History of Harmony Hall

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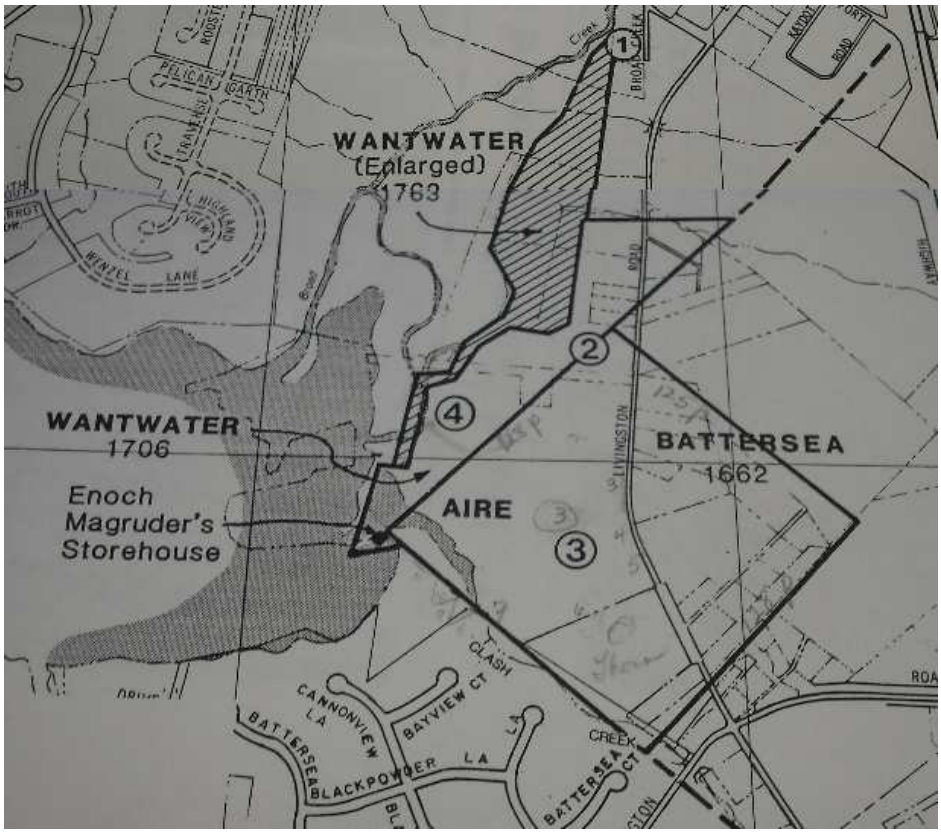
Introduction



Broad Creek Historic District
Key: 1) St. John's Episcopal Church 2) Piscataway House 3) Harmony Hall 4) Want Water
Susan Pearl

Leaving Indian Head Highway and traveling down windy Livingston Road toward Harmony Hall, one can easily imagine it as Charles Wallace Collins, its owner during the first half of the twentieth century, did, as a rural community, a relic of an earlier age before the forces of modernity changed the pace and nature of life forever. While the Broad Creek community is now a rural preserve -- a hidden patch of trees, marshland, and historic structures in the midst of an urban metropolis -- it was the site of a prosperous commercial town during the eighteenth century. For nearly one hundred years, farmers and merchants thrived on maritime trade, and African-American slaves toiled in their homes, workshops, and tobacco fields. Broad Creek was

part of an Atlantic world that brought wealth, goods, and new residents (many by force) to the lands where Harmony Hall now stands. This history of Harmony Hall spans the centuries from the early Piscataway settlements to the present day.

Broad Creek Historic District

Broad Creek, a broad estuary of the Potomac River, was the site of one of the earliest sites of European settlements in the Washington, D.C area. In 1985, Prince George's County established the Broad Creek Historic District, the first district of its kind in the state, to commemorate the community as "a special place because of its historical significance, its important architectural and archaeological resources, and its unspoiled natural features."[1] The district extends from Broad Creek to Livingston Road, between Fort Washington Road to the south and Oxon Hill Road to the north. The historic district includes the St. John's Episcopal Church (first built 1694, the current structure constructed 1764-67), the ruins of Want Water, or Lyles House (c. 1710), a canal (1749), the site of a port town called Broad Creek or Aires/Ayres (c. 1706), Harmony Hall (c. 1760), Piscataway House (c. 1750, moved to its current location during the 1930s), and the community of Silesia (founded c. 1900).

The historic district is administered by the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission, advised by an eleven-person Broad Creek Historic District Advisory Committee. Two locally organized non-profit groups, the Broad Creek Conservancy (est. 1998) and the Silesia Citizens' Association, advocate on behalf of local preservationists and residents, respectively. Since the National Park Service owns large tracts of waterfront property in the District administered by National Capital Parks - East, including Harmony Hall and Want Water, it has a considerable investment in the future of the area. Until 1999, Harmony Hall was leased

[1] Historic marker, Livingston Road, Silesia, Maryland.

to a private interest under the terms of the Historic Leasing Program. Piscataway House is a privately-owned residence, and St. John's Episcopal Church represents a community of active parishioners.

Early sites of settlement

During an archaeological investigation in the 1980s, originally meant to insure compliance with preservation standards and to avoid the destruction of any historical artifacts, the National Park Service discovered the remains of an earthfast house, east of the current Harmony Hall structure, at what could be the oldest site of settlement in the Washington, D.C., area. While the property is celebrated for its beautiful red-brick house, the evidence of the 1690s house could be of even greater historical significance than Harmony Hall or the ruins of Want Water. It also gives historical clues about the lives for the earliest settlers at Broad Creek *(chapters 1 and 5)*.

Want Water

Want Water / Lyles House, 1935
Historic American Buildings Survey

Want Water, or Lyles House, was constructed c. 1706 by the Addison family, an influential Protestant family in the Catholic colony of Maryland. During the last decades of the eighteenth century, it was occupied by William Lyles, a close friend of George Washington. It was allowed to fall into disrepair during the twentieth century and ultimately collapsed, probably sometime during the 1970s. Thus was destroyed of one of Broad Creek's greatest historical assets. In 1998, the ruins -- the gambrel ends and two brick chimneys -- were stabilized by the National Park Service *(chapters 1-5)*.

Town of Aire/Ayres or Broad Creek (site)

The town of Broad Creek, or Aire/Ayres, was mandated by an Act for the Advancement of Trade, or town act, passed by the colonial assembly in 1706. (The estuary at Broad Creek had been a site of commerce since the 1690s.) It was comprised of 100 one-acre plots situated between Slash Creek and the Broad Creek landing. During the eighteenth century, Broad Creek was a prosperous center of trade, with taverns, a shipbuilder, a tobacco warehouse, international merchants, and African slaves. It was through the port town at Broad Creek that the early settlers of the modern Harmony Hall property were connected to the commercial networks of a larger Atlantic world *(chapter 2).*

Want Water Canal

In 1749, Humphry Batts, a shipbuilder in the town of Broad Creek, cut a canal, some 100 yards long, between his tobacco warehouse and the Broad Creek estuary, where large merchant ships would anchor. It was dredged by Charles Wallace Collins during the 1930s and is now called Want Water Canal, "run[ning] north past the Want Water house... bend[ing] to the east."[2] It was one of the earliest canals dug in the American colonies, reflecting on Broad Creek's role as a maritime and commercial center in the early history of Maryland. Its location may help guide future archaeologists in the search for Broad Creek, and the Batts' tobacco warehouse in particular *(chapter 2).*

[2] Susan Pearl, "Broad Creek History," *Broad Creek Historic District Preservation Planning Study* (Upper Marlboro: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 2002), 17.

Harmony Hall

Harmony Hall (rear), 1935
Historic American Buildings Survey

Harmony Hall is a Georgian-style country house built c. 1760, probably by a wealthy merchant named Enoch Magruder. In 1662, the current Harmony Hall property was patented as "Battersea," and was the site of one of the earliest settlements in the region. According to local legend, the house was renamed Harmony Hall during the 1790s, as a result of the marital harmony that blossomed there when two young couples rented the property after their nuptials. At the end of the nineteenth century, the house was owned by the Stein family, who founded the community of Silesia. During the first half of the twentieth century, it was owned by a

government servant and political author named Charles Wallace Collins, who “restored” the property to resemble an antebellum Old South plantation. The Park Service acquired the property during the 1980s and leased it to horse breeders named Frank Calhoun and Carlton Huhn. After they were evicted from Harmony Hall in 1999, the property was left to stagnate and decline.

A Georgian mansion of red brick set in Flemish bond, Harmony Hall is two-and-one-half-stories and one room deep. It once had north and south wings, which collapsed or were demolished before 1929. The two south wing extensions were built in 1941 and 1987 respectively. The current “bull’s eye” window replaced a Collins-era window of a different design in the 1980s *(chapters 2-5).*

Piscataway House

Piscataway House, a Tidewater-style house with a pitched gable roof and named for its original location in nearby Piscataway, was saved from destruction in the 1930s by Charles Wallace Collins. It was torn down and rebuilt piece-by-piece at its current location in 1932-33. There are local legends that Collins used the wood paneling from Want Water to restore Piscataway House, but this claim is not substantiated by physical evidence. The property, near St. John’s Episcopal Church, is privately owned *(chapter 4).*

St. John’s Episcopal Church

The fourth church on the site, St. John’s Church at Broad Creek, has a long history, dating from the 1690s. The building is a fine example of Georgian architecture. Because of its architectural similarities to Harmony Hall, it was long believed that the two structures were both built around the same time. In 1692, the colonial assembly created Piscataway Parish, and local settlers built a church at the current location in 1694. While the current church building has been rebuilt and expanded over the years, it has always served as a community focal point. The

current structure was built during c. 1767. George Washington worshipped at the church on occasion. Walter Dulany Addison, rector of the church at the beginning of the nineteenth century, opposed the institution of slavery and even freed some of his slaves from bondage. Many of the men and women who lived at Harmony Hall and Want Water worshipped at the church, and many of the historical actors described in this history are buried in its cemetery *(chapter 4)*.

Silesia

In 1892, a German immigrant named Robert Stein purchased Harmony Hall. His arrival marks the beginnings of the community of Silesia, founded by Stein and his relatives during the 1890s. The town of Silesia received official recognition with the establishment of a post office and school at the beginning of the twentieth century. The descendants of Robert and his family, the Stein and Tilch families, among others, still live in the community. Today, the Silesia Citizens' Association advocates on behalf of the historic town's residents *(chapters 3 and 5)*.

Statement of Significance

The shores of the Broad Creek possess a rich diversity of environmental features and wildlife. The area is characterized by hardwood forests and marshy wetlands, which have been designated by the state of Maryland as an Area of Critical State Concern.[3] The tidal wetlands at Broad Creek are a sanctuary for fish, waterfowl, and vegetation. The ecological zone, of which Harmony Hall is a part, represents an invaluable and irreplaceable resource for the region.

[3] Broad Creek Historic District Preservation Planning Study, 75.

Historically, this ecology profoundly affected the lives of the people who lived at Broad Creek, providing opportunities as well as posing challenges.

The histories of Harmony Hall and Want Water include several historical figures of state and national importance. During the late seventeenth century, the area was settled by the family of John Addison, a local notable and leader of the Protestant Association's rebellion against the Lord Proprietor's Catholic Government in 1688-89, an uprising that led to the British government revoking the fiefdom of the Lords Baltimore in Maryland and establishing it as a Crown Colony. George Washington, a friend of Colonel William Lyles, who lived at Want Water, worshipped at St. John's Church and may have visited Want Water or Harmony Hall. During the twentieth century, the property was owned and "restored" by Charles Wallace Collins, a Washington insider who wrote the pro-segregation treatise *Whither Solid South?*, which outlined the electoral strategy later used by the Dixiecrat Party.

The community at Broad Creek is also representative of Maryland's maritime and commercial past. On the banks of the Potomac River, tobacco was king in Broad Creek. It was here that planters, or more precisely their African slaves, grew tobacco and sold it locally or for export in the town. It was weighed and checked for quality at the tobacco inspection warehouse before being loaded on big ships in the estuary. Broad Creek was one node on a vast circuitry of trade in the Atlantic world. Local farmers traded tobacco for European and Asian goods or African slaves. While this world collapsed at the end of the eighteenth century, this early history demonstrates the profound global connections the now rural community of Broad Creek developed during the eighteenth century.

Conclusion

This Historical Resource Study was commissioned by the National Park Service and supervised by Mr. Gary Scott at NPS and Dr. David Sicilia at the Department of History, University of Maryland, College Park. The study represents the most thorough history of Harmony Hall to date, and uses the archival resources of the Charles W. Collins papers at Hornbake Library, University of Maryland; the Prince George's County Historical Association Library; the records of the National Park Service at the National Capital Parks – East office in Anacostia; and the legal and property records held by the Maryland State Archives in Annapolis. It has also been assisted by Dr. Frank Faragasso and Dr. Marilyn Nickels, former historians at National Capital Parks – East, Mr. Stephen Syphax of National Capital Parks – East, Ms. Susan Pearl, historian at the Prince George's County Historical Association, and Mr. Frank Calhoun, former co-owner of the Battersea Company. This history builds on and expands the in-depth research conducted by Dr. Nickels and Ms. Pearl on Harmony Hall and Broad Creek, both of whom kindly provided their research notes for my use. I was also assisted by Professors Ira Berlin, Rick Bell, and George Callcott, Department of History, University of Maryland, College Park.

Chapter 1:
Early Settlement at Broad Creek (to c. 1700)

During the seventeenth century, Broad Creek was situated on the edge of two different political and cultural universes. The core of Piscataway Indian civilization, since c. 1300, was downstream several miles near Piscataway Creek. For the Piscataway, Broad Creek was probably a place where they hunted and fished but not a place where people lived. For the Europeans who settled at St. Mary's City in 1634, Broad Creek must have seemed like the end of the known universe.

But over the course of the century, Broad Creek was transformed into a thriving agricultural community connected through the Potomac to a larger Atlantic world. This transformation would bring not only European settlers but also white indentured servants and African slaves to the shores of Potomac River. For the Piscataway, these changes would come with significant costs, as initially friendly relations became more hostile with the march of white settlement into the interior.

Pre-Contact Life at Broad Creek: The Piscataway

Accokeek Creek Site, Moyaone (c. 1997)
Maryland Historical Trust

The inhabitants of the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay, whom the Europeans called Piscataway, lived in a constellation of villages radiating out from a political and cultural center named Moyaone, until its destruction by fire in 1622, and subsequently at a reconstructed capital that Europeans called Piscataway at the confluence of Piscataway Creek and the Potomac River. These villages were affiliated with each other and united in their recognition of the *tapac,* or great chief, at Moyaone. The Piscataway made alliances with other local communities, their influence extending as far as the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay. Surrounded by the more powerful confederacies of the Iroquois and Powhatan to the north and south respectively, the Piscataway developed a political culture less dependent on hierarchy and centralized power than their neighbors. They spoke a language related to Algonquian and developed a unique brand of pottery, found throughout the coastal shores of western Maryland, that archaeologists call

Moyaone.[4]

At Moyaone, archaeologists have discovered artifacts from as long ago as the Late Archaic period, c. 3000 BCE, in former hunting and camp sites.[5] The remains of small farming villages on the site date from the Middle Woodland period, c. 800 CE, although the palisaded capital of the Piscataway was settled c. 1300, around the time they migrated to the western shore.[6] The Piscataway grew maize, beans, and squash, caught crabs, oysters, and fish, and hunted woodland animals such as deer and turkeys.[7] There is no evidence of any permanent Piscataway settlement on the Harmony Hall site, although the remains of Nacotchtank village lay about ten miles to the north near the confluence of the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers. But the swamps and woodlands of Broad Creek probably were important hunting and fishing grounds for local peoples. Archaeologists have known of a prehistoric campsite or possible hamlet, located in the lower, front field, near the mouth of Broad Creek, since the 1890s, although no systematic archaeological investigations have been conducted on the site outside of the work during the 1980s.[8]

The *tapac* at Moyaone occupied the center of the Piscataway political universe; it was he (or she, on several occasions) who was responsible for engaging with and conducting diplomacy

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[4] "Moyaone," *Diagnostic Artifacts in Maryland*, http://www.jefpat.org/diagnostic/Prehistoric_Ceramic_Web_Page/Prehistoric%20Ware%20Descriptions/Moyaone.htm.

[5] "Accokeek Creek Site," National Register of Historic Places.

[6] "Accokeek Creek Site," National Register of Historic Places. Scholars disagree on the origins of the Piscataway. Using archaeological evidence, NPS archaeologist Stephen Potter argues that the Piscataway used similar ceramic techniques as the people of the Montgomery complex and probably migrated down the Potomac from the northwest. Wayne Clark and Helen Rountree claim that the Piscataway descended from the Delaware, based on their use of ossuary burial. Stephen R. Potter, *Commoners, Tribute, and Chiefs: The Development of Algonquian Culture in the Potomac Valley* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993), 126-30; Wayne Clark and Helen Rountree, "The Powhatans and the Maryland Mainland," in *Powhatan Foreign Relations,1500-1722*, ed. Helen Rountree (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993), 124-35.

[7] James Merrell, "Cultural Continuity Among the Piscataway Indians of Colonial Maryland," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3, no. 36 (1979): 550; Stephen Potter, "A New Look at the Accokeek Creek Complex," in Robert L. Stephenson, *The Prehistoric People of Accokeek Creek* (Accokeek, MD: Alice Ferguson Foundation, 1984), 38.

[8] Stephen Potter, e-mail to the author, 16 December 2009. The exact location of the site is protected by the 1979 Archaeological Resources Protection Act.

with outsiders. This universe was a relatively decentralized one, however, with local *werowances* (chiefs) and *cockarouses* (counselors) wielding significant power and autonomy in their villages. A chief's political authority was inherited from his mother, although succession by bloodline was hardly guaranteed. By the sixteenth century, the *tapac* possessed limited sovereignty over a far-flung tributary state, made up of communities across the region. Still, the great chief's power was limited by the very nature of the Piscataway confederacy, which was further destabilized by internal conflicts and external invasion. By the 1630s, the Piscataway not only were contending with the Susquehanna, the Iroquois, and the Powhatan, but they also were confronted by strangely dressed outsiders who came from the sea.

Encounters with Europeans destabilized Piscataway culture and proved disastrous in the end. Yet, as historian James Merrell contends:

> The history of the Piscataway Indians of Maryland, one tribe that accepted the authority of the English, demonstrates that it was possible for Indians to follow successfully a path that lay between total war and complete capitulation. Heirs to a cultural tradition characterized by stubborn resistance to outside influences, and accustomed to dealing with incursions by other peoples, the Piscataways used their geographic distance from English settlements and the colonists' need for Indian allies and Indian corn to preserve their way of life after the English arrived.[9]

The first recorded European contact with the Piscataway was written by the English adventurer Captain John Smith, who made contact with the Piscataway in 1608.[10] In 1623, during colonial Virginia's war with the Powhatan, a military force led by Governor Francis Wyatt attacked and burned Mayaone.[11] This, along with continued conflict with the Susquehanna and the Erie, caused the Piscataway to move their capital further inland, so that the Mayaone (or Piscataway) locale visited by the Jesuit priest Father Andrew White during 1630s was an entirely different

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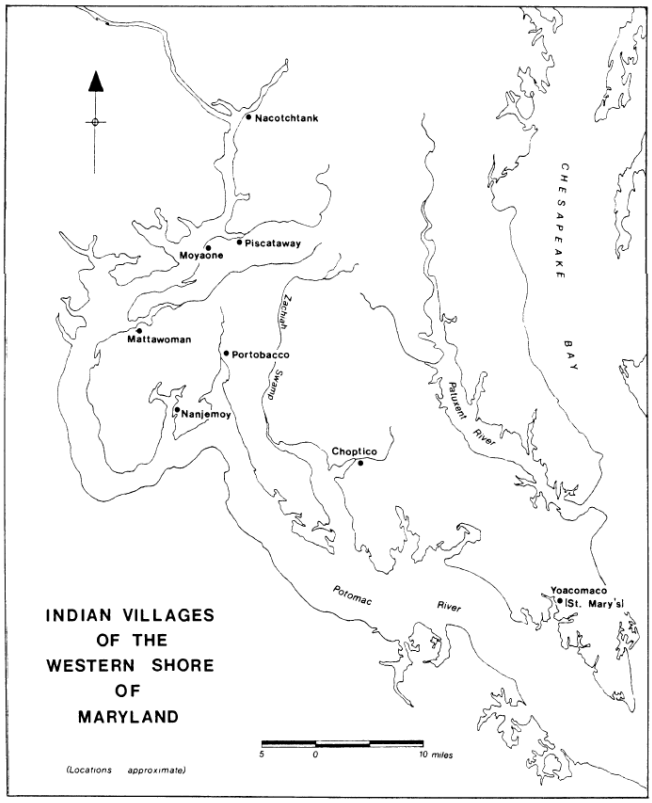
[9] Merrell, 549.

[10] John Smith, *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631),* ed. Philip L. Barbour, vol. 1 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986).

[11] Merrell, 554.

place.[12] The encounter with Europeans initiated a process through which Piscataway-affiliated polities and the confederacy itself were destabilized and ultimately collapsed. The Piscataway had been reduced, from an estimated population of 8,500 when the English arrived in the Chesapeake at the turn of the seventeenth century, to around 300 people by 1800, as a result of warfare and disease.[13] Many Piscataway fled north by the turn of the eighteenth century, to western Maryland, Pennsylvania, and as a far as New France.



Archives of Maryland

[12] Merrell, 554.

[13] Gabrielle Tayac and Edwin Schupman, "We Have a Story to Tell: Native Peoples of the Chesapeake Region," *Learn NC.* http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/native-chesapeake/1804 (accessed 23 February 2010).

The Lords Baltimore and the Province of Maryland

In 1625, George Calvert (1579-1632), a former Member of Parliament and influential advisor of King James I, resigned as Secretary of State for the king. He had supported a marriage alliance, the much touted "Spanish Match," between Charles, the Prince of Wales, and Maria Anna of Spain, which had failed miserably, and his political influence in the court was on the wane.[14] Claiming poor health, he was granted the title Baron Baltimore and given 2,300 acres in County Longford in Ireland.[15] During this time of religious conflict between conformist Church of England Protestants and non-conformist Protestants and Catholics, Calvert, who had been raised Catholic but practiced Anglicanism as a servant of the king, returned to his Catholic faith. While the relationship between Calvert's conversion to Catholicism and his resignation has long been a topic of debate for historians, his resignation was followed by an affirmation of his Catholic faith to the king and his withdrawal from court politics, save his position on the king's Privy Council.

