



passage aboard this ship. Thankfully, Master Calvert recognized the need for good strong workers here in Maryland and agreed to pay my way for me. His kindness only going so far, however, I still have to work off my debt. So, I will spend my first four years here in the colony as a servant to Master Calvert and he will provide for my well-being during that time.

It is the end of my time, though, that I am living for, to be certain. After my four years, I will be given a new suit of clothes, an axe, two hoes, three barrels of corn, and the rights to fifty acres of land. All I need do is have the land surveyed and patented. That is, to pay a surveyor to decide exactly where my land lies and then to pay a clerk to write down those boundaries in the record. I, unfortunately, am not qualified to do that job myself, having never learned my letters. In fact, most folks I know have never learned to read or write, but have learned what is required for them to live a fine life. I am not unwise in the ways of the world and, in truth, have a learned skill. I am a brick mason. I know of very few men aboard this ship who are in possession of a skill of any sort. Being the only man with a particular skill can make for quite a demand on one's time. The Lord Baltimore seems to think that masons like myself will be of use here in Maryland and I am hanging my hopes on the idea that he is right.

You see, there is great opportunity here in Maryland, to my way of thinking. There is all that



land to tame and not even two hundred men here to do the job. I have it in my mind to own a piece of that land someday and I hear tell that it is quite possible here. I would never have so much as dreamed of owning land back in England. Here in Maryland, though, I can become the master of my own land. I hope I shall marry and have lots of children to help me in my work. Of course, indentured servants are not permitted to marry until after they finish their time. Not to mention, there are very few women with us on this voyage whom I could take as a wife, but all that shall come in due time.

And so it is, then, that we will begin our adventure here in the New World. I have high hopes for our time here in Maryland. And who knows what the future shall bring for our fair colony or for your most humble servant, John Halfhead.

