

# Bulletin

OF

## THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CECIL COUNTY

No. 34

Gunter's Harbor, Maryland

May 19, 1969

### 1969 WINTER MEETING

The Society's 1969 winter meeting was held in the newly constructed Assembly Hall of the American Legion Home on Partridge Hill in Elkton on Saturday afternoon, January 25th. Mr. Alfred T. Scarborough pronounced the invocation and the ladies of the American Legion Auxiliary served a delectable luncheon to the 119 members and guests who were present.

Following the luncheon, a short business session was conducted by the President, Mrs. Robinson. Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting was dispensed with, and the Treasurer, Mr. Bouchelle, reported a cash balance on hand of \$1,507.78. The Curator, Mr. Taylor, gave a report on 31 accessions received by the Society since his appointment to that office in October 1968.

The Secretary, Miss England, announced the names of the following nominees who had been elected to membership since the preceding meeting:

Mr. Lawrence Beers  
Mr. Francis L. Keene  
Miss Isabelle C. Lynch

Mrs. J. Wirt Lynch  
Mr. Robert E. Quinlan  
Mr. Harry L. White

A program entitled "JANUARY IN CECIL COUNTY" was presented by various members of the Society with Mrs. Robinson acting as moderator. This program was based on a historical calendar of notable events occurring in Cecil County during the month of January and consisted of three-minute talks on the subjects recorded in the calendar. The following members participated in the program in person or by proxy:

Miss Eula Lee Bartlett  
Miss Ruth C. Bartlett  
Mr. Lawrence Beers  
Miss Mary K. Beers  
Mrs. Harry Clark Boden  
Mrs. Cecil E. Ewing  
Miss Alverda Ferguson  
Mrs. F. Rodney Frazer  
Mr. Joseph R. Grant

Miss Miriam J. Jeffers  
Mrs. Dorothy W. Jefferson  
Miss Clara Liddell  
Mrs. Guy C. Rogers  
Mr. A. T. Scarborough  
Miss Dorothy J. Story  
Miss Caroline W. Stump  
Mr. Morton F. Taylor

Many interesting facts concerning Cecil County history were related and the participants agreed to make their research papers a part of the Society's archives. An exhibit of pictures, books, etc. connected with the talks was displayed at the rear of the hall.

## HISTORIC MARKERS ERECTED

At the request of our Historic Markers Committee, of which Mr. Francis W. Krastel is Chairman, the Maryland Historical Society has recently had two historic roadside markers erected, both in the 7th District of Cecil County.

The first marker was placed in Rock Run at the north end of Port Deposit's Main Street. It marks an ancient mill which is now owned by Mr. Ronald Tome. Its text reads:

ROCK RUN MILL, BUILT CIRCA 1725  
BUILT BY JOHN STEEL, THIS GRIST MILL WAS  
IN SUCCESSFUL OPERATION AS EARLY AS 1731.  
AT THE SAME PERIOD A FERRY WAS OPERATED  
ABOUT ONE HALF MILE DOWNSTREAM AT A CROSS-  
ING KNOWN AS UPPER FERRY.

Maryland Historical Society

The second marker is located on Dr. Jack road, approximately one-quarter of a mile from its intersection with the Jacob Tome Memorial Highway at Battle Swamp. It marks the site of a former chapel and its abandoned graveyard which otherwise would soon be lost in the mists of oblivion. For many years a one-room public school known as the Chapel School, which is now a dwelling, was conducted on or near this site and evidently took its name from the location. The text of this marker follows:

SITE OF CHAPEL-OF-EASE  
TO ST. MARY ANNE'S CHURCH, NORTH ELK PARISH,  
NORTH EAST, MARYLAND, BUILT IN 1733. THE OLD-  
EST REMAINING GRAVESTONE IN 1968 RECORDS THE  
DEATH OF THOMAS SHEPHERD AUGUST 28, 1742.

