

Charlotte Town - Monkton

A History 1742 - 1992

Shirley B. Clemens

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which Thomas Brerewood was asking for "joiners, carpenters, millwrights, tanners, taylors...etc. " to settle on My Lady's Manor. The first of the town lots was recorded in 1744 and by 1746 there were some 40 to 45 lots leased to at least 13 tradespeople.

Four carpenters were among the tradesmen holding lots: William Wright, William Carson, Paul Garon, and Charles Cole. Cornelius Stewart was listed as a joiner, John Wood a tailor, and Thomas Hamilton a blacksmith. One Jonathan Ady (or Aidy) claimed proficiency as a malster, brewer and cooper. For his skill in these three needed trades he was given his lots without rent charges. The rent was five ears of good Indian corn per year and leases were made for the life of the tradesman and two others selected by him, often his wife and a young child. Because these were designated by name and age in the lease, they have become a valuable tool for genealogists.

The holder of a lot in Charlotte Town was to build a good and sufficient house with the timber on his land, or other land laid out in the town; he was to share any springs with the other inhabitants. The land was for his use but "subject nevertheless to all street, roads, cartways, conveniently to be laid out for the inhabitants or housekeepers of the said town as well as for the back inhabitants" , as the owners of large manor tracts were referred to !

John Wood's four lots were a rectangle 16 perches by 40 perches which was 268.8 by 672 feet or four parcels each 168 by 268.8. No one leased less than two lots and some artisans had leases on eight lots.

The location of the 1st of the original lots of Charlotte Town was probably in the area where Monkton-Manor Road divides from Sheppard Road, east of the river. Several of the lots began at the southwest line of Jacob Bull's land and this was lot 70, now the location of Fruitful Valley and the Monkton Mill. Jacob Bull had been granted lot 70 in 1742 with the requirement that he would build a good water grist mill within a year and it was on this location on Charles Run that historians believe the first mill on

the mill on the west bank was thriving in the last quarter of the 18th century. It had been built by Isaac Bull, son of Jacob Bull who built the mill on Charles Run. There probably was a road from the west bank connecting Charlotte Town to the settlements at Priceville and Hereford. Landowners across the river were Benjamin Merryman, Thomas Gorsuch, and Samuel Tipton of Cromwell's Park (Corbett- Mathews Road Area).¹

