

Chapter 4

THE LANDSCAPE OF FREEDOM

*Rose Johnson was a slave at Clynmalira. She came merrily down the stairs calling out, “ I am free. I am free,” when emancipation was announced.*¹⁷⁷

Rose Johnson was one of the county's 3,182 slaves who was not emancipated until November, 1864. It is widely unknown, however, that before Rose Johnson was freed, there were already 4,231 free black Baltimore County residents and another 25,680 free blacks living in the City of Baltimore. This sizable free black population created a unique African-American cultural environment and experience in the county. The large free black population allowed a fugitive to pretend to be a free black as a means of escape out of the county, or sometimes even to hide permanently amongst the free blacks in the city.

This chapter works in tandem with Chapter III for developing a map that will begin a more complete representation of the African-American experience in Baltimore County in the first half of the nineteenth century (Figures 11-14). Chapter IV continues the discussion of fugitive slavery initiated in the last chapter, but in a more celebratory fashion that recognizes the enduring inspiration of the fugitive slaves in the legacy of slave resistance. This chapter also presents information on the other elements within the county's African-American cultural landscape, including antebellum period free black communities, free black landholdings, the Quakers, and the Germans.

Fugitive Slave Sites as Artifacts of Slave Resistance

Ran away, from the subscriber, on Sunday morning, the 20th instant, a Negro Woman named Bet, middle-aged; took with her a Negro CHILD, about a year old. The child has a remarkable scar on its cheeks and chin, occasioned by a burn; the first joint of the first finger, on the left hand is off. Whoever takes up and secures the said Negro Woman and Child, so that the owner may get them again, shall receive if taken up ten miles from*

¹⁷⁷ Harriet Winchester Jones, “A Childhood at Clynmalira,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 51 (June 1956): 108-109. Clynmalira is Maryland Historical Trust Inventory # BA 00112.

*home, Three Dollars, and in proportion for any further distance, and if out the County, Eight Dollars. WILLIAM COALE near Towson's Tavern.*¹⁷⁸

Bet (or Betty) was not successful in her escape. William Coale, Jr.'s inventory at his death in 1809 listed a sixty-two-year old female slave named Betty, one male slave who was nineteen and could have been the baby listed in the advertisement, and three other adult male slaves.¹⁷⁹ Unfortunately, William Coale's farmstead has not survived to the present day as a site that might yield archaeological information about Betty's life. Fortunately, the county retains at least eighteen farmsteads that are documented points of departure for fugitive slaves. These buildings represent the harsh legacy of slavery, but can also symbolize the individuals' ennobling pursuit of freedom from bondage.

◆ **Young Jacob's Choice** (BA 00373, Figure 11) is the county's most significant fugitive slave site because it was the point of departure for James Watkins who later wrote a narrative about his experiences. His first-person account of slavery is the county's most extensive slave narrative. His narrative vividly describes how the Ensor slaves were fed corn-bread with some whisky for breakfast, how he was removed from his mother when he was one year old, how he was beaten with a perforated paddle in a city jail, and how, several years after his escape, he returned to see his mother, on foot through the same swamps he traveled in his escape.¹⁸⁰ James Watkins' narrative illustrates individual perseverance, but it also proves there were individuals who assisted with his passage North. Although Watkins' narrative does not record that he received any assistance until he was in Pennsylvania, this chapter identifies documented accomplices within Baltimore County. The researchers at the Maryland State Archives refer to this informal assistance network in the states below the Mason-Dixon line as the "Southern Underground Railroad," described as follows:

[T]he Northern Underground Railroad – entailed the concerted, organized, integrated system of communication, transportation, and finance aimed at assisting fugitives slaves, upon their arrival in free states, to avoid recapture and return to slave states. The second network, though by no means secondary network – the Southern Underground Railroad – carried forth a more basic penchant of resistance to slavery as exhibited by the enslaved themselves (and others) on the plantations in the slave states. This involved running, or in a wide range of ways helping others to run, or keep running. These two networks can be seen as cooperative.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Latham A. Windley, *Runaway Slaves*, 289.

¹⁷⁹ Joseph M. Coale III, *The Middling Planters of Ruxton, 1694-1850* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1996), 46.

¹⁸⁰ James Watkins, *Narrative of the Life of James Watkins*.

¹⁸¹ Maryland State Archives, "Beneath the Underground."

The fugitive's individual choice to flee was obviously the starting point in the process. However, the timing of that flight during the year was important in the fugitive's overall strategy, as described below:

Many fugitives benefited from the kindness and courage of free people, both black and white. Others, however, took matters into their own hands and created opportunities to flee by playing on the habits, routines, even vices of their owners. Enslaved blacks viewed the holiday season as particularly opportune, when owners often traveled away from their plantations, relaxed supervision, and indulged in distracting vices such as alcohol. For example, although winter weather prevailed, each Christmas brought new episodes of flight. Such was the case for Tom Hughson who, in 1847, fled Rezin Worthington's estate in Elysille, Baltimore County, during the Christmas Season. In this case, the twenty-three year old Hughson was believed by his pursuers to have traveled along the Baltimore and Ohio [Rail] Road, perhaps to Cumberland, Maryland, and beyond. Likewise, Joshua Anderson and Basil White fled Leonard Quinlin's Kingsville farm, near Belair Road, during Christmas 1852. Quinlin went to the U.S. District Court for Maryland, in Baltimore City, the very day of Basil and Joshua's escape and filed a petition to recover them under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.¹⁸²

Some county fugitives may have benefited from the county's location along the Chesapeake Bay and the access that the bay provided to international waters and foreign havens. In 1781, a twenty-five-year old male slave who reportedly was familiar with traveling in bay watercraft ran away from the Hampton estate in Towson.¹⁸³ In 1855, a slave in Baltimore named Nettles or Anderson, a hired-out cook on the brig *Young America*, gained his freedom by jumping ship onto British soil at Jamaica.¹⁸⁴

Other county slaves escaped during wartime. In 1765, Thomas Cockey's advertisement for a fugitive slave noted that "Shadwell" had previously attempted to pass himself off as free, that he had on an iron collar and fetters when he fled, and that he had once tried to run off to join the French and Indians west of Frederick County.¹⁸⁵ According to the National Park Service's Underground Railroad researchers, the American Revolution was a significant liberator for enslaved blacks who either actively supported the war as soldiers or somehow found a way to work or leave with the

¹⁸² Maryland State Archives, "Beneath the Underground."

