

Beneath the Underground and Beyond -The Flight to Freedom and Antebellum Communities in Maryland,
1830 – 1880:

Resistance along the Eastern Shore

Underground Railroad Educational and Cultural Program

Office Of Postsecondary Education

U.S. Department of Education:

Beneath the Underground and Beyond -The Flight to Freedom and Antebellum
Communities in Maryland, 1830 – 1880:

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Maryland State Archives Report

March 31, 2011

The Maryland State Archives staff began work on *Beneath the Underground and Beyond -The Flight to Freedom and Antebellum Communities in Maryland, 1830 – 1880: Resistance along the Eastern Shore* on October 1, 2010 the first official day of their grant award notification. Project Director Chris Haley and Research Department Director Emily Oland Squires began reviewing plans to immediately implement all elements of the broad scope of work they had proposed in their project overview. Utmost among those items was the focus, design, fabrication and installation of an African American themed exhibit to reside in the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture for the bulk of the grant's three year funding period. This element is well underway with a projected completion in June.

Additionally, the projected scope and vision of *Resistance along the Eastern Shore* required Haley and Oland Squires to initiate hiring committees to acquire three new employees to supply the additional labor necessary to carry out the project's data gathering and presentation goals. Those objectives were specifically to locate and extract images and data pertaining primarily to free and enslaved Blacks from the Eastern Shore Counties of Kent, Queen Anne, Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot. As detailed in the project work plan, the information would be drawn from contemporary newspapers, Federal Census records and subject related county court records, along with general accessioning and review of the Maryland Colonization Society records and the ancestral papers of a storied Queen Anne County family in the Poplar Grove collection.

Proceeding with the report, we would like to ask first which of the following dates might best work for you as we must schedule a **Spring Advisory Board Meeting: May 2, 9, 12, or 17**. As before, we will plan the meeting based on the date most board members find convenient. The meeting will be held at the Archives at either 10am or 2pm. Please get back to me at your earliest convenience with your preference.

Hiring

One of the first orders of business we had to address after being awarded the DOE Grant was the challenging but welcome task of hiring additional full time employees to help us achieve our ambitious research goals. Following an approximate two month process where we received and reviewed over 90 submissions, Project Director Chris Haley, Research Department Head Emily Oland Squires and Archives Webmaster Kara Carter interviewed 9 candidates for the two open Research Archivist positions. Thankfully, our

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pool of applicants was impressive, and we have been fortunate to hire University of Maryland College Park History major and teacher David Armenti and Yale Academy History major Jarrett Drake. Both have accepted their positions and began their archival training on Wednesday, March 16th. The Archives Research Department has also benefited since January of this year from the valued contribution of a volunteer intern from Salisbury State University, History major Wesley Tanner Sparks. Working a part time schedule, Tanner has contributed to our mining of Census Records. We are anticipating having a total of four interns working on the project during the summer months of June, July, and August.