Calvert had demonstrated a life-long interest in overseas colonization. He owned shares in both the East India Company and the Virginia Company.[16] In 1820, he purchased land on the southeast coast of Newfoundland and planned a settlement called Avalon.[17] After the death of James in 1625 and the renewal of British hostility toward Catholics under Charles I, Calvert first moved to Ireland, then across the Atlantic to his Newfoundland colony. In spite of Calvert's pronounced religious tolerance, the colony suffered from French attacks and religious strife, and collapsed during the deadly winter of 1628-29, after which his dreams of colonization migrated

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[14] John Krugler, *English and Catholic: The Lords Baltimore in the Seventeenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 65-66.

[15] Krugler, 74; Robert J. Brugger, *Maryland: A Middle Temperament, 1634-1980* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 4.

[16] Brugger, 4.

[17] Brugger, 4.

south. Rebuked by the settlers at Jamestown, Calvert vigorously petitioned for a new royal charter to establish a second English Chesapeake colony, this time north of Virginia.

The province of Maryland, north of the Potomac River on both sides of the Chesapeake Bay, was granted to Lord Baltimore in June 1632, two months after his death. Its proprietorship passed to Cecil Calvert, his oldest son, who became the second Lord Baltimore.[18] As the crisis that would become the English Civil War swirled at home, Cecil Calvert equipped two ships, the *Ark* and the *Dove*, and set sail for Maryland with "about seventeen" Catholic gentlemen, most of them sons of gentry, as well as more than a hundred settlers, most of whom were Protestant, two Jesuit priests, and Cecil's brother, Leonard Calvert.[19] The two ships were thrashed by storms and rough seas, the *Dove* believed for a time to have sunk, but it arrived in the New World in 1634 – first stopping in Jamestown, against Cecil Calvert's explicit orders, then sailed into the mouth of the Potomac.[20] The settlers made landfall on an island they called St. Clement's, where a few days later they erected a wooden cross.

Maryland's earliest settlers probably encountered the Piscataway first at Yaocomoco, the future site of St. Mary's City.[21] The Yaocomoco were preparing to migrate northward when the settlers arrived, possibly as a consequence of attacks by the Susquehanna, and the settlers moved, quite literally into Yaocomoco villages, as their original inhabitants began to migrate north. The *Dove* then sailed farther up the Potomac and made contact with the Powhatan in Virginia and with the Piscataway in Maryland. The Jesuit priest Andrew White, whose chronicles remain one of the richest original accounts of Maryland's founding, established a mission station at Piscataway, not far from Harmony Hall, in 1839 and baptized Kittamaquund, the *tapac* or great

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[18] Brugger, 5.
[19] Brugger, 5-6.
[20] Brugger, 8.
[21] The Yaocomoco were affiliated with the Piscataway but were too far removed from the core at Moyaone to be considered culturally or politically Piscataway in the strictest sense.

chief of the Piscataway Confederacy, in 1840.[22]

As Lord Proprietor, Calvert offered land grants, or headrights, to entice English settlers to make the arduous journey across the Atlantic to the new colony, which he imagined as a rural "New England" of plantations and manor houses.[23] Tobacco was quickly embraced as the cash crop of choice, and new settlers, notes Maryland historian Robert Bruger, "eagerly sought patents on lands that faced onto the rivers and creeks of the western shore, thus accommodating the annual visits of tobacco vessels."[24] The land where the wide-open Potomac flows into the Broad Creek estuary was ideal for planting tobacco, but this would have to wait a few more decades. Tobacco was, as one Maryland settler described, "our meat, drinke, cloathing and monies."[25] As part of this emerging Atlantic economy, Broad Creek soon became a settlement on what one historian has called the Tobacco Coast.[26]

The English Civil War (1641-51) reopened old wounds and encouraged claims against the Lord Proprietor's authority on grounds of his Catholicism. In the face of Roundhead opposition, Cecil Calvert encouraged religious toleration, as illustrated by the Toleration Act (1649), issued under a Protestant governor named William Stone.[27] After Charles I was executed in 1649 by the Puritan-dominated Commonwealth government of Oliver Cromwell, the Puritan settlers of Providence (Annapolis) rebelled against the Lord Baltimore's proprietorship and established their own government. The result was both a Puritan council and the Lord Proprietor's government simultaneously claiming the legitimacy to govern the colony. William Stone lost the decisive Battle of Severn to the Puritans in 1654, and Calvert would not regain

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[22] "Piscataway Indians," *Catholic Encyclopedia.*
[23] Brugger, 16.
[24] Brugger, 16.
[25] Reverend John Hughes, cited in Brugger, 16.
[26] Arthur Middleton, *Tobacco Coast: A Maritime History of Chesapeake Bay in the Colonial Era* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984).
[27] Brugger, 20-21.

control of his province until 1658. The restoration of the monarchy under Charles II (son of Charles I) in 1660 solidified the Lord Baltimore's authority in Maryland, but the legitimized Calvert fiefdom would be short-lived. In 1660, the Lord Baltimore's government created Charles County, of which the Harmony Hall tract was part.[28]

The Lord Proprietor's government frequently clashed with local settlers during the1660s – over port duties, protection against Indians, a more restrictive franchise, and the alleged despotism of the Lord Proprietor's son and the governor, Charles Calvert.[29] After the death of Cecil Calvert in 1875, a series of rebellions challenged Charles Calvert's proprietorship, importing the suspicions, rhetoric, and conflict of the seventeenth-century crises in England to a new context in the colonial frontier of Maryland. While James II was condemned by opponents in Britain as a papist autocrat, disgruntled settlers in Maryland were describing the third Lord Baltimore with the same political language, as capricious, nepotistic, and even tyrannical. In 1688, these claims were assisted by George Talbot – who was Calvert's nephew, the president of the governor's council, and the acting governor – when he stabbed a royal customs officer to death.[30] Talbot's replacement, a Catholic named William Joseph, then "chastised the provincials for their sins… drunkenness and breaking the Sabbath."[31] This smoldering political and social unrest would be sparked aflame by the intersection of events in Britain and provincial politics, and would involve settlers from a recently settled area on the Potomac River near a place called Broad Creek.

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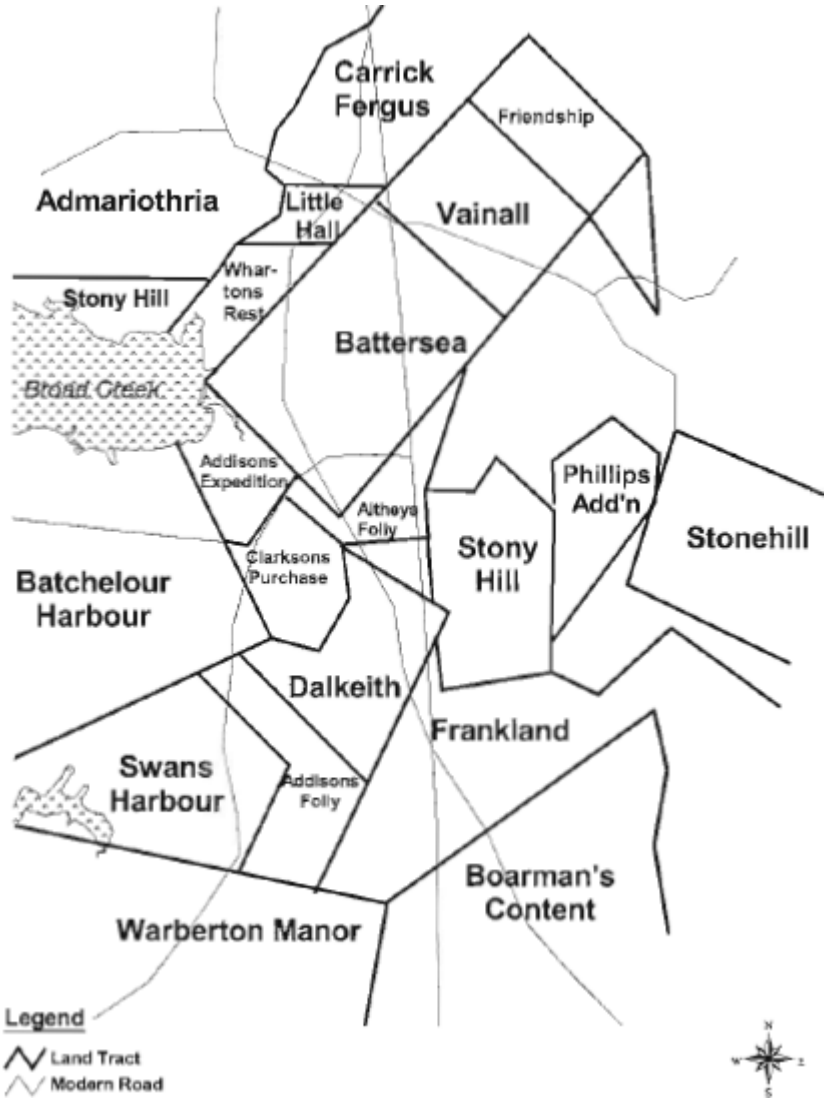
[28] Brugger, 27.
[29] Brugger, 33-36.
[30] Brugger, 39.
[31] Brugger, 39.

Settlement at Broad Creek



Approximate Locations of Early Tracts at Broad Creek (1696)
Susan Pearl, Broad Creek History

First settlements

In 1662, the land on which Harmony Hall now sits was patented as a 500-acre tract by a lawyer named Humphrey Haggett, as Battersey (or Battersea). According to a 1993 National Park Service archeological study:

> A parcel of land in Charles County called Battersey lying on the North side of Piscattaway River on the Northeast side of a creek in the sd. river called Clark [or Clash] Creek. Beg. at bounded poke hickory standing by the mouth of said Creek and running S.E. for breadth of sd. Creek. Beg. at bounded poke hickory standing by the mouth of said Creek and running S.E. for breadth of sd. Creek for the length of 250 perches to a bounded Oak bounding on the East with a line drawn N.E. from the sd. Oak for the length of 328 ps. to the bounded Oak, on the North with a line drawn N.W. from the end of the former line for the length of 250 ps. to a bounded oak that intersects a parallel line drawn from the first bounded oak, on the West with the sd. parallel, on the South with the sd. Clark Creek, containing 500 acres more or less.[32]

Haggett probably settled on and "improved" the parcel of land at Broad Creek before it was legally granted to him by the Crown. Haggett died by 1668, when the ownership of the property passed to Richard Fowke, who had married Haggett's widow Anne in 1663-1664.[33] In 1688, the year of the Glorious Revolution in Britain, Fowke divided Battersea in two, selling one half to Philip Mason and the other to Richard Iles for 10,000 pounds of tobacco.[34] The tract Fowke sold to Mason (250 acres) is the site on which Harmony Hall now stands.[35] In 1692, Mason sold the property to Thomas Lewis. When Lewis died in 1696, 100 acres on the southwestern corner of the property, including the house where his Thomas' wife Catherine lived, were willed to his son

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[32] Robert C. Sonderman, Matthew R. Vitra, Marilyn W. Nickels, and Stephen R. Potter, *Archaeology at Harmony Hall: Exploring the Late Nineteenth-Century Frontier of Maryland* (National Park Service-National Capital Region, 1993), 3; Susan Pearl, "Broad Creek History," in *Broad Creek Historic District Preservation Planning Study* (Upper Marlboro: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 2002), 8; PG Patent 6:226, 1662.

[33] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall,* 3; Pearl, 8; ARMD 49:8, 35, 165. PG Patent 12:138, 1668.

[34] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall,* 3; Pearl, 8; Charles Deed P 1: 32, 1688.

[35] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall,* 3.

Richard Lewis, with smaller tracts left to his sons Thomas and John.[36] Archaeological evidence suggests that the Harmony Hall site was first occupied during the period when the Lewis family lived at Battersea.[37]

The Lewis family at Broad Creek

East of the current structure, National Park Service archaeologists discovered a borrow pit for the mining of clay, likely evidence of an earthfast or post-in-the-ground house built on the Harmony Hall site during the last decade of the seventeenth century.[38] There is documentary evidence that Thomas Lewis planted a cornfield near the mouth of Clash Creek, proof of agricultural production on the property.[39] His will conferred his "Plantation and house" to his wife, Catherine, and a 1697 inventory gives evidence of an prosperous if small farm at the Lewis homestead with hogs, sheep, horses, and cows.[40] Archaeological evidence and household inventories reveal the presence of livestock and, for a farm on the edge of the Atlantic World, a remarkable collection of consumer goods.[41] The NPS archaeologists discovered "North Devon gravel-tempered earthenware, a variety of black-glazed earthenwares, Staffordshire slipware, monochrome blue and polychrome delftware, and Rhenish grey 'Westerwald' blue and manganese incise stoneware," in addition to bottle fragments, clay tobacco pipe-stems, animal bones, hearth tongs, a garden hoe, scissors, gunflints, and Dutch-made glass beads.[42] By the turn of the eighteenth century, the emerging community at Broad Creek was becoming integrated into a developing Atlantic economy of tobacco, slaves, and consumer goods.

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[36] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall,* 4; Pearl, 8; Charles Deed S 1:48; PG Will, 7:150, 1696. Thomas Stonestreet owned the remaining 150 acres by 1709-11. PG Deeds D:79, E:101, M:88; Pearl, 10.

[37] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall,* 10.

[38] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall,* 4-5, 45.

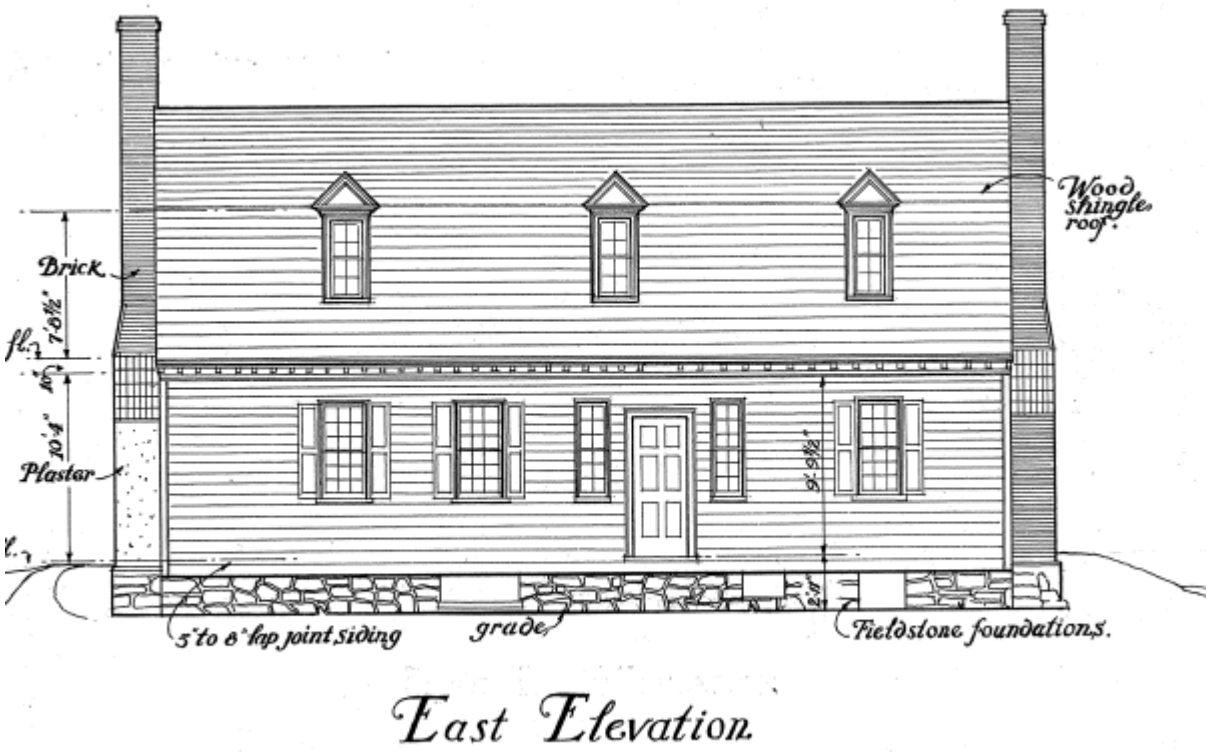
[39] Charles Deed BB1:327, 1745.

[40] PG Inventory XIV: 42.

[41] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall,* 10; PG Inventory XIV: 42; PG Will 7:150, 1696.

[42] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall,* 46-47.

The Addisons and Protestant Settlement in Catholic Maryland



Want Water or Lyles House, 1935
National Historic Buildings Survey

Want Water (c. 1706)

John Addison emigrated to Maryland in 1667 from Wiltshire, England, and settled in Charles County.[43] He established a manor at a place he called Oxford on the Hills, later Oxon Hill.[44] In 1688, responding to the Glorious Revolution in England and in the face of swirling rumors about brewing Catholic intrigue in Maryland, Addison and other Protestant settlers joined

[43] *Across the Years*, 32; Allen, 6.
[44] Nathania A. Branch Miles and Jane Taylor Thomas, *Oxon Hill* (Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 7.

to form a Protestant Association against the government of Charles Calvert.[45] Refusing to proclaim the new king and queen, Governor William Joseph had ordered Maryland's settlers to return their guns to colonial arsenal for repair and adjourned the April 1689 session of the Assembly.[46] The Asssociators issued a "Declaration of the reason and motive for the present appearing in arms of His Majesties Protestant Subjects in the Province of Maryland," making the standard grievances against the Lord Proprietor and declaring their allegiance to William and Mary, who had deposed the Catholic James II in a bloodless coup.[47] In late July 1689, the 700 armed Protestant Associators marched on St. Mary's City, where Lord Baltimore's counselors surrendered without a shot fired.[48] The Associators immediately banned Catholics from holding public office in Maryland.[49]

The Protestant Association's rebellion against proprietary government replayed – and appealed to the legitimacy of – the Glorious Revolution. Responding to the political crises that had plagued Maryland, the British government revoked the proprietorship of the Lords Baltimore, as it had canceled the Virginia Company's charter in 1622, and Maryland became a Crown Colony, administered by a governor responsible to the English monarch. Over the next century, the intellectual, political, and economic currents of the Atlantic World would continue to shape life in Maryland and at Broad Creek, in the emergence of a tobacco-based economy, the importation of Africans as slaves, and exchange of political ideas about liberty and tyranny.

The Protestant Association's John Addison was a community leader on the Charles County frontier; he served the Council of Maryland (1692-93), as the judge of Charles County,

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[45] Brugger, 39; *Archives of Maryland* VIII, 56, 67, 70-71.

[46] Richard S. Dunn, "The Glorious Revolution and America," in *Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. 1, *The Origins of Empire*, ed. Nicholas Canny (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 455-56.

[47] Brugger, 39. The full text of the declaration can be found in Charles M. Andrews, ed., *Narratives of the Insurrections, 1675-1690* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), 305-314.

[48] Brugger, 39; Dunn, 456-57.

[49] Dunn, 456.

and as the captain of the Charles County militia.[50] In 1695, Prince George's County was created out of portions of Charles and Calvert Counties, including John Addison's property, and Colonel Addison became the militia leader in the new county.[51] In 1706, Addison's son Thomas patented a tract of land on the northwest boundary of Battersea, which he called Want Water.[52] The property added to the Addisons' considerable land holdings, which included nearby Batchelor's Harbor and their manor house three miles to the north. Prince George's County historian Susan Pearl speculates that the Want Water structure, now in ruins, was constructed during Thomas' ownership of the property, though archaeological work is required to bear out this claim.[53]

The Church at Broad Creek

In 1682, the Church of England became the established church of Maryland for the first time.[54] The colony's assembly created 30 parishes; Broad Creek became part of Piscataway Parish, later known as King George's Parish.[55] Colonel John Addison organized a meeting at his house, where a vestry of local inhabitants was formed to plan the construction of the first church in the parish.[56] The vestry, which included William Hatton, John Smith, William Hutchison, William Tannehill, and John Swallwell, agreed to raise the necessary funds with a poll on each household.[57] In 1694, the vestry purchased a 70-acre plot called Little Hall in Broad Creek from George Athey, and commissioned carpenters to build a wooden church on the site.[58]

The vestry had a church in which to worship but no minister. In July 1696, they asked

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[50] E.G. Bowie, *Across the Years in Prince George's County* (Genealogical Publishing Co., 1947), 32; Ethan Allen, unpublished mss history of St. John's Church, c. 1870**,** 6.

[51] Bowie, 32.

[52] PG Patent DD 5:509; Pearl, 12.

[53] Pearl, 13.

[54] "Act for the Service of Almighty God and the Establishment of the Protestant Religion with the Province." *Archives of Maryland* XIII, 425-430.

[55] Pearl, 10; Allen, 4.

[56] Allen, 5.

[57] Allen, 5.

[58] Charles Deed Q:70-71; Vestry Minutes of King George's Parish, 1693, 1694; cited in Pearl, 10; Allen, 6.

Rev. George Tubman, who served both Port Tobacco and Durham Parishes, to preach at the new church in Piscataway Parish.[59] Allen agreed and began ministering at the modest church.[60] Ethan Allen, whose unpublished history of St. John's Parish is a robust source of local lore, claimed that Tubman was "presented on common rumor for bigamy, and was much given to sotting, drunkenness, and horse racing."[61] With no ecclesiastical authority present in the colony, Tubman was brought before the governor and the council in 1699.[62] He admitted that he had never married his wife in England but insisted that his marriage in Maryland was legal having "received his marriage license from the Rev. Mr. Cony [or Coney], the incumbent of St. Ann's, Annapolis."[63] Tubman met with a group of clergymen in Annapolis, to whom he confessed that "he was accused touching the license, but said that Mr. Coney gave him a blank marriage license, and he himself filled it up."[64] The governor suspended Tubman, and Piscataway Parish was again without a minister.[65]

In the meantime, the vestry agreed to pay a layman named Abraham Ford 1,500 pounds of tobacco to read the services for one year.[66] In 1701, Thomas Bray, the Bishop of London's comissionary for Maryland, heard Tubman's case and reinstated him as an acting minister.[67] In December 1701, the vestry agreed to pay Tubman 8,000 pounds of tobacco to serve the church over the next year.[68] Tubman died a month later, and his wife was granted 500 pounds of tobacco in compensation by the vestry.[69] In June 1703, the vestry would agreed to pay Robert Owen, the

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[59] Allen, 7.
[60] Allen, 3, 7.
[61] Allen, 8.
[62] Allen, 8.
[63] Allen, 8.
[64] Allen, 8.
[65] Allen, 8. Ethan Allen insisted that the governor had no authority to deny Tubman his ministry.
[66] Allen, 8.
[67] Allen, 8-9.
[68] Allen, 9.
[69] Allen, 9.

incumbent minister at St. Paul's Parish, 2,500 pounds of tobacco for serving the church in the aftermath of Tubman's death.[70] Owen preached at the Broad Creek church intermittently until 1710, supplemented by a lay reader named Hickford Lemen.[71] Despite the instability of the new parish, the frontier community would soon have a new church and an incumbent minister of its own.

