

## APPROVAL SHEET

Title of Thesis: Encounters Through Encroachment: 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century Interactions on Maryland's Eastern Shore

Name of Candidate: Robin K. Martin  
Master of Arts, 2017

Thesis and Abstract Approved:



Melissa Blair  
Professor  
Historical Studies

Date Approved: 5-24-2017

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document: ENCOUNTERS THROUGH ENCROACHMENT:  
17<sup>th</sup> AND 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY INTERACTIONS ON  
MARYLAND'S EASTERN SHORE.

Robin Kahne Martin, Master of Arts, 2017

Directed By: Professor, Dr. Melissa Blair, Department of History

On Maryland's Eastern Shore, early encounters between groups of Native Americans and newly arriving Africans and Europeans appear highly blurred or nonexistent in its historical narrative. This thesis argues that many such encounters and interactions did occur between Maryland's early inhabitants of the Eastern Shore, on many levels, and was a predominant occurrence during the seventeenth and eighteenth-century. New trends in historical scholarship strive to showcase various encounters by questioning dominant portrayals seen throughout the history of North American settlement. Nevertheless, scholarship written for Maryland's Eastern Shore is sparse. This research looks at encounters and interactions as a means for understanding how various groups related to one another and interacted from their initial contact through times of oppression brought about by discrimination and the advancement of colonial agendas. Also affirmed here is a necessity to emphasize the fluidity that existed in early colonial society between the various groups and to open new conversations within historical presentation for those still living on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were both periods of discovery and nation building for the newly forming colonies, therefore, it is important to address the

many false impressions of obscurity and separateness projected in early historiographies regarding those who shared in this formation. The intent here is to clarify how relationships were not separate histories, but an inclusion of competing cultures that shared an early landscape. Upon contact in the New World individual group histories dissolved, merging into a shared narrative. In contrast to many historical presentations in the past, not all Africans entered the early Maryland landscape as slaves, nor did all Natives abandon traditional homelands. What is unfortunate is that early encounters came to be defined by notions of racial superiority and established boundaries that marginalized and rendered many important historical participants into obscurity and presumed extinction. This thesis, firmly within the realm of new historical trends, establishes that through such relationships came an inevitable exchange of cultural knowledge, rather than its erasure, and points out possibilities that for a moment the course of Maryland's history could have taken a path towards solidarity.

ENCOUNTERS THROUGH ENCROACHMENT: 17<sup>TH</sup> AND 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
INTERACTIONS ON MARYLAND'S EASTERN SHORE

By

Robin K. Martin

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Maryland, Baltimore County, in partial fulfillment  
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2017



## Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to the many individuals who have become obscured within our historical memory, and to those whose contributions continue to be overlooked today.

## Acknowledgements

Foremost, I would like to thank my family and colleagues for all their support and for enduring my many insecurities throughout the numerous years it has taken to arrive this far. I am also greatly indebted to my adviser Dr. Melissa Blair for her encouragement and contagious enthusiasm regarding this project, for without her guidance this would never have come to fruition. I thank Dr. Terry Bouton and Dr. Susan McDonough for volunteering to serve on my committee and taking their time to explore my thesis. My co-workers, Tom Beck, Susan Graham, and Lindsey Loeper have been invaluable, providing research links, helping with editing, and thinking of me in conversations with scholars outside of the office on this subject. I especially appreciate their interest and asking me every day how things were progressing. There are so many others to whom I had reached out to over the course of this project. Allison Seyler, Emily Huebner and Ryan Cox from the Maryland State Archives, who either referred me to others more knowledgeable, or responded by helping me to navigate the State website. I can't forget the many student workers of UMBC Special Collections for their support and knowledge. When it comes to the tough stuff however, I would like to thank Nichole Zang Do and my daughter Ashley Martin for their proof reading skills and comments that made this a much stronger presentation.



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## Introduction

On Maryland's Eastern Shore, early encounters between groups of Native Americans and newly arriving Africans and Europeans appear highly blurred or nonexistent in its historical narrative. This thesis argues that many such encounters and interactions did occur between Maryland's early inhabitants of the Eastern Shore, on many levels, and was a predominant occurrence during the seventeenth and eighteenth-century. New trends in historical scholarship have strived to showcase various encounters by questioning dominant portrayals seen throughout the history of North American settlement. Nevertheless, scholarship written for Maryland's Eastern Shore is sparse. This research looks at encounters and interactions as a means for understanding how various groups related to one another and interacted from their initial contact through times of oppression brought about by discrimination and the advancement of colonial agendas. Also affirmed here is a necessity to emphasize the fluidity that existed in early colonial society between the various groups and to open new conversations within historical presentation for those still living on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were both periods of discovery and nation building for the newly forming colonies, therefore, it is important to address the many false impressions of obscurity and separateness projected in early historiographies regarding those who shared in this formation. The intent here is to clarify how relationships were not separate histories, but an inclusion of competing cultures that shared an early landscape. Upon contact in the New World individual group histories

dissolved, merging into a shared narrative. In contrast to many historical presentations in the past, not all Africans entered the early Maryland landscape as slaves, nor did all Natives abandon traditional homelands. What is unfortunate is that early encounters came to be defined by notions of racial superiority and established boundaries that marginalized and rendered many important historical participants into obscurity and presumed extinction. This thesis, firmly within the realm of new historical trends, establishes that through such relationships came an inevitable exchange of cultural knowledge, rather than its erasure, and points out possibilities that for a moment the course of Maryland's history could have taken a path towards solidarity.

Evidence which can be found through research on the seventeenth and eighteenth-century Eastern Shore for Maryland suggests a unique and yet complex interactive system of encounters and worldviews outside of ones presented within local historical presentations. To best highlight this fluidity, the study area for my thesis encompasses specific regions on Maryland's Eastern Shore known to be primary residence for Native peoples' along with areas to which white colonist and free blacks migrated during the seventeenth and eighteenth century. The decision to showcase the long eighteenth century is based primarily on these points of initial contact impacted by growing European encroachment during the founding process of the Maryland colony. Native interactions began to take hold in the Chesapeake region through fur trading by the mid-seventeenth century, then escalated amid the onset of colonial settlements throughout the eighteenth century and the arrival of both African slaves and free blacks into local native territory.

My methodological aim was twofold: to find both material and archival evidence that indicates interactions were indeed taking place between Natives, Africans and English colonist within the confines of Maryland's Eastern Shore. The initial strategy was to investigate archaeological field reports, artifact collections, and scholarly journals for evidence of possible collaborations that may have disclosed themselves within the material records. This proved to be a more difficult task than expected. Archaeological records were available to substantiate locations of Native inhabitants and provided background material, however, for the sake of site preservation disclosure of these records was limited. It also became problematic to pinpoint crossover material in archaeological collections relating to encounters. Through the trade system of the time Native peoples had been introduced to European products early on through dealings with the French and Dutch, while free blacks shared the same or similar material culture as that of other white settlers, inhibiting a precise interpretation of archaeological evidence. The primary goal however, was to highlight the possibility of encounters or of those that may have taken place as the result of encroachment and to demonstrate cohesion among the various players of the time.

Due to the cautions and difficulties found in applying archaeological interpretations, the history presented in this paper for active groups in this peninsula region of Maryland, or the lack thereof, is reliant more often than not on secondary source materials. Nevertheless, to substantiate those readings and to extrapolate similar scenarios it was important they be linked through the examination of primary source historical documentation, which included land records, court cases, and various county proceedings. Oral histories, local exhibits, and public historical road markers became the

primary sources used to demonstrate how local regions portray their history. Focusing on these types of memorial presentations established how vagueness within such renditions have led to misrepresentation and elimination with regard to cultural encounters. It is well documented that both Native people and free blacks historically lived and interacted in other regions yet we see little evidence of this happening on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Encounters should hold particularly true during the course of post-contact migrations, when colonial encroachment and cultural preservation prompted Native groups, such as the Nanticoke, to move north of Maryland into Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and as far away as Canada. Lord Baltimore's colonizing strategy, of offering land to those who would settle in the region, encouraged free blacks to enter from Virginia for property on Maryland's Eastern Shore. These prospects not only mingled free blacks and English settlers, but brought them into close proximity with those Natives who chose to remain. (see fig. 1) Maryland's Eastern Shore has proven to be a very active landscape at the point of contact through colonization activities and should hold a more prominent space in local histories and their presentations.

As a discussion on how interactions between Natives and free blacks have been influenced and treated within a predominantly white historical record, the beginning stages of my thesis address the concerns of many contemporary writers and historians with regards to the marginalization of these groups' active role in the development of this country. Chapter one elaborates on scholars' concerns by recounting background histories for local Native people, free blacks who entered Maryland, as well as English settlers. This brief account lends itself to the diverse patterns of thought and worldviews that are relevant to understanding each culture's reaction to encounters and their eventual

outcome. It also presents evidence found, or not found, within local historical records pertaining to the specific groups in the region and illustrates how they are presented in a public context. The chapter provides locations of settlements and reservations, groups with which each interacted, movement or change within the time period, while touching on the understanding of various cultural mindsets.

To create a macro view into specific active locations on the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century landscape, Chapter two puts forth an in-depth focus on three case studies: The Isle of Kent, the town of Vienna, and The Hill community located in Easton. These case studies delve into what took place at each area to showcase the richness of interactions, and to demonstrate how much of this history is absent from local historical narratives. Encounters for the Isle of Kent are seen primarily through court documents and testimonies from England's High Court of Admiralty, and Examinations of Pirates. Testimonies of individuals employed by William Claiborne, and proceedings of the State regarding the actions taking place on the island. These records define Claiborne's business activities, the establishment of a working community on the island, his trading capacities, developing frictions with Lord Baltimore, and Maryland's eventual takeover of the island. The study for the town of Vienna relies heavily on archaeological site records, which includes analysis from geological surveys as to town location and reservation lands. Area history and its presentation are looked at with regards to the Handsell property. This property contains an eighteenth-century house reportedly erected on the site of Thomas Taylor's trading post. Additionally, Handsell had once been the residential area of the Nanticoke and a parcel of what became their later reservation. The Hill community located in Easton is a relatively new discovery believed to be the oldest

free black community in the United States. Even though the community is not as old as the two preceding case studies; evidence suggest that community development had been in place for an extended period prior to its founding in the early nineteenth-century. The community is significant in that it existed within an area of white plantations reliant on slave labor and was also in close proximity for possible encounters with Native peoples along the Choptank River.



*Figure 1: Choptank River Watershed*

The map above shows how navigable rivers within both the Choptank watershed, shown here, and the Nanticoke watershed located just below the Choptank provided easy access between areas discussed throughout this thesis. Today, when traveling by land or in what might be considered a straight line, Easton lies within fourteen miles of the Choptank River, the Chicone reservation on the Nanticoke is six miles south of Vienna,

and the Isle of Kent would have been perhaps a day or two's journey to the west, all within easy access of diverse cultural encounters.

Chapter three begins by tackling shifting portrayals through romanticized histories and misrepresentations, examining them century by century and looking at how encounters and interactions were portrayed by historians and other writers. It also investigates how these histories are presented in the public space of the twenty-first century. Lastly, to analyze how information and presentations are beginning to change it was necessary to rely on present-day discussions with descendent communities, archaeological and historical lectures, along with secondary source materials written by contemporary authors who fall within the categories of this study.<sup>1</sup> The chapter also attempts to address historical memory through the use of interviews, videos, and personal discussions regarding the region's history and what these communities, still present here today, envision for their future.

## Historiography

Contextualizing the array of experiences and cultural ideologies brought together during the late seventeenth and eighteenth-century it was necessary to examine how numerous experiences had been treated within the current historical record. Information used for this historiography I found to be broken into segments that draw attention to aspects of a specific culture or a specific region. Sources that work against the grain of

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<sup>1</sup> Tiya Miles, "Uncle Tom Was an Indian: Tracing the Red in Black Slavery," In *Confounding the Color Lines: The Indian-Black Experience in North America*. Edited by James F. Brooks, 137-160. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002; Arica L. Coleman, *That the Blood Stay Pure: African Americans, Native Americans, and the Predicament of Race and Identity in Virginia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013); Keith Collins, "What is a Black Indian? Misplaced Expectations and Lived Realities," in *IndiVisible: African-Native American Lives in the Americas*, Edited by Gabrielle Tayac, 183-195. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2009; Philip J. Deloria, "Racial Science and Hierarchy: Historiography." *History Compass*. 4:5(2006): 1-6.



these individualistic concept can be found, however, they do not come into play until the twentieth-century when historians began to take a step back from previous interpretation to approach history with new eyes. For this thesis, I decided to keep the historiography in divided sections for several reasons. One is due simply to the difficulty of finding records and scholarship on the seventeenth and eighteenth-century that highlight an inclusive history; also, this method provided a means to create a richer understanding of the various trends which dominated the historical narrative. This too demonstrates the overall behaviorism shown towards cultural encounters and what changes to this narrative took place throughout the centuries.

Challenges arose from the very beginning when historical documentation specific to the seventeenth and eighteenth-century Eastern Shore of Maryland proved impossible to obtain in many Eastern Shore counties due to their destruction in past fires and through engagements of colonial warfare. Personal accounts, as diary's or memoirs for Native peoples did not exist and any possibly written by free blacks also proved elusive. To facilitate this primary source scarcity, it was necessary to draw from content outside of the framework for this thesis as is demonstrated in this historiography. Nevertheless, the sources presented here provide an in-depth examination into period mindsets significance for discerning how encounters and interactions came to be viewed while also demonstrating trends in historical representations. The necessity to establish an overarching method for research, owing to the lack of primary documentation, these resources are presented as pertinent for an understanding of how encounters played out within the Chesapeake region including those on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Early writings pertaining to Virginia and Maryland initially come from persons newly arriving in the area. The well-known recordings and maps of Captain John Smith describe a pristine landscape inhabited by Native peoples. Smith however was here primarily to map, build alliances, and make contacts for trade relations and exploration. His descriptions of the region and its inhabitation have been substantiated by historians and archaeologists alike and have proved to be of relative accuracy. Smith nonetheless, was a known self-promoter in his writings and many of his adventures appear as exaggerations. He wrote numerous books, his first publication *A True Relation of Such Occurrences and Accidents of Noate As Hath Happened in Virginia*, pertained predominantly to *Jamestown*. Later publications came from notes and letters from his voyages as in, *Proceedings of the English Colony of Virginia written in 1612* and two others, the *Generall Historie of Virginia* in 1624 and *The True Adventures and Observations of Captain John Smith* in 1630. These later edited versions have been known to contain discrepancies regarding his encounters. A primary example was his recording of encounters with Pocahontas.

Another such writer in this early period is Father Andrew White. White arrived in the new world landing in Virginia on board the Ark. His *Revelations of a Trip to Maryland* began with his actual voyage, continuing through his initial encounters and religious exploits. White had come for religious freedom and in his book, much of his description came from a sense of favoritism which exalted the new arrivals' experiences as God-given miracles. His main purpose was to promote and convert the local inhabitation with the word of God. White's mindset is clearly one of superiority which I discuss further in a later chapter. Most scholarly writings in turn have thoroughly

documented the devastation to early native cultures brought on by disease and displacement through encounters with Europeans, yet they do not present Native peoples nor free blacks, or those enslaved, as active participants in the development of the colonies.

Authors and historians in the nineteenth century followed suit in this type of demeanor, yet an awareness of diverse contributions seemed to have begun late in this era. For example, you begin to see poems and publications drawing attention to the role of minority cultures. Walt Whitman, for example, writes that as a nation “impressed by New England writers and schoolmasters, we tacitly abandon ourselves to the notion that our United States have been fashioned from the British Islands only...”<sup>2</sup> This he believed was a grave mistake, and one which is clearly present in early historiographies.

Other writings regarding the important roles played by African Americans began to appear in the early twentieth-century. *The Souls of Black Folk*, probably the most famous was written by W.E.B. Dubois and originally published in 1903. This was an effort to open people’s eyes to the contributions made by Africans throughout the development of the Nation. Dubois writes, “we fought their battles, shared their sorrow, [and] mingled our blood with theirs...” yet there was little sign of this in the historical narrative. Some historians were not quite as accommodating to this new viewpoint. One such historian was James M. Wright who chronicled *The Free Negro in Maryland 1634-1860*, originally printed in 1921. The context of his work regarding African’s was still highly connected to the institution of slavery. He saw their contribution as a mere side

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<sup>2</sup> David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America: The Brief Edition*. Yale University Press, 2009, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1np7gn.3> ; Timothy David Fritz, “More than a Footnote: Native American and African American Relations on the Southern Colonial Frontier 1513-1763” (MA thesis, The College of Charleston and the Citadel, 2008), 3: Fritz also provide an extensive historiography for more information regarding relations between Native Americans and enslaved Africans.

notes with no direct influence. free blacks existed predominantly as the result of manumissions by their benevolent white masters, which in itself, failed to bring them up to the standard of the white community. Wright may have been conflicted in some of his representations for he does credit the “combined efforts of men of the European and African stocks,” in the development of nineteenth-century Maryland. This however, excluded common encounters within business dealing and failed to call attention to any form of cooperation on the part of Native peoples as those seen within the fur trade.

In this early twentieth-century, eugenics had also become a popular movement which impacted historical writing. William Harlen Gilbert Jr. wrote an essay in the *Journal of Washington Academy of Sciences* based on a Native population known as the Wesorts and located in Southern Maryland. His essay was somewhat more open minded than that of his predecessor here, yet his findings stemmed from a hierarchal racial perspective as well. He viewed the Wesorts as separating themselves from local blacks as an effort to maintain ethnic purity. He also, questioned some of the behaviors he found not in the best interests of the Wesorts, but failed to understand that this may have been their way of maintaining a cultural identity rather than blending into categories devised by a white majority in the area. By the late twentieth-century historians appeared to be questioning more and more aspects of their research. For example, Clayton Torrence who wrote the *History of Somerset County* also debated some of the motives behind the history he included. Yet his writing was highly stylized which romanticized his finding to the point where it became difficult to take seriously anything he presented. Most of the writings predominant for Native American history portrayed them as a vanishing race that, if not already, were surely on the brink of extinction. Remanence of

this continued into the twentieth-century sparking a re-examination of historic portrayals as marginalized cultures sought recognition.

The primary framework for this re-examination was to provide inclusion and agency for marginalized cultures and developed into a new historical trend where historians such as James H. Merrell and William Loren Katz showcased how past historiographies tended to look at Indian history, colonial history as well as African American history as separate entities. New work in this respect sought to remedy this by providing closer consideration of past encounters and contributions suggesting alternative, and more inclusive, interpretations. Scholarship and representations prior to this, which I demonstrate further in this thesis, only provided scattered snippets regarding the interactions and encounters of African and Native populations. Timothy David Fritz states in his Master's thesis *More Than Just a Footnote: Native American and African American Relations on the Southern Colonial Frontier 1513-1763*, it was not until 1932 that the "first useful study [regarding a more inclusive presentation of encounters] was conducted by Kenneth W. Porter"<sup>3</sup> in *The Negro on the American Frontier*.<sup>4</sup>

James H. Merrell's research in *The Indians New World: Catawba's and Their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal*, unraveled what he saw as historian presumptions that barriers existed between diverse groups. William Loren Katz, also a prominent figure in unmasking mixed relationships,<sup>5</sup> highlighted in his book *Black Natives* the existence of blended heritage between Native Americans and African Americans. He strongly argued that to single out and distort a player's interactions and

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<sup>3</sup> Timothy David Fritz, "More Than Just a Footnote: Native American and African American Relations on the Southern Colonial Frontier 1513-1763," (MA thes., The College of Charleston and the Citadel, 2008) 8.

<sup>4</sup> Kenneth Wiggins Porter, *The Negro on the American Frontier* (New York: Arno Press, 1971).

<sup>5</sup> Collins, "What is a Black Indian," 183.

their subsequent contributions, created a scenario which became highly damaging for it excluded them from the historical narrative.<sup>6</sup> It is important to consider Katz's concept, for having taken such a stance in the past we consequently discredited the fluidity within diverse cultural relationships.

Numerous others author addressed below, continued to present evidence that in my research proved contrary to the deluded histories found in displays and on historic marker for Maryland. The case studies within my thesis highlight incidents where older interpretations remain in existence. It has been clearly indicated throughout the new historiography that during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century foreigners had become a prevalent part of Indian territories throughout the Mid-Atlantic, and that Maryland's Eastern Shore was not void of inhabitation prior to English arrival. Theda Perdue traces in-depth, various interactions in *Mixed Blood Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South* pointing out that many of those who entered this new landscape were not only traders and trappers, but English, French and Dutch, along with various colonial officials. Other intruders ranged from "squatters and escaped slaves to criminals."<sup>7</sup> Native communities reacted in a variety of ways towards the influx of foreigners. During times of unrest and war many became captives as war booty suffering as replacements for tribal members lost to captivity or killed in battle. Others were adopted into the various tribes, however, much of their incorporation depended on skills they brought with them and what they came to represent. For example, in tribes throughout the South, many scholars have emphasized how the adoptees served a specific purpose with some acting

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<sup>6</sup> Katz, *Black Indians: A Hidden Heritage* (New York: Simon Pulse, 2005), 5.

