

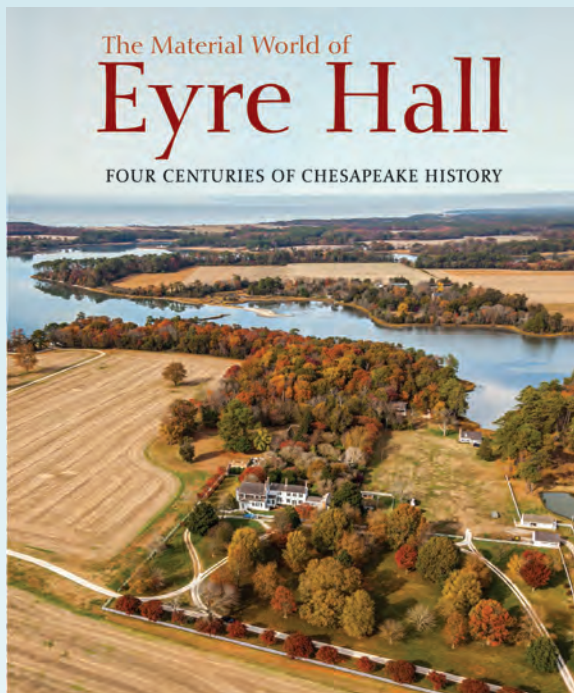
# MARYLAND

## HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

JOURNAL OF MARYLAND HISTORY AND CULTURE

SPRING/SUMMER 2021





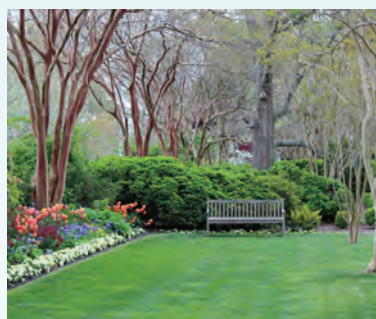
## The Material World of Eyre Hall:

**FOUR CENTURIES OF CHESAPEAKE HISTORY**

Edited by Carl R. Lounsbury, PhD

Available in September 2021 from the  
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in association with D Giles Ltd.

Few places on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay boast a continuity like Eyre Hall, built in 1759 by little ton Eyre and occupied by his descendants to this day. Featuring the work of 22 contributors and 400 stunning illustrations, *The Material World of Eyre Hall* offers a rare and fascinating insight into the preservation of a family home in the midst of changing aspects of southern history through Eyre Hall's material culture, which will appeal to enthusiasts of architecture, gardens, decorative arts, and beyond.



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### **ABOUT THE BOOK:**

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448 pages, 400 color illustrations

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## About the Cover Image

*Classes Over at Polytechnic Institute*, unknown photographer, 1952, Baltimore, Maryland. Milton Cornish is featured in the foreground, and Clarence Daly in the back left of the image. The photograph was published in the *Afro-American* on September 20, 1952, and is used here courtesy of AFRO American Newspapers Archives.

In Baltimore, dual school systems for black and white students had operated semi-autonomously for nearly fifty years, before demographic and social changes led to radical reforms. Residential and educational facilities for black Baltimoreans were woefully insufficient as the city's population reached nearly one million in the late 1940s.

Owing to its exclusive A-Course and specialized engineering curriculum, Baltimore Polytechnic Institute or "Poly" was one of the most highly esteemed public schools in the state. Graduates were often accepted into the best colleges, with many even entering engineering schools as sophomores.

A biracial coalition of organizations including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Baltimore Urban League (BUL), and the Baltimore chapter of Americans for Democratic Action (BADA) spearheaded an effort to gain admission for black students to the Poly program. By focusing on the "separate but equal" provision of the Fourteenth Amendment, this Coordinated Committee on Poly Admissions (CCPA) was following the model that Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP had earlier employed to integrate the University of Maryland's various graduate programs. After months of secretive planning and outreach, sixteen boys applied for Poly's A-Course on July 12, 1952. The hearing would not take place until September 2. Despite some opposition, most notably from Poly's Alumni Association, the board went on to vote 5-3 in favor of the students' admission.

Fifteen black boys would enter Baltimore Polytechnic Institute at the start of the 1952 academic year. This group included Milton Cornish and Clarence Daly, depicted rolling out their bicycles after school in the cover image. At that time, Cornish remarked that "it's just like being in any other school." While the initial experience was not nearly as violent or volatile as later integration efforts at Baltimore's Southern High School or Little Rock, Arkansas, the students did face angry opposition to their entry. Several would later report subtle forms of discrimination and racism, as well as social isolation as they navigated the new environment. Principal Wilmer A. DeHuff was credited for his no-nonsense approach, threatening disciplinary action against any white students who might try to disrupt integration at the school.

As similar lawsuits were in motion to integrate unique programs at all-female Western High School and the Mergenthaler School of Printing (Mervo) in Baltimore, the national effort took precedence. The NAACP legal team, led by Thurgood Marshall, had reached the US Supreme Court with the *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka* case in early 1953. The suit culminated with a unanimous 9-0 decision in favor of the plaintiffs, on May 17, 1954. The bold actions of Baltimore activists, students, and their families helped lay the groundwork for these significant developments, cementing Maryland's unique position in the history of school desegregation and civil rights activism overall.

David Armenti

Maryland Center for History and Culture, BPI Class of 2003

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To learn more, read MCHC's *underbelly* blog:

"A Thorny Path: School Desegregation in Baltimore," [mdhistory.org/a-thorny-path-school-desegregation-in-baltimore](http://mdhistory.org/a-thorny-path-school-desegregation-in-baltimore)

"Are We Satisfied?: The Baltimore Plan for School Desegregation," [mdhistory.org/are-we-satisfied-the-baltimore-plan-for-school-desegregation](http://mdhistory.org/are-we-satisfied-the-baltimore-plan-for-school-desegregation)

# MARYLAND

## HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

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# MARYLAND HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

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SPRING/SUMMER 2021





# From the Editor

MARTINA KADO, PHD

Dear readers,

IN OUR 2021 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY, the *Maryland Historical Magazine* was voted one of MCHC's most popular membership benefits, together with access to our H. Furlong Library. As we work on our publication schedule and fresh content on Maryland and US history, it is our goal to make this connection to our audience even stronger.

In this issue, David Taft Terry's article "Allyship and Its Contexts in the Southern Black Struggle: Baltimore, 1940s–1950s" unpacks the complexity of interracial initiatives in the modern black struggle for equality, focusing on Baltimore. Starting with paternalist organizations that emerged after World War I and analyzing popular front modes and Ober Law effects that overturned them after World War II, it devotes most of its attention to urban liberal allyship and direct action resulting in desegregation of public spaces and businesses in the 1950s. By illuminating the period before the 1960s and focusing on interracialism, this article deepens our understanding of the long civil rights movement and Maryland's complex place in it.

In addition to writing this piece for the *Maryland Historical Magazine* and his book *The Struggle and the Urban South: Confronting Jim Crow in Baltimore before the Movement* (2019, reviewed in *MdHM* 114, no. 2, Fall/Winter 2019), Dr. Terry is a member of the Curatorial Panel for MCHC's exhibition *Passion and Purpose: Voices of Maryland's Civil Rights Activists*, opening in May 2022. Spanning the period from the 1930s to the present day, this exhibition was developed in collaboration with a group of external experts. Visitors will hear excerpts from oral histories by agents of change who tell the story in their own words. Many of them come from MCHC's collections: the McKeldin-Jackson Project (1970–1975) and the Doris M. Johnson Project (2006–2007).

Despite its focus on the early nineteenth century, Robert Schoeberlein's article "When Harry Met Elsey: Madness, Power, and Justice in Federal-

Era Baltimore” may read familiar to our contemporary audience encountering the term “conservatorship” in recent media coverage (the 1812 term was “trusteeship”). Using court and hospital records, it reconstructs the life story of an individual experiencing what was seen as mental health issues and the ensuing battle between family wealth and personal freedom, bringing into relief the relationship between legal and psychiatric definitions of sanity, as well as ways in which they differ and in which they remain similar today.

In this issue we also bring you a taste of MCHC’s most recent book publication, *The Material World of Eyre Hall: Four Centuries of Chesapeake History* (2021), available in our Museum Store and online at [shop.mdhistory.org](http://shop.mdhistory.org). Edited by Carl Lounsbury and featuring the work of twenty-two contributors as well as 400 stunning illustrations, this book is a gem for enthusiasts of historic houses, decorative arts, architecture and landscaping, and much more. The excerpt we are sharing is from Chapter 4, titled “I’m Home.” We selected it as a humble nod to the fact that the notion of “home” has been redefined for most of us during pandemic times. We also chose a chapter that covers Eyre Hall’s more recent history because—like in our exhibition, *Passion and Purpose*—it gives us access to the voices and experiences of people who lived and continue to live there, adding a human element to our knowledge of earlier periods.

We are excited to announce that our Book Reviews section has a new editor: Professor Lawrence Peskin from Morgan State University. Dr. Peskin is a member of our Publications Committee and will work to bring fresh titles in the field of Maryland history to the pages of this journal.

You can visit our Virtual Programs Archive to find out more about Timothy Walker’s edited book *Sailing to Freedom* ([mdhistory.org/online-resources/virtual-public-program-archive](http://mdhistory.org/online-resources/virtual-public-program-archive)). The review of John Clark Mayden’s book of photography is an opportunity to announce that some of his night photography will be featured in MCHC’s exhibition *Visions of Night: The Baltimore Nocturnes*, opening in April 2022.

Those interested in maritime history are welcome to explore the winner of MCHC’s Brewington Book Prize for 2021, David W. Wooddell’s *The Inspection Tugboats Baltimore 1857–1980* (2020). The book traces the lifespans of two inspection tugboats once operated by the City of Baltimore to oversee and maintain the harbor from their respective launches in 1857 and 1906 to their ultimate fates.

Finally, we are grateful to our colleagues at the University of Maryland Libraries, Anne Turkos and Liz Caringola, for compiling yet another Maryland History and Culture Selected Bibliography for 2020.

While many of our public programs continue to be virtual, our Museum and Library remain open for visitors and researchers and we look forward to seeing you on our premises. You can find everything to plan your safe visit on our website, [mdhistory.org/visit](https://mdhistory.org/visit). For information on how to submit to the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, please visit [mdhistory.org/publications/mdhs-magazine](https://mdhistory.org/publications/mdhs-magazine).

All issues of the *Maryland Historical Magazine* are available for free at [mdhistory.org](https://mdhistory.org). Printed copies are a benefit of membership with the Maryland Center for History and Culture. To join, visit [mdhistory.org/join](https://mdhistory.org/join).




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# Allyship and Its Contexts in the Southern Black Struggle: Baltimore, 1940s–1950s

BY DAVID TAFT TERRY

IN THE PAST QUARTER CENTURY, a number of studies have given greater depth and nuance to our grasp of African American social justice history and the civil rights movement. New chronologies of struggle have been developed and new geographies have been mapped for contributions to an emerging narrative. In the process, fresh inquiries have revitalized old questions—specifically, our central need to understand the history of the black struggle from local perspectives and how everyday folk created the forces of change, and how everyday folk were impacted by forces beyond their creation.

In that spirit, this article offers what may prove a useful perspective on the history of the black struggle: one that considers its allyships. Such a view can recapture aspects of what African Americans understood as the possibilities open to them at any given historical moment. The nature of allies willing to stand with southern blacks, and the contexts promoting (or discouraging) those stances can aid our attempts to better appreciate how black activists set their goals, developed their strategies, and settled upon their tactical approaches to it all. Seeking such a perspective, this essay focuses ultimately on Jim Crow Baltimore in the 1940s and 1950s. Throughout this period (to various effects and impacts) nontraditional sources of allyship presented themselves to the southern black struggle. These included a small number of liberal and leftist southern whites, but also non-southern Americans, and ultimately elements of government. As they struggled toward equality, black southerners in Baltimore made best use of an evolving cadre

David Taft Terry is an associate professor of history at Morgan State University. A generous grant from the Quarles Humanities and Social Science Institute, Morgan State University, supported parts of this research. This essay also draws, in part, from themes explored in the author's previous book, *The Struggle and the Urban South: Confronting Jim Crow in Baltimore before the Movement* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2019).

of allies. Reviewing this shifting cast and interrogating the contexts for their allyship may add new and necessary complexity to the increasingly familiar narrative of civil rights history in the city.

## Black Southerners and Their Allies through World War II

The history of the modern southern black struggle for equality reflects an evolution in allyship. In its earliest forms, prior to World War II, allyship functioned in paternalist modes that actually protected white supremacy as faithfully as did the forces of segregation.

Later, seemingly more authentic expressions of allyship emerged among a small cadre of leftist and liberal voices in the white South advocating a reassessment of the region's racial norms. Later still, on the eve of World War II, even some elected officials in the South's biggest cities offered expressions of urban liberalism that (rhetorically, at least) sought to address racial iniquity—even while refusing to confront segregation itself.<sup>1</sup>

### *From Paternalist Allyship to a Popular Front Mode*

From the time of Jim Crow's rise around the turn of the twentieth century, black southerners struggled against it. They welcomed allies, but few southern whites stepped forward. Allyship in response to Jim Crow emerged after World War I. Racially paternalist, however, the first modes of allyship advocated the tenets of white supremacy while rejecting its most egregious abuses (namely, widespread white-on-black violence). Despite token numbers of blacks in their ranks, paternalist allyship organizations sought racial peace, which they thought necessary for the region's stability and economic prosperity, not racial equality. Southern organizations in paternalist modes included the regional Commission on Interracial Cooperation (CIC) and the local Baltimore Interracial Commission (BIC). The Maryland Interracial Commission (MIC), created by Gov. Albert C. Ritchie in the mid-1920s, also followed the paternalist mode.<sup>2</sup>

Finding Baltimore in some of its ways "more southern than Virginia," paternalist allies would not challenge the city's "strange mixtures of sentiments, methods and customs." Indeed, as the Baltimore *Afro-American* observed, white segregationists and paternalist allies alike regarded black southerners' central goals—"the abolition of the unjust jim-crow [*sic*] system, equal wages and opportunities, privilege to vote as any citizen should"—as intolerable outcomes. Meanwhile, the BIC supported the founding of the Baltimore Urban League (BUL) in 1924. It was one of only eight Urban League affiliates launched in the South during the interwar years. Along with its predilections for white supremacy and presumptions of black "backwardness," the BUL largely absorbed the leadership of the old BIC (black executive directors notwithstanding). In its first years, the BUL worked exclusively to ameliorate the social and economic effects of Jim Crow rather than confront segregation directly.<sup>3</sup>



FIGURE 1. *Afro-American Newspaper Staff with Dr. Carl Murphy*, photograph by Paul S. Henderson, unknown date, Baltimore, Maryland. Maryland Center for History and Culture, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Baltimore City Life Collection, Paul S. Henderson Photograph Collection, HEN.00.B1-055

By the 1930s, an international popular front rose against fascism. This global phenomenon combined domestically with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's economic recovery program, the New Deal, and introduced fresh iterations to liberal reform culture. Though elements of the popular front's program (like willful defiance of taboos against interracial social gatherings) injected New Deal liberalism with an interracialist strain, interracialism, of course, was not inherently its nature. Nonetheless, the popular front nurtured pluralistic perspectives that endorsed interracialism for the first time within liberal conceptions of progress. The New Deal's endorsement of interracialist labor organization represents one example. Yet, as Andor Skotnes points out in his study of race and labor organizing in 1930s Baltimore, appetites for interracialism among core New Deal constituencies (in this case, white workers aligned with the Congress of Industrial Organizations) were "everywhere uneven and contradictory." Although the episodic and largely rhetorical interracialism of the labor scene in the urban South at times served the broader black struggle for equality, it did not endure, amounting in the end to little more than slogan-making.<sup>4</sup>

To note the limitations of interracialism within southern labor organization during the late 1930s is not to discard the movement's ultimate contributions to the black struggle for equality in the region. Indeed, even if difficult to actualize, southern labor liberals' commitments to interracialism as a vehicle for allyship with the black struggle became the signature component of the broader American liberalism (as it had not been previously) beginning in these years. This was done by equating fascism and white supremacy in much of the white American imagination; liberals opposed to European fascism could not ignore American racism (especially southern Jim Crow). While the process would consume most of the twentieth century, "the cultural reversal that made racism seem like a violation of the American creed of equal opportunity," Doug Rossinow writes, "lay in the Popular Front's anti-fascism and anti-racism." As such, from the mid-1930s through the war years, a coalition of liberals and leftists (especially American communists) promoted interracialism, in the South and elsewhere.<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile, as liberal allyship showed its potential for transformation, southern black activists in the region's cities met the challenges of the 1930s with a mass mobilization ethic rooted in community-level organization. Couching economic needs (such as access to employment and worker rights) as part of a larger social justice agenda, the southern black struggle found ready allyship with the popular front. The most famous example of popular front allyship with the southern black struggle involved leftist work with the ultimately successful defense of the so-called "Scottsboro Boys." Arrested in 1931, Alabama convicted these black teenagers of rape, and sentenced them to death despite little evidence and recanted testimony from one of the alleged victims. Among other instances, leftists worked in Maryland (this time, without success) to free another black defendant facing execution, Euel Lee. In the process, the case brought greater public scrutiny to the threat black Marylanders faced from white lynch mobs.<sup>6</sup>

Also during the Depression years, some organizations of the paternalist allyship mode like the Baltimore Urban League moved toward popular front modes, and more direct confrontation of Jim Crow. Not only did key white socialists like Broadus Mitchell and Naomi Riches come to serve in BUL leadership during the decade, but the hiring in 1931 of a transformative executive director, Edward Shakespear Lewis, ushered the organization's remaking toward social justice advocacy. For their efforts, the BUL and other elements of the popular front allyship coalition won the confidence of countless blacks in communities across the South, including Baltimore.<sup>7</sup>

### *The Mixed Promise of Urban Liberal Allyships during the War Years*

The popular front years revealed the uselessness of paternalistic allyship to the southern black struggle. Urban liberal allyship in the 1940s largely brought a new approach, but failed to achieve better results. If, for example, urban liberal politicians offered southern blacks membership to governing boards in these years, they kept numbers at token levels, insuring that those bodies would issue minimalist policies that ultimately protected Jim Crow.





FIGURE 2. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Meeting. In attendance are Florence Snowden (second row, third from the left) and Lillie May Carroll Jackson (first row, second from the right). Photograph by Paul S. Henderson, circa October 1948, Baltimore, Maryland. Maryland Center for History and Culture, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Baltimore City Life Collection, Paul S. Henderson Photograph Collection, HEN.00.A2-147

Still, in southern cities like Baltimore, Atlanta, Nashville, and Greensboro, these same governing boards became battlegrounds. After all, the newly won access reflected the growing, if still limited, power of the black electorate. Soon after inauguration, for example, Baltimore Mayor Theodore McKeldin repaid black support for his 1943 victory over incumbent Howard Jackson with the city's first black appointment to the school board. Perhaps even more so than the school board, the Baltimore City Board of Parks and Recreation had been the focal point of contention for its minimalist approach during the war years. White members—especially those in leadership—proved obstinate in their refusal to meet black needs fairly—even within the Jim Crow structure.<sup>8</sup>

The minimalist nature of things in these years notwithstanding, a rhetorical expansion of allyship shaped urban liberal discourse generally. Industrial labor union locals (many with interracial memberships), for example, advocated for mainline social justice groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Similarly, high-profile white private citizens such as Rev. Harold Bosley, minister at Mount Vernon Place Methodist Church, voiced consistent support for the black struggle during the war years. Even some lower-profile civic organizations, like the Baltimore Committee for Homefront Democracy, an organization of activist white women, encouraged elected officials to act fairly regarding black citizens.<sup>9</sup>

Meanwhile, elected officials also spoke in the language of moderation toward the black cause. Their actions, if novel, however, rarely allowed (or even permitted) true reforms. Maryland Governor Herbert O'Connor's Commission to Study Problems Affecting the Negro Population, an entity purpose-built in 1942, exemplified this rhetoric-over-substance dynamic. O'Connor appointed Joseph P. Healy (a wealthy white business leader with no history of interest in the black struggle) to chair the body. On its face, the Healy Commission's appointment appeared as a fulsome response to black demand. However, despite an expansive yearlong investigation, and comprehensive report with recommendations, O'Connor's edict to proceed gradually prevailed and the efforts yielded few direct reforms.<sup>10</sup>

The war years in the South also witnessed at least a few urban liberal entities willing to move beyond minimalist and rhetorical allyship with the black struggle. Organized in 1941, for example, Baltimore's Citizens Planning and Housing Association (CPHA) became a force. Combining research, public education, lobby and policy activism, CPHA recognized the acute challenges city blacks faced. Wartime migration exacerbated an already considerable shortage for blacks in the city's segregated housing supply. CPHA co-founder Frances Morton and others (including architect John M. Scarff, who served on the Healy Commission as well) advocated new housing laws for the private market, and a robust—if segregated—public housing program.<sup>11</sup>

Urban liberal allyship with the black struggle, like that the CPHA offered, came indirectly, through bureaucratic procedures—pressing local officials, preparing position documents, testifying in hearings, educating the public. Still, many within CPHA framed their work in the racist environment of Jim Crow Baltimore as a “[social justice] movement.” The fact that CPHA's efforts proved largely ineffectual through the war years testifies to the obstinacy of Jim Crow.<sup>12</sup>

## The Transformations of Allyship in the Postwar Era

War era modes of allyship persisted into the postwar years. Mixed returns persisted as well. Paternalist modes, for example, continued to advise southern blacks toward only incremental progress. They largely lost influence to popular front voices, however, in the early postwar years. The Southern Conference for Human Welfare, for example—an advocacy group of civil rights activists, New Deal liberals, labor groups, and leftists—received accolades for its public commitments to anti-segregation. By the end of the 1940s, however, America's cold war with Russia imposed a new context. The black struggle was made to choose: stalwart allies from popular front coalitions that included leftists; or, emerging opportunities with liberal officials, politicians, and political parties. Clear-eyed through it all, black activists worked to balance what could be lost in the unprecedented moment against what they might gain.

## *Anti-Radicalism and the Postwar 1940s Southern Black Struggle*

Black activists drew upon experiences from two decades earlier when a similarly impactful but short-lived “red scare” of reaction had unfolded after the First World War. Back then, nativists, conservatives, and white supremacists co-opted the general anti-leftist hysteria to justify widespread anti-black violence during the Red Summer of 1919. Indeed, the paternalist mode of allyship emerged during these same years in the South, functioning more with blacks to meet the threat of Marcus Garvey than Vladimir Lenin. If its most egregious nature abated by the 1920s, its shadow loomed for two decades through legislation, capped by the Alien Registration Act of 1940 (more popularly, the Smith Act). Signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, it hoped to stamp out subversive speech and organizing through imprisonment and deportation mechanisms.<sup>13</sup>

States followed the federal lead by enacting their own anti-subversive legislation. In 1949, for example, the Maryland legislature enacted an “Oath of Office as it Relates to the Subversive Activities Act.” Popularly known by the name of its chief architect, attorney Frank Ober, Maryland voters overwhelmingly approved the “Ober Law” at a ballot referendum in 1950. Its provisions required: a loyalty oath from public employees; the state’s attorney general to actively pursue and indict citizens for acts of subversiveness; state colleges, universities, and other educational institutions to report annually on their efforts to suppress subversive activities on their campuses; and the state’s attorney general to maintain information on disloyal Marylanders and those accused of disloyalty—even if accusations came from anonymous sources—and to disseminate that information to prospective employers of the accused.<sup>14</sup>

Once enacted, however, a lax, uninspired enforcement from the state’s attorney office (which questioned its constitutionality) ultimately stunted the Ober Law’s impact. Still, the Maryland law helped to usher a second red scare to the desired chilling effect on the popular culture. In the state and across the nation throughout these years, as basic civil liberties regarding speech and association seemed under siege and persecuted, the range of tolerable dissent narrowed. Beginning in the late 1940s, anti-communist cold warriors stoked the new hysteria. Numerous and varied voices called for dissenters to be intimidated into silence—if not through personal persecution, then by the many examples of the public persecutions of others. The profligacies of Republican Senator Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin and “McCarthyism” represent only the shorthand for this broad-based cultural moment.<sup>15</sup>

Repression of legitimate activists and allyships hid easily in these shadows. Journalists of the day noted the threat the second red scare posed to dissent, especially for the black southern struggle and those inclined toward allyship with it. “As the diplomatic relations between Russia and America become more and more strained,” Baltimore *Afro-American* columnist Ralph Matthews observed in 1946, at the start of the postwar era, “attempts are being made to brand all liberal movements without the slightest

thought of a connection with Moscow as Communist front movements.” The common thread of subversiveness conveniently connected “every organization which has been outspoken against lynching, disfranchisement and discrimination,” Matthews concluded. A few years later, his colleague at the *Afro*, columnist Mae Medders, went further when she chastised the mounting anti-subversive hysteria as overblown. Writing in 1950, she called out those who had weaponized the moment for political advantage, generally, and the thwarting of anti-racist initiatives, specifically. “Incidentally,” she wryly observed, “that oath [required by the Ober Law] to determine whose ‘red’ is printed on pink paper.”<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, the Ober Law (like the larger second red scare) emerged just as the prewar popular front mode of allyship with the black southern struggle reorganized for a postwar continuation. Interracial cadres of young activists would assume especially visible roles in this period. A Baltimore affiliate of the Progressive Citizens of America (PCA), for example, sponsored an interracial boys’ basketball team to compete in the city’s segregated whites-only league. The PCA, a national political group organized late in 1946, pushed progressive legislative agendas and slates of candidates for local, state, and national offices—including presidential tickets beginning in 1948. It hoped to extend the New Deal’s left-liberal coalitions. Interracialists of any stripe, however, made easy marks for segregationist red-baiters. The *Afro*’s Medders, for example, saw through the “name calling” charade and spoke for many when she asserted, “unimpeachable persons who dare to challenge the mores that have fostered segregation and racial hatred for hundreds of years are being dumped indiscriminately into a barrel of thought labeled ‘red.’”<sup>17</sup>

Recreational space became a battleground in the early postwar southern black struggle. Parks boards like those in Baltimore’s found themselves “continuously” faced with challenges to segregationist policies. Indeed, their meetings and hearings provided the platform for public debate over the continuing place of racism in southern society. The Baltimore Parks Board held such hearings in early 1948. Late the previous year, Philip Boyer of the Fulton Community PCA entered an interracial basketball team in the city’s Amateur Sports League. After its first game against an all-white squad (in Garrison Junior High School’s gymnasium), a sense of obligation led a referee to report the interracialism to the Parks Board. No one involved in the game at Garrison objected to its interracial makeup—not the Fulton team’s opponents, not the opposing coaches, not the spectators, probably not even the referees. Still, the board suspended the team.<sup>18</sup>

PCA supporters charged the board with duplicity. Segregation was only customary, not mandated by law. The commissioners permitted mixed-race teams to compete, for example, at Baltimore Municipal Stadium, home field for professional football’s Baltimore Colts and minor league baseball’s Baltimore Orioles (Jack Robinson and the Montreal Royals had played the Orioles there the year before). Any number of college games between mixed race squads also played there.<sup>19</sup>



FIGURE 3. Portrait of Mayor Thomas D'Alesandro Jr., mayor of Baltimore 1947–1959, photograph by A. Aubrey Bodine, c.1950. Maryland Center for History and Culture, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Baltimore City Life Collection, A. Aubrey Bodine Collection, B679-B

Friends and foes of the PCA team lobbied Thomas J. D'Alesandro, mayor of Baltimore during the 1950s. "I feel ashamed," Maurice Braverman, head of the Maryland Civil Rights Congress, told D'Alesandro, "that this came about through official action of your administration." Alice Arrington, President of the Maryland League of Women's Clubs asserted, "This is not only a time when we must affirm our belief in democracy but we must help see that it works." Advising D'Alesandro to the contrary, however, Robert S. Garrett, the segregationist white businessman and member of the social elite who headed the Parks Board, dismissed the criticism as a matter of dubious sponsorship. "We cannot cater to an element that knowingly or ignorantly is disloyal to this country."<sup>20</sup> Perhaps attesting to the fact that the anti-subversive mania had not yet arrived at its crescendo by early 1948, D'Alesandro chastised Garrett for his red-baiting. "There are many good proposals that suffer from bad sponsorship," the Mayor insisted. "If the policy of segregation is opposed by the Progressive Citizens of America, an organization with which you and I are not in sympathy, that alone would not

justify your Board in persisting in this policy if you should conclude that it was not right," he continued. "The Board should neither allow this organization to dictate a change in policy according to its wishes," D'Alesandro concluded, "nor should the Board feel driven to take the opposite position merely because this organization had interceded." His altruism notwithstanding, when Garrett's board ultimately thwarted the PCA's interracial basketball project, D'Alesandro did not stand in its way.<sup>21</sup>

A few months later, in the summer, a second episode of activism by PCA-affiliated liberal and leftist young people developed, this time almost wholly independent of adult involvement. In July, tennis players protested disparities created by Jim Crow and proclaimed their desire for interracialism on the courts. White teens from the Young Progressives of Maryland (a PCA affiliate) joined in allyship with a group of black teens, the Baltimore Tennis Association, in a premeditated event at the whites-only tennis facilities in Druid Hill Park. Earlier, to entice the general public to bear witness and provide support, the activists distributed flyers stating "Jim Crow Is Un-American," and circulated a petition, "End Discrimination in Public Parks." The Parks Board, the police, and the press also received advance notice of the demonstration.<sup>22</sup>

Before a crowd of nearly three hundred, fifteen players of both races from nearby neighborhoods took the courts. Once play began, parks authorities issued a cease and desist order. The teen activists ignored the order, and continued playing until police officers arrived. Then, the players simply sat down on the courts to await arrest. Some onlookers spat "Fascist!" and "Gestapo!" at the officers' actions. Following the arrests, some fifteen hundred citizens gathered at the police station while the protestors were booked. As the activists intended, the story made national headlines.<sup>23</sup>

Ironically, perhaps, not long after the tennis court protests at Druid Hill Park, the Maryland legislature took up the anti-sedition bill that became the Ober Law. Some critics of the new legislation lampooned the effort as an overblown "conspiracy" built around what had been in actuality no more than "the simple desire of negro [*sic*] and white boys and girls to play tennis together in public parks." Allowed to proceed, critics feared, the hysteria not only limited progress on civil rights for blacks, but it threatened the civil liberties of all.<sup>24</sup>

### *Popular Front Allyship's Last Hurrah in Postwar Baltimore*

In the end, however, neither the basketball protest nor the tennis court demonstrations led the Parks Board to change its segregation policy substantially. A Baltimore protest of longer duration against Jim Crow at Ford's Theatre, however, not only achieved desegregation but its evolution serves as a crucial example of how postwar transformations impacted the southern black struggle and the allyship modes supporting it. The campaign against Jim Crow at Ford's Theatre (1946-52) in downtown Baltimore illuminated the transformations that ended the left-liberal coalition and popular front modes allyship with the southern black struggle. The start of the Ford's project con-



FIGURE 4. Protesting Jim Crow Admissions Policy at Ford's Theatre. Mrs. Adah Killion Jenkins is at the far left; Paul Robeson second from left; and Dr. John E. T. Camper fourth from left. Photograph by Paul S. Henderson, circa March 1948, Baltimore, Maryland. Maryland Center for History and Culture, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Baltimore City Life Collection, Paul S. Henderson Photograph Collection, HEN.00.A2-156

nected black postwar efforts with the protest pedigree of the prewar black struggle. By the end, however, the nature of the Ford's struggle—like the southern black struggle, and American dissent, broadly—differed from how it began.

In 1946, the Baltimore branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) began a picket line against the segregated seating policy at Ford's on Fayette Street. In a mode of allyship attending the black struggle since the 1930s, a range of organizations stepped forward to aid the Baltimore NAACP in this effort. Prominent among the profiles of allied groups was interracialism. The Baltimore Interracial Fellowship (BIF), for example, not only provided foot soldiers for the picket line, but also important leaders like Adah K. Jenkins.<sup>25</sup>

Students as a profile category also stood out. As had their antecedents at the height of the popular front mode nearly a decade previous, Baltimore's young people contributed significantly to the coalition that took on theater segregation. They came as youth

division members of larger groups (the Baltimore NAACP and BIF, for example). A number of the regular picketers came from colleges like the historically black Morgan State, and from the whites-only Johns Hopkins. Younger students also participated, including a few from whites-only private high schools like the Park School. "I'd been mouthing off about racial injustice for a long time," recalled Robert Kaufman, a sophomore at Park (and leader of the BIF Youth program) when he joined the picket line. "But as a 16-year-old from a Jewish family, I'd never considered such a radical thing as picketing a theater," he continued. Kaufman joined the protest with a classmate. "Before long I'd advanced to captain of the picket line every Saturday afternoon." In the name of efficiency, many from the allied groups formed a temporary organization, the Committee for Non-Segregated Theatres in Baltimore. BIF's Jenkins led this outfit.<sup>26</sup>

A number of the organizations and several individuals who joined the Ford's protests were leftists. The most prominent leftists belonged to the local Progressive Citizens of America/Progressive Party apparatus. Not only did the coalition of allies welcome PCA/PP folk, leftists played integral roles in the early years of the Ford's campaign. Physician and activist J. E. T. Camper, for example, regularly participated in picketing Ford's. Camper held important roles with a local PCA affiliate, served as co-chair of the state Progressive Party, was a national committeeman at the PP's founding convention, and ran for Congress on the PP ticket in 1948. Even the Civil Rights Congress (CRC), perhaps the most militant of the Communist-oriented leftist entities of the era, supported the Ford's effort. Indeed, CRC's most famous spokesperson was the widely known and revered African American, Paul Robeson. The actor/singer walked the Ford's picket line and drew national attention to the local effort.<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile, in the months before Robeson's Baltimore appearance, the administration of President Harry S. Truman and the national Democratic party took a number of consequential steps toward molding a postwar agenda. The so-called "Truman Doctrine" (March 1947) all but declared that a cold war with Russia had begun. Contextualized by this foreign policy edict, Truman bolstered his anti-subversive *bona fides* by issuing a loyalty order (also March 1947), which provided for close surveillance of federal employees and punitive action against those deemed subversive. All of this coincided with the escalating anti-subversive hysteria of federal- and state-level legislators, most famously the House Un-American Activities Committee, which had become a permanent committee of Congress in 1945 and immediately set out upon very public investigations. The nature of allyship in the black struggle seemed to change overnight.

President Truman also directed the Department of Justice to develop and publish an Attorney General's List of Subversive Organizations (AGLOSO). The AGLOSO ensnared at least two Baltimore entities with ties to the black struggle. Both had interracial membership and leadership profiles. Both also presented the popular front allyship mode that included the prominent involvement of leftists, especially the now-pariah communists. The first of these, the Committee to Abolish Discrimination in Maryland, had been established only a few months before the initial AGLOSO ap-



peared in 1947. It advocated against the anti-black violence that had been rampant since the end of the War. Morgan State political scientist Alexander J. Walker served as its leader.<sup>28</sup>

The other group with ties to the local black struggle named on the inaugural AGLO-SO was the CRC. The local chapter of the CRC, the Maryland Civil Rights Congress (MCRC), was Baltimore-based and led by Maurice Braverman, a white leftist attorney. MCRC hoped to advance Baltimore's role in the continuing postwar left-liberal community, but managed only minor actions in its relatively short existence. Braverman worked concurrently with the National Lawyers Guild, advocating for defendants in high profile civil liberties matters. These efforts (more than his MCRC work) landed him in prison by 1952, convicted as an enemy of the state. The MCRC and the national CRC were defunct only a few years later, victims of the second red scare.<sup>29</sup>

President Truman's Loyalty Order flowed from reporting provided by a temporary committee he established in late 1946. Shortly after appointing that body, Truman authorized a different reporting group, the President's Committee on Civil Rights (PCCR). This move portended the historic steps Democrats and liberals would take in the next two years toward a more fulsome statement of allyship with the blacks' struggle. In June 1947, for example, the President of the United States—the Democratic Party standard-bearer—addressed a gathering of the NAACP from the foot of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. Broadcast nationally, Truman pledged himself as “a friendly, vigilant defender of the rights and equalities of all Americans . . . . And, I mean all Americans.” “We cannot, any longer, await the growth of a will to action in the slowest state, or the most backward community,” Truman averred, “Our national government must show the way.” If, as the historian William E. Leuchtenburg writes, Truman's words “sent chills through the white South,” southern blacks understood the moment as a chance for their first meaningful incorporation into one of the two major political parties since Reconstruction. Liberals seemed ready to stand in allyship with the black struggle on their own, apart from leftists.<sup>30</sup>

Further encouragement came only months later when the PCCR published its report, *To Secure These Rights* (December 1947). It affirmed the scope and urgency of the southern black struggle. The major elements of its recommendations included such long-sought goals as a federal anti-lynching law, legislation to end poll taxes, the end of segregation in the armed forces, and a permanent federal fair employment practice act. Truman received near-universal accolades in the black press. The Baltimore *Afro-American* observed that *To Secure These Rights* “may well become a sort of *Magna Carta* for democracy.” Implementing what he could from the recommendations, Truman issued executive orders by summer 1948 directing an end to segregation in federal employment and in the military. Signalling the beginning of a liberal ascent within the party, when the Democratic National Convention convened that July in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, its campaign platform included civil rights planks (something absent from the major parties since Reconstruction). Thus, at the same moment those ar-

rested in Baltimore for the Druid Hill Park tennis court sit-in faced a grand jury, liberal Democrats invited conservative “Dixiecrats” within the party to walk out of the national convention if they could not accept the anti-segregation platform. A transformation in allyship with their struggle was underway, and southern blacks perceived it.<sup>31</sup>

Between 1946 and 1947—roughly overlapping the launch of the Ford’s picket line in Baltimore—Harry Truman began to redefine American liberalism’s commitments regarding racism. If largely rhetorical, his near-simultaneous embrace of anti-segregation and anti-subversive policy applied constrictive pressure to the ways in which anti-racist activism was pursued. The new formulation held leftists as pariah and toxic to any social justice effort that hoped to enjoy mainstream support. As such, these years witnessed a destruction of the popular front’s critical left-liberal coalition. By that time, the NAACP leadership began to speak publicly of plots by leftists and communists to infiltrate its organization. At its 1949 convention in Los Angeles, in fact, the national NAACP began a systematic purge of leftists and communists in its organization—from its headquarters in New York, down to the personnel and membership of its most remote branches. The NAACP was not alone, however. The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) had undertaken similar purges.<sup>32</sup>

The Ford’s Theatre protest entered the 1950s with a good deal of organizational carry-over, but different political winds at its back. Theodore McKeldin, the liberal Republican inaugurated as Maryland’s governor in January 1951, no doubt perceived the opportunity. As Robert Brugger writes, if McKeldin often “pursued a bipartisan course,” it owed to the truth that “he was a party unto himself” in an overwhelmingly Democrat state. Another scholar of Maryland politics notes a similarity between McKeldin and Truman in these years insofar as both politicians “provided rhetoric that boosted black hopes and sometimes won white sympathizers.” Indeed, as governor (1951–59), McKeldin openly acknowledged the notion that racial segregation was incompatible with postwar America.<sup>33</sup>

Conversely, during his first stint as mayor (1943–47), McKeldin restricted his concerns largely to “rhetorical and symbolic” notions of equity within the Jim Crow system more so than challenging the system itself. And when pressed to choose a side, the mayor as often cajoled the forces of segregation as he did blacks struggling against it. During the first year of the Ford’s demonstration, for example, McKeldin made a show of support for the theater owners. “The Mayor went in,” activist J. E. T. Camper recalled decades later, “he crossed the picket line.” By his gubernatorial inauguration in 1951, however, through public pronouncements reported widely in the local press, McKeldin stood poised to perform in the urban liberal mode of allyship to the black struggle.<sup>34</sup>

If leaders of the Ford’s demonstration never issued any formal or public pronouncements regarding these new allyship rules, the nature of their actions after 1950 demonstrated the new mood’s impacts all the same. The protest had achieved minor national notoriety by that point. Publications like *Variety* offered periodic updates of the effort.



