Cover: “Children at Parade,” c. 1912–1915

Eugene Gwynn McFee (c.1892–1974) worked as a staff photographer for the Baltimore Sun from 1913 to 1919 before joining the army during World War I and serving as an x-ray technician at U.S. Army Hospital No. 2, Fort McHenry. He captured these wonder-filled smiles during an unidentified parade in Baltimore, c. 1912–1915. Clues in the photograph such as the forty-eight star flag, first issued July 4, 1912, and the Billy Whiskers book held by the little girl on the right, which was published between 1903 and 1915, help date the event. Perhaps it was a Fourth of July parade or a Defender’s Day event commemorating the Centennial of the War of 1812. Whatever the occasion, these happy young faces are timeless and the photograph is a century-old record of patriotic summer traditions. (Maryland Historical Society.)
“The Best Justice of Peace in the Province”: Colonel Henry Hooper (ca. 1687–1767)  
by J. Elliott Russo

Charles Carroll of Carrollton and the Creation of the “Three American Graces”  
by Mary Clement Jeske

Go Quietly or Else: The Resignation of Vice President Spiro T. Agnew  
by Peter Levy

Research Notes & Maryland Miscellany  
What’s in a Name? Baltimore—“The Monumental City,”  
by Lance Humphries

Maryland History Bibliography, 2014

The Journal of the Maryland Historical Society
The Maryland Historical Society continues its commitment to publish the finest new work in Maryland history. This year marks a decade since the Publications Committee, with the advice and support of the development staff, launched the Friends of the Press, an effort dedicated to raising money to be used solely for bringing new titles into print. The society is particularly grateful to H. Thomas Howell (1937–2014), past committee chair, for his unwavering support of our work and for his exemplary generosity. The committee is pleased to announce two new titles funded through the Friends of the Press.

Rebecca Seib and Helen C. Rountree’s *Indians of Southern Maryland*, offers a highly readable account of the culture and history of Maryland’s native people, from prehistory to the early twenty-first century. The authors, both cultural anthropologists with training in history, have written an objective, reliable source for the general public, modern Maryland Indians, schoolteachers, and scholars.

Appearing this fall, Milt Diggins’s compelling story of slave catcher Thomas McCreary examines the physical and legal battles that followed the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Was seizing escaped slaves the legal capture of fugitives—or an act of kidnapping? Residing in Cecil County, midway between Philadelphia and Baltimore, and conducting his “business” in an area already inflamed by clashes like the violent Christiana riots, McCreary drew the ire of abolitionists. Frederick Douglass referred to him as “the notorious Elkton kidnapper.”

These are the seventh and eighth Friends of the Press titles, continuing the mission first set forth in 1844. We invite you to become a supporter and help us fill in the unknown pages of Maryland history. If you would like to make a tax-deductible gift to the Friends of the Press, please direct your donation to Development, Maryland Historical Society, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore, MD 21201. For additional information on MdHS publications, contact Patricia Dockman Anderson, Director of Publications and Library Services, 410-685-3750 x317 or panderson@mdhs.org.
CONTENTS

“The Best Justice of Peace in the Province”: Colonel Henry Hooper (ca. 1687–1767) .......... 165
J. ELLIOTT RUSSO

Charles Carroll of Carrollton and the Creation of the “Three American Graces” ............ 193
MARY CLEMENT JESKE

Go Quietly or Else: The Resignation of Vice President Spiro T. Agnew ......................... 226
PETER LEVY

Research Notes & Maryland Miscellany .............................................................................. 253
  What’s in a Name? Baltimore—“The Monumental City,” by Lance Humphries

Book Reviews ......................................................................................................................... 271
Ziegler, Harlots, Hussies, & Poor Unfortunate Women: Crime, Transportation & The Servitude of Female Convicts 1718–1783, by Teresa Bass Foster
McDonald, ed., Sons of the Father: George Washington and His Protégés, by Michael P. Gabriel
Robbins, James McHenry, Forgotten Federalist, by Kimberly Nath
Benn, ed., Native Memoirs from the War of 1812, by Brian C. Rindfleisch
Keehn, Knights of the Golden Circle: Secret Empire, Southern Secession, Civil War, by Ben Wynne
Recko, A Spy for the Union: The Life and Execution of Timothy Webster, by Brian Dunne
Seranno, Last of the Blue and Gray: Old Men, Stolen Glory, and the Mystery that Outlived the Civil War, by Rachel Crone
Smith, The Slaves’ Gamble: Choosing Sides in the War of 1812, by Christopher T. George White
Abraham Lincoln and Treason in the Civil War: The Trials of John Merryman, by Lawrence A. Peskin
Curran, Shaping American Catholicism: Maryland and New York, 1805–1915, by Joseph G. Mannard
Martelle, The Admiral and the Ambassador: One Man’s Obsessive Search for the Body of John Paul Jones, by David McDonald
Olesker, Front Steps in the Fifties: Baltimore Legends Come of Age, by W. Edward Orser

Maryland History Bibliography 2014 ..................................................................................... 293
Maryland Historical Magazine

This rare broadside, dated April 14, 1761, was written by Henry Hooper when he was Speaker of the Lower House. The Speaker offered condolences regarding the death of the king offered support to the new sovereign and his government. (Maryland Historical Society.)
“The Best Justice of Peace in the Province”: Colonel Henry Hooper (ca. 1687–1767)

J. ELLIOTT RUSSO

The career of Maryland resident Henry Hooper, a man described shortly before his death as “the best Justice of Peace in the Province,” provides unique insight into the social and political development of the colony during the eighteenth century. Today, the phrase “justice of the peace” suggests an official of a lower court holding limited jurisdiction over minor offences, small claims, and civil marriages. In the eighteenth century, a justice of the peace was a far more powerful figure, not only in his county but frequently at the provincial level as well. Collectively, the justices of the peace for a county functioned as both the executive branch of local government and the county court. The Maryland colony’s court structure was less complex than either the English courts of the period or today’s judicial system, with essentially two tiers: the county courts and the Provincial Court. County courts held original jurisdiction over the vast majority of cases, and the justices of the peace were the government officials with the most direct connection to the everyday activities and concerns of colonists. As a justice of the peace for Dorchester County, on Maryland’s Eastern Shore, Henry Hooper played a leading role in the affairs of his county and his province for more than four decades. Native-born, well connected, and one of his county’s most prominent residents, Hooper mediated between the business of the colony and the local concerns of his neighbors and extended family.

Although responsible for conducting legal proceedings at the county level and issuing judgments in a wide variety of cases, justices of the peace in colonial Maryland rarely had formal training in law. Prominent justices nevertheless gained considerable knowledge through their administration of justice, and Henry Hooper’s activities suggest a thorough grounding in Maryland’s legal culture. In addition to his judicial career, Hooper was elected fourteen times as a Dorchester delegate to the General Assembly, an indication of his ability to navigate the colony’s political terrain and a measure of his legislative skill. His assembly service culminated with nearly ten years as Speaker of the Lower House, followed by elevation to the governor’s Council of State (which also functioned as the upper house of the General Assembly).

J. Elliott Russo is an independent scholar and the co-author (with Jean B. Russo) of Planting an Empire: The Early Chesapeake in British North America.
Assembly) and appointment as chief justice of the Provincial Court. Hooper’s tenure in these eminent positions was cut short by his death, which occurred less than two years after his council appointment. As Governor Horatio Sharpe wrote to Lord Baltimore early in June 1767, with the “Death of Colonel Hooper . . . we lately lost a very worthy Member.”

This essay examines Hooper’s background and early activities to illuminate the factors that contributed to his long and illustrious career. The discussion explores Hooper’s family connections and considers the evidence for his education and occupation. The essay then follows his career from his first service as a county delegate to his appointment as Speaker of the lower house of the General Assembly. Colonel Henry Hooper’s pursuit of elite roles in local and provincial governance was made possible by the wealth and status built by his father and grandfather. To that foundation Hooper added important connections to other influential men as well as his own aptitude and temperament, a combination of opportunity and ability that fostered decades of distinguished public service.

Henry Hooper’s roots in Maryland extend back to the 1650s, when his grandfather, also named Henry Hooper, resided in Calvert County. This elder Henry Hooper was roughly forty-five years old when he arrived in Maryland with an established family. In 1651, the first Henry Hooper claimed headrights (land grants from the Lord Proprietor) for transporting not only himself but also his wife, Sarah, and five children: Sarah, Richard, Henry, Elizabeth, and Mary. Hooper settled himself and his family on the western shore of Chesapeake Bay and patented approximately 1,750 acres in Calvert County by 1661.

The English background of Henry and Sarah Hooper remains to be discovered, but one possible lead is Henry’s activity as an agent for the London merchant Henry Meese. In 1657, for example, Hooper was identified as “Attorney of m’t Meese” when he petitioned to administer the estate of Lawrence Starkey. Maryland records indicate that Meese’s trade with the Chesapeake colonies included transporting servants; perhaps he supplied the sixteen men and women whom, according to a patent record, “Henry Hooper hath transported into [the] Province, here to Inhabit, in the year 1651 and since.” A number of references to Hooper buying and selling servants appear in the Provincial Court records alongside disputes over tobacco, sugar, and other commodities. These transactions may only reflect a planter’s efforts to acquire sufficient labor for his land but likely indicate more active involvement in the servant trade. That Hooper pursued diverse trading opportunities is evident from his 1651 purchase of a half share of “a Shallop with half the ropes Sailes cable grapling and other things belonging to her,” as well as from his deposition, given in 1670, in which he recalled a time in the 1660s when he traveled up Manokin River on Maryland’s Eastern Shore “to trade for Corne [at] the Indian towne.”

In addition to engaging in mercantile pursuits and working his landholdings,
the first Henry Hooper involved himself in provincial and local governance. In 1652, shortly after his arrival in the colony, Hooper served as a member of the grand jury at a Provincial Court held in St. Mary’s City. Six years later he was appointed a captain in the militia for Calvert County, although the governor’s council, observing that “Captaine Henry Hooper was out of the Province, and the time of his returne uncertaine,” subsequently commissioned John Odbur as captain in his stead. Hooper had returned to the colony by the fall of 1658, when he was appointed a justice of the peace for Calvert County, a position he held until at least 1661. In filling these public roles in the government of Maryland at both the local and provincial levels, Hooper established a pattern of judicial and military service that was replicated and expanded upon by his descendants.5

By the 1660s the first Henry Hooper and his two sons, Richard and Henry, were patenting land across the bay in the territory that became Dorchester County. In 1658, ten years before the establishment of county boundaries for Dorchester, the elder Henry Hooper surveyed three hundred acres later described as “now [in] Dorchester.” Eleven years later the younger Henry patented one hundred acres called “Buck Ridge” and another fifty acres called “Buck Valley,” while Richard patented 650 acres called “Town Neck.” The elder Henry Hooper and his son Richard continued to reside primarily in Calvert County, but by the time Henry died in 1676, his younger son, the second Henry Hooper, lived on land in Dorchester. The first Henry Hooper’s inventory comprised two parts: the main inventory, compiled in Calvert County on August 10, 1676, and a second “true and just Inventorie of the goods & Chattles of mr Henry hooper Signor deceased” taken on August 5, 1676 “upon the plantation of mr Henry Hooper Junior in dorceter County.” This plantation may have been on the three hundred acres the elder Henry Hooper had surveyed in 1658, which likely was re-patented as “Hoopers Lott” by “Henry Hooper, Junior” in 1677, just after his father’s death.6

The second Henry Hooper, who was in his late twenties when he settled in Dorchester County, followed the path of public service established by his father. The first commission for justices for Dorchester County, issued in 1669, appointed Henry Hooper as one of the “Gentlemen Commissioners jointly and severally to keep the peace.” The second Henry Hooper appears in subsequent commissions for the 1670s and 1680s, including the orders issued by the Associators’ Assembly after the Protestant Revolution in 1689. Throughout these decades, Hooper was not commissioned as a member of the quorum (a subset of more experienced justices, at least one of whom had to be present for a court session), but in 1692 he joined Henry Trippe, Jacob Loockerman, Edward Pindar, and John Hodson as a quorum justice. Beginning with the 1694 commission, moreover, Hooper was the most senior member of the quorum and, in effect, chief justice for the county.7

The year 1694 also marks the second Henry Hooper’s only election as a Lower House delegate for Dorchester County. In response to the writ of election issued that
year by Maryland’s new governor, Francis Nicholson, the freeholders of Dorchester chose Hooper as well as two other novice delegates, John Pollard and Thomas Hicks, to attend with Thomas Ennalls, who had served in the previous assembly. Hooper was present for at least four of the eight sessions of the 1694–1697 assembly, which included the first meetings held in Annapolis rather than St. Mary’s City. Hooper evidently experienced a period of ill health that limited his service, because in October 1695 he was excused from attending the fourth session after sending a letter explaining that he was “so far indisposed” that he could not “possibly attend the house.” Health may have been a factor in Hooper’s lack of service in subsequent assemblies, although it is not known whether he was passed over by the freeholders or declined to stand for election.8

As his public service suggests, the second Henry Hooper was well established in Dorchester County by the mid-1670s. At the time of his father’s death in 1676, the younger Henry was either married or recently widowed, having married Elizabeth Denwood of Somerset County on the fourth day of July in 1669. Marriage into the
Colonel Henry Hooper

Denwood family connected Hooper to a nascent web of important families on the Eastern Shore that eventually stretched from Maryland’s Talbot County south through Dorchester and Somerset Counties and into the Virginia counties of Northampton and Accomack. Elizabeth’s father, Levin Denwood, had served as a magistrate of Northampton County, Virginia. He most likely became a member of the Society of Friends in the 1650s and in 1657 was responsible for building the first Quaker meeting house on the lower Eastern Shore. Elizabeth’s brother, the younger Levin Denwood, was similarly instrumental in the establishment of Quaker meetings in Maryland’s Somerset County, while her sister Mary was the wife of Roger Woolford, a justice and delegate for Somerset, and another sister, Sarah, married Thomas Hicks, who later served in the same capacities for Dorchester County.9

This early web of families strengthened and grew over the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Marriages of younger siblings linked in additional families, such as the 1679 marriage of Rebecca Denwood, Elizabeth Denwood Hooper’s sister, to Nehemiah Covington, another prominent Quaker in Somerset County. The second Henry Hooper contributed to these ever more complex family ties with his second marriage. Already loosely linked to the Woolford family through the marriage of his first wife’s sister to Roger Woolford, Hooper formed a closer connection when he married his first wife’s niece, Mary Woolford, a daughter of Roger Woolford and Mary Denwood Woolford. Henry Hooper’s second bride, born not earlier than 1661, was roughly two decades younger than her husband. The exact timing of their marriage is uncertain, although it is probable that Elizabeth Denwood Hooper bore only two of Henry’s surviving children and died within a decade or so of their 1669 marriage. Henry Hooper and Mary Woolford were certainly married by March 1689, and may have been married as early as 1680.10

Between his first marriage in 1669 and his death in 1720, the second Henry Hooper fathered at least thirteen children. Two of them, a son named Richard and a daughter named Mary, are mentioned in Hooper’s will but are not identified as children by his second wife, Mary Woolford Hooper, in her will written in 1740. Both were probably married by 1700 and had children of their own well before their father’s death, additional evidence that they were probably born to Hooper’s first wife. The remaining eleven children named in Hooper’s will include his namesake, the third Henry Hooper, who is identified in 1720 as the eldest son (Richard having died the previous year); five married daughters; two unmarried daughters; and four additional sons, all of whom are described as being under eighteen years of age. Two grandchildren are also named in the will: Henry, son of Richard; and Henry, son of Henry.11

Whether the second Henry Hooper actively pursued strategic marriages for his sons and daughters cannot be determined, but as a member of Dorchester County’s emerging elite he was well positioned to promote connections to the families of other justices and delegates. The two surviving children of his first marriage married the
offspring of fellow justices: son Richard married Ann Dorrington, daughter of William Dorrington; and daughter Mary married Henry Ennalls, son of Bartholomew Ennalls. The children of his second marriage likewise chose spouses from the families of men engaged in public service. Thus Elizabeth married Matthew Travers, son of justice William Travers; Mary married Levin Hicks, son of delegate Thomas Hicks; Sarah married John Heyward, son of justice Francis Heyward; and Rosannah married John Hodson, son of delegate John Hodson. Hooper’s son and namesake, the third Henry Hooper, arguably made the most advantageous marriage: his bride, Mary Ennalls, was a daughter of Joseph Ennalls, a niece of both Thomas and Henry Ennalls, and a granddaughter of both Bartholomew Ennalls and John Brooke. Each of these men served their county as both justice and delegate, with Mary’s maternal grandfather, John Brooke, also sitting as a justice on the Provincial Court in the 1690s and her paternal uncle, Thomas Ennalls, also serving as a member of the governor’s council between 1704 and 1718.12

Born in the mid-1680s and therefore of age soon after 1700, the third Henry Hooper appears to have pursued a mercantile career prior to succeeding his father and his wife’s relatives as a county justice and delegate. When he began to buy and sell tracts of land in Dorchester County in the 1710s, for example, the deeds finalizing these transactions identify Hooper as “mariner”—although never as “merchant,” indicating that Hooper worked in partnership with established merchants and shifted his focus to governance before achieving independent status as a merchant. Hooper executed deeds that identify him as a mariner in 1712, 1720, 1722, 1726, 1728, and 1732 before using the identification of “Gent” in 1733, in a deed that transferred ownership of the same tract purchased in the 1732 deed with the mariner designation.13

Because few of the early shipping records for the Maryland colony are extant, we lack any direct evidence about the nature of the third Henry Hooper’s maritime activity. One possibility is that Hooper captained vessels owned by his Ennalls relatives. Throughout the Chesapeake region, local merchants employed young men from prominent families to man their vessels. This practice benefited the merchants, who cultivated relationships with their county peers, and the young men so employed, who gained valuable skills and experience as well as their own useful connections with established members of county elites. That Dorchester merchants pursued this strategy is evident in a deed executed in 1724 by Jacob Loockerman, who served alongside members of the Ennalls and Hooper families as a Dorchester County justice and delegate. In the deed, which transferred ownership of land in Talbot County to a son also named Jacob, the elder Loockerman clarified that he had previously deeded the same land to his son Thomas, but that “the said Thomas Loockerman afterwards to witt some time in the year 1714 went to sea in a sloop belonging to one Colo. Thos. Ennalls which said sloop and company were never after heard of.”14

There is ample evidence that the Ennalls family engaged in overseas trade throughout the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In 1684, for example,
“Thomas Ennalls of Dorchester County Mercht.” informed the governor’s council that Jeremiah Waters, master of a “Brigantine belonging partly to the [said] Thomas Ennalls,” had recently left the Madeiras and had “clandestenly and in an Unjust manner [brought] with him a Portugueez boy [against] his will.” Waters had not brought the boy to Maryland, however, having “left him at Carolina.” Because the abduction of the boy was causing “some trouble and inconveniency” for “the English Consul of that place,” the Maryland council wrote a letter to authorities in Carolina requesting them to deliver the boy to Ennalls, who could arrange for his return to the Madeiras, as he was “now fitting out a Vessell for that place again.” When Thomas’s father Bartholomew Ennalls died in 1688, he divided ownership of “the Pinke now gon to Sea” between his sons Thomas and Joseph (father of Mary Ennalls, whom the third Henry Hooper later married). An account of Maryland shipping compiled roughly ten years later stated that Thomas Ennalls owned a brigantine that “goes to Sea” and had “another a building.” One of these vessels may have been the “Brigantine named Hare belonging to Major Thomas Ennalls & others” that the Maryland council learned in 1698 “hath lately Imported Sundry Barbadoes goods for which no dutyes have been paid.” Ennalls evidently worked in partnership with non-Maryland merchants, as the duties were not paid “Out of pretence that the said Vessell wholy belongs to Maryland Owners, but by Information hath two or three other persons that are no Inhabitants [as] owners, whereby the imposition of 4d gallon Justly due hath been excluded.” By the time of his death in 1718, Ennalls must have sold or made a gift of his stake in the brigantines, for the appraisal of his estate does not list any shares of ships and only documents an “old Shallope” and a parcel of “old riging belonging to a Sloope,” both located at his property “at Vienna Town.” The Vienna property nevertheless included more than £110 in “Sundry goods Lately Come in,” while the items appraised in the storehouse at Ennalls’s dwelling plantation included more than £1,250 in “Sundry new goods.”

Members of the Ennalls family continued to pursue maritime trade in the eighteenth century, including at least three of the sons of Thomas’s brother Joseph. These men were Henry Hooper’s brothers-in-law, and we can reasonably hypothesize that Hooper’s activity as a mariner may have included working for (or in partnership with) one or more of Joseph’s sons. Bartholomew Ennalls identified himself as a mariner in two deeds executed in 1718, while Henry was identified as “Henry Ennalls junr. late of Dorchester County Mariner” when he was sued by “Richard Bennett Esqr. & Capt. John Hyde and Company” in 1734. Another of Hooper’s brothers-in-law, William Ennalls, inherited the bulk of Thomas Ennalls’s considerable estate and is identified in deeds and court records throughout the 1720s as a merchant. In 1725, for example, he sued Somerset County resident Thomas Prior to recover the cost of “divers Goods wears and merchant Dizes.” The account of goods transcribed in the case includes not only sugar, brandy, and more than eighty yards of assorted textiles but also “a plow sent by you to Sell” and credit for “my promise to [pay you] for Selling
my goods & Carrying them home.” After William Ennalls died in 1731, the appraisal of his estate listed among the property at the “Viana House” he had inherited from Thomas all but one-sixteenth of a brigantine “with Boat & all Utensils to her belonging.” The remaining sixteenth part belonged to his brother Bartholomew, who later disputed settlement of the estate and objected to the “sham sale” of “a Brigantine Called Mary Anne.” This vessel was undoubtedly used for trade in the West Indies, because Bartholomew attempted to sue William Hood for expenses incurred in June 1732 that included “the freight of Sundry Goods as household Stuff Rum Sugar Molasses lime Juice &c. and passage of 1 white Lad & nine Negroes from the Island of Antegoe to Maryland in the Brig. Mary Anne.”

Although we lack direct information about the vessels that Henry Hooper may have captained, the cargoes he transported, and the destinations for his voyages, it is probable that his activity included commerce in the West Indies. Merchants from the Eastern Shore often exchanged foodstuffs and lumber products with Caribbean planters, usually for sugar or its byproducts, molasses and rum, and occasionally for slaves. Perhaps building on some degree of participation of the first Henry Hooper in importing servant labor in the middle decades of the seventeenth century, the second, or perhaps third, Henry Hooper may have been similarly involved in the importation of enslaved labor at the very end of the century. The evidence for such activity stems from a suit against Henry Hooper first brought in the Chancery Court in July 1701 and continued until October 1705. The Maryland records are ambiguous about the exact identity of this Henry Hooper, who could be either the second Henry Hooper, who lived until 1720, or his son. The father is more probable, as the son likely was just coming of age, but it is possible that the younger Henry participated at this early stage in his career. The plaintiff, identified in the record as Thomas Stork, was most likely Thomas Sheffield acting on behalf of his partner, London merchant Thomas Starke, whom historian Jacob Price argues was “one of the pioneers in the importation of slaves into the Chesapeake directly from Africa, rather than from the West Indies.” The substance of the case was never entered into the record, leaving just tantalizing information in the last entry, which states that “bills & Money received by the Defendant on each of the Negros sold by the said Defendant” should be paid to the plaintiff. Although the record does not specify the total amount that Hooper owed, it must have been substantial, as the entry specifies that there were “26 Negros in the bill Mentioned.”

The chancery case almost certainly arose from the efforts of Thomas Sheffield to sell a shipment of enslaved men, women, and children whom Thomas Starke sent to Maryland in the African Galley in 1699. Fortuitously, documents assembled for a later suit between Sheffield and Starke, in tandem with a journal entry in the Maryland council records, provide context for the transactions alluded to in the chancery records. The Sheffield v. Starke documents link Henry Hooper to the voyage of the African Galley through letters and accounts that identify Henry Bradshaw as cap-
tain of the vessel and detail the difficulty Sheffield encountered in selling the slaves. Bradshaw evidently had stopped on the Eastern Shore before reporting to a naval officer for the colony, because the clerk of the governor’s Council of State noted in April 1700 that “Captain Bradshaw Comander of the Ship [blank] of London [had] Imported Negros into this Province . . . on the Shore side in Dorchester and Somersett Countys without Giveing any account thereof.” In order to investigate this accusation of smuggling, the council ordered John Pollard, a Dorchester County resident and one of the justices of the Provincial Court, to take testimony from several men who “are knowing thereof,” including “Mr Henry Hooper of Dorchester County.” The Sheffield v. Starke documents include an account of fees subsequently paid to naval officer George Plater, most notably the duty due for “26 Negroes landed on the Eastern shore by Cap' Bradshaw before entry”; in all probability these were the same enslaved laborers for whom Henry Hooper was indebted to Thomas Starke—not least because Sheffield informed Starke in a letter written in August 1701 that “Hooper about Bradshaw laughs at me however I am in chancery with: him.”

By about 1710 the third Henry Hooper had married Mary Ennalls, the eldest child of Joseph Ennalls (d. 1709) and Mary Brooke Ennalls. With the marriage Hooper gained control of four hundred acres of land along Dorchester’s Chicamacomico River. This land consisted of two parcels, “Porpeigham” and “Crowes Nest,” that Mary had inherited by the terms of the will written in 1693 by her maternal grandfather, John Brooke. Late in 1712 the young couple swapped Mary’s inheritance for two tracts owned by Henry’s father but already “in the possession of” Henry and Mary. Although the deed of sale for “Porpeigham” and “Crowes Nest” identified the elder Henry’s two tracts, “Hooper’s Lot” and “Hooper’s Fortune,” as the “consideration” (or payment) for the land sold, the title evidently did not pass to the younger Henry until his father’s death in 1720. The elder Henry’s will bequeathed to his namesake the two tracts and a third contiguous tract, “Hooper’s Chance,” for a total of nearly eight hundred acres, as well as one tract in Calvert County, referred to as five hundred acres which “my Father Henry Hooper formerly lived on.”

The third Henry Hooper expanded considerably upon his inheritance during the decade following his father’s death. His largest single purchase of land occurred in July 1720, when Hooper paid Nicholas Sewell £250 sterling for “Warwick,” comprising a thousand acres, and “Secretary’s Creek,” another two hundred acres. The third Henry Hooper’s steady acquisition of property in Dorchester County during the 1720s, a period in which he consistently identified himself as a mariner, suggests that he invested profits from his mercantile activity in land. In 1722 he purchased two tracts totaling 310 acres; in 1726 he acquired another hundred acres, and in 1728 he purchased at least six hundred acres of the tract “Goodridges Choice.”

These years of rapid land acquisition coincided with the third Henry Hooper’s first service as a delegate to the provincial assembly. In an election held sometime between April and July 1722, the freeholders of Dorchester County choose Hooper
Colonel Henry Hooper

as one of four representatives, all of whom were new delegates. Hooper attended his first assembly, which convened on October 9, 1722, with Matthew Travers (husband of Henry’s sister, Elizabeth Hooper Travers), Edward Pritchett, and John Hodson, Secundus (or Hudson; whose brother, also named John Hodson, was married to another of Henry’s sisters, Rosannah Hooper Hodson). Hooper and his fellow Dorchester delegates were present for all three sessions of this assembly, each of which lasted roughly a month, in the fall of 1722, 1723, and 1724. In a new election, held in the summer of 1725, the voters retained Hooper and Pritchett as delegates, but replaced Travers and Hodson with John Kirke, a new delegate, and John Rider, who had served in the assembly prior to Hooper’s first election. Hooper attended all four sessions of his second assembly, including a month in the fall of 1725, about ten days in March 1726, another two weeks in July 1726, and three weeks in October 1727.

The next election, held in 1728, reshuffled the delegates, with only John Kirke returned for the new assembly. Henry Hooper was not reelected, although—as was the case with his father—we cannot determine whether he was passed over by the freeholders or chose not to stand for election. On balance, the latter explanation seems more plausible, as Hooper was returned to the assembly not only in the following election, in 1732, but also in every subsequent election but one until his elevation to the governor’s council in 1765. The sole exception was the election of 1742, when he was serving as the Lord Proprieter’s prosecutor for Dorchester County.22

The third Henry Hooper began his legislative service when he was in his mid-thirties and evidently still actively engaged in mercantile pursuits. In the 1730s his identification in deeds shifted, from “mariner” in documents written between 1712 and 1732, to simply “gentleman” for the remainder of his life. A greater involvement in local governance in the 1730s probably precipitated this transition, because the men who served their counties as justices of the peace during this period invariably were identified as gentlemen and 1732 marks the first year Henry Hooper was appointed to the county bench. Three successive orders “from his Excellency the Governour” in May, August, and October of that year requested a “Commission of the Peace” for Dorchester County that included Henry Hooper; the first added John White as well as Hooper, while the second and third also named Thomas Nevett. These three newcomers joined nine experienced county justices, six of whom were identified as quorum justices.23

Henry Hooper’s commission as a justice in the spring of 1732, coupled with his return to the Lower House for the assembly that began in July of the same year, marks the beginning of a period of considerable activity and rapid advancement. Most notably, Hooper leapfrogged over his fellow junior justices, moving ahead of John Hodson, Secundus, and Thomas Hicks to be a quorum justice by March 1734 and, remarkably, elevated to chief justice by the commission received before the June session of the same year. Hooper’s multiple connections with the Ennalls family may have played a role in his unusually quick promotion, as he replaced Henry Ennalls,
who served as Dorchester’s chief justice from at least 1725 until his death in 1734. Unlike his predecessor, Hooper held the position of chief justice for less than a year. In July 1735, Governor Ogle issued a new commission for the Provincial Court that included Henry Hooper and three other men as new provincial justices (who could not hold concurrent commissions for a county court). Hooper’s unusually rapid promotion through the province’s judiciary continued in the next Provincial Court commission, issued just three months later in October 1735, when Hooper was added as a quorum justice after Charles Hammond and James Hollyday were appointed to the council and removed from the court commission.

Other judicial service within his nuclear family does not adequately explain the third Henry Hooper’s unusual career path—he did not simply follow his father or an older brother into positions of authority. Nor could he have gained much training for such positions by assisting his father or brother, because there is no evidence that his older brother ever held either county or provincial office and his father’s last known date of service was before 1700, when Hooper was likely under twenty years of age. There are occasional examples of young boys serving as assistants to their fathers, and it is entirely possible that the third Henry Hooper shadowed his father during county court sessions in the 1690s, but the long lag between those years and Hooper’s first appointment to the court suggests that his preparation for public service occurred later.

Looking beyond Henry Hooper’s nuclear family provides some interesting possibilities. Hooper’s maternal grandfather, Roger Woolford, served in the provincial assembly and was a justice in Somerset County, but Woolford’s service, like that of Hooper’s father, ended in the 1690s, and he died in the winter of 1701/2. Nor does Woolford’s will make any mention of his daughter or grandchildren, which does not preclude a meaningful connection between Henry and his grandfather but also does not lend any weight to such speculation. Hooper is more likely to have had significant contact with the next generation of Woolford kin, particularly his uncle, Roger Woolford (1670–1730). This younger Roger Woolford served as a county justice, sheriff, and delegate to the assembly in the 1710s and 1720s, years when Henry Hooper could have been observing, and thus learning, the roles and responsibilities of county officials. Woolford, moreover, sat as a justice on the Provincial Court from 1722 until his death in 1730; if the kinship connection between Woolford and Hooper translated into a mentoring relationship, then Woolford’s experience as a provincial justice could have shaped Hooper’s judicial career. Again, however, there is no direct evidence that the kinship connection was significant. The second Roger Woolford’s will, like that of his father, makes no mention of his Hooper kin.

There is evidence, albeit scant, that Henry Hooper did have meaningful contact with his maternal aunt, Elizabeth Woolford Ennalls Holland, and with her first husband, Thomas Ennalls. Ennalls, whose service as a county justice and in the lower house of the General Assembly overlapped that of the second Henry Hooper,
Colonel Henry Hooper

was arguably Dorchester County’s most prominent official in the first two decades of the eighteenth century, thanks to his appointment to the governor’s council in 1703. Henry Hooper’s connection to Thomas Ennalls was twofold, for Ennalls was both Hooper’s maternal aunt’s husband and Hooper’s wife’s uncle. Thomas Ennalls and Elizabeth Woolford Ennalls had no children; when Ennalls wrote his will in the spring of 1718 he left the bulk of his personal property, totaling more than £4,300 in Maryland currency, to his wife and to his nephew William Ennalls, brother-in-law of Henry Hooper. He also made numerous bequests of land and small amounts of personal property to the sons of his brothers as well as several token bequests to his surviving siblings and unmarried nieces. Seven bequests specified money to be used to buy commemorative rings, a not uncommon gesture in wills of this period, and included a bequest to “Henry Hooper Junior Son of Henry Hooper” consisting of “twenty five shillings to buy him a ring with.” This bequest suggests some measure of kinship and affection (the other six bequests being to some, but not all, of Ennalls’s siblings and to a handful of the children of his wife’s siblings), although the terse language of the will does not indicate whether Ennalls selected Hooper in recognition of their family ties or as a result of a relationship built on shared experience in mercantile activity or local governance.27

Like Thomas Ennalls, whose service to the Maryland colony could have provided Henry Hooper with a model for the role of elite men at the provincial level, Thomas’s brother Henry Ennalls (1675–1734) was another member of Hooper’s extended family whose public service could have influenced Hooper’s career. He was related to Henry Hooper in two ways, as another uncle of Henry’s wife, Mary Ennalls Hooper, and as the husband of Henry’s half-sister, Mary Hooper Ennalls (1674–1745). Although Henry Ennalls only served briefly in the lower house of the Assembly in the 1710s, he spent decades as a militia officer and as a justice of the Dorchester County court, culminating with at least nine years as chief justice. Although the nature and significance of Henry Hooper’s relationships with his Woolford and Ennalls kin cannot be determined from the available evidence, it is plausible that these connections afforded Hooper not only the mercantile opportunities hypothesized above but also practical training, through observation and mentoring, in the business of being a member of the county elite.28

Increasing prominence in the lower house of the General Assembly accompanied Henry Hooper’s ascendance from junior justice on the county bench to quorum justice of the Provincial Court. Consistently re-elected to the assembly throughout the 1730s, 1740s, and 1750s, Hooper served not only on multiple standing committees but also in numerous ad hoc conferences appointed to discuss pressing provincial issues. At the beginning of the 1732–1734 assembly, for example, Hooper was named to the Committee of Laws and also selected with seven other members of the Lower House “to Joyn in a Conference ... relating to the form of the Oath of Judge or Justice.” A few days later Hooper and five of his fellow delegates were “nominated ...
as Conferees to Treat with” members of the Upper House “in Relation to a Paper Currency Bill.” Hooper continued to serve on the Committee of Laws until he became Speaker of the House in 1754 (with the exception of the 1742–1744 assembly, when he was not a delegate). In addition, he served at various times on the Committee of Elections, Committee of Accounts, and Committee of Arms and Ammunition. In August 1745, Hooper began a period of service on the Committee of Aggrievances and Courts of Justice after William Stoughton, a delegate from Somerset County, “acquaint[ed] the House, that he is incapable, through Indisposition, of attending his Duty as a Member of the Committee.”

The periodic appointments of Henry Hooper to conferences with members of the Upper House reflect his involvement in many of the key provincial questions of the mid-eighteenth century and encompassed fiscal, judicial, and diplomatic affairs. These conference appointments ranged from a 1736 meeting to discuss “Advancing the Credit of the Paper Currency” to 1745 talks “relating to an Officers Fee Bill,” a 1746 committee “appointed to inspect into the State and Condition of the Repository and Records,” and, in 1754, an enquiry “into Ways and Means for raising Money sufficient for a Present to the Six Nations of Indians.” Hooper was also selected repeatedly to investigate the substance of petitions to the assembly, which typically involved competing claims to real property or motions to break entail for particular tracts of land. In 1741, for example, Hooper delivered to the Speaker of the House a report “By the Committee appointed to enquire into the Facts contained in the Petition of Thomas Spalding and Catherine his Wife” regarding a tract called “Crackbornes Purchase” in St. Mary’s County.

During these years of assembly service Hooper continued to sit as a justice on the Provincial Court. He attended the court’s sessions consistently during the 1730s, with appearances at both the spring and fall sessions from 1735 to 1742 (with the possible exception of the session that met in April 1742). Although included in the governor’s commissions for provincial justices issued in February 1743 and March 1744, Hooper is absent from the lists of justices in the records for the court’s sessions for those years, absences that coincide with his years of service as the Lord Proprietor’s prosecutor in Dorchester County. Hooper was omitted from commissions issued in 1745 and 1746, but was included again in August 1747; he sat with the court in October of that year and continued to serve on the provincial bench through 1748. Despite his inclusion in the commission issued in 1749, he did not sit with his fellow justices at the sessions in Annapolis between 1749 and 1751. A new commission, dated October 2, 1751, again removed Henry Hooper from the list of provincial justices; this withdrawal from the court persisted into the 1760s.