<sup>7</sup> Theda Perdue, *Mixed Blood Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South* (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2003), 3.

as translators and go-betweens during Native relations with Europeans, while others provided skills beneficial to the Native community.<sup>8</sup>

Alliances however, like those mentioned above, had become blurred or eliminated in many methods used for historical documentation. In chapter two I provide a clear example of such methods which appeared in Bethany Montagano's *Blacking Out History*. Montagano uses an original photograph titled *Kickapoo to the Emperor's Court* and compares that image to August Schoefft's painting of the same event titled *Six Kickapoo Indians, Chief and Family*. Highlighted in this comparison are the discrepancies that exist between the two images. Montagano provided a brief history of the event and analyzed possible motives behind each image. Tiya Miles shared a similar method of comparison with Montagano only using cultural projections found in literature and ethnography. In her essay, *Uncle Tom Was an Indian: Tracing the Red in Black Slavery*, Miles explored the literary work of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and compared it to Cora Gilliam's memory of her own Uncle Tom a mixed African-Native. Miles talks about how the stereotypical views portrayed in classic novels romanticized slavery and slaves presenting them as forgiving, submissive, and naive. By comparing the literary images to Cora's memory, which was recorded during an interview by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), Miles demonstrates how infused such characteristics became in the national perception even by those persons of mixed heritage. Similar romanticized images of Native peoples as a vanishing breed, or the noble and exotic savage were rampant within the national perception.

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<sup>8</sup> Katz. *Black Indians*, 50, 90; Christina Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country The Changing Face of Captivity in Early America*, (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2010), 126-130.

Initially relationships and encounters between Native Americans and blacks were easily located through scholarship and recorded evidence regarding historical events as uprisings and wars throughout the South, and even into areas of the Northeast. Yet, Helen Roundtree and Thomas Davidson provide a thorough history for Natives living on the Eastern Shore in their collaboration, *Eastern Shore Indians of Virginia and Maryland*. Their focus is on three main areas, “Indian history, Indian culture and Indian ecology.”<sup>9</sup> Roundtree and Davidson provided a firmer time frame for my thesis area by tracing relations in both Maryland and Virginia beginning through the fur trade and ending with detribalization. Provided were many searchable names as that of John Westlock and other known English traders. The historical background presented in their scholarship, regarding colonial encroachment, also provides a clear progression of events which took place over time.

*Eastern Shore Indians of Virginia and Maryland*, demonstrated above, is important in that Helen Roundtree and Thomas Davidson went on to provide tribal names and identity for most Native groups living in the area. It tracked affiliations, locations, and probable directions in which Natives moved, both in and out of the Delmarva Peninsula. This text also contains numerous illustrations and maps regarding reservation lands which clearly denote eventual encroachment, as well as providing contemporary route names for further investigation. Yes, many groups chose to leave for Pennsylvania, Delaware, and took shelter within the League of Five Nations, thus losing affiliation with Maryland, nevertheless, many remained and continue to live on the Eastern Shore today.

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<sup>9</sup> Helen C. Roundtree and Thomas E. Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians of Virginia and Maryland* (Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 1997), xii.



A monograph entitled *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland* and written by Thomas E. Davidson provides similar information to that of Roundtree and Davidson by chronicling the movements of free blacks entering Maryland from Virginia during the Colonial period of 1662-1775. Davidson underscores his work in the vein of new African America history by highlighting the misrepresentation throughout history that all blacks were linked to slavery. Davidson follows in the footsteps of T.H. Breen and Stephen Innes highlighting individuals as Anthony Johnson, whom Davidson credits as the “first black known to move into Somerset County.”<sup>10</sup> Throughout the monograph Davidson points out that at least thirteen other plantations are credited as belonging to free blacks living on the lower eastern shore. Davidson provides the names titled to these properties and their general location on the lower eastern shore.

Considering the time frame chosen here it was difficult to see African interactions with whites or Native Americans outside that of slavery. Undoubtedly Christina Snyder’s *Slavery in Indian Country* was one of the more significant text that confronted and sought to understand such relationships as they existed within Native communities. Snyder’s work incorporated a large area over a vast period of time and fell outside of the context of Maryland, however, it opened a window into the behaviorism of Native groups. Her research allowed the reader to understand the thinking behind such events, as those of captive torture and adoption, by presenting her finding through a Native perspective. Snyder’s work was well documented in both primary and secondary sources. Through such extensive research, she could explore how Native Americans

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<sup>10</sup> Thomas E. Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland: The Colonial Period: 1666-1775, part 1* (Maryland: Maryland Historical Trust, 1983), 6; T.H. Breen and Stephen Innes, “Myne Owne Ground” *Race and Freedom on Virginia’s Eastern Shore, 1640-1676*, (New York: Oxford University Press), 1980

practiced and understood captivity and demonstrated how interactions changed over time into avenues for support and possible regeneration.

To fully understand the complexities existing between these various cultures it was important for this new history to establish and highlight how overtime relations became ingrained with notions of White superiority. Kevin Young's "*Those Few Who Counted: Indian Slavery in Recent Historiography of Colonial North America*" is useful for understanding how such views developed. Another valuable source that supports Young's view comes from a chapter titled *Culture, Race, and Class in the Colonial North* written by James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton. This writing deals with areas north of Maryland and into New England, yet it provides some insight into why Europeans feared relationships and interactions between the various groups. It too recounts the importance of understanding the social hierarchy dominant in Britain and its colonies. Primary sources used to confirm such relationships came from quoted poems and reference to runaways seeking refuge with native tribes. With racial discrimination becoming a prominent factor in white relationships, Theda Perdue provides a good chronology for the development of racial constructs among both Whites and Natives. Her published work, *Mixed Blood Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South* illuminates how Euro-American views regarding blood quantum became the determining factor for relationships and the development of political policy.

The fur trade occurred as an overarching theme within the context of my research, and dominated relations and contacts with those moving into and out of the Delmarva area. The next few texts drew attention to a prominent question seen throughout the mid-Atlantic region regarding just who controlled the trade. Merrell and Potter posed the

question and argued agency and manipulation of colonial powers by tribes of the area.

Pekka Hämäläinen in *The Comanche Empire* also argued for Native agency.

Hämäläinen's work concentrated on areas throughout the West, yet remained important in that it questioned the superiority historically afforded to Europeans, and challenged the stereotypical view of Native Americans as the victims of expansion. *Our Bond of Peace*, written by James H. Merrell, focused on early interactions and exchange in the Tidewater Potomac, where there too he pointed out signs indicative of a reasonable amount of Native control over trade. His work began somewhat early for the time period of this thesis, but many aspects carried over into the later century.

Stephen Potter as well emphasized trade exchange between the Virginia Algonquians and English colonist in another important chapter from *Powhatan's Mantle*. His work was also early, as it opened with the attempt to destroy Jamestown in 1607 and reached back as far as the 1500s and described tribal development within the mid-Atlantic coastal plain. Presented however, is a clear picture of Native life like those found in text by Roundtree and Davidson, J. Frederick Fausz, or C.A. Weslager, one which was highly representative of groups living in Maryland. Sources cited in the chapter are multidisciplinary incorporating area chronicler reports, archeological surveys, museum reports, scholarly writings, master theses, and numerous secondary sources. I sympathized with Potter's statement that after the uprising of Powhatan in 1622 English accounts regarding Virginia's Algonquian lifeways become increasingly hard to find. This difficulty of finding records became evident for Maryland especial the Eastern Shore as marginalized groups move out of the area or to the outskirts of white society. Most records he suggested were deficient in documentation necessary for establishing any

concrete effects that might suggest acculturation. This too was a prominent assessment by archaeologist regarding the use of material culture to establish an overlap indicative of encounters.

However, anthropologist S.M. Patnaik advocates along with Stephen Potter for archaeological investigation suggesting that burial sites, and the documented changes in their grave goods, are strong indications of changes taking place within a society suggesting that “socio-cultural complexity”<sup>11</sup> can be seen through the “nature and distribution of grave goods.”<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, Patnaik, in his article *Material Culture and Archaeology* which appeared in *Indian Anthropologist*, cautions on the basis of scant evidence about too much speculation that can in itself lead to misinterpretation or over interpretation.

Changing historiographic trends which began in the twentieth-century and took a fresh look into such presupposed historical narratives as that of “imperialistic winners and victimized losers”<sup>13</sup> continue today. Historians as Pekka Hämäläinen’s, *The Comanche Empire* provides new history highlighting the Comanche as a Native power that emerged out from the southern plains and came to dominate the interior of the U.S. throughout both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It questions the historical assumption of European dominance, while challenging the projected stereotype of Native Americans as the victims of expansion. What appears different in many writings is that they do not attempt, as Hämäläinen puts it, to romanticize actions, but rather to inform graphically (in his case the Comanche) encounters that took place among other Natives,

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<sup>11</sup> S.M. Patnaik, “Material Culture and Archaeology,” *Indian Anthropologist*, 25:2(Dec 1995), 63.

<sup>12</sup> Patnaik, *Material Culture and Archaeology*, 63.

<sup>13</sup> Deloria, “Racial Science and Hierarchy,” 5.

Africans, nor Anglo-Americans. Hämäläinen states that his intentions were to acknowledge “the full potential of indigenous agency, its positive, negative, predictable, and unpredictable dimensions.”<sup>14</sup>

Arica L. Coleman also investigated issues that still linger regarding racial purity. Her work, *That the Blood Stay Pure*, stressed how ingrained notions of race effect Black-Indian relationships, familial ties, and Afro-Indian identity in the face of tribal membership and state recognition. Coleman emphasized how marrying white does not jeopardize one’s tribal status, however, marriage or even a common-law relationship with an African American nullified one’s membership. When referring to “marrying outside of your race,”<sup>15</sup> Coleman asserted that this always meant that you married an African American and that “racial purity meant the absence of Blackness.”<sup>16</sup> Katz also defined this problem with regard to those claiming Indian heritage.

Keith Collins noteworthy essay, “What is a Black Indian?” took an ethnographic approach to research as seen with Tiya Miles. Collins perspective is important in that it too engaged the problematic cultural practice of assessing worth and identity from skin color still ingrained in today’s culture. His essay dealt with what white Americans expect of people who look black and how mixed races tended to perceive themselves. The essay is based in contemporary time yet it shared overarching themes of race and the suppression of identity present in other readings. Collins explored the racial constructs that force those of African and Indian heritage to accept themselves as “black” rather than see themselves also as Indian. He explained that in order to restructure one’s self image,

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<sup>14</sup> Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 360.

<sup>15</sup> Coleman, *That the Blood Stay Pure*, xvii.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, xvii.

it “required individuals to forget they have Indian relatives and to reinforce that it is skin color that determines who they are.”<sup>17</sup> Similar experiences took place during the eighteenth century when colonial officials expected Natives to turn over runaway slaves and other blacks whom they had accepted into their tribes and looked on as family.

Many of the sources included here, apart from those written by Helen C. Roundtree and Thomas E. Davidson who focused on Native peoples, along with Davidson’s monograph and Ross M. Kimmel regarding free blacks, fell outside of Maryland’s Eastern Shore. This in its self is an indication that further research into encounters for this area are greatly needed. In their absence, it became necessary to incorporate outside sources into this historiography as background materials from which to extrapolate similar actions missing for Maryland. They provided crucial aspects of the various lifeways to consider when researching the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and afforded a rich historical background from which to draw comparative situations for Maryland and the Eastern Shore.

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<sup>17</sup> Collins, “What is a Black Indian,” 184.

## Chapter 1: Locating Maryland Natives and Free Blacks

There is little evidence for Maryland's Eastern Shore that encompasses the inclusion of those existing at the edges of recorded history. In contrast, however, this region possessed a rich and active history that included not only settlers but Native peoples and Africans who had arrived free or obtained freedom through other means. Discoveries in archaeological evidence, has placed the existence of Early Woodland Native peoples on Maryland and its Eastern Shore approximately six hundred years prior to European exploration, and this region continues to be home for those groups who chose to remain. By the mid-seventeenth century free blacks entered the lower Eastern Shore, receiving lands offered by Lord Baltimore to those who would settle his fledgling colony. Yet at times, Maryland and the Potomac basin are depicted in writings, and on early maps, as somewhat of a "no-man's-land"<sup>18</sup> void of permanent inhabitants. Native place names alone scattered throughout the region prove that notion false. For Maryland's Eastern Shore to have a narrative suggesting the nonexistence of many early inhabitation, demonstrates a need to expose encounters, interactions, and the possibilities that existed for collaborative relationships.

To allow the complexity of players to emerge from what are in many cases lost histories it is imperative that we create new conversations that question and further explore historic records and representations that perceive history from a limited frame of

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<sup>18</sup> James D. Rice, Preface to *Nature & History in the Potomac Country: From Hunter-Gatherers to the Age of Jefferson* (Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), iv.

reference that has advocated for the disappearance of Native peoples and linked blackness with the institution of slavery. Highlighted here is how subtle collaborations between diverse ethnic groups who occupied the same seventeenth and eighteenth-century landscapes on Maryland's Eastern Shore has been overlooked. The resulting consequences worked to obscure and extinguish the possibilities that friendly accord between cultures, which appeared fragile at best during the seventeenth-century, was a vital aspect for the new colony and needs to become more inclusive.

For example, stepping back from old ingrained attitudes as that of the prominent *vanishing native* narrative and engaging in new historic perspectives that places more than one culture on the historic landscape, does it not become possible to perceive this region as instrumental in creating encounters between its Native peoples, Africans, and English settlers?<sup>19</sup> If we were to narrow research down to simply an ecological perspective by depicting the region's abundance of navigable waterways, fur-bearing mammals, and divergent terrains, Maryland's Eastern Shore stands out as a prime location for native and colonial encounters through settlement, trade, and empirical investment; all of which would become the inevitable reality. Relationships formed here during the seventeenth-century stood to provide the groundwork for possible alternative outcomes to what we see today. Opportunities existed to establish business ventures through trade that would support multi-cultural interests as those between the Susquehannock and William Claiborne. free blacks, though limited, shared many of the same privileges as white colonist. Evidence of such opportunities were documented

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<sup>19</sup> Daniel R. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*, (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press), 2001; Breen and Innes, "Myne Owne Ground"; Jean M. O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England*, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press), 2010.



through writings on Anthony Johnson's life. Ultimately, however, cultural misunderstandings led to ethnically-biased legislation which lumped all cultures into dimensions of race, while effectively erasing the existence of those persons outside the realm of black or white.

Early scholarship on the Mid-Atlantic area concerning encounters amid those inhabiting this long eighteenth-century landscape is sparse. Locating evidence for a variety of encounters throughout the South, even into some regions of the Northeast, became straightforward largely due to major conflicts and wars. For example, the Anglo-Powhatan wars in Virginia from 1610-1614 were well documented and common knowledge, as was the Pequot war in 1637 and the later King Philip's wars in 1675, that had ensued in New England. It is much more challenging to interpret encounters in areas lacking in such documentation of violence, or where encroachment went relatively unheeded as is evident on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Early treaties did not guarantee land rights to Native populations in the area. It was not until 1678 that the Lord Proprietor proclaimed certain towns where English settlers were not allowed to reside.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, surveys ordered by this proclamation to establish boundaries were not completed leaving native residents vulnerable to encroachment. It was not until 1698, when the Maryland Assembly passed an Act, that boundaries were formally established for the Nanticoke reservation at Chicone.<sup>21</sup> With this in mind, it was necessary to draw more heavily from secondary sources and historical background whose primary information pertained to locations just outside the study area of this thesis.

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<sup>20</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians*, 108. Maps for these towns are included in reference on 110-111 of same text.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

To accentuate the fact that possibilities for encounters through encroachments on Maryland's Eastern Shore did indeed exist on numerous levels, this first chapter includes evidence presented by European explorers, such as Captain John Smith's writings and his 1612 map of the Chesapeake, along with business documents from early arrivals to the colonies such as Father Andrew White and William Claiborne. Applying this evidence with an inclusive history one is able to explore the mindsets of the various cultures to acquire a clearer perspective as to why interactions played out as they did. At the same time, this method of research draws attention to those players obscured in the historical memory by investigating archaeological site forms and geological evidence for placement within the region.

## **Learning from other Regions**

The scarcity of primary record holdings in many regions on Maryland's Eastern Shore makes it imperative to draw upon research and scholarship from other regions. Over time many local records, such as those in Dorchester County, were lost to fire or the destruction of war. Through in-depth historical studies available for Virginia, North Carolina, and areas both west and north of Maryland one can extrapolate similar situations for the Eastern Shore. Native culture has been extensively studied throughout these areas. Highlighted are the intricate networks of communications, relationships, and trade between various Native peoples living along the eastern seaboard and as far west as Texas and Ohio. Records and colonial papers stated the continued necessity for interpreters and traders, both white and black. Government officials relied on these interpreters to communicate their intentions, whereas adventurers relied on both skills not only to negotiate trade, but to insure their own safety. Accounts such as these, which

hold true for all early colonization, can be used to understand what was happening throughout the Chesapeake region including Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Writings by early settlers and explorers to the Delmarva area, such as those of Father Andrew White and Capt. John Smith, suggest that once initial contact was established, the Native peoples' in the area were friendly, accommodating with resources, and acted as guides for English exploration.<sup>22</sup> Despite these references, we know even less about encounters between Maryland's Native population and free blacks in the region. Yet, southern scholarship has clearly established that deep-seated liaisons existed between Native peoples and blacks, as with the Seminole of Florida and the Catawba of South Carolina.<sup>23</sup> This type of support and guidance came in the form of tribal interpreters, new tactics of warfare and protection for both sides, as well as, shared work, and a combined knowledge necessary for future survival.

During the development of the Maryland colony similar encounters can be seen on the Eastern Shore through reports of indentured runaways as John Nuttall of Somerset County whom I single out in greater depth later, a reliance on interpreters for native and colonial interactions, along with Shore traders like Thomas Taylor who patented Native

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<sup>22</sup> Rev. Father Andrew White, "A Relation of the Colony of the Lord Baron of Baltimore in Maryland, near Virginia; A Narrative of the First Voyage to Maryland," (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1847). [https://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=sSnABp3B\\_IIC&pg=GBS.PA19](https://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=sSnABp3B_IIC&pg=GBS.PA19); Ebenezer Cook, *The Sot-weed Factor: or, a Voyage to Maryland*, (London: Raven in Pater-Noster-Row, 1708), 11

<sup>23</sup> James H. Merrell, *The Indians New World: Catawba's and Their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989); Bethany Montagano, "Blackening Out History," in *IndiVisible: African-Native American Lives in the Americas*, 43-51, (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 2009); Theda Perdue, *Mixed Blood Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South*, (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2003).

land at Chicone to protect both his and Native ways of life.<sup>24</sup> Similar evidence for free and indentured blacks in this respect are missing for this area outside of a mention that in 1702 house break-ins involving Native individuals included a black slave accomplice named Caesar.<sup>25</sup>

During the long eighteenth century, it is challenging to see African interactions with whites, or Native peoples, outside of the context of slavery. It seems critical to have a sense of how Natives viewed their own captives and to explore the cultural mindset that they would have exhibited during African encounters. A window into this behavior in Native groups is provided through the documentation of their relationships and interactions beginning as far back as the Mississippian era and extending as far west as Missouri and Ohio.<sup>26</sup> Clearly defined in this research are interactions, not all of which were good, between various Natives groups and those people they considered to be their enemies, foreigners, and intruders on their lands. Yet, tracing the movements and evolution of that ancient culture allows one to explore how Native peoples came to practice and understand captivity and how these beliefs changed over time.

Captivity was normal for most Native people as the culmination of warfare and was deeply rooted throughout indigenous society. It was not, however, a static institution but one that adapted to changing needs and circumstance that may have resulted over time. Unlike European slavery, the role of a captive could be revised or determined by the needs of the community and varied from replacements and adoptees to captives used

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<sup>24</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians*, 90,108; Other important traders and land patent holders were John Westlock, Jenkin Price, and William Stevens; Restore Handsell Project, "History of Handsell Land Grant," visited 10/12/2016, [http://www.restorehandsell.org/?page\\_id=2](http://www.restorehandsell.org/?page_id=2)

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>26</sup> Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country*.

for their labor, bartered and sold for goods, or tortured and killed as retribution. A point to take note of is the differences between the slavery that existed in European colonies for its economic value and Native captivity driven by cultural beliefs and kinship responsibilities.<sup>27</sup> From a “Native view... the opposite of slavery was not freedom... [but] kinship.”<sup>28</sup> It is crucial to remember, however, that native loyalties adhered only to kinships and clans to which they would support and defend no matter the cost.

For example, in tradition Native customs wrongful deaths required vengeance thus setting up cycles of tribal warfare. The taking of replacements, coupled with European interests in the purchase of slaves, led to attacks on Native peoples who were fewer in numbers and less capable of defending themselves. Vanquished individuals taken as spoils of war were in turn sold or traded by their Native captors into what became known as the Indian slave trade. Writings suggest that Europeans began to forge relationships with stronger native groups solely for the economic purpose of obtaining cheap labor. The repercussions of inter-tribal warfare and the subsequent native slave trade, coupled with their losses from disease, became tribal depopulation. In response to the ensuing depopulation, Native peoples shift away from traditional practices and began to incorporate more captives through adoption and marriage.

The scholarly tendency for all regions, nonetheless, has been to study groups separately fabricating history from a predominantly white point of view. For example, Native history up to approximately the 1960s was of the vanishing native and their culture. New scholarship also challenges the standard depiction of slavery, with regards to being either black or white, by demonstrating how the slave trade was indiscriminate.

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<sup>27</sup> Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country*.

<sup>28</sup> Snyder, Introduction, 5.

The system spared no one, which is clearly seen throughout colonization of the Americas, and natives were as susceptible as Africans. When history is presented from a single lens, it works only to diminish and highly marginalize the complexity of encounters and collaborations existing outside of that frame. As a result, you find historical records and scholarly interpretations highlighting Native peoples' immigration and extinction, along with those connecting all people of African descent with the institution of slavery.