¹⁸³ Latham A. Windley, *Runaway Slaves*, 254.

¹⁸⁴ *Republican & Argus* (Baltimore, MD), June 19, 1855.

¹⁸⁵ *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), September 26, 1765. At that time, Frederick County extended 200 miles westward from Baltimore County into the wilderness at the colony's farthest limit.

British.¹⁸⁶ For example, Abraham Risteau's fugitive slave advertisement in 1779 noted that a slave named Jack might once again attempt to connect with the British Army.¹⁸⁷

The Civil War opened similar opportunities for slaves to escape in the same fashion as in previous wars. Additionally, the federal and Maryland governments each established "Negro" recruiting centers that granted bounties of approximately three hundred to four hundred dollars per slave to slaveholders presumed to be loyal to the Union. In turn, the slaves were granted their freedom and given fifty dollars upon entering the army and another fifty dollars after they were officially discharged.¹⁸⁸

Fugitive slavery started with an individual's choice to run, but accomplices sometimes were instrumental in their success. Accomplices took great risks with their own safety and livelihoods. To date, researchers have found documented accounts of at least fourteen individuals in Baltimore County who were accomplices to fugitive slaves. On July 20, 1843, the *Sun* reported that Mr. Ridgley, of Hays, Zell, and Ridgely, had returned the prior evening from Harrisburg, having in custody Archibald Smith, a free black who was charged with enticing away the slaves of Richard Emery, Esq., of Baltimore County.¹⁸⁹ The same Mr. Ridgely had been absolved of the murder of a fugitive slave named William Smith in Columbia, Pennsylvania in 1852.¹⁹⁰

The punishments for abetting a runaway were harsh. Isaac Burley was sentenced to be sold out of the state for six years for enticing a slave to run away sometime before March, 1829.¹⁹¹ Peter Hood was arrested for concealing a slave girl from her master and for assisting in her escape from the city.¹⁹² Henry Connelly was arrested in October, 1847 on the charge of aiding and abetting in the escape of a slave owned by James Howard.¹⁹³ Thomas Wallace, a free black in Baltimore County, was arrested for enticing slaves to run away in 1859.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁶ National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, "Underground Railroad Resources of the United States, Theme Study, 1998," <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/underground/thhome.htm> .

¹⁸⁷ Latham A. Windley, *Runaway Slaves*, 230.

¹⁸⁸ Sherry H. Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 146.

¹⁸⁹ *The Sun* (Baltimore, MD), July 20, 1843.

¹⁹⁰ *Republican & Argus* (Baltimore, MD), May 3, 1852.

¹⁹¹ *Jeffersonian* (Towson, MD), March 2, 1829.

¹⁹² *Republican & Argus* (Baltimore, MD), August 12, 1845.

¹⁹⁴ *Baltimore County Advocate* (Towson, MD), September 17, 1859.

Mary Ann Coates, John Robinson, John Jones, James Wilson, and Joseph Stinnett are several other documented accomplices. In 1862, Mary Ann Coates, a middle-aged free black woman, was sentenced to six years in the Maryland Penitentiary for assisting a Baltimore County fugitive slave by letting the girl ride with her to Pennsylvania. James Wilson of Baltimore City served a three-year sentence for transporting a slave on the run. Joseph Sinnett was convicted of enticing and persuading a slave to flee, and subsequently spent six years in prison until he was pardoned in 1859. John Robinson, a free black native of Norfolk, Virginia who worked in Baltimore city as a stonecutter, was sentenced in 1841 for aiding a fugitive slave.¹⁹⁵

Nicholas Smith, a Woodlawn resident with a cooper shop at 1940 Featherbed Lane, supposedly hid slaves in barrels to transport them to freedom, but no records have been found that document his efforts, and both his cooper shop and residence have been demolished.¹⁹⁶ Interestingly, in 1849, the newspaper report on the “Arrest of William and Susanna Adams, colored, for trying to send slaves of Thos. E. Talbott, Esq. on the underground railroad,” reflects a public awareness of the existence of the underground railroad in Baltimore County by that time.¹⁹⁷

◆ Many slaves successfully made the frightening journey to freedom. Once Charles Hall was safely in the north, he disclosed that his owner Atwood A. Blunt, owner of the **Blunt House** (BA 00008, Figure 13), spent much of his time “card-playing, rum-drinking, and fox-hunting.”¹⁹⁸ William Pierce fled a farm in Long Green owned by John Hickol and later recounted how “ill-grained” Hickol and his wife, “a big devil,” regularly beat all fifteen of their slaves.¹⁹⁹

The map of the county’s documented runaway sites (Figure 15) indicates that the pattern of fugitive slavery was relatively random throughout the county. The reconstructed atlas of African-American experience (Figures 11-14) correspondingly shows the random distribution of runaway slave sites.

¹⁹⁵ Maryland State Archives, “Beneath the Underground.”

¹⁹⁶ Woodlawn Historic Committee, *Woodlawn, Franklinton, and Hebbville, Three Communities- Two Centuries* (Woodlawn, MD: Woodlawn Recreation and Parks Council, 1977), 48.

¹⁹⁷ *Republican & Argus* (Baltimore, MD), November 27, 1849.

¹⁹⁸ William Still, *The Underground Railway*, 397-398.

¹⁹⁹ William Still, *Underground Railway*, 557-58.

Free Neighbors in the Slave Landscape

Slavery was at its peak in the State of Maryland and in Baltimore city and County in 1810. In that year 845 African-Americans lived in freedom in Baltimore County, forty-three percent of whom were concentrated in the Patapsco Upper and Lower Hundreds as indicated in Table 3.²⁰⁰ The boundaries of the Hundreds are illustrated in Figure 17.

In 1860, the distribution of the free black population in the county was fairly similar to what it had been in 1810. According to the Maryland State Archives, forty-nine percent of the total enslaved and free African-Americans resided in the districts contiguous to the city in 1860, and few African-American, either enslaved or free, inhabited the northern areas of the county near Pennsylvania. Election Districts 6 and 7 contained a total of 117 enslaved, and 83 free African-Americans, who comprised only four percent of the county's total African-American population in 1860.²⁰¹

Table 3: Distribution of the Free African-American Population, 1810

Divisions of Land (Hundreds)	Total Free Black Population
Baltimore County, Maryland	
Middle River Lower Hundred	27
Back River Lower Hundred	65
Back River Upper Hundred	124
Gunpowder Hundred	24
Middlesex Hundred	97
Soldiers Delight	54
Pipe Creek & North Hundred	60
Delaware Lower Hundred	32
Mine Run Hundred	0
Patapsco Lower Hundred	247
Patapsco Upper Hundred	115
Countywide Total	845

Source: See footnote 197

²⁰⁰ Paul Heinegg, "Free African Americans of Maryland and Delaware," <http://www.freeafricanamericans.com/>. This website provides an abbreviated version of Heinegg's *Free African Americans of Maryland and Delaware*, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2000. The "Hundreds" are geographic areas delineated in colonial times and used by the early U.S. Censuses for reporting sub-county data.

