

# The Surratt Courier

Published Bimonthly by the Surratt Society

---

April 2020

Louise Oertly, Editor

Volume XLV No. 4

---

Welcome back to *The Surratt Courier*. As indicated in the website's introduction, this is the new digital version of the Surratt Society's newsletter. After this issue, *The Surratt Courier* will become bimonthly, as the March issue was already published and this is a special issue.

As many of you may have already heard, we lost Laurie Verge, Director of the Surratt House Museum, on February 23. She was the heart of the museum and the Surratt Society, so it is only fitting that we dedicate this issue of *The Surratt Courier* to Laurie. It also includes Laurie's article about her hometown and her family connection with the Lincoln assassination. This was perhaps the seed that planted her interest in it. So it is fitting that *T.B. Or Not T.B.* is the last article in this special tribute to Laurie Verge—and she gets the last word.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Laura "Laurie" Elizabeth Mays Verge

October 24, 1943 – February 23, 2020

Laurie was born on October 24, 1943 to the late Noel Owen Mays and late Laura Elysebeth Burroughs Mays at Mitchel Field, New York. From a young age until adulthood, she was the organist at the Chapel of the Incarnation in Brandywine, Maryland. She was a 1961 graduate and salutatorian of Gwynn Park High School in Brandywine. She attended Frostburg State College where she enjoyed a variety of clubs and activities, especially Alpha Xi Delta Women's Fraternity. She graduated in 1965 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education.

After college, Laurie taught History and Government in the Prince George's County Public Schools at Spaulding Jr. High School in Forestville, Maryland, until 1972. At that time, she married and gave birth to a daughter in 1973. While a stay at home mother, she dedicated her time to her daughter as a dance mom, spending countless hours behind the desk of the Linda



Laurie Verge

---

*This newsletter is a monthly publication of the Surratt Society, a non-profit volunteer affiliate of the Surratt House Museum, a historic property of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 9118 Brandywine Road, Clinton, MD 20735. Museum phone number is (301) 868-1121.*

*Annual Surratt Society membership is \$10. Visit our website: [surrattmuseum.org](http://surrattmuseum.org).*

Napoli dance Studio and at dance competitions. During this time, her love for history was fueled again, when she became a founding member of the Surratt Society and one of the first volunteer docents at the Surratt House Museum in Clinton, Maryland.

In the mid-1980's, Laurie became a full-time employee of the Surratt House Museum under the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. She continued to work at the Surratt House, as the Museum Director, until her death. During her long tenure, she was blessed to

meet and make many wonderful friends and colleagues. She was known as a leading authority on the Civil War, the Lincoln assassination, and local Southern Maryland history.

She is survived by her daughter, Jennifer Diane Verge Morphew, and her grandson, Aaron Brayden Alexander Morphew. She was particularly proud of her grandson's shared love of history and dedication to education.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the Surratt Society in remembrance of her love and dedication to the society and its members.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Many friends from around the world have sent messages of how they knew Laurie and how she helped and encouraged them in their own voyages of discovery regarding the Lincoln assassination. I think my favorite description of Laurie was from Dave Taylor, who called her "one of the great encyclopedias of the Lincoln assassination." You asked her a question and, if she didn't know the answer, she usually knew who might. Of course, we all know there are still many unanswered questions in the assassination story.

What are my memories of Laurie? I'll warn you now that my family handles grief with stories and humor. What else would you expect from a Lincoln?

It all began in the fall of 1976 with a tour at the newly opened Surratt House Museum. I still don't remember writing the check to join as a docent. (Later, I found out that docent means unpaid tour guide.) This tour led to a host of questions that needed to be answered. Why weren't we told in

history class that there was more to the story than Booth shot Lincoln, and who was this Mary Surratt? Little did I know that, for the next 44 years, I'd still be running around in a hoop skirt sharing with others this same story. Along the way, I've also made a new set of incredible friends.