FIGURE 5. Portrait of Maryland Governor Theodore McKeldin (1900–1974). In addition to serving as governor of Maryland (1951–59), McKeldin served two terms as mayor of Baltimore (1943–47, 1963–67). Photograph by Paul S. Henderson, 1950s, Baltimore, Maryland.

Maryland Center for History and Culture, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Baltimore City Life Collection, Paul S. Henderson Photograph Collection, HEN.00.B1-090

Some artists, producers, and production companies gave statements of support in the local black press.<sup>35</sup>

Meanwhile, if an out-of-town activist like the young Bayard Rustin walked the line occasionally when visiting Baltimore, never again would anyone of Paul Robeson's stature. The progressive leftist likely represented a mode of allyship no longer wanted on the Fayette Street picket line by 1950. Very quickly, in the span of some twenty-four months, much of the black struggle in Baltimore and everywhere else transformed from welcoming the likes of Robeson to joining the US Government in persecuting him (and other leftists), effectively narrowing the voices allowed to offer dissent. Those who persisted in associating with Robeson were castigated.<sup>36</sup>

In Baltimore, an imbroglio around the harassment of Robeson ensnared the venerable W. E. B. Du Bois, for example. "I am writing to withdraw our invitation to you to deliver the commencement address at the commencement exercises at Morgan State College on June 1949," a letter to Du Bois began bluntly. Despite his "outstanding contributions in the field of scholarship," and his "many, many years as a symbol and a source of inspiration," the pioneering activist (who had agreed to speak on "The Future of the Negro State College") had committed an unpardonable cold war crime weeks before commencement. "Your presence with Mr. Paul Robeson at the recent World Peace Congress held in Paris," college president Martin Jenkins wrote, "and, particularly, your failure to condemn his treasonable statement made at that meeting

have linked you in the public mind with the communist movement in this country.” “I do not deny you the right to speak your views,” Jenkins allowed, “[but] we are far from being sympathetic in this matter.” “I think that Mr. Robeson’s views and approach are to be severely condemned,” the college president concluded.

In his brief remarks at the World Peace Congress in Paris during April 1949, Robeson had expressed a view that black Americans being called to take up arms in foreign lands in spite of the abuse they endured domestically was unconscionable. “We shall not put up with any hysterical raving that urges us to make war on anyone,” Robeson told the gathering, including those like Du Bois who shared the dais with him. “And our will to fight for peace is strong,” Robeson said. “We shall not make war on anyone . . . We shall not make war on the Soviet Union.”

Du Bois apparently said little in the immediate wake of Morgan’s 1949 rebuke. Whatever scandal emerged materialized more than a year later. In his own defense, Du Bois provided the *Afro* with his record of correspondences with Morgan. Meanwhile, more than a decade later, in 1960, after the highest fever of the red scare had broken, Morgan sought peace and amends with Du Bois. Jenkins conferred honorary doctorate of laws on the great champion.<sup>37</sup>

If cold war politics demanded that the support of those like Robeson be sworn off, new, more mainstream sources seemed ready to step forward. Ultimately, at Gov. McKeldin’s direction, the state’s Commission on Interracial Relations and Problems finally intervened on behalf of the Ford’s protesters. This marked “the first time,” the *Afro* reminded its readers, “that a State official has taken a stand in the fight to lower the color bar at the Fayette Street theatre.” It also represented shifting political calculations, since earlier (as noted above) McKeldin himself had crossed the Ford’s picket line. Now he brought tremendous political pressure that added to the weight of scrutiny being applied by the non-southern theater industry press, and a marked decline in ticket sales. Shortly after McKeldin’s intervention, theater officials relented to protesters’ demands. Ford’s abandoned Jim Crow early in 1952, and the newly narrowed coalition of allyship had its first significant victory.<sup>38</sup>

## Allyship and Desegregation in the 1950s Southern Struggle

The developments of the late 1940s and the political shifts attending postwar allyship against southern racism worked to re-shape protest culture by the early 1950s. Where Baltimore’s Ober Law, for example, had proven ineffectual in routing out actual subversives, it nonetheless contributed to a creeping national mood of intimidation. Black activists and their allies perceived its effect. As the *Afro* noted in 1950, the postwar red scare’s sole utility seemed to be “curb[ing] freedom of thought arguments for civil rights.” Blacks and their allies persisted, and the era of school desegregation following *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) marked another contextual shift in the struggle. In its wake, new allyships developed, independent activism by southern students stepped

forward, and innovative protest strategies were deployed.<sup>39</sup>

### *Urban Liberal Allyship and the Politics of School Desegregation*

Across the South, promoters of white supremacy orchestrated an irrepressible wave of anti-sedition defenses for Jim Crow. Under assault, urban liberals everywhere summarily discarded their alliances with leftists as anti-communism came to dominate decision-making within their organizations, organized labor, and in government. Even stalwart civil rights organizations like the NAACP directed that all communists and “fellow travelers” be purged from its branches. “[We became] cold warriors,” one national NAACP staffer noted, recalling the mindset at the New York headquarters. Urban NAACP branches across the South (including Baltimore’s) generally fell in line with the anti-communist liberal moment, and resulting tensions eradicated the left-liberal nexus. Baltimore’s John E. T. Camper—a long-time member of the Baltimore NAACP’s executive board—quit his associations with the Progressive Party in 1950.<sup>40</sup>

Meanwhile, beyond civil rights groups like the NAACP, most urban liberals who operated in some mode of allyship with the black struggle adopted anti-racist positions only as part of a larger anti-communist argument. As Patricia Sullivan notes, the ultimate “urgency” in their doctrine rested with “exposing and routing out Communists” more than anti-racism. Where the needs of anti-communist policy dictated, the black struggle’s white liberal partners would preach patience on civil rights. In Baltimore, for example, the local chapter of Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) more than any other group in the postwar era blended consistent anti-racist talk with strident liberal anti-communist rhetoric. In 1947, Sidney Hollander, president of the Baltimore chapter (BADA), asserted that its allyship with the southern black struggle was authentic, “not [simply] a gesture of goodwill.” BADA, however, played no organizational role in the public protests against Jim Crow (like the Ford’s Theatre campaign).<sup>41</sup>

Still, individual members pushed BADA to pick an appropriate and public fight with segregation. In this way, southern ADA chapters like Baltimore’s ran ahead of the national organization, which preferred anti-racist advocacy to protest action. BADA had connections to the local black struggle through overlapping leadership with the Baltimore Urban League (BUL). Hollander, in fact, had chaired the respective boards of both organizations through the end of the 1940s. The BUL and BADA had in fact collaborated on a few previous initiatives. In fall 1951, BUL’s visionary executive director Furman L. Templeton addressed a BADA function, challenging it to “strick[e] out at race restrictions wherever they occur.”<sup>42</sup>

With Templeton’s instigation, Margaret Houghteling “Peggy” Neustadt, chair of BADA’s Race Relations Committee, encouraged the group to challenge a glaring example of what the city’s Jim Crow school system offered its white but not black students: the college-preparatory program in engineering available at Baltimore’s

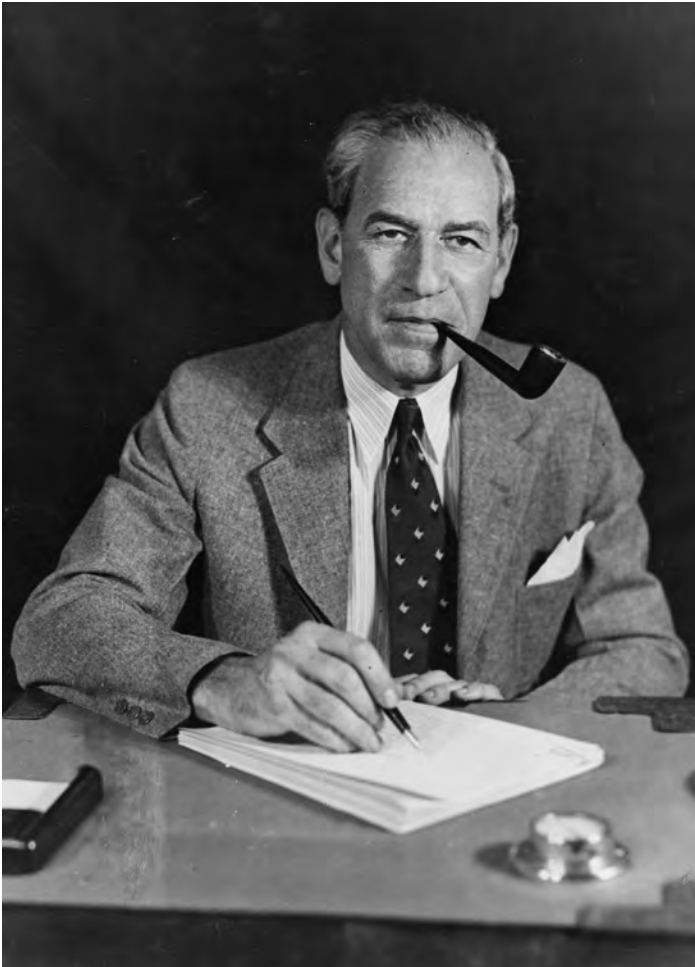


FIGURE 6. Portrait of Sidney Hollander by unknown photographer, unknown date.

Maryland Center for History and Culture, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Sidney Hollander Photograph Collection, PP256.01

Polytechnic Institute for Boys. The BUL and BADA spearheaded an effort to gain admission for black students to the Poly program. Other groups like the Baltimore NAACP joined the project. After recruiting student petitioners, hearings with the school board began.<sup>43</sup>

Despite the urban liberal reputations enjoyed by many on the school board, it moved only haltingly when confronting the inequality of segregation. Their animating premise was “[to] provide an opportunity within the law to move the school system forward to some extent.” Nevertheless, once it was determined that an equivalent program could not be developed at a blacks-only school, fifteen black boys were allowed to enter Baltimore Polytechnic Institute at the start of the 1952 academic year.<sup>44</sup>

This might have represented a breakthrough point, challenging Jim Crow schooling beyond simply Poly. Urban liberals certainly lauded its triumph. However, when activists pushed a Poly-as-precedent line, seeking black admissions to other unique and whites-only public school programs, the school board balked, uncomfortable with

“giv[ing] black petitioners everything they asked,” Howell S. Baum posits. The urban liberal-dominated school board did not welcome any potential role for themselves as ushers of the end of Jim Crow education in the city. Activists took them to court.<sup>45</sup>

Similarly, urban liberal politicians in the 1950s had not embraced anti-racism in any fulsome way, the rhetoric of national party platforms notwithstanding. Most liberal politicians in the South did not in fact advocate the unqualified defeat of segregation, nor did they offer full-throated endorsement of anti-racism as a core liberal value. At points where anti-racism hampered anti-communism, liberals tended toward devaluing the black struggle.

Mayors of big southern cities during the 1950s (a principal source, as far as such existed, of liberal politics in the region) felt peculiar pressures. In the postwar era, the traditional urban-rural divide in most southern states began to reflect the untraditional consideration of race. Postwar southern black electoral strength before 1965 impacted urban politics much more than rural. Pressure also emanated from interests related to job creation, business investment, and economic development as the South’s biggest cities looked to attract regional, national, and even global concerns.<sup>46</sup>

Political animals, primarily, southern big city mayors often held no true preference, one way or the other. The amount of political capital expended in the name of the southern black struggle, therefore, reflected political pragmatism more so than ideological commitments. Such a perspective contextualizes Mayor D’Alessandro Jr. of Baltimore, which during the 1950s was by far the largest city governed by Jim Crow. D’Alessandro governed as an urban liberal Democrat for Baltimore’s working class—though, as Matthew A. Crenson clarifies, “mostly its white working class.”<sup>47</sup>

If D’Alessandro was no intentional champion of the black struggle, he “took care to monitor” circumstances under the purview of his office affecting blacks all the same. These efforts reflected calculations—the electoral costs and benefits of “progress” for Baltimore blacks. Demonstrating his direct hand, for example, the number of black employees of the city government increased during his tenure (around seven percent, according to Crenson). Likewise, D’Alessandro appointed a city-level “human relations” commission to complement the work of the state-level interracial commission. Otherwise, however, it is difficult to see where he led or even provided allyship to the black struggle during his years in City Hall.<sup>48</sup>

While he was by no measure a champion of Jim Crow, D’Alessandro seemed content to allow segregation to die by the momentum of other forces: primarily through efforts of the black community itself and its allyships at the federal level. That said, his administration was certainly not eager to run ahead of such forces, as was true of other big city mayors in the South. For example, his contemporary Ben West of Nashville, also presented as a modern mayor, taking a broad view of the South’s central theme—“We don’t have race relations,” he insisted, “we have human relations!” Like D’Alessandro, West built a track record of at least engaging black citizens, but little else.<sup>49</sup>

Another in this cohort, Atlanta's William B. Hartsfield—in some ways, the icon for the South's liberal big city mayors in the postwar years—nurtured an image of “a city too busy to hate.” In this way, he projected commitments to both New South economic development and rhetorical anti-racism. Despite such promotion, Hartsfield's Atlanta struggled in earnest to find a way forward regarding fairness and equality for blacks. “Many problems were ignored or allowed to fester,” Bayor observes. “Whatever Hartsfield's rhetoric, Atlanta's blacks were still treated as second-class Citizens . . . . No white leaders saw an end to segregation.”<sup>50</sup>

Less certain of the benefits of supporting desegregation was DeLesseps “Chep” Morrison of New Orleans. Morrison won the 1950 mayoral election over a “Dixiecrat” opponent by, among other tactics, “loftily condemning his opponent's anti-Negro rhetoric,” Fairclough writes (adding that New Orleans liberals congratulated themselves for spurning racial hatred). Quickly, however, Morrison revealed a meek appetite for allyship with the black struggle. Faced during this tenure with a large and growing black electorate on the one hand, and a white population easily riled to reaction by any improvement by blacks on the other, Morrison did as little as possible, and “considered the maintenance of segregation essential to his continued political success.” Working from these political calculations, “the result was inaction.”<sup>51</sup>

Generally, southern liberal urban mayors like D'Alesandro foreswore direct leadership and preemptive endorsement on desegregation. Instead, they committed (some quite apologetically) to improving city services and employment opportunities for blacks within the Jim Crow system. Then, however, came *Brown v. Board of Education*. Anticipating the May 1954 Supreme Court ruling, which declared Jim Crow unconstitutional in public schools, D'Alesandro went further than his urban liberal mayoral contemporaries. He acknowledged the city's “duty and the . . . responsibility” to comply with a Supreme Court mandate—but specified that the burden rested not with him, but rather with the school board (which his office appointed).<sup>52</sup>

The actual end of compulsory race segregation in Baltimore City public schools proved “a cut-and-dried affair,” a *pro forma* procedural matter. When organized anti-*Brown* protest came—couched in the language of white supremacy, and executed under the banner of groups like the National Association for the Advancement of White People—it belied urban liberals' contention of broad white support for desegregation. As such, the D'Alesandro administration's swift and plain-spoken defense of desegregation marked a difference in degree, not kind, from his urban liberal mayoral contemporaries elsewhere in the region (who delayed and equivocated). In the end, Baltimore's “Freedom of Choice” option acted to tamp desegregation, while rapid white flight from the city's public schools executed a largely successful massive resistance by 1960.<sup>53</sup>

Such outcomes were not readily apparent, however. In the moment, blacks and their allies received *Brown* as a triumph. Among white urban liberal activists, many—like Una Corbett—paused to reflect. Corbett's journey through the interracialist mo-



ment had run the gamut of liberal activism by that point. An avowed socialist since the 1930s, the Virginia native and English teacher at Western High School had worked as an organizer and president of the Baltimore Teachers Union since its beginnings. And, since the late 1940s at least, she was a member and activist in the city's leading inter-racialist anti-communist outfit, BADA.<sup>54</sup>

Back in 1952, Corbett worked in the BADA leadership on the Poly admissions project. Now, two years later, she stood before a class that included black students at Western High. During the first week of school that year, one of her new black students asked, "which day of the week do we pass our book in?" Corbett did not understand at first, the student later recalled, and the white girls giggled at what seemed a strange question. Not intimidated, the student clarified: "How long during the week do we keep the book, and when do we turn it in so the other class gets a book?" Jim Crow had always required black students to do more with less—going to school in shifts, for example, and sharing with each other the "hand-me-down" books discarded by whites-only schools. This general scarcity and chronic materials deficiency had formed their basic educational experience and haunted every attempt at academic excellence before Brown. Having known nothing else, therefore, Una Corbett's student was simply enquiring about the new ground rules.

An awkward silence passed before Corbett understood the question. "Oh!" she blurted with nervous apology. "Why, no . . . you keep your book all the time." Over-taken, perhaps, by the meaning of her long allyship with the black struggle right then and there, Corbett quickly turned her back to her class. When she finally faced them again, she had tears in her eyes. Composing herself, she then re-framed her black student's question so her white students would understand—adding for emphasis that black girls "have landed here [at Western], just as you have landed here . . . without [even] having a book all the time!"<sup>55</sup>

Meanwhile, the words and deeds of urban liberal politicians like D'Alesandro, the Baltimore school board, or the police commissioner may have muffled public pronouncement of white dissent against school desegregation, but it did not prevent its more fundamental expression. In the South, flight from cities like Baltimore functioned for urban whites as the concomitant to rural and small town nullification demands, manifestos, and school closure schemes. Considered against those other expressions of white massive resistance, however, flight had the most lasting and significant impact. Contentions of an apparent ease regarding *Brown's* implementation in Baltimore, therefore, should not be overstated. A large majority of white Baltimoreans by the 1950s did not embrace desegregation. Rather, Baltimore's "open enrollment" structure allowed the obdurate to avoid desegregated schools—"moving" their children, before they could move their residences. Indeed, Baltimore's public school system flipped from majority white in 1954 to majority black by the end of the 1950s, more than a decade ahead of its sweeping residential demographic turnover.<sup>56</sup>

### *Militant Interracialist Allyship at the Dawn of Direct Action*

If urban liberalism remained visibly allied with the southern black struggle well into the next decade, it also plainly revealed its limits before 1960. The pace of the moment had quickened. The moral authority of the struggle combined with the legal authority implied by *Brown* and the contest over segregation in southern life moved ever more from the courtrooms to the public spaces and the streets of cities like Baltimore. Another mode of allyship became visible at this point, militant interracialism. A dedicated cadre of militant interracialists began to build at the forefront of allyship. They supported blacks, especially young blacks, as the era of direct action dawned.<sup>57</sup>

The ranks of militant interracialist organizations attracted a range of left-leaning personalities, including pacifists, Christian socialists and practitioners of the social gospel, war-resisters, and others who took moral inspiration from what was transpiring by the 1950s with the southern black struggle. The remaining southern New Dealers, like those affiliated with the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF), also embraced the black struggle as perhaps the last best champion of the intra-regional fight to define their South as other than the land of racists and demagogues. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) was first among these operating in the South. Though small and peripheral wherever it organized in the South before 1960, CORE's brand of militant interracialist allyship gave national visibility to forms of direct action protest that had always been a part of the black struggle. CORE worked with local southerners to stage militant protests and organize affiliate groups in the region.

CORE made central commitments to interracial organizing and militant action. CORE's organizing philosophy required its members to commit to an "action discipline" as August Meier notes, "which set forth the modified Gandhian methods [of non-violence] by which CORE operated." As CORE began its work from its Chicago base back in 1942, its militancy seemed in-step with many of the late-popular front efforts then in vogue. By 1950, as CORE organized its first southern affiliates in Jim Crow cities like St. Louis and Washington, D.C., its direct action tactics like sit-ins attracted young people to its brand of activism.<sup>58</sup>

Having assessed that Baltimore "needs a CORE-type group badly," local activists formally launched an affiliate organization in 1953. Herbert C. Kelman, a Johns Hopkins-affiliated psychiatrist only recently arrived in Baltimore, spearheaded the formation of the city's first chapter. Baltimore CORE (BCORE) formally began on January 10, 1953, with about two dozen members. Attracted by CORE's mission to be "interracial [sic] in both character and intent," Kelman's initial cohort of BCORE members attracted, he later recalled, white and black "teachers and students, union girls and some veterans in the struggle for racial equality" in the city.<sup>59</sup>

Along with peers at Johns Hopkins University, Goucher College, and other schools, several Morgan State College faculty and administrators were among those who joined BCORE at its launch. While the school had a long standing in the city's protest tradition, at least one staff member, Eugene Stanley, had prior experience with CORE it-

self, including its efforts to work more forcefully in the South. Stanley's history with CORE was, in fact, unique among all the members of early BCORE. His affiliation dated to the parent organization's beginnings. A Georgia native who had been active with an Ohio CORE affiliate in the early 1940s, Stanley had also worked for a time previously on CORE's national staff. While based in Greensboro, North Carolina, Stanley had even played a minor but important role in CORE's landmark *Journey of Reconciliation* (1947). He joined Morgan's Department of Education in 1950.<sup>60</sup>

In the months prior to the Baltimore chapter's founding, national CORE executive director George M. Houser reached out to Juanita Jackson Mitchell about the prospects for public accommodations activism downtown. "The store managers pass the buck," Mitchell reported. "They say if the other managers will also take the more liberal attitude they will be happy to join in, but they cannot be the first."<sup>61</sup>

BCORE began work immediately, with remarkable success in its first years. Using teams of black and white activists, BCORE's method involved lengthy negotiation, then—if needed—publicity (leaflet distribution), "sit-ins," and picketing. During summer 1953, for example, BCORE activists staged "supper hour sitins [sic]" involving between 12 and 34 demonstrators. "When the white members of the group were served, they passed their food to Negro members [seated next to them]," the news organ *CORE-lator* reported. "The employee thereupon roughly yanked plates, cups and silver off the counter and the group continued to sit there." Soon after, however, the May–June 1954 cover of *CORE-lator* announced a victory for the Baltimore chapter: "Win Campaign At Grant's." The issue even featured a picture of the chapter in action. That victory came in a line of six over previously segregated "lunch counter" restaurant chains that dropped racist service practices: S.S. Kresge Co. (May 1953), Woolworth's (May 1953), Schulte-United (1953), McCrory's (October 1953), W.T. Grant and Co. (May 1954), Read's (January 1955).<sup>62</sup>

The projects of this eighteen-month period represented the first successful desegregations of public accommodations in the history of Baltimore's downtown district. Of more than local relevance, however, BCORE's work drew upon regional and national resources. The 1953 sit-ins at McCrory's on Lexington Street in Baltimore, for example, benefitted from concurrent actions against a St. Louis McCrory's. When the latter agreed to desegregate, the chain's national headquarters mandated desegregation across all of its stores. Similarly, in 1954, when BCORE's effectiveness seemed to stall, a sympathy protest by New York CORE against the W.T. Grant and Co. store in Harlem (which did not discriminate) coaxed the chain's board of directors and stockholders to end Jim Crow across its stores nationwide.<sup>63</sup>

Baltimore proved to be a beachhead for what the national CORE hoped would be an unfolding commitment to building a nonviolent allyship movement in the South through strategies of militancy and interracialism. Ironically, perhaps, militancy proved easier to program in the South than interracialism, which developed into a point of contention perplexing CORE's national leadership throughout the 1950s. Cautioned



FIGURE 7. Read's Drugstore, unknown photographer, c.1940s, Baltimore, Maryland.

Maryland Center for History and Culture, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Subject Vertical File-Baltimore, Md.-Drugstores

by its black staffers not to make a “fetish of ‘interracialism,’” CORE ultimately determined to encourage interracial activism in the South where it could, but to promote the efficacies of non-violence if nothing else. Ultimately, CORE’s approach to militancy, with its intentional (some argued, overly aggressive) direct-action confrontation

of Jim Crow structures, marked a departure from organized protest in the South, and became the dominant strategy of the post-1960 civil rights movement.<sup>64</sup>

BCORE's downtown project unfolded almost in tandem with similar efforts undertaken by students in the Northwood community near the Morgan State College campus. Whether or not this synchronicity represented pure coincidence or some aspect of coordination is not fully apparent. What is clear, however, is that Morgan State College had traditions of student activism and even militant protest dating well before the arrival of BCORE. They were participants in the Ford's Theatre project from the beginning, for example. Indeed, two Morgan students were involved in one of the rare instances of arrests of Ford's picketers. Similarly, hundreds of Morgan students demonstrated in Annapolis (1947) in protest of inadequate budget support for the school.<sup>65</sup>

For its part, BCORE seems to have preferred to organize students under its banner. "We are now engaged in a joint project," Kelman reported in early 1953, adding, "chances are that we will continue a cooperative relationship enabling us to draw more students into our group." Such hopes petered quickly. The students at Morgan, Johns Hopkins, and other colleges approached activism independently, under their own organizational structures. If they cooperated with each other—to say nothing of non-student groups—they insisted on remaining organizationally independent. "Morgan students are typical of the active students all over the country," CORE leaders later consoled themselves, "they prefer to be independent." The collaborative efforts with BCORE to desegregate lunch counters downtown and near Morgan's campus had been largely completed by fall 1955. For the remainder of the decade, student activists worked on the other Jim Crow venues in Northwood Shopping Center near campus: a movie theatre and several dine-in restaurants. When a sustained sit-in campaign against the Arundel Ice Cream Shop concluded in March 1959, the Afro splashed its headlines with, "Sit Down Wins!"<sup>66</sup>

Militant interracialism characterized more than just the allyship program of BCORE, however. An interracial if overwhelmingly white group of students from the Johns Hopkins University chapter of Students for Democratic Action (JHUSDA) also joined Morgan student projects from time to time. Indeed, Morgan activists sometimes advertised for allyship support in the Hopkins student newsletter. The small community of black students enrolling at previously whites-only schools like Johns Hopkins in the early postwar years also bears consideration. One black student at Hopkins, for example, Tony Adona, was active during his undergraduate years (1954 to 1958). He served as co-chair of JHUSDA and remained engaged in protest projects even after graduation.<sup>67</sup>

### *Allyship and Backlash as a Movement Approaches*

CORE in the 1950s represented an incursion of sorts—a non-southern white-led allyship group at work on the ground in the South. Among white-led allyship organizations indigenous to the region, however, the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF), an urban liberal organization of politicians who worked through public

education projects (aimed at white southerners) and governmental lobby efforts to influence anti-racist public policy, had deep roots in fulsome interracialist agendas. After news of the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, grabbed national attention in 1956, however, interracialist organizations at work in the region stepped forward in allyship, hoping to promote Montgomery's example of mass mobilization as a regional model. More than any other organization, CORE ran with this work. In hopes of encouraging similarly organic actions by southern blacks through allyship work, National CORE sent its "experts" on nonviolent direct action to unfolding protest scenes during the late 1950s around the region to train and support.

Likewise, BCORE began a desegregation project in spring 1955 at the Gwynn Oak Amusement Park in Baltimore County, shortly after victory against Read's lunch counters. It deployed a picket line to coincide with the park's annual "All Nations Day" Festival, a late-summer celebration of ethnic diversity and "good fellowship." Inviting the formal participation of foreign embassies, consulates, and local nationality groups, the program featured a grand parade, folk dancing and music, cuisine and foodway demonstrations, and even cultural exhibits in the main showplace of the park, the "Dixie Ballroom." Tens of thousands attended each year, but park owner policy excluded blacks (except for maids in uniform caring for white children).<sup>68</sup>

Each year, several dozen picketers marched at the entrance to the park as "an educational demonstration." As Adah Jenkins, BCORE's vice chairperson, told the *Baltimore Sun* in 1957, "we are working in the spirit of good will and nonviolence, [and] we are always ready to negotiate." Education components and advance work with the various embassies and consulates potentially participating in the festival informed them about the undemocratic practices of the park. This aspect ultimately saw a number of groups from Asia and Latin America decline participation in the latter years. National CORE even sent its field secretary, LeRoy Carter, to Baltimore to help. Before coming to Baltimore, Carter had already been on the ground in Montgomery, and at scenes of student-influenced protest at Orangeburg, South Carolina, and Tallahassee, Florida. By the late 1950s, another of CORE's national officers, James Peck, had occasionally participated in the Gwynn Oak Park campaign.<sup>69</sup>

Local segregationist resistance across the South, however, also benefited from broader support. After 1955 (owing to the *Brown* rulings and the favorable way much of the nation responded to efforts like the Montgomery Bus Boycott), segregationist white southerners adopted a region-wide program of massive resistance. If sharing common themes, strategies, and tactics, such efforts centered on local communities, and local entities—from traditional school boards to new innovations like the "white citizens councils." After 1957, emboldened no doubt by the latitude afforded pro-segregationist brutality across the South, whites in and out of uniform became verbally abusive and physically violent against the Gwynn Oak Park demonstrators. On one occasion, private security guards roughly ejected two nonviolent protestors who had slipped into the park unnoticed. White bystanders accosted activists physically, beating and ripping away their clothing, then watched police arrest their victims.<sup>70</sup>

Through the late 1950s, however, the Gwynn Oak Park effort was more of an annual event than an ongoing protest program (although negotiation was attempted year-round). BCORE's sustained effort in these years was to provide allyship to a coalition of groups attempting to desegregate a local restaurant chain, the White Coffee Pot. BCORE participated in the campaign as part of an umbrella group, the United Citizens Committee for Human Rights (UCCHR). Chaired by Morgan State College professor Alexander J. Walker, UCCHR comprised representatives of thirty separate civic, fraternal, and neighborhood groups.<sup>71</sup>

While the restaurant chain's owners claimed sympathy with desegregation philosophically, they remained guided by a fear of white reaction, claiming their white patrons would abandon them. Their Jim Crow policy was chain-wide despite the fact that many White Coffee Pot locations were often the only segregated businesses in a given area. It segregated customers, that is, even though many other locations were in all-black communities (like its Mondawmin Mall location), or communities clearly trending that way. The owners even purported to welcome new compelling legislation or a court ruling that might give them cover. Negotiation seemed "futile," since business owners negotiated largely in bad faith.<sup>72</sup>



FIGURE 8. White Coffee Pot Restaurant, photograph by Cronhardt & Sons, unknown date, Baltimore, Maryland. Maryland Center for History and Culture, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Baltimore City Life Collection, Triangle Sign Company Collection, 1982.2.38

The White Coffee Pot campaign began in fall 1956 with concurrent demonstrators at various locations across the city. UCCHR deployed nonviolent direct action (or “passive resistance” as many black southerners referred to it through the late 1950s) in the form of sit-ins, picketing, and leaflet distribution as a primary tactical approach. If CORE’s adherence to nonviolence dated to its beginnings (1942), its companions in UCCHR drew influence more contemporaneously. “If colored people can walk for the right to ride the buses in Montgomery, Ala.,” Chairman Walker announced, “they can walk for the right to eat in restaurants in Baltimore, Md.” Drawing synergies with the Montgomery Bus Boycott, still ongoing at the time, some in the community looked for a Baltimore pastor to rise up and “emulate Rev. M. L. King, the messiah of the Montgomery bus boycott.” Indeed, A. J. Payne of Enon Baptist, and Marcus Wood of New Providence Baptist, shared leadership duties (and the nonviolent vision) with Professor Walker.<sup>73</sup>

Because of its early association with nonviolent direct action protest techniques, BCORE’s impact on the White Coffee Pot campaign seemed pronounced. However, in the 1950s, the southern black struggle held nonviolent direct action as a tactic more than a doctrine. The efforts of militant interracialist allies like those in CORE to press for deeper commitments only revealed an underlying tension, feeding a backlash of sorts from black activists that became more pronounced as the southern struggle inspired a national movement.

Meanwhile, for the White Coffee Pot project, the most evident impact of this development saw newly converted adherents to nonviolence grow impatient in the eyes of doctrinaires. Traditionally, BCORE deployed direct action as a last resort, and only after extended periods of behind-the-scenes negotiation with segregators failed to produce results. It often proved “a long drawn-out procedure,” one witness remembered. By 1957, it divided doctrinaires within the UCCHR from those who were not. Student groups, especially, demonstrated this impatience, marginalizing the allyship of BCORE and others. By spring that year, for example, civic activist Verda Welcome had distanced herself from UCCHR, citing its impatience and eagerness to deploy pickets and sit-ins. They had not allowed sufficient time for negotiation with the White Coffee Pot owners before direct action began, she asserted, and were too “radical.”<sup>74</sup>

## Conclusion

The function of allyship within the southern black struggle achieved new visibility, of course, as that struggle inspired a national civil rights movement after 1960. Paramount for any historical grasp of the African American struggle for equality in the South requires us to come to terms with what black southerners themselves understood as the possibilities open to them at any given moment. Allyship did not determine black southern resistance, of course. However, framing the nature of allies willing to stand



with southern blacks (and the contexts promoting or discouraging those stances) aids our appreciation for how black activists set goals, developed strategies, and settled upon tactical approaches to it all.

The history of the postwar 1940s and 1950s revealed trends of transformation and adaptation. American liberals moved to wrest the anti-racist mantle from leftists, with developments in southern cities like Baltimore marking this turn most demonstrably. Making best use of the evolving cadre of allies, Baltimore blacks deployed strategies of confrontation and instigation joined with nonviolent direct action and continuing legal suits.