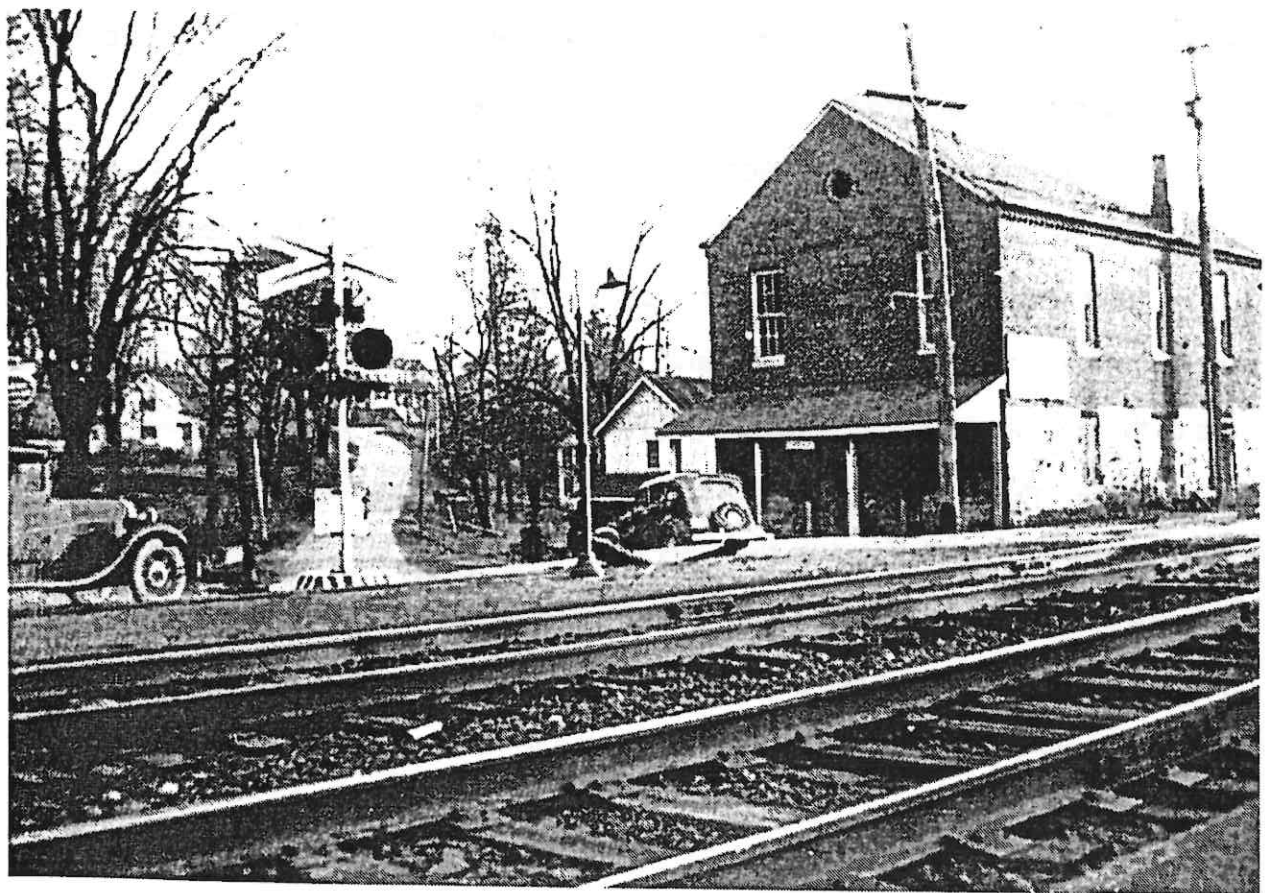
If it could be said that Thomas Brerewood was the founder of the village, then Robert Cummins was responsible for the change in name to Monkton. Cummins had purchased a large tract of land and both mills (the one on Charles Run and the one on the west bank of the Gunpowder below the Bridge House) from his Uncle Adam Hoopes' widow, Elizabeth, in 1771. Hoopes had bought the mills from Thomas Harris who had received them from Isaac Bull. Robert Cummins accompanied his uncle and other Pennsylvanians to Nova Scotia in 1765 and settled at a town called Monckton, in honor of British Colonel Robert Monckton. Ill health forced him to return to the colonies. In a letter to a friend he stated that he had "...purchased a small estate in Maryland 20 miles from Baltimore.... which goes by the name of Monkton Mills". There is a town in Nova Scotia today that is called Moncton, but the local community dropped the "c": at the turn of the Nineteenth Century, giving rise to the rumors that it was named by William Gwynn for Monkton Priory in Wales. ²

Cummins was active in local affairs during the Revolutionary War; by 1776 he had frequent correspondence with the Committee of Safety in Baltimore from "Monkton Mills." A year later he died and his mother, executrix of his estate, stated in the Maryland Gazette for December 2, 1777, "Likewise those who have any demands against the said Cummins as a contractor for victualing the Maryland or Continental troops..." should apply to her. Persistent rumors that the Monkton Mill ground grain into flour for the troops in the Revolutionary War have a foundation.