I met Laurie and others at my first Surratt Society meeting. They took this newbie docent under their wing and opened a whole new understanding of what happened that fateful night. Laurie made it very clear from the beginning that her expertise was history. I was on my own, when it came to costuming. She didn't sew. Fortunately, I did. For many years, she called me the infamous Lincoln of the group, but they would allow me on the museum grounds anyway. In later years she told me, that the day I quit, as a docent, was the day she'd retire. So much for that plan.

In the early years, Laurie and Joan Chaconas invited me on excursions with James O. Hall, John Brennan, and others to Tudor Hall and to cemeteries from

Baltimore to Richmond. (Mr. Brennan sometimes provided the sandwiches. We would never know what they might contain. One time, he was so proud to share his new discovery, canned corned beef.) Then there was the first Booth Escape Route Tour, which Laurie and others weren't sure anyone would be interested in doing a 12-hour tour. It was an outrageous price of \$10 and was on a yellow school bus. By the way, it ended up being an 18-hour tour, instead of 12 hours

Other unforgettable memories are the road trips with the Surratt ladies (ringleaders were Laurie, Joan, Betty Ownsbey, and Nancy Griffith). We never knew what was going to happen. In Gettysburg, we explored the battlefields and found the breastworks (don't ask, but there may be photos). However, we also experienced flooded motel ceilings and fought over the room's temperature. (Why? Let's just say the ladies' ages ranged from 20s to 50s. Need I say more?)

Betty had a speaking engagement in Ft. Myers, Florida, so Laurie, Joan, and I tagged along. On this Florida trip, we explored historic St. Augustine and met

Powell descendant in Tampa, but also experienced hurricane force winds in March. (The same storm dumped 13 inches of snow on D.C.) During the storm, Laurie sacrificed her stockings to tie down a drain pipe that was banging against the parked cars. We also stumbled across a possible drug deal at a Ft. Myers' cemetery and hightailed it out of there. Our local guide had assured us it was perfectly safe after dark. Like I said, unforgettable memories.

To many of us, Laurie Verge was a friend, teacher, mentor, proofreader, facilitator (her description), and even a cheerleader, but the title she was most proud of was Mother and Grandmother. Over the years, I've watched Jen and Aaron grow up to become awesome adults. As the saying goes, the apple didn't fall far from the tree.

Rest in peace, Laurie. You will be missed. May you find all the answers to your many questions. However, if you do decide to keep an eye on us by haunting the Surratt House, your friends wouldn't mind if you found a way to share some of those answers.

Louise Oertly, President

\*\*\*\*\*

## REMEMBRANCES OF LAURIE VERGE

### *From Surratt House Museum Volunteers*

Laurie Verge. What do you say about a woman who dedicated her life to the Surratt Museum, the Surratt Society, her daughter Jen, and her grandson Aaron?

Laurie started her career as a schoolteacher. She had a schoolteacher's voice of precise diction and authority. It's not surprising that her penmanship was cursive, beautiful, and readable. She could answer almost any question about the history of Southern Maryland, Abraham Lincoln, and the Lincoln assassination. As a past vice president, president, current treasurer of the Surratt Society, and volunteer, I became aware how respected she was by all she met, especially historians. It was a pleasure and honor to work with her. I will be only one of many who will miss her.

Tom Buckingham

\*\*\*\*\*

It's hard to believe Laurie is gone. She was so welcoming, helpful, and supportive when I started as a docent back in 1998. It was obvious to me that she appreciated my work at the museum. She served as a job reference when I interviewed for a museum job in Sarasota, Florida. During my meeting with the chief curator, he told me that when he talked to Laurie over the phone, she told him that he could have me only if I returned to do my tours once each month. I moved away to Pittsburgh for six years, and each year I'd return for the annual conference. Laurie would ask me to bring my costume and give tours on the Friday evening of the conference weekend.

I remember so good many times gathered on special event days with Susan Proctor, Louise Oertly, and Rick Smith, among others talking, laughing, and joking with Laurie. It was like a family.