Our sincere thanks are hereby expressed to the Maryland Historical Society, to Mr. Krastel, and to Mr. John J. Ward, a member of this Society and former maintenance engineer with the State Roads Commission, who along with his staff performed the work involved in erecting the markers, and to Mr. Allen Jack who granted permission to have the second marker erected on his property.

## MARSHBANK TABLE ACQUIRED

A walnut extension dining table with three leaves has recently been purchased by this Society. Made by Robert Marshbank during the mid-1800's, it bears the original label of its maker. Mr. Marshbank, an Elkton citizen for over 50 years, was a noted cabinetmaker, furniture dealer and undertaker. He came to Elkton in 1843 and the next year opened a furniture store which he conducted in connection with the undertaking business. His establishment was located on the west side of Bow Street north of Cathedral.

Mr. Marshbank was born on Christmas Day 1821 in Chester County, Pa. His father died when Robert was seven, and he was bound out to a farmer with whom he remained until he was 16 years old. He then went to Baltimore and learned the cabinetmaker's trade.

During the more than half a century Mr. Marshbank lived in Elkton he witnessed many changes in the County: the days prior to the Civil War, the perils of civil strife, the business depression that followed the war, and finally the return to prosperity. He died July 11, 1897.

## THE HOLT COLLECTION

Last December the Society received from Mr. Joseph Holt, of Van Nuys, California, four large cartons of material pertaining to Cecil County history. The material had been collected over a period of many years by his father, the late J. Frank Holt, a Cecil County native and a member of this Society. Born on a farm near Union Church, the elder Holt had planned to publish a history of Cecil County and had enlisted the aid of Miss Mollie Howard Ash, one of the Society's incorporators and a professional genealogist.

The collection contains the manuscript of his history, as well as a wealth of other historical data which he had used as source material. Most of it is mounted and filed in loose-leaf binders. Included is an abundance of clippings from County newspapers, pamphlets, photos, booklets, correspondence, and a considerable amount of information on old families of Cecil County.

The donor is a former member of the U. S. House of Representatives, in which he represented the 22nd California District for four two-year terms. The Society hereby records its gratitude to Mr. Holt for an invaluable gift and one which has given the Society a tremendous boost in building up its archives.

## OTHER RECENT ACCESSIONS

These include a genealogy of the Ward, Veazey, and other First District families, from Mrs. Harry Clark Boden (this work contains records copied from Governor Thomas Ward Veazey's Bible which Mrs. Boden had located in a midwestern book store and tried unsuccessfully to purchase); a biography of Robert S. Brookings (a Cecil County native and founder of the Brookings Institute in Washington, D. C.), from Miss Leila R. Thompson; an autographed copy of a history of Harford County ("Harford Heritage"), from the author, C. Milton Wright; a history of the Wherry family, from Mrs. Leslie Roberts; the donor's diploma from Union Hospital School of Nursing and two children's books, from Miss Mary K. Beers; an egg carrier from Gonce's store, from F. Rodney Frazer; political buttons from Ernest A. Howard, Michael J. Dixon, and Mrs. Marie Bruner; a political poster, from Mrs. Dorothy W. Jefferson; a donkey statuette and a cane carried in a victory parade following President Taft's election in 1908; from Alfred T. Scarborough; a Directory of Members and ancestors published by the Maryland Society, DAR, from the Capt. Jeremiah Baker Chapter; a collection of political folders, pamphlets, booklets, banners and buttons, from Mrs. A. H. Haroldson; a dressmaker's form, from Mrs. Howard Mutschler; a Maffitt family genealogy, from Joseph Burris; six stage coach tickets, from Mrs. Melissa Mackey; six bound volumes of the Cecil Democrat newspaper, from James A. Jackson; an 1851 marriage certificate, from Willard A. Thompson; two Sunday School leaflets and five essays written at West Amwell school, from William Spry; a Michael family genealogy, from Edward R. Michaels; eight copies of "The Genealogist's Post," from Mrs. Mary DeV. Dunn; genealogies of the Owens, Benjamin, Little, Gale, Jackson, Craig, Lynch,

McNeilly and Mann families, from Mrs. Carmen F. DeMar; three old valentines, a political button and comb, and the donor's World War Army II Army blouse, from Norman Bursler; three maps from Ridgley E. Simpers; and a songbook memento of Woodlawn Camp's 40th anniversary, from Mrs. Clarence W. Brown.

