

News and Notes from

THE PRINCE GEORGES  
COUNTY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

January-February 1977

The Winter Recess

There will be no meetings of the Prince George's County Historical Society in January or February. The meeting schedule will resume in March.

The Winter Cold

The freezing of the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay this Winter seems to underscore the fact that this is, as the Weather Bureau has stated, the coldest Winter in the history of the Republic. In the May 1976 issue of News and Notes, we published the weather observations of Dr. Richard Brooke, taken in Prince George's County in 1753-57. Compared to current temperature highs, the weather in January and February of those years seems to have gotten quite balmy at times.

Brooke's recorded highs for the month of January were: 1754: 64 degrees; 1755: 69; 1756: 73; 1757: 65. The lows were: 1754: 15 degrees, 1755: 23. 1756: 15. 1757: 10. It should be noted, too, that Brooke's estate, Brookefield, was located "far outside the Beltway."

Brooke's February figures were as follows: High in 1754; 61. 1755: 64. 1756: 70. 1756: 67. Lows in 1754: 10. 1755: 14. 1756: 27. 1757: 8.

Addition to the National Register of Historic Places

Melwood Park, in Prince George's County. Built circa 1729, Melwood Park began life as a 1-1/2 story structure and was later raised to two full stories on the front facade only. William Digges, a merchant and planter, is generally thought to have been the builder. His granddaughter, Mary Digges, married Thomas Sim Lee, later Governor of Maryland.---Maryland Historical Trust.

Melwood Park is located a few miles west of Upper Marlboro.

Indexes to Previous Volumes

An index to volumes 1-3 (1973-75) of News and Notes has been completed by Frank F. White, Jr., and an index to volume 4 (1976) is in progress. The indexes list names, places, articles, and authors alphabetically, year by year. While not yet ready for distribution, the Society is investigating the best way to reproduce the indexes and make them available to those who would like them.

Activities of the Friends of Montpelier

Several activities have been planned for the Spring by the Friends of Montpelier, and will be held at the mansion on Route 197, just south of Laurel.

The group will sponsor a lecture and workshop series beginning March 19 with a presentation by Orva Heissenbuttei on "Appreciation of Antique Glass." Mrs. Heissenbuttel will speak on "American Antique Silver" on April 19, and lead a workshop on the care and refinishing of antique furniture on May 4. The series will conclude on May 21 with a program on colonial tools and household utensils presented by "Miss Betty and her Bicentennial Trunk."

On April 2, the Friends of Montpelier will sponsor a plant sale, featuring boxwood cuttings and other plants. During the months of April and May, the mansion will be open to the public for guided tours on Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturdays from noon until 4 p.m. There will be an admission fee, and the gift shop will be open. The Montpelier plates are still available.

For more information, call Mrs. Jean Speicher at 953-9595 (Monday through Friday) or at 776-3086.

Charles County, Maryland: A History

A new history of Charles County has been recently published by the Charles County Bicentennial Committee. The new work is 500 pages long, and includes 60 pages of photographs, three bibliographies and a 6-page index. Among the photos are those of the county's homes listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The work has no single author; rather it was edited and produced by a professional staff from the work on many volunteer writers, researchers, artists, and photographers. Considerable attention is given to the county's religious history and to the Indians and blacks.

The price of the hardcover book is \$8.95, plus 36¢ tax and 90¢ postage and handling, for a total price, of \$10.21. All proceeds from the sale of the book will be used for the construction of the pediatrics ward at Physicians Memorial Hospital, LaPlata. Orders may be placed with the Charles County Bicentennial Committee, P.C. Box 1776, Port Tobacco, Md. 20677.

For Rent: The brick house in the town of Piscataway, for many years occupied as a Tavern by Isidore Hardy. This property will be rented low to a good tenant for one or more years. Possession can be had immediately. For terms, apply to Juliana Hardy.

--Maryland Gazette# Jan. 8, 1824, courtesy of Frank F. White, Jr.

### Why John M. Lloyd was in Upper Marlboro

by James O. Hall

On the afternoon of April 14, 1865, Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Surratt and one of her Washington boarders, Louis J. Wiechmann, drove out to her tavern in Prince George's County. That night John Wilkes Booth shot President Lincoln at Ford's Theatre. The Government alleged that Mrs. Surratt's trip that day was made

in the furtherance of Booth's conspiracy; she was convicted by a Military Commission and hanged on July 7, 1865. It is not the purpose here to examine the controversial evidence against Mrs. Surratt; but much hinged on the testimony of John E. Lloyd, her tenant at Surrattsville. He swore at two sensational trials that he had attended court in Upper Marlboro on April 14 and had returned to the tavern in an intoxicated condition. At the tavern he talked with Mrs. Surratt: his testimony as to what she said to him, if believable, was damning. The Military Commission believed him.

As a side matter, Mr. John C. Brennan and Mr. Frank White, both members of the Prince George's County Historical Society, asked me to ascertain what Lloyd was doing at Upper Marlboro on April 14--was he telling the truth when he testified that he was there to attend court?

This is what I found.

H

At the murder trial of John .H. Surratt in 1867, District Attorney E.C. Carrington asked Lloyd where he had been on April 14, 1865. Lloyd responded by saying: "I was in Marlboro' attending the trial of a man who had stabbed me." He did not say who had stabbed him, or when, or where. These questions were left dangling mid are not answered in the massive collection of documents dealing with the assassination of President Lincoln.

Mr. White, an employee of the Maryland Hall of Records, suggested that I check the 1865 Circuit Court archives for Prince George's County. From the shelf list we selected several volumes, including two large ones called Office Dockets which contain brief log entries for the April and November terms of that court. While other materials were found to bear on the problem, these two volumes contained the most specific information.

The first relevant entry is dated February 17, 1865, and shows that Edward L. Perrie was placed under \$100 bond ". . . to answer for an assault on John M. Lloyd. The date of the assault is not shown but it could not have been long before February 17. Richard B. Perrie and Jas. A. Medley each made bond of \$200 to guarantee that Edward L. Perrie would show up for trial in addition, the following witnesses were placed under a \$100 appearance bond: John M. Lloyd, E.L. Smoot, Wm. Allen, David Barry, John W. Ball, Wm. F. Mullikin, Andrew Kaldenback, James T. Lusby, Thomas W. Ward, Chas. Middleton, and Joseph T. Knott. Five of the witnesses were required to have sureties, also under \$100 bond; for example, John Z. Jenkins, Mrs. Surratt's brother, was a surety for Mullikin.

That the assault took place at the Surrattsville tavern seems clear from the list of witnesses placed under bond. Several of the names may be found on the extant accounts of those who owed tavern bar bills. Most lived in the immediate Surrattsville area. Knott was the tavern barkeeper, employed by Lloyd. It is not hard to imagine what happened: everybody drinking, an argument between Perrie and Lloyd, Perrie deciding to settle it with a knife.

Another entry shows that six of those placed under bond, including Lloyd, were later sworn before the Grand Jury. This resulted in an indictment against Perrie for an assault on Lloyd ". . .with intent to kill." The trial was apparently set down for April 14, 1865, but the narrative entry of proceedings term. In an aside at the 1865 conspiracy trial, John Z. Jenkins stated that: "The Jury was discharged that day from our court. . . ." The witnesses had made the trip to Upper Marlboro on April 14 for nothing.

Lloyd testified in 1667: ".I staid in Marlboro' for some time after the trial was over, drinking and playing cards. . . ." Obviously what he called "the trial" consisted of the motions and arguments that resulted in dismissal of the Jury and a continuance of the case to the November term. It was probably after 3:00 p.m. when he and James T. Lusby, one of the witnesses summoned, set out together--but in separate conveyance--for Surrattsville. Both were more than a little drunk. Lusby told about this at the conspiracy trial in 1865.

The Perrie case was called on November 13, 1865. Seven witnesses were on hand. By this time things had cooled down. The charge against Perrie was dismissed with the costs to be paid by him--\$37.15.

In this, Lloyd told the truth; he was in Upper Marlboro on April 14, 1865, to attend court. Whether or not he told the truth in other matters--particularly with respect to Mrs. Surratt--is disputed. There are partisans of either view.

As a postscript, John M. Lloyd died in Washington on December 18, 1892, aged 68.

He was buried in Mt. Olivet Cemetery, not too far from the grave of Mrs. Surratt. The judgement of his veracity has long since been made in the Highest Court. Here we can only stir the ashes.

The trial was apparently set down for April 14, 1865, but the narrative entry of proceedings (The Surratt tavern, located La Clinton, is now owned by the Maryland -National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and is open to the public. Editor)

The Prince George's County Historical Society President: Frederick S. DeMarr, 277-0711.  
Corresponding Secretary Mrs. Frank Bagot, 927-3632.,  
Newsletter editor: Alan Virta, 772-5448.

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SOCIETY

March 1977

The March Meeting

The March meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society will be held on Saturday, March 12 at the Calvert Mansion, Riversdale, in Riverdale. The topic of the program will be "The National Tobacco Museum at Upper Marlboro," and the guest speaker will be Mr. Hugh Clagett.

The National Tobacco Museum is a newly created private corporation founded to establish a museum devoted to tobacco and its production at Upper Marlboro. The corporation now owns approximately 8 acres of land near the schoolhouse pond on the edge of Upper Marlboro on which the museum and other buildings will be erected. Mr. Clagett has been a leader in the effort to establish the museum and will fill us in on the progress at the meeting.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Friends and guests are always welcome. Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road.

St. George's Day Dinner

The Society's 4th annual St. George's Day Dinner will be held this year on Saturday evening, April 23, at the University of Maryland Center of Adult Education. The dinner is held every year on St. George's Day to commemorate the founding of Prince George's

County on St. George's Day, April 23, 1696.

Invitations and more details will be mailed soon to every member of the Society. Tickets will be the same as last year. All members and their guests are invited to participate in commemorating this 281st anniversary of our county's founding by joining us at the dinner.

Vol. V, no. 3

Awards Nominations

One of the highlights of the St. George's Day Dinner is the presentation of the Society's St. George's Day Awards. The awards program was begun in 1974 to honor individuals and groups who have made significant contributions to the documentation and preservation of Prince George's County's history.

Members may nominate candidates for this year's St. George's Day Awards by contacting John Giannetti at 6300 Pontiac Street, College Park 20740 phone 345-1790.

Early County Records Microfilmed

As an aid to students of local history, the Prince George's County Bicentennial Commission is microfilming the early records of Prince George's County and will deposit the microfilm in the Maryland Room at the Hyattsville branch of the county library system.

Ten reels of microfilmed records have already been received at the library, and it is anticipated that there will be 40-50 reels of the early records when the project is completed.

The original records are located at the Maryland Hall of Records in Annapolis.

"Old House Living"

The Prince George's County Memorial Library system will present a program entitled "Old House Living" at two of its branch libraries during the month of March. The program will be presented at the Laurel library on Saturday, March 19, and at the Hyattsville library on Adelphi Road on Saturday, March 26.

"Old House Living" is all about acquiring, improving, living in, and appreciating an older home. The definition of an "old house" is quite broad--the program is geared toward those who live in or are interested in living in colonial structures as well as homes that might be just 30 or 40 years old--and all in between. The program is not limited to discussion of "historic structures," either. It will be about all "old houses," historic or not.

The program is presented free of charge, and will last all day. There will be many talks presented by experts in various phases of "old house living." Representatives of banks and building and loan associations will talk about the financing of such a home; officials of the Dept. of Licenses and Permits will discuss legal requirements; others will advise

on what one should look for, and avoid., in older homes; a couple from Baltimore will discuss their experience in renovating a row house; and John Walton, Jr., historian for the Park and Planning Commission, will describe how to research the history of an old home.

Advance registration is required, because attendance will be limited. To register, or to get more details, contact the adult services department of the county library at 699-3500.

### An Unclaimed Legacy?

"If SARAH HARVIE, who lived near Upper Marlborough about the year 1741, and afterwards removed to Frederick county, is living, and will apply to Ignatius Digges; she may receive the balance of a legacy left her by William Mordent; or if she is dead, and her heirs apply as above, they ay receive the same."

---From the Maryland Gazette, October 31, 1776, as reprinted in the Sunday Baltimore News American magazine.

### The Federal Direct Tax of 1798

The Federal Direct Tax Lists of 1798 contain a wealth of information about houses, lands, and slaves in a particular area as of October 1, 1798. Since these lists have only become generally known within the past ten years, historians, genealogists, and title searchers need, to know more about them in order to mine the vast riches contained in these lists. Since, too, many of the Society's members are somewhat unfamiliar with these assessment and collection lists,

this brief account may prove valuable and enlightening.

Originally, these records belonged to National Archives Record Group No. 58--Records of the Internal Revenue Service. Many years ago, and the exact date is unknown, the government deposited the extant lists for Maryland with the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore. In January of 1965, the Hall of Records in Annapolis microfilmed them and made them available for more widespread use. Index cards have been prepared for several of the counties, but the task has not yet been completed. Other lists have been preserved for Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Maine, but these are not available locally.

To pay the costs of a possible war with France in 1798, the U.S. Congress voted several types of taxes. One of these, the direct property tax, was designed to raise some two millions of dollars, of which Maryland's share was slightly over one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. This tax fell on two types of property. List A of the Direct Tax relates to dwelling houses with outhouses on lots not exceeding two acres and over \$100 in value. List B relates to other lands, lots, buildings, and wharves. Both lists show the name of the owner or occupant of the property, its location and the dimensions of each building, the type of building materials used, the number of stories and windows, and the valuation. Thus it can be seen that some of the larger houses in an area would not have been listed. The third list indicates the total number of slaves, but only those between the ages of 12 and 50 were subject to the tax. The rate on slaves was fifty cents per individual.

On dwelling houses, the tax was graduated, according to the valuation of the structure. A. small property owner had to pay a tax of forty cents, while an owner of property valued at between three and six thousand dollars would have had to pair at the rate of one half of one percent. For property with a market value of over thirty thousand dollars, the rate was one percent.

The effective date of the tax was October 1, 1798. The Fifth Congress of the United States enacted two laws which contained the necessary instructions which implemented the program. The first, codified as 1 Stat. 580, but known as Chapter 87, was entitled "An Act to provide for the valuation of lands and dwellinghouses, and the enumeration of slaves within the United States." It was approved on July 9, 1796, and contained some thirty sections. One (No. 8) provided for the appointment of assessors. Each of these was instructed to "enquire after and concerning all lands, dwellinghouses and slaves, by reference to any records or documents, and to any lists of assessment taken under the laws of their respective states, and by all other lawful ways and means; and to value and to enumerate the said dwelling-houses, lands, and slaves in the manner following to wit: Every dwelling house above the value of one hundred dollars, with the outhouses thereto appurtenant and the lot on which such dwelling house and outhouses are erected, not exceeding two acres, in any case, shall be valued at the rate such dwelling house, with the lot and appurtenances aforesaid, are worth in money with a due regard to situation." Other sections dealt with the form of the lists, penalties for delivering fraudulent lists, their transmittal, exceptions, provisions for

absentee owners, valuation and assessment of three classifications in just proportion, appeals, and related matters.

A second Act, approved on July 14, 1798 (1 Stat. 597), known as "An Act to lay and collect a direct tax within the United States" (Chapter 92) provided for the levy as indicated previously. The Act contained over twenty sections which dealt, in addition, with the apportionment of the tax by states, how the tax was to be collected under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury, the rates, and other necessary information.

The Hall of Records has on microfilm the lists for the following hundreds of Prince George's County: Horsepen, Patuxent, Prince Frederick, Washington, King George, Grubb, New Scotland, Oxen, Bladensburg, Piscataway, Hynson, Eastern Branch, Rock Creek, Collington, and Western Branch. The exact location of these hundreds can be determined by consulting the maps in Louise Hinton's book, Prince George's Heritage.

Normally, each section of the list contained two hundreds, although New Scotland, Oxen, and Bladensburg were lumped together. The hundreds not found on the original lists include Columbia, Charlotte, Mt. Calvert, Mattapany, and Upper Marlboro. Unfortunately, the county's records for several of the more important areas are missing and undoubtedly will never be found.

Here are specific entries for Tobias Belt, who was enumerated in the lists pertaining to Horsepen and Patuxent Hundreds:

List A: General List of Dwelling Houses which, with the outhouses thereto appurtenant, amount to the sum of one hundred dollars:

Tobias Belt: 1 dwelling 6 outhouses 2 acres

List B., Particular List--Dwelling Houses:

Tobias Belt: Part of Good Luck, a framed dwelling house, 30 by 20, nursery adjoining, 16 feet square, kitchen 20 by 16, one Negro house 16 by 12, meat house 16 by 12, milk house 12 feet square, pottery house 16 by 6, corn house 16 by 0, all out of repair. Valuation \$200. Lands:

		(Val.)
		Part of Good Luck, adjoining Alexander Duvall
		Part of Jeremiah and Mary ditto
50		150
		Part of Batts Pigpen Tennant 16 feet
square	200 acres	600
		1 tobacco house 24 by 16 adjoining
Robert		J. Freeland, Addition to Good Luck
adjoining		Alexander Duvall
200		600
		1 dwelling house

List C. Slaves  
Tobias Belt

13, and number of slaves above the age of 12 and under 50 subject to taxation. . . . . 5

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-  
Frank F. White, Jr.

A Nineteenth Century Advertisement

"Unbiased endorsements," inane theme songs, and preposterous claims were not the inventions of the Madison avenue TV-commercial writer. Such advertising techniques have been with us for quite a while. The following was taken from the Planters Advocate, a newspaper published in Upper Marlboro, of the date February 16, 1850.

WHAT THE PRESS SAY:

"Costars" Exterminators are invaluable remedies for clearing houses of all sorts of vermin. With all confidence we recommend them. --N.Y. Daily State Register

"Costars" remedies for all domestic pests, such as Rats, Roaches, Bed-Bugs, Ants, Fleas, &c. are invaluable; we can speak from actual knowledge of their merits. Druggists and dealers should send their orders early, if they would secure a trade in them.--N.Y. Journal, April 1st.

