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## William M McClaskey: A Tavern Keeper in His Community, 1834-1844

Lisa Gail Royse  
*College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences*

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WILLIAM M. MCCLASKEY:

A TAVERN KEEPER IN HIS COMMUNITY, 1834-1844

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A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of American Studies

The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Masters of Arts

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by

Lisa Gail Royse

1990

**APPROVAL SHEET**

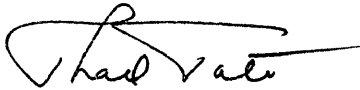
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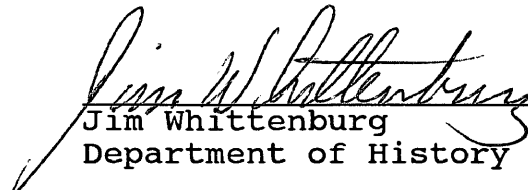
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Author

Approved, December 1990

  
Barbara Carson

  
Thad Tate

  
Jim Whittenburg  
Department of History

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## ABSTRACT

By examining previous studies of taverns and applying current methods of analysis of small business in America to one individual, this study broadens our image of the tavern keeper.

Studies of taverns and their keepers range from catalogues of physically extant or known tavern sites to analyses of archaeological data identifying differences between urban and rural taverns. The majority of these discuss eighteenth-century taverns, relating the tavern keeper's role in his community to characteristics of its locality and his relationship with the tavern.

The growth of a retail and service industry and the emergence of a merchant middle class affected small business opportunities in the nineteenth century. Correlating these trends with tavern keeping has not previously been addressed by tavern research.

This study analyzes the occupational diversity and social role of a specific and an unusually well-documented tavern keeper, William M. McClaskey, and relates tavern and small business research. McClaskey participated in a variety of service-related occupations in response to the economic opportunity available in early nineteenth-century Bel Air, Maryland. He was not simply a tavern keeper, but also a part of the growth of the service sector in the early nineteenth century.

LISA GAIL ROYSE

DEPARTMENT OF AMERICAN STUDIES

THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

**WILLIAM M. MCCLASKEY:**

**A TAVERN KEEPER IN HIS COMMUNITY, 1834-1844**



## CHAPTER I

### THE TAVERN KEEPER'S ROLE IN PERSPECTIVE

Taverns and their keepers have been researched by Thomas B. Searight in 1894, Alice Moore Earle in 1930, Patricia Ann Gibbs in 1968, James Deetz in 1977, Kym S. Rice in 1983, Peter Clark in 1983, Oliver W. Holmes and Peter T. Rohrbach in 1983, Diana DiZ. Rockman and Nan A. Rothschilds in 1984, and Donna-Belle and James L. Garvin in 1988.<sup>1</sup>

These studies range from catalogues of physically extant or known tavern sites to analyses of archaeological data

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas B. Searight, The Old Pike: A History of the National Road with Incidents, Accidents and Anecdotes Thereon (Uniontown, PA: Thomas B. Searight, 1894); Alice Moore Earle, Stagecoach and Tavern Days (NY: The Macmillan Co., 1930); Patricia Ann Gibbs, "Taverns in Tidewater, VA, 1700-1774," MA Thesis, College of William and Mary, 1968; James Deetz, In Small Things Forgotten: The Archeology of Early American Life (NY: Doubleday, 1977); Kym S. Rice, Early American Taverns: For the Entertainment of Friends and Strangers (Chicago: Regnery Gateway, 1983); Peter Clark, The English Alehouse: A Social History, 1200-1830, (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1983); Oliver W. Holmes and Peter T. Rohrbach, Stagecoach East: Stagecoach Days in the East from the Colonial Period to the Civil War (Washington, DC: The Smithsonian Press, 1983); Diana DiZ. Rockman and Nan A. Rothschilds, "City Tavern, Country Tavern: An Analysis of Four Colonial Sites," Historical Archaeology 18, no. 2 (1984):112-121; and Donna-Belle and James L. Garvin, On the Road North of Boston: New Hampshire Taverns and Turnpikes, 1700-1900, (Concord, NH: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1988).

identifying differences between urban and rural taverns.<sup>2</sup> Most of this research discusses eighteenth-century taverns and relates the tavern keeper's role in his community to characteristics of its locality and to his relationship with the tavern.

One of the earliest treatments of taverns by Thomas B. Searight told anecdotes about nineteenth-century taverns and their keepers on the National Road.<sup>3</sup> He found that tavern keepers derived supplemental incomes from occupations such as politician or banker.<sup>4</sup> One tavern keeper in particular "kept teams on the road, (was) a repair contractor, store keeper, owner and operator of a grist mill among other things."<sup>5</sup>

In Stagecoach and Tavern Days, Alice Moore Earle related anecdotal information about eighteenth-century taverns and tavern keepers. She found that taverns were social centers, places for the exchange of business, and sources of information.<sup>6</sup>

Patricia Gibbs also examined eighteenth-century taverns, specifically in Virginia, in "Taverns in Tidewater,

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<sup>2</sup> Rockman, "City Tavern, Country Tavern."

<sup>3</sup> Searight, The Old Pike. The information on taverns is inconsistent--some entries simply include the tavern keepers' name and dates, others have longer and often colorful narratives.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 157 and 265.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 220.

<sup>6</sup> Earle, Stagecoach and Tavern Days, p. 91, 194, and 199.

Virginia, 1700-1774." She discussed conditions at colonial taverns and the common roles of the tavern keeper. Gibbs mentioned the role of the tavern keeper in the transportation business.<sup>7</sup> She noted that horse racing was an entertainment "sponsored by the tavern keeper who collected subscription monies and housed the horses."<sup>8</sup> Gibbs found that ladies seldom stayed at these taverns, though they did dine there with their husbands.<sup>9</sup>

James Deetz briefly mentions a tavern site in Wellfleet, Massachusetts in his book, In Small Things Forgotten.<sup>10</sup> In its isolated location this tavern had a specialized function, servicing the Wellfleet whale fisheries from circa 1690 to about 1740.

In her book, Early American Taverns: For the Entertainment of Friends and Strangers, Kym S. Rice analyzed the eighteenth-century roles of the urban tavern and tavern keeper. She concluded that taverns had diverse roles. They functioned as meeting house, market place, political arena, restaurant, social setting, hotel, post office, stagecoach nexus, and community hub.<sup>11</sup> During the eighteenth century,

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<sup>7</sup> Gibbs, "Taverns in Tidewater, Virginia, 1700-1774," p. 123.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 97. Gibbs references the Virginia Gazette for February 19, 1767 and July 22, 1773.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 63.

<sup>10</sup> Deetz, In Small Things Forgotten, p. 33-35.

<sup>11</sup> Rice, Early American Taverns, p. 21, 45, and 81.

urban taverns became more specialized and reflected the needs of the economic or social group they served.<sup>12</sup>

Tavern keepers were expected to be upstanding citizens in the community. They often supplemented their income with other occupations as economic need dictated.<sup>13</sup> In urban areas they often lived in their tavern, but rarely owned them.<sup>14</sup> Licensing varied and depended on the financial status of the would-be tavern keeper, the location of the tavern, the existing facilities, and the tavern keeper's ability to discharge the required services.<sup>15</sup>

Rice found that tavern clientele included locals and travelers. In some regions the serving of minorities such as African- and Native Americans, apprentices, servants, and seamen was restricted.<sup>16</sup> Meals were served communally with distinctions made between clientele served in the dining room and in other public rooms.<sup>17</sup> Accommodations, when provided, were in spaces separate from other public rooms, usually with communal sleeping arrangements.<sup>18</sup> Payment was usually by cash, goods, or services and transactions were

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 31.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 47 and 66.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 31.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, p. 61-66.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 69-73.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p. 88 and 92.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 102.

recorded in daybooks and ledgers.<sup>19</sup>

In his book, The English Alehouse: A Social History, 1200-1830, Peter Clark examined the English inn. He analyzed the local community, the growth of a consumer economy, the impact of urbanization, the effectiveness of governmental controls, and the living standards of the lower class.<sup>20</sup> He identified a hierarchy of three different tavern types that catered to the stratified class society of England.<sup>21</sup>

An analysis of Clark's study finds that the more democratic American tavern combined aspects of all three types of English drinking establishments. The English inn, a social and economic center at the nexus of overland transportation and communication routes, provided a variety of drinks, food, and lodging to the upper class.<sup>22</sup> The English tavern, serving the upper and middle classes, acted primarily as a social club, although it had disappeared by the nineteenth century.<sup>23</sup> The public house had customers ranging from farmers to servants served in separate public rooms for different classes of clientele.<sup>24</sup> It served

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 67.

<sup>20</sup> Clark, The English Alehouse, p. ix.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p. 5 and 9.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 11-14.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 15, 282-285, 308, and 313.

primarily beer; rarely was food provided. Its keeper was often a respectable and literate former servant who supplemented his income with farming and various trades. Clark found that by the early nineteenth century, the English public house had become more commercial and specialized.<sup>25</sup>

In Stagecoach East: Stagecoach Days in the East from the Colonial Period to the Civil War, Oliver W. Holmes and Peter T. Rohrbach identified several aspects of tavern keeping. Stagecoaches stopped for meals or lodging at prized tavern locations often owned by the stagecoach proprietor.<sup>26</sup> As one of the most profitable businesses of the day, tavern keepers frequently served in public office and were men of high community standing.<sup>27</sup>

Diana DiZ. Rockman and Nan A. Rothschilds in "City Tavern, Country Tavern: An Analysis of Four Colonial Sites" interpreted archaeological finds from four tavern sites. They concluded that taverns performed different functions in different cultural environments.<sup>28</sup> Urban taverns specialized and had specific social roles within the community (for instance, as a political meeting place).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 333.

<sup>26</sup> Holmes, p. 145.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 149 and 150.

<sup>28</sup> Rockman, p. 121.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 114 and 118.

Rural taverns tended to have a wider variety of functions, predominantly food preparation and accommodation.<sup>30</sup>

The most recent tavern study, the Garvins' 1988 examination of New Hampshire taverns, found that they were centers for social exchange, business meetings, and mail delivery.<sup>31</sup> Typically, three to four meals were served daily at a "table d'hote."<sup>32</sup> Tavern keepers supplemented their incomes with occupations as diverse as hair dresser and cook. They boarded animals and vehicles, and often took on related services such as horsebreeding, veterinary medicine, blacksmithing, and organizing horse races.<sup>33</sup> Successful tavern keepers often became prominent figures in their communities.<sup>34</sup>

This tavern research has not taken advantage of the interpretive potential offered by studies of other types of small businesses or theories about the changing roles of these establishments. Conclusions about additional occupational incomes and the social prominence of tavern keepers have been based on contemporary writers and documentation directly applicable to taverns and their keepers. In the context of other research on small

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 117 and 119.

<sup>31</sup> Garvin and Garvin, On the Road North of Boston, p. 10.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 148 and 145.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p. 113.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 113.

business, these issues have a broader significance.

During the early nineteenth century, greater economic opportunities and a wider distribution of power created a period of fluid social order.<sup>35</sup> The effect of these general social trends allowed upward mobility within the working class and created a general climate of social egalitarianism in which the cult of the self-made man flourished.<sup>36</sup>

Richard Walsh's study, "The Revolutionary Charleston Mechanic," found that beginning in the late eighteenth-century, carpenters in Charleston were able to become political leaders.<sup>37</sup> Increasingly, "American status depended on economic position, not on socially immobile and artificial notions of society" as had prevailed in Europe.<sup>38</sup> The perception (and, in some cases, reality) that economic and social mobility was possible, created "frontiers of

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<sup>35</sup> Stuart W. Bruchey, The Roots of American Economic Growth, 1607-1861: An Essay in Social Causation (NY: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1965), p. 201-207; Whitman H. Ridgway, "The Search for Power: Community Leadership in the Jacksonian Era," in Law, Society and Politics, ed. by Aubrey C. Land, Lois Green Carr and Edward C. Papenfuse, Proceedings of the First Conference of Maryland History, June 14-15, 1974 (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1977), p. 308-9.