Conclusions

The seventeenth century unleashed processes of political, economic, and social change at Broad Creek. By the turn of the eighteenth century, Broad Creek was participating in an expanding Atlantic economy. The Protestant Association's rebellion and the revocation of the proprietorship of the Lords Baltimore reflected both the growing power of a centralized British state and the processes of instability and protestation that would plague the colonial enterprise over the next century. The economy of the "Tobacco Coast" would bring settlers, wealth, and slavery to Broad Creek. The new century would also bring the construction of a stately brick house that would come to be called Harmony Hall.

[70] Allen, 9.
[71] Allen, 9-10.

Chapter 2:
Harmony Hall and the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World

During the first decades of the eighteenth century, the community at Broad Creek transformed from a sparsely populated frontier settlement to a dynamic and prosperous port community, a node in the networks of the Atlantic world. The farmers, merchants, and laborers of the community participated in the global exchange of chattel African slaves and goods from Europe, Asia, and Africa. Many local settlers grew tobacco, which they sold to local buyers or to British merchants for export, while others helped develop the port town at Broad Creek in a variety of ways – importing and exporting goods, building ships, or opening public houses. African slaves, who arrived in large numbers via the Atlantic slave trade, faced long hours of difficult work and brutal treatment at the hands of an increasingly powerful planter class – but also developed methods of survival, borrowing from diverse beliefs and practices of a European and African Atlantic world, and searched for meaning in a life of inhumanity.

The Town of Broad Creek (Ayres/Aires)

The development of the port at Broad Creek was not a historical accident, but was mandated by the colonial assembly as a means of promoting commerce and trade in the colony. The earliest settlers used the estuary and river as a mode of transport beginning in the 1680s. Maryland was, after all, a maritime colony, founded along the shores of the Chesapeake Bay and the banks of the Potomac River and its tributaries. In 1706, the colony's General Assembly passed an Act for the Advancement of Trade, or town act, that sanctioned the building of ports

and towns across the Maryland frontier, including one at Broad Creek.[72] The 100-acre plot, on Thomas Lewis' landing and the southwest corner of Richard Lewis' property at Slash Creek, was divided into 100 one-acre plots. In 1716, stocks and a whipping post were constructed in the town, reflecting its growth as a population center.[73] Broad Creek, sometimes called Ayres or Aires, was one of the earliest ports on the Upper Chesapeake.

Humphrey Batts' tobacco inspection warehouse (1748)

In 1736, John Addison, the eldest son of Thomas Addison, sold the 35-acre property at Want Water to a shipbuilder named Humphrey Batts, who was married to Mary Tyler, the daughter of the elder William Tyler.[74] Batts built or completed the house at Want Water and began building ships on the property.[75] In 1746, he advertised for sale "a new Schooner, of about 36 tons, well built for the West-India or Coasting-Trade."[76] During the middle of the eighteenth century, the growing commercial port at Broad Creek was a node in the circuits of an Atlantic economy -- the famous "triangle trade" that connected Africa, Europe, and the Americas -- and also engaged in some global trade, thanks to ships of the British East India Company that brought goods from India and China. Batts and his neighbors at Broad Creek actively participated in these networks, growing and selling tobacco, constructing ships, buying goods and African slaves. Batts purchased slaves, probably from West Africa, and sold ships that traveled to the West Indies, or perhaps even Europe and Africa.

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[72] In 1706, the colony's General Assembly passed a Act for the Advancement of Trade, or town act, that sanctioned the building of ports and towns across the Maryland frontier, including one at Broad Creek. Pearl, 12; Session of General Assembly, April 2 to 19, 1706, *Archives of Maryland* XXVI, 636 ff.

[73] Pearl, 12; *Archives of Maryland* XXVI, 638-639; PG Court Records H:86 (1715-1720).

[74] Pearl 14; PG Deeds T:42L.

[75] Pearl, 14.

[76] *Maryland Gazette*, September 30, 1746, cited in Pearl, 14-16.

The mercantilist British state of the eighteenth century regulated trade of its overseas colonies with customs taxes and various controls over production, carriage, exports, and imports. The Navigation Acts (1651, 1660, 1663), passed by the English Parliament to regulate the trade of British merchants, required goods in the colonies to be carried on British ships. It also stipulated that goods not produced in Britain, such as tobacco, could only be shipped to metropolitan or colonial ports. This brand of economic protectionism -- enacted to benefit the British state and economy in an effort to exclude competitors from colonial trade and to nurture economic dependency between Britain and its colonies -- was a major grievance of the colonists during the American Revolution. However, as the citizens of a new American nation at Broad Creek – who were effectively "shut out" of an Atlantic economy dominated by British naval power and economic protectionism -- would discover during the 1770s, this uneven system had its benefits.

At Broad Creek, the tobacco crop was subject to British customs taxes and, after 1747, to inspection for quality.[77] The regulation of tobacco quality in Maryland was motivated by competition with Virginia, where tobacco had been inspected since 1730.[78] Humphrey Batts, a shrewd entrepreneur, successfully petitioned to build the inspections warehouse on his property and Broad Creek, and the St. John's parish vestry elected the local inspectors, who were paid an annual salary by the colony.[79] In his 1953 classic, *Tobacco Coast,* Arthur Pierce Middleton described the voyage of tobacco from field to port:

> So soon the planters cured and prized their crops, they had the hogsheads [of tobacco] rolled down to the nearest landing, carried by sloop or flat to the most convenient warehouse, and delivered to the inspector. The hogsheads were stored

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[77] "An Act for Amending the Staple of Tobacco [and] for preventing Frauds in his Majesty's Customs," 1847.

[78] Arthur Pierce Middleton, *Tobacco Coast: A Maritime History of the Chesapeake Bay in the Colonial Era* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 135-136.

[79] Pearl 14; *Archives of Maryland*, XLIV, 595 ffj; PG Court Records HH:351; Middleton, 137.

> in a shed built for the purpose. Then, one by one they were brought out, broken open, and inspected. If any trash tobacco was found, it was condemned to be burnt. Then the hogsheads were re-prized, nailed, and marked with a hot iron with the name of the warehouse, the tare, and the net, and the net weight of the tobacco.[80]

The planter then received a "crop note" certificate, which identified his processed tobacco crop.[81] He would then transfer the certificate to the buyer, typically a British merchant in the case of export sale.[82] Small flat boats would carry the goods into the broader and deeper estuary, where they would be loaded onto larger British ships.[83] British merchants, who operated from burgeoning port towns such as Bristol and Liverpool on the west coast of England, returned to Broad Creek with loads of "fabric, nails, sugar and rum" for sale.[84] In 1749, Batts cut a channel, approximately 100 yards long, between the warehouse and the Broad Creek estuary, where larger ships anchored.[85] Charles Collins dredged and extended it during the 1930s.

Growth and development as a port town

While there are few extant records relating to the town at Broad Creek, sometimes called Ayres or Aires, Prince George's County historian Susan Pearl has uncovered twelve licenses, granted to operate taverns, that were issued by the Prince George's County Court between 1737 and 1772.[86] Beyond these licenses, we have no evidence of these public houses. Many were probably short-lived, and it is doubtful all twelve of operated simultaneously. In 1764-67, the church at Broad Creek was rebuilt and extended, to reflect the structure that stands today, proof of an expanding community of worshipers. There is also very little evidence of the town of

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[80] Middleton, 137.
[81] Middleton, 137.
[82] Middleton, 138.
[83] Pearl, 17.
[84] Pearl, 16.
[85] Pearl, 17; PG Court Records 1749, Book LL:67, 68.
[86] Pearl, 17; PG Court Records, 1747-1772.

Broad Creek, merely fragments here and there, to give us much of a sense of what life was like in the community. We do know, however, that Broad Creek was a town of trade, with taverns, a shipbuilder, a tobacco warehouse, and access to a larger Atlantic economy. There are no superficial remains of the town, and archaeological work is needed for a fuller picture of eighteenth-century life in the town.

Life on the tobacco plantation at Harmony Hall

Slave Populations at Broad Creek, 1776-1790	
1776 Census	
Enoch Magruder (Want Water and Harmony Hall)	26
1790 Census	
Walter Dulany Addison	20
William Lyles (Want Water)	93
Meek Magruder (Harmony Hall)	11
Dennis Magruder[87]	32

During the late seventeenth century, planters consolidated their "control over Chesapeake society" and turned increasingly to African slave labor on their tobacco farms, establishing slave status as permanent and hereditary.[88] White indentured servitude became much less common. Between 1820 and 1840, the slave population of the Chesapeake increased exponentially from about one-quarter of the total population to nearly half.[89] These "forced immigrants" brought new sights and sounds to the region, as historian Ira Berlin describes:

> Men and women with filed teeth, plaited hair, and ritual scarification (which slaveowners called "country markings" or "negro markings") were everywhere to be seen. Their music -- particularly their drums -- filled the air with sounds that frightened European and European-American settlers, and their pots, pipes, and other material effects left a distinctive mark on the landscape.[90]

[87] At the time of his death in 1928, Dennis Magruder owned 26 slaves. PG Inventory. 1781-1787, 391-400.
[88] Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 109.
[89] Berlin, 110.
[90] Berlin, 111.

Settlers of European descent found "the manner in which the new arrivals spoke, prayed, and buried their dead to be foreign."[91] The development of a large-scale trans-Atlantic slave trade permanently transformed the daily lives of slaves in the Chesapeake through a potent combination of gender imbalance, higher mortality rates, more brute violence, greater regimentation, longer hours, and greater cultural alienation.[92] Eighteenth-century slaves lived under an increasingly violent and inhumane system that abandoned the customary rights and mutual cultural knowledge that characterized life for an earlier generation of slaves.

Historian Eugene Genovese's classic *Roll, Jordon, Roll* (1976) explored the ways in which enslaved African Americans created semi-autonomous social and cultural worlds and developed methods of negotiating and contesting the brutality of human bondage.[93] Although the slave communities at Broad Creek were comparatively smaller than those whose slaves worked the massive cotton plantations of the Deep South, Broad Creek slaves almost certainly participated in similar strategies of maintaining their humanity – and survival. They certainly developed relationships and ritual practices, which they borrowed from both African and local cultures and traditions – including Christianity -- to make sense of a life in bondage and to find meaning in their lives. St. John's Church became a center of conversion and worship for local enslaved peoples, and its rectors and lay preachers may have pursued mission work in the slave quarters at Broad Creek.

The early-eighteenth-century slave population at Board Creek is somewhat difficult to discern because of the limited number of records. According to a county inventory, c. 1850,

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[91] Berlin, 111.
[92] Berlin, 111-116.
[93] Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made: The World the Slaves Made* (New York:L Vintage Books, 1976). Also see Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake and Low Country* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

Humphy Batts, the well-to-do shipbuilder, owned six slaves.[94] Batts was not a farmer, however, so this number may not shed much light on the general slave population at Broad Creek. In 1790, there were 11,176 slaves in Prince George's County, the largest county slave population in the state.[95] When Enoch Magruder died in 1786, for instance, he left to his wife Meek "four negro men namely Lander Peter Will commenly called Billy and Tom also three negro women Lucy fillis and beck also one negro girl named Rachel one malatto boy named Jess."[96] The slave populations recorded in the 1776 and 1790 censuses offer some evidence, but it should be remembered that members of the Magruder and Lyles families owned additional properties in the county, which are also included in the census data. William Lyles, owner of ninety-three slaves, must have been one of the largest slaveholders in the area.

We know very little about slave life, or even the locations of slave quarters, on the property. Future archaeological work, it is hoped, will fill the voids in our knowledge of African-American life at Harmony Hall. It is extremely likely that slavers, or trade middle men, sold human cargo "in small lots" at Broad Creek's port.[97] The Park Service has conducted preliminary archaeological work at nearby Tent Landing, owned by the Lyles family, but has discovered little in terms of slave quarters or burial sites.[98] A significant slave population lived and worked in the tobacco fields, houses, workshops, and stores in and around the Harmony Hall and Want Water properties. They created kinship and social networks, worshipped, and communicated the stories and traditions made in their experiences in an Atlantic world.

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[94] PG Inventory 64:142.

[95] 1790 Census, Prince George's County, Maryland. Data compiled by the Historical Census Browser, University of Virginia, http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu (accessed 14 May 2010).

[96] PG Will T1:238.

[97] Berlin, 115.

[98] "Information about the Lyles Family Cemetery, located at Historic Resource #80-14 Site of Tent Landing," Prince George's County Historical Association Library.

By the end of the eighteenth century, "king tobacco" had been dethroned, and the diversification of agriculture led to less labor-intensive farming and decreasing reliance on slave labor. Yet, by 1850, there were still 11,510 slaves in Prince George's County, 334 more than counted in 1790.[99] This number is remarkable given the decline of tobacco in the county and the end of slave importation in 1808. Although the number of slaves in Maryland decreased approximately 10 percent over this period, the slave populations of the Deep South expanded exponentially over the same period. According to the 1850 census, there were 1,138 free persons of color in the county, a significant but relatively small population. Their remarkable contribution, albeit a forced one, and cultural influence on the development of the community and the county cannot, and should not, be underestimated. (The next chapter will explore the lives of nineteenth-century African Americans in Broad Creek and Prince George's County.)

The great planters of the region, including the Magruders and the Lyles, came to dominate their local communities, gaining notable social, cultural, and political power over their African slaves as well as over many local farmers and merchants, some of whom may have arrived on the shores of the Chesapeake as indentured servants. These tobacco aristocrats, notes a leading historian, "knit themselves together through strategic rituals, creating a style of life which awed common folk and to which lesser planters dared not aspire."[100] The great families of Prince George's County – the Bowies, the Magruders, and others – came to dominate the political and legal institutions of the county and in the process created a self-sustaining and interconnected gentry class, modeled on an image of the English countryside.[101] They

[99] 1850 Census, Prince George's County, Maryland. Data compiled by the Historical Census Browser, University of Virginia, http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu (accessed 14 May 2010).

[100] Berlin, 117.

[101] Berlin, 115-118.

communicated in a language of patriarchy toward their slaves and lower class people of European descent, which in turned helped solidify and perpetuate their status and wealth.

By the 1870s, Battersea and Want Water were acquired by the Magruder family, who would lived at Broad Creek for the next century. In 1709, Richard Lewis sold his Battersea property -- which included part of the town of Broad Creek -- to William Tyler,.[102] Tyler and his family probably lived in the earthfast house discovered by NPS archaeologists during the 1980s. Tyler, a member of St. John's Church, constructed a new wood church structure in 1708 and installed wooden pews in 1713.[103] He died in 1721 and left his "dwelling plantation" at Battersea to his wife, Elizabeth.[104] She remarried, and their son, the younger William Tyler, who was heir to the property, moved to Charles County – possibly because the house was destroyed in a fire – and predeceased his mother. His son, John Tyler, sold Battersea in 1761 to an influential local merchant named Enoch Magruder.[105]

The Magruder era

When Humphrey Batts died in 1757, his son-in-law Richard Barnes inherited his Want Water house, warehouse, storehouse (built c. 1749), and thirty-five acres of land.[106] Barnes sold the house in 1861 to a local merchant named Enoch Magruder.[107] By about 1760, Magruder had built a house on the corner of the original Battersea property at Slash Creek. In 1763, he moved into Want Water, but maintained another residence at Norway, farther east in Prince George's County, which he had inherited from his parents. Over the course of the 1760s, he also acquired

[102] Pearl, 13; PG Deed E:5.
[103] Pearl, 13; Vestry minutes of Piscataway Parish, vol. I, 17-20; Ethan Allen, unpublished history of St. John's Church, Broad Creek, c. 1870, Collins papers.
[104] PG Will 1:117, cited in Pearl, 13.
[105] Pearl, 13.
[106] PG Will, Book 1:491.
[107] PG Deed RR: 142.

land around Broad Creek and 100 acres of property on the west side of the Battersea plot, which overlapped with the town of Broad Creek.[108] During a survey of the property, he discovered that the Want Water plot was smaller than the 35 acres that his deed claimed, but also discovered a twenty-acre plot of unpatented land, which he acquired and called Want Water Enlarged.[109] The county inventories of Magruder's property, 1786-87, reflect the transformation of Broad Creek since the late seventeenth century; the planter and landowner possessed an extensive collection of fine furniture, carpet, dining ware, and other goods made available through the Atlantic trade.[110]

Construction of Harmony Hall

In 1722, the St. John's Church vestry commissioned the construction of a new brick church, paying a man named John Lane 16,000 pounds of tobacco to build a brick church building and a carpenter named John Radford to do the woodwork.[111] According to local legend, the red brick house at Harmony Hall was built in 1723 with the left-over materials from the construction of the new church. Charles Collins, an amateur historian who owned the property during the twentieth century, disseminated this mythology as fact, causing much confusion to modern historians working on the house's history. At the time of the archaeological investigations of the 1980s, a metal plate adorning the front of the house gave 1723 as its date of construction.

Contrary to the legend, the red-brick house at Battersea, later called Harmony Hall, was probably constructed during the late 1760s by Enoch Macgruder. The evidence of the 1980s

[108] PG Deeds AA 2:22, RR: 142.
[109] Pearl, 19; PG Patent DD 5:509; PG Survey 2249, 1763.
[110] PG Inventory, 1786-87, 391-400.
[111] Pearl, 14; Vestry minutes of King George's Parish, 44-52.

archaeological investigations at Harmony Hall gives rather strong support to this thesis. Historian Susan Pearl has described the house in rather eloquent terms:

> The house that he built was two and one-half stories high and side-gabled. Comparatively long at 56 feet, the house was only one room deep, but distinguished by particularly fine Georgian interior detail in the cornices, chair rails, paneling and stair elements. It was the home of a successful businessman and gentleman landowner, and it can be assumed that the Magruder family, including the younger children not yet married, moved into the new and elegant house at Battersea before the outbreak of the Revolution.[112]

The north and south wings collapsed or were demolished sometime between the construction of the house and its acquisition by Charles Collins in the 1920s. Despite the extensive work done on the history of Harmony Hall, the date of its construction remains a historical mystery.

George Washington and Broad Creek

Enoch Magruder's daughter Sarah married Colonel William Lyles c. 1779 and moved into the house at Want Water. Colonel Lyles was a friend of George Washington, who lived a short distance downriver at Mount Vernon, and legend has it that George Washington traveled up the Potomac from Mount Vernon on a barge rowed by slaves. Whether or not Washington visited the red-brick house at Harmony Hall cannot be determined with absolute certainty, but he was an occasional parishioner at St. John's Church and developed social relationships with several residents of Broad Creek. According to one tale, when Henry Yates Satterlee, the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington (1896–1908), told the parishioners at St. John's Church that the stories of Washington at Broad Creek were merely legends, a woman "Mrs. Joseph C. Patton" responded

> Not at all, sir. It is absolutely true. My grandfather has often told me that he himself has seen the General land upon yonder beach and with his family and retinue, white and black, enter the church for service... Usually the General would

[112] Pearl, 21.

> linger awhile, when the service was over, and chat pleasantly with the rector and the church folk.[113]

Locating conclusive evidence of George Washington at Harmony Hall would certainly enrich the national significance of the property, opening a clearer path toward restoration. Still, there is strong historical evidence of Washington's presence at Broad Creek, which itself helps establish the place of Broad Creek in the social and cultural networks of the Potomac River.

The Duel

On August 8, 1805, the young Enoch Magruder Lyles entered into a duel with John Fraser Bowie and was killed. According to one version of the story, Lyles, who had a romantic interest in young Elizabeth Bowie, "became extremely jealous of the attention showered upon her by his friends and others [at a ball] and gave expression of his feeling in so offensive a manner it was brought to the attention of her brother, and he [John F. Bowie]... slapped Lyles' face."[114] In this recollection, the two made peace shortly thereafter, but Enoch's father insisted that his son avenge Bowie's affront to the family's honor. Helen O'Leary, who wrote an occasional column of local history and legend called "Broad Creek Ripples" for the *Prince George's Journal* (1958-59), offered a slightly altered version of this story:

> At a dance one evening a young lady, cousin of the Lyles, was offended by a remark made by a young gentleman cousin, whereupon Colonel [William] Lyles ordered one of his sons to challenge the offender to a duel. The son did as his father told him and the duel was held the following morning on the dueling grounds across the Potomac in Virginia. The Colonel watched through field glasses as his son fell. He was buried at St.John's and it was that his father composed an epitaph vowing vengeance on his slayer.[115]

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[113] John Bowie Ferneyhough, ed., *Year Book of the American Clan Gregor Society* (Richmond: American Clan Gregor Society, 1935), 23.

[114] Susan E. Claggett, "The Sanguinary Practice of Dueling," in *Duels in Virginia and Nearby Bladensburg*, ed. (Richmond: Dietz Press).

[115] "Broad Creek Ripples," *Prince George's Journal*, November 14, 1958.

On the tombstone of the young Lyles is carved such an epitaph, to which O'Leary was probably referring:

Enoch M. Lyles
Died 7th August, 1805, aged 26

Go thou, my son, obey the call of the heaven
Thy sins, my son we trust they are forgiven.
Yet, oh, what hand can paint thy parents' woe
God, only, can punish the hand that gave the blow.

Dueling was a common practice among the social elites of the North American colonies, a ritual that Walter Dulany Addison, a reactor at St. John's Church would actively opposed. The idea of family honor reflects a social code inherited from the "Old World." By the beginning of the eighteenth century, it was considered a backward practice in a "rational" and "modern" world of the new American nation. Moreover, it represented a set of gentlemanly practices, perpetuated by a gentry social group of wealthy planters and merchants, that were being displaced rapidly by technological and industrial change.

The American Revolution and the Atlantic World

The First Continental Congress banned imports from Britain in 1774 and exports to Britain in 1775. While the burden of the British mercantilist state was heavy on the planters and merchants at Broad Creek, and many of them opposed British trade regulations and taxes, the Atlantic trade was the economic lifeblood of the community. After the battles at Lexington and Concord in 1775, most of the year's tobacco crop rotted in local storage sheds and warehouses.[116] The war divided the community, where there were both Loyalists and Patriots, as elsewhere in the colonies. Enoch Magruder and his son-in-law William Lyles were active Patriots; Magruder

[116] Pearl, 22.

served on local communities of observation and organization.[117] Some Loyalists, including the rector at St. John's Church, Henry Addison, fled to Britain.

