

## **6.0 RESEARCH AND SURVEY RESULTS: SYNTHESIS**

### **6.1 Prehistoric Occupation of the Bodkin Creek Study Area**

#### *The Development of the Estuary*

Bodkin Creek was once a considerably colder and wetter place than it is at present. The region was characterized by open tundra and boreal forests. Water was trapped in ice sheets that still blanketed much of the continent, and sea levels were hundreds of feet below current levels. Major estuary systems such as the Chesapeake Bay had not yet formed.

As temperatures rose, the ice sheets retreated and melt waters drove a persistent and enduring rise in sea levels. While large rivers throughout the region probably carried more water than they presently do, a stream such as Bodkin Creek would have been a small upland tributary draining toward the ancestral Susquehanna River, taking run-off to the larger stream located two-to-three miles to the east of the present mouth of the creek. As sea level rose, the mouths of rivers flowing into the ocean were inundated forming bays and extensive estuary systems including the Chesapeake Bay, which formed from the lower reaches of the Susquehanna River. Inland estuaries began to stabilize perhaps as early as 5,000 years ago as temperatures moderated and the rate of sea level rise diminished. Within the next 2,000 years, an essentially modern climate and environment became established.

The undisputed record of human occupation of the region began as early as 12,000 years ago, as nomadic Paleo-Indian hunters visited the area. Relatively little direct data from the Paleo-Indian period is available from the region for study. This is in part a function of the generally low population at that time, resulting in few archaeological sites overall. In addition, many stream-side settings have disappeared with the rise of sea level and the formation of the Chesapeake Bay, so that many archaeological sites from the period are currently underwater. Sites have been recorded in Anne Arundel County from the Paleo-Indian period, including Katcef (18AN57-58) and Higgins (18AN489), but these sites occur to the west and northwest of Bodkin Creek. While Paleo-Indian groups almost surely visited the Bodkin Creek valley, there is no direct archaeological evidence of their presence known at the present time. The Bodkin Creek area was probably inhabited sporadically during the Early and Middle Archaic periods as well, yet there is similarly no direct archaeological evidence of extensive use of the valley from this time span. As was the case with Paleo-Indian occupation, low population and the inundation of sites resulting from the formation of the Bay are probably major factors in this lack of information. Further, the creek lies at the extreme western edge of the Chesapeake Bay estuary system. It would have been among the last estuaries to form and thus may not yet have attracted groups seeking the maritime habitats that were developing further to the east and south.

By the beginning of the Late Archaic period (3500-1000 B.C.), sea level rise had begun to slow. Estuary environments could begin stabilizing and soon represented a reliable base of resources, allowing local population groups to return to the same increasingly rich areas on a seasonal basis and to stay in those areas longer. Some of the earliest archaeological evidence from the Bodkin Creek survey area is from the Late Archaic period. Spear points from the period have been reported at sites on terraces above Main Creek, in particular at one of the Green Springs sites, 18AN654 (Goodman 1989). While little data other than artifact

occurrence is recorded, the location of the site at the upper end of the estuary overlooking some of the only tidal flats in the valley suggests that the inhabitants were there to exploit the nearby marsh resources.

#### *Woodland Shell Middens on Bodkin Creek*

The transition from the Archaic to the Woodland period is conventionally marked by the appearance of pottery in the archaeological record. Evidence of Early Woodland occupation of the Bodkin Creek valley is recorded again at the Green Springs sites, where some of the earliest ceramics in the Middle Atlantic region, schist-tempered Bushnell ware (Egloff and Potter 1982), were reported at 18AN654 along with a slightly later ware referred to as Accokeek Creek (Stephenson and Ferguson 1963). Accokeek Creek sherds were also documented at 18AN1005, a site on a low terrace above of Back Creek along the north bank of the stream. While not enough evidence was recorded at either site to allow an assessment of the specific activities conducted at these locales, it is likely that the creek was the main focus of the occupations, with maritime resources including fish and shellfish, and shoreline vegetation such as reeds and tubers, being the main economic focus.

A hallmark of the Middle Woodland was the use of small fragments of shell as a tempering agent in ceramics. An increased focus on shoreline activity may thus be implied, with shellfish meat targeted both as a food source and shells providing a technological advantage in the manufacture of ceramic containers. Large shell middens begin to appear in the archaeological record at this time throughout the Chesapeake Bay. The remnants of shell middens occur at sites 18AN244, 18AN266, 18AN426 and 18AN427, along Bodkin Creek, and at 18AN265 on the north side of Back Creek. While the middens have not been dated, they are direct evidence of the kind of Native American use of the estuary that is commonly documented from the Middle Woodland period throughout the county (Sperling 2009). The middens are small, both in thickness and horizontal extent, in comparison with others recorded in the county and around the Bay. The small sizes of the middens might be a factor of their original sizes and the sizes of the occupation sites with which they were related, or they may in fact have once been much larger, representing sites that have been disturbed by shoreline erosion. Middle Woodland ceramics including Mockley, a thick-bodied, shell-tempered and net-impressed ceramic, were reported at the large site at the Green Springs locale, 18AN654. Also reported at that site were sherds of Popes Creek (sand and quartz tempered) and Nomini (rounded quartz-tempered, cord-marked or net-impressed [Waselkov 1982:286, 292-3; Egloff and Potter 1982:104-106]). Popes Creek sherds were also reported at 18AN1005, on Back Creek. A shell midden was not reported at 18AN1005, but the proximity of the site to the midden at 18AN265 may indicate widespread occupation along the shoreline of Back Creek during this period focused on the aquatic or maritime resources there.

Less evidence has been documented of Late Woodland use of the Bodkin Creek valley. While the shell middens noted above could be Late Woodland in date, no artifact data has been obtained from the sites for corroboration. Nevertheless, occupation of Bodkin Creek during this period is represented by Townsend series shell-tempered wares, along with sand-tempered Potomac Creek ceramics, both occurring at the terrace site on Main Creek, 18AN654.

No evidence of Contact period occupation of the Bodkin Creek estuary had been documented. Likewise, there is little evidence from this period in most of the northern part of Anne Arundel County. The absence of Contact period sites conforms to current regional data suggesting that the area from the Susquehanna to the Patuxent was largely uninhabited at the time that Europeans arrived, as a consequence of incursions into the northern territories of Algonquian groups by Iroquian Susquehannocks and Massawomecks.

## 6.2 Historical Occupation of the Bodkin Creek Study Area

John Smith was the first known European to have explored the Bay, making two voyages in 1608 in an attempt to find a route to the Pacific Ocean. He passed Bodkin Point on both voyages and may have anchored in its lee, the first time on June 12 and the second on July 29 (Rountree et al. 2007: 90, 111).

### *Earliest Settlement: The Maritime Focus*

As throughout most of prehistory, early colonial settlement focused primarily on the waterfront, since roads were not well developed and water was the primary means of transportation for people and for commerce. As noted in the Background section of this report, initial settlement in Anne Arundel County first occurred with the Puritan settlement of Providence in 1649 (Ware et al. 2008). The Hog Neck peninsula, which contains Bodkin Creek, was first settled in the 1660s (Nelker 1990), but early maps show little detail of the



**Figure 6-1. Detail from Griffith's Map of the Chesapeake Bay from 1795 Showing Bodkin Point.**

area. By the late-18<sup>th</sup> century, for example, Anthony Smith's chart of the Chesapeake Bay (Smith 1777), and Dennis Griffith's map of the Bay in 1794 provide no information about the Bodkin Creek area other than showing Bodkin Point: notably the creek itself is not shown on Griffith's map (Figure 6-1). Among the earliest deeds was Gray's Lott, from 1685, a 239-acre parcel on the south shore of Main Creek that included Jubb Cove and the lower (southern) ends of Wharf Creek and Locust Cove (Nelker 1990:52).

The land was typically cleared for agriculture, which generally meant tobacco cultivation. Grist mills were

also an important part of the economy. Mills were constructed on the Magothy River (Cunningham 2001:10), but none are known in the Bodkin Creek area, probably a factor of

the relatively short lengths and meager water flow of the streams in the estuary which made them unsuitable for powering mill wheels.

In 1683, the Maryland General Assembly named official ports of entry to regulate trade and stimulate the growth of cities. None of the ports was in or near Hog Neck (Gabsby et al. 2001:24), and thus trade via ships calling at local wharves along the shoreline of Bodkin Creek was probably conducted directly between grower and market. Archaeological evidence in the Bodkin Creek survey area from this period is very limited. Several possible 17<sup>th</sup>-century ceramic sherds were reported at 18AN1177, located along Old Cove on the grounds of Hancock's Resolution Historic Park. The artifacts included three sherds of Rhenish salt-glazed stoneware: two blue and gray and one brown. This German ceramic ware was brought to the Chesapeake region beginning with the earliest days of colonial settlement. It declined in use in the late-17th century (Noël Hume 1970, 2001:107). Also reported was a fragment of manganese mottled earthenware, manufactured in Staffordshire between about 1680-1750 and having a peak popularity during the late-17th and early-18th centuries (MAC Lab 2002). While not associated with structural features that would indicate an occupation site, the artifacts may be remnants of some of the earliest European use of the Bodkin Creek shoreline.

#### *Tobacco Growers and Hancock's Resolution*

As in most of the Middle Atlantic colonies, tobacco was the main agricultural focus of the earliest settlers on Bodkin Creek.