²⁰¹ Maryland Archives, "Beneath the Underground." By 1860, the Census used the Election Districts for sub-county reporting instead of the superceded Hundreds.

In 1810, seventeen households in Baltimore County headed by free blacks owned a total of forty slaves.²⁰² Additional research may reveal the degree to which this form of this slavery was similar to that between a white slaveowner and an African-American slave, and how much of this slavery may have reflected a number of different relationships particular to the African-American community. Again, until now, there has been little documentation on either free or enslaved blacks, so it is difficult to draw conclusions from the limited data.

There is some documentation, however, of the free black population's property holdings in the county land records, where free blacks were typically identified as "colored" landowners. Benjamin Banneker, the earliest recognized African-American man of science, was also one of the county's earliest free black property owners.²⁰³ Ismael Merry was not only freed by Thomas Cockey Deye's will filed in 1809, but also was bequeathed the house in which he lived as well as ten acres of property.²⁰⁴ Job Madden, recorded as "colored" in the 1834 tax assessment, owned seven acres worth \$115.²⁰⁵ Abraham Williams, "colored man," was listed with twenty-three acres in the Patapsco Neck area in the 1823 Tax List of District 4.²⁰⁶ In 1852, Dolly Harris was listed with eleven acres in District 7.²⁰⁷ Benjamin Talbot, who was born in 1787 on James Wolf's farm, was granted his freedom, bought seventy-seven acres from Dr. Lennox Birckhead, and then sold that property to John M. Shanklin.²⁰⁸ The 1846 Transfer Book noted that Isaac Rould, identified as "colored," purchased or built upon his land on Trappe Road "Wind Grist Mill" worth \$250.²⁰⁹ Jack Cox, the body servant of Richard and John McGaw, was set free in 1845 and provided "a little farm" and an annuity of ninety dollars a year.²¹⁰

²⁰² Paul Heinegg, "Free African-Americans of Maryland and Delaware."

²⁰³ John W. McGrain, "Mt. Gilboa Chapel" (Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 000637, April 1977).

²⁰⁴ Dawn F. Thomas, *The Greenspring Valley: Its History and Heritage*, Vol. 1 (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1978), 89.

²⁰⁵ Baltimore County 1834-40 Transfer Book, Maryland Hall of Records No. 8358, Old District No. 7 in 1834 listed in folio 6.

²⁰⁶ Baltimore County 1823 Tax List, District 4, Maryland State Archives, Md. HR No. CR 39, 605-5.

²⁰⁷ Baltimore County Tax List, 1852, District 7, Maryland State Archives.

²⁰⁸ *Baltimore County Union*, September 1, 1886.

²⁰⁹ Baltimore County Board of Commissioners, 1846 Transfer Book, Maryland State Archives, No. 8360, MSA No. C432-5.

²¹⁰ *Maryland Journal* (Towson, MD), December 5, 1868.

It is likely that some of these property holdings were the core sites within what eventually became the county's free black communities. These communities, however, remain under-documented, so that little is known about the origins of each. Until 2002, Baltimore County had completed little in comprehensive architectural documentation or historic research on these communities, but a recent preliminary architectural survey has approximately delineated community boundaries and has identified remaining buildings that contribute to the communities' architectural heritage.²¹¹

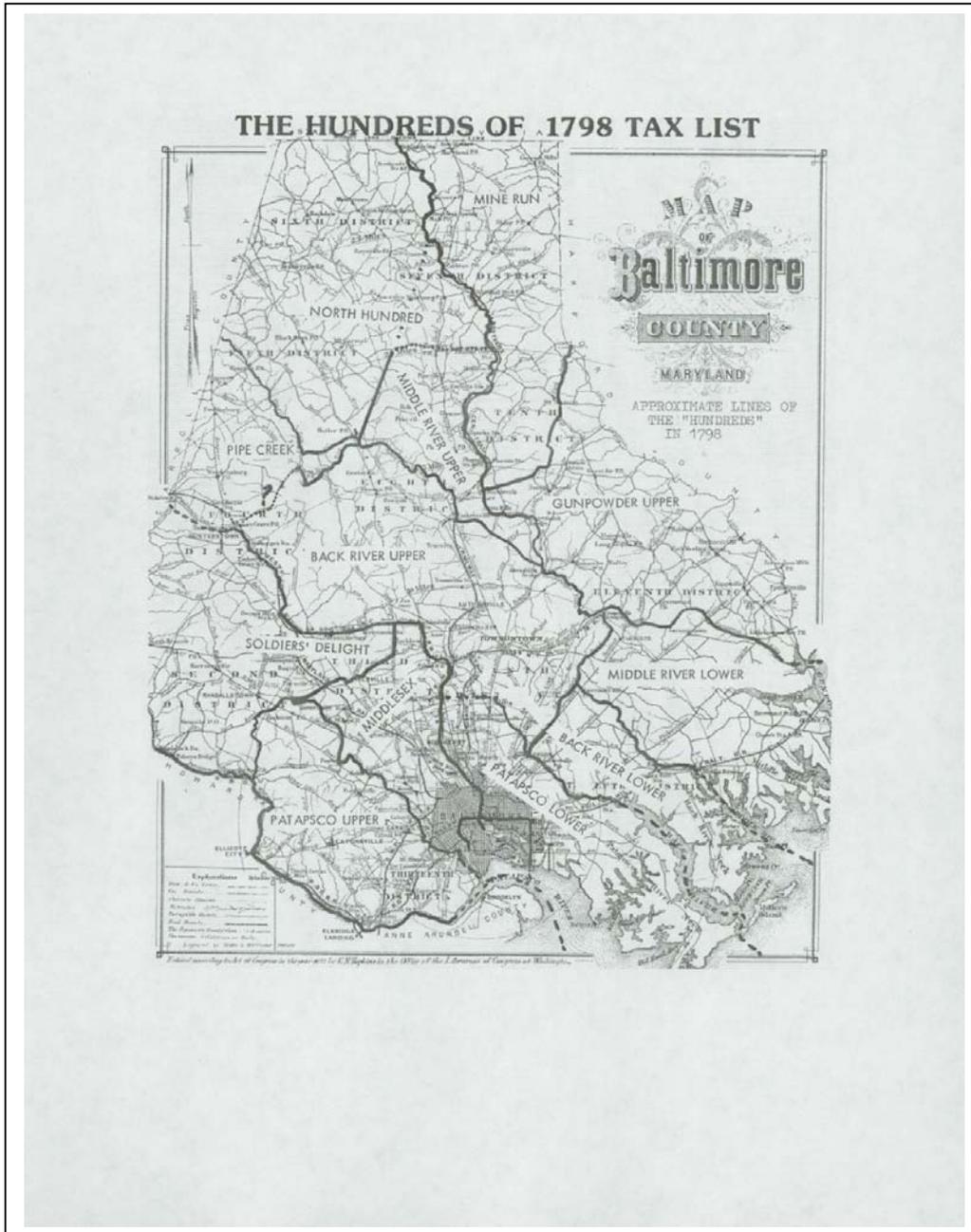
In the rural areas the church typically functioned as the community center for the dispersed residents. Thus, not all of these neighborhoods had definable geographic boundaries. Additionally, because the preliminary architectural survey did not include an attempt to confirm community origination dates, it is possible that there are additional antebellum communities (within the county's approximately forty African-American neighborhoods) that could have been included in the following discussion and mapped in Figures 11-14.

