Upper Marlborough for a Presbyterian Meeting House. A newspaper article of 1904, states that when the remains of Colonel Ninian were removed from his home plantation now within Georgetown of the National Capital, "it was found that he was six feet, seven inches tall, and his Scotch red hair had retained all of its fiery hue".

**Children of William and Verlinda (Beall) Dent**

2. William Dent. *q.v.*
3. Peter Dent, born Mar. 16, 1761, married Sarah ————. *q.v.*
5. Samuel Beall Dent.

William Dent was first of his family to manifest the spirit of adventure by removing to new and unsettled lands in the South. Perhaps the frontier of Maryland where he first settled was an incentive, but before the Revolution he removed with his young family to the western portion of North Carolina, then being developed with settlers from Virginia, Maryland and other Colonies.

In 1773 he purchased a 320-acre tract of land on Reedy Ford Creek in then Orange County, North Carolina, later to become a part of Guilford County. The purchase therefore approximates his removal from Maryland. He was there definitely by October 17, 1774, when he and his wife, of Guilford County, conveyed their Maryland plantation "Grubby", of 73 acres, to Henry Watson, of Frederick County.

He vied with his brother, Captain Thomas Dent, for public recognition as one of the leading citizens in his community. While in Maryland he was addressed as Captain William Dent, but any commission from official sources has yet to be found, but in Guilford County, he was a delegate from that county to the Provincial Congress of North Carolina held at Hillsborough on August 20, 1775. The same year he served as a member of the Committee of Safety for the District of Salisbury. When the Provincial Congress of North Carolina met at Halifax the next year, he was again a delegate.

On December 11, 1776, he was commissioned a Captain of the Revolutionary Army and was Commissary Officer of the 9th Battalion of North Carolina Troops.

His work in the Commissary Department and his furnishing provisions to the Army during the Revolution are amply demonstrated by a letter
dated Georgetown, March 4, 1781, from Thomas Beall of George to
Governor Thomas Sims Lee, of Maryland, enclosing an order from
Brigadier General Morgan in favour of "Mr. William Dent formerly a
resident of this County [Montgomery]". At that time William Dent had
driven up from North Carolina with his wife and "many small children"
Quoting from the communication, as follows:

"William Dent of Guilford County and State of North Carolina having
furnished the troops of the United States with 2000 lbs. of salt pork,
200 bushels of Indian corn and 10 bushels of meal on condition of being
furnished with the like quantity on his way to Maryland or in that
State, I do heretofore hereby request all Commissarys and forage
masters to issue to the said William Dent or his order (not exceeding
the quantity above mentioned) taking his receipt for what each may
issue and certifying the same on the back of this order. . . . Given
under my hand at Guilford Court House in the State aforesaid, this
6th Feb. A.D. 1781".

On March 7, 1781, the Council of Maryland replied to Mr. Thomas
Beall:

"Whenever a detachment of continental troops are obliged to remain
in Georgetown and are without provisions and forage we think it
necessary that you should supply them with so much as will serve them
until they can march to the next place where provisions are regularly
issued. We think the provisions ought to be returned to William Dent
agreeable to the General Morgan's order and request you to deliver
what may be due him after deducting the quantity he has received;
but as it may be attended with inconvenience to deliver the whole
immediaely, you will deliver it to him at different periods most con-
venient to yourself and as he may want it".

After the Revolution he served as a Magistrate of the County Court,
an office which he resigned on November 9, 1790, the resignation being
presented to the Carolina House of Commons by John Hamilton. At the
first Federal Census he was a slave holder with a moderate number of seven.

What induced him to leave Guilford County where he had won distinc-
tion in public service and was one of the leading patriots of the county
during the Revolution is a matter of conjecture. It may have been sheer
adventure, but the undeveloped and newly opened lands of Georgia called
and by 1792 he was seated on a plantation bordering the Shoulderbone in
Hancock County.