There will be a silent space at this year's conference that we will all recognize and know. It will be at Surratt House Museum for a long time as well.

*Laurie, you are among the angels now. Pray for us.*

Hal G. DeLuca

\*\*\*\*\*

It has taken a little time to recover from the shock and to settle my thoughts and tribute to Laurie Verge. Laurie was a force of nature. It is practically impossible to pick up a book dealing with the subject of Lincoln's assassination written in the past 40 years that does not contain an acknowledgement to Laurie. Her encyclopedic knowledge on the subject was apparent to all who met her, and she never lost her instincts as a superb teacher. Thanks to Roger Norton, some of that knowledge has been captured on this forum [Lincoln Discussion Symposium at [www.rogerjnorton.com](http://www.rogerjnorton.com)] and is an extraordinary legacy to all who will come along. I tell people that Laurie used an unfair tactic to recruit me, first as a Surratt House docent and later as vice president of the Surratt Society, namely, she asked me nicely (as if I could ever say "no" to her). As much as I will miss her, I consider myself very fortunate to have known her and to have been her friend. I know of no greater tribute to Laurie than to do what I and others can to continue her life's work for the Surratt House Museum, the Surratt Society, and the quest for research in this field.

Bill Binzel

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***From Friends and Fellow Historians***

When I retired as a middle school teacher, I had trouble finding what to do with myself. Eventually I decided to attempt to create a Lincoln website for students. And I would offer to try and assist students with their homework through emails. I had subscribed to the *Surratt Courier* for years, and I contacted Laurie (c. 1996-1997). We never had any previous contact. I asked for her help with the assassination section of the website, and I was overwhelmed by her incredibly

positive reply. And she gave me two other contacts of people, who were also most helpful, Betty Ownsbey and Ed Steers.

After exchanging a few e-mails with Laurie, we became aware that we both were the same age. I was almost exactly one month older than Laurie.

We decided we could help each other with students. If she received e-mails at Surratt House about Abraham Lincoln, she would forward them to me. And if I received emails about the assassination, I would forward them to her. I soon learned her knowledge of the assassination was encyclopedic, while my knowledge of Lincoln was typical of an 8th grade teacher. BIG DIFFERENCE! I soon learned why she was salutatorian of her high school class. (I was 129th and looking out the windows too much; couldn't wait to get out, run home, and watch what remained of the Chicago Cubs' game.) The arrangement of helping each other with e-mailed questions lasted right up until her final illness.

Laurie's impact on my life was so incredibly positive, I just don't have the words for it.

Roger J. Norton

Lincoln Discussion Symposium

\*\*\*\*\*

It is entirely appropriate that Laurie Verge is being commemorated in the *Surratt Courier*, for Laurie herself was an "original edition." Hers was a unique combination of personal and intellectual skills. She was equally at home with scholars, history buffs, senior researchers, and tellers of old family stories--which they swore were true. For them, Laurie always had a sympathetic ear. And she had some old family stories of her own, too. Like the one about German prisoners of war working on farms near her uncle's Maryland store during World War II, which I could never quite confirm. I'm on it, Laurie!

The Surratt Society is a unique place in which researchers, with differing views on the Lincoln assassination and Civil War, can publish and share their conclusions and debate their differences in an atmosphere of friendliness and mutual respect. That was a spirit that Laurie Verge – leader, teacher, organizer, quiet presence, devoted mother and grandmother – sought to build and carry on.

I first met Laurie in the 1980s through my friend and neighbor, James O. Hall. When Mr. Hall turned 80 (or was it 90), Laurie, operating in Mosby style, snuck a group over to 5 from Maryland and organized a great surprise party. I think the part she enjoyed most was watching her grandson Aaron and my daughter Cate, both toddlers, play on the floor as Mr. Hall looked on, beaming. The next generation of assassination scholars, right there in front of us! That was Laurie to a T – doing what needed to be done, then fading into the background to enjoy the good times had by others.