Participation in the international economy of tobacco trade required access to water transportation and a widely dispersed settlement pattern... Besides water for drinking purposes, primary concerns centered on good agricultural land and access to navigable water for shipping. In fact, the latter seemed to override all other considerations in many instances. Despite the existence of better land further inland, most early settlement took place along the shores of the Chesapeake Bay or along the banks of its major tributaries. The depth of water, and concomitantly the size of craft that a tributary would admit, was the primary factor in how far a settlement extended and, late in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, where the locations of towns were proposed. (Wesler et al. 1981:78)

Initially, Bodkin Creek was settled with small farms. The property on the north shore of Back Creek that would become the plantation known as Hancock's Resolution was first patented in 1665. The best documented property on Bodkin Creek, both historically and archaeologically, and arguably among the most significant properties in the region, Hancock's Resolution was a typical, middling plantation. An extensive study of Hancock's Resolution by the Lost Towns Project concluded that the plantation was "a good example of the 'average' farm in [northern] Anne Arundel County" (Gadsby et al. 2001:73). Curiously, though, the researchers indicated that based on historical documents such as tax assessments, probate records, agricultural censuses or estate inventories there is there is "no clear evidence that the Hancock family ever grew tobacco on their property." However, the researchers conceded that circumstantial evidence, including farm labor (slaves) and soil characteristics (well-drained and slightly acidic sediments), provide "contextual information [that] shows a farm with the labor and soil type befitting tobacco cultivation (Gadsby et al. 2001:62, 63).

Stephen Hancock, sire of the line of Hancocks that settled on Bodkin Creek, originally came to Maryland in the 1660s as an indentured servant. But, as did many in that period, he completed his indentured service and eventually made his fortune as a free landowner. The land that eventually became Hancock's Resolution was first patented in 1665 by a planter from Talbot County, David Johnson. The original 100-acre patent was known as Dividing Points. With the addition of 35 acres, the property was renamed Heirusalem (Fair Jerusalem). Stephen Hancock's son, William (1680-1754), purchased a lease on property as part a 400-acre leasehold then owned by William Worthington that included the 100 acres of Dividing Points and 300 adjoining acres, Homewoods Range. Hancock soon moved to the plantation from family holdings on the Severn River. William's grandson, Stephen, a veteran of the 6<sup>th</sup> Company 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of the Continental Army, built the stone house that now stands on the Heirusalem tract between 1784-1785 (Calvert 2003:15). He purchased the property from Worthington outright in two sections (part of Homewood Range [136.5 ac] and some vacant land [67.5 ac]), in 1790 and 1793. He had already inherited Heirusalem (135 ac) and Peggy and Mollie's Delight (Hammonds Point [Bayside Beach] 48 ac) from his father (Stephen [1704-1775] who had bought it in 1776) (Calvert 2003:33). By 1806, Stephen had amassed 409.5 acres which he resurveyed and named Long Meadows. The name Hancock's Resolution was applied later, possibly in reference to the resolution of consolidation claims.

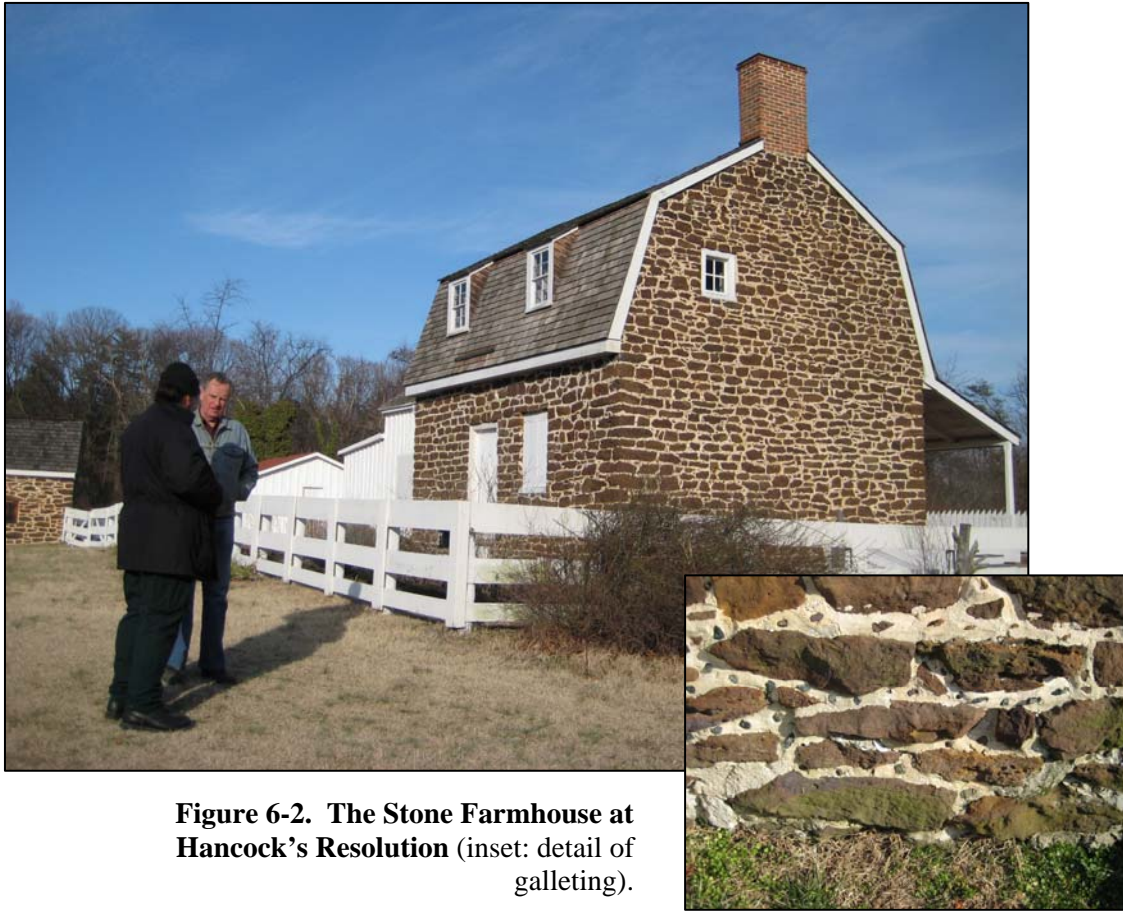
Aside from extensive documentary accounts, archaeological evidence of the plantation consists of Site 18AN169, which has been the subject of a variety of archaeological and architectural investigations as summarized in Chapter 2 of the current report. The site is comprised of several standing structures (collectively designated AA129 on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties), a cemetery, and two wharves: the new wharf on Back Creek, investigated by MAHS in 1997 (Hammill et al. 1997); and an earlier wharf on Old Cove which has not yet been documented. The main farmhouse (Figure 6-2) was built of local ferruginous sandstone (ironstone) in 1785 on a "one-room plan," and measures 22-by-24 feet. One of the few existing 18<sup>th</sup>-century buildings in Anne Arundel County, it is one of the oldest buildings in the county north of the Severn River. The roughly coursed field stone is galleted, with small pieces of stone inserted into the mortar both for decorative and structural purposes<sup>1</sup>. Although occupied until 1962, electricity or plumbing were never installed in the farmhouse. Also on the grounds are a stone milk house, a kitchen (added in the 1850's), gardens, and a cemetery, the latter containing the remains of almost all of the Hancocks who lived on the property from 1785 until 1962 (Figure 6-3). Of the original 409.5-acre plantation, the park currently occupies 26 acres (Hancock's Resolution n.d.).

The Henry Alfred Cook Farmhouse (AA807), a two-story frame house (ca. 1840), was moved to Hancock's Resolution in 1990 (Henry Schmidt, personal communication 2009). It now houses a ranger from the Department of Natural Resources and his family, providing an

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<sup>1</sup> The farmhouse and nearby milk house are unusual in being the only known rural examples of galleted masonry in the Chesapeake region. Moreover, they are unusual examples in which the entire wall is galleted, the process typically being confined to the lower portion of a wall (Hancock's Resolution n.d.).





**Figure 6-2. The Stone Farmhouse at Hancock's Resolution** (inset: detail of galleting).



**Figure 6-3. Hancock Family Cemetery** (above, Mary and John Henry Hancock; left, Anne Hancock).

on-site presence and thus a measure of security for the property that is otherwise unoccupied for much of the year.

### *Timbering*

Existing stands of forest throughout the region were cleared to make way for cultivated fields. Depending on the size of a property, timbering was often an important commercial activity, since wood was the most common building material during this period. For example, Henry C. Dunbar purchased most of Bodkin Neck, the peninsula between Bodkin Creek and the Chesapeake Bay, in 1828. Dunbar farmed the northern part of the peninsula, while the southern portion, which is now Downs Park, was “historically the...site of lumbering activities” (Holt 2008.) Although Moser’s (n.d.) study of marine trades and shipbuilding in Colonial Anne Arundel County indicated that there were no commercial shipbuilding enterprises on Bodkin Creek, inventories from Hancock’s Resolution for three generations (1774, 1810, 1832) also suggest the importance of timbering in the Bodkin Creek area. Some of the Hancock inventories indicated that timber was often aimed “specifically for the shipbuilding trade” (Gadsby et al. 2001: 30-31). Doubtless some property owners built their own craft, which may be how Hancock’s timber was used. Other indications that timber was a commodity along Bodkin Creek come from Hancock’s Resolution, including a deed in 1806 that recorded the resurvey of Long Meadows for Stephen Hancock and mentions a collection of more than 410 “tolerably good fence logs and ... Peach trees, the whole valued at fifteen shillings” (AR-M455N). In addition, John Hancock’s inventory of 1853 lists as his largest asset 315 cords of pine wood, which was probably destined for sale to steamers in the days before the Civil War when coal had yet to become a major source of fuel. The 19<sup>th</sup>-century wharf at Hancock’s Resolution was long and heavily built, extending out into Back Creek, and may well have been constructed for this trade (James Morrison, personal communication 2009). Even into the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, Bodkin Creek and Hancock’s in particular were reportedly known for “tall straight pine trees to repair masts and spars broken in Bay storms” (Calvert 2003:43).

An archaeological correlate for timber shipping from the shores of Bodkin Creek is seen in the so-called Pinehurst Canal (18AN949). The canal was probably built by John Gibson around 1794 to provide direct access to the Chesapeake Bay from Wharf Creek and Locust Cove for timber or other produce. Built by slave labor, the canal stretches 500 yards from Locust Cove to the Bay. In use it was reportedly 10-12 feet deep, 15-20 feet wide at base and 40-60 feet wide at the top. Although presently filled in somewhat by erosion, the canal is still a prominent feature on the landscape, being at least 8 feet deep and 30 feet wide in some places. Cut by Pinehurst Road, the canal was deeded to the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks (Cunningham 2001:23). A similar means of direct access to the Bay was a strip of land known as Peggy and Mollie’s Delight that the Hancocks acquired north of Bodkin Creek, along Bayside Beach.