Cummins was a wealthy man and the inventory of his estate placed the total

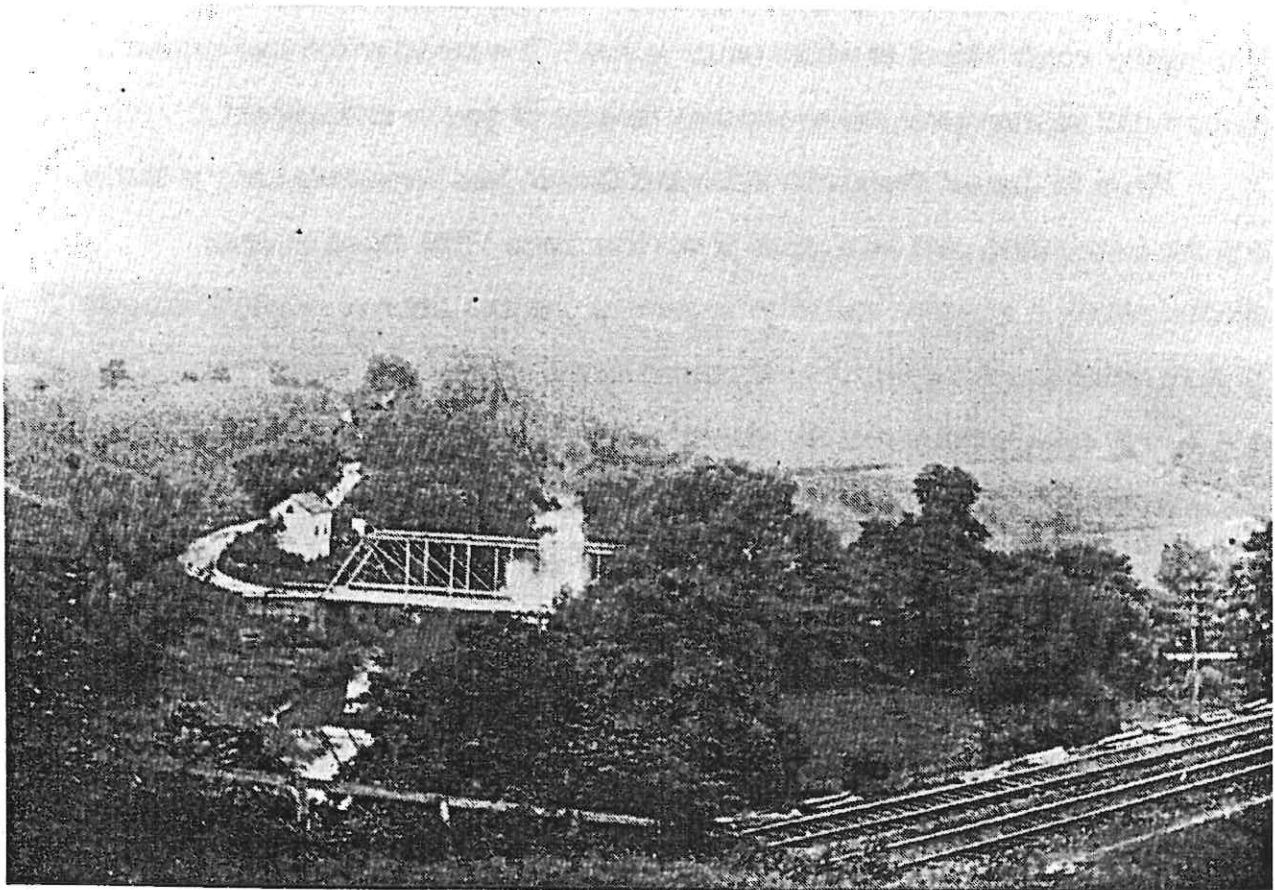
Gunpowder.... to intersect the Baltimore and Yorktown Turnpike at or near 18 miles (from Baltimore). This was probably the present Matthews Road, once the main road west to the turnpike. In August, 1817 the Federal Gazette reported that a flood swept away the saw mill, part of the grist mill and the miller's house.

The next major event to shape the destiny of Monkton was the building of the Baltimore and Susquehanna Railroad along the bed of the Gunpowder River north of Cockeysville. The village became a stop on the railroad which was completed to York from Baltimore in 1838. From that date until it was discontinued in 1959, shortly after the opening of the Harrisburg Expressway, I 83, there was regular local service and the railroad was a major influence on the town of Monkton. In 1972 a hurricane destroyed enough of the roadbed to effectively halt all trains and the track has never been repaired. In the old railroad bed became the Northern Central Bike-Hike Trail a part of the Maryland State Park System.



and John T. Kaufman's house was on Manor Street (the large white painted brick house standing today on the south side of Monkton Road) ... we can assume that Manor Street was Monkton Road and York Avenue was the road north along the railroad tracks.

Main Street and Gunpowder Avenue are not as easy to solve. The dye mill was on Main Street ... that would be the present Mathews Road in front of the Bridge House, but where was Gunpowder Avenue with Wilson's Tavern on the corner ? We know that the road on the west side of the river ran much closer to the river itself than the present road, passing behind the existing white house on the north side of the road and behind the home of John Magers where it curved toward the present road to Hereford. It is still visible in the underbrush across from Piney Hill Road. Could this be Gunpowder Road and could the tavern been the building that appears in an old photograph of the bridge?



purchased from Annie and Ira Tipton. Methodist in the village had felt the need of a house of worship closer than Clynmalira or Wesley Chapel for several years previous to the building of the church. There was prayer or preaching service on many Sundays either in the passenger room of the station or in the parlor of the Miller Hotel, conducted by a preacher from the Shrewsbury, Pennsylvania circuit. The Sunday School was established probably even earlier, some say around 1860, in the old school house west of the river and then later in the home of Mrs. Thomas Kaufman in the village. For the past 110 years the church has played an active part in there life of the village. Samuel Miller and also the Kaufman, Parsons, Bacon, and Bosley families are buried in its cemetery.