## NOTES

1. Charles S. Johnson, "Negroes at Work in Baltimore, Md.," *Opportunity* 1, no. 6 (June 1923): 12. See also J. Douglas Smith, *Managing White Supremacy: Race, Politics, and Citizenship in Jim Crow Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Kimberley Johnson, *Reforming Jim Crow: Southern Politics and State in the Age before Brown* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
2. Daryl Michael Scott, *Contempt & Pity: Social Policy and the Image of the Damaged Black Psyche, 1880–1996* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 2–7, 11–17, 19–40, 58–66; Morton Sosna, *In Search of the Silent South: White Southern Racial Liberalism, 1920–1950* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1972), 8–11, 20–41; K. Johnson, *Reforming Jim Crow*, 24–30; *Session Laws*, 1924, Volume 568, 1515–16, MSA 820973-1; *Session Laws*, 1927, Volume 569, 1139–41, MSA 820974-1, General Assembly (Laws), Maryland State Archives, Annapolis, MD (hereinafter MSA); *Afro-American*, January 23, 1926, January 21, 1927, May 14, 1927, February 9, 1929, May 7, 1931, December 17, 1932, December 17, 1938, April 24, 1924. See also Dorothy Brown, "The Election of 1934: The 'New Deal' in Maryland," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 68, no. 4 (Winter 1973), 405–21.
3. C. S. Johnson, "Negroes at Work in Baltimore, Md.," 12; *Afro-American*, September 21, 1923, February 24, 1922, October 15, December 3 and 10, 1938; Ralph Pearson, "The National Urban League Comes to Baltimore," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 72, no. 4 (Winter 1977): 524–30. The other southern Urban Leagues were Richmond (organized in 1918), St. Louis (1918), Atlanta (1920), Louisville (1921), Memphis (1932), Washington (1938), and New Orleans (1938).
4. Andor Skotnes, *A New Deal for All?: Race and Class Struggles in Depression-Era Baltimore* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 217–18, 265.
5. *Afro-American*, January 13 and 28, 1933, October 15, 1938; Doug Rossinow, *Visions of Progress: The Left-Liberal tradition in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 169; Skotnes, *A New Deal for All?*, 64–68.
6. It should be noted that these lynchings and the Euel Lee case—like the Scottsboro Boys—predate the formal declaration of a popular front, but speak to the Depression Era context into which the moment tapped. See: Sherrilyn A. Ifill, *On the Courthouse Lawn: Confronting the Legacy of Lynching in the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Beacon Press, 2007), 53–55, 85–86; Skotnes, *A New Deal for All?*, 56–64, 184–85, 206; David Taft Terry, *The Struggle and*

- the Urban South: Confronting Jim Crow in Baltimore before the Movement* (Athens: University of Georgia Press), 70–74. See also: Dan T. Carter, *Scottsboro: A Tragedy of the American South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979); Patricia Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice: The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: The New Press, 2010), 105–10, 155, 190–97.
7. Oral History Interview with Broadus Mitchell, August 14 and 15, 1977, Southern Oral History Program Collection (#4007), Interview B-0024, accessed August 2, 2013, docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/B-0024/menu.html; Skotnes, *A New Deal for All?*, 185, 191–93; Terry, *The Struggle and the Urban South*, 70–74.
  8. Matthew A. Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 404–5; Terry, *The Struggle and the Urban South*, 176. Mayor Jackson had refused to make such an appointment in the early 1940s. If, in the 1930s, Mayor Jackson had put the first Black person on any city board—George Murphy to the Baltimore Housing Authority (BHA)—he had also in the late 1920s appointed a “Committee on Segregation,” charged with recommending steps to shore up Jim Crow’s durability. See also: Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007); William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981); Benjamin Houston, *The Nashville Way: Racial Etiquette and the Struggle for Social Justice in a Southern City* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2012).
  9. Mrs. Frances M. Jencks and Mrs. H. Milton Wagner to Gov. Herbert O’Conor, April 12, 1944, *Records of the Governor* (General Files), 1942–44, “National Defense - Ne,” Series 1041, Accession No. 8955-61, MSA; Baltimore Committee for Home Front Democracy to Governor Herbert O’Conor, Governor (General File), 1945–46, BC, S 1041, “bal–ban,” 9626-3, MSA; George H. Callcott, *Maryland and America, 1940–1980* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 53–57.
  10. The vice-chair was also white. Blacks led none of the commission’s six sub-committees. Of course, the ideological politics of the commission’s white members no doubt varied. Yet where several of the white members ultimately engaged the commission’s work sincerely, the fact that none but five of the commission’s eighteen members were black belied any pretense of black empowerment or authorship of the committee’s voice. Meanwhile, the Healy Commission’s *Report*, released spring 1943, did not directly confront racial segregation, but it did call for greater black access to government employment, including law enforcement and seats on governing bodies, specifically the Baltimore City School Board. The report also pointed to the need for equal funding to segregated blacks-only public colleges and universities. Increased government advocacy to end racially discriminatory hiring practices by private sector employers was also noted, as was expanded access to housing, and improvements in housing code enforcement to ensure safe and desirable living opportunities. See: Carl Murphy to Walter White and Roy Wilkins, March 20, 1942, Records of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Group II, Box C76, Folder Baltimore, Md., 1942, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; *Afro-American*, March 21, April 28, and May 2, 1942. See also: Carroll P. Kakel III, “Fighting Hitler and Jim Crow: Baltimore Activists, Equal Rights, and World War II, 1941–45,” *Journal of Civil and Human Rights*, 6, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2020): 53–77; Terry, *The Struggle and the Urban South*, 86–88; Callcott, *Maryland and America*, 53–57.
  11. Cleveland Bealmear, Chairman of the Housing Authority of Baltimore City, “Post-War Housing Program for Baltimore: General Statement,” January 1944, McKeldin Files, BCA,

- Box 252, File G1–38 (2); *Baltimore Real Estate News* 8, no. 9 (September 1940), 10–11; Frances Morton Froelicher oral history, interview by Barry Lanman, October 18, 1977, 2, OH 8259, McKeldin-Jackson Project, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Maryland Center for History and Culture, Baltimore, MD (hereinafter MCHC); William Theodore Dürr, “The Conscience of a City: A History of the Citizens’ Planning and Housing Association and Efforts to Improve Housing for the Poor in Baltimore, Maryland, 1937–1954” (PhD dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1972), 84.
12. Dürr, “Conscience of a City,” 359–60.
  13. See: Mary G. Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism: The Universal Negro Improvement Association in the Rural South, 1920–1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Theodore Kornweibel Jr., *Seeing Red: Federal Campaigns against Black Militancy, 1919–1925* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).
  14. Coincidentally, Ober had earlier served on the Healy Commission. Callcott, *Maryland and America*, 123; William E. Leuchtenburg, *The White House Looks South: Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Lyndon B. Johnson* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 171.
  15. See: Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919–1950* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009); Landon R. Y. Storrs, *The Second Red Scare and the Unmaking of the New Deal Left* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012); Larry Tye, *Demagogue: The Life and Long Shadow of Senator Joe McCarthy* (Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2020).
  16. *Afro-American*, September 7, 1946, April 29, 1950.
  17. Though the PCA formally disbanded in 1948, it did so largely to transform into the Progressive Party. See: *Afro-American*, April 29, 1950; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 190–94.
  18. Board of Park Commissioners Meeting Minutes, Records of the Department of Recreation and Parks, 1865–Present, BRG–51, series 5, vol. 1946–1951, January 6, 1948, Fol. 146; July 14, 1950, Fol. 529; October 11, 1948, Fol. 254; May 4, 1948, Fol. 209, Baltimore City Archives, Baltimore, MD (hereinafter BPC Minutes\_BCA). *Afro-American*, January 10, 1948. Daniel Atwood to Rev. Roy Ross, February 4, 1948, Robert Garrett to D’Alesandro, January 27, 1948, Thomas D’Alesandro Jr. to Robert Garrett, January 29, 1948, Records of the Mayor: D’Alesandro Jr. Administrative Files (from three terms between May 1947 and February 1959 filed as a group), BRG 9-23, Box 276, File 93, Baltimore City Archives, Baltimore, MD (hereinafter D’Alesandro Jr. Files\_BCA).
  19. BPC Minutes\_BCA: January 14, 1948, Fol. 149.
  20. D’Alesandro Jr. Files\_BCA: Lillie Jackson to D’Alesandro, January 19, 1948, Box 282, Fol. 156; Maurice Braverman to D’Alesandro, February 9, 1948; Alice B. Arrington to D’Alesandro, February 17, 1948; Ella J. Ulman to Thomas D’Alesandro, January 22, 1948; Robert Garrett to D’Alesandro, January 27, 1948, Box 276, Fol. 93.
  21. D’Alesandro Jr. Files\_BCA: D’Alesandro Jr. to Garrett, January 29, 1948, Box 276, Fol. 93; Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History*, 419.
  22. “Racial Tennis Group to Face Grand Jury,” *Baltimore Evening Sun*, July 12, 1948.
  23. D’Alesandro Jr. Files\_BCA: Marjorie N. Everingham and Ben. C. Everingham to D’Alesandro, July 23, 1948, Box 276, Fol. 93; *Baltimore Evening Sun*, July 12, 15, 26–27, October 25, November 9, 1948; *Afro-American*, October 23, November 4, 20, 1948.
  24. *Baltimore Sun*, January 25, 1949.

25. Another venue, the Maryland Theatre, also drew protest for some time. See the *Afro-American*, December 16, 1950.
26. *Afro-American*, Nov 27, 1948; *Baltimore Evening Sun*, September 17, 1993.
27. Juanita J. Mitchell and Virginia Jackson Kiah oral history, interview by Charles Wagandt, January 10, 1976, 3, OH 8097, McKeldin-Jackson Project, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, MCHC, Baltimore, MD. In a related action, demonstrating the tenuous nature of postwar gains, another local theater—the Maryland Theatre—had acceded to desegregation pressure, only to rescind and resume Jim Crow practices. See also: *Afro-American*, February 22, 1947, September 17, 1949; BPC Minutes\_BCA, January 14, 1948, Fol. 149; *Afro-American*, July 31, October 30, 1948, September 17, 1949.
28. *Afro-American*, August 10, 1946.
29. The CRC inherited the mantle of an interracial leftist allyship with the black struggle from earlier communist-led efforts by the International Labor Defense, and the National Negro Congress. See: Erik S. Gellman, *Death Blow to Jim Crow: The National Negro Congress and the Rise of Militant Civil Rights* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Charles H. Martin, “The Civil Rights Congress and Southern Black Defendants,” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 71, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 25–52; Gerald Horne, *Communist Front?: The Civil Rights Congress, 1946–1956* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1988); *Baltimore Sun*, March 27, 2002.
30. Leuchtenburg, *The White House Looks South*, 171. See also “President Truman’s Address before the NAACP” (1947), *Historic Speeches*, Truman Library Institute, 2016, accessed March 21, 2021, trumanlibraryinstitute.org/historic-speeches-naacp; Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice*, 323, 345–46.
31. *Afro-American*, November 8, 1947, July 24, 1948; *Baltimore Evening Sun*, July 12, 1948.
32. *Afro-American*, December 6, 1947.
33. Robert Brugger, *Maryland: A Middle Temperament* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 573; Callcott, *Maryland and America*, 150.
34. Dr. John E. T. Camper oral history, interview by Leroy Graham, July 2, 1976, 23, OH 8134, McKeldin-Jackson Project, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, MCHC, MD (hereinafter Camper [1976] MCHC).
35. *Afro-American*, February 19, May 28, October 29, 1949. The *Afro* credited Rustin as a participant in the 1947 Journey of Reconciliation protest that tested compliance with the Supreme Court’s ruling supposedly desegregating interstate travel. The plaintiff, Irene Morgan, and one her NAACP-supplied attorneys, Thurgood Marshall, were both Baltimoreans. See *Morgan v. Virginia*, 328 US 373 (1946).
36. Though she takes some issue with the notion that Cold War politics played a determinative role in how the civil rights movement unfolded, Glenda Gilmore’s *Defying Dixie* (see publication details in endnote 15) remains a seminal text for understanding how some allies encouraged the black struggle to turn away from leftist voices in exchange for liberal support.
37. See: Morgan State College to W. E. B. Du Bois, March 23, 1949, telegram, mums312-b125-i055, credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b125-i055; Du Bois to Morgan State, March 24, 1949, telegram, mums312-b125-i056, credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b125-i056; Morgan State to Du Bois, April 23, 1949, letter, mums312-b125-i057, credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b125-i057; Morgan State to Du Bois, April 29, 1949, letter, mums312-b125-i059, credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b125-i059; Lillian Murphy to Morgan State, May 4, 1949, letter, mums312-b125-i060, credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/

- mums312-b125-i060; Morgan State to Du Bois, March 25, 1960, letter, mums312-b151-i349, credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b151-i349; Du Bois to Morgan State, April 4, 1960, letter, mums312-b151-i350, credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b151-i350; Morgan State College doctor of laws honorary degree, June 6, 1960, mums312-x01-i033, credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-x01-i033, W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, MA. See also: *Afro-American*, July 16, 1949, August 26, 1950; Martin Duberman Paul Robeson (Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 341–42, 358–62; David Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois, 1919–1963: The Fight for Equality and the American Century* (New York: Henry Holt, 2000), 545.
38. Caroline Ramsay (Mrs. John B. Ramsay) oral history, interview by Mrs. William Cunningham, July 1, 1971, 1–2, OH 8020, McKeldin-Jackson Project, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, MCHC, Baltimore, MD; Camper (1976) MCHC, 23; *Afro-American*, January 12, February 9, 1952; *Baltimore Evening Sun*, September 17, 1993.
39. *Afro-American*, April 29, 1950; Callcott, *Maryland and America*, 124–27.
40. Camper's resignation came reportedly over a disagreement about the party's position against US involvement in Korea, but not long after demands to break subversive organizational ties. Though he joined the Republican Party, he seems to have maintained his ideologically progressive positions and connections—including a longstanding friendship with the leftist actor Paul Robeson, whom Camper named the godfather of his daughter, Jean (he also came to the public defense of another persecuted leftist with Baltimore connections, W. E. B. DuBois). Herbert Hill quoted in Simon Hall, "The NAACP and the Challenges of 1960's Radicalism," in *Long is the Way and Hard: 100 Years of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)*, edited by Kevern Verney and Lee Sartain (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2009), 82; *Afro-American*, March 3, 1951; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 214.
41. BADA's history as an interracial though predominantly white liberal anti-communist organization in allyship (tepid though it was) with the Baltimore black struggle stretched back to the early 1940s. BADA began as the local branch of the Union for Democratic Action (UDA), an anti-fascist and anti-segregation liberal organization whose primary thrust was to promote Democratic Party policy and FDR's New Deal agenda. Though its strength lay outside the South, UDA/ADA organized other southern chapters (of greater or lesser vitality): Dallas, Louisville, Miami, New Orleans, St. Louis, and Washington, D.C. Meanwhile, William Boucher III replaced Hollander as BADA president by January 1949. Regarding local ADAs and Jim Crow, a reluctance among white anti-communist liberals in most southern cities explains the lack of an impact that ADA as a whole made on the region. Only New Orleans developed a branch comparable to Baltimore. "A.D.A. and the Liberal Movement," March 28, 1947, Box 1, Folder 18; Edna Walls to William Cochrane, September 20, 1945, Box 67, Folder 12; Edna Walls to SH, August 1, 1946, Box 67, Folder 13; Sidney Hollander, "Speech to Baltimore Chapter of UDA, announcing the formation of the Americans for Democratic Action," January 10, 1947, Box 92, Folder 9; Sidney Hollander to Dorothy Dare, February 11, 1942, Box 67, Folder 10; "Third Anniversary of Baltimore Chapter, Union for Democratic Action Report and Introduction of Guest Speaker, Bruce Bliven – Baltimore, MD," May 1, 1945, Box 1, Folder 17; "A.D.A. and the Liberal Movement. . .," March 28, 1947, Box 1, Folder 18, Sidney Hollander Collection (1926–1972), MS 2044, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Maryland Center for History and Culture. *Baltimore U.D.A. Newsletter* 1, no. II (March 1, 1945), Americans for Democratic Action Papers, 1932–1965, Microfilm HS2325.A5, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland, College Park, MD (hereinafter: ADA\_UMCP); *Afro-American*, February 8, 1947; Furman L. Templeton, "The Admission of Negro Boys to

- the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute 'A' Course," *Journal of Negro Education* 23 (Winter 1954): 22; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 189–90; Terry, *The Struggle and the Urban South*, 179–89; Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice*, 349, 374–75. See also: Douglas Steven Gallagher, "Walking the Tightrope: Americans for Democratic Action in the South, 1947–1963" (PhD dissertation, University of Florida, 2008).
42. Templeton, "The Admission of Negro Boys": 22; Howell S. Baum, Brown in *Baltimore: School Desegregation and the Limits of Liberalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 51.
43. The Wisconsin-born Neustadt had been active in interracialist, liberal, and anti-communist projects since arriving in Baltimore in 1948. Even before then, she spent a year in Washington, D.C., working as an organizer in allyship capacities, including the National Committee on Segregation in the Nation's Capital. Once in Baltimore, Neustadt continued her allyship work through a number of groups, including the Commission on Interracial Problems and Relations (as the former Commission to Study Problems Affecting the Colored Population/Healy Commission had been re-branded by Governor McKeldin in 1951); the American Civil Liberties Union, and for several decades, the local ADA. Elizabeth T. Meyer to George Houser, January 4, 1952, Papers of the Congress of Racial Equality, 1941–1967, Ser. 3, Microfilm, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. [hereinafter CORE\_LOC]; *ADA News* II, no. 2 (March 1952), II, no. 1 (September 1951), II, no. 2 (October 1951); *Baltimore Sun*, September 26, 1951; Templeton, "The Admission of Negro Boys," 22–29. Terry, *The Struggle and the Urban South*, 179–89. See also *Baltimore Sun*, December 25, 2004.
44. Walter Sondheim Jr. oral history, interview by Francis Colletta, October, December 1971, OH 8044, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, MCHC, Baltimore, MD (hereinafter: Sondheim Jr. [1971], MCHC). See also Terry, *The Struggle and the Urban South*, 185–86.
45. Baum, Brown in *Baltimore*, 51, 68.
46. See Numan V. Bartley, *The New South, 1945–1980* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995); James C. Cobb, *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade For Industrial Development, 1936–1980* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982).
47. Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History*, 413. I define the urban South from black perspectives—by the proportional representation of African Americans, by the centrality of race to the local social order, and by the durability of compulsory racial segregation into the postwar era, where federal intervention was required for its destruction. Baltimore (population 949,708), St. Louis (856,796), Washington, D.C. (802,178), Houston (596,163), and New Orleans (570,445) represented the largest cities in the region in 1950. These same five retained their relative rankings in 1960 as well. Another cue as to Baltimore's regional identity can be taken from the fact that twice during the postwar years a Marylander chaired the Southern Governors Conference (William Preston Lane, 1947–48; J. Millard Tawes, 1965–66).
48. Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History*, 424. Lawsuits seeking admission to special programs at whites-only Mergenthaler Vocational and Western High School for Girls were pending when the US Supreme Court decided *Brown v. the Board of Education*. See Juanita J. Mitchell oral history, interview by Charles Wagandt, July 25, 1975, 55–56, OH 8095, McKeldin-Jackson Project, MCHC, Baltimore, MD. See also Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners for Baltimore City, Records of the Department of Education, RG 31, Ser. 1, Sub-Series A, Fol. Exec. Session Minutes, 1953–1955, Baltimore City Archives, specifically the following dates: February 5 and 19, March 5 and 19, May 7, 1953.
49. *Baltimore Sun*, June 12, July 10, 1951, February 5, 1952; Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History*, 420; Houston, *The Nashville Way*, 4, 35–36.

50. Ronald H. Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 27.
51. Adam Fairclough, *Race and Democracy: The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1915–1972* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 151–53.
52. D’Alessandro Jr. Files\_BCA: William Jabine II to Mayor Thomas Tommy D’Alessandro Jr., December 28, 1953; Mayor Thomas Tommy D’Alessandro Jr. to William Jabine II, December 29, 1953, Series 23, Box 297, Fol. 258; *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 US 483 (1954); *Baltimore Sun*, September 4, 7, 1952; Baum, *Brown in Baltimore*, 54–57, 62–63; Terry, *The Struggle and the Urban South*, 187–89.
53. Sondheim Jr. (1971), MCHC, 7; Elinor Pancoast, *Report of a Study on Desegregation in the Baltimore City Schools* (Baltimore: The Maryland Commission on Interracial Problems and Relations and the Baltimore Commission on Human Relations, 1956), 11; Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History*, 423; Baum, *Brown in Baltimore*, 72–82; Houston, *The Nashville Way*, 70.
54. As a scholar, Corbett was apparently also versed in the black literary tradition, having assisted her romantic interest, the Baltimore-based white literary scholar, V. F. Calverton, with his 1929 *Anthology of American Negro Literature*. Meanwhile, during the first semester of desegregation in the fall of 1954, Corbett possibly escorted some of the young women at Western a few blocks down Howard Street from their Centre Street campus to the intersection of Lexington Street. There they observed a BCORE sit-in campaign. See: Natalie Forrest oral history, interview by David Taft Terry, February 2, 2002, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, MCHC, Baltimore, MD; V. F. Calverton, *Anthology of American Negro Literature* (New York: The Modern Library, 1929); Haim Genizi, “V. F. Calverton, a Radical Magazinish for Black Intellectuals, 1920–1940,” *The Journal of Negro History* 57, no. 3 (July 1972): 241–53; “Joy Corbett-Calverton Hurwitz,” *Baltimore Sun*, October 12, 2001.
55. Terry, *The Struggle and the Urban South*, 196–98.
56. Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History*, 424; Baum, *Brown in Baltimore*, 92.
57. I use the term “militant” to describe the direct action strategies used by some activist groups at work in Baltimore by the late 1930s, but especially in the postwar 1940s and 1950s. The term provides the necessary contrast to what similar groups previously regarded as the acceptable boundaries of protest (litigation, quiet negotiation, incrementalism)—especially on behalf of racial equality and desegregation. Projects by local affiliates of the Progressive Citizens of America (PCA), the National Negro Congress (NNC), and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), for example, as well as “homegrown” activism by Baltimore students—especially those at Morgan State College—were viewed as militant during that period. My use aligns with other scholars in the field, for example Erik Gelman: when describing the national NNC, he writes of the group’s “militant forms of activism,” and cites such projects as “pickets, boycotts, and marches.” Of course, one generation’s militancy is docility for the next. The late 1960s witnessed such a transformation that militancy in the name of social protest took on new popular meaning. This development should not mask the meaning of what came before, however. See Erik S. Gellman, *Death Blow to Jim Crow: The National Negro Congress and the Rise of Militant Civil Rights* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 3.
58. August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement, 1942–1968* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 9.
59. Meier and Rudwick note that BIF represented the city at a national gathering called by

- CORE in the early 1940s. While BIF found sympathy and inspiration in CORE's program at the time, the group chose to remain formally independent, making the 1953 formation of Baltimore CORE that organization's first establishment in the city. Prior to arriving in Baltimore, Kelman had worked with New York CORE. See CORE\_LOC, Ser. 3, Rl. 8, No. 6: Kelman to George Houser, February 9, 1952, Houser to CORE Groups, April 7, 1953. See Terry, *The Struggle and the Urban South*, 165–66; “New Group in Baltimore,” *CORE-lator* no. 57 (March–April 1953), 2; Herbert C. Kelman, *A Time to Speak: On Human Values and Social Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1968), 229–30; Meier and Rudwick, *CORE*, 16–17.
60. *Afro-American*, April 26, 1947, September 20, 1950; Meier and Rudwick, *CORE*, 25, 34–35.
  61. CORE\_LOC, Ser. 3, Rl. 8, No. 6: Juanita J. Mitchell to George M. Houser, January 21, 195[2], Elizabeth T. Meyer to George Houser, January 4, 1952.
  62. CORE\_LOC, Ser. 3, Rl. 8, No. 6: Herbert Kelman to George Houser, May 19, Tom O'Leary to George Houser, November 10, Houser to Kelman, December 4 and 17, 1953; O'Leary to Houser, March 1, 1954; *Afro-American*, May 9, August 1, 1953, August 20, 1960; *Baltimore Sun*, January 30, 1992; “End Bias at Lunch Counter Near Negro College,” *CORE-lator* no. 59 (Oct.–Nov. 1954), 1; “Step Up Sitdown Campaign at Grant's,” *CORE-lator* no. 60 (Jan.–Feb. 1954), 2; Meier and Rudwick, *CORE*, 25, 34–35.
  63. CORE\_LOC, Ser. 3, Rl. 8, No. 6: O'Leary to Houser, November 10, 1953, March 1, 1954, November 10, 1953; Houser to Kelman, December 4 and 17, 1953.
  64. Where the mid-1960s brought approaches to militancy that did not eschew violence in self-defense, the nonviolent militancy introduced by CORE and affiliated activists in the South during the early 1950s and deployed most fulsomely by black activists including Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. broke with the quiet negotiation tactics of previous activism. See Meier and Rudwick, *CORE*, 45.
  65. *Afro-American*, March 29, December 20, 1947, February 24, 1948.
  66. “New Group in Baltimore,” *CORE-lator* no. 57 (March–April 1953), 2; *Afro-American*, January 22, 1955, March 17, 1959; Thomas Anthony Gass, “‘A Mean City’: The NAACP and the Black Freedom Struggle in Baltimore, 1935–1975” (PhD dissertation, Ohio State University, 2014), 369; Terry, *The Struggle and the Urban South*, 210–12.
  67. Adona (and JHUSDA) became increasingly active, and involved in Morgan's Northwood project, after 1955. After graduating from Johns Hopkins University, he started law school in Baltimore. When he died unexpectedly in 1960, he was still active in the local struggle, including projects with Morgan State College students. See: *SDA Bulletin*, December 1957, Americans for Democratic Action Papers, 1932–1965, Ser. 8, Campus Division, Rl. 128, No. 94 “Maryland, corr.,” ADA\_UMCP [see full citation in endnote 41]; *Afro-American*, December 24, 1960.
  68. *Baltimore Sun*, September 5, 1955; *Afro-American*, September 4, 1956.
  69. Unaffiliated activists and other groups also lent support and participation over the years. *Afro-American*, September 4, 1956; *Baltimore Sun*, September 2, 1957, September 1, 1958; Raymond Arsenault, *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice*, 44; Meier and Rudwick, *CORE*, 76–78, 83.
  70. *Baltimore Sun*, September 1, 1958, September 7, 8, 1959.
  71. *Afro-American*, March 30, 1957.
  72. *Afro-American*, April 6, 1957.
  73. *Afro-American*, June 24, 1958.



74. Though black, at that stage in her career Welcome aligned with urban liberal power bases. She was only months away from seeking elective office. *Afro-American*, April 6, 1957. See also Clarence Logan, interview with the author, March 11, 2011, Baltimore, Maryland, audio recording, in possession of the author.



FIGURE 1. *Pennington Mills, Jones Falls, Baltimore, View Upstream*, oil on canvas by Francis Guy (1753–1820), c.1804.  
Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 4680-10-0028

# When Harry Met Elsey: Madness, Power, and Justice in Federal-Era Baltimore

BY ROBERT W. SCHOEBERLEIN

**O**N A LATE SEPTEMBER DAY, a carriage rolled southward past the stores and merchant dwellings on Howard Street in Baltimore. An unusual task awaited its four male passengers. The group's leader, though not granted any official police powers, had been appointed by a Maryland court to take a certain thirty-two-year-old white man into his custody. The carriage slowed to round a corner as it made its way to Lerew's Alley, eventually coming to a stop in front of a modest brick house. Dismounting, the men quickly approached the steps leading to the front door. The leader's determined knocking upon the door brought the targeted man's spouse to the threshold. She knew that they would be coming for him. Hesitating for just a moment, she glanced over at the cradle where the couple's fourteen-month-old daughter lay before slowly turning the knob, opening the door, and stepping aside. It was pointless to further delay the inevitable. The men swiftly entered and mounted the stairs to the garret. A few moments later, her puzzled husband, held firmly by each arm, was escorted down the steps and out onto the street and placed into the waiting carriage. He then was whisked away, never to reside again with his wife and child. The year was 1812 and this man had been labeled, in the language of the time, "a lunatic." The group leader was no stranger. He was the man's brother and had just been awarded the trusteeship of his sibling's person and estate by Maryland's Chancery Court.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Please note that some of the primary sources cited in the article contain language that would not be considered appropriate in legal or medical practice today.

The legal actions concerning the trusteeship case “In the Matter of Henry Moore, a Lunatic,” are multifaceted and deserve our attention for a number of reasons. First, examining these cases allows us a rare glimpse into the intimate life and the limited rights of a person society labeled as mentally ill when the field of psychiatry was in its infancy and when public opinion decided the standards for what might be termed deviant behavior. At the heart of these cases is the question of whether someone exhibiting what was considered behaviors of a mental disorder could legally marry and, in a broader sense, enjoy the same rights as other citizens, a status much revered and spoken about idealistically during the early years of our republic.

Second, the cases illustrate the inequities between social classes, genders, and races. The narrative pits a wealthy, influential, urban, white family against a young, white woman of humble and rural origins in a custody contest over the person and property of her husband Henry Moore. Societal beliefs and constraints, with behavioral expectations based on gender and class, colored the sequence of events and informed the outcomes in this particular case. White racial bias against African Americans may have also influenced certain decisions.

Lastly, a review of these cases opens a window into the workings of the Chancery Court, Maryland’s equity court, and its decision-making process that in principle required a fair weighing of the facts. Judgments, however, were handed down by a solitary male appointee for life: the Chancellor. How did the court treat people of different gender or economic circumstances?<sup>1</sup>

What do we learn about Maryland’s society and its judicial workings from this complex story? A person deemed mentally ill during the Federal Era had no legal standing and no personal rights that anyone was bound to respect. Wealth and influence did not necessarily guarantee the success of one’s cause before the Chancery Court on trusteeship matters. However, monied individuals could draw upon their financial resources to doggedly pursue their interests, racking up large expenses over an extended period, delaying the resolution of the case. Lastly, though the Chancellors swore to serve justice impartially, the decisions of the men who held the position reflected the customs and prejudices of the white patriarchal power structure in place at that time.

## Baltimore and the Moore Family

Baltimore’s star was rising during the late eighteenth century and astute people knew it. The population increased from about 5,000 in 1776 to over 46,000 by 1810, making the city the third most populous in America. The influx of people into the city was fueled by the hope of economic opportunity. Milled wheat flour propelled Baltimore’s dramatic commercial ascent. “In 1774, the city exported the equivalent of almost 800,000 bushels of wheat or 25 percent of the total for all of British America.” In the post-war era the number of barrels of flour inspected more than doubled from 247,046 in 1798 to 537,988 barrels in 1812. By 1820, Baltimore was the leading flour market in the United States and “possibly in the world.”<sup>2</sup>



FIGURE 2. *View of One of the Many Mills That Dotted Baltimore's Jones Falls, Pennington Mills, Looking Downstream*, oil on canvas by Francis Guy, c.1804. Maryland State Archives, Peabody Art Collection, MSA SC 4680-10-0028

The Moore family's timely move to Baltimore permitted it to reap the benefits of the city's meteoric growth from the flour trade. William Moore Sr. (flourished 1750–1773) and his wife settled in the area in the mid-eighteenth century and began operating a mill on the Jones Falls River on the then outskirts of the city. Finding success in his initial endeavor, William Moore soon purchased and operated a second mill downstream. In 1763, he sold what was known as “Moore's Upper Mill” to concentrate his business at the remaining mill. Though we know nothing about his mill's operations, it was likely a source of employment for his children, who would learn all aspects of the milling and business from their father.<sup>3</sup>

In 1773, Moore's twenty-three-year-old son David (1750–1806) partnered with his father in the milling operations. David Moore soon became a successful miller and businessman in his own right. He broadened the foundation for his own wealth through the acquisition of city real estate including rental properties. His municipal service from 1781 to 1796 as Baltimore's Inspector of Flour, a lucrative position that

brought him into the circle of urban power brokers, earned him a commission on each of the thousands of barrels he inspected annually. By his retirement at the age of forty-six, David Moore had become the nineteenth-century equivalent of a multi-millionaire.<sup>4</sup>

Befitting his gentlemanly status, David Moore built what was described as a “mansion” at the very upper end of Howard Street just outside the city limits. Set back from the road, the residence sat upon the gentle crest of a hill on three acres in a sparsely populated area to the northwest of the harbor. His multi-story house, which featured a back wing with porches down its length, overlooked a pleasure garden. Just behind and west of the home sat an orchard, hosting various fruit trees cultivated for both family consumption and public sale. A coach house and several outbuildings also dotted the property.<sup>5</sup>

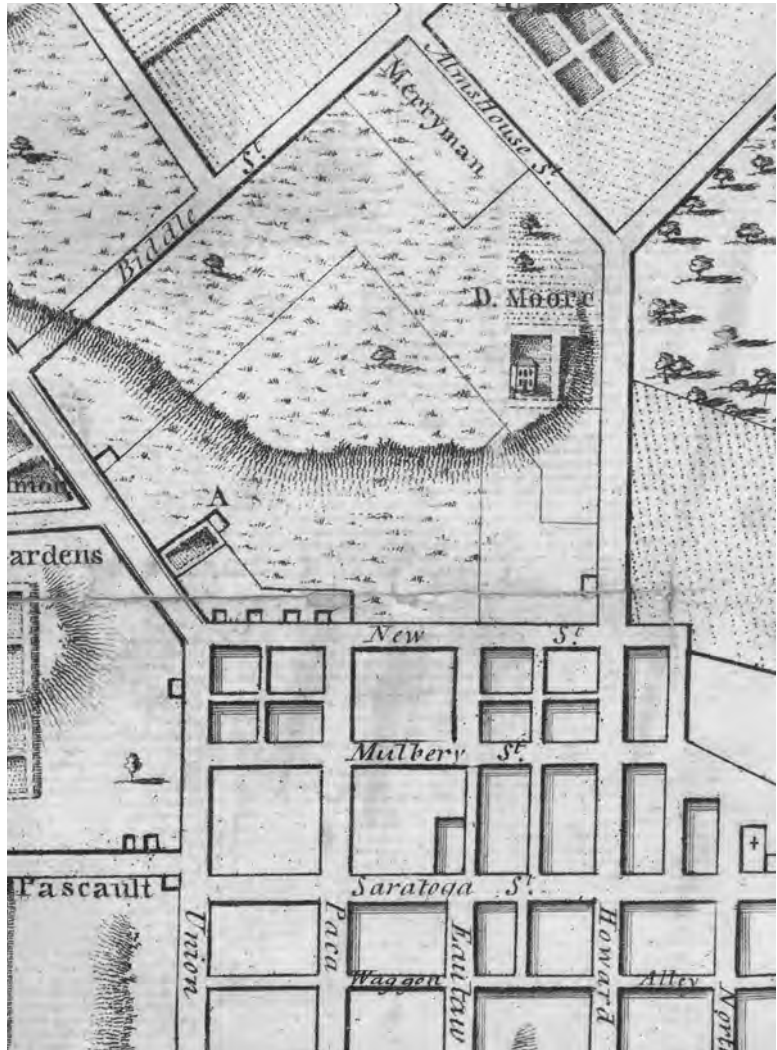


FIGURE 3. Detail showing David Moore's mansion and property boundaries, Warner & Hanna's Plan of the City and Environs of Baltimore, engraving by Charles Varlé, 1801. Maryland Center for History and Culture, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Map Collection—Baltimore City

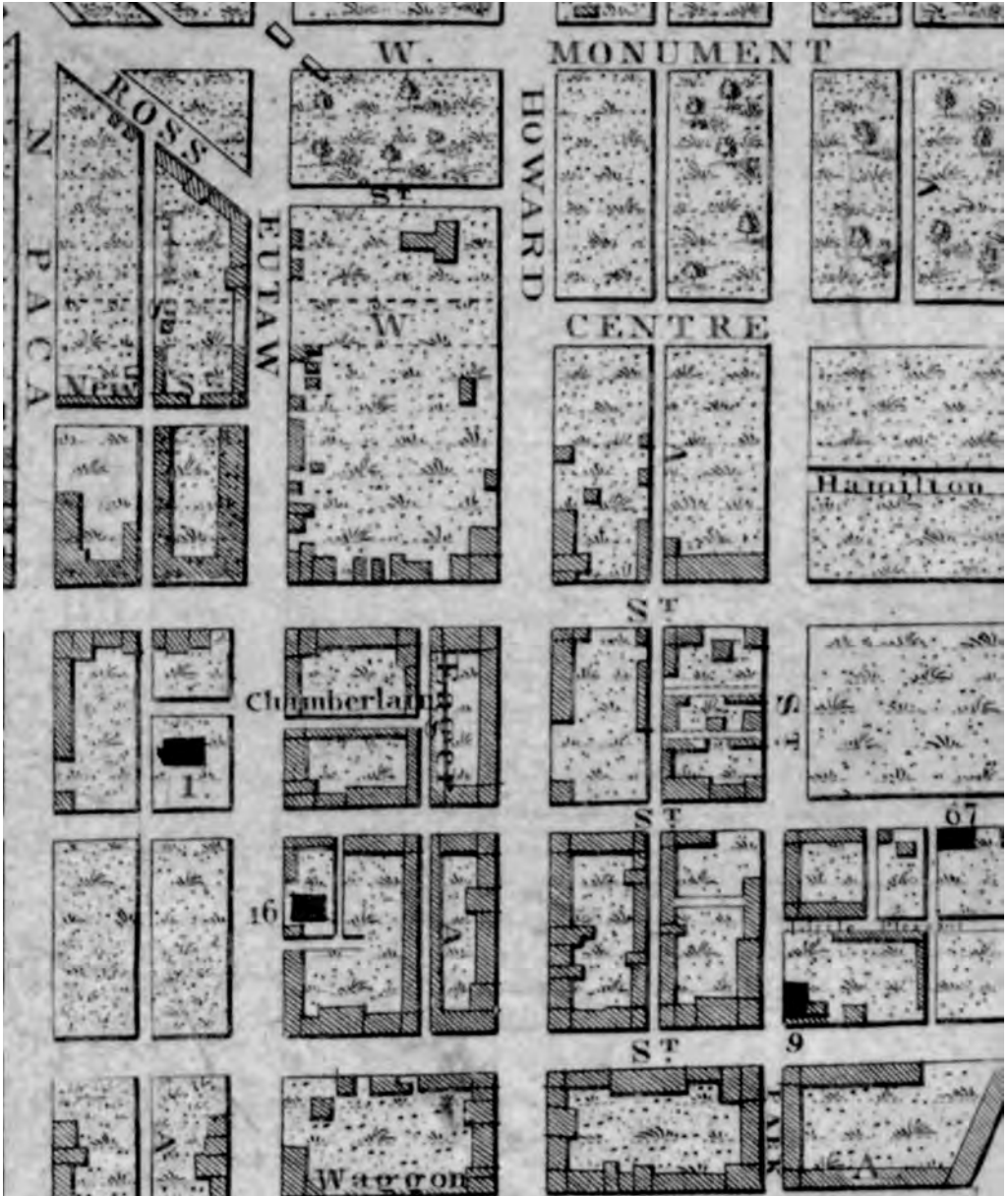


FIGURE 4. Detail showing development surrounding the Moore family property; the mansion sits just to the left of the “R” in Howard Street, from *This Plan of the City of Baltimore*, Thomas H. Poppleton, Joseph Cone, and Charles Peter Harrison [Baltimore, Commissioners, 1822]. Maryland Center for History and Culture, H. Furlong Baldwin Library, Map Collection—Baltimore City

David Moore was characterized as a “good and mild man” and “a stranger to avarice and deception.” He professed to be a Methodist, a new faith transported in the 1770s from England to Maryland and popular in Baltimore, especially among the working classes. David Moore participated in prayer groups and opened his own home to weekly small group “class” meetings with his co-worshippers.<sup>6</sup>

David Moore was also known by some of his acquaintances to exhibit some “extravagances” of character or what we might term today eccentricities of personality. Many individuals at that time considered eccentricity to be the precursor of insanity. A longtime associate characterized him to be “of [a] peculiar make, & liable to give into some propensities that would not fail at time to cause uneasiness.” The person also expressed that “[a]pprehensions were held of his fancies & propensities injuring the [financial] interests of the family.” One example of David’s “fancies” was his invention of an alleged perpetual motion machine to propel “all carriages . . . at the will of the conductor” and his wish to petition the US Congress for exclusive rights.<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, much less is known about Mary Kelly Moore (c.1752–1831), David Moore’s wife. The scarcity of primary resource material relating to women, regardless of class, impedes a fuller understanding of their lives since most archival holdings over-represent the papers of upper-class males. However, some surviving court case depositions that Mary Moore made indicate that she was both an intelligent and formidable person. Her primary occupation was managing the Moore household and all its occupants, including the couple’s two sons, a few young and ever-changing white female domestics, and six enslaved African Americans.



