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Articles of historic interest on Southern Maryland are requested for possible publication in future issues of **The Record**. Please send your typewritten manuscripts and other communications to: Editor, **The Record**, P. O. Box 261, Port Tobacco, Maryland 20677.

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The RECORD

Publication of the Historical Society of Charles County, Inc.

No. 34 May, 1985

William E. Garvey, Jr., *President*

Elwood M. Leviner, *Editor*

SEDITION IN CHARLES COUNTY?
1861 ---

By Sarah L. Barley

The opening months of the Civil War found many citizens of Charles County publicly and defiantly proclaiming their sympathies with the new southern Confederacy. The records printed here were obtained from the Provost Marshal's files in the National Archives and include an account of a public meeting held April 22, 1861, in Port Tobacco, calling for resistance to "northern armed fanatics" and the "military despotism at Washington." These documents provide valuable insight into the tensions of a community sharply divided by regional and national loyalties.

Information in regard to certain treasonable characters in and around Port Tobacco--From a Source well known to Gen. Sickles.

To
Brig. Genl. R. B. Marcy
Chief of the Staff
Army of the Potomac

Head-Quarters, Excelsior Brigade
Good Hope
Oct. 4th 1861

General,
I have the honor to transmit herewith Col. Dwight's report in relation to prisoners.
It will be seen that Jones and Acton are the only prisoners now in custody. They are now sent to the Provost Marshal by order.
There is no doubt of their guilt. It can be established by overwhelming proof from Charles County.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This file was discovered in the course of research for the exhibit "A Window on the Past: The Mitchells of Linden," displayed in April, 1984, at the Celebrating History Day, jointly sponsored by the historical society and the community college. As far as I can determine, this file has not been cited in work previously published on the Civil War in Charles County.

Judge Crane and the Rev. Mr. Wilmer of Charles County, true Union men and gentlemen of the highest character, urge that they be held in custody and I have no doubt this should be done. The information communicated to me by these gentlemen was given in confidence and I hope their names will not be compromised.

There are but few Union men in that part of Maryland and their situation is rendered very unpleasant by the supposition that they are in communication with the government.

The letters for Richmond found on Jones are enclosed. He has been for months engaged, in connection with Acton, in conveying across the river from Popes Creek, men, arms and munition of war. They have done it for hire.

Sergeant Major Bates who will deliver this communication to you, made the arrest by my order. The prisoners are in his charge. He will give you further details, if required.

I remain, General
Very Respectfully
Your most bodt Servt
D. Sickles
Brig. Genl.

To
Camp McClellan
near Good Hope
October 4, 1861

Camp McClellan
near Good Hope
October 4, 1861

Head-Quarters, Excelsior Brigade

General
On the subject of prisoners taken by the late expedition into Southern Maryland, I have the honor to report that of the number taken all have been discharged but two.
When it was considered necessary the oath of allegiance was administered before discharge.
The two remaining are T. A. Jones of Charles Co. and S. G. Acton of Anne Arundel near Baltimore.
T. A. Jones lives near Popes Creek on the banks of the Potomac. When taken he was heavily armed and secreted behind bushes near his house. His loaded arms were pointed towards the party making the arrest. He had in his possession Richmond papers of a late date and several letters addressed to persons in Richmond.

He had crossed the river the night before. During the whole of my stay within 15 miles of his vicinity I had frequently attempted his capture as I had heard frequent reports of his activity in crossing men and letters and particularly in crossing recruiting agents.

That he is a very dangerous man, there is no room to doubt.

S. G. Acton is a recruiting agent for the Maryland Rgt. in the Rebel service, this was his reputation and his own acknowledgements and conversations overheard confirm this character. He said he was at work at business between Maryland and Virginia for which he was paid.

I enclose the letters found on the person of Jones. They seem unimportant but he had just arrived that morning when taken and was not ready for his return.

Jones has had several boats taken from him and burned by the Gun boats plying the river.

The boat in which he crossed the morning he was taken was burned by your order.

