

18th Century Timeline

of the

Bostwick House



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Timeline - Part I

Christopher Lowndes and the Building of Bostwick: 1738-1760

July 20, 1738 Christopher Lowndes was born in Cheshire, England around 1713. By July of 1738, he was working in Maryland for Henry & Edward Trafford. The Traffords were Liverpool-based slave importers and merchants who had, a few years earlier, established a storehouse in Beall Town, which was located one-half mile upstream from the future site of Bladensburg. Henry and Edward Trafford were both prominent figures in Liverpool, and each served a term as the mayor of that city during the 1740's.

Also during 1738, Christopher Lowndes led an effort to have a new road constructed in Prince George's County, and to have the Eastern Branch of the Potomac cleared after heavy flooding choked the river with debris.¹

Aug. 22, 1738 A deed entered on this date marks Christopher Lowndes' first recorded land purchase in Prince George's County. Lowndes purchased the lot, located "in the fork of y^e Eastern branch of Potomack river " from "William Beall the Elder...planter...on behalf of himself and Henry & Edward Trafford Merchants in Liverpool." The one acre lot sold for £22.²

Sept. 28, 1739 This deed records Lowndes' first purchase of slaves in Maryland, "in Consideration of the Sum of Forty one pounds Seaven Shillings & Seaven pence Sterling money." Two individuals, "one named Dick...the other a girll named Cloe" were purchased from William Wallace and James Freeman.³

February 1742 Twenty-four men, Christopher Lowndes among them, are impaneled at Garrison's Landing to lay out sixty, one-acre lots, designated for the future town of Bladensburg. The Bladensburg Record Book, housed at the Maryland State Archives, provides the following:

"Cap^t Christopher Lowndes to furnish 51 stones 2 ½ feet long at least six Inches square in order to fix and establish the bounds of the lots of the said Town." ⁴

Sept. 1742 The Maryland General Assembly passed an act establishing the town of Bladensburg, "on the South Side of the Eastern Branch of Patowmack River, in Prince George's County, near a Place called Garrison-Landing."⁵

March 5, 1743 On this date, the sixty Bladensburg town lots were auctioned off. Each property owner was required, within eighteen months, to construct a minimum four-hundred square foot structure, with a brick or stone chimney. The Market Master's House, built by Christopher Lowndes on Lot 38, is the last surviving example of the sort of building that qualified under these minimum size restrictions.⁶

May 11, 1744 As the boundaries of Fredrick County were being considered, Christopher Lowndes led the citizens of Bladensburg in a petition in the Upper House of Maryland, which opposed any possible division of Prince George's County. The "County of Prince George's may not be divided at the Eastern Branch of Patowmack nor at Seneca," according to the petition.⁷

Sept. 27, 1745 This date marked the first mention of Christopher Lowndes in the *Maryland Gazette*, in which he advertised for lost or stolen horses.

Stolen or Strayed out of the Subscriber's Pasture near Bladensburg, two large Bay Horses, both natural Pacers: One of them is branded on the near Shoulder R P, has a blaze Face, and Saddle Marks; the other has a very clumsy Walk, afraid of having his Ears touch'd, his Brand (if any) not remembered; he is shod before, and the other Horse had four Shoes on. Whoever secures the said Horses, and brings them or either of them to the Owner, shall have Twenty Shillings each; and if the Offender or Offenders can be brought to Justice, and convicted thereof, shall have Thirty Shillings more for each Offender; It is supposed that those Persons have with them a Gun or two, a small Remnant of Broad Cloth, and a Remnant of narrow Persian, which were stolen out of the Subscriber's Store the preceding Night.

CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES.

The frequency of ads placed by Lowndes for runaway horses, including a possible reference to an Arabian horse, suggest that he engaged in horseracing, and possibly fox hunting, both popular sports throughout the Chesapeake. Lowndes' future brother-in-law, Benjamin Tasker Jr., was a famous thoroughbred horse racer and breeder. Prince

George's County in the mid eighteenth-century has been referred to as "the cradle of American thoroughbred racing."⁸

Nov. 8, 1745 Another notice posted by Lowndes, this time regarding a runaway servant, appeared in the *Maryland Gazette* for three consecutive weeks.

Run away from the Subscriber, living at Bladensburg in Prince George's County, the 28th of October last, a Servant Man name John Bateman, by trade a Stone Mason or Bricklayer, born in Cheshire, speaks broad English, and is very much addicted to Drinking. He had on when he went away a snuff colour'd Broad cloth Coat, a blue Waist-coat, with white Metal Buttons, and Leather Breeches of an Olive Colour, his Head lately close shaved, and neither Cap nor Wig with him. Whoever brings the said Servant to the Subscriber, shall have Forty Shillings more than the Law allows, paid by

CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES.⁹

This servant was very likely involved in the construction of Bostwick House. The house's architectural details, particularly the original pilasters which flanked the front entrance, resembled those found on Overton, a Lowndes family home in Cheshire, England. The similar stonework that once adorned the front façade of Bostwick may have been the handiwork of a native Cheshire stone mason - such as John Bateman.

Dec. 31, 1745 Christopher Lowndes advertised for information leading to contact with a woman from Liverpool in the *Md. Gazette*, which ran for four weeks.

Whereas Mary Tarbuck (who some Years since came from Liverpool, and landed on the Maryland Side of Potomack River,) has been enquired after, but no Account can as yet be given of her. This is therefore to give Notice, that if the said Mary Tarbuck can be found, and will be Letter, or personal Appearance, give satisfactory Proof that she is the Woman above-mentioned, she may be informed of something to her Advantage, by Christopher Lowndes.¹⁰

This and other newspaper ads containing references to Liverpool point to the connections – both family and business – that Lowndes had with that port.

Feb. 16, 1746 In a deed recorded on this date, "Christopher Lowndes & Co^y" purchases "One Negro Man named Jemmy One Scotch Servant Man who has yet four years and upwards of his term to serve named Donald McKenzy ten head of Cattle Six of them now with Calfe two feather beds and furniture two Sorrel horses One plow with all Necessaries there to belonging and fifty hogs" for "fifteen Pounds Sterling and nine thousand Eight hundred Seventy Eight and half Pounds of good sound Merchantable Tobacco" from Humphrey Hasledine, "planter."¹¹

- June 5, 1746** The Town Commissioners reported the completion of Bostwick House. Also on this date, Lowndes purchased Lot 46, which is today a terraced garden at Bostwick. Of the original sixty town lots, only eighteen were improved as required. Lot 37 was reserved for the town market, and the remaining lots were seized by the Commissioners and resold.¹²
- Aug. 28, 1746** In a deed recorded on this date, Christopher Lowndes purchased Lot 53, described as “lying and being in y^e Town of Bladensburg in y^e County afs^d on the South Side of y^e Lott where the said Chris^r Lowndes’s new dwelling house standeth and adjoining to the said Lott” from “Nehemiah Ogden of Prince George’s County Blacksmith,” for “One Pound ten Shillings gold and silver Currency.”¹³
- 1747** During 1747, Bladensburg was made an official tobacco inspection station by an Act of the Maryland General Assembly.¹⁴
- Apr. 18, 1747** Christopher Lowndes & Co. purchased a large shipment of hardwood, recorded in a deed on this date. The seller, J. Humphrey Hasledine, a “Prince George’s County Planter” received £15 and “Nine thousand Eight Hundred seventy & Eight & a half pounds of good Tobacco” from Christopher Lowndes for “four Thousand Foot of Walnut and Cherry Tree plank.”¹⁵
- May 14, 1747** On this date, Christopher Lowndes married Elizabeth Tasker, daughter of Benjamin Tasker, who was the Provincial Governor of Maryland from 1752-1753, Mayor of Annapolis numerous times, and one of the founders of the Baltimore Ironworks Company. Elizabeth’s mother was Ann Bladen, the sister of Thomas Bladen, Proprietary Governor of Maryland from 1742-1747. Through his marriage to Elizabeth Tasker, Christopher Lowndes became a brother-in-law to three of the wealthiest men of this era. Elizabeth Tasker’s sisters were married to Robert Carter of Nomini Hall (served for more than a decade on the governor's council), Daniel Dulaney (lawyer of Annapolis, Maryland, and served many years as commissioner general, secretary of state, attorney general, and councilor of Maryland before the Revolution), and Samuel Ogle (served numerous terms as Provincial Governor of Maryland).¹⁶
- May 19, 1747** Christopher Lowndes’s wedding to Elizabeth Tasker was announced in the *Maryland Gazette*.
- Mar. 29, 1748** In a deed recorded on this date, Christopher Lowndes purchased Lot 60, which adjoined the public landing in Bladensburg, for £16.¹⁷
- June 15, 1748** Daughter Anne Margaret Lowndes was born.¹⁸
- Sept. 14, 1748** Another Runaway ad, concerning an Irish convict servant, ran for two weeks in the *Maryland Gazette*.