FIGURE 5. *Mary Kelly [Moore] (Mrs. David Moore)*, oil on canvas by Rembrandt Peale, c.1795–1797. Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth, Gift of Judge David D. Furman in memory of Walter R. Furman, Class of 1908, and William F. Furman, Class of 1880, P.983.23



George Washington Moore (c.1778–1822), David’s elder son, was outgoing, sociable, business-minded, and worked side by side with his father for a time as his deputy. Upon his 1798 appointment, George Moore assumed his father’s position as an Inspector of Flour and would interact daily with dozens of businessmen throughout the city. In 1805, George married Margaret Hussey (1787–1861), the daughter of a local merchant and innkeeper who had received some education while in her youth. The couple set up their own household upon the land adjacent to Moore’s parents where they raised seven children, including a son bearing George’s name.<sup>8</sup>

Henry Moore (c.1780–1823), sometimes called Harry by his family and friends, appears to have been the more intellectual, introspective, and less commerce-oriented of David’s two sons. Some termed him as being “timid” in overall manner. At least one family friend believed him to have been a promising young man. Henry attained some higher education, studied the law, and could converse fluently in the French language. Known for his good handwriting, he clerked for a notary public and performed some accounting services for a silversmith. In his leisure time, Henry enjoyed reading and playing parlor games, billiards, and the piano. He traveled perhaps to Europe, or the West Indies: court depositions attest to Henry surviving a shipwreck which likely occurred around 1806. The experience depleted him physically and mentally. Within a few years, Henry developed a mental illness that evolved from an acute to a chronic condition.<sup>9</sup>

## The First Delirium

Henry’s first alleged psychiatric episode occurred in September of 1807. He was studying law at this time. A longtime family friend recalled that “[t]he first symptoms of [his] dilirium were connected to a religious concern.” Henry fervently embraced the Methodist faith and began to proselytize neighbors and passersby. The Methodist clergy at this time, both the ordained and lay, preached in churches, outside the city markets, and even in the streets. Henry, though untrained, also wanted to preach to an audience. His initial targets ranged from the neighborhood boys to priests from the nearby St. Mary’s Roman Catholic seminary. Henry, allegedly, “would stop a man . . . and tell him that his soul was lost, and that he was going to hell.” He exhorted all to reflect upon their current spiritual state. Sometimes a sympathetic neighbor might invite him home to discuss religious matters over a meal. Henry, in turn, would repay their kind gesture by playing a few tunes on the family piano, his skill level being “equal if not superior to any person.” A fellow Methodist later recalled that Henry was “very much devoted to religious matters and his mind was frequently engaged in prayer [and that] he made use of as sound doctrine as any man in town.”<sup>10</sup>

Henry Moore once organized a solo preaching event outside a city market. Said to have advertised his appearance and the content of his sermon in a Baltimore newspaper, the local ordained Methodist clergy attempted to dissuade him from going forward with his plan. The opposition was said to be that Henry “lacked any regular

authority, and [that it] was contrary to the discipline of the Church,” according to a Methodist lay minister who was familiar with the incident. It is unknown if Henry carried through with his idea.<sup>11</sup>

## Decline and Diagnosis

Henry’s mental condition took a distinct turn for the worse in 1808. Unfortunately, one cannot discern his state of mind at that time from his specific behaviors, other than his proselytizing. Two physicians were called in by the family for consultation. Both were general practitioners with limited knowledge of the causes or treatments of mental disorders, like most doctors of this period, and, working independently, concluded Henry to be insane. Dr. George A. Dunkel characterized Henry as “deplorably afflicted with mental derangement” and prescribed some medicines and horseback riding to soothe his mind and strengthen his body. Dunkel thought Henry suffered mostly from a nervous condition and did not require confinement. To calm him, the family journeyed to the nearby York Sulphur Springs to relax in its tranquil rural setting and partake of its restorative waters.<sup>12</sup>

Dr. Ashton Alexander, who had witnessed Henry’s street preaching, believed him to be in a “state of lunacy.” Alexander advised that Henry be sent to the Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia, the nation’s leading mental health facility, because the family was “unwilling to subject him to those restraints so necessary and indispensable in the management of lunatics.” The doctor, when using the word “restraints,” meant physical restraints. The general medical opinion at this time, and at least until the 1830s, held that disciplined coercion and the application of restraints taught self-control and, thus, had a restorative effect on some so-labeled “lunatics.”<sup>13</sup>

The family attempted to place some of Dr. Alexander’s recommendations into practice, even though Henry’s condition and the ways prescribed to alleviate it caused great emotional strain upon them. George Moore’s housekeeper recalled witnessing how her employer “shed tears twenty times over his brother’s unhappy state.” The family preferred to humor and indulge him rather than correct or discipline him, a stance at variance with Alexander’s advice as well as the medical thinking of that period.

However, to keep Henry from wandering and close to home, physical confinement may have been the first step. Henry’s wandering naturally caused his family to be concerned for his safety. It may have also brought some unease to the greater community. Once, while “in a state of mental derangement,” he walked twelve miles from Baltimore to Elkridge Landing. A family friend who happened to be there recognized Henry, took responsibility for him and they rode together on the public stagecoach back to the city. However, some of the passengers first objected to Henry’s presence and needed to be convinced to allow it.<sup>14</sup>

The second measure was to acquire a straight jacket to be used on those rare occasions when restraint was deemed necessary. On a cold and sleety winter night, one of those occasions did indeed happen. While undergoing a treatment administered by



FIGURE 6. Detail of *South East View of the Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia*, engraving by John G. Exilius, 1814. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, [loc.gov/item/2003666919](https://loc.gov/item/2003666919)

Dr. Dunkel, Henry suddenly bolted from the Moore mansion wearing little else but his nightshirt and the straight jacket. Around midnight and many blocks south from home, Henry used his body to pound on the front door of Francis McHenry, an old family friend. Startled awake, McHenry opened his bedroom window and leaned out to inquire who might be standing down there. “It is I Harry Moore . . . if you will let me come in and sleep in the cellar, I will black your boots and shoes, and do anything you have to do,” was the response. McHenry immediately took him in, clothed, fed, and comforted him before placing him in a proper bed for the night. In the morning, Henry’s family was notified of his whereabouts. When Henry’s brother came to collect him, McHenry suggested leaving Henry temporarily at his house, the reason being that a change in his daily routine might benefit his condition. George Moore agreed to the offer, appeared to be grateful, and promised to pay all the expenses. Henry boarded there for six weeks. McHenry characterized Henry’s behavior at that time as mostly docile, though “his mind quite a wreck.”<sup>15</sup>

## Hospitalization and Recovery

In the late spring of 1809, Henry’s family brought him to the Pennsylvania Hospital. The Philadelphia institution was run by Dr. Benjamin Rush (1749–1813), considered to be the founder of American psychiatric medicine, and offered the nation’s most progressive care regimen at that time. Only a handful of hospitals in the United States during this period offered specialized treatments for mental health patients.<sup>16</sup>

Henry was not a stereotypical “madman” destined for perpetual confinement in a dank basement cell. On the contrary, his condition improved during his approximately three-month stay. The alleged medical opinion was that “his mental faculties were not injured but his [dis]order arose from a weakness of the nerves.” However,

because of legal restrictions on Henry's medical records, if they still exist, we may never know of his exact diagnosis or his course of treatments.<sup>17</sup>

Dr. Rush's book on the causes and treatments of mental illness sheds some light on Henry's possible diagnosis and his prescribed care regimen. In his book, Rush specifically mentions a patient who "delighted, as well as astonished, the patients and officers of our hospital, by his . . . preaching from a table in the hospital yard every Sunday." According to Rush's classification system, persons exhibiting Henry's obsession with religion were afflicted with amenomania, or mania, a form of partial insanity. Such persons might experience periodic intervals of lucidity and mental instability throughout their lifetime. However, a chance also existed that they could deteriorate further into what Rush called manalgia or general madness. This was a chronic condition characterized by torpor, a state of mental and motor inactivity with partial or total insensibility.<sup>18</sup>

The course of treatment for amenomania patients followed a certain pattern. Rush believed that insanity was due to hypertension in the brain's blood vessels, so bleeding a patient, often and in copious quantities, was first prescribed. Other treatments included purges, to stimulate bowel movements; emetics, to induce vomiting; a low-calorie diet; and hot or cold baths. Two "heroic" therapies were held in reserve: the tranquilizing chair and the gyrator. In the former, patients were strapped into a sturdy chair and had a wooden box secured over their heads. In theory, the deprivation of stimuli would calm the patient, thus causing the blood to flow away from the engorged blood vessels in the brain. In the latter, rarely used by the time of Henry's admission, patients were fixed firmly down upon a horizontal board and spun around swiftly with the express purpose of invigorating the senses.<sup>19</sup>

Although we do not know Henry's specific diagnosis or treatments, we do know that between his treatment sessions, Henry enjoyed some leisure time. He penned a series of letters home to his mother, probably read some books, and on at least three occasions received a visitor from Baltimore. Unfortunately, at some point Henry suffered a slight setback in his convalescence when a small fire occurred elsewhere in the building. The experience of being locked within a room with barred windows, likely smelling the smoke and hearing a commotion, and having no ability to escape to safety unsettled Henry's nerves. By late summer of 1809, he was deemed well enough to be discharged.<sup>20</sup>

## When Harry Met Elsey

A change in the Moore family home awaited Henry upon his arrival home from the Pennsylvania Hospital. A new live-in, female domestic worker had become part of the household, hired possibly as a seamstress and to perform general house cleaning, though her exact duties are unclear. A sibling of George Moore's wife recalled that the worker was brought in specifically to be "a nurse or an attendant" to Henry.<sup>21</sup>

Alice Pearce (1790–1850?), who also went by the nickname “Elsy,” had lived on her parents’ rural Cecil County farm before moving to Baltimore at the age of sixteen or seventeen in about 1806. Described by a female deponent as being a lean, dark-eyed “middling good looking woman . . . pretty tall and rawboned,” she could write and sew. Elsey first came to live for a year or two with the family of John Lynch, a silversmith and a distant relative, who characterized her as “prudent and respectable.” She sought employment as a live-in domestic, the primary paid work of the majority of unmarried young women at that time.<sup>22</sup>

Henry, by then in his late twenties, had taken notice of Elsey even before she came to live in the Moore mansion. He had seen her walking on the nearby streets when she was employed elsewhere and, according to John Lynch, had found her to be “a pretty girl and appeared to be fond of her.” Elsey started serving as Henry’s informal sewing instructor and the two began spending many hours together. He enjoyed this preoccupation so much that he became proficient with the needle and thread in his own right. Of course, this or any activity would have been under the watchful eye of either his mother or a household staff member. This new domestic worker may have decreased his tendency to wander from home, a behavior that had troubled his mother and that she had hoped to curtail.<sup>23</sup>

The duo’s intimacy eventually resulted in Elsey’s pregnancy sometime in late August 1810. In hindsight, a person knowledgeable of the facts noted that if she had been hired to take care of Henry, “then it was possible [*sic*] probable that an illicit commerce might ensue.” Yet few suspected their mutual secret at that time. By the fall, however, the pair were seen frequently walking out together in the evenings, always without a chaperone and clearly in breach of social decorum. Some neighbors began to talk and spread rumors about the two. Even Elsey’s relative warned her about her imprudent behavior. By year’s end, as Elsey’s pregnancy just began to show, Mrs. Mary Moore allegedly sent her away from the immediate neighborhood to live elsewhere, paying for her to board with Jacob Winand, a tailor, and his wife.<sup>24</sup>

## A Sudden Marriage and Its Aftermath

In the dawning hours of a snowy February 7, 1811, Henry and Elsey married in a secret, pre-arranged location. Their wedding took place in the modest home of carpenter William Gracey and his wife Elizabeth, near the Calvert Street City Spring, a short distance from the Moore mansion. The repercussions from the solemn twenty-minute ceremony altered the lives of the Moore family and Elsey for decades to come. The Reverend Richard Lewis (1752–1832), the pastor of the First Baptist Church, who had been officiating marriages since 1784, agreed to preside over the service. Lewis later remembered that the couple appeared “low spirited” at that time, but that was not at all unusual for him to observe on the faces of two people on the verge of taking their marriage vows. The Reverend observed nothing amiss in the groom’s general behavior

and had been unaware that certain people considered him to be insane. At the completion of the service, the handful of attendees celebrated the union over a plate of cookies and a pot of tea.<sup>25</sup>

News of the marriage reached the Moore mansion that same day. “Mrs. [Mary] Moore . . . was exceedingly enraged when she heard . . . and refused to receive either one of them.” George Moore, accompanied by Isaac Philips, went to the Gracey house that evening to take Henry back home. Upon George’s arrival, Elizabeth Gracey first counseled him to “not make use of any harsh means” and then went upstairs in hope of persuading Henry to come down and speak with his brother. However, Henry refused and stated to her that “he would not trust his life in his [brother’s] hands.” George then allegedly “cried out to his brother Harry ‘I forewarn you from owning elsey as your wife. if you do i will take you to the hospital and keep you there your lifetime for you are a mere idiot.’” Losing his patience, George then mounted the stairs, and entered the room; a struggle between the men ensued. Elsey, five months pregnant at the time, attempted to separate them but was unable to do so. George’s colleague, hearing the commotion, rushed up the steps and stood horrified to discover his friend covered in blood. Henry, during the melee, had struck his brother in the head with a flatiron. Before Henry could be grabbed and held by the men, he bolted down the stairs, into the street and out of sight. Henry returned to the Graceys’ the next evening “in his perfect senses” and inquired of the whereabouts of his bride. William Gracey went out and brought back Elsey to reunite the couple who then soon departed under the cover of night.<sup>26</sup>

The circumstances infuriated George Moore and so he initiated a legal action designed to separate the couple. He promptly wrote to the Chancery Court to request that a writ of *lunatico inquirendo* be issued to determine the “lunacy” or mental state of his brother. Moore’s ultimate desire was to be named Henry’s trustee and have control over Henry’s person and his property. Elsey would then be prevented access to Henry’s wealth.

The writ of *lunatico inquirendo* was the essential first step of declaring Henry insane in the eyes of the State of Maryland. Under a 1785 state law, a relative, friend, or neighbor could petition the Chancellor, who presided over the Chancery Court, to issue such a writ, by penning a letter that described that the subject had for some time been “deprived of his reason” and was unable to care for themselves or their property. The petitioner could ask that a writ of *lunatico inquirendo* be issued to determine the “lunacy” or mental state of the individual. If issued, the Chancellor would send the writ to the county sheriff of the petitioner and request that the sheriff convene a panel of twelve “good and lawful citizens,” limited to all males, who, sitting as an “inquisition,” would decide upon the person’s sanity. No medical professional needed to be present at this gathering. However, the alleged “lunatic”—a broad term used at this time for an individual that society deemed to possess a mental disorder—generally would be present for observation and questioning. Once found insane, the Chancellor would then appoint a trustee or a trustee committee to manage the person and their affairs.<sup>27</sup>

William Kilty (1757–1821), the Chancellor that received George Moore’s request, was a well respected and skilled jurist. He had practiced medicine previously, serving with the Continental Army as a surgeon during the Revolutionary War. He went on to study law, edited legal works, and sat as a circuit court chief judge until 1806 when he resigned to become the Chancellor. He was later described as being “a man of [a] quiet unassuming life and [that] his greatest interest was . . . in his judicial and professional work . . . his opinions [were] uniformly excellent showing ample learning . . . [a]s chancellor he gave universal satisfaction.”<sup>28</sup>

Kilty complied with George Moore’s request and directed the local sheriff to convene an inquisition to rule on Henry’s sanity. On February 11, 1811, four days after the wedding, an inquisition held in a Howard Street home pronounced the younger Moore insane. The proceedings took place under very questionable circumstances. Henry was not informed that the inquisition would be taking place and was not present to be questioned or for his behavior to be observed by the gathering. Chancellor Kilty, unaware of Henry’s absence at the inquisition, declared George Moore his brother’s provisional trustee. Four days later, Henry, through his lawyer William Winder, petitioned Chancellor Kilty to have the inquisition’s pronouncement quashed. “[T]he proceedings had taken place without his knowledge” and no notice was given to him or attempt made to produce him, wrote Winder.<sup>29</sup>

On February 17, ten days after the marriage, George Moore happened to chance upon his brother on Howard Street. George then allegedly persuaded Henry to accompany him back to his house. However, this served only as a temporary stop on the way back to the Moore mansion and Henry’s reunion with his mother. It is difficult to determine to what degree Henry went along willingly. Conflicting depositions paint an unclear picture. Two observers noted that George had grasped Henry by the back of his collar, twisting it tightly so that he might less likely get away, and dragged him along. Henry was supposedly “begging the neighbours to assist him” asking “for God’s sake to interfere,” even exclaiming “brother George, I have not hurted you nor do I wish to hurt anyone.” Two of George’s enslaved men followed close behind to block Henry’s escape. However, another witness, George’s brother-in-law, believed that Henry, while expressing fear and uneasiness about his fate, walked side by side with his brother up Howard Street. The very next day George Moore wrote the Chancellor to request that Henry be returned to the Pennsylvania Hospital. Kilty rejected this idea without giving any reason. In any event, Henry would reside at the Moore mansion for the remainder of the year, whether it was under closely watched confinement or by his own free will.<sup>30</sup>

The Chancellor, considering the hasty inquisition and the immediate re-hospitalization request, was very displeased with George Moore and quickly rescinded his appointment as Henry’s trustee. Kilty noted that the inquisition transpired in “very unusual haste and without the Lunatic being present.” Kilty further wrote: “The Prevention of the Consequences of [the] Marriage appears to have been a great object with the Petitioner for the Commission and it seems to have considered that end more

than the means . . . there has been misbehavior in the Execution of the Inquisition.” The inquisition’s finding was set aside. However, Kilty allowed George to keep custody of his brother as he pondered the question of who the most appropriate person or persons to serve as Henry’s trustee might be. The Chancellor’s overriding concern in all such “lunacy” cases was who was best suited to care for the individual and would also aid them in regaining their reason (if a restoration to sanity was indeed possible.)<sup>31</sup>

Five weeks later, Elsey penned an impassioned note to Chancellor Kilty. She pleaded for the Chancellor to intercede on her behalf “to Obtain the liberty of my Husband Henry Moore, who has been unlawfully confined, & separated from me for several weeks . . . that we may . . . enjoy the common privileges of Inoffensive Citizens.” Elsey continued, “I shall not detain you with . . . my present suffering of Body & mind, or of the treacherousness and Self Interested motives, that has the enemies of Justice & Humanity have made use of to keep us, separated.”<sup>32</sup>

Respected Sir      Baltimore March 23<sup>d</sup> 1811

My necessity forces me to address my humble Prayer to you, hoping you compassion & sympathy will stimulate you to present it to the Chancellor, in order to obtain the liberty of my Husband Henry Moore, who has been unlawfully confined & separated from me for several weeks. Therefore if this humble Request is consistent with the laws of Justice & humanity I beg you ever more to authorize the Sheriff of this County to release my Husband, from his present confinement, and that we may be suffered to enjoy the common Privileges of Inoffensive Citizens, I shall not detain you with giving a full recital of my present suffering of Body & mind, or of the treacherous and self Interested motives, that the enemies of Justice & Humanity have made use of to keep us, separated. The bearer of this Humble address, can state to you the whole of the Proceedings. Hoping that this may find favour in your Sight, I will subscribe myself your humble Petitioner Alice Moore

FIGURE 7. The signature of “Alice Moore” in this document appears to be different than the “Mrs. Moore” featured in other Chancery Court documents (compare Fig. 11). “[T]he enemies of Justice & Humanity... keep us, separated.” “Alicce Moore” to “Dear Sir” [William Kilty], March 23, 1811. Maryland State Archives, Chancery Court, Chancery Papers, Moore v. Moore, S512-9732-1



The couple's temporary separation by the Moore family proved long-lasting. On May 12, 1811, Elsey gave birth to a girl, naming her Malvina Rebecca Moore. Henry would not lay eyes upon his infant daughter until seven months later.

Kilty granted a second writ of *lunatico inquirendo*. On April 5, twelve different men were assembled for the inquisition with Henry in attendance this time. Dr. Ashton Alexander was also present to pose questions to Henry and give testimony about his condition before the gathering. However, Henry allegedly "sat still and did not say a word." Alexander's opinion: "I satisfied myself that Henry Moore was a lunatic differing in degree from when he was at the time of my [earlier] attendance but leaving no hope that he would be restored to reason." The procedurally sound inquisition declared Henry insane.<sup>33</sup>

Chancellor Kilty, however, still appeared unsatisfied. In what was a rare occurrence in these types of trusteeship cases, he requested that George and Henry Moore and their mother travel to Annapolis so that he might interview them personally and draw his own conclusions. It also allowed him to bring his own prior medical experience into his decision-making. Kilty formed an unfavorable impression of the family dynamics, especially of Mrs. Moore. He observed that Henry was "in great dread" of her and that she intended to keep him entirely separated from his wife. Kilty opined:

It was not to be expected that the marriage which took place would be pleasing to his Mother or Brother . . . but it is obvious that, with the former especially, resentment for the marriage has been stronger than any sentiment. . . . This passion . . . in women is not apt to be very mild. . . .<sup>34</sup>

On April 9, Elsey again wrote the Chancellor. This time it concerned her own preference of who might be considered the most suitable trustees for her spouse. She first apologized, hoping that Kilty would "excuse the liberty in addressing to your Honor . . . [on the matter of] the appointment of a friendly Gardian to my beloved husband. The naming of Abner Neale and John Lynch will secure happiness to both the [distress and] also health & Strenght to my beloved husband." Abner Neale sat on the Baltimore City Council and owned a book and paper store. He also served as a lay Methodist preacher. Lynch was Elsey's relative. In the closing paragraph, speaking of George Moore, she wrote: "any mans name wich is recorded on the records for striking and beatings his father I hope cant be considered a decent or entitable man."<sup>35</sup>

A deposition by Elizabeth Gardner, who had lived as a domestic in the Moore mansion, outlined the various types of physical abuse applied by George and his mother to David Moore, George and Henry's father, within the confines of his own home. In one incident he was supposedly beaten by his wife with the branding iron used to mark barrels of flour. David Moore "had them indicted in Criminal Court," recalled Gardner, an eyewitness at those legal proceedings. "All the old gentlemen who were acquainted with Mr. Moore burst into tears when they heard him give . . . his evidence."

for can sure any mans name wich is recorded on the  
 records for striking and beatings his father I hope cant  
 be considered a decent or entitable man and therefore  
 there is but little hopes of his treatment towards  
 his brother to be of a ~~reasonable~~ <sup>reasonable</sup> nature  
 I submit to your Honor with  
 confidence and hope your honor  
 will not forget one who is in  
 the greatest distress  
 No it may be proper to state as Mr Geo Willmore  
 will lay before you a recommendation <sup>word</sup> with  
 of singness consisting of ~~several~~ <sup>several</sup> merchants bank directors  
 and attorneys wich is by professional and interest  
 influence but not withstanding all this  
 I live in the great hopes  
 and am your honors  
 friends &c  
 I will further state should the within names  
 be appointed security can be had to any  
 amount your honor will please to demand

FIGURE 8. "[A]ny mans name wich is recorded... for striking and beatings his father... I hope cant be considered a decent or entitable Man. . ." "Alis Moore" to "your honor" [William Kilty], April 9, 1811. Maryland State Archives, Chancery Record, Chancery Papers, Moore v. Moore, S512-9732-1

An 1806 record from the Court of Oyer and Terminer, which heard criminal cases for Baltimore City, shows that an assault charge was brought by David Moore against his son. George Moore was found guilty and paid the fine under protest. Gardner went on to state that David Moore, for at least seven months before his death, chose to board away from his own home. The last five weeks of David Moore's life were spent as a

Court of Oyer and Terminer and Gaol Delivery  
 for Baltimore County  
 November Term 1806  
 State of Maryland  
 George Moor  
 Presentment for  
 assaulting David  
 Moore his Father  
 November the 7th  
 to Appear and submit  
 under prot. of innocence, Judgment  
 fined 10 and costs  
 Th. Harwood

FIGURE 9. Clerk's copy of ledger entry taken from "State of Maryland v. George Moor," presentment for assaulting his father David Moore, Court of Oyer and Terminer, November Term 1806. Maryland State Archives, Chancery Court, Chancery Papers, Moore v. Moore, S512-9732-1

boarder within her own home, where he died. Henry had the chance to visit with his father on his death day and asked him if he had "made peace with God." While gone to bring back a doctor, his father passed away.<sup>36</sup>

George Moore took dramatic and pro-active steps to counteract this evidence of a negative aspect of his past. First, George and his lawyer solicited numerous positive, supportive depositions from his friends and business associates that attested to his good character. All of them also spoke in admiring terms about how both George and his mother had treated Henry in a kind and tender manner. Second, two petitions were also submitted. The first, featuring eighty-seven signatures, was drawn from the then Baltimore elite, including those of federal, state, and municipal officials, along with prominent merchants, millers, and lawyers. A few examples of the signers are James Calhoun (the former mayor of Baltimore 1797-1804 and Second Branch City Council member), Alexander McKim (a Maryland representative to the US House), Levi Hollingsworth (a Maryland state senator), and Theodorick Bland (immediate

past member of the Maryland House of Delegates representing Baltimore). The petition's preamble touted George Moore's good character and affirmed him as an "honest, industrious, careful, worthy man . . . a kind affectionate Brother [and] the most suitable person to be appointed [as a member of the trusteeship committee]." The men also vouched for the worthiness of Mrs. Mary Moore, whom they knew to be a "humane and indulgent parent." A second petition, featuring an additional twenty-one signatures, followed later. These glowing depositions and petitions on George's behalf soon found their way to Chancellor Kilty's desk. The documents surviving today constitute a three-inch high stack.<sup>37</sup>

All of George Moore's efforts failed to persuade the Chancellor. Clearly, he had seen such stacks of testimonies before. Kilty, reflecting on himself, opined that although "not disposed to think worse of people than they deserve . . . many transactions that come before him in Court forbid him to think too well of them." Besides, he had already met George and his mother and had witnessed the less-than-positive family interaction. Kilty, in addition, seemed to harbor a lingering resentment against George Moore for the rushed, improper circumstances surrounding the first inquisition.<sup>38</sup>

Kilty chose instead to act upon the advice of Elsey Moore. On April 15, he appointed Abner Neale and John Lynch as trustees for her husband, the same men she had recommended. Unwilling to accept the decision, George immediately filed a petition with Chancellor Kilty that his final determination on the trusteeship matter be postponed until the validity of the couple's marriage could be determined. The Chancellor complied with Moore's request and the appointment was suspended temporarily. The Chancery Court simply had neither the legal power to rule on the legitimacy of marriages nor to invalidate them. That responsibility rested entirely with Maryland's General Assembly, the state's legislative branch.<sup>39</sup>

In November, George Moore and his mother petitioned the Maryland General Assembly to have Henry's marriage annulled on the grounds that Henry had been mentally ill at the time of the ceremony and, therefore, could not make any binding legal contracts. James Lowery Donaldson, a lawyer and the House member representing Baltimore, delivered the petition and on November 21 put forth a bill for legislative consideration. Six days later, Elsey's attorney delivered a counter petition on her behalf asking that the marriage be confirmed.<sup>40</sup>

In early December, the House of Delegates invited the lawyers from both sides to appear before them later that month to produce evidence and make oral arguments. Elsey wished the delegates to scrutinize Henry's own writings as a clue to his mental state in advance of his marriage and so, through her attorney, requested that Mrs. Mary Moore be required to produce all of the letters Henry had written to her while he was at the Pennsylvania Hospital. However, the requests for both the in-person arguments and the letters were quickly withdrawn in favor of taking depositions from the interested parties and other witnesses.

In the waning days of the legislative session, after a second reading of the bill, the General Assembly postponed further consideration on the matter until the first day of June 1812. However, for unknown reasons, no more action on this bill ever ensued.<sup>41</sup>

## Elsy Is Appointed Trustee

Without waiting for the General Assembly's future decision, Chancellor Kilty made up his mind. On January 13, 1812, he appointed Elsey Moore and Abner Neale as Henry's trustees. Three days later, Kilty issued an order permitting them to take possession of Henry's person and estate. The Chancellor's reasons were twofold. First, he "considered [that] Alice Moore is in fact the wife of Henry Moore" until otherwise disproved by the state legislature because the Chancery Court did not possess the power to make that determination. Second, Kilty also believed that Elsey was the best suited individual to aid in Henry's recovery. In his opinion, Kilty wrote,

Altho' . . . the relations of the Lunatic appear at the first view to be the most proper persons to have the custody of the person . . . this disposition is subject to be controlled by circumstances, [t]he great object being the comfort and convenience of the lunatic and the securing of such treatment as may not make him worse but may tend to the restoring of his reason. . . . Neither of these objects is likely to be attained by the appointment of George Moore as Trustee of the lunatic being left in his care.<sup>42</sup>

Sometime in late January, amid a spectacle of loud voices, conflict between both sides, and the wary eyes of neighbors, Henry was removed bodily by the new trustees from the Moore mansion. The couple was at last together. With their child Malvina, the couple set up household and attempted to live quietly as a family. However, without ready access to the money in Henry's estate at this point, the trio first boarded in a series of private homes.

They first stayed with John Wilson, a grocer and flour seller, and his wife Susannah at their combination store and dwelling at the lower end of Howard Street for several months. Taking two adjoining rooms in the back of the house, Henry was calm, quiet, and often engaged in reading. The Wilsons had no knowledge of his mental health history, so it came to their surprise when one day George Moore, who was inspecting flour within the store, revealed to Mr. Wilson that Henry was a "lunatic." Wilson countered that he did not think that Henry was deranged. He had been living at the Wilsons for four or five weeks by that time. George, however, assured Wilson that Henry "was the craziest man he had ever seen."<sup>43</sup>

The Wilsons were both in disbelief of Flour Inspector Moore's revelation about their boarder. Their curiosity, however, prompted them to spend an evening with the couple to observe Henry's behavior and judge for themselves. Upon their arrival, Henry greet-

ed them and immediately offered his chair to Mr. Wilson. "After talking a little while, they began to tell riddles and then Henry Moore joined in, laughed and talked[,] guessed some of the riddles and propounded some himself." The Wilsons believed Henry to be quite rational that night.<sup>44</sup>

The family next settled in a small alley house on Strawberry Lane, nearby the Wilsons but closer to the city's center. They boarded for five or six months with John Brewer, a plasterer, and his wife. Located conveniently around the corner from John Lynch, Elsey's relative, the home was also close to the Light Street Methodist Church, which Henry attended. To both casual and close observers, the family appeared to have grown accustomed to the domesticity of married life. When Naomi Lynch, John's wife, visited them a few days after the move, she found them "both sewing by the candle" and that "Henry at that time appeared . . . to be cheerful, rational and happy." John Lynch recalled seeing Henry picking up and caressing his daughter, stroking her face and head tenderly with his hand while he cradled her gently in his arms. Ann Arants, a Cecil County sixteen-year-old who had known Elsey previously, came to stay with the couple to assist them. She characterized Henry's behavior at that time as being like any other man's and in her conversations with him "he talked very sensibly."<sup>45</sup>

Elsey and Henry earned a very modest income by making men's jackets for nearby tailor shops. They performed what was called "out work" in the role of private contractors. A contemporary newspaper characterized out work income potential as being "of so small account as scarcely to defray the necessary and immediate expenses." The Moore family, however, did not relinquish financial control of Henry's estate to the new trustees even after being ordered to do so. As a result, Abner Neale, Leonard Pouder, and a few others, underwrote a large portion of the couple's expenses personally, for which they were later reimbursed. Nonetheless, Henry's inability at that time to support his family properly troubled him and may have led to another mental breakdown.<sup>46</sup>

One frigid night in the dead of winter, Henry stepped away from his home to wander the dark streets of Baltimore. He left around midnight dressed only in a shirt, flannel drawers, and socks. Leonard Pouder, with the aid of City Night Watchmen, a precursor to Baltimore's police force, searched the neighborhood, chased him down on Light Street, and returned him home. However, from this point forward Elsey took certain measures to restrict Henry's freedom, such as keeping the front door locked or confining him to a room, when warranted. She subsequently always had a young woman live with them to ensure that Henry would not be left alone while she stepped away on errands.<sup>47</sup>

## George Moore's New Strategy

George was opposed to the trustee arrangement and pursued yet another approach designed to separate the couple. He hired William Alexander of Elkton, a Cecil County-based lawyer, to perform a thorough background investigation on Elsey Moore. In

February, Alexander began making inquiries to those individuals who knew her previously and those who lived near her family in the Elk Neck area. The attorney, consequently, uncovered a secret that the Pearce family had intended to keep deeply hidden. In 1805, while a young teenager of fifteen, Elsey had given birth to an illegitimate child that was immediately placed under the care of a free African American woman.

This revelation unleashed a concerted campaign to have Elsey removed as Henry's trustee. In mid-March 1812, George Moore, through his lawyer, sent a petition to the Chancellor decrying Elsey Moore's ability to continue as a trustee based upon the alleged immorality of her past.

Theodorick Bland (1776–1846) acted as George's attorney. Virginia-born and raised, Bland briefly practiced law in the South before settling in Baltimore around 1800. Elected in 1808 to the Maryland House of Delegates to represent the City, Bland served a single two-year term. In 1809, the state General Assembly passed a law specific to him that permitted Bland to bring his slaves into the state. He continued to hold enslaved African Americans his entire life.<sup>48</sup>



FIGURE 10. *Portrait of Theodorick Bland*, unknown artist, n.d. Maryland Commission on Artistic Property, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 1545-1149

Bland put forth three very thorough and strident arguments against Elsey's continuance as trustee. First, he criticized Henry's current living conditions, which he characterized as almost constant confinement within a close and oppressive small-sized room. Second, he bemoaned the inability of Henry's relatives and Dr. Dunkel to gain access to him, citing ongoing visitation difficulties and heated conflicts with Elsey. Last, and perhaps the most damaging to Elsey, was the disclosure of her alleged out-of-wedlock child.

Bland's ten-and-a-half page screed incorporated a lengthy character assassination of Elsey Moore. Always referring to her as Henry's "pretended wife," he wrote that she had "prostituted herself from calculation" and that a "connection between the sexes never did commence or continue under circumstances more shocking." The attorney alleged that Henry, due to his insanity and thus supposed inability to make choices, could not have been a seducer nor would have willingly chosen Elsey as his marriage partner. Instead, "she first entrapped his weakness into a meretricious commerce and then into the mockery of a marriage." He alleged that Elsey had chosen to marry Henry purely for her own personal enrichment. Lastly, Bland begged Kilty to "rescue the unfortunate lunatic from the infamy of a permanent connexion with the mistress of the vilest of mankind, the early mother of a coloured bastard, the paramour of a slave." Elsey's alleged child was of mixed race, a mulatto, in the language of the times. Bland used the blatant racism that was rampant at that time to further influence the mind of the Chancellor.<sup>49</sup>

However, should Bland's arguments fail to convince Kilty of Elsey's unworthiness, he also arranged for the deposition of a key witness in the matter of the child. In May, Ann Williams, an older African American domestic worker "of good character," was brought to Baltimore from Cecil County to provide a sworn deposition as to the facts. She came with a "yellowish colored," dark-eyed seven-year-old boy in tow, the one for whom she had been caregiver. Lawyers for both sides gathered to question and cross-examine Williams, her testimony remarkable for its level of detail surrounding the child's birth and for her own personal family history. In July 1805, William Pearce, Elsey's father, had approached Williams to act as a nurse for his expectant daughter and she agreed. While visiting the visibly pregnant Elsey, the two strolled slowly over to a nearby spring for a very private conversation. That is when Elsey "pressed [Williams] to take the child when it should be born and [that] she should be well paid for her trouble." A few months later, with Williams acting as a midwife's assistant, a healthy boy was delivered at midnight and was ushered away by her that same night. Elsey visited her child five weeks later, requesting that he be named "George," to which Williams complied. The women arranged several additional visits.<sup>50</sup>

On the same day of Ann Williams' deposition, George Moore brought Williams and the boy to confront Elsey at her home. When George asked Elsey directly if she knew the child, she denied it outright. He replied, incredulously, "that she must know it." Then, when George asked Williams if she recognized Elsey as the mother of little George, she responded that "she [looked] like the woman and [had] the same name" but could not swear that Elsey was indeed the same person.<sup>51</sup>



In early July 1812, a very troubled Elsey wrote Kilty once again. The tone of her letter portrayed clearly her fear of losing custody of her husband. She lamented that she “considers herself Truly an unfortunate woman from her Injudicious Connection with a Family Disposed . . . To persecute and harass her.” Further, she dreaded the possibility of Henry being placed under the care of his mother and brother. Elsey then related an incident. The couple was then renting a small, three-room brick house on Lerew’s Alley close by the Moore mansion. While she had been gone momentarily from the house, George Moore and a colleague arrived, were allowed entry by the live-in helper, and did “Seize and attempt to force my husband away.” Only Elsey’s timely return put an end to their scheme. The two men wanted Henry to sign a petition to the State Legislature. She emphatically denied their request on behalf of her husband as his trustee. The duo replied to her menacingly, “if they could get him Away from here, he would sign it.” A few days later, William Pinkney, a lawyer representing the Moore family, visited the couple’s home and, in conversation with Elsey, used “Considerable Language Calculated to wound [her] feelings.” She ended her letter to the Chancellor by expressing that if she should be removed as trustee, the Moores would be unfit replacements.<sup>52</sup>

Further Illudation should be required your Memorant  
 is ready to make it on oath & to shew by her Neighbours  
 the General Linc of her Conduct and affectional Care for and  
 attentions to her unfortunate Husband as the only Competent  
 power on Earth She Looks to your Honour for Justice and  
 Nothing More for herself her Husband and Child;  
 Mr. A. Neal will be down in Annapolis this week whomever  
 I hope give you some more Information than the Bounds  
 of A letter will contain I am &c

Alis Moore

FIGURE 11. “She looks to your Honour for Justice and Nothing More . . .” Detail of letter showing signature of Alice Moore, “Alis Moore” to “William Kilty,” July 4, 1812. Maryland State Archives, Chancery Court, Chancery Papers, S512-9732-1

Elsey's worst fear came to fruition. In early August, during Chancellor Kilty's regular summer session, he removed her from the trusteeship team. What was his most compelling reason? Simply stated, her newly uncovered past now disqualified her. In his official opinion, Kilty wrote that "in the allegations in the petition relating to the alleged Mulatto child . . . the chancellor considers the fact as established. The immorality of this act . . . affects her Character so as to render it improper to continue her as a Trustee." Interracial sex resulting in a child born to the young Elsey years ago now made her unfit to care for her husband.<sup>53</sup>

## George Moore Takes Control

George Moore at last accomplished his goal of legally separating the couple from one another. On September 4, 1812, George Moore and James Mosher, a banker and Moore family friend, were appointed Henry's trustees, replacing Elsey and Abner Neale. Apparently, physical abuse of a parent proven in a court of law did not disqualify George Moore from assuming this role. Finally, on September 25, George Moore and Mosher took physical custody of Henry, seizing him from his home and family. George Moore brought along Bob and Tom, two of his enslaved men, to aid in the removal his brother's belongings, and also, perhaps, as a measure of avoiding another conflict-filled transfer. However, this time things went very differently. Elsey had exhausted all the legal means to retain her husband; she had been resigned to his impending removal and did not argue with or impede the group. Mosher recalled that when they "went to take [Henry] away, he did not appear to know what [the purpose of Mosher's visit] was about, and . . . did not think he made any resistance. The men took him up and carried him away." They placed Henry back with his mother at the Moore mansion and that is where he resided until his death. He had spent less than ten months living under the same roof with his wife and child.<sup>54</sup>

Chancellor Kilty, however, did not abandon Elsey's cause in its entirety. He ordered that she receive \$300 a year in support from Henry's estate and granted her weekly visitation rights, "if required by her[,] in the presence of one of the Trustees or some person authorized by them." Although we know nothing at all of these visits, it is difficult to imagine any sort of a congenial reception afforded to Elsey and her daughter at the Moore mansion.<sup>55</sup>

Over a year passed before Elsey wrote Chancellor Kilty once more to ask for his assistance. Her melancholy letter recounted a sad event. She lamented that "The Situation of my unfortunate Husband is by no means to improve his unfortunate Disorder but on the Contrary rather to increase it[.] Sometime ago his Mother and him Differed & he Struck her Or threw her Down Stairs." His brother had brought in two constables and one hit Henry with his wooden baton "on the head the wound of which is not entirely healed yet—Since this Fracas he appears to be more Ill Disposed than he had hitherto been." She requested that her husband be removed temporarily to the Baltimore Hospital. Dr. Colin Mackenzie, one of the physicians in charge of the

facility, had been trained at the Pennsylvania Hospital and specialized in psychiatric cases. Elsey closed her letter with the plea: “I hope & Entreat that you will Order his removal . . . at Least for Sometime that we may See what Effect it may have on him.” James Mosher sided with her on Henry’s temporary transfer. George Moore, however, was opposed to any hospitalization. Consequently, Kilty did not issue an order and Henry was never again confined within an institution.<sup>56</sup>

In December 1818, there was one last communication to Chancellor Kilty from Elsey. She requested an increase in her annual allowance from \$300 to a higher amount so that Malvina might be educated properly. Though Elsey neglected to any file additional paperwork to justify the increase, and so no adjustment occurred, her request initiated a comprehensive audit of Henry Moore’s estate. The accounting report revealed the estate holdings to be over \$9,000, a sizeable amount of money for the time. Kilty found some irregularities in the report, such as George Moore’s attempt to charge off over \$800 in attorney fees he incurred personally during the custody phase of his sibling. The Chancellor disallowed them.<sup>57</sup>

Henry’s mental condition worsened with the passage of time. James Mosher, who visited him frequently, noted that at some point near the end of his life, Henry became “an idiot, and he did not recognize, or take notice of anyone.” Others also noted a degeneration of both his mind and body, especially during his last five years. An attendant dressed him. He had lost the ability to hold a fork and knife and instead used his hands to eat his meals. Though the family attempted to keep him clean, his clothing was often spattered with dried-on food. Incontinence was also another problem. One deposition even hinted at Henry exhibiting catatonic behavior.<sup>58</sup>

## Henry’s Death and Its Aftermath

Despite his general decline, Henry still outlived his brother George by about one year. The circumstances surrounding Henry’s death, like much of his early life, are shrouded in mystery and are now lost to time. Even the exact date on which he died is unknown. However, legal documents pinpoint the year as 1823 and that Henry’s passing without a will soon unleashed a series of suits and countersuits on the rightful ownership of his estate. The Moore family hoped to establish that Henry’s marriage was invalid so Elsey and Malvina would be disqualified as his heirs. If the family proved successful in this effort, then George Moore’s children would inherit Henry’s estate. The legal maneuvering dragged on for over a decade, even garnering the attention of Maryland’s highest court.

