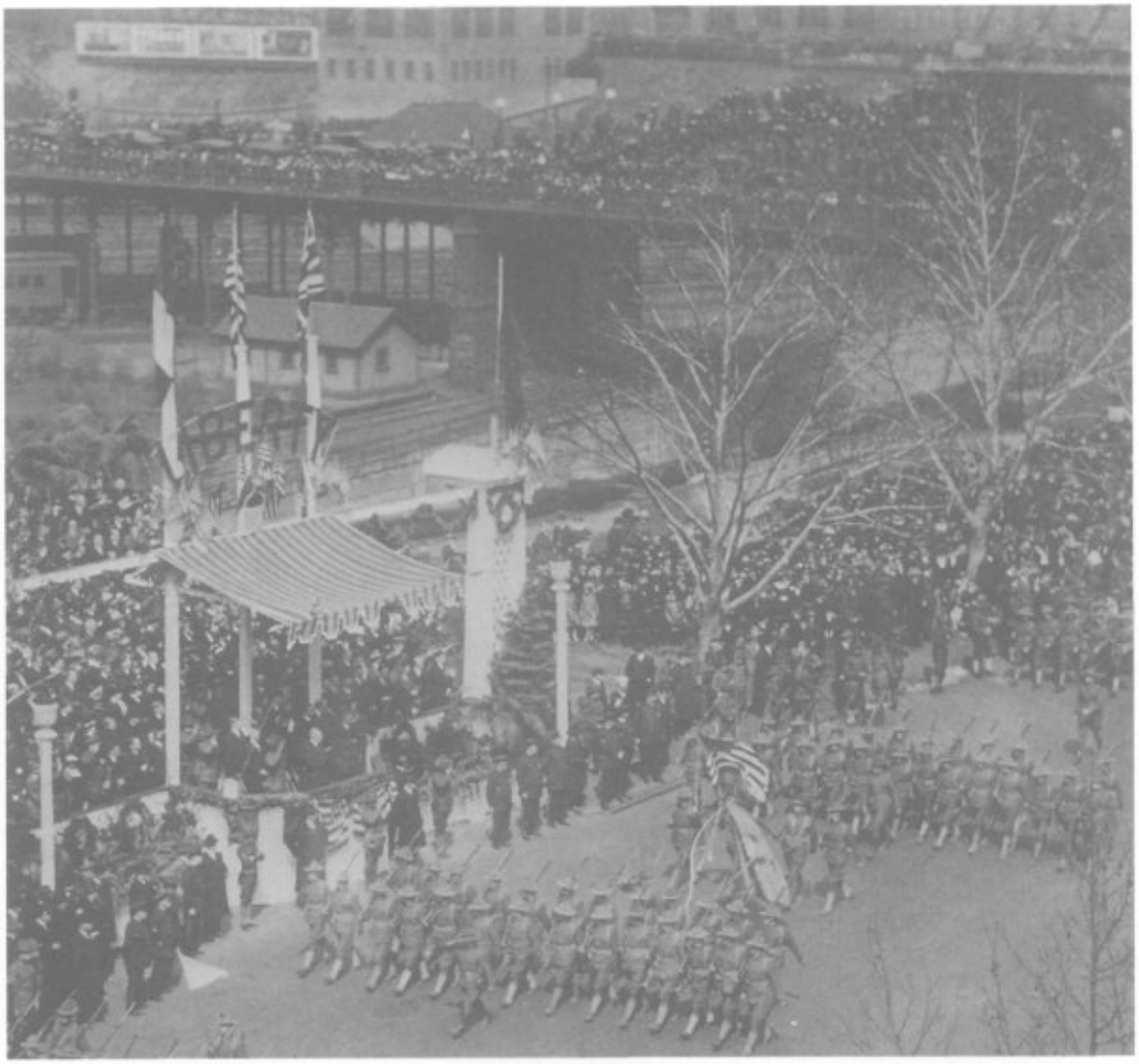
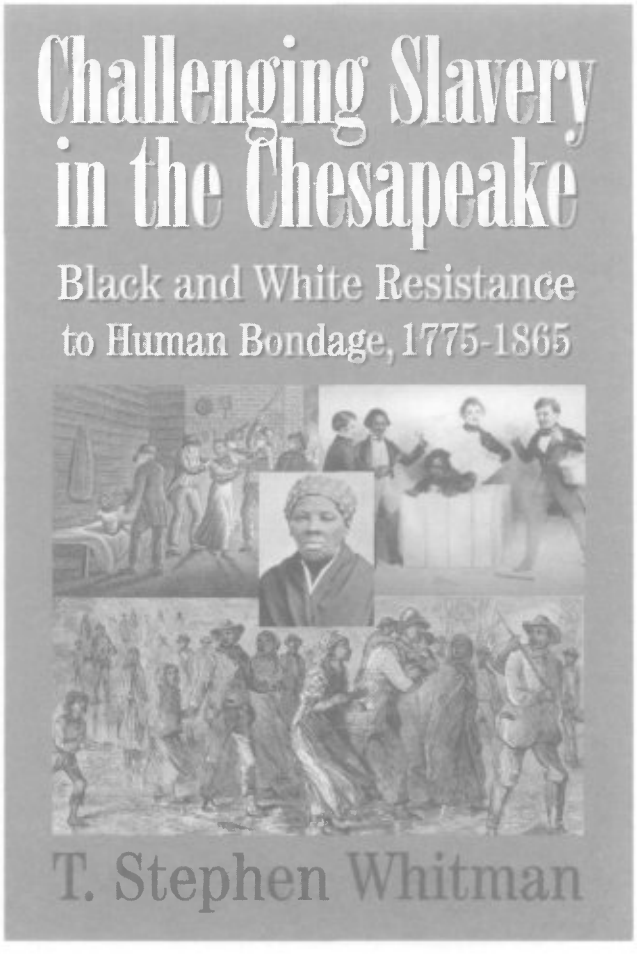
Fall 2007

MARYLAND
Historical Magazine



The dramatic and true fight for freedom...



Paperback, 320 pages,
ISBN 938420-96-8
$20.00
410.685.3750 ext. 305
www.mdhs.org
available now

The very cradle of American slavery, the Chesapeake, brought forth vigorous resistance to that terrible institution. Now T. Stephen Whitman (Author of *The Price of Freedom*) describes the ideas, attitudes, and complex human relationships that gave it form and momentum. Following the Revolution, in which large numbers of blacks sought their freedom by fighting for the British, a largely white abolition movement born of religious beliefs and revolutionary idealism flowered briefly, then fell into lingering decline by the 1850s.

Rising from these pages are the idealists—Benjamin Lundy, William Lloyd Garrison, William Still, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, and Frederick Douglass—whose pens and voices would not be stilled. Here, too, are the warriors—Harriet Tubman, Gabriel, Nat Turner, William Parker, John Brown. As formidable as they were, their struggle to end slavery would have failed but for the thousands of men and women, enslaved and free, who changed history with individual acts of determination and defiance.

A Maryland Sampling: Girlhood Embroidery 1738-1860

By Gloria Seaman Allen, Ph. D.

A Maryland Sampling brings together for the first time a rich collection of Maryland samplers and pictorial embroideries and the stories of the girls who created them. With more than 150 color photographs—most never before published—the book showcases the most skillful, unusual, and interesting aspects of Maryland girlhood embroidery, illustrating regional, religious, and racial diversity.

This beautifully crafted book will appeal to many, including modern day embroiderers, students of women's history, the decorative arts, and Maryland history Unique to Maryland are the antebellum samplers and needlework pictures worked by African American girls—primarily daughters of Baltimore's free blacks. Appendices provide researchers with names of all documented examples of Maryland needlework and all documented schools and teachers, as well as a list of all students known to have worked silk pictorial embroideries at Saint Joseph's Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

Publication Date July, 2007. Cloth, casebound $75.00 ISBN 938420-98-4
35% discount for MdHS members. To place an order call the Museum Shop at the Maryland Historical Society at 410-685-3750 ext. 305.

ISSN 0025-4258

Published as a benefit of membership in the Maryland Historical Society in March, June, September, and December. Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in *Historical Abstracts* and/or *America: History and Life*. Periodicals postage paid at Baltimore, Maryland, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Please send address changes to the Maryland Historical Society, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201. Printed by The Sheridan Press, Hanover, Pennsylvania 17331. Individual subscriptions $24.00. (Individual membership in the society with full benefits is $50.00; family membershp, $65.00.) Institutional and library subscriptions $50.00 per year, prepaid.

MARYLAND

Historical Magazine

VOLUME 102, NO. 3 (FALL 2007)

CONTENTS

Scouting Out the Land: Revolutionary Migration and the Journey of James Auld 112
CRESTON LONG

"The Torment with the Servants": Management and
Labor in a Southern Maryland Plantation Household 131
STEVEN SARSON

"Many Were Set at Liberty": John Needles, Abolitionist and Artisan 156
CHRISTOPHER H. JONES

Spirogate: *The Washington Post* and the Rise and Fall of Spiro Agnew 176
CHARLES J. HOLDEN and ZACH MESSITTE

Research Notes and Maryland Miscellany 194
The *Mermaid* of Assateague
by Roger Novak

Book Reviews 204
Mitchell, *Maryland Voices in the Civil War*, by William Evitts
Mancke and Shammas, eds., *The Creation of the British Atlantic World* and Olwell and Tully, eds., *Cultures and Identities in Colonial British America*, by Mathias D. Bergmann
Stockdale and Holland, eds., *Middle Temple Lawyers and the American Revolution*, by Jim Tschen Emmons
O'Brien, *Conjectures of Order*, by James Sidbury
Fazio and Snaden, *The Domestic Architecture of Benjamin Henry Latrobe*, by Charles Kolb
Wright, *Slavery and American Economic Development*, by Matthew J. Hudock
David, *Together Let Us Sweetly Live*, by T. Stephen Whitman
Mason, *Slavery and Politics in the Early Republic*, by William H. Earle
Lightner, *Slavery and the Commerce Power*, by Jessica A. Cannon
Lankford, *Cry Havoc: The Crooked Road to the Civil War, 1861*, by Daniel Doyle Wessel
Kamphoefer and Helbich, *Germans in the Civil War*, by Ben Wynne
Chalfant and Belfoure, *Niernsee and Neilson, Architects of Baltimore*, by Francis P. O'Neill
Fahs and Waugh, *Memory of the Civil War*, by George Freidman
Olson, *Wives of Steel*, by Stephanie Holyfield

Cover Photo: World War I victory parade, Mount Royal Avenue, Baltimore, 1919. (MdHS.)

The *Maryland Historical Magazine* welcomes submissions from authors and letters to the editor. Letters may be edited for space and clarity. All articles will be acknowledged, but only those accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope will be returned. Submissions should be printed or typed manuscript. Address Editor, *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore, Maryland, 21201. Include name, address, and daytime telephone number. Once accepted, articles should be on 3.5-inch disks (MS Word or PC convertible format), or CDs, or may be emailed to panderson@mdhs.org. The guidelines for contributors are available on our website at www.mdhs.org.

Scouting out the Land: Revolutionary Era Migration and the Journey of James Auld

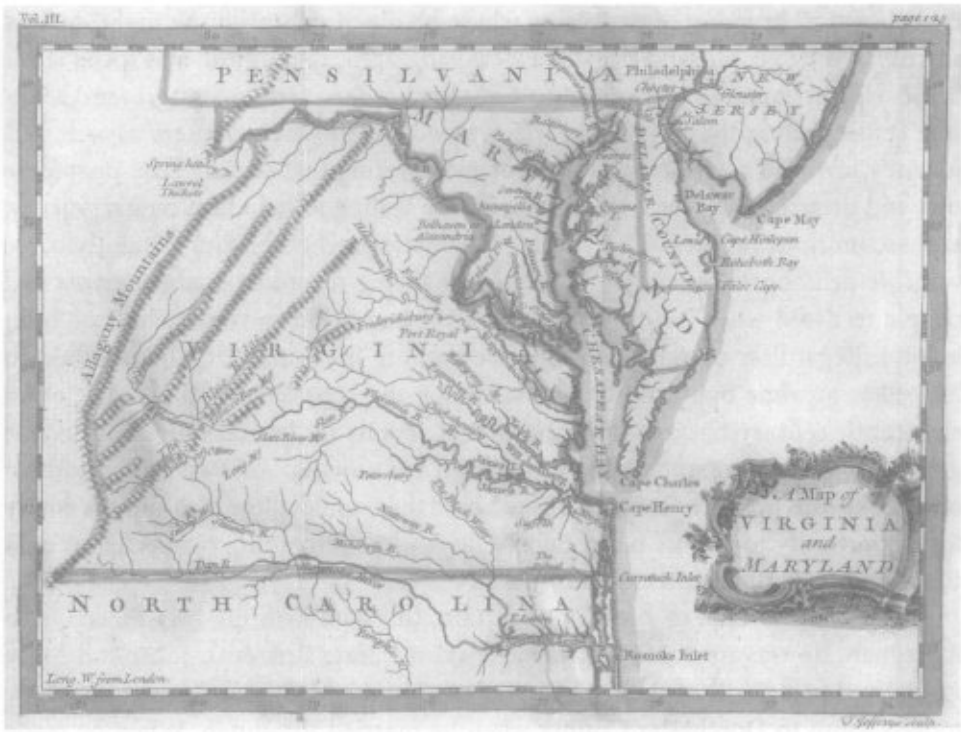
Creston Long

In February 1765, James Auld left his home on Fishing Creek in Dorchester County, Maryland. Although others owned more land and held higher offices than Auld, life in this Eastern Shore county had treated him well. Before his departure he had been a commissary for the county, a prominent attorney, and a clerk for a special session of the Provincial Council which met in Cambridge in 1754. When he set out from his home, Auld's initial destination was the town of Halifax, North Carolina, where he would operate a store and hold the county court clerkship for several years. In the early 1770s, as Auld saw his opportunities in Halifax diminish, he moved his family farther into the North Carolina backcountry.[1]

The Auld family story is substantially the same as those of the thousands of migrants who made their way to the southern backcountry in the generation before the American Revolution. James and Rosannah Auld journeyed several hundred miles with their six children. The oldest daughter, Ann, was fifteen and the youngest child, Betsey, was all of eight months old when the family trekked to North Carolina. Once they arrived at their new home, they established a household in the fall-line town of Halifax. Just over a year after the Aulds arrived, Rosannah had one more child, a little boy named after his father. James Jr. lived just two months and died in January 1767. Within eighteen months of migrating to Halifax, the Aulds bought a house and six hundred fifty acres of land seven miles outside the town.[2]

Hundreds of Maryland families pulled up stakes and migrated during the revolutionary period as lands became available in central North Carolina and later in Kentucky and Tennessee. Thousands of families traveled routes connecting the eastern seaboard region of the Mid-Atlantic to the greater backcountry.[3] Tracking individual families within this migration is notoriously difficult. Seeing that a family or individual departed from one locale is usually a simple matter of checking tax lists or some other public record source, yet determining where they resettled months or even years later, after subsequent moves, is a much more difficult task. It is clear that after the Revolutionary War, hundreds of Maryland-

The author is an assistant professor of history at Salisbury University, Salisbury, Maryland.



In 1765, James Auld and his family left Maryland in search of more lucrative opportunities in the North Carolina backcountry. Thomas Jefferys, A Map of Virginia and Maryland, *1770.*

ers left the state for the territories of Kentucky or Tennessee or for the backcountry areas of Virginia or North Carolina. Many war veterans left detailed descriptions of their families' migration patterns when they applied for federal pensions in the early nineteenth century. The pension applications provide insights into where migrants settled after leaving Maryland, but they offer only slight detail on the actual process of migration, that is, the manner in which families packed up in one place, moved, and then resettled in another.[4]

One thing that sets the Auld family apart from most other migrant families is that James Auld kept a diary of his preliminary excursion to Halifax in the months before he moved with Rosannah and their children. His journal reveals a lot about his experience and his thoughts on the road to the southern backcountry. He often described in detail the daily challenges that he faced as he traveled south down the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia and then across southern Virginia. For reasons that Auld never made clear, he recorded information about where he stayed, what he ate, and which routes he took to his destination. The landscape before him occupied much of his attention and throughout the later parts of his journey he wrote brief descriptions of rivers, forests, and fields, and the commodities that settlers extracted. Auld also traveled through a number of towns, centers of local economic, social, and political activity. Whether he real-

ized it or not, in many of the places where he dined or stayed the night, he was surrounded by people who knew the local geographical, political, and social landscape. He encountered a dozen or so ordinary keepers, ferry operators, and roadside settlers along the way. Auld left evidence of those encounters as well. His journey involved a constant process of interpreting or "reading" the people he met and determining, first, whether they were willing to help him on his journey, and secondly, as he drew closer to his destination, whether they would become valuable neighbors. Perhaps Auld wished to keep a record of establishments and people to avoid when he moved his family, in addition to those who had been helpful. Regardless of Auld's reasons for keeping his journal, he bequeathed to historians a prime opportunity for examining the experience and mindset of an eighteenth-century backcountry migrant. It reveals the process involved in migrating as well as the underlying motivation for moving. Auld and thousands of others like him hoped to settle in a new home that would allow him and his family the opportunity to pursue new opportunities while remaining connected to each other and to familiar careers and pursuits.

James Auld's date of birth is uncertain, but based on his 1747 marriage to Rosannah, he was probably born in the 1720s. James's parents, John and Mary Auld, lived just north of their son in Talbot County, Maryland. James apparently moved south to Dorchester County when he married Rosannah. When he made his trip to North Carolina in 1765, Auld was most likely in his early-to mid-forties.

Robert Ramsay, historian of eighteenth-century settlement in western North Carolina, suggested that many mid-century migrants abandoned their former homes at major turning points in a family's history, most notably at the death of a father.[5] James Auld, however, began searching out new land for his family before his father penned his will in 1765 and lived in Halifax town where he worked as a store keeper and as a court clerk. His mother filed her husband's will with the Talbot County court in October 1766, when James and his family were already in Halifax. John Auld named James as his primary heir in the event that Mary died or remarried, but he stipulated one provision on James receiving his inheritance. John wanted his son to return to Talbot County in person to take possession of his property. If James failed to comply with John's wishes, his estate would fall to James's son John, who was all of fourteen years old at the time and presumably with his parents in North Carolina. A simple note scribbled at the end of the court record confirmed James's absence: "James Auld heir at law to the testator is said to be out of the Province."[6]

James Auld evidently left behind a supportive and loving family on Maryland's Eastern Shore. It appears that his father wished to preserve his family insofar as he wanted to keep all of his children close to home. In addition to James, John and Mary Auld had at least four more sons, all of whom remained in Talbot County and later served in the Revolution.[7] Yet John mentioned the only son who had

moved away and it appears as though James's absence genuinely troubled him. He may have offered the estate to his grandson as a way to keep his own son close, yet the elder Auld's failing health did not prompt James to return to Maryland.

On February 10, 1765, James set out from his plantation on Fishing Creek, a tributary of the Little Choptank River, southwest of Cambridge, the county seat. In the first entry of his journal, Auld rather unceremoniously wrote, "I left a wife and six children." While Auld traveled, the burden of caring for his six children and tending the household fell squarely on Rosannah. His journal betrays no doubt about her ability to carry out this responsibility.

Starting out from the northern part of the county, Auld made it to the southern border of Dorchester in a day. As he rode his horse across Dorchester County's poorly maintained roads, the weather was "Rainey and Cold."[8] Although one might question Auld's decision to embark on his journey on that particular day, many eighteenth-century travelers crossed long distances in the middle of the winter. Patience Brayton, a Quaker itinerant from Swansey, Massachusetts, toured the colonies as far south as Savannah, Georgia, between 1771 and 1772. In early December 1771, Brayton made her way through the Piedmont of Virginia toward western North Carolina, but when she and her party reached the James River, they first had to break ice so their ferry boat could carry them across.[9] John Griffith, another Quaker itinerant, began his journey from northern Virginia to visit several Friends' meetings in western North Carolina at the beginning of December 1765.[10] As Auld began his scouting trip to the southern backcountry in the cold winter months, he may well have encountered others heading in the same direction.

When Auld dismounted at the end of his first day on the road, he lodged "at one Beard's 34 miles" from his home on Fishing Creek. Although most of Maryland's lower Eastern Shore is virtually flat, covering thirty-four miles in one day was an admirable feat. The exact location of the Beard home is uncertain other than Auld's indication that it stood near the Nanticoke River. There he dined on pork and hominy, a menu he would encounter again as he traveled south. The next morning he woke and crossed the Nanticoke River at Bozley's Ferry.

Several ferries crossed the Nanticoke River into Somerset County in the mid-eighteenth century. The primary ferry operated at the small village of Vienna, while another ferry ran across a northern fork of the river.[11] Bozley's Ferry, however, does not appear in the public records of Dorchester County or in the proceedings of the provincial assembly, which licensed ferries. In all likelihood, Auld crossed the river on a privately-operated ferry, a small flat boat capable of transporting a small number of livestock. Although legal, unlicensed ferrymen did not have to maintain their boats to government standards and did not necessarily provide reliable service.[12] A traveler or migrant family may not have cared about the official or unofficial status of a ferry so long as some-

body was available to take them over the water.

Once across the Nanticoke, Auld faced another long day of travel under cold, cloudy skies. Early on February 11, Auld must have begun to wonder if all the roads he would travel would prove as bad as the ones he had experienced so far. For the second day in a row he used the term "rotten" to describe his route, but this time the roads proved so bad that he actually lost track of his route and rode about ten miles off course. He found the correct route and "proceeded to lower Ferry Wicomico."[13] After crossing the Wicomico River, Auld's horse, "being fatigued with the heavy Roads," forced him to stop long enough to purchase some feed and have some dinner for himself. After buying some "Corn husks at a French house for my horse," he made a meal of a boiled egg and a biscuit he had tucked in his pocket.[14]

As Auld crossed the central portion of Somerset County, Maryland, he stopped complaining about road conditions, an indicator that the route had improved or he had grown accustomed to hard travel on his trek down the peninsula. Although two licensed ordinaries operated in Princess Anne, Auld kept going. As court did not meet until January, both proprietors probably had room for travelers, yet as night fell he "passed by Princess Ann Town . . . & lodged at one Jessee Kings 3 miles beyond Town."[15] He may have wanted to get a few more miles behind him before the day ended or he may have anticipated a higher price tag for a night's stay in town, but considering that he was a man of some means, the cost differential may not have been a factor. Auld mentions nothing else about Princess Anne, suggesting that the county seat of government had not yet become an important commercial or social hub.

Over the next couple of days, Auld continued his journey down the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia toward the mouth of Chesapeake Bay. He crossed the Pocomoke River at Mary Stevens's ferry and then ran into some difficulty finding lodging in southern Worcester County. After he crossed the border into Virginia, he stayed at a string of public houses where the quality ranged from very good at Groten's tavern in Pungoteague, Virginia, to outright filthy a few days later near the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay.[16] On his first attempt to get across the Chesapeake he encountered a ship captain not yet ready to sail. Auld returned to the main road and continued to head south. The official ferry across the Chesapeake, from Severn Eyre's plantation on the Hungar River to the towns of York, Hampton, and Norfolk, carried high numbers of people, animals, and goods and thus created a situation that undoubtedly frustrated many migrants and travelers.[17] When Auld reached Eyre's ferry, the boat was away or the operators had to wait for sufficient winds to make it across the bay. He reached the crossing point about noon on a Friday, but he spent the next two days waiting at the worst ordinary he encountered on his journey.[18]

Few travelers recounted ferry crossings as pleasant experiences, particularly when one came to a substantial waterway such as the lower portions of the James

or Potomac Rivers or any portion of Chesapeake Bay. Crossing actually involved several steps. At smaller rivers, such as the ones Auld had previously crossed, small flat-boats glided close to the dry banks. On Virginia's south side, a flat-boat ferry across the Meherrin River measured 16 feet long by 5 wide. At even smaller rivers and creeks, some crossed in dugout canoes capable of holding only two or three people. These small ferries required only the efforts of the ferry attendant to either paddle or pole the craft across the water.[19]

Larger bodies of water, however, required substantial sail-powered vessels. The operator ferried travelers out to the larger boat on a flat boat and then set sail for the opposite shore. Although this system worked rather well for foot passengers, those on horseback faced the difficult task of making the transfer from the flat boat to the larger vessel. As late as the 1790s, the ferries in Virginia garnered multiple complaints. Isaac Weld, an Irishman traveling throughout the eastern states, complained about the danger involved in taking a horse on a ferry. He reported hearing "of numberless recent instances of horses being drowned, killed, and having their legs broken, by getting in and out of the boats." Beyond the danger of crossing, Weld also had little good to say about the reliability of ferry service in Virginia, "There is not one in six where the boats are good and well manned."[20]

Passage across the bay to Norfolk took about ten hours. Auld expected a long day after someone at the ordinary told him that the journey to Norfolk was about sixty miles. They departed the Eastern Shore at ten in the morning and arrived at the Norfolk wharves about eight o'clock that evening. After all of the horses "were hoisted out at the wharf," Auld found lodging at Wrensburgh's Tavern. For the first time on his journey, Auld met someone he knew, the proprietor of the tavern, an old acquaintance. Auld took advantage of this meeting and sent word of his condition back home. The tavern keeper assured him that he would send the letters on the first ship to Annapolis where a carrier would take them across the bay to Dorchester County.[21]

Many backcountry migrants sent letters home during their journeys. John Wall, migrating with his family from Chester County, Pennsylvania, to Orange County, North Carolina, reported to a relative about the progress his family had made while they were passing through Loudon County, Virginia. Although they had traveled about 200 miles and were in good health, heavy rain and high water hindered their progress as they made their way south through the Piedmont of Virginia.[22] The famed Moravians moving from Pennsylvania to North Carolina in the mid-1750s anxiously sent word to Bethlehem at various points on their journey. Fellow Moravian settlers sent news of the travelers' whereabouts and experiences back to their families and associates in Bethlehem.[23] Auld seemed equally eager to send an account of his adventures home.

Writing to family members who had remained behind allowed migrants to remain connected to a network of family and friends while they were in transit

and served as a means of coping with the daily uncertainties of travel. They reported on their progress and their health and reassured loved ones of their own well-being. Letters home also helped focus on the core reason for moving—re-establishing social networks of family and associates as they sought better lives in the southern backcountry. Even as migrants assured relatives (and themselves) of their progress, they prepared those left behind for their own journey. As Auld continued on his own way, he kept in mind how he would move the rest of his family on a subsequent trip. By writing home and describing his journey, he probably demystified the whole undertaking and thereby helped his wife as she prepared herself and the rest of the family for their upcoming trip.[24]

On Monday, February 18, little more than a week into the trip, Auld set out rather late from Wrensburgh's tavern and began his journey across Virginia's Southside. From this point on, Auld became more interested in his surroundings. Prior to leaving Norfolk, he primarily recorded observations and complaints about his effort to cross the land. As he began his journey across the eastern portion of the Southside, however, he wrote relatively detailed accounts of the landscape. His entries read much like the accounts of sundry other speculators, surveyors, and scientific explorers who traveled through the backcountry or frontier regions in the eighteenth century. For example, Dr. Thomas Walker, an agent for the Virginia-based Loyal Land Company, kept a detailed account of his extended journey to present-day West Virginia. As he left Albemarle County on March 7, 1749, he and a company of five other men headed "Westward in order to discover a proper Place for a Settlement." His journal reads like a catalog of plants, trees, and wild game.[25] Auld's purpose differed from Walker's only in matters of scale and geography. Although Walker sought out resource-rich land in the far backcountry for speculation and settlement, Auld sought out opportunity for his family. Both men saw the value of appraising the land.[26]

On the way to Suffolk, before he reached a roadside tavern on February 18, Auld described his surroundings, "Lands midling good, but Plantations old & small, Indian Corn Tobo & Tarr the produce, very little Wheat."[27] This observation alone indicates Auld's interests. He saw around him a landscape of moderate potential but thought it suffered from a degree of overdevelopment and overuse. Tobacco and corn remained in wide production back in his old neighborhood on the Eastern Shore, but he evidently expected to see more in the way of wheat. By the 1760s most Eastern Shore counties produced significant wheat crops in addition to corn and a decreasing amount of tobacco.[28] He later found North Carolina wheat production increasing, particularly in the backcountry counties.[29]

Auld's comparative framework indicates that he judged this new landscape by the opportunities he anticipated and by the familiar landscape he had left behind in Maryland. Although a lawyer and businessman by trade, and not a farmer, Auld evidently appraised the land by what a settler could produce from it. His

thoughts also indicate that he considered farming as a means to support his family.

Auld reached the small town of Suffolk on February 19 an hour before noon after crossing a bridge over the Nansemond River. He judged that Suffolk was about eleven navigable miles up the Nansemond from the James River and continued his assessment of the town's commercial potential. Auld speculated that most of the "Trade & Chief exports" from North Carolina passed through Suffolk on the way to the Chesapeake. He witnessed the transport of pork, butter, flour, and naval stores such as tar and turpentine, all as he had expected. As he continued to draw closer to his destination, he realized that the wagoners he observed and the commodities they carried represented a vital element of his future economic opportunities. In addition to the town's commercial activity, Auld found Suffolk the site of "a beautiful Court house a good Church and a School house."[30] He clearly admired the town and hoped to find the same type of activity and community in Halifax.

On February 19, Auld stopped just outside of Suffolk to visit a friend, an unnamed physician. He arrived late in the day and, perhaps prearranged, stayed for almost two weeks, and recorded his thoughts on the countryside, "fine Lands in this neighborhood & a Fine River." After this extended respite at his friend's house near the banks of the Nansemond River, both men departed for the Blackwater River, the dividing line between Nansemond and Southampton County. Although he now traveled with a companion, he nevertheless continued to pay close attention to the landscape. They traveled southwest through an "extremely poor & Sandy" stretch of land, off of the primary road into North Carolina, a detour that included additional river crossings.[31]

On their way to the South Key Bridge over the Blackwater River, Auld took particular interest in forest lands and milling operations, a potentially viable economic option in this area of sandy land "Over run with a sort of short Sedge" grass. The woods held an abundance of pine, some red oaks and a few white oaks and "numbers of Tarr kilns" smoked throughout this area of southeastern Virginia, one of the colony's leading tar production regions. The pines provided "plenty of Lightwood," the resinous wood of the yellow pine, well noted in other eighteenth-century accounts. When plantation owner and surveyor William Byrd crossed just south of this area in March 1728, he had also taken note of the ample number of these valuable trees. He noticed that "The inhabitants hereabouts pick up knots of lightwood in abundance, which they burn into tar and then carry . . . to Norfolk or Nansemond."[32] Although Virginia never overtook North Carolina in the production of tar, pitch, and turpentine, the colony ranked as the second leading producer of naval stores.[33] Auld also noticed the increased numbers of grist mills along the creeks and the Blackwater River as he traveled farther south and west.[34] As Auld approached the bridge across the Blackwater River he had a

variety of money-making options to consider.

The two men "Arrived at South Kay," a primary crossing point over the Blackwater, "that afternoon." Auld spent the night at the home of Thomas and Mary Fisher, adjacent to the South Key Bridge. The Fisher's property included the house, a storehouse, and two 30 ft. x 20 ft. warehouses with ample shed storage. To Auld, the South Key Bridge, along with the Fisher's plantation, may have resembled a small town area. The warehouses next to the bridge stood along a wharf in nine feet of water, making the site an ideal location for backcountry trade. The Blackwater eventually empties into the Albemarle Sound in North Carolina, but for farmers or traders who wished to market their produce in Virginia, it was only a twenty-mile stretch from South Key Bridge to the Nansemond River and its Chesapeake Bay outlets.[35] Auld absorbed a multitude of detail as he made his way across the Southside—bountiful landscape, principal trade routes, and storage facilities, critical decision-making factors in a move that affected the security and welfare of his family and his future.

Leaving South Key Bridge, Auld and the doctor proceeded approximately fifteen miles to the Nottoway River and then continued another twelve to the Meherrin River. They saw more tar and tar kilns, the rivers seemed manageable and both contained "Plenty of Fresh Water Fish." Local residents reported that neither river tended to overflow, even in seasons of heavy rain. After crossing the Meherrin in Henry Hill's ferry, Auld and his companion spent two evenings at Hill's house due to heavy rain. On Friday, March 8, they departed at about nine o'clock in the morning and reached the Roanoke River late in the afternoon, a distance of approximately thirty miles. As Auld took the ferry across the Roanoke, his anticipation grew. More impressed with the Roanoke than the Chesapeake Bay, he noted it as a "River of first Magnitude," with both of its high banks standing tall in "Rich large Quantities" of assorted timber. By this point, Auld rode within a day's travel of his destination in Halifax and clearly this accounts for his heightened interest in the Roanoke. He now saw, with his own eyes, the resources that he hoped would enrich him and his family.

Contrary to what he had heard about the Nottoway and Meherrin Rivers, the Roanoke frequently overflowed its banks. Someone, perhaps the ferry keeper, told the undeterred Auld that the water rose, with some frequency, thirty to sixty feet over its normal level. The floods usually occurred a day or two following a heavy rain, when the waters from deeper in the backcountry flowed toward the coast.[36] The report that Auld heard may have been an exaggeration, but it did not dissuade him from settling in the neighborhood.

Auld actually crossed the Roanoke at some distance from the town of Halifax. According to his journal, after taking the ferry, he and the doctor traveled another eight miles "to a little Tavern on the Road side" and then rode another twelve miles the next day to the house of the doctor's son-in-law, Malachi Murden.

Murden expected Auld and the doctor to arrive in the mid-morning. They left the tavern about six in the morning and the doctor sent advance word of their arrival to his son-in-law. Auld remained at Murden's house for five days and reported that he "received great kindness" and that he was "amongst friends." Although it is possible that he met other acquaintances at Murden's house, he felt comfortable among the doctor's family as he made his final plans for riding to Halifax to find a position.

The doctor and Murden recommended to Auld that he seek out the assistance of one of Halifax's most prominent residents, Joseph Montfort. On March 14, 1765, Auld departed Murden's house and rode about fifteen miles to Halifax, where his journey temporarily ended. As his hosts for the previous nights suggested, Auld "put up at the house of Jos. Montfort Esqr." Montfort, one of Halifax's wealthiest men, represented the town in the colonial assembly through most of the 1760s and had also been the first clerk of county court.[37] Auld made just one reference to Montfort's status. In relation to the positions that Montfort arranged for him, Auld wrote "afterwards [I] settled in Town and took the county clerkship of him and kept a store." His stay with Montfort evidently paid off.[38]

That Auld arranged his position with Montfort *after* his arrival in North Carolina indicates that he left Maryland with half-formed plans. He had evidently made contact with his physician friend about potential opportunities, but apparently had no solid prospects before meeting Montfort. Other prospective backcountry migrants followed a pattern similar to Auld's. For example, in 1769, George Glascock wrote from Halifax County, Virginia, to his merchant friend Richard Bennehan in Orange County, North Carolina, to ascertain if there were any opportunities for him. Earlier in the decade, Bennehan had worked for George Glascock's father, William Glascock, in Richmond County, Virginia. In 1762, when Bennehan wished to travel "to the Remoter parts of this Colony," William Glascock and his partners wrote Bennehan a letter of introduction vouching for his honesty and his work ethic. By 1769, Bennehan, well established with a Scottish trading group in Orange County, knew of opportunities for friends. Specifically, George Glascock asked Bennehan "if a school Master might get imployment in those parts . . . or if you could get me into the business of store keeping or any other such as you think."[39] Evidently Glascock had a flexible vision of opportunity in the backcountry, and he placed a significant degree of confidence in Richard Bennehan's judgment. Like James Auld, Glascock clearly expected to settle in the backcountry, but he relied on friends and their associates to help clarify which opportunities might prove fruitful.

By early spring of 1765, Auld had a strong foothold in his new home, but the job of moving his family to North Carolina remained. During her husband's absence, Rosannah Auld remained on Fishing Creek in Maryland. She left no written record of her efforts with the children or with managing any financial

business, but it is safe to say that preparing her family of young children for the move to North Carolina occupied much of her time and thoughts. Historians of later migrations have identified a distinct difference between how men and women perceived the experience of moving. Men tended to view the journey and the settlement process as an opportunity for improvement. Women, on the other hand, often looked forward with apprehension and sometimes dreaded the experience.[40] The evidence yields nothing about Rosannah's position on moving to North Carolina.

James returned to Dorchester County in June 1765 and stayed for just three weeks. On this brief visit home, he took care of the business of preparing his family to move. They had already sold the land that he and his wife had owned for the previous two years.[41] During the summer of 1765, Auld still served as a member of the county land commission, charged with surveying lands and validating property lines.[42] He resigned from this position and put his efforts toward moving his family. As his family packed the household, Auld traveled back to Halifax to resume his duties as the clerk of court and as Montfort's storekeeper.

In August, Auld returned again to Maryland, this time to remove his family. He wrote nothing about their journey until it ended, "we arrived on the 25th Day of Sept. 1765."[43] Although portions of his first journey proved arduous, re-tracing his steps with six children in tow, including a nine-month-old infant, certainly complicated every aspect of the trip. The family probably took the same route, down the Eastern Shore, then across the Southside. Auld had lost his way enough times on his first trip that he probably hoped to avoid the uncertainties of a new route with his family. Judging from their arrival date in Halifax, it appears that the trip took somewhat longer than his first journey. If they left Dorchester County shortly after James's arrival in August, they traveled for at least three weeks.