The Society here records its thanks and appreciation to each of these donors for their valuable gifts.

### RESTORATION OF INDIAN QUEEN TAVERN

In 1961 the Maryland Historical Trust was created by the State of Maryland "for the purpose of preserving and maintaining historical, aesthetic, and cultural properties, buildings and furnishings — pertaining in any way to the Province and State of Maryland from earliest times, to encourage others to do so, and to promote interest in and study of such matters."

The Trust was informed on October 1, 1966, that the Indian Queen Tavern, dating from Charlestown's heyday as a rival port of Baltimore, was about to be demolished. Lying on the Old Post Road, a main north-south thoroughfare of the 18th century, Charlestown entertained many important travelers, among whom was George Washington, who recorded at least three stops there. The property at the Indian Queen includes not only a house worthy of mention in Dr. H. C. Forman's book, "Manor and Plantation Houses", but also a number of interesting outbuildings.

After careful study and evaluation, the Trust secured approval from the Maryland Board of Public Works to buy the property and make the initial restoration. Upon its completion the Indian Queen will probably be resold with protective covenants to a responsible buyer and the amount received will be returned to the Trust's revolving fund, thus preserving the State's outlay for use in other similar projects.

In this connection, our Society owns a license issued under date of April 22, 1782 to one Robert McMullen to keep an "ordinary" at Charlestown. This may very well have been for the Indian Queen. Our Curator was gratified to be able to furnish the Maryland Historical Trust with a copy of this license and additional information for use in this project.

### IN MEMORIAM

The deaths of the following members of this Society are recorded with regret:

Harvey C. Bounds - January 16, 1969  
 Aaron L. Reynolds - January 18, 1969  
 Aldridge B. Craig - January 21, 1969  
 J. Mercer Terrell - April 19, 1969

In accordance with the Society's custom, an appropriate book has been placed in the Cecil County Public Library in memory of each of these departed members.

### WHO WAS THE OLD WATCHMAKER

Folger McKinsey, better known as the "Bentztown Bard", was born in Elkton on August 29, 1866. The scenes of his childhood remained indelibly impressed upon his mind throughout his life, and he made frequent references to them in the daily column he wrote for the BALTIMORE SUN from 1906 to 1948.

In one of his columns Mr. McKinsey drew on his memory for the following description of an old resident of Elkton:

His workshop was in his home along Main Street in the old town — a square frame house of plain architecture which was set well back on an old lawn and shaded with oaks and maples. That workshop was right up against the front window, for the old watchmaker was near sighted and needed plenty of light, and always when you went in to take something to be repaired or to see if the watch you left the other day had been finished, he would look up at you with that funny little barrel-like glass in his one eye and mumble something about being ready tomorrow.

There were dozens of old clocks on the walls, all of them ticking away at a furious rate, and a big frame full of watches of all kinds on the wall next to the parrot's cage. Such watches! Some of them silver, some of gold; some of them small, and some of them as big around as old man Lieberman's stomach.

On his work table were little wooden trays with all sorts of parts for watches in the several compartments — tiny little wheels, big wheels, springs, screws, little pivots and ratchets and land knows what else — all having something to do with the mending of watches. The music the clocks on the wall made was wonderful and mysterious, some of them ticking loud and raucous, some of them plaintive and sweet; and the music, too, was varied when they struck.

The old watchmaker's hair was white as snow and his skin as rosy as a girl's pink cheeks, and his fingers were long and thin and so deft that he could pick up a tiny little rivet with them and put it just where it belonged in a watch.