### *The Revolutionary War*

The events surrounding the American Revolutionary War had relatively little direct impact on Bodkin Creek. The British attempted to blockade the Chesapeake Bay to suppress privateers and naval shipping originating from Baltimore, and a sloop of war, HMS *Otter*, anchored off Bodkin Point in May 1776 to patrol the entrance to the Patapsco River. The

sloop captured at least one American vessel that carried grain. But in one of the first naval engagements of the war, the *Defense*, of the new Continental Navy, Captain James Nicholas, drove the *Otter* off, re-opening access to the river (Anne Arundel County 2008e; Riley 1905:77).

Local landowners from the Magothy River and Bodkin Creek, including the Hancocks, were among Marylanders who signed the so-called Oath of Fidelity, pledging not to be bound by allegiance to the English Crown but to be “true and faithful to the state of Maryland and...to the utmost...support Maryland and defend [her]...against all enemies” (Oaths of Fealty 1777-1781, in Cunningham 2001:17-18). Stephen Hancock was among those who joined the Continental Army, serving from August 1, 1780 to November 15, 1783. Hancock was in the so-called Maryland Line, reputedly among the best regiments in the Continental Army. George Washington referred to the Marylanders as his Old Line, giving Maryland one of its nicknames, The Old Line State (Polk 2005). Hancock served during the Southern Campaign in the Carolinas, and may have seen action in battles such as Cowpens, Camden, Guildford Courthouse, and Yorktown (Cunningham 2001:18).

#### *Maritime Commerce and the Bodkin Telegraphe*

Baltimore was considered among the best ports on the Atlantic seaboard in the years following the Revolutionary War, in spite of not having one of the best harbors. The excellence of the port has been attributed to “the unceasing energy and resourcefulness [of her merchants] in making the most of what nature had given” (Brewington 1949:101). An example of this resourcefulness was the co-called Bodkin Telegraphe, a signaling system that provided important communications regarding shipping.

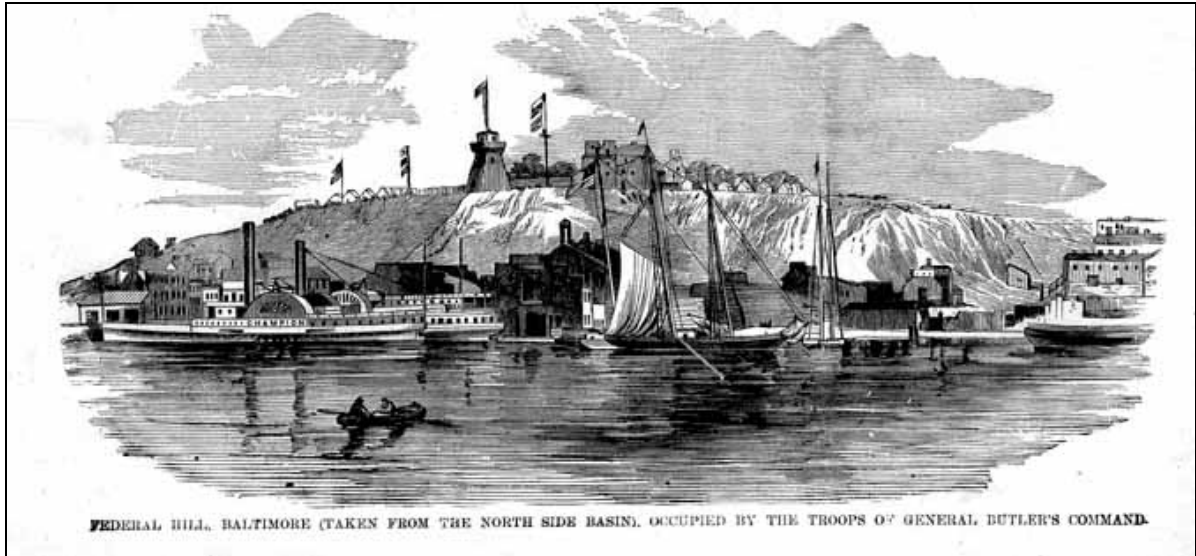
Captain David Porter<sup>2</sup> was a commander in the Continental Navy during the Revolutionary War. Following the war, he was appointed sailing-master in the navy by George Washington and was given charge of the signal-station on Federal Hill, Baltimore (Figure 6-4, 6-5). The site provided a panorama stretching 15 miles or more down the Patapsco River, and in cooperation with the Maritime Exchange, Porter established a marine observatory and signal tower on the hill (FHO n.d.). On March 10, 1797, Porter advertised in the *Federal Gazette* his intent to “build a Look-out House, and raise a Flag-Staff on Federal Hill, that early information may be obtained of ships and vessels coming up the bay...” (Brewington 1949:103).

“The hill itself...on the south side of the Basin...rose about 75 feet above the water. On its crest was a two-story frame house, evidently Porter's residence, and the look-out house itself. The latter was a square pyramid thirty feet high with a projecting balcony” (Brewington 1949:106).

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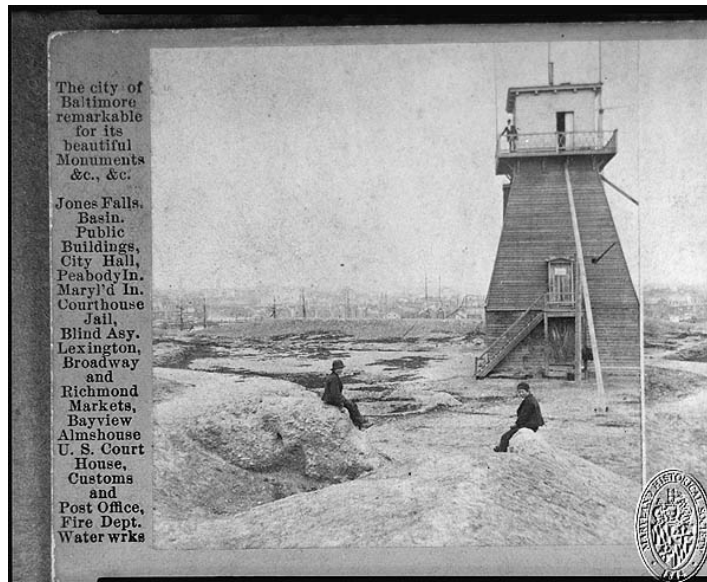
<sup>2</sup> The name Porter, and in particular David Porter, has a long and distinguished history among American naval officers. Captain David Porter (1754-1808) of the Continental Navy and subject of the current narrative was father of Commodore David Porter (1780-1843), who gained fame in the War of 1812 by capturing the first British warship of the conflict, HMS *Alert*, in August 1812. Porter's grandson, Admiral David Dixon Porter (1813-1891), was a noted naval hero of the Civil War and one of the first American naval officers with the rank of rear admiral.





**Figure 6-4. The Signal Tower at Federal Hill in Baltimore** (Leslie n.d.)

The signaling tower was in effect an early warning system, a means of informing merchants when one of their vessels was approaching home port. In the days before telegraphs or radios, the first news of a vessel's return was often the image of her entering the harbor. A few days' or even a few hours' notice could be of real benefit to a merchant, owner, or insurance underwriter: "Well before the vessel dropped anchor, customs officials could get their red tape ironed out and quarantine doctors could ready their bills and bleeding cups. Wives and sweethearts could prepare for the sailor's return. In fact, everyone directly or indirectly concerned with waterborne commerce was interested in knowing of the pending arrival of a vessel in port" (*New Baltimore Directory and Annual Register, 1800-1801*, p. 18, in Brewington 1949:101).



**Figure 6-5. The Signal Tower at Federal Hill** (Maryland Historical Society 2001c).

Porter financed his signaling system by means of subscription. In 1797, he sought three hundred subscribers at an annual rate of \$2.50 “half to be paid in advance to finance the construction of the lookout house.” Non-subscribers “were required to pay twenty-five cents each time they sought admittance” (*Federal Gazette*, in Brewington 1949:104). Subscribers would have their own banners of distinctive design and coloring so that their vessels could be identified. The observatory would hoist an identical signal on sighting an approaching vessel.

When a second vessel hove in sight, a small cannon was fired to alert the port to the change in or addition to the flag hoist. Foreign vessels were indicated by their respective national ensigns being hoist. There also seems to have been some scheme whereby, through the use of large canvas or basketwork balls being hauled aloft, other information, perhaps the position of the inward-bound vessel, could be conveyed. Knowledge of this latter system, however, has not survived (Ruckert 1980:32).

Soon the signaling system was extended beyond the single tower at Federal Hill to include Bodkin Point. On April 3, 1806, Porter informed the merchants and citizens of Baltimore that he would reside on Bodkin Point for the season until December 1. A book for the “Bodkin Telegraph,” as it was then known, was left at the Merchants Coffee House, 36 South Street, in Fells Point, for potential subscribers to the service. Having received “encouragement” from subscribers, Porter commenced the extended service on May 8, 1806 (*American & Commercial Daily Advertiser* 1806).

#### *War Comes to Bodkin Creek – Events of the War of 1812*

On June 18, 1812, the United States declared war on Britain. Several conditions lead to this decision including American anger over Britain’s restrictions on trade with France, Britain’s impressments of former British sailors who joined the expanding American merchant navy, and a desire to stop British support for Native Americans who were opposing American expansion into the Northwest Territory.



**Figure 6-6. Captain Sir Peter Parker**  
(Lossing 1869).

In response, Britain imposed a naval blockade of American ports, and in March 1813 a British squadron under Rear Admiral George Cockburn blockaded the Chesapeake Bay. Cockburn also began raiding towns along its shores in an attempt to coerce the Americans into a favorable peace agreement. In August 1814, Vice Admiral Cochrane, Commander in Chief of the British Navy Fleet in America, dispatched a diversionary squadron of three ships to the upper Chesapeake Bay while his main force prepared to attack Washington, D.C. One of the ships in the diversionary squadron was the HMS *Menelaus*, commanded by Captain Sir Peter Parker (Figure 6-6).