In February of 1824, Elsey Moore brought a suit against Mary Moore, Henry’s mother, in the Baltimore County Orphans’ Court. She requested, as his lawful wife, to be appointed the administrator of his estate. Mary Moore countered the petition of the “woman claiming to be the wife of Henry Moore,” asserting the marriage to have been “null and void” from its beginning. Mary Moore enlisted the aid of a very capable legal team that included Roger B. Taney, a future Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, and Reverdy Johnson, a future United States Attorney General.<sup>59</sup>

Remarkably, despite possessing outstanding legal minds, Mary Moore's lawyers crafted spurious arguments as to why Elsey Moore should be denied the role of administrator. Granted, they built their case upon the information supplied to them by their client. The men relied heavily on discrediting Elsey's reputation—a strategy used successfully during Henry's trusteeship contest. First, they declared that Henry had been insane before his wedding day. However, they further embellished that assertion to state that he was found a "lunatic" by the Chancery Court "long anterior to the time of his alleged marriage." Of course, this was simply untrue. Henry's inquisitions, both the invalid and the valid one, came after the marriage ceremony. The second charge, and now a familiar one leveled at Elsey, was that she was immoral. They alleged that since her separation from Henry "of her own free will and accord . . . she lived and remained in open adultery" up until the time of her husband's death. We know that the couple's separation was ordered by Chancellor Kilty and not done by Elsey's wishes. Further, the immorality charge leveled by Mary Moore's attorneys was likely an overt attempt to prejudice the three male judges, who sat as the Orphans' Court, against Elsey.<sup>60</sup>

In March 1824, a hearing before the Orphans' Court took place with the opposing sides presenting witnesses to give testimony. Elsey's lawyers chose the Reverend Lewis Richards, the minister who had performed her wedding. Lewis simply affirmed his participation in the ceremony, not truly helping her cause. Two other witnesses testified on behalf of Mary Moore. George McShade, who had purchased the marriage license and attended the event, detailed how Henry had been secreted away late at night from the Moore mansion to become a reluctant participant in the matrimonial proceedings. Mary Garrettson, a domestic worker in the Moore household prior to the marriage, recounted Henry's numerous eccentric behaviors years prior to his union with Elsey. Both of Mary Moore's witness testimonies contained many damaging details. However, rather than render a decision, the Orphans' Court referred the matter to the Baltimore County Court for a jury trial in accordance with Elsey Moore's wishes. She desired that a jury rather than a panel of judges decide her fate.<sup>61</sup>

The Baltimore County Court, acting upon the order of the Orphans' Court, held a hearing to decide the matter. In April, the County Court impaneled a jury of twelve men to consider two questions and to render a decision on each one. The first question: Was Henry Moore of sound mind at time of his marriage and therefore able to make a valid contract of matrimony? The second question: Did Elsey live in a state of open adultery after being separated physically from Henry? The jury did not review the written testimony given to the Orphans' Court. Instead, after three days of listening to the attorneys question the same three witnesses, along with some others, the jury decided upon its answers. They deliberated for less than five minutes. On the first question, the twelve men concluded that Henry Moore was not of sound mind at the time of his marriage and was thus incapable of negotiating any legal contract. On the second issue, they answered in the negative. The matter of the validity of the marriage, as well as who was entitled to Henry Moore's estate, appeared to be settled. Elsey Moore pursued no further legal action.<sup>62</sup>

In May 1825, the Orphans' Court of Baltimore County appointed Margaret Moore, George Moore's widow, to be the administrator of Henry Moore's estate. An estate accounting was soon taken and the value of the inventory stood at \$10,350.<sup>63</sup>

The matter, however, was far from settled in the eyes of another interested person. Malvina Moore took up the fight over her father's estate. As Henry's only daughter and heir, Malvina wrote Margaret Moore on multiple occasions to demand her father's estate. Her letters, sent over a period of years, never elicited a response.

In 1829, the now eighteen-year-old Malvina married Kirkpatrick Ewing, a farmer who was nine years her senior, in a Methodist ceremony in Baltimore. Ewing came from an old farming family in southern Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Together, in August 1830, the couple petitioned the Chancery Court for its assistance in obtaining Malvina's inheritance.

A new Chancellor now headed the court. None other than Theodorick Bland, George Moore's former lawyer in the action to remove Elsey as trustee, had become Chancellor in 1824. A laudatory biographical sketch of Bland noted that "[h]is opinions . . . reveal his excellence, and at the same time his short-comings as a judge . . . He was a genuine lover of the law, and did no little in his time to increase the respect and confidence of the profession, and of the public in the administration thereof." Bland would serve the longest tenure of any Maryland Chancellor.<sup>64</sup>

Inexplicably, it took almost three and a half years for Margaret Moore, through her lawyers, to finally answer the Ewings petition. The Ewings almost won their case by default. At last, in January 1834 a response came from Margaret's legal team. Her attorneys requested that the case be dismissed on the grounds that Henry Moore's marriage had been deemed invalid by the 1824 Baltimore County Court jury. Therefore, they also denied that Malvina was Henry Moore's lawful heir.<sup>65</sup>

Chancellor Bland arranged for witnesses, many of them aged and unable to travel to Annapolis, to be deposed in Baltimore. In February, over the course of several days, a procession of individuals gave depositions regarding Henry Moore's mental state, his marriage, and other aspects of his life. Lawyers from both sides questioned and cross-examined the parties, resulting in almost seventy-five pages of their recollections of what had occurred over twenty years before. On October 20, after reviewing the material, Bland dismissed the Ewings' case without stating his reasons.

The Ewings immediately appealed Bland's decision to the Court of Appeals, Maryland's highest court. In December of 1834, the Court accepted their case. Another year passed. After reviewing numerous depositions and listening to several days of attorney arguments, a final verdict on the matter was postponed for six months. Finally, in mid-July of 1836, in a three-to-two decision, the Court decided that:

the marriage of a lunatic in this State, is not absolutely void, but voidable only; that the courts must consider the marriage as valid, until it is avoided by a tribunal of competent jurisdiction . . . [the Legislature only . . .] and that no tribunal can annul such a marriage, and declare the same to be void, after the death of either or both of the parties.<sup>66</sup>

In addition, it ruled that “Mrs. Ewing is the heir of Henry Moore, and as such, is entitled to all and singular the estate, real, personal, and mixed of her father.” The matter was sent back to Chancellor Bland to coordinate the administration and transfer of Henry’s estate to the triumphant Ewings.<sup>67</sup>

Margaret Moore, however, refused to accept the court’s decision. In 1836, she appealed to the Maryland State Legislature’s Committee on Grievances and Courts of Justice in hope of reversing the ruling. After reviewing the case, the Committee, citing its reluctance to nullify the decision rendered by another branch of government, a cornerstone principle in American democratic governance, declined to grant a re-hearing. The Committee simply chose not to inject itself into what it termed the “long and angry controversy.” Justice had favored the Ewings and the ownership of Henry Moore’s estate was forever settled.<sup>68</sup>

## Postscript

Elsey Moore remarried a Mr. McVitty after 1825. However, in the 1830 US Census, an “Alice McVitty” is listed as heading a Cecil County, Maryland, household of three females. At some point she moved to Little Britain Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, to live closer to her daughter and likely died around 1850.<sup>69</sup>

Malvina Moore Ewing, with her husband and four children, relocated from Pennsylvania to Maryland in 1858. A former school teacher, Malvina purchased land and “a very valuable and handsome residence” in Mount Washington, about six miles northwest from Baltimore City in then rural Baltimore County.

The family later moved to a farmstead on the outskirts of Towson in that same county.<sup>70</sup>

Malvina’s son, whom the couple named Henry Moore Ewing, received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1857 before settling in Maryland. He married, started a family, and worked as a successful solo practitioner in Baltimore County. In 1872, Dr. Ewing was appointed the county almshouse physician, serving in that capacity for six years. In his role, he oversaw the health of the indigent residents, including some with a mental illness.<sup>71</sup>

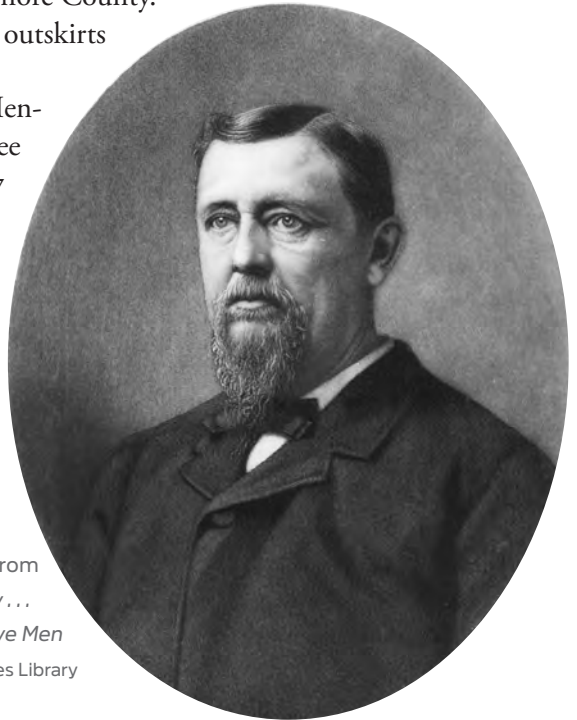


FIGURE 12. *Henry Moore Ewing* (1832–1890), engraving from J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Baltimore City and County . . . Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men* (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1881). Baltimore City Archives Library

Henry Moore's estate benefited the Ewing family as well as many others over the ensuing years. The Ewings leased a small portion of their land to a church congregation. On part of the property where the old Moore mansion orchard had been situated, a new house of worship soon arose through the labor of both free and enslaved African Americans. Led by Trueman Pratt, a formerly enslaved person, the Orchard Street United Methodist Church grew and thrived.<sup>72</sup>

What of Margaret Moore and her family? They continued to squabble among themselves about the remainder of George Moore's estate well into the 1840s, the conflicts spawning three new Chancery Court cases regarding land division. In 1840, Margaret's son, George W. Moore Jr., was described as being "in a weak state of body and of unsound mind incapable of attending the management of himself and his affairs," and in 1842, Chancellor Bland, of the Chancery Court, appointed Margaret as George's trustee. That same year and for several years thereafter, a "George Moore," from Baltimore, is recorded on the patient register at the Maryland Hospital for the Insane. Thus, the Moore family's use of the legal system and mental health institutions continued.<sup>73</sup>

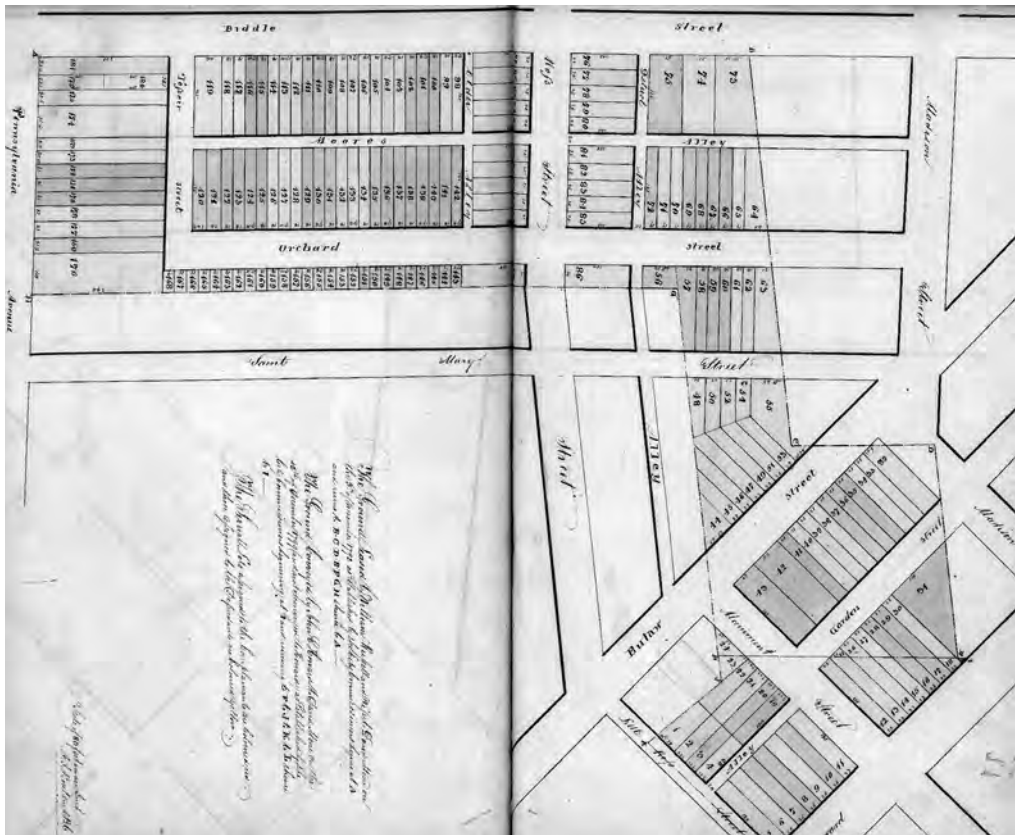


FIGURE 13. Ewing v. Moore property division settlement plat, Agreement of 20 July 1837, A.J. Bouldin, Baltimore, 1838. Maryland State Archives, Chancery Court, Chancery Papers, S512-7751-5

## NOTES

1. According to *Black's Law Dictionary*, an equity court represents "a system of jurisprudence distinct . . . from the common-law courts empowered to decree 'equity.'" Equity can "be described as a 'portion of justice' . . . not embodied in legislative enactments, or in the rules of common law . . . [that is] administered in regard to cases where the particular rights, in respect of which relief is sought. . . . The ordinary courts of law cannot . . . clearly afford relief." See Henry Campbell Black, *A Dictionary of Law containing definitions of the terms and phrases of American and English jurisprudence, Ancient and Modern* . . . (St. Paul: West Publishing Company, 1891), 428.
2. Christopher Phillips, *Freedom's Port: The African American Community of Baltimore, 1790–1860* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 15; Seth Rockman, *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 18; Richard S. Chew, "Far Short of Our Expectations': Baltimore and the Atlantic World Trade in the Confederation Era," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 98, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 409; *The North American Review* 20, no. 46 (Jan. 1825): 122; John McGrain, *The Molinography of Maryland* (Towson: Online Edition, 2007), 8, Special Collections (McGrain Collection), MSA SC4300, Maryland State Archives, Annapolis, MD (hereinafter MSA); G. Terry Sharrer, "Flour Milling in the Growth of Baltimore, 1750–1830," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 71, no. 3 (Fall 1976): 322.
3. Clayton Colman Hall, *Baltimore: Its History and Its People* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1912): 1:71.
4. Baltimore County Court (Land Records), 1774–1774, AL I, p. 270–2, MSA CE 66–45, Maryland Land Records website, accessed December 15, 2021, mdlandrec.net. By 1806, Moore had amassed a fortune of \$9,701, which compares to a relative income worth \$2,696,924.25 in 2021. See: [measuringworth.com/dollarvaluetoday](http://measuringworth.com/dollarvaluetoday).
5. Theodorick Bland, Chancery Court (Chancery Record), 1819, MSA S517–130:363 (hereinafter cited as Chancery Record, MSA S517–130: page #).
6. Deposition of Sarah Stewart, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Record, MSA S517–130:340. See also *Baltimore Sun*, February 12, 1950. The Moore family may have had a prior connection to Methodism. A William Moore opened his own home to Methodist meetings in the 1770s. He may have also assisted in funding the erection of the Lovely Lane Church. See Abel Stevens, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America* (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1866), 1:135–136.
7. Robert W. Schoeberlein, "Mental Illness in Maryland: Public Perception, Discourse, and Treatment, from the Colonial Period to 1964" (PhD dissertation, University of Maryland, 2006), 48. At least one person believed that mental illness ran in the Moore family: see deposition of George Peters, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Record, MSA S517–130:342; James McCulloh to William Kilty, April 22, 1811, George W. Moore and James Mosher v. Henry Moore, petition to sell lot in BC, MSA S512–9732 (hereinafter cited as Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732:page # where available); James McCulloh to William Kilty, April 16, 1811, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732; see also *Baltimore Sun*, February 12, 1950; *Telegraphe and Daily Advertiser* (Baltimore, MD), November 26, 1795.
8. See Ord. 13, "An ordinance to prevent the exportation of flour not merchantable . . . mentioned," *Ordinances of the Corporation of the City of Baltimore . . . 1797, and February 1798* (Baltimore: John Cox, City printer, 1875), 47–48; Wilbur F. Coyle, *First Records of Baltimore Town and James' Town, 1729–1797* (Baltimore: 1905), 101; Baltimore County Maryland Indexes (Marriage Licenses, Baltimore, Male Index), 1800–1811, MSA S1398-9.



9. Depositions of Francis D. McHenry, Susannah Wilson, and Dr. George Dunkel, 1834, Chancery Court (Chancery Papers), Kirkpatrick and Malvina Ewing v. Margaret Moore et al., BA, Estate of Henry Moore, MSA S512-7751: 60, 15, and 48, respectively, MSA (hereinafter cited as Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751: page #). Note: I used an unnumbered clerk's copy of a series of 1834 depositions bound as one document. The numbers that I cite hereinafter reflect the page order of this document. Depositions of Francis D. McHenry, James Mosher, and John Lynch, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:57, 65, 6 respectively. The West Indies imported great quantities of Maryland flour and was an important trading partner; deposition of Francis D. McHenry, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:55; see also deposition of William Hays, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:71. Though unrecognized by his family and his physicians at that time, the shipwreck may have contributed to a chronic nervous condition. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was neither perceived of, nor existed, in the medical lexicon in this era.
10. I have retained the spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization as they appear within the original documents that I quote throughout this article. On occasion, I have added words, always within brackets, to clarify a statement or to decrease wordiness without altering the main sentiments expressed. James McCulloh to William Kilty, April 22, 1811, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732; deposition of Asahel Hussey, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:62; deposition of Benjamin Berry, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:340; deposition of Elizabeth Wilson [formerly Elizabeth Gardner], Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:26. Early adherents to Methodism were noted for their enthusiastic, demonstrative religiosity as an open rejection of European-style clericalism. In 1770s Baltimore, John King, a lay preacher, used a blacksmith's box as a pulpit at Front and French Streets. See Abel Stevens, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1864), 1:89. In 1800, on the occasion of his ordination in Baltimore as a Methodist bishop, Richard Whatcoat recalled that, "[w]e had a most blessed time, and much preaching, fervent prayers and strong exhortations through the city . . . which greatly alarmed the citizens." See James Edward Armstrong, *History of the Old Baltimore Conference* (Baltimore: King Brothers, 1907), 127. The lines between Methodist clergy and laity were blurred and anyone, if so compelled by the spirit, might preach. Take the case of James Horton, also known as "Crazy Horton," a shoemaker and lay Methodist preacher in rural New York. He admitted that while proselytizing, he "hallowed so loud that it would frighten the devil's children." As John Wigger, an historian of religion in America, summed up, "[n]ot surprisingly Horton aroused a degree of opposition and even fear in some." See John H. Wigger, "Taking Heaven by Storm: Enthusiasm and Early American Methodism, 1770-1820," *Journal of the Early Republic* 14, no. 2 (Summer 1994), 180; deposition of Asahel Hussey, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:62; deposition of Benjamin Berry, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:34; deposition of Elizabeth [Gardner] Wilson, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:26.
11. Deposition of John Lynch, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:11.
12. Deposition of Dr. George A. Dunkel, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:380, and deposition of Dr. George Dunkel, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:45, 48.
13. Deposition of Dr. Ashton Alexander, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:33-34, and deposition of Dr. Ashton Alexander, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:333; Gerald N. Grob, *The Mad among Us: A History of the Care of America's Mentally Ill* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 25-29, and Schoeberlein, "Mental Illness in Maryland," 58.

14. Deposition of John Fennell, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:385.
15. Deposition of Catherine Sampson, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:51 and deposition of Francis D. McHenry, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:55-61.
16. One hospital was in New York, another in Williamsburg, Virginia, and the third a newly opened Baltimore facility. Most hospitals had rooms set aside for mentally ill patients but did not offer specialized care.
17. “Any patient at the Pennsylvania Hospital from 1783-1813 who suffered from any mental disorder would have been seen, at least occasionally, by [Dr.] Rush . . . a huge advocate for blood-letting, including in mentally ill patients. Humoral medicine would still have been the norm in the early 19th century—so lots of purges and enemas, as well as blistering.” Stacey C. Peeples (Curator and Lead Archivist, Pennsylvania Hospital) email correspondence, April 6, 2020; deposition of John Lynch, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:350. Researcher access to Henry’s case notes, as well as the files of any former mental hospital patient from any point in time, is restricted by Pennsylvania State law (50 Pa. Code Sect 7111 [2021]).
18. Benjamin Rush, *Medical Inquiries and Observations upon the Diseases of the Mind* (Philadelphia: Kimber & Richardson, 1812), 133-138, 140, 153. Published in 1812, the book was widely disseminated and influenced the medical community for seventy years.
19. Rush, *Medical Inquiries and Observations*, 139, 181; Stacey C. Peeples (Curator and Lead Archivist, Pennsylvania Hospital) email correspondence, April 6, 2020.
20. Deposition of John Lynch, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:350. James Mosher, Solomon Etting, and Asahel Hussey (the brother of Henry’s sister-in-law) all made separate visits to Henry. Dr. Samuel Calhoun, the brother of former Baltimore Mayor William Calhoun (and a friend of George Moore), was an attending physician at the hospital. Dr. Calhoun provided updates on Henry’s condition to the Moore family via his brother.
21. Deposition of Asahel Hussey, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:64.
22. Deposition of Alisanna Smithson, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:67; deposition of John Lynch, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:7; also Elizabeth [Gardner] Wilson, MSA S512-7751:28; Rockman, *Scraping By*, 106.
23. Deposition of John Lynch, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:5.
24. “In the Matter of Henry Moore, a Lunatic” (hereinafter: Kilty’s Opinion), July Term 1812, March 1, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732; depositions of John Lynch, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:7, 10, and 4.
25. Deposition/certification of Rev. Richard Lewis, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:354; deposition of Richard Lewis, Baltimore County, Register of Wills (Orphans Court Proceedings) 1822-1824, December Term 1823, MSA CM181-12:297. Lewis stated that he had little conversation with the couple on that day. Deposition of George W. Shade, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:20. Susannah Wilson was also present at the ceremony.
26. Deposition of John Lynch, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751: 5; deposition of Elizabeth Gracey, April 4, 1811, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732.
27. The Chancery Court held that the sworn opinion of local acquaintances—those having a more intimate knowledge of the individual’s behavior—was all that was needed to declare one as legally insane in the eyes of the State. The Court, in turn, would appoint a legal guardian or a committee of guardians. The guardian had to sign a bond of indemnity of sufficient security “for the true and faithful discharge of the Trust hereby in him reposed.” See Schoeberlein,

- “Mental Illness in Maryland,” 33. The guardian’s obligation to the court involved the maintenance of their charge and the property and at certain intervals, an accounting of expenditures for the court’s review.
28. William L. Marbury, “The High Court of Chancery and the Chancellors of Maryland . . . Presented to the Maryland State Bar Association at the 1905 Annual Meeting” (1905), Archives of Maryland Online, accessed October 20, 2021, [aomol.msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/spec-col/sc2900/sc2908/html/chancery.html](http://aomol.msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/spec-col/sc2900/sc2908/html/chancery.html) (hereinafter cited as Marbury, *High Court*).
  29. Deposition of William Winder, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Record, MSA S517–130:326; see also Kilty’s Opinion, February Term 1811, March 1, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732.
  30. Depositions of Michael Kimmell and William Phillips, Chancery Record, MSA S517–130:338; deposition of Asahel Hussey, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732; deposition of George W. Moore, February 18, 1811, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732; deposition of Asahel Hussey, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–7751:63; see also Kilty’s Opinion, July Term 1812, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732.
  31. Kilty’s Opinion, September 4, 1812, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732:2.
  32. Alice Moore to “Dear Sir” [William Kilty, Esq.], March 23, 1811, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732.
  33. Deposition of Dr. George A. Dunkel, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–7751:47; deposition of Dr. Ashton Alexander, April 13, 1811, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732.
  34. Deposition of George Peters, April 20, 1811, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732; deposition of George Peters, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Record, MSA S517–130:342; Kilty’s Opinion, July Term 1812, August 1, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732.
  35. Alis Moore to “your honor” [William Kilty, Esq.], April 9, 1811, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732.
  36. Deposition of Elizabeth Gardner, April 20, 1811, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732; see also her deposition as Elizabeth (Gardner) Wilson in MSA S512–7751:27; deposition of Elizabeth Gardner, January 12, 1812, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Record, MSA S517–130:357; deposition of Elizabeth Gardner Wilson, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–7751:29. At some earlier time, David Moore complained to a Grand Jury about his treatment from his wife and son, showing two jury members bruises from beatings at their hands; see depositions of George Ligget, January 12, 1812, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Record, MSA S517–130:357, and Rev. John Pitt, December 4, 1811, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732. Notation from November Term 1806, “State of Maryland v. George Moor, Presentment for assaulting David Moore, his father signed by Clerk Thomas Harwood. November the 7th appears and submits under prot. of innocence, judgment fined 1/3 and costs” in Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732. Deposition of Elizabeth Gardner Wilson, Ewing v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–7751:30. There is a corroborating deposition that places David Moore’s death at the Gardner home. See deposition of William J. Alcock, December 3, 1811, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–9732. Moore spent the previous six months boarding at Alcock’s home; deposition of Elizabeth Gardner, Moore v. Moore, Chancery Record, MSA S517–130:358.
  37. George’s own profession enabled him to interact daily with numerous merchants, millers, and tradesmen from throughout the city, not to mention government officials and city department heads. While it is impossible for us today to determine the depth of George’s work relation-

- ships, it is difficult to accept that these signers would know the deeply intimate details of Moore's private life. Petition on behalf of George W. Moore, April 13, 1811, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732. Some other signers included Solomon Etting (merchant), William Patterson (wealthiest man in Baltimore), Robert Gilmore and J. A. Buchanan (merchants who specialized in foreign trade), James Purviance (former member of the Maryland House of Delegates, 1802), James and Andrew Ellicott (millers), and James Carey (City Council member). Undated petition affirming that no harsh treatment occurred and that George W. Moore was best suited to be named trustee, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:342-343.
38. Kilty's Opinion, July Term 1812, August 1, 1812, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732.
39. From 1790 until 1850, all parties wishing either a divorce or an annulment had to bring their request before the Maryland State Legislature. Richard Chused, who did an exhaustive study of these actions, found that during this period the General Assembly passed 549 divorces and three annulments. See Richard H. Chused, *Private Acts in Public Places: A Social History of Divorce in the Formative Era of American Family Law* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 1, 7-8.
40. "An Act declaring null & void the pretended marriage of Henry Moore (a lunatic,) and a certain Alice Pearce, of Baltimore County, and providing for the said care of the lunatic's person and estate," *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Delegates of . . . Maryland* [1811] (Annapolis, MD: Jehu Chandler, 1812), 56.
41. Chused believed that "the legislature was puzzled about how to handle this fact-intensive dispute" (*Private Acts in Public Places*, 48).
42. Kilty's Opinion, December Term 1811, January 13, 1812, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732.
43. Deposition of Susannah Wilson, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:14-15.
44. *Ibid.*, 14.
45. Deposition of Margaret Ryan, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:35; deposition of Naomi Lynch, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:352-353; deposition of Ann Arrant, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:22. Later, during that fall, the couple rented a home on Lerew's Alley, back in the neighborhood of the Moore mansion.
46. Historian Seth Rockman termed seamstresses' wages as "sub-subsistence" due to low pay and the seasonal and irregular nature of the work (*Scraping By*, 133). *Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, February 23, 1805; see invoices from Abner Neale (\$143.93), Leonard Pouder (\$320.02 ½), and Samuel Chamberlain (\$28.00), *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732; deposition of John Lynch, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:8.
47. Deposition of Francis Lowry, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:368; Alice Moore to "Sir" [William Kilty, Esq.], September 26, 1812, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732.
48. See: An Act for the relief of Theodorick Bland, *Laws of Maryland . . . One Thousand Eight Hundred and Nine* (Annapolis: Frederick Green, Printer to the State), Chap. CLXXXVII, 123; Anne Arundel County, Register of Wills (Wills) 1828-1847, MSA CM122-10:555-556.
49. The Petition of George W. Moore in the Matter of Henry Moore, a lunatic [undated but filed with the Chancellor on March 18, 1812], Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:362-363, 366.
50. Deposition of Ann Williams, May 30, 1812, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732. Williams, for her troubles, received two dollars in cash and a three-year-old horse, worth

- another thirty dollars, as the payment for her services. Deposition of Ann Williams, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:379. The child's father was Benjamin Duncan, a free African American who lived near the Pearce farm.
51. Deposition of Martha Byard, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Record, MSA S517-130:374-5. Byard was the current live-in domestic for Elsey and Henry.
  52. Alis Moore to the Honourable William Kilty, July 4, 1812, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732.
  53. Kilty's Opinion, July Term 1812, August 1, 1812, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732.
  54. Deposition of James Mosher, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:67.
  55. Kilty's Opinion, September 18, 1812, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732.
  56. Alis Moore to "Sir" [William Kilty, Esq.], December 6, 1813, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732.
  57. Kilty's Opinion, December 5, 1820, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732.
  58. Deposition of James Mosher, *Ewing v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751:65-67. Asahel Hussey noted a similar decline: see S512-7751:64 and deposition of Dr. George Dunkel, *Ewing v. Moore*, MSA S512-7751:47. The deposition of Bashti Bartlett on page 43 hints at catatonic-like behavior.
  59. Baltimore County, Register of Wills (Orphans Court Proceedings) 1822-1844, December Term 1823, MSA CM181-12:296.
  60. *Ibid.*
  61. *Ibid.*, 300-301.
  62. *Alice Moore v. Mary Moore*, Baltimore County Court, March Term 1825, Short Copy Judgment, filed August 29, 1826, Chancery Papers, S512-9732. Unfortunately, the filings and depositions for this case appear to be no longer existent and no in-depth analysis of this judgment is possible.
  63. Baltimore County, Register of Wills (Administration Docket), Henry Moore, 1823, MSA CM 130-7: 147-48.
  64. Marbury, *High Court*.
  65. "Order that the bill is taken Pro Confesso against the defendants (Moore's)," Bland's Opinion, July Term 1833, September 5, 1833, *Moore v. Moore*, Chancery Papers, MSA S512-9732; "Margaret Moore [v.] Ewing & Wife, Marg. Moore's Answer, Filed 15 Jany 1834, *Ewing v. Moore*," Chancery Papers, MSA S512-7751.
  66. William H. Tuck, *Report of the Committee on Grievances and Courts of Justice, Relative to the Memorial of Margaret Moore, and Others, Against Ewing, and Wife* (Annapolis: Jeremiah Hughes, 1837), 3-4.
  67. *Ibid.*, 7.
  68. *Ibid.*, 3.
  69. An 1833 newspaper legal notice referring to the "legacies bequeathed" by the late William Pearce of Cecil County (Elsey's father) lists an "Alice M'Vitty, alias Alice Moore"; see "John Rutter, Jr. v. Andrew Pearce and Others," *Cecil Democrat* (Elkton, MD), May 18, 1833. Elsey may have married a "Wm McVitie," a farmer and resident of Little Britain, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania: see 1820 US Census, Little Britain, Lancaster, PA, digital image s.v. "WmMcvitie," FamilySearch, accessed December 8, 2021, familysearch.org; 1830 US Census, District 3, Elkton, Cecil County, District 3, MD, Ancestry, accessed December 8, 2021, ancestry.com; 1840 US

- Census, Little Britain, Lancaster, PA, digital image s.v. "Allice McVitty," Ancestry, accessed December 8, 2021, ancestry.com.
70. Steinman v. Ewing, in Robert E. Wright, *Pennsylvania State Reports . . . Supreme Court of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Hay & Brothers, 1862), XLIII:63; *Sun*, May 20, 1858; *Lancaster Daily Intelligencer* (Lancaster, PA), April 27, 1882.
71. Eugene Fauntleroy Cordell, *The Medical Annals of Maryland, 1799–1899* (Baltimore: Press of Williams & Wilkins Company, 1903), 393.
72. David Armenti, "Orchard Street Church," *Explore Baltimore Heritage*, November 2012, accessed January 20, 2021, [explore.baltimoreheritage.org/items/show/167](http://explore.baltimoreheritage.org/items/show/167); see also Baltimore County Court (Land Records) 1839–1839, TK 295:352, MSA CE 66-345.
73. See Margaret Moore et al. v. Merrick A. Jewett et al., Chancery Papers, MSA S512–12:9452; Margaret Moore et al. v. Nathan T. H. Moore et al., MSA S512–13:9855; Margaret Moore et al. v. Elizabeth M. Wood and Hannah M. Wood, Chancery Papers, MSA S512–12:9454; Margaret Moore v. George Washington Moore, a Lunatic, Chancery Record, 1840–1841, MSA S517–180:5; Chancery Record, S517–188:628–630; and Maryland Hospital (Patient Register) 1834–1872, MSA S184–1:40. A 26-year-old "George Moore" from Baltimore is listed beginning in 1842.

# EYRE HALL FARM

NEAR CHESAPEAKE, VIRGINIA.