Ran away from the Subscriber, on the 6th of the Instant September, an Irish Convict Servant Man, named Thomas Butler, about 30 Years old, middle-siz'd, of a dark Complexion, much pitted with the Small-Pox, and pretends to know the Business of a Plaisterer: He had on when he went away an old Castor Hat, a short black Wig, a blue Waist-coat, a Check Shirt, and grey cloth Breeches. He may probably attempt to pass for a Sailor, and believe he was transported before, and liv'd on Rapahannock, near Fredricksburg. He is an impudent Fellow, and swears much: His Ankles are mark'd with the Irons he has worn, and have not long been cured.

Whoever will bring the said Fellow to his Master at Bladensburg, shall have Forty Shillings more than the Law allows.

CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES.¹⁹

Feb. 1, 1749 Lowndes advertised, for six weeks, a large quantity of medicines in the *Maryland Gazette*.

Just Imported.

And to be Sold by the Subscriber, at Bladensburg, for Bills of Exchange, Paper Money, or Tobacco, a Box of Medicines, containing upwards of One Hundred and Fifty Articles.

CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES.²⁰

Dec. 12, 1749 Christopher Lowndes & Co. purchased a 112 acre tract of land in Prince George's County called "Bealls Plain" from John Ferguson for "One thousand Pounds of Crop Tobacco and one Hundred Barrells of Indian Corn." Lowndes & Co. agreed to "Two yearly Payments of Viz. Five Hundred Pounds of Tobacco and Fifty Barrels of Indian Corn at or upon the Tenth day of January in the Year one Thousand seven hundred & Fifty One" and an equal payment the following January 10, 1752.²¹

Dec. 30, 1749 Christopher Lowndes' son Benjamin was born.²²

Feb. 21, 1750 Lowndes placed an advertisement for a runaway Irish servant in the *Maryland Gazette*.

Bladensburg, February 19, 1750

Ran away from the Subscriber's Cart, on the 17th Instant, about 8 Miles from Annapolis, as the said Cart was returning from thence to Bladensburg, an Irish Servant Man, named Michael Wallace, 17 Years of Age, pretty tall and slender, of a pale Complexion, and has been about 4 Years in the Country: He had on two dyed Cotton Jackets, a Felt Hat, a Wig, Cotton Breeches, Woolen Stockings, Country-made Shoes, and a brown Linnen Shirt. Whoever takes up the said Servant, and brings him to the Subscriber in Bladensburg aforesaid, shall have Twenty Shillings more than the Law allows; and if taken out of the Province, Two Pistoles, and reasonable

Charges. He may probably pretend to be a Smith, as he has work'd at that Business some Time.

CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES.²³

Mar. 21, 1750 A notice appeared in the *Maryland Gazette*, and stated that the aforementioned runaway servant was found dead.

One Michael Wallace, a Servant Lad, who was advertised about a Month ago, as run away from a Cart which was driving from hence to Bladensburg, was found dead near the Head of South River, after the melting away of the last great Snow, in which it is supposed he lost himself and perish'd.²⁴

Sept. 4, 1750 Lowndes placed another advertisement in the *Maryland Gazette* for an Irish runaway convict. The advertisement ran for five weeks.

Ran away from the Subscriber at Bladensburg, a Convict Servant Man, named Thomas Butler, born in Ireland, he has been in the Country about three Years, and lately employ'd as a Carter, tho' he may pretend to be a Bricklayer or Plaisterer; he was in Rappahannock some Years ago as a Sailor; he is middle siz'd, dark Complexion, and his Face very much pitted with the Small Pox; he had on when he went away, a Linnen Coat or Frock, Plaid Waistcoat, a Cotton Jacket dyed, brown Linnen Shirts, Linnen Breeches, dark Worsted Stockings, Country-made Shoes, Felt Hat, and a Wig; he is very much given to Swearing and Drinking, his Legs are sore or very lately cured, but are red on his Shin Bones.

Whoever takes up the said Servant, and brings him to his Master, in Prince George's County in Maryland, shall have one Pistole Reward, if taken at a greater Distance than Fifty Miles Two Pistoles, and Twenty Shillings Currency if taken in Maryland, besides what the Law allows, paid by

CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES.

N.B. He has a Cutlass with him, and it is supposed he will endeavour to get on board some Man of War.²⁵

May 1751 A law passed by the Maryland General Assembly entitled "[An Act for the more effectual Punishment of Negroes and other Slaves, and for taking away the Benefit of Clergy from certain Offenders: And A Supplementary Act to an Act Entitled, An Act to prevent the tumultuous Meeting and other Irregularities of Negroes and other Slaves, and directing the Manner of trying Slaves,](#)" spelled out harsh penalties for undesirable slave conduct. Free persons found guilty of "enticing" a slave to run away would be liable for the full value of the slave. If unable to pay, they would be jailed for a year. Indentured servants who aided runaway slaves were similarly held financially liable, or were required to provide four additional years of service upon completion of their indenture.

Oct. 19, 1751 Christopher Lowndes' second son, Francis Lowndes, was born on this date.²⁶

May 28, 1752 Slaves imported by Christopher Lowndes and Benjamin Tasker, Jr. were advertised in the *Maryland Gazette*.

JUST IMPORTED,

In the ELIJAH, *Capt. James Lowe, directly from the Coast of AFRICA*,
A Parcel of healthy SLAVES, consisting of Men, Women, and Children, and
will be disposed of on board the said Vessel in *Severn River*, on Thursday the
4th Day of *June* next, for Sterling Money, Bills of Exchange, Gold, or Paper
Currency.

*Benjamin Tasker, junior,
Christopher Lowndes.*²⁷

1753 Christopher Lowndes was appointed County Court Justice, and served in that position for 32 years, until his death in 1785.²⁸

By the mid-1750s, lawmakers made attempts to curtail the ability of servants, slaves, and debtors to flee the colony via boats and ships, and enacted "[An Act to prevent masters of ships and vessels from clandestinely carrying servants and slaves, or persons indebted, out of this province](#)", requiring captains of ships to verify the status of all passengers aboard their vessels. Penalties could be levied for the presence of fugitive stowaways.

Feb. 20, 1753 Benedict and Elizabeth Calvert of Annapolis sold Christopher Lowndes a tract of land in Prince George's County called Charles and Rebecca, consisting of 742 acres "near the head of the Eastern Branch of Potomack," for £207. Bladensburg was founded on part of this tract, and Riversdale was built on the western half of Charles and Rebecca. Christopher Lowndes later renamed a portion of the tract "Columbia." Here is an 1886 USGS topographic map showing the boundaries of "Columbia."²⁹

July 20, 1753 Christopher Lowndes' third son, Samuel Lowndes, was born on this date.³⁰

Aug. 16, 1753 A runaway ad appeared in the *Maryland Gazette* for three servants – a bricklayer, a miller, and a rope maker – who made their escape on horses stolen from Christopher Lowndes.

Bladensburg, August 13, 1753

Ran away Yesterday Morning, from the Subscriber, the three following
Servants, viz.

Bartholomew Combs, born near Piscataway, in Prince George's County,
by Trade a Bricklayer, or Stone Mason, about 30 Years old, is lusty, and of a
fresh Complexion, about 5 feet high, is very talkative, and behaves very
pertly. His Apparel uncertain, except an Osnabrigs Shirt, a Cap, and
Country-made Shoes.

Francis Illett, an Englishman, aged about 22, has a clumsy Way of Behaviour, stoops very much in his Shoulders, about 5 Feet and a half high, is lately come into the Country, speaks bad English, and will pass for a Farmer, or Miller.

Peter Corbett, an Englishman, aged 25, of a low Stature, wore his own Hair, his Face is round, and is very much Pock-fretten, of a dark Complexion, has a slow Way of speaking, by Trade a Rope-maker. The Apparel of the two last is uncertain also, except that they have a black Waistcoat, Osnabrigs Shirts, and Trowsers.

