

**HISTORICAL RESEARCH REPORT FOR
THE MARKET MASTER'S HOUSE, MAGRUDER HOUSE,
AND THE GEORGE WASHINGTON HOUSE**

**BLADENSBURG,
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**



Maryland State Highway Administration
Project Planning Division
Environmental Evaluation Section
707 North Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

October 2009

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Prepared for



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Project Planning Division
Environmental Evaluation Section
707 North Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

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ABSTRACT

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) proposes to conduct an archeological survey on three eighteenth-century properties in the town of Bladensburg in Prince George's County, Maryland. The properties to be investigated include the George Washington House (4302 Baltimore Avenue; PG: 005-02), the Magruder House (4703 Annapolis Road; PG: 69-005-07), and the Market Master's House (4006 48th Street; PG: 69-005-02). The Bladensburg Historical Research Project was assigned to EHT Tracerics, Inc., a subcontractor to R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc. This extensive archival research effort, conducted in March through June, 2009, was designed to serve as a guide for the archeological study of each site. The resulting report addresses the findings of the research, with a history of land ownership and families who owned and lived on the property discussed sequentially. The findings, when combined with future archeological studies, will provide pertinent documentation and reveal the extensive history of these properties from the time of their construction in the eighteenth century through their most recent restorations in the late twentieth century.

Located in western Prince George's County, the town of Bladensburg was established in 1742 by an act passed by the General Assembly, which required that the town be divided into sixty lots. As part of the sale of each lot, the owners were required to improve the property within eighteen months with a "tenantable House, with one Brick or Stone Chimney...that shall cover four Hundred square Feet of Ground." The three eighteenth-century houses that are the subject of this historical research project were constructed as a result of this stipulation in "An Act for Laying out and Erecting a Town on the South side of the Eastern Branch of Potomack River in Prince George's County near a Place called Garrison Landing."¹

The Magruder House (also known as the Hilleary-Magruder House) was erected for William Hilleary circa 1742, making it possibly the oldest extant building in Bladensburg. The George Washington House was first constructed as a dwelling between 1754 and 1763. This imposing building, complete with a two-story, full-width porch on the façade, became part of a commercial complex owned by Jacob Wirt that included the original Indian Queen Tavern, which was located adjacent to the George Washington House. (The George Washington House would eventually become synonymous with the Indian Queen Tavern.) The Market Master's House was constructed circa 1760 by Christopher Lowndes, a prominent merchant. Also constructed as a dwelling, the Market Master's House later served as a store for the Lowndes family trading company. All three of these properties are listed in the Maryland Register of Historical Places and the National Register of Historic Places, and are as inventoried as Prince George's County Historic Sites.

¹ "An Act for Laying out and Erecting a Town on the South Side of the Eastern Branch of Potomack River in Prince George's County near a Place called Garrison Landing," *Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly, 1740-1744*, Volume 42, page 413 (Chapter 11, 1742).

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) contracted with R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc. and their subcontractor, EHT Tracerics, Inc., to perform extensive archival research as part of an archeological investigation in the town of Bladensburg, Maryland. The Bladensburg Historical Research Project was dedicated to establishing the historic contexts of three eighteenth-century properties: the George Washington House/Indian Queen Tavern, the Magruder House, and the Market Master's House. Each property is individually listed in the Maryland Register of Historical Places and the National Register of Historic Places for their architectural and historical significance. Additionally, each property is recognized as a Prince George's County Historic Site, protected since 1981 by the Historic Preservation Ordinance of Prince George's County. Although general documentation exists for each property, SHA wishes to explore the ownership and occupancy of the properties, and the history of the improvements and associated outbuildings. The research, which explored local, state, and national repositories, resulted in a detailed historic context for each of the properties studied, including a narrative history, the results and findings of the research effort, and recommendations for additional research. The findings, when combined with future archeological studies, will provide an extensive history of three properties from the time of their construction in the eighteenth-century through their most recent restorations in the late twentieth century.

1.1 PURPOSE OF WORK

SHA proposes to conduct an archeological survey in the town of Bladensburg in Prince George's County. The study will focus on three eighteenth-century properties and their cultural resources (both standing and archeological):

- ❖ The Magruder House (4703 Annapolis Road; PG: 69-005-07);
- ❖ The George Washington House/Indian Queen Tavern (4302 Baltimore Avenue; PG: 69-005-02);
- ❖ The Market Master's House (4006 48th Street; PG: 69-005-02).

As part of the cultural resource investigation for this study, historical research was conducted on each property. This research included exploring local, state, and national repositories in order to record the ownership and occupancy of the properties and the history of the improvements and associated outbuildings. Particular attention was devoted to the occupancy of the properties at the time of the Battle of Bladensburg, which occurred on August 24, 1814 during the War of 1812 (1812-1815).

All work was performed in accordance with Volume II, Section IV of the Specifications of Consultant Engineer's Services (April 1986); the Maryland Historical Trust's (MHT) Standards and Guidelines for Archeological Investigations in Maryland (Shaffer and Cole 1994); Guidelines for Completing the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) Form (Standing Structures and Non-Archaeological Sites) (July 1991); Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Historical Investigations In Maryland (2000); Archeology and Historic Preservation: the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines (Federal Register 48:44716-44742) (September 1983); and the MHT-Office of Research, Survey and Registration (ORSR) guidelines. In addition, the work conformed to the

guidelines established in Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines (1983); Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan (Weissman 1986); and General Guidelines for Compliance-Generated Determinations of Eligibility (DOEs) (MHT 2002).

1.2 PROJECT TEAM

EHT Tracerics, Inc.:

EHT Tracerics performed archival research in order to compile a summary history of the town of Bladensburg and detailed histories of the three eighteenth-century properties. The research historians included Laura H. Hughes (Principal Investigator), Laura V. Trieschmann (Senior Architectural Historian), Paul Singh (Preservation Planner), Latishia Allen (Graphic Artist) and Andrea Schoenfeld (Historian). The project in its entirety was directed and supervised by Laura V. Trieschmann and Laura H. Hughes.

R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc.:

All of the research findings and the final compliance report for the Bladensburg Historical Research Project were reviewed by Kathryn Kuranda, who is the Vice President of Architectural and Historical Services for R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc. in Frederick, Maryland.

2.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Bladensburg Historical Research Project is to provide detailed documentation on three eighteenth-century properties. This documentation includes the ownership and occupancy of the properties. A particular focus of the research was the occupancy of the property at the time of the Battle of Bladensburg, which occurred on August 24, 1814 during the War of 1812. Historic photographs and maps were also collected in an effort to better understand the history of improvements to the primary resources and the location of associated outbuildings. To complete these tasks, EHT Traceries conducted the background and archival research for the preparation of the historic context of each property and prepared a report that addressed the findings of the research; a history of land ownership and families who owned and lived on the property will be discussed sequentially. The scope of the project was separated into three steps:

- ❖ Step 1: Archival Research
- ❖ Step 2: Report Preparation
- ❖ Step 3: Final Products and Submission

2.2 ARCHIVAL RESEARCH METHODS

Extensive background and archival research was performed to provide a basis for understanding the town of Bladensburg and its history and built environment, with particular attention paid to the Magruder House (also known as the Hilleary-Magruder House), the George Washington House (also known as the Indian Queen Tavern), and the Market Master's House. Information on the historic settlement in the project area was compiled from a number of sources such as census data, local and family histories, land records, equity and chancery records, and assessment records. Additional research related to the historic and architectural development, growth, and significance of the three properties included review and collection of historic photographs and maps, agricultural and slave schedules, will and probate records, published and unpublished books and records, biographical information, and city directories. The results of the archival research were used to develop a general context for the three properties, which is presented in Section 4.0 of this document. The following archival repositories served as the basis for the research:

- ❖ Ancestry.com (website)
- ❖ Heritage Quest Online (website)
- ❖ ProQuest (research database for electronic/digitized publication)
- ❖ Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- ❖ National Archives, Washington, D.C. and College Park, Maryland
- ❖ Maryland State Archives, Annapolis, Maryland
- ❖ Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland
- ❖ Maryland Historical Trust Library and Archives, Crownsville, Maryland
- ❖ Historical Society of Washington, D.C.
- ❖ The Maryland Room at the University of Maryland at College Park
- ❖ Prince George's County Historical Society Library, Upper Marlboro, Maryland

- ❖ Prince George’s County Planning Department/Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Upper Marlboro, Maryland
- ❖ The Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, Maryland
- ❖ The Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, Washington, D.C.

2.3 RESEARCH METHODS

The Bladensburg Historical Research Project began with the collection of existing documentation from local, county, state, and national repositories, particularly those available online. All three properties are listed in the Maryland Register of Historical Places and National Register of Historic Places. Each property is recognized as a Prince George’s County Historic Site, protected by the Historic Preservation Ordinance of Prince George’s County. The existing documentation supporting the nominations and designations of these properties provided an underpinning for the research conducted by EHT Traceries. Additionally, all three of the properties were surveyed by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS): the George Washington House in 1936, the Market Master’s House in 1980, and the Magruder House in 1985. This provided limited historical documentation, but included historic photographs essential to the understanding the properties. In 1979, local historian John M. Walton, Jr. prepared a comprehensive history of the George Washington House for the Prince George’s Jaycees. This report relied on primary sources that are no longer readily available at the Maryland State Archives (MSA), making this document a critical source. The Susanna Kyner Cristofane collections available at MSA and the Prince George’s County Historical Society Library were another invaluable resource for primary and secondary sources.

The initial phase of EHT Traceries’ research focused on establishing chains-of-title for the properties. Land Records, equity cases, chancery court records, and wills and probate records providing evidence of land transfers were located at the MSA, which served as the main repository for this research. In order to determine construction dates and building details, the *Record Books of the City of Bladensburg, 1787-1836* and the *Federal Direct Tax of 1798* were consulted. Tax Assessment Records for Prince George’s County from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries were also consulted; however, these provided very limited descriptions of improvements. The personal tax assessments did, however, supply details concerning slaves. The agricultural census, which documents agricultural production in the mid to late nineteenth century, was temporarily unavailable at the University of Maryland Library due to conservation work.

Photographic research was conducted at the following repositories: MSA, the Maryland Historical Trust, Maryland Historical Society, the Maryland Room at the University of Maryland at College Park, the Prince George’s County Historical Society Library, the Historical Society of Washington, D.C., the Enoch Pratt Free Library, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library in Washington, D.C., and the Library of Congress. Historic images collected included those taken by HABS and J. Harry Shannon, who was known as “The Rambler” and published in *Sunday Star*. Historic map research was conducted at MSA, the Maryland Historical Trust, Maryland Historical Society, the Maryland Room at the University of Maryland at College Park, the Prince George’s County Historical Society Library, and the Library of Congress. Those collected include maps of the British invasion routes through Bladensburg during from the Battle of Bladensburg in 1814, nineteenth-century Simon J. Martenet Survey maps of Bladensburg and Prince George’s

County, twentieth-century Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, Franklin Survey Company maps, and U.S. Geological Survey maps.

The next phase of research focused on identifying information about property owners, tenants, and slaves associated with each of the properties. Several repositories and sources were critical to this task. United States Federal Census Records from 1790 to 1930 (the first and last available census) provided information such as age, occupation, and nativity for property owners and renters, their households, and direct descendants. Slave schedules from the mid-nineteenth century provided information on the names and ages of slaves. Biographical research was conducted at the Maryland Historical Society, the University of Maryland at College Park, the Prince George's County Historical Society, and the Enoch Pratt Free Library. Genealogical websites were also invaluable in the documentation of owners, tenants, and slaves. Local newspapers available at MSA, Library of Congress, Maryland Historical Society, the University of Maryland at College Park, and the Prince George's County Historical Society also provided details concerning property owners, occupants, and tenants.

3.0 PROJECT LOCATION

3.1 PROJECT LOCATION – TOWN OF BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND

The project area includes three properties that are located in the town of Bladensburg in Prince George's County, Maryland (Figure 1). The primary buildings on each of these eighteenth-century properties are located within the boundaries of the 1747 plan of the town. The 1787 Resurvey of Bladensburg noted sixty one-acre lots, including those improved by the resources encompassed in this historical research project. The Magruder House (also known as the Hilleary-Magruder House) is located at 4703 Annapolis Road on Lot 32. The George Washington House (also known as the Indian Queen Tavern) is located at 4302 Baltimore Avenue (formerly Water Street) on Lot 6. The Market Master's House is located at 4006 48th Street on Lot 38.²

3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The town of Bladensburg is located in northwestern Prince George's County, Maryland. Bladensburg is set to the east of the Anacostia River, south/southeast of the City of Hyattsville. Cottage City, Brentwood and Mount Rainier are located to the west, across the river. The Capital Beltway (Interstate 495) and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway (Maryland Route 295) are located to the west of the town. The District of Columbia-Maryland line is approximately three miles to the southwest of the town of Bladensburg. Founded in 1742, the town of Bladensburg was laid out by an act of the General Assembly of Maryland "...on the South Side of the Eastern Branch of the Potowmack [sic] River near a Place called Garrison Landing."³

² C. R. Beaumont, *Plat of the Town of Bladensburg as Re-Surveyed in May 1787*, Maryland State Archives Special Collections M 265.

³ "An Act for Laying out and Erecting a Town on the South side of the Eastern Branch of Potomack River in Prince George's County near a Place called Garrison Landing," *Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly, 1740-1744*, Volume 42, page 413 (Chapter 11, 1742).

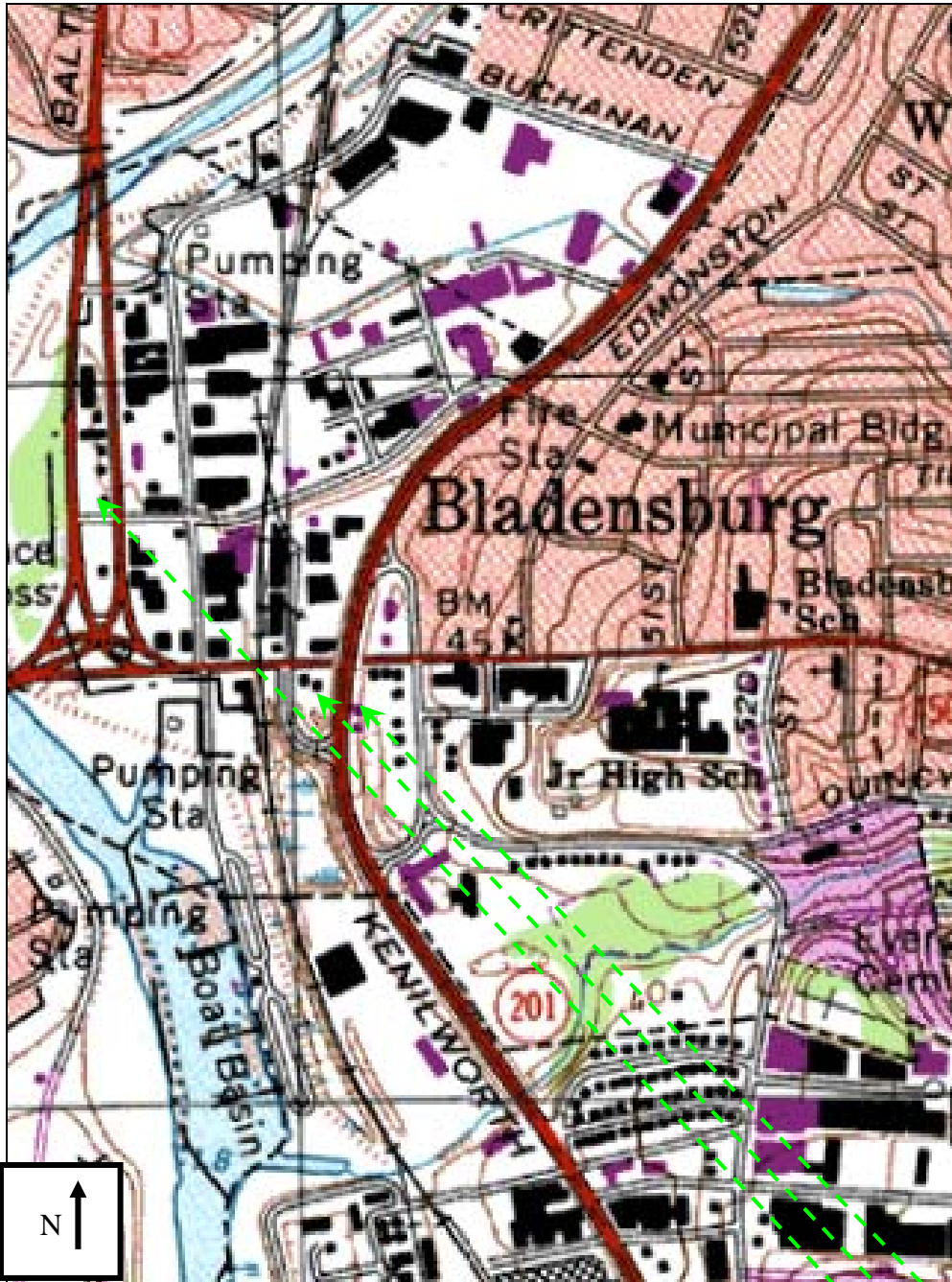


Figure 1: General Vicinity of Project Area
 Bladensburg, Prince George's County, USGS Map, 1982
 (A) George Washington House (B) Magruder House (C) Market Master's House

(A) (B) (C)

4.0 HISTORIC CONTEXT

4.1 THE TOWN OF BLADENSBURG

In the plantation-based economy of colonial Maryland, towns were slow to form. Therefore, the General Assembly created towns by statute. Recognizing the need for a local center of trading and manufacturing, residents of Prince George's County petitioned the legislature to erect a town near Garrison's Landing (the former name of the port of Bladensburg) on the Eastern Branch, as the Anacostia River was then known. Accordingly, in 1742, the General Assembly passed an act establishing "Bladensburgh" in western Prince George's County. The new town was named after the colonial governor, Thomas Bladen.⁴ The General Assembly required that the town be divided into sixty lots, which were to be improved within eighteen months of the purchase date by a "tenantable House, with one Brick or Stone Chimney...that shall cover four Hundred square Feet of Ground." Each lot was to consist of one acre. The law provided for a Town Commission that would oversee the creation of the town, the sale of lots, and their required improvement.⁵

The Bladensburg Town Commissioners platted the sixty one-acre lots along two principal streets. Water Street (now Baltimore Avenue), running parallel to the river, was bordered on both sides by a single row of lots. The other street, known as East-West Street (now Market Street), ran east from the river and was bordered with parallel rows of lots (Figure 2). Once the physical framework of the town was established, the Commissioners assessed the value of the lots and sold them to the initial town settlers. In the event that the purchasers failed to improve their lot within eighteen months as prescribed by law, the land would revert back to the Commission, which was then free to resell the property. The forfeiture clause ensured that the town would be inhabited quickly, and the building provisions requiring a house with either a brick or stone chimney guaranteed that it would be settled in a proper manner. Despite the forfeiture clause, the town was initially slow to develop. The Record Book of Bladensburg reports that only eighteen of the lots had been improved by June, 1746.⁶

In 1747, Bladensburg was designated as an inspection site for tobacco in Prince George's County. In order to protect the quality of tobacco being shipped to England, all tobacco grown in Maryland had to pass through inspection sites at Nottingham, Piscataway, Upper Marlboro, or Bladensburg before it was allowed to be publicly sold.⁷ By 1776, Bladensburg exported more tobacco than any other Maryland port on the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay. The commercial activities brought to Bladensburg as a result of its esteemed designation as a tobacco inspection port led to the construction of numerous

⁴ Some sources, such as Anthony S. Pitch in *The Burning of Washington*, indicate the town was named after William Bladen, who served as Maryland's commissary general; See Anthony S. Pitch, *The Burning Of Washington* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1998), 72.

⁵ "An Act for Laying out and Erecting a Town on the South side of the Eastern Branch of Potomack River in Prince George's County near a Place called Garrison Landing," *Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly, 1740-1744*, Volume 42, page 413 (Chapter 11, 1742).

⁶ *Record Book of the City of Bladensburg, 1787-1836*, Maryland State Archives, Special Collections 4885.

⁷ Marina King, "The Tobacco Industry in Prince George's County, 1680-1940," in *Historic Contexts in Prince George's County: Short Papers on Settlement Patterns, Transportation and Cultural History* (Upper Marlboro, MD: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1991), 69-71.

supporting buildings to meet the needs of the growing population. Thus, by the late eighteenth century, Bladensburg supported a shipyard, tannery, waterfront wharves, taverns, stores, and dwellings.⁸

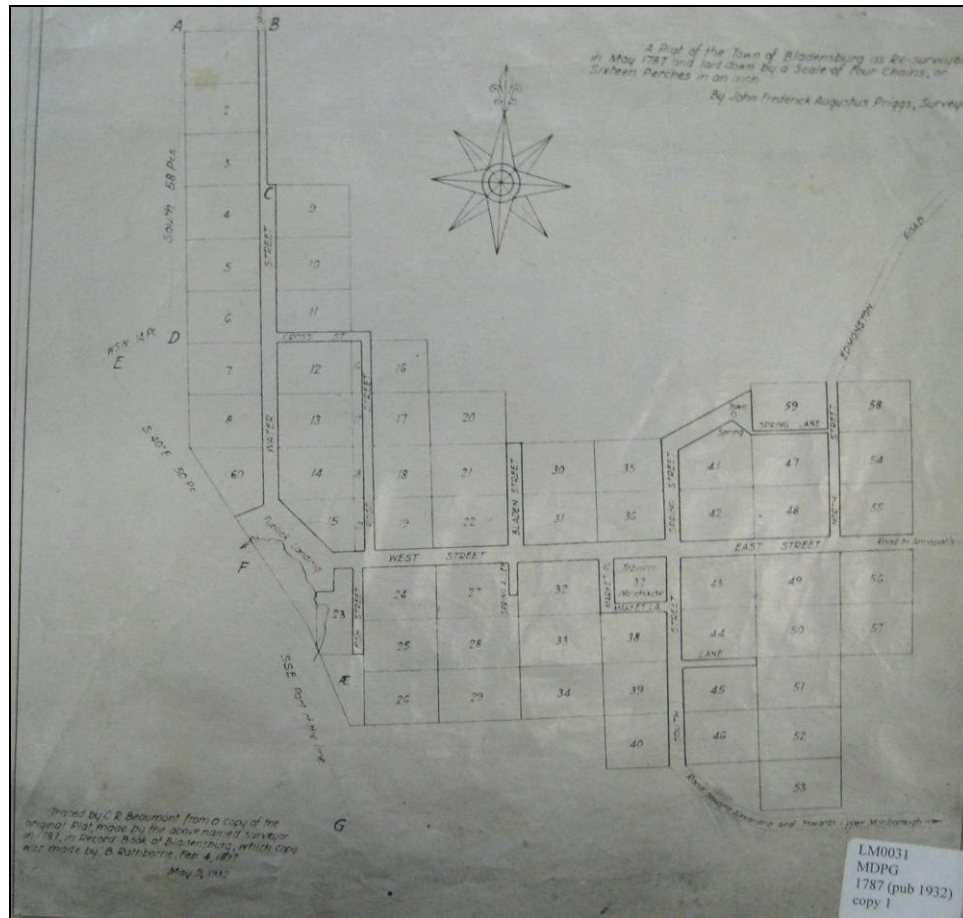


Figure 2: 1787 Resurvey of Bladensburg
 Source: Prince George's County Historical Society Vertical Files.

The French traveler and writer François-Alexandre-Frédéric, duke de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt visited Bladensburg in 1797. He observed "Bladensburg is a small village decently built, where there is a place for inspecting tobacco, little used at present; and a school of considerable reputation in the country. Bladensburg is situated on the upper part of the East-branch, at the spot where it begins to be navigable. Not far from one of the streams which fall into that river is a fine spring of mineral water, which is separated from the bed of the stream only by a slip of land four or five feet in breadth."⁹

Although the eighteenth-century town of Bladensburg was forever changed by the 1840 closing of the inspection port, the silting of the Anacostia River that blocked the harbor, and subsequently by the development of the Washington, D.C. suburbs in the late nine-

⁸ Susan G. Pearl, *Prince George's County African-American Heritage Survey, 1996* (Upper Marlboro, MD: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1996), 37.

⁹ François-Alexandre-Frédéric, duke de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, *Travels through the United States of North America, the Country of the Iroquois, and Upper Canada in the years 1795, 1796, and 1797* (London: R. Phillips, 1800), 668.

teenth and twentieth centuries, several early buildings remain to document the town's early and prestigious beginnings.¹⁰

The Magruder House (also known as the Hilleary-Magruder House) was erected for William Hilleary circa 1742, making it possibly the oldest extant building in Bladensburg.¹¹ Another early surviving building in Bladensburg is Bostwick (PG: 69-005-67), a Georgian-style house constructed in 1746 for Christopher Lowndes, a wealthy merchant and Town Commissioner. A prominent landmark, Bostwick later became the home of Benjamin Stoddert, Lowndes' son-in-law and the first Secretary of the Navy. Christopher Lowndes was also responsible for the construction of the Market Master's House, which was completed circa 1760.¹² The George Washington House (also known as the Indian Queen Tavern) was first constructed as a dwelling between 1754 and 1763. This imposing building, complete with a two-story, full-width porch on the façade, became part of a commercial complex owned by Jacob Wirt that included the original Indian Queen Tavern, which was located adjacent to the George Washington House.¹³ All four of these properties are listed in the Maryland Register of Historical Places and the National Register of Historic Places, and are recognized as Prince George's County Historic Sites for their architectural and historical significance.

Although there was little military activity in Prince George's County during the American Revolution (1776-1783), Bladensburg was documented in 1782 by a French cartographer who was traveling with the military forces under Jean-Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau, following the surrender of Charles Lord Cornwallis at the Battle of Yorktown (September-October 1781). The map shows a small, but well-developed town on the banks of the Anacostia River (Figure 3).¹⁴

During the War of 1812 (1812-1815), the town of Bladensburg was the site of a decisive battle that allowed the British troops under the command of Major General Robert Ross to burn the City of Washington. Marching up the Patuxent River in late August 1814, the British crossed through eastern Prince George's County to Bladensburg where they planned to cross the Anacostia River and capture the District of Columbia (Figure 4). Brigadier General William H. Winder, a native of Maryland and relative of the governor, was the commander of the Military District No. 10, which was charged with protecting the nation's capital. Supported by 1,000 regulars and 15,000 poorly trained and equipped militia men, Winder was forced to face the British troops with merely 1,500 to 1,600 men, most of who were stationed near Baltimore.¹⁵

¹⁰ Michael F. Dwyer, "Bladensburg Survey District," *Maryland Historic Trust Inventory Form for State Historic Sites Survey* (March 1973), 7:1.

¹¹ Margaret W. Cook and Ruth Lockard, "William Hilleary House," *National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form* (Oxon Hill, MD: The Maryland Historical Trust, 1977), 8.1.

¹² Frank White, *Bostwick National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (Riverdale: Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust, 1975), Section 8.

¹³ John Walton, Jr., *George Washington House National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form* (Hyattsville, MD: Prince George's County Jaycees, Inc., 1974), Section 8.

¹⁴ Alan Virta, *Prince George's County: A Pictorial History* (Virginia Beach, VA: The Donning Company/Publishers, 1984, 1991), 70-71.

¹⁵ Pitch, *The Burning of Washington*, 71-85.



Figure 3: 1782 Map of Bladensburg from the Rochambeau Map Collection

Source: Prince George's County: A Pictorial History

General Winder adeptly realized that by holding Bladensburg he could block the preferable of the two routes leading to the City of Washington and Baltimore, which the Americans believed was also the target of an attack. Yet, as the British advanced, Winder failed to act, pulling his troops back from Upper Marlboro and ultimately retiring to Washington. This left Bladensburg to be defended by the sailors of Commodore Joshua Barney, 1,450 local militia men, and 420 regulars under the command of General Tobias Stansbury, who had taken a defensive position on the western bank of the river.¹⁶

Military historians recount that Stansbury's deployment was interrupted by the arrival of Secretary of State James Monroe and 5,000 men under Winder, who had returned to command the forces moments before the attack. Despite the size of the American forces, which was more than double than that of the British, they lacked the experience of Major General Ross's regulars. When the British attacked, the American position was held for only a short time. The Americans panicked under fire from Congreve rockets, a recent British innovation in warfare. Although the battle on August 24, 1814 was a decisive victory for the British, they had three times the casualties of the Americans.¹⁷ Several

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Vita, *Prince George's County: A Pictorial History*, 94-95; Pitch, *The Burning of Washington*, 71-85; also see Christopher T. George, *Terror on the Chesapeake: The War of 1812 on the Bay*, (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane, 2001); Joseph A. Whitehorne, *The Battle for Baltimore, 1814*, (Baltimore, MD: Nautical & Aviation Publishing, 1997), and J. Mackay Hitsman, updated by Donald E. Graves, *The Incredible War of 1812*, (Toronto, Canada: Robin Brass Studio, revised 1999).

local accounts state that some of the buildings of Bladensburg were occupied by the British and used as hospitals during and subsequent to the fighting.¹⁸



Figure 4: Map of the Battle of Bladensburg August 24, 1814

Town of Bladensburg Highlighted

Source: "The Battle of Bladensburg" in *Port of Bladensburg: Historical Themes*

The British victory at Bladensburg left the City of Washington exposed. President James Madison and his cabinet were forced to flee to Virginia as the British entered the city. The destruction of the capital, resulting in the burning of the White House, Capitol, Treasury, and War Office, was thought to be in retaliation for the April 1813 capture of York, the capital of Upper Canada, and burning of the parliament buildings and Government House by the Americans. On the next day, August 25th, the British forces began their march back through Prince George's County to their ships (Figure 5).¹⁹

¹⁸ Joseph Durst Patch, "The Battle of Bladensburg" in *Port of Bladensburg: Historical Themes* (Upper Marlboro: M-NCPPC History Division, 1981), 26.