On August 24, 1814, while on patrol near Bodkin Point, a lookout aboard the HMS *Menelaus* reported observing a “schooner at an anchor under the land.” Captain Parker

sent men to investigate. The next morning they returned to the HMS *Menelaus* and reported finding a schooner and burning it (Figure 6-7). Lieutenant Benjamin George Beynon was a British Royal Marine assigned HMS *Menelaus*. He recorded the event in his diary, noting the report made by a Lieutenant Crease of the destruction of “a fine schooner called the *Lion of Baltimore*.” The next day, the British succeeded in their campaign against Washington, burning the Capitol and other public buildings including the White House.

Local historians have taken a great interest in positively identifying the schooner burned by the HMS *Menelaus*. Extensive archival research was conducted as part of the current project in an attempt to confirm the account. Initial searches at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., Maryland Historical Society library, and numerous other American archives found no evidence confirming the description of the burning of a schooner at Bodkin Point on that date.



**Figure 6-7. Artist's Conception of the Burning of a Schooner in Bodkin Creek near Hancock's Resolution (White n.d.).**

Search efforts were pursued at the National Archives at Kew, England, to obtain copies of the Captain's Log and other records of *Menelaus*. Although the Captain's Log for the date in question was missing and reported to be misfiled, an examination of the Master's Log along with correspondence by Captain Parker to Vice Admiral Cochrane confirmed that a schooner was burned by the *Menelaus'* crew that day, although neither report attributed a name to the vessel that was destroyed.

Further research identified correspondence from the Duke of Wellington to the Comte de Jaucourt in Paris on October 30<sup>th</sup>, 1814 complaining about an American schooner *Lion* that was reported to be using the harbor in L'Orient, France. On November 26, 1814, Wellington again registered his objection, this time to Viscount Castlereagh, K.G., about the use of the harbor in L'Orient by the *Lion*. These documents are important because they indicate that

the famous privateer *Lion* was in the harbor at L'Orient on dates well after the crew of HMS *Menelaus* reported burning her near Bodkin Point.

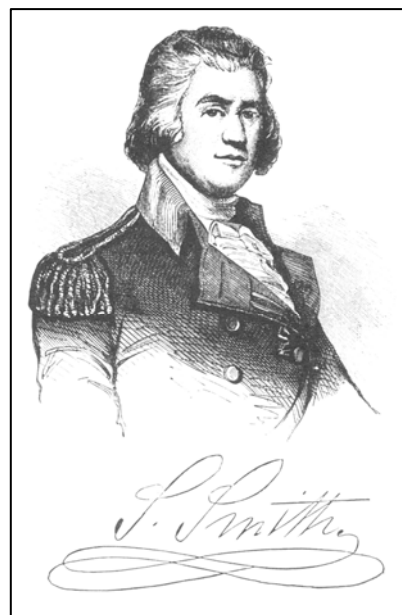
Thus, the mystery remains about the events that occurred near Bodkin Point on August 24, 1814. Although evidence suggests that the crew of the HMS *Menelaus* did not burn the famous privateer *Lion*, the question as to what schooner was in fact destroyed there has not been fully answered.

Other events during the war were associated with the Bodkin Creek area. The so-called City Barge Guard was an important intelligence gathering group for the American forces that reportedly frequented Bodkin Creek at this time. The City Barge Guard barges belonged to Captain George Stiles (1760-1819). They formed a company of 200 mariners of the First Marine Artillery of the Union, organized in 1808 at Fells Point and in existence until 1816. General Samuel Smith (Figure 6-8), who commanded the troops assembled for the defense of Baltimore in 1814, considered them his "strong right arm." Daily, the Guard would row the 11 miles from Baltimore to the mouth of the Patapsco River alternating between Bodkin Point and North Point (perhaps depending on the tides) and keeping watch on the Bay. Items in the *Baltimore Whig* from 1813 note the barges' movements:

"Report of the City Barge Guard to Major General S. Smith - 9. A.M., August 27 [1813] Barges, No 3 and 5, have just returned from their stations at the Bodkin..." *Baltimore Whig* August 27, 1813;

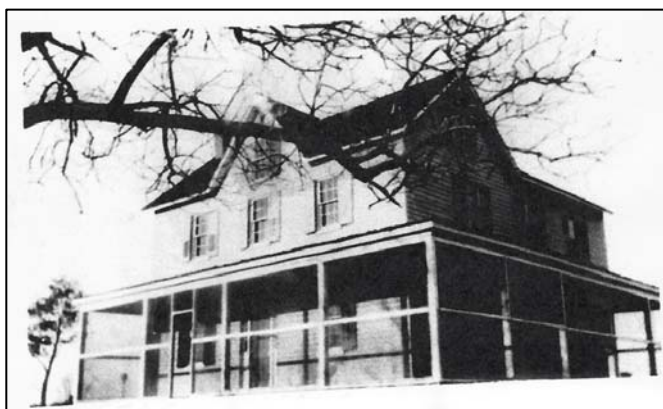
"Barge No. 4, and galley *Vigilant*, to-day arrived from their station at the Bodkin..." *Baltimore Whig* August 28, 1813.

In addition to the City Barge Guard, an effective communications system such as the Bodkin Telegraphe was probably adapted for military purposes, and likely continued in use through the war years (Scott Sheads, personal communication 2007). Hancock's Resolution was headquarters of Captain Francis Hancock of the Maryland Militia, 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment. Hancock built a frame farmhouse overlooking the Patapsco in today's Bayside Beach in 1798 (Calvert 2003:37), from which he is said to have kept watch on British ship movements during the war. When the fleet came above Annapolis, Hancock would raise a signal flag that was seen at Steeple House Farm, across the mouth of the Patapsco River on North Point, from where the signal was raised to be seen from the Federal Hill Observatory. The warnings are credited with much of the successful defense of the port in the so-called Battle of Baltimore in 1814 (Calvert 2003:38; Keith (2005:32). The farmhouse stood on the bay shore until 1931 when the structure burned to the ground (Figure 6-9). A life-long resident of Bayside Beach, Clarence 'Buzz' Parsley, witnessed the event remembering that the fire was hot enough to be felt hundreds of feet away (Buzz Parsley, personal communication 2009). The archaeological remains of the house were investigated in 1998 by the Lost Towns Project, at

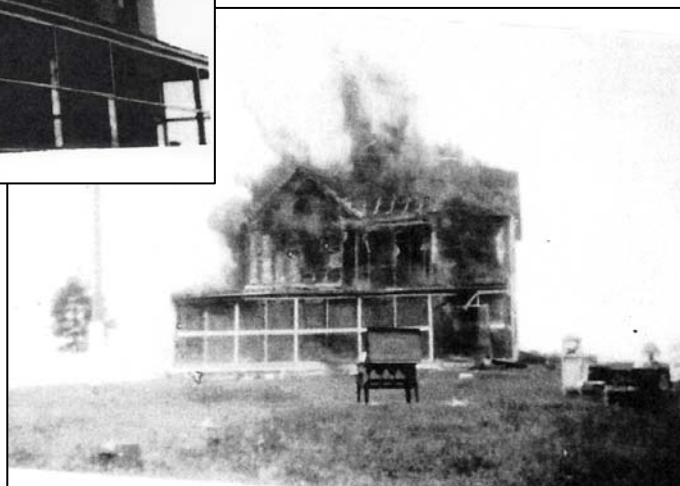


**Figure 6-8. Major General Samuel Smith**  
(Lossing 1869).

which time they were formally recorded as the Doss Site, 18AN1072 (Walker 1998). Wrought nails and 18<sup>th</sup>-century ceramics, including Delft and creamware, were among the artifacts recovered from the site.



**Figure 6-9 Hancock's Farmhouse on the Patapsco and the Fire that Consumed it in 1931** (Photos courtesy of Clarence "Buzz" Parsley).



Brewington (1949:108) notes that the signaling system was used for commercial purposes throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, despite the eventual development of Samuel Morse's magnetic telegraph. She reported that Baltimore merchants Thomas L. Neilson and John L. Dudley built "about 1822-33 another look-out house, located at Bodkin Point." How long the Bodkin look-out eventually served in the signaling system is unclear.

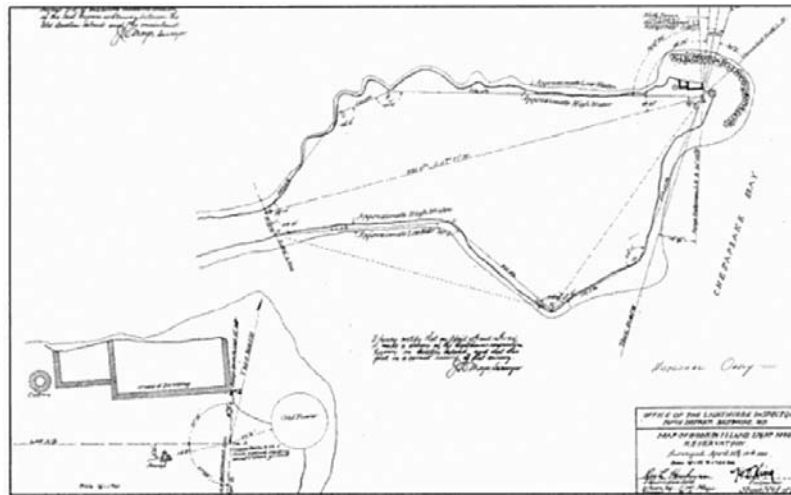
#### *Maritime Commerce and Bodkin Light*

In 1819, Congress approved construction of a series of lighthouses on the Chesapeake Bay (U.S. Government 1828). Three of the structures were erected in the northern part of the Bay to help guide shipping to the Patapsco River and the port of Baltimore. The lighthouses, or lights as they are sometimes called, were commissioned to mark the mouth of the river: one on Bodkin Island (Figure 6-10) and two on the north side of the river, at North Point and Sparrow's Point, the latter pair for use as range lights for alignment.

