BULLETIN

OF

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CECIL COUNTY

| No. 3 | Brick Meeting-House, Maryland | May 21, 1956 |

JANUARY 1956 MEETING

Despite the inclement weather which had prevailed during the day, the attendance at the Society's winter meeting on the evening of January 30th taxed the capacity of Odd Fellows Hall in Elkton. The incoming President, William T. Mahoney, presided. After a turkey dinner served by the ladies of Rebekah Lodge, Mrs. Henry S. Young presented James W. Foster, Director of the Maryland Historical Society, as the speaker. His topic was "History is Big Business".

Mr. Foster commented on the interest which has been awakened recently in Maryland history by citing the fact that the number of county historical societies has increased from six in 1933 (of which Cecil was one) to sixteen at the present time. He spoke in complimentary terms of our home in the Cecil County Library and emphasized the many opportunities for historical research which this county offers.

Frank W. Krastel, President of the Old Bohemia Historical Society, was introduced and told of the progress being made in the restoration and preservation of Old Bohemia Catholic Church at Warwick. On behalf of the Friends of Rodgers Tavern, Morton F. Taylor, its chairman, spoke optimistically of the plans of the group organized to acquire and restore this historic landmark in Perryville. Fletcher P. Williams reported that he expected very shortly to obtain possession of the old covered bridge at Gilpin's Rocks, the only remaining one of its kind in the county.

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FIRST ROUND-TABLE

The first round-table discussion sponsored by the Society was conducted in the Conference Room of the County Library on Monday evening, April 16th, when a group representing various sections of the county assembled to explore the origin or meaning of Cecil County place names. Much interesting information on this theme was elicited and the results were deemed sufficiently valuable to warrant a similar discussion at a future date which will be announced in the local papers. The subject for consideration at that time will be the old factories and mills of the county.

MEMBERSHIP INCREASE

The Society's progress toward a larger enrollment has been accelerated by the addition of fifty-four new members since January 1, 1956. Greetings are extended to:

Mr. and Mrs. John Abel
Mrs. Richard E. Anderson
Mr. Thomas Beers
Mr. Burton D. Bishop
Miss Frances M. Cleaves
Mr. and Mrs. Harold C. Cobb
Mr. Bradford Corry
Mrs. A. Victor Davis
Mrs. C. W. Dickerson
Mr. and Mrs. Wm. F. Donigan
Mrs. Eugene England
Mr. and Mrs. Harold England
Miss Lillie E. England
Mr. and Mrs. Cecil E. Ewing
Mr. Jay O. Ewing
Miss Peggy Finger
Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Founds
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Harding
Miss Bessie C. Hartnett
Mr. John H. Hessey
Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Krastel
Mrs. Sara H. Levering
Mrs. Bayard S. Lindell

Mrs. J. Cavender Loraine
Mr. Ephraim P. Lowe
Mrs. Mary McCauley
Mrs. David McDowell
Mrs. John H. Minster
Miss Harriett C. Owens
Mrs. Marian C. Parks
Miss Marjorie Phillips
Mrs. W. Henry Pippin
Mr. Edward Plumstead
Mrs. Grace Wells Price
Mr. James D. Quinn
Mr. and Mrs. Chester Reed
Mr. Gus Sclavos
Mr. Edward H. Seneff II
Mrs. Gladys N. Smith
Mr. Avery S. Stitchberry
Miss M. Lenore Taylor
Col. Cecil E. Watts
Mr. Edward Watts
Mr. Milton Waxman
Mr. Roger B. Williams

We record with regret the loss which the Society has suffered by the deaths of Mr. Alfred C. Bohn in November 1955 and of Mr. Garrett A. Allender on February 20, 1956.

MARTENET'S MAP

Lasting gratitude is expressed to all those members and friends who have aided by their generous contributions in the establishment of a historical collection for our Society. Among the gifts so received, especially noteworthy is a large framed map of Cecil County which has been presented by Mr. James B. Eliason, of Wilmington, Delaware.

This map was copyrighted in 1858 by Simon J. Martenet, of 6 South Street, Baltimore, after it had been examined and approved by a committee consisting of Hon. Alexander Evans, U.S. congressman, James McCauley, Esq., chief judge of the Orphans' Court, and Palmer C. Ricketts, Esq., editor of the Cecil Whig.

It is approximately four feet square and is drawn to a scale of 1-1/2 inches to the mile. The nine election districts of the county are shown in colors and the name of each property owner with his place of residence is marked. Also shown are the 27 post offices existent in 1858, all schools, churches, hotels, and business establishments.

This excellent piece of cartography hangs on the east wall of the Howard Room.

