse any applicant, leaving the choice to the navy.⁴⁵

Stoddert waited until the merchants launched the *Maryland* to name John Rodgers as her commander. Rodgers, only twenty-six in 1799, hailed from Havre de Grace. His experience included many years as a mate and captain on merchant ships out of Baltimore, including capture by the French while in command of the ship *Hope* of Samuel Smith's house. In the early months of the Quasi-War, Rodgers served as first lieutenant to Truxtun aboard the *Constellation*. The fact that Rodgers's brother-in-law was William Pinkney, a Maryland Federalist state legislator and sometime

diplomat, probably helped secure him the command of a Maryland-built ship. Stoddert promoted Rodgers to captain in May 1799 and ordered him on 13 June to take command of the *Maryland* and to make her ready for sea.⁴⁶

For the *Patapsco* Stoddert selected an older man, Henry Geddes, who had “long been an Applicant for a command in the Navy” and who came recommended by Senator James A. Bayard, Federalist from Delaware. Geddes, originally from Annapolis, lived in Wilmington. In the Revolution he commanded several small vessels in the Maryland state navy and in the 1790s sailed the State Department’s brig *Sophia* ferrying dispatches to and from Algiers. While other captains received encomiums from Stoddert, in recommending Geddes to the president, the navy secretary tepidly allowed that he “appears to be a man of understanding.”⁴⁷

Rodgers complained about the delays in getting the *Maryland* ready for sea. The “mechanicks employed on the ship have not been as Expeditious as I expected,” he wrote, and the blacksmith, block makers, and sailmaker all needed more time. Moreover, a recruiting effort at Mr. Harrison’s tavern in Fells Point in early August was not entirely successful. Gaps in the crew remained until September, which Rodgers blamed on the “scarcity of seamen, the great Number of Merchantmen fitting out, and the extravagant wages given by them.” Rodgers eventually got his men; with his commissioned and warrant officers, and complement of marines, 160 men packed into the *Maryland*.⁴⁸

Critics harped on the *Maryland*’s sharp-built design. In January 1799 Captain Truxtun sent a long letter to his friend, Captain Yellott, responding to the design of the Baltimore subscription ships. As the building had begun, Truxtun refused comment “below the Whales,” but strongly concurred with “a light Spar Deck being put on them.” Truxtun urged that “these sharp built Vessels” not be overarmed, which would make them “laboursome and crank” sailers and give them a low freeboard—or as Truxtun put it, “too deep in the water.” Overarming, in short, “injures their Sailing” and “makes them wet, uncomfortable, and difficult to fight.” He suggested they mount twenty-four six-pound cannon. Instead, the *Maryland* carried twenty nine-pound cannon and six six-pounders. Captain Rodgers, inspecting his new command, reported to the secretary of the navy that the *Maryland* carried her battery too low, prompting Stoddert, in a near-panic, to write Captain Yellott to “do all in your power at this late hour to prevent this defect in the two ships at Baltimore.” But it was too late to alter the design. James Buchanan, the merchant partner of Gen. Samuel Smith, thought the *Maryland* “a Charming Little Ship, Exceedingly well fitted w[ith] The best Materials,” but listed two faults. The first, which Buchanan conceded was “certainly not esteem’d So by The Builder” (suggesting that Price may also have designed the ship), was the *Maryland*’s flush deck: a spar deck covered the *Maryland*’s cannon. But the other problem was “irremediable:” “Swimming too low in The Water. & Her Gun-Ports being too near The Waters Edge,” which made them “Crank or Tender, & even Dangerous Ships, eitlier in a Gale of Wind—or in Battle if any Sea is Going.”⁴⁹

It is interesting to contrast these descriptions of the *Maryland* with the archetypical Baltimore topsail schooner. Price’s yard produced many topsail schooners in the

1790s, characterized by long and extremely raked masts, little rigging, a low freeboard, a great rake to stem and stern posts, and a flush deck.⁵⁰ Although neither the *Maryland* nor the *Patapsco* were topsail schooners—their “ship” rig (i.e., square rig), three masts, and comparatively great size set them apart—Truxtun’s design critique and Buchanan’s description of the *Maryland* suggest that she incorporated some of the advanced features Baltimore shipwrights were crafting into topsail schooners. The *Maryland* was a “sharp built” ship, implying a great rake; she sat low in the water, with little freeboard; and she had a flush deck, with a gundeck below, as if the *Maryland* were a miniature frigate. A dyed-in-the-wool conservative like Truxtun recoiled at the seemingly radical features of the Baltimore subscription sloops of war.



On 21 August 1799 the *Maryland* got under way for the first time, sailing down the Patapsco to anchor below Ft. McHenry. She glided down the bay at the end of August, anchoring in Hampton Roads on 2 September. On 15 September the *Maryland* weighed anchor to head out into the Atlantic; ten days before her departure, a newspaper noted—correctly—that she was “destined . . . on a cruise off Surinam.”⁵¹ In a letter Rodgers sent back to Norfolk with the pilot, he reported that it took five days to clear Cape Henry owing to headwinds “blowing with unabated obstinacy from the SE and ESE until the morning of the 19th.” Rodgers called the *Maryland* “a handsome little ship” but reiterated that “like a number of our small Ships she Carrys her Guns to low, the Gun Deck at present being only 18 Inches above the Surface of the water and the Sills of the ports Barely three feet ten Inches [above the waterline] the consequences of which you know too well.”⁵²

Stoddert ordered the *Maryland* to proceed to Surinam. He enjoined Rodgers “to give all possible Security to our trade by Capturing Enemy Vessels wherever to be found on the high seas and by occasionally convoying our own, tho the most protection is afforded to the whole trade by capturing the Vessels which annoy it.” To the young captain Secretary Stoddert offered his own good wishes for success and the president’s belief in Rodgers’s “activity Zeal & Bravery.”⁵³

Accustomed to the bareknuckle discipline of the merchant marine and the autocratic Truxtun, the youthful Rodgers held his first command in the navy. He ran a taught ship, as Buchanan reported:

The order on Board was *Great, & Probably too much all a mode L’Truxton—& Too distant, For Officer to Officer—& more than I ever Saw in any Ship of War before, of any Rate, or any Nation!*⁵⁴

Rodgers adopted Commodore Truxtun’s scheme of organization and rigorous discipline. Like Truxtun, Rodgers insisted on proper subordination and instant obedience. Just as Truxtun urged his officers to steer between “too great a disposition to punish” and “improper familiarity” which was ruinous to hierarchy, so Rodgers did aboard the *Maryland*. The captain of a man-of-war was a near-ab-

solute ruler, and in a ship packed with men Rodgers made clear from the beginning both his own authority and the need for system. On 29 August, Rodgers posted the gun drill and forty-four paragraphs of standing orders that encompassed everything from etiquette (“The weather side of the quarter deck is reserved for the walk of the Captain”), to cleanliness (“The head and seats therein are to be washed every morning”), to maintaining the ship (“Every morning the Boatswain or his mates are to overhaul the rigging fore and aft, and from each mast head including Jibboom, bowsprit, gaff, etc. and to report what may be seen out of order or wanting repair”), to exercising the men at the guns.⁵⁵

Rodgers took the *Maryland* to Surinam, which the British had recently taken from the Dutch, in twenty-six days. One *Maryland* officer boasted that in eighteen years at sea he had never served “in so fast a sailer.” Rodgers anchored the ship eight or nine miles below the mouth of the Surinam River, “being unacquainted with the Navigation,” and sent a lieutenant into Paramaribo with the navy secretary’s orders for Capt. Daniel McNeill, senior officer on the station. McNeill being away on a cruise, Rodgers left the orders—to bottle up any French warships in Cayenne, although the Surinam squadron of three ships was to patrol from Cayenne to Curacao—with the American consul, Turell Tufts. Secretary Stoddert made clear that the vessels in the Surinam squadron “are never to leave [the area] unless compelled by superior force” or to bring home their sailors after their one-year enlistments expired.⁵⁶

The *Maryland* thus began a series of desultory cruises. Rodgers craved the opportunity for ship-to-ship action. Instead, he saw nothing but open ocean. At the end of his first, month-long cruise, he reported to Secretary Stoddert:

During the whole of our cruize we have not seen anything Wearing the french flag Except the Port at Cayenne, altho I believe we have seen over and over again every Remarkable Rock and Tree Between Surinam and that place, and from the particular situation of the french at present, I can see their privateers have all left those Seas, having no place on this Coast, to send their Prizes since the British have been in possession of Surinam, and [it] is Impossible to get them into Cayenne, Owing to a continual Strong Current Setting to Leeward. In our cruise we were at Anchor five days at the Devils Island, during which time no vessel could have passed into or out of Cayenne, without our knowledge.⁵⁷

A *Maryland* officer wrote home that the *Maryland* returned to Surinam to water on 21 November, after “a cruize of four weeks to windward, without any success.” The *Maryland* met no French privateers but probed into Cayenne “so near in as to distinctly see the tri colored flag flying at the fort.” Later on the cruise the *Maryland* raced the *Insurgente*, narrowly losing to her in a two-day contest; but the *Maryland* then raced McNeill in the *Portsmouth*, distancing her so much that the *Maryland* might have “run her nearly out of sight in 24 hours.” The lieutenant of marines in the *Maryland*, Joseph Neale, wrote the commandant that “our Ship is thought to be the fastest” in the American fleet. While Neale conceded that the *Insurgente*, in “a

short tryal Sailing . . . out Sailed us a verry little indeed," Neale noted that the *Maryland* at the time "was not in propper trim." Neale reported that all his marines, and the crew generally, were healthy and in good spirits, if "bad off for cloth[in]g," and that they anticipated a squadron action, with the *Maryland*, *Portsmouth*, and light frigate *John Adams* squaring off against three French frigates that reportedly had arrived off South America.⁵⁸

While the *Maryland* refilled its water casks in Surinam, the *Patapsco* remained at her mooring in Baltimore. Geddes, for all his purported desire for a command, showed little energy: Stoddert enclosed his commission in a letter on 24 September 1799 and asked him to get to Baltimore as soon "as your convenience will admit." Geddes did not move, and it took two direct orders from the secretary of the navy and a month's time for Captain Geddes to take command. Fortunately for Geddes, the *Patapsco* inherited most of her crew from the *Montezuma*, a merchantman taken into the navy but then sold in Baltimore as deficient. Forty-five able seamen, forty-one ordinary seamen and boys, and four of the ship's warrant officers—ninety of the one hundred forty in the *Patapsco*'s company—were ex-*Montezuma*'s.⁵⁹

For *Patapsco*'s complement of twenty-one marines, there was the one-man recruiting service of Sergeant Corcorran. In a piece entitled "*To the BRAVE*," helping to establish a tradition of Marine Corps recruiting hyperbole, Corcorran assured Baltimoreans

inclined to serve their country, in the *Marine Corps*, that on board the governmental ships of war, the men are *plentifully* provided with *good meat, drink and comfortable lodging*; and that the marines, with whom he has *conversed and served* appear to him quite satisfied and happy in their situation and prospects—and as but FEW MEN are now wanting, such as apply to him may depend on a HARDY WELCOME, KIND TREATMENT and GOOD ENCOURAGEMENT.⁶⁰

With the ninety men of the *Montezuma* forming the rest of the *Patapsco*'s crew, Stoddert was not about to brook delays in the sailing of the *Patapsco*. On 11 November he wrote Geddes that the *Patapsco* could not remain at Baltimore after the 17th and pointedly mentioned that "no exertion on your part will be omitted to prepare you for sailing by the time mentioned." Geddes's orders followed three days later. The *Patapsco* was to embark Brig. Gen. James Wilkinson, ranking officer of the United States Army, and carry him "to the mouth of the Mississippi, and if it can be done, without danger and too much detention," drop him off at the Spanish city of New Orleans. From there the *Patapsco* was to sail to Cape Francois and join the American squadron off San Domingo. The *Patapsco* finally sailed in mid-November.⁶¹

She took two months to arrive at the Mississippi's mouth, only to be immediately driven into the Gulf of Mexico by a gale. She clawed her way back to the bar of the Mississippi eight days later. On 3 February 1800 General Wilkinson and his staff went ashore, where Spanish emissaries received them and conveyed the general and his entourage the 110 miles up the river to New Orleans. Geddes refused to cross

the bar, fearing he would run the *Patapsco* aground, since the bar only allowed ships with a draft of less than thirteen feet.⁶²

Retracing her route to Havana, the *Patapsco* then rendezvoused with merchant ships bound for American ports and convoyed eighteen vessels up the coast. In mid-March Geddes put the *Patapsco* into New Castle, Delaware, and reported his ship in need of caulking, his crew sickly, and merchants' specie on board entitling him to a half percent commission. While the *Patapsco's* layover in New Castle suggests that Geddes wanted to be near his hearth in Delaware, the secretary promised him fresh provisions for his men and "a parcel of Carpenters" from Philadelphia to plug the *Patapsco's* seams. The navy needed every ship in the West Indies. Three weeks later Stoddert ordered the *Patapsco* to convoy a provision ship, the *Florida*, to St. Kitts, and then to join the American squadron off Guadaloupe.⁶³

Meanwhile, John Rodgers and the *Maryland* sailed into headwinds and looked upon empty seas off the coast of South America. In late November 1799 the *Maryland* left Surinam to cruise to the windward. The ship got nowhere. As Rodgers confessed in a letter written the day after Christmas, "I have found it very difficult to get to Windward, owing to an intollerable Strong Current Setting to Leeward, and the Squally disagreeable Weather, Such as I have never met with in these Latitudes before." Finally, he returned to Surinam and anchored off the river, writing the American consul that "after a five weeks cruize" (it was nearer to eight) he was "without any success . . . I found it impossible to get to Windward."⁶⁴

Yet the *Maryland* was more or less driven away by the arrival of a French naval squadron. In November 1799 Rodgers informed Stoddert of a rumor that three French frigates were on the South American coast with troops to relieve Cayenne and in early February, Tufts reported that a French frigate, two brigs, and two corvettes arrived there. Tufts warned that "if the present protection is not withdrawn or increased to Higher force—we shall loose the *Maryland*—and the trade also." In reality, the French force amounted to the thirty-six-gun frigate *La Sirene* and the corvettes *La Bergere* and *l'Arethuse*.⁶⁵ The *Maryland* would have had a difficult battle with either of the smaller ships; to fight a combination, or the frigate, would have been disastrous. No help was at hand. Since December 1799, when the British authorities ordered the *Portsmouth* to depart after a touchy diplomatic incident, the *Maryland* was the only United States naval vessel on the station.⁶⁶

After the *Maryland's* return to Surinam, Rodgers wrote Tufts of his wish to extend to merchant vessels what protection he could, knowing "the Risk in passing the islands to be great," but noting his desire to sail no later than 24 January. Still at anchor on the 27th, he expressed "mortification" that he might meet a French frigate in a tête-a-tête. He later complained that the American merchants were "very dilatory" and "as many of them are so apt to be detained by trifles, I think you would do well to Hurry them." Tufts at last roused the merchant captains, and in early March the *Maryland* escorted a convoy of twelve merchant ships. The *Maryland* shepherded them through the Windward Islands to St. Kitts, where another ship assumed convoy duty, and by early May, Rodgers put the *Maryland* about and headed back to the Surinam station.⁶⁷

By sailing back to the coast of South America, Rodgers took the *Maryland* away from the scene of action. Remaining off Surinam during the summer months of 1800 the *Maryland* saw nothing but vast expanses of water. Rodgers relied on the secretary's command to "never" leave the station unless compelled by superior force. While expressing chagrin at having no enemy, Rodgers claimed that no American captain could do better, given "the British being in possession of Surinam totally prevents there being any french cruizers on its coast—owing to their having no place to send their prizes, and it is impossible to get them into Cayenne" owing to the strong currents. With few American merchant ships trading on the coast of South America there was little for the *Maryland* to defend and little for her to attack. Rodgers reported that some French ships operated out of Cayenne, but they cruised off Brazil and out into the Atlantic and thus beyond the literal limit of Rodgers's station. Under the guise of a strict obedience to orders, Rodgers effectively conceded that he knew his orders were meaningless and suggested that he believed Stoddert would not want the *Maryland* where she was. Nevertheless Rodgers stayed off the coast of South America. If there was no glory on his solitary patrol, he assured his superior that "no Ship ever cruized with more assiduity and unremitting attention."⁶⁸

The *Maryland* did seize two merchant vessels, the brig *Gloria da Mar* in July 1800 and the ship-rigged *Aerial* in September. The *Gloria da Mar*, a Portuguese vessel that the *Maryland* recaptured from the French, sailed into St. Kitts harbor as part of the *Maryland*'s convoy. The British admiralty court decided that the American captors were entitled neither to prize money—nor to take the brig away to the United States for a fresh adjudication—on the ground that the property of a friendly nation captured from an enemy reverted to the original owner. The British offered as consolation the payment of a salvage fee. Tritun sent all the communications and legal memoranda to the secretary of the navy to prepare his mind "to meet any complaint" against Rodgers, whom he still regarded as his protégé.⁶⁹

Rodgers's vision of prize money entirely disappeared after he brought a convoy of more than fifty ships home. The *Maryland* seized her other would-be prize, the *Aerial*, commanded by a master aptly named Marriner, on 2 September. Rodgers claimed that Marriner, an American citizen, traded with French ports in the *Aerial* while flying neutral Swedish colors, and then made a bargain with an English privateer to capture the *Aerial*, split the profits at the prize sale of the cargo, and return the bill of ownership to Marriner. Rodgers hired a leading Baltimore lawyer, Levi Hollingsworth, to file suit "libelling" the ship. The ensuing trial must have been a fiasco, as Rodgers attempted to testify—based on hearsay—to the *Aerial*'s illegal trading practices. The court did not admit Rodgers's testimony, leading him to write forlornly to an English merchant in Montserrat to search local records for evidence to allow the suspended trial to resume. Apparently, the court never condemned the *Aerial*.⁷⁰

To Rodgers's credit the *Maryland*'s two convoys—twelve merchantmen in March 1800 and more than fifty in August and September—came through without a loss (leaving aside the *Gloria da Mar*). Also a credit to Rodgers were his efforts to enforce

United States law against the slave trade, particularly since Rodgers was (or was later) a slaveowner himself. The Navy Department ordered captains who intercepted American slave ships to report the names of the ships, their tonnage, owners, and ports of destination and departure, with the number of slaves carried, and Rodgers did so. In January 1800 the *Maryland* stopped the schooner *Clarissa* of Boston, carrying eighty-one African slaves, which Rodgers reported. In July the *Maryland* encountered the schooner *Ranger* of Charleston, with sixty-two slaves on board, in Surinam's territorial waters. Rodgers, conceiving his duty "to notice such violence," requested the colonial governor to turn over to him the *Ranger* and its human cargo for prosecution. Rodgers argued that the slave trade violated both countries' law. The governor, a man Rodgers described as having "all the address, Intrigue and artifice of a Frenchman," refused to surrender the *Ranger* on the pretext that the ship was unseaworthy. Rodgers could do nothing to prevent the Africans from being sold at the auction block.⁷¹

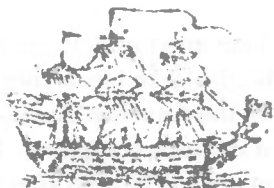
Upon the *Maryland's* return to the Chesapeake Bay after almost exactly a year at sea, Stoddert ordered Rodgers to pay off the crew. The *Maryland's* war record was truly unremarkable—two captures, both nullified, and two convoys escorted. Although the *Maryland* logged thousands of miles in the warm, vast waters of South America, her lookouts apparently never sighted a French cruiser, nor did the *Maryland* ever fire her guns in anger.⁷²



In the spring of 1800 Stoddert sent the *Patapsco* to the Guadeloupe squadron. In late May Captain Geddes chased a schooner named the *Cecilia*, caught her in five hours, and discovered that she had no papers. He ordered a prize crew to take the *Cecilia* into St. Kitts for examination. The British seized that prize.⁷³ That summer the *Patapsco* captured the French letter-of-marque *La Dorade*, of six guns and forty-six men, which a prize crew sailed to Philadelphia. Civil authorities sold the ship and cargo for \$3,251.50, excluding costs and commissions.⁷⁴

In July at St. Thomas, Geddes received intelligence that the French were about to invade the Dutch colony of Curacao. American merchant ships would be lost if the French captured the island. After landing five hundred troops at Curacao, the French demanded that the Dutch pay a massive "loan," surrender the forts at the mouth of the harbor at Willemstad, and grant the French *carte blanche* to deal with the dozen American merchant ships in the harbor. The Dutch refused. On 5 September the French carried the fort on the western side of the harbor and occupied the Outrabande, a suburb of Willemstad. The next morning the United States consul, Benjamin Phillips, sent a small ship, the *Escape*, to the American naval squadron off St. Kitts requesting immediate aid. When the *Escape* returned on the 21st with the sloops of war *Merrimack* and *Patapsco*, the rescue force discovered Curacao to be English—the Dutch had surrendered the island to Britain in return for protection from the French. Yet the only British warship available to intervene, the thirty-six-gun *Nereid*, merely stood offshore. Her commander refused to take

Notice is hereby given,



That the United States' Sloop of
War

P A T A P S C O ;

Will be offered for sale on the
18th instant, at twelve o'clock, at the coffee-
house in Philadelphia, agreeably to inventory, to
be exhibited at the place of sale: Burthen about
400 tons.

Terms of payment, notes with *two approved*
endorfers, at three and six months.

April 8.

dt17thA

Advertisement for the sale of the merchants' subscription ship *Patapsco*. *Federal Gazette and Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, 11 April 1801. (Maryland Historical Society.)

his ship into the 350-foot wide channel because the French had already placed batteries in the Outrabande. Although the American captains doubted their orders allowed them to intervene, the Dutch governor and American consul begged them to consider that, if something decisive were not done, the fort would surrender or be overwhelmed that very night and all the Americans slaughtered.⁷⁵

That sufficed; the *Patapsco* would go into the channel to prevent a French crossing. At five o'clock in the afternoon on 22 September, the *Patapsco* stood in for the channel. The French opened fire with a battery of five cannon at half pistol-shot range. French infantry tried to pick off the exposed men on the *Patapsco*'s decks with musket fire from the windows and rooftops of houses in the Outrabande, but Sergeant Corcorran's twenty Baltimore-recruited marines, reinforced by the twenty marines out of the *Merrimack*, peppered the French snipers with shots from the *Patapsco*'s tops. Geddes backed his topsails, stopping the forward motion of the *Patapsco*, and ordered his port broadside to sweep the French gun batteries with grapeshot. At point blank range the American gunners opened fire. Geddes kept the *Patapsco* off the Outrabande, blasting the French position throughout the night. The *Patapsco*, much cut up in her hull and rigging, lost only two men wounded; an American officer aboard thought the French suffered 150 casualties.⁷⁶

The next morning Geddes landed seventy men—the marines of the *Merrimack* and *Patapsco*, and thirty sailors off his ship—to reinforce the Dutch-American garrison in Fort Amsterdam on the eastern side of the harbor. The French evacuated Curacao that same day. The *Nereid* sailed into Willemstad, and the British claimed victory

and took possession. Consul Phillips applauded the “great promptitude & every disposition” on the American warships and gave the “praise & thanks of the Inhabitants in general, as well as the Americans in particular” for the *Patapsco*’s intervention.⁷⁷

If the Americans had won the fight, the British duped them into losing the peace. The *Nereid*’s commander prevailed on the *Patapsco* and *Merrimack* to block another French invasion force. Since it would take ten days for the fourteen American vessels in the harbor to be readied for sea, the American captains complied. The *Patapsco* and *Merrimack* went out, found nothing, and returned to Curacao after ten days. There, much had changed. The British prohibited the American merchantmen to leave with cargo, and sent out privateers to capture the “freed” American merchantmen. Geddes and Brown decided that their instructions did not allow them to intervene. Resigned to the situation, they sailed for St. Kitts on 11 October without any merchant vessels to protect.⁷⁸ Soon afterward, Truxtun ordered the *Patapsco* to escort a convoy “safe to the Northward of Bermuda,” where they might scatter to their ports of destination, then to sail to Norfolk.⁷⁹

The naval war with France provided no further chances for distinction. At the end of September 1800 President Adams lifted the prohibition on American trade with the islands and territories of France. The *Patapsco* came up the Delaware to Philadelphia in early December. Stoddert, who was by then aware of his lame duck status in the Federalist administration and the incoming Republicans’ disdain for a blue-water navy, immediately thought of selling the *Patapsco* as an easy step toward paring down the navy. At the end of March 1801 he ordered George Harrison, the navy agent in Philadelphia, to store the *Patapsco*’s guns and stores and to sell the ship and all her equipment at public auction. The sale brought in \$24,680 to the treasury. In April 1802 three Philadelphians, including Richard Dale, John Paul Jones’s lieutenant during the Revolution and one of the senior captains of the new navy, registered as the *Patapsco*’s new owners.⁸⁰

The *Maryland* had one last operational cruise. On 22 March 1801 she sailed for Le Havre, carrying Congressman John Dawson and the draft peace treaty with France. Arriving on 9 May, the *Maryland* stayed in the harbor for two months except when she rode out a gale in company with the British blockading squadron—after which Rodgers dined with the British admiral and told him about the masting and readiness of the French ships in port. Dawson wrote Rodgers on 10 July that the *Maryland* should not await ratification of the treaty but should return home. Five days later she departed with several private American gentlemen, public dispatches, and curiously, a present—a box containing a model of an Egyptian pyramid—sent to President Jefferson from Count Volney in Paris.⁸¹

The *Maryland* arrived in Baltimore in late August 1801. Immediately the navy put the *Maryland* in ordinary and paid off and discharged the crew. A month later Robert Smith, Jefferson’s secretary of the navy, ordered the navy agent at Baltimore, Colonel Stricker, to sell the ship after taking out her military stores. William Taylor of Baltimore bought the *Maryland* for \$20,000; at some point afterwards, New York

merchants William Bayard and Herman LeRoy purchased her and then she disappeared from history.⁸²

Both captains came close to fading into total obscurity as well. In October 1800 Truxtun destroyed Geddes's career by reprimanding the *Patapsco's* commander in a letter to Secretary Stoddert. Truxtun transmitted Geddes's account of the Curacao affair, along with a newspaper clipping and correspondence from a witness on board one of the American merchantmen. Truxtun reported himself "much mortified at the management of the Curacao business, & hurt at the Sneers and horse laughs at some here, at our Giving an Island to a nation, whose Officers instantly set traps to get hold of our property." Stoddert dismissed Geddes from the service. A year later, Stoddert's successor, Robert Smith, dismissed John Rodgers as a captain under the Naval Peace Establishment Act. Although Rodgers is said to have sworn never to wear his country's uniform again, he regained his rank in August 1802 and became one of the leading American naval officers of the sailing navy. As in his first command, however, Rodgers never "quite succeed[ed] in coming to grips with his adversary."⁸³

The privately subscribed, privately built Baltimore sloops of war played minor roles in the naval war with France and, as warships, are scarcely noted in histories of that era. But the enthusiasm with which private citizens of Maryland came together, subscribed more than \$100,000, developed plans, oversaw construction, launched and largely manned two cruisers for the navy, illuminates the high-minded activism and fervent patriotism that marked post-revolutionary Baltimore.

NOTES

1. *Federal Gazette & Baltimore Advertiser*, 4 June 1799. The author wishes to thank Jill Leiner, W. M. P. Dunne, Geoffrey Footner, Kellee Green, Bonnie Bolno, and Edward Papenfuse for their help and comments.

2. A "sloop of war" was a midsize warship in nineteenth-century navies. Sloops of war were not sloop-rigged but were three-masted square-rigged ships that carried between twenty and twenty-eight cannon and were used as convoy escorts or, offensively, to attack enemy merchant ships or small naval vessels.

3. *Federal Gazette*, 20 June 1799.

4. Norman Ruckert, *The Fells Point Story* (Baltimore: Bodine & Associates, 1976), p. 27.

5. John Mullin, *The Baltimore Directory, for 1799, Containing the Names, Occupations, and Places of Abode of the Citizens, Arranged in Alphabetical Order* (Baltimore: Warner & Hanna, 1799), p. 126.

6. Michael A. Palmer, *Stoddert's War: Naval Operations During the Quasi-War with France, 1798-1801* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987), pp. 6-7; Oliver to Kirwan, 10 March 1798 and Oliver to Lowrey, 10 March 1798, Robert Oliver Record Books, MdHS 626.1, box 3, Letterbook 1796-1800, pp. 206-9.

7. William Stinchcombe, *The XYZ Affair* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980), pp. 56-57; Ralph Adams Brown, *The Presidency of John Adams* (Lawrence:

University Press of Kansas, 1975), pp. 48–55; L. Marx Renzulli, Jr., *Maryland: The Federalist Years* (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1972), pp. 192–97.

8. *Federal Gazette*, 10 May 1798; Baltimore *Telegraphe and Daily Advertiser*, 21 June 1798; Pringle to Miller, 18 May 1798, Mark Pringle Letter Book, MdHS, MS. 680, 1:1796–98, p. 387; Oliver to Lance & Boone, 10 April 1798, Robert Oliver Record Books, p. 219.

9. *Federal Gazette*, 2, 9, 13, and 15 June 1798.

10. *Ibid.*, 15 June 1798.

11. Thorowgood Smith (1743–1810) ran a mercantile partnership with his brother Isaac from Bowleys Wharf. An organizer of the Bank of Maryland in 1790, Smith owned a half-dozen ships and was a magistrate of the city before his property losses from French and British captures threw him into bankruptcy. He nevertheless was elected the mayor of Baltimore (1804–1808).

12. *Federal Gazette*, 16 June 1798. All five men were merchants. Robert Oliver, born in Ireland in 1757, emigrated to Baltimore in 1783. A Federalist, he would later become an original director of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. Stuart Weems Bruchey, *Robert Oliver: Merchant of Baltimore* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956). David Stewart was on the boards of the Bank of Baltimore and the marine insurance office. John Stricker (1758–1825) had been a junior officer in Smallwood's regiment of the Maryland line during the Revolution. In the 1790s he owned a mill on the Jones Falls and was a colonel in the militia; at the Battle of North Point in 1814, he would command a brigade against the British regulars. A Republican, the Jefferson administration appointed him the navy agent at Baltimore in 1801. James Barry owned a wharf at Fells Point.

13. *Federal Gazette*, 19, 20, 22, and 23 June 1798; Oliver to Stoddert, 24 July 1798, Robert Oliver Record Books, pp. 250–51 (noting that the subscription then exceeded \$100,000).

14. Jeremiah Yellott (d. 1805), known as "Captain Yellott" for his commands of three privateers in the Revolution, emigrated from Yorkshire in 1774. A spectacularly successful trader and a Federalist, by the early 1780s he owned his own wharf, a warehouse, and had investments in fourteen vessels. He was a leading proponent of the topsail schooner and was the navy agent at Baltimore from 1798 to 1800. John Bosley Yellott, Jr., "Jeremiah Yellott—Revolutionary War Privateersman and Baltimore Philanthropist," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 86 (1991): 176–89.

15. Robert Gilmore (1748–1822) emigrated from Scotland at nineteen. Mercantile partner to Robert Morris and William Bingham of Philadelphia, Gilmore helped begin American trade with the East Indies. An original director of the Bank of Maryland (1790), he established the first joint-stock insurance company, the Maryland Insurance Company, in 1795 and built a gunpowder mill on the Gwynns Falls. A Federalist, he served on the First Branch of the Baltimore City Council and as its president. Robert Gilmore, Jr., *Memoir, or Sketch of the History of Robert Gilmore of Baltimore* (unpublished MdHS manuscript, 1840).

16. William Patterson (1752–1835), born in Donegal, emigrated to Philadelphia at fourteen to work in the countinghouse of a local merchant. In 1775 he risked all

his property to buy gunpowder in France to supply Washington's army at a critical time. For two years he was a purchasing agent for the Continental Congress in St. Eustasia and Martinique. Original president of the Bank of Maryland, he was related by marriage to Gen. Samuel Smith. His daughter, Elisabeth, caused a national sensation by marrying Napoleon's brother, Jerome, in 1803. In later years Patterson gave land for a city park which bears his name and was one of the incorporators and first directors of the B&O Railroad. S. Mitchell, *A Family Lawsuit: The Story of Elisabeth Patterson and Jerome Bonaparte* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1958), pp. 7-9.

17. Thomas Cole, a merchant, was an officer aboard one of Yellott's privateers in the Revolution.

18. Archibald Campbell, a merchant, was a Federalist and member of the boards of the Bank of Maryland and marine insurance office. When Yellott resigned as navy agent, the Adams administration appointed Campbell to the position.

19. Mark Pringle (1751-1819), a merchant and a Federalist, was a director of the marine insurance office.

20. The list is found in the Records of the Bureau of the Public Debt, National Archives, Record Group 53, entry 263, 948: 100-3.

21. William McCreary (spelled in the list "MacCreery") (1750-1814), a merchant and a Republican, became a three-term congressman from Baltimore (1803-1809) and later served in the Maryland state senate.

22. Moore Falls (spelled "Moor" in one entry and without the "s" in his last name in the other), a physician, was an investor in shipping, having an interest in the merchant ship *Dolphin*, which traded with the East Indies. See Oliver to McHenry, May 29, 1798, Robert Oliver Record Books, p. 238.

23. Margaret Sprigg was the widow of Republican Congressman Richard Sprigg of Anne Arundel County, who died in November 1798 "at his seat on the West River." *Federal Gazette*, 27 November 1798. In the House, Sprigg voted against the establishment of a navy department, against suspending trade with France, and against emergency military spending. *Ibid.*, 3 October 1798.

24. Col. John Eager Howard (1752-1827) fought in the Maryland line from 1776 to the end of the Revolution. For his gallantry at the battle of Cowpens, Congress awarded him a silver medal; he was wounded at the battle of Eutaw Springs. After the Revolution he was a delegate to the Continental Congress, governor of Maryland (1788-91), turned down President Washington's offer of a cabinet seat as secretary of war, and served as a United States Senator (1795-1803). A leading Federalist, he was the vice presidential candidate in the party's last, unsuccessful campaign in 1816.

25. John Swan (spelled in the list "Swann"), a merchant and a Federalist, was a director of the marine insurance office and brigadier general in command of the Baltimore militia. Frank A. Cassell, "The Structure of Baltimore's Politics in the Age of Jefferson, 1795-1812," in *Law, Society and Politics in Early Maryland*, Audrey C. Land, Lois Green Carr and Edward C. Papenfuss, eds. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1977), p. 291.

26. No biographical information has been found on John McDowell. The list notes "Annapolis" next to his name.

27. Benjamin Harwood (1751–1826) of Annapolis was treasurer of Maryland. It is not clear whether “his” contribution in fact reflects money subscribed by the state.

28. John O’Donnell (d. 1805), a Federalist and a merchant, owned the *Palas*, which sailed to the Orient in 1785 and brought to Baltimore the first cargo from China. Hamilton Owens, *Baltimore on the Chesapeake* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1941), p. 155. A director of the Bank of Maryland, O’Donnell was also a lieutenant colonel of militia, in charge of the 6th Regiment.

29. Despite Samuel Smith’s status as a “merchant prince” of Baltimore, he was the city’s Republican leader and cultivated the artisans and laborers of Baltimore through his command of the militia. William Bruce Wheeler, “The Baltimore Jeffersonians, 1788–1800: A Profile of Intra-Factional Conflict,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 66 (1971): 165.

30. John D. Kilbourne, “The Society of Cincinnati in Maryland: Its First One Hundred Years, 1793–1888,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 78 (1983): 169–85.

31. New York *Spectator*; 23 June 1798, reprinting letter from a Baltimore gentleman to his New York friend dated 17 June.

32. This was the figure suggested by the Newburyport letter of 1 June. A bill authorizing stock for the subscription warships was introduced 6 June, passed the Senate on 14 June and the House on 25 June, and was signed into law by President Adams on 30 June. The act is printed at chapter 64, 1 Stat. 575 (1845). There was little profit in six percent stock. According to Albert Gallatin, the Republican floor leader in the House and an inveterate opponent of war profiteering, the certificates “would not sell for 20s[hillings] in the pound.” *Annals of Congress*, 5th cong., 2d sess., (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1851), 7:2034.

33. Stoddert to Yellott, 27 June 1798, Dudley W. Knox, ed., *Naval Documents Related to the Quasi-War Between the United States and France* (7 vols., Washington: Government Printing Office, 1935–38), 1:145–46; Stoddert to Stewart, 6 July 1798, *ibid.*, 1:170; Stoddert to Yellott, 6 July 1798, *ibid.*, 1:170.