In Guilford County he found a strong and forcefull group of provincial
Quakers and while it is not believed that he became a convert to their strict
and unorthodox teachings, for he certainly did not refuse to bear arms
during the Revolution, yet at least two of his children married into that
sect and apparently became firmly convinced of its dogma. The reason
given for one daughter leaving Georgia and traveling to the Shiloh Valley of St. Clair County, Illinois, was her disbelief in the benevolent institution of slavery.

In 1795 he gave power of attorney to Smyth Moore, who was or later to become his son-in-law, to dispose of his realty in Guilford County, Carolina. In that year he was taxed for 200 acres of land on the Shoulderbone in Hancock County, and three slaves. His sons, Peter, William and Samuel, were all tithables in Hancock County with a few slaves but no land. According to the Hancock County tax list for 1802, he had 100 acres and two slaves.

His last will and testament was dated March 8, 1805, but the date of probation is missing. He named his wife, Verlender, daughters Mary Moore and Anne Moore, and sons William, Peter and Samuel. Another heir was John Campbell whose relationship was not stated, but probably his grandson.

It is family tradition that his widow, Verlinda Dent, migrated about 1812 to St. Clair County, Illinois, with her daughter Ann who had married Risdon Moore in order to live in non-slave territory.

CAPTAIN THOMAS DENT, GENT. 4
1735-1799

Thomas Dent, son of Judge Peter Dent and his wife Mary Brooke, was born about 1735 in Piscataway Hundred, Prince Georges County. By the request of his brother, Walter, the parental landed estate was divided by a deed of partition in 1772, whereby the definite bounds of “Whitehaven” and “The Addition to Whitehaven” were defined, the claimants being the brothers Thomas, Richard and Walter. At that time the portion of their brother, Peter, had already been laid out. The divisions were considered to be 339 acres more or less.

On November 11, 1771, before the partition of “Whitehaven”, he had purchased from his brother-in-law and sister, George and Lucy Hardy, “Leith” at Piscataway, which had formerly been in the possession of Joseph Noble, but which was actually a portion of the larger tract “Littleworth”. The latter was the dwelling-plantation of his father-in-law, and it undoubtedly came into his possession by his marriage with a Noble heiress.

In 1773 or thereabouts he married Elizabeth, born about 1748, the daughter of James Edelen and Salome Noble his wife, a wealthy and socially prominent branch of the early Edelen family which settled first in St. Mary’s County. The Edelens were Roman Catholics but several had joined
the Established Church and as to the allegiance of Elizabeth, his wife, there is some doubt, but her children were of the Episcopal faith. Her father died testate in Prince Georges County during 1768, and bequeathed her £30 at the age of sixteen or day of marriage.

*Children of Thomas and Elizabeth (Edelen) Dent*

3. Lewis Dent married Ann Brooke ———. *q.v.*

Of the children of Judge Peter Dent, Thomas seemed to have carried on the tradition of the family relative to public service more than the other brothers and became actively engaged in events leading up to the Revolution. He was present at a meeting of the Committee of Observation for Prince Georges County on August 4, 1775, held in the home of Richard Carnes of Piscataway. On May 15, 1776, he was recommended by Jonathan Beall to the Council of Safety as an officer in any regular force that may be raised in the Province either Continental or Provincial. Accordingly, on September 1, 1777, he was commissioned a Captain of the Lower Battalion of Prince Georges Militia. In 1778 he took the Oath of Fidelity and Allegiance to the State of Maryland.

In 1776 he was the census enumerator for St. John’s and Prince Georges Parish. In his household were the following members: himself aged 41 years; Elizabeth Dent his wife aged 28 years; George Fairfax Dent, aged 2 years; George Washington Dent, aged 2 months; George Hardey, a kinsman, aged 14 years; John Clark aged 40; Judah Murray aged 35; and 18 negro slaves.

On August 31, 1776, he made a certification of his work as Captain Thomas Dent and stated that Richard Thrawls and James Prather refused to answer the questions and to give a list of the members of their family within his district, and that Anthony Addison had neglected to do so after "several applications" by him.