I have the honor to be
General
Very Respectfully
Your obt Sevt
William Dwight, Jr.
Col. 1st Rgt.
Commanding Expedition

Signed

Information in regard to J. T. Stoddart, George Dent, Tom Stone and other treasonable characters in Charles Co. Maryland.

To
Brig. Gen S. Williams
Asst. Adj. Genl
Army of the Potomac

Head-Quarters, Excelsior Brigade
Good Hope
7 Oct. 1861

General,

I have the honor to transmit to you herewith copies of two communications both coming from sources of high respectability giving the names of prominent secessionists in lower Maryland.

It is believed that a meeting of these men is to be held at an early day near Port Tobacco. In my judgment they should be arrested. There is no doubt the meeting has for its object to concert measures for the separation of the state from the Union, and also to make preparations to aid the enemy in their often promised demonstration for the "liberation of Maryland".

The same persons figured in a secession meeting held in April at Port Tobacco, a copy of the proceedings of which is enclosed.

The arrest of these conspirators is a service which should be performed by an officer of tact and discretion in command of a mounted force. I have no cavalry. For this particular duty I would be reluctant to detail an untried officer, and I respectfully request that a small force of regular cavalry be assigned to my Brigade at least, temporarily.

I have the honor to be,
General, your most obt servt
D. Sickles
Brig. Genl

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Oct. 7. 1861

Dear Sir,

Allow me to introduce you to Mr. B. D. Spalding. He is thoroughly Union in his sentiments.

Major or Col. J. T. Stoddart on the Wicomico River--George Dent and Tom Stone near Popes Creek--Major Wm. B. Stone, Frederic Stone, George Brendt, General Mitchell, Lieutenant Philip Henry Muschet, son-in-law to Genl. Mitchell, John Mitchell, newpew to General Mitchell, John A. Jenkins--these men will now be in motion. If arrested would quash Secession in the County. The most of them could be arrested at any time--But Tuesday, the 15th day of October, at 11 o'clock, would be a favorable time. Then delegates from every part of the County will be in Port Tobacco--States rights men--men to prevent civil war will be there. The Substance of the information I think should be given at Washington.

Doctor Bayne Truly yours

The Port Tobacco Times of the 25th April contain Resolutions of approval etc. of the mob in Baltimore. William not Thomas Pye is the owner of the boat at Blossom Point on Cedar Point neck.

Dr. Dent particularly should be looked after. Leonard S. Robey for shrewdness cannot be surpassed. Secession with him is ingrained.

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Head-Quarters, Excelsior Brigade

Immediately after Gen. Sickles arrived at Port Tobacco and during the time his troops were there persons were carried across the Potomac from Blossom Point on Cedar Point neck. They were carried over by Mr. Thomas Pye and by his servants in boats. His boats may be secreted but if all the boats on Cedar Point neck were captured it would prevent subsequent crossing.

Jones who is under arrest ought not to be released. He is an unprincipled man and would not regard an oath. He has been carrying persons across to Virginia & with him it has been a matter of Speculation not as with Mr. Thomas Pye. Frederic Stone and George Brent, Esqr., of Port Tobacco have been most active in the cause of Secession and deserve to be arrested. They would take the oath of allegiance.

After the Baltimore mob a meeting was held in Port Tobacco at which most inflammatory resolutions were drawn up by Maj. Stone and passed; approbatory of the mob, etc. See Port Tobacco Times after the 19th of April.

General Mitchell has been a most violent Secessionist and no doubt has contributed his money and aid to the Southern cause.

Maj. J. T. Stoddart has furnished very exciting pieces over the signature J. T. S. in the Port Tobacco Times.

Barnes Compton has been active in getting persons carried to Virginia.

Leonard S. Robey has been a very active and influential man in his circle--and his arrest would be a check to his whole family.

Dr. Dent ought to be looked after. He has had a secret organization pledged to defend him in case of an arrest.

Lieut. Wm. Dement of the Port Tobacco Cavalry has been most violent and is in the Southern Army.

