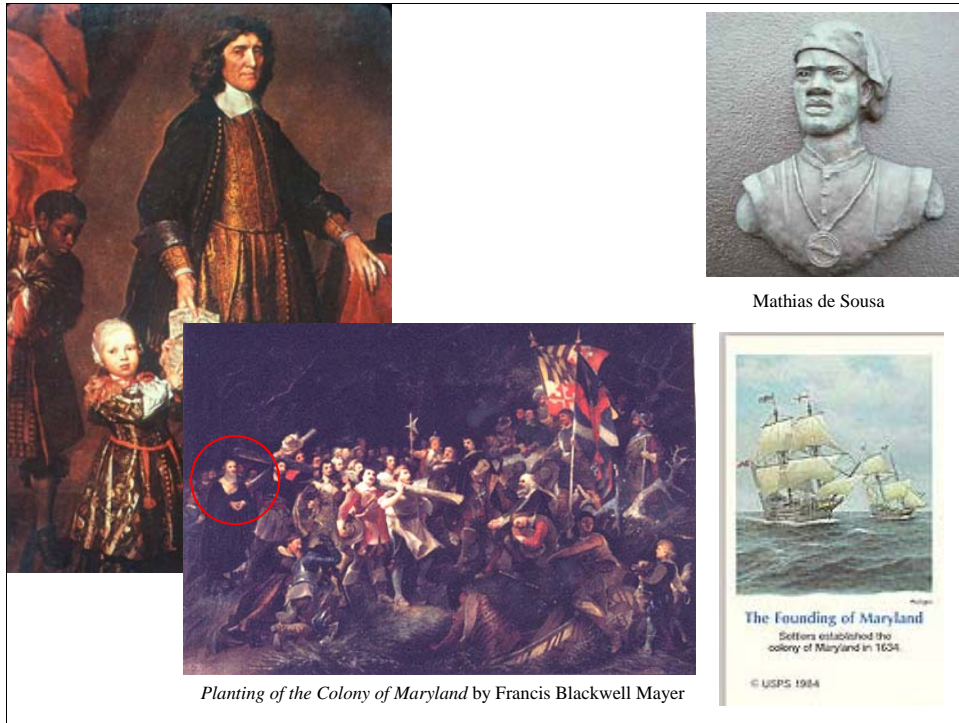


Notes by Kirsti Unila, Historic Preservation Planner, Calvert County Department of Planning and Zoning, Prince Frederick, Maryland.

The images above: on left, Eliza Dawkins Gross Reynolds with two of her daughters (photo courtesy Lillian Gordon Ross, Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum photo collection); People on steamboat wharf with tobacco hogsheads, courtesy Special Collections Department, University of Maryland Libraries; bottom center, the James T. Gray House, photo by K. Unila, courtesy JPPM; lower right, Elizabeth Dare Parran grave stone, St. Edmond's UMC cemetery, photo by K. Unila, courtesy Planning and Zoning

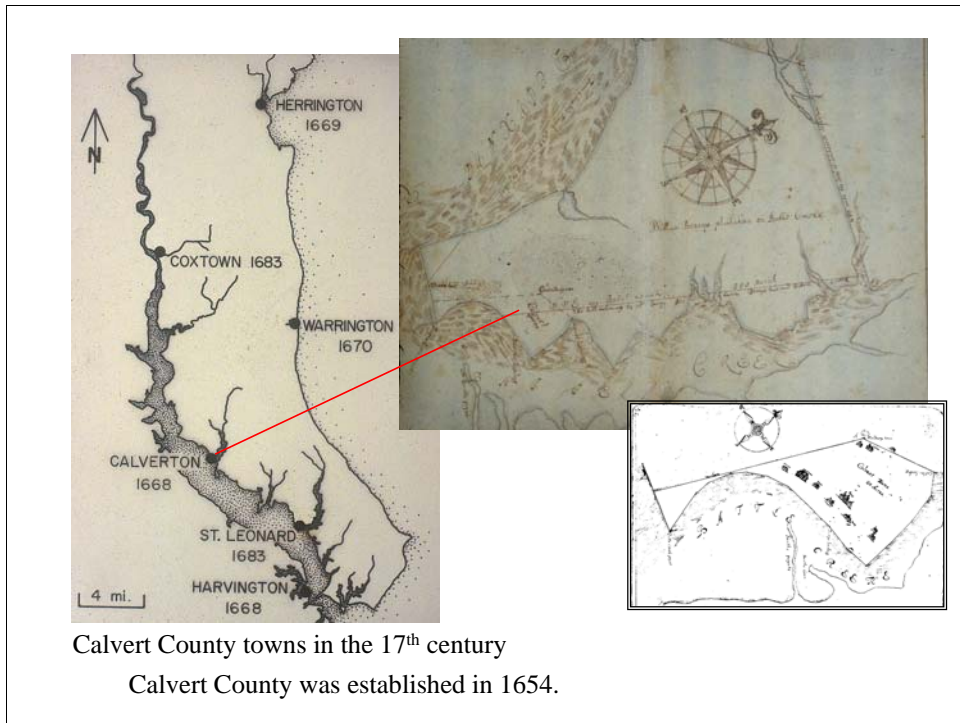
This presentation is available in pdf format on the Calvert County website at [www.co.cal.md.us](http://www.co.cal.md.us) To schedule a presentation of the animated powerpoint presentation, please contact the Department of Planning and Zoning, (410) 535-1600 x2504.