I shall write something about your Exterminators, as I can do so with some propriety. They are selling rapidly here and destroying all vermin. --Ed. "Banner" Fayette Mo.

"Death to All Vermin"

As Spring approaches  
Ants and roaches  
From their holes come out  
And Mice and Rats  
Despite of Cats  
Gaily skip about,  
Bed-bugs bite  
You, in the night,  
As on the bed you slumber,  
While Insects crawl  
Thro' chamber and hall  
In squads without number.

It is truly wonderful with what certainty Rats, Roaches, Mice, Moles, Ground Mice, Bed-Bugs, Ants, Moths, Mosquitos, 'Fleas, Insects on Animals, in s ort every species of Vermin are utterly destroyed by:

"Costar's" Rat, Roach etc. Exterminator  
"Costar's" Bed-Bug Exterminator  
"Costar's" Electric Powder for Insects.

### Teacher Wanted

"Any Person, who is qualified to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic, and can bring proper Credentials of his sobriety and diligence, will upon application meet with great Encouragement in the neighborhood of Mrs. Rebecca Addison, opposite

Alexandria, in Prince-George County."

--- From the Maryland Gazette, September 26, 1776, as reprinted in the Baltimore-News-American Sunday magazine, Sept, 26, 1976.

### The Prince George's County Historical Society

P.O.. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland, 20840.

President	Frederick S. De Marr 4010 Hamilton St, Hyattsville 20781,
Corresponding Secretary	Mrs. Frank Bagot 3510 Longfellow St., Hyattsville 20782
Newsletter editor:	Alan Virta 470C 67th Avenue, Hyattsville 20784

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Here are specific entries for Tobias Belt, who was enumerated in the lists pertaining to Horsepen and Patuxent

List A: General List of Dwelling Houses which, with the outhouses thereto appurtenant and the Lots on which the same are erected, not exceeding two acres in any case, were owned, possessed, or occupied on the 1st Day of October 1798 in the Fourth Assessment District in the State of Maryland, and exceeding in value the sume of one hundred dollars:

Tobias Belt: 1 dwelling 6 outhouses

List B., Particular List--Dwelling Houses:

Tobias Belt: Part of Good Luck, a framed dwelling house, 30 by 20, nursery adjoining, 16 feet square, kitchen 20 by 16, one Negro house 16 by 12, meat house 16 by 12, milk house 12 feet square, pottery house 16 by 6, corn house 16 by 8, all out of repair.

Valuation \$200.

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Tobias Belt

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"Unbiased endorsements," inane theme songs, and preposterous claims were not the inventions of the Madison avenue TV-commercial writer. Such advertising techniques have been with us for quite a while. The following was taken from the Planters Advocate, a newspaper published in Upper Marlboro, of the date February 16, 1850.

WHAT THE PRESS SAY:

"Costars" Exterminators are invaluable remedies for clearing houses of all sorts of vermin. With all confidence we recommend them. --N.Y. Daily State Register

"Costars" remedies for all domestic pests, such as Rats, Roaches, Bed-Bugs, Ants, Fleas, &c. are invaluable; vie can speak from actual knowledge of their merits. Druggists and dealers should send their orders early, if they would secure a trade in them.--N.Y. journal, April 1st.

I shall write something about your Exterminators, as I can do so with some propriety. They are selling rapidly here and destroying all vermin. --Ed. Banner" Fayette Mo.

"Death to All Vermin"

It is truly wonderful with what certainty Rats, Roaches, Mice, Moles, Ground Mice, Bed-Bugs, Ants, Moths, Mosquitos, Fleas, Insects on Animals, in short every species of Vermin, are utterly destroyed by:

### Teacher Wanted

Any Person, who is qualified to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic, and can bring proper

Credentials of his sobriety and diligence, will upon application meet with great Encouragement in the neighborhood of Mrs. Rebecca Addison, opposite Alexandria, in Prince-George County."

--- From the Maryland Gazette, September 26, 1776, as reprinted in the Baltimore-News-American Sunday magazine, Sept, 26, 1976.

### The Prince George's County Historical Society

P.O.. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland, 20840.

President Frederick S. De Marr  
4010 Hamilton St, Hyattsville 20781,  
Corresponding Secretary Mrs. Frank Bagot  
3510 Longfellow St., Hyattsville 20782  
Newsletter editor: Alan Virta  
470C 67th Avenue, Hyattsville 20784

As Spring approaches  
Ants and roaches  
From their holes come out  
And Mice and Rats  
Despite of Cats  
Gaily skip about,  
Bed-bugs bite  
You, in the night,  
As on the bed you slumber,  
While Insects crawl  
Thro' chamber and hall  
In squads without number.

"Costar's" Rat, Roach etc. Exterminator  
"Costar's" Bed-Bug Exterminator  
"Costar's" Electric Powder for Insects.

News and Notes from

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S  
COUNTY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

April 1977

The Spring Schedule

There will be no regular business meeting of the Society in April. The St. George's Day Dinner will take the place of the April meeting. The regular meeting schedule will resume on the second Saturday in May.

The St. George's Day Dinner

The Society's annual St. George's Day Dinner--commemorating the establishment of Prince George's County on St. George's Day, 1696--will be held this year on St. George's Day, Saturday, April 23, at the University of Maryland's Center of Adult Education. A reception will begin at 6:30 p.m., and dinner at 7:30 p.m. The dress is optional. This year's dinner marks the 281st anniversary of the founding of our county.

The chairman of the dinner is Sister Catherine Wright. Reservation cards should be returned to her at 5715 Emerson St., Bladensburg, Md., 20710 by April 12. If for some reason you did not receive an invitation in the mail, you may send your check directly to Sister Catherine without the preprinted reservation card. Tickets are \$10.00 per person,

One of the highlights of the dinner is the presentation of the annual St. George's Day Awards, honoring individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions

to the preservation of the county's heritage and the study of her history. Join with us at the dinner in celebrating the 281st anniversary of Prince George's County's founding. Guests are welcome.

Nominations to the National Register

The Governor's Consulting Committee met on February 18 in Annapolis and approved the nomination of two Prince George's County structures to the National Register of Historic Places.

Nominated were the Buck House, in Upper Marlboro, and Compton Bassett, on the Patuxent River near Hill's Bridge. Buck House, though not being currently used, is public property. Campton Bassett is now the home of Dr. and Mrs. Robert B.G. Sasscer, and once was the home of Judge William Beanes Hill, Dr. Sasscer's great grandfather.

The Collections Committee

Mr. Herbert Embrey, chairman of the Society's Collections Committee, is preparing a display of Indian artifacts from Prince George's County. If anyone has any artifacts they would be willing to loan for the display, please contact Mr. Embrey at 434-2958.

New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society. Elected at the March meeting were:

- |                            |                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Thomas M. Beall            | Bowie           |
| Claire S. Bostelman        | Upper Marlboro  |
| George H. Callcott         | University Park |
| Mrs. Phyllis A. Cox        | Oxon Hill       |
| Mr. & Mrs. John A. deGreck | Laurel          |
| Mavis W. McAvoy            | Cheverly        |
| Julia B. McGraw            | Greenbelt       |
| Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Milberg  | Bowie           |
| Hilda Powell               | Accokeek        |
| Mrs. Clifford Ransom       | Oxon Hill       |
| Miss Mary Margaret Walton  | Hyattsville     |

Chesapeake Beach Railway

The Washington Star of April 1 reported that the East Washington Railway Company, the current operator of part of the old Chesapeake Beach Railway line in the District, has filed a petition of abandonment before the Interstate Commerce Commission. The line once transported Washingtonians and Marylanders to Bay vacation resorts, but for the past several decades most of its business has been the transportation of coal to the PEPCO generating plant on Benning Road, N.E. In 1975 the power plant converted from coal to oil, and the rail line lost 97% of its revenue. The largest remaining customer is a liquor wholesaler at Sheriff Road and Minnesota Avenue, N.E.

The wholesaler will fight the proposed abandonment before the ICC, but the Star concludes that the East Washington Railway will win the right to cease operations by this summer. Its right of way, a very long and very narrow swath of land between Bennings and Seat Pleasant, will soon go up for sale.

The long history of the Chesapeake Beach Railway, which began operations in 1896, will apparently soon be coming to an end. The story of the rail line was summarized in the October 1973 issue of News and Notes in an article by James H. Shreve. The line is also the subject of a book, Otto Meers Goes East, published just a few years ago.

#### Never Underestimate the Power of a Woman!

Lafayette C. Baker, chief detective of the War Department's powerful national detective police during the Civil War, never passed up an opportunity to attempt recapture of Walter Bowie of Prince George's County, as that individual returned home on espionage missions throughout the war. "Wat" Bowie, as he was popularly known, had escaped from Baker's grasp early in the war just two days before his scheduled execution, but nevertheless spent many hours in his home county serving the South.

Accordingly, Baker was undoubtedly elated to learn in July 1863 that Wat Bowie had accompanied his cousin, William Haring, also in the Confederate service, on a visit to William's home in Prince George's County at Bald Eagle

on the Patuxent. Wat was able to escape, however, as Baker closed in by the quick thought of William's sister, Elizabeth Waring Duckett, who conceived a successful disguise for him as a "mighty tall colored girl" barefoot and in a gingham dress.

In retaliation, the entire Waring family was arrested; William Waring charged as a spy and his father, John H. Waring, accused of hiding a spy, harboring rebels, and possessing illegal Southern mail. Learning that her brother faced execution, Elizabeth contrived an interview with President Lincoln on his behalf. That interview, as reported by the historian Matthew Page Andrews, is described below:

#### A Visit To The White House in War Times

Despite the mass of material that has been written concerning Abraham Lincoln, there are still in Maryland numerous little-known or unpublished notes descriptive of visits to the White House in war times, some of which are significant or illuminative, some merely interesting and others trivial.

Among Marylanders "under watch" by Government detective agencies were thousands of Maryland women who had relatives in the Confederate service. Occasionally the names of some of these women appear in Baker's secret reports, and one of them was Elizabeth Waring Duckett, whose notes were transcribed and verified by the author. The following account of Mrs. Duckett's visit to President Lincoln and Secretary Stanton illustrates more clearly than an entire chapter in formal history, some of the characteristics of the two men and, incidentally of the relationship between them. Mrs. Duckett was seeking pardon for her young brother, and influential friends in Maryland had arranged an interview with Lincoln. "Accordingly," run the notes, "I went to the White House and was taken to President Lincoln's office. I stood there some time before he noticed me.

"The President then said: 'Why don't you sit down?'

"I replied: 'Because you did not ask me.'

"Thereupon, he pushed a chair towards me, took his long legs off the green baize-covered table where he had them, and asked me what I wanted. I told him that my brother was no spy and that he was arrested in his uniform after an honorable discharge from the Confederate army.

"In the course of my talk with him, the President said, 'Mrs. Duckett, what are you Rebels for?'

"I replied, 'Because, Hr. Lincoln, we cannot help it.'

"Mr. Lincoln was kind in his manner to me and gave me a card to Secretary Stanton on which was written: 'The Honorable Secretary will see Mrs. Duckett and hear her.'

"I went to the War Department and was ushered past a long line of waiting people, both men and women. I handed the card to Stanton, and I can see him now. He took the President's card between his thumbs and forefingers, tore it in half, and threw the pieces on the floor. He roughly refused my request to go to Fort Delaware to see my father; and I knew that it would be of no use to talk to him about my brother. I was indignant over his attitude toward me and his contempt for the President's message; so I said, 'Mr. Stanton, I am going to fort Delaware!' He replied, 'Very well, Mrs. Duckett,' and I left his office.

"I immediately left Washington for Prince George's County, Maryland. By means of the 'underground railroad,' I communicated with Walter Bowie. Walter went to Colonel Robert Ould, Confederate Commissioner of Exchange of Prisoners at City Point, Virginia, who was an old friend of the family. Commissioner Ould at once notified Stanton and Judge Holt, that if William Waring was injured in any way, he would straightway hang General Cochran, who was a friend of Stanton."

Mrs. Duckett found a way to get to Fort Delaware--not only once but twice. This was in 1863. sequel. "During the conversation, Mr. Blair told Mr. Lincoln how I had sent word to Stanton that I had got to Fort Delaware and of Stanton's message to me 'to go to hell!' Mr. Blair also told the President that I had promptly sent a message (undelivered) to the Secretary of War saying that 'I did not wish to go there for fear of finding him.

"I can even now see Mr. Lincoln throw his head back and laugh heartily as Mr. Blair told the story. He then wrote on a card:

"'Miss Alice Maria Waring, may remain at home as long as she behaves herself.--A. Lincoln',"

Incidentally, William Waring was not executed.

References: Tercentenary History of Maryland, by Matthew Page Andrews, v. 1, p. 913. (1925)  
Spies For the Blue and Gray, by Harold T. Kane. 1954. Chapter 7.  
Some Recollections, Anecdotes, and Tales of Old Times, by Harold Stabler. 1962. pp.  
News and Notes from the Prince George's Historical Society. v. 2, no. 1 (1974) p. 5.

### The Easter Story of a Church

Spring has meant rebirth to man ever since he became aware of the cycle of the seasons. To members of the Christian faith, the occurrence of Easter, the Festival of the Resurrection, on the first Sunday after the first full moon of Spring, gives the season added meaning: a spiritual guarantee that out of death will come eternal life.

As one congregation prepared to celebrate Easter in Prince George's County 110 years ago, they saw their church go up in flames. This "death" was by no means permanent, however, for even though the church building was completely destroyed, the spirit of the church was still alive. The church was rebuilt, and the parish maintains a church still today.

-Alan Virta

From the Baltimore Sun, April 20, 1867

Beltsville, April 19, 1867. The beautiful Church known as St. John's Protestant Episcopal, situated in a pleasant grove in this village was entirely destroyed by fire this morning, about 11:00 o'clock. In less than an hour the structure fell to the ground, leaving only the President left to mark its resting place. A fire had been made in one of the stoves, preparatory to the commencement of the regular services to be given for Good Friday and it is thought the roof caught from the pipe having been in too close contact with the shin shingles which were very dry. The entire building including the vestry room was consumed. The benches, carpeting and furniture of this beautiful and most tasty edifice were saved but I regret to say that the organ placed therein at considerable expense, though rescued from the flames was materially injured in its hasty removal.

The church was built about 10 years ago through the liberality of the neighborhood at a cost of nearly \$4000 exclusive of the furniture. The congregation is under the pastoral charge of Rev. Mr. J. Earnest and

the church was frequently visited by members of the House of Representatives and Senate, it being considered a pleasant drive from Washington when the roads are good. It certainly must have been the hottest fire ever known as the bell that hung in the steeple was entirely melted.

A number of passengers on the 11:00 o'clock express from Baltimore to Washington got off at this point, on seeing the fire and lent their aid to save the furniture of the church. There was no insurance.

--From the collection of R. Lee Van

Horn, courtesy of Frank F. White, Jr.

The St. George's Day Dinner--April 23--University of Maryland--Comel

#### Who are the Citizens of Prince George's County?

For many years, the citizens of Prince George's County have seen themselves referred to in the press as both "Prince Georgeans" and "Prince Georgians," and no one can really be quite sure which, form is the correct one. Society member John Brennan has brought to light a letter--now one year old--that he received which should settle the question for some time--at least until the next election!

PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY  
Courthouse  
Upper Marlboro, Md. 20870

Jan. 22,

1976,

Dear Mr. Brennan:

Thank you for your letter of January 12. I prefer that the citizens of our County be referred to as "Prince Georgeans" and I am pleased that you concur with my opinion.

Sincerely,

(s) Winfield

M. Kelly, Jr.

The editor should note that there have been two prominent local papers which have chosen the two variant forms as their titles., "The Prince Georgian" was a popular local paper of the 19th century, and "The Prince Georgian" was one of the 20th century.

#### A Research Inquiry

The editor of News and Notes is currently researching in the political history of Prince George's County. If anyone has old political material, from the Civil War through the 1940's and 50's, or letters or documents of county politicians of the past--and would be willing to let him examine them, please give Alan Virta a call at 772-5448 in the evenings.

The Prince George's County Historical Society  
P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20840

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Winfield M Kelly, Jr.  
County Executive

News and Notes from

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S  
COUNTY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

May 1977

The May Meeting

This month's meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society will be held on Saturday, May 14 at the George Washington House (Indian Queen Tavern) in Bladensburg.

Our program will feature the showing of "City From A Wilderness" the widely acclaimed film on the history and development of the City of Washington.

Refreshments will be served. Please bring a friend. The tavern is located on Baltimore Blvd., just above Peace Cross and the intersection of Baltimore Blvd. and Annapolis Road (Route 450).

Bowie Heritage Day

The City of Bowie's annual Heritage Day celebration will be held on Sunday, May 15 from 1-4 p.m. Special programs and exhibits will be featured at both the Belair Mansion and the Belair Stables, one block away. This year for the first time a colonial militia unit, Congress' Own Regiment, will be camped on the lawn of the Belair Mansion.

Bowie's Bicentennial publication, featuring the story of Belair and its owners and prepared by Mrs. Shirley Baltz after many years of research, should be off the press and on sale that day. All are cordially invited to attend.

County Office Building Dedication

A few years ago this publication spoke out in favor of building the new county office building in Upper Marlboro, the county seat, where such a structure belonged. Thankfully, those who sought to locate it elsewhere in the County were in a minority.

The Society has recently received a letter of invitation from County Executive Winfield Kelly, Jr., and County Council Chairman William B. Amonett to attend the dedication ceremonies for the new administration building on Saturday, June 4, 1977 at Noon. The building will be open for public inspection following the ceremony until 3:00 p.m.

Beginning at 10:00 a.m. that same day a major arts and crafts festival will be held in the town. All members are encouraged to avail themselves of this opportunity to get a close look at the new facility and perhaps see the new John Carroll monument on the court house grounds for the first time as well.

Railroad Sesquicentennial Tour

In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of America's first railroad, the Chessie System is sponsoring a series of steam railroad tours during the month of May. Using the B & O and Western Maryland tracks, these trips will operate on each Saturday and Sunday during the month. All depart from Baltimore.