<sup>36</sup> Bruchey, The Roots of American Economic Growth, p. 195-201; Stephen Thernstrom, Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth-Century City (Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press, 1964).

<sup>37</sup> Walsh, "The Revolutionary Charleston Mechanic," p. 64.

<sup>38</sup> Richard Walsh, "The Revolutionary Charleston Mechanic," in Small Business in American Life, ed. by Stuart W. Bruchey (NY: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 64.



opportunity" for the individual.<sup>39</sup>

During the nineteenth century, the role of the small business community changed. Small business opportunity shifted from skilled artisans and craftsmen, who were being integrated into an industrialized work force, to a retail and service industry.<sup>40</sup> The need for services grew. Depending on the local economy, they became increasingly specialized. For example, the new wage-earning working class required a wide array of retail services to supply basic needs, such as food and clothing.<sup>41</sup> The uneven progress of industrialization in America meant that the frequency and significance of retail and service related business opportunities varied between communities.<sup>42</sup>

Studies of general store owners have found that throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries they supplemented their incomes with related occupations. Doris

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<sup>39</sup> Stuart W. Bruchey, ed., Small Business in American Life (NY: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 2.

<sup>40</sup> Stuart M. Blumin, "Black Coats to White Collars: Economic Change, Nonmanual Work, and the Social Structure of Industrializing America," in Small Business in American Life, ed. by Stuart W. Bruchey (NY: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 100-121. Peter Temin, Causal Factors in American Economic Growth in the Nineteenth Century (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1975), p. 16.

<sup>41</sup> Blumin, "Black Coats to White Collars," p. 105-116. Blumin analyzes the growing specialization of the retail sector in urban centers.

<sup>42</sup> Clyde and Sally Griffen, "Small Business and Occupational Mobility in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Poughkeepsie," in Small Business in American Life, ed. by Stuart W. Bruchey (NY: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 123.

D. Fanelli's study of William Polk found that this late nineteenth-century store keeper was also a farmer, miller, and moneylender.<sup>43</sup> Clyde and Sally Griffen's research of mid-nineteenth-century Poughkeepsie shows that some businessmen had varied business careers.<sup>44</sup>

The subject of this study, William M. McClaskey, ran a tavern from the 1830s to the early 1840s, a time of economic and social fluctuation in the United States. An economic expansion in the early to mid-1830s was followed by the "Panic of 1837" and a depression from 1839 to 1843.<sup>45</sup>

The tavern was located in Bel Air within the general economic influence of Baltimore, the third largest urban center and seaport in the United States.<sup>46</sup> The city competed with New York and Philadelphia for both

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<sup>43</sup> Doris D. Fanelli, "William Polk's General Store in Saint George's, Delaware," Delaware History 19, no. 4 (1981):212-222.

<sup>44</sup> Griffen, "Small Business and Occupational Mobility," p. 127.

<sup>45</sup> Peter Temin, The Jacksonian Economy (NY: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1969), p. 148. Douglass C. North, Economic Growth of the United States, 1790-1860, (NY: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1966), p. 70 and 202.

<sup>46</sup> Joseph Austin Durrenberger, Turnpikes: A Study of the Toll Road Movement in the Middle Atlantic States and Maryland (Cos Cob, CT: John E. Edwards, Publisher, 1968), p. 69. Gary Lawson Browne, "Baltimore as Maryland's Economic Hub in the Nineteenth Century," in Maryland: Unity in Diversity, Essays on Maryland Life and Culture (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1990), p. 78-79.

international trade and access to the interior.<sup>47</sup>

Baltimore's pre-eminence as a metropolitan center on the Chesapeake Bay reoriented regional economies and focused their markets on the city.<sup>48</sup>

Harford County, Maryland, lies east of Baltimore. It is bordered by the Chesapeake Bay to the south and the Susquehanna River to the east. In the southern section of the county are the major transportation routes and urban centers, including Joppa and Havre de Grace. In the nineteenth century, the remaining part of the county was primarily farmland, serviced by secondary routes that led to the urban centers of the south.

By 1830, Bel Air had been the Harford County seat for forty-eight years, although it was not incorporated until 1901.<sup>49</sup> Voters on April 27, 1782, chose a site located at the geographic center of the county.<sup>50</sup> The choice represented a compromise. It created a community with no prior political commitments to either the farming population

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<sup>47</sup> Gary Lawson Browne, Baltimore and the Nation, 1789-1861 (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), p. 114-117. Durrenberger, Turnpikes, p. 46-47.

<sup>48</sup> Bayly Ellen Marks, "Rural Response to Urban Penetration: Baltimore and St. Mary's County, Maryland, 1790-1840" Journal of Historical Geography 8, no. 2 (1982):113-114.

<sup>49</sup> Writers' Program, Work Projects Administration. Maryland, A Guide to the Old Line State (NY: Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 42.

<sup>50</sup> Marilyn M. Larew, Bel Air: The Town Through Its Buildings (Edgewood, MD: Northfield Press, Inc., 1980), p. 9.

or the port towns of Harford County.

Bel Air's resident population remained small during its first fifty years.<sup>51</sup> From the 1798 Federal Tax List population figures of 157 people and twenty houses, Bel Air changed very little over the next forty years with less than a fifty percent increase in dwellings and little change in the total population.<sup>52</sup> This growth pattern was not unusual for the mid-Atlantic region, for by 1840 only eighteen percent of the region's population was in urban areas.<sup>53</sup>

Its politically acceptable geographic location put Bel Air at an economic disadvantage. (see Figure 1) Waterways, a major transport system in the Chesapeake Bay region, provided farmers with direct access to ports and the railroad. A landlocked town, like Bel Air, could not compete with the major Harford County commercial or economic centers, which had direct access to water transportation.

The major roads and railroad between Baltimore and Philadelphia bypassed Bel Air well to the south. The town was surrounded by farmlands whose owners' economic welfare depended upon access to these transportation routes to Baltimore and urban centers in the southern end of the county. A road connecting Baltimore and Bel Air was planned as early as 1791. Paving was to begin in 1821, but by the

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p. 20.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p. 14 and 20. Population records for 1820-1840 do not distinguish the township from the district.

<sup>53</sup> North, The Economic Growth of the United States, p. 131.



Figure 1. 1839 Map of Harford County, Maryland

1840s the Baltimore and Harford Turnpike was still incomplete.<sup>54</sup>

A stagecoach line connected Baltimore and Bel Air from the late eighteenth century until after the Civil War.<sup>55</sup> Stagecoach lines were supplementing their incomes with mail carrier service by the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>56</sup> Officially sanctioned in 1794, the U.S. Post Office contracted with private carriers to handle mail "to encourage stagecoaches, subsidized by postal money to go where they otherwise would not have gone and thus establish a transportation system throughout the young Republic."<sup>57</sup> Existing stage lines were preferred for such contracts as they had demonstrated prior experience.<sup>58</sup> Stage passenger complaints about delays resulting from mail sorting were eventually resolved by establishing post offices close to taverns.<sup>59</sup> By the 1830s, stage travel was possible throughout settled regions and a system of detailed contracts outlining carrier obligations

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<sup>54</sup> C. Milton Wright, Our Harford Heritage: A History of Harford County, Maryland (C. Milton Wright, 1967), p. 105-108. Larew, Bel Air, p. 26-28.

<sup>55</sup> Wright, p. 119.

<sup>56</sup> Holmes, Stagecoach East, p. 13.

<sup>57</sup> Wayne E. Fuller, The American Mail: Enlarger of the Common Life (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 150.

<sup>58</sup> Holmes, p. 114.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, p. 116.

was in place.<sup>60</sup> This policy may have directly benefitted Bel Air. By 1830, the Conowingo Stage Line that ran between Baltimore and Philadelphia stopped in Bel Air.<sup>61</sup>

During the national depression from 1837 to 1842, its location hampered Bel Air's opportunity for growth. Baltimore compensated for a post War of 1812 decline in its international maritime industry by diversifying to the interior and competing with Philadelphia for the trade of the Susquehanna farmland.<sup>62</sup> As Baltimore concentrated its economic efforts on improving trade routes to the north and west of the city, Bel Air to the east did not benefit from this infusion of Baltimore wealth.

Throughout its early history Bel Air's economic existence depended largely on its political and administrative functions. Twice a year, in March and August, the county legislature met in Bel Air.<sup>63</sup> The influx of nonresidents and the concurrent economic benefits are not

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<sup>60</sup> Fuller, The American Mail, p. 154 and 157.

<sup>61</sup> Larew, p. 28.

<sup>62</sup> Writers' Program, Maryland, A Guide to the Old Line State, p. 42; Browne, Baltimore and the Nation, p. 70-89; Marks, "Rural Response to Urban Penetration," p. 119; Gilbert Gude, "Some Social Effects of Nineteenth Century Transportation Developments on Regional Patterns in Western Maryland: The Impact of the National Road, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad," in Maryland: Unity in Diversity, Essays on Maryland Life and Culture (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1990), p. 88-90; and James Weston Livingood, The Philadelphia-Baltimore Trade Rivalry, 1780-1860 (Harrisburg, PA: The Pennsylvania History and Museum Commission, 1947).

<sup>63</sup> Larew, p. 20.

reflected in any statistical data. However, the physical layout of the town, planned around the courthouse and jail, reflects the significance of politics and county government to the community.<sup>64</sup> The role of county seat greatly affected the economic and social life of Bel Air.

The town provided other services for its residents and those who lived nearby or who passed through. From two to four general stores, three taverns, and various craft shops operated during the 1830s and 1840s.<sup>65</sup> It was common for successful businessmen to participate in a variety of different business roles. For example, Thomas Hays, who owned a general store and a tavern, was also a newspaper editor, moneylender, real estate investor, and an attorney.<sup>66</sup>

Diversification rather than specialization was the way many businessmen were able to succeed in a town with such diverse interests, population, and economic needs. Bel Air, because of its primarily administrative role, was an ideal location for service-related businesses.

This study examines William M. McClaskey of Bel Air, Maryland, an unusually well-documented example of a tavern

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid, p. 12, 19, and 29. The only other social center was the Masonic Lodge located directly behind the courthouse and the only church in Bel Air met in the basement of the Lodge.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, p. 20-26.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p. 23; and Harford Republic, vol. 6, no. 31 (March 17, 1836 edition at Maryland Historical Society).



keeper in a local economy in the early nineteenth century.<sup>67</sup> His records, dating from 1835-1844, include two ledgers and five daybooks. Their contents record the expected activities of a tavern keeper--providing food, drink, lodging, and entertainment. Other personal records (an estate inventory, personal communications, and licenses) indicate the various ventures of which he was a part.<sup>68</sup>

McClaskey participated in a variety of occupational roles within his community. He was a tavern keeper as well as a banker/agent for transient laborers, a businessman, a mail carrier, a stagecoach operator, a landlord, a county coroner, and a road supervisor. His business positions were usually in the service sector (rather than manufacturing or farming) and he had a wide variety of economic and social relationships in his community and with his clientele.

