

PULASKI SAGA Historical Fiction and author, Robert F. Lackey Connecting History and Story – Discovery Tour

This tour highlights locations based on 1840's Havre de Grace:

- Merges historic reality with the Pulaski Saga theme
- Standing before the foundations at Lapidum, I imagined life when the canal was our most modern highway
- Musings, years of research, and creative writing, led to **Pulaski's Canal**, a historical novel
- The **Pulaskis** came to life, allowing me the freedom to fill in gaps, as well as insert experiences, I only imagined.
- Go to the following locations. Stand before them. Appreciate them.
- Then take a deep breath and step through the looking glass, joining me in the **Pulaski World**.
- See the sites through the eyes of the characters:
 - The anguish of Susquehanna ice gorges and spring floods
 - The agony of slavery
 - The bravery of abolition
 - The beauty of love between a man and a woman resurrecting a lost life near Havre de Grace.

Author: Robert F. Lackey

The Pulaski Saga, a historical novel series based in Havre de Grace, Maryland, that ranges to South Carolina and into the deeper antebellum south, chronicles the Pulaski family during the mid 1800s. Starting along the canal that reaches from the slave state of Maryland at Havre de Grace into the free state of Pennsylvania, the **Pulaskis** awaken to higher moral laws that begins their struggle against natural disasters, hateful enemies, and cruel laws. Working together to feed themselves, keep their self-respect and grow their infant shipping business, Ben and Sonja become a husband and wife team stealing slaves and smuggling them north to freedom.





The LOCKHOUSE – a recurring center of the **Pulaski** stories. Located on the northern end of Havre de Grace (now houses the Susquehanna Museum at the Lock House)



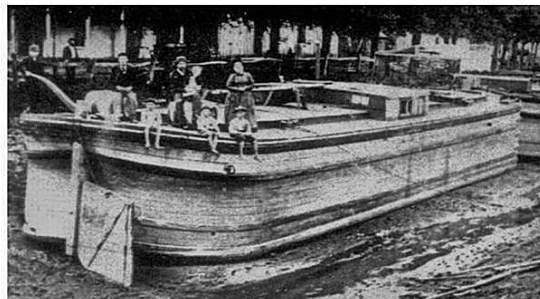
* From the office, facing the river, the lockkeeper kept the books showing the cargo and barges that went through the canal.

* Will Boyd was the first superintendent. He actually did drown in the canal basin after being thrown by his horse. (part of the story in **Pulaski's Canal**)

* In the living room was where his body was viewed.

PIVOT BRIDGE – or ‘swing bridge’ – the authentic recreation at the Susquehanna Museum at the Lock House in Havre de Grace is the model for the Lapidum swing bridge that channels many **Pulaski** characters on and off the towpath to the Pulaski Farm.

Example to show the size of the barges:





ALISHA'S TREE – this tree can be found at the corner of McLhinney Park as you cross the bridge over Lily Run in North Park (near the Lock House)

"... She walked up the slope beyond the canal basin, above the warehouses to the large oak tree. It stood alone, once overlooking the lane that ran by their house and now covered by those warehouses."

"... I put the flowers there, 'cause I understood this was the place he said goodbye to that little angel."

"... Sonja took in a deep ragged breath and looked up to watch a heron glide down over the shallows at the edge of the basin. A tear on her cheek slipped down her face in timing with the sweep of the heron.

Her name was Alisha."

PINK HOUSE – is the historic A.P. McCombs House. Actually built in 1880, it was 'pro-created' by the author in 1845 for use in **Raven's Risk**. The character **Mamie Stewart** is based on the real-life great-great-grandmother of the current owner, Perry Stewart. The author actually boarded in the house in 2014, fell in love with the place, and developed a tremendous respect for Perry Stewart, who remains my friend in spite of myself.



*Picture the **Pulaskis** sitting at this dining table as a guest of **Mamie Stewart**.*

(photo to the right is the 'real' Mamie Stewart and family)





HARFORD HOUSE – once a hotel, this is the location of several scenes in the **PULASKI Saga**. It is here that **Ben Pulaski** formalizes his commitment to freeing slaves and to his relationship to the Argyle Corporation. (You'll find this location at the intersection of Union Ave and St. John St. The Lafayette statue is in front of it with a row of flags.)

