

Background on the history of Fair Haven, Maryland—1800s-1904

Direct Quotes from *Tidewater by Steamboat, the Saga of the Chesapeake*
by David C. Holly, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.

Chapter 1 – The Quest for Steamboats: Trial and Error

(p 12-13) George Weems was a romantic adventurer, born with a yen for the sea. At the same time, he lived in the shadow of his heritage and his roots in the soil of southern Maryland....

His grandfather, David Weems, had arrived in Anne Arundel County in 1720, brought by his mother to live with her brother, Dr. William Loch....In the New World, David Weems spawned 19 children, one of whom was Mason Loch Weems, the colorful biographer of George Washington,. Another was son David, the father of George.

The elder David, grandfather of George, spoke with the burr of Scotland in his teeth, but he brought to Maryland the vigor of his illustrious forebears. The tobacco trade beckoned....At age 26, David Weems began his acquisition of land in order to become a planter himself. One of his first purchases, made in 1733, was a 150-acre tract called Marshes Seat on Herring Creek, which ran into Herring Bay on the western shore of the Chesapeake....At Marshes Seat, he built a manor house 100 feet in length, and settled down to raise his numerous children and bask in the pleasures of the Chesapeake....

The younger David (born 1751), father of George, smelled the sea at an early age. He ventured forth as a seaman from the landing at Town Point, which served Marshes Seat on Herring Creek, aboard ships bound for Europe....

Shortly after the American Revolution broke out, David Weems threw in his lot with three neighbors, John Muir, Isaac Vanbibber, and Charles Wallace, all seafarers, to outfit privateers for action against the British....

While he was outfitting the first privateer, David Weems courted Margaret Harrison and married her on April 15, 1777. He had six children, among them Gustavus (born April 2, 1779) and George (born May 23, 1784)....

Gustavus, in spite of his attachment to his father and to Marshes Seat, made his fortune in neighboring Calvert County....

George Weems, in contrast to the land settling of his brother, made his mark in the shipping world of Baltimore and sailed the seven seas in search of adventure....His taste for adventure on the high seas never flagged, and within a few years he had crossed the oceans of the world. During the War of 1812, he fitted out a fast sloop named *Halcyon* as a privateer and set out to harry British shipping. Surprised and outgunned by a British ship, his vessel was captured, her cargo of flour seized; curiously, the British, after holding the vessel and her crew for a time, released *Halcyon* and allowed her crew to sail

away. After the war George managed to gain an interest in several vessels and profited from their trade overseas. He was respected on the Baltimore waterfront.

XXXXX

(p 19-20) Just a year after the purchase of *Surprise*, George Weems, in partnership with an anguished Gustavus, was not in a financial position to consider the acquisition of another steamboat. Nevertheless, he looked longingly at *Eagle*, the blue-water steamer that journeyed back and forth with the regularity of the passing days. George lived under the shadow of his father's death and the adamant refusal of Gustavus to consider the use of his portion of the estate at Marshes Seat as collateral for further borrowing of money.

At that point, a neighbor, who owned property just to the south of Marshes Seat on Herring Bay, entered the life of George Weems.... Their discussions in late 1819 and early 1820 marked the beginning of an odd relationship that endured for nearly 30 years and punctuated almost every important decision that George Weems would make.

James Harwood, a contemporary of George Weems in age, was a somewhat mercurial individual with a collection of conflicting traits. He was a money-making planter who fought the soil with righteous indignation. He was a speculator and a risk taker if the chances of success were better than even, but he was a hardheaded man with a balance sheet in mind.... He was somewhat of a scholar, known for youthful oratory at St. Johns College in Annapolis.... And he reveled in public service. But he was a tenacious and often critical—even acerbic—friend, who undertook to oversee the business ventures—and even personal life—of George Weems, whom he considered visionary and impractical.