### GENEALOGICAL DATA WANTED

From time to time this Society receives from persons living in distant states requests for information concerning their ancestors who may have been natives or former residents of Cecil County. In most of these cases where it is possible to be of assistance the information is acknowledged with appreciation; in other cases it is not. There are more requests for genealogical data than for information on any other subject, and this presents a field in which the Society may render service. Some progress has been made to date in accumulating such data, but a great deal more remains to be done. The Society should take advantage of this opportunity if it wishes to justify its existence and be of service to the public. We feel that if the Society entertains any desire to fulfill its obligation it behooves our members to do more than listen to an illustrated talk three times a year.

## CECIL COUNTY'S RECALCITRANT DELEGATES

(The following summary of proceedings of the General Assembly of Maryland in 1692, which forms an untold chapter of Cecil County history, is taken from Vol. XIII of MARYLAND ARCHIVES, page 360 et seq. The orthography and capitalization of the Assembly's Journal are unchanged).

When a General Assembly of Maryland was convened on the 10th day of May, 1692, at the city of St. Mary's, Cecil County was represented by four delegates, viz., Col. St. Leger Codd, William Dare, Edward Jones, and George Wardner. All four were warm partisans of Lord Baltimore, and they were evidently in a hostile frame of mind because the Lord Proprietor had been recently divested of his authority in the province and a royal Governor, Sir Lionel Copley, had been named in his place.

The first two days of the Assembly were spent in examining the credentials of the members. On May 12th the Committee on Elections & Priviledges reported that after having made an inspection into the Election for Caecill County found that Coll. Codd ought not to Sitt as a member of the lower House till he had Cleared himself of an Accusation proved against him before a Convention held at St. Mary's the 11th day of Aprill 1690, and because he had since sent a Letter to Coll. Henry Coursey endeavoring to divert their Majesties' subjects from their allegiance.

On the following day the Committee reported that the Caecill County Delegates had made noe Return to the information given against them of severall Misdemeanours & Crimes Laid to them, whereof the house thought fitt they should cleare themselves. Thereupon they were dismissed the house until the Matter were enquired into and debated.

On May 14th the Committee reported that having perused severall Depositions & papers Relating to Caecill County found the Deposition of Wm. Ward fitt for the consideration of the house of Assembly. Mr. Ward's deposition was ordered to be read. He declared upon Oath that at the first Court held for Caecill County after the Convention held in Aprill Anno 1690 Mr. Edward Jones and Mr. George Wardner called the Court and held the same in the name of the Lord Baltimore, denying the Authority of the Convention, and utterly refused to take the Oath required of Magistrates in their Majesties' name.

A motion was made that it be put to a Vote, whether the Accusation brought against Coll. Codd be Sufficient to Expell him from the house or noe. Coll. Codd having been ordered to Appear before the house, the Speaker, Mr. Kenelm Cheseldyne, acquainted him with severall Crimes layd to his Charge, which incapacitated him to Sitt as a member. He denied the letter to Coll. Coursey to be his Act or Writeing, and said he never heard anything of the Accusation before. It was then put to a Vote, whether Coll. Codd be a person quallified to Sitt as a member of the house, which was carried in the negative, and he was thereupon dismissed.

Mr. Jones and Mr. Dare were next called into the house, and it was ordered that the Returne of the Committee of Elections about Caecill County be read over againe, as Likewise Wm. Ward's Deposition against Mr. Jones and Mr. Dare &c. This having been done, it was the opinion of the house that upon their giving security for their good behaviour they might be againe admitted into the house. Mr. Jones was willing to give bond, but Mr. Dare absolutely refused to give Security and thereupon was Voted out of the house. The house then ordered that the Serjeant att Armes immediately take into his Custody the Body of William Dare of Caecill County that he should appeare on Monday morning, May 16th, to answere for his contempt of the house.

