

AN INTERESTING CAREER

THE LIFE AND WORK OF
LUTHER GIDDINGS
(1823-1884)



by
John Eric Fredland

Cover photograph of painted portrait of Major Luther Giddings (c. 1847)
courtesy of Brunk Auctions, Asheville, North Carolina.

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L. Giddings

FOREWORD

In February 1869, Luther Giddings bought a 225-acre farm just west of Annapolis in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. The land was bounded by a line that ran along today's Rowe Boulevard, then along the boundary with Strawberry Hill Farm (now part of Perry Circle in the U.S. Naval Academy), through the center of Shady Lake and along the shore of the Severn River to Horseshoe Point, and continued along the shore and finally up Weems Creek to the present Rowe Boulevard bridge. This land already had a long history from the first patent to John Norwood in 1650 through ownership by some of the most prominent families in Anne Arundel County, including those of Andrew Norwood, John Beale, John Weems, and Jonathan Pinkney. But it was with the ownership by Luther Giddings that changes began which would ultimately lead to the incorporation of the Village of West Annapolis in 1890, the subdivision of Wardour Bluffs in 1907 and annexation of the whole area into the City of Annapolis in 1951.

When we started the West Annapolis Heritage Partnership in 2012, we wanted to expand on the history of our area begun in the booklet, *Listening to Our Trees, A Walking Tour of West Annapolis and Wardour*. As we collected information about Giddings Avenue or wondered why there is a Monterey Avenue or visited the tomb of Major Giddings in St. Anne's Cemetery, we wondered, who was this Giddings and how did he get to our neighborhood? A little research indicated that this Major Luther Giddings had, indeed, had "An Interesting Career" and that his life had definitely shaped our community.

In talking about the significance of Luther Giddings, our neighbor, Eric Fredland, retired professor from the nearby United States Naval Academy, offered to look into the historic record. The further he went, the more connections he found between English-born Luther and the Annapolis of the mid- to late 19th century. A graduate of St. John's College, a member of St. Anne's Church, married in Annapolis to a member of the Randall family, Giddings worked in a number of locations in

downtown Annapolis and lived at various times in the Bordley-Randall House on State Circle, the Voorhees House on Duke of Gloucester Street, the Jonas Green House on Charles Street and on his farms at Round Bay and also in the Epping Forest area, as well as in his home, Cerralvo Cottage, on Horse Shoe Point Farm - now West Annapolis.

Publication of this biography was made possible by a grant from the Four Rivers Heritage Area with matching funds contributed by the West Annapolis Business Affiliation, the Wardour Improvement Association, the West Annapolis Civic Association, and by donors and merchants listed at the back of the booklet. Putting together the story of Luther Giddings has been a community effort and we want to thank all who have contributed to this project.

Virginia Vroblesky and Constance Ramirez
West Annapolis Heritage Partnership

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is easy to have ideas but much harder to carry them out. I had a lot of help. Major assistance was provided by Jane Wilson McWilliams, author of *Annapolis: City on the Severn*, who helpfully provided some of her own research and also information about Annapolis and Maryland politics in Luther's time. Jane read and critiqued the manuscript several times, saved me from significant errors, and suggested avenues for further work to strengthen the paper. Important help was also provided by Catherine Randall, who made available transcriptions from the extensive diaries of her ancestor, Alexander Randall. Alexander was a relation by marriage and a close friend of Luther's. The diaries provide much information about the Giddings family unavailable from any other sources. Virginia Vroblesky and Constance Ramirez read and expertly critiqued several drafts. Research on the Maryland agricultural records at the University of Maryland was provided by John Gentry, UMD MHP 2013.

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Eric Fredland
Annapolis, MD

June 2015

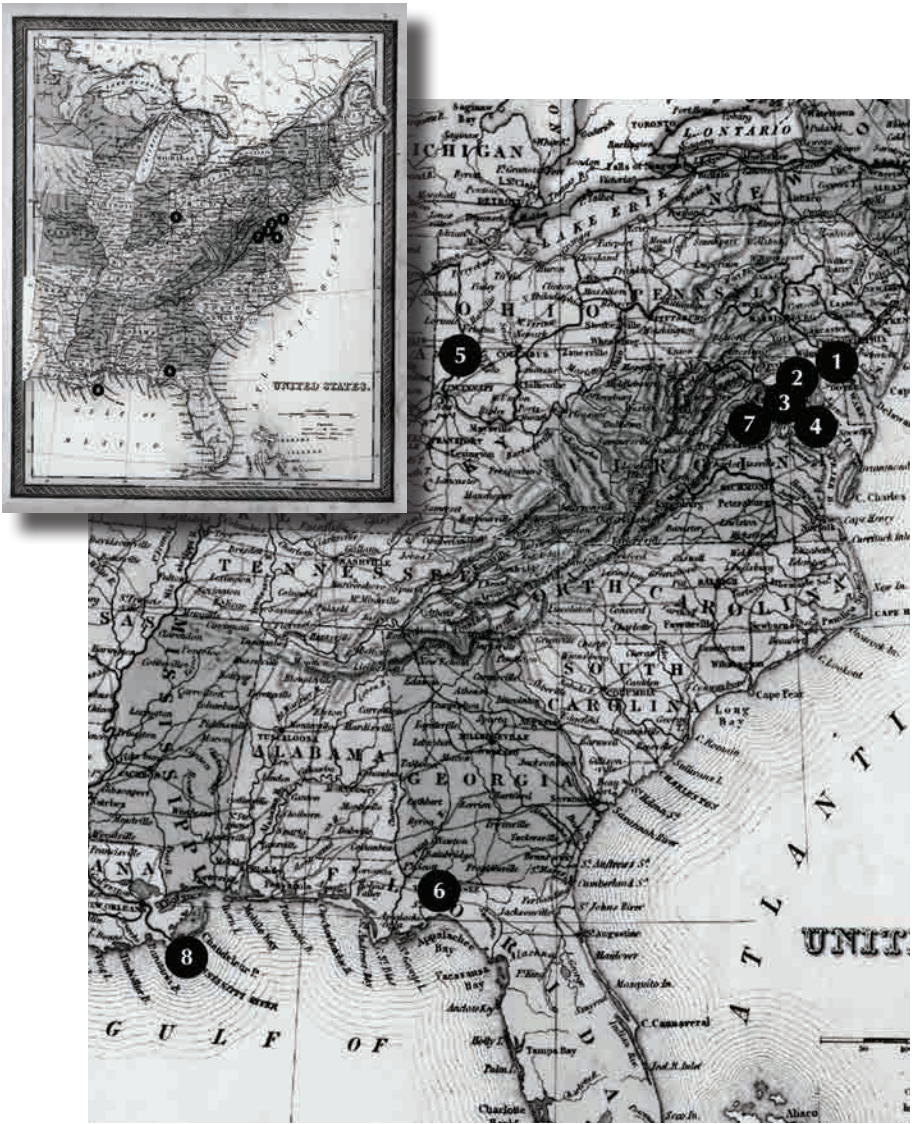



Fig. 1 - This Map of 1847 from *S. Augustus Mitchell's Universal Atlas of 1849* shows the places Mitchell shows the places where Giddings traveled during his life, including (1) Baltimore; (2) Frederick; (3) Petersville; (4) Annapolis; (5) Dayton; (6) Tallahassee; (7) Loudoun County, VA; and (8) the Mississippi River which he traveled down on his way to fight in the Mexican-American War. (Source: Library of Congress)

THE LIFE AND WORK OF LUTHER GIDDINGS (1823–1884) WHOSE FARM BECAME WEST ANNAPOLIS

Luther Giddings, whose farm later became West Annapolis and Wardour, was a multitalented, energetic individual who reinvented himself several times. He was a farmer for most of his adult life, and he was also an attorney, a soldier in the Mexican War, a published author, an elected politician in two different states, a government bureaucrat, the proprietor of the then largest winery in Maryland, a corporate officer (of the Annapolis and Baltimore Short Line Railroad and of two Annapolis banks), a newspaper editor, and a journalist. On at least one occasion, he was paid as a printer¹ and finally, he might reasonably be characterized as a land speculator, as he bought and sold numerous pieces of property. He married twice, both times to women from prominent Annapolis families. And he was only 60 when he died! A long obituary in the *Baltimore Sun* was aptly titled, “An Interesting Career: The Story of the Life and Work of the Late Luther Giddings.”²

EARLY YEARS

Luther was born May 29, 1823 in Cornwall, England ³ the second son of James and Susanna Giddings.⁴ This was a second marriage for Susanna. Her first husband, Richard Beckel, died about 1819. The Giddings household included her son, Daniel Beckel,⁵ ten years older than Luther. Daniel grew up to be a highly successful, entrepreneurial adult who played an important role in Luther's life. James and Susanna had three sons in addition to Luther, but the younger two apparently did not survive infancy. James, his stepson, Daniel, and his two surviving sons, William (b. 1821) and Luther, emigrated to the United States in 1829,⁶ first settling in Baltimore.⁷ There is no record

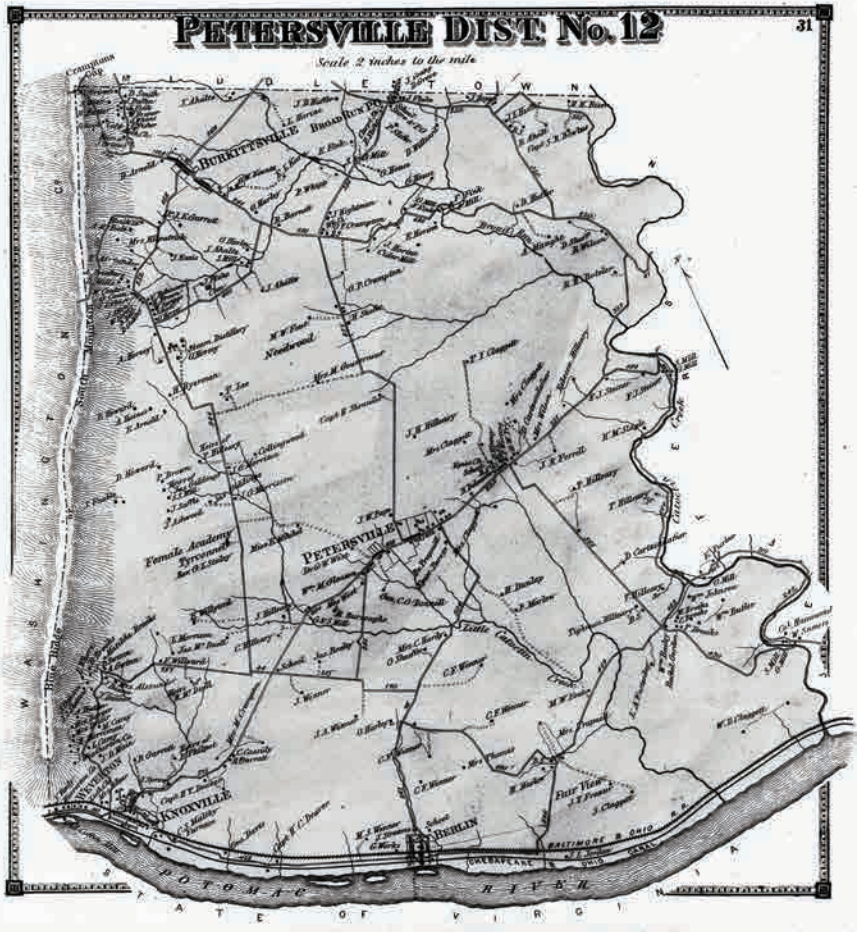


Fig. 2 - The property of James Giddings (Luther's father) is indicated on this map of the Petersville District, in the southwest corner of Frederick County, Maryland, just north of the Potomac River and the C & O Canal, from D. J. Lake's Atlas of Frederick County, MD, 1873.



that Susanna accompanied them, and it seems likely that she had died by then.⁸ Why James decided to emigrate can only be a matter of speculation, but economic opportunity was certainly an important part of his motivation. He was a civil engineer at a time when civil engineering was a new profession; there were very few experienced civil engineers in the United States at the time,⁹ and the rapidly expanding American transportation system—both rail and canal—meant that there was great demand for their expertise. James was initially hired to work on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. B&O engineers went to England to study railroads for seven months, beginning in October 1828, when ground was broken for the railroad.¹⁰ James likely became aware of the opportunities through contact with them during that period and perhaps was recruited then. In the United States with stepson Daniel as his assistant, he worked as a contractor on the B&O Railroad until 1835.¹¹ B&O construction moved steadily westward, reaching Frederick in December 1831, and Harper's Ferry in 1834. In 1834, James was a contractor on the Lateral Railroad, a branch line extending south from the B&O line to Washington DC, which opened in 1835.¹² In 1834, he also performed on two contracts awarded by the U.S. War Department related to the upgrading of the Cumberland Road (also called the National Road) east of the Ohio River.¹³ In the mid-1830s, engineering contract work took James and Daniel farther west, to Ohio. In late 1835, they were working on the Sandy and Beaver Canal—a project to connect the Ohio Canal with the Ohio River; in 1836, Giddings had a contract to build a section of the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad; in 1837 or 1838, the firm of Giddings, Stepson and Hottsbecker began contract work on the St. Mary's Reservoir on the Miami Canal in Mercer County, Ohio. That project was not completed until 1845, and James was there at least through 1840.¹⁴ In the 1840 Census, James was the head of a household of 13 people in Mercer County. Nine were young men in their 20s, of whom Daniel was undoubtedly one.¹⁵