She can be remembered, honored, and on our best days, maybe even emulated. But she can never be replaced.

Goodbye for now, old pal.

Richard Willing

Life Member

\*\*\*\*\*

Tentatively approaching the registration desk of my first Surratt Society Conference nearly twenty years ago, I was immediately enveloped by the warm welcome of Laurie Verge. Despite not knowing me from Adam and despite her manifold responsibilities for the conference, she took the time to ask what had brought me there and what was I working on. I think nearly every one of us can remember our first impression of Laurie, and I'll bet it was similar to mine. I've long lost track of how many times, since then, I relied on her advice and phenomenal knowledge about the Lincoln assassination. Her review of my book remains to this day at the head of the queue, voted "Most Helpful," a phrase that certainly sums up Laurie and her tireless dedication to the cause of the diligent pursuit of accurate, verifiable research. She was the gold standard of "getting it right," and I pitied anyone foolish enough to stand in her way. For this, I respected her immensely and will always treasure memories of my interactions with her.

Tom Bogar

\*\*\*\*\*

I'm so happy I got to know Laurie over the past several years through my annual visits to Maryland, which always included the Surratt House. I spent part of a wonderful afternoon with Laurie this past September, when we shared thoughts for an hour or so, and I inscribed a copy of my then newly released book for the house library. Through Laurie, my book is now in the Surratt House gift shop. I loved Laurie for her graciousness, her candor, and her wealth of knowledge. She was always willing to share her time and her knowledge. My eyes will be wet, when I remember Laurie in my prayers tonight. Requiescant in pace my dear friend.

To Jennifer Morphew and Family:

Losing a Mother and Grandmother is devastating; especially one so special as Laurie. She is now free of the infirmities of this life and in a better place, where all her historical questions are answered.

She would no doubt be embarrassed by the outpouring of emotion and admiration from those of us who knew her. Laurie's love of history and the willingness to share her knowledge made us all better historians and researchers. I will miss her dearly and my annual trips to the Surratt House shall never be the same.

God has finally granted her the peace and serenity she so richly deserved. May your family be comforted in your sorrow, as you celebrate a life well lived.

Dennis D. Urban

Past President, Knoxville Civil War Roundtable (2013-2016)

\*\*\*\*\*

The tragic news was a great shock to me. I knew, as most of us did, that she had not been in good health in recent years, but I didn't expect this. I thought she would get through the latest ordeal and carry on, as she did the last time. Her death is a great loss not only to family and friends, but to the entire CW community. She was so knowledgeable on the war and especially the assassination, which is why she was nationally known.

She touched so many lives, including mine. I did not know her as well as you and so many others in that area, but I did have the good fortune of being her friend in the later years of

her life. I enjoyed our exchanges on the Forum and our e-mail correspondence, and I looked forward to seeing her at the annual conferences. She was good to me.

John C. Fazio

\*\*\*\*\*

### *Tributes from the Lincoln Discussion Symposium*

Very sad news, indeed. Laurie and I became great friends over the years, and I'm glad I got to see her this past September, when Rick Smith and I surprised her with a visit at the Surratt House. She took me on a tour of the northern end of Booth's escape route in Maryland, when I visited in 2013, and we had a great weekend together. She was a veritable encyclopedia of the Lincoln assassination, and even more so with Southern Maryland end, including locations and the inhabitants.

She was a great friend and I'll miss her terribly. Rest easy, my Little Rebel Pal.

J. Beckett

\*\*\*\*\*

It's so sad and hard to realize she's not there anymore. I miss her and owe her so much. She meant a lot to me. Laurie was one of a kind.

Antoine de Saint-Exupery wrote: "And when your sorrow is comforted (time soothes all sorrows) you will be content that you have known me. You will always be my friend." So be it.

Laurie's daughter told me she was listening to Amazing Grace, which she loved so much.