34. Merchants along the coast built nine ships by subscription: the frigates *Boston*, *New York*, *Philadelphia* (from those cities, respectively), *John Adams* (from Charleston), and *Essex* (from Salem), the sloop of war *Merrimack* (from Newburyport), the brig *Richmond* (from Richmond, Petersburg, and Norfolk), and the two Baltimore-built sloops of war. Frederick C. Leiner, “The Subscription Warships of 1798,” *American Neptune*, 46 (1986): 141–58.

35. Stoddert to Campbell, 19 July 1798, *Naval Documents*, 1:220. A warship’s “rate” was the number of cannon it carried on its gundeck(s), which ultimately had little relation to the number of guns actually carried. For instance, the frigate *Constitution*, rated at 44 guns, actually carried fifty-two or fifty-six guns.

36. Ralph J. Robinson, “Shipbuilding on the Patapsco; Part II: The Glorious Eighteenth Century,” *Baltimore*, 50 (May 1957): 48. As to Price owning slaves, see Charles G. Steffen, *The Merchants of Baltimore: Workers and Politics in the Age of Revolution 1763–1812* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), pp. 39–40.

37. William J. Kelley, “Shipbuilding at Federal Hill Baltimore” (1964), typescript MS. at MdHS; “Earle’s Maryland Shipbuilding Collection 1680–1910,” index at

MdHS, book I, sheet 31; Marion V. Brewington, comp., "Lists of Carpenters Certificates 1790-1831" (1957), typescript MS. at MdHS.

38. Oliver to Stoddert, 24 July 1798, Robert Oliver Record Books, pp. 250-51, 255-56; Stoddert to Oliver, 26 July 1798, *Naval Documents*, 1:242-43. Stoddert put the materials of Stodder's yard at the committee's disposal but hoped they would leave the live oak timber for the frigates. Stoddert asked whether the committee meant to procure the ship's cannon or have them manufactured; he certainly did not know the design of the ships, reiterating the need for them to be rated 18s, as opposed to 20s or 24s, and hoped that the Baltimore vessels would be strong enough to mount nine-pound or twelve-pound guns.

39. Howard I. Chapelle, *The History of the American Sailing Navy* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1949), p. 154.

40. Certificate of *Maryland* (MS. 2543 in MdHS) RG 36, Certificates of Registry Issued at Baltimore, Maryland 1789-1801, roll 2, no. 242, National Archives). The tonnage, called the carpenter's measure, was obtained by multiplying the length of the ship's keel by the extreme breadth and multiplied again by the interior vertical dimension (called "depth of hold"), the whole divided by ninety-five. Thomas C. Gillmer, *Pride of Baltimore: The Story of the Baltimore Clippers 1800-1990* (Camden, Maine: International Marine, 1992), p. 189. Tonnage, therefore, was *not* a measure of weight.

41. Proof No. 38, 3 April 1802, RG 36, French Spoilation Claims (Philadelphia District), Proof of Ownership of Registered Vessels, 9 October 1801-1 October 1802, National Archives.

42. Chapelle found two sloop of war plans that *might* reflect the design of the Baltimore ships. One was for a "spar-decked sloop of war," rated a 20, but mounting twenty-four or twenty-six guns. That vessel would have measured 106'4" between perpendiculars, 29-foot moulded beam, a depth of hold of 13'6"—a rather "sharp-ended vessel." Chapelle, *American Sailing Navy*, p. 155. The other plan called for a ship of eighteen guns, with a length of 95 feet along the keel, a 32-foot beam, 116 feet between perpendiculars, and a 13-foot 6-inch depth of hold. Chapelle calculated her tonnage at about 430 tons. *Ibid.*, p. 160. The plan is marked "Copied by Sam Humphreys Phila. 1798" which, even assuming that the plan represents one of the Baltimore ships, does not shed light on who drew the plans originally, and Chapelle concedes the designer is unknown. *Ibid.*, pp. 159, 160. W. M. P. Dunne assumes that Josiah Fox designed both ships, but this is set forth by implication. W. M. P. Dunne, "An Inquiry into H. I. Chapelle's Research in Naval History," *American Neptune*, 49 (1989): 54 n.70. That Fox or any Philadelphia-based naval architect was the designer is mitigated by the secretary's ignorance of the designs (see n. 38 above), the arguably faulty design (the text at nn. 49 and 52), and the sharpness of the design with its Baltimore schooner attributes.

43. Stoddert to Adams, 31 July 1798, *Naval Documents*, 1:262-63; Oliver to Stoddert, 28 August 1798, Robert Oliver Record Books, p. 262.

44. Oliver to Stoddert, 8 and 10 October 1798, Robert Oliver Record Books, p. 276; Stoddert to Gilmor, 28 November 1798, *Naval Documents*, 2:55; Stoddert to Yellott, 27 April 1799, *ibid.*, 3:100-1 ("Cannon for one of the Vessels will be sent

from hence—the other is provided—The Public has powder in the hands of Messrs. Gilmore [sic] & Co.'s Works"); *Documents Accompanying a Message from the President of the United States, with Sundry Statements Containing Detailed Accounts of the Expenditures of Public Monies, by Naval Agents; From 1st January, 1797 to 31st December 1801* (Washington: William Duane & Son, 1803), p. 227, Ralph R. Shaw and Richard H. Shoemaker, comp., *American Bibliography: A Preliminary Checklist for 1801–1819* (New York: Scarecrow Press, 1958–83).

45. Stoddert to Oliver, 15 October 1798, *Naval Documents*, 1:536 (noting that "Gen. Washington, Gen. Lee & other respectable men of Virginia" recommended a Captain Spotswood for one of the Baltimore vessels); Oliver to Stoddert, 24 and 31 July 1798, Robert Oliver Record Books, pp. 250–51, 255–56.

46. Charles Oscar Paullin, *Commodore John Rodgers: Captain, Commodore, and Senior Officer of the American Navy, 1773–1838* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1967 [orig. pub. 1909]); Stoddert to Rodgers, 13 June 1798, *Naval Documents*, 3:335 (enclosing commission as captain and ordering him to take command of the ship).

47. Stoddert to Adams, 2 September 1799, *Naval Documents*, 4:144; Charles E. Claghorn, *Naval Officers of the American Revolution: A Concise Biographical Dictionary* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1988), p. 119; Stoddert to Geddes, 24 September 1799, *Naval Documents*, 4:222; *Federal Gazette*, 31 August 1799.

48. Rodgers to Stoddert, 7 September 1799, John Rodgers Papers, Copy Book 1799–1805, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, AMN 950. As to opening recruiting, see Rodgers to [?], 3 August 1799, *ibid.*

49. Truxtun to Yellott, 8 January 1799, *Naval Documents*, 1:563–64; Stoddert to Yellott, 17 July 1799, *ibid.*, 3:507–8; Buchanan to Pickering, 5 September 1799, *ibid.*, 4:159–60. Chapelle, *Sailing Navy*, p. 156, cites the Buchanan letter in a passage indicating that the Baltimore-built ships were "overgunned," especially in comparison with British warships of like size. As to this comparison, Dunne, "Chapelle's Research," pp. 45–46, points out that the British ships' weight of armament was *not* what Chapelle believed and that the *Maryland* and *Patapsco* "carried the armament they had been designed for," which is correct. However, the armament for which they were designed might have been flawed in theory (especially given the extra men, shot, powder, and provisions necessitated by additional or heavier guns) and there is no gainsaying the fact that Rodgers, the *Maryland's* captain, shared the opinion of the low gun deck. Buchanan, in his letter, went on to make the comparison to British sloops of war which Chapelle took up.

50. Howard I. Chapelle, *The Baltimore Clipper: Its Origin and Development* (Hatboro, Pa.: Tradition Press, 1965 [orig. pub. 1930]), p. 3.

51. *Federal Gazette*, 22 August, 9 and 14 September 1799 (the latter reprinting extract from *Norfolk Herald*, 5 September).

52. Rodgers to Stoddert, 20 September 1799, John Rodgers Papers, Copy Book 1799–1805.

53. Stoddert to Rodgers, 5 September 1799, *Naval Documents*, 4:158.

54. Buchanan to Pickering, 5 September 1799, *ibid.*, 4:159–60.

55. For Truxtun's system on board the *Constellation*, and its influence on Rodgers, see Eugene S. Ferguson, *Truxtun of the Constellation* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute

Press, 1982 [orig. pub. 1956]), pp. 139–41. For Rodgers' standing orders, see Paullin, pp. 55–60, and John Rodgers Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

56. *Federal Gazette*, 17 December 1799 (reprinting extract from an officer aboard the *Maryland*, dated Surinam, 17 October); Rodgers to McNeill, 22 October 1799, John Rodgers Papers, Copy Book 1799–1805; Stoddert to McNeill, 5 September 1799, *Naval Documents*, 4:160–61.

57. Rodgers to Stoddert, 20 November 1799, John Rodgers Papers, Copy Book 1799–1805.

58. *Federal Gazette*, 24 December 1799 (reprinting extract from an officer on the *Maryland* to his friend in Baltimore, dated 21 November); Neale to Burrows, 22 November 1799, *Naval Documents*, 4:441–42.

59. Stoddert to Geddes, 24 September, 8 and 23 October, and 5 November 1799, *Naval Documents*, 4:222, 265, 312, 357–58.

60. *Federal Gazette*, 17 and 18 September 1799.

61. Stoddert to Geddes, 11 and 14 November 1799, *Naval Documents*, 4:380, 392–93; *Federal Gazette*, 19 November 1799. Despite the potential for confusion in naming both a sloop of war and a frigate *Chesapeake*, the Baltimore-built ship continued to be called the *Chesapeake* in the newspapers. In official correspondence she was the *Patapsco* by the end of October.

62. *Naval Documents*, 5:206.

63. *Naval Documents*, 5:282, reprints extract of log of U.S.S. *Warren*, 7 March 1800 (noting "Spoke the U.S. Ship *Petapsco* [sic] from Havanna Having under Convoy a fleet of Merchantmen"); *Federal Gazette*, 21 March 1800 (noting arrival of brig *Dorsey*, Pierce, fifteen days from Havanna, which had been under convoy of *Patapsco* for four days from Havanna until she separated from the convoy off of Florida); Stoddert to Geddes, 19 March 1800, *Naval Documents*, 5:327–28; Stoddert to Geddes, 14 April 1800, *ibid.*, 5:417.

64. Rodgers to Tufts, 26 December 1799 and 16 January 1800, John Rodgers Papers, Copy Book 1799–1805.

65. Rodgers to Stoddert, 20 November 1799, John Rodgers Papers, Copy Book 1799–1805; *Federal Gazette*, 24 December 1799; Tufts to Secretary of State, 3 February 1800, *Naval Documents*, 5:181–82; Palmer, *Stoddert's War*, p. 148.

66. After two of McNeill's men deserted, he sent an armed party ashore to seize them. The British governor protested and demanded an apology, which McNeill refused. The British then expelled the *Portsmouth* from Surinam, leaving Rodgers and the *Maryland* alone on the South American station. Palmer, *Stoddert's War*, pp. 143, 194.

67. Rodgers to Tufts, 18, 27, and 31 January 1800, John Rodgers Papers, Copy Book 1799–1805; Tufts to commanders of American vessels, 20 February 1800, *Naval Documents*, 5:234; Tufts to Secretary of State, 3 February 1800, *ibid.*, 5:181–82.

68. Rodgers to Stoddert, 20 September 1800, *Naval Documents*, 6:364–65.

69. Rodgers to Stoddert, 20 September 1800, *ibid.*, 6:366; Solicitor General of St. Kitts to Judge J. Garnett of Court of Admiralty, 3 October 1800, *ibid.*, 6:436–39; Truxtun to Stoddert, 4 October 1800, *ibid.*, 6:434–35.

70. Rodgers left Surinam with seven vessels under convoy on 9 August, picked up five more from Berbice and Demarara (from which he sailed on 17 August), joined forces with another convoy escorted by the U.S. brig *Eagle* off Martinique, departed St. Kitts on 31 August with thirty-five American and several English merchantmen and left St. Thomas on 10 September with fifty-two American and several English ships. See Rodgers to Stoddert, 20 September 1800, *Naval Documents*, 6:366; John Rodgers Papers, Copy Book 1799–1805 (listing each vessel under convoy, its owner, port of origin, and cargo). As to the capture and trial of the *Aerial*, see Rodgers to Stoddert, 2 September 1800, *Naval Documents*, 6:312; Rodgers to Hollingsworth, 9 October 1800, John Rodgers Papers, Copy Book 1799–1805; Rodgers to Lockhart, 22 November 1800, *ibid.* The *Aerial* does not appear in the navy department's list of prizes taken in the war. *Naval Documents*, 7:59, 311–12.

71. Paullin, *Commodore John Rodgers*, p. 367; Circular to Rodgers, 6 September 1799, *Naval Documents*, 4:156; Stoddert to Secretary of Treasury, 17 March 1800, *ibid.*, 5:313–14; Rodgers to Stoddert, 20 September 1800, *ibid.*, 6:367–68; Stoddert to Rodgers, 1 October 1800, *ibid.*, 6:420–21.

72. Stoddert to Rodgers, 1 October 1800, *ibid.*, 6:420–21.

73. A British privateer lugger seized the *Cecilia* by force, saying that the prize lieutenant's orders and warrant "would not do." The British sent their own prize crew aboard and sailed into Nevis. The collector of customs took possession of the *Cecilia* as a *droite* of the admiralty, the Americans were ordered off, and Geddes was accused of "impertinence" and threatened with arrest if he should disembark at St. Kitts. *Federal Gazette*, 25 July 1800.

74. *Naval Documents*, 7:59, 311–12; Bill of Costs, *United States v. The armed French Vessel the Dorade*, Case Files (Informations), 1789–1910, Records Relating to Forfeitures in Customs, Internal Revenue and Other Cases, Records of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, Records of the District Courts of the United States, RG 21, National Archives—Mid Atlantic Region.

75. *Federal Gazette*, 20 and 23 August 1800; Palmer, *Stoddert's War*, pp. 196–99.

76. Palmer, *Stoddert's War*, p. 200; Robinson to Stoddert, n.d., *Naval Documents*, 6:337–41; Phillips to Secretary of State, 25 October 1800, *ibid.*, 6:500–1.

77. Robinson to Stoddert, n.d., *ibid.*, 6:337–41; Phillips to U.S. squadron commander, 10 October 1800, *ibid.* 6:451–52.

78. *Federal Gazette*, 9 December 1800.

79. Truxtun to Geddes, 27 October 1800, *Naval Documents*, 6:505–6.

80. *ibid.*, 7:3, reprints extract from Mallowny journal, 1–17 December 1800; Stoddert to Harrison, 12 December 1800, *ibid.*, 7:24; Stoddert to Harrison, 31 March 1801, *ibid.*, 7:165; Proof of Ownership No. 38, 3 April 1802, Records of Bureau of Customs, RG 36, Proof of Ownership of Registered Vessels (Philadelphia District) 9 October 1801–1 October 1802, National Archives.

81. Stoddert to Rodgers, 7, 16, and 18 March 1801, *Naval Documents*, 7:141, 147, 148; *Federal Gazette*, 23 March 1801; Rodgers to Commandant, 9 May 1801, John Rodgers Papers, Copy Book 1799–1805; Paullin, *Commodore John Rodgers*, pp. 69–71; Homberg to Jefferson, 7 July 1801, Thomas Jefferson Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, reel 6.

82. Smith to Rodgers, 31 August 1801, *Naval Documents*, 7:279; Smith to Stricker, 2 October 1801, *ibid.*, 7:290; Certificate of Registry No. 242, 9 December 1801, Records of Bureau of Customs, RG 36, Certificates of Registry Issued at Baltimore, Maryland 1789–1801, MS. 2543, roll 2, MdHS; Statement of Sales of Public Vessels, 8 December 1801, *Naval Documents*, 7:307; Carl C. Cutler, *Greyhounds of the Sea: The Story of the American Clipper Ship* (New York: Halcyon House, 1930), p. 399.

83. Truxtun to Stoddert, 5 December 1800, *Naval Documents*, 7:11; Smith to Rodgers, 22 October 1801, *ibid.*, 7:292; Leonard F. Guttridge and Jay D. Smith, *The Commodores* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1984 [orig. pub. 1969]), p. 104.

Murder in Western Maryland: The Life and Death of George Swearingen, Sheriff of Washington County

PETER H. CURTIS

On 2 October 1829 more than four thousand people gathered on the banks of Wills Creek just outside Cumberland, Maryland, to witness the execution of a most unusual convicted murderer. The condemned man was George Swearingen, the twenty-nine-year-old former sheriff of neighboring Washington County. His execution was the final chapter in a chain of events that created sensation after sensation in rural western Maryland in the late 1820s. So intense was interest in Swearingen's case that within a few months of the hanging at least two volumes recounting the story, both published in Hagerstown, appeared and sold well. One offered the memoirs of the convicted murderer himself; the other recounted the lengthy and impassioned defense of the sheriff's lawyer. Although all this excitement is almost forgotten today, the Swearingen case contained the dramatic elements of an epic novel.

According to the *Life and Confession of George Swearingen*, dictated just before his execution, the condemned man was born on 29 January 1800 near Berryville, Virginia.¹ He claimed "respectable and wealthy parentage," including direct ties to the Alexander family of Alexandria. He attended a private secondary school in Berryville for four years. At age sixteen his father secured for him a clerk's position in the local county court in Leesburg. After a brief stint at a similar post in the county court in Hagerstown, Swearingen returned to "read law" under the Loudoun County clerk. About the time he turned twenty-one, Swearingen obtained a license to practice law in Virginia. He tried unsuccessfully to establish practice in Noblesville, Indiana, where he had relatives, before again settling in Hagerstown in 1822.

In Hagerstown Swearingen finally put down roots and began to make a name for himself. He moved there, he stated, because his uncle, John V. Swearingen, had been elected Washington County sheriff. His uncle offered him a clerk's position in the sheriff's office, which put George Swearingen in an excellent position to meet both the general population and county leaders. By all accounts an attractive and ambitious young man, he made the most of this opportunity. By the spring of 1825, a full two and one-half years before the next election, the younger Swearingen felt

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confident enough of his political prospects to announce his own candidacy for county sheriff (his uncle having been succeeded by another man in 1824). He continued to work in the sheriff's office until a few months before the election, when he resigned to devote full time to his campaign.

Swearingen's social life bloomed along with his political career. By his own account, he and an unnamed young woman conducted a serious courtship in 1822. It did not work out, however, and the relationship, he claimed, ended by mutual agreement. Then in 1823 Mary Scott of Cumberland arrived in Hagerstown with her mother to attend school. The Scotts were cousins of Swearingen, so the school girl became a boarder at the house where he lived. Less than one year later, on 12 February 1824, George and Mary were married. "We boarded in the same house together," Swearingen later explained.

I knew her character, that she had been well raised, and stood on equal grounds with myself—our ancestors being closely connected by consanguinity, viz: the Cresaps and Swearingens. Her prospects being flattering, but not more so than my own, I concluded that by uniting our persons and our interests we would have a fair start for wealth, influence and happiness in this world.²

He asked Mary's father for her hand in correct fashion, and, in his account, emphasized the respect and high regard that her father showed to him. Several paragraphs later in Swearingen's narrative, he denied marrying his wife for "sordid motives" and belatedly claimed that he married her for love.

Almost from the start, there were problems in the marriage. Swearingen wrote that the early months were happy ones, but in the same paragraph he complained of his wife's poor housekeeping and of the repeated trips she insisted the couple make to visit her family in Cumberland, a distance of nearly seventy miles.³ In October 1825 Mary Swearingen returned to Cumberland for what turned out to be more than a six months stint. The immediate cause of this separation was the impending birth of the couple's first and only child, due the following month. Swearingen stated that inclement weather, the delicate health of mother and newborn daughter, and the increased travel required by his job (he was now a deputy sheriff) accounted for this prolonged family separation.

During this long period of living apart from his wife, Swearingen became involved with prostitutes. Washington County in this period was a rural area (Hagerstown in 1820 was a small town of about 2,600 people⁴), and on the surface officials scarcely suffered the "world's oldest profession." Swearingen explained early in his narrative that he tried to build rapport with the public by working hard at his duties as a clerk and avoiding strong language, excessive drinking, and "those places of carnal pleasure and vice which are the sure and certain road of death."⁵ This pious reference marked the first time Swearingen mentioned prostitution in his memoirs. In early 1826, with his wife living with her parents in Cumberland, Swearingen admitted "a few deviations from the path of pure living, which arose from the fact

of [Mary's] absence. . . . I occasionally visited . . . houses of libertinism and chambering."⁶

As a deputy sheriff, George Swearingen must have known about local prostitution and, if he wished, could have made efforts to discourage it. Officials in rural and frontier America at the time usually had much to say about the extent and tolerance of vice (however locals defined it). "Prostitutes responded by accepting this power of public officials," concludes one student of the subject, "and, where possible, adding sexual and social intimacies to reinforce their liaison with authorities."⁷ Like many law officers on the western frontier, Deputy Sheriff Swearingen not only ignored laws against prostitution; he visited prostitutes.

In mid-1826 Mary Swearingen returned from Cumberland, and from then until June of 1827 the couple lived together in Hagerstown. All was not well, however. Both Mary and her mother continually urged George to move the family permanently to Cumberland. And after a carriage accident that seriously injured his wife, rumors circulated that Swearingen had caused the incident in an attempt to murder her. Swearingen made a persuasive case that the accident was pure happenstance. He attributed rumors to the contrary to the attempts of political rivals to smear him prior to the election.

What gave these rumors substance—and served to keep them alive—was a critical event that occurred in June 1827, when Swearingen met Rachel Cunningham. While we know very little about this woman's life, all sources agree that she was a prostitute. Swearingen himself describes her as "a wanton."⁸ A 1906 Washington County history declared that her "career of crime reads like a romance." Supposedly she came from Pennsylvania, where she had been instrumental in breaking up three marriages by her relationships with the husbands, successively, in Franklin County, Pittsburgh, and Harrisburg.⁹ True or not, this unsubstantiated tale is all that survives concerning Rachel's life other than her involvement with George Swearingen.

According to Swearingen, he met the Pennsylvania siren when he took some clothing to her to be sewn and washed at a time when his wife was again temporarily in Cumberland. Rachel had apparently been living in Hagerstown for some time, sharing rooms with her brother. Swearingen began to visit her more regularly in the late summer of 1827; in one visit in early September he encountered "a gentleman of respectability" stepping out of her door. Rachel subsequently told George that this man "wished her to have no intercourse" with Swearingen, to discard the deputy sheriff and accept the gentleman as her only suitor.¹⁰ George responded to this competition for Rachel's heart by taking Rachel to a Sunday morning camp meeting outside Hagerstown, where more than a few worshippers noticed their attendance.

Not surprisingly, Swearingen's political opponents took immediate advantage,¹¹ but voters proved tolerant or ill-informed; the Cunningham/camp meeting episode did not seriously impede Swearingen's campaign. In November he defeated three other candidates for the sheriff's office, including the man who eventually succeeded him and a man who had been a member of the Maryland House of Delegates (it

may be worth noting that in Washington County in 1827, as in the rest of the United States, only white men were eligible to vote).

Open acknowledgement of the relationship between Swearingen and Cunningham had far more severe effects on Rachel. Her brother (if he was that) left her, and her landlord threw her out, refusing to return rent she had paid in advance. All these troubles, Swearingen commented, "made known to me in a plaintive tone, excited my sympathies for her, and elicited my attention, and my care. From this circumstance, and from this time, my attachment became more strong."¹² Doubtless Rachel's situation truly was desperate. Few means of livelihood were open to single women in the early nineteenth century, particularly those living in rural areas. Apparently lacking family support, education, and job training, Rachel discovered that her new-found notoriety left her totally dependent on her paramour.

She did not leave town in the face of her setbacks. Instead, with George's consent, she rented a room near the jail. Swearingen told her to rent it by the month, as he was planning to build her a house with more privacy. For the moment, however, she remained quite visible to the public. During the fall and winter of 1827-28 a number of unpleasant incidents continued to make Rachel's life miserable. Various men from near and far, some of them George's acquaintances, came by the apartment to attempt to see her in George's absence. A jail inmate yelled insults at her during a court session in March 1828.

Worse was to follow, for that winter Rachel became pregnant. When she also became ill, George sent a doctor to examine her. Unfortunately, that physician appears to have shared the attitude of many in the community toward Rachel Cunningham; cruelly, he told her that George did not believe that he was father of her child.¹³ Believing the story, Rachel attempted suicide with laudanum, an opium mixture. Neighbors hastily summoned Swearingen, who went looking for another doctor. When at last he found one, the man refused to come to Rachel's aid, telling the sheriff he would be better off having nothing to do with Rachel. Swearingen returned to Rachel's room and managed to revive her himself. The awful event resulted in a miscarriage.

How did George Swearingen's friends and family feel about his increasingly open extra-marital relationship with a known prostitute? From shortly after his election as sheriff, George admits he and his wife began sleeping in separate rooms. In his



Rachel Cunningham, "Swearingen's Paramour." (From *Life and Confessions of George Swearingen* [Hagerstown, 1829].)

memoir, if not to his wife, he explained that he did so because he had contracted venereal disease from two prostitutes he had encountered in his travels and did not wish to infect Mary. Yet he continued to visit Rachel regularly throughout this period. Perhaps Mary Swearingen would not let her husband near her. As her mother and other family members learned of her husband's behavior, pressures on Mary must have grown ever more intense. Finally, in February of 1828, after George refused a direct appeal from Mary's mother to give up Rachel, Mary Swearingen left their home in Hagerstown and returned to her family's house in Cumberland.

The other members of George's family, as well as many of his friends, reacted just as strongly. His father wrote him letters beseeching him to give up Rachel. Several uncles and other male friends came to see him, demanding the same; if he refused, they warned him that they would drive her away. Two of his uncles and two close friends remained after most of the group departed, and a highly emotional scene ensued. One uncle threatened to raise a force to drive Rachel out of town. George burst into tears, in part he says because he knew Rachel was pregnant and believed the child to be his. His uncles, one of whom was also in tears, finally agreed not to disturb Rachel if George would stop seeing her.

But Swearingen could not oblige, despite the strongest entreaties of his friends and family and the growing anger of the community. His "attachments were too strong," he later wrote. "To part from her was death."¹⁴ Instead, he did exactly what he had promised her he would do. He defiantly built Rachel a brick house that stood in Hagerstown until November 1890 and was so constructed that "not a window or door opened toward the town."¹⁵ (An 1887 fire-insurance map of Hagerstown shows this small brick house, clearly facing south, away from the hostile community.¹⁶)

Rachel moved to this house in April 1828, but it quickly proved to be no safe haven. By the middle of May public indignation at the continuing relationship of the sheriff and the prostitute burned at fever pitch. A friend came to see George and warned him that mob action against Rachel was a real and immediate possibility. Swearingen quickly removed her to his own home and borrowed a gun from a friend. When a few days later he received word of another forming mob, George went upstairs, opened the window, and told his messenger that he would shoot the first man who attacked his house. The brunt of this public wrath was notably directed at Rachel Cunningham, the "home-wrecker," not at the male public official.

While no attack apparently occurred, George finally realized that the situation in Hagerstown was too dangerous to continue keeping Rachel at home. About the end of May he removed her to the first of a number of temporary quarters, some of them at a considerable distance—rented rooms in towns in Maryland and Virginia, a farm his father owned near Berryville, and finally a secluded farm the Swearingens owned in Allegany County near Cresaptown. At each place, nearby residents or friends and relatives of the Scott or Swearingen families eventually learned of Rachel's presence and demanded her departure. So passed most of the summer of 1828, with Swearingen trying to appear to give up his connection with Rachel without really doing so.

Late summer found all of the involved parties in Allegany County. Mary Swearingen stayed with her parents in Cumberland, Rachel Cunningham secretly lodged at the farm near Cresaptown, and George Swearingen shuttled back and forth between the two sites. During this time he tried to effect a reconciliation with his wife, telling her that he had given up Rachel. He told Mary that he visited the rural farm in order to set up and operate a distillery there. Matters came to a head in early September when George, Mary and their young daughter visited two of Mary's aunts who lived on either side of Cresaptown. On the way from one aunt's home to the other, the family came to a road that led to the farm where Rachel stayed.

From this point Swearingen's story as told in his confession and the accounts of prosecutors diverge. The state claimed that George waited until the family was out of sight of a passing drover, led his wife's horse up a side road into the forest, and then knocked Mary unconscious with a club he had cut. Seeing she was not dead, he then suffocated her.¹⁷ Swearingen himself stated that at that point Mary told him she had received a letter telling her that Rachel was living at the family farm. She demanded that they go there directly so that she could see for herself if George was deceiving her. He attempted to dissuade her, but failed. She gave him the child and set off up the side road to the farm. Furious, he demanded that she stop, and they began to quarrel violently. When he could not stop her, he struck her with his fist from behind "with all my force," causing her to tumble from her horse. When he dismounted and went to her, she was dead. He then galloped back and found the drover and sent the man to get help. When assistance arrived, Swearingen claimed that his wife had died of injuries resulting from an accident when she and her horse fell and she struck her head on the rocky ground.¹⁸

Mary Swearingen's death touched off intense public furor. At first authorities accepted the nearby county sheriff's account. A jury of inquest decided that "the unfortunate woman had met her death by an act of Providence. . . ."¹⁹ But tongues soon began to wag. The Hagerstown *Torch Light & Public Advertiser* reported shortly after the event,

Much excitement has been produced in this county during the last week by the death of Mrs. Mary C. Swearingen, which occurred near Cumberland, in Allegany County, on Monday last week. As the accounts of this melancholy event are contradictory, and the reports exceedingly numerous and conflicting, we shall wait until something positive transpires before we hazard a statement.²⁰

As public suspicion grew, local authorities had second thoughts. Swearingen admitted that he had used his knife to injure the knees of his wife's horse in order to simulate the cuts and bruises suffered in a fall. A close examination of the horse's injuries led to a decision to exhume Mary Swearingen's remains. A second inquest re-opened the case, and after brief deliberations the grand jury returned a charge of murder against George Swearingen.²¹

The accused and Rachel did not wait to hear of these developments. When word came of the pending exhumation of Mary's body, George concluded that the

authorities in Allegany County believed him (and possibly Rachel) guilty of murder. He went to the farm and had Rachel pack a few belongings. Together they fled from the area, traveling on horseback west and south through Romney, Virginia (now West Virginia), and into southern Ohio and Kentucky. In that sparsely settled region they encountered illness, poor roads, lack of food, poor weather, and cheerless lodgings. No one wanted to accept their "eastern money" (Maryland bank notes). That currency and the increasingly tattered condition of their clothing made the fugitives memorable to those persons whom they met. After eluding capture on several occasions in late October, they reached a part of Kentucky where George had relatives. He told them that Mary's death was due to an accidental fall and that in consequence of his connection with Rachel he had been charged with murder. He claimed to have married Rachel.²² His relatives offered the fugitives shelter.

But the respite proved brief. Back in Maryland, George and Rachel's abrupt departure appeared to confirm suspicions of George's guilt. Rumors abounded that Rachel had taken part in the murder as well. On 16 October Joseph Kent, governor of Maryland, issued a proclamation offering a \$300 reward for the apprehension and return of George Swearingen to face the charge of having murdered his wife.²³ In December one of Swearingen's friends arrived in Kentucky in response to a letter asking for money and advice. The friend told the couple of the governor's proclamation and warned them that they would likely soon face arrest. He urged them to split up to avoid detection. At first they refused to consider separating. Eventually George decided on a compromise. He would go to Shawneetown on the Mississippi, take a boat to New Orleans, and Rachel would follow him shortly. They would re-unite in New Orleans and then press on to Texas.

After an emotional farewell, the lovers separated. George set off down the Mississippi, traveling under an assumed name on the flatboats that crowded the great river. Sometime in early February 1829 he arrived in New Orleans and began to wait anxiously for Rachel's arrival. When she did not come immediately he wrote her repeated letters, several of which were intercepted after his arrest and later read in court during his trial. He purchased guns and other supplies to be used in Texas; he arranged for passage there on a boat leaving 16 February. Rachel, however, did not arrive by the 16th, and George refused to leave without her. This proved to be a fatal delay.

At the store and post office where George and Rachel had agreed to meet, a customer looked closely at Swearingen during one of his repeated visits seeking word of Rachel. John V. L. Ramsay had worked in a shop in Hagerstown some time before, and he thought he recognized the fugitive. A few days later Ramsay apparently overheard George saying that he was about to leave for Texas. This must have confirmed Ramsay's suspicions, for he contacted the authorities. The next day, 17 February, several New Orleans policemen, accompanied by Ramsay, arrested George Swearingen aboard the flatboat he lived on while waiting for Rachel. Newspaper accounts emphasized the discovery of a rifle, pistol, and knife among George's possessions.²⁴

From the time of his arrest until well after his execution, Swearingen became a major topic of public interest in western Maryland. It was quite unusual for newspapers in smaller towns at this time to give much coverage to local happenings. For the most part their pages were filled with political fulminations, national and international doings, and amusing stories often copied from other papers. Yet between April and October 1829 each new development in Swearingen's case triggered a spate of articles in the Hagerstown and Cumberland newspapers. Until early April Swearingen remained in the New Orleans city jail, enduring lice infestation, the rough behavior of other prisoners, and shackles he was forced to sleep in. On 6 April he left New Orleans on the brig *Arctic*, arriving at Baltimore the 23d. On 4 May he arrived in Hagerstown on his way to the Allegany County jail. The *Torch Light & Public Advertiser* took note of his physical appearance, the stage coaches he rode in, the names of his lawyers, the names of the men guarding him, the fact that he was kept in irons at all times, and the name of the tavern he and his guards stayed at overnight. "We have been this particular (and perhaps we may be considered unnecessarily so) for the purpose of satisfying public curiosity, which has reached a degree of intensity, in relation to everything concerning this unfortunate man, that we have seldom witnessed on other occasions."²⁵

Public interest grew to a crescendo when the prisoner went to trial in a special session of the Allegany County Court, which convened in Cumberland on 11 August 1829. At the outset of the trial published reports questioned whether an untainted jury could be found, given the intensity of public interest and the degree of press coverage of the trial.²⁶ It took three days and the questioning of ninety-one potential jurors to select the twelve men to try George Swearingen. The trial took another eight full days.²⁷

As there were no witnesses to the alleged murder (save the couple's two-year-old child), the state's case depended entirely on circumstantial and physical evidence. As a result, prosecutor James Dixon sent a parade of thirty witnesses to the stand. They testified both to the events immediately preceding the death of Mary Swearingen and to several earlier incidents that Dixon regarded as previous attempts on the part of Swearingen to murder his wife. The defense called only six witnesses, most of them simply testifying to George's "good character." It is interesting to note that neither side called Rachel Cunningham to take the stand, although the prosecution did read a letter George Swearingen wrote to her while being held in the Allegany County jail. The prosecution summed up its case in speeches to the jury totaling about six hours in length. These orations were dwarfed by the presentations of the defense. William Price spoke for five hours, and John Van Lear McMahan for a remarkable seven hours. McMahan's speech (he was counsel to the B&O Railroad) was "as able and as eloquent as was ever heard in a court of justice, his eloquence, it is recorded, being 'electrifying to the point of absolute intoxication.'"²⁸

The courtroom drama had a swift conclusion. The *Torch Light and Public Advertiser* reported, "At 4 o'clock on Saturday [August 22] the jury retired, and after an absence of ten minutes returned with a verdict of 'guilty of murder in the first

degree.”²⁹ On the Monday following Judge John Buchanan sentenced George Swearingen to death by hanging.