On May 20, 1777, he and Elizabeth his wife deeded to Richard Carnes a lot in Piscataway being part of two tracts called "Littleworth" and "Leith". As Captain Thomas Dent on December 10, 1784, he claimed a stray sorrell mare which had wandered on his plantation.

After the Revolution and perhaps before he was engaged in trade with
affiliation with the Contee trading house in Baltimore. A period of economic stress followed the Revolutionary War and with deflated currency, his business suffered to such an extent that he was forced to mortgage several of his slaves. Before he could recover or redeem his lien, he was taken ill and died soon thereafter, or about 1788.

Business became depressed and Thomas Dent who wanted to mortgage his land sent for Thomas Contee. Contee refused to accept a mortgage but insisted upon a bill of sale. Thomas Dent thereupon sent for his brother, Richard Dent, who prepared a bill, and Contee finally agreed but wanted more security that Thomas Dent was willing to give. Agreement was finally reached and Thomas Dent consented to sell Contee eleven of his seventeen slaves. The parties sent for Justice Thomas Marshall, a neighbor, who was unable to come. The bill was later delivered for Thomas Dent's signature, but at that time he was quite ill and unable to sign.

His realty was sold by trustees of the estate on May 18, 1803. The lot of 4 acres on the south side of the Piscataway was sold to William Marshall for $970.00, the lot on the north side of the creek was sold to Electius Edelen for $100.00, and the plantation on Mattawoman Swamp was bought by George Washington Dent for $6,120.00, all land lying in Prince Georges County.

George Washington Dent, the son, filed a petition on March 12, 1804, stating that Thomas Dent died in 1788, leaving five children—George F., George W., Lewis W., Horatio and Patrick. George F. and Horatio died intestate and without issue. The widow in May 1804, when she filed her petition gave her age as 50 years.

On October 6, 1804, Madam Elizabeth Dent made a deed of gift for natural love and affections for her grandson, John Walter Stoddert Dent, of a slave known as Sophia. His father, George Washington Dent, paid five shillings as further consideration.

In 1813 the wealthy bachelor brother of Madam Dent, Dr. James Edelen, died testate and bequeathed his sister a legacy of $2,500.00, but she was to pay the interest on $500.00 to her son, William Lewis Dent. At her death the $500.00 were to be distributed among her children. She also received a negro girl Suck and additional legacy of $250.00. To his nephew, George W. Dent, he bequeathed $250.00.

A law suit Edelen's Executors vs Dent's Admx later developed in court which was decided in June 1830, whereby it was shown that at the time James Edelen died he owed his sister $1,409.88 on a single note. The court held that the legacies to his sister were not the mediums to cancel the debt.
In August 1804, Franklin Boucher Franklin, of Charles County, filed a bill of complaint in the Court of Chancery against the widow and administratrix of Thomas Dent and his heirs, namely, Elizabeth Dent, George Washington Dent, William Lewis Dent and Patrick Dent. It was stated that in 1784, Thomas Dent, of Charles County, a man of considerable property and well known in the neighborhood, was a merchant dealing extensively in the sale of goods and the purchase of tobacco alleging to be in partnership trading as Thomas Contee & Sons. Franklin sold him 49,918 lbs. tob. at 45 shillings per hundred weight as by account in the handwriting of Thomas Dent, and received partial payments until December 20, 1790. Thomas Dent died intestate leaving a personal estate sufficient to pay his debts and that the estate owed him a balance of £184/14/1.

It was furthermore stated that Thomas Dent left considerable property in Charles and Prince Georges Counties, particularly a house and lot in Piscataway. The realty descended to his children, namely, George Washington Dent, William Lewis Dent, Horatio Dent and Patrick Dent, all of Prince Georges County. The court requested a guardian to be appointed to Patrick Dent, whereas his mother stated that he was not more than two years of age at his father’s death. A bill of revivor of May 6, 1800, stated that all infants had come of age except Patrick.