At some point during his contract work for the B&O, James met Louisa Catherine Johnson of Frederick, whom he married on June 17, 1833. Louisa was probably related to a

large and distinguished Frederick County family that included among others, Thomas Johnson, the first governor of the state of Maryland. Exactly where she fits in that family has not been discovered. Born in 1802, she was probably named after Louisa Catherine Johnson who, in 1797, married John Quincy Adams, the future President.¹⁶ James and Louisa had three daughters and two sons, all born in Maryland between 1834 and 1845, giving Luther and William additional half-siblings.¹⁷ It appears that James was away from his family much of the time from 1835 to 1840. Luther and his brother doubtless lived with their stepmother and her family, until they went away together to St. John's College in Annapolis. What, or who, led them to St. John's is unknown, although Louisa's family had close Annapolis connections. At least one of her cousins, and probably more family members, had graduated from St. John's in the early 1800s. The student body at St. John's was very small at the time—William and Luther were two of the five graduates in the class of 1841.¹⁸

Shortly after James and Louisa were married, they purchased property in Frederick County, where the growing family probably lived, although James was often gone. In 1841, James had apparently become wealthy enough from his contract work to buy a more substantial Frederick County property near the unincorporated town of Petersville and settled there with his family. The property, a large farm described as “the old estate of Covington,” was actually closer to Weverton (also unincorporated), a town founded by Caspar Wever, at one time the chief construction engineer for the B&O.¹⁹ James, Louisa, and family appeared in the 1850 and subsequent Federal Censuses in Petersville. James died there in 1872 and is buried in nearby St. Marks Apostolic Church cemetery.²⁰ In addition to farming, he was appointed a District Justice of the Peterville Election District in 1843. In 1846, he formed a corporation to buy some property in Harper's Ferry, only about a mile from his farm, where he built two mills that produced cotton goods from 1848 until 1854. He was on the Board of Directors of the Western Telegraph Company, organized in 1848, which ran a line from Baltimore

to Wheeling via Harper's Ferry, with branches to Frederick and Washington. In 1849, he was one of those authorized to raise subscriptions for the building of the Hillsborough and Harper's Ferry Turnpike, and about 1850, he and C.F. Brown formed Brown, Giddings & Co. to sell hydrocarbon gas to be used for lighting.²¹

Although James returned to Maryland when he finished the firm's contract work on the St. Mary's Reservoir, Daniel Beckel, Luther's older half-brother, did not. By age thirty he had already amassed considerable wealth from working with his stepfather James. He moved to Dayton, Ohio, a rapidly growing city just south of the reservoir project, and soon became a prominent citizen. In 1845, he married Susannah Harshman and together they raised a family of 12 children. He was among the founders of the first bank in Dayton, built and operated the Beckel House hotel, built the opera house, and at various times was involved in numerous businesses: woolens, flour, lumber, insurance, and the construction and operation of railroads and turnpikes. He was twice elected to the Ohio House of Representatives.²²

Luther, following graduation from St. John's, studied law with "the distinguished Judge Hunter" of Charles Town, Virginia, probably Andrew Hunter, who later was the prosecutor in the John Brown trial.²³ In 1844 he went to Dayton, where his half-brother was already becoming well established. Luther was admitted to the Ohio bar and began practicing law. He also joined the local militia and became Captain of the Dayton Dragoons, or cavalry.²⁴

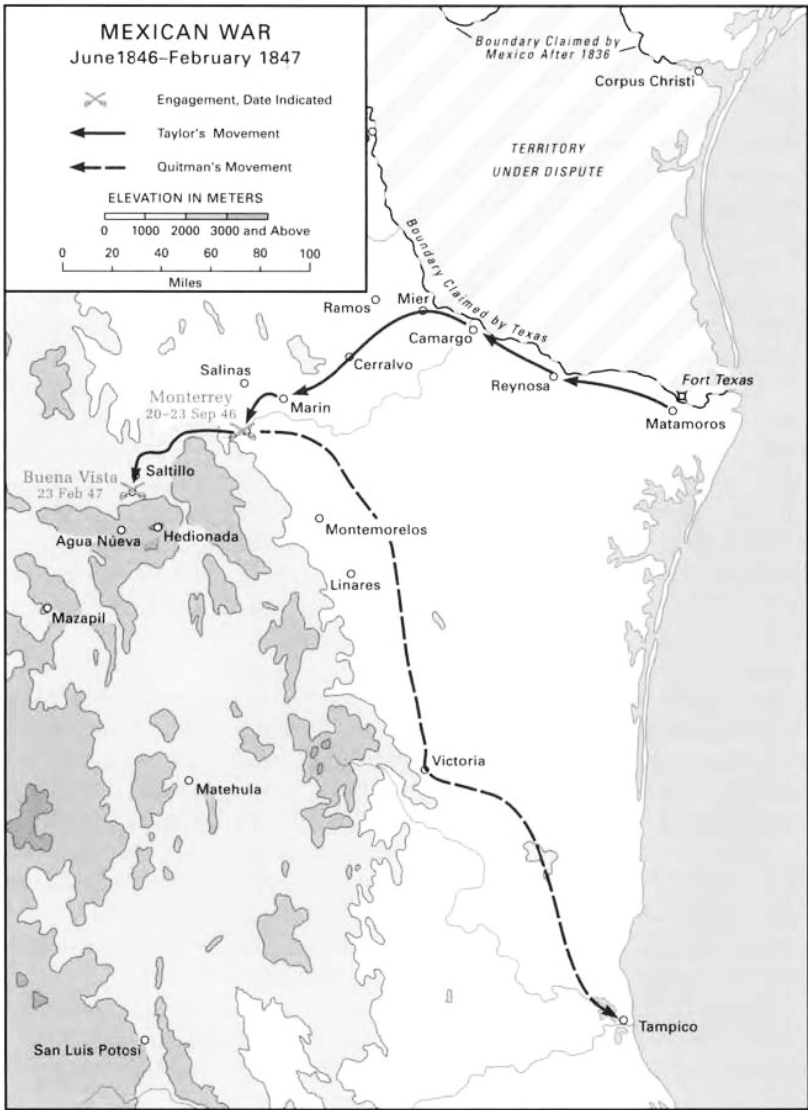



Fig. 3 - Map of the Mexican American War sites. As part of Taylor's forces, Giddings fought in the Battle of Monterey and saw action at Cerralvo.

MEXICAN WAR SERVICE

In May 1846, the United States declared war on Mexico over issues related to the newly annexed state of Texas and to the possible annexation of California. Mexico officially still considered Texas a province in rebellion. In summer 1845, President Polk sent General Zachary Taylor and a  regular army troops to the Rio Grande River, effectively claiming for Texas the area between the Nueces and Rio Grande rivers. Hostilities began in late April 1846 when a Mexican army detachment crushed an American patrol, killing 16.

The annexation of Texas, a new slave state, was not popular, particularly in non-slave states, including Ohio, but when American soldiers were killed, patriotic support for war was strong. On May 13, Congress declared war and agreed to the President's request for ten million dollars and fifty thousand volunteers.²⁵ Ohio's initial quota was 3,000 men to serve for one year. Ohio had more volunteers than the quota, and many were sent home to await a further call later in the war. In Dayton, an enthusiastic public meeting was held on May 21, 1846, during which Captain Giddings of the Dayton Dragoons, among others, made patriotic remarks. The Governor of Ohio ordered that members of the militia were to be given the first opportunity to volunteer. Dayton was to provide two companies, and further recruiting helped fill out the ranks. Upon learning that the government was not interested in cavalry, the Dayton Dragoons reorganized themselves as the Dayton Riflemen. This unit, some 77 men under Luther's command, was designated as Company B in the First Regiment of the Ohio Volunteer Infantry. With much fanfare, they left Dayton for Camp Washington, near Cincinnati, on June 4, 1846.²⁶

The 30 companies of volunteers from all across Ohio, which were to make up three regiments, reported to Camp Washington as soon as they were formed. The First Regiment of Ohio Volunteer Infantry, consisting of ten companies from southern Ohio, was organized at Camp Washington on June 23, 1846. The regimental commander, selected by the company

officers, was Colonel Alexander Mitchell, with Lieutenant Colonel John Weller and Major Thomas Hamer as second and third in command, respectively. Major Hamer, a highly popular, competent politician who later proved to be a competent military officer as well, was promoted to Brigadier General. He took command of the Ohio Brigade (all three regiments) and Captain Luther Giddings was selected to take his place as regimental Major. Outfitting and training, such as it was, took place in June, and by the 4th of July, the troops were on boats headed down the Mississippi for New Orleans. From there they went by boat to the front.²⁷

The Ohio Brigade, along with other volunteer units, joined Zachary Taylor's regulars on the Rio Grande in late July. In early September, Taylor took a force of some 6,000—half of them volunteers, including the First Ohio—to advance on the city of Monterey, a strongly defended citadel. The Battle of Monterey began September 21, 1846. The First Ohio was part of the assault force in the center of the American line. At one point it endured destructive cross fire, suffering a number of casualties. As Colonel Mitchell was severely wounded, Lieutenant Colonel Weller assumed command. He led a tactical withdrawal, interrupted by the need to fight off mounted Mexican Lancers charging after them. Over the next two days, the American forces regrouped and attacked. On September 25, the Mexican force surrendered, and Taylor's army secured the city. The First Ohio, a raw volunteer unit, had apparently distinguished itself, although there was some dispute about that. A unit of Baltimore volunteers claimed that Ohio and Kentucky volunteers had shown cowardice. Luther wrote a vigorous defense, suggesting that if anything, the reverse was true.²⁸

In the weeks that followed, there was much illness in camp. Lieutenant Colonel Weller became ill and had to step down from command temporarily. With the wounded Colonel Mitchell and others, he returned to the United States and Luther became the regimental commander. Taylor's army later advanced toward Buena Vista, where it was to encounter a larger Mexican force.²⁹ The First Ohio regiment was left as a garrison force in

the city of Monterey. Luther, as both soldier and lawyer, was the commandant and also the Chief Justice of Monterey.³⁰

In early 1847, lack of news created anxiety in Washington regarding General Taylor's Buena Vista campaign. On March 3, two messengers arrived at Monterey carrying dispatches from Buena Vista on their way to Washington. Luther was ordered to escort them to Camargo, on the Rio Grande, a distance of about 120 miles through territory not controlled by American forces. Three companies from the First Ohio and two companies from a Kentucky regiment, plus two gun squads—a total of about 250 men—were selected to be the escort unit. Surprisingly, as far as Luther was concerned at least, the force was also tasked at the last moment with escorting an empty wagon train—150 wagons and drivers, and some 700 animals—to the rear to retrieve supplies. His troops met and defeated a much larger Mexican force at Cerralvo on March 7.³¹ Major Giddings received, and deserved, great credit. A contemporary news item noted:

We are indebted to a friend of Major Giddings for a copy of his official report to Col. Mitchell, detailing the particulars of the fight with the Mexicans at Seralvo. Major G. with his brief experience in the field was more than a match in tactics, for "three Mexican generals," having a force six times greater than his own! These men behaved nobly through all the discouragements under which they fought, and the fact that they were ultimately successful, proves the skill and presight of their commander, as well as their own³²

The wagons were able to move on to Camargo, pick up supplies, and return to Monterey. At Camargo, both Colonel Mitchell and Lieutenant Colonel Weller rejoined the First Ohio and resumed command. For the next two months in Monterey, Luther resumed his duties as a lawyer, as well as remaining regimental Major. The regiment mustered out and traveled home in June 1847, at the end of their one-year enlistment.³³

Luther wrote a book about his experiences, *Sketches of the Campaign in Northern Mexico in Eighteen Hundred Forty-*

Six and Seven, By an Officer of the First Regiment of Ohio Volunteers, published in 1853 and still cited today in books and articles on the Mexican War. It is a chatty account of daily activities of the troops—hardships, tragedies, triumphs and often amusing anecdotes, as well as a detailed description of the battle of Monterey. The book is full of literary and classical allusions—his St. John’s education stood him well. He never explicitly mentioned becoming regimental commander. In fact, in narrating the events relating to the escort of the wagon train, he always referred to himself as “the commander” taking various actions or issuing orders. There are descriptions of terrain and towns; lengthy opinions (often, but not always negative) regarding the Mexican people and troops, and opinions (always negative) on the ways the Mexican government and the Catholic Church had mismanaged the country. For example:

An industrious, well-governed people could make the valley [the Rio Grande Valley] “stand so thick with corn that it would laugh and sing.” But the Mexicans, naturally indolent, are oppressed by a government that fosters neither agriculture nor any of the productive arts which are the surest source of public and individual prosperity. Nay so far from encouraging enterprise, it imposes severe restrictions upon it, and, together with an avaricious priesthood, is continually sapping what little of energy yet remains among the people (p. 52)

There are few comments on politics or on domestic criticism of the war but Luther clearly showed the disdain, perhaps characteristic of soldiers on the front lines, for opinions of those who were not so directly involved. For example:

“Stars” and “Torchlights,” or other equally luminous and rabid anti-war prints published in Ohio; whose editors, not content with opposing the cause of their country, engaged in the pitiful business of abusing those who dared not only to differ from them, but to take part in the strife. (p. 68)

He was particularly vigorous in his defense of Taylor, who was sharply criticized for treating the Mexicans who surrendered at Monterey too favorably:

Certainly the capitulation was sufficiently honorable to our arms, and humiliating to the foe. Many mustang heroes and militia generals, both in and out of Congress, and even the Cabinet of Mr. Polk, have condemned General Taylor for acceding to it, – one of the most humane and politic strokes of war that distinguished the campaign. By its terms we gained all that could have been acquired by a further assault, save more blood, and a repetition of those horrors from which I have not attempted to raise the veil. (p. 208)

The 24-year-old English immigrant was a war hero in Dayton. Along with the citizens of Dayton, the rank and file presented him a jeweled sword in appreciation of his conduct as acting colonel of the regiment.³⁴ He wished to reenlist, but his application arrived too late.³⁵ Perhaps because he received a land grant in return for his service, he became a farmer, as well as an attorney.