¹⁹ Pitch, *The Burning of Washington*, 71-85.

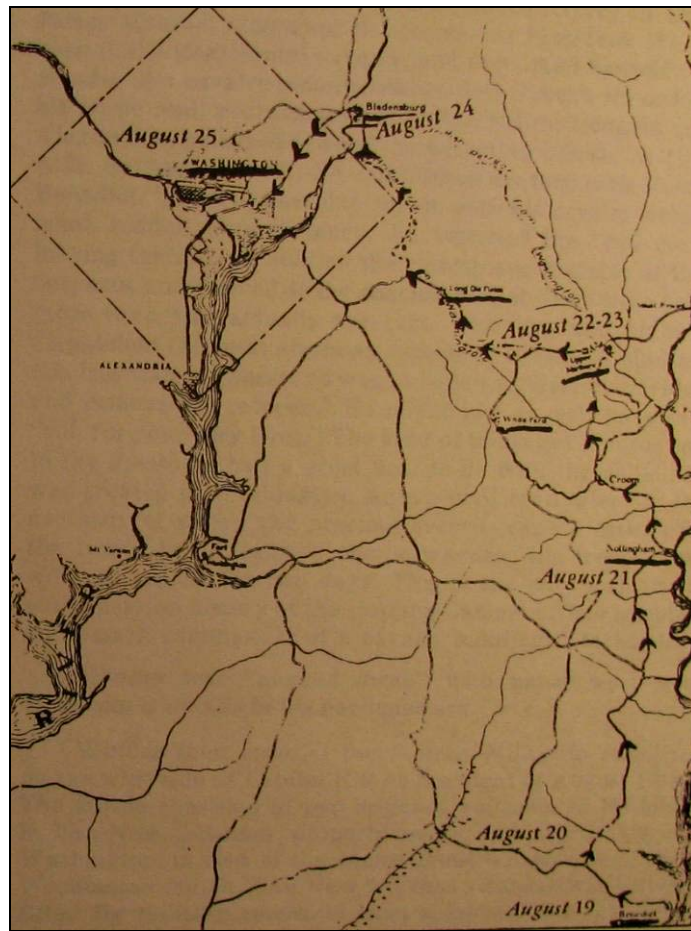


Figure 5: Map of the Route of British Forces, War of 1812

Source: "The Battle of Bladensburg" in *Port of Bladensburg: Historical Themes*

After the activities of the War of 1812, the town of Bladensburg returned to its esteemed position as a port town. However, this changed by the second quarter of the nineteenth century as the Anacostia River silted up and the river became un-navigable for large ships carrying tobacco and supplies. This caused trade and shipping in Bladensburg and other small ports to decrease as Baltimore became the primary port because of its accessibility to more farmers, merchants, and larger ships. The last commercial vessel left Bladensburg in 1843, loaded with sixty hogsheads of tobacco. When the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad was constructed in 1835, it bypassed Bladensburg, effectively cutting off the town as a mid-nineteenth-century commercial center. The route of the B&O railroad is shown in the 1866 Martenet Map of Prince George's County (Figure 6 and Figure 7).²⁰

²⁰ Pearl, *African-American Heritage Survey*, 37.

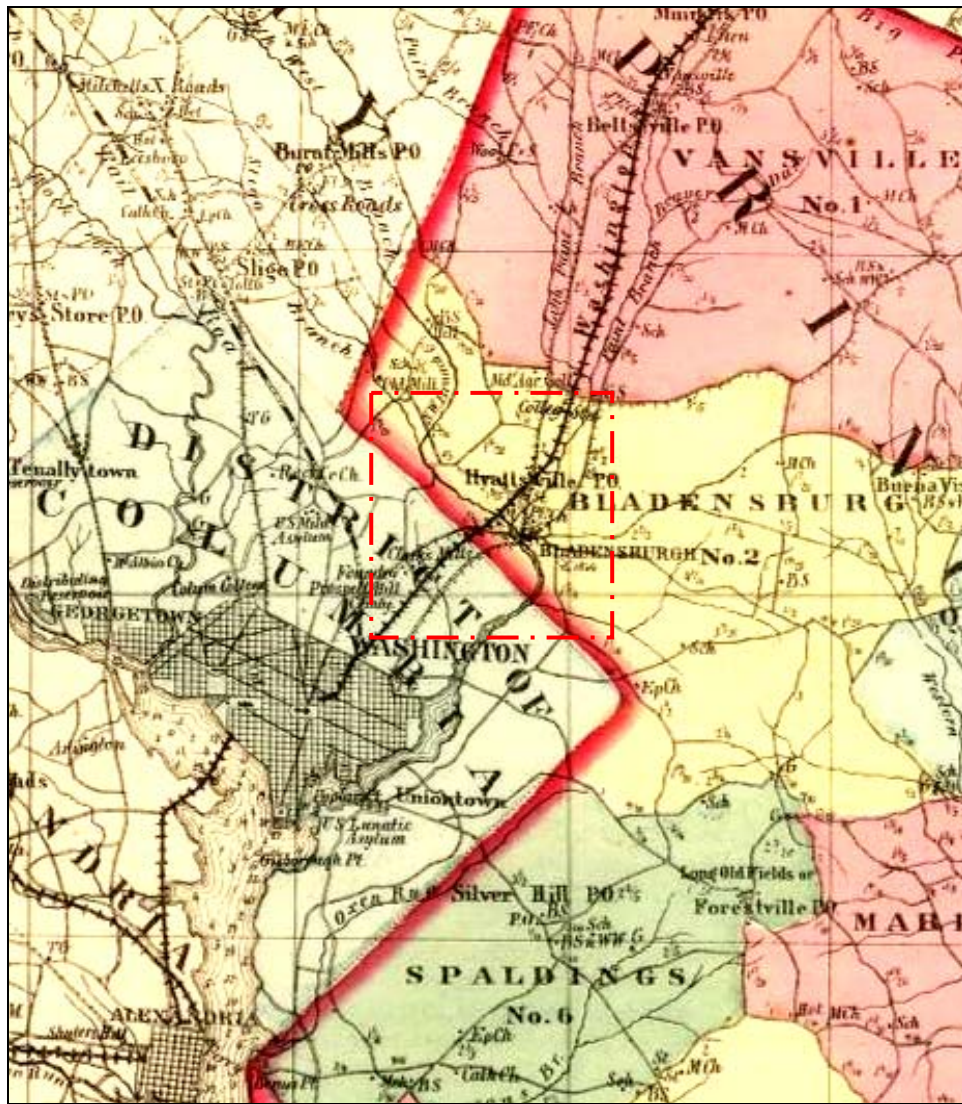


Figure 6: 1866 Martenet Map of Prince George's County highlighting the Town of Bladensburg

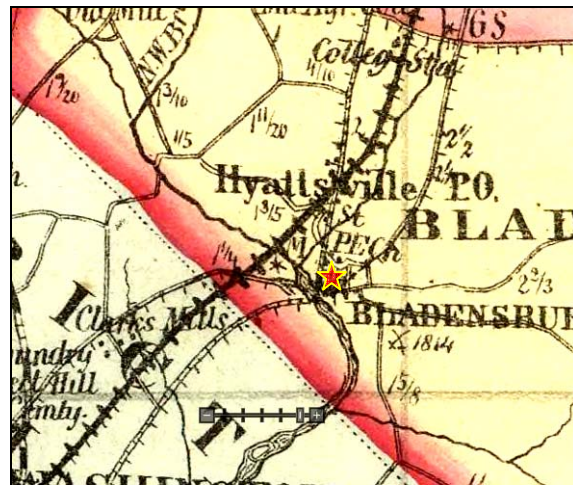


Figure 7: Enlargement of 1866 Martenet Map with Star indicating the Town of Bladensburg

Martenet's map of 1861 (Figure 8) documents the small, but self-sufficient town of Bladensburg. A variety of amenities were available for residents including several general stores, a blacksmith shop, shoemaker, cabinetmaker, doctor's office, schoolhouse, and churches representing Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal congregations. Two mills were located outside of the town, one to the east and one to the west. The Female Academy and Spa Spring were both located north of Bladensburg.²¹ An early view of Bladensburg circa 1850 depicts the hamlet situated along the Anacostia River (Figure 9).

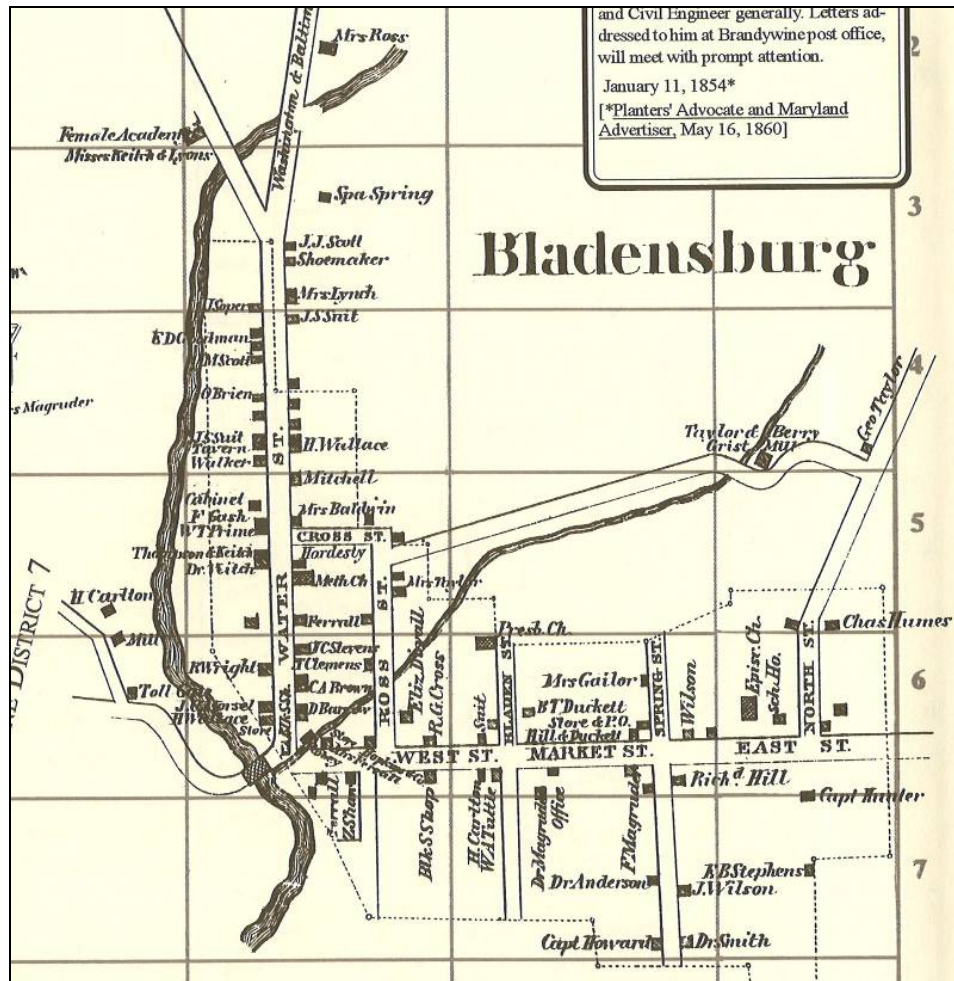


Figure 8: Martenet Map of Bladensburg, 1861

²¹ Simon J. Martenet, "Atlas of Prince George's County, Maryland, 1861, Adapted from Martenet's Map of Prince George's County, Maryland" (Baltimore: Simon J. Martenet C.E., 1861).



Figure 9: Image of the Town of Bladensburg, circa 1850
Source: Force's Picture of the City of Washington and Its Vicinity

The construction of the Alexandria Branch of the B&O Railroad in the 1870s once again spurred development in Bladensburg. The Hopkins map shows that growth by 1878 was directly related to the expansion of the rail line, which ran directly through the town (Figure 10). In support of this growing industry, which would forever change the landscape of Maryland, two hotels and several new stores were constructed. The northern and eastern portions of the town experienced the most significant growth as the town expanded closer to neighboring communities such as the City of Hyattsville. Many new dwellings, outbuildings, and commercial buildings were constructed between 1861 and 1878. Three new churches appear on the Hopkins map: the African Methodist Episcopalian, St. Paul's Second Baptist, and St. Luke's Catholic Church. The town boasted a much larger public school, and the private Bladensburg Academy.²² Although not noted on the map, a Freedmen's Bureau school was established in Bladensburg in 1866, and a schoolhouse for African-American students was constructed in 1867.²³

In the early twentieth century, the expansion of the streetcar system connected Bladensburg and other communities in the rapidly growing northwestern section of Prince George's County to Washington, D.C. and Baltimore. The Washington, Spa Spring, and Greta Railroad served Bladensburg from 1910 through the early 1920s. The line started on Fifteenth and H Streets, N.E. in Washington, D.C., stopped at Bladensburg, and then followed Edmonston Road to Riverdale and Berwyn Heights.²⁴ Accessibility to the railroad and streetcar made the largely agricultural county attractive to suburban residential development, which was targeted to the increasing number of federal and military employees moving to the Washington metropolitan area.

²² G.M. Hopkins, "Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington, Including the County of Prince George Maryland" (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins, C.E., 1878).

²³ Pearl, *African-American Heritage Survey*, 37.

²⁴ Virta, *Prince George's County: A Pictorial History*, 205.

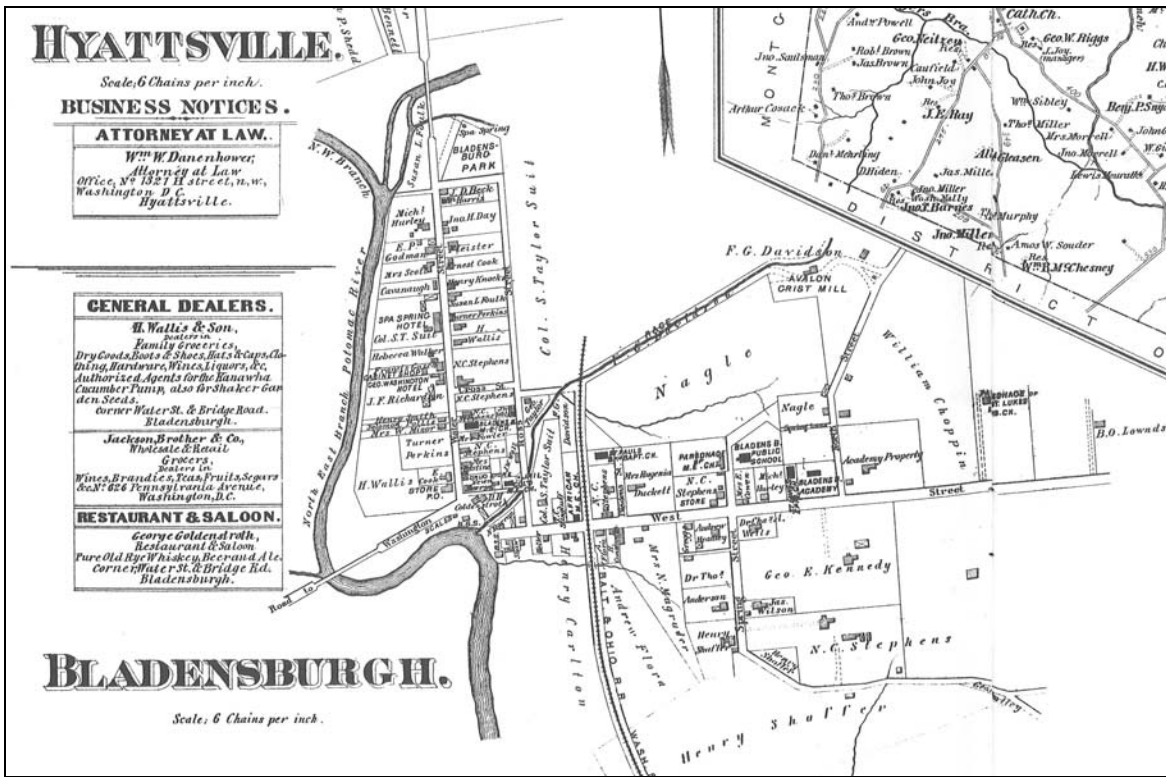


Figure 10: G.M. Hopkins Map of Bladensburg, 1878

During the first half of the twentieth century, many subdivisions and suburbs were platted on the periphery of the eighteenth-century town, primarily because of the accessibility to public transportation system and the established commercial, educational, and religious facilities (Figure 11). The development and subsequent growth of these suburbs has ensured the preservation of Bladensburg, which because of its early development and subsequent growth albeit sporadic, has become a noteworthy suburban community of Prince George's County with a historic context stretching from the early eighteenth century through the twenty-first century.

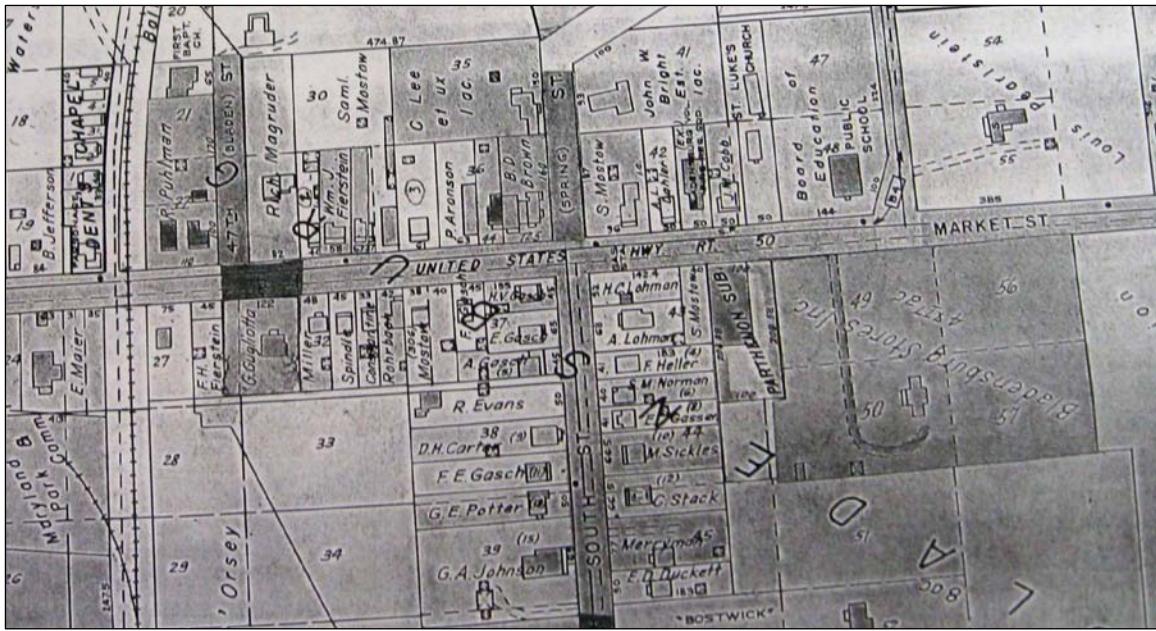


Figure 11: Franklin Map of Bladensburg showing Market Street, 1940
Source: Franklin Survey Company

5.0 BUILDING HISTORY

5.1 MAGRUDER HOUSE (HILLEARY-MAGRUDER HOUSE) 4703 ANNAPOLIS ROAD



Figure 12: The Magruder House, 2009
Source: EHT Traceries

5.1.1 Construction

The Magruder House at 4703 Annapolis Road (Figure 12) is located on Lot 32 within the original Town of Bladensburg. *The Record Book of Bladensburg* shows that Lot 32 (Figure 13) was purchased from the Bladensburg Town Commissioners by William Hilleary on March 5, 1742, for two pounds and ten shillings current money.²⁵ The Hilleary family descended from French Huguenots that first settled in New York in the sixteenth century. William Hilleary was the eldest son of Thomas Hilleary II and Eleanor Young. William Hilleary's paternal grandfather, Thomas Hilleary, was the original proprietor of Three Sisters, a thousand-acre tract in Prince George's County.²⁶ In 1735, William Hilleary, then a planter from Frederick County, married Margaret Crabb and they had three daughters: Sarah, Margaret, and Eleanor; and five sons: Thomas, Wright, Ralph, Jeremiah, and John.²⁷

According to the *Record Book of Bladensburg*, Hilleary complied with the regulations to construct a house with a masonry chimney within eighteen months of the date of pur-

²⁵ *Record Book of the City of Bladensburg, 1787-1836*, Maryland State Archives Special Collections 4885.

²⁶ Unpublished Hilleary Family History, Maryland Historical Society Library Vertical Files.

²⁷ Effie Gwynn Bowie, *Across the Years in Prince George's County* (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1975), 460; William Hilleary's occupation and residency are recorded in William Hilleary to Richard Henderson, Prince George's County Land Records, TT: 339-340 (21 December 1764).

chase. The *Record Book* reports that a house was standing on Lot 32 by June 5, 1746 (Figure 14), although this date may have been the start of construction. The Magruder House, as it was later known, was certainly standing by 1746 as the property was not sold at the next public auction—the penalty for owners who did not improve their property within the required period outlined in the sale agreement. Thus, together with the architectural evidence, the Magruder House is given a construction date of circa 1742.²⁸ Hilleary did not reside at the Magruder House; he lived on a portion of Three Sisters that he inherited from his father.²⁹ Therefore, it is inferred that Hilleary constructed the Magruder House as an investment property. On December 21, 1764, Hilleary sold Lot 32 “along with all improvements” to Richard Henderson.³⁰

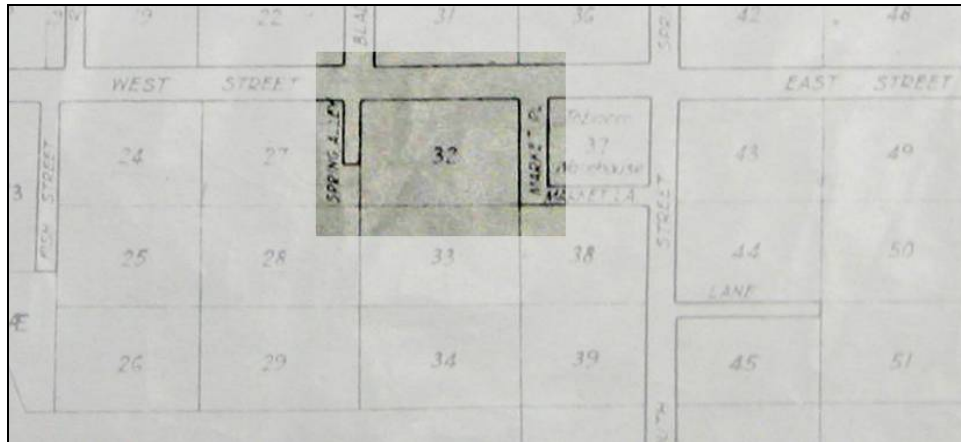


Figure 13: 1787 Resurvey of Bladensburg showing Lot 32
Source: Maryland State Archives

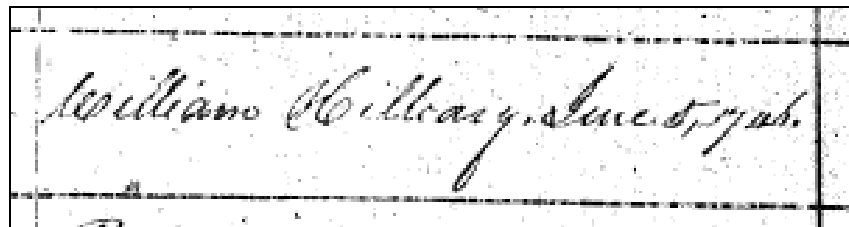


Figure 14: Entry for Lot 32 in the Record Book of Bladensburg
Source: Maryland State Archives

5.1.2 Richard Henderson and David Ross, Jr.

The property’s second owner, Richard Henderson, is believed to have occupied the dwelling during his tenure. Although Henderson owned other properties in Bladensburg, none of these lots were improved until 1769-1771. The Magruder House, constructed

²⁸ *Record Book of the City of Bladensburg, 1787-1836*, Maryland State Archives Special Collections 4885.

²⁹ Bowie, *Across the Years in Prince George's County*, 460.

³⁰ William Hilleary to Richard Henderson, Prince George’s County Land Records, TT: 339-340 (21 December 1764).

circa 1742, would have been the first proper residence available to Henderson. Additionally, later land records would refer to it as Henderson's "Mansion House."³¹

As early as 1759, Henderson served as the Bladensburg representative of the John Glassford Company, a trading operation based in Scotland. In addition to his property in Bladensburg, he also held extensive tracts of land in Montgomery and Frederick Counties. Henderson was a partner, along with Col. Samuel Beall and David Ross, in the Frederick Forge on Antietam Creek. His contentious personality got him into long "paper wars" with Levi Gantt and Alexander Claggett in the pages of the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*.³²

In the 1760s, Henderson and David Ross were responsible for the importation of goods to the Port of Bladensburg, returning shiploads of tobacco to Europe (Figure 15). David Ross served as Town Commissioner (1750-1759) and Justice of the County Court, and was a prominent Bladensburg merchant. Presumably while serving as a surgeon during the French and Indian Wars (1754-1763), Ross first became acquainted with George Washington for whom he served as personal physician during the American Revolution. When Washington became President of the United States in 1789, he appointed Ross to the position of Auditor.³³ In 1749, Ross oversaw construction of his own house in Bladensburg. (The Ross House was dismantled and reassembled in Cockeysville in the 1960s).³⁴

Henderson and Ross were among the leading citizens of Bladensburg who advertised in the February 4, 1762 edition of the *Maryland Gazette* for a lottery to raise funds to remove shoals from the Anacostia River (then known as the Eastern Branch) to further their business interests. Both Henderson and Ross were married to daughters of Judge John Brice of Annapolis, who was the Chief Justice of the Province.³⁵

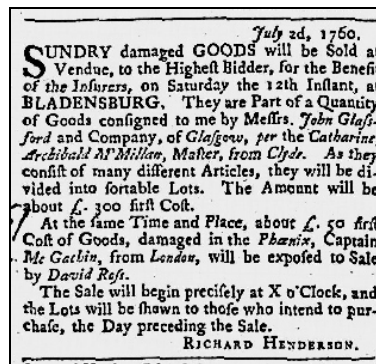


Figure 15: *Maryland Gazette* Advertisement from Richard Henderson and David Ross, 1760

Source: *Maryland Gazette*, July 2, 1760

³¹ James Maccubbin Lingan and John Henderson as Trustees to Alexander Mitchell, Prince George's County Land Records, JRM 10: 69-71 (4 July 1803).

³² Richard K. MacMaster and David C. Skaggs, "The Letterbooks of Alexander Hamilton, Piscataway Factor: Part I, 1774," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 63, No. 1, December 1968, 28.

³³ Margaret W. Cook and Ruth Lockard, *William Hilleary House National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form* (Oxon Hill, MD: The Maryland Historical Trust, 1977), 7.4.

³⁴ Delos H. Smith, *Ross House Historic American Buildings Survey* (MD-120 HABS MD, 1985), 2.

³⁵ Advertisement in the *Maryland Gazette*, 4 February 1762, in John M. Walton, *Historical Chronology of Bladensburg* (Upper Marlboro: Maryland National Parks and Planning Commission, 1981), 21.

In May of 1787, George Washington is believed to have dined at the Magruder House while traveling through Bladensburg in route to Philadelphia to serve as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention. The visit was a recorded event in his diary (Figure 16):

Wednesday 9th. Crossed from Mt. Vernon to Mr. Digges a little after sunrise & pursuing the rout by the way of Baltimore—dined at Mr. Richd. Hendersons in Bladensbg. and lodged at Muir. Snowdens [Montpelier in Laurel, Maryland] where feeling very severely a violent hd. ach & sick stomach I went to bed early.³⁶

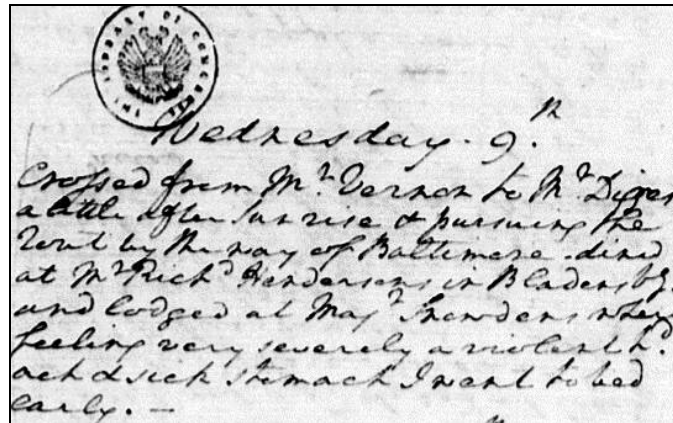


Figure 16: Excerpt from George Washington's Diary, May 9, 1787
Source: Library of Congress

According to the 1790 Federal Census, Richard Henderson resided with one free white male under the age of sixteen, three free white females, and three other household members. Henderson also possessed twenty-five enslaved persons of African descent.³⁷ An article in the July 13, 1962 edition of the *New Citizen* reported that “Certainly legend and record have it that the cellar [of the Magruder House] contained a slave dungeon. Until a few years ago the actual slave rings were still set in the floor just outside the small, dark stone-walled room that is believed to be the dungeon. The spikes to which the rings were attached are still set in the flooring.” However, no historical accounts describe the purported confinement of slaves in the house. The article also reported that slaves likely did the cooking for the Henderson household in the ground-floor kitchen, which contained a hearth over ten feet in length.³⁸

The *Record Book of Bladensburg* reports that Ross purchased Lot 34, located south of the Magruder House in 1752. Henderson purchased Lot 33, directly adjoining the Magruder House to the south in 1765.³⁹ Subsequently, Ross and Henderson exchanged portions of their properties, although these transactions were not recorded. Each apparently owned

³⁶ Donald Jackson and Dorothy Twohig, eds., *The Diaries of George Washington* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia) 1979, Vol. 5, 153.

