

# THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY STORY

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## **BEALL AND EDMONSTONS DISCOVERY TO WHEATON REGIONAL PARK: 1736-1994**

By Florence Bayly DeWitt Howard

Wheaton Regional Park has been in existence for more than a quarter century, but its story begins over 250 years ago, long before there was a Montgomery County. Today, as you ride north toward it along Georgia Avenue, the old Brookville Pike, you are probably quite unaware that you are on a ridge between the Rock Creek valley on the west and the Northwest Branch valley on the east and that the road is there because in early times major roads followed the ridges. You cross University Boulevard at Wheaton, once called Mitchells Crossroads, or "Mitchells X Roads" as maps showed it. A few blocks farther, a right turn on Shorefield Road leads to the entrance of Wheaton Regional Park.

As you pass through the gate, you cross an ancient north-south boundary line. On the west side were Josephs Park and Hermitage, huge land grants totaling over 8000 acres that were surveyed in 1689 when this area had no settlers and was still part of Charles County. East of the line was Beal and Edmonstons Discovery, a tract of 894 acres surveyed 24 July 1736 for William Beall and James Edmonston.<sup>1</sup> Settlers had arrived by the 1720s and the 1730s were a time of great activity in surveys and patents, as what is now Montgomery County was rapidly claimed by land speculators.

Beall and Edmonstons Discovery extended south a little beyond today's University Boulevard, where it bordered on a large tract called Labyrinth that William Beall, James Edmonston and James Beall had patented a few years earlier, in 1732. The northwest point of Beall and Edmonstons Discovery was where today Glenallan Avenue meets Randolph Road.

The northeast corner of the tract was marked by "Woodcocke's tree," a bounded white oak that was the beginning tree of 500-acre Saint Wynoxberge, surveyed in 1689 for John Woodcocke. The patent for Saint Wynoxberge describes the land as adjacent to "a great Indian field" and at the "head of a great savannah."<sup>2</sup> Most of the land was at that time a primeval forest and this evidence of a savannah is unusual. Woodcocke's tree was

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<sup>1</sup> Patents BY&GS#2, f. 238.

<sup>2</sup> Patents PL#8, f 268; C#3, f. 557.

also the beginning of the 400-acre Second Addition to Culvers Chance lying to the east of Beall and Edmonstons Discovery, along today's Kemp Mill Road. A mill was on the Northwest Branch near Woodcocke's tree at an early date.

Although surveyed in 1736, it was ten years before Beall and Edmonstons Discovery was actually patented and by that time Beall and Edmonston had made two sales of the southern portion of the tract. In 1738 Samuel Blackmore purchased 100 acres called "Blackmore's land" for 15 pounds sterling. Just west of it was "Killybegs," sometimes referred to as "Killy Bog's," the 155 acres purchased for 30 pounds by John Coffee. Coffee's land, near the head of Sligo Creek, seems to have been named for the Killybegs that lies across Donegal Bay from Sligo in northwestern Ireland.<sup>3</sup>

At an early date, Beall and Edmonstons Discovery came to be called simply "Discovery," and on 23 July 1743, William Beall Senior and James Edmonston conveyed to William Murdock, planter, for 18,759 pounds of tobacco, 268.75 acres of the northern part of the tract, "all that tract or parcell of land called Shawfield, being part of a tract Discovery."<sup>4</sup> Most of what is now Wheaton Regional Park lies within Shawfield and the part of Discovery that remained unsold at this time.

Both William Beall and James Edmonston died within a few years after receiving their patent. James Edmonston disposed of most of his share of Discovery before his death in 1753, and his will gave to his friend Samuel Blackmore "all my part of Discovery," which amounted to just 41.25 acres.<sup>5</sup>

By the time William Beall, the other patentee, died in 1756,<sup>6</sup> his son Alexander already had his part of Discovery. In 1753 "Alexander Beall of William" was listed in the Frederick County debt book, the Lord Proprietor's record of persons from whom rent was payable annually for patented land, as owning 268 acres of Discovery. Actually, it was 260 acres, but was confused with the adjoining tract.

Alexander Beall died in 1759, leaving a will stating that he had, by verbal agreement, sold his 260 acres of Discovery to George Ross, provided Ross paid 110 pounds. Obviously Ross did not, and in 1762 William Murdock, who had purchased Shawfield in 1743, bought the 260 acres of Discovery from Adam Henry and his wife Sarah Beall Henry, widow and executrix of Alexander Beall.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Prince George's County Deeds T, f. 625, 631

<sup>4</sup> Prince George's County Deeds BB#2, f.15

<sup>5</sup> Wills 28, f.448. 1753 Debt Book.