They took with them three Saddles, three Bridles, and three Horses; one small Dark Brown Horse, with a bob Tail, branded C L on the near Buttock, and trots, and gallops; one other small Black Horse, with a white Face, a bob Tail, and his near hind Foot white; and a Brown Horse, with a short Tail, and his Foretop and mane cut; the two last are Draught Horses, and the Brands of them unknown.

Whoever takes up the said Servants, and brings them to the Subscriber, at Bladensburg, shall have Twenty Shillings for each, besides what the Law allows; and if taken at a considerable Distance an Allowance will be made in Proportion: If Combs is taken in Frederick County, it is desired, he may be put into the Sheriff's Custody.

CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES.³¹

Sept. 13, 1753 The *Maryland Gazette* advertised a horse race at Bladensburg with a prize of £15.³²

April 7, 1755 Christopher Lowndes' second daughter, Elizabeth, was born on this date.³³

April, 1755 Four indentured servants, working in Christopher Lowndes' shipyard, were recruited by Gen. Edward Braddock's forces for the French and Indian War. A month later, Governor Sharpe wrote a letter to Braddock, requesting the return of the bonded laborers.³⁴

D^r. Gen^l

As I have been most earnestly solicited & importuned on my Return home thro this place by one M^r Lowndes (a person whose Behaviour & Conduct on all Occasions make me very desirous of serving him) to apply to your Excellency & favourably represent his Case I beg leave to trouble you on his Acco^t & beg the Discharge of four Servants of his that were enlisted by Lieut Brereton just as he was leaving Rock Creek. The petitioner has a Ship on the Stocks which these 4 Servants were employed in building & fitting for Sea others of the same Trade cannot be procured, whereby the Vessel must remain unfinished & the Owner receive a prodigious Detriment unless by my Intercession he can be favourably heard by your Excellency & procure the Servant's Discharge. I have ventured to give him hopes of succeeding if he can procure as many young & unexceptionable persons to serve & enlist

in their Stead this he is endeavouring to do & will I believe be able to accomplish within four or five Days when I will take Care to accomplish within four or five Days when I will take Care to have them marched to Wills-Creek & shall think myself much obliged if your Excellency will order them to be accepted & the Servants dismissed, or if you please to order them to be discharged immediately which will be doing a greater Kindness. I will take on myself to replace them with an equal number of able men as soon as I can possibly procure & send them up. I have acquainted Cap^t Orme with the Servants names one of whom is a Convict & as your Excellency intimated an unwillingness to have any Convict Servants at all enlisted into the Regiments I think myself obliged to advise you that M^r Brereton has also recruited four other Convicts at this place named James Tobin, Cornelius newhouse, Nich^l Stone & W^m Beadle, which I believe their former Masters would be glad to recover at the Expence of sending Recruits in their Stead to Wills Creek if you should be pleased to order them to be left there when the Troops march. Col^o Cresap who acts as a Magistrate in this province waits on you with this to whom I have desired Capt Orme to communicate your Answer if y^e Excellency should be inclined to grant my Request I hope he will have the Servants delivered to him that they may be carefully sent hither.

With the greatest Respect & most fervent wishes

for your success I am Y^r Excellencys.

June 26, 1755 Lowndes advertised products produced at his ropewalk in the *Maryland Gazette*. During the American Revolution, Lowndes supplied the American Navy with cordage manufactured at this ropewalk, which was located just north of Bostwick.

To be Sold by the Subscriber, at his Rope-Walk in

BLADENSBURG,

All Sorts of Cables, standing and running Rigging of every Sort and Size; also Spun-Yarn, Marline, Housing, Amber-Line, deep Sea-Lines, Log-Lines, Lead-Lines, and any Kind of Rope that can be made of Hemp; likewise Sail-Twine, Whipping-Twine, Seine-Twine, Drum-Lines, &c. Any Person wanting a Quantity, not under Five Ton, shall have it delivered at their Landing on this Bay, at the same Price it sells at the Walk; and all Orders shall be strictly observed, both as to Size and Length.

Christopher Lowndes³⁵

July 19, 1756 In a deed recorded on this date, Christopher Lowndes sold a ship, built at his shipyard, to "Colonel Benjamin Tasker of the City of Annapolis" for £550. The ship is described as

“a Certain Vessel or Ship called The Hawk... of One hundred & thirty Tunn or thereabouts now lying... in the Eastern Branch in Prince George’s County” ³⁶

Aug. 12, 1756 Lowndes placed a help wanted advertisement in the *Maryland Gazette* for able-bodied seamen to man *The Hawke*, which he had recently sold to Benjamin Tasker. Lowndes also advertised a public house for rent in Frederick.

To be LET, at FREDERICK-TOWN, by the Year, or for a Term, and to be Enter’d upon the Beginning of next March,

A VERY GOOD PUBLIC-HOUSE, with all necessary Out Buildings, situated in the Middle of Town, now in the Occupation of Mr. William Beall. Any Person inclined to Rent the said House, may know the Conditions, by applying to Mr. Christopher Edelen on the Premises, or from

CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES.³⁷

1757 The Lowndes’ third daughter, Rebecca, was born in this year. Rebecca later married Benjamin Stoddert, the future first Secretary of the Navy under John Adams.³⁸

Mar. 21, 1757 During the French and Indian War, the English High Court of Admiralty issued a Letter of Marque to Christopher Lowndes, Arthur and Benjamin Heywood, George Mort, Thomas Falkner and Captain Walker, merchants of Liverpool, and owners of the ship *Middleton*. The ship was armed with ten carriage and two swivel guns, and the letter authorized the ship to capture and claim a prize for enemy French vessels.³⁹

May 17, 1759 According to a notice published in the *Maryland Gazette*, a smallpox outbreak forced Edward Trafford & Sons to move their store to Eastern Branch Ferry.

Piscataway, May 14, 1759.

WHEREAS the Small-Pox is now very rife in *Bladensburg*, and in all Probability will be a great Detriment to Trade in that Town, on Account of the Danger that People would be under in coming there to dispose of their Tobaccos, or deal with the Factors for Goods. In order to prevent any Danger from that Distemper, and to make it more satisfactory for those that have Tobaccos to lay out, the Subscriber hereby gives Public Notice, that the Store belonging to Edward Trafford, Esq. and Sons, of *Liverpool*, and at present under Management of Mr. Richard Whittle, is now removed from *Bladensburg* to Mr. Magness’s House, opposite the Widow Cramphin’s, at the Eastern Branch Ferry . . .