In the midst of the third Henry Hooper’s active participation in the governance of the Maryland colony we find the curious break in the early 1740s, when he left the assembly and the Provincial Court to practice in the county courts as an attorney. The evidence that Hooper did indeed practice law in the Dorchester and Talbot county
Colonel Henry Hooper

Courts is unequivocal, but the timing of that activity is unusual. His stint as a lawyer fits neither of the common profiles of mid-century attorneys in that he was not a “career attorney” whose primary occupation was the law, nor did he use activity as an attorney as a stepping-stone to his judicial career. Instead, Hooper interrupted his service as a justice and delegate to spend several years working not only as an attorney for his family and neighbors but also in the somewhat more prestigious role of the Lord Proprietor’s prosecutor (or clerk of indictments) for the Dorchester court. In doing so, it appears that Hooper paved the way for his son’s advancement as an attorney, as the younger Henry Hooper immediately succeeded his father as his Lordship’s prosecutor.32

The incomplete state of the Dorchester County judicial records unfortunately renders it impossible to determine exactly when Henry Hooper began to work as an attorney. His first extant appearance in that capacity is entered in the judicial record for August 1742, when Hooper represented the plaintiffs in four civil actions. Hooper must have petitioned the justices of the county court to admit him as an attorney prior to this time, but due to the absence of any judicial records between June 1734 (when Hooper was chief justice) and August 1742, the date and substance of that petition are lost.33

Qualifications for Maryland attorneys were imprecise during the eighteenth century. In 1708, Governor Seymour ordered that no one should be admitted as an attorney until he had “undergone an Examination of [his] Capacitys honesty and good behaviour” before the governor and council except “such as have been for some time members of some of the Inns of Court or Chancery” in England. In practice, however, the justices of each county’s court exercised their judgment as to whom to admit. Formal training in England was uncommon, and most of the men admitted as attorneys in the county and/or provincial courts had either served some type of apprenticeship or were self-taught. Given what is known about Henry Hooper’s career, an apprenticeship, although possible, is less likely than self-education, as his years in the assembly and his service as a county and provincial justice provided ample opportunity. It is likely that Hooper’s petition for admittance was similar to that of Henry Trippe, who informed the Dorchester court in March 1743 that “for Some Time past” he had studied “The Law and The Practice of courts” and he “Humbly pray[ed] to be admitted” as an attorney.34

The study of law undertaken by Henry Trippe, and perhaps by Henry Hooper as well, relied not only on observation at the county court sessions but also close reading of an assortment of law books. When Trippe died in 1744, the appraisers of his considerable estate noted more than fifty books, including Compleat Attorney, A Grand Abridgment of the Common and Statute Law of England, and Acts of Assembly in Maryland. Although the third Henry Hooper’s 1767 inventory does include books, they are unfortunately not listed by title. The inventories of both Thomas Ennalls (d. 1718) and William Ennalls (d. 1731) list a number of law books (at least
five of which William most likely inherited from Thomas), and it is plausible, given the kinship connections discussed above, that Hooper had access to their libraries in addition to whatever volumes he possessed himself. In March 1734, moreover, Henry Hooper received instruction from his fellow Dorchester justices “to buy the Statutes and some necessary books for the use of the County,” which suggests that, in addition to law books owned by individuals, some books owned by the county may have been available for study.

The third Henry Hooper’s abilities as an attorney must have been well established before August 1742, because he appears in the record for that court session not only as an attorney in civil suits but also as “Attorney of the Right Honorable the Lord Proprietary.” As the Lord Proprietor’s prosecutor during the August session, Hooper oversaw five criminal prosecutions and received orders to “exhibit an information” against county resident John Polk, whom Elinor Wall had sworn was the father of her illegitimate child. These actions were typical for a clerk of indictments in a Maryland county court. The attorney general of the colony appointed a clerk of indictments (also known as the “Lord Proprietor’s attorney” or as “his Lordships Prosecutor”) for each county to serve as his deputy to issue indictments and prosecute criminal cases. Some records suggest that the attorney general made clerk appointments in consultation with the justices of the counties. In 1724, for example, the justices of Somerset County received a letter from Daniel Dulany, identified as “Prosecutor Generall of his Lordhips [Pleas] in the province of maryland,” informing them that the county’s prosecutor had moved to Virginia. The justices then issued their “Opinion that Levin Gale . . . is a fitt person” and ordered “that he act as prosecutor in the County . . . and prosecute his Lordships pleas untill such time as a Commission be produced from the said Dulany for the Prosecutors place.” There is nothing in the extant records to indicate that Hooper began his service in this role at the August 1742 session. It is more likely that Hooper’s service as prosecutor, like Gale’s, began with an appointment by the court pending a commission from the attorney general. The record twice notes that “The Court appoints Colnel Henry Hooper his Lordships prosecutor During this Term” before an entry in June 1744 that states “Colo. Henry Hooper Qualifies as Prosecutor of his Lordship’s Pleas by virtue of a Commission granted unto him by Henry Darnal Esqr. Attorney General of this Province.”

By some accounts the appointment of clerks of indictment posed a challenge for colonial officials during the early to mid-eighteenth century, because the office required considerable legal acumen but reportedly was unattractive to professional lawyers. According to a message that members of the Maryland assembly’s Upper House delivered in October 1720 to their colleagues in the Lower House, “such Practitioners as are the most Capable to serve [as prosecutors] Absolutely Refuse to Accept the employ” so that “none but young and unexperienced Practitioners are willing to undertake that Office.” Yet difficulty finding capable men to serve as clerks of indictments may not have persisted throughout the period. The third Henry
Hooper’s qualifications to fill the position of prosecutor were probably similar to those of William Goldsborough, whom Attorney General Daniel Dulany commissioned as clerk of indictments for Somerset County in 1733. Dulany informed the Somerset justices that he had “Especiall Trust and Confidence . . . in the diligence Care and Circumspection of William Goldsborough . . . and of his Skill and Knowledge in the Laws & Customs of Great Brittain and of this province.” A number of men with successful careers in county and provincial government filled this role for a period of time, including not only Hooper but also fellow justices and delegates (and future members of the council), such as Levin Gale and Robert Jenkins Henry.

Henry Hooper continued to serve as the Lord Proprietor’s prosecutor and clerk of indictments until his son’s appointment in August 1745. He also continued to represent clients in civil cases from 1742 until at least 1745, although he never handled more than a few such cases at each court session. The bulk of the work of attorneys for civil actions during these years was handled by the Goldsborough brothers, Charles and William, whose younger brother Howes was the Dorchester County court clerk for the same period. Both Charles and William were admitted as attorneys in multiple counties on the Eastern Shore, and both practiced as well before the Provincial Court. As noted above, William Goldsborough also served as clerk of indictments for Somerset County for a period in the 1730s.

In 1745, having successfully established himself not only as a legislator and an administrator of justice but also as an attorney in the county courts, Henry Hooper resumed his service in the colony’s provincial government. Elected once again to represent Dorchester County in the lower house of the Assembly, Hooper returned to Annapolis in August 1745 and was promptly reappointed to the Committee of Laws and the Committee of Arms and Ammunition; later in the month he was added to the Committee of Aggrievances and Courts as well. Two years later Hooper also resumed his position as a quorum justice on the Provincial Court. As discussed above, commissions for the Provincial Court issued in August 1747, October 1747, and October 1749 included Hooper, who joined the court at several sessions in Annapolis in those years in addition to performing the duties of a provincial magistrate in his home county and in the neighboring counties of Somerset and Queen Anne’s.

For the next two decades the third Henry Hooper continued to serve his county and his province as a justice and delegate. The assembly records for the period from 1745 to 1754 are replete with Hooper’s contribution to Maryland’s governance as he sat on committees, delivered reports, prepared addresses to the governor, and cast votes. Hooper’s absence from the Provincial Court in the 1750s is explained by his reappointment as chief justice of the Dorchester County Court, beginning with a commission in December 1751 and continuing to the commission issued in March 1764. In these years, as throughout his decades of service, the third Henry Hooper...
demonstrated an ability to balance the needs of his Dorchester County constituents with the concerns of Maryland's Lords Proprietor and governors.40

Henry Hooper's colleagues in the lower house of the Assembly likely recognized a centrist tendency in his political sensibility, which allowed him to vote with the colony's "court" party in favor of the Proprietor's prerogative on some issues, but to side at other times with the "country" party in defense of the rights and liberties of colonists (usually, that is, in defense of the rights of the Lower House). Perhaps in appreciation of Hooper's decades of experience as both a delegate and a justice, and probably mindful as well of his useful connections in the provincial and county elites, in December 1754 the Lower House delegates “unanimously made Choice of Col. Henry Hooper, a Delegate for Dorchester County, to be their Speaker, and placed him in the Chair.” Hooper was then “presented to the Governor,” Horatio Sharpe, who readily “gave his Approbation.”41

The governor's approbation found expression again in a letter to Lord Baltimore, written in December 1764, in which Sharpe recommended “as a Person worthy of a Seat [in the council] Colonel Henry Hooper . . . who has for many years been Speaker of the Lower House of Assembly where he behaved with great Moderation & respect towards the Government.” Sharpe elaborated in a letter written the same day to Cecilius Calvert, the colony's Principal Secretary in England, regarding Hooper: “All I shall say of this Gentleman is that he has during many years acted an upright moderate Part in the Lower House of Assembly & has the Reputation of being the best Justice of Peace in the Province.” Sharpe explained to Calvert that Hooper continued to enjoy the support of the freeholders in Dorchester County, as he “would have been again elected a Representative for his County had he not declined it on Account of his Age & the continual Attendance he was obliged to in the Lower House by being Speaker.” Sharpe also reassured the Lord Proprietor that “tho his Age made him decline coming again to undergo the fatigue of sitting constantly as Speaker in the Lower House I doubt not but as he enjoys a good State of Health he will give due Attendance in the Upper.” Early in 1765 Calvert wrote to Sharpe to confirm “his Lordships appointment by your recomendation for Mr Hooper . . . to be of the Council.” Although Calvert's letter was evidently delayed in its passage across the Atlantic Ocean, in September 1765 Sharpe informed the council that Lord Baltimore “had appointed Henry Hooper Esquire a Member of the Council and the Upper House of Assembly,” at which time Hooper took “the several Oaths to the Government” and “the Oath of a Councillor and thereupon [took] his place at the Board accordingly.” A year later, while still serving as a member of the council, Hooper returned to the Provincial Court for the October session, having been added to a new commission in the position of chief justice. Hooper replaced the previous chief justice, John Brice, who died after the April 1766 court, but only served for the one session before he, too, died.42

In April 1767 the Maryland Gazette published the news of Henry Hooper's death and included a succinct summary of his many contributions to local and provincial
governance. The Gazette informed its readers that “On Monday Evening died, aged upwards of Eighty Years, The Honourable Henry Hooper, Esquire; Chief Justice of the Provincial Court, and One of his Lordship’s Council of State.” Adding that Hooper “was formerly a Representative for Dorchester County, and for many Years Speaker of the Lower House of Assembly,” the Gazette asserted that “in all [these] Stations he maintain’d an excellent Character.” Building upon the foundation of wealth and connections laid by his father and grandfather, the third Henry Hooper crafted a remarkable history of public service. Spanning more than four decades, from his first election as a delegate to the Lower House in 1722, until his final years as a member of the council and chief justice of the Provincial Court, Hooper’s service in his county and his colony stand as a model of the opportunities—and responsibilities—of elite men in early Maryland. Like Hooper, men of wealth and social stature gained experience in local government primarily through observation and practice; a subset achieved more prominent positions through their connections and their abilities. And some, again like Hooper, pursued independent study of the law to expand their opportunities for service. In Hooper’s case, that blend of status, experience, and self-education combined—we can surmise—with sincere interest in governance and a sense of civic responsibility to forge a remarkable career. As the Gazette observed in 1767, “By his Death, the Public . . . lost an able, upright, Magistrate, and a very valuable Member of Society.”

NOTES

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3. For the first Henry Hooper’s approximate age in 1670, see Somerset County Court (Judicial Record), MSA C1774-2:9. For Hooper’s headright claims, see Land Office (Patent Record) MSA S920-4:4140 and S920-6:239–40. For patents in Calvert County, see Maryland Indexes (Patents, Index), MSA S1426. Unless otherwise stated, all manuscript sources cited in this essay are held by the Maryland State Archives, Annapolis, Maryland.

It is likely that the first Henry Hooper and his family resided in Virginia before migrat-
ing to Maryland in 1651; additional evidence suggests that they went back for a period in the 1650s before settling permanently in Maryland after 1657. See Virginia Land Office Patents 1:316, 4:108 (held by the Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia) and Beverly Fleet, *Virginia Colonial Abstracts* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1988), 1:687, 689.

Although the Henry Hooper who is the focus of this essay was commonly identified as “Colonel Henry Hooper” during the last few decades of his life, this essay avoids use of the militia title. In order to distinguish between “our” Henry Hooper and his relatives bearing the same name, the text generally refers to Colonel Hooper’s grandfather as the first Henry Hooper and to his father as the second Henry Hooper. Colonel Hooper thus becomes the third Henry Hooper.

4. For Hooper’s association with Meese, see *Arch. Md.*, 10:403–4 and 489. For examples of Meese’s trade in Maryland, see *Arch. Md.*, 10:394 and 41:23, 24, and 595. For Hooper’s patent, see Land Office (Patent Record, Original), MSA S920-6:239–40. For further evidence of Hooper’s trading activity and dealings with servants, see *Arch. Md.*, 10:334, 452, 473, 480, 498, 41:5–6, 31, 35, 179; and 66:360. For the shallop purchase, see *Arch. Md.*, 10:83–84. For the trading deposition, see Somerset County Court (Judicial Record), MSA C1774-2:9.


6. Maryland Indexes (Patents, Index), MSA S1426; Prerogative Court (Inventories & Accounts), MSA S36-3:209–10. The Calvert inventory totaled nearly 17,000 pounds of tobacco, while the Dorchester appraisal listed goods worth 2,990 pounds. The combined estate ranks Hooper as a middling planter, with a value that falls just under the 57th percentile for a sample of Maryland inventories recorded during the period 1671 to 1680. Historic St. Mary’s City Chesapeake Inventory Data File.

It is not entirely clear whether the Dorchester land patented by Henry Hooper in the 1660s was taken up by the first Henry or his son Henry, as only one of the patents specifies “Henry Hooper, Junior.” Subsequent deeds suggest that most was patented by the son, because there is no indication that ownership of the tracts had passed to him from his father. For examples, see the sale of “Buck Valley” in 1671 and “Buck Ridge” in 1689. Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-2:265 and 3:233. Further evidence that the second Henry Hooper was actively acquiring land in Dorchester appears in his deposition, given in 1706, stating that “some time in September in the year 1669” he was “going up Transquaken River in company with one Thomas Howton and others with intent to discover land to survey and take up.” Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-10:176.

7. A deposition taken in August 1706 identifies “Mr. Henry Hooper aged sixty three years or thereabouts,” which indicates he was born circa 1643. Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-10:176. See also *Arch. Md.*, 748:880–81. For the second Henry Hooper’s first commission as a justice, see *Arch. Md.*, 5:52–53. A subsequent commission identifies “Henry Hooper Junior,” thus clarifying that the Dorchester justice is the second Henry Hooper, not his father. *Arch. Md.*, 51:365–66. For additional commissions, see *Arch. Md.*, 15:38, 69, 131, 326; 17:45, 381; 13:244; and 20:138.

8. The second Henry Hooper’s attendance at the sessions is gleaned from the Assembly proceedings contained in *Arch. Md.*, volume 19 (quote at p. 242). Hooper’s service as a county justice appears to have been similarly circumscribed after the late 1690s, although the absence of a consistent judicial record renders the evidence inconclusive. Hooper was again listed first in the commission issued in 1697 and evidently sat on the bench in 1698, but he does not appear as a justice in other extant records for the remainder of his life. *Arch. Md.*, 23:129; Provincial Court (Judgment Record), MSA S551-19:593.
Colonel Henry Hooper


10. For the marriage of Rebecca Denwood and Nehemiah Covington, see Somerset County Court (Land Records), MSA C1778-24:36. For Mary Woolford Hooper’s birth year, see her deposition, given in 1723, which states her age as “aged sixty years or thereabouts.” Chancery Court (Chancery Record), MSA S517-6:974. Although the language of the deposition suggests that she may have been born before 1663, her parents were not married until March 1661. Torrence, *Old Somerset*, 464. Torrence does not include Mary Woolford Hooper as a daughter of Roger Woolford and Mary Denwood Woolford, most likely because Mary’s birth, unlike that of her siblings, probably occurred in Virginia and is not recorded in the Somerset County land records. For the births of Mary’s siblings, see Somerset County Court (Land Records), MSA C1778-24:271, 274, 276, and 280. The third Henry Hooper clarified his connection to the Woolford family in the 1720s when he requested two justices of the Dorchester County court to certify “the relation and affinity that is between the said Hooper and Colonel Roger Woollford,” the eldest son of Roger Woolford and Mary Denwood Woolford. The justices stated that “the said Hooper is the said Woollfords Sister’s son and thereupon nephew to the above named Roger Woolford and this is what is & hath been currently reported and acknowledged and is believed.” Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-10:108. For evidence that the second Henry Hooper and Mary Woolford were married by March 1689, see Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-3:239.

11. Prerogative Court (Wills), MSA S538-16:159 (Henry) and 22:248 (Mary). Richard Hooper died in 1719, two decades before Mary Woolford Hooper wrote her will, which could account for his absence from her will even if he were her son. In her 1740 will, however, she identifies and leaves property to the children of her deceased son Thomas but makes no mention of the children of Richard, whose son Henry likely did not die until 1749.

The genealogical information published in *A Biographical Dictionary of the Maryland Legislature* links Elizabeth Hooper Travers as a daughter of Elizabeth Denwood Hooper, but she is clearly identified in Mary Woolford Hooper’s will as a daughter (unlike Mary Hooper Ennalls, who is not mentioned). Papenfuse, et. al., *Biographical Dictionary*, 1:456.

12. Papenfuse, et al., *Biographical Dictionary* 1:169, 306–11, 455–56. This source states that Rosannah Hooper married the younger son of John Hodson (d. 1730), commonly known as John Hodson, Quartus, but careful sifting of the probate, land, and judicial records clarifies her marriage to the elder son, also named John, who died in 1749. Prerogative Court (Wills), MSA S538-19:899 and 27:6; Prerogative Court (Inventories), MSA S534-15:614 and 43:113; Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-11:491; Dorchester County Court (Judgment Record), MSA C704-6:22.

13. The third Henry Hooper is generally said to have been born in 1687. Yet the only evidence for this birth year is the obituary published in the *Maryland Gazette* in 1767, which described Hooper as “aged upwards of eighty years,” an imprecision common to documents of the period. Hooper likely was somewhat older than eighty in 1767, and probably was born between 1680 and 1685. Before 1680 is improbable, as his mother was born about 1663 and is unlikely to have married and born children before the late 1670s. After 1685 is similarly unlikely, as Henry probably was of age and had at least one child by about 1707. *Maryland Gazette* Collection, MSA SC 2731:285 No. 1128 (23 April 1767); Mary Woolford Hooper deposition, Chancery Court (Chancery Record), MSA S517-6:974; Henry Hooper (1707–1790) lease, cited in Gaius M. Brumbaugh, *Maryland Records Colonial, Revolutionary, County and
Church from Original Sources, 2 vols. (Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1967), 2:37. This last source identifies Henry Hooper, son of the third Henry Hooper, as forty years old in 1747, which suggests that his parents were married not later than 1707. But again, the reliability of this age information is questionable. It is possible that Henry Hooper and Mary Ennalls Hooper were not married until a few years later, although they were definitely married by December 1712. Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-6:197. For transactions using the “mariner” and “Gent” identification, see Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-9:53, 113; 10:125, 148, 249, 258, 276; and 11:44, 116.


15. Arch. Md., 20:454–56; Prerogative Court (Wills), MSA S538-6:56; Arch. Md., 25:598 and 22:29; Prerogative Court (Inventories), MSA S534-2:4–22. All inventory values given in Maryland currency are adjusted using an index created for the St. Mary’s City Commission and updated by P.M.G. Harris. This index converts raw inventory values to 1700–1709 prices.

16. Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-8:74, 75; Dorchester County Court (Judgment Record), MSA C704-3:199; Prerogative Court (Wills), MSA S538-14:631–37; Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-9:156; 10:55, 263, 411; Somerset County Court (Judicial Record), MSA C1774-28:118–19; Prerogative Court (Inventories), MSA S534-16:666–78; Prerogative Court (Testamentary Papers), MSA S541-44 (Box 39 Folder 38); Dorchester County Court (Judgment Record), MSA C704-3:145.

17. For an overview of Chesapeake trade with the West Indies, see Middleton, Tobacco Coast, 197–232. For Price’s assessment of Thomas Starke, see Jacob M. Price, “Sheffield v. Starke: Institutional Experimentation in the London–Maryland Trade c. 1696–1706,” in Business in the Age of Reason, ed. R. P. T. Davenport-Hines and Jonathan Liebenau (London: F. Cass, 1987), 27. For the Stork case, see Chancery Court (Chancery Record), MSA S517-4:460, 466, 477, 481, 507, 514, 521–22. It should be noted that “Mr Jn. Scarth,” identified in the last chancery court entry as holding some of the “bills & Money” for the sale of the slaves, could be Jonathan Scarth, merchant of London, who in 1722 gave power of attorney to William Ennalls, the third Henry Hooper’s wife’s brother. Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-10:44.


Additional evidence that might connect the third Henry Hooper to the slave trade appears in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, which identifies a Henry Hooper as captain of the Mary, a vessel owned by the Royal African Company that transported slaves from the Gold Coast to Antigua in 1708. Voyage #99010, Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. http://www.slavevoyages.org (accessed February 23, 2015). The frequency with which the surname Hooper appears in English records of the period and the lack of evidence connecting the ship in question with Maryland, however, argue against a definite link to the third Henry Hooper, although it is possible that archival work in England and/or the Caribbean may yield additional, supporting evidence. I am indebted to the MdHM’s reviewer for drawing my attention to this intriguing information.

19. John Brooke’s will, written in January 1693, bequeathed “to the First Child that my Sonn Joseph Enals Shall have by my Daughter Five hundred Acres of Land Called porck pekam & One hundred & Fifty Acres Called Crowes Nest.” Although the will specifies 150 acres, the patent and all subsequent deeds for “Crowes Nest” involve only 100 acres. There is no
extant deed transferring ownership of these tracts from an Ennalls child to Henry Hooper. Thus his wife, Mary Ennalls Hooper, must have been the eldest child of Joseph Ennalls and Mary Brooke Ennalls. The available evidence suggests that Mary Ennalls Hooper was born no earlier than the spring of 1693, which means she likely was barely sixteen years old when her father died in 1709, and roughly nineteen years old in 1712, by which time she was married to Henry Hooper. Probate records for Joseph Ennalls, regrettably, do not identify any of his children and therefore do not indicate whether Henry Hooper and Mary Ennalls Hooper were married as early as 1709. Prerogative Court (Wills), MSA S538-7:26; Prerogative Court (Inventories & Accounts), MSA S536-43:85.

20. Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-7:197; Prerogative Court (Wills), MSA S538-16:159. The appraisers of the second Henry Hooper’s personal property valued his estate at just under £580, which places him in the top ten percent of sampled Maryland estate values for the decade 1716 to 1725. Prerogative Court (Inventories), MSA S534-4:273; Historic St. Mary’s City Chesapeake Inventory Data File.

According to the terms of the second Henry Hooper’s will, nearly all of his personal property passed to his four youngest sons and his widow. As was then common, Hooper likely had already gifted livestock and household goods to his six married daughters, and his will stipulates that his two unmarried daughters, Rebecca and Priscilla, should each receive “one feather bed and furniture two cows two calves two heifers and six ewes” as well as twenty shillings out of the estate. The third Henry Hooper and his brother Richard probably had also received goods when they attained their majority or perhaps upon marriage; as with the married daughters, they and their offspring received only a token share of the personal estate. Two grandsons are identified in the will: Henry Hooper, son of Henry, received an enslaved boy, and Henry Hooper, son of Richard, received one shilling (as did each of the married daughters). To his eldest surviving son, the third Henry Hooper, the second Henry Hooper bequeathed “three cows in full for his portion or part of my personal estate.”

The third Henry Hooper and his wife, Mary Ennalls Hooper, further clarified title to the tracts “Porpeigham” and “Crowes Nest” in 1740. Again in consideration of the tracts “Hooper’s Lot” and “Hooper’s Fortune” Henry and Mary “sold” the two tracts she had inherited from John Brooke, this time to Henry’s brother, James Hooper, to whom the second Henry Hooper had bequeathed the tracts in 1720. It is not clear why this second deed was deemed necessary, as there is no evidence that any of Mary’s nephews or other kin tried to claim the land. Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-13:11.

21. Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-9:53, 113; 10:125, 148, 249, 258, 276. Securing title to “Goodridges Choice” took several years and numerous deeds as Hooper reassembled much of a tract that had been divided by bequests and previous sales. Ultimately an act of assembly was required in order to break an entail established by Andrew Gray in a will written in 1705. See Arch. Md., 39:444, 485.

22. Hooper’s legislative service is summarized in Papenfuse, et al., Biographical Dictionary, 1:456. A comprehensive list of the members and session dates for each assembly for the entire colonial period can be found in ibid., 1:15–75.

23. Other sources, such as the county judicial records and the provincial assembly records, at times identified this Henry Hooper by his rank in the militia rather than as “gentleman.” These records indicate his appointment as a captain from 1722 to 1734 and a colonel thereafter. For examples, see Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-10:53 and Dorchester County Court (Judgment Record), MSA C704-3:307.

The quorum justices appointed in 1732 were Henry Ennalls, Walter Campbell, Charles Nutter, Tobias Pollard, Peter Taylor, and Thomas Woolford. The non-quorum justices, in
addition to Hooper, Nevett, and White, included John Hodson, Secundus, John Lecompte, and Thomas Hicks. Governor and Council (Commission Record), MSA S1080-1:48, 50, 53.

It is not immediately clear why the Commission Book includes three separate orders for Dorchester County in 1732. The second commission was issued not long after the Lower House of the assembly informed the governor, Samuel Ogle, that its Committee of Aggrievances was of the opinion that in 1728 the justices of Dorchester County had “Assumed a much greater power than they can derive from any Law in being in making a rule of Court” regarding the sheriff’s fees for serving attachments and executions. Governor Ogle pledged to “take the most Effectual Measures to relieve such as may have Suffered, and to prevent Abuses of the like Nature for the future” but any measures he may have taken did not include removing the justices involved. Seven justices were identified as sitting on the bench for the relevant 1728 session: Henry Ennalls, John Rider, Walter Campbell, Charles Nutter, Peter Taylor, Thomas Taylor, and Tobias Pollard. All of these men continued to be commissioned into the mid-1730s except Thomas Taylor, who died before April 1729, and John Rider, who was appointed to the governor’s council before July 10, 1729. The timing of the second commission, therefore, must be coincidental, and not a response to the over-reaching of the 1728 court. Arch. Md., 25:473–80; Prerogative Court (Inventories), MSA S534-15:311–17; Arch. Md., 36:309.

The simplest explanation for the multiple commissions is that the governor issued the first commission in May to add new justices not only to replace Anthony Rawlings (who moved to Delaware sometime between February 1729 and March 1733) but also to increase the number of county justices. It is possible that the August commission, in which Thomas Nevett was inserted into the list before John White, was issued to correct an error in the May commission. The order in the August list suggests that Nevett was considered senior to White and should have been included in the May list, as new justices typically were added at the end of commissions and moved higher as senior justices were removed because of appointments to other offices, illness, or death. The third commission, which is identical to the August list, is part of a complete reissue of commissions for all twelve Maryland counties accomplished in October and November. For the relocation of Anthony Rawlings, see Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-8:253 and 9:37.

24. Provincial Court (Judgment Record), MSA S551-43:289; 44:1. Because justices could not hold concurrent commissions, Hooper was omitted from the next extant commission for the Dorchester County Court, issued in October 1738. Governor and Council (Commission Record), MSA S1080-1:61.


27. That Henry Hooper shared a meaningful connection with his aunt, Elizabeth Woolford Ennals Holland, is suggested by a codicil to her will, written in 1739. In the codicil Holland bequeathed her “four wheel Chaise with all the furniture thereto belonging to my Nephew Colonel Henry Hooper.” Prerogative Court (Wills), MSA S538-22:123. For a summary of the career of Thomas Ennals, see Papenfuse, et al., Biographical Dictionary, 1:311. For his probate information, see Prerogative Court (Wills), MSA S538-14:651–37 and Prerogative Court (Inventories), MSA S534-2:4–22. The inventory value in the text is adjusted using the St. Mary’s City Commission index. William Holland, Elizabeth Woolford Ennals Holland’s second husband, was a resident of Anne Arundel County. Holland, like Thomas Ennals, served
as a county justice and delegate before appointment to the council. Holland also sat on the bench of the Provincial Court, including twelve years as that court’s chief justice. Although Holland’s will does not suggest any ties of affection to Hooper, the two men probably knew each other fairly well, as Hooper’s first service in the Lower House of the assembly occurred during Holland’s last years in the Upper House. For Holland’s career history, see Papenfuse, et al., *Biographical Dictionary*, 1:447.


29. The task of amending the justices’ oath was intertwined with a lengthy dispute between the Lower House and the Lord Proprietor about whether “the Laws Statutes and Reasonable Customs of England” would apply in cases where “the Laws Customs & directions of the Acts of Assembly of this Province - are Silent.” *Arch. Md.*, 37:386. See also *Arch. Md.*, 35:ix; 36:xi, xiii; and 37:xvi, xvii. For the other examples of Hooper’s conference appointments, see *Arch. Md.*, 37:447, 382, 396, 406. For a summary of Hooper’s committee service, see Papenfuse, et al., *Biographical Dictionary*, 1:456. For his 1745 appointment to the Committee of Aggrievances, see *Arch. Md.*, 44:91.

30. For conference appointments, see *Arch. Md.*, 39:387; 44:31, 446; 50:479. For the Spalding petition, see *Arch. Md.*, 42:211.

31. Provincial Court (Judgment Record), MSA S551-43:289; 44:1, 145, 223, 381; 45:1, 203; 46:1, 173; 47:32, 191, 361, 461, 565; 48:1, 108, 159, 287, 405, 635; 49:215, 441; 50:1, 20, 219; 51:485, 653, 839; 52:1, 159, 363; 53:1, 203; 54:465, 797, 811; Governor and Council (Commission Record), MSA S1080-1:57, 70, 75, 83, 92, 93, 100, 123, 142, 147, 157. Hooper’s failure to appear at the Annapolis sessions does not preclude performance of useful services as a provincial magistrate. One of the issues that cropped up repeatedly during the eighteenth century was the hardship faced by residents of the Eastern Shore who had business before the Provincial Court, which—for most of the period—met only in Annapolis. There were multiple efforts to institute a circuit system to mitigate this hardship. A number of these “Assize” laws were passed by the assembly only to be rejected by the Lord Proprietor, but “An Act for the Tryal of all Matters of Fact, in the Several Counties where they have arisen, or shall arise” was successfully enacted in 1723 and continued in 1727. *Arch. Md.*, 36:565. After the 1723 law expired in 1731, the assembly enacted a nearly identical law in 1732, which was continued in 1736 but expired in 1740. *Arch. Md.*, 37:523. There is ample evidence that Hooper and other provincial justices attended courts convened in the counties rather than in Annapolis. In 1738, for example, the assembly considered a report from “the Honourable Henry Hooper and Stephen Knight Esquires two of his Lordships Justices of the Provincial Court being appointed to ride the Circuit on the Eastern Shore” regarding charges made “at the Court of Assize held for Talbot County.” *Arch. Md.*, 40:193. After the expiration of the assize laws, provincial justices continued to perform services in their home and neighboring counties, such as taking depositions and witnessing conveyances. For examples, see *Arch. Md.*, 42:655 and Dorchester County Court (Land Records), MSA C710-13:43. In addition, provincial justices occasionally were commissioned to hold court in the counties under either an “Especial Commission of Oyer & Terminer & Goal Delivery” or a “Commission of Assize.” In 1743, for example, the governor ordered a “Commission of Assize nisi Prius Oyer & Terminer and Goal Delivery issued for the Eastern Shore directed to Henry Hooper & Stephen Knight Esquires.” Governor and Council (Commission Record), MSA S1080-1:61, 76.

32. Although the attorney who prosecuted criminal cases is never referred to as the clerk of indictments in the Dorchester judicial records, other county courts did use that designation. See, for example, Somerset County Court (Judicial Record), MSA C1774-17:354 and 31:77.
For the appointment of Henry Hooper (ca. 1707–1790) as “his Lordships Prosecutor,” see Dorchester County Court (Judgment Record), MSA C704-7:409.

33. Hooper’s clients in his first extant civil actions were William Perry, Francis Lee and Company, John Stevens, and William Adams. Dorchester County Court (Judgment Record), MSA C710-6:3, 6, 10, 15.


Day’s compendium of Maryland lawyers unfortunately conflates the career of the third Henry Hooper with that of his son, Henry Hooper (ca. 1707–1790). The chaotic state of the Dorchester judicial records for the 1740s contributes to the confusion, but when the records are sorted carefully it is evident that Colonel Henry Hooper was an attorney from sometime before August 1742 until at least October 1745, when Mister Henry Hooper, Junior began to practice as well. It is clear that father and son overlapped as attorneys in Robert Allen’s suit against Thomas Flower. In this action Allen is represented by “Henry Hooper his Attorney” while Flower responds “by Henry Hooper Junior his Attorney.” During the same court session “Mr Henry Hooper” took “the Oath of an Attorney of this Court And [was] Admitted an Attorney of Said Court.” Dorchester County Court (Judgment Record), MSA C704-7:398, 409. Day also identifies the Henry Hooper admitted to practice in Talbot County in August 1744 as the third Henry Hooper’s son, but again, the record explicitly identifies Colonel Henry Hooper, while his son in these years is always identified as Mister or Captain. Talbot County Court (Judgment Record), MSA C1875-43:45.

35. Prerogative Court (Inventories), MSA S534-2:4 (Thomas Ennalls), 16:66 (William Ennalls), 31:173 (Henry Trippe), and 93:247 (Henry Hooper); Dorchester County Court (Judgment Record), C704-3:276. Day, Social Study of Lawyers, 60–79, discusses the acquisition of law books by individuals and by the county courts.

36. Dorchester County Court (Judgment Record), C704-6:19–25; Somerset County Court (Judicial Record), C1774:27:138; Dorchester County Court (Judgment Record), C704-7:48, 107, 108.

37. For the scarcity of qualified lawyers willing to serve, see Arch. Md., 34:46 and Day, Social Study of Lawyers, 110–15. For William Goldsborough’s commission, see Somerset County Court (Judicial Record), MSA C1774-31:77. For the careers of Levin Gale and Robert Jenkins Henry, see Papenfuse, et al., Biographical Dictionary, 1:337–38 and 437–38.


39. Arch. Md., 44:66, 91; Governor and Council (Commission Record), MSA S1080-1:100; Provincial Court (Judgment Record), MSA S551-51:653; 52:363.

40. Arch. Md., vols. 44, 46, 50, passim; Governor and Council (Commission Record), MSA S1080-1:130, 136, 143, 164, 168, 184, 207.

41. Divisive splits between “court” and “country” are discussed in the introductions to several volumes of the Arch. Md. For examples, see Arch. Md., 37:xviii–xix and 44:vi–xxii. Hooper’s moderate position has complicated modern assessments of his politics, as he is linked to the court party in volume 37 but is identified as part of the country party in volume 44. For Hooper’s election as speaker, see Arch. Md., 50:588. For a brief discussion of the office of the speaker in Maryland, see David W. Jordan, Foundations of Representative Government in Maryland, 1632–1715 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 91–92 and 166.

42. For Sharpe’s letters to Cecilius Calvert and Lord Baltimore, see Arch. Md., 14:186–88. For the Lord Proprietor’s approval (and the delay receiving Calvert’s letters), see Arch. Md.,
31:560–65. For Hooper’s oaths and first service on the council, see Arch. Md., 32:107. For his return to the Provincial Court, see Governor and Council (Commission Record), MSA S1080-1:219.
43. Maryland State Archives, Maryland Gazette Collection, MSA SC 2731:285 No. 1128 (April 23, 1767).
Mary Ann Caton, the eldest Caton sister, married Robert Patterson in Baltimore. She was known for her beauty and kindness in America and Europe. After his death she returned to England where she married Richard Wellesley. (Maryland Historical Society.)
Charles Carroll of Carrollton and the Creation of the “Three American Graces”

MARY CLEMENT JESKE

In the spring of 1816, three of Charles Carroll of Carrollton’s four Caton granddaughters, Mary Ann, Elizabeth, and Louisa, sailed from Baltimore on an intended two-year voyage to Europe, two of them never to return. Carroll (1737–1832), a leader of the American Revolutionary movement in Maryland, the only Catholic signer of the Declaration of Independence, and a patriarch of one of Maryland’s wealthiest families, was the father of three children who lived past childhood and more than a dozen grandchildren, but his daughter Mary Caton’s family always enjoyed a preferential place in his affections. It was Carroll who made possible his granddaughters’ European adventure and who provided the financial support that allowed the two younger sisters, Louisa and Elizabeth (sometimes called Bess or Bessy, but always Betsy to her grandfather), to continue living in Europe long after he himself believed they should have returned home. Eventually all three women would make spectacular marriages into titled families and settle in Britain, far distant from the man who had so influenced their lives. It is unlikely that Carroll intended or foresaw the marriages that would result in a lifelong separation from his beloved granddaughters, but he nonetheless welcomed their impressive marital alliances. Somewhat ironically, the Revolutionary War leader who had risked his life and fortune for American independence was enormously pleased by his granddaughters’ reception in England and eventual marriages into the ranks of the British aristocracy.