The Aulds settled in Halifax for about two years and by the end of that time he sought other opportunities in the area. According to his diary, the family moved about seven miles outside the town of Halifax, to a six hundred fifty-acre farm with "a large Orchard & house." In the four years between 1767 and 1771, Auld remained active in Halifax town, making almost daily trips from his home while a number of overseers managed his farm operations. Furthermore, in 1769, he pledged £3 for the building of a Masonic temple in Halifax. His former benefactor Joseph Montfort donated a lot and a house in Halifax and received a charter from the Grand Master of England. Auld was one of twelve other men who pledged support for the lodge.[44]

By 1771, however, Auld's agricultural enterprise began to fail. Two overseers, in 1769 and 1770, produced poor crops of wheat and corn, and in 1771 Auld decided not to hire anyone to help his two aging slaves. In January of that year, Auld once again looked for brighter opportunities deeper in the backcountry. He "Travelled up to Anson County about 200 miles contracked with Colo. Saml. Spencer for the

Clkship of that County," and his "first Court Commenced Jany 1771." Repeating an almost identical process, Auld left his family behind while he pressed ahead to determine his prospects for the future. This time, he exercised more caution before relocating his family and rode the Anson County circuit for over a year before he decided to settle in the county. Part of this time he spent traveling through Anson with his two sons, Michael, 14, and John, 19. John began following in his father's footsteps in January 1772 when he gained a position at a store in Chatham County and also became the deputy clerk for a county judge. After the Anson County Court ended its April 1772 session, Auld returned to Halifax to remove his family. He hoped to re-settle before the July court began.

Although Auld's diary ends with his entry regarding settling in Anson County, several pieces of evidence indicate how he and his family fared as they headed to western North Carolina. At the end of 1772, Auld attempted to sell his house in Halifax and at least part of his property. Despite recent poor harvest yield, he touted the richness of his property. The ad that appeared in the *Virginia Gazette* in December 1772 read as follows:

> The said land lies about six miles above Halifax Town is well wooded and watered, the soil good for corn, wheat, &ec and affords as good Range, for Stock of all Kinds, as any Land in the County. There is remarkable fine Apple Orchard on the place, a good Dwelling House and sundry Outhouses. For terms apply to Mr. William Hendric who lives near the Premises or to James Auld. [45]

The Aulds had evidently moved on by the time this ad ran in Williamsburg, otherwise it would not have instructed potential buyers to forward enquiries to a neighbor.

The following May, Auld began taking up land in Anson County, mostly in the form of grants from the colonial government. On May 24, he recorded patents for three tracts of land, two hundred, four hundred, and six hundred forty acres. Two of the properties lay on the north side of the Pee Dee River, while the third was located on Buffalo Creek, "near Smiths Mill at the Great Road." A year later, in July 1774, Auld patented an additional six hundred forty acres, bringing his total land holdings to almost 1,900 acres.[46] Despite their setbacks towards the end of their stay in Halifax, the Aulds had accumulated a sizable amount of land by the outset of the Revolutionary War.

The historical record offers little on the Aulds during the Revolution. Back in their former home in Maryland, four of James's brothers served in various patriot units during the war, but it is not clear what role James may have played in the struggle for American independence.[47] His family, however, lived in a part of North Carolina that experienced some of the most brutal fighting of the war. The British Army under the command of Lord Cornwallis pursued Continental forces

led by General Nathanael Greene throughout the backcountry counties of the Carolinas in the last two years of the War. This formal campaign took a heavy toll on the surrounding countryside and its population, but an even more gruesome drama played out between the Patriot and Loyalist militias, waging a civil war against each other at the same time.[48] Facing a future of uncertainty brought about by the depredations of war, Auld never achieved the safety and security that he had long sought for himself and his family. Auld's diary tells us nothing of his family's life during this turbulent time, but other traces of evidence provide some clues about his last years.

James Auld died in 1780 and Rosannah about ten years later. His will was filed in Anson County, although he apparently died at a new residence in Mecklenburg County, Virginia. Rosannah, his son William, and his son-in-law William Harrington served as the executors of his estate.[49] A family tradition holds that Auld died in Mecklenburg, Virginia, on a journey to or from Maryland, while others believe that Auld died in Maryland.[50] Whichever is true, Auld apparently never found satisfaction in his situation. Of course, it is impossible to know for certain what he intended in later life. Had he continued maintaining his journal throughout the Revolutionary War years, he probably would have betrayed again his continual search for a better opportunity for his family. James Auld appears to have associated geographic mobility with social mobility and the quest for economic well being. Of all of the factors that motivated families to migrate in the eighteenth century, the impulse to build a better life and seek economic stability ranked highest. Yet many tempered this impulse with the desire, and possibly the need, to build a better life in a familiar area of known faces.

The Aulds' experience from 1765 through the Revolution represents the experience of hundreds, even thousands, of other families of the same era. As an attorney and county clerk, James Auld had achieved a rank higher than the majority of people who left their homes to settle in the southern backcountry. Yet James Auld's status only separated him from the average migrant insofar as it allowed him a greater chance of cultivating opportunities once he arrived at his destination. His position as the clerk of the Halifax court could not shield him from the vagaries of agricultural production and when leaner times came Auld devised a plan to re-settle farther in the backcountry—as did countless others.

Auld's first journey to the backcountry also represents the daily travails of mid-eighteenth-century migrants. As one man traveling alone, he probably covered more territory in a typical day than during his later journey with his family. One person on horseback could, after all, cover ground much more quickly than a group of people with a wagon or cart of possessions. He also enjoyed regular stays in houses or ordinaries, although his descriptions of these

establishments indicate that camping outside, as he almost certainly did with his family, probably proved to be equally comfortable. On the whole, Auld's encounters and challenges reflect a typical migration experience—poorly marked routes, unpredictable opportunities for buying provisions, and inconsistent service in public houses—all included in the price of building a new life.

NOTES

1. James Auld "Diary," William Alexander Smith Papers (photocopy), Rare Book, Manuscript & Special Collections Library, Duke University, Durham, N.C. There are also two transcribed versions of Auld's diary, "The Journal of James Auld, 1765–1770," *Publications of the Southern History Association,* 4 (July 1904): 253–68; "Diary" & Notebook of James Auld (1765–1789)" transcribed by Ransom McBride, *North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal* (Nov. 1984): 223–26; William Browne, ed., "Proceedings of the Council of Maryland 1753–1761," *Archives of Maryland* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1883), 31: 41–43.
2. James Auld, "Diary."
3. For more than a decade scholars have studied features of this movement to the backcountry. A partial list of the best recent monographs see Stephen Aron, *How the West was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky from Daniel Boone to Henry Clay* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); H. Tyler Blethen and Curtis W. Wood, *From Ulster to Carolina: the Migration of the Scotch-Irish to Southwestern North Carolina* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1998); Joan E. Cashin, *A Family Venture: Men and Women on the Southern Frontier* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Aaron Spencer Fogelman, *Hopeful Journeys: German Immigration, Settlement, and Political Culture in Colonial America, 1717–1775* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996); Patrick Griffin, *The People with No Name: Ireland's Ulster Scots, America's Scots Irish and the Creation of a British Atlantic World, 1689–1764* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Warren R. Hofstra, *The Planting of New Virginia: Settlement and Landscape in the Shenandoah Valley* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004); Elizabeth Perkins, *Border Life: Experience and Memory in the Revolutionary Ohio Valley* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); and S. Scott Rohrer, *Hope's promise : Religion and Acculturation in the Southern Backcountry* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005). Two older works remain important, Carl Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities: Societies in the Colonial South* (New York: Atheneum Books, 1963), and Robert W. Ramsey's *Carolina Cradle: Settlement of the Northwest Carolina Frontier, 1747–1762* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964). The latter has numerous references to Marylanders migrating to the backcountry, see 10–15, 27, 33, 34, 38, 40, 42, 50, 138–140, 168.
4. Lawrence A. Peskin, "A Restless Generation: Migration of Maryland Veterans in the Early Repubic," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 91, (1996): 311–15; Peskin has provided an invaluable contribution to our understanding of the destinations of Maryland's revolutionary war veterans. His analysis of the pension files offered some of the best evidence to be found about the aspirations of the revolutionary generation in Maryland as they set out on what was an early phase of the greater American westward movement. Other settlers who migrated from Maryland to the southern backcountry left accounts of their journeys as well. See Waightstill Avery,

"Diary", 1769, North Carolina Papers, Draper Manuscript Collection, State Historical Society of Wisconsin (microfilm); and William Few Jr., "Autobiography of William Few," *Magazine of American History* 7 (July–Dec. 1881): 343–58.

5. Robert W. Ramsay, *Carolina Cradle: Settlement of the Northwest Carolina Frontier, 1747–1762* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), 21–22.

6. F. Edward Wright compiler, *Maryland Calendar of Wills, 1764–1767* (Westminster, Md.: Family Line Publications, 1992), 13: 132. Maryland Prerogative Court, Wills, 34, 382–84 (microfilm), Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture, Salisbury University, Salisbury, Maryland (hereinafter cited Nabb Research Center).

7. Henry C. Peden, *Revolutionary Patriots of Talbot County, Maryland, 1775–1783* (Westminster, Md.: Family Line Publications, 1998), 6–7.

8. James Auld, "Diary."

9. Patience Brayton, "Diary," typescript extracts from *Life and Religious Labours of Patience Brayton, late of Swansey, In the State of Massachusetts* (New York: Isaac Collins and Sons, 1801), North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

10. "Life of John Griffith," *Friends Library*, 14 vols. (Philadelphia: Joseph Rakestraw, 1842), 5: 423–25.

11. Joseph Brown Thomas, "Settlement, Community, and Economy: The Development of Towns on Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore, 1660–1775" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1994), 193–94.

12. A similar situation prevailed in North Carolina. Alan D. Watson, "The Ferry in Colonial North Carolina: A Vital Link in Transportation," *North Carolina Historical Review* 51 (1974): 247–60.

13. This ferry began running in the late seventeenth century and is still in operation at the hamlet of Whitehaven. In the early nineteenth century, this ferry was called the Whitehaven ferry as opposed to the "lower ferry." Thomas, "The Development of Towns on Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore," 211–17; out of the eight tavern licenses granted by Somerset County Court in 1763, at least two went to men who owned property in Princess Anne. Robert Geddes and John Done operated ordinaries side by side in the town, and their location almost guaranteed Geddes and Done that they would see a brisk business when the county court met in March, June, August, and November.

14. James Auld, "Diary." What Auld meant by "French" house is not clear. Although Huguenots abounded in the middle south, this area of Maryland was predominantly English in ethnic composition. In any case, Auld appeared to have felt comfortable dealing with the residents of this French house.

15. Somerset County Judicial Record, Aug. 1763 (microfilm) CR 50, 297; Somerset County Land Records, 24, 132 (microfilm) C (0 24); Somerset County Land Records, 24, 156 (microfilm) C (0 24) all at Nabb Research Center.

16. For more on Mary Stevens's ferry and ordinary on the Pocomoke River, see J. Hall Pleasants, *Archives of Maryland, Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly of Maryland* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1944), 61: 510; Maryland Prerogative Court Records, Wills, 30. 658 (microfilm) SR 4424; Somerset County Judicial Record, Aug. 1763 (microfilm) CR 50, 297, all at Nabb Research Center; James Auld, "Diary."

17. In October 1748, the Virginia Assembly enacted a law that established a ferry across Chesapeake Bay, making it the only authorized ferry across the bay to the mainland of Virginia. Twelve years later, the operation of the ferry passed to Eyre's son Severn. The Northhampton County Court required Eyre to have at least two workers to operate the ferry boat across the bay. William Waller Henings, ed., *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of all the Laws of*

Virginia, from the First Session of the Legislature in the year 1619, 13 vols. (Richmond, 1819), 6: 19–20. Unlike other unofficial ferries in many of the colonies that operated without license *and* without harassment from officials, ferries across the Chesapeake that sailed from points other than at Eyre's were prohibited by Virginia law.

18. Considering that the ferry served three Tidewater towns, it is hardly surprising that a trip to Virginia and back required several days. Northampton County Court Minute Book 25: 231 (microfilm), Nabb Research Center.

19. Alan D. Watson, "The Ferry in Colonial North Carolina," *North Carolina Historical Review* 51 (July 1974): 250.

20. Isaac Weld, *Travels Through the States of North American and Provinces of Upper & Lower Canada, During the Years 1795, 1796, & 1797*, 2 vols. (New York: Augustus M. Kelly, 1970 [1807]), 1: 369–70.

21. James Auld, "Diary."

22. John Wade to Phebe Hadly, June 13, 1766, Buffington Family Mss, item 787, Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pennsylvania. Unlike Auld and the Moravians, Wall apparently entrusted his correspondence to the hands of a stranger rather than someone with whom he shared some ethnic or religious connection.

23. "Diary" of the Journey of the First Colony of Single Brethren to North Carolina, October 8–November 17, 1753," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 11 (Oct. 1904): 138, 151.

24. For more on how families corresponded with each other after settling and how backcountry settlers encouraged other family members and friends to follow them see Creston Long, "Southern Routes: Family Migration and the Eighteenth-Century Southern Backcountry" (Ph.D. dissertation, College of William and Mary, 2002).

25. Thomas Walker, *Journal, 1750* (microfilm), Manuscripts Reading Room, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. The date given here is in the Old Style calendar.

26. What both men were taking part in was the process of constructing and defining the landscape, a process that necessarily involved each man's perception of what to expect out of the land. While Walker and Auld would both ultimately be concerned with quantifying their land by purchasing a number of acres in the case of Auld and seeking to validate a huge land grant in the case of Walker, on their initial journeys anyway they were concerned with the landscape, a qualitative object of perception and social reproduction. For discussion of this concept, see Tim Ingold, "The Temporality of the Landscape," *World Archaeology* 25 (1993): 153–55; David Harvey, "Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 80 (1990): 419; Elizabeth Perkins, *Border Life: Experience and Memory in the Revolutionary Ohio Valley* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 42–44. For similar discussion of travel and perception, see Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740–1790* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988 [1982]), 53–56.

27. James Auld, "Diary." All of the backcountry counties produced this crop, and the popularity of growing wheat increased throughout the 1760s.

28. Lois Green Carr, "Diversification in the Colonial Chesapeake: Somerset County, Maryland, in Comparative Perspective," in *Colonial Chesapeake Society*, eds. Lois Green Carr, Philip D. Morgan, and Jean B. Russo (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 358–61; Paul Clemens, *The Atlantic Economy and Colonial Maryland's Eastern Shore: From Tobacco to Grain* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 22–23, 183–98.

29. Harry Roy Merrens, *Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Historical Geography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), 113–15.

30. James Auld "Diary."

31. John Dalrymple's 1755 edition of the Fry-Jefferson map clearly delineates a route from the

town of Suffolk to the vicinity of Halifax. When John Saunders, a Virginia merchant, made a trip from Suffolk to Hillsborough in 1753, he took this route. On Saunders' first day of travel, he crossed the border with North Carolina, stopping shortly for dinner at a plantation in Summerton, just inside Virginia. Saunders's route provided a number of advantages, the greatest of which were river crossings. By taking a route that swung more to the south than the southwest, Saunders only had to cross the Chowan and Roanoke Rivers. John Saunders, *Notebook and Journal*, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C.

32. William Byrd, *History of the Dividing Line*, in Louis B. Wright, ed. *The Prose Works of William Byrd of Westover: Narratives of a Colonial Virginian* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1966), 203–04.

33. Timothy Silver, *A New Face on the Countryside: Indians, Colonist and Slaves in South Atlantic Forests, 1500–1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 122–23.

34. There were so many grist mills along the Nottoway and Meherrin rivers by the early 1760s that they interfered with the passage of fish to counties farther to the west. To remedy the situation, the colonial assembly enacted a law requiring mill owners to place slopes or openings in their mill-dams to allow fish to swim upstream. Henings, *Statutes at Large*, 7: 409–10.

35. *Virginia Gazette*, Purdie and Dixon, Feb. 9, 1769, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

36. Almost twenty years later, when J. F. D. Smyth traveled through the town of Halifax, he too heard of the famed "freshets" on the Roanoke. Smyth reported that "trees, fences, corn, tobacco, horses, cattle and even houses are all swept away by the torrent and carried down stream." John Ferdinand Dalziel Smyth, *A Tour in the United States of America* (New York: Arno Press, 1968 [1784]), 1: 85–87.

37. W. C. Allen, *History of Halifax County* (Greenville, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1993 reprint edition), 149–51.

38. Auld "Diary."

39. Letter, John Woodbridge, William Glascock, LeRoy Hammond, March 20, 1762; George Glascock to Richard Bennehan, Sept. 21, 1769, Cameron Family Papers, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina. For more on Bennehan and the business that Glascock was interested in, see Marjoleine Kars, *Breaking Loose Together: The Regulator Rebellion in Pre-Revolutionary North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 62–64; and Merrens, *Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century*, 162–63. Examples of people contacting backcountry residents to inquire about opportunities extend across the Atlantic. Colin Shaw was a well established merchant in Cumberland County, North Carolina. In 1770, Donald Campbell, Shaw's uncle, wrote to him from Scotland asking assistance for his daughter and son-in-law who were attempting to settle in the North Carolina backcountry. Campbell explained to Shaw that their ill fortune in Scotland had not been due to their own shortcomings, and he asked that Shaw "may give them...advice & assistance in having them put on some footing." Campbell put Shaw on the spot with this request, because his son-in-law, presumably with his family in tow, was the bearer of the letter. Letterbook, Colin Shaw Collection, North Carolina Division of History and Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

40. Joan E. Cashin, *A Family Venture*, 32–49. See also John Mack Farragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail*, 163–64. Julie Roy Jeffrey, *Frontier Women*, 42–47, on the other hand, points to a number of examples in which women displayed a sense of adventure and an interest in seeking a better life for themselves and their families. It is possible that Rosannah Auld and other colonial women were not as reluctant to migrate as the majority of their nineteenth-century counterparts, yet there is little or no evidence suggesting a major difference.

41. In 1763, they had sold one hundred acres and the following year another 265-acre tract in

Dorchester County. Dorchester County Court, Land Records, Old 18: 409; Old 157 (microfilm), Nabb Research Center. There are no other records of the Aulds selling land in Dorchester County through the early 1770s.

42. Dorchester County Court, Land Records, Old 20:237 (microfilm), Nabb Research Center.

43. By this point in Auld's "Diary," he was obviously writing from memory, as though he thought to record some memorable milestones a few years after they occurred. He appears to have made his last daily entry on his first day in Halifax when he met Joseph Montfort.

44. W. C. Allen, *History of Halifax County*, 92–94. By supporting the local Masonic Lodge, Auld was attempting to associate further with the county's elite. Although freemasonry in America had undergone a process of democratization since 1750, many men saw joining a Masonic lodge as a means of asserting their social and political importance. For a man like Auld, someone still struggling to secure his status in a new community, supporting the building of the Masonic lodge offered him another way to bind himself to men like Joseph Montfort. See Steven C. Bullock, "The Revolutionary Transformation of American Freemasonry, 1752–1792," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 47 (1990): 349–50; for a thorough discussion of the divisions in American Masonry before the Revolution, see Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730–1840* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 85–108.

45. *Virginia Gazette*, Purdie and Dixon, December 3, 1772, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

46. Margaret Hoffman, ed., *Colony of North Carolina, Land Patents* (Weldon, N.C.: Roanoke News Company, 1984), 2: 346, 350, 351, 642.

47. Henry C. Peden, *Revolutionary Patriots of Talbot County, Maryland, 1775–1783* (Westminster, Md.: Family Line Publications, 1998), 6–7.

48. For a recent examination of this portion of the war see, Wayne E. Lee, *Crowds and Soldiers in Revolutionary North Carolina: The Culture of Violence in Riot and War* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2001), 176–211.

49. Brent H. Holcomb, ed., *Anson County North Carolina, Deed Abstracts, 1749–1766, Abstracts of Wills & Estates, 1749–1795* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1980), 128.

50. R.T. Bennett, "Introduction: The Journal of James Auld, 1765–1770," *Publications of the Southern History Association* 4 (1904): 253–55.

Rosalie Stier Calvert (1778–1821) and her daughter Caroline Maria. Calvert wrote frequently to her family in Belgium on the challenges she faced managing the slaves and servants in her household. (Gilbert Stuart, 1804, Maryland Historical Society.)

"The Torment with the Servants": Management and Labor in a Southern Maryland Plantation Household

Steven Sarson

In May 1807, Rosalie Calvert, mistress of Riversdale plantation in Prince George's County, described her household to her sister in revealing detail. "A family like ours," she wrote:

> is like a little kingdom—the ministers often fail to do their duty, and sometimes, too, the subjects become discontented and have to be replaced. We have three white servants—a chambermaid, a gardener, and an overseer. Then [there is] a black prime minister who serves as chamberlain, confidant, "housekeeper," in short, as man-of-all-work. Our household consists of 21 persons, including my children. Besides that, there are always workmen about, sometimes one, two, three, even four at a time—all to be lodged and fed, of course. You can see that so large a household requires care to manage, especially as things are not yet properly settled. [1]

The Riversdale household, clearly a large and complex organization, consisted of Rosalie and her husband George, four children, plus fifteen laborers, including slaves, indentured servants, and wage workers, black and white, cooking for the family, waiting on them, and tending their house and garden. Additionally, the Calverts employed midwives, wet nurses, nannies, cooks, tutors, and carriage drivers. Rosalie, as did others in her social and economic position, regarded a waged overseer as a member of her household and as a servant. She did not, however, count the "workmen," builders and decorators completing the new mansion, as servants as their work did not contribute to running the household.

The passage also says much about the plantation mistress's idealized view of the world around her. Rosalie Calvert's generic use of the term "servant" (here and elsewhere) for laborers of different occupations, conditions of service, and race suggests that she saw the social distance between herself and her workers as greater than any between the laborers themselves. Yet at the same time she perceptively viewed the world around her. Despite her generalization about workers, she acknowledged the existence of a complex hierarchy of household labor. And despite

The author teaches history at the Swansea University in Wales and is a past contributor to this journal, see "'Objects of Distress':Inequality and Poverty in Early Nineteenth-Century Prince George's County," MdHM, *96 (2001), 141–62.*

the absolutist implication of her monarchical simile, she was well aware of ministers' failings and subjects' discontent.

Rosalie Calvert, therefore, has much to tell us about household management and labor in the early national upper south. Some aspects of Rosalie's life and personality did not fit the standard of many plantation mistresses, yet her words are generally enlightening. In 1794, then sixteen years of age, she arrived in America with her family, in flight from Napoleon's invasion of Belgium. The Stiers adapted well to their new environment, first making friends in an elite circle in Philadelphia that included President George Washington. In Maryland, they connected with an eminent local family through Rosalie's 1799 marriage to George Calvert, son of Benedict Swingate Calvert, oldest, illegitimate but well-provided son of Charles Calvert, the fifth, and last, Lord Baltimore. Though born abroad, Rosalie spent her adult years in America, most especially in southern Maryland. Her thoughts and skills in plantation and labor management developed, as for most plantation mistresses, after taking over her own household. She assimilated remarkably well into the southern planter class, betraying none of the alienation from her new society such as that experienced by a born-outsider like Frances Kemble, or even the vague discomfort of a questioning insider like Mary Chesnut. In fact, Rosalie Calvert's attitudes and actions bear out Elizabeth Fox-Genovese's argument that, although gender shaped planter women's lives they acted first and foremost as members of a class and race. Rosalie Calvert exemplifies Fox-Genovese's characterization of planter women as "elitist and racist." Nor did she display the "soft" attitude (relative to men) or adopt the mediating role in the slave system that Catherine Clinton described. Rosalie Calvert did have a prickly personality. Her letters reveal that she consistently believed herself correct on any point of discussion she did not hesitate to confront those who disagreed with her, regardless of their knowledge and experience. Her character, although a bit extreme, did not appear idiosyncratic. She displayed the confidence of a manor-born European and her assertiveness grew as she learned to master American slaves.[2]

Rosalie Calvert did not fit the southern image of a lady placed on a pedestal, though it is important to stress that few planter women did. In fact, like many, Rosalie Calvert enjoyed an active role in her family's economy, including the running of the household, even if she, and they, complained frequently and at length about being overburdened.[3] In this challenging role, she left an abundance of fascinating and useful comments about how a plantation household ran and on the labor relations within it. In 1803, the Stiers returned to Belgium, following Napoleon's general amnesty to émigrés and left Rosalie behind. Between then and her death in 1821 she wrote over 230 letters to her family, covering a wide range of subjects in revealing detail (and sometimes the revealing absence of detail) on the operation of a southern plantation household.

Concentrating on a single household provides a narrow focus, yet also offers

Riversdale, c. 1890. (Maryland Historical Society.)

the opportunity to explore how one employer treated different types of laborers and how those laborers reacted. Riversdale therefore provides a single and controlled environment in which to compare different conditions of labor and the varying natures of labor relations. The relatively narrow focus also allows a glimpse of how social relations developed over time, guided by the experiences of both employer and employee.

Although Rosalie Calvert's words cannot always be taken literally and unintended meanings sometimes lurk beneath the surface, she left valuable insights on how planters and laborers lived and worked together, what they thought of each other, and how, over time, they developed strategies for dealing with each other. The nature of relations between the mistress and different kinds of laborers varied enormously. This variety is partly attributable to occupational diversity, differing degrees of propinquity, and partly to the laws of slavery and freedom and the conventions of gender that prescribed and proscribed plantation mistress's actions. But variability in labor relations also existed because slaves and different kinds of wage laborers exercised different kinds and degrees of agency in dealing with masters and mistresses.

In labor relations at Riversdale, a simple or reductive relationship between power and victimhood did not exist. Slaves, extremely resentful of their situation,

George Calvert (1768–1838) became master of Riversdale upon his marriage to Rosalie Stier, but he never owned the estate. The property belonged to her father who then entailed it to his daughter and her children. (Gilbert Stuart, 1804, Maryland Historical Society.)

seem to have resisted planters much more vigorously and consistently than did wage laborers. Senses of justice and injustice thus meant that more power on the part of mistresses and masters did not necessarily mean less agency on the part of laborers. Power operated in different ways, sometimes brutal and open, other times subtle and disguised. Slaves could be bought, sold, and beaten but had guarantee of a subsistence (however mean). Free workers could not be bought, sold, or beaten (at least legally), but they could be fired and thereby lose their subsistence. No doubt slaves would have preferred freedom and free workers would not have swapped freedom for enslavement. But it does not make slavery any less heinous to observe that the free could not eat their freedom, and that this basic vulnerability helped to make them more compliant workers. This article therefore agrees with the work of those historians who, in critiquing scholarship that emphasizes slaves' cultural autonomy, have argued that master-slave relations are fundamental to a full understanding of the nature of agency in slave society. Yet comparing enslaved workers with certain types of free laborers in one household also reveals a paradox—the conditions of enslavement permitted more resistance and rebellion.[4]

Some free workers, though, were more vulnerable and compliant than others. Domestic servants, for example, were much more tractable than tutors and overseers. Not necessarily because young women domestics (Rosalie Calvert most often referred to women) were happier employees, but because gender limited the number of available occupational options and their work could be done by any number of slaves. These factors made it more difficult for women to find new

livings if they were fired. Even with less vulnerable employees, though, planters had other ways of exercising power. The essay will conclude with an analysis of the intricate and subtle language and the less subtle substance of a contract that limited an overseer's economic, social, and personal autonomy.

Not surprisingly, gender defined a large part of Rosalie Calvert's life as a southern plantation mistress. She received no assistance from her husband with domestic duties. As she wrote to her sister, Isabelle van Havre, in 1818, after almost twenty years of marriage:

> My husband has become so lazy that I must exert myself even more, since I have to manage everything myself. He lives in our house as if he were not the master—not giving any instructions, not worrying about anything—and is content to manage his various farms. So you can imagine how overwhelmed with work I am at times.[5]

Admitting that George Calvert contentedly managed "his various farms," Rosalie unintentionally conceded that he was not necessarily "lazy" in the strictest sense of the term. Rather, he believed in a gendered division of labor in which his responsibilities ended where his wife's began—at the threshold of their home. This was somewhat unusual as custom dictated that most planter men exercise mastery indoors as well as out.[6] Also, Rosalie expended considerable efforts keeping plantation accounts and dealing in stocks and bonds. Although Rosalie Calvert had no objection to her husband being "master," she disliked an order of things that left her to cope with domestic tasks alone. Perhaps she did not know that her husband spent time at the household of his enslaved mistress, Eleanor Beckett, with whom he maintained a relationship predating his marriage and postdating his wife's death.[7]

The cares of a large family bore heavily on Rosalie Calvert. As she wrote her brother, Charles Jean Stier, in December 1808, at which time she had five children at the demanding ages of fifteen weeks, and two, four, five, and eight years of age:

> One time Charles has to be soothed, which takes a half-hour. Then they [servants] come to ask for mustard for a ragout or sugar for pastry, for you are aware that we American ladies are, alas, our own housekeepers! Then Caroline must have a reading lesson and George must write. A new coat is brought from the tailor which must be tried on. No, it is not right and a note has to go back with it. The man is going to Georgetown and a long list of details for the household must be remembered. All these occupations seem trifling and still they prevent me from chatting with you.[8]

The routine could be exhausting. As she wrote her sister in 1816:

> Although I live so quietly and see so few people, I nevertheless rarely have time to rest and am nearly always behind in everything that needs to be done. But this is partly due to having poor servants whom I must supervise constantly, and frequently I must be extremely sparing of myself because of poor health. . . . Sometimes I am even forced to spend half my time reclining on a sofa. You can imagine how disagreeable this is, especially for someone like me who loves activity and directing and overseeing everything myself.[9]

As the foregoing hints, Rosalie Calvert's class, more than gender, defined her position as a plantation mistress. She regarded those who worked for her as unhelpful as her husband and wrote later that same year:

> . . . [m]y servants are very negligent and my husband does absolutely nothing other than manage his lands. The wines, the provisions, the servants' work, horses, carriages, garden, dairy—I am in charge of all that. Besides which, all our clothes, linens, etc., from mine to Emily's are made here at the house and I have to supervise everything, often cutting and fitting them myself.[10]

Although she complained of lazy and feckless servants, it is nevertheless clear that she kept them busy. More so than herself, for she would not have suffered them reclining on sofas when they got tired. Moreover, the precise nature of the mistress's problems lay in "directing and overseeing" while others did the actual work. "So what do I do all day?" she asked her sister, rhetorically, in 1807, "I get up at five o'clock and we breakfast at seven. Most of the day is spent continually trotting from one end of the house to the other, in the morning giving directions about what has to be done and then after dinner seeing that my instructions have been carried out."[11] As Elizabeth Fox-Genovese has said, plantation mistresses managed, and this role put them in a position of antagonism with other members of their households, including other women. Mrs. Calvert was certainly not "a slave of slaves," in Catherine Clinton's characterization. To understand the plantation mistress's burden properly, then, requires recognition of its managerial dimension. To understand it fully demands acknowledgment of the antagonistic position she consequently assumed towards those who worked for her.[12]

Shortly after her parents' return to Belgium, Rosalie Calvert expressed ambivalence about remaining in America. "In my opinion," she told her mother, "there is only one objection to this country, but that one is dreadful and without remedy—the difficulty we have with servants. Except for that inconvenience, which destroys all other pleasures, America would certainly be a more pleasant country in which to live."[13] When Rosalie Calvert wrote about her difficult American servants, she invariably referred to slaves. Although she expressed no ideological or

moral misgivings about slavery, she found slaves difficult to master, at least initially, as she had not grown up with them. She told her father in 1804 that she loved the Maryland climate and "the liberty of everyone to live as he pleases. But," she added, "the torment with the servants poisons all these pleasures. Perhaps by hiring housekeepers and spending twice as much, we would have less trouble, but I am not in a position to do that. My husband doesn't feel this inconvenience as I do, since he is used to it."[14]

Mrs. Calvert had ample opportunity to observe the operations of slavery, a fundamental part of life in Prince George's County. Planters and farmers of the Eastern Shore, the north, and the west of Maryland gradually switched from labor-intensive tobacco cultivation to less labor-intensive and more family-farm-friendly wheat production. Thus, between 1790 and 1830 the enslaved population fell from nearly one-third to less than one-fourth. Prince George's County, however, with three other counties (Cecil, Charles, and St. Mary's), did not give up growing tobacco, and slavery remained fundamental to its economy. The Calverts, among the county's grandest families, owned the greatest number of slaves. In 1800 they held seventy-six slaves. By the time Rosalie died in 1821 they owned 124.[15]

Most of these slaves, at least those of prime working age, toiled in the tobacco fields. Those who Rosalie supervised personally worked in the household. Even so, the born-outsider could learn much about slavery—and mastery—by looking around her own plantation, observing the actions of her peers and listening to their advice, and then learning from her own experience. Certainly, in time, Rosalie Calvert grew accustomed to slaves and gained greater mastery over them. The process by which she did so tells us much about managerial strategies available to plantation mistresses. As numerous historians have shown, the gendered convention of female non-violence left slaveholding women at a disadvantage in a labor system that depended on physical force, and there is no evidence that Rosalie Calvert ever beat her slaves (though she may have done so without having mentioned it).[16] Yet Calvert did employ other management methods to great effect, specifically, sale, removal, and a certain, carefully calibrated, degree of toleration and accommodation.

A fundamental fact of enslavement, of course, was power over the body, including the power to buy and sell human beings. An essential precondition for using sales as a labor management strategy rested in the ability to objectify slaves, and, like most slaveholders, Rosalie Calvert possessed that ability. "I don't know whether I told you," she matter-of-factly wrote her father in November 1803, "that for $300 we bought a man who is a good carpenter and knows how to keep a mill in good repair."[17] She used distinctly economic language when referring to another way in which slave property increased. A short time later, listing recent purchases, including the above carpenter and "a negro at auction . . . for $400," she added that a "little darky arrived here day before yesterday—Betty's produc-

tion."[18] She also often referred to slaves in the same breath as beasts of burden. "We have," she wrote of their Oatlands property, "put five of our negresses there and bought three negroes, four mules etc., in order to operate this farm."[19]

Rosalie Calvert maintained enormous emotional distance even from her household servants. There is no evidence that she made a conscious decision to do this, but it is revealing that she seems never to have thought of doing otherwise. She appears, for example, to have considered her carriage drivers as part and parcel of the carriage apparatus. "Since the body of the carriage was too short to put a passé" she wrote her mother in 1803 of modifications being made, "we manage with two postilions in yellow jackets, leather pantaloons, and black velvet caps with gold lace trim. It makes a very fine equipage."[20] Even the imminent death of one of her drivers failed to awaken in Mrs. Calvert an appreciation of slave humanity that entirely over-rode concerns for her own convenience. "Cooks and coachmen are the most difficult to find," she wrote her sister in 1805, "especially the latter. We have a very good [coachman], but I am afraid he won't last long, as he has the consumption which I think is killing him."[21]

Nor did the mistress of Riversdale worry about the separation of slave children from their parents, commenting only on how it affected their work and attitude. Of a slave called Lucie, who had accompanied the Stiers on their return to Belgium, Rosalie wrote her father on Christmas Day 1803, "[s]he really is a very good chambermaid and conducts herself well since she has been separated from her mother." Yet Lucie caused problems for her mistress. "I am going to try to sell her soon. . . ." Rosalie continued, "I could not make her say that she had not left the ship, as she tells me about having been on land several times, but I don't think it is important."[22] Yet Rosalie informed her father less than six months later, "[y]esterday we sold your girl Lucy to Dougherty for $225."[23]

Lucie had, it seems, temporarily jumped ship a few times, perhaps taking the opportunity to see some of the world or just to have a little time to herself while she could, but she had nevertheless returned to Riversdale. Rosalie Calvert's attitude toward Lucie proved contradictory. If it was not important that Lucie had left the ship, why did the mistress try to make her admit she had? And why did she sell her, despite her excellence as a chambermaid? The reason for these apparent contradictions may have been that Rosalie had imbibed too much Christmas cheer before writing to her father. More likely, though, she sold Lucie as a way of dealing with the "torment with the servants" by ridding herself of a once disobedient slave and setting an example to the others. She made no explicit statement to that effect, but Lucie was not the only Calvert slave sold at this time. "The old witch Sara and her granddaughter," Rosalie wrote her parents in August 1803, "have been sold for $100. We tried to sell her in Baltimore, but couldn't; [she was] afraid of being sold to some Georgian and took it in her head to make herself look bad. Finally, she

made so many fine promises that she persuaded Ben Lowndes [a neighbor and friend of the Calverts] to buy her."[24]

Rosalie Calvert did not detail exactly what Sara had done to earn the title "witch." Perhaps Sara had gained her reputation before the Stiers' departure and been a troublesome property for some time, obviating the need for further explanation. Even on the auction block, Sara knew how to present herself to actively deter unwanted buyers and she tormented her new master as well. "The old woman Sara," Rosalie wrote two years later, "whom we sold to Ben Lowndes, is the worst I know of among all the servants of our friends, and she regrets every day of her life the change of masters since your departure."[25]

Another way Rosalie Calvert gained greater control over her enslaved household workforce was removal of privileges. "My gardener John," she wrote her mother in 1803, revealing her tendency to quantify laborers' efforts, "works as hard as four people—he is a good man."[26] Some time the following year, however, John incurred Rosalie's wrath. "I had to dismiss my gardener John," she told her father, "because he had become so insolent. He has been back three times since, begging me to take him back, [but] I am now without [a gardener]."[27] Again, Rosalie Calvert did not provide any detail on John's actions. Perhaps he became tired of her oversight or criticism and consequently developed a resentful demeanor. He may have lost his temper and treated her disrespectfully, believing that as a man he had power in the situation. If so, he misjudged her. Regardless, Rosalie condemned him to the boredom, intensity, regimentation, and, no doubt, whippings of the gang-labor regime of the tobacco fields—a situation that apparently reduced him to pleading for forgiveness—yet Mrs. Calvert remained unmoved.[28]

Resistance or truculence among the Calverts' slaves did not entirely cease once the mistress of Riversdale began asserting her power, but it seems to have moderated significantly. "My cook Sam," Rosalie wrote in August 1805, "is the most heedless and least tractable of all my servants." She did not sell or remove Sam, and perhaps he had more license than other slaves in that he ranked as an indispensably fine chef, yet Rosalie appears to have accommodated him as labor relations in general had calmed down. Her complaints about slaves grew much less bitter after 1804, following the removal of John and sales of Sara and Lucie, and even the comments about Sam did not exude the air of exasperation of earlier lamentations. Moreover, the same letter makes clear that she had turned her household help into a tolerably manageable workforce. Encouraging her sister to move back to Maryland, she wrote that,

> [t]he servants are somewhat better than before. Surely it would be impossible to have any worse than those Papa had. . . . I have a little fourteen-year-old negress who is invaluable. I could let you have half a dozen young girls to mind the children, all very good for that job with a little supervision. If you

> do return, I will undertake to provide you with servants who won't be perfect but a hundred times better than the best you had when you were here.[29]

It is possible that Mrs. Calvert had simply become more accustomed, with time and experience, to the work rates, standards, and attitudes of her slaves. Perhaps the situation only seemed better than it had a few years earlier. But the treatment of Lucie, Sara, and John perhaps served a dual purpose, as lessons for other slaves and as punishments for those particular individuals. Perhaps even Sam dared not push the situation beyond a certain point. It is likely, therefore, that Rosalie complained less because she had succeeded in cowing her slaves.