GEORGE BOWDON.⁴⁰

1760 The Lowndes’ fourth daughter, Harriott, was born in 1760.⁴¹

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- ¹ John Parsons Earwaker, *The history of the ancient parish of Sandbach, co. Chester: Including the two chapelries of Holmes chapel and Goostry* (London: Hansard Publishing Union, 1890), 123.; Robert William Barnes, *British Roots of Maryland Families* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1999), 1:300.; Christopher Johnston, "Lowndes Family," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 2, September 1907.; Catherine Wright, *Port O'Bladensburg: A Brief History of a 1742 Town* (Bladensburg, MD: Craftsman Press, 1977), 35.; John M. Walton, *A Historical Chronology of the Town of Bladensburg*, compiled by the history division of the Maryland-National Capital Parks and Planning Commission, Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 4885.; Liverpool Archives, available at <http://www.liverpool.gov.uk/search/> (see entries for Christopher Lowndes & Co. and Edward Lowndes & Co.)
- ² Prince George's County Land Records, Liber T, Folio 633.
- ³ Prince George's County Land Records, Liber Y, Folio 94.
- ⁴ *Record Book of the Town of Bladensburg, 1742-1787*, Susanna Kyner Cristofane/Bostwick Collection, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 4885, 1-18.
- ⁵ Bacon's *Laws of Maryland* (1765), vol. 75 of the *Archives of Maryland* series (2000), Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, 451.
- ⁶ *Record Book of the Town of Bladensburg, 1742-1787*. (Also see the National Register nomination for the Market Master's House at http://www.heritage.umd.edu/chrsweb/ATHA/port_Towns_nominations.htm)
- ⁷ *Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly, 1740-1744*, vol. 42 of the *Archives of Maryland* series (2000), Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, 459.
- ⁸ *Maryland Gazette*, September 27, 1745, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.; "Benjamin Tasker, Jr. (1720/21-1760)," in *Archives of Maryland* (Biographical Series), Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 3520-1228.; Alan Virta, *Prince George's County: A History* (Annapolis: Maryland-National Capital Parks and Planning Commission, 1995), 7.
- ⁹ *Maryland Gazette*, November 8, 1745, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ¹⁰ *Maryland Gazette*, December 31, 1745, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ¹¹ Prince George's County Land Records, Liber EE, Folio 141.
- ¹² *Port O' Bladensburg*, 37.; *A Historical Chronology of the Town of Bladensburg*.
- ¹³ Prince Georges County Land Records, Liber BB, Folio 80.
- ¹⁴ *Prince George's County: A History*, 7.
- ¹⁵ Prince George's County Land Records, Liber EE, Folio 201.
- ¹⁶ See Register of St. Ann's Parish, Annapolis. For Benjamin Tasker's biography, see MSA SC 3520-1227. See also Louis Morton, *Robert Carter at Nomini Hall: A Virginia Tobacco Planter of the 18th Century* (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1941).
- ¹⁷ Prince Georges County Land Records, Liber BB, Folio 605.
- ¹⁸ Johnston, "Lowndes Family." See also Piscataway Parish Records.
- ¹⁹ *Maryland Gazette*, September 14, 1748, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ²⁰ *Maryland Gazette*, February 1, 1749, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ²¹ Prince Georges County Land Records, Liber PP, Folio 93.
- ²² Johnston, "Lowndes Family." See also Piscataway Parish Records.
- ²³ *Maryland Gazette*, February 21, 1750, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ²⁴ *Maryland Gazette*, March 21, 1750, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ²⁵ *Maryland Gazette*, September 4, 1750, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ Elihu Samuel Riley, *"The Ancient City": A History of Annapolis, in Maryland, 1649-1887* (Annapolis: Record Printing Office, 1887), 118.
- ²⁸ Henry C. Peden, *Revolutionary Patriots of Prince George's County, Maryland, 1775-1783* (Westminster, MD: Family Line Publications, 1997), 194.
- ²⁹ *Provincial Court Land Records, 1749-1756*, vol. 701 of the *Archives of Maryland* series (2005), Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, 334-36.
- ³⁰ Johnston, "Lowndes Family." See also Piscataway Parish Records.
- ³¹ *Maryland Gazette*, August 16, 1753, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ³² *A Historical Chronology of the Town of Bladensburg*.

³³ Johnston, "Lowndes Family." See also Piscataway Parish Records.

³⁴ Aubrey C. Land, *The Dulanys of Maryland: a biographical study of Daniel Dulany, the Elder (1685-1753) and Daniel Dulany, the Younger (1722-1797)*(Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), 227.; Sharpe to Braddock, May 7, 1755, in *Correspondence of Governor Horatio Sharpe, 1753-1757*, vol. 006 of the *Archives of Maryland* series (1888), Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, 204.

³⁵ *Maryland Gazette*, June 26, 1755, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.

³⁶ Prince George's County Land Records, Liber NN, Folio 474-75.

³⁷ *Maryland Gazette*, August 12, 1756, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.

³⁸ Johnston, "Lowndes Family." See also Piscataway Parish Records.

³⁹ The National Archives, United Kingdom, *High Court of Admiralty: Prize Court: Registers of Declarations for Letters of Marque*, HCA 26/7/67, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>.

⁴⁰ *Maryland Gazette*, May 17, 1759, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.

⁴¹ Johnston, "Lowndes Family." See also Piscataway Parish Records.



William Marsh, *Great Western*, 1852, Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Timeline – Part II

Prosperity and Revolution: 1760 – 1775

Sept. 11, 1760 The Bladensburg Commissioners posted a notice in the *Maryland Gazette* which informed the public that all vacant lots in town would be auctioned on September 23.¹

Sept. 23, 1760 Lowndes purchased Lot 38 and by 1765, built what became known as the Market Master's House, possibly using ship ballast for its construction. The lot adjoined the public market in Bladensburg, on which the County tobacco inspection facility was built in 1784. The National Register Nomination Form for the Market Master's House states that there is no evidence that the house served as a tobacco inspection facility prior to 1784. In 1798, according to the Federal Direct Tax, the Market Master's House was owned by Benjamin Lowndes, Christopher's eldest son, making this possibly the location for his store (described in Benjamin Lowndes's obituary notice in 1798). The house was also very likely the store that Christopher Lowndes operated before him, mentioned in the 1785 Inventory taken after Christopher's death.²

Oct. 17, 1760 Elizabeth Lowndes's brother, Benjamin Tasker Jr., died on this date, and was buried at St. Anne's Churchyard in Annapolis. From *Belair*, his 2,177 acre plantation in Prince George's County, he imported cattle, and he partnered with Christopher Lowndes in the

importation of slaves. Tasker was very active in thoroughbred racing, and he trained and raced *Selima* (1752), an English mare that reportedly never lost a race. At the time of Tasker's death, he was Deputy Secretary of Maryland, and had served as an Alderman (1753-55, 1757, 1759, 1760) and as the Mayor of Annapolis (1754-55). In his will written two weeks before his death, he directed his father to sell his property and divide the proceeds in thirds for his three sisters, Ann Ogle (widow), Frances Carter (wife of Robert Carter), and Elizabeth Lowndes. The sisters each received £2,500.³

Feb. 4, 1762 A lottery was advertised in the *Maryland Gazette*, the proceeds to be used "for removing several shoals, in the eastern branch of the Patowmack, from the wharf at Blandsburgh downwards, and from thence to the bridge upwards, and for enlarging the wharf. . . it's hoped this Scheme for raising the Sum wanted, will meet with Encouragement from both the Merchant and Planter."⁴

Feb. 18, 1762 An announcement concerning news for an indentured servant appeared in the *Maryland Gazette*, and ran for five weeks.

WHEREAS Joshua Atherton, late of the County of Lancashire, in Great-Britain, came into this Province under Indenture, and cannot be heard of: These are to acquaint him, that by Application to either of the Subscribers, or at the Printing-Office, he will hear of something greatly to his advantage.

STEAD LOW,
CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES,
BENJAMIN YOUNG.⁵

Aug. 5, 1762 Christopher Lowndes advertised a ship in the *Maryland Gazette*. The advertisement ran for three weeks.

To be sold, now upon the stocks at Bladensburg, and will be launched sometime in this month, August, a vessel of 56 feet keel, 23 ½ feet beam, 9 feet 4 inches clear between the decks, 8 inches dead rise, she will draw but very little water, and take the ground very early, she is calculated for stowing tobacco, and it is believed she will carry 330 hogshead. She will be fitted with sails, rigging, anchors and cables. He will likewise make all kinds of running rigging and cables, and will, on a short notice, supply whole sets.

CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES.⁶

Feb. 10, 1763 The Treaty of Paris ended the French and Indian War.

Dec. 25, 1763 Lowndes' fourth son, Richard Tasker Lowndes, was born on this date.⁷

- April 5, 1764** British Parliament passes the Revenue Act (Sugar Act) that imposes import duties on foreign cloth, sugar, indigo, and coffee brought into the colonies.
- April 5, 1764** An advertisement for sailors appeared on this date in the *Maryland Gazette*, and ran for three weeks.⁸
- Sept. 13, 1764** A runaway slave advertisement appeared in the *Maryland Gazette* on this date, and ran for two weeks.

Ran away from the Subscriber at *Bladensburg*; on the first on this Instant *September*, a Negro Man named *Joe*, about 35 Years old, of a low Stature, and has a very wide Walk. His breeches are red; but the other Parts of his Dress is not certainly known. He is by Trade a Ship Carpenter or Caulker, and when he lived with some Masters, he was allowed to look for Work in different Rivers. Whoever will bring him to his Master, shall have Twenty Shillings more than the law allows. All Masters of Vessels and Others are desired not to employ or entertain him. He is very artful, and probably may endeavour to pass as a Freeman. Should he be brought any considerable Distance, Satisfaction will be made in Proportion. It will be necessary to tie him securely.

CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES⁹

- Dec. 17, 1764** Christopher Lowndes leased a 180 acre plantation, known as Buck Lodge, to a Prince George's County planter in exchange for a yearly rent to be paid in tobacco.¹⁰
- 1765** The Lowndes' fifth son, Charles, was born in this year.¹¹
- Mar. 22, 1765** The British Parliament passed the Stamp Act, which required that stamps be affixed to newspapers, pamphlets, documents, playing cards, licenses, and other documents.
- May 15, 1765** The Quartering Act is passed, which required that the colonies provide food and lodging for British soldiers.
- Feb. 16, 1766** Governor Sharpe wrote to Christopher Lowndes on this date regarding a shipment of stamped paper, required under the hated Stamp Act, being held at Annapolis.