<sup>6</sup> Wills 30, f.71.

<sup>7</sup> Wills 30, f. 727. Frederick County Deeds H, f. 120.

William Murdock was the only son of Anglican Reverend George Murdock, Rector of Prince George Parish from 1726 to 1760. In 1761, William inherited his father's dwelling plantation on the tract Friends Goodwill. The 1763 debt book for Frederick County lists land owned by William Murdock for which he paid annual rent of 1 pound, 7 shillings, 2 pence:

Part of Discovery	268 acres (Shawfield)
Part of Discovery	260 acres
Friends Goodwill	150 acres

This was the last entry for William Murdock and the land was not listed in the debt books for 1764 and 1765. Apparently William died, and in 1776 we find all of William Murdock's properties listed in the name of George Murdock Junior. Although no will has been found, later records state that William Murdock bequeathed the 528 acres of Discovery to his sons William and Benjamin. George Murdock Junior, named as a grandson in the will of Reverend George Murdock in 1760, presumably was a son of William Murdock and, being of age, was holding the properties for his younger brothers, Benjamin and William Murdock.

This young William Murdock, whom for the sake of clarity we will refer to as William Murdock Junior, filed suit some years later asking that the 528 acres of Discovery be partitioned. A guardian was appointed for Benjamin, who was still a minor, and in 1772 "twelve good men" were summoned to divide the land, "regard being given to the true value of the land." William Murdock Junior received 268.75 acres, the western part called Shawfield, and Benjamin Murdock received 260 acres.<sup>8</sup> Benjamin Murdock probably was of age by 1782 when he received a patent for a tract called The Garden, 20 acres of land on the east side of his part of Discovery.<sup>9</sup>

William Murdock Junior in 1778 conveyed Shawfield, "281.5 acres," to Moses Orme for 492 pounds 12 shillings 6 pence and in his will of 1782, Moses Orme gave "Shawfields known by the name Discovery" to his wife, Priscilla (Taylor) Orme during her widowhood, and after her death to his son James Orme. Priscilla Orme was left with three sons, one married daughter and seven younger daughters, a large family.<sup>10</sup>

It is not known exactly when the Ormes moved onto the tract Shawfield but Moses Orme is listed in the 1777 Montgomery County tax list in Rock Creek Hundred with four taxables. The early owners of Discovery were residents of present-day Prince George's

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<sup>8</sup> Provincial Court Judgments DD#19, f. 353, 727.

<sup>9</sup> Patents IC#A, f. 189.

<sup>10</sup> Montgomery County Deeds A, f. 195; Estate Records B, f. 68.

County and had patented and purchased it as an investment, expecting that the land would increase in value as settlers moved into the area, which it did.

The 1783 tax assessment, legislated to raise money to pay off debts incurred by Maryland during the Revolutionary War, listed Shawfields as 285 acres, valued at a little over 248 pounds. On it were an old framed dwelling house 14 feet by 18 feet and a tobacco house, with 200 acres of the land cleared and soil described as "middling." This shows that tobacco had been grown on the land and, in addition, that the house had been there for some time. Just what the tax assessor thought was "old" at that time is not known, but housing the Orme family of two adults and eleven children in a house of 252 square feet must have been a challenge, although it probably did have a loft and a framed house was certainly a step above a log house. Nothing was found in the records to indicate that the Murdocks ever lived on the property, but it is possible that they leased it with the provision that the lessee build a house.

In 1787 William Murdock Junior, who by this time was a merchant in London, executed a deed to Priscilla Orme and her son James, which stated that Moses Orme in his lifetime contracted to purchase 281.5 acres, part of the tracts "divided between brothers William and Benjamin Murdock by virtue of a judgment in partition...all that part of said land so willed to him by his father William Murdock which was assigned to him upon the execution of the partition aforesaid." Priscilla and James Orme had paid 500 pounds for the land and it was conveyed to them.<sup>11</sup>

Benjamin Murdock sold his two tracts of land, Discovery and The Garden, to Henry Baggerly and Charles Phillips in 1786 and settled in Frederick County, where his older brother, George, was Frederick County Register of Wills and Clerk of the Court.<sup>12</sup>

When William Murdock Junior died in England, "of Upper Bedford Place Russell Square in the County of Middlesex," he left a will paying tribute to the memory of his deceased brother George Murdock, adding that "after the death of my parents and during my infancy his tender care of me and his friendly interest in my favor to the end of his life left a lasting impression of gratitude on my mind."<sup>13</sup>

The southernmost boundary of Beall and Edmonstons Discovery, below Killybegs and Blackmore's Land, on a present-day map would lie south of University Boulevard, its western end beginning just east of Dodson Lane and angling to the southeast north of Carmody Drive. The 61 acres in the southwestern corner of Discovery were acquired in

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<sup>11</sup> Montgomery County Deeds D, f. 166.

