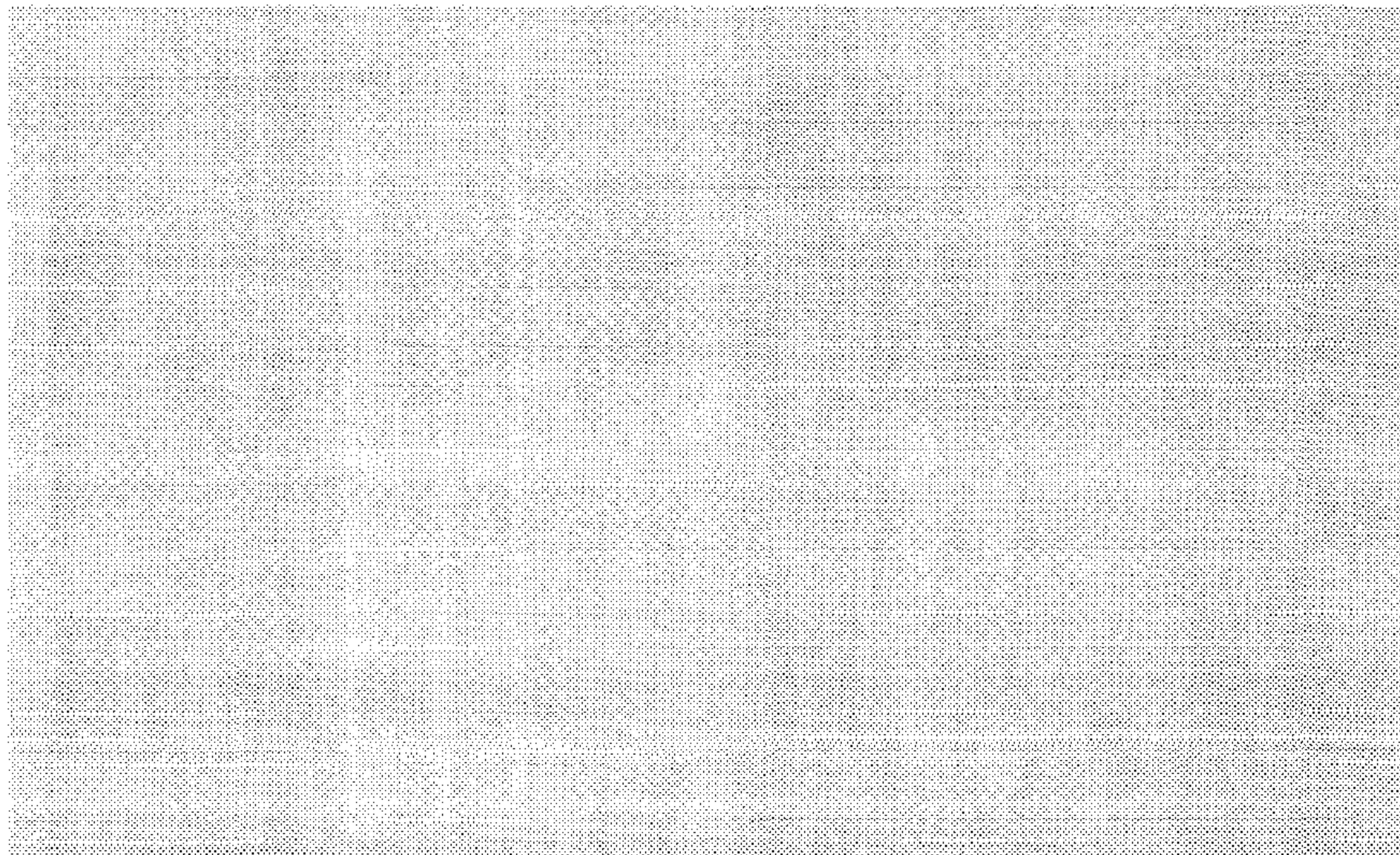


Old Senate Committee Room



Milbourne watercolor of Annapolis. Courtesy of the Hammond-Harwood House Association, MdHR G 1556-10

CONGRESS AT ANNAPOLIS, 1783-1874

The Capital of America?

An ingenious Baltimore politician by the name of George Lux was the first to argue in print that Congress deserved a separate administrative district of its own. Under the pen name Aratus, Lux argued that Annapolis should be given to Congress and Baltimore should become the capital of Maryland. In a private letter enclosing copies of his pamphlet, Lux explained that Maryland was safer than Pennsylvania where Congress was "in danger of being mobbed." The Maryland General Assembly liked the idea of Annapolis as the capi-

tal of the United States, but was decidedly opposed to moving itself to Baltimore.

- BROADSIDE OF GEORGE LUX ("ARATUS") PROMOTING ANNAPOLIS AS THE CAPITAL OF THE UNITED STATES

Enoch Pratt Free Library of the City of Baltimore Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-3

The General Assembly's offer to Congress of Annapolis as a permanent capital, made in May 1783, was not published in the Baltimore papers until August. By then Annapolis city officials were diligently gathering information about their town to bolster their cause with

Congress, including having a map of the town drawn and the most recent census abstracted.