The schedule is as follows:

	May 7	Balt.--Ellicott City--Point of
		Rocks--Silver Spring--D.C.—Baltimore
	May 8	Balt.--Laurel--Silver
		Spring--Harper's Ferry--Return.
	May 14	Baltimore--Philadelphia—Return
	May 15	Reverse of May 7th tour
	May 21	Baltimore--Harper's Ferry (same as
May 8)		
	May 22	Balto.--Gettysburg--Hagerstown—
Return		
(One way)	May 28	Balto.--Silver Spring--Cumberland
	May 29	Cumberland--Pittsburg (One way)

Fares are \$20 for adults and \$18 for children. The last two tours (one way) are \$18 and \$16. Details may be obtained by calling (301) 485-1555 after 6 p.m. If you want to take the children over to the local B & O tracks to see the steam engine go by, the following times will be helpful:

May 7	Lv. Silver Spring about 4:30. Arr. Balto 5:50.
May 8	Lv. Laurel 8:55 a.m. Arr. Silver Spring 9:50
	Lv. Silver Spring 6:45 p.m. Arr. Laurel 7:25
May 15	Lv. Balto. 8:30 a.m. Arr. Silver Spring 9:45.
May 21	Same as May 8
May 28	Lv. Laurel 8:55 a.m. Arr. Silver Spring 9:50.

## New Publication

Mrs. Helen W. Brown has recently published Index to Registers: St. Paul's Parish, Baden, Prince George's County, Maryland, 1831- 1835. This completes the project of indexing the records of the early parishes of the county, begun several years ago by Mrs. Brown and her colleague, the late Mrs. Louise Hinton.

Unfortunately, records from the early period of St. Paul's, which is one of the thirty original parishes established in 1692, were either burned or lost in the passage of time. This compilation contains births, deaths, and marriages, as well as entries of free colored and colored servants showing the families they served. The index may be ordered from Mrs. Brown at 4704 Fordham. Road, College Park, Md. 20740 for \$10.00 post paid.

## New Society Treasurer

Mr. Herbert C. Embrey of Adelphi has assumed the duties of Treasurer of the Society, succeeding Dr. Truman Hinton who relinquished the post in March. 1977 membership cards are in the process of being mailed. Mr. Embrey may be addressed at 10414 Tullymore Dr., Adelphi, and his telephone number is 434-2958.

## A Letter in May

The recent change in administrations in Washington has brought many new faces to the national capital. Many of those who accepted appointments to high government posts pondered long and hard before

reaching their decision--for it is not easy to uproot one's family and resettle into a new job in a new place.

In May of 1798, a citizen of Prince George's County faced a similar decision. President Adams had asked him to join the administration as Secretary of the newly created Department of the Navy. Accepting the post meant leaving the county and moving to Philadelphia then the seat of government, many miles away.

That citizen of Prince George's County was Benjamin Stoddert of Beall's Pleasures in Landover. In the letter reproduced below, written to his brother-in-law, Benjamin Lowndes, Stoddert leans toward declining the post, although history has recorded that he eventually did accept the appointment and did become the nation's first Secretary of the Navy. One wonders from reading this letter what single influence most made him accept the high position.

The "concerns on the Beaver Dam" was his home, Beall's Pleasure, now owned by Mrs. Anna C. Rogers. "Becky" was his wife, Rebecca Lowndes Stoddert, daughter of Christopher Lowndes of Bladensburg.

To Benjamin Lowndes, Esq.

Bladensburg

I suppose you have heard of my appointment to be Secretary of the Navy of the United States, I have not determined to accept--and what you will think more extraordinary, I have not determined to refuse. I hate office--have no desire for fancies, or real importance--I wish to spend my life in retirement, and ease without bustle of any kind. Yet it seems cowardly, at such a time as this, to refuse an important and highly responsible appointment. And at all times, there is as much Vanity in refusing, as in accepting a post, beyond a mans Talents--for after all the modesty assumed on such occasions, who, examining well his motives, ever did refuse an office because he thought it above his abilities? You know I have heretofore managed peaceable ships very well. Why should I not be able to direct as well those of War! After all this preface, I think there is about 30 to 1 that I shall not accept. But that I may be able to consider every side of the question--pray let me know whether you will in case I do accept, and undertake to oversee as the owner of my concerns on the Beaver Dam for two years and a half. You would have to ride to each place once a week--oftener, if agreeable to you--and to issue orders for the week--To direct the operations of getting my wood in the low grounds only, send to market, as long as it would pay one dollar per cord, beyond expenses. To direct the sending of the hay to markets by water and to receive all money arising from such operations--and to pay out of the receipts all the expenses.

All this would require some of your time--and some attention. I know if you would take it all--it would serve be to serve me--but to have a proper tie upon your conscience to give the attention required I should insist on your receiving all the money for the wood and other products of the place.

I dont believe I shall go, if you would undertake this--but most assuredly I shall not if you will not.

If I do I mean to have the bricks made at Bladensburg--and to have the fourth gable end taken down and rebuilt, and add a room to the house--but I shall not be in so much hurry to do this--but merely have prepared against my return. After 2-1/2 years bustle, both Becky (who-is not alarmed at the society at Phil.) nor myself, shall be fond enough of spending the rest of our times in tranquility at Bladensburg.

Sunday

I must determine by tomorrow stage. I send then for your answer. I am not today so adverse to going as I was yesterday. But I think going impossible.

.---Submitted by William Aleshire and John Brennan, who performed the difficult job of translating Stoddert's handwriting into typescript copy. The letter is from the Library of Congress Manuscript Division, George W. Campbell papers, AC9903. Mr. Aleshire is doing the research to nominate Beall's Pleasure to the National Register of Historic Places. More news on this project next month.

#### The Duvall Pecans

The following item, submitted by Ted Bissell, is taken from a recently published booklet from the American Forestry Association.

#### The Duval Pecans (Maryland)

"About 1784, Thomas Jefferson presented Gabriel Duvall (1752-1844) of Maryland some pecan seedlings (Carya illinoensis). The trees were planted at Duvall's estate "Marietta" in Prince George's County. This estate, now in the community of Glenn Dale, was part of the original land grant by King Charles I of England to Cecil Calvert, second Lord Baltimore, in 1632. Duvall was a member of Congress, comptroller of the Treasury under President Thomas Jefferson for nine years, and an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court for 24 years (1812-1835).

"At Marietta, built in the 1780's many distinguished visitors were entertained, including Presidents Washington, Jefferson, and Madison.

"Seven of the pecans are still living. They stand in front of the original entrance of the manor house on Bell Station Road and vary in diameter from three to four feet at breast height. The property is now owned and maintained by the Maryland Capital Park and Planning Commission."

St. George's Day Awards I am yours sincerely,  
Ben Stoddert

The fourth annual St. George's Day Dinner in recognition of Prince George's County's 281st anniversary was held on Saturday, April 23, 1977, at the Center of Adult Education, University of Maryland. Highlight of the evening was the presentation of the St. George's Day Awards, established by the Society to recognize outstanding contributions by individuals and organizations toward the preservation of our county's heritage. The 1977 award recipients:

Robert Lee Van Horn and Elizabeth Parker Van Horn. This posthumous award was accepted by their son, Mr. Robert Parker Van Horn. Judge Van Horn, late Historian of the Society, was honored for his history, Out of the Past: Prince Georgians and their Land. Mrs. Van Horn was recognized for her generous support which made possible the publishing of her husband's book by the Prince George's County Historical Society. In both instances, the book was a labor of loves and our citizens have profited by their work.

Vestry of Queen Anne's Parish. For their 1974 restoration of 200-year old St. Barnabas Church at Leeland. As a result of their efforts, this gem of colonial architecture will continue to be used by our citizens in their worship of Almighty God. The award was accepted by the Rector, Fr. Lawrence Harris.

City of Bowie For their preservation of the Belair Stables, a landmark of American racing which was destined for destruction by the developers. The city and its people have turned this facility into what was the first public museum facility in the County. The award was accepted by Mrs. Shirley Baltz on behalf of the Mayor of Bowie, Mrs. Audrey Scott.

John M. Walton, Jr. For his tireless efforts in the area of historical research and archeology. Specifically, Mr. Walton was honored for his efforts to have the Woodyard site place on the National Register, as

well as his collaboration on the Surratt House and Indian Queen Tavern projects.

Edith M. Bagot. For her efforts over the years in building the Maryland Collection at the Hyattsville Branch Library into a major reference source for local historians, and for her untiring assistance offered to all who have made use of the collection.

Orva Heissenbuttel. For her continued work over the years on many projects relating to our county's heritage, most notably the Buck House, the Chesapeake Beach Carousel, the Bicentennial House Tour, the Indian Queen Tavern, and the Surratt House.

Surratt Society. For their many hours of work as interested local citizens in the interpretation of the Surratt House and its story to the many visitors from

Society of the Pilgrims of St. Mary's. For their work in erecting a monument in Upper Marlboro in commemoration of its native son, Archbishop John Carroll, patriot-educator-churchman. The award was accepted by Mrs. Henrietta Hill Arthur.

#### The Friends of Montpelier

Tours of Montpelier mansion in Laurel, offered by the Friends of Montpelier, will continue through June 4 on Thursdays and Saturday, with the exception of May 28. Hours on Thursdays are 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., and on Saturdays Noon to 4 p.m. The fee is \$1.00 for adults, 50 cents for children.

Two chandeliers are now in place in the mansion, and a third has been ordered. Two antique sofas have been recovered. The Friends of Montpelier have also received a

generous donation of Chinese export china from Mr. Forrest Bowie of Mt. Lubentia.

Donations to the Friends of Montpelier are tax deductible. Particularly needed are candlesticks and old leather books. The house will be furnished in the 18th century style, but non-18th century items will be accepted for the occasional auctions held to raise funds for the group. The organization has applied through the Park historian, John Walton, Jr., for matching funds for structural works on the mansion to the Maryland Historical Trust.

At a recent meeting, the officers of the Friends of Montpelier were elected to serve another term. Mrs. Jean Speicher serves as Chairman.

For information on tours, membership, or other activities, call Mrs. Speicher at 776-3086 or contact her at 12209 Shadetree Lane, Laurel, Md. 20811.

#### Death of a Member

We regret to announce the passing of Mrs. Hester B. Bryan of College Park on February 7, 1977.

Next Month: An article by Paul Lanham on tax deductions and tax collection--in 1884! Plus lists of new members and contributors, and other articles.

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20840

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News and Notes from

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

June 1977

Vol. V no. 6

#### 'The June Meeting

The last meeting of the Spring-season will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, June 11, 1977, in the Music Room of Riversdale, the Calvert Mansion. At that time we hope to review program plans for the 1977-78 season, including new types of Society activities as well as the regular meeting series. Your comments will be most welcome

A film of the Queen's visit to Washington Cathedral will be shown at the meeting.

Refreshments will be served and guests are welcome. Riversdale is located on Riverdale Road in Riverdale.

### Bishops' Day: Sunday June 5

Bishops' Day, honoring two native Prince Georgians, John Carroll and Thomas John Claggett, will be observed at the Queen Anne Fine Arts Auditorium of the Prince George's Community College on Sunday, June 5, 1977. Sponsored by the Prince George's County Bicentennial Commission, this program is intended to become an annual observance of our county's religious heritage.

At 2 p.m. a commemorative program will be held at which Col. John Hinkel of the Columbia Historical Society will speak on the life of Archbishop John Carroll, America's first Roman Catholic bishop. Also speaking will be the Rev. Dr. Robert Wright of the General Theological Seminary (N.Y.) who will discuss the contributions of Bishop Claggett, the first Episcopal bishop consecrated in America.

Music will be furnished by the Southern Maryland Choral Society and the choir of St. Barnabas Church, Leeland.

From 2 to 5 p.m. there will be a display in the auditorium lobby dealing with the lives of the two bishops. Among these will be many historical documents, portraits, and Archbishop Carroll's vestments. A special feature will be the colonial communion silver belonging to St. Paul's Baden (ca. 1702); St. Barnabas, Leeland (1717); St. John's, Broad Creek (1729); and Christ Church, Accokeek

(1752). (Dates refer to the age of the silver).

The program is free and the general public is cordially invited to attend.

### Reminder Dedication of New County Building

The new county administration building will be dedicated at Noon on Saturday, June 4. The building will be open for inspection until 3:00 P.M.

### Tax Time--Old Subject and Old Variations

Today's "Prince Georgians" (to use the term coined by our late Historian, R. Lee Van Horn\*) may experience some nostalgia at a county Notice to Taxpayers prominently displayed in 1884.

Signed by John G. Hall, Treasurer, the notice specified dates from June 9 to June 30 when county tax agents would be present at various county locations to collect State and county taxes for the year. In some locales, a specific location was identified--Bevan's Store in Queen Anne District, Bright Seat in Kent, Gregory's Store in Oxon Hill, Beall's Store in Marlboro' (note-the apostrophe indicating a contraction in spelling). Also provided was a Washington, D.C. collection point, Messrs. Jackson Bro., & Co.

Particularly interesting is an incentive provision for early payment of County tax--8% if paid prior to July 1 and 4% deduction if paid by October 1; similarly for State tax--a 5% deduction if paid by September 1, 4% if paid by October 11 and 3% if paid by November 1.

In today's environment, it is hard to decide which of the two provisions, an opportunity to confront the collector face to face or the weighty choice of five incentive deductions would be most appealing! Today's tax reform enthusiasts may be interested in these precedents of early Prince George's County.

(Editor's note: These taxes, of course, were property taxes)

\* R. Lee Van Horn's history of the county, Out of the Past, published in 1976 by the Society, is still available. Send \$13.90 to the Prince George's County Historical Society, Box 14, Riverdale, Md., 20840.

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individual to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society. Elected to membership was:

Elizabeth Hamilton

New Carrollton

Spon  
Mrs.

### Contributors to the Society

The Society gratefully acknowledges the generous contributions made by the following Individuals:

Rita E. Bastek  
John C. Brennan  
Rev. and Mrs. Edward G. Raffetto, Jr.

County House Tour--Sponsored by the Prince Georges County Historical And Cultural Trust--Saturday October 8

### The Gold Diggers of '49

Mr. Winston DeVille, President of the Polyanthos book publishing firm of New Orleans, has deposited in the Laurel Library, in memory of Robert M. Marshall, Sr., of Laurel who died on February 27, 1977, a copy of a 1975 genealogical reprint entitled "Index to the Argonauts of California." The thick volume, not too dissimilar from a present-day metropolitan telephone directory, lists 27,000 names alphabetically, with an indication of date of departure from the East and the mode of travel used by the "Emigrants" who went West in the Gold Rush of 1849.

Mr. DeVille, obviously, was not and is not aware that six Capron boys, one of them a Laurel resident (and a nephew of the celebrated Horace Capron, mentioned below) are listed in the book that he donated to the Laurel Library. Nor could this young book publisher know, unless he has lately "gotten into" ESP, that there has been preserved in Laurel an apropos article from a Baltimore newspaper called the "Baltimore Clipper" which here permits us to flesh out the bare bones fact stated in the Argonaut book that one AUGUSTUS J. CAPRON

departed the Laurel area "overland" on April 2, 1849, bound for California.

The "Baltimore Clipper" article, datelined Washington, D.C., March 31, 1849, is too well written to risk diluting its meaning by paraphrasing it. Therefore, except for deleting from the long list of sixty-five names those Argonauts hailing from distant States, the news item of 1849 is reproduced verbatim as follows:

Ho! for California--  
The Washington City and California Mining  
Association--  
The Names of the Emigrants, etc.

We have, on several occasions noticed the preparations of the company, formed in this city to visit the gold regions. A uniform has been adopted--grey; single-breasted coat, with brass eagle buttons; black stripe down the outside seam of the pantaloons; flat leather cap, with the initials in front, "W.C.C.M.A."<sup>1</sup>

Every member is armed with a revolver, belt knife and hatchet, and a rifle, and provided with five hundred rounds of cartridges. Eight wagons have been provided (in the west) to be drawn by mules. Each mess<sup>2</sup> of eight, is provided with a gum elastic carpet and tent. Boats of the same material will be made use of to ford the streams, and clothing of similar impervious property, to keep off the rain. No company, we venture to say, has gone to California so well equipped, and with a better constitution for its government. One of the articles is, "any member who may discover a rich deposit of gold, silver, or any other precious substances, shall not withdraw from the Association in order to aggrandize it to himself, but it shall inure to the Association for their mutual benefit." Another, "if any member of this Association die or be killed in the performance of his duty, his family shall be entitled to receive the full amount which the deceased would have been entitled to at the close of the Association," etc.

No labor is to be performed by the Association on the Sabbath, except under extraordinary circumstances; drunkenness and gambling are strictly prohibited; a second offence is visited with expulsion by a vote of two-thirds. The gentlemen composing the Association are highly respectable, and have among them talents of the first order in science and mechanical pursuits. Twelve of them are carpenters, two printers, and two lithographers. Mr. J. G. Bruff, the President, is a match any day for Cruikshank in sketches, and in other artistical respects his superior.

The Association will assemble in Lafayette Square fronting the President's House, on Monday afternoon, at two o'clock: and will be escorted to the depot by the Washington Light Infantry. A portion of the members will remain at the Relay<sup>3</sup> until the next morning, while others will look in at Baltimore. The following is the list of names, viz:

<sup>1</sup> Washington City-California Mining Association

<sup>2</sup> Mess: military term for a group of persons who regularly eat together.

<sup>3</sup> Relay: probably the Relay House, on the Baltimore side of the Potapsco River at the Thomas B&O Viaduct.