In 1819, James Harwood owned the large estate of Fair Haven on Herring Bay, near its southern hook. His slaves farmed it for its worth in tobacco. His primary enterprise, however, was in Baltimore, where he profited from a business as flour merchant, wholesale grocer, and incipient commission merchant.

Chapter 3:- Expansion: Acceptance of the Steamboat on the Bay

(p 43-49) In a very real sense, the season of 1835-36 marked the beginning of the Weems line as a viable steamboat company....

In 1838, George Weems felt the infirmities of middle age and the physical devastations of past injuries coming upon him. He was only 46, but he suffered from lingering disabilities inflicted by *Eagle*, and he was tired. Years of pounding the decks of *Patuxent* in fair weather and foul, of navigating her through the narrows of the Patuxent, the Rappahannock, and the Wicomico, and of fighting seemingly endless and fruitless battles had taken their toll. He wanted a more settled life---some place to rest---either in Baltimore or on the banks of Herring Bay....

George found himself preoccupied with the activities and proposals of James Harwood...Harwood seem to be ubiquitous, appearing everywhere in the affairs of corporations and the state....

In late 1838, Harwood was engaged in a little minuet with George Weems and some other local residents on the banks of Herring Bay. They were dancing around the subject of a tract of land known as Fair Haven.

Ten years before, George Weems, with his brother Gustavus, had bought a small parcel of 21 acres of Pascals Purchase. This tract extended south from Marshes Seat to the Middle of Herring Bay. In contrast to the hilly, often ravined contours of the land around Marshes Seat on the north and near the lower hook of Herring Cove, the terrain surrounding the 21 acres rose gently from the shoreline in pastures and low-rising slopes. The sandy beach extended in a gradual drop to a depth of 10 feet and some 50 feet or more from the low-tide mark.

On this tract of land, George had built a house and a wharf. Here was the Herring Bay landing at which *Patuxent* called at first on her runs to Town Creek and elsewhere. On this land, there had been erected by lease from George Weems a public house called Fair Haven Tavern. Adjoining this land were several estates: that of George Sunderland known as "Ayres and Chews"; that of Robert Garner; and, most importantly, that of James Harwood. Harwood, to accommodate his own interests, had built a substantial wharf that *Patuxent* found convenient to use. Harwood's estate was known as Fair Haven. The name came to be applied to the area as well.

In 1837, George Weems rented his acreage at Fair Haven to Richard Houghly under the stipulation that the latter would feed and house any employees there from time to time and keep the icehouse filled for the steamer *Patuxent* in the summer. Fair Haven, it seemed, had become something more than a way stop for *Patuxent* on her journeys south.

In September 1839, George Weems paid \$573 to his neighbor Robert Garner for a tract of land at Fair Haven "where the ten pin alley stands." The place, sustained by passengers from Baltimore, showed the beginnings of an amusement park.

In the mind's eye of George Weems---and in the calculations of James Harwood---was the creation of a summer resort on the site of this land on Herring Bay. With the rapid expansion of steamboat service up and down the Chesapeake and its principal tributaries, the pleasure-loving escapists of Baltimore and Norfolk had discovered the wonders of a trip by boat and a vacation, even for one day, in little resorts along the shore. Old houses became inns; farmers scrambled to cater to the city-weary for profit; and small beach communities became beach resorts.

Talks among Weems, Harwood, Sunderland, and Garner danced around the subject. In the meantime, Weems, as impatient as ever in spite of his aches and pains, went ahead with plans to create a park from his small tract of land and some portion of the adjoining estates comprising Fair Haven. In the summer of 1838, *Patuxent* began to stop on her

runs to *Patuxent* landings. Proceeds from the operation of *Patuxent* sufficed to buy out other shareholders...and provide a living wage for Weems and his son, but the proceeds were not enough to purchase any additional land of Fair Haven in time for the 1839 season. Harwood worked out a solution of his own, using the resources of none other than John Watchman.