He also became embroiled in the complicated and divisive politics of the day. His sympathies lay with the broad Whig Party advocacy of market-oriented economic growth, and vigorous, government-funded expansion of infrastructure (roads and canals), public schools, and other national programs. He ran for public office as a Whig, and was elected as a Montgomery County representative to the Ohio legislature in 1848.³⁶ He campaigned for Zachary Taylor, the Whig Party candidate, who was elected President in 1848.³⁷ The Whig Party was badly divided though, on two related issues: the war and slavery. Whigs, particularly those from the north, had opposed the war with Mexico as an imperialistic land grab, while the Democratic Party of President Polk focused on the “Manifest Destiny” of the country. Part of Whig opposition to the war was based on the concern that expanding borders would lead to dispute over expanding slavery into the new territories. Most southern Whigs were slave owners; many northern Whigs were indifferent to

the issue, but some were strongly abolitionist.³⁸ Luther certainly favored the war, at least after the attack on American troops. In speaking to his fellow soldiers on the occasion of the receipt of the sword presented to him, as noted above, he gave a scathing denunciation of those who in his view, after the fact, slandered the performance and patriotism of the volunteer army:

“But not content with questioning your patriotism, they have anathematized you, ‘for waging war in its most horrid forms; murdering, skull breaking, desecrating temples, and violating innocence and virtue.’ Upon you, my fellow soldiers, has this pyramid of calamity been heaped—you who have practised forbearance and humanity heretofore unknown to the victims of war—you have shown mercy and courtesy even when battling with an unsparing foe, whose legions, though calling themselves Christians, have never failed to exhibit all the treachery and barbarity of Indian savages. If such is to be the reward of the soldier, why, oh sacred God, did you grant us victory? Why could we not all perish beneath the tattered standard of our regiment, happy in the belief that whoever died beneath its folds would obtain at least the respect of his countrymen! But my friends, the day will soon come, when these slanderers will hide their heads for very shame, overwhelmed by ‘a universal hiss, that sound of public hate.’ I am satisfied that there are but few, very few citizens of Ohio, who are not grateful to you for your services; although the only individual in Congress who opposed the passage of a recent vote of thanks from that body to the army, I am pained to learn is a representative of our state. He has chosen his position – it is a conspicuous one, and he is welcome to it. ‘There let him stand, through ages yet unborn, Fixed statue on a pedestal of scorn.’³⁹

Luther came down on the side of the strengthened Fugitive Slave Act (part of the Compromise of 1850), which required that slaves who escaped from slave states to non-slave states must be returned to their owners. Of all states, Ohio had the most active “underground railroad” network to assist runaway slaves. The Fugitive Slave Act was thus particularly controversial

there. At a public meeting in Dayton in October 1850, Luther was on record as saying that the Act was “important and indispensable” to the stability of the Union and the peace and harmony of its different sections.⁴⁰

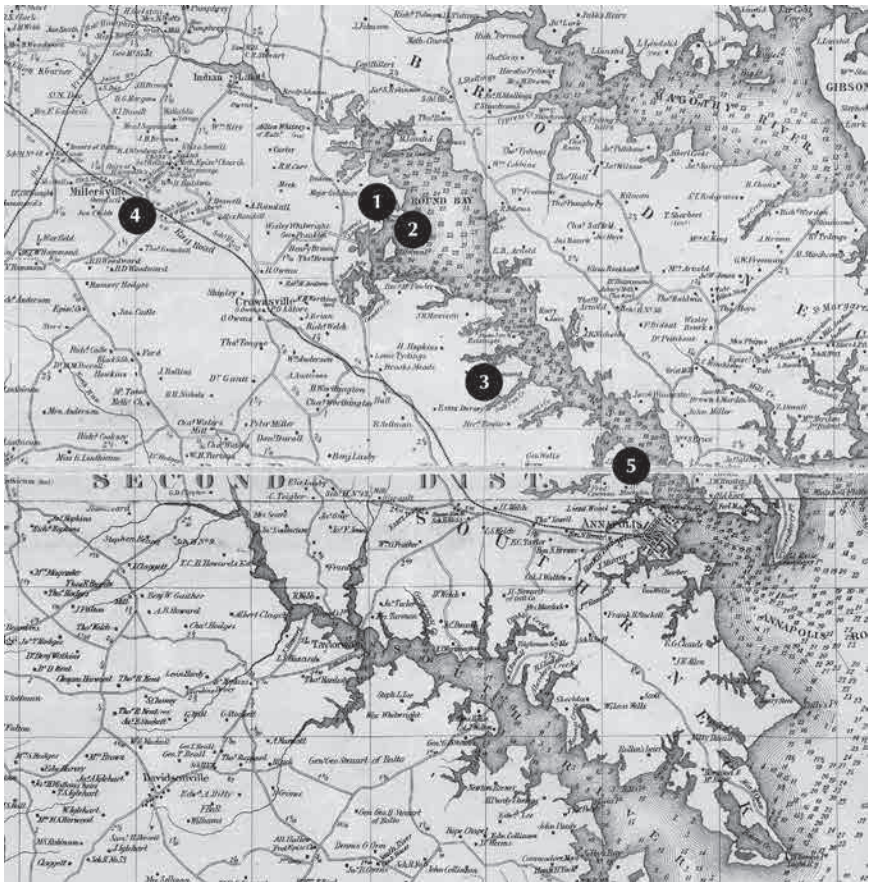


Fig. 4 - Places associated with Giddings are indicated by numbers on this 1860 Map of Anne Arundel Coutny, MD, by Simon J. Martenet : (1) his farm near today's Sherwood Forest; (2) his ownership of St. Helena Island; (3) his farm in today's Epping Forest; (4) the Anne Arundel Academy in Millersville; and (5) his farm in today's West Annapolis. (Source: Library of Congress)

THE 1850S IN MARYLAND

In 1849, Luther got married. During the time he was at St. John's, or shortly thereafter, he undoubtedly met a preteen (she was born in 1829), Catherine Randall, a member of a large and distinguished Annapolis family. Luther probably met the Randalls through his stepmother's family, the Johnsons. Catherine's father, Thomas Randall, was a personal friend of President John Quincy Adams, after whose wife, Louisa Catherine Johnson Adams, Louisa Giddings was probably named. Thomas, a War of 1812 hero and later Judge of the Middle District Superior Court of the Territory of Florida, was one of a number of prominent Annapolis Randalls. Thomas had moved to Florida in 1826 and subsequently been appointed judge by Adams. He returned to Maryland in 1827 to marry Laura Wirt, the daughter of the United States Attorney General, William Wirt, who was a long time Randall family friend. This new Randall family was afterward established in Tallahassee. Sadly, Laura died in December 1833, shortly after childbirth. Florida was frontier country in the early 19th century. Judge Randall, a single father, sent his four young daughters to Annapolis to live with his sister, Anne Randall Voorhees, and her new husband, Phillip Voorhees, in early summer, 1834. The children returned to Tallahassee about 1844.⁴¹

Shortly after the Mexican War, Luther took a trip to Florida and it was perhaps then that he began to court Catherine.⁴² In any case, Catherine returned to Annapolis for the wedding. She and Luther were married in Annapolis on August 23, 1849 in the Voorhees house.⁴³ The young couple settled in Dayton, Ohio, where Luther practiced law and ran his 120-acre farm, one of the most valuable in Miami Township. At the same time, he and Catherine resided on a 24-acre spread (it may have been more than twice that size) in neighboring Van Buren Township.⁴⁴ Their first child, Laura Wirt Giddings, named after her deceased grandmother, was born in the summer of 1851 in Florida while Catherine was visiting her father and younger sisters. Their second child, Katherine Grattan Giddings, was born in January 1853 in Dayton. When the Giddings later moved to Maryland,

Catherine bore their third daughter, Elizabeth, in Annapolis in August 1855. In 1857, a fourth daughter, Susan, was born, but she lived only a month.⁴⁵

Despite Luther's stature and economic success in Dayton, the Giddings moved to the Annapolis area. Family ties meant the pull of Annapolis was strong. Luther knew Annapolis from his time at St. John's. Catherine had lived in Annapolis with her aunt Anne Voorhees, her father's sister, from age five to fifteen. In addition, her mother's sister, Catherine Wirt, married her uncle, her father's brother, Alexander Randall, in 1841. Finally, her grandmother, Elizabeth Wirt, was a formidable presence in the Alexander Randall household.⁴⁶ In the summer of 1853, Luther bought 136 acres of farmland north of Annapolis on the Severn River, on the north side of Round Bay, then regarded as part of Crownsville. Luther purchased two additional, contiguous parcels totaling 379 acres in 1854, and a fourth 36 acre tract in 1855. Thus, his farm finally totaled 551 acres.⁴⁷ Because there was no suitable dwelling on the property, Luther, Catherine, and their two daughters moved in with her uncle and aunt, Alexander and Catherine Wirt Randall in Annapolis, from March through December 1854. The Randalls lived in what is today called the Bordley–Randall House on State Circle.⁴⁸ When the Crownsville house and outbuildings were ready, the Giddings family moved.

In addition to other crops, Luther began growing grapes to produce wine. He had first experimented with growing wine grapes on his farm in Ohio. He became interested in grape culture and wine making through his acquaintance with General Nicholas Longworth of Cincinnati.⁴⁹ Longworth was the first successful commercial wine producer in the United States, and is sometimes called the father of American grape culture. Beginning in the 1830s in the Ohio Valley, Longworth produced both still and sparkling wine from Catawba grapes. He had experimented unsuccessfully with European varieties; Catawba, an American grape, on the other hand, he found suitable to the local soil and climate. At the end of Longworth's life in 1863, his business was producing about 150,000 bottles annually.⁵⁰ Not surprisingly, Luther's new vineyard in Maryland grew Catawba grapes. His

first vintage reached the market in 1856 to great acclaim by the editors of *The American Farmer*.⁵¹ The 1860 Census listed two European vine-dressers (again mimicking Longworth, who also employed experienced Europeans) living with the Giddings family in Crownsville.⁵² The Catawba wines of Severn Side Vineyard became known throughout the state. By 1860, he had 30,000 vines in cultivation.⁵³

In Crownsville Luther quickly became a leading citizen. In 1855, the local farmers established a weekly market, and Luther chaired that effort.⁵⁴ In 1856 he became a trustee of a new private secondary school called Anne Arundel Academy, in Millersville. The only secondary school in the county until the 1890s, it operated from 1854 until 1924.⁵⁵ In 1855, a convention of Whigs and Democrats in Annapolis nominated Luther as a candidate for the Maryland House of Delegates on the Union ticket, but he had to withdraw his name because he did not meet the three-year residency requirement.⁵⁶

That he was much admired by local residents in the Crownsville area is clear from the following excerpts from a letter published in 1868 in the *Annapolis Gazette*:

“It is our purpose to speak in this communication, of the improvements that have taken place on Severn, within the past ten or twelve years since. We shall begin with the “Old Place” farm now called Severn Side. This farm but a short time ago, was one vast common where everybody’s cattle roamed at will... Pines and scrubby bush are covering every foot of space, save where brier-matted gutters varied the monotony of its dilapidated and neglected condition; it was regarded as the worst farm in the whole country. Major Giddings came among us, bought the property, and began a series of improvements that sat most of our easy jogging farmers all agog. What is he about, some would say? Others, it will never pay him! And as many more believed him to be a visionary sort of man with more money than he knew what to do with. Well, nothing daunted, means, taste and energy were not spared by this gentleman. A splendid residence,

fine out-buildings, and every other convenience necessary to progress, sprung up as if by magic; the axe rung out from its hills and dales, ditches tossed up the mud and the plow sped day after day – from dawn ‘till dusk; teeming grain fields soon offered a golden harvest, orchards bloomed where pine trees had lately flourished; vineyards were planted, and lo! in the compass of a thought the purple vintage flowed to gladden the palate of the visionary (?) owner of Severn Side: in fact, in every phase of beautifying change – graded walks, clustered hedges, and spacious grounds – no one will ever recognize the “Old Place.” . . . We have dwelt lengthly [sic] on this place, because we regard it as the Keystone of progress hereabouts.”⁵⁷

Tragically, at the height of Luther’s success, his wife, Catherine, took ill while visiting her father in Florida and died in June 1860.⁵⁸ She was only 31. Luther was left to parent three young girls, the oldest only nine.