When the three Baltimore belles left Maryland in the spring of 1816, no one at the time, not the sisters themselves, their contemporaries, their ambitious mother, nor their grandfather, could imagine the life-altering outcome of the venture or the glittering futures that awaited them. Although they no doubt entertained hopes of excitement, adventure, and, possibly marriage when they set sail from Baltimore, their welcome into British high society was by no means inevitable. British elites admitted few Americans into their ranks, regardless of their status at home, but the Caton sisters, to the delight of their family and chagrin of their enemies, enjoyed an immediate, unprecedented success virtually from the moment they set foot on British

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soil. Welcomed into the highest echelons of the British aristocracy with invitations to the most exclusive dinners, parties, balls, and other galas, the sisters, dubbed the “Three American Graces,” quickly became the darlings of high society.

What accounts for the extraordinary attention lavished on these outsiders from the wilds of America? Nearly a century later, wealthy American “dollar princesses,” depicted in such works as Edith Wharton’s The Buccaneers, would parlay newly made American fortunes into marriages with impoverished but titled European families, a pattern that fails to account for the Catons’ success. None of the sisters initially had any fortune to speak of, and even had they been so endowed, their Catholic faith would have served as a bar to many British aristocrats, no matter how financially strapped. The families they married into were not, in any case, impoverished nobles hoping for economic salvation, nor did they always welcome the alliances. Furthermore, at the time of their arrival and warm reception, Mary Ann, the most highly regarded of the three, could offer no marital prospects to potential fortune seekers as she was already married, with her husband Robert Patterson quite conspicuously in tow.

Initially, the most important factor accounting for the welcome they received was their connection to Lady Mary Bagot and her husband, Charles Bagot, the British minister to the United States who, during their time in Washington (1816–1819), became close friends of the Carroll-Caton clan and source of the all-important letters of introduction that gained the Americans entree into Lady Bagot’s social circle, which included, most significantly, her uncle, the Duke of Wellington. Thanks to Lady Bagot’s letters, soon after their arrival the sisters received an invitation to dine with Wellington and, in a most unprecedented and significant turn of events, soon found themselves swept into the duke’s inner circle. Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington (1769–1852), the greatest hero of the day, was then at the height of his popularity, having vanquished the French emperor Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo a year earlier (June 1815) and bringing to an end more than two decades of nearly continuous European warfare. The patronage of the duke, who reputedly became infatuated with the beautiful Mary Ann, ensured the Catons’ success. “Everybody is wild with admiration of our wonderful hero,” wrote one contemporary. “Treated almost as a sovereign prince” in London, “his conversation conferred distinction” upon any woman singled out by him.1

Successfully exploiting the opportunity afforded by their introduction to Lady Bagot’s circle required particular assets which the sisters by all accounts enjoyed in abundance: their famed beauty, confidence, charm, intelligence, breeding, and education, as well as their connection to a wealthy family of distinction, albeit an American one. Their supposed “fortunes,” even though at the time largely non-existent, would undoubtedly have been an essential requisite to their entree. Mary Ann’s sister-in-law, Madame Betsy Patterson Bonaparte, the abandoned wife of the emperor Napoleon’s younger brother, Jerome, and lifelong enemy of the Caton sisters, would
later accuse them of falsely portraying themselves as heiresses, “in affirming they had forty thousand pounds fortune, besides great expectations from grandpapa.”

But no doubt in their own minds the sisters, as the favored granddaughters of the exceedingly, by American standards, wealthy Charles Carroll, in fact were (or would in future be) well-endowed heiresses, a belief that imbued them with a natural and deeply felt confidence in themselves and their place in the world critical to their acceptance by members of the British upper class. And finally, the fact that there were three of them, sisters no less, probably also played a role. One beautiful American heiress might have made a minor splash, but three beautiful, fascinating women, each with her own unique personality and charm, granddaughters of the venerable patriot Charles Carroll, reputedly one of the richest men in America, suddenly and unexpectedly dropped in their midst, no doubt created a much greater sensation than any would have individually.

Aside from their natural beauty and other inherent traits, all of the factors that coalesced to ensure the Catons’ success abroad can be traced to one principle source: their grandfather, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, arguably the most significant force in the Caton sisters’ lives from their childhood until the time of his death in 1832 at age ninety-five. Just as he was responsible, if indirectly, for their introduction to the Bagots as well as a stream of other distinguished visitors, Carroll provided the financial security and wealth that formed the bedrock of the sisters’ existence. That their parents had no money of their own, that their father would have in fact landed in jail as an insolvent debtor, leaving them shamed and impoverished, was of no consequence. Their grandfather’s fortune, even though he maintained tight control of it until his death, was the family’s fortune, and in a sense, their fortune, there to be relied upon whenever the need arose. Carroll’s money defined their lives. It provided the homes, city and country, in which they grew up, the horses they rode, the clothes they wore, their carriages, household goods and furnishings, and the slaves who toiled, unacknowledged, on their behalf. It paid for their elite education, an asset signifying their privileged status, it promised them an inheritance and a secure future, and it financed their entry into European society. Luxury, refinement, security, everything defining and declaring their exalted place in the world, came from their grandfather.

The wealth and privilege that defined the Caton sisters’ existence was not, however, an inevitable entitlement shared equally among all of Carroll’s descendants. Until the end of his long life, Carroll retained absolute authority over the family fortune, the foundations of which had been laid by his determined and shrewd grandfather, known as Charles Carroll the Settler (1660–1720), who had fled religious persecution in Ireland to build a better life in the New World. The Settler’s eldest surviving son, also Charles (1702–1782), devoted his life to expanding that fortune and securing it for future generations by the creation of an heir, his only son, Carroll of Carrollton, worthy to shoulder the responsibility. Carroll of Carrollton proved more than equal
to the task, greatly increasing the family’s wealth while protecting it from the never ending demands of his extended family, all of whom were financially dependent upon him. When he died in 1832, Carroll left an estate, including thousands of acres of land in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York, more than three hundred slaves, bank shares, and other property altogether estimated to be worth more than one and a half million dollars, or in excess of forty-two million dollars today.3

Carroll had good reason to worry about the future. His only son, Charles Carroll of Homewood (1775–1825), a hopeless alcoholic soon deemed incapable of managing the family empire, did not outlive his father, while the husbands of Carroll’s daughters Mary (Richard Caton) and Catharine, or Kitty (Robert G. Harper), both incurred massive debts ultimately assumed by their father-in-law, who by the end of his life had become owner of all their major property holdings. All three families received an annual stipend, but never direct access to any of the family capital that might have led to financial independence. As steward and guardian of the family fortune, Carroll exerted tremendous influence and control over his children and their families throughout his extraordinarily long life. Carroll alone determined the amount of the annual allowance, never enough judging by the frequent clamors for more, as well as any additional payments, all minutely set down in the detailed accounts he kept for each branch of the family.4 Every single expenditure on behalf of his children, grandchildren, and by the end of his life, great-grandchildren, whether stipend, gift, or advance against their future inheritance, he recorded from the time of their marriages until his death in 1832, a period that for his eldest daughter, Mary Caton, spanned more than four-and-a-half decades. She was sixty-two, an old woman by the standards of the day, by the time she finally inherited her share of his estate, even

Richard Caton, Charles Carroll of Carrollton’s son-in-law and father of the “Three Graces.” (Maryland Historical Society.)
then carefully shielded by trusts to keep it out of the hands of her seventy-year-old husband and his creditors.

Mary Carroll Caton, the eldest of Carroll’s children to live past childhood, was born in 1770 and grew up in Maryland during the years of the American Revolution. Unlike her younger siblings and her father before her, Mary did not go abroad for her education and by the spring of 1787, when she was just sixteen years old, had fallen in love and, in her father’s words “engaged herself to” Richard Caton, a handsome, twenty-four-year-old Englishman who had immigrated to Baltimore from his native Liverpool four years earlier with hopes of becoming a successful merchant. Carroll, who as an idealistic young man of twenty-five had written to his own father that he “had rather be disinherited than obliged to marry against my inclination,” did not think himself “at liberty to control” his daughter Mary’s choice of a marriage partner, though he admitted that he “sincerely” wished she had “placed her affections elsewhere.” His only condition to the marriage was that Caton extricate himself from his debts and get into a “business sufficient to maintain himself, and a family.” Caton did not accomplish either task, yet before the year was out, in November 1787, shortly after Mary Carroll turned seventeen, the two were married. Over the next six years, while her younger brother and sister were away at school in Europe, Mary would give birth to four daughters: the “three graces” Mary Ann (1788), Betsy (late 1789 or early 1790), and Louisa (c. 1792), and the youngest, Emily (1793), who had no interest in traveling to Europe with her older sisters in 1816.5

From the time the Catons married, Carroll helped the couple with occasional gifts but more frequently, with drafts against the fortune Mary could one day hope to inherit. On the day of their wedding, for example, he paid $901 ($23,300) for a chariot and horses, and over the next several months and years he advanced, mostly as loans against Mary’s fortune, thousands of dollars for land and the construction of their country residence, Brooklandwood, their Baltimore town house, and plate and furnishings. Carroll also bailed his son-in-law out of debt on several occasions with loans charged against Mary Caton’s future inheritance: $2,000 ($294,000) in 1789, the same amount again in 1794, and a staggering $20,000 ($2.5 million) in 1797. At least one of Caton’s business partners did end up in debtor’s prison, and there is little doubt that Caton would have suffered the same fate had not his father-in-law intervened. After Caton went bankrupt a final time about 1802, he transferred his remaining property to Carroll, beyond the reach of his creditors, and thereafter seems to have abandoned his risky and unsuccessful mercantile pursuits.6

Over the course of his life, Carroll’s accounts reveal the development of a marked partiality toward his daughter Mary and her family, but that had not always been the case. Before her brother Charles’s “fatal propensity” for alcohol became apparent, he enjoyed favored status as Carroll’s only son and principal heir. From the date of Homewood’s marriage in 1800, Carroll gave his son a five-thousand-dollar ($120,000) annual allowance, in contrast to Mary, who did not receive a stipend from
the time of her 1787 marriage until 1801, the year her sister Kitty married. Carroll then began giving each daughter twenty-five hundred dollars a year, half the amount of Homewood’s annuity. Not only did they receive less, but unlike their brother’s annuity, which came as a gift, Mary and Kitty’s annuities were charged against the share of Carroll’s estate they would one day inherit. By 1812, Homewood’s alcoholism began to spiral totally out of control, making it impossible for his wife Harriet (Chew) and their five children, four girls and a boy, to live in the same household. After two temporary separations, in 1816, Harriet finally took her daughters to live permanently in her native Philadelphia, while Carroll placed Homewood under the control of a live-in caretaker. The consequences, not only for Homewood’s family, but for all of Carroll’s children, especially the Caton granddaughters, were far reaching.

Recognizing that his son was not to be trusted with any responsibility, Carroll began to rethink his strategy for passing on the family fortune to succeeding generations and by 1814 had decided to disinherit his son in favor of his grandson, Charles Carroll of Doughoragen (1801–1862), Homewood’s only son to survive infancy and the only grandson to bear the Carroll name. Beginning about the same time, Carroll became more generous toward his daughters and began making their annuity payments gifts, like Homewood’s, rather than debits against their future inheritance. He also made the change retroactive, so that they received credit for all annuity payments previously charged against their fortunes. He subsequently increased their stipends to equal their brother’s, again backdating the change to the start of the payments in 1801. And finally, he later made Mary’s annuity retroactive to the date of her marriage in 1787, crediting her not only with all the back payments, but also with interest on the amount that had not been paid for the entire period.7

No one benefitted from these changes more than Mary Caton and her family. By the time he died in 1832, Carroll had advanced a total of $344,988 ($9.7 million) to his son’s family, a comparable $346,115 ($9.7 million) to the Harpers, and a much greater $453,473 ($12.7 million) to the Catons, about a third more than to either of the other two branches. A large part of this discrepancy was due, of course, to the larger total annuity paid Mary over the longer course of her marriage, payments Carroll had not initially intended to make and then advanced as a charge against her inheritance and finally converted into gifts credited from the date she married in 1787. Mary also benefitted from the large interest payment, also a gift, Carroll later made for the annuity payments originally withheld, which offset some of the large sums Carroll had paid to cover Caton’s debts. Aside from their larger lifetime annuity, the Catons also received far more additional outright gifts: $111,750 ($3.1 million) versus $52,897 ($1.5 million) to the Harpers and $73,770 ($2 million) to the Homewood Carrolls, which gifts, like annuities, would not be deducted from each family’s share of Carroll’s estate. The Catons did, however, receive less than the others in the form of advances that would be charged against their fortune so that, ironically,
even though they received far more during Carroll’s lifetime, when it came time to settle his estate they owed less to be deducted from their inheritance.8

Though Homewood’s decline benefitted the Catons, it produced an opposite, devastating impact on his own family, particularly his wife and daughters. Homewood would die in 1825 at age fifty, never having conquered his addiction. Living in Philadelphia and barred from even visiting Maryland during his lifetime, Harriet Carroll became estranged from her father-in-law, who viewed her as little more than a pawn in his dynastic strategies. Carroll took charge of Harriet’s son Charles, his intended heir, while largely ignoring her daughters. They occasionally traveled to Maryland to see their grandfather, but he barely knew them, took little interest in their lives, and never accorded them the same place in his affections as their Caton counterparts. Carroll, rather than his financially emasculated son, continued to support Harriet and her daughters, but paid her only thirty-five hundred dollars a year for their support, compared to his daughters’ five thousand dollar (or occasionally greater) annuity, the latter frequently augmented with gifts and other advances. Not only did Harriet receive less, but unlike her in-laws, who enjoyed city and country residences built at Carroll’s expense as well as the use of his slaves to tend their homes and gardens, Harriet was forced to spend part of her income on rent of a house in Philadelphia. Never, even during the good years, did Carroll give her the gift of a clothing allowance, $222 ($6,000), granted to each of his daughters, nor was she the beneficiary after her separation of any gifts or other advances. Although the family as a whole was credited with $73,770 in gifts, most by far went either to Homewood...
and his wife in the period before his decline or to their son Charles, the recipient of nearly half the total gifts to the family. Harriet’s daughters received less than seven thousand dollars ($158,000) in gifts and other advances during Carroll’s lifetime, most of it in the two years just before he died, a striking contrast to the nearly one hundred thousand dollars ($2.4 million) bestowed on their Caton cousins for education, clothing, travel, and other expenses. A significant part of the discrepancy in the total spent on the Caton family versus the Homewood Carrolls lies in Carroll’s parsimonious treatment of the female members of his son’s family. By practicing economy, Harriet managed to live within her means, but her daughters did not enjoy the same level of material comfort, or the sense of entitlement and security that graced their cousins’ lives. Carroll did not pay for their education, gave them no clothing allowance, no cash advances when they married, no help with houses or furnishing, no trips to Europe, in short, no special treatment for these granddaughters, who in a different set of circumstances would have taken their rightful place beside, or in place of the Catons as the Carroll heiresses, as the daughters of Carrollton’s only son and principal heir. But that was not to be; exiled to Philadelphia, living largely out of sight and out of mind, dependent on their grandfather’s good will for their very support, they were in no position to cajole, wheedle, or demand anything, and Carroll, beset by constant calls of those closer to home, easily could and did neglect them.

Access to the family wealth was clearly not an inherent right, but a gift to be bestowed, or not, by the family patriarch, once aptly described by his hapless son as “the Treasurer of All his Family and their Children.” As the treasurer of his family, Carroll’s influence extended into all aspects of his children’s lives, and at least for his Caton granddaughters, he seems to have become something of a surrogate parent in place of their financially dependent, irresponsible father and perpetually childlike mother. It is no surprise then, that Carroll became intimately involved in the upbringing of his Caton granddaughters, who spent much of their young lives under his roof, whether at his mansion in Annapolis or the plantation ten miles outside of Baltimore where he, and most of his extended family, spent the summer months. From the time they were little girls, Carroll not only financed every major purchase, but took an active interest in every aspect of their lives, while they in turn welcomed the attention and sought out his opinion and advice. “You have all your life been such a kind tender parent to me,” his granddaughter Emily wrote Carroll shortly after her marriage, “my happiest years have been spent under your roof,” sentiments likely shared by her older sisters. Carroll’s correspondence with them, which continued until he became too blind to read or write, reveals a mutual love and regard that endured until the end of his long life, many years after they had last set eyes on one another.9

Only a few scattered letters survive for their childhood years, but they none-theless afford glimpses of his affection and involvement in their lives. “I long to be
at home and with you, and to see my little granddaughters,” he wrote his daughter Mary when he was in New York attending Congress. The girls often spent extended periods with him apart from their parents, and as they grew up he took an active interest in their activities, especially their education, advancing more than five thousand dollars ($102,000) for that purpose. Initially he charged the sums against Mary’s future inheritance but later, after “mature reflection,” decided to instead to credit the amount he had spent as a gift.10

Beginning in 1796, when they were seven and eight, Mary Anne and Betsy attended the female academy in Baltimore run by Maria Lacombe, a French exile whose school offered instruction in “every branch of female education.” The older girls had moved to Norfolk, Virginia, by 1803, when Carroll wrote Mary Ann to express his “pleasure that you are in earnest to acquire those accomplishments which will render you agreeable to society.” Following a long lecture on the merits of piety and virtue, he concluded with the admonishment to “Reflect my dear Mary on what I have written; I treat you not as a child but as a rational being capable of judging correctly, and desirous of acting rightly.” During the same period, the younger sisters attended Mrs. Keets’s boarding school for young ladies in Annapolis under the eye of their grandfather, who warned that “if you do not apply, & improve yourselves I shall send you both back to your Mama.” About 1804 Mary Ann and Betsy went off to Mrs. Rivardi’s Academy for Young Ladies in Philadelphia, an institution renowned for providing an exemplary education to young women. The girls remained there until the spring of 1805, when they returned to Baltimore, Betsy to continue her studies while Mary Ann prepared to make her entrance into society.11

The previous summer, Carroll had promised sixteen-year-old Mary Ann that he would “consult with your Mama, as to your outfit and apparel on yr introduction to company.” Not content to merely provide the means to purchase that apparel, Carroll characteristically had firm opinions on the subject, informing her that

All expensive ornaments I object to; a neat simplicity in dress best becomes a young lady just entering into the world; sweetness of manners, great modesty, affability tempered with dignity, playfulness without levity, are the most attractive ornaments of a young lady; these she may call her own; they are the ornaments of mind, which will be permanent; those of the person will fade, and tho’ in youth they may be aided by dress, in which taste may be displayed, yet their chief merit must be ascribed to the milliner & manufacturer.

In October he directed his London agent to honor Caton’s draft to the amount of £80 sterling ($6,500) “to be expended in the purchase of apparel” for Mary Ann, but ultimately paid considerably more, about £145 ($12,000) when the goods arrived in the spring. Later that year he paid another £80 sterling for goods imported for Betsy, undoubtedly for the same purpose.12
By the early 1800s, other grandchildren began to arrive to compete with the Catons for Carroll's time and affection. His only son, Charles of Homewood, married in July 1800 and a year later his wife gave birth to the next Charles Carroll destined to continue the family dynasty. Six children followed in rapid succession, including two boys who died as infants and four girls, the last of whom was born in 1809. Carroll's daughter Kitty married Robert Goodloe Harper in 1801 and the following year she too delivered a boy, followed by five more children, three girls and two boys. Carroll seems to have been fond of all of his grandchildren, but none ever seriously rivaled his affection for his Caton granddaughters. One reason might simply have been timing. Carroll was only fifty-one when his eldest grandchild, Mary Ann, was born, and just fifty-six when her youngest sister, Emily, came into the world. But by the time his son's first child was born in 1801, Carroll was already sixty-four, and when Kitty gave birth to her last child in 1814 he was nearly eighty. By then, he had a well-established relationship with his Caton granddaughters developed over the course of many years, something that his advanced age might have hindered with the later arrivals. Another factor was the series of tragedies that befell the Harper family. Their second son, named for his uncle Richard Caton, died in 1815 at age nine, followed in 1818 by Carroll's favorite Harper niece, fifteen-year-old Mary Diana, and then her younger sister Elizabeth in 1823, at age twelve. The only remaining Harper granddaughter (and the only child to outlive both parents), Emily, was born in 1812, when her youngest Caton cousin was already nineteen, and never seems to have developed a close bond with her grandfather, who turned eighty just after her fifth birthday. Carroll's relationship with his son's daughters also suffered from their removal to Philadelphia in 1816, when the eldest was fourteen and the youngest seven. Aside from the distance, which might not necessarily have been a barrier, Carroll's disappointment and anger with his son seems to have tainted his relationship with the entire family.

Homewood's decline and displacement as heir not only benefited the Catons with respect to Carroll's moneyed estate, it led to changes in the disposition of his landed property as well. Although Carroll had "always expressed the most settled determination to keep his Manors entire," in 1814 Harriet Carroll's concerned brother-in-law noted that "the Catons now report that he has altered his Will & has divided the Manocacy Manor, giving two thirds to Mrs Caton & Mrs Harper. This will satisfy you of the game that is playing, and Charles by his conduct has given them every advantage, which they well know how to turn to account." Carroll's principal plantation, the twelve thousand acres of Doughoragen Manor, and most of its enslaved labor force would still descend through the male line intact, albeit to the grandson rather than the son, but Carrollton Manor, the twelve-thousand-acre tenanted estate in Frederick County, worth according to contemporary estimates at least four hundred and twenty thousand dollars ($10.2 million) would instead be equally divided after Carroll's death among all three branches of Carroll's family, a
change specifically designed to benefit his Caton granddaughters. “I hope the different disposition of the Carrollton estate may be productive of the good effects mentioned in your letter” Carroll wrote his daughter Mary in June 1814, “and among others, be the means of marrying your daughters well.” At the same time, he nevertheless insisted that “independant of expected fortunes their good qualities merit husbands of character & of dispositions to render the married state happy.”

Apparently Mary Caton had become concerned. Despite their beauty, charm, and other advantages, by 1814 three of her four daughters, the youngest of whom was then twenty-one, remained unmarried. A good marriage was, without doubt, the sine qua non for women of their time and place, and the younger Catons’ unmarried state had become a noteworthy topic of local gossip. As early as 1812, Rosalie Stier Calvert, a family acquaintance, informed her father, who had known the Carrolls when he lived in Annapolis many years earlier, before he returned to his native Belgium, that “Mrs. Caton still has three of her daughters unmarried, in spite of common knowledge that they will each have $30,000 the day they marry.” Two years later she reported that “Another of our old friends, the venerable Carroll, is quite unhappy. His son-in-law Caton has gone bankrupt for the second time and in a manner so dishonorable that he is generally scorned.” Caton’s eldest daughter Mary Ann had “married badly,” while the other three were “not likely to marry at all . . . since they are so widely held in contempt—as much for their own conduct as for that of their father and mother—that no one wants such an alliance.” Carroll’s only son, Homewood, she continued, “has become as ‘Sot’—he is drunk from morning to evening. He has treated his wife in the most impossible way, beating her almost daily and on one occasion almost strangling her.” Finally, she concluded, “I don’t know if you knew that the older Carroll is an illegitimate son,” whose mother “was a woman of the lowest class,” perhaps, she seemed to imply, the root cause of the family’s latter-day failures. “What an idea” the aristocratic Calvert exclaimed, “to say that the nobility is an imaginary good!”

Ironically, the Caton sisters would eventually marry into Rosalie Calvert’s cherished aristocracy, but she did not live long enough to witness or record for posterity her thoughts on that subject. Nevertheless, at the time she penned the above letter in 1814, Carroll’s money evidently could not entirely shield his granddaughters from the stigma associated with their father’s economic failure and their uncle’s public displays of debauchery. Although not entirely accurate, Calvert’s gossip offers an invaluable contemporary view of the Carroll-Caton family. The Caton sisters would not, in fact, each receive thirty thousand dollars on the day they married, but regardless, the belief that they would do so was “common knowledge.” The perception of them as heiresses persisted, even though Calvert could in the same breath report that their father had gone bankrupt yet another time. Clearly he could not offer a thirty-thousand-dollar dowry which, presumably, would have to come from Carroll’s coffers. At the same time, Calvert’s comments about Richard Caton’s business
failures reveal that his financial catastrophes were clearly no secret. Likewise, the scandalous behavior of Carroll of Homewood who, until his father intervened, was in fact “drunk from morning to evening” and most likely did abuse his wife, was public knowledge. Most remarkable, perhaps, was that nearly eighty years after his birth, Carroll of Carrollton’s illegitimacy—true in fact, although his mother was not of the “lowest class”—was deemed worthy of comment. Calvert was by no means an intimate of the family, not even a friend, nor did she live near them in Annapolis or Baltimore, but on her plantation, Riversdale, some twenty-five to thirty miles to the southeast. If Calvert was privy to the family’s most private matters, so too must have been most of the Chesapeake elite.

Certainly everyone in the Carroll’s social circle was aware that by 1814 only one of the Caton daughters—Mary Ann, the eldest and by all accounts the most beautiful—had married. The marriage might not have been an entirely happy one, but it certainly was not, as Calvert claimed, a bad match. Mary Ann’s husband, Robert Patterson, the second son of wealthy Baltimore merchant William Patterson, was a partner in his father’s firm and a wealthy man in his own right. The couple married in 1806, when Robert was twenty-six and Mary Ann three months shy of her eighteenth birthday. When he died in 1822, Robert left Mary Ann a large estate that provided her with a comfortable life many years before she inherited part of her grandfather’s fortune. But during their sixteen-year union the couple had had no children, a source of unhappiness for Mary Ann, exacerbated by her incompatibility with her husband. Contemporaries generally considered the genteel, well-educated Mary Ann mismatched to her rather “boorish” husband, whose greatest passion centered on his dogs and the hunt. One unimpressed English acquaintance declared Robert “more of a clown and a lout than the most remote village or farmhouse in this country could supply.”

By 1814, six years had elapsed since Mary Ann’s wedding, and her sisters were now all in their early to mid-twenties. Despite their beauty, charm, and perceived fortunes, perhaps no one, as Calvert claimed, was willing to marry into a family marred by such scandal and shame. The year before they set sail for Europe, their father had taken the three unmarried girls to Montreal, Canada, possibly on a similar mission. On their return, he reported “the girls have benefited much by their journey, so far as muscular Strength, and ruddy faces have a title to benefit.” But, he acknowledged, the “chat of the tea table will be, ‘but have they had any offers?’” At least one of the sisters, the youngest, Emily, did find a beau on that trip, John McTavish, whom she married the next year, shortly after her sisters departed for Europe. Emily herself does not seem to have shared their desire to cross the ocean, perhaps because she was already engaged, but her lack of interest in mingling among the titled glitterati seems heartfelt. “I suppose you have heard that my sisters and Robert intend sailing in a month or two,” she informed her uncle in March 1816. They are “all mad about Europe,” she wrote dismissively, convinced that they would “return sadly disap-
pointed.” Perhaps Emily’s promised share of Carrollton Manor, or more likely, the immediate promise of a financial settlement, had helped win McTavish’s affection. In either case, Emily had her grandfather to thank. It was he who had promised her parents one-third of Carrollton Manor, and it was Carroll who provided Emily ten thousand dollars ($171,000) on her marriage, a payment charged against her mother’s fortune. Emily was the only granddaughter to receive a cash dowry, perhaps in lieu of the trip to Europe Carroll financed for her unmarried sisters. Carroll had not given Mary Ann a dowry when she married, but in 1811 he did advance nine thousand dollars ($165,000) for a house in Baltimore “given to Mrs Patterson.” No dowry would be forthcoming when Harriet Carroll’s daughters married, nor would they receive alternative compensation in the form of houses or trips to Europe.16

Emily Caton’s marriage left unwed just Betsy and Louisa, who sailed for Europe in May 1816, four months before their sister’s wedding, perhaps, as Calvert’s comments would suggest, on a quest to find husbands in a place their family history was unknown. But neither sister had lacked suitors, especially Betsy, who had no shortage of beaux in her native country. “Perhaps no woman breathing ever had more offers of marriage,” declared Baltimore acquaintance Eliza Godefroy, an intimate of Madame Bonaparte and no friend to the Caton sisters. Betsy swore, however, that she would marry for love alone, a belief her grandfather repeated more than a decade later, declaring that while Betsy “has mind temper, good sense to make happy the man whom she may honour with her hand, the one I am sure she will not give without her heart.”17

Betsy had actually become unofficially engaged about 1814 to John Hare Powell (1786–1856) of Philadelphia, but his wealthy, childless aunt, who had promised to make him her heir, strongly objected to the match. Railing against Betsy as a “perfidious Siren,” “faithless Gypsy,” and “mere Pageant of a Ball Room,” Mrs. Powell emphatically declared that the “Estate of the modest virtuous protestant Powel should not by any agency of mine be transmitted to any Descendant of Charles Carroll of Carrollton,” and her nephew, threatened with disinheritance, ended the engagement. Soon afterwards, a “very devoted” John E. Howard Jr., the son of Revolutionary War hero John Eager Howard of Baltimore, was reportedly “addressing Miss Elizabeth,” and would, Mary Ann’s brother-in-law Edward Patterson predicted, probably succeed after Betsy returned from Europe “without achieving any distinguished conquest.” During Betsy’s absence, Howard turned his attention to her cousin Elizabeth Carroll in Philadelphia and then, after she rejected his suit, in 1820 married Cornelia Read of South Carolina. Other “beaux” included an “L Rogers,” a Mr. Scot, and Joseph Patterson, another brother of Mary Ann’s husband. “I often congratulate myself upon the escape he made in not taking as a partner the fair Betsy,” a relieved Edward Patterson confided to his sister Elizabeth when Joseph became engaged in 1817. Two other suitors would remain steadfastly loyal for years. Count Charles Julius de Menou (c. 1790–1862), a French aristocrat whose family had fled during the French
Revolution to Maryland, where they became intimate friends of the Carrolls, had returned to France in 1815 but only awaited Betsy’s “permission to brave the dangers of the Atlantic in order to lay his Title and himself at her feet.” Lastly, another family friend, John Devereux (1778–1860), an Irish adventurer and hero of Latin American independence, still hoped to marry Betsy as late as 1826. In short, while she might have hoped to make some new conquests on her visit to Europe or perhaps find her true love, and her mother (who had married at seventeen) might have suffered some anxieties, Betsy had no shortage of prospective marriage partners. Edward Patterson was probably closer to the mark when he wrote that “the great ambition of this lady is to dazle the Courts of Europe with her charms & accomplishments[,] there she can be estimated & there she must & will go,” although in his caustic opinion “if ever a lady was overrated this Miss certainly is, she has nothing but the manual to recommend her.”

Nor was Louisa Caton lacking in suitors, although only one can be documented, Daniel Clark (1766–1813), a wealthy Catholic merchant from New Orleans who lived in Washington from 1806 to 1809 while serving as a territorial delegate to Congress from Louisiana. Clark proposed in 1808 when she was just seventeen, and despite the fact that he was twenty-five years her senior, Louisa’s family approved the match. Louisa, though, decided against it, confiding to her grandfather that she had “a high opinion and esteem for the character of Mr. Clark but cannot love him, and, therefore notwithstanding the advantages of this connection” thought it would be “improper to marry him.” She added that “where she cannot give her heart she must withhold her heart.” Carroll believed that Louisa “stands in the way of her own happiness and will hereafter repent of her silly conduct,” but he respected her right to decide. That was probably well, given that none of the family seems to have been aware that Clark had left a mistress and two young illegitimate daughters in New Orleans, one of whom later sued to inherit his vast estate in a protracted legal case that dragged on for more than half a century.

What is most notable about both Betsy and Louisa is their expressed determination to marry for love rather than accept a match just because it appeared to be good, or because their family approved. Rosalie Calvert and similarly minded women might gossip about their lack of prospects, but thanks to the privileged upbringing provided by their grandfather, the sisters knew better. Despite having reached their mid-twenties (Betsy was twenty-six and Louisa about twenty-four when they sailed for England in 1816), they were waiting for something superior to what was on offer in Baltimore. Rather than desperation, their journey to Europe bespoke confidence in their own merits. If they could not find true love in Europe, Betsy at least could always come back and choose among her many beaux, hardly concerned in the meantime that they might marry in her absence. In any case, the ostensible purpose of their “somewhat hazardous, & certainly expensive” voyage was not matrimony, but to restore the health of Mary Ann, who suffered all her life from severe asthma,
and Louisa, who had been ill several months with “bilious fevers.” Their doctor had recommended a sea voyage and change of air as essential, and in the spring of 1816 Robert Patterson reluctantly agreed to the journey. Carroll advanced the money to pay Betsy and Louisa’s expenses, directing his London agent in March 1816 to pay Patterson £900 sterling ($85,000) for that purpose and charging the sum against Mary Caton’s future inheritance. He only hoped that “dissipation & late hours may not counteract the benefit proposed to be derived from the Cheltneham waters.”

Shortly before the Catons embarked, Edward Patterson predicted that they would surely “experience the disappointments incident to most of our travelers—failure of admittance into the high circles in England,” a defeat sure to be “cutting” given their “high pretensions.” Contrary to his expectations, within a month of their arrival in England the travelers had been introduced, thanks to Lady Bagot’s letters, to the Duke of Wellington, who became smitten with the beautiful Mary Ann, and to the Prince Regent, the future George IV. “Is it possible there can exist so beautiful a woman?” the latter reportedly exclaimed on meeting Mary Ann. Invited to attend the prince’s ball at Carlton House, his magnificent London mansion, the sisters were presented to his mother, Queen Charlotte, and all the royal dukes and princesses. Soon they received invitations to all the right houses, parties, balls, and soirees, and even to Almack’s, the most exclusive club in Regency London, to which even many members of the British nobility could not gain admittance.

The Catons’ acceptance into these exalted circles is particularly impressive because despite Lady Bagot’s introduction and their grandfather’s venerable reputation,
they were burdened with less fashionable relations much closer at hand in the form of their father’s family in Liverpool. One unimpressed British aristocrat knowledgeable about the connection sniffed at “these sisters . . . passing themselves off for tip-top Yankees . . . to me too, who remember their grandfather, old Caton, a Captain of an Indiaman in Liverpool, their father an adventurer to America, and know their two Aunts now at Liverpool . . . who move in about the third rate society of the town.” An American friend who saw them in England claimed that the girls were ashamed of their Liverpool relations, and, although their mother indignantly denied it, there is no indication that they socialized with that family. Such connections might well have doomed lesser lights, but apparently the sisters’ charms, perhaps coupled with the Duke of Wellington’s patronage, allowed their Carroll pedigree to triumph over their father’s lowlier lineage.22

Following their introductory social whirl, the sisters left London in mid-July to visit Cheltenham, a resort in west-central England known for the healing powers of its mineral springs, so that Mary Ann and Louisa could take the waters for their health, the whole point of the trip as their grandfather reminded them after hearing about their reception in England. “What a dissipated life the great in London lead!” he exclaimed, “what time have they for reflection?” with “the nights consumed in a variety of entertainments & amusements, and a large portion of the day in bed.” To Carroll, “such a whirl of pleasures” appeared “incompatible with real happiness,” which depended on the “love of God, a good conscience, and the exact faithful discharge of the duties we owe to God & man.” Nevertheless, he was “much gratified by the accounts of the kind reception you have received from Mrs Bagot’s family & connections,” noting that “I understand that the marked civilities & attentions you have met with from the Prince Regent and Duke of Wellington and other great people & distinguished persons have been noticed in the public prints as well as in private letters.” But nothing made Carroll happier than to hear that Mary Ann and Louisa’s health was “so much improved.” Therefore, “altho’ we are all anxious for yr return home; and no one more than I am,” Carroll wanted them “to remain in England till some time in the ensuing autumn, to make another trial of the Cheltenham waters before you embark.” To that end, he had instructed his London agent to “give Mr Patterson a further credit of £500 Sterg ($47,000) to defray Betsy’s & Louisa’s expences.” While at Cheltenham the travelers again met up with Wellington, who escorted Louisa and Mary Ann to take the waters every morning. They passed most days together, and on July 29 the girls were invited to a ball in his honor, a gala event attended by some fourteen hundred guests. By the time the duke left the spa on August 1 for France, where he was commander-in-chief of the Army of Occupation, he had already made plans to see the sisters in Paris and at his headquarters outside Cambrai later that year.23

Before leaving England, the sisters journeyed north to visit another new acquaintance, Thomas William Coke (1754–1842), at Holkam Hall, his thirty-thousand-acre
estate in Norfolk, where he lived “in a style of the utmost magnificence, his house . . . always filled with the best company.” Although impressed by the “splendour & elegance” of her surroundings—walls covered in satin and velvet, fine pictures, statues, and “twelve footmen in the richest liversies attend[ing] us at table, where every thing is served on silver, wrought in the richest manner”—to Betsy the best part was their host, “the excellent Master of the Mansion [who] treats us as old Friends & makes us perfectly at our ease in his House.” Indeed Coke, a handsome sixty-two-year-old widower noted for his extravagant hospitality and style of entertaining, was delighted with his American guests. “There is a most beautiful and lovely woman in my House of the name of Patterson, an American, with her sisters, two Miss Catons,” Coke gushed in a letter of introduction for his new friends. “The fascinating and lively deportment of Mrs. Patterson will soon speak for itself, she is so extremely amiable and natural in her manners as to engage the admiration of everybody. She is an ornament to her sex, and has a claim to every attention that can be shewn to her in this country.” But while clearly quite taken with Mary Ann, Coke became even more greatly enamored of her sister Betsy, soon the object of his affection.