Case Studies

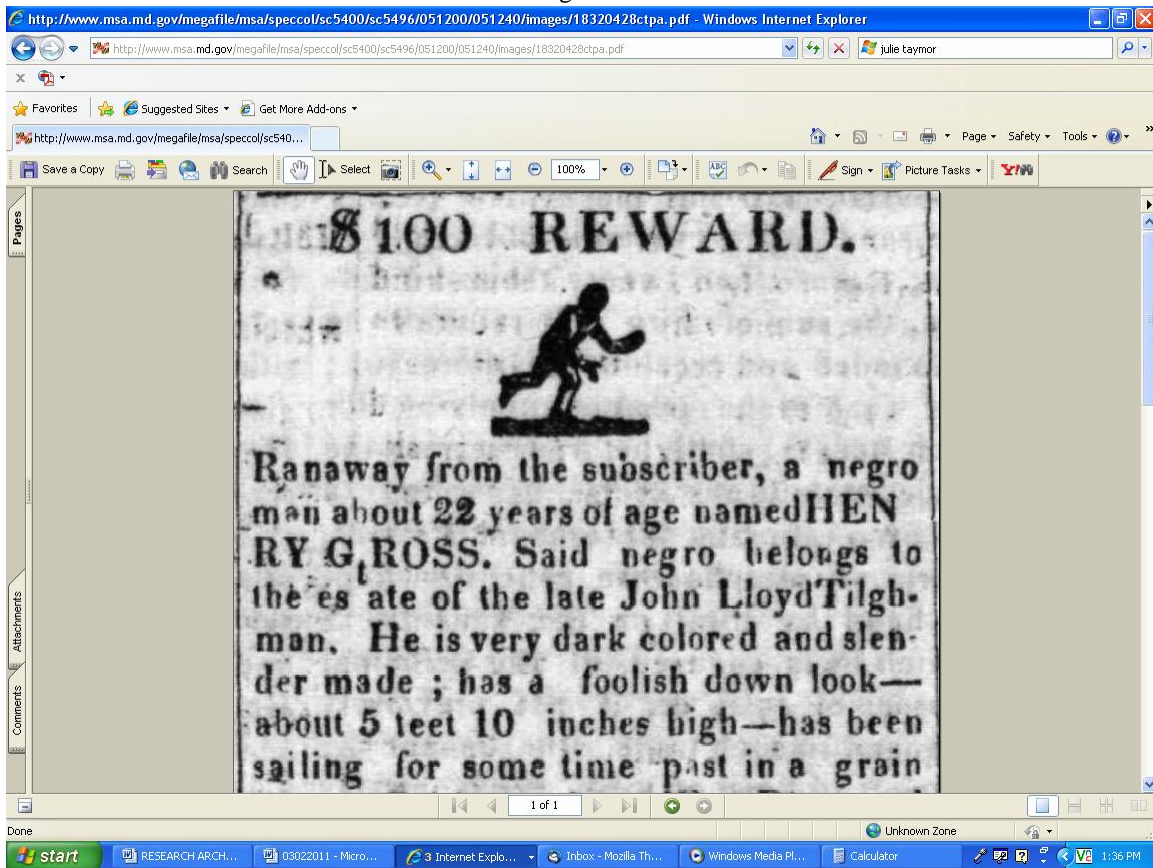
Maryland State Archives staff, Maya Davis and Rachel Frazier has begun research on Caroline and Queen Anne County. The following Case Studies have been produced which are now available on the Beneath the Underground website under the respective county section, <http://www.mdslavery.net/html/casestudies/storyindex.html>:

Slaves

1. John Reasons (37 or 38): Pin 051228. Ran from Thomas Hewitt, 1831, QA.
2. Nancy Reasons (55 or 60): Pin 051229. Ran from Thomas Hewitt, 1831, QA.
3. William (14): Pin 051230. Ran from Lewis Williamson, 1831, QA.
4. Henry Gross: Pin 051240. Ran from John Lloyd Tilghman (dec'd), 1832, TA.
5. Isaac: Pin 051243. Ran from Kimmel Godwin, 1830. QA.
6. Samuel, QA. pin 051246
7. Peter Still, CA. pin 015222
8. Sidney Still, CA. pin15226

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Henry Gross MSA SC 5496-051240 - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.msa.md.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc5400/sc5496/051200/051240/html/051240bio.html

Julie taymor

Henry Gross MSA SC 5496-051240

Archives of Maryland (Biographical Series)

Henry Gross (b. circa 1809 - d. circa ?)
MSA SC 5496-051240
Escaped from Bennet's Point, Queen Anne's County, Maryland, 1832

Biography:

Henry Gross escaped from [Bennet's Point](#) in Queen Anne's County in 1832.¹ He had been a slave of [John Lloyd Tilghman](#), who had died earlier in 1832.² By escaping that year, he may have exploited the confusion in the household resulting from Tilghman's death. Maria Elizabeth Tilghman (nee Gibson), Tilghman's widow and the administratrix of his estate, placed a [runaway ad](#) in the *Centreville Times and Public Advertiser*. The ad running from April 26 through May 12, 1832. He offered a \$100 reward.³

Tilghman believed that Gross may have sailed to Baltimore in a vessel from the Wye River area. He added that Gross's mother lived in Queenstown, providing another possible place to which the fugitive slave may have fled.⁴

1. Queen Anne's County District 5, J. G. Stong's Map of Queen Anne's County, 1866, MSA SC 5080-1, Courtesy of the Queen Anne's County Historical Society.

2. QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY COURT (Land Records), Liber TM 5, Folio 497, 1828-1831, MSA CE 143-35. John L. Tilghman to John Wright, June 15, 1830.

3. "\$100 Reward." *Centreville Times and Public Advertiser* 28 April 1832: 3.
George A. Hanson. *Old Kent: The Eastern Shore of Maryland* (Baltimore, MD: John P. Des Forges, 1876) 253.
"Tilghman Family." *Maryland Historical Magazine* 1.4 (1906): 373.

4. Stephen F. Tillman. *Tilghman-Tillman Family, 1225-1945* (Ann Arbor, MI: Edwards Brothers, Inc., 1946) 80.

Done

Internet 105%

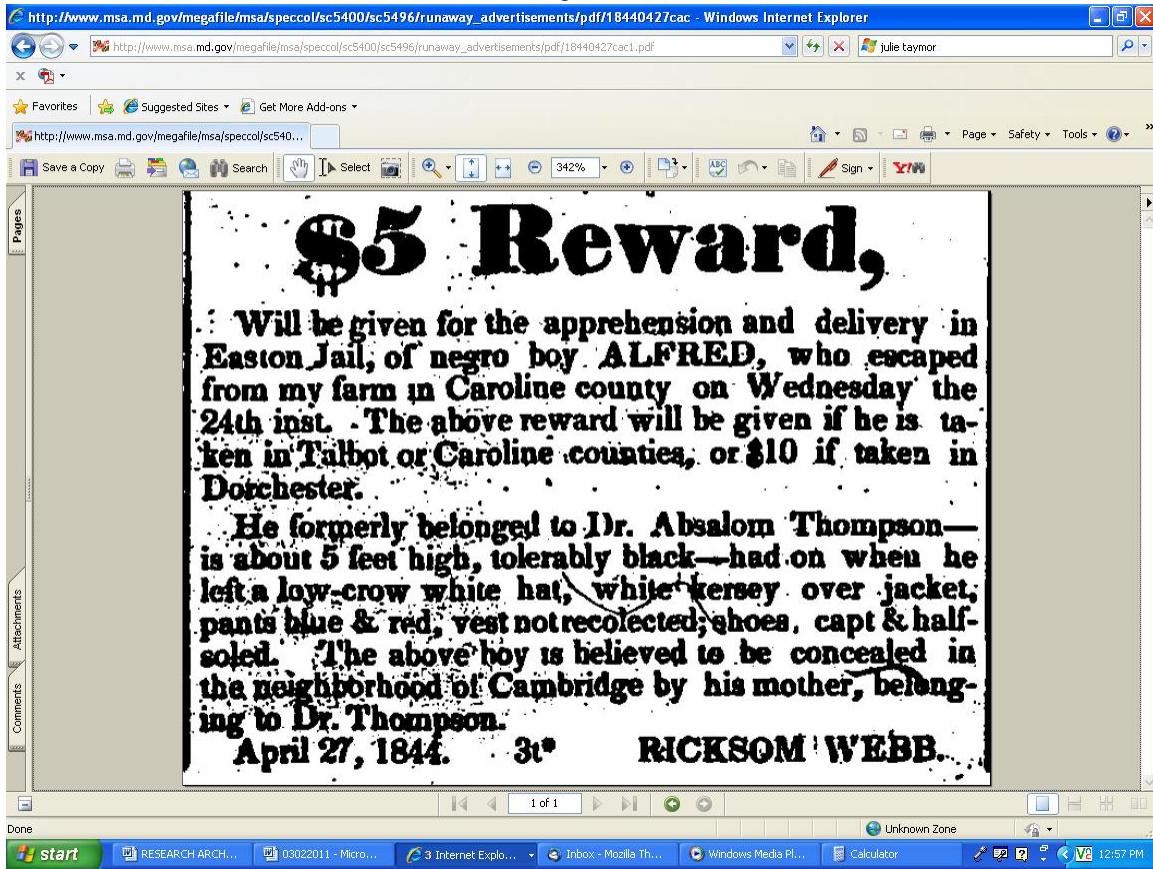
start RESEARCH ARCH... 03022011 - Micro... 3 Internet Expl... Inbox - Mozilla Th... Windows Media Pl... Calculator 1:33 PM