³⁷ *First Census of the United States, 1790*. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. Census Place: Prince Georges, Maryland; Roll: M637_3; Image: 0166.

³⁸ Helen Lee Garrison, “Magruder House Linked to Bladensburg Past,” *New Citizen*, 13 July 1962.

³⁹ *Record Book of the City of Bladensburg, 1787-1836*, Maryland State Archives Special Collections 4885.

portions of Lots 33 and 34.⁴⁰ David Ross died in 1778. In 1793, Henderson sold his shares of Lots 32, 33 and 34 to his nephew and David Ross' son, David Ross, Jr. Thus in 1793, Ross Jr. owned the "Mansion House of ... Richard Henderson" and three acres stretching to the south behind it.⁴¹

Major David Ross, Jr., Esq. was born on February, 12, 1755. During the Revolutionary War, General George Washington put Ross, Jr. in charge of a regiment in the Continental Army. He resigned his post in 1777 to study law. Ross, Jr. was admitted to the bar in 1783 and began his legal practice in Frederick County. Between 1787 and 1789, Ross, Jr. served as a Delegate to the Continental Congress from Maryland. After his father's death in 1778, Ross, Jr. devoted much of his time to administering the family estate.⁴²

The 1798 Federal Direct Tax listed David Ross, Jr. as both the owner and occupant of the Magruder House. The tax assessor described the house as a "stone dwelling house, story + half high 43 by 30 [feet]." In addition to the primary dwelling house, the lot was occupied by a 26-foot by 20-foot log wash house, a 16-foot by 12-foot wood-frame milk house, a 16-foot-square stone meat house, a 12-foot-square wood-frame hen house, an 18-foot-square wood-frame stall, and a 10-foot by 12-foot shed (Figure 17).⁴³

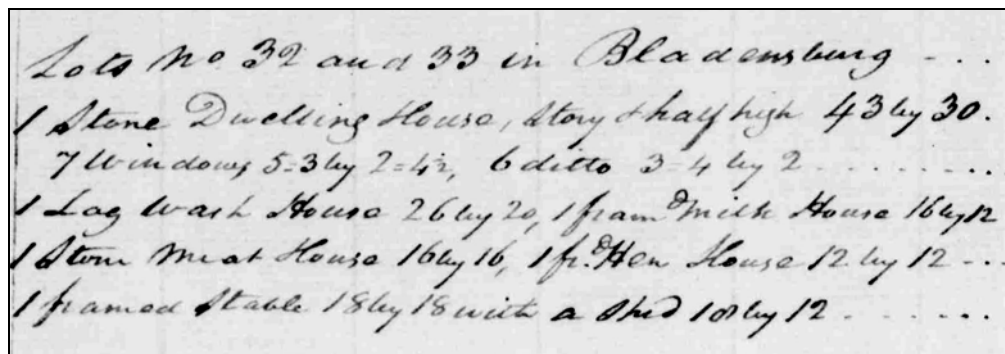


Figure 17: Description of Lots 32 and 33 in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax Assessment
Source: Maryland State Archives

The 1793-1794 Tax Assessments for Prince George's County (the earliest available) list David Ross, Jr. as a slaveholder with substantial holdings. He possessed thirty-five enslaved persons of African descent: eleven under the age of sixteen; two between ages of eight and fourteen; and twenty-two over the age of fourteen.⁴⁴

The younger Ross lacked the business acumen of his father. In 1799, he conveyed all his property "real, personal, and mixed of every kind whatsoever," including the Magruder House, to a trustee, William Stewart. Ross published notice of the conveyance in the

⁴⁰ James Maccubbin Lingan and John Henderson as Trustees to Alexander Mitchell, Prince George's County Land Records, JRM 10: 69-71 (4 July 1803).

⁴¹ James Maccubbin Lingan and John Henderson as Trustees to Alexander Mitchell, Prince George's County Land Records, JRM 10: 69-71 (4 July 1803).

⁴² *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress 1774-Present*. Available online: <http://bioguide.congress.gov>.

⁴³ *1798 Federal Direct Tax, New Scotland, Oxen & Bladensburg*, Maryland State Archives, Archives of Maryland Online, Volume 729.

⁴⁴ Prince George's County Commissioners of the Tax, *Assessment Record 1793-1794*, Maryland State Archives, CM779-1.

Centinel of Liberty on October 11, 1799, announcing, “I mean to apply to the next General Assembly, for an act of insolvency, to release me from debts I am unable to pay.”⁴⁵ Ross died a year later in 1800 in Frederick County.⁴⁶

In 1803, Richard Henderson died; his Last Will and Testament had not been updated to reflect the 1793 sale of the Magruder House to David Ross, Jr. and thus bequeathed the property to his heirs. Confusion over the ownership of the property was furthered by the fact that the sale to David Ross, Jr. was never officially recorded in the Land Records of Prince George’s County. Thus, to remedy the error, James Maccubbin Lingan and John Henderson, the executors of Richard Henderson’s will, confirmed sale of the Magruder House to Dr. Alexander Mitchell, who had recently purchased the property from trustee William Stewart.

William Stewart had advertised the sale of the Magruder House in the September 8, 1802 edition of the *National Intelligencer*. The advertisement provides a detailed description of the house and other improvements on the three-acre parcel:

Will be sold at Mr. Dougherty’s Tavern ... That well improved lot late the property of Maj. David Ross.—The Improvements are a large and convenient and well finished stone house, rough casted, three handsome rooms, and a compleat [sic] store room, with a fire place in each, and an entry on the first floor, three bed rooms with a fire place in each—two other small bed rooms and a compleat store room and entry on the second floor—the outhouses are an excellent stable and carriage house, and corn house—and excellent stone meat house, and extensive wash house with lodging rooms for the servants, and a compleat store house and dairy, with a never failing spring of water, an excellent garden abounding with a variety of fruit and shrubbery—a neat yard in front and about three acres of meadow ground behind are annexed to this lot, as also about half an acre of high ground, from whence the meadow may be watered the whole year round. In short both of these lots are well improved, and for their many local advantages might at a small expense be rendered as elegant as any property in the state....⁴⁷

Sometime after 1803, the Magruder House was sold to Leonard M. Deakins, a Prince George’s County landowner who lived on a plantation called Deakins Hall. Deakins also owned a large tract of land in Prince George’s County called Lone Head.⁴⁸ As Deakins did not reside in Bladensburg, the occupancy of the Magruder House between 1803 and 1824 remains uncertain.

⁴⁵ “Notice,” *The Centinel of Liberty*, 11 October 1799, 1.

⁴⁶ “David Ross.” *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress 1774-Present*. Available online: <<http://bioguide.congress.gov>>.

⁴⁷ “Valuable Property for Sale,” *National Intelligencer*, 8 September 1802, in John M. Walton, *Historical Chronology of Bladensburg* (Upper Marlboro: Maryland National Parks and Planning Commission, 1981), 21.

⁴⁸ John Heath vs. William F. Deakins and Others, Prince George’s County Court Equity Case 430 (3 April 1833), Maryland State Archives, T65-5.

5.1.3 The Battle of Bladensburg

Oral tradition holds that the Magruder House was the site of the only civilian resistance offered during the Battle of Bladensburg on August 24, 1814, and later was used as a hospital by the British.⁴⁹ A review of both primary and secondary accounts of the Battle of Bladensburg refutes the legend that the Magruder House was the site of civilian resistance, but potentially supports the house's use as a hospital.

Prior to the Battle of Bladensburg, the American forces under General Tobias Stansbury had initially occupied a strong defensive position east of Bladensburg on Lowndes Hill. Stansbury abandoned this position, however, on the grounds that it was too exposed. On the morning of the battle, he repositioned his troops on the hill on the west side of the Eastern Branch (now Anacostia River), across a narrow bridge from the town. Upon returning from the City of Washington, Brigadier General William H. Winder—without consulting Stansbury and acting under orders from Secretary of State James Monroe—positioned his forces in two lines a quarter of a mile from the forward artillery. The Americans were thus deployed in three lines west of the Anacostia River, all out of supporting range of one another.⁵⁰

The British approached the Town of Bladensburg cautiously, expecting American resistance; they found none. In an account of the battle based on his diaries, British Officer George Gleig described the approach to the town:

The road having conducted us for about two miles in a direction parallel with the river, and of consequence, the enemy's line, suddenly turned, and led us directly toward the town of Bladensburg. Being of course ignorant whether this town might not be filled with American troops, the main body paused here till the advance guard should reconnoiter. The result proved that no opposition was intended in that quarter, and that the whole of the enemy's army had withdrawn to the other side of the stream, whereupon the column was again put in motion, and in a short time arrived in the streets of Bladensburg, and within range of the American artillery.⁵¹

A sketch of the Battle of Bladensburg from the British perspective drawn by Thomas Ormsby in 1816 (Figure 18) notes a “fortified house deserted by the enemy” in Bladensburg, suggesting that the Americans may have initially planned to offer some resistance from the town.⁵² Gleig also recounted that once the Americans began firing on the British, “the men were directed to shelter themselves as much as possible behind the houses.” Although he was under heavy fire from two-pound guns, General Robert Ross ordered the British to assault the bridge. The American failure to destroy the bridge ahead of the advance was the final tactical error that enabled the British infantry to cross the river and

⁴⁹ Margaret W. Cook and Ruth Lockard, *William Hilleary House National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form* (Oxon Hill: The Maryland Historical Trust, 1977), 7.4.

⁵⁰ Pitch, *The Burning of Washington*, 71-85.

⁵¹ George Robert Gleig, *A Narrative of the Campaigns of the British Army at Washington and New Orleans* (London: John Murray, 1821), 116-117.

⁵² Ormsby's map is published in James Riehl Arnold, “The Battle of Bladensburg,” *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* Vol. 37-38 (1937): Plate 5.

break through the American lines. Besieged by rocket fire, Winder ordered a retreat. The hasty withdrawal would later cause the battle to become known as the “Bladensburg Races.”⁵³

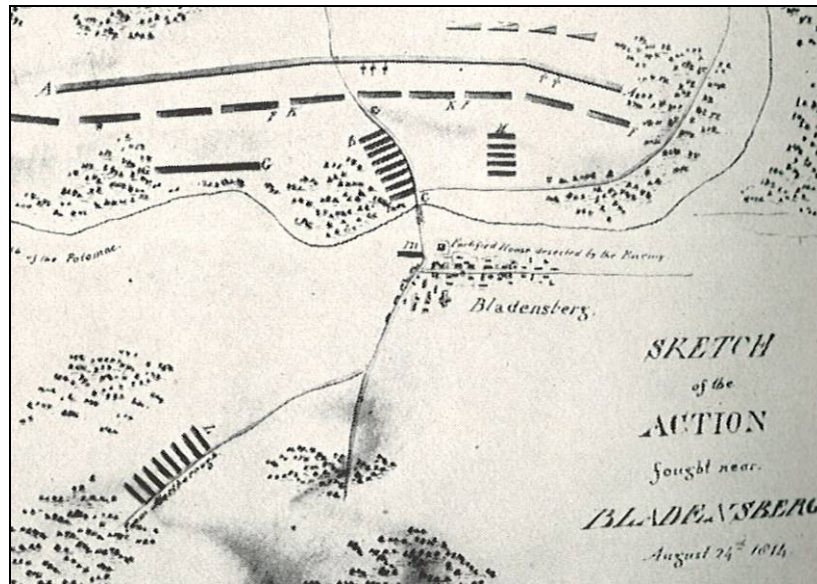


Figure 18: Sketch of the Action Fought near Bladensburg by Thomas Ormsby
 Source: *Records of the Columbia Historical Society*

While eyewitness accounts of the battle do not record any civilian resistance from the Magruder House, or anywhere in Bladensburg, the British wounded were left in the town while the column advance to Washington, D.C. In a letter to General Winder from Elliott Mills (en route to Baltimore) dated August 26, 1814, General Stansbury reported that “...the Enemy [sic] have cleared out from Bladensburg and commenced their march with much apparent disorder & confusion towards Marlboro leaving about 80 of their wounded, and many of their Solders wandering after unprotected. I ordered all Calvary ... to push down to Bladensburg with a view of harassing their Rear & picking up their criple [sic] & sick, which I was informed by the Doctor you sent on with a flag to dress the wounded would be many...”⁵⁴ The presence of more than eighty wounded British soldiers languishing in the aftermath of the battle lends credence to the oral history that private residences in Bladensburg, perhaps including the Magruder House, served as field hospitals.

5.1.4 The Magruder House in the Mid Nineteenth Century

Leonard Deakins died on June 28, 1824. In 1833, the Circuit Court of Prince George’s County ordered that his real estate be sold and the profits from the sale distributed among his heirs. In 1835, Benjamin Welsh, the court appointed trustee, sold Lot 32 to Christopher C. Hyatt. Hyatt was born in 1799 to a well-established family in Prince George’s County, Maryland. In 1832, he opened his own store in Bladensburg, selling general

⁵³ Joseph Durst Patch, “The Battle of Bladensburg” in *Port of Bladensburg: Historical Themes* (Upper Marlboro: M-NCPPC History Division, 1981).

⁵⁴ Brigadier General Tobais E. Stansbury, “Letter to Brigadier General William H. Winder,” 26 August 1814 (*William H. Winder Papers*, Maryland Historical Society Library, MS 919).

merchandise and tobacco. Hyatt's success motivated him to purchase a tract of land in 1845 in nearby Beall Town, which he would subsequently develop as Hyattsville.⁵⁵ In 1836, Hyatt sold the Bladensburg property, along with all of Lots 32, 33, and 34 to Howarton and Susan Cross. Because the Hyatt's store was located on property he purchased from Thomas C. Duvall in 1832, it is unlikely that he resided in the Magruder House. This is pure speculation, however, as the actual occupancy of the house during Hyatt's tenure is not known.

The 1840 Census lists Howarton Cross as a head of household living in Prince George's County with five females (one under five, two between the ages of five and ten, one between the ages of twenty and thirty, and one between the ages of forty and fifty).⁵⁶ In 1847, Cross and his wife, Susan, sold the Magruder House to Dr. William Draine. Two years later, in 1849, Draine sold Lots 32, 33, and 34 to William C. Harris of Baltimore; Harris immediately mortgaged the property to Dionysius Sherriff of Prince George's County. In 1853, Harris defaulted on the loan and Sherriff sold Lots 32, 33, and 34 to James T. Clarke of Washington, D.C. Based on census research and land records, it is possible that the Cross family occupied the Magruder House from 1836 to 1847. It is unlikely, however, that any of the subsequent property owners from 1847 to 1853 resided in the house given their residences outside of Bladensburg.

It is believed that around 1850 the Magruder House was occupied by Benjamin Day. Later land records (from 1883 and onward) would identify the Magruder House as the "final residence of Dr. Benjamin Day."⁵⁷ According to *The Medical Annals of Maryland*, Day graduated from the University of Maryland (Baltimore campus, founded in 1807) with his medical degree in 1821.⁵⁸ In addition to being a physician, Day served as a Representative to the Maryland House of Delegates from Prince George's County in 1833 and was appointed the County Medical Examiner in 1839.⁵⁹

The Rambler, writing for the *Washington Star* in 1922, identified another house as the home of Dr. Benjamin Day: the Gretta House in East Riverdale (Figure 19). According to the Rambler, Dr. Day married Martha Cooks of Howard County. The Days named their house after their only daughter, Margaret, whose nickname was "Miss Gretta." The house, which was inherited by Benjamin Day's grandson, Benjamin Day Stephen, was associated with a large plantation, also called Gretta, that later formed a large portion of Riverdale Park, a suburban community northwest of Bladensburg.⁶⁰ The information presented by the Rambler suggests that Dr. Day only occupied the Magruder House in the later years of his life, although it is not known when he died.

⁵⁵ John Heath vs. William F. Deakins and Others, Prince George's County Court Equity Case 430 (3 April 1833), Maryland State Archives, T65-5; EHT Tracerics, Inc., "Hyattsville Historic District (Amended and Expanded)," *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form* (Washington, D.C.: EHT Tracerics, Inc., 2004).

⁵⁶ *Sixth Census of the United States, 1840*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1840. Census Place: Prince Georges, Maryland, Roll: 169, Page: 8.

⁵⁷ C. C. Magruder as Trustee to Florence S. Summers, Prince George's County Land Records, JWB 2: 361 (21 June 1883).

⁵⁸ Eugene Fauntleroy Cordell, *The Medical Annals of Maryland, 1799-1899* (Baltimore, MD: 1903), 374.

⁵⁹ R. Lee Van Horn, *Out of the Past: Prince Georgians and Their Land* (Riverdale, MD: Prince George's County Historical Society, 1976), 321.

⁶⁰ J. Harry Shannon, "The Rambler Visits and Old Homestead and Many New Villages in Maryland," *Sunday Star*, 26 February 1922.



Figure 19: ‘Gretta’—Dr. Benjamin Day’s House in East Riverdale, 1922

Source: The Rambler Photograph Collection, The Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

5.1.5 Archibald & Narcissa Magruder

On February 12, 1853, Archibald Magruder—for whom the house is named—purchased Lots 32, 33 and 34 from James T. Clarke. Born on February 18, 1818, Magruder was a physician living in Bladensburg at the time of the purchase in 1853. He is known to have occupied the house until his death in 1863. He was married to Narcissa (nee Adamson) of Baltimore. Together, the couple had one son, Thomas, and five daughters: Jane, Susanna, Mary, Elizabeth, and Julia. Magruder was a slaveholder; according to the 1850 Slave Schedule, he owned four slaves: a twenty-three-year-old female, an eleven-year-old male, a ten-year-old female, and a three-month-old female. By 1860, his holdings had increased to eight slaves: a fifty-six-year-old male, a three-year-old male, a fifty-year-old female, a thirty-two-year-old female, a twenty-year-old female, a ten-year-old female, an eight-year-old female, and a nine-year-old female.⁶¹ In his Last Will and Testament, dated May 15, 1860, Archibald Magruder named the “servants” to be distributed among his family: Tom, Emma, Louisa, Sally, Charles (who had escaped), and Carolina.⁶²

According to a family history recounted by Margaret Homes Kelley, who was Archibald and Narcissa’s great-granddaughter, Dr. Magruder was an ardent southern sympathizer during the Civil War (1861-1865). He reputedly hid medical supplies in his home so he could tend to the Confederate soldiers. The men would slip behind the Union line and hide in the Magruder House until nightfall when they would return to Confederate territory under darkness, bringing medical supplies for the sick and wounded. For his actions, Dr. Magruder was imprisoned for a short time in Washington, D.C., but allowed to return to Bladensburg because he was the only physician in town.⁶³ Magruder’s actions

⁶¹ 1850 and 1860 Slave Schedule (Archibald Magruder). Available online through Ancestry.com.

⁶² Prince George’s County Circuit Court, *Isaac Scagg and Thomas J. Turner vs. A. J. Magruder*, Equity Case No. 532, 10 December 1886, Maryland State Archives T65-22.

⁶³ Margaret Holmes Kelley, *Oral History: Archibald and Narcissa Magruder*, 30 July 1978.

as a southern sympathizer, his slave holdings, and the reported presence of a slave dungeon in the basement of the house seem to repudiate later speculation that the Magruder House was a stop on the Underground Railroad.⁶⁴

The 1861 Martenet's Map (Figure 20) shows the Magruder House set back from Market Street (formerly East-West Street) to the east of its intersection with Bladen Street. Another building is located on the lot to the northeast of the house, fronting directly on Market Street. It appears the label "Dr. Magruder's Office" on the map applies to this secondary building rather than the main house. Archibald Magruder died on May 1, 1863. After his death, Narcissa Magruder continued to live in the house with several of her children. She is shown as the occupant of the property on the 1878 Hopkins Map (Figure 21). By this time, the property also included a second, larger outbuilding, which was located in the northwest corner of the lot. There are no notations for the uses of the secondary buildings on the property.



Figure 20: Map showing outline of the Magruder Property, 1861
Source: 1861 Martenet's Map

⁶⁴ Janet Groat, "History in the Making – Magruder Restoration Almost Done," *Prince George's Post*, 21 January 1982.

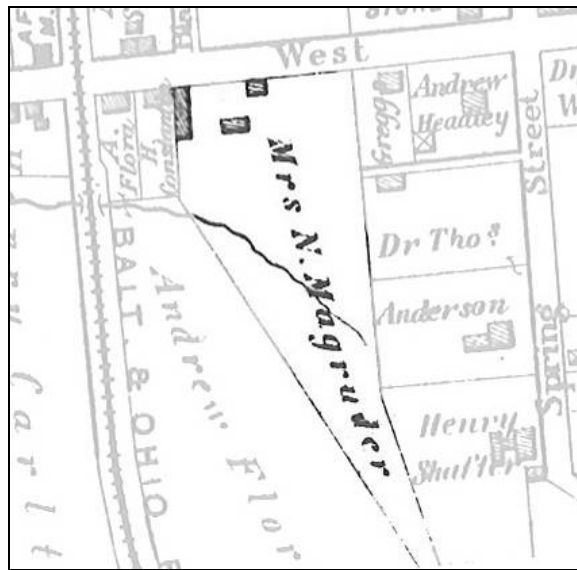


Figure 21: Map showing outline of Magruder Property, 1878
 Source: 1878 G.M. Hopkins Map

In 1866, the Prince George’s Circuit Court appointed Caleb C. Magruder, Jr. as executor of Archibald Magruder’s Will, authorizing him to sell the Magruder House. (Despite their common surname, research has been unable to reveal the relationship between Archibald and C. C. Magruder.)⁶⁵ Around 1880, Narcissa Magruder moved back to her hometown of Baltimore, and C. C. Magruder, Jr. sold the house to Florence Summers. In 1891, Summers subdivided the property, selling the portion of Lot 32 encompassing the Magruder House to Marion Duckett. Duckett was a prominent Bladensburg lawyer and landowner. Duckett likely retained the Magruder House as an investment property; the 1910 Census reports that he lived on River Road.⁶⁶

5.1.6 The Magruder House in the Twentieth Century

In 1915, Duckett sold the Magruder House to Richard Duckett Magruder, who in turn conveyed it to Anna Loffler. Three years later, in 1918, Loffler conveyed the property to Baxter and Alice Denny. An Indiana native, Baxter Denny was an employee of the Division of Stamps of the United States Postal Service. The 1930 Census lists Baxter and Alice Denny as residing in Bladensburg along with their children: Fred, James, John, Rosemary, Alfred and Elias.⁶⁷ The Dennys are known to have resided in the Magruder House until 1940, when they sold the property to Guisepe and Grazia Gugliotta.

The earliest known photograph of the front façade of the Magruder House dates from 1910 to 1915 (Figure 22). Another early image was taken for the March 26, 1922 Rambler column in the *Washington Star* (Figure 23). The Rambler identified the photo as

⁶⁵ C. C. Magruder (as trustee) to Florence S. Summers, Prince George’s County Land Records, JWB 2: 361 (21 June 1883),

⁶⁶ *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1910. Census Place: Bladensburg, Prince George’s, Maryland; Roll: T624_567; Page: 7A; Enumeration District: 61; Image: 78.

⁶⁷ *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1930. Census Place: Bladensburg, Prince George’s, Maryland; Roll: 877; Page: 8B; Enumeration District: 4; Image: 633.

“One of the Old Houses of Bladensburg.”⁶⁸ Both early images show that the Magruder House, described as a stone dwelling in the 1798 Federal Direct tax, had been covered with stucco in the late nineteenth century. The exposed stone on the interior is shown in an image from the Magruder House National Register of Historic Places Nomination, taken in 1974 (Figure 24); exposed stone on the exterior is shown in a photograph published in the Prince George’s Sentinel in 1979 (Figure 25). An image from the Sussanna Kyner Cristofane Collection at the Maryland State Archives (Figure 26) shows the rear of the Magruder House around the turn of the twentieth century. As shown in the photograph, the stone was covered in stucco circa 1900.

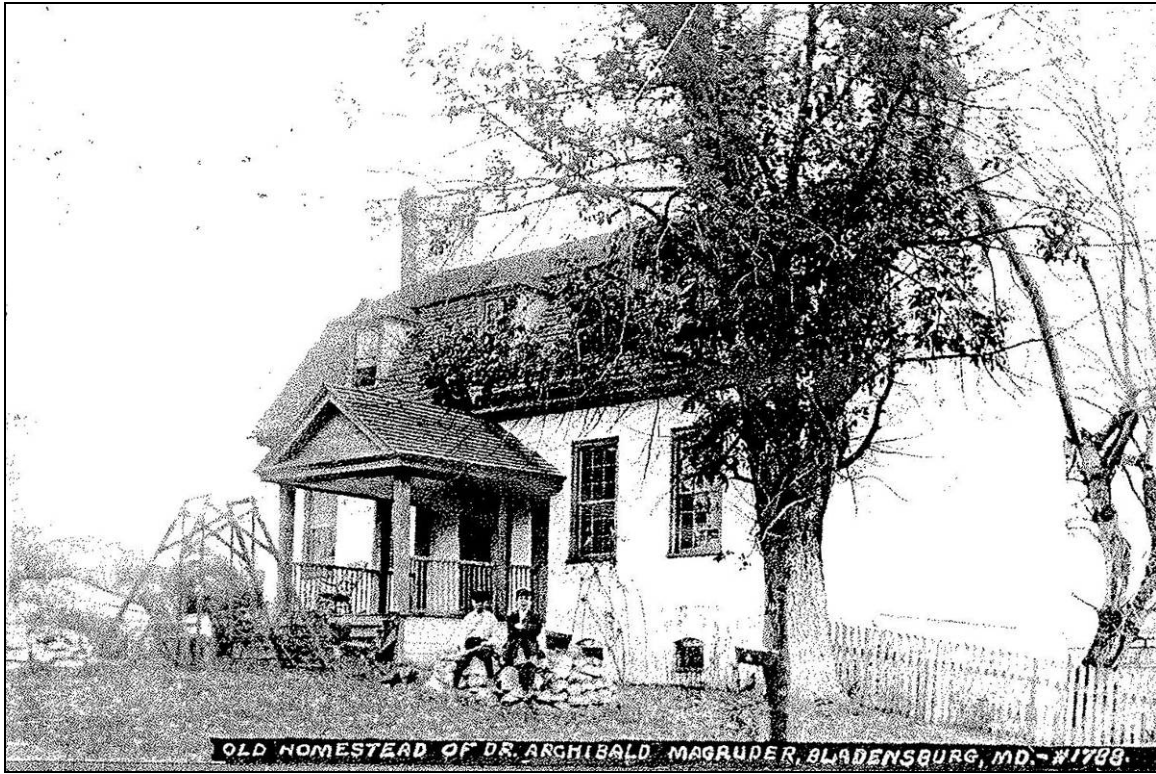


Figure 22: North Elevation of Magruder House, circa 1910-1915
Source: The Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

⁶⁸ J. Harry Shannon, “The Rambler Writes More of Bishop Pinkey, His Work and Churches,” *Evening Star*, 26 March 1922.



Figure 23: The Magruder House, 1922

Source: The Rambler Photograph Collection, The Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

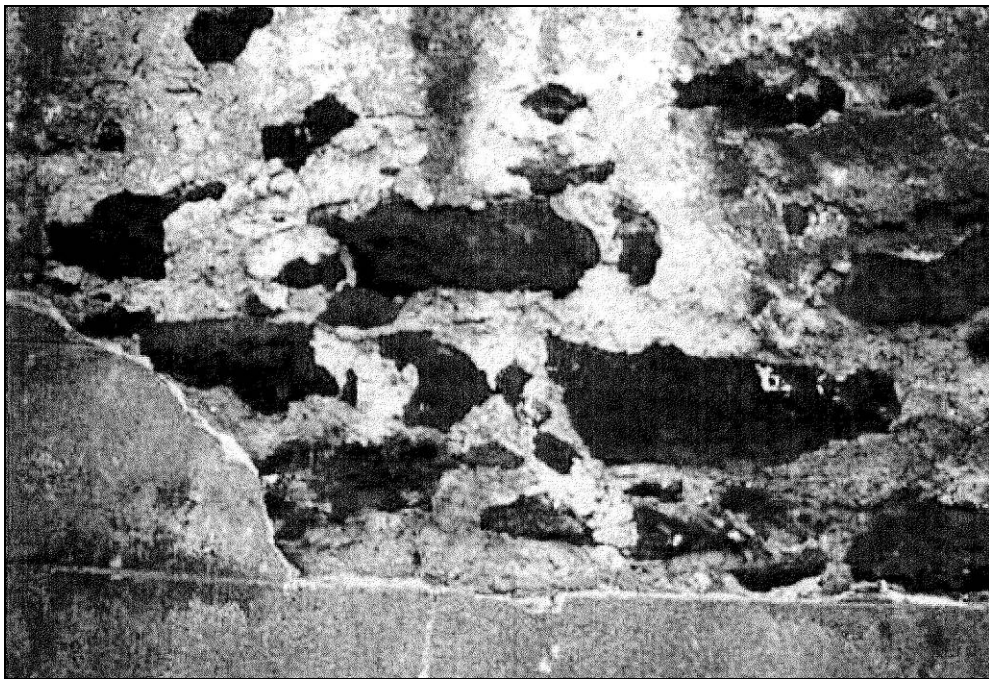


Figure 24: Exposed Stone in the Interior Walls of the Magruder House, 1974

Source: Maryland Historical Trust/National Register of Historic Places



Figure 25: Exposed Stone on the Exterior of the Magruder House, 1979
Source: The Prince George's Sentinel/PGCHS Library



Figure 26: Rear of the Magruder House, circa 1900
Source: The Susanna Cristofane Collection at the Maryland State Archives

A photograph taken between 1932 and 1936 shows that during the late-1920s or early-1930s, the front porch on the Magruder House was replaced by the Dennys with a shed roof porch (Figure 27). The form of the original porch was recreated during the most recent renovation of the house.