At Coke’s pressing invitation, his guests would return to Holkham for an extended visit the following year, but in the meantime his increasingly ardent letters followed Betsy (or Bessy, as he called her) as the travelers made their way to Brighton and then on to France. While at Brighton, where they passed their evenings with the Prince Regent at his royal pavilion, Coke urged “Miss Caton,” now “in a round of daily luxury, surrounded by Venal and corrupt courtiers,” to recall the “happy times we passed together” at Holkham, where he was “anxiously looking for a return of those delightful guests, which his soul will ever revere and love,” and whose “Society could both lengthen my years, & add happiness to my life.” By January “Miss Caton” had morphed into “my dear, & beloved Bessy,” “my beloved Bessy,” “My dearest dear Bessy,” and Coke was impatient to know “when I may hope for an equal joyous reception,” suggesting that she cut her visit to France short and spend Easter at Holkham. “When may I hope to see you back?” he wrote the next month. “I dread the possibility of Paris detaining you longer than you first intended. . . . How I long for you.” In April, “tempted . . . beyond resistance itself,” he resolved “to set out tomorrow, & hope to find you, and yours all well,” declaring, “that a Man in love is good for Nothing.”

Apart from these amorous declarations, Coke’s long missives to Betsy are filled, most remarkably, with lengthy discourses on politics and current events. “Your observations upon the general distracted state of the times, & the universal discontent that prevails could not, to a mind like yours pass totally unobserved—but little did I think that you had reflected so deeply upon the consequences likely to issue from them,” he declared in one of his letters. “The reprimand you gave me, & the opinion I have had of your better judgment in Politics will deter me from broaching my wild principles of liberty during your stay in France,” he wrote in another. As their
correspondence continued, their political content increased. Coke clearly respected her intelligence and appreciated her interest in current events, even soliciting her views. “As a sane and excellent Politician let me hear a little of your opinion of the present state of things, & the general feelings of the People respecting our Army being kept on the Continent contrary I am given to understand to the wishes of the French Government,” he asked during her stay in France. In this respect Coke’s letters are similar to those written to Betsy by her grandfather, who focused on political and economic issues, rather than the “tittle tattle” and gossip he left to her mother, and reveal a profound respect for her intelligence and grasp of world events. As with her grandfather, Coke and Betsy shared an intellectual bond. “I feel as if we thought upon most subjects alike,” he confessed to her, “& adapted to each to each others company.”

Unfortunately, Betsy’s half of her correspondence with Coke has not survived, but his many references to her letters indicate that she encouraged his attentions. Whether or not Coke ever proposed to her is unknown, but circumstantial evidence suggests that he probably did, or at least that her family thought that he did ask her to marry him. Many years after the fact her grandfather, speculating on Betsy’s marriage prospects, wrote that “it is thought, she had it in her power to make happy the man of the greatest merit in England: what errors do we commit when we suffer passion to get the better of our judgment!” If Coke did propose, Betsy evidently declined, possibly to her later regret, but her refusal would indicate that she was not, as Madame Bonaparte would have it, a mere adventurer in search of a rich husband. Although not then titled (he would later, reluctantly he claimed, relinquish his preferred distinction as first commoner of England to become earl of Leicester), Coke was indeed wealthy, and Holkham Hall, his palatial Palladian mansion, far outshone her grandfather’s comparatively humble Doughoragen Manor, where Betsy would have never, in any case, reigned as mistress. That Betsy held Coke in high esteem there is no doubt, and the two remained friends for many years, but fortune seeking aside, there were many disincentives to such an alliance. While still handsome, Coke was more than a decade older than Betsy’s father and thirty-five years her senior. Marrying him would have entailed a permanent separation from her family, a choice she might not have wanted to make, since she declared repeatedly during her early years abroad that she intended to return home. Years later, when circumstances kept her in England, she might well have regretted her decision. But if so, Coke did not renew his suit and in 1822, at age sixty-seven, he married his nineteen-year-old goddaughter, a fruitful union that produced five sons and a daughter.

Before Betsy’s romance with Coke reached its denouement, the Caton party headed to Paris, where they received a warm reception from the Menou family and other former French exiles their family had befriended in America, as well as the French royal family. During their stay in what Betsy proclaimed the “most splendid City I ever saw,” they again met up with the Duke of Wellington, who was “all kind-
ness and attention to us,” even letting her ride Copenhagen, the horse he had ridden during the battle of Waterloo. In late January they were guests at the duke’s “most brilliant ball,” attended by some three hundred of his officers splendidly turned out in full dress uniform, where Louisa probably met her future husband, Col. Felton Bathurst Hervey, Wellington’s private secretary. Hervey had served under Wellington throughout the Peninsular War (1808–1814), despite losing an arm early in the campaign, and was with him at the victory over Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815. Within months of meeting Louisa he proposed and she immediately accepted, thus changing their plans, and all of their lives forever. A delighted Wellington insisted that Louisa and Hervey marry at his London mansion, Apsley House, standing in himself in place of her absent father to give the bride away. “My Sisters say he spoils me,” Louisa wrote her Uncle Harper, “indeed if I was his own Child he could not appear more fond of me.” Thanks to the duke’s influence, the following year Hervey was created a baronet in reward for his services during the war, greatly pleasing Louisa, now “Lady Hervey,” and her family.28

On learning of his granddaughter’s marriage, Carroll confided to Betsy his “conflicting sensations of pleasure & pain; of pleasure, from Louisa have attracted and attached to her a man so universally esteemed & beloved as Col. Harvey; of pain from the apprehension that I shall never again see her.”29 Louisa claimed that she “had no thought of being married” when she came to France but a few months after her wedding bragged to her sister Emily that she was “much envied by the American ladies,” and indeed, knew that she certainly had “married admirably.” And so she had, especially considering that she had no immediate fortune to bring to the union, although it is not clear that Hervey or his family, who were not pleased with his marriage to an untitled American Catholic, were aware that she had no dowry besides. One of Elizabeth Bonaparte’s correspondents reported that Hervey’s family was “not Satisfied with the appearance of things; they Expected ready money which I am told he very much wanted, and in short from what I have heard things have not been fully explained on either side. . . . it will be very unpleasant for her . . . to be disapproved of by his relatives, who I am told from good authority disapproves of the connection altogether.” He went on to add, no doubt to Madame Bonaparte’s satisfaction, that you can be quite sure, “that no one will go to the altar” with Betsy Caton unless the “money is first paid down.”30

Because of the haste—Louisa and Hervey married on April 17, 1817, less than three months after they first met—no marriage settlement could be arranged before they wed. Hervey’s entailed estate required a £14,000 sterling ($1.26 million) jointure from the bride’s family, which Louisa knew her parents could not provide. “I know very well that my Father has not the 14,000 Pounds to give me,” she admitted to her Uncle Harper, lending credence to Elizabeth Bonaparte’s assertion that the Catons had practiced great fraud to get husbands. But while Louisa knew her father could not supply the cash, she still expected “that some arrangement may be made to get
the money,” because “I know my fortune”—the fortune she would receive from her grandfather, not her father—“will be much more than that sum.” Without a settlement, Hervey’s lawyers told her, she would be left “destitute” should she survive him. “It would really break my heart,” she wailed, “to see all the fortune, and all the beautiful diamonds, go to the nephew,” while she “was left starving.”31

The Catons quickly executed a deed conveying their interest in one-quarter of the one-third share of Carrollton Manor they would receive after Carroll’s death to trustees for the use of their daughter Louisa, but the promise of a future payment from the sale of her share of the manor—which share Harper estimated to be worth at least fourteen thousand pounds sterling, and “probably twice as much”—would not do. Nevertheless, Louisa’s grandfather, ever consistent in his determination to maintain control over the family capital, refused to relinquish his life interest in the land. If Hervey could not make a settlement based on the promise of a future share of Carrollton, Harper informed Louisa, then she would have to go without the English estate, for “there exist no means of raising the money.” He did offer the consoling thought that since her grandfather was already eighty, there was every reason to believe Hervey would survive him and then be able to make the settlement. If not, at least she would eventually inherit her share of the manor, and her mother would also have a very ample fortune, of which Louisa could also expect a share.32

Contrary to expectations, Hervey did not outlive Louisa’s grandfather; he died on September 24, 1819, less than two and a half years after his marriage. Profoundly shocked, Louisa went into seclusion at the home of Hervey’s mother, where he had died, but she could not stay there forever. “Alas,” one of their friends wrote, “how wretched a lot awaits the poor widow desolate and disliked by his family.” The following spring, Carroll sent Mary Ann and her husband Robert to “fetch home my granddaughters,” but much to her grandfather’s annoyance, Louisa refused to leave. Betsy, who had planned to return home with the Pattersons in the spring of 1818 but finally yielded to Louisa’s entreaties to remain longer, now apparently felt obligated to stay with her grieving sister. She and Louisa soon moved to the dower house at the Duke of Wellington’s Stratfield Saye estate, where they lived in relative isolation for the next few years, with only the occasional trip to London to enliven the “monotony” of Betsy’s life. Although Carroll believed it “an injustice to lessen Mrs Caton’s fortune by an unreasonable indulgence of Louisa’s continuance in England,” he nevertheless made it possible for them to remain. Since Louisa’s marriage he had been giving both granddaughters an annual stipend; Betsy, entirely dependent on her grandfather’s support, received £300 sterling ($31,000), and Louisa, who had other sources of income, £200 ($21,000). Although Hervey had not been able to settle any of the entailed estate on her, Louisa did inherit his personal property and, as his widow, received a “very inadequate” military pension of eighty pounds per year. In addition, Hervey’s mother, considering her daughter-in-law’s income insufficient to “maintain her according to her station in life” as Hervey’s widow, agreed to pay
Louisa four hundred pounds per year during her widowhood up until the death of her grandfather, when she would presumably inherit significant property. Louisa’s total income from all sources amounted to the substantial sum of about £1,000 per year, approximately $4,500 in 1817, significantly more than the $3,500 Carroll allowed his daughter-in-law Harriet for the support of herself and her four daughters.33

While Betsy and the grieving widow lived quietly at Stratfield Saye, back in Baltimore their sister Mary Ann continued to suffer from asthma, greatly aggravated in the summer by Maryland’s hot and humid climate. “Nothing can be more painful than to see a person so dear to us all sinking gradually under a most distressing disease,” Carroll wrote during one of Mary Ann’s particularly severe summer attacks. “I fear if the air of the mountains & Bedford-water,” at the Bedford Springs in Pennsylvania, where Mary Ann had traveled in search of relief, “do not strengthen her constitution, she must live in Europe.” By all accounts, Mary Ann enjoyed far better health abroad, but she could not travel without her husband who, possibly jealous of the attention she had received during their earlier visit, refused to make the trip.34

Contemporary accounts agree that soon after meeting her, the Duke of Wellington had fallen “violently in love” with Mary Ann, much to “the amusement of all London,” though not, perhaps, to her husband. When reports of the duke’s attentions had reached her family in Maryland, Mary Ann felt compelled to reassure them that despite the attention, her head and heart remained unchanged. “I have been much attended to, and my vanity no doubt flattered by the attentions of high rank, and fashion, but yet I have seen nothing to dazzle the sight, or to make one forget the duties incumbent on us all.” Although Mary Ann “always behaved very correctly,” it is not surprising that Patterson had no desire to revisit the society to which he was so ill-suited or to reunite her with Wellington, who continued to correspond with Mary Ann after her return to Maryland. Two gifts from the duke that Mary Ann brought home with her no doubt served as constant reminders of the great man’s infatuation: a little lap-dog named Flora, who became “a favourite of the family,” and Wellington’s handsome portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence, painted in 1817 specifically for Mary Ann while they were together in London. At the same time, Wellington had commissioned Lawrence to paint Mary Ann, and nothing perhaps so well illustrates the duke’s feelings for her as that lovely portrait, which hung in his study at Stratfield Saye, where it remains to the present day. Robert Patterson’s views on the exchange of portraits and his wife’s correspondence with the duke is not known, but her grandfather Carroll apparently saw nothing amiss in the duke’s attentions, attributing them to the “affection of a parent and that pure and disinterested esteem he has constantly expressed from the commencement of his acquaintance with you.”35

In October 1822, Robert Patterson died suddenly after a short illness at the age of forty-one. Now free to travel, the widowed Mary Ann initially declared that she would “rather have feeble health” at home with her family “than good health abroad,”
but in the spring of 1824 she sailed for England, planning to stay no more than a
year or two before returning with Betsy. Louisa had since emerged from mourning,
and by early 1823 she and Betsy were in London “injoying the gaities of a London
winter,” followed by visits to Cheltenham and Holkham. Reunited in the spring of
1824, the three women spent the following winter in Paris, where Mary Ann’s health
improved. Although Carroll had doubts that Mary Ann could “live in this country,”
he was pleased to learn in April 1825 of her “determination to return home” the
next year, accompanied to his great joy, at long last by Betsy. “I already anticipate
the delight, your & her company & conversation will afford me; I depend on your
coming with her,” he wrote, warning that “if you should not, I shall be grievously
disappointed & displeased.”

Before returning in the spring of 1826, Mary Ann and Betsy decided to first
make a brief visit to Ireland, the land of their ancestors, in the summer of 1825.
Thanks to their “good letters,” nothing could “exceed the hospitality . . . of the Irish
nobles,” and the two were soon enjoying the attentions of Richard Colley Wellesley
(1760–1842), second earl of Mornington and Marquess Wellesley, elder brother to
the Duke of Wellington and, at the time, lord lieutenant of Ireland. As the British
representative of the Crown, Wellesley, “the most agreeable & elegant man they had
ever seen,” lived in “regale state” at Dublin Castle with the princely salary of thirty
thousand pounds ($3 million). In reality, however, Wellesley, a sixty-five-year-old
widower described by one contemporary as a “libertine of shattered fortune,” was
head over heels in debt, so much so that even the “plate on his table is hired,” and a
“great part of his salary mortgaged.” The father of numerous illegitimate children,
he was notorious for the unsavory liaisons that had at one point led Wellington to
“wish that Wellesley was castrated. . . . It is lamentable to see Talents & character &
advantages such as he possesses thrown away upon Whoring.”

Before long Wellesley was in ardent pursuit of Mary Ann, the former object
of his younger brother’s affection, and after a whirlwind courtship, the two mar-
rried on October 29, 1825, about three months after they first met, to the outraged
astonishment of Wellington. Venting his anger to his friend and confidante Lady
Arbuthnot, who had “never seen the Duke more annoyed,” Wellington told her he
had given Mary Ann “credit for more real good sense than to make such a preposter-
ous match. . . . that Ld. Wellesley was a man totally ruined; when he quitted Ireland,
which he must soon do, he wd not have a house to take her to, or money to keep a
carriage; that he had not a shilling in the world &P moreover, was of a most jealous
disposition, a violent temper & that he had entirely worn out his constitution by the
profligate habits of his life.”

Surely Mary Ann must have had some knowledge of the marquess’s reputation
and financial situation, and in fact she took care to protect her economic interests
with a marriage settlement drafted by her own lawyers that placed all of her prop-
erty and the income from it out of the reach of Wellesley and his creditors. But she
seems to have been totally swept off her feet by his charm, and perhaps his title and the prospect of becoming vicereine of Ireland. Wellesley’s daughter believed, probably unfairly, that Mary Ann “was no sooner a widow than she came back hoping to establish herself in England again and some said she went over to Ireland with a determination to become the Lady Lieutenant as there was no chance of the Duchess’s demise at present.” In a similar vein, rather than sympathize with the Duke of Wellington’s complaints about the match, Lady Arbuthnot told him she was “not the least surprised,” for Mary Ann “had come to this country on a matrimonial speculation; that it was pretty well for the widow of an American shopkeeper to marry a Marquis, the Ld. Lieutenant of Ireland a Knight of the Garter.” Perhaps Mary Ann agreed with her former sister-in-law, who dismissed Wellesley’s lack of fortune as “of little consequence when his rank is considered. There is not a woman in Europe who would not prefer a man of rank, without money, to the richest man in the world who has no title.” In short, she enviously declared, Mary Ann had made “the greatest match that any woman ever made.”

Shortly before her wedding, Mary Ann wrote Wellesley that her family “indeed will be proud, and happy to confide me to you, and glory in their alliance to a person so distinguished in every respect.” And indeed, Mary Caton was predictably giddy with delight, regaling her friends with lengthy descriptions of Mary Ann’s wedding, beautiful clothes, and “Regal” lifestyle at Dublin Castle: “Servants enumerable covered with gold lace – served upon a grand service of gold plate” the whole “like the Arabian Knights.” Certainly she had no qualms about the great age difference—“he looks 45 but is sixty four!” (Wellesley was actually sixty-five, twenty-eight years older than his new wife and a decade senior to his new mother-in-law)—nor what she knew of his debts. She blithely attributed his “difficulties” to “a magnificent, & liberal temper—fostered by living in situations that imperiously calld for splendor—& a long residence in the oriental state, which he was obliged to support in India—he in fact was plundered by his Servant.”

An equally pleased, though more restrained Carroll immediately wrote to “congratulate you my dear Mary and rejoice on your marriage with the man of all others the most deserving of your hand & heart.” But Carroll’s joy was “not without is mixture of regret, when I reflect that it takes from me the hope of ever seeing you again.” Wellesley himself wrote Carroll “in the language of dutiful affection,” trusting that he would “accept this tribute of my veneration & love, with the same spirit of parental tenderness, by which you have cherished her since her birth, and contrib-uted so essentially to form her for the delight and ornament of this World, and for the glories of the next.” Through Mary Ann’s representations, Wellesley had come to “love & to revere” Carroll and hoped to win the “good opinion” of the man who had played such an important role in her life. Recognizing that “your dear Grand-daughter would not be happy, if She were ever to abandon the hope of embracing you again,” Wellesley promised to bring Mary Ann on a visit to America “when the
king and his country may dispense with his services.” Carroll thought that day would never come, for “when can the services of a person of such rare & conspicuous talents be dispensed with?” He never saw his granddaughter again, but assured her that he would “continue to write to you as long as I can see to write.”41
Carroll entertained high expectations for his granddaughter’s tenure as vicereine of Ireland. “May God, who has elevated you to so high a station, make you his instrument for restoring good will, the spirit of conciliation between parties, and the suppression of discord, the bane of poor & oppressed Ireland!” Perhaps Carroll’s pride, and his granddaughter’s own ambition, are best captured in a passage from a biographical sketch of his life that he sent her in 1827, in which his biographer remarked on the “singular circumstance” that 140 years after Carroll’s ancestors left Ireland, his granddaughter had, through her marriage to Wellesley, become vicereine—or, more poetically, in the “land from which the father’s father fled, his daughter’s daughter now reigns as Queen.”

Whatever Mary Ann’s hopes or ambitions, her marriage to Wellesley was not a happy one. Within three months there were reports of terrible feuds in Lord Wellesley’s family that had become the “exclusive topic of conversation in Dublin,” and a separation was believed imminent. Mary Ann wrote Wellington admitting “that all the evils he had predicted had come upon her even to a greater degree than he expected,” and declaring herself “very unhappy & only anxious to die.” After they returned to England at the end of 1827, they kept two separate establishments and lived apart much of the time, with Mary Ann traveling frequently for her health. Mary Caton eventually became aware that something was amiss, but Mary Ann kept her marital problems from her grandfather, who had nothing but praise for her husband, “the ablest statesman in Europe,” and in 1826 commissioned Thomas Sully to paint his full-length portrait as a gift for the marquess. Carroll’s pride in his “dear and virtuous child” reached even greater heights in 1830, when newly crowned Queen Adelaide, in a “flattering manifestation of esteem,” offered Mary Ann a position as lady of the bedchamber. Along with his “heartfelt congratulations,” Carroll sent Mary Ann a five-thousand-dollar ($130,000) gift for her expenses at the coronation.

As marchioness and lady in waiting to the queen, Mary Ann had surpassed all her family’s expectations, but her younger sister Louisa would make an even more “splendid alliance” when in 1828, then age thirty-seven, she married thirty-year-old Francis Godolphin D’Arcy Osborne (1798–1859), Marquess of Carmarthen, the eldest son and heir of the sixth duke of Leeds. “Louisa had made a great match,” the Caton’s old rival, Elizabeth Bonaparte, declared without exaggeration. At the death of his father, Carmarthen would reach the very pinnacle of the British aristocracy when he became the seventh duke, a rank beneath only the royal family and the king himself. “This nobleman might have led to the altar a lady much superior to Louisa in rank and fortune,” her grandfather acknowledged, but he believed Carmarthen would find in Louisa “attractions better suited to make him a happy husband than wealth & title.” Carroll only wished the “marriage had been sanctioned by his parents,” for once again Louisa’s new in-laws were not thrilled by their son’s choice. On the contrary, the Duke and Duchess of Leeds were horrified by his marriage to an
older, untitled American widow with no fortune, who, to make matters worse, was a Catholic. Carroll, though, was sure that when they came to know her, “prejudices arising from difference of religion, and the disappointment in their son not having married an heiress of high birth and great wealth will give way to better feelings and the amiable qualities of his Louisa will be much higher prized than rank and fortune.” In this he was wrong. The duke never became reconciled to the match, refused ever to meet Louisa, and attempted to break the entail on his estates in favor of his younger son until the latter’s accidental death put an end to those plans.44

Finally, only one sister still remained unmarried. “Poor Betsy,” her grandfather wrote at the time of Louisa’s marriage in 1828, “will not I fear have the luck to catch Marquiss Duke or commoner.” But even then, approaching forty, Betsy was not entirely without prospects. “I believe but cannot say, if Bessy will smile at last upon D’Evereux,” her mother reported a year after Mary Ann’s marriage. Three years later she assured Betsy that “if our friend Julius was a Minister I should have no objection to yr rewarding him with yr fair hand!—I believe he loves you most sincerely.” Ultimately Betsy rejected both suitors, and the fact is, that although the product of a patriarchal society and patriarchal family, she possessed a strong independent streak. She took a great interest in politics and current events, was knowledgeable about money matters and investments, and, like her father, became enthralled with various unsuccessful money-making schemes. “What a pity that a man of such a good heart & so active should be so visionary, & that his activity should not be better directed!” Carroll exclaimed in 1820 at the sad end of Richard Caton’s latest unsuccessful scheme—mining coal and other minerals at the Magothy River—a venture Carroll had underwritten and which Betsy was certain would yield gold if only her father would take her advice and dig in the right place! A year later, lamenting that she had not been able to “make my fortune” by purchasing shares a decade earlier in the Illinois land company, Betsy grew nostalgic over the “many magnificent utopian schemes I should have had—I sometimes now in imagination see a village in the wilderness where every cottage is gay with roses and honeysuckles, & where the richest fruits of the most distant quarters of the earth ripen together, & then I fancy that all my cottagers are as innocent as doves & therefore,” she sardonically noted, “as unlike as possible all the Cottagers I am acquainted with in the parish of Heckfield Swallowfield &c.” Against the advice of her grandfather, Betsy made unprofitable investments in South American mines, and in 1828 proposed sending a colony of Irish to work in the United States, a plan Carroll deemed “benevolent” but impractical. Should she ever “venture” to marry, he wryly commented, “I earnestly wish her marriage speculation may be more fortunate than in mines & stocks.” Like her father, Betsy could afford to take risks because she could rely on her grandfather’s support. Protesting that he was not a “man overflowing with riches,” Carroll initially rejected her request for a “present” in 1826, but the following year, even while complaining that “my estate is decreasing my expenses & expenditures increasing,” he directed
his London agents to advance her £500 sterling ($52,000). “[I] earnestly beg you” to repay the money as soon as possible, he implored, but when she inevitably failed to do so, he made a bequest of it to her in his will.45

Although Carroll had in 1825 decreed that Betsy must return home, after Mary Ann’s marriage to Wellesley everyone, including her grandfather, seemed to assume that she would never come back to America. For an unmarried, middle-aged woman dependent on her grandfather’s support, life in Baltimore evidently held little appeal. Although a thriving city by American standards, Baltimore was merely a small provincial town compared to the London metropolis, capital of the far-flung British empire and home to more than two million people. Had she wished, Betsy surely could have returned long since, but evidently preferred to stay in England with her sisters. “Is not England a paradise?” she had written back in 1819, fantasizing that her grandfather might purchase “Houghton a magnificent seat of Lord Cholmondelys,” sell his American estates, and live in England “like a prince & give his children three or four thousand a year each besides. . . . absurd as the wish is I can not get it out of my head we could have our town houses & spend all the autumn & winter with him . . . how much more he would enjoy his own existence than in Annapolis.”46

All of the sisters were “much pleased,” “delighted” and “enchanted” with England and the English, whom they greatly preferred to their Gallic neighbors, although Betsy loyally insisted that the count de Menou was not “in the least” a Frenchman. Their affinity for England is hardly surprising, given the shared language, culture, and political heritage, and that they were, in fact, half English. Quite likely, as with so much else in their lives, their Anglophilia derived in part from their grandfather, who had studied in London as a young man before the American Revolution. When his father, angry over the treatment of Catholics in Maryland during the French and Indian War, contemplated selling his Maryland estates and relocating to French Louisiana, Carroll advised against such a move, warning that “you will only exchange religious for civil Tyranny, and In my opinion of the two the greatest evil.” For himself, Carroll would “chuse to live under an english governement rather than under any other: Catholick I mean: for I know of no Catholick country where that greatest blessing civil liberty, is enjoyed.” He did of course take a leading role in the Revolutionary movement in Maryland, but explained to his granddaughter Mary Ann that “it was not my wish or design to strip England of that influence & power, which hereafter might be useful to us & to others but to rid the colonies from a church establishment, and to separate them for ever from England and its government unacquainted with our habits and manners and from distance of situation incapable of ruling justly & wisely.”47

As Carroll expected, the newly independent United States had quickly established religious liberty for all Christians, while England continued to labor under discriminatory anti-Catholic legislation dating back to the seventeenth century. An increasingly contentious issue in British politics during the 1820s, Catholic Emancipa-
tion became a prominent topic of Carroll's correspondence with his granddaughters, who of course shared his views on the subject. “The Catholic question was lost last night—I feel in a great rage about it” Betsy indignantly reported in 1819. After the Duke of Wellington, a Tory and opponent of emancipation, became prime minister in 1828, Carroll became increasingly critical of the “great man,” whose “shining & uncommon qualities” he had earlier so lavishly praised. “The Duke you say is doing every thing wise & good for his country, I beg leave to differ from you,” he wrote Mary Ann soon after Wellington assumed office. “What! does the stale bugbear of the Devil, Pope, & Pretender still haunt the minds of Englishmen? Pretender there is none; from the present temper of that people one would suppose they are more afraid of the Pope than the Devil; such is the force of prejudices sucked in with mother's milk and of falsehoods daily circulated in defiance of truth to keep alive those prejudices, falsehoods daily & victoriously refuted; oh happy America freed from bigotry!” In 1829, however, Wellington changed course and pushed through a Catholic relief bill removing all former disabilities, an event Carroll had never believed he would live to see. By then over ninety years old and nearly blind, Carroll was approaching the end of his life, and the loving relationship with his granddaughters, sustained by the exchange of letters over the long course of their separation, would soon come to a close.48

While railing against the persecution of “Millions” of Catholic subjects kept in “bondage” under British rule, Carroll and his granddaughters never once in their correspondence alluded to the injustices suffered by the black slaves under their dominion in America, whose labor had created the family wealth underpinning the Caton sisters’ entree into English society. Thanks to Carroll’s diversification of the family holdings with investments in banks, canals, railroads, bridges, and other ventures, slaves formed a much smaller part of his total estate, less than 5 percent, than had been the case with his forebears. Nevertheless, slave labor had laid the foundation of the family’s fortune, and at his death in 1832 Carroll still owned more than 350 men, women, and children who worked at Doughoragen Manor, where the Caton sisters spent their childhood summers, and at the family homes in Baltimore and Annapolis. And though the Caton sisters had left Maryland’s slave society behind, a reminder of the origin of their family’s wealth was still close at hand in the form of a slave woman named Henrietta Johnson, who accompanied Betsy Caton to England and who, when the intended two-year visit turned into a lifetime, remained, willingly or not, to share her mistress’s self-imposed exile. During her long residence in England, Johnson, who is never once mentioned in the sisters’ correspondence, lost all contact with her family in Maryland, evidently deprived even of the consolation of long-distance communication with loved ones back home, including a young daughter she never saw again. Eventually Johnson became free, but lacking either the will or the means, never returned to America. Supported by legacies from both Mary Ann and Betsy, Johnson lived for decades after their deaths in a small house
with a garden near London, where she died in 1905 at the extraordinarily advanced age of one hundred and seven. Like the three graces, during her years of service Johnson had come into contact, albeit from a radically different perspective, with the “crowned heads and the highest aristocracy of Europe,” even living for a time at the royal Hampton Court Palace. Nothing survives to chronicle Johnson’s own feelings, but she must have been an ever-present reminder of the choices they had made and the world left behind.49

Unlike the slaves, who had few options, during the years that the Carrolls had suffered under colonial Maryland’s anti-Catholic laws and policies the family might easily have converted to the Anglican faith, as did many of their contemporaries and even some kinsmen. But never once did Carroll, his father, or grandfather consider abandoning the Catholic Church, as much a part of their identity as their Irish heritage. Nor did Carroll’s granddaughters ever entertain any such ideas, even though their father was not a Catholic, nor were any of Louisa and Mary Ann’s four husbands. When the Duke and Duchess of Leeds insisted that Louisa convert before marrying their son, she scoffed at the “absurd” proposition that she change her religion. Life would probably have been easier for her and Carmarthen, whose father disowned him, if she had, but it was not an option she was willing to consider. After Mary Ann married Wellesley, the Protestant Orange faction opposed to his policies as lord lieutenant made much of her religion, but like Louisa, Mary Ann had no intention of relinquishing her faith. Carroll did not live to see it, but in 1836 Betsy would finally exchange her single state for marriage with Sir George William Jerningham (1771–1851), eighth Baron Stafford, a widower nearly twenty years her senior who had twelve children from his first marriage. Like her sisters, Betsy thus acquired a title, and as Lady Stafford presided over the family’s ancestral home, Costessy Hall, a wonderful Tudor-style mansion in Norfolk. What would have most pleased Carroll, though, was that Stafford, scion of an old English Catholic family, shared Betsy’s faith, the only Catholic among the Caton sisters’ many husbands. None of the three graces ever bore children, thus leaving forever unanswered the question of succeeding generations’ continued religious loyalty, but all three of the sisters remained true to the Catholic faith of their grandfather Carroll until the end of their lives.

“Really there is something singular in the destiny of the Caton family,” Eliza Godefroy observed on learning of Betsy’s marriage. “I think,” complained their old nemesis Elizabeth Bonaparte, “they are the most fortunate people I have ever heard or read of.” If, as Godefroy believed, “rank and title” was their “Soul’s ambition,” then the Caton sisters were indeed fortunate, and immensely successful, attaining distinctions that other envious Americans could only dream of for decades to come. Individually, each of the sisters would have been considered a great success in her own right, but for all three to acquire rank and position in the British aristocracy was beyond remarkable, a truly unprecedented, even amazing feat. Not everyone
agreed, however, that theirs was an enviable fate. James Buchanan, U.S. minister to Great Britain and friend to the aging sisters during the 1850s, believed that they would have been happier “united to independent gentlemen in their own country.” Even the envious Bonaparte, defeated in her quest for a title for either herself or her son, finally returned home to live out her days in Baltimore near her grandchildren; but once settled in England, the Caton sisters, increasingly estranged from succeeding generations of the family, would never again cross the ocean.

Whether or not the “Three Graces” ultimately found happiness in their choices, there is no doubt that they had succeeded beyond anyone’s expectations, to the great pride and joy of their family at home, especially their grandfather, who reveled in their accomplishments. And without doubt, for better or worse, it was Carroll who made it all possible. Certainly their inherent beauty and grace played an important role, but the material advantages and financial security he provided, as well as his love, admiration, and encouragement, laid the foundation for their spectacular triumphs abroad. Not all of Carroll’s grandchildren benefited equally from his largesse; the Caton sisters were truly privileged, not only in the world at large but within their own family, and though taken for granted as their due, that privilege made possible, perhaps inevitable, the fulfillment of their destiny as the “Three American Graces.”

NOTES

1. Charles Carroll of Carrollton (hereafter CCC) to Mary Ann (Caton) Patterson, October 16, 1816, and CCC to Elizabeth Caton, October 23, 1816, Carroll-McTavish Papers, MS 220, MdHS; Jehanne Wake, Sisters of Fortune: America’s Caton Sisters at Home and Abroad (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010), 99–104.
3. Inventory of CCC’s personal estate, 1833, MS 205, MdHS; Ann C. Van Devanter, ed. “Anywhere So Long as There Be Freedom”: Charles Carroll of Carrollton, His Family & His Maryland (Baltimore: Baltimore Museum of Art, 1975), 57. Conversion from contemporary dollars (in this case 1832) to present-day (2013) amounts has been made using converter provided by Samuel H. Williamson, “Purchasing Power of Money in the United States from 1774 to Present,” MeasuringWorth, 2015 (available online at www.measuringworth.com). Conversions from contemporary pounds to present-day dollars rely on Lawrence H. Officer and Samuel H. Williamson, “Computing ‘Real Value’ Over Time with a Conversion Between U.K. Pounds and U.S. Dollars, 1774 to Present,” MeasuringWorth, 2015. Hereafter, values in current dollars follow (in parentheses) contemporary amounts given in either dollars or pounds. All conversions are approximate; values spanning multiple years have been estimated by averaging a conversion of the first and last years of the period covered.
5. CCC to Daniel Carroll of Duddington, March 13, 1787, Harper-Pennington Papers, MS 431,


9. Emily Caton to CCC, July 29, 1817, Carroll-McTavish Papers, MdHS.


11. CCC to Mary Ann Caton, February 2, 1803, Vertical File, MdHS; CCC to Louisa Caton, September 19, 1803, Carroll-McTavish Papers.


13. John E. Howard to Benjamin Chew, June 13, 1814, Chew Papers, Pennsylvania Historical Society; CCC to Mary Caton, June 12, 1814, and John McTavish to Louisa Hervey, October 13, 1825, Carroll-McTavish Papers. In 1825, McTavish estimated the manor to be worth $35 per acre ($420,000 for the entire 12,000 acres); eight years earlier Robert G. Harper thought it would sell for at least $62 per acre ($744,000 total), but at Carroll’s death in 1832 its estimated value was only $480,000, closer to McTavish’s figure.


20. CCC to Mary Caton, April 26, 1816, and CCC to Mary Ann Patterson, October 16, 1816, Carroll-McTavish Papers; CCC to William Murdoch, March 27, 1816, Carroll Letter-book, Arents Collections.
24. Anna Maria Wilhelmina Stirling, *Coke of Norfolk and his Friends* (New York, 1908), 145, 481; Mary Ann Patterson to Elizabeth Patterson Bonaparte, October 10, 1816, Elizabeth Patterson Bonaparte Papers; Mary Ann Patterson to Robert G. Harper, August 26, November 19, November 27, December 4, 1817, and Mary Ann Patterson to Richard Caton, February 4, 1818, Harper-Pennington Papers; Elizabeth Caton to Mary D. Harper, October 25, 1817, Mary D. Harper Letterbook, MS 430, MdHS.
27. CCC to Mary Ann Patterson, November 18, 1824, Duke of Leeds Papers; Louisa Hervey to Catharine Harper, June 16, [1818], Harper-Pennington Papers.
29. CCC to Elizabeth Caton, May 22, 1817, MS 220.
30. Louisa Hervey to Emily McTavish, November 9, 1817, Carroll-McTavish Papers; James McElhinney to Elizabeth Patterson Bonaparte, September 18, 1817, Elizabeth Patterson Bonaparte Papers.
32. Robert G. Harper to Louisa Hervey, November 14, 1817, Harper-Pennington Papers; Frederick Co. Land Records, Liber J. S. no. 6, fols. 119–123, MdAA. Harper’s estimate is considerably higher than later values (see n. 13 above) placed on Carrollton Manor, based on which Louisa’s share was worth no more than £8,000 in 1817.
34. CCC to Mary Caton, July 19, 1819, Carroll-McTavish Papers.
36. Mary Caton to Ann Chase, July 20, 1823, Chase Papers; CCC to Elizabeth Caton, April 27, 1825, Duke of Leeds Papers.
37. Mary Caton to Ann Chase, September 19, [1825], Chase Papers; Eliza Godefroy to Ebenezer Jackson, November 27, 1836; Didier, *Madame Bonaparte*, 175; Wake, *Sisters of Fortune*, 195.