CIVIL WAR

Meantime, hostilities that ultimately became violent—the Civil War—were intensifying. Many local residents were sympathetic to the Confederate cause. Luther, a slaveholder, was likely among them, but he denied ever participating in the war. He was listed on the 1860 Census Slave Schedule as having four slaves, including a five-year-old boy. Subsequently, he was accused of being a Confederate spy, but there was no clear evidence that the accusation was true.⁵⁹ His father, his brother William, and his Maryland half-brothers, on the other hand, were definitely involved on the Confederate side. In August 1861, Luther went back to his boyhood home in Frederick County to secure the release of his father, also a slaveholder, who had been arrested as a secessionist. According to Alexander Randall's diary, it was not his father who was arrested, but Luther's half-brother, Eugene, who later served in the Confederate Army. Instead of securing the release of his half-brother, Luther himself was arrested. Fortunately for him, his in-laws, the well-connected Randall family, sent one of their own family, A.B. Hagner, with papers from the Maryland Governor and the Union Commander in Annapolis, to free Luther.⁶⁰ Luther's father continued to support the Confederate cause. In *War Talks of Confederate Veterans*, one veteran recounted that after the battle of South Mountain in Frederick County in September 1862, while he was a wounded prisoner, he and several other prisoners stayed with James Giddings and family for a month. They were well and generously treated. He noted, "The citizens of this neighborhood being almost exclusively Southern in their sentiments..."⁶¹ Luther's other half-brother from his father's second marriage, Charles, was a Confederate Army lieutenant, and later in the war, a prisoner for 18 months.⁶²

While Luther did not participate in the hostilities, he did participate in the politics, as Marylanders debated what the state should do. The Maryland State Conference Convention met in Baltimore in February and March 1861 to consider the issues. Giddings was one of five Anne Arundel delegates, and was selected to be one of the five secretaries of the conference.

The men who convened the conference, and almost all who attended, were persuaded that the state should secede, at least if Virginia decided to do so. Among the resolutions unanimously passed one stated, "that the secession of the seven slave-holding States from the Federal Union was induced by the aggression of the non-slave-holding states in violation of the Constitution of the United States." A second read, "that the moral and material interests and the geographic position of the State demand that it should act with Virginia in this crisis." A third resolved, "that the honor of this State requires that it should not permit its soil to be made a highway for federal troops, sent to make war upon our sister States of the South" Luther offered a resolution, adopted unanimously, thanking anti-war factions in the north:

That we gratefully appreciate the patriotic efforts of the national men in the free States to preserve the Union by a faithful observance of the covenants of the constitution, and to arrest the long-threatened irrepressible conflict, now about to be initiated, under pretense of enforcing the laws; and though their generous co-operation may fail in the present as in the past, to secure for us the peaceful acknowledgment of our full and equal rights in the confederacy, they shall not fail to receive from us our ardent esteem and lasting admiration for their noble conservatism, and our thanks for their fraternal sympathies.

The Conference Convention was not the Legislature, of course, but rather an attempt to put pressure on the elected government.⁶³ Governor Hicks favored slave owners, but he also was strongly against secession, and was therefore not a favorite of Conference delegates. He finally convened a special session of the legislature in late April to consider secession, but he moved the session from Annapolis to Frederick. The stated reason for the move was that Annapolis was occupied by federal troops and that members of the legislature could not reach the capital except through the guards of a hostile foe. The legislature, its ranks reduced by the arrest of some Southern sympathizers, voted not to secede. However, it did approve a resolution calling for "the peaceful and immediate recognition of the independence of the

Confederate States," which Maryland "hereby gives her cordial consent thereunto, as a member of the Union."⁶⁴

In September, a Maryland State Peace Convention, called by one newspaper, the convention of the Secession Party of Maryland, was convened at the suggestion of States Rights members of the Legislature. Its purpose was to nominate candidates for Governor and Comptroller of the Treasury. Luther was an Anne Arundel delegate. In November, the Union Party gubernatorial candidate, Augustus Bradford, was easily elected over the Peace Convention's candidate Benjamin Howard, although in Anne Arundel County, the vote was very close.⁶⁵

In late 1860, Luther put his Severn Side property up for sale. In early 1861, George Marsh bought the 551-acre farm and continued to sell wine produced there.⁶⁶ Luther also sold St. Helena Island, in Round Bay. He had purchased St. Helena from two owners in 1853 and 1854, at the same time he assembled his Crownsville farm. The island, only 11 acres, was used to produce fruit and wine as well as for family recreation.⁶⁷ Why he decided to sell the farm can only be a matter of speculation, but it is likely that it was financially advantageous. He paid less than \$7,000 for the Severn Side farm and sold it for \$29,000.⁶⁸ He did however make many costly improvements. He might also have decided to sell because Catherine had died, and with young daughters, perhaps he wanted to live in town. Years later, he himself suggested that the war was the primary reason for selling. In any case, in November 1861, the family again moved in with Alexander Randall and his family while waiting for "Spragle's [house] near the Naval School" to be ready for them.⁶⁹

Only a few months later, in June 1862, Luther bought a 179-acre farm in what is now called Epping Forest. At the time, this Severn River peninsula was part of a larger area called Sherwood Forest. Sherwood Forest is now the name given only to another part of that large area, a peninsula farther north, just south of Round Bay. This purchase appears to be opportunistic on Luther's part—the price was apparently right. He did not reside there immediately. Instead he decided to leave the area,

presumably because of the war. In January 1863, perhaps concerned about possible confiscation, he transferred the property, including all chattels, livestock, and a slave (Robert, age 25) to a trust for his children, with his father, James, as trustee. Just before the end of the war, in March 1865, he reclaimed the property by repurchasing it from the trust. He and his daughters were living there that year. In 1866, he purchased an additional 228 acres contiguous with the Sherwood/Epping farm. The following year, 1867, he sold the entire farm to John R. Magruder and Co. (another relative by marriage). The Magruder firm later defaulted and Luther reclaimed the farm in 1870. Had the Magruders been able to pay, Luther would have more than doubled his money, but that was not to be. In 1874, he finally sold the 179-acre first tract to Arthur Drevar for less than he had paid for it in 1862.⁷⁰ Drevar, the apparent founder of the community of Epping Forest, originally used the land for raising sheep.⁷¹ Luther sold 135 acres of the second tract to William Burke in 1882 for far less than he paid for it. The remainder, some 93 acres, was left as part of his estate. His heirs sold it in 1890.⁷²

The Conscription Act of March 1863 stated that all males aged 20–35 and all unmarried males 35–45 could be drafted. The first draft lottery was held July 11, 1863. Although he had three young children, Luther, age 40 and unmarried, was listed on official documents in fall 1863 as subject to the draft.⁷³ By that time, however, he and his family had left Annapolis for Virginia. His older brother William lived with his family on a farm in Loudoun County, Virginia. Luther and his daughters—still all preteens—moved there, probably late in 1862, staying to 1864.⁷⁴ During this time, his daughter Katherine, age 12, met Joseph West Aldridge, who later became her husband. Aldridge, a nephew of William Giddings, born in 1846, was thus about 17 at the time. He became a member of the notorious Mosby's Rangers—a scourge on Union Army supply lines in northern Virginia.⁷⁵ William Giddings and other Aldridges were also involved in the war. William was the commander of the 56th Virginia militia.⁷⁶ Joseph West's younger brother, Robert, died in a

Union prison camp in 1864; his father, John Aldridge, needed to apply for, and was granted, a Presidential pardon in 1865.⁷⁷

Luther did not stay put on William's farm during the entire war. He traveled to Richmond and to Florida, where his father-in-law still lived, but he insisted he played no part in the war. In August, 1864, he decided to go to Chicago to attend the Democratic National Convention, and to stop in Dayton to visit the family of his half-brother, Daniel Beckel, who had died suddenly in 1862.⁷⁸ Luther was arrested in Dayton and sent to prison in Washington, accused of being a Confederate spy. That he was still thought of as an upstanding citizen and war hero was suggested by the following excerpted story from the *Dayton Daily Empire*:

Major Luther Giddings "was arrested by military authorities on the night of Monday, the 5th of September and carried off to some unknown Bastille. The fact that such an outrage should be perpetrated at this time, in this place, upon such a person, is one that amazes and shocks every peace-loving and law-abiding member of our community. We propose now by a simple statement of the facts, to show the unmitigated villainy of the transaction; and to express again, the detestation of such crimes, which we feel in common with every true American....

Though in the prime of life, he has taken no part in this war, resisting steadily, on account of the claims of a family of motherless children, and his affection for the "old flag" under which he had fought, and for whose honor he had often periled his life, all the inducements that were held out by the Southerners to draw him to the support of their cause.

The last two years he has spent with his brother on their farm in Loudoun County, Virginia, a few miles south of the Potomac, within reach of the Federal forces, who could have arrested him at any time. . . . he came back to Dayton about three weeks ago, to visit the family of his half-brother, the late Daniel Beckel. . . He had been here but a few days however, before some gentleman of the most uneasy patriotism caused him to be summoned to the Provost Marshall's Office to

give an account of himself. . . .he was dismissed with assurances that his statements were entirely satisfactory, and that he was only summoned to satisfy some 'Intermeddling Union people,' whose nervousness makes them imagine on every dark night that they see a Jeff Davis behind every awning post upon the street. The 'intermeddlers' however, were not satisfied, but continued their efforts until, as has been stated, they succeeded, and the Major was spirited away at midnight, under a military escort to some dungeon in the East. The supple tools of despotism who made the arrest, enjoined the strictest secrecy upon all who witnessed it, and but for the inability of some of the 'intermeddlers' to contain their exultation, the facts might have been kept from public knowledge for many days yet to come"⁷⁹

The story was picked up by papers elsewhere, particularly in Ohio. He was sent to the Old Capitol Prison in Washington, where most inmates were civilians, including accused spies. Only a short while later, high profile prisoners associated with the Lincoln assassination—Dr. Samuel Mudd, John Ford, and others—were incarcerated there. By mid-December 1864, Luther was released from prison and reunited with his children in Baltimore. Again the Randall family played a key role in springing him. Alexander Randall mentioned meeting with Assistant Secretary of War Charles A. Dana in November on behalf of Luther, and getting permission to visit him in prison. Dana apparently took the Giddings case on for special consideration.⁸⁰

POST-WAR POLITICS

Back in the Annapolis area post-war, Luther soon became involved in politics and government. At the immediate end of the war, the Union Party was in firm control. The state constitution, adopted in 1864, required a loyalty oath of prospective voters stating not only that they had not directly aided the Confederate cause, but also had “never expressed a desire for the triumph of said enemies over the arms of the United States.” This clause disenfranchised large portions of the Maryland population and assured Unionist control. Luther surely would not have been allowed to vote. Because Maryland had not seceded, Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, did not apply. Thus, the new constitution provided for the abolition of slavery with no compensation for former slaveholders. However, the right to vote was limited to whites. Legislative reapportionment was based on the white population of the counties, not the total population, further reducing the political power of the Democratic Party, which tended to represent former slave-holders and Southern sympathizers.⁸¹ Dissension within the Union Party eventually led to a split. The positions of the more radical “Unconditional Union” members were reflected in the 1864 constitution. Some “Conditional Union” party members, while strongly supporting the Union and emancipation, condemned some of the Lincoln Administration’s aggressive war measures, including suspension of Habeas Corpus. They also regarded the stringent loyalty oath requirement as unfair. A number of Conditional Unionists joined the Democrats to form the Democratic-Conservative Party in 1866. Probably the key to this political realignment was that Unionist Governor Thomas Swann switched parties. He was strongly opposed to the loyalty oaths, and declined to enforce them. He also endorsed President Andrew Johnson’s reconstruction policies to the dismay if not outrage of the radical Unionists. The election in November 1866 went strongly to the new Democratic-Conservative coalition party. It held a two-thirds majority when the General Assembly met in January 1867. The Assembly passed a bill calling for a special election in April to allow voters to decide whether to hold a Constitutional Convention, and to select delegates who

Trustees' Sale OF VALUABLE LAND NEAR ANNAPOLIS.

IN execution of a decree and order of the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel county in the cause of the Farmer's National Bank of Annapolis vs. Pinkney and others, the subscribers, as trustees, will offer at public sale at the Court House door in the city of Annapolis, on

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16th, 1869,

at 12 o'clock, m., the Valuable Real Estate, of which Jonathan Pinkney died seized, containing about two hundred and thirty-seven acres, called,

"NORWOOD BEALE."

This land lies on the south bank of Severn River, at Horse Shoe Point, adjoining on the east the lands recently purchased for the United States Naval Academy; and extends up the river to Weems' Creek; on the west and south, it joins the lands of Messrs. Reese and Berry.

The soil is of fine quality producing all the county crops, and particularly adapted to the growth of early fruits and vegetables, for which Annapolis affords ready sale. The situation is one of the most beautiful on the Severn, commanding an extensive view of the grounds of the Naval Academy and across the Chesapeake. It is distant less than a mile from Annapolis by a good road. On the farm are good landings for shipping, and a switch on the Railroad is within half a mile.

The improvements consist of a small *DWELLING*, two fine *BARNS*, *Servants' Quarters*, *Corn House* and all necessary buildings.

It is proposed to divide the place into three or more parcels, affording beautiful sites for buildings on bold water; or it may be sold in a body, to suit purchasers. It is seldom a more desirable property for country residences or gardening purposes is placed in the market.

Mr. Phelps, the tenant, will give information to all desiring to examine the place, and the plat will be shown by the undersigned.

The terms of sale prescribed by the decree and order are:—One-fourth of the purchase money to be paid in cash on the day of sale, or of the final ratification thereof by the Court; the residue in three equal installments at one, two and three years—the whole purchase money to be secured by the bonds of the purchasers to the satisfaction of the trustees, and to bear interest from the day of sale.

**ALEX. RANDALL,
ALEX. B. HAGNER,**

Trustees.

January 28, 1869.