“After the testimony was closed,” Swearingen lamented,

and the prosecutor and my counsel had gotten through their arguments, the jury retiring and continuing out but ten minutes, I looked up at them with complaisance and good cheer, expecting an acquittal from them—when lo! most confounding to my feelings, they rendered in their verdict of *Guilty of Murder in the first degree!!!* I hardly knew where I was, nor can I express the feelings I realized at the time. I trembled, and shuddered, and wept.³⁰

Looking back after more than 160 years, what can we say about the outcome of this case? First, a careful reading of the evidence presented by the numerous witnesses makes it clear that the state in no way proved Swearingen guilty of premeditated murder. One of the doctors who examined Mary Swearingen’s exhumed body testified that the advanced state of its decomposition made it absolutely impossible to determine the cause of her death. The other physician had at first agreed, and both originally so deposed in writing during the second inquest. One of the doctors later changed his mind and told the court that he believed that death had been caused by suffocation.³¹ The admission of such evidence makes McMahan’s remarkable speech in Swearingen’s defense highly persuasive: the case against George Swearingen was an empty shell.³²

Why, then, after more than a week of testimony and arguments did a jury so quickly convict him of first degree murder? The most likely answer is that Swearingen—and Rachel Cunningham—were seen in their rural community as a virulent threat to that most vital of social institutions, the family. This sentiment shone through clearly in the lengthy remarks Judge Buchanan made in sentencing Swearingen. The judge offered a prolonged commentary on George’s life, emphasizing his steady moral degeneracy and the effects it had on his family. The judge declared that Swearingen had married for money. “That one false step soon begat another,” Buchanan went on, addressing the convicted former sheriff. “Scarcely had you [married] her, regardless of all decorum, of the feelings of the friends and relatives by whom you were encompassed, and of every thing that was due to the society in which you lived, you coolly dashed her from you, to grovel in the foul embraces of a base and common wanton.”³³

Swearingen’s society expected this official to adhere to certain standards of private conduct. Seeing a prostitute was tolerable, as long as it was not too visible. After all, he won election as sheriff after he had established a close relationship with Rachel Cunningham and even after he had been seen in public with her. But when he refused to give up his paramour and indeed openly embraced her by building her a home, he directly challenged his society’s view of how a husband should behave. Social response was swift and certain; not only was he estranged from his wife and his family, Hagerstownians threatened mob action against him and his lover. When, after all of this, his wife died under mysterious and suspicious circumstances, the anger of rural society neared fever pitch. Cumberland’s twelve jurymen doubtless

reflected the attitudes of those in western Maryland at the time. Ten minutes was ample time to confirm that George Swearingen was a selfish, evil man who spat in the face of society's morals and deserved to die. Swearingen's only appeal was to the state governor, who denied it. George Swearingen then paid the ultimate price for flouting the values of his society.

NOTES

1. The best source for Swearingen's life is N. B. Little, *The Life and Confession of George Swearingen, who was executed at Cumberland, Allegany County, MD. on the 2nd day of October, 1829, for the Murder of his wife* (Hagerstown, Md.: William D. Bell, 1829). This rare and fascinating book consists primarily of Swearingen's own account of the events of his life, and hence must be read with caution. It is an excellent example of a popular American genre, the murderer's (or criminal's) memoirs—although far more interesting, and less moralistic, than most of its peers. Only two original copies of this work are known to exist, one at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, and the other at the Maryland Historical Society.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

4. Thomas J. C. Williams, *A History of Washington County, Maryland, from Hagerstown* ([Chambersburg, Pa.]: J. M. Runk and L. R. Titsworth, 1906), p. 178.

5. Little, *Life and Confession of George Swearingen*, p. 9.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

7. Anne M. Butler, *Daughters of Joy, Sisters of Mercy: Prostitutes in the American West, 1865–1890* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), p. 76.

8. Little, *Life and Confession of George Swearingen*, p. 22.

9. Williams, *History of Washington County*, p. 193.

10. Little, *Life and Confession of George Swearingen*, p. 18.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

15. Williams, *History of Washington County*, p. 194.

16. *Map of Hagerstown, Maryland...* (Baltimore: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1887).

17. No detailed account of the prosecution's case has survived, though one can surmise its outlines in the defense's tract, John V. L. McMahon, *Speech of John V.L. M'Mahon, on Behalf of the Accused Delivered to a Special Court of Oyer and Terminer, Held at Cumberland, Alleghany County, Aug. 3, 1829 for the Trial of George Swearingen, Indicted for the Murder of his Wife Mary C. Swearingen* (Baltimore: Lucas and Deaver, 1829). See especially p. 55.

18. Little, *Life and Confession of George Swearingen*, p. 28ff.

19. Williams, *History of Washington County*, p. 194.

20. *Hagerstown Torch Light & Public Advertiser*, 18 September 1828.

21. Ibid.
22. Little, *Life and Confession of George Swearingen*, p. 57.
23. *Torch Light & Public Advertiser*, 23 October 1828.
24. See, for example, *Hagerstown Mail*, 10 April 1829.
25. *Torch Light and Public Advertiser*, 7 May 1829.
26. Ibid., 13 August 1829.
27. This account of Swearingen's trial is drawn primarily from a series of articles in the *Hagerstown Torch Light & Public Advertiser*, 27 August 1829, 10 September 1829, and 27 September 1829.
28. James W. Thomas and T. J. C. Williams, *History of Allegany County, Maryland* (Cumberland, Md.: Titsworth & Co., 1923), p. 338.
29. *Torch Light and Public Advertiser*, August 27, 1829.
30. Little, *Life and Confession of George Swearingen*, p. 74.
31. *Hagerstown Torch Light & Public Advertiser*, August 17, 1829.
32. *Speech of John V. L. M'Mahon*, pp. 1-106.
33. *Hagerstown Torch Light & Public Advertiser*, August 27, 1829.

Research Notes & Maryland Miscellany

The Tilghman Papers

JENNIFER A. BRYAN

One of the most important gifts to the Manuscripts Division of the Maryland Historical Society in recent years is the Tilghman Papers. Spanning the years 1745 to 1960, the collection contains a wealth of information on various Maryland subjects—agriculture, politics, law, slavery, medicine, and manufacturing among them. Scholarly demand for access to these manuscripts has prompted the society to open the collection in stages. The papers of Edward Tilghman (1713–1785), his son Edward Tilghman, Jr. (1750–1815), James Tilghman (1716–1793), and his sons Richard Tilghman (1746–1785) and William Tilghman (1756–1827) form the core of the portion and are now available to researchers.

The first Tilghmans arrived in Maryland in the latter half of the seventeenth century. The family grew rapidly and prospered. By the fourth generation, these planters, merchants, and lawyers were tied by blood or marriage to most of the landed families east of Chesapeake Bay, including the Lloyds, Goldsboroughs, Earles, and Hollydays. They had also married into the Chews and Francis of Philadelphia. Among the Tilghmans' friends and family were George Washington, Robert Morris, Tench Coxe, Horatio Gates, Benjamin Chew, Edward Shippen, and Sir Philip Francis. With land and wealth and social prominence went political office; it is the political leanings of various members of the family during the eighteenth century that generate the high degree of interest in this collection.

The American Revolution divided the Tilghmans, some members favoring independence and others opposing what they regarded as a far too radical solution to the problems between Britain and its colonies. While James remained loyal to the Crown, his brothers Edward and Matthew cast their lots with the revolutionaries. Tench, James's eldest son, joined the Continental Army and became one of Washington's aides-de-camp. Tench's brother Philemon, however, preferred to serve George III. Believing the rebels had taken his father prisoner, Philemon boarded one of General Howe's warships in the Chesapeake and ended up a midshipman in His Majesty's navy.

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Although he went on to a prominent legal career in Philadelphia after the Revolution, Edward Tilghman, Jr. appears to have been a “trimmer” during the war. He fought at the battle of Long Island in 1776, yet, when reporting to his father about Congress’s deliberations, he referred to Samuel Adams as Judas Iscariot. Two years later he and his father had to post \$5,000 bond to ensure that Edward Jr. would appear before the general court of the Eastern Shore to explain why he had travelled to Philadelphia during Howe’s occupation without permission from the governor and council of Maryland. William’s behavior was similar to his cousin Edward Jr.’s. William would become chief justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania but during the Revolution seems to have contented himself with scholarly pursuits. When he began practicing law in Queen Anne’s and Talbot counties in the 1780s, suit was filed against him because of his suspect loyalties. Despite his admission “that he was averse to the Independence of America,” the court cleared him, and he was admitted to the Maryland bar.

The divided sympathies of the family caused comment among the Tilghmans’ neighbors. “The Actions of our Fmy are I believe pretty much pried into—Turbutt Wright I am told sayd publickly there was not one of the Ts except Matt Snr, & Matt’s Dick [Richard Tilghman 4th] but what woud cut the Throat of any Man to let in Ld Howe.” Joseph Reed, chief executive of Pennsylvania, wrote to his wife, “When I look around and see how few of the numbers who talked so largely of death and honour [are] around me, and those who are here are those from whom it least could be expected, such as the Tilghmans, etc., I am lost in wonder and surprize.”

Family members revealed in their correspondence their thoughts and feelings about the momentous events taking place. Edward longed to share with his brother Matthew the honor of being a delegate to the Continental Congress. “I am wretched that I cannot make Acquaintance with some of the most remarkable Worthies the chief Orators of this grand Amn. parl’t.” He fancied “almost every one has given up his Ideas of moderate Measures by this—I never had one— Compulsion will undoubtedly be the measure on both Sides.” Matthew, though, seems to have had some misgivings early on that things were moving too far too fast, writing to James in January 1775 that the proceedings of the Provincial Convention were “rather hasty” and, though he was “more & more convinced of the Utility and Efficiency of our Association,” he feared “we are loosing Sight of & ruining it by other plans.” James opposed independence, and explained his reasoning in a letter to his son Tench, then in New York with Washington:

We were undoubtedly under the weight of oppression which in my mind, by proper management might have been effectually remedied[.] But we have chosen a remedy, upon the best judgement I can form, worse much worse than the disease[.] And tho’ I would not oppose the ruling powers I would not join them to the violation of my judgement and my conscience from which every man has a right to claim an exemption. When a man parts with that right he loses the most valuable of all earthly concerns; And can be justified only by the most urgent necessity, if he may, even in that Case. I

will not say what effect the prospect of losing my life and ruining my family might have upon me. I hope I shall not be put to a Trial so severe. My Principles are that it is not only right but proper to oppose Arbitrary power[.] But I would not do it in such a manner as to risque Every thing, untill oppression became grievous and every other remedy had been repeatedly tryed[.] In that necessity only I would put every thing upon the Chance of Arms.

Obviously, the letters cited above are just a sampling of the information contained in this important collection of manuscripts. Through these documents, the individuals who wrote them breathe once more, reaching out to us from the past. Not only do the letters tell us about the Tilghmans, but also about their slaves and tenants; they not only describe historic events taking place but also the routine lives of farmers, merchants and lawyers. As with all manuscripts, they reveal to us not only what we still hold in common with our ancestors but also how very different was the world in which they lived and their way of looking at it.

The Family Papers of Maj. Gen. Robert Ross, the Diary of Col. Arthur Brooke, and the British Attacks on Washington and Baltimore of 1814

CHRISTOPHER T. GEORGE

The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland in Belfast holds copies of the papers of Robert Ross and Arthur Brooke—two younger sons of Anglo-Irish families who were leaders of the British army that attacked Washington, D.C., and Baltimore in August–September 1814. Maj. Gen. Ross, from Rostrevor, County Down, commanded the British during the attack on Washington and then fell victim to a marksman's shot during the advance on Baltimore on 12 September. Col. Brooke, of Brookeborough, County Fermanagh, led the 44th Regiment and took command of the army when Ross was mortally wounded.

The letters of Ross to his wife and sister-in-law, written on board ship en route to the Chesapeake and in the aftermath of the sack of Washington,¹ provide insight into the psychology of an intensely loyal family man who was personally stunned at the success his army achieved.

The diary of Arthur Brooke² shows a man unexpectedly thrust into a position of power: a former brigade commander who was faced with the difficult question of whether to attack a heavily defended city after being informed by the Royal Navy that—despite a twenty-four hour bombardment—it had failed to “reduce” Fort McHenry at the entrance to Baltimore harbor.

Brooke's decision was to withdraw, a decision that may have dogged his later career, though before he died in 1843 he was promoted to major general (1819) and lieutenant general (1837) as well as honored with a knighthood.³ Brooke came from a much more influential Northern Irish family than did Ross—one that in the twentieth century produced a key British World War II military leader, Alan Francis Brooke, first Viscount Alanbrooke, and a prime minister of Northern Ireland, Basil Stanlake Brooke, first Viscount Brookeborough. Brookeborough headed the government of the province from 1943 to 1963, before the acknowledged start of the current “troubles” with the provisional Irish Republican Army in 1969.

Study of the Ross letters and Brooke's diary provides certain information on the British invasion of Maryland available neither in the two officers' official dispatches

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nor in the usually accepted contemporary British narrative by George Robert Gleig.⁴ Although it is true that Gleig later became a well-known Victorian writer on military affairs, as well as chaplain-general to the British army, at the time of the events under discussion he was only a second lieutenant in the 85th Regiment, aged eighteen years!

The papers also serve to correct some of the statements made by a number of modern writers, including Walter Lord, whose *Dawn's Early Light*⁵ is the best and most complete modern-day narrative of the three-week period.

The texts of the Ross letters and Brooke's diary reproduced here attempt to render faithfully the writers' spelling, capitalization, punctuation, paragraphing (if any), and abbreviation. Words supplied in square brackets provide information needed to elucidate meaning, while ellipses mark words or passages omitted for the sake of brevity and readability. Transcriptions follow guidelines established in the *Maryland Historical Magazine's* fall 1987 issue, p. 241.

Arthur Brooke's diary of the events in August from the time the British fleet bringing Ross's army arrived in the Chesapeake Bay up until the return of the army to the Patuxent after the burning of the capital is written in a staccato, bare-bones fashion, a style for which he is unapologetic, feeling that as a soldier he should eschew a more florid approach, as he explains in a preface to the diary:

When I first entered on a Military life at the age of sixteen [as an ensign in the 44th Regiment on 31 October 1793] I determined for my own amusement and that of my Family to select such Occurrences as should happen to be interesting. In conformity to this determination, I have marked, in the following diary facts as they occurred satisfied that an unadorned statement would be more satisfactory and amusing to those whose perusal they were intended than the varnished tales of interested writers in whose productions truth is too often supplied by well coloured and fanciful inventions. To those friends, whose domestic circles may be entertained by a perusal of the following sheets I shall make no apology for the stile or brevity in which my notes are dressed as they must be aware that the duties of a soldier leave but little leisure for ornamental composition—and that many of the following pages have been written after the dangers and fatigues of a long march or hard fought engagement.⁶

It may be noted, incidentally, that the foregoing note is written in a cruder and larger hand than the rest of the document (except for some insertions, which appear to match the handwriting of the preface). It might be assumed that the copperplate writing that comprises most of the document is a transcription made by a secretary or family member of notes Brooke entered in a campaign diary at the time of the events covered.

August 15th. Made the Chesapeake—very little wind all day—were obliged to anchor six or eight times off Cape Henry—at about half past three, the Admiral made the signal to weigh, and doubled Cape Henry; at about half past ten at night, weighed & stood up the river [Bay?] with a fair wind and all sail set, so expect to get up this



Col. Arthur Brooke (1772-1843), shown in a portrait done late in his life. (Ulster American Folk Park, Omagh, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland.)

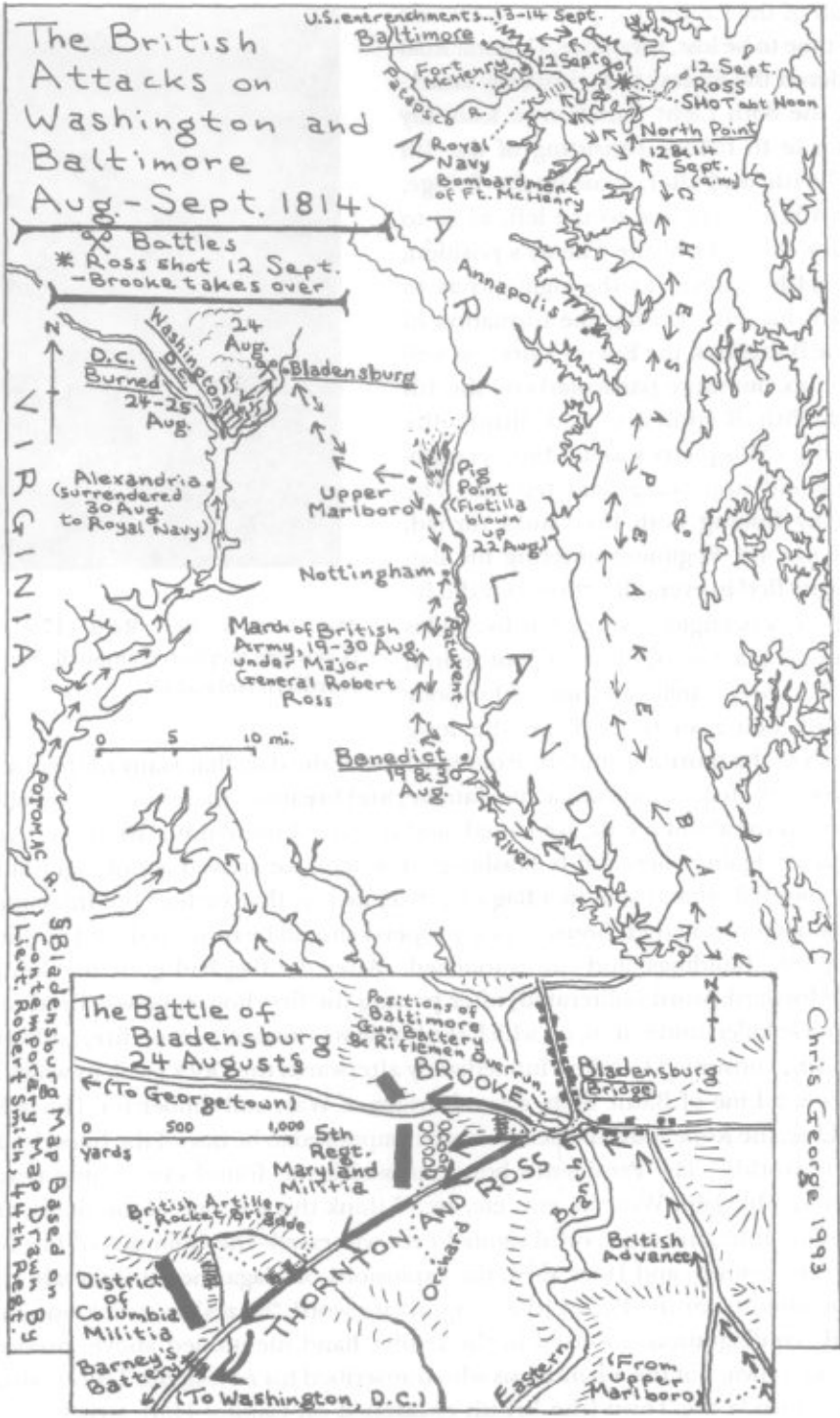
evening.—the scenery very fine, the ships all carrying lights, and all sail crouded, the land very low, and in many parts, only the tops of the Trees can be seen; the shore a white sand. August 16th. At ten at night, anchored off the Island of Tangiers, close to [H.M.S. Tonnant, the flagship of] Admiral [Sir Alexander] Cochrane [commander-in-chief of the combined British naval and army task force]. At nine [a.m. on the 17th?], the Signal was made to weigh, went on board the Tonnant, and saw Admiral Cochrane and General Ross, when I received my Instructions, to be in readiness to land, either this night, or next morning, for Washington, which is about Fifty miles up the River Potomack, which branches from the Chesepeake. Since getting under weigh, our destination has been changed, the Bombs [bombships], and Frigates, going up the Potomac, and the Troop Ships up the Putexent. August 19th. All the Ships anchored, and the Troops ordered into the Boats, landed at a little Village, called Benedict, about nineteen miles up the Patuxent. Bouviacked this night in a wood. On the 20th, every thing being ready, the Army was put in motion, our first operations are to destroy a fleet of Gun boats, consisting of seventeen sail, under the command of the American Commodore Barney, at a town called Nottingham, about twenty miles up the River, whither, all the Launches, and boats of the Fleet go, whilst we proceed by land, with intent of cutting them off from Washington. On our arrival at Nottingham, found they had gone further up the River, to a place called Pig Point, for greater security. On the evening of the 23rd, came in sight of them, when they immediately set fire to the boats, and out of eighteen, seventeen blew up, Commodore Barney, and his men, taking care to retire to Washington, in time. We followed him to a Town called Marlborough, where, we halted for the night, after a dreadful hot day[']s march. Next day 24th Marched for Washington, halted for this night half way. Fell in with the Enemy's Advanced Parties, who retired on seeing us. Next morning before day light, advanced, and arrived at Bladensburg, about eleven in the day, where we found the Enemy strongly posted, on a high hill, on the opposite side of the River, their right flank resting on the high road to Washington, with breast works, a seven Gun battery in their Centre, a large wood with strong Entrenchments, on their left, and a small narrow bridge over the River, by which only three men abreast, can pass at once. They opened their fire, the moment the

evening.—the scenery very fine, the ships all carrying lights, and all sail crouded, the land very low, and in many parts, only the tops of the Trees can be seen; the shore a white sand. August 16th. At ten at night, anchored off the Island of Tangiers, close to [H.M.S. Tonnant, the flagship of] Admiral [Sir Alexander] Cochrane [commander-in-chief of the combined British naval and army task force]. At nine [a.m. on the 17th?], the Signal was made to weigh, went on board the Tonnant, and saw Admiral Cochrane and General Ross, when I received my Instructions, to be in readiness to land, either this night, or next morning, for Washington, which is about Fifty miles up the River Potomack, which branches from the Chesepeake. Since getting under weigh, our destination has been changed, the Bombs [bombships], and Frigates, going up the Potomac, and the Troop Ships up the Putexent. August 19th. All the Ships anchored, and the Troops ordered into the Boats, landed at a little Village, called Benedict, about

head of the Column appeared, there was no time to be lost, therefore, General Ross ordered the Enemy to be instantly attacked, the 85th Light Battalion to lead, my Brigade to follow, consisting of the 4th and 44th, and after, crossing the Bridge, the 4th to form line to the left, so as to attack the right of the Enemy's position, the 44th to form to the right, so as to attack his left. During the formation of these Battalions, the Enemy's fire was well kept up, but more particularly on the 4th and 85th Regiments, and altho', the Enemy's Musquetry was dreadful, yet nothing could stop our gallant fellows. The Enemy finding both his Flanks turned, and the 4th Regiment entering his Battery, he fled in every direction, nor did he stop in Washington, which was five miles from the place of [the] action, but retired thro' it, twelve miles farther. Our poor fellows being so tired, from the long march of the morning, and the excessive heat of the day, that many of them striving to keep up, fell down from actual fatigue, and breathed their last. After following them up for about a mile, we halted, and remained there until five in the evening, when we again proceeded fr Washington, where, we arrived about eight at night, when we halted and sent in a flag of Truce, saying, that such of the Inhabitants as remained quiet in their houses, their property should be respected, and nothing but the public buildings, and stores touched. After the flag had gone in, Genl. Ross rode forward [word obliterated] after passing the first house, he was fired on, and his horse killed under him, on which the house was instantly set on fire, and in about an hour, consumed to ashes, immediately afterwards the Dock yard, in which was a Frigate, a Line of Battle Ship, several Briggs of War, and timber for Thirty Sail of the Line, the Rope walk, the Senate house (supposed to be one of the finest buildings in the world). The President's house, in which was found every thing ready for Dinner, table laid, Wine in, etc., etc, etc. I think this was one of the finest, and, at the same time, the most awful sights I ever witnessed—the Columns of fire issuing from the houses, and Dock yard, the explosions of Magazines at intervals, the sky illuminated from the blazes [the copperplate word "blazes" is struck out and the word "conflagration" inserted in the cruder hand mentioned above, presumably Brooke's own, not the amanuensis who transcribed his notes], the Troops all under Arms outside the Town [the British encamped on Capitol Hill], struck the mind with a something, that can be better conceived than described. Next morning retired a little from the Town, as we could scarce think the Americans (from their



Maj. Gen. Robert Ross (1766–1814).
(Courtesy Stephen Campbell, Rostrevor,
Northern Ireland.)



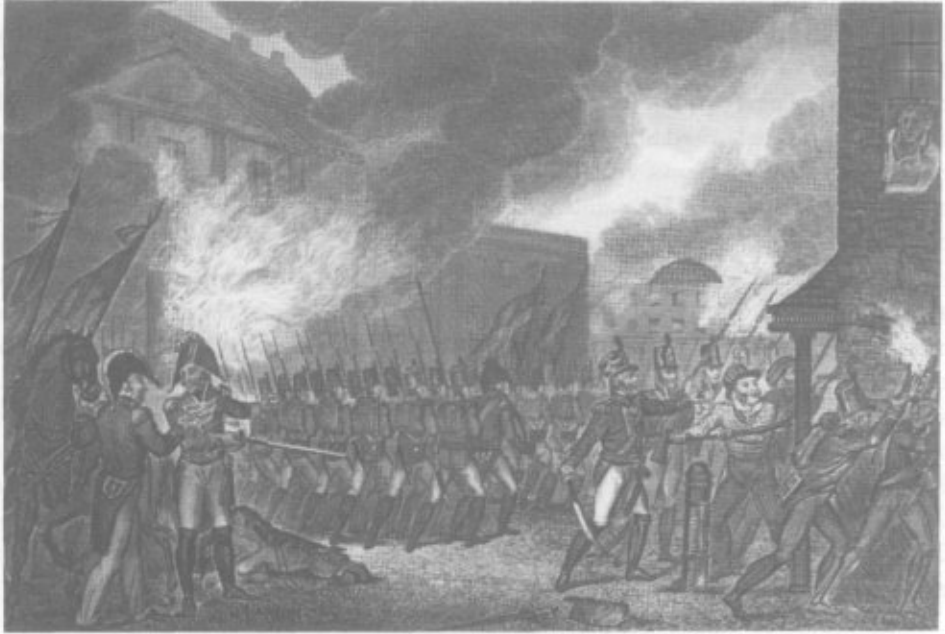
Author's rendering of British campaigns in the Chesapeake, August-September 1814, based on the contemporary map of Lt. Robert Smith, 44th Regiment of Foot.

immense population, and a well trained Artillery) would tamely allow a handful of British Soldiers, to advance thro' the heart of their Country, and burn, & destroy, the Capitol of the United States. Having by the next evening completed the destruction of every thing, we received an order, to march at eight, at night. So fell the Capital of the United States of America, to about Five thousand men, composed of Four British Regiments, viz. 4th, 21st, 44th, and 85th, and a Battalion of Marines, performing a march of Fifty miles, thro' the heart of their country, and returning by the same Road, without being molested, altho' from its being a close, woody country undergrowth [?] very favorable to the Enemy, for annoyance. All this was accomplished between the 19th & 30th August, with the loss of about Three hundred men. To this affair add, the destruction of the Flotilla of Eighteen Gun boats, and six hundred hogsheads of Tobacco. Certainly on the whole, it [was] an affair as fine a thing, as any done during this War, and a sore rub to the Americans, that can never be forgotten. On the 31st Embarked, and remained at the entrance of the Putuxent to take in Water. Sept. 4th. In the evening, General Ross went on board the *Tonnant*, Sir Alexander Cochrane, & sailed for Tangier Island, in the Chesapeake. Sept. the 6th. We sailed for the same Island, where we anchored next evening.⁷

Ross's decision at Bladensburg, as Brooke reports, that the Americans be "instantly attacked" has been criticized as risky. Moreover, British casualties must have been greater because Col. William Thornton of the advance 85th Regiment concentrated the attack solely on the narrow bridge over the eastern branch of the Potomac—across which, as Brooke relates, "only three men abreast" could pass at once—when the river was fordable upstream. Earlier this century, Sir John Fortescue severely criticized Ross's strategy (or lack thereof) at Bladensburg: "The action, trifling though it was, appears to have been ill-managed by Ross, who hurried his troops into action piece-meal, and thus ran great and unnecessary risk of seeing them defeated in detail."⁸

More recently, another British military historian credited Ross's success to the fortuitous facts that three of his key subordinates—Colonel Thornton, Capt. Harry Smith, and Lt. George de Lacy Evans—were to become three of the most successful British generals in the coming decades, and that the British possessed a "comparatively secret weapon" the Americans did not have—the Congreve rocket.⁹ This type of rocket, the device used being a smaller version of those fired by the Royal Navy weeks later at Fort McHenry, was acknowledged even by the British to be notoriously inaccurate, but it quickly panicked the raw militia. At Bladensburg, as later at North Point, the British were unable to follow up their victory and make it total because they had no cavalry.

In his description of the "conflagration" that consumed the capital, Brooke alludes to the burning of the U.S. Navy Yard but neglects to mention (or perhaps did not know) that both the Navy Yard and the bridge over the Potomac were torched by



“Capture of the City of Washington,” 1814, showing General Ross and Admiral Cockburn conferring in the left foreground. From *Rapin’s History of England* (Library of Congress/Francis De C. Hamilton.)

the retreating Americans. Moreover, there are two glaring omissions from his narrative, two disasters that took place 25 August: the accidental explosion at the fort at Greenleaf’s Point, where barrels of powder the British were destroying exploded, killing as many as thirty of Ross’s men and leaving forty-four horribly mutilated; and a sudden late summer storm of hurricane force that for miles around damaged buildings, uprooted trees, and dismasted ships.

The set table at the president’s mansion provides yet another British retelling of this story, although President Madison’s servant, Jean Pierre Sioussa, denied that an American “victory banquet” had been prepared.¹⁰ Gleig relates that Ross and his men “found a dinner-table spread, and covers laid for forty guests. Several kinds of wine in handsome cut-glass decanters were cooling on the sideboard . . . everything in short was ready for the entertainment of a ceremonious party.”¹¹ The usual British story is that, as might be expected, Ross and his party made short work of this food and wine.

Like the Brookes, the Rosses were Protestant planters who came to Ulster in the early 1600s, apparently from either northern England or Scotland. Robert Ross was born in Dublin in 1766, the second of three sons of Maj. David Ross, a veteran of the Seven Years’ War. Robert and his brothers were tutored at home, and he went on to enter Trinity College, Dublin, from which he obtained a bachelor’s degree early in 1789.

Ross began his military career that August, when he was commissioned as an ensign in the 25th Regiment. After transfer to the 19th Regiment, in which he became a major by purchase, he moved in 1799 to the 20th Regiment. It should be noted that both Ross and Brooke, though Irish-born, were attached to English regiments, Ross with the 20th or East Devonshire Regiment, and Brooke with the 44th or East Essex Regiment, in line with a conscious policy of the British high command to provide officers for regiments from regions removed from the source population for the enlisted men.

In the 20th Regiment, Ross's daring and courage were noticed, particularly at the Battle of Maida in Calabria, southern Italy, on 4 July 1806. There, as a colonel of the 20th, he led his men against the French at a decisive moment, thereby sealing the British victory and winning the first of his four gold medals.¹²

Ross's character combined the martial and aesthetic. While his regiment was not on active service, Ross became known as a tough disciplinarian, constantly keeping his men busy with exercises and maneuvers. Yet, he was liked by the troops, gaining their affection on Malta by standing up to the local authorities when they got into trouble with civilians. He was proficient in Spanish and French and was also an accomplished violinist. A Belfast archive letter to Ross praises him and the exploits of the British army in the Pyrennees: "I assure you when I read [in] the Gazette of the 'Pyrennean fights', I felt very proud at having played *Allo* to so distinguished a 'Violinist Primo.' God send you safe to us again, sound in every limb, especially the *fiddle hand* and *Bow Arm*."¹³

Ross was promoted to major general in June 1813, received another gold medal for his part in the Battle of Vittoria, and had two horses shot out from under him when the 20th was involved in fighting Soult's army beyond Pamplona, for which he was singled out by Wellington for his courageous example to his troops. A neck wound he received 27 February 1814 placed him on invalid status until he went on the expedition against the United States.

Ross's wound badly frightened his wife, the former Elizabeth Catherine Glascock, who, whenever she could, remained close to the war front where her husband was engaged.¹⁴ She mounted a mule to travel eighty or ninety miles from Bilbao on the north coast of Spain to St. Jean-de-Luz in France, braving, as Ross later related in a letter to his brother-in-law, rain, hail, and mud in the snowy Pyrennees in order to nurse him back to health. The wound was more severe than he admitted (it later was apparent to John S. Skinner, U.S. Agent for Prisoner Exchange, months later when he and Francis Scott Key went to intercede for the release of Dr. William Beanes; on dining on board ship with Ross and other British officers, Skinner noticed that Ross, whom he said was the "most reserved gentleman at the table," had "on the left side of his neck a yet uncatrized wound"¹⁵). In a modern army it would probably have excused him from active service until healed.

It must have been a stunning blow to Elizabeth Ross for her husband to leave on the expedition. Yet it was a duty and an honor he could not refuse. His letters to her written on board ship en route to and while in the Chesapeake are largely an attempt to mollify her fears.

Following the reembarkation of the British troops after the march from Washington, Ross wrote two letters that are in the Belfast archive. The longer of the two, written 1 September 1814, was to his wife, whom he called “Eliza” or “Ly.”¹⁶ A shorter letter with similar contents was written the following day, 2 September, to his sister-in-law, Maria Ross,¹⁷ wife of his older brother, the Reverend Thomas Ross, with whom Elizabeth Ross stayed in Clifton, Bristol, after she returned from France.

The letter of 1 September, written in a barely legible, apparently hasty scrawl (as is the letter of the following day), begins with a long passage in which the general writes “with Feelings of the most acute Misery” because of his wife’s expressed unhappiness in two letters she had written in June from Bordeaux. “I declare to you that were it in my power to leave the Army I would without hesitation fly to you. . . . This War cannot last long. We then meet my Ly *never* again to separate.”

Only after this long preamble intended to mollify Elizabeth does Ross mention the momentous events of the previous ten days:

My Ly will surely be pleased to find that our Arms have been in this part of the World crowned with a Success that I had no reason to expect. Indeed at the Moment that the Attempt was made upon the City of Washington, I felt an apprehension of the Consequences of Failure, originating from my Instructions, which bound me not to attempt anything that *might be attended* with the want of Success. However, Fortune favored us and we succeeded beyond our most sanguine Expectations, having defeated the Army of Genl. Winder in the neighbourhood of Washington and entered the City on the Night of the Action. I am much, indeed principally, indebted for the Success of the Business to the original suggestion of Admiral Cockburn and to the persevering Industry and Exertions of Mr. Evans, my Qtr. Mastr. Genl., whose Conduct is beyond Praise. The Army had considerable Fatigue to undergo in the performance of a March of 50 miles and back again through the most thickly planted Country I have met with, the roads in general Sandy in many places much as we passed over between Bayonne and Bourdeaux. The Weather being extremely hot, the Fatigue became the greater. The Gazette will give you a Detail which from the hurry I am in I literally have not time to write to you. You will be sorry to hear poor Thornton has been wounded. He is doing well, I am happy to think; we were forced to leave the wounded who could not be moved at Bladensburg. I trust all our Differences with the Yankees will be shortly settled. That Wish is, I believe, very prevalent with them. They feel strongly the Disgrace of having had their Capital taken by a handful of Men and blame very generally a Government which went to War without the Means or the Abilities to carry it on. There is a general Complaint of the Stagnation of Trade as much from the Effect of their Regulations as from the Difficulties we oppose to its being carried on. The Injury sustained by the City of Washington in the Destruction of its public Buildings has been immense and must disgust the Country with a Government that has left

the Capital unprotected. You will be happy to hear that my Health continues pretty good. I feel rather oppressed by the Heat, but while on Shore, from great occupation, did not mind it. . . . How anxiously I look for July News from England which will convey the Joyful Tidings of your having reached Clifton where I long to hear of your being settled. Capt. Smith who goes home with my Dispatch will call upon you at Clifton and will give you an Acct. of our Proceedings. . . .

Writing on 2 September to his sister-in-law in Clifton, Ross said:

“Our little operation here will no doubt appear brilliant and so, not to speak too *partially of our own feats*, it ought. It was never expected that an Army of 4,000 men could march with little or no Difficulty, take and have at its Mercy the Capital of the United States. Our Success on the Occasion would make me probably one of the happiest soldiers in the Service were my Joy not completely damped by the melancholy Letters I have received from my dearest Eliza. They have given me more Affliction than the Success of our Operations have afforded satisfaction. . . .”

In both letters Ross mentions the illness of his aide, Capt. Thomas Falls, telling Ly on 1 September:

“You will be sorely afflicted to hear that poor Falls has fallen into a State of Melancholy Derangement. His Disease is connected with some of the Occurrences that have taken place with this Army and has originated in an over anxiety. It is a Case that gives me as you may suppose much Affliction—he is going home in the Frigate that takes my Dispatches.”

After Washington, Falls returned to England with Capt. Harry Smith, who carried Ross's dispatch. Captain Smith briefed the Prince Regent and Lord Bathurst, the British secretary of war. Later, Smith and his wife traveled to Bath to see Elizabeth Ross, but such was the time taken by transatlantic travel of the day, at the moment they met, unknown to them, Ross was dead. As Smith recalled in his *Autobiography*: “We found Mrs. Ross in the highest spirits at the achievement of our arms under her husband. Poor thing! at that very moment he was in a soldier's bloody grave.”¹⁸

We give now Colonel Brooke's narrative of the British attempt to capture Baltimore. As Brooke relates, Ross assigned him to superintend the disembarkation of troops for that campaign, the details of which Brooke left out of his official dispatch to Lord Bathurst.¹⁹ Brooke's diary between his account of the attack on Washington and his version of the events of 11–14 September consists of transcriptions of official dispatches on the capture of the capital and Alexandria's surrender to a British naval force that sailed up the Potomac.

