

Baltimore.

Baltimore began its career in 1730, with one house, that of John Fleming. But it rapidly grew. Its environment was a fortunate one. Located at the end of tide-water, with many miles of water-front accessible, it had opportunity for unlimited commerce. Its stream afforded sites for many mills and factories. Before the close of the century there were not less than fifty flour-mills alone in or around the town. The land adjoining the town proved to be very fertile, and a great trade soon began in wheat, flour, tobacco, etc. Within a few miles lay extensive beds of the finest red-clay, granite, gneiss, marble, and the purest deposit of sand. Almost in the town were found great quantities of iron, copper and chrome ores. The adjoining waters furnished an unlimited quantity of fish, oysters and other sea-food. Large open markets or trading-posts became at once established, and in these markets there came a most tempting variety of game, fowl, fish, fruits and vegetables. The markets of the city now have a national reputation.

The town grew rapidly. People flocked to it from the adjoining colonies and from foreign parts. The marshes were filled in, the streams straightened, bridges took the place of fords and ferries, long avenues were laid out, and the town began its career of solid development which has ever marked its progress.

In 1752 the town had twenty-four dwellings, one church and two taverns. In 1775 the population was six thousand seven hundred and fifty. In 1773 appeared the first newspaper. It has been published without interruption up to the present time. It is now known as the Baltimore-American. The Sun newspaper did not begin its career until May, 1837.

The little town had three or four commercial rivals, or ports of entry—Joppa,

Annapolis, Elkside Landing and Upper Marlboro; but these towns soon lost their commercial importance, chiefly on account of the filling up of their harbors. In 1768 the county court of Baltimore county was removed from Joppa to Baltimore. The court-house was erected on the spot now occupied by the Battle Monument, just midway between the present court-house and post-office.

The first custom-house was erected in 1780. Previous to this time all vessels engaged in the Baltimore trade were entered and cleared at Annapolis, thirty miles down the bay. This had worked a hardship to the local merchants. Commerce, especially to the West Indies and England, rapidly grew. In 1783 a harbor board was appointed to make a survey of the river and harbor and to recommend plans for dredging and deepening the channel.

In 1797 the town became incorporated. The three towns, separated by marshes or falls—Jones, Fells Point and Baltimore town—became amalgamated under the name of Baltimore City. Its population at this time was 15,000. In 1800 it had grown to 26,500, and in 1810 it had become 47,000. The population was composed of English, Irish, German, Scotch and French. Many French had come from Acadia (Nova Scotia), and from 1793 to 1803 from three to four thousand French immigrants had arrived. A section of the city was known as French-town. To these settlers is doubtless due, in large measure, the culture and courtesy of the present inhabitants.

The town became known for its patriotism, energy and refinement. Seven years before the revolutionary war the inhabitants had adopted the "non-importation" agreement, though very injurious to its commerce. When the port of Boston was closed by the home government, the people of Baltimore adopted warm resolutions of sympathy and support.



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