Eva Lennartz

\*\*\*\*\*

I feel it is almost impossible to express in the fullest terms, the impact that Laurie has had on all of our lives. She has been a great nurturer to all of us. She has been a catalyst in all of our research and her contributions, directly and indirectly, will forever have an impact on the education and understanding of the most significant event in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Her footprint is on all of our individual and group efforts. Without Laurie, I never would have met Rich. If our joint projects (Rich and I) did not have her encouragement and endorsements, they may have never been done. I think the same can be said of all of our collective output.

Laurie succeeded in her life's mission of expanding the knowledge of and interest in the Lincoln assassination. Her other great passion was her grandson, who will sorely miss her.

So take a moment, think a good thought, and say a prayer for Laurie. There will never be another like her. May God bless her soul and all of us left in her wake.

Jim Garrett

\*\*\*\*\*

I have been trying to come up with the words to express what Laurie meant to me. Jim's comments came close to what I've been trying to put into words. Laurie was such an encourager and nurturer. She often fed me tidbits, resources, and contacts for my research. I saw her eyes

light up when she learned of a young person interested in this topic. She gave me opportunities that made the book I'm writing possible. She was a friend.

Wesley Harris

\*\*\*\*\*

What a painful loss. I'll always remember Laurie for her thoughtful encouragement and generosity. I loved her feisty personality, honesty, and willingness to engage in spirited debate and conversation. Luckily, we were on the same side on most topics!

Laurie left an indelible mark on so many of us and played a key role in assisting myself and Barry in our research.

She will be deeply missed. My heartfelt condolences go out to her family and friends. I am unable to attend her memorial service, but she will be in my thoughts and prayers. May she rest in peace.

John E. Elliott

\*\*\*\*\*

I am very sorry to hear of the passing of Laurie. She was such a very strong-willed person. I liked it very much when she and I both agreed on a Lincoln subject. She will be sincerely missed by all of us on the Lincoln Discussion Symposium.

David Lockmiller

\*\*\*\*\*

It is so sad to hear of Laurie's passing. My first communication with Laurie was in 2015. She didn't know me, but she was gracious, helpful, and tolerant of my ignorant questions about Lincoln and the Civil War. She continued to give me kind and useful advice over the next few years.

We first met face-to-face at the 2019 Surratt Conference, where she treated my wife and me like long-lost friends. What a jewel she was! We will all miss her.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalm 116:15)

Leon Greene

\*\*\*\*\*

Thanks to everyone for sharing here about Laurie. Your moving words and personal experiences add to my gratitude for having met Laurie through this forum. I was new to Lincoln studies when I joined, and Laurie was one of the members who welcomed me. Laurie wrote on all things Lincoln and more. Yes, she was a wordsmith, but not all wordsmiths have the depth of knowledge, the desire to share and collaborate, and love of learning that came through in her posts.

We never met in person, yet I came to know her. Laurie shared her passion for history and teaching, her values, family history, and love of her daughter and grandson, who brought her much joy. She supported young student members with encouragement and respect. She had a

wicked sense of humor. She leaves a rich professional legacy. I am missing her, but I know she still lives here. I just need to read one of her 10,000 plus posts and *Surratt Courier* newsletters.

Anita

\*\*\*\*\*

I'm saddened to hear about Laurie's passing. She was one of the most knowledgeable and most helpful members of the Lincoln Assassination Researcher community. But on a more personal note, she was a wonderful, kind, and funny person.

For months and months, I've been distracted with life and been putting off writing an article for the *Surratt Courier* about Junius Brutus Booth's family in England, which I had promised to Laurie to write. Unfortunately now, she'll never get a chance to read it. I just wanted to include that story as a reminder that one never knows what the future might hold, so don't keep putting off something important.

Steve

\*\*\*\*\*

I'm so glad that I had the chance to send Laurie a message a couple of weeks ago, and let her know that, even though we never met or talked on the phone or interacted in any way except on this forum, she did touch my life in important ways.