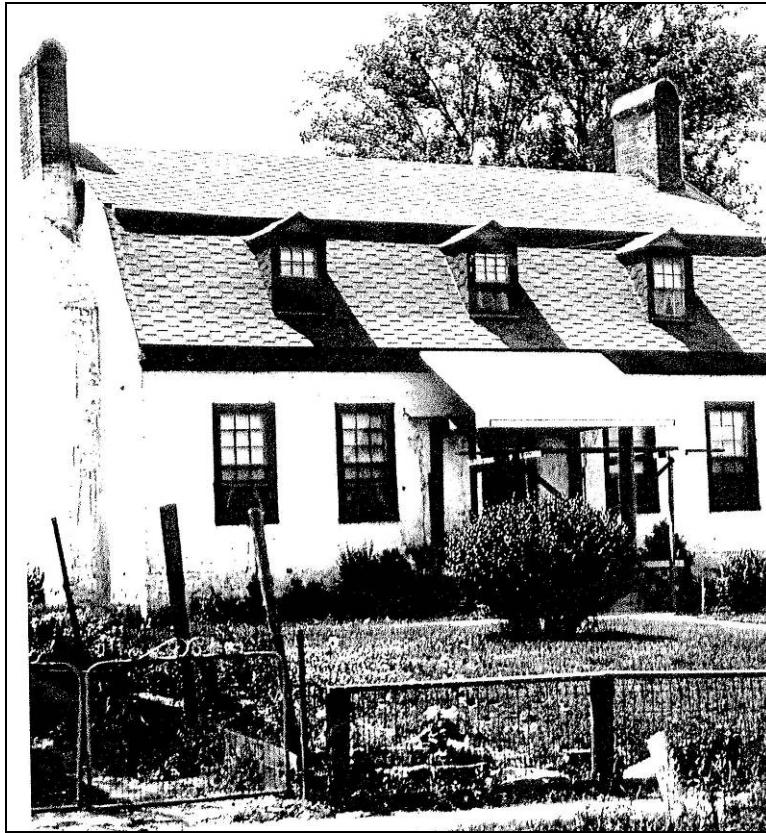


Figure 27: The Magruder House Porch, circa 1932-1936
Source: The Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

In 1954, the State Roads Commission gained control of the property with the intent to demolish the Magruder House to allow for the expansion of Kenilworth Avenue, which is today a primary transportation and commercial corridor running north/south through Prince George's County. Susanna Cristofane (pictured in Figure 28), a member of the town council, spearheaded an effort to save the architecturally and historically significant building, along with the nearby Market Master's House. The houses were ultimately spared by the realignment of the road and creation of an overpass for Kenilworth Avenue at its intersection with Upshur Street. Maps from the mid twentieth century show the Magruder House before and after the construction of Kenilworth Avenue (Figure 29 and Figure 30).



Figure 28: Susanna Cristofane in front of the Magruder House, 1979
Source: The Prince George's Sentinel/PGCHS Library

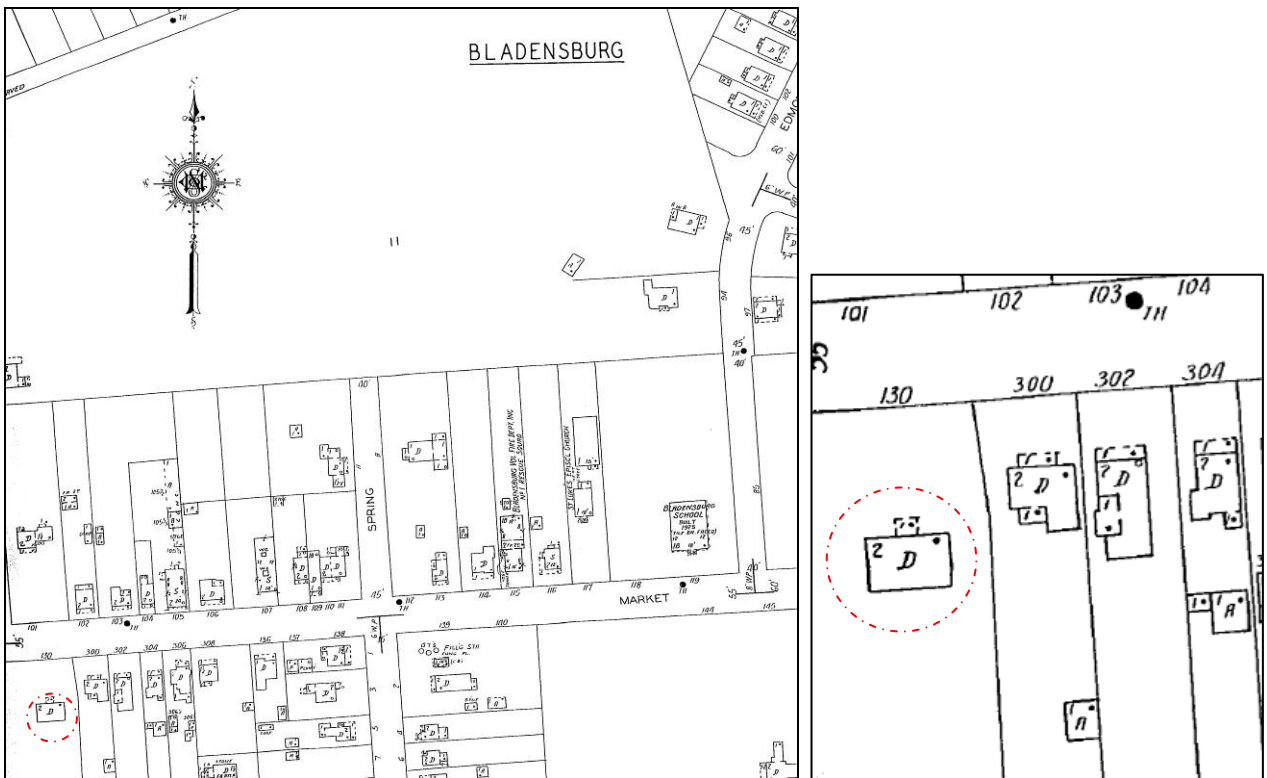


Figure 29: The Magruder House prior to the construction of Kenilworth Avenue, 1939
Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

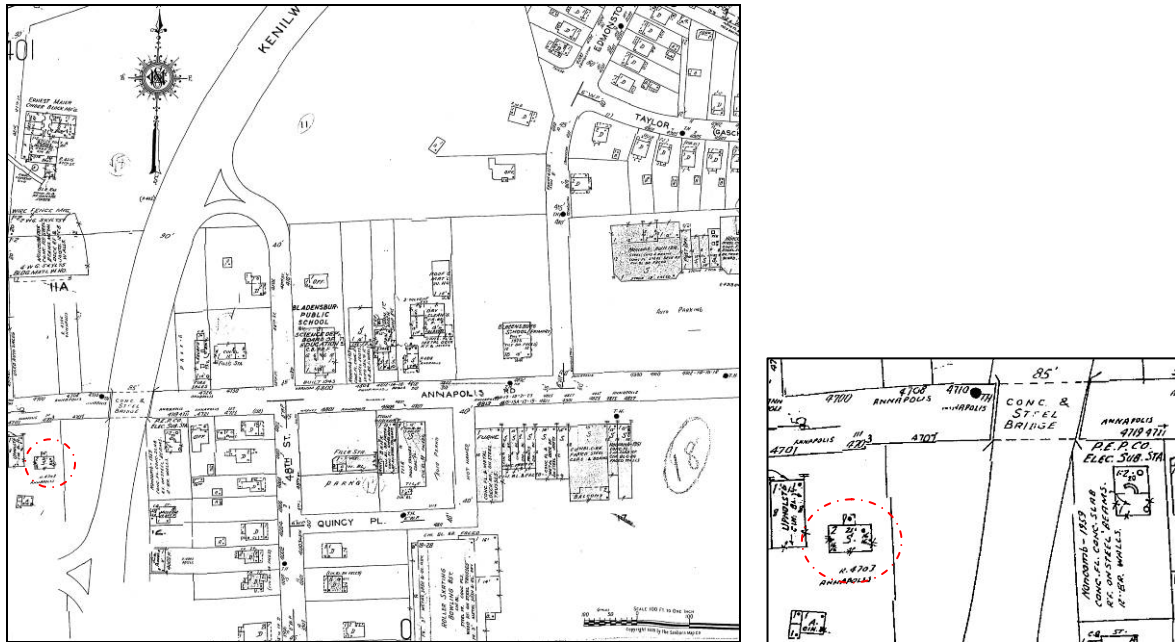


Figure 30: The Magruder House after the construction of Kenilworth Avenue, 1959

Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

After the highway construction, the State Roads Commission retained ownership of the building, leasing it to Forest Newton. Newton resided in the top floor of the house along with his wife and son, while operating an antique shop on the first floor (Figure 31). The house, which had fallen into disrepair (Figure 32), was conveyed by the State Highway Commission in 1979 to Prince George's Heritage, a volunteer history and historic preservation organization. Under the careful direction of Prince George's Heritage, the Magruder House underwent a major restoration in 1982 (Figure 33).

The extensive restoration project included removing portions of the stucco on the façade to uncover original features. Additionally, the porch roof at the front of the house was returned to its original gable form, replacing the shed roof that was added sometime after 1920 (Figure 34). The antique shop and residence was replaced with an office for the accounting firm of W. Dickerson Charlton.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Helen Lee Garrison, "Magruder House Linked to Bladensburg Past," *New Citizen*, 13 July 1962; David Braaten, "Is it too Late to Save Prince George's Historical Jewels?" *The Washington Star*, 18 January 1978; Nancy Scales, "Besieged by Suburban Clutter, Colonial House Deserves a Face-Lift," *The Sentinel*, 26 April, 1979.

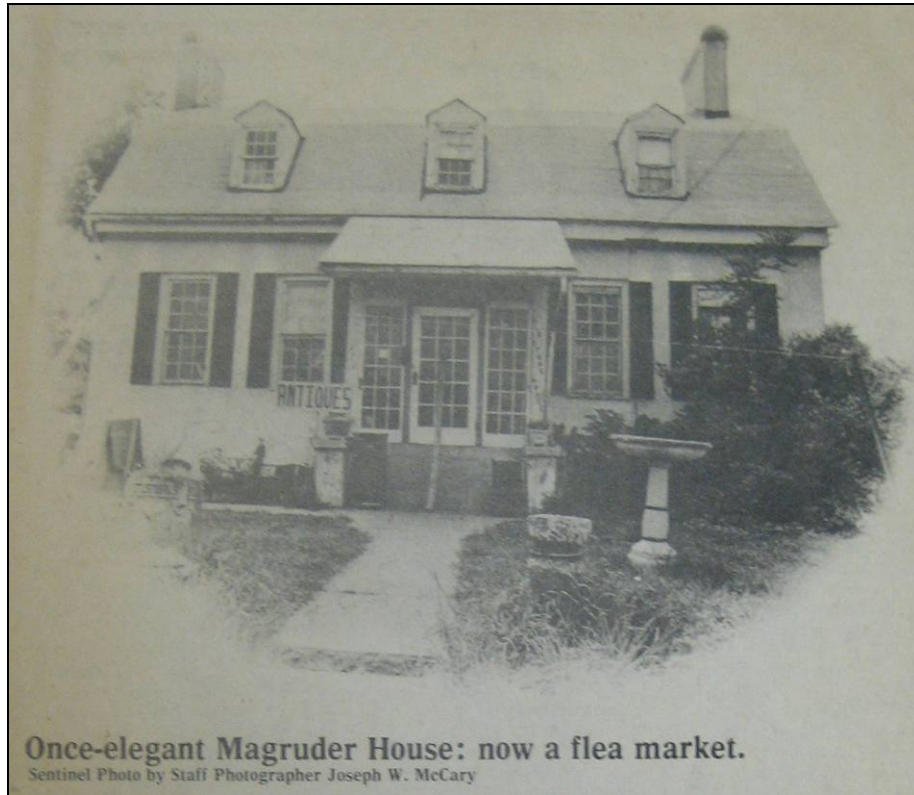


Figure 31: The Magruder House as a Flea Market, circa 1980
Source: The Prince George's Sentinel/PGCHS Library



Figure 32: The Magruder House prior to the 1982 Restoration
Source: Prince George's Journal/PGCHS Library

Magruder: Restored Home Becomes an Office

From Page A1

Maryland and the Neighborhood Business Revitalization Office, which provided grants and reduced-interest loans for the project.

The restoration reflects Charlton's faith in the area — once a bustling port but now a depressed area targeted for business revitalization. The University Park resident, an active member of Kiwanis and the Chamber of Commerce, also was looking to save the \$60,000 a year the firm pays for its prestigious northwest Washington address. Charlton's \$75,000 restoration investment also includes his rent on the building for the 30-year lease.

Charlton, who had never considered relocating to a historic site, got the idea from Bladensburg's long-time mayor and active preservationist Susanna Cristofani, who lives nearby in the 200-year-old mansion of Bladensburg's founding father, Christopher Lowndes.

According to the long tradition surrounding the Magruder house, it was used as a hospital for wounded troops after the Battle of Bladensburg in 1814. Besides its namesake, Dr. Archibald Magruder, the house also has sheltered such prominent Prince Georgians as Dr. Alexander Mitchell, Leonard M. Deakins, Christopher Hyatt, Dr. Benjamin Day and Dr. William Draine.



Weldon Fossett (left) and Walt Kunz show off the renovated third floor's fireplace.



W. Dickerson Charlton (center) meets with accountant Frances McLean and client Gene Bond in the restored library of the house.

Staff
Photos
by
Lon Slepicka



Figure 33: The Restoration of the Magruder House, 1982
Source: Prince George's Journal/PGCHS Library



Figure 34: View of the Magruder House from the Northwest, 1980
Source: Historic American Building Survey/Library of Congress

In 1978, the Magruder House was listed in the Maryland Inventory of Historical Places and the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural and historical significance. In 1980, the Magruder House was documented by the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), which recognized the early-eighteenth-century building's architectural significance. Additionally, in July 1981, it was protected as a Prince George's County Historic Site. The property is currently owned by Prince George's Heritage, Inc. and used for office space and the organization's headquarters.

The timeline on the following page (Figure 35) summarizes the use and occupancy of the Magruder House from the time of its construction through the date of purchase by the State Roads Commission.

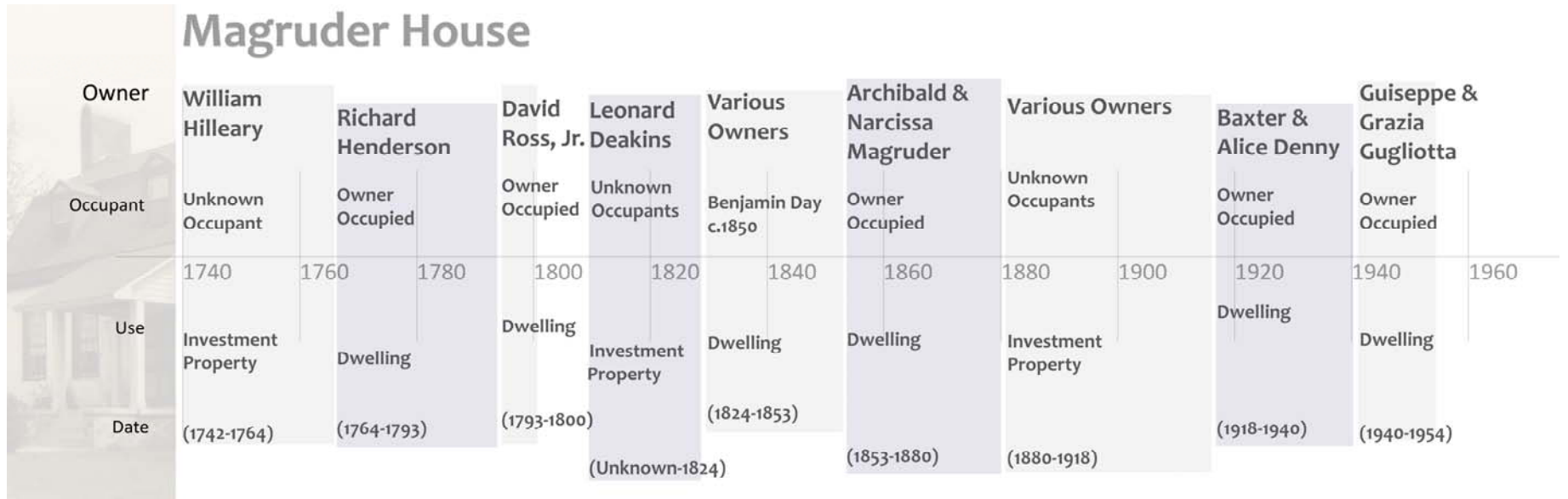


Figure 35: Use and Occupancy of the Magruder House 1740-1960

MAGRUDER HOUSE- CHAIN OF TITLE

LOT 32

March 5, 1742	Bladensburg Town Commissioners to William Hilleary Lot 32 Record Book of Bladensburg
December 21, 1764	William Hilleary to Richard Henderson Lot 32 Prince George's County Land Records TT: 339-340
October 26, 1793	Richard Henderson to David Ross, Jr. Lots 32, 33, and 34 Deed not recorded (see JRM 10: 69-71 – July 4, 1803)
August 14, 1799	David Ross, Jr. to William Stewart as Trustee Deed of Trust Lot 32, 33 and 34 Prince George's County Land Records JRM 7: 264-266
July 4, 1803	James Maccubbin Lingan and John Henderson as Trustees to Alexander Mitchell Lots 32, 33, and 34 Prince George's County Land Records JRM 10: 69-71
Date Uncertain	Lots 32, 33, and 34 conveyed to Leonard M. Deakins
November 21, 1835	Benjamin Welsh as Trustee to Christopher C. Hyatt Lots 32, 33, and 34 AB 10: 150
January 16, 1836	Christopher C. and Catherine E. Hyatt to Howarton Cross Lots 32, 33, and 34 Prince George's County Land Records AB 10: 269
January 1, 1847	Howarton and Susan Cross to William Draine Lots 32, 33, and 34 Prince George's County Land Records JBB 4: 798-799.
January 3, 1849	William Draine to William C. Harris Lots 32, 33, and 34 Prince George's County Land Records JBB 5:508-509

January 5, 1849 William C. Harris to Dionysius Sheriff as Trustee
 Lots 32, 33, and 34
 Prince George's County Land Records
 JBB 5:454-456

February 12, 1853 Dionysius Sheriff as Trustee to James T. Clarke
 Lots 32, 33, and 34
 Prince George's County Land Records
 ON 1: 291-292

May 17, 1853 James T. Clarke to Archibald S. Magruder
 Lots 32, 33, and 34
 Prince George's County Land Records
 ON 1: 291

June 21, 1883 C. C. Magruder as Trustee to Florence S. Summers
 Lots 32, 33 and 34
 Prince George's County Land Records
 JWB 2: 361

PORTION OF LOT 32 (30,723 Square Feet)

July 18, 1891 Florence S. Summers to Marion Duckett
 Portion of Lot 32
 Prince George's County Land Records
 JWB 19: 38-40

1915 Marion Duckett, Attorney to Richard Duckett Magruder
 Not recorded (see 108: 98 – July 3, 1915)

July 3, 1915 Richard Duckett Magruder to Anna Loffler
 Portion of Lot 32
 Prince George's County Land Records
 108: 98

September 1, 1918 Anna Loffler to Baxter Denny and Alice H. Denny
 Portion of Lot 32
 Prince George's County Land Records
 137: 449-450

August 15, 1940 Baxter Denny and Alice Denny to
 Guiseppe Gugliotta and Grazia Gugliotta
 Portion of Lot 32
 Prince George's County Land Records
 570: 355-356

March 10, 1955 Guiseppe Gugliotta and Grazia Gugliotta to
 The State Roads Commission
 Portion of Lot 32
 Prince George's County Land Records
 1852: 467-469

February 9, 1979 State Highway Administration to Prince George's Heritage, Inc.
4303 Annapolis Road (0.469 acres)
Prince George's County Land Records
5071: 48-67

PORTION OF LOT 32 AND 33 (8,132 Square Feet)

October 19, 1914 James C. Rogers as Trustee for the Estate of Florence S. Summers (Equity Case 3826: Nathan R. Summers, et al. vs. Rosetta Vincent et al.) to Herman J. Miller
Prince George's County Land Records
101: 273

March 22, 1950 Dorothy Miller Warren, Heir of Herman J. Miller, and Benjamin Warren to Margaret B. Pleitner
Prince George's County Land Records
1220: 76-77

December 6, 1952 Margaret B. Pleitner to Peter Palazzo and Rose Palazzo
Prince George's County Land Records
1565: 476-477

June 15, 1954 Peter Palazzo and Rose Palazzo to the State Roads Commission
Prince George's County Land Records
WWW 1737: 572-573

PORTION OF LOT 33

November 1, 1859 Charles B. Calvert to Henry L. Carlton
Prince George's County Land Records
CSM 3: 242-243

November 24, 1939 Arthur John Jones to Robert H. D'Orsey
Prince George's County Land Records
539: 267-268

May 1, 1941 Ignatius J. Keane, Trustee, to Robert H. D'Orsey
Equity Case 11519: Robert H. D'Orsey vs. Martha Ellen Jones, et al.
Prince George's County Land Records
574: 359-360

November 20, 1953 Robert H. D'Orsey (also known as Robert Herbert Jones and Herbert D'Orsey Jones) to Richard Teagle
Prince George's County Land Records
1677: 315-316

November 24, 1953

Richard Teagle to Brooke F. Hudson and Oliver C. Sard,
Trustees of Robert H. D'Orsey
Purchase Money Deed
Prince George's County Land Records
1677: 317-319
Release Deed 1760: 396

April 27, 1954

Richard Teagle to Gale Realty
Prince George's County Land Records
1715: 326-327

August 30, 1954

Gale Realty to the State Roads Commission
Prince George's County Land Records
1764: 479-480

5.2 GEORGE WASHINGTON HOUSE (INDIAN QUEEN TAVERN) 4302 BALTIMORE AVENUE



Figure 36: George Washington House
View from the Southeast, 2009
Source: EHT Traceries

5.2.1 Introduction

The George Washington House at 4302 Baltimore Avenue (Figure 36) was constructed as a dwelling circa 1752 to 1763. Within a decade of its construction, the house was operated as a store (initially by Cunningham and Co.) and was commonly referred to as the ‘Brick Store.’ The upper story may have continued to serve as residential space. Lot 6 also included a two-story framed tavern. This tavern—not the George Washington House—was the original Indian Queen Tavern. Although the name ‘Indian Queen Tavern’ was applied to the George Washington House in the twentieth century, this is historically inaccurate because of the no longer extant tavern. Regardless of its origin, the name ‘Indian Queen Tavern’ has come to refer to the George Washington House.

Sometime between 1792 and 1816, the Brick Store was renovated and expanded to its current footprint (the expansion may have coincided with the addition of the tavern). The George Washington House retained its retail function until around 1835, when it was converted back into a dwelling. It became a store again in 1854, and the store was soon expanded into a hotel and tavern. It was during this period that the house first became known as ‘the George Washington Hotel.’ For over one hundred years, from the mid-nineteenth century to the second quarter of the twentieth century, the George Washington

House functioned as a hotel, tavern and/or restaurant, and occasionally as the residence for the proprietors. In 1976, it was rehabilitated and converted into a local history museum for the Prince George's Jaycees. The George Washington House currently functions as an office and headquarters for the Anacostia Watershed Society.

5.2.2 Construction

The George Washington House is located on Lot 6 in the town of Bladensburg (Figure 37). This lot was sold by the Town Commissioners to Osborn Sprigg on March 5, 1742 for fifteen shillings current money. Sprigg failed, however, to comply with the requirement to construct a “tenantable house” within eighteen months and he forfeited ownership of the lot to the Town Commissioners. On June 5, 1746, Sprigg again purchased the lot from the Commission, but he once more failed to construct the required house. On March 14, 1747, the Commission sold the lot to Israel Folsom. Like Sprigg, Folsom failed to improve the property and repurchased the right to develop it on April 16, 1752. The *Record Book of Bladensburg* reports that the Lot was improved on June 1, 1752 (Figure 38).⁷⁰ This 1752 date may indicate the beginning of construction given the short time that had elapsed since Folsom’s final purchase. The George Washington House was more likely constructed between 1752 and 1763, when Folsom conveyed “two setts of land lying in the town of Bladensburg numbered five + six ... together with all the houses + other improvements” to Jacob Wirt.⁷¹

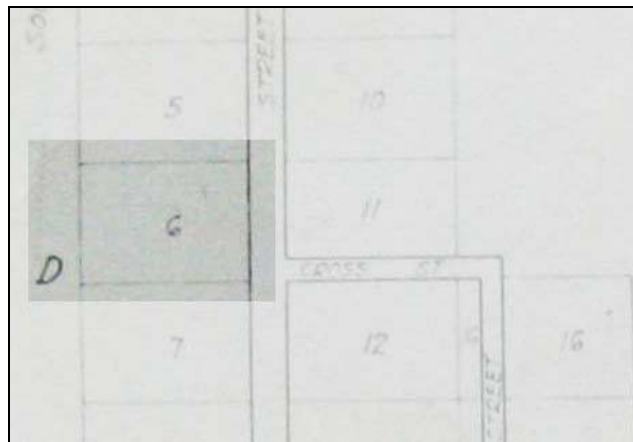


Figure 37: 1787 Resurvey of Bladensburg showing Lot 6

Source: Maryland State Archives

As will be discussed later, a tavern and other commercial buildings also occupied Lot 6 in the late eighteenth century. There is a possibility that the tavern preceded the George Washington House and constituted the improvements described in the Records Book of Bladensburg in 1752. Therefore, the dates of construction for the George Washington House are uncertain. It was, however, standing by 1774 at the latest when it was deeded by Jacob Wirt to his descendants.⁷²

⁷⁰ *Record Book of the City of Bladensburg, 1787-1836*, Maryland State Archives Special Collections 4885.

⁷¹ Israel Folsom to Jacob Wirt, Prince George’s County Land Records, TT: 30 (8 June 1763).

⁷² Will of Jacob Wirt, *Prince George’s County Register of Wills*, Liber 40, Folio 30. Maryland State Archives CM 816 (Microfilm Reel CR34681).

6	150	Osborn Springg	1741, June 5 th Osborn Springg 1741, March 10 th Isaac Holdens 1752, April 16 th ditto
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Figure 38: Entry for Lot 6 in the Record Book of Bladensburg
 Source: Maryland State Archives

5.2.3 Jacob Wirt

Jacob Wirt immigrated to the United States from Switzerland. His wife, Henrietta, was a German immigrant. They had three sons: Jacob, Uriah, and William, and three daughters: Elizabeth, Catherine, and Henrietta. In addition to owning the George Washington House, Jacob Wirt operated a separate tavern and hotel on Lot 6. The Wirt family lived in the tavern, which William Wirt later speculated was the “little hotel” where he was born in 1772.⁷³ Although the George Washington House was constructed as a dwelling, beginning in the 1770s, Wirt rented the brick house (Figure 39) for use as a store to Cunningham and Co. The Brick Store and nearby tavern were part of a small commercial complex operated by Wirt that included a billiards room on Lot 5 and a blacksmith’s shop on Lot 11.⁷⁴



Figure 39: A Dry Point Etching of the George Washington House by Benson B. Moore (1882-1974)
 Source: The Library of Congress

⁷³ John Pendelton Kennedy, *Memoirs of the Life of William Wirt, Attorney-General of the United States* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1860), 17.

⁷⁴ John M. Walton, *A Brief History of The George Washington House* (Prepared for the Prince George’s Jaycees, January 8, 1974), 2.

Jacob Wirt, Sr. died in 1774. In his will, he divided his commercial operations among his heirs. To his wife, Henrietta, he left half of Lot 5, “on which the Billiard Room is built on which also I am now building a new house.” The interest in the remainder of his property was to be shared equally among his children. Wirt stipulated that the “Brick store now in the tenure of Cunningham and Co.” be continued in this service until his son, Uriah Jasper Wirt, came of legal age. Likewise, Wirt decreed that the tavern should continue to be rented until his children came of age. Wirt’s will provides description of the Tavern and the outbuildings that occupied Lot 6:

I will that my Tavern in which I now live with all back buildings pertaining hereto with [of?] Stable & Lot. Also the counting house before the tavern door & smith shop be Rented out from year to year and the money coming from the rents of all & every of the houses and premises to be let out ... untill [sic] the children come of age Respectively.⁷⁵

5.2.4 Peter Carnes

Following Jacob Wirt’s death, Peter Carnes, a close family friend, assumed control of the commercial complex, including the Brick Store and Indian Queen Tavern, contrary to the late Jacob Wirt’s wishes that the store continue to be rented to Cunningham and Co.⁷⁶ William Wirt’s biographer described Peter Carnes as “an early patron and most useful friend ... This gentleman belonged to the bar of Maryland. He was the owner of a considerable landed estate in Charles County, and, being a cultivator of tobacco, his occasions, both as a planter and as a professional man, often brought him to Bladensburg. Here he was accustomed to taking his lodgings in the public house which was kept by Jacob Wirt. He thus became intimate with the family.... When Jacob Wirt died, Mr. Carnes charged himself, to some extent, with the control and guidance of the family...”⁷⁷

Despite his land holdings and law practice, Peter Carnes is best known for making the first authenticated balloon ascents in the United States. The first demonstration of a lighter-than-air machine took place on June 4, 1783, in Annonay, France, when Joseph and Jacques Montgolfier, two brothers who owned a paper mill, sent up an unmanned hot-air balloon. On October, 1783, the Montgolfiers launched the first hot air balloon with human passengers.⁷⁸ These early experiments may have inspired Carnes to replicate the feat in the United States (Figure 40). On June 15, 1785, Carnes advertised in the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser* for an upcoming “American Aerostatic Balloon” exhibition in Baltimore:

“On vent’rous Wings in the quest of Praise I go, and leave the gasing
[gasing] Multitude Below.”