ANNAPOLIS GAZETTE, *Printed.*

Fig. 5 - Description of "Norwood Beale," the Pinkney Farm which Giddings bought that is today's West Annapolis. (Source: Maryland State Archives)

would serve should the convention take place. The Unionist/Republican Party tried to stop the special election, even calling on the U.S. Congress to intervene, but did not succeed. The voters approved holding a convention by nearly a two-to-one margin. The convention opened in the second week in May. The Republicans had put up no candidates, so all 118 delegates were Independents or Democratic-Conservatives. Luther was one of the four delegates from Anne Arundel County.⁸² The resulting new Constitution discarded the punitive loyalty oaths. It retained the provision abolishing slavery, and continued to limit eligible voters to white males (the latter provision was made moot by the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1870). It also stated that the legislature should adopt measures to obtain compensation for emancipated slaves from the United States government. Maryland voters approved the Constitution by an overwhelming margin on September 18, 1867.⁸³

Luther did not play an important role in the debates over these high profile provisions. His major contribution was to propose a new Department of Labor and Agriculture with an elected superintendent. The new department was to have three major tasks: performing the duties then performed by the Commissioner of Immigration and the Immigration Agent; supervising inspectors of agricultural products, tobacco warehouses and other buildings; and seeking revenue sources in the undeveloped resources of the state, especially the Chesapeake Bay. The proposal was initially defeated—the Commissioner and the Immigration Agent apparently had strong political allies. However, it passed on a vote to reconsider and became Article X of the Constitution. The article contained what is now called a “sunset clause;” the office was to expire four years after the incumbent was qualified unless renewed by the General Assembly.⁸⁴ The Superintendent, William McPherson, was elected in November 1867. The following April, he appointed Luther as Assistant Superintendent. Increasing the labor pool, particularly the agricultural labor pool to offset the ending of slavery, was a major post-war concern. Luther took over what had been the portfolio of the Commissioner of Immigration and the Immigration Agent. Accordingly, a key part

of his role was to encourage foreign immigrants who arrived in the Port of Baltimore to remain in Maryland rather than migrating elsewhere. The new department focused particularly on German immigrants. As soon as it began work in 1868, the office received many applications from farmers seeking laborers. Early reports claimed that the department was quite successful in getting immigrants to remain in Maryland and to work on, or to purchase, farms. Luther apparently remained in this position through 1872. At that point the Legislature did not renew the department—the “sunset” provision was de facto invoked, and the Department of Labor and Agriculture ceased to exist.⁸⁵

During the Convention, Luther was also assigned to the Committee Respecting the Militia and Military Affairs. The Militia Act of 1864, organizing a State militia, had expired in 1866 and the General Assembly had not renewed it. This came to be regarded as an oversight by Governor Swann, who had wanted the option of using force in case of riots in Baltimore when he allegedly interfered with the city election in late 1866. The Convention considered the issue, resulting in Article IX, providing for a militia and a permanent paid Adjutant General.⁸⁶ Luther was appointed as Inspector General of the State Militia in May 1868, serving under the Adjutant General. Their offices were in Baltimore in the same building with the Department of Labor and Agriculture. This position, like all militia positions except for the Adjutant General, was unpaid, but it carried the rank of Brigadier General, so Luther was thereafter often referred to as General Giddings in news stories. He served in this position until about 1871.⁸⁷

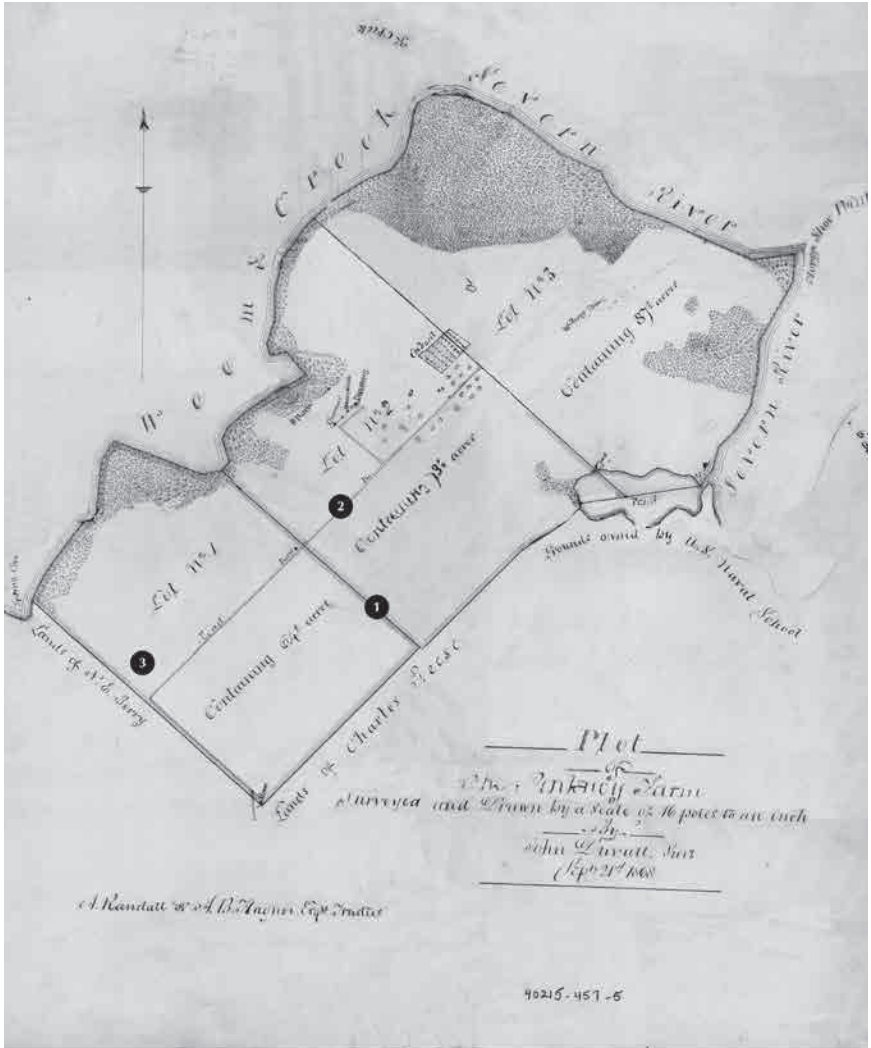


Fig. 6 - Plat of the Pinkney Farm, 1968, prepared for the sale of the property, as advertised in the broadside. Note that the lines dividing the farm into parcels fall along alignment of today's (1) Annapolis Street, (2) Melvin Avenue, and (3) Rowe Boulevard in Annapolis. (Source: Maryland State Archives)

LATER YEARS

Although Luther's working hours in the late 1860s were focused in Baltimore, he bought a third Anne Arundel County farm. In late 1868, the land known today as Wardour and West Annapolis was a farm owned by the Pinkney family. Because the Pinkney heirs were unable to make payments, Farmers National Bank foreclosed. It ordered the trustees, Randall family members Alexander Randall and A.B. Hagner, to sell the property. The Pinkney sisters – the previous owners – bought the land, but again were not able to make payments, so the bank ordered the property resold. Luther, who may have been the only bidder, bought the property, 237 acres, at auction on February 16, 1869 for \$46 an acre.⁸⁸ In the ensuing decades, farming took less of his time than it once had, but he planted fruit trees and established a vineyard, which he called Severn Vineyard. By 1875, he began producing wine, albeit on a smaller scale than he had at his old Severn Side farm. The farm became known as Horse Shoe Farm, named after Horse Shoe Point, the peninsula that jutted out into the Severn River.

Luther remarried in 1869. He and Mary Wallace Wells were married July 4, 1869.⁸⁹ Mary, age 33, was the second daughter of George Wells, president of Farmers National Bank, and probably the owner of more property than anyone else in the Annapolis area. His holdings included the whole peninsula south of Epping Forest, site of the second Giddings farm. Wells owned many houses in Annapolis, often purchased in foreclosure, including the Jonas Green house on Charles Street, one of the oldest houses in Annapolis. It is across the street from the Adams–Kilty House, George Wells' residence. Luther rented the Jonas Green house.⁹⁰ The 1870 Census showed the Giddings family twice—an error, of course—on Charles Street and on the farm in Epping Forest.⁹¹ After only four years of marriage, Mary died March 8, 1873, and Luther was again a single father.⁹² All three girls, now aged 18 to 22, were living in the household. In June 1874, Catherine married Joseph West Aldridge, whom she had met some ten years before, when the family was living on the William Giddings farm in Virginia. Initially, the new couple

lived with the senior Aldridges in Loudoun County, Virginia. Sometime in the 1890s, they moved to Orkney Springs, Virginia, in the Shenandoah Valley, where Joseph West became the proprietor of a resort.⁹³ Meanwhile, in January 1877, George Wells was discovered to have misappropriated bank funds. The scandal resulted in his having to sell most of his real estate, including the Jonas Green house, which was repurchased by the Green family. In 1880, the Giddings family lived on Horse Shoe Farm in West Annapolis.⁹⁴

During the 1870s, Luther remained a prominent member of the farming community. He was Master (equivalent to the president) of the Annapolis Grange; he represented the state at the National Agricultural Congress; he exhibited at horticultural fairs; and he produced wine, now mostly not from Catawba grapes but from Ives, Concord, Clinton and other varieties.⁹⁵ During the decade he was also involved in a variety of new, quite different, activities. In 1870, he became the first editor of a new weekly newspaper, the *Anne Arundel Advertiser*. Its stated purpose, Luther wrote, "...will be to advance the industrial interests of our people. I shall be much gratified if the '*Advertiser*' can be made to contribute to the more extensive development of the resources of our County, and in augmenting the business and general prosperity of our citizens." The first issue was published September 22, 1870. Despite its stated goal, during Luther's tenure at least, it was primarily devoted to Reconstruction Era politics. Its editorial stance strongly favored the Democratic-Conservative Party. The Democrats dominated Maryland government in 1870, but the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guaranteed that the right to vote could not be denied based on race, had been ratified early that year. Maryland had voted to reject the amendment. The *Advertiser* echoed the concern of many citizens that newly enfranchised African Americans would vote with Radical Republicans, making them the majority party. In the second issue, September 29, Luther wrote:

The land-holders and taxpayers of Anne Arundel certainly know what their condition will be if the

Radicals obtain control of our county next year. . . The contest on our part is not for office and spoils, but for the overthrow of the most ignorant, and therefore, the most dangerous political organization ever marshaled by indigent cupidity for the wild work of plunder and misrule. Let every white man now prepare for the inevitable struggle. . . Patriots to the front!⁹⁶

Luther remained editor for only a short time, relinquishing the position in March 1871, in order, according to his letter of resignation published in the paper, to pursue other interests. His last issue was March 2. There he opined:

Five years have passed since our civil war was brought to an end, but the Radicals have used and are still employing every means to prevent the restoration of peace. . . It is very evident that its [the Republican Party's] failure to restore the rights of the States—its obnoxious class legislation, its efforts to array the negro race against the whites of the South solely for base party ends, and its ill concealed intention to use military power to control the ballot—have so disgusted thousands of its late followers in nearly every State that they are ready to come to any party pledged to reform. Ours is the only party that can rescue the government.

. . .⁹⁷

Following his resignation he continued to write occasional columns for the paper, giving advice on agricultural matter, signing them “Laborer.”⁹⁸

Although he stepped down from the editorship, Luther did not give up his involvement in politics. The concern that Radical Republicans would capture the Maryland government proved unfounded. The Democratic-Conservative Party remained firmly in charge. However, some party members, Luther among them, became disaffected. They complained that the party was controlled by a ring that decided on all nominations and that officeholders spent large sums of taxpayer money on projects that favored their friends.⁹⁹ These “Reform Democrats” tried to form a joint ticket with the Republicans in 1873, but political differences

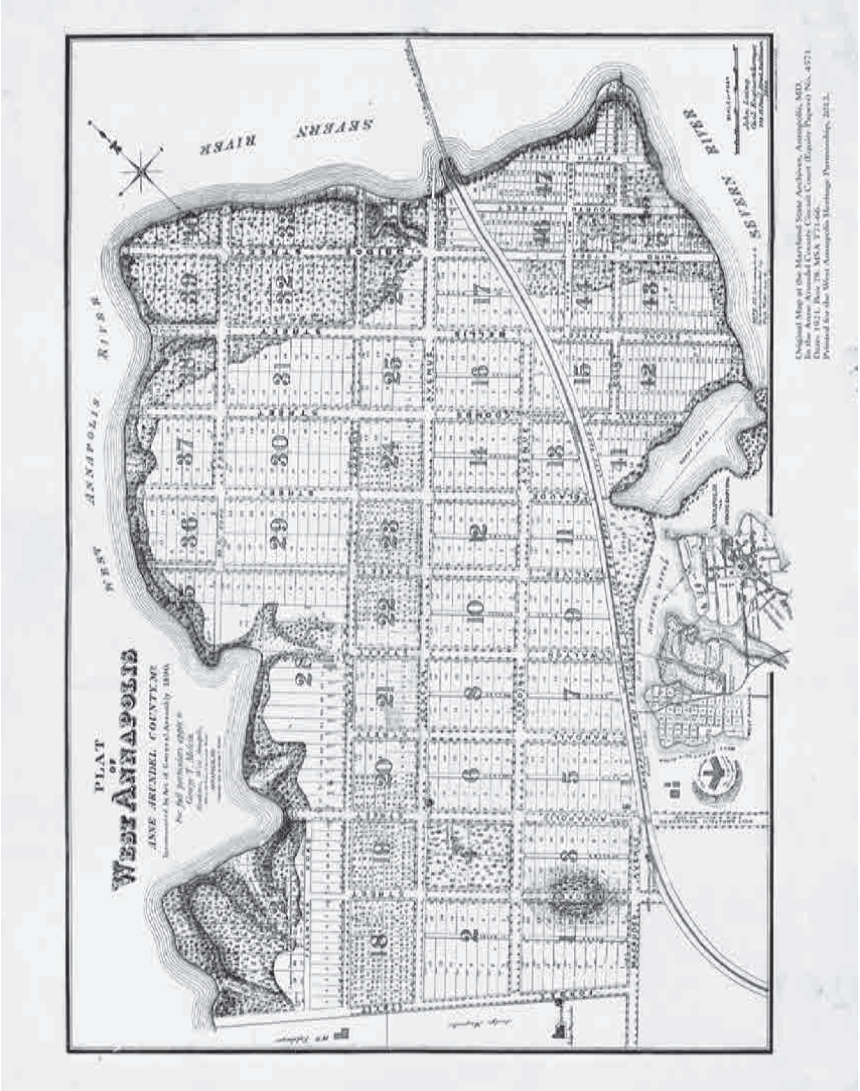
proved too great. Luther became a Reform Democrat candidate for the House of Delegates, but lost the election. In 1875, he ran for the State Senate as an Independent, and lost by a considerable margin to Democratic-Conservative Millard Bannon. Prior to the election, the *Anne Arundel Advertiser* endorsed Bannon, and criticized the Independents for waging a scurrilous campaign. Luther wrote a long letter to the paper in September, noting that he had not sought the position, nor did he particularly desire it, but that he felt duty bound to run because of abuses he and others perceived within the Democratic Party. After the election, he threatened to challenge the results in court, but apparently did not do so. In 1879, he was again nominated to be a candidate for the State Senate, this time by the Anne Arundel County Taxpayers' Convention.¹⁰⁰