Jones who is now under arrest can, and will if pressed, make some very important developments.

Posey of Port Tobacco during the time he was Stage Contractor in the employment of the U. S. was constantly in the habit of using his Stage to transport persons to the Potomac for the Southern confederacy. Every man in Port Tobacco could testify if induced to speak.

John Mitchell, Esqr., near Port Tobacco, is an active Secessionist and at one time had kegs of powder desposited on his premises.

Henry Muschett, Son-in-law of Gen. Mitchell, has been active and ought to take the oath of allegiance.

John Hamilton, Esqr., has contributed his portion to the Southern Cause.

For weeks after the Baltimore mob Secession flags were flying from both Hotels in Port Tobacco. Would it not be well to compel them both to hoist the Union Flags.

It would be gratifying to the Union men in and around Port Tobacco to see the Union Flag flaunting from the Court House Steeple.

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From "Port Tobacco Times and Charles County Advertizer" of April 25, 1861--

Public meeting of Citizens
and Military of Charles County

On Monday, April 22, 1861, a large and enthusiastic meeting of both Citizens and Military was held at the Court House, in Port Tobacco, for the purpose of considering the present crisis and adopting measures for the defence of our rights, the protection of our homes and the repelling invasion of hostile troops. The meeting was organized by calling Judge Francis H. Digges to the Chair. Judge Geo. P. Jenkins and John Hamilton were selected vice-chairmen and L. D. Middleton, secretary.

Major Wm. B. Stone offered the following resolutions which were unanimously adopted--

Resolved That we heartily approve the resistance of the Citizens of Baltimore to the passage of northern armed

fanatics through their city and this state for the purpose of coercing the free citizens of the south and establishing a military despotism at Washington.

Resolved That we sincerely sympathize with the friends and all patriotic citizens in their sorrow for the loss of those who were ruthlessly murdered by armed enemies of their and our rights as freemen.

Resolved That the citizens of Charles County offer their services to repel any attack and drive back those who invade and pollute the soil of Maryland.

Resolved That we instruct our delegates and most earnestly and respectfully recommend to all the delegates to the State Convention immediately upon assembling. to pass an ordinance of secession and submit it to the whole people of Maryland at the earliest moment practicable and to take all other steps to enable Maryland to stand by the side of her honored sister Virginia and others of the South.

Resolved That we request our Commissioners of the Tax to provide by loan or otherwise the sum of at least twenty five thousand dollars to purchase arms for the Citizens of the County.

Resolved That the commanding officer or officers cause the Citizens to be enrolled mustered and equipped with the utmost dispatch.

Resolved That the Citizens be requested to guarantee the above loan.

Resolved That the Chair appoint a Committee of Safety consisting of eight, three being a quorum, who shall be fully authorized to act for the peace and defence of all the rights of our citizens.

The Chair, in pursuance of the above resolutions appointed the following gentlemen on said committee, F. Stone, J. T. Padgett, Gen. W. Mitchell, John Hamilton, George Brent, Major Wm. B. Stone, Col. F. Thompson and Major J. T. Stoddert.

The meeting was addressed by Major Stone, Gen. Mitchell, George Brent, Barnes Compton, F. Stone, Capt. Cox, John Hamilton and others, each pledging himself in favoring the resolutions.

GENEALOGY OF THE BEAN FAMILY
ON SALE

Mrs. Margaret Bean Langley

"The Bean Family of Maryland" is a newly published hardbound history of the Bean and kindred families of Maryland, dating from the settlers who arrived in the Province in the 1600's to the present time.

Some of the families included are Beall, Beavin, Berry, Brooke, Carroll, Contee, Dent, Greene, Hawkins, Key, Lee, Magruder, Marbury, Marlow, Smallwood, Turner and many others.

It is more than a traditional genealogy as it contains interesting articles on historical events, quotes from a diary and the personal lives of many people.

It may be purchased from the author, Mrs. Margaret Bean Langley, Telephone: 274-3249; or writing her at the