⁷⁵ Will of Jacob Wirt, *Prince George’s County Register of Wills*, Liber 40, Folio 30. Maryland State Archives, CM 816 (Microfilm Reel CR 34681).

⁷⁶ *Wirt v. Carnes*, Prince George’s County Court Case No. 5130 (17 October 1785).

⁷⁷ Kennedy, *Memoirs of the Life of William Wirt*, 16-17

⁷⁸ “Early Balloon Flights in Europe,” *U.S. Centennial of Flight Commission*. Available online: <http://www.centennialofflight.gov/essay/Lighter_than_air/Early_Balloon_Flight_in_Europe/LTA1.htm>.

Thursday, the 24th instant, if fair, if not the next fair day, at eight o'clock in the morning, or at five in the evening, and so on till the exhibition takes place, an Aerostatic Balloon, nearly 35 feet diameter with a splendid Chariot suspended at the bottom, fitted for the recreation of two persons, in which the subscriber purposes to ascent above the clouds, after a short lecture on the great uses to which this important discovery may be applied, for the convenience and delight of human life, and the method of ascertaining the height, velocity and direction of those curious aerial Globes, by both sea and land, the darkest nights.

A large field, with a high fence, is market out, and will be guarded on all sides with fire-arms; the centinels [sic] being interested in the exhibition, will be justifiable in taking the life of any person who attempts to force with way into the field, as no person will be admitted but by presenting a ticket at the gates. Should any person, notwithstanding the guards, steal into the field, a suit will be commenced instantly against him for Ten Pounds. As the subscriber has made his experiments in the presence of Mr. Sydebotham, Mr. Diggs, Mr. Miller, Mr. Ross, Mr. Toloforth, and many other Gentlemen of Bladensburg, who will certify their friend in different parts of the country, no more need be said respecting the success of the exhibition....⁷⁹

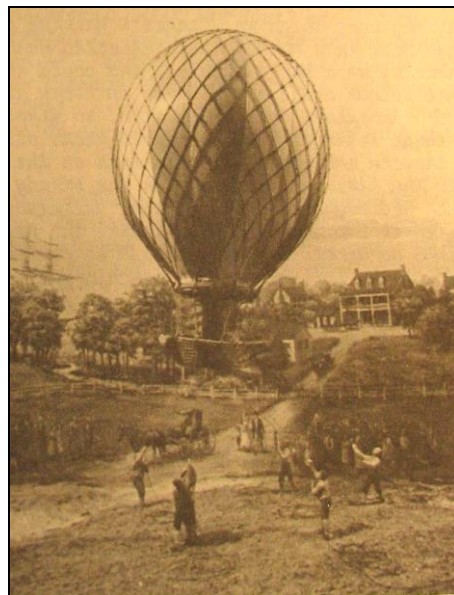


Figure 40: A Diorama of Peter Carnes' Balloon
Source: John Giannetti (Port O' Bladensburg)

In order to prepare for the Baltimore attempt, Carnes gave a similar public exhibition in Bladensburg on June 19, 1784. An unnamed 'friend' of Carnes' (more likely Carnes himself) wrote an account of the flight in a letter in the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser* on June 22, 1784. Carnes originally set up his exhibition in a field outside of Bladensburg, but residents, especially those without horses, persuaded him to move the

⁷⁹ *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, 15 June 1784; Walton, *A Brief History of The George Washington House*, 5-6.

show into town. The balloon was already inflated, but Carnes floated it into town through the woods at a height of five or six feet above the ground. As he brought the balloon into town, a gust of wind drove it into a fence, severely damaging the hoop that surrounded the balloon. As a result, the balloon could only be raised—unmanned—to a height of 70 yards. Had it not been for the collision, the first manned balloon ascent in the United States could have occurred in Bladensburg.⁸⁰

The exhibition in Baltimore took place on June 24, 1784. The *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser* reported that the crowd was delighted to see, “the awful Grandeur of novel a Seene [sic], as a large Globe making repeated Voyages into the airy Regions, which Mr. Carnes Machine actually performed, in a Manner that reflected Honour [sic] on his Character as a Man of Genius....” A brave thirteen-year-old boy named Edward Warren volunteered to ride in the “chariot” on the final balloon ascent, making history as the first person to ascend in a balloon on American soil.⁸¹

Carnes attempted to replicate his feat on July 4, 1784, in Philadelphia. This time, Carnes himself rode in the balloon on a free ascent—the balloon was not tethered to the ground. Tragically, after reaching an altitude of ten feet, the balloon careened into a nearby wall. Carnes fell to the ground and the balloon floated rapidly toward the sky and burst into flames. Although he was unscathed, the destruction of the balloon marked the end to Carnes’s brief, but historic, aeronautical career.⁸²

With his knack for promotion, Carnes was likely relying on his balloon flights to bring him fame and wealth. With the failure of his Philadelphia launch, however, Carnes was forced to face mounting fiscal problems back in Bladensburg. For the past eight years, he had not been paying rent for his use of the George Washington House. Given his closeness to the Wirt family, perhaps Carnes assumed that he was deserved of free accommodation. But in 1785, Jasper Wirt, the late Jacob Wirt’s brother, brought a suit against Carnes for rent owed. On June 22, 1785, the Circuit Court of Prince George’s County ordered the sheriff to bring Carnes before the court. When Carnes could not be apprehended, the Court ordered that Jasper Wirt seize control of Carnes’s assets and distribute the owed rent among Jacob Wirt’s descendants.⁸³

As the case against Peter Carnes was moving forward, in 1785, the Orphans Court of Prince George’s County decreed that the totality of the late Jacob Wirt’s assets be divided among his heirs. Jasper Wirt, guardian of Jacob, Jr., Uriah, and William, was granted control of a portion of Lot 6 containing the “Brick Store and Kitchen & Ground” and a portion of Lot 5 that was home to Jasper Wirt. The portion of Lot 6, which contained the Tavern, was assigned to James Johnson, husband of Catherine Wirt. Lot 6 was split in two by a line “to run from the street in the middle location the Tavern and the Brick Store to the back of the Lott....”⁸⁴ Elizabeth Wirt was awarded Lot 11 and the unimproved half of Lot 7. The court assigned the Billiard Room on Lot 5 to Henrietta Wirt.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Walton, *A Brief History of The George Washington House*, 5-6.

⁸¹ Walton, *A Brief History of The George Washington House*, 7.

⁸² Walton, *A Brief History of The George Washington House*, 8.

⁸³ *Wirt v. Carnes*, Prince George’s County Court Case No. 5130 (17 October 1785).

⁸⁴ Later Prince George’s County Land Records (i.e. AB 7: 528-530 and CSM 1: 344) reveal that the tavern was located on the northern one-sixth of an acre of Lot 6.

⁸⁵ *Prince George’s County Orphan Court Proceedings*, WK: 215-216 (8 October 1785).

5.2.5 William Wirt

In 1791, the General Assembly of Maryland also took up the matter of the Wirt estate. Although Jacob Wirt's property was the source of much legal wrangling, it only amounted to three or four thousand dollars. When divided among his heirs, it failed to adequately provide for his children's education. William Wirt (pictured in Figure 41), Jacob Wirt's youngest son, petitioned the legislature for authorization to sell his equity in the George Washington House to pay for law school. Subsequently, the General Assembly passed "An Act for the Benefit of William Wirt:"

Whereas it is represented to the general assembly by the petition of William Wirt, a minor, that he is the youngest son of Jacob Wirt, deceased, and entitled by the last will and testament of his father, to one moiety of a house and lot in Bladensburg ... known by the name of the Brick Store; that he is engaged in the study of the law, but his personal estate, with the annual value of his real estate, are insufficient to enable him to prosecute his studies with any advantage; and it is prayed by the said William Wirt ... that a law should pass appointing trustees to sell and dispose his moiety of said house and lot, and to apply the same to finishing his education.

Be it enacted ... that Joseph Hall and William Pitt Hunt be and they are hereby appointed trustees to sell and dispose of the said William Wirt's moiety or interest in a lot and house in Bladensburg....⁸⁶



Figure 41: Portrait of William Wirt

Source: Portrait by Samuel Lovett Waldo, Port O' Bladensburg

The investment in William Wirt's education proved to be a judicious outlay. Wirt studied law under William Hunt in Montgomery County. He commenced his legal career in Virginia, and was eventually appointed Chancellor of the Eastern District. Wirt was widely recognized for his scholarship and oration. In 1806, President Thomas Jefferson tapped Wirt to prosecute the treason trial against Vice President Aaron Burr. The trial propelled

⁸⁶ Walton, *A Brief History of The George Washington House*, 10-11.

Wirt to national fame and in 1817, President James Monroe appointed him Attorney General of the United States, a position he held through three presidential terms. In 1830, the Anti-Masonic Party nominated Wirt to run for president, but he only garnered a small portion of the vote in the 1832 election, which was won by Andrew Jackson. Wirt died on February 18, 1834.⁸⁷

5.2.6 The Indian Queen Tavern

From the end of the seventeenth century through the early-nineteenth century, taverns were important institutions along the primitive network of overland transportation in the United States. Taverns were modeled after public houses in England and were designed for the accommodation of wayfarers. For a small charge, travelers were afforded decent bed, board, and drink. Although they were more common in the North than the South, due to the former region's denser settlement pattern, taverns became essential waypoints along America's early turnpikes and stagecoach routes. A tavern's main feature was a public assembly room or dining room, with guest rooms typically located on the second floor. An unspoken code prevented tavern keepers from turning away guests, so once the guest rooms reached maximum occupancy, travelers were welcomed to unroll their blankets in the public dining room. Taverns quickly became prominent landmarks by which to mark a journey; the length of a trip was often measured in distances between well known taverns.

Taverns were important social centers, not only for travelers, but as gathering places for the resident population. In an era of few newspapers and irregular mail service, the public house served as an information hub—a place for travelers to share news from distant locales with the principal men of the town. The taverns also served as meeting places for local clubs and societies, often organized around business interests. Many early merchants' exchanges first met in taverns. Taverns also hosted concerts, dinners, balls, and receptions. In addition to social functions, many taverns served municipal functions. Public notices were posted in taverns, public meets were held in the assembly rooms, and political caucuses convened over ale and spiced cider.

As America became more urban, simple taverns evolved into more cosmopolitan inns. Eventually, improved turnpikes and quicker modes of transport negated the need for a multitude of closely-spaced taverns. However, in smaller communities, such as Bladensburg, taverns retained their role as social centers until the emergence of the railroad era.⁸⁸

The portion of Lot 6 that was conveyed to James and Catherine Johnson by the Orphan's Court in 1791 contained the original Indian Queen Tavern. Documentation from this period confirms that this building, and not the Brick Store, was the first tavern on the property. The 1798 Federal Direct Tax described the tavern as a two-story framed dwelling house measuring 46 by 28 feet (Figure 42). The tavern was supported by an "old framed 12 by 16-foot framed kitchen" and a "framed 26 by 20-foot stable with a 26 by 9-foot shed." The assessment noted that although the premises were owned by James Johnson's

⁸⁷ *The Bibliographic Cyclopedia of Representative Men of Maryland and the District of Columbia* (Baltimore: National Biographical Publishing, 1879), 273-274.

⁸⁸ Seymour Dunbar, *A History of Travel in America* (New York: Tudor Publishing Co., 1937), 207-220.

heirs, it was occupied by a Richard Ross.⁸⁹ According to the 1790 Census, Richard Ross was a resident of Prince George' County, living with his wife and two sons.⁹⁰ Ross also owned two slaves. In addition to operating the tavern, in 1796, Ross purchased the portion of Lot 5 that contained the Billiard Rooms.⁹¹

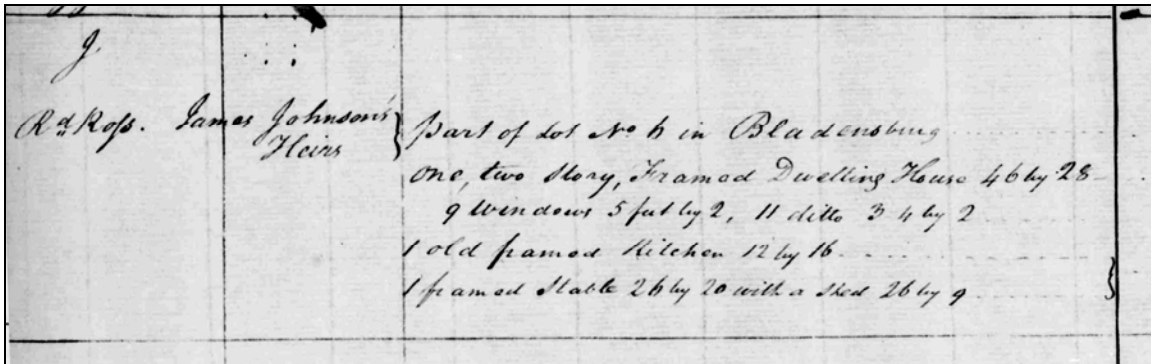


Figure 42: Description of a Portion of Lot 6 in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax Assessment
 Source: Maryland State Archives

Although the Federal Direct Tax recorded the building as a dwelling, Richard Ross continued to operate it as a tavern. In a letter to Elizabeth Willing Powel dated March 26, 1797, George Washington observed that although Spurrier's Tavern in Jessup was frequented by travelers, "the lodging is bad – the eating tolerable ... better for lodging than eating. At Bladensburg nine miles beyond a good house is kept by one Ross (sign of the Indian Queen)."⁹² In addition to confirming that the tavern continued to function as a popular waypoint, Washington's travel advice to Powel reveals that the name 'Indian Queen Tavern' was likely derived from the sign that advertised the tavern.

In 1802, Patrick Daugherty purchased Ross' portion of Lot 5 that included the Billiard Room.⁹³ Daugherty may also have assumed tenure of the tavern on Lot 6, which was still owned by Johnson's heirs. In 1805, a deed recording the sale of a portion of Taylorsburg, a large parcel just outside Bladensburg formerly owned by David Ross, identified the eastern boundary of the land as abutting "...that part of plot No. 6 of said town [Bladensburg] now owned by Elizabeth Johnson and at present in the tenure of said Patrick Daugherty..."⁹⁴ An article in the March 16, 1804 edition of the *Washington Federalist* advertised a public auction to occur in "Mr. Daugherty's Tavern in Bladensburg," confirming that Daugherty was the proprietor of the tavern adjacent to the Brick Store.⁹⁵

⁸⁹ This may be the same Richard Ross that constructed the Rossborough Inn in present day College Park (now owned by the University of Maryland) in 1803. The Rossborough Inn was also referred to as "Ross' Tavern," which leads to inevitable confusion between the two locations. For more on the Rossborough Inn see, Susan G. Pearl, "The Rossborough Inn," *Maryland Historical Site Inventory Form* (Annapolis: Maryland Historical Trust, 1981).

⁹⁰ *First Census of the United States, 1790*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1790. Census Place: Prince Georges, Maryland; Roll: M637_3; Image: 0178.

⁹¹ Benjamin Stoddert to Richard Ross, Prince George's County Land Records (5 April 1796), JRM 4: 286.

⁹² Donald Jackson and Dorothy Twohig, eds. *The Diaries of George Washington* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1976-79) v. 6, 238.

⁹³ Richard Ross to Patrick Daugherty, Prince George's County Land Records, JRM 4: 286 (4 June 1802).

⁹⁴ William Stuart to Patrick Daugherty, Prince George's County Land Records, JRM 10: 465-466 (28 December 1804).

⁹⁵ "For Sale," *Washington Federalist*, 16 March 1804.

Although the tavern was no longer operated by Richard Ross, it was apparently still referred to as “Ross’ Tavern.” Under that name, it played a bit part in the Battle of Bladensburg on August 24, 1814. Following his flotilla’s heroic defense of the turnpike leading to Washington, Commodore Joshua Barney was injured and captured by the British. After the battle, General Robert Ross, the commanding officer of the British forces, sought out the wounded Barney and congratulated him on the courageous effort. Ross paroled Barney, ordered a British surgeon to treat him, and had him conveyed on a litter carried by British sailors to Bladensburg. Barney’s posthumous biographical memoir recorded, “Upon reaching Bladensburg, he was taken, at his own request, into ‘Ross’s Tavern’ and there taking a bank note of fifty dollars from his pocket-book, he offered it to the sailors, in remuneration of the care and tenderness with which they had conveyed him...” Upon departing, General Robert Ross charged Barney with sending for his troops to secure order in the town. From the tavern, Barney also oversaw the capture and parole of eighty wounded soldiers left behind by the British.⁹⁶

Barney’s memoirs record that he sent “his landlord, Mr. Ross” on an errand to deliver letters while he stayed in the tavern. The identification of Ross as the proprietor may be an error as the biography was assembled by Barney’s family following his death. However, it might also suggest that Ross continued to operate the tavern during the early nineteenth century.⁹⁷

The ownership of the tavern property between 1805 and 1832 is uncertain. No record of a transfer of ownership from Elizabeth Johnson (Catherine and James Johnson’s daughter) has been located.⁹⁸ Moreover, it is uncertain how long the tavern building itself remained on the parcel. In an early representation of the George Washington House, a painting by Edward Lamson Henry (1841-1919) that was published in 1900 in *Stagecoach and Tavern Days* (Figure 43), a house is visible to the north of the hotel. The building is partially obscured by a stagecoach and it is impossible to know how faithful Henry was to real life. Nonetheless, this house may be the artist’s unwitting representation of the original Indian Queen Tavern. Photographs from the turn of the twentieth century show a framed dwelling next to the George Washington Hotel, but based on the architectural features including the roof slope, this building appears to have been constructed during in the mid-nineteenth century (Figure 44). The original Indian Queen Tavern may have been demolished to clear the way for this building (which is also no longer extant), or it may have burned. Regardless, the name “Indian Queen Tavern” lives on in the adjacent brick structure, which also contained a tavern as early as 1793.

⁹⁶ Mary Barney, *Biographical Memoir of the Late Commodore Joshua Barney* (Boston, MA: Gray and Bowen, 1832), 236-267.

⁹⁷ Barney, *Biographical Memoir of the Late Commodore Joshua Barney*, 269.

⁹⁸ According to family trees assembled on Rootsweb.com, Eliza Johnson, daughter of James and Catherine Johnson, married Dabney Minor in Ablemarle County, Virginia in 1805. She died there in 1818.



Figure 43: The Indian Queen Tavern by Edward Lamson Henry (1841-1919)
Source: Stagecoach and Tavern Days



Figure 44: Undated Photograph from the Rambler Collection (circa 1910-1919?)
Source: The Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

In 1832, a deed of sale was recorded between Francis and Mary Modina and Lilborn Mitchell for “that parcel of ground situated in the Town of Bladensburg ... containing one sixth an acre of land ... at the present time in the occupancy of a certain Joshua Humphrey ... it being the south part of lot number six....” The deed’s identification of this one-sixth of an acre as being the south part of Lot 6 is mistaken. As previously stated, the tavern lot was located adjacent to Lot 5 (the *northern* portion of Lot 6). Additionally, later historic maps would locate the property to the north of the George Washington Hotel. The error in the 1832 deed would be replicated in future land records.

The 1820 Census recorded Joshua Humphreys as a resident of Bladensburg. He lived in a household with one white female over the age of forty-five (presumably his wife) and six minors under the age of eighteen (four males and two females). The household also had one male slave under the age of fourteen.⁹⁹ Lilborn Mitchell may have purchased the tavern property in conjunction with Wilson Mitchell’s purchase of the George Washington Hotel property in 1832 (Wilson would sell Lot 6 to Henry Mitchell in 1834, who in turn sold it to Elizabeth D. Mitchell the next year). Both Lilborn and Wilson Mitchell were listed as Elizabeth Mitchell’s heirs in an 1842 dispute over her estate.¹⁰⁰

In 1836, Lilborn and Ann Mitchell sold the one-sixth of an acre of Lot 6 to Cepphas Rinaldo Benson, a carpenter, who according to the deed was already occupying the lot.¹⁰¹ In 1838, Lilborn and Ann Mitchell and Cepphas and Mary Benson sold the lot to John Watkins Scott, who was married to Cepphas Benson’s sister, Lucinda. According to the 1850 Census, Scott, a merchant, resided in Bladensburg with his wife, Lucinda, and their six children ages twelve to one: John, Margaret, Cora, Gertrude, Clifton, and Amy. Scott owned one slave, a twelve-year-old black female.¹⁰²

In 1856, John and Lucinda Scott, along with John J. and Mary A. Scott, sold the one-sixth of an acre to Francis Gasch. Erntz Franz (Francis) Gasch was born in Saxony (present-day eastern Germany) and immigrated to Washington, D.C. via Baltimore in 1850. In Washington, Gasch apprenticed as a cabinet maker. In 1854, he married Katherine Sophia Schron and they soon moved to Bladensburg. According to the 1861 Martenet Map (Figure 45), Gasch operated a cabinet shop in Bladensburg. As shown in the map, the Gasch’s property was located on the northern half of Lot 6, not the southern half as recorded in earlier land records. In 1879, Gasch purchased the southern half of Lot 5 adjoining his workshop to the north. The 1878 Hopkins Map (Figure 46) shows a building on the southern half of Lot 5 fronting Water Street and the cabinet shop to the rear of Lot 6.

⁹⁹ *Fourth Census of the United States, 1820*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1820. Census Place: Bladensburg, Prince George’s, Maryland; Roll: M33_44; Page: 24; Image: 168.

¹⁰⁰ Singleton Mitchell and others v. Sarah Mitchell and others, Prince George’s County Circuit Court Equity Case no. 601, Maryland State Archives, T65-7.

¹⁰¹ *Seventh Census of the United States, 1850*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1850. Census Place: Queen Anne, Prince George’s, Maryland; Roll: M432_295; Page: 80; Image: 422.

¹⁰² *Seventh Census of the United States, 1850*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1850. Census Place: Bladensburg, Prince George’s, Maryland; Roll: M432_295; Page: 1; Image: 266.

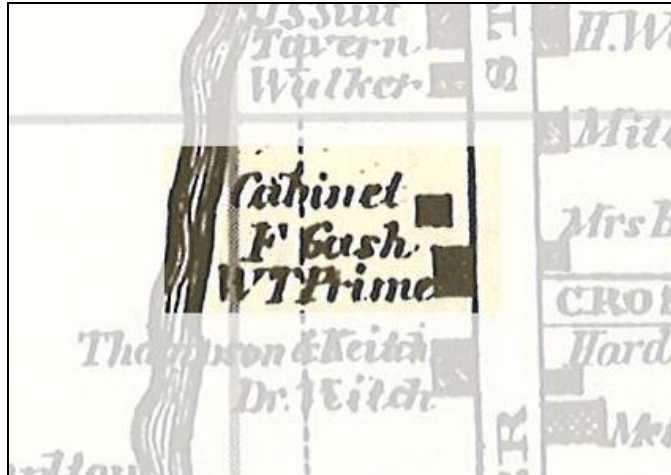


Figure 45: The Gasch Cabinet Shop, next to the George Washington House (labeled WT Prime)
Source: 1861 Martenet Map

Cabinet makers traditionally made coffins; for several years Gasch constructed coffins for people in the Bladensburg and Hyattsville in addition to operating his cabinet shop. In 1858, he launched his own undertaking business. Francis and Sophia had three sons, Edward, Ernest and Frank, and one daughter, Amelia. Edward and Ernest followed in their father’s footsteps and became morticians. Around 1895 Francis and Sophia moved their family and the business across the street. They both lived in this home for the remainder of their lives. Sophia died in 1910, Francis in 1914. In 1902, the funeral home relocated to its current location in Hyattsville.¹⁰³



Figure 46: 1878 G.M. Hopkins Map showing highlight of Lot 5

In 1907, Francis and Sophia Gasch sold the northern portion of Lot 6 to Elizabeth Stubener. This sale reunited the property formerly occupied by the original Indian Queen Tavern with the George Washington Hotel.

5.2.7 The Brick Store and the George Washington Hotel

After control of the George Washington House was wrested from Peter Carnes in 1785, the Brick Store was administered by Jacob Wirt, Sr.’s brother, Jasper Wirt, caretaker of Jacob, Jr., Uriah and William. In June 1790, the Wirts rented the store to Bailey (alternatively spelt Bayley or Baley) Earles Clarke. Following the “Act for the Benefit of William Wirt,” Joseph Hall and William P. Hunt, serving as trustees, sold William Wirt’s interest in the Brick Store to Clarke on November 13, 1792.

¹⁰³ “About Gasch’s Funeral Home.” Available online: <<http://www.gaschs.com/>>.

After the sale of William Wirt's moiety in the George Washington House, Jacob Jr. and Uriah Wirt retained an interest in the Brick Store. However, Jacob Wirt, Jr. left for Europe in 1780 and never returned; he was declared legally dead in 1789. In his will, he wrote, "I give and bequeath to Rebecca Tilley ...all my right, title, claim and interest in the Estate both real and personal of my Father Jacob Wirt as left me by him."¹⁰⁴ In 1793, Uriah Wirt issued a bond transferring his interest in his father's real estate to John Tilley. (The nature of the relationship between the Wirts and the Tilleys has not been established.)

By 1793, Rebecca and John Tilley owned two-thirds of the interest in the Brick Store. According to Walton's analysis of tax accounts, however, after 1790, the Brick Store was operated by either Bailey E. Clarke and/or Christian Hillreagle, with no mention of the Tilley family. Walton's research into county license records reveals that Hillreagle and his sons, George and Jacob, may have operated a tavern in George Washington House between 1793 and 1814. Walton notes that during this period, the main section of the George Washington House was altered to form the main brick section of the present building, the dimensions of which are approximately 40 feet by 20 feet.¹⁰⁵ Unfortunately, these records could not be located by the archivists at the Maryland State Archives and therefore could not be re-examined.

Contrary to the complicated ownership structure detailed by Walton, Prince George's County Land Records indicate that Bailey Clarke possessed sole ownership of the George Washington House after 1792. It was during this period, as part of the 1798 Federal Direct Tax, that the George Washington House and its associated buildings are first described in any detail. It was listed as a "two story brick dwelling house 36 by 24." Accompanying the brick house was a 16 by 12-foot framed smoke house, two old stables of the same size, and a ten-foot-square "very old house" (Figure 47).¹⁰⁶

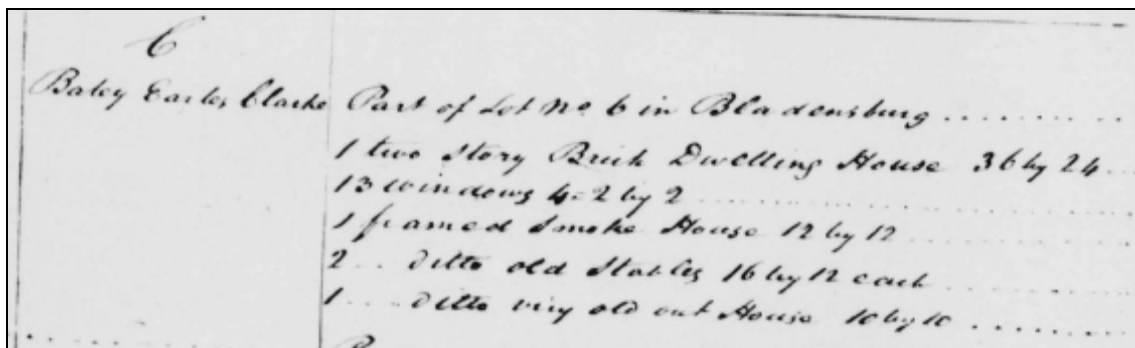


Figure 47: Description of the George Washington House in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax Assessment
 Source: Maryland State Archives

Following Bailey Clarke's death in 1816, his heirs, Bailey L., Mason E. and Maria Clarke, continued to own (and presumably operate) the store in the George Washington

¹⁰⁴ Will of Jacob Wirt, Jr., *Prince George's County Wills*, T: 1, 282.

¹⁰⁵ Walton, *A Brief History of The George Washington House*, 13-14.

¹⁰⁶ 1798 Federal Direct Tax, *New Scotland, Oxen & Bladensburg*, Maryland State Archives, Archives of Maryland Online, Volume 729.

House. In 1831, Maria Clarke and her husband, Abraham (whose last name was also Clarke), sold their interest in the property to Bailey L. and Mason Clarke. In 1832, Mason Clarke sold his interest in the store to Wilson Mitchell. Two years later, the Prince George's County Court ordered that Constable Henry L. Carlton sell Bailey L. Clarke's interest in the property to Wilson Mitchell to satisfy a debt. Three months later, Wilson Mitchell sold the George Washington House to Henry Mitchell. In 1835, Henry Mitchell and his wife, Lavena, sold it to Elizabeth Mitchell for \$600.