“Dear Weems,” Harwood wrote from Baltimore on May 13, 1839, “I have the satisfaction of telling you that I have seen Mr. Watchman and arranged fully with him respecting ‘Fair Haven’ for the present season and I have know [*sic*] doubt before Jan I can put everything perfectly straight if you do as you are advised by me---Mr. Watchman agrees that you may have the property on the following terms, his \$500 for the House and ground and \$500 for the Wharf making \$1000 for the whole property to the 1st of Jan (1840)...You can therefore make any public notice you think proper and I can say you have rented it for the season.”

Fair Haven, as George Weems called it, began to function as a resort. For all practical purposes he moved there; the old house at the Marshes Seat estate had fallen on bad times, had been shortened from 100 to 50 feet in 1832, and suffered from disrepair in 1840. *Patuxent* called regularly, in the summer of 1839, on her runs to and from the river landings, many of her passengers arriving for a day of picnicking and bathing in the salty wavelets lapping on the sandy beach (George Weems had his slaves build bathhouses to accommodate them).

Fair Haven was now the resort envisioned by George Weems. He drew up plans for the conversion of a house near the wharf into a hotel. The structure was to be a 150-foot, three-story building behind a promenade fronting on the water. A wide porch would grace its entrance. To one side would be a dining room and a residential area, two stories high. To the other, would be a storage area. On the second floor, a bathroom would occupy the space over the storage area, and on the third would be 10 bedrooms and a washroom, with a wide porch overlooking the Bay. An extension on one side was to provide for five additional bedrooms with a fronting porch. On the wharf, he sketched a warehouse and bathhouses, a row of cubicles to please the fastidious visitors from Baltimore.

Since 1837, Fair Haven as a park had catered to picnickers arriving by boat from the city; but with the 1839 season, it opened as a resort—a beach hotel, luxurious for the times with boasts of fine cuisine and splendid bedrooms, and various amusements.

In June 1839 Baltimore newspapers notice was given that the “Steamboat *Patuxent*, Captain M.L. Weems, will leave the lower end of Dugans Wharf on Sunday morning the 26th instant for Fair Haven....Passage to and from Fair Haven \$1.50. Fair Haven presents to the citizens of Baltimore the most pleasant excursion that can be found so contiguous to this city,...and in a very salubrious district, commanding an extensive prospect of the surrounding country, and the broad waters of the bay. To persons desirous of enjoying the luxury of saltwater bathing, a very extensive bath house has been erected, with separate and distinct private apartments. Dinner will be served at the spacious Hotel,

where all of the luxuries of the season will be served up, together with an abundance of fish, oysters, and crabs...and with a choice of liquors. Persons fond of fishing and gunning can be particularly gratified at Fair Haven.” From his house nearby, George Weems could look at the plans he had drawn up for Fair Haven and contemplate his accomplishments after a life of struggle.

At this time, James Harwood assumed almost a baronial attitude toward the administration of the estate of Fair Haven, and by conjunction with that of George Weems, of the latter’s affairs as well. From his bastion in Baltimore, Harwood fired a continuous barrage of letters to George Weems on every subject related to their joint interests....

The exchange of charges and countercharges between the two in 1841 led Weems to demand that their respective claims be submitted to a third party and that the two claimants each agree in advance...to abide by the arbitrator’s decision....

A formal agreement dated February 26, 1842 was exchanged between the two disputants....Weems could not have been surprised at the adverse ruling; he knew, after all, that the arbitrator was Harwood’s business partner.

George Weems gathered his resources and the increased earnings of *Patuxent* to gain control of Fair Haven. Linked to any purchase of Harwood’s land were the adjoining properties of Benjamin Sutherland and Robert Garner, both under a contract with Harwood for their use. By a system of 99-year leases of the Sunderland and the Garner tracts and the purchase of Harwood’s Fair Haven tract for \$2,090, Weems succeeded in his objective. The domain of Fair Haven was complete, and George Weems could view with some satisfaction the fulfillment of his dream....