September 11th. Anchored off Baltimore. At nine in the morning, Signal made to Cook two days Provisions. September 12th. At 4 o'clock in the morning, landed on the right bank of the Potapses [Patapsco] River, about thirteen miles from Baltimore. On my seeing General Ross he told me, the Enemy were fortifying themselves about 3 miles from us. As soon as the Light Troops, and first Brigade had disembarked, Gen. Ross advanced with the Light Troops, leaving me to superintend the disembarkation, with orders to advance, when the 21st Regiment, and four six pounders were on shore. General Ross, on advancing to the place where he expected to have found the Enemy, was surprized to find they had abandoned the place, altho' they had cut a ditch across the neck of land, from the Potapses to the back River, here he took a few Dragoons. The Guns having been got on shore about eight o'clock, and the heat dreadful, I determined altho' the 21st Regiment had not disembarked, to advance, in order to get under cover of a wood, as the men were falling in Twentys, from the heat of the sun. [Sentence of nearly a full line here erased] I rode forward, to report the circumstance to General Ross, whom I found with Admiral Cockburne, about a mile and an half in advance, sitting on the steps of a house, where it was agreed, that I should wait 'till the remainder of the Troops came up, and then the General wished me to advance, as he was anxious to gain a certain point, that day, in order to enable him to advance in the morning, on Baltimore. On my return I found the 21st Regiment, and Guns had come up, so instantly commenced my March, but had not proceeded two hundred yards, when the Assistant Quarter Master General [Lt. George de Lacy Evans], came Galloping up to me, and told me, General Ross was wounded, and he feared mortally. On this, I rode as fast as I could to the front, and at about two miles I found our Advanced Light Troops halted, who informed me, that the Enemy were drawn up in an opposite wood, from the one we were then in, and on my going to a rising ground, in order to reconnoitre, I found him strongly posted, he then commenced a heavy fire of Cannon. In this situation, [I] had but little time for thought, knowing nothing of the intentions of the General, and without a single person to consult with, I determined on an instant attack, so ordered two six pounders to advance, and open on him, in order to engage his attention, whilst I was reconnoitring & waiting for the coming up of the Troops. I then ordered the Light Troops to cover the front of the Enemy's line, keeping out of fire, as much as possible. I found him strongly posted in a Wood, and behind a strong pailing, covering him almost from my sight, with six or eight Guns, and a flat of about five hundred yards, between us. I now saw there was no time to be lost, the Enemy having about twelve thousand men [American forces numbered slightly more than three thousand], whilst I could not have more than about three thousand, so I ordered the first Brigade to wheel off the road to the right, and after extending as far as they could, to form line; at the same time ordering the 4th Regiment, under the command of Major Faunce, to take ground to the right, and gain the Enemy's left flank; and as soon as he had done so, to form line, Advance, and turn him; whilst the first Brigade, and Light Infantry forced his Centre, the left brigade keeping the road, and as soon as clear of the Wood, to form line, and either get round the

Enemy's right flank, or force him. In this order we advanced, the Enemy opening a well directed, and destructive fire during our advance, in Line. His fire, when within about an hundred yards, was so destructive, and thinning our Ranks so much, that I ordered the whole Line to [here inserted in another hand: "advance in Quick time"] which was done in a most [inserted: "steady and determined"] manner [several words erased], in hopes of bringing him to the Bayonet, but in less than ten minutes, he ran in every direction, leaving a number of Killed, and Wounded, and two pieces of Cannon on the Field. After driving him thro' the Woods, and seeing him in full Retreat within five miles of Baltimore, no ammunition, or heavy guns up, I determined to halt for the night, as the men were much fatigued—the Enemy's loss on this occasion, amounted to Five hundred Killed & Wounded, and Prisoners about a thousand [the United States claimed 24 men killed, 139 wounded, and 50 taken prisoner]. Next morning, at day light advanced, and about night [9 A.M.] came in sight of Baltimore. Found the Enemy strongly posted, on a high hill, a regular ditch, and strong Redoubts, in short saw it was impossible to attack them, so took up a position in his front, within half Musquet shot of him. I then reconnoitred him, and found his left was not so secure, and that by making a night attack, I might gain his flank, and get into his rear, so came to a resolution of attacking him in two Columns, whilst the third was to make a feint on his right. At night after every thing was ready, and orders given to the different leaders of Divisions, I received the following letter, from Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, thro' Admiral Cockburn, who was serving with me on shore. "My Dr. Admiral. It is impossible for the Ships to render you any assistance, the Town is so far retired within the Forts, it is for Colonel Brooke to consider, under such circumstances, whether he has force sufficient to defeat so large a number, as it is said the Enemy have collected, within Say Twenty thousand strong, and to take the Town, without this can be done, it will be only throwing the men's lives away, and prevent us, from going on upon other Services. At any rate, a very considerable loss must ensue, and as the Enemy is daily gaining strength, his loss, let it be ever so great, cannot be equally felt. Ever yours, Sincerely Alexander Cochrane.["] This was a blow not easy to explain. It would have been presumptuous in one, to say, I could take such a force without great loss, more especially, having only about Four thousand men—(All my hopes were in a moment blated)—If I took the place, I should have been the greatest man in England. If I lost, My Military Character was gone for ever. By the advice of Admiral Cockburne, to whom I am much indebted—I therefore determined, on retiring before day light, as far as the ground on which I had defeated the Enemy, the preceding day, and there wait some hours, in the hopes he would follow, and give me an opportunity, of attacking him to more advantage, and after defeating him, of being able to follow him, into his works, but the lesson he got the day before, had taught him to respect us, and think himself well off, by being allowed to remain in possession of his City, and entrenchments. After remaining about three hours on this ground, and exchanging all his prisoners that were so badly wounded, that they could not be moved on board Ship, for those of ours, taken at Washington, I retired about three miles further, for the night, sending to the Admiral, requesting



“Death of Genl Ross at Baltimore.” Engraving after an original painting by Alonzo Chappel, published by Johnson, Fry & Co., New York, 1859. (Maryland Historical Society.)

[this word struck out and “a request” inserted] boats might be ready for us in the morning.

Next morning, the 14th at day light, finding the Enemy did not attempt to come near us, the Troops marched down to the Beach, and Embarked, without leaving a single wounded man, or a Military Store, to the Value of a Musquet stock behind. Having seen the last of the Army in the Boats, went on board His Majesty’s Ship Tonant. . . .²⁰

The house where Brooke reports he met Ross and Cockburn sitting on the steps may have been one of several houses in the neighborhood. The distance Brooke gives (“about a mile and a half in advance”), if accurate, seems to indicate either the Todd or Shaw house. The Todd house, one of the first houses built on Patapsco Neck in the seventeenth century, reputedly with bricks brought from England, was burned by the British on their way back to the ships. The burning was probably ordered because the British knew the Americans had used the upper stories of the house as an observation point. However, some local writers have said the burning was ordered because the British knew the house was Presbyterian (presumably from

inscriptions on gravestones in the family burial plot). One author states, "Going in, the commander was Presbyterian, coming back, Colonel Brooke, a Methodist, was in charge."²¹ This statement would have been a surprise to the two British commanders, because Ross and Brooke both were members of the established Church of Ireland, an Episcopal body allied to the Church of England, and not only was Ross's elder brother a Church of Ireland clergyman, but the general is said to have given the land in his native Rostrevor to build a new church for the Church of Ireland.²²

Soon after noon, Ross was riding ahead with the light troops through a densely wooded section. The casualties the British incurred three weeks earlier made for a more hazardous situation than during the advance from Benedict: key officers in the 85th Regiment who led the advance then had been killed or seriously wounded, and the British still lacked the cavalry support that could give them better intelligence of the situation up ahead.

A letter of 17 September from Admiral Cockburn to the Reverend Mr. Ross, describes the event: "The fatal Blow was struck soon after mid-day of the 12th Inst. by a Musket Ball which passed thro' his right Arm and entered his right Breast. He lived about two Hours after receiving the Wound, during which time he only Expressed Anxiety on account of his Family and seemed to suffer little or no bodily Pain." Cockburn adds that Ross died "on his way to the water-side for re-embarkation."²³

Cockburn's letter refutes statements that "Ross was killed instantly."²⁴ Was he riding alone when shot?²⁵ Capt. Edward Crofton, who led the naval brigade at North Point, wrote to Ross's mother-in-law on 7 August 1815, enclosing a lock of the general's hair and stating, "It was my fate to be with him when he received his fatal wound." Crofton also spoke of "the impressive lesson which I received in viewing the dying moments of a Christian Hero. His last words were Oh! my beloved Wife & family."²⁶

Brooke's comments over the dilemma he faced in whether to attack the Baltimore defensive works—"If I took the place, I should have been the greatest man in England. If I lost, My Military Character was gone forever"—are private thoughts that Brooke recorded in his diary but did not express, not surprisingly, in his official dispatch.

If Brooke, instead of withdrawing, had decided to attack the city, it is quite possible that, as John S. Skinner later wrote, the British "would have met with a foretaste of what they afterwards encountered at New Orleans,"²⁷ i.e., they would have experienced carnage on the same order as on the morning of 8 January 1815, when 2,057 British perished (compared with only 13 Americans) when they tried to attack the defensive works under the command of Andrew Jackson.

A draft letter from General Ross's widow written 24 April 1815 shows that she requested that Lord Bathurst ask the Prince Regent to award the the unique name "Ross of Bladensburg" to the Ross family, in memory of her husband's greatest victory.²⁸ A misspelling ("Bladensberg") appears both on the original patent of arms and on the monument in the Protestant church at Rostrevor. The new crest awarded

to the family shows an arm rising from a castellated coronet, brandishing a Stars and Stripes with a broken staff.

The last male Ross of Bladensburg, the grandson of Robert Ross, was Sir John Foster George Ross of Bladensburg, who converted to Catholicism in the 1880s, served as aide-de-camp to two lords-lieutenant of Ireland, and secretary to two missions to the Holy See. Sir John was a noted horticulturalist, raising some exotic plants on the estate of his house "Topsy Turvy" or Rostrevor House, which is now a convent of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles.

NOTES

1. The letters of Maj. Gen. Robert Ross, written on board ship en route to and in the Chesapeake June–September 1814. See Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (hereinafter PRONI) D.2004/1A/3/1-9 and PRONI D.2004/1A/1. The author acknowledges permission given to him to quote from the family letters of General Ross by the deputy keeper of records, PRONI. Rosemary, Viscountess Brookeborough, and the deputy keeper of records, PRONI, have granted permission to quote from the diary of Colonel Brooke. The author also thanks Dr. D. S. MacNeice, FRICS, director, and Patrick Fitzgerald of ars both on the original patent of arms and on the monument in the Protestant church at Rostrevor. The new crest awarded to the family shows an arm rising from a castellated coronet, brandishing a Stars and Stripes with a broken staff.

The last male Ross of Bladensburthe Ulster American Folk Park, Omagh, County Tyrone, for providing copies of the pages of the Colonel Brooke's diary; thanks also Col. Henry Brooke, MC, Lt. Col. J. A. Every-Clayton, USAR, Ret., Robert Linden, Francis de C. Hamilton, and Scott S. Sheads for invaluable help. Walter Lord and Paul Plamann granted access to Mr. Lord's notes for *The Dawn's Early Light*, archived at Fort McHenry, Baltimore.

2. Diary of Col. (later Lt. Gen.) Arthur Brooke of Brookeborough, PRONI D.3004/D/2.

3. Entry on Lt. Gen. Sir Arthur Brooke, KCB (1772–1843) in Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee, eds., *The Dictionary of National Biography* (22 vols.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1917 [repr. 1967–68]), 2:1324.

4. G. R. Gleig, *The Campaigns of the British Army at Washington and New Orleans, 1814–1815* (London: John Murray, 1861).

5. Walter Lord, *The Dawn's Early Light* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972).

6. Brooke diary, pp. 1–2.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 161–67. Contrary to some published statements, Brooke's older brother, Lt. Col. Francis Brooke, likely did not lead the 4th Regiment at Bladensburg.

8. J. W. Fortescue, *A History of the British Army* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1920), pp. 144–45.

9. G. N. Wood, "Burning Washington: The Lighter Side of Warfare," *Army Quarterly*, 104 (1973–4): 352–57. Major General Wood analyzes Ross's tactics in a

bizarrely titled contribution from the U.S. perspective; see also W. A. Maguire, "Major General Ross and the Burning of Washington," *The Irish Sword*, 14 (Winter 1980): 117-28.

10. "Mr. John Sioussa, Mr. Madison's porter, a respectable Frenchman, who still survives, pronounces all this account of food a fable. There was, he says, no preparation for dinner or eating, beyond a small quantity of meat in the kitchen, which he found there after the house was burned, still unconsumed. If there had been food, he says the British would not have eaten it, such was their fear of poison" (Charles J. Ingersoll, *Historical Sketch of the Second War between the United States of America, and Great Britain. Vol. 2, Embracing the Events of 1814* [Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1849], p. 187).

11. Gleig, *Campaigns of the British Army*, pp. 71-72.

12. *Dictionary of National Biography*, 17:274-77.

13. W. Waggett to Robert Ross, 13 October 1813, PRONI D.2004/1A/1/4.

14. [Sir John Foster George Ross of Bladensburg,] "The Capture of Washington by the English, 1814," *The Genealogical Magazine: A Journal of Family History, Heraldry, and Pedigrees*, 1 (May 1897-April 1898):229-36.

15. John S. Skinner, "Incidents of the War of 1812," *Baltimore Sun*, 29 May 1849 (MS. 1846, MdHS). Skinner mistakenly attributes Ross's wound to the "bloody battle of Toulouse"—though at the time of that battle (10 April 1814), Ross was still convalescing.

16. Robert Ross to Elizabeth Ross, 1 September 1814, PRONI D.2004/1A/3/8.

17. Robert Ross to Mrs. T. Ross, 2 September 1814, PRONI D.2004/1A/3/9.

18. G. C. Moore Smith, ed., *The Autobiography of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Smith Baronet of Aliwal on the Sutlej G.C.B.* (2 vols.; New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1902), 1:217.

19. Brooke to Lord Bathurst, 17 September 1814, printed in *Gentleman's Magazine*, 84 (Dec. 1814): 581-83.

20. Brooke diary, pp. 180-87.

21. Buzz Chriest, *Defenders Trail Hikers Guide* (Dundalk, Md.: Dundalk-Patapsco Neck Historical Society, n.d.), p. 2.

22. Author's research in Rostrevor and Brookeborough, Northern Ireland.

23. Cockburn to Thomas Ross, 17 September 1814, PRONI D.2004/1/4. Cockburn to Cochrane, 15 September 1814, printed in *Gentleman's Magazine*, 84 (Dec. 1814): 584-85.

24. Frank A. Cassell, "Response to Crisis: Baltimore in 1814," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 66 (1971): 261-87. Skinner in "Incidents of the War of 1812" says Ross gave the admiral "a locket from his bosom, saying, give that to my dear wife." Skinner says Cockburn told him, "My impression is, that if [Ross] could have been borne easily on a good litter to the boat, instead of being jolted down to it in a cart, he might possibly have been saved."

25. See Lord, *The Dawn's Early Light*, p. 262.

26. Edward Crofton to Mrs. Glascock, 7 August 1815, PRONI D.2004/1/4.

27. Skinner, "Incidents of the War of 1812." Skinner describes the plan to capture Baltimore: "With an uncommonly favorable coincidence of fair wind with a high

tide, which then existed, and such as rarely occurs, the Admiral expected to silence [Fort McHenry], pass up some light frigates, and then, turning his guns upon the entrenchments, drive away its defences on Loudenslager's hill, and so let the army in, or up to a position from which the town might be laid under contribution or burnt." Skinner attributes the city's saving to the sinking of ships across the channel between Fort McHenry (Whetstone Point) and the Lazaretto, which was done on the orders of "that meritorious patriot, Commodore [John] Rodgers, . . . after the British hove in sight."

28. Elizabeth Ross to Lord Bathurst, draft letter, 24 April 1815. Maguire, "Major General Ross and the Burning of Washington," places this letter in PRONI D.2004/1/4, but one cannot find the letter there, and it may remain in private hands.

Race, Power, and Money in Antebellum Baltimore: Mary Ridgely's Thousand-Dollar Note

FRANK TOWERS

Social mobility via found money played a part in many pieces of nineteenth-century popular fiction, ranging from Mark Twain's "Ten Thousand Pound Note" to Horatio Alger's waif returning cash to its rightful owner and then receiving even greater riches as a reward. These works suggested that windfall money was the last-ditch hope in the pursuit of the American Dream: the possibility of winning a lottery or stumbling across money in the street helped even the bereft to believe that somehow the door to riches and ease might open for them. In 1860 a free black woman, Mary Ridgely, petitioned the Baltimore City Council for permission to keep a \$1,000 bank note she claimed to have found more than twenty years earlier. Her case illustrated how subtly the legal and cultural subordination of blacks in antebellum Baltimore altered the outcome of a common motif of American popular culture.

Ridgely's story began on what she described as "the morning of a very cold day in the early spring of the year 1838," probably March 1st, when passing along Sharp Street, between Market and German streets in west-central Baltimore. She had been on her way out to get shavings to start a fire in a small shop she kept on the corner of German and Liberty streets.¹ Near a water pump she picked up a bank note wrapped in newspaper. At first she thought it was an ornament made out of ribbon of the sort commonly worn by the ladies at that time and presumably dropped in the street the night before. Returning to her shop, Ridgely hung the snow-dampened note over the fire to dry. She was unsure what the three zeroes and a one meant. At this point Harriet Wernel, a white woman, entered Ridgely's shop. Ridgely trusted Wernel enough to discuss the note with her, but Wernel could no more understand the numbers than Ridgely. On the white woman's advice Ridgely decided to take the note to Josiah Cobb, a Massachusetts-born grocer and provisioner who kept a store a few doors away from Ridgely's.²

Taking an empty jug with her—planning to buy some ham and molasses in addition to asking about the note—Ridgely walked the short distance down Liberty Street. Inside Cobb's store she showed the note to a clerk named Josiah Harlan, who called

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his employer from the back room and his daily newspaper. As the first literate person to see the note that day, Cobb quickly realized its value and remarked to Harlan and Ridgely that he had not seen such a note in a long time. Ridgely asked about the note's value. According to Wernel, Cobb told Ridgely that, though "it is a good note, there is some mistake about it. You must call again. I will advertise it." Cobb never told Ridgely the note's value, nor did he return it, despite Ridgely's repeated requests.³

Cobb disputed Ridgely's version of events. It was not Mary Ridgely, he said, but the twelve-year-old son of Hannah Rogers, a white Liberty Street seamstress and in Cobb's words a "lady of respectability," who brought the thousand-dollar note to his store that morning in the company of an unidentified "colored woman." The colored woman had given the note to Rogers in paying for repairs to a bonnet. Rogers had sent her son out to change what she thought was a ten dollar bill and buy some coffee. After unsuccessful attempts at other stores, Cobb said, the Rogers boy had come to him. Cobb handled a heavy volume of business and had the cash on hand to change what in 1838 truly was a large denomination bill (a day's wage for a common laborer in the 1830s was only \$1; even a \$10 bill would have been a rare sight). Cobb's clerk, suspecting that the bill was counterfeit, had called his employer.⁴

In the Cobb account, which he set down in the pages of the *Sun* in 1842, the store owner had asked several questions about the note's origins. "Receiving various answers untenable and contradictory,—with an utter ignorance as to its value," Cobb "thought it his duty to retain the note." In Cobb's version its finder "immediately, so soon as she heard there was something wrong about the note, disappeared and has not been heard of since." Cobb's story hinted that the unidentified colored finder of the note either had stolen the money or knew that it might be stolen and fled in fear of authorities.⁵

Cobb's narration of the affair also played on prevailing assumptions about female competence and honesty. According to Cobb, Hannah Rogers feared questions about the note's origins and stated that, "Mr. Cobb, if anything be wrong with the note which my son brought here, I have nothing to do with it further than to receive the price for trimming her bonnet. The note belongs to this woman." Cobb claimed that, "Mrs. Rogers congratulated herself upon the circumstance of its having fallen into other hands than hers, as in case of difficulty arising out of it, she should not know how to proceed, being, as she termed it, 'but a lone woman.'" Rogers' denial of ownership reflected a similar fear of being connected with stolen property. As an established merchant Cobb had less to fear from public suspicions about the found money; to bolster his story he used conventional assumptions about how low-income people of either race and gender would react to the hint of criminal charges.⁶

Cobb advertised the note in local newspapers the month after he received the money. When there turned up no claimant who could correctly describe the bill or its value, he deposited the note and began collecting interest. Meanwhile, in late 1838, Hannah Rogers filed suit in Baltimore County court to gain or regain

ownership of the note. Key to Cobb's claim was a set of notes that he claimed to have composed the day he received the money and had his clerks witness. According to Cobb these notes proved his ownership. Yet he refused to turn them over to authorities—either at the first, inconclusive hearing in February 1839 or at two subsequent official investigations in 1842 and 1855, “giving as a reason that other parties might get the description of the note and thus set up a fictitious claim.” Rogers's side of the story has been lost along with the 1839 court documents. Her argument was substantial enough to persuade the court in 1842 to rule that the found money and accruing interest belonged in trust in the city treasury until the note's rightful owner appeared.⁷

This ruling did not convince Mary Ridgely to give up her own claim. She made repeated personal appeals to Cobb to return the money or at least corroborate her story of being the original finder. Failing in these requests, Ridgely obtained the services of a white lawyer, Henry Webster, and in 1855 petitioned the city council for the money then being held in the city treasury. At that hearing the council's committee on claims carefully considered Webster's written version of events surrounding the note's discovery in 1838, a statement (drawing on Cobb's *Sun* account), which seemed to establish Ridgely's claim once and for all. At first, Ridgely's efforts won the support of prominent whites. Reporting on Ridgely's “curious claim” in early February, the *Republican and Argus* newspaper argued that, “the sum, it is to be hoped will be paid over to the poor old woman without delay, as she is certainly entitled to it, whilst the Corporation is without any claim whatsoever.” On 27 February one committee member, Charles Kraft, declared himself favorably disposed to Ridgely's petition and asked the council to approve it.⁸

But the committee summoned Ridgely, who no doubt feared as well as welcomed the opportunity to tell her story in the richly decorated chambers. As a person of color, she stood in an ambiguous position. Maryland laws placed a wide range of encumbrances on free blacks. They had the right to file suit in city court and petition the city council, as did Ridgely. Yet they were barred from presenting evidence except in cases involving African-Americans where other testimony was lacking. Adding to this liability, Ridgely in this critical moment committed a tactical error. Apparently unaware that her lawyer had introduced a written account of events in March 1838, Ridgely proceeded to contradict and raise so many questions about it that she undermined her case and set the stage for a powerful counterattack. Cobb and Hannah Rogers's son, A. M. Rogers (who in 1855 was an up-and-coming lawyer in the city), next appeared before the claims committee and in *sworn* testimony demolished Ridgely. The committee concluded that her oral statement conflicted “very materially with her written statements.” The petitioner, the committee reported,

(aided by counsel) has not been able to impeach the testimony of these gentlemen; or cause the committee to doubt the truth of their statements.

We can come to but one conclusion: namely that Mary Ridgely, the claimant, is not entitled to the sum of \$1,081 as claimed by her in her petition.⁹

The Committee's ruling rested on Ridgely's contradiction of Webster's submitted statement and the testimony against her by two "gentlemen."

Ridgely persisted. Five years later, then ninety years of age, she again petitioned the city, this time with the help of Webster but also of Henry P. Brooks, a prominent Baltimore lawyer and unsuccessful Democratic congressional candidate in the 1850s. In this final effort to gain the found money, Ridgely's lawyers explained that Webster's written statement in 1855 had been intended to convince the claims committee to subpoena Cobb's memoranda on the bank note. Ridgely's attorneys also charged the committee with ruling on the petition before all the evidence had been considered. By this time Webster knew the case in all its tedious detail; Brooks carried a great deal of clout in city politics. The pair filed seventeen exhibits and entered corroborating testimony from Harriet Wernel and Elizabeth Roney.¹⁰ Ridgely also obtained character references from William M. Ellicott, a successful commission merchant who in 1860 owned more than \$2,000 in real estate and employed three domestic servants (two of them free black women), his wife Sarah, and their daughter Sarah A. Ellicott. The Ellicotts could testify to Ridgely's "good character and veracity, she having been employed in their family for some years as a servant. . . ." More importantly, the Ellicott's swore "that the first time she met with a member of the family after the occurrence, she spoke of finding a bank note, and has consistently continued to tell the same story ever since."¹¹

Unwilling to yield, Cobb, then sixty-four, again told his version of events. Hannah Rogers had died sometime before 1855, but her son again testified in Cobb's behalf. As a new witness, Cobb introduced William Morris, a free black who in 1838 had been employed to sweep out Cobb's store (he could lawfully testify against Ridgely). Cobb, Rogers, and Morris all agreed that the woman who brought the note to Rogers was not Mary Ridgely. Morris stated that the finder was "low size, with dark, rough skin and young looking." Rogers told the committee that "the colored woman" who went with his mother to Cobb's was "a mulatto" and not a "black woman" (in the Old South's racial hierarchy "colored" people often were of mixed black and white parentage; Baltimore whites frequently used the term to refer to all persons of African-American descent). Ridgely was well-known in the neighborhood and had been familiar to Cobb "for some years." She was "black"—and much older than the twenty-to-thirty-year-old woman that Cobb and his supporters recalled.¹²

The committee in 1860 could not determine the rightful owner based on this testimony, yet it proved much more sympathetic to Ridgely than earlier. It finally forced Cobb to reveal his memoranda on the bank note only to discover that, "there is nothing in said paper as to whom the note was received from, nor anything to assist the committee in deciding as to the justice of Mary Ridgely's claim."¹³ The committee's explanation for a compromise resolution clearly showed the importance of race and social status as well as admissible evidence in reaching a decision.

Mr. Cobb is an old and respected merchant, and his evidence is most positive

on the subject. . . . On the other hand, Mary Ridgely, although now a feeble and very old woman, tells a straightforward story with all apparent truthfulness, and in nearly all the important particulars is corroborated by two white witnesses, Mrs. Wernell and Mrs. Roney. She also produces letters from old and well-known citizens, testifying to her good character and veracity.¹⁴

Additional testimony from prominent whites like Ellicott convinced the city council that Ridgely's claim had to be given equal weight to Cobb's.¹⁵

The claims committee did not grant Ridgely title to the \$1080 in the city treasury. Instead it resolved that the city should pay her \$60 a year "for the term of her natural life," the amount to be paid in quarterly installments of \$15 with the first payment beginning 10 October, six days after the hearing. As a condition to the settlement, the committee ordered Ridgely to "relinquish . . . all right and title that she may possess, both for herself and her heirs, to the amount of money now on deposit in the city treasury." Fifteen dollars every four months for the rest of a ninety-year-old's life seems a cheap price in exchange for rights to \$1000 in principal. Yet Ridgely lost even this paltry sum when the city council voted indefinitely to postpone consideration of the resolution.¹⁶

Ridgely's difficulties were hardly remarkable, given the conditions in which free African-Americans lived in pre-Civil War Baltimore. But her petition illustrates how the limitations on free African-Americans in antebellum Baltimore affected even something as banal as finding money in the street. The rightful owner, or more to the point, the rightful finder of the note, cannot be determined by the available records. In 1860 Ridgely and her lawyers emphasized age and poverty in making her plea for the thousand dollars: "she is now very old and feeble and wholly unable to support herself." Ridgely then owned no property and lived as a boarder in the home of David Jones, a thirty-six-year-old black man who worked as a porter and headed a family of five. His wife Anna supplemented their meager savings of \$100 by washing clothes.¹⁷

The conflicting stories of Ridgely and Cobb agree that a woman other than Rogers found the money. Rogers seized upon the alleged flight of the original finder to argue that she, as the person to whom the note was first given as payment, was the legal owner. At the very least Rogers succeeded in her publicly stated wish that the money "be placed beyond the possibility of any contingency that time might bring about it." Like Ridgely, Rogers ended her life as a propertyless boarder in the home of another family.¹⁸

Unlike Ridgely, Cobb did not need the money to survive. In 1860 he owned \$30,000 in real and personal property and told the city council that, "from the beginning" he had "disclaimed all ownership of the note." His statement in 1860 expressed regret "that he even mentioned the amount of the note," for "if he had not done so, he would have never heard anything more about the matter. . . ." His friends blamed him for so doing, and "he had lost a thousand dollars by having done so." His steadfast refusal to produce his memorandum of March 1838, which ultimately proved inconclusive, and his seizure of the note the minute he saw it,

leave no doubt that he did what he could to gain control of the money. After four years of legal battles, Cobb in 1842 concluded that the note “fully deserves a scorching rebuke, if not doom of greater affliction, for the many bickerings, jealousies, and heartburnings it has engendered. . . .”¹⁹

Cobb and Rogers’s open exploitation of African-American illiteracy served as one example of how Ridgely’s experiences reflected broader patterns of racial discrimination. Whether or not Ridgely truly found the money, no one disputed the fact that an illiterate African-American woman was the original finder. Cobb, Rogers, and the committee on claims never questioned the ethics of white store owners claiming ownership of a note that obviously had been gained from a colored woman under false pretenses. The note’s finder had very likely grown up in Baltimore, where she had been barred from public schools. Ridgely lost the note because of her confusion as to its value.

Cobb’s word carried more weight than Ridgely’s for obvious reasons of race, gender, and social class. Members of the committee that considered Ridgely’s petition in 1855 and 1860 had much more in common with Josiah Cobb than Mary Ridgely or Hannah Rogers. Of the six men identifiable in census records, two were merchants, two were manufacturers, one was a contractor, and another was a coal dealer. Committee members owned an average of \$6,000 compared with the city-wide average household wealth of \$1,480. All committee members but one employed a female domestic servant in their household, and three men had black servants.²⁰ In the Ridgely case, Baltimore’s municipal government responded to a claim by one of its free black constituents with a small stipend—much the way, one might observe, that rural slave owners dealt with faithful field hands.²¹

NOTES

1. Mary Ridgely to the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, n.d. [1860], City Council Correspondence, RG 16, ser. 1, box 119, Baltimore City Archives (hereafter BCA); *Journal*, First Branch Baltimore City Council, 4 October 1860, City Council *Proceedings*, RG 16, ser. 1, box 121, BCA; City Council *Proceedings*, 13 March 1855, p. 49, BCA.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Baltimore Sun*, 14 February 1842. Later documents revealed Cobb to be the author of this “History of the One Thousand Dollar Note,” although the story was signed by an anonymous “O.P.” See Mary Ridgely to the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, n.d. [1860], City Council Correspondence; First Branch Baltimore City Council, *Journal*, 4 October 1860; Baltimore City Council *Proceedings*, 13 March 1855, p. 49.

5. *Baltimore Sun*, 14 February 1842, p. 1; First Branch Baltimore City Council, *Journal*, 4 October 1860.

6. *Ibid.*

7. First Branch Baltimore City Council, *Journal*, October 4, 1860; Baltimore City Council *Proceedings*, 13 March 1855, pp. 9–50.
8. Quotation is from *Baltimore Republican and Argus*, 1 February 1855, p. 3; for Kraft's resolution see 27 February 1855, p. 3..
9. City Council *Proceedings*, 1855, p. 50, Baltimore City Archives.
10. It is not clear who paid for Ridgely's lawyers. Since Ridgely had no money of her own, the wealthy Ellicotts might have underwritten her costs.
11. First Branch City Council, *Journal*, 4 October 1860.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. United States Eighth Census, 1860, Population Schedules for Baltimore City; First Branch City Council, *Journal*, 4 October 1860.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Baltimore Sun*, 14 February 1842, p. 1; United States Seventh Census, 1850, Population Schedules for Baltimore City.
20. United States Seventh and Eighth Census, 1850 and 1860, Population Schedules for Baltimore. Median wealth for Baltimore figure comes from Joseph Garonzik, "Urbanization and the Black Population of Baltimore, 1850–1870" (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Stonybrook, 1974), p. 138.
21. Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (Vintage Books: New York, 1976 [1972]), pp. 3–7.

Maryland's First Political Convention by and for Its Colored People

C. CHRISTOPHER BROWN

In July 1852, with controversy swirling both within and without Baltimore's Washington Hall, forty-one African-American delegates from all regions of Maryland gathered to ponder their social and political future. As the Reverend Darius Stokes, a leading delegate from Baltimore and its proud Bethel Church, later accurately proclaimed, "this was the first time a Colored Convention of the whole State had ever assembled." To Stokes and those in attendance, this event reflected a seminal occasion in their people's history.¹ When word of the event reached Frederick Douglass, he declared it to be "the first dawn of moral resurrection to our long buried people." "We thought we knew something of Maryland, and of the colored people of Maryland," he added, "but we underrated the magnanimity of the one and the courage of the other."² The 1852 convention addressed the only substantial political choice left to free blacks in the mid-nineteenth century: the right to leave the country, to emigrate to Africa.³

For fifty years Maryland's law makers had drawn the noose of racial oppression ever tighter. In the early years of the century Maryland took the vote from nonwhite people, imposed significant restraints upon the movement of slaves about the state, and permitted local agencies to remove supposedly neglected free black children from their families and apprentice them to whites. The General Assembly also placed severe limits on a black person's ability to hold meetings, sell farm products, and own dangerous commodities such as firearms, liquor, and dogs.⁴ After Nat Turner's 1831 insurrection in Virginia, the assembly enacted laws further to control Maryland's colored race. It more efficiently circumscribed the right to leave the state, as well as the practical ability of free blacks to travel to unfamiliar parts within it. It also placed additional limits on the businesses in which blacks could engage and the methods of conducting their meetings.⁵ Legislators proposed a constant barrage of restrictive laws, many of which failed by close votes. Free black Marylanders faced the constant threat of more oppressive measures.

At the state's constitutional convention of 1851 a committee on the free colored population reported a proposal to empower the General Assembly to order immediate registration of free blacks, plan for their removal from the state, and deny them the right to own real property and to enter the state. This sweeping and

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“Water Street,” Montserrado County, Liberia. Albumen photograph, c. 1860. This view looking up toward the main street of town identifies the executive mansion (center), the Methodist Episcopal Seminary (far right), and various residences. (Maryland Historical Society.)

oppressive proposal lost by a close vote. The convention did agree that the guarantees of due process need not be extended to free blacks.