This study analyzes the occupational diversity and social role of this tavern keeper. By examining previous studies of taverns and applying current methods of analysis of small business in America to one individual, this study

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<sup>67</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Books, LVI-LXI, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, LVI-LXI, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD.

<sup>68</sup> William M. McClaskey, William McClaskey Folder; William McCloskey Folder; William McClaskey Receipt Folder; William McClaskey Account Book, 1820; William M. McCloskey Ordinary Account Book, 1835; William McClaskey-Mail Carrier Contracts and Correspondence, 1826-1844; McClaskey Miscellaneous Papers, 1807-1844; James McCloskey Folder; James McClaskey Deceased Folder; Harford County-Retail Dealer Licenses Folder; Samuel Forwood Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

broadens our image of the tavern keeper.

## CHAPTER II

### WILLIAM M. MCCLASKEY AND HIS ROLES

The bulk of available data on McClaskey is business-related. However, enough information exists to give a brief sketch of his personal life.

He was born between 1796 and 1799 to James and Elizabeth Mead McClaskey.<sup>69</sup> His father was a farmer, constable of the Susquehanna Hundred in Harford County, and a businessman.<sup>70</sup> The McClaskey household at Lower Cross Roads, Maryland, consisted of James, Elizabeth, an aunt (whose name is not recorded), William M., and his five

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<sup>69</sup> This is an approximation from the 1800 to 1840 U.S. Censuses (see appendix) and his parents marriage lines from the First Baptist Church of Baltimore (Maryland Historical Society, MS 690). His father, James McClaskey married Elizabeth Meads on November 19, 1795. He had previously been married to Henrietta Riggs on July 28, 1790 in the First German Evangelical Reform Church at Frederick, Maryland (Maryland Historical Society, MS 2FR-1151). However, from the census record data it is extremely unlikely that Henrietta was William's mother.

<sup>70</sup> Wright, p. 72, the county was divided into Hundreds (a military district). William M. McClaskey, Note, n.d., William McClaskey Receipt Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD, a note about James McClaskey's will requiring William to administer family farm. McClaskey's father was a constable of the Susquehanna Hundred in Harford County (James McClaskey, Constable Licenses, 1804-1815, James McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD). United States Bureau of Census, Fourth Census of the United States, 1820 Population Schedules, Maryland, p. 327, "engaged in commerce."

sisters--Martha, Elizabeth, Mary, Emily, and Julia.<sup>71</sup>

By 1820, when in his early twenties, William M. McClaskey was already in business and had a separate household near the family home.<sup>72</sup> During the 1820s William McClaskey continued to live at Lower Cross Roads where he sold goods and liquor.<sup>73</sup> By 1827 he had both a retail dealer's license to run a dry goods store and a liquor license for Harford County.<sup>74</sup> At some time prior to 1832, McClaskey began renting his dry goods store premise at Lower Cross Roads.<sup>75</sup> By 1832 he had relocated to Bel Air, and in

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<sup>71</sup> James McClaskey, Letter, 8/17/1812, James McCloskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. Letter from Daniel Rey to James at Lower Cross Roads. Maryland State Archives, Baltimore County Register of Wills (Wills) 1831-1834 [WK 1005-2], NC 14, James McClaskey Will, 2/3/1833, p. 289. Wright, p. 339. Herbert Cross Roads, Churchville, and Lower Cross Roads are different names for the same place. In this paper, Lower Cross Roads will be used in the text since it is most frequently cited in the original records.

<sup>72</sup> United States Census Bureau, 1820 Population Schedules, p.327. James and William McClaskey were listed as two separate head of households. James had seventeen people in his household (including nine slaves), William had one in his household.

<sup>73</sup> William M. McClaskey, Receipt, 5/14/1823, William McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. Receipt for subscription to church building at Churchville [Lower Cross Roads].

<sup>74</sup> William M. McClaskey, Licenses, 5/19/1827 (dealer of dry goods at Herbert [Lower] Cross Roads) and 8/19/1826 (liquor license for Harford County), Harford County Retail Dealer Licenses Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>75</sup> Harford Republican 3, no. 20 (12/27/1832). "Pritchard's Tailor removed to the home of William McClaskey near Herbert [Lower] Cross Roads recently occupied by Mr. Ezekiel Morrison as a store." This home is not listed in any county

1834 he had acquired a tavern license.<sup>76</sup>

When his father died in 1834, William took on the added responsibility of administering the family farm.<sup>77</sup> His mother and a sister then lived with William in Bel Air along with slaves probably acquired from his father's estate.<sup>78</sup>

The only further information about his private life records his death when he was approximately forty-five to

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land transaction records, which might indicate that it was inherited, however, I have found no such evidence.

<sup>76</sup> William M. McClaskey, Letter, 3/26/1832, William McClaskey Receipt Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. Letter from Samuel Barron to William McClaskey of "Bellaire" ordering a suit for his son. William M. McClaskey Tavern License, 1834, William McClaskey Receipt Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>77</sup> Maryland State Archives, Baltimore County Register of Wills (Wills) 1831-1834 [WK 1005-2], NC 14, James McClaskey will, 2/3/1833, p. 289. "To son, William, a negro boy, Jacob as a remuneration for his trouble that he has had with the family." Maryland State Archives, Harford County Register of Wills (Inventories) 1828-1844 [WK 834-835-2], James McClaskey estate inventory, 9/15/1834, p. 484-486. James McClaskey's estate was valued at \$1,893.37 1/2 on September 15, 1834. William M. McClaskey, Note, n.d., William McClaskey Receipt Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. Note about James' will that requires William to administer family farm for mother and to support family. In return, William gets all increase arising from the property over and above the support. William leased the farm as mentioned in the note to Benjamin Milton of Baltimore County for one third of the grain yield.

<sup>78</sup> United States Census Bureau, Fifth Census of the United States, 1830 Population Schedules, Maryland, p. 343. In 1830, there were only three people listed in William's household and sixteen people in James' household (including twelve slaves). [see Appendix A] United States Census Bureau, Sixth Census of the United States, 1840 Population Schedules, Maryland, p. 59. By 1840 William had seventeen people in his household (including nine slaves), an increase due to the incorporation of his father's household into his own.

forty-eight years old. William McClaskey died intestate on April 1, 1844.<sup>79</sup> His death was of enough significance to be reported in the [Baltimore] Sun.<sup>80</sup> His sister, Martha, and mother acted as executrices of his estate, valued at \$1,536.75.<sup>81</sup> His probate inventory gives little insight into his personal life, but it clearly identifies his occupations as tavern keeper and stage operator.[see Appendix A] No records suggest that he ever married or had any children.

According to meager surviving county land records, McClaskey was not directly involved in any land transactions nor was any property assessed as part of his estate at the time of his death.<sup>82</sup> However, his personal papers reveal his participation in a variety of real estate transactions. For example, in a letter dated April 5, 1825, Mr. Maxwell Kennedy requested repayment of a loan since McClaskey was

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<sup>79</sup> [Baltimore] Sun, April 9, 1844, p. 2. William M. McClaskey, Funeral Record, Index of Reverend John R. Keech Pastoral Records, Harford County, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland.

<sup>80</sup> [Baltimore] Sun, April 9, 1844, p. 2.

<sup>81</sup> Maryland State Archives, Harford County Register of Wills (Inventories), 1844-1848 [WK 835-836], William M. McClaskey estate inventory, 6/6/1844, p. 40-45. [see Appendix A for transcribed inventory]

<sup>82</sup> Maryland inventories exclusively list personal property, so the lack of reference to land in his estate inventory is not unusual. Many local records were destroyed when the Harford County Courthouse burned down February 19, 1858, Wright, Our Harford Heritage, p. 70.

receiving monies from a rental property.<sup>83</sup>

Existing receipts establish that he also received rent money and repossessed a house and garden rented by Mrs. Churchman in 1826.<sup>84</sup> Another series of receipts, dating from January 24, 1827 and totaling \$1,000.00, record payments made on a house and two lots of ground, previously owned by Mary Logan.<sup>85</sup> None of these properties were recorded in surviving county books. The locations are unknown but were probably at Lower Cross Roads.<sup>86</sup> The only mention of the family farm is found in a note among McClaskey's business papers about the administration of his deceased father's farm and its leasing to a third party.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> William M. McClaskey, Letter, 4/5/1825, McClaskey Miscellaneous Papers, 1807-1844, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. Letter from Maxwell Kennedy--posted to William McClaskey at Harford [Lower] Cross Roads.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, Receipt [Notice of Repossession], 3/16/1826.

<sup>85</sup> William M. McClaskey, Receipts, 1/24/1827 and 7/16/1833 William McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. Receipt for purchase of the house and two lots formerly the property of Mary Logan, deceased.

<sup>86</sup> William M. McClaskey, Letter, 4/5/1825, McClaskey Miscellaneous Papers, 1807-1844, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. Letter from Maxwell Kennedy--posted to William McClaskey at Harford [Lower] Cross Roads. There is no indication of his participation in any activities outside Lower Cross Roads until he moved to Bel Air.

<sup>87</sup> William M. McClaskey, Note, n.d. William McClaskey Receipt Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD (see footnote 10 for full citation). Land records for both Baltimore County and Harford County were exhaustively researched without success nor was a patent issued to James or William. Tax records no longer exist for Harford County due to the burning of the courthouse. No mention of the farm is made at the time of Elizabeth McClaskey's death (Maryland State Archives, Harford County Register of Wills

Finally, records indicate that during 1838 while living in Bel Air, McClaskey rented property to James McClain and his wife.<sup>88</sup>

The location of McClaskey's tavern in Bel Air is not recorded, nor is there any evidence that he purchased a suitable site. McClaskey did not record any payments for rental of a tavern site in any of his extant business papers. It is unlikely that he worked as a tavern keeper for another proprietor. His account books lack any record of personal wages paid to McClaskey for keeping a tavern.<sup>89</sup>

Bookkeeping practicums, such as Progressive Exercises in Book Keeping by Single and Double Entry, instructed

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(will), 1843-1853, TSB, no. 6 [WK 828], Elizabeth McClaskey will, 4/2/1847, p. 148).

<sup>88</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVIIIA, 2/9/1838, p. 17, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD. During 1838 James McClain, an employee (see footnote 94) paid rent to McClaskey and although no location of the rental is mentioned, it was most likely in Bel Air.

<sup>89</sup> Larew p. 20-22, lists only three taverns in Bel Air for time period. There is only one inn/tavern which Larew mentions for which she does not give a tavern keeper name for the late 1830s and early 1840s and that is the Union tavern owned by Thomas Hays. However, there is no evidence of a business association between Hays and McClaskey in any records, instead Thomas Hays seems to have been treated by McClaskey as any other client (William M. McClaskey, Ledger Account, 1836-1843, William McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. Ledger account made up after McClaskey died, itemizes purchases by Hays of oats, hay, beef, etc. balanced by cash and stage tickets) and visa versa (William M. McClaskey, Account Books, LVI, 1835-1837, p. 33 and 65, account of Thomas Hays, Jr. for meals, cigars, stage tickets, etc.).



businessmen to record every transaction as it occurred into a daybook (or waste book).<sup>90</sup> Entries were later recorded in a separate account book or ledger organized by customer. Receipts, correspondence, and other notes were also part of the business transaction.

McClaskey's business papers are substantial, but incomplete.<sup>91</sup> They include several folders of receipts, licenses, contracts, business correspondence, and obligatory notes. McClaskey apparently used separate daybooks and ledgers for different business activities.

His daybooks included bar books recording purchases made by tavern clientele, court books presumably for transactions related to court sessions, and stage books for entries on stage service. Of these, only five bar books still exist.