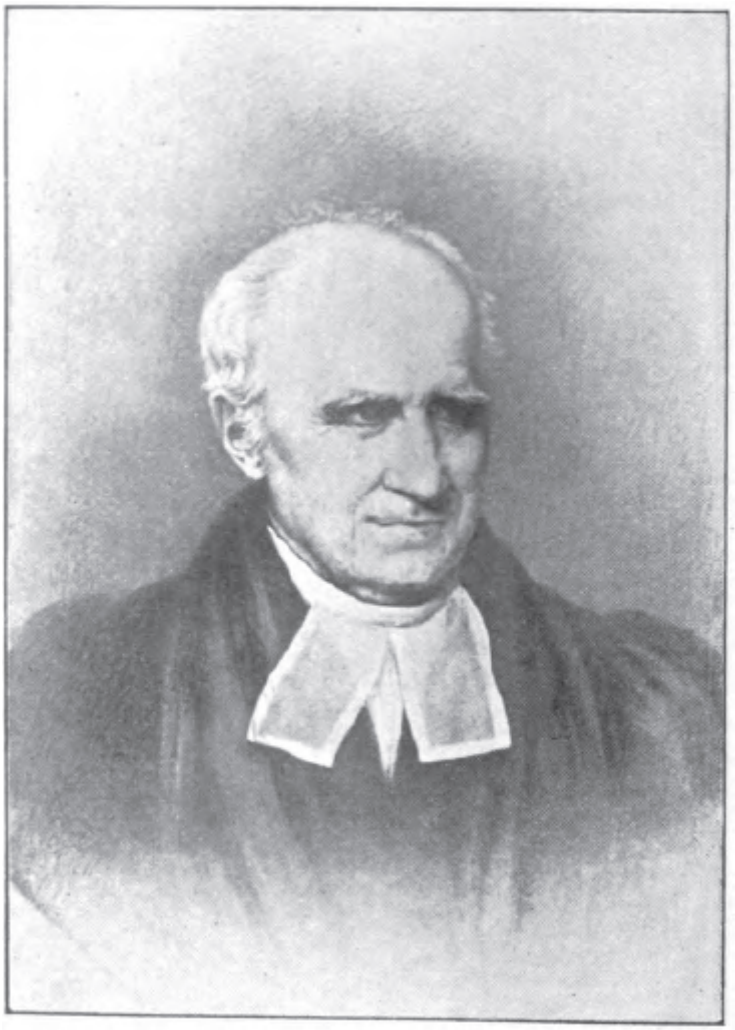
The Revolutionary period was a watershed in the history of Broad Creek. It quickened the processes by which Broad Creek's maritime world of trade was displaced and replaced, and its connections to the Atlantic world were interrupted and destroyed. By the early nineteenth century, the port town of Broad Creek had disappeared, and the community looked to be a rural, somewhat insular place. It is no wonder Charles Wallace Collins, upon arriving in Broad Creek during the 1920s, would see it as a perfect setting for a Southern-style plantation, far away from the cultural and social threats of modernity but close enough to their conveniences.

The Early Republic

After Enoch Magruder's death in 1786, his wife stayed there for some period; she and eleven slaves lived on the property as of the census of 1790.[118] Sarah's father had left both Want Water and Harmony Hall to her; her brother, Dennis, rented out the red-brick house in 1792 to Walter Dulany Addison, future rector at St. John's Church (1801-09), and to his bride, Elizabeth Hesselius, daughter of the portrait artist John Hesselius. Addison would officiate the funeral of George Washington and serve as Chaplain of the United States Senate (1810-11). Addison's brother John and new sister-in-law, also newlyweds, moved into the house as well.[119] They lived there for one year before moving to their permanent residences. Mary Hesselius Murray, the granddaughter of Walter and Elizabeth**,** later recounted that "the two families lived in great happiness together, and from this fact my grandmother Hesselius called the place Harmony Hall

[117] Bowie, 35.
[118] Pearl, 23; U.S. Census, Prince George's County, 1790.
[119] Elizabeth Hesselius Murray, *One Hundred Years Ago: The Life and Times of the Rev. Walter Dulany Addison, 1769-1848* (Philadelphia, George W. Jacobs, 1895), 105.

which name it retains to this day."[120]



Rev. Walter Dulany Addison, date unknown[121]

During the 1770s, the Ellicott Brothers, in nearby Howard County, Maryland, encouraged local farmers to grow wheat and other grains instead of tobacco, which quickly robbed the soil of its nutrients and caused many Maryland farmers to search for more fertile soil on the western frontier. Charles Carroll, a Catholic "founding father" from Maryland, was a convert to their

[120] Murray, 106.
[121] Murray, 163.

methods. While the influence of the brothers at Broad Creek is unclear, these changes were typical of broader agricultural and economic trends experienced by Chesapeake farmers at the end of the eighteenth century. The Ellicott Brothers also initiated another innovation, the dredging of local water ways to remove silt from the bottom of rivers and harbors. At Broad Creek, local waterways were undergoing profound environmental change, making them more difficult to navigate. Despite the development of dredging, changes on the land put the community at a economic disadvantage relative to the growing port city of Baltimore or other towns connected to the commercial networks of the interior and the coast by train. By the end of the eighteenth century, local planters had begun to look for reliable and profitable markets. Many began to diversify their agricultural production, while others, such as Enoch Magruder, began commercial fishing ventures.

Conclusion

The maritime and agricultural community at Broad Creek reached its commercial and economic highpoint during the eighteenth century, when it grew from an outpost of a British colonial empire into a thriving port through which slaves, tobacco, and consumer goods passed. From the banks of the Broad Creek estuary and the Potomac River, Broad Creek was connected to a larger Atlantic world – to Africa, Europe, and Asia. Toward the end of the century, and as a consequence of the American Revolution, the tobacco economy that served as the foundation for the community's growth and prosperity collapsed. While tobacco was no longer king, slaves continued to toil in the fields and houses of the community until the end of the Civil War. But in the next century, Broad Creek entered a period of decline, and Harmony Hall and Want Water passed out of the hands of the great planter families and into the ownership of renters and

sojourners. Then would come reinvention at the end of the nineteenth century, as new arrivals – mostly immigrants from Germany – began to transform Broad Creek and founded the community of Silesia.

Chapter 3:
Decline and Revival in the Nineteenth Century

The nineteenth century was an age of decline and revival at Broad Creek. During the years following the American Revolution, the Chesapeake's tobacco economy and slave culture experienced a precipitous decline.[122] The Broad Creek community, connected to a larger commercial world through maritime trade on the Potomac River, the Chesapeake Bay, and the Atlantic Ocean, was economically marginalized by the transportation revolution that transformed the young republic during the first decades of the nineteenth century. While the Magruder and Lyles families continued to live and plant on the land at Harmony Hall during the first decades of the nineteenth century as they diversified their agricultural production and searched for new sources of wealth, the middle years of the century brought significant instability to the two properties. After the deaths of Dennis Magruder in 1828 and Thomas Lyles in 1845, Harmony Hall and Want Water were occupied intermittently by sojourners and renters who failed to establish permanent roots or relationships. The arrival of a young man named Robert Stein, who came to the United States from Germany in 1875, at Broad Creek, brought a new era of transformation and prosperity to Broad Creek, where a new community called Silesia took root.

Broad Creek in 1800

The American Revolution disrupted and destabilized the "tobacco coast" by depriving it of its British and European markets and the British merchant ships that carried its goods.[123] For those who lived at Broad Creek, the political revolution was also an economic revolution, one

[122] See Philip Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, 659-673.
[123] Middleton, 382-85.

from which they would never fully recover. With the decline of tobacco as a cash crop in the Chesapeake region, the Magruder and Lyles families began to diversify their agricultural production by increasing the planting of orchards and grains and raising livestock. William Lyles' son Dennis Magruder Lyles operated a fishery near Harmony Hall on a site called Tent Landing.[124] The decline of tobacco, the economic lifeblood of the Broad Creek community, also brought changes to Broad Creek. Long-time residents and their heirs left the community. Sojourners came and went. Political life, too, was in flux; in 1800, the hundreds of Hynson, Piscataway, and King George residents were consolidated into a single electoral district, number five, called Piscataway.[125] Whereas the eighteenth century saw considerable economic growth and prosperity at Broad Creek, the nineteenth century was a period of change and uncertainty.

During the first decades of the nineteenth century, the economic and transportation revolutions of the young republic transformed southwestern Prince George's County and Broad Creek, a thriving eighteenth-century maritime community, into a relative backwater. The White House, or Slash Creek, Tavern, situated on the edge of the Harmony Hall plot, represented Broad Creek's place in a changing state and nation, an age when the community was linked to a prosperous river trade to the north and to points south and east by road. The tavern sat to the south of Harmony Hall on the Piscataway-Alexandria stage road, where Charles Collins would later propose the construction of the George Washington Memorial Parkway in Maryland and near the current-day intersection of Livingstone Road and Fort Washington Road.[126] The White Horse Tavern was a community watering hole and a place for travelers on the stageroad to stop and rest. In 1804, a man named Philip Webster bought three acres of road-front Battersea

[124]Pearl, 25.
[125] Pearl, 24.
[126] Pearl, 26.

property, where he built and operated the tavern.[127] When he died in 1818, the property was acquired by Henry Culver Thorne, who ran the tavern until he died in 1872.[128]

During these years, Broad Creek was being commercially and economically marginalized by a "transportation revolution" in the United States.[129] In 1835, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad began operations in Prince George's County, bringing the revolution to the region.[130] In the intervening years between the arrival of the railroad and the Civil War, Maryland's network of railroads expanded and came to criss-cross the countryside. The war encouraged the North's propensity for industrial expansion in cities such as Baltimore, leaving the rural communities of the Potomac far from centers of growth. The families at Broad Creek, in the houses at Harmony Hall and Want Water, continued to own slaves, to fish the Potomac and Broad Creek, and to farm the land. The White Horse Tavern and its large sign, which survived into the first years of the twentieth century, endured all the transformations that the nineteenth century brought to the area.[131]

Magruders and Lyles at Harmony Hall andWant Water

The Magruder-Lyles family continued plantation-style production at Broad Creek and their other properties during the early nineteenth century. Sarah Magruder Lyles raised her family in the house at Want Water, and the family may have simultaneously occupied Harmony Hall.[132] Sarah's brother Dennis spent much of his time at the family plantation at Norway plantation. Using a straw deed to circumvent restrictions governing exchanges of property

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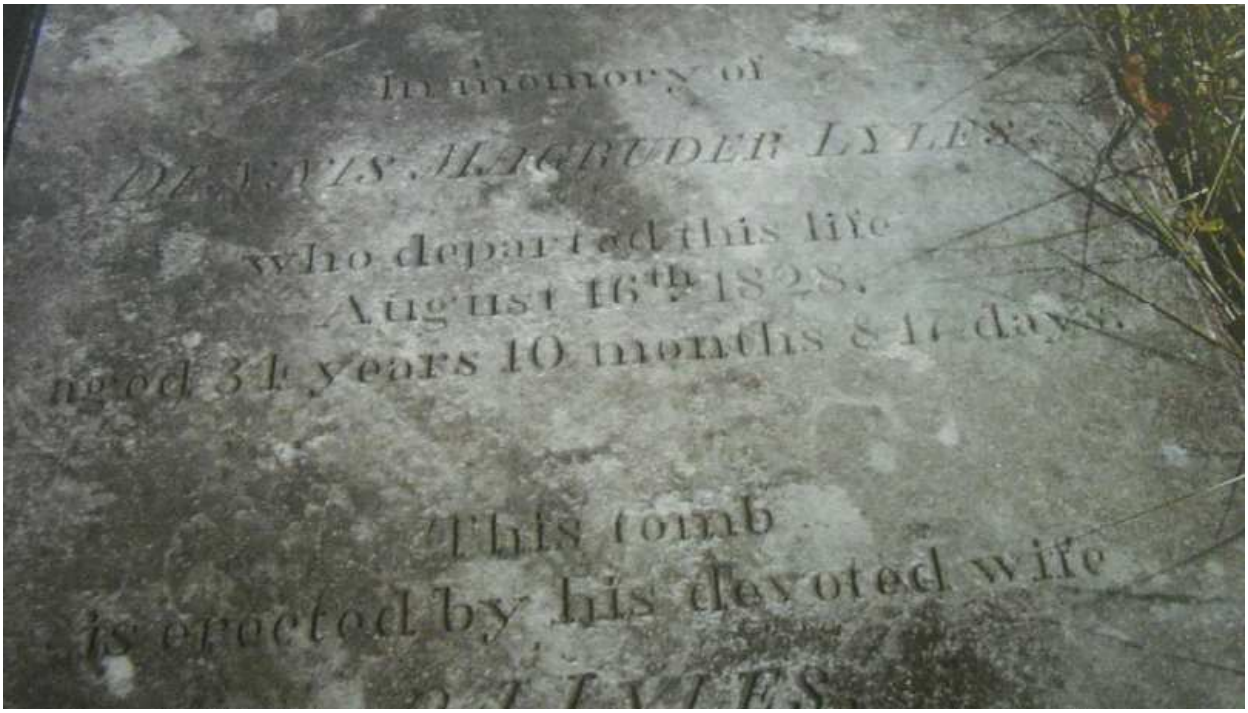
[127] Pearl, 26.
[128] Pearl, 26.
[129] George Rogers Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution, 1815-1860* (New York: Harper, 1968).
[130] Pearl, 26.
[131] "Broad Creek Ripples," March 13, 1959.
[132] Pearl, 24.

between spouses, Sarah's husband, William Lyles, transferred his wife's property – around 100 acres – to himself in 1795.[133] When he died, William left his Want Water house and some of his Battersea acreage to his son Thomas C. Lyles (who acquired more than 100 additional acres of land and marsh at Broad Creek) and Harmony Hall to his son, Dennis Magruder Lyles, who died in 1828. [134] Dennis and his four children – Sarah, Eliza, William, and Henrietta, who all died during a five-month period in 1826 – were buried in a small graveyard near the Potomac River south of Broad Creek on his property called Tent Landing. Their remains were exhumed by a developer and reinterred at St. John's Church cemetery in 2002.[135] There, Lyles rejoined his first wife Eliza W. Seaton Lyles, whom he married in 1817. As a consequence of the failed development by a company called Flordia on the Potomac, local preservationists and residents worried about the disruption of hallowed remains and the possible destruction of important archaeological evidence at Tent Landing.

[133]Pearl, 25.

[134]Pearl, 25; PG Will TI l:164.

[135] Susan Pearl, e-mail to Clan MacGregor Society, September 19, 2001; "Information about Lyles Family Cemetery, located at Historic Resource #80-14, Site of Tent Landing,"



Headstone of Dennis Magruder Lyles, moved 2001
Susan Pearl **[need permission to reproduce]**

Ariana Lyles, the second wife and widow of Dennis, moved to Washington, D.C., and rented the Harmony Hall house to Henry Fairfax Thorne, the local constable, for two years in 1833 and 1834.[136] Thomas C. Lyles died in 1845; his widow and several of his children continued to live on and work the land on Broad Creek until the 1860s.[137] In 1850, Ariana Lyles sold forty acres at Broad Creek – including Harmony Hall – to William J. Edelen, who farmed the land but probably did not live at Harmony Hall.[138] Edelen failed to pay his taxes several times during 1860s, and the property was put up for auction in 1867.[139] Before the sale, the

[136]Pearl, 25.
[137] Pearl, 27.
[138] Pearl, 27; PG Deed JBB 7:92.
[139] Pearl, 27; PG Deed FS 5:223.

house had been occupied by Francis and Elizabeth Kerby, who bought it at the auction for $27.60. [140]

Decline? (1850-1892)

Both Harmony Hall and Want Water changed hands numerous times during the second half of the nineteenth century. Harmony Hall was auctioned in 1876, after the Kerby family defaulted on its taxes.[141] It was purchased by Ignatius S. Wilson, editor of the *Marlboro Gazette*. In 1877-78, he sold the property to his brother George W. Wilson, a merchant, who in turn sold it to Nicholas C. Stephens and Joseph K. Roberts. [142] They all apparently considered Harmony Hall to be an investment property, and the Kerby family continued to live there. [143] In 1886, Stephens' heirs and Roberts sold the property to a shoemaker named Domenico Cristofani, who used Harmony Hall as a workshop and residence.[144] In 1892, Cristofani sold the property to a young immigrant from Germany named Robert Stein.[145]

After 1845, Rebecca Lyles, widow of Thomas C. Lyles, stayed at Want Water, and her sons John and Thomas, Jr., farmed the property until their mother's death in 1860, when they sold it.[146] In 1870, the Want Water property was described as a

> property of 158 acres, called Broad Creek House, three miles from Alexandria Ferry... improved by a mansion house, large and old fashioned, 12 or 14 rooms with full cellar with a spring in it... ice house, granary, stable, corn house, carriage house, meat house and quarters... newly built tenement house one mile from

[140] Pearl, 27; PG Deed FS 5:223.
[141] Pearl, 29; PG Deed HB 10:694.
[142] Pearl, 29; PG Deed HB 13: 72.
[143] Pearl, 29; PG Deed ATB 1:193.
[144] Pearl 30; PG Deed]WB 7:424.
[145] PG Deed 20: 639.
[146] Pearl, 29; PG Deeds WAJ 1:I82, FS 3:668, 669.

> dwelling.. . situated on the head of Broad Creek, a branch of the Potomac, sail boats and tugs can come within 300 yards... public road and landing on place.[147]

Tracing ownership of the property becomes difficult in the 1860s and 1870s due to a series of sales and defaults.[148]

The Civil War

Colonel William Lyles owned a large number of slaves during the eighteenth century – ninety-three at the time of the first U.S. Census in 1790.[149] By the time he died in 1815, there were eighty slaves working on his properties at Broad Creek.[150] As the tobacco economy of the Chesapeake, Maryland, and Broad Creek was built on a slave economy, the practice of slavery declined in the region but did not vanish. By 1800, the Chesapeake had "more free blacks than any other region in the nation."[151] Slaves continued to work in the fields, houses, and businesses at Broad Creek, where the number of slaves compared with other communities in the Chesapeake remained relatively high.[152]

The state of Maryland declared neutrality in the war between North and South, but there were certainly many Confederate sympathizers among the white settlers at Broad Creek, several of whom owned slaves. After all, it was near Broad Creek in southern Maryland through which John Wilkes Booth fled and where he received local protection after he shot and killed President Abraham Lincoln in April 1865. While the community actively participated in and benefited

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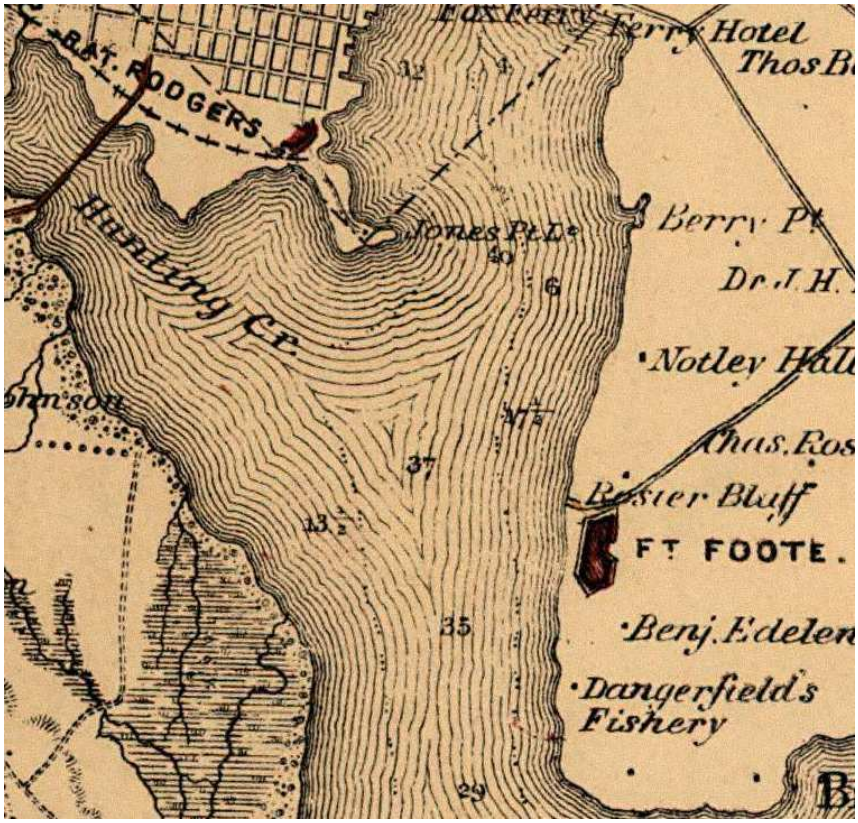
[147] PG Equity 573, 1870. Cited in Pearl, 29.
[148] Pearl, 29; PG Deeds HB 3:534, 536j, HB 1l:170,177; WA] I:673, 675.
[149] U.S. Census, Prince George's County, 1790.
[150] PG Inventory TT 2:196.
[151] Philip Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, 665.
[152] Pearl, 28; "Fifty-three percent of its population (1,600 out of 3,040 persons) was enslaved, just slightly higher than the 5% percent average enslaved population of the entire county." Census, Prince George's County, Maryland, 1860. Dick Krueger, chair of the Broad Creek Historical District, has contested these claims, arguing that white and freed black residents outnumbered slaves at Broad Creek during this period.

from the enslavement of other human beings, it was not without opponents of the "peculiar institution." The Reverend Walter Dulany Addison, who had lived at Harmony Hall and who was rector at St. John's Church (1801-1809), condemned the evils of slavery and freed several of his own slaves.[153] He would later support the resettlement of freed slaves in the African colony of Liberia.[154]



Fort Foote
National Park Service

Maryland was a "middle state" during the Civil War, and the community at Broad Creek was situated just a few miles south of the Union capital in Washington, an obvious strategic

[153] According to the 1790 U.S. Census for Prince George's County, he owned twenty slaves at the time of the count. Pearl, 28; Elizabeth Hesselius Murray, *One Hundred Years Ago or the Life and Times of the Rev. Walter Dulany Addison, 1769-1848.*

[154] Pearl, 28.

target for Confederate troops. It also sat between two forts along the Potomac River – Fort Washington and Fort Foote – which protected Washington. Despite its proximity to the capital, the community at Broad Creek was not directly affected by the military campaigns of the war. Moreover, because Maryland was not in a state of rebellion, its slaves were not freed by Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in 1862**.** The end of the war and the emancipation of the slaves in January 1865 unleashed far more profound changes on the community, as many of Broad Creek's "residents" were freed from bondage.

Many slaves freed in January 1865 stayed in or near the community. The Warrick and Humphries families continued to live and work in Broad Creek, on or near the farms of their former masters.[155] The Shorter family -- free African Americans who had lived in Broad Creek -- helped found a settlement called Chapel Hill for emancipated slaves, two miles southeast of Harmony Hall; many former slaves from the area settled in the new community.[156] Many African-American children attended the school at Fort Foote, a few miles upriver. The federal camp constructed for slaves manumitted in the aftermath of the war was located on the current site of Arlington National Cemetery, not far from Broad Creek, although it is not known if freed slaves from Broad Creek moved to the settlement.