	Georgetown, D.C.		do	
(Note: only area residents' names have been copied in below--JCB)	Chas. Bishop	25	do	
	Oscar B. Queen	25	Georgetown, D.C.	
	Henry J. Queen	22	do	
Name	Joseph C. Riley	25	Maryland	
	Daniel R. Wall	24	P. George's co. Md.	
Age	Wm. P. Hillary	22	Frederick co., Md.	
	Stephen S. Culverwell	22	Baltimore city	
Where born	Fielder M. Magruder	21	P. George's co. Md.	
	John Young Donn	19	Havre-de-Grace, Md.	
Residence	Wm. J. Stoops	41	Georgetown	
Gid. Brooke	J. W. Marden	21	Georgetown	P.
	AUGUSTUS S. CAPRON	25	New York	LA
29	Josias C. Willis	31	Talbot co. Md.	Ba
	C. G. Moxley	21	A.A. co. Md.	A.
Chas. co. Md.	Henry Vermillion	31	P. G. co. Md.	Wa
	H. C. Dorsey	25	Alex'a, VA.	Al
Washington	Rich'd Washington	22	West'ld co. Va.	W
B. B. Edmunston	Charles G. Alexander	24	K.G. cot Va.	K.

27 The other five Capron boys whose names appear in the Argonaut proceeded to California by water, one sailing from New York by steamship on Feb 18, one from Boston on a "ship" on Feb. 27, two by bark on Feb. 10 and Mar. 11, and one by brig from New York on Feb. 14--all in the year 1849.

50 Augustus J. Capron was the son of John M. Capron, about whom little is now known locally except that he was one of the original 1848 Wardens of Laurel's S t. Philip's Episcopal Church. The Capron family lines (at least to outsiders) became somewhat complicated when Augustus' half sister, Emma Capron, married Dr. DeWilton Snowden, whose sister, Louisa, was the wife of Augustus' father's brother, Horace Capron. About Horace, in the briefest possible space it may be stated that his enterprising business endeavors caused "Laurel Factory," the erstwhile name of the present-day Laurel, to become widely known throughout the East in the 1840s. Prostrated by his wife's death in 1849 (she is buried in the Snowden Cemetery not far from Montpelier), Horace left Laurel--never to return--in 1852. In his latter days he served as a General in the 66th Iowa and then, in effect, became the first Secretary of Agriculture under President Grant. Finally, to crown a notable career, he undertook to modernize the northern-most Island of Hokkaido for the Japanese government, and his successful accomplishment of this task is attested to by the fact that a larger-than-lifesize statue of him stands in a public park in the capital city of Hokkaido, Sapporo.

47 Research on Bealls-Pleasure

Balto City, Md. William Aleshire is continuing his research for the nomination of Beall's Pleasure to the National Register of Historic Places, and is presently gathering information on those who have owned the property. Beall's Pleasure is best known as the home of Benjamin Stoddert, first Secretary of the Navy.

do  
Thos. B. Scott  
26

Most of the home's owners have not been prominent persons like Stoddert, and little is recorded in print about them. The following is a list of owners about whom information is needed. If you can further identify any of these names, or perhaps knew some of the more recent persons, contact Bill, His address: 12302 Chalford Lane, Bowie 20715. Phone: 262-3360.

The dates of association with the home are approximate.

Charles Wallingford. ca. 1776.  
James Crawford. ca. 1776.  
Thomas S. Alexander. 1835.  
E. B. Caldwell and Ann Caldwell. 1836.  
Thomas Ewell. 1836. One of Lee's lieutenants? Born at Beall's Pleasure?  
Levi, George B., Sarah E., Dionysius L., and Margaret Sheriff. 1835-1886.  
James N. Huston. 1897  
Charles and Esther Mount;  
Charles and Sarah E. Mount. 1902.  
Harry G., Mary N., and Isabella H. Leopold. ca. 1913  
William J. and Margaret T. Byrne. 1903.  
Frederick and Lena Koch. ca. 1912.  
Freda and Howard C. Reed. 1914.  
Genessa and Charles H. Ulrich. 1914.  
Alvin Ulrich, Jr. 1916.  
Kate F. Canfield. ca. 1916.  
From Colorado?

### A History of Washington

Green, Constance McLaughlin. Washington: A History of the Capital, 1800-1950. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. 1962. \$7.50 paperback.

Constance N. Green's Pulitzer prize winning history of Washington, D.C. has recently been republished in a paperback, edition by Princeton University Press. First published in two volumes under two titles, Washington Village and Capital, 1800-1878 and Washington: Capital City, 1879-1950, the two have been republished in their entirety in one volume and retitled.

There are 95 photos and illustrations, and altogether more than 900 pages of text. Although the book does not treat Washington's colonial history as part of Maryland, there is much in the story of the separated District that is essential to an understanding of the history of Prince George's County.

### The Summer Schedule

Although there will be no formal meetings of the Society in the Summer, the newsletter will be published and mailed to members on a fairly regular basis.

The Society's meeting schedule will resume in September.

### The Prince George's County Historical Society

President: Frederic S. DeMarr  
4010 Hamilton Street, Hyattsville, 20781.  
Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. Edith Bagot  
3510 Longfellow Street, Hyattsville, 20702  
Newsletter editor: Alan Virta  
4708 67th Avenue, Hyattsville, 20704

News and Notes from

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S  
COUNTY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

July 1977

Summer Festival and Fair

"Festival and Fair--The ladies of Prince George's, Maryland, propose holding a Festival and Fair, at the village of Long Old Fields, for the purpose of aiding in the erection of an Episcopal church in that neighborhood. They offer a number of inducements to those who desire a trip to the country. Tents will be spread in the woods, where refreshments of every kind will be provided, and, with the aid of music, dancing, and the still greater attraction of pretty girls, a visit among them will be rendered delightful. The Fair will open on the 8th of June, and be continued one week. A six-horse omnibus will leave the Navy Yard every morning at eight o'clock and return at night. All who desire to assist the ladies 'in this praiseworthy enterprise are cordially invited to make them a visit."

--from the Daily National Intelligencer, Washington, D.C. Thursday, June 1, 1865.

The term "old fields" indicated a former agricultural site which had been exhausted by extensive cultivation. Long Old Fields designated today's Forestville area, approximately eight miles southeast of the capital city. Both the American and British armies encamped there during the War of 1812.

The Parish director, Mr. Ridgely, of the Church of the Epiphany, confirms that the

above article relates to the present church which began as a chapel from Trinity Church in Upper Marlboro in 1863. It can be assumed that the advertised Festival and Fair was highly successful and that the "refreshments" and "pretty girls" were more than adequate.

Vol. V no. 7

News from the Maryland Historical Trust

The trust reports in the June issue of its newsletter SWAP (Some Words About Preservation) that Maryland Senate Bill 383, introduced by State Senator Mike Miller, has been signed into law. The law directs \$3.00 of the county's marriage licence fee for the use of the Prince George's County committee of the Trust and its restoration projects. Members of the committee attended the signing ceremony at the State House in Annapolis.

The Trust also reports the following news of Laurel:

"Laurel's city government is committed to the rehabilitation of Main Street. The street and two alleys will be spruced up to attract shoppers and generally improve the quality of the area. The move is in an effort to prevent further shopping center development. Several civic groups are actively supporting the projects, among them the historic district commission, the Horizon Society and the Main Street Business Association. Laurel's nine block Main Street was originally a dirt track for ox carts."

Some Maryland Reading

Sister Catherine Wright's history of Bladensburg, entitled Port 0' Bladensburg, is now available at the Town of Bladensburg offices for \$3.00. The book is 120 pages long and contains numerous photographs and reproductions of news articles and documents. On the cover is a full color reproduction of the painting of the stage at the George Washington House. Sister Catherine documented her sources through footnotes, and added an extensive bibliography at the end. The town offices are located at 4229 Edmonston Avenue. Phone: 927-7962 or 927-7048.

Also now in print is Vera Rollo's biography of Henry Harford, entitled Henry Harford: Last Proprietor of Maryland. The volume offers a brief outline of the English background to the settlement of Maryland and biographical sketches of the lives of the six Lords Baltimore. The unusual story of Henry Harford is told with an account of his birth in London, his education at Eton and Oxford, his visit to Maryland, and his later life. The book is approximately 200 pages long and is illustrated. Henry Harford: Last Proprietor of Maryland is available from Maryland Historical Press, 9205 Tuckerman Street, Lanham, Md. 20801. Price for the library binding is \$7.95, plus 400 tax (at the new 5% rate) for a total of \$8.35.

Fuller reviews of these publications, both by members of the Society, will follow in later issues of News and Notes.

Baron or Baronet? Setting the Record Straight

In the April 1977 issue of News and Notes of the Maryland Historical Society there were two references to Sir John Eden, Bart., M.P., an honorary member of the Maryland Historical Society. Sir John's ancestor, Sir Robert Eden, Bart., was the last proprietary governor of the Province of Maryland prior to the American Revolution.

In one news item Sir John is referred to as the 7th Baron of Maryland and in the other instance is called the 7th Baron of Baltimore. To be perfectly frank, Sir John holds neither of these titles. In fact, the title "Baron of Maryland" has never existed and that of Baron of Baltimore became extinct in 1771 when Frederick Calvert, 6th Baron Baltimore, died without a legitimate male heir. (His natural son, Henry Harford, was the legal heir and became the 6th proprietor of the Province of Maryland.) So, just what is the full story on Sir John Eden's titles?

For background purposes we must consider briefly the subject of titles conferred by the Crown. There are five ranks in the nobility or peerage. In descending order they are: Duke, Marquis, Earl, Viscount and Baron. Those holding the title of Baron are usually addressed as "Lord." The full title in each rank may adopt the family name, the local area of residences or the locality in which the person achieved his distinction. For example, Admiral Horatio Nelson, when elevated to the peerage after his defeat of the French fleet at the mouth of the Nile River, assumed the title Baron Nelson of the Nile. Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery of World

War II fame became Viscount Montgomery of El Alamein in commemoration of his defeat of the German Afrika Korps in the North African Campaign.

All peerages were hereditary, however in recent years the Crown has created a category of "life peers" in which case the title expires with the death of its holder.

In addition to the-peerage, there are knighthoods created by the British monarch. There are two categories. A regular knighthood, which involves membership in one of the Orders, i.e. Garter, Bath, British Empire, Victorian Order, St. Michael & St. George, is a lifetime thing. The other category is the baronetage, which is hereditary. As in the case of the peerage, a baronet's title is associated with some location and following the name of the holder of the title are the abbreviations Bart or Bt.

Thus, Sir John Benedict Eden, Bart, M.P. (Member of Parliament) is the 9th Baronet of West Auckland in the County of Durham and the 7th Baronet of Maryland in North America. As a second son, Robert Eden, Maryland's last proprietary governor, did not inherit the baronetcy of West Auckland which had been conferred first upon his grandfather, Sir Robert, in 1672 by Charles II. The younger Robert Eden, who was married to Caroline Calvert, sister of Frederick, Lord Baltimore, was created Baronet of Maryland sometime after he assumed the governorship of Maryland in 1769.

A's a matter of interest to Marylanders, Governor Eden's grandson, Sir Frederick (3rd Baronet of Maryland), served as an Ensign in the 85th Regiment

The two baronetcy's (West Auckland and Maryland) were joined when they were inherited by Sir William Eden, younger brother of Sir Frederick.

### Montpelier and the Snowden Family

Mr. William G. Cook's history of Montpelier mansion and the Snowden family is now available with sheet music for the song "Montpelier," written by Mrs. Gladys Cook and Albert A. Kelly. The book contains 368 pages with an index, drawings, and 90 family pictures, and documents the story of the Snowden family at their estate. The book and music are available together for \$15.70 (\$14.00, 70¢ tax, and \$1.00 handling) from William G. Cook, 402 Greenhill Avenues Laurel, Md. 20810. Music alone is \$3.10 (\$2.00) 10¢ tax, \$1.00 handling.)

### Who Were Our Teachers?

Frank White, Jr., of the Hall of Records in Annapolis, recently passed along the Annual Report of the State Board of Education for the year 1908, which includes a directory of public school teachers in Prince George's County as of October 1, 1908. The schools and the teachers of 70 years ago have passed from the scene— but the natives of Prince George's County may find some memories in this list of names. Readers should note that this record lists 72 open

public schools in the county.		4	Florence Suit, Forestville
The October 1976 Maryland		4	Ada Johnson, Forestville
Suburban telephone book lists		4	Helen E. Middleton,
240 schools now. And while	Forestville		
this report lists 108 teachers in		5	Mary Garner, Good
the county, the Board of	Hope, D.C.		
Education tells us that there are	7-Queen Anne's	1	(Closed)
now approximately 7,000		2	Josephine E. Wilson,
classroom teachers on the	Leeland		
county payroll today!		3	Barbara E. Schultz,
	Benning, D.C., R.F.D.		
Directory of Public School		4	Mary P. Berry,
Teachers	Woodmore		
		5	Meta N. Pratt, Upper
Prince George's County	Marlboro, R.F.D.		
		6	Blanche Hyatt,
District	Mitchellville		
		1	Florence B. White,
School	8--Aquasco		
	Aquasco		
Name and Address		2	R.C. Connick, Orme
	9-Surratts	H.S.	Eugene S. Burroughs,
	Clinton		
1-Vansville		1	Lulie M. Queen, Beltsville H.S.
		2	Clintona Clara C. Gibbons, Beltsville
		3	Emma A. Flester, Laurel H.S.
		4	Hattie I. Selby, Beltsville H.S.
		5	Clintona Charles N. Beebe, Laurel
		5	Lottie Curtin, Beltsville H.S.
2-Bladensburg		1	Carrie H. Shipley, Hyattsville
		1	Mary L. Walters, Hyattsville
		2	Mrs. Blanche Mudd, Landover
		3	10-Laurel Mrs. M. Nalley, Riverdale
		3	Nannie B. McGregor, Riverdale
		3	Louise Hamilton, Riverdale
		4	Margaret A. Hawkins, College Park
		5	Laurel J. Elizabeth Mullikin, Tuxedo
3-Upper Marlboro		H.S.	William Stafford Jackson, Upper Marlboro
		H.S.	Mary Nalley, Upper Marlboro
		H.S.	Burtonville Kate Latimer, Upper Marlboro
		H.S.	.....3.....
		2	Maude E. Pumphrey, Upper Marlboro
4--Nottingham		1	Maude A. Gibbs, Croome
		2	Olive MsKee, Nottingham
		3	Emma G. Wilson, Westwood
		4	Lucy Gough, North Keys H.S.
		5	Genevieve Baden, Westwood H.S.
		6	Laurel Katherine A. Willes, Croome
5-Piscataway		1	Maria C. Queen, Waldorf, Charles County
		2	J.A. Carrico, Piscataway H.S.
		3	Margaret Underwood, Accokeek
		4	Laurel Eleanor C. Edelen, Silesia
		5	Millard Thorne, Friendly
6-Spaldings		1	Nellie Grant, Congress Heights, D.C., R.F.D.
		2	11--Bradyville Harris, Camp Springs
		3	Xenia McC. Haslup, Benning, D.C., R.F.D.
		3	Township Curtin, Benning

	3		ington, Benning, D.C.
		1	Dena Atcheson, Ritchie
		5	Emma E. Walker,
S			Benning, D.C. R.F. D.
e		5	Amy C. Clark, Benning,
a			D.C.
n		5	Mary C. Hook, Benning,
n			D.C.
a		5	M. L. Brooke, Benning, D.
			C.
S	14--Bowie	1	Bessie Gardner,
m	Collington		
a		2	Alice Jones
l		3	(Closed)
l		4	Edna E. Waring, Laurel,
w			R.F.D.
o		5	Suzie R. Henault, Bowie
o		5	Marguerite Bowie, Bowie
d		6	Bessie Cook, Bowie
,		7	Rachel Hamilton,
			Glennedale
R		8	Louisa I. Mulloy
o	15--Melwood	1	Myra Duley, Croom
s	Station		
a		2	Lulu Meadows
r		3	Edith Pumphrey,
y	Meadows		
v	16-Hyattsville	1	
i			.....
l		1	Eva A. Palmer, Hyattsville
l		2	Lucy Mayo, Hyattsville
e		1	Nellie Moran, Hyattsville
4	Elizabeth Tippett, Brandywine		Pearl L. Boone,
5	Hyattsville		
6	Howard M. Dent, Cedarville		
	Margaret Wilson, Baden	1	Elsie A. Burgess
12--Oxon Hill	Belle R. Marlow, Congress Heights, D.C.		MAFIELD C. Berry,
	Hyattsville		
	Belle Groves, Congress Heights, D.C.		
	17-Riverview	1	Mamie N. Gleason,
	Hyattsville		
	Blanche Hurtt. New Glatz		
13--Kent	Clive Edelen, Camp Springs	2	Edna Tippett, Hyattsville
	Lucy Lanham, Lanhams	2	Evelyn Lewis, Hyattsville
	Lillian E. Waters, Benning, D.C.		Elinor Scaggs, Hyattsville
		2	Della Nalley Hyattsville

Two of the teachers-on the list--Margaret A. Edmonston at the Laurel High School and Eugene S. Burroughs, principal of the Surrattsville High School--now have schools named after them. Margaret Edmonston Elementary School is located on Cherry Lane in Laurel. Eugene Burroughs Junior High School is located at Livingston and Berry Roads in Accokeek. Eugene S. Burroughs later served as superintendent of the county schools. Alice McCullough, principal at school 10-3, the Laurel "Downtown School" is memorialized by the Alice McCullough Field, also known as the Laurel Athletic Field, purchased by the Board of Education with the legacy of Miss McCullough.

One of the teachers on this list certainly must have set some sort of longevity record. Miss Maria Queen, teacher at Hickory Grove School (5-1) on the T.B.--Accokeek Road (Rte. 373), retired after more than 50 years at the same school!

More information on county schools can be found in The Public Schools of Prince George's County, edited by Nelda Davis and Mildred Hoyle. Available for \$5.00 from Arthur B. Hamilton, 6515 40th Ave., Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Checks should be made to PGCRTA. The book was published by the county's Retired Teachers Association.

News and Notes from

THE PRINCE GEORGES  
COMITY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

August 1977'

Vol, V. no, 8

Nearby Marine Museum  
Celebrates Second Anniversary

Society members interested in a short but pleasant weekend driving trip will probably find a visit to the nearby Calvert Marine Museum a rewarding experience.