Two existing ledgers hint at broader interests and records that have not survived. One ledger lists debts by individual tavern clients--"to amount brought from court

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<sup>90</sup> James H. Coffin, Progressive Exercises in Book Keeping by Single and Double Entry (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1836).

<sup>91</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Books, LVI-LXI, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD. William M. McClaskey, William McClaskey Folder; William McCloskey Folder; William McClaskey Receipt Folder; William McClaskey Account Book, 1820; William M. McCloskey Ordinary Account Book, 1835; William McClaskey-Mail Carrier Contracts and Correspondence, 1826-1844; McClaskey Miscellaneous Papers, 1807-1844; James McCloskey Folder; James McClaskey Deceased Folder; Harford County-Retail Dealer Licenses Folder; Samuel Forwood Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

book."<sup>92</sup> It also mentions accounts in a stage book. Without this stage book, relatively few stagecoach clients are identifiable, and the extent of the service that McClaskey provided can only be guessed. A few entries in one of the ledger books mention "To amount brought from day book," which may refer to a ledger for his bar books.<sup>93</sup>

The second ledger contains debits and credits incurred by workers in a separate business venture that cannot be definitely identified. It hints at a diversification of interests in a one year period.<sup>94</sup> It also mentions a "new book" where accounts were to be continued. Although the existing record is incomplete, McClaskey appears to have been a scrupulous recordkeeper who retained most of his business-related paperwork.

McClaskey's business career started as early as 1820 when he was "engaged in commerce."<sup>95</sup> By 1827 he had obtained licenses to run a dry goods store and sell liquor

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid, LVI, there are many references in the different individual accounts to a court book.

<sup>93</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVI, 6/1839, p. 9, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD. This entry is for Thomas Forwood and appears to combine accounts from the "court book" and "day book." However, the entry is brief and apparently incomplete.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, LVIIIA.

<sup>95</sup> United States Census Bureau, 1820 Population Schedules, p. 327.

at Lower Cross Roads, Maryland.<sup>96</sup> An account book with the earliest record of his involvement in the alcohol trade lists alcohol sales by the pint flask in 1822.<sup>97</sup> By 1826 McClaskey was billed for purchasing large quantities of alcohol from Adam Cochran, a Baltimore merchant.<sup>98</sup>

The earliest extant license for McClaskey to run an ordinary or tavern in Bel Air was issued December 15, 1834, at a cost of \$6.75.<sup>99</sup> Subsequent licenses were issued annually on May first, and those for the years 1835-1840 survive.<sup>100</sup> Since no bar records date prior to December, 1835, he probably began the business at that time. Daybooks for the tavern exist for four years, including one bar book dated 1846 two years after his death.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> William M. McClaskey, Licenses, Harford County Retail Dealer Licenses Folder, 5/19/1827 (dealer of dry goods at Herbert Cross Roads) and 8/19/1826 (liquor license for Harford County), Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>97</sup> William M. McClaskey, Entry, 1822, William McClaskey Account Book, 1820, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>98</sup> William M. McClaskey, Receipts, 9/17 and 12/5/1826; 5/5/1827, William McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. These receipts are for the purchase of buying whiskey.

<sup>99</sup> William M. McClaskey, License, 12/15/1834, William McCloskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, Licenses, 1835-1844, inclusive at an eighteen dollar fee.

<sup>101</sup> William M. McClaskey, Ordinary Account Book, 1835, William McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. William M. McClaskey, Account Books, LVIII and LXI, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland

The bar books indicate that he served meals and drinks, provided lodging, stabled horses, sold tobacco and other items, and rented card tables and rooms. His normal bar clientele appears to have been a regular group of people who ordered a consistent quantity and type of alcohol. [see Appendix B] Not all of McClaskey's tavern customers drank alcohol. For example, Mr. Michael Pew ordered dinners and glasses of lemonade.<sup>102</sup>

McClaskey's bar books were kept as a continuous record of tavern services rendered. Entries were jotted down as they occurred, marked through with lines at a later date, and sometimes labeled "paid". This may indicate that some customers paid for purchases when made and other purchased on credit. No formal ledger exists for the five bar books that would indicate whether payment was in cash or goods, nor whether most of the accounts were paid as they occurred or as a monthly or annual bill.

Some surviving receipts indicate that regular customers, even from out of town, paid their accounts when they were in funds and not on any regularly scheduled basis. One entry for Mr. John C. Forwood itemizes his patronage of the bar and stable, borrowing cash, buying a horse, and payment on his account over a two month period with bushels

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Historical Society, Baltimore, MD.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, LVI, 7/15/1835-4/3/1836, p. 48.

of oats and corn.<sup>103</sup>

A receipt for Mr. Taylor dated October 2, 1842 is indicative of the credit notes that were excepted as legal tender--"Wm P. Taylor settled with me this day and there due him on settlement \$51.75 for which I have given him a due bill subject to a deduction if any receipts can be found in my favor."<sup>104</sup>

Some customers paid for their accounts with other services, as did Mr. Edward Jackson. To pay for his account, he made McClaskey a saddle pad and mended a harness.<sup>105</sup> These services also accounted for charges added to other customer's accounts. For example, to pay for his bar debt, Mr. Blaney mended Mr. Otho Scott's stable door.<sup>106</sup> This repair was charged to Mr. Scott's bar account by McClaskey.<sup>107</sup> Occasionally, a dinner or drink consumed by one customer was paid for by another. Mr. John Forwood was charged for drinks and dinner for Mr. Ewing, Jr.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid, LVI, 1/1/1838-6/26/1838, p. 69.

<sup>104</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVIII, Receipt, 10/29/1842, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, LVI, 1/1835-1838, p. 21.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, LVI, 1835-1836, p. 40.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, LVI, 1/2/1837, "To mending stable door by Blaney," p. 38. There are several similar examples of work by one customer charged to another's account.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, LVI, 1/25/1838, p. 69. This was also true for McClaskey's stage serve, at times one customer's account was billed for stage tickets given to another (Ibid, LVI, 5/26/1836, p. 51, Mr. John McHenney's account, "To 1 seat

Years after his death, customers still owed money to McClaskey's estate. For example, a ledger account recorded after McClaskey died, itemizes Thomas Hays's purchases of oats, hay, beef, etc. that were balanced by cash and stage tickets.<sup>109</sup>

An analysis of McClaskey's surviving records can further illuminate the diversity of his business interests and how they contributed to his incurring status in the community. As previously mentioned, McClaskey kept a court book that no longer exists.<sup>110</sup> This probably included accounts for those clients who were in town during the standard legislative months of March and August and also, for May and June court sessions. For example, McClaskey noted in the account for Mr. William Forwood on two separate occasions, "To amount brought from Court Book of August" and "To amount brought from March Court Book including May and June court."<sup>111</sup>

The increased trade during these months is highlighted by his need for additional help. McClaskey wrote to Mr. George Bryarly, "Let your father know that we will want our

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in stage for Mr. Heald."

<sup>109</sup> William M. McClaskey, Ledger Account, 1836-1843, William McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, LVI, the "court book" is referenced in this ledger.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid, LVI, 8/18/1835-1836, p. 56.

negro girl home to assist us in Belair during court."<sup>112</sup>

Occasionally, McClaskey provided long-term lodging to customers, such as Mrs. Hannah R. Quarrels and Dr. David King. Mrs. Quarrels was a permanent resident of Port Deposit, Maryland, but stayed at McClaskey's tavern from April, 1836 through January, 1838.<sup>113</sup> Dr. David King also stayed at McClaskey's tavern from April, 1836 to August, 1837, paying for meals, lodging, oats, and hay.<sup>114</sup>

McClaskey's estate inventory recorded in county records soon after his death confirms and helps clarify services provided at his tavern.<sup>115</sup> Liquor was served on the premises--a stock of two barrels of whiskey, one ten gallon keg, champagne and wine glasses, and nine decanters were inventoried.

Several separate public rooms are indicated by

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<sup>112</sup> William M. McClaskey, Letter, 2/22/1835, William McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>113</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Books, LVI, 4/1836-9/30/1836, p. 190, 200-202, n.p., and LVII, n.p., 10/1/1836-12/31/1836 and 1/1837-1/6/1838, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD. Mrs. Quarrels was daily charged for breakfast, dinners, board, and oats. A letter from Mrs. Quarrels (found in LVI) is postmarked Port Deposit and asks about her bill for the last quarter.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid, LVII, 4/1836-8/13/1837, n.p.

<sup>115</sup> Maryland State Archives, Harford County Register of Wills (Inventories), 1844-1848 [WK 835-836], William M. McClaskey estate inventory, 6/6/1844, p. 40-45 [see Appendix A for transcribed inventory] This is especially important since the physical tavern site and/or floorplan has not been located.

contents identified with specific rooms. The bar room contained at least one table and a clock. Both the parlor and dining room had a fireplace equipped with its own set of andirons. Both were food service areas with tables, chairs, and sideboards. The parlor probably doubled as a common room, while the other was a formal dining room. Dinnerware for two dozen was inventoried. Other amenities found in these two rooms included two card tables, looking glasses, eleven pictures, and a map of the United States.

Accommodations were adequate if not luxurious. Ten beds, bedsteads, appropriate linens (including nine quilts, three coverlets, six blankets, and ten pair of sheets and pillowcases), and one case of drawers were inventoried. Contents are not listed by room. The presence of three washstands may indicate three separate sleeping areas or a communal wash area serving all rooms.

McClaskey was not only a tavern keeper. He participated in several other business ventures. Prior to his move from Lower Cross Roads to Bel Air, McClaskey was involved in horse breeding. In 1827 McClaskey purchased a stallion, Prince George, that stood mares at four to five dollars each.<sup>116</sup> The next evidence of his continued participation in horse breeding is a notation of payment to

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<sup>116</sup> William M. McClaskey, Receipts and Account Book, 1820, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. William M. McClaskey, Receipts, 5/1827, William McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. Receipts kept to the "season of mares to horse Prince George."



a horse handler in 1829 and a promissory note for the season of three mares to a horse called Regulous.<sup>117</sup> After moving to Bel Air in 1832, he apparently continued this venture until 1836 with another stallion named Sir Henry.<sup>118</sup> Horse races were held at Lower Cross Roads on a regular basis.<sup>119</sup> However, there is no evidence that McClaskey was involved in them.

Proximity to transportation routes and the ability to provide services to passengers gave many tavern keepers the opportunity to participate in the transportation industry. McClaskey was involved in several ways. At first, he simply sold tickets on existing stage and rail lines and may have provided a stage service from his tavern to points along those transportation routes.<sup>120</sup> The earliest records of

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<sup>117</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Receipts, 5/1829 and 6/1829, William McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. Receipt for employment of Thomas Duff to fifty-three days attending horse at nine dollars a month. William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVI, 6/22/1829, n.p., Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD, a promissory note from Mr. Louis Butter. Mr. Butter was a customer in later years, his bar account from 4/4/1835-10/3/1837 is in the same account book, p. 6.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid, Receipts, 1835-1836.

<sup>119</sup> Bond of Union, 9/14/1826. Gibbs, "Taverns in Tidewater Virginia, 1700-1774," p. 97.

<sup>120</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVII, 1836, n.p., Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD.