Luther became a member of the Board of Visitors and Governors of St. John's. In early 1873, he was appointed Financial Agent of the college, tasked "to visit the different parts of the State to solicit pecuniary aid."¹⁰¹ He served as a warden of St. Anne's Church, 1871–1874.¹⁰² In 1871, he chaired a meeting to organize solicitation of charitable contributions to aid the citizens of Dijon, France, who suffered from severe fighting in the Franco-Prussian War.¹⁰³ In December 1873, the *Annapolis Gazette* editorialized: "We have repeatedly called the attention of our readers to the importance of establishing in our midst a Saving (sic) Bank, and are gratified to learn that an effort in the right direction has at last been inaugurated by a number of our public-spirited citizens." The elected directors included Luther as well as two of his in-laws by marriage from the Randall family. Luther became the President of the Annapolis Savings Institution, with offices in the Masonic Building that still stands at the corner of Maryland Avenue and Prince George Street.¹⁰⁴ When the Farmers National Bank scandal involving his father-in-law, George Wells, broke in early 1877, Luther was called upon to be part of the rescue team. Wells and his son Arthur, who was the bank's bookkeeper as well as the mayor of Annapolis, had made large unauthorized withdrawals. They provided real estate collateral that proved insufficient, probably because of the depressed state of the real estate market during this depression,

which began in 1873. In January 1877, Alexander Randall took over as bank president; Luther became the bookkeeper. The rescue process, which was ultimately successful, involved restoring depositor and stockholder confidence, thereby heading off a run on the bank. In December, Randall reported, "Major Giddings gave me notice this week that he is anxious to resign his position in the Bank," and the Board of Directors quickly chose a replacement.¹⁰⁵

The Annapolis and Elk Ridge Railroad had connected Annapolis to Baltimore and Washington since 1840.¹⁰⁶ Luther was a shareholder in the company. In the late 1870s, a number of businessmen and farmers were interested in running a more direct, "short line" from Baltimore to Annapolis. They formed the Annapolis and Baltimore Short Line Railroad Company in 1879. Luther Giddings was the first treasurer, a position he held until about 1883. The initial plan was to build the line entirely by individual subscription, with bonds to back these subscriptions. No legislative action, nor taxpayer funding, was to be asked.¹⁰⁷ There was considerable opposition to the proposed railroad. Speculation had driven rapid expansion in the railroad industry nationwide in the past decade, contributing importantly to the Panic of 1873 and the subsequent "Long Depression," from which the country had not fully recovered. Would a new railroad, however good an idea it seemed to be, really be viable?¹⁰⁸ In early 1880, a sharply divided Annapolis City Council endorsed the project. They proposed to issue \$200,000 in bonds, subject to State legislative approval to enable the city to do so under its charter.¹⁰⁸ Survey work began that July. The corporation received its charter in December 1880. The 22-mile line was planned to cross the Severn from the Winchester property on the north side to and through the Giddings farm, now West Annapolis/Wardour, on the south side. Capitalists from New England promised backing. However, costs were much higher than originally estimated; some of the initial backers opted out. Construction was delayed and the remaining backers took direct control of the planned railroad in 1884. Ground was not broken until October 1885, after Luther's death. A year later, October 1886, almost all of the line except the Severn River

Fig. 8 - Even though Giddings had negotiated the right-of-way for the new Baltimore-Annapolis Short Line Railroad through his farm, his heirs were unable to sell the property and six years after his death, they asked George T. Melvin to develop it for house lots. West Annapolis was incorporated by the State of Maryland on April 8, 1890. (Source: Maryland State Archives)



bridge had been completed. On March 9, 1887, the trains finally began to run.¹⁰⁹

In his later years, Luther was often ill, and he backed off from his many activities. He continued to live on Horse Shoe Farm with his two unmarried daughters, Laura and Elizabeth, and minimal household help. Laura, long plagued with medical problems, died on July 29, 1882.¹¹⁰ On January 5, 1884, the Rector of St. Anne's Church, William Southgate, noted in his diary, "I was called this morning to Major Giddings, who was very ill. Administered to him the Holy Communion. His daughter Elizabeth and Mr. Alex Randall received with him. He died at 11:45."¹¹¹ Luther's obituary reported the cause of death as typhoid fever, with which he had been ill about a week. He is buried in St. Anne's Cemetery. Long obituaries appeared in local papers. As further indication of his prominence, the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald*, and the *Brooklyn (NY) Eagle* all noted his death.¹¹²

CONCLUSION

After her father's death, Elizabeth Giddings moved to Virginia, joining her sister Kate Aldridge and her family. The sisters initially put the farm up for sale but subsequently decided to sell lots for residential development.¹¹³ They contracted with the firm of Melvin and Mancha to do the development and marketing. The town of West Annapolis was incorporated in 1890. The developers did not perform as contracted, however, leading to extended and complex legal action. Elizabeth and the Aldridges eventually prevailed, but the marketing and building process was much delayed.¹¹⁴ The Wardour and West Annapolis of today were laid out and developed in the early 20th century.

Luther Giddings was a renaissance man. Even by the standards of the 19th century, when talented people did not tend to specialize as much as they have since, his interests and accomplishments were wide ranging. He wrote well; he was an excellent orator; he was widely read; he was an innovative farmer.¹¹⁵ He was also a lawyer, a journalist, an author, a soldier and a politician. Astute, hard-working, and a man of ideas, he made a good living, while he also gave generously of his time in public service and in volunteer endeavors. He was in at the beginning of new enterprises – the “Short Line” railroad, the Anne Arundel Academy, the Annapolis Savings Bank, the *Anne Arundel Advertiser* newspaper, the Maryland Department of Labor and Agriculture. Well respected for his ability and enterprise, he was repeatedly selected by contemporaries for positions of responsibility. In sum, Luther Giddings was a community leader. His politics with regard to voting rights were racist by today's standards, but were in accord with the Democratic Party majority in Maryland in the post-Civil War period. And he did part company with the Democrats in the mid-1870s. Of his politics, the *Anne Arundel Advertiser* said in its obituary, “He was Democratic rather than a Democrat.”

There are few reminders today of the life of the man whose farm once encompassed Wardour/West Annapolis. The vineyard he established is long gone, as is the house he built at

the corner of what is now Ridgely and Melvin avenues. But the track-bed of the Short Line railroad, which ran for more than 70 years after his death, is still part of the landscape. And a few street names recall his life as well. Aside from Giddings Avenue, there is Monterey, named for the Mexican War battle and Loudoun Lane, named for Loudoun County in Virginia, where the family lived with Luther's brother during the Civil War.



Fig. 9 - Giddings' tomb in St. Anne's Cemetery Annapolis, MD, with the words, below inscribed on it. Photo by Jody Christian



SOLDIER, REST. THY WAR O'ER

NOTES

¹ Journal of the Proceedings of the State Senate, Maryland, 1872, March 18. The Senate passed a bill to pay Luther Giddings \$2,495 for printing, binding and distributing the report of the Board of State School Commissioners for the year 1870.

² *Baltimore Sun*, January 28, 1884.

³ *England, Births and Christenings, 1538–1975*. (Salt Lake City, UT: FamilySearch, 2013). (online: <https://familysearch.org>).

⁴ *England Marriages 1538–1973*. (Salt Lake City, UT: FamilySearch, 2013) (online: <https://familysearch.org>) James and Susanna were married March 22, 1820 in Cornwall. Their other children, William (b. 1821), Job (b. 1825), and James Thomas (b. 1827) were all born in Cornwall. *England, Births and Christenings 1538–1975* op. cit.

⁵ *England Births and Christenings 1538–1975*. Op. cit. Daniel was christened October 24, 1813 in Cornwall, so his parents were married at least by early 1813. A second child, Richard, was born in 1818 but apparently did not survive.

⁶ James R. McCloud, *A History of Dayton Lodge No. 147, F. & A.M., From 1847 to 1997, The First 150 Years*, (Dayton, OH: privately published, 2000) (online: daytonlodge147.org) p. 5.

⁷ *History of Montgomery County, Ohio*, “City of Dayton” (Chicago: W.H. Beers & Co, 1882), p. 189. There is no Census record of James in Baltimore in 1830, but only head of households are listed in this Census. It is possible that James had relatives there. There are several Giddings and Gittings families listed in and near Baltimore in 1830, and of course, other surnames are possible as well. The family also might have been living in housing provided by the B&O railroad.

⁸ Although no indication that Susanna emigrated with the family has been found, neither has any death record for her been found either in England or in the United States. She was certainly deceased before 1833, when James remarried.

⁹ Wikipedia, “Civil Engineering.” The first university trained civil engineer in the U.S. graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in 1835.

¹⁰ James D. Dilts, *The Great Road*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993) pp. xv, 73, 85ff.

¹¹ *History of Montgomery County, Ohio*, op. cit.

¹² *American Railroad Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 2, January 16, 1836, p. 29.

¹³ War Department 1834. Letter from the Secretary of War, Transmitting Statements of Contracts Made by the Department during the Year 1834, p. 30.

¹⁴ On the Sandy and Beaver Canal: *American Railroad Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 41, October 15, 1836, p. 649.

On the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad: James Lewis, et al, “The Pioneers of Jefferson County,” *Indiana Magazine of History*, Vol. 12, No. 3, 1916, p. 236.

On the St. Mary's Reservoir: S.S. Scranton (ed.), *History of Mercer County, Ohio and Representative Citizens*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: Biographical Publishing Co., 1907), p. 54.

¹⁵ *1840 United States Federal Census*, St. Mary's, Mercer County, Ohio. Jas Giddings, head, with 13 persons. One, obviously James, was employed as a professional engineer. There were nine men in their 20s. Daniel Beckel was surely one of them. James' family was clearly not with him and so was back in Maryland. James and his wife Louisa C. Johnson bought property in 1833 shortly after they were married. (Frederick County Land Records, Liber JS 44, folio 57) The family may have been living there, but neither she nor James were listed in the 1840 Census for Frederick County. It is also possible that the family was living with the numerous Johnson relatives.

¹⁶ *Maryland Marriages 1666–1970*. (Salt Lake City, UT: FamilySearch) (online: <https://familysearch.org>) Louisa's father was Richard Johnson. Her mother Eleanor's maiden name was also Johnson. See: Sons of the American Revolution Membership Applications, 1889–1970 (Louisville, KY: National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution) (online: ancestry.com) Richard's and Eleanor's fathers were of the same generation as Governor Thomas Johnson but were not among his six brothers. James and Louisa were married in All Saints Episcopal Church in Frederick, where Thomas and one of his brothers were vestry members. James and Louisa probably met when he was working on the construction of the B&O through Frederick County. It is possible that Louisa's family and the Thomas Johnson family were not directly related, although they certainly knew one another. The families were related through two other large families, the Dorseys and the Wests, many of whose members lived in Frederick County. In both cases there were multiple connections.

¹⁷ *Memoirs of Georgia*, Vol. 1, "Fulton County Sketches" (Atlanta: Southern Historical Association, 1895) p. 785. This source is a biographical sketch of Charles Granville Giddings, a descendant. The children were: Charles G. (b. 1834), Eugene J. (b. c. 1839), Frances (b. c. 1836), Alice (b. c. 1843) and Mary (b. c. 1845).

¹⁸ *Baltimore Sun*, February 24, 1841, p. 2. Each graduate gave an oration. Luther's was entitled "Permanence of Republican Institutions." William Giddings gave the valedictory oration. Joshua Dorsey Johnson graduated from St. John's in 1836. Joshua was a cousin of Louisa. James Giddings provided a mortgage for an undivided share of property to Joshua in 1843 (Frederick County Land Records, Liber HS 21 folio 17). James assigned the mortgage to Dewitt Clinton Johnson, a brother of Joshua, in 1847 (Liber WBT 3 Folio 502). The Dorsey family and the Thomas Johnson family had multiple ties to Annapolis. Members of both families were residents of Anne Arundel County.