Annapolis 16 feb^y 1766.

Sir

In answer to the Lett^r You wrote to me the 14th of Sept^r last by Order of the Lds. Com^{rs} of his Majestys Treasury which I have lately received I must desire you to inform Their Ldps that if the Person appointed to distribute the Stamp Paper within this Province could with any Security have proceeded to the Execution of his office I should have thought it my Duty to give him all the Aid & Assistance in my Power & would have punctually complied with their Ldps Requisitions,

but M^r Hood the Distributor being terrified by the Proceedings of the populace in this as well as the Neighbouring Colonies retired some Weeks before the Stamp Act was to take place to New York where he still remains & as I had no reason to expect that the People of this Province would suffer him to execute his office when almost all the other Distributors on the Continent had been obliged to resign I did not think it advisable to call upon him to qualify under his Commission or to expose himself to Insults by returning to the Province where His Majestys Service could not be thereby at all promoted. There being in his Absence no person authorized to receive the Stamp Paper which was consigned to him & no place of Security here in which it could be lodged I desired Capt Browne of His Majestys Sloop Hawke who had brought hither a parcel of it to keep it on board until Instructions could be received from His Majestys Ministers concerning it with which Request of mine he has complied & still remains at anchor in this port. I am &c.¹²

Mar. 18, 1766 The British Parliament repealed the Stamp Act on this date.

June 29, 1767 Parliament passed the Townshend Revenue Acts, which imposed duties on British glass, red and white lead, painter's colors, paper, and tea.

Mar. 17, 1768 On this date, Christopher Lowndes advertised a large assortment of goods in the *Maryland Gazette*, which included fabrics, spices, saddles, hats, paper, sewing supplies, carpentry and gardening tools, shoes, sugar, pots and pans, glass, cheese, coffee, tea, molasses, soap, bedding, blankets, firearms, and many other items. The advertisement ran for two weeks.¹³

June, 1768 Elizabeth Lowndes father, Benjamin Tasker, died in June of 1768. Daniel Dulany assisted in dispersing the large estate, which consisted of "several thousand acres of land in the Western Shore counties, £10,000 sterling in Bank of England stock, and the share in the Baltimore Iron Works . . . [and] slaves." In a letter to Robert Carter, who was married to Elizabeth Tasker Lowndes' sister Frances, Dulany confided:

I write this to inform you of the Sale of the Negroes at Enfield Chase, except two, whom I had not Resolution to sell, because the one had a Wife, & the other an Husband at Bell-Air. The Sale upon the whole has turned out very well; but without doubt, wou'd have been higher if the Negroes had been set up separately; but I cou'd not think of separating Husbands & Wives, & tearing young children away from their Mothers . . . In truth, if [other] Negroes must be sold, I can have no Concern in the Business. The Distress is intolerable.¹⁴

Christopher Lowndes complained that some of the properties were selling for less than their worth. Dulany was especially sensitive to Lowndes' criticism, as the two men differed in their political views.

Enfield Chase is sold at 35s. sterl. [per] acre. I think it a great Price & so does everyone else except Lowndes. I got information of the value of the Land from very good Judges.¹⁵

According to the provisions outlined in Tasker's will, each of his daughters, including Elizabeth Lowndes, received £2,500 sterling. Each of his eldest grandsons, including Benjamin Lowndes, Christopher and Elizabeth Lowndes' oldest son, received £1,000 sterling.¹⁶

Nov. 26, 1768 Lowndes placed the following advertisement in the *Maryland Gazette* on this date:

The SNOW APOLLO, Capt. John Midford (being a free bottom in Maryland) bound to Patowmack River, is expected to leave Barbados in January or February next. Any Gentleman inclined to ship West-India GOODS in her, from thence, are requested to inform their correspondents thereof. She will also take in MERCHANDISE for any other Part of Maryland; provided it is agreeable to the owners to receive them in the Eastern Branch of said River.

CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES¹⁷

1769 The Bladensburg Post Office was established in 1769, and Christopher Lowndes was named its first Postmaster.¹⁸

June 22, 1769 Christopher Lowndes was a leading member of the convention that signed the "Bond of Union, The Association," drafted as a response to the Townsend Acts. The Association created an embargo that prevented the importation of certain goods from England. "Lowndes figured prominently on a committee appointed to investigate alleged violations by Annapolis merchants James Dick and Anthony Stewart, who had imported a cargo valued at £10,000 sterling in the brigantine *Good Intent*." The vessel was sent back to London without unloading.¹⁹

Aug. 23, 1771 In a deed recorded on this date, Christopher Lowndes purchased a female slave named Nell from James Greenwell for £32.0.4. The sale was witnessed by Benjamin Lowndes.²⁰

May 9, 1771 The "STATE of the CARROLSBURG LOTTERY, drawn at Bladensburg, on Monday the 22d of April, 1771" was published in the *Maryland Gazette*, with figures for the ticket numbers that corresponded to lot numbers in Carrolsburg. A note states that:

The Plat of the Town may be seen by applying to Mr. Lancelot Jacques, at Annapolis, or to the Trustees—and Deeds will be given by the Trustees, when applied to—One of the Lists of Lots and Tickets, taken as they were drawn, is seal'd up and deposited with Mr. Christopher Lowndes of Bladensburg.—The reserved Lots belonging to Charles Carroll, Esq; of Duddington, are numbered upon the Plat as follows, No. 35, 36, 212, 213, 214, and 215.²¹

Dec. 31, 1771 Lowndes purchased “a Negro man named Sugar and a Mulatto boy free at thirty one years of age named Will” from Richard Henderson for 6,361 pounds of tobacco plus £356.19.8. Henderson had secured the two slaves in a lawsuit April, 1771, in which the slave Sugar is described as “about forty five years of age” and the mulatto boy “about five years of age.” The conditions of the settlement stipulated that if the agreed sum of £51.7.4 was not paid by the “last day of the present year” that the slave and mulatto boy would be sold “at Public Sale to the highest ready money bidder.”²²

April 10, 1772 On this date, the *Maryland Gazette* advertised imported goods from London, and listed one of the sellers as “Benjamin Stoddart; at Hunting-Town.”

LARGE and compleat Assortments of European and West India Goods,
for Cash, Bills of Exchange, or Tobacco, at the most reasonable rates.²³

Oct. 29, 1772 On this date, Lowndes advertised a large shipment of indentured servants for sale in the *Maryland Gazette*. The ad ran for three weeks.

Just arrived in the Britannia, Capt. William Scott, from Port
Glasgow,

ABOUT One Hundred Servants, Men, Women, and Children, the
Men and Women are under Indenture for Four Years, and their Children
by Agreement, are to serve till they are Twenty-one Years old: Those
that are married will be sold together; there are some Tradesmen
amongst them, but the greatest Part are Farmers; these are Part of the
People who were compelled to leave their Native Country by the
Oppression of the Land-Holders; they are orderly and well behaved, and
will be disposed of at Bladensburg, for ready Cash, or Bills of Exchange,
by

CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES.²⁴

Nov. 1772 Christopher Lowndes presented a petition to the court in Upper Marlboro regarding:

...two servant girls that came from Scotland in my vessel. When they
embarked their parents were living and by agreement between the Captain
and them, these two girls were to have engaged under indentures on the
arrival here until they were twenty-one years old, but as both father and

mother died upon the passage this agreement could not be carried out. I therefore submit this matter to your consideration and request you will determine how far your Worships think the above agreement should operate as to the times they must serve; and whatever your Resolution is that you will direct the Clerk to acquaint me with the time they must serve the sooner you will be pleased to consider the above the more you will oblige Christopher Lowndes.