Elizabeth Mitchell died in 1840. Following a dispute between her heirs, the Circuit Court of Prince George's County decreed that the property be sold. In 1841, the Court appointed Nicholas C. Stephens and Daniel C. Diggs as trustees to sell the property of the deceased Elizabeth Mitchell. In a letter to the court, Stephens and Diggs described the George Washington House as "the dwelling house of a certain William Taylor situated in the Village of Bladensburg..." This statement suggests that by 1840 the Brick Store had been converted from commercial to residential use and was being occupied by renter, William Taylor. The trustees held a public auction on December 16, 1841 and the George Washington House was sold at public auction to Margaret A. B. Baldwin. The sale was contested by Mitchell's heirs, however, and it was not ratified until 1848. In the meantime, Baldwin married Owen Norfolk, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Prince George's County.¹⁰⁷ Walton surmises that Margaret Baldwin may have lived in the George Washington prior to her marriage to Norfolk. But from 1848 to 1854, she likely continued to rent the house as a dwelling.¹⁰⁸

Around 1854, the George Washington House once again became a store when William T. Prime and his wife, Harriet, rented the building and applied for permits to run a grocery, liquor, and dry goods store. They soon expanded the business to include a tavern and hotel. The business proved to be unprofitable, however, and the Primes were forced to liquidate their hotel furnishings in 1858.¹⁰⁹ On January 13, 1860, Margaret Norfolk sold the George Washington House to William H. Wilson. Three months later, Wilson sold it to Harriet Prime. In 1861, Harriet Prime mortgaged the property to George W. Corner. The Primes were unable to overcome their financial difficulties and apparently defaulted on the mortgage as Corner conveyed the property to Robert Coltman in 1870. The Primes purchased the property back from Coltman on May 31, 1871, and sold it on the same day to Mary E. Richardson.

¹⁰⁷ Walton, *A Brief History of The George Washington House*, 15.

¹⁰⁸ Singleton Mitchell and others v. Sarah Mitchell and others, Prince George's County Circuit Court Equity Case no. 601, Maryland State Archives, T65-7.

¹⁰⁹ Walton, *A Brief History of The George Washington House*, 16-17.



Figure 48: 1861 Martenet's Map showing highlight of the George Washington House Labeled with W.T. Prime as the Owner

The 1861 Martenet Map (Figure 48) shows the George Washington House as being owned by W. T. Prime. Interestingly, the name “Geo. Washington Hotel” does not appear until the 1878 Hopkins Map (Figure 49). Walton notes that this naming scheme—and the legends regarding George Washington’s visits—were likely an advertising scheme designed to capitalize on the centennial of the founding of the nation.¹¹⁰ Washington did travel through Prince George’s County and Bladensburg on multiple occasions. For example, he visited the town in 1787 while traveling to Philadelphia to serve as a delegate to the Constitution Convention.¹¹¹ Per Washington’s 1797 letter, it is known that he visited the Indian Queen Tavern. But this was likely the tavern next door and not the building that presently bears his name.



Figure 49: 1878 G.M. Hopkins Map showing highlight of George Washington Hotel

¹¹⁰ Walton, *A Brief History of The George Washington House*, 18.

¹¹¹ Donald Jackson and Dorothy Twohig, eds., *The Diaries of George Washington* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia) 1979, Vol. 5, 153.

Mary Richardson's husband, Judson, operated the building as a hotel until his death in 1894. His obituary in the June 6, 1894 edition of the *Washington Post* identified Richardson "as the proprietor of the George Washington House, in Bladensburg...." The obituary also notes that Mr. Richardson "served the county of Prince George's as sheriff during the war, and has been a commissioner of Bladensburg. He was also a prominent Republican."¹¹² Although Richardson continued to operate the George Washington House as a hotel until 1894, the Prince George's County Circuit Court ordered that the property be sold in 1880 to Peter G. Grimmes to satisfy a debt. In 1881, Grimmes sold the property to Susan Norris of the District of Columbia, who in turn mortgaged the property to Charles J. Bonaparte (1851-1921), a prominent Baltimore lawyer who served as Secretary of the Navy under President Theodore Roosevelt.¹¹³ As trustee, Bonaparte assigned the mortgage to George W. Richardson, Jr. in 1886. Richardson, Jr. finally purchased the property from the heirs of Susan Norris on October 8, 1886.

In 1892, the backyard of the hotel served as an encampment for "Coxey's Army," a rag-tag group of job seekers that descended on Washington, D.C. to demand labor reforms. The group was named for its leader, Jacob Coxey, who led the march on the nation's capitol on May 1st. Afterwards, the army proceeded to camp near Hyattsville on the Anacostia River. They moved to Bladensburg on May 14th after receiving an offer from the George Washington Hotel's proprietor (presumably Judson Richardson) for hospitable lodging. Coxey's Army was forced to seek higher ground when the Anacostia River began to flood on May 18th.¹¹⁴

The earliest known photograph of the George Washington House was taken circa 1895-1905 by William Alexander Miller (Figure 50). Looking from the southeast, the photo shows a single-story commercial building with a parapet adjoining the George Washington House to the south. An image from 1903 (Figure 51) also shows the single-story commercial building, as well as the rear addition that was affixed perpendicular to the main section of the George Washington House. The two-story rear wing (also shown in Figure 52) is of an undetermined age, although photographic evidence and its appearance suggest that it was added in the mid to late-nineteenth century.¹¹⁵

¹¹² "Hyattsville," *The Washington Post*, 6 June 1894.

¹¹³ During tenure as Attorney General of the United States, Bonaparte is credited with creating the Bureau of Investigation, which would later become the FBI.

¹¹⁴ Walton, *A Brief History of The George Washington House*, 16-17.

¹¹⁵ John A. Styer, *George Washington House or Indian Queen Tavern National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form* (Hyattsville: Prince George's Jaycees, 1974), 7.1.

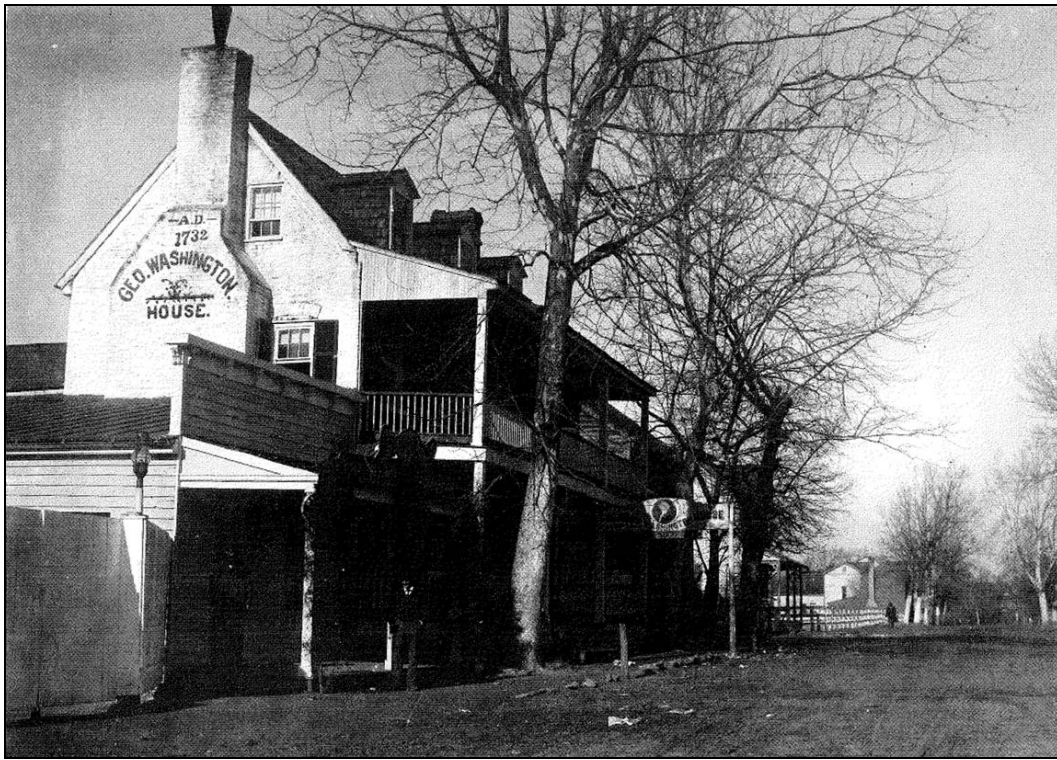


Figure 50: The George Washington House, circa 1895-1905
Source: William Alexander Mitchell/Library of Congress

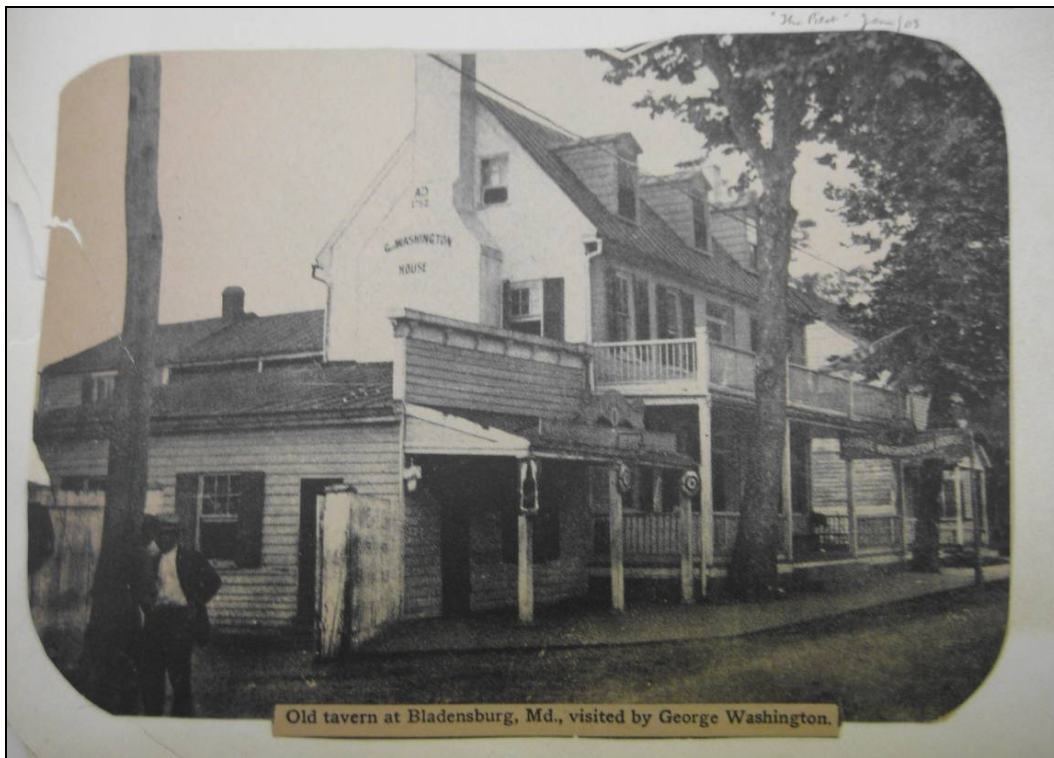


Figure 51: Old Tavern at Bladensburg, 1903
Source: Suburban Scrapbook, Martin Luther King, Jr. Library

George and Mary Richardson sold the George Washington House to Elizabeth Stubener on September 4, 1907. Stubener may have already been operating the tavern in the George Washington Hotel as early as 1905, when the *Washington Post* reported that she had appeared before the Magistrate of Prince George's County for violating Sunday liquor laws.¹¹⁶ She also lived in the George Washington House during her tenure as owner; her obituary reported that she died in her residence at the George Washington House on July 7, 1916.¹¹⁷

Following her death, her heir, Phillip Stubener, sold the property to Mary J. Gafford. Photos from circa 1900 to 1910 show the building from around the time of this sale (Figure 53). According to 1920 census records, Gafford lived in Bladensburg, but there are no subsequent records of her residing in the town. Under her ownership, the George Washington House continued to operate as a tavern and restaurant, although it is not known if Gafford herself was the proprietor, or if she leased the property. During the twentieth century, the setting of the George Washington Hotel was drastically altered by the expansion of Baltimore Avenue (Figure 54 and Figure 55). Subsequently, the George Washington House fell into disrepair and was threatened with demolition. On June 30, 1972, Florence Morgan, Mary Gafford's daughter, sold the George Washington House to the Prince George's Jaycees.



Figure 52: The George Washington House, circa 1900
Source: *The Susanna Cristofane Collection – Maryland State Archives*

¹¹⁶ "Sunday Law Violations," *The Washington Post*, 6 August 1905.

¹¹⁷ "Obituaries," *The Washington Post*, 8 July 1916.



Figure 53: Main Façade of the George Washington House, circa 1910-1919
Source: The Rambler Photograph Collection, The Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

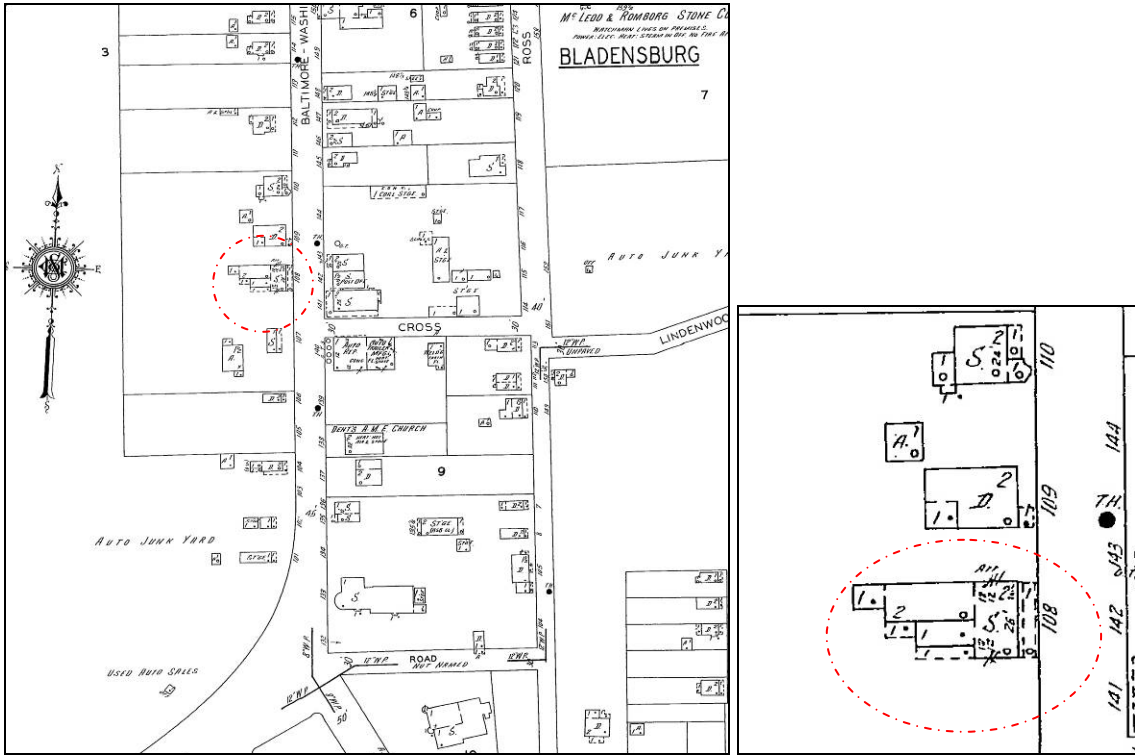


Figure 54: 1939 Sanborn Map with circle around the George Washington House
 Enlargement of 1939 Sanborn Map with circle around house (right)

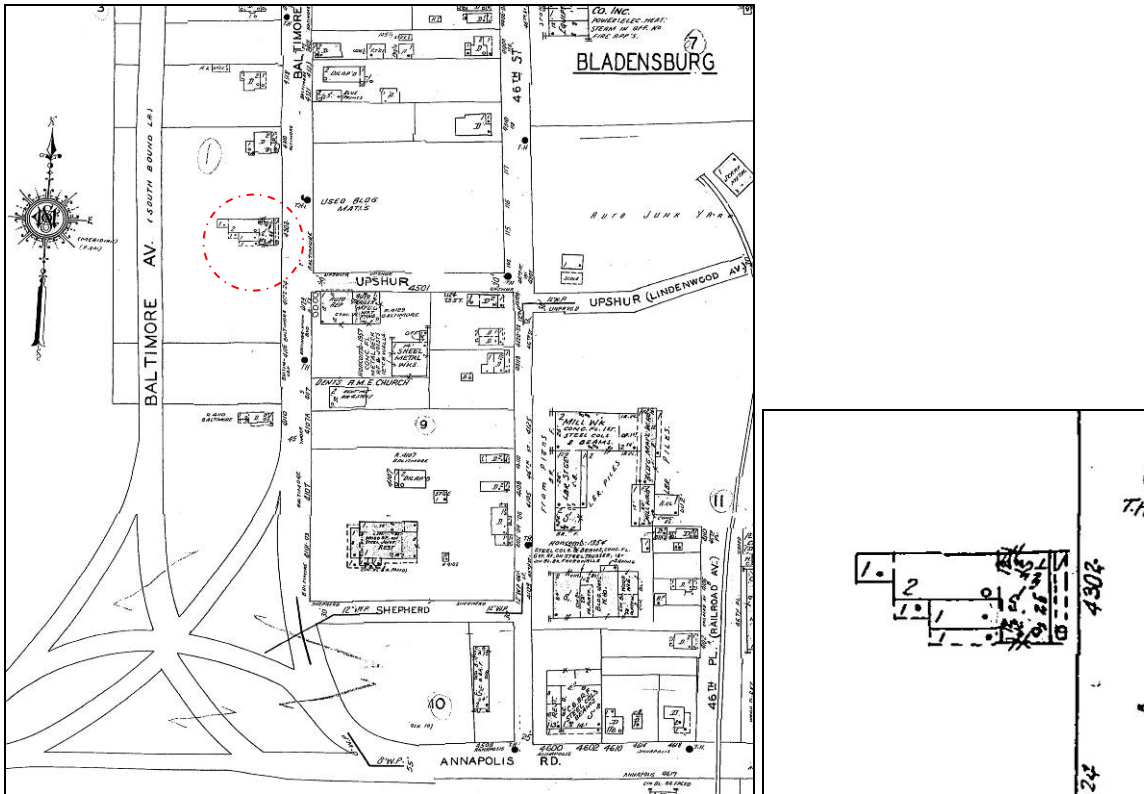


Figure 55: 1959 Sanborn Map with circle around the George Washington House
 Enlargement of 1959 Sanborn Map (right)

The Prince George's Jaycees, led by John Giannetti, purchased the property in 1972 with the intent of restoring the building as a museum in time for the nation's bicentennial. The restoration was accomplished with support from the Maryland Historical Trust (Figure 56 and Figure 57). Over two hundred other community groups contributed to the restoration fundraising effort. The local history museum opened to thousands of visitors on Independence Day, 1976 (Figure 58).¹¹⁸



Figure 56: The George Washington House Prior to Restoration, 1972
Source: Susanna Cristofane Collection/PGCHS



Figure 57: John Giannetti behind the Bar in the George Washington House, 1973
Source: The Baltimore Sun/Enoch Pratt Free Library Maryland Department

¹¹⁸ “The George Washington House: Will it be Renovated by 1976?” *The Prince George's Post*, n.d. “Tavern Becomes a Museum,” *The Sun Magazine*, 3 April 1977.

In 1974, the George Washington House was listed in the Maryland Inventory of Historical Places and the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural and historical significance. Additionally, in July 1981, it was protected as a Prince George's County Historic Site. Although the museum attracted crowds of history enthusiasts at first, attendance dwindled over the ensuing decades, eventually forcing the Jaycees to close the museum and sell the building. In 2003, the Anacostia Watershed Society acquired the George Washington House and undertook a \$750,000 renovation. The building currently serves as the organization's headquarters.¹¹⁹



Would George Washington Recognize the Old Tavern, Now a Museum?

By HENRY SCARUPA
Photos by ELLIS MALASHUK

BLIND faith alone kept the project going. This is how John Giannetti, chairman of the George Washington House Restoration Committee, recently characterized the restoration of Bladensburg's colonial inn. Begun as a Bicentennial project over three years ago by the Prince Georges Jaycees, the former Indian Queen Tavern opened its doors last July 4 as a museum of local history. George Washing-

ton and other historical figures from the nation's early days had been guests there.

Only a few years ago the old tavern was being eyed by a fast-food chain for its land, and it seemed likely it would meet the fate of so many other historical buildings which had outlived their usefulness—the wrecking ball. If not that, time would have taken its toll. The building, believed built in the 1760's, was vacant and crumbling, the haunt of derelicts. The rescue work took \$300,000, double the anticipated cost.

What began solely as a Jaycees en-

deavor rapidly evolved into a community effort, with some 200 groups pitching in to raise money and to help in other ways. For its part the 90-man club—only half are really active—had the distinction of having the project selected by the Jaycees national organization as the outstanding one in the nation in 1976. The Prince Georges Jaycees competed against 8,000 other chapters over the country, participating in 25,000 separate projects.

Today little over six months after its rebirth, the old inn has seen thousands of visitors, as many as 500 from a single elementary school. It is open seven days a week from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. weekdays, 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. Saturdays and 1 to 4 P.M. Sundays. It is staffed entirely by volunteers from RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program), a part of ACTION, and the American Association of University Women. An office in the upstairs wing

houses the Prince Georges Bicentennial Commission. In addition a number of meeting rooms are provided for community organizations. Mr. Giannetti would like to see a small historical library serving scholars and researchers installed on the unused third floor.

Sitting on Alternate Route 1 in a run-down industrial section, the freshly painted building—buff, matching the old color uncovered during restoration—contrasts sharply with the dingy surroundings. The grounds, which at one time were littered with trash and overgrown with weeds and brush, have been expanded and neatly landscaped.

Inside the museum, a series of 20 dioramas offer a realistic glimpse into the history of the county and particularly of Bladensburg. They begin with Lord Calvert's meeting with the Piscataway Indians at their settlement on Piscataway Creek and extend to the moon landing, an achievement of NASA, just down the road from the museum. Other dioramas show a typical colonial plantation, the tobacco port of Garrisons Landing, as Bladensburg was once known, a panoramic view of the battle fought there during the War of 1812 and the infamous dueling grounds just out-

Continued on Page 16

The former Indian Queen Tavern in Bladensburg has been restored as a museum of local history at a cost of about \$300,000.

Figure 58: George Washington House after Renovation, 1974
Source: Prince George's County Historical Society Vertical Files

¹¹⁹ Sol Sandberg, "\$400,000 Needed to Restore George Washington House," *Hyattsville Life & Times*, February 2006.

The timeline below (Figure 59) summarizes the occupancy and use of the George Washington House and the Indian Queen Tavern from the time of their construction through the date of purchase by the Prince George’s County Jaycees.

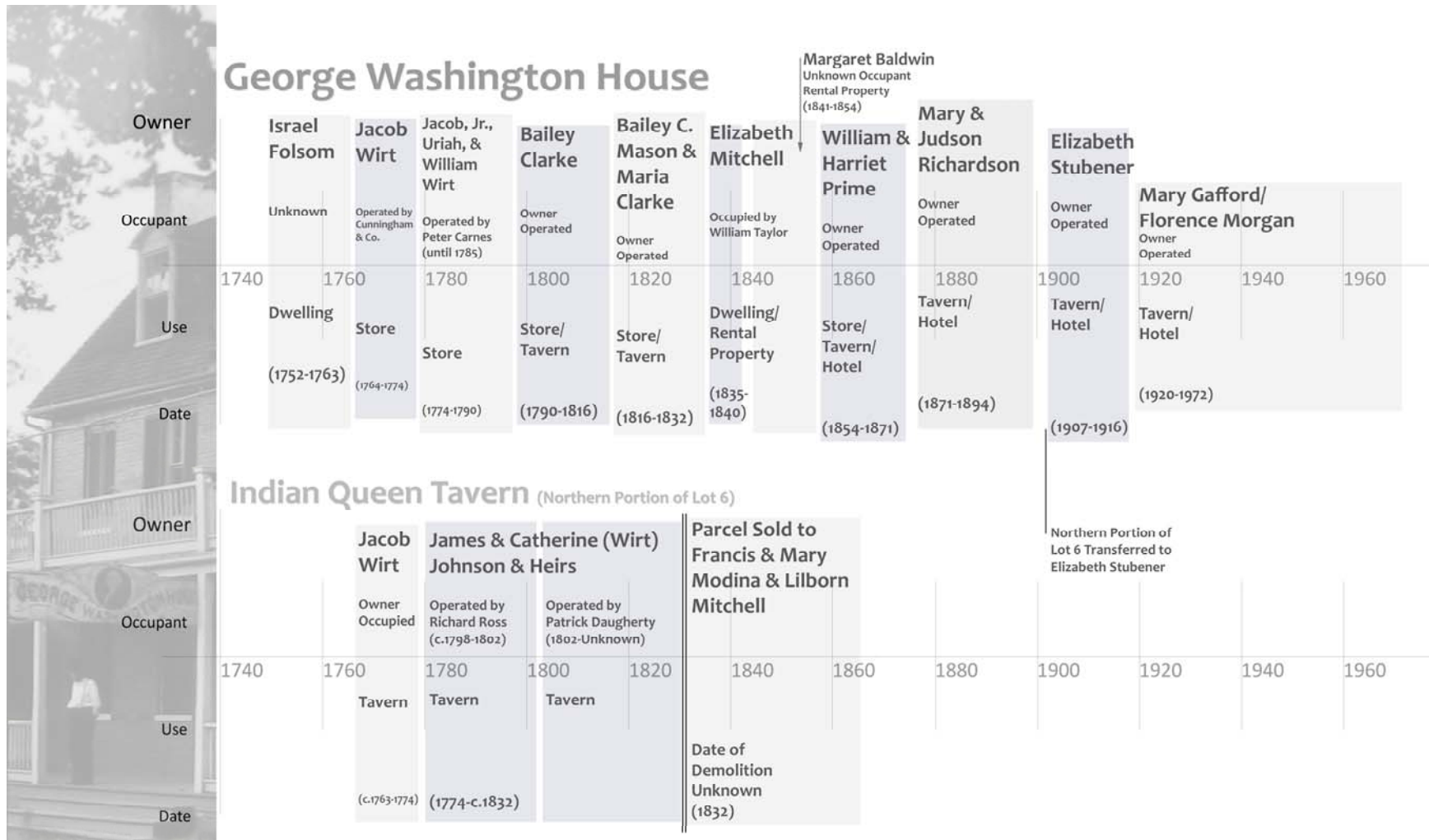


Figure 59: The Occupancy and Use of the George Washington House and Indian Queen Tavern

GEORGE WASHINGTON HOUSE – CHAIN OF TITLE

GEORGE WASHINGTON HOUSE (Southern $\frac{5}{6}$ Acre of Lot 6)

March 5, 1742	Bladensburg Town Commissioners to Osborn Sprigg Lot 6 Record Book of Bladensburg
June 5, 1746	Bladensburg Town Commissioners to Osborn Sprigg Lot 6 Record Book of Bladensburg
March 14, 1747	Bladensburg Town Commissioners to Israel Folsom Lot 6 Record Book of Bladensburg
April 16, 1752	Bladensburg Town Commissioners to Israel Folsom Lot 6 Record Book of Bladensburg
June 8, 1763	Israel Folsom to Jacob Wirt Lots 5 and 6 Prince George's County Land Records TT: 30
November 13, 1792	Joseph Hall and William P. Hunt as Trustees to Bayley E. Clarke William Wirt's Interest in House and Lot Prince George's County Land Records JRM 1: 354-356
January 31, 1831	Abraham and Maria Clarke to Bailey L. Clarke and Mason Clarke Interest in Real Estate of Bailey E. Clarke Prince George's County Land Records AB 6: 324-325
November 5, 1832	Mason E. Clark to Wilson Mitchell Interest in Portion of Lot 6 Prince George's County Land Records AB 7: 528-530
August 1, 1834	Henry L Carlton (Constable) to Wilson Mitchell Bailey L. Clarke's Interest in Lot 6 Prince George's County Land Records AB 9: 64-66.
November 4, 1834	Wilson Mitchell to Henry Mitchell South Part of Lot 6 ($\frac{5}{6}$ Acre) Prince George's County Land Records AB 9: 104-105

September 22, 1835	Henry and Lavena Mitchell to Elizabeth Mitchell Part of Lot 6 Prince George's County Land Records AB 10: 114-115
April 14, 1848	Nicholas C. Stephens and Daniel C. Diggs (Trustees) to Margaret A. B. Norfolk Brick House and Lot opposite Baldwin's Tavern Prince George's County Land Records JBB5: 361-363
January 13, 1860	Margaret A. B. Norfolk to William H. Wilson Brick House and Lot opposite Baldwin's Tavern Prince George's County Land Records CSM: 329
March 3, 1860	William H. and Martha R. Wilson to Harriet E. Prime Brick House and Lot opposite Baldwin's Tavern Prince George's County Land Records FS 1: 322-323
July 8, 1861	Harriet E. Prime and William T. Prime to George W. Corner Lot 6 Improved by a Brick Building Prince George's County Land Records CSM 1: 151-152
April 8, 1870	George W. Corner to Robert Coltman Land described in Mortgage (CSM1: 151-152) Prince George's County Land Records HB3: 289
May 31, 1871	Robert and Mary Jane Coltman to William Prime Lot 6 Improved by a Brick Building Prince George's County Land Records HB4: 740-741
May 31, 1871	William and Ann Prime to Mary E. Richardson Lot Number 6 on Water Street Prince George's County Land Records HB 4: 741-742
December 8, 1880	James H. Ritchie (Sheriff) to Peter G. Grimmes Part of Lot 6 (HB4: 741-742) Prince George's County Land Records WAJ 2: 203-205
June 23, 1881	Peter Grimmes to Susan Norris Lot 6 (HB4: 741-742) Prince George's County Land Records WAJ 2: 732

June 30, 1881	Susan Norris to Charles J. Bonaparte Mortgage Lot 6 on Water Street (HB4: 741-742) Prince George's County Land Records WAJ 2: 732-734
May 26, 1886	Charles J. Bonaparte to George W. Richardson, Jr. Assigned Mortgage Prince George's County Land Records WAJ 2: 732-734
October 8, 1886	John and Mary Heard (Heirs of Susan Norris) to George W. Richardson, Jr. Property Susan Norris obtained from Peter Grimmes and property adjacent to Hotel Property Prince George's County Land Records JWB7: 509-510
September 4, 1907	George W. and Mary F. Richardson to Elizabeth Stubener Lot No. 6 and all that lot adjoining same Prince George's County Land Records 40: 547-548
1916	Phillip J. Stubener to Mary J. Gafford The George Washington Hotel Prince George's County Land Records See 119: 196
June 30, 1972	Florence Morgan to Prince George's Jaycees, Inc. Part of Lot 6 Prince George's County Land Records 4094: 366-368
December 5, 1975	Prince George's Jaycees, Inc. to Maryland Historical Trust Preservation Easement Prince George's County Land Records 4562: 537-544
January 22, 1982	Prince George's Jaycees, Inc. to Winfield Kelly, Jr., Charles A. Dukes, Jr., W. Stanley Machen, Andrew O. Mothershead, and George Saslaw (Joint Tenants) Part of Lot 6 Prince George's County Land Records 5496: 908-918
January 23, 1986	Winfield M. Kelly, Jr., Charles A. Dukes, Jr. W. Stanley Machen, Andrew O. Mothershead, and George Saslaw to The George A. and Carmel D. Aman Memorial Trust Prince George's County Land Records 17709: 704-706

May 29, 2003 The George A. and Carmel D. Aman Memorial Trust to
The Anacostia Watershed Society, Inc.
Part of Lot 6
Prince George's County Land Records
11709: 698-700

INDIAN QUEEN TAVERN (Northern $\frac{1}{6}$ Acre of Lot 6)

March 5, 1742 Bladensburg Town Commissioners to Osborn Sprigg
Lot 6
Record Book of Bladensburg

June 5, 1746 Bladensburg Town Commissioners to Osborn Sprigg
Lot 6
Record Book of Bladensburg

March 14, 1747 Bladensburg Town Commissioners to Israel Folsom
Lot 6
Record Book of Bladensburg

April 16, 1752 Bladensburg Town Commissioners to Israel Folsom
Lot 6
Record Book of Bladensburg

June 8, 1763 Israel Folsom to Jacob Wirt
Lots 5 and 6
Prince George's County Land Records
TT: 30

October 8, 1785 Orphan's Court to James and Catherine Johnson
Part of Lot 6 whereon is the Tavern
Prince George's County Orphan Court Proceedings
WK: 215-216

DATE UNCERTAIN Property conveyed to Francis and Mary Modena

May 16, 1832 Francis and Mary Modena to Lilborn Mitchell
South Part of Lot 6
Prince George's County Land Records
AB 7: 190-191

December 10, 1836 Lilborn and Ann Mitchell to Cepphas Rinaldo Benson
South $\frac{1}{6}$ Acre of Lot 6
Prince George's County Land Records
AB 11: 19-20

July 13, 1838 Lilborn and Ann Mitchell and Cepphas and Mary Benson
to John Watkins Scott
Sixth part of Lot 6 South
AB 11: 520-521

September 12, 1856

John Watkins and Lucida Scott
and John J. Mary Scott and to Francis Gasch
Prince George's County Land Records
Sixth part of Lot 6 South
CSM 1: 344

July 1, 1907

Francis and Sophia Gasch to Elizabeth Stubener
Northern portion of Lot 6 (northern 54 feet)
Prince George's County Land Records
120: 498

September 27, 1916

Phillip J. Stubener to Mary J. Gafford
Northern portion of Lot 6 (northern 54 feet)
Prince George's County Land Records
119: 196

5.3 MARKET MASTER'S HOUSE 4006 48TH STREET



Figure 60: Market Master's House, 2009
View of North and East Side
Source: EHT Traceries, Inc.