Public schools in this area previous to 1850 were village oriented and their location and activities were often not reported by Baltimore County. Thus the old school house half way up the hill toward Hereford may have existed before 1861, but in that year it was listed in a Board of Education report as being of stone with the title vested in the trustees. The location was Monkton, it operated with 31 students and one teacher, Miss Maggie Scott. This was probably the school which closed when the new village school opened in 1873. Still standing, this newer school served the community until 1935 when consolidation took place and pupils were bused to Sparks. Since then it has been a Sunday School hall for the Methodist Church from 1935 - 1970, and a sanctuary for Isaiah Baptist Church.

Prior to 1850 there was a school on the road to St. James Church just west of of the Carroll Road intersection; and one at St. James itself in a little brick building near the church wall which had started as a private parish school in 1821. This was the forerunner of the present St. James Academy but by 1850 was being used as a public school.

Thus by 1880 the village that had started with a handful of artisans one hundred and forty years previously, consisted of two churches, a school, post office, railroad

Another house built before 1850 and indicated on the Sidney map of that date is the frame house still standing on the southwest side of Remare Road. This was the home of Samuel Bosley. Bosley and Lewis Parsons were among the men prominent in the early history of Monkton Methodist Episcopal Church as was Lewis Bacon, whose family built the stone house at the corner of Piney Hill Road and the road to Hereford before 1850.

On January 12, 1878 the new iron bridge across the Gunpowder was completed, according to a news item in the Baltimore County Union. It was designed and built by Charles A. McQueen at the Pennsylvania Bridge Works in New Brighton, Pennsylvania and was 125 feet long of wrought iron crux construction set on stone piers. All that is left in 1992 are the stone piers.... the bridge lasted almost 100 years and survived many floods before it was replaced in the late 1970's by a concrete structure upstream.

A telephone line made its appearance in 1903, a private venture of Royston Matthews which linked five locations: the station agent at Monkton, Royston; his brother, Harry; Dr. Ross Payne of Corbett; and James Sheppard on the Manor. Soon the Chesapeake and Potomac took over the private lines. Speaking of physicians, this was one service the village did not have until Dr. Elizabeth Sherrill opened her office in the 1960's era. Dr. T. Ross Payne and his father, Josiah Payne, had their office for a while in the village of Corbett. For a short time there was a dentist, Dr. George Little, who used a room in the hotel as an extension of his office in Hereford. Dr. Sherrill retired in 1981 and again there is no physician in the village.

Samuel Bosley, whose Willow Glen Farm took up the entire area west of the town within the bend of the river, was the owner of a second retail store in Monkton. An old photo taken in the 1890 era shows this building west of the railroad tracks with a sign proclaiming R. Nelson as the proprietor. It was more of Samuel Bosley's land that was sold to the railroad about this time for the erection of the present station, one

auto brought an end to the blacksmith and the livery stables, World War I took the young men from the band and the baseball team (one of them was killed in France and buried with military honors in the Methodist Cemetery.)

Monkton hotel had always housed travelers and vacationers. Salesmen called "drummers" stopped there when making the rounds of the country stores with their wholesale wares. Families came out from the city in the summer heat and rented rooms, enjoying the countryside and the river. The kitchen for the hotel once stood where the Post Office wing is now and the bar room was under the front of the building, reached by outside as well as indoor stairs. The late Edith Leight Lintz recalled her employment there as a cook before World War I.

Eventually the building became a general store with apartments on the second and third floors; in the 1960's even the store ceased to operate and the children no longer walked to town with a dime for an ice cream bar.

Monkton Road going west from Fruitful Valley had been lowered sometime in the 1920's, the original pitch of the hill down to the railroad can be seen by looking at the level in front of the old school and the side entrance of the parsonage on the main road ... these were level with the road prior to that time.

When the 1878 iron bridge was dismantled, it marked the end of the dogleg turn on the west side of the tracks. A new road cut through the remains of the mill race for Isaac Bull's mill, and the Bridge House and Matthews Road are all but isolated from the main road.