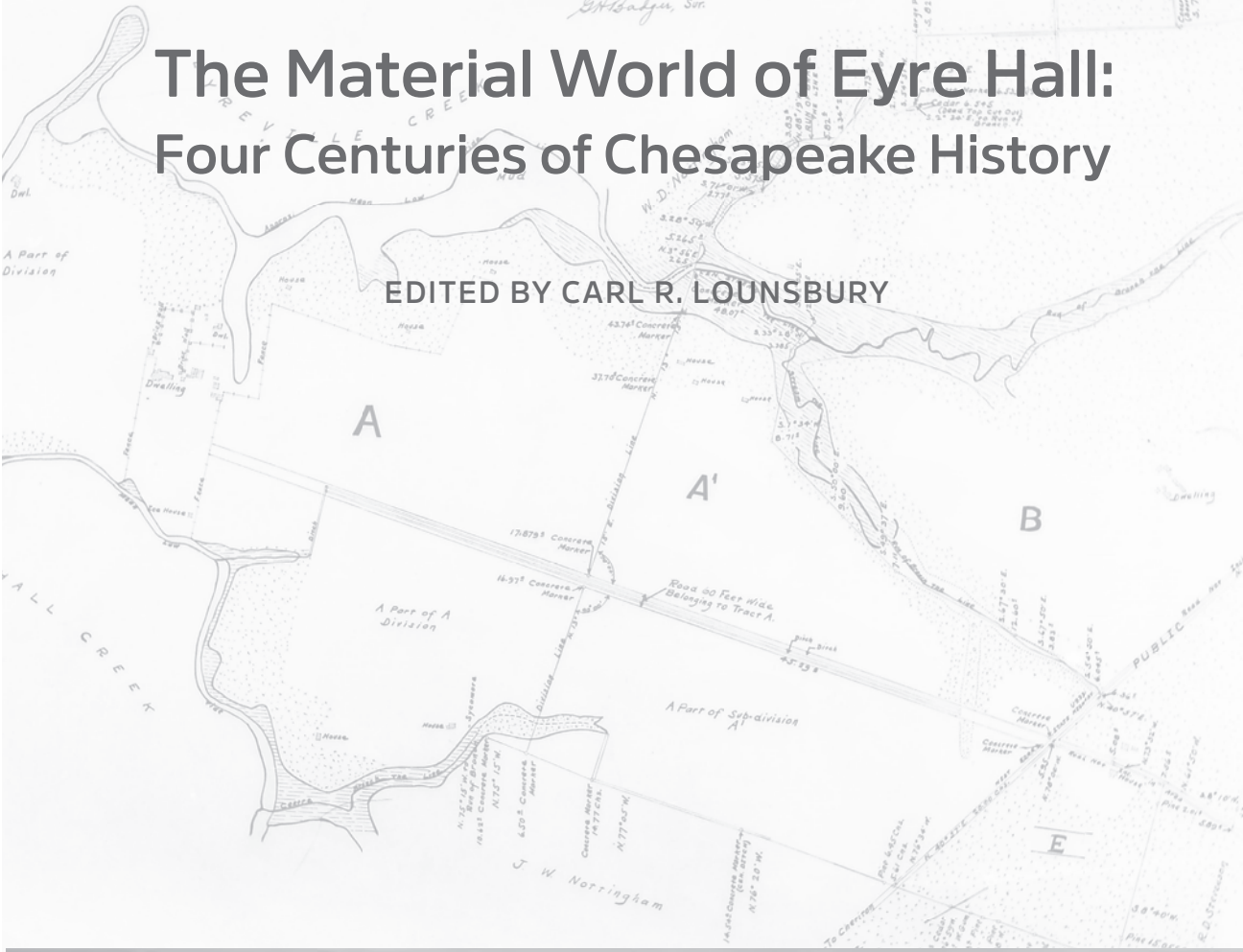
Surveyed at Request of  
W.H. Dec. Wright, Dec. 1921 & Jan. 1922.

*C. H. Salinger, Sr.*

W. D. Northington

# The Material World of Eyre Hall: Four Centuries of Chesapeake History

EDITED BY CARL R. LOUNSBURY





DETAIL OF FIG. 84. South façade of Eyre Hall with early nineteenth-century housekeeper's wing to the right.  
PREVIOUS PAGE: Fig. 2. Aerial view of Eyre Hall looking north.



## Eyre Hall in the Twentieth Century: “I’m Home”

BY GEORGE MCDANIEL

“I would never want it to get burned down because it’s historic and my ancestors worked there, and I have a lot of love for that.” —Anthony Foeman

“All around was family.” —Helen Burton

“At Eyre Hall, I didn’t feel a sense of segregation.” —Robert Curtis, Jr.

“I remember everybody on the farm looking out for us and being incredibly kind and caring.” —Eyre Baldwin

“That same place that’s so beautiful encompasses both a legacy and a reality in the nation that are ugly, violent, and unacceptable.” —Molly Baldwin

IT WAS A WONDERFUL WEDDING at Grace AND ST. PETER’S CHURCH in Baltimore. After the reception, the couple departed, motoring through the South and, on their way back, taking the two-hour ferry ride from Norfolk to Virginia’s Eastern Shore. This was new country to the groom, who was from Kentucky, though his family had deep roots in Delaware. It was farm country, isolated, with mostly dirt roads covered by oyster shells. After disembarking the ferry, they drove a short distance, turned down a long allée

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\*EDITOR’S NOTE: *The Material World of Eyre Hall: Four Centuries of Chesapeake History* was published in 2021 by the Maryland Center for History and Culture, in association with Giles Ltd. The excerpt featured here, which introduces the book to our readers, is from Chapter 4, “Eyre Hall in the Twentieth Century: ‘I’m Home,’” written by George McDaniel. It has been edited for length and clarity, whereas the editorial style of the book, including endnotes and image captions, was not altered. Image credits are provided at the end of the excerpt.

*The Material World of Eyre Hall* is available for purchase in our Museum Store and online. Please see the front inside cover for more details.

lined with trees, and arrived at the bride's family farm house, a place ancient but not well kept. To the groom's surprise, his wife declared, "I'm home." She meant it.<sup>1</sup>

What was this home? As has been described, it was named Eyre Hall and had been in the family of the bride, Margaret Eyre Taylor Baldwin, since the mid-eighteenth century. In the antebellum era, it had been owned by her grandfather, Severn Eyre, who on his death in 1914 left it in equal, undivided shares to his daughter, Mary Eyre Wright, and his granddaughter, Margaret Eyre Taylor. Margaret was the daughter of Severn's older daughter, Grace Eyre Taylor, who had married a member of the prominent Taylor family of Norfolk. With Grace's death in 1910, Margaret, her only child, inherited her mother's share at age 12. (Upon her death in 1979, Margaret Eyre Taylor Baldwin joined her mother Grace and other Eyre family relatives in the graveyard of Eyre Hall.)

A well-respected Baltimore lawyer, William Henry DeCourcy Wright served as trustee of the two sisters' shares in the estate and managed Eyre Hall long distance, coming down by boat once a month to check on things. Mary Eyre Wright chose not to live at Eyre Hall, preferring their home on Cathedral Street in Baltimore and their farm in Baltimore County. As a result, Eyre Hall was hardly operable for most of the year and began to decline. However, accompanied by her aunt Mary's daughter, Grace Wright, Margaret Taylor frequented Eyre Hall on sojourns throughout her youth (Fig. 61). They loved their time together at Eyre Hall, and, despite a 16-year age gap and different parentage, became like sisters. In fact, after her mother's death in 1910, Margaret Taylor became the ward of DeCourcy and Mary Wright and lived with them and Grace.<sup>2</sup>



FIG. 61. Margaret Eyre Taylor playing the Nunns & Clark square piano in the parlor at Eyre Hall, ca. 1925. Her cousin Grace Eyre Wright stands next to her.

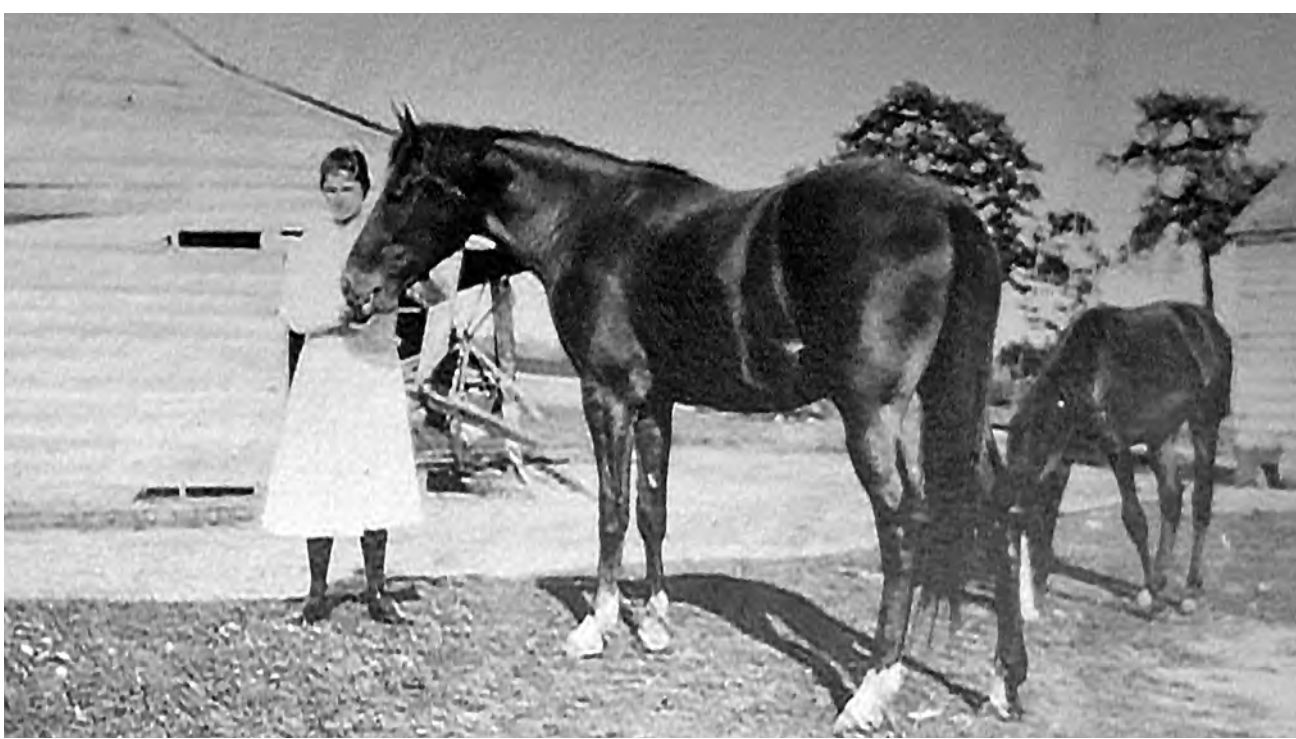


FIG. 62. Margaret Eyre Taylor at Eyre Hall, early 1910s.

On the subject of Eyre Hall and Margaret Taylor, Grace's son DeCourcy Wright McIntosh observed, "Cousin Marg is a round peg in a round hole." Perhaps her devotion to the property was because she had known Severn Eyre, who was characterized in his 1914 obituary in Norfolk's *Virginian-Pilot* as the "wealthiest man in Northampton County with an estate valued at \$750,000," the equivalent of over \$19 million dollars in 2020. Severn was the last of the family to carry the surname of Eyre, which "had been conspicuous in Northampton County for two hundred years." Margaret had adored him, spending parts of her girlhood summers with him at Eyre Hall (Fig. 62). It was Severn Eyre's bequest to Margaret that helped fund Eyre Hall's upkeep and renovation during her ownership from the 1930s into the 1960s, because farming in the twentieth century could not sustain its myriad expenses.<sup>3</sup>

On April 10, 1928, Margaret married Henry duPont Baldwin. His father's family had been tobacco farmers in Anne Arundel County, and his mother a child of the duPont family from Wilmington, Delaware, who had moved to Kentucky. Henry had been reared in Kentucky and graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in engineering. Soon after their marriage, they fulfilled Margaret's dream and moved to Eyre Hall. As a result, DeCourcy Wright, as trustee, divided the estate, giving Margaret the house and about 300 acres around it, and his wife, Mary Wright, the balance of 700 acres of farmland or more (Fig. 63).

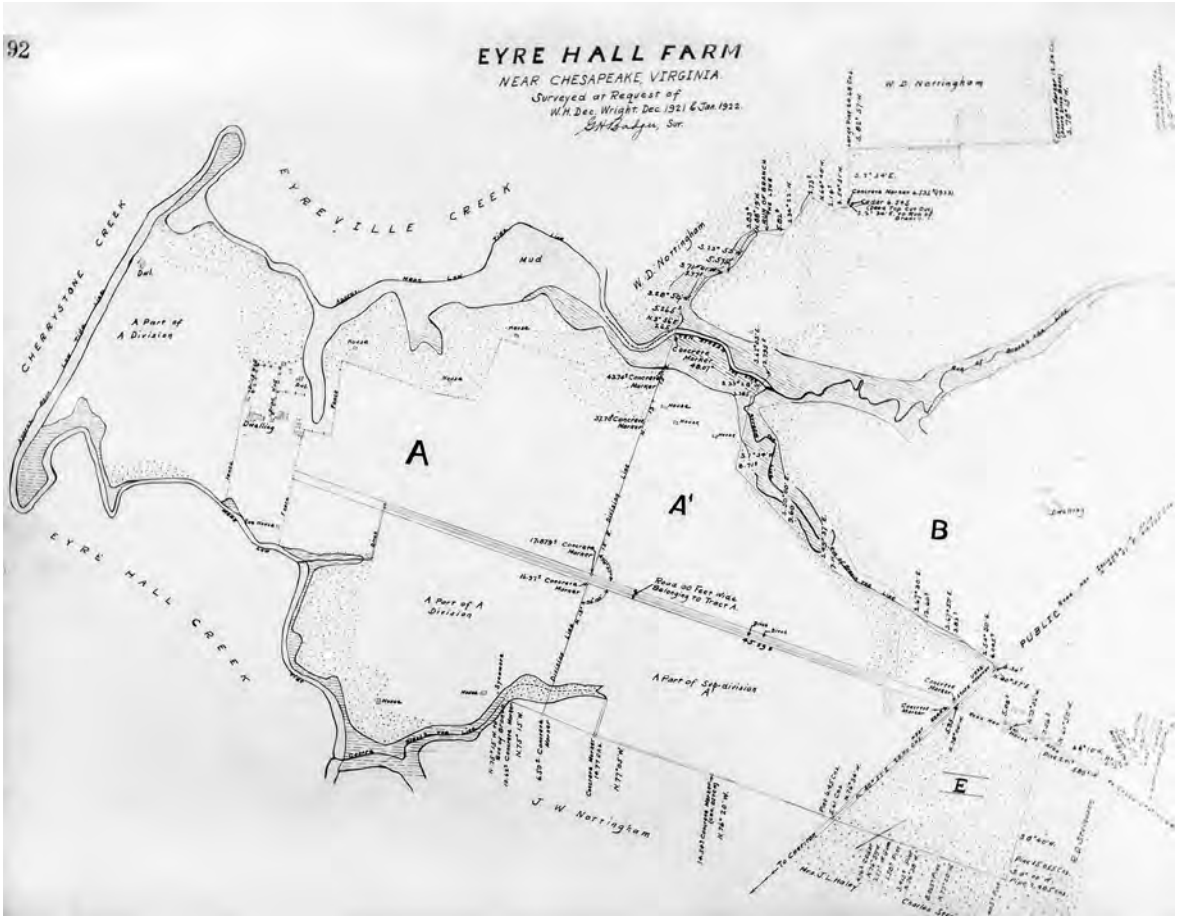


FIG. 63. Plat showing the proposed division of the Eyre Hall estate between Mary Eyre Wright and her niece Margaret Eyre Taylor, 1922.

Mary Wright’s daughter Grace had married David Gregg McIntosh. Upon her demise, Grace’s share was inherited by her son DeCourcy (Dick) McIntosh and his sister Anne Lowe McIntosh. Through a series of arrangements, Dick and his sister traded their land with Margaret’s son, Furlong Baldwin. Dick put his approximately 325 acres under a conservation easement and sold them in the early 2000s for a hunting preserve. As a result of those arrangements with Furlong Baldwin, the peninsula of Eyre Hall returned to one ownership, its land consisting of all that in and around the main house, but also extending to Cherystone Creek and to Route 13, bounded on the south by Eyre Hall Creek and on the north by Eyreville Creek.<sup>4</sup>

From 1931 onward, Henry and Margaret Baldwin lived at Eyre Hall full time. Gradually, they began to modernize the eighteenth-century house, renovate its historical features, and make modest improvements to the landscape, replacing dead or lost trees along the entry lane with cedars and crepe myrtles, which can still be seen today. Their

son Henry Furlong Baldwin, named after his paternal grandfather, was born in 1932, shortly after their move to Eyre Hall (Fig. 64). As he recalls, the changes she made were substantial but at the same time subtle, and they took place over time: “You didn’t wake one day, and notice great change, but instead you woke up five years later and realized it was different from five years before. It was her home. It was the way she wanted it. She just didn’t want sudden change, and I don’t blame her.”

The Baldwins rented the land for truck farming, producing broccoli, cabbage, and other winter crops, and tomatoes, sweet potatoes, white potatoes, and beans in warm weather. Migrants harvested the crops as they moved northwards with the seasons. According to Furlong, the farmland was rich, so it was used to raise crops, rather than cattle. “You don’t waste good farmland raising cattle. Out West, you could have 100 acres per cow, but not here.” They did raise domestic animals like horses and mules for farm work, cows for milk, hogs for meat, and chickens for both meat and eggs.<sup>5</sup>

Using his engineering skills, Henry Baldwin capitalized on the bounty of the Chesapeake by building a packing plant for clams and oysters on the point at the juncture of the Cherrystone Creek and its tributary, Eyre Hall Creek. Watermen would bring in their catch, and the plant processed and shipped clams and oysters, whole or shucked. Critical to operations was the 4:00 p.m. train, leaving Cape Charles, bound for Boston. As Furlong Baldwin recalls, everything had to make that train. Clams and oysters were shipped in the baggage car. If not going to points further north, they were switched in Philadelphia to the Broadway train and sold in the wholesale market in Chicago about five o’clock the next morning. If the oysters and clams were shucked, they were in gallon cans and potato barrels packed with ice, or if raw, left in their shells, loose, in burlap bags. In Eyre Hall’s kitchen today is a 1934 ad from *Town & Country* for Cherrystone Clams, Henry Baldwin’s brand. His packing plant, Cherrystone Seafoods, was located on Cherrystone Creek. There is also an advertisement for the Pump Room in Chicago, declaring “These oysters slept in Cherrystone Creek last night.”<sup>6</sup>

Nothing was wasted. Oyster shells were used for road construction, there being no local stone available for gravel. What is now the four-lane U.S. Route 13 was then a two-lane dirt road, covered with oyster shells from the packing plants along the creeks. According to Furlong Baldwin, oyster shells were preferred since they were more du-



FIG. 64. Henry DuPont Baldwin and his children Furlong, b. 1932, and Mary, b. 1929, at Eyre Hall, June 1932.

nable than clam shells, which after having been steamed became brittle and broke into powder. A frequent scene was the mule carts and trucks filled with oyster shells, leaving the packing plant to supply shells for the construction of state roads and farm lanes.<sup>7</sup>

Although the packing plant was not a major financial success, it did provide income for the Baldwins and the many plant workers and watermen. To supplement income, Henry Baldwin devised a pen in which to raise terrapins for the market. Built of tall upright boards sunk into the creek bottom, the pen was located near the packing plant at the mouth of Eyre Hall Creek. Spaces between the uprights allowed water to pass through but were too small to allow terrapins to swim out. Terrapins sent to “fancy restaurants and clubs” were a modest financial success until a hurricane smashed the pen, releasing all the terrapins, which enjoyed their new-found freedom by swimming about the creeks and marsh.<sup>8</sup>

Furlong remembers eight or nine abandoned tenant houses, now demolished, that dotted Eyre Hall’s landscape. In the absence of local stone, the bricks from their chimneys were gathered, cleaned, and broken by African American workers, who on rainy days sat in the woodsheds at Eyre Hall, breaking them into smaller pieces for reuse. They then rolled the brick chips into the garden paths at Eyre Hall, using the eighteenth-century English roller with an axle through it, which still resides by the side of the garden wall. Today, the garden paths remain and are swept of dirt and sand, but as Furlong recalls, “During Mother’s time, they were pale pink in color, due to the brick. Pretty elegant.”<sup>9</sup>

Furlong recalled that the location of antebellum slave quarters was near the “little branch off Eyreville Creek.” During his youth, only the locust posts upon which they stood remained, forming “little rectangular boxes” outlining the locations and sizes of the dwelling houses. When the “magnificent barn” burned in 1940, its flames consumed two carriages dating from the late 1800s. The barn had oak stalls with wrought iron between each stall so horses “couldn’t bite each other across the wall.” After World War II, tractors arrived, and mules gradually disappeared, as did much manual farm labor. Mules had been used not only in the fields but to pull mowers to cut Eyre Hall’s acres of grass. In the fields big rigs were used, consisting of eight mules abreast to pull a “six- or eight-bottom plow,” which unearthed a wide swath. Before the war, Furlong Baldwin remembers, about 95 percent of the farm work was done by horses or mules, requiring stables, corn cribs, equipment sheds, and other buildings on Eyre Hall’s landscape. When a friend offered Henry Baldwin a job in his factory manufacturing airplane parts in Baltimore, he took the position and never returned to live at Eyre Hall. In 1962 he and Margaret formally separated, though they never divorced.<sup>10</sup>

While they lived at Eyre Hall, “being in the social circuit” was not of great interest to Henry and Margaret Baldwin, their son remembers. They were not golfers or tennis players, nor did they belong to country clubs. As her son explains, Margaret did belong to a ladies’ club, but it was not “her thing.” When young, she had horses at Eyre Hall,



FIG 65. Eyre Hall cook William Frazier and Furlong Baldwin, ca. 1942.

for she loved to ride, but being near the water and the marsh, the flies and mosquitoes were so worrisome that she eventually gave up riding.<sup>11</sup>

In the years before mass media, the Baldwins and Eyre Hall's African American residents did enjoy good conversations, offering entertainment to family and friends and reminiscing about those who had passed on or were rarely seen. Drawing from the local lode of story nuggets, Furlong Baldwin became an excellent raconteur, opening a window into family life and social relationships. A telling example revolves around the butler Severn Weeks, who lived in the house, now torn down, located behind the kitchen. He lived there with the cook William Frazier and the housemaid named Lena in the 1930s and '40s (Fig. 65). According to Baldwin, Severn Weeks was the "dance king of Northampton County." In the absence of Furlong's parents, he would not simply serve food to Furlong and his sister Mary, but dance while doing so—the Turkey Trot, the Strut, the Big Apple, Cotton-Eyed Joe, and the Suzy Q.<sup>12</sup>

Above all, Weeks loved to sail. Furlong's father had a 65-foot bugeye, a traditional Chesapeake Bay work boat, which he had converted to a cruising vessel. Furlong, his father, and friends would sail to Oxford, St. Michael's, or Annapolis, or over to

Hampton or Norfolk. The Eyre Hall cook, William Frazier, who was quite stout, was terrified of the water and refused to go out in the boat, so the cooking fell to Severn Weeks. On the boat's stove, Severn would fry chicken and bake biscuits, and they would eat below. While they dined, Severn would sail the boat in his starched white coat and black trousers.

As was often the case, when they pulled into port, girls would come out in a row-boat and ask Mr. Baldwin if Severn Weeks could come ashore. "Pick him up at nine," Mr. Baldwin would reply. Severn would put on his light brown dancing shoes, and off he'd go. Being only six or seven, Furlong would be asleep by then. About six in the morning, Furlong would awaken and Severn would be returning, after having danced all night. He'd show Furlong the small trophies he'd won. "He was a piece of work," Furlong concluded. "Starched white coat. Black trousers. Sailing that bugeye up the Bay. He loved it."<sup>13</sup>

"In essence, I grew up at Eyre Hall," Furlong recalls. "It was the Depression, and though we had a home in Baltimore, we spent every vacation and so much time here. Since my older sister wouldn't play with me, I learned to play by myself and would leave the breakfast table with many things to do. At that time we only had mules and no tractors, so I learned to harness mules and drive carts and how to crab pot. I'd play games in the woods. I never put a bridle on a 'mule': she was a 'cavalry horse.' Though she would only walk, I was independent and would imagine. Each creek had a fresh-water spring to explore, and an exciting thing was to go and try to shoot a cotton-mouth water moccasin with a 22 rifle. I used outhouses at my friends' homes. You would use a red corncob, and a white one to see if you were clean. If not, you'd get another red one. The big thing I loved was catching fatback fish, or menhaden. I'd feed everybody on the farm. My maternal grandfather taught me too. When here, he fished practically every day. He would go duck shooting in the morning and fishing in the afternoon in the winter, two creeks up, catching croaker, perch, and gray trout. People used to say to me, 'You went to Princeton.' I replied, 'Fifty percent of my education came from growing up at Eyre Hall.'"<sup>14</sup>

"Mother's favorite room was what grown-ups called the parlor, off the front hall, which we used when we had guests or put up Christmas trees. Even though no one warned, 'Don't do it,' we children didn't go in there but maybe twelve times a year. It was very formal. Mother loved it, and we would sit in those starched chairs during holidays. Listening to my mother, I learned about the history of Eyre Hall. I did happen to live in a bigger house than my friends did, but I didn't think about it. Mother never poured our history into me. I realized that this place was pretty and loved it and have been absorbing its history for 70 years by osmosis. There was no epiphany; it just sort of slid in. Also, I would never forget. As for our family's history, we've lived here for eight generations and on the Eastern Shore for eleven. We came in 1624. My ambition is to live until 2024 because I want to have a party, celebrating our 400 years of being here. That's my goal.



“The china and silver in the dining room are important. The seventeenth-century silver punch bowl is now one-of-a kind in America, but, among all the silver pieces, what says it all—continuity and change at Eyre Hall—are the eighteenth-century silver pitcher and the twentieth-century one Mother received as a wedding present, standing next to one another. As for the china, since Washington died in 1799, the brown sepia pattern represents a memorial to him from 1800 and has been in this dining room at least since my mother’s lifetime. Since this was her home, Mother would say, ‘Let’s use the brown china. It’s Christmas.’ Our family and friends would eat on it. Finally, someone said, ‘Peggy, do you know what you’re doing?’ Our regular china was the Canton. All our dogs ate table scraps. We’d scrape them onto the Canton platters and put them down for the dogs. Daddy had a pointer that lived to be 19, and the slightly smaller Canton platter was his. Nobody thought it was special, and then all of a sudden, you realized it was.”<sup>15</sup>

Growing up in a farm environment on the Eastern Shore, Furlong remembers an Eyre Hall “soundscape” far different from the one heard today in much of America. There were no honking horns and only rarely sirens. Trains whistled at every road crossing, so, depending on the direction of prevailing winds, one could hear the trains and know their locations as they chugged across the Shore in accordance with their schedules. Especially in warm weather with the windows open in the house at night, one could hear the trucks on Route 13, shifting gears up or down as they approached Cheriton, two miles south, and Eastville, three miles north. “You knew exactly what was going on.” If lucky, one could hear the fog horns and clanging bells of the Bay’s ferry boats, since the bridge and tunnel connecting the Eastern Shore to Norfolk were not built until the early 1960s, making the Eastern Shore much more isolated than it is today, and ferries essential.<sup>16</sup>

While there were always seagulls crying or laughing as they circled about, shore birds in abundance arrived in the spring, along with cardinals, bluebirds, chickadees, hummingbirds, woodpeckers, and more, their colors flashing against the sky and their calls filling the air. The presence of birds distinguished the seasons’ cycles, one example being the arrival and departure of ducks and geese. During warm weather one heard the loud rat-a-tat-tat of woodpeckers sharpening their bills on the soft brick of Eyre Hall’s orangerie and dovecote. Added to that were the rhythms of insects like June bugs and cicadas and frogs like peepers and bullfrogs. They were “just country sounds,” Furlong explains, “simply wonderful.”<sup>17</sup> They were the same sounds heard by his ancestors and by African Americans over the course of their 400 years on Virginia’s Eastern Shore and by Native Americans for millennia.

Trains and buses also connected Eyre Hall’s residents to the wider world. Passenger trains would not stop at every station, but, if requested in advance, they would stop at the crossing near Eyre Hall. Such trips illustrated the times, an example being a bus trip Furlong made from Baltimore to Eyre Hall when he was under 12. At Salisbury, two hours from Eyre Hall, he had to change onto the bus bound for Cape Charles, and

ask the driver to drop him off at Eyre Hall's entrance. "Nobody thought that was unusual or that somebody was going to kidnap you."

Another trip introduced him to race relations in the wider world. While every town on the Eastern Shore had eating or sitting areas, water fountains, and restrooms marked "White" or "Colored," Furlong had not registered what segregation really meant until he was ten, when a bus trip taught him. Put on a bus in Baltimore by his mother and being shy, he wanted to sit by himself, so he kept passing seats and going back and back until he found an empty row. "A nice Black man said to me, 'Young man, you don't really belong back here. I suggest you move forward.' I didn't know what it was about until I was older. I wanted to be Black. Heck, they were eating biscuits and fried chicken out of paper bags. But he'd said, 'Young man, I don't . . .' And I said, 'Oh, all right.' So up I went and sat next to a person already there, a white person. But it was the gentlest thing. It wasn't mean or hostile or angry. I never said anything to anybody about it, but as I got older, I realized that was my first introduction to Jim Crow. I hadn't had a clue. Later, when I was 13 or 14, all of a sudden, I realized what was going on. But at the time, segregation meant nothing to me. I would have gotten on the bus and sat with our people at Eyre Hall. Why not? I was brought up in the world, but I didn't understand the hostility of the world. I kind of understood the world, but if you were Pinky or Georgie, why wouldn't I have sat with you?"<sup>18</sup>

Later, when a junior at Princeton in the 1950s, Furlong used that introduction to Jim Crow to good benefit. This time, he was on a bus riding with his lacrosse team from Princeton to Durham to play Duke. The athletic trainer was an African American, Bobby Sinker, whom Furlong adored. When they stopped for lunch in a small Virginia town, someone asked Sinker if he was going to get lunch. "No, I'm not hungry," came the reply. Furlong was the only one who understood what was going on, so he asked Sinker what he wanted since he was going to get lunch and bring it back to the bus and eat there. "We had this nice lunch on the bus. He was my friend. That's why I had been confused at ten years old on that bus in Baltimore by that gentle reminder that I didn't belong there. Very strange. I guess I understood the Black and white part, but I didn't understand the animosity part of it. These were my friends. I lived with these people every day, and I didn't understand it."<sup>19</sup>

When growing up in the 1930s and before World War II, Furlong recalls that workers outdoors were paid \$5.50 a week until after World War II, and indoor workers double at \$2 a day or \$11 a week. Each of the outdoor workers had their own house and a small tract of land for a garden and hog pen. After the war, farming changed because mules and mule teams were no longer needed, and tractors came into use. With tractors, one did not need as much farm labor, so the African American population at Eyre Hall diminished. To make ends meet, the Baldwins leased a lot of land for truck farming, with most of the work on the garden and grounds done by African American residents. "They would go home and eat their lunch or sit in the woods and eat. We'd cook a huge pan of cornbread and take it to them." Living with African

American families close by brought opportunities for what writer Bryan Stevenson calls “proximity learning,”<sup>20</sup> which taught Furlong uncomfortable lessons: “I didn’t understand it, and then I did understand it. I knew we had more than they did, but when I first understood it was when, in the late ’30s or early ’40s, a man with 14 children came up on Christmas Eve, when it was already dark, and asked my father, ‘Can I borrow \$5 to make Christmas?’ What did they get? One orange and one peppermint stick? Then it occurred to me, because in the other room was a train set and a wagon and a football. That’s when it really registered. I remember that so vividly, ‘Can I borrow \$5?’ Fourteen kids, at 6 o’clock at night on Christmas Eve. There were tough times here. There really were.”<sup>21</sup>

After World War II, the landscape changed considerably. The large barn had burned and not been replaced; abandoned tenant houses, probably former slave houses, were pulled down and bricks in their chimneys used for the garden; and, later, the small dwelling behind the kitchen was demolished. Even before the war, a large extended family consisting of Lawrence Bagwell and his sister Pinky Bagwell Foeman and her husband William and their many children had taken up residence and begun working. Lawrence Bagwell became the farm’s overseer in the 1940s and ’50s and lived in the brick overseer’s house, constructed in 1798. According to his grandniece, Joyce Ramassar, Lawrence cultivated a large garden near the house. In warm weather vegetables and fruit like tomatoes, beans, strawberries, and cantaloupes fed the family fresh from the garden, or, if suitable, were preserved for the winter. In cold weather, turnips, broccoli, collards, and other vegetables sustained the family. An orchard supplied apples, pears, and figs. What his family did not consume, Lawrence would take to markets in Eastville and other nearby towns to sell.<sup>22</sup>

After Lawrence’s death and then Margaret Baldwin’s in 1979, the house was restored and enlarged by Furlong’s sister, Mary Eyre, and her husband, David W. K. Peacock, who made it their home. Mary Eyre had graduated from Vassar College in 1950 and forged a distinguished career in the Central Intelligence Agency for 30 years. Upon her retirement, Eyre Hall exerted its pull, so she and her husband chose the house for their residence. Both Mary and Georgia Curtis, the remarkable woman described in the Scrapbook of Recollections, were born in 1929; upon Mary’s return, they became close and enjoyed simply “talking to one another.” Mary died in 2015 and is buried at Forest Lake, New Jersey, her husband’s family retreat.<sup>23</sup>

Near the brick house was the home of Lawrence Bagwell’s sister, Pinky Bagwell Foeman, and her husband William. There they raised many of their nine children, the first child Bertha being born in 1909 and the last, Georgia, in 1929. Four of those children—Ben, Dorsey, Georgia, and Daisy—continued working at Eyre Hall and occupied the tenant houses whose locations around the fields on either side of the entrance lane are shown on the site map (Fig. 66). As the map indicates, the homes of Lawrence Bagwell, of his sister Pinky Foeman, of their sister Lizzie Press, and of Pinky’s four children transformed Eyre Hall into a community of one extended family.<sup>24</sup>

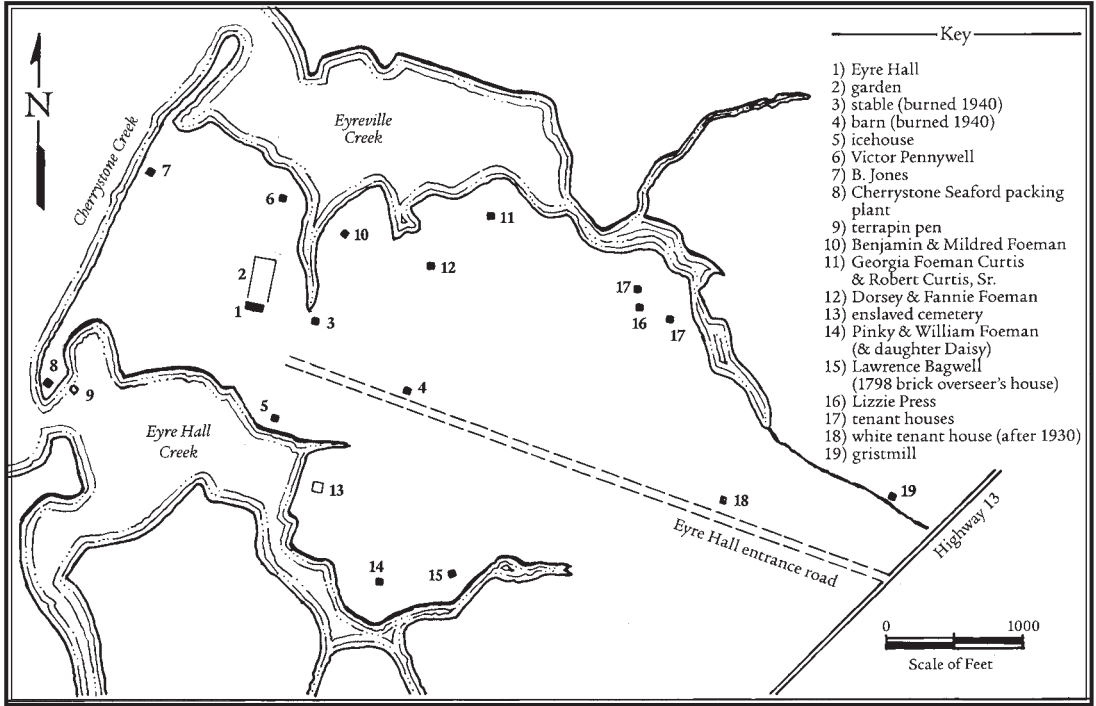


FIG. 66. Map of Eyre Hall in the mid-twentieth century showing dwellings, work buildings, and other features with the names of those who occupied the tenant houses.

In the twentieth century the strength of that family—in fact, the entire Eyre Hall community—was tested when hurricanes swept the coast. The Baldwin family could have felt no obligations, but did, and offered their sturdier house as refuge to the African American families. As if in an unspoken contract, the elders assumed responsibility and exerted authority. Beginning in the 1940s onwards and perhaps earlier, African Americans like Pinky Foeman and later her daughter Georgia Curtis had keys to the main house. From the Baldwins and African Americans alike, there was not one mention of something being broken or stolen. The elders were in charge.

Hurricanes illuminated the faith of Pinky Foeman for all in the African American community to see. According to her grandchildren, she viewed hurricanes not as a danger to be feared but rather as an expression of God's will to which she answered. While everyone else retreated to the main house with her blessing, she declared, according to her granddaughter, Joyce Ramassar: "No, I'm not going anywhere. If the Lord wants to take me, then He will take me, whether I am in the big house or my house.' We'd get upset and try to persuade her to leave since we didn't want her to be by herself, to no avail. So her daughter, my Aunt Daisy, who lived with her, would stay. Pinky had her rocking chair and so strong was her faith, she wouldn't move from there, and would sit in front of the window and watch everything."<sup>25</sup>



factory, which then closed. As Pinky's children and grandchildren became adults in the last half of the twentieth century, Eyre Hall could no longer provide steady work, and better opportunities beckoned elsewhere, so they left. This diaspora is described in their oral history interviews in the Scrapbook of Recollections.<sup>26</sup>

Today, Eyre Hall's fields continue to be leased and grow wheat, corn, and soybeans. Over the course of two years, each is grown separately and sold to feed the large broiler industry on the Eastern Shore. However, for the first time in probably four



FIG. 69. Anthony Foeman, 2019.

centuries, no African American families live on the Eyre Hall estate. Not that they have all left the area; indeed, several families, like those of Helen Burton and Anthony Foeman, featured in the *Scrapbook of Recollections*, own homes in nearby towns. For all these African Americans as well for Furlong and his children and granddaughter, their memories of Eyre Hall in the twentieth century give us informative glimpses so we might see Eyre Hall not simply as a historic site but as a home, where real people lived out real lives in real places.