Stephen Pleasonton, Treasury Auditor, was charged with lighthouse administration following 1820. Frugal in the extreme, Pleasonton was known for accepting the lowest-cost construction bids and for placing lighthouses on low-lying, eroding land if he could get the property cheap. The first lighthouse he erected was Bodkin Light, on Bodkin Island (Taylor 2008:32). Richard Caton sold four acres to Pleasonton at the east end of the island for \$600 (Cunningham 2001:28). The contract for construction was awarded to Thomas Evans and William Coppeck, who completed a 35-foot stone tower measuring 18 feet in diameter at bottom and 9 feet at top, with a small, one-story, keeper's dwelling, in October of 1821.



Thirteen lamps with 16-inch reflectors were purchased from the Massachusetts contractor, Winslow Lewis.



**Figure 6-10. Map of Bodkin Island Showing Bodkin Light**  
(Maryland State Archives, Special Collections [MSA CS 1887-1-32],  
in Taylor 2008).

An alternative history indicates that William B. Barney, naval officer for the Port of Baltimore, was superintendent for lighthouses and was responsible for the construction (Totton 2000). In 1819, Barney cited the need of a lighthouse at the entrance to the river, claiming that “the Bar [Bodkin Island] was never without one or more vessels aground” (de Gast 1973:160). The lighthouse was plagued by problems stemming from its poor construction. Barney had Evans and Coppeck pull down the first 15 feet of the original tower because of poor workmanship (de Gast 1973:160).

Bodkin Light was completed and commissioned in January 1822. The first keeper was Captain John Gray. Gray died soon thereafter, in August 1822. His widow, Araminta Gray, assumed the keeper’s duties in his stead, although in a sign of the times President James Monroe stipulated that a male accept the appointment for her in name. Gray’s nephew accepted the nominal appointment (Cunningham 2001:28-9).

In August 1823, a sea wall was built by John Donahue (also spelled Donahoo) to protect the lighthouse from erosion that was already threatening the structure (Totton 2000). By 1856, following complaints that it had become ineffective, Bodkin Light was replaced by Seven-Foot Knoll Light. A fisherman is said to have lived in the dwelling on Bodkin Island for some time afterward (Figure 6-11).

Catherine Thom, daughter of H.R. Mayo Thom, who owned Rocky Beach Farm on Bodkin Neck at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, recalled visiting the lighthouse ruins: “Of course we swam almost daily. And exploring the beach was endlessly interesting. We frequently walked up to the Bodkin Point Light House, which was still standing” (Holt 2008). The tower



**Figure 6-11. Bodkin Light after Abandonment** (unknown date: above, Cheslights 2001; right, Holt 2008).



**Figure 6-12. Base of Bodkin Light Tower** (unknown date: Holt 2008).

collapsed in 1914 (Figure 6-12), and the island itself disappeared in the 1933 hurricane, although it is again today considered a navigational hazard. “Everybody that has a boat in this area has found the Bodkin Point Light,” hitting the shallow remains of the island with their prop or worse (Henry Schmidt, personal communication 2009). The location of the island is clearly evident from a variety of maps that date the 1933 storm. The position was confirmed by remote sensing surveys conducted for this investigation. Shallow water depths and an uneven, rocky bottom surface indicated the general outline of the island.

#### *Diversification of Agriculture and Getting the Goods to Market*

The Bodkin Creek area has been characterized as “well north of Maryland’s best tobacco land,” which was further south around St Mary’s City: the loamy, sandy soil along the Patapsco and its tributaries is described as not well-suited for tobacco (Gadsby et al.

2001:29-30). As tobacco prices fell throughout the late-18<sup>th</sup> and into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, farmers turned to the cultivation of less labor-intensive cereals and produce that were better adapted to the local soils. Baltimore merchants began shipping wheat and flour to Britain and the West Indies in the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and Bodkin Creek planters were in a position to provide the produce they required.

The eventual shift from cereal cultivation to truck farming sometime in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century has been well documented across the region. By this period, the southern portion of Bodkin Neck was farmland, the main holding there known as Deer Park Farm. Moody Carl Schmidt, who lived on the farm with his father, August Carl Schmidt, in the latter part of the century, noted the produce grown on the farm: "What we grew [there] was vegetables, tomatoes, cantaloupes, watermelon and we had a small peach orchard on one part of the west end of the farm. The produce was sent to Baltimore by sailboat" (Holt 2008). Crops grown and marketed from Hancock's Resolution were similar to those from other farms of the same size in northern Anne Arundel County. Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Hancocks consistently supplemented their cereal crops with produce such as peas, beans, potatoes, and fruits, as well as corn: "with fluctuations in market prices, crop blights, and the ever-present insect, diversification of one's crop production insured survival" (Gadsby et al. 2001:65). In 1809, a farm inventory at Hancock's included sweet potatoes, peas, watermelon, cabbage, heathers, rye, Indian corn and, notably, no mention of tobacco. An estate evaluation in 1812 also listed 100 apple trees, 200 peach trees, and 10 cherry trees "in variable condition" (Gadsby et al. 2001: 63, 64). Orchards were not common in northern Anne Arundel County: by 1860 there were only 23 orchards besides those of Henry Hancock noted in the agricultural census. The Hancocks raised produce almost solely by this point: potatoes, peas, and orchard products. The value of Hancocks' market gardens at this time is estimated at \$600; in comparison, the average value of gardens in the southern, tobacco producing part of the county was around \$400 (Gadsby et al. 2001: 65, 72).

In addition to produce and timber, other goods and materials were generated in the Bodkin Creek area. Francis Hancock's inventory in 1809, for example, indicated that he had 77 sheep. Even earlier, William Hancock, Sr.'s inventory at his death in 1754 indicated that he produced wool cloth, finished clothing, and shoes for sale. Also seine fishing nets and boats appear on the Hancock inventories in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Gadsby et al. 2000:64). While it is doubtful that this indicated commercial fishing, it does demonstrate the integrated nature of life on Bodkin Creek and that maritime activities were not restricted to transportation. In fact, there has always been a maritime focus to life bordering the creek and farmers often fished to supplement their incomes. Nevertheless, few if any residents of the area appear to have been primarily watermen (Cunningham 2001:82).

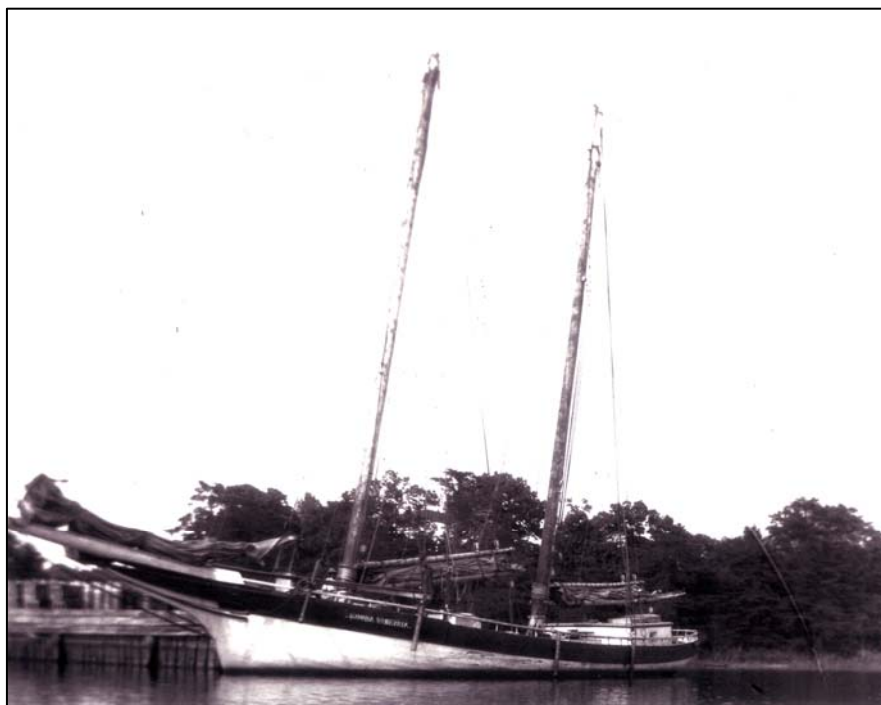
Roads were not well developed in the area, so water transport was still the most important means of moving people and goods well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Produce was typically transported from the creek to markets in Baltimore by boat. The so-called buy boats would anchor off shore in deep water where produce would be loaded from scows or other small vessels, or in the case of local fishermen, where their catch would be loaded straight from their fishing boats. In contrast, market boats represented direct access for producers. John Hancock (1799-1853), eldest son of Francis, noted in his farm journal that he transported

produce to market by water using a market boat, which appears in an inventory at the time of his death in 1853 (Gadsby et al. 2001:32). But by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Henry Alfred Cook, who owned property west of Hancock's Resolution along Back Creek and married into the Hancock family in 1887, was one of the few farmers in the area who still owned and operated his own market boat:

His boat (named *Rhoda Virginia* for his wife) was custom built in 1903 on the Eastern Shore. It was a broad beam, round stern bugeye<sup>3</sup>, of shallow draft, designed to operate in the shallow waters of Bodkin Creek, as well as the 'flats' along the Patapsco...Produce was harvested in the fields, packed in <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> bushel, or later <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> bushel (peach baskets) and delivered by horse and wagon to the market boat moored at the farm wharf or anchored on the 'flats' along the river shore. (Calvert 2003:46)

The *Rhoda Virginia* (Figure 6-13) was sold to the Gibson Island Corporation in 1915 (Henry Schmidt, personal communication 2010).