Review of early So Md history in one minute or less:

The Maryland colony was founded in 1634. The portrait on the left shows Cecilius Calvert, Lord Baltimore, with a young, presumably African servant in the shadows behind him. People of color were reported on the first ship that sailed to settle the colony: Mathias de Sousa sailed on the Ark in 1634. De Sousa was an indentured servant of the Jesuits, (Father Andrew White, de Sousa's Jesuit "master" is circled in red in the Mayer painting) and served a period of four years, before he was freed. He voted in the legislative body after that. De Sousa is an ambiguous historical character in that his identity, other than his name and social status, is unknown. His name is Portuguese, he may have been African by birth.

The first people described as slaves arrived in 1644, according to Roland McConnell in 350 years, a Chronology of the Afro-Americans in Maryland.

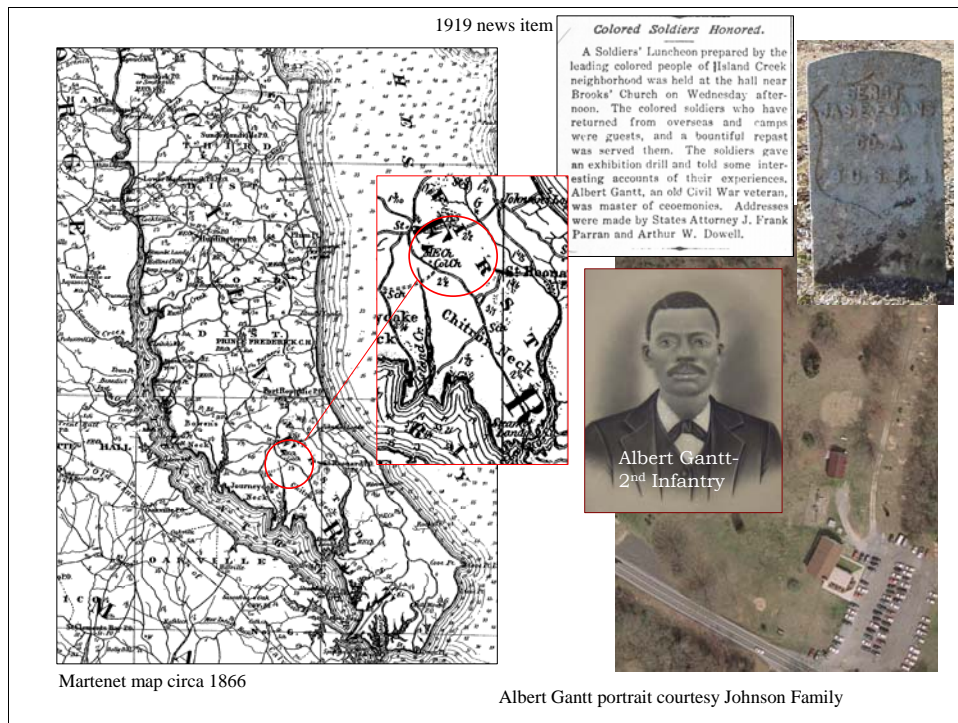


Calvert County was established in 1654. The first county seat was called Calverton, sometimes Battle Town, and was located on the north shore of Battle Creek near where it flows into the Patuxent River. The image on the upper right shows a survey of the William Berry Plantation made by Robert Jones in 1683, including the portion of the plantation carved out for Calverton. The inset below shows the town of Calverton. The business of the county was transacted here until Prince Frederick was named the County seat in 1724.