Stein Family and the Making of Silesia

The man who purchased the Broad Creek properties in 1892, Robert Stein, immigrated from Germany to the United States in 1875. He had been born in Glatz, Germany, in 1857, and had studied languages at Heidelberg University, with short-lived plans to become a priest.[157]

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[155] Pearl, 28.
[156] Pearl, 28.
[157] "Broad Creek Ripples," March 6, 1959; Pearl, 31-32.

After arriving in Washington, D.C., he attended Georgetown College, where he earned his M.D. in 1886. [158] With his brother Richard and Joseph Adler, he began to purchase land at Broad Creek during the 1890s and to refer to the area Silesia. In 1892, he purchased the Harmony Hall property for $800, which his brother Richard came to own and manage. Members of his family from Germany began settling in the area, including his sisters Selma Stein Adler and Anna Stein Tilch. Silesia was granted its own post office in 1902, and a school opened there in 1903, a clear indication of its growth as a community. Other relatives – Adlers, Tilches, Walzels, the Rudsits – also arrived from Germany.

These community builders constructed residences on the Stein plot, including two homes across the Alexandria-Piscataway Road from Harmony Hall, while Richard Tilch built and opened a grocery and feed store, which was expanded and rebuilt over the years, on the site of the White Horse Tavern.[159] Robert Stein, whose family and neighbors called him "Uncle Robert," lived in Washington, where he worked for the U.S. Geological Survey and pursued a life as a renaissance man of sorts, working in the fields of linguistics and exploration. He spoke many European languages including German, Swedish, Danish, Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Russian.[160] He also traveled on several expeditions to the arctic; on one, he served as the interpreter for Admiral Robert Edwin Peary's trip to Greenland in 1897. In 1894, he proposed an expedition to rescue Alfred Björling and Evald Kallstenius, two Swedish naturalists lost on Ellesmere Island west of Greenland.[161] He donated the geological artifacts he collected on his

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[158] "Broad Creek Ripples," March 6, 1959.

[159] In 1959, Robert Tilch opened a Texaco gas station across the street from the tavern site, which he called Silesia Service Station. "Broad Creek Ripples," March 6, 1959. The station is no longer in the family. Raymond and Michael Tilch own a liquor store and "carry-out place" on the site of the former tavern. The feed store was closed in June 2001. "Prussian Echoes in a Handed-Down Hamlet," *Washington Post*, September 1, 2001.

[160] "Broad Creek Ripples," March 6, 1959.

[161] Smithsonian Institution, "List of Smithsonian Expeditions, 1878-1917" in "Topical Finding Aids to Records in the Smithsonian Institution Archives, Guide to Records of Expeditions, 1878-1917." See William Barr, "Robert Stein's Expedition to Ellesmere Island 1899–1901," *Polar Record* 21 (1982): 253-274.

various trips to the Smithsonian Institution. Stein, in one of the most bizarre plans to repatriate African Americans "back" to Africa ever concocted, proposed that black Americans be sent to Africa and that the U.S. and British governments collaborate to create "a puppet state for them" called Hopeland.[162] During the years leading up to World War I, he advocated a diplomatic pact, a "Trust of Civilization," between the U.S., France, the United Kingdom, and Germany as a means of securing world peace.[163] He committed suicide in 1917. His brother Richard and his nephew Bernard Tilch continued to live at Harmony Hall. They would sell it after the Stock Market Crash of 1929.

The descendants of the Tilch and Stein families still reside at Broad Creek. During interviews in the 1950s, Frederick (Fritz) Adler, a descendant of the original German settlers in Silesia, recalled winters skating and walking on the Potomac and square dances at neighbors' houses.[164] In the years before World War I, members of the Tilch and Adler families played in a German band at celebrations and other events in the community.[165] Members of their families were founders of the Silesia Citizens' Association and have taken a profound interest in the future of Harmony Hall. As Mike Tilch told the *Washington Post* in 2001, "We have our own little hamlet."[166]

Conclusion

The decline of the tobacco-based economy in the aftermath of the American Revolution brought profound changes to the community at Broad Creek. The transportation revolution

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[162]Robert Stein to Thomas Nelson Page, January 29, 1904, Thomas Nelson Page Papers, William R. Perkins Library, Duke University, cited in John David Smith, "Out of Sight, out of Mind: Robert Stein's 1904 'Deafricanization' Scheme to 'Hopeland,'" *Phylon* 46, no. 1 (1985): 1-15.

[163] "Broad Creek Ripples," March 27, 1959.

[164] "Broad Creek Ripples," March 13, 1959.

[165] "Broad Creek Ripples," March 27, 1959.

[166] "Prussian Echoes in a Handed-Down Hamlet," *Washington Post*, September 1, 2001.

transformed the riverside community from an economic hub in an Atlantic world to a relative commercial backwater. During this period, the small-scale urbanization of the eighteenth century – best represented by the growth of Broad Creek as a port town – ended. The town virtually disappeared to such an extent that researchers were unsure of its location until recently. The people of the community continued to farm and fish, though without the prosperity and growth of the earlier age. Broad Creek experienced a pronounced commercial decline, illustrated by the lack of stability in property ownership during the second half of the nineteenth century.

But the arrival of German immigrants to the area during the last two decades of the nineteenth century brought new growth to Broad Creek – new houses, a school, a post office, businesses, and a new community that its residents called Silesia. Richard Stein sold the Harmony Hall property in the aftermath of the Stock Market Crash of 1929 to a Southerner named Charles Wallace Collins, who would permanently alter the landscape at Harmony Hall and profoundly affect life for the residents of Broad Creek.

Chapter 4:
The Collins Era (1929-64)

The purchase of the property by Charles Wallace Collins in 1929 ushered in a new era of changes to the property. Over the course of the twentieth century, Collins, a lawyer from Alabama, and his wife Susan, "restored" the eighteenth-century property in the image of a Southern plantation. A successful government servant and attorney, Collins is most well-known for his pro-segregation treatise *Whither Solid South?* and his role in the Southern Democratic, or Dixiecrat, "Revolt" of 1948. After his death in 1964 and the acquisition of the property by the National Park Service in 1966, Susan remained a resident at a rapidly deteriorating Harmony Hall for two decades. Charles and Susan Collins were the last private owners of the Georgian mansion house.

Charles Wallace Collins (1879-1964)

Charles Wallace Collins (known as Wallace Collins to friends and family) was a man of many interests and professions. He was an economist, a librarian, a lawyer, a farmer, a linguist, an author, an intellectual, and a historian. He imagined Harmony Hall to be a plantation-style farm inspired by the Old South and himself to be a Southern gentleman, an independent man of wealth, influence, and property in the image of Thomas Jefferson or Andrew Jackson. While his most significant contribution to American political culture, a virulent pro-segregation treatise called *Whither Solid South?*, represents the darkest impulses of twentieth century American thought, his contribution to modern conservatism and his role in restoring and transforming Harmony Hall are undeniable.

Collins was born on April 4, 1879, to Robert Wood, a country store owner, and Anne Bates (Allen) Collins at Ingleside Plantation in Prarieville, Alabama, in rural Hale County. He

was one of nine sons and one daughter.[167] He was raised, in his own words, "in the Black Belt of Alabama where I was brought up on a cotton plantation and where the Negroes then as now out-numbered the whites ten to one."[168] As he describes in his unpublished *Recollections:*

> We never saw any white people of the neighborhood except at social and church gatherings or when they came all dressed up to pay formals calls. Our playmates were Negro boys of our own age. We went swimming, hunting with dogs, and fishing, played the usual games of children.[169]

He graduated from Auburn University in 1899 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture. He then read law for two years in Birmingham and was admitted to the Alabama Bar in 1901. He even spent some time studying at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and practicing his craft at Baptist revival meetings, though he later claimed that he never intended to become a minister.[170] He studied Semitic languages and archaeology at the University of Chicago, earning a Master of Arts degree in 1909, then took courses in government and economics at Harvard University from 1909.[171]

Collins arrived in Washington, D.C., shortly before World War I. In 1911, he became a reference assistant in the Economic Section of the Legislative Reference Service at the Library of Congress, beginning a decade of government employment and a half century of residence in the Washington area. While still employed at the Library of Congress, where he became director of legislative reference, he served as a legal advisor for select committees of the House and Senate from 1919 until 1920, during which time he drafted the Budget and Accounting Act (1921).[172]

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[167] Nancy Bruce telephone conversation with Marilyn Nickels, 4/28/1989, paraphrased by Marilyn Nickels.

[168] Charles W. Collins, *Whither Solid South? A Study of Politics and Race Relaions,* viii. Collins' early life on a plantation may reflect the construction of his own mythology as an old-fashioned Southern more than any reality. Nancy Bruce telephone conversation with Marilyn Nickels, 4/28/1989, paraphrased by Marilyn Nickels.

[169] *Recollections of Charles Wallace Collins,* Chapter I, unpublished manuscript, Collins papers.

[170] *Recollections of Charles Wallace Collins,* Chapter I, unpublished manuscript, Collins papers.

[171] Sarah McCulloh Lemmon, "The Ideology of the 'Dixiecrat' Movement," *Social Forces* 30 (December 1951): 169.

[172] Pearl, 32.

He worked as the Librarian of the Supreme Court and as a Law Librarian for Congress (1920-1921); General Counsel for the Bureau of the Budget (1921-1923); General Counsel in the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (1923-1925); and Deputy Comptroller of the Currency (1923-1927). He retired from government service in 1927 in order to pursue opportunities in the private sector.[173]

After his retirement from government service, Collins served as counsel for several financial institutions, including his work as general counsel for Bank of America and Transamerica and, his final position, as special counsel for the American Bankers Association (1933). He retired in 1947. After the Stock Market Crash of 1929, Collins worked vigorously to defend the banking industry against a political movement to curtail speculation and regulate the financial services industry.[174] After the findings of the Pecora Commission were published in 1931, Congress passed the Glass-Steagall Act of 1933, which mandated the institution separation of commercial and investment banks. Collins considered the "moderate reform" a victory for the banking industry.

[173] "C.W. Collins, Deputy Comptroller, Quits," *Washington Post*, June 1, 1927.
[174] *Recollections of Charles Wallace Collins,* Chapter XII, unpublished manuscript, Collins papers.

Sue Spencer Collins (1895-1983)

Waldwic, or Spencer House, Gallion, Alabama
Historic American Buildings Survey

At the age of fifty four, Collins married for the second time (little is known about his first marriage), this time to Susan (Sue) Steele Spencer on on June 22, 1933. Born August 13, 1895, the daughter of William Micajah Spencer and Bertha Gracey Steele of Hale County, Alabama, Sue Spencer Collins came from a wealthy, slave-owning planter family.[175] William Spencer and Bertha Steele married in 1889 at Waldwic plantation house in Gallion, which Steele's grandfather, Robert Gracey, had built in 1840 and renovated and expanded in Gothic Revival style in 1852. [176] The family plantation almost certainly inspired the building and renovation projects she and her husband completed at Harmony Hall. William Spencer, son of a Conference

[175] Gracey's widow, M.S. Gracey, and her second husband Willis Bocock owned 127 slaves in 1860. 1860 United States Census, Slave schedule, Marengo County, Alabama.

[176] Waldwic House & Outbuildings, State Route 69, Gallion, Hale County, AL, Historical American Buildings Survey, American Memory, http://memory.loc.gov.

officer named Alvis Harper and his wife Susan Elizabeth Spencer, was a lawyer and planter.[177] He earned his A.B. (1882) and his law degree (1883) from the University of Alabama and was elected a State Senator in 1901.[178]

Sue Collins had a profound emotional attachment to her home state of Alabama, which she and Charles visited frequently. She wrote regularly to her brother William M. Spencer, Jr., a lawyer in Birmingham, and spent much of her time researching her family's genealogy. She maintained two rental properties there, Montgomery House and Gallion House, and even voted in Alabama by absentee ballot.[179] She lived a life centered on domestic life and social events, which her husband certainly imagined as the proper role of a Southern gentleman's wife. She was active in the local clubs of the Colonial Dames, the Daughters of the Confederacy, and the Washington Club.

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[177] Thomas Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, vol. 4 (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1921), 1607.

[178] *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, vol. 4, 1607.

[179] He voted but did not pay taxes there, on grounds that she lived in Maryland. After the Alabama Department of Revenue disputed her non-payment of taxes, Collins filed income tax returns for 1946, 1947, and 1948. Susan Collins to Robert K. Greene, Judge Probate, Greensboro, Alabama, telegram, October 22, 1946; William Spencer, Jr., to Susan Collins, February 22, 1949; George P. Davis to the Alabama Department of Revenue, February 22, 1949; William Spencer, Jr., to Susan Collins, February 24, 1949; William Spencer, Jr., to Susan Collins, April 28, 1949, Collins papers.

The Restoration

Harmony Hall with Collins Additions, 1934
Historic American Buildings Survey

In the 1920s, Collins restored two eighteenth-century homes when he lived in Georgetown.[180] He first saw Harmony Hall while learning to drive on the Piscataway-Alexandria stage road.[181] After several months of negotiation, he purchased the brick mansion from Richard Stein in April 1929, months before the great stock market crash.[182] Collins considered his restoration of Harmony Hall to be "one of [the] most satisfying experiences" of "a long and eventful career."[183] Even though Collins spent much of his life across the river in Washington,

[180] Collins restored and lived at 3328 O Street and 1310 34th Street, Georgetown, Washington, DC. He considered himself "one of the pioneers of the restoration of Georgetown," "a decade before the influx into Georgetown in the thirties." Collins to Helen Duprey Bullock, National Trust for Historic Preservation, November 10, 1952, Charles Collins papers.

[181] Pearl, 33.

[182] Pearl, 33; PG County Deeds 326:375, 376.

[183] Collins to Helen Duprey Bullock, National Trust for Historic Preservation, November 10, 1952, Charles Collins papers.

working as a government servant and as a private attorney, he fashioned himself around Harmony Hall. Charles Collin's niece, Nancy Bruce, described his vision of "a life in the country at Harmony Hall [as] almost out of another century."[184] As Collins defended "Southern civilization" as activist and writer, Harmony Hall was central to his vision of himself as a Southern country gentleman.

Staircase at Harmony Hall, 1934
Historic American Buildings Survey

[184] Nancy Bruce telephone conversation with Marilyn Nickels, 4/28/1989, paraphrased by Marilyn Nickels.

Staircase at Harmony Hall, 2009
Charles Reed

When Charles and Sue Spencer Collins acquired Harmony Hall, its condition had deteriorated significantly from its eighteenth-century grandeur. Still, its major architectural and structural elements remained largely intact, with the exception of its two wings.[185] The Stein Family had used the parlor as a fish-drying room and the third floor as a storage space for meal and corn.[186] Collins saved and restored much of the existing woodwork, including floors, mantels, paneling, chair rails, and cupboards. The majestic staircase required virtually no restoration work.[187] The house was infested with rats, so Collins rebuilt the brick foundation in order to deny the pests access to their elaborate network of tunnels through the house.[188] He also

[185] When Collins purchased Harmony Hall, only the stone foundations remained. Pearl, 33; Charles W. Collins, "Harmony Hall," Charles Collins papers.
[186] Pearl, 33; Charles Collins papers.
[187] Pearl, 33; Charles Collins papers.
[188] Pearl, 33; Charles Collins papers.

installed electricity and running water.[189] After two years of extensive work, the Collins family moved into the red brick house.

From the earliest days of his ownership, Collins sought to trace the history of his property and to document its historical significance. In 1931, he wrote to Joseph Morgan of the Maryland Historical Association to inquire about locating "some of the original records" relating to Broad Creek "rich in historical association with the early development of our country and particularly Mount Vernon."[190] He also wrote to the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore, the Land Office in Baltimore, and Louise Macgruder, a genealogist and descendant of Enoch Magruder. [191] Collins wished to connect Harmony Hall to the origins of colonial America and the New Republic in order to document the local and national cultural significance of Harmony Hall and Want Water, to accentuate his own status, and to increase the value of his property. Collins was deeply invested in the idea that Harmony Hall was a stamping ground of George Washington, a claim which itself had some historical backing but was grossly exaggerated by Collins.[192]

Collins received little help from the Maryland Historical Society, other than advice to contact the state Land Office and Louise Macgruder, a descendant of the Magruder family and historical researcher. The Land Commissioner referred him to the county-level records in Upper Marlboro, and Macgruder agreed to research the Lyles and Macgruder families at Broad Creek

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[189] Pearl, 33; Charles Collins papers.

[190] Collins to Joseph Morgan, Maryland Historical Association, May 8, 1931, Charles Collins papers.

[191] Collins to the Secretary of the Maryland Historical Society, August 14, 1931; Collins to James Hancock, Secretary of the MHS, August 20, 1931; Collins to Arthur Trader, Maryland Land Commissioner, August 20, 1931; Charles Collins papers.

[192] For more on George Washington at Harmony, see chapter 3 on the eighteenth century. As an amateur preservationist, Collins desire to say that "George Washington slept here," was in no way unusual. The 1940 play *George Washington Slept Here*, written by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman and adapted for the screen in 1942 by Everett Freedman, satirizes the phenomenon. Also see Seth C. Bruggeman, *Here, George Washington Was Born: Memory, Material Culture, and the Public History of a National Monument* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2008).

for a fee of $2.50 per hour.[193] He also hired a researcher named Carl Turner, who spent considerable time researching the Broad Creek property records. With help from Magruder and Turner, Collins was able to craft a rather detailed history of his property, which he used to write the official Harmony Hall and Want Water narratives for the Historical American Buildings Survey; to lecture the American Clan Greg Society, whose members he invited to Harmony Hall in 1935, on the history of their family at Broad Creek; and to challenge the 1934 plans of National Parks Planning Commission to build a causeway across Broad Creek as part of a Maryland extension of the George Washington Memorial Parkway.[194] As an amateur historian, Collins possessed extensive but flawed knowledge of Broad Creek, knowledge that also was shaped by his ambitions for Harmony Hall. He wrongly believed, for instance, the local tradition that Harmony Hall was built in 1723, and he exaggerated the presence of George Washington on the property.[195] Yet, the rich documentation of Broad Creek's history, as commissioned and written by Charles Collins, has served as the starting point for all later research, including the work of Marilyn Nickels, Susan Pearl, and the present author.

While Collins and his wife imagined themselves as amateur historians, the standards and methods that they used in "restoring" Harmony Hall to its original grandeur were not those of twenty-first century historic preservation professionals. Some of their work fundamentally altered the historic character of the property. In the 1930s, Collins disassembled a house on the

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[193] Louise Magruder to Collins, August 22, 1931, Charles Collins papers.

[194] Collins to H.T. Magruder, Chieftain, American Clan Gregor Society, October 7, 1935; "Remarks by Charles W. Collins upon the occasion of the visit to Harmony Hall, Broad Creek, Prince George's County, Maryland of the American Clan Gregor Society on Saturday, October 19, 1935," Charles Collins papers. He also wrote a long treatise on the history of Broad Creek in a letter protesting a permit issued by the Army Corps of Engineers to allow the construction of a commercial wharf at the mouth of Broad Creek. Draft of Collins to the Board of County Commissioners, Prince George's County, Maryland, c. November 1949, Charles Collins papers.

[195] At the invitation of Collins, the National Society of the Colonial Dames of Maryland even ceremonially attached a plaque to Harmony Hall, giving its date of construction as 1723. This artifact has gone missing. Draft of Collins to the Board of County Commissioners, Prince George's County, Maryland, c. November 1949, Charles Collins papers.

main road in Piscataway, which was scheduled to be demolished, and reassembled it on his property; this was Piscataway House.[196] During World War II, Collins installed vents for a warm-air system by cutting holes in the brick walls and covering them with plaster.[197] He permanently transformed the landscape by grading and filling, destroyed and removing buildings, and building new ones inspired by the Old South.[198] His work damaged or destroyed traces of the past, leaving little documentation of what had been lost, including the rich archaeological evidence of the centuries-old mansion.[199] At the same time, the research and restoration work of Charles and Sue Collins established the historical significance of Harmony Hall and helped secure it for future generations.

Charles and Susan Collins transformed the brick mansion at Harmony Hall from a deteriorating Chesapeake country house into a plantation estate modeled on the Old South. They added a terraced law, a stone-lined ha-ha, and a cypress walk.[200] They dredged Slash Creek, reclaiming eleven acres of property, and built two bridges across the creek.[201] Servant residences were built in order to accommodate the needs of a Southern plantation family. During the 1940s, Collins built a new two-story wing and basement on the south side of Harmony Hall. Around the time of his retirement in 1947, he built a small house, now near ruins, to the south of the mansion, where he spent much of his time reading and writing.

Over the course of the restoration, Collins reconsolidated a significant tract of the old Battersea land grant by acquiring adjacent parcels of property. From 1930 to 1932, Collins

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[196] Pearl, 34; "Specifications for Mr. Charles Collins, Harmony Hall, Fort Washing to Road, Oxen Hill, MD," January 30, 1940, Collins papers..

[197] Pearl, 33; Charles Collins papers.

[198] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall,* 4.

[199] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall,* 19-20.

[200] Pearl, 33; Collins reported that he found, during the process of digging the ha-ha, "the floor of one large room perfectly laid in square slabs of red sandstone so well fitted that mortar was unnecessary," which he believed to be the original Haggett structure. No formal archaeological study of the ha-ha has been completed, and Collins' theory was speculation. Charles W. Collins, "Harmony Hall" and "Memo," Charles Collins papers.

[201] Pearl, 33; Charles Collins papers.

acquired three 13.3-acre plots from the Sellner family, including their residence at Want Water/Lyles House.[202] Collins had plans to restore the already crumbling house, but "World War II came along and the project was temporarily abandoned."[203] After the war, Collins planned to use wood from the property to replace and restore the woodwork: from "a piece of virgin forest which contains the three woods which were used in the construction of want water – white oak, tulip poplar and yellow pine (more than a century old)."[204] Collins asserted that the original paneling was still intact in the drawing room, hall, and dining room, which he claimed both the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Baltimore Museum of Art sought to acquire.[205] In 1942, the "distinguished architect" Ward Brown drew up plans in 1942 to disassemble Want Water and rebuild it as an addition to Harmony Hall.[206] Collins never completed the work. At some point, he made efforts to stabilize the property. But, by the time of his death in 1964, Want Water had been reduced to near ruins. Its wooden outer walls had collapsed leaving only "its brick gambrel-end walls."[207]

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[202] Pearl, 34; PG Deeds 279: 371, 334: 245 and 247, 381: 279. The original Want Water property had been subdivided into five lots in c. 1888.