Located south of Upper Marlboro by a scant thirty-five miles at Solomons Island in Calvert County, the Marine Museum presents a variety of exhibits and artifacts peculiar to Maryland's Chesapeake Bay heritage. The museum's proudest possession, the Drum Point Lighthouse, is eclipsed if not in size, but by popular appeal, by its woodcarving and modelmaking shop where Bay artisans may be observed carving models, trailboards, and other nautical exhibit items. The creditable collection of Bay memorabilia currently features a marine art exhibit, a military scuba display, and an extensive fishing equipment collection of interest to all Bay sportsmen while enlightening to the layman.

Prince George's County history buffs who have not visited this area are neglecting their historical enlightenment since a major portion of old "P G" County was carved out of Calvert on St. George's Day (April 23) 1696. Side trips of short duration en route to Solomons Island to view the

relocated colonial homes at Lower Marlboro and the magnificent view of the Bay from the Nuclear Power Plant overlook are but two suggestions. Numerous historical markers along the entire Route 4 route are worth stopping for.

The busy waterfront at Solomons is always interesting and currently an ocean going Thailand junk at anchor provides a unique contrast to the spectacular fishing fleet in the harbor.

From Upper Marlboro, Route 4 dead ends at Solomons so the route is easy to follow. The seafood restaurants provide a wide selection for dinner choice and an alternate return route via the Benedict Bridge will recall memories of the British landing there in the War of 1812 and their march through Prince George's County to the Battle of Bladensburg.

The museum is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sundays from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. without admission charge. It is a short trip but a most interesting one.

September Meeting Reminder

The first meeting of the Fall will be on September 10.

New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society

Mr. J. J. Smith, Jr.  
Marlboro  
Mrs. Virginia E. Dantona

Upper  
Mrs. Walton, Mrs. Cook  
Seabrook

Sasscer-Hill Rezoning Denied

The County Council-last month denied the controversial application for rezoning of the "Sasscer-Hill" tract just southwest of Upper Marlboro. The area is now a rural one; what was-proposed was a rezoning to allow a 500-acre residential development.

The Maryland Historical Trust was particularly vocal in its opposition to the rezoning proposal. Brice Clagett, Chairman of the Trust, and Mrs. Sara Walton, chairman of the Trust's Prince George's County Committee, both testified against rezoning at a Council meeting on June 20.

Some development will undoubtedly come to Upper Marlboro soon, and the Prince George's Journal reports that construction on one project may begin as early as next year. The County Council has the final say on what rezoning will be allowed. Those with opinions on the matter of development in what remains of the county's rural areas

should follow developments in the local press--and by all means write directly to the County Council expressing their opinions.

### Sewer Moratorium Lifted

In another action which will greatly affect development and historic preservation in rural Prince George's County, the Maryland State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene terminated its moratorium on new sewer hookups in the eastern and northeastern parts of the county. The opening of the Western Branch Wastewater Treatment Plant, according to the Washington Star, will free for new sewer hookups an 110-square mile area which includes Largo, Upper Marlboro, Bowie, and Greenbelt. The lack of adequate sewage treatment facilities caused the state to impose a ban on new sewer hook ups seven years ago. In its July 22 edition, the Star reported that a "new surge of home building is expected in most of Prince George's County's northeastern quadrant as a result of the lifting of a seven year sewer moratorium....."

The sewer moratorium was already lifted for the central and southern parts of the county when the Piscataway treatment plant was opened. The Maryland Historical Trust views the ending of the moratorium with alarm. In its July 1977 newsletter it stated: "With the end of the sewer moratorium and the pickup in construction, the remaining rural, agricultural, historic areas of Prince George's are facing the threat of inappropriate development on an enormous scale."

### The Bladensburg Academy

The press has given much attention recently to the selection of a president for the new University of the District of Columbia. At the University of Maryland, a search committee has been appointed to begin the work of finding a successor to President Wilson H. Elkins who has announced his intention to resign the post he has held for more than twenty years. In each case, the two universities' governing bodies--the trustees and the board of regents--realize that their selection is not the selection of an anonymous administrator. The president symbolizes the university--and the university's reputation is in part determined by the reputation of its president.

When the trustees of the Bladensburg Academy sought a leader for their school, they must have been as aware of the importance of their choice as the trustees of the two nearby universities are today. In an age when very few went on to college, early education was in all likelihood all the formal training a student would receive. The trustees of the Bladensburg Academy knew that their choice for the director of their school program would influence many parents--and so they made sure they let the public know of his qualifications. The following advertisement is taken from the Washington, D. C., newspaper, the National Intelligencer, for August 119 1838 Thanks to Frank White, Jr., for supplying it.

--Alan Virta

BLADENSBURG ACADEMY. The Trustees of this infant institution take great pleasure in announcing to the Public that they have at length succeeded in unanimously electing Dr. Philip Smith to preside over its rising destinies. Dr. Smith is a sound classical scholar, and a gentleman of science; not only in the estimation of the Board of Trustees but also of many other gentlemen of literature and science.

Dr. Smith, with profound classical and mathematical research, combines much professional experience, unceasing industry, efficiency of system, and a happy method of communicating instruction. The Greek, Latin, and French languages will be thoroughly taught, with the Mathematics, Geography, and the elementary branches of a sound English education. The Academy will be open for the reception of pupils on the first Monday of September next.

In inviting the attention of the Public to the Bladensburg Academy, the Trustees give the assurance that every exertion shall be made on their part (supported, as they will be, by Dr. Smith,) to render this institution worthy of the patronage of those who may be desirous of placing their sons at a nursery of literature and science where useful and ornamental learning will be imparted, the morals preserved, and the character of the pupils formed under a system of rigid propriety. Bladensburg is remarkably healthy and moral, the location of the academic buildings very agreeable, with spacious areas for exercise; the whole being well calculated to secure as much comfort to the pupils as can be found elsewhere; and the Academy can be approached by persons at a distance, by means of the railroad and other conveyances.

## TERMS

For elementary pupils	\$16 Do per annum	Robert Wright,
For more advanced English classes	20	Thomas Ferrol,
The Mathematics	30	Benjamin Day,
The Classics including French Board a and Tuition	40	Alexander Keech.
Washing	10	
Lodging	6	

The editor should note that trustee Thomas Ferrol usually spelled his name Thomas Ferral, and that the spelling in the above advertisement is probably an error.

C

The Bladensburg Academy was located near the intersection of what is now Annapolis Road (Route 450) and Edmonston Road in Bladensburg. The Board of Education's County Media Center (in the old Primary School building) now occupies the site. Elementary education had been available in some form in Bladensburg since the 1770's, and we all often tend to lump the schools together under the title "The Bladensburg Academy." The organizational history of the schools of Bladensburg is not an easy one--there were several over a period of many years, and several reincorporations and reorganizations took place. "Ode to Education," a poem by Samuel Knox, director of one of the early schools, which was spoken by several of his pupils at an "exhibition" on the 18th and 19th of December, 1788, was published in News and Notes from the Prince George's County Historical Society for May 1973 (Vol. 1, no. 3) pp. 18-21. Readers should recall, as well, that this was not public education. A comprehensive system of public schools had not been established, and those who couldn't pay didn't go to school.

P

### Dr. Bayne Speaks Out

e

Of Prince George's County's leaders in the 19th century, Dr. John H. Bayne, from near Oxon Kill, ranks among the most versatile. He was by profession a physician and surgeon. He was an accomplished agriculturalist. He was active in politics, serving in the House of Delegates and the State Senate. And he was also an educator, for he served as president of the county's school board and superintendant of schools just after the Civil War.

No question in the 19th century was as trying in Prince George's County as the question of Secession. As the nation entered the Civil War, the citizens of Prince George's County were divided. Dr. Bayne chose to remain loyal to the Union, and in November of 1861 he was elected to represent Prince George's County in the State Senate on the Unionist ticket.

m

In 1864, the citizens of the county faced a choice as important as that of Secession or Union. It was the question of freedom or slavery for Maryland's slaves. Throughout the war, Maryland was in a curious position. Although it remained loyal to the Union, it also remained a slave state. In 1864, however, the state legislature decided that a new constitution for the state should be written, and instructed all counties to elect delegates to a state constitutional convention. Opponents of

slavery let it be known that they would work to include a provision outlawing slavery in the new constitution.

Dr. Bayne and his family had never been abolitionists before the war. In fact, they owned slaves themselves. But by 1864, he had come to the conclusion that slavery should be eliminated. In the letter below, published in the Marlboro Gazette of March 30, 1864, Bayne declared that he would not be a candidate for delegate to the convention, but that he did endorse the emancipationists.

Dr. Bayne, it seems, in this case was not in tune with the county's voting citizenry. Emancipation's opponents were elected. The constitution which eventually was adopted, however, did free the slaves.

#### DECLENSION

I am announced in the last issue of the Marlborough Gazette as a candidate for the contemplated State Convention.

My position as Surgeon at Fort Washington renders it incompatible for me to serve in the capacity of a Delegate if elected; and I therefore feel compelled to decline tile honor. After having obtained leave of absence from the War Department for the past two months to complete the term for which I was elected to the State Senate, I believe it impracticable to get permission again to be absent from my post.

I am unequivocally in favor of the election of Delegates to the proposed State Convention.

Slavery in my humble opinion is practically extinct in Maryland and without the least prospect of resuscitation. And as the destiny of the institution is manifest, I think it behooves the people of the State to send Delegates to the Convention who are in favor of Compensated Emancipation.

#### Commodore Barney on the Patuxent

During tile War of 1612, British naval squadrons roamed the Chesapeake Bay virtually at will. They pillaged many towns in 1813, and returned for more action in 1814. Throughout the summer of 1814, Commodore Joshua Barney's American flotilla--consisting of his sloop, Scorpio, 16 gunboats, and others--was trapped upriver on the Patuxent by British ships below.

The- newspapers in other states kept their readers informed of the naval situation in Southern Maryland. The following account of early action in June 163 years ago is from the Boston Repertory of June 17, 1814, and was contributed by Mrs. Helen Brown.

"From our correspondent. Office of the Federal Gazette. Baltimore. June 11. --Alan Virta

By the Annapolis Packet, arrived last night, we learn that two expresses had arrived to the Governor from Com. Barney, whose Flotilla was at Leonard's Creek, in consequence of which 5 or 6 pieces had been despatched to him, and a numerous body of militia and volunteers had gone thence and from Anne Arundel County, to his assistance.

It was understood the expresses brought accounts that the British had brought all their forces to the Patuxent and on Wednesday and Thursday made a vigorous attack via the flotilla, principally with rockets from a brig prepared for the purpose. The firing was of long duration and no other damage was known to have been done to the flotilla, except that t rocket had fallen on one of the barges, which killed one man and scorched. two. Heavy firing was heard yesterday afternoon supposed another attack."

The flotilla survived these attacks in June. The British did not pursue Barney upriver until August 22, 1814, when they finally had begun their march on Washington. By the time they reached the flotilla, however, it had been abandoned and deliberately destroyed. Barney and his flotillamen set the torch to their own boats on the Patuxent at Pig Point near the place where the Western Branch (from Upper Marlboro) enters the Patuxent. The flotillamen then joined their American compatriots in the ill-fated "defense" of Washington.

Source: Lord, Walter;  
The Dawn's Early Light, New  
York: W.W Norton, 1972.

(It should be that Mr. Lord lists  
Paul Lanham in the  
Acknowledgements for his book  
The Dawn's Early Light.)

--Alan Virta

The Prince George's County  
Historical Society

For information on membership,  
which includes a subscription to  
this newsletter, contact the  
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# The Planters' Advocate.

UPPER MARLBOROUGH, MARYLAND, WEDNESDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 16, 1859.

"We claim for the landed interest the future control of the destinies of this State, and we will not abate one jot of our pretensions."

The citizens of Prince George's County of 1851 were presented this frank statement of purpose in the September 10 issue of the Planters' Advocate, a newspaper founded earlier that year to be a spokesman for the landowning tobacco planters of Southern Maryland. Published in Upper Marlboro by Thomas J. Turner, the Planters' Advocate had a short life of only ten years. Those ten years, however, are important ones in the study of the history of Prince George's County. They were the last years of the conservative, agricultural, slaveholding society that would be swept away with the Civil War. Through the columns of the Planters' Advocate, we see how that society reacted to the challenge of the dynamic, industrial, commercial North--and how, in desperation, that society tried to save itself through separation from, the rest of the Union. The story of the Planters' Advocate is a fascinating one--for through its eyes we can witness a society under fire. The Planters' Advocate was unsuccessful in its fight to preserve the society of the "landed interest," but it reflected that interest's views faithfully over ten critical years.

Thomas J. Turner published the first issue of the Planters' Advocate on September 3, 1851. Prince George's County then was society very different than the Prince George's County of today. There were no large towns, only a few tiny villages, with most of the population of 22,000 scattered across the country side. Washington City was a distant village, and most of the District of Columbia was farmland.

Prince George's County of 1851 was an agricultural county, the largest producer of tobacco in the State. Though tobacco was dominant, it was not the sole crop, for wheat and corn, in particular, were important in the county's economy. Also important to the economy was the forced labor of black slaves--11,510 of them in 1850--more than half of the county's population. Besides the slaves, there were 8,901 whites and 1,138 free blacks. The challenges of the Northern Abolitionists struck at the heart of the social order of Prince George's County, and it was in part in response to their attacks that the Planters' Advocate was established.

KIMMELL HOUSE,  
C STREET,  
Between Four-and-a-Half and Sixth Streets.  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

A. Proprietor.  
E. Superintendent.

Febuary 2, 1859--ly

**C. S. KEECH & DANIEL CLARKE,**

HAVING associated together in the PRACTICE OF THE LAW under the firm of **Keech & CLARKE**, offer their professional services to the public.

They will practice in the Courts of Prince George's and the neighboring counties, and in the Court of Appeals. Prompt attention given to all entrusted to their care.

One member of the firm may always be found at their Law Office.  
April 6, 1859--tf

**John T. Eversfield, M. D.,**

Offers his Professional Services to the citizens of Nottingham and adjoining districts.

Office at his residence near "Croom."  
May 25, 1859 tf

**Extensive Furniture Emporium**

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE subscriber would respectfully inform the citizens of Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, Maryland, and the Public in general, that he has now completed his stock of FURNITURE for the fall and winter trade, and is prepared to sell, at low prices, every description of the best quality of

Furniture. We enumerate in part:

Fine Mahogany Walnut, Cherry and other Wardrobes.

Fine ~~11:1110gllly~~ Walnut and Cherry Jenny Lind, Cottage and other  
Beadsteads and Miltrusses.

Fine Mahogany and Walnut Sofas, Mails and Ottomans.

Fine Mahogany and Walnut Marble-top Centre, and other  
Tables.

Fine Mahogany and Walnut Dressing and other Bureaus and  
Sideboards.

Fine Mahogany and Walnut Ladies' Cabinets, Work Stands and  
What-Nots.

Fine Walnut and Cane-seat Chairs, mid Rockers, China, Glass,  
Crockery and Hardware--with a large assortment of other

**House Furnishing Goods,**

which We deem unnecessary to enumerate--all of which is of a good quality and will be sold t low prices.

The subscriber flatters himself that no person wishing to purchase good Furniture will go away dissatisfied after giving him a call, at the corner of 7th and D Streets, No. 525 7th Street  
A. GREEN.

Washington, August 25, 1858-tf

**A CARD.**

The subscriber respectfully offers his services to the public AS A COLLECTOR OF ALL KINDS OF CLAIMS Having been elected constable last fall And given good nod sufficient blind <sup>18 such the</sup> public ~~can~~ rest assured that all claims placed in his hands will receive prompt attention And lie faithfully accounted for. His postis ~~n~~ Bladensburg where all letters addressed to him will receive early attention

RICHARD HOPKINS.

Bladensburg, Oct. 6, 1858-tf

**2500 Tobacco Hogshead Hoops**

**for Sale.**

I have for sale at this place TWENTY-FIVE HUNDRED TOBACCO HHD. HOOPS, in good order. Terms cash on delivery.

WILLIAM 11. EARLY.

**Thomas J. Turner asserted his news paper's creed in Volume 1, number 1, on September 3, 1851. He began:**

"The character of our people and the nature of our institutions are peculiar to ourselves. It is vitally important we should appreciate those institutions that we may teach others to respect them. The age in which we live and the reckless spirit of innovation which has seized upon it, renders such knowledge on our part a stern necessity. ... Our opinions are the result of conviction--our sole object the prosperity of the community in which we live. That we would promote unity of opinion in our community in reference to its interests and institutions--and combined and determined action in protection and support of their interests and institutions,--we are free to admit--other than this we have no motive...."

**Specifically, Turner outlined three positions:**

"In the first place, we believe domestic slavery, as it exists among us, to be a truly conservative and beneficial institution--right in view of God and man, and as such, we will ever maintain it.

"In the second place, we shall claim for agriculture, as the most important interest of the State, a controlling influence over the policy of the State, while for the land owner, as the representative of this great interest, we shall demand an equally imposing influence in the legislation of our State.

"And in the third place, having in view the fact that no production of any soil commands a better price from the consumer than tobacco, and that despite this truth, our thousand pounds of the leaf, in bulk, is frequently sold for forty dollars, while fifteen or twenty pounds of the same leaf, rolled into cigars, (the work of a day,) is made by some magic or trickery of trade to command the same amount (\$40) in the same market. We will cease not to inquire strictly and fearlessly into the cause of disproportionate

prices and so unnatural a condition of the markets, until we obtain from Government, both State and National, such consideration and legislation in regard to this interest as will secure to the grower of the article a more equitable share of the profits, and a fairer return for his capital and his labor.--Such is our social creed."

As considered and serious as Turner's social creed might have been, and as determined his intention was to defend and preserve his society's way of life, the Planters' Advocate did not fail to report the lighter side of county life. Like most newspapers of today or yesterday, most of its space was devoted to less weighty matters--to community news, advertisements, fiction, poetry, and features. The newspaper was issued weekly, on Wednesdays, and was four pages long. The pages were a little larger than those of today's newspapers, and there were seven columns across the page.