The following day, the court issued its ruling: "On reading this petition and on due consideration thereof had, it is considered by the Court that Catherine Grant aged twelve years and Rachel Grant aged ten years serve Christopher Lowndes or his assigns till they arrive at the age of twenty-two years."²⁵

- 1774** As an example of anti-English sentiment in the county, a shipment of tea consigned to Robert Findlay in Bladensburg is stopped, with a recommendation that the tea be returned to England.²⁶
- Sept. 1, 1774** The First Continental Congress met on this date, and passed a resolution to boycott all English goods.
- April 18, 1775** In a deed recorded on this date, Christopher Lowndes purchased horses, cows, and hogs from Thomas Neall, described as "One Black Horse named Butter Six years old One Bay Mare named Bonny Ten years old One bay mare named Fly Eighteen years old two Cows and two yearlings all marked in the left Ear with a Single Crop twenty two head of Hogs all marked in the left Ear with a Single Crop and all my Tobacco exclusive of nine hundred and fifty pounds weight" for £74.17.8.²⁷
- Mar. 25, 1775** Christopher Lowndes purchased several horses from James Page in a deed recorded on this date. The horses were described as "one Roan Stallion named Lion about three years old one Black Mare named Lightfoot about six years old one Dark Bay Mare named Jen about eleven years old two Colts viz. one Roan named Prince and one Black named Faisel both one year old" for £55.2.10.²⁸

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- ¹ *Maryland Gazette*, September 11, 1760, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ² National Register of Historic Places, "Market Master's House," PG:69-8.; Prince George's County Register of Wills (Inventories), 1781-1787, MSA CM809-9, 177-196.
- ³ Anne Arundel County Register of Wills, Book 31, Page 90.; MSA SC 3520-1228.
- ⁴ *Maryland Gazette*, February 4, 1762, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ⁵ *Maryland Gazette*, February 18, 1762, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ⁶ *Maryland Gazette*, August 5, 1762, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ⁷ Johnston, "Lowndes Family." See also Piscataway Parish Records.
- ⁸ *Maryland Gazette*, April 5, 1764, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ⁹ Lathan A. Windley, *Runaway Slave Advertisements: A Documentary History from the 1730's to 1790*, vol. 2 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983), 55.
- ¹⁰ Prince George's County Land Records, Liber TT, Folio 328.
- ¹¹ Johnston, "Lowndes Family." See also Piscataway Parish Records.
- ¹² *Correspondence of Governor Horatio Sharpe, 1753-1757*, 262.
- ¹³ *Maryland Gazette*, March 17, 1768, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ¹⁴ *Dulany to Carter*, December 18, 1768, Robert Carter Papers, Library of Congress, MSS15297.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ *The Dulanys of Maryland*, 295.
- ¹⁷ *Maryland Gazette*, November 26, 1768, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ¹⁸ *A Historical Chronology of the Town of Bladensburg*.
- ¹⁹ *The Dulanys of Maryland*, 287.; *Maryland Historical Magazine* 3 (1908), 141-157, 240-256, 342-363.
- ²⁰ Prince George's County Land Records, Liber AA 2, Folio 275.
- ²¹ *Maryland Gazette*, May 9, 1771, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ²² Prince George's County Land Records, Liber BB 3, Folio 419.
- ²³ *Maryland Gazette*, April 10, 1772, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ²⁴ *Maryland Gazette*, October 29, 1772, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2731.
- ²⁵ *Port O' Bladensburg*, 90.
- ²⁶ *A Historical Chronology of the Town of Bladensburg*.
- ²⁷ Prince George's County Land Records, Liber CC 2, Folio 135.
- ²⁸ Prince George's County Land Records, Liber CC 2, Folio 116.



Timeline – Part III

Patriot Merchant: 1775 – 1785

April 19, 1775 The battles of Lexington and Concord start the American Revolution.

July 31, 1775 The Chairman of the Maryland Convention issued a statement regarding the reported seizure of a ship by the British Royal Navy, the Harriott, which belonged to Christopher Lowndes.

This Convention being informed that a Brig of Christopher Lowndes of Prince George's County, lately cleared out from this Province for Barbadoes, was seised and carried into Boston by some Officer or Officers of His Majestys Ships of War, stationed there; and considering it as a matter of the last importance, that the truth of this fact be enquired into and known; Do recommend it to the General Committee of Observation for Prince George's County, immediately to call before them all witnesses who may have any knowledge of the said Transaction, and also to summon the said Christopher Lowndes to appear before the said Committee, bringing with him all papers relative to the said Vessel, and in particular a Letter said to have been wrote to him by Henry Lloyd of Boston, concerning the same Vessel; and pass Judgment whether any collusion has been committed or not, and if the said Committee shall adjudge that there has been any collusion, that in such case the person or persons guilty thereof be sent with the Judgment and Evidence to this Convention, or in their Recess to the Council of Safety, hereafter to be appointed (N^o 3)

Signed by order of the Convention
Mat. Tilghman, Chairman¹

Aug. 17, 1775 Christopher Lowndes appeared at the Provincial Convention in Annapolis to answer questions regarding the reported seizure of his brig, Harriott, by the British Navy.

To the Hon^{ble} Provincial Convention, Annapolis

Mr. Thomas Gantt, Chairman Thomas Williams, Clk.

In consequence of a recommendation from the Honora^{ble} Provincial Convention directed to the General Committee of Observation for Prince George's County M^r Christo^r Lowndes attended: the following Questions were ask'd him.

Quest 1st Whether the Brigg harriott Capt. Will^m Scott Master clear'd out in May 1775 by M^r Lowndes out of this Province for Barbadoes, was seiz'd and carried to Boston by some Officer, or Officers of his Majestyes Ships of War there stationed.

Anser. She was not taken nor carried to Boston.

Quest. 2^d Whether M^r Lowndes ever receiv'd any Letter from Henry Loyd of Boston respecting the said Brigg Harriott or Cargo.

Anser. He never received any.

M^r Lowndes produced the following evidence in his defense.

Letters to M^r Lowndes from his Correspondants in Barbadoes, Dated July 1st 13th & 14th from Philip Lytcott & Comp^{ny}, were produced, from which it appears that 19 barrels of flour 2545 bushels of Corn 397 bars of iron, 20 barrels of Pork, 20 barrels of Herring, 19,865 Shingles and 2718 Staves were landed for M^r Lowndes, acco^t.

A letter from Mr biddle of Philadela was produced by M^r Tho^s Richardson of Geo: Town dated 31st July saying that Cap^t Scott was arrived at Barbadoes, and that the Bread Ship'd by M^r Richardson on board the Brigg Harriott was sold.

By the above Evidence & the deposition of John Tolson who was a Passenger on board the Brigg Harriott to & from Barbadoes, it appears clear to this Committee, that there is not the least foundation for the charge of collusion, propogated against M^r Lowndes.

M^r Lowndes prays these proceedings with M^r Tolson's deposition at large may be publish'd in the Maryland Gazette for his Vindication to the Public.

It is the opinion of this Committee that these proceedings be publish'd as soon as possible.

Sign'd by order Tho^s Williams, Clk

In Committee Aug^t 7th 1775. Bladens.

M^r Tho^s Gantt, Chairman²

Aug. 17, 1775 An article published in the *Maryland Gazette* on this date describes an August 1 meeting of the Prince George's County Committee of Inspection, which was held at Bladensburg

and was chaired by Christopher Lowndes. The committee passed a resolution at that meeting to publish a letter written by a local youth named George Munro. In the letter, Munro seems to reveal his loyalist sentiments:

We hear of nothing new down this way that can be depended upon, there is so many d_____d lies going about the country and in the newspapers, that is not worth while mentioning any of them; one thing is true that the New Englanders have taken Fort Ticonderoga by surprise, in the night time when the officers were all asleep; there was only about forty soldiers in the fort. We have at last been obliged to muster to live on peaceable terms with the country people; our company is commanded by Col. Jos. Beall; we are all obliged to have a hunting shirt, gun, bayonet, and cartridge-box; but if it is every likely to come to blows this way, you know my determined resolution not _____ I need not go any further, as it is not adviseable to trust one's sentiments on paper, as they now open all the letters to the northward, and I suppose the committees in every other place will follow the same laudable example.

The letter caused an uproar in Bladensburg. Munro agreed to appear before the Committee, but fled as his safety became increasingly threatened by angry residents. Richard Henderson of Bladensburg described the scene during his testimony before the Maryland Convention in Annapolis.