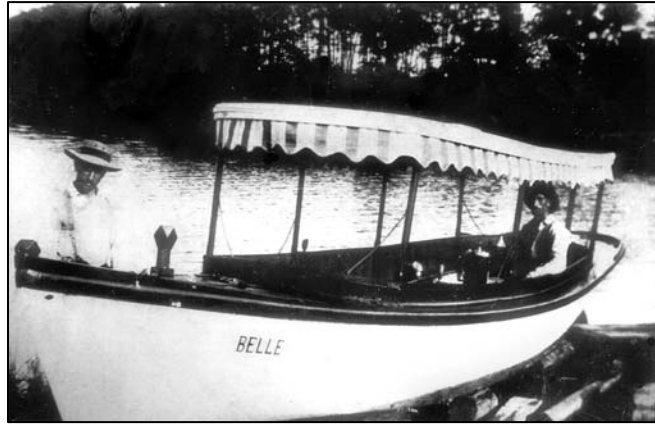
Another market boat from this period was the *Calvert*, owned by George W. Calvert. It reportedly had a single mast, pilot house and a swinging boom (Cunningham 2001:78). The last market boats to visit Bodkin Creek were operated by the Deale brothers of Deale, Maryland, in the late 1930s. The boats came into Back Creek five days a week and took the produce from the farms into Baltimore (James Morrison, personal communication 2009).



**Figure 6-13. Cook's Market Boat *Rhoda Virginia***  
(Collection of Henry A. Schmidt).

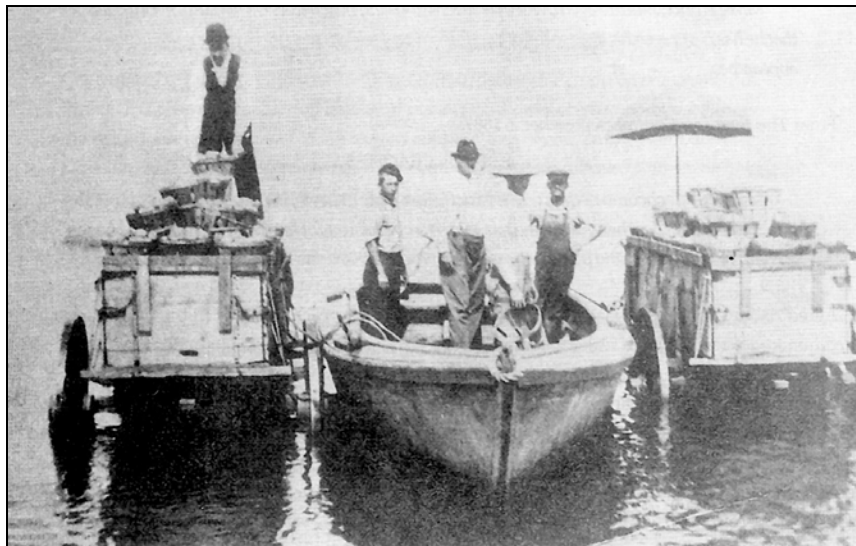
<sup>3</sup> Calvert (Charles H.), quoted in Cunningham (2001:77), referred to the boat as a 60-foot pungee.

Moser's (n.d.) study of marine trades in Anne Arundel County during the Colonial period documented no commercial shipbuilding enterprises on Bodkin Creek, nor does boat building appear to have been an important commercial activity later. The Calvert's did build boats for their own use and may have produced some for other farmers in the area (Figure 6-14). Around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century both the Calverts and Cooks had marine railways that they employed for hauling boats for maintenance and repair. The windlass from the Cooks' marine railway was presented to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum at St. Michaels in 1981 (Henry Schmidt, personal communication 2010).



**Figure 6-14. A 23-foot Deadrise Built Locally by George W. Calvert, 1910**  
(Collection of Charles Calvert).

Using the flats along the Patapsco shoreline was a means of avoiding the problems of getting a sailing vessel out of the creek if the winds would not cooperate (Figure 6-15). “A shallow draft boat could come in closer to the shore in low tide, be loaded with produce from the high six spring wagons in as [little] as three feet of water, and still move out on the rising tide” (Calvert 2003:46). This method of loading produce was one reason that the Hancocks acquired Peggy and Mollie's Delight, the strip of land on the Patapsco River shoreline that is now Bayside Beach and Alpine Beach. Just as the Pinehurst Canal was probably used for direct access to the Chesapeake Bay for transporting timber and possibly other goods in the early-19<sup>th</sup> century, Peggy and Mollie's Delight provided the Hancocks with direct access to the Patapsco River and a quick route to Baltimore.



**Figure 6-15. Wagons Loading Peaches into a Small Boat for Transfer to a Vessel in Deeper Water in 1911**  
(Stinchcomb in Mumford 2000).



Wharves would have been situated at a number of strategic locations along the shorelines of Bodkin Creek and its tributaries. Hancock's original wharf was in Old House Cove, southeast of the stone farmhouse. A path to the wharf can still be seen extending from the house bending slightly eastward to the cove shoreline. Although debris has been noted in the cove during sonar surveys (Abe Roth, personal communication 2009), remains of the wharf structure have not been positively identified. Hancock's later wharf, used by Henry Cook's market boat, was located on Back Creek, west of the Hancock family cemetery (Figure 6-16). The wharf was probably relocated there from Old Cove to take advantage of the deeper waters of the creek channel and to accommodate large, heavy sailing vessels such as those hauling timber, or even steam boats (James Morrison, personal communication 2009). Historical maps indicate that a wharf was present in this location by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The structure served as Hancock's main wharf for shipping produce until the 1930s



**Figure 6-16. Remains of Hancock's New Wharf at Low Tide**  
(photo from 1990 by Charles Crue, current landowner).

(Hancock's Resolution n.d.; Calvert 2003). MAHS surveyed the site in 1997 and reported the archaeological remains of wooden cribbing filled with stone and earth. In addition, a number of wood pilings were documented during a wading survey. Measurements from the survey suggested that the wharf was at least 12 meters (40 feet) wide and 21 meters (70 feet long), reaching into water that is currently up to 3 meters (10 feet) in depth (Hammill et al. 1997).

Other wharves on Bodkin Creek and its tributaries are known from historical accounts, maps, and archaeological surveys. The Cooks and Calverts had family wharves on their properties along Back Creek (Figure 6-17, 6-18), as did the Schmidts to the south, on Main Creek (Henry Schmidt, personal communication, 2009). Later in the nineteenth century, as farms became smaller and families were unable to maintain their own wharves, the County established public wharves. A county wharf was located at the end of what is now Dock Road, on the south side of the creek. The tributary on which the wharf was situated has since been known as Wharf Creek (James Morrison, personal communication 2009).

The Bodkin Neck Wharf (18AN1354) is an archaeological site that lies on the south shore of Bodkin Creek north of Ashlar Pond. The archaeological survey report that documented the site described it as a submerged debris field lying in less than four feet of water and consisting of rock and brick fragments (Bilicki 2007). A sherd of blue-and-grey stoneware

ceramic suggested a 19<sup>th</sup>-century date for the site. The site was large, described in the Maryland Archeological Site Survey Form as measuring 60-by-90 meters (197-by-295 feet).



**Figure 6-17. Rowing on Back Creek in the Early-20<sup>th</sup> Century**  
(photo of Edwin Cook, Henry Schmidt's uncle, taken in 1908, with the *Rhoda Virginia* tied up at the Cook Wharf and the *Wren*, a derelict puny owned by Schmidt's great uncle, Oliver J. Cook, off its stern; Collection of Henry Schmidt).



**Figure 6-18. The Bugeye *John R. Beaton* at Cook's Wharf**  
(Collection of James Calvert).

Historical quadrangle maps show a wharf, known as Robinson's Wharf, in this vicinity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and thus the site was interpreted as the remains of that wharf. The Robinsons, who would eventually develop the bay side resort locale, Pinehurst on the Bay, were major produce growers in the Bodkin Creek area. They maintained a supply house in Baltimore, C.N. Robinson and Brothers (Henry Schmidt, personal communication 2010). The wharf probably served their transport needs and may have been built sufficiently large to accommodate steamboats.

One of the shipwreck sites from the current remote sensing survey could be related to this period of Bodkin Creek's history. Acoustic Contact 216 is reportedly a vessel of log canoe construction and thus could be a brogan, bugeye, or skipjack similar to those used as market boats by farmers in the creek. Identification of the vessel type is still uncertain, as is its history of ownership and use. Direct association with Bodkin Creek has not been established, yet the site may be a material remnant of the market and transportation activity that characterized Bodkin Creek from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the second quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

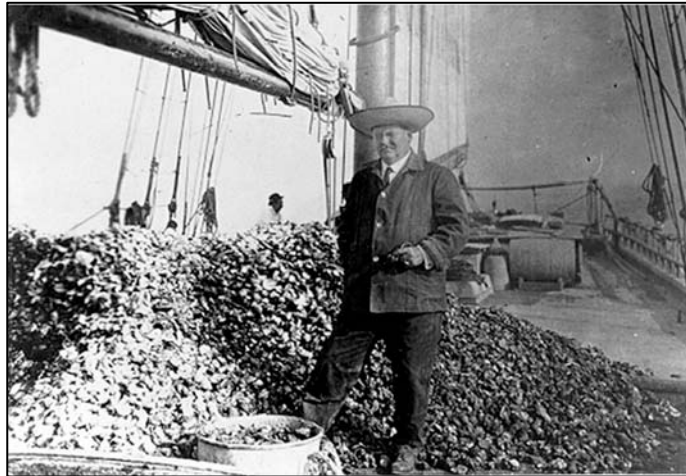
Around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Hancocks operated a small dry goods and grocery store in what was originally a milk house situated near the main farm house (Cunningham 2001:68; Hancock's Resolution n.d.). They sold produce, eggs, and salt meat from their farm, in addition to "box cheese, barrels of soda crackers and ginger snaps, hard rock candy, licorice sticks, and chewing tobacco" imported by boat from Baltimore (Calvert 2003:44). Customers included local agricultural workers, the keeper of the lighthouse at nearby Seven-Foot Knoll, and area watermen including oystermen.