In spite of her somewhat anachronistic appearance in the advancing steamboat pageant, *Patuxent* steamed on for many years, a stalwart boat used more and more by Weems as a spare....

George Weems did not see the denouement of his beloved *Patuxent*. After a lingering illness he died at Fair Haven on March 6, 1853.

XXXXXX

(p 54) Fair Haven advertised in 1845 that new bathhouses offered excellent accommodations on the wharf near the sandy shore. Who used them remained a question. The Victorian reign had barely begun. The prudishness that accompanied it had just crossed the Atlantic, but the strictures of early Puritanism, Quakerism, and Catholicism, and the rising restraints of Methodism and Anglicanism had affected the mores of the times. Not one advertisement for bathing suits or beachside attire appeared in any newspaper. Bathing in public---particularly by the ladies---was simply not done in polite society, or so it seemed. If the more daring entered the water, they went in fully clothed. For the ladies, not even an ankle was exposed. The bathhouses certainly hid the

charms of the more audacious, but they offered a tempting reminder of the art of the possible.

XXXX

(p 64) These were days of social unrest. Around the shores of the Patuxent, the news arriving aboard the Weems boat stirred hot blood. The planters of southern Maryland, slaveowning, bred to plantation life, echoed the fire of rebellion coming from the South. On the other hand, the merchants, small manufacturers, and professionals---more often linked to the economy and society of the city---found their loyalties divided. Aboard the *Planter*, *Patuxent*, and *Mary Washington*, slaves continued to serve as deckhands and stokers, and their owners joined hands with the planters.

Chapter 4 -Civil War: Disruption and Rebuilding

(p 69) An incident aboard *Mary Washington* on July 8, 1861, electrified the news on both sides of the Potomac....

(p 72) On July 4, strange characters had been observed circling about *Columbia*, a likely target for Richard Thomas [a swashbuckling Confederate sympathizer who went by the name Zarvona]....Then the authorities learned that several chartered omnibuses with certain parties had left Baltimore for Fair Haven, and suspicion arose that Thomas had arrived there under disguise, with further depredations in mind. Accordingly, an expedition...set out in the steamer *Chester* (or possibly a sloop) for Fair Haven. To cover its purpose, the expedition arrested a vacationing barber by the name of Neale Green on the charge of fomenting assault on a Massachusetts regiment passing through Baltimore on April 9, and the entire detachment with Green in tow boarded *Mary Washington* for return to Baltimore.

Shortly after departure, Lieutenant Carmichael, from casual conversation with a number of more talkative passengers, confirmed what he suspected....Richard Thomas Zarvona himself was on board, bound for Baltimore to effect his next escapade....

Carmichael directed Captain Mason Locke Weems to dock the vessel at Fort McHenry, now a Union prison in Baltimore Harbor. On hearing of the order, Richard Thomas appeared....drew his pistol, called some of his men around him, and threatened Carmichael. Confusion reigned, women screamed and ran about, and some of the men passengers tried to stand between the adversaries and bring calm.

Mary Washington docked at Fort McHenry. General Banks...arrested all of the men identified by Carmichael...all that is except Colonel Richard Thomas Zarvona. He had vanished into thin air....

Then they found him. He had been fitted into a bureau or dresser in the ladies' cabin by some of the more "afflicted" among the female passengers....

XXXX

(p 77) The most sensational entry on the Patuxent in the war years was that of *Harriet Deford*. Just launched (October 5, 1864), a handsome boat---fast, propeller driven---she captured the fancy of residents from Fair Haven to Hills Landing. The Weems brothers welcomed her with an invitation to call at Fair Haven and their usual landings on the river. She arrived in late October, 1864....

She was a small but graceful boat and excited the interest not only of river residents but also of the Confederate underground, which maintained a well-established channel of communication across the Patuxent, through St. Mary's County, to the Potomac.