¹⁹ According to Luther's obituary in the *Baltimore Sun*, January 28, 1884, the family settled in Weverton, Maryland, on "the old estate of Covington" This is located about a mile from Harper's Ferry, near both the Canal and the Railroad. Information on the founding of Weverton from Wikipedia "Weverton, Maryland." The purchase of Covington was recorded in Frederick County Land Records, Liber JS 14, Folio 332.

²⁰ *1850 United States Federal Census*, Petersville, Frederick County, Maryland; *1860 United States Federal Census*, Petersville, Frederick County, Maryland; *1870 United States Federal Census*, District 12, Frederick County, Maryland. Findagrave.com. James Giddings died March 6, 1872. He is buried in Saint Mark's Apostolic Church Cemetery, Petersville, Frederick County, Maryland. Louisa is also buried there, as are two of their children.

²¹ His business activities in Harper's Ferry are noted in Mary Johnson, "A Nineteenth-Century Mill Village: Virginus Island, 1800–1860" in *West Virginia History*, Vol. 54, (West Virginia Archives and History, 1995). On the telegraph: James D. Reid, *The Telegraph in American and Morse Memorial* (privately published, 1886) Ch. XIII. On the gas company: *Daily National Intelligencer*, February 11, 1850, p. 4; see also, *Boston Evening Transcript*, November 13, 1850, p. 2. On the appointment as District Justice: Frederick County Land Records, Liber HS 20 Folio 342.

²² *History of Montgomery County, Ohio*, 1882, op. cit. p. 189 contains a biography of Daniel Beckel. He was a leading citizen in Dayton for many years. Among his accomplishments and positions he held were: cofounder of the Farmers' Bank in Dayton in 1850, president of the Miami Valley Bank, member of the Ohio House of Representatives, incorporator of the Cincinnati, Dayton and Toledo Rail Road Company, director of at least two other railroad companies, builder of the Beckel Opera House and of the Beckel House Hotel. See also: Augustus Waldo Drury, *History of the City of Dayton and Montgomery County*, Ohio Vol. 1. (Dayton, OH: S.J. Clark Co., 1909). Also: *A History of Dayton Lodge No. 147*, op. cit.

²³ Luther's obituary, published in the *Baltimore Sun*, January 28, 1884, stated that he "studied law with the distinguished Judge Hunter of Charlestown, W. Va," which was part of Virginia before the Civil War. Andrew Hunter, the prosecutor at the John Brown trial in 1859, practiced law in Charles Town from 1825, and died there in 1888. Charles Town is less than 10 miles from Harper's Ferry, where Hunter first practiced law. The Giddings farm was only about two miles from Harper's Ferry. Virgil Anson Lewis, *History and Government of West Virginia* (New York: American Book Company, 1904) p. 178. Also James Davison Lawson, *American State Trials*, Vol. 6 (Thomas Law Books, 1916) p. 728.

²⁴ Harvey W. Crew, *History of Dayton, with Portraits and Biographical Sketches of Some of its Pioneer and Prominent Citizens* (Dayton, OH: United Brethren Publishing House, 1889) p. 475; p. 269.

²⁵ For an overview of the U.S. – Mexico War including images of many original documents, see the University of Texas at Arlington website: library.uta.edu/usmexicowar. Texas declared its independence in 1836. On December 29, 1845, the United States annexed the Republic of Texas and made it a state.

²⁶ Crew, op. cit. pp. 269–276.

²⁷ E. O. Randall (ed.), *Ohio Centennial Anniversary Celebration at Chillicothe, May 20–21 1903, under the auspices of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, Complete Proceedings* (Columbus, 1903) pp. 198–200. See also, Rowland H. Rerick, *History of Ohio* (Madison, WI: Northwestern Historical Association, 1905) p. 267–268. Luther Giddings, *Sketches of the Campaign in Northern Mexico in Eighteen Hundred Forty-Six and Seven, By an Officer of the First Regiment of Ohio Volunteers* (New York: George P. Putnam & Co., 1853). Page 20 recounted selection of officers.

²⁸ *Daily National Intelligencer*, January 19, 1847, p. 3. A response to Luther appeared in the *Baltimore Sun*, January 22, 1847, p. 2.

²⁹ Giddings, op. cit., passim.

³⁰ Maskell E. Curwen, *A Sketch of the History of the City of Dayton 2nded.* (Dayton, OH: James Odell Jr., 1850) p. 39.

³¹ Giddings, op. cit. pp. 296–327, gave a detailed account of the sequence of events beginning with the arrival of the messengers and concluding with the arrival of the force back in Monterey.

³² *Niles National Register*, Vol. 72, May–June 1847. Note that Colonel Mitchell was the regimental commander, who had been wounded at the battle of Monterey. It was because of Mitchell's wounds and Lieutenant Colonel Weller's illness that Luther was in command of the regiment.

³³ Giddings, op. cit.

³⁴ Elihu Samuel Riley, *The Ancient City: A History of Annapolis in Maryland 1649–1887* (Annapolis: Record Printing Office, 1887) p. 274; See also, *Tri-Weekly Ohio Statesman*, May 7, 1847, p.2. The rank and file decided to present the sword while the regiment was still in Monterey.

³⁵ *Tri-Weekly Ohio Statesman*, May 3, 1847, p. 2.

³⁶ Curwen, op. cit. p. 52

³⁷ *Wilmington Clinton Republican* (Ohio) November 11, 1848, p. 2.

³⁸ Wikipedia, “Whig Party (United States).”

³⁹ *The Sun* (Pittsfield, Massachusetts), March 30, 1848. The Ohio congressman he referred to was the abolitionist, Joshua R. Giddings. Luther was not related to him.

⁴⁰ *Ohio Statesman*, November 5, 1850. For a brief overview of the underground railroad in Ohio, see www.touring-ohio.com/history/ohio-underground-railroad.html.

⁴¹ Walter W. Manley II, Canter Brown, Jr., and Eric W. Rise, eds. *The Supreme Court of Florida and its Predecessor Courts 1821–1917* (University of Florida Press, 1998) pp. 53–58. Ann Randall and Phillip Voorhees were married May 14, 1834 (*Maryland Marriages, 1655–1850*, online: ancestry.com) In March, prior to the marriage, Daniel Randall indicated in a letter (dated March 17; Maryland Historical Society MS 2816 Box 5 File 14) that the decision had already been made that the newlyweds were to take on the four Thomas Randall children.

⁴² This visit was noted in Luther’s obituary: *Baltimore Sun*, January 28, 1884.

⁴³ *Maryland Marriages 1655–1850* (online: ancestry.com). That the wedding took place in the Voorhees house was stated in a letter from Luther Giddings to Alexander Hagner, August 20, 1849 (private collection).

⁴⁴ *1850 United States Federal Census*, Van Buren Township, Montgomery County, Ohio; *U.S. Non-Population Schedules, 1850*, Ohio, Agriculture, Montgomery County, Miami Township; Oakwoodregister.com/archives February 26, 2008, Harry G. Eberling, “Centennial Reflections: Essays from the Oakwood Historical Society” Eberling notes that Luther bought, and in 1852 sold, a 24-acre property with a residence. He also notes that Luther sold another 32-acre property, which was close, perhaps contiguous with, the 24 acre piece.

⁴⁵ For Laura: *1870 United States Federal Census*, 2nd election district, Anne Arundel, P.O. Crownsville. For Catherine: Findagrave.com. St. Anne’s Cemetery, Annapolis, Maryland. For Elizabeth: *Maryland Births and Christenings 1650–1995* (Salt lake City, UT: FamilySearch, 2009) (online: <https://familysearch.org>). For Susan: Archives of Maryland (Biographical Series) Luther Giddings (1823–1884).

⁴⁶ Alexander Randall Diaries (unpublished) Catherine had other aunts and uncles in the area as well. Another of her mother’s sisters married Louis Goldsborough, a Naval officer who became superintendent of the Naval Academy; another married Dr. Alexander Robinson of Baltimore.

⁴⁷ Anne Arundel County Land Records, Liber NHG 2, folio 343, 17 August 1853; Liber NHG 4, folio 65, 23 October 1854; Liber NHG 4, folio 308, 24 February 1855; Liber NHG 5, folio 388, 14 April 1856.

⁴⁸ Alexander Randall Diaries (unpublished).

⁴⁹ Giddings’ experiments with wine in Ohio were reported in *American Farmer*, April 1858 p. 330. His acquaintance with Longworth was noted in an obituary published in *Baltimore Sun*, January 28, 1884, “An Interesting Career. The Story of the Life and Work of the Late Luther Giddings.”

⁵⁰ Paul Lukacs, *Inventing Wine* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2012) p. 181. See also, Wikipedia, “Nicholas Longworth (winemaker)” and “Longworth family”. See also, thewinehistorian.blogspot.com Feb 13,

2010, quoting George MacLean, "Great Fortunes and How They Were Made" 1871. Longworth, also a lawyer, banker, and real estate speculator had become one of the richest men in the country at the time of his death in 1863.

⁵¹ *American Farmer*, May 1857 p. 345.

⁵² 1860 *United States Federal Census*, 2nd Election District, Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

⁵³ See for example, a classified ad in the *Baltimore Sun*, January 16, 1861, p. 2, "Severn Side Catawba." Output reported in: *American Farmer*, October 1860 p. 153.

⁵⁴ *Annapolis Gazette*, August 9, 1855.

⁵⁵ *Annapolis Gazette*, September 18, 1856. The school, open to both boys and girls as boarders and as day students, was on the current site of Millersville Elementary School. It operated as a private high school until 1924. It was the only secondary school in Anne Arundel County until 1899. In 1924, the trustees gave it to Anne Arundel County for a public high school. See: Isabel Shipley Cunningham, "Anne Arundel Academy," *Anne Arundel County History Notes*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 1, October, 2004.

⁵⁶ *Baltimore Sun*, September 17, 1855, p. 2.

⁵⁷ *Annapolis Gazette*, September 3, 1868. The letter, signed by "U.R. Reader," went on at length to describe developments in the area since Giddings first developed his property.

⁵⁸ Catherine's obituary was published in *Annapolis Gazette*, June 28, 1860.

⁵⁹ 1860 *United States Federal Census – Slave Schedules*, District 2, Anne Arundel County, Maryland, Name of slave owner: Luther Giddings. The accusation that he was a spy is discussed below.

⁶⁰ Alexander Randall Diaries (unpublished) August 18, 1861. According to the *Richmond Dispatch*, August 17, 1861, James was arrested twice. First he was arrested for prowling around the Union Army camps, but released. The second time he was arrested because proof existed that he had been in communication with the Confederates. This arrest would have been a third time. Instead, however, it was James' son arrested this time. Because Alexander Randall was strongly loyal to the Union, he was in a position to secure Luther's release. James was arrested yet another time in November, 1861. *Baltimore Sun*, November 7, 1861, p. 2.

⁶¹ Geo. S. Bernard, ed. *War Talks of Confederate Veterans*, (Petersburg, VA: Penn and Owen, Publishers, 1892) p. 33ff.

⁶² *Memoirs of Georgia*, Vol. 1, op. cit.

⁶³ *Baltimore Sun*, February 20, 1861, p.1, "Maryland State Conference Convention." See also February 20 and March 13.

⁶⁴ www.etymonline.com/cw/maryland.htm.

⁶⁵ *Baltimore Sun*, September 11, 1861, p. 1, "Maryland State Peace Convention" *The Easton Gazette*, September 14, 1861, p. 2, called the meeting a meeting of the Secessionist Party.

⁶⁶ Anne Arundel County Land Records, Liber NHG 10, folio 527. That Marsh continued to produce wine there was noted in a letter to the editor in the *Annapolis Gazette*, September 3, 1868, cited in endnote 57 above. Advertisements for Severn Side wines appeared periodically in the *Baltimore Sun* in the 1860s.

⁶⁷ Anne Arundel County Land Records. Luther's purchase recorded in Liber NHG 2, folio 300, 11 July 1853 and Liber NHG 2, folio 612, 26 November 1853. The sale is recorded in Liber NHG 10, folio 639, 17 December 1862. Alexander Randall Diaries (unpublished) noted many recreational visits by family to the island.

⁶⁸ Anne Arundel County Land Records. See endnotes 47 and 66.

⁶⁹ Alexander Randall Diaries. Daniel Sprogle, a brick mason, bought and sold many pieces of property, both lots and houses, in Annapolis in the 1850s and 1860s. The house Alexander Randall referred to is likely one of those. See: Anne Arundel County Land Records.

⁷⁰ Anne Arundel County Land Records, Liber NHG 10, folio 619, 24 November 1862 and Liber SH 1, folio 378, 21 April 1866 recorded the two purchases of Epping Forest land. Liber NHG 11, folio 379, 8 July 1863 conveyed the first of the two properties to James Giddings as trustee for Luther's children. Liber NHG 13, folio 317, 20 July 1865 recorded Luther's repurchase of the property back from the trust. Liber GEG 3 folio 407, 21 October 1867 recorded the sale of both parcels to John R. Magruder et al. Liber SH 4, folio 430, 9 May 1870, conveyed the property back to Luther and indicated that the Magruders defaulted. The sale of the first tract to Arthur Devar was recorded in Liber SH 8 folio 347, 11 July 1874. The 1870 Census, taken in June, showed the Giddings family living on the farm in Epping Forest. An April 1865 reference in Alexander Randall Diaries mentioned the Giddings family living there. Whether they lived there at any time while the Magruders owned the property is not known.