### *Oystering*

Beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, oystering became an important commercial maritime activity in many areas along the Eastern Seaboard. As the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed, oyster beds to the north, in New England and New York, were fished out, and oystermen from those regions began frequenting the Maryland waters of the Chesapeake Bay. Their presence soon became such a problem that a series of legislative measures was undertaken to restrict their activity. In 1868, the Maryland General Assembly created the State Oyster Police, and in 1874, the force was restructured and renamed the State Fishery Force: it is today known as the Maryland Natural Resources Police (Warren 2006). Until 1965, Maryland limited dredging to sailing vessels. As indicated in Chapter 5, these regulations prompted the development of specialized sailboats such as the bugeye and later the skipjack for dredging.

Oyster farming was an attempt early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to address reduced harvests of shellfish. The Haman Oyster Culture Law was passed in 1906 allowing private planters to lease up to 500 acres in the open waters of the Chesapeake Bay and 30 acres in tributaries (Webster 2003a). In 1913, the Rocky Beach Oyster Farm, off Bodkin Neck, was one of the first oyster farms developed on land leased under the new law (Figure 6-19). The farm was operated by H.R. Mayo Thom, who also owned farmland on the Neck. Thom's seeded beds produced oysters, but poachers and politics ultimately led to the failure of the enterprise (Holt 2008). The Haman Act was opposed by Maryland watermen, who saw it as an encroachment on their harvest areas and as competition in the marketplace (Webster 2003b).

Bodkin Creek's extensive estuary system, with its many small inlets and embayments, historically provided shelter for oystermen, especially during inclement weather (Figure 6-20, 6-21). As late as 1938, boats from the oyster fleet that worked the Seven-Foot Knoll oyster bars reportedly used Bodkin Creek as their winter base. Cunningham (2001:56) quotes a story from the *Evening Capital*, March 4 1886, describing a steam tug that came to Bodkin Creek to free up ice-bound oyster boats following a high-wind storm. In an example of the unpredictability and occasional harshness of weather in the Bay, the tug itself became trapped by ice blown into the mouth of the creek.



**Figure 6-19. H.R. Mayo Thom and Shellfish from His Rocky Beach Oyster Farm (Holt 2008).**

As many as thirty vessels at a time anchored in the creek, and the watermen patronized Hancock's store at the Hancock Resolution farm (Calvert 2003:44). A former skipjack captain, Daniel Harrison, was one of the patrons of the store in the 1930s. Harrison likened it to a convenience store, citing the ease and quickness with which one could acquire basic provisions. An added advantage was the relative isolation of the area: Harrison points out that "crews were less likely to 'go astray' when he took on supplies at Hancock's than if he went into Annapolis or Baltimore" (Harrison, personal communication in Gadsby et al. 2001).

The estuary was also a base for law enforcement officials. As noted by researcher Robert Keith:

Bodkin Creek is a base for the Maryland Marine Police, known in its early days as the "Oyster Navy" because of its fights to keep "pirates" off the Chesapeake Bay oyster beds. Officer K.L. Phillips won immortality at his Bodkin post in 1966 when he filed this brief report: "Found bottom half of girl's bathing suit at Bodkin Point. Returned same to owner. Had no trouble locating her. Very little activity this date." (Keith 2005:31).

As noted earlier, one of the sites documented during the remote sensing survey, Acoustic Contact 216, was a vessel of log canoe construction that could have been an oystering vessel. If so, it likely visited Bodkin Creek along with other ships in the oyster fleet.





**Figure 6-20. Oyster Fleet in Bodkin Creek**  
(Collection of James Calvert).



**Figure 6-21. Oyster Fleet Frozen in Bodkin Creek**  
(Collection of James Calvert).



*Changes in Transportation Technology and New Influences from Baltimore*

Throughout the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, changes in land transportation began to effect life on Bodkin Creek. Railroad lines were established to the west, in the central part of Anne Arundel County by the late 1880s. The opening of the Hanover Street Bridge across the Patapsco in southern Baltimore spurred the development of roads throughout the county. With the roads came trucks and automobiles, along with an increasing reliance on land transport in many rural parts of the county, the Bodkin Creek area included, in which water had always been the main mode of conveyance. Higher market demand for produce led to labor shortages at picking time, and immigrant agricultural workers were brought into the area from Baltimore to work the truck gardens on a seasonal basis. Archaeological evidence from this period consists of picker checks, the small brass or aluminum tokens, used to pay the workers. The tokens were used like cash at stores such as Hancock's on Bodkin Creek, and are still found on and in the ground throughout the area (Figure 6-22).



**Figure 6-22. Picker Checks from the Shipley Farm, West of Hancock's Resolution** (Collection of Abe Roth III).

*The Bodkin Piggery*

The growing city of Baltimore had another, rather unusual effect on the Bodkin Creek area. In 1907, Baltimore began hauling garbage to Bodkin Creek as part of an ongoing process for disposing of urban refuse and night soil during the period. The practice has been characterized as an early recycling effort: the sandy soils of the region were enriched for the market gardens they supported, and the produce from the gardens was sent to the city. Bodkin Creek's involvement began after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. An article on "Hog Feeding Contracts" in the *New International Year Book for 1919* (Colby 1920:278) notes that from 1882 to 1901, a contractor removed Baltimore's garbage to a reduction plant and then hauled it to be spread as fertilizer on farmland just outside the city. Complaints about odors from the reduction plant and non-collection of garbage led the city to buy the collection equipment and reduction works in 1908.

A new location for disposal was found along Bodkin Creek. The Southern Product Company operated a reduction plant there under contract with the city until 1918. That the plant was a success is indicated in part by the number of years it operated, while an article in the *Baltimore Sun* noted that “oil or grease produced from the city's garbage supply at the Southern Product Company's plant on Bodkin Point is a source of no inconsiderable revenue to the company.” The newspaper article goes on to note that:

Reduction of garbage and waste material has been brought to such a high point of efficiency that practically every material to be found on the dumps, from old shoes to tin cans, may be converted into by-products with commercial value. The refuse disposal committee hopes in its campaign to arouse public sentiment in favor of creating a committee of experts to look into Baltimore's refuse disposal problem and determine whether it would be wise for the city to install improved machinery in the Bodkin Point reduction plant when it becomes the city's property and avail itself of the revenue from the byproducts of the plant. (Anon 1916:5)

But in 1918 a different form of reduction was tried—hog feeding. Not a new concept, recycling garbage by feeding it to hogs was a process used in several cities, including Buffalo and Utica, New York; Newark, New Jersey; and Akron, Ohio (Colby 1920:278-9). Garbage destined for Bodkin Creek was hauled by scow and dumped along Spit Point, the peninsula between Main Creek and Back Creek. A facility referred to colloquially as a “piggery” was established on the peninsula on the 116-acre Jubb Farm at Graveyard Point, on Ventnor Road where the Ventnor Marina is currently located. The piggery was operated by the American Feeding Company, who imported 15,000 pigs to the farm. The company began spreading garbage before the pigs arrived, and the local citizenry immediately began to fight the effort. As many as 40 prominent residents from Bodkin Creek and Gibson Island participated in a lawsuit against the city (*Baltimore Sun* 1918). The suit was unsuccessful and the hogs were imported to the farm. The initial ruling in the case was that the hog farm did not constitute a nuisance and would not affect property values in the area. “Before residents could file an appeal, the pigs became ill and some died, the manger of the piggery absconded with \$15,000 that belonged to the city, and Baltimore returned to incineration and landfill to dispose of the garbage” (Cunningham 2001:98). It is said that one reason the pigs became ill was that the city did not do a good job of separating broken glass from the garbage (James Morrison, personal communication 2009).

An alternative history is presented in the background of another lawsuit related to Baltimore's garbage disposal process, a nuisance action brought by Baltimore County against the City of Baltimore (Gontrum 2006). In 1921, the city contracted with a Baltimore County farmer, William F. Huse, who owned wharves along Bear Creek, on the north shore of the Patapsco River. Garbage would be hauled by scow for disposal as fertilizer on adjacent farmland. The *Baltimore Sun* published a series of articles about the plans, and the lawsuit was soon brought on behalf of the residents of the county. The Baltimore County Circuit Court eventually found in favor of the county, but by that time the City had “successfully imitated an alternative garbage disposal system in Anne Arundel County” (Gontrum 2006:4).

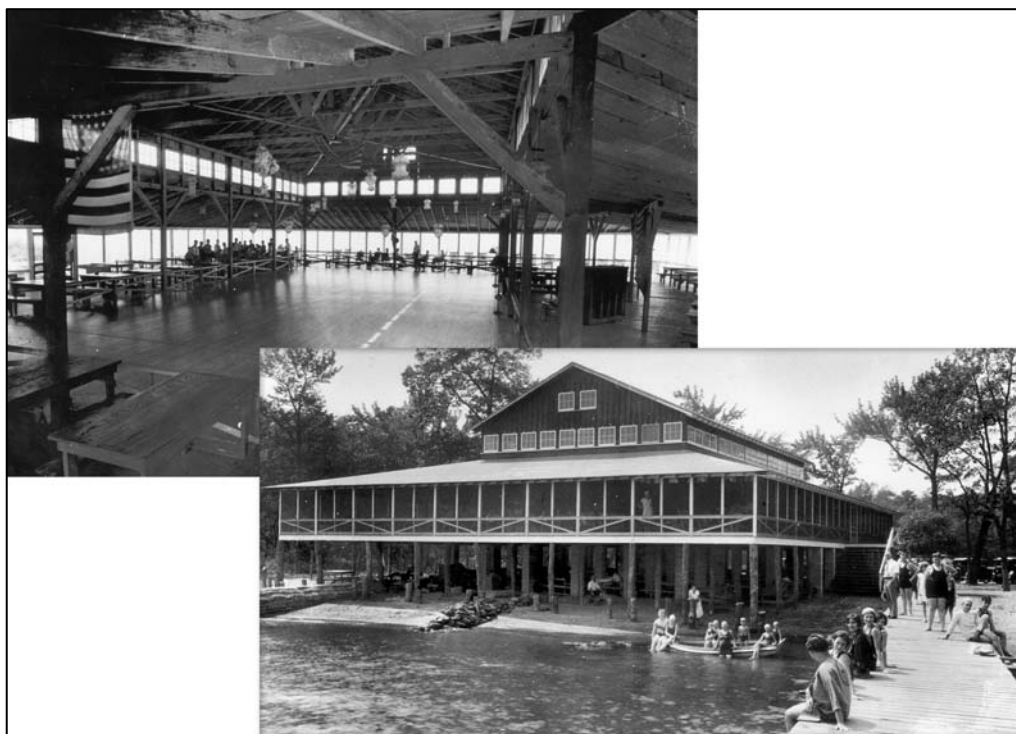
In the background for the case, Gontrum (2006:6) notes that from 1898 to 1907, the city's garbage was shipped to Bear Creek, to the same William Huse, to be sold as fertilizer. During this period, the city also began transporting some of the garbage to a rendering plant on Bodkin Creek run by the Southern Product Company, where the material was boiled down to "grease and fertilizer." The rendering process was reportedly considered expensive and an alternative was sought in hog feeding—a piggery. Gontrum notes that piggeries had been used successfully to solve the problem of garbage disposal in Albany, New York, and Denver, Colorado. In 1919, Baltimore entered into contract with the Minnesota-based American Feeding Company to set up a 15,000-hog piggery. The company bought the garbage from the city in a complicated pricing arrangement that depended largely on the price of pork in Chicago.