40. Mary Caton to Ann Chase, December 20, 1825, and January 8, 1826, Chase Papers; Mary Ann Patterson to Richard Wellesley [October 1825], Wellesley Papers, British Library, London.

41. CCC to Mary Ann Wellesley, December 13, 1825, and November 2, 1827, Duke of Leeds Papers; Richard Wellesley to CCC, December 20, 1825, Chase Papers.

42. CCC to Marianne Wellesley, December 13, 1825, and May 15, 1827, Duke of Leeds Papers.


46. Elizabeth Caton to Catharine Harper, June 19, [1818], Harper-Pennington Papers.


49. CCC to Mary Ann Wellesley, December 3, 1827, Duke of Leeds Papers; Inventory of CCC’s personal estate, 1833, MS 205, MdHS; *Washington Post*, February 26, 1905, and *Baltimore American*, February 10, 1905 Proquest Historical Newspapers. Accounts vary as to whether Johnson belonged to Betsy or Mary Ann, but the former’s 1854 will left a £25 annuity to Johnson, whereas an 1828 draft of Mary Ann’s will mentions several slaves but not Johnson (Duke of Leeds Papers). Johnson might not have been the only slave the sisters brought from Maryland. Betsy’s will also left a legacy to “my Nurse Nancy Mahoney,” who had almost certainly been a Carroll slave, and to her maid “Ann Jackson,” while Mary Ann’s 1828 draft freed her “maid Servant Mary.” Unlike other slaves freed by Mary Ann in the same draft on condition they leave the United States, Mary appears to have been with Mary Ann in England.
Go Quietly or Else: The Resignation of Vice President Spiro T. Agnew

PETER LEVY

Spiro T. Agnew entered Judge Walter E. Hoffman’s courtroom in Baltimore, Maryland, just before 2 P.M. on October 10, 1973, knowing he was about to become the second vice president to resign from office and the first federal executive to be forced from power due to criminal wrongdoings. Agnew had grown up only a stone’s throw away from Hoffman’s courtroom. His father’s restaurant, his own elementary school, and the University of Baltimore, where he had earned his law degree, were all in close proximity. He had met his wife, Elinor “Judy” Judefind, at the nearby Monumental Life Insurance Company, where both of them had worked before he went off to fight in General Patton’s army. The State Office Building, where he had first gained national fame by lambasting black radicals for causing the riots that erupted following Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassination in 1968, was just up the street. No one could deny that he had traveled a long way in a short time.

Just five years earlier, when Richard Nixon nominated him as his running-mate, Agnew was virtually unknown. To the query, “Who or what was Spiro Agnew?” responses were on the order of, “It’s some kind of disease,” “He owns that Greek shipping-firm,” “It’s some kind of egg,” and, most commonly, “Spiro who?” Nevertheless, by the summer of 1973, polls showed that Agnew had emerged as the favorite to win the Republican presidential nomination in 1976. Already campaign buttons declaring “Spiro of ’76,” a reference to the American Revolution and the upcoming bicentennial, not to mention the next election, were circulating. With the Democratic Party in disarray following the Nixon-Agnew landslide over McGovern-Shriver in 1972 and Ted Kennedy’s fiasco at Chappaquiddick, there can be little doubt that the Agnews had given some thought to what it would be like to occupy the White House.

Well before Agnew entered Judge Hoffman’s courtroom, 1973 had become a historic year. The Watergate scandal had dominated the news and President Nixon’s top advisors, H. R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, and John Dean had resigned. The Senate had convened special televised hearings to investigate what the president knew and when he first knew it. Then, just when some thought that Nixon might extricate himself from the scandal, the media reported that the president had taped his White House conversations, which resulted in ongoing battles between the special

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prosecutor, Archibald Cox, and Nixon over access to “the tapes.” Agnew remained above the fray because, as his good friend Barry Goldwater put it: “If there is one thing the Vice President can back up, it’s that he doesn’t know what the hell is going on in the White House.” Though twice nominated by Nixon, Agnew had never enjoyed the president’s confidence.

Aside from Watergate, the nation was reeling from a series of other crises, including creeping inflation about to be made worse by an oil embargo orchestrated by the recently formed Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, a two-year decline of the stock market that saw the Dow Jones Industrial Average plummet 45 percent between January 1973 and December 1974, and the Yom Kippur war between Israel and its Arab neighbors, which broke out on October 6. Though President Nixon had managed to successfully negotiate the Paris Peace Accords signaling the end of the direct involvement of American forces in Vietnam, the Senate had yet to ratify the agreement and deep divisions stemming from the war, such as whether to grant amnesty to draft-resisters, continued to tear the nation apart.

On August 7, 1973, amid all this turmoil, the Wall Street Journal reported that Agnew was the “target of a criminal inquiry.” Americans soon learned from the Journal and other media sources that Agnew had allegedly taken kickbacks for years, beginning in the early 1960s, when he served as Baltimore County executive, and subsequently as governor of Maryland. Some sources even suggested that Agnew had accepted bribes after taking office as vice president. From the start, Agnew termed the charges “damned lies” and blamed his old nemeses, the media and politically motivated and unscrupulous government attorneys, for trying to drive him from office. In response to the allegations, Barry Goldwater helped to organize an Agnew Defense Fund, and countless other conservatives rallied to his defense. On September 29, 1973, nearly two months after the Wall Street Journal broke the story, Agnew informed a wildly cheering crowd at the annual meeting of the National Federation of Republican Women in Los Angeles that he was innocent and would not resign. He also requested that the House of Representatives initiate hearings into the charges and argued that the vice president could only be removed from office via impeachment and, if necessary, a trial by the U.S. Senate.

This essay will explore why, on October 10 in Judge Hoffman’s courtroom, Agnew decided to enter a plea of nolo contendere, or no contest, to a single charge of tax evasion and to submit his resignation. Why, given his pugnacious reputation and the strong support he still enjoyed from many ordinary or forgotten Americans, did he elect not to put up more of a fight? Why didn’t he listen to the entreaties of women like Gladys Donahue, who implored: “Don’t resign! Mr. Nixon didn’t, so why should you?” It should be remembered that as of October 10, 1973, no president and only one vice president, John C. Calhoun, had ever resigned, and Calhoun did so because of his personal differences with Andrew Jackson, not legal troubles. Before Watergate and since, despite a bevy of scandals that range from the Whiskey Ring and
Teapot Dome affairs to Iran-Contra and Whitewater/Lewinskygate and the outing of Valerie Plame, no president or vice president except Agnew and Nixon have ever resigned. Did the severity of the charges against Agnew account for his decision to step down, or did other factors play a role? Just as importantly, what impact, if any, did Agnew’s resignation have on American politics? Did it help usher in an era of political polarization and incivility? Or was Agnew’s resignation inconsequential to the course of history, and like Agnew himself, rightfully forgotten?

Although Agnew would insist for years afterward that he was innocent and that the charges against him were politically motivated, he resigned because of the weight of the government’s evidence against him and because he feared that fighting the charges could financially ruin his family and himself. In addition, Agnew stepped down when he did because he lacked the support of the president and his top aides, especially Alexander Haig, Nixon’s chief of staff. Perhaps if conservatives, who saw Agnew as one of their champions, had been stronger at the time, he might have been able to mount a stronger effort, but the New Right was still emerging as a major political force and lacked the institutional power to thwart the push to compel Agnew to resign.

When the Wall Street Journal and other media outlets informed the public that Agnew was a target of a criminal investigation, suggesting that a “New Watergate” might be at hand, Vice President Agnew and President Nixon both feigned surprise. “I have been informed that I am under investigation for possible violations of the criminal statutes,” read a statement released by the vice president’s office on August 7.4 The following day Agnew similarly told the press that he had been “formally notified” only a week before that “he was under criminal investigation,” a statement that clearly implied that he had little if any prior knowledge of his legal troubles.5 White House sources suggested to reporters that the president “hit the ceiling” when he learned that Agnew was under investigation,” certainly indicating that Nixon had not known about any of the charges beforehand.6 Yet, as far back early as February, Agnew knew that the U.S. attorney general’s office in Baltimore had been investigating him and Nixon had learned that Agnew faced his own legal difficulties not long afterwards, though he did not broach the subject directly with his vice president until the seventh of August.7

Agnew became a target of the U.S. attorney’s office in Baltimore by accident, not because it suspected him of any wrongdoing. Ironically, unlike Dale Anderson, the prime target of a federal investigation, and many other Democrats in Maryland at the time, Agnew had a reputation for integrity. He first ran for office as a reform candidate who sought to overcome the corruption of the Democratic machine that had dominated politics in Baltimore County for years. As county executive and to a lesser degree as governor, Agnew promoted “good” government. For example, he publicly acknowledged that slot machine interests had tried to bribe him, and he
promoted a statewide constitutional convention to reform Maryland’s antiquated government. In contrast, the kickback scheme that ultimately led to Agnew’s conviction was long a “staple in Maryland politics,” according to reporters Washington Post reporters Jules Witcover and Richard Cohen. Or as Richard Nixon put it, Agnew’s alleged transgressions were “in the Maryland tradition.” Among Marylanders implicated in scandals during this period were A. Gordon Boone, Speaker of the House of Delegates, U.S. Senator Daniel Brewster, Baltimore County State’s Attorney Samuel Green, and Representative Clarence Mitchell III, all Democrats. Marvin Mandel, who succeeded Agnew as governor of Maryland, also a Democrat, was forced to resign after being convicted of mail fraud and racketeering, and the aforementioned Dale Anderson was indicted and convicted on corruption charges.  

On January 15, 1973, in the course of an interview regarding Anderson, Lester Matz, who owned an engineering firm, stated that he had made payments to Agnew in order to enhance his chances of getting county business for his firm. “Lester Matz and John Childs established their company in Baltimore County in 1956,” stated the U.S. attorney’s office in Baltimore. “From 1956 until 1963,” an official memo continued, “they found it extremely difficult to get substantial amounts of public work from Baltimore County. They observed that a relatively small number of engineering firms who were close to the Democratic county administration received most of the county engineering work. Despite repeated efforts, Matz and Childs simply could not break into this group.” Put somewhat differently, a staple of politics in Maryland was the principle of “pay to play.” Democrats, who dominated most local governments,
demanded that contractors contribute to them in order to obtain work and Matz’s firm either did not understand how to play the game or was not allowed to do so.9

In 1962, when Agnew challenged the Democratic machine in Baltimore County, Matz supported him, hoping his victory would enhance his business. This included making several legal contributions to Agnew’s campaign. “Sometime after Mr. Agnew assumed office,” the U.S. attorney’s office observed, Matz was contacted by J. Walter Jones, a close associate of Agnew, who informed Matz “that they were going to make a lot of money under the Agnew administration.” A short time thereafter, Jones and Matz met again, and Jones advised Matz “that a cash payment in the amount of 5% would be necessary for County work that Matz’s company would receive.” Matz believed Agnew received the money and was “delighted to be in that small group of engineers who . . . would receive most of the substantial County work.” Subsequently, he would regularly deliver cash to Jones, whom he presumed passed it on to Agnew. This arrangement continued when Agnew became governor, though Matz had to devise new methods for generating the cash without alerting auditors. At one point, Matz alleged that he handed Governor Agnew an envelope containing $20,000 worth of cash. Calculating that he still owed Agnew $10,000, for work that had already been contracted but for which Agnew had not yet been paid, Matz met with the vice president in his temporary office in the White House. At this meeting, Matz asserted that Agnew was alone and that he “gave him approximately $9,000 or $10,000 in cash in an envelope which he recalls Mr. Agnew placed in his desk drawer.”10

To be clear, investigators did not learn all of these details on January 15, only glimmers of the larger scheme. At the time Matz made the first revelations, his attorney did not think that U.S. Attorney George Beall was interested in pursuing a case against Agnew because the vice president had helped Beall’s brother, J. Glenn Beall Jr., win a seat in the U.S. Senate in 1970. He also knew that his clients did not wish to help build a case against Agnew. Subsequently, when the story broke, Agnew asserted that Barnet Skolnik, one of Beall’s assistants, had decided to pursue the case for political reasons. As Agnew noted, Skolnik had worked for Senator Edmund Muskie’s unsuccessful presidential campaign in 1972, and, Agnew maintained, “there was no doubt that the other young lawyers in the prosecutor’s office were ideologically hostile” to him.11 In addition, Agnew insisted that testimony against him was bought by promises of immunity from individuals who acknowledged they had broken the law. Richard Cohen and Jules Witcover disputed Agnew’s allegations, arguing that Skolnik and his colleagues were simply doing good legal work and that it was common practice to exchange immunity for testimony.12

Regardless of their motivations, the U.S. attorney’s office in Baltimore decided to follow the initial lead provided by Matz, and Agnew learned of the investigation in late February. Shortly afterward, he contacted U.S. Attorney General Richard Kleindienst, perhaps in the belief that Kleindienst would nip the investigation at the bud. Had the nation not been in the middle of the Watergate scandal, Kleindienst
might have done so. Witcover and Cohen assert that Kleindienst's predecessor, John Mitchell, had sabotaged other investigations of leading Republican politicians, but Kleindienst, who had succeeded Mitchell, faced his own legal troubles and resigned on April 30. Agnew also reached out to Charles Colson, one of President Nixon's top aides, to provide legal advice. Busy dealing with the unfolding Watergate scandal, Colson recommended that Agnew seek counsel from his law partner, Judah Best. About the same time, Agnew informed Nixon's top aide, Haldeman, of the investigation. There is every reason to believe that Haldeman passed the information along to the president. Burdened with his own legal problems, not to mention the broader Watergate scandal, Haldeman devoted little time or attention to the Agnew matter.13

When Agnew told Haldeman about the matter on April 10, 1973, the president and his top aides were hunkered down, figuring out how to respond to John Dean's decision to cooperate with Watergate prosecutors. Nixon was so consumed with extricating himself from the Watergate investigation that it is difficult to gauge exactly how he initially responded to news of the investigation of his vice president. Evidence from Nixon's White House tapes, about which the public did not learn until mid-July, suggest that he sought to keep Agnew around as an insurance policy in the event of his own impeachment. Even though Nixon had long contemplated replacing Agnew with John Connally, whom he considered to be a much more worthy successor, once the Watergate scandal emerged he believed that his enemies would never remove him from office if Agnew was the alternative. As he put it to Kleindienst on April 25, "People say, 'impeach the president.' Well, then they get Agnew, what the hell." Or as he mused to his press secretary, Ronald Ziegler, "They can't want, frankly, to see Agnew be president. No, really, don't see impeachment. . . . Good God, the point is they've got to want to see the country succeed." Likewise, on the day that Haldeman and Ehrlichman resigned he rhetorically asked another of his advisors, Ray Price, "You [meaning the public] want Agnew?"14

Meanwhile in Baltimore, the U.S. attorney's office continued to gather evidence against Agnew, all the while denying the existence of such an investigation to the press. Unlike his predecessors, especially John Mitchell, who was one of Agnew's supporters in the administration, Elliot Richardson, who succeeded Kleindienst as attorney general, encouraged Beall to develop the case. Indeed, there is a good deal of evidence that from early in his tenure Richardson hoped to accumulate enough evidence to force Agnew to resign quickly. What prompted him to pursue such a strategy remains a matter of dispute. Agnew claimed that he and Richardson had long been at odds, to a large degree because they occupied opposite ends of the political spectrum. To make matters worse, according to Agnew, Richardson was everything he was not. Richardson had inherited a fortune, came from a long-line of distinguished New England families, had attended Ivy League schools, and was anti-Catholic. Agnew even asserted that Richardson was motivated by his own
presidential aspirations, which, Agnew suggested, his demise would boost. Agnew added that Richardson, along with one of his top aides, Henry Petersen, wanted to restore the public’s trust in the Justice Department, a trust that had been severely damaged by the Watergate scandal. Agnew contended that he was the sacrificial lamb in this process.\textsuperscript{15}

Richardson explained his pursuit of Agnew differently. He agreed with those who claimed that he was largely bent on restoring the public’s faith in the Justice Department but rejected the idea that there was anything wrong or excessive about investigating Agnew. “Our first job,” he told an interviewer on September 3, “is to restore confidence in the Department” and thence “in our legal system and the government itself.”\textsuperscript{16} Moreover, the Baltimore U.S. attorney’s office had convinced him that they were developing a strong case against the vice president, one built on the testimony of multiple witnesses, including former associates. Coincidentally, Lester Matz agreed to testify against Agnew at about the same time that Richardson was sworn into office—mid-June, 1973. Other witnesses who came forward included Allen Green, who, in exchange for testimony against Agnew, was offered immunity from charges having nothing to do with the Agnew investigation.\textsuperscript{17}

On July 3, Beall and his staff briefed Richardson about the kickback scheme. On the eleventh and again on the twenty-seventh, they met with Richardson to elaborate on the investigation. At these meetings, Richardson emphasized that the offices had to confront four key questions. First, “When, if ever, and under what conditions, should Mr. Agnew be confronted with the allegations” and given the opportunity to respond. Second, “When should Richardson advise the President of the investigation?” (Richardson did not know that Nixon already knew about it.) Third, which witnesses should be “given complete immunity from prosecution?” And fourth, whether Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox held jurisdiction over the case. In addition, the attorneys discussed how Agnew might defend himself from charges, with Richardson suggesting that Agnew could assert that all of the testimony against him was false or claim that all of the funds he had received were legal campaign contributions from which he had not profited personally. To counter the latter possibility, Richardson suggested, but did not yet authorize, a “net worth investigation,” which presumably would have involved the FBI and the Internal Revenue Service. At the same time, he revealed that he would prefer if he could convince Agnew to resign prior to securing an indictment.\textsuperscript{18}

A little more than two weeks later, Beall and his staff met with Richardson again to discuss the Agnew case. Several of the topics raised at the previous meeting were rehashed, including the role of the Special Prosecutor, the question of when and if to confront the vice president, and the issue of granting immunity to witnesses. Richardson was concerned that “the case might be weakened . . . in the public’s eye if a substantial number of people involved were given total immunity in exchange from prosecution.” Subsequently, Agnew would complain that the testimony of all
of the witnesses was bought in this way. Prosecutors discussed two other substantial matters, the need to involve the IRS immediately, presumably to investigate whether Agnew had reported the income he had received, and when to inform the president of the investigation. Though Richardson was convinced that he should discuss the matter with the president as soon as possible, the assistant attorneys who had been conducting the case opposed such a move on the grounds that the White House might leak information to the press, which, in turn, might hamper the prosecution of Agnew.19

The same day that Richardson met with Beall, he also met with Alexander Haig to brief him about the investigation. More than the president, Haig, who had only recently become Nixon’s chief of staff, would play a pivotal role in terms of deciding Agnew’s fate. “In the second week of July 1973, while the Watergate scandal metastasized and pressure mounted for Nixon to resign the presidency, Elliot Richardson told me that Vice President Agnew’s name had come up in an investigation of kickbacks,” Haig recollected in his autobiography. “In my own mind, two words formed: double impeachment.” “I am not subject to visions,” Haig continued, “but as Richardson left my office a vivid picture grew in my mind of the President and Vice President both charged with high crimes and misdemeanors, side by side, on trial together before the Senate.” Deeply disturbed by this possibility, Haig called Fred Buzhardt, Special White House Counsel for Watergate Matters, and explained the situation. Buzhardt replied with an expletive. “Then,” Haig inquired, “it’s within the realm of possibility, under the Constitution?” Buzhardt replied, “Absolutely. You could have a coup d’état with the Legislative Branch taking over the Executive Branch under the cover of the Constitution.” But, Haig replied, Speaker of the House Carl Albert, who would have assumed the presidency had both Nixon and Agnew resigned, was a Democrat. “That would reverse the results of the election,” he said. “We’ve got to find a way to decouple these two situations and deal with them one at a time. Otherwise, they’ll go down together and the country will go with them.”20

Why Haig equated an impeachment, which would have mandated both an indictment in the House of Representatives and a trial in the Senate, with a coup d’état, remained unclear. His perspective, though, dovetailed with Richardson’s view that it was more important to prod Agnew to resign than to risk long, drawn out hearings in the House and a Senate trial, particularly since the president was concurrently embroiled in his own controversy which could similarly result in an impeachment. Accordingly, even before the Wall Street Journal broke the story of the investigation, Richardson and Haig took steps to try to prompt Agnew to step down, and there is a good chance that at least one of them leaked information to the Journal in order to achieve that end.21

On August 1, Agnew’s attorney Judah Best received a letter from Beall informing him that the vice president was a suspect. Until now, Beall’s office had stated repeatedly that other Maryland officials, but not Agnew, were the targets of the Baltimore
attorney general’s office. In the letter, Beall demanded to see Agnew’s bank statements. Even before the deadline passed for turning over these records, Richardson, Haig, Buzhardt, and President Nixon met to discuss Agnew’s situation. Richardson described Nixon’s reaction to their summarization of the case as “remarkably objective.” For instance, the president suggested that Henry Petersen, a top official in the Justice Department, should conduct an “independent review” of the case. Yet, at the same time, presumably with the president’s authorization, Haig arranged for a meeting later that afternoon with Richardson and Agnew, whereupon Richardson and Haig sought to convince Agnew to resign without a fight, a fight Haig wanted to avert lest he risk alienating the vice president’s conservative base.22

At this meeting, where Agnew’s attorneys, Judah Best and Jay Topkis, were present, Richardson summarized the investigation, including allegations that Agnew had received kickbacks while Baltimore County executive and governor and that some of the payments, from Matz, had been received after he had become vice president. In a memo describing the meeting, Richardson noted that Agnew termed the whole thing a “fabrication,” called Matz “crazy,” and asserted that he had “no confidence in the objectivity” of Beall and his staff. Best accused the prosecutor of employing unprofessional tactics in emphasizing his willingness to coerce witnesses to give testimony. Best also chided Beall’s office for not showing proper respect for the vice president.23

Nixon’s response to Agnew’s troubles proved truly Machiavellian and revealed as much about his character as anything else he ever did during his presidency. Before meeting personally with his two-term vice president, Nixon authorized his top aides, particularly Haig, Buzhardt, and longtime confidant Len Garment, to pressure Agnew to resign, and most likely authorized his aides to leak information to the press that he knew would harm Agnew. As noted above, the U.S. attorney general’s office in Baltimore was so worried about leaks from Nixon’s aides, which could lead to a “prejudicial pretrial motion,” that it fought against submitting a memorandum summarizing the case to the White House. (Richardson made them submit it anyway.) Simultaneously, Nixon informed Agnew that he had confidence in him and in public pronouncements expressed his support for the vice president, though in measured terms.24 Perhaps one reason Nixon did not directly demand Agnew’s resignation was because he still believed that Agnew was his best insurance policy. At the same time, the president weighed the possibility that he might be able to buy some good will by sacrificing Agnew. Certainly, this is how Agnew interpreted Nixon’s tepid support for him once the story broke. “It is ironic that Nixon thought he was helping himself by shoving me out,” Agnew later wrote. “The truth is that had he kept me in office, he might have held onto the presidency. . . . Only later,” Agnew asserted, referring to Nixon’s memoirs, did the president realize that “appeasing enemies did not secure his presidency but led to demands for more.”25

In a memo dated September 26, Richard G. Dixon, a Nixon confidant at the
Department of Justice, bluntly summarized the president’s main objectives: “(1) get rid of STA [Spiro T. Agnew] ASAP; (2) Avoid court process that could suggest that incumbent President himself subject to court process; (3) Avoid losing VP’s constituency; (4) Get new VP . . . promptly; (5) Get rid of Cox/Richardson.”

Regarding the second point made in Dixon’s memo, Solicitor General Robert Bork, acting at the behest of the president, filed a brief for the Justice Department contending that even though the president could not be indicted or criminally prosecuted because it would “undermine the capacity of the executive branch to perform its constitutionally assigned function,” the vice president could be indicted because “none of a Vice President’s constitutional functions were “substantially impaired by his liability to the criminal process.” Recent reviews by scholars, written in the midst of Vice President Dick Cheney’s legal troubles, raise questions about Bork’s argument that, essentially, because the vice president’s job is so inconsequential he can be indicted, whereas the president cannot. Agnew’s attorneys argued that the vice president could not be indicted while in office, and since Agnew stepped down as part of a plea deal, the constitutional issue remains unresolved.

This does not mean that Agnew or his attorneys believed that he was immune from impeachment. On the contrary, as his attorneys argued, “the Constitutional plan requires that a Vice President may be removed from his office . . . only through impeachment voted by the House, and judgment of conviction voted by the Senate.” Acting on this view, Agnew not only refused to accede to Haig’s and Richardson’s call for him to resign, he actively pursued a House inquiry. To that end, he wrote Speaker Carl Albert to specifically “request that the House of Representatives undertake a full inquiry into the charges. . . . The request is made in the dual interest of preserving the Constitutional stature of my Office and accomplishing personal vindication.” To bolster his claim that Congress was the proper body to adjudicate the charges against him, Agnew quoted at length from a letter written by John C. Calhoun that had made virtually the same legal argument. Numerous Republican officials expressed support for Agnew’s call for a congressional inquiry, including Edward Hutchinson, the senior Republican on the House Judiciary Committee. So too did Congressman Pete McClosky, the liberal anti-war Republican from northern California, who delivered a passionate speech from the floor of the House in favor of granting Agnew’s request. “In all fairness,” declared McClosky, who was no great friend of Agnew’s, “we owe the office of the Vice President this much—a speedy, comprehensive and impartial inquiry into allegations of impeachable misconduct—so that the Vice President can serve his high office without this particular sword of Damocles suspended over his every function.”

Agnew’s efforts to have his case heard by the House were thwarted by liberal Democrats, who displayed little interest in “fairness,” and by Nixon’s aides, who wanted him to resign quickly so that they could focus on protecting the president. Agnew’s aide David Keene recalled that Peter Rodino, the chair of the House Judi-
cary Committee, responded to the call for a House inquiry with another expletive. (Keene went on to lead the American Conservative Union and later the National Rifle Association.) Speaker Albert rejected Agnew’s request without even informing Gerald Ford, one of the top Republicans in the House, of his decision. At the same time, Melvin Laird, one of Nixon’s top aides, pressured Republicans to back off. More specifically, Laird warned John Anderson, the chairman of the House Republican conference, “Stay away [from the Agnew affair] . . . as far as possible.” Similarly, the attorney general worked to undermine Agnew’s efforts to avert a criminal indictment. For instance, when Paul Findley, a Republican from Illinois, sought to introduce a resolution that would force the House to vote on conducting an inquiry, Richardson’s aides arranged an urgent meeting with the leaders of the Judiciary Committee to find ways to derail Findley’s efforts.

Looking back somewhat sympathetically on Agnew’s travails, Henry Kissinger offered an enlightened structural analysis of the situation. Avoiding the question of Agnew’s guilt, Kissinger observed that virtually everyone in the executive branch worked at the pleasure of the president, except the vice president. This meant, Kissinger continued, that everyone in the administration had to satisfy the boss, lest they lose their jobs. Once Nixon’s aides and cabinet members concluded that the president wanted to dispose of Agnew, they focused on achieving this end, not determining the vice president’s guilt or innocence, or fighting the charges. In contrast, the vice president only enjoyed the allegiance of his personal staff, none of whom had any real power.

Blocked from having the charges against him heard by the House and faced with pressure to resign from his colleagues in the White House, and presumably from the president himself, Agnew decided to do what he did best, appeal directly to middle Americans for their support. He had signaled that this would be his response when he had called the charges “damned lies” in his initial press conference on August 8. There is good reason to believe that Frank Sinatra, with whom Agnew had become very close friends, encouraged him to fight it out, perhaps because Sinatra himself had long had to combat rumors that he had risen to fame because of the workings of the underworld. At a minimum, Agnew’s brief stay at Sinatra’s private estate in southern California at the end of September provided a respite wherein he could consider his options away from the headaches of the capital. Aside from a place to reflect, Sinatra also offered Agnew legal and financial help, both tools he would need to carry on the fight. A review of the Agnew Defense Fund, officially headed by Barry Goldwater, Missouri governor Warren Hearnes, and conservative financier W. Clement Stone, showed that although most of the contributions came from ordinary Americans in the form of donations ranging from $1 to $100, at least a quarter of all funds came from a select group of Southern Californians, most with ties to Sinatra. Performer Dean Martin contributed $3,000; so did Alfred Hart, Sinatra confidant and founder of the Beverly Hills based City National Bank; comedian George Burns and Patsy
D’Amore, the legendary owner of the Villa Capri restaurant frequented by Sinatra, the late James Dean, and other Hollywood moguls, donated to Agnew’s defense as well. Sinatra himself contributed a sizeable, though undisclosed, amount.\(^{34}\)

Agnew’s spirits were also buoyed by public polls that showed that he still enjoyed the support of a substantial number of Americans—42 percent still gave him good-to-excellent job approval ratings, far better than those President Nixon enjoyed at the time—and by his mail, which urged him not to resign. “This is the first time I have ever been compelled to write to a public official to urge him to take a steadfast stand,” wrote Dorthea Knock, “but the possibility of your resigning almost makes me wild.” “Don’t give up. . . . You are more popular than you think,” added La Verne Hyndman of Springfield, Virginia. “I really challenged a man to a fight last week for mouthing off about you and . . . I will fight for our Constitution . . . and you any day,” exclaimed Clyde Ryan of Arlington, California. “You are the scapegoat of Nixon,” declared Edith Harkey. Or as John Schuster put it, “Please do not resign. Our country needs you. If Pres. Nixon’s or others put pressure on let them resign.” Somewhat similarly, Shirley Fallon of Waterbow, Maine, telegraphed, “We are behind Nixon 25 percent. We are behind Agnew 100 Percent. Don’t back down.”\(^{35}\)

Agnew ad-libbed much of the speech he delivered to the National Federation of Republican Women on September 29, breaking significantly from the advanced copy he had distributed to the press. Putting aside the niceties of thanking the group for inviting him to speak, he declared his absolute innocence and declared that he would not resign. With the crowd of 2,000 cheering his every word—it interrupted his address with howls of approval thirty-two times—Agnew delivered a blistering attack on the Justice Department for persecuting him and condemned his old enemy, the press. “In the past several months,” Agnew exclaimed, “I’ve been living in purgatory. I have found myself the recipient of undefined, unclear, unattributed accusations that have surfaced in the largest and most widely circulated organs of our communications media.” The motives and methods of the prosecution, he added, have been downright “unprofessional and malicious and outrageous.” The Justice Department, he explained, had bought the testimony of witnesses with offers of immunity. “Now in case you don’t know what immunity is,” he said, “it means that someone who has already admitted his guilt . . . can escape the full force of his punishment by turning in someone higher up. And that’s exactly what happened in this case.” Before bringing his speech to its crescendo, Agnew explained that he had requested a hearing by the House of Representatives. Though to date it had refused to grant him such a hearing, Agnew insisted he would not retreat because to do so “would forsake the principles of the founding fathers” themselves. As the great Justice Felix Frankfurter’s observed, “the history of liberty has largely been the history of observance of procedural safeguards.” Although he calculated that
the investigation had cost him the GOP nomination in 1976—a calculation that the crowd did not share—Agnew assured the audience that he would fight for principles that Frankfurter had argued we should all revere.36

The press was largely critical of Agnew’s address and quoted Elliot Richardson’s “rebuke” of Agnew’s charges that his office was politically motivated, but much of the public loved it.37 Letters poured in to Agnew’s and Richardson’s offices in support of the vice president. Many writers defended Agnew as their knight errant in what they perceived as a holy war, with Christianity and America on one side and the devil, communists, and un-Americans on the other. “ROUT OUT THE FORCES OF EVIL which have put this nation in such a position,” implored Elizabeth Nesbitt. “Righteousness will prevail. . . . Your enemies are our country’s enemies,” declared Frank Edwards. “Beat them to the ground and save our nation from the forces of evil,” advised Hazel Paus. “Please look to God for guidance in this great cause, for our country was founded on the principles of the Bible,” she added. Dr. Robert Miller of Paragon, Indiana, warned that Agnew should not “overlook the Communists and the left wing skunks in high office” or the “long hand of Henry Kissinger.” “Those who control the news media have become a source of evil,” added Florence Williams. Similarly, Dr. Talivaldis and his wife declared: “Keep fighting, lest we all are forced to goose-step along with the power crazy media moguls.”38

In addition to viewing Agnew as a defender of their Christian and American values, many letter writers rallied around him because of his fighting spirit. Building on a theme that had appeared when Agnew first attracted the public eye, they repeatedly and favorably likened him to Harry Truman. “A quitter has yet to win a battle,” wrote Paul Makela. “So, stay in there and let the chips fall where they may!” T. Berger agreed, noting, “America loves a fighter against odds.” “Harry Truman earned the respect and admiration because he gave them hell,” declared H. M. Wells. “We expect you to do the same.” Please stand up to these critics,” implored Mr. and Mrs. LaFollette of New Albany, Indiana, “and give them a little of the ‘Harry Truman ire.’” Or as Mrs. Howard Roddy put it, “emulate Mr. Truman and ‘give em Hell, Spiro.’” One letter writer went even farther back in history to stiffen Agnew’s resolve. “Leonidas was faced with no greater odds than you,” wrote Dr. Corbett Thigpen, and “his name shall ever . . . stand as a symbol of courage and dauntless allegiance to the things he knew were right.” Many of these same letter writers also saw Agnew as a defender of manliness, a virtue in short supply in their estimation. As Mrs. William Striver of Paradise Valley, Arizona put it, “there seems to be a scarcity of strong men to run this country and perhaps that’s what’s wrong with America, no strong men.” When we have finally elected “good and able and strong men,” she continued, “why should we have to give them up.”39

Moreover, Agnew continued to enjoy the support of a number of prominent conservatives. Displaying his solidarity with Agnew, William Loeb, the prominent publisher of the Manchester Union Leader, characterized Elliot Richardson
as a “sanctimonious stuffed shirt” who, along with his fellow “bleeding heart left-wingers” in the U.S. attorney general’s office in Baltimore, “hate his guts” because of his attacks on the press. William Rusher and William Buckley of the National Review, and John Tower, the Republican senator from Texas, all offered words of encouragement. So too did the Young Americans for Freedom, which described Agnew as “an unapologetic friend” while terming President Nixon’s lack of support for Agnew “criminal.” Phyllis Schlafly, who had recently launched her crusade to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment, remained a fervent Agnew supporter. About the only major conservative politician to offer a more measured support of Agnew was Governor Ronald Reagan. Although Reagan and Agnew had gotten along well throughout Nixon’s presidency, the former clearly had the most to gain politically from the latter’s demise.40 In contrast, when Nixon’s aides sought to convince Barry Goldwater of Agnew’s guilt and need to resign, Goldwater replied “I don’t give a damn if Agnew is as guilty as John Dillinger” because, like all other Americans, he has the right to be presumed innocent.”41

Building on this wave of support, Agnew’s aides and lawyers pushed ahead in the halls of Congress and the courts and they appeared to enjoy some success. Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott publicly declared that he believed that the vice president deserved an inquiry and urged the Speaker to “reconsider his decision not to hold” one. Newly elected Jack Kemp, who would become one of the leading voices of the New Right in Congress, concurred. Agnew’s aide, David Keene, rallied support for Robert Findley’s resolution demanding that Congress accede to Agnew’s demand for an inquiry. Simultaneously, Agnew’s attorneys at the prestigious New York firm of Paul, Weiss, and Rifkin, requested a hearing to determine the source of the government leaks of privileged information that they asserted were depriving the vice president of the “basic right of a free man: the right to be judged on the merits, without prejudice.” When federal district court judge Walter Hoffman granted Agnew’s lawyers authority to issue subpoenas to reporters to compel them to reveal the source of their stories on the Agnew inquiry, including reporters from the New York Times, Washington Post, and NBC News, their employers’ lawyers, including some of the best-known First Amendment attorneys in the nation, whipped up their own motions seeking to delay Hoffman’s hearing of Agnew’s complaint, if not quash the request outright. Richardson carefully monitored this battle and conducted a review of possible sources of leaks from his office. 42

What made this dispute especially significant was that the debate over the press’s right to publish leaked information versus the government’s right to stop leaks, a conflict central to the Watergate affair, was still unresolved. The publication of the Pentagon Papers in July 1971, sanctioned by the courts, had clearly emboldened advocates of the First Amendment who claimed that the government did not have the right of prior restraint. Agnew’s case presented the courts with a slightly different question, namely, did the press have the right to publish privileged information
if it jeopardized a criminal defendant’s right to be presumed innocent. This issue was significant enough to attract the attention of Charles Morgan, director of the American Civil Liberties Union. Even though the ACLU was closely identified with the First Amendment rights of speech and the press, Morgan, no ally of Agnew, found the leaking of privileged information in a criminal case so unsettling that he personally complained to Elliot Richardson about the matter. Similarly, several prominent columnists from across the political spectrum expressed their deep concern. David Broder wrote:

One truth is that Spiro Agnew is innocent. He is innocent (and not just presumed innocent) because he shares with you and me the blessing of citizenship in a country, which, thank God, decided 200 years ago that the burden of proving any one of guilt falls entirely on the state through a deliberately laborious process.