Nevertheless, it is known that at least fourteen free black communities existed before Emancipation. These communities hold many untold stories within surviving buildings' walls, within their unplumbed archeological potentials, within documents not yet tapped for information, and within family stories not yet shared. These neighborhoods each have a unique beginning and a distinctive history. Some of these free black communities were organized around a church, whereas others originated with a free black's landholding. They are relatively dispersed around the county. The antebellum free black neighborhoods are briefly described below, starting with the North County communities then moving from east to west across the county. It is important to remember when reading about these communities that most of the county's free black population lived in the City of Baltimore. This larger community is described in Christopher Phillip's work, *Freedom's Port: The African-American Community of Baltimore*.²¹² The existence of pre-Civil War free black communities throughout the county reflects well on the ability of these people to stand their own ground, and perhaps even to own their own ground, amidst a society that casually regarded most American blacks as a marketable commodity. These communities are all certainly worthy of much additional research and documentation.

²¹¹ The survey of the county's historic African-American neighborhoods, prepared in 2001 by E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., is a preliminary study that will be presented to local historians within each community for review and comment.

²¹² Christopher Phillip, *Freedom's Port: The African-American Community of Baltimore* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1977).

Figure 17: The Hundreds of the 1798 Tax List



Source: John W. McGrain, 1990

- **Troyer Road** (BA 03117, Figure 12) is particularly fascinating as a community that may have had both free and enslaved residents. The community is located along Troyer Road in the far reaches of northern Baltimore County within

Election District 7, an area that contained few free or enslaved blacks in the mid-nineteenth century. Troyer Road is documented as one of the oldest free black settlements, circa 1798, based on inclusion of the Martin Fugate House (BA 00617, Figures 7, 12) within the community's boundaries. Interestingly, the Martin Fugate House is one of the county's sixteen documented slave quarters, discussed in Chapter II. The presence of this property may suggest that the residents of the house were manumitted before the Civil War, or that the residents were slaves who resided adjacent to a free black community, or it may simply be an error. Only further research might resolve the question.

Two churches were founded within the Troyer Road community in 1874 – the Mount Joy African Episcopal Church and the Union United Methodist Church. Troyer Road also contains a log structure called the Richard Cromwell House (BA 00896, Figure 18) that tradition claims was built by a freed slave after the Civil War. Alternatively, it could have been built by a slave freed before Emancipation, since the structure apparently is on the 1850 J.C. Sidney Map.²¹³

- **Big Falls** (BA 03118, Figure 11) is another community in the northern county area where there were few African-Americans before the Civil War. Big Falls is distinctive, however, as being along the edges of the bustling nineteenth century village of Hereford. African-Americans settled in two separate areas, and each is called Big Falls. One section of Big Falls is centered around St. Luke's Methodist Episcopal Church, circa 1867, on Hereford Road, and the other section lies west of the village along Big Falls Road beginning at Monkton Road.²¹⁴

- **Cuba Road** settlement (BA 03088, Figures 11, 19) is located southeast of Butler village. The community is parallel to Falls Road in central Baltimore County, in an area once populated by Quakers who were members of the nearby Gunpowder Meeting (BA 00080, Figure 11). Figure 19 shows one of the community's remaining mid-nineteenth century buildings. The community may initially have been organized around the Gough United Methodist, which probably had members living beyond the boundaries of the immediate Cuba Road community. The exact origins of the community are not yet clear, but it is reputed that the Price family freed their slaves and donated land on Cuba Road.²¹⁵

- **Piney Grove** (BA 03087, Figure 11), near the village of Boring, was one of

²¹³ J.C. Sidney and P.J. Browne, *Map of the City and County of Baltimore*, 1850.

²¹⁴ Kristie Baynard, "Big Falls African-American Survey District" (Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 03118, May, 2003).

²¹⁵ Kristie Baynard, "Cuba Road African-American Survey District" (Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form, No. BA. 03088, February, 2003).

the African-American communities that formed around a church. The only architectural remnants of Piney Grove are the Piney Grove United Methodist Church (BA 01177, Figure 11) and the schoolhouse.

Figure 18: Richard Cromwell House (BA 00896)



Source: *E.H.T. Traceries, Inc., 2001*

The congregation formed in 1841 and acquired land for a church in 1850. On July 8, 1848, Henry Bushey and his wife Ruth Bushey executed a deed to three free blacks named Stephen Brooks, Joshua Derricks, and John B. Diggs, specifying that they "shall erect" a place of worship for "use of the Coulered [*sic*] people in the neighborhood or vicinity" and that it would be "used for their benefit and advancement in moral and religious improvements and not otherwise."²¹⁶ The Piney Grove church that stands today appears on the 1850 J.C. Sidney Map as a "Colored Meeting House."²¹⁷

²¹⁶ Baltimore County Land Records, AWB 408:292, Hall of Records, Annapolis.

