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# The RECORD

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## The History Of Marshall Hall

By Don Schatz

### Part I - INTRODUCTION

At the time of the first English settlement in Maryland the land in southern Maryland was owned by the Conoy Indians who spoke the Algonquian language and lived in villages. The colonists called the indians living on the Piscataway Creek, "the Piscataway." With time, conflicts arose between the English and the Indians regarding who had say over the land. These conflicts led the colonial government to adopt a policy of placing the Indians on reservations. In 1669 the colonial government increased the size of the Piscataway reservation by adding most of the land between the Piscataway and Mattawoman Creeks, including the future site of Marshall Hall.

The Marshall Family Tree is attached for your reference. This study is done in two parts. Part I traces the family. Part II concentrates on the estate. Part II will be published in the next issue.

### THE MARSHALL FAMILY TREE

William Marshall I arrived in Maryland in 1640 at the age of about 33. He lived an additional 33 years in Maryland until his death in 1673. He must have been a strong person as he lived a good bit longer than the average immigrant for that time. It is believed that William was an indentured servant to Thomas Weston, a merchant, who paid his transportation to the new world. After more than thirty years in Maryland, the immigrant William Marshall accumulated 1,870 acres of land and a valuable personal estate including expensive furniture, luxury items and six servants.

Although he was illiterate, William Marshall was appointed a justice of the Charles County court in 1660 and then removed from the office in 1667. A Protestant, he registered a deed of gift with the courts in 1670 which provided that the milk from 30 head of cattle should be used to help support a minister and the poor in the area between the Wicomico and Potomac rivers.

William Marshall II was not so fortunate. His brief life was more typical of the experience of seventeenth century settlers. He lived on the Wicomico river plantation inherited from his father. He died at age 28. When he died, his will divided the land so that each of the three younger children received 100 acres, while the eldest son, William Marshall III inherited the remainder.

Thomas Marshall mother was Elizabeth Hanson. Elizabeth Hanson Marshall, daughter of pioneer Randall Hanson, remarried in an alliance whose possible ramifications helped to define the land that eventually became Marshall Hall. Her second husband, John Fendall, a carpenter, was the son of Josias Fendall, once governor of Maryland. More important, was the fact that Fendall was also a speculator in lands of upper Charles County, who had been associated with both Elizabeth Hanson's father and her former brother-in-law, Joshua Marshall. This was the household in which Thomas Marshall I grew up.

The first records of Thomas Marshall as an adult are of his service on a grand jury, acquiring an indentured servant, and facing charges of assaulting two men in 1720 and 1721 when he was 25-26 years old. At this time he listed his trade as shipwright or carpenter, a trade he may have learned from John Fendall. When he was 31 years old, Marshall married Elizabeth Bishop, widow of James Stoddert. She had two minor sons at the time of their marriage in 1726. Thomas became guardian to these boys Benjamin and Thomas Stoddert; Elizabeth and Thomas also had two children of their own. At that time, Thomas also assumed responsibility for William III living children in 1734.

At a time when high mortality rates made death at a young age routine, such families were frequently found throughout the Chesapeake Bay region. The ratio of men to women in the new world was three to one making it common for women to marry more than once.

Thomas and Elizabeth had five children with three surviving childhood. After the death of his wife, Thomas married Sabina Trouman Greenfield in 1756. This marriage produced no children and lasted only three years as



Thomas died in 1759.

Only two of his children survived Thomas Marshall. Sarah Marshall and Thomas Hanson Marshall married another brother and sister, John Dent and Rebeckah Dent. This double marriage connected the Marshall family to a lineage which was not only wealthy, but also politically powerful. Colonel George Dent, father of the new in-laws of the Marshall family, was Chief Justice of Maryland. His father, Colonel William Dent, had been Attorney General of the province, Speaker of the lower house of the legislature, and Naval Officer, as well as a colonel of the militia. Sarah Marshall's husband, John Dent, rose to the rank of general in the American revolutionary army. Their children continued the tradition of civil and military service. Both Thomas and George Dent were captains in the Revolution. Afterwards, George Dent served in both houses of the Maryland legislature, becoming Speaker of the House and President of the Senate before his election to the federal Congress. He remained in Washington for several terms and achieved some prominence as a supporter of Thomas Jefferson.

In the revolutionary generation no descendants with the Marshall surname achieved national prominence, but two grandsons of Elizabeth Bishop Stoddert Marshall did make a mark in the political life of the new nation. George Dent was described above, and Benjamin Stoddert, the child of her son Thomas Stoddert, was the first Secretary of the Navy of the United States (1798-1801).

Thomas Hanson Marshall and Rebeckah Dent had six children, three boys and three girls. Two sons died in childhood, leaving Dr. Thomas Marshall as the only surviving male heir. Two daughters died in their early twenties, while the third, Elizabeth, survived her father.

Thomas Hanson Marshall's heir was Dr. Thomas Marshall, born in 1757. After the Revolution, he lived as a bachelor in Prince George's County. Dr. Marshall visited George Washington's Mount Vernon twice in 1785, once crossing the river to have tea and on another occasion spending the night. He was married in 1795 when he was 38 years of age. His first wife, Anne Claggett, was 17 at the time of the marriage. Although the Revolution occurred when Marshall was in his twenties, that does not explain his delaying marriage until comparatively late in life. Anne Marshall had four children before she died in 1805. Dr. Marshall remarried in 1808, this time to a cousin nearer his own age named Margaret Marshall. They had no children.

When Dr. Thomas Marshall died in 1829 at the age of 72 only two sons survived him. They were Thomas Hanson Marshall (the second in the family to bear that name) and Richard Henry Marshall. Thomas Hanson Marshall

inherited Marshall Hall when he was 33 years old. He was then already married to Eleanor Ann Hardesty. They had seven children before Marshall's death in 1843, but four of these died in childhood. The three survivors joined with their mother, Eleanor Hardesty Marshall, in seeking a court division of the Marshall land in 1846.

The fifth Thomas Marshall, born in 1826, married twice and had a total of sixteen children, although only eight survived childhood. His first wife, Sarah M. Lyles, died in 1855 when she was 27. She had borne six children in her marriage of nine years, two buried before she was. Within six months of his wife's death, Thomas Marshall V married her cousin, Henrietta E. Lyles. While caring for her four stepchildren Henrietta Marshall survived ten pregnancies. Five of her children died in infancy or childhood, including two during the family's four year residence at Marshall Hall between 1863 and 1867. In that brief period a twelve year-old daughter of Sarah Marshall also died. Thomas Marshall died in 1903.

The second part, Part II, of this article will appear in our next issue. It will concentrate on the land acquisitions of the Marshall family leading to the Charles County estate called Marshall Hall.

REFERENCES

The material used in this article was abstracted from a historical study identified below:

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THE MARSHALL HALL FAMILY, 1640 - 1867

