

trade but slowly recovered and unemployment in Baltimore remained a problem. Baltimore banks reflected the division in the city between established, elite money and the craftsmen's struggle for capital: to compete with the Baltimore, Maryland, and Union institutions, groups like tanners, tailors, shoemakers, and leatherworkers formed the Mechanics' Bank in 1806 and the Franklin Bank four years later. A Federalist party resurgence in the city helped to raise tensions by polarizing opinion and feeling. Led by aggressive young lawyers like Jonathan Meredith, Virgil Maxcy, William H. Winder, and a former South Carolinian who had married Catharine Carroll, Robert Goodloe Harper, Baltimore Federalists complained of the embargo in their own newspaper, the *Federal Republican*. Its editor, Alexander Contee Hanson, Jr., a Montgomery County native and son of the Federalist judge, called Jefferson "His Gallic Majesty" and otherwise antagonized Republicans to the point that Hanson carried a pistol to defend himself.⁵²

Scoring well in the 1808 elections, young Federalists in Baltimore reveled in their adversarial position. They recruited volunteers and gathered support from along the Potomac and in Anne Arundel County, where suspicion and jealousy of Baltimore remained strong. In June 1812, when President Madison called for a congressional declaration of war against Britain, the *Federal Republican* described him as a dupe of Irish immigrants. A mob no doubt made up of the immigrant laborers and unemployed whom Hanson held in contempt next destroyed his office and ran him out of town. On 26 July the editor returned with armed friends—young men with names like Pringle, Gaither, Gwinn, Kennedy, Warfield, and Schley; a young lawyer, David Hoffman; and two old revolutionary soldiers, "Light-Horse Harry" Lee of Virginia and James Lingan of Maryland. Hanson and his company barricaded themselves in a brick building on South Charles Street and waited for the latest issue of the paper to arouse Baltimore Republicans. They did not wait long. By nightfall of 27 July rioters had surrounded Hanson's fortress. The besieged Federalists fired into the crowd, killing one man. Anarchy reigned throughout the night. Twenty-four hours later, after authorities had persuaded the Federalist band to surrender and marched the men to jail, the mob broke open the jail and tried to beat to death every "monarchist" and "aristocrat" it could lay its hands on, singing a weird chant whose words went, "We'll feather and tar every d—d British tory / And this for American glory."⁵³ Remarkably, Lingan alone was killed in that night of terror. Survivors wore hideous scars and were missing some eyes and teeth. Critics of popular rule, holding themselves vindicated, published an account of the riot entitled *Portrait of the Evils of Democracy*. Class, ethnic, and regional differences in Baltimore and Maryland had produced one of the worst civil outbreaks in American history to that time.

Most Marylanders saw the War of 1812 as the second for American independence; Federalists, who after the Hanson riot gained heavily in the House of Delegates, considered it "unwise and impolitic"—merely an ex-

MARYLAND

A Middle Temperament

1634-1980

Robert J. Brugger

with the assistance of

*Cynthia Horsburgh Requardt, Robert I. Cottom, Jr.,
and Mary Ellen Hayward*

Published by
THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS
in association with the
MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

c. 1988