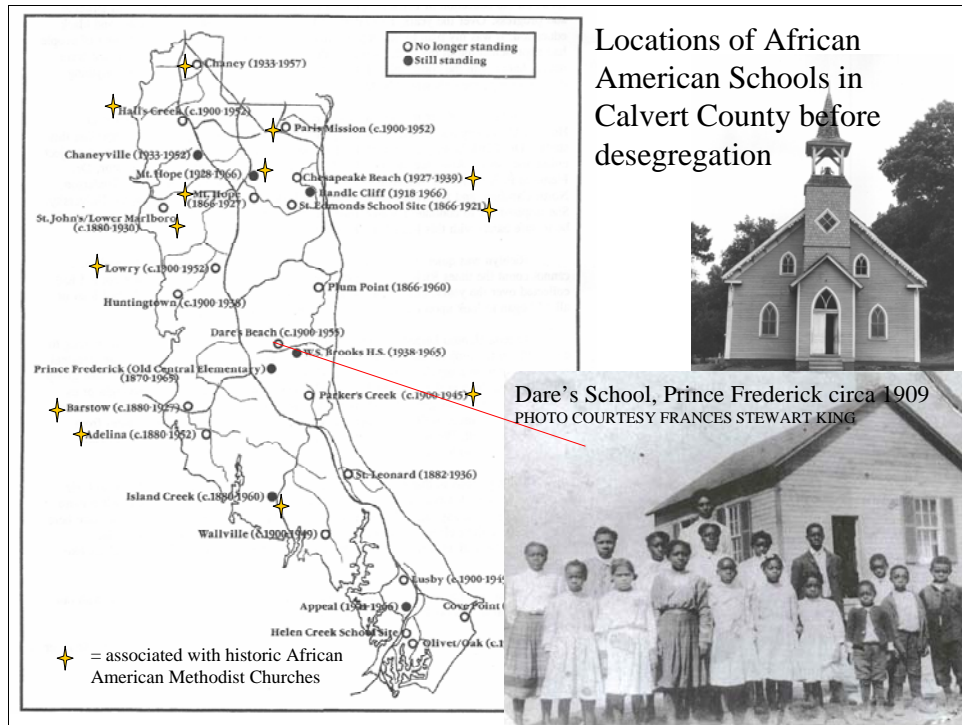


The Europeans moved onto lands that had been occupied by Native peoples. The map drawn by John Smith early in the 17<sup>th</sup> century shows Indian settlements along the rivers and the bay. The map on the right, drawn decades later by Bohemian mapmaker Augustine Hermann, shows that the settlements have been replaced by tobacco farms, or plantations, most of which depended upon bound labor. By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, enslavement for life was the expectation for African people brought to the Maryland Colony. The first slave ship documented in Calvert County was the Ffly, recorded in St Leonard Creek in 1697. We may certainly assume that there were others earlier than that. We conjecture an association of the Ffly with Capt Richard Smith, whose property is associated with the plat in the center of the screen. Capt. Richard Smith, who built here on his father's plantation in 1711, was a merchant, a legal representative of the Royal African Company (English slave traders), a captain in the Calvert County militia, and a founding member of the vestry of Christ Church. Evidence of African people have been found at the site of his plantation.





Education is a useful thread to illustrate the self-determination of African Americans in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As we will see shortly, churches became the community centers for African Americans and served as schools and more. By the end of the Civil War, the landscape in Calvert County was formally segregated, as indicated on the Martenet map. Note the circled area on the inset: 'MECh' stands for 'Methodist Episcopal Church' and 'ColCh' stands for 'Colored Church'. These were both Methodist churches, which had participated in the same episcopal administration until the eve of the Emancipation Proclamation, when the Washington Conference (African American) of the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed and the African American Methodists thus had self-determination in the region. Many members of the congregation enlisted to serve in the US Colored Troops in the Civil War, and returned to build up their community. They were laid to rest in Brooks United Methodist Church Cemetery. The African American church was the primary public arena where African Americans could exercise full civic responsibility and privilege. The two churches, though the episcopal conferences (Baltimore and Washington) have been reunited since the 1960s, are still separate.