<sup>12</sup> Montgomery County Deeds C, f. 407. Frederick County Orphans Court Proceedings 1777-1805.

<sup>13</sup> Frederick County Wills HS#2, f. 397.

1758 by Dennis Madden, and after vacant adjoining land was added, he patented the tract of 203 acres in 1768 as The Swamp.<sup>14</sup> The Swamp, south of what is now Arcola Avenue, included the headwaters of Sligo Creek and what now is the northern part of Sligo Creek Park.

In 1782 Mareen Duvall, who had purchased The Swamp from Dennis Madden, petitioned the Montgomery County Court for a commission to establish the boundary lines of The Swamp. Ten years later, 13 March 1792, the proceedings were completed. The Land Commission was a state agency and it was the state that called upon "substantial and capable freeholders within the county aforesaid" to mark and bound the tract according to an Act of Assembly passed 6 November 1785. The commissioners appointed were Thomas Johns, William Bayly, Andrew Heugh, Lewis Wilcoxon and Hugh Riley. One of the men commissioned, William Bayly, did not serve. Although an owner of property in Montgomery County, formerly a deputy surveyor in Frederick County and the first surveyor of Montgomery County in 1777, he was by 1787 living in Prince George's County.

Depositions were taken and James Beall, son of James, age 61 or 62, John Lee age 56, Robert Beall age 66, Zachariah Beall age 47, Thomas Nichols, Archibald Orme age 58 (who was then County Surveyor), William Thrasher age 58, and Thomas Ditchey age 54, each testified as to what he knew about the exact location of the eastern end of the east-west line that separated Josephs Park from Hermitage. It was the eastern point of this line which was the beginning point of both Discovery and The Swamp.<sup>15</sup>

By this time the original trees marking the points had in some cases been replaced by a "heap of stones," but even their location was in dispute. On September 22 William Smith surveyed Discovery and The Swamp. His explanation of the plat pointed out that "These two tracts ... are laid down both by course and distance and by an allowance of 2.5 degrees for variation (of the compass)." The whole matter of variation of the compass does not seem to have been well understood by some surveyors and by using a "correction," the first line, which formerly ran directly north, now tilted to the west. Tilting a tract made it appear there was adjoining vacant land where none actually existed. Boundary disputes were quite frequent.

Going back again to the northern portion of the original Beall and Edmonstons Discovery, the land on which Wheaton Regional Park now lies, we find that the eastern part of Discovery and The Garden was owned by Henry Baggerly in 1788, who had purchased the half-interest of his co-owner, Charles Phillips. Henry was then about 42

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<sup>14</sup> Frederick County Deeds F, f. 406. Patents BC & GS #36, f. 138.

<sup>15</sup> Montgomery County Deeds E, f. 48.

years old and his son Hezekiah was 15. <sup>16</sup>The Montgomery County assessment record for 1793 show Henry Baggerly with 285 acres of Beall and Edmonston Discovery and 20 acres of The Garden. This 285 acres was no longer intact by 1805. Henry had sold 15 acres of Discovery to Shadrack Turner, 138 acres of Discovery to his son Hezekiah Baggerly, and his dwelling plantation, 150 acres of Discovery and 17.25 acres of The Garden, to Arnold Lashly.<sup>17</sup> As late as 1840 county tax assessment records listed the tract as owned by "Arnold Lashley's heirs."

Shawfield, the western half of the northern section of Beall and Edmonstons Discovery, was still the home of the Ormes at the time of the 1793 county tax assessment. Priscilla Orme was listed with 285 acres of Shawfield and eight slaves. By 1810, the land was assessed to her son, James Orme. James made his will in 1829, several years before his death in 1832, leaving Shawfield to his wife Rebecca during her lifetime and after her death to their three sons, Jeremiah, William and Patrick Addison Orme. He instructed his children to free his slaves when the female slaves reached the age of 30 and the male slaves at age 35.<sup>18</sup>