Arriving in Calvert County on April 3, 1865 was Captain Thaddeus Fitzhugh and a band of some 27 Confederate guerillas, late members of Mosby's band in the valley of Virginia. With an appraising eye, Captain Fitzhugh targeted *Harriet Deford*, in spite of the drab paint that had been applied to disguise her. On the night of April 4, 1865, he moved his men to the woody groves of Fair Haven, where *Harriet Deford* lay overnight on her runs in and out of the Patuxent. At 2:00 a.m., he stormed aboard with his troops and seized the boat. In the dead of the night, it was an easy capture. He put ashore the mate and captain---first relieving the latter of his wallet---and all of the white passengers. Retained as captives were the engineer, firemen, and some 60 Negroes, including many children. *Harriet Deford*, with Fitzhugh in command, steamed off down the Bay as a prize of war....

A report of the steamer's capture sent to the secretary of the navy...resulted in telegrams sent regionally ordering a search for *Harriet Deford*. Foxhall A. Parker, commanding the Potomac Flotilla, reported that he had dispatched 10 patrol vessels in pursuit and followed his report with a general order to trap or sink *Harriet Deford*....

On April 7, Commander Parker...found the wreck of the captured steamer. She had been set on fire by the rebels and "was still burning when we boarded."....Officially, the war ended on April 9, 1865, only a day or so after the devastation aboard *Harriet Deford*.

XXXXX

(p 79) The difficult days of reconstruction struck hard at tidewater Maryland and Virginia. Abolition of slavery meant an abrupt and dramatic change in economic and social patterns that had been the underpinning of life in the region for generations. Blacks left the fields in multitudes, beckoned by the prospects of employment in urban industry. White owners abandoned their farms when the lack of labor or its sudden cost drove them from their livelihood. Plantations were sold off into smaller tracts. And the rural landscape changed in appearance, as the fields of labor-intensive tobacco gave way step-by-step to grain and truck farming or to the dreariness of abandonment....

The shift from tobacco to other crops was far reaching in Maryland. It was necessitated by shortage of labor, land division, and soil depletion....On the Western Shore, harvests

dropped dramatically from 41,029 hogsheads in 1846 and 51,247 in 1860 (the largest ever produced in Maryland) to 25,479 in 1865....the volume dropped to little more than 20,000 hogsheads by the 1880s and remained at that level.

XXXXX

(p 87) By mid 1870, indications pointed to the need for expansion. Steamboat lines around the Bay were prospering, and the Weems boats were doing well....Mason Locke Weems....had brought the steamboats back from the disasters of the Civil War and built two promising lines---the Patuxent and the Fredericksburg---among the most respected on the Chesapeake. Fair Haven, a resort for Baltimore vacationers, flourished on Herring Bay....

(p 89) But the single-minded intensity of his work and the endless brooding over the loss of his family contributed to his undoing. Overwrought by events, Mason Locke Weems died on October 15, 1874. His death was attributed to "softening of the brain" (a stroke).

In utter shock were his daughters---bereft of a father on whom they had completely depended---beset by the ownership and management of a steamboat line about which they knew nothing.

Chapter 5 - Red Ball on the Three Rivers

(p 90-91) The two sisters, Georgeanna and Matilda, now owners of the steamboat lines, had no training for the business, knew very little about their father's activities in the steamboat trade, and stood behind the barrier of the times which generally excluded women from participating in the man's world of transportation and commerce....Georgeanna, who had married Henry Williams on June 11, 1868, was now the mother of four children....

Matilda had married Sydney Hume Forbes on April 15, 1873....At the time of Mason Locke's death, Matilda and Sydney were physically in residence in Baltimore at the seat of the Weems business, and Sydney was unhampered by other occupations....Dutifully, Sydney Hume Forbes arrived at the old office...and assumed the title of superintendent. It was immediately obvious to him that he was unsuited by interest and temperament to exercise the necessary responsibilities of exclusive management....

Henry Williams and Georgeanna cast aside a life in the gentle countryside of Calvert County, for the competitive and tension-filled confusion of commercial Baltimore....He set himself up as attorney and agent for the Weems Transportation line.