[203] Collins to Helen Duprey Bullock, National Trust for Historic Preservation, November 10, 1952, Charles Collins papers.

[204] Collins to Helen Duprey Bullock, National Trust for Historic Preservation, November 10, 1952, Charles Collins papers.

[205] Collins to Lee Chandler, August 22, 1938, Charles Collins papers.

[206] Ward Brown, Specifications for Alterations and Additions to Harmony Hall, Maryland, for Mr. and Mrs. Charles Collins, n.d.; Collins to Donald Donohue, October 7, 1949, Charles Collins papers. "The old house on the property known as Lyles House, shall be carefully taken down and such materials as lumber, flooring, paneling, cornices, chair rails, doors trim etc. that can be used in the proposed new wing to Harmony Hall shall be carefully removed before demolition of the masonry walls."

[207] Pearl, 35; PG Deed 334: 245, 247; Remarks by Charles W. Collins to the American Clan Gregor Sociery, October 19, 1935, Year Book of the American Clan Gregor Society; Charles Collins papers.

Relocation of Piscataway House

On the main road in Piscataway, Collins found a house that was to be torn down, to make room for a "Sears Roebuck brick bungalow."[208] Collins contacted the owner, who agreed to give him the house if he removed it from the site.[209] North of Want Water, on one of the parcels Collins acquired from the Sellner family, he reassembled the Tidewater-style Piscataway House over the period of a year in 1932-1933 after carefully documenting and numbering its component pieces.[210] The house, still standing and occupied as a private residence, was rebuilt close to Livingstone Road near St. John's Church. Local lore suggests that Collins paneled the living quarters in Piscataway House with materials from Want Water, but this claim is unsubstantiated.[211] Collins dredged the channel dug by Humphrey Batts in 1749, providing Piscataway House better access to Broad Creek. On the north gable side of the house, Collins built a kitchen wing addition and a detached carriage house in Tidewater style. Collins rented out the property, adding a separate garage and apartment in 1946-48, before selling the house and 11.5 acres to Colonel and Mrs. George S. Brown in 1956.[212] From 1974 until 1978, Brown served as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.[213]

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[208] Collins to Helen Duprey Bullock, National Trust for Historic Preservation, November 10, 1952, Charles Collins papers.

[209] Collins to Helen Duprey Bullock, National Trust for Historic Preservation, November 10, 1952, Charles Collins papers.

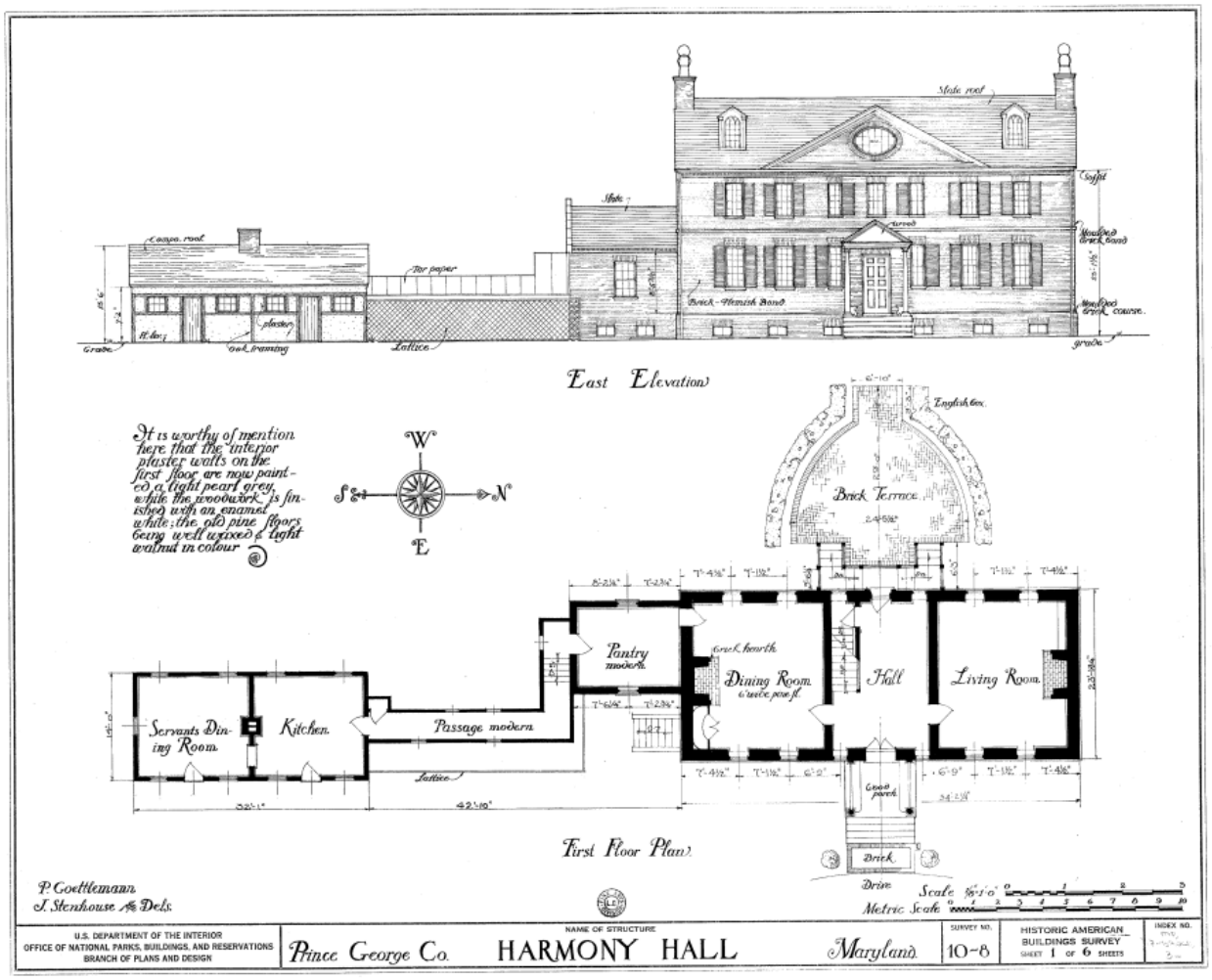
[210] Collins estimated the house was built around 1752, though the actual age of the house, detached from its original plot, is difficult to determine. Pearl, 34; Collins to Helen Duprey Bullock, National Trust for Historic Preservation, November 10, 1952, Charles Collins papers.

[211] In 1952, long after the relocation and restoration of Piscataway House, Collins hoped to save Want Water, in particular, "to preserve the beautiful paneling that is still in tact." Collins to Helen Duprey Bullock, National Trust for Historic Preservation, November 10, 1952, Charles Collins papers.

[212] Collins had considered selling the property during the 1930s but never did. Pearl, 34; PG Deeds 279: 371, 334: 245 and 247, 381: 279; Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties form for PiscatawayHouse, PG 80-Z4-9; Prince George's County Deed #2020:429; Charles Collins papers.

[213] Pearl, 34.

Establishment of status as historic landmark



Harmony Hall, East Elevation, 1924, with proposed extension
Historic American Buildings Survey

Collins was dedicated to establishing Harmony Hall and Want Water as historical landmarks. In November 1933, he wrote to the General Director of the Maryland Tercentenary Commission -- organized to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Maryland's founding -- to inquire about the placement of a state marker by the roadside on his property.[214] He apparently received no response.

[214] Collins to J. Alexis Shriver, Maryland Tercentenary Commission, November 24, 1933, Charles Collins papers.

For Charles Collins, the birth of the Historical American Buildings Survey (HABS) offered the opportunity to document the historical significance of Harmony Hall and to increase the value of his property.[215] HABS was a New Deal make-work program started in 1933 to employ out-of-work architects, historians, and photographers.[216] The HABS program carefully documented the architectural significance of historic properties across the United States, creating an invaluable archive for future historic preservationists. In 1934, HABS teams documented both Harmony Hall and Want Water in photographs and drawings of floor plans, elevations, and other architecturally significant details, which were deposited in the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress and have recently been digitized as part of the library's *American Memory* project.[217]

In January 1835, nearly two years after his letter to the General Director of the Tercentenary Commission, Collins wrote a second time to J. Alexis Shriver, who was by then the Director of Historic Markers at the Maryland State Roads Commission.[218] He complained that he never received a response to his 1933 letter and mentioned that he now had "a certificate [from the Department of the Interior] certifying both of these houses as historical buildings worthy to be preserved for future generations."[219] There is no evidence that a roadside marker was ever installed by the Maryland State Highway Commission

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[215] Collins to Charles E. Peterson, Chief, Branch of Plans and Designs, Eastern Branch, Office of National Parks, Buildings and Reservations, November 29, 1933.

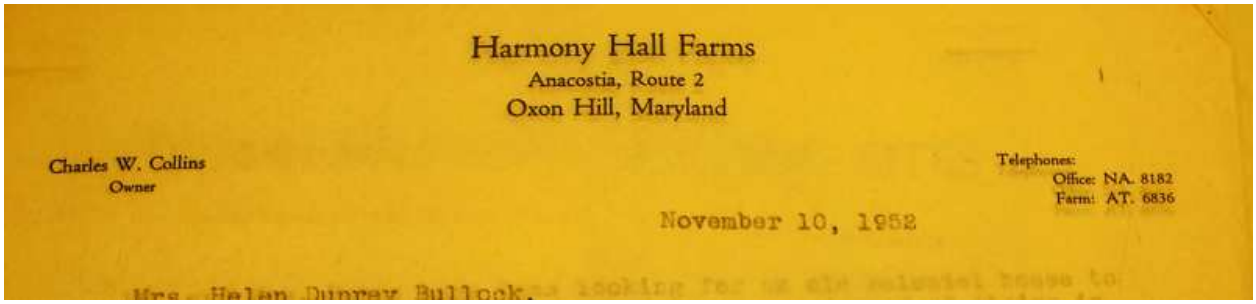
[216] Pearl, 35; Harmony Hall, 10500 Livingstone Road (10511 Livingstone Road), Friendly vicinity, Prince George's County, MD, Built In America, American Memory, http://memory.loc.gov; Lyles House, Livingston Road, Fort Washington, Prince George's County, MD.

[217] John P. O'Neill, Associate Architect, Historical American Buildings Survey, to Collins, January 25, 1935, Charles Collins papers.

[218] Collins to J. Alexis Shriver, January 28, 1935, Charles Collins papers.

[219] Collins to J. Alexis Shriver, January 28, 1935, Charles Collins papers.

Life on Harmony Hall Farms


Harmony Hall Farms
Anacostia, Route 2
Oxon Hill, Maryland

Charles W. Collins
Owner

Telephones:
Office: NA. 8182
Farm: AT. 6836

November 10, 1952

Charles Collins letterhead, 1952
Charles W. Collins Papers, University of Maryland

The soil at Harmony Hall had been tilled since its earliest days. Even though Collins did not retire from his law practice until 1944, he continuously farmed the land at Harmony Hall for much of his tenure there. Collins fashioned himself a gentleman farmer, with the status, wealth, and manners of the great plantation owner of the Old South. His identity was profoundly invested in this self-image, and he renovated Harmony Hall to reflect it. Despite his office at the National Press Building in Washington, D.C., he typed much of his written correspondence from "Harmony Hall Farms." He apparently spent much of his leisure time reading or writing correspondence and browsing the pages of agricultural catalogs and magazines, looking for new equipment and fertilizers to use and crops to plant. He carefully sought out and acquired Aberdeen Angus Cattle (1934) and Yorkshire Boars (1945), the raising of which was more of a hobby than a profession. [220] A Washington political insider, Collins imagined himself to be a Southern gentleman farmer, even if he was, he admitted, an amateur.

As a professional litigator, Collins was a difficult man to please. He was quick to write angry letters to those who had wronged him: a lumber yard proprietor who overcharged him for

[220] Collins did not report having any cattle to the War Food Program in 1944 or 1945. In a letter to the editor of the *Abderdeen-Angus Journal*, he reported that his "small herd... [was] largely for recreational purposes." Collins to Fred Hahne, January 16, 1934, Collins papers.

timber, a plasterer who did shoddy work, an auto mechanic who misquoted the price of a repair, a government agency that planned to build a causeway across his beloved Broad Creek. His uncompromising attitude became pronounced when he dealt with laborers. In 1938, he complained to the William Burns Detective Agency that the watchman he had hired to watch the property while he was out of town "was found at six o'clock in the morning, dead drunk, on the floor of one of our bedrooms with an empty whisky bottle on both sides of him."[221] In March 1946, when the Prince George's County agent for the Department of Agriculture offer potential labor relief for farmers, Collins quickly responded: "I am very much in need of a man who is sober and able to operate a tractor and has a permit to drive a truck. If I could secure such a man, I would be able to discharge two drunkards."[222] Collins was not an easy man to work for.

World War II

The experience at Harmony Hall Farms during World War II was not untypical. While farming was somewhat of a hobby for Collins, he profited enormously from the war effort. Supported by wartime government programs and expanding global markets, American farmers experienced a period of relative prosperity following the lean years of the 1930s. At the same time, he experienced the same difficulties as other farmers: price controls, scarce labor, and the rationing of farming implements.[223] Because of war, labor was scarce, and the hardnosed Collins had difficulty maintaining an adequate labor force to operate the farm. For instance, he protested the conscription of William Clyde Murdoch (1943) and Arthur P. Nevitt (1945) by the local draft

[221] Collins to William J. Burns International Detective Agency, November 4, 1938, Collins papers.

[222] Collins to P.E. Clark, County Agent, U.S. Department of Agriculture, March 20, 1946; Clark to the Farmers of Prince George's County, March 13, 1946, Collins papers.

[223] J. Claggett Sweeny, Chairman, USDA War Board, Prince George's County, to Charles Collins, December 22, 1942; Charles Collins to John L. Ingalls, January 8, 1943; Collins to Agricultural Adjustment Agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture, February 25, 1944, Collins papers.

board, arguing that men were essential skilled labor essential to the war effort at home.[224] Nevertheless, the farm grew during the war. By the time of Collins' letter to the draft board in 1945, he was cultivating "80 acres of corn, 10 acres of Kaffir corn, 20 acres of Russian giant sunflower, [and] 20 acres of alfalfa" and raising "hogs (about 300 for market per year)... [and] 300 or 400 hens and chickens and some other poultry"[225] During the period, he also sold some of the property's old-growth forest to the Southern Maryland Lumber Company and the War Production Board for timber.[226]

Whiter Solid South? and the Dixiecrat Party

At the end war, Collins retired from his law practice to concentrate on writing and politics. It was during this period he became involved in one of the most significant political movements of the twentieth century, the Southern Democratic, or Dixiecrat, "Revolt." While Collins imagined himself a gentleman acting in defense of Southern culture and states' rights, his book *Whither Solid South?* presented a rather controversial vision of American politics and history. Nonetheless, the book and his politics contributed significantly to the Dixiecrat movement and the development of modern conservatism.

The origins of Collins' political thought can be traced to his 1912 work *The Fourteenth Amendment*, written when he was in his thirties. Decades before *Whiter Solid South?,* Collins articulated an ideology that advocated states' rights, limited federal government, and racial segregation. Of course, his thought developed over the course his lifetime, informed by the Great

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[224] Collins to Selective Service System, Local Board No. 3, February 2, 1943; Collins to Selective Service System, Local Board No. 3, May 21, 1945, Collins papers.

[225] Collins to Selective Service System, Local Board No. 3, May 21, 1945; Charles W. Collins, War Food Program, 1944 Farm Plan, Collins papers.

[226] Charles Collins to Southern Maryland Lumber Co., Inc., January 18, 1944; Collins to F.S. Martin, Forest Service, War Production Board, January 31, 1944, Collins papers.

Depression and the New Deal, World War II, the emergence of the United Nations, and the civil rights movement. His core political ideology remained fundamentally unchanged, however. In 1912, Collins argued that the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution (1868) -- a Reconstruction-era amendment that extended basic civil rights to "all persons born or naturalized in the United States" (e.g. African Americans) -- had:

> change[d] the form of the American Commonwealth. The States were to exist only in name. Their legislation and their courts were to be reduced to impotency. The citizens of the States were now to live directly under the surveillance of the Federal Government, looking to it for protection in his private affairs and fearing its avenging power should he transgress the least of its commandments.[227]

This language was remarkably similar to Collins' later opposition to the New Deal, to the civil rights movement, and to the United Nations. Such rhetoric helped inspire a Southern revolt within the dominant Democratic Party that had been brewing for decades, and articulate a political ideology and strategy that would transform American politics during the second half of the twentieth century.

Charles Wallace Collins retired from his law practice on November 8, 1944, just one day after Franklin D. Roosevelt's historic election to fourth term as president.[228] He began writing a book called *Whither Solid South?* that, once published in 1947, became "both manifesto and blueprint for the states' rights – soon nicknamed 'Dixiecrat' – Revolt."[229] Collins wrote the treatise, he explained in the introduction, to "rationalize and strengthen the position of the orthodox Southerner and… [to] arouse him to action in the face of organized hostility to the

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[227] Charles W. Collins, The *Fourteenth Amendment and the States: A Study of the Operation of the Restraint Clauses of Section One of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1912), 20. The book has been cited in two Supreme Court cases: Adamson v. California, 332 U.S. 46 (1947); In his dissent, Hugo Black also cited the book in Connecticut General Life Ins. Co. v. Johnson, 303 U.S. 77 (1938).

[228] Lowndes, 11.

[229] Lowndes, 11.

Southern States."[230] The work did not represent a political reawakening to the postwar transformation of American society for Collins as much as the logical summation of the ideology he espoused in *The Fourteenth Amendment***,** which conceptually linked the centrality of a limited federal government with a belief in racial segregation and exclusion. As Collins sought to recreate a plantation reminiscent of the Old South at Harmony Hall, he envisioned a future for the New South that recalled the social and political order of the Antebellum South.

The "Solid South" to which Collins referred identified the electoral dominance of the Democratic Party in the American South between the end of Reconstruction in 1877 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.[231] During this period, the Democratic Party experienced virtually uncontested electoral dominance in the South and acted as a vehicle for perpetuating the white supremacy of the Jim Crow state.[232] The South remained "solid" through the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt (1933-1945), despite the New Deal's expansion of federal power and economic interventionalism against the Southern orthodoxy of states' rights.[233] In the years following World War II, however, Democratic rule in the South began to fracture. The service of thousands of African-American servicemen to the American war effort and the emergence of a civil rights movement pushed the winds of change in ways unparalleled since the days of Radical Reconstruction. In 1948, President Harry Truman organized the President's Committee on Civil Rights, issued a 10-point *Civil Rights Program*, and ended the practice of segregation in the U.S.

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[230] Charles W. Collins, *Whither Solid South?*, xii. Henceforth cited as "*Whither*."

[231] Keith M. Finley, *Delaying the Dream: Southern Senators and the Fight Against Civil Rights, 1938-1965* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008); Kari Frederickson, *The Dixiecrat Revolution and the End of the Solid South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

[232] There were occasional Republican breakthroughs. Theodore Roosevelt won Missouri's electoral votes in 1904. In 1928, Al Smith, a Catholic from New York, lost some electoral ground in the South to the Republican candidate Herbert Hoover.

[233] While the New Deal-era Democratic coalition mobilized and enfranchised laborers and immigrants in a way virtually unparalleled in American history, it remained decidedly silent on the issue of civil rights for African Americans. Roosevelt often depended on Southern clout in Congress to pass New Deal legislation, though a significant "conservative" minority within the party began to oppose and limit Roosevelt's program during the late 1930s. African-American representation in the Democratic voting rolls, however, grew dramatically during the period because of the economic and social opportunities offered by the New Deal.

military. At the 1948 Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, Hubert Humphrey, then the Mayor of Minneapolis, Minnesota, proposed a party platform on civil rights that called for active federal intervention against racial segregation. When this platform was adopted in a highly divided vote, thirty-five Southern delegates walked out of the convention, beginning a revolt that would play no small role in the whither of the Solid South.

Although Collins is widely identified as the intellectual architect of the modern states' rights movement, his contribution to American political history has received limited attention from scholars. In 1951, historian Sarah McCulloh Lemmon explained what she saw as the deeply ambiguous relationship between Collins' writings and the Dixiecrat, or States' Rights Democratic Party:

> It is almost an impossibility to find any ideas expressed by States Rights Democrats in 1948 which are not clearly, logically, and learnedly stated in Collins's work. It is not easily possible to prove who reads a book or who is influenced by it after reading. Yet it is reasonably clear... that Collins should be considered the most important ideologist of the movement... There is apparently no connection between Collins and the actionists, but that he expressed most of their ideas earlier and better than they did cannot well be doubted.[234]

More recently, scholar Joseph Lowndes has drawn a direct conceptual link between Collins and modern conservative thought, positing that Collins contributed uniquely to American political history. He argues that Collins' *Whither Solid South?* contributed profoundly to the states' rights movement and to modern American conservatism, and demonstrates "how southern elites began to link racism and free market conservatism in theory, and began the first steps to break with the Democratic political order in practice."[235] At the same time, Lowndes smartly argues that this reconfiguration of the American political terrain -- the disintegration of a Democratic Solid South and the collapse of the New Deal coalition -- was never a foregone conclusion, but instead

[234] Lemmon, 169.
[235] Lowndes, 11.

"constituted a dynamic and highly contingent process."[236] Collins had significant foresight in identifying the coming links between Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans, developing a political "Southern strategy" that Republican presidential candidates from Richard Nixon to George W. Bush mobilized effectively.[237]

While most Southern Democrats supported Roosevelt during the election of 1944, Charles Wallace Collins began writing the treatise that would identify the salient issue that would undermine the Solid South: race. In the aftermath of a war justified in the language of democracy, Collins argued that the very idea of democracy was being hijacked by radicals (liberals, Communists, "statists," "Negroes") who sought to "make the Negro equal to the white man economically, politically, and socially."[238] This racial liberalism, he argued, was aberrant to American traditions of "state sovereignty, traditions of exclusion, and economic liberalism."[239] To Collins, the political alliance between civil rights activists, empowered by the war, and liberal "statists" combined the two greatest threats to the Southern way of life: "Negro equality and State capitalism."[240] Using deeply conspiratorial language, he claimed that these forces intended to "establish a reign of terror of a centralized national police state with a vast secret service to track down individuals who have been charged with the violation of rights of other individuals."[241] Through the course of the book, Collins developed a high-stakes political strategy that sought to seize control of the Democratic Party at the state level and to mobilize the

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[236] Lowndes, 12.

[237] It is extremely unlikely that Kevin Phillips, the Nixon strategist who proposed the same "Southern strategy," knew of Collins. He makes no mention of Collins, for instance, in his 1970 interview with the *New York Times*. "Nixon's Southern strategy 'It's All In the Charts,'' *New York Times*, May 17, 1970.