Rosalie Calvert increased her control through threats and punitive sales but also with shrewd personnel management tactics. By October 1805 her careful selection of individuals bore dividends in more industrious and submissive service. "I was surprised to hear," she sympathized with her sister, "that your servants have become worse. As for myself, I have a pretty good set now. Several are quite young, but I find these the best—they are the most attentive and docile."[30] In 1804, Rosalie considered various options for help with the birth and post-natal care of her third child and second daughter, Marie Louise. "I had planned on using a doctor from Washington," Rosalie recounted to her sister,

> but after I hired as a nurse an old negress who used to belong to Mrs. Washington and who is highly regarded, I liked her so much that I wanted only her. . . This little old woman is worth her weight in gold. I don't have the least bother—she dresses the child, if the baby wakes at night, she takes her until she falls asleep, and she takes marvellous care of me so that I won't catch cold.[31]

She grew dissatisfied with the unnamed free black nurse, and in February 1805, believing (wrongly, it later transpired) that she was pregnant again, Mrs. Calvert considered employing a white wet-nurse for two-month-old Marie Louise. Rosalie believed that finding a white wet-nurse would be difficult, but that she believed she might find one at all is perhaps surprising. Less surprising is the common racial attitude she entertained in regard to black people's ability to nurture children. "I am afraid to continue nursing her [Marie Louise] for long," she confided to her sister, "[for fear] of hurting the other one, and it is hard to get a wet nurse whom you really know. I never want to have a black one again—they are not capable of attachment to a child."[32]

Rosalie Calvert, then, never found full satisfaction with slave laborers. Although she gained a large degree of mastery over their work and general behavior, she remained frustrated that she could not control their inner feelings. Imbued with the slaveholders' imperative to achieve absolute mastery, she had to con-

clude, when she did not achieve it, that the fault lay with black people. For slaveholders who idealized their mastery, the notion that slaves would not love them, and certainly the possibility that slaves might resent them, remained unthinkable or impossible to believe. This almost willful incomprehension, along with the need to justify separating slave children from their parents, helps account for slaveholders' belief that African Americans were emotionally obtuse.

Rosalie Calvert never articulated a racial justification of slavery, or of her treatment of slaves, beyond the occasional and incidental comment such as the one above. She hinted sporadically in her letters at an antipathy for black people based upon race. In 1817, for instance, referring to some land that the Calverts thought they might purchase, she wrote that "[t]here is a good house on the property, but he [the deceased former owner] has freed two of his negroes and given each of them 150 acres, which would give it bad neighbors unless one could make them sell their land."[33] As is clear below, however, she often expressed prejudice against poor whites as well, indicating that the Calverts disliked all types of poor people.

As well as slaves, the Calverts employed indentured servants. Referring to a gardener, she told her sister in 1816 that "we have a German who seems to be knowledgeable and this greatly relieves me. One small inconvenience, however, is that he doesn't understand a word of English—I have to explain everything to him by signs."[34] Yet her relationship with this man, quite likely a German Redemptioner, did not work out over time, and she took similar recourses to those she used with slaves. Although "he was very industrious and did more work in a day than three or four of our negroes," as Rosalie told her sister in 1819, "[I] recently discharged my German gardener, whom we bought along with his wife off a ship. He knew nothing at all and couldn't tell a carrot from a turnip."[35] Of course, if he was really unable to differentiate carrots and turnips, one wonders why Mrs. Calvert took three years to discharge him. Presumably, his indenture contract expired at this time, though she could have sold his service or employed him in another task. In truth, the problems likely related more to Mrs. Calvert's excessive expectations, caprice, and arbitrary power than to his gardening abilities. What became of this man and his family after leaving Riversdale is unknown as Rosalie never deigned to name him.

Although the German indentured servant was almost certainly white, most of the Calverts' white household labourers worked for wages. Rosalie's found validation of her belief that white people had greater capability of loving her children and recorded her perception in a letter to her father. "I have an excellent white nurse for the children now," she told him in September 1804 (although she employed the aforementioned "old negress" soon afterwards), "George [Henry] is so attached to her that he never leaves her side, and she loves him as if he were her own."[36]

To her sister the same month, Rosalie further extolled the virtues of the white nurse and other white and black household servants. "I don't know why I have so much work because I now have two excellent seamstresses," she remarked:

> and a white children's nurse who also sews very well. I pay her high wages—five dollars a month—but she is worth it. Never have I seen such patience and good humor about everything. I don't have the least trouble with the children now—she even makes their clothes with very little help from me. I also took on a thirteen-year-old black girl who cleans, makes the beds, etc. Kitty, whom you know, is my chambermaid and an excellent one. She is quite skilful and even puts my hair in curl-papers every night.[37]

It is possible that the nurse, who Rosalie never named, had genuine affection for the Calvert children. Although it is doubtful that she loved them as if they were her own, it is nonetheless interesting that Rosalie believed she did. Also, the nurse was probably not as pleased with receiving five dollars per month for her unremitting toil as Mrs. Calvert was pleased with herself for giving it. But it is notable that the white nurse more willingly and ably gave at least a believable impression of "good humor" and "love."

The races of the "excellent seamstresses" are unknown, but the black cleaner and bedmaker did not attract any qualitative judgments, positive or negative, at this time. Kitty, however, a white chambermaid, enjoyed Mrs. Calvert's long-term approval. Rosalie's comment that her sister should remember Kitty indicates that the chambermaid had been in the family's employ from before June 1803, when the Stiers left America. As late as April 1807, Mrs. Calvert still praised her. "I have an excellent white chambermaid," she wrote, "who is accomplished at dressing and caring for a baby and is a good nurse."[38] The mistress also entrusted her with running the household in the presence of guests, as it would have been "unseemly" for Rosalie to do this work herself. After describing her busy schedule, she confided to her sister, "keep these proofs of my industry between us. I am more active than I want to be known, and I give you these details to provide you with an idea of the way I spend my time. When I have guests, all my functions cease and are performed by a white woman who is really my chambermaid but on occasion my "housekeeper."[39]

The reasons for Kitty's apparent pliability, and that of other white domestics, may have been simply that they lived and worked as free people and earned an income for their labor. Working alongside numerous slaves, and no doubt observing slave gangs toiling in the fields, they must have felt relatively fortunate. Yet there may have been other reasons for their apparently positive attitude. A paradox of slavery was that it gave slaves a grim kind of security. Slaves could be punitively removed and sold, but they could not be fired and thereby

threatened with unemployment. However appalling the powers inherent in slavery, and although slaves were occasionally killed (though there is no evidence of this at Riversdale), slaves more or less had a guaranteed living. A free wage laborer, fired and without references, had no guarantees. He or she would probably find a living elsewhere, but when, for whom, and doing what? These troubling questions may have kept them on their best behavior.

Unemployment and possible indigence presented a very real threat. Prince George's County Levy Court annually provided between £500 and £1,500 for destitute residents and additional sums, usually £10 to £20, to philanthropists in a patrician arrangement for taking care of almshouse "outpensioners" and for burying paupers. Records of the numbers of almshouse residents do not survive, but between 1805 and 1808 the number of outpensioners grew from two to twenty-four as the consequences of an 1804 flood and embargoes from 1807 hit the county's poorest people. Between March and July 1817, in response to a wheat crop failure the previous year, the court distributed £3,140 (again to patrons) for 217 other people who were, by the court's reckoning, "such objects of distress as to require immediate relief." The number included no less than 127 women and twenty-four children.[40]

Other white employees, whose occupations, skills, and gender made it easier to find alternative employment, may have been less tractable than free female domestics. Finding a satisfactory tutor for the Calvert children, for example, ultimately proved impossible. Understandably, Rosalie Calvert wanted her children well educated, but she showed a presumption of her own pedagogical skills more consistent with her belief in her own superiority than with any of her own training or experience. Coupled with her difficult personality, Rosalie Calvert's European background may have enhanced her exacting attitude towards those she sought to teach her children. Home tutors, common in socially elite Chesapeake households, seem to have suffered less contempt and contrariness than those who worked for the Calverts. For example, Philip Vickers Fithian, employed to teach the Carter children of Nomini Hall in Virginia, fared well. The Chesapeake gentry had very firm ideas about what they expected their children to learn, both academically and socially, and they passed that on to tutors in no uncertain terms. Also, perhaps, Rosalie's impatience and quick and frequent willingness to fire tutors reflected planters' sense of the prerogatives of mastery, even over relatively well-educated free white people.[41]

Rosalie Calvert first expressed concern about her children's education to her European family in December 1806. At this time Caroline was aged six, George was three, Marie Louise was two, and Rosalie Eugénie was a baby of two months. "My children are not yet of an age," she told her father, "to give me real companionship. It is, however, almost time to give them some teachers for their education. I don't know how we are going to do that—it isn't easy to find a good

tutor."[42] Mrs. Calvert's concern appears to have been either justified or, more likely, a self-fulfilling prophecy, for a little over two years later she still had not found a tutor to her liking. "I continue to be a schoolmistress (much against my inclination)," she complained, "but what can I do? We cannot find the kind of teacher I want."[43]

The financial troubles of these years, caused by trade embargoes beginning in December 1807 against the belligerents in the Napoleonic Wars and then by the War of 1812, also discouraged Mrs. Calvert from employing a tutor. In September 1809 she wrote to her brother, Charles Jean Stier, of the "commercial obstacles which prevent our selling our harvests and consequently leave us without income." Rosalie continued:

> I was just about to engage a tutor who was quite what I wanted for my children, but I must put it off still for those reasons and continue to teach them myself, which not only bores me insufferably, but by confining me still more closely to the house is injurious to my health and confuses my brain so that I often reason falsely and don't have good common sense."

Her family's experiences apparently influenced her impressions. "Have you not remarked," she asked her brother, clearly agreeing with him, "that schoolmasters are always stupid people, like wanderers from another world or from a dead and bygone century[?]"[44] This comment perhaps reflected a very modern anti-intellectualism that reinforced her low opinion of tutors. Rosalie evidently considered the cerebral distinct from and inferior to the practical, commonsensical, business-like mentality of the "world" and "century" with which she identified herself.

Despite her financial and personal reservations, Rosalie Calvert hired a tutor in November 1809. She soon reverted to teaching her children herself, however, as the tutor did not keep pace with her precise scale of time and pedagogical progress. Having written that her garden and her children took "much" and "the rest" of her time, she continued, "I employed a tutor for six months, but he didn't teach them half as much, and now I instruct them myself. . . . You can imagine, dear Father, how much time this takes, and having a large household to direct in addition leaves me few moments of leisure."[45] Her dislike of teaching, though, often overcame her dislike of tutors, for she kept hiring for the position. "As of three days ago," she announced to her sister in June the next year, "I have a tutor for my children—he is an Englishman between 50 and 55 years old. This is a great relief to me."[46] Short-lived, the relief evaporated and in August, Rosalie wrote her other sibling, "I have a tutor for the two oldest, but I am not satisfied with his attainments so he cannot stay much longer."[47] The following year she told her sister that "The tutor I had was so worthless I had to dismiss him, and I have none at present."[48]

By December 1811, Mrs. Calvert reported serious dissatisfaction with the man who served as the third (at the least) tutor she had employed. "I thought," she wrote her father:

> I had acquired an assistant to keep my accounts in my children's new tutor—he told me he had kept book for several years. I don't know whether it is my manner or my not following the rules of the art or what, but we cannot come to an understanding. I had a hundred times more trouble getting him to copy this account out of my book than if I had done it myself. He is so slow to understand and even slower to get it done that I lose patience.[49]

Rosalie briefly entertained the possibility that she bore responsibility for the bookkeeping difficulties but then concluded that the fault did lay with the tutor. But it was not just his alleged accounting ineptitude that aggravated Rosalie. She also thought him, as the previous tutors, too slow a teacher. On this occasion she believed she taught not just two but seven times faster than this educator. "I am not very happy," she told her father, "with the tutor of my two eldest. He is so slow that they don't learn as much in a week as they should in a day. For the rest, he is a good man, but I cannot make him appreciate the value of wasted time."[50] It is not clear whether she dismissed this man or he left voluntarily, but four years later, when Caroline and George Henry were attending school in Philadelphia, Rosalie faced an old dilemma in relation to her younger children. "I am beginning to be quite perplexed," she wrote her sister, "as to what I will do with the [children] I have here. Eugénie especially ought to be at school or have a tutor, but we have been so little pleased with our last two that I don't know what to do. Meanwhile, I am once more obliged to resume my old profession of schoolmistress which I find not at all amusing."[51]

Rosalie Calvert found fault with every teacher she employed. As late as 1819, she was still making the same complaints she first expressed thirteen years earlier, yet her eldest daughter now assisted her. "I have just dismissed the governess," she told her father, "whom I employed for the past year for Eugénie, Henry, and Julia. She did not have a good method of teaching. If I cannot find a better one, I shall have to send Eugénie to a school and teach the other two myself with Caroline's assistance."[52] The change occurred within six months. "Since winter," she reported to her sister in September, "I haven't had a teacher for my three youngest children; Caroline gives them some lessons, but it takes up some of my time too."[53]

The Overseer

A particularly important type of wage laborer on large slave plantations was, of course, the overseer. As Margaret Law Callcott observed, overseers "generally had a short tenure, caught as they were between the demands of the master and the

resistance of an enslaved labor force." As William K. Scarborough and Eugene D. Genovese have shown, it was difficult to walk the line between subordination to masters and super-ordination over slaves, especially as masters routinely forced overseers to play the part of "evil ministers" so that masters could play the part of benign sovereigns to whom slaves could appeal against those very overseers. These impossible situations quickly forced overseers out of their positions. There is no direct evidence of Calvert overseers being pawns in such battles, but as a commonplace dilemma it is reasonable to suppose that it existed at Riversdale and other Calvert plantations.[54]

Once again, the bulk of evidence about master-overseer relations in Prince George's County comes from masters, mainly Rosalie Calvert's letters but also an overseer contract. This document is found in the county court records, deposited when Stephen Lee sued his boss, Mary Pottenger, for wages and other expenses. Reading between the lines once more reveals a good deal of agency on the part of employees. Plantation owners seemingly had more problematic relations with overseers than with most other wage earners, in part due to slave-related complications. Other factors undoubtedly included the reality that qualified and trustworthy overseers could easily find other jobs.

Rosalie Calvert expressed doubts about visiting Belgium with her American family as their absence meant leaving their plantations in the hands of tenants and overseers. Such people, she felt, could not be trusted. "As for us, my dear brother," she wrote Charles Jean Stier in 1802:

> I cannot imagine how you could have thought it feasible for my husband to leave in one month all his property, consisting as it does entirely of real estate. . . . You understand how hard it is to find a good tenant for good estates, and how still more difficult it is to find an honest industrious overseer. And no matter how well they were managed we would not derive nearly as much profit from them as if we remained on the spot.[55]

The following year Rosalie wrote more positively about the possibility of granting an overseer full managerial responsibility in the Calverts' absence, nevertheless postponing visiting Europe "until all is put in good order." "My husband will have to have a good manager in any event," she explained to her father, "and for four plantations it will be worthwhile to hire an able, intelligent, and honest man to whom it is worth the trouble of giving directions. We have one in mind who we believe will do well."[56] The Calverts must have been disappointed, however, for the following year George fired two overseers. "You perhaps remember," Rosalie wrote her father, "our overseer Watson. We discharged him at the end of the year for being good-for-nothing and hired another man who quickly turned out to be a worse and the biggest rascal. We dismissed him at mid-year and re-

hired Barett, who is a good, honest man. My husband is quite happy with him."[57] Yet the Calverts never did visit Europe.

Although happy with the "industrious" Riversdale overseer, the Calverts hired and fired numerous others. Late in 1805 she told her father that her husband:

> is busy dismissing all his overseers in order to take on new ones who will, I trust, be better than the one at Mount Albion. He let six to eight hogsheads of tobacco be ruined in two days. If they had all been as industrious as [our overseer here], we would have made 100 hogsheads this year. Now I suppose we will make between 70 and 80.[58]

Clearly, the Calverts found working with overseers difficult, but they and others tried to combat the problem by maximizing their mastery. Partly a conceptual exercise, Rosalie listed the Riversdale overseer as a member of her household and described him as one of her "three white servants."[59] Also a practical exercise, planters curtailed overseer autonomy through various contractual prescriptions and proscriptions.

Few overseers' contracts survive (some may have been verbal arrangements), but in 1810 Stephen Lee sued his employer, Mary Pottenger, in Prince George's County General Court for £300 in unpaid fixed wages, £89.19 in commission on 37,791 pounds of tobacco taken to market, £111.12 in plantation expenses he had incurred, and £300 damages. Whether he won the full amount is not recorded, although he must have achieved at least a partial victory. At the end of the case depositions there is a note with Lee's endorsement that assigned "the amount of [£135-13-05] obtained by me, in Prince George's Court against M[ary] P[ottenger]' to William M. Lansdale."[60] What the case primarily reveals, however, is the nature of master-overseer relations delineated in the contracts contained in the litigation papers.

Stephen Lee's initial contract with Mary Pottenger, signed on 1 October 1802, gave the starting date of his employment as January 1, 1803. The court records contain his plantation accounts for 1804 through 1806. Pottenger hired Lee on an annually renewable basis. This arrangement allowed the employer an annual option to replace the overseer in the event that he or she became dissatisfied, even without either party necessarily having broken any terms of contract. Of course, as long as the overseer did his legal duties, he was supposedly protected until the end of the year. It is clear from George Calvert's dealings with his overseers, however, that if the employer believed the employee to be in violation of his contract, he could fire him on the spot, and Rosalie's letters show that her husband fired an overseer "at mid-year" at least once.[61] An overseer so treated would have had recourse to legal redress, but any satisfaction from this would have been gained, after a lot of trouble, long after losing his job.

Even if relations ran smoothly, contractual obligations were carefully speci-

fied and, from the overseer's perspective, highly restrictive. The general notion of the contract, and some of the linguistic constructions contained in particular examples, suggest a form of equality between assignees. But other written constructions and certainly the substance of such agreements instituted a highly unequal power relationship between employer and employee. The Lee-Pottenger contract detailed the overseer's duties in ways that initially suggested equal status between the two but then clearly established Mary Pottenger as the dominant partner:

> the said Stephen, at the special instance and request of the said Mary had agreed with the said Mary, that he would carefully and diligently superintend the plantation Negroes and stock of the said Mary, and in all respects will and faithfully discharge the duties of an Overseer to the best of his knowledge and ability, for one year to commence on the day aforesaid, and that the said Stephen would be careful and attentive in preserving the stock and all the implements and utensils of husbandry, belonging to the said Mary, that he would endeavour to make the best crops, the plantation and hands would admit of, and lastly that he would on no occasion use the Negroes or horses of the said Mary on his private business without the permission of the said Mary first had.

There was a perhaps more marked shift in emphasis from equality to authority in the part of the contract that dealt with payment. The contract first represented Stephen Lee's monetary remuneration as his right but then constructed his additional payments-in-kind as privileges and liberties that Pottenger granted. The court's summary read:

> the said Mary then and there undertook and promised the said Stephen that she would pay the said Stephen, at the expiration of the said year, the sum of seventy five pounds Current Money and one dollar for every thousand weight of Tobacco, that he should carry to Market, and to allow him the following privileges to wit: He should be at liberty, to keep two Cows on the plantation to be fed and treated as the said Mary's Cattle, and also two horses, one to be fed and treated as the said Mary's carriage horses are, the other to be fed only on hay and no corn to be allowed, also to keep two hogs and to raise chickens and ducks, and should be furnished with four hundred pounds of Pork, by the said Mary and corn for the use of his family.

The language of liberty in contemporary republican political discourses had quite different meanings from those found in the socioeconomic language of Stephen Lee's work contract. In contrast with meanings inherent in republican

Prince George's County, 1804. Detail from Aaron Arrowsmith, Maryland.

political discourse, "liberty" in this overseer contract was conflated with "privilege" and was not a right or congeries of rights conferred by citizenship, or by God, or by nature, and it was not inalienable. Quite explicitly, it was something given and something that the employer could take away. It is possible that such language served as mere legalese surviving from an earlier era and had no sub-

stantive implications in the early nineteenth century. But revolutionary and post-revolutionary Americans were well aware of the importance of the language of political economy and of legal minutiae. It seems likely, therefore, that they were also aware of the implications of the language of social relations in legally binding work contracts. In other words, if such authoritarian language survived in contracts, we can suppose that it did so for a reason—to establish employer authority.

Stephen Lee's liberties and privileges depended in part on his marital status. The contract discusseed thus far dated from 1805, after the overseer's marriage. The original 1802 contract (parts of it identical to that of 1805) related to the different and lesser entitlements of a single man. After detailing those he would have if he were married, as above, the original agreement asserted:

> Be it understood and agreed by the parties that if the said Stephen should not get married he shall not have the liberty of raising chickens and ducks, nor of keeping two Hogs, nor Cows, nor shall he be furnished with Pork, but he shall live in the family of the said Mary, as usual. It is further understood by the parties that the said Stephen shall always use his own Horse in attending to the Business of the plantation, or transacting any other business for the said Mary.

The limitations on Stephen Lee's economic independence would constrain him if he married. Unmarried, the provisions constricted him even more and, additionally, limited his social and personal independence to the extent of having to live in his mistress's house. The term "as usual" suggests that most unmarried overseers lived within the plantation household. In these circumstances, it is difficult to imagine Mary Pottenger regarding her overseer, as Rosalie Calvert regarded hers, as anything other than a servant.

The agreement curtailed Lee's economic and social independence still further. The last section of the original contract shows that Mary Pottenger not only detailed further limitations on the Lee family's economic independence, extensive enough to directly limit the family's home comforts, but also limited the family's size. The agreement read that if Stephen Lee "should get married," his family:

> shall not consist of more than four persons, to wit himself and Wife, his child and one Servant only, that the said Stephen shall not make use of more fire Wood, than is absolutely necessary for his family, and that he shall not on any Pretence feed the Horses of any of his Visitors with the Corn, or provinders of the said Mary. And that the said Stephen shall not keep more than one fire for the use of his family.

That the limitations on Stephen Lee's family's size were listed in the same sentence

as those on his family's use of firewood again suggests these as routine features of master-overseer relations. The restrictions placed on the independence and autonomy of overseers, then, were such that they were not even masters of their own households.

Rosalie Calvert's and Mary Pottenger's words and actions at times appear paternalistic. There is the social distance implied in the genericization of all laborers as "servants," the condition that unmarried overseers live in the big house, and the fact that liberties and privileges conceptualized in work contracts functioned as favors rather than rights. There is also Rosalie Calvert's monarchical simile, implying organic social relationships—yet it is undercut in another part of the passage that opened this article, "the subjects become discontented and have to be replaced." Mrs. Calvert's frequent willingness to replace laborers implies that she saw her household not so much as an organic society as a mechanism of interchangeable parts. Any paternalistic tendencies Rosalie Calvert possessed, then, were very much countered by a modern, hard-headed, capitalistic approach to the practicalities of labor management.

To some extent, laborers themselves forced capitalistic behaviors on their mistresses and laborers' attitudes and behaviors constantly undercut employers' attempts to genericize workers. Slaves had less to lose than free workers and adopted an evidently more troublesome approach to their mistress than did free workers. Young Lucie illicitly went on land in the port cities of Europe, taking an opportunity to see a little bit of the world while she could, and then she lied about it to her mistress. Old Sara continued as a constant source of unspecified trouble to Rosalie, as she had been to other members of the Stier and Calvert clans, and as she would be to Benjamin Lowndes. The gardener John and the chef Sam seem in some ways to have "sassed" their mistress on several occasions. At one point, early in her career as mistress of Riversdale, Rosalie Calvert found these subversions of her authority an intolerable "torment." Yet she eventually gained greater control over her slaves, using the extraordinary powers of the system to sell some away from family and friends, and removing others to the hardships of the tobacco fields.

Slaves had few material possessions but stood to suffer profound losses, as seen in the cases of Lucie, Sara, and Sam, whose punishments functioned as an example by which to cow the others into greater submission. Free workers faced the loss of income and generally had more reason not to upset the mistress of Riversdale who most particularly kept female domestic servants in check with the threat of unemployment. Kitty the chambermaid and the anonymous nurse knew how to navigate Rosalie's temperament and thus worked long years at Riversdale. They may have been genuinely happy, yet there is little reason to suppose they were happier in the Calverts' employ than were tutors and overseers. The abuse the tutors received is perhaps a measure of how much they stood up to the mistress of Riversdale, no doubt leaving her home knowing they could get work else-

where. The sackings of the overseers, the "good for nothing" Mr. Watson and his successor, who was apparently "a worse and the biggest rascal," as well as others, were perhaps a measure of how much they stood up to the master of Riversdale. They undoubtedly left Riversdale plantation knowing that someone else would offer them a job. One, Mr. Barett, even got his job with the Calverts back again, and we might speculate that this represented a little victory of some sort. And even when they lost, some came back and fought another day, as did Stephen Lee when he sued his former employer, Mary Pottenger.

Different workers, then, dealt with their employers in various ways according to their particular circumstances. We cannot reduce these dealings, though, to a simple formula of more power for employers meant less agency for employees, for slaves showed that they could use their extreme and enforced dependency as a powerful weapon in their battles against oppression. Free workers were freer as people, free from the extremities of enslavement, but also potentially free to starve if they had no work. That possibility seems to have profoundly affected the lives and working relations of female domestics, though it apparently had less effect on others. One point, however, is certain—although Rosalie Calvert learned to reduce and then cope with the "torment with the servants," her "little kingdom" nevertheless remained a rather turbulent place.

NOTES

1. Rosalie Eugenia [Stier] Calvert [hereinafter REC] to Isabelle van Havre [hereinafter IvH], May 6, 1807, *Mistress of Riversdale: The Plantation Letters of Rosalie Stier Calvert, 1795–1821*, ed. Margaret Law Callcott (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 168. I would like to thank Robert J. Brugger of the Johns Hopkins University Press for kind permission to use the Calvert letters, Margaret Law Callcott for her correspondence, Nathalie Morello of the University of Wales Swansea French Department for looking over the French originals with me, and Ann Wass of Riverdale Historical Society for information and an excellent tour of the mansion. The mansion is owned by the Maryland-National Capitol Park and Planning Commission and, located at 6005 48th Ave., Riverdale, is open to the public. I depart from Callcott's use of Stier as a middle name for Rosalie Calvert because Rosalie herself did not use it after her marriage.
2. Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale*, xi; John A. Scott, ed. *Journal of a Residence on a Georgia Plantation in 1838–1839* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1984); C. Vann Woodward and Elisabeth Muhlenfeld, eds., *The Private Mary Chesnut: The Unpublished Civil War Diaries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984); Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989) 22–25; 112–16, 38–29, 43, quote from page 35; Catherine Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress: Woman's World in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 180–98. For further discussion of the Stiers' and Calverts' backgrounds and Rosalie's representativeness see *Mistress of Riversdale*, 1–39; and Steven Sarson, "Wealth, Poverty, and Labor in the Tobacco Plantation South: Prince George's

County, Maryland, in the Early National Era" (Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1998).

3. Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830–1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), chapter 1; Jan Lewis, *The Pursuit of Happiness: Family and Values in Jefferson's Viginia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 147–50; and for accounts of the tasks plantation women routinely undertook, see Clinton, *Plantation Mistress*, 7, 16–35, 46–49, 143–48, 155–56; Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household*, 68, 92, 85–87, 116–131; and Cynthia A. Kierner, *Beyond the Household: Women's Place in the Early South, 1700–1835* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), 171–77.

4. For examples of emphasizing agency see George P. Rawick, *From Sundown to Sunup: The Making of the Black Community* (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1972); John W. Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972; revised and enlarged edition, 1979); Herbert G. Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750–1925* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976); Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); and perhaps especially Sterling Stuckey, *Slave Culture: Nationalist Theory and the Foundations of Black America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987). Examples of scholarship emphasizing the importance of masters" power include Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972); Peter Kolchin, *Unfree Labour: American Slavery and Russian Serfdom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987); *American Slavery, 1619–1877* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995); and especially Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982).

5. REC to IvH, April 26, 1818, Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale*, 334.

6. Daniel Blake Smith, *Inside the Great House: Planter Family Life in Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake Society* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980), 160.

7. The story of the relationship is told by one of their descendants: Nellie Arnold Plummer, *Out of the Depths; or, The Triumph of the Cross* (Hyattsville, Md., 1927, reprint New York: G. K. Hall & Co., 1987) and mostly verified by Callcott in *Mistress of Riversdale*, 379–84, and by Bianca P. Floyd, *Records and Recollections: Early Black History in Prince George's County, Maryland* (Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission Publication, 1989), 80–81. Public records show that George Calvert freed Eleanor Beckett and, evidently, the children they had together. Eleanor was initially manumitted under a pseudonym, Charlotte, presumably to avoid arousing the suspicions of Rosalie Calvert, but her freedom was confirmed under her own name after Rosalie died. Prince George's County Land Records, Manumission, November 12, 1801, JRM 9, 946-947; Manumission, October 30, 1822, AB 2, 371. For her children's manumissions see "George Calvert to Negro Charlotte and others," October 30, 1822, AB 2, 371-372; "to Negro Caroline & children," July 12, 1824, AB 3, 349–50; "to Ennis Scott & others," April 7, 1825, AB 3, 549–50; "to Anna & her children," August 29, 1825, AB 4, 24–25. See also Prince George's County Certificates of Freedom, 1806–1829, 244, 248, 250, 269.

8. REC to Charles Jean Stier [herineafter CJS], December 3, 1808, Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale*, 193–94.

9. REC to IvH, March 5, 1816, ibid., 290–91.

10. REC to IvH, September 17, 1819, ibid., 351.

11. REC to IvH, May 6, 1807; ibid., 168, 136.

12. Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household*, 6–7, 29, 100–45; Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress*, 16–35.

13. REC to Marie Louise [Peeters] Stier [hereinafter MLPS], May 12, 1804, Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale*, 83.
14. REC to Henri Joseph Stier [hereinafter HJS], May 14, 1804, ibid., 85.
15. In 1800, shortly after Rosalie arrived at Riversdale, the county's enslaved population comprised 12,291 souls, 57.6 percent of the total population of 21,175. In 1820, shortly before she died, 11,185 slaves constituted 55.3 percent of the total population of 20,216. This slight decline was a mere fluctuation caused by slightly differing rates of westward migration, not a trend reflecting the decline of slavery. In 1830, 11,585 slaves comprised 56.6 percent of 20,474 Prince Georgians.Historical, social, economic, and demographic data from the US Decennial Census, Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, Ann Arbor, Michigan [http://icg.fas.harvard.edu/edu~hist1651/census/]; Prince George's County Tax Assessments, 1800, Personal Property, 25; 1821, Personal Property, 27, 33, 37.
16. Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household*, 23–24, 34–38, 47–48, 96–99, 131–61, 205–206, 334–71; Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress*, 19, 187–88, 191–93; Drew Gilpin Faust, "Altars of Sacrifice: Confederate Women and the Narratives of War," in *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War*, eds. Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 171–99; Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 53–79.
17. REC to HJS, November 19, 1803, Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale*, 59.
18. REC to HJS, December 25, 1803, ibid., 65.
19. REC to HJS, May 12, 1817, ibid., 318.
20. REC to MLPS, [no date] November 1803, ibid., 63.
21. REC to IvH, August 8, 1805, ibid., 125.
22. REC to HJS, December 25, 1803, ibid., 65.
23. REC to HJS, May 14, 1804, ibid., 85.
24. REC to HJS and MLS, August 12, 1803, ibid., 55.
25. REC to IvH, August 8, 1805, ibid., 124.
26. REC to MLPS, [no date] November 1803, ibid., 63.
27. REC to HJS, February 20, 1805, ibid., 113, 105.
28. Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household*, 159–61
29. REC to IvH, August 8, 1805, Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale*, 124.
30. REC to IvH, October 7, 1805, ibid., 131.
31. REC to IvH, December 4, 1804, ibid., 103.
32. REC to IvH, February 18, 1805, ibid., 111; Blake Smith, *Inside the Great House*, 35–38.
33. REC to HJS, August 1, 1817, Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale*, 322.
34. REC to IvH, October 25, 1816, ibid., 304.
35. Rosalie did not mention what happened to him. Nor is it possible to search for him in county records, as she never identified him by name. REC to HJS, March 13, 1819, ibid., 343.
36. REC to HJS, September 15, 1804, ibid., 97.
37. REC to IvH, September 28, 1804, ibid., 100, 81, *n1*.
38. REC to IvH, April 2, 1807, ibid., 162–63.
39. REC to IvH, December 10, 1807, ibid., 177–78.
40. Prince George's County Levy Court, Levy Book, 1805, 634; Proceedings, June 8, 1807, 289; July 14, 1807, 292–93; February 21, 1817, 603; March 1, 1817, 604–16; March 17, 1817, 621–24; May 19, 1817, 626–29; July 7, 1817, 639–40; August 6, 1817, 648; "An Act for the temporary relief of the Poor in the several Counties in this State," William Kilty, ed., *Laws of Maryland, 1776–1818, revised and collected under the authority of the legislature* (Annapolis, 1820), Chapter 192. One of the names on the lists is indecipherable. Rosalie Calvert recorded hardship caused by the

flood of 1804, the drought, and embargoes, see *Mistress of Riversdale*, Callcott, ed., 85–86, 88–89, 147, 181, 190, 195, 198, 201. Steven Sarson, "Distribution of Wealth in Prince George's County, Maryland, 1800–1820," *Journal of Economic History*, 60 (2000), 847–55; "'Objects of Distress": Inequality and Poverty in Early Nineteenth-Century Prince George's County," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 96 (2001), 141–62.

41. Hunter Dickinson Farish, ed., *Journal and Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian, 1773–74: A Plantation Tutor of the Old Dominion* (1843, reprint Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1968); Louis Morton, *Robert Carter of Nomini Hall* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1941), especially 205–30; Lewis, *Pursuit of Happiness*, 126–30, 149–50.

42. REC to HJS, December 11, 1806, Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale*, 155.

43. REC to IvH, January 20, 1809, ibid., 200.

44. REC to CJS, September 1, 1809, ibid., 208–209.

45. REC to HJS, November 1, 1809, ibid., 213.

46. REC to IvH, June 5, 1810, ibid., 219. As Margaret Law Callcott notes, according to George Henry Calvert's autobiography this tutor appears to have been a Mr. Gunston, ibid., 220, n2.

47. REC to CJS, [no date] August 1810, ibid., 226.

48. REC to IvH, July 15, 1811, ibid., 239–40.

49. REC to HJS, December 7, 1811, ibid., 241. This appears to have been Mr. Gunston's successor, a Mr. Bradley. Callcott, relying in this instance on George Henry Calvert's autobiography, notes that Mr. Gunston "lasted two years as the children's tutor," ibid., 242. Rosalie Calvert's letters would seem to indicate, however, that he lasted only one year.