The company purchased a 156-acre farm "at the mouth of the Patapsco River" and built a wharf there. The garbage was hauled in scows to the wharf, identified as Graveyard Point, and was there unloaded onto narrow rail cars that distributed the material to 70 feeding lots. Problems ensued including sick pigs, winter ice that prevented transport up Bodkin Creek to the wharf, and complaints about noxious odors. A lawsuit was brought locally and a medical investigation was instituted. On January 14, 1921, Walter M. Cooper, manager of the company now referred to as the Maryland Feeding Company, abruptly closed the operation and sold the assets. By this point the city had invested \$96,000 in the piggery and wharf and had yet to receive any payments from the company: the total owed was reportedly \$20,663.51. Garbage continued to be brought to the peninsula for several more days and was spread around the point. Meanwhile, the city entered into contract with William Huse, which quickly occasioned the nuisance suit by Baltimore County noted above.

Undeterred, the Sanitary Reduction Company reportedly bought the Hines farm across Main Creek on Spit Point and continued to import garbage from Baltimore, rendering it for oils and grease to make soap. The solid residue was hauled away for field fertilizer. Residents again complained that the plant was noxious. Daniel P. Corey and Charles H. Calvert filed an unsuccessful lawsuit claiming that the plant's effluent was killing aquatic vegetation, crabs, and fish in the creek. The company eventually lost its contract with the City of Baltimore, and Bodkin Creek was finally free of the city's garbage (Cunningham 2001:99).

#### *Later 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Recreation and Suburbanization*

As transportation changed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, waterfront areas along the Western Shore were soon discovered as recreation areas. Residents of the population centers of Baltimore and Washington, D.C., began to arrive along the shores of the Bay and tributaries like Bodkin Creek seeking day and weekend refuge from busy and crowded urban life. Railroad and steamboat service added to the convenience of accessing many areas, as did the growth of road systems and frequency of automobiles. Bayside Beach and Pinehurst were two popular resort locales in the Bodkin Creek area in the 1920s and 1930s, boasting hotels and dance pavilions. Pinehurst on the Bay began as a gated community on the southern end of Bodkin Neck in 1922, developed by the heirs of C.N. Robinson. It featured "five miles of waterfront and a harbor that could accommodate large yachts" (Cunningham 2001:102). A public beach and large bathhouse were built in 1925, and a two-story pavilion and dance floor were added in 1928 (Figure 6-23, 6-24). The pavilion was the largest in the Pasadena



**Figure 6-23. Pinehurst Pavilion in the Late 1920s**  
(Collection of Janet Robinson O'Connell in Cunningham 2001:103).



Peninsula, extending out into the Bay with a screened porch around the exterior (Cunningham 1999:55). The pavilion was still standing when area resident Henry Schmidt was in his early teens: “The owner was a friend of my father’s, and we used to go down there to go swimming. It was a public beach—they charged admission at that time—but he’d let us go up where my father was born on the bank that wasn’t developed. My dad did work on the rental houses in the winter months” (Henry Schmidt, personal communication 2009).

Most of the physical evidence of the original Pinehurst community has been erased by later development, but the remains of the pavilion’s concrete slab and the piers that supported it, while not recorded as an archaeological site, are still present along the Bay shoreline just north of the outlet of the Pinehurst Canal (Figure 6-24). Alpine Beach and Bayside Beach, north of the mouth of Bodkin Creek were also developed during this period (Cunningham 1999:52, 90). In 1924, the Bay Side Beach Development Company advertised “the view across the Chesapeake, a sandy beach, saltwater bathing, boating, fishing, and cool breezes, ‘an ideal spot to build your bungalow and make your dreams come true’” (Cunningham 2001:108).



**Figure 6-24. Concrete Slab and Piers of the Pinehurst Pavilion Today.**

Steamboats brought more than tourists to the Bodkin Creek area. On a July evening in 1937, the steamboat *City of Baltimore* was on its way to Norfolk when it caught fire near Seven-Foot Knoll. The boat headed toward Bodkin Point and grounded on a sandbar nearby, where at least 90 passengers and crew abandoned ship. Ships in the vicinity and small boats from shore came to the rescue, bringing many of the survivors to Bayside Beach. Ambulances eventually transported them back to Baltimore. Two persons were reported to have died as a result of the incident, and two were missing. The next day Navy seaplanes patrolled the area around Seven-Foot Knoll for survivors (Cunningham 1999:74). Dr. Frank N. Ogden, of Gibson Island, observed the fire and called for two fireboats (*Torrent* E-48 and *Subchaser* #428 E-49) along with all seven municipal ambulances. Water from the deck pipes of the fireboats had little effect on the blaze. The heat was so intense that after a time the boats had to back away and the ship burned to the waterline. Only the funnels remained visible, and the ship quickly sank (James Morrison, personal communication 2010). Local residents tell a somewhat different story about the ultimate fate of the steamer. It did not sink immediately, and informal salvage efforts were undertaken. Henry Schmidt’s father salvaged car parts from the vessel (Henry Schmidt, personal communication 2010). Long-time Bayside Beach resident Clarence ‘Buzz’ Parsley noted that security men from the company that insured the line guarded the wreck for several days. Parsley’s sister took a phonograph out to the site and danced with the guards to keep them company (Parsley, personal communication 2010). Berman (1972) and Shomette (1982) both list the steamer as lost at Seven-Foot Knoll, although neither researcher provides precise coordinates.

By the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Bodkin Creek area had become a bedroom community, settled largely by commuters working in Baltimore or Washington, D.C. This demographic shift from rural to suburban populations can be seen in some ways as a development of the truck farming industry: while different in size and character, the two populations were interconnected and driven by the same forces. Both communities were in support of or directly affected by the growing urban-commercial centers of Baltimore and Washington. As more farmers grew produce, drawn by the lucrative urban market, the prices of their goods fell. Many growers eventually sold non-profitable farms to land developers who turned the land into housing for city dwellers in search of suburban life. In effect, urbanization both encouraged and took advantage of the demise of farming in the region.

There is ample evidence of the suburbanization of the Bodkin Creek estuary throughout the survey area, since suburban development is its modern condition. The shoreline is dense with houses, wharves, piers, and small and large marinas. Many stretches of the creek bank have been reinforced with bulkheads or riprap to guard against erosion. These improvements, while protecting the shore from an acknowledged threat, have also either destroyed or covered over portions of archaeological sites, including prehistoric shell middens and historic period wharves. Evidence of late-20<sup>th</sup>-century occupation and use of the area is found throughout the waters of the creek itself. The majority of the more than 250 remote sensing targets from the current investigation represent 20<sup>th</sup>-century debris, from items identified as tires and duck blinds, to a small cabin cruiser (Acoustic Contact #23) and what are probably other small boats, crab pots, anchors, and lengths of cable.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

Bodkin Creek, like many parts of the Western Shore of Maryland is a quiet somewhat rural area, and has always been so, at least until the advent of modern transportation and communications technologies. The historical theme running through this study has been one of a slow progression from isolation to integration. The focus of life on the creek has always been the water, beginning with the earliest occupations of the region by Native Americans, who came to the creek for the aquatic and estuarine resources it provided and who left behind shell middens and scattered artifacts as indication of their passage. Later, European settlers planted tobacco on the slopes above the creek. Road systems were undeveloped and water was the primary means of transportation, for people and commerce. Planters were connected to the markets of Annapolis, Baltimore, and England by the waters of the creeks and the Chesapeake Bay.

The Bodkin Creek area started as a small backwater, isolated by geography. It became increasingly linked to the larger world by technology, at first by maritime transportation systems, as somewhat ironically the water that isolated the creek was also its link or means of access to the world at large. Pungys, schooners, and steamboats developed particularly for the Bay and its estuaries were the main transportation and communications connections. Few notable historical events occurred in Bodkin Creek, perhaps the most important being related to the War of 1812, when the area was involved in intelligence gathering for the defense of



Baltimore and was the site of the sinking of an American schooner by a British warship during the War of 1812.

But the impetus of life along Bodkin Creek was always agricultural and always commercial: first through tobacco, probably shipped directly to England; then through other agricultural products shipped to Baltimore as that city developed into a commercial center. The maritime focus of Hancock's Resolution, the most important land holding on the creek throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Market boats still called at wharves on the creek to collect truck produce for the Baltimore markets into the second quarter of the century. As Gadsby et al. (2000: 116) have noted, in other areas of Anne Arundel County and the Western Shore, a shift to inland orientation is noted in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century—but not so along much of Bodkin Creek. Eventually, non-maritime transportation technology, in the form of roads and automobiles, spread into the region and the area became more fully integrated with life on the Western Shore. Bodkin Creek soon became the focus of recreational opportunities and suburban living for residents of Baltimore and Washington, as it remains today.

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