George Washington Dent and William Lewis Dent answered the bill of complaint and admitted that their father was in partnership with Thomas, Alexander and Benjamin Contee, but that the real estate of their deceased father was not considerable. Thomas Contee and his sons took benefit of the insolvent act and the case against him was declared by the court as non-suit.

Thomas Contee stated that he was the sole partner in the Baltimore establishment for himself and sons, Alexander and Benjamin, and that Thomas Dent was the sole partner in the Pomonkey store, and that each kept their own books. The business was to procure shipments of tobacco for the London House of Benjamin Contee and David Farquharson.

The last will and testament of his widow, Elizabeth Dent, dated December 21, 1814, was proved May 21, 1816, by William Marshall, Joseph Edelen and Richard Gregory.

To son George Washington Dent, his wife Anne and his children, ie, John W. S. Dent and Eleanor Matilda Dent and two unnamed children by his second wife legacies.

To sisters Mary N. Stonestreet, Sarah Pye and Catherine A. Edelen wife of “my brother Joseph” legacies.

Residuary estate among the children of George W. Dent, except the two eldest, and children of Lewis W. Dent except the eldest daughter.

Executor—nephew Joseph N. Stonestreet.

Her personal estate was appraised at $2080.00 on October 11, 1816.

WALTER DENT 4
1744-18-

Walter Dent, son of Judge Peter Dent and his wife, was born at “Whitehaven” about 1744, and according to family tradition he married Elizabeth Burrell. The 1776 census for St. John’s Parish states that his wife was born about 1740 and would therefore be a contemporary of Alexander Burrell who married his sister Eleanor.

On September 14, 1771, he and his brother, Thomas, granted their share of the parental plantation to their brother Richard. Unlike his ancestors he took no interest in public service, and his participation in the Revolution was apparently minor.

At the census taken in St. John’s Parish in 1776, he gave his age as 32 years and his wife, Elizabeth, stated her age as 35, and reported the following children at home—Chloe aged 9, Jane aged 5, Walter C. aged 4, and Ann aged 2. In his household was also Margaret Montgomery, aged 29, of no stated relationship, and two slaves.

On November 2, 1790, Walter Dent and Elizabeth his wife, then of Prince Georges County, conveyed 339 acres of “Whitehaven” and “Addition to Whitehaven” to John Harris, stating in the deed that he with his brothers Thomas Dent and Richard Dent were devisees of their father, Peter Dent, and that on September 14, 1771, he and his brother, Richard Dent, executed deeds of partition. It was furthermore stated that “Whitehaven” adjoined the plantation “Market Overton” held by the descendants of Governor William Stone.

By his disposing of his land, it was obvious that he was preparing to remove from Maryland. There are reasons to believe that he was the Walter Dent who was domiciled for a time in Franklin County, Virginia, but according to family traditions he died in Oglethorpe County, Georgia, where some of his children had settled. His daughter Chloe Hanson Dent married Thomas John James Stoddert, by license issued in Prince Georges County on September 21, 1790.

In 1794 he was made an heir in the last will and testament of his sister,
Elizabeth, but he was apparently not a resident of Maryland at that time. A son, Richard, born about 1778, married in Columbia County, Georgia, removed later to Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, where he died. (q.v.)

**CAPTAIN GEORGE DENT of W**
**175--1801**

George Dent, second son of William and Anne (Warren) Dent, was the only son of his parents to carry on the name of Dent in the senior branch. His heritage was considerable, for he not only inherited a portion of his father's vast land holdings, but that of his bachelor brother, Judge Warren Dent, as well. Furthermore, he found widows more attractive than maidens—married two who brought dowries of no small proportions.

During his bachelor days, he served in the State Militia during the Revolution. His commission as Captain of the 26th Battalion of Charles County was dated May 9, 1778, but he probably served before that time, as the militia rosters are far from complete. In March of that year he subscribed to the Oath of Allegiance and Fidelity to the State of Maryland.

