

**Guide to the Oral History of
WALTER, MALCOLM (1894-1993)**

Biographical/Historical Notes

Malcom Walter was a life-long resident and community volunteer in Kensington, Maryland. He was born in 1894 in Kensington. Walter was a World War I veteran. He was a carpenter, and he worked for the Riggs National Bank for many years. He also served as Secretary of the Kensington Chamber of Commerce from 1920 to 1924 and was an election official for over 50 years.

Interview – Interviewed November 29, 1974 by James Scull for MCHS.

Subject

Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad
Kensington (Md.) – History
Kensington trolley

Subject Names

Warner, Brainard H.

Table of Contents/Index – See also Time Index for additional subjects and topics.

TIME INDEX

Oral history recording with Malcolm Walter of Kensington,
November 29, 1974. James H. Scull, interviewer.

SIDE I

- 0:0 Introduction
4:02 Origin of Walter family- emigration of Nicola, great-grandfather from Germany to Robert Bruce Walter, father, builder in Kensington.
4:00 Why father came to Kensington, meeting with mother, Sarah Austin.
5:08 Malcom's early recollections of Kensington- snow storm of 1898, attending 2 room school, early family life, taffy pulls, fresh fruit at Christmas, strict parental rules, chores, games.
11:13 Going away to school- St. Charles, Catonsville
13:08 Working as carpenter and cabinet-maker
13:48 Service in World War I- 1918-19, Kensington in wartime, signing of the armistice
17:03 Return to Kensington- working with father in building, marriage in 1930.
17:58 Employment with Washington Loan and Trust for 25 years (1924-49) as keeper of 10,000 safety deposit boxes.
19:03 Community service after retirement- secretary of Chamber of Commerce (1950-54), building of war memorial
21:23 The Walter children- Bruce and Frances
22:28 Retirement years- interest in music, reading, photography (including progress pictures of Montgomery County Court House)
25:33 Kensington in the old days (early 1900's) - muddy streets and old lamps, town marshall (Chrisman) as lamplighter, the old town hall and rebuilding after fire, community dances, church picnics, etc.

SIDE II

- 0:00 Fun in Kensington - Ice skating and sledding, bonfires and weiner roasts
2:00 Brainard Warner and the Montgomery Press- Cornelius Clum, editor and printer
3:35 The old fire company- bucket brigade, Model T Ford as first fire engine, houses burning down
6:10 Going to Washington- by train and streetcar, old "Tonner-ville Trolley", Capital Transit takes over
9:15 Churches in Kensington
11:25 Improvements come to Kensington- electricity, the first telephone with Sally Umstead operating switchboard, first automobile (Dr. Jones), father's early autos, horse and carriage days, sleighing rides at night, the Edison gramophone, music lessons
17:45 Other sights in old Kensington- the organ grinder, tramps at the back door, the old-time doctors (Dr. Jones, Dr. Lewis), windmills

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Time Index, Malcolm Walter

SIDE II (continued)

- 20:30 Politics in Kensington- Malcolm as election official for 52 years, early voting in Wheaton, Democrat in a Republican town, absence of scandals
21:45 Treasurer for the Boy Scouts
22:40 Disasters in Kensington- Terra Cotta wreck on B & O, Twonley family in grade crossing accident
25:15 Kensington in the long view- early settlers, influx of government employees, commercial development and stores

SIDE III

- 0:00 Commercial Development
0:45 Town Growth and Social Development- post-war suburban expansion, decline of religious prejudice and absence of animosity against German-Americans in World War I, always a "dry town", minor impact of the Great Depression, Kensington potentially for future growth- extension of its boundaries
10:37