Despite Maryland’s hostile environment, few free blacks embraced colonization. Reports of famine and suffering from those who had crossed the Atlantic did not paint a pleasant picture of this alternative life. Furthermore, free blacks did enjoy some rights in Maryland. They could marry, own property, and practice some professions. State officials often declined to enforce many of Maryland’s most extreme racial laws. Even white colonizationists acknowledged at times that emigration was “utterly abhorrent” to the majority of the “free colored people of these United States.”⁷

Before 1852 colonization organizing in Maryland had been primarily all-white occasions, generally conducted under the auspices of the Maryland Colonization Society. There were but a few instances in which blacks took the initiative and gathered to promote this cause. As early as 1832 a black colonization society apparently formed in Somerset County to study and debate the desirability of emigration to Africa. A similar group formed in Govanstown, Baltimore County, in October 1844, led by Garrison Draper, a frequent contributor to the *Maryland Colonization Journal*. At this meeting eighteen persons formed the Govanstown Society of Inquiry to study emigration.⁸

From a colonizationist’s perspective, the most hopeful black organization favoring emigration developed in April 1851, more than a year before the Baltimore convention, when free Dorchester County African Americans who favored emigra-

tion to Africa gathered in Cambridge. From this meeting emerged the Cambridge African Colonization Society.⁹ William Banks, its chair, was elected the society's president. A committee of three—Cyrus Sinclair, the local butcher; Benjamin Jenifer, a minister; and Thomas Fuller, the town's barber—thereafter drafted a series of resolutions that were later enacted. These resolutions lamented the present status of free blacks in Maryland and deplored their having been "cut off and excluded forever from the blessings and benefits of citizenship." From their perspective "as long as we remain in any State or Territory of the United States, we shall remain an inferior and degraded people." Feeling deprived of all choice, they viewed emigration to Liberia as the "only hope" of the free black persons' "salvation from their present degraded condition." Nevertheless, rather than propose such immediate action, they resolved initially to gather information regarding emigration by sending two of their number, Jenifer and Fuller, to observe that country and its laws and institutions and then to report back to the society. In July 1851, under the sponsorship of the Maryland Colonization Society, Jenifer and Fuller headed east on the *Liberia Packet* "to spy out the land." Upon return in December they filed a glowing written report with their county's African Colonization Society.¹⁰

Besides Jenifer and Fuller, a handful of prominent blacks had supported colonization to varying degrees. Stokes, who later played a major role in the 1852 convention, had helped solicit donations for the white Maryland society as early as 1850. In February 1852 he cooperated with Maryland colonization leader John H. B. Latrobe to arrange a ceremony to eulogize John Brown Russwurm, Maryland in Africa's black governor who had died in 1851. The Reverend Harrison H. Webb, of Baltimore's prominent black St. James Episcopal Church, had equivocated on this issue. He had earlier gone on record as opposing colonization. Furthermore, when Jenifer and Fuller were leaving on the *Liberia Packet*, Webb refused to allow the voyage's white colonizationist organizers to use St. James for a farewell meeting of emigrants. Nevertheless, he relented and agreed to go on board upon departure, thereby lending some support to those who were leaving.¹¹

Planning for the Baltimore convention began as early as 25 May 1852 at a meeting at the Reverend Mr. Webb's church, at the corner of Saratoga and North streets. Two weeks later a second meeting, announced by the daily newspapers, was held at the same site. "A respectable number" of black Baltimore leaders reportedly attended this follow-up organizational effort. St. James continued to serve as the coordinating center for the convention's planning.¹²

James A. Handy of Fells Point and John H. Walker of northwest Baltimore directed the planning effort. Walker, a thirty-eight-year-old mulatto school master and drayman, was secretary of the planning committee. Handy, then only twenty-five years of age, served as its chair. His career turned out to be quite remarkable. Born of a slave father and free mother in Baltimore, Handy grew up within the influence of Baltimore's most important black institution, Bethel Church, where he came to know most of the luminaries it attracted. In 1860 the African Methodist Episcopal Church licensed Handy as a pastor and thirty-two years later appointed him a bishop. Although he enjoyed but limited formal education, Handy developed

into a scholarly, self-educated man. At the turn of the century he published an informative 420-page history of the A.M.E. Church. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century Handy not only was an esteemed national A.M.E. leader, but his oratorical skills also put him at the forefront of numerous major black political events.¹³

The announced purpose of the convention was to permit black freemen in the state “to take into consideration their present position and future prospects in this country” and to compare them with the “prospects held out to them to emigrate to Liberia or elsewhere.” Organizers printed and in June distributed throughout the state five hundred copies of the announcing circular. Exuding a belief that the times posed unique opportunities, the circular attributed far reaching advances to mankind at mid-nineteenth century:

The nations of the earth seem to have arisen from the slumber of ages, and are putting forth their utmost energies to obtain all those blessings, which nature and nature’s God seem to have intended that man should enjoy

“Activated by these feelings,” the organizers solicited delegates to an assembly to begin 26 July in Baltimore. The committee proposed that each county could present up to six delegates, to be selected at local meetings sanctioned by the white authorities.¹⁴ Money to cover expenses was to be raised at these meetings, and the chair and secretary of each such meeting was directed to certify each county’s delegates.¹⁵

Handy’s organizing committee predicted “a full attendance of delegates . . . who will calmly, deliberately, and intelligently consider the object for which they have been called together.” Each delegate was asked to “come prepared to contribute his portion of information, and fully and freely to express his views on the great subject of future destiny.”

On Monday, 26 July 1852, in the lower floor of Washington Hall in Baltimore, the meeting convened only to discover itself in the midst of a hostile environment emanating not from white antagonists but from blacks vigorously opposed to the colonization movement. A group described by a Baltimore *Sun* reporter as “several hundred evil disposed and riotous blacks” gathered outside the hall. “Nothing but the presence of a body of police prevented a general melee.”¹⁶ Attracted by the circulars that made no secret of the convention’s purposes, these protesters assailed the delegates who entered into the convention, and, in some instances, gained admission themselves. This led to rival cheering sections within the hall. The dissenters often successfully interrupted the business of the convention. When some members of the Dorchester County delegation announced that their concerns regarding the hostile atmosphere counseled them to return home, a chorus of applause responded. Thereafter, when a member of the Kent County delegation urged them to stay, a countering salvo erupted, followed by hisses from the objectors.

The intensity of opposition both surprised and shocked several delegates, especially those from the Eastern Shore who had expected a broad consensus on the

colonization issue. Soon after James A. Jones, a prosperous butcher and church leader from Chestertown, had taken the floor and unequivocally spoken in favor of emigration, he announced that he had just received a threat "that his head, if not his life, was in danger" were he to leave the hall. He then sought police protection and made plans to return to the Shore.

The Reverend Mr. Stokes promptly took the floor and urged Jones to stay, explaining that the youths actually meant no harm. As the day's session ended and Stokes and the other delegates left the hall, however, many in the crowd outside directed their animosity toward Stokes. After a drinking glass thrown at him just missed its mark, police had to escort Stokes to safety in a store on Baltimore Street. Several arrests for disorderly conduct resulted, but no further injury occurred.

When the convention did get underway at 3:00 in the afternoon, it installed Handy as the temporary chair and Walker as the secretary. It then accepted the credentials of forty-one delegates. Baltimore was represented by the largest number, six delegates from each of three districts. Handy assembled a six-person delegation from southeast Baltimore. Stokes gathered six from northeast Baltimore, including Rev. H. H. Webb. Walker came with five other delegates from the city's northwest section. The eighteen-person Baltimore delegation included two of the Bethel Church's five founders, Jacob Fortie and Stephen W. Hill.¹⁷

Only six of the state's eighteen counties responded to the convention's call: Frederick, Dorchester, Kent, Caroline, Talbot and Harford. Only Frederick's delegation met the six-person limit. Harford sent but two delegates. No delegate appeared from the southern counties.

The oratory of co-organizer Walker soon produced a better state of order in the hall. Delivering the convention's major speech on its initial day, Walker quieted the objectors by toning down the emphasis on emigration to Liberia. He stressed that that was but one solution, and, in fact, one which he at present did not intend to choose. Walker decried the new Maryland Constitution of 1851, which failed to recognize "colored people at all." "They were men but not recognized as men." He also attacked the General Assembly for session after session having enacted repressive legislation. Walker's stridency and assertiveness seem to have blunted the hostility of the anti-colonization nondelegates within the hall.¹⁸

Again with the purpose of reassuring the opponents that the delegates had the best interests of all blacks in mind, William Perkins, a restaurant owner from Chestertown, tried to dispel rumors that the white colonization society had given \$700 to support the convention. He also tried to persuade the Dorchester delegates to stay.

Several delegates thereafter rose to speak in favor of emigration. The chair recognized one nondelegate to speak in opposition. James Jones, Perkins's colleague from Chestertown, made the most forceful pro-colonization speech of the afternoon. He was decidedly in favor of emigration and surprised at the "confusion" regarding this issue that existed in Baltimore. In Jones's view "the colored man could never rise to eminence except in Africa—the land of [his] forefathers." It was

the only place where he could “expect to be a free man.” Opponents of emigration hissed Jones as he returned to his seat.

Toward the end of Monday’s session the delegates appointed a committee to prepare a “platform.” Half of its ten members were from the Eastern Shore: Jones of Kent, Jenifer and Fuller of Dorchester, Jacob Lewis of Caroline, and Joseph Bantem of Talbot. Rounding out the committee were Webb, William Williams and Charles O. Fisher of Baltimore City, Henry Hopkins of Harford, and Perry E. Walker of Frederick. Later Perkins and Handy replaced Williams and Webb, each of whom apparently had second thoughts and withdrew as a delegate to the convention. The committee consequently ended up with a strong Eastern Shore flavor and contained but two Baltimoreans. Three of the rural delegates—Jones, Perkins, and Perry Walker—had already taken the convention floor to declare strong support for emigration.

Monday night the committee hammered out its proposed set of resolutions. The platform carried a general tone of optimism and hope for the black man’s future but voiced complete pessimism as to what could be accomplished in this country. Drawing from the language of the June circular, the committee’s proposal began with a statement of confidence in the times and expectation of progress: “The present age is one distinguished for inquiry, investigation, enterprise, and improvement in physical, political, intellectual and moral sciences” Borrowing from the Declaration of Independence, the statement then proclaimed, “we hold the truths to be self evident that we are, as well as all mankind, created equal, and are endowed by our Creator with the right to enquire into our present condition and future prospects”

The declaration acknowledged “in ourselves” the capacity honorably and creditably to conduct public affairs, “to acquire knowledge, and to enjoy the refinements of social intercourse” But, “having a praiseworthy ambition that this capacity should be developed to its full extent, we are naturally led to inquire where this can be done” The resolution deemed it “out of the question” that fulfillment of this potential could be attained in this country. Despite appreciated aid from those whites who over the past twenty years have struggled with the black people to put them “on a footing of social and political equality with the white population of this country,” no advancement toward this goal has been attained. Indeed, “our condition as a class is less desirable than it was twenty years ago.”

Further dissatisfaction was voiced over the wave of immigration of European whites who were being granted more and more of the American dream. In addition, the declaration voiced the conclusion that the black person’s “very agitation intended for good” was only leading to a more bitter white reaction.

Based on this state of affairs, the platform committee suggested that only Liberia offered convincing hope of salvation for its people. It is there “we have been told that we can exercise all the functions of a free republican government, and hold an honorable position among the nations of the earth.” Despite this praise, the proposed resolutions cautioned that the convention would not be taking the position that emigration was the answer for everyone; each must judge for himself.

Nevertheless, the committee was of the conviction that "sooner or later removal must take place"

On Tuesday, 27 July, the convention's second day, a greater police presence assembled. As the roll call was taken, it became apparent that several of the Dorchester delegates had followed their instincts of the day before and gone home. Their decision was premature. Day two passed peacefully with little interference from dissenters within and without the hall, admission to which was apparently restricted.¹⁹

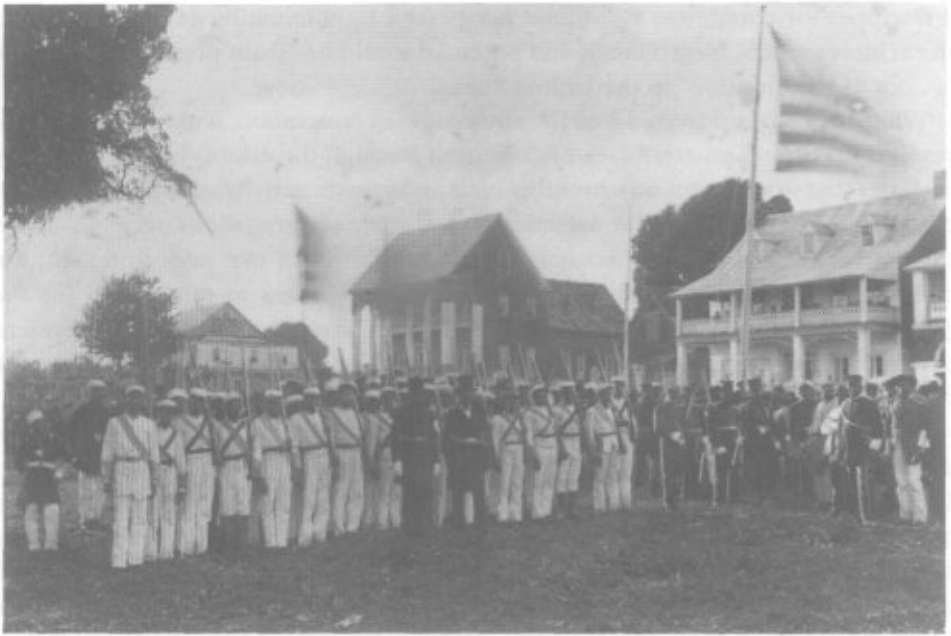
After a few organizational matters were resolved, Benjamin Jenifer, chair of the platform committee and veteran of a Liberian visit, presented his report. A spirited debate immediately followed. John Walker led the opposition to the committee's proposal, a curious position considering his initial organizational role in calling the convention together. Perhaps inspired by the dissenters of the day before, Walker now suggested that a more useful exercise would be the hiring of an influential white lawyer to lobby the following year in favor of repealing regressive legislation. Jenifer vigorously objected, suggesting that Walker ran afoul of the convention's basic premise of emigration.

Eventually Stokes's motions to table the committee report and turn the convention into a committee of the whole carried. The delegates were able to agree upon and adopt the first two of the committee's resolutions, which decried the present status of blacks in this country. Delegates skirted the emigration issue; when they failed to attain agreement on the more controversial resolutions, the convention adjourned for the day.

Day three began with the opening prayer of Rev. Ephraim Lawson of Frederick County. Delegate attendance was sparse and onlookers were few. A crowd still gathered outside but was by and large peaceful.

The most outspoken opponent of Liberian emigration on this final day, Frederick Harris of northeast Baltimore, gained the floor first. He claimed that a majority of free colored people in the state, as well as his constituents, did not approve of emigration. While William Perkins and Stephen Hill tried to assuage Harris by emphasizing that immediate and mandatory emigration was not their object, James Jones urged the convention to get on with it and adopt the resolutions in their entirety as proposed. Baltimorean Charles Williamson, who at sixty-seven years of age had been able to travel to several countries, and Benjamin Jenifer, who had spent several months in Liberia, spoke for the hopelessness of their present position and the clear advantages of Liberia.

James Handy, the future A.M.E. bishop, delivered the oratorical highlight of the convention. His talk replicated significant parts of the circular and platform committee resolutions, evidencing his creative hand in those documents. The youthful Handy seemed truly excited to be living in what he saw as grand and unique times, "an age of physical, moral and intellectual wonders." To Handy the opportunity presented by this golden era was for those assembled to have the privilege "of aiding in carrying forward the great enterprise of redeeming, disenthraling and



"1st Regiment, Montserrado County, Liberia." Albumen photograph, c. 1860. The former president's mansion stands in the center of this view, a private residence to the right, and the Methodist Episcopal Seminary to the left. (Maryland Historical Society.)

restoring back in all their primitive glory three millions of down-trodden people to the land of their forefathers."

Abandoning all semblance of restraint, Handy portrayed Liberia as the "garden spot" that Providence had prepared "for all the sable sons and daughters of Ham." Handy's idealized version of this new nation had it possessing far more natural and potential resources than Europe, Asia, or America. In this veritable Garden of Eden, all desirable fruits, vegetables, rich woods, and domestic animals were "in the greatest abundance." Now the centuries-old question of "how shall Africa be redeemed" could be answered. By Africa's "children returning," he said, the "long closed doors of that continent are to be opened." Providence now called out to the black people in America: "Arise and depart for this is not your rest."

After a good deal of procedural confusion, John Walker, who earlier in the convention had attempted to moderate its pro-colonization tone, offered a revised set of resolutions to be substituted for those of the platform committee. Practicing the art of compromise, Walker rearranged much of the original resolutions and added additional verbiage. His proposal left the essence of the original version intact. The delegates unanimously adopted the Walker compromise.

Walker had added more dramatic pronouncements of the free black's present status: "we are now sunken into a condition of social degradation which is truly deplorable," and continue to live in this state which "we cannot but view as a crime and transgression against our God, ourselves and our posterity." Walker's version

did temper the committee's gloomier perspective by eliminating its conclusion that the achievement of Negro ideals and potential would be "from present appearance . . . out of the question" in the United States.

While the convention explored the advantages of emigration, it ultimately enacted resolutions urging greater black organization through the establishment of county societies that would meet on a monthly basis and greater activity within the structure of the black churches. The societies and church congregations were to direct themselves to "support free schools for the education of our poor and destitute children" Ministers should urge their congregations to raise funds for the purpose of educating young black children. Walker's resolutions sought betterment of the black person's status quo in America through reinvigorated efforts to improve his intellectual development.

With the main business of the convention now accomplished, several delegates presented short talks concerning immediate problems in Maryland. William Perkins castigated the apprenticeship system in Kent County, whereby—upon a county official's determination that the children of free blacks were not properly tended to—the children were bound out to whites and used as servants. Perkins also criticized the legal prohibition against a colored person returning to the state once he left it. In Talbot, according to Charles Dobson, free colored men had been "taken up and sold for one year, and when that year was out, taken up and sold for another year." Daniel Koburn poignantly offered his view that hogs in Baltimore enjoyed more freedom than did black people. Under the city's hog law, hogs could run free for certain seasons but must be taken up for others. On the other hand, Koburn noted, "the law referring to colored people allowed them to be taken up at any time."

To remedy these grievances Charles Fisher of Baltimore proposed formation of a committee that would draw up a memorial to the General Assembly, urging it to "pay more indulgence to the colored people of the State." Over Jenifer's dissent the committee was appointed. It consisted of several of the convention's leaders, including Walker, Handy, Perkins, and Fuller.

After a resolution of thanks to the event's officers for their leadership, the morning newspapers for their publicity, and the police for their protection, the convention adjourned at 3:00 P.M., to meet next in Frederick on the second Monday in November 1853.

Unanswered questions remain as to the role the white Maryland Colonization Society played in the convention. Many of the convention's opponents clearly assumed that the entire project was orchestrated and funded by the society and therefore did not represent independent black opinion. From the convention floor John Walker and William Perkins emphatically denied these rumors. The circular calling for the convention had urged local county groups to raise their own money to finance their journey to and accommodations in Baltimore. Furthermore, in his 1853 annual report for the society, John H. B. Latrobe proclaimed that the convention had been "a matter wholly unexpected by the board," which had done nothing to promote it.²⁰

Society records, however, belie these denials. In June, for example, the society spent a modest amount for printing five hundred circulars “to Colored People of Md.” It paid the rental fee for the use of Washington Hall for the three-day convention. Also, Thomas Fuller, organizer of the Dorchester County contingent and veteran of a trip the society had sponsored to Liberia, was paid board and travel expenses three weeks before the convention. The society advanced money to Fuller on at least three other occasions in 1852, bringing his total receipts to over \$125.²¹

Rev. Darius Stokes, who was publicly linked to Latrobe as early as 1851, also financially benefited from his society connections. In January 1853 Stokes, who was primarily employed as a drayman, received a \$50 loan from the society. Thereafter, he appears to have been regularly retained to round up and carry emigrants to society ships heading for Africa and to perform other “drayage” tasks.²²

Yet the feeling delegates expressed clearly dispels any notion that they needed to be “put up” by the colonization society to stage the event. A mutuality of interests coalesced to produce it. Debate was full, frank, and robust. Delegates barred no holds and hurled without equivocation criticism of white society’s treatment of black people.

The structure of the three-day affair was in no way the product of inexperienced delegates with no feel for formal organization and procedural rules. Years of religious meetings and conventions, such as those held frequently in Baltimore by the A.M.E. Church, helped shape the format. Delegates elected convention officers and delegates, selected committees, and enacted resolutions. Debate proceeded in an orderly, albeit vociferous fashion. The convention achieved friendly consensus at its close. In its account of the convention, the Baltimore *Sun* offered praise for its having been “conducted in the most creditable manner.” To this observer “much talent [had] been observable in a number of the members, who have displayed an eloquence, power of argument and knowledge, that would have done credit to any legislative body.”²³

The 1852 convention was clear proof that free blacks in Maryland were fully capable of conducting political business in a sound and organized fashion. It was a demonstration of governance. And this was not an academic exercise but one of the few areas at the time in which the black man was given political choice: the opportunity of accepting the white colonialists’ offer and uprooting his family from his native land. It was a choice of desperation, but, more than with nearly any other political choice, the blacks here had significant say.

Only two delegates appear to have heeded the convention’s call to Africa. In April 1853 Thomas Fuller gave up his barber shop in Cambridge and returned to Cape Palmas, Liberia, where he operated a retail store and soon was elected to the senate of the newly independent nation. Accompanying him were his wife and their infant child. In November 1853 Charles Williamson, at age sixty-eight, resumed his worldly journeys and also emigrated, taking along his young wife and six young children.²⁴ Two years later Fuller wrote the Maryland Colonization Society asking if it would like to hear whether “the old Delegate from Cambridge” was living or not. He

reported himself to be satisfied and in good spirits “in the country which gave birth to my liberty as a man.”

Here I am a *free man*; here I enjoy the rights of a freeman and citizen; here I have the right not only to say what laws I will be governed by, but the privilege of aiding in making those laws, for as you must know that I am one of that honorable body, a *Senator to be sure*.

A melancholy tone offset this satisfaction. Fuller seemed resigned to a lonely, distant course. He noted that he had not communicated with his “old shipmate,” Benjamin Jenifer, “since I left him on the wharf.” “Some will come from America,” he surmised, “but if all are like Jenifer, and my old Cambridge friends, I don’t think many will come.”²⁵

Fuller was correct. Although the colonization society hailed the 1852 convention as a landmark, the meeting produced little in concrete terms for the colonization movement. The next scheduled meeting in 1853 appears never to have come off. Emigration logs kept by the society indicate that decreasing numbers thereafter chose to emigrate. Soon came the war that appeared to redefine the African American’s position in this country, thereby making emigration to Liberia a moot issue.²⁶

NOTES

1. In light of this 1852 gathering, a “Meeting of Colored Men to Encourage Enlistments” held nearly twelve years later in February 1864 at the Sharpe Street Methodist Episcopal Church in Baltimore, cannot be described as the “first Negro meeting in Maryland.” See Philip S. Foner, “The First Negro Meeting in Maryland,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 66 (1971): 60–67. Local blacks played a minimal role in this 1864 event. Its speakers were primarily the white Unionist Baltimore liberals of the day and a black minister from New Jersey. Black persons from other parts of the state do not appear to have attended this one-evening event, whose primary purpose was to enlist black soldiers to help Maryland satisfy its quotas and permit fewer whites to enlist (*Baltimore Sun*, 1 March 1864).

The first major integrated state-wide proceeding was the Republican state convention in May 1867 in Baltimore. In what was a remarkable development at the time, “the former slave owner and his slave sat side by side” (*Baltimore American*, 15 May 1867).

2. *Frederick Douglass’ Paper*, 13 August 1852, reprinted in C. Peter Ripley, *Black Abolitionist Papers 1830–1865* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1985–86).

3. The fullest available record of this convention comes from the reports of the *Baltimore Sun*, 27, 28, and 29 July 1852, which at least in part were adopted in lieu of minutes by the delegates. The accuracy of the *Sun’s* account is corroborated by the similarity of the shorter *Baltimore American* reports (*Baltimore American*, 27, 28, and 29 July 1852). The *Sun’s* publisher, A. S. Abell, contributed to the Maryland Colonization Society. See *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 4 (Feb. 1849): 328; 6 (Feb.

1852): 116; 7 (Feb. 1853): 336). The *Journal* and all other Maryland Colonization Society records cited in this article are on microfilm at the Maryland Historical Society and at the central branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library. Washington Hall was located on Plowman Street, just east of Jones Falls (*Baltimore American*, 27 July 1852).

4. Maryland Laws 1801 ch. 90, 1802, ch. 20 (voting); 1810 ch. 63; 1821, ch. 183 (slave movement); 1806, ch. 81 (meetings, guns & dogs); 1805, ch. 80; 1825, ch. 199 (sale of farm products). See Jeffrey R. Brackett, *The Negro in Maryland* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1889), pp. 176–99. On Maryland's system of "apprenticing" "neglected" black youths to white families, see James M. Wright, *The Free Negro in Maryland 1634–1860* (1921; New York: Octagon Books, 1971), pp. 130–48.

5. See Maryland Laws, 1831, ch. 323, and Brackett, *The Negro in Maryland*, pp. 177–215.

6. *Debates & Proceedings of the Maryland Reform Convention* (Annapolis: Wm. M'Neir, 1851), 1:194–98, 2:220–22, 865. From 1800 to 1850 the state's free black population had increased nearly four-fold (from 19,587 to 74,723), while over the same period the white population had not quite doubled (from 216,326 to 417,942). One committee of the House of Delegates in 1844 had projected with alarm that, if trends continued, in one hundred years Maryland would have 517,717 whites and 3,869,280 free blacks (Maryland Public Docs., Dec. Sess. 1843–44, "Report from the Select Comm. to Whom Was Referred the Subject of the Removal of the Free Colored Population from Charles County," 24 January 1844).

7. Aaron Stopak, "The Maryland State Colonization Society: Independent State Action in the Colonization Movement," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 63 (1968): 292–95; Penelope Campbell, *Maryland in Africa: The Maryland State Colonization Society, 1831–1857* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), pp. 27–28, 56–57, 102–3, 186–88; *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 3 (Jan. 1847): 290, 4 (May 1849): 362.

8. A history of the society, sympathetic to its views, is Campbell's *Maryland in Africa*. For a more critical view, see Stopak, "Maryland State Colonization Society." Regarding the Somerset County group, see Wright, *Free Negro in Maryland*, p. 292, and *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 2 (October 1844): 242–44.

9. *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 (June 1851): 6–7, quoting *Cambridge Chronicle*.

10. Before 1851 Dorchester County had no history of significant colonization activity. No local resident had emigrated since December 1842, when thirty-two persons set sail on the *Globe*. Prior thereto only nine other Dorchester residents had left (*Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 [Feb. 1852]: 142). In 1822, at age six, Stephen Allen Benson of Cambridge emigrated with his parents to Liberia. In 1855 he was elected Liberia's president (*ibid.*, 8 [Aug. 1856]: 225–26). Regarding the Jenifer/Fuller trip see *Maryland Colonization Society, Record of Emigrants* (July 1851); *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 (Dec. 1951): 98–104. The Maryland organization had occasionally sent over and back free blacks in order to gain endorsements and counter the prevalent black view that once upon the Society's ships, they would be "sold south" (Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, p. 25).

11. *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 5 (Nov. 1850): 296, 6 (June 1852): 18, 20; *National Era*, 1 April 1852.

12. *Baltimore Sun*, 25 May 1852; "Call for a Colored People's Convention," reprinted as an appendix to *Maryland Colonization Society, Annual Report* (1 January 1853). Numerous white newspapers received the circular and promptly provided positive free advertising, displaying full support for the convention's declared purposes. See papers quoted in *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 (June 1852): 194-98 and (July 1852): 214-16.

13. Regarding Walker, see Wright, *Free Negro in Maryland*, p. 295n. James A. Handy, *Scraps of African Methodist Episcopal History* (Philadelphia: A.M.E. Publishing Co., ca. 1903), pp. 5-10. When Handy was but a young child, A.M.E. Church founder Bishop Richard Allen is said to have put his hand on young Handy's head and declared, "he will be one of my successors" (*ibid.*, p. 5).

14. Circular, *Maryland Colonization Society Annual Report* (January 1853).

15. Permission to meet in the counties had to be obtained from a white official, who in certain situations had to be present at the meeting (Maryland Laws, 1831, ch. 323).

16. The following account of the convention's proceedings draw primarily from the *Baltimore Sun*, 27, 28, and 29 July 1852.

17. For the story of Bethel's founding, see Handy, *Scraps of African Methodist Episcopal History*, p. 14.

18. Walker's half-hour speech was also summarized in the *Baltimore American*, 27 July 1852.

19. *Baltimore American*, 28 July 1852.

20. *Maryland Colonization Society Annual Report* (January 1853), p. 4.

21. Maryland Colonization Society, Bills, 11 June 1852; Day Books, 31 March, 6 July, 31 August, 7 September 1852; Checks, nos. 495, 500 & 507 (1852).

22. Maryland Colonization Society, Day Books, 17 January, 21 and 25 June 1853. Maryland Colonization Check no. 528 (1853).

23. *Sun*, 29 July 1852.

24. Maryland Colonization Society, Record of Emigrants, 1831-1862 (Nov. 1853).

25. *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 8 (December 1855): 105-6.

26. *Maryland Colonization Society Annual Report* (January 1853); Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, pp. 199-201. The Maryland Constitution of 1864 emancipated all slaves as of 1 November 1864. After ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment in March 1870, the first black man voted at a town election in Towsontown in April 1870 (*Baltimore American*, 5 April 1870).

Dearest Braddie:
Love and War in Maryland, 1860–61
Part 2

ANNA BRADFORD AGLE and SIDNEY HOVEY WANZER, Eds.

Editor's note: For the first installment of and introduction to this selection from the Spencer letters, which are available to researchers at the Eisenhower Library, Johns Hopkins University, see the spring issue of the magazine.

Home. Friday May 24th [1861]

My own darling,

. . . Sweetheart, the country is *lovely* just now—the sky and earth glow with June's perfect quivering amber, the breeze makes softest music among the young leaves, and oh the nights! reigned over by the great full placid moon—I never saw such. How I wished for you last night—what a precious moonlight walk we would have taken, arm in arm, and murmuring love-talk out upon the pearly calm. Ah darling, these are cruel deprivations, and I feel them keenly, I can assure you.

Mother returned home yesterday evening. She looks very badly and is more low spirited than I have seen her for a great while. She had a visit from Mrs. Hambleton and Miss Clara a day or two ago, and reports that Mrs. H. is such a Secessionist that she does not attend even to her housecleaning. This is much for one so notably neat as she is. Our letters from Missouri come regularly, but our relatives do not venture to sign their names to them. Think of that, precious. Is it not come to a fearful pass when the telegrams are all siezed and even the mail is no longer sacred? I shall have to be circumspect in my avowal of Secession sentiments, even to you. Aunt Kennard says there is no security for person or property in St. Louis. Ten thousand "Hessians" are in arms there, and control the city for the present. Both of her sons are in camp at Jefferson City. Joe Spencer has gone to Richmond pro tem. He gives [General] Butler an infamous character—says he was held as hostage, and, had the Yankees been again attacked in B. would certainly have been shot. A wonderful free land we live in. Hurra for the glorious "stars and stripes," and its patriotic, magnanimous, courageous upholders! Oh that I may live to see the day of retribution—to salute these men when they put on sackcloth and sprinkle themselves with ashes!



Edward Spencer, c. 1870. (Collection of the author.)

I have been extremely busy the last few days, darling. I cannot say more than that it is in the cause that has my best wishes—it will not do for one to commit himself further on paper at these times. I am pretty well fatigued, riding at night, but I take extreme good care of myself, and run no risk whatever. So don't you worry, pet. The Lincolnites are drawing the lines closer and closer upon us every day. On Wednesday they were at Towsontown, entering the private houses of gentlemen, in search of arms. Think of it! They searched Grason's, Bedford's, Acy's, Wheeler's etc—all men of name, and as orderly citizens as can be found anywhere. I suppose Cousin Bill will say "it makes no difference." I wonder what would be his opinion if it came home to him: if Secession was in the ascendancy in Md. and *his*

house were searched, as that of a Unionist? But they're all mad alike. Even the Bishop, in his solemn pastoral letter, flings a covert slur and sneer at our side by means of a text of Scripture. If he is not more careful the day may come when some one will usurp his office, at least so far as the "laying on of hands" is concerned. . . Your own Edward

Early on 10 June Union Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, notorious among Southern-sympathizing Baltimoreans for seizing Federal Hill in May, ordered his troops westward from Fortress Monroe in Virginia. At Big Bethel they fought one of the first engagements of the war in a sharp skirmish with Confederate soldiers under the command of John B. Magruder.

Home. June 12th at night

My own precious Darling.

It is insufferably hot tonight, and the perspiration is dripping from me, although I am in a condition as near approaching to *puris naturalibus* as the flies will permit. . . .

I have been hard at work for *the cause* (like Cousin Bill, writing—having last night & this morning gotten up a *very* severe review of Gov. Hicks' last letter, twelve pages in length, which I sent to a Balto. paper tonight) and oh honey, the C.S.A. are victorious—the enemy has been defeated in the first engagement—*routed*, & put to flight. I had an inkling of the affair at Great Bethel this afternoon, & immediately mounted my horse & rode to Randallstown for the particulars. I saw the extras &c, and in addition heard reliable private reports from Fort Monroe which leave no room for doubt that the Federal army was *badly* beaten & suffered a lost of *not less* than 1000 killed & wounded. Hurrah! The fight reflects great credit upon the C.S.A.

who outgeneraled the Federals, & used their artillery with terrible effect. Over 100 bodies of the slain were brought into Fort Monroe, besides those left on the field. This is but the *beginning*, for the U.S.A. is bound to be terribly defeated at Harper's Ferry, Manassas Gap, and Norfolk. There are 175000 men under arms in Virginia, and they can't be whipped. I'm going to get Isabel to teach me the *Te Deum*, and I mean to play it after every Southern victory. I only wish I had my darling here to sing it with me. Will you come? . . .

I had a letter from Lindsly yesterday, a letter that I must not answer until I have brought my cool calm judgment to bear upon the matter, for it becomes my duty to write plainly & to tell him what I think of his cause. We wont quarrel, but he must be made to understand that all my feelings are involved in this crisis & that I will sooner lose my friend than see detriment done to my honorable cause. He makes a mere matter of dollars & cents of it, as if no higher principle could be at stake. "As soon as these war troubles began, my business here collapsed completely, and, as I could not collect enough to pay office rent, I thought it best to try something else, and so I have gone into the army as Assistant Surgeon. . . . I begin with the rank of Ist Lieut at 120\$ a month. . . ."

The U.S. Arsenal [at Pikesville] was occupied last night by three hundred troops (only 6 miles from here) and, among the arrests certainly to be made in a day or two, are those of I. Howard McHenry, Dr. J. Z. Offutt, Atwood Blunt, Sam'l Mettam, Robert Spencer, and one "little fellow" who is I think tolerably well known to Miss A. C. B. H. [Braddie]. I don't know what charge is to be trumped up, but the source whence I got the information is such that I cannot fail to give it credence. Now, they can't *hurt* us, honey, of course, and I'll get into no trouble unless they insult the women folks—but, I *vow I will not take the oath of allegiance*, and so, if I am arrested, I may expect to be imprisoned indefinitely. I write to you about this now, so that you need not to be alarmed if you see the matter in the papers. *No harm can come to me*—I will be well cared for, and have friends who will spare no pains to effect my release as speedily as possible, so, if it *does* come, I forbid you to feel the slightest uneasiness or apprehension. I shall be guarded, will stand on my dignity, and will *permit nothing to provoke me*, except insolence to my mother. In *that* event, of course, I shall be apt to fare badly, for no possible danger could prevent me from resenting it instantly—but I do not fear any such miserable result. Mother is terribly excited, but not a bit scared, and is more of a Secessionist than ever. I am worried a little



Anne Catherine Bradford Harrison ("Braddie"), c. 1870. (Collection of the author.)

on Bob's account, as he has exposed himself a good deal, but I cannot see any danger I am in, save for my doggerel verses which I send. . . .

I cannot write you as long a letter as I wish, for I am not only very tired, but, so to speak, "turned out of doors." When I came home to dinner today, I found Mother had availed herself of my absence to march her army into my "snuggery", with whitewash, broom & scrubbing brush—carpet up, books down & my whole world topsy-turvy. So I am writing to you in the dining room & I feel *lost* without my desk & papers.

Honey, you must send me Cousin Bill's next article. I want to answer it, in the *Easton Star*. I think I can "show up" any arguments he can bring in favor of war & I think it ought to be done. Don't forget, please. . . .

Sunday—June 23rd [1861]. At home.

. . . [T]he troops are still in our neighborhood, and bear themselves precisely as might be expected of Yankees. We associate with & get information from the negroes. I know of several that have been cross-examined—and there are many complaints about their conduct. They have stripped all the cherry trees for miles around—& are frequently caught pilfering. They stole a piece of beef from my butcher, while his wagon was stopped in front the Arsenal. If I am arrested, I suppose they will take bail—if not, they will anyhow give me a chance to write to my darling and let her know how I am getting along. The news from Missouri is terrible. We have not heard from Aunt K. for some time, but judge that they are all safe.

The Thirty-seventh Congress convened in Washington 4 July 1861.

July 4th [1861]

. . . Honey, have you seen the comet? I have seen no notice of it in the papers, and I observed it last night for the first time. The negroes claim to have noticed it four or five nights ago. It is certainly a magnificent spectacle, with a tail of full 80 degrees in length, and a nucleus as large as the new moon. It was peculiarly brilliant last night, owing to the refractive state of the atmosphere. It is evidently approaching the earth with the utmost speed, since it has grown upon us so large within a week, while Donati's comet in '59 was 25 days ere it reached its maximum. Suppose its going to make a general smash up of things? Two hundred years ago its appearance would have been taken as a certain omen of the fearful events now transpiring in the world, and possibly might have frightened the combatants into a change of policy. But . . . it is nothing but a celestial phenomenon, to be observed & made use of astronomically. I should not much care if it were to touch some of the mephitic vapors of that long tail somewhere in the vicinage of Washington and "wipe out" about 200 politicians who meet there today, and 70,000 Yankees in arms there. If that should happen I'm sure I should become a convert to the doctrine of Special Providences—that is, of course, if Beauregard and his men should be spared.