Native slaves inevitably vanished from Virginia records and throughout the mid-Atlantic as planters and legislation began categorizing them as Black.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, historians beyond the fringes of Maryland's Eastern Shore have established that Native peoples and both free and enslaved blacks from New England, south to Florida, and throughout the Midwest all shared histories amidst systems of subjugation and oppression, if not because of it, and survived into the future.<sup>30</sup>

## Native Peoples' History on Maryland's Eastern Shore

To understand the early seventeenth and eighteenth-century landscape and how Native people's reactions to emigrant arrivals developed in this region, it is critical to have some sense of the Native history and culture specific to the Eastern Shore. The focus of this section is on areas near and including those lands set aside by the provincial government as designated reservations including their inhabitants. Using Capt. John Smith's 1612 map of the Chesapeake we get a sense of not only the various local tribes, but specific areas of the Bay that they inhabited, along with their proximity to colonial settlements. Archaeological research obtained through excavations contributes to this

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<sup>29</sup> Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country*; Merrell. *The Indians New World*

<sup>30</sup> Katz, *Black Indians*, (New York: Simon Pulse, 2005), Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country*; James Oliver & Lois E. Horton, *In Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community, and Protest Among Northern Free Blacks 1700-1860*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

history by substantiating locations, time periods, and colonial settlements through artifact collection and field notes. Lectures and demonstrations presented by current descendants of local Eastern Woodland Natives added another dimension to the story told from a living Pocomoke and Nanticoke perspective.

These Early Eastern Woodland tribes living on Maryland's Eastern Shore moved throughout the surrounding areas occupying various landscapes at different times of the year. They utilized the regions available natural resources for food, clothing, and building materials. In the spring and summer month's groups would locate to areas suitable for planting and the harvesting of waterways. Women and children were responsible for planting and cultivating the fields in early spring. Men cleared the land and did most of the fishing and hunting. The foundation crops consisted of beans, corn (maize), and pumpkins but could include gourds, melons, and in some area a passion vine called maracock.<sup>31</sup> Variants in the local waterways from salt, brackish, to freshwater provided a wide array of fish, mollusk, and crustaceans along with varieties of edible native plants such as Tuckahoe. Native people would also supplement their diet with wild berries, nuts, and available local game. During winter months, they would move inland to hunt in their hinterlands. Native peoples' nomadic lifestyle was foreign to English settlers. This seasonally driven lifestyle appeared to English settlers as an abandonment of village lands, a misunderstanding that resulted in significant conflicts and even threats of war.

In the early seventeenth century, Capt. John Smith traveled and mapped the areas of the lower Eastern Shore recording approximately one-hundred and sixty-six Native

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<sup>31</sup> Rice, *Nature & History*, 39-40.

villages present in that region. Historical records of the Pocomoke Nation place their “main village and center of the Paramountcy...on the east side of the Pocomoke River.”<sup>32</sup> Smith's 1612 map (fig.1) reiterates this location by depicting a Wighcocomoco (Pocomoke) village to the eastern side of Wighco Flu, which is the area of the Pocomoke River drainage system today. To the north, Smith mapped the Kus Flu (Nanticoke River drainage system) locating at its head the village of the Kuskarawack who became known as the Nanticoke People. Along this same tributary, a smaller village is noted to be that of the Nantaquak; or what archaeologists point to as the "residential village" of the Nanticoke peoples.<sup>33</sup> The Pocomoke Nation today considers *Kuskarawaoks*, written across a significant portion of the map, as a telling indication that they were historically associated with the Kuskarawack and those living at Nantaquak, thus sharing a similar language and customs with these other Native peoples of the region.<sup>34</sup>



Figure 2: Captain John Smith's 1612 Map of the Chesapeake Bay, Pocomoke Indian Nation, Inc.

<sup>32</sup> “Capt. John Smith’s Map of the Chesapeake Bay, published in 1612,” Pocomoke Indian Nation, Inc., last modified Oct. 2016. <http://www.pocomokeindiannation.org/Maps.htm>

<sup>33</sup> Virginia R. Busby, “Interim Report on Archaeological Research at Nicholas Farms,” II. Background, Report submitted to the Office of Archaeology, Maryland Historic Trust, Mar. 1996, 2.

<sup>34</sup> “Capt. John Smith’s Map, 1612.



Groups living in Maryland had faced many similar circumstances with those living outside of the area. For instance, enslavement of Native peoples is rarely spoken of, however; there is some evidence supportive of Native individuals in Maryland becoming indentured to local settlers. A 1728 complaint registered in Somerset County said that Quinackin, a Pocomoke boy, had been taken and illegally held as a servant. A similar situation came to light when another Somerset County resident attempted to sell a Native boy outside of the state. Both incidents here however, were quickly resolved and punishments, what form is unclear, were doled out accordingly for the indenturing and selling Natives.<sup>35</sup>

Intertribal warfare, with the Susquehannock and tribes to the north, also became more prevalent. Local attacks caused smaller tribes to pursue the protection of other local groups, or larger groups like the Piscataway and those of the five Nations, in order to seek out new safer locations. Coupling this growing scenario of apprehension, with that of colonial encroachment, and it becomes problematic not to see what a significant role such encounters would have played in the reconfiguration of Native peoples' lives. Traders who arrived early in Virginia, remarked how the custom for Native hunters had been to burn their animal's pelt for which they were convinced to save the pelts for their return. Similar customs may have been prevalent even for the Eastern Shore.

Beginning around 1608 the Susquehanna traveled into the Delmarva region from villages located primarily in Pennsylvania along the Susquehanna River. By the 1630s the Susquehannock had expanded into the upper Eastern Shore claiming the region as a part of their trading territory, which at that time extended as far north as the Great Lakes.

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<sup>35</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians*, 143.

This would have curtailed trade relations and needed materials for the local tribes, even placing them in positions for retaliation by these stronger groups. William Claiborne entered into trade with the Susquehannock during the 1620s hoping to tap into their extensive northern trade routes. Accompanying his newly established trading post on the Isle of Kent, Claiborne brought with him the necessary manpower and materials to transform the native landscape into a plantation business. Continuing to expand fur trading territories, by the late 1650s Susquehannock control had reached as far as the north shore of the Choptank River. The ensuing encroachment from both the Susquehannock and English into Maryland regions which were still inhabited by groups like the Wicomiss, who held tribal lands along the Chester River on the upper Eastern Shore, and the Monoponsons of Kent Island pushed these smaller groups farther out in an effort to escape recurring hostilities.<sup>36</sup>

Outside of the pressures from encroachment the native ecology present within the Delmarva Peninsula, by way of diversity in terrain and multiple “econiches,”<sup>37</sup> allowed various peoples to develop cultural differences while still maintaining tribal alliances. For example, villages occupying alternate sides of rivers and creeks along the Chesapeake Bay most times constituted separate clans of the same family group.<sup>38</sup> Each would have developed variations in culture depending on location, yet maintained family connections, trade relations, and message networks. At different times during the long

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<sup>36</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians*, 86,90; Ethnohistorical Records, “The Black Diamond Site (7NC-J-225)”, 4.3, 29.

<sup>37</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians*, xii; “Econiches” refers to the vast ecological landscapes present on the peninsula as forest, lowlands, tidal marshes, brackish and freshwater streams and rivers which provide a variance in food sources, building materials, and cultural lifeways for those who inhabit a particular area.

<sup>38</sup> “Our History,” Pocomoke Indian Nation, Inc., last modified Nov. 21, 2014, <http://www.pocomokeindiannation.org/Our%20History/index.html>.

eighteenth-century, these interconnections held as tribes came together through alliances and collaborated their efforts to try to stall colonial encroachment.

A leading example is when in 1742 the Nanticoke met at Wimbesoccom Neck along with members from the Choptank, Assateague, Indian River, and Pocomoke tribes to discuss a Shawnee plot to attack the local English settlers. Warriors sent from Pennsylvania and beyond would in turn support the uprising. Members of the Conoy (Piscataway) people located on the Western Shore had also joined with the Nanticoke at points during the 1740s. During such periods of strife and encroachment from both English and other hostile Natives, local tribes could seek out shelter and support among their neighbors and diverse allied nations.

The significance of such tribal alliances for Maryland Native peoples convincingly discredits the ideas of disappearance or extinction. In conversation with the chief of the Pocomoke tribe today, he clarified that upon encroachment, when Native peoples were forced to move or were taken in by other groups, they did not disappear but shared a new landscape that would have necessitated the incorporation of many aspects from the original inhabitant's culture in order for them to survive.<sup>39</sup> This experience equates to that of living with one's in-laws or learning new techniques better suited to an unfamiliar ecosystem. Scholars, however, have historically worked to compartmentalized Native peoples by area, ignoring the larger scenario of long-range alliances which provided safety and kinship rather than supposed absorption and eradication.

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<sup>39</sup> Norris C. Howard Sr., personal communication to author, Nanticoke River Jamboree, October 8, 2016.

Many interconnections linking Native peoples came as the result of trade in raw materials. The landscape itself provided unique natural resources from place to place. Copper and shells, both symbols of significant power and meaning for Native peoples, came through trade in areas where sources were not as prevalent. The natural diversity in flora and fauna also provided some of these areas with the types of animals coveted by the fur trade. Maryland's Eastern Shore, abundant in beaver to supply the English hat fetish of the time, encouraged the colonial government to limit English settlements for that region of Maryland.<sup>40</sup> This also, however, encouraged intertribal raiding on the part of northern Susquehannock, resulting in local tribes like the Piscataway moving inland to safer areas.

Other regions proved more suited for the growing of food stuff. Virginia natives for instance, including the Piscataway who were living in coastal areas on the western shore of Maryland as well, were already farming corn and a variety of other foodstuffs before the time of English arrival and their flight from hostile tribes. Father Andrew White, the superior of the Maryland Mission, attested to these actions. After having arrived in the new world aboard the Ark, White observes how "they [presumably the Piscataway] move away every day... and leave us their homes, lands, and cultivated fields."<sup>41</sup> In what sounds to be a hasty retreat from possibly both hostile tribes and arriving foreigners, made it somewhat effortless for the colonist, whose existence relied on cultivating the land, to take over a premade farming culture.

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<sup>40</sup> Erich Isaac, "Kent Island, Pt.1: The Period of Settlement," *Maryland Historic Magazine*, 52:2 (Jun 1957), 101.

<sup>41</sup> White, "A Relation of the Colony, 37.

[https://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=sSnABp3B\\_IIC&pg=GBS.PA19](https://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=sSnABp3B_IIC&pg=GBS.PA19)

In contrast, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, early encounters were based primarily on the economic advantages that came through the interactions of trade. Scholarship for regions outside the Eastern Shore traces the development of these relationships beginning through the fur trade and ending with detribalization as Native peoples disappear from colonial records. English settlement as previously stated had been discouraged, and for a time banned, during the 1630s and 1640s for fear of damaging this important form of colonial income. John Westlock appears in the historical record as the first known English trader who in 1620 traded on a regular basis with the Manokin Indians living in Somerset County on the lower Eastern Shore. His dealings presumably took place at a village called “Trading Branch... later known as Manokin Town.”<sup>42</sup> English interest in Chesapeake trade continued until approximately the 1650s. William Claiborne established a trading post on Kent Island in the late 1620s for Virginia, which was eventually taken over by George Calvert who chartered the land for Maryland.

As the fur trade began to wane during the 1650s, political barriers that restricted settlement on the “Eastern Shore north of the Pocomoke River”<sup>43</sup> began to disappear. Traders in the region began to petition lands as a means of investment for their livelihood. Thomas Taylor, a licensed trader and the initial owner of Handsell in Dorchester County, petitioned land in July of 1665 containing the main residential village of Chicone. Scholars have alluded to the fact that Taylor requested the property to protect Natives of the area who were the heart of his business, and to maintain hunting

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<sup>42</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians*, 85.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

grounds which supported his trading post<sup>44</sup> This appears to be a sound assumption, for upon the death of Christopher Nutter, who had purchased the property from Thomas Taylor, encroachment became more blatant and hostile.

Another important trade relation is that of John Nuttall's. What is significant about John Nuttall is his prior exposure to Native peoples, which substantiates the convoluted encounters and relations that existed here. Nuttall is reported to have been an indentured servant in Virginia records who had run away numerous time from his owner Hugh Hays<sup>45</sup> to live among a local Eastern Shore tribe.<sup>46</sup> It is unclear what relations evolved at that time from this contact, for it appears Nuttall was sold to a William Jones<sup>47</sup> "for the price of a hoe"<sup>48</sup> and returned to his owner. Nuttall nevertheless, eventually became a major player in the fur trade throughout the Chesapeake Bay region. Through his associations with numerous local Natives throughout the years it appears Nuttall had developed strong allegiances with the Wicomico living in Somerset County. These people may have been the group who offered him sanctuary during his term of indenture. His allegiances became suspect in a report to the Council of the province of Maryland presented by John Elzey and Francis Wright appointed commissioners presiding over the settlement of Maryland. In this report and subsequent depositions Nuttall's loyalties came under scrutiny. As tensions had grown over English advances on Wicomico land,

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<sup>44</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians*, 146.

<sup>45</sup> Clayton Torrence, *Old Somerset on the Eastern Shore of Maryland*, (Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1966), 486.

<sup>46</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians*, 90-92.

<sup>47</sup> Torrence, *Old Somerset*, 486.

<sup>48</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians*, 90.

Nuttall was accused of instigating the “seeds of disaster”<sup>49</sup> by encouraging their resistance.

The fur trade is an overarching theme within the context of Maryland and it dominated relations and encounters with persons moving into the Delmarva area. Attention to one prominent presumption seen throughout the mid-Atlantic region focuses on who controlled this trade. Scholars re-evaluate such business encounters as a means to argue agency and manipulation of colonial powers by tribes of the various area.<sup>50</sup> Historically Europeans are afforded superiority in such encounters, yet challenges to this stereotypical view which projects Native people as victims of expansion is becoming more prominent. For example, initial interactions and exchange in the Tidewater Potomac suggest a reasonable amount of Native control over trade. Trade relations that had begun in the Tidewater area by 1650 were still viable into the eighteenth century and followed pre-established rules of conduct. Traders could use or take what they needed concerning a Native's shelter and supplies during their travels, but tribes demanded compensation in the form of other goods in exchange. Codes and networks established through the fur trade acted as a “bond of peace.”<sup>51</sup> Whereas, Europeans came to believe Native peoples were becoming dependent on goods and technology supplied by them thus controlling or conforming native behavior to colonial wishes.

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<sup>49</sup> Torrence, *Old Somerset*, 17.

<sup>50</sup> Stephen R. Potter, “Early English Effects on Virginia Algonquian Exchange and Tribute in the Tidewater Potomac” in *Powhatan's Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast* 151-172. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989); Hämäläinen, *Comanche Empire*; James H. Merrell, “Our Bond of Peace: Patterns of Intercultural Exchange in the Carolina Piedmont, 1650-1750, in *Powhatan's Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast*, 196-222. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989).

<sup>51</sup> Merrell, “Our Bond of Peace,” 198.

Convincing amounts of acculturation at this point in time appear highly unlikely. Trade transactions support more of a notion for assimilation rather than acculturation by highlighting significant complexities within the story. Essentially for acculturation to take place, it requires an acceptance and receptiveness towards “outside cultural elements.”<sup>52</sup> Most Native people were not that receptive nor did they want to change. The fur trade in retrospect worked through established codes where Piedmont Natives were in fact molding trade etiquette towards native specifications. Traders or “outsiders” were allowed into native territory only by following strict guidelines and behaving in “acceptable ways.”<sup>53</sup> Native peoples never entirely relinquished their ways or submitted to the dictates of colonial traders but to the contrary were active participants. A required diplomacy that forced traders to rely on local guides, wait for permission to enter villages, and then implored them to follow tribal etiquette is visibly emphasizing their will or agency within the trade system.

Native people also did not accept just any goods but looked for what some called “trinkets”<sup>54</sup> which they could use as adornments. Archaeological evidence has demonstrated how Native people also fabricated unfamiliar European objects into something that could better suit the needs of the community rather than to use them in a prescribed manner. Exchanges, even those involving the purchase of humans, some scholars see as symbolic expressions of friendship and trust used to cement peaceful relations.<sup>55</sup> This becomes evident back as far as 1608 when Thomas (Ensigne) Savage

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<sup>52</sup> James H. Merrell, “Cultural Continuity among the Piscataway Indians of Colonial Maryland,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 36:4, (Oct. 1979): 568.

<sup>53</sup> Merrell, “Our Bond of Peace,” 198.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 283.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 292.



was exchanged along with gifts sent from King James I.<sup>56</sup> Savage arrived in James Town as a young boy on board the John and Francis and soon thereafter was sent to live among the Powhatan. He was expected to learn their language and native customs in order to act as interpreter for the new and future arrivals.<sup>57</sup> By the late eighteenth-century nevertheless, a changeover in the trade system becomes noticeable as the introduction of alcohol and weapons becomes more prevalent. Similar trade exchanges existed between the Virginia Algonquians and the English colonist and appeared to be highly representative of Native groups living in Maryland.

When settlement restrictions lifted for Maryland's Eastern Shore due to the decline in the fur trade, colonists began crowding into Somerset County, and by approximately 1670 the trading village at Manokin Indian town ceased to exist. Native decline also accelerated for the Nanticoke when Unnacokasimmo, the Nanticoke werowance, was forced to sign the first of five treaties with the Maryland provincial government on May 1, 1668.<sup>58</sup> By the end of the seventeenth-century reservations had become the Nanticoke and the Choptank peoples' lone chance at survival within a growing colonial population. However, in 1768 the Maryland government authorized a bill that allowed the purchase of any remaining rights the Nanticoke tribe held to their town at Chicone. This same bill also resulted in the sale of Broad Creek, the extended

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<sup>56</sup> Martha McCartney, "Thomas Savage (ca. 1595–before September 1633", *Early Years*), Encyclopedia of Virginia, (Williamsburg: Virginia Foundation of the Humanities)

[http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Savage\\_Thomas\\_ca\\_1595-before\\_September\\_1633](http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Savage_Thomas_ca_1595-before_September_1633)

<sup>57</sup> Karen Kupperman, Crandall Shifflett and Jim Whittenburg, "English Interpreters," excerpt from *With Good Reason*, aired Sept. 30, 2006, VFH Radio, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities

[http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/media\\_player?mets\\_filename=evm00003544mets.xml](http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/media_player?mets_filename=evm00003544mets.xml)

<sup>58</sup> Frank W. Porter, III, "A Century of Accommodation: The Nanticoke Indians in Colonial Maryland", *Maryland Historical Magazine* 74:2 (1979): 181.

3,000-acre reservation<sup>59</sup> provided by the Maryland Assembly in 1711. After 1770, it appears that there were "no further references to Indians at Chicone and that by 1785 reservation lands were entirely in the hands of Anglo-American farmers."<sup>60</sup> In Maryland formally organized tribes, according to most colonial records, ceased to exist in the late eighteenth-century. The last formal group in Virginia, the Gingaskins, were detribalized in the early nineteenth-century.<sup>61</sup> Detribalization came under the assumption by English officials that through the depletion in population, and loss of lands, Native peoples were unable to maintain a recognized government or support recognized tribal characteristics thus becoming hidden within the dominant cultural.

### Free Blacks Entering Maryland's Eastern Shore

The stereotype of an African arriving in the colonies during the long eighteenth-century is an enslaved person. The importance of the transformation in the African American Historiography was to break such preconceived notions for free blacks and for them to be viewed as distinct among the conglomerate of arrivals entering the New World. Former biased historiographies written to "achieve the notice and respect of White America,"<sup>62</sup> promoted many misconceptions about the African experience in Maryland.<sup>63</sup> This section addressed these misconceptions by presenting background information regarding known free blacks who came to Maryland's Eastern Shore from Virginia and from other regions of Maryland. It will also emphasize that contrary to the

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<sup>59</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians*, 93,101.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 159.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>62</sup> Robert L. Harris, Jr., "Coming of Age: The Transformation of Afro-American Historiography," *The Journal of Negro History*, 67:2 (Summer, 1982), 107.

<sup>63</sup> James M. Wright, *The Free Negro in Maryland 1634-1860*, New York: Octagon Books, 2nd ed. 1971; William Harlen Gilbert, Jr. "The Wesorts of Southern Maryland: An Outcasted Group." *Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences*. 35:8 (1945): 237-246.

histories found for Maryland and much of the Mid-Atlantic, evidence clearly indicates that during the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth-century foreigners, including free blacks, became a significant part of what had previously been Native territories.