(p 93) As a new decade approached, Williams decided to promote Fair Haven as a resort. There were good reasons for doing so. In the late 1870s resorts and amusement parks had caught the fancy of the American public. The notion had started much earlier in Europe, but in the United States by the 1850s Coney Island...had its bathhouses and Ferris wheels operating and steamboats ferrying huge crowds by the day, fast steamers

ran on the Delaware to Long Beach, New Jersey, from Philadelphia and Wilmington in the 1870s, and boats from Cincinnati plunged down the Ohio in the middle of the decade to Parker's Island...with its bowling alley, dance pavilion, shooting gallery, and merry-go-round powered by a mule. The Philadelphia centennial in 1876 brought miniature railroads to intrigue both children and grandmothers. And the roller coaster—a Russian invention perfected by the French—came to America, complete with little cars equipped with longitudinal seats facing each other, gentle slopes instead of dips, and not enough speed to dislodge the cartwheel hats of the lady passengers....

(p 95) Williams perceived Fair Haven as a hotel resort, a retreat south of Baltimore on the Chesapeake where the Bay and the sky and the countryside would revive the city-weary, where the trip by the steamer for several hours each way would constitute in itself a shore vacation by water, and where superb cooking service would develop a reputation and create a loyal clientele. He saw no need for a roller coaster, miniature railway, or midway. And he saw no reason to follow the Anti-Saloon League lead of Tolchester; fine liquors were served aboard the Weems boats and at Fair Haven.

(p 104-105) Fair Haven attracted large crowds to its groves and beaches in summertime, and even off-season visitors came to stay at the pleasant old hotel. The year 1891 boded well for the health of the Weems line.

(p 124—end of 1890s) Fair Haven, in spite of the best publicity Henry Williams could muster in the local press, failed to attract the enormous crowds he had hoped for. His choice not to make of it an amusement park had been deliberate; he wanted instead a peaceful hotel resort and picnic grove by the Bay, with the pleasant boat ride on a comfortable steamer, fine dining and dancing on both the boat and at the hotel, and a genteel atmosphere at the beach, away from boisterous crowds, as inducements for patronage by a somewhat more sedate clientele. The patronage, however, came from all levels of Baltimore society which could afford the \$1.00 fare; ethnic societies, church groups, labor unions, and beer-drinking German organizations stomped aboard the boats in about the same proportions as well-to-do matrons, with their servants to handle the children and luggage, and as family picnickers bent on a day at the beach. The resort earned a comfortable income, but by no means did it compare with the experience at Tolchester.

Chapter 6 - Coping with the Nineties: Catastrophe, Confrontation, and Adjustment

(p 131) ...an altercation...developed on the Patuxent! There, the dispute was not between two competing steamboat lines but between Weems and a blundering railroad. Earlier, in 1891, an enterprise called the Washington and Chesapeake Railway launched an ambitious project to build a rail line 28 miles long from Washington to a proposed 3,000 acre resort to be called Chesapeake Beach, on the Bay in Calvert County. The prospectus announced that a great drawbridge, the largest single-span plate girder in the United States, had been constructed to cross the principal obstacle, the Patuxent River. The announcements were overblown, financial arrangements miscarried, and a new enterprise was formed under the name of the Chesapeake Beach Railway to complete the

project. With fits and starts and much mismanagement, the railway progressed on its route and the resort began construction. Otto Mears, well-known railroad builder from Colorado, now brought into the corporation, was instrumental in its progress.

(p 132) At the beachside resort, construction of boardwalk, pier, bathhouses, midway, and amusements continued haltingly, with financial disasters rearing up intermittently in 1900. On the opening day, June 9, 1900, the steamer *J.S. Warden* disgorged hundreds of excursionists on the half-finished pier. Henry Williams had tried to prod the resort developers by routing *St. Mary's* to the Chesapeake Beach landing on a Wednesday and Saturday run to Fair Haven. He continued biweekly service through the winter and into the next summer season. But with the chartering of regularly running steamboats by the Chesapeake Beach Company itself and the tentative prospering of the railway to Washington, he dropped the service.

