

FOREWORD

In 1608, Captain John Smith (1580-1631) led two expeditions of exploration to the upper reaches of the Chesapeake Bay, mapping for the first time a 'fruitful and delightful land' for prospective settlers. Twenty-four years later, the same terrain, named Maryland in honor of the Queen of England, would be granted by Charles I to Cecil Calvert, 2nd Lord Baltimore. First published in 1612, Smith's map would be reissued in many subsequent authorized and pirated editions. In celebration of Captain Smith's achievement, a reproduction of the open boat in which he sailed the Bay has been constructed in Chestertown, Maryland, and the Johns Hopkins University Press is publishing one author's modern-day account of retracing Smith's voyages of discovery.

Smith's map presents a horizontal view of the Chesapeake and the land masses that shape its contours. Maryland's Western and Eastern Shores are drawn running from left to right in contrast to the orientation to which we have become accustomed: north atop and south at the foot of a page. The resulting view of Maryland in the 1612 map bears a broad ribbon of land (the Western Shore) above, under which lies a horizontal Chesapeake Bay, supported further down by a still broader band of land (the Eastern Shore).

The detail from Smith's map which graces the cover of this volume features the area that would become Maryland, including Watkins Point, and the drawing of the shallow in which Smith explored the upper Bay in 1608. When Cecil Calvert came to negotiate the boundaries for the Charter to Maryland (1632), he used Smith's map and specifically mentioned Watkins Point as defining Maryland's southern boundary with Virginia. Unfortunately for Cecil Calvert and subsequent generations of residents on the Bay, the Point proved not to be one and became a very difficult place to locate, costing Maryland and Virginia ultimately hundreds of thousands of dollars in court costs and legal fees as they battled over their respective jurisdictions. Today, the jurisdictional disputes are nearly over, but Smith's map stands as both an exquisite historical artifact of the era of initial exploration of the Chesapeake Bay, and a cautionary tale of the importance of accuracy in mapping, whether it be of the physical world or the artificial world of government created by those who were lured westward by the likes of Captain John Smith and Cecil Calvert.

What follows is the 28th edition of the *Maryland Manual* published by the Maryland State Archives. It is part of our on-going effort to accurately map the government of Maryland, but it is also the basic document upon which is built our understanding of the extensive historical archives that government creates. Accurate, accountable, and reliable information is the soul of a Democracy. It is the mission of the Archives to accurately describe and explain the nature and the extent of Maryland government and the legacy of permanent records, in whatever form they exist, that government has created since the earliest days of settlement.

It is by knowing what government does, or is intended to do, that sensible decisions of what information to save for posterity can be made. By identifying and describing the agencies of Maryland government over time, the *Maryland Manual* and the *Maryland Manual On-Line* each inform the archival administration that preserves and makes available for use the permanent records of government. The *Manual*, in its book editions and electronic formats, enables us to know the state of Maryland government at a given time, providing a blueprint for what to save and what to throw out. From the *Manual*, archivists identify government agencies and functions, appraise the resulting records to determine what should be preserved, and prepare those records of permanent value for use, even under the most severe of emergency conditions.

In mapping the current state of Maryland government and the future course of conserving and accessing its permanent records, there is no greater pressing issue than identifying and preserving the electronic record. We take for granted that paper can always be with us, and assume that precautions are taken to preserve and make accessible what now exists only in electronic form. But like Watkins Point, such assumptions are unwarranted and disaster looms if steps are not taken to move the permanent paper and electronic records of the present into an accessible, accountable, and persistently reliable archival setting. Few people know that better now than those from the hurricane-stricken areas of the Gulf of Mexico.

Much of the recent work of the Maryland State Archives seeks to preserve electronic records and provide access initiatives that bring records and their information more efficiently to the public. Through digital imaging, recent initiatives provide electronic access and search capabilities to county land records (mdlandrec.net); government publications and reports; and special collections, including maps and newspapers. More information about these initiatives will be found here on pp. 280-282, and on the Maryland State Archives website <http://mdsa.net>. One of the distinctive features of this *Manual's* electronic edition is to lead the user directly to the websites of government.

As Maryland began when Captain John Smith mapped the Chesapeake Bay, so its memory—the record of the government and the governed—continues only to the degree that its records are effectively preserved, secured, and made readily accessible in times of emergency and of peace.

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