

## "A Fancy Ball at Winchester Place"

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By Jay A. Graybeal

Many people may think that the county's multi-million dollar tourism industry is of relatively recent origin. Summer visitors, many of whom sought refuge from the heat of summer in Baltimore, were commonplace by the late nineteenth century. Inns, hotels and boarding houses located along the railroads throughout the county provided lodging and meals for the traveler and visitor alike.

In New Windsor the Dielman Inn was a popular haunt. Some visitors became regular guests as the June 18, 1898 issue of the Westminster Democratic Advocate noted, "Commander E. P. Wood, of the United States gunboat Petrel, which took part in the bombardment of the fortifications at Manila and in the destruction of the Spanish fleet, has spent several summers at the Dielman Hotel, New Windsor. He was there last summer and is known to many citizens of that town."

Winchester Place was a popular Westminster summer retreat and the site of a "Fancy Ball" on August 17, 1898 as reported in the Democratic Advocate:

### "Fancy Ball at Winchester Place"

The dining room at Winchester Place was thronged with dancers in all kinds of fancy and grotesque costumes, on Tuesday night. By the competent management of Mrs. Stickney and Mrs. Cantwell, with the hearty cooperation of the young men, an ordinary, every day dance was changed into an event which will stand out in bold relief from the previous festivities of this popular resort. The dancing floor was in perfect condition, the music was all that could be desired; indeed, when one's feet were decorously resting, the tinkling strings of the mandolin sent little thrills meandering up and down until it was impossible to sit still. The short notice of the affair prevented many of the visitors from preparing fancy costumes, per se, but did not prevent powder and patches; the days of our grandmothers seemed to be hovering over us. Those who came in character were: Mrs. George Stickney, as Evening; Mrs. Cantwell, Fortune Teller; Miss Katherine Gassaway, Lady Betty Stair; Miss Laure de Mitkiewicz, Colonial Dame; Miss Helen Jerome, Normandy Peasant; Miss Ethelyn Evans, The American Flag; Mrs. Kennedy, Queen of Hearts; Miss Marjorie Kennedy, Bachelor of Arts; Miss Helen Irwin, Colonial Dame; Mrs. Charles E. C. Smith, Patriot; Miss Alice Bond, Old Fashioned Girl; Miss Anita Simpson, Red Cross Nurse; Miss Elsie Kent, Japanese Girl; Mr. Alden Peirson, Mendicant Friar; Paul Reese, Continental officer; Mr. Kennedy, Columbia; William Wells, Teddy Roosevelt; Frank Thomas, Calamity Jane; Ivan de Mitkiewicz, Colonial Beau; Marguerita Sanchez, Rose Bud; Margaret Stickney, Sunflower; Elizabeth Stirling, Japanese Girl; Caroline Kennedy, Kate Greenaway; Margaret Kent, French Peasant; Dorothy Kent, Rose; Margaret Stirling, Midshipmite; Gerald Smith, Doll; Hall Stickney, Negro Minstrel; George Stickney, Clown; Richard Cantwell, Dominoes. Miss de Mitkiewicz and Miss Roder wore powder and patches with latter day evening dress. Others in evening dress, besides the guests of Winchester Place, were Misses Elizabeth Irwin, Madge Shaw, Jean Mackintosh, Gambill, Ailsa Craig, Misses Wilson, of Baltimore, and Clarke, of Minnesota; Mrs. John M. Roberts, Mrs. Annie Stirling, Mrs. W. H. Vanderford, Mrs. J. H. Billingslea, and Messrs. Arthur Smith, Guy Smith, Guy Steele, John Roberts, Dan Roberts, Nat Baumgartner, E. O. Grimes, Jr., James A. Bond, Neal Parke, Satterwhite and others. Among the many expressions eulogistic of this dance was one of gratitude to Miss Mary B. Shellman, who in addition to furnishing a large proportion of the beautiful costumes, loaned her supply of national colors with which the dining room was so

gracefully decorated. The dancing continued until 12:30, and broke up amid a general regret that such a delightful affair should come to an end."

Winchester Place was built as a private residence in c.1800 and later enlarged in 1889 for use as a summer resort. The accommodations included cottages for children, a dance hall, croquet grounds and tennis courts. Today the former resort is an apartment building.

Photo caption: Winchester Place on East Green St., Westminster, was a popular resort in the late nineteenth century. Historical Society of Carroll County collection.