50. REC to HJS, March 17, 1812, ibid., 249.

51. REC to IvH, March 5, 1816, ibid., 289; REC to CJS, February 24, 1813, ibid., 254, 255–56, ns. 2, 3.

52. REC to HJS, March 13, 1819, ibid., 343.

53. REC to IvH, September 17, 1819, ibid., 351.

54. Ibid., 105; Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 12–22; William K. Scarborough, *The Overseer: Plantation Management in the Old South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1966).

55. REC to CJS, July 1, 1802, Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale*, 34, 45, n141. For an analysis of tenancy see Steven Sarson, "Landlessness and Tenancy in the Early National Tobacco-Slave South: The Case of Prince George"s County, Maryland," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd. Ser., LVII (July 2000), 569–98.

56. REC to HJS, June 28, 1803, Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale*, 53.

57. REC to HJS, September 15, 1804, ibid., 97.

58. REC to HJS, November 24, 1805, ibid., 134.

59. REC to IvH, May 6, 1807, ibid., 168.

60. This and all that follows in relation to the case of Stephen Lee versus Mary Pottenger comes from, as above, Prince George's County General Court, Circuit Court Papers, T-67, Box 18, Folder 15, 1810.Maryland State Archives.

61. REC to HJS, September 15, 1804, Callcott, ed., *Mistress of Riversdale*, 97.

John Needles and wife (Lydia Smith or Mary Ann Bowers), c. 1848. (Courtesy Winterthur Museum.)

"Many Were Set at Liberty": John Needles, Abolitionist and Artisan

CHRISTOPHER H. JONES

John Needles (1786–1878) earned his living as a cabinetmaker on the Eastern Shore and then in Baltimore through much of the nineteenth century. His work as a master craftsman of fine furniture is well studied, and the surviving pieces grace the galleries and halls of historical societies, museums, antique shops, and private homes.[1] Less studied is his commitment to securing freedom for the nation's enslaved people, through local organizations and philanthropic efforts and on a national level with the American Antislavery Society. This essay examines the popular artisan's fifty year role in the fight against slavery.

Needles' long life and career spanned a period of great change in American society and in the craft of cabinetmaking. He first lived in Talbot County, Maryland, near the town of Easton, where he learned traditional methods and styles of cabinetmaking and developed the high standards of quality and workmanship ingrained in his artisan family. Quakers such as the Needles family formed a significant part of the population in the Talbot County area of the Eastern Shore, a community that included free and enslaved blacks. Consequently, John Needles grew up with the experience of belonging to a minority and within a tradition of believers who understood the pain, sacrifice, and ostracism that often accompany dissent.[2] From his forebears, John Needles derived a belief in aiding one's neighbors, a history of support for the tenets of the Quaker sect, and a strong sense of personal integrity that he would retain after he moved to Baltimore and one that remained with him for the rest of his life. John Needles opposed slavery, as did many other Quakers, but unlike many he and his uncle John, for whom he was probably named, and his brother Edward played active political roles in abolishing the institution.[3] By his life's end at age 91, war had brought an end to slavery, industrialization had brought an end to cabinetmaking as it had been practiced for hundreds of years, and Baltimore had passed the peak of its commercial success.

Needles' brief autobiography is the best source of information on him and on the experiences of his life. Completed around 1872, he wrote at his son Edward's request. Almost a century later, Edward Needles Wright, edited the manuscript for publication.[4] The autobiography is incomplete and full of frustrating gaps

Christopher H. Jones earned a Masters Degree in the History of Decorative Arts from the Corcoran College of Art and Design. He works with American antiques, folk and fine art, and is based in Alexandria, Virginia.

concerning important personal and professional events, but it stands as a testimony to the religious convictions and entrepreneurial spirit that guided his commitment to a range of philanthropic and business activities. Unfortunately, he omitted a great deal about himself and closed his brief and modest sketch with the words "I need not write more . . . [as the details are] familiar to my children." Our direct knowledge of John Needles is derived largely from this and two other sources, a history of the Needles and related families with annotations in John Needles' hand, and the surviving furniture that he labeled or signed.[5] It is from other, indirect evidence, the letters and recollections of individuals who knew him and traces of his activities in period documents that we learn of his less well known but important role as one of the leaders of the anti-slavery movement in Baltimore for over four decades.

By the time of John Needles' birth on October 10, 1786, the Needles family had lived on Maryland's Eastern Shore for over a century. His ancestors had established themselves as farmers and artisans in Talbot County along the shores of the Choptank River, and as early as 1701 a John Needles had served on the county's court.[6] His father, Edward (d.1798) worked as a farmer and a cabinetmaker and served as an elder of the Quaker meeting at Tuckahoe. His uncle John (d.1795), Edward's twin brother, served as a well-respected surveyor and sheriff of Talbot County.[7] John Needles' earliest memories included images of life at High Banks the site of the family home on the northeast shore of the Choptank River, where his father employed a number of apprentices and produced wheat fans and "battoes" or small fishing boats. John's mother, Mary Lamb Needles (d. 1787), died the year after his birth, and his father then married Sarah Berry (d. 1796) with whom he had four more children. During this period his father seems to have spent significant time away from home traveling to other Quaker meetings and John apparently lived for periods in Easton with his aunt and uncle, Samuel and Sarah Yarnall. John's sporadic and haphazard education began when he was seven, under the instruction of "William Voux, an Irishman who knew how to whip as well as teach." His stepmother died when John was only eight and his father passed away in December 1798, leaving John and his siblings to live with various family members and friends. John stayed with his grandfather, Pierce Lamb, in Kent County for two years and boarded briefly at James Idinges's School in Smyrna, Delaware where he received his first lessons in grammar. He recalled that, in general, he "learned more than [he] had ever before." Kent County records show that Pierce Lamb manumitted eight slaves in 1778, probably an indication of his acceptance of the Quaker Meeting's policy of encouraging (and later requiring) its members to free their slaves. It is likely that John also learned a great deal about living as a Quaker from his grandfather whose example surely influenced his views on slavery and his commitment to working for its abolition.[8]

In 1803, at age sixteen, John returned to Easton and began five years of apprenticeship with cabinetmaker and fellow Quaker, James Neall, a small scale

High Banks (Rock Clift), Needles family home near Easton, Talbot County, 1976. (photo by Michael Bourne, Maryland Historic Trust.)

merchant and entrepreneur.[9] James and Rachel Neall treated him as one of their children, he recalled, and the time of his apprenticeship "was a pleaseant [sic] one."[10] Working with Neall undoubtedly added to the cabinetmaking skills young Needles had learned from his father.[11] In 1807, John completed his contractual obligation as an apprentice and then looked elsewhere for steady work. In October 1808, Needles packed his tools and accompanied his Aunt Sarah on her trip to Baltimore for the annual Quaker meeting. He quickly found a place at the cabinet shop of Edward Priestly where he worked for several months. "After a while," he moved to the shop of cabinetmaker William Camp, one that he described as "the largest factory in the city," but he remained there only briefly, possibly because Camp owned slaves.[12] Whatever the immediate impetus, Needles had greater ambitions than a journeyman's career in Camp's employ, and he readily struck out on his own, eager to establish his financial and personal independence.

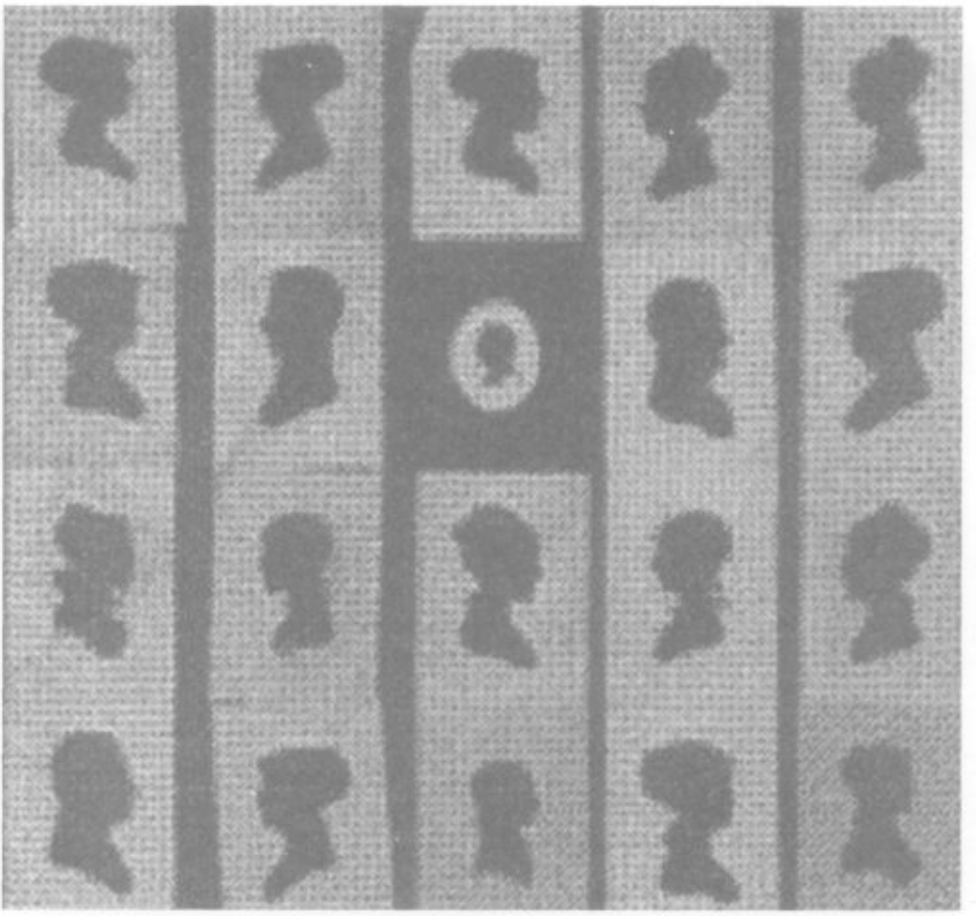
John Needles' Baltimore

The city to which John Needles moved in 1808, and in which he passed most of his life, has been described as one of America's first boomtowns.[13] Baltimore ranked as the country's fourth largest city and enjoyed a level of prosperity and dynamism that convinced many it could challenge New York, Philadelphia, or Charleston as the new nation's commercial capital. The city had grown rapidly in the years following the Revolution and enjoyed tremendous profits in the transition from dependence on tobacco to less labor-intensive grains.[14] With its establishment as a milling center, a regional and international transportation hub, and as an attractive industrial site, the city saw its population burgeon from 13,508 in 1790 to 102,513 in 1840.[15] President Thomas Jefferson's embargo policies, and those of his immediate successors, spurred the expansion of local manufacture and the series of wars enveloping Europe created opportunities for the city's merchants and for the development of a modern commercial shipping fleet. Although the end of the War of 1812 and the return of a degree of normalcy spurred economic activity, the years that followed brought on a series of challenges to the founda-

tions of Baltimore's prosperity. The period 1815–1831 saw strong competition from English and other imports, collapsing agricultural prices, a banking and currency crisis, and a series of financial panics that undermined the confidence of consumer, capitalist, and tradesman. Additionally, the economy underwent further transition as the extremely profitable trade with the West Indies diminished and industrialization rapidly altered the workplace.

The city's location in a border state magnified the challenges it faced. As home to a large number of free and enslaved blacks, Baltimore stood at the center of the ongoing social, economic, and political crisis over slavery and the place African Americans would hold in American society. As tobacco receded in importance and owners sought to hire out their slaves for profit, or to at least off set the cost of support, free persons, slaves, local whites, and immigrants often competed for the limited number of available entry level and semi-skilled positions. The growing economic independence of the city's black community, both slave and free, created legal, moral, and social dilemmas for Baltimore's citizenry.[16] John Needles lived in a boomtown city that ran on a dynamic if erratic economy and simmered with many of the volatile social and moral issues that faced the nation in the early years of the nineteenth century.

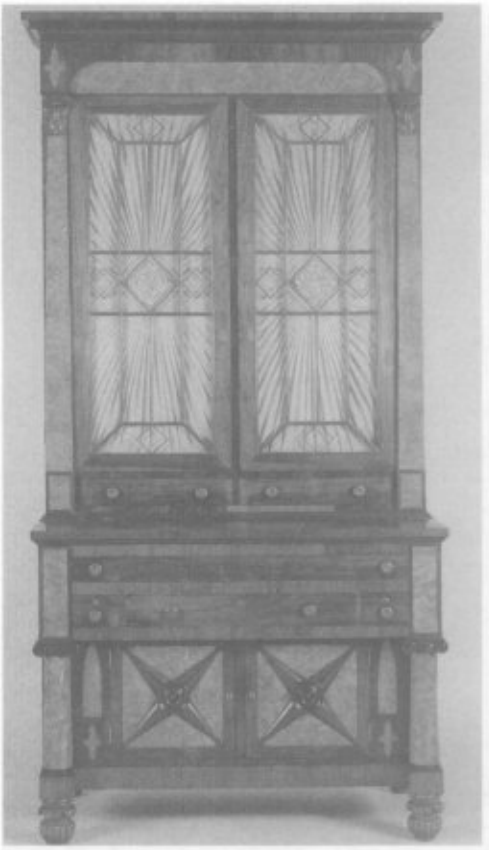
Following his departure from Camp's shop in March 1810, John Needles established himself at No. 10 Hanover Street, where he "commenced the Cabinett making business." He chose a location west of the Jones Falls, in a community of artisans in similar trades who produced increasingly large volumes of a wide variety of consumer goods for the city's expanding population. Typically, these small-scale handicraft shops employed from two to ten journeymen and apprentices, and formed Baltimore's basic organizational unit of production. Proprietors styled "manufacturers" headed enterprises known as "manufactories."[17] It is probable that Needles' initial operation followed this pattern. He likely viewed himself as among this upwardly mobile, new generation of skilled craftsmen intent on making the transition to entrepreneur. He expanded his work force in short time and by 1812 had moved to a new and larger dwelling and shop at No. 54 Hanover Street where he advertised frequently for apprentices and journeymen.[18] In addition to the new shop, he had accumulated sufficient capital to take on the financial responsibilities of a growing family. His marriage to Eliza Matthews, also in 1812, produced a steadily growing family—Mary born in 1812, Ruthanna (1815), Edith (1817), Ann Maria (1819), and five more children in the following decade.[19] Even though the war of 1812 brought turmoil to the city and severe economic dislocations for several years, Needles survived and prospered during a time of what he termed "dull" business. With the end of the war his trade "so increased that [he] could not make furniture fast enough to sell," but the local and national economies remained both volatile and fragile. A sharp recession ended the decade's prosperity. Two years of poor business brought about a series of bankruptcies



"Silhouettes of Members of the Needles Family," c. 1820 (Maryland Historical Society.)

that engulfed nearly one hundred of the city's most prominent merchants and undermined both growth and confidence.[20] By 1819–1820, Needles calculated that property values had decreased 75 percent. Reflecting the uncertain economic times, along with the beds, mattresses, sofas and other furniture offered for sale, he pragmatically advertised that furniture could be exchanged for dry goods, groceries, lumber, bricks, or other useful commodities.[21] Even with these reversals, by 1820 Needles owned a home that he valued in his *Autobiography* at over $6,000 and he offered a variety of goods and services, such as upholstery, draperies, and paperhanging that complemented his cabinet making business.[22]

Though the city's economy remained erratic in the period 1820–1850, it appears that Needles aggressively sought out a range of investment opportunities. Whether he felt the earning potential of his cabinet business to be limited, perceived a need for diversification, or was simply ambitious is not clear. Whatever his motivations, Needles became involved in several real estate speculations, acted as a representative for "Roving and Spinning Cotton and Wool" machines, and,



Desk bookcase, c. 1837. Attributed to John Needles and made for his oldest daughter Mary, in celebration of her marriage. (Courtesy Baltimore Museum of Art.)

among other enterprises, exported furniture to South America.[23] These diversions from his core business appear to have been generally disappointing. His conviction that Federal Hill property would surely increase in price was "much mistaken" and that he had entered into his furniture exporting venture "very imprudently."[24] Although he continued to expand his real estate holding near Hanover Street, it seems clear that cabinetmaking and related trades remained the focus of Needles' business enterprises and the source of his financial stability.

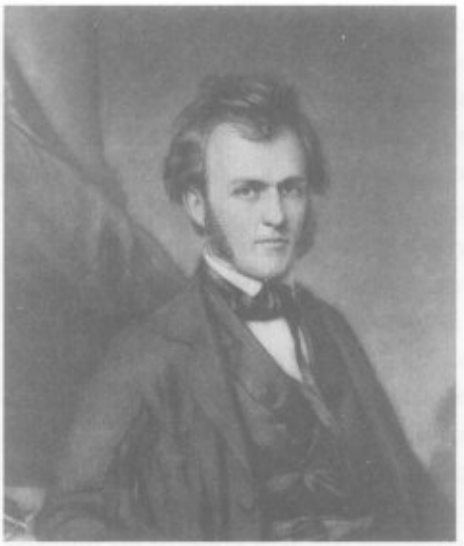
During the 1830s two devastating fires destroyed much of what Needles had accomplished and could have brought personal ruin on a less determined individual. In his autobiography, he remembered the first of these fires as occurring in 1832, yet a newspaper report for August 8, 1831, notes that a fire at the business of John Needles had consumed the entire back building of his Hanover Street "Cabinet Factory." The contents included "tools, material, and unfinished furniture valued at $4000."[25] The fire Needles recalled burned part of his factory and a "back shop" and the reported incident were likely the same event. The newspaper account suggested that an "incendiary" may have set the blaze and, in later years, the family maintained that a disgruntled employee had indeed ignited the fire.[26]

This fire produced two positive results. His wife Eliza and their eldest daughter Mary used the $500 insurance proceeds to open a store in the front of the Hanover Street building, one that grew substantially over the coming years. Needles later credited its success as being "much to [his] advantage in making a living for [his] family." Of equal or greater significance, he also made changes to his production practices as a result of the 1831 fire. When Needles rebuilt his factory, he added a steam engine that powered two turning lathes, circular saws, and a tenoning machine for creating joints, "all of which ware usefull in making furnature."[27] This modern equipment, among the earliest in an area cabinet shop, put Needles' operations at the forefront of mechanization. Introduction of expensive innovations and his propensity to expand at every opportunity suggest the size, scope, and success of the "manufactory" he managed.

The descriptions provided in the newspaper accounts of these two fires, in 1831 and another in 1838, are the best evidence of how Needles' "manufactory" developed during the years and most probably represent the high point of his business activities. The 1831 fire damaged "the back building, three stories high, in which a large number of workmen were employed," entirely consumed, "together with the unfinished furniture, tools, lumber &c. No part of the front house, in which all the finished furniture was stored, received any injury." By 1838, the reporter referred to the "extensive Cabinet Maker's shop of Mr. John Needles," and to "a large four story building" where the fire had broken out. It spread to Needles' house, fronting on Hanover Street, in which a large quantity of furniture was stored, and to the dry goods store in the lower story. All of the furniture in the first and second story was saved, "but every article in the shop, comprising a large amount of unfinished work, lumber, tools, turning lathes and other machinery, including a steam engine, was entirely destroyed." Of the extensive fire, which spread to numerous surrounding structures, the report concluded, "Mr. Needles [was] of course the heaviest loser."[28]

This 1838 fire, ignited by the steam boiler, burned the entire factory. Needles valued the enterprise at $13,000 but recovered just $8,000 in insurance money. Although a major loss, he quickly rebounded and was back in operation within a few days.[29] Regardless of the second fire, the destruction of a substantial portion of his operation, and a significant loss of capital, Needles had reached a level of financial and personal stability that allowed him to take the setback with equanimity. Needles' long career encompassed a great deal of change and a wide range of furniture styles. One twentieth-century assessor of his work noted "To a remarkable degree [the] furniture reflects stylistically the changing and varied tastes of the first half of the nineteenth century."[30]

His personal success had not blinded him to the injustices around him, rather it allowed him to use his position and economic success in support of Baltimore's free blacks, to work for the abolition of slavery, and to deepen his commitment to



In 1825, abolitionist Benjamin Lundy (1789–1839) moved the Genius of Universal Emancipation *to Baltimore. John Needles provided financial support, type, and space in his warehouse for its operation. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

the Society of Friends. John Needles' secular pursuits as a cabinetmaker and entrepreneur, although important, functioned as a backdrop for his larger role in the ongoing local and national moral crisis that dominated his life and the era.

Abolitionist

John Needles' animosity towards slavery and his support for the economic and social development of African Americans had its roots in his family's history on the Eastern shore and in the involvement of the related Lamb, Neall, Yarnall families and other Quakers in the anti-slavery movement.[31] Many of John Needles' activities in the fight against slavery remain undocumented, as do the records of his long and successful years in business. Yet intriguing bits and pieces of hard evidence that suggest the scope of his activities have surfaced. Needles devoted little space in his autobiography to the cause that consumed much of his time, effort, and money. He simply recounted his attendance (to protest) at an 1841 slaveholders' convention in Annapolis, and a brief summary of his association with William Lloyd Garrison and Benjamin Lundy's anti-slavery activities in Baltimore.[32] Of the important contributions of these two men and his key role in their activities, Needles modestly concluded that more information could be found in "historyes of their lives published heritofore by abler hands." And indeed, a modern biographer of Garrison identifies John Needles as the successor to Elisha Tyson (1750–1824), the leader of the Quaker philanthropists in Baltimore.[33] Tyson, "a challenger of kidnappers, and the bane of slaveholders generally" was well known for his active, public opposition to slavery, and Needles inherited his leadership role and spirit, if not his high profile and flamboyance.[34]

Needles' most important early recorded contributions to abolitionism came

in 1825 when Benjamin Lundy moved the controversial *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, founded in 1821, to Baltimore. The cabinetmaker provided principal financial and organizational support of the newspaper, critical funding for purchase of the press and the type essential for its publication, and space in his warehouse for its operations.[35] Lundy and the *Genius* became closely associated with the Anti-Slavery Society of Maryland, founded with John and Edward Needles and others who met in "E. [Elizabeth] Needles' schoolroom."[36] The society hoped to establish auxiliary branches throughout Maryland and supported publication and distribution of the *Genius* as a means of spreading its message of opposition to slavery and encouraging organized action among its approximately five hundred members.[37] Daniel Raymond, who served as the society's president, ran for city office and for the state legislature in 1825 and again in 1826 when he actually won more votes than an avowedly pro-slavery opponent.[38] The society, which seems to have been Needles' most ambitious foray into the political arena, failed to achieve broad support. Internal discord on the colonization issue crippled the society, and its members held their last recorded meeting in 1830.

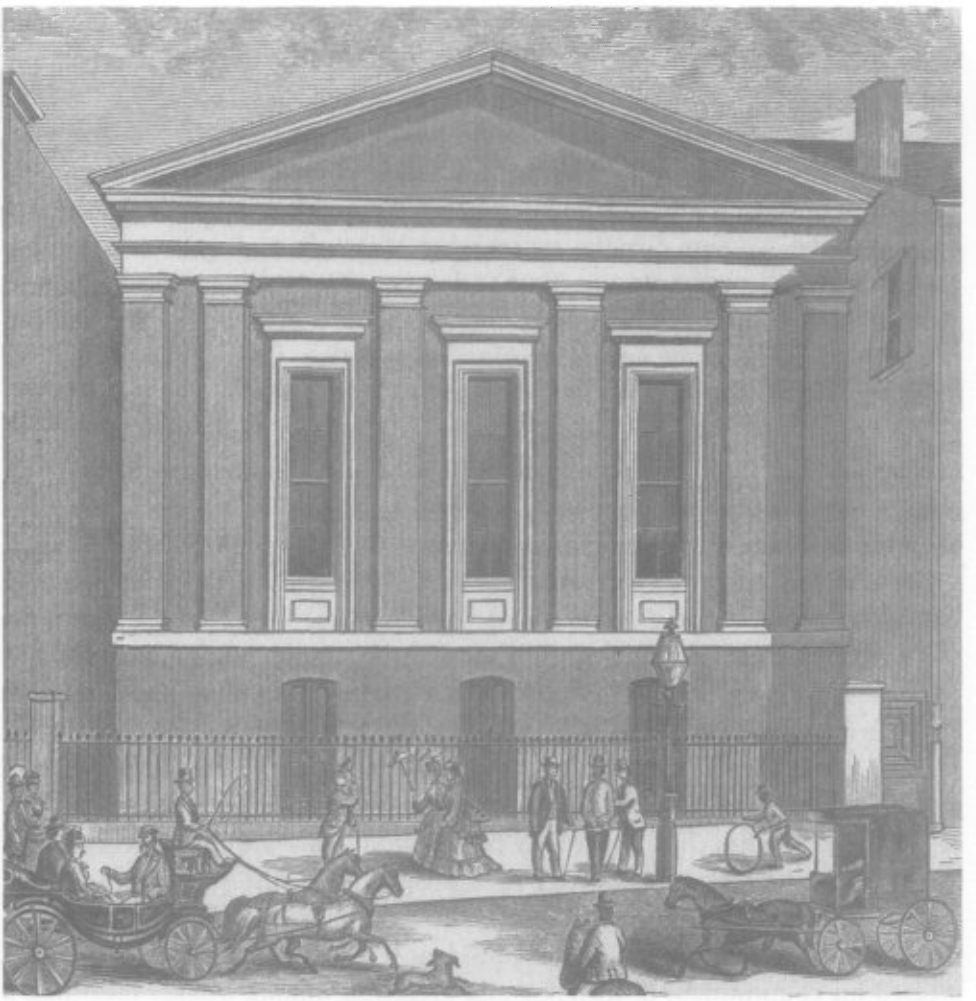
Needles had also befriended William Lloyd Garrison. The famed abolitionist arrived in the city in 1829 after Lundy urged him to move south and co-edit the *Genius*. Lundy, determined to challenge slavery on its own ground in a slave state, had convinced Garrison that the country's "national sin" must unite its opponents. In the brief period that they worked together, the *Genius* reflected their very different approaches to defeating slavery.[39] Lundy advocated gradual emancipation through manumissions or self-purchase, and he supported colonization, most notably in Haiti. Garrison had come to champion immediate, uncompensated emancipation without expatriation.[40] Their anti-slavery activities, regardless of the particular strain of abolitionism, generated hostility in the city, and they became targets of harassment and parties in lawsuits. Garrison, imprisoned briefly on charges of libeling a slave trader, and Lundy, physically assaulted, left Baltimore in just a few years. Lundy continued publishing the paper, albeit sporadically, in Washington until his death in 1839. Garrison's work on this paper and his experiences in Baltimore were critical phases in the development of his philosophy. His association with John Needles and Baltimore's complex sociopolitical environment "matured his talents as an editorial crusader." The experience inspired him and he confidently launched the *Liberator* in 1831.[41]

It is difficult today to sort out the currents and counter currents, competing strategies and factions through which Baltimoreans sought to address the issue of slavery in the years prior to the Civil War. For Needles and many other Quakers the growing political and emotional intensity of the opponents and supporters of slavery, and the increasing willingness of both sides to resort to violence, brought about a difficult dilemma. Conscience would not allow them to resort to or condone violence regardless of how just the cause, but virtually any anti-slavery ac-

Elisha Tyson (1750–1824), Quaker philanthropist and abolitionist (Maryland Historical Society.)

tivity generated the potential for confrontation.[42] By 1838 the situation had become so inflamed that Maryland Hicksite Quakers refused to allow their members to become "entangled" in any way with the antislavery movement.[43] Fear of slave revolts pulsed through white society, particularly after the Nat Turner uprising in 1832. The episode furthered polarized society and injected an additional element of fear into an already volatile mixture, and consequently support for colonization increased. The city's anti-slavery supporters, emigrationists, free-education sponsors, and members of its welfare societies struggled to sort through the complex and confusing elements of domestic slavery and colonization.[44] Unable or unwilling to colonize the entire free black population, they chose to affirm slavery and to continue legislating social controls in a piecemeal fashion. The failure of abolitionism or colonization as practical policy alternatives allowed the ascendancy of opponents to social or legal equality for African Americans. By 1830, abolition no longer seemed viable in Baltimore.[45]

From a more benign standpoint, Needles and his contemporaries may have seen economics and demographics as a slow remedy, particularly as the free black population increased. Slave owners questioned the institution's economic viability and experimented with manumission schemes, self-purchase, industrial day labor, and outright sales of under-utilized slaves to plantations in the "Deep South." These, with other alternatives, confirmed the impractical nature of slavery in the port city's economy. By 1830, fourteen thousand free African Americans made up nearly one-fifth of the population and outnumbered slaves by almost four to one.[46] These circumstances may have convinced John Needles that support for the educational and personal development of free blacks was of paramount impor-



Sharp Street Methodist Church, spiritual home of many free black citizens. Needles supported organizations founded to aid and unite this community. (Maryland Historical Society.)

tance and that he could address these concerns as he continued working through legal channels toward the abolition of slavery. This dual approach alleviated the moral and practical quandary.

Needles clearly remained active in the community even after the demise of the Antislavery society and its failure to achieve a political presence. With one dramatic exception, he supported relatively passive, non-confrontational, benevolent and educational organizations. In this work, he followed the established Quaker policy that had supported a school for Baltimore blacks as early as 1794. In 1802, the African Academy opened in the Sharp Street Methodist Church and attracted a large number of students after 1809 when Daniel Coker gained appointment as teacher. William Watkins took over the school in 1820 and likely found an ally in John Needles in their shared efforts to strengthen organizations

supporting and uniting the African American community. Needles also provided space in his factory buildings for Prudence Gardiner's school, deemed among the most successful nineteenth century African American schools.[47] Other philanthropic organizations that attracted Needles' support included the Baltimore Society for the Protection of Free People of Color, where he served on a committee that petitioned the Maryland General Assembly for more liberal treatment of free blacks. In 1840, Needles represented Maryland at the American Anti-Slavery Society's convention in New York, a seemingly unusual foray beyond Baltimore.[48]

In 1842, an intriguing episode in Needles' evolution from activist to Quaker elder occurred during his visit to a slaveholder's convention in Annapolis. When he read the newspaper reports, "the account of it Struck at the very life in me" and moved him to go and stand before them where the attendees viewed him with "astonishment." Although the group had resolved not to permit "any Abolitionists to be in the room," and removed and jailed abolitionist newspaper editor Charles Torrey, Needles remained in Annapolis where he "had much talk with them" until late in the night at the tavern where he stayed.[49] There is no evidence that Needles colluded with the volatile, confrontational Torrey in a plan to undermine the convention, and the fact that both attended seems to have been coincidental.[50] Even so, Needles' appearance at the convention and his later recollections of his role and Torrey's, is evidence of the intense passion that Needles felt for the abolitionist cause.[51]

By 1853, Needles had apparently retired from daily business affairs, yet he remained an important supporter of the city's philanthropic organizations, among them the Prisoners' Aid Association and the Friends Association in Aid of Freedmen, of which he served as president.[52] Needles also seems to have increased his commitment to traveling and preaching among Quaker meetings, a practice he more actively pursued following his wife Eliza's death in 1840. He did marry again, twice—first to Lydia Smith (1797–1848) and then to Mary Ann Bowers (d. 1879) who came to be known as the "last 'traveling friend' in Cecil [County Maryland] Monthly meeting." This third wife accompanied him on his rounds over the last decades of his life.[53]

In August and September 1857, William Lloyd Garrison wrote as "an old and attached friend . . . [who] . . . may have passed almost entirely out of your recollection." Garrison asked for help with his mother's estate, specifically in recovering funds from a Baltimore bank account that had lain dormant since his mother's death in 1823.[54] The letters provide several insights. Although both men staunchly supported abolition, their limited contact since their work the Genius of Universal Emancipation in 1829–1830 suggests that they pursued their common goal through different means. Garrison, who praised Needles for a life "signally devoted to the cause of suffering humanity, particularly with reference to a race 'peeled, meted out,

William Lloyd Garrison (1805–1879) met John Needles when he came to Baltimore to work with Benjamin Lundy. (Library of Congress.)

and trodden under foot,' on account of their color," had clearly followed the cabinetmaker's work.[55]

Garrison reunited with the Needles family in 1864 when he attended the Republican Convention in Baltimore. He had met with a kind welcome, he wrote to his wife, stayed with the family, and had taken the opportunity to revisit the scenes of earlier battles.[56]

The importance of Needles' abolition work, and his high esteem in the community, is seen in the celebration ceremonies of the Frederick Douglass Institute. In September 1865, he gave a dedicatory speech, on the stage with Douglass and institute president John Butler. Butler honored Needles' leadership and his role as friend to the black community for more than four decades. Those assembled, the president proclaimed to a mixed crowd of some eight hundred persons, "felt [as] much honored by the presence of this noble old man as they would the president of the United States."[57] A group of the city's African Americans had purchased the building, and the institute served as one of Baltimore's most important cultural and educational institutions for nearly twenty-five years.[58]

John Needles departed this life in July 1878 at the age of ninety-one, and The "Memorial of Baltimore Monthly Meeting Concerning John Needles" offers the best contemporary appreciation of his abolition work. The record opened with an account of his life and noted his deep faith. On his commitment to freedom:

> Our friend was deeply interested in the welfare of the African race in this community, and devoted much time, money and labor in promoting the education and best interests of the few, comparatively, who were free from

> the bonds of slavery. He deeply deplored that this iniquitous system was upheld by the laws of the land, and earnestly aided in every right effort for its abolition; he was careful, however, not to place himself in the position of a violator of the law, and thereby impair his usefulness to the free colored people or lessen the confidence that even the *slave dealers* had in his fearful integrity. He would go to the slave pens and ask permission to go through to look for those legally entitled to their freedom; and through his efforts many were set at liberty, to their great joy and his satisfaction.[59]

John Needles balanced and reconciled the sometimes difficult tasks of serving both his God and his Mammon throughout his life. His family, business associates, and the reformers with whom he worked greatly admired his efforts and his character and noted "a lively interest in whatever tended to the relief and uplifting of humanity." This young eastern shore cabinetmaker carried well-honed skills to Baltimore where he established a reputable and profitable business. With steadfast consistency of purpose, he provided leadership and financial support during the long years of the nineteenth century, a dangerous and uncertain time for Baltimore's large free and enslaved African American population.

The details of John Needles' life and contributions lay in relative obscurity for three quarters of a century, until 1954, when *The Magazine Antiques* (*Antiques Magazine*) published Charles Montgomery's work on the Baltimore cabinetmaker.[60] In the fifty years since that article brought Needles out of obscurity, researchers have focused their efforts and attention on his material legacy. Now, from the strands of evidence that have survived from his long life and the turbulent years it encompassed a fuller portrait emerges, albeit indistinct and incomplete, of John Needles and his accomplishments, a man of true significance in his chosen profession—cabinetmaking, and in his chosen cause—abolition of slavery.

NOTES

The author wishes to thank Kym Rice of George Washington University for her kind assistance. The author is also grateful for the assistance of T. Stephen Whitman of Mount St. Mary's College for editorial suggestions, insight into sources, and information on the anti-slavery movement in Baltimore.

1. When Charles Montgomery's 1954 article in *Antiques Magazine* rescued John Needles from years of obscurity, he was able to identify only some twenty pieces of furniture as Needles' work. By 1993 and the publication of *Classical Maryland*, Gregory Weidman could state that over 100 pieces of furniture labeled or signed by John Needles had been located and a much larger number attributed to his shop based on these documented examples. In the intervening years expanded scholarship in the decorative arts and the increase in prices commanded by Needles' work have significantly increased the number of identified pieces. He is now the best documented of any Maryland cabinetmaker of the pre-modern era and is extremely important in the study of Baltimore furniture. Fortunately for scholars and collectors a relatively large number of pieces were labeled, a practice that was not commonplace at the time. The fact that Needles used labels virtually throughout his career suggests that he was aware of the promotional value of identifying his work. It also may reflect the difficulties he had with imitations, a problem which led him to inscribe a label on at least one occasion "none genuine without signature of the maker namely John Needles." Problems with imitators could also be considered an indication of Needles' reputation among consumers. Another clue to the size, success, and reputation for quality he enjoyed is his status as one of only a handful of Baltimore cabinetmakers whose reputation was sufficiently well established to warrant that their work be specifically identified in estate sales.

2. Kenneth L. Carroll, *Three Hundred Years and More of Third Haven Quakerism* (Easton, Md.: The Queen Anne Press, 1984) and Carroll, "Maryland Quakers and Slavery," *Quaker History*, 72 (1983): 27–42, are the principal references on Eastern Shore Quaker history.

3. According to Carroll, many Maryland Quakers owned slaves, probably upward of 40 percent in the period 1669–1750, but by the second half of the eighteenth century opposition within various meetings was growing. By the end of the century most meetings rejected slave owners' memberships. John Needles (subject's uncle), among other Quakers, looked to Annapolis to change the legal code and encourage manumissions. John Needles was a member of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and served as the president of the Choptank Abolition Society in 1793, Kenneth Carroll, "Voices of Protest: Eastern Shore Abolition Societies, 1790–1820," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 84 (1989): 350 (hereinafter cited *MdHM*).