HOW NAMES ORIGINATE

Frenchtown was the terminus of the railroad from New Castle to the point on Elk River where passengers transferred to and from the Baltimore packets. It was originally known as la Ville francaise (the French village) because a settlement was made there by a group of French Acadians who had been banished from their homes in Nova Scotia in 1755. Another band of these exiles settled on the Sassafras River near Fredericktown.

When the Wilmington & Susquehanna Railroad was being constructed in the county in 1833 a number of Germans were employed in the vicinity of North East and were encamped north of the town on the road to Mechanics Valley. The location was called "Dutchtown" and the railroad crossing at that place was referred to as "Dutchtown Crossing".

HIGHWAY MARKER HINTS ROMANCE

The State Roads Commission has recently installed a replacement of the historical marker at Blue Ball. It bears the following inscription:

BLUE BALL TAVERN

ESTABLISHED ABOUT 1710 ON LOT 35 OF THE NOTTINGHAM LOTS BY ANDREW JOB, WHO SECURED IT FROM WILLIAM PENN. JOB'S SON, THOMAS, MARRIED ELIZABETH MAXWELL, NIECE OF DANIEL DEFOE, WHO WROTE "ROBINSON CRUSOE".

Andrew Job's tavern at Blue Ball was the first one established in that region for the accommodation of man and beast making the long and arduous journey across the northern edge of Cecil County. It was midway between Baltimore and Philadelphia, and being at the junction of the Lancaster County and Nottingham roads which were the great thorofares between those places, the Blue Ball Tavern was well patronized and for a long time was one of the most celebrated hotels in the county.

The terse inscription on this marker conceals a dramatic story. Elizabeth Maxwell's mother was a sister of Daniel DeFoe. At the age of 18 Elizabeth contracted a matrimonial engagement which was broken off by her mother. Goaded by this frustration, the young girl left her parental roof and secretly embarked for America. As she was without money, she bargained with the ship's captain to be sold into voluntary servitude upon her arrival in this country in order to pay for her passage.

She was accordingly offered for sale in Philadelphia in the autumn of 1718 and was purchased by Andrew Job, of Cecil County, to whom she was indentured for a term of seven years. In 1725 she was married to her master's son, Thomas Vernon, and lived happily ever afterward.

CECIL COUNTY ALMANAC

In the early days of our country almanacs were a popular form of literature and before the advent of newspapers they were the only means of conveying information to many people. The best known of American almanacs was "Poor Richard's", which was established by Benjamin Franklin in 1732. The Hagerstown Almanack has been published since 1797 and is a perennial favorite in Maryland.

Herewith is presented the beginning of a Cecil County Almanac in which are chronicled important events in the county's history.

MAY   5TH MONTH

1. Col. Nathaniel Ramsay born in Lancaster County, Pa., 1741.
2. Methodist Protestant Church at New Leeds incorporated, 1863.
3. Perryville incorporated by Act of the General Assembly, 1882.
4. DeKalb's army embarked at Head of Elk for the Carolinas, 1780.
5. Elkton Banking and Trust Company began business, 1913.
6. Fredericktown sacked and burned by British marauders, 1813.
7. George Fox, Quaker, swam his horse across Bohemia River, 1672.
8. General Thomas Marsh Foreman died at Rose Hill, 1845.
9. David Davis, U.S. Supreme Court justice, born at Warwick, 1815.
10. First county fair inaugurated at Charlestown, 1744.
11. Cornerstone of new court-house in Elkton laid, 1939.
12. The Cecil Republican started publication in Elkton, 1832.
13. First postcards issued by Postmaster-General Creswell, 1873.
14. George Washington "dind and lodgd" at Worsell Manor, 1773.
15. George Johnston, historian, born in Philadelphia, 1829.
16. 33,000 shad caught in one haul at Bull's Mountain, 1822.
17. Governor Austin L. Crothers born near Conowingo, 1860.
18. John White established X-Keys Tavern at Brick Meeting-House, 1717.
19. John Mears serving as postmaster at St. Augustine, 1841
20. County population of 18,939 disclosed by census, 1850.
21. H.S.C.C. held spring meeting at Calvert High School, 1956.
22. Quakers fined for refusing to do military service, 1777.
23. William Dare appointed High-Sheriff of Cecil County, 1684.
24. "Geoffarison", a tract of 5743 acres, patented to John Copson, 1724.
25. First passenger train on B&O Railroad crossed county, 1886.
26. Covered bridge at Wilna swept away by a flood, 1898.
27. New firehouse of Singerly Company in Elkton dedicated, 1950.
28. First class graduated by North East High School, 1901.
29. First class graduated by Cecil County High School, 1897.
30. Memorial to Revolutionary soldiers unveiled at Brick M-H, 1929.
31. Rev. William Duke, principal Elkton Academy, died, 1840.