[238] *Whither*, 181. Lowndes, 17.

[239] Lowndes, 19. Collins explicitly challenged Gunner Myrdal's *An American Dilemma* (1944), a liberal account of the "Negro problem," which damned the white supremacy of the South as antithetical to the American creed. It articulated a profound belief in the importance of educating in transforming "poor and uneducated whites" in "backwards" areas. See Lowndes, 20-21.

[240] *Whither*, ix-x; Lowndes, 22-23.

[241] *Whither*, x; Lowndes, 23.

South's electoral votes against these emerging threats. His final chapter proposed another, highly charged solution to the "Negro problem": the resettlement of African Americans in "a forty-ninth state in Africa," somewhat reminiscent of the African nation of Liberia, founded more than a century earlier by freed U.S. slaves.[242] *The New Republic* called *Whither Solid South?* the "*Mein Kampf* of the new movement."[243]

Collins paid some $10,000 to publish the book. Pelican Publishing, a "one man outfit" in New Oreleans, printed 2,000 copies of *Whither Solid South?* on its first run in February 1948. Both Brown and Little and Macmillan, publishers of Collins' previous works, refused the manuscript on grounds of its "frank statement of the political and social condition of the South."[244] By the summer of 1948, the book had sold only 1,300 copies, which Collins blamed on a lack of publicity and "the whole elaborate machinery of the Eastern book trade."[245] He complained that Pelican had refused to mention the "Southern Revolt" in the marketing literature and that "in the whole Southern Region there is not one first class commercial house which can print a book, promote it through advertising and reviews and distribute it to the book trade."[246] Collins himself distributed copies of the book to friends and colleagues, including 500 to the United Daughters of the Confederacy and several hundred to Southern governors and other leaders.[247] The American historian Richard Hofstadter, soon after embracing a more conservative "consensus" interpretation of the American past, wrote to Charles Collins, asking where he might find a copy of the book.[248] In response, Collins explained that "Pelican had sold the first edition out last September, but did not get out the second printing until December 21st,

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[242] Collins later claimed that this resettlement would be completely voluntary.
[243] "The New Confederacy." *New Republic*, November 1, 1948, 10-14.
[244] Collins to Baker and Taylor Co., July 28, 1948, Collins papers.
[245] Collins to unknown, c. 1948, Collins papers.
[246] Collins to unknown, c. 1948, Collins papers.
[247] Stuart Landry, Pelican Publishing Company, to Collins, December 31, 1951; Collins to Landry, July 8, 1952, Collins papers.
[248] Richard Hofstadter to Collins, December 23, 1948, Collins papers.

so they were out of books for the critical [1948] campaign and election months."[249] He frequently expressed hopes that the States Rights Democratic Party might distribute it, particularly in the North. The commercial failure of the book perhaps explains the lack of importance attributed to Collins by historians. Collins' private distribution of *Whither Solid South?*, however, reached an elite and influential audience, who would take up his call to action.

The Southern Democratic Revolt began in the months leading up to the 1948 Democratic National Convention. In his January 17 State of the Union address, President Harry S. Truman promised "corrective action" by the federal government against the forces of segregation.[250] Truman recommended, in the language of Collins, "a series of laws which would destroy the civilization of the South by making the Negro the social equal of the White man through the abolition of segregation by legislative fiat and enforcing equality through fines and jail sentences in the Federal Courts."[251] Betrayed by the Missouri-born president, argues historian Joseph Lowndes, "committed segregationist political elites and intellectuals began to mobilize in response with the blueprint closest at hand, Collins' *Whither Solid South?* which was at the time in wide circulation among Southern Democratic elites."[252] In the resolution passed by a group of Southern governors soon after the State of the Union address, drafted almost entirely by Governor Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, they promised not to "stand idle and let all of this happen… It is thought that we have no redress. This assumption ignores the Electoral College set up in the Constitution of the United States."[253] This response reflected the profound influence of Collins and a long tradition of Southerners using the power of the sectional vote in the American

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[249] Collins to Richard Hofstadter, December 28, 1948, Collins papers.
[250] Lowndes, 27.
[251] Charles W. Collins, "Civil Rights and States' Rights," address to the Federation of Women's Clubs, Baltimore, MD, October 27, 1948, Collins papers.
[252] Lowndes, 27.
[253] Quoted in Lowndes, 27.

system to influence national politics.

After an unsuccessful meeting with DNC chairman Howard McGrath on February 3, 1948, Thurmond and the Southern Democrats agreed to refuse a pro-civil rights candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination at the national convention and to reconvene a rump convention in Birmingham, Alabama, should the nominee be unsatisfactory.[254] After the nomination of Truman and the endorsement of a pro-civil rights platform, the Southern Democrats withheld their electoral votes. Some of them walked out. Their July convention in Birmingham, Lowndes notes, "had more the flavor of a revival meeting than a political convention as thousands of excited white settlers streamed into the hall."[255] Collins appeared on a national television broadcast at the Birmingham conference on the night of Friday, July 16, after a leadership conference that included former Alabama Governor Frank Dixon and the state chair of the Alabama Democratic Party Gessner T. McCorvey. The Southern Democrats nominated Strom Thurmond, the Governor of South Carolina, who had never read *Whither Solid South*.[256] Yet, the overall strategy was clearly inspired by Collins, who had helped organize the greatest third-party revolt since the Progressive Party candidacy of Theodore Roosevelt in 1912. While Thurmond garnered thirty-nine electoral votes, he won only 2.4 percent of the popular voting and finished a distant third to Truman and Thomas Dewey.

In July 1954, months after *Brown v. Board of Education*, Collins finished a new treatise called *The Race Integration Cases*, which was published by the American States' Rights Association.[257] The *Brown* decision, Collins lamented, unconstitutionally imposed upon the states a system by which "the whole population from the age of six to twenty-two could be held

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[254] Lowndes, 27.
[255] Lowndes, 28.
[256] Lowndes, 29.
[257] Charles W. Collins, *The Race Integration Cases* (Birmingham, Alabama: American States' Rights Association, 1954).

in coercive physical contact from early childhood to maturity [with African American children]."[258] Collins identified the origins of this transformation in African-American civil rights leaders' insidious to achieve "racial integration as an end in itself":

> To integrate is to combine the parts into a whole. To integrate races of people is to produce one race where two or more previously existed... The social theory behind this procedure is that this close and intimate association during the entire formative period of their lives, would itself produce integration, or in other words, amalgamation of the races. Fantastic as it may appear the social aim is a Negroid South.[259]

The Brown case, Collins asserted, had unconstitutionally overturned the Reconstruction settlement and *Plessy v. Ferguson,* the 1896 Supreme Court case that upheld the constitutionality of "separate but equal," on sociological and psychological grounds rather than legal ones.[260] During the twentieth century, he theorized, African Americans began to infiltrate the American political system through "the simple qualification of manhood suffrage" in Northern urban areas and by mobilizing themselves in political and labor movements.[261] Despite this emerging political power and the victory in the Brown case, Collins asserted that segregation was "natural law" and "cannot be abolished."[262] He encouraged his Southern brethren to unite against a tyrannical federal government, white students to institute *de facto* segregation at integrated schools ("A Regional Cold War"), and African Americans to "educate themselves."[263] Collins further declared that, if "worse [came] to worst," the Knights of the White Camelia, a nineteenth-century secret organization similar to and associated with the Ku Klux Klan, ought to be revived

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[258] Collins, *The Race Integration Cases,* 2.
[259] Collins, *The Race Integration Cases,* 1-2.
[260] Collins, *The Race Integration Cases,* 6. As he had in *Whither Solid South?,* he identified the influence of Gunner Mydral's *American Dilemma* in the decision.
[261] Collins, *The Race Integration Cases,* 5.
[262] Collins, *The Race Integration Cases,* 14-16.
[263] Collins, *The Race Integration Cases,* 15-17.

to protect Southern civilization.[264]

During the 1950s, Collins also turned his attention to a wholly different issue, though one profoundly connected to the idea of states' rights: the United Nations. He maintained a collection of files on the UN, and his writing during the last years of his life focused on his opposition to the institution. For Collins, the UN was the "new Frankenstein monster," which threatened national sovereignty as much as encroaching federal power endangered states' rights.[265] American adherence to the "world government" UN Charter, he argued,

> converted the Constitutional Republic of the United States of American into a consolidated democracy with all State line wiped out and the former sovereign power of the States transferred to the Federal government... The people of the United States, now organized under forty-eight separate governments, will face the naked coercive power of the Federal government.[266]

It was the product of "ignorance, misconception and sentimentality" and drafted by "socialists, communists, and traitors to the United States."[267] Appealing to the charged rhetoric of the Cold War, Collins argued that it gave Russia sovereign power over the United States, just as liberal "statists" and civil rights leaders had usurped the rights of the South.

While Collins' political ideology embodied the darkest impulses of American political culture, of intolerance, hatred, and fear, his contributions to modern conservative thought are profound – and unappreciated by scholars. He was an ideologue of one of the most transformational shifts in American political history, one that ended the dominance of the Democratic Party in the American South. His electoral strategy during the Dixiecrat campaign of 1948 would later be embraced as the "Southern strategy" by the Republican Party, which first

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[264] Collins, *The Race Integration Cases*, 18-19.
[265] Charles W. Collins, *The New Frankenstein Monster*, unpublished manuscript, Collins papers.
[266] Collins, *The New Frankenstein Monster*.
[267] Collins, *The New Frankenstein Monster*.

captured a new "Solid South" in 1972 and never let go.[268] Most significantly, Collins redefined conservatism in a language of limited government that brought together Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans. This political revolution, which alternatively has been called neo-conservatism and neo-liberalism, remade the Republican Party during the 1970s, leading to what has been called the "Reagan Revolution." Charles Collins engineered the beginnings of this revolution and the rapid erosion of the New Deal settlement during the "Southern Revolt" of 1948.[269]

George Washington Memorial Parkway

For more than thirty years, the property was involved in a long legislative and legal conflict over the proposed construction of a Maryland extension to the George Washington Memorial Parkway. In 1901, the Senate Park Improvement, or McMillan, Commission of the District of Columbia proposed a system of scenic parkways in the revitalized city.[270] The commission, named for its chairman, Michigan Senator James McMillan, was charged by Congress with fulfilling the uncompleted plan of Washington, D.C., designer Pierre Charles L'Enfant for the national capital. The plan was inspired by the City Beautiful Movement, an early school of urban renewal that believed that city beautification and monumental grandeur would inspire civic virtue among the citizenry. It resulted in the national mall, completed with the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial in 1922, the opening of Union Station, and a program of slum clearance that remade Washington, D.C. The "Potomac Drive" from Washington to Mount Vernon and extending to Great Falls and along the Maryland river bank was envisioned as a

[268] The Southern-born Democrat Jimmy Carter electorally swept the South in 1976, with the exception of Virginia. Bill Clinton won the electoral votes of six Southern states in the Elections of 1992 and 1996. Barack Obama took Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia in the Election of 2008.

[269] Charles W. Collins, "The Welfare States," unpublished manuscript, Collins papers.

[270] George Washington Memorial Parkway, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1995.

recreational gateway between the parks and historic sites of the capital region rather than a transportation artery.[271] While the idea of constructing a highway to preserve the region's natural beauty and the historic integrity is antithetical to modern conservationist theory, it was a revolutionary concept at the beginning of the twentieth century.

In 1923, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission (NCPPC) was established by Congress to acquire land for and to plan the region's expanding park system.[272] The agency became the prime mover in the development of the George Washington Memorial Parkway. The first section of the parkway -- built on the Virginia side of the Potomac River between Arlington Memorial Bridge and Mount Vernon between 1929 and 1932, the bicentennial of Washington's birth -- was the "first modern motorway built by the federal government," a model of modern transportation efficiency that preserved, by 1920s standards, the beauty and historical integrity of the area.[273] During the 1920s, NCPPC moved to protect the Maryland shoreline against a plan by the Army Corps of Engineers to dam the river north of Chain Bridge.[274] In 1930, Senator Louis C. Cramton of Michigan sponsored what became the Capper-Cramton Act (1930), which gave the NCPPC broad powers to acquire land and appropriated $7.5 million to the construction of a parkway along both sides of the Potomac.[275]

The National Park and Planning Commission proposed that the Maryland extension of

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[271] Barry Mackintosh, "A Partially Fulfilled Dream: The George Washington Memorial Parkway in Maryland," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 91 (Winter 1996): 405-407.

[272] Mackintosh, 405.

[273] Timothy Davis, *Highways in Harmony: George Washington Memorial Parkway* (U.S. Department of the Interior/NPS, year).

[274] Mackintosh, 406.

[275] "The significance of the Capper-Cramton act to the development of the Capital's parks cannot be over—emphasized. By means of this act, advance land purchase and landing powers were given to the National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Because of the Capper-Cramton act the National Capital Parks has kept pace with the increase in park use. Maryland has benefited from the act. The State of Virginia is now beginning to realize the possibilities. The Capper-Cramton act has made possible the acquisition of large tracts of land, destined for future park development. With park lands increasing, planners envision the need for more city and regional parks, more playgrounds, and parkways and inner-ring roads to lessen the traffic congestion." http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/nace/adhi3g.htm (accessed 14 February 2010).

the George Washington Memorial Parkway follow the Potomac River from Washington to Fort Washington, then over Broad Creek by means of a causeway, northward toward a bridge connection at Great Falls.[276] Collins was infuriated by the plan to "cut the Creek in two" and send a lengthy memorandum to the National Park and Planning Commission highlighting the historical, cultural, and environmental significance of Broad Creek. [277] He lambasted the idea of a memorial to George Washington that threatened the historical, navigational, and aesthetic integrity of Broad Creek.[278] Perhaps surprisingly, Collins was not opposed to the parkway itself, only its path. He proposed an alternative plan that, in his words, "would avoid all of these objectionable features and at the same time lead to the treatment of the park in relationship to Broad Creek which would create a more fitting memorial to Washington."[279] Collins suggested that the parkway use the pathway of the old Piscataway-Alexandria road, a plan that he claimed would be less expensive, would preserve the beauty of Broad Creek, and would not require the commission to dispossess local residents of their family homesteads.[280]

In Virginia, existing routes were used and the NCPPC forged ahead in construction with little resistance; in Maryland, the project was dead on arrival, with the state and Prince George's County reluctant to contribute the funds required to build a road that many observers saw as unnecessary.[281] Nevertheless, during the 1930s, NCPPC acquired Fort Foote (1931) and Fort Washington (1939) from the War Department, the first of a disconnected collection of holdings

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[276] Collins to Frederic A. Delano, Chairman, National Park and Planning Commission, January 22, 1934, Charles Collins papers. Delano was the chairman of NCPPC from 1921 to1942; he was the uncle of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

[277] Collins to Frederic A. Delano, Chairman, National Park and Planning Commission, January 22, 1934, Charles Collins papers.

[278] Collins to Frederic A. Delano, Chairman, National Park and Planning Commission, January 22, 1934, Charles Collins papers.

[279] Collins to Frederic A. Delano, Chairman, National Park and Planning Commission, January 22, 1934, Charles Collins papers.

[280] Collins to Frederic A. Delano, Chairman, National Park and Planning Commission, January 22, 1934, Charles Collins papers.

[281] Mackintosh, 408-409.

along the Potomac in Maryland.[282] Over the next three decades, the project was championed by several federal administrators but never came to fruition. During the 1950s, NCPPC, supported by newfound receptiveness from Prince George's County, sought federal funding to resume the project, only to be denied by Congressional appropriation committees on grounds that the parkway was unnecessary or that it was a federal pet project that should not be funded by the American taxpayers.[283]

Acquisition by NPS (c. 1964)

The 1960s brought new hope that the Maryland parkway might finally be constructed. The Kennedy administration's Secretary of the Interior, Stewart L. Udall, actively supported the parkway project; in 1966, backed by a letter of support from President Johnson, he asked Congress for $1.5 million to begin work on the plan.[284] Congress appropriated only $500,000, the use of which was limited to expanding the holdings at Fort Foote and Fort Washington and was used to purchase 65.71 acres on Broad Creek including Harmony Hall.[285] Mrs. Collins was "granted a life tenancy to the house and auxiliary buildings, including the free and full access for herself, her heirs, and assigns, over and above the Harmony Hall property, to Broad Creek and its tributaries from any other lands under her ownership, until such time as the property [was] needed by the National Park Service for park purposes."[286] Through the 1960s, Congress continued to reject the plan for a Maryland Potomac parkway, which was fiercely opposed by

[282] Once acquired, NCPPC transferred the administration of the properties to the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks until 1933, when the office was abolished. After 1933, the National Park Service assumed this function. Mackintosh, 408.

[283] Mackintosh, 414-415.

[284] Mackintosh, 416.

[285] Mackintosh, 416; Harmony Hall, NPS Statement of Management, rev. 10/1989 [incorrectly dated], NACE files;Frank Faragasso history, NACE files.

[286] Harmony Hall, NPS Statement of Management, rev. 10/1989.

local citizens groups, and the National Park Service finally abandoned the plan in June 1969.[287] The Maryland extension of the parkway was never built, and Harmony Hall continued to deteriorate as the residence of the elderly Mrs. Collins.

As a result of the parkway project, the Harmony Hall property became one of several discontiguous NPS properties along the Potomac River in Maryland. Although acquired under the authority of the Capper-Cramton Act of 1930, the original purpose of the law – to build the George Washington Memorial Parkway in Maryland – was no longer under consideration by the late 1960s. After years of building and "restoration," Harmony Hall began a period of rapid decline. With a lack of vision and limited funds, NPS rented the property during the 1980s, resulting in significant archaeological discoveries and a disagreement between the Park Service and its tenants, burdens from which Harmony Hall has yet to recovered.

[287] Mackintosh, 422.

Chapter 5:
The National Park Service Era (1964-present)

By the late 1960s, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission owned a collection of discontiguous properties along the Potomac River in Maryland that included Fort Washington, Forte Foote, Oxon Hill Manor, and Harmony Hall. With plans for a George Washington Memorial Parkway in Maryland abandoned, NCPPC developed the two fort installations into public parks and Oxon Hill Manor into a historic site and rental property. The Harmony Hall residence and property was occupied by Mrs. Collins until the 1980s, and it lacked the national historical significance that would justify transforming the brick mansion into a house museum. Moreover, the Capper-Cramton Act acquisitions extended the portfolio and responsibilities of NCPPC significantly and pushed its personnel and budgetary resources to their limits.

The National Park Service has struggled to preserve the house at Harmony Hall and to find some use for the property. After the acquisition, Sue Collins lived at Harmony Hall over the next two decades until her death in 1984. Between 1985 and 1999, the property was leased through the Historical Leasing Program to the Battersea Company and was transformed into a horse farm and driving school. In 1999, after a long dispute between the Park Service and Battersea Company, the Park Service determined that the tenants had failed to fulfill the obligations of their lease, to maintain and restore the historic property, and evicted them.

For the last decade, Harmony Hall has remained unoccupied, and its present-day condition is of serious concern to the Park Service and other interested parties. The Broad Creek Historic District Advisory Committee, founded in 1985 by Gail Rothrock of the NCPPC, and the Silesia Citizens' Association, established as an alternative to the NCPPC group by local

residents, have contributed resources and expertise in order to “save” Harmony Hall, but the property still risks sharing the same fate as Want Water.

Sue Spencer Collins at Harmony Hall

Sue Spencer Collins at Harmony Hall, 1977
National Register of Historic Places Inventory / Gary Scott

After Charles Collins died on December 14, 1964, his widow, Sue Spencer Collins, remained at Harmony Hall as part of the Collins’ agreement with the Park Service. Although it is unclear precisely how long Mrs. Collins resided in the brick mansion after her husband’s death, her letters, notes, and clippings, held by the Special Collections Department at the University of Maryland, suggest that she actively maintained her contacts and relationships in Maryland as late as 1971. National Park Service historian Gary Scott photographed Collins in front of the mansion in 1977.

Harmony Hall and its outbuildings began to deteriorate rapidly after the death of Charles Collins. It was during this period that the wooden structure of Want Water collapsed, leaving the ruin that includes the brick chimneys. Sue Collins sold ten acres on the southern edge of the property to Prince George's County Public Schools. On the site, the district built Harmony Hall Elementary School, which operated between 1966 and 1981; the building was renovated and enlarged to house the Harmony Hall Regional Center, an arts center that continues to serve the community today.[288]

Mrs. Collins died on April 28, 1983, at the age of eighty-three, in Birmingham, Alabama, after which the Park Service acquired full control of the property and its structures. In 1985, the NPS began to rent the property under the provisions of the Historical Leasing Program, "a program designed to lease historic properties not open for public interpretation to preservation-minded individuals or entrepreneurs."[289] According to memorandum by National Capital Parks – East (NACE) historian Frank Faragasso, a Park Ranger named Don Stiner resided on the property for several years after the death of Mrs. Collins.[290] The Spencers took most of the furniture from Harmony Hall, leaving only "junk." The remaining furniture, some of which was given to Stiner by the Spencer family, was stored at Fort Washington and later moved in another facility.

[288] PG Deed l. 3193, f. 387.
[289] Harmony Hall, NPS Statement of Management, rev. 10/1989; *Archaeology at Harmony Hall*, 3.
[290] Frank Faragasso, "Notes Concerning Harmony Hall," 1996, NACE files.

Archeological exploration (1985-87)

"Regional Archeology Program Volunteers and Staff at Harmony Hall"
Archaeology at Harmony Hall / Stephen Potter

On October 18, 1985, the NPS leased the property to Battersea Company, Ltd., for a period of fifty-five years (to end on October 18, 2040) under the terms of the Historic Leasing Program.[291] In order to restore the property and upgrade the facilities to their needs, the lessees sought to install new utility infrastructure and build new buildings. In accordance with the requirements of Section 106 of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, the Regional Archaeological Program (RAP) of the National Park Service began a three-year archaeological

[291] Harmony Hall, NPS Statement of Management, rev. 10/1989; Memorandum, Superintendent , National Capital Parks - East to Deputy Field Director, National Capital Area, September 28, 1996, National Capital Parks – East files.

study of the property in order to prevent the destruction of "significant cultural resources."[292] It was during this work that the archaeologists discovered a borrow pit for the mining of clay east of the current structure, likely evidence of an earthfast house built on the Harmony Hall site during the last decade of the seventeenth century (see chapter 1).

The study was coordinated by Dr. Stephen Potter, the Regional Archaeologist for NPS, National Capital Region; NPS archaeologists Robert C. Sonderman and Matthew R. Virta; and Dr. Marilyn Nickels, former historian for National Capital Parks-East. In addition to NPS staff, the dig was assisted by volunteers from the University of Maryland, College Park, and from the Regional Archaeology Program. The work began in the fall of 1985 and continued "intermittently" through the summer of 1987.[293] The project, designed to fulfill the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act, focused on "portions of the Harmony Hall property slated for future construction and installation of utility lines," mainly the planned site for a stable on the south side of the Harmony Hall mansion.[294] Over the course of the work, NPS staff and volunteers excavated forty-nine square units (5x5 feet each) and discovered important artifacts that revealed new information about the property's history.