. . . And that is a process in which the press interferes, not only at its own peril, but at hazard to the most important of everyone's fundamental rights.43

This concern over the preservation of due process of law was also shared by number of ordinary Americans who had, heretofore, opposed Agnew. “Although I . . . supported McGovern-Shriver,” wrote Anthony Limberakis of the University of Pennsylvania, “under the judicial adversary system an accused is innocent until proven guilty. . . . I urge you not to surrender your Constitutional responsibilities.” Or as Audrey Royce Quall of Appleton, Wisconsin, observed: “I’m not really a fan; I’m not even a Republican . . . . But ever since the Dump Johnson movement, it seems we have people in this country who want to bring about coup d'état by mouth and maneuver instead of guns . . . . If coup by mouth should prove attainable, we could have this constant chaos for half a century.”44

In spite of these entreaties and his own pledge to fight it out, on October 10, 1973, Agnew pled nolo contendere to one count of tax evasion and submitted his letter of resignation. In Judge Hoffman’s court and in the years to follow, Agnew admitted no wrongdoing. Though the vice president acknowledged that he had accepted contributions from contractors and that those contractors were awarded government contracts, he categorically denied that there was any quid pro quo involved. Instead, Agnew insisted that his “acceptance of contributions was part of a long-established pattern of political fund-raising in the state” and that he had not enriched himself. In exchange for his plea and resignation, Attorney General Richardson recommended that Agnew be placed on probation, not imprisoned, and fined $10,000. U.S. District Judge Walter Hoffman accepted that arrangement.45

Nixon crafted two written replies to Agnew’s letter of resignation. In neither did Nixon explicitly say whether he felt Agnew was guilty or not. In a typed letter, the one he shared with the press, Nixon accepted Agnew’s resignation and his reasoning, namely, his “concern for the national interest.” Still wanting to maintain the support
of Agnew's followers, Nixon added that the vice president had been “an inspiration . . . to millions . . . throughout the country.” In a handwritten letter, not released to the press, Nixon repeated some of these lines but then added: “In the next few months and the years ahead you will find out who your real friends are. Count me and the entire Nixon family among them.” Perhaps reading his own history of coming back from political crises, Nixon concluded: “You have been wounded but I predict you will recover and fight again another day.” Not only did Agnew not respond to the letter, he never spoke to Nixon again. Not until Nixon’s funeral did he have any contact with anyone in Nixon’s family.46

Several overlapping and plausible factors explain Agnew’s rapid change of heart. First, the U.S. Attorney General’s office in Baltimore had built a powerful case against him, including testimony by some of his oldest friends, and was in the finishing phases of presenting its case to the grand jury. Although the federal government dropped all kickback charges in exchange for Agnew’s nolo contendere plea on tax evasion, the court allowed Richardson’s office to read a forty-page summary of the case against Agnew into the public record. In Richardson’s words, the evidence established “a pattern of substantial cash payment to the defendant,” which in the case of one engineering firm began in the early 1960s and continued, as one newspaper writer put it, “through the Christmas season of 1972,” or past his re-election as vice president. This summary also included a detailed description of cash payments that Agnew had received from several other sources, including deliveries of envelopes “containing between $2,000 and $3,000,” in cash, “nine times a year,” from Allen Green. The summary made clear that Agnew did not create the “system” of paybacks but contended that he was more than willing to perpetuate it once he assumed political office. (By pleading nolo contendere Agnew forfeited his right to dispute these claims.) Richardson also maintained that although the government could have “pressed forward with the return of an indictment charging bribery and extortion,” it chose to accept Agnew’s plea to one charge in order to spare the nation “serious and permanent scars.” Impeachment, Richardson explained, could have taken years. “It is unthinkable,” he said, “that this Nation should have been required to endure the anguish and uncertainty of a prolonged period in which the man next in line of succession to the presidency was fighting the charges brought against him by his own government.”47

Second, Agnew resigned when he did because Nixon and his aides had severely undercut him. In addition to lobbying congressional leaders against a House inquiry and, possibly, impeachment procedures, in which Agnew thought he would have a better chance of avoiding a conviction, they went after Agnew’s sources of financial support by putting out the word to his long-time backers that the president opposed this fight. Agnew had cause to worry that Richardson’s investigation would drain his resources and could even lead to charges against his wife, who had co-signed his annual tax filings. That played to Agnew’s deepest fears regarding his relative
economic vulnerability—he insisted that he was not a rich man—and contributed to his decision to step down.\textsuperscript{48}

In \textit{Go Quietly . . . or Else}, published in 1980, Agnew introduced an alternative explanation for his decision to resign in October 1973, claiming that Haig demanded that he do so “or else,” which Agnew maintained meant that Haig would surreptitiously end his life if he did not resign. “I was close enough to the presidency to know that the office could exert tremendous power,” Agnew wrote.\textsuperscript{49}

I had attended secret sessions of the National Security Council and knew something about the functioning of the intelligence community. I knew that men in the White House, professing to speak for the President, could order the C.I.A. to carry out missions that were very unhealthy for people who were considered enemies. . . . Haig’s words to Dunn [General Dunn was on Agnew’s staff] that after indictment ‘anything may be in the offing,’ could only be construed as an open-ended threat. . . . I feared for my life. If a decision had been made to eliminate me—through an automobile accident, a fake suicide, or whatever—the order would not have been traced back to the White House any more than the ‘get Castro’ orders were ever traced back to their source.

Why Agnew had not proffered such an explanation beforehand he did not say. Perhaps he sought to capitalize on the public’s growing distrust of the government and belief in conspiracies, fed by the Church Committee’s revelations about Cointelpro and the Nixon administration’s involvement in the coup and death of Chile’s democratically elected president, Salvador Allende, neither of which had come to light prior to his departure from office. Yet, Agnew’s revisionist view lacked corroboration. His top aide, General Michael Dunn, who, Agnew asserted, had direct knowledge of Haig’s alleged threat, stated that “there never was any threat of bodily harm,” adding that Agnew had used his own memo regarding Haig’s statement out of context. Somewhat bizarrely, in his own autobiography, Haig accused Agnew of having threatened him, though he produced no evidence to support the charge. Reviewers of Agnew’s autobiography either ignored his allegations or dismissed them as unfounded.\textsuperscript{50}

Finally, other possible but unverifiable factors may have affected Agnew’s decision to resign. In his 2007 book, \textit{Strange Bedfellows}, Jules Witcover asserts that Agnew was worried that Nixon insiders were on the verge of leaking information regarding an affair that the vice president had had with a woman about half his age. Why Witcover did not discuss this in his earlier work on Agnew’s resignation, \textit{A Heartbeat Away} (1974), or why such allegations have never appeared elsewhere, Witcover did not say. Witcover also insisted that he could not divulge the source of this claim, but, given multiple revelations against politicians accused of similar sexual liaisons, from FDR to JFK, none of which came to light at the time, the possibility of an affair
is plausible. Several years after he resigned, Agnew wrote a best-selling political spy novel in which a presidential aspirant’s career was undermined by an affair he had with an associate and his need to cover it up. 51

Aside from possible revelations of a personal nature, Agnew also had to take into account the risk of fighting the charges versus the benefits of accepting the plea deal. Central to the arrangement was Agnew’s request that he not serve any time in jail. Given the severity of the charges against him—not just the single charge to which he pled guilty—this was no small matter. Indeed, most of the attorneys who had investigated the case thought Agnew should have received a harsher sentence. So too did many of those who wrote to Richardson afterward. Herbert Geist wrote to Elliot Richardson, “If my son stole a set of hubcaps and were caught, he would end up with a jail term. Mr. Agnew, on the other hand, not only stole, but bribed and extorted money . . . and has ended up with a tap on the wrist. Is this what you call equal justice for all?” 52 Given that Agnew had already determined that the scandal had dashed his chances of ever becoming president, the risk of serving jail time, regardless of the motives of Richardson and the U.S. attorney’s office in Baltimore, outweighed the benefits of fighting it out, especially since Agnew had come to recognize that he did not enjoy the support of Nixon or his top aides.

Agnew also lacked the resources to mount a viable counterattack on the scale of those waged by Ronald Reagan during the Iran Contra Affair and George Bush and Dick Cheney in response to a wide range of charges, including the outing of CIA agent Valerie Plame. True, the New Right was already in the making at the time of Agnew’s resignation. As numerous recent scholarly studies have shown, in the wake of Goldwater’s devastating loss to Lyndon Johnson in 1964, conservatives had begun to build the institutions that would make Ronald Reagan’s election possible in 1980. This included the establishment of think tanks, like the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), special interest and youth groups like the American Conservative Union and the Young Americans for Freedom, as well as conservative journals, especially the National Republic and Human Events, all of which had backed Agnew during his vice presidency. 53 The New Right had also displayed growing strength at the grassroots level, especially in places like Orange County, California, and was in the process of transforming the South from a Democratic stronghold into a bastion of conservative Republican strength. 54

In 1973, though, a number of these institutions were still in their relative infancy. The AEI, for instance, had a budget of $1 million and a staff of ten in 1970. By 1980 it would have a budget of $8 million and 125 staff members. Similarly the Heritage organization was not founded until 1973. More important, in the world of mass communications, conservatives were still limited. Agnew may have exaggerated the liberal bias of the media when he targeted it for attack in a series of addresses in the fall of 1969, but he was correct to note that there was little competition on the national level. That would begin to change in 1976, when Ted Turner established
the first basic cable television network, which in turn would give rise to CNN (and ultimately FOX News), followed shortly afterward by the creation of a cable version of the Christian Broadcasting Network. If these alternative media sources had been available to Agnew in 1973, he might have been able to mount a much more effective defense.

Ironically—especially when coupled with Watergate—Agnew's resignation may have given a boost to the New Right by reinforcing the public's declining faith in the government. Sam Ervin and some others have argued that Watergate showed the system worked, a view shared by Elliot Richardson. But as letters to Richardson suggested, tens of thousands of Americans felt betrayed, not just by Agnew but by government's double standard. If Agnew was guilty of tax evasion and bribery, why had he received such a light sentence? Either he was not really guilty or his sentence proved that the elite did not care about the little guy. As Sandra Eccli exclaimed: “Almost everyone we've spoken with feels exactly the same as we do—disgusted. And you wonder why the young people are cynical about the American political system!” Even many of those who praised Richardson's handling of the case did not feel it had restored their faith in the system. On the contrary, they saw it as just the tip of the iceberg. W. A. Bandle, for instance, congratulated Richardson for his “handling of the investigation” and then expressed his hope that he would extend it to “all of the members of Congress.” Similarly, Marian Stewart wrote, “Now, let's continue with the Watergate investigation.”

Undoubtedly, Nixon's firing of Richardson for refusing to remove Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, and to an even greater extent President Gerald Ford's pardon of Nixon, reinforced the public's growing cynicism about government in general, a view borne out by public opinion polls and a steady decrease in voter participation in elections. The central tenet of liberalism that the federal government was on the people's side, that it was not a necessary evil but a positive good, a tenet already damaged by the quagmire in Vietnam and a stagnating economy not to mention wedge issues like busing, crime, abortion, acid, and amnesty, had been dealt a body blow.

If the New Right was indeed given a boost by Agnew's resignation, it would come of age in an era marked by the decline of civility, partly due to the politics of polarization symbolized and played so well by Agnew and Nixon. Long before Agnew ran for public office, Richard Nixon had mastered the art of character assassination as a means to achieve political power. It should not have been surprising when he nominated Agnew as his running mate, because he saw in the Maryland governor a kindred spirit. Numerous commentators have noted that Agnew played Nixon's Nixon during the 1968 presidential campaign. For instance, early in the fall of 1968, Patrick Buchanan, one of Nixon's campaign aides, advised his boss: “Our job is not to make the New York Times happy.” Rather, the campaign needed to “kick the living hell out of Humphrey” and Agnew “has got to be [the] guy” to do it. “Get Agnew in
the headlines everyday hammering these people,” Buchanan continued, “and let the editorial writers squeal.”57 With the help of Buchanan and several other aides, Agnew remained the administration’s attack dog. He went after radicals and liberals, whom he characterized as “radlibs,” accusing them of having enabled radicals by mollycoddling them and fostering culturally permissive values. Even more infamously, Agnew castigated the media as an elitist and liberally biased cabal. As much if not more so than any other member of the administration, Agnew helped the president win the votes of the “Daley Democrats” (subsequently known as the Reagan Democrats) and make crucial inroads into the once historically solid Democratic South. He did it by playing to the fears and anxieties of “forgotten” Americans.

But the costs of playing the politics of resentment were high, not just to liberals but to Agnew himself, and in the long run to all who entered the political arena. When ACLU chief Charles Morgan and maverick Republican congressman Pete McClosky demanded that the government follow time-honored processes such as protecting defendants from media leaks that could make a fair trial difficult, few leaders of either party rallied behind them. Even Elliot Richardson, whom both Agnew and Loeb characterized as a sanctimonious stuffed shirt, did virtually everything in his power to compel Agnew to resign from office rather than allow the nation to “suffer” through a long impeachment process. Likewise, Alexander Haig demonstrated little if any concern for Felix Frankfurter’s admonition that the “history of liberty has largely been the history of observance of procedural safeguards.” And Robert Bork, who went on to become one of the most famous advocates of “originalism” or a strict interpretation of the Constitution, displayed a relatively loose or broad construction of the Constitution when he argued that the vice president could be indicted but the President could not.

We will never know what might have happened if hearings and an impeachment and a trial in the Senate had taken place. Given the weight of the evidence against the vice president, chances are he would have been convicted and forced to resign. From the perspective of Richardson and Haig, the nation could not risk such an ordeal, either because Watergate alone was enough to endure or because of the prospect that a Democrat might assume the presidency. Given their animosity toward Agnew, and vice versa, most liberals in Congress, like Peter Rodino, had no interest in affording the vice president the opportunity to extricate himself from the scandal. Nor did the media see reason to safeguard the legal rights of the man who had done so much to besmirch its reputation. Still, it is possible that an impeachment trial might have restored the public’s faith in the government by showing that the system as sketched out by the founders, though messy, could work. Instead, Spiro T. Agnew departed from office in much the same way he had come. He faded into obscurity, with few wondering about the potential costs and consequences of the manner in which he departed.
NOTES

3. Dorthea Knock to Spiro Agnew, September 17, 1973; Gladys Donohue to Spiro Agnew, September 17, 1973, Special Collections, Subseries 3.3, Box 7, Spiro T. Agnew Papers, University of Maryland, College Park.
10. Ibid.
11. Agnew, Go Quietly . . . or Else, 50.
15. Agnew, Go Quietly . . . or Else, 79–84.


25. Agnew, Go Quietly . . . or Else, 202–3.

26. RGD, “President’s Objectives,” September 26, 1973, Box 197 (Miscellaneous), Richardson Papers.


30. There is some evidence that the House wanted to see Agnew step down quickly so that it could have greater say in appointing Nixon's successor, with liberals seeking to block Nixon from nominating John Connally as his vice president.


34. W. Clement Stone to Frank Sinatra, December 2, 1973, with enclosure, Folder 8, Box 88, Barry Goldwater Papers, Arizona State University, Tempe.

35. Edna Harkey to Spiro Agnew, September 18, 1973; Roselle Herman to Spiro Agnew, September 18 1973; Dorthea Knock to Spiro Agnew, September 17, 1973; Gladys Donohue to Spiro Agnew, September 17, 1973; Phil Myers to Spiro Agnew, September 17, 1973; LaVerne Hyndman to Spiro Agnew, September 17, 1968; Clyde Ryan to Spiro Agnew, September 17, 1968; John Schuster to Spiro Agnew, September 18, 1973; all in Box 7, Subseries 3.3, Agnew Papers.


38. Dr. and Mrs. Talivaldis to Agnew, September 1, 1965; Shirley Fallon to Agnew, September 18, 1973, Florence Williams to Agnew, September 18, 1963; Richard Berger to Agnew, September 18, 1963; Robert Miller to Agnew, September 18, 1963; Albert Westphal to Agnew, September 18, 1963; Esther Pringle to Agnew, September 18, 1963; all in Box 7, Series 3.3, Agnew Papers.
Even after he resigned, the sense that Agnew was involved in a holy war and that he represented good in the fight against evil stood out as a theme in many of the letters that were written to him. See, Mrs. Eugene West to Agnew, November 2, 1973, Aneea C. Lamont to Agnew, November 2, 1973, Filomena Catanzaro to Agnew, November 2, 1973, Tim Bowling to Agnew, November 2, 1973, all in Folder 1, Box 11, Series 3.3, Agnew Papers; Mrs. Arlin L. Stoltenow to Agnew, October 2, 1973, Box 4, Folder October 1, 1973, 1 of 6. Mrs. William T. Shriver to Agnew, October 1, 1973, Box 4, Series 3.3, Folder October 1, 1973, 1 of 6, Agnew Papers.


44. Rev. Spencer Gilley to Agnew, October 2, 1973; Dr. Corbett Thigpen to Agnew, October 2, 1973; H. M. Wells to Agnew, October 2, 1973; Mrs. Howard Roddy to Agnew, October 2, 1973; Elizabeth Nesbitt to Agnew, October 2, 1973, Frank Edwards to Agnew, October 2, 1973, Mrs. E. C. Liles to Agnew, October 2, 1973, all in Series 3.3, Box 4, Folder October 2, 1973, 1 of 5, Agnew Papers; Audrey Quall to Agnew, September 19, 1963; Anthony Lemberakis to Agnew, September 18, 1963; Paul Makela to Agnew, September 18, 1963, all in Box 7, Series 3.3, Agnew Papers.


47. United States v. Spiro Agnew, Criminal No. 73-0535, Trial Proceedings, October 10, 1973, in the United States District Court for the District of Maryland. The beginning of the summary illustrates the nature of case the U.S. Attorney General’s office had built against the vice president. “In the spring of 1967 shortly after Mr. Agnew had taken office as Governor of Maryland, he advised [I. W.] Hammerman that it was customary for engineers to make substantial cash payments in return for engineering contracts with the State of Maryland. Mr. Agnew instructed Hammerman to contact [Jerome] Wolff, the new Chairman-Director of the Maryland State Roads Commission, to arrange for the establishment of an understanding pursuant to which Wolff would notify Hammerman as to which engineering firms were in line for state contracts so that Hammerman could solicit and obtain from those engineering firms cash payments in consideration therefore. . . . Mr. Agnew informed Hammerman that the split of cash monies would be 50% for Mr. Agnew, 25% for Hammerman and 25% for Wolff.” Hammerman carried that message to Wolfe who agreed to the split. See: “Exposition of Evidence Against Spiro T. Agnew, Accumulated by the Investigation in the Office of the United States Attorney for the District of Maryland as of October 10, 1973,” in Fay, ed. The Spiro T. Agnew Case, Role I.

48. Spiro Agnew, Go Quietly . . . or Else; Witcover and Cohen, A Heartbeat Away; George Joulwan to Alexander Haig, October 1, 1973, WHSF, Box 40, Folder 81, Haig Papers.


52. Herbert Geist to Richardson, n.d., Caroline Shookhoff to Richardson, October 16, 1973, Troy Route to Richardson, October 19, 1973; W. A. Bandle to Richardson, n.d., Box 195, Agnew Case, Public Reaction, especially Folder Set 2, Richardson Papers. Perhaps the strongest praise Richardson got for his conduct in the case came from Jay Topkis, the liberal attorney who had defended Agnew. “I couldn’t let our period of professional antagonism come to an end without expressing my warm appreciation of the way you handled it.” If Agnew had seen this letter, perhaps he would have seen further signs of a conspiracy to run him out of office. See Jay H. Topkis to Richardson, October 12, 1973, in Box 197, Folder III (Agnew Case Miscellaneous) Richardson Papers. One flaw in the Constitution raised by Agnew’s potential impeachment was that the vice president would have presided over his own trial in the Senate, had it gotten that far.
53. Although these journals had been established prior to Goldwater’s defeat, they gained greater significance afterward.
55. Herbert Geist to Elliot Richardson, n.d., Box 195, Agnew Case, Public Reaction, especially Folder Set 2, Richardson Papers.
56. Polling data documented the decline in public trust in government. For instance, Gallup polls showed that the public trust in the federal government fell from 70 percent having a “great deal” or “fair amount” of trust and confidence in the federal government’s ability to handle domestic problems in May of 1972 to less than 50 percent in June 1976.
The cover of a small brochure published in the mid-nineteenth century touting Baltimore's monument to George Washington. (Maryland Historical Society.)
When George W. Howard published *The Monumental City, Its Past History and Present Resources* in 1873, Baltimore had been known by that moniker for half a century. Howard, in his heroic account of the city, did not provide an origin for the name, but he did discuss what civic actions had led to the title being awarded. His observations were cloaked in an important American dialogue regarding who would memorialize American heroes, and, equally important, where these celebratory and inspirational symbols would be located. He observed that, as of 1873, in nearby Washington, D.C., “the Capital of the Country . . . [a] huge mass of marble rises out of the mud-flats on the Potomac river. Misshapen, unfinished and gradually settling in the ooze upon which its foundation are laid,” it was an ungrateful nation’s thoughtless tribute to the memory of George Washington “whom the world calls great.”¹ The monument designed by architect Robert Mills (1781–1855) had been commissioned by a private board of managers, the Washington National Monument Society, formed in 1833. Although construction began in 1848, the society’s fundraising efforts had foundered, despite the “most strenuous efforts”—and before the Civil War work had come to a halt. In a word, it was an American cultural disgrace, one that would not be rectified until the federal government stepped in with funding and the monument was completed in 1884 and dedicated the following year.² “The vividness of the contrast presented by the action of our own people fairly entitles Baltimore to be styled “The Monumental City,” Howard continued, “a name by which she is known both at home and abroad, and of which she is justly proud.” Howard then briefly recounted the history of Baltimore’s Washington Monument, begun “while the City was yet in swaddling clothes.”³

Like its counterpart, Baltimore’s monument to George Washington was also officially conceived by a private board of managers, in this case a decade after the

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*Dr. Humphries is currently the chair of the Restoration Committee of the Mount Vernon Place Conservancy.*
great man’s death. This group of citizens, and not the municipal government, solidified plans to erect a monument in their city when in 1809 they petitioned the Maryland state legislature to support the work through a lottery. Their efforts had begun several years earlier, in 1807, when it was announced that plans were underway to erect a new Baltimore city and county courthouse because the old one on what was then Courthouse Square (Calvert Street between Fayette and Lexington Streets, later called Monument Square) was in hazardous condition. Residents who had built handsome houses around the square feared some disagreeable structure might be erected in its place. Initially a marble statue of Washington, funded by subscription, was planned to replace the aging structure, but by 1809 that plan either had not materialized or was abandoned in favor of a more substantial monument. They hoped it would be funded through lottery proceeds as were many public and civic works at the time.4

The petitioners to the Maryland legislature noted of such public monuments: “Trophies to the memories of great and good men are an encouragement to victorious and heroic deeds. They stimulate the young to emulation, to noble and honorable actions.” In January 1810, with the new courthouse still under construction, the legislature approved the plan, noting that the square could be utilized for a Washington monument as soon as the new building was sufficiently far advanced “as to afford suitable accommodation for the courts and public offices.” Lotteries were commenced and a design competition held. Robert Mills was awarded the project in May 1814, beating out several gifted French-born architects, Maximilian Godefroy (1765–ca. 1840), and Joseph-Jacques Ramée (1764–1842), both of whom had presented handsome designs for triumphal arches. Mills had taken great pains to present himself as the first American-born artist with architectural training, and that fact was not lost on the board of managers. The board, in advertising the design competition, while noting that it was open to both Europeans and Americans, put forward their hope that an American would win so that “there will be no occasion to resort to any other country for a monument to the memory of their illustrious fellow citizen.” Although the art of painting had had some support in this country prior to the Revolution, with American artists traveling to Europe for training, early in the nineteenth century there were as yet few native-born sculptors or architects with sufficient training and experience to take on the important cultural work of building the new republic’s monuments and public buildings and sculpting its heroes in stone. The remnants of the ancient world established that those forms would survive the ages. If the United States was going to be respected as a nation and fulfill the promise of its revolution, it would be these and other cultural symbols by which the European world judged its maturity.5

After the commission had been awarded to Mills, several additional design and construction hurdles had to be overcome by the time the cornerstone was laid on July 4, 1815, not to mention the interlude in September 1814, when local defenders
repulsed a British sea and land invasion of the city. Mills’s original design was a towering, heavily ornamented column, 140 feet high. On the same day he was notified that he had won the competition, he was also informed by influential board member Robert Gilmor Jr. (1774–1848) that some residents of Courthouse Square feared his column might topple on their houses in the event of a natural disaster, and that there was concern his design would far exceed the $100,000 appropriated by the legislature. Over the next several months Gilmor persuaded Revolutionary War hero Col. John Eager Howard (1752–1827) to donate a plot of land, two hundred feet square, from his vast Belvidere estate north of the city. On this square, on an axis with Charles Street but still at the time in Howard’s Woods, the cornerstone was laid. By that time, a significantly altered and simplified plan had been put forward, appearing very much like the Monument that was eventually built.6

At the laying of the cornerstone, then board of managers president James A. Buchanan observed that the city had not only “the glory of being the first to erect a monument of gratitude to the father and benefactor of our country” but a “peculiar propriety” in erecting “this first expression of national gratitude” as well. During the recent war, he observed with obvious pride, “the city destined to bear the proud name of WASHINGTON to future ages, fell an easy conquest to the ruthless invader.” The “shock . . . was felt from the one end of these United States to the other.”

The minds of our countrymen appeared to be transfixed with horror and dismay; a night of awful darkness seemed to overshadow our land; the gloomiest apprehensions were entertained for the republic; the timid and the desponding, not recollecting that freedom rises with an elasticity proportionate to the pressure made upon it, were approaching a state of political despair. At this most awful moment for our country, Baltimore, the city of our affection, in which was contained our altars, our families, our all, became the next object of attack to a vindictive, and at that time, a vainglorious foe. The eyes of all America were fixed upon us! On the destiny of Baltimore seemed to be suspended the fate of the republic! She breasted the storm; and, thanks to her gallant defenders, exists now, in prosperity and glory, to perform the most grateful of duties.7

The speeches uttered at the dedication of the Washington Monument’s cornerstone ceremony have been available to specialists since they were published in 1815, but what had not been known until the Monument was restored in 2014–15 by the Mount Vernon Place Conservancy were the actual contents of the cornerstone. During the restoration process the cornerstone was discovered on the Monument’s northeast corner. Though some of the cornerstone’s contents were listed in contemporary accounts, perhaps the most meaningful item is one not mentioned. Laid on top of the glass jars in the cornerstone’s well was a copy of the Declaration of Independence printed in the Federal Gazette on July 3, 1815, the day before the
cornerstone was laid. Several days later, an account of the ceremony noted that the column was being “erected in honor of the illustrious Defender of American Independence.” What Buchanan’s speech and this cornerstone offering make clear is that the monument was not only a memorial to Washington, but one of the earliest major American monuments celebrating American nationhood—a point punctuated by its commencement on Independence Day.8

Work on the monument began in earnest the following year and advanced rapidly until about 1820, and shortly thereafter the column proper had been largely completed up as far as the pedestal that would eventually hold a statue at its pinnacle. In 1824 the scaffolding, no longer needed and in poor condition, was taken down, and additional masonry work continued on the roof of the gallery base and four staircases. The masonry was essentially complete in 1829 when Enrico Causici’s colossal statue depicting Washington resigning his commission as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army was raised to the top. Other details like the monument’s iron railing, braziers, and interior finishes were completed in the late 1830s.9

In the early twenty-first century, it is difficult to recapture the contemporary importance of Baltimore’s Washington Monument. Buchanan’s dedicatory observations were not idle boasts. That the first monument to George Washington was not erected in the nation’s capital speaks volumes about American cultural development. As the new nation got underway and established a permanent seat in Washington, D.C., it remained unclear who was going to support the arts, culture, and the sciences in this new nation. Newly minted Americans only had history upon which to base their assumptions. Most European capitals were also cultural capitals—was Washington going to become one? Many hoped and envisioned it would. It was also logical for these new Americans to assume that the federal government would take the lead in honoring and memorializing American heroes, most notably Washington, just as governmental patronage had erected most ancient and modern European monuments.10

Yet, by the first years of the nineteenth century, while functional structures such as the Capitol and President’s House (White House) were materializing in the national capital, a non-functional and solely commemorative tribute to Washington was not, despite several decades of interest in such a memorial. A bronze equestrian statue of
Washington had been proposed by the Continental Congress in 1783. The statue was intended to be displayed in the eventual residence of the national legislature, but by the time of Washington’s death on December 14, 1799 the plan had not materialized. With his death, however, the country went into mourning, and the loss revitalized interest in commemorating Washington in the federal city. Congress, in a series of three proposals, revived the plan to erect an equestrian statue to Washington and directed that a marble monument, serving as a mausoleum, be erected under the dome of the Capitol “on a scale commensurate with the virtue and ability of the character thus held up as a model to all future generations.” Congress, though, was unable to agree on what form the monument should take. Federalists favored increasing the size of the monument from an indoor tomb to an outdoor mausoleum, but the Democratic-Republicans thought that too ostentatious. The discussion ended there, and nothing came of the proposal. As was true in Baltimore, a memorial to Washington in the national capital would eventually arise from a private initiative, but unlike the Baltimore project the private enterprise in Washington failed and it would not have come to completion decades later without federal government intervention.

Howard’s 1873 book did not theorize how Baltimore came to be called “The Monumental City,” but most modern sources credit that to President John Quincy Adams (1767-1848) when he visited in 1827. In October of that year, as he noted in his extensive diary, Adams fulfilled a two-year-old promise to stop in Baltimore. Upon his arrival on the fourteenth, Adams’s plans were changed by the death two days earlier of John Eager Howard. On the fifteenth, his first full day in Baltimore, Adams participated in the funeral cortege that began at Howard’s estate Belvidere, north of the monument, and he likely saw it, largely completed except for the statue at its top, as he traveled to Belvidere for the start of the ceremonies.

The next day, Adams was taken by various civic leaders to see the Aquila Randall monument, a small obelisk erected on the site of the Battle of North Point, east of the city. It had been erected in 1817 in memory of Randall who died during the battle, by stonecutter Thomas Towson with the design assistance of Jacob Small Jr., a carpenter-builder. Both men had participated in the Battle of Baltimore. Early that
A decade after John Quincy Adams’s visit to Baltimore, Robert Gilmor Jr., president of the Board of Managers, solicited the former president’s advice regarding the monument’s inscription. In this letter, dated July 6, 1837, Adams suggested: “The most important if not the first rule for the composition of monumental inscriptions is brevity—compression—the maximum of sentiment in the minimum of words.” (Maryland Historical Society.)

evening, Adams attended a banquet at Barnum’s Hotel, and toward the end of the dinner he proposed a final toast: “Baltimore—the monumental City—May the days of her safety be as prosperous and happy, as the days of her danger have been trying
and triumphant.” Adams recorded this version of the toast in his diary, and the toasts given that evening were published in Baltimore papers such as the *Baltimore Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, and quickly appeared in other American newspapers.\(^{14}\)

However, in toasting Baltimore as the Monumental City, Adams was not coining a new phrase but using one already in the lexicon. Apparently, the first source to give Baltimore the nickname was the *Daily National Intelligencer*, the principal newspaper in Washington, edited by Joseph Gales Jr. (1786–1860) and William Winston Seaton (1785–1866). On February 8, 1823, in the middle of a debate over the creation of the Potomac Canal (later called the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal), the *Intelligencer* reported that support for the canal was under discussion in the Maryland legislature but that it might fail because Baltimore was not supporting it. “What delusion is this! What evil genius, more potent than any that fables describe to us has breathed his pestiferous influence over that patriotic and public-spirited city?” According to the paper, Baltimore was not in support because the District of Columbia might benefit from the canal. “If the Canal should benefit the District, it will, at the same time, doubly benefit Baltimore; and we cannot conceive of a more suicidal act, than for Baltimore, *the monumental city*, to interpose her influence in opposition to her own aggrandizement.”\(^{15}\) Within days the article was picked up by newspapers in Alexandria and Richmond and likely elsewhere, spreading not only contempt for Baltimore’s current stance, but an informal new name for the city itself.\(^{16}\)

Later evidence suggests that the original article came from Joseph Gales, who had arrived in the United States in 1795 with his father, also a printer. After moving to Washington from North Carolina, he in 1810 became the sole proprietor of the *Intelligencer* until he brought his brother-in-law Seaton into the business several years later. By the early 1820s Gales had emerged as a well-respected publisher and Washington booster, so much so that in 1827 he was elected mayor of the city. In 1828, as mayor, he would participate in the groundbreaking ceremony for the long-awaited C&O Canal that had been so hotly contested in early 1823.

The editors’ jab at Baltimore’s “monumental” character surely provoked disbelief that the city that had accomplished one of the most culturally important statements of the early Republic—the erection of the first public monument dedicated to the father of the American nation—was not supportive of other major civic works that would benefit itself and the region. Perhaps Baltimoreans’ priorities were misplaced. Throughout the debate there are hints at financial regional rivalries and national patriotism. By the early 1820s, Baltimore was thriving and had quickly emerged from its rather recent 1797 incorporation into one of the most populous cities in the country. The seat of the federal government had been moved to Washington in 1800, and construction had begun on notable structures such as the Capitol and the White House, but Washington would remain a small town for years to come. It is important to remember that although Pierre Charles L’Enfant (1754–1825) had in 1791 laid out an impressive and heroically-scaled plan for the city of Washington, by
the early 1820s little had materialized. Even several decades later, in 1849, the Scottish Robert Baird traveling through the United States, noted that while the capital city took up a large area, it was disappointing for the “village-like appearance of the whole place.” The monumental Mall as we know it today is largely a twentieth-century production.17

Without question, Baltimore’s primary claim to the title of the Monumental City followed from the distinction of erecting the first major memorial to Washington, as a number of nineteenth-century sources suggest. Baird who traveled through Baltimore before going to Washington, observed in discussing the sobriquet that “in so far as America at least is concerned, it would be entitled to the distinction were it only because it contains this noble structure to the greatest of America’s sons and statesmen.”18 In 1823 when the C&O Canal was under discussion, there were no concrete plans for a Washington memorial in the national capital, but the monument in Baltimore had advanced significantly toward completion. The column proper was built as far the pedestal for the statue, and while other elements would be completed over the next decade, it was a majestic structure, more than 150 feet tall, roughly equivalent to a fifteen-story building. As of that moment it was the most impressive monumental column in the country, rivaling current European and ancient examples, and it was the only one honoring the father of American democracy.19

By 1823, Baltimore was also putting the finishing touches on its Battle Monument. In the same year the Washington Monument was begun, the cornerstone was laid (September 12, 1815) for this second monument, designed by Maximilian Godefroy and located in the square (later Monument Square) originally intended for the Washington Monument, which became available after the Washington Monument was moved to Howard’s Woods. Commissioned by the city’s Committee of Vigilance and Safety, which enlisted donations for its erection, the monument commemorated those who had fallen in the battles of North Point and Fort McHenry during the Battle of Baltimore. While not nearly as ambitious as the Washington Monument, the Battle Monument was handsomely designed and iconographically rich in decorative symbolism. In early 1822 the city government, which financed some of its construction, acknowledged that although the monument had traditionally been called the Battle Monument, the city was renaming it the Baltimore Monument (a name that apparently did not last). On September 12, 1822, Antonio Capellano’s statue symbolic of the City of Baltimore was raised to the top, essentially completing the monument with the exception of its platform and fencing, which were completed several years later. News of the Battle Monument’s completion was of national interest, and was picked up by numerous papers up and down the East Coast. Over their subsequent long histories, both monuments would be the site of important historical and cultural events in the life of the city.20

Baltimore’s Washington Monument and Battle Monument were both begun in 1815, only months after Baltimore emerged largely unscathed in the fall of 1814. But
while Baltimoreans celebrated, nearby Washington, D.C. had been burned by the British, including its principal governmental buildings the Capitol and the White House—a severe blow to the city and nation. By the early 1820s, these symbolic buildings were in various stages of rebuilding. The city of Washington desperately wanted the perceived boost to its economy promised by the canal. That George Washington himself had fostered an early canal along the Potomac River as a way to connect the East Coast with the West, was likely not lost on those promoting the new canal initiative as a patriotic endeavor in the 1820s.