Rebecca Orme must have died by June 11, 1841, when William Orme and his wife Anna Maria Orme of Washington, D.C., Jeremiah Orme of George Town, D.C., and Patrick A. Orme and his wife Anna R. Orme of Baltimore sold the land. They conveyed, for \$2800, their 281.5 acres of Shawfield to Edward Stubbs. Stubbs found the description and bounds of the tract "imperfectly recited: and demanded a deed of conveyance "truly and correctly describing the said parcel." A new deed was recorded in 1843 that conveyed to Edward Stubbs of Washington "part of the two tracts of land called Shawfield and Discovery which was assigned by Judgment of Partition...in the year 1773 to William Murdock."<sup>19</sup>

Edward Stubbs, born in Ireland, had come to Washington, D.C., from Troy, New York, about 1829. He and his wife, Terzah E. Bugby, had a son William E. Stubbs, born in 1824 in New York State. Edward Stubbs was an admirer of Andrew Jackson, as was William L. Marcy, also of Troy, New York, two-term governor of this state and later Secretary of State under President Franklin Pierce. Marcy is remembered as saying, "to the victors belong the spoils," a conviction held by many at that time.<sup>20</sup> Edward, listed in the 1846

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<sup>16</sup> Montgomery County Deeds B, f 141. Census of 1776.

<sup>17</sup> Montgomery County Deeds H, f. 329; I, f. 101; M, f 385.

<sup>18</sup> Montgomery County Estate Records S, F. 383.

<sup>19</sup> Montgomery County Deeds BS#10, f. 446; BS#11, f. 605.

<sup>20</sup> Dixon Ryan Fox, The Decline of Aristocracy in the Politics of New York, 1801-1840. N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1985, p. 284.

Washington, D.C. City Directory as a clerk in the State Department, held the position of Disbursing Clerk under numerous Secretaries of State.

When Edward Stubbs' son, William E. Stubbs, was just over 19 years of age, the National Intelligencer of Washington, D.C., announced that William E. Stubbs and Catharine Anne Boyle, daughter of John Boyle, "all of this city," were married on April 18, 1843. John Boyle had married Catherine Burke, a daughter of Richard Burke who had emigrated from Ireland in 1767. The Boyle's beautiful home in Georgetown, called "retirement," was torn down long ago and the old Heurich Brewery built on the site.<sup>21</sup>

In 1844 Edward Stubbs and his wife Terza Elvira Stubbs conveyed to John Boyle, the father of his son's wife, for a token payment of five dollars, 281.5 acres of Shawfield and Discovery, with the provision that "one acre of land from this (is) for William Beckett if he shall succeed in establishing his right to the same."<sup>22</sup> Although the conveyance from the sons of James Orme to Stubbs did not mention it, in 1827 James had sold one acre of Discovery, just inside its north line, to William Beckett for \$30, the deed stating that the land was commonly called "The Old Cabbin" and was "in the tenure of said William Beckett." Beckett was able to establish his right to the land and 23 April 1845, Edward Stubbs bought the one acre from William Beckett, a "free colored man." Beckett signed his hand to the deed and his wife Verlinda signed with her mark. The same day, Edward Stubbs executed a deed conveying the one acre to John Boyle for five dollars.<sup>23</sup>

John Boyle and his wife Catherine, for one dollar, deeded 117 acres of the 281.5 acres back to Edward Stubbs. In September of 1850, Stubbs signed an agreement to sell his farm to James C. Haviland, "giving him partial possession at present and full possession of the whole on the first day of January next. When Haviland complied with all terms of the agreement, Stubbs would give him a deed conveying title. Haviland was to pay \$1750, \$200 when the agreement was signed, plus \$300 later and \$1000 in installments over a three-year period and "for the residue, board and lodging to the amount of \$250, at the rate of \$5 per week for two persons." The credit for board and lodging is most unusual. Haviland must have fulfilled the agreement; in 1853, Edward Stubbs conveyed the land to him.<sup>24</sup>

John Boyle died in 1849 still owning the southern 165.5 acres of Shawfield he had received from Edward Stubbs and in August his widow, with her children, executed a deed conveying the land to her son-in-law William E. Stubbs. The deed stated that the

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<sup>21</sup> Family notes from the late Mrs. Maud Gertrude Stubbs Culver.

<sup>22</sup> Montgomery County Deeds BS#12, f. 349.

<sup>23</sup> Montgomery County Deeds BS#1, f. 107; STS#1, f. 114, 140.

