

# Bulletin

OF

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CECIL COUNTY

No. 35

Head of Elk, Maryland

January 17, 1970

## 1969 FALL MEETING

On Monday evening, October 20, the Society held its Fall Meeting in the new fire house of the Community Fire Company at Perryville, Md., with 159 members and guests present. This meeting was presided over by the President, Mrs. Argus Robinson, and the invocation was given by Mr. Alfred Scarborough. The dining hall was attractively decorated in a HallowE'en motif, and a delicious turkey dinner was served by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Fire Company.

Mr. H. Wirt Bouchelle, Treasurer, reported a balance of \$2884.92. Mr. Morton F. Taylor, the Curator, reported on accessions received since the Spring Meeting. Mr. Taylor also reported as Chairman of the By-Laws Committee, the other members being Mr. Ernest A. Howard and Mrs. Raymond Delano. This Committee recommended only minor changes in the By-Laws, which included the Cecil County Seal, adopted earlier as the Society's seal, and the incorporation of past amendments such as those changing the place of the Winter Meeting from "Cecil County" to "Elkton" and increasing the dues to the current fee. The revised By-Laws were quickly adopted by unanimous vote.

Miss Lillie E. England, Recording Secretary, announced the following new members, who were recognized and welcomed by the President:

Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Benner  
Miss Miriam C. Biddle  
Miss Ruth C. Biddle  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert K. Boyd  
Mr. and Mrs. Donaldson Cole, Jr.  
Mr. Joe L. Crews

Mr. Jennings B. Hanna  
Mr. and Mrs. Charles H. Jeffers  
Mr. and Mrs. J. Clark Samuel  
Mr. and Mrs. Charles H. Scheeler, Jr.  
Mrs. Edna Boyd Tipton  
Mrs. Bernice F. Williams

Mr. Frank Krastel, Chairman of the Historic Markers Committee, announced that six new roadside markers had been erected recently in the First District of the County by the Maryland Historical Society, at the request of our Society and through the generosity of Mrs. Harry Clark Boden. The markers designate the following old homes:

Rose Hill	Mt. Pleasant	Woodlawn
Cherry Grove	Essex Lodge	Bohemia

Mrs. Thomas H. Reynolds, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, which included Mrs. Clarence Brown, Mr. Paul Orr, Mr. Robert Davis and Mr. Ulysses G. Demond, presented the following slate of officers to serve the Society for the next two years:

President — Mrs. Argus F. Robinson  
 First Vice President — Mr. Alfred T. Scarborough  
 Second Vice President — Mr. Howard Medholdt  
 Third Vice-President — Col. Theo O'Brien  
 Recording Secretary — Mrs. Charles B. Benner  
 Corresponding Secretary — Mrs. Ellis Hawke  
 Treasurer — Mr. H. Wirt Bouchelle  
 Historian — Mr. Ernest A. Howard  
 Curator — Mr. Morton F. Taylor

#### TRUSTEES

Mrs. Harry Clark Boden	Mr. Joseph Grant
Mrs. Raymond P. Delano	Mrs. Dorothy Jefferson
Mrs. Mary Dunn	Mr. Frank Krastel
Mrs. Ronald Edwards	Mr. Otis McCauley
Miss Lilly O. Ferguson	Mr. Herman Slaybaugh
Mr. George Gifford	Miss Caroline Stump

Inasmuch as there were no nominations from the floor, the slate was unanimously elected. Mrs. Robinson asked all the officers and Trustees to stand and be recognized by the membership. Mrs. Robinson then thanked the Nominating Committee for their work.

Mr. Ernest A. Howard, Chairman of the Resolutions Committee, read Resolutions of Respect for our late Vice-President, Peyton B. Patterson, which his Committee recommended. It was resolved that a copy of these Resolutions be sent to the family and to the county newspapers.

The guest speaker, Cecil County's Delegate Richard D. Mackie, gave an interesting talk on "Tourism in Maryland". Mr. Mackie is a member of the Tourism Committee of the Legislative Council of the Maryland General Assembly, and, as such, had acted as official host to the Committee when it toured Cecil County on September 6, 1969. He outlined the work of his Committee, emphasizing the importance of tourism as an industry and noting that Maryland is far behind its neighboring states in this field. Mr. Mackie also commented on the restoration of the Indian Queen Hotel in Charlestown by the Maryland Historic Trust. He further stated that his Committee is recommending a bill to request Federal funds on a matching basis for the preservation of Principio Furnace. Mr. Mackie also displayed the crimson flag of Cecil County and stated that it had been assigned the County by Governor Nicholson in October, 1692.