²¹⁷ J.C. Sidney and P. J. Browne, *Map of the City and County of Baltimore*, 1850.

Figure 19: Cuba Road Community



Source; E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., 2001

- **Long Green** (BA 00928, Figure 12) and **Glen Arm** (BA 03094, Figure 12) are two relatively close, free black settlements in the Long Green Valley area of northeastern Baltimore County. The only remaining architectural element of the Long Green community is the Mount Zion African-American Episcopal Church that dates to the mid-nineteenth century. Notable families of the original church include Bowley, Cole, Quickley, Boulden, Johnson, Hawkins, and Bell.²¹⁸ The Glen Arm free black community is also centered around a church, called Waugh United Methodist Church (BA 00540). The current church was erected in 1900 and replaced an earlier, circa 1846 chapel. Before 1846, church meetings were conducted in private homes and at the Friendship School House. Names on the grave markers include Todd, Burton, Geddis, Barbour, Door, Dorr, Shearman, Frank, Clark, and Leight.²¹⁹

- The central area of the county included four free black communities: the

²¹⁸ Kristie Baynard, "Long Green African-American Survey District" (Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 00928, February, 2003).

²¹⁹ Kristie Baynard, "Glen Arm African-American Survey District" (Maryland Historic Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 03094, March, 2003).

community that formed around the **Bazil African Methodist Episcopal Church; Chattolane; East Towson; and the St. John's Ruxton** community. Bazil African Methodist Episcopal Church (BA 02183, Figure 11), circa 1876, was erected on property donated by Bazil Foote, a black resident of the area east of Cockeysville. Foote was a free inhabitant of Baltimore County as early as 1840 and held church meetings in his home before the church was constructed.²²⁰ The Chattolane community (BA 03049, Figure 13) apparently originated after the Civil War. The 1850 J.C. Sidney Map does not show any development in the Chattolane area.²²¹ East Towson (BA 02564, Figure 12) dates to Daniel Harris's purchase of a one-and-a-quarter acre parcel of land in the eastern portion of the Towson community in 1853. Daniel Harris was one of several hundred slaves freed in November, 1829 by Charles C. Ridgeley's will.²²² Other manumitted slaves from Hampton also formed part of East Towson's early population. The current St. John's Ruxton Church (BA 01559, Figure 13) is a replacement church on the site of the log structure erected near the Baltimore and Susquehanna Railroad in 1833. The first pastor of St. John's was Rev. Aquilla Scott, a free blacksmith who owned two acres of land along Falls Road at Bare Hills in 1839.²²³

As noted by the Maryland State Archives research staff, the majority of the free black population in Baltimore County lived in the area surrounding the perimeter of Baltimore City. This perimeter area includes the four central-area communities noted above, as well as Granite, Cowdensville, Oella, and Winters Lane on the west side of the county, and Dowden's Chapel on the east side.

- **Granite** (BA 03095, Figures 13, 20) is comprised of two sections, Bunker Hill and Melrose Avenue. Granite is in the Patapsco River valley and was built around the quarrying industry that was in operation from the middle of the eighteenth century through the 1930s. Some of Granite's free black population was probably related to the large number of slaves in the area in the early nineteenth century. Residents in the early twentieth century, who may have been descendants of the earlier inhabitants, include the names Wilson, Hodges, Griggs, Butler, Buchanan, Lees, Lawrence, Bennett, Walker, and Porter.²²⁴

²²⁰ John McGrain, "Bazil A.M.E. Church" (National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, No. BA 02183, January, 1990).

²²¹ J.C. Sidney and P. J. Browne, *Map of the City and County of Baltimore*, 1850.

²²² Kristie Baynard, "East Towson African-American Survey District" (Maryland Historic Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 02564, October, 2002).

²²³ Kristie Baynard, "Bare Hills African-American Survey District" (Maryland Historic Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 03050, November, 2002).

²²⁴ Louis S. Diggs, *Surviving in America: Histories of 7 Black Communities in Baltimore County, Maryland* (Towson: Louis Diggs, 2002), 69.

Figure 20: Granite Community



Source: E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., 2001

- **Cowdensville** (BA 03051, Figure 13) stands as the only community identified, to date, as a possible destination for a fugitive slave. Cowdensville, near the villages of Avalon and Arbutus in Southwest Baltimore County, existed by at least by 1847, as suggested by the runaway slave advertisement placed by William Linthicum in the *Baltimore Sun* on May 1, 1847, referencing the name "Crowden Town" as the possible location of a fugitive slave.²²⁵ In 1840 several free black residents were farm laborers, and in 1850 the majority of the fourteen heads of households were agricultural workers, except for William Hawkins, who was a waiter for a white inn-keeper, and John Scott who was a wagon driver. The Pine, Hawkins, and Byas families moved into the area between 1840 and 1850.²²⁶

²²⁵ *The Sun* (Baltimore, MD), May 1, 1847.

²²⁶ Kristie Baynard, "Cowdensville African-American Survey District" (Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 03051, October, 2002).

Figure 21: Mt. Golboa Chapel in Oella



Source: *E.H.T. Traceries, Inc., 2001*

- **Oella** (BA 03093, Figures 13, 21), another free community that formed in the Patapsco Valley, organized around Mt. Gilboa Chapel (BA 00637, Figures 13, 21), which appears on the 1850 J.C. Sidney Map as the “Coloured Meeting House.”²²⁷ The first chapel was replaced with a stone chapel in 1861 that still stands. The community is located primarily on Westchester Avenue and Oella Avenue. Oella is famous as the birthplace of Benjamin Banneker, the first recognized African-American man of science, who lived nearby on his one-hundred acre farm. The free black section of Oella first appeared in land records as the “The Negroes lott “ in a resurvey of land completed by the Ellicott brothers of Ellicott City in 1803.²²⁸ Mary Williams, a Quaker, freed her slaves and in 1786 bequeathed to them ten acres of the land tract called “Stout,” which is an area generally west of Oella Avenue.²²⁹ Some of the African-American residents in

²²⁷ J.C. Sidney and P.J. Browne, *Map of the City and County of Baltimore*, 1850.

²²⁸ John W. McGrain, “Mt. Gilboa Chapel.”