Although it had fewer advertisements than later issues, the number of September 3, 1851 (Volume 1, number 1) was fairly typical of most issues of the Planters' Advocate. Most of page 1 was devoted to fiction, in this case "Love and Smuggling: A Story of the English Coast," which was continued on page 4. Page 2 was the political, editorial, and news page. There was a long letter from Thomas F. Bowie, candidate for Congress, presenting his story on the bitter division in the local Whig Party. Turner presented his editorial statement, plus short news reports on county, state, and national events. Page 3 was exclusively advertisements. Page 4 contained ads, as well as the continuation of the story on page 1, an agricultural column, and feature articles on transcendentalism and mesmerism. In later issues, there would be more variety on the front page--poetry, shorter stories, and more feature articles--and almost all of the back page, as well as the third, would be devoted to advertisements. Few of the fiction or feature articles were locally written--most were reprinted from other sources. The ads printed here are taken from the Planters' Advocate of November 16, 1859, as is the masthead, which has been reduced in size.

**Valuable Tract of Wood Land**

AT

**PRIVATE SALE.**

The subscriber offers at private sale A TRACT OF WOOD LAND situated immediately on the public road leading from the Forest of Prince to Washington City, about half a mile from the Long Old Fields, adjoining the lands of Zachariah Berry, Sr., Thomas P. Ryan and others. It

**Contains about Eighty or Ninety Acres,**

and is well stocked with PINE, OAK, CHESTNUT &c. The soil is of an excellent quality and susceptible of being easily improved. It can be cleared up without much trouble, still advantageously--and a portion of it is bedded with clay, of first rate quality for brick making.

The land will be shown to any person disposing to purchase by James J. IAHnDr., Esq., at the Long Old Fields, or the subscriber. Letters addressed to me at Upper Marlborough will meet attention

JOHN H. SANSRIURY  
\$500 Reward.

Ran away from the subscriber, living near the Brick Church in the Forest of Prince George's County, Maryland, on Tuesday the 16th of September 1856, negro man BEN,

*BENJAMIN DUCKETT*

I purchased him from Mr. Edmund B. Duvall his father and mother belongs to Mr. Marcus DuVal near Buena Vista Post Office in this county; and he, no doubt may be found in that neighborhood.

Ben is of a dark ginger color, about twenty-five years of age, five feet ten or eleven inches high: has an impediment in his speech, and when spoken to has a down look and pats his left foot. His clothing not recollected, as he has various kinds

I will give the above reward for his apprehension--no matter where taken--provided he is brought home or Secured in jail, so Ill: 1 "0 him again.

November 10,

**J. E. Q. EARLY,**

CIVIL ENGINEER,

Offers his services to the public in the capacity of **SURVEYOR** and Civil Engineer generally. Letters addressed to him at Brandywine post office, will meet with prompt attention. January 11, 1854-tf

**CO-PARTNERSHIP.**

WALTER 13/11

NICOLAS

**BOWIE & SNOWDEN.**

**Civil Engineers,**

WILL attend to "if professional calls upon them, any where in the county. All letters upon business must be directed to them at Upper Marlborough,

November 10, 1858-tf

**Field Peas! Field PEAS!!**

THE subscriber is just in receipt of 100 BUSHELS FIELD OR STOCK PEAS to which he would call the attention of the farming community. Having purchased them at a low price, he can sell them at an *unusually low price.*

Send in your order early to

J. P. BARTHOLOW,  
Agricultural Warehouse, Seed Store and Guano Depot, 7th Street, opposite east end Centre Market, bet. Pennsylvania Avenue and Canal, 11 Washington,

In the early years, the Planters' Advocate was politically independent, and did not endorse particular candidates or parties in election campaigns. In 1855, however, it departed from this practice. The Whig Party had recently disbanded, the local Democratic Party was weak, and a new party, the American, or "KnowNothing" Party had organized in the county. The Planters' Advocate was vociferous in its denunciation of Know-Nothingism, and warmly endorsed a -unity ticket "formed of the conservative elements of both the old parties." In 1856, the paper endorsed Democratic Presidential candidate James Buchanan, and in the 1857 and 1859 local elections, it supported the Democratic candidates. On October 26, 1859, the Planters' Advocate concluded that "...no county in Maryland has so large a stake in the maintenance of the opinions and principles which, in late years, have been represented by the Democratic party...." Like most Southern newspapermen, Turner greeted Abraham Lincoln's election as President with grave concern. The citizenry of Maryland and Prince George's County was divided on the issues of Secession or Union, but Turner's position was clear. When the Southern States seceded, he saw Maryland's union with them the only way to save the county's traditional ways of life. In the early months of the Civil War, the Planters' Advocate declared in its issue of July 31, 1861:

"We shall therefore continue to advocate the recognition of the Independence of the Confederate States ... and we shall strenuously cooperate with those of our people who favor the pursuit of that local policy, in Maryland, which will place the State in Confederation with the Southern Government at the very earliest practicable moment."

And if the reader was still unsure of the paper's war policy, its column of war news was called "Progress of the Second War of Independence!"

These early months of the Civil War were the last months of the Planters' Advocate, however. In an article in the EnquirerGazette of August 9, 1957, Samuel A. -Wyvill stated that in 1861 Turner changed the name of the Planters' Advocate to the Prince Georgian . Indeed, in 1862, there appeared in Prince George's County a new newspaper called the Prince Georgian Volume 1, number 23 is on file in the Pratt Library in Baltimore. If one number had been issued weekly, volume 1 number 1 would have come out on January 3, 1862. Why did Turner let the Planters' Advocate die and begin anew with the Prince Georgian? Was the Planters' Advocate suppressed by the Federal authorities or denied the use of the mails? Was there a change in ownership? Or did Turner believe that the advocacy of +he Planters' cause was a lost one--and a new outlook was needed? The writer does not know. Whatever the case, the Planters' Advocate

ceased publication sometime in late 1861, and in its place was the Prince Georgian. A comparison of the Martenet map of 1861 of Upper Marlboro and the 1878 Hopkins map shows that both papers seem to have been located on the same lot in Upper Marlboro--so the change simply may have been one of name.

Turner edited the Prince Georgian until the 1880's, when it was sold. By 1886, Frederick Sasscer and Joseph K. Roberts had acquired it, and it was renamed the Enquirer. On February 1, 1925, the Enquirer was combined with the old Marlboro Gazette--founded by George W. Wilson in 1836--and the new newspaper took the name of the Enquirer-Gazette, still published today. That current paper, therefore, can trace its roots on one side of the family back to the Planters' Advocate.

The Planters' Advocate began with a promise to defend the way of life of Maryland's "landed interest." That way of life was ended, or at least radically changed, with the Civil War. Through the pages of the Planters' Advocate we can get a glimpse of what that life was like, and what the people of the "landed interest" felt and thought. For that reason alone, we can be glad that the ten short years of the Planters' Advocate have been preserved.

--Alan Virta

Sources: Planters' Advocate, on file at the Pratt Library, Maryland Department, Baltimore, Maryland.  
Seventh Census of the United States, 1850.  
Various editions of Ayer's American Newspaper Annual and Rowell's American Newspaper Directory.  
Article by Samuel A. Wyvill in the August 9, 1957 issue of the Enquirer-Gazette, on file in the vertical files of the Prince George's County Memorial Library, Hyattsville Branch.

### **The high price?**

The Pratt Library, in Baltimore, has an almost complete run of the ten years of the Planters' Advocate. One issue from April 1861 is located in the Surratt House, in Clinton, and scattered copies may exist in private hands or in other institutions. This newspaper, like the many other county newspapers, is a valuable resource for the study of the history of Prince George's County. Unfortunately, newspapers deteriorate with age and handling. This source may be lost to the next generation, and perhaps before, if nothing is done. Microfilming the 2100 pages of the Planters' Advocate would cost several hundred dollars. Is this too high a price? --AV

# The Marlboro Gazette

Another Upper Marlboro newspaper of the 1850's was the Marlboro Gazette. The Gazette enjoyed a much longer life than the Planters, Advocate.. Founded in 1836 by George W. Wilson, the Marlboro Gazette would survive under the ownership of the Wilson family until 1925, when the Prince George's Enquirer bought it out to form the Enquirer-Gazette.

Samuel A. Wyvill in the Enquirer-Gazette of August 9, 1957, states that the Gazette had trouble with the Federal authorities several times during the Civil War because of its Confederate leanings. Indeed, in American Bastille, by John A. Marshall, published in 1869, there is an account of George W. Wilson's brief imprisonment in the Old Capitol Prison in Washington, D. C.

The Old Capitol was located at 1st and A Streets, N.E., on the site of the Supreme Court building today. The building was erected after the War of 1812 to serve as a temporary home for Congress while the Capitol was being rebuilt after its burning by the British. The Old Capitol later served as a boarding house, and during the Civil War it was converted to a prison. The accompanying print is from

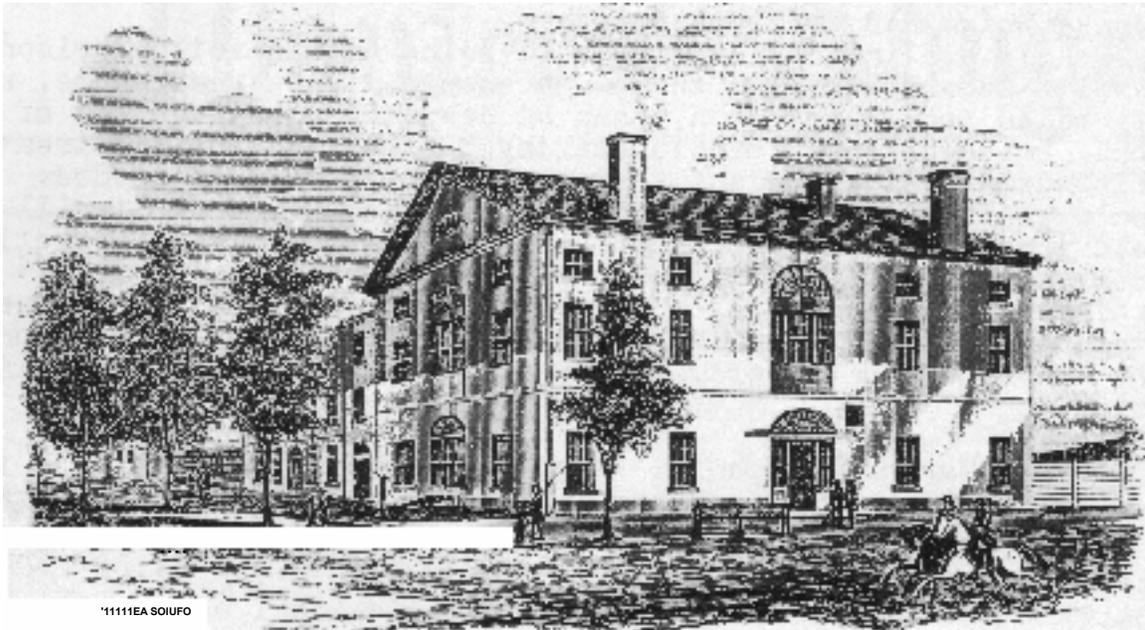
George W. Wilson

"George W. Wilson, of Upper Marlboro', Maryland, was arrested for the publication of an article in the Marlboro' Gazette, of which paper he was the Editor. The article in question was a criticism upon the unjustness of the apportionment of the population of his State, which included white and black, freemen and slaves, in the basis for a draft.

"The apportionment made three-fifths of the slaves and free colored population a part of the militia of the State, when the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, and the acts of the Legislature distinctly declared the militia of the State shall consist only of that portion of her free white citizens who are between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years.

"On the morning of the 15th of October, 1862, his house was searched by a Government Detective, who said that he was searching for Government stores, but failed to find any. He was supported in his nefarious work by a squad of soldiers, under the command of a Captain Bullock.

"Upon Mr. Wilson's return to Marlboro\*, at noon, he reported himself to the Captain, who at once put him under arrest. After a private and informal examination of his case before the Provost Mar



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THE OLD CAPITOL PRISON, WASHINGTON D.C.

shal of the County, the Detective, and the Captain, during which time these functionaries had quite a sharp discussion as to who had the greatest power in the case, a parole of two hours was granted the prisoner, when he was to report, and hear what disposition had been made of him.

"At the expiration of the allotted time, he found a horse in readiness, and was told that he was to be taken to Washington. Thither he was conducted, and arrived safely at the Old Capitol, at 9 o'clock p.m., where he was lodged, with ten or twelve other prisoners, in room No. 16. At the examination in Marlboro', the Marshal and Detective acquitted him fully of the charge alleged, but the Captain arraigned him upon the editorials published in that morning's "Gazette." He read and re-read them, torturing the language into an "interference with the draft," and charging him (Wilson) with sarcasm, in calling his soldiers "the sons of Abraham." He defended himself by asserting that it was a cognomen of their own choosing, and quoting in support a popular air of the day. His escape from the civil authorities, (the Marshal and Detective,) and his arrest by the military, brought to mind the

"Them were hard times for an honest gossoon; If he missed the judges, he met a dragoon: And whether the judges or soldiers gave sentence, The devil a short time they gave for repentance."

"During the few days Mr. Wilson was an occupant of the Old Capitol, and an inmate of room No. 16 of the famous--or infamous, rather--

Bastile--he made his room-mates forget, most of the time, that they were victims of despotism. His bon-mots and witticisms seemed inexhaustible, and the vivaciousness of his temper tended to dispel the ennui which had settled upon them.

Nor did his interest in -the well-being of his fellow prisoners cease with separation from them. No sooner did he reach home, some twenty miles from Washington, than he despatched a large box of provisions, which he knew, by his six days' experience of the treatment of prisoners of state by the Administration, they much needed. Mr. Wilson's genial nature and liberal and gentlemanly conduct will ever be held in grateful remembrance by his fellow-victims of despotism of room No , 16, Old Capitol Prison.

After remaining in the modern Bastile for six days, his case was taken up, and he was discharged, mainly through the exertions of the Hon. Charles Calvert, representative in Congress from his district."

Source: Marshall, John A. American Bastile: A History of the Illegal Arrests and Imprisonment of American Citizens During the Late Civil War. Philadelphia: Thos. W. Hartley. 1869. Reprinted by DeCapo Press, New York, 1970.

#### September Meeting Reminder

The Society will meet on Saturday, September 10, at the Rossborough Inn, University of Maryland. Guest speaker will be Mr. Edwin J. Beitzell, Jr. who will speak on "The Confederate Prison Camp at Point Lookout, Maryland." Cocktails and lunch begin at noon, the meeting at 2 p.m. If you plan to join us for lunch, reservations should be placed with 'Mr. Herbert Embrey, Treasurer , 10414 Tullymore Dr., Adelphi, Mid. 20783, by September 1. Lunch is \$3.50 per

#### St. Thomas Antique Show and Sale

The annual St. Thomas Parish Antiques Show and Sale will be held at the Edelen Brothers Tobacco Warehouse in Upper Marlboro (corner of Routes 301 and 408) from Friday, September 9 to Sunday September 11. Hours are 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day except Sunday, when it closes at 8 p.m. Admission is \$2.00 per person. Information: 627-3877 or 372-6945 Free

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

This special issue of News and Notes from the Prince George's County Historical Society is Volume V, no. 9, September 1977. For information on membership contact the Society at P. O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20840. President: Mr. Frederick S. DeMarr. Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. Frank Bagot. Editor: Mr. Alan Virta.

News and Notes from

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

October 1977

Vol. V, no. 10

The October Meeting

The October meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society will be held on Saturday, October 15, 1977, at St. John's Church at Broad Creek. The program will be presented by James T. Wollon, AIA, of Havre de Grace, an architect specializing in restoration work, who will speak on the architecture of churches in early Maryland. His talk will be illustrated with slides.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Guests are welcome. Following the meeting, members will have a chance to see the restoration work in progress at the church. The church building now used was completed in 1768.

A page with directions and more information accompanies this newsletter.

The 1977 House Tour

The second annual Prince George's County House Tour, sponsored this year by the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust, will be on Saturday October 8, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. This year five houses will be shown that have never been shown before:

The Dr. McCeney House, on Main Street in Laurel  
The Market Master's House in Bladensburg  
Grigsby Station in Landover  
Prospect Hill at Glenn Dale  
Fairview home of Governor Oden Bowie, near Belair-Bowie.

Also open will be the Indian Queen Tavern-George Washington House in Bladensburg and the Rossborough Inn at the University of Maryland. The beautiful grounds of the Christian Brothers Novitiate (Ammendale Normal Institute) above Beltsville will also be open, but the buildings themselves will be closed.

Admission price is \$4.00 for the entire tour, and includes a tour booklet. Senior citizen and student price is \$2.00. You may begin your tour at any tour stop. Tickets for individual houses are \$1.00 apiece if you do not buy the tour package, but no booklet is included.

Lunch and cocktails will be available at the Rossborough Inn. Reservations may be made, but are not necessary, by calling 454-3940.

Tour chairman is Mrs. Orva Heissenbuttel. Proceeds of the tour admissions will go toward watercolor paintings of historic county sites for the Court House at Upper Marlboro.

New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Raymond Leber	Upper Marlboro	Mr. Embrey
Kenneth W.	Riverdale	Mr. Embrey
M. J. Cuff	Hyattsville	Mr. Embrey
F. Hamer Campbell, Jr.	Greenbelt	Mr. Virta
Nevin and Theresa Saylor	Camp Springs	Mr. DeMarr
Karel C. Petraitis	College Park	Mr. Virta

### Dates to Keep in Mind

October 15: 2nd Annual Laurel Heritage Tour. Contact Pam Murphy at 497-1322.  
October 23-24: College Park Airport celebration. Replica of the Spirit of St. Louis will be there.  
October 30: 2nd Annual All Hallow's Eve celebration at Congressional Cemetery, Washington.  
To benefit the cemetery's restoration fund. Call 543-0539  
October 23-29: Craft Days at the Surratt House. 868-1121.