Following Mr. Mackie's talk, Mr. Morton F. Taylor, who had represented the Society on the local tour, gave a summary of the Committee's visit to Cecil. His talk

was illustrated by colored slides of various tourist attractions in the county, which were projected by Mr. Argus Robinson. Mr. Taylor stated that Mr. Mackie was responsible for the legislation which provided the funds for the Indian Queen Hotel restoration and that he was to be commended for arranging such a fine tour.

#### MRS. FOREMAN'S DIARY

A copy of Mrs. M. B. Foreman's diary was donated in October to our Society by Mrs. Harry Clark Boden. Mrs. Foreman was the wife of Major-General Thomas Marsh Foreman (1758-1845), an officer in the War of 1812, and lived with her husband on their estate, "Rose Hill", five miles southwest of Cecilton. Both are buried in the family burying-ground on the estate, a short distance from the house, on a knoll overlooking the Sassafras River.

The copy is a typed transcription, consisting of six volumes and 2201 pages. It covers the years from her marriage to the General in 1814 until 1853 and is an invaluable



able historical record of customs of the times. As mistress of "Rose Hill", Mrs. Foreman paints a vivid picture of plantation life, particularly in respect to her responsibilities for supervising, feeding, clothing, nursing and otherwise humanely treating their servants (never slaves). Also reflected is an account of the life of old St. Stephens Episcopal Church where she and the General regularly worshipped, as well as a record of the very active social life of the countryside. In connection with the latter, Mrs. Foreman mentions local historical figures, such as the Fishers of "Mt. Harmon", General Sewell of "Holly Hall", the Veazeys of "Cherry Grove", the McLanes of "Bohemia", and Commodore and Mrs. Jacob Jones of "The Anchorage".

The Society is deeply indebted to Mrs. Boden for making this most interesting and informative narrative a part of our archives.

### OLD SCHOOLS EXHIBIT

On Saturday, September 20, the Society opened its Fall Exhibit on "Old Schools of Cecil County". In line with the September theme of "Back to School", the current exhibit contains a collection of relics, pictures and information relative to some of the early schools, both public and private, of the County.

Featured in the display are a lap desk which was a gift from the pupils at Chapel School to their teacher, Miss Mollie Williams; the teacher's certificate of Miss Debbie Jackson, the 1879 register at Cherry Grove School in District 9, and an old schoolmaster's desk donated by Lt. Col. and Mrs. Robert McCauley.

Also exhibited are school bells, one from Pierson Grove School, which is believed to have been the first one-room school in the County closed. Also from Pierson Grove School is a 45-star United States flag. An early ink bottle, ink wells, quill pens, slates, a pointer, a 1914 invitation to the commencement of Oakhurst Private School; and ciphering, penmanship, and note books add interest to the display. Some of the pictures included are those of teachers; an 1898 Teachers Institute; the Octagonal School House at Carter's Bank; Big Elk School; Wilna School; Leeds School; Perryville Public School; Howard Street School; Friends Select School; West Nottingham Academy; Cecil County High School and its 1905 graduating class; Tome School; St. Augustine School; the site of Bohemia Academy, Elkton Academy; the log school which Rev. William Duke opened in 1799 (and which the Historical Society is hoping to help

preserve); and the colonial Sessions House where Rock Academy was housed from 1889 to 1907. A plaque, bearing dates, from Elkton Academy's gable; the copper cornerstone box and a diploma from Cecil County High School; compositions written at West Anwell School; a letter written by a Cedarhill Seminary pupil, and one from a former Monroe School teacher are also on display.

Some of the most valuable items are in a collection of old school books which include one of the rare McGuffey's Readers, loaned by Mr. Clarence W. Brown.