The editors of the *Intelligencer* were well aware of the “monumental” activities going on in Baltimore, since they routinely reprinted news articles from Baltimore newspapers about the monuments, as well as advertisements placed by the Washington Monument’s lottery. Whether Gales actually coined the phrase “the monumental city” or heard it in conversation from others may never be known, but within days of its initial appearance in the paper, readers were repeating the phrase. Nathaniel H. Carter (1787–1830), the editor of the New York *Statesman* who happened to be traveling from Washington back to New York at the time, stopped in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on February 12, and wrote an installment of his travelogue that recounted his stay in Baltimore. The editors of the *Baltimore Patriot* chose to reprint this “flattering” account from a “gentleman of observation and fine talents.” Carter began by observing that he had left Washington on Monday morning (February 10, two days after the *Intelligencer* article) and that early in the evening he had “arrived at the ‘monumental city,’ as the Intelligencer fancifully calls it.” While he was in Baltimore, local editors showed their colleague the sights. Carter’s account devotes most of its space to a description of his visit to the Washington Monument, which, though still awaiting the arrival of the statue on its pinnacle, was complete to the level of the upper balcony. Led by a boy with a lantern, they climbed the steps to take in the views of the city. Carter thought that, when complete, the monument might provide ideas to a committee in New York then entertaining the idea of building their own monument to Washington. Carter was impressed by this “new” city and called it “one of the finest built places” he had ever seen. He found the public springs a rare adornment and admired Latrobe’s Merchant Exchange, once again observing that his native city might learn from the experience of the Baltimore merchants. The same page announced that the “Potomac Bill” had been withdrawn from the Maryland House of Delegates and would not be introduced again in the present session.21

Some Baltimoreans were quick to take up the new title, including one aggrieved citizen who wrote to the *Intelligencer* claiming that “enemies of the Monumental City” were unfairly attacking Baltimore for opposing the Potomac Canal while supporting the idea of a canal from the Susquehanna to their city. One critic of Baltimore defended his comments, writing that “the magnanimous monumental city of Baltimore gives graves to her enemies.”22 The fall of 1823 saw the meeting of a three-day-long Canal Convention in Washington to discuss the building of the
C&O Canal, by which time enough Maryland support had been garnered for the project to move forward.

At the conclusion of the meetings, the citizens of the District of Columbia hosted a public dinner for more than a hundred assembled guests and national dignitaries, including representatives from the District, Maryland, Virginia, and neighboring states. According to reports, the toasts at its conclusion were not planned, but many spoke to patriotism and the prosperity to be gained by internal improvements such as the C&O, which would link the Potomac and the Ohio, Maryland and Virginia, and, more generally, the East and the West. Charles Carroll of Carrollton toasted the City of Baltimore. “May her benefit from the Potomac and Ohio Canal equal the merit and patriotism of her people.” Joseph Gales offered, “Baltimore: the Monumental City—an union of interest and object between her and the city of the Hero, Washington.”

Although Gales’s 1823 “monumental” take on the city of Baltimore started as a bit of sarcasm, by the following year the phrase was being used in an honorific and celebratory manner. In 1824, the Statesman, whose New York editor Carter had apparently been one of the first to employ the title, published another article repeating that reference to the city that was reprinted in Baltimore and other newspapers. Baltimore’s own press used the nickname in discussing plans for the Marquis de Lafayette’s visit to the city in 1824. In 1826, when John Cleves Symmes Jr. (1779–1829), bypassed Baltimore on his lecture tour regarding his theories of a hollow Earth, the Baltimore Patriot, postulated that he might find some of the cities he had visited in his “concave regions” but not so the “Monumental City.” For this “city of monuments and of patriotic devotion” he would look in vain. Later, in 1826 when a new frigate, the Baltimore, was launched from its namesake waterfront, the toasts included one by Capt. Alexander Claxton of the U.S. Navy to “The ‘Monumental City’—Marble columns may perpetuate her gratitude, but this noble frigate establishes her greatness.”

In 1827, before President Adams came to Baltimore, several other toasts to the Monumental City had already been published and thus his use of the phrase in his own October 1827 toast was not new at all but established in common usage. Although Adams may have known of the phrase for several years, Joseph Gales was also in Baltimore the day Adams visited North Point and later made his toast, and was one of several Washington residents who called on him in between events. It is not unreasonable to suggest that they might well have discussed the day’s activities in “The Monumental City.”

Because the phrase emerged from the newspapers, its origin quickly became hard to establish. Baltimore’s earliest chronicler, Thomas W. Griffith, in the 1833 edition of his Annals of Baltimore (1824), recounted Adams’s 1827 visit, noting that the president visited the North Point battleground and attended a dinner at Barnum’s Hotel, where he “addressed the company in a speech of much erudition of energy, referring to the
gallantry of the Monumental City.” In not mentioning Adams’s specific toast, Griffith left unclear whether Adams had specifically called Baltimore the Monumental City, or if that was merely the author’s own construction.26 In the early 1830s with histories like Griffith’s and illustrated guidebooks like John H. B. Latrobe’s *Picture of Baltimore* (1832) appearing, one need not have read American newspapers in the previous decade to understand Baltimore’s claim to its patriotic title. Latrobe devoted a chapter specifically to the city’s monuments. “Baltimore is known throughout the Union as the ‘Monumental City,’ and the pride which is felt in the title, makes the subject worth a separate chapter.” British actress Fanny Kemble spent time in Baltimore at just this time, noting, with typical European disdain for the cultural accomplishments of the young United States, that its two monuments had “given Baltimore the appellation the monumental city, which never could have befallen it in any other country under heaven but this.” There emerged in the following decades numerous references to the Monumental City in contemporary American and European magazines, journals, and in extremely popular travel accounts like Kemble’s and Baird’s.27 Several handsome prints of the Washington Monument also appeared in this period, including William Henry Bartlett’s depiction, which was included in Nathaniel Parker Willis’s 1840 publication, *American Scenery*. Bartlett’s view was reprinted shortly thereafter in Leipzig, Germany, by British-born Albert Henry Payne, who paired it with a cut of Washington’s tomb at Mount Vernon (also copied from a Bartlett view), flanking a small portrait of the general. The pairing suggests that Baltimore’s Washington Monument functioned as the American monument to Washington until the one planned for the nation’s capital slowly took over that distinction after its groundbreaking in 1848.28

With the appearance of such publications as John C. Gobright’s *The Monumental City, or Baltimore Guide Book*, and other American and European volumes devoted to travel, the sobriquet was a commonplace by the middle of the nineteenth century. Most of the significant late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century histories of Baltimore, while using the phrase “The Monumental City,” do not cite its origin, including Howard’s 1873 volume, which took the moniker for its title.29 By the first years of the twentieth century, the phrase was in such common usage that it appeared in dictionaries listing “Notable American Sobriquets,” where, in looking up “Baltimore,” one found “See Monumental City.”30

Baltimore had had other nicknames prior to Monumental City, including apparently somewhat briefly around 1812 the less flattering “Mobtown.” When war was declared on Britain in that year, a group in favor of war demolished the office of the *Federal Republican and Commercial Gazette* because the paper had denounced the war. Several people were killed in the following days. Over the years, this name would bubble up again in the press whenever a public disturbance brought the earlier civil disgrace to mind. Perhaps indicative of the relative popularity of “Mobtown” and “The Monumental City” as references to Baltimore is the number of times each
appears in available online newspaper searches encompassing the hundred years between 1812 and 1912. “Mobtown” was used to describe Baltimore perhaps fewer than one hundred instances, while “The Monumental City” came up nearly seven thousand times.31

Given that for nearly 150 years the origin of Baltimore’s monumental nickname seems to have been unknown, how is it that the present day believes it was first uttered by John Quincy Adams? In 1971, director of the Peale Museum and Baltimore historian Wilbur Harvey Hunter, writing a brief essay about public sculpture in the city, was apparently the first to state that Adams’s 1827 toast was the origin of the city’s moniker. His discovery of this information seems to be the basis for assumptions by others whose writing has appeared in numerous online sources and published books up to the present.32

Hunter’s discovery came at a time when Baltimore was eagerly seeking a catchy slogan to rebrand the city. In July 1974, the Baltimore Promotion Council, looking for a way “to lure tourists and conventions,” enlisted several advertising agencies to come up with a new slogan under the theme: “Baltimore has more history and unspoiled charm tucked away in quiet corners than most American cities put in the spotlight.” Using images such as the Washington Monument, “The Block,” and pictures of white marble steps, the campaign observed: “While the wrecking balls of other cities have been busy leveling tradition in the name of progress, Baltimore has been meticulously rerouting progress around its history.” The rhetoric of this pre–Inner Harbor redevelopment campaign came in response to the very recent defeat of the proposed highway extension that would have destroyed much of Federal Hill and Fells Point. As the “Charm City” campaign got further underway in 1975, Mayor William Donald Schaefer was pictured holding brochures with the Washington Monument, among other icons, on the cover. As the 1976 American bicentennial approached, the campaign was promoted as a link to Baltimore’s history with the expectation that many would be traveling through the city on their way to the national capital.33

Although the campaign focused on Baltimore’s “successful interplay of preservation and progress,” and promotional films featured the Washington Monument and Mount Vernon Place, what had made Baltimore “The Monumental City” was conspicuously absent in the dialogue. In fact, in the significant newspaper announcements of the campaign, that early designation was not even mentioned. By mid-1976 the campaign was thought to be a dud. According to the leadership of the Greater Baltimore Committee, there was not significant “buy-in” into the campaign, with some civic leaders claiming that it “seemed small townish.” By 1977 plans were underway to adopt a new slogan, “Baltimore than you know,” and others would follow to this day.34

Despite the initial disappointment in the “Charm City” marketing campaign, over the next four decades, as a number of other slogans came and went, this one
has had the longest staying power. Most subsequent campaigns focused on the newly built Inner Harbor, and by 2003 the harbor was thought to be the “natural” focus of any marketing strategy, even though defining the spirit of the city was thought to be a “Monumental task.” As the city approached the bicentennial of the War of 1812, the 1814 Battle of Baltimore, and the writing of “The Star-Spangled Banner” by Francis Scott Key, some, such as video documentarian Mike Wicklein, argued that these campaigns were futile, and that the city might be better served by using ideas expressed in Francis Scott Key’s National Anthem: “free and brave.” Wicklein, while acknowledging that “The Monumental City is an old tag that still applies and gets used,” did not make the connection that the very monuments that gave rise to the name “Monumental City” in fact stand for American democracy and its freedoms and honor those brave souls who fought to preserve them. As this article goes to press, the City of Baltimore has officially adopted yet another slogan, “Baltimore: Birthplace of The Star-Spangled Banner,” hoping to capitalize on the recent success of its bicentennial celebrations.35

As Wicklein noted, however, “The Monumental City” has never completely gone out of use. It seems to appear when Baltimoreans desire to evoke pride in their past, or when discussing the present, to challenge current cultural expressions to live up to the nationally important and recognized events of the past. What sets “The Monumental City” apart from modern slogans, is that unlike them it was not created by city “promoters” or branding campaigns. It was, in fact, begun by others outside the city, and even though originally ironic, at its core, the appellation recognized that Baltimore had accomplished something vitally important to the new nation—the erection of the first heroic monument to honor the father of American democracy and American nationhood.36

NOTES

2. Howard does not discuss the board that was formed to build the monument in the national capital, or its subsequent completion by the U.S. government; on this within the context of Robert Mills’s career, see John M. Bryan, Robert Mills, America’s First Architect (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001), 289ff.
3. Howard. The Monumental City, 68. Howard’s account is generally accurate, but much more precise accounts have since been assembled.
4. A concise history focused on the monument remains J. Jefferson Miller II, “The Designs for the Washington Monument in Baltimore,” Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, 23 (1964): 19–28. On the Baltimore Washington Monument within the context of Mills’s career, see Bryan, Robert Mills, 105ff. The earlier date of the sculptural memorial for the site made available by the eventual demolition of the courthouse was not known to the above authors. It is discussed in “Miscellany: Improvements in Baltimore, From the Baltimore Evening Post,” May 1, 1807, Newburyport (Mass.) Herald.

6. Gilmor noted both of these concerns in his letter to Mills, May 2, 1814, as quoted in “Robert Mills and the Washington Monument in Baltimore,” Maryland Historical Magazine, 34 (1939): 159–60. Gilmor in his letters to Mills, August 7, 1814 and January 21, 1815, discusses his efforts with Howard, as published in “Robert Mills and the Washington Monument in Baltimore,” Maryland Historical Magazine, 35 (1940): 178, 179. The design as it stood at the time of the cornerstone laying is reproduced as the frontispiece of the publication documenting the entire ceremony. See An Authentic Account of all the Proceedings on the Fourth of July, 1815, With Regard to Laying the Corner Stone of the Washington Monument, Now Erecting in the City of Baltimore (Baltimore, 1815).

7. An Authentic Account of all the Proceedings, 5–8. The complete text was published in the Baltimore newspapers and picked up in a number of American cities.


9. Although extensive documentation of the building of the monument survives in the Washington Monument Papers, MS. 873, MdHS, a detailed account of its construction is not provided in most standard modern sources on the column. The general patterns can be gleaned from the bills and receipts in the financial records, Box 4.


Important early understandings of the emergence of culture in the United States include Lillian B. Miller’s Patrons and Patriotism: The Encouragement of the Fine Arts in the United States, 1790–1860 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), reflecting the interpretations of its time in suggesting that Americans largely wanted to break away from European culture. Newer interpretations, including the author’s and that in Gordon S. Wood’s Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789–1815 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), suggest that these new Americans wanted to embrace all Old World culture and move it forward in whatever direction the emerging “new” American culture dictated. See especially Wood’s Chapter 15, “The Rising Glory of America.”


13. The modern origins of this notion are discussed below. On the purpose of the visit see “Visit of the President of the U.S.,” Baltimore Gazette and Daily Advertiser, October 15, 1827, which reprinted the committee’s invitation letter to Adams and his response. See John Quincy Adams, entries for October 14–16, 1827, Diary 37, Adams Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society. Adams noted his two-year-old promise on his final day in Baltimore, October 16.

14. On the North Point visit and the evening’s celebrations and his toast see Adams’s entry for October 16, 1827, Diary 37. The printed versions differ only slightly in punctuation and capitalization; see for instance “Baltimore, Wednesday, October 17, 1827,” in that date’s issue of the Baltimore Gazette and Daily Advertiser. Adams’s Baltimore toast was reprinted in the papers of the significant East Coast cities as well as others. The assumptions about the spread of the phrase are made possible by the database of American Historical Newspapers created by Newsbank. The inquiry is of course limited by the accuracy of the OCR (Optical Character Recognition) used to create the word search terms from images of the scanned newspapers. On the erection of the North Point monument and these attributions, see the account of it in the column “Baltimore, July 28,” in the issue of that date, Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser.

15. See the column “Saturday, February 8,” in the issue of that date, 1823, Daily National Intelligencer, hereafter Intelligencer. The assumption that this is the first use of the phrase is based on currently available newspapers in Newsbank’s American Historical Newspapers series, and the many scans of books and periodicals now available on Googlebooks. As other materials are scanned and made available this interpretation could change.

16. See the reprints in respectively, Alexandria Herald, February 10, 1823, and Enquirer, February 13, 1823.


18. Many nineteenth-century accounts discuss both the Battle and Washington Monuments (and mention other monuments), as did Baird, before making this observation. See his Impressions and Experiences of the West Indies and North America in 1849, 2:188. In 1845, when Baltimore was considering improving the public squares around the Washington Monument, it noted of the monument that it was “the proud column which has given our home the distinguished name of the ‘Monumental City.’” See Journal of the Proceedings of the First Branch of the City Council of Baltimore, January Session, 1845 (Baltimore, 1845), 357. T. Addison Richards, writing of Baltimore, noted that the monument was “chief among the structures of this kind, from which Baltimore has won the name of the Monumental City.” See Richards’s Appleton’s Illustrated Hand-Book of American Travel, Part II. The Southern and Western States, and the Territories (New York, 1857), 199. At the end of this period Charles L. Shipley, writing in his “Monuments of the ‘Monumental City,’” Book of the Royal Blue, vol. 10, no. 12 (September 1907), 1, notes that the title arose from building the first monument to Washington. Notably he observed that more recently the title has been questioned because
other American cities now have as many if not more memorials than Baltimore. This early article hints at reasons why the sobriquet lost some of its potency in the twentieth century, especially as the nearby city of Washington, D.C. expanded its monumental core on the National Mall.

19. Several years later, on July 4, 1827, the residents of Boonsboro, Maryland, began erecting a memorial of rough-hewn stone on a prospect on the nearby South Mountain. Discussed in the local Hagerstown, Maryland, newspaper (“Washington's Monument, Near Boonsborough,” Torch Light, July 12, 1827), the story was picked up by several papers available in American Historical Newspapers, but does not seem to have garnered much notice at the time. Its location in a rural setting did not lend itself to newspaper notices. Around the turn of the twentieth century, the Boonsboro monument emerges in newspaper articles amid a debate over whether it or the Baltimore monument was the first. It has crumbled into a ruin and been rebuilt several times.


21. See “Baltimore,” which introduces the reprint of Carter’s account penned in Lancaster, Baltimore Patriot, February 19, 1823. Carter’s account was probably published in his own newspaper, but the 1823 editions of that paper are not among those scanned by Newsbank. Other than this Baltimore reprint, the article does not appear to have been picked up in its entirety by others available in the scanned collection, although an excerpt omitting the first paragraph where the monumental city is mentioned was published in Spooner’s Vermont Journal (Windsor, Vermont) on February 24, 1823. Carter’s observation about the Intelligencer “fancifully” calling Baltimore “The Monumental City” is the most compelling evidence that this is, in fact, the earliest reference to the term.

22. See “To the Editors,” Intelligencer, July 3, 1823; and Rowland’s response in “To the Editors,” in ibid., July 23, 1823.

23. See “Chesapeake and Ohio Canal,” and “Grand Union Canal Dinner,” in the Intelligencer, November 11, 1823. These articles were picked up by many other papers including the Baltimore Patriot.

24. On 1824–1826 usage of the name, see “E. Bourne’s Cash Store,” The [New York] Statesman, August 3, 1824. This article was reprinted in the Baltimore Patriot, August 5, 1824, as well as a number of other papers. On Lafayette, see the untitled notice, Baltimore Patriot, August 9, 1824, an article that was reprinted in at least the Easton, Maryland, paper. Accounts of his visit use the term in other cities including “Gen. Lafayette,” Intelligencer, October 9, 1824. On the Symmes visit, see the untitled notice in the Baltimore Patriot, May 20, 1826, On the frigate toast see “The Collation,” Intelligencer, October 17, 1826.


27. John H. B. Latrobe, Picture of Baltimore, Containing a Description of all Objects of Interest in the City; and Embellished with Views of the Principal Public Buildings (Baltimore, 1832), 182. In addition to the Washington and Battle Monuments, Latrobe included the Armistead

28. See Nathaniel Parker Willis, *American Scenery; Or, Land, Lake, and River* (London, 1840), 2:92–93. The prints in the volume had been issued serially in the late 1830s. The Payne view is sometimes dated to 1844. It appears to have been issued in several versions, including one without the portrait in the middle. Charles Edward Lester, in 1845 discussing the Washington Monument in Baltimore and the recently completed Bunker Hill Monument, questioned whether the former was a “national” tribute, arguing that it was not “national” because it was not in the nation’s capital or sponsored by the federal government. See his *The Artist, the Merchant, and the Statesman, of the Age of the Medici, and of Our Own Times* (New York, 1845), 2:124–28. At the time his book was published, Mills’s monument in Washington had not yet been begun.

29. Though a comprehensive search is not possible, several of the most commonly used compilations and anecdotal histories have been examined, including: Brantz Mayer, ed. *Baltimore: Past and Present, With Biographical Sketches of its Representative Men* (Baltimore, 1871), mentions the term once (157). J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Baltimore City and County, From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Representative Men* (1881; repr., Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1971), appears not to use the term. Clayton Coleman Hall, ed. *Baltimore: Its History and Its People*, 3 vols. (New York and Chicago: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1912), used the term throughout to describe the city (often referring to Howard’s work), but uncredited. Letitia Stockett, *Baltimore: A Not Too Serious History* (1928; repr., Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997) mentions (20) the title but does not provide a source. Francis F. Beirne, in his *The Amiable Baltimoreans* (1951; repr., Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984) titles chapter 7 “The Monumental City” but does not discuss the origin of the name. Beirne, 102, notes that as of the date of publication the term was “seldom” heard. He states, probably incorrectly (94), that the term was used “quite as widely” as the name Mobtown, which modern book and newspaper search capabilities would seem to disprove.

30. Gobright’s volume was published in Baltimore by Gobright & Torsch, 1858. A number of turn-of-the-century publications have similar references; this reference is from Francis Andrew March and Francis Andrew March Jr., *A Thesaurus Dictionary of the English Language* (Philadelphia, 1906), p. 65 of the appendix section.

31. On the 1812 riots, see Paul A. Gilje, “The Baltimore Riots of 1812 and the Breakdown of the Anglo-American Mob Tradition,” *Journal of Social History*, 13 (1980): 556 and n55. Gilje cited Scharf’s 1881 volume as well as Beirne’s 1951 book on the term. Modern newspaper searching, unavailable to Gilje, seems to confirm that while there were earlier mobs in Baltimore, for instance in 1807 around the Luther Martin affair, “mobtown” was coined in 1812.

As with any historical newspaper search, this data is only as good as the OCR software used to scan the material. These assumptions are based on a search from 1812 to 1912 in all American newspapers available in American Historical Newspapers created by Newsbank. Several searches were conducted including “mobtown and Baltimore,” “mob town and Baltimore,” and “monumental city and Baltimore.” Other searches without Baltimore would increase the numbers, but, for instance, with “mobtown” it would include references to other cities called “mobtown”—which did occur. This data seems to refute notions about the pervasiveness of the term mentioned by Gilje, citing Beirne (who had stated that “mobtown” was frequently used).

32. Wilbur Harvey Hunter, “The Monumental City,” in *The Rinehart School of Sculpture 75th Anniversary Catalogue 1896–1971* (Baltimore: The Maryland Institute, College of Art and The

33. Modern slogans for the city are best explored in the *Baltimore Sun*, available through ProQuest. The *Sun* was not in existence in the 1820s when “The Monumental City” was coined. On “Charm City” and the timing of its origins, see: “Ads dub Baltimore ‘Charm City,’” *Baltimore Sun*, July 11, 1974; James D. Dilts, “Expressways to Spare Harbor Area,” ibid., March 30, 1974; James A. Rousmaniere Jr., “Charm City’ gets 5-fold boost,” February 13, 1975; and Robert A. Erlandson, “Charms City is 2 Years Behind: Bicentennial Ad Goofs; Puts Key, Flag in 1812,” June 19, 1975; all in the *Sun*. Some of these and the slogans discussed below were not officially adopted by the City of Baltimore but were used by promotional offices.

34. On the presence of the Monument in the efforts, see “Charm City Premieres in Promotional Film,” *Baltimore Sun*, September 25, 1975; on the campaign’s perceived failure see “‘Charm City’ Ad Was Wallflower,” ibid., May 30, 1976; and on the new campaign see Tracie Rozhon, “City Promotion Effort Is to be Reorganized,” ibid., August 21, 1977.


36. Wicklein, “Baltimore: Brave and Free.” The use of the phrase as a point of cultural pride is evident in Hunter’s 1971 essay and Gold’s review of it in the *Baltimore Sun*, as is also true of the title of Kelly’s 2011 book on sculpture. Expanding from this, Arney’s 2003 newspaper article on the branding of the city speaks to the challenges of living up to past successes.
Book Reviews


Edith Ziegler’s intriguing study of convict women forcibly relocated from British prisons to colonial Maryland substantially amplifies her 2002 article published in this journal ("The Transported Convict Women of Colonial Maryland, 1718–1776," *MdHM*, 97 (2002): 5–32). The impact of British penal servitude on colonial merchant trade and agricultural labor has often been undervalued. By engaging the methodology of gender historians and placing women at the heart of her analysis, Ziegler offers a unique perspective that makes clear the importance of Chesapeake convicts to the colonial economy. With this analytic shift, Ziegler suggests that women convicts may have been larger contributors to Maryland’s colonial economy than previously thought because the non-taxable status of white female servants enabled planters to maximize tobacco profits through the use of convict women for fieldwork, regardless of their previous experience or training (86). She also notes that most Maryland convict women were sent from urban areas; 72 percent were sentenced by London and Middlesex courts (153). Ziegler’s original research on Old Bailey Court records indicates Maryland convict women were primarily young, and nearly three-quarters of them were younger than thirty (156). Most were convicted of property-related thefts and were nonviolent offenders (152). In a sampling of 1,174 cases, 35 percent stole clothing and 21 percent stole household items (155). Of the 7,957 women sent from England and Wales to the American colonies, Ziegler estimates that 3,422 arrived in Maryland from 1718 to 1783. “His Majesty’s seven-year passengers” labored in Maryland houses and fields until their release from service, and then faded from history.

These statistics might suggest these women posed little threat to colonists, but Ziegler connects convicted women to larger issues in Britain and the colonies, suggesting that “convict transportation was a prime feature and symptom of all that was odious to Americans about imperial hegemony and colonial subordination” (1). The practice was “one grievance in a long list” and one that colonists such as Benjamin Franklin railed against in colonial newspapers and letters (141). Convict transportation was unpopular in the colonies, and numerous attempts were made to enact anti-convict importation laws without success. In spite of colonial objections, 97 percent of all felons transported to the American colonies were sent to the Chesapeake, where the demand for cheap labor ensured a ready market throughout the eighteenth century (4).

Focusing on eighteenth-century Maryland convict women, this book covers
many related issues, from the passage of the 1718 *Transportation Act* to the last convict ship in 1783. Ziegler challenges us to look beyond traditional narratives and consider the lives of women, from courtroom to plantation and beyond. She asks who these women were, what characteristics they shared and what crimes merited their being transported. Using *Maryland Gazette* runaway advertisements and Maryland court records, Ziegler considers how and why convict women left their employers. Advertisements for runaways suggest that Anne Bailey was “a likely hussy,” Sarah Davis as a woman with a “palavering tongue,” and Mary Rider was “given to drunkenness and taking snuff” (111). Ziegler suggests these comments indicate the attitudes held by most Maryland planters toward convict women who deviated from acceptable gender norms. Convict women who ran away were “making a strike against their powerlessness, asserting their individuality, and allowing themselves the enjoyment of autonomy and unrestricted mobility” (123).

Ziegler’s eight chapters offer a transatlantic study of the various stages in the lives of convict women. Detailed endnotes and an impressive bibliography provide ample primary sources and historiography for further research. Working with no written diaries or letters from convict women, Ziegler makes full use of primary documents in England and Maryland, including shipping documents, colonial planter records, newspapers, and Maryland court records. Given the limitations of extant source materials, this study is a remarkable synthesis. The appendix includes statistical charts, a copy of the Transportation Act, and Maryland legislation applicable to convict transportation. Although not included, an additional appendix listing all convict women named in this book would be beneficial to historians and genealogists hoping to trace these women beyond their convict service.

This book should appeal to seasoned and novice historians interested in the eighteenth-century Chesapeake, and to those interested in colonial criminal prosecution and punishment, colonial labor, and colonial gender issues, specifically the ways in which gender configured the lives of transported convict women. *Harlots, Hussies, and Poor Unfortunate Women* is a nuanced study of women and the eighteenth-century British American convict trade that brings us closer to previously unknown Maryland convict women and their crimes, occupations, and personal experiences. This work also serves as a reminder that much remains unknown about the experiences of some colonial Maryland women. Ziegler closes with an anecdote about a convict woman named Mary Nobody, a woman whose name is emblematic of all convict women who “have been obscured or neglected in the historical consciousness” (150). In 1751, as Captain James Dobbins’s ship *Thames* arrived in Annapolis, Mary Nobody stepped onto the dock and disappeared from history, like so many others.

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Sons of the Father: George Washington and His Protégés. Edited by Robert M. S. McDonald. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013. 286 pages. Notes, index. Cloth, $35.00.)

In June 2010, a group of scholars met to honor the memory of the distinguished American Revolutionary War historian Don Higginbotham, by examining George Washington's ability to identify and cultivate leaders. Robert M. S. McDonald has compiled thirteen thoughtful essays from this conference that collectively reveal Washington's changing and varied style of mentorship. Consistent with the father-son theme, Washington's relationships with his protégés were not without conflict, nor did they always bring out the best traits in each individual. Still, they proved critical for winning independence and establishing a viable federal republic.

Fred Anderson contextualizes the later chapters by examining Washington's own experience with mentorship. Anderson argues that the headstrong Virginian rose to prominence at a relatively early age because he possessed sponsors who opened doors for him. One result of this rapid ascent was that Washington never learned to be a good subordinate and, at times, angered Governor Robert Dinwiddie, General John Forbes, and other patrons. Still, Anderson rightly suggests that these experiences helped make Washington a better mentor for other ambitious young men.

With this background established, the main portion of the book examines an eclectic mix of personalities, who can be divided into political and military categories, although the groups overlap. Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, Gouverneur Morris, and Alexander Hamilton compose the first group, and, interestingly, Washington had the most tumultuous relationship with his two fellow Virginians. Brian Steele asserts that Jefferson and Washington's close friendship became strained during his second term as president. Following Washington's death, though, Jefferson went to great lengths to portray the first president as non-partisan, hoping to undercut the Federalists. Although this act was politically motivated, Steele argues that in a sense, Jefferson showed his friendship for Washington by ensuring that he was remembered in the very image he tried so hard to create. William M. Ferraro’s chapter on Monroe's relationship with Washington is reminiscent of Mark Twain's comments on the great wisdom that his father gained in the course of seven years. That friendship disintegrated after Washington named his protégé minister to France in 1794 and subsequently recalled him because of his poor performance. Monroe responded with a nearly five hundred-page critique of the administration's handling of foreign affairs. In fact, Steele argues that at the time of Washington's death, the two men hated each other. Monroe's attitudes changed after serving as secretary of state during the disastrous War of 1812. Steele claims that this experience convinced Monroe of the necessity of a strong national government, and he later modeled his presidency after Washington's.

What drove Washington apart from his two fellow Virginians was his support
for Alexander Hamilton’s economic and international policies. Peter R. Henriques argues that Washington initially started as Hamilton’s mentor by selecting him as an aide during the Revolutionary War. This ultimately evolved into a partnership, as Hamilton became Washington’s “Indispensable Man” while serving as his secretary of treasury (206).

Three of the military “sons” represent some of Washington’s most trusted subordinates and are obvious choices for inclusion in this book: Henry Knox, Nathanael Greene, and the Marquis de Lafayette. Stuart Leibiger claims that Washington and Lafayette’s warm friendship was initially based on mutual convenience. The American general sought foreign aid for his cause, while the young French nobleman craved glory and adventure. The other three choices—Daniel Morgan, Anthony Wayne, and Robert Kirkwood—are more novel. L. Scott Philyaw asserts that Morgan, who was closest to age with Washington and knew him longer than any other protégé, was never close with the general. Still, the two men possessed great respect for one another, based on their shared devotion to the United States and the “Ideal of Service.” Washington repeatedly assigned the rough-hewn Morgan to commands involving militia and frontier populations, most notably the occupation of Pittsburgh following the Whiskey Rebellion. Mary Stockwell paints a less flattering portrait of Washington concerning his relationship with Wayne. Although Wayne dutifully accepted any assignment from the general—even at the expense of his health and family—and seemed to crave attention, Washington often criticized him to others. Stockwell speculates that Washington had misgivings about the “mad” emotional Pennsylvanian, not realizing that age had mellowed him.

One of the book’s strongest chapters, and certainly the most unusual “son,” is Thomas Rider’s discussion of Delaware’s Robert Kirkwood, who probably never met Washington or rose above the rank of captain. Rider convincingly argues that “the intrepid Kirkwood” epitomized the junior officers who formed the heart of the Continental Army (232). Often serving with Maryland troops in campaigns from New York to the Carolinas, Kirkwood repeatedly demonstrated enterprise, vigilance, and bravery, the very qualities that Washington sought in officers.

Jack P. Greene concludes Sons of the Father with an examination of how Americans found leaders during the Revolutionary era. In an interesting discussion, Greene suggests that a deeply ingrained prejudice caused Britain to consistently underestimate the colonists’ ability to overcome parochialism and unite. Reminiscent of his earlier works, Greene concludes that the Americans already possessed extensive experience in cooperation and self-governance long before the imperial crisis and subsequent war. The Revolution did not create a new class of colonial leaders. Instead, Americans turned to those who had gained this experience during the colonial period.

Inevitably with such a book, some may quibble with the selection or exclusion of particular individuals, such as Kirkwood. The inclusion of Benedict Arnold would
have offered an interesting counterpoint to some of the other “sons.” Still, these essays are well written, deeply researched, and offer an important perspective on the Revolutionary period and the Early Republic. Students and scholars alike will profit from *Sons of the Father*.

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*Kutztown University*


*James McHenry, Forgotten Federalist* offers a refreshing look at the life, historical involvement, and contributions of James McHenry. Karen E. Robbins finds that McHenry is an influential figure involved not only in the founding of the nation, but a man who worked tirelessly throughout his lifetime both in national and state politics. She argues that McHenry’s historical contributions have been wrongly obscured and diminished by previous histories. This new biography brings McHenry’s contributions during the American Revolution and his work as secretary of war to light, and highlights his involvement in state and national politics. His life also intersected with many important moments in American history. He was a young immigrant who left Ireland in search of opportunities. He worked as a citizen soldier in the American Revolution, served under Washington, attended and influenced the Constitutional Convention, and served as secretary of war. This important work is part of a series, the Studies in the Legal History of the South, and adds the first modern biography of an often-overlooked figure in American history.

Robbins methodically organizes her work through the major events in James McHenry’s life as she masterfully weaves in the events of American history into his story. Part I, titled “Becoming an American,” explores how McHenry immigrated to America and how he became involved in the events of the American Revolution. McHenry originally trained as a physician and apprenticed under Benjamin Rush in Philadelphia, where he caught the revolutionary spirit early and joined Washington’s staff. In the first part, Robbins also develops McHenry’s long-lasting friendship with Alexander Hamilton. Part II, titled “Politics, State and National,” traces McHenry’s involvement in the Confederation of Congress, his role in the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, and his involvement in Maryland politics. During this period following the Revolution, McHenry held multiple political positions, including serving in the Maryland Senate, as secretary of war, and as one of Maryland’s Federalist leaders. Part III focuses on McHenry’s time as secretary of war and the political tensions he faced upon taking office, one in which he served under both George Washington and John Adams. Robbins develops a complex political picture when McHenry’s politics were called into question and revives McHenry’s reputation.
by showing that he was fully competent, though John Adams requested he resign. (Robbins argues that McHenry’s reputation was unfairly damaged during his tenure as Adam’s secretary of war.) Part IV discusses McHenry’s final years in politics, the personal events of McHenry’s family, and the larger political involvement of the United States in the War of 1812 and the Battle of Baltimore.

This biography also presents a narrative of the American Revolution, the founding of the nation, and the United States’ growing political influence, seamlessly blending the major events of McHenry’s life with those of the Revolution and early Federal period. In particular, Part I succeeds in providing a great understanding of the Revolutionary fervor in Philadelphia, the politicization of Philadelphians, and the Philadelphia military campaign. The book is a rich trove of resources for scholars of the Revolution and early national period, providing a fair analysis of early political debates following the Constitutional Convention. Furthermore, the book is a balanced narrative of the life of a prominent figure in Maryland. James McHenry spent a large portion of his life devoted to Maryland politics and worked tirelessly on its behalf. Scholars of Maryland history will find this biography illuminating not only as a biography, but also on Maryland politics in the years following the American Revolution.

Robbins’s book is methodical in its organization and meticulous in the attention to detail. She succeeds in presenting McHenry as a hardworking man who worked tirelessly for his adopted country. His influence in the founding of the nation cannot be ignored and Robbins gives a fair, just, and much needed look at a previously overlooked figure in American history.

**Kimberly Nath**

*University of Delaware*

*Native Memoirs from the War of 1812.* Edited by Carl Benn. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2014. 208 pages. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth, $29.95.)

Historian Carl Benn skillfully weaves together the autobiographical accounts of two prominent Native Americans from the early nineteenth century, Black Hawk (Sauk) and William Apess (Pequot), in order to illustrate “the diversities of aboriginal experiences” during the War of 1812, and to provide “insights into native perspectives and involvement in [that] conflict” (x). Benn deliberately pairs the two authors, not for their extensive recollection of events during that war but because Black Hawk and Apess experienced the fighting in fundamentally different ways. Black Hawk and his people, who lived around the Great Lakes and along the upper Mississippi River, immediately sided with the British at the outset of the war in reaction to U.S. encroachments upon their lands and the broken promises of American officials to protect those lands. As Black Hawk wrote, “I had not discovered one good trait in
the character of the Americans!” (48). During the conflict, he led the Sauk against American fortifications in the Illinois and Great Lakes territories, joined Tecumseh’s pan-Indian confederacy, and fought off attempts by other Native leaders, like Keokuk, to end Sauk participation in the war. All the while Black Hawk sought “to fulfill Sauk objectives in affirming and maintaining independence from American control” (47).

