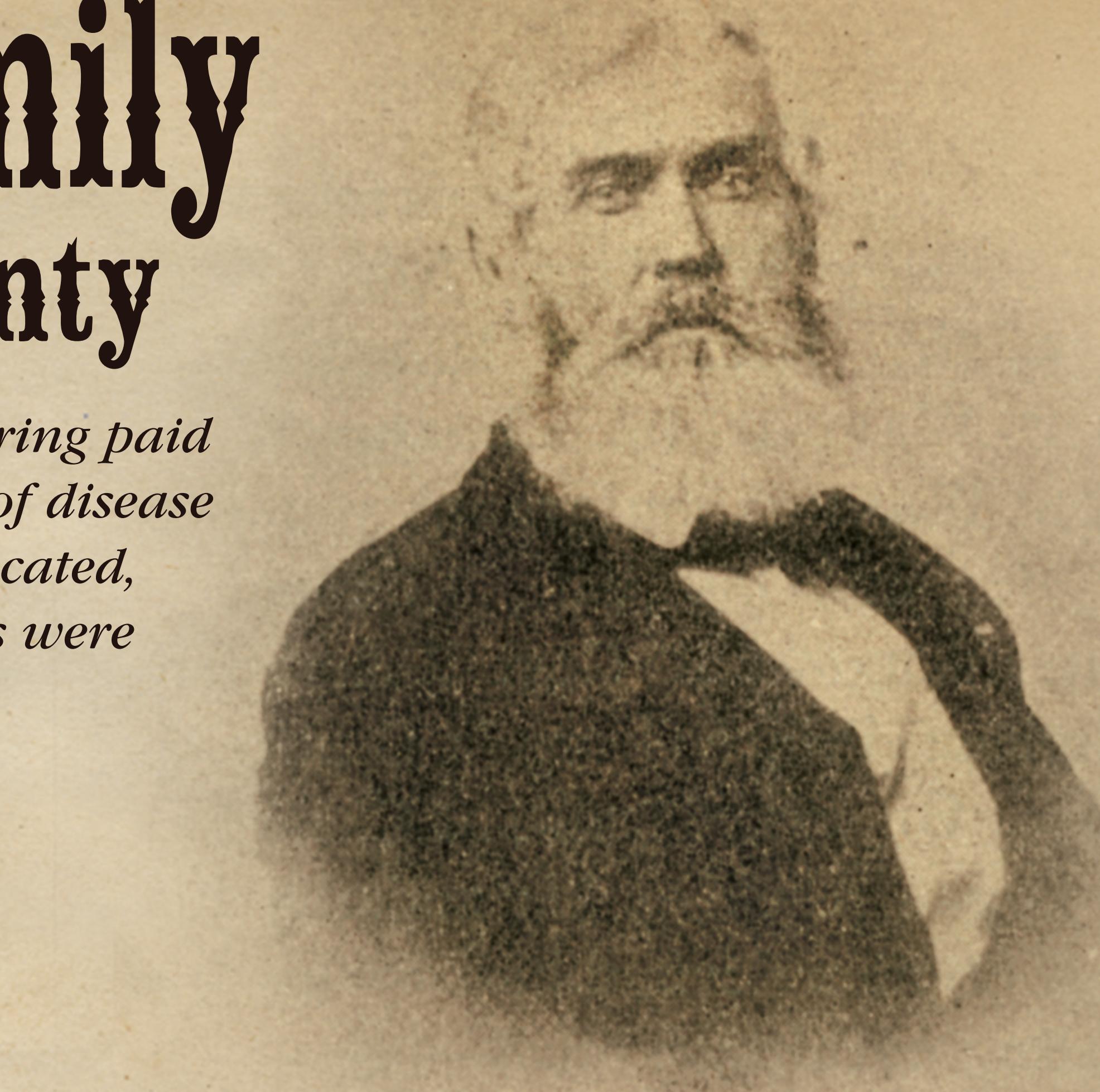


The Waring Family of Prince George's County

The family of MAC students Robert and William Waring paid heavily for its Confederate sympathies. Robert died of disease during the war, their home, "Bald Eagle," was confiscated, patriarch Colonel John H. Waring and his daughters were arrested, and the rest of the family sent south.

Robert and William Waring enlisted together in Charlottesville, Virginia, on September 10, 1862, in Company B, 2nd Maryland Cavalry. They endured a harrowing trip south guided by their father, Col. John H. Waring (at right), swimming their horses across an unguarded section of the Potomac River. Four months later, older brother Bob died of typhoid fever in Strasburg, Virginia. His funeral was recorded by a Prince George's County neighbor:

"I attended today the funeral of the son of Col. J. H. Warring [sic] who left his home but a few short months ago, to avoid oppressions of a tyrannical government to share his fate in the glorious cause of freedom from that tyranny, but is now no more, died one month ago today, his body brought home and placed among his friends."



The death of Bob was just the first blow. The family appealed to the Confederate government to allow Bob's 17-year-old brother Billy, who was also sick, to come home. An underage student when he enlisted, his discharge was granted based on his status as a minor. Billy's arrival at "Bald Eagle" on May 12, 1863, called even more attention to the family's activities. Union troops surrounded the house and arrested Colonel Waring, Billy, and several of his sisters.

Colonel Waring, charged with harboring Southern military persons, including Billy, was court-martialed, found guilty, and sentenced to confinement at Fort Delaware for the duration of the war. Union officials took over "Bald Eagle" and confiscated household furnishings, livestock, crops, and farming equipment. The family's slaves, about 80 in number, went to Washington, D.C., where "the males of the party...eagerly embraced every opportunity for employment" and were hired by the federal government.

Billy refused to sign an Oath of Loyalty and was sent to Point Lookout prison camp in southern Maryland, where, after eight months, he "eluded the guards" and returned to Virginia. He wrote to Confederate Treasury Secretary C. G. Memminger seeking employment to aid his mother and sisters, who had been sent south "with nothing to depend upon for support."

The family had a number of influential advocates, both Confederate and Union, and after months of personal appeals, Abraham Lincoln pardoned Colonel Waring on February 6, 1864. However, "Bald Eagle" was not returned to the family for another nine months. Mrs. Waring did not live long enough to return home; she died of cancer that same November. Colonel Waring died in 1871.

Billy Waring went on to graduate from the University of Maryland Medical School and practiced medicine in Prince George's County for many years. He was killed in a barroom brawl in 1896.