4. Edward Needles Wright, ed., "John Needles, an Autobiography," *Journal of Quaker History*, 58 (1969): 3–21. Unless otherwise cited, the facts and quotations relating to Needles' life are drawn from this autobiography. Also very valuable in tracing Needles' life is, "Genealogy of the Needles, Man, Cox, Cope and Related Families of the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Pennsylvania, with annotations in the hand of John Needles," MS G5088, Maryland Historical Society Library (hereinafter cited MdHS Library).

5. Spelling varies – Needles, Nedeles, Nedles, The collections of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (hereafter MESDA), Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA), Maryland Historical Society (MdHS), and Winterthur have the most extensive holdings of furniture and research materials on Needles and his furniture.

6. Oswald Tilghman, *History of Talbot County* (Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins Company,

1915), 156–57. Legal records in MESDA research files suggest that members of the family were in the area in the early seventeenth century. Needles family members in the early nineteenth century recorded as artisans by MESDA were cabinetmaker, Tristam; upholsterer, Stephen; and silversmith, William.

7. Obituary, MESDA research files, and "Autobiography,"6.

8. Information on Quaker manumission policy and Kent County records relating to Pierce (Pearce) Lamb were kindly shared with the author by T. Stephen Whitman.

9. Typed transcript of the apprenticeship agreement is in the vertical files of the Talbot County Historical Association, Easton, Md.

10. Brother of Joseph Neall, also a cabinetmaker, died October 1800. According to MESDA files, Neall had taken over the shop at the time of his brother's death in 1800 and apparently ran a small but successful operation. By the early 1800s he occupied a larger building where he also sold general merchandise. Ronald Hurst and Jonathan Prown, *Southern Furniture, 1680–1830* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1997), 349–52, discuss cabinetmaking in Easton and identify a chest of drawers with secretary from Joseph Neall's shop circa 1797–1800.

11. No surviving furniture from this period has been attributed to Needles, but a few pieces are credited to Neall. For a discussion of local cabinetmaking and Lloyd family patronage of James Neall while Needles was an apprentice see Alexandra A. Alevizatos, "'Procured Of The Best And Most Fashionable Materials:' The Furniture and Furnishings of the Lloyd Family, 1750–1850" (MA thesis, University of Delaware, 1999), 64–80.

12. For a discussion of the Priestley shop, see Alexandra Alevizatos Kirtley "A New Suspect: Baltimore Cabinetmaker Edward Priestley," *American Furniture* (2000): 100–51 and her publication of additional Lloyd material in *American Furniture* (2002): 2–53; Gregory R. Weidman, "The Furniture of Classical Maryland, 1815–1845," *Classical Maryland, 1815–1845: Fine and Decorative Arts from the Golden Age* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1993), 89–140 for the work of William Camp, Needles and others; and Hurst and Prown, *Southern Furniture*, 525–29. Along with kindly providing copies of John Needles' will and estate inventory referenced later, Ryan Pope of the Maryland State Archives also noted that Needles assisted in the administration of William Camp's estate. T. Stephen Whitman provided information on Camp as a slave holder.

13. Christopher Phillips, *Freedom's Port, the African American Community in Baltimore, 1790–1860* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 13.

14. Gary Lawson Browne, *Baltimore in the Nation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 70–101 and Phillips, *Freedom's Port*, 162–69 provide extensive information on the economic base and transformation of Baltimore in the first half of the nineteenth century.

15. Phillips, *Freedom's Port*, 24–27.

16. Slaveholders sought to "rent" out or otherwise utilize their slaves when their labor was no longer needed in the fields. T. Stephen Whitman, *The Price of Freedom* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 24–26; and Browne, *Baltimore*, 99–101, discuss the rapid changes in the economic forces, their impact on workers in every class, and the varied and contradictory approaches to dealing with slavery.

17. Browne, *Baltimore*, 87–88.

18. MESDA research files. He remained at this address for the duration of his career.

19. John and Eliza had the following additional children, Edward (1823), Eliza (1826), John (1828), Sarah (1831), and Helen (1834).

20. Browne, *Baltimore*, 76.

21. MESDA files.

22. It is likely that Needles', writing at an advanced age, overestimated the value. A home

valued at $6,000 would have placed him in the top one per cent of Baltimore's home owners according to T. Stephen Whitman's analysis of property values. Even if he exaggerated his success or confused changing values over time, with the impact of inflation, Needles had clearly achieved significant financial success. By comparison, during this period an unskilled laborer rarely earned in excess of $200 per year, Browne, *Baltimore*, 98.

23. It has not been possible to document his export activities. The reference to a "Roving and spinning machine" was found in one of Needles' newspaper ads (MESDA files) and could be the same device described in a broadside at the Library of Congress that describes the benefits of the machine. It is not clear if Needles invented, manufactured, or acted as agent for the device, but the assumption is the latter.

24. Initial search of documents available at the Maryland Historical Society Library record the lively export trade with Central and South America but does specifically refer to John Needles. Merchants did, however, ship chairs and furniture in large quantities, see Corner and Son, MS 467 and Vertical File 47893, MdHS Library.

25. *Baltimore Patriot*, August 8, 1831. The story was also reported in *Atkinson's Saturday Evening Post*, August 13, 1831.

26. Charles Montgomery, "John Needles, Baltimore Cabinetmaker," *The Magazine Antiques*, April 1954, 294.

27. The machinery introduced into the factory at this time may have been similar to the extensive line of woodworking equipment advertised during the 1830s in the *Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser* (hereinafter cited *American*).

28. *American*, August 8, 1831, September 1, 1838.

29. Policies 9436 and 13586, Equitable Fire Insurance Company, MS 3020, MdHS Library, record payments to John Needles relating to both fires. For the first he received a total of $500 and for the second, two payments totaling $2600. The discrepancy between these numbers, those reported in the newspapers, and Needles' recollection, indicates that he may have had at least one additional policy in force. David Angerhofer, MdHS Library kindly provided information from the insurance archives.

30. Montgomery, "Needles," 294. The pieces he produced incorporated aspects of early and late neo classical, American Gothic, Restoration, Empire, and Rococo revival, sometimes mixing and combining elements of several styles in a single piece. Surviving examples showcase almost every form of furniture that found any degree of popularity in the period—tables of all sizes, desks, bookcases, chests of drawers, sideboards, wardrobes, mirrors, and picture frames, Weidman, *Classical Maryland*, 124. Oddly, only one labeled neo-classical chair links this popular form to his shop, an 1825 klismos side chair, Weidman, *Classical Maryland*, 124.

31. Samuel Harrison, "Friends and Early Abolition Societies," *Friend's Intelligencer*, August 8, 1874. In addition to supporting manumission, Easton area Quakers founded societies for the abolition of slavery as early as 1792. A philanthropic society for "the Relief and Protection of Blacks and People of Color unlawfully held in Bondage or otherwise Oppressed" was organized in 1804 with the support of Samuel Yarnall, James Neal, Tristam Needles, and Edward Needles.

32. John Needles also used abolitionist literature as packing material, perhaps copies of the *Genius*, as he shipped furniture. Needles carried on a significant volume of business south of the Mason Dixon and in his autobiography noted that the tracts gave "great offense to slave holders."

33. Henry Mayer, *All On Fire, William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1998), 79. Leroy Graham, *Baltimore, the Nineteenth Century Black Capital* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1982), 96, also identifies Needles as a national leader.

34. Whitman, *Price of Freedom*, 154.
35. Louis Ruchames, ed., *The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison, Vol.4, 1850–1860* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 473; Wright, "Autobiography," 16–17.
36. *Genius*, August 4, 1825. This Edward Needles was probably John's half-brother (1796–1873). He also worked as a Baltimore chair maker and merchant with a business located on Hanover Street. Another Edward Needles (c. 1782–1851) probably a first cousin, was a druggist and very active in Quaker and abolitionists organizations in Philadelphia.
37. Gordon E. Finnie, "The Antislavery Movement in the Upper South Before 1840", *The Journal of Southern History*, 35 (1969): 323 The society ran antislavery candidates for the state legislature in 1825 and 1826 but, support had dwindled by 1830 and the group disbanded.
38. Whitman, *Price of Freedom*, 156–57.
39. Stanley Harrold, *American Abolitionists* (New York: Longman, 2001), 31.
40. Harrold, *Abolitionists*, 31.
41. Mayer, *Garrison*, 82.
42. Barbara C. Mallonee, Jane Karkalits Bonny, and Nicholas B. Fessenden, *Minute by Minute, A History of the Baltimore Monthly Meetings of Friends Homewood and Stony Run* (Baltimore: c. 1922), 181–87, discusses the different viewpoints and activities among the Baltimore Meetings in the years before the Civil War; Finnie, "Antislavery Movement," 322–32.
43. Finnie, "Antislavery Movement," 325.
44. Mouser, "African American Experience," 113–30; Phillips, *Freedom's Port*, 28.
45. Browne, *Baltimore*, 101.
46. Whitman, *Price of Freedom*, 140. This important shift in the population continued. In 1840 the slave population had decreased to 3,212 and free black increased to 17,980; in 1850 the ratio was 2,946 to 25,442; and in 1860 2,218 to 25,680, Phillips, *Freedom's Port*, 25.
47. Gardner, "Antebellum Black Education in Baltimore," 360–66; Graham, *Baltimore, the Nineteenth Century Black Capital*, 62–65, 93–96.
48. Papers of the Baltimore Society for Protection of Free People of Color, SC 210, SC 211, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College; "Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the A. A. S. Society," *The Colored American*, May 30, 1840.
49. Wright, "Autobiography," 7.
50. Harrold, *Abolitionists*, 68. Stanley Harrold, *Subversives, Antislavery Community in Washington, D.C., 1828–1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 71–72. In his account of the events in Annapolis, Torrey made no mention of Needles. He later wrote that he had disdain for Baltimore's Quaker community and claimed they were afraid to visit him in prison, Joseph Lovejoy, *Memoir of Rev. Charles T. Torrey* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 91–100, 130.
51. Torrey died in a Baltimore jail in 1846 after being convicted of helping slaves escape.
52. *Minute Book*, Friends Society in Aid of Freedmen, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College; in 1867, as "the immediate necessity of this institution has come to an end" the society transferred its assets to the Shelter for Orphans of Colored Soldiers and Friendless Colored Children of Baltimore. Needles now described himself as "pretty well fixed for business." His son John A. Needles appears to have taken over the dry goods business and Thomas Godey cared for the furniture manufactory.
53. Ruchames, *Letters*, n322–23, quotes Kenneth Carroll, *Quakerism on the Eastern Shore* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1970): 182, 279.
54. Ruchames, *Letters*, 471–74; 485–86.
55. Ruchames, *Letters*, 471.
56. Mayer, *All on Fire*, 567; Walter M. Merrill, ed., *The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison,*

Vol. 5, 1861–1867 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 204–207. There is some ambiguity as to whether John Needles, who was ill and out of the city when Garrison made his travel plans, or his son John actually met with him.

57. John W. Blassingame and John R. McKivigan, eds., *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, Vol. 4 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 86.

58. Graham, *Black Capital*, 138.

59. *Memorial of Baltimore Monthly Meeting concerning John Needles*, Baltimore Monthly Meeting Records, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College. Emphasis in original.

60. Montgomery, "Needles," 294.

Spirogate: *The Washington Post* and the Rise and Fall of Spiro Agnew

Charles J. Holden and Zach Messitte

In late July 1973 the political aspirations of Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, the former Maryland governor and Baltimore County executive, looked promising. Agnew remained unscathed as Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein of *The Washington Post* took apart the Nixon Administration in the unfolding Watergate scandal. Stewart Alsop, a nationally syndicated columnist for *Newsweek*, wrote an op-ed that appeared in *The Post* highlighting Agnew's rising political fortune:

> Since the existence of the famous White House tapes was revealed, it again seems possible that Vice President Spiro Agnew may again become President before 1976. It is also entirely possible that he may be elected in his own right in 1976. He is, in short, at least as likely as any other man to be our next President.[1]

Agnew was, Alsop continued, "a serious man partly because he epitomizes a mood, an attitude, that a great many Americans share." If, he concluded, Agnew became president before 1976, "he might be a most difficult President to defeat."[2]

Two and a half months after Alsop's rosy prediction, Spiro Agnew's political career ended. On October 10, 1973, Agnew resigned the vice presidency and pled no contest to tax evasion at U.S. Federal Court in Baltimore. A judge sentenced Agnew to three years' probation and a $10,000 fine.[3] Agnew, the son of Greek immigrants from Baltimore, lived out his days in political oblivion, playing golf with Frank Sinatra, and seeing his name as the answer to a trivia question.[4] Agnew's story also reveals an important journalistic episode often forgotten in the *Post's* more famous contribution to the downfall of Richard Nixon. Although the vice president brought about his own political demise, *The Washington Post*, despite Agnew's description of the paper as one of his "chief tormenters," played a more complicated role in his political career than his after-the-fact assertion indicates.[5] By chronicling and complimenting Agnew's early political success, by covering

Charles J. Holden is an Associate Professor of History and an Aldom-Plansoen Honors College Professor at St. Mary's College of Maryland. Zach Messitte is the William J. Crowe Associate Professor of Geopolitics and the Vice Provost for International Programs at the University of Oklahoma. From 2002–2007, he directed the Center for the Study of Democracy at St. Mary's College of Maryland.

In 1966, Spiro T. Agnew celebrated his election as governor of Maryland. (University of Maryland College Park.)

his flamboyant vice presidential speeches, and finally by solid investigative journalism uncovering Agnew's corrupt past, *The Post* helped shape the dramatic rags-to-riches—and riches-to-rags—story of Maryland's only elected national leader.

In the history of American presidential politics no one has risen quite so far and fast (and then fallen quite so hard and suddenly) as Agnew, a career that *Post* reporter Jules Witcover described as an "overnight flash."[6] In 1960, running as a first-time candidate for public office, he finished fifth in a five-way race for Baltimore County Circuit Court Judge. Eight years later, as Richard Nixon's running mate, voters elected him the 39th Vice-President of the United States. To scale these political heights, Agnew masterfully exploited the fissures that appeared in the Democratic Party in the 1960s. The New Deal alliance of conservative, southern Democrats and liberal, northern progressives began to fray as the civil rights struggle, the U.S. involvement in Vietnam, and maintaining "law and order" divided old political coalitions and created new ones. During Agnew's meteoric rise through local, state, and national politics, Republicans such as Nixon invoked "the silent majority" and employed "the southern strategy" to appeal to frustrated white southerners and nervous middle class suburbanites. As Jules Witcover and fellow *Post* reporter Richard Cohen explained, Maryland, a border state with one

major city, "combined the worst of the Northern big-city machine with the worst of the Southern courthouse tradition."[7]

The Democratic Party dominated Maryland politics in the 1960s (and still does).[8] Agnew, hoping to get ahead politicially, had switched his party affiliation from Democrat to Republican in 1946. He then took advantage of a bitter primary battle between two Democratic political bosses to win election as the Baltimore County Executive in 1962.[9] By 1966, after just one term in office, Agnew ranked as one of the most important Republicans in the state and ran unopposed in the primary for governor. Once again, Agnew benefited from a divided Democratic Party. Congressman Carleton Sickles and Attorney General Tom Finan split the progressive majority of votes in the 1966 Democratic gubernatorial primary and opened the door for the nomination of George Mahoney. Mahoney, a perennial, losing candidate undoubtedly knew that segregationist George Wallace ran well in Maryland in the 1964 presidential race. In 1966, Mahoney campaigned on the patently racist slogan, "A Man's Home Is His Castle—Protect It!" in reference to his opposition to racially sensitive fair housing legislation that Agnew, as governor would later sign into law. Agnew, as Jules Witcover explained "suddenly became the savior of Maryland liberalism."[10] With the Democratic nomination accomplished, Mahoney headed into the general election against Agnew and an independent, anti-tax candidate named Hyman Pressman. Agnew had the backing of the national Republican Party, including the former vice president and defeated California gubernatorial candidate Richard Nixon, who considered Agnew "superbly qualified." Nixon accused Mahoney of "exploiting the race issue" and compared him to Wallace and segregationist Lester Maddox of Georgia.[11] Agnew himself openly linked the Mahoney campaign with Klan marches in Maryland during 1966, "without offering a scrap of evidence," according to biographer Joseph Albright.[12] At the same time, Agnew revealed his own blunt speaking style on race issues, telling an African American student audience at Morgan State College, "I do not come to the Negro community asking for its help. . . . The Negro community needs my help."[13] This peculiar political moment in Maryland's history, therefore, made Agnew "more liberal because of the opposition he had."[14]

By the 1960s, *The Washington Post* had started to expand its coverage of Maryland in order to accommodate its growing suburban readership in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.[15] That coverage paid off handsomely for Agnew's rising political fortunes. The *Post* covered the 1966 Maryland gubernatorial election closely, assigning multiple reporters to the candidates and devoting pages to analysis and news coverage of the key issues and personalities. Ten days before the election, the Sunday Metro section of *The Post* included a "Voter's Guide" to the candidate's positions with verbatim responses on civil rights, public education, taxes, the efficiency of state government, health and welfare,

law enforcement, highways and transportation, pollution, and conflict of interest. Over on the editorial page on the same day *The Post* strongly endorsed Agnew for Governor:

> The voter needs to understand that most of the important issues were staked out first by Mr. Agnew, and the others have since gravitated toward them. Mr. Agnew's position papers have set the level of debate in those instances where it has reached substantial questions of state policy, particularly in regard to the schools and colleges....voters who wish to protest a civil rights bill killed in Congress last month will support Mr. Mahoney. But those who support orderly, modern government with an emphasis on public education will support Mr. Agnew.[16]

The Post also ran a blistering Rowland Evans and Robert Novak column on the Sunday before the election in which they saw Mahoney's possible election a "nightmarish prospect." Unimpressed by Mahoney's "disorganized, ungrammatical remarks" and a candidacy that "relies wholly" on white backlash against any stirrings for civil rights, Evans and Novak hoped that Agnew would prevail. But even with the backing of major newspapers in the area, of important national Democrats such as Dean Acheson, and even of "stars of the Baltimore Orioles and Baltimore Colts," they worried that Agnew "seemed slightly behind Mahoney in a tight race."[17]

With the blessing of their hometown newspaper, *The Post*, and revulsion at Mahoney's racism, many Democrats in Maryland's Washington, D.C., suburbs crossed party lines and voted for Agnew in the general election (one calculation had Montgomery County going for Agnew by over 70 percent).[18] Montgomery and Prince George's County even organized Democrats for Agnew groups and helped him become one of only five Republican governors of Maryland elected since the end of the Civil War, winning by over 80,000 votes.[19]

Governor Agnew worked with the Democratic legislature during his short stint in Annapolis, and he maintained a close relationship with the Speaker of the House of Delegates, Marvin Mandel. During the only two legislative sessions (1967 and 1968) that he served, Agnew helped to reform the state's tax formula to shift the burden away from homeowners, championed the environment, and ended antiquated anti-miscegenation laws. He also banned discriminatory covenants in new housing developments. He took, however, a harder line on racial unrest. In the aftermath of rioting in Cambridge on the Eastern Shore in 1967, he held the black community at least partially responsible for the strife.[20] Touring the scene just hours after the riot, Agnew charged that "the Negro citizens in Cambridge have been victimized by a few rabble rousers." "I wouldn't be surprised at all," the Governor continued, "if this thing weren't organized from some central source."[21]

A few days later, Agnew returned to the theme. First he acknowledged "ample cause for unrest in our cities. There is still discrimination and, in too many cases, there are deplorable slum conditions. Our Negro citizens have not received, and in many cases are not receiving, equal educational, job, and housing opportunities." But then Agnew asserted straightforwardly that "Burning, looting, and sniping, even under the banner of civil rights, are still arson, larceny, and murder . . . and we cannot change the punishment simply because the crime occurred during a riot."[22]

An early supporter of Nelson Rockefeller for president in 1968, Agnew first caught the eye of Richard Nixon's campaign by dealing sternly with protesting black students at Bowie State College and his public scolding of Maryland's African-American leadership over rioting in Baltimore following the assassination of Martin Luther King.[23] As syndicated columnist Roscoe Drummond wrote in *The Post*, Agnew was "committed enough to racial justice to be consistent with Nixon's wishes and sufficiently identified as a strong advocate with law and order to help Nixon in the South."[24] In the midst of Agnew's tough handling of Bowie State protestors—he ordered upward of two hundred arrested for staging an illegal sit-in at the State House in Annapolis—he met with Nixon. Conservative Republican Patrick Buchanan, working on the Nixon team, "saw to it that his boss got clippings about Agnew's tough stances." Thus prepared, the Nixon-Agnew meeting came off smoothly and "the courtship was on."[25] Agnew placed Nixon's name in nomination at the Republican National Convention in August 1968, and one night later Nixon announced the Maryland Governor as his running mate.

In his convention acceptance speech, Agnew cited his "deep sense of the improbability of this moment."[26] The media and many of Nixon's long-time campaign aides shared the view, and Drummond recalled the numerous reporters who "gasped in disbelief" as Agnew was announced.[27] Agnew's selection caused not only surprise but consternation among some Republicans. Columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak wrote of a "brief but passionate revolt" on the convention floor "against the nomination of Gov. Spiro Agnew for Vice President. . . ."[28] *The Washington Post* editors were also surprised by the choice of the recently elected Maryland governor, having heavily discounted his chances heading into the convention. Richard Cohen, now a *Washington Post* syndicated columnist, remembered that before the announcement:

> There was a story, a famous story at *The Washington Post*, written by [reporter/ columnist] David Broder saying that Agnew was on the short list, for Nixon's [running mate]. Broder thought so little of it that he put it way down at the bottom of the story. And it was only an editor who said "No, no, he's local. Put him up there."[29]

Given that in 1968 Calvin Coolidge, Harry S. Truman, and Lyndon Johnson (three of the previous seven presidents) had all come to office due to the death of a president, the qualifications of Agnew and Senator Edmund Muskie (the Senator from Maine who became the Democratic vice presidential nominee) were closely scrutinized by the press. Agnew's performance on the national campaign trail changed *The Post's* editorial opinion of him. He quickly took on the attack dog role that many vice presidential nominees assume in tough elections, calling the Democratic standard bearer Hubert Humphrey, "soft on Communism and soft on law and order" and comparing him to Neville Chamberlain based on his "documented vacillations."[30] He also was prone to gaffes such as, "when you have seen one slum, you've seen them all," and calling Gene Oishi, an Asian-American reporting for the *Baltimore Sun*, a "fat Jap."[31] *The Post's* syndicated columnist Art Buchwald satirized an imagined conversation between Nixon and Agnew, "'Where are you going now, Spiro?' 'I am going down to Harlem to talk to the spic . . . I mean Puerto Ricans.'"[32] *The Washington Post* savaged Agnew's campaign performance in editorials, mocking his lack of experience and adding, "Given enough time, Nixon's decision . . . to name Agnew as his running mate may be the most eccentric political appointment since the Roman Emperor named his horse a consul."[33]

Agnew, however, railed against the Eastern press and continued to crisscross the country. He visited thirty-two states, with an emphasis on the border region between north and south that the Nixon campaign believed critical to its electoral success. He logged 60,000 miles, pressing hard on law and order issues.[34] The week before the election, *The Post* weighed in on Agnew and Muskie in an editorial. The editors commented that there was "no question that Senator Muskie is qualified for the Presidency if it should come to that."[35] On the other hand, *The Post* deemed Agnew unfit to serve based on his performance since being nominated to the Republican ticket:

> Agnew's record is neither qualifying or disqualifying. It is the record of a competent state official, no more and no less, which is why so much attention has been focused on Mr. Agnew's performance in the campaign....Governor Agnew's campaign has been distinguished by smear and innuendo, by misstatements of fact and grotesque failures of judgment. . . . His has been a campaign almost unbelievable in its banality, his principle theme the pursuit of law and order unrelieved by serious proposals to deal with the conditions that cause crime and disruptions of domestic tranquility. There has been nothing in the Agnew campaign to reassure a reasonable voter that the Governor, either by knowledge, experience, or temperament, is qualified to be President. The evidence indicates the reverse.[36]

The Nixon-Agnew team went on to win a close election but failed to carry Maryland. As Vice President, Agnew remained controversial nationally and not just locally, giving speeches around the country that painted "the media," the liberal establishment ("radiclibs"), and the young people protesting the Vietnam War as national problems. Known for his use of alliteration in his public addresses, Agnew received valuable speechwriting assistance from Buchanan and future *New York Times* columnist William Safire. However, he never considered himself part of Nixon's "inner circle" of advisers.[37] In fact, in 1973, but before his tax evasion scandal erupted, Agnew sounded what would soon become a familiar note of self-pity, this time in regard to his relationship with the Nixon team. Having just interviewed the vice president, Stewart Alsop recounted how during the 1968 campaign Agnew "would take 12 briefing books home . . . and 'study for a week,' when he had to go on a television talk show." The campaign had been a bruising experience for Agnew, and he still felt twinges of pain reliving it in his memory, "The first thing that hurts a man deeply, if he hasn't been exposed to it, is ridicule. I was the buffoon, if you'll recall, before I became the hated and feared spokesman of reaction."[38] The implication hung in the air that Agnew played both unpleasant roles at the behest of the Nixon team.

Nonetheless, as vice president, Agnew carried out the duties Nixon assigned him. He made the usual appearances with foreign dignitaries and performed other ceremonial functions of the office. But he also continued to hammer away at Nixon's enemies, both real and perceived. Following an unsatisfactory press reaction to one of the president's speeches on Vietnam in November 1969, Nixon ordered Agnew to deliver a broadside against "the media." Agnew did just that in a Des Moines, Iowa, speech, written in part by Pat Buchanan, where the Vice President accused a small elite of controlling the nation's television news. "Nowhere," Agnew charged, "are there fewer checks on vast power." "A small group of men," he continued, "numbering perhaps no more than a dozen 'anchormen,' commentators, and executive producers, settles upon the twenty minutes or so of film and commentary that is to reach the public." What accounted for television news, he continued, was "not my decision, it is not your decision; it is their decision."[39] Agnew struck a chord with his attacks on the media and he frequently returned to it. For example, he reiterated in 1970, "The world seems to become what the people in Washington and New York are saying, and what was in the 'liberal' Eastern news coverage that day."[40]

In his 1969 attack on the television elite, Agnew also managed to work in two of his other responsibilities as Nixon's Vice President—go after critics of the Vietnam War and black radical leaders. Of the television elite he said, "It was obvious that their minds were made up in advance" against Nixon's Vietnam policies. And Agnew also complained that "the networks" had "elevated Stokely Carmichael and George Lincoln Rockwell [leader of the American Nazi Party] from obscurity to national prominence."[41] In August 1970, *U.S. News and Report* reported that

Agnew said of African American leaders, "As long as the face is black—no matter what the tactic is—don't ever criticize another black. Look around and see if you can find a black leader who has had anything to say against Rap Brown or Eldridge Cleaver, or any of the known criminals of this country. You just won't find it."[42] The next month Agnew tangled with antiwar demonstrators who interrupted his speech in Detroit. In typical Agnew fashion, he engaged the protestors in a shouting match. When the protestors chanted "One-two-three-four, we don't want your [obscenity] war," Agnew hurled back, "That's exactly what we're running against in this country. With enemies like that, how can we lose?" Then Agnew chastised the protestors directly, "You people out there preach a lot about dissent. But you're afraid to tolerate dissent." Finally, interrupted yet again, Agnew said to the protestors simply, "You're pathetic."[43]

Reelected in a landslide in 1972, Richard Nixon could not constitutionally seek a third term and many considered Agnew a strong contender for the Republican nomination in 1976.[44] Shortly after his reelection, however, *The Washington Post* again came to play an instrumental role in Agnew's political life. By 1973, as the Watergate scandal began to unfold on the pages of *The Post,* the U.S. Attorney's Office in Baltimore also opened an investigation into political corruption in Baltimore County. Agnew had not been the County Executive since 1966, and prosecutors originally thought that he was beyond the five-year statute of limitations.

Richard Cohen, who covered Annapolis for *The Post* in the early 1970s, remembered the time as a "golden age of corruption" in Maryland politics:

> In my days covering Maryland, the Governor [Marvin Mandel] was convicted of corruption, later overturned on appeal, and the former Governor, Spiro Agnew, then the Vice-President of the United States pleaded guilty to charges of tax evasion. Also convicted [on a variety of charges] were the County Executives of Anne Arundel County [Joseph W. Alton] and Baltimore County [Dale Anderson], the Baltimore County State's Attorney [Samuel Green Jr.], the Congressman from the first district [William O. Mills[45]], a Baltimore State Senator [Clarence Mitchell III], the Speaker of the House [A. Gordon Boone[46]], a U.S. Senator [Daniel B. Brewster], and a member of the House of Delegates [James A. "Turk" Scott] who was flushed out of the State House by U.S. Marshals because he was wanted on drug charges...[*Washington Post* Executive Editor Ben] Bradlee was right. Covering Maryland spoiled me. I loved it so thoroughly that to this day I miss it.[47]

Cohen began to hear rumors in the Maryland legislature that the U.S. Attorney's office was going after Dale Anderson, the Baltimore County executive who had followed Agnew into office. He had a reporter's hunch that if the "Feds" were squeezing Anderson they might find some "dirt" on Agnew as well:

> In retrospect now you wonder how anybody got away with it because thousands of people knew what was going on. You can't have gotten all these bribes and shaken everybody down for all these years.... but everybody had a vested interest in keeping it quiet or limited. So there were guys in the legislature who clearly knew what was happening and to my utter dismay *The Baltimore Sun* was just totally asleep. I just started working the story, that's all. And the legislative session ended and I kept going, and I talked to people, and for a while I was totally thrown off the track because I got lied to. The prosecutor said there's nothing to it, there's nothing happening. But I knew that something was happening.[48]

On August 7, 1973, Cohen shared a byline with his colleague Carl Bernstein that broke open the story on the front page of *The Post* with a headline screaming across the masthead, "Agnew Is the Target of Kickback Probe in Baltimore, Proclaims His Innocence."[49] The next day, *The Post* bemoaned the state of the Nixon administration in an editorial that tied Agnew's legal troubles to the undertow of the Watergate scandal. Although "the investigation of the Vice President is entirely separate from the Watergate scandals," the article held, "it can only reinforce the sense of loss that many Americans feel as they regard their national government. It can only increase the sense of being adrift, as lawyers debate how to handle serious charges against men in very high offices, charges for which there are no precedent in our history as a nation."[50]

Along with Bernstein and colleague Jules Witcover, Cohen helped lead *The Post's* coverage of the Agnew investigation through the late summer and the fall. *Post* reporters, with a growing contingent of journalists from around the country, doggedly asked Nixon, Agnew, government spokesmen, and unnamed sources to explain the unfolding details of the investigation. Cohen remembered the media frenzy:

> The Baltimore Hilton filled up. It was like a convention. All the national press showed up, and all of a sudden I was up against everybody. I had to walk around, and I was new...I see these people that I only saw on television, these monster reporters, you know, these guys with great reputations, and I said, "I can't take these guys on, I can't handle all this."[51]

It was during this period that Cohen first learned from his *Post* colleague Bob Woodward (via Woodward's famous and once anonymous source Deep Throat, now known to be Mark Felt, then the Deputy Director of the FBI) that Agnew had, in fact, taken bribes.[52] However, as the case progressed towards trial, the Justice Department threatened to subpoena Cohen's notes to determine how leaks of grand jury information made it into the press. In response, *The Post* developed what Ben Bradlee recalled as "the Gray-Haired Grandmother Defense," in refer-

ence to the fact that Katherine Graham, owner of the *Post,* also happened to be widowed and a grandmother. Bradlee remembered the strategy as a way to shift legal ownership of the notes away from Cohen: "The idea was that Katherine [Graham] owns [the notes]. And Cohen doesn't own the notes and Bradlee doesn't own the notes, but this poor old widow . . . owns the notes."[53]

Cohen responded with a mixture of concern and wry humor. On the one hand, he worried that a subpoena would compel him to testify in court about what he knew in the case against Agnew. But since his last name put him at the top of the alphabetical list of potential reporters to be subpoenaed, Cohen, much to his own bemusement, became part of the story. Meg Greenfield, who was then the editorial page editor of *The Post,* coined the phrase "subpoena envy" to describe other journalists' reaction to Cohen's newfound fame. But the gravity of the situation came home to Cohen later when he received a telephone call from the prosecutors in Baltimore saying that they would try to move him to a Montgomery County jail for his incarceration (and away from the more dangerous Baltimore jail) if he refused to testify or turn over his notes.[54]

Throughout the fall of 1973, Agnew maintained his innocence.[55] He even explored the possibility of taking his case to the House of Representatives and starting the impeachment process in order to avoid an indictment. An August appearance at a fund-raiser picnic in Centreville on the Eastern Shore, gave his fellow Marylanders a chance to stand by their man. Drawing "repeated cheers and shouts of support," Agnew in his first public appearance in Maryland since the accusations broke, received a hero's welcome. "We're gonna see you in the White House yet," shouted one admirer. Another supporter, Victoria Hastings, had clearly received Agnew's message over the years about unfair treatment by a hostile media. Referring to Nixon and Agnew, Hastings proclaimed that "They . . . can't help it if they got skewered by the newspapers."[56] Nonetheless, by October 1973, Agnew and his lawyers were aware that the government had a very strong case. Privately, according to Agnew, the Nixon White House pressured him to resign.[57] The pressure continued to mount as multiple individuals testified that they had paid kickbacks to Agnew during his tenures as county executive, governor, and vice president. Finally, on October 10, 1973, Agnew resigned the vice presidency and pled no contest to tax evasion at U.S. Federal Court in Baltimore.

The Post's coverage of that fateful day reported the "stunning and historic finale" to his vice presidency and legal battle, depicting Agnew as dignified in defeat, standing "erect and expressionless . . . to enter his 'no contest' plea on the tax evasion charge."[58] The day after the Agnew resignation, coverage of the hearing dominated *The Post* with sixteen articles in the front "A" section alone. In addition to covering the events from the trial in Baltimore, *The Post* chronicled the stunned reactions of Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill and the tearful reaction of Agnew's staff and disillusioned Marylanders. The paper also

published the entire text of the judge's statement from the bench during the hearing in Baltimore, printed a six column biographical background sketch, and even ran United Press International articles with saddened reactions from first lady Pat Nixon and Agnew's relatives in Greece.[59] In its editorial, *The Post* was charitable but firm with the now former vice president: "When a proud, aggressive and supremely confident politician, such as Spiro Agnew, falls from high estate, one necessarily feels compassion for the man—and that is true irrespective of what may have cause his fall." Still:

> it seems to us that Mr. Agnew has taken the wisest and best course available to him in pleading nolo contendere to a single tax evasion count and stepping out of office in exchange for a dropping of the other counts against him . . . [Agnew] has not been "hounded" out of office or misused by the Justice Department or denied the fair trial that is every citizen's right or made a scapegoat for Watergate in some convoluted White House maneuver. . . . In the first place everyone doesn't [take bribes]. In the second place everyone isn't Vice President.[60]

Despite its significant role investigating Agnew's illegal activities, *The Post* also published op-eds friendly to Agnew's position that he was unfairly forced out of office and the victim of a "trial by headline" and "leaks and innuendo."[61] The paper also quoted former rival George Mahoney, who clearly relished getting in what amounted to the last word on the 1966 gubernatorial race. That Agnew had to resign under a cloud of scandal "doesn't strike me as a great surprise," Mahoney confessed. "Why, in 1966 he called me a bigot and a racist, all those outrageous dirty tricks, none of it was true what he said about me in the campaign," Mahoney complained. "It was worse than the dirty tricks used in the Watergate, and he never apologized to me after it was over."[62]

In a nationally televised address a week after his resignation, Agnew one more time blamed his political defeat on leaks from various sources from within the investigation, all fed to a voracious press where "their stories have been treated as gospel by most of the media."[63] Robert Maynard responded in *The Post* by pointing out "the vast body of evidence . . . remained essentially undisclosed until released by the prosecution" and that "for all the potentially damaging disclosures, much that was favorable to the former Vice President was also reported." As for the press's coverage of the Agnew case, Maynard summarized that "what the press told, it told warily."[64]

After this last, well-publicized proclamation of his innocence, Spiro Agnew dropped out of the public eye. *Post* reporters Richard Cohen and Jules Witcover took six weeks off after the trial and wrote *A Heartbeat Away*, a best seller that chronicled the rise and fall of Agnew's political fortunes. The former vice presi-

In 1973, a defeated Agnew faced the press after resigning as vice president. (University of Maryland College Park.)

dent, however, never showed public repentance for his actions. In the opening line of his 1980 memoir he wrote, "I am writing this book because I am innocent of the allegations against me which compelled me to resign from the vice presidency of the United States."[65] However, he acknowledged that he had to "live with another more subtle punishment . . . I am recognized all over the world. When people stop and stare at you, you know some are thinking, 'There goes Agnew, the guy who was kicked out of the vice-presidency.'"[66]

Cohen and Witcover ran into Agnew several years after his resignation while having drinks in the lounge at the Madison Hotel, across the street from the offices of *The Washington Post* on 15th Street NW. Cohen recalled the meeting as awkward:

> Agnew started talking about maybe we could help him. He was trying to do a novel and he was having a problem with the first chapter.[67] I thought, this is the weirdest conversation I've ever had in my life.[68] The guy wants me to help him with his novel?[69]

In 1981, Cohen did a "whatever-happened-to Spiro Agnew" article for *Rolling*

Stone magazine and found that the former vice president had slipped into political obscurity, spending his summers quietly in Ocean City, Maryland, and the rest of the year in Rancho Mirage, California, doing some international business consulting.[70] Cohen, however, believes that if Agnew's resignation had not happened during the middle of Watergate scandal that it would be better remembered as an important chapter in American political history:[71]

> There's a hell of a moment when you've got a president hanging from his fingernails and a vice-president about to be indicted, and if you're the attorney general of the United States or you know about this, you can't think of a more dramatic moment. I mean the whole government is about to come apart. The framers couldn't have predicted it.[72]

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Agnew maintained a low public profile, rarely granting interviews or appearing at political functions. He died at the age of 77 in 1996 while on his summer vacation in Ocean City. Bart Barnes, yet another *Post* reporter who covered Agnew in the late 1960s and early 1970s, wrote a respectful, detailed obituary for the paper. Barnes noted that Agnew had "cultivated a loyal and enthusiastic constituency of his own" and as the vice president he grew into a "superb and articulate public speaker and a master rhetorician." Barnes also noted that even at the height of his public appeal, Agnew remained "a virtual non-person in the inner circles of the Nixon administration."[73] Agnew has remained a virtual non-person in Maryland history as well. His public papers and mementos from his political career are unceremoniously housed at the University of Maryland's Hornbake Library in College Park, Maryland. His legacy, shaped importantly through his relationship with *The Washington Post*, remains potent, if largely forgotten. More than any other political leader of the 1960s, with some competition from George Wallace, Spiro Agnew, doing Richard Nixon's bidding, and through his own combative public style, popularized the real concerns as well as the occasional paranoia of the American white middle class and turned them into votes for the Republican Party. Moreover, he helped reshape the nation's relationship with its own news-providers. Decrying the moral relativism of the 1960s and convinced that a liberal media was out to get him, Agnew's attacks helped pave the way for a kind of news-viewing relativism where viewers now search out media outlets that speak to their political beliefs and dismiss the others for "spin" and political biases.