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

1877 included J. Hall, J. Lee, J.H. Hines, D. Van Order, William J. Kelly, and the Brown family that descended from Mary Williams.²³⁰

- **Winters Lane** (BA 03067, Figure 13) developed in the mid-nineteenth century in Western Baltimore County when former slaves established a settlement along the road's northern end, and a "colored" school on property purchased by the Freedman Bureau after the Civil War.²³¹

- **Dowden's Chapel** (BA 00158, Figure 14) is the only Eastern Baltimore County antebellum free black community included in this study, although it is likely that other African-American settlements such as Forge Road, Loreley, and Bradshaw-Philadelphia can be documented as pre-Civil War once additional research is conducted. Dowden's Chapel is east of the intersection of Putty Hill Road and Belair Road. The land for the chapel was donated in 1849 by Nicholas Gatch. It is likely that this log building served as the church for both free and enslaved blacks in the surrounding area, but there is not currently a community called Dowden's Chapel.²³²

Extended Communities in Extended Landscapes

This study has already substantially documented the existence of an African-American cultural landscape in Baltimore County that extends beyond the slave quarters on farms, to free black communities, and sometimes to the fugitive slave's path to freedom. However, several other components worthy of mention attest to the complexity of the African-American experience in Baltimore County before Emancipation.

Among the more fascinating documented events in the African-American community were the "bush meetings" recorded in the local newspapers. These gatherings reflect how communities transcended the boundaries of slavery, and the size of the gatherings indicates the existence of strong communication networks in the local black population.

The July 2, 1853 edition of the *Baltimore County Advocate*, reported that there were two thousand "Negroes" at a meeting held on the land of W.T. Galloway in Timonium and that "good order prevailed."²³³ On August 20, 1853, however, the same

²³⁰ Kristie Baynard, "Oella African-American Survey District" (Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 03093, March, 2003).

²³¹ Laura Trieschmann, "Winters Lane National Register Nomination" (National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, No. BA 03067, April, 2003).

²³² John W. McGrain, "Dowden's Chapel" (Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 00158, May, 1995).

²³³ *Baltimore County Advocate* (Towson, MD), July 2, 1853.

paper reported that County authorities intended to stop “Negro bush meetings.”²³⁴ It is unclear from available records whether or not such meetings were actually banned for a time, but seven years later, on October 6, 1860, the *Baltimore County Advocate*, reported “another Bush Meeting was held at the brick yard near [Towson] on Sunday last and although the day was cold and unpleasant, there was a large turn out of the colored population.”²³⁵

Without additional research, it is also unclear whether a bush meeting was different from a religious or “camp meeting” such as those popularized by the Methodists. The *Baltimore County Advocate* reported on July 20, 1850 that “seven cars of colored people took the train to Rider’s Woods [near Towson] for a Camp Meeting.”²³⁶ On July 2, 1853, the *Maryland Journal* reported that there was a “Colored Camp Meeting” on the Stevenson property about a mile south of Towson.²³⁷ Interestingly, on August 17, 1859, the *Baltimore County Advocate* noted that, “On Sunday last, the people of color held a religious meeting in Mr. Austen’s woods, near Glencoe station, on the Northern Central Railroad. A large crowd assembled there, both white and colored.”²³⁸

The network of contacts was not limited to the immediate Baltimore County environment. Extended family and friends were sometimes as far away as Liberia as a result of the Maryland Colonization Society's programs to send free blacks to Africa. The departure of a vessel to Monrovia was reported as follows:

Learning that this vessel would leave Mason’s Wharf during the morning for Monrovia, the Capitol of Liberia, with a large number of colored emigrants, we visited the scene of departure between 9 and 10 A.M. and found the wharf crowded with a vast concourse of the colored population in a state of excitement rarely witnessed. With few exceptions they were bitterly declaiming against the colonization scheme, and declared the emigrants were downright insane to leave the Heaven blessed States for the barbarous wilds and life-destroying climate of Africa.²³⁹

One ex-Baltimore County slave named Daniel B. Warner, who was born on Hookstown Road, met with notable success once he left the region by eventually being inaugurated the President of Liberia in 1864.²⁴⁰

²³⁴ *Baltimore County Advocate* (Towson, MD), August 20, 1853.

²³⁵ *Baltimore County Advocate* (Towson, MD), October 6, 1860.

²³⁶ *Baltimore County Advocate* (Towson, MD), July 20, 1850.

²³⁷ *Maryland Journal* (Towson, MD), July 2, 1853.

²³⁸ *Baltimore County Advocate* (Towson, MD), August 17, 1859.

²³⁹ *Republican and Argus* (Baltimore, MD), July 19, 1851.

Baltimore County Quakers

*On the 28th day of the 9th month of 1763, Jacob Comly, Thomas Hooker (of Samuel) and William Parrish (son of William, Jr.) were both disowned from the Quakers for “accompanying divers peopled which mostly took guns, they also bore arms themselves, and in the time of engagement with the said Negroes one was killed and two wounded.”*²⁴¹

In 1763, Jacob Comly, Thomas Hooker, and William Parrish, were disowned by their church because the Quakers were opposed to violence and war. The Quakers had initiated the religious debate over slavery in the mid-eighteenth century when the Society of Friends, both in England and America, began to view slavery as an evil.²⁴² Quakers were instrumental in eliminating slavery in Pennsylvania, beginning in 1780, and they remained an anti-slavery force in the nation through the Civil War.

Quakers had established a presence in Maryland and in Baltimore County by the mid-eighteenth century. The 1860 U. S. Census indicates that four of the state's twenty Friends' Meeting Houses were in Baltimore County. There were Quakers among the early settlers in the county, who clustered around the county's waterfront until the 1730s. These Quakers, along with their slaves, formed part of the initial northwest migration into the county's hinterlands, described as follows:

Mordecai Price, a member of the Society of Friends, took up land grants west of the York Road near Sparks in the early 1700s and settled there about 1726. The sturdy homes built by the Price, Matthews, and Scott Families who settled with him, gave the name of Quaker Valley to the lands around Piney Run and Western Run. Bosley's and Coles were early builders here [,] and there are fifteen or twenty homes standing today that were built around 1800; perhaps some may be even earlier. The heart of the Quaker Valley is the meeting house on Quaker Bottom Road. From its porch can be seen Oakland, the Matthews family home, which is the only house built in the immediate area built of brick rather than stone. The Quaker homes line both sides of the York Road in the Sparks area and can also be seen on Western Run, Western Run Road, and Belfast Road....²⁴³

²⁴⁰ *The Sun* (Baltimore, MD), March 4, 1864.

²⁴¹ Henry C. Peden, *Quaker Records of Northern Maryland: Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Abstracts from the Minutes, 1716-1800* (Westminster, MD: Willow Bend Books, 2001), 42.