The Argyle Corporation, a fictitious radical offshoot of the Philadelphia Abolitionist Society, is run by **Anthony Renowitz**, a long time friend of Ben Pulaski. **Renowitz** spends his grandfather's riches gained by importing slaves, by using it to free as many as he can. (**Raven's Risk**)

SAWYER BUILDING, c1940 – at the corner of Pennington Ave. & Washington St. In 1842-1861, it would have been St. Clair & Washington Streets, owned by Mr. Matthew Newkirk of Philadelphia. Most likely a hotel with the entrance between the two first floor businesses, this was **Newkirk Hotel** in **Raven's Risk** and **Brazen Deceit**, location for planning the Washington City mass slave escape with **Drayton** and **Renowitz**. (**Kingdoms in the Marsh** and **Brazen Deceit**)

(The Vineyard Wine Bar is now located in this building, which has been renovated in recent years.)



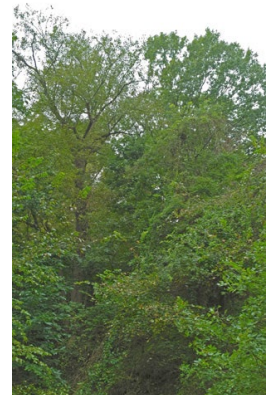
SUSQUEHANNA STATE PARK and LAPIDUM



Intersection of Webster-Lapidum and Stafford Road – (This is the intersection just before you enter the present Lapidum launch area.) Facing uphill, to the right was the **Lapidum Hotel** that survived the 1920's Ice Gorge. In the **PULASKI Saga**, it is an early hardware/mercantile, first owned by **Lars Nilson**, later by **Delbert Friedman**. Delbert was the father of **Maggie**, who would one day marry **Ben's son, Aaron**.



To the left is a private lane with a small bridge. (Herring Run) Looking uphill, over the distant trees, you can see the tips of the **massive twin Oaks** standing like sentinels on the front slope of the imaginary **Pulaski farm**.





Down the road to your right, you'll see the **granite block canal** built by Irish Immigrants like the character, **Michael O'Grady**. Directly across from this canal would have been the **Locktender's house**.



Locktender characters **John Bartlett** and wife, **Margaret** lived there (**Pulaski's Canal** and **Blood on the Chesapeake**). Later the characters were **Jesse** and **Catherine Price** and their household of children. (**Raven's Risk**, **Kingdoms of the Marsh**, and **Brazen Deceit**)

Farther north along **Stafford Road** is where a distraught **Sonja**, grieving the infant daughter torn from her arms, throws herself into the Susquehanna River, saved by a stranger that re-entered her life later as a close friend.

Photo of old Lapidum area



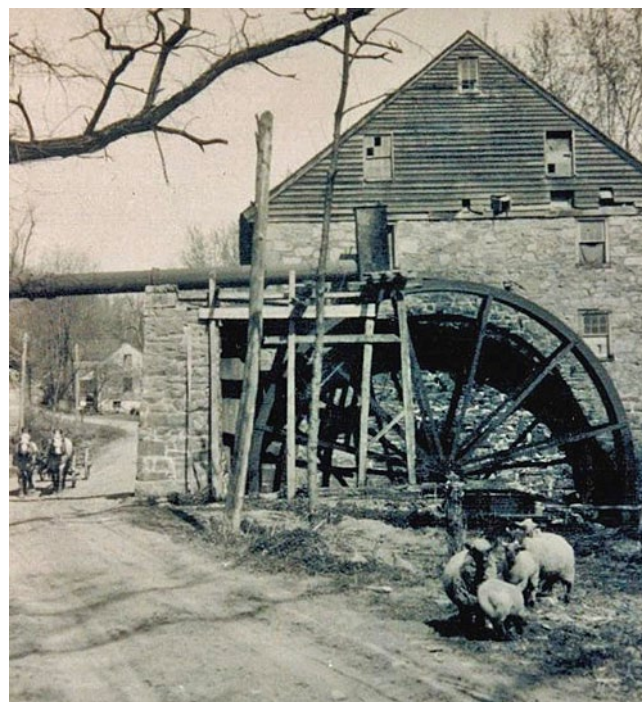


Rock Run – the watermill provided flour for the *Pulaskis* and other local people along the canal.

The remnants of *Dr. Archer's toll bridge at Rock Run*, still stands in the shallows of the river, marching across to Cecil County. The fee was a nickel.



“Sonja and I once rode the mares up this way. Crossed over and had dinner at the Union Hotel. It was a fine time, but between the bridge fare going both ways and the dinner at the Hotel, it cost me over half a dollar. A working man just can’t live like that for long.” – **Ben Pulaski, Pulaski’s Canal.**



Deer Creek or Stafford Bridge – The foundry chimney visible from the ridge marks the site where the village of Stafford stood. The foundry processed flint for pot coatings that was shoveled into barges on that spur of Deer Creek coming off the main canal.