<sup>24</sup> Montgomery County Deeds STS#3, f. 550; JGH#1, f. 452; JGH#2, f. 430.

land had been held by John Boyle to secure him against "an endorsement for money borrowed for and on account of the said William E. Stubbs," the money borrowed having been repaid by William. William may have used the money to pay for construction of the home where he and Catharine Anne lived; it is believed that the home still standing in Wheaton Regional Park was built about that time.<sup>25</sup>

The 1850 census shows, in the Fifth or Berry District of Montgomery County, William E. Stubbs, farmer, born in New York; Catharine A. Stubbs, his wife, born in D.C.; and daughter Amy Stubbs and son John B. Stubbs. John Bean and John A. Bellows, listed in the household as laborers, were probably farm hands. The agricultural census for 1850, which covered the 12-month period ending June 1, 1850, shows William Stubbs with 150 improved acres and 132 unimproved acres, valued at \$2500. In addition, he had farm implements and machinery valued at \$345 and livestock, including 3 horses, mules, 6 cows, 2 oxen, and 11 swine, valued at \$810. The farm produced 20 tons of hay, 100 bushels of wheat, 27 of rye, 450 of "Indian corn," 250 of oats, 100 of Irish potatoes, and 550 pounds of butter. The total of 282 acres seems to indicate that William was farming not only his own 165.5 acres but the 117 acres owned then by his father, Edward Stubbs.

Beginning in 1854 William E. Stubbs listed his income and expenditures in a record book which he kept for the rest of his life. He recorded in meticulous detail every cent spent and earned, whether concerning property in Washington, D.C., or for the farm in Montgomery County. The items include his salary as a clerk in the State Department, as well as receipts from farm produce and animals sold, especially horses. He paid to have the piano tuned, purchased clover seed and guano from "J. Stabler," also a scythe, a bush hook and a mosquito bar (a mosquito net). He listed loans from his father, Edward, and from others, including a Washington neighbor and fellow Democrat, William Fletcher Bayly, who had a wholesale stationary business on Pennsylvania Avenue. In 1858 Stubbs paid \$2.50 to the "Jackson Association" and \$2.50 for "Expenses to Fair." When Democrat James Buchanan was elected President in November of 1856, Stubbs lost \$4 and won \$47.50 on bets. William E. Stubbs was a subscriber to the National Inauguration Ball on March 4, 1857, as were his brothers-in-law Cornelius Boyle and Junius Boyle.<sup>26</sup>

During the years that William E. Stubbs was employed in the State Department, he and his family maintained a residence at the farm in Montgomery county and a residence in Washington at 322 K Street, North, where he was a neighbor of Edwin M. Stanton. When hostilities broke out at the beginning of the Civil War and troops arrived in the city, the

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<sup>25</sup> Montgomery County Deeds STS#4, f. 414.

<sup>26</sup> Account books of William E. Stubbs and of William Fletcher Bayly, Treasurer of the Inaugural Ball Committee, privately owned.

quiet neighborhood became full of the noise of drilling, bugling and drumming. The encampment in Franklin Square and surrounding regimental hospitals made the neighborhood so unpleasant that Mr. Stanton was obliged to move his family out of their house on K Street.<sup>27</sup>

About this time, the Stubbs family made their Montgomery county farm their full-time residence, and their friend William F. Bayly moved to Baltimore. Both families, being Democrats and with close relatives who favored the South, had reason to be concerned about staying in Washington. Stubbs' brother-in-law, Doctor Cornelius Boyle, had gone South and William F. Bayly's son had joined the Confederacy. For the Stubbs family, affairs at the farm became the center of attention. The farm had acquired a name, being identified as "Avon" in 1861 when the house was insured for \$3500 by Aetna Insurance Company against loss or damage by fire.<sup>28</sup> In 1862 William E. Stubbs was among those men of Montgomery County examined for military service in the Union Army by Dr. E. E. Stonestreet but was exempted from service for "rupture of capsular ligament" (Capsule that surrounds joints).<sup>29</sup>

Martenet & Bond's 1865 map of Montgomery County shows the Stubbs' house, with James Havelin to the north, nearer what was then Old Annapolis Road, now named Randolph Road. Today Glenallan Avenue runs through the land Haviland purchased. In the interests of accuracy, it should be noted here that although the map designates the Stubbs property as that of Edward Stubbs and he probably did live there, it was owned by William E. Stubbs.