The formation of alliances within the various groups have become increasingly blurred or eliminated altogether from historical records. Chronicling the movements of free blacks entering Maryland from Virginia during the Colonial period, underscored the misrepresentations throughout history that link all blacks to slavery.<sup>64</sup> Not all Africans who entered the Chesapeake area came as slaves. Blacks who immigrated to Maryland during the seventeenth century - at least from Virginia - were neither slaves nor did they appear to be reliant on Europeans for subsistence. Of those who came as ex-slaves or indentured servants many had purchased their freedom along with that of their family members. Some came after having been manumitted, either upon the owner's death or through the owner's deliberate release.<sup>65</sup>

However, still other immigrating Africans lacked a defining association with the system of enslavement. In Maryland for instance, black children born to mothers who were free inherited freedom from birth despite the circumstances of the father.<sup>66</sup> Historians have pointed out that prior to the Revolutionary War, the majority of free blacks arriving on the lower Eastern Shore had been born free or obtained their freedom by other means, such as purchase, manumission, or descendance from a mulatto

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<sup>64</sup> Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore*.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 4; John R. Wennersten, *Maryland's Eastern Shore: A Journey in Time and Place* (Tidewater Publishers: Centreville, 1992), 120.121

<sup>66</sup> Thomas E. Davidson, "Free Blacks in Old Somerset County, 1745-1755," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 80:2 (1985), 153; Archives of Maryland, ed. William Hand Browne, et al., 68 vols. (Baltimore, 1833- ), 13L 546-49.

heritage.<sup>67</sup> Somerset County recorded ninety-three individuals in 1755 who were listed on the county census as free blacks, forty-four of which were children. Out of those individuals listed above thirty-nine had been free from birth.<sup>68</sup>

Terminology within the county documents lacks consistency and can be confusing when attempting to determine a person's status. Records have indicated the majority of those listed as free also showed as mulattoes. Of the ninety-three free blacks listed above in Somerset County, approximately eighty-three were free mulattoes leaving eleven as free blacks only four of whom are known to have been previously slaves. There are also clear indications that roughly half of the free mulattoes living in the county had been free for consecutive generations sharing the "surnames of Puckham, Horner or Game."<sup>69</sup>

During the seventeenth century, it appeared that race played a minor role in determining relationships between white and black residents in Maryland. If one were fortunate enough to be in a position where they could purchase land then they were "considered part of the community."<sup>70</sup> However, class notations emerging during the eighteenth century demonstrate the beginnings of what became a progression of blurred identity within the historic record. For example, it was recorded that "freeborne English women forgettfull of their free Condition and to the disgrace of our Nation doe intermarry with Negro Slaves."<sup>71</sup> Children born to these women were considered free but took on

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<sup>67</sup> Wennersten, *Maryland's Eastern Shore*, 120,121; Coleman, *That the Blood Stay Pure*, 31,32; Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore*, 4.

<sup>68</sup> Davidson, "Free Blacks in Old Somerset County, 151.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 154.

<sup>70</sup> Breen and Innes, "Myne Owne Ground," 104.

<sup>71</sup> Paul Heinegg, introduction to *Free African Americans of Maryland and Delaware: From the Colonial Period to 1810*, (Baltimore: Clearfield Company, Inc., 2000), 2.

the classification of mulatto that was thought at this point to be the mixture of white and African heritage.

These types of encounters appeared to have become so prevalent that Maryland and Virginia passed laws to advert its frequency. In 1692 Maryland put a law in place that restricted cohabitation with slaves by punishing white woman, selling them as servants for as long as seven years. This law also required that any children “serve until the age of twenty-one if the mother were married to the slave, and till thirty-one if they were not married.”<sup>72</sup> By the year 1715 a “Supplementary Act to the Act, entitled, An Act relating to Servants and Slaves”<sup>73</sup> added similar punishments for mulatto woman to the current law:

Be it enacted, That from and after the end of this present session of assembly, that all such free mulatto women, having bastard children, either within or after the time of their service, (and their issue,) shall be subject to the same penalties that white women and their issue are, for having mulatto bastards, by the act, entitled, An act relating to servants and slaves.” And be it further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, by and with the advice and consent aforesaid, That from and after the end of this present session of assembly, that all free negro women, having bastard children by white men, (and their issue,) shall be subject to the same penalties that white women are, by the act aforesaid, for having bastards by negro men.<sup>74</sup>

The Puckham family nevertheless, noted as the "largest and the oldest free black family"<sup>75</sup> in the area, is somewhat unusual with regards to this mulatto class distinction indicating a change in definition, for they shared an inherent descent from a John

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<sup>72</sup> Heinegg, introduction to *Free African Americans of Maryland and Delaware*, 1; “*Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly, April 1684-June 1692*,” 13:546-49 (May 10-June 9, 1692), Maryland State Archives. <http://aomol.msa.maryland.gov/000001/000013/html/am13--547.html>

<sup>73</sup> “*Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly, 1727-1729 With Appendix of Statutes, 1714-1726*,” Chap. IV [Supplement to 1715, Ch. 44], v,36:235, Maryland State Archives. <http://aomol.msa.maryland.gov/000001/000036/html/am36--275.html>

<sup>74</sup> Dorsey, “The General Public Statutory Law and Public Local Law of State of Maryland, from 1692-1839”, p. 79, in *The Journal of Negro History*, v,3: n,4 (Oct. 1918),342.

<sup>75</sup> Davidson, “Free Blacks in Old Somerset, 154.

Puckham. Jone, classified as a free negro, in 1682 is noted to be the granddaughter of Anthony Johnson who moved to Maryland in the initial wave of immigrations from Virginia. However, she married John Puckham who was of Native ancestry, possibly living at Monie Indian Town, which was located in the vicinity of her home on Wicomico Creek.<sup>76</sup> Settlement locations in close proximity to Native lands would have brought about such encounters. (see fig. 1) In 1657, Jone is recorded as having received one-hundred acres of land from a “Tobot Deabot. [or] Debedeavon... nicknamed The Laughing King.”<sup>77</sup> It is believed that Debedeavon may have been the father of John Puckham and that this land came as a gift when the two married.<sup>78</sup> The land was also said to be located next to her brothers indicating that both parcels may have belonged to or were adjacent to Native lands.<sup>79</sup>

The resulting relationships, as this between free blacks and Native peoples, was also accompanied by those which occurred in the white population. Scholarship notes similar encounters for other areas, as North Carolina with the Lumbee and in Virginia with the Piscataway. Yet, census records tended to designate these Native people along with those of mixed Native heritage as “Free Persons of Color.”<sup>80</sup> The mixing of black and native had now become part of the terminology that designated mulatto. Outside of such racial classifications there stands the inclination that tri-racial encounters between black, white and native provided a network of connections that would have proved vital

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<sup>76</sup> Heinegg, *Free African Americans of Maryland and Delaware*, 292.

<sup>77</sup> Ryan Charles Cox, “The Johnson Family: The Migratory Study of an African-American Family on the Eastern Shore,” *Delmarva Settlers: Biographical Profiles*, (2016), visited 10/14/2016. <http://web.archive.org/web/20100629232207/http://nabbhistory.salisbury.edu/settlers/profiles/johnson4.htm>

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., Ch. 3.

<sup>79</sup> Heinegg, *Free African Americans of Maryland and Delaware*, 211.

<sup>80</sup> Karen Blu, *The Lumbee problem: the making of an American Indian people* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1980), 36.

for survival and community development. What would one need more when settling a new area but the aide of someone familiar with territory or understanding of colonial ways?

Seventeenth-century free blacks also appeared to have been privy to many of the same judicial privileges as those available to free white persons. Even though they were required to pay taxes and excluded from military service and voting rights, free blacks could borrow money, were extended credit, sign and witness legal documents, and could freely access the legal system when needed.<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless, during the seventeenth century, Maryland had no specific legislation describing the rights and liberties for free blacks; nor was there any affirmation that these rights and liberties would remain protected.<sup>82</sup> White communities on the lower Eastern Shore of Maryland appeared to tolerate the presents of free blacks, for most places during colonial times their position in the community was determined solely on the “attitudes and perceptions of a white majority.”<sup>83</sup> Any burden of proof regarding free status fell upon the individual, thus making it a notable practice to equate themselves culturally to Englishmen either by demonstrating an Anglicized lineage or by declaring themselves Christianized.<sup>84</sup> Claiming English traits including baptism were not grounds for freedom under Maryland law. However, the abundance of cases brought before County courts allude to the frequency in which they used this claim. A prime example of this is when Sarah Diggers along with several other claimants petitioned the Somerset County Court to alleviate

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<sup>81</sup> Ross M. Kimmel, “Free Blacks in Seventeenth-Century Maryland,” *Maryland Historical Magazine* 71:1(1976), 25.

<sup>82</sup> Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland*. 21.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>84</sup> Kimmel, “Free Blacks in Seventeenth-Century Maryland,” 21.

them from taxes being charged "at the legal rate for slaves."<sup>85</sup> All petitioners involved pleaded on the grounds of free birth to which the court acknowledged, that if they could submit parish certificates to substantiate their claims, at that time only would they no longer be held responsible for paying the current taxation amount.

Nevertheless, Christianization could play a double role during this time frame. For free blacks in Maryland, it appeared to have worked advantageously, securing them a form of legal identity within the white Anglo community. It also seems to have brought with it certain status advantages such as affording them treatment as servants rather than as slaves.<sup>86</sup> In fact, it appears to have become such a standard plea in Virginia that the General Assembly enacted a new law in 1667 to eliminate baptism as a justifiable proof for freedom. The law stated that "conferring of baptisme doth not alter the condition of the person as to his bondage or Freedom."<sup>87</sup> Maryland followed suit in 1671 passing an Act which also stated that baptism was no longer a release from slavery.<sup>88</sup> Conversion, however, appeared to play a more negative role for Native peoples.

As numerous individuals among Native communities chose to remain despite encroachment, many converted to Christianity as a requirement for obtaining a legal marriage. For example, when Jone Puckham married a Monie Native, he took the name of John Puckham believed to have "derived from Puckamee,"<sup>89</sup> possibly his home village.

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<sup>85</sup> Kimmel, "Free Blacks in Seventeenth-Century Maryland," 21.

<sup>86</sup> Warren M. Billings, "The Cases of Fernando and Elizabeth Key: A Note on the Status of Blacks in Seventeenth-Century Virginia," *William and Mary Quarterly* 30:3(1973), 470.

<sup>87</sup> Billings, "The Cases of Fernando and Elizabeth Key," 470.

<sup>88</sup> James M. Wright, *The Free Negro in Maryland*, 22.

<sup>89</sup> Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland*, 32.



The couple's marriage license clearly showcases that John Puckham had been baptized a month prior to his marriage with Jone:

John Puckham an Indian baptized by John Huett minister on 25th day of January one thousand six hundred eighty two And the said John Puckham & Jone Johnson negro were married by the said minister ye 25th February Anno Do,/ Maryland.<sup>90</sup>

Religious conversion provided Native peoples a means for marriage outside of their own communities that became a necessity in the face of diminishing populations, however, it did not provide them acceptance under the law or within the white community as Native individuals. What it did accomplish was to erase their Native identity through the prerequisite of having to assume an Anglicized name. This action, in turn, resulted in many individuals becoming lost within the historical record.<sup>91</sup>

The most prominent privilege free blacks held was their ability to obtain or purchase land. In the 1650s when Maryland opened the door for settlers many free blacks from Virginia, predominantly the Northampton and Accomack areas, took advantage of the prospect for new horizons and began to immigrate into Somerset, Worcester, and later into Dorchester Counties. As a means of attracting settlement into the newly established colony, Maryland offered the prospect of 500 free acres of land to those who sponsored new settlers.<sup>92</sup> Anthony Johnson is credited along with his wife and son as "the first blacks known to move into Somerset County"<sup>93</sup> during the seventeenth century. Johnson and his sons also arrived as "probably the wealthiest of the Accomack

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<sup>90</sup> Heinegg, *Free African Americans of Maryland and Delaware*, 292.

<sup>91</sup> Norris C. Howard Sr., personal communication to author, Nanticoke River Jamboree, October, 8, 2016.

<sup>92</sup> Maryland State Archives, "*Proceedings of the Council of Maryland, 1636-1667*" v,3:47-49.  
<http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2900/sc2908/000001/000003/html/am3--47.html>

<sup>93</sup> Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland*, 8.

and Northampton areas free blacks.”<sup>94</sup> Father and sons continued to share ownership of approximately eight hundred acres of land holdings in Virginia. Eventually, in 1666, Anthony Johnson leased "Tony's (Tonies) Vineyard”<sup>95</sup> a 300-acre plot from a Stephen Horsey in Somerset County.

Johnson's story is interesting in that he entered Virginia records in 1621 as a person in bondage purchased for labor on the “Bennett or Warresquioake (Wariscoyack) plantation.”<sup>96</sup> His first encounter with local Natives was through survival during a raid which took place while he was working at this tobacco plantation. The Piscataway, who had become angry over planter's encroachment, subsequently attacked the surrounding areas killing everyone at this plantation except Johnson and four others.<sup>97</sup> Eventually, Johnson was able to purchase his freedom, marry another slave and procure her freedom, invest in land, and upon his arrival in Maryland had acquired a slave named John Cassa (Cassaugh). This is a clear indication that during the early settlement a certain fluidity existed between participants. Opportunity, though marginal in comparison to those available to white individuals, allowed many free blacks to interact and redefine themselves and their lifestyles, thus developing unique cultural identities through the inclusion of both old and new lifeways. One's original status appeared to have been malleable, not yet a set cast at this early stage in the colony. Thus, through the procurement of a slave, Johnson's behavior is indicative of the times and his ability to associate himself with white society.

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<sup>94</sup> Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland*, 26.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 27-28.

<sup>96</sup> Breen and Innes, “*Myne Owne Ground*,” 8.

<sup>97</sup> *Africans in America: The Terrible Transformation, People & Events: Anthony Johnson 1600*, PBS Online, visited November 12, 2016. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1p265.html>

Johnson, as did other free blacks during the seventeenth century, had behavioral options available which allowed him to shake off the identity of enslavement, interact in colonial society as freemen, and to take part in similar economic and social opportunities available to most whites. By the mid-eighteenth century on the Eastern Shore the social system had enacted barriers which inhibited free black economic success unless they belonged to families who had already established themselves and were able to inherit prior economic gains.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, free blacks owned thirteen other plantations on the lower Eastern Shore, all of which contributed to the formation of defined black lifeways presently seen throughout Maryland.

Free black plantations as, “Red Oak Ridge” which existed within the “Indian Town”<sup>99</sup> (Askibinikansen or Askiminikansen) of Worcester County just north of present day Snow Hill, indicate the availability of encounters with local tribes. In 1744, the forty-nine acres known as Red Oak Ridge became the property of Samuel Collick noted as a free mulatto. Remnants of the Pocomoke and Assateague Nations continued to inhabit this area during the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Their very existence near one another furthered the opportunity for encounters even if based merely on land ownership, or through feelings of encroachment and trespass felt on both sides. The faint similarities of situation regarding present and past experiences of oppression, coupled with eventual changing views on status and race, could have become a defining link between Native people and free blacks.

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<sup>98</sup> Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland*, 25.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 82. Collick family held possession until 1801 making this the longest occupied of the 13-colonial era free black plantation identified on the lower Eastern Shore.

Yet, in what appears to have become an English trend, the property had been patented while the Pocomoke and the Assateague still held possession of the land. Another sixty-acre tract of land known as William's Choice was purchased in 1748 by William Cambridge Hunt also a free mulatto. These lands too were located within Askiminikansen just east of Red Oak Ridge.<sup>100</sup> The collective belief here is that Native people had abandoned Askiminikansen during the 1740s, although it depends on whose history you chose to use, the one passed down through English colonial records or those projected by Native communities currently living there today. Later in the eighteenth-century, free black immigrants into the area of Dorchester County may have also encounter Nanticoke living on their homelands located at Chione. Just what, or if there were, interactions taking place remained unclear. However, other sources reveal ties did exist at times through a variety of encounters with Natives taken as indentured servants to collaborative incidents of crime.<sup>101</sup>

Provincial court records for Maryland help to provide a small glimpse into the lives and status of several free blacks. For instance, Robert Butchery, who was brought up on charges in September of 1690 of "fathering the bastard child of a white servant girl"<sup>102</sup> in Dorchester County, is ordered to pay the court five hundred pounds of tobacco as well as provide the girl's owner an additional eight hundred pounds in compensations. This may be the same Robert Butchery who historian Thomas E. Davidson records as having been a freed slave who entered the county from the western shore along the

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<sup>100</sup> Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore*, 82-83.

<sup>101</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians of Virginia and Maryland*, 142; John Dryden's house break-in of 1702 by Indians whose accomplice was a black slave named Caesar.

<sup>102</sup> Kimmel, "Free Blacks in Seventeenth-Century Maryland," 20; Heinegg, *Free African Americans of Maryland and Delaware*, 51; The indentured servant girl was named Elizabeth Cobham and her owner was Andrew Gray; Dorchester County Court Proceedings, 1690-92, D.C. land record, Liber 4-1/2, pp.176,165,157,156. Maryland State Archives.

Choptank River in 1668.<sup>103</sup> Records also indicate a person by the name of Grinedge, formerly belonging to a Thomas Marsh, faced similar charges in 1699:

Grinedge Formerly Negroe of Thomas Marcher now Living on Kent Island & Jane Shoare of ye same Island ye Daughter of William Shoare for haveing Carnell Copulation wth. one another, wch. Fact was Committed Last October 1697.<sup>104</sup>

Grinedge, however, appeared to have been acquitted of "cohabitation with a white woman named Jane Shore,"<sup>105</sup> for he secured his court appearance with two thousand pounds of tobacco as well as paying the cost of the suit:

Grinage a Negroe together with Richard Kempton his surety and became bound unto our sovereing Lord ye King ... afsd Grinage in ye sum of 2,000 pounds and Richard Kempton 1,000 pounds for appearance.<sup>106</sup>

Having access to such large amounts of tobacco as payments in their lawsuits is a clear indication that at least Butchery either possessed a formidable amount of land to produce the quantities of tobacco required or he maintained outside connections and some means for obtaining an adequate income on a regular basis.

From the accounts of this chapter it becomes evident that the Eastern Shore was not a desolate place during the seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries. Encounters did indeed take place in greater diversity than those included here, and presumably at an increased rate than what has been recorded. free blacks and Native peoples did not evaporate into the fog, as it would seem presented through the chronicling of local history.

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<sup>103</sup> Davidson, *Free Blacks on the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland*, 7.

<sup>104</sup> Talbot County Judgment Records 1696-1698, Liber AB 8, 1-798, (Nov. 17, 1696), 524.  
<http://www.freeafricanamericans.com/Talbot.htm>

<sup>105</sup> Kimmel, "Free Blacks in Seventeenth-Century Maryland," 20; Talbot County Judgments, 1691-1698, in Talbot County Land Record, Liber A.B. #8, pt.2, 524.

<sup>106</sup> Talbot County, *Judgment Record 1699*, Liber WW, no.1, (20 June 1699), 49.

## Chapter 2: Locations of Prime Encounters

Kent Island, a location of initial conflict between Virginia, Maryland, and Britain, along with numerous Native peoples, is now a place someone can pass through and not even realize they crossed an Island. This island, small in comparison to the rest of the Eastern Shore at approximately thirty-two square miles, holds a history rich in content and ripe with encounters all of which are unknown to most travelers as well as many of its residents. The second case study is the town of Vienna. Also, a sleepy small town now bi-passed on the way to reach the ocean was once home to one of the largest Native populations on the Eastern Shore. This area had been a part of the Nanticoke nation mapped by John Smith and later designated as a reservation, lands reserved so they could continue their way of life in the face of colonization. The town proper is land once patented by Lord Baltimore. Vienna was at the heart of Native interactions over the encroachment of English colonists and eventually suffered in conflicts with British forces. Would you get a sense of this driving by? Probably not. The final case study is a community in Easton called The Hill. A rather recent discovery, The Hill has been noted as the oldest free black community in America. The history of this community falls at the turn of the eighteenth-century, which is at the tail end of this study's time frame, nevertheless it highlights possibilities for encounters through location and it too stresses the existence for communities hidden or forgotten in Maryland. The histories of these areas, rich in content, are important to this thesis in that they highlight the fact that so little is presented in the public arena regarding encounters and conflicts that took place here during the seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries. The primary purpose for honing in

on these specific locations was to dispel notions that the Eastern Shore was a “no-man’s land” and that by the end of the seventeenth-century all native populations had moved on leaving their land to be colonized. These studies represent a forgotten yet vital history at a crucial point in the establishment of the Maryland colony.

## Case Study 1 – The Isle of Kent

The Isle of Kent, otherwise known as Kent Island, stands as a prime illustration for the exclusion of contextual information regarding inclusive historical narratives that still existing in the twenty-first century. To credit the efforts of public historians most of the public presentations are hindered simply through limitations on space. Yet for such a small area of land in comparison to that of the Eastern Shore, Kent Island’s little-known history is extremely complex and important to the context of how persons become marginalized and hidden from public knowledge. Examining the history in this area, which is now a part of Queen Anne’s County, it becomes obvious that Kent Island was once at the heart of contested conflicts and accommodation on many levels during the seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries. Captain John Smith visited and explored the region as early as 1612 mapping the land and local inhabitants. Most Native peoples were alerted to expect foreign visitors ahead of their arrival through an intricate communication web often referred to as the Moccasin trail. Coastal Natives all along the Chesapeake and its tributaries knew of and expected Smith’s arrival. Father Andrew White witnessed this communication, writing how “night fires kindled through the whole region... and messengers were sent everywhere to announce”<sup>107</sup> their arrival. Thus,

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<sup>107</sup> White, “A Relation of the Colony, 18-19.

[https://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=sSnABp3B\\_IIC&pg=GBS.PA19](https://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=sSnABp3B_IIC&pg=GBS.PA19)

having become accustomed to and eager for trade goods, Native people met arriving ships along the shorelines.