²⁴² National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, "Underground Railroad Resources of the United States, Theme Study."

²⁴³ Shirley Clemens and C.E. Clemens, *From Marble Hill to Maryland Line: An Informal History of Northern Baltimore County*, Revised Edition (n.p.: C. E. Clemens and S.B. Clemens, 1983), 6.

Abraham Scott was an English Quaker from Woodhall, Cumberland, who settled in the county around 1765, established a grist-mill, and resided at his farm in his house called Regulation (BA 00095, Figure 11). James Mason married Abraham Scott's daughter and in 1802 built a house called Belle Haven, or Pear Hill (BA 00439, Figure 11). Oakland, mentioned above, was the homestead for Samuel Price and then for his son, Mordecai, both Quakers. Echo Farm (BA 00267, Figure 11) was built in 1812 and sometimes used for Quaker Meetings. One of the oldest houses in this cluster is the circa 1761 Kenneth Fisher House (BA 00422, Figure 11) built by Daniel Price, a descendant of the Prices who were staunch Quakers and who came into Baltimore County from the West River, Anne Arundel County.²⁴⁴

Amos Ogden, who built Strawberry Hill (BA 00189, Figure 11) in 1811, was a member of the Maryland House of Delegates in 1805 as well as a slave owner, but by 1823 the farm was in the hands of two Quakers, Thomas and Beall Price. Both Prices were members of the Gunpowder Friends' Meeting. Thistle Down Farm (BA 00426, Figure 11) was also called the Haines farm and the Haines' were also members of the Gunpowder Quaker Meeting.²⁴⁵

The Quakers in this valley were not all farmers even though much of the land in this valley is prime agricultural soil, the same type that brought the Worthington Valley farmers great prosperity. There were also Quaker tanners and millwrights surrounding the Gunpowder Friends' meeting house. Jesse Scott built Tanyard Farm (BA 00192, Figure 11) in 1824, and this facility appears as "Griffith and Scott Tanyard" on the 1850 J.C. Sidney Map. Stoddard Manor (BA 00377, Figure 11) is one of the Quaker homes that line both sides of the York Road area in Sparks.²⁴⁶

There were also Quakers in the Patapsco Valley area of Baltimore City, as well as along the two Gunpowder Rivers. The John Humphrey House (BA 00025, Figure 13), on Wright's Mill Road in the Patapsco Valley, was inherited through the Quaker-oriented Hartley family from 1743 through 1867.²⁴⁷ Another Quaker site along the Gwynns Falls is the stone house known as Buckingham (BA 01721, Figure 13) that was built by Elisha Tyson, Sr., and was home to his son Jesse Tyson until sold to Charles Adams Buchanan in 1835.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁴ Jim Wollon, AIA, and Catharine F. Black, "Western Run – Belfast Historic District" (National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1978).

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Laura Trieschman, "Stoddard Manor" (Maryland Historic Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 00377, November, 2001).

²⁴⁷ J. Bunting, A. McDonald, and A. Didden, "John Humphrey House" (Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 00025, February, 2001).

²⁴⁸ William C. Warren, "Maryland's Buckingham," *Maryland Magazine* (Summer, 1993): 15-20.

The Gunpowder Meeting records provide some insight into the Quaker existence and their anti-slavery activities, giving meaning to the houses labeled Quaker sites on Figures 11-14. The records reveal a steady pace of manumissions between 1776 and 1778. Philip Hopkins, William Parrish, and Mary Bowen each freed one slave, Benjamin Howard freed thirteen slaves, William Amos, Jr., freed seven slaves, Samuel Price manumitted seven slaves, and Mordecai Price (son of Mordecai Price) freed eight slaves. Another twenty-three slaves (owners not in the record) were also freed during this time period.²⁴⁹

Several Gunpowder Meeting Friends chose slavery over membership in the church. William Morris was first warned that he had neglected the meetings and that he had purchased a slave, but clung to his opinion that he could continue to hold another human in bondage beyond the age of twenty-one. William Morris was given the chance to condemn his own action, but chose instead to be disowned from the Quakers.²⁵⁰

James Benson made a similar choice between slavery and Quaker membership. In 1808 Benson was charged with purchasing a black boy who was scheduled to be freed at thirty years old, and Benson choose to hold him in bondage until that time. Benson was given more than adequate warning. He was not immediately disowned. There was a nine-month period from the time he was charged with holding the slave until he was disowned.²⁵¹

The Quakers were also rigid about the hiring of slave labor and other actions that would encourage slavery. In 1809 William Amos, Jr., and John Harlin were charged with employing two slaves. These two men chose to condemn their own behavior in written testimony and remained in the church.²⁵² In 1809, Thomas West confessed that his falsehood told to a runaway slave resulted in the man being returned to slavery.²⁵³

The Friends were much more lenient with one of their elder members, Israel Morris, who was charged in 1810 with detaining Aquila and Milcha in service after they were entitled to freedom. Several months later, the Friends records note that Israel Morris was charged with “manifesting an irritable disposition which caused him to make use of unbecoming language and conduct towards Friends, but with respect to his age and

²⁴⁹ Henry C. Peden, *Quaker Records of Northern Maryland: Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Abstracts from the Minutes, 1716-1800* (Westminster, Willow Bend Books, 2001), 69-72.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 26-27.

²⁵¹ Henry C. Peden, *Quaker Records of Baltimore and Harford Counties, Maryland, 1801-1825; Births, Deaths, Marriages, Removals, and Abstracts from the Monthly Minutes* (Westminster, Maryland, Willow Bend Books, 2000), 30-31.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 33.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

great infirmity, no further action will be taken in his case.”²⁵⁴ The available records do not provide information regarding how much longer Aquila and Milch were kept in slavery.

The available records are also unclear whether the Elisha Tyson who owned the Buckingham house was the same Elisha Tyson who in 1773 moved from Pennsylvania to the house called Jericho (BA 00153, Figure 12) along the Gunpowder River. Nonetheless, although Quakers were pacifists, Elisha Tyson prospered during the Revolutionary War by offering to operate a powder mill at Jericho. In 1781, Tyson moved to the booming town of Baltimore where he started the first abolition society in Maryland in 1789. He lobbied heavily to the Maryland General Assembly and was instrumental in obtaining the repeal of the 1753 law that had restricted slaveholders' ability to free their slaves. Tyson's many accomplishments also included the formation of The Protection Society that provide legal help for slaves or free blacks who were threatened by kidnappers called “Georgia Men.”²⁵⁵

Germans and Slavery in Baltimore County

This study initially sought to explore whether the Germans, as a settlement group, may have affected slavery in Baltimore County, since as an ethnic group the Germans held lower numbers of slaves than the Scotch and English. The initial goal, therefore, was to include ten German-American farms in the study. Identifying ten German antebellum period farmsteads proved to be difficult, largely because there was not a substantial amount of German settlement in Baltimore County prior to 1850. Thus, the following is an overview of several of the known German settlers and their families.