William E. Stubbs died in 1866, only 42 years old, and left his widow Catharine Anne with a large family of young children. When Catharine was appointed guardian of her six unmarried children, Charles B. Bayly of Baltimore was one of the sureties on her bond. The inventory of William E. Stubbs' estate describes the farm at that time:

"One frame dwelling, in good condition 40 ft by 36, containing 12 rooms; one back building containing 3 rooms; one tenant house; one Blacksmith shop; one Barn 40 ft by 40; one Corn House; one Chicken house; one log Dairy. The orchard contains a few trees, peaches and apples, in an unthrifty condition. The land is in a tolerable state of cultivation, 4 fields containing about 80 acres and the balance

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<sup>27</sup> Boyd's Washington City Directory, 1860. Margaret Leech: Reveille in Washington 1860-1865. N.Y.: Harper & Brothers, 1941, p. 75.

<sup>28</sup> Copy of policy from Park & Planning Commission Historian.

<sup>29</sup> List of Exemptions from Military Duty Granted by Dr. E. E. Stonestreet, Examining Surgeon, Enrollment Record 1862, Maryland State Archives, MdHR 4336-4340.

85.75 acres in pine wood. The fencing in bad condition; there is no meadow or garden. We estimate the annual rent at \$150."<sup>30</sup>

The personal estate was appraised for a total value of \$1548.50, which included farm animals and equipment, corn, rye and hay. Furniture for each room of the house was listed, the parlor marble-top table, parlor stove, and 75 yards of parlor carpeting being typical of the times. There were nine bedrooms.<sup>31</sup> The widow Catharine was to receive one-third of the personal estate and the remainder was to be divided among the seven children.

Catharine Stubbs continued to live in the farmhouse on what was now called Avon, although 65 acres of it was sold for taxes at an auction in 1879. With her were her unmarried daughter, Rose, and two motherless granddaughters, Marie Louise Stubbs and Maud Gertrude Stubbs, daughters of Edward Cornelius Stubbs. These two young girls were joined during the summer months by two of the younger daughters of family friends Charles B. Bayly, who had returned to Washington with his family. A life-long warm friendship developed between the Stubbs girls and the Bayly girls, one whom, Clara Glendora Bayly, known as "Glen," was my mother.

Mrs. Catharine A. Stubbs died in 1897 and in an equity case filed in 1903, the court ordered that the property be sold and proceeds divided among her heirs. Trustees advertised it in the Montgomery county Sentinel in June of 1908 as being 100 acres, more or less, improved by a large and commodious frame dwelling containing twelve rooms, besides large hall, kitchen, pantry and necessary outbuildings, with a well at the residence and a fine spring within about 100 yards. It was sold July 11, 1908, to Edward Cornelius Stubs, the highest bidder at \$5000.<sup>32</sup>

Edward C. Stubbs died December 12, 1928 at his Wheaton home but his heirs lived there another seven years, until 1935, before finally selling the land that had been owned by the Stubbs family for nearly 100 years.

The period after World War II saw a rapid population growth in the Wheaton area, as subdivisions were built and business expanded. To accommodate increased traffic, Georgia Avenue was widened to six lanes and officially opened in 1952. Wheaton Plaza was underway in 1959. Old Bladensburg Road had been renamed University Boulevard and was widened. The area east of Georgia Avenue did not develop as rapidly as other areas because no trunk sewer line had been extended up the Northwest Branch valley,

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<sup>30</sup> Montgomery County Inventories RWC#4, f. 92.

<sup>31</sup> Montgomery County Inventories RWC#2, f. 249.

<sup>32</sup> Montgomery County Equity #2035, JLB#6, f. 1.

which made large lot sizes necessary. The area north of Arcola Avenue and east of Nairn Road was still open fields and second growth woodland, except for the few houses abutting Arcola Avenue.