Monkton Mill on Charles Run, one of the two mills that helped give the town its name 200 years ago, continued to grind corn and feed until the end of World War II, having switched by then from water power to electric power. The mill as it stands today, an antique shop and dwelling, is probably the building for which Samuel Miller was assessed \$3,500 for a new mill in 1870. If the mill is built on the exact site of Jacob Bull's 1743 venture, then nothing is original except possibly a part of the

NOTES

1 At the time of the settlement of Charlotte Town the main road to York Pennsylvania, was the Old York Road in the vicinity of St. James Church with the exception of a portion which ran through the fields east of Markoe Road, long since abandoned. This was the main but not the only road to Pennsylvania. A road ran through Sparks and Hereford which became the York Turnpike in 1810 was also an 18th century route known in old deeds as "the middle road to York."

2. The present owners of the bridge house, which was part of the land passed from Issac Bull to Thomas Harris (in 1764) and then to Adam Hoopes, etc. found several years ago a large flat piece of stone with initials and date carved on the face. The stone had been in use as a step near the mailbox and the carving includes a clear T.H. and the date 1764.

3. Confusion as to the exact location of the Catholic Church, called St. Michael's, has been cleared lately with the information that when the church was torn down, the white frame house on the north west side of the road from Monkton to Hereford, was built on the same foundation using lumber from the church.

4. The location of the post office in Curtis' Store at the corner gave that location the name of "St. James Corner" which persisted until recently. Mrs. Grover Hutchins states that William Hutchins of My Lady's Manor received his mail at that store in the 1888-1889 era when he was running a canning factory whose address was "St. James, Baltimore County, Maryland."

5 For some reason, this sale of an entire village attracted a large amount of interest as reported in the newspapers. It was claimed that this was the first time an entire village had been put on the block. In 1967, the 50th anniversary of the sale, the news was repeated in the "Fifty years Ago" column in the magazine section. In truth the "entire" village was not sold, many of the homes were not owned by Mr. Miller and not included in the sale at all.

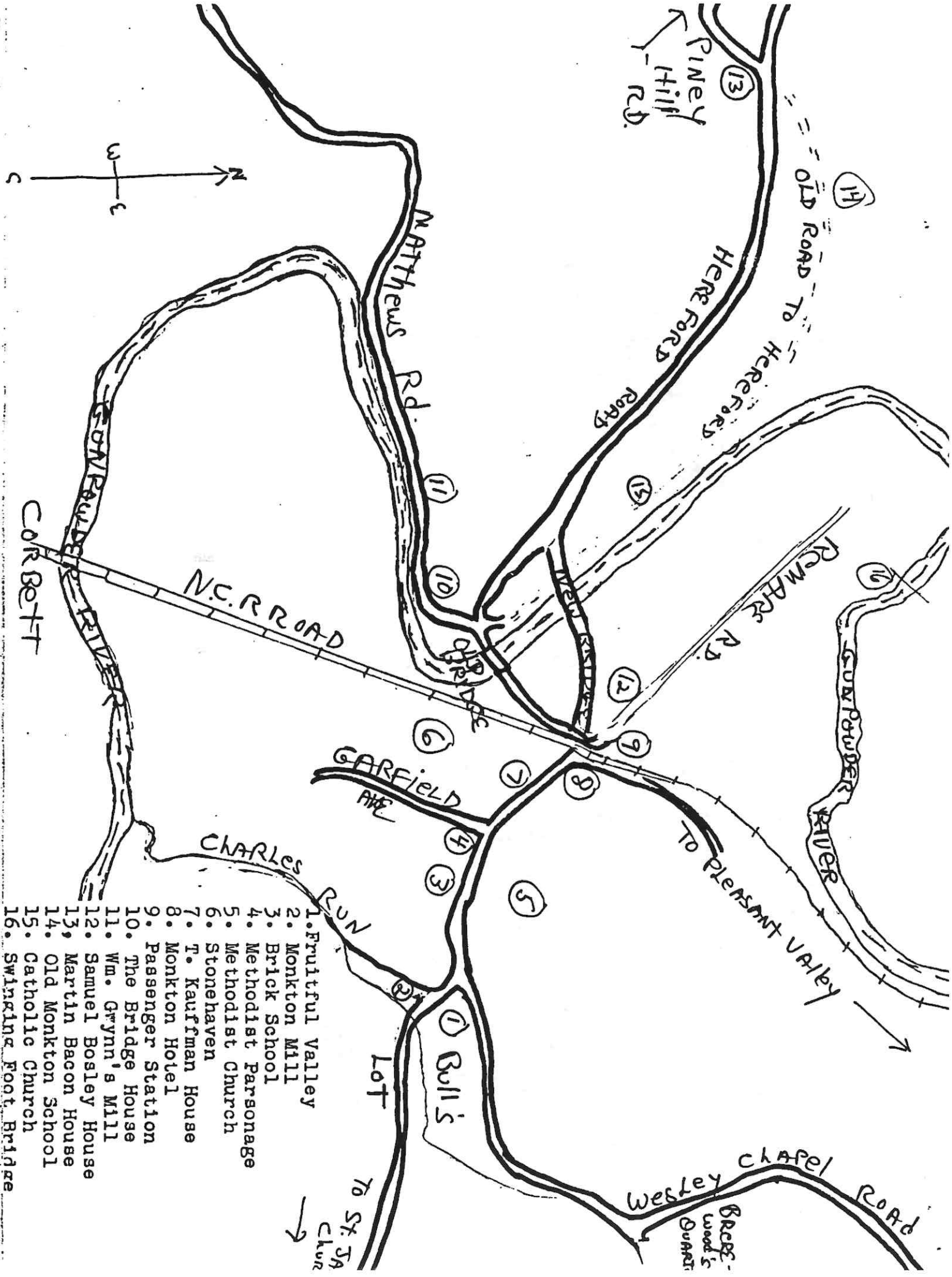
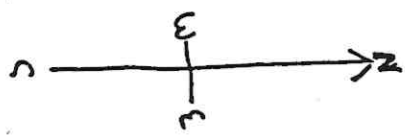
6 In the fall of 1982 the post office moved its operation to a shopping center in the town of Hereford.