McClaskey selling tickets for the stage date from 1835.<sup>121</sup> Later that year, McClaskey was running his own stage service from Port Deposit to Bel Air, most likely terminating at his tavern.<sup>122</sup> He provided both passenger service and the transport of packages.<sup>123</sup> Over the years, McClaskey hired stage drivers such as Peter French (1836), Reuben Eaton (1838), William Linch (1839), and Robert D. Parker (1840).<sup>124</sup>

Although the relevant stage books are missing, a few of McClaskey's stage customers are noted in the remaining ledgers. For instance, Mr. Jonas W. Onion booked from one to six seats on the stage about three times a week from July, 1841 to January, 1842.<sup>125</sup> Occasionally, regular bar customers purchased a stage ticket and McClaskey charged the

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid, LVI, 10/10/1835, p. 23, Mr. Chas. D. Boulden's account, "To 1 seat in stage for wife." This is included in his bar charges.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, LVI, 1835-1836, p. 30, Peter French's bar account.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid, LVI, 1836, p. 75, charge to Samuel Richardson for carrying three boxes on the stage. This is one example of many such instances.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid, LVI, 1836, p. 30, account of stage driver Peter French; Receipt, LVI, 6/2/1838, for \$16.66  $\frac{2}{3}$  on account of driver Reuben Eaton for driving stage from Port Deposit to Baltimore; LVI, 1839, p. 80, account of driver William Linch "commenced driving 17th Oct. at \$12.00 per month"; LVI, 1840, p. 186, account of driver Robert D. Parker "commenced 17th Feby."

<sup>125</sup> Ibid, LVII, 7/2/1841-1/17/1842, n.p.

fare to their bar accounts.<sup>126</sup>

McClaskey received several notes and letters requesting special services and favors. A note dated March 15, 1839, sends "Mrs. Rivers' compliments to Mr. McClaskey and would be much obliged to him if he would send her a ticket to go to Baltimore."<sup>127</sup> Mr. Samuel Martin wrote McClaskey to mention a lady traveling on the stage from Baltimore to Bel Air and asked him to arrange conveyance from Bel Air to her new position with Mr. Robinson if no other is provided.<sup>128</sup>

In conjunction with this stage service, McClaskey contracted to carry the mail. Mail carrier contracts were generally granted to existing stage lines, since their owners were able to prove prior experience and consistent transportation service.<sup>129</sup> McClaskey delivered mail from Bel Air to Port Deposit and Perrymansville as early as 1836.<sup>130</sup>

His contracts with the United States Post Office

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid, LVI, 1010/1835 and 10/24/1835, p.23, account of Mr. Chas. D. Bouldin with purchases of stage tickets for his wife.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, LVI, 3/15/1839, n.p.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid, LVI, 10/7/1839, n.p.

<sup>129</sup> Holmes, p. 114.

<sup>130</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVII, 1836, n.p. and LVI, 1838-1842, p. 196-197, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD. The earliest documentation of his involvement in mail service is the payment of drivers for carrying mail in 1836. The Harford County Historical Society dates his mail service from 1826, however, I can find no documentation to substantiate this earlier date.

specified routes, number of deliveries per week, the requisite size of the post coach, and his payment which averaged around one thousand dollars annually. His contract was renewed and updated annually, and his routes changed, usually expanding service.<sup>131</sup> He was paid by various drafts on postmasters that he serviced, including Mr. McAtee of Churchville (Lower Cross Roads), Elijah Carman of Fork Meetinghouse, and A.J. Jarrett, postmaster of Bel Air.<sup>132</sup>

Messrs. James C. Caldwell and Oliver Evans acted as mail carriers on McClaskey's route from Bel Air to Port Deposit. McClaskey provided them with meals and lodging that were deducted from their salaries.<sup>133</sup> One other stage driver, Reuben Eaton, also worked as a mail carrier. A portion of his wages paid by McClaskey were credited to the account of Caldwell and Evans.<sup>134</sup>

At the time of their annual renewal, contracts could be challenged or changes in the prescribed route could be

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<sup>131</sup> William M. McClaskey, Letters, Contract Notices, & Indentures, 1838-1843, William McClaskey-Mail Carrier Contracts and Correspondence, 1826-1844, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>132</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVI, 1838-1842, p. 196-197, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, LVII, 1836 and LVI, 1/14-7/7/1838.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, LVI, 1838, n.p., Receipt for \$16.66  $\frac{2}{3}$ , received of William McClaskey by Reuben Eaton, "in full for driving teams from port deposit to Baltimore from 12th of May up to above date (2nd June) eight dollars and thirty 3 +  $\frac{1}{3}$  cents of the above amount to be charged to Evans & Caldwell's account.."

requested. One such instance is recorded in a letter to McClaskey. A tavern keeper, who ran the post office at Gunpowder Water Station, wanted the mail route changed so the stage would stop at his tavern.<sup>135</sup> His letter makes very clear that he was attempting to increase business and raise the value of his property.

McClaskey's stage service was not entirely dictated by mail contracts. He provided additional passenger service to Port Deposit and Baltimore. He ran a stage almost daily, three days mail/passenger service and two to three days of passenger service only.<sup>136</sup> Receipts for payment of tolls (from which mail coaches were exempted) for the Baltimore and Havre de Grace Turnpike at eighty-two-and-one-half cents a day for a stage and four horses indicate the additional passenger service he provided.<sup>137</sup> At his death, McClaskey owned two 4-horse carriages, one 2-horse carriage, five other vehicles, and twelve horses, a considerable number of vehicles for an individual to own. They confirm his commitment as a stage operator.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> William M. McClaskey Letter, n.d, Post Office Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>136</sup> Holmes, Stagecoach East, p. 36, typically stages did not run on Sundays.

<sup>137</sup> William M. McClaskey, Letter, 7/2 and 9/30/1841, William McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. Holmes, p. 120.

<sup>138</sup> Maryland State Archives, Harford County Inventory, 1844-1848, WK 835-836, p. 41-44 (see Appendix A for transcription).

In 1839 McClaskey was named road supervisor for the section of road from Bel Air to Lower Cross Roads for the sum of forty dollar a year.<sup>139</sup> Road supervisors were appointed by County Administrators from prominent citizens who for an annual sum maintained a segment of the roads.<sup>140</sup>

One of the most elusive of his business roles mentioned in the surviving records was the relationship between McClaskey and Mr. Robert B. Jordan, who owned land around Bel Air and in other parts of Maryland and New Jersey.<sup>141</sup> An 1838 ledger is the only surviving source for the business relationship between Jordan and McClaskey.<sup>142</sup> It records transactions on behalf of day laborers, who were provided with room and board and payroll monies. A debit and credit is recorded for every laborer. The settlement of each account is signed or witnessed by the individual. Each laborer was paid a daily wage from which deductions were made for room and board, purchases such as tobacco plugs, and any cash lent. McClaskey paid the remaining balance in cash to the laborer. Long-term workers were advanced cash

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<sup>139</sup> William M. McClaskey, Receipt, 9/19/1839, William McClaskey Receipt Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>140</sup> Wright, p. 105-106.

<sup>141</sup> Harford County Courthouse, Land Records, HD 27, p. 173; HDG 37, p. 6; and HDG 32, p. 524. Attempts to track Robert Jordan have not been productive.

<sup>142</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVIIIA, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD.

on account, probably as need arose or their account balance increased.

In these arrangements McClaskey served as banker/agent for Jordan and landlord and payroll clerk to the laborers. Jordan paid McClaskey the full wage of each laborer in cash from which McClaskey deducted his charges for services, such as boarding, local store accounts, etc. and then paid the worker in cash.<sup>143</sup> Since he was never salaried by Jordan, McClaskey was probably not responsible for hiring or supervising workers. McClaskey's profit seems to have been limited to the usual margin built in to charges for accommodations, goods, and other services.

During 1838, McClaskey maintained ledger accounts for over 120 laborers. The occupation of most of these workers was not stated. Only four laborers, three masons and one blacksmith, were hired for specific jobs at higher wages.<sup>144</sup> Most laborers worked an average of ten days a month with salary increases from seventy-five cents to one-dollar-and-twelve-and-one-half cents a day. About twenty percent of the laborers worked full-time between twenty-one and twenty-three days a month.

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid, LVIIIA, p. 6, 7, and 54-60.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid, LVIIIA, p. 9. 33, 36, 62, and 66. Masons John Ebenson and David Reed were paid one-dollar-and sixty-two cents a day. Mason Jonathan Reed was paid one-dollar-and-seventy-five cents a day during the same period. Henry Keely, Jr. was paid for smith work at eight-seven-and-one-half cents to one dollar a day.

TABLE I<sup>145</sup>

<u>Month</u>	<u>Number Employed</u>	<u>Total Days</u>	<u>Average Salary</u>	<u>Number Full Time</u>
January	18 laborers	162 days	@ \$ .75	4 laborers
February	46 laborers	495 1/8 days	@ \$ .75	8 laborers
March	56 laborers	560 days	@ \$ .90	17 laborers
April	56 laborers	631 days	@ \$1.00	18 laborers
May	55 laborers	591 1/2 days	@ \$1.00	17 laborers
June	26 laborers	270 1/4 days	@ \$1.00	9 laborers
July	8 laborers	140 3/4 days	@ \$1.12	6 laborers

Of the 121 laborers, 110 were provided with room and board at thirty-five cents a day, an amount subtracted from their wages. Over two-thirds of the laborers worked less than one month. Most of the names of these men were not recorded in the 1840 census. Probably they were transient workers who lived in Harford County for only a short period of time. There is no evidence that they were hired as a group of migrant workers. They were employed as individuals who arrived and left at different times.

One strong indication of the transient nature of these workers is that several bought stage tickets to Baltimore when their work was completed.<sup>146</sup> Some settled in the area,

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid, LVIIIA, compilation of data from account book. Browne, Baltimore and the Nation, p. 98, wages of one dollar per day for unskilled labor was the going rate in Baltimore at this time.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid, LVIIIA, 3/5/1838, p. 3, account of Barney Cain and 3/17/1838, p. 11, account of Isaac Stout.



at first boarding with McClaskey and then renting long-term quarters from him. Unlike the majority who received payment in cash, these laborers purchased beds and goods through McClaskey in return for their work.<sup>147</sup> Local laborers also tended to purchase durable goods or produce in large quantities. The temporary transient workers mostly purchased nondurable items such as tobacco or shoes.

Analysis of the ledger reveals which employees were local and those who were not. Eleven residents were found in the ledger. Local farmers and their sons supplemented their incomes by working a few days a month for Robert Jordan.<sup>148</sup> McClaskey recorded the four and three quarters days that farmer Hugh Fitzpatrick worked for Jordan. Later in the year, Fitzpatrick sold local farmer Henry Harlan manure in exchange for potatoes and the loan of a team and driver to drag logs.<sup>149</sup> Henry Keely, the son of local farmer Henry Keely, Senior, worked for Jordan as a smith over a long period of time at the same wage as other laborers. Keely, Junior, also rented rooms to laborers and

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid, LVIIIA, 5/6/1838, p. 12, account of Michael Kelly who purchased pair of bedsteads and food, and 2/9/1838, p. 17, account of James McClain who purchased food and a window pane.

<sup>148</sup> A comparison of names on the census rolls of 1840 and those working for McClaskey in 1838 shows a correlation between local residents and their sons.

<sup>149</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVIIIA, p. 48, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD. Henry Harlan, Farm Accounts, XXVIII, p. 11, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 11, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD.

received payment for these rentals from McClaskey.<sup>150</sup>

McClaskey's ledger shows that Jordan employed women. They received a lower rate of pay and were hired only for long-term work periods. For example, Mrs. Riley worked for several months at eight dollars a month.<sup>151</sup> Mrs. McClain, a wife of one of the laborers, worked for one-and-a-half dollars a week.<sup>152</sup> She was not paid directly, her wages were credited to her husband's account. Since McClaskey did not board any women workers, Mrs. McClain and her husband rented unspecified quarters from McClaskey.<sup>153</sup> The clear separation of women and husbands and wives from other laborers suggests that the dormitory accommodations provided were considered unsuitable for females.