5.3.1 Construction

The Market Master's House at 4006 48th Street (Figure 60) is located on Lot 38 in Bladensburg. According to the *Record Book of Bladensburg*, the property was purchased by Francis Finn from the Bladensburg Town Commissioners on March 5, 1742 for one pound and ten shillings current money (Figure 61). Finn failed, however, to comply with the requirement to construct a "tenantable House" within eighteen months of the purchase date and he was forced by the terms of the sale to forfeit the lot to the Town Commissioners. On June 5, 1746, the Commission sold the unimproved lot to George Scott. Scott also neglected to erect the required building and was forced to repurchase the lot from the Commission on March 14, 1747. Scott once again forfeited the land, which was sold to Christopher Lowndes on September 23, 1760. Lowndes seemingly complied with the requirement to construct a house on the lot within eighteen month; the *Record Book of Bladensburg* notes that improvements were made prior to the next public auction on February 26, 1765. Based on this historical documentation, the Market Master's House is believed to have been constructed circa 1760.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ *Record Book of the City of Bladensburg, 1787-1836*, Maryland State Archives Special Collections 4885.

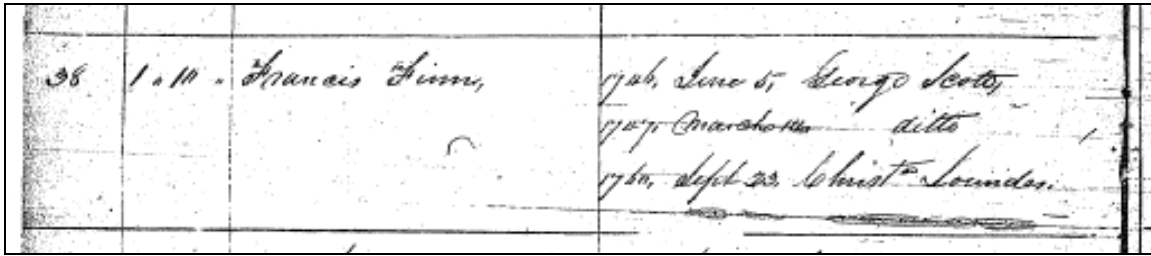


Figure 61: Entry for Lot 32 in the Record Book of Bladensburg
Source: Maryland State Archives

Lowndes constructed the house on the northwestern corner of Lot 38. As shown in the 1787 Resurvey of Bladensburg (Figure 62), the house was located at the intersection of Market Place and Market Lane. The lot was set to the immediate south of Lot 37, which was designated by the Town Commissioners as a public market in 1746. Although Bladensburg was designated as the location for a county tobacco inspection warehouse by the act of 1747, the warehouse was not located on the market square until 1784 when the Town Commissioners granted the eastern part of Lot 37 to the trustees of the county for the purpose of erecting warehouses; the other part of Lot 37 was “reserved for a market place, or other building for use of the Town.”¹²¹ Prior to 1784, the tobacco warehouse in Bladensburg was located on one of the properties owned by Dr. David Ross.¹²²



Figure 62: 1787 Resurvey of Bladensburg showing Highlight of Lot 38.
Source: Maryland State Archives

¹²¹ *Record Boo of the City of Bladensburg, 1787-1836*, Maryland State Archives Special Collections 4885.

¹²² *Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly, October 1773 to April 1774*, 198. The Proceedings of the General Assembly list all the tobacco warehouses in Maryland at the time including “...At Bladensburg on the Land of Doctor David Ross...” According to the *Record Book of Bladensburg*, by the 1770s, Ross, a prominent merchant and Town Commissioner, owned several lots in Bladensburg; the General Assembly did not specify the exact location of the tobacco warehouse within Bladensburg.

Despite its traditional name, the supposed use of the Market Master's House as a residence for the tobacco inspector is unsupported by historic documentation. Louise Joyner Hinton is one of the first of many local historians who, in her 1972 book, *Prince George's Heritage: Sidelights on the Early History of Prince George's County, Maryland from 1696 to 1800*, presumptuously called it the Market Master's House.¹²³ The location of the building to the immediate south of the market square appears to have led to speculation it was erected by Lowndes for this specific purpose. However, the Market Master's House preceded the tobacco warehouse at this location by more than two decades. Also, as will be discussed anon, evidence suggests that Lowndes used the building as a store for his importing business.



Figure 63: View of the North and West elevations of the Market Master's House, circa 1913
Source: The Rambler Photograph Collection, The Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

Another oft-repeated tradition concerning the Market Master's House is that it was constructed from stone used as ballast in oceangoing ships from Europe. The Rambler explained the origin of the legend to his *Sunday Star* readers (the photograph that accompanied the article is shown in Figure 63):

Christopher Lowndes was a rich merchant. He was also a planter. So too, he was a shipowner, or had interests in ships, as was the custom with many merchants of that time. These ships use to come up to Bladensburg ... [to the wharf] at which those ocean-going vessels used to be moored. He brought over in those ships a good deal of European merchandise for the American colonials and shipped back wheat, flour and tobacco. The

¹²³ Louise Joyner Hinton, *Prince George's Heritage: Sidelights on the Early History of Prince George's County, Maryland from 1696 to 1800* (Baltimore, MD: Maryland Historical Society, 1972), 139.

out-going cargoes were heavier and more numerous than the incoming cargoes and often the ships came in ballast.¹²⁴

Supposedly, the ballast was reused as a building material. Oral tradition holds that stone from Europe was used in the construction of the Market Master's House, as well as the Magruder House and the foundation of nearby Bostwick. In the process of preparing the National Register Nomination for the Market Master's House, a University of Maryland Geology Professor conducted an analysis of the stone and concluded that the quartz/mica schist that comprises the building was not local to the Bladensburg vicinity or Prince George's County. The closest source for this type of stone would have been northern Montgomery County or the Baltimore area. So while the origin of the stone cannot be definitively traced to Europe, the nonnative derivation of the stone lends some credence to oral tradition.¹²⁵

5.3.2 The Lowndes Family

Christopher Lowndes (circa 1713-1785), for whom the Market Master's House was constructed, was born to the Bostwick House (Figure 64) of Chester County, England, and arrived in Maryland in 1738 to act on behalf of the business interests of Liverpool merchants Henry and Edward Trafford. Lowndes soon established his own trading company, Christopher Lowndes and Company, which operated in Maryland and England.



Figure 64: The Lowndes of Bostwick Family Seal

Source: Prince George's County Historical Society Library

Lowndes imported medicines, dry goods, spices, cutlery, carpenter's tools, farming implements, and salt, which he sold in Bladensburg and along the Severn River. He also

¹²⁴ J. Harry Shannon, "With the Rambler in Odd Nooks and Crannies about the City," *Sunday Star*, 12 April 1914, 9.

¹²⁵ Marina King, *Market Master's House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (Upper Marlboro: Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission, 1989), 8.4.

partnered in the slave trade with Benjamin Tasker (1690-1768), a prominent politician from Annapolis who acted as governor from 1752 to 1753.¹²⁶ In addition to his import business, Lowndes manufactured cordage in Bladensburg, supplying ocean-faring vessels that docked in the port. During the Revolutionary War, Lowndes' ropewalk supplied most of the cordage to Maryland's nascent navy.¹²⁷

Lowndes frequently advertised his recent shipments in the *Maryland Gazette*. For example, on March 16, 1750, Lowndes took out a classified ad announcing "A Ship with Negroes, consign'd to Messieurs Tasker and Lowndes; which had Orders to leave the African Coast by the first of April, is every Day expected here, and will dispose of her Cargo in Severn."¹²⁸ On June 26, 1755, he advertised "all sorts of cables, standing and running Rigging of every sort and size..." to be sold at his Rope-Walk in Bladensburg" (Figure 65)¹²⁹ On December 18, 1766, Lowndes advertised a lengthy list of items for sale, including all varieties of textiles and household goods. Predictably for a slave trader, Lowndes frequently took out ads seeking the return of runaway slaves.¹³⁰

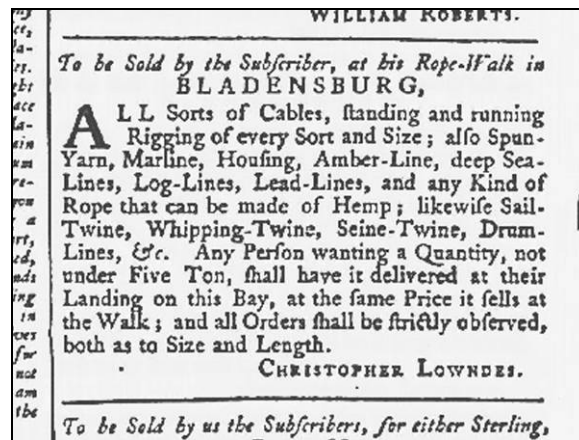


Figure 65: Ad from Christopher Lowndes in the *Maryland Gazette*.

Source: *Maryland Gazette* June 26, 1755.

In 1745, Lowndes was appointed as a Town Commissioner of Bladensburg. The following year, he constructed an imposing Georgian-style house on a hill overlooking the river, port and Town of Bladensburg. Bostwick, named after the family home in England, was an ostentatious display of the wealth Lowndes amassed in the shipping business.¹³¹ His

¹²⁶ Robert Harry McIntire, *Annapolis Maryland Families* (Baltimore, Maryland: Gateway Press, Inc., 1980), 694.

¹²⁷ Hienton, *Prince George's Heritage*, 188-189; R. Lee Van Horn, *Out of the Past: Prince Georgians and Their Land* (Riverdale, MD: Prince George's County Historical Society, 1976), 84; Frank White, *Bostwick National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (Riverdale: Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust, 1975), 3.

¹²⁸ *Maryland Gazette*, 16 May 1750.

¹²⁹ *Maryland Gazette*, 26 July 1755.

¹³⁰ *Maryland Gazette*, 13 September 1764. Also see Louise Joyner Hienton, *Items from the Maryland Gazette 1745-1785 Concerning Christopher Lowndes of Bostwick, Bladensburg, Maryland*, Prince George's County Historical Society Vertical Files, 3-12.

¹³¹ Kathleen Manicke, *Building at Risk: A Historic Structure Report for Bostwick in Bladensburg* (University of Maryland College of Architecture, 2007), 16-17.

home was one of several grand houses that Lowndes constructed near Bladensburg, including Blenheim and Sunnyside—presumably built for his children.¹³²

After completing his house, Lowndes married Benjamin Tasker's daughter, Elizabeth, in 1747. In addition to his shipping business, Lowndes was commissioned under the new state government as a Justice of the County and Judge of the Orphan's Court. Lowndes also served as the first Postmaster in Bladensburg.¹³³ The Post Office in Bladensburg was one of the first in the nation established under the nation's first Postmaster General, Benjamin Franklin. Franklin's ledger notes that Christopher Lowndes first submitted an account for the post office on January 5, 1776.¹³⁴

Christopher Lowndes died on January 8, 1785. He was survived by nine children: Anne, Benjamin, Francis, Samuel, Elizabeth, Rebecca, Harriot, Richard, and Charles.¹³⁵ Lowndes' obituary, published in the *Maryland Journal and Commercial Advertiser* on January 18, 1747, read: A few Days ago died, in a very advanced Age, at Bladensburg, CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES, Esq. for many Years an eminent Merchant at that Place; a Gentleman remarkable for the Liberality of his Mind, and for his great Probity, Hospitality and Benevolence.¹³⁶

After Christopher Lowndes' death, ownership of the Market Master's House fell to his oldest son, Benjamin, who took over his father's merchant business.¹³⁷ Benjamin Lowndes also assumed his father's mantle as a leading citizen of Bladensburg; he served as a trustee of the Bladensburg Academy, an election judge, and the town Postmaster. Benjamin married Dorothy Buchanan of Baltimore County and they had six children: Elizabeth, Andrew, Benjamin, Susan, Eleanor, and Christopher.¹³⁸ The 1793-1794 Tax Assessments for Prince George's County (the earliest available) list Benjamin Lowndes as slaveholder. He possessed eleven slaves, four of whom were engaged in Lowndes' rope-making business.¹³⁹

Bostwick (Figure 66) was inherited by Christopher and Elizabeth's daughter Rebecca, who married Benjamin Stoddert (1751-1803), the first Secretary of the Navy under President John Adams.¹⁴⁰ As one of the oldest extant buildings in Bladensburg, Bostwick was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 and is recognized as a Prince George's County Historic Site.

¹³² J. Harry Shannon, "With the Rambler in Odd Nooks and Crannies about the City," *Sunday Star*, 12 April 1914, 9.

¹³³ Christopher Johnson, "Lowndes Family," *Maryland Historical Magazine* Vol. II (1907), 276-277; Mayor and Council of Bladensburg, Maryland, *Historic Bladensburg*, n.d (Enoch Pratt Free Library Vertical File: Bladensburg).

¹³⁴ Postmaster Finder, United States Postal Service. Available online: <<http://www.usps.com/postmasterfinder/welcome.htm>>.

¹³⁵ Christopher Johnson, "Lowndes Family," *Maryland Historical Magazine* Vol. II (1907), 276-277.

¹³⁶ "Mortuary Notice," *Maryland Journal*, 18 January 1785, 2.

¹³⁷ No will exists for Christopher Lowndes, but the stone dwelling house on Lot 38 is referenced in the will of Benjamin Lowndes (TT 1:106), suggesting that he inherited it from his father.

¹³⁸ Christopher Johnson, "Lowndes Family," *Maryland Historical Magazine* Vol. II (1907), 276-277.

¹³⁹ Prince George's County Commissioners of the Tax, *Assessment Record 1793-1794*, Maryland State Archives, CM779-1.

¹⁴⁰ White, *Bostwick National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, 8:1.



Figure 66: Bostwick, Home of Christopher Lowndes, 1936

Source: Historic American Building Survey

The first known description of the Market Master’s House was recorded in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax (Figure 67).

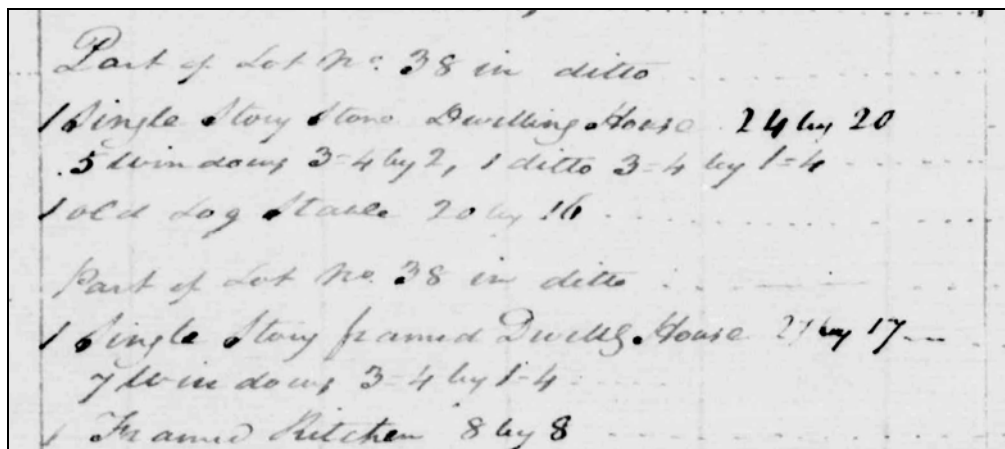


Figure 67: Description of Lot 38 in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax Assessment

Source: Maryland State Archives

The assessment describes the Market Master’s House, which was then in Benjamin Lowndes’ possession, as a “single story stone dwelling 24 by 20 [feet].” The stone house had five windows. Additionally, the property was improved by a 20 by 16-foot stable. The Federal Direct Tax also reveals that a second portion of Lot 38 was improved with an unoccupied “single story framed dwelling house 27 by 17 [feet]” and an 8-foot-square framed kitchen. The Federal Direct Tax, which noted owners as well as occupants of the properties being assessed, indicated that the Market Master’s House was not occupied by Benjamin Lowndes, or any other member of the Lowndes family. Rather, as stated in the tax assessment, Benjamin Lowndes lived in a three-story brick dwelling on Lot 60 and

Henry Jones occupied the Market Master's House.¹⁴¹ No Henry Jones was identified in either the 1790 or 1800 Federal Censuses, thus nothing is currently known about this early occupant of the Market Master's House.

5.3.3 The Lowndes Store and Post Office

Although the Federal Direct Tax recorded the Market Master's House as a dwelling, other evidence suggests that it may have been used as a store for the Lowndes Company. In 1800, a notice appeared in the *George-Town and Washington Advertiser* that "A number of inhabitants of Prince George's County intend applying to the next General Assembly of Maryland, for a law, authorizing the laying out of a road from Bladensburg across the Eastern Branch opposite *Mr. Lowndes' store* [emphasis added] and to run ... the nearest and best way to the City of Washington."¹⁴² Although the notice does not provide any more information about the location of the Lowndes store, an 1802 controversy over Benjamin Lowndes' dereliction of duty as Postmaster of the Town of Bladensburg suggests that the store was located in the stone building.

According to a letter published in the *Washington Federalist*, on two occasions Benjamin Lowndes left his store, which also served as the Post Office, prior to the arrival of the mail. The Post Master was required to remain at his station even if the mail arrived late, as it was on these instances. Lowndes went home, apparently intending to return when the mail arrived. Even though Lowndes had left the store in the care of an unnamed associate, he was dismissed for failing to receive and examine the mail in a timely manner. In an open letter to the Postmaster General dated February 25, 1802, Lowndes appealed to return to his position:

The post-office at Bladensburg is worth no man's acceptance, but after seventeen years servitude (the attention requisite can be called nothing else) I consider myself as intitled [sic] to it as any person. I have acted, I believe without censure, and I know I have done my duty faithfully.

An editorial in the *Washington Federalist* defended Lowndes' actions, noting that his home was close enough to his store:

For the exchange of mails, one quarter of an hour is allowed, but it can be proved that in the instances alluded to, the mail carriers did not stay five minutes. It is not true that Mr. Lowndes's [sic] dwelling house, even with all the meanders is half a mile from his store, the more direct way does not exceed 630 yards...

The author's identification of the store as being located between a third and a half of a mile from Lowndes' house supports the contention that the store/post office was indeed the Market Master's House (Benjamin Lowndes' house on Lot 60 was located on the parcel directly to the southeast of Bostwick). After Lowndes was dismissed, the *Washington*

¹⁴¹ 1798 *Federal Direct Tax, New Scotland, Oxen & Bladensburg*, Maryland State Archives, Archives of Maryland Online, Volume 729.

¹⁴² "Notice," *The Centinel of Liberty, George-Town and Washington Advertiser*, 9 September 1800.

Federalist reported that the Post Office moved into another store somewhere on Market Street.¹⁴³

Benjamin Lowndes died in 1808.¹⁴⁴ In his Last Will and Testament, he bequeathed both the Market Master's House and the wood-frame dwelling on Lot 38 to his son, Christopher Lowndes.¹⁴⁵ On February 23, 1809, the executors of Benjamin Lowndes' Will (Dorothy Lowndes, George Calvert, and Richard T. Lowndes) advertised the Lowndes Store for rent in the *Washington Federalist*. The advertisement provides a sense of the types of goods sold by the Lowndes in the Market Master's House:

The Subscribers will rent the house in Bladensburgh, which was occupied as a Store by the late Mr. Benjamin Lowndes, also the large Brick Building which has been used as a Warehouse and Granary.

The situation of the store premisses [sic] being convenient to the water side, to one of the best Tobacco Inspections in the state, an also to a fertile extensive country, render them a object of attention to a person who wished to engage in a business on a limited or extensive scale, they will sell for cash the stock of goods now in the Store, consisting of a valuable assortment of DRY GOODS, Groceries, Iron Mongery of different sorts, Earthen Ware, China, and many other articles that would be wanted in a country Retail Store...¹⁴⁶

To summarize the early use of the Market Master's House, it was built as a house circa 1760 by Christopher Lowndes. The building was described in legal records as a dwelling (or "stone dwelling house") and the Federal Direct Tax of 1798 listed an occupant, Henry Jones. Historical evidence suggests, however, that by the turn of the nineteenth century at the latest, the building was used as a grocery and dry goods store by Benjamin Lowndes. After Benjamin Lowndes' death, the store was owned by Benjamin's son, Christopher, but was rented by the Lowndes family to another proprietor.

Following the younger Christopher Lowndes' death in 1823, the Market Master's House passed to William B. Jackson, who had married Christopher Lowndes' sister, Elizabeth, in 1813.¹⁴⁷ Jackson continued the Lowndes family tradition of serving as Postmaster, a position he held from 1816 to 1828.¹⁴⁸ Jackson left Bladensburg sometime shortly after 1828. The Censuses from 1830 to 1860 locate William Jackson in Washington, D.C. Later land transactions also document Jackson as being from the District of Columbia.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴³ *Washington Federalist*, 19 April 1802.

¹⁴⁴ Christopher Johnson, author of a Lowndes Family history published in 1907 in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, wrote that Benjamin Lowndes died in 1802; however this date is incorrect. In *Mistress of Riverdale: The Plantation Letters of Rosalie Stier Calvert* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991) editor Margaret Law Callcott notes on page 56 that Benjamin Lowndes died in 1808. This later date is also supported by an 1809 newspaper advertisement (see note 71).

¹⁴⁵ Prince George's County Wills TT 1: 6.

¹⁴⁶ "Advertisement," *The Washington Federalist*, 23 February 1809.

¹⁴⁷ Helen W. Brown, *Index of Marriage Licenses, Prince George's County, Maryland 1777 – 1866* (1971).

¹⁴⁸ Postmaster Finder, United States Postal Service. Available online:

<<http://www.usps.com/postmasterfinder/welcome.htm>>.

¹⁴⁹ William B. Jackson et al. to Thomas and Eleanor Anderson, Prince George's County Land Records, JBB 7: 286 (26 May 1851).

The Boyd's Directories for the District of Columbia for the years 1858 and 1867 list William B. Jackson as the operator of Jackson Bro. & Co. Grocery at 333 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.¹⁵⁰ Jackson's occupation as a grocer intimates that he may have continued the use of the Market Master's House as a general store.

On May 26, 1851, William Jackson and his family sold Lot 38 to Elizabeth Jackson's sister, Eleanor, who had married Dr. Thomas Anderson in 1841.¹⁵¹ The 1861 Martenet's Map of Prince George's County (Figure 68) shows Dr. Anderson as owning a building fronting South Street on Lot 39 (to the south of the site of the Market Master's House). The Market Master's House is not shown in this 1861 map. The 1880 Census lists a physician, Thomas Anderson, and his wife E. R. C. (in land records Eleanor's full name is given as Eleanor R. C. Anderson) as residing in Bladensburg.¹⁵² Historic maps suggest that the Anderson household resided in a house on Lot 39, located to the south of the Market Master's House.¹⁵³



**Figure 68: Map showing Highlight of Lot 38 and 39 with Structure Labeled as “Dr. Anderson”
Star indicates the Approximate Location of the Market Master's House**

Source: 1861 Martenet's Map

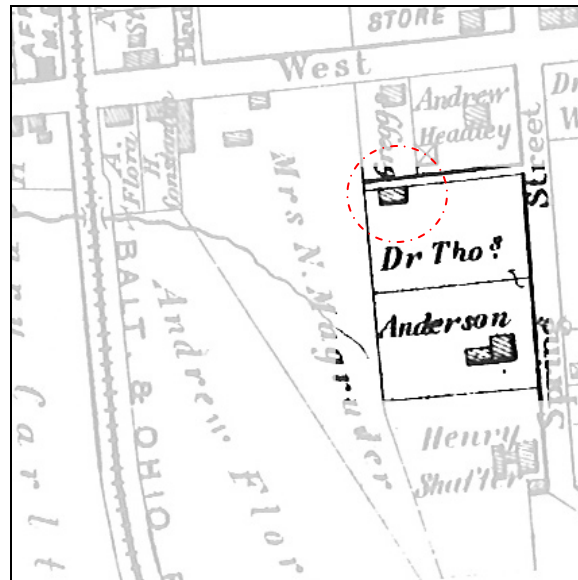
¹⁵⁰ R. L. Polk & Co., *Boyd's Directory, District of Columbia 1858*, 162; R. L. Polk & Co., *Boyd's Directory, District of Columbia 1867*, 334.

¹⁵¹ Helen W. Brown, *Index of Marriage Licenses, Prince George's County, Maryland 1777 – 1866* (1971).

¹⁵² The 1860 Census lists a physician named Thomas Anderson as living in Bladensburg, but this Thomas Anderson, age 41, was married to Ellen (not Eleanor), age 40. The 1870 Census lists a Thomas and Eleanor Anderson, both 40 years of age, living in Bladensburg, but his occupation is given as farmer. Based on the names, ages, and occupations of the individuals, neither of these households appears to be a match for the Anderson household that owned the Market Master's House from 1851 to 1883.

¹⁵³ *Tenth Census of the United States, 1880*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1880. Census Place: Bladensburg, Prince Georges, Maryland; Roll: T9_513

The 1878 Hopkins Map (Figure 69) shows Dr. Thomas Anderson owning both Lots 38 and 39 and depicts the Market Master's House standing on the northwestern corner of Lot 38 fronting on the former Market Lane.



**Figure 69: Map showing Highlight of Lot 38 and 39 labeled "Dr Thos Anderson"
Circle around Market Master's House**
Source: 1878 G.M. Hopkins Map

In 1879, Thomas and Eleanor Anderson borrowed \$750 from William B. Jackson. To secure the loan, they assigned Lots 38 and 39 to trustees George J. Seufferle and Richard T. Morsell, the latter being an attorney from Washington, D.C. When the Andersons failed to satisfy the terms of the loan, the trustees sold the property at auction to Andrew D. Headley in 1883. Headley, who according to the deed of sale from 1883 was living in Prince George's County, appears to have purchased the property for investment purposes. Later land records identify Headley as a resident of Brooklyn, New York and Washington, D.C. The 1878 Hopkins Map noted Headley also owned the dwelling located in the northeast corner of Lot 37, which was formerly the market square.