In the years ahead, Chesapeake Beach was to have on-and-off-again success, and *Dreamland*, the largest excursion steamer out of Baltimore, carried 3,000 picnickers at one time to revel in the surf, eat enormous meals in her dining room, and drink beer at five cents a glass. On her moonlight cruises, couples danced on a huge floor to one of the sweetest-sounding bands known in Baltimore and finished the evening to the theme song "Meet me tonight in Dreamland." Carousels at the beach honked away, the crowds shrieked in mock terror aboard the roller coaster. The train chugged back and forth to Washington, crossing the Patuxent River below Bristol, occasionally stopping to allow the drawbridge to swing open to allow a stately steamboat pass through.

Chapter 7 -The Gilded Age: Palace Packets, River Conflict, and the Railroad's Grasp

(p 146) Henry Williams was in office the last days of Mayor McLane when the great fire of February 7, 1904 engulfed the financial and harbor district of Baltimore.

(p 148) ...the great fire and the resulting upheavals in business circles diminished much of his confidence in Baltimore finance, of which he was a substantial part. The possibility of legal stricture on vessels and the levying of requirements for safety equipment as a result of the [New York] *Slocum* catastrophe tempered his judgment of the prospects of steamboat maintenance.

Mounting expenditures for fuel, high costs of steamboat maintenance and repairs, and increased wharfage fees worried him. The capriciousness of the weather added to his woes; the Bay had frozen over at times, and wharves on the rivers had been heavily damaged. The summers were some of the coldest on record, and excursion trade had fallen off. At times Fair Haven welcomed only a sprinkling of its usual patronage.

(p 156) ... other ...events troubled Henry Williams.

During the year, his steamboats had delivered several gasoline-driven "horseless carriages" to landings along the rivers, and automobiles, some outfitted to carry goods,

were pattering about the streets of Baltimore. In the newspapers, reports showed that 4,000 automobiles had been sold in the United States in 1900, more than 11,000 in 1903, and the number was growing geometrically. During 1904, the federal Office of Public Roads reported that 154,000 miles of paved roads, mostly concrete, had been built in the United States, substantially reducing the nearly two million miles of unpaved roads. The burst of construction had been necessitated by the rapid increase in automobile traffic. Although there seemed to be little change in the back country roads along the Patuxent, Potomac, and Rappahannock, Williams knew instinctively what the statistics portended.

Chapter 8 – Steamboat Life through the Years *[reflections]*

(p 176) Although Fair Haven never drew the crowds of Tolchester, it enjoyed a steady clientele. The Patuxent-bound steamers and the special excursion boats of the Weems line crowded aboard hundreds of one-day or weeklong vacationers each trip. Bowler-hatted or straw-hatted men, vested and gold-chained, often mustached and bewhiskered---and parasoled, cartwheel-hatted, skirt-dragging, well-corseted women---sat sedately around the shaded or open decks and drank in the beauty of the Bay. On the evening return trip, they might loosen up the stays a bit to dance a waltz or a polka to Mr. Itzel's orchestra. Or someone might produce a newly fashionable mandolin, and in the darkness of the afterdeck they would sing "Come Back to Erin" and "Love's Old Sweet Song" and "In the Gloaming" and often the songs of the old country they had left behind.

The comfortable accommodations at the hotel, superb meals in the dining room and aboard the boats, lazy days on the hotel porch or in the groves (where local residents often came by carriage) or along the lapping waters of the sand shore from which the cliffs of Calvert were clearly visible drew visitors season after season. In spite of scares from drinking water at one time considered polluted or from hordes of mosquitoes and biting flies that came with a change in the wind, Fair Haven kept its reputation for unsurpassed hospitality.