On Tuesday morning I saw him, & he expressed no apprehension about appearing before the Committee, and therefore, at the beating to Arms, I joined the Company, & never afterwards saw him being with the Company constantly till near evening, when I was sent for by the Committee & asked to bring M^r Munro, I went, but about noon a great number of men with loaded Arms having come to Town & declared their determination to Tar & Feather him, & having brought an old, lean, sore backed, dull horse, whereon to set him & drum him thro, the Town, whatever might be the sentiments of the Committee. The youth was struck with an agony of fear, and rode off.³

Nov. 1, 1775 Invoice to Christopher Lowndes for silk fabric purchased by Elizabeth Lowndes in Annapolis. Mrs. Lowndes purchased the fabric on an account payable to John Ridout (d. 1797), who administered Elizabeth's father's will (Benjamin Tasker died in 1768). She purchased "20 Yds of White Ducape from Mess^{rs} Williams's Store M^{rs} Lowndes by them charged to Me" for £15. Ducape is a plain-woven stout silk fabric of soft texture. Elizabeth Lowndes also purchased additional quantities in December. Ridout, who came

to America in 1753 and served as the secretary of Governor Horatio Sharpe, was married to Anne Ogle, Elizabeth Lowndes' niece. He lived in Annapolis on Duke of Gloucester Street in a townhouse that has been fully restored.⁴

1776 During the American Revolution, Christopher Lowndes aligned himself with the Patriot cause, and supplied cordage to the Navy. Benjamin Stoddert served as a Major in the Pennsylvania Line, and was wounded at the Battle of Brandywine. Stoddert then served as secretary to the Continental Board of War. In that position, he oversaw the procurement of materiel for the Army and Navy, including cordage from his future father-in-law, Christopher Lowndes.⁵

Jan. 1, 1777 In a letter written to Christopher Lowndes on this date, the Governor's Council of Maryland requested a quote for "Eight or Ten Tons of Cordage" and "Cables and all sorts of lesser Cordages fit for vessels." In response, Lowndes assured the Council that he could deliver the cordage, at a production capacity of 1000 to 1200 pounds per week, but advised that a quote before March, and the arrival of the new crop of hemp, would be difficult, due to the fluctuating price of the material.⁶

Jan. 27, 1777 Lowndes wrote to the Council of Safety seeking advice on whether to proceed with the order, in light of an expected sixty percent increase in the price of hemp.⁷

Apr. 14, 1777 In response, the Governor's Council directed Christopher Lowndes to proceed with the order for ten tons of cordage despite the high prices of hemp in Frederick, which the Commissioners were unable to regulate to their advantage.⁸

May 14, 1777 A statement by the Governor's Council reveals that an armed recruiting party had mistakenly fired upon Christopher Lowndes:

Thomas Jiams, the Person mentioned in the Letter of M^r Christopher Lowndes dated the twelfth Instant, as the officer of the recruiting Party therein mentioned appeared before the Council according to order, and was examined touching the matters mentioned in the said Letter, and confessed that he ordered the men of his party to fire, and afterwards to fix their Bayonets nearly in the manner, and on the occasion mentioned in the said Letter. It is therefore ordered that the said Thomas Jiams enter into Bond with sufficient security in the sum of one hundred Pounds Currency for his Appearance at Prince George's County Court to be held at Upper Marlboro' the third Tuesday of this Instant May, to answer for his Conduct towards, and in the Presence of the said Christopher Lowndes, as Magistrate in the Execution of his Office.⁹

June 4, 1777 Under the new state government, Lowndes is commissioned to serve as a Justice of the Peace, and as a Judge of the Orphan's Court, for Prince George's County. Lowndes continued to be reappointed by the Governor's Council, and served in these roles through 1784.¹⁰

June 4, 1777 A letter from the Governor's Council of Maryland to Thomas Smyth discusses Christopher Lowndes efforts in supplying cordage for the American Navy.

In Council Annapolis 4th June 1777

Sir,

We are very desirous of getting the Chester Galley fitted and much obliged to you for the Trouble you have taken to forward it. Lux and Bowley wrote us some Time since that they would give us Preference of their Cordage at £7.10. We accepted, but indeed, as yet, have got little or nothing of it. M^r Lowndes is now at work, we believe, solely for us, and at about that Price, but he will not be able to furnish us so far as wanted; yet if we give £14 for any, we suppose we must for all, for this Reason, and as Hynson's Quantity would go but a very little Way, we choose not to take it, at this Price. If Lux and Bowley do not go to Work for us soon, the Frigate now being gone, we intend, rather than be at the present Pass, to set up a Rope Walk for the Public and are satisfied we should, even in different Management, save a good Deal of Money.

We are &^{ca 11}

June 6, 1777 In a letter written on this date, the Governor's Council instructed the captain of a sloop to apply to Christopher Lowndes for shrouds for his vessel. Similarly, letters in June and July ordered the ships *Plater* and *Xebeck* to Bladensburg in order to obtain cordage from Lowndes.¹²

Oct. 24, 1777 The Governor's Council again wrote to Christopher Lowndes regarding the supply of cordage. The letter also addresses an incident in which the Georgia Regiment took one of Lowndes' wagons, which he was later reimbursed for.

Sir,

We write to Capt Coursey to wait on you himself and explain his Bill for Cordage, Belt wants his for a different Vessel, he says he wrote to you for a Ten inch Cable and half a Ton of small Cordage. I suppose he is mistaken, and that he wrote for the Ton, as you mention, tho' the Cable and half Ton only were wanted by him. We do not think we shall have Occasion for the ten Tons of Hemp, besides what you now have by you, though we possibly may and therefore we wish you to contract for it. If it should not be all immediately, or as soon as you work it up,

wanted by the Public, it will yet be a Public Advantage to have your People kept full employed, and there's no Likelihood of any Loss from it. We will advance the Money for Purchase, as you may desire it, and shall willingly settle and pay for what we have had, as soon as you please. The Price we presume will depend a good Deal on the Cost of the Materials and ought to be mentioned by you, we expect it will be as moderate as you can well afford. The Georgia Regiment have occasioned Complaints wherever they have went. A Representative of their Conduct has been laid before Congress, who have empowered the Governor to appoint Commissioners to hear Complaints against them and settle Damages, which are to be stopped at the Pay of the Regiment. We believe that your Waggon, when on such Business, will not again be taken, but there would be an Impropriety as we have no Power to grant particular Exemptions.

We are &^{ca 13}

Feb. 26, 1778 A letter from the Governor's Council to Christopher Lowndes requested that he expedite the delivery of cordage for the galley *Chester*.

Sir,
Cap^t Coursey waits on you about the Remainder of the Rigging for the Chester Galley. We are very desirous of getting her fitted and wish you to expedite it and send it to Elk Ridge. The Delay and Risk in sending a Boat round, we wish to avoid.

We are &^{ca 14}

1778 In 1778, Christopher Lowndes swore an official Oath of Allegiance to the Revolutionary government.¹⁵

Apr. 3, 1779 John Ridout wrote a letter to Elizabeth Lowndes on this date regarding Bills of Credit due to her as part of her inheritance from her brother, Benjamin Tasker, Jr., referred to as "Col Tasker" in the letter. Tasker was a Colonel in the Anne Arundel County Militia.

Ann^o 3^d April 1779

Dear Madam

Inclosed you will receive Bills of Credit for £77.1.9 Sterling which I pay on acco^t of Interest received since last Settlement (made the 23 May 1775) on Part of the Moiety of Col^o Taskers Legacy for which M^{rs} Ogl is accountable to you. When I have the pleasure of seeing You this Summer I will bring you an acco^t stated as heretofore [&?] in the meantime You will be pleased to sign & return Me the

inclosed Receipt. I beg you to be remembered to M^r Lowndes & Family
& D^r Madam your most obed^t humble

JR ¹⁶

- Nov. 23, 1779** Christopher Lowndes, Josiah Beall, and Abraham Boyd all entered into contracts on this date for the construction of a new warehouse at Bladensburg. ¹⁷
- Feb. 22, 1780** The Muster and Pay Rolls of the Continental Army recorded eleven enlistments on this date, which were authenticated by Christopher Lowndes. ¹⁸
- Feb., 1781** As Loyalists, the Dulany family was subject to having their property seized after the American Revolution. Ann Dulany wrote to her cousin, Rebecca Lowndes, who was engaged at this time to Benjamin Stoddert, that “In all probability we shall not have it in our power to remain here much longer, as I believe there is little doubt of the Confiscation Bill passing.” ¹⁹
- Feb. 27, 1781** Maryland ratified the Articles of Confederation on this date – the last state to do so.
- June 17, 1781** On this date, Benjamin Stoddert married Christopher Lowndes’ daughter Rebecca in Georgetown, where Stoddert lived at Halcyon House. The couple eventually purchased Bostwick House in 1799. ²⁰
- Oct. 19, 1781** British General Cornwallis surrendered to George Washington on this date, ending the American Revolution.
- Dec. 22, 1781** The Governor’s Council approved a payment to Christopher Lowndes for £718.2.8, most likely for cordage supplied during the war. Another payment of £730.11.6 was approved in April of 1782. ²¹
- July 19, 1782** Rochambeau’s Army camped at Bladensburg during July of 1782. The soldiers marched from Georgetown to Bladensburg and remained encamped for two days before moving on to Snowden’s Iron Works at Laurel, Maryland. ²²
- Mar. 14, 1783** The Governor’s Council approved the settlement of a debt of £14.8.1, which the Rev. Jonathan Boucher owed to Christopher Lowndes. The settlement was made in accordance with “a Supplement to the Act for the Liquidation and Payment of Debts against persons convicted of Treason,” suggesting that Rev. Boucher was a Royalist. ²³
- 1784** British painter, Robert Edge Pine, painted a portrait of Christopher and Elizabeth Lowndes. The painting’s location is unknown, but it was described in a June 9, 1794 edition of the *Columbian Gazetteer* as “A beautiful painting of Mr. and Mrs. Lowndes &c. of Maryland.” ²⁴
- Jan. 8, 1785** Christopher Lowndes died intestate, and was buried at Addison’s Chapel Churchyard in Mount Pleasant. His grave marker reads