NOTES

The authors thank Justin Coffey, Bradley University; Jennie Levine, University of Maryland Libraries; and Janet Butler Haugaard, Abby Meatyard, Holly Chase, and Larry Vote, St. Mary's College of Maryland.

1. Stewart Alsop, "President Agnew?" *The Washington Post,* July 29, 1973, C6.
2. Ibid.
3. Agnew was the second vice president to resign from office. John C. Calhoun resigned as Vice President in 1832 over a dispute with President Andrew Jackson over tariffs and its effects on the southern states.
4. Agnew's memoir, *Go Quietly . . . Or Else,* is dedicated to Frank Sinatra, a friend who, he wrote, "falls into a special bracket, a bracket of one." Agnew (1980) 177. Sinatra also lent Agnew $200,000 to pay off debts related to his 1973 resignation.
5. Spiro T. Agnew, *Go Quietly . . . Or Else* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1980), 177.
6. Jules Witcover, "Agnew's Rise: From 'Spiro Who?' to Household Word," *The Washington Post,* August 8, 1973, A1.
7. Richard Cohen and Jules Witcover, *A Heartbeat Away* (New York: Viking Press, 1974), 49.
8. According to the Maryland State Board of Elections in 2006, there are almost twice as many registered Democrats as Republicans statewide. Maryland's three most populous counties (Montgomery, Prince George's, and Baltimore City) are heavily Democratic. Much of the rest of state either favors, or is trending towards, Republican voter registration. http://www.elections.state.md.us/citizens/registration/May_2007.pdf (Accessed, July 11, 2007).
9. Robert Marsh, *Agnew: The Unexamined Man* (New York: M. Evans and Company, 1971) 29–32.
10. Witcover, "Agnew's Rise: From 'Who's Spiro?' to Household Word."
11. Bart Barnes, "Agnew Belittles Qualifications of Mahoney," *The Washington Post,* October 30, 1966.
12. Joseph Albright, *What Makes Spiro Run? The Life and Times of Spiro Agnew* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1972), 127.
13. Jack Eisen, "Negroes Need His Help, Agnew Tells Collegians," *The Washington Post,* November 2, 1966, A1.
14. Witcover, "Agnew's Rise: From 'Spiro Who?' to Household Word."
15. Personal Interview with Ben Bradlee and Richard Cohen, November 11, 2005.
16. "For Governor of Maryland," *The Washington Post,* October 30, 1966, E6.
17. Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "A Nightmarish Prospect," *The Washington Post,* November 6, 1966, E7.
18. Quoted in Albright, *What Makes Spiro Run? The Life and Times of Spiro Agnew, 128.*
19. In 2002, Robert Ehrlich became the first Republican governor of Maryland since Agnew.
20. Robert J. Brugger, *Maryland: A Middle Temperament* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1988) 621–22.
21. "National Guardsmen Check Cambridge Disorders," *The Evening Capital,* July 25, 1967, 5.
22. Quoted in Albright, *What Makes Spiro Run? The Life and Times of Spiro Agnew,* 175.
23. Referring in particular to black power advocates Stokely Carmichael and Rap Brown, Agnew excoriated the largely African-American audience, "I publicly repudiate, condemn and reject white racists. I call upon you to publicly repudiate, condemn and reject all black racists. This, so far, you have not been willing to do. . . . If our nation is not to move toward two

separate societies—one white and one black—you have an obligation too." Agnew's full statement at a Conference with Civil Rights and Community Leaders at the State Office Building in Baltimore on April 11, 1968, can be found in *Addresses and State Papers of Spiro T. Agnew, 1967–1969, Volume 2* (Annapolis: State of Maryland, 1975) 758–63.

24. "Nixon Could Be Proved Right In Surprising Choice of Agnew," *Washington Post*, August, 17, 1968, A13.

25. Witcover, "Agnew's Rise: From 'Spiro Who?' to Household Word."

26. "Transcripts of Acceptance Speeches by Nixon and Agnew to the G.O.P. Convention," *The New York Times*, August 9, 1968, 20.

27. Drummond, "Nixon Could Be Proved Right In Surprising Choice of Agnew." In his memoirs, Richard Nixon wrote, "Though [Agnew] had no foreign policy experience, his instincts in this area appeared to parallel mine. He had a good record as a moderate, progressive, effective governor. He took a forward-looking stance on civil rights, but he had firmly opposed those who resorted to violence in promoting their cause. As a former county executive. . . . he had a keen interest in local as well as state government. He expressed deep concern about the plight of the nation's urban areas. He appeared to have presence, poise, and dignity, which would contribute greatly to his effectiveness both as a candidate and, if we should win, as Vice President. From a strictly political standpoint, Agnew fit perfectly with the strategy we had devised for the November election. With George Wallace in the race, I could not hope to sweep the South. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, to win the entire rimland of the South — the border states—as well as the major states of the Midwest and West. Agnew fit the bill geographically, and as a political moderate he fit it philosophically." Richard Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978), 312.

28. Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "VP Revolt Was Symbol of Protest Over South's New Power in GOP," *Washington Post*, August 12, 1968, A21.

29. Personal interview with Richard Cohen, November 11, 2005.

30. Bernard D. Nossiter, "O'Brien Gibes at Agnew," *The Washington Post*, September 12, 1968, A4; "Agnew Says His Attacks Are Fair," *The Washington Post*, September 30, 1968, A9.

31. Oishi's family was interned at one of the many relocation camps created to hold families of Japanese-American descent during World War II. See Gene Oishi, "The Anxiety of Being a Japanese-American," *The New York Times Magazine*, April 25, 1985.

32. Art Buchwald, "Spiro Wades In," *The Washington Post*, September 29, 1968, B7.

33. "The Perils of Spiro," *The Washington Post*, September 25, 1968, A20.

34. Robert C. Maynard, "Main Themes of Agnew Candidacy Pressed on Final Campaign Trip," *The Washington Post*, November 5, 1968, A4.

35. "The Election (II) – Agnew & Muskie," *The Washington Post*, November 1, 1968, A22.

36. Ibid.

37. Some of Agnew's alliterative speech has become part of American political lore. Democrats were accused of "pusillanimous pussyfooting" and "paralyzing permissive philosophy pervades everything they espouse." The media were categorized as "nattering nabobs of negativism," and "hopeless, hysterical hypochondriacs of history." Agnew's speeches as Vice President can be found in *The Collected Speeches of Spiro Agnew* (New York: Audubon Books, 1971). Agnew wrote in 1980, "I was never allowed to come close enough to participate directly with [Nixon] in any decision. Every time I went to see him and raised a subject for discussion, he would begin a rambling, time-consuming monologue. Then finally the phone would ring or [White House Chief of Staff H.R.] Haldeman would come in, and there would be no time left for what I really had come to talk about. . . He preferred keeping his decision making within a very small group." Agnew (1980) 34.

38. Alsop, "President Agnew?"
39. "Transcript of Address by Agnew Criticizing Television on Its Coverage of the News," *The New York Times*, November 14, 1969, 24.
40. "Agnew Talks About 'Those Agnew Speeches,'" *U. S. News and World Report*, August 24, 1970, 35.
41. "Transcript of Address by Agnew Criticizing Television on Its Coverage of the News."
42. "Agnew Talks About 'Those Agnew Speeches,'" 36.
43. "Agnew is Heckled at Campaign Stop," *The New York Times*, September 17, 1970.
44. Nixon seriously contemplated dropping Agnew from the ticket in 1972 and replacing him with his Treasury Secretary John Connolly of Texas. Nixon claimed that Agnew was thinking about stepping down. Nixon, *The Memoirs*, 674–75. Republican Senator Barry Goldwater wrote that Agnew told him before the 1972 Republican National Convention that he was considering withdrawing from the ticket. Barry Goldwater, *With No Apologies* (New York: Morrow, 1979), 235–37.
45. The Watergate hearings disclosed that Congressman Mills had accepted $25,000 from the Committee to Re-elect the President (CREEP) and had not reported it as required by Maryland law. Disgraced by the revelations, Mills committed suicide in 1973 before he was convicted. For more detail on corruption in Maryland in the early 1970s, see Cohen and Witcover, *A Heartbeat Away*, 34–51.
46. Speaker Boone was indicted in 1963 (prior to Cohen's tenure with the *Washington Post*) in connection with a scandal in the Maryland savings and loan industry.
47. Speech of Richard Cohen at St. Mary's College of Maryland, November 11, 2005.
48. Personal Interview with Richard Cohen, November 11, 2005.
49. Richard Cohen and Carl Bernstein, "Agnew Is the Target of Kickback Probe in Baltimore, Proclaims His Innocence," *The Washington Post*, August 7, 1973, A1.
50. "The Vice President and the Investigation," *The Washington Post*, August 8, 1973, A18.
51. Ibid.
52. Cohen wrote a column in 1980 naming Mark Felt as "Deep Throat." Felt's identity would become public twenty-five years later. Richard Cohen, "Mark Felt's Viewpoint: Worthy of Deep Throat," *The Washington Post*, November 16, 1980, B1.
53. Personal interview with Ben Bradlee, November 11, 2005. In his autobiography, Bradlee quotes Califano: "The judge would throw Bradlee or Cohen in jail so fast it would make your head swim. Let's see if he has the balls to put Kay Graham in the clink." Ben Bradlee, *A Good Life: Newspapering and Other Adventures* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 371. For her part, Katherine Graham wrote in her memoirs that she was prepared to go to jail to defend Cohen's notes and sources. Katherine Graham, *Personal History* (New York: Random House, 1998), 409.
54. Personal interview with Richard Cohen, November 11, 2005.
55. In August 1973, Agnew called the charges against him "damned lies" during a press conference after the story broke in the newspapers. On September 29, 1973, Agnew gave a fiery speech in Los Angeles to a group of Republican women, where he proclaimed, "I will not resign if indicted."
56. Philip A. McCombs, "Agnew Gets Cheers at Md. Picnic," *The Washington Post*, August 19, 1973, A1.
57. Agnew recounted an early August 1973 visit from White House Chief of Staff Gen. Alexander Haig requesting his resignation. "I find it difficult to comprehend the callous self-interest which dominated the actions of the White House [in August 1973]. Bear in mind the President had not granted my request to see him. Without even an opportunity to be heard in my own defense, I was to be jettisoned, a political weight too heavy." Agnew, *Go Quietly*, 101–104.

Nixon, already reeling from Watergate, thought the Agnew resignation might take some of the pressure off his own troubles but soon realized he was mistaken. "The Agnew resignation was necessary although a very serious blow, because while some thought that his stepping aside would take some of the pressure off the effort to get the President, all it did was to open the way to put pressure on the President to resign as well. This is something we have to realize: that any accommodation with opponents in this kind of fight does not satisfy—it only brings on demands for more." Nixon, *The Memoirs*, 1005. Strangely enough, Agnew received support from then Governor of Georgia and future President Jimmy Carter who phoned him less than a month before he pled *nolo contendere*. Carter told a press conference in Atlanta that "[Agnew] needed to hear a friendly voice." Agnew (1980) 161–62.

58. Laurence Stern, "Vice President Agnew Resigns, Fined for Income Tax Evasion," *The Washington Post*, October 11, 1973, A1.

59. See among other articles: Stern, "Vice President Agnew Resigns, Fined for Income Tax Evasion"; Carol Kilpatrick and Edward Walsh, "Judge: No Contest is 'Full Equivalent of a Plea of Guilty,'" *The Washington Post*, October 11, 1973, A1; Jules Witcover and Spencer Rich, "Both Parties Jolted: Nixon Polls Leaders," *The Washington Post*, October 11, 1973, A1; "Pat Nixon Saddened," *The Washington Post*, October 11, 1973, A5; Lou Cannon," "Stunned Agnew Staff Reacts with Tears and Anger," *The Washington Post*, October 11, 1973, A6; "Agnew's Relatives in Greece Sad," *The Washington Post*, October 11, 1973, A9; Peter A. Jay, "Agnew's Departure Jolts Marylanders," *The Washington Post*, October 11, 1973, A10; Comments in Court; Details of Charges by the U.S," *The Washington Post*, October 11, 1973, A12–14; "Spiro Agnew: A Rapid Rise from Obscurity," *The Washington Post*, October 11, 1973, A15.

60. "Mr. Agnew's Resignation," *The Washington Post*, October 11, 1973, A30.

61. See: Joseh Alsop, "The Agnew Decision," *The Washington Post*, October 12, 1973, A31; Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "'He Resigned Because He Had No Choice,'" *The Washington Post*, October 12, 1973, A31; William Raspberry, "A Good Deal for Everyone," *The Washington Post*, October 12, 1973, A31; William S. White, "The Agnew Resignation: Bitterness Among Conservatives," *The Washington Post*, October 13, 1973, A19; Robert C. Maynard, "Mr. Agnew and the Press," *The Washington Post*, October 18, 1973, A16.

62. Peter A. Jay, "Agnew Departure Jolts Marylanders," *The Washington Post*, October 11, 1973, A10.

63. Lou Cannon, "Agnew Denies Guilt, Hits 'Scurrilous Leaks,'" *The Washington Post*, October 16, 1973, A1.

64. Robert C. Maynard, "Mr. Agnew and the Press," *The Washington Post*, October 18, 1973, A16.

65. Agnew, *Go Quietly*, 9.

66. Ibid., 222–23.

67. The Playboy Press published *The Canfield Decision* in 1976. The story focuses on fictional Vice-President Porter Canfield who is cheating on his wife and later charged with conspiracy and murder. Much of the prose is a departure from the strict public figure Agnew cut during his time in office: "In the rhythmic twisting and pulsing of the next fifteen minutes, he was conscious only of disjointed impressions: the little animal cries from Meredith; the carefully folded brocade bedspread on the side; the slight creaking of the bed as they reached a crescendo. Then his own flurry of endearments and groan of release during the rocketing to a delicious peak before plunging ecstatically into awareness of every vibrating curve." Spiro T. Agnew, *The Canfield Decision* (Chicago: The Playboy Press, 1976), 300.

68. Agnew recounted meeting Witcover in Washington later in the 1970s in which he wrote, "Witcover knelt alongside me at the table and whispered, 'I'm sort of an Agnew student. I've

written more about you than anybody else, and I'd like to write the story from your viewpoint.' I burst out laughing every time I think of the incident. After dipping his pen in poison to write two books about me, Witcover had the nerve to ask me help him write another!" Agnew, *Go Quietly*, 213.

69. Personal interview with Richard Cohen, November 11, 2005.

70. Richard Cohen, "Did Crime Pay? Spiro Agnew: Pay Attention, All You Nattering Nabobs of Negativism," *Rolling Stone*, November 26, 1981.

71. Agnew's resignation came in the midst of important domestic and international events. The Yom Kippur War erupted just days before Agnew resigned, and the "Saturday Night Massacre" in which President Nixon fired Attorney General Elliott Richardson and his deputy William Ruckelshaus for their refusal to get rid of Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox occurred ten days after Agnew's resignation.

72. Personal interview with Richard Cohen, November 11, 2005.

73. Bart Barnes, "Nixon Vice President Spiro T. Agnew Dies," *The Washington Post*, September 19, 1996, B7.

Research Notes & Maryland Miscellany

The *Mermaid* of Assateague

Roger Novak

Events in the spring of 1778 looked ominous for the British in their effort to retain the North American colonies. The expected war with France loomed as Louis XVI signed the Treaty of Alliance with the Americans and dispatched a naval squadron of twelve ships of the line and four frigates, under the command of Comte d'Estaing, from Toulon. The poor state of the Royal Navy meant that England could not prevent d'Estaing from leaving the Mediterranean without leaving its home waters undefended. English spies warned that d'Estaing's destination was America but the British overridingly feared he would join the French main fleet at Brest and attack commercial shipping just beginning to arrive home in the English Channel. The French squadron set sail in April, and Royal Navy frigates observed its passage through the Straits of Gibraltar in mid-May, but indecision and lack of intelligence delayed the departure of reinforcements until June, much too late to intercept or deter the French squadron.[1]

The French commander sailed for the Delaware Bay in hopes of trapping the British at Philadelphia, which they had occupied since the previous year. In anticipation of war with France, London had ordered Admiral Richard Lord Howe to abandon Philadelphia, an action he completed by late June. Howe then posted guard ships along the middle Atlantic coast to divert British victualers en route to Philadelphia and to warn of the approaching French fleet.[2] Thus ordered, the HMS *Mermaid* dropped anchor at Cape Henlopen at the mouth of Delaware Bay on July 6, 1778.[3]

The *Mermaid*'s last sojourn to America began in September 1776 when her captain, James Hawker, was ordered to escort a supply convoy from England to New York.[4] After delivering the convoy, Captain Hawker and the *Mermaid* went on to support British naval operations against Machias, Maine, and Egg Harbor, New Jersey, all while ranging the Atlantic coast between Providence, Rhode Island, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Nantucket Shoals, and Antigua, West Indies. They captured numerous prizes before Howe ordered them to the Delaware.[5]

The author earned a Ph.D. in Physiology and Biochemistry in 1972. After a long career as a chemist, he is now a regulatory consultant and author. This article corrects earlier statements that the Mermaid *actually sailed through Sinepuxent Inlet into the bay and bombarded area residents.*

Captain James Hawker, R. N., c. 1769. (Maritime Museum, Greenwich, England.)

By July 5, American Captain Selby (or Selwin) guided the French squadron toward Chincoteague.[6] In light winds on a clear day, d'Estaing charged the frigate *L'Engagenate* with leading the squadron towards the coast. At 11:00 A.M., they sighted land, the loyalist privateer *Rose*, and another vessel presumed to be a "prize." The "prize" fled northward while *Rose* confronted *L'Engagenate*. With night approaching and the already feeble wind dying, *L'Engagenate* tacked and trapped *Rose* between itself and the rest of the squadron.[7] At 8:00 P.M., the two combatants floated less than a half mile apart and cannon fire began. By 10:00 P.M., the range had closed considerably and musket fire became effective. The two vessels continued closing to the point that they briefly collided.

Finally at about 1:00 A.M., *Rose* struck her colors and surrendered. Her losses totaled sixteen men and the French counted one dead and three wounded. The Rose, severely damaged and subsequently abandoned, sank the following day. The presumed "prize" noted in *L'Engagenate's* log could have been *HMS Haerlem* whose master's log records the encounter off Cape Assateague. "Saw a fleet to the SE at 2 [P.M.] hauled our wind they appearing not to be British ships and stood from them. The fleet formed 2 divisions one of which chased us the other the ship to the SW." In calm winds at 7:00 P.M., *Haerlem* got out her sweeps and put over her boats and began rowing and towing to the northwest. The French abandoned pursuit of *Haerlem* at 10:00 P.M. *Haerlem's* log notes that the "ship to the SW" (the *Rose*), engaged at 9:00 P.M. and cannon fire ceased at 2:00 in the morning, roughly

The French squadron in pursuit of the Mermaid, *A. HMS* Mermaid, *B. Cape Henlopen, C. Delaware Bay. Detail from Pierre Ozanne,* L'Escadre françoise entrant dans la Delaware et chassant la frégate la Mermaid. *(Library of Congress.)*

confirming the account in the *L'Engagenate's* log. In the early morning of July 6th the wind picked up and *Harelem* gained some distance to the northwest. She put in at Cape Henlopen that afternoon to find *Mermaid* lying at anchor taking on casks of drinking water from HMS *Roebuck*. *Haerlem* "spoke" (hailing, passage of notes, face-to-face, etc.) to the other ships and *Roebuck* set sail for Sandy Hook while *Mermaid* remained at anchor.

The sun rose early the next morning and the moon would be full on July 9th. The officers and crews of *Haerlem* and *Mermaid* must have waited with nervous anticipation for the arrival of the French. Dawn found the French fleet at the mouth of the Delaware Bay bearing northward under cloudy skies, calm seas, and a west wind. *Haerlem* was cruising the mouth of the bay when the French arrived and dispatched a vessel to pursue her, but the chase ended when the French ship ran aground leaving *Haerlem* to sail on to Sandy Hook where she arrived later that day. *Mermaid* waited quietly at anchor hoping not to be seen but the French finally sighted the ship and at 8:30 A.M. she made sail and ran due east directly toward the approaching fleet until she cleared the "Hen and Chickens" shoal and then turned south down the Delmarva shore with the enemy fleet in chase.

The exact number of French ships involved in the chase is unclear. Pierre Ozanne, the official artist of the expedition, depicted the start of the chase. His wash drawing *L'Escadre françoise entrant dans la Delaware et chassant la frégate la Mermaid* (The French squadron entering the Delaware & hunting the frigate *Mermaid*) shows at least four and possibly six French ships chasing *Mermaid*.[8] Captain Hawker stated that initially the "entire" fleet pursued him. At 8:30A.M., July 7th, HMS *Haerlem* logged "the Mermaid stood out of the Delaware part of the fleet chased her she hauled to the southward." Again, at noon, she logged "18 sail in sight besides the Mermaid the fleet still in chase of her." As just sixteen vessels made up the French squadron, it is likely that the other "sails" were d'Estaing's prizes accompanying the squadron. Captain Hawker noted that two commercial vessels accompanied the French. Comte de Estainge stated only that sufficient forces under Pierre André de Suffren-Saint-Tropez's command

drove her on the beach.[9] The "kill" has been credited to de Suffren and *Le Fantasque* and *Le Sagittaire.*[10]

Mermaid tacked to and fro, close to shore, in a prevailing west or southwest wind, typical of a Delmarva summer. The French held the more advantageous offshore position (heading upwind in a square rigged vessel is a laborious process as it can only point to within 60 degrees of the wind). As the day wore on and the slow chase south continued, *Mermaid*, with three of the "chasseurs" ran aground on Fenwick Shoal and threw the French into a state of disarray. Several ships anchored and the rest left off the chase. *Mermaid* kept full sail aloft and used long boats and anchors to pull off two hours later when the chase resumed with five vessels in pursuit.[11] Anchors, cannon, and drinking water were thrown overboard to lighten the ship and speed her passage, yet *Mermaid* could not escape her pursuers. The slow chase continued through the night of July 7th.

Where the chase ended has been obscure until now. Ozanne's caption reads, "Note: This frigate landed four leagues south of Cape Henlopen, to escape from the vessels that were pursuing it, and its crew was taken prisoner by the Americans." Others have pointed to the Delaware Bay or coast as the site where *Mermaid* went aground, but the ship actually landed much farther south, on the Maryland shore.

As chase entered its eighteenth hour, Captain Hawker and his officers huddled to decide the fate of the ship and its crew. The ship, trapped against the shore in shoal waters and light winds since leaving the mouth of the Delaware, moved slowly. Attempts to lighten the vessel and outrun the enemy had been unsuccessful. The captain had to decide whether to continue the chase and face almost certain capture or to surrender to the American insurgents who were, at least, nominally British citizens. Two settlements of note existed along the largely unpopulated coast between the Delaware and the Chesapeake. Just off starboard lay Sinepuxent Inlet, the last rebel settlement before Chincoteague, forty miles further south and many hours distant.

In the early foggy morning of July 8th, under a fresh southwest breeze, *Mermaid* began her last tack to starboard and stood inshore. The captain decided to destroy the ship rather than allow capture. Still positioned quite some distance offshore, the men threw all but six cannon over the side and the ship gained speed. The remaining cannon would provide some defense against the expected French assault once *Mermaid* cast ashore. In Captain Hawker's own words:

> After a Chace of Thirty hours & about 10 AM of the 8th we run our Ship on Shore, a little to the Southward of Senepuxton (an inlet where several American Vessels were Riding) with all Sails set; but as she lay very quiet and to all appearance had received very little damage, & the French Ships standing in, I then hoisted A St Georges Ensign for about a quarter & a minute, & struck

> it to America, before the French had time to fire a Shot, & to prevent their claiming her, went with my second Lieutt. and another Officer to surrender; & by my Orders all her Masts were very soon cut away. The French hoisted out their Boats, but before they could come very near the Ships, the American colours were hoisted onboard her by the Commander of an Armed Schooner, I prevailed to go onboard for that purpose. The French Admiral then made a Signal, fired a Gun, & their Boats returned to their Ships.[12]

HMS *Mermaid* lay grounded off Assateague Island just south of the then extant Sinepuxent Inlet, approximately 38.10 N.[13]

Today this location is in the Assateague Island National Seashore just to the south of the "developed" area. Sinepuxent Inlet was one of the many shallow inlets that come and go as the storms and tides cut through Assateague Island. It existed from the earliest colonial times until, perhaps, the 1840s and functioned as a local economic engine. During the Revolution, the inlet provided access to the Chesapeake Bay via Snow Hill, Maryland, and the Pocomoke River. War materials arrived at Sinepuxent from France and from other ports and food was shipped to other rebel towns.[14] Warehouses and piers stood at Sinepuxent Neck, across the bay on the mainland, and British warships foraged for food and sounded the bar near the inlet.[15] The Maryland Council of Safety ordered a battery of cannon on the south side of the inlet to repel British forces and privateers and dispatched the Worcester County Militia to Assateague Island to defend the inlet.[16]

Mermaid provided an unexpected bounty to the local residents. An intact, fully provisioned and partially armed (although dismasted) British ship of war had been delivered into their hands. Col. Samuel Handy of Snow Hill took the formal surrender of over one hundred fifty prisoners of war—among them eleven Americans taken from captured prizes. On July 11, Joseph Dashiell wrote to Governor Johnson:

> May it Please your Excellency, I have the pleasure to Congratulate you on the arrival of a French fleet of Twelve Ships of the Line and four frigates on our Coast and I have likewise the pleasure to inform you that they . . . drove the Mermaid of Twenty eight Guns on Shore on our Beach yesterday the Capt. And his whole Crew delivered themselves to Col. Handy Prisoners of War. . . . We are endeavoring to save what we can of the ship. . . . I shall send the Prisoners Immediately to Cambridge and as I find they are very Lisenscous, Submit whether the gallies had not better be sent for them abought the middle of Next week as they are not fit to be any where but under a very strong guard.[17]

The prisoners arrived in Cambridge, Maryland by July 15th and General

Detail from Dennis Griffith, Map of the State of Maryland, *1794.*

Henry Hooper requested shipping to transport them further up the Chesapeake Bay.[18] Governor Thomas Johnson sent six vessels, among them *Conqueror, Chester, Plater,* and *Emilia.*[19] *Mermaid's* ordinary seamen, initially ordered on to Fort Frederick in western Maryland, later went to Philadelphia.[20] Johnson granted Hawker and his officers parole, based on their humane and generous treatment of the captured Americans. Yet upon their arrival in Philadelphia, authorities citing the "law of retaliation," abruptly revoked their parole and imprisoned the men, most likely due to local anger about the recent British occupation. Hawker successfully petitioned the Continental Congress for his release on parole once more. By early October 1778, Hawker was exchanged and was back in New York where he was ordered court martialed for the loss of the *Mermaid.*[21] The court martial was held on board HMS *Monmouth* in New York harbor on October 16, 1778. The assembled captains found "that Captain James Hawker has acted consistent with his duty by running His Majesties Ship Mermaid on shore in preference to falling into the hands of the French Fleet. . . . and they are hereby acquitted according."[22] Hawker arrived in England in early December and immediately petitioned the Admiralty for a new command.[23]

With *Mermaid* lying relatively undamaged just off the Assateague beach in shallow water and fair weather, local residents salvaged the ship, among them about one hundred men most of whom belonged to Colonel Handy's Sinepuxent

Battalion of the Worcester County Militia.[24] On August 1st a controversy erupted when the Navy Board at Philadelphia ordered Captain Thomas Bell to proceed to Sinepuxent and take charge of the naval stores recovered from the *Mermaid* on behalf of the United States. The Navy Board ordered the guns, provisions, and spirits sent to Philadelphia and the remaining naval stores forwarded to Gosport, Virginia (near Norfolk), for use in building a frigate.[25] Captain Bell arrived at Sinepuxent on August 9th and lodged a demand for the stores. The local authorities refused to comply until they received instructions from the Governor of Maryland or the state Court of Admiralty, saying that their allegiance lay to the State of Maryland.[26] A courier left immediately for Baltimore to file a "libel" or petition in the Admiralty Court on behalf of Colonel Handy and others:

> Whereof the said libellants pray that the said Frigate together with her Guns, Stores, Tackle, Apparel and Furniture may be condemned and sold according to the Resolutions of the honourable Congress to and for the use and benefit of the said libellants and all others concerned.[27]

The Maryland Admiralty Court promptly completed the auction of *Mermaid* and her contents by the end of August 1778, thereby ending the Board of War's attempts to claim the ship and its contents.[28] The sale raised a total of £14,223 to be distributed to the libellants. John Davidson & Co. of Philadelphia bought the ship's remaining cannon and the bell and Jacob Morris & Company purchased the hull.

The *Mermaid* appears to be the only British man-of-war, while under French pursuit, to have surrendered voluntarily to the American rebels. The Continental Congress debated her officers' confinement at least three times. Capt. Hawker treated his prisoners humanely and surrendered his ship and crew with no reported loss of life. Both the state and national governments claimed *Mermaid*'s bounty, which ultimately went to the local inhabitants who salvaged her. The final resting place of HMS *Mermaid* is unknown, yet her cannon are scattered along the ocean floor from Fenwick Island, Delaware, to just below Ocean City, Maryland. *Mermaid's* remains surely lie along Assateague Island, scattered by countless storms and the ceaseless motion of the tides over the course of the two centuries since Hawker ordered the ship driven ashore on that foggy summer morning in July 1778.

NOTES

The author wishes to thank Michael Crawford, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C. for his invaluable assistance and guidance and, especially, for translating the log of *L'Engagenate* .

1. G. R. Barnes and J. H. Owen, eds., *The Sandwich Papers, Vol II*, (London: Naval Records Society, 1933), 7; G. S. Brown, The Anglo-French Naval Crisis 1778: A Study of Conflict in the North Cabinet, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 13 (1956): 3–25.
2. *Sandwich Papers, Vol II*, 285. HMS *Maidstone*, *Zebra*, *Mermaid*, *Daphne*, *Swift*, and *Solebay* were stationed between Sandy Hook and the Chesapeake, present in addition was HMS *Roebuck*, its tenders, and others such as *HMS Armed Sloop Haerlem*.
3. On May 9, 1778, Howe wrote to Griffith, "The *Apollo*, *Maidstone* and *Mermaid*, when to be considered spared from the necessary Service of the Port, are to join me in this River [Delaware]; After being put into such a Condition for Sea as is practicable on their return to Rhode-Island," ADM 1/488, 398–99, The National Archives, London (hereinafter cited TNA). On July 8, 1778, Howe wrote to Byron, "I have received correct Intelligence of the Arrival of the Toulon Squadron the 5th Instant on the Coasts of Virginia, from whence it has been attended by the Cruizers I had stationed for the Occasion off of the Delaware, Yesterday Morning," ADM 1/488, 299–300, TNA; Captain James Hawker to Philip Stephens, Esq., December 7, 1778, ADM 1/904, TNA.
4. D. Lyon, *The Sailing Navy List* (London: Conway, 1993), 86. HMS *Mermaid*, launched 1761, was the archetype of the Mermaid class frigates adapted from a French prize, 124 feet long, 612 tons, armed with 24 x 9, 4 x 3, and 12 swivels. Six of were built, including HMS *Hussar* lost at Hells Gate, New York, 1780.
5. "A Journal of the Proceedings of His Majestys Ship Mermaid between the 8th April 1776 & 17th June 1777," ADM 51/4260, TNA.
6. Henry Laurens to George Washington, *Letters of Delegates to Congress, Volume 10, June 1, 1778–September 30, 1778*, 256 (Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 1983); the events of July 5–8 are taken from the logs of the *Engagenate*, *Haerlem* and *Roebuck* and Captain Hawker's letter to Admiral Howe unless otherwise indicated. Dates and times are given as civil time. "Journal de la frigate Du Roy *L'Engagenate*," Marine B4, 147, National Archives, Paris, France, photostatic copy at Library of Congress (hereinafter cited LOC); *Haerlem* Sloop Log & Journal, John Jurd Master, 6 April–14 Oct., 1778, ADM 52/1789, TNA; Log of HMS *Roebuck*, ADM52/1964, TNA; Captain James Hawker to Vice Admiral Viscount Howe, ADM1/1904, TNA.
7. *New York Gazette and the Weekly Mercury*, Monday, July 27, 1778.
8. Ozanne's drawing can be viewed at http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/picamer/paRevol.html, Reproduction number: LC-USZ62-904. (viewed October 6, 2007).
9. Henri Doniol, *Histoire de la Participation de la France à l'Établissement des États-Unis d'Amérique*, Vol. 3 (Paris: Impremerie Nationale, 1888), 447.
10. G. Lacour-Gayet, *La Marine Militaire de la France sous le Règne de Louis XVI* (Paris: Honore Champion, 1905), 154.
11. The vessels were *Fantasque, Sagitaire, Chimere, Engageante* and *Alcmene.*
12. Captain Hawker may have been counting the hours since the sighting of the French

fleet at dawn on July 7, (approximately 4 A.M EST), whereas the *Haerlem*'s log has the *Mermaid* standing out at 8:30 A.M.

13. J. Morse and R. C. Morse, *New Universal Gazetteer or Geographical Dictionary* (New Haven, 1823).

14. "Journal and Correspondence of the Maryland Council of Safety," 43:494, Maryland State Archives (hereinafter cited MSA); "Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774–1789," 141, 348, MSA.

15. H. Geiger Omwake, "Trade Goods Found in Sinepuxent Neck on Maryland's Eastern Shore," *Bulletin Archaeological Society of Delaware*, 4 (1946): 12–18; for delivery of provisions and appearance of enemy ships, see Joseph Dashiell to Governor Johnson, February 27, 1777, S 989-3857, MdHR 4593-24, MSA; for military action and capture of a vessel, see Dashiell to Johnson, June 10, 1777, MSA S 989-2703, MdHR 4581-33; for enemy fleet movements and threats to the community, see William Morris and Samuel Handy to Colonel Joseph Dashiel, February 22, 1779, Feb. 22, S 989-3858, MdHR 4593-25, MSA.

16. "Journal and Correspondence of the Maryland Council of Safety," 16: 285–87, 435, MSA; Joseph Dashiell to Governor Johnson, November 9, 1777. On questioning the authority of Robert McGarmont to seize salt, see S 989-2714, MdHR 4581-44, MSA.

17. Receipt of prisoners taken from the *Mermaid*, Thomas Bradford to Captain William Campbell, July 28, 1778, S 989-1271, MdHR 4570-37, MSA; list of the men from the "Mermaid" set at liberty, 1778, S 989-1270, MdHR 4570-36, MSA; request to supply prisoner guards and list of prisoners, Captain Thomas Grason to Captain Thomas Coursey ("Chester"), 1778, S 989-1272, MdHR 4570-38, MSA; on the arrival of the French fleet and the surrender of the entire crew, see Dashiell (Snow Hill) to Governor Johnson, July 11, 1778, S 989-2706, MdHR 4581-36; the name of the American captain who hoisted his colors on the *Mermaid* is unknown.