He considers “Eyre Hall my home because I was born there, August 24, 1964, delivered by the midwife, Miss Hannah Wise, who charged \$5. As a boy, we used to play hide and go seek in the garden by the big house and run through the woods all the time. Me and my brother had a trail that we would go to my grandfather’s brother’s house, Ben Foeman, and we’d go down there and play with those kids because there were so many at our house: 13 of us grandkids, my grandparents, and their four kids—my mother Deloris and her three sisters, Melba, Mildred, and Carol. Me and my brother used to hunt deer, rabbit, and squirrels. My grandfather taught us how to fish, and we’d catch ‘hardheads’ [croaker] and ‘fatbacks’ [menhaden], plus plenty of crabs, sharks, eels, speckled trout, and flounder. We’d put food on the table.

“My grandfather was not the kind of person that would be angry with anyone. He would take the shirt off his back and give it to you if you was white, black, purple, or yellow. My grandfather looked at everyone the same. There wasn’t none of this, ‘Just because you have this much money or just because you have a fancy car and all that.’ My grandfather treated them just as well as he would treat anyone. All he ever taught me was to respect people like he wanted to be respected. I mean if they ask you something and you didn’t know, then you didn’t know, but if you knew, you told the truth.”<sup>28</sup>

“I graduated from Northampton High School in 1982 and went into the military, and when I came home, I saw my grandfather Dorsey Foeman was getting old, and it didn’t feel right. He raised me. So I left the Army in 1987, was hired by Mr. Furlong, and that made me the ninth generation in my family to work on Eyre Hall. When my grandfather Dorsey was living, Mr. Furlong would come around to his house on Sundays and sit on the porch with him and discuss what needed to be done the next week. Eyre Hall, I know every inch of it. Today I live not far away, and here, I’ve got fresh air and don’t have to worry about walking over the top of people trying to get somewhere. There’s not smog or a bunch of shooting. I can go outside and not worry about a drive-by. Whenever my grandchild comes, I can let her go outside and play and don’t have to watch her. When I go to Eyre Hall, I feel a whole lot better. I may remember my grandfather Dorsey and go places where we used to sit and talk, like down at the waterfront. Sometimes I can be riding the tractor and think about the times with him, and maybe shed a couple of tears.”<sup>29</sup>

According to Joyce Curtis Ramassar, another granddaughter of Pinky Foeman, who grew up at Eyre Hall in the twentieth century: “When I think of Eyre Hall, what

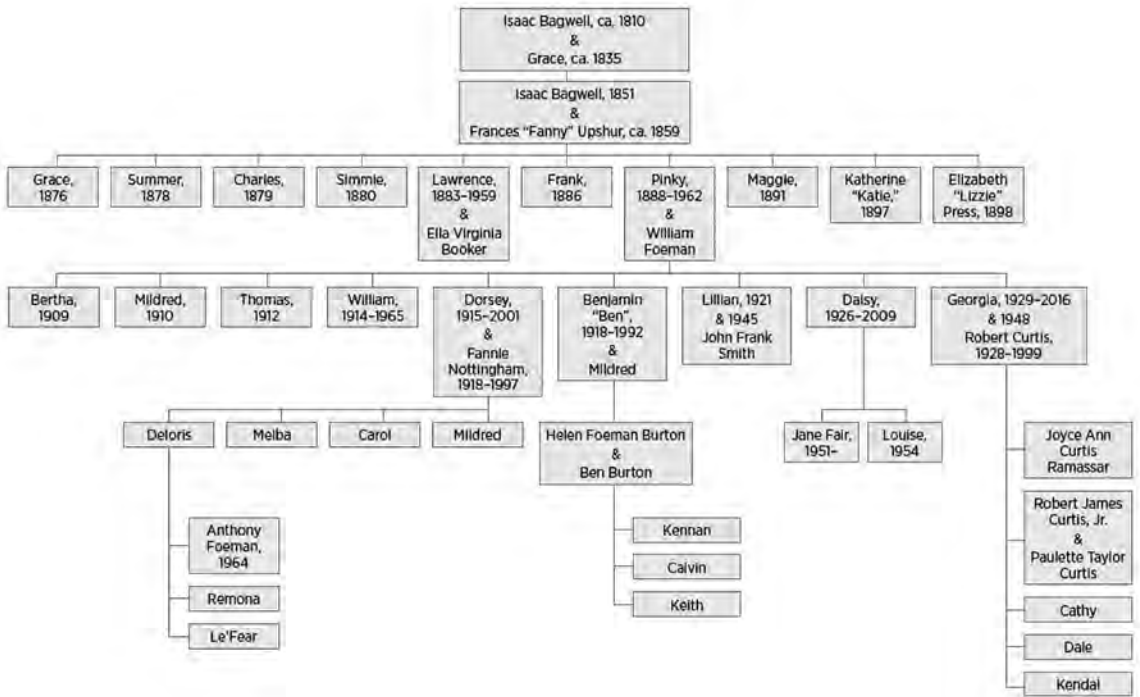


FIG. 70. Family tree of the Bagwell-Foeman family.

comes to mind are your roots. We were fortunate to have our whole family here; the generations of my grandmother Pinky with her brother, Uncle Lawrence, her sister Lizzie, and my grandmother's children— Uncle Dorsey, Uncle Ben, Aunt Daisy, and my mother, Georgia Foeman Curtis. Having my whole family here, how lucky can you be? Growing up together with cousins, uncles, aunts, and grandmother, that is what was special about Eyre Hall (Fig. 70). We roamed wherever we wanted to. We swam in the creek and built homemade boats and floated them there. We walked through the garden. My father built a treehouse in the yard. When fields were empty after Webster had finished all the summer crops, we'd use the field for baseball. Webster, a good man, would sit out there and watch us play—all my cousins, my mom, and uncles.

“Whatever happened in the seventeenth century, that is not part of the time period I know about. I didn't even know I was living on a plantation, because my definition of a plantation was quite different from living here. To me, it was a place where you had people centered in one location who didn't have the freedom to say what they thought. I don't know anybody on this farm that didn't say what they thought. Even to the owners of this farm, they were very outspoken. Mrs. Baldwin had a way of treating everyone as if they were people, and that's why I couldn't get in my head about when I found out this place had been a plantation.





FIG. 71. Paulette Taylor Curtis, Robert Curtis, Jr., and Helen Foeman Burton, 2019.

“Regarding discrimination, my mother didn’t play. ‘You don’t have the right to discriminate against any race because if you cut yourself and drain all your blood, there’s no way that you’re going to drain one race separate from the other because you will have too many involved. You can’t say you are one thing or the other or that you don’t like this group because they are white, because your father’s grandfather, who raised him, was from Scotland and married a Nigerian. And your father’s mother was a Cherokee, who died giving birth to him.’”<sup>30</sup>

When asked about growing up during the era of segregation in the twentieth century, Joyce’s brother Robert Curtis, Jr., his wife Paulette Curtis, and cousin Helen Burton reflected on life at Eyre Hall and the limited opportunities available in a rural, segregated community, where for so many African Americans getting a good job and moving ahead meant leaving the Eastern Shore (Fig. 71). However, there were nuances. As Robert Curtis remembered: “Going to school sometimes, black kids would look at

me because they'd think I was different from them because my hair was always curled, since my dad is half Cherokee."

A newcomer from New Jersey to the community after her marriage in 1976, Paulette recalled: "My first encounter with segregation was when I went to a doctor's office in Cape Charles, which had a sign to the right that said 'whites' and a sign to the left that said 'blacks.' I asked my husband, 'What does this mean? I've never seen this before.' He said, 'We have to sit on the black side, and the whites go there.' They even had a water fountain for the blacks and the whites. That was my first encounter with segregation. It really did bother me." But Eyre Hall seemed different.

As her husband explained, "When Eyre Baldwin, Furlong's son, would come and sit at our table and eat just like he was home. He would sit there and ask my mom Georgia, 'What's this? This is good.' Mama would say, 'This is biscuit, navy beans, and neck bones.' He said 'Well, I don't know what it is, but it's good.' His sister Molly would also come around. She would never eat, but they always came in our house, and we never felt different about that. Whenever they took us up there, Furlong and them would tell them to give us lunch, something to drink, or whatever we wanted. I felt more comfortable at Eyre Hall than we did when we went out in the streets because everybody was so friendly back there."<sup>31</sup>

According to Robert Curtis, "One time we had a big party right down at the Eyre Hall house. Mrs. Baldwin, Furlong, Helen's mother, and all of us were there, and folks about my age were there. I used to play guitar, and my cousin had his drums, plus other guitars down there. Helen's oldest brother, who was my age, was there. We had a big party until about 12 or 1 o'clock that night." Robert does not recall how they got the party going. "We asked, 'Could this happen?' It was in the long hallway of the house. Right there. We cranked it up and played. We had electric guitars and drums. Played some of everything. I will never forget that. Dancing and everything. Mrs. Baldwin was there, and Furlong too. All of my family was there. I think they got together and said, 'Let's all of us get this together. Everybody on the farm. We just get in here and show you the things we do,' so that's what happened. That was about 1963 or '64, when I was about 13 or 14." Helen remembers "Y'all having the party. We tried to go, but my mama said, 'You're too young.' My older sisters and brothers went and brought back food, snacks, and stuff for me and said it was fun, but we were too small."<sup>32</sup>

Robert Curtis elucidates his background. "I was born on Eyre Hall, perhaps at my grandmother Pinky's house before it burned down. It was one of the old houses, like two rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs. My mother, Georgia Foeman Curtis, moved us perhaps to Delaware, where we stayed for two or three years, and when we came back to Eyre Hall, we built a new house, which is still standing. To catch the school bus, we had to walk about a mile and a quarter because not too many people had cars (Fig. 72). Beginning when I was about five or six, my mother took me to the big house, where she would be cooking and doing things. While she taught me a lot, I learned a lot on my own by going around the farm and looking at plants, flowers, and the beautiful parts of the house. Everybody was family that lived on Eyre Hall."



FIG. 72. Joyce Curtis and her brother Robert "Buster" Curtis, Jr., waiting for the school bus, ca. 1960.

According to Paulette Curtis, his wife, they lived for a while with Robert's mother Georgia Curtis, at Eyre Hall. "She taught me how to do the silver and brass and would take me to work with her at Eyre Hall." The values of integrity and hard work that she absorbed as a youth seemed to merge with those of the African American families of

Eyre Hall. "My father was a perfectionist, and I took after him. So too was my mother-in-law, Georgia Curtis. For example, she taught me how to polish silver or brass so it sparkles like brand new. It was so beautiful to see and something to be proud of. I also whitewashed fences along with other families and am still polishing silver and brass. I had to get used to country living, for there was no such thing as plumbing; I had to get used to pumping water, lifting pots to take your bath, and washing clothes by hand on the little scrub board. A lot of work. But I love the fresh air, the greenery of the trees, and hearing the birds in the mornings. It's really a beautiful place to be."<sup>33</sup>

Dick McIntosh, an Eyre descendant and Furlong Baldwin's cousin, often visited Eyre Hall when growing up and remembers: "Race relations at Eyre Hall were peaceful. I don't remember any upsets or unpleasantness. We were fond of the African Americans who worked there and knew we were dependent upon them, just as they, I imagine, knew they were dependent upon us. We accepted a kind of interdependence. Since Furlong was 11 years older than I and would have his friends down working on the farm, the black children were my playmates. That's the way it was. In fact, when Furlong had parties there like weddings, he always invited the black families to come. We'd all dance and have a good time. It was an extension of our having grown up there. We knew the different characteristics of each person, and they knew ours. Perhaps that was because everybody, black or white, had enough freedom at Eyre Hall for their personality to emerge and to express themselves and be themselves. Why? We all felt an attachment to the place. Perhaps it was also due to Margaret Baldwin, because she was happy and not a controlling person."<sup>34</sup>

The memories of Eyre Baldwin, Furlong's son, evoke a lively site. According to Eyre: "My earliest memories of Eyre Hall are of a lot of laughter, a lot of love. We'd go to the creek, sail, or spend time in the gardens. I remember everybody on the farm looking out for us and being incredibly caring. As a child, you just knew it was natural and honest. I grew up in Baltimore when my parents were together, and we would come down for vacations. Probably around 1975 or 1976, I started spending summers here with my grandmother and came on weekends and holidays from boarding school. I became pretty entrenched in the community and in Eyre Hall. As a teenager, I worked on farms that supplied canning companies and in seafood houses in nearby Oyster and Cheriton. I probably understood Eyre Hall's history when I was 14 or 15, because I knew what was here, how my grandmother did things, and that the things we used, whether it was the silver or the china, were hers. There would be long conversations about portraits, silver, china, and antiques at the table. You would have to be a fool not to hear something that was going to stick. So much was still intact. I appreciated that."<sup>35</sup>

The memories of Molly Baldwin, Furlong's daughter, add different colors to the portrait: "I was born in 1959 in Baltimore, grew up there until I was about 16, and in the summers, came to Eyre Hall. It was home. I'd spend a lot of time with Georgie and Daisy, following them around and hanging out with them. All of their children plus

Dorsey's and Ben's, we all played for hours in the garden and in the water. It was beautiful. As I got into pre-teens, I was separated from them. That was hard. I didn't understand it. I was a little kid, and all of a sudden because they were African American and I was white and I lived in this house and they lived in smaller houses on the farm, we were separated."

Molly spoke of how her father "ingrained in me, not drilled directly: 'You're given a lot of opportunity and privilege—and to whom much is given, much is expected'" She observed, "There are things about Eyre Hall that are extraordinary. There're beautiful parts of its history and not-beautiful parts. It's physically and geographically beautiful. The garden was and is extraordinary. I was born into a lot of privilege and had opportunities that most people in the world don't have, and take seriously the commitment to give back. But I don't do it just because of that. While the house is extraordinary, to me it stands for things in the United States that are not good, that are unacceptable: the history of slavery, the history and the tragic reality of racism in our nation today, even in the country where lots of people have come from other countries to work for no money or hardly any money. So I have mixed feelings about the place—not the people—and take seriously my responsibility as a white woman to understand the privilege I come from and to be respectful. My father and mother and the way I was raised obviously gave me enough strength to follow my own calling. As a result, in some small way I hope I can help the world to be more fair and just."<sup>36</sup>

Interpreting what Eyre Hall has meant over the decades, Furlong Baldwin reasoned: "Had I not been successful in banking, I would have still fought to keep Eyre Hall. It would have gotten shabbier and shabbier. My real push has been to be successful enough that I'm able to pass it along to my granddaughter with the means to run it. Beyond that, I have no idea. If I hadn't been successful and we needed a new tractor, that wouldn't have been possible. I would have been in tears, but it wouldn't have been possible. As for my mother and father sustaining Eyre Hall by truck farming, there wasn't any money in it. We rented most of it out and farmed a little bit ourselves, but it wasn't enough to live on. Nor did the seafood packing plant or terrapin venture produce enough income. Fortunately, Mother had a little income thanks to Severn Eyre. As they say in that good old southern way, we went three generations and lived off somebody's brightness."<sup>37</sup>

Furlong further observed, "Despite what the books say, you can go home again. After I divorced in 1973, I came home 45 weekends a year. This is where I want to be. What I gave up was a perfectly normal social life in Baltimore, but it wasn't what interested me. I sure didn't want to be the extra man at a dinner party Saturday night." When asked about Eyre Hall's attraction, he explained: "If you didn't love Eyre Hall, you would hate it. There ain't an in-between. My joy and my hobby is this place. It used to be when I was working and got here on a Saturday, the lawnmower was broken. The next Saturday, the water pump didn't work. The next Saturday, the roof blew off. It's a killer, but I love it. I want to leave it in the best shape I can and

hope my successors get as much pleasure out of it as I do. People come and say very nice things about it, but it's my home. Though a little bigger than most, I like it the way you want your home to be."

And he concluded: "Eyre Hall has changed and is very demanding. In the '30s everything was cheaper. I look at buildings and remember those 80 years ago because I remember when those boards were there, 80 years ago. Eyre Hall's like me—my boards are coming off, too. . . . If you didn't love it, Eyre Hall would break your back. This is my beach house. This is my golf club. This is my whatever. I don't want that. I want this. I'm home."<sup>38</sup>

Like his mother before him, Furlong Baldwin means it.

## A Scrapbook of Recollections by Those Who Called Eyre Hall “Home”

“What was important and what was not” is a quotation from my oral history interview with Joyce Curtis Ramassar, at least the fourth generation of an African American family who lived and worked at Eyre Hall. She was reflecting upon her childhood there and on Eyre Hall’s early garden because, as a young woman, she found it a place where she could think about things and find clarity in decision-making. She was not alone in this, for the garden has meant many things to many people over the span of three centuries. It has been a place of thought, a place of play, a place of work, a place of imagination, and a place of beauty. Different people at different times have perceived it in different ways; indeed, the garden—like Eyre Hall itself and other historic sites—carries myriad meanings, depending on one’s point of view.<sup>39</sup>

In addition to documents, objects, and even buildings and landscapes, there are, fortunately, oral histories in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that provide answers to questions we wish we could have asked people of previous ages. These commentaries breathe more life into Eyre Hall and allow us to better understand multiple perspectives, like those of the garden. As Lonnie Bunch, historian and secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, has observed, this is critical because too many people of the past have been relegated to anonymity or been omitted completely, especially African Americans. By recording oral histories and using many other forms of evidence, historians may remedy that situation and give more people both personal and collective identity and voice.

This Scrapbook therefore builds on the foundation established by earlier chapters, and, by using oral histories and recent photographs, seeks to give identity to a wider range of people at Eyre Hall and to the places they knew. It adds to, rather than replaces, the picture created by other essays. These snapshots were not taken by professional photographers, but are family pictures, which descendants have kept and kindly shared with this project since they too have wanted to contribute to Eyre Hall’s history. As Robert Stanton, former director of the National Park Service, pointed out, quoting African American historian Carter G. Woodson, “they won’t know unless you tell them.”<sup>40</sup> The Eyre Hall contributors wanted to share their snapshots so that readers could see the faces and demeanor of their elders and of themselves in ways that would not have been possible for their ancestors in earlier centuries.

These studies of Eyre Hall will not, of course, “wrap up” Eyre Hall’s history, but it is hoped that they will open up its past and prompt more research and interpretation in the years to come by scholars, students, and family members alike. Eyre Hall is a gold mine of history, especially since its courthouse records from the seventeenth century to the present remain intact, having not been damaged by hurricanes or burned during the wars that swept the area. Though altered, its main house, as has been described, remains substantially intact, as does its garden and several outbuild-

ings. The house is filled with historical artifacts, each with a story to tell, some told here by people who touched them. As for archaeology, nothing deeper than a plow has disturbed most of its earth, so the entire site awaits excavation in accordance with a strategic plan. Oral history informants abound, and their varied accounts show how much there is to explore. As a result, Eyre Hall stands as a living and learning laboratory for generations to come.

From Baldwin family members as well as from African Americans associated with Eyre Hall, one common sentiment expressed about Eyre Hall in the twentieth century was that it was a homeplace. Abundant stories were told to illustrate this. To test their veracity, I asked Joyce Ramassar, a straight-talking African American born on the property, how that feeling could be, since her family and relatives had labored for years in a house and on land they never owned. Without hesitation, she explained: “When my mother passed away in August 2016, I stayed here until September, taking some of her personal things back to my house. There’s something that registered in my mind: my mother is buried here. She is where she wanted to be. I tried to get her to move to Florida with me, and she said, ‘No. I don’t want to live in Florida. This is my home.’ “After that, there was not a year that I did not come back home here because I considered this to be home. I would come here two or three times a year, and it always felt like home. My mother is buried here. Over there is my birthplace, a part of me. The house that my mother and father built by tearing down old boards from another house and that my uncles and aunts all worked together on is still there. We were raised in that place. No matter what happens to it, Eyre Hall will always be my homeplace. Home is not ownership of a place. Home is where the love is, where you feel loved in the house. I could live in a teepee as long as there was love—that’s the most important thing, not the size of the house or the shape of the house or the look or the value. It’s the people that live in the house that makes the home.”<sup>41</sup>

Joyce and other African American descendants of those who lived and worked at Eyre Hall spoke genuinely of their life there. Amidst the wider world of racial prejudice, their elders guarded them against prejudice and taught them values of respect, hard work, dignity, and tolerance. Within their own households, they did not put up with bigotry. Pushing this issue further, I frankly asked whether she was “Uncle Tomming” me, a white interviewer. She replied: “Furlong [Baldwin, the current owner of Eyre Hall] tells me, ‘One thing about you, Joyce, you are very open and don’t sugarcoat anything.’ Nobody can force me to say things that I do not believe in because my mother taught us: ‘Don’t live this fake, phony life because it will find you out. Just be truthful about things. Tell it the way it is, and you will be able to live with yourself.’ Being able to live with myself is important to me. When I see people, I see them for who they are. It doesn’t matter whether they are white, brown, yellow, or red. The character of the person is what matters to me, not the color of their skin.”<sup>42</sup>

None of this is to sugarcoat the history of Eyre Hall. As Molly Baldwin explains: “There are things about Eyre Hall that are extraordinary. There are beautiful parts of its



history and not beautiful parts. It's physically and geographically beautiful. The garden was and is extraordinary. While the house is extraordinary, it stands for things in the United States that are not good, that are unacceptable: the history of slavery and the history and the tragic reality of racism in our nation today. That's the complexity of Eyre Hall."<sup>43</sup>

"Complexity" Eyre Hall has indeed, enough to be puzzled over by scholars, students, and family members for years to come. Hence the need for the site to be preserved, studied, lived in, and opened periodically for research, education, and tours. This sharing of history is critical, for Eyre Hall is like a film that frame by frame allows us to see ourselves as Americans from our worst to our best. It thereby helps us, as Lonnie Bunch has urged, to "remember not just what we want to remember, but what we need to remember."<sup>44</sup>

## The Future of Eyre Hall: "Eyre Hall Needs to Be Lived In"

What will happen to Eyre Hall? Should it remain in the home of the same family that has owned it for centuries? Should it become a historic site, owned and operated by a non-profit organization and open to the public? Why is Eyre Hall significant? How can it contribute to the future? The list of questions could go on, and they have been asked and received much thought and discussion. Most do agree that Eyre Hall warrants a place in the future of the state and nation, not because a famous person lived there or a significant moment in our nation's history happened there, but because its continuity in ownership and operations and its abundance of evidence allow us to see America as it evolved over time. We can see what has changed and what has stayed the same. We can connect with real people at the real places where they lived. Few if any historic sites today can still claim ownership by the same family since the 1750s. It is fortunate that the family has retained a wonderful collection of artifacts and documents. Fortunate, too, that their ancestors chose not to destroy the integrity of the place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when there was money to do so. Of course, they made some modern improvements since the main house has been continually lived in, but nothing drastic. Since nothing deeper than a plow has disturbed most of its earth, archaeological sites abound. And since the Northampton County court records have survived unbroken from the early seventeenth century onwards, historians may continue to investigate questions of Eyre Hall's past and how it illustrates the nation's.

No one connected to Eyre Hall wants to see the property developed. All recommend it remain a home and not become a museum. Fortunately, the current owner, Furlong Baldwin, has established an endowment to fund the myriad expenses an historic place generates, but has also given freedom to his heir to sell the property, protected by preservation and conservation easements. African American descendants too have their thoughts. The following excerpts articulate the variety of opinions that coalesce into a general consensus.

*Furlong Baldwin:*

“Has my family ever considered selling Eyre Hall? Not even a subject of conversation! I would never consider selling it. Nor did my mother. It never occurred to her. As for the future of the house’s contents: thanks to my will, the furniture, the family portraits, the silver, and other furnishings belong to the house. In fact, all of the collection is in a trust of its own. My only grandchild, Gracie, my son Eyre’s daughter, will inherit the property. When she turns 40, if she wants to sell it, it’s her option. It would kill me, but you can’t rule from the grave. I can take you through this county and show you houses whose owners said, ‘I’m not going to let my children sell my house.’ And with time, the houses eventually fell to the ground.

“For three generations, nobody contributed to Eyre Hall’s upkeep, but I was lucky to be able to put something back in and have maintained Eyre Hall because I love it. There will be enough for my granddaughter Gracie to maintain it, thanks to an endowment, so my hope is that Eyre Hall goes on. But what can I do about it? I’ll be out there in the graveyard. I may talk to her out there. I’ve got a conservation easement on the land and a preservation easement on the house. They restrict what can be done right down to the color of the paneling or the preservation of the wallpaper. A new owner wouldn’t have much wiggle room.”<sup>45</sup>

*Anthony Foeman:*

“Since Eyre Hall was a slave plantation and my ancestors were slaves there and bad things happened, I was asked ‘why not burn it down?’ That’s not the solution. I feel as though Eyre Hall is part of me, and I’m part of Eyre Hall. I’ll always be part of Eyre Hall, no matter what. Burn it down? No, that would never cross my mind. I would never want it to get burned down because it’s historic and my ancestors worked there and I have a lot of love for that, and that’s why I love the Baldwins the way I do. They are like family.

“I would like Eyre Hall to survive into the future because I want my children and my grandchildren to know about it: how important it is to our family, how much work we put in there, and how to just always respect everyone around there because they will respect you the same. What I would like them to know about my ancestors is that we should still try to keep searching and finding out more and more about them and how they respected the people that owned Eyre Hall as we do now. Respect is the number one thing in my mind. You should always respect, no matter what, and that’s what I would like for them to know.”<sup>46</sup>

*Joyce Curtis Ramassar:*

Contemplating Eyre Hall’s future, Joyce concluded, “It’s a memorable place, and what I would not want to see is commercialization. Too many properties with a lot of mem-

ories of people who were born and lived there have been wiped out by commercial properties and turned into malls and housing. Once you do that, there're no memories left of that place because there's nothing identifiable to the people born and raised there. What I would like to see is something to identify the people that lived here, like a lane with the name of the person that lived on that lane.

"It might not be important to other people, but it will be important to the last generation that lived here. My grandmother Pinky and her brother, Uncle Lawrence, her son Uncle Dorsey, and all the rest of them are the last ones we have any personal attachment to. Each one of them had a lane going directly to their house, so naming those lanes for them would mean something for generations to come. We have grandchildren, and they may want to come and see one day, when I'm gone, where 'my grandmother' was born. They can come here and see their great-grandmother Georgia's name on the lane, not mine. They would know exactly its location, and that would mean something to them.

"Eyre Hall should remain a part of history. This house should be open to the public to see, because young people these days have no idea what happened before the 1900s. There are so many people in the United States that don't know what an historical house looks like. There's nothing I would change. Otherwise, it would not carry the history that actually determined what this house was in the first place. I don't care whether you are African American, white American, or whatever American. White Americans cannot erase how they—not all white Americans—treated slaves. They can't erase that. It's always going to be there, whether they talk about it or don't. Since my great-grandmother was born on a Cherokee reservation, I wanted to see exactly how she lived, so I took my kids there. That's history, and you cannot erase it."<sup>47</sup>

### *Molly Baldwin:*

"I would hope that Eyre Hall could be a place to tell the truth. It could be a place of reconciliation, a safe place to have the most difficult conversations we need to have in the country so that we can move forward. Why Eyre Hall? What does Eyre Hall offer? I know Eyre Hall is a place that's beautiful, with a historic building and gardens. Could you create a place that has both a beautiful and a painful legacy and be a place of healing and reconciliation? I hope so."<sup>48</sup>

### *Eyre Baldwin:*

"One of my biggest fears about Eyre Hall is that it becomes too sterile and becomes a museum. It is a home. It isn't just a house. Grace may stay away for years, but if she comes home every once in a while, I hope she will raise the windows, have her friends hanging out the windows, and that they use the property the way we did."<sup>49</sup>

### *Grace Baldwin:*

“When I was growing up here, my friends loved Eyre Hall. They still do. It’s filled with memories. Every year we gave tours during Garden Week and were assigned rooms to explain the history of, say the front hall or blue room. When I was about 11, what I liked most in the ‘yellow room’ was the dresser. It had a little secret compartment I’d show. People loved it!

As I think about its future, Eyre Hall needs to be lived in. It was a source of happiness for my childhood memories. It should not be tiptoed around in. It needs to stay intact and stay as a home.”<sup>50</sup>

#### IMAGE CREDITS:

- Fig. 61 DeCourcy McIntosh
- Figs. 62–65 Eyre Hall
- Fig. 66 Richard Britton
- Fig. 67 Cornell University Library Collections
- Figs. 68, 72, 77 Robert Curtis
- Figs. 69, 71 George McDaniel
- Fig. 70 Carl Lounsbury
- Fig. 79 Joyce Curtis Ramassar
- Fig. 82 Helen Burton
- Fig. 84 Jeff Klee

#### NOTES

1. Furlong Baldwin fourth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007.
2. Dick McIntosh interview with George McDaniel, February 12, 2020.
3. Dick McIntosh interview with George McDaniel, February 12, 2020; *Virginian-Pilot* (Norfolk), July 10, 1914, 11.
4. Dick McIntosh interview with George McDaniel, February 12, 2020.
5. Furlong Baldwin second walking tour with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007
6. Furlong Baldwin fourth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007.
7. Furlong Baldwin fourth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007; Furlong Baldwin second walking tour with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007.
8. Furlong Baldwin fourth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007; Furlong Baldwin second walking tour with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007.
9. Furlong Baldwin fourth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007; Furlong Baldwin second walking tour with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007.
10. Furlong Baldwin second walking tour with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007; Furlong Baldwin fifth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007.
11. Furlong Baldwin fourth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007

12. Furlong Baldwin fifth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007
13. Furlong Baldwin fifth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007
14. Furlong Baldwin interview with George McDaniel, May 11, 2019.
15. Furlong Baldwin interview with George McDaniel, May 11, 2019.
16. Furlong Baldwin fourth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007.
17. Furlong Baldwin fourth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007.
18. Furlong Baldwin fourth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007.
19. Furlong Baldwin fourth interview with Elaine Eff, September 28, 2007.
20. Bryan Stevenson, *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* (New York: One World Press, 2015), 50.
21. Furlong Baldwin second part of second interview with George McDaniel, May 13, 2019;
22. Joyce Curtis Ramassar interview with George McDaniel, July 30, 2019.
23. Joyce Curtis Ramassar interview with George McDaniel, July 30, 2019; Mary Peacock obituary, *Washington Post*, September 13, 2015.
24. Joyce Curtis Ramassar interview with George McDaniel, July 30, 2019.
25. Joyce Curtis Ramassar interview with George McDaniel, July 30, 2019.
26. Joyce Curtis Ramassar interview with George McDaniel, July 30, 2019; Furlong Baldwin third part of second interview with George McDaniel, May 13, 2019.
27. Robert Curtis, Paulette Curtis, and Helen Burton first interview with George McDaniel, May 12, 2019.
28. Anthony Foeman second interview with George McDaniel, May 12, 2019.
29. Anthony Foeman second interview with George McDaniel, May 12, 2019.
30. Joyce Curtis Ramassar interview with George McDaniel, July 30, 2019.
31. Robert Curtis, Paulette Curtis, and Helen Burton interview with George McDaniel, May 12, 2019.
32. Robert Curtis, Paulette Curtis, and Helen Burton interview with George McDaniel, May 12, 2019.
33. Robert Curtis, Paulette Curtis, and Helen Burton interview with George McDaniel, May 12, 2019.
34. Dick McIntosh interview with George McDaniel, February 12, 2020.
35. Eyre Baldwin interview with George McDaniel, May 13, 2019.
36. Molly Baldwin second interview with George McDaniel, July 31, 2019.
37. Furlong Baldwin first part of second interview with George McDaniel, May 13, 2019.
38. Furlong Baldwin first part of second interview with George McDaniel, May 13, 2019.
39. Lonnie Bunch, *A Fool's Errand: Creating the National Museum of African American History and Culture in the Age of Bush, Obama, and Trump* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2019), 4–10.
40. Robert Stanton, "Curating Black America," The Marion Thompson Wright Lecture Series, Rutgers University at Newark, N.J., February 21, 2015.
41. Joyce Curtis Ramassar interview with George McDaniel, July 30, 2019.
42. Joyce Curtis Ramassar interview with George McDaniel, July 30, 2019.
43. Molly Baldwin second interview with George McDaniel, July 31, 2019.

44. Bunch, *Fool's Errand*, 4–10.
45. Furlong Baldwin interview with George McDaniel, May 11, 2019.
46. Anthony Foeman third interview with George McDaniel, May 12, 2019.
47. Joyce Curtis Ramassar and Louise Hayman interview with George McDaniel, July 30, 2019.
48. Molly Baldwin second interview with George McDaniel, July 31, 2019.
49. Eyre Baldwin and Grace Baldwin interview with George McDaniel, July 30, 2019.
50. Eyre Baldwin and Grace Baldwin interview with George McDaniel, July 30, 2019.

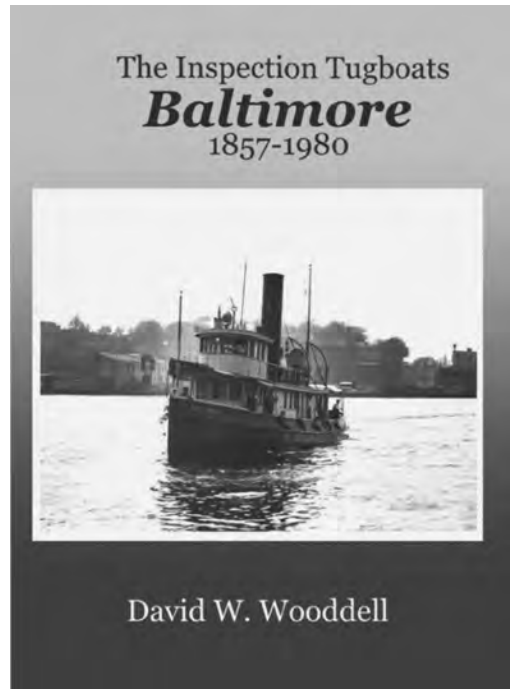
## Maryland Center for History and Culture's Brewington Book Prize 2021

David W. Wooddell,  
*The Inspection Tugboats*  
Baltimore 1857–1980

AFTER careful deliberation, the Maritime Committee of the Maryland Center for History and Culture (MCHC) has awarded the 2021 Brewington Book Prize to David W. Wooddell for *The Inspection Tugboats Baltimore 1857–1980* (2020, independently published). Chosen from a competitive selection of titles on the Chesapeake Bay and US maritime history published throughout 2020, Wooddell's book traces the lifespans

of two inspection tugboats once operated by the City of Baltimore to oversee and maintain the harbor from their respective launches in 1857 and 1906 to their ultimate fates, revealing the tugs' significance to the region through extensive research and analysis of historic photographs, maps, drawings, and archival documents.

"The Maritime Committee selected this book from 11 candidates published in 2020 for the best combination of importance of the subject, appeal, long-term value, and depth and breadth of research," said Karl L. Kirkman, Brewington Book Prize Subcommittee chairman. "The author's writing style is to collect artifacts and use them to tell his story and this brings fresh insight. The selection of *The Inspection Tugboats Baltimore* was a clear-cut choice by the Brewington Subcommittee."



David W. Wooddell, previously of Baltimore, Maryland, is a nonfiction writer who retired as a research editor from *National Geographic Magazine* in 2009 after 22 years, during which time he specialized in marine archaeology, military, naval history, and anthropology. Prior to his work with *National Geographic*, David worked as a photo-journalist and picture editor for a number of publications. Since his retirement, he has written and published several history books on such topics as nineteenth-century steam locomotives, the Chesapeake Bay in winter, and the Civil War. David currently resides in Pembroke, Ontario, Canada, with his wife.

Beginning in 2016, the Brewington Book Prize has been awarded annually by the Maryland Center for History and Culture for the best book on maritime history related to the Chesapeake Bay or the nation. The prize comes with a \$500 honorarium and is named for Marion V. Brewington (1902–1974), a legendary maritime curator and historian from Salisbury, Maryland. During World War II, Brewington was the curator for the US Navy. After the war, he was the maritime curator of MCHC (then known as the Maryland Historical Society), a trustee of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, and later held curatorial and administrative positions at the Peabody Museum of Salem, Massachusetts, and the Kendall Whaling Museum in Sharon, Massachusetts. His books include *Chesapeake Bay: A Pictorial Maritime History* and *Chesapeake Bay Log Canoes and Bugeyes*.

### **Previous winners of the Brewington Book Prize include:**

- 2020 Donald Grady Shomette, *Anaconda's Tail: The Civil War on the Potomac Frontier, 1861–1865* (Dunkirk, MD: Millstone Publishing, 2019)
- 2019 Judge John C. North II, *Tradition, Speed, and Grace: Chesapeake Bay Log Sailing Canoes* (St. Michaels, MD: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, 2018)
- 2018 William Fowler Jr., *Steam Titans: Cunard, Collins, and the Epic Battle for Commerce on the North Atlantic* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017)
- 2017 Donald Grady Shomette, *Privateers of the Revolution: War on the New Jersey Coast, 1775–1783* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 2016)
- 2016 Kate Livie, *Chesapeake Oysters: The Bay's Foundation and Future* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2015)



## Book Reviews

*Harnessing Harmony: Music, Power, and Politics in the United States, 1788–1865.* By Billy Coleman. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020. 268 pages. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$95.00, paperback \$27.95, e-book \$21.99.)

In *Harnessing Harmony*, Billy Coleman provides an interesting study of popular music's impact on American political culture from 1788 to 1865. He includes "The Star-Spangled Banner," Jenny Lind's tour of America in the early 1850s, the mass-production of pianos, and "Dixie," as well as music societies, songs, and performers who would be less familiar today. While modern audiences who consider the intersection of music and politics might think of protest songs, it was primarily elites who used music in this earlier era, and they did so for conservative purposes, hoping to calm and "uplift" audiences. Middle-class reformers believed that music could "exert a controlling and refining influence over an otherwise unwieldy public" (88). In conjunction with the book, UNC Press offers a soundtrack on its website that features modern interpretations of songs mentioned in the work, including "Log Cabin March" and "Jefferson and Liberty."

As Coleman notes, antebellum Americans would have heard far less music than we do today. Before 1865, they could sing, play instruments if they had them, or write songs, but the phonograph had yet to be invented. Even avid fans could only hear so much. In the early 1850s, for example, printer S. Willard Saxton attended about three professional musical performances per week and also attended performances in friends' homes. Music formed a large part of his social life, but he would have had few opportunities to listen to music outside of these settings.