By 1631 William Claiborne had established relations and purchased land on Kent Island, which he referred to as the *Isle of Kent*, from the local natives in the name of Virginia. After having obtained what he believed to be a license to trade from “Charles... Kinge of England Scotland France and Ireland... in all seas coasts rivers creekes harbors lands teritories in neare or about those partes of America for which there is not already a pattent granted...”<sup>108</sup> Claiborne began to set up a trading post on the Island. Located along the shores of what today is known as Kent Point, Claiborne actively traded with local Native peoples and built a palisaded fort,<sup>109</sup> equipped with “four big pieces for defense mounted thereon,”<sup>110</sup> in which to store his trade goods. The fort area would also act as protection for his new plantation community against any Natives who might be hostile to their presents. Scholarship indicates numerous settlers from Claiborne’s existing plantation in Virginia including indentures, and some blacks, probably both free and enslaved, accompanied Claiborne into the region. Claiborne also hired on skilled workers from Virginia to perform various skilled tasks as millwright, carpenter, sawyer,

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<sup>108</sup> “Journal and Correspondence of the State Council, v,7”, in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, v,26: n,4 (Dec. 1931), 403, Maryland State Archives, v,47. [msa\\_sc\\_5881\\_1\\_104.pdf](http://msa.sc.5881_1_104.pdf); High Court of Admiralty, Examinations of Pirates, Liber 98 No.278, (Cloberry C. Cleborne, Jan. 28, 1638). [http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc5800/sc5881/000001/000000/000104/pdf/msa\\_sc\\_5881\\_1\\_104.pdf](http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc5800/sc5881/000001/000000/000104/pdf/msa_sc_5881_1_104.pdf)

<sup>109</sup> “Journal and Correspondence of the State Council, v,7”, in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 27:1 (Mar. 1932), 17, Maryland State Archives, v,47. [msa\\_sc\\_5881\\_1\\_105.pdf](http://msa.sc.5881_1_105.pdf)

<sup>110</sup> Reginald V. Truitt, “Kent Island: Maryland’s Oldest Settlement,” (subject of the Winter Lecture of the Queen Anne’s County Historical Society, Stevensville, Maryland, 1964), 4



and smyths.<sup>111</sup> Other servants, probably indentured, were sent over by his business partners from England.

The original settlement, which included the above trading post, was located at the “south end [of the island] between its extreme tip, Kent Point, and the little creek next east of it.”<sup>112</sup> Eastern Shore researcher, and writer, Reginald V. Truitt notes a windmill on the Island and a church established at Broad Creek. (fig. 5) However, English court records indicate there were in fact two other windmills, several mills, and at least one ship yard where they constructed various small vessels called pinnace.<sup>113</sup> The area of Broad Creek would function as the Island’s only village as such until approximately the middle 1800s. From here Claiborne worked at developing amicable relations with the local Matapeake, also called the Monoponson. His Island trade associations included not only the local Maryland tribes of Tockwogh, Ozinies, and Matapeake but Claiborne, having also established a trading post on Palmer Island located at the mouth of the Susquehannock River, an allegedly two others on Poplar Island and Claibornes Island,<sup>114</sup> continued to conduct a lucrative trading business with the Susquehannock.<sup>115</sup> Undoubtedly what we see taking place appears to be a phenomenon developing towards cooperative relationships.

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<sup>111</sup> “Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly of Maryland, 1752-1754, v,50, “*Maryland Historical Magazine*, 28:2 (Jun. 1933), 180-187, Maryland State Archives, msa\_sc\_5881\_1\_110; High Court of Admiralty, “Examinations of Pirates,” Liber 100 No.63, (Cloberry C. Cleborne, Jan. 28, 1638). [http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc5800/sc5881/000001/000000/000110/pdf/msa\\_sc\\_5881\\_1\\_110.pdf](http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc5800/sc5881/000001/000000/000110/pdf/msa_sc_5881_1_110.pdf)

<sup>112</sup> Truitt, “Kent Island: Maryland’s Oldest Settlement,” 4.

<sup>113</sup> “Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly; Isaac, “Kent Island,” 103.

<sup>114</sup> “Journal and Correspondence of the State Council, v,7”, in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 26:4 (Dec. 1931), 394, Maryland State Archives, v, 47. msa\_sc\_5881\_1\_104.pdf; High Court of Admiralty, Examinations of Pirates, Liber 98 No.278, (Cloberry C. Cleborne, Jan. 28, 1638); Isaac, “Kent Island,” 100.

<sup>115</sup> Truitt, “Kent Island, 5; Edward C. Papenfuse, Black Books, Maryland State Archives.

Prior to this point, self-centered English colonist had a propensity of taking what they saw fit from the landscape, while isolating themselves from the outside world around them. As a result, growing Native tensions flowed over into small wars in the face of unapprised encroachment. The results of such occurrences awakened settlers and exposed the impact imposed on these local Natives through their presence. From this point on, seemingly to avoid a recap of tragic events still fresh in their thoughts, came a sharpening of settler reliance on, or to create a buffer of, friendly tribes crucial for their survival. At the same time, these tragic incidences instilled an imperative cognizance of those tribes who would remain their enemy.<sup>116</sup> Some historians advocate that during the seventeenth century this awakening leads to an “atmosphere in which interethnic interest-group alliances could flourish for the first time.”<sup>117</sup> Yet it also created a new sort of “English frontiersman”<sup>118</sup> that became dominant throughout Virginia and the Chesapeake region.

William Claiborne is an example of just such a frontiersman. He was appointed surveyor of Virginia and in 1626 he became secretary of state. An ambitious businessman with financial backing from the wealth merchants known as Cloberry & Company in England,<sup>119</sup> Claiborne invested daringly with their money and goods. During this time, he too became an extremely successful Virginia planter for his exports back to England from his plantation Kecougkton fell in the range of “eighty-five hundred

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<sup>116</sup> J. Frederick Fausz, “Merging and Emerging Worlds: Anglo-Indian Interest Groups and the Development of the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake,” in *Colonial Chesapeake Society*, ed. Lois Green Carr, Philip D. Morgan and Jean B. Russo, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 52.

<sup>117</sup> Fausz, “Merging and Emerging Worlds, 52.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>119</sup> “Journal and Correspondence of the State Council, v,7”, in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 26:4 (Dec. 1931), 381, Maryland State Archives, v,47. msa\_sc\_5881\_1\_104.pdf; High Court of Admiralty, Examinations of Pirates, Liber 98 No.278, (Cloberry C. Cleborne, Jan. 28, 1638).

pounds of tobacco in 1630.”<sup>120</sup> Setting up residency on Kent Island, Claiborne used his proficiency in Native languages along with his business connections and expertise to establish himself at the heart of trade in the Chesapeake. Hence, his trade encounters with the Susquehannock became what can be seen as a three-fold business alliance between English merchants, the colony of Virginia, and Native tribes. Each group saw the economic advantage in becoming associates and monopolizing the Chesapeake fur trade. The Susquehannock who ranged over vast areas of the Middle-Atlantic were able to access prime furs much in demand by merchants in England. Scholarship would suggest Claiborne's success hinged merely on the timing of unfolding events in the Chesapeake. For example, the Susquehannock who by this time had allied with the Tockwogh living along the Sassafras River of Maryland, were becoming increasingly intolerant to continued trading with rival groups by both the French and Dutch of the northern colonies. As a new source for merchandise, this encouraged the Susquehannock who took full advantage of English merchant's interest in their furs and were eager to collaborate with Claiborne and his partners to receive their much sought-after trade goods.

It is difficult to decipher just who Claiborne brought with him to the Island, his documentation only recorded the person's duties and whether or not he had hired their services. Indications regarding race or position is excluded. It has been speculated that some individuals had come as the result of persuasion by Claiborne after having been discovered as squatters on his lands located on the lower eastern shore. Rather than evict them they were allowed to remain but were called on later to work on the Island

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<sup>120</sup> Fausz, “Merging and Emerging Worlds” 59.

plantations.<sup>121</sup> Many others came as indentured servants shipped over by his business partners in England. Claiborne was required to send his partners a full account of his spending along with an inventory of goods acquired. It is from these business dealings with Clobery & Co. that we are able to piece together life here at all.

Seventeenth-century Maryland saw many such collaborative encounters due in part to the fur trade. The business of trade and demand accounted for the delay of settlement on the Eastern Shore. Interpreters like Thomas Ensign Savage mentioned earlier, who was paid by Claiborne to be the first interpreter for Kent Island,<sup>122</sup> became liaisons for both Native peoples and English businessmen and officials. As partners dependent on trust and understanding, traders and interpreters took the time to learn and recognize differences in Native languages and cultural formalities. Others had simply counted on the skills of someone to translate for them or were reliant on the use of sign language, which tended to manifest into numerous misunderstanding. Here again we become aware of that glimmer of the possibilities that could have evolved for the future. Some historians have acknowledged that these early encounters,

brought Englishmen and Indians together in the most direct and intense form of cultural contact short of war, and yet it... demanded... that Indians remain Indians, pursuing the skills they knew best without fear of territorial dispossession, and that Englishmen remain Englishman, performing the services they understood without the need to become Christian crusaders.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Isaac, "Kent Island," 99.

<sup>122</sup> "Provincial Court of Maryland, 1663-1666, v,49", in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 28:1 (Dec. 1931), 32, Maryland State Archives, v,47.

<sup>123</sup> Stephen R. Potter, "Early English Effects," 160; Fausz, "Patterns of Anglo-Indian Aggression and Accommodation along the Mid-Atlantic Coast, 1584-1634," in *Cultures in Contact*, ed. William H. Fitzhugh (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985), 252.

Despite such inklings, over time trade and land disputes did ensue but not all from parties one might expect. Charles Calvert, upon his arrival in 1632, and his brother Governor Leonard Calvert challenged Claiborne's rights to said lands, insisting King Charles I had granted the area to the Calvert family by Royal Charter thus becoming the territory of Maryland. Several times Claiborne attempted to regain control on Kent Island through proclamations, protest, and on occasion by force. The *Longtail*, a ship belonging to Claiborne and sent from Kent Island up the Pocomoke River on a “bartering trip”<sup>124</sup> incited the first naval battle in the waters of the Chesapeake when engaged by two ships sent to intercept it from St. Mary’s City on Maryland’s Western Shore. Court testimony by the two captains of the Longtail, Thomas Smith and Henry Ewbanck clearly indicates resentment on both accounts as they are removed from their post, put ashore with no provisions for their safety, and the ship's cargo is confiscated.<sup>125</sup> Ewbanck had also acted as Claiborne's interpreter. Herein is evidence of the complexity of loyalties entwined within growing colonial rivalry over land control and religious discrimination.

This region of coastline too had become highly contested hunting territory for the Susquehannock who began making frequent attacks on the peninsula in an effort to gain and maintain control over the fur trade. By 1634 residences, including native peoples on Kent Island, had suffered abductions and killings by both the Susquehannock to their north and the Wicomesse to their south. Local tribes, as the Monoponson, may have pursued relationships with the new settlers as a form of protection from such attacks.

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<sup>124</sup> Truitt, “Kent Island,” 6.

<sup>125</sup> Testimony of: *Thomas Smith account of his capture by Maryland*, Library of Congress, (Image 145), of The Calvert Papers (Baltimore, 1889), v1, 141-145 <https://www.loc.gov/resource/lhbc.3364a/?sp=145> ; Testimony of: Henry (Ewbank’s) Ewbanck being taken prisoner at Mattapany, Library of Congress, (Image 149), of The Calvert Papers (Baltimore, 1889), v1, 145-149. <https://www.loc.gov/resource/lhbc.3364a/?sp=149> – They were the captains arrested by Lord Baltimore for trading in the bay from KI on the pinnacle Long Tail.

Europeans trade in guns and ammunitions allowed weaker tribes to defend their territory, as well as, defer the brunt of violent encounters. Claims regarding earlier friendly relations seemed to deteriorate by 1634 for Claiborne wrote “this year we were much hindered and molested by the Indians falling out with us and killing our men...”<sup>126</sup> Eventually, tensions over settlement encroachment escalated into military conflict during the Indian War of 1641-1643 led by the Susquehannock, Wicomesse, and the Nanticoke. An act passed in 1650 prohibited any Native peoples or person from crossing or entering Kent Island without first notifying authorities. Simultaneously the act authorized the “shooting, killing, beating or taking prisoner, any native found to be in violation.”<sup>127</sup> By the end of the seventeenth century into the early eighteenth century, the majority of what remained of the Matapeake people had emigrated with their neighboring Algonquian tribes.

## Case Study 2 – The Town of Vienna

The choice to bring the town of Vienna in as one of the main focal points stemmed from its location. Set on the shores of the Nanticoke River, the town’s property held access to colonial trade and was at this time a central location for various settlers from around the area. During this same time frame the town was set adjacent to local Native tribes having been a part of their original seasonal migration lands. (see fig. 1) This closeness of activities between inhabitants at this precise point along the river should have been prime for the development of encounters. Material from state records,

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<sup>126</sup> “Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly of Maryland, 1752-1754, v,50, “*Maryland Historical Magazine*, 28:2 (Jun. 1933), 184, Maryland State Archives. msa\_sc\_5881\_1\_110; High Court of Admiralty, “Examinations of Pirates,” Liber 100 No.63, (Cloberry C. Cleborne, Jan. 28, 1638).

<sup>127</sup> Frederick Emory, “*Queen Anne’s County, Maryland: Its History and Development*,” (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1950), 15. Appeared in the Centreville Observer 1886-1887.

newspapers, and current exhibits, along with archaeological and geological reports provide some background into how encounters played out, if indeed they did, and expose their outcome.

The early history for the region actually begins in and around what is Vienna's town proper today. Located at the confluence of the Nanticoke River, ecologically the area provided a rich variety of foodstuff from the marshes and rivers along with pristine forests for hunting. The wild marsh grasses and new forest growth allowed for the harvesting of ample building supplies in which Native peoples used for the making of longhouses, for medicinal purposes, along with tools and weaponry. Strong trade relations developed throughout the area with the arrival of Europeans introducing Native peoples of the region to new and unique materials, as well as, providing an ample supply of animal furs for English traders.

Historically however, lands located along the Nanticoke River and Chicone Creek in Dorchester County are linked to both the Nanticoke and the Chicone Nations. The Nanticoke people occupied both sides of the river by approximately 1200 CE. This part of Dorchester County and the surrounding acreage is believed to have been not only the principal residence of the Nanticoke werowance, whom John Smith designated as their Emperor, but that it had supported a large native community.<sup>128</sup> Research gained from overlay comparisons between Smith's 1612 map with those of the present day, placed the

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<sup>128</sup> Restore Handsell Project, "History of Handsell Land Grant," visited 10/12/2016, [http://www.restorehandsell.org/?page\\_id=2](http://www.restorehandsell.org/?page_id=2)

village of Kuskarawaok and its approximate two hundred residents just on the outskirts of what is now the town of Vienna.<sup>129</sup>

Thomas Taylor, a trader and trapper in the region during the mid-seventeenth century, petitioned the initial English patent for lands existing at Chicone, July 13, 1665.<sup>130</sup> Taylor became a high-ranking military officer acting not only as a go-between for the proprietary government interpreting for Nanticoke leaders, but also served as an envoy negotiating on behalf of the Nanticoke. Taylor's history extended beyond his military duties as he went on to play an important role as county justice, then as sheriff of Dorchester County from 1675 to 1677 and again in 1685.<sup>131</sup> The original lands granted to Taylor consisted of seven hundred acres including the site location of the Nanticoke Fort, a palisaded area to protect the wealth of the werowance, and land that encompassed the primary residential village of the Nanticoke people.<sup>132</sup> Scholars have suggested that Taylor, and eventually Christopher Nutter, used this patent as a friendly means to protect the Nanticoke community from encroachment and to maintain their assets within the fur trade.

Christopher Nutter, who had dealings with local area tribes as early as 1670, acquired the Handsell patent from Taylor in 1693 as a licensed trader. Nutter's trade dealings up to the time of the transfer, appeared to have existed primarily on Maryland's Eastern Shore in regions which became parts of Virginia and Delaware. He had likewise

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<sup>129</sup> Michael S. Scott, PhD., A Digital Historical Geography of Vienna, Maryland: The Digitization of John Smith's 1612 Map of the Chesapeake Bay and Thomas Ennals' 1706 Map of "Vienna Towne", (Salisbury: Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative, Salisbury University, 2005)  
[http://viennamd.org/johnsmith\\_revisited.pdf](http://viennamd.org/johnsmith_revisited.pdf)

<sup>130</sup> Virginia R. Busby, "Interim Report," 2.

<sup>131</sup> "Our History," Pocomoke Indian Nation, Inc., last modified Nov. 21, 2014,  
<http://www.pocomokeindiannation.org/Our%20History/index.html>,

<sup>132</sup> Restore Handsell Project, "History of Handsell Land Grant," visited 10/12/2016,  
[http://www.restorehandsell.org/?page\\_id=2](http://www.restorehandsell.org/?page_id=2); Busby, "Interim Report," 3-5.



served as an official interpreter for that region. It seems that Nutter attempted to maintain similar relations with the Nanticoke, following in Taylor's footsteps as a representative and interpreter. Nevertheless, by this point encroachment was becoming such a prominent factor, even taking place on the newly reserved reservation lands, that Nutter became lumped into the dynamics of those whom the Nanticoke saw as a threat. In a 1698 complaint brought before the Maryland provincial government Christopher Nutter along with three others were singled out for holding property now within the reservation.<sup>133</sup>

The particular piece of property allocated for Vienna was located on what the Nanticoke called "Emperour's Landing" and included in lands patented April 16, 1664 by Lord Baltimore. The property was situated within a proprietary expanse consisting of between one-thousand<sup>134</sup> to six-thousand acres named *Nanticoke Manor*<sup>135</sup> and positioned along the north side of the river.<sup>136</sup> One hundred acres of the original grant, deemed consistently high and well drained, were incorporated as the town of Vienna. Lord Baltimore never actually resided on the property but leased it to James Anderson who in turn rented to a William Merritt as his tenant who was possibly a sharecropper.<sup>137</sup>

The town proper was founded in 1706 through an act passed by the Maryland General Assembly. This came as the result of Maryland proprietors attempting to control trade throughout the area. It held several advantages for trade, one being its mooring

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<sup>133</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians*, 146-147.

<sup>134</sup> McCallister, "Indian Lands in Dorchester County, Maryland, (DOR NA MCAL)20, visited 11/2016

<sup>135</sup> Paul B. Touart, "Vienna: Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Public and Private," in Maryland Historical Trust Determination of Eligibility Form - D-652, Chesapeake Heritage & Preservation, (Crownsville: Maryland Historical Trust, 2010) 1.

<sup>136</sup> McCallister, "Indian Lands in Dorchester County, 20.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 48.

capacities with deep water relatively close off shore, and the other, was its known consistency in suitability to act as a water landing area. The town's positioning at the confluence of the Nanticoke River, which provided adequate draft for ocean going vessels, also opened up opportunities for developing a shipbuilding port with the capabilities to initiate transatlantic commerce. By 1671 Vienna had become "the Western terminus of the Nanticoke River ferry, established by provincial assembly."<sup>138</sup> Scholarship regarding the town tends not to address the Native component which at this point would still have been present at Chicone. The reservation was not dissolved until 1770 at which point those who chose to remain have seemingly disappeared.

Nevertheless, at the onset of the Revolutionary War, Vienna was the "center of boat building on the lower Shore."<sup>139</sup> It became a subject of interest for the British and suffered numerous encounters with British soldiers. In 1780 war ships landed at Vienna and proceeded to destroy buildings and industry still under construction. Again, in March of 1781 the British attacked the town with heavy gun fire and sent ashore a landing party to either purchase or confiscate large quantities of grain.<sup>140</sup> With destruction throughout the town resulting from burnings and loss of property, Vienna's economic base and further investment potential were weakened for the next several decades.<sup>141</sup>

Today Vienna is a quiet historic town bypassed by Maryland's route 50. It remains however, the home for many Native people belonging to the Nause Waiwash

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<sup>138</sup> Touart, "Vienna," 2.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>140</sup> J. Hall Pleasants, ed., *Journal of Correspondence of the State Council of Maryland: Letters to the Governor and Council, 1781*, (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1930), 122-23, Maryland State Archives, XLVII; Touart, "Vienna," Continuation Sheet 8:3.

<sup>141</sup> Touart, "Vienna," 3.

Band who are the remnants of the Nanticoke, Choptank and Pocomoke tribes. In the onslaught of encroachment and fear regarding English influences, primarily the distribution of alcohol (for which the government nor themselves could control)<sup>142</sup> and the disruption of traditional values, these tribes allied together and fled into the marshy confluences deemed unsuitable by settlers.<sup>143</sup> In seclusion the remaining members survived by whatever means possible. Inwardly they maintained a cultural identity by passing down many of the old traditions to their future generations while blending into the surrounding landscape.

### Case Study 3 -The Hill

The African American community known as "The Hill," is located in the town of Easton on Maryland's Eastern Shore. As a recent archaeological discovery, the work here is ongoing and much of the interpretation is still in the theoretical phase. However, in 1790, one of the properties excavated in 2012 belonged to a white man named James Price who was also the register of wills. Three free Africans were reported to have resided on the property by the time of the 1800 census. Speculation by Stefan Woehike, in charge of the project at that time, is that these three individuals rented the property from Price and possibly earned an income working as blacksmiths on the property.<sup>144</sup> The 1790 census indicated that 410 free African Americans resided in The Hill community.

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<sup>142</sup> Calendar of Maryland State Papers, No. 1 *The Black Books*, Maryland State Archives, XXXIII, (V 100: May 18, 1719) 311, Petition for regulations of sales by various Indians Tribes [Eastern Shore]; XXXIII, 91 (V 101: July 13, 1721), Petition concerning the sale of strong liquor, Indians have been ruined by liquor in spite of laws to the contrary; ask that no liquor be sold the common Indians; chief men to be allowed a restricted amount. [Various Indian Tribes, Somerset County].

<sup>143</sup> Nause Waiwash, "The Nause Waiwash Band of Indians," history presented in a pamphlet at the 24th Annual Powwow, (Vienna, Maryland, Sept.2016).