. . .

Well, my darling, this is the “glorious Fourth”. Its coming was announced in Baltimore by the infamous and bloody mockery of a salute of 34 guns—big ones—followed by what sounded out here like a general *feu de joie* from all the camps. Exalting, I suppose, over our conquered city. I wonder how the people there feel? Sullen enough, doubtless. The Yankees are terribly afraid of Baltimore—witness that valorous N.Y. regiment, pigeon-shooting at the Camden depot the other day. They have Fort McHenry with 1700 regulars—Fort Carrol with a garrison—and 8000 men and 24 cannon in the city—half our arms and all our powder seized—yet they are afraid of us—make continual arrests—find out innumerable bogus conspiracies—& close all the bar-rooms for fear of excitement. Yet *there* are the heroic forces who have set out to conquer the whole South! Where are the St. Michaels ladies that they do not come forward to crown with laurels such distinguished braves? It makes me sick at heart to think of my state conquered, ruined and her people robbed of every right for the sake of such a cause, so defended. Once more I say it, that Cousin Bill will live to curse the day when he joined this infamous crusade against Southern Rights, against the dictates of justice, and the sure promptings of honour and home-affection. It will all come home to him, through his negroes, and he will find out that these “Union men of the South” for whom he is so zealous (meaning Balto Plugs—and Md & Virginia Yankee aliens, with [Henry Winter] Davis, Etheridge & Andy Johnson) are nothing *never have* been anything but Abolitionists and agrarians—making war upon all vested rights because, being propertyless themselves, they have all to gain and nought to lose by revolution and anarchy. Meantime, this is a woful day for the destinies of America. Congress meets, money will be appropriated, Abe Lincoln’s despotism confirmed to him, and every means used to carry on the war with vigor and exclude forever the last chance of compromise save at the bayonet’s point. Good bye henceforth to peace and peaceful arts. Welcome grim war, oppressive taxes, and grinding, cruel despotism. I look to see the suspension of Habeas Corpus made optional with every sixpenny Colonel, and an ex post facto treason law passed that will make the life of every man in the country dependant upon the leniency of the military arm. A debt of 500,000,000\$—increased duties—direct taxes of nearly 1 percent—abolition of state lines—consolidation of government—a standing army—& the destruction not only of our commerce & manufactures, but also of our dearest rights, and of nearly every element of law that has made us the most prosperous people on the globe—all these things are in the program of events to be initiated on this national Feast Day. Ah, well may Abe Lincoln’s cannon bid it welcome! To be sure, it seals our dungeons & confirms our chains, but it decks off Yankee brows with high though perilous honour, and above all, it puts certain store of money in Yankee pockets. Say to the day then—let the people here weep & groan—let brothers be murdered, so Boston can grow rich and Fanueil Hall have her rocket celebration of Independence Day!

Night. I walked over to Randallstown this afternoon, in search of a paper, and got one, with no very good news in it. I am impatient for intelligence of the great battle that is to be fought in a few days—perhaps indeed two or three of them—as events are rapidly culminating in Western Virginia—the Federal troops are advanc-

ing from Alexandria, and Butler must fight or abandon Newport News. We shall have startling enough movements in a very short time, and then we shall be better able to judge of the material composing the respective armies. The Confederates may be forced to fall back upon their second line of defence (their present position is only held at great disadvantage & solely for the sake of saving those parts of Virginia from the ruin of invasion) but if they retire, their second position will be entirely unassailable, and Scott dare not attack without being certainly defeated. Ask Cousin Bill where the "Union men of the South" are about Alexandria—*seventy two votes*—and every one of them men of northern birth! But enough. . . .

I can never forget that you have been brought to trouble in your own family for my sake. True, you never were *entirely* theirs, but still, you have lived with them almost from birth. I've told Mother pretty much all our troubles, honey, and I can assure you she sympathises with you eagerly, and is as hurt as if you already belonged to us. She seems to feel as if you are one of *our* folks, and dont say she isn't glad you're a Secessionist. "You must make haste and get married, child", she tells me, "and then you can see your sweetheart whenever you wish." "Lend me the money, then," say I—and out comes her big pocket book, and out of it the round brown disk of her pocket piece—a French centime (1/5 of cent). "Here Son—take what you want, but give me the change. Money's very scarce in these times, and young married people should not be wasteful if they wish to succeed in life. . . ."

On 25 May Union authorities had arrested the noted Baltimore County Democrat and secessionist John Merryman at his home near Cockeysville. His imprisonment at Fort McHenry had led to the celebrated civil liberties case Ex parte Merryman, in which Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney severely chastised the Lincoln administration for violations of civil liberties. Merryman spent seven weeks in prison. By the time he gained his release, Braddie had embraced the Southern cause.

Sunday Noon [14 July]

My own darling

. . . I must write of news first, as I may not have time after awhile. I am not very well, fatigued, worried, overworked,—and I have been so much interrupted that I cannot write at as great length as I purposed. I must lie down this afternoon, or I will not be fit for work tonight. . . .

I send you some papers, containing my latest Southern pieces. "Stockton's Prayer" is just what I have made it out. The letter in the "State Journal" was one I sent my Uncle Kennard a short time since & "Long May It Wave" I sent them (Isabel copied it) in ms. not expecting it to be published. Honey, I am a mighty unlucky dog. I got a letter yesterday morning from my Uncle Kennard, saying "I rec'd. yours on Saturday last & happened to show it to my friend the editor of the State Journal, who insisted on publishing it. . . . They would be pleased to have a lively correspondent in Balto—. . . they wish you to write them two letters a week. I think you are just the man they would like as a correspondent, and they can afford to pay handsomely for communications. The Editor is a high-toned South Carolinian and

full-blooded Southerner. I would like to have you write for the Journal, and as Tucker is *my* very particular personal friend, I feel anxious you and he should be acquainted as far as writing can make you so. You will notice he is on trial for *Treason*, but he is a first-class lawyer and will be hard to head, and the Court is O.K." Well, honey, I got the letter yesterday morning & was just thinking over the matter for a ten dollar reply (for I meant to put in for *high wages*—I begin to appreciate the value of money here lately) when up comes Bob with the evening papers, announcing that the cursed Hessians had suspended Tucker's paper & carried off his type, press and paper! Confound it—how can a man keep from swearing? It would have given me a little money weekly—say 10\$—and I want it so much just now. "Headlong Jim" Tilghman says that if he could only get all the Yankees together, he'd go to Hell with them and stay there to all eternity. My Uncle writes: "Missouri is not yet as badly off as Maryland, and we hope soon to know the State authority again in the ascendant. We have good reason so to hope, and I would like to impress you with my full faith in the power and resources of the South. I have just heard from reliable sources that the Confederate army is now over 225,000 strong—over 150,000 in Virginia—the Commissary department overflowing and properly attended to. This is not bogus." To come nearer home: Graft Carlisle, our acquaintance & Bob's aid, has been indicted for treason—"aid & comfort"—and Bob is also in great danger—though I judge they cannot get evidence against *me*, as I was less open about it. It is evident that some of our neighbors have turned spies—woe be to the man who did it if Bob is arrested and I can discover the party. I will shoot him like a dog, regardless of the consequences. Bob vows he'll not be taken, but will go to Virginia if any bill is found against him. Mrs. Agle Tilghman did not *shoot* at the Yankees who arrested her husband. One of the *gentlemen* pointed a pistol at her child who was looking out the window, whereupon she presented her revolver and threatened to shoot if he did not instantly withdraw it. She prepared breakfast for the whole crew of them—in return, Capt. Tilghman was not allowed a mouthful for 24 hours, and was kept at the fort, out in the rain, with no shelter, for two days more. These are our *fellow-citizens*, while Southerners, who treat even spies with courtesy, are rebels, traitors, scoundrels. Honey, the times are "out of joint." John Merryman is released on bail, but Capt's Jarrett & Stump, and Henry Farnandis are taken in Belair. The Federals have their spies out in every direction, now, and it is hardly safe to talk. You speak of your getting excited, and wonder how we men keep from fighting. Shall I tell you of a little argument I had on Friday, with a Balto. Co. Yankee? There were several of us talking pretty warmly about the times, and I had decidedly the best of the battle when I referred to one of Clay's speeches, as corroborative of my position. The impudent blackguard replied that he wanted to read the speech himself before he would believe that Henry Clay had said any such thing. I felt my fist clench involuntarily and I was pretty mad for a minute. I looked at him saying to myself "Old fellow, I wonder if you know in how much danger you are? If you were a gentleman, I'd break your nose for you, and if you struck back, I'd shoot you." However, I kept my eye on him, and *drawled* out slowly and distinctly: "If you'll go to the house, I'll show you the passage. Of course, it wouldn't be

altogether fair in me to ask a man to believe *me* when *I* couldn't believe *him* in *any* statement he might choose to make, except he called *himself* a d—d fool!" That ended the argument—he had no more to say, and I was satisfied—everybody laughed—and he pocketed the affront, Yankee like. . . .

What must I do about visiting you? Can I, *ought* I to come, consistently with my own pride, my own independence, my sensitiveness, my self-respect—and moreover, without danger of the visit contributing still more to my darling's discomfort and to our mutual embarrassments? You say "You would even now be received cordially, I am sure"—but what an "even now" that is—how significant—how pregnant with unpleasant suggestions. There is only one view that I can take of the matter. You can say that I am misjudged, that it is a prejudice, the result of passion, unjust, and therefore should not be regarded. *I* can only ask myself: If I go will I be entirely welcome, or will I have to suffer the intolerable mortification of slight and coldness? For your sake I could do nothing in such event—I would be disarmed—I would have no weapon for self-defence. Consequently, there is double reason why I should not expose myself to the danger. I know that Cousin Bill is all right—but Semty is boss in that establishment. And honey, I know this, that if I go without a treaty before hand there will be incessant danger of a flare up, and then, you will make it your duty to take up the clubs in my defence, and I shall have the pleasant consolation of being the cause of a breach in family relations which have heretofore been amicable enough. Still less would I have you *make* a treaty, for things must be spontaneous to please any one, and to feel that I was tolerated because you had asked it, would be the "unkindest cut of all"—So the best way will be just to leave things as they are, at present, trusting and hoping. It will be *very* hard, for both of us, if I must deny myself the promised visit, but honey, we shall have the consolation of knowing that *we* are not to blame for it. Meantime, the slightest opening that comes up I will *gladly* profit by, and whenever you can tell me that I may come with impunity and with welcome, I will hasten to fix a day.

In late July, following much popular cry for action in the North, federal forces under Gen. Irvin McDowell advanced toward Richmond. On the 21st, near the town of Manassass Junction, they met Confederate troops in a battle that began badly for Confederate forces but finally—with Col. Arnold Elzey's 1st Maryland, CSA, entering the fray at a critical moment—turned into a Union rout.

Home. Saturday night [20 July 1861]

My darling old woman

. . . Honey, I *think* the "great battle" begun at last. There was some slight cannonade this morning—practice, probably—but tonight I am *almost* certain there is fighting. I cannot be *entirely* so, as the wind is so high as to confuse sounds, but I am reasonably sure. that I hear the almost incessant rumble of cannon—and have done so since ten o'clock. If so, it is the action so long anticipated. You know which way my prayers go—yet I am not at all uneasy about the result. We'll know more on Monday.

Home. July 21st [1861]

My own darling

“It is—it is the cannons’ opening roar!” I am all in a flutter of exultant hope & terrible fear, for I have heard this evening and still hear the repeated sound of cannon, at short & I fancy irregular intervals, in the direction of Washington! What does it mean? If it be a salute, then the Federals have a victory—*if not* (oh God grant it!) the Federals are defeated & Beauregard is in Arlington Heights. The firing is almost certainly near Washington, and I feel moreover entirely sure that, if the Federals have risked a general engagement (as I fear they dare not) they have been badly repulsed. The gallant Carolinians have won the first blood at Manassas already, and the Yankees could not face them. You must not trust any accounts given in the [Baltimore] “American.” The Federal loss at Bull’s Run was fully 300, and but for Sherman’s battery and the 2d Cavalry (regulars) who fought *on foot* pour encourager les autres—Tyler’s whole division would have been driven off the field in inglorious rout. But, let me try to shut out battle thoughts just now, though my soul is all afire with eager thirst for victory to the “good cause. . . .”

Monday. [22 July 1861]

I send Cousin Bill some copies of the “South” to read, as he may be “down” from his knee. I wish to call his particular attention to [Severn] Teakle Wallis’ noble report upon the wrongs inflicted upon Maryland—and to the secret history of Fort Sumter. This last proves a deliberate conspiracy on the part of the Administration for the purpose of involving the country in war, and is damning evidence against those exalted patriots. I have private advices from Capt Nicholas and others of Elzey’s brigade at Manassas, fully confirming the report of their great share in the victory of the 20th. They marched 40 miles in two days, with no provisions, and *ran four miles* to the battle, through crowds of wounded, every one of whom told them this day was lost, but begged them for God’s sake to hurry forward. Their first fire scattered the Zouaves, and they all fought like veterans, using the bayonet fiercely, charging regiment after regiment & capturing *two* batteries. John Berryman has a wound 13 inches long, but is so kindly nursed by the Richmond ladies that he says he will get wounded again. This is his *second* wound. He is a Baltimore County boy, remarkably handsome, and very popular with the ladies. Though shot through & through the stomach, he will get well. Hicks, the man whose head was blown off, was half-brother to the Governor—he used to work in this neighborhood, for Tom Worthington—and was a worthless sort of fellow. . . .Your own Edward

Friday. July 26. [1861]

Dear Darling

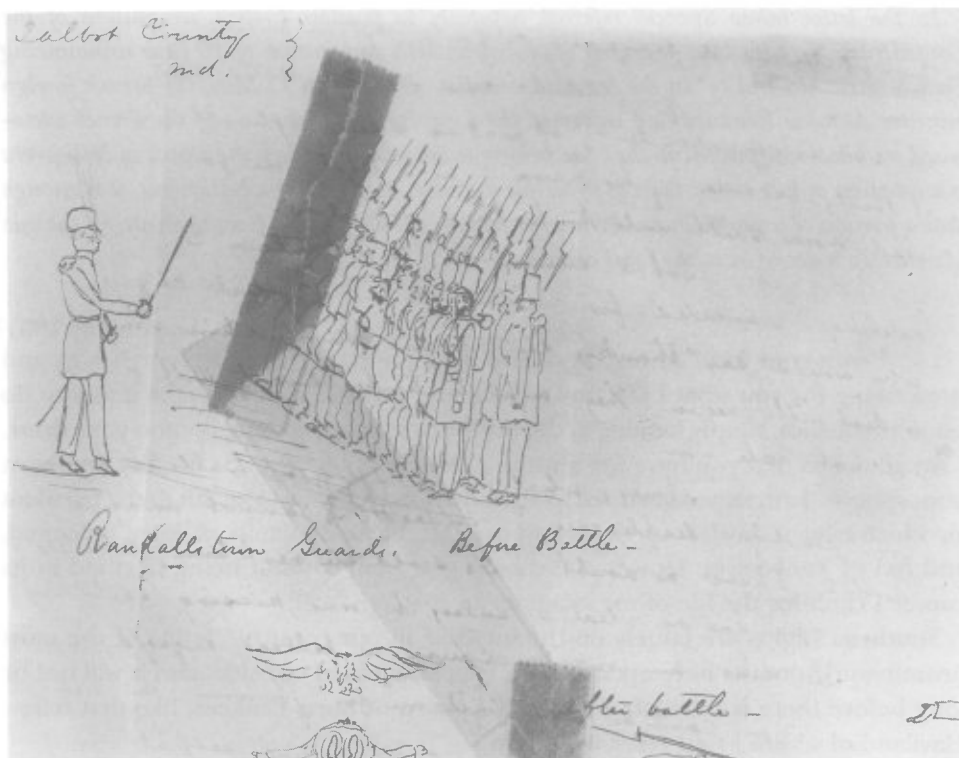
I am so extremely unwell that writing is almost beyond my powers, and nothing but the fear lest you should be doubly uneasy without it, dictates this brief letter. . . .

There are little news. Some Southern particulars & private advices concerning the battle begin to creep in, and many of them most distressful. It was the Maryland Guard who bore the brunt of the fight on Thursday, and their losses are said to be

heavy. There is intense anxiety in B. for further news of these brave fellows. Rumor says that but for their impetuosity the Yankees would have suffered even more terribly than they did. Beauregard intended his men to fall back gradually, yielding all the outworks until he had the enemy fully within the circle of his batteries, but the Guard would not be controlled, charged, and whipped the Yankees before the time. I know of one very sad case, a neighbor of Aunt C's, named Hughes. His two sons age only 15 & 17 *ran away* & enlisted in the Guard, and had already won golden favors, one of them being promoted, the youngest lieutenant in the army. On Monday some friends brought in the corpse of one, killed Thursday, and news that the other poor fellow was mortally wounded! Is it not awful to think of? The Southerners wreaked a terrible vengeance on the Fire Zouaves, and justly, for the villains murdered all the fifteen sick Confederates who were left in Centreville hospital. They were cut all to pieces by the dragoons of Alexandria, who remembered Jackson and the numberless outrages committed upon their relatives & friends in that unhappy town. . . . Ever your own devoted, Edward

[late July 1861]

. . . News from the great battle begin to come slowly in, and I have discovered that, in spite of all their attempts to conceal the extent of their disaster, the Federal losses will fully reach my first estimate, 15,000 killed, wounded, and taken—and many more cannon, small arms, and stores than I had any idea. The Associated Press has the impudence to say that 1000 will cover their loss, while the very same papers give the official returns from three regiments at 1330! In 17 regiments by their own statement, the loss exceeds 4000—and there were over 40 engaged. The Zouaves probably lost 800 men out of 1500—the Rhode Islanders say they lost but 114—while they have already forwarded 300 recruits to fill vacancies! They find great difficulty in recruiting—in spite of all they have said, the three months men will not reenlist—they say they have been treated too badly—and deserters are flying from their camps in every direction. The Federal forces are now much less than before Manassas, in spite of the 60,000 new recruits they claim to be sending on. This will give any unprejudiced person an inkling of the final event. It is rumored in town that poor Bill Murray was killed at Manassas, but I do not believe it. So many lies have been circulated that I do not feel like trusting any thing I see. But it is certain that the war is going to end more favorably for the South than anyone had a hope for. France has laid down her ultimatum, that the “rebellion” must be conquered before October, or the new Confederacy is to be recognized. It is scarcely possible that there will be another attempt on Richmond before three months—meantime, its fortifications will be completed—Banks' army driven back & Butler shut up in Fort Monroe. The defences of Memphis will be strengthened with all the resources of the Confederacy, so as to make the Mississippi impassable. Fremont's expedition from Cairo will have to give place before the uprising in Missouri, which is becoming more formidable every day, and the Mississippi flotilla will not be built until the Government has enough vessels in the Atlantic to make the blockade complete. Meantime, the Federals will have to strain every nerve for the defence of



The Randallstown Guards, as depicted by Edward Spencer, before and after the Battle of Bull Run or Manassas. (Collection of the author.)

Washington, and the Southern army, efficient already, will be perfecting itself in drill & equipment. Arms are being manufactured & cannon cast in immense quantities. Privateers are beginning to make themselves severely felt by the Federal commerce. Wise will be able to mature his defences in Western Virginia, and the course pursued by Congress tends more and more to alienate Kentucky. Maryland is like a volcano, shivering already with the eruption about to take place—while old Scott stuffs himself upon pate's de Perigood, and Abe Lincoln cracks ribald jokes at the White House. Hurrah for the C.S.A.!

The troops in our neighborhood make their presence continually felt. They beat some fellows very severely a week since—on Monday last they searched Ridgely's premises very strictly for arms, though the old man is a great Unionist. Clay gave them a wild goose chase about his barns, in the hay and straw, and they left in high dudgeon, finding nothing, although one of the famous Md. Guard muskets was standing in a corner of his bedroom. They took it to be a shot gun. This has made the young man more of a Secessionist than he ever was before. . . . Ever your own, Edward

In the letter below Spencer referred hopefully to possible French recognition of the Confederacy, perhaps after learning of Napoleon III's declaration of 10 June announcing French "strict neutrality" in the American conflict. Earlier, on 11 May, the French foreign minister Antoine Edouard had informed the Lincoln administration of the French view—based on historical precedent—that "according to international law the status of belligerent is a question of fact rather than of principle and that, to be called a belligerent, it is enough that a portion of a people in revolt have possession of only enough force to create, in the eyes of neutrals, a doubt as to the final outcome."

[c. late July 1861?]

. . . I owe your kind Aunty a grateful debt for taking care of your health and prescribing for you what I am sure will do you good—unless you take it as you do other medicines, simply looking at the bottle, or at most, spilling it upon your dress. I am glad also that you have for a while a chance of breathing a healthy Southern atmosphere. I am almost inclined to attribute some of your ill-health to the pestilent air which sweeps down from the North over Mt. Pleasant, damp, chilling, befogged, and full of Yankeeism. How it could have got there without being purified in its course I can't for the life of me imagine.

Southern Rights are largely on the increase in our country. Some of the most prominent Unionists have opened their eyes and joined our side, and it will not be long before there is only left a corporal's guard of born Yankees, like that fellow Haviland of whom I told you a while ago.

Congress has proved to be so entirely abolitionized, and has so entirely crushed out freedom of speech for the purpose of serving their base ends, that it will not be very long before all reasoning men, not blinded by prejudice or interest, join the side of right and honor. Our privileges and liberties under the Constitution are too familiar to our minds, too dear to our hearts, to be finally surrendered without a struggle. I see a great many extracts from Northern Conservative and Democratic papers and I find that they are beginning to recognize the fact that this is an Abolition war—that the South must yield unconditionally—or be conquered—or have her slaves proclaimed free, without recompense—or, win the victory. She'll do the last.

England and France are sure to admit the Confederacy among nations before Jan. 1st and rumor has it that Mr Seward [William H. Seward, Lincoln's secretary of state] is in receipt of an autograph letter from Napoleon, announcing that if the rebellion be not suppressed before October, his government will recognize the C.S.A. That may all be fudge, nevertheless, it is a fact, and an extremely significant one to those who know the . . . French Emperor, that Agents of his Government have been in the South sometime, profiting by low prices to make large purchases for cash. They bought 1,000,000\$ worth of tobacco in N. Orleans not long ago, and paid for it in gold. Of course the blockade must be raised before these goods can be made available. And there are two facts which none but blind partisans of Lincoln can fail to see: 1. The English Cotten Spinners must and will have their supply next fall. 2. The only possible way in which to secure that is to raise the blockade—and England knows it. Their agents are well informed about the Southern forces. . . .

Home. Aug 6 [1861]

My dearest life

. . . I am *very, very* lowspirited, and get worse instead of better—indeed expect to be thus depressed for some time. Honey, you must not scold me this time, nor find fault with me for giving way. I cannot help it—and God knows I have cause enough for being so. . . . I will schedule the matters that combine to harass me—perhaps talking them over with you will ease me—indeed I know so. I will not touch the old song about literary disappointments & blights—reduced circumstances &c—these are but make weights. I will class the troubles now vexing me.

I. *Our* bother, involving a painful sense of injustice done me, and utterly depriving me of the pleasure I have dreamt so much about—for darling, I do not see how it is possible for me to visit Mount Pleasant, after what you have so delicately said in your last letter. II. The miserable uncertainty of my own domestic affairs. III. The political condition of things, and especially of Maryland.—I will go over these with you, in order, taking the last clause first.

Honey, I *fear* the result of this war. Unless something occurs to arouse the North *very* speedily, the *war is over*. I read the course of events in this fashion: No advance upon Washington (I fear), strong movements in the West, looking to the complete rescue of Missouri, and possibly the capture of Cairo—England's offer to mediate, accepted South, rejected by Lincoln—terrible reaction in favor of Peace in the North—overthrow of the war party—acceptance of England's terms. This will secure Washington to the North—consequently, will *force* Maryland North. Our only hope is in the renewal of the war spirit (which seems hardly likely—they got only 25 recruits last week in N. Y.) or in the speedy conquest of Washington by our friends. I have never urged this hitherto—but anything—riot, civil war, burnings, murder, all desolation and misery, rather than the infamous servile misery of submitting like a whipt cur to the Lincoln dynasty. I love Maryland well, but I cannot and will not stay here with that shame resting upon us. I cannot and will not be the fellow citizen of men who so persistently lick the foot that spurns them. Our party is about to be reorganized under the august banner of Peace, and, as it is entirely essential for us to carry the fall election, I will submit to the disguise—but I am for war, ruthless war, if need be, till our rights are fully recognized. I shall fling myself into the campaign with ardor, and shall spare no exertion to forward the “good cause”, how I can. Even if we fail I shall reap honor, if not profit—and make myself better known for what I am. As soon as the plans for operation are developed, I mean to see if I cannot get up a campaign paper for the county—one that will aid the cause as well as put money in my purse. We must carry things through “with a rush”, and when we once begin the war, give the enemy no breathing space. But honey, it is a very bad case for us here in Maryland. It is probably that Baltimore will be made a central military depot—large bodies of troops concentrated there, and the influence of large sums of money unscrupulously profited by. The habit of submission to wrong rapidly grows upon a people—and we have had none to stand up for us. The Marylanders are our noble advocates in Virginia, having won the great battle—but they are a small brigade—scarce 2000 in all—and it is doubtful if the South will look

upon our redemption as necessary or as justifying the risks. And oh my love, the fear I have that things may go again our honor is so keen, so painful. Sooner anything than that. I would give my only life tomorrow, a willing sacrifice, to secure our cause, and I cannot be happy in the contemplation of its failure. Still, there is chance—some noble, glorious souls we yet have—Mallis, May, Whyte, Brown, Kane &c—who will spare no heroic effort to secure our honor—and I desire to be enrolled among that band, to do as they do—to suffer what they suffer.

II. My own affairs necessarily give me great worry, honey, more from the uncertainty about my arrangements than anything else. I do not know what I am to do—I have no less than *four* different plans for our future, all dependent upon contingencies, and it will be impossible for me to elect in favour of any one of them until certain events transpire, the waiting for which is terribly irksome. I want to be *doing something*, yet my hands are completely tied. Write I cannot, because no money repays the labor. I want to see my preparations for your reception in progress—my program for married life fixed upon—but I can do nothing, know nothing, until our uncertain business affairs have made further progress. I know these things should not worry me—I know that in the worst event we will have enough of necessaries—I know that you are content & will be satisfied with the provision I am able to make—yet I cannot help being terribly worried. This joint farming does not suit me—things are not managed, as I think they should be, and so, I get provoked. I am anxious to make a complete change, so that we can be entirely to ourselves, and I will in the course of a year, but these hard times interfere here again, and prevent me from arranging immediately, as I wish—as I ought to do. But for this wretched war, how nicely I could have fixed things—I would have had a house of my own—and money in plenty. As it is, I will have no money scarcely, and will not be able even to fix the house comfortably. If there is a thing in this world I hate, it is being poor—and to be so from no fault of my own, but because a villanous party have chosen to sustain their base ends by an internecine war, is doubly vexatious, doubly destructive of my little patience.

III. Honey, you will say that I am a very bad boy and do not deserve the happiness of such love as yours. Yet . . . I have sad cause for being depressed. I have unfortunately been the means of making unpleasant your position in your own family—I have angered your relatives against myself, and that anger has reacted upon you, my own sweet darling. How can I think of this without pain and sorrow? But, honey, in addition to the grief, there is another feeling, which has been growing rapidly, which I have sought to control, but shall now give free course to. This is *indignation*. You told me once that I did not know Cousin Em—I acknowledge it—but I think I know her now, much better, since these last letters of yours especially—and I am very sorry to think that this increased knowledge lowers her *very much* in my opinion. I knew that she was, so to speak, “snappish”, but I did not condemn her here for I was aware that she has suffered much, *very much*, in health, and has had both pains & disappointments enough to make any one’s temper unhappy. I knew that she had bitter & unreasonable prejudices, but these I rather pitied than condemned as the necessary result of such a one-sided, secluded, sectional, high-

Church life as she has accustomed herself to. But honey, now I discover that there is more than this. She is *noli me langere*. Offend her, and she hates you. Convince her she is wrong, and you wound her more deeply than ever. She is your sister, honey, but—you are to be my wife, and I say to you what I feel, knowing that you will not be angry, but will simply correct me where I am wrong. Now, I am thoroughly convinced that I will be an unwelcome guest to her—that she has come to almost dislike me—altogether, perhaps, and will *wonder* at my obtuseness, if I venture to visit my darling. And I will tell you why this great change in her feelings towards me has come about—a *great* change it is, for I know perfectly well that she positively *loved* me and was very proud of me when I came down in November after poor Tom's death. There were several slight specks of cloud during Xtnas—that unlucky business of the present among others, my whisky drinking, &c. But it was my next visit that set the bale fairly in motion. There was some pique against me, for coming inopportunately & for having taken strong Secession grounds. Then I would talk—I would not defer to the Captain's judgment (permissible on *her* part but a terrible misdemeanor in all others;) I abused the bishop; I spoke of the cowardice &c governing Union shriekers; I rejoiced over Sumter, sympathized with Pratt St &c; Then, on my way across the bay (the only time I was ever *glad* to leave Mt P. honey) I had whisky aboard & I got tight in Annapolis. *You* may not have heard of these things—the Captain *has* doubtless—& Cousin Em does not consider how much *she* had to do with it—she only says: to think of the man who is to marry *my* sister, buying whisky at Tim Dyot's & drinking with St. M. oystermen! Monstrous, unpardonable crime! I'm afraid Brad will fare badly &c—inoreover, he has had the impudence to dare write to Cousin Bill assailing his party—to. . . Captain Harrison! *the* man of St. M. 'deestric'—*my* husband! Who ever heard tell of the like? He sends "rebel poetry" to us, to insult us. He asserts that he is free to differ in opinion with us, so much older & wiser than he—he no longer submits, but claims equality of manhood with Cousin Bill—is recognized as a member of rebel conventions—is approved by people we dont like—and seeks to revolutionize the state & bring the terror to our very own doors. He has (more than all) made a rebel of Braddie. She not only dares to differ with us in opinion, but she ventures to take his part. He has made a pipe-smoker of Cousin Bill—who knows but he may also make a whisky-drinker of him, or perhaps even a Secessionist—and then, he'll have to go to war. To cap the climax, his influence is so excessive with Braddie, that he has persuaded her to tell him what was said about him—in consequence of which he actually takes me to task, accusing me of treating her unjustly!

This is not an exaggerated picture, honey, and what irks me in the matter is not Cousin Em's petulance or ill-temper, but her selfishness and injustice. She *knows* she has not done right—yet is most angry at being told she is wrong. In consequence, she views all I do in an unfavorable light—takes up all she can against me. She thinks I take it too free and easy at Mount P—stay too long when I do come—make too free—are in the way. She obeys my letter to the *letter*—but is sedulous to infringe upon the *spirit* of it, by making you feel as uncomfortable as silence, coldness & reserve can do so. This is both wrong and ungenerous. What must I do, honey?

Nothing, but *keep away* and preserve my own independence. I shall *certainly and positively* make *no more visits* to Mount P. until things are completely changed. I will come over before long, for a day & night—and you may look for me right speedily—but no more *visits*. I may go to Queen Anne's, with Bob, in our carriage, and if I do so, I will spend a week in Talbot, but you must go to Long Point with me, and to Susie's, and the rest of the time we'll give to visits and calls where we please.

This is the law and the gospel of it, honey. I will be greatly pleased, sincerely rejoiced, if you can show me that I have overstated matters, or been harsh in my judgment—but you must not hope to persuade me that I will be a *welcome* visitor at Mount P. and I am sure you will not wish me to go where I am not welcome. I shall not take further pains to deprecate the wrath against me. On the contrary, I don't care a fig what they think or say, and if it would be done consistently with your welfare and comfort, I'd write Cousin Em a plain letter, and have it all out at once. As it is, I shall say nothing—and when I come, and while I am with you, I intend being the most stolid Know Nothing you ever say—a genuine stranger, *your* acquaintance—*your* guest. So you must prepare to give me your time in the parlor, and to see me shun the dining room as much as possible. Some of these days, when things are changed, we will have our meet and proper revenge. Our party will be triumphant, and I will have the chance to screen them from inflictions such as they calmly witness towards us. We will entertain them as our guests, and if it breaks me, they shall be handsomely entertained. We will sooner or later have the opportunity of showing them that they have misjudged us both—and that will suffice. Meantime, darling, we will be patient, we will do what we can to keep bad from lapsing into worse, we will forget the present, for the sake of debts and obligations in the past, we will encourage their virtues to hide their faults—we will blame as little as can be—and we will love one another, more fervently than ever. . . .

At Wilson's Creek, Missouri, 10 August 1861, Confederate forces under Sterling Price defeated Unionists commanded by Gen. Nathaniel Lyon.

In the dining room. Aug 11th 1861

My dearest—

Scene—downstairs (out of oil!), Mother, Aunt C., Uncle Tom & 6 children singing loud hymns—Edward sick & in a bad humor—no letter—flies—heat—noise—boils—only the glorious rumors from Missouri, of Lyon's capture, to save his many wounds. . . .

I am too unwell, too low-spirited, and there is too great a confusion of noises here for me to write. I have no news to give you—things with me are at the lowest ebb in every respect, and I am more and more fretful and impatient from day to day. It is a mean low way to be in & and I am perfectly aware that I do very wrong to indulge such idle peccant humors—but indeed I cannot help it. I am borne down by the endless variety of my troubles, things for which I am not accountable and over which I have no control. The black grim devil of war, the turbulent imp of civil discord seems to have invaded every household, and to have flung his despicable embitter-

ments into every heart. God have mercy upon this miserable land—certainly man has ceased to compassionate [be] it.

The indications now are of a speedy advance on the part of the Confederates towards Washington—and this promises us of Maryland a succession of untold horrors. If the Federal forces are driven back through our state they will ravage and lay waste with the ruthless fury of Cossacks. There is no calculating, no imagining the horrors that will be heaped upon us. Baltimore I fear will be the signal victim of their revengeful hatred—indeed I am sure that our city will experience the utmost limits of their impotent and fury. Missouri has been rescued—Virginia is safe—*through war*—but poor old Maryland, which Hicks has been so anxious to *save*, is to be plunged into the profoundest depths of intolerable misery through him and his party—or else, to remain a conquered Yankee province. I begin to think of merciless revenge towards these authors of our ruin when I contemplate the position of affairs—and there are many, very many like me. There are ropes enough in reserve for the betrayer of the people—the authors of our ruin.

I have been planning a severe letter to Seward, about Abe's correspondence with our contemptible Congressmen, in reference to searching Jim Ridgely's house. As minister for foreign affairs, I shall ask him to explain Lincoln's letter, & shall sprinkle some caustic references through the letter, which I mean to publish over my own name & with my residence, deliberately taking the consequences. This may be hazardous, but I do not care—a letter at once so infamous in purport, and so ungrammatical in form, should not be suffered to go unanswered—and, if old Abe has *any* feeling, I mean he shall feel the weight of what I say. You shall have a copy when it comes out—and I do not doubt but you will *hear* about it, elsewhere.

I have just been enabled to get a clear idea of the late battle, a plan of which I have drawn from McDowell's report. A = Bull's Run. B = Manassas. C: Centreville. On Thursday McDowell advanced as far as E. & attacked Blackburn's ford, R—but was beaten back. Friday, under pretence of burying his dead, he put up field-works at E, on the high-grounds. Sunday morning, placing Miles at G, as a reserve, he marched his army from Centreville out on the Warrenton road (W) in 3 divisions. Tyler with one, went straight on to the stone bridge (L.M.). Hunter, turning off on the road N, went as far as the ford O, four miles beyond Stone Bridge, while Heintzelmen crossed at P. The battle began as soon as Hunter's cannon announced that he was over. The Confederates were in small force—the junction seven miles away, so, during the day they were driven back across the turnpike as far as the stone house, T, where Sherman's battery was taken. At 4 o'clock, the Marylanders, under Elzey (Q) came up from the railroad, attacked Hunter's wavering forces in flank & decided the battle, though the Federals would have been whipped anyhow in half an hour more. There were no "masked batteries"—one battery alone was placed at Stone Bridge, and that the Federals never took. Hunter, Heintzelman & Tyler had about 35000 men in attack—the Confederates only had eight thousand during the morning, five thousand reinforcements from the Junction & Elzey's three thousand at 4 o'clock. It was a pitched battle fought in the *open field*—the Federals had a larger artillery & double the force—besides over a thousand regulars—and they were

I have just been in
battle, a plan of which I have



beyond Stone Bridge, while Heintzelman's
The cannon announced that he

Plan of the Battle of Bull Run or Manassas, 21 July 1861, sketched by Edward Spencer.
(Collection of the author.)

repulsed—defeated—routed—ruined. Yet they talk of conquering the South! If the war lasts long enough to enable the Confederates to organize their army completely, the war will become one of aggression, and Philadelphia and New York will not be safe. And if France cooperates with the Confederacy, another year may witness the utter destruction of the U.S.—and half a dozen miserable republics north of Mason & Dixon's to compete with one grand united South. . . .