The belief that music was a powerful force was profound, especially among Federalists and their Whig successors. They took to heart the observation of playwright William Congreve that "Musick has Charms to sooth the Savage Breast" (30). Democrats sang "Tippecanoe and Tyler, Too" during the 1840 campaign and parodied Whig songs, but these were the exceptions. It was primarily Federalists and Whigs who used songs for political purposes and founded music societies, hoping to shape society to their liking, and they disdained the opposition's contributions. In 1814, one Federalist derided Republican ballads as being "in vogue with the Vulgar" (40).

Coleman points out that "The Star-Spangled Banner" was a Federalist song that was, nonetheless, not regarded as partisan, since it was heard in a wartime context—and in the context of a war that Republicans had supported.

In Chapter 1, which focuses on Federalists, Coleman notes that members of the party used music to try to influence society after they had lost political power. They hoped to encourage deference, which they considered to be key to ensuring social order. To this end, some hoped that concert audiences would see society as akin to an orchestra, in which people work together but play different roles. Francis Scott Key hoped that “The Star-Spangled Banner” would help to unify the public. Coleman suggests that the lyrics were first published anonymously because Key was a well-known Federalist and there was strong anti-Federalist sentiment in Baltimore.

Later chapters focus on music societies and the use of music in election campaigns. Chapter 2 focuses on the societies which were, again, often founded by Federalists, and which tended to be elitist. Some groups performed religious music, others patriotic songs, and many performed at public events. Founders of such societies believed the performances would benefit listeners by helping them to “cultivate a good taste for music” (82). In the next chapter, Coleman notes that the goal of campaign songs was to provide an outlet for political enthusiasm, rather than to garner additional political support. Also, Whigs believed that campaign music could have a “refining influence over an otherwise unruly process of popular democracy” (10).

It can, of course, be difficult to establish the impact of music on the audience’s politics, but Coleman addresses this by focusing, in the last chapter, on S. Willard Saxton, who kept a detailed diary of his activities, including attendance to musical performances. Saxton saw Jenny Lind calm an unruly crowd as if she had cast a “magic spell” over them, which supports the notion of the impact of music—or musicians (131). Also, she donated some of the proceeds of her Boston concerts to the city’s benevolent societies, which impressed upon Saxton the importance of acting on one’s beliefs. After Lind left Boston, Saxton became more assertive in his political beliefs, which included the abolition of slavery.

Coleman does not focus on music and slavery, and he notes that other works have explored this topic in depth. Still, it is interesting to see the subjects of his focus in this broader context. He notes that enslaved people used music to demonstrate agency, and he points out that Lind did not criticize slavery publicly until she had completed the Southern part of her tour. He also addresses Saxton’s support for abolition. Saxton met the Hutchinson Family Singers, who wrote abolitionist songs. He also saw a performance by the Campbell Minstrels in 1856 and wrote in his diary that, while he “Enjoyed some parts” of it, he found “much of it . . . insipid” (154). Coleman states that “white abolitionists like Saxton were drawn to minstrel music and melodies” and that Saxton was not overawed by the performance (203). It would have been interesting to have seen more elaboration on these aspects although, as Coleman notes, other scholars have addressed this topic.

In the epilogue, Coleman’s focus returns to Fort McHenry, where Henry McCafrey was imprisoned for breaking an 1863 law that banned the “publication or sale of secession music” as contrary to the public good (159). This, again, attests to music’s

potential impact, as well as the vulnerability of the Union. After Appomattox, referring to “Dixie,” President Lincoln stated that the rebels “will be free to hear it again” (160).

*Harnessing Harmony* highlights many aspects of the era’s music to present an intriguing cultural portrait and a clear demonstration of efforts to “harness harmony” in order to advance political beliefs or a preferred partisan social vision. It would work well in studies of music and of cultural history.

Elizabeth Kelly Gray  
Towson University



*Baltimore Lives: The Portraits of John Clark Mayden.* By John Clark Mayden. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019. 116 pages. Photographs, essays, index. Hardcover, \$29.95.)

Baltimore’s own John Clark Mayden’s first collection of photographs feels like it is just the tip of the iceberg. It is not simply that the 101 beautifully presented black and white images leave you wanting more, but also because we learn so much about Mayden, the artist, through his photographs, and three insightful essays by his sister Ruth W. Mayden, Michael D. Harris, and curator Gabrielle Dean.

An athletic young man who attended now-defunct Northwestern High, Mayden pursued his undergraduate degree at Ohio Wesleyan University before returning home to attend University of Baltimore School of Law. From his older sister, Ruth, we learn that Mayden began advocating for social justice as a teenager, and he went on to serve as an attorney in the office of the Baltimore City Solicitor for over 30 years. His interest in photography, however, was sparked when he worked as an apprentice reporter for WMAR-TV in 1970.

Mayden’s portraits and street photography capture four decades of the magic and detail of everyday life in Baltimore that would likely be otherwise invisible to the readers of this very publication. The cover image, *Beauty* (1977), which some viewers may recognize from HBO’s adaptation of Ta-Nehisi Coates’ *Between the World and Me*, is just one example of Mayden’s striking portraiture (cover; 13). Here, Mayden captures a young woman waiting for a bus in the Reservoir Hill neighborhood, transforming the mundane act into a mesmerizing image. Bus riders and stoop sitters—the everyday people who inhabit this city—are among the subjects Mayden elevates with his camera lens.

Leading off with *Beauty* is not just a gimmick. The photographer seems to be preparing his viewers, many of whom will be white, to consider the lives and beauty of black

Baltimore, especially in neighborhoods and streets they might otherwise never travel. Beginning with over a dozen posed portraits, each of Mayden's images capture more than just an interesting character and gives the viewer insight into the artist himself. Each portrait serves as an invitation, welcoming the viewer to consider the subject's lived experience, their thoughts at the moment the shutter snaps, where they have been, or where they are going.

From portraits to street photography, the connecting line is the richness of the city and its people, and Mayden presents an urban landscape in stunning black and white that any painter might themselves be tempted to capture. *Family* (1972) shows a mother and her two children standing in their East Baltimore doorway, a familiar scene in a neighborhood that many white Baltimoreans might consider inhospitable or even unsafe (38). Yet Mayden uses his gentle view to welcome us in, documenting the way old Baltimore and the working poor pass their time and stay cool during the summer heat, where the front stoop and sidewalk become an annexed room from June through September.

With *Relaxin'* (1971) we travel to the backyards of the city (93). A man reclines on the sofa of a makeshift living room located in an overgrown backyard near the aptly-nomikered Highway to Nowhere, the abandoned attempt to connect Interstate 70 to West Baltimore. Here it is worth mentioning the conversational layout of *Baltimore Lives*, where many of the images seem to be in dialogue with those on the facing page, much like neighbors might chat from one stoop to the next. Indeed, juxtaposed with *Relaxin'*, an image of repose, we see a fishmonger engaged in the daily grind of livelihood, operating from a pushcart in *Hollywood Charm Center* (1970) (92).

While the lives and communities of many Baltimoreans are reflected in Mayden's work, it does not include everyone. It is not meant to. And yet, while we will not all see ourselves in these photographs, we will see our city, our neighbors, our friends. We see our past and our present. And we see our future, together, too.

Many of the excellent photographs taken at night will be featured in MCHC's upcoming exhibition, *Visions of Night: The Baltimore Nocturnes*, where they will be joined with work from our historic photograph collections as well as contemporary nocturnal shooters Sydney Allen, J. M. Giordano, and others.

Joe Tropea  
Maryland Center for History and Culture

*Remaking the Republic: Black Politics and the Creation of American Citizenship.* By Christopher James Bonner. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020. 272 pages. Illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, \$34.95.)

University of Maryland history professor Christopher James Bonner's well-researched first book could hardly be more timely. It deals with a crucial subject in contemporary events and recent historiography: the place of African Americans within the American state.

To get at this issue, Bonner follows a line of argument developed by a loosely formed group of antebellum African American activists who used the ambiguous legal nature of citizenship as a wedge to secure rights and political power for black Americans. Citizenship remained ambiguous on a national level before the 14th Amendment because it was not clearly defined anywhere in the Constitution.

Bonner notes that his book “seeks to specify the work black Americans did when they talked about citizenship and to examine the broadest possibilities of their protest for legal developments in the United States” (5). This approach “underlines the ways the law, which has so often been a tool to bind black people, also was used to create new possibilities for Americans’ lives” (8).

Addressing race and legal history this way brings to mind Johns Hopkins University professor Martha Jones’ recent volume, *Birthright Citizens: A History of Race and Rights in Antebellum America* (2018, reviewed in *Maryland Historical Magazine* 114.1, Spring/Summer 2019). But, while Jones focuses on how ordinary black people in Baltimore made use of (and were used by) the law, Bonner’s work focuses more on the national context established by a group of relatively elite political actors. Still, the two books do occasionally examine similar issues (e.g. the *Dred Scott v. Sandford* case) and contain overlapping characters, including Maryland’s Frederick Douglass, Martin Delany, and moral reformer William J. Watkins Sr.

Bonner’s first two chapters delineate African American notions of citizenship and political strategy formulated mostly in newspapers and at conventions. Often times the citizenship ideal was constructed in opposition to supporters of colonization and others who did not see a future for African Americans in the U.S. Proponents of citizenship saw it as a way of constructing space for African Americans within the polity. But black citizenship was often defined in different terms by different proponents, whether based on birth, patriotic contributions, physical toil, or some other criterion. A third chapter follows African American thinkers into Europe and the West Indies as they attempted to construct a more cosmopolitan notion of citizenship defined by shared ideals, including a commitment to equality, rather than just by territorial boundaries.

Bonner also argues that by breaking the law, African Americans contributed to its reshaping. His fourth chapter focuses on slave runaways and black vigilance committees that protected them against slavecatchers who often had the law on their side. These African Americans “framed personal security as a key aspect of citizenship” (95). Lawbreaking became even more necessary after passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 which made anyone who did not assist in the capture of runaways complicit.

The final chapters revisit the well-known events surrounding the 1857 *Dred Scott v. Sandford* Supreme Court case and the passage of the 14th and 15th Amendments during Reconstruction. Viewed in the context of the antebellum black politics described by Bonner, the Supreme Court’s repudiation of black citizenship and the 14th and 15th amendments’ support for it become the climax of a long discussion rather than, as is usually the case in the literature, the start of it.

Further, Bonner argues that the assertion of black citizenship was, at least in part, a result of the antebellum citizenship discourse constructed by African Americans. This is an original and striking argument that parallels an earlier generation's assertion that the end of slavery was the product of black agency. It remains to be seen, however, whether and to what extent members of the white power structure were aware of and influenced by black voices in the matter of citizenship. Yet, while work remains to be done, Bonner's contribution is impressive, not only in identifying and tracing the discourse of citizenship but in showing the extent to which African Americans were actively engaged as participants in formal and informal legal battles over their place in American society, as opposed to their more usual portrayal as passive victims.

In the end, the people that populate Bonner's book were not entirely radical or entirely triumphant. Rather than rejecting the legal system entirely, as William Lloyd Garrison did when he burned the Constitution, most were hopeful that the ambiguous notion of citizenship could be used to their advantage within the existing system while retaining a healthy skepticism based on centuries of oppression. Looking back on the gains and setbacks of Reconstruction, Bonner writes that these early black activists "recognized that the citizenship the government built was profoundly transformative and profoundly limited" (179).

Lawrence A. Peskin  
Morgan State University

*Unearthing St. Mary's City: Fifty Years of Archaeology at Maryland's First Capital.* Edited by Henry M. Miller and Travis Parno. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2020. 348 Pages. Illustrations, references, index. Hardcover, \$90.)

The story of Maryland's founding has not made its way into the public consciousness in quite the same way that the mythologies of Jamestown or Plymouth have, but in terms of what it can teach us about early colonial history, Maryland's first capital does not suffer by comparison to its better-known sister cities. Established in 1634, St. Mary's City was all but abandoned when the capital was moved to Annapolis in 1695, and vanished from view, if not entirely from memory, beneath plowed fields that remained largely undeveloped for the subsequent two hundred years.

The rural nature of St. Mary's and its relative geographic isolation helped to protect the archaeological remains of the abandoned town, until a grassroots effort by concerned citizens led to the appointment of a special committee, the Historic St. Mary's Commission (HSMC), in 1966. Since then, the HSMC has supported fifty years of innovative archaeological research and the longest-running archaeological field school in the United States at one of the most important early colonial sites in the country.

This book is a collection of essays detailing the history of St. Mary's City, the origins of the archaeology program, the challenges that led to the development of new

techniques in archaeological fieldwork and analysis, and how these analyses helped to shed light on a diverse range of sites.

The first section focuses on some of the methodological innovations pioneered by archaeologists at St. Mary's City. These essays are some of the most technical in the volume, and are likely to be useful primarily to archaeologists, although within the profession, the techniques discussed have a broad range of applicability. There is a detailed discussion on how to reverse-engineer earthfast structures, an enterprise that involves more carpentry and crawling around underneath houses than readers might imagine, and a discussion of soil chemical analysis as a tool for identifying features whose past uses might otherwise remain a mystery. The chapter on controlled surface collection as a supplement to shovel test surveys highlights the shortcomings of standard site identification techniques, particularly when the goal is to identify sites associated with historically disadvantaged groups, such as the poor, the enslaved, tenant farmers, or transient workers. That modern economic priorities continue to privilege the stories of the wealthy over those of the poor and disenfranchised is something all archaeologists should consider, since archaeology often shines brightest when it focuses on people whose only mark on history was left on the ground itself.

Silas Hurry provides an excellent discussion of ceramic analysis across multiple sites that remains grounded in an understanding that even the most quotidian artifacts can reveal much about human desires, hopes, and beliefs. This chapter, and George Miller's essay reflecting on his work on the ceramic assemblage from the Tabbs Purchase site, will be useful for anyone working with historic-period ceramics from North American sites. Miller not only highlights the utility of reevaluating artifact assemblages and our analyses of them, but also helpfully addresses a pervasive issue that will be very familiar to every historical archaeologist in the United States, if not to anyone else: the problem of creamware, pearlware, and whiteware, and whether these categories have any diagnostic significance, or if that blue tint in the pooled glaze of pieces of possible pearlware is, as he puts it, "a pigment of our imagination," distracting us from the far more diagnostically important characteristic of decoration (230).

The second section of the book focuses mainly on sites dating to the seventeenth century, but begins with a comprehensive overview of the 11,000 years of occupation by the Native American inhabitants of St. Mary's City, including those who met the immigrants in 1634. An examination of the St. John's site shows the ways that English and European traditions were adapted to the realities of colonial life. Those traditions and identities were not cast off entirely, however, as is shown in the chapter about Pope's Fort, the only known site in North America associated with the English Civil Wars.

Two chapters on the Calvert House site offer a comparison of seemingly opposite aspects of public life in early colonial America: law and order on the one hand; alcohol, gaming, and animal-baiting bloodsports on the other, highlighting the ways in which these disparate activities acted to bind the new colony's society together. The final chapter in this section focuses on three lead coffin burials associated with prominent colonists

at the first major brick building in Maryland, the Jesuit Chapel, as part of the first systematic study of seventeenth-century skeletons and burial practices in the Chesapeake.

The third and last section of the book takes the reader to the period after St Mary's City was abandoned, from the eighteenth century onward. Terry Brock explores the transition from slavery to freedom on the Brome plantation site, particularly the ways in which African Americans lived in and changed the plantation landscape, both to survive enslavement and to assert and define their freedom. The penultimate chapter takes us to St. Mary's Female Seminary, a "monument school" intended to commemorate the place of Maryland's founding. In a way, as Henry Miller and Travis Parno observe in their final chapter on the importance of archaeology as a means of exploring and preserving cultural memory, the school did ultimately end up realizing that hope.

*Unearthing St. Mary's City* is a thorough overview of five decades of groundbreaking archaeological research. That said, a keen interest in historical archaeology is more likely a prerequisite to reading this book, rather than an outcome of it. It is easy to imagine this collection appearing on reading lists for college courses in historical archaeology or on the bookshelves of historical archaeologists (I certainly intend to keep it on mine, and to consult it often). It is less easy to imagine a casual reader venturing into this volume for pleasure, although the book is not inaccessible to a broader audience. The introductory and concluding essays provide a detailed and engaging context for the more technical archaeological studies. People whose curiosity about the past is durable enough to withstand a healthy dose of archaeology vernacular will be rewarded with a deeper understanding of the pioneering work conducted at St. Mary's, and the contributions this influential program continues to make not just to our understanding of early colonial life, but to our ability to learn more from any archaeological endeavor.

Lisa Kraus  
Baltimore, Maryland

*Strange Fruit: Racism and Community Life in the Chesapeake—1850 to the Present.* By John R. Wennersten. (Washington, D.C.: New Academia Publishing, 2020. 240 pages. Illustrations, notes, index. Paperback \$24.00.)

In *Strange Fruit*, John Wennersten, a longtime professor of history at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) and the author of multiple works on the region, sets out "to trace the course of racism and society" in Somerset County "from 1850 to the present" (xi). He breaks his "microhistory" into ten chronologically organized chapters, beginning with a discussion of slavery and the Civil War and ending with an examination of the civil rights movement, the struggle for equality in higher education, and the current political, economic, and social status of black residents in the region. His effort to use the lens of local history to explore what he terms the underpinnings of race in



the United States is commendable. However, the result remains uneven, largely because he underutilizes recent scholarship and consults too few primary sources to give voice to ordinary African Americans.

When Wennersten makes use of local sources and recent scholarship, as he does in his chapter “The Black College Down the Road,” he demonstrates the value of local history. Indeed, by building on Ruth Ellen Wennersten’s and Carl Person’s work on UMES, as well as archival material and his own recollections, Wennersten contributes to our understanding and appreciation of the struggles that historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) encountered and the contributions they made to their communities. Like many other HBCUs, UMES had to overcome underfunding, opposition from local whites and prominent educators, most notably H. C. “Curly” Byrd, the influential president of the University of Maryland at College Park, whose main goal was to maintain racially unequal education in the state. As if that were not enough, it also had to fend off administrators at nearby Salisbury State (University), who sought to guard its turf, and deal with internal divisions among UMES students and administrators over the policies that the school should adopt to overcome these obstacles. As a result of its perseverance, bolstered by lawsuits filed by the NAACP and the lobbying efforts by black elected officials, UMES, which had only 875 full-time equivalent students as late as 1975, more than tripled in size over the next forty years and became a leading employer in the region.

In contrast, in two crucial chapters of the book, those on lynching and the civil rights movement, Wennersten barely draws on Sherrilyn Ifill’s pathbreaking study of lynchings in Princess Anne and Salisbury (2007), and fails to consult Joe Fitzgerald’s biography of Gloria Richardson (2018) or C. Fraser Smith’s, C. Christopher Brown’s or Charles Chavis’ recent research on civil rights, race, and lynchings in Maryland and the Eastern Shore. Moreover, he makes little use of black-owned newspapers, such as the *Afro-American*, or manuscript collections, including those of various Maryland governors. Instead, he presents a somewhat straightforward description of the lynchings of Matthew Williams and George Armwood, based largely on the contemporary coverage by the *Baltimore Sun* and *The New York Times*, and a brief discussion of student-led protests at UMES in 1963–1964 and attempts by local “moderates” to temper white backlash against them.

Wennersten’s chapter on the civil rights movement lacks geographic and temporal focus. Half of this twenty-page chapter, titled “Riots, Fire Hoses and Dogs,” examines developments in Cambridge, Maryland, located in Dorchester not Somerset County. At the time, the national media emphasized that these two Eastern Shore communities reacted quite differently to the arrival of Freedom Riders. Rather than investigate the source of these differences (or challenge this interpretation), Wennersten lumps the two places together. His coverage of the movement in both of these places jumps from demonstrations in 1963 and early 1964 to riots and white backlash in 1967, without discussing what transpired in the interceding years. Perhaps if Wennersten had taken as

a model John Ditmer's award-winning study of the civil rights movement in Mississippi, *Local People* (1995), or Kerry Pimblott's examination of the Black Freedom struggle in Cairo, Illinois, *Faith in Black Power* (2017), he could have achieved the intimacy that local history allows and which he champions in the opening pages of his book.

Finally, *Strange Fruit* could have benefited from a map of the region as well as charts or graphs depicting key demographic data—for instance, Somerset County's population has stagnated for over 150 years, testifying to damage that persistent racism can have—as well as some careful copy editing. To cite just one example of the latter, Wennersten asserts that H. Rap Brown first met Gloria Richardson, the leader of the civil rights movement, in Cambridge, Maryland, in 1967, shortly before Brown journeyed to Cambridge where he “called for violent resistance to the federal government which he called ‘The Fourth Reich’ and urged blacks to ‘carry on guerilla warfare in the cities that would make the Viet Cong look like Sunday school teachers.’” While Brown uttered a lot of fiery words in Cambridge on July 24, 1967, none of the transcripts of Brown's speech, all accessible online from the Maryland State Archives, include any of these words, nor are they included in the source he cites in the footnote for this passage. And, as Wennersten correctly observes elsewhere, Brown first met Richardson four years earlier in Cambridge when he joined Richardson there to protest against racism in the community, an experience that shaped the speech he actually delivered four years later.

Peter B. Levy  
York College

*Sailing to Freedom: Maritime Dimensions of the Underground Railroad.* Edited by Timothy D. Walker. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2021. 248 pages. Illustrations, notes, index. Hardcover \$90, paperback \$27.95.)

“It is almost an every day occurrence for our negro slaves to take passage [aboard a vessel] and go North,” complained a correspondent to the *Wilmington Journal*, a North Carolina newspaper, in October 1849. Escaping slavery by sea, the writer continued, is “an evil which is getting to be intolerable.” Yet Wilmington's busy harbor was not unique. Port towns from Savannah, Charleston, and New Bern to Baltimore, Portsmouth, and Norfolk witnessed sustained maritime fugitivity between the Revolution and the Civil War. Indeed, a sampling of one hundred accounts written by survivors of slavery prior to 1865 found that seven out of ten authors discussed the use of oceangoing vessels to make passage out of bondage.

In *Sailing to Freedom*, a new volume of essays, Timothy Walker and his contributors recover the hidden history of this ‘Saltwater Underground.’ Getting free this way was, they argue, risky and dangerous. Black dockworkers took their lives and liberty in their hands to assist fugitives. Black sailors risked extreme punishment if caught violating the terms of the Negro Seamen acts passed by southern legislatures begin-

ning in 1822. For their part, freedom seekers had to evade and outwit port inspectors. In South Carolina, a law passed in 1841 “stipulated that vessels owned in any proportion whatsoever by a citizen of New York could not depart Charleston before undergoing an inspection or search for runaway slaves or fleeing criminals” (45). In several ports, inspectors even habitually fumigated departing ships to literally smoke out black stowaways.

Despite these obstructions and deterrents, the Atlantic Coast provided a passage to liberty for a great swathe of freedom seekers, from Crispus Attucks, who sought work on a whaling ship after absconding from his Massachusetts master in 1750, to Harriet Jacobs, who made her escape by schooner from Edenton, North Carolina, in 1842. Contributors note that the black refugees who left New York for Nova Scotia with the British in 1783 went by ship, that similar things happened during the War of 1812, and that several major uprisings within the Domestic Slave Trade occurred onboard ships like the *Creole* (1841) and the *Pearl* (1848).

Even Frederick Douglass’s familiar journey to freedom had important maritime elements that have too long been overlooked. Growing up on the Chesapeake, Douglass had yearned to find passage aboard one of the “beautiful vessels, robed in purest white” that might “yet bear me into freedom.”<sup>1</sup> Indeed, his first, unsuccessful, attempt to escape slavery, made when he was just eighteen years old, consisted of a plan to paddle a large canoe up the Chesapeake Bay. Likewise, when he tried to escape slavery again, two years later, he donned the clothes of a sailor, as black mariners were typically permitted greater freedom of movement. Boarding a train in Baltimore, his journey northward required Douglass to make three river or estuary crossings by ferry as well as a steamboat passage between Wilmington and Philadelphia. When he arrived in New York City, he slept rough those first nights in freedom among some barrels near the docks, finding sanctuary among a community of black stevedores and longshoremen. From New York, he pressed onward, settling in New Bedford, Massachusetts. He chose New Bedford because he had heard that fugitives from slavery could get work on the wharves there and could blend in among the town’s surprisingly large free black community. Many other freedom seekers would do the same over the following years and, as we learn in this volume, an 1855 state census found that nearly 43 percent of New Bedford’s black community admitted to being born in a southern state.

*Sailing to Freedom* is the outgrowth of an NEH Landmarks in American History and Culture program that took place in New Bedford in 2011, 2013, and 2015. For that reason, perhaps, the ten essays it comprises all focus on the Atlantic Coast and upon the south-to-north coastwise traffic that brought freedom seekers out of the nation’s easternmost slave states. In two early chapters, Michael D. Thompson and David S. Cecelski look at the varied means by which enslaved waterfront laborers escaped by sea from Charleston and the Carolina Low Country. Cassandra Newby-Alexander and

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1. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave. Written by Himself* (Boston: Published at the Anti-Slavery Office, 1845), 64–65.

Cheryl Janifer LaRoche do the same for Hampton Roads, Norfolk, Baltimore, and the rest of the Chesapeake Bay. Mirelle Luecke transports readers to New York City, which was an important waypoint for fugitives like Douglass arriving from the South. Elysa Engelman, Kathryn Grover, and Len Travers then carry the story northwards, examining the experiences of maritime fugitives arriving in New England's coastal towns, notably Mystic, Connecticut, and New Bedford itself. In a final chapter, Megan Jeffreys introduces readers to the Freedom on the Move project at Cornell University, a major initiative to collect, present, and analyze extant runaway slave advertisements, and reflects briefly on the evidence of seaborne escapes held within that expanding digital database.

For all its vitality and originality, this collection's organization sometimes undermines its impact. Coverage of the Atlantic Coast is so thorough that contributors frequently step on each other's toes, repeating one another. At the same time, *Sailing to Freedom* has nothing to say about inland waterways or riverine routes such as the Mississippi or the Ohio. It leaves out Florida, the Gulf Coast, New Orleans, and the Caribbean Sea entirely. Walker acknowledges these lacunae in his well-written and useful introduction, but a more expansive geography would nonetheless have made for a richer, fuller accounting of maritime fugitivity.

Such structural criticism aside, *Sailing to Freedom's* result is a welcome contribution to the history of the freedom struggle that makes the persuasive claim that "escape by sea must be seen as a significant, indispensable component of the Underground Railroad story" (5). Indeed, given the claims advanced here, readers may be left to ponder why we continue to refer to the network to freedom as the Underground Railroad at all.

Richard Bell  
University of Maryland

*Fur, Fashion and Transatlantic Trade during the Seventeenth Century: Chesapeake Bay Native Hunters, Colonial Rivalries and London Merchants.* By John C. Appleby. (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK, and Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 2021. 294 pages. Appendix, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$115.00.)

As any historian will say, nothing is ever created in a vacuum. John C. Appleby seems to be intimately familiar with this phrase in his research and writing of *Fur, Fashion and Transatlantic Trade during the Seventeenth Century*. His book provides a comprehensive approach to analyzing the fur trade and its significance to the first colonial settlements in North America, Indigenous peoples, and international trade during the early years of the United States of America. He regards this trade network with a wide lens, using economic, environmental, geopolitical, and material approaches to examine the effects of the "apparently abundant but ultimately diminishing" resource on the human and material culture of seventeenth-century Europe and its colonies

(7). From the initial hunting to the processing, trading, shipping, manufacturing, and selling of beaver skins into fine fur hats, Appleby explores every stage of the production of this titular commodity.

As an accomplished maritime historian, Appleby charts the development of transatlantic trade through the ever-changing economy of fur. Beginning with an explanation of the eminence of the beaver fur hat, court politics, and changing tastes in fashions throughout the seventeenth century, Appleby sets the scene for the demand for fur in England and across the continent. The demand was so great that fur traders had hunted the beaver to near extinction in Europe. As a result, European adventurers decided to test the waters in this trade overseas. The Chesapeake Bay area was a fertile land brimming with wildlife, making it a breeding ground not only for beavers but for trade, agriculture, and, subsequently, violence.

Quintessential to Appleby's narrative is the ways in which global and cross-cultural relations shaped the emerging and volatile trade in fur. Not only did the English colonists have to compete with other traders and settlers from France, Sweden, and the Netherlands but the colonies of Maryland and Virginia continually challenged one another for access and domain over trading territories and partners. Because the newcomers relied on native hunters to supply them with fur, the exploitation of Indigenous peoples of the Chesapeake Bay became the key to unlocking this trade in the colonies of Maryland and Virginia. The author names the many Indigenous groups who were active players in the fur trade, including the Susquehannock, Iroquois, Lenape, and the Saponi peoples. According to Appleby, Native rivalries and in-fighting, often caused by the increasing demand for European commodities such as glass, copper, and most significantly, guns and alcohol, are important threads to the tapestry of the fur trade. The weapons the European colonizers exchanged with Indigenous peoples for furs often ended up being used against them, fostering distrust and resentment between the two groups.

Appleby is not alone in his probes into the uniqueness of fur as both a commodity and a driving force for colonization during this time, though the scale of his interrogation is impressive. Dr. Amélie Allard has also recently written about the cross-cultural relationships that forged the fur trade, as well as other facets of eighteenth-century colonial trade, which directly follows Appleby's period of interest. She has recently asserted that "traditional fur trade studies could probably serve as the poster child for propagating colonialist models of acculturation and the inevitability of colonialism," a criticism that could be applied to this text.<sup>2</sup>

Occasionally throughout the text, Appleby's focus on maritime history and economics seems to outshine the importance of fur and fashion, which often take a back seat to contemplations on trade and politics. Fashion is almost completely

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2. Amélie Allard, "Relationships and the Creation of Colonial Landscapes in the Eighteenth-Century Fur Trade," *American Indian Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (2020): 149–70, doi.org/10.5250/amerindiquar.44.2.0149.

relegated to the first and last chapters of the book rather than being harmoniously woven throughout the text as an active player in the economy of the seventeenth century. While the chapters are organized chronologically, the full story is not told from beginning to end. Often, the narrative begins at the end of a decade before making its way back to the beginning. With such a broad scope focusing on the entirety of the trade network, it was likely nearly impossible to tell the straightforward story unfolding across the century.

Any weaknesses present are balanced by the unique connections the author makes between seemingly disparate histories. Included in the historical information so densely packed within these pages is a refreshing take on the impact of the English Civil Wars on early colonial America, specifically in the ways it limited the colonies' access to commodities needed both for survival and trade with native communities. Archaeological evidence is a large part of the historiography of the North American fur trade, but Appleby relies solely on documentary and archival evidence in his research, albeit utilizing a wide range of sources. Meticulously researched, the primary sources featured within include personal, financial, and legal documents: letters and journals, sumptuary laws and other edicts, wills and inventories, and even portraits and plays come together to paint a comprehensive picture of the fur trade. This text would be a useful resource for anyone interested in colonial trade and seventeenth-century high fashion as it provides invaluable information on the material, economic, and political implications of fur as a commodity.

Vivien L. Barnett  
Maryland Center for History and Culture

*Baltimore Civil Rights Leader Victorine Q. Adams: The Power of the Ballot.* By Ida E. Jones. (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2019. 173 pages. Photographs, timeline, notes, bibliography, index. Paperback, \$21.99.)

Baltimore's African American women consistently played a critical role in the political sphere of their city and state during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These women were on the front lines defending their rights to full citizenship in a climate of racist and sexist inequality. They agitated for fairness, equality, and inclusion in a country that did not embrace the promise of equality and political power. It was women like Victorine Quille Adams who took on this crusade during their lifetimes to eradicate these barriers. In the biography, *Baltimore Civil Rights Leader Victorine Q. Adams: The Power of the Ballot*, Ida E. Jones examines the life of Victorine Quille Adams and her paths toward changing the social, economic, and political landscape of Baltimore's African American community. Jones summarizes Adams' life into five chapters, each chapter detailing how this native Baltimorean and pioneer in Baltimore's African American politics advocated for women's rights, equality, and political power during the twentieth century.

In 1912, Adams was born in Baltimore to working class parents. Her childhood was steeped in segregation, inequality, and unfairness. It was her humble beginnings and the political climate of her youth that laid the foundation for her life's work. Jones delves deeply into Adams' modest family structure, illustrating how these early developments shaped her interests in becoming an educator, a political activist and a powerhouse in Baltimore's political circles. In the first chapter, "Ever So Humble, the Quille Home," Jones examines the beginnings of Adams' trajectory into the powerful segregated political circles of Baltimore. She grew up in an era of deep racial divide where "uplift and electoral politics" were tools used by activists to support and engage African American communities. Jones spends time reconstructing the religious life of Adams and establishes how her roots in Catholicism in the African American community were a conduit for her future accomplishments. Jones notes that the influence of St. Peter Claver Church instilled in Adams "a servant's heart that resulted in a career in education and politics." Jones mentions in this work the impact of the Catholic Church on the African American community and their experiences with segregation in the Catholic Church community, which led to the establishment of separate African American Catholic churches. The St. Peter Claver Church in Baltimore was once the largest black Catholic Church in the country and the Oblate Sisters of Providence established the first institution of education to teach African American girls.

Education was extremely important to Adams' success. She saw education as a catalyst for change in her community. Adams was educated at African American schools in segregated Baltimore. After earning her BS degree in education from Morgan State College in 1940, she taught for fourteen years in the segregated schools of Baltimore prior to entering the realm of policymaking. Steeped in a religious faith of fairness, equality, and activism, Adams stayed true to her mission of uplifting those who were marginalized. She focused mainly on African American women by teaching and empowering them to vote and to become politically active in order to change their lives. Adams' political aim was to dismantle discrimination and racism in her beloved city. As a civil rights activist, she grappled with the issues of biases and disparity as she advocated for inclusion in a society that was intolerant of fairness and equality for all. Jones illustrates in this work how Adams committed herself to making a difference in the lives of many by supporting better education for students, better jobs for the community, and better political choices. These avenues would improve the lifestyle of the underprivileged and increase their political voice in the body politic of the city.

In the second chapter, "To Have and to Hold: In Love, Work and Play for the Race," Jones highlights Adams' early relationship with William "Little Willie" Adams. She demonstrates how her marriage to Adams allowed them acceptance into Baltimore's African American elite class. Jones explains that "their love affair was one of mutual pride and socioeconomic justice." Their union made them one of the most influential economic and political powerbrokers in Baltimore's African America community. Jones pointedly discusses the illegal and legal businesses of William "Little Willie" Adams and

how his wife remained publicly in his shadow despite her activism and political positions within Maryland and Baltimore politics. To complete the narrative, Jones writes about other important Baltimoreans in Adams' life and how their actions helped to shape her civil rights engagements.

This study chronicles further the many milestones of Adams' life, from joining the National Council of Negro Women's Baltimore section to the founding of the Colored Women's Democratic Campaign Committee. These organizations were established to educate African American women about voting and the power of the voting box. She mobilized and directed a "Register to Vote" campaign that registered thousands of new voters. They were able to assemble, support, and elect the Republican Mayor, Theodore R. McKeldin. They also elected Harry A. Cole, a Republican, African American lawyer who won a state Senate seat over a white Democratic candidate, Jack Pollack. Cole became the first African American elected to the Maryland General Assembly and, in later years, the first jurist elected to the Maryland Court of Appeals.

As a businesswoman, Adams was the only African American who co-owned and operated a clothing store for African American women in Baltimore. She opened Charm Center in 1948 to counter the policy of major department stores not to allow African Americans to try on clothes. As an "uplift" strategy, Adams' business offered women training on how to improve their charm, poise, and appearance. Jones surveys the importance of Adams' work as a "club woman" who with her cofounder, Ethel P. Rich, founded Woman Power Incorporated, which mobilized African American women for "political action/power, community involvement and educational commitment." Men were allowed to join the Woman Power's affiliate, Minute Men, which had such notable members as Carl Murphy, the Baltimore *Afro-American* newspaper publisher, and insurance owner and Masonic official Willard W. Allen. Jones outlines Adams' achievements: according to her, the two professions for African American women that made a difference in the community were teaching and social work. Members of these professions were the community's crusaders for equality and as a former educator, Adams was one of the top crusaders for justice.

While Adams was the first African American member of Baltimore's City Council and a member of the Maryland House of Delegates, her intent was always to ameliorate the conditions for all her constituents. However, Adams considered her most important work the establishment of the Baltimore Fuel Fund in partnership with the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company. This was a model program that assisted low-income families with their winter utility bills while keeping them safe from freezing temperatures. Her concern for families struggling during the winter months lead her to create this important venture. So successful was this partnership that it became a model for other jurisdictions in Maryland and across the United States. The fund was later renamed the Victorine Q. Adams Fuel Fund and, in later years, the Maryland Fuel Fund, which exists to this day.



Jones' work is important for anyone interested in knowing more about the life and work of Victorine Q. Adams as a mover and shaker in Baltimore's politics and her work in empowering women to enter politics. Most importantly, this book provides an in-depth narrative of Adams' life and how her humble beginnings and her marriage to William "Little Willie" Adams paved the way for her remarkable life. Her story will appeal to anyone interested in African American women's history, politics, and the civil rights movement in Baltimore.

Vivian Fisher  
Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore



# Maryland History and Culture Bibliography, 2020: A Selected List

ANNE S. K. TURKOS AND ELIZABETH CARINGOLA, COMPILERS

From 1975 on, the *Maryland Historical Magazine* has published regular compilations of books, articles, and doctoral dissertations relating to Maryland history and culture. The following list includes materials published during 2020, as well as earlier works that have been brought to our attention.

Bibliographers must live with the fact that their work is never finished. Please notify us of any significant omissions so that they may be included in the next list. Send additional items to:

Anne S. K. Turkos  
Special Collections and University Archives  
3210K Hornbake Library  
4130 Campus Drive  
University of Maryland  
College Park, MD 20742  
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Previous years' installments of the Maryland History and Culture Bibliography are now searchable online. Please visit [digital.lib.umd.edu/mdhc](http://digital.lib.umd.edu/mdhc) for more information about this database and to search for older titles on Maryland history and culture.

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