### The Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee, under the chairmanship of Col. Samuel Crook of Laurel, is preparing a slate of candidates to run for offices in the Prince George's County Historical Society for the coming year. Elections will be held at the October meeting, and the new officers will conduct the affairs of the Society during the year 1978. Anyone wishing to suggest candidates may call Col. Crook at 725-2445.

### John Wilkes Booth Tour

On Sunday, October 23, 1977, the Surratt Society will retrace the escape route used by John Wilkes Booth in April 1865 after the assassination of President Lincoln. From Ford's Theater, the scene of the assassination, Booth fled south through Prince George's and Charles Counties into Virginia. He was tracked down and killed by federal troops at the Garrett farm in Caroline County, Va.

Members and friends of the Prince George's County Historical Society are invited to join the Surratt Society for the tour. Cost of the all-day bus trip will be \$10.00. Tickets and information are available from Mrs. Joan Chaconas at 372-6945 or from the Surratt House at 868-1121.

County House Tour--Sponsored by the Prince George's Count-v Historical  
And Cultural Trust--Saturday October 8

### A Letter From Point Lookout

Those members of the Society who were able to attend the September meeting heard an excellent presentation by Edwin W. Beitzell on the Civil War prison camp at Point Lookout, Md.

One of the members of our Society, Mr. Richard Dent of Landover Hills, has in his possession a letter written on August 11, 1864, by a Union officer from Ohio on duty at the camp.

The letter was written by Alonzo Walter Baker to his brother Charles Eber Baker, who was then with the Union Army in the South. The author, who lived all his married life in Van Wert, Ohio, was the great grandfather of Mr. Dent's wife. Mr. Dent's own grandmother owned a cottage at Point Lookout in the 1930's and 40's--and this curious coincidence was discovered when Dent first met his wife's parents on a visit to their home in Ohio.

The letter is printed below.

Point Lookout Maryland  
August 11, 1864

Dear Brother,

Your letter like bread cast upon the waters, came to me after many days, but after its many wandering was none the less thankfully received. And now while everything here is again "Quiet on the Potomac" - I have thought it a good opportunity to pen a reply. I am happy to learn (as I do from Lottie's last letter) that up to the last letter received by Father you were still safe and free from all harm. I suppose you were not engaged in any of Sherman's last battles yet might be exposed to some of the dangers of battle. Sherman from all accounts must have had a series of victories although the Rebs claim some triumphs.

I sincerely wish the Army of the Potomac might have as much success. Grant's last engagement was a failure "Somebody to blame" as there eternally is in this Army. It was too long under the control of McClellan. But I do hope Grant will weed it out and then he will be successful here. I think Sherman lost a good officer when old Joe Hooker left. The Rebs have got up another big scare in Pennsylvania and Maryland but I, guess it is about played out. Grant threw up the 6th and 19th corps in short metre the second time.

We had a big scare here at the time of the first raid into Maryland, throwing up intrenchments &C. All bustle and excitement that has now played out, although we are, now building a very respectable Fort by rebel labor, it being voluntary on their part, prefering it to lying idle in the pens.. One of the guards shot one dead last Sunday.

Last Saturday we had a large water spout pass over the extreme south part of the point, destroying everything it came in contact with. Destroying two commissary buildings each at least 100 feet long--the dead house, Sutler Store, two wards in the General Hospital each probably 100 feet long, the roof and the sides tumbling in smashing beds, etc. and yet not a sick man was hurt in either. One sentinel was picked up and carried 100 yards, had both legs broken by striking timbers in the air or when he lit, and he does not know which. Another was carried a considerable distance but lit in the bay and was not injured. But two men in all were hurt, lumber, bales of hay, and pieces of roofs, large limbs of trees etc. sent whirling, in the air. It was a scene only witnessed in a life time. I did not get to see it, only the effects Just having come off duty as a Field Officer of the Day, I had lain down and was asleep, I would not have missed seeing it for \$25--but so it was.

I visited the Roanoake (doing guard duty off the point) a few days ago. She is claimed as the most formidable vessel in the world in an engagement. Is about 225 feet long, has three turrets each 11" thick, was plated 4 1/2 inches on the sides extending 6 feet below the water edge. The front turret has one 15 inch one 200 lb, Parrot gun. The rear one the same. The centre one two 11 inch guns. All the handling on the guns is done by machinery and by steam, having for all purposes 24 engines on board. She is indeed worth seeing.

Well we expect to start for home next week, our time being out the 20th. The detachments are ordered in today and General Barnes says we will start next week.

Lottie has returned to Van Wert from her visit to Marion all well. And strange as it may seem after the experience I had my brother and Irene is said to be carrying on a correspondence. Be careful Boy, how you take a fancy to a Peter's girl or a Nathan may get after you too.

Well Irene is a-good girl, but be careful of your heart for I tell you those girls take a fellows heart right away from him. At least that's the way one of them served me--so look out. Well answer this soon & direct to Van Wert as I expect to be there at the farthest by the 1st of September and if your letter should best me, a day or two, it will be all right--but don't delay a day after you receive this.

Our Col. has gone to Washington and I subscribe myself your brother.

A. W. Baker Maj. Comding. 139th O. V. I.

Alonzo W. Baker did indeed return to Van Wert, Ohio, where after the war he served as Collector of Internal Revenue and as Probate judge of Van Wert County. Born in 1828 in Marion, Ohio (a town founded by his family), he died in 1878. He was married to Charlotte Peters (Lottie in the letter), the daughter of Nathan Peters. She was born in 1830 and died in 1895, They had 1 son and 6 daughters.

Alonzo's younger brother Charles Eber Baker was only sixteen when he enlisted in the Ohio Volunteer Infantry, 64th Regt. He was mustered out of the service in Texas.

It seems as if younger brother has taken an interest in a Peters girl as did his older brother before him. The editor does not know the story of how this romance came out--we shall have to ask Mr. Dent!

### The Overnight Sensation of 1929

There was a time when there were several miniature golf courses in this county. The editor remembers 4 or 5 in northern Prince George's alone. Today the Yellow Pages lists just two courses in the county--one on University Boulevard in College Park and another at Mitchellville on Millbranch Road.

Miniature golf was the overnight sensation of 1929. According to most sources, miniature golf was introduced to America in the late 1920's by businessman Garnett Carter when he built a course to amuse the children at his Fairyland Inn near Chattanooga, Tenn. He found the game to be so popular with adults that he decided to go into miniature golf as a business--and in 1929 he began designing and marketing courses to others. And the boom began!

Overnight miniature golf became the national rage. Liberty magazine ran a feature article on the latest American fad, and books were published to advise both the golfer and the course owner. The Washington area was hit by storm. The 1930 Washington business directory (compiled the previous year) lists no courses--the 1931 directory lists 231. All of them were in the District. Like all fads, though, the miniature golf rage slacked off quickly. The 1932 D. C. directory lists only 6 courses--quite a fall-off. But interest didn't die out completely, it just stabilized at a level much lower than that of the early boom.

When was a miniature golf course first established in Prince George's County? The earliest one I could find in old phone books was the Queens Chapel course on Chillum Road in 1956. More extensive research in older books could push this date back. Some courses that have gone under that I remember are one in Clinton, one on Landover Road in Kent Village, another on George Palmer Highway near the drive-in theater, and another at Beltway Plaza in Greenbelt. According to old phone books, there was another in Berwyn.

Of the two now operating here in the county--Walt Potter's at Mitchellville and Monte's at College Park--the oldest is Monte's. It's in the phone books as early as 1957.

--Alan Virta

Sources: Henderson, Peter. Pitch and Putt Golf Courses.  
Phillips, Michael James. How to Play Miniature Golf.  
Los Angeles: Keystone Publishing Co. 193  
Thompson, Morley B. Miniature Golf. Central States Publishing Co. 1930.

### The College-Park Airport

Bill Aleshire reports that College Park Airport has just been named to the National Register of Historic Places by the Dept. of the Interior. The airport's application was submitted by Bill Aleshire and Robert Sellers, and had been forwarded to the Dept. by the Governor's Consulting Committee in October 1976. The airport will be open October 23 and 24--see page 50 for more information.

### The Friends of Montpelier

The Friends of Montpelier report the following activities:

The next meeting of the group will be on Saturday, October 15, at 1:30 at the mansion near Laurel. The program will be presented by Mr. Thomas Snowden, 12th generation descendant of the Thomas Snowden who built the house. Mr. Snowden and his wife Margery will speak on their research into the history of his ancestors, including, visits of Mount Snowdon and Snowdonia in Wales. They will have slides. The house will be open for inspection, and the gift shop will be open as well.

The Christmas Candlelight buffet will be offered on Sunday, December 11. Cocktails will begin at 5 p.m., dinner at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$12.50 per person, and a cash bar will be provided. Reservations are necessary, and may be made by contacting Mrs. Jean Speicher at 776-3086 (12209 Shadetree Lane, Laurel 20811) or at 953-9595 weekdays. The dinner will be hosted by Thomas and Margery Snowden.

The Friends of Montpelier will sponsor candlelight tours of the mansion on December 12 and 13 from 7 to 9 p.m. Tickets are \$1.00 for adults, 50 cents for children.

The group also reminds local organizations that catered luncheon meetings can be arranged at the mansion for a reasonable fee. For information call Mrs. Speicher.

### A Maryland Vacation

The State of Maryland has prepared a Maryland travel kit, which, according to the advertisements, "contains everything you need to plan an exciting fun-filled, budget-stretching vacation in Maryland." The travel kits are free, and are available by writing: Maryland Tourism, Room RR-97, Annapolis, Md. 21401.

### The Prince George's County Historical Society

This newsletter is published monthly and mailed to all members of the Society. Dues are \$5.00 per year. For information on membership, write the Society at P.O. Box, 14, Riverdale 20840, or call any of the officers listed below.

President: Frederick S. DeMarr.	277-0711
.4010 Hamilton Street, Hyattsville	20781
Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. Edith Bagot	927-3-32
3510 Longfellow Street, Hyattsville 20782	
Newsletter editor: Alan Virta 772-5448	
4703 67th Avenue, Hyattsville 20784	

News and Notes from

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

November 1977

Vol. V, no. 11

The November Meeting

The Prince George's County Historical Society will meet on Saturday, November 12, 1977, at 2 p.m. at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion at Riverdale. Guest speaker at the meeting will be Orlando Ridout IV, former director of the Maryland Historical Trust, who will speak on "Building a Great Colonial Mansion," the story of Col. James Brice and the Brice House in Annapolis. Mr. Ridout's talk will be illustrated with slides.

The Society's officers for the year 1978 will be elected at the meeting.

Guests are welcome. Plan to join us on November 12.

Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, several blocks west of Kenilworth Avenue.

Zoning Report

The Maryland Historical Trust, in its October newsletter, report the following news:

"Despite strong opposition which included the testimony of Trust chairman Brice M. Clagett, the county planning board has approved a plan for the development of Church Road, a 650-acre site in a rural and historic area north of Upper Marlboro. Included in the plan are amusement and employment parks, townhouses and highrises. The land is currently zoned residential and agricultural. The planning board chairman labeled rural preservation as 'a luxury the county cannot afford.' In addition to the rural environment, seven historic sites will be adversely affected. The Trust will continue to oppose the development when the matter comes before the County Council."

The area in question is near the intersection of Church Road and Oak Grove Road, near historic St. Barnabas Church, Leeland. The Prince George's County Historical Society resolved in opposition to the development plan at the September meeting at the University of Maryland. Individual members are encouraged to register their opinions with the County Council by letter. The address is County Council, Upper Marlboro, Md. Write your councilman, or the Council Chairman, William B. Amonett.

The public press has also reported the lifting of the sewer moratorium in the northwestern parts of the county. This was the last area to be retained under the ban on new hook-ups, and development can be expected to begin anew.

New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society. Elected at the October meeting were;

Name	Town	Sponsor
Mrs. Paul Buinicki	Annapolis	Mr. DeMarr
Mrs. Helen Reed	Bethesda	Mr. DeMarr

We also welcome a new institutional member:

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison

### Death of Otho T. Beall, Jr.

We regret to inform the membership of the death last month of Otho T. Beall, Jr. Dr. Beall was a charter member of the Prince George's County Historical Society and had served as an officer and director for many years. He was Professor of American Studies at the University of Maryland and a former chairman of the Dept. of American Studies. He joined the faculty of the University in 1946.

Dr. Beall lived at Young Hope Farm on Oak Grove Road, and was a member of numerous organizations besides our own. He was buried at St. Barnabas Church, Leeland.

The Society extends its deepest sympathy to Mrs. Beall and their son and two daughters.

### Events at Montpelier

The Friends of Montpelier will sponsor a fashion show and tea at the mansion on Thursday, November 3, at 2 p.m., in conjunction with the running of the Washington International at Laurel Racetrack. Tickets are \$5.00 per person.

Members of the Society are reminded that they and their guests are invited to the annual Candlelight Buffet dinner on Sunday, December 11. Cocktails will be at 5 p.m.; dinner at 6:30. Tickets are \$12.50 per person, and reservations are required.

For more information or reservations for either of these events, contact Mrs. Jean Speicher, 12209 Shadetree Lane, Montpelier, Md. 20811. Phone: 776-3086.

### Worcester County: Maryland's Arcadia

A new history of Worcester County, Md., has been published and is now available from the Worcester County Historical Society. Written by Dr. Reginald V. Truitt and Dr. Millard Grant LesCallette, the book traces the county's history to the present day.

Worcester County: Maryland's Arcadia is available for \$10.00, plus \$1.00 for mailing, from Worcester County Library, 307 N. Washington Street, Snow Hill, Md. 21863

### "That Grim, Truehearted Fighting Man": Admiral Daniel Ammen

Just north of Beltsville, on Route 1 and the B & O Railroad tracks, is an area known informally as Ammendale. Today it is marked by Ammendale Road and the Christian Brothers novitiate; once it was a railroad stop and the home of Admiral Daniel Ammen, U. S. N.

Admiral Ammen is well remembered in Beltsville: his life is traced in some detail in the history of that town published last year. Naval historians know him, too: his autobiography, The Old Navy and the New, and his history, The Atlantic Coast During the Civil War, are frequently consulted works. Nevertheless, his life and career are virtually unknown to most of the residents of Prince George's County--even to those who take an interest in her history. His was a career that should not be forgotten, and his contributions to the nation and the county should be well noted.

Daniel Ammen was born on May 16, 1819, in Brown County, Ohio. He grew up there, where he was for a number of years a boyhood friend of Ulysses S. Grant, three years his junior. In 1836, Ammen was appointed midshipman in the United State Navy, and according to the Dictionary of American Biography, "from then until the Civil War, his life was passed chiefly in long cruises. . . ." Amen sailed to the Mediterranean, The Gulf of Mexico, Labrador, Canada, China, Japan, Guam, Panama, Paraguay, Acapulco, and numerous other places.

When the Civil War broke out, he remained in the U.S. Navy and served the Union cause well. He participated in several naval engagements during the war, and in the words of the Dictionary of American Biography, "his reputations as a resolute and dependable ship commander... is suggested in the phrase of a brother officer, 'that grim, truehearted fighting man, Daniel Ammen.'"

Ammen resumed his voyages for the Navy after the war was over, and he was in the Far East when he received word that the President-elect, General Grant, was calling him home for service in Washington. Ammen and Grant had lost contact with each other in the 1840's, but during the Civil War they again became close friends. In 1869 Grant called him to Washington to head the Navy's Bureau of Yards and Docks.

It was only then--when he was fifty years old--that Ammen settled in Prince George's County, on a tract of land near Beltsville known as "Happy Home." "I found my time so much occupied," he wrote in his autobiography, "that I chose a country home, where I could have my evenings for considering or preparing my work, and a horse to ride, which I consider almost indispensable to the health and well-being of every one having responsible duties." Indeed, Ammen was quite an advocate of country life--he wrote on that subject for magazines and newspapers, and published a 44-page pamphlet on the subject as well.

Ammen purchased the tract of land known as "Happy Home" in 1869, and the area soon became known as "Ammendale." He and his second wife, Zoe Atocha, a Louisianan of French-Spanish descent whom he married in 1866, raised five children there--three daughters and two sons. After his service as Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, Ammen served as Chief of the Bureau of Navigation. He retired from the Navy in 1878 as a rear admiral.

Even though he was retired on his Prince George's County estate, he remained quite active. He wrote The Atlantic Coast During the Civil War in 1883, Country Homes and Their Improvement in 1885 and his autobiography, The Old Navy and the New in 1,891. What seems to have been his primary interest, however, was another project--the promotion of an American canal across the isthmus of Central America.

Ammen had become active on behalf of a canal before he retired from the Navy. In 1872, President Grant appointed him a member of the U. S. Isthmian Canal Commission, and he became an ardent advocate of a Nicaraguan route. After his retirement, in 1879, President Hayes appointed him to represent the United States at the Inter-oceanic Canal Congress in Paris, and until his death in 1898, he wrote and spoke in favor of an American canal across the Isthmus.

Admiral Ammen did not neglect the affairs of his local community despite his national reputation and concerns. He was particularly interested in the religious and educational life of his area, and made contributions to both. He sold twenty acres of land--for \$400--to the Christian Brothers for the establishment of a novitiate and school near Ammendale. The religious institute was first called the St. Joseph's Normal Institute, but later became known as the Ammendale Normal Institute. The Christian Brothers opened a school there for local boys, and Ammen's son, Grant Ammen, was one of the pupils. Ammen also donated five acres of land to the local Catholic parish and contributed with his family to the building of St. Joseph's Catholic Church, forerunner of the church standing now on Montgomery Road. In recognition of his services to the order, the Christian Brothers named him an "Affiliated Brother of the Brothers of the Christian Schools," the highest honor that the order can bestow upon a layman.