<sup>144</sup> Chris Polk, "New Artifacts found at Talbot County Archaeological site," *Cecil Whig*, Jul. 22, 2013, accessed 6/26/2016, [http://www.cecildaily.com/news/state\\_news/article\\_9dccaba2-dec6-54d1-9fb2-98779d2ef750.html](http://www.cecildaily.com/news/state_news/article_9dccaba2-dec6-54d1-9fb2-98779d2ef750.html) \_

In comparison, at this same time Baltimore accounted for 250 free blacks and the Wye House Plantation just seven miles northeast of Easton showed 346 slaves. The Hill is thought to be the largest free black community in the Chesapeake region and possibly the oldest in the nation dating to 1789 and predating Tremé in New Orleans not founded until 1812.<sup>145</sup>

Archaeological excavations have dated the area to the 18th and early 19th centuries. Grace Brooks, a former slave, is noted as the first female landowner on The Hill purchasing property in 1792. Cynthia Schmidt, a local researcher living in Cordova, Maryland, has been able to locate land records that indicated eight other properties within Easton also owned by African Americans between the years 1789 and 1805. Schmidt provides names for these properties as Johnson, Adams, Hall, Gross, and Johns.<sup>146</sup> Material culture located during the archaeological work done here does not seem to connect the community to interactions with surrounding Native tribes.

In most cases, free black existence, outside of a few objects, such as magic bundles or cowrie shells, would mimic that of white society when looking at the material culture. The same scenario is evident when seeking confirmation of encounters or interactions between free blacks and Native peoples. Native markers usually appear in the presence of copper, shells and collinal ware (believed to be an adaptation of indigenous and colonial pottery) however no documents confirm this type of pottery was present in this area. Native peoples would also have maintained knowledge for projectile

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<sup>145</sup> Pamela Wood, "The Hill, Earliest Free African-American Settlement, Uncovered in Easton, Maryland," *The Baltimore Sun*, Jul. 24, 2013, accessed through The Huffington Post, 6/26/2016. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/26/the-hill-african-american-settlement-uncovered-easton-maryland-video\\_n\\_3657240.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/26/the-hill-african-american-settlement-uncovered-easton-maryland-video_n_3657240.html)

<sup>146</sup> Star-Democrat, The Sunday Star, from Easton, June 16, 2013, A12. <https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/115999748/>

technology, however, at this point of contact, evidence shows many had begun napping points out of glass.

Finds, like those above, would be indicators of crossover encounter yet these evidently appear few and far between. Mark Leone, a noted historical archaeologist of the Chesapeake, reflects that “In all my time there [Eastern Shore] and in all my reading I have never come across any written information about contact. There has to have been contact and destruction of Native communities. However, I do not know of literary evidence.”<sup>147</sup> It almost seems that you must know just the right questions to ask, for it is challenging to break through this type of ambiguity.

The objective for these macro studies was to explore and expose the complexities of encounters that were a mainstay in the early development of the Maryland colony. The Eastern Shore was a prominent if not crucial part of the action. These stories are important for they challenge early writings and many present-day interpretations seen throughout the region. Many non-inclusive interpretations are in need of change.

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<sup>147</sup> Dr. Mark Leone, e-mail message to author, October 27, 2016.

## Chapter 3: Romanticized Histories and Misrepresentations

Within the context of complexities existing among very diverse cultures on Maryland's Eastern Shore came a fluidity of exchange most times overlooked throughout the historical memory. For example, trends in presentation as those noted in the historiography divided history into single elements emphasizing local heroes, yet ignoring many of the underlying intricacy and how encounters from many cultural perspectives shaped the outcome. Historical portrayals became romanticized setting up an idealized concept of how encounters came about. Addressing local histories, both in print and exhibition, provided a sense of how those encounters and contributions were perceived by the majority and how damaging this phenomenon became with regards to cultures outside of European aspiration.

What is evident here is that it is virtually impossible to engage topics concerning encounters between indigenous Native peoples and those of African descent without noting the push and influences coming from early Europeans. The difficulties, however, of presenting an inclusive and objective history stem from the records themselves not only in their objectivity (as most are legal cases), but in their scarcity, and singular viewpoint for the sake of nation building. Scenarios as these, constructed through biased scholarship and physical representations, have led to diminished or complete denial of the contributions by other active participants.

### Tackling Shifting Portrayals

This section breaks down, century by century, shifting portrayals of Natives and

free blacks on Maryland's Eastern Shore. This methodology highlights cultural commentators from across time to expose a clearer comprehension of the mindset for each century and how it substantially changed over time. In some cases, these commentators are local historians; their works are used not for narrative content or scholarly insight, but as primary source evidence of the cultural biases of a given era. Images seen through artwork and literature have also been incorporated for certain centuries. Cultural projections of bias are prevalent throughout most historical records and ethnographies and are clearly present in the literature, both scholarly and fictional, of a particular era. Keeping this in mind it becomes imperative to establish how interactions, which could have become advantageous for everyone and at times did faintly glimmer with that possibility, became ingrained with notions of white superiority.

### Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century Portrayal

To acknowledge what influence seventeenth-century English writers had on portrayals of Eastern Shore groups it is necessary to first introduce possible explanations or perspectives from which to base our judgments on. Scholars, such as Kevin Young and others, open a window onto how views of European supremacy developed during this time period. Young's stance comes from his studies on the treatment of Native slavery in colonial America; he highlights how seventeenth-century England suffered from a growing population and failing economy in which migration to North America served as a means to "unburden itself."<sup>148</sup> The initial immigrants came predominantly as freemen and women with many of the men being non-inheriting siblings from the upper

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<sup>148</sup> Kevin C. Young, "Those Few Who Counted: Indian Slavery in Recent Historiography of Colonial North America" *Problems and Directed Readings in Early American History* (New Brunswick, Rutgers University, 2013), 2.

classes. However, individuals from Europe's lower classes along with a mix of foreigners, which included Africans both free and indentured, were among those seeking freedoms or escape, and the prospect of obtaining land. Seventeenth-century colonist who arrived during the early stages of colonization came pre-programmed for "class stratification, coercive labor forms, and mythical Anglo-Saxon identity."<sup>149</sup> Consequently, the new Euro-American mindset emerging in places like Maryland's Eastern Shore became one of cultural and intellectual superiority. These ingrained notions of authority and dominance went on to shape European interactions and connections for everyone with whom they came in contact. Historians James Oliver and Lois E. Horton support Young's views. They too highlight the importance of understanding the social hierarchy in Britain and its colonies. Colonial elites who could not "aspire to nobility"<sup>150</sup> still upheld elaborate social distinctions believing them to be crucial for the stability of society.

Ebenezer Cooke, for example, wrote about his visit to Maryland in which he traveled throughout the colony during the late seventeenth-century. He penned his work as, Eben. Cook, Gent., and titled it *Sot-weed Factor* as a reference to the tobacco trade, Maryland's primary industry alongside that of fur trading. First published in 1708, Cook's poem was highly satirical in nature. His title, which distinguishes him as a Gentleman, appeared to set him apart from those he met on his journey and placing him in what he may have considered the upper hierarchy of English life. His travels may well have been a part of a *Grand Tour* common for wealthy young English men of this period. From his description of life in Maryland one would think that he was more

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<sup>149</sup> Kevin C. Young, "Those Few Who Counted," 2.

<sup>150</sup> Horton, *In Hope of Liberty*, 30-54.



appalled with English behavior than that of the Native he chose to describe in the work.<sup>151</sup>

Ebenezer Cook's portrayal reflected the English mindset based on social hierarchies discussed in the previous paragraph. Various calamities he related to his reader appear to stem from the inclusion of what he believed to be a lower-class citizenry having come predominantly as indentured servants. He chastised their rude behavior, crudeness, and their homely corn-based nutrition from Native foods. At one-point Cook crossed a river in a canoe, which he equated to a "trough for swine"<sup>152</sup> and upon reaching the Eastern Shore seemed shocked when met by someone who believed him to be a runaway.

Cook's character, if he is not in fact Cook himself, told of a landscape much harsher than what he was used to and his actions suggest he considered himself above most of those he meets. When he finally encountered a Native, he characterized him as "in hot perfuit of wounded Deer."<sup>153</sup> Cook's image of this individual was one of awe and fear, describing him as partially naked, oiled with the grease of a bear and looking "fternly grim,"<sup>154</sup> all while wearing a useless coat. This jacket could potentially have been a matchcoat, an item of importance for Eastern Shore Natives. He shared similar descriptive views such as those recorded by Capt. John Smith and Father Andrew White. After the initial shock, Cook discovered the "Brute was civil... [yet he elevated his own behavior with] I boldly fac'd the courteous devil... [thus offering him] a dram of

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<sup>151</sup> Ebenezer Cook, *The Sot-weed Factor: or, a Voyage to Maryland* (London: Raven in Pater-Noster-Row, 1708)

<sup>152</sup> Ebenezer Cook, *The Sot-weed Factor: or, a Voyage to Maryland*, (London: Raven in Pater-Noster-Row, 1708), 3.

<sup>153</sup> Cook, *The Sot-weed Factor*, 10.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 11

rum.”<sup>155</sup> From this passage the influence of liquor is clearly evident, as is the importance and value placed on trade goods.

Most of the early English settlers in Maryland came seeking religious freedoms in which God determined the social order of individuals. Of course, all others were seen as inferior and in dire need of conversion. Father Andrew White began his *Revelations of a Trip to Maryland* noting that his early beliefs regarding encounters emanated from past experiences, which had proved Natives to be generally peaceful and friendly neighbors when treated well and without aggression. His sense of humanity nevertheless progressed into a naive belief that the actions of Native peoples to their presence was a miracle set up by God. He recorded that the ease with which they were able to obtain land from the Natives was because “God, by these miracles, [was] opening a way for his law and for eternal life.”<sup>156</sup> This notion coupled with the English concept of hierarchy is what appears to have set in motion a distorted sense of favoritism that would exalt the colonist and spill over into eventual racism and white supremacy.

It is also important to note that this order of ordainment through God and its subsequent superiority also emanates from a Stuart England mindset. Scholar and historian C.A. Weslager explains that during the Stuart period of England, 1603 to approximately 1731, the belief was that any land yet to be discovered, or lands held by other than a “Christian prince or people, belonged to the discoverer.”<sup>157</sup> This tradition of divine right of Kings eliminated any Native peoples’ claim to their own land. If

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<sup>155</sup> Cook, *The Sot-weed Factor*, 11

<sup>156</sup> White, “A Relation of the Colony,” 21/56.

[https://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=sSnABp3B\\_IIC&pg=GBS.PA19](https://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=sSnABp3B_IIC&pg=GBS.PA19)

<sup>157</sup> C.A. Weslager, *The Nanticoke Indians: Past and Present* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1983) 48.

indigenous peoples disputed the supposed English settlement rights they were seen as enemies of the crown. Such a challenge to the King's right of rule was acted upon as a treasonous assault punishable by death.<sup>158</sup>

## Eighteenth-Century Portrayal

Much of what is found for the eighteenth century evolves out of court records and governmental documents. Stereotypical viewpoints portrayed in legislation, such as treaties, acts, and laws adhere to those same notions of hierarchy and superiority seen in the earlier century by either authorizing or romanticizing encounters and relationships. For example, legal documents from the long eighteenth century pertaining to Native peoples, diplomatic protocol referred to the English as "Father,"<sup>159</sup> denoting a sense of superiority and control, whereas Native People became children, uncultured and subordinate. Such notions are evident when writings refer to natives as naive with "unenlightened minds... lambs... [who] surrender themselves and property to us."<sup>160</sup> Historian Hester Dorsey Richardson, drawing from manuscripts regarding the development of colonial Maryland, referred to writings that projected natives as possessing the attributes of "simplehearted children."<sup>161</sup> This type of terminology is at the heart of many misunderstandings.

By contrast in Native matrilineal terms, fathers were thought to be "non-relatives"<sup>162</sup> someone who was supportive and loving but who had no real influence over

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<sup>158</sup> Weslager, *The Nanticoke Indians: Past and Present*, 48.

<sup>159</sup> Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country*, 128-129.

<sup>160</sup> Hester Dorsey Richardson, *Side-Lights on Maryland History: with Sketches of Early Maryland Families* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1913, reprint: 1995) 135; Rev. Father Andrew White, "A Relation of the Colony," 21/56.

<sup>161</sup> Richardson, *Side-Lights*, 137.

<sup>162</sup> Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country*, 128-129.

their lives. Native Peoples on the other hand chose words as “Brethren” when speaking to diplomatic delegations implying equality in status, and they referred to legalities and treaties as “covenants”<sup>163</sup> of common ground. When disagreements arose over encroachment, some of which became violent, English terminology changes from benevolent children towards that of savage heathens.

This change can be seen in the 1742 Articles of Peace and Amity between Lord Baltimore and the chiefs of the Asseteagues and Pocomoke nations. Peace and Amity are the furthest images from my mind when reading this document. It was virtually a declaration of dominance and takeover, where these nations become subordinate to the English falling under clear notions of the Divine Rights of Kings. In this case, the divine right belonged to “Charles Absolute Lord of the Province of Maryland.”<sup>164</sup> This was not an agreement of peace, this was penalty a life sentence, invoked by the Lord Proprietary of the Province for Native actions taken in defense of their land and culture. From this point on Natives of these nations were banded from beating, assaulting, killing, plotting, and conspiring to make war against any English man. They were to turn over any servants or slaves who may have lived among them, or at any future point try to take shelter from them. They could no longer keep company with other Native groups, for which the Articles refers to as “Foreign or Strange Indian[s].”<sup>165</sup>

The agreement also nullified Natives’ right to take care of their own, be it business or protection. No longer could they be at peace with any nation who is

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<sup>163</sup> Daniel R. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*, (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001), 129-143.

<sup>164</sup> Proceedings of the Council of Maryland 1732-1753, *Articles of Peace and Amity*, v,28:584, old page 527, Maryland State Archives.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

considered an enemy of the English, nor could they make war against another without consent of the Governor. If disputes arose amongst themselves they were disallowed from settling the matter on their own terms, it had to be sent before the Governor and Council. Basically, this document broke down any formal governing powers held within these nations. Customarily new chiefs were appointed from within by a Werowance or Chief. For the Asseteagues and Pocomoke this appointment appeared to have come through the Chief or Emperor of the Nanticoke, considered an enemy of the state. Now they could “never join with the Nanticoke... in the choice of an Emperor or chief nor be subject in any manor to them.” If they were caught with a gun they would be treated as an enemy and punished accordingly.<sup>166</sup>

The basic lifeways of these nations were also altered. Subsistence with regards to “crabbing, fowling, hunting and fishing,” though preserved “inviolably” became a privilege with a price tag. With this decree, the English also vowed that they were one people with the Natives, and that they would “assist each other against all persons whatsoever that shall make war with or attack either of them.” Nevertheless, all this came with a yearly payment of “two bows and two dozen arrows... upon the tenth day of October as an acknowledgm’ of his Lordships dominion over them and as a Pledge of Peace.” Nowhere in this document was there any compensation or restrictions on the part of the English outside of the punishment of death for killing a Native. Even this penalty was only imposed after the individual had called aloud to announce his arrival before coming within one-hundred paces of said English man, laid down his weapons on the ground and stepped away to a distance so that the person they were approaching could

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<sup>166</sup> Proceedings of the Council of Maryland 1732-1753, *Articles of Peace and Amity*, 584.

seize them up, and they had to approach unpainted. “For as much as the English cannot easily distinguish one Indian from another that no Indian shall come into any English plantation” without first following these directions.<sup>167</sup> Natives were predominantly cut off from any extended family and friends and had to pay to maintain some semblance of their cultural subsistence. It is through documents and treaties as this, which interfered with Native government, subsistence, cultural continuity, and restricted them to government approved lands, that notions for detribalization were instilled into the nineteenth-century psychic.

## Nineteenth-Century Portrayal

The lack of both source materials and imagery representing free blacks and Native peoples is significant during the nineteenth century for Maryland’s Eastern Shore. Yet, imagery that did exist depicting Native peoples may have dealt a harsher blow in retrospect than the lack of them seen for free blacks. Images that perpetuated throughout this period were representations of Native peoples who lived in the middle and western territories. These portrayals promoted a stereotypical Native image that became representative of all Native peoples. It is not particularly arduous to imagine that this westernized image played a derogatory role in how Native peoples living in Maryland came to be perceived.

A particularly illuminating example of how cultural and stereotyped projections played out during the nineteenth century appears in an original albumen photograph taken

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<sup>167</sup> Proceedings of the Council of Maryland 1732-1753, *Articles of Peace and Amity Between the Honorable Charles Absolute Lord of the Province of Maryland & Bastobell, John Wittonguis, Jeremy Peake and George Rohahaum Chiefs of the Asseteagues and Pocomoke Indians and Indians Under Their Subjection*, 28:584 (old page 527), Maryland State Archives.

by François Aubert. Due to a lack of this type of physical record for Maryland it was imperative to showcase an event outside of the region studied here for its pertinence to the subject at hand. The print is titled *Kickapoo to the Emperor's Court* and Historian Bethany Montagano strikingly compares it to August Schoefft's painting of the same event titled *Six Kickapoo Indians, Chief and Family*. This particular photographic print was taken to commemorate the Kickapoo delegation's visit to the court of Maximilian, who in 1865 was the emperor of Mexico. The Kickapoo from southern Kansas had embarked for Mexico to escape the ravages of the Civil War. Led by Chief Machemanet, the Kickapoo had taken refuge in Mexico several times before this point and in doing so had forged relationships with "Seminole leader Wildcat (Coacoochee) and Black Seminole leader John Horse of Florida."<sup>168</sup>



The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. ID no.: gfi\_mexico\_98\_r\_122\_v1\_13r\_3. Digital images and files are provided for study purposes only. Copyright restrictions may apply to some images. For copyright information or higher resolution images visit: [http://hdl.handle.net/10026/npnra\\_perm](http://hdl.handle.net/10026/npnra_perm).

Figure.3: Albumen print, carte-de-visite. François Aubert, *Indios Kikapos or Kickapoo to the Emperor's Court*, ca 1865.

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<sup>168</sup> Bethany Montagano, "Blackening Out History," *IndiVisible: African-Native American Lives in the Americas*, (Washington, D.C., Smithsonian Institution, 2009) 45.

The photographic image is impossible to dismiss for it clearly depicts two men of African lineage standing with the Kickapoo leader along with their combined family members seated in front normally seen as a position of importance. The painting by August Schoefft, on the other hand, eliminated all traces of the two Black leaders. Schoefft, described as a Hungarian painter, may have been influenced by artistic techniques learned while studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. He apparently spent much of his career traveling to exotic places, which may also have played into his romanticized rendering. Prior to his stay in Mexico Schoefft had spent time in India painting the Sikhs, however, at the conception of this meeting Schoefft was employed in the service of Maximilian as a court painter.

In the original image those in question were dressed in non-native, more western style clothing with rounded brim hats and European vest, whereas the Kickapoo leaders appear in their elaborate native ensembles. This alone placed the two Seminole leaders outside of an ideal or romanticized image, one which Maximilian himself may have wished to perpetuate as exotic.<sup>169</sup> Conversely, Schoefft's earlier painting experiences may too have played the deciding role for his more inventive treatment of those in the painting. Nevertheless, discrepancies within the image, whether simply falling within the realm of romanticism or the product of stylistic conceptions, they serve to highlight how easily such an important part of the visiting delegation could be eliminated. (fig. 4)

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<sup>169</sup> Montagano, "Blackening Out History."



Figure 4: Painting by August Schoefft, *Six-Kickapoo-Indians, - Chief-And-Family*, ca 1865.



Combining such tangible material evidence with historical documents not only pieced together, but emphasized, relationships between the Kickapoos and the Seminoles within the image. This blending of materials from separate disciplines provided avenues for speculation as to why similar images were made, as well as, it demonstrated the predominant views during that era. Understanding the periods accepted presumptions is significant in that artistic liberties, whatever they may have been, highlighted stereotypes of the time through the falsification of authenticity for that moment in history. With one painting, Schoefft sidelined important Black Seminole leaders and their families by simply rendering them non-existent.

It is also important to note here that photography during this time was not widespread. Yet, like those above, the majority of images representing Native peoples prior to photography came from drawings or engraving mostly of Natives on diplomatic visits to various European cities or by individual travels. One such image of an Algonquian Native, presumed to be the earliest and possibly the only Algonquian, comes from an engraving made by Wenceslaus Hollar of Czechoslovakia. It is a portrait of a

young Native presumably on a diplomatic visit to London in 1645.<sup>170</sup> Many images for this time, came from drawings or paintings by military illustrators as Seth Eastman. Eastman served in the area of the upper Mississippi River and had taken a Native Plains woman as his common-law wife. In 1847 Eastman provided illustrations for *Information Regarding the History Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes*, which was published in 1851 and based on his encounters there.

Several other notable artists at this time were Karl Bodmer who Illustrated Native peoples he encountered during his expedition up the Missouri River between 1832 and 1834. Also, George Catlin painted Native peoples while following Lewis and Clark on their excursions.<sup>171</sup> All of these images however documented Native peoples west of the mid Atlantic. Photographic documentation did not become popular until the twentieth-century with photographers like Edward Curtis and others who continued to focus on Native peoples of the southwest. The ideal imagery had become fully ingrained in the American psyche by the turn of the twentieth-century.