In Memory of
CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES
Esq.
who departed this Life.
at an advanced age.
on the 8th day of January.
1785.

After his death, Christopher's eldest son, Benjamin, took over his father's positions as Commissioner and Postmaster of Bladensburg. Benjamin lived at Blenheim, which was located directly across from his father's ropewalk, where the Hilltop Manor in Bladensburg now stands.²⁵

Jan. 18, 1785 Lowndes' obituary notice, which appeared in *The Maryland Journal and Commercial Advertiser* read:

Died. A few days ago, in advanced age, at Bladensburg,
Christopher Lowndes, Esq., for many years an eminent merchant of that
place.²⁶

Mar. 10, 1785 The administrators of Christopher Lowndes' estate placed a notice in the *Maryland Gazette* which ran for three weeks.²⁷

Bladensburg, March 9, 1785

ALL persons indebted to the estate of Christopher Lowndes, late
deceased, either by bond, note, or open account, are desired to make
payment; it is expected that those who cannot comply conveniently
with this request will settle their accounts and renew their obligations.
Persons having claims against the estate are desired to bring them
legally attested, to
BENJAMIN LOWNDES,
FRANCIS LOWNDES, administrators.

April 12, 1785 The inventory of Christopher Lowndes' estate lists thirty-five slaves, ten horses, twenty-three sheep, thirty-six cattle, thirty-six hogs, farm tools, household furniture (including a chariot valued at £25), provisions (bacon, pork and beef), liquor, cash, beans and grains, plate, seeds, rope walk items (tar, wheels and hooks, hemp "hakles" and a copper kettle. The value given for the above goods and chattel is listed at £3189.11.5.

The goods in Christopher Lowndes' store comprises most of the inventory, and includes items such as hair brushes, glasses, paper, buckskin breeches, irons, hinges, carpentry tools and fasteners, hardware, farm implements, towels, locks, combs, china, flatware, basins, pewter cutlery and bowls, kitchen pots and pans, egg slicers, handkerchiefs, shoes, men's and women's clothing, an extensive selection of fabrics, books including

bibles and spelling books, equestrian supplies, spices, 2,294 pounds of sugar, tea, candles, soap, shoe heels and sole leather for shoe repair, window glass, fans, molasses, musket balls and powder, indigo, saddler furniture and tools. The valuation of the store goods is £4613.6.11.

The household inventory provides a room-by-room account, and is an excellent resource for reconstructing the appearance of the house during this period. Of special interest is the designation of certain rooms: "A. Ls. Room," for Anne Margaret Lowndes, the oldest child who never married, and was buried next to her father upon her death in 1822; "B. Ls. Room," for Benjamin Lowndes, the oldest son who inherited most of the estate; the "Nursery," probably occupied by the grandchildren; "Mrs. Lowndes Room," for Elizabeth Lowndes; "the Garrett," or attic, which contained extra bedding and beds for guests; "the Store Room," which seems to have been used to store extra supplies for entertaining; and one of the most intriguing, "Issac's Cubboard," which held all of the family's plates, flatware, serving dishes, cups and saucers, baskets, pots, dish warmers, candlesticks, and fireplace tools. An Isaac is listed in the slave inventory, and this man may have been the house slave in charge of setting the table for each meal. The valuation of the household goods was evaluated at £519.15.0. The total value of Christopher Lowndes's goods and chattels was over £8300 pounds sterling.²⁸

- Aug. 15, 1789** One month before her death, Charles Willson Peale traveled to Bostwick, and painted seven portraits of Elizabeth Lowndes, which she gave to her children, and to her son-in-law Benjamin Stoddert, as gifts. Several days later, Peale traveled to Georgetown, and painted a portrait of Benjamin and Rebecca Stoddert's three children.²⁹
- Sept. 19, 1789** Elizabeth Lowndes died on this date, and she was buried at Addison's Chapel, beside her husband Christopher Lowndes. Her grave marker reads:

In Memory of
Mrs. ELIZABETH LOWNDES,
Relict of
CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES
Esq^r.
who departed this Life
on the 19th day of September
1789,
in the 63^d Year of her Age.³⁰

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- ¹ *Journal of the Maryland Convention July 26 to August 14, 1775*, vol. 11 of the *Archives of Maryland* series (1892), Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, 6. (Also reported in *Port O' Bladensburg*)
- ² *Ibid.*, 38-39.
- ³ *Maryland Gazette*, August 17, 1775.; *Journal of the Maryland Convention July 26 to August 14, 1775*, vol. 11 of the *Archives of Maryland* series (1892), Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, 49-50.
- ⁴ *Ridout Papers*, Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 371. (The *Ridout Papers* contain ledger accounts with other purchases by Elizabeth Lowndes.)
- ⁵ *Revolutionary Patriots of Prince George's County, 1775-1785*, 194. (For a short biography of Benjamin Stoddert, see <http://www.history.navy.mil/bios/stoddert.htm>)
- ⁶ *Journal and Correspondence of the Maryland Council of Safety, January 1-March 20, 1777*, vol. 16 of the *Archives of Maryland* series (1897), Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, 8.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 81-82.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 211.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 253.
- ¹⁰ Johnston, "Lowndes Family," 277.
- ¹¹ *Journal and Correspondence of the Maryland Council of Safety, January 1-March 20, 1777*, vol. 16 of the *Archives of Maryland* series (1897), Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, 277.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 281, 298, 321.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 404-405, 445.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 521.
- ¹⁵ *Revolutionary Patriots of Prince George's County, 1775-1783*, 194.
- ¹⁶ MSA SC 3520-1228.; MSA SC 371.
- ¹⁷ *A Historical Chronology of the Town of Bladensburg*.
- ¹⁸ *Muster Rolls and Other Records of Service of Maryland Troops in the American Revolution*, vol. 18 of the *Archives of Maryland* series (1899), Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, 332.
- ¹⁹ *The Dulanys of Maryland*, 327.
- ²⁰ *Port O' Bladensburg*, 38.
- ²¹ *Journal and Correspondence of the Council of Maryland, 1781-1784*, vol. 48 of the *Archives of Maryland* series (1931), Special Collections, Maryland State Archives, 121.
- ²² *A Historical Chronology of the Town of Bladensburg*.
- ²³ *Journal and Correspondence of the Council of Maryland, 1781-1784*, 381.
- ²⁴ Smithsonian Institution, *Robert Edge Pine: A British Portrait Painter in America, 1784-1788* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1979), 68.
- ²⁵ Johnston, "Lowndes Family." (See also Piscataway Parish Records); *Port O' Bladensburg*, 39.; "Obituary for Benjamin Ogle Lowndes," *Washington Post*, July 13, 1897.
- ²⁶ Johnston, "Lowndes Family," 276.
- ²⁷ *Maryland Gazette*, March 10, 1785.
- ²⁸ *Prince George's County Register of Wills (Inventories), 1781-1787*, Maryland State Archives, MSA CM809-9, 177-196.
- ²⁹ Charles Coleman Sellers, "Portraits by Charles Willson Peale," *American Philosophical Society* 42, no. 1 (1952): 131. (For a copy of the portrait, see p. 126. For a description of the Stoddert children portrait, see p. 202.)
- ³⁰ Johnston, "Lowndes Family." See also Piscataway Parish Records.