18. General Henry Hooper (Cambridge) to Governor Johnson, July 15, 1778, request for a ship to send prisoners of war to Annapolis, S 989-1268, MdHR 4570-34, MSA.

19. Journal and Correspondence of the Council of Maryland, Vol. 21: 162, MSA.

20. For transporting prisoners from the *Mermaid*, see Deputy Commissary General Daniel Hughes (Hagerstown) to Governor Johnson, August 1, 1778, S989-1281 MdHR 4570-47, MSA; on settlement of accounts, "Journal and Correspondence of the Council of Maryland," Vol. 21: 176, MSA.

21. On parole for Hawker and his officers, see Thomas Johnson to Board of War, July 22, 1778, ADM 1/1904, TNA; Henry Laurens to Rawlins Lowndes, August 26, 1778, "Letters of the Delegates to Congress," 10: 401–404; "Journals of the Continental Congress," 11: 840: "The petition of James Hawker, Captain of the *Mermaid*, prisoner in the new gaol, praying to be discharged on parole, was read, and it appearing to Congress that the said Captain Hawker had treated such American prisoners as fell into his hands with singular humanity and tenderness; *Ordered*, That the Marine Committee enlarge the said Captain Hawker on his parole" (his subordinates were not paroled at that time). Rear Admiral James Gambier to Captain Collingwood, Order for the Court Martial of Captain James Hawker, et al., October 14, 1778, ADM 1/5310, folio 337, TNA.

22. Collingwood, "Report of the Court Martial of Capt. James Hawker, et al.," October 16, 1778, ADM 1/5310, folio 335, TNA.

23. Hawker to Philip Stephens, Esq., December 7, 1778, ADM 1/904, TNA. Capt. Hawker was posted to the West Indies where he commanded HMS *Iris*. It is ironic that he encountered de Suffren again at the Battle of Porto Praya, Cape Verde Islands where Hawker captained HMS *Hero*, his last command, *The Dictionary of National Biography*, 200.

24. The list of libellants attached to Colonel Samuel Handy et al. vs. Mermaid was compared to Henry C. Peden, *Revolutionary Patriots of Worcester & Somerset Counties, Maryland 1775–1783* (Westminster, Md.: Willow Bend Books, 1999).

25. See John Wharton (Philadelphia) to Captain Thomas Bell, August 1, 1778, for orders to confiscate stores on board the British frigate *Mermaid*, S 989-3460, MdHR 4588-73, MSA.
26. For the explanation not to surrender the *Mermaid*'s provisions, see Dashiell, Handy, Robins, and Purnell to Captain Thomas Bell, August 9, 1778, S 989-2473, MdHR 4580-72B, MSA; Dashiel to Johnson, August 9, 1778, request for instructions for turning over stores on board the *Mermaid* to Captain Bell, S 989-3461, MdHR 4588-74, MSA.
27. "Colonel Samuel Handy et al. vs. Mermaid," Admiralty Court (Court Papers), 1778, MdHR 7871-1-19, 116-19 1/32/1/6, MSA.
28. "Sale of this vessel stranded near the Sinepuxent Bar and condemned in the Court of Admiralty, Aug.–Sept., 1778," MS. 1814, Maryland Historical Society.

Book Reviews

Maryland Voices of the Civil War. Edited by Charles W. Mitchell. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007. 563 pages. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth, $35.00.)

A classic Maryland crab cake is a beautiful but simple thing, just clean-picked crab enhanced by prudent seasoning and only enough binder to hold. In *Maryland Voices of the Civil War*, Charles Mitchell has crafted a terrific crab cake. Mitchell spent more than a decade culling primary sources for the testimonies of Marylanders caught on the cusp of sectional war. He selected hundreds of excerpts from Marylanders' own writings, added a few outsiders such as Lincoln and Robert E. Lee, and bound everything together with minimalist narration that fixes the time, the issues at stake, the writer, and his/her relationships and allegiances. The result is both fascinating and illuminating. If at times it seems a bit of a welter, well, that is exactly the way it felt to these eyewitnesses to chaos. Mitchell leaves the writers' spelling and punctuation intact and resists over-clarifying their dilemmas of perception, confusion, loyalty, and survival. With the barest nudge from him, these Marylanders, black and white, men and women, speak for themselves.

Maryland Voices of the Civil War is organized into three sections: Indecision, "Occupation," and Liberation. The first covers only the turbulent secession year 1861; the other two each span the duration of the war. Each section has thematic chapters, such as "Federals" or "Rebels," which move chronologically. History's broad sweep acquires personal dimension in these pages. It is one thing to cluck over slavery and another to read a black man's description of how both his wife and mother were "taken to the barn & severely whipped. Their clothes were raised & tied over their heads to keep their screams from disturbing the neighborhood" (377). We read of John Dorsey's refusal to accept release from prison by taking an oath of allegiance even though he was, an anxious relative reported, "the only male member of his family, now left with a widowed mother & sister looking to him for protection" (260). Equally obdurate, diminutive Baltimore Mayor George W. Brown remained in custody in Boston's Fort Warren rather than accept a parole which implied a crime when he had committed none—and gained fifteen pounds during his confinement. Southern sympathizers tried to smuggle contraband in coffins, and buried arms in the Maryland soil where, one reported later, "the rusty remains possibly even now are resting undisturbed" (229). Families desperately tried to raise the $300 commutation fee to keep sons and husbands from the military draft. Entrepreneurs arranged substitutes for draftees, even offering guarantees of replacement if the substitute deserted; seven members of the Shriver family all found replacements through the same company.

A few small missteps intrude. Grant "pressed south amid growing losses" in the spring of 1864, not, as Mitchell's text says, autumn 1863 (358). A few selections repeat (e.g., Allen B. Davis [105] and again on [119]). Mitchell tentatively suggests that a document from April 1862, was a response to the Second Confiscation Act, which was not passed until July of that year. Referring to his being the son of a "black abolitionist" (a common, value-loaded nineteenth-century phrase, 358) might lead the unaware into thinking William Birney was a man of color. And so on.

Given the diversity of the book's potential audience, it is impossible for Mitchell's narration to satisfy every need. A background explanation too sketchy for those unfamiliar with Maryland history will be overkill for those who know it well. An overall timeline might have helped, as would a better map of Maryland to aid those who don't know where Relay is, or that Somerset County is on the Eastern Shore. Overall, though, Mitchell has hit a happy medium. Assuming some background knowledge of the war, most readers will follow the thread of narrative quite well enough to understand the selections in context.

In the end, Mitchell has done his work thoroughly and well, and the book is carried by the words, images, and stories of people who lived through an extraordinary time. Rewarding the browser as readily as the researcher, *Maryland Voices of the Civil War* belongs not only in libraries and schools, but also on the bookshelves of everyone interested in this state or that era.

William Evitts
Baltimore

The Creation of the British Atlantic World. Edited by Elizabeth Mancke and Carole Shammas. *Anglo-America in the Transatlantic World*, edited by Jack P. Greene. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005. 408 pages. Illustrations, notes, contributor list, index. Cloth, $52.00.)

Cultures and Identities in Colonial British America. Edited by Robert Olwell and Alan Tully. *Anglo-America in the Transatlantic World*, edited by Jack P. Greene. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. 394 pages. Illustrations, notes, contributor list, index. Cloth, $50.00.)

These compilations of the Johns Hopkins University Press *Anglo-America in the Transatlantic World* series offer a significant number of insights into the complexities and dynamics of the British Atlantic World, from its seventeenth-century beginnings through the era of American independence. Jack P. Greene, the general editor of the series, brings together a cadre of largely Johns Hopkins University-associated scholars who range from promising, recently-minted Ph.D.s to some of the most prominent and well-published historians in the field, and whose works represent the cutting-edge research conducted on the British Atlantic.

In different ways, each work emphasizes and illustrates the contested nature of this period. *Cultures and Identities* illustrates the contested nature of eighteenth-century colonial identities and the "imitation, adaptation, and creativity" (16) that forged distinct cultural patterns in America, while *Creation of the British Atlantic World* exemplifies the contested interpretations of the early-modern British Empire. The Mancke and Shammas volume is wide-ranging in its scope, and more so of the two, incorporates developments and factors throughout the British Atlantic (including the mother country); the Olwell and Tully volume, on the other hand, focuses almost solely on the thirteen mainland colonies. The editors of both works do well to provide readers with a solid introduction to their respective debates, something necessary for such complex topics. Mancke and Shammas aptly describe the historiographical trends, conflicts, and discussions regarding past and recent methods of understanding the "transatlantic experience" (6). Olwell and Tully's introduction does equally well to situate the reader into the contexts of colonial identity formation and offers a fine synthesis of current interpretations of colonial culture and attributes of it—so much so that the introduction alone contributes to the field and could be used as a starting point for scholars new to colonial identity studies.

Yet, both works have their unique organizational flaws. Although partly due to the focus of competing views, *Creation of the British Atlantic World* as a whole lacks cohesion. Although the articles do well to illustrate the discord over new and old imperial approaches and how the "Atlantic World" paradigm fits into it, the editors and authors do not attempt to offer a resolution to it. This creates a real disconnect among and even within the three parts to the work, leaving the greatest contributions to come from individual chapters and parts rather than the whole. Olwell and Tully's work maintains the topical cohesion lacking in the other volume—the focus and narrow scope facilitated that—but is lacking in cohesion within the parts. Dividing the study of American colonial identities into "Environment and Identity," "Exchange and Identity," and "Politics and Identity" makes perfect sense, but many of the articles (while strong in and of themselves) did not relate well, if at all, to their respective parts. Indeed, both works contain articles that, while solid on their own, seem to be outside the purview of the project.

The three parts of *Creation of the British Empire* also seem disjointed, and Part I ("Transatlantic Subjects") emerges as the weakest. The articles of Part One certainly highlight the incongruous nature of British experiences, yet add little to discussion. James Horn and Philip D. Morgan's article comparing the character and rates of European and African migrations offers little that is not found in other works, including works of both authors; thus, it is more synthetic than original. They illustrate that Europeans and West African migrations (forced for Africans) were similar in their survival rates, in the regional concentration for departure and arrival, and in numbers (if one considers the magnitude of the

European migration eastward as well). Moreover, immigrants from both continents were, they emphasize, heterogeneous in ethnicity and they found it difficult to transplant their old culture and identities in the "new" world. They noted there were, of course, great differences as well.

The second essay, by Joyce Chaplin, looks at a highly intriguing topic, but does not do it justice—further weakening the effectiveness of Part I. Although she should be applauded for questioning the prominence of the European captive narratives, overall her essay offers little. Her evidence is largely secondary, and her few scattered examples of Indian captivities do not make a convincing case that the "inclusion of Indian slavery in the larger narrative of British Atlantic history would significantly change the nature of that narrative" (45–46). Her argument seems valid, but it is largely asserted rather than illustrated. Further, her understanding of the Spanish relations with natives and the legal changes of the early 1500s comes across as lacking; notably her definition of their *encomienda* system as one of enslavement is both incorrect and misleading (48). As Chaplin correctly points out, there is yet to be a narrative of Indian slavery. Unfortunately, there was still a need for a comprehensive and substantiated account.

One essay in the first part particularly did not fit the theme of the work. Instead of dealing with the *British* Atlantic, "From Catholicism to Moravian Pietism" analyze pietism in a Danish colony. Its relation to the other articles in this volume is tenuous at best. Perhaps David Gasper's article on the repatriation of Cape Verdeans who had been illegally enslaved and sold in the Leeward Islands is the most effective of the bunch. He provided a clear case of individuals portraying themselves as transatlantic subjects—i.e., Cape Verdean, yet also Portuguese—and securing their freedom from illegal enslavement (as members of a Christian empire could not be enslaved). Gaspar also illustrates how the British were not acting in isolation but that, instead, outside influences (i.e., Britain's alliance with Portugal in this case) often intervened.

Parts Two ("Transatlantic Connections") and Three ("Imperial Visions and Transatlantic Revisions") were much stronger. April Lee Hatfield's essay on merchants acting as facilitators or enablers in connecting Atlantic peoples and Avihu Zakai's essay on Jonathan Edwards' rejection of metropolitan intellectual changes in Part II were particularly fascinating and persuasive. Utilizing a number of primary sources, Hatfield illustrates that mariners (and courts) not only connected the colonies to the mother country, but also the peoples in them while they stayed in port, repaired and supplied vessels, visited taverns, and attended social events, among other countless activities. In the 1670s, for example, Hatfield cites that when filling their ships with 300 hogshead of tobacco, mariners remained in port over 200 days, during which time they transmitted imperial and metropolitan news, developments, and trends (151). Ships at port in the Chesapeake became vitally important centers of attraction, she illustrates, due to that region's dis-

persed settlement and lack of towns. This is one example she provides while portraying the regional differences in the contact between mariners/merchants and inhabitants of the West Indian, Chesapeake, and New England colonies.

In his article on Jonathan Edwards, Zakai offers a much-needed and interesting corrective to the heavy focus in the standard narrative of colonial identities on colonial emulation. He does not repudiate the model of colonists unabashedly emulating the cultural values of the mother country, but does illustrate there were certainly simultaneous threads of selective rejection. In this case, it was Edwards and the Enlightenment ideas and effects he rejected. As Zakai effectively writes, cultural and intellectual adaptation and replication was a dialectic negotiation between the center and the periphery, not merely a one-sided relationship wherein the periphery absorbed the cultural and intellectual trends from the center. In his rejection of Enlightenment values and influences, Edwards, he maintains, "contributed much to forging the ideological foundations of a distinct Protestant culture in America" (207).

The strongest part of the book, and perhaps the most original, is Part III. In particular, the complementary essays by Robert Olwell and John E. Crowley deserve commendation. These essays, "Seeds of Empire" and "A Visual Empire," respectively, effectively illustrate ways metropolitan Britons re-envisioned their empire after 1763 to make adjustments for the new lands and peoples acquired from their victory in the Seven Years' War. As Orwell aptly argues, the exotic colonial plants of the Kew Gardens of George III (predecessor to the Royal Botanical Gardens of today) reflected the conflicting politico-cultural constructs of empire after 1763. The gardens themselves offered a didactic tour illustrating, through exotic plants and structures, the greatness of empire. In turn, the new colony of Florida, Olwell argues, was akin to a new exotic plant that had to be "described and classified before its true character could be known." He aptly argues that "the case of Florida illustrates the close ties between science and imperialism" (273) and the conflicts between ideological and cultural constructs in the changing British Empire.

Crowley also highlights the British responses to the changing face of empire and looks beyond the British Atlantic to analyze the global empire—an emerging approach in the study of the early modern era (see, for example, the October 2006 *William and Mary Quarterly*'s forum "Beyond the Atlantic"). In an argument akin to Edward Said's in *Orientalism*, Crowley argues that a surge in imperial landscape art after 1750 allowed Britons to "know" and better understand their expanding empire. This enabled Britons to incorporate the new and foreign lands (e.g., in Canada, West Indies, and India) into their imperial mentality, he argues, and reconstruct, mentally, a cohesive empire again. As Crowley effectively illustrates, "Empires, like nations, are imagined communities . . . [and] British landscape art helped Britons identify with a global empire" (303)—i.e., make the shift from an Atlantic to a global empire.

A number of the articles in *Creation of the British Atlanic World* volume, notably Olwell and Crowley's, discuss British identities and provide some consistency with and a good segue to the second volume in the series, *Cultures and Identities*. Like the first volume in the series, *Cultures and Identity* contains some awkward groupings of articles, but nonetheless it does offer a more cohesive general argument.

Of the four articles under "Environment and Identity," Part I of *Cultures and Identities*, only Max Edelson's contribution fits entirely with the topic. Bradford Wood offers a social and statistical history of the Cape Fear region in the mid-1700s that has little to do with identity, while Daniel Littlefield and Robert Weir offer interesting articles on identity, but ones that relate very little to the environment. Edelson, meanwhile, in "The Nature of Slavery," offers a compelling argument that South Carolinians "understood slaves and nature together, as sources of their prosperity" (22) and as things to be feared. Carolinians viewed slaves possibly as dangerous as wild animals, which led them to construct perceptions of their settlements as "civilized" enclaves surrounded by barbarism, with slaves and wild animals in some outer realm. Hurricanes and insurrections were the two most feared things in South Carolina, and it seemed like neither could be controlled or stopped by man. All of the above, along with the climate, made Carolina a possibly horrifying place where natural forces were out of control. Yet, because of that, as Edelson aptly argues, whites turned to slaves to act as middlemen and a buffer between whites and nature—because of their knowledge of rice cultivation, their ability to endure elements "better," their skills at cattle herding, clearing, and hunting, and because of their individual plots of land acting as a physical barrier to the savage nature of America. Slaves thus operated in the "spaces in between" plantations and wilderness (27) and had "de facto possession of the borderlands" (29). The last part of chapter on the slave codes, however, merely a narrative of eighteenth-century slave-master relations, and less important than the first part. Even this chapter has less to do with identity as it does eighteenth-century cosmography (the way peoples ordered and gave meaning to their surroundings).

Although the Littlefield article "'Almost and Englishman'" does not deal much with the environment, it is a compelling analysis of Africans' divided identities in the British Atlantic. Indeed, one may wonder if this essay more properly belongs in the first volume of the series. Using the stories and experiences of a handful of Anglicized West Africans (such as Olaudah Equiano and James A. U. Gronniosaw), he argues that most of those who embraced Anglicism did so nigh wholeheartedly, with only a few reservations moderating their attachments—notably, the contradictions between Christianity and European slavery and the lack of acceptance and general racism no matter how fully acculturated they had become. In the end, most slaves perceived the English influence as beneficial, even to their old homelands, but one that could also be reformed in ways.

In Part II—"Exchange and Identity"—one again finds tenuous connections to identity, but all the articles do certainly pertain to exchange. *MHM* readers will enjoy Jean B. Russo's article on artisan craftsmen in the Chesapeake, in which her focus is Maryland. She makes a compelling argument that the Chesapeake region did have a village structure—something critical for artisan work to exist—but it was one much more dispersed and decentralized in form than in the northern colonies or the mother country. Much of her analysis seems like conjecture, and she admits concrete evidence is lacking, but her assessment seems viable.

Along with Russo's article, readers should also note James M. Baird's essay re-evaluating paternalism in Piedmont Virginia from 1750 to 1825. His findings surely have implications for Maryland's plantation past as well. The central focus of his essay is the planter-overseer relationship, and he effectively illustrates that this relationship was one less about offering paternalism over the slaves and more about a proto-capitalist contract with overseers, at least in the three generations of slave owners after 1750. The ultimate priority of the planter, he convincingly argues, was the profit margin and those overseers who attained solid profits, by whatever means, stayed, while those who did not either left or lost their jobs. More and more, Baird maintains, paternalism was merely a veneer covering more capitalistic intentions. When it came to maintaining profits or paternalism, it seems profits won out.

Also in this exchange section, James H. Merrill continues his study of Pennsylvania natives in his article addressing the critical, yet understated, roles women played in the Euro-Indian frontier exchanges on the Susquehanna. Although relating little to identity, this is a fascinating essay on gender roles and social history and one that exhibits women playing not only roles, but also leading roles in the frontier economies—although the native and European women's activities differed (e.g., European women did not go alone into a native village unlike their native counterparts who ventured alone into colonial towns). Yet, as Merrill emphasizes, no matter their leadership in "middle ground" exchanges, neither Indian nor European forgot where s/he came from, nor did the female presence in the forging of economic ties ever "erase the gender frontier" (200).

Part III of *Cultures and Identities*, "Politics and Identity," contains the greatest cohesion. Natalie Zacek tackles a well-known topic—American colonists asserting their rights as Englishmen and presumed equality with the metropolitan Britons—and offers an intriguing account of how the actions and attitude of a despised governor heightened displays of Britishness and reinforced British identity in the Leeward Islands. Although her general argument is not new per se, she builds a clear and effective case around a lesser-studied region that illuminates how that eighteenth-century trend occurred *throughout* British America.

Daniel Richter's analysis of the Plan of 1764 and Michal Rozbicki investigation of the meaning of "liberty" to America's founding fathers wrap up this work nicely.

Richter argues that the British Plan for North America after the Seven Years' War was as fatally flawed as the metropolitan post-1763 vision of empire, and for the same reasons. It called for enforceable trade regulations and boundaries and a centralized command that could also act as a colonial-native arbitrator. Why the plan failed, and why the British failed to control the Americans as before, Richter aptly chalks up to the British government's refusal to allow a colonial voice in imperial governance. This was a tactic that flew in the face of the colonial identifications as Britons, as illustrated by Zacek's previous article. That 1764 Plan, he illustrates, highlighted all the flaws of empire and encapsulated the central ideological and constitutional issues, e.g., funding the plan was predicated on fur/hide taxes (an internal tax) and the trade and other native-colonial regulations were rooted in the same mercantilist ideology colonists were already chafing against. This is a first-rate article on Britain's failed efforts to stabilize its growing empire and on the nigh-irreconcilable Indian-English boundary issues.

In the concluding chapter, Rozbicki grapples with the question: what did liberty mean to the founding fathers? He concludes that historians have misunderstood the patriot leaders' rhetoric and have instead put words, or better yet, definitions into their mouths. Too often, Rozbicki poignantly argues, scholars anachronistically assume the founders' "liberty and equality" rhetoric was the same as ours in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Instead, he effectively illustrates that their definition was much more restrictive, and therefore there was no inherent contradiction in the revolutionary rhetoric and post-revolution actions. The revolutionaries fought for ideals of liberty and equality of the elite, so they were not backsliding after 1783 when they denied those rights to others. As Rozbicki clearly portrays it, those who led the Revolution did so to protect their presumed rights and liberties as gentlemen, property-holders, and statesmen—i.e., the rights of Britons vis-à-vis the crown. The American elite perceived and portrayed themselves as British gentlemen, and to gentlemen on both sides of the Atlantic, only the highly educated, wealthy, and propertied citizenry had liberties and rights. Rozbicki asserts that late eighteenth-century Americans understood the limited notion: "'Ownership' of the country was inseparable from 'ownership' of liberty" (301). Yet utilizing the rhetoric so freely and zealously, he adds, the colonial elite allowed for the commoners to appropriate the language as well and universalize it, which sowed the seeds of the growing democratic movement of the early nineteenth century. The colonial expansion in the meaning of liberty to include colonial elites was progressive in 1776, but until the early 1800s, those now American elite still held fast to the eighteenth-century *British* definition.

Overall, while the organization of the volumes and the selections of articles may be incongruent, the articles contained in these volumes, together or individually, will nonetheless be a boon to graduate students entering the field, and these volumes should grace the shelves of early American historians. Those look-

ing for Maryland history, however, will find little in these volumes that pertains specifically to the colony/state. The major exceptions being Jean Russo's essay on Maryland artisans and Baird's essay on paternalism in *Cultures and Identities*, which should be must reads for scholars of the Chesapeake region.

Mathias D. Bergmann
Randolph-Macon College

Middle Temple Lawyers and the American Revolution. By Eric Stockdale and Randy J. Holland. (Eagan: Thomson West, 2007. 294 pages. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, tables, index. Hardcover, $30.00.)

In *Middle Temple Lawyers and the American Revolution*, Eric Stockdale and Randy J. Holland, a Bencher of the Middle Temple and a judge on the Delaware Supreme Court respectively, explore the professional and personal lives of colonial American students at the Middle Temple in London and the subsequent careers of several Templars who played critical roles in the birth of the United States. The Four Inns of Court (Lincoln, Gray's, and the Inner and Middle Temples) attracted a great number of American students in the eighteenth century. Five signers of the Declaration of Independence were Templars, seven helped draft the Constitution, and Templars could be found in the armies of both sides of the Revolution. Middle Templars were also an important element in the varied legal community of colonial and early republican courts. For example, between 1750 and 1805 Pennsylvania boasted four successive chief justices from the Middle Temple: William Allen, Benjamin Chew, Thomas McKean, and Edward Shippen.

Initially arranged chronologically, *Middle Temple Lawyers* begins with a brief history of the Temple from its origins as a site granted to the Templar Order in the twelfth century, through the arrival of the first "Templars" in Jamestown, and finally to the Convention in Philadelphia that produced the Constitution. From this general introduction, Stockdale and Holland then focus on the careers of two Templars, Peter Manigault of South Carolina and John Dickinson, originally from Talbot County, Maryland, but later representative of Pennsylvania and Delaware. This valuable section gives firsthand accounts not only of the educational opportunities available to students of law but also of the social life, the temptations, the camaraderie found in court and at the table, and the homesickness that often characterized student life in London. The remaining chapters cover specific Templars in Pennsylvania, Virginia, South Carolina, and Maryland, as well as a broadly themed "ambassadors" chapter which details the experiences of Temple-trained representatives of the United States, men such as Thomas Pinckney. Of particular interest to students of Maryland history, chapter three, which chronicles the legal fortunes of the Allen family (many of whom had Maryland connections

via marriage into the Tilghman family), and chapter seven, which covers the Dulanys and Carrolls, make for valuable reading.

Middle Temple Lawyers provides an excellent survey of an important chapter in American legal history. Valuable as such a survey is, and as interesting as contemporary accounts of life at the Middle Temple are, the book suffers from the lack of a more focused thesis. It is more a work of synthesis than original research. Clearly many prominent Americans, and a fair number of those responsible for the formation of the nation, benefited from education at the Inns of Court, but the authors do not illuminate the specific ways in which that education shaped the political and legal thought of these architects of the United States, something the title at least suggests they plan to do. Part of the problem may be explained by their sources. Apart from secondary works, the core of their evidence is drawn from either the archives of the Middle Temple (one of the real strengths of the work) or the edited letters of people like Peter Manigault. Such sources are worthy, but given the number of collections available for William Allen, Benjamin Chew, and the Carrolls, to name only a few, one might have expected the authors to marshal this additional evidence to their cause as well. Templar testimony residing within repositories outside the Temple set side by side with the sources Stockdale and Holland discuss would have provided additional insights into American Templars, and perhaps, provided more evidence for the direct connections between English legal education and the ideas enshrined within the Constitution, American jurisprudence, and our political philosophy.

While tighter focus would greatly improve the work, *Middle Temple Lawyers* remains an excellent introduction to the important role that the Middle Temple, among other Inns of Court, played in the legal world of eighteenth century America. It explores not only the value of the Middle Temple to the earliest colonists, but to the major players of the new republic. Students new to legal history will find a useful bibliography, entertaining and informative firsthand accounts of life among London's would-be barristers, and an attractive overview of the legal life and thought of many of our founding fathers.

Jim Tschen Emmons
Maryland Historical Society

Conjectures of Order: Intellectual Life and The American South, 1810-1860. 2 volumes. By Michael O'Brien. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004. 1,371 pages. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth, $100.00.)

Michael O'Brien's monumental history of antebellum southern intellectual history manages at once to provide erudite and insightful readings of dozens of white

southern writers, and to offer an interpretation of the ways that intellectual life in the Old South changed from the early nineteenth century through the beginning of the Civil War. He paints a picture of southern intellectuals who were conscious of their status as provincials, but, in part because of that consciousness, were anything but provincial. Deeply engaged with the most advanced intellectual trends emerging out of Great Britain and the Continent (especially Germany, but France as well), they struggled to make sense of the place of the slaveholding South and of slaveholding southerners in the modern world.

O'Brien traces what is, in some ways, a conventional narrative in which southern thinkers moved from the Enlightenment to romanticism and then on to realism, without, of course, ever entirely escaping earlier modes of thought. The greatest achievement of this justly celebrated work is not, however, the contour of the story that it tells, but the depth with which it explores so many aspects of that story. Anyone still inclined to see the antebellum North as the home of sophisticated American culture and the Old South as an intellectual backwater can be cured of that misconception by opening either of these volumes at random and reading for an hour. Such readers will discover antebellum white southerners reading, say, Smith, Malthus, and Ricardo on political economy, or Kant, Hegel, and Comte on metaphysics and working diligently and creatively to make sense of those writers' ideas, as well as to adapt those ideas in ways that would help make sense of life in the slaveholding South.

The richness and depth of *Conjectures of Order* constitute a challenge to writing a short review. The two volumes are divided into Books One through Six. In moving from beginning to end, one goes from a study of southern engagement with the relatively concrete (travel, nature, literature) to the increasingly abstract (history, society, philosophy, theology). Each book can be approached as a distinct book in which O'Brien simultaneously explores the complexity and nuance with which different southern thinkers engaged the questions at hand, and in which he traces the movement from Enlightenment to realist modes of thought. Never does the reader sense that O'Brien forces a reading or seeks to impose an interpretation on the material. He is instead happy to follow the contradictory and idiosyncratic pathways of his subjects' thought, taking care to note the partial and often inconsistent development of individual writers' ideas and of larger ideological trends. To have attempted to boil this rich material down into a simple and straightforward thesis would have done violence to the lines of analysis that O'Brien works so hard to follow, and it is a mistake that he does not make.

Some readers may be frustrated by O'Brien's refusal to simplify and impose a more rigid order of his own upon his subjects' efforts to project order upon their worlds. He is generous when taking material from other scholars' work, but he rarely engages with their arguments, for he believes that "historiographical debates" should remain implicit in narrative or be "left to essays and conferences"

(17). Not surprisingly, then, while he sees "the Old South as not premodern but deeply implicated in modernity, though an idiosyncratic version based on slavery" (17), he never again makes this point as explicitly as he does in this statement from the introduction. Instead, he shows the way that southern thinkers engaged with modern thought and the modern world. In the hands of a less erudite scholar and, equally important, a less gifted writer, such an approach might produce a chaotic and difficult to follow book. Fortunately, O'Brien is a gifted writer. He wears his impressive learning lightly and writes with wit and clarity. He displays an admirable ability to draw brief but fascinating biographical sketches of those about whom he writes and, just as impressive, to use those biographical sketches to illuminate the ideas and texts that he discusses. *Conjectures of Order* looks like an intimidating study—the sort of book one reads only as a graduate student preparing for comprehensive exams—and it would be misleading to suggest that it is light reading. O'Brien's most impressive feat may be, however, that he has produced a deep and complicated discussion of antebellum southern intellectual history that is as enjoyable as it is profitable to read.

James Sidbury
University of Texas at Austin

The Domestic Architecture of Benjamin Henry Latrobe. By Michael W. Fazio and Patrick A. Snadon. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. 789 pages. Illustrations, bibliographic essay, notes, index. Cloth, $75.00.)

Emeritus Professor of Architecture Michael Fazio (Mississippi State University) and Associate Professor of Architecture and Interior Design Patrick Snadon (University of Cincinnati) have prepared a huge, magnificently illustrated, comprehensive book on the domestic structures designed by British-born American architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe (1764–1820), who is perhaps best known for his design of "The President's House" in Washington, D.C. in 1807 (burned by the British in 1814). Latrobe also holds the distinction of being the first professional architect of international stature to practice in the United States. This exquisite book, the culmination of fifteen years of research by these renowned authors, weighs 7.5 pounds, has nearly 800 pages, 241 line drawings, 349 halftones, 22 color plates, 826 endnotes, and consists of eight long chapters and an epilogue. These are supplemented by a catalogue of Latrobe's work (589–701), scholarly notes (703–44), a nine-page bibliographic essay, and a detailed fifteen-page index. Maps of Southern England and the Eastern United States show the locations in which he worked and list the structures he designed. This treatise documents briefly Latrobe's training and career in England and Europe but focuses on his principles of design and his methods of architectural practice. Fazio and Snadon trace the evolution of Latrobe's design thinking through analytical essays on all of his major domestic

commissions and conclude with a summary discussion of his position within the international architectural scene, the impact of his design theories, the integration of interior design and engineering into his architectural practice, as well as the preservation of the houses that he designed.

Born in West Yorkshire on May 1, 1764, Latrobe at age 12 was sent to a Moravian seminary in Silesia but joined the Prussian army in 1785 and was subsequently severely injured, ending a potential military career. Returning to England, he became an apprentice to neoclassical architect Samuel Pepys Cockerell and designed at least 14 English country houses (1789–1792). Fazio and Snadon's initial chapter focuses on the influence of Sir Robert Taylor and tutelage under Cockerell. Another chapter uses archival materials from European repositories to document the architectural designs of English country houses – villas and rural retreats for the upper class. Latrobe came to the United States (his mother's birthplace) in 1795 where he practiced as an architect initially in Norfolk and Richmond, Virginia, and later in Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Pittsburgh, and Baltimore. During his later years he worked in Ohio, Kentucky, and Louisiana. His American work is detailed in four chapters. The architectural design work in Virginia (1789–1807) was for the landed gentry, while his efforts in Philadelphia (1798–1807) focused on the merchant elite and reflect his British and European education. In Washington and Pittsburgh (1807–1815) his concept of the "rational house" solidified and is exemplified in the Pope Villa and Van Ness Mansion. His later work (1815–1820) on the Casanave House, Decatur House, and State Bank of Louisiana (a residence over a masonry-vaulted banking room) are also detailed. Latrobe died of Yellow Fever in New Orleans on September 3, 1820, and was buried there.

Fazio and Snadon's effort augments and surpasses Talbot Hamlin's Pulitzer Prize-winning, once definitive biography, *Benjamin Henry Latrobe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955) and draws upon materials from other major sources, including the John C. Van Horne and Lee W. Formwalt et al. edited *The Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers of Benjamin Henry Latrobe* (3 volumes, 1984–1988) and Jeffrey A. Cohen and Charles E. Brownell's edited compendium *The Architectural Drawings of Benjamin Henry Latrobe* (2 volumes, 1994). Both of these sets were published for the Maryland Historical Society and the American Philosophical Society by Yale University Press, New Haven. Notably, the Maryland Historical Society is the repository for most of Latrobe's American papers and the authors have used the collection extensively; alas, Latrobe's papers in England have mostly disappeared.

This remarkable volume catalogs all of Latrobe's domestic commissions, offering in-depth authoritative commentary and analyses of his concepts, designs, and unique interior and exterior features of his houses. His diverse education, travel, and training with eminent architects and engineers in England conditioned

his response to American manners and climate and resulted in the design of what he termed a "rational house," an application of Enlightenment thinking to the design of a proper living environment for citizens of democratic America. Fazio and Snadon have produced a very readable and profusely illustrated definitive study of the work of this significant American pioneering architect.

CHARLES C. KOLB
National Endowment for the Humanities

Slavery and American Economic Development. By Gavin Wright. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006. 152 pages. Illustrations, appendix, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth, $25.00.)

Gavin Wright's brief book began more than a decade ago as the annual Walter Lynwood Fleming Lecture at Louisiana State University. Now, revised and expanded, it serves as both a useful re-framing of several old debates about American slavery and as an introduction to the economic history of slavery.

Mirroring the original three-lecture format, the book is comprised of three chapters. The opening chapter begins with an Atlantic and comparative perspective on slavery. Addressing the old argument about slavery and capitalism, Wright argues that scholars' focus on productivity ignores an important economic factor. The great benefit of slavery was the inherent property rights in slaves. This allowed owners to force slaves to do work others would not, where they would not, in a manner they would not. Wright admits that this not a new insight but "for some reason historians often seem to feel obliged to explain the rise, spread, and persistence of slavery in terms of advantages in productivity" (23).

The concluding chapter is also more a matter of emphasis than new insights. After dismissing the importance of slave productivity, Wright then debates how to measure slave productivity, especially highlighting other scholars' underestimation of slave women's productivity. In spite of this incongruity, the middle chapter provides a new metaphor for antebellum America, one that raises old questions about Maryland.

Wright proposes that antebellum America be seen as an economic cold war between North and South. He makes several compelling arguments for this interpretation, but one of the strongest goes unstated. Antebellum advocates for free labor or slave labor recognized this competition at the time. Wright also clarifies many historiographic debates about which section was more productive by noting that each side could, and did, claim victory. It depends on how you keep score. The Southern elite was certainly more successful, especially if you add value in slaves. In the North, economic wealth was mainly in land and spread more evenly among a much larger population. Wright draws from his earlier work in labeling wealthy Southerners laborlords and wealthy North-

erners landlords. The laborlords had easier access to credit and the ability to quickly settle advantageous new lands. This also meant that they were uninterested in encouraging white immigration and monopolized much of the prime land. In the North growth was slower in new lands, but speculators built roads and schools to entice settlers, eventually creating broad, sustained growth. All of these trends are illustrated through clear, evocative maps.

In both the cold war metaphor and map illustrations, the place of Maryland is striking. Situated between two economic powers, it is unclear if Maryland is East or West Germany. Surely the presence of slavery and tobacco agriculture tends toward a southern persuasion, but its land values and population density are much closer to the North than the deep South. Any metaphor, even one as useful as an antebellum cold war, loses its utility if pushed too far. For example, both sides shared a national government. In spite of this, Maryland provides a useful test case as a transitional zone between these opposing powers.

Though not based on new research, this certainly does not mean the book is without merit. Wright re-focuses many important debates, and his emphasis on the importance of property rights, as opposed to productivity, usefully clarifies American slavery and economic development. In short, a well-written overview of existing debates for experienced scholars and an introduction to both old issues and economic history for novices is always welcome.