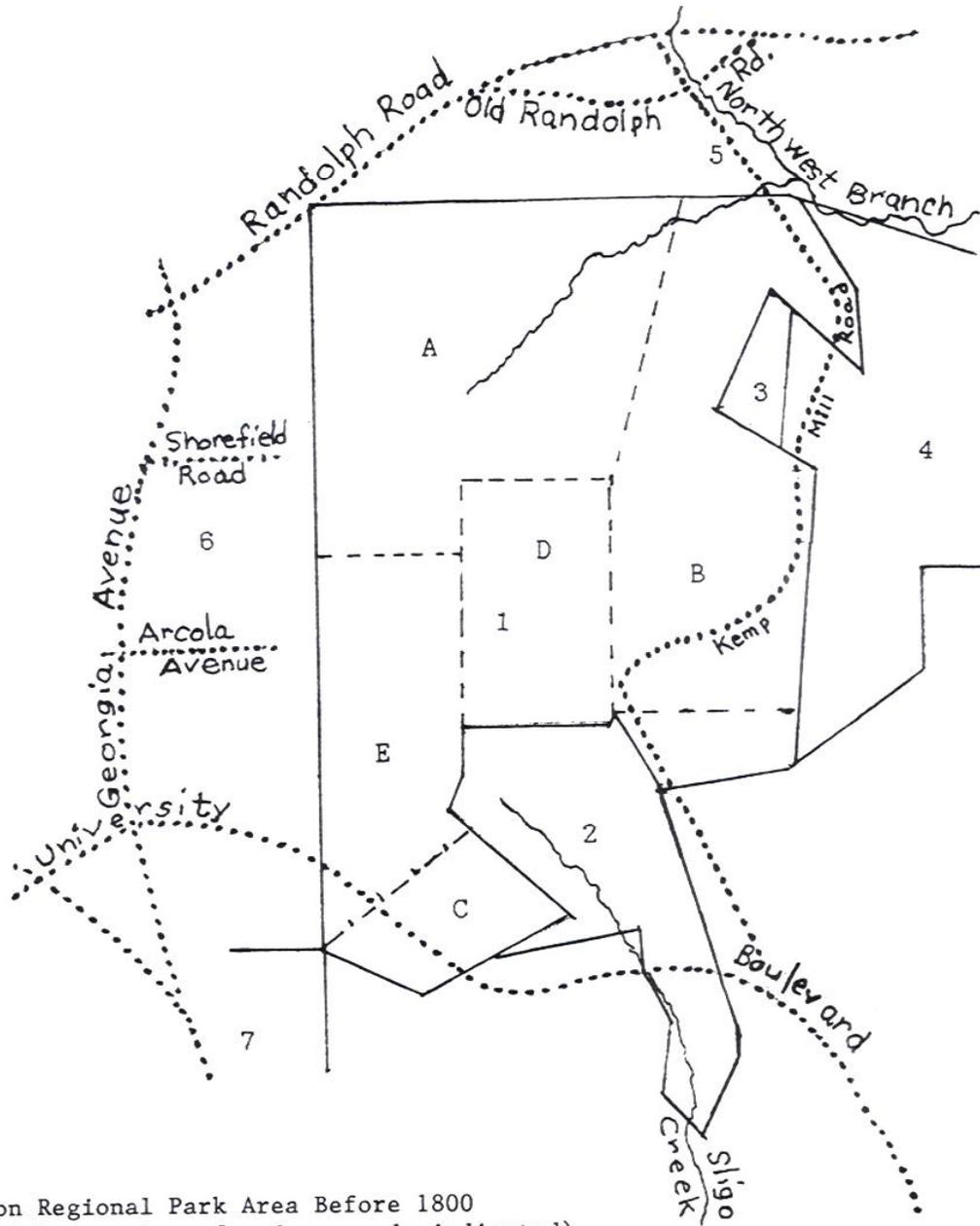
The Park and Planning Commission had the foresight, before the price of land shot sky-high, to begin to institute acquisition of acreage north of Arcola Avenue for a large park to maintain some open space. Under the leadership of John P. Hewitt, Director, the Parks Department of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission purchased 37 parcels of land with a total of 306 acres acquired or placed under option by 1959.

The grounds near the Stubbs house were developed into a playground and picnic area, with a much-admired old airplane fitted with a sliding board. A children's farm, "Old MacDonald's Farm," was built, although closed in later years. In time, a camp site, ballfields, ice-skating rink, tennis courts, a riding stable, a miniature train and carousel were installed, a nature center was established. The renowned Brookside Gardens, opened in 1969 were developed under the able direction of horticulturist Carl Hahn and landscape architect Hans E. Hanes. The acquisition of the old Stadler Nursery property extended its boundaries and special gardens were laid out: rose garden, azalea garden, fragrance garden, winter garden, butterfly garden, aquatic garden and the Gude Garden, which had a lake and a Japanese Tea House, to name a few. Fine specimen trees were planted. A week of special programs and entertainment was held during September of this year to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Brookside Gardens.

During the first years of Wheaton Park's existence, Stanton Ernst was in charge and lived on the second floor of the old Stubbs house. The two old ladies, both about 80 years old, who had been girlhood friends, Maud Stubbs Culver, and Clara Glendora Bayly Dewitt, visited their dearly beloved Avon and were delighted to walk through the downstairs rooms and relive wonderful memories of the days of their youth, of picnics, visits to baseball games in Wheaton, horseback riding and all that farm life offered. The old house was changed, with brick placed over the frame exterior, but the big rooms with ceilings over ten feet high on the first floor and over nine feet high on the second, the wide hall and stairway to the third floor were much as they had been long ago.

