

## "County Birthday 1925"

Carroll County Times article for 16 January 2000

By Jay A. Graybeal

Each year the Historical Society of Carroll County sponsors a special observance of the founding of Carroll County in 1837. Prior to the founding of the Historical Society in 1939, the county birthday was celebrated by the Carroll County Society of Baltimore. The January 23, 1925 issue of the Westminster Democratic Advocate newspaper carried a front page article about the event:

### "CARROLL COUNTY SOCIETY MEETS

Carroll County's birthday was fittingly celebrated this week by the Carroll County Society of Baltimore City, whose annual banquet was held at the Hotel Rennert on January 19th.

It was the sixth annual gathering of the Society and marked the eighty-seventh birthday at the county. One hundred and fifty members and guests including several living back home, attended and renewed many old friendships. A reception preceded the banquet.

The Society includes in its membership two hundred and fifty sons and daughters of Carroll County. Although its aims and purposes are social, the Society also endeavors to keep Carroll County in the front ranks in the state's metropolis.

Chief Judge Francis Neale Parke, of Westminster, member of the Court of Appeals, was the guest of honor and delivered the principal address. The Rev. Dr. Calvin S. Slagle delivered the invocation. Mrs. Catherine Slagle Ramsay, a Westminster girl and one of the talented professional singers of Baltimore sang several selections, accompanied by Mrs. Bessie Pate French, pianist.

J. Hampton Baumgartner, president presided. After extending a welcome he alluded to the history of the Carroll County Society of Baltimore City before presenting the speakers.

Judge Parke's address was warmly received. Referring to early history of the county he said that prior to the Revolution Carroll's citizens contributed of their means to financing the oppressive stamp act and other burdensome taxes imposed upon the colonists.

He referred to his County as a section of the State where the laws are obeyed and where the people live in a state of contentment and prosperity. Judge Parks told of a pilgrimage of exploration which he made last summer, accompanied by Willis A. Myers and Louis H. Diehlman, in an attempt to locate the boundary line of the county.

Touching further upon the history of Carroll County, Judge Parke connected it with two outstanding incidents of the stirring days of our infant nation, namely, the execution of Major Andre, during the Revolution, and the attack upon Baltimore, in 1814, Judge Park brought out the fact that at Andre's execution the drummer boy was named Dewese, who is buried in the Union Cemetery in Manchester; and that during the attack of Baltimore another native of what is now Carroll County, the immortal Francis Scott Key, gave America its national anthem.

Judge Parke also made a number of entertaining references to persons and events during and prior to his boyhood. His address was roundly applauded.

Peyton B Gorsuch, Editor of the Westminster Times, spoke humorously and seriously. Mr. Gorsuch paid his respects to many of those at the banquet.

Mr. Diehlman explained the tour of exploration last summer and said he thought the government should establish a reserve at Parr's Spring, the point at which four counties join.

Hon. John H. Cunningham, a Westminster banker and business man, brought a message of optimism to the banquet concerning the recent establishment of several industries in Carroll County and the prosperity which they will promote.

Other speakers were Mrs. Francis Goodwin, Charles R. Woods and Geo. R. Babylon. Mr. Babylon reported to the Society concerning the bill in Congress to create a national park at Fort McHenry. He thought that if Carroll Countians and other Marylanders display sufficient interest and urge members of Congress to favorable action the bill likely will pass. The fact that the second congressional district contains no Federal building was brought out by Mr. Babylon and he strongly urged that a post office building be erected at Westminster.

Mr. Woods brought the Carroll County Society into being and was its first president. The attractive program contained a sketch by him of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, for whom the County was named."

The items mentioned by Mr. George R. Babylon were eventually taken care of. Ft. McHenry became a National Park in 1925 and the former Westminster Post Office building on E. Main St., was completed in 1934.

Photo caption: Judge Francis Neal Parke was the guest speaker at the Carroll County Society of Baltimore's county birthday celebration in 1925. Historical Society of Carroll County collection, gift of Mrs. James Boylan, Jr., 1981.