Home—Aug 13th Tuesday night

My own dearest Braddie—

. . . The weather is extremely rough and blustery. This has been a real November day, and the wind howls now with dismallest reminders of the "sere and yellow leaf." It has given great chagrin to Belle and Sue, who were to have gone with Bob and myself tonight to a party at Tom Worthington's. I cannot say that I am much dissappointed, as I dont care for such amusements, and am neither in health nor spirits to enjoy myself—still, I should have gone to accommodate the children—though I cannot remember having been to a party since poor dear Kate Harrison was married. I suppose however I should have "faced the music" decently, though the fiddles would not have been likely to charm my legs out of their habitual inaction

on carpets. I dont dance, and, luckily for my character as man of grace, I make no pretensions that way, and have no aspirations after terpsichorean excellence. . . .

There are various indications astir . . . which render it almost *certain* that the theatre of this war is speedily to be transferred to our own state, until we are completely rescued and the invaders driven across the Susquehanna. The Confederate Congress have passed an act which is useless unless Maryland is invaded: providing for the organisation of volunteers from our State into companies. I think now that I can discover their designs for a simultaneous advance at every point—the investment of Fort Monroe—the expulsion of Rosenkranz [Gen. William S. Rosecrans] & [Gen. Jacob D.] Cox from Western Virginia—the capture of Lyon & rescue of St. Louis, an attack upon Washington & the emancipation of our own state. Energetic movements of the forces already in the field will be ample for these purposes, and, unless the Northern armies are very speedily & *largely* reinforced, Washington *must* fall.

The plans for this end are I think, as follows, and as set down in this map of the Potomac river. That river is being fortified between Acquia & Point Matthias (G & E) so that the Confederates will have complete control of it there. They have a large number of boats, scows &c there & in the Rapahannock (D). Lee & Wise are to defeat Rosenkranz (R) & drive him back, then returning to Romney (L) unite with Johnson (J) & defeat Banks (B) whose retreat on Washington will be prevented by Confederates crossing at Leesburg (M). Then, this army of 50000 will attack Washington Georgetown way—20000 be thrown across into Charles County from G & D, to operate in the rear, while Beauregard with 90000 attacks Arlington Heights.

Such an attack with 150000 men & 400 cannon will be utterly irresistible. Scott *cannot* concentrate *more* than 150000 men in Washington, & one Southern soldier is worth *at least* two Yankees. If Washington is taken, Maryland can be swept & Fort McHenry secured before the North has time to recover from such a shock—and *then*, England and France will interfere, as they are already preparing to do. Such, I hope & believe, is the program of operations. But it will be a terrible calamity for Maryland, if a defeated Northern army should retreat through her borders. They will burn and ravage with a ruthless severity such as has never been witnessed in modern times. And my darling, I mean to take the field as soon as the call comes—you will not say me nay, I am sure. I am a citizen of Maryland, a son of the South & every man must do his best in aid of those who come to defend us. They will want soldiers—every arm from Maryland will be an additional guarantee that they will not desert us, and I hope also, an additional argument in favor of that speedy peace which must be extorted from the North. I believe that 200000 men under arms in Maryland and Washington once destroyed, will bring us peace forthwith, for it will reduce the Federals to a naval war & Europe will never permit that. . . .

I would be glad indeed, my darling, to believe that Cousine Em bears me no ill-will, for certainly I love her very much, though not blind to her faults—but I am afraid it is your eagerness to see me which makes you think so. It is of small consequence to me what she & her party say of me politically, for I feel with John Breckenridge

when he told the mob that sought to howl him down the other day in Baltimore: "Poor fellows—it matters little what you say—*you* may revile me—but your children will *bless* me." But I am very sorry that she is not able to distinguish between the private man and his public faith, and that she dislikes me because I act up to the teachings of my reason, the sure convictions of my experience, and the dictates of my strong sense of right. . . .

Home. August 15th—Thursday night.

Dearest

. . . Friday. During the past ten days I've been trying to resume my occupations & forget myself by getting out a new series of "Rebel Poetry", apropos to the more recent occurrences—and I have written several pieces that have at least the merit of being *very* full at once of bitterness and "treason." I will send you copies as they come out. . . . I shall probably publish my letter to Mr. Seward also.

Our people are flocking South, to the army—and *my* regiment is being formed—it is composed of the members of our Convention—Governor Lowe Colonel—Elias Griswold (of Cambridge) Major—&c. I hope they will save *me* a place, in case they come to Maryland. The Federal army has been *badly* defeated in Missouri, leaving their dead & wounded on the field & one cannon—and making a forced retreat of over 100 miles. Lyon, who was killed, was driven to attack *one* division of McCulloch's army, to prevent his communications from being cut off. Dont trust Federal accounts. I always analyse them, with the map before me, and I can now pronounce the deliverance of Missouri a certain thing. The retreat of the Hessians upon St Louis will give McCulloch 20000 recruits for his army—Jeff Thompson at once menaces Cape Girardeau (above Cairo) and gets control of the lead region, and in a short time the whole state outside of St Louis will be free again. I think that St Louis must fall when beseiged by the combined forces of Polk, Thompson & McCulloch—over 50000 men. Anyhow, such an army will prevent the Northwest from sending troops to Washington. . . .

After hard begging, the Government has only been able to raise \$50,000,000 in the North—and [financier August] Belmont is not likely to get much more in Europe—not enough to pay off the debts already incurred. Great changes are on the eve of taking place—the theatre of war *must* be transferred to Maryland before long, and we shall have a sharp agony of it for a while, but I hope it will be a brief one, to end in our certain emancipation. . . .

On 15 August a committee delegated by a convention of pro-Union men in Baltimore asked former peace-convention delegate Augustus W. Bradford to accept its nomination for governor on a Unionist platform. Bradford wrote his acceptance the 21st.

Home. Aug 17th 1861

My own Braddie—

Your dear letter was most welcome—real physic to my ailing soul and body. . . . Your second postscript, about Cousin Bill being hurt, was so indefinite as to give

me much concern. Is it a serious wound? I hope not, and that I shall hear on Tuesday it was but a trifling injury, from which he is already recovered. I am glad however that he was in *any* way prevented from being present at the Convention which nominated Gus Bradford, and wrote down a damning mark of infamy upon old Maryland's already tarnished fame. To read these resolutions, and know that they were adopted by *Marylanders*, in the face of what has taken place here during the past few months, is enough to give heart sickness to any man. The day is not far distant when Cousin Bill will congratulate himself upon the accident that prevented him from identifying himself with such a servile, infamous organisation.

...

I see, my pet, from your mildest estimates, that I shall have a very hard road to travel at Mount Pleasant. I wish the folks could be induced to forbear just a little their severe strictures upon my party while I am present. It would do them no harm, and would make my brief stay *much* more pleasant. However, I suppose I must submit, bearing it as well as I can. Traitor and rebel are easy enough to gulp, considering—but “thief”—*no!* The word was used offensively on a former occasion, you may remember—if it is so applied again, I shall be compelled, in self-defence, to retort according to my ability. I can't help what happens. I think I had better not come, anyhow, and I would not, much as I wish to see you, but for two reasons: You seem so very anxious for me to come now, and 2, if I postpone it, there is no certainty *when* I will be able to fold my dearling to my heart, for honey, at the rate at which events are hurrying now, a man is scarcely able to look forward with assurance for twenty-four hours. I am, I fear, in imminent peril of arrest, because of some recent matters (which I do not care to trust to paper) and moreover, I am hourly strengthened in the conviction that the Confederates intend an almost immediate advance into Maryland. The Potomac is nearly fortified now—in a few days it will be utterly impossible to Federal vessels. Rosenkranz will be cut off, “wiped out,” by Lee, the best strategist in the land. McCulloch and Hardee will bring 50000 men against St. Louis. Then, Lee and Johnston combine to drive out Banks—and march 50000 men down the Potomac, while Beauregard, sending 30000 into Charles County, to take Annapolis, the railroad & Baltimore, operates in person against Arlington Heights with 50000 more. The Confederates have 240000 men, *well drilled* in the field—and these operations will not require more than 150000 in all. It can and *will* be done—unless I am *very* mistaken. The Federal army is terribly disorganized—they are not recruiting any new men scarcely—and many regiments are in such a state of insubordination that they dare not lead them into the field. This will bring about consequences in Maryland of such a character that no one can foresee what will happen to him individually. There is more to be dreaded from a *retreat* of the Federals through our State than from anything else—they will burn, ravage & destroy everything within their reach. Baltimore will suffer terribly—the hatred against it is malignant. . . .

Your sister's letter was very kind indeed—you must give my especial thanks to her when you write. . . . We will try to avail ourselves of her kind invitation, some of these days. It was rather funny though, in her trying to teach *me* anything about my

own darling . . . whom I know so very well, so much better than anybody else does. *She* cannot guess how much I will “possess” in my Braddie, nor how much she will be to me when she is my own darling wife. “A treasure”? Something more than that, Sister Mary. Treasures are not *always* blessings.

Now, my love, about that visit. If nothing prevents, I will go to Baltimore on Friday next, and be in St. Michaels, and see my darling, on Saturday, Aug 24th. I shall make a *very* short visit, honey, for I must return by the boat on Wednesday. It is imperative that I shall be in our famous village on Thursday 29th. So make up your mind to have as much as possible of me and to give me every moment of your time. It is precious . . . and oh, in these terrible times a thousand fold more so, because I cannot say certainly when I shall see you again. The war may come among us and snatch me off in its whirlwind—or I may be in Fort Lafayette. There is no telling, so sweetest, let us resolve to make the most of our brief meeting. Love, pure joyous holy love shall crown us and fill all the hours. . . .

Edward and Braddie married in Philadelphia 25 November 1861, at the home of Braddie's half sister (and not entirely with the approval of the Harrison family), and spent the rest of the war at Martin's Nest. While Edward's brother Bob fought in the Army of Northern Virginia, Edward cared for farm and family. At war's end, after selling off parts of the property to cover debts, Edward moved to Baltimore, where his writing won him a modest income and some acclaim. Sad times followed. Edward's mother died in 1881. The year after, only forty years old, Braddie succumbed to tuberculosis. Then in 1883, at age forty-nine, Edward himself died of grief, overwork, heart failure—or all three, as the newspapers said. Eliza Benson, now freed, courageously assumed charge of the Spencer children, living in a Baltimore boarding house. One of the children, Emily, was the mother of one editor of these letters and grandmother of the other; both editors acknowledge the loving work of another family member, Gellert Spencer Alleman, late professor of English at Rutgers University, who collected his grandfather's letters, diaries, plays, short stories, essays, and poems.

The old Spencer home still stands on Offut Road, Randallstown.

Book Reviews

Marylanders Who Served the Nation: A Biographical Dictionary of Federal Officials from Maryland. By Gerson G. Eisenberg. (Annapolis, Md.: Maryland State Archives, 199?. Pp. xiii, 275. Foreword, preface, introduction, index. \$17.95.)

This book delivers more than it promises. Taken prosaically, as the reader is supposed to take it, it serves up a no-nonsense dictionary of Maryland political biographies—a boon to researchers on a dull day buried in the bowels of the Maryland Historical Society. Taken lyrically, and this is more fun, it treats the reader to a delightful, uncommon journey. Here is a guided tour across nearly four hundred years—Cecilius Calvert through William Donald Shafer (whose mother was named “Tululu”)—of what amounts to Maryland’s ruling classes.

One by one, provincial figures and state, each is meticulously set forward as to his or her critical dates, parents, education, children, positions held, and so on. The result is a rich tapestry, artlessly interwoven and best described as a happy blend of *Who Was Who* and the *Almanach de Gotha*. It’s a rare Maryland native who can leaf through these pages without spotting here a distant cousin, there a former neighbor, yonder a once-gleaming political leader now dusted over by history.

Usefully, surely, the Calvert family is sorted out and pigeonholed, all fifty-four members. Devilishly, perhaps, Frederick Calvert is reported to have had five children, “all illegitimate,” including Henry Harford, proprietor of Maryland between 1771 and 1776. By contrast Philip Key, an eighteenth-century congressman, had seventeen children—all apparently legitimate. Others had twelve or thirteen.

Maryland’s five justices of the Supreme Court—notably Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney, a political “Coodie,” or prewar Federalist—are reported in detail. So are its eighty-five governors: Spiro Agnew is said to have “resigned” as the state’s only Vice President of the United States; why is not mentioned. About Marvin Mandel “bribery charges” are clearly mentioned. Stevenson Archer, Jr., a nineteenth-century congressman, is dealt with even more harshly: “embezzling monies . . . found guilty and sentenced.” Still, the overwhelming majority of these leading Marylanders seem to have been not simply honest but honestly interested in serving the public.

Some had businesses, many had law practices. Farmers and planters abounded, as did army officers, Union as well as Confederate. One political leader managed, by a fluke, to graduate from the Naval Academy not just once but twice. Money alone seems not to have fetched these people. They were not, as a class, tycoons. Generally comfortable financially, yes; big, rich, and swingers, no. Fancy fortunes, early as late, seem to have attached to other Marylanders with different ambitions.

Particularly in the early days, education was sketchy. For every one who made it through the College of New Jersey (later, Princeton) or the University of Maryland,

two made it only through high school. For one, schooling was listed simply as "some." To be sure, some were teachers, a few at college level.

Simple men, perhaps, not aristokratia. Landed gentry was the ambience predictable in early years. Old family names in public office—Archer, Beall, Bowie, Byron, Calvert, Carroll, Kerr, Lee, Sprigg, Thomas—tended to recur through the generations, usually father to son. Men predominated overwhelmingly, men born on their family's country estate, to study and to work nearby. After a taste of the great world of public service, their names end up on tombstones in the family cemetery. It was a pattern staid, responsible, echoing not a little of British customs. Later years saw old lines fade into new ones, less readily discernible.

Maryland by all odds was the most common place of birth, followed far off by Pennsylvania and Virginia. England in the provincial years offered many natives, often titled. In the late eighteenth century, Northern Ireland sent James McHenry, a doctor destined to sit as a Maryland delegate to the Continental Congress, then serve as secretary of war. Russia, near the turn of the nineteenth century sent Daniel Ellison, who would become a Baltimore office holder and, in the 78th Congress, a city representative.

The book thus functions on two levels. First, by its own definition, it stands at the service of the scholarly fact hunter. Second, it is a broad social canvas on which are sketched for inquisitive Marylanders the parts played by their forefathers over the long roll of four centuries. Double indices furnish guides suitable to both sorts of reader. Neither sort is likely to be disappointed.

BRADFORD JACOBS
Stevenson

Your Maryland: A History. By Vera Foster Rollo. (Maryland Historical Press, Fifth Revised Edition, 1993.) Pp. xviii, 414. Appendices and index. \$17.95.)

Vera Rollo's *Your Maryland: A History* is a textbook aimed at students aged ten to fourteen. It is well-researched, competently organized, clearly written in language students are sure to understand, and examines in some depth a period of history (ca. 1600–1865) given little attention by most texts. Rollo, however, in an effort to intrigue her audience, presents an oversimplified picture of the past. While young students may not always understand complex historical phenomena, they should be urged to perceive basic human motivations.

The problems with this text (and in this it is representative of its genre) are twofold: first, it emphasizes the actions of a few elite people at the expense of broader social movements; and second, it often portrays historical figures as either righteous or sinister, without explaining the reasoning behind their actions.

Although Maryland Historical Press has just issued a revised edition of *Your Maryland*, little evidence suggests that Rollo has incorporated much recent historical work into her text. The excellent demographic and social history written on Maryland during the last two decades merits scant attention. Rollo, for example, does not explore the crucial role played by epidemiology during the seventeenth

century; she scarcely mentions mortality rates and their effects on Indian or European societies in early Maryland.

She adheres, instead, to the Important Man (or, occasionally, Woman) theory of history. She notes that "One man can often begin a chain of events" (p. 11) and "the fate of Maryland . . . often depended on only a few dozen men" (p. 69). *Your Maryland* is peppered with vignettes about important elite individuals—the Calverts, the Carrolls, Sir Francis Nicholson, John Hanson, George Washington, and so on. This approach breaks up the flow of broader themes in the book and leaves students, as most texts do, with the idea that history is primarily congeries of unrelated facts and stories to be memorized.

This tactic also undervalues the importance of social, economic, and cultural movements. John Wilkes Booth's broken leg and Kitty Knight's argument with a British officer get as much space as the origins of slavery. In another instance, Rollo implies that the practice of selling free blacks as slaves in Maryland almost vanished after a single kidnapper, Patty Cannon, was arrested (p. 234). In so doing, she ignores the significance of widespread social factors, such as racism and labor demand, in fostering this pernicious practice.

Rollo's text also suggests strongly that certain individuals and groups were "bad" and others "good" in a spectrum of ways. The French and their Algonkian allies were "cruel" and "merciless" during the Seven Years' War (p. 97), while American colonists evidently were not. Within Indian nations, hunting Indians were "cruel" and practiced the "strange custom of torture," while farming Indians were "more peaceable" (p. 36). Colonial criminal punishments like whipping were also "cruel," and the English legal system often unjust; in England, "a poor man faced severe penalties for even small crimes," while "men of wealth and rank usually fared better" (p. 73). (Rollo believes this situation has now changed for the better, a dubious assertion in a world that winks at insider trading and condemns petty theft.)

American colonists, and particularly Marylanders, fare better in Rollo's work than other groups. Maryland had few seventeenth-century prosecutions for witchcraft because Marylanders were less superstitious than New Englanders (p. 74). Colonials differed from Englishmen because they "learned to work and to respect work" (p. 115). The Founding Fathers all agreed that slavery was "a great evil" which would be gradually abolished (p. 130). (One is left to wonder, as they respected work and hated slavery, why so many of them kept slaves.) And, of course, the British government was usually ill-intentioned, not simply confounded, during the Revolutionary era; its attempts to placate colonists during the 1760s were really meant only to "beguile" them into submission (p. 118). Rollo's portrayal of British corruption, however, sometimes becomes tangled. The cruel and unjust English legal system became the foundation for that of the United States, whereupon Rollo observes that "the English system of law . . . placed great emphasis upon personal property ownership as well as fair and just punishment for crimes" (p. 156).

American history texts usually celebrate more than they analyze or explain; Rollo's portrayal of Maryland's history as a morality play is not unusual. Most text authors try desperately to engage their students' attention, and one way to do so is to

populate one's book with heroes and villains. But such simplistic explanations are insufficient. Students need to understand the process of history, the motives and desires of people like themselves who happen to have lived centuries ago, and the implications of historical parallels for today's world. Of course colonial soldiers, like the French and their Indian allies, committed atrocities during the Seven Years' War—what nation, under the incredible pressure of battle, can claim an army of ideal men? Some Indians ritually tortured captives to assuage the social loss and grief of death, actions which became more common after Europeans brought epidemic disease to the New World. English and colonial courts did indeed whip criminals; no penitentiaries yet existed, and they had few other options. Puritanism, declining economic expectations, and governmental failure explain more about witchcraft in New England than assertions of superstition. And while slavery was a radical system of exploitation, it was also immensely profitable; the Founding Fathers were Great Men with lofty thoughts, but they could balance their account books.

Simplifying motivation and human agency along with language and sentence structure gives students a distorted and naive view of the American past. My college freshmen are frequently outraged, for example, when they first read a balanced analysis of the origins of the American Revolution, one that explains British reasoning and motivation as well as that of the colonists. As one recently demanded "What's the matter with this writer? Doesn't he know the Americans are always the good guys?"

Students are bombarded constantly with easy resolutions to the complexities of life, in hour-long dramas, three-minute rock songs and thirty-second sound bites. They need to learn that people from different cultures (and the past is, indeed, another culture) deserve, not to be stereotyped or dismissed, but to be understood.

CHRISTINE DANIELS

Michigan State University

Minute by Minute: A History of the Baltimore Monthly Meetings of Friends, Homewood and Stony Run. By Barbara C. Mallonee, Jane Karkalits Bonny, and Nicholas B. Fessenden. (Homewood and Stony Run Friends Meeting. Pp. xvi, 237. Bibliography and index. \$17.00.)

Mallonee, a convinced Friend, member of Stony Run and current chair of the writing and media department of Loyola College; Bonny, a birthright Friend, member of Homewood and retired educator; Fessenden, a convinced Friend, member of Stony Run and current head of the history department of Friends School, with the assistance of a number of dedicated helpers, have produced a fascinating history resulting from their researching over three hundred years of carefully prepared and safeguarded records of the meetings of the Society of Friends.

Minute by Minute describes two Baltimore monthly meetings of the Society of Friends (Quakers). It is the story of Quaker principles, Quaker outreach, and the activities of these meetings. But it is far more. The authors have gone beyond the

confines of the meetings' records to describe the roles individual Quakers played which impacted on the broader community.

The material in this new publication will be of interest to a larger audience than currently active Friends. Descendants of Friends, non-Quakers studying the Quaker experience, and particularly those studying specific areas of concern listed below will be intrigued to read about Quakers involved in these endeavors:

Abolition of Slavery and Help to Black Americans: Margaret T. Carey, Gerard T. Hopkins, Moses Sheppard, Joseph Townsend, and Elisha Tyson;

Aid to Indian Americans: George Ellicott, Gerard T. Hopkins, Evan Thomas, Philip Thomas, and Elisha Tyson;

Equality of Women: Anna King Carey, Elizabeth T. King, and M. Carey Thomas;

Education, Health and Philanthropy: Ellicott family, Johns Hopkins, Francis T. King, John McKim, Martha Ellicott Tyson, Moses Sheppard, Elisha Tyson, and Thomas Wilson;

Temperance: Mary W. Thomas.

The background of the Friends in Baltimore begins in about 1656, just four years after George Fox had founded the Society in England. In that year Fox sent Elizabeth Harris across the ocean as a missionary to the American colonies. She arrived in Anne Arundel County, where her efforts were well received, and when she returned to England in 1657 she left behind a group of convinced Friends.

The story of the Friends that Elizabeth left behind and their successors covers 337 years of witness to pioneering Quaker messages such as equality of all men in the sight of God, religious toleration, living a life motivated by decency, simplicity, utility, obligation to live in peace and harmony with one another, and democracy in government growing out of the individual's responsibility to God and his fellow human beings for personal conduct.

In *Minute by Minute* the reader's thoughts are turned to the wide acceptance today of many Quaker principles, including equality of man, religious freedom, women ministers, democratic government, and education for all, which were regarded as upsetting and impractical in the seventeenth century. In 1772 Baltimore Friends who had long opposed slavery required members to free their slaves. With regard to issues such as these the story reflects that, when meetings expressed a need but could not agree on what to do, members provided leadership by individual action and example.

Friends believed that not only did God speak directly to each human soul, but that the corporate meeting had a responsibility to guide its members. Books of Discipline, the first of which was published in England in 1668, set forth guides to members adopted by Friends meetings. *Minute by Minute* includes a list of topics and guides from the Discipline of the Yearly Meeting of Friends held in Baltimore in 1806. Over the years a large part of the records of Friends' monthly, quarterly, and annual meetings has related to discipline and the maintenance of unity. Ultimately unresolved differences led to a split in 1828 resulting in what are now

the Homewood and Stony Run meetings. After a long period of efforts to come together, the meetings approved a common faith and practice in 1968.

The 1988 Discipline titled "Faith and Practice" reflects both change and reaffirmation of Quaker beliefs. Disciplines covering personal conduct have moderated since 1806. They are now less judgmental and more discretionary. Change in Friends' discipline has been toward encouragement and away from prohibition.

Periods of war were difficult times for Friends. Many painful situations arose because the Discipline demanded "faithful adherence to our ancient testimony against wars and fighting." Many readers will be surprised to learn that 80.6 percent of Friends subject to the draft served in the military during 1940–1945 and 0.8 percent completely refused all alternatives and went to jail.

Readers of *Minute by Minute* will benefit from the importance placed by Friends from earliest times on keeping good meeting, family and personal records. Readers will also be interested in the Friends stair step system of preparative, monthly, quarterly, and annual meetings which offered encouragement and a wide range of opportunity for participation in men's and women's meetings.

The authors have divided their work into three parts. Part one—*In the Beginning; West River to Baltimore* by Barbara Mallonee—covers 1572 to 1828, when the meeting split; part two—by Jane Karkalits Bonny—is an 1828–1992 history of Homewood Meeting; and part three—1828–1990 by Barbara Mallonee and 1890–1992 by Nicholas Fessenden with Helen Fessenden—is a history of Stony Run Meeting and the long road to the coming together with Homewood again in 1968 after 140 years of separation.

Minute by Minute is highly recommended.

SAMUEL HOPKINS
Baltimore

The 1693 Census of Swedes on the Delaware: Family Histories of the Swedish Lutheran Church Members Residing in Pennsylvania, Delaware, West New Jersey & Cecil County, Maryland, 1638–1693. By Peter Stebbins Craig. (Studies in Swedish American Genealogy 3. Winter Park [FL]: SAG Publications, 1993. Pp. ix, 213. Appendix, bibliography, indices. \$37.50.)

Peter Stebbins Craig, a Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists, has used both Swedish and American sources, many not previously known, to identify 195 households in a four-state area and pinpoint their arrival in New Sweden. The basis of the book is a list of Swedes on the Delaware sent by Charles Springer in May 1693 to the postmaster of Gothenburg, Sweden. Although many transcriptions of the 1693 list have been published, each has been found to contain errors. Starting with the original copy of the list, Mr. Craig has used records in Sweden, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and Maryland to reconstruct the lives and families of these settlers. After an introduction tracing the history of Swedish settlement in America, the compiler has grouped the families by their membership in two congregations: the Wicaco and Crane Hook churches. Biographical statements are fully docu-

mented, although the compiler asks that anyone having additional information (even if it negates his own statements) contact him.

One of the author's purposes was to find everything that could be found on the lives of all the settlers. Not only did he examine the lifestyles of the well-to-do and influential, but he gathered all the available information he could find on the lives of ordinary men: their trials (including criminal proceedings) and tribulations, their migrations, relations with the Indians, and property disputes.

Not all of these settlers lived blameless lives or died peacefully in their beds, surrounded by loving family. Margaret, wife of Nils Mattsson, was indicted (but later acquitted) on the charge of being a witch. Catherine, wife of Lars Carlsson Lock, eloped with another man. Conraeth Groenburgh and others were fined for refusing to work on a dike. Dirick Johnsson was executed for murder, and Matts Hansson was murdered by Indians.

Several of these families moved into Maryland. John Wheeler left New Sweden by 1658 for Cecil County as did Johan Gustafson (1661), Anders Nilsson Friend (1710), and John Hansson (later known as John Hansson Steelman) (1695). Anders Mattson moved as far southwest as Baltimore County, where he died by May 1706. Anders Hansson moved to Kent Island and later Kent County. Andreas Derrickson migrated to Somerset County.

The book concludes with an appendix containing transcriptions of four letters written by Swedish settlers to friends and relatives back in Sweden, and two indices: one of place names and the other of personal names. Two well drawn maps by Sheila Waters showing the areas served by the two churches enhance the book's value.

The value of the book to students of migration history, colonial history, or family history is immense. Peter Craig is a lawyer who understands legal documents of the seventeenth century. A work-study grant enabled him to pursue his research in the Swedish Archives. The author of several books and articles on a number of Swedish-American families, he has brought his legal training, his research experience, and his love of the subject to create a book that students of history will find rewarding to study and interesting to read.

ROBERT BARNES

Perry Hall

Forged by Fire: Maryland's National Guard at the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904. By Dean K. Yates (Westminster, Md.: Family Line Publications, 1992. Pp. viii, 115. Notes, bibliography, index. \$9.50.)

This little volume will be of interest primarily to genealogists. A full three-fourths of the book consists of listings of the 2,000 National Guard members who were called to duty during Baltimore's fire of 1904. The name, rank, and length of service is given for each member of the First Brigade. Thirty-five civilians hired by the National Guard as cooks and laborers are also listed. Slightly more information, such as commission dates, is included for the nineteen members of the Naval

Brigade who were called to duty. Listings are by regiment, but an alphabetical index will simplify the researcher's task.

The small section of text (twenty-one pages) tells the story of the Guard's service during the Great Fire. From 7 to 23 February the Maryland National Guard patrolled the burned-out district, at first keeping the public out of danger as the fire burned, then later protecting property from theft and vandalism. According to Yates, this marked the beginning of the Guard's modern tradition of helping in cases of domestic emergencies.

That the National Guard had never been used in Maryland in this capacity before was demonstrated when Gen. Lawrason Riggs, commander of the First Brigade, called his troops to report for action. Most failed to appear, since they were already among the crowds watching the fire. After attempts to reach the members by telephone and telegraph failed, the officers finally remembered to sound the riot call on the City Hall bell.

Once on duty, the troops were at first disorganized and unprepared for this sort of work. Few had experience in crowd control or removing drunks from hotels and saloons in the path of the fire. Not only were they kept busy with the urgency of protecting the public from the fire, but they lacked adequate food and shelter. Some officers purchased sandwiches and coffee from local restaurants until a more regular arrangement could be set up. When troops were offered sleeping quarters in the city morgue, Capt. Jesse Slingluff declined the location as "uncanny and gruesome" (p. 12). The lack of protective clothing against the early February temperatures, which stayed at about fifteen degrees above zero, was another hardship. It is surprising that only two guardsmen died from pneumonia—the only two deaths caused by the Great Fire.

On the whole, Yates concludes, the Maryland National Guardsmen served the public well. They overcame the natural and self-imposed obstacles that faced them and established a tradition that would characterize their units in the twentieth century. This telling of the story of the Guard's role in confronting the catastrophic fire of 1904 completes another small piece of Maryland's history.

DEAN ESSLINGER

Towson State University

History of Baltimore's Streetcars. By Michael R. Farrell et al. (Sykesville, Md.: Baltimore Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, 1992. Pp. 312. Bibliography, glossary, index, notes. \$45.95.)

The need for an effective means of urban transport in the middle of the nineteenth century led to invention and experimentation to enable all-weather, high-capacity travel along unpaved and often hilly roadways without distressing the inhabitants. Muddy streets, limited horsepower, and steep terrain defeated the horse-drawn omnibus in its mission to provide cheap transportation for the working class. Raising the vehicle's wheels onto rails improved serviceability and capacity, but the ride was slow while hills were difficult to impossible. Small locomotives,

called “steam dummies” and disguised as carriages, fooled neither horses nor pedestrians with their billowing smoke and falling cinders. Andrew Hallidie’s invention of the cable car conquered the hills of San Francisco at nine miles per hour and fostered a boom in cable railway construction across the country. However, costs were immense and the cable travelled no more than twelve miles per hour. Various experiments with electric propulsion, including Leo Daft’s successful Baltimore and Hampden, evolved into Frank Sprague’s electric trolley system in Richmond, Virginia.

The development of the electric street railway dramatically altered the lives of Americans and grew into an industry of 44,800 miles of track, 295,000 employees, and 11.3 billion passengers by 1917. Factory workers moved to better housing some distance from their places of employment. Middle-class families created the suburbs. Farmers became less isolated from nearby towns. Commercial and entertainment centers prospered as the developing mass society moved to the tune of the singing trolley wire. Marylanders enjoyed the services of the Hagerstown and Frederick Railway; the Washington, Baltimore, and Annapolis Electric Railroad; the Washington Railway and Electric Company; and, in Baltimore, the United Railways and Electric Company.

The History of Baltimore’s Streetcars is the definitive study of the electric street railway in Baltimore. Originally published as *Who Made All Our Streetcars Go?*, Michael Farrell’s book presents developments in Baltimore with a particularly human treatment of a subject often left technically oriented by other authors. One of the “Who” was Farrell’s father, who served as a motorman for the United. Another was Gov. Oden Bowie, who was president of City Passenger for nearly a quarter century. T. Edward Hambleton’s Baltimore Traction Company employed the cable car, and Bancroft Hill led the Baltimore Transit Company in buying the Presidents’ Conference Committee streamlined streetcar in the thirties and forties. For whom the streetcars went emerges as equally important to Farrell. In a series of chapters titled “Streetcar Vignettes,” he reveals the impact of the trolley on lives and livelihoods with reflection on the folklore of the railways. His selection of photographs with people in them rather than roster shots reinforces his orientation toward the populations served by Baltimore’s streetcars. Moreover, he carefully includes photographs of city structures and ample maps to provide the setting for his readers. Lastly, his history includes the museum movement to preserve and interpret Baltimore’s streetcars for future generations.

Herbert Harwood and Andrew Blumberg enhance Farrell’s work with two new chapters, one expanded chapter, and a rich color portfolio. Although their styles are more technically oriented, they amply demonstrate that electric traction is alive in Baltimore with the Metro subway and Central Light Rail Line operated by the Mass Transit Administration and with the dedicated volunteers of the Baltimore Streetcar Museum. Together these authors give readers a finely crafted and illustrated history.

KENNETH H. RUCKER

National Capital Trolley Museum

- Did Pocahontas Save Captain John Smith?* By J. A. Leo Lemay. (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1992. Pp. xx, 144. Notes, index. \$22.50.)
- The Massawomeck: Raiders and Traders into the Chesapeake Bay in the Seventeenth Century.* By James F. Pendergast. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society Held at Philadelphia for Promoting Useful Knowledge, Volume 81, Part 2. (Independence Square, Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1951. Pp. vii, 101. Appendices, notes, index. \$15.00.)
- Powhatan Foreign Relations, 1500–1722.* Edited by Helen C. Rountree. (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1993. Pp. xi, 310. Notes, index. \$29.95.)

These three publications focus on the important Powhatan Indians and related tribes in the area of Colonial Virginia, two examining very controversial topics while the third brings new scholarship to the broader subject of the external relations of the Powhatans. All three probe interesting and challenging subjects with extensive research, but they do not answer definitively all of the intriguing questions that emerge in these studies.

J. A. Leo Lemay tackles the age-old question, “Did Pocahontas save Captain John Smith?” Examining primarily historical and literary sources, he aims his major assault at Henry Adams whose article in the *North American Review* of January 1867 asserted that Smith lied about being saved from the execution block by Pocahontas. This, some have suggested, revived the North-South hostilities of the American Civil War and amounted to what Lemay has termed “simple South-baiting” (p. 105). Lemay identifies the eight reports of Smith that Pocahontas saved him, including a letter in 1615 probably presented to Queen Anne at the time his *Description of New England* was delivered to Prince Charles (later King Charles I). While Smith did not refer in his *True Relation* of 1608 to the Pocahontas story, this 1616 letter became known only with the publication in 1623 of the prospectus of his *Generall Historie* released in 1624. Lemay calls special attention to William Wirt Henry’s challenge to Henry Adams in his 1875 article in *Potter’s American Monthly* and laments the limited recognition it received, perhaps because *Potter’s* was a minor magazine of its day in contrast to the highly respected *North American Review*. Lemay also reviews the various positions that historical and literary writers have taken over the centuries on this controversial subject, noting the changing views of some scholars. Relative to Smith’s adventures in eastern Europe against the Turks and others in 1601–1603, he identifies the sharp attack on Smith by the Hungarian writer Lewis L. Kropf in the nineteenth century, a criticism that Laura Polanyi Striker nullifies in the twentieth century with her use of Hungarian archives. This, however, relates only to the veracity of Smith about his European experiences, not about the Pocahontas episode. Lemay concludes with an endorsement of the position of Charles M. Andrews that the Pocahontas rescue “can be shown to be true in all probability” (p. 101), and he hopes to have ended the “Great Debate.” While he presents convincing arguments based upon historical and literary sources, there remain questions from ethno-historians about Powhatan customs. This caveat, for example, is stated in *The*

Powhatan Indians of Virginia: Their Traditional Culture (Norman and London, 1989) by Helen C. Rountree: "Some scholars have suggested that Powhatan's attempt to have Smith clubbed to death on an altar stone and Pocahontas's saving of him were all part of an adoption procedure. Aside from the serious problem raised by Smith's publishing the story for the first time seventeen years later, I doubt on ethnographic grounds that a rescue took place. Clubbing was a punishment for disobedient subjects, not a treatment for foreigners, except during a battle" (p. 121).