Slaveholders

9. Thomas Hewitt: Pin 051232. QA.
10. Lewis Williamson: Pin 051239. QA.
11. John Lloyd Tilghman: Pin 051241. QA.
12. Kimmel Godwin: Pin 051242. QA.
13. John Wesley Bordley: QA. pin 051247
14. Rixom Webb: QA: pin 0512144

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Archives of Maryland
(Biographical Series)

Rixom Webb (b. circa ? - d. 1846)
MSA SC 5496-051244
Black Property Owner, Caroline County, Maryland

Biography:

Rixom Webb was a free black land owner who lived in Caroline County Maryland. It is unknown where he was born and who his parents were, but it is likely Rixom Webb was from Maryland. Rixom Webb married Hester Chase February 18, 1834 in Dorchester County, Maryland. Rixom Webb and his wife Hester had the following children: Harrison, John, James, Eliza Ann, and Peter. Webb owned a sizable amount of land in his lifetime. In addition to the land he owned in Caroline County, he bought and sold land in Dorchester County and would eventually relocate to a large tract of land in Talbot County. When Rixom Webb's property was assessed in 1841 in Caroline County he owned 20 acres of Banningland. No value was listed for the property. The assessment also listed 450 acres of land worth eighteen hundred dollars. On this particular farm Webb owned horses, mules, steer, and cattle.

Rixom Webb also owned slaves which added value to his estate. He owned at least 6 slaves: Harriet, Alfred, Luke, Jerry, Asbury, and Ann. Harriet was listed in Webb's 1841 assessment to serve ten years and was worth \$120.00. In 1842 Webb was assessed \$530 for three slaves that he owned in Caroline County, MD. On April 24, 1844 Webb's enslaved boy Alfred fled his plantation. Webb placed a runaway ad for Alfred in the Cambridge Chronicle with a reward of \$5.00. He purchased Alfred at a Sheriff's sale from the estate of Doctor Absalom Thompson of Talbot County, Maryland. Alfred initially belonged to Doctor Thompson's father Anthony Thompson who willed the Alfred to his son. In May 1844, Alfred was eventually caught and returned to Rixom Webb, who then sold him to Anthony C. Thompson, brother of Absalom Thompson, who lived in Dorchester County. Harriet Tubman hired herself out to this same Anthony C. Thompson who was the step brother of her owner Edward Brodess.

Rixom Webb died March 14, 1846 and left nearly 500 acres to his heirs. Along with this sizable amount of land he also left provisions for several slaves. Servant Jerry, was to be left to his son James, and was to be freed after ten years. Several other slaves are also given brief terms of servitude, a practice that was not uncommon among planters in Maryland. In addition, certain protections were also given to the slaves. Jerry, for example was allowed to choose his new master, if his sale came up. Webb was not exempt from the cruel realities of the slave system. He states in his will that if Jerry is to "abscond" then he should be sold "for life to the highest bidder." Webb also stated in his will that his servant Luke be willed to his son-in-law Eben Hughes for the sum of four hundred dollars. If Hughes chose not to pay for Luke, the servant would be sold to the highest bidder.

[Return to Rixom Webb's Introductory Page](#)

Others

15. Patty Cannon, CA. pin. 051231
16. Cyrus James, CA. pin. 051238

NEWSPAPERS

The project has already generated an increase in the overall number of runaway, domestic traffic and committal ads drawn from source newspapers, many of which continue to be the source of the case studies referenced above. As of the date of this report, 149 Domestic Traffic and 55 Runaway Slave Ads from Queen Anne County have been added to our Beneath the Underground database and site. Unfortunately, our source newspaper (within the Archives holdings) for Caroline County contained no ads.