The records of these transactions are in the same ledger as those for the laborers. No other transactions are recorded in this volume. There may be some correlation between the gunpowder and the laborers.

The 1838 ledger records payments for the purchase of barrels of gunpowder from Hugh Mullon and William McGlinchey, Peter Smith, and Smith and McElwayne. McClaskey

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid, LVIIIA, p. 9 and 62.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid, LVIIIA, p. 18.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid, LVIIIA, p. 17, account of James McClain.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid, LVIIIA, during 2/1838 James McClain paid for boarding for himself only (same rate as other men), but after that time he paid rent to McClaskey and purchased foodstuffs and durable goods. The location of the rental is not mentioned.

then sold the empty barrels back to them.<sup>154</sup> Over 200 kegs of powder were purchased between February and August of 1838. Several mines and mills operated in Harford and Baltimore County, but none close to Bel Air account for these transactions. No major construction or public works projects around Bel Air at this time explain why such large quantities of gunpowder exchanged hands.

The distinction between the laborers' accounts and McClaskey's other accounts is reinforced by two ledgers for that year.<sup>155</sup> In one ledger McClaskey records the accounts of unskilled laborers hired through Jordan. Another ledger documents all other activities for the same year, including the account of a skilled farmer, Joseph Robinson, who worked directly for McClaskey plowing, harrowing, and laying out corn ground at two-and-a-quarter dollar per day.<sup>156</sup>

The records do not tell how long McClaskey continued in this business. He handled accounts for laborers into 1839, but after that his entries were forwarded to the "new book," which no longer survives.<sup>157</sup>

McClaskey branched into other business ventures for which only minimal documentation exists. A note tucked

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<sup>154</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVIIIA, p. 28, 36, 44, and 51, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid, LVIIIA and LVI.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid, LVI, p. 79, account of Joseph Robinson.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid, LVIII A, p. 69. Account for Robert O'Donald mentions that the entries continue in the "new book."

into one of his account books lists textile occupations and salaries for jobs, such as "throittle tenders" and "spoolers."<sup>158</sup> An entry in his estate inventory lists "1/2 of the right of 10 Counties in Pennsylvania for the use of To-dds feather Renovator."<sup>159</sup> These are the only records of ventures that may have been unsuccessful or incomplete at the time of his death.

McClaskey's business roles were numerous and diverse. His importance as a community leader was just beginning to develop when he died in his mid-forties. Some of his community roles were both business and social. For example, McClaskey was appointed county coroner in 1842, 1843, and 1844.<sup>160</sup> County coroners not only made decisions about questionable deaths, but "serve(d) execution against" individuals who behaved improperly at musters or misused militia armaments and arrest(ed) defendants when the sheriff was directly involved in a case.<sup>161</sup> For a successful

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid, LVI, Note, n.d.

<sup>159</sup> Harford County Register of Wills (Inventories), 1844-1848 [WK 835-836], William M. McClaskey estate inventory, 6/6/1844, p. 40-45, Maryland State Archives, Annapolis, MD. [see Appendix A for transcribed inventory]

<sup>160</sup> William M. McClaskey, Commission, 3/8/1842, McClaskey Miscellaneous Papers, 1807-1844; Certificate, 1/24/1843, William McClaskey Folder (also recorded Harford County Courthouse, Land Record, HD, no. 28, folio 21, 1/24/1843); Certificate, 3/7/1844, James McClaskey Deceased Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>161</sup> Clinton Ashley Ellefson, "The County Courts and Provincial Courts of Maryland, 1733-1763" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1963), p. 193.

businessman like McClaskey the position, a political appointment made by the Governor, was probably a first step up the political ladder .<sup>162</sup>

The business relationships with his tavern clientele could on occasion go beyond the rendering ordinary services. For example, an 1843 letter from Mr. Samuel Forwood to McClaskey outlined a court case against Mr. John Forwood. This local farmer and regular tavern customer was accused of burning his father-in-law's barn. In his letter Samuel Forwood tells McClaskey to plead for John's innocence on the grounds of insanity brought on by heavy drinking.<sup>163</sup> The tone and wording of the letter suggests the possibly that McClaskey was acting as legal advocate or defense witness for John Forwood in court.

Business contacts were on occasion social acquaintances. For example, at the same time that John Buck of Baltimore billed McClaskey for Baltimore-Harford Turnpike Company tolls, he asked McClaskey to "give(s) regards to (his) mother, aunt and sister."<sup>164</sup> John Buck was obviously a friend of the family as well as a business associate of

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<sup>162</sup> William M. McClaskey, Commission, 3/8/1842, McClaskey Miscellaneous Papers, 1807-1844, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. All of McClaskey's certificates for his appointment were signed by the Governor.

<sup>163</sup> William M. McClaskey, Letter, 11/7/1843, Samuel Forwood Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD. John Forwood was a daily tavern customer [see Appendix B].

<sup>164</sup> William M. McClaskey, Letter, 7/6/1841, McClaskey Miscellaneous Papers, 1807-1844, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

William McClaskey.

Relatively few documents tell about McClaskey's social life. He received an invitation in 1839 to a Barbecue and Ball at the residence of Mr. Henry Bang near St. Charles.<sup>165</sup> For nonpayment of dues, McClaskey was suspended from the lodge, an indication that at one time he was active in Masonry.<sup>166</sup> And over the years, McClaskey appears to have been a member of his local church. He subscribed to the building and finishing of the Smith Chapel meeting house at Lower Cross Roads and rented a pew in 1829 and 1830.<sup>167</sup>

McClaskey's personal relationship with other businessmen in his community is similarly difficult to interpret. A few references in his records and those of other members of the community are pertinent. His tavern clientele ranged from local farmers, like Mr. John Forwood, to Democratic politician and Harford Republican editor, Mr. Charles D. Bouldin.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> William M. McClaskey, Invitation, 7/4/1839, William McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>166</sup> William M. McClaskey, Letter, 1/11/1843, William McClaskey Receipt Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid, Note, 1/29/1829 and 1/13/1834. William M. McClaskey, Note, 5/14/1823, William McClaskey Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>168</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVI, 1/1-6/2/1838, p. 69, account of Mr. John Forwood and 3/10-12/29/1835, p. 23, account of Mr. Chas. D. Bouldin who also was billed for "ploughing and harrowing" and "To 1/2 days work by Harry," Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD. Bouldin managed Thomas

McClaskey had direct ties with the postmasters on his stage-operated mail-carrier route, including Bel Air postmaster A.J. Jarrett who patronized McClaskey's stage service.<sup>169</sup> Mrs. Mary Norris regularly bought stage tickets for young ladies, who presumably attended a local girls' school.<sup>170</sup> Mrs. Catherine Richardson ran the Eagle Hotel from 1834 to 1848 in direct competition with McClaskey's tavern. Since he had the connection to the stage service, she had to purchase seats on the stage from him.<sup>171</sup>

References to McClaskey's taking advantage of the services provided by local businessmen are limited. His account books do not reflect his personal debts (and rarely his business debts). However, the accounts of Samuel Richardson, a local merchant who had a dry goods store at the northwest corner of Main and Office Streets in Bel Air, record McClaskey's purchases of cloth, wine, and sugar over a period of years.<sup>172</sup> The Maulsbys were an important local

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Hay's tavern in 1855 (Larew, p. 20 and 29).

<sup>169</sup> Ibid, LVI, 4/23/1836, Jarrett purchased a ticket from Bel Air to Baltimore.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid, LVI, 12/2/1837-10/7/1838, p. 198. The Misses Belton had opened a seminary for young ladies in 1832 and it continued to be a successful school for many years (Larew, p. 29). Although, there is no reference to a Mrs. Norris, she was probably a member of the school's staff.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid, LVI, 4/21/1836, n.p. Larew, p. 21.

<sup>172</sup> Samuel Richardson, Account Books, LXV, p. 13, 171, 219, 273, 327, 369, 372, 397, and LXVI, p. 141, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 27, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD. Larew, p. 20.

family in Bel Air. L.T. Maulsby, an attorney, sold large quantities of liquor to McClaskey.<sup>173</sup> These few examples demonstrate the many connections between local businessmen and professionals in the community. McClaskey was no exception.

From an early age McClaskey had chosen to work in the service sector rather than to farm, the occupation of the majority of local county residents. After he inherited the family farm, McClaskey leased it. Perhaps the farm did not provide sufficient income. McClaskey's father had supplemented his income with a job as a constable and, for a time, with some other unspecified business.

For whatever reasons, William McClaskey was "engaged in commerce" from his brief stint operating a dry goods store to his long-term occupation as tavern keeper. At his tavern, he provided a variety of the usual services from bar room drinks to food served in the salon or common room to both long- and short-term lodging. His tavern served as a social center for card playing and occasional meetings. He accepted payment in the form of notes, barter, and cash.

To supplement his income McClaskey made diverse occupational forays in the service sector. Many other tavern keepers pursued sidelines, such as a stage service and related mail contracts. Less common was McClaskey's

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<sup>173</sup> Larew, p. 19-20; Harford Republican, 3/17/1836, v. 6, #31, lists L.D. Maulsby as a Bel Air attorney; William M. McClaskey, Receipts, 1841, William McClaskey Receipts Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.



role as banker/agent or middle man between laborers and employers.

Success in his business ventures enhanced McClaskey's status in his community. His career culminated in appointments as road administrator and county coroner. Whether McClaskey would have continued his upwardly-mobile rise and become a prominent member of his community is unclear. His untimely death cut short his successful small business enterprises. Because he lacked a partner or children, his tavern closed two years later. Presumably, other local businessmen took up the services McClaskey provided so ably.

### CHAPTER III

#### INTERPRETING A TAVERN KEEPER'S ROLE IN HIS COMMUNITY

This study of William M. McClaskey confirms some of the conclusions reached by previous analyses of taverns and tavern keepers. There is evidence for all expected activities of a tavern keeper--providing food, drink, and accommodations.

Eighteenth-century tavern keepers kept ledgers and daybooks and recorded payments most often in barter or promissory notes.<sup>174</sup> McClaskey's well-documented tavern accounts are not that different in appearance from those of seventy years earlier.<sup>175</sup> Even during the early nineteenth century, money was relatively scarce and McClaskey recorded payments for services ranging from promissory notes to produce to bartered services.

Tavern keeper McClaskey participated in a variety of other economic roles within his community ranging from stagecoach operator to county coroner. All the research literature on taverns agrees that this kind of diversity was

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<sup>174</sup> Rice, p. 66-68, she found that few of their record books had survived to the present.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid, p. 65.

common practice for tavern keepers.<sup>176</sup>

Multiple economic roles were not unique to tavern keepers. It was normal practice for most small businessmen in rural areas. Bel Air businessmen performed a variety of economic roles, especially when the courts were in session. These periodic influxes of nonresidents increased the possibility of success for small business ventures.

Several Bel Air businessmen combined tavern keeping with specialized trades such as lawyer, newspaper publisher, or stagecoach operator. For example, Thomas Hays, a tavern proprietor, was an attorney, dabbled in real estate, lent money, and edited a newspaper.<sup>177</sup> John McKinney, an 1820s tavern keeper in Bel Air, was postmaster and edited the local newspaper.<sup>178</sup> Like these businessmen, McClaskey's diverse occupational roles were in response to economic opportunities within his community and not solely attributable to his tavern keeping role.