MATTHEW J. HUDOCK
University of Delaware

Together Let Us Sweetly Live: The Singing and Praying Bands. By Jonathan C. David with photographs by Richard Holloway. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007. 251 pages. CD of field recordings. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth, $80.00. Paper, $27.00.)

For over two hundred years, African Americans in the Chesapeake Bay region have been praising the Lord in song and prayer. Here, in the cradle of American Methodism, black people created a distinctive fusion of American prayer meeting worship and African dance and song traditions. In this remarkable book, Jonathan David offers us both a historical and contemporary picture of the "singing and praying bands," as well as a compact disc with recordings and dozens of photographs of the bands and their members.

The bands are members of church congregations, principally in Eastern Shore Maryland and southern Delaware, who sing hymns and offer prayers at the conclusion of a camp meeting religious service. A band captain may "line out" a hymn, i.e., sing out a line which the band members then repeat. From this base, the band develops the hymn into an elaborate series of harmonies, accompanied by the

band members marching around in a circle. Both lyrics and tunes may be improvised from the original hymn. In short, the bands do not merely perform a hymn; they collectively interpret and create new versions of it.

Jonathan David has captured and described this intriguing musical form, with its elements of the African ring shout blended with American camp meeting. Music lovers will delight in David's transcriptions of the hymns, and his careful notes on how pitch and tempo change as religious emotion builds for the singers. But that is not all.

David places the doings of the singing and praying bands in an all-encompassing view of how band members live their lives. We get not merely musicological discussions, but testimony on the religious conversions of band members, and their reminiscences of a strongly communal life centered on the church. Based on more than twenty years of hearing the bands and interviewing their members, David offers us the reflections of nine men and women. They speak of how one "raises" a hymn, how a prayer is crafted, how the bands organized themselves, and how men and women in the bands relate to each other. Above all, the band members explain how religion informed and informs daily life among band participants.

As David makes clear, in his thoughtful introduction, singing and praying bands have been a vital and sometimes controversial element of black religion in the Chesapeake since the early nineteenth century. The unleashing of emotion that so elevates the spirits of band members could be and was denounced as "pagan Africanisms" by the likes of Daniel Payne, an African Methodist Episcopal church bishop in the mid-nineteenth century. Eventually, the devotion of the band members combined with the attractions of their music won over a skeptical clergy and the bands became a major feature of black religious life at weekend or weeklong camp meetings. Though their numbers today are somewhat diminished, the singing and praying bands still offer up their sacred song.

Together Let Us Sweetly Live thus constitutes an excellent addition to the U. of Illinois Press's Music in American Life series, and offers an impressive historical counterpoint to other investigations of African American music, such as Shane and Graham White's *The Sounds of Slavery* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005). Scholars, music lovers, and anyone interested in life in the Chesapeake will find both pleasure and instruction in this fine book and its accompanying compact disc.

T. Stephen Whitman
Mt. St. Mary's University

Slavery and Politics in the Early American Republic. By Matthew Mason. (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006. 339 pages. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth, $45.00.)

A survey of Richard B. Morris's *Encyclopedia of American History* for the years

from 1808 (when importation of African slaves was banned) and 1819 (when the crisis over slavery in Missouri arose) reveals that slavery rarely appeared as a dominant issue in American life in the period. Indeed, of 52 major topical sections that Morris devotes to that period, slavery appears briefly in only two of them. In light of this, it is understandable why some historians have asserted that slavery was simply not a subject of political debate between the end of the African slave trade and the eruption of the Missouri Crisis in 1819–1820.

But Matthew Mason argues in *Slavery and Politics in the Early American Republic* that this view is erroneous. He demonstrates quite effectively that slavery persisted as an issue throughout the period even when other questions dominated the national debate. Slavery was advancing during much of this period: It was then that slavery and cotton cultivation began to take root in the Deep South; three slave states were admitted to the union (Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama); and it was initially an open question whether the two new "free" states (Indiana, Illinois) would not in fact tolerate the institution as well. Given these dynamic changes with regard to a subject that aroused so much passion, it is not surprising that discussion of the subject should persist. If national politicians managed to avoid prolonged, divisive debates in the halls of Congress, the subject still arose regularly in courtrooms, in state legislatures, in newspaper columns, and in electioneering addresses.

The bulk of Mason's work is taken up with accounts of how the rhetorical and political strategies of opponents and defenders of slavery developed over time in various contexts. He charts, for example, the gradual movement of southern defenders of slavery from the "necessary evil" argument, to the "hate it, but don't know how to end it" argument, to the "positive good" argument that was prominent in the South during the antebellum period. The various lines of argument on both sides were adopted, or abandoned, in response to developments in the society at large, and a perception (sometimes measured in election results) as to how well the underlying assertions were holding up in public opinion.

Some of the strategies Mason describes are somewhat surprising. For example, he notes several denunciations by southern supporters of slavery of some of the more objectionable elements of the slave system, such as the importation of slaves from Africa and the kidnapping and enslaving of free blacks. However, these humane impulses were apparently intended simply to protect the fundamental institution of slavery by undercutting the most sensational complaints made by its opponents.

Occasionally, the strategies adopted by one side or the other demonstrate a bizarre and baffling ingenuity. For example, one writer during the debate over slavery in Illinois in 1818 suggested that slavery should be accepted in the state because that was the only way that there could also be a subsequent act of emancipation — which would strike more effectively at American slavery than "the mere act of exclusion." One finds oneself wondering just which side of the argument this writer really favored.

The book abounds in examples of these arguments during the period under discussion. It covers all the participants in the debates — North, South, West, opponents, defenders, slaves, free blacks, and foreigners as well. The various overarching contexts are also well considered, particularly the War of 1812, the degeneration of the Federalists into a mere regional party, the difficulties encountered in defending the United States against foreign (primarily British) critics, and the gradual development of the North-South split between "free states" and "slave states." (As a border/slave state, Maryland is touched upon but receives no special emphasis.)

Slavery and Politics in the Early American Republic is not intended for the casual reader, but it should be of great value to the specialist in slavery or in the period. The footnotes and bibliography are both impressive (although the index is merely serviceable). Furthermore, since Mason opens with a summary chapter leading to 1808 and closes with a summary chapter explaining how the strategies employed in the Missouri Crisis played out over the years leading to the Civil War, the work is both intensive and extensive as well.

William H. Earle
Editor, Niles' Register: *Cumulative Index*

Slavery and the Commerce Power: How the Struggle against the Interstate Slave Trade Led to the Civil War. By David L. Lightner. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2006. 240 pages. Illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, $45.00.)

Building upon several previously published articles and more than twenty years of research, David Lightner's *Slavery and the Commerce Power* is an impressive study of the interstate slave trade and its significance to antebellum political and constitutional debates surrounding slavery. In fact, Lightner goes so far as to argue that "southern anxiety over the threat to the interstate slave trade was an important element in precipitating the secession crisis and the Civil War" (xi).

He begins with a succinct duscussion of the background of the interstate slave trade from 1790 to 1860, underscoring the tumultuous experience of individual slaves forced to migrate southward. The focus then shifts back in time to the 1787 Philadelphia Convention and the origins of the "commerce clause" and "1808 clause" in the Constitution. A close reading of accounts from convention participants reveals that these clauses were intentionally vague to avoid using the term *slave*, but that this ambiguity also created a "loophole" that could have allowed Congress to regulate the interstate slave trade prior to the end of the importation of slaves in 1808 and potentially to terminate the domestic trade completely afterward (36).

Although a handful of early anti-slavery advocates were wondering aloud about the implications of these clauses as early as 1790, open discussion of the

potential for "federal interference in the domestic slave trade" did not "burst" onto the political scene until the Missouri debates in 1819 and 1820 (37). Once the idea of using federal commerce powers to regulate slavery captured the attention of politicians, it then grew in popularity and intensity alongside the burgeoning anti-slavery movement in the 1830s and 1840s. Lightner sees cases such as *Gibbons v. Ogden*, *New York v. Miln*, and *Groves v. Slaughter* as evidence of the fact that northern politicians believed the commerce clause could be used to attack the expansion of slavery: placing limits on the free movement of slaves by their owners or slave speculators would reduce the viability of slavery in the territories and generally curtail the growth of the institution in states where it already existed.

By the 1850s, however, a number of northern politicians and anti-slavery advocates had given up on this approach, seeking instead a political remedy to end slavery outright through the territorial issues following the War with Mexico. They joined the Liberty and Free Soil parties and eventually supported the Republicans in 1860. Lightner contends southerners, on the other hand, did not fully realize the potential threat inherent in the commerce clause until the 1850s, well after the zenith of agitation in the North. As a result, southern politicians and fire-eaters realized with horror their decreasing representation in Congress and the dangers already inherent in the Constitution, making them less willing to stay in the union. By then many southerners were equating Lincoln's election victory with the first step of a Republican plan to kill the institution of slavery.

Slavery and the Commerce Power is a wonderful analysis of one aspect of slavery in America. Although this thread is worth pursuing simply for bringing to light the nature of the debates surrounding the interstate slave trade, Lightner perhaps pushes its pre-eminence a little too forcefully regarding the coming of the Civil War. The absence of a national solution within religion to the vexing slavery controversy seems just as important, especially in light of the role the clergy played in either defending slavery or pushing for an awareness of the evils of slavery depending on their sectional allegiances (with the domestic slave trade serving frequently as one of the worst evils). In the end, it is refreshing to see so many references to Maryland politicians and court cases on a topic where the Deep South usually attracts the most attention, and the book weaves together the story of the antebellum era well for the general reader.

Jessica A. Cannon
Rice University

Cry Havoc: The Crooked Road to Civil War, 1861. By Nelson D. Lankford. (New York: Viking Press, 2007. 318 pages. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth, $27.95.)

The idea of the American Civil War as an irrepressible conflict has haunted the

historiography of the United States since the closing moments of the war. Scholars have argued fervently over whether the timing and events of America's bloody conflict could have been different. Nelson Lankford's new book *Cry Havoc* weighs in on this familiar debate with a careful appraisal of the months surrounding the outbreak of the Civil War. Lankford argues that although war may have been unavoidable by the spring of 1861 "the particular way that it began was in the hands of individuals, not impersonal, irresistible historical forces" (7). Focusing on the volatile and complex politics within the border states, particularly Maryland and Virginia, *Cry Havoc* recounts the many decisions made and not made by political leaders in March and April of 1861. As Lankford asserts, in the months before large scale fighting erupted changes in any number of contingent situations could have radically altered the course of war. In the spring of 1861, according to Lankford, Civil War "was not foreordained" (236).

Lankford's book bristles with counterfactual scenarios of events in the months surrounding the bombardment of Fort Sumter. The upper South takes center stage in these hypothetical claims as the author assesses what might have been had the unionists of the border states better cooperated. Lankford is at his best in this regard when he examines the special convention called by the Virginia legislature to decide on secession in February of 1861. As the only convention to meet continuously through the outbreak of war, Lankford contends that the participants in the Virginia gathering represented the range of views that existed through the upper South on secession. Through a series of brief sketches of such Virginia political leaders as Jubal Early, John Baldwin, and Henry Wise, the author brings to life the vibrant debates that warded off secession until late in the spring of 1861. Lankford makes clear that conservative unionist voices within the convention still held hope for compromise late into the spring. The great might-have-been in these months was the hope that many upper South statesmen held out for a border state confederacy. As Lankford points out, this hope did not seem unfounded by many in the convention. Thus he argues that a middle way between southern secession and northern military action existed as a real possibility for the border states. Ultimately, the author recognizes that border state cooperation failed and that the states of the upper South were forced to pledge allegiance to either Union or Confederacy. Despite these facts Lankford insists that the landscape of the war could have been radically different had upper South unionists succeeded in creating a buffer between North and South.

Readers of this journal will want to note the central place of Maryland in this work. As the terminus of railroad lines from the North, Baltimore became a central transfer point on the way to Washington. In April of 1861, a Massachusetts regiment headed for the capital met with fierce resistance by Baltimore civilians during their transfer from the President Street Station to Camden Station. The bloody fighting that ensued in what came to be the Pratt Street Riot produced the

first casualties of the war and signaled the importance Maryland held for both North and South. In the wake of this violent clash, Marylanders burned railroad bridges into the state to prevent Northern troops from reaching Washington. Lankford describes these events in detail and argues that bridge burning by Marylanders prevented further violence in Baltimore and helped keep the state from breaking with the union. Despite repeated attempts by Maryland leaders to remain neutral and isolated in the early stages of the war, they too were forced to choose between North and South. By siding with the Union, Maryland, despite Antietam, avoided the wholesale destruction that Virginia experienced during the war. For Lankford, it is this destruction that marked the tragic consequences of roads not taken in the upper South.

Overall, Lankford has crafted a highly readable account of the upper South political battles during the spring of 1861. *Cry Havoc* succeeds by restoring the complex array of attitudes toward war, union, and secession that coexisted in the border states in the months before large scale fighting began. Although emphasizing the agency and choices of political leaders in early 1861 represents a crucial step in tracing the crooked road to Civil War, Lankford's work falls short by largely ignoring the constitutive role of structural factors in shaping individual decisions. Changes wrought in antebellum economy, intellect, and culture, produced internal divisions across the country that proved difficult to bridge with compromise. Americans in the decades before the Civil War did not live in isolation of these transformations but instead made decisions firmly within the world of these changes. Historians have shown how these changes were far from impersonal as they penetrated and were shaped by everyday life. Lankford's focus on the importance of individual decisions in shaping the course of the Civil War is admirable, but greater attention to how these decisions were enmeshed in the larger changes of the period would have made for a stronger volume.

Daniel Doyle Wessel
State University of New York at Buffalo

Germans in the Civil War: The Letters They Wrote Home. Edited by Walter D. Kamphoefner and Wolfgang Helbich. Translated by Susan Carter Vogel. (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006. 555 pages. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth, $59.95.)

In *Germans in the Civil War*, editors Walter D. Kamphoefner and Wolfgang Helbich offer readers an informative and provocative view of the Civil War era as seen through the eyes of seventy-eight German immigrants who during the period

produced hundreds of letters to friends and family. Although the immigrants were unaware at the time that their correspondence one day would be used in a study of the era, they provided a vast amount of detailed historical fodder by freely expressing their views on many topics including American democracy, Republican and Democratic politics, race and the institution of slavery, and the nature of the military conflict. The letters were written by a cross-section of Germans, in and out of the army, who exhibited a wide range of divergent opinions that to one degree or another were all a product of their common heritage. Using the correspondence, the editors challenge past assertions that the Civil War united individuals of various backgrounds in a common life-or-death endeavor that "Americanized" all immigrants. In reality, many Germans linked the struggle for the Union with emerging democratic ideologies in Europe. The immigrants in the service also tended to hold German officers in high esteem while at the same time they found most American generals wanting. According to the editors, the letters contained in this work "cast doubt on the venerable and conciliatory claim, made by contemporaries as well as historians, that the Civil War was a great 'melting pot' that eradicated nativism and ethnic prejudice—on the part of both Germans and Anglo-Americans—as natives and immigrants stood shoulder to shoulder and shed their blood together. . . ." (xiii).

After a preface and an explanation of the editorial approach, the book begins with an introduction outlining the German experience in America from the 1840s through the Civil War period. The work is then organized in two general sections, correspondence from the war's eastern theater and from the western theater, followed by a brief epilogue on Reconstruction. The letters are detailed, reflecting serious thought on a host of issues and are written (and translated by Susan Carter Vogel) in a highly readable style. The editors also include a helpful glossary of pertinent terms. The correspondence reflects that although a significant number of Germans lived in the South, their numbers were far greater in the North, and that many of the immigrants in the South were cool to secession. The editors also provide biographical data on the individuals who wrote letters, in addition to a map of Germany that marks their birthplaces. A number of letters came from immigrants who were living in Maryland when the war broke out, while others were written by soldiers passing through Maryland at one time or another during the war. As a result, students of Maryland history or specifically Civil War Maryland may find this volume useful.

The correspondence contained in *Germans in the Civil War* collectively provides an extraordinary chronicle of the times through the filter of an important sub-group within the American population. As the editors point out, more than 200,000 Germans served in the United States Army during the Civil War, representing about ten percent of the soldiers who fought for the Union. While they fought for a common cause, they were also acutely aware of their own heritage,

and as such they left a unique and in some cases oddly detached record of the era. Numerous collections of Civil War correspondence exist but few are as usefully specialized as this one. Anyone interested in Civil War history or the history of immigration in the United States would do well to take notice of it.

Ben Wynne
Gainesville State College

Niernsee and Neilson, Architects of Baltimore: Two Careers on the Edge of the Future. By Randolph W. Chalfant and Charles Belfoure; Introduction by Michael J. Lewis. (Baltimore: Baltimore Architecture Foundation, 2006. 161 pages. Illustrations (some colored), tables, bibliography, notes, index. Paper, $24.95.)

The Baltimore Architecture Foundation (BAF) is the research and publishing arm of the Baltimore chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the professional association for architects in the United States. Established in 1870, the Baltimore chapter has a long and distinguished history which its current members hope to make better known to a wider public, through research done and published by those current members on celebrated Baltimore architects of the past.

The first of these publications, Carlos Avery's *E. Francis Baldin, Architect: The B & O, Baltimore, and Beyond*, appeared under the BAF's auspices in 2003; the volume at hand clearly is intended as a successor to that work, being remarkably similar to it in general layout, dimensions, and number of pages. The publishers seem convinced that in presenting in each volume a list of each architect's buildings, a description of as many as possible of those buildings, and appropriate biographical treatments of each architect, they have found a format ideally suited to their purpose — and to a remarkable extent they are right. Both the Avery book and this one are extremely useful handbooks to the work of the architects with which they deal.

The Chalfant and Belfoure book is in fact an improvement over its predecessor—editors learn as they go—in that it lists all the buildings worked on by its subjects rather than only those still extant. It thus has more occasion for illustrations—always one of the main attractions in architecture books—and it takes full advantage of its opportunities: it is replete with handsomely-reproduced photographs, plans, and drawings, some of them made by BAF members and other hunted out by them. Best of all, all the images are fully credited, a virtue to which more publishers ought to aspire. The descriptions of the buildings on the list of architects' works are, like those in the Avery book, laid out by category—e.g., "churches," "country houses and estates," "places of business"—which will greatly enhance the volume's value as a reference work.

Had the book consisted of nothing more, there would have been hardly any need for its excellent index, but unfortunately it conscientiously supplies a num-

ber of biographical chapters, which are not only more scattered than readers might like, but are a marked letdown when considered against the remainder of Chalfont and Belfoure's work. This is due in part to the fact that the authors, beyond a Niernsee diary covering a five-year stretch in his twenties, had no primary sources generated by either of their subjects on which to draw; all their many footnotes covering the years John Rudolph Niernsee [1814–1885] and John Crawford Neilson [1816–1900] spent as professional architects lead one to others' reactions to the two men's work. This certainly complicates a biographer's task, but such complications are not always fatal.

There may, however, be a fundamental flaw in the approach the Baltimore Architecture Foundation's authors take in presenting their subjects as people. Each of its members studies an individual architect in detail, but their treatment is markedly uneven. Michael J. Lewis hints at this problem in his Introduction when he states, "I believe this book would never have come into being were it not for Randolph W. Chalfant's conspicuous personal identification with John Rudolph Niernsee." [page xiv] The book's title speaks of *two* careers on the edge of the future, not one; but given that "conspicuous personal identification" it might have been wiser to have limited this volume to Niernsee alone. Another choice might have been to bring in someone who was as enthusiastic about Neilson as Mr. Chalfant was about Niernsee, in order to balance the presentation, at least as far as the lack of sources would allow. As things stand, while there is some material on the junior partner, he gets only paragraphs whereas Niernsee gets whole chapters.

This imbalance is too bad, because the building list shows Neilson to have been at least as hard a worker as Niernsee; and what biography there is indicates that he may have been a more sympathetic character. Niernsee twice walked out on his partnership with Neilson: the first time, the younger man took the "prodigal son" back as a partner, and the second time, he took over an unfinished Niernsee project in South Carolina until Niernsee's son could succeed his deceased father on the job. A more evenhanded treatment of the two subjects might have produced an actual double biography, rather than a star turn linked to a series of seeming afterthoughts.

What students of Baltimore architecture come to the book seeking they will probably find: a clear account of the buildings — many of them swept away in the 1904 Baltimore Fire — designed by two leading nineteenth-century Maryland architects. The type of men those architects were, and the nature of their professional interaction, is less clear, partly from a lack of sources and partly from choice. Although a frustrating read, the book will be a necessary reference for any student of Baltimore building history.

Francis P. O'Neill
Maryland Historical Society

The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture. Edited by Alice Fahs and Joan Waugh (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004, 286 pages. Notes, index. Paper, $19.95.)

Memory of the Civil War is a collection of essays tracing the centrality of that conflict in American culture from Appomattox to the present day. Each essay explores the way in which the lessons of the war have been modified to fit the varying agendas of the modifiers.

The collection opens with one of the best, Joan Waugh's "U.S. Grant, Historian," which focuses on the eighteenth president's *Memoirs* (1885) and in particular his displeasure over the belief that the North prevailed against superior generalship solely through greater numbers and more plentiful supplies, a notion still widely held to this day. Also of merit is Patrick J. Kelley's "The Election of 1896 and the Restructuring of Civil War Memory," an account of Mark Hanna's efforts on behalf of William McKinley against William Jennings Bryan, in a presidential contest notable for its intense sectionalism and waving of the "bloody shirt." The two concluding essays, "You Can't Change History by Moving a Rock: Gender, Race and the Cultural Politics of Confederate Memorialization," by Lee Ann Whites, and "Civil War in Context, 1960–1965," by Jon Wiener, vividly illustrate how the war became a litmus test for both supporters and opponents of the Civil Rights Movement.

As is to be expected, the essays focusing on the closing decades of the nineteenth century and the opening decade of the twentieth give much attention to the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the United Confederate Veterans. These organizations were zealous in their efforts to see to it that "old times were not forgotten." They were uncompromising in their insistence that history textbooks stressed state sovereignty, and not slavery, as the underlying cause of the Civil War. The UDC, in particular, promoted funding and installation of monuments to Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and—on courthouse lawns throughout the South—the Confederate soldier facing North.

If there is one historical movement overlooked in this collection, it is the countermovement that arose across the South at the close of Reconstruction and was still evident in the opening years of the twentieth century, committed to downplaying the "late unpleasantness." Led by Henry Grady, editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*, the campaign gained support from southerners who believed the South's only route out of poverty lay in luring Northern capital and industry to the region, and a key component of that enticement was to assure would-be Yankee investors that no lingering resentment remained in Dixie. Thus, in a famous address entitled "The New South," delivered before the New England Society in New York on December 21, 1886, Grady said General William Tecumsah Sherman was "considered an able man in these parts, though some people think he is a kind

of careless man about fire." More serious and strident was Walter Hines Page. At various stages of his life, Page was editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, founder of Doubleday, Page Publishing Company, and Ambassador to the Court of Saint James. In his only novel, *The Southerner* (1909), Page wrote of a vanishing generation:

> Their speech was in a vocabulary of war; their loyalties were loyalties, not to living ideas or duties, but to old commanders and to distorted traditions . . . we did not become ourselves till they were buried, if indeed we are become ourselves yet.

Speaking of his native state, Page once said tersely, "What North Carolina needs are a few first-class funerals." The yearning for the Old South, and bitterness over the war that brought about its downfall, were clearly matters of dispute in the South itself long before the twentieth century reached its final decades.

This omission aside, *Memory and the Civil War* is an interesting, well-documented collection of eminently readable essays. Although Missouri is the only "border state" singled out in an essay ("You Can't Change History by Moving a Rock") Maryland Civil War buffs will find much to interest them in this analysis of the war's legacy.

George Friedman
Towson University

Wives of Steel: Voices of Women From the Sparrows Point Steelmaking Communities. By Karen Olson. (University Par, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005. 222 pages. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. Hardbound. $45.00.)

In the late 1880s Bethlehem Steel built a new steel mill in the Patapsco Neck region of Baltimore County called Sparrows Point. For nearly a century steelworkers and their families made their homes in the nearby residential communities of Sparrows Point, Dundalk, and Turner Station. In her recent book, Karen Olson delves into the lives of women in these communities and examines how the gendered beliefs and expectations forged on the shop floor shaped life outside the mill. Studies of the steel industry typically focus on men's struggles for fair working conditions and unionization. Olson intends to correct a historiographical omission by telling the story of Sparrows Point from the perspective of steelworkers' wives. Although few women ever worked within the confines of the Sparrows Point complex, the rhythms and demands of men's jobs dictated the organization of family life and shaped relations between married couples over time.

Olson's chronologically arranged chapters draw on rich archival sources and

an exhaustive collection of oral histories taken from both steelworkers and their wives. These sources allow Olson to reconstruct aspects of the "gendered world of steel." In three eras she discusses how women's labor proved vital to their families' economic success. In the decades between the mill's opening and World War Two nearly every family took in boarders. Wives and daughters cleaned rooms, prepared meals, and laundered clothing for up to twelve members in a household. The money earned from their labor added to the household income and enabled families to gain some luxuries and rent better houses. In the post-war era from 1945-1970 a man's breadwinner wage allowed his wife to remain at home, but the responsibility for running the household and childrearing fell almost exclusively on the wife's shoulders. The era of deindustrialization and the concomitant loss of jobs at Sparrows Point pushed women who had never worked outside the home into the workforce. Patriarchal families suddenly became two-breadwinner families.

Rather than view deindustrialization through the lens of decline, Olson emphasizes the opportunities that entry into the workforce created for wives and husbands. Themes of identity, economic freedom, and self-esteem recur frequently in the oral histories. While the loss of the "good jobs" created a crisis for many men, the two-breadwinner family opened the door for a more equitable division of labor within their families. Some men embraced the freedom to spend time with their families and participate more fully in family life while other marriages ended in divorce.

Throughout the book Olson distinguishes between the experiences of black and white steelworkers' wives. Frederick and Rufus Wood, the designers of the mill and the adjoining community of Sparrows Point, organized the residential sections of the complex along class and racial lines. Men's skill level and position dictated the size and location of available housing in white areas but black families were restricted to the area beyond Humphrey's Creek where the houses were smaller and lacked amenities such as running water and indoor plumbing. The segregation of black families was out of custom with patterns of residence in Baltimore. Most of the steel workers came from rural areas in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, and while some may have expected segregation as a matter of course, the decision to designate separate neighborhoods for blacks and whites was made by the New England Wood brothers in an effort to stave off any racial tensions that might develop.

Until the late twentieth century black men held the lowest paying jobs at Sparrows Point, and more of their wives worked outside the home. In spite of the race-based systems of segregation and discrimination, Olson finds remarkable similarities in the experiences of black and white wives who ran boardinghouses and managed families; however, in the post-war period the attitudes toward paid work varied significantly. Much of the paid work that black women performed was as domestic servants in the homes of white steelworkers' wives. The conse-

quence of deindustrialization for these women was not the freedom to enter the paid workforce but the struggle for better-paid work. As Olson notes, "Those women from Turner Station who had already been employed full-time before the 1970s argue that getting into the paid workforce was not a vehicle for more independence, because as Yvette Johnson said, when it comes to being able to work, 'black women have always been free'" (153).

While Olson's evidence is specific to a particular place and time, she places the Sparrows Point story within the broader context of industrialization and industrial decline in the United States and makes a significant contribution to the historiography of the steel industry. More specifically, *Wives of Steel* contributes to the body of scholarship on industrial development in Maryland. Olson's style and enthusiasm for her subject make her work a pleasure to read.

Stephanie Holyfield
University of Delaware

Notices

Research Project

For an academic research and oral history project I am undertaking on the history of early twentieth-century Maryland divorce law, particularly with regard to several divorce and child custody cases in Allegany County Circuit Court during 1910–1935, I am seeking to interview persons in the greater Cumberland area who have firsthand knowledge, newspaper clippings, photographs or personal correspondence concerning any of the following during the above-mentioned time period: the divorce examiner system in Cumberland; the Western Maryland Railroad; workplace injuries to employees of the Western Maryland Railroad; residential housing in Cumberland, particularly on Baltimore Avenue; Cumberland public elementary schools and curriculum; visiting circuses to Cumberland; motion picture houses in Cumberland; camping and leisure trips to Town Creek, Maryland, outside Cumberland; and any of the following individuals: Lisa Morris Shaw, Martha Morris, Amos Shaw, William Dean, Julia Stewart Dean, Sarah Carla Dean, Betty Hamilton Dean, Georgiana Dean, Marcella Dean, and Guy Dean.

Lynne Spigelmire Viti, J.D., Ph.D.
Wellesley College

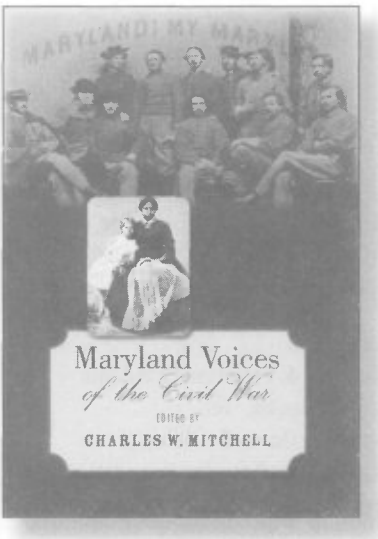
Fellowship, University of North Carolina

The UNC-CH Center for the Study of the American South (CSAS) invites applications for a one-year postdoctoral fellowship in the history, culture, or society of the American South, to begin July 1, 2008. The award will support an outstanding junior scholar in the revision of a book-length manuscript for publication in a field related to the South, broadly construed to include the states of the former Confederacy and adjoining areas. The fellowship provides a salary of $40,000, plus health insurance and $3,000 in research and travel funds.

Applications are due January 18, 2008. See the CSAS website for complete application requirements http://www.unc.edu/depts/csas/grants_stipends/postdoctoral%20apply.html. Send applications to: Postdoctoral Fellowship in Southern Studies, The Center for the Study of the American South, Love House and Hutchins Forum, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 410 E. Franklin Street, CB# 9127, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-9127, Phone: (919)962-5665, Fax: (919) 962-4433, Email: csas@unc.edu.

Maryland Voices of the Civil War

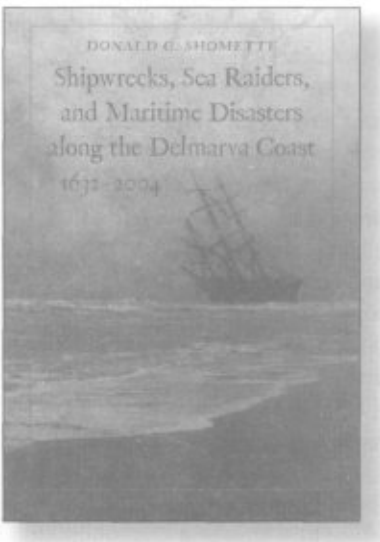
EDITED BY
CHARLES W. MITCHELL



"Mitchell's remarkable new book lets us listen and understand how the great war was fought to save the union, this state and our national soul."—Michael Olesker, *Baltimore Examiner*

"Using excerpts from personal correspondence, journals, and newspapers from that period, Mitchell frames the issues (states' rights, slavery, secession) and the state's role in the conflict in both political *and* personal terms. There's plenty of bravado from the warriors, but Mitchell also does an excellent job including the voices of people who are simply snagged by the war . . . giving it more diversity and range."
—John Lewis, *Baltimore Magazine*

$35.00 hardcover



Shipwrecks, Sea Raiders, and Maritime Disasters along the Delmarva Coast, 1632–2004

DONALD G. SHOMETTE

Claiming more than 2,300 vessels since 1632, the Delmarva Peninsula's Atlantic coast rivals North Carolina's Outer Banks for the infamous title "The Graveyard of the Atlantic." Featuring the accounts of twenty-five ill-starred vessels—some notorious and some forgotten until now—this anthology provides a fascinating history of a local maritime culture and charts how the catastrophic events along this shore significantly affected U.S. merchant shipping as a whole. The appendix provides a complete catalog of all 2,300 recorded wrecks.

$60.00 hardcover

THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS
1-800-537-5487 • www.press.jhu.edu

Leadership Donors

The Maryland Historical Society wishes to pay tribute and express its gratitude to those individuals, foundations, and corporations who made leadership gifts to the organization during the past fiscal year (July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007)

Anonymous
William L. & Victorine Q. Adams Foundation, Inc.
Estate of J. Howard Adkins
AEGON/TransAmerica Foundation
Agency Services, Inc.
Alban Family Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Charles T. Albert
Robert Austrian, M.D. †
Ms. Tracy A. Bacigalupo
Mr. John S. Bainbridge, Jr.
Daniel & Patricia Baker Foundation
Summerfield Baldwin Foundation (Mr. H. Furlong Baldwin)
Baltimore City Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Gregory H. Barnhill
Mr. and Mrs. Richard S. Barroll
Bay National Bank Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Becker
Mr. and Mrs. Frank A. Bonsal, Jr.
Mrs. Joseph Bryan III
The Bunting Family Foundation
Julia T. Burleigh Philanthropic Fund
W. P. Carey Foundation
Mr. Francis J. Carey, Jr.
Marilyn and David Carp
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. William F. Chaney
Mr. and Mrs. Peyton S. Cochran, Jr.
Stiles Tuttle Colwill
The Comegys Bight Charitable Foundation (Drs. Thomas and Virginia Collier)
Jane and Worth B. Daniels, Jr., Fund
H. Chace and Helen S. Davis Fund
Mr. and Mrs. L. Patrick Deering
Delaplaine Foundation, Inc.
Mary and Dan Dent Fund
Ellin & Tucker, Chartered
Fancy Hill Foundation
Ms. Ann Y. Fenwick
Mr. and Mrs. Alex. G. Fisher
Mr. and Mrs. Cecil E. Flamer
Funk & Bolton, P. A.
GlaxoSmithKline Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. James R. Grieves, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin H. Griswold IV
Mr. and Mrs. Jack S. Griswold
Jack S. Griswold Fund
Mrs. Leith S. Griswold
Mrs. E. Philips Hathaway
Louise Lake Hayman
The Hecht-Levi Foundation, Inc.
Mr. and Mrs. Louis G. Hecht
Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Hopkins
Mr. and Mrs. David L. Hopkins, Jr.
The Harley W. Howell Charitable Foundation (Mr. and Mrs. H. Thomas Howell)
Mr. and Mrs. Frederick M. Hudson
Mr. and Mrs. Francis N. Iglehart, Jr.
Barbara and Jay Katz
Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Kelly III
Stanard T. and Sarah C. Klinefelter
Legg Mason, Inc.
Dr. and Mrs. Sheldon H. Lerman
Mr. and Mrs. J. Leo Levy, Jr.
Mr. M. Willis Macgill
Mr. and Mrs. Luke Marbury
Ms. Cathy M. McDermott
Morris A. Mechanic Foundation
Mercantile Bankshares
The Joseph and Harvey Meyerhoff Fund, Inc.
Missy and Rich Moreland
The Louise and Alvin Myerberg Philanthropic Fund
Northrup Grumman Corporation
Mr. and Mrs. David R. Owen
Ms. Jayne Plank
Platt Foundation, Inc. (Mr. Dwight S. Platt)
T. Rowe Price Associates Foundation, Inc.
Mr. and Mrs. William T. Reynolds
Mr. and Mrs. George S. Rich

Eugene Bowie and Lynn Springer Roberts
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Willard Rogers
Rogers-Wilbur Foundation, Inc.
The Henry and Ruth Blaustein Rosenberg Foundation, Inc.
(Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Rosenberg, Jr.)
The Rouse Company Foundation
Mr. Edward A. St. John
Walter G. Schamu, FAIA, SMG Architects
Morris Schapiro and Family Foundation, Inc.
Miss Dorothy Mcl. Scott
Mr. and Mrs. Truman T. Semans, Sr.
Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Shaughnessy
John and Elizabeth Sherwood
Mr. and Mrs. Stewart T. Shettle
Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Smelkinson
Society of the Cincinnati of Maryland
Henry and Judy Stansbury
Estate of Robert Gordon Stewart
Mr. George Strawbridge, Jr.
SunTrust Mid Atlantic Foundation
Swan Sampler Stitichers
Sylvan Learning Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. David S. Thaler
Mrs. Mary Donnell Tilghman
Beverly and Richard Tilghman
Stiles Ewing Tuttle Charitable Trust
Wachovia Foundation
Dorothy Wagner Wallis Charitable Trust
Weiler-Miller Foundation (Mrs. J. Jefferson Miller)
Mr. William C. Whitridge, Jr.
Cecilia Young Willard Helping Fund
Dr. and Mrs. Henry B. Wilson
Mr. and Mrs. Vernon H. C. Wright

†Deceased

In this Issue . . .

Scouting Out the Land:
Revolutionary Era Migration and the Journey of James Auld
by Creston Long

"The Torment with the Servants": Management
and Labor in a Southern Maryland Plantation Household
by Steven Sarson

"Many Were Set at Liberty": John Needles, Abolitionist and Artisan
by Christopher H. Jones

Spirogate: *The Washington Post* and the Rise and Fall of Spiro Agnew
by Charles J. Holden and Zach Messitte

The *Mermaid* of Assateague
by Roger Novak

The Journal of the Maryland Historical Society