7 The Monkton Railroad Station, abandoned and neglected for many years, was carefully and accurately restored in the summer and fall of 1989. On November 11, 1989 it was dedicated to serve as a rest stop, museum and ranger's station for the Northern Central Bike-Hike Trail. The railroad right-of-way from Cockeysville to the Maryland Pennsylvania line was acquired by the State of Maryland in 1980. By December 1984 the first 7 1/2 miles of track bed had been converted to a path for hikers, bicyclists and horse back riders, with a temporary terminus at Monkton. Here a

The following verses are from a poem about the Northern Central Railroad written by Peter B. Fahey of Cleveland, Ohio in 1911. The poem was published in the Baltimore Sun in December of that year as part of the "Maryland Musings By the Bentztown Bard."

Your car runs on without a stop--perhaps a moment late--
You rumble past old Corbett, near the bridge called twenty-eight.
The bell cord now is seen to jerk, a "toot toot " sound floats out,
And--"Monkton is the next train stop" -- you'll hear the brakeman shout.
Ah, Monkton, you may not seem much to those who pass your way,
But still you are the little town that gave me light of day.
My footprints are upon your roads, where as a boy I trod--
I love the inside of your school, where oft I felt the rod.
Upon the mound close by the church my many friends now rest;
May heavens guiding hand be good and place them with the blest.

"Judge Holmes' , north of town, where Matticks house once stood,
And Scott's deserted cottage is now hidden by the wood.
"My Lady's Manor" to the east, lies several miles away,
The Bacons, Parsons, and Re-mars, Alas, but where are they ?
And "Uncle Sam" that dear old soul, who was our patron saint
(The man who sold us everything from threshers down to paint)
Miss Lou Mac Bride, who taught the school---Winstanley ant the store;
John Miller and good Thomas Bond are names we hear no more.
The old town does not seem the same---new faces to and fro---
It's mighty changed from that I knew some 20 years ago.
But still the fields are just as green, the ridges are as high,
The glist'ning stream floats just as clear as in the days gone by.



1. Fruitful Valley
2. Monkton Mill
3. Brick School
4. Methodist Parsonage
5. Methodist Church
6. Stonehaven
7. T. Kaufman House
8. Monkton Hotel
9. Passenger Station
10. The Bridge House
11. Wm. Gwynn's Mill
12. Samuel Bosley House
13. Martin Bacon House
14. Old Monkton School
15. Catholic Church
16. Swinkins Foot Bridge