James F. Pendergast considers an equally difficult subject on the identification of the Massawomecks, who appeared in the Chesapeake area in the seventeenth century. He examines the many contemporary historical references to these Indians with particular attention to the journal of Capt. Henry Fleet, Indian trader during the 1630s. He also analyzes the many cartographic notations on a series of English and French maps that suggest locations but fail to provide precise identifications. Scholars since the seventeenth century have occasionally ventured a guess that the Massawomecks were the Eries, the Mohawks, the Senecas, or some other identification. The volume edited by Rountree on *Powhatan Foreign Relations* that follows in this review includes numerous references to the Massawomecks but includes only one brief conjecture that they were "probably Iroquoian, they were equally probably not one of the Five Nations Proper" (p. 217). John R. Swanton does not include the Massawomecks in his *Indian Tribes of North America* (Washington, 1952) and has only one passing reference to them in his *Indians of the Southeastern United States* (Washington, 1946). The Smithsonian's more recent *Handbook of North American Indians, Northeast*, volume 15 (Washington, 1978) likewise includes only two general references to them. What then can be done to identify this mysterious group?

On the basis of both English and French historical and cartographic records, Pendergast postulates that the Iroquoian Indians known to the French as Antouhonrons were the same as the Massawomecks identified by the English. He locates them prior to 1627 in an area east of the Niagara River from where they visited the Algonquians of the Chesapeake Bay area either as raiders or traders. Sometime before 1627 they were driven by enemies to a location near the headwaters of the Youghioghny River or of the North Branch of the Potomac River. From this position they engaged in fur trade with the English of the Chesapeake from around 1627 to 1634 as recorded by Fleet and several other writers. To test this hypothesis, Pendergast sets forth a problem-oriented archaeology model to confirm or deny his proposal. Archaeological data, therefore, are needed in contemporary sites in the Niagara region and along the headwaters of the Potomac, Monongahela, and Youghioghny rivers. Until this data or possibly further historical documents become available, Pendergast's answer remains the best solution to identification of the Massawomecks that has thus far eluded other writers.

Archaeological evidence is the key to the most significant contributions of the third book in this review, *Powhatan Foreign Relations, 1500-1722*. It is edited by Helen C. Rountree, anthropologist and ethno-historian, who is currently the leading authority on the Powhatans. In addition to her role as editor, she contributes the introduction, two and one-half chapters, and conclusions. She is joined by six other

scholars, all anthropologists except for one historian. These combined efforts provide a broad-based study of the external contacts of the Powhatans from the perspectives of archaeology, history, physical anthropology, and cultural anthropology.

Rountree describes the political organization of the Indians in the coastal plain of Virginia as a paramount chiefdom. Powhatan, whose Indian name was Mahunsonacock, was paramount chief during the early years of the Virginia colony but with less absolute authority over his subjects than Europeans often assumed. Yet John Smith recorded examples of his ruthless force against both individuals and some of the tribes in his chiefdom. The Powhatans, identified as all of the Algonquian-speaking natives of the Virginia coastal plain, are featured as extensive travelers with frequent contacts with other linguistic groups for trade for a variety of goods or often for war.

Douglas H. Ubelaker examines the human biology of Virginia Indians and presents the limited information now available in paleodemography. Life tables, skeletal samples, and geographic variations provide suggestions for tribal differences and for the impact of different diseases. Such information, however, seems to contribute less directly than other chapters to the major focus of the volume on foreign relations.

Randolph Turner III analyzes what he calls protohistoric interactions in the Powhatan core area before 1607. Examining historical records and adding especially archaeological evidence from the study of ceramic wares, he concludes that the evolution of the paramount chiefdom of Powhatan was of "a completely indigenous origin" (p. 93).

Jeffrey L. Hantman describes Powhatan's relations with the piedmont Monacans and incorporates the Mannahoacs along with them with the rationale that their culture was similar and that the two were a part of a "single sociopolitical entity" (p. 95). They are described as most likely of a Siouan speaking group with a population that equalled the Powhatans. Archaeological evidence contributing to the identification included the spatial distribution of ceramics, mortuary practices and burial mounds, lithic distribution including flint, and the role of native copper. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, both the Monacans and the Mannahoacs were enemies of the Powhatans, although later in the 1600s they were allied with their former enemies against the English. Examining the Monacans and Mannahoacs as one unit is convenient but not entirely convincing. More information is needed about both groups that could take the Mannahoacs out of the shadow of the Monacans.

Wayne E. Clark and Rountree next consider the relations of the Powhatans to Indians on the Maryland mainland. They trace the existence of petty chiefdoms and the evolution of some of them to the paramount chiefdom of the Piscataways and the Patuxent alliance. Both historical and archaeological evidence are used to suggest relations with the Powhatans that were essentially friendly and more sociopolitical than economic, although limited trade did exist. The intriguing question is raised about the relationship of the paramount chiefdoms of the

Powhatans and the Piscataways: which came first and how did one affect the other? This question remains for future consideration and may never be definitively answered.

Thomas E. Davidson moves to the Eastern Shore with a task somewhat more difficult because of fewer archaeological sites and more limited historical accounts. The evidence that is available suggests most extensive relations of the Powhatans with the Accomacs and Occohannocks that were more important in trade than in political dominance because of the distance from the core of the paramount chiefdom. The Accomacs, nonetheless, were on the fringe of Powhatan control. The Nanticokes and Pocomokes also on the Eastern Shore appear to have closer links, both economic and cultural, with the Conoy chiefdom of southern Maryland. Maine shells and shell beads constituted the most important trade items, an exchange that was later disrupted as the English dominated the trade with their increasing settlements.

Charlotte M. Gradie, historian, examines the short-lived experience of the Spanish in the Chesapeake Bay area. She describes the intensive conflict between Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, first governor of Florida, and the Jesuits over control of missionaries. This eventually led to the missionaries coming to Ajacan (later Virginia) in the 1570s without Spanish military support. One of the central figures in this Spanish effort was Don Luis, probably the son of a Powhatan chief. He had gone in the 1560s with the Spanish to Mexico, Havana, and Spain and received instruction from Dominican friars. He agreed to lead the Jesuits to his homeland when it was certain that military forces would not accompany the missionaries. However, he soon returned to his native culture and turned against them. The Jesuit mission ended with the killing of the missionaries in February of 1571. Spain then directed its major attention to the Florida peninsula.

Rountree concludes the volume with a chapter on "Multiple Conflicting Agendas" for the Powhatans and the English followed by a summary and suggested implications. The variety of attitudes are explored not only between English and Indian but also internal conflicting views among the constituents of each group. From the early contacts between 1585 in the present area of North Carolina to 1610, the conflicts are traced through the first Anglo-Powhatan war from 1610 to 1613, and to the emergence of Opechancanough as the real power over the Powhatans from 1613 to 1622. The struggle then continued in the second Anglo-Powhatan war from 1622 to 1632 with a period of rebuilding resistance before the climax of the conflict between equals from 1644 to 1646. The result thereafter is described as a period of fragmentation and diminishing autonomy from 1646 to 1722 with the tributary treaties of 1646 and 1677 after Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia.

The purpose of this book by multiple scholars has been to reconstruct the experience of the ethnic group of Powhatan Indians from the sixteenth to the early eighteenth centuries and to examine their inter-ethnic relations with other Indian tribes as well as their contacts with Europeans, primarily the English and secondarily the Spanish. By use of both history and anthropology this has been partially achieved. It is evident that the historical record still provides the greatest informa-

tion about the Indians even though recorded by Caucasians. Whatever view one may take about the story of the saving of John Smith by Pocahontas, Smith's writings and his map are still the most extensive source for study of the Powhatans in the early seventeenth century, even though he did not visit a few tribes. What this volume does is to add archaeological evidence as far as it goes at the present time. Some areas have not yet been examined; others have been only sparsely covered. For further information in the future, it is most likely that additional archaeological discoveries will add more to the story of the Powhatans than the location of hitherto unknown historical documents. Rountree also suggests further contributions by the academic disciplines of sociology, psychology, geography, and ecology, but archaeological evidence will be more helpful with additional substantive data.

This Powhatan volume includes thirty-one pages of documentary notes, thirty-two pages of bibliography, an index, and a series of effective maps identifying the locations of tribes and the sources of trade goods.

W. STITT ROBINSON
University of Kansas

Cultivation and Culture: Labor and the Shaping of Slave Life in the Americas. Edited by Ira Berlin and Philip D. Morgan. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993. Pp. viii, 396. Notes, index. Cloth, \$49.50, paper, \$17.95.)

Cultivation and Culture brings together papers originally presented to a comparative slavery conference at the University of Maryland in 1989. The authors explore linkages between slaves' work and culture, departing from a shared premise that editors Berlin and Morgan's introductory essay expresses compactly: "For slaves, work was both Adam's curse . . . and a source of personal satisfaction and political self assertion. . . . It became the terrain upon which slaves and masters battled for the wealth that the enslaved produced . . . [and] informed all other conflicts between master and slave" (p. 12).

Several of the authors focus on variations across space and time in the labor regimes of cultivating tropical staples and consequent impacts on the composition of slave work forces and communities. A second focal point of this collection involves delineating points of friction and recurring cycles of conflict and compromise between masters and slaves over plantation work routines. Building on this foundation, the essayists consider slaves' engagement in independent economic production and labor, and how the attendant struggle to gain and maintain control over one's working day shaped definitions of freedom.

Containing the work of both established and emerging scholars of slavery, *Cultivation and Culture* offers both synthetic treatments and new findings. Richard Dunn's study of sugar production and slave women in Jamaica, for example, concludes that the harshness of labor in the cane fields, by depressing fertility and contributing indirectly to increased infant mortality, had more to do with low rates of natural increase in the West Indies than planters' preferences for importing male slaves. Scholars of the Chesapeake will be stimulated by Lorena Walsh's elucidation

of the relationship between tobacco culture and regional racial demography from 1620 to 1820, and her argument that diversification from tobacco monoculture hastened environmental degradation in tidewater counties. But this book's most important contribution lies in its articles on slaves' market-related activities.

Historians since Bryan Edwards have noted slaveholders' efforts to increase slave loyalty, discipline, and output by allowing bondspeople to cultivate gardens or raise animals to augment their diet, and to sell surpluses as their own property. Unlike Edwards' contemporary assessment of independent production as an amicable arrangement palliating slavery's rigors, today's historians view it as a contested ground on which masters sought to increase and slaves to erode the exploitation of their labor. Woodville Marshall characterizes disputes over the working of provision grounds in the Windward Islands as a competition for the resource of the slaves' labor. In Martinique, according to Dale Tomich, slaves' independent production allowed them to internalize a sense of self-interest that helped them resist planters' efforts to intensify labor routines on the sugar plantation, contributing to the failure of the plantation regime after emancipation.

While Tomich and Marshall thus see the germination of post-emancipation class struggles in the soil of West Indian provision grounds, Joseph Reidy, John Campbell, and Roderick McDonald depict the initial encounter between slaves and the marketplace, in Georgia, South Carolina, and Louisiana. They find that independent production of cotton, corn, hogs, or forest products allowed slaves to acquire and bequeath money and property, and even to obtain credit with local merchants. Bondsmen were eager to do so, and resourceful in circumventing masters' attempts to rein in modest work-incentive schemes gotten out of hand. If slaves and masters ultimately agreed on anything, it was that direct involvement in the marketplace appealed strongly to slaves and challenged masters' control of them.

But Reidy et al. do not applaud the market's well known atomizing impact uncritically; they also rehearse the potential social and cultural drawbacks of slaves' getting and spending for themselves. It appears that these writers, knowing the market's aggressive, engulfing force, would prefer the slaves to have exhibited more ambivalence about its operations than they seem in fact to have done. The resulting assessments, nuanced and balanced as they are, fall just a bit short of giving full play to the cultural impact of slaves' independent production, and unnecessarily blunt the force of the authors' findings. A second historiographic objection applies more generally to the relative silence of *Cultivation and Culture* on the work of gender within the realm of slaves' independent production, in contrast, it should be noted, to its illuminating deployment in discussions of the "master's economy" of plantation labor. One would like to hear more, if the sources permit, about the extent to which the production and marketing of slave goods were gendered activities, and what impact sexual divisions of labor in this arena had within the slave community.

But these are quibbles. *Cultivation and Culture* is an important book, one that convincingly emphasizes slaves' work and independent production as a key to understanding both the nature of master-slave relations and slaves' conceptions of freedom. We will be well served if it sparks further efforts to apprehend the

formation and maintenance of slaves' culture through a greater understanding of their working lives.

STEVE WHITMAN
Crownsville

Reappraising Benjamin Franklin: A Bicentennial Perspective. Edited by J. A. Lemay. (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993. Pp. 499. Illustrations, chronology, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.50.)

This book of twenty-four essays was the product of a three-day conference held in Philadelphia and Delaware in April 1990 commemorating the 200th anniversary of Benjamin Franklin's death. Although several of the essays contained in this volume are the same as those delivered at the conference—albeit with the addition of notes—others were expanded and revised for inclusion in this book. In keeping with Franklin's varied interests and achievements, all of the essays are written by distinguished scholars from diverse fields, thus representing a multidisciplinary approach. If any one figure in American history is deserving of such an ambitious project which seeks to cover his life and accomplishments, it certainly is Franklin. The only individual "to sign all three of the essential founding documents of the United States—the Declaration of Independence (1776), the Treaty of Paris (1783), and the Constitution (1787)—Franklin was also the greatest mid-eighteenth-century scientist" (p. 19).

The book is divided into seven parts, each reflecting a particular aspect of Franklin's life and/or interests: "Franklin as Journalist and Printer," "Franklin and American History," "Franklin and Science," "Franklin: Patron of the Arts," "Franklin and Ethno-Cultural Issues," "Franklin's Thought and Writing," and "Franklin's Personality." Each part is preceded by a foreword written by the editor, J. A. Leo Lemay, H. F. du Pont Winterthur Professor of English at the University of Delaware, who originally conceived the idea of a Franklin symposium.

Since Franklin attained a truly international reputation during his lifetime, it is entirely fitting that the numerous contributors to this work include not only noted scholars from the United States, but distinguished foreign experts such as English biographer Esmond Wright, the French literary scholar Daniel Royot, and the German historian of science Heinz Otto Sibum. This volume contains something for just about everyone. Among the American contributors are historians Jack P. Greene and Michael Zuckerman. The book includes the writings of two art historians, Wayne Craven and Ellen G. Miles, as well as those of journalism historian Jeffrey A. Smith, literary historian A. Owen Aldridge, Library Company of Philadelphia librarian John C. Van Horne, and three editors of *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*. Notes follow immediately after each essay, and the project editor has provided a useful chronology of Franklin's life, biographical sketches of each contributor, bibliography, and index, all of which appear at the back of the volume. Thirty-five illustrations are interspersed throughout the book.

A project of this kind is a daring undertaking, and not without potential risks.

Nevertheless, the editor has successfully demonstrated considerable skill in compiling this broad, well organized book that holds together very well. *Reappraising Benjamin Franklin* is, in this reviewer's opinion, a major, notable contribution to scholarship on Benjamin Franklin. As a historian, I, for one, appreciate the relative lack of jargon in those essays written largely by nonhistorians. The book thus retains its readability for not only professionals, but for laymen alike. Not only is this work a must for Franklin scholars, but it should be a required purchase for most libraries. It is a significant scholarly achievement that offers new insights into the life and accomplishments of Franklin, not just for American history, but also for the cumulative history of mankind.

THOM M. ARMSTRONG
El Camino College

The Business of May Next: James Madison and the Founding. By William Lee Miller. (Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia, 1992. Pp. xii, 274. Notes, index. \$24.95.)

The bicentennials of the U.S. Constitution, the First Federal Congress, and the Bill of Rights have spawned a host of recent books celebrating the deeds of the Founders. Some of these, written by political scientists for their colleagues, explore the ideas of the founding generation in great detail. Others, written by historians and popularizers of history, tell a familiar story in a familiar narrative way.

By focusing on James Madison and his part in the design and establishment of republican government in the United States, Miller has managed to combine personalities, ideas, and narrative in an odd, discursive, and often compelling fashion. In a conversational tone, Miller examines Madison's political career, his education, his mind and ideas, in an effort to explore the "moral and intellectual underpinnings of the American nation" (p. xi).

Miller begins with a thorough discussion of Madison's research projects of 1786 and 1787: his study of the ancient and modern republics and the causes of their downfall; and a critique of the republican state governments and the federal Confederation entitled "Vices of the Political system of the U. States." In the first, Madison explored the problems of power, interest, and conflict that caused the eventual destruction of these republican experiments, an exploration that quickly led him to argue for a strong federal government. In the second, Madison analyzed the fundamental tenet of republican government—majority rule—and pointed out the ways in which this principle was subject to abuse. As Miller describes it, this "quiet work of thinking and reading" (p. xi) provided the ground for positions Madison would defend at the Constitutional Convention, the first Federal Congress, and beyond.

The bulk of the book, a close reading of the proceedings of the Constitutional Convention, will be familiar to most readers interested in the period. Miller is, however, very good at placing political ideas in their historical context. His chapter on "The Inadvertent Origins of the Presidency," for example, successfully explains

how a group of revolutionaries intensely hostile to the executive branch ended up creating a strong presidential office.

The most intriguing sections of the book are those that deal with Madison and slavery and the chapter entitled "Was the U.S. Founded on Selfishness?" Miller pulls no punches over the Convention's handling of slavery, emphasizing the "moral embarrassment and bad conscience" that characterized its "timid but definite effort to limit the concessions to the evil" (p. 119). More interesting is Miller's sensitive reading of the "Peculiar Federalist" (p. 171), in which he points out how Madison, by a rhetorical device peculiar to this one essay, attempted to distance himself from the constitutional position he had pledged to defend, and how he implicitly admitted the moral illegitimacy of slavery.

The chapter on self-interest asks whether Madison's political philosophy, especially his views of conflicting interests as laid out in *The Federalist* No. 10, was based on a recognition or endorsement of human selfishness. Miller is here answering those who consider that the public good is never served by those who try to serve it, but only by each following his own self-interest. This, he believes, is a gross misreading of Madison, who, while he recognized political depravity and guarded against it by designing a government of checks and balances, believed that self-government presupposed a certain degree of virtue and consensus in the public.

Miller gives a vivid demonstration throughout the book that the Founding generation bequeathed to us, not just a constitution, but a political culture that valued debate, persuasion, collaboration, tolerance, and compromise. Madison believed that grounded solidly beneath the clash of interests in a modern state were certain shared assumptions about the process of politics. Miller's subtext points out that how the Founding generation reached their decisions was almost as important as the decisions they made. In the stridency of modern American politics, that is a timely lesson.

DAVID B. MATTERN
Papers of James Madison
University of Virginia

Books Received

Mermaids, Mummies, and Mastodons: The Emergence of the American Museum issues from the celebrated Peale Museum exhibit that closed in the early summer of last year. This slim paperback volume captures much of the rich detail and historical insight of the exhibit. It includes short essays on selected topics by Edward P. Alexander, Sally Gregory Kohlstedt, John W. Durel, Ruth Helm, and David R. Brigham; it carries a foreword by the director of the City Life Museums, Nancy Brennan and an introduction by Gary Kulik of the Smithsonian. William T. Alderson edited the volume, in which the exhibit's curator, Richard Flint, receives not so much as passing mention.

American Association of Museums, \$45/\$35

Frederick must be one of the most charming places in the mid-Atlantic region, certainly in Maryland, and now this gem of a living community has a guidebook for people who like to walk around and appreciate historic sites. *Frederick: A Walking Tour*, the work of Richard Lebherz. The tour takes visitors—in “self guided, self-paced” fashion—to thirty-two points of interest, from court square to Hood College and Schifferstadt, the classical German stone house out Rosemont Avenue.

Privately published, \$5

The University of Nebraska Press continues to turn out facsimile editions of old military-history favorites from the nineteenth century. William L. Shea has written an introduction to *Hardtack and Coffee: The Unwritten Story of Army Life*, the Civil War memoir of John D. Billings, originally published in 1887. Here's a book that offers authentic portrayals of camp life and campaigning—and contains dozens of contemporary drawings. Philip T. Tucker has written a new introduction to Wiley Britton's *Memoirs of the Rebellion on the Border, 1863*, which leaves no doubts about the gruesomeness of fighting in the trans-Mississippi theater. Britton fought with the Union 6th Kansas Cavalry and published his recollections of war in 1882. Annie Heloise Abel published *The American Indian and the End of the Confederacy, 1863–1866* in 1925, examining the fate of the Five Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory under Confederate control. Nebraska reissues the work with an introductory essay by Theda Perdue and Michael D. Green.

Nebraska, \$14.95, \$40/\$14.95, \$12.95

Letters to the Editor

John E. Reilly in his article on “Robert D’Unger and His Reminiscences of Edgar Allan Poe” (*Maryland Historical Magazine* spring 1993) seems very intent on establishing the authenticity of the possible recollections of Poe recorded in Robert D’Unger’s letter to Chevalier Reynolds of 29 October 1899. However, as he notes, a number of Poe scholars have had reservations about the letter’s “authenticity and accuracy.”

Although Dr. Reilly appears to establish sufficiently the identity of the letter writer as Robert D’Unger, M.D., he fails to fully verify all of the Baltimore locations and persons named in the letter, or to provide full documentation for his statements about D’Unger’s career and background.

Let us say that it can be taken as established, as Dr. Reilly states, that Poe visited Baltimore on at least four occasions while travelling up and down the east coast from his home in Fordham during 1846–1849, the years D’Unger claims that he knew Poe. However, even Dr. Reilly states that “D’Unger gives Reynolds the impression that Poe spent a good deal of time in Baltimore between 1846 and 1849”—although he admits that “this impression is not consistent with what we know of Poe’s whereabouts.”

The few occasions D’Unger could have met Poe hardly seem to support D’Unger’s claim that he heard Poe say “a hundred times” that he was going to quit drinking. (If that was so, it would make Poe an extremely morose companion—and D’Unger must have had a very tired ear to listen to all these good intentions!) Moreover, this point would seem to outweigh Dr. Reilly’s claims that the relationship of Poe and D’Unger is established by a discussion of literature that D’Unger asserts he had with Poe, when the writer noticed D’Unger was carrying a copy of Melville’s *Omoo* and a book containing Fouqué’s works.

We also have to ask ourselves about D’Unger’s character and supposed ancestry. For example, Dr. Reilly says D’Unger was awarded a medical degree in 1859 from the Eclectic Medical College of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. However, he says in a note to this statement, “There is some uncertainty about the authenticity of degrees from the Eclectic Medical College”!

Moreover, what about the biography of D’Unger as related by Dr. Reilly? We are told that D’Unger was a Confederate sympathizer, and was wounded in “an altercation with federal authorities attempting to arrest him” while he was working in the offices of the *Cambridge Herald*, on which he fled to London and Paris, “where he served as a correspondent to several New York newspapers.” At the end of the Civil War, he returned to the United States and practiced medicine, journalism, and politics on the eastern shore of Maryland—until early in 1871, when he went to Duluth, Minnesota, where he made, and lost, a fortune in real estate. None of these statements appears to be referenced by Dr. Reilly, particularly the seemingly

grandiose claims about being wounded by federal authorities and the making and losing of a fortune. All of these things may have happened, but on whose say-so are we to believe in them—on D’Unger’s own word, or on the evidence of independent authorities?

Then we come to the matter of D’Unger’s ancestry—the details of which Dr. Reilly apparently obtained from an unpublished “D’Unger Family History” begun by Claude Vachel D’Unger, the son of Robert D’Unger, and since updated by others.

Dr. Reilly states, “D’Unger’s family traced its origins to thirteenth-century Bavaria, and includes such notables as Henri der Unger, an acquaintance and enthusiastic follower of John Calvin, and Gabrielle de Bourbon, daughter of Henry of Navarre.” Not only this, but, Dr. Reilly says, “Robert D’Unger’s paternal grandfather, Henri, accompanied the Marquis de Lafayette and Baron de Kalb to America in 1777 aboard the ship *Victoire* to join forces with the Continental Army.” Yet, according to Dr. Reilly’s notes, “Henri D’Unger’s name does not, in fact, appear on the list of passengers on the *Victoire*. For several reasons, principally as a stratagem to avoid difficulties with authorities when attempting to leave France, the list does not accurately identify all those persons who accompanied Lafayette.” In the absence of evidence to the contrary, which Dr. Reilly does not provide, how can we then believe the statement that “Henri D’Unger” was with Lafayette and de Kalb?

Do we sense in all this a tendency on Robert D’Unger’s part for self-aggrandizement and name-dropping? Couldn’t D’Unger’s letter of 29 October 1899 to Chevalier Reynolds be part of the same tendency? On the subject of Edgar Allan Poe, let’s remember Poe’s pseudo-Byronic claim of having run away from home “without a dollar,” of setting out to fight for the Greeks in their war for independence, but instead landing up in St. Petersburg, where he got in such scrapes that he had to be extricated through the kind services of the U.S. Consul—none of which seems to have occurred! Are D’Unger’s claims about his background, career, and knowing Poe in the same category? Well, perhaps he learned a thing or two from his drinking buddy!

Finally, in focusing on D’Unger’s questionable medical degree and supposed ancestry, has Dr. Reilly not weakened rather than strengthened his claim of authenticity for the D’Unger letter? Yours sincerely,

Christopher T. George

Christopher George’s objections to my article on Poe and Robert D’Unger are so devoid of substance I find it difficult to imagine that he read the article and its accompanying documentation either with care or without bias. Rather than reply in tedious detail to every one of his objections, I will respond to two of his charges regarding documentation in my article and will consider a passage in his letter that brings into question Mr. George’s own ability to evaluate evidence.

1. On the subject of documentation, Mr. George charges that I fail “to fully verify all of the Baltimore locations and persons named in [Robert D’Unger’s] letter.” Though I must admit I am not certain just what Mr. George intends by the qualification “fully,” nonetheless the charge is, as my endnotes attest, unequivocally

and manifestly groundless. I not only document *every* person and *every* location to which D'Unger alludes, but I do so by means of unimpeachable primary sources: references to editions and page numbers of Baltimore street directories for the period from 1837 to 1850 and to John C. Gobreight's *The Monumental City or Baltimore Guide Book* (1858). Furthermore, much of what I document in D'Unger's letter accords with earlier findings by the late prominent Poe scholar Thomas Ollive Mabbott who, as I note, is among recent Poe scholars "more willing to accept the letter as creditable" even in the absence of the evidence I adduce in my article.

2. Mr. George charges also that I fail "even to provide documentation for [my] statements about D'Unger's career and background." This too is manifestly untrue. The documentation I provide begins with the letter itself: it was written on stationery of the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago and bears an autograph signature, a signature misread heretofore as "R. D. Unger" and "R. DeUnger" but which is in fact, as I demonstrate, "R. D'Unger." Other documentation of D'Unger's "career and background" includes D'Unger's brief autobiographical sketch prefacing his 1879 pamphlet *Dipsomania* (a pamphlet with which even his descendants were not familiar until I brought it to their attention), records of a half-dozen patents taken out by D'Unger (all published in the *Official Gazette* of the U. S. Patent Office, though I saw no need to clutter my text with the details of this readily available reference), an article in *The Electrical Engineer* for June 1894 reporting D'Unger's claim to have invented the telephone "several years before" Bell, D'Unger's name and credentials in the *Medical and Surgical Register of the United States and Canada* for 1898, and a photostatic copy of his death certificate issued on 30 January 1908 by the Department of Health: City of Chicago and identifying D'Unger as a resident of Illinois for twenty-nine years and as having been born in Cumberland, Maryland, eighty-three years, one month, and twenty-two days earlier.

Although this biographical information alone is sufficient to "verify" the identity of Robert D'Unger, M.D., as the author of the 1899 letter in question, I felt it would be of genuine interest to readers of my article were I to flesh out my sketch of D'Unger with additional information made available to me by his descendants, whom I did not have the good fortune to come across until I was well along in my research. As I duly note in my article, this additional information is drawn from an unpublished "Family History" originally prepared by Robert D'Unger's son Claude Vachel D'Unger (1865-1938) and updated subsequently by Robert D'Unger's grandson Robert Mace D'Unger and by his greatgrandson John Breckenridge Warfield. The "Family History" is based upon genealogical research, upon letters, upon marriage and death certificates and other documents, upon newspaper clippings (e.g., obituaries in Duluth newspapers) and photographs (one of which is reproduced along with my article), and upon information garnered from among members of the family over several generations. After all, Robert D'Unger is not a figure in the remote past: his death occurred within living memory of persons who contributed to the "Family History," and it would be unreasonable and irresponsible to dismiss this source out of hand as Mr. George appears inclined to do.

3. Mr. George not only seems unwilling or unable to appreciate the documentation I furnish, but his handling of the text of D'Unger's letter brings into question his own ability to evaluate evidence. A case in point is his treatment of D'Unger's remark that "I suppose [Poe] told me a hundred times that *he was going to quit the habit,*" i.e., of drinking. Mr. George pounces upon the phrase "a hundred times" as a literal statement indicating that D'Unger is unreliable because he could not have met so often with Poe. The phrase "a hundred times" is, however, so classically hyperbolic (e.g., "I must have tried a hundred times to quit smoking," or "If I've told you once, I've told you a hundred times, not to talk with food in your mouth!"), so classic an hyperbole that Mr. George's insistence upon its literality is either disingenuous or naive. Moreover, if Mr. George will look back into Poe's life, he will discover that Poe indeed made a practice of promising to "*quit the habit,*" a practice that began at least as early as 1836, when he sought reinstatement at the *Southern Literary Messenger* after being fired for tippling, and continued at least as late as his efforts in November/December of 1848 to convince Sarah Helen Whitman and her mother that he was a suitable prospect as a husband in spite of rumors to the contrary.

I had the privilege of delivering the annual Poe Lecture at Westminster Church in Baltimore in October of 1975. The title of my lecture was "The Image of Poe in American Poetry," but my underlying subject was, in fact, a special perspective upon the history of Poe's reputation in America. One of the principle points I made was that our understanding of the historical Poe was obscured for more than a half century after his death by bias and prejudice both for and against him, by unwillingness to consider who Poe was, warts and all, virtues and vices, accomplishments and failures, and that a serious effort to free our understanding of him of bias and prejudice in order to uncover the real Poe did not seriously begin until after the turn of this century. As much as I appreciate Mr. George's unmistakable enthusiasm for Poe, his obvious unwillingness to accept anything negative about the man is an unfortunate throwback to an attitude that prevailed a century ago, an attitude one would hope we had left in the past. Sincerely,

John E. Reilly, Ph.D.
Emeritus Professor
College of the Holy Cross

Notices

UNDERGRADUATE ESSAY PRIZE AWARDED

The Education Committee of the Maryland Historical Society congratulates the winner of the fourth annual undergraduate essay contest, Seely Foley of Hood College, for "Descended from a Long Line of Baltimoreans," an inquiry into the records of the Gorsuch family and related families from 1650 to the present. The amount of the prize is \$250, and the deadline for next year's contest is 30 June 1994.

PARKER AND HARRIS GENEALOGY PRIZES ANNOUNCED

The Maryland Historical Society's Committee on Genealogy herewith announces the winners of the two prizes for the best genealogical works related to Maryland received by the society's library during 1992.

The Sumner A. and Dudrea Parker Prize for the best work on a Maryland family was awarded to Isaac W. K. Handy, D.D., for *Annals and Memorials of the Handys and Their Kindred*, edited by Mildred Handy Ritchie and Sarah Rozelle Handy Mallon (Ann Arbor, Michigan: William L. Clements Library, 1992).

The Norris Harris Prize for the best source record book on Maryland was divided between two works. The first was Patricia Dockman Anderson, *Abstracts of the Ridgely Papers*, manuscript number MS692 (Microfilm Reels 1-6) with permission and assistance at the MHS Library, Manuscript Division (Westminster, Maryland: Family Line Publications, 1991). Sharing the award is Henry C. Peden, Jr., *Revolutionary Patriots of Anne Arundel County, Maryland*, (Westminster, Maryland: Family Line Publications, 1992).

The Posthumous Award of Highest Acclaim is awarded to Edna Agatha Kanely for her outstanding contributions to genealogy and to honor her last published work, *Directory of Ministers and the Maryland Churches They Served, 1634-1990* (Westminster, Maryland: Family Line Publications, 1991).

MARITIME PRIZE WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The Maritime Committee has selected three winners of its annual research competition, which it sponsors jointly with the University of Baltimore Educational Foundation: Ms. Toni Ahrens, Baltimore, first prize (\$300); Prof. Bayly Ellen Marks, Catonsville, second prize (\$125); Prof. Wallace Shugg, Catonsville, third prize (\$75).

Maryland Picture Puzzle

Test your knowledge of Maryland history by dating and identifying this Eastern Shore scene. What town is this? When was this taken?

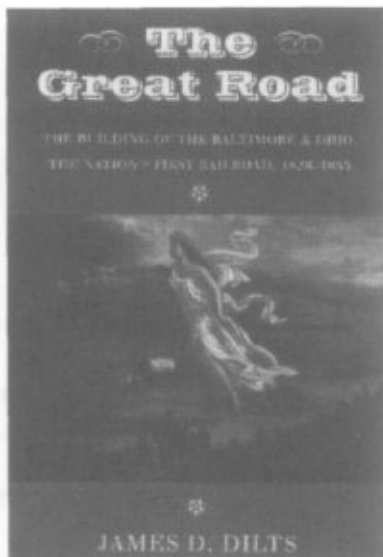
The summer 1993 Picture Puzzle depicts Laurel, Maryland, looking west on Main Street toward Avondale Street on 25 August 1907. Block's Department Store, a long-time Laurel landmark, is the last building on the right.

Our congratulations to Mr. Maury Bates, who correctly identified the spring 1993 Picture Puzzle.

Please send your answers to:

Picture Puzzle
Prints & Photographs Division
Maryland Historical Society
201 West Monument Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201





THE GREAT ROAD

THE BUILDING OF THE BALTIMORE AND OHIO, THE NATION'S FIRST RAILROAD, 1828-1853

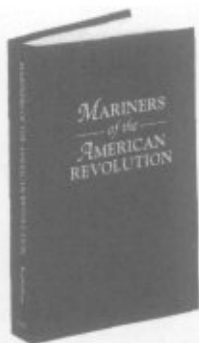
JAMES D. DILTS

This engaging account of the planning and building of the Baltimore and Ohio portrays the colorful early history of this important railroad. The B&O contributed greatly to the economic expansion of Maryland. It deeply affected the development of Baltimore's port, industry, and urban geography, as well as its financial, educational, and cultural institutions. Such prominent Baltimore philanthropists as George Peabody, Enoch Pratt, William Walters, and Johns Hopkins were involved with the B&O; The Johns Hopkins

University was founded on B&O Railroad stock. Richly illustrated with photographs, drawings, and maps, it's the perfect gift for readers interested in the history of the railroad and how it changed Maryland. 592 pages, with 80 illustrations and 5 maps.

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MARINERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

By Marion & Jack Kaminkow

Compiled from a wide range of official records and private diaries of captured American seamen during the Revolution.

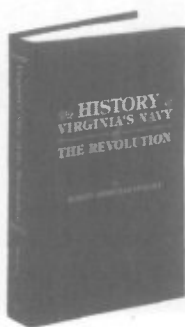
274 pp., cloth. (1967), repr. 1993. \$25.00

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By Robert Armistead Stewart

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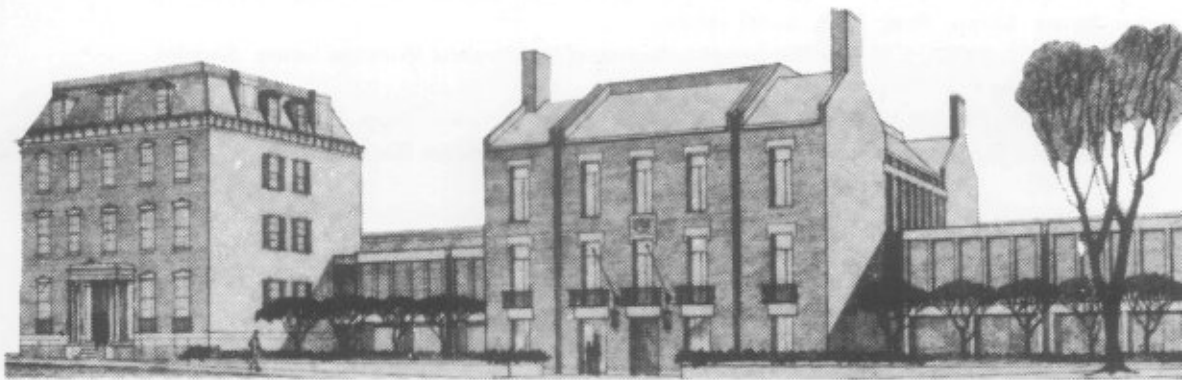
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