After May 28, 1785, he married Rose-Townshend Knox, the widow of Captain Robert Knox, of Charles County, Maryland, who possessed estates in Virginia. From circumstances she was probably not the only wife of Captain Knox. She was the daughter of Mrs. Elizabeth (Harrison) Mastin, of Charles County, who as the widow of Robert Mastin died testate in Charles County during 1785. By her last will and testament among other bequests she devised her daughter, Rose Townshend Knox, "Woodbury's Hope" for life, then to her [Rose] daughter, Ann Townshen Knox in fee tail, but in default of heirs of her body then to Robert Dade Knox. It is believed, however, that Rose-Townshend, the wife successively of Robert Knox and George Dent was an issue of her mother's prior marriage, probably with a Dade or perhaps a Hooe. Mrs. Elizabeth (Harrison) Mastin was without question the daughter of Captain Joseph Harrison by his wife Verlinda Stone.

The will of Captain Knox was probated in Charles County on October 30, 1782, though dated September 1, 1781. On February 13, 1782, by a codicil he provided for a legacy of £800 for his unborn children "whereas my wife Rose Townshend is now with child". He bequeathed his wife her "legal dower allowed in this part of the world", and mentioned his estates in Scotland. At probate the widow renounced the provisions and demanded her thirds in both realty and personality. Captain Knox mentioned two brothers in his will. He advised his executors to obtain the
effects from his brother John’s estate from his brother William “as I have had nothing and there should be a considerable balance in my favour”.

His estate was unsettled as late as April 1792, when George Dent and his wife, Rose Townshend Dent, filed an account with the court of Charles County, reporting a balance of £975/9/10.

The Maryland estate of Captain Dent was on “Friendship” at Nanjemoy, where the first census reported him as a planter of considerable parts with 38 negro slaves. His brother, Judge Warren Dent, was also domiciled on “Friendship” and was living in bachelor splendour surrounded with his classic library and 34 slaves.

On June 18, 1792, as George Dent of William, he certified to the court that he had removed from Fairfax County to Charles County 12 negroes for employment and not for sale. They were the descendants of slaves willed him by his father in October 1756, from the estate of his uncle, and the slaves were residents of Virginia before 1783. With the exception of the slave Vernon, all were descendants of Hannah, formerly belonging to his father William Dent.

In the early part of his married life, he maintained his seat on “Friendship”, being the fourth generation to reside or to maintain quarters at Nanjemoy, but presumably after his marriage he resided sometime on his plantation through courtesy in Fauquier County, though sometimes in court records he is styled of Charles County and at other times as Fauquier County. His only son and heir, presumably upon his marriage, established his seat on “Friendship”, while his father enjoyed the Virginia estates.

His first wife died in October 1794. By November 30, 1796, he had wedded Elizabeth Harrison, daughter of Richard Hanson Harrison who at the time of her marriage was the widow of John Knox, of Fauquier County.* John Knox was living as late as December, 1794.

*It looks very much like George Dent married the widow of his step-son, John Knox. John the brother of Captain Robert Knox was deceased by 1781.

On November 30, 1796, George Dent and Elizabeth his wife and William Dent and Janet his wife, of Fauquier County, deeded to Alexander McConchie, a tract of 84 acres in Fauquier County. At that time it was inconvenient for Elizabeth Dent and Janet Dent to travel to court which usually indicated that the wife was expecting. A clerk therefore was ordered to take their waivers at home.

In 1797 when he deeded land to John Maddox, of William and Mary Parish, Charles County, he styled himself as “George Dent of William formerly of Charles County but now of Fauquier County”. At the August
1801 term of the court in Charles County, “George Dent of William formerly of Charles County but now of Fauquier County” who declared himself to be the guardian of Elizabeth Knox who had married William Morris, of Charles County, ordered the court to issue citations against Morris to file an account of his ward’s estate.

Circumstances would indicate that his children were all issue by his first wife, yet it is possible that there was some issue by his last wife, as she was probably expecting in 1796.