5.3.4 John Bowles and Lucie Lloyd

When the Rambler visited the Stone House in 1914, he was perplexed by the building's past, but provided valuable information about the occupancy of the building:

Not far from Bostock [Bostwick] and in a sandy meadow between the Eastern branch and the main east west roadway of the village is a curious, picturesque and well preserved stone house evidently of great age. The owner and occupant is John E. Bowles [Shannon was incorrect in identifying Bowles as the owner]. He has lived there for thirty years. The Rambler could learn nothing of the early history of this house. It is blocked off from view from the main streets of Bladensburg by newer structures, and a traveler is apt to overlook it unless he passes the Marlboro road. It perhaps was not the abode of any of these folks who made Bladensburg as a place of wealth and business, but its history may be just

as interesting in spite of that. The stones in its walls are cold and silent, and could not tell the story of their life.¹⁵⁴

The 1900 Census lists John E. Bowles as a 35-year-old African American living with his 61-year-old mother, Margaret J. Bowles. John Bowles occupation was given as “detective.” His mother was a companion, or servant, to the head of household, a single white 63-year-old woman named Lucy E. Lloyd [her name more often appears as Lucie]. The Census identified Lloyd as renting her home.¹⁵⁵ In 1904, Lloyd was appointed the town Postmaster—continuing the coincidental link between the Market Master’s House and that position. In her capacity as Postmaster, she employed John Bowles as an assistant.¹⁵⁶

John Bowles was a prominent African American politician and a leader of the local Republican Party. He was a chief organizer in Bladensburg for U.S. Congressman Sydney Emanuel Mudd, who served in the House of Representatives from 1897 to 1911. Bowles was also a backer of Lloyd Lowndes, the governor of Maryland from 1896 to 1900.¹⁵⁷ In addition to politics, Bowles was well known in Prince George’s County for his detective work. Bowles made the pages of the *Washington Post* in 1903 when he discovered the body of a man who drove a blind horse into the Eastern Branch while intoxicated.¹⁵⁸

In 1904, Bowles found himself on the other side of the law when he was arrested for embezzling 75 dollars from the post office. At the trial Lloyd’s nephew, Parlett Lloyd, a pension attorney and author, testified that his aunt had a special affinity for Bowles, who she had helped raise as a child. In fact, Lucie Lloyd had threatened to commit suicide unless Parlett gave her the money to cover up the crime.¹⁵⁹ Bowles pled guilty and was sentenced to two years in prison.¹⁶⁰ The crime apparently did not sour the relationship between Lucie Lloyd and Bowles as the 1910 Census listed them as still residing in the same household. After being released from jail, Bowles gave up detective work and became a property manager.¹⁶¹

5.3.5 The Market Master’s House in the Twentieth Century

Nearly ten years after purchasing the property, Headley subdivided Lot 38, selling the southernmost portion (9,520 square feet) to Marion Duckett, an attorney and prominent real estate investor, in 1892. On the same day as the sale to Duckett, Headley conveyed half-interest in another 8,330 square feet of Lot 38 to his daughter, Laura, and her husband, Frank Gasch. This tract was conveyed by the Gaschs and Headley in 1901 to

¹⁵⁴ J. Harry Shannon, “With the Rambler in Odd Nooks and Crannies about the City,” *Sunday Star*, 12 April 1914, 9.

¹⁵⁵ *Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1900. Census Place: Bladensburg, Prince George, Maryland; Roll: T623_626 Page: 22A; Enumeration District: 91.

¹⁵⁶ Postmaster Finder, United States Postal Service. Available online:

<<http://www.usps.com/postmasterfinder/welcome.htm>>.

¹⁵⁷ “Politician Arrested,” *The Washington Post*, 29 September 1904, 2. “Opposition to Lowndes: Loyal Republicans of Prince George’s County Organize,” *The Washington Post*, 8 July 1899, 4.

¹⁵⁸ “Hack Driver Drowned,” *The Washington Post*, 20 December 1903, E2.

¹⁵⁹ “Negro Held for Trial,” *The Washington Post*, 1 October 1904, 5.

¹⁶⁰ “Bowles Pleaded Guilty,” *The Washington Post*, 14 October, 1904, 2.

¹⁶¹ *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1910. Roll: T624_567; Page: 9B; Enumeration District: 61.

Duckett, thus enlarging his holdings to include the entire southern half of Lot 38. Headley retained the northern 23,800 square feet of Lot 38 that included the Market Master's House. Headley had also purchased Lot 39 from the Andersons in 1883; before the turn of the twentieth century, his daughter and son-in-law occupied this corner lot. The 1900 census records Laura and Frank Gasch, a painter, living on Spring Street with their three children: Elroy, Headley, and Clifton.¹⁶² The 1910 Census located the Gasch family, which by then also included nine-year-old Andrew, on Sand Street (Annapolis Road).¹⁶³

Throughout the Gasch's ownership of the Market Master House, the dwelling continued to be rented by Lloyd and the Bowles. Their tenure would end around 1920 with the sale of the property. In April, 1918, Andrew Headley sold the Market Master's House along with the remaining 23,800 square feet of Lot 38 to Marion Duckett. Two years later, Duckett re-subdivided the lot, selling 11,900 square feet, including the Market Master's House, to Raymond and Louise Evans, who moved to Bladensburg from Washington, D.C. The Evans occupied the Market Master's House from 1920 to 1944.

Raymond Evans was the Chief of the Motion Picture Service of the Department of Agriculture from 1927 to 1944. He joined the Agriculture Department in 1914 after a stint as a reporter. Films made under Evans's direction included "In the Beginning," a movie showing the early evolution of mammal life; "How Animal Life Begins;" "Poultry, A Billion Dollar Industry;" and "Clouds." These were instructional and educational films for schools, extension agents, and farm groups. Louise Evans was active in the local Red Cross Committee and a director of the Housekeeper's Club. Raymond and Louise Evans had two sons, Warren and Halbert, and a daughter, Helen. After he retired from the Agriculture Department in 1944, Raymond and Louise Evans moved to Ohio, his childhood home. Ownership of the Market Master's House was transferred to Helen Evans and her husband, Shaw Matthews.¹⁶⁴

The 1940 Franklin Survey Co. Map of Bladensburg (Figure 70) depicts the Market Master's House, occupied by R. Evans, surrounded by the residential development that typified Bladensburg in the early twentieth century. The Market Master's House was joined on Lot 38 by three other residences. To the north, Lot 39 was subdivided among the children of Laura and Francis Gasch.

¹⁶² *Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1900, Roll: T623_626 Page: 28B; Enumeration District: 91.

¹⁶³ *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1910. Census Place: Bladensburg, Prince George's, Maryland; Roll: T624_567; Page: 8A; Enumeration District: 61; Image: 80.

¹⁶⁴ Christine Sadler, "Uncle Sam, Producer, Presents 'The River,'" *The Washington Post*, 5 December 1937; Jerry Kluttz, "The Federal Diary," *The Washington Post*, 13 March 1944; "Raymond Evans, Chief of Agriculture's Movies," *The Washington Post*, 12 October 1962.



Figure 70: The Market Master House, 1940

Source: Franklin Survey Company

A 1913 photograph taken for the Rambler column in the *Washington Star*, closely corresponds with the description of the building given in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax. According to later newspaper articles, the Market Master's House underwent extensive renovations in the mid twentieth century. Comparison of the 1913 Rambler photograph to those from the 1989 Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) (Figure 71) reveals that an addition was constructed during the tenure of Shaw Matthews to the western end of the building, nearly doubling the size of the house. The addition included a lean-to wing constructed of stone on the western part of the façade. Alterations also include the creation of new window openings, replacement of original window sashes, and the addition of a shed-roof dormer, west of the original front-gabled dormer.



Figure 71: Comparison view of Market Master's House, 1913 (left) and 1980 (right)

Source: The Rambler Photograph Collection, The Historical Society of Washington, D.C. HABS/Library of Congress

Shaw and Helen Matthews (Figure 72 and Figure 73) continued to reside in the Market Master's House until November, 1954, when they sold the property to the State Roads Commission. The house, along with the nearby Magruder House, was slated for demolition to allow for the widening of Kenilworth Avenue, which is today a primary transportation and commercial corridor running north/south through Prince George's County. The house was ultimately spared by the realignment of the road and creation of an overpass for Kenilworth Avenue at its intersection with Upshur Street (Figure 74 and Figure 75). The preservation effort was spearheaded by several local residents of Bladensburg.



Figure 72: Helen Matthews with her son, Shaw Hall Mathews, III, Undated Photograph
(Possibly circa 1945)

Source: Susanna Cristofane Collection/PGCHS Library



Figure 73: Helen Matthews gardening in front of the Market Master's House, 1954

Source: Herald Post/PGCHS Library

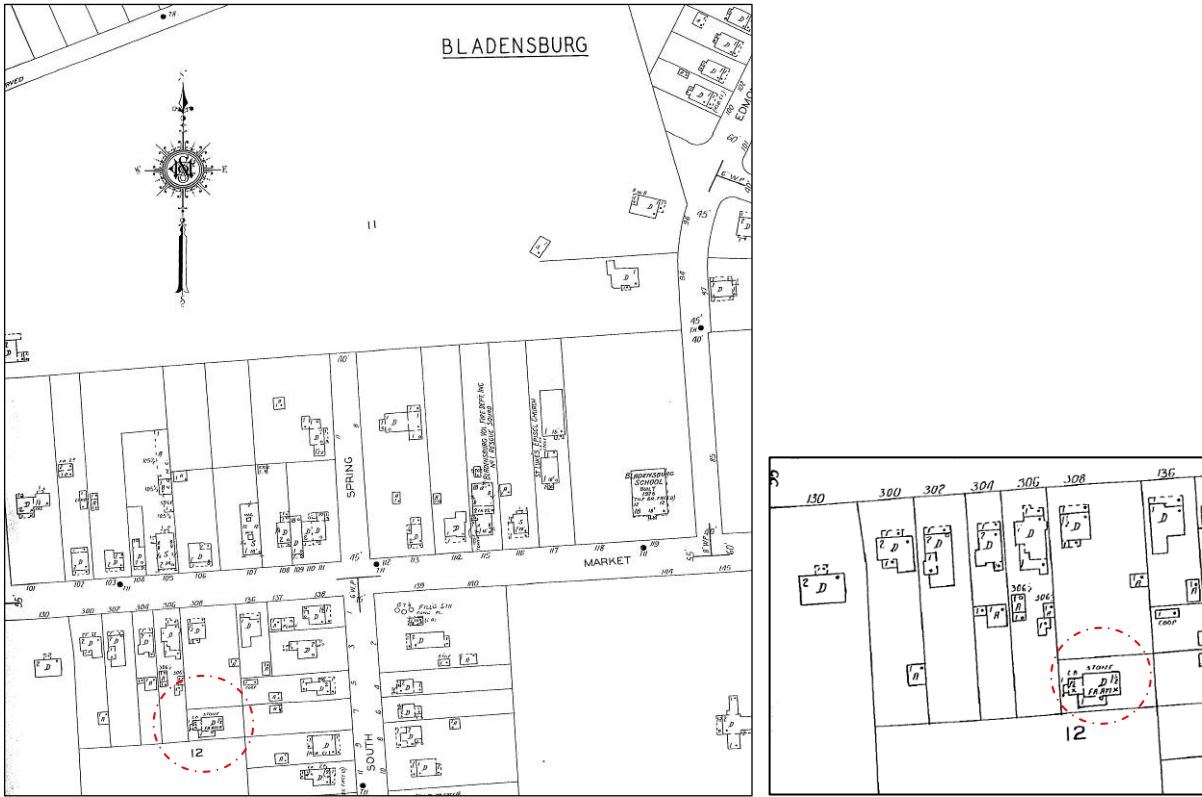


Figure 74: 1939 Sanborn maps with circle around Market Master’s House
Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

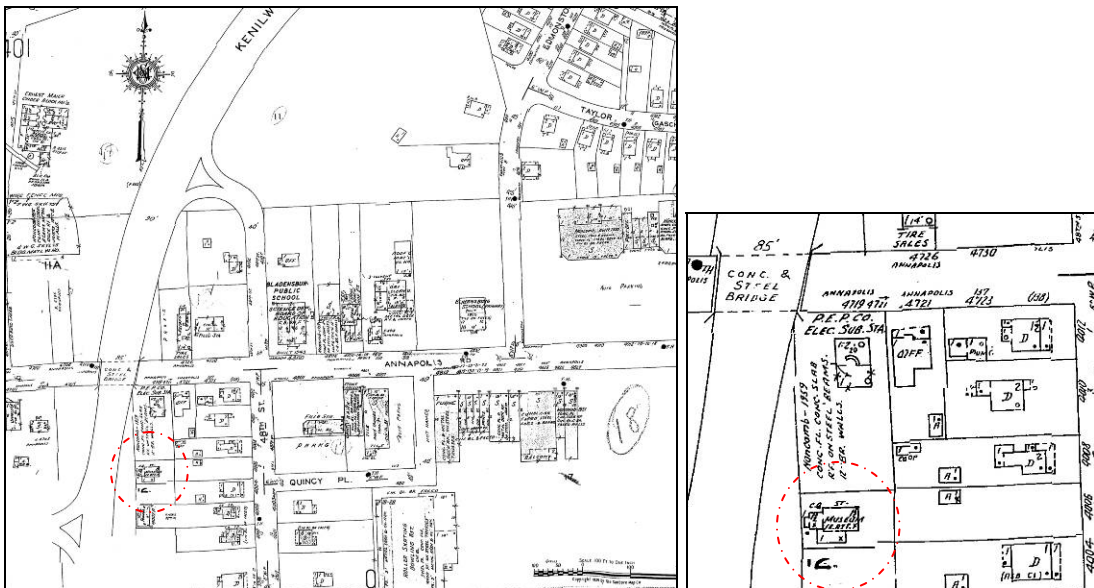


Figure 75: The Market Master’s House after the Construction of Kenilworth Avenue, 1959
Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

The State Roads Commission sold the property in October, 1956 to Susanna Cristofane (Figure 76), who was instrumental in its preservation. She also purchased an additional 5,950 square feet of Lot 38 two months later from the Matthews. Cristofane was a member of the town council and later would be elected mayor; she was the first woman in Bladensburg to hold that office. An entomologist (a scientist specializing in insects) by training, Cristofane had been spurred to participate in town affairs during the period of rapid development that occurred in Bladensburg after World War II. She was known for her work on beautification, economic development, and historic preservation issues. Her father had renovated the Bostwick House, the Georgian-style house built for Christopher Lowndes in 1746.¹⁶⁵



Figure 76: Image of Susanna Cristofane pointing to the 1760 Sign on the Market Master's House

Source: Evening Star, 1951/PGCHS Library

Working with Prince George's Heritage, Cristofane spearheaded an effort to restore the Market Master's House, as well as the Magruder House and the George Washington House during the 1970s. Cristofane was the Prince George's County Municipal Official of the Year in 1970 and also won the Governor's Distinguished Citizen Award in 1970. In 1989, she was elected into the Prince George's County Women's Hall of Fame.¹⁶⁶

In September 1986, Susan Cristofane conveyed the Market Master's House to her daughter, Susanna Christofani Yatman, who was also a member of the town council. Accord-


¹⁶⁵ "A Legend Passes On, Former Bladensburg Mayor Led City's Preservation Effort," *The Prince George's Express*, 26 July 1993.

¹⁶⁶ Jennifer Rudick, "Bladensburg Pioneer dies at 90," *Prince George's Journal*, 19 July 1993, A3.

ing to files of the Prince George's County Heritage Preservation Section of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), the Market Master's House underwent a major renovation in 2004, including repairs to the roof, cornice, and entry and window surrounds. Additionally, the interior was repainted while the exterior foundation was stabilized, storm windows were added, and an updated electrical and HVAC systems was installed. In 2007, Yatman sold the property to its current owners, the George and Carmel D. Aman Memorial Trust.

The Market Master's House was documented in 1989 by HABS, which recognized the early-eighteenth-century building's architectural significance. In 1990, the Market Master's House was listed in the Maryland Inventory of Historical Places and the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural and historical significance. Additionally, in July, 1981, it was protected as a Prince George's County Historic Site. The building is currently used as a residence.

The timeline on the following page (Figure 77) summarizes the occupancy and of the Market Master's House from the time of its construction through the date of purchase by the State Roads Commission.



Market Master's House

Owner	Christopher Lowndes	Benjamin Lowndes	Christopher Lowndes	William B. Jackson	Thomas & Eleanor Anderson	Andrew D. Headley & Laura Gasch	Raymond & Louise Evans	Helen & Shaw Matthews				
Occupant	Owner Occupied	Owner Occupied	Owner Occupied	Owner Occupied	Owner Occupied	John E. Bowles, Margaret Bowles, & Lucie Lloyd	Owner Occupied	Owner Occupied				
Use	Dwelling & Store?	Store, Post Office, & Dwelling	Store	Store?	Unknown	Dwelling	Dwelling	Dwelling				
Date	(1760-1785)	(1785-1808)	(1808-1823)	(1823-1851)	(1851-1880)	(1880-1920)	(1920-1944)	(1944-1954)				
	1740	1760	1780	1800	1820	1840	1860	1880	1900	1920	1940	1960

Figure 77: The Occupancy and Use of the Market Master's House

MARKET MASTER'S HOUSE – CHAIN OF TITLE

March 5, 1742	Bladensburg Town Commissioners to Francis Finn Lot 38 Record Book of Bladensburg
June 5, 1746	Francis Finn to George Scott Lot 38 Record Book of Bladensburg
September 23, 1760	George Scott to Christopher Lowndes Lot 38 Record Book of Bladensburg
January 8, 1785	Christopher Lowndes to Benjamin Lowndes Not Recorded / No Will on File See TT 1: 6 (1802)
January 6, 1802	Benjamin Lowndes to Christopher Lowndes Prince George's County Wills TT 1: 6
1823	Christopher Lowndes' Heirs to William B. Jackson
May 26, 1851	William B. Jackson et al. to Thomas and Eleanor Anderson Lot 38 Prince George's County Land Records JBB 7: 286-287
June 26, 1879	Thomas and Eleanor Anderson to Richard Morsell and George J. Seufferle as Trustees Lot 38 Prince George's County Land Records ATB 1: 340-342
November 17, 1883	Richard Morsell and George J. Seufferle as Trustees to Andrew D. Headley Lot 38 Prince George's County Land Records JWB 2: 541-542.
October 3, 1892	Andrew D. and Emily B. Headley to Marion Duckett Southern Portion of Lot 38 (9,520 Square Feet) Prince George's County Land Records JWB 23: 106-107
October 3, 1892	Andrew D. Headley and Emily B. Headley to Laura E. Gasch Portion of Lot 38 (8,330 Square Feet) Prince George's County Land Records JWB 25: 658-659

December 12, 1901	Laura E. and Frank H. Gasch and Andrew Headley to Marion Duckett Portion of Lot 38 (8,330 Square Feet) Prince George's County Land Records 4: 470-471
April 22, 1918	Andrew D. Headley to Marion Duckett Northern Portion of Lot 38 (23,800 Square Feet) Prince George's County Land Records 128: 231-232
April 9, 1920	Marion Duckett to Raymond and Louise A. Evans Northern Portion of Lot 38 (11,900 Square Feet) Prince George's County Land Records 153: 114-115
June 26, 1944	Raymond and Louise A. Evans to Shaw and Helen Matthews Northern Portion of Lot 38 (11,900 Square Feet) Prince George's County Land Records 757: 81-82
November 10, 1954	Shaw and Helen Matthews to State Roads Commission Northern Portion of Lot 38 (11,900 Square Feet) Prince George's County Land Records 1795: 167-169
October 31, 1956	State Roads Commission remitted to Felix E. and Susanna K. Cristofane Northern Portion of Lot 38 (11,900 Square Feet) Prince George's County Land Records 2073: 54-55
December 24, 1956	Shaw H. Matthews and Helen L. Matthews to Felix and Susanna K. Cristofane Northern Portion of Lot 38 (5,950 Square Feet) Prince George's County Land Records 2073: 51-53
October 17, 1958	Shaw H. Matthews and Helen L. Matthews to Felix and Susanna K. Cristofane Portion of Lot 38 (5,950 Square Feet) Prince George's County Land Records 2263: 353-355
September 4, 1986	Susanna K. Cristofane to H. Susanna Cristofani Northern Portion of Lot 38 (11,900 Square Feet) Prince George's County Land Records 6549: 288-290

June 29, 2007

Susan Christofani Yatman and Marjorie Elaine White to
The George and Carmel D. Aman Memorial Trust
Northern Portion of Lot 38 (11,900 Square Feet)
Prince George's County Land Records
20281: 617

6.0 CONCLUSION

The objective of the Bladensburg Historical Research Project is to provide documentation on three eighteenth-century properties in the town of Bladensburg: the Magruder House (4703 Annapolis Road; PG: 69-005-07), the George Washington House (4302 Baltimore Avenue; PG: 69-005-02) and the Market Master's House (4006 48th Street; PG: 69-005-02). Bladensburg was established by an act of the General Assembly in 1742 and was designated a tobacco inspection site in 1747. In the late-eighteenth century, the town developed into a thriving commercial port. The Magruder House, the George Washington House, and the Market Master's House are rare remnants of the initial settlement and early growth of Bladensburg. Through the Bladensburg Historical Research Project, EHT Tracerics conducted background and archival research to establish the history, ownership, and occupancy of the three properties. Historic photographs and maps also provided an understanding of the improvements to the buildings. This research effort built on existing documentation to provide a more complete understanding of the history of the three buildings. A summary of the key findings is presented below:

The Magruder House

The Magruder House was constructed circa 1742 for William Hilleary, a planter from Frederick County, as an investment property. In 1765, Hilleary sold the Magruder House to Richard Henderson, a prominent merchant from Bladensburg. Henderson is believed to have occupied the house until 1793, when he conveyed the property to David Ross, Jr., the son of Henderson's business partner and brother-in-law, David Ross. Ross, Jr. was a veteran of the Revolutionary War, a Delegate to the Continental Congress, and a landowner with substantial slave holdings. Ross, Jr. resided in the Magruder House until he declared insolvency in 1800. After Ross' death in 1803, the building was sold at public auction. The property subsequently fell to Leonard Deakins, a prominent Prince George's County landowner. Oral histories hold that during the Battle of Bladensburg, the Magruder House was the site of civilian resistance and later served as a hospital. Research into firsthand accounts of the battle revealed that the British encountered no resistance in Bladensburg, repudiating this tradition. However, the house may have been used as a field hospital as eighty wounded British soldiers remained in the town following the skirmish.

Leonard Deakins did not live in the Magruder House, and many of its subsequent owners between 1824 and 1853 also resided outside Bladensburg. Thus, the tenure and occupancy of the house during this period is uncertain. Later land records reported that the house was the final residence of Dr. Benjamin Day, a prominent physician and politician from Prince George's County. In 1853, the house was purchased by Dr. Archibald Magruder, for whom the house is named. In addition to practicing medicine, Magruder was best known for illicitly providing care to Confederate troops during the Civil War. After his death in 1863, the Magruder House was occupied by his widow, Narcissa, until 1880. In the first half of the twentieth century, the house served as a residence to the Denny and Gugliotta families.

Photographic records reveal that during the nineteenth century, the stone house was covered in stucco. Additionally, the original porch was replaced in the late-1920s or early-1930s. However, the house remained substantially unaltered. In the 1950s, the house

threatened by the expansion of Kenilworth Avenue. Although it was acquired by the State Roads Commission in 1954, the house was saved from demolition by local preservation advocates. In the 1970s, the house underwent an extensive renovation and its rooms were converted into offices.

The George Washington House and Indian Queen Tavern

The George Washington House was likely built circa 1752 to 1763 for Israel Folsom, who sold it to Jacob Wirt in 1763. Initially constructed as a dwelling, the brick building was leased by Wirt to Cunningham and Co. as a store. Wirt operated a small commercial complex on his property that included the store, a billiards room, a blacksmith shop, and a tavern. Although the George Washington House is now known as the “Indian Queen Tavern,” the original tavern on the property, a two-story wood-framed building, was actually located north of the George Washington House. After the property was divided among Jacob Wirt’s heirs in 1785, this tavern continued to operate under proprietors Richard Ross and/or Patrick Daugherty. The original Indian Queen Tavern stood next to the George Washington House until sometime in the mid-nineteenth century; later photographic documentation suggests that the tavern was replaced by a house around this period. The exact date of the destruction of the Indian Queen Tavern is unknown; however, the former tavern property was operated as a cabinet workshop by Francis Gasch as early as 1854. Regardless, the George Washington House itself also contained a tavern as early as 1793 and it assumed the name of the Indian Queen Tavern.

After Jacob Wirt’s death in 1774, the George Washington House was divided among his three sons: Jacob, Jr., Uriah, and William. However, between 1774 and 1785, the “Brick Store” was operated by a family friend, Peter Carnes, who is best known for making the first authenticated balloon flight in the United States. In 1791, a portion of the interest in the house was sold to sponsor the legal education of William Wirt, who went on to become the Attorney General of the United States. In the early nineteenth century, the George Washington House was operated as a store and tavern by Bailey Clarke and his heirs. During the Clarkes’ tenure, the main section of the George Washington House was altered to form the main brick section of the present building. By 1840, the building was sold to Elizabeth Mitchell, who returned the building to residential use. It is likely that the building continued to function as a domestic rental property until 1854, when it was reverted to a store, tavern, and hotel by William and Harriet Prime. In 1871, the George Washington House was purchased by Mary and Judson Richardson, who operated it as a hotel until 1894. Either the Primes or the Richardsons may have affixed the rear addition to the main section of the George Washington House.

In the twentieth century, the George Washington House continued to serve as a hotel, tavern, and restaurant until 1972, when it was purchased by the Prince George’s Jaycees. The Jaycees renovated the dilapidated building and converted it into a history museum. In 2003, the building was again renovated for use as the Anacostia Watershed Society’s headquarters.

The Market Master's House

The Market Master's House was constructed circa 1760 for Christopher Lowndes, a prominent merchant, public official, and Bladensburg Town Commissioner. Despite its traditional name, the supposed use of the Market Master's House as a residence for the tobacco inspector is unsupported by historic documentation. The public warehouse was not constructed on the market square north of the Market Master's House until 1784. Instead, Lowndes constructed the stone house as a dwelling, but by the turn of the nineteenth century, it served as a store for his family's import business. After Christopher Lowndes' death in 1785, the Market Master's House passed to his son, Benjamin Lowndes, who operated the building as a general store. Additionally, Benjamin Lowndes, like his father before him, was the town Postmaster and he operated the post office from the Market Master's House.

The house remained in the Lowndes Family until 1879, when it was sold to Andrew Headley of New York City and Washington, D.C. Headley and his daughter, Laura Gasch, rented the building to Lucie Lloyd and John E. Bowles, an African American politician and detective. While residing in the Market Master's House, Lloyd, the town Postmaster, and Bowles were involved in a minor scandal involving the embezzlement of post office funds. In 1920, the Market Master's House was purchased by Raymond Evans, Chief of the Motion Picture Service of the Department of Agriculture, and his wife, Louise. The Evans resided in the Market Master's House until 1944, when Raymond and Louise transferred ownership of the house to their daughter, Helen, and her husband, Shaw Matthews. The Matthews resided in the Market Master's House until 1954, when it was acquired by the State Roads Commission. The house was slated for demolition to allow for the widening of Kenilworth Avenue, but was spared and sold to Susanna Cristofane, a preservation advocate and the first female mayor of Bladensburg. The house recently underwent a major renovation, and was conveyed to the Aman Memorial Trust in 2007.

Although this research effort has built on past studies to provide a more complete understanding of the history of the Magruder House, the George Washington House, and the Market Master's House, the findings presented in this report suggest topics for future research. First, the history of the Magruder House from 1803 to 1833 remains uncertain. A better understanding of ownership and occupancy during this period could provide additional information about the supposed role of the house during the Battle of Bladensburg. Second, the history of the original Indian Queen Tavern remains only partially understood. It is uncertain how long the tavern operated on the parcel to the north of the George Washington House, although research suggests that it was demolished by the mid-eighteenth century. The archeological investigations proposed by SHA for the Magruder House, the George Washington House, and the Market Master's House will likely reveal additional information concerning the history of these eighteenth-century buildings. Combined with the findings presented in this report, the archeological investigations will not only contribute to our understanding of the extensive history of these three buildings, but enhance our understanding of the early history of the Town of Bladensburg.

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- Prince George's County Historical Society Library, Upper Marlboro, MD.
- Prince George's County Planning Department/Maryland-National Capital Park and The Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, Washington, DC.

The Maryland Room at the University of Maryland at College Park, MD.

The Maryland State Archives, Annapolis, MD.

Wills

Archibald S. Magruder. Prince George's County Register of Wills, Liber WAJ, No. 1, Folio 246. Maryland State Archives, CM816 (Reel CR20-1).

Benjamin Lowndes. Prince George's County Register of Wills, Liber TT, No. 1, Folio 6. Maryland State Archives, CM 816 (Reel CR 34682-1).

Christopher C. Hyatt. Prince George's County Register of Wills, Liber WAJ JR, No. 1, Folio 383. Maryland State Archives, CM 816 (Reel CR20-2).

Jacob Wirt. Prince George's County Register of Wills, Liber 40, Folio 30. Maryland State Archives, CM 816 (Reel CR 34681).

Judson Richardson. Prince George's County Register of Wills, Liber JBP, No.1, Folio 169. Maryland State Archives, CM 816 (Reel CR 11293).

Leonard M. Deakins. Prince George's County Register of Wills, Liber TT, No. 1, Folio 306. Maryland State Archives, CM 816 (Reel CR 34681-2).

Richard Lowndes, Prince George's County Register of Wills, Liber P.C., No.1, Folio 153. Maryland State Archives, CM 816 (Reel CR 34682-2).