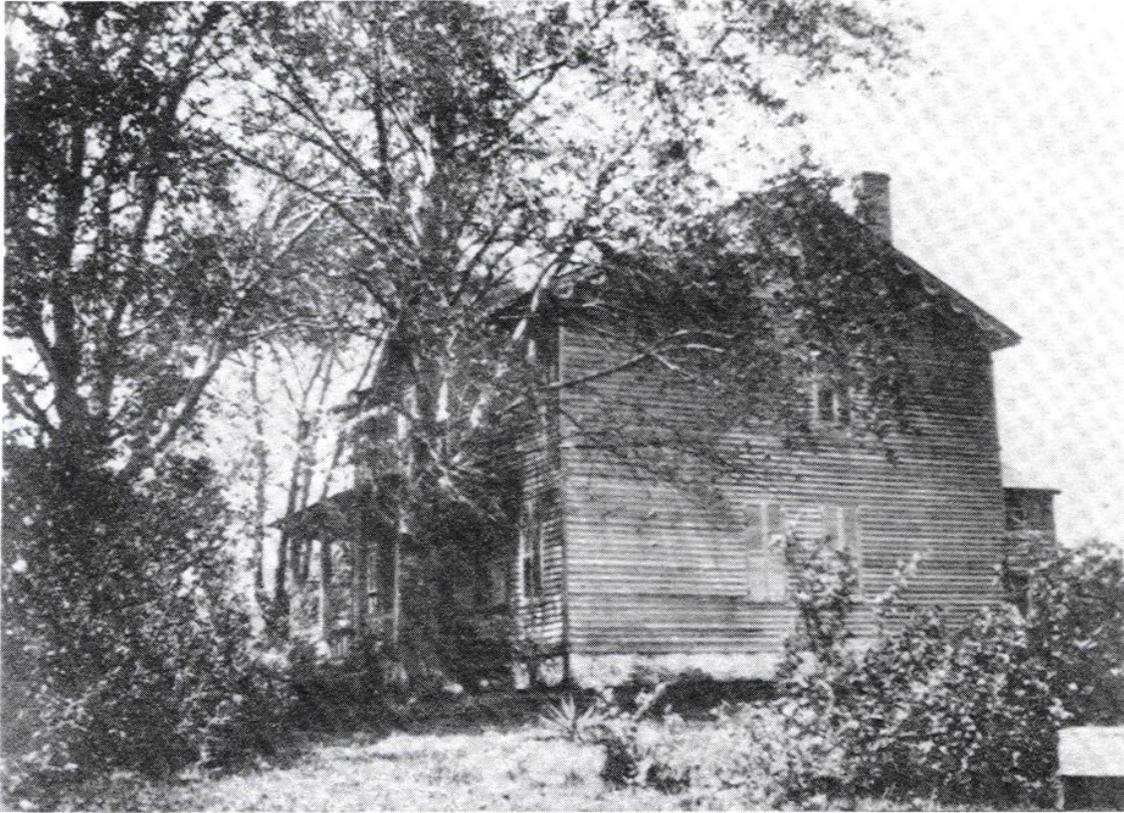
Many families have lived on this land that was once Beall and Edmonstons Discovery: three generations of Ormes, four generations of Stubbs, and so many other families. Today the land belongs to the residents of Montgomery County and is visited by people from far and near. It has become our treasure and part of our heritage, to be cared for and enjoyed and passed on to future generations.

Florence Bayly DeWitt Howard, a native of Washington, D.C., lived in Montgomery County in her youth and returned there with her husband in 1947. A former Maryland schoolteacher, she is now working with Sheila Cochran and Mary Charlotte Crook on a map of early Montgomery County land tracts.



Wheaton Regional Park Area Before 1800  
 (with location of modern roads indicated)

1. Beall and Edmonstons Discovery, patent 1748, 894 acres
  - A. Part to William Murdock, Shawfield, 268-3/4 acres
  - B. Part to Benjamin Murdock, Discovery, 260 acres
  - C. Part included in The Swamp, 61 acres
  - D. Blackmore's Land, 100 acres
  - E. Killybegs, 155 acres
2. The Swamp (with C), patent 1788, 203 acres
3. The Garden, patent 1782, 20 acres
4. Second Addition to Culvers Chance, patent 1743, 400 acres
5. Saint Wynoxberge, patent 1695, 500 acres
6. Hermitage, patent 1689, 3866 acres
7. Josephs Park, patent 1705, 4220 acres



The Stubbs Family Home in 1906



The Log Dairy House on the Farm