I don't know any of the details regarding Laurie's health problems, but I do know that she must have suffered and probably was in pain, or at the very least, was frustrated at not being able to get her body to do what she needed it to do much of the time.

As director of a museum, she had to have had a lot of contact with people, which requires being courteous and helpful, optimistic and encouraging, etc. How she was able to do that day in and day out for many years, with all her physical ailments, is beyond my comprehension. Her love for her work must have been the lifeline that sustained her.

I'm comforted by the thought that she is at peace now. I will miss her posts and I won't forget her.

My Name Is Kate

\*\*\*\*\*

*The following article was published in the October 2014 issue of The Surratt Courier.*

## **T.B. OR NOT T.B.**

by Laurie Verge

While recently perusing the Internet, I stumbled on a very bad article on the history of T.B. First, let me make it clear that we are not discussing the disease in this case, but rather a small village in

Southern Maryland that played a role in the Lincoln conspiracy story—and which is now in serious danger of being wiped off the maps. The history in that article, which appeared in the *Baltimore Sun* newspaper

several years ago, is so bad that I had to take my anger out on you folks—especially because the village is my hometown and events in the spring of 1865 involved my ancestors

The village, which is five miles south of Surrattsville/Clinton, Maryland, dates back to before 1830. Its curious name is believed to have been taken from a boundary stone marking the northwest corner of a large land grant owned by Thomas Brooke. My great-grandfather (born in 1837) remembered riding past the stone in his early years, as he traveled from the family plantation in Charles County to Washington, D.C. He described it as an English field stone that had been brought over in British ships as ballast and dumped at nearby ports in order to take on the hogsheads of tobacco to be sent to England. Many foundations of home and outbuildings in the area consisted largely of these stones, indicating how brisk the tobacco trade was with England. The initials “T.B.” were carved on the top of the rather flat stone.

Another version of the story is that the stone separated land owned by Brooke from land owned by a Townshend family. However, the latter family appears to have settled a good deal later than Brooke.

It so happened that a series of Indian trails intersected near the boundary stone, and, as so often happens at such intersections, a village began to grow. Its life as an intersection continues to this day. Maryland Route 5 out of Washington, D.C., intersects with U.S. Route 301 in the village, and the two roads run together for about five miles before separating in Charles County. Route 5 continues into St. Mary’s Country, Maryland, and on to the waters of the Patuxent and the Chesapeake Bay, while Route 301 crosses the Potomac River into the Northern Neck of Virginia (the escape route of John Wilkes Booth).

Our family home (which recently became the victim of arsonists) was built ca. 1830, by Jeremiah Townshend—the same man who would later build the Surratt House in 1852. By the time of the Civil War, the village was well-established and significantly larger than Surrattsville. There were a good number of homes, a blacksmith shop, a grocery store, a hotel, and a post office. It was here that my great-grandfather, Joseph Eli Huntt, brought his wife and daughter to live in 1862. He took over the ownership of the store and was also appointed postmaster by Abraham Lincoln in 1863, a position he would hold until his death in 1897.

The town’s and family’s brush with infamy came in the spring of 1865. It was pretty well-known that Southern Marylanders were involved in a plot to kidnap President Lincoln in a last-ditch effort to revive the Southern cause. As part of that plot, on March 17, 1865, conspirator David Herold was sent to Surrattsville with weapons and supplies, expecting to be met there by cohorts with the captured President. As historians know, the kidnapping did not happen, and Herold decided to move on to the hotel in T.B., that was run by John Chandler Thompson. He spent the night of March 17 there and then headed back towards the city the next morning. He was met on the road by John Surratt and George Atzerodt, and they returned to the Surratts’ old tavern, where the guns were secured in a small area over the kitchen wing. The guns would remain in hiding until the night of April 14, when one was taken by Herold and Booth. The one that remained would later be crucial evidence against Mary Surratt.