- *MARYLAND JOURNAL*, August 8, 1783
Enoch Pratt Free Library of the City of Baltimore Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-16

Baltimore continued its campaign to encourage Congress to come to Annapolis with a favorable front page article in the *Maryland Journal* of September 30, 1783. The anonymous author had nothing but good to say about Annapolis calling it urbane, unrivaled in luxury, a home of poets and painters, the "nursery of the Long Robe," and claiming it had among the best taverns he had "anywhere met with." In short "It is, perhaps, in such places, only, that we are to look for great virtues."

- *MARYLAND JOURNAL*, September 30, 1783
Enoch Pratt Free Library of the City of Baltimore Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-4

As recorded in these minutes of the Corporation of Annapolis, Maryland's efforts to make Annapolis the permanent capital of the United States failed. On October 23, 1783, Maryland Congressman James McHenry and Daniel Carroll wrote Governor Paca that "It would be a very tedious business were we to copy all the proceedings on the subject of the residence of Congress (for we believe they make above 40 pages) and we are not sure that your Excellency would take much pleasure in their perusal." The same day McHenry and Carroll wrote Jeremiah Townley Chase, the Mayor of Annapolis, enclosing the resolution of Congress designating Annapolis one of two temporary residence (the other was Trenton, New Jersey). Congress took its time coming to Annapolis. The first session was scheduled for November 26, but there were too few states represented to conduct business until December 13.

- *MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION OF ANNAPOLIS*, November 1, 1783

Maryland State Archives, MdHR 5100. Photograph, MdHR G 1556-88

Early in November 1783, Governor Paca and his Council ordered that a "pair of colors" be made for Congress. The cloth was purchased in Baltimore and given to John Shaw, accomplished Annapolis cabinetmaker, undertaker, and principal caretaker of the State House, who made the flags. From the receipt for the cloth "bunting" which indicates the amount purchased, and another accounting record of the linen bought for the stars, noted flag authority Grace Rogers Cooper recreated Shaw's design depicted here. On the receipt for the cloth is the endorsement "Flag made by Mr. Shaw. 1st hoisted for the President of Congress." President Thomas Mifflin arrived in Annapolis on the evening of December 3, 1783. In all likelihood Shaw's flag was first raised in Mifflin's honor the following day.

- **THE JOHN SHAW FLAG**

Gift of the Maryland Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-19

Where Pleasure Holds Her Court

Charles Thomson, secretary of Congress, wrote a friend that "Coming to the city of Annapolis where pleasure holds her court . . . I have attended Ball; play; and . . . Mrs. T. has had her tea parties dignified with the title of conversations." After Thomson returned to Philadelphia in the summer of 1784, John Montgomery, Congressman from Pennsylvania, wrote: "Dont you long for a good fat turkie, the fine fish and Delightful Oysters . . . Will you pay that Pleasant city a visit this summer, or did you look back when passing by the poor house and take a final farewell of the ancient city?"

Except, perhaps, for the high cost of living in Annapolis, most Congressmen appeared to enjoy their stay, even if David Howell from

Rhode Island did not. In February Howell complained bitterly about the "tedium of" his present situation. "Had my education in youth, or did my Present taste, admit of my participating in the amusements of this place, such as plays, balls, concerts, routs, hops, fandangoes, and foxhunting, or, I may add, did my finances admit of mixing with the bon-ton, time might pass off agreeably." Instead Howell stayed in his room and read, borrowing from a "good library of French Books," that Thomas Jefferson brought with him.

Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts found Annapolis "of all Places the best for transacting the Publick Business . . . The Inhabitants are almost universally disposed to enjoy themselves. Balls, Plays, dining and Tea Parties, engross the Time of the Ladies; Hunting, Fishing, Gaming, Horseracing, etc. that of the Gentlemen. Those of Congress who are wholly devoted to Pleasure, if there are any such, may indulge their Inclinations by being couteous and attentative to the Inhabitants, those who are for dispatching the Public Business, will never be interrupted by the Citizens of Annapolis."

Congress In Annapolis

In March 1784, Samuel Dick, a Congressman from New Jersey, described how he spent his leisure time in Annapolis: "Eight of us lodge in one house and our time at home is spent agreeably enough whilst the polite attention of the gentlemen of the town engages all our leisure hours in visits and amusements. The players exhibit twice a week and there is a brilliant assembly or ball once a fortnight to which we have standing cards of invitation."

Not all entertainment took place as planned. When the stage from Baltimore failed to arrive one winter evening, Mr. Brown was left with no musicians and a disgruntled audience. In the next issue of the Maryland

Gazette he offered a public apology and free tickets to a future concert.