⁷¹ *Annapolis Gazette*, October 20, 1874, p. 3.

⁷² Anne Arundel County Liber SH 20, folio 203 recorded the sale to William Burke, and Liber SH 36 folio 655, 19 April 1890 recorded the sale of the remainder of the property by Luther's daughters.

⁷³ www.visitthecapitol.gov/civilwar describes the provisions of the draft. Giddings was listed in Civil War Draft Registration Records, 1863. (*Consolidated Lists of Civil War Draft Registrations 1863–1865*, Records of the Provost Marshal General's Bureau (Civil War) Record Group 110, National Archives, Washington D.C. (online: ancestry.com).

⁷⁴ *Baltimore Sun*, September 19, 1864, p. 4 "Arrest of a Former Marylander in Ohio."

⁷⁵ Wikipedia, "43rd Battalion, Virginia Cavalry". Joseph West Aldridge's participation in Mosby's Rangers is noted on findagrave.com. See: www.mosocco.com/mosby.html for a roster of Mosby's battalion. Aldridge was a member of Company D.

⁷⁶ Briscoe Goodhart, *History of the Independent Loudoun Virginia Rangers 1862–65*, (Washington, DC: McGill & Wallace, 1896), p 20. See also, Taylor M Chamberlin and John M. Souders, *Between Reb and Yank: A Civil War History of Northern Loudoun County, Virginia* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co, 2011) passim. There are many references to William Giddings' activities as commander.

⁷⁷ Findagrave.com notes Robert died in Point Lookout prison camp in Maryland. *Confederate Applications for Presidential Pardons 1865–1867*. (online: ancestry.com) Only relatively few selected individuals needed a Presidential pardon. Most Confederate soldiers and sympathizers did not. Aldridge probably required a pardon as "a volunteer participant in the rebellion who had property valued at more than \$20,000."

⁷⁸ *Baltimore Sun*, September 19, 1864; Obituary in *Baltimore Sun*, January 28, 1884

⁷⁹ *Dayton Daily Empire*, September 12, 1864, p. 2.

⁸⁰ His release was reported in *Dayton Daily Empire*, December 27, 1864. Alexander Randall Diaries reported on Randall's role in helping secure Luther's release. Assistant Secretary of War Charles Dana

signed the order for Giddings arrest, in a telegram dated September 3 1864, See: *U.S. Union Provost Marshal's Papers 1861–1867* (online: ancestry.com). For a brief history of the Old Capitol Prison, see: “Other Government Buildings: Old Capitol Prison” (online: www.mrlincolnwhitehouse.org.)

⁸¹ William Starr Myers, *The Self-Reconstruction of Maryland 1864–1867*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1909), p. 40ff; Dan Friedman, *The Maryland State Constitution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) pp. 11–15.

⁸² *ibid.* p. 55ff, 80ff.

⁸³ *ibid.* p. 122.

⁸⁴ Philip B. Perlman (ed.) *Debates of the Maryland Constitutional Convention of 1867* (Baltimore: Hepbron & Haydon, 1923), pp. 60, 228, 439, 452.

⁸⁵ Giddings' appointment to the position was noted in *Baltimore Sun*, April 25, 1868, p. 1. The success of the program to encourage immigrants to remain in Maryland was reported in *Baltimore Sun*, January 4, 1869, p. 1. *Woods Baltimore City Directory for 1868–1869* through 1872 listed him as Assistant Superintendent with an office in Baltimore. That the existence of the office was allowed to expire is stated in *State of Maryland, Revised Code of Public General Laws, 1879*, p. 268. However, in *Woods Directories for 1873 and 1874*, the department, with McPherson as Superintendent, was still listed. It was not listed in subsequent directories. Either the department was given time to wind down its activities, or the makers of the *Woods Directory* made an error.

⁸⁶ Perlman, *op.cit.* pp. 63, 150. In October 1866, Swann used his recess authority, when the Legislature was not in session, to dismiss two police commissioners in Baltimore City who were charged with partisan conduct in a municipal election. The dismissed commissioners denied his authority and jailed the successors appointed by Swann. Swann's fear of unrest, possibly riot, was such that he even called on the federal government for assistance. See: Archives of Maryland (Biographical Series) MSA SC 3520-1464 “Thomas Swann (1809–1883).”

⁸⁷ *Baltimore Sun*, May 18, 1868 reported his appointment. It is not clear how long he served. In 1871, the Governor fired the sitting Adjutant General, arguing that he had misappropriated State property. There was a lengthy legal battle that the Governor and his appointed successor finally won. No mention was made of Giddings, or of any other staff members, in the many news stories regarding this affair. The Adjutant General's office did not list staff in its annual report until 1873. In that year, the Adjutant General's report did list staff. Giddings was not the Inspector General.

⁸⁸ Anne Arundel County Land Records, Liber SH 6, folio 368, 6 March 1872 recorded the West Annapolis deed. *Annapolis Gazette*, February 25, 1869 reported the price Luther paid. He immediately (the same day) sold ten acres to Ann Maria Greenhow. In 1873, he sold 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres to William Feldmeyer, recorded in Liber SH 8, folio 165, 14 January 1874.

⁸⁹ *Maryland Marriages 1667–1899* (online: ancestry.com).

⁹⁰ Owen Taylor, *The History of Annapolis From Its Origins to the Present Time* (Baltimore: Turnbull Bros., 1872) noted that Giddings was occupying the Jonas Green House

⁹¹ *1870 United States Federal Census*, Annapolis, Anne Arundel County, Maryland, P.O. Annapolis; *1870 United States Federal Census*, 2nd Election District, Anne Arundel County, Maryland, P.O. Crownsville. Of course people are not supposed to be counted twice. The Epping Forest count was done on June 8–9; the Annapolis count, August 19. Perhaps the family moved in the summer of 1870, leading to the error.

⁹² Findagrave.com, Saint Anne's Cemetery, Annapolis, Maryland.

- ⁹³ 1880 *United States Federal Census*, District 53, Loudoun County, Virginia.
1900 *United States Federal Census*, Ashby District 72, Orkney Springs, Shenandoah County, Virginia.
Baltimore Sun, June 12, 1897, p. 8: advertisement for Orkney Springs and Baths, J. West Aldridge, proprietor. Similar advertising ran regularly through 1900.
- ⁹⁴ On the Wells scandal: *Baltimore Sun*, January 18, 1877.
1880 *United States Federal Census*, 2nd District, Anne Arundel County, Maryland.
- ⁹⁵ *American Farmer*, new series Vol. 4, No. 7, July 1875, p. 269 listed him as Grange Master; *Baltimore Sun*, September 12, 1876 noted his participation in the National Agricultural Congress; *Baltimore Sun*, September 15, 1877, p.1, noted his contributions to a horticultural fair and exhibition. He received a commendation.
Severn Vineyard wines were advertised in *Maryland Directory*, 1878, p.161; *The American Farmer*, by Saml. Sands and Son, 1876, p. 385, had a long letter from Luther, dated November 13, describing his current wine making efforts. There he noted that Catawba vines rot easily, but that he was experimenting with grafting Catawba vines onto Concord grape roots.
- ⁹⁶ *Anne Arundel Advertiser*, September 29, 1870, p. 2.
- ⁹⁷ *Anne Arundel Advertiser*, March 2, 1871, p. 2.
- ⁹⁸ His obituary in the *Baltimore Sun*, January 28, 1884 noted that he wrote articles signed "Laborer." These appeared frequently in the *Anne Arundel Advertiser*.
- ⁹⁹ See for example: *Annapolis Gazette*, September 16, 1873, p. 4, and *Baltimore Sun*, October 27, 1873, p. 2. These were among many newspaper discussions of the Reform movement's dissatisfaction with the Democrat-Conservative Party.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Annapolis Gazette*, September 23, 1873.
Anne Arundel Advertiser, August 19, 1875 contained the paper's endorsement. Giddings' letter appeared in *Anne Arundel Advertiser*, September 9, 1875; *Baltimore Sun*, December 4, 1875, noted Giddings' intention to challenge the result.
Baltimore Sun, September 26, 1879, p. 4 reported on Taxpayer convention candidates.
- ¹⁰¹ *Annapolis Gazette*, January 7, 1873. Also, February 11, 1873.
- ¹⁰² Diary of the Reverend William Southgate, March 17, 1884 (unpublished).
- ¹⁰³ *Annapolis Gazette*, February 14, 1871.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Annapolis Gazette*, December 2, 1873; *Annapolis Gazette*, August 25, 1874.
- ¹⁰⁵ Alexander Randall Diaries (unpublished).
- ¹⁰⁶ Wikipedia, "Annapolis and Elkridge Railroad."
- ¹⁰⁷ *Baltimore Sun*, August 1, 1879.
- ¹⁰⁸ Wikipedia, "Long Depression."
- ¹⁰⁹ *Baltimore Sun*, March 17, 1880; also March 27, 1880.
- ¹¹⁰ *Baltimore Sun*, September 23, 1884, p 1; October 13, 1885, p. 6; October 13, 1886, p.4; March 9, 1884, p. 7.

¹¹¹ Archives of Maryland, Biographical Series, Luther Giddings. Alexander Randall noted in his diary that Laura suffered from monomania, which is today called Bipolar Disorder.

¹¹² The Reverend William Southgate Diaries, January 5, 1884. Southgate noted that Alex Randall was present. Alexander Randall, Luther's relative by marriage who assisted him and his family on numerous occasions, as noted in this essay, died in 1881. Thus, the Alex Randall mentioned here was of course a different person, likely the son of the senior Alexander's brother, Burton.

¹¹³ Obituaries appeared in the *Baltimore Sun*, January 7, 1884 and a longer obituary on January 28, 1884; in the *Anne Arundel Advertiser*, January 10, 1884. His death was noted in the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald*, and in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, January 6, 1884.

¹¹⁴ *Baltimore Sun*, March 14, 1885 contained an advertisement for the sale.

¹¹⁵ *Baltimore Sun*, December 21, 1892; April 14, 1894, p. 6; October 15, 1894, p. 2; April 5, 1895, p. 2.

¹¹⁶ He often wrote about his experiments with grapes and with farming techniques. See, for example, *American Farmer* Vol. XIII, April 1858, p. 330–337, where he critiqued techniques of grape cultivation and discussed his own experimentation.

EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF LUTHER GIDDINGS

- 1829 (age 6) - Emigrates with his family from England to Baltimore.
- 1833 (age 10) - Father remarries; family lives in Frederick County, MD.
- 1841 (age 18) - Graduates from St. John's College in Annapolis, MD, then studies law
- 1844 (age 21) - Moves to Dayton, OH; admitted to the Ohio bar.
- 1846 (age 23) - Volunteers, and fights with Zachary Taylor's Army in the Mexican-American War.
- 1848 (age 25) - Represents Montgomery County in Ohio State legislature.
- 1849 (age 26) - Marries Catherine Randall in Annapolis, MD; couple lives in Dayton, OH.
- 1851 (age 28) - Daughter Laura born.
- 1853 (age 30) - Second daughter, Katherine, born; publishes his book, *Sketches of the Campaign in Northern Mexico*, about his Mexican War experiences
- 1854 (age 31) - Moves from Dayton to Annapolis and buys property on Round Bay that becomes his Severn Side farm and vineyard.
- 1855 (age 32) - Third daughter, Elizabeth, born.
- 1860 (age 37) - Wife Catherine dies at age 31.
- 1861 (age 38) - Sells Severn Side and moves with his three daughters into Annapolis.
- 1862 (age 39) - Buys farm where Epping Forest is today; temporarily moves family to brother's farm in Loudoun County, VA.
- 1864 (age 41) - Arrested by Union troops in OH; incarcerated in prison in Washington, DC.
- 1867 (age 44) - Elected delegate to Maryland Constitutional Convention.
- 1868 (age 45) - Appointed assistant superintendent of Maryland Department of Labor and Agriculture; appointed Inspector General of Maryland Militia.
- 1869 (age 46) - Buys the Pinkney Farm (today's West Annapolis); marries Mary Wells; lives in former Jonas Green House on Charles St., Annapolis.
- 1870 (age 47) - First editor of the *Anne Arundel Advertiser*; establishes Severn Vineyard on his West Annapolis farm.
- 1873 (age 50) - Second wife, Mary, dies at age 37; founding member and president of Annapolis Savings Institution.
- 1874 (age 51) - Sells farm in Epping Forest area; lives on Horse Shoe Point Farm in today's West Annapolis.
- 1879 (age 56) - Member of the original corporation for the Baltimore & Annapolis Short Line Railroad which runs through his farm.
- 1884 (age 61) - Dies at home and is buried in St. Anne's Cemetery.

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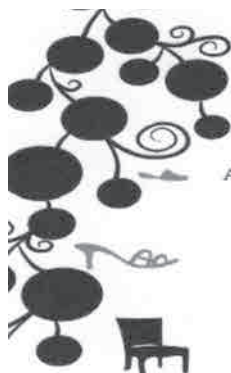


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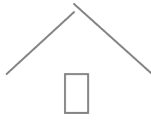
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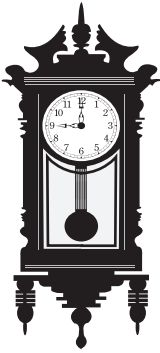
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eric Fredland is a native of Annapolis. He earned a doctorate in Economics from the University of Michigan in 1970. From 1974 until his retirement in 2006, he taught Economics at the U.S. Naval Academy and served as department chair for 11 years. He and his wife live in Wardour in the house that Elizabeth Giddings had built in 1909-10.

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