Although it appears that the first- and second-generation members of these families did not own slaves, by 1850 some descendants of German settlers did hold one or two slaves. Given the limited size of the sample, few if any broad conclusions can be drawn from such limited data. Nonetheless, the findings are important to the overall study since they begin to unravel the mysteries of German settlement in the county. Specifically, they show that most of the settlement happened during the second wave of German migration into this country in the middle of the nineteenth century, only twenty or so years prior to Emancipation.

The European settlers who were primarily of Scotch and English ancestry began migrating into the Baltimore County's backlands in the 1730s after depleting the soils in the waterfront areas through intensive tobacco cultivation. At the same time these settlers were moving inland, Lord Baltimore built roads and lowered taxes in parts of Maryland

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 37

²⁵⁵ Leroy Graham, *Baltimore, the Nineteenth Century Black Capital* (Washington D.C.: University of America Press, 1982).

hoping to attract Germans to settle in his colony's hinterlands as they migrated south from Pennsylvania towards Virginia's Shenandoah Valley.

Lord Baltimore's efforts were successful in Frederick, Washington, and Allegany Counties, which by 1790 held eighty-six percent of all Maryland Germans, comprising forty-four percent of the total population of those counties. In contrast, in 1790, only 627 of Baltimore County's 25,434 residents had German surnames. Baltimore City recorded another 444 Germans amidst a total population of 13,503 people.

Several biographies and local histories prove the German origins of the few Germans who settled in the county before 1790. Henry Wilhelm came to America from Germany during the American Revolution and settled in the sixth district of Baltimore County along the Pennsylvania line.²⁵⁶ The 1798 Federal Tax List identifies Henry and John Wilhelm with one-story log houses, small farms less than two hundred acres in size, and no slaves. Descendants of these two Wilhelms, Daniel and Peter B. Wilhelm, appear in the 1850 Census with one slave each.

Two Hoffman families settled in Baltimore County. The descendants of George F. Hoffman, a native of Hanover, Germany, arrive first in Frederick County. Some of the family then settled in Baltimore County.²⁵⁷ The other Hoffmans were descendants of Aaron and John Hoffman, German immigrants who had settled in Pennsylvania.²⁵⁸ The 1850 Census shows Elizabeth Hoffman with one slave and Henry B. Hoffman with three slaves, both owners in the county's northern area.

John Reister, Sr., is one of the county's best-known German immigrants. He was born in 1715 of German parents. In the 1760s he purchased land along a major roadway leading northwest out of the City of Baltimore. He constructed an inn which became the nucleus for the village of Reisterstown and a center of German immigrant life. Other settlers in the town included Benedict Swope, a German reformed minister, and Barnet Holsinger, a German blacksmith.²⁵⁹ Philip Reister [Sr.] lived at the Philip Reister House, which was demolished in the 1980s, and his son Philip Reister, Jr. is listed there as the owner of two slaves in the 1850 Census Slave Schedule. John Lanus's grandfather, Jacob Lanus, was a Pennsylvania pioneer who married Catharine, the oldest

²⁵⁶ Sallie A. Mallick, ed., *Sketches of Citizens of Baltimore City and Baltimore County* (Westminster, MD: Family Line Publications, 1989), 36.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 49.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 118.

²⁵⁹ Lilian Bayly Marks, *Reisters Desire* (Baltimore: Garamond/ Pridemark Press, Inc., 1975), 6.

daughter of John Reister II, and lived at the Lanius House (BA 0894).²⁶⁰ The 1798 Tax List identifies John Lanius as John Lonas with a two-story brick dwelling in Reisterstown and no slaves.

Several of the first wave of German immigrants settled in the eastern portion of the county where a sizable number of Germans from the second wave of immigration also settled. For instance, Fairview (BA 00864) was the home of Jacob Hiss who came from Germany in 1786.²⁶¹ The 1850 Census Slave Schedule lists William Hiss as the owner of one slave in the same vicinity as the Hiss house. In contrast, the Fringers who settled in the Pipe Creek Hundred by 1798 and later built the Henry Fringer House (BA 01855) do not appear as slaveowners in 1798, 1823, or 1850.²⁶²

The second wave of German settlement into Maryland and the United States arrived in the middle of the nineteenth century. The 1877 Hopkins *Atlas of Baltimore City and County* shows many names of German origin throughout the county. The Gartling Farm (BA 00270) was built by an immigrant from Baden Baden in 1849.²⁶³ Adam Klohr constructed the Klohr House (BA 02901) in the Owings Mills neighborhood, at the corner of Church lane and McDonough Road, in 1844 shortly after his arrival from Germany.²⁶⁴ Neither the Klohrs nor the Gartlings owned slaves.

The information for analysis of German settlers and their slaveholding patterns in Baltimore County that could be obtained during the timeframe of this study is too small and limited in scope to permit any conclusions. Therefore, as noted above German farmsteads are not included on the African-American Cultural Atlas (Figures 11-14). More research is certainly warranted regarding the extent to which German immigration may have influenced and enhanced the county's and the state's slow retreat from a slave-based economy. The following thesis conclusion explains how historical geography is the best method for tackling these types of difficult research questions surrounding American slavery.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 138. As explained at the conclusion of this section, the homes of the German-American settlers identified in the remainder of this Chapter do not appear on the Cultural Atlas maps (Figures 11-14).

²⁶¹ The Maryland Historical Trust and Baltimore County joint Inventory (explained in footnote 7) is comprised of documentation forms and other information, a portion of which is available on the county's website, http://www.co.ba.md.us/Agencies/planning/historic_preservation/index.html.

²⁶² John W. McGrain, "Henry Fringer House" (Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 01855, May, 2003).

²⁶³ Baltimore County Historic Inventory. See footnote 258.

²⁶⁴ L.V. Trieschmann, A.L. McDonald, and J.J. Bunting, "Klohr House" (Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form, No. BA 02901, June 29, 2000).