Ammen's autobiography, The Old Navy and the New, is chiefly about his naval career; there is little mention of life at Ammendale. He does recount one amusing incident, however, that could very well be titled "Sherman's March to Vansville":

"General Sherman drove out to spend the day with me ... and met Commodore Guests, my brother, General Ammen, and myself, in a hollow, on our way towards Vansville on the top of the hill. From long habit in army life General Sherman took in the topography of the country at a glance: he asked what fool had laid out this road to take people up a hill just to make them go down on the other side and then up another hill again. I told him that the road had been laid out sixty years before, when it was supposed there was no corruption in

politics; at the request of two distinguished lords of the soil the turnpike between Baltimore and Washington had by law to pass through Belleville near the Agricultural College, and Vansville, on the top of the hill he had just passed, and in consequence over half a dozen hills in succession to a large oak, to be seen on the crest of a hill nearly two miles distant. By passing around the hill he had ascended, and following up a valley, an excellent road location would have been secured to near that tree, instead of passing over a succession of ridges sixty or eighty feet in height, and making the distance greater than had the road been properly laid out."

Ammen lived at Ammendale until his death in 1898 at Washington Naval Hospital. He attracted other military figures to the area: his brother, General Jacob Ammen, lived in Vansville for more than twenty years. Two military colleagues, Commodore John Guest and his own brother-in-law, Captain Davis, U. S. A., also lived nearby.

Throughout the last years of his life, Admiral Ammen remained devoted to his boyhood friend, General Grant. His autobiography closes with mention of Grant and of his resting place in New York.

"I met General Grant for the last time in Washington, in October, 1881. His residence in New York was distant from the part of the city visited by me at intervals. He was surrounded by new friends, and many of them, and it seemed to me that I would not be missed should I not call. I have never had other than the most affectionate regard for him, and if in his illness he had sent a message that he wished to see me I would have been at his bedside at once, and have remained as long as he desired my presence. I never go to New York, when the weather and my time will permit, that I do not stand at an early hour in front of that lonely tomb; and I am sure that there is not one of all his old friends and comrades who does not wish to see his remains removed to Arlington. The memory of such a man belongs to a great people--no less to those of the South than to those of the North. His resting place should be there, surrounded by the tens of thousands who have fallen in battle, and by the sturdy companions of the war, as General Sheridan, and many others, and by those who in the near future will be gathered to their old companions in arms, who now rest at this burial-spot, which will be visited in coming centuries by multitudes who love their country, and who will wish to honor the remains of the illustrious men and the unnamed thousands who in a dire extremity-aided in maintaining the life of a nation."

Daniel Ammen was an accomplished mans one who should be well remembered in Prince George's County.

---Alan Virta

Sources: Ammen, Daniel. Country Homes and Their Improvement. Washington, D.C.: Joseph Shillington. 1885.

Ammen, Daniel. The Old Navy and the New. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co. 18910

Brother Angelus Gabriel. The Christian Brothers in the United States, 1848-1948. New York: The Declan X. McMullen Co. 1948.

Dictionary of American Biography.

History of Beltsville (1976) sponsored by the Beltsville Volunteer Fire Dept., Women's Community Club of Beltsville, Beltsville-Vansville District Citizens Association, and the Beltsville News.

For more detailed information on Ammen and his estate, consult the History of Beltsville, cited above. Information on his brother, General Jacob Ammen, can be found there and in the Dictionary of American Biography.

Affair of Honor

The Fall 1977 issue of the Maryland Historical Magazine carries an interesting story titled "A Strange Career in A Young Navy." The story traces the career of Maryland Captain Charles Gordon who was so unfortunate as

to command the U.S. Frigate Chesapeake whose peaceful capitulation to the British Leopard at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay in June 1807 was one of the underlying causes of the War of 1812.

Most county history buffs are aware that the tragic duel at Bladensburg between Commodore Stephen Decatur and James Barron on March 22, 1820, had portions of its origin in the so-called "Chesapeake Affair." Not so well known, however, is the fact that Captain Gordon had also defended his honor at the same spot and basically for the same reason. On Jan 10, 1810, he met Alexander C. Hanson, the vitriolic pro-British editor of the Federal Republican newspaper.

Gordon was felled in the encounter with a serious wound in the abdomen which contributed to his ultimate demise in 1816 while commanding the U.S. Constellation. He was removed from the dueling ground to nearby Hill's Hotel and subsequently to the nearby residence of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Gallatin. Hanson, unharmed in the duel, was to be severely injured by an anti-British attack on his offices in Baltimore in July 1812. He never fully recovered from the wounds in that riot, and he died shortly after the war at the age of 35.

While the Decatur-Barron duel is well known (and is the subject of a striking diorama at the Indian Queen/ George Washington House museum in Bladensburg) the lesser known Gordon-Hanson duel is part of the same underlying tragic chain of events which began before the War of 1812 and continued until after that conflict's cessation.

--Paul Lanham

References: Maryland Historical Magazines, Fall 1977,

Death of Decatur. Article by John M. Taylor in the Washington Star of October 28, 1973,

(Notes George Alfred Townsend, or "GATH," in his Tales of the Chesapeake, presents a fictitious story of a duel titled "The Fall of Utie" which graphically depicts the sordid beginnings, emotions, and callous excitement surrounding an "affair of honor" at the Bladensburg dueling ground.

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

President:	Frederick S. DeMarr 4010 Hamilton Street, Hyattsville, Md. 20781	277-0711
Corresponding Secretary:	Mrs. Edith Bagot 3510 Longfellow Street, Hyattsville, Md. 20782	927-3632
Editor:	Alan Virta 4708 67th Avenue, Hyattsville, Md. 20784	772-5448

For information on membership, which includes a subscription to the newsletter, contact any officer or write the Society at P. O. Box 149 Riverdale, Md. 20840.

News and Notes from

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

December 1977

Vol. V, no. 12

The Christmas Party

The Society's annual Christmas Party will be held this year on Saturday, December 10, at 2 p.m. at Montpelier Mansion, just south of Laurel.

The mansion will be decorated for the Holidays, and special Christmas refreshments will be served. As is the custom, anyone with a Christmas food speciality is invited to bring some to share.

This year's party will have an added feature: a program of Renaissance and Baroque music during the party with voice and early instruments, presented by Dr. Richard Berg of the University of Maryland and associates.

Montpelier is located on Route 197 north of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway and south of Laurel. Members are reminded that entry to the parking lot is no longer made via Montpelier Drive but via Muirkirk Road. Turn off of Route 197 (the Laurel-Bowie Road) at the traffic light just opposite the shopping center.

The Friends of Montpelier have made remarkable progress in the furnishing of the house. Bring your friends and family to celebrate the beginning of the Christmas season in this impressive reminder of our county's 18th century heritage.

A Christmas Message from the Printer

The printer "...congratulates his readers with the compliments of the Season, and heartily wishes them a Happy New Year."

At Christmas 1777, the readers of the Maryland Gazette received these wishes from the printer of their newspaper. Two hundred years later, the officers of the Prince George's County Historical Society wish our readers the same: We congratulate you with the compliments of the Season, and heartily wish you a Happy New Year.

Merry Christmas!

Herbert W. Wells is Honored

The county's new ice skating rink, recently opened on Calvert Road in College Park, has been named in honor of Herbert We Wells, a past chairman of the Park and Planning Commission and the 4th president of the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Herb Wells was appointed to the Planning Commission in 1947 by Gov. William Preston Lane, Jr. In June of 1957 he was appointed to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and served until 1963. As chairman of the commission, he was responsible for the acquisition of Montpelier Mansion.

Mr. Wells also served as Chairman of the National Capital Regional Planning Council and as a Director of the Citizens Bank of Maryland. The principal owner of the G.T. Wells Fuel Company in College Park, he was also a councilman for the City of College Park, a president of the Chamber of Commerce, and president of the Prince George's Kiwanis Club. He now lives in College Park.

The Herbert W. Wells Ice Rink is now open. For information on hours and fees call 277-0654. The rink is operated by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the county Department of Parks and Recreation.

### Election of Officers

Elections were held at the November meeting, and the following members were elected to serve as officers of the Prince George's County Historical Society for the year 1978:

Presidents Frederick S. De Marr, Hyattsville  
Vice president: John A. Giannetti, College Park  
Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. Frank Bagot, Hyattsville,  
Recording Secretary: Harold C. Hutcheson, Laurel.  
Treasurer: Herbert C. Embrey, Adelphi  
Historian: James C. Wilfong, Jr., Prince Frederick  
Directors: Mrs. Felix E. Cristofane, Bladensburg  
Paul T. Lanham, Huntingtown  
Alan Virta, Greenbelt  
Awards Committee: Leslie Ticknor, District Heights,  
Mrs. John Walton, Sr., Clinton  
Frank F. White, Jr., Riverdale

The Society extends its warmest thanks to Dr. Truman Hienton, who served as Treasurer for part of the past year; Sister Catherine Wright, who served as Recording Secretary for part of the year; and David Rinn, director for the entire year. Dr. Otho T. Beall, Jr., who served as director for many years, passed away in October. Our deepest appreciation to those retiring officers.

### Montpelier Candlelight Buffet

Members of the Society are reminded that the Friends of Montpelier will hold their annual Candlelight Buffet Dinner on Sunday, December 11. Cocktails at 5 p.m., dinner at 6:30.

Tickets, are \$12.50 per person and advance reservations are required. Contact Mrs. Jean Speicher, 12209 Shadetree Lane, Montpelier, Md. 20811. Phone 776-3086.

### The Robert Crain Highway, 1927-1977

Fifty years ago saw the end of the steamboat era in Southern Maryland and the takeover of the automobile as the primary means to transport both people and products to the center of civilization and commerce in Baltimore. At 11:00 a.m. on October 22, 1927, a barricade was removed from the newly constructed concrete road at Priest Bridge on the Patuxent (the Anne Arundel-Prince George's boundary at Whitemarsh near Bowie) and an "automobile parade" led by Gov. Albert C. Ritchie proceeded to Upper Marlboro.

The story of the inception of the Robert Crain Highway is told in the printed dedication program.

Forging a New Link in Maryland's

State Road System

Measured by miles, Southern Maryland is not far from Baltimore. Measured by the time required to make the trip it has heretofore been more remote than many sections miles further away.

In the early days of American history the people of Southern Maryland had little occasion to travel great distances from their homes. The necessity for an unusual trip was generally a journey to Baltimore to market their products and that meant a long and tedious water trip.

To make the journey by land was inconvenient and difficult. What roads there were, were narrow, twisting dirt paths. Vehicles were drawn by horses, mules or oxen and skillful maneuvering upon the part of the driver was necessary to pass a vehicle bound in the opposite direction.

With the development of the State's resources came a decided demand for better roads and in answer to this demand post roads for the carrying of mails were established and later, public necessity prevailed upon several counties to build county roads.

With the event of the automobile came an insistent demand all over the State for better roads and this demand, upon the part of Southern Maryland, became increasingly vigorous in the last decade.

It remained for the late T. Rowland Thomas, a native of St. Mary's County and at that time President of the Southern Maryland Society, to make this demand a reality, and with the interest of both Baltimore City and Southern Maryland at heart he conceived the real need for a direct highway of communication between the metropolis of the State and the Southern Counties.

Such a project required considerable money to be appropriated by the Maryland Legislature and Mr. Thomas selected Mr. Robert Crain, of Charles County, for whom the highway has since been named, to father the project. Mr. Crain's strong and convincing personality "carried on" successfully and in 1922 the Legislature appropriated one million dollars for the construction of the highway.

With this sum, construction was continued until it was demonstrated that further appropriation was necessary. Then a committee headed by Mr. Crain called upon Governor Ritchie to acquaint him with the situation and secure his support in behalf of additional funds. The Governor, realizing the importance of this vital link in Maryland's chain of highways, consented to ask the next Legislature for the necessary additional appropriation and the Legislature of 1927 provided \$250,000 to complete the work.

The construction of the highway was officially begun on September 30, 1922, and in commemoration of the event the Robert Crain Highway Monument erected at Upper Marlboro by the Southern Maryland Society and the Merchants and Manufacturers Association of Baltimore (now the Baltimore Association of Commerce) was dedicated. The construction of the Highway was completed in September, 1927.

The Robert Crain Highway is of modern type concrete construction, fifteen and eighteen feet wide and thirty-one and one-half miles long. It extends from Baltimore to a place known as T. B. (Thomas Brooke). It passes through the pleasant countryside of Southern Maryland--a section replete with traditional and historical memories and rich in fertile beauty. It reduces the distance between Baltimore and the most remote section of the Southern Counties to a minimum and makes it possible to travel from any point in Southern Maryland to Baltimore and return in the same day without undue strain or haste.

Maryland highways have opened up avenues of travel scarcely conceived a generation ago and the folks of Southern Maryland blood now residing in Baltimore, as well as their brothers in Southern Maryland, may now enjoy the pleasures and advantages of frequent and reciprocal visits, firmly linking together the mutual commercial as well as social interests of Baltimore and the Southern Counties.

(End of program)

Following a luncheon in Upper Marlboro, the official party adjourned to the grandstand at the fair Grounds for the dedication ceremony which was chaired by M. (Mercer) Hampton Magruder. The Invocation was given by the Most Rev. Michael J. Curley, Archbishop of Baltimore, and a welcome made by Judge Joseph C. Mettinger of the Seventh Judicial Circuit.

A ceremony of Flags, in which the standards of the several Southern Maryland counties were presented, was presided over by the Hon. William F. Broening, Mayor of Baltimore.

Presenting the flags were:

Calvert County: Miss Meridee Taylor and State Senator John Parran

St. Mary's County: Miss Hope Greenwell and State Senator J. Allan Coad

Anne Arundel County: Miss Eleanor Kyle and State Senator George Cromwell.

Charles County: Miss Mary Ida Wilmer and State Senator Walter J. Mitchell

Prince George's County: Annabelle Diantha Lloyd and State Senator Lansdale G, Sasscer

Receiving the flags was the Hon. John C. Mackall, Chairman of the State Roads Commission, who in turn presented them to the Hon. Robert Crain, for whom the highway was named. After addresses by Mr. Mackall, Mr. Crain and Governor Ritchie, Miss Southern Maryland was selected from among the five-county representatives. A float contest among the five counties and a Mule Race were the final events of the day. Music was furnished by the Fifth Regiment (Maryland National Guard) Band and the American Legion Drum Corps.

Over the past half-century the Robert Crain Highway has been an integral part of the Prince George's County highway system, however time has brought some changes. In the post-Model T era of the 1930's, wider automobiles tested the skill of the drivers while passing on the 15' wide roadway and eventually concrete or macadam shoulders were added. With the opening of the Morgantown bridge (Gov. Harry W. Nice Bridge, across the Potomac) the road was extended southward. The end of World War II saw the return of heavy traffic to the highway as it became a major North-South artery leading to Richmond, by-passing Washington. It was made into a dual highway and along most of the route another set of lanes was constructed parallel to the existing roadway. In some instances the route was straightened by building a complete new road, such as the section north of Wells' Corner in Upper Marlboro. The most notable change was the Upper Marlboro by-pass which eliminated the tremendous weekend traffic jams on Main Street.

Perhaps the most regrettable change has been the designation of the road as U.S. Route 301, following the bureaucracy's pattern to place meaningless numbers on everything. Despite this effort to reduce the memory of Robert Crain and his efforts in behalf of his native Southern Maryland to a number, the dedication monument of 1922 still stands. In the center of Old Crain Highway at its intersection with Marlboro Pike in the Town of Upper Marlboro the monument bears witness still to Robert Crain and the "Tobacco Trail."

--- FSD

Source: Celebrating the Opening of the Robert Crain Highway, Upper Marlboro, Maryland, October 22, 1927. (Dedication program)

### Another Change of Name

Today newcomers to Prince George's County know the Robert Crain Highway as U.S. Route 301, A landmark on that highway, as well, has undergone a change of name--this one relatively recently, within the past two or three years. The Pigeon House Restaurant was a well-known landmark on the Crain Highway. It stood in Anne Arundel County, just north of the Patuxent River Bridge (Priest Bridge) within site of Prince George's

County. Travelers on the Crain Highway knew it well, as did travelers on Annapolis Road-Defense Highway (old U.S. Route 50, now Maryland Route 450) for it stood at the intersection of the two roads. "Making the jog at the Pigeon House was a significant step in completing the journey to Annapolis on Route 450.

The Pigeon House, though, is no more. Its name has been changed--to Widow Brown's.

#### Additions to the National-Register

The Prince George's County Committee of the Maryland Historical Trust announces that the following 4 sites have been accepted onto the National Register of Historic Places:

St. Paul's Church at Baden. Circa 1733, the parent church of one of Maryland original parishes

Ash Hill. Also known as Hitching Post Hill, Hyattsville. Built by Robert Clark in 1840; Presidents Grant and Cleveland were frequent visitors as was Buffalo Bill Cody; Grant's Arabian horses were stabled on the property.

Belair Mansion, Bowie. Home of Samuel Ogle, Provincial Governor of Maryland and his son Benjamin Ogle, Governor of the State. In the 20th century owned by the Woodward family; their Belair Stud Farm became internationally known. Now houses offices of the City of Bowie.

College Park Airport. The oldest airport in continuous operation in the world. The Wright Brothers worked there.

There are now twenty-eight properties in the county listed on the National Register, two of which are National Historic Landmarks-Montpelier and His Lordship's Kindness.

#### Editor's Note

With this issue, News and Notes from the Prince George's County Historical Society celebrates five full years of publication. Volume 1, number 1 was issued in March 1973 by Frederick S. De Marr, and he edited the newsletter through October 1974. Alan Virta has served as editor since November 1974.

An index to the five years of News and Notes is in preparation. Frank White, Jr., undertook this mammoth job, and the Society hopes to offer a bound index to those requesting one sometime in 1978.

Many persons have contributed to the production of News and Notes over the past five years. Recognition should be given, however, to the regular staff who work every month:

Mrs. Edith Bagot: Addressing and mailing

Fred De Marr: Printing and mailing

Alan Virta: Editing and typing

Paul Lanham: Contributor

Frank White, Jr.: Contributor

Thank you!

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

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