The transportation industry is an occupational role often identified with tavern keepers.<sup>179</sup> In cities, tavern keepers acted as ticket agents and handled baggage.<sup>180</sup> They developed formal, contractual relationships with stage

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<sup>176</sup> Rice, p. 45-46; Rockman, p. 114-115; and Garvin, p. 113.

<sup>177</sup> Larew, p. 23 and 25.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid, p. 20.

<sup>179</sup> Rice, p. 45; Gibbs, p. 123; and Holmes, p. 145.

<sup>180</sup> Rice, p. 45.

drivers.

McClaskey's involvement with stagecoach service began with the selling of tickets. Operating in a predominantly rural area, he did not have to compete with other tavern keepers for this privilege. Within a year, he was operating the stagecoach service.

Tavern keepers in urban centers competed for prized tavern locations where the stage would stop for meals and/or lodging.<sup>181</sup> McClaskey, as stagecoach operator, was assured this trade. Other rural tavern keepers petitioned him for route changes to benefit their taverns.<sup>182</sup>

Although service related, McClaskey's association with Mr. Robert B. Jordan is an unexpected occupational role for a tavern keeper. Acting as banker/agent, McClaskey provided room and board and payroll monies for laborers. The reason for this business arrangement is unclear. In the 1820s a new social group of "day laboring wage earners free from existing craft and guild structure" had appeared in the Baltimore area.<sup>183</sup> Those laborers listed in McClaskey's ledger were probably part of this pool of unskilled wage earners.

Urban taverns occasionally acted as a post office or

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<sup>181</sup> Holmes, p. 145.

<sup>182</sup> William M. McClaskey Letter, n.d, Post Office Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>183</sup> Browne, "Baltimore as Economic Hub," p. 80. According to Browne, this transient labor force provided a labor pool for the oncoming Industrial Revolution.

had an informal arrangement with stage drivers for mail delivery.<sup>184</sup> McClaskey combined stagecoach service with mail carrier service and arranged delivery of mail from Bel Air to Port Deposit and Perrymansville.<sup>185</sup> McClaskey was not Bel Air's postmaster. In fact, he received drafts on his Post Office Department account from Mr. A.L. Jarrett (1838-1840) and from Mr. Larkin Davis (1841-1842), postmasters of Bel Air.<sup>186</sup> However, his tavern customers probably received specialized mail service.

Urban taverns commonly served as meeting places.<sup>187</sup> McClaskey's tavern also served as a social center (beyond the congeniality of drinking at the bar). He rented card tables and rooms. There are a few references to club meetings at the tavern. This type of billed activity is rare in McClaskey's surviving records. Among the bar accounts, Mr. Chas. D. Bouldin was billed "To 1 dinner and club" and "To Ball Club."<sup>188</sup> These club meetings could have been political, considering that Bouldin was a local

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<sup>184</sup> Rice, p. 81-83 and Garvin, p. 10.

<sup>185</sup> Holmes, p. 111, notes that although the first railroad mail contracts were made in 1835, stagecoach service continued to be used for twenty more years.

<sup>186</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVI, 1838-1842, p. 196-197, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD.

<sup>187</sup> Rice, p. 34.

<sup>188</sup> William M. McClaskey, Account Book, LVI, 3/14/1835 and 12/29/1835, p. 23, Harford County Record Books, MS 1516, Box 25, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD.

Democratic politician.<sup>189</sup> During legislative sessions, county legislators probably frequented and/or resided at McClaskey's tavern. The missing "court books" would have been recorded any social amenities provided.

In previous studies of taverns researchers have claimed upward social mobility was associated with the occupation of tavern keeper.<sup>190</sup> McClaskey attained some political and social standing just prior to his death. He had been named road supervisor in 1939 and for three successive years had been appointed as county coroner.<sup>191</sup> McClaskey had acquired a measure of social prominence in his community and probably would have attained successively more important positions if he had lived longer.

Small business research found that the changing social role of businessmen was part of a broader historical trend.<sup>192</sup> By the early nineteenth century, opportunities in the service sector increased as wage earners had needs that required services no longer provided in the home.<sup>193</sup> With the growth of the retail and service sector, business was

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<sup>189</sup> Larew, p. 20 and 29.

<sup>190</sup> Rice, p. 47; Holmes, p. 149; and Gavin, p. 113.

<sup>191</sup> William M. McClaskey, Receipt, 9/19/1839, William McClaskey Receipt Folder; Commission, 3/8/1842, McClaskey Miscellaneous Papers, 1807-1844; Certificate, 1/24/1843, William McClaskey Folder; and Certificate, 3/7/1844, James McClaskey Deceased Folder, Harford County Historical Society, Bel Air, MD.

<sup>192</sup> Blumin, p. 108.

<sup>193</sup> Blumin, p. 105-116.

considered a respectable occupation.<sup>194</sup> Economic position conferred a social status to the small businessman that had previously not existed.<sup>195</sup> Economic opportunity and social mobility varied between communities depending on the progress, or lack thereof, of industrialization and, thus, a wage earning class.<sup>196</sup>

Bel Air, although not a large urban or industrial center, lent itself to a service sector economy. Its legislative role required services such as lodging, food, transportation, and entertainment. Bel Air's success as a political and administrative seat relied in part on small businessmen, able to provide periodic services to visiting legislators. There were increased opportunities for small businesses. However, successful businessmen diversified to compensate for the varied clientele who resided in or visited Bel Air. McClaskey took advantage of small business opportunities available in Bel Air. He was successful because of his ability to diversify into other businesses, directly and indirectly related to his tavern keeping role.

His tavern was neither the specialized urban or the broadly diversified rural tavern identified by tavern

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<sup>194</sup> Bruchey, Roots of American Economic Growth, p. 195-201.

<sup>195</sup> Griffen, p. 64.

<sup>196</sup> Griffen, p. 123. Small business opportunities in administrative centers, like Bel Air, have not been examined. However, many of the conclusions based on service sector businesses in industrial centers seem to be applicable to Bel Air.

research. Instead, aspects of both types and their respective roles in the community are intermixed in McClaskey's tavern. His occupational diversity was not simply associated to his role as tavern keeper, but a response to the economic opportunities available in Bel Air, Maryland. McClaskey was not only a tavern keeper, but also a part of the growth of the service sector in the early nineteenth century.



**APPENDIX A**

**INVENTORIES OF WILLIAM AND JAMES MCCLASKEY**

**WILLIAM M. MCCLASKEY'S INVENTORY**

Inventory of William M. McClaskey transcribed from the Harford County Register of Wills (Inventories), 1844-1848 [WK 835-836], p. 41-46.

"An Inventory of the Personal Estate of William M. McClaskey late of Harford County, deceased, appraised in dollars and cents by us the subscribers being lawfully authorised and sworn, this 6th day of June 1844.

1	Hogshead	75
2	lot of 60s(?) \$1.75 lot of bls & hogs about 30	\$5 6 75
3	Lot of bottles	1 00
4	Lot of old iron	5 00
5	stove & pipe (large)	3 00
6	small stove & pipe	1 50
7	Lot of Seuns(?) & bowl	50
8	briar hook	25
9	Cabinet makers saw	2 50
10	2 Collars Sleigh bells	1 0
11	1 Bon slate pencils, curtain pins etc	25
12	Lot of empty jugs, bottles etc	1 50
13	2 old bones & contents	25
14	6 old chairs	.37 1/2
15	1 dressing Table	.12 1/2
16	3 old Bedsteads	75
17	Lot of old iron & harness	10 00
18	curled hair mattress	8 00
19	1 bag & contents	50
20	1 corn mat	.61 1/4
21	1 keg & contents	50
22	2 sacking bottoms 1 blanket, old carpet	50
23	old coach	15 00
24	" Carriage	15 00
25	" Buggy	25 00
26	" Carriage 2 horse (black)	30 00
27	" do 4 horse "	30 00
28	" do do (yellow)	40 00
29	1 wagon	20
30	1 sleigh (yellow)	<u>1 00</u>
		<u>\$220.68 1/2</u>
	Amount brot forward	\$220.68 1/2

31	Sled & swingletrees	1	50
32	Cart body frame and wheels	1	00
33	Shafts & Seat		50
34	Plough (broken handle) No. 1		50
35	do dingle & swingle tree No. 2	2	50
36	Cultivator & swingletree	1	50
37	1 large Sled	2	00
38	No. 1 Bed, bolsters & pillows	5	00
39	2 do do do	7	00
40	3 do do do	10	00
41	4 do do do	10	00
42	5 do do do	9	00
43	6 do do do	12	00
44	7 do do do	7	00
45	8 do do do (single)	5	00
46	9 do do do	12	00
47	10 do do do	12	00
48	Case of drawers	4	00
49	1 bedstead (green) and sacking	2	00
50	do curled maple	7	00
51	do walnut	3	00
52	do and sacking	3	00
53	do do	2	50
54	do (yellow)	2	50
55	do (red)	2	00
56	do curled maple	12	00
57	do do	12	00
58	do single	4	00
59	10 pr sheets	5	00
60	3 Coverlids	1	50
61	9 Quilts	9	00
62	10 pr pillow cases	2	00
63	1 wash stand (red poplar)		50
64	1 do do imitation curled maple		75
65	1 do do poplar		50
		<u>\$392.43</u>	<u>3/4</u>
	Amount brot forward	\$392.43	3/4
66	small looking glass		50
67	6 pr blankets	6	00
68	1 mahogany Table	5	00
69	do do	5	00
70	1 Centre do mahogany	5	00
71	sideboard (mahogany)	5	00
72	1 doz chairs (common)	6	00
73	1 do do (Salon)	12	00
74	2 looking glass (gilt frames)	6	00
75	1 clock (mahogany frame)	4	00
76	1 do barroom	4	00
77	4 window blinds	1	00
78	1 pr andirons (parlor)	3	50
79	do do dining room	1	50
80	Shovel & tongs	1	50
81	3 large waiters		75

82	3 small do	50
83	2 small do	25
84	Reflector & Lamp	25
85	2 pr brass candlesticks	50
86	1 glass do	50
87	5 sets castors	1 50
88	cork screw	50
89	2 doz wine glasses	1 00
90	2 do knives & forks	1 00
91	2 do dinner plates (light color)	2 00
92	1 do do do (dark)	2 00
93	1 do soup do	.62 1/2
94	1/2 German Silver tea spoons	.62 1/2
95	11 Table Spoons	50
96	3 coffee pots	75
97	2 tea pot	.37 1/2
98	1 linen Table cloth	1 50
99	1 cotton do do	50
100	1/2 dozen towels, linen,	75
		<u>\$472.81</u>
		\$472.81
101	2 spit bones	.12 1/2
102	1 sideboard, new	8 00
103	1 large cooking glass	2 00
104	11 Pictures	5 00
105	2 1/2 baskets champagne (2 1/2 dozen)	25 00
106	1 pr card Tables (mahogany)	3 00
107	1 map of the United States	1 00
108	Fender	50
109	1 Carpet (old)	50
110	1 large brass kettle	2 00
111	1 do iron pot	1 00
112	1 Bake oven	50
113	12 dishes (Liverpool & Queens Ware)	75
114	6 vegetable dishes	8 00
115	1 Cooking stove	3 00
116	2 tea kettles	25
117	2 egg boilers	1 00
118	2 chafing dishes	1 00
119	2 Sconces	.12 1/2
120	1 coffee strainer	25
121	1 cupboard	50
122	5 large cut glass Tumblers	94
123	2 dozen do do small	2 40
124	1 Pitcher & wash bowl	75
125	1 doz custard cups and wash bowl	75
126	8 plain Tumblers	50
127	9 decanters	2 25
128	2 Lamps, mettle	50
129	1 blue Pitcher	25
130	1 Stove do	.12 1/2
131	1 poplar Table (bar room)	50
132	1 small looking glass	50