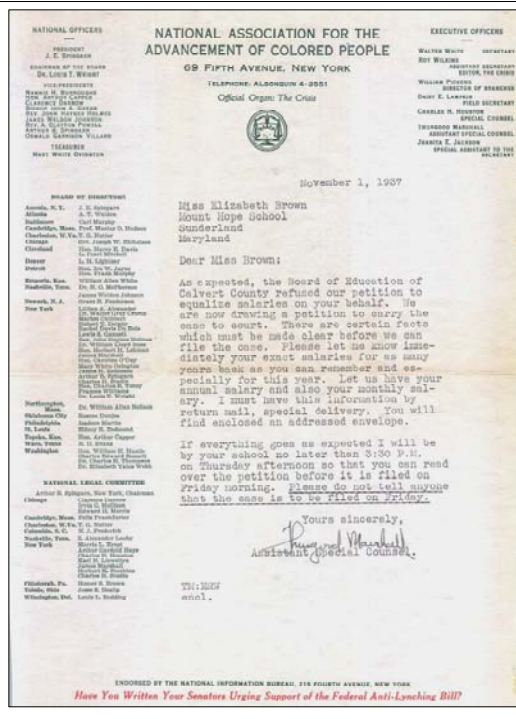
The early schools were established by the communities themselves, usually utilizing church buildings. When the county was forced to extend public education to African American children, the Board of Ed purchased the community school buildings and incorporated them into the public school system. The schools were typically one-room structures and grades 1 through 7 were instructed together in the same room—the older students would assist the younger ones. Teachers played all roles in the schools from instructor to administrator to custodian. The teachers were also advocates for the children, making do with little—the schools were equipped with castoffs from the white schools. The teachers were also resourceful and some were activists.

For more information, see *Persistence, Perseverance and Progress: History of African American Schools in Calvert County, Maryland, 1865-1965* by Richlyn F. Goddard, Calvert County Government, 1996. Also, later in 2007, you will be able to visit the Old Wallville School in Prince Frederick.



H. Elizabeth Brown successfully sued the Calvert County Board of Education for equal pay for African American teachers in 1937. Salaries were equalized across the state as a result. The case was cited across the nation. Thurgood Marshall was Miss Brown's attorney for this landmark case.

- Courtesy Calvert County Planning and Zoning



Harriett Elizabeth Brown is shown here at the age of 97—(2004). Her historic effort earned her a place in the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame, among other honors. She has graciously made her story and documents available to researchers—the amazing letter shown here was produced for an exhibit and was scanned with her permission. A roadside marker honoring Miss Brown stands on MD Route 2 near the last school she served in Sunderland. Her story is a good subject for a History Fair project.