According to our family stories, Herold was back in town in the late-afternoon of April 13, 1865. He had been in Charles County and was caught in a rainstorm, while heading back to the city. He stopped at Mr. Huntt’s store and asked to

sleep by the stove for warmth. Instead, being known by the family, Herold was taken to the Huntt home next door, where he dined with the family and spent the night in a downstairs bedroom. He was gone before the family arose on the morning of April 14, but left behind a nightshirt bearing the laundry mark of John Surratt, Jr. That garment is now on display at the Surratt House.

In the wee hours of April 15, Mr. and Mrs. Huntt were awake and feeding their new son, who had just been born in February. They heard horses hurrying past the house and dogs barking in the village. Mr. Huntt would learn later that day that they had likely heard Booth and Herold riding past their home. When he commented on Herold's visit to Mr. Thompson at the T.B. Hotel, he was advised to remain silent "'cause people are going to hang higher than a Georgia pine..."

I should note here that John Chandler Thompson was very likely a Southern agent and his hotel a safe house on the courier route between Richmond and Washington.\* His hotel had also had a run-in with the Yankees earlier in the war. A Confederate officer, George Emack of Prince George's County, was arrested nearby and left under guard on the porch of the hotel, while the troopers took advantage of Mr. Thompson's room for food and drink. Emack overcame his guard and managed to escape. Throughout the war, residents of the village were also subjected to routine searches of their property and routine raids of their smokehouses, crops, horses, and other livestock. Mr. Thompson would later be called to testify in the trial of the conspirators.

The village of T.B. grew slowly after the Civil War, largely because a new Brandywine City was planned a few miles east, when the railroad went through. It maintained its post office until the 1920s,

when a later postmaster absconded with federal funds. In the 1930s, a huge bus terminal was built in the village and offered food, drink, dance bands, etc., to travelers. I have had visitors to the Surratt House remark about that bus terminal during World War II. Buses out of D.C. stopped there with new recruits, as did buses of recruits coming out of Baltimore. They then went to points south for training camps. At that time, the town was referred to as T.B. Junction.

In 1942, a new high school, Gwynn Park, was built in the middle of town. It took its name from the Gwynn family, who had maintained a home and plantation there during the Civil War. Houses began to spring up in the 1950s—but, unfortunately, so did a modern, four-lane highway to replace the original Route 5. It split the village in half and required moving the old Huntt home into its adjacent sheep meadow.

When President Wilson was courting his second wife, they made frequent trips into southern Prince George's County and would fill their tank for the return trip at the Huntt store that was then run by the son-in-law and grandson. Wilson was very interested learning about the family's sheep and would later install sheep on the White House lawn.

During World War II, German prisoners of war were housed a few miles from T.B. in a former Conservation Corps camp. They were put to work on roads and other chores and often stopped at our old store to drink from the well. Mr. Huntt's grandson (my uncle) had learned fluent German, while studying at Charlotte Hall Military Academy, and the prisoners were very happy to have someone to converse with.

And what is the fate of T.B. today? There are plans for a large interchange, because its roads are so well-travelled, especially during rush hour into D.C. and

Baltimore. Its historic marker has been moved, where few can see it, and only one pre-Civil War building still remains. Another piece of history will give way to progress. My guess is that, within ten years, T.B. is not to be.

[\*Editor's Note: John Chandler Thompson of T.B. is not the same John C. Thompson, the son-in-law of Dr. William Queen, who is generally credited for introducing John Wilkes Booth to Dr. Samuel A. Mudd. Both Thompsons testified at the trial of the conspirators. The T.B. Thompson was called as a witness by the defense for Mrs. Surratt and, when asked about his loyalty to the Union, said: "I do not know that I am a competent judge of locality; I have always considered myself loyal, and I think that such has been my reputation. I have never desired the success of the Southern rebellion, and have been all time on the side of the government." Laurie would have filed that under "perjury."]