133	1	Saw		25
134	1	Shot bag		25
135	4	yellow stand kegs		<u>1 00</u>
				<u>\$547.27 1/2</u>
				\$547.27 1/2
136		kegs	1 12	1/2
137	1	Lanthoin(?) & large funnel		25
138	1	bl containing about 7 gallons common whiskey		
139		at 25cts pr Gal	1	75
140	1	do do 7 gallon at 30cts	2	10
141	2	stone Kegs (2 Gallons)		50
142	3	Tubs Tar		50
143		bon and contents	1	50
144	1	ten Gallon keg	1	00
145	1	Boar	2	50
146	1	Sow	3	00
147	1	young sow	2	50
148	1	cow (crooked neck)	3	00
149	1/2	of a Durham Bull 3 yrs old	5	00
150	2	sets of 4 horse harness	40	00
151	1	mare, Ret(?) & colt	40	00
152	1	white horse Peter	60	00
153	1	sorrel horse John	50	00
154	1	do do Fon	50	00
155	1	do do Bill	40	00
156	1	sorrel do Damon	30	00
157	1	do mare Jane	30	00
158	1	bay horse Larry	30	00
159	1	dark bay Bob	40	00
160	1	do Tim	30	00
161	1	black do Charley	35	00
162	1	brown do Barney	50	00
163	1	Set Carriage harness	6	00
164	1	work bench	1	00
165	1	fly net (horse)		75
166	1	Domestic cotton carpet	5	00
167		Contents of drawers, tacks etc		50
168	3	razors Box & Brush	1	00
169	2	powder flasks		25
170		Drawers and contents		<u>25</u>
				<u>\$1,111.75</u>
				\$1,111.75
171		saddle and bridle	3	00
172	2	half bushel measures		50
173		backbands Traces and hames	1	00
174	3	curry combs		25
175	3	hoes		75
176	2	shovels		50
177		Negro Boy Jacob, 17 years old	300	00
178	4	old chairs		50
179		Spy glass		50
180	8	chairs (bar room)	3	00

1/2 of the right of 10 Counties in Pennsylvania  
for the use of To-dds feather Renovator 115 00  
\$1536.75

We the subscribers do certify that the foregoing is a true and just Inventory and valuation of the Goods, Chattles and personal estate of Wm M McClaskey late of Harford County, deceased, so far as they have come to our sight and knowledge. Witness our hands and seals this 11th day June 1844."

#### JAMES MCCLASKEY"S INVENTORY

Inventory of James McClaskey transcribed from the Harford County Register of Wills (Inventories), 1828-1834 [WK 834-835-2], p. 484-486.

"Inventory of the personal estate of James McClaskey late of Baltimore County deceased appraised in dollars and cents by us the subscribers this 15th day of September 1834.

	Doll	cts
one negro woman named Amy aged about 50 years	50	00
one Do Do Do Kore Do 28 Do	200	00
one Do man Do Henry Do 20 Do	300	00
one Do woman Do Harriet Do 18 Do		
one Do Boy Do George Do 15 Do	300	00
one Do Do Do Abraham Do 10 Do	140	00
one Do Do Do Isaac Do 10 Do	140	00
one Do Girl Do Caroline Do 7 Do	125	00
one Do Boy Do Jacob Do 7 Do	100	00
one Do Do Do Charles Do 5 Do	100	00
one Do Do Do Samuel Do 2 Do	50	00
One Bay mare 10 years old	40	00
One Red cow	16	00
One pided Do	15	00
One Brown Do	12	00
Three breading sowse	12	00
One Horse Cart & Gears	11	00
One Corn Harrow	1	25
One follow Do	2	00
Two plough & 1 ....swingle trees	3	00
One scythe & cradle	50	
One old mowing scythe & Brice Hook	50	
Two hay forks Huce(?) Do Rakes & 1 dung fork	75	
Four old hoes 1 spade & 1 mallock	1	00
A maul & 3 wedges	75	
One bread axe 1 hand axe & chopper	1	00
three falling axes	1	50
Two addses & 2 hammers	1	50
four screw augers & 2 Gimbles	<u>75</u>	

	\$1630 50
	Doll cts
Amount brought forward	1630 50
Hand saw drawing knife & square	1 25
1 pr stockyards	1 50
1 lot old Iron	1 50
1 lot Do Chains	2 00
1 Garden rake 2 flails & 1 .....pow	50
2 pr Plough Gears 2 bline bridles 7 1 coller	3 00
1 Culling Box 75cts & 1 pr Fetters 25cts	1 00
1 mans saddle 1 side Do & 1 pr saddle bags	6 00
2 Riding bridles	1 25
3 Bed Quilts nearly new	10 00
5 Do Do Do Quality	7 00
2 Do Do Do Do	3 00
2 prs Linen sheats no 1	6 00
Linen Do no 2	2 50
2 pr muslin Do	2 00
2 pr Blankets	4 00
5 new home made Do	10 00
1 Covered	3 00
2 feather Beds no 2 & 3	24 00
1 Walnut bedstead & underbed	3 50
1 new Bed no 1 a straw Bed & Bedstead	10 00
1 Bed no 4 a straw Bed & Bed Do	10 00
2 Toilet Tables & cover	1 50
3 old umbrellas	.37 1/2
1 foot stove	.37 1/2
3 1/2 pr linen pillow cases	1 75
4 pr Do Do	1 00
7 Towels	1 75
5 Linen Table Cloths	7 50
2 common Do Do Do	1 00
1 pr poplar chest & 1 clothes Box	75
1 pr Candle stand & 1 Trunk	1 00
2 pr Bedsteads	1 00
2 old spinning wheels	1 00
1 Real & swift	50
1 pr quilting frames 50cts & 1 rocking cradle	1 00
50 cts	1775 50
	Doll cts
Amount brought forward	1775 50
1 old half bushel	25
1 walnut Desk	3 00
1 Do dining Table	4 00
1 Cherry Do Do	2 50
1/2 Doz Rush bottomed chairs	3 00
1/2 Do Green windsor Do	2 50
1/2 Do old Do Do	1 50
3 Tongs & 2 shovels	2 00
1 patent time piece	8 00
2 pr candle sticks & snuffers	75
5 looking Glases	1.12 1/2

1 Back Gammon board	50
1 Family Bible	2 00
1 lot Books	3 00
2 pr andirons	2 00
2 Sea boards & 4 Japan'd waiters	1 25
Cupboard Furniture	6 00
1/2 Doz Silver Table spoons	15 00
3/4 Do Do Tea Do & plated sugar tongs	5 00
A lot of jugs Jars & Iron bound Keg	1 00
Shaving Apparatus & Hone	1 00
1 spaying(?) needle Horn Heams(?) Hancet(?)	25
1 Gold watch	20 00
1 walnut Bureau	7 00
1 shot Gun & 1 pr Pistols	6 00
1 Doz Knives & Forks	1 50
2 powder flasks & 2 pr shears	50
5 Iron pots & 2 duch ovens	4 00
1 Tea Kettle frying pan & small pot	1 00
1 pr smoothing Irons	50
1 lot Tubs & kitchen furniture	1 00
1 staff churn & 2 buckets	1 00
1 sled \$1.00 & 6 old barrels 50cts	1 50
4 cider barrels 2 meat Tubs & 2 barrells	<u>2 50</u>
	\$1888.62 1/2
	Doll cts
Amount brought forward	1888.62 1/2
1 Lot old open beaded Tubs	50
1 Glass Lamp	25
1 lot milk ware	50
1 pot Rack chain hook & pig irons	1 50
1 Bake Iron & 2 pr pot hooks	1 25
1 old coffee kettle cullender & coffee pot	50
1 watering pot	<u>25</u>
	\$1893.37 1/2

We the subscribers do certify that the foregoing is a true and just Inventory and valuation of the goods chattles and personal estate of James McClaskey late of Baltimore County deceased as far as they have come to our sight and knowledge witness our hands and seals this 15th day Sept 1834."

APPENDIX B

AN EXAMPLE OF BAR RECORDS

Transcribed from a bar book (MS 1516, LVIII, n.p.) at the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD.

Sept 10th 1842

-----  
 Benjamin R. Bond Dr  
 To 1 Glass 6 1/4  
 To 1 Glass 6 1/4  
 To 1 Do 6 1/4  
 To 1 pt Rye 25  
 -----

Jno C. Forwood Dr  
 To 1 Glass 6 1/4  
 Tobacco 25  
 To 1 Glass 6 1/4  
 -----

Lewis Ruckers Dr  
 To 1 Glass 6 1/4  
 To 2 Dinners 50  
 -----

Robt Flowers Dr  
 To 3 Glasses 9 1/4  
 -----

Clement Bussey Dr  
 To 1 Glass Wine 6 1/4  
 -----

Joshua Guyton Dr  
 To 3 Glasses 18 2/4  
 -----

L. M. Jarett Dr  
 To 6 Glasses 31 1/4  
 -----

Jno Word Dr  
 To 1 Bush oats 25  
 -----

Sept 11th 1842

-----  
 Benjamin R. Bond Dr  
 To 2 Glasses 12 1/2  
 To 1 pt Rye 25  
 To 1 Glass F. Pord(?) 6 1/4  
 To 1 pt Rye 25  
 -----



A. L. Jarett	Dr
To 3 Glasses	18 1/4

Jno C. Forwood	Dr
To a Glass	6 1/4

William Wordan	Dr
To 2 Glasses Rye	12 1/2

Robt Lee	Dr
To 2 Glasses Cider	12 1/2

C.D. Bouldin	Dr
To 4 Glass	25

Josiah Wilson	Dr
To 4 Glass	25

Sept 12th 1842

Benjamin R. Bond	Dr
To 1 Glass	6 1/4
To 3 Glasses	18 1/4
To 2 Glasses	12 1/2
To 3 Glasses	18 1/4

Jno C. Forwood	Dr
To 1 Glass	6 1/4
To 3 Glasses	12 1/2

Lewis Ruckers	Dr
To 3 Glasses Cider	12 1/2

C. D. Bouldin	Dr
To 1 pt Whiskey	12 1/2
To 1 Glass Rye	6 1/4
To 1-----	6 1/4

Jno Word	Dr
To 5 Glass	31 1/4

Jno Word	Dr
To 1 Bush Oat-----	37 1/2

Sept 13th 1842

Benjamin R. Bond	Dr
To 2 Glasses	12 1/2
To 2 Glass	12 1/2
To 2 Glasses	12 1/2
To 2 Glass	12 1/2
To 1 pt Rye	25

C. D. Bouldin	Dr
To 4 Glasses	25
James Preston	Dr
To 1 Glass Cider	6 1/4
David Pyle	Dr
To 1 Dinr 2 Glass	31 1/4
Sept 14th	
Mrs Rivers	Dr
To 2 passage in stage to Shaffers Shop	2 00

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## VITA

### Lisa Gail Royse

Born in Carlsbad, New Mexico, December 26, 1957. Graduated from Prince George's Community College with an A.A. in 1978 and from the University of Maryland with a B.G.S. in 1980 and a B.A. in Architectural History in 1982.

Worked as an intern with the Departments of Ceramics and Glass and Community Life at the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution. Under a fellowship, worked with the Office of Excavation and Conservation at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, while doing graduate work in American Studies at the College of William and Mary from 1984-1985. Worked as Registrar at The Museums at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, NY from 1985-1987 and as Associate Curator at The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, VA from 1987 to the present.