When Mr. Dare made his appearance before the house on Monday morning the Speaker acquainted him with the charge of Contempt for refusing to give Bayle according to the order of the house. Mr. Dare for Excuse said that he did refuse the order at that time, "being a little Surprized", but after reflection he was willing & ready to comply. The house was in no mood to condone Mr. Dare's conduct, for it ordered that he give security unto "our Sovraigne Lord the King" in the sum of Twenty pounds Sterling for his good behaviour and that he pay to the Serjeant att Armes a fine in the sum of two hundred pounds of Tobacco. Mr. Dare entered into Recognisance as above before Mr. Wattson, a Justice of the Peace for the city of St. Mary's, paid his fees, and was dismissed the house.

On May 27th the House received Mr. James Wrouth, Mr. Thomas Theakston, and Mr. Robert Crooke, who had been elected to serve for Caecill County in the room of Coll. Codd, Mr. Dare, and Mr. Wardner. The Oathes of Allegiance & Abhorrence having been given to the new delegates at the Councill Board, they were allowed to take their places in the House.

The Messers. Wrouth, Theakston, and Crooke appear to have been no less contemptuous of the House than their predecessors, because the Journal records that on June 1, 1692, they were fined fifty pds. of Tobacco a piece for remaining with out Dores dureing the Sitting of the House. From which it may be concluded that civil disobedience, contempt of authority, "sit-outs" and other forms of dissent are nothing new in the Free State of Maryland.

## SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Historical Society is open to all persons of good character, regardless of age, who are genuinely interested in Cecil County history and who desire to preserve it for the present and future generations.

Any one wishing to join the Society may be nominated for membership by having an active member present a signed card to the Secretary who will submit the nomination to the Executive Committee for consideration. In the event of favorable action, the applicant is notified of his election and asked to signify his acceptance of election. Nominating cards may be obtained from any officer of the Society.

New members who will support the work of the Society are greatly needed and will be welcomed.

## MISCELLANY

During the winter months the Society sponsored an exciting exhibit called "100 Years of Skating", which featured ice skates used between 1820 and 1920. Ten of the dozen pairs of old skates displayed were loaned by Mr. F. Rodney Frazer, of Elkton, the oldest pair being of 1820 vintage and known as "Turkish Skates". The exhibit also included ice creepers, old-style ear muffs, skating prints, books on skating, and a child's sled of 1890.

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Rock Presbyterian Church has appointed a committee to work on a new history of that venerable church. It is planned to reprint the old history written by the Rev. John H. Johns in 1872 and to prepare a supplemental history from that date to the present. Anyone having information or old records pertaining to Rock Church is requested to contact the pastor, the Rev. Allen B. Yuninger.

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The Maryland Historical Magazine is a quarterly publication devoted to articles dealing with persons, places, and significant events in Maryland history. A subscription to this fine magazine is included in the annual fee of \$8 for membership in the Maryland Historical Society. Those who do not wish to join that Society but are interested in our State's history will find the magazine a source of much information. A large file of back numbers is reposing on our shelves awaiting perusal.

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Through the generosity of Mrs. Harry Clark Boden, a stock of notepaper showing a picture and brief history of Mt. Harmon Plantation has been placed on sale by the Society. This stationery may be bought at the desk in the Public Library for \$1.25 a box. The Society expresses gratitude to Mrs. Boden for this donation.

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Mr. and Mrs. John A. Beers, of Elkton, have been instrumental in having the Potter's Field on the grounds of Mount Aviat Academy, formerly the Almshouse near Cherry Hill, cleared of debris and its location marked by a marble slab inscribed

## POTTER'S FIELD

1776 - 1950

May their Souls rest in Peace

Mr. Beers estimates that approximately 200 destitute and unknown persons were inhumed in this burial plot. The marker serves as a reminder that while the Almshouse reflected the seamy side of life, it was an integral part of the County's history for 163 years (1788-1952).

Reference to the "potter's field" as a burial place for strangers goes back to Biblical times. It is recorded by St. Matthew that the 30 silver pieces which Judas Iscariot received for his perfidy were used by the chief priests to buy a potter's field.

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The fall meeting of this Society is tentatively scheduled for October 20th at Perryville Fire House. An important item on the agenda for that meeting will be the election of officers to serve for the ensuing biennium.