CENSUS

In addition to the above new biographies and newspapers ads, Archives' research staff has focused on mining census data from 1830 to 1880 in the two counties, extracting demographic information on free and enslaved blacks from the Federal Census for all the aforementioned years. (Please note, Slave Schedule data has not been extracted for this stage of the study. Full mining of the Slave Schedules for all five counties may be undertaken after the initial targeted areas are completed if time and resources allow prior to grant period's conclusion.) Census record mining involves the extraction of biographical data such as name, sex, age, race designation (Black or Mulatto), County District or Precinct, occupation, personal and real estate value and household status into a searchable online database. The Archives' census record stripping has added the following new entry totals of Caroline County and Queen Anne County census data:

Federal Census Free and Enslaved Blacks

Year	Caroline	Queen Anne	
1830/1840	1,436	1,046	
1850/1860	5,585	4,738	
1870/1880	8,769	6,708	
Total:	15,790	12,492	28,282

OUTREACH

In addition to information gathering and dissemination from these initial two counties targeted in the Archives grant proposal, much emphasis has been placed on sharing knowledge and findings of our study. To that end, staff has initiated, presented and attended African American and Genealogical events since the grant's October onset. The institutions included interested entities such as local and national genealogical and historical societies, conferences, and elementary, secondary and schools for higher education. Among these were the following:

Presentations:

Elementary School

“Black History in Maryland; 1864 to Now”

- The Key School, Annapolis, Maryland, 3rd Grade Classes; March 2011
- Wiley H. Bates Elementary School, Annapolis, Maryland, Gems and Jewels Mentoring Program; February 2011

“Genealogy and You”

- Mount Calvary Catholic Elementary School, Forestville, Maryland; March 2011

College

“SLAVERY: The Hot Button Topic”

- CV Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience, Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland; February 2011

“Conducting Research at the Maryland State Archives and using the Beneath the Underground website”

- Allegany College African American Legacy, Maryland State Archives, Annapolis, Maryland; February 2011

Churches

“Black History in Maryland: 1864 to Now”

- Mount Calvary Catholic Church, Forestville, Maryland; March 2011

Museums

“Blacks in Maryland 1860: The Onset of War and Freedom”

- B&O Railroad Museum, Baltimore, Maryland; December 2010 and February 2011

Participation:

Historical Societies

- “Project Run-a-Way”, (Panelist) Historic Annapolis Foundation, Frederick, Maryland; February 2011
- “Intersections: The Bar, The Law and the Underground Railroad”, (Panelist) Montgomery County Black Bar Association; February 2011
- “Read Across America”, (Reader) Annapolis Middle School, 6th Grade Classes, Annapolis, Maryland: March 2011
- The 5th Annual Montgomery County History Conference, January 2011

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- *Underground Railroad Gathering*, sponsored by the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom of the National Park Service, Hyattsville Library, Prince George's County, February 2011

School

- Job shadowing for Annapolis Area Christian School High School Junior, Jason Spargo, Maryland State Archives, Annapolis, Maryland; March 2011 (Guide)

Attendance:

- “Maryland’s Place in the Civil Rights Movement”, C Frazer Smith, Waldorf School of Baltimore, Baltimore, Maryland; January 2011
- Harriet Tubman Day Reception/ *11th Annual Harriet Ross Tubman Award*. Dr Clara Small, Professor of History, Salisbury University, received the award. Lowe Office Building, Annapolis, March 2011.

Workshops:

- Heritage Area Grant Workshop at Montpelier Mansion, Laurel, Maryland: January 2011
- *The African American Experience in the Digital Age: How the Story of African Americans in the Civil War Era is being told through Archival Documents*, National Archives College Park, February 2011. (Attendee/Panelist)

Media:

- “*State Archivists Uncover Stories of Slavery*”, Teri Winslow, The Capital, February 3, 2011 (Cover Story)

<http://www.hometownannapolis.com/news/top/2011/02/03-26/State-archivists-uncover-stories-of-slavery.html?ne=1>

- “*Wanted Runaway Slave; ‘A Stout Healthy Lad’*”, Paul Lagasse, Bay Weekly, February 17, 2011 (Cover Story)

<http://bayweekly.com/articles/culture-history/article/wanted-runaway-slave-stout-healthy-lad%E2%80%9D>

We look forward to any questions, comments or ideas you would like to share with us regarding our progress thus far as well as inquiries on where we are headed next as we follow our work on Caroline and Queen Anne and tackle Dorchester. As soon as

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I've received and polled everyone's preference for our Spring Advisory Board Meeting
from page one I will send the date and time in a subsequent email.

Respectfully Submitted March 2011

Chris Haley
Director
Study, Legacy of Slavery in Maryland