### CHRISTMAS DISPLAY

The Society opened its Yuletide exhibit on December 1, in time to welcome more than 60 members and guests of the Elkton Woman's Club at its Christmas program held at the County Library on December 2. Included in the display, which will be shown until after Christmas, are an old-fashioned Christmas tree; toys of yesteryear; a Christmas tree holder made in the Armstrong Foundry at Perryville and a wrought iron Christmas tree fence made in the same company's foundry at Port Deposit; old time Christmas cards; a large old glass "candy cane"; dressmakers model dolls; a doll house of the 1930's given by Mrs. David Minster; doll house furniture donated by Miss Anna Denny; doll dishes loaned by Mrs. Lois Mann; books about Frank Merriwell, etc., given by Mrs. Edward Holmes; and some 60 antique and foreign dolls from the collection of Mrs. Ernest K. Taylor.

### IN MEMORIAM

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

Mrs. John J. Denver (Ethel Graves) — October 22, 1969

Mrs. Goodwin Matthews — November 14, 1969

### SOME "FIRSTS" IN CECIL COUNTY

There are a great many "firsts" in the history of Maryland, and Cecil County possesses a fair share of them. The County has not always been accorded due recognition for the part played by her citizens in pioneering the way in certain fields of endeavor, and the number of important matters in this category is too large to permit them to go unheralded. Following are fourteen history-making events to which Cecil County makes claims:

- 1 - Augustine Herman and his family were the first foreign born persons to be naturalized in Maryland and probably in America, November 15, 1669.
- 2 - The first Methodist society on the Eastern Shore of Maryland was organized in April, 1771 at the home of Solomon Hersey at Sluyter's Mill on Bohemia Manor, by the Rev. Richard Wright.
- 3 - The first Roman Catholic church on the Eastern Shore was founded by a Jesuit mission at the Head of Bohemia River in 1704.
- 4 - The first priest of the Protestant Episcopal church to receive ordination in America was the Rev. Joseph Coudon, of St. Mary Anne's Church in North East, May 29, 1787.
- 5 - The first parsonage in America for use of itinerant Methodist ministers was established at North East, April 12, 1804.
- 6 - The first Sunday School in Maryland (outside of Baltimore City) was organized by Miss Sarah Wilson at New Leeds, June 16, 1816.
- 7 - The first use of steam power in America for transporting passengers occurred on the Frenchtown and New Castle Railroad on March 1, 1832. The first system of signal devices to control the movement of railroad trains in America was employed on the Frenchtown and New Castle Railroad in 1832.
- 8 - The first negro ordained by the Protestant Episcopal Church south of the Mason and Dixon Line was the Rev. William Douglass at St. Stephen's Church at Earleville, June 22, 1834.
- 9 - The first Sunday School convention in Maryland was held in Elkton, on May 15, 1860.
- 10 - The first flag to float over a schoolhouse in Maryland was raised at North East on May 30, 1889.
- 11 - The first agricultural high school in Maryland was opened at Calvert on November 5, 1906.

- 12 - The first Catholic School on the Eastern Shore of Maryland was opened in Elkton in September, 1927.
- 13 - The first Vocational-Technical School in Maryland was opened at Bay View on November 18, 1965.
- 14 - The first boat propelled by the reaction of a stream of water forced by the agency of steam through a trunk or cylinder parallel to the keel, out at the stern, was invented by James Rumsey who was born near Warwick in 1743.

### HOW DO YOU PRONOUNCE C-E-C-I-L?

Is it see-sil, ses-il, or sis'l, or some similar sibilance? If you are a native or have lived in the County long enough to have learned to do as the Romans do, you will use the form that rhymes with "whistle"; if you are an outlander you may affect some variation to your liking which will be sure to irritate the old timers. In any case, it is recognized that a person has a right to pronounce a word the way it is not spelled, and conversely, to spell it the way it is not pronounced.

The Historical Society of Cecil County is on record as having declared by unanimous vote that the preferred pronunciation is "sis'l" exactly as "scissile". What could be plainer?

### MEETINGS

The Winter Meeting will be a luncheon meeting to be held in the Friendship Hall of the Methodist Church in Elkton, on Saturday, January 17, 1970, at 12:30 P.M. The program will be especially interesting, for it is about "Collectables", the hobby everyone has, and will be described and illustrated by Mrs. Raymond P. Delano with items from her own collections. Do mark this date!

The Spring Meeting will be held on Monday, May 18, 1970, at 6:45 P.M., at the North East Yacht Club. The program has not been completely arranged, but further notice will be given.

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