1. William Dent, son and heir, certainly an heir of the first wife, married Janet Knox, daughter of John Knox, late of Fauquier Co., Va., sometime before Nov. 1796. q.v.
2. Anne Dent, 1st daughter, married ——— Thomas and secondly after May 1803 Samuel Hanson, and resided in Charles Co.
3. Elizabeth Dent, 2d daughter, married Robert Knox and after May 1803, married Elijah Brown.
5. Rebecca Townsend Dent, born Mar. 9, 1789, married Jesse G. Scott, by license issued in Fauquier Co., Oct. 5, 1816, later of Huntsville, Ala. Her headstone reads “Rebecca T. Scott wife of Jesse G. Scott died Nov. 28, 1830”.

Captain George Dent was deceased by September 3, 1801, when his son and heir, William, requested and was granted letters of administration upon his father’s estate. The personal estate in Fauquier County was appraised at £982/2/6, including ten negro slaves.

The inventory of his personal estate in Charles County was filed at court on July 14, 1802, appraised at $4685.50. There were 32 slaves at Nanjemoy, four of which were aged and of no value.

On March 25, 1802, Elizabeth Dent, widow of George Dent of William, late of Fauquier County, deeded to William Thomas, of St. Mary’s County, several tracts of land, inasmuch as George Dent of William by his deed of November 10, 1800, conveyed to the said William Thomas “Wallington” of 160 acres, “Hog House” of 42 acres, a tract surveyed for Humphrey Warren on July 31, 1683, called “Warren’s Discovery” except that portion assigned by George Dent to Robert Crain in 1799, “Burgess Discovery” except that portion assigned by George Dent to Robert Crain in 1799, “Burgess Upzone” of 15 acres, part of “Hanson’s Discovery” of 18½ acres, and also “Tan Yard” of 78 acres. The deed was in the form of a correction owing to faulty or irregular assignment and was acknowledged by Elizabeth Dent, the widow of the original grantor.
The estate of John Knox was not finally settled until after the death of Captain George Dent, or at the May session of the court of 1802 in Fauquier County, when the widow received personalty valued at £272/15/- and 418 acres of the landed estate. Settlement was also made to Elizabeth Dent who is styled a sister of Robert Knox and also to Janet who had married William Dent.

At the June court of 1803 for Charles County, William Dent was made the guardian of his two minor sisters, Rebecca aged 14 and Grace Harrison Dent aged 12, with William Dent Harrison and Francis Elgin as his sureties.

Several years after the death of George Dent, his heirs conveyed their interest in a plantation known as "Brett's Discovery" in Durham Parish, Charles County. In December 1816, Jane Shumate, presumably a widow at that time, Jesse G. Scott and his wife Rebecca T. all of Fauquier Co., Va., and Burgess Field and Grace H. his wife of Culpeper County, were the grantors in a deed of conveyance to Thomas Price Sr., of Charles County, for their undivided interests in "Brett's Discovery". In October 1817, Samuel Hanson and Anne his wife of Charles County, and William Dent and Janet his wife assigned their rights in the same plantation to Thomas Price Sr.

Captain Henry Dent
1755-1803

Henry Dent, son of Captain George and Eleanor (Hawkins) Dent, was born about 1755 at his father's plantation on Pope's Creek. On February 26, 1776, at the outbreak of the Revolution, his uncle, General John Dent, recommended him for a First Lieutenantcy. In 1778 he subscribed to the Oath of Fidelity and Allegiance to the State of Maryland before his father, Judge George Dent. There are all indications that he served throughout the war in the County Militia, and on February 9, 1781, he was advanced to Captain in room of Captain Benjamin Philpot.

His wife has not been identified. She predeceased him, leaving an only daughter, Eleanor Hawkins Dent, born September 1799.

He died intestate. Letters of administration were issued to his brother, George Dent of George, at the June session of the court in 1803. Jane Dent and Samuel Hawkins were sureties. The value of the personal estate was approved by Eleanor Dent and Janet Dent. The orphan was placed under the guardianship of her uncle, Samuel Hawkins, being at the time aged five years next September.

In February 1819, she married John Edelen, and had an only daughter,