The Stafford Flint Furnace was built from granite, stone and brick. It's 30 feet high, and the upper section is made of brick and shaped like a beehive. Centuries ago, white flint was quarried north of Stafford and brought to the furnace by wagons or canal. Then it was layered with wood and set afire, the heat driving the water out of the flint, reducing it to pebbles. These remnants were then ground into a fine powder, washed, bagged and sent by canal to Trenton, N.J., where it was used to make porcelain pots, pans and china, according to the Historical Society of Hartford County. – <http://blog.davey.com/2010/11/indiana-dave-and-the-uncovering-of-the-stafford-flint-furnace/>

CONCORD POINT LIGHTHOUSE AREA



Concord Point Lighthouse and the Light Keeper's House: constant landmarks in all the **PULASKI** books.

"Not that I care a fig for the Brits. There is certainly no love lost for them here in Havre de Grace, since [they] nearly burned it all to the ground back in '13. Old man O'Neill still talks at Mrs. Sear's tavern about firing the cannon at them as they came ashore." – **Pulaski's Canal**



CONCORD COVE: behind the present-day Havre de Grace Maritime Museum, the author placed the Boatwright shop of **Adam Tuttle** in the trees along the walkway. There the cranky old man resurrected the barge frame belonging to **Ben Pulaski** and **Will Boyd** that became the "**Ugly Boat**" – a sailing canal barge.



SHANTIES – to the left of **Adam Tuttle’s shop**, where the shallows kiss the muddy shore, the author placed the **Shanties**, where rented slaves and a few runaways sought refuge at night.

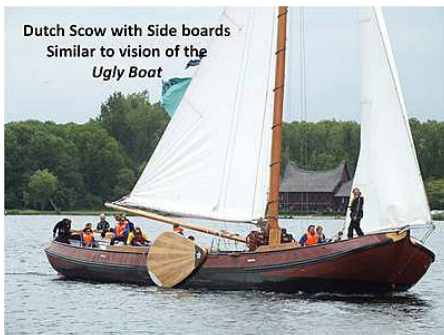


To the right of **Adam Tuttle’s Shop**, the author imagined a small dock along the boardwalk in front of the Decoy Museum.



Here **Ben** and **Adam** launched the **“Ugly Boat,”** only to have it overturn near a sand island on the Cecil County side of the Bay. (**Pulaski’s Canal** and **Blood on the Chesapeake**)

The **“Ugly Boat”** was imagined as a combination of these two models:

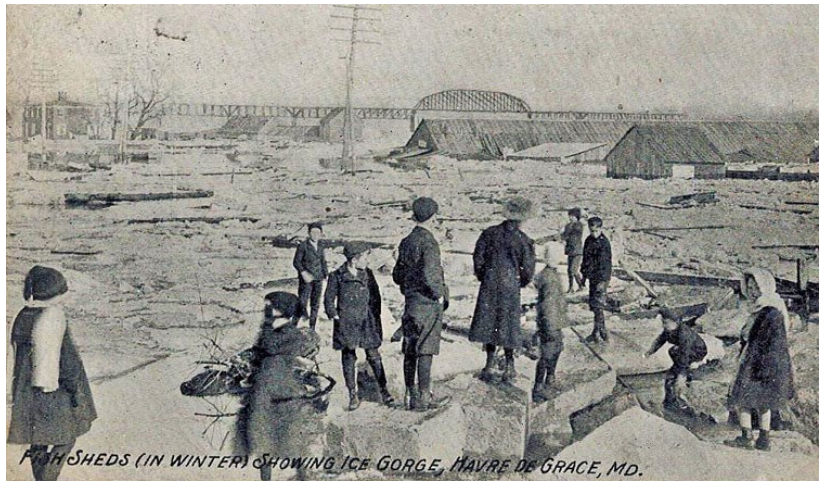


MODEL
Chesapeake Bay Scow

“Imagine This ... “

The following are in the Lock House area:

OYSTER STREET and the nefarious **TIDEWATER BANK and TRUST**, run by the sinister **Herbert Binterfield**, are fictional. I set them between the converging streets of Water & Pearl Streets. (Over by the Lock House) Author’s note: Sorry, friends, I did not want to lay an image of dark history on a living location.



CANAL STREET is actually Erie Street (renamed) at the end of **OYSTER STREET** used to take my characters to the Lock House.

PEARL LANE is Constego Street renamed, and I continued it beyond its current end at Park Drive, sweeping behind the Lock House to the edge of the remaining canal basin. There, where canal warehouses once stood, I placed the *original* home of the **Pulaskis**, lost in the ice gorge of 1839.



This is near the Tydings Park area:

CHESAPEAKE LANE (not to be confused with Chesapeake Drive, which IS real) is actually Commerce Street today.