An interesting letter written in 1845 to Dr. Stouton W. Dent, in the hopes of changing the constitution, came from Robert S Reeder, esq. This letter was in reference to slaves and free blacks who had been manumitted. Reeder believed these individuals were a nuisance, stating “policies of the State... would never have been adopted or executed”<sup>172</sup> had this not been the case. He also maintained that they had “effect[ed] the

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<sup>170</sup> Library of Congress, *Unus Americanus ex Virginia*, digital collections, Aetat 23, LC-USZ62-114953, visited 4/21/2017. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3g04603>

<sup>171</sup> Tam O'Neill Fine Arts, Specialties in Antique Prints, Artists, visited 4/22/2017. [www.tamoneillfinearts.com](http://www.tamoneillfinearts.com)

<sup>172</sup> Robert S. Reader, “A Letter from Robert S. Reeder, esq., to Dr. Stouton W. Dent: On the Colored Population of Maryland, and Slavery; and a Speech on the Proposition to Call a Convention, By a Single Act of the Legislature, To Change the Constitution at the December Session, 1845,” (Port Tobacco: Elijah Wells, 1859), 5.

most destructive consequences”<sup>173</sup> on society. The social hierarchy was clearly demonstrated throughout the letter, suggesting that freedom was “a thing visible through its agencies”<sup>174</sup> much like the word of God, and “for its own preservation and perpetuity, it must be ruled by a strong and disciplinary authority.”<sup>175</sup> He continued by stating there were two types of freedom, voluntary and involuntary. Voluntary freedom was the state in which free blacks resided and involuntary was the state of slavery without much separation. This leaves the reader to presume Reeder falls in the category of disciplinary authority. The system of manumission projected as burdening society for the “presence of Free Blacks [was] impairing the value and efficacy of the institution of slavery.”<sup>176</sup> To Reeder, manumission simply allowed newly freed blacks to “wander at large by the consent and act of the owner... without any rights under the constitution than those of a slave. Within this letter are notions of social hierarchy, Godly preference, and the connection of free blacks to slavery.

## Twentieth-Century Portrayal

With the onset of the twentieth-century racial discrimination continued to spill over and directly affected groups’ treatment of one another. Many secondary sources, primarily those relating to the South, provided a chronology for the development of such racial constructs among both whites and Native peoples. Some works regarding Natives of mixed blood, focused on racial development, once absent in Native society, and clearly depicted how Euro-American views regarding blood quantum became the determining factor for relationships and the development of political policy. Public historians have

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<sup>173</sup> Reader, “A Letter from Robert S. Reeder,” 5.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 12.

likewise discussed this development, also known as the “one-drop rule,”<sup>177</sup> pointing out how it consequently lumped anyone of mixed blood into the category of black. This type of categorizing happening during the twentieth-century established a means in which to further eliminate individuals from the historic narrative.

As a response to negative white treatment, Native communities separated persons of mixed blood and eliminated kinship as the imperative factor in tribal identity. The white society at this point stood only to gain in a reduction of the Native population through such an identity reclassification that systematically freed up land for their taking. At this point, too free black’s status had begun to change. They now shared the growing stigma of color, which many had attempted to avoid by the mid-eighteenth century through limited interactions with Native peoples and the claiming of English traits. Concepts as these are noteworthy in that it demonstrated how whiteness became synonymous with power and freedom and non-whiteness to that of weakness and slavery.

Instilling such images as childlike submissiveness and weakness into the historical memory as those demonstrated throughout this thesis, negated the many acts of both Native and African resistance and what had become persistent “insurrectionary activity”<sup>178</sup> noted to have taken place in Maryland. Expressions regarding ideal identities, or those that exclude one over another, resonated throughout the twentieth century historical landscape. One example in which ideal identity is promoted falls within scholarship written by Native Americans themselves. It had been stated by a notable Native historian that, “It is fortunate that we were never slaves. We gave up land

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<sup>177</sup> Miles, *Uncle Tom Was an Indian*, 139.

<sup>178</sup> Wennersten, *Maryland’s Eastern Shore*, 119.

instead of life and labor.”<sup>179</sup> The opposite scenario here, in which the Native slave trade had been a prominent activity during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, is forgotten. Once planters and legislation had begun to categorize enslaved property in terms of black, negro, or mulatto, the Native slave inevitably vanished from the records making it appear that this particular enterprise had either never truly existed, or that it had been eradicated early before the loss of land.

Early twentieth-century writing was particularly vague and often misleading. Historian James M. Wright chronicled *The Free Negro in Maryland 1634-1860*, originally printed in 1921, yet the context of his work was still highly connected to the institution of slavery. He presented information in such a manner that it created a mind's image that free black existence came predominantly as a result of manumissions. Those who may have entered the colonies as free blacks prior to slavery were but “an unmarked incident in the mass of men of their color.”<sup>180</sup> Manumissions, in his eyes, also did not change the newly freed blacks’ station in life for Wright stated they remained dependent on “doles... and ward-robes...,” while at the same time manumission failed to “change their occupations, their abodes, or their diversions... [nor did it] raise their intellects”<sup>181</sup> from that of a slave.

Wright continually diminished facts both quantitatively and in importance of contributions. His opening chapter projected Maryland territory prior to 1634 as the North American wilderness. He remarked that the Native population at that time was not

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<sup>179</sup> Miles, *Uncle Tom Was an Indian*, 139; Vine Deloria Jr, *Custer Died For Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co, 1969) 7-8.

<sup>180</sup> Wright, introduction to *The Free Negro in Maryland* 18.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

more than a “few hundred,”<sup>182</sup> when Capt. John Smith had recorded one-hundred and sixty-six Native villages just along Maryland’s waterways as early as 1612. Wright did credit the fact that nineteenth-century Maryland developed directly through the “combined efforts of men of the European and African stocks,” however this excluded any business ventures, as those created through the fur trade, along with disavowing any form of cooperation on the part of Native peoples. Wright further diminished the work of all Africans both free and enslaved when he puts forth the statement that their contributions came “mainly as passive factors in state building.”<sup>183</sup>

William Harlen Gilbert Jr., writing in this same early twentieth-century time frame, has been referred to as a notorious eugenicist. However, his writing on the Wesorts was somewhat more open-minded than those of Wright. Gilbert, nevertheless, presents his findings from a hierarchical racial perspective as he describes the Wesorts’ efforts to separate themselves as “We Sorts..., from those sorts,”<sup>184</sup> what he views as only the local black population. This type of terminology is evidence of a lingering social hierarchy where a Gentleman’s place was at the top of colonial society with the “lower sort”<sup>185</sup> filling in at the bottom.

For Gilbert, this was a means of maintaining desirable heritable characteristics as opposed to the possibility of the Wesorts wanting to hold on to their cultural identity. Gilbert had questioned some of the actions he considered counterproductive, as when the Wesorts refused to attend Black schools after having been excluded from a white

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<sup>182</sup> Wright, *The Free Negro in Maryland*, 19.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>184</sup> William Harlen Gilbert, Jr. “The Wesorts of Southern Maryland: An Outcasted Group.” *Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences* 35:8 (1945): 237-246.

<sup>185</sup> Horton, *In Hope of Liberty*, 39.

education. This in itself infers the temperament of the times where it appears in Gilbert's mind exclusion from white society was appropriate. Throughout this article, Gilbert neglected to understand the Wesorts' reluctance to being incorporated into racial categories of black and white.

Clayton Torrence who wrote the history of Somerset County also questioned some of the motives behind the history he included. His writing, however, was poetically embellished and romanticized almost to the point of distraction as he equated the founding of Old Somerset and Maryland to that of a human birth experience. He spoke of the developing settlements of Manokin and Annemessex as "a part of the whole adventure... in the first blush of infancy." His research nevertheless, appeared to have been in depth and at times offered what might be considered an alternative side to the story, but he would just as quickly retract this questioning.

Torrence's chapters were small snippets of information reminiscent of many public presentations. Encounters were brought to light within the text, yet the heart of these relationships and significant background material for the story had been relegated to footnotes some four hundred pages towards the end of the book. From this location, where they would have been predominantly overlooked by the casual reader, they acted much like unopened display drawers in a local exhibit discussed in Chapter 3.

## Twenty-first Century Portrayal

Today area histories, as seen through historical road markers and county historical societies, tend to also present vague snippets of information that continue to present mixed interpretations. While surveying several of the area's public interpretations it

becomes evident that much of the Eastern Shores rich history is missing and lacking stories that employ encounters. Historical Society museums break down exhibitions into areas of importance to their local heritage. This works to only glamorizing influential persons and memorializing local events. Displays tend to showcase object based ancient technologies, especially for Native cultures, rather than incorporating shared stories, or they spotlight, as one historical organization volunteer put it, whatever is “all the rage.” Much of what can be presented in this type of historical presentation hinges on space requirements. Regardless, the limitations in information and context more often concede to the prevailing viewpoint of the majority, and fails to link these artifacts, mementos, and persons with exchange and interactions due to encounters within the varied historical landscape.

As demonstrated in an earlier chapter, the complexity of the encounters and exchange that took place on Kent Island, one small area of Maryland’s Eastern Shore, it becomes difficult to understand its exclusion from the historical memory. When talking to current history students, many had not even heard of William Claiborne, a clear indication that public access to such information is highly limited even on the Island itself. Signage for Kent Island at one time read *Welcome to the Isle of Kent: the first English settlement in Maryland, established in 1631* and appeared when arriving from the west over the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. It seems now to have been replaced by one that simply reads *Welcome to Queen Anne’s County: Gateway to the Eastern Shore*.

Maryland began a Historical Road Marker program for individual counties in the 1930s and it became state wide in 1933. These markers featured regional history of the time and it was not until 2001 that the Maryland Historical Trust laid out new standards



and criteria for their production.<sup>186</sup> Much of the information they presented still resonates from the twentieth-century. One such marker is located on Kent Island's main thoroughfare Route 8 south, though equally as vague as the once present welcome sign, it does highlight that:

“William Claiborne of Virginia established a trading post, settlement and fort at the southern end of this island in 1631. Lord Baltimore's rights were resisted, which led to serious controversy until taken by armed forces in 1637.”<sup>187</sup>

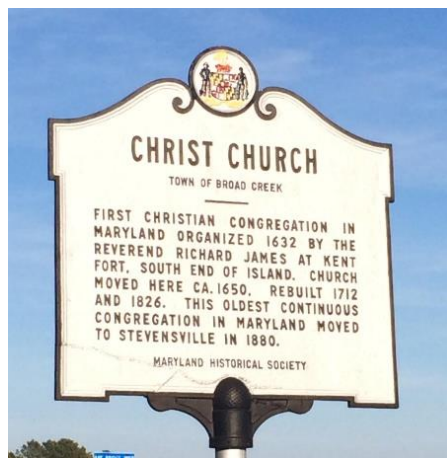


Figure 5: Historic Road Marker, Kent Island, MD

Another similar roadside marker, seen above, is located at the entrance to Broad Creek Cemetery. Featured here is Christ Church as the first Christian congregation in Maryland. The fort built by Claiborne and his initial settlers is in question as to its true whereabouts and the only indication of its prior existence is the remains of a mill stone with a plaque that simply reads *Kent Fort Manor*. (Fig.6) The millstone however, appears to mark the

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<sup>186</sup> Department of Planning: Maryland Historical Trust, “*History of Maryland’s Roadside Historical Marker Program*,” Maryland’s Historical Markers, copyright c. 2003-2014.  
<http://mht.maryland.gov/historicalmarkers/History.aspx>

<sup>187</sup> Historical Marker Project, “Kent Island (HM1GY),” visited 1/14/2017.  
[http://www.historicalmarkerproject.com/markers/HM1GY\\_kent-island\\_Stevensville-MD.html](http://www.historicalmarkerproject.com/markers/HM1GY_kent-island_Stevensville-MD.html)



Figure 6: Property marker, Kent Fort Manor

farm boundaries of what may have been an original plantation. What knowledge we do have indicated that the landing area and fort were located “east and north of Kent Point on the first navigable creek.”<sup>188</sup> This too has been questioned, as seen from the slightly different location description in the case study for Kent Island. For in 1631 most of the creeks along Kent Island were navigable and the landscape has changed over time. Archaeological excavations also have not turned up a specific location for the fort and it is thought now that the area may have been submerged or was eroded away by rising waters.

The *Chesapeake Heritage and Visitors Center* situated near the Kent Narrows, a waterway separating the island on the east from the Eastern Shore, also fails to highlight the intricacies of early stories. The opening room of the mini-museum, “Our Chesapeake Legacy,” instead discusses local artisans through their duck stamps and wood carvings. Object based side display cases house various artifacts found locally such as clay pipes. Context written for these pipes talk about how: “Europeans first learned about tobacco after the voyage of Columbus... [and] John Rolfe established tobacco as a staple crop... in 1615.” It also states that Sir Walter Raleigh popularized smoking in England, but

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<sup>188</sup> Truitt, “Kent Island: Maryland’s Oldest Settlement,” 4.

nothing that defines its introduction as a crop grown by Native peoples and presented to Columbus as a gift during his visit.

As you move around in the exhibit, a large wall hanging describes native lifeways emphasizing their farming techniques, tools, diet, and manner of fishing. Nestled next to this in the corner is a case with display drawers labeled 500 years ago - 13,000 years ago. These object-based drawers contain native artifacts and chronicle life and technology during these time frames. Both displays present an accurate history with regard to what we have learned through archaeological evidence of life prior to contact with Europeans. The focus of the wall text is primarily on Native peoples' early history; however, it stands separated from local context. The file drawers, nevertheless, address the circumstances of Native encounters with Europeans incorporating materials which project a combined history and suggests how "diseases, conflict, warfare, and displacement associated with European exploration"<sup>189</sup> played out on the region's early landscape. Considering the placement of the file cabinet one can only hope visitors will actually open the draws.

The exhibit continues into nineteenth-century farming, agricultural reforms, the local waterman industry, changes in transportation, and even a "*know your watershed*" display. Interestingly the early Eastern Shore is presented as "A Place Apart." The thematic text indicates that, "for centuries, its inhabitants enjoyed a quiet, stable, and relatively isolated lifestyle." This notion is reminiscent of those previously mentioned writings that suggested Maryland was a no man's land exempt from outside encounters. Plainly this was not the case. Kent Island and the Eastern Shore may not have had bustling cities, having their only access by water until 1952, however; neither quiet,

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<sup>189</sup> Chesapeake Heritage and Visitors Center, *Complex Cultures and Invasion from Outside: Museum Text*, (Queen Anne's County, Maryland, visited January 10, 2017), drawer:500 years ago.

stable, nor isolation, seem to fit with the historical records that advocate for encounters from many parallel cultures existing here within the same frame.

Further blurring of diversity is evident when the exhibit on oystering features the industry rather than the human aspect at its heart. An entire workforce becomes omitted from public access. Emphasized was the fact that along the Narrows there were eight working shucking/packing houses, yet never mentioned are the workers. This workforce consisted primarily of African Americans, women, and in many cases young children. Workers were paid by the bucket and along the Chesapeake “\$0.35/bushel [was paid] to openers for shucking.” This modest income paid from an industry that at its peak was capable of grossing millions of dollars.

In confirming the ease of accidental misrepresentation, a pamphlet featuring historical sites for Queen Anne’s County, *Explore our History and Heritage: Guide Map for Your Journey to Our Past*, lists a Dudley’s Chapel in the town of Sudlersville as a significant stop along the exploration journey. Information for the Chapel indicates that, “many early Methodist leaders preached [here].” One specific leader mentioned is Freeborn Garrettson who is presented as the “(1st Native American Methodist minister).”<sup>190</sup> A quick fact check on the history of Garrettson, as a possible inclusion here for relationships of two distinct cultures, found that he was not Native American at all but came from a wealthy white family who settled in the Bush River Neck area along the Susquehanna River. Having been born in Maryland, yes Garrettson was a native of the area, yet this one line in the pamphlet text (as simple as a capitalized letter)

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<sup>190</sup> “Queen Anne’s County: Explore Our History and Heritage, Guide Map for Your Journey to Our Past,” *Sudlersville*, (pamphlet distributed by The Historic Sites Consortium of Queen Anne’s County and the Queen Anne’s Department of Parks and Recreation).

demonstrates how easily history becomes inaccurately construed. To the credit however of Wikipedia, more often than not an unreliable source, for highlighting that “The Garrettson estate was an exceptional property made more valuable by the numerous families of slaves which ran the various business of the Garrettson estate.”<sup>191</sup> This line supports the important relationships and interactions between family members and slaves that worked together to build the prosperity of the Garrettson family rather than permitting it go unmentioned.

The Talbot County Historical Society, located in the town of Easton, also houses a small library, and a museum area in the Mary Jenkins House (circa 1790). The society's mission is “to provide educational opportunities to the citizens of our country so they may learn from the past and use that knowledge to build a future that preserves Talbot County as one of the best places to live.”<sup>192</sup> To accomplish this, the museum highlights notable county residents as artist Ruth Starr Rose, Maryland’s Governor from 1809 - 1811 Edward Lloyd, and Frederick Douglass former slave, orator, writer, and human rights leader. They have a new interactive exhibit case on which visitors can scroll through and it does address the presents of slavery in the county as well as wall text. Yet, displays did not mention free blacks or their owning of plantations or land as shown with the community living at The Hill in Easton.

Dorchester County records are hard to pin down and many were reportedly destroyed in mishaps over the years. However, this region of the Eastern Shore was originally the migratory home of the Nanticoke People. Capt. John Smith as noted

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<sup>191</sup> Wikipedia: the free encyclopedia, Freeborn Garrettson, visited 1/16/2017.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freeborn\\_Garrettson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freeborn_Garrettson)

<sup>192</sup> Talbot Historical Society, “Museum and Gardens,” *About Us*, <http://www.hstc.org/museum-gardens/about-us>

previously, highlighted the location along the Nanticoke River and Chicone Creek as the residence of the Nanticoke werowance on his 1612 map. Much of the areas favored lands became subject to colonial patents, grants, or proprietary manors during the seventeenth century. One common legal means of acquiring lands in Maryland was called “Socage.”<sup>193</sup> The grantee on the land maintained full rights of usage but was thereafter required to pay a fee, usually of “a Quitrent,”<sup>194</sup> to the proprietor, or to his heirs, on an annual basis. Other ways came in the form of proclamations, or acquisitions from the Land Proprietor which did not require a patent, and any person of English descent could at this time legally patent Native peoples’ land out from under the local tribes.<sup>195</sup> One land grant in particular was that of Lord Baltimore on April 16, 1664. A portion of this property became the Town of Vienna.

Dorchester County, nevertheless, has proven to be the most inclusive in their ethnic representations. For instance, as noted in chapter one, many trappers and fur traders were known to patent Native lands as a means to protect the hunting rights of their business partners.<sup>196</sup> The area known as *Handsell* is representative of one such site. As discussed in the Town of Vienna case study, Thomas Taylor a licensed trader and military officer patented seven hundred acres of Chicone area lands which included the main residency for the Nanticoke people and their Werowance. His successor Christopher Nutter continued in this same tradition. However, this same property continued to be a point of contention when John Ryder, having purchased the property from Nutter’s heirs, attempted to gain ownership of the property by burning down the Native dwelling and its

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<sup>193</sup> Roundtree and Davidson, *Eastern Shore Indians*, 100.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*; “Our Legacy,” *A Brief History of Vienna, Maryland: Early History*, visited: January 22, 2017. <http://viennamd.org/legacy.html>

accompanying fences belonging to William Ashquash then built a house of his own. These important connections have all been addressed in one manner or another within Hansell's narrative as have those of later centuries.

The narrative at Restore Handsell, both online and through exhibits, takes several different paths. The main emphasis is placed on the eighteenth-century house that still exists on the property. However, a second component, the Handsell land, is featured as the original property patented by Taylor and used as a trading post with the Nanticoke. To emphasize other components of the property, site development includes not only the Native presence, but that of sharecroppers, and the later nineteenth century owners and their slaves.

Incorporating the original Native inhabitants, local residents worked with the aid of archaeologists and the Nanticoke Historic Preservation Alliance to reconstruct an authentic Native living area just across the property from the 18th century house. This area consists of a replica longhouse (the English term) or wigwam representing the style of homes use by the Nanticoke and other tribes of the Eastern Shore. This dwelling constructed by volunteers, follows native techniques and uses local native materials. Also included is a palisaded garden planted with what are known to be traditional Native food crops, along with a traditionally framed work space. Large outdoor text spaces provide history for the area and describe the local indigenous vegetation and wildlife.