The Old Wallville School



Regina Brown



Edith Gray



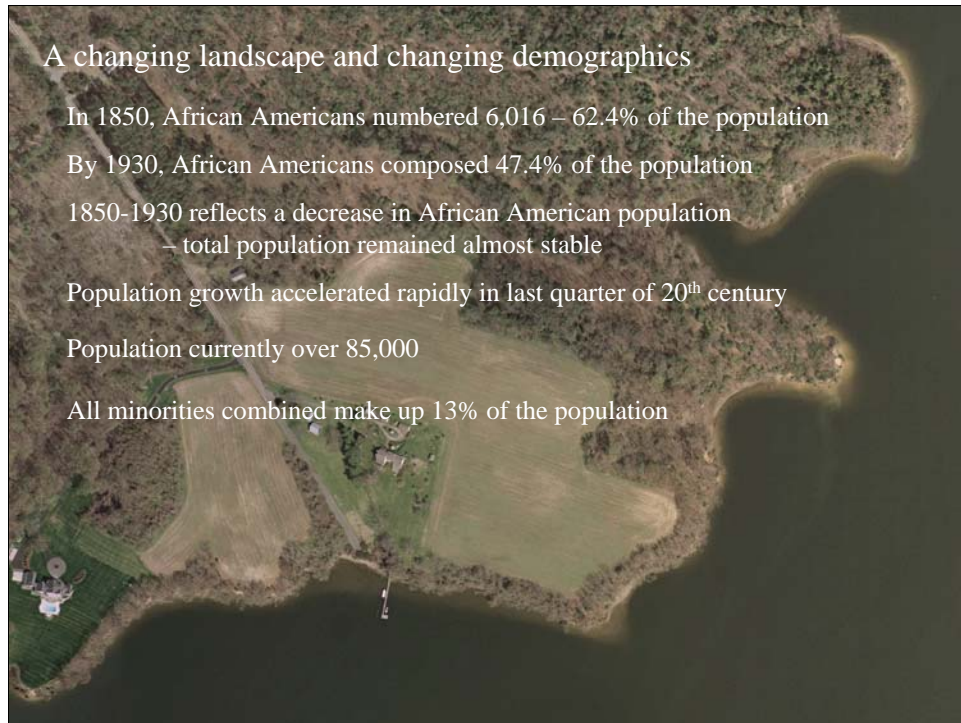
The Old Wallville School is the oldest known standing one room school for African American children in Calvert County. Until 2006, it sat on private property, where it had been since it stopped being a school in 1934. Miss Regina Brown, sister of H Elizabeth Brown, was the last principal/teacher to serve at the building. Edith Gray, pictured at 99 (deceased at age 100, in 2006), is the oldest surviving student who attended school there. She was instrumental in ensuring that the building survived these many years.

The Friends of the Old Wallville School is a nonprofit organization; the Friends applied for and used small grants to stabilize the building until funds could be raised to relocate and restore it. The MD legislature, under the sponsorship of Del. Sue Kullen, Sen. Roy Dyson and with support of Del. Tony O'Donnell, passed a bond bill in 2004. With a gift from Dominion Energy of \$10,000, the Friends met the match necessary to realize the dream to relocate the school and restore and interpret it for the public. Local churches gave generously to the project, also.

To learn more or to get involved, contact The Friends of the Old Wallville School, PO Box 3527, Prince Frederick MD 20678.



The Old Wallville School, indicated by the star, will allow the interpretation of the landscape in a new way: in 2006 it was re-located next to what was to be the “new” African American High School before desegregation (it became Calvert Elementary), and next to what was the African American elementary school (Calvert Country Day School), and across the road from the “old” African American High School (Brooks High School), which is now the Board of Education.



### A changing landscape and changing demographics

In 1850, African Americans numbered 6,016 – 62.4% of the population

By 1930, African Americans composed 47.4% of the population

1850-1930 reflects a decrease in African American population  
– total population remained almost stable

Population growth accelerated rapidly in last quarter of 20<sup>th</sup> century

Population currently over 85,000

All minorities combined make up 13% of the population

Modern landscapes reflect changes in uses—and in the ways people value different settings. Until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, this area on St. Leonard Creek supported tens of small African American landholdings where people lived by seasonal economies: working the water, farming tobacco and carpentry, for example. Now there are no African American landowners here. Much of the land in the photo on the screen has been preserved. The traces of earlier occupations can be seen only in a couple of historic buildings and a cemetery. The rest are archaeological sites.

Review of demographic facts: African American depopulation began after the Civil War, perhaps because greater economic opportunity was to be found outside the county in areas where industry offered jobs.

In-migration, movement into the county has been overwhelmingly white. Since population growth is rapid, Calvert is, in most places, no longer a face-to-face community. Hence the importance of understanding the rootedness of historic communities and offering that history to newcomers as a means to understand the place to which they have come and to learn about and identify with the people who have shaped it.



We are fortunate to have so many elders and others in our county who have kept the history alive so that we may nurture and share it with others before it is too late to learn from it. We must learn from it—some are hard lessons. Those are the ones we never want to have to repeat. All of them will, we believe, help us all to become the kind of caring communities we envision.

(Clockwise beginning with woman in red hat: Thelma Johnson, Harriett Elizabeth Brown, Mervin Parker and his mother, Annie Gross Parker, Regina Brown, Everard Johnson, Phillip Jones, Daniel Brown, Edith Gray in center)