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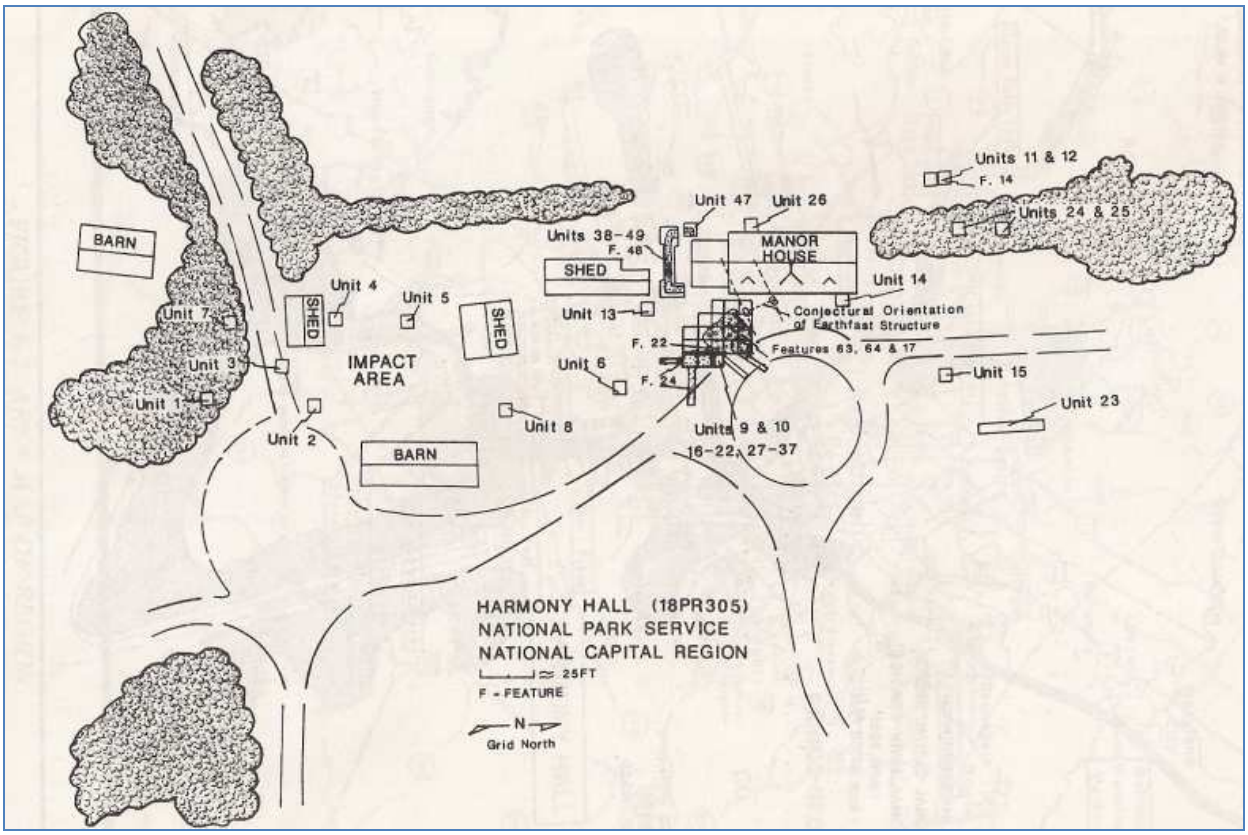
[292] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall*, 3.
[293] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall*, 4.
[294] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall*, 4-5, 23.



Site Map Detail, c. 1985
Archaeology at Harmony Hall

The National Park Service has been unable to systematically investigate the archaeological evidence at Harmony Hall. Neither the pre-historic campsite, nor the hamlet near the mouth of Broad Creek (see chapter 1), nor the Want Water site have been thoroughly excavated.[295] The work at the Harmony Hall site, however, uncovered unknown archaeological features that offered historical clues about the settlement of the site. The archaeologists discovered two refuse pits, the artifacts of which have helped unlock historical secrets about the wealth and lifestyles of the people who settled at Broad Creek: a brick clamp, or kiln, which may have been used in the construction of Harmony Hall; evidence of a late seventeenth-century or early eighteenth-century structure on the east side of the brick structure; and a structure or

[295] Stephen Potter, e-mail to the author, 16 December 2009.

wing adjacent to the south wall of Harmony Hall. These discoveries brought new conceptual texture and depth to the historical knowledge about Broad Creek's past, especially the early colonial earthfast structure (c. 1690s), which probably is the "oldest structure ever discovered in the Washington metropolitan area."[296]

Feature	**Description**	**Significant Archaeological Features**
Feature 14	Refuse Pit	Early eighteenth-century tableware, mostly imported; possible reflection of increased wealth from tobacco trade
Feature 24	Brick Clamp	Evidence of a brick firing structure, burned soil, and "poorly-fired brick fragments," dating from the eighteenth century[297]
Feature 22	Refuse Pit	Early eighteenth-century pipe-stems, two pipe bowls, mugs, stoneware, earthenware, wine bottle fragments, and one glass tube bead
Feature 17	Late Seventeenth- Early Eighteenth-Century Borrow Pit	Evidence of a late seventeenth-century or early eighteenth-century structure on the site; see above and chapter one
Features 41 and 41A	Post Hole and Post Mold	Evidence of northeast corner of post-in-the-ground structure
Feature 48	Kitchen Wing Dependency and Harmony Hall Manor House	Evidence of a cobble foundation and a masonry chimney, part of an attached or detached structure adjacent to the Harmony Hall mansion

[296] "Area's Oldest House Is Unearthed in Pr. George's :Oldest House in Area Found in Pr. George's," *Washington Post*, June 17, 1986.

[297] *Archaeology at Harmony Hall*, 38-39.

Historic Leasing Program

Under the terms of the Historical Leasing Program lease, the tenants, Frank Calhoun and Herman Carlton Huhn, lived in the red brick mansion and used the property to breed Morgan horses and to operate a carriage driving school. Calhoun was the Assistant Chief Counsel for the Federal Highway Administration, and Huhn restored historic properties and bred Morgan horses at Independent Farm in Cheltenham, Maryland.[298] The NPS and the tenants jointly outlined the restoration and preservation needs of the property, the costs of which the Battersea Company was allowed to amortize against its monthly rent of $1,500 "until all expenses have been amortized," after which the tenants would be required to pay a monthly rent of $2,000, adjusted for cost of living.[299]

The Battersea Company did fulfill many of the requirements of the lease, but failed to maintain the pace required by NACE. Calhoun and Kuhn replaced an oval window on the upper gable with a new bullseye design and antique glass.[300] They repaired the gutters, downspouts, windows, and the two porches. They also did work that was not required, such as building a rose garden and laying a new pathway. They built a stable to house their horses and made other changes to suit their needs. Starting in the early 1990s, NACE grew concerned that the restoration was not proceeding on schedule and that the house was beginning to deteriorate rapidly. Calhoun defended his company's actions more than a decade after his business venture was evicted from the property by asserting:

> We still love and have loved Harmony Hall since first seeing it. We spent a considerable part of our life savings on saving Harmony Hall but in the process

[298] Lease of Historic Property, Request for Proposal, National Park Service Capital Region, NACE files.

[299] Harmony Hall, NPS Statement of Management, rev. 10/1989; Memorandum, Superintendent , National Capital Parks - East to Deputy Field Director, National Capital Area, September 28, 1996, National Capital Parks – East files; "Harmony Hall Briefing," October 1996, NACE files.

[300] Frank Faragasso, "Notes Concerning Harmony Hall," 1996, NACE files.

> we met some of the most wonderful people who are still part of our lives. We are proud of what we did with help from many in Maryland and elsewhere in preserving Harmony Hall and establishing the first historic district in Prince George's County.[301]

The Park Service staff made significant efforts to negotiate the requirements of the lease with Calhoun and Kuhn, recognizing that the NPS stood to gain little if the tenants abandoned the property. However, the exchange of letters and several meetings between 1992 and 1999 resulted in few agreements and significant animosity between the two parties.

Between 1992 and 1996, the dispute over the restoration of Harmony Hall spiraled into a crisis. In July 1992, Gentry Davis, Superintentent of National Capital Parks - East (NACE), requested the quarterly report on preservation expenditures from Calhoun and Huhn, which had not been filed since April 1991, in order to assess their fulfillment of the lease terms.[302] Davis demanded "a schedule for the competition of architectural plans and specifications and for the commencement of restoration work."[303] On October 20, 1992, he further ordered the tenants to begin immediate work on the exterior of the Harmony Hall structure or risk breach of contract.[304] Nearly two years later, in March 1994, the NPS reported that "more than eight years into the lease initial restoration work is far from complete, although the tenants have financed over $190,000 in restoration expenses to date. Achieving compliance with the current lease and/or any newly agreed upon plans and schedules will be an ongoing priority in the management of Harmony Hall."[305] The following month, Superintendent Davis informed the Regional Director

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[301] Frank Calhoun, e-mail to author, March 3, 2010.

[302] Memorandum, Superintendent , National Capital Parks - East to Deputy Field Director, National Capital Area, September 28, 1996, National Capital Parks – East files.

[303] Gentry Davis to Frank Calhoun, July 29, 1992, NACE files.

[304] Memorandum, Superintendent , National Capital Parks - East to Deputy Field Director, National Capital Area, September 28, 1996, National Capital Parks – East files.

[305] Harmony Hall, NPS Statement of Management, rev. 10/1989.

that Battersea Corp. was not fulfilling the requirements of the lease.[306] In April 1996, the *Washington Post* requested the details of the lease under the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act, creating the potential for a public relations disaster over the decline of Harmony Hall.

By the summer of 1996, the "initial restoration," to be completed within the first five years of the lease, was not completed, and the Park Service granted a five-year extension for the restoration work, but not the amortization of capital expenditures. In August, after one month of paying the first post-amortization rent payment, Frank Calhoun refused to pay the rent because the NACE Superintendant had not responded to his requests for a meeting about the end of amortization.[307] In November, Gentry Davis informed Battersea Company that rent amortization would not be restored and that a performance bond was required before the continuation of preservation work.[308] NACE representatives also expressed concerns about the removal of lead paint and the property's insurance policy.[309] In December, Park Service employees inspected the property and concluded that the four "emergency repairs" – including replacement of the roof on the front gable, repair of the gutters and downspouts, and the restoration and painting of the windows – had been completed as required. During the same period, the Park Service initiated plans to install a fence around Want Water and to stabilize the ruins, during which they discovered that bricks were being removed from to build pathways and gardens at Harmony Hall.[310]

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[306] Superintendent, National Capital Parks-East, to Deputy Director, National Capital Area, September 28, 1996, NACE files.

[307] Frank Faragasso, "Notes Concerning Harmony Hall," 1996, NACE files.

[308] Frank Faragasso, "Notes Concerning Harmony Hall," 1996, NACE files.

[309] Superintendent, National Capital Parks-East, to Deputy Director, National Capital Area, September 28, 1996, NACE files.

[310] Frank Faragasso, "Notes Concerning Harmony Hall," 1996, NACE files.

Early in 1997, the Park Service made some overtures to resolve the dispute but threatened "strong action" if non-payment of rent continued.[311] After two more years of negotiations and disputes, NACE recommended that the lease be terminated.[312] Harmony Hall has faced even more serious decline since the departure of Calhoun and Kuhn, who founded a new horse farm near Charlottesville, Virginia in Crozet. They call their new business Battersea Stud.

Recovering and processing the Collins Papers

Charles Collins' Office, Harmony Hall, c. 1987
University of Maryland Archives **[need permission to reproduce]**

William Spencer, III, the brother of Sue Spencer Collins and the executor of her will, left the papers of Charles and Sue Spencer Collins that he and his family did not remove from the property after her death to the National Park Service. The Spencers also left a painting by the

[311] Frank Faragasso, "Notes Concerning Harmony Hall," 1996, NACE files.
[312] Faragasso history, NACE files.

twentieth-century artist Frederick Coffay Yohn, which hung over a fireplace until the 1980s when it was moved to an office-site storage facility.[313] In turn, NPS donated the papers to the University of Maryland in 1985.[314] Charles Collins kept a study in an outbuilding near the mansion, where he housed his library and papers. The materials were found in "poor condition and in complete disorder," strewn across the room and covered in debris.[315] They were recovered by archivists from the University of Maryland in or around 1987; the papers were treated with gamma-irradiation in order to destroy the "insects, mold, and bacteria" that had accumulated on the materials during years of neglect. The papers were professionally organized and boxed using archives-grade materials in 2002 by Sarah Heim and re-organized in 2006 by Steven Bookman. They were used extensively in chapter four of this study.

Broad Creek Historic District

In 1985, after a campaign by local activists, Prince George's County, through Council Resolution 152-185, established the 460-acre Broad Creek Historic District, the first district of its kind in Maryland.[316] The county's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) appointed nine members to the Broad Creek Historic District Advisory Committee and charged them with the development of the district and the oversight of Historic Area Work Permits (HAWPs) and of restoration-related tax credits. Among these none members were representatives from St. John's Church, the Tanta-Cove Garden Club, the Tantallon Citizens Association, and local property and business owners. Members from the Potomac Valley Citizens Association, the Broad Creek

[313] It may be worth several hundred thousand dollars, according to former NACE historian Frank Faragasso. Faragasso to the author, e-mail, May 14, 2010.

[314] "Papers of Charles Wallace Collins," finding aid, University of Maryland Special Collections.

[315] "Papers of Charles Wallace Collins," finding aid, University of Maryland Special Collections.

[316] Broad Creek Historic District Preservation Planning Study (Prince George's County Planning Department, 2002), 1.

Conservancy (est. 1998), and the National Park Service were later added to an expanded eleven-person board. While the HPC is the final arbiter on alterations, construction, and demolition within the district, the advisory committee can recommend revisions and additions to the historic district's regulations, policies, and guidelines.[317]

In 2001, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission coordinated with the Broad Creek Historic District Advisory Committee to convene a series of preservation workshops for property owners and residents. These workshops resulted in the 2002 Broad Creek Historic District Preservation Planning Study, intended "to produce an updated guide to the protection and ultimate development of the Historic District."[318] The workshops were "facilitated" by historical architect and preservation consultant C. Richard Bierce of the American Institute of Architects.[319] An ambitious final report identified the restoration of Harmony Hall as "essential" to the future development of the Broad Creek Historic District:

> The realization of this ambitious goal will be in evolution and development for a number of years. Current constraints include the noted lack of adequate documentation, funding and the still-emerging stewardship agreement between the National Park Service and the Broad Creek Conservancy. However, it should be noted that this broad goal embraces more than a narrow definition of restoration limited to buildings or other cultural resources.
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> As was understood throughout the workshop discussion, Harmony Hall is an integrated resource with significant natural as well as cultural assets, and "restoration" in this context goes well beyond a scholarly exercise in "freezing time." It includes the concepts that wildlife management practices, watershed conservation, cultural resource conservation, and enhancement would be carried out to the highest standards and in balanced development. It also implies that public access and use of these diverse resources will be studied, planned and built to accommodate these uses appropriately and protectively. Master planning may begin tomorrow, but implementation will be a long-term, incremental achievement.[320]

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[317] Broad Creek Historic District Preservation Planning Study, 1.

[318] Broad Creek Historic District Preservation Planning Study, NPS-East files, March 31, 2001; Broad Creek Historic District Preservation Planning Study (Prince George's County Planning Department, 2002).

[319] Broad Creek Historic District Preservation Planning Study, 93.

[320] Broad Creek Historic District Preservation Planning Study, 111-112.

Despite this ambitious development plan, limited funds, conflicting visions, and difficulties coordinating resources have slowed plans to restore Harmony Hall.

The Park Service has struggled to fund the maintenance and restoration of Harmony Hall and to determine the future of the site. In 2003, John Hale, Superintendent of NACE, considered selling Harmony Hall.[321] As early as 1977, the National Park Service began developing an interpretive plan for Harmony Hall, not as a historic house museum but as a site for performances of Baroque and colonial American music.[322] The plan never came to be, although music has been performed at Harmony Hall several times since 2000. Estimates suggest that the restoration of Harmony Hall will cost in excess of $150,000, and NACE continues to search for a use for property.

The future of Harmony Hall is in peril, which may befall a fate similar to that of Want Water. The history of the property after the death of Charles Collins is a troubling tale, from its rapid deterioration after Collins' death in 1964, to its partial restoration and tangled legal history during the Battersea lease period (1985-1999), to its recent years of sitting empty. Groups such as the Silesia Citizens' Association and the Broad Creek Historical Advisory Board and politicians such as Maryland State Senator Thomas V. Mike Miller have advocated on behalf of the property as a piece of local and regional history that could soon be lost forever. Still, the fate of Harmony Hall remains an open question.

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[321] "Park Service considers selling mansion," Gazette.net, Mary 15, 2003.
[322] Gary Scott to Rock Comstock, November 10, 1977, NACE files.

Conclusion

Even though the red-brick mansion called Harmony Hall was not constructed until the middle of the eighteenth century, the shores of Broad Creek have been the site of human creativity and innovation for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. It is a place where local Native Americans hunted and fished; where European settlers tamed the frontier of Maryland during the seventeenth century; where a port town grew and prospered during the eighteenth century, supplying tobacco to addicted consumers in Europe and bringing African slaves and a world of goods to the New World; where chattel African and African-American slaves toiled and made new cultures in a hostile and brutal environment; where German immigrants to the United States built a new Germany a few miles away from the U.S. Capitol; and where Charles Wallace Collins imagined the political and cultural exclusion of African Americans from American civic life – and the country itself. To the shores of Broad Creek, at Harmony Hall, during the eighteenth century, came an expanding world of global trade – from as far away as Africa and Asia – and human cargo who would help build the community. From Harmony Hall, during the twentieth century, Charles Wallace Collins disseminated his ideas of exclusion and resettlement, a rejection of the very movements of people (forced and unforced) and goods that made the communities at Broad Creek.

Before the arrival of Europeans in the seventeenth century, the Potomac River was the center of a thriving Native American civilization, the people whom the Europeans called Piscataway. Like other encounters between Europeans and Native Americans in the New World, Pisctaway interactions with Europeans, starting in St.

Mary's City, began in comparative harmony and a spirit of cooperation but devolved into conflict and dislocation.

Broad Creek, some 100 miles upriver from St. Mary's City, was first settled during the middle of the sixteenth century. Humphrey Haggett, a Charles County lawyer, patented a 500-acre tract called Battersea in 1662. During the 1980s, National Park Service archaeologists discovered an earthfast house east of the current structure, where the family of Thomas Lewis probably lived c. 1690, farming the land and raising livestock on the frontier of colonial Maryland. It was also during this period that Want Water, later called Lyles House, was built by Thomas Addison, the son of the prominent colonial settler John Addison, who participated in the rebellion of the Protestant Association against the proprietary government of Maryland.

During the eighteenth century, part of the land at Battersea became the site of the port town called Broad Creek, created by the colonial assembly to encourage commerce. Through the Broad Creek estuary, the settlers were connected to a larger Atlantic and global trading world. They grew tobacco for export and bought goods imported from Europe and Asia as well as chattel slaves brought on the Middle Passage from Africa. During this period, the shipbuilder named Humphrey Batts, who lived in the Want Water house, built a tobacco inspection warehouse and a canal. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the families Magruder and Lyles came to settle at Broad Creek; the merchant and farmer Enoch Magruder probably built Harmony Hall c. 1760.

In the aftermath of the American Revolution, the tobacco economy of the Chesapeake region declined precipitously, bringing an end to the prosperity its residents had known for several generations. The nineteenth century also brought decline and

change to Broad Creek. The Magruder and Lyles families continued to live at Harmony Hall and Want Water during the first decades of the nineteenth century, after which both properties were occupied by renter and sojourners. The conclusion of the Civil War resulted in the emancipation of the slave community at Broad Creek, many of whom continued to live and work at or near the Harmony Hall property. During the 1890s, a German immigrant named Robert Stein, an explorer and linguist, bought the Harmony Hall mansion and encouraged his German relatives to settle at Broad Creek, beginning the community of Silesia.

In the aftermath of the Stock Market Crash of 1929, the property was purchased by a native Southerner and government bureaucrat named Charles Wallace Collins. Collins would rebuild and "restore" the property at Harmony Hall in the image of an antebellum Southern plantation. After retiring from government service, he wrote several books, including *Whither Solid South?,* a work that advocated racial segregation and proposed an electoral "Southern strategy," which was adapted and used by the Dixiecrat Party in 1948. Collins also proposed that African Americans should be resettled in Africa.

During the 1960s, Harmony Hall was acquired by the National Park Service, as part of a project to build a Maryland extension of the George Washington Memorial Parkway. This plan never came to fruition, largely because of opposition to it in Congress, and the National Park Service was left to maintain and administer several historic properties, including Harmony Hall, along the Potomac River. Since the 1980s, when the Park Service took full possession of the property after the death of Sue Spencer Collins, the NPS has worked to develop a long-term plan for the property. Between 1984

and 1999, Harmony Hall was rented out to private investors for use as a horse farm. When these tenants were evicted in 1999, NPS began to search for new ways to use and save Harmony Hall from destruction.

With each passing day, the future of Harmony Hall and its historical and archaeological artifacts appear more and more grim. The property risks sharing the same fate as Want Water, now in ruins after decades of neglect. Park Service employees and local preservationist have proposed many ideas for "saving" Harmony Hall – "renting" it to a non-profit organization for restoration and use; selling it to a private party; developing it as riverfront nature park or as a venue for music concerts. As of the completion of this work, none of these plans have been fully developed or funded. Given the current dislocation of the U.S. economy, finding the will and money to restore the rapidly declining colonial mansion has become an even more difficult task.

Future interpretive plans should seriously consider Harmony Hall's troubling place in the racial history of the United States. Chattel African slaves lived on and worked the land at Broad Creek from its earliest days. Charles Wallace Collins protested against the national movement toward racial "integration" and crafted the electoral strategy used by pro-segregation Dixiecrat Party. Collins, Walter Dulany Addison, and Robert Stein advocated the resettlement of African Americans to African "colonies." Despite their efforts, Prince George's County has emerged as the most affluent majority African-American county in the United States. Much work remains to be done to improve the state of racial relations in the United States, however, and future plans for Harmony Hall should consider its troubling legacy – along with the creativity and innovation of generations of European and African-American "settlers" at Broad Creek.

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