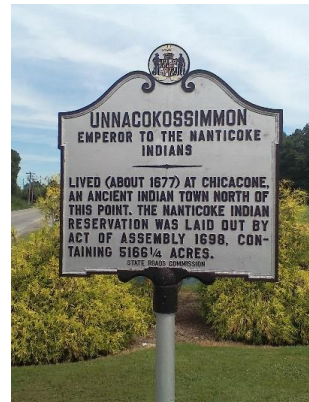
The eighteenth-century side of *Restore Handsell* includes the old brick house believe to have been the home of Henry Steele. The property is located in Indiantown north of Vienna at the approximate location belonging to the village and residence of the Nanticoke werowance. Here volunteers give interpretive tours and address the hard-told

stories in its history. Today Handsell is owned by the “Nanticoke Historic Preservation Alliance with a Preservation Easement from the Maryland Historic Trust.”<sup>197</sup> In 2008 the property was added to the National Register of Historic Places. The long-term goal for the site will be to further “interpret the Native American contact period with the English, the slave and later African American story and the life of all those who lived at Handsell.”<sup>198</sup>

Figure 7: Handsell site, Replicate Longhouse,



Figure 8: Historical Road Marker, Chicone



## Memory and Recovery

Research has clearly affirmed that it took the combined efforts of complex groups of people to build Maryland’s Eastern Shore.<sup>199</sup> Yet contributions from Native Americans and African Americans are difficult to interpret through the haze that still clouds our historical memory. It became common for the keepers of history to overlook or simply fail to accurately record cultures outside of their own if they appeared in places divergent from preconceived expectations. Thus, the contributions of others became diminished in

<sup>197</sup> Restore Handsell Project, “History of Handsell Land Grant,” visited 10/12/2016, [http://www.restorehandsell.org/?page\\_id=2](http://www.restorehandsell.org/?page_id=2)

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Katz, introduction to *Black Indians*, 3



scope or projected as merely “passive factors.”<sup>200</sup> It also appears that today we continue to forget two main factors, which were primarily English institutions, responsible for setting in motion most encounters throughout the colonies, and promoted what became unacceptable interactions and relationships in the eyes of the dominant power. What truly became an institution by the early eighteenth-century was the unimpeded seizure and exploitation of Native peoples and their lands. This became infused with the economic advantages presented through the system of African enslavement. In short, greed on the part of the colonizing powers pushed peoples of different heritage together on what became a marginalized landscape and then held them responsible for the resulting relationships through restrictive laws and the continued seizure of their property. Only in recent times do we begin to see a reciprocity of historical scholarship within the treatment of European encounters that begin to expose the significance of contributions made by those players allocated for so long to the background.

What has become evident throughout this research is that contrary to the picture painted through Maryland’s historical record, Native peoples and free blacks never disappeared during these times of oppression, nor did they totally assimilate into a white society. In spite of the circumstances created through encroachment and white supremacy, these groups continued to maintain an identity and spiritual connection with their ancestral heritage and land. Maryland’s Native people, for example, actively forged relationships through accommodation with tribes to the North, or within the local populations. Many Native groups as the Nanticoke, located at Chicone, moved north in order to salvage some semblance of their heritage and to protect their children from white

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<sup>200</sup> Wright, *The Free Negro in Maryland*, 19.

influences. It seems that accepting temporary hardships, and a degraded status among the Five Northern Tribes offered them a better alternative for preserving cultural continuity. Yet the connections to ancestral lands remains strong. This is true for a group of Nanticoke living in Canada, who petitioned the government to return land in Maryland that had been taken from their ancestors. The motion was denied on grounds that their forefathers had been compensated for relinquishing their rights to this land.

Here too, some Nause Waiwash chose to remain near their Native homelands on the Eastern Shore, as did those Nanticoke living near Broad Creek which became part of the State of Delaware. Delmarva's Assateague peoples see themselves as "assimilat[ing] into the intruder's way of life... as it became a growing disgrace to be Native."<sup>201</sup> Despite the Maryland and Virginia law which made it illegal for any Natives to congregate in groups of more than three individuals,<sup>202</sup> the Assateague have, as too the Pocomoke and others, continued to practice their native customs in private. These groups however, greatly reduced in numbers by the late eighteenth-century, either tended to settle in the more remote "necks of land between rivers, creeks and coastal bays, [on] land found unsuitable for the colonist's plantations,"<sup>203</sup> or they faded, at least in a legal sense, into the era's expanding spectrum of black or white.

Free blacks, who had shared many legal privileges afforded to the white population of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, likewise began experiencing the growing prejudices of white planters. Legal limitations became prevalent as to their

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<sup>201</sup> "Home," Assateague People of Delmarva, visited 11/13/2016, <http://www.assateaguepeopleofdelmarva.org/home.html>

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Norris C. Howard SR, The Pocomoke Nation, Revised 10-9-2015, [http://www.pocomokeindiannation.org/Our%20History/Narrative-The%20Pocomoke%20Nation%20%20Revised%2010-9-2015%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.pocomokeindiannation.org/Our%20History/Narrative-The%20Pocomoke%20Nation%20%20Revised%2010-9-2015%20(1).pdf)

interactions in white society. Laws prohibiting marriage within the white community, including indentures as well as other slaves, were also enacted. As the system of slavery became more and more prevalent in the eighteenth-century free black status came under heavy scrutiny. Proof of their freedom, as seen in chapter one, became more demanding with the elimination of baptism as a justifiable criterion. The rampant spread of white supremacy began pushing this population out of white circles by linking them with characteristics they attributed to slaves. Anthony Johnson for instance, had become a respected person within the white community

The push by white society to set themselves apart from other races only created encounters and relationships which they had sought to dissuade. Discrimination and the loss of land, as well as the prospect of obtaining those lands, brought free blacks, slaves, and Native peoples together. Suffering somewhat similar fates, there are numerous accounts in the court records of theft in which Natives and Blacks are said to have been accomplices. Slaves and indentures often ran away, as noted earlier with John Nuttall, taking up shelter with local Native tribes. As Native population numbers dwindled they looked to other groups for marriage in order to sustain their existence; as did those within free black communities who married white indentured servants, Native people, and those still enslaved. Pocomoke legend attests to these relationships indicating that marriages did indeed take place between their people and persons of both black and white ethnicity. It is unfortunate that the majority of those unions performed in the Christian faith, failed to be recorded in “official records or local church histories.”<sup>204</sup> Those which did make it into the records, as John Puckham did, became obscured and difficult to trace due to the

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<sup>204</sup> Howard, The Pocomoke Nation. [http://www.pocomokeindiannation.org/Our%20History/Narrative-The%20Pocomoke%20Nation%20%20Revised%2010-9-2015%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.pocomokeindiannation.org/Our%20History/Narrative-The%20Pocomoke%20Nation%20%20Revised%2010-9-2015%20(1).pdf)

church requirement that they take an English name. This makes it burdensome at best for historians but for Native peoples today it represents a loss in their cultural heritage.

Interestingly these groups have very different perspectives on historic encounters, with many individuals unaware of events which took place in their own communities. Twentieth-century historian, writer, and Native American, Vine Deloria Jr. looks at the similarities of exploitation for both Native peoples and free blacks in this somewhat different light. He acknowledges the fact that free blacks shared many of the same legal rights with those of white society, but suggests that this closeness, especially after the Revolution and possibly as an underlying result of slavery, is what made it progressively more and more difficult for the white majority to respect or even acknowledge the legal rights of free blacks.<sup>205</sup> This new mental association to what Deloria calls a “draft animal,”<sup>206</sup> in turn led to the eventual segregation of free blacks from state and federal programs afforded through their rights of citizenship. For example, schools became separate, with black schools receiving less funding. Churches and even the use of public spaces became segregated, thus forcing free black communities out of the white societal framework.

Native peoples on the other hand who never shared this closeness were in the eyes of Vine Deloria Jr. seen as “wild animals.” Oddly, because of this association, Native treatment became one of forced inclusion and “conform[ity] to white institutions.”<sup>207</sup> They still however, were not comparative in status, and it appears they tended to hold less status than those free blacks of the early eighteenth-century. So, as the white community

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<sup>205</sup> Deloria, *Custer Died for Your Sins*, 7-8.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, 8

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

pushes one group out, they force another to enter, but now it was strictly on their terms. This form of inclusion appears more notably in the records for tribes who moved to the Southwest, nevertheless, Native children throughout the colonies were taken and sent to white boarding schools, they were Christianized with English names and required to conform to white ways. One possible scenario for the concept of a dwindling and extinct native population may rest in the reaction to the above practice. For example, if Native children were noted to be full blood, authorities were allowed to take them away to boarding schools. To avoid losing their children many Natives when asked, would only claim one eighth Native blood in order to maintain their custody.<sup>208</sup>

Seeing these different forces in play, it becomes easy to acknowledge the free Black community pushing back in order to restore their rights and liberties in white society. Their actions here may well have been what set the cornerstone for civil disobedience in the movements of the twentieth century. While on the other hand, one can also easily recognize and understand why the various Native populations sought to withdraw from their forced inclusion in an effort “to maintain their own communities”<sup>209</sup> and ways of life outside of white society, even if it meant living on marginal lands allotted them by the government. When researching these groups in accord with their own cultures it becomes clear that relationships and interactions were never on an inevitable path towards assimilation. They both sought to preserve their own heritage in a white world through group as well as personal decisions, and persisted in the belief that they could still have control within their own environments.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Terry Bouton, lecture from History #, at University of Maryland Baltimore County, (Maryland, 2007).

<sup>209</sup> Vine Deloria, *Custer Died for Your*, 8.

<sup>210</sup> Breen and Innes, “*Myne Owne Ground*,” 22.

It is because of exclusions and the blurring of facts evident within the historical record that documenting encounters which appeared to be absent in Maryland history becomes crucial. It has been said that “denying a people’s heritage questions their legitimacy.”<sup>211</sup> Such questions are thoroughly entrenched within the legal documents of the eighteenth century. In the effort to prevent alliances, legitimacy and racial differences took center stage positioning one culture against another. It is important to note, however, that “defining group membership for Blacks and Native Americans originated outside of Black and Native communities.” Both Native peoples and free blacks “regularly defined the members of their families and tribes in accordance with their own values”<sup>212</sup> contrary to what was expected of them by Euro-Americans. Nonetheless, the colorization of “ethnic rivalries” and economic advantages in conformity eventually “turned [some Natives] into slave hunters [as well as] slaveholders, and [some free blacks] into [native] fighters”<sup>213</sup> as the Buffalo Soldiers.

### Maryland’s Eastern Shore Today

The landscape on Maryland’s Eastern Shore holds few signs of the activities nor the encounters which arbitrated life as we see it today. Nevertheless, both African Americans and Native peoples of the region are excited and hopeful as to what the future holds. New discoveries are adding additional information to enhance the historical narrative. Groups and communities continue to work ardently at uncovering their lost history and through their research the hope is that new knowledge will decidedly

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<sup>211</sup> Katz, introduction to *Black Indians*, 16.

<sup>212</sup> Miles, “Uncle Tom Was an Indian,” 147.

<sup>213</sup> Katz, introduction to *Black Indians*, 13.

highlight (compliment) their past contributions as they look towards the future for younger generations.

Active Native groups, who are very much alive, are anxious to demonstrate their existence. The Pocomoke Nation, for example, publicly affirms their “history, culture and lifeways” as a part of the Pocomoke Paramountcy. To do this they host demonstrations such as a yearly jamboree, which features traditional dance, foods, and crafts. They also sponsor educational classes and interpretive oral presentations regarding their native customs, ancient skills and current art work.<sup>214</sup> For others as the Assateague, their local stories and customs came down to them through “small, quiet circles.”<sup>215</sup> Their ancestors had to discreetly teach children traditional beliefs for it had become a stigma to be Native. Today they believe it is now this generation's responsibility to continue passing these traditions on to “the next seven generations.”<sup>216</sup> Native peoples preserve close knit relationships, as seen when their “plains brethren”<sup>217</sup> freely shared knowledge of certain ancient ways to replace those lost in time to the Assateague.

Many Nanticoke living at the reservation of Broad Creek, located in what is now Delaware, chose to remain in the area. Becoming sharecroppers working for the white population, individuals saved their earnings and began to purchase property. In time, as more Native individuals began purchasing land they would subdivide tracks for their children so that they too had a piece of the community. In an interview with Charles C. Clark, the son of the Nanticoke Chief Kenneth Clark, he describes how life for the

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<sup>214</sup> Pocomoke Indian Nation, Revised 10-9-2015. <http://www.pocomokeindiannation.org/>

<sup>215</sup> “Home,” Assateague

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

Nanticoke is a day to day struggle. It is a balancing act between the two worlds. He views them as having assimilated into the modern world, yet feels too that it is their responsibility as a distinct culture to “maintain tribal identity”<sup>218</sup> in the process. Through the suppression of historical knowledge and drastic alterations to Native lifeways, he was unable to say what life would have been like as a Nanticoke in the seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries. They had lost their language and many of the ancient customs. Despite erasures by dominant powers regarding contributions and existence for local groups, the Nanticoke chose to “transform the negative thoughts... resulting from oppression and prejudice into internal positive thoughts and feelings, strengthening their beliefs and conviction in themselves”<sup>219</sup> and their present day tribal identity.

The Nanticoke acknowledge and appreciate the work of historians and archaeologist for taking the opportunity to meet with many of their elders and for documenting old ways, without which “their knowledge would be limited.”<sup>220</sup> Nevertheless, they view that history as a tool for discovery and preservation. Rather than looking at Native history as being “something that was... [for them history is] living”<sup>221</sup> a continuance of their contributions relevant in the world.

A museum dedicated to their culture acts as a catalyst for younger members of the tribe to learn about and take part in helping to preserve the culture. They revived the Nanticoke Jamboree, in which they had not been able to participate since the beginning

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<sup>218</sup> Charles C. Clark, Delaware’s Forgotten People, (Nanticoke People) pt.1 of 4, by GIC Delaware, DEPublic Archives, updated 4/2/2012.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjtYFKSoQmc&list=PL5628B0420CE372E5&index=1>

<sup>219</sup> Ibid., pt.2 of 4.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid., pt.1 of 4.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.



of WWII<sup>222</sup> and they hold a yearly homecoming that brings together the old and young members of the tribe, as well as, those now living outside of the local area. Every activity, be it dancing, crafts, or talks, is showcased as an educational experience bringing awareness of their culture to the world.<sup>223</sup> Chief Kenneth Clark feels it is important not to forget the struggles of the past but to use their remembrance as prevention for similar happenings today. The future for the Nanticoke is projected as “hold[ing] great promise”<sup>224</sup> only if they work to maintain their cultural heritage.

Memories regarding local free blacks are interesting and elusive. Having existed within such a convoluted realm comprised of colorized historical documentation, the mingling of cultural heritage, and associations with the system slavery, make it difficult to draw them out. For communities like the Hill, free black history comes as a surprise. Priscilla Morris, who is versed in the community’s history and folklore and whose family has lived in this area since the 1600s, told a local newspaper “Nobody ever told us there was this extraordinary, large, free community.... [however] we suspected there was something here we didn’t understand”<sup>225</sup> Similar to patterns highlighted by this thesis, much of the information available regarding The Hill’s past Morris acknowledges comes from a “plantation economy”<sup>226</sup> viewpoint.

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<sup>222</sup> Clark, Delaware’s Forgotten People, pt.4 of 4.

<sup>223</sup> Jean Norwood, Delaware’s Forgotten People, pt.3 of 4.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AvnNphchUBU&index=3&list=PL5628B0420CE372E5> ,

<sup>224</sup> Clark, Delaware’s Forgotten People, pt.4 of 4.

<sup>225</sup> Pamela Wood, *Baltimore Sun*, “The Hill, Earliest Free African-American Settlement, Uncovered in Easton, Maryland (video)” 2013, viewed on The Huffington Post, 12/2016.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/26/the-hill-african-american-settlement-uncovered-easton-maryland-video\\_n\\_3657240.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/26/the-hill-african-american-settlement-uncovered-easton-maryland-video_n_3657240.html)

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

Discoveries found through archaeological excavations on The Hill present another have possibly belonged to a Buffalo Soldier.<sup>227</sup> A residence within the community has long been known as “the Buffalo Soldier’s House.”<sup>228</sup> If these ensuing connections can be substantiated, even though they occurred in the mid-nineteenth-century, it would shed light on the progression of attitudes towards Native peoples’ from those lived in the area.

At this point in time, The Hill community is on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) but as a conglomerate of the historic town of Easton. The communities hope is to have this information included in the NRHP listing to reflect new evidence predating its founding to that of Tremé on the outskirts of New Orleans, Louisiana. The goal is to showcase this part of Easton as a free black community, as well as, to accentuate it as a contributing factor in the town’s history and that of the countries.

A similar lack of knowledge can be seen for descendants living outside of Vienna in what is known as Indiantown. This area shares connections to Handsel, the residence located within the boundaries of the Chicone reservation. By the end of the eighteenth century the family of Henry Steele owned the property. Slaves and sharecroppers, who had worked the land for years many, of which lived along today’s Indiantown Road. Researchers for the *Restore Handsel Project* interviewed descendants of these individuals and many of their reactions and memories are surprising. Several of the persons speaking during the interview had no prior knowledge that free black workers or slaves had lived at Handsel. Nor were these individuals aware that many of these slaves were their own

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<sup>227</sup> Chris Polk, *Archaeologists dig ‘The Hill’*, (The Star Democrat: Aug 5, 2012).  
[http://www.stardem.com/life/article\\_a3fb4ccc-dee9-11e1-9562-0019bb2963f4.html](http://www.stardem.com/life/article_a3fb4ccc-dee9-11e1-9562-0019bb2963f4.html)

<sup>228</sup> Talbot County, Maryland: Minutes, “Request for Letter of Support from Housing Authority of Easton,” (March 8, 2011).  
<http://www.talbotcountymd.gov/uploads/File/council/minutes/March%208,%202011%20Minutes.pdf>

ancestors. They referred to the house at Handsel, which by this time had been abandoned for seventy years, as the “Mystery House.”<sup>229</sup>

Oral histories and interviews present a challenge in this as in most historical interpretation. Yet, they remain an important source of information. Within the recollections of these local residents, one can clearly note the blurring of historical facts which erased the lives of those living at Handsel outside of the plantation owners. What was important to take away from these recollections was the values instilled in them from ancestors they knew little about regarding the importance of community, education and family. According to Handsel records, as many as ninety-one slaves had resided in and around the Steele estate. The Nanticoke Historic Preservation Alliance (NHPA) continues to work at bringing these individuals into the local dialogue. With this said, it is evident that much work needs yet to be done when it comes to not only the existence of free blacks living in the region, but noting their contributions and encounters within Maryland’s Eastern Shore.

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<sup>229</sup> Delmarva Life, *Delmarva Treasure*, Handsell House (February 23, 2016), viewed 1/28/2017. <http://wypr.org/post/voices-indiantown#stream/0> ; this video can also be accessed from the “African American Story at Handsel,” Restore Handsel, [http://www.restorehandsell.org/?page\\_id=776](http://www.restorehandsell.org/?page_id=776)

## Conclusion

“Does the Absence of Evidence Mean that Evidence is Absent?”

Jay Custer

Inspired by the above quote, this thesis fits within the broader topics of early race relations, immigration, and assimilation in lieu of acculturation, but firmly within new scholarship trends for both Native peoples and African Americans. Maryland Eastern Shore scholarship in general is sparse so the research here helps to fill gaps existing in the current historiography and works to create new conversations missing for this region. Meshing the views from other disciplines, as in those from history, archaeology, and anthropology, acted to broaden and enhance the perspective of this project. Archaeology worked to established location boundaries and material evidence for occupation and trade. Anthropology and ethnology, on the other hand, provided aspects to consider regarding the mindsets of individuals within the landscape, as well as, those present during the recording process.

Limitations, nevertheless, still exist for anyone continuing this study. Historical documents have been lost through unpredictable changes in location, burning during warfare, and general time related deterioration of archival materials. However, the most prominent archaeological obstacle fell within the difficulties of interpretation. All the experts I spoke with felt there was little question that interactions did take place on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Yet, complications arise when searching for specific types of encounters using material culture alone. Material evidence acknowledges diverse cultural presents, and provides patterns in their lifeways; the difficulties arise when attempting to present scant findings in a manner clear enough to support complex interactions and encounters, many of which appear to have been fleeting at best.

Yet, to further uncovering centuries of blurred encounters, and the possibilities for collaborative relationships, through whatever means possible, will allow the complexity of players to emerge from their otherwise lost histories. It also feels imperative for future researchers to question and further explore what has been recorded from a skewed point of view as a lack of agency, disappearance, and removal. Acceptance of the dominant vantage point has meant overlooking subtle encounters between diverse ethnicities and the resulting consequences were ethnic legislation that lumped all cultures into dimensions of race predominantly erasing the existence of persons outside the realm of black or white.

The primary goals for writing this thesis have been to uncover aspects which may or may not have taken place as a direct result of colonial encroachment, and to demonstrate a cohesion among the various players within this time period who are currently missing in the local narratives. Only recently have historians begun to take a fresh look at presupposed historical narratives based on the premises of “imperialistic winners and victimized losers.”<sup>230</sup> Expressing agency within cultural relationships, be it good or bad, are important factors within the thesis and a necessary component for public memory. It is clear, nevertheless, that “encounters between deeply entrenched, coexisting worldviews are never easily negotiated,”<sup>231</sup> how true this statement became during research. Hopefully the questioning of historical assumptions and challenges to the projected stereotypes will continue in the future and highlight the importance of all individuals who called this early landscape their home.

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<sup>230</sup> Deloria, “Racial Science and Hierarchy,” 5.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., 2.

## Appendix 1

### Alternative spellings

#### Names

William Claiborne: Cleyburne, Cleybourne, Cleborne,

Robert Butchery: Bouchere, Butcher, Buchery

John Cassa (slave of A. Johnson): Cassaugh

Henry Eubank - interpreter and trader for Kent Island: Ewbanck, Ewbancke, Ewbank's, Ubankes

Grinage - from KI: Greenidge, Grinnage, Grenage, Greenwich, Greenage, Grinedge

Thomas Savage: Thomas Ensigne Savage, Ensigne Savage, Thomas Newport (his name known to Powhatan)

Jone Puckham: Jane Puckham

Clobery & Company: Cloberry

Thomas Marsh: Marcher

#### Places

Warresquioake plantation: Wariscoyack

Chesapeake and Delaware Bays: Chesopeake and Delawar

Popular Island: Popleyes Island

Wimbesocom Neck & Creek (in the 1790's shortened to Sockum, which was both a place name and a surname): Wimbesocom, Winnasoccum, Wimbasacham

Chicone: Chicacoan,

#### Terms

Mulatto: Mallatoe, Mallattoe, Mulato

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