In contrast, William Apess lived his entire life within white society, his people having fallen victim to American colonialism, the consequences of which shunted Apess into poverty and indentured labor. Much like African American slaves, Apess often tried to run away from the owners of his indenture and, in 1812, successfully managed to do so. Following his escape, he was recruited as a soldier for the U.S. Army and fought against British and Native opponents on the Canadian border between 1813 and 1815. As Benn demonstrates, Apess’s account is particularly useful for illustrating the drudgery of camp life, the soldier’s plight (“people have no idea of the extreme sufferings of the soldiers”), and the brutality of war (“the horribly disfigured bodies of the dead, the piercing groans of the wounded and the dying . . . I can never forget it”) (109–10). Following a bout of vagrancy after the conflict, Apess reinvented himself as a Methodist preacher and settled among the Mashpee Indians in New England, where he advocated for “indigenous peoples [and] their rights” (92). Apess represents Native peoples coming to terms with American colonialism from within that world, while Black Hawk encapsulates the experiences of Native peoples who confronted expansionism from the outside.

Despite the differences, Black Hawk and William Apess articulated strikingly similar worldviews and themes in their narratives. Both men exhibited “deep indigenous identities, affirmed aboriginal cultures and nationalisms . . . and possessed an intense commitment to protecting [Native] interests” (x). Black Hawk extolled Sauk customs, cultural values, and ways of life over that of white society, glorified Native resistance to American colonialism, blamed white Americans for the violence between their two peoples, and condemned the treaties that dispossessed indigenous peoples of their lands. As Black Hawk demanded of his readers, “What do we know of the manner of the laws and customs of the white people? They might buy our bodies for dissection, and we would touch the goose quill to confirm it without knowing what we are doing.” He concluded: “I will leave it to the people of the United States to say . . . whether we received a fair compensation” or not (43–44, 69). Meanwhile, Apess aggressively promoted the “rights and . . . humanity” of Native peoples from the pulpit, as well as in court, where he exhorted white Christians and federal officials to establish more “equal and honorable . . . relationships” with aboriginal communities (92). Apess also reminded his readers that “true Christianity is color-blind,” a not too subtle hint that popular attitudes toward, and the treatment of, indigenous peoples by white Americans contrasted sharply with Christian doctrine (92–93). Benn, therefore, frames Black Hawk and William Apess as foundational voices for
indigenous advocacy within the larger continuum of Native activism between the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries.

One need only consult Benn's exhaustive endnotes to see the herculean effort that went into researching, annotating, contextualizing, and stitching these two autobiographies together to create a vivid portrait of Native experiences and perspectives of the War of 1812 and the early American republic. This is not simply a matter of combining the original editions of Black Hawk's *Life of Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak* (1833) with William Apess's *A Son of the Forest* (1831) and leaving it at that. Instead, Benn consulted notes and editorial changes in posthumous editions of Black Hawk's narrative, as well as an abundance of materials from Apess's writings and publications, and integrated them into this book. One could almost argue that Benn's work is actually two books; the autobiographies themselves as one, with Benn's annotations as the other. All of this is to say that Benn has done a remarkable job of putting these two Native voices into dialogue with one another, and then making them “speak to us in the twenty-first century with a vitality that commands our attention” (x).

**Bryan C. Rindfleisch**

*Marquette University*


David C. Keehn's well-written treatment of the clandestine Knights of the Golden Circle (KGC) sheds considerable light on an understudied group whose members personified the radical southern mindset of the late 1850s and the Civil War years. Keehn explores in great detail the organization's founding and evolution as he sets out to prove that “the Knights were much more powerful and played more of a role precipitating the Civil War than historians have heretofore recognized” (5).

The book is organized chronologically beginning with the founding of the group shortly before the war. At its inception, the KGC was a reckless, southern purveyor of Manifest Destiny that promoted the takeover of the “golden circle,” which included much of Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. Members hoped to spread the American slaveholding kingdom into these areas in what amounted to an extension of the filibuster movement of the prior two decades. Keehn points out that, imperialist motives aside, the KGC was also attractive to southern rights activists and adventurers, as well as those intrigued by the prospect of joining a secret society complete with secret meeting places, whispered passwords, and other rituals designed to codify the expansionist mission of the group among the membership. Central to this part of the story is the organization's founder, George W. L. Bickley, a sometime physician and newspaper editor of questionable character whose ambition routinely trumped his honesty. Although during his lifetime he failed at a number of occupations, he used
a quick wit and his personal charisma to organize the KGC in 1859 as southern fears related to the abolition movement peaked following John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, Virginia. Bickley traveled the country seeking support for the group and was successful in establishing dozens of KGC chapters. He found considerable aid and comfort in Texas, where supporters were eager to launch an invasion of Mexico. It was Bickley's inability to keep his promises related to support and funding for the invasion that contributed to his downfall as leader of the group. The author’s treatment of Bickley’s backstory, the KGC’s founding, and his descriptions of the group's organizational infrastructure are among the strengths of the book.

In the book's latter sections the author makes the argument that the KGC played a central role in the secession movement in several states, particularly Texas and Virginia, though only after the group was somewhat reorganized. After Bickley’s removal as leader, the organization became more decentralized as the secession crisis of 1860–1861 came to head. Local leaders took control and turned their attention from expansion to secession. According to Keehn, the KGC during the period successfully “rustled Texas out of the Union” before spearheading “the drive for secession in the pivotal Border State of Virginia, whose participation was essential to the nascent Confederate nation” (126). Furthermore, the author also claims connections between the KGC and a number of other schemes and plots ranging from the establishment of a new republic on the West Coast, to the capture of federal military installations, to plans to kidnap or assassinate Abraham Lincoln. Along these lines, John Wilkes Booth's association with known KGC members and his own alleged membership in the group certainly adds spice to the narrative. However, it is in these latter chapters that the book's weaknesses become apparent. Although Keehn's research is obviously meticulous and thoughtful, it comes up a bit short with regard to definitive proof of some of the KGC's activities. This is likely a function not of the author's research techniques, but of the inherent difficulties in locating primary source material related to a society that operated in secret. The book relies on legitimate sources but they provide, in some places, a great deal of smoke with much less fire. Words and phrases such as “could have been,” “likely” and “alleged” appear with some frequency throughout the narrative, enough that they temper some of Keehn's central conclusions. For instance, while many individual KGC members were certainly proactive in the secession movement in the South in 1860–1861, the Knights seems to be given a bit too much credit for the movement's success in places like Texas and Virginia. Similarly, although admitting that the facts of the matter are unclear, the author seems to infer that because some of the characters involved in the 1865 assassination of Abraham Lincoln had KGC ties, the group as an organized entity in some way helped facilitate the murder.

Despite these issues, Keehn should be applauded for taking on this topic and providing readers with a good sense of how secret southern societies operated and how they influenced events leading up to the Civil War. He has opened the door for
further study of the subject and has done so in a well-organized and readable fashion. The information contained in the book is intriguing and should be of interest to anyone interested in events leading up to the Civil War and the nature and tradition of secret societies in the United States.

**Ben Wynne**

*University of North Georgia*

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When reflecting upon the life of Timothy Webster, Allan Pinkerton wrote that his detective was “a faithful officer, a true friend, and an ardent patriot” (69). *A Spy for the Union: The Life and Execution of Timothy Webster* simply attempts to present the biography of a recognized spy during the Civil War while nobly trying to separate fact from fiction. The book is a very quick read, at times resembling a historical novel rather than just another historical, informational text. In just 137 pages and fourteen chapters, historian Corey Recko guides the reader through forty years of Timothy Webster’s turbulent and dangerous life with a focus on the hero’s work as a spy, including his investigation into the early assassination threats against President-elect Abraham Lincoln. Webster’s life story is a very American one as he rises from immigrant obscurity to become a successful police officer and eventually, an accomplished Pinkerton detective working for the Union cause. A credit to both Webster’s exciting life and Recko’s storytelling talent, this book is a true page-turner as each chapter brings the reader one step closer to the inevitable fate first revealed in the title.

Although cast as the main character of the work, Timothy Webster often disappears into subtle obscurity as a secondary persona. To be fair, Recko is forced to keep Webster in the background at times due to the sheer lack of reliable sources available to the historian. Some readers may find Webster’s background spot normal and perhaps fitting since he was a spy who was expected to remain in the shadows. Nevertheless, one can almost sense the frustration in Recko’s words as he constantly takes some sources with a grain of salt, believing that they may not be telling the whole truth. The author’s historical reflections based on the lack of solid sources are admirable but also tiresome for the reader as they weigh down the momentum and drama of the narrative to the point that by the end of the book Webster’s story feels incomplete.

Ultimately, Recko is left with a very difficult task of piecing together Webster’s story with details that are weak or unclear. Webster’s story is told through others, be it through Alan Pinkerton’s exaggerated and, at times, encrypted words or even the self-serving accounts from the man who helped Webster meet his deadly end,
another Pinkerton agent named Pryce Lewis. Although the instances are rare, Webster is also revealed through his own words as found in his stolid testimony in front of the Board of Aldermen in 1855 and through his work during the early years of the Civil War. Here, the reader truly discovers the hardworking, confident, and brave individual that Recko wants us to recognize and acclaim.

In terms of its overall historical value, Recko’s book highlights a topic that continues to earn more attention in relation to Civil War studies—that of espionage. Often the story of the Civil War has been told through the limited scope of the soldiers who fought in the war and the politicians who directed it. In a subtle way, Recko’s work illustrates how the war was also waged by those in the background on both sides. In one chapter, while not definitively pointing to Webster’s research as the deciding factor, Recko does credit the spy’s work during General George McClellan’s plans to invade Richmond. Additionally, as demonstrated in the last chapter, the author truly wants the reader to appreciate Webster’s efforts and ultimate sacrifice, especially in terms of preserving Lincoln’s valuable life for a few more years. Historians, students, and even general history enthusiasts will be grateful for Recko’s decision to include Timothy Webster’s actual detective reports from his work in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Maryland, and Pinkerton’s reports to McClellan, which were based on the initial reports made by Webster.

Those specifically interested in Maryland’s history will pleasantly discover that Recko spends a great deal of time detailing Webster’s work in the Border State, including Webster’s investigation into the fledgling secessionist movement there. It is this portion of the book that the reader not only realizes the point of no return for Webster, but also his consistent devotion to his country as he successfully fools the Confederacy into believing he was a loyal southern sympathizer in order to obtain valuable intelligence for the Union. Taken as a whole, A Spy for the Union is an enjoyable and well-researched book that praises an American hero while also encouraging more research into the life of Webster and the other spies who helped shape a nation’s future.

Brian Dunne
Florida Atlantic University


In the years leading up to the centennial of the American Civil War, two survivors remained from that conflict: one in blue and one in gray. “One of them indeed was a soldier,” writes Seranno, “but one, according to the best evidence, was a fake. One of them had been living a great big lie” (5).

Albert Woolson was a drummer boy from Minnesota, and Walter Williams a
forage master from Mississippi, later Texas. Serrano writes in great detail about the last few decades of their lives—their everyday routines, the attention they received from the public, and the ways in which they responded to their roles in history. By comparing their accounts to the stories of other Civil War veterans at the turn of the century, he attempts to find out which of the men told the truth about his service. Their stories weave through broad overviews of veteran reunions at Gettysburg and Manassas battlefields, and soldiers’ societies including the Grand Army of the Republic and United Confederate Veterans. Serrano also delves into the history of the birth of the Civil War centennial commission in the mid-1950s. One of his most stimulating pieces of research revolves around the men who falsified their war time experiences to receive pensions during the Great Depression or simply to gain fame and recognition.

Although the depth of research and information is astounding, the narrative stalls on the minutiae of the men’s stories. Serrano provides little commentary about the effect these men’s stories have on our conceptions of Civil War memory, leaving unanswered questions about why and how they became such popular heroes and icons. Seranno also chooses not to weave together the last of the Civil War generation with the disillusioned and divided world in which they were living. Although some current events and issues of the 1940s through the 1960s are mentioned briefly, most of the interaction that the book offers with the modern world is confined to accounts of the nostalgic celebrations surrounding the surviving veterans. The volume would be enriched by a deeper discussion about our historical memory of the Civil War in light of the disintegrating social conditions of the 1950s and 1960s and how the fading presence of its veterans affected that interpretation.

Although Maryland veterans are not specifically mentioned, the work raises interesting questions about Maryland’s approach to veterans’ celebrations and monuments. Further research about Maryland’s veteran organizations—both Confederate and Union—would be illuminating in light of Serrano’s research. Over all, Serrano’s work opens the door to further investigation into the lives of Civil War veterans and their impact on a reunited United States.

Rachel Crone
Maryland Historical Society


The issue of race is often overlooked in histories of the War of 1812. During the war, former African American slaves in the Chesapeake region and elsewhere often took refuge with the British, and even fought for them or acted as guides during the enemy operations in American waters. This is a narrative of the war that has increasingly drawn the attention of historians who recognize that the issues of slav-
ery and race, and the tensions they caused, performed a significant role in the War of 1812 and in the climactic period leading up to the Civil War. The author, Gene Allen Smith, professor of history at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, is a well-published historian of the war, concentrating on its maritime aspects (A British Eyewitness at the Battle of New Orleans: The Memoir of Royal Navy Admiral Robert Aitchison, 1808–1827, Historic New Orleans Collection, 2004; Thomas Catesby Jones: Commodore of Manifest Destiny, Naval Institute Press, 2000). The Slaves’ Gamble is a result of extensive research by the author in British and American archives.

In the Introduction, Smith correctly recognizes the key relationship that the Chesapeake-Leopard affair of 1807 had to the War of 1812 (1–2). In that controversial incident on June 22, 1807, HMS Leopard, 50 guns, commanded by Capt. Salusbury Pryce Humphreys, stopped USS Chesapeake, 36 guns, commanded by James Barron, off the capes of the Chesapeake. Humphreys demanded that Barron allow a search of his vessel to find suspected deserters from the Royal Navy at a time when the British were pressed for manpower for their war against Napoleonic France. When Barron refused the request, Humphreys opened fire on the American frigate, killing several sailors, and the U.S. commander felt he had no option but to surrender and allow the search. The search produced four sailors who had deserted from the Royal Navy in Norfolk, Virginia, and joined the crew of Chesapeake. Humphreys demanded that Barron allow a search of his vessel to find suspected deserters from the Royal Navy at a time when the British were pressed for manpower for their war against Napoleonic France. When Barron refused the request, Humphreys opened fire on the American frigate, killing several sailors, and the U.S. commander felt he had no option but to surrender and allow the search. The search produced four sailors who had deserted from the Royal Navy in Norfolk, Virginia, and joined the crew of Chesapeake. Humphreys demanded that Barron allow a search of his vessel to find suspected deserters from the Royal Navy at a time when the British were pressed for manpower for their war against Napoleonic France. When Barron refused the request, Humphreys opened fire on the American frigate, killing several sailors, and the U.S. commander felt he had no option but to surrender and allow the search. The search produced four sailors who had deserted from the Royal Navy in Norfolk, Virginia, and joined the crew of Chesapeake. The incident caused outrage in the United States and nearly led to war five years before the War of 1812. Unpublicized in the United States, despite the widespread ire expressed in the American press, three of the four sailors were black men who claimed to be Americans. The lone white sailor among the four, who did not make such a claim, was hanged as a deserter on August 31 as noted by Dr. Smith (2).

During Britain’s decades long war with revolutionary and Napoleonic France, many U.S. sailors, including many black Americans, had willingly signed up to serve in the Royal Navy. Thousands of African Americans also served in the U.S. Navy and merchant ships. Indeed, it is estimated that in this period, one out of every five American sailors was a black man. After the Battle of Lake Erie on September 10, 1813, Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, who before the battle was dubious of the usefulness of the black sailors he was given to crew his squadron, declared that they proved themselves to be “amongst my best men” (46–51). It is also noteworthy that when the War of 1812 broke out, many of the American sailors serving in the Royal Navy elected to turn themselves in as prisoners of war and to languish in British prisons, such as Dartmoor, rather than to fight against their country (183–88). In this period, African Americans were by law excluded from serving in the U.S. Army and state militias except as servants or “fatigue men” or ditch diggers.

After Smith discusses the “Patriot War” of 1812 in Florida, when American adventurers tried to make inroads into Spanish-held Florida with its mixed population of Spanish, Indians and African Americans (59–84), he turns his attention to the Chesapeake Bay (85–141). He provides detailed discussion of key Chesapeake Afri-
can Americans such as Charles Ball, who served as a sailor in Commodore Joshua Barney’s flotilla; George Roberts, a gunner aboard Capt. Thomas Boyle’s famous privateer schooner Chasseur; and escaped slave William Williams, a man who was light enough to pass as a white man and who enlisted as a private in the 38th U.S. Infantry, lost a leg in the bombardment of Fort McHenry in September 1814, and died weeks later at the Baltimore public hospital. Such personal stories enliven and enrich the narrative.

It is believed that as many as 3,500 former African American slaves fled to the British during 1813–1815 while the British navy operated in the bay. Most of these former slaves, men, women and children, were transported out to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where their descendants still live to this day. Around two hundred able-bodied male slaves were trained as “Colonial Marines” on Tangier Island, Virginia, in the lower bay. British Rear Adm. George Cockburn, who was initially doubtful of the service of the former slaves in battle, came to praise them for their “zeal” as fighting men. After the war, the former Colonial Marines were given jobs in the Ireland Island naval base in Bermuda and eventually received land in Trinidad in so-called “Company Towns” (130–31, 202–3).

After their short occupation of Washington and their failed attempt to capture Baltimore, the British turned their attention to New Orleans and operations off the coast of Georgia and the Carolinas. Both on the coast of the southern Eastern Seaboard and in the Gulf, the British conducted further “slave stealing” operations, as the Americans called them, as well as continued to train former slaves as Colonial Marines, as they had in the Chesapeake (142–53). Andrew Jackson famously employed a company of “free men of color” in the defense of New Orleans but later reneged on a promise of freedom for black men who fought for the American cause (164–66, 208–9).

Smith correctly points out that the lyrics of Francis Scott Key’s “The Star-Spangled Banner”—originally titled “Defence of Fort M’Henry”—makes an allusion to the former slaves who fought for the British, in the line “No refuge could save the hireling and slave.” However, in this reviewer’s opinion, he is not totally correct when he states that “The reference to ‘hireling and slave’ alludes to the black Colonial marines who joined the British ranks.” (215). This assessment perhaps betrays Smith’s previous concentration on the maritime aspects of the war. In fact, Americans of the day referred sarcastically to the British troops in general as mercenaries or “hirelings,” i.e., the hired servants of the tyrant, George III. Republican Americans looked down on the enemy troops, in contrast to the way they viewed the “free” citizen soldiers who were fighting to defend democracy.

The thought that the British were actively training and arming former slaves, transporting thousands out, and refusing to return the ex-slaves angered white Americans during the course of the war. The issue of the slaves taken from the United States would remain unsettled during the war itself and for years afterward. It was not
until 1826 that the Treaty of St. Petersburg settled issues not addressed by the Treaty of Ghent, including making sure that American slaveowners received restitution in terms of fair market value for each slave taken by the invaders (211).

_The Slaves’ Gamble_ is a detailed and informative study of race during the War of 1812, a key conflict in the early American republic and in the period leading up to the bloody Civil War, which finally settled the issue of slavery.

Christopher T. George
Independent Historian


_Ex Parte Merryman_ is one of the most famous Maryland Supreme Court cases. Or was it? Jonathan W. White’s treatment of Merryman and his famous case raises a number of intriguing issues, including the question of whether _Merryman_ was a Supreme Court case at all.

White has taken a page from microhistory-influenced biographies that use the story of a relatively obscure person’s life to analyze broader issues. Due to scarce sources, such biographies must focus more on context than on biographical detail, and this work is no exception. Luckily that context—prosecution of treason and disloyalty—is both timely and interesting.

John Merryman was arrested as a Confederate sympathizer after burning bridges along the Northern Central Railroad line in Baltimore County following the Baltimore Riot of April 19, 1861, ostensibly to prevent more Union troops from arriving. White has discovered a letter from Merryman in the Simon Cameron papers that suggests he was in fact ordered to do so by Governor Thomas Hicks. Merryman was held in Fort McHenry indefinitely without being granted the opportunity to face a judge. Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, also a Marylander and author of the infamous _Dred Scott v. Sandford_ decision, ruled that in so doing the Lincoln administration violated Merryman’s constitutional right of _habeus corpus_. Lincoln ignored Taney’s decision, insisting that he had the constitutional power to suspend _habeus corpus_ during wartime.

White begins with a concise discussion of events leading to Merryman’s arrest and the larger context of the aftermath of the Baltimore riots. Local authorities considered detaining Capt. Charles Ridgeley, Merryman’s superior, but they found him “too fine a fellow and too good a man to be made the victim of such a mean plot” (28). Merryman, by contrast, had his enemies. A New York newspaper wrote that “no more overbearing, intolerant, and bitter secessionist lives than John Merryman, and that his neighbors would rejoice to hear that he had been hanged as a traitor, as he richly deserves to be” (29). White adds to the well-worn discussion of Taney’s
June 1, 1861 ruling in *Ex Parte Merryman* and Lincoln's response by bringing in an extended discussion of newspaper reaction. Most interestingly, he makes careful use of the rarely examined original manuscript to conclude persuasively that, in fact, Taney was not acting as a Supreme Court justice but as a circuit judge (which was then part of Supreme Court judges' duties) and that *Merryman*, therefore, was not a Supreme Court case.

The second half of the book deals with Lincoln's use of treason charges and Congress's efforts to regulate the issue. Much of this has a contemporary ring to it, none more than the discussion of the Lincoln administration's use of military and civilian courts to deter treason. *Merryman*'s case made clear the difficulties in using civilian courts, but Lincoln persisted in bringing selected treason cases to trial. White argues that in doing so he was less interested in attaining convictions than in wielding a tool to deter future treason. After all, *Merryman* lingered in the court system for almost six years before being dismissed on April 23, 1867. As a result he suffered a great deal of psychological and financial distress.

Congress passed a Habeus Corpus Act in 1863 that addressed some of the issues raised by *Merryman*'s case. It allowed the president to suspend *habeus corpus* but also forced the administration to send lists of so-called political prisoners to Congress and to release those who were not indicted. White argues that the act would have badly damaged the administration's strategy of using treason charges as a way of holding prisoners like *Merryman* indefinitely had Lincoln not ignored it, much as he ignored *Ex Parte Merryman*. Additionally, the armed services created an “alternative military-justice system” (84) that allowed them to take cases out of the civilian courts and prosecute them in military courts despite the protests of famed Maryland attorney Reverdy Johnson and others. In 1866 the Supreme Court ruled against such trials in *Ex Parte Milligan*. White concludes, perhaps too facilely, that in ignoring both *Ex Parte Merryman* and the Habeus Corpus Act, Lincoln signaled that the president should be the “final arbiter on the meaning of the Constitution” (89).

These arrests also exposed the government officials who made them into potential lawsuits, despite language in the Habeus Corpus Act designed to protect them. In 1863, *Merryman* filed suit in the Maryland courts against Gen. George Cadwalader, the man who had arrested him. He may have hoped this action would force Lincoln to pardon him to protect Cadwalader. According to White, *Merryman*'s suit against Cadwalader “forced Lincoln to reconsider his policy of Reconstruction” and issue a second Amnesty Proclamation in March 1864, making it more difficult for those accused of treason to gain amnesty. As White notes, “Prosecuting traitors in the courts was only part of the legal battle, Lincoln also had to defend his subordinates there” (121).

White packs a lot into this short, well-researched volume. Legal scholars will appreciate how he uses *Merryman*'s case as a way of understanding the timely problem of prosecuting those who act against the state. At the same time, *Merry-*
man’s misadventures provide an easy introduction into the drama occurring within Maryland at the dawn of the Civil War. White’s clear, concise writing should appeal to the general public and to college-level courses.

Lawrence A. Peskin
Morgan State University


At the dawn of national independence, American Catholics made up a tiny minority group that was largely native-born, of English descent, and centered in rural Maryland. By the mid-nineteenth century, Catholics had grown into the largest single denomination in the country whose members were heavily foreign-born, mainly of Irish and German stock, and located in the urban Northeast and Midwest. In Shaping American Catholicism: Maryland and New York, 1805–1915, Robert Emmett Curran argues that Maryland and New York were “the two most important areas in the shaping of Catholicism” in nineteenth-century America, with “the center of influence shifting steadily from the Chesapeake to New York” as the century progressed (1). In the new nation, Maryland was “the site of the institutional nucleus of the hierarchical Church” (6). Mass immigration especially from Ireland, however, would relocate the population center of Catholicism to New York during the antebellum period, and institutional leadership would follow in the decades after the Civil War.

The dozen essays presented in this handsomely produced volume sketch the chronological and regional contours of this shift and examine how American Catholic leaders sought to position themselves in relation to both their Protestant countrymen and their Roman co-religionists. Curran organizes the book into two roughly equal parts: six chapters on the Chesapeake region from the early nineteenth century until just after the Civil War, then six chapters on New York from the Civil War to the early twentieth century, respectively. Collectively these diverse pieces deal with several key public issues “that were integral to the Catholic experience” in nineteenth-century America, in particular “church polity, slavery, religious culture, education and the intellectual life, and social justice” (8). Nine of the chapters have been previously published in part or in full either in edited collections or in scholarly journals such as The Catholic Historical Review, Church History, and The U.S. Catholic Historian.

Indeed, some of these essays, such as “‘The Finger of God is Here’: The Advent of the Miraculous in the Nineteenth-Century Catholic Community” and “The McGlynn Affair and the Shaping of the New Conservatism in American Catholicism, 1886–1899” are classic treatments of their respective topics. Three essays—“The First American Jesuit Province and the Shifting Center of Catholicism,” “‘Listen to Our Voice . . . Walk in the Ancient Paths’: The Episcopacy and the Road to Universal Parochial

The essays are arranged as topical chapters, making the volume read almost like a monograph. A brief Introduction surveys the status of American Catholics in the Colonial and Revolutionary eras and sets the stage for the focus on the Church in the nineteenth century. The twelve chapters then span the period from the restoration of the Jesuit order in the United States in 1805 to the institutional triumph of ultramontane conservatives over liberal American Catholics by the early twentieth century, the latter as witnessed in the erection of the parochial school system and in the papal condemnation of “Americanism” in 1899 and Modernism in 1907, respectively. The author provides an introductory note that sets each chapter in its broader historical and historiographical context. Also helpful to researchers is the inclusion of a bibliography and index, two items missing from many essay collections. There is occasional overlap of factual information from chapter to chapter. For example, whereas Chapter Two explores Jesuit slaveholding in antebellum Maryland in detail, parts of two later chapters go over some of the same ground. Similarly, while Chapter Eight analyzes in depth the events surrounding the excommunication of Father Edward McGlynn in 1887, parts of two other essays in the New York section recap the same material. Closer editing and revising could have pruned such repetitions.

Curran, professor emeritus of history at Georgetown University, is a specialist in the history of the American Catholic Church and of the Society of Jesus in particular. The “shaping of American Catholicism” found in these essays is done principally from the “top down” rather than the “bottom up.” That is, Curran’s focus is more on the church hierarchy than the church faithful, more on the priests and prelates than the nuns and laity, more on the shepherds than the flock. While Curran does give attention to matters of race, class, and gender in some of the chapters, they are not his primary concern. Rather, these essays revolve around the tensions between the American Catholic minority and the Protestant majority, liberal and conservative Catholics, bishops and priests, and the American Church and Rome. An underlying theme throughout the book is the rivalry between Baltimore and New York City and their conflicting claims to be the “American Rome.” These essays testify to Curran expertise in this kind of institutional ecclesiastical history. One of the book’s chief strengths is the author’s sure command of original sources, especially when navigating the arcane relations between American Church leaders and the Vatican. These chapters in particular reveal Curran’s immersion in multiple Catholic archives in America and in microfilm records from Rome, some of which he was the first historian to research.

Curran possesses a clear, readable writing style. At the same time, the rather esoteric nature of the subject matter means this book will appeal more to the historian of religion than to the general reader. Indeed, since three quarters of these essays were first penned between 1976 and 1987, much of this collection would have been
even more useful had it appeared twenty years sooner. Scholars, nonetheless, will be grateful to have these valuable studies all gathered conveniently in one volume.

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Horace Porter, decorated Civil War hero, aide to President Ulysses S. Grant, and ambassador to France (1897–1905), became consumed with the mission to locate the unmarked burial place of Revolutionary War naval hero, John Paul Jones. Porter researched sources from the time of Jones’s death in 1792 Paris, during the French Revolution, uncovering the memoirs of his last days and the records of his death, embalming, and burial. Interpreting old maps and burial customs of eighteenth-century Paris, Porter finally identified the probable site of his grave, negotiated with local property owners and government officials to gain access to site, and directed the excavation and discovery of a body sealed in a lead coffin. With the help of medical experts and comparisons with contemporary images, Porter ultimately identified the body as the preserved remains of John Paul Jones. Throughout the project, Porter used personal contacts with Secretary of State John Hays, Secretary of the Navy Charles J. Bonaparte and President Theodore Roosevelt to persuade the United States government to repatriate Jones’s remains and prepare a suitable burial place to honor the “Father of the American Navy.”

The Admiral and the Ambassador is interwoven with depictions of diplomatic life in turn-of-the-century Paris, Porter’s role in negotiations to end the Spanish-American War, and the surge of interest in American naval heroes sparked by Admiral George Dewey’s victories in that war, creating a book that is part cultural history, part personal biography, and above all, a story of detective work. It is also an absorbing account of how one man led the effort to recover the remains of America’s first naval hero, and after 120 years, lay him to rest in the imposing crypt beneath the Chapel of the United States Naval Academy.

A few additional notes are warranted from the perspective of a first-time e-book reader. The overall design was excellent: pages were well laid out and the typeface was easy to read, even without zooming in on the page. The bookmark feature was very helpful, opening to the last-read page each time one selected the book. The “zoom” feature permitted reading in a larger format if necessary and permitted closer inspection of the photographs and diagrams included in the text. Direct internal links to the end notes were helpful.

But as a new e-book reader I was disappointed that the potential to integrate additional resources and information about the topics under discussion was not
more fully exploited. With the wide range of events and topics involved in this narrative, ranging from John Paul Jones’s naval exploits, his post-Revolutionary War career and death, to post–Civil War politics, the Grant Administration, the McKinley assassination, the Spanish-American War, diplomatic circles in Belle Époque Paris, and more, the desire for access to additional information about specific areas was only natural. For example, in a rather lengthy discussion of Porter’s role in the completion of Grant’s Tomb in 1897, it would have been helpful to have hyperlinks in the text or as a footnote permitting the reader to jump to Internet resources about that project and then return to the narrative. Likewise, in the discussions of the search for the location of the cemetery where Jones was buried, links to period and present-day maps of Paris would have enhanced the understanding of the challenges Porter faced in that effort. Regarding the discussion of the challenges of identifying the body, additional contemporary images of John Paul Jones compared with the photographs of the remains would have been valuable. While it is easy enough for technology-savvy users to work in multiple frames to explore additional resources on the side, providing internal links to those resources offers the immediate potential to enrich the reader’s experience and lets readers know that the author/designer has considered their desire for more information about the subject.

While intellectual property issues and rights may limit expanded resources of this type, one hopes that future authors and book designers will take full advantage of the technology and available resources to support the reader experience and take the e-book format to its full potential as a rich and exciting tool for reading and learning.

**David McDonald**

*Maryland Historical Society*


Michael Olesker has provided a memoir of the city’s 1950s that past readers of the veteran Baltimore journalist’s writing will welcome for its familiar blend of insight and humor, and new readers will find illuminating and refreshing. Bookends for the volume are chapters on the significance of the assassination of John F. Kennedy in November, 1963—the opening chapter labeled “The Day the Fifties Ended,” the closing chapter, “The Day the Sixties Started.” Olesker places himself in the chronology, noting that he came of age in the Baltimore of the 1950s and was a freshman at the University of Maryland in College Park when he learned of that momentous and tragic event.

The strength of the volume comes from Olesker’s blending of personal exper-
ence, interviews with key local figures, and use of local newspaper sources. A typical citation reads, “Much of this chapter’s flavor comes from the author’s memories, as well as those of . . .” (229). And the newspaper accounts he draws on are from some of the very journals he later wrote for during his long career—the Baltimore Sun, Evening Sun, and News-American—resulting in a seamless tone to the book in which his own style as a reporter and commentator merges naturally with that of his print sources. With the advantage of retrospection, Olesker adds to the accounts his own sense of humor and sarcasm, as when he reflects on the atmosphere of Mandel’s Delicatessen, the inspiration for Barry Levinson’s film Diner, “where the local jargon consists entirely of slices of wry” (141).

The theme of each chapter is probed in relation to a profile of a Baltimore personality and centers on interviews with, or related to, that individual. In many cases, the subject is a person whose local experience projected onto the national scene and became integral to the social, political, or popular culture of the era and its aftermath: Jerry Lieber, who grew up in rowhouse West Baltimore and went on to help create rock and roll legends, writing songs performed by Elvis Presley and others; Clarence Mitchell Jr., and Thurgood Marshall, whose personal experience of segregation and racism close-up in their native city led to their significant roles in fighting for civil rights breakthroughs; and Nancy Pelosi, raised in a culture framed by the traditional Catholicism and political prominence of the D’Alesandro family, who eventually broke the gendered glass ceiling that accompanied that culture to become Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. It was that local setting that gave America the 1950s iconic film representations of Grease and the Baltimore context for Barry Levinson’s Diner, Avalon, Tin Men, and Liberty Heights.

Olesker again draws on his own personal and family experience to trace the way race and suburbanization intertwined to produce the white exodus from older parts of the city and the reconfigured racial boundaries that resulted. In the notes to his chapter, “Hello Towson, Hello Pikesville,” he acknowledges, “I was part of the suburban exodus, as were many of my family and friends, and our experiences contribute to this chapter’s flavor” (226). That odyssey paused in the intermediate setting of Northwest Baltimore, where for a moment at Garrison Junior High, as African American interviewee Richard Holley reflected, the school “looked like America tells itself it’s supposed to look.” But, Olesker adds, that was “before all the whites cleared out” (190). In retrospect Olesker sees the impact of the racial isolation and urban decay in neighborhoods left behind that “comes out of the innocent fifties” (184).

It is, indeed, Olesker’s frequent characterization of the era as one of “innocence” that deserves even further probing. Though it is true that much of the popular culture of the 1950s projects such an image, he nevertheless acknowledges that “innocence” to some degree was grounded in ignorance, conveniently un-probed, that often blinded participants to social realities. While Olesker does an admirable job of widening the
palette in this profile of the 1950s to include diverse perspectives on race and gender, the dominant image of this volume is still very much white and male.

That caveat aside, Olesker’s exploration of Baltimore’s (and America’s) 1950s succeeds in probing beneath the nostalgia of so many popular representations, using the Baltimore setting to ground the narrative in engaging stories of local individuals who were shaped by the era, but who in important ways also contributed to its legacy. And he does so with just the right amount of “wry.”

W. Edward Orser

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Maryland History Bibliography, 2014: 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. The following list includes materials published during 2014, 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, University Archives, 2208 Hornbake Library, University of Maryland, College Park, Md. 20742.

Previous years’ installments of the Maryland History Bibliography, and the full version of this year’s, are available online. Please visit http://www.lib.umd.edu/dcr/collections/mdhc/ for more information about this database and to search for older titles on Maryland history and culture.

General

African American


**Agriculture**


**Archaeology**


Nisbet, Christiana, Makenli Essert, and Patricia Samford. “‘We Wash Everything but the Baby’: Archeological Investigations at the Wysing Lung Laundry, Baltimore, Maryland.” *Maryland Archeology*, 49 (March 2013): 1–10.


Architecture and Historic Preservation


Biography, Autobiography, and Reminiscences


**County and Local History**


**Economic, Business, and Labor**


Sarson, Steven. “‘It cannot be expected that I can defend every man’s turnip patch’: Embargoes, the War of 1812, and Inequality and Poverty in the Chesapeake Region.” *Revue Francaise d’Etudes Americaines*, 139 (2014): 16–29.


**Education**


**Environment**


**Geography and Cartography**


**Historical Organizations, Libraries, Reference Works**


**Intellectual Life, Literature, and Publishing**


### Maritime


**Medicine**


**Military**


Cole, Merle T. “Imperial German Invasion Plans and Landward Defense of the Patapsco River Forts.” *Anne Arundel County History Notes*, 46 (Fall 2014): 3–4, 8–11.


### Music and Theater


### Native Americans


Politics and Law

Religion
Society, Social Change, and Popular Culture

Transportation and Communication

Women