At least one Congressman, Authur Lee of Virginia, got himself in deep trouble with the Ladies by planning a ball at Middleton's at the same time as another. "Lee," wrote Jefferson, "finding no faction among men here, entered into that among the women which rages to a very high degree. A ball being appointed by the one party on a certain night he undertook to give one, and fixed it precisely on the same night. This of course has placed him in the midst of the mud."

The theater season began in February 1784 with a presentation of a tragedy "The Roman Father," followed by a musical farce entitled "Thomas and Sally or the Sailor's Return." A contemporary review of the Production was most flattering. "To say they gave universal satisfaction, would inadequately express their Merits, or the Feelings the excited." In addition to heartrending drama and lighthearted music, the evening closed with "a brilliant Scene which disclosed to us the loved Name of WASHINGTON—who like an auspicious Planet, with his Thirteen Satellites, dispensed their cheering Influence, on all beneath—Witness the repeated Shouts of Applause with which this Heart-enlivening Scene was received by the delighted Spectators."

- TITLE PAGE FROM MUSIC TO *THOMAS AND SALLY*
The Folger Shakespeare Library Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-96
- *MARYLAND GAZETTE*, February 12, 1784
Maryland State Law Library Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-11
- *MARYLAND GAZETTE*, January 22, 1784
Maryland State Law Library Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-13
- TITLE PAGE AND ILLUSTRATION FROM THE 1778 EDITION OF *THE ROMAN FATHER*
The Folger Shakespeare Library Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-94

David Howell of Rhode Island was a devout man who was persuaded that "religion is for the good of Society." He was shocked to find that Annapolis had no church and that his colleagues would rather play cards than pray. He wrote home that on the second night after his arrival "being Saturday night, in the edge of the evening, the servant brought into the room & set on the Table two candles & two packs of cards.—Some of the company soon spread around the table & went to playing for money. I left the room & was shewed to another. After which I sent for Mr. Ellery [a member of the Rhode Island delegation] & we spent the Evening by ourselves in conversation. I observed to the Company that in N. England the table would have been furnished with a bible & psalm book instead of two packs of Cards."

- TUESDAY CLUB by Frank B. Mayer (1827-1899).

Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 431 Photograph, MdHR G 1556-89

- ANNAPOLIS CANDLESTICK, 18th century

Private collection

- PLAYING CARDS, 18th century

Colonial Williamsburg reproduction. Private collection

Apart from the State House dome, the exterior of which was not completed until 1788, the Annapolis of 1784 looked much like this 1794 watercolor by Cotton Milbourne. At least eight of the thirty-five Congressmen who came to Annapolis in 1783-1784 lived at Isaac McHard's, believed to be the three-story brick building on the right, known today as the Maryland Inn.

- MILBOURNE WATERCOLOR OF ANNAPOLIS

Hammond-Harwood House Association, Annapolis Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-10

Congress found Annapolis an expensive place to live. David Howell from Rhode Island wrote that he and another delegate were

"well accommodated with large & elegant apartments & sufficient fare" at Isaac McHard's, "but our living will, on the whole, come dearer here than in Philadelphia." Thomas Jefferson kept a detailed account of his stay in Annapolis in which he recorded the goods and services he purchased in town, including a rather substantial doctor's bill. On January 1, 1784, Jefferson wrote James Madison: "I have had very ill health since I have been here and am getting rather lower than otherwise." By spring, when he settled his account with Dr. James Murray "in full" for L35/4/0 he was healthier, but considerably poorer. The value of a pound in today's money varied, depending upon what was purchased, but an average would be about \$32. Medical care cost Jefferson \$1126.40, the largest single bill he was to pay in Annapolis.

For a Congressman, whose spending allowance was equivalent to \$48 a day, Annapolis was a more expensive place to live in the winter of 1783-1784 than today. The best bargain was a bed and breakfast for which Jefferson paid about \$46 in 1983 money.

- MARYLAND COLONIAL CURRENCY, EMIS- SIONS OF 1770 AND 1774

Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 612

- SKETCH OF MAN ON PORCH by Frank B. Mayer (1827-1899)

Annapolis harbor in the background

Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 431 Photograph, MdHR G 1556-90

- THOMAS JEFFERSON'S ACCOUNT OF EX- PENSES IN ANNAPOLIS, November 25, 1785- May 11, 1784

The Massachusetts Historical Society, Thomas Jefferson Coolidge Collection. Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-98

- ADVERTISEMENTS FROM THE *MARYLAND GAZETTE*, 1783-1784

Maryland State Law Library. Photographs, Maryland State Ar- chives, MdHR G 1556-14, 30-34, 48, 99-102

Newspapers kept people informed of the events and issues of the day. Frederick Green published the *Maryland Gazette* at his print shop on Charles Street where, as postmaster, he also kept the post office. When Joseph Dowson, a local merchant, returned to England to visit his ailing mother, his wife Elizabeth sent him the newspapers for the "pirtickalars" of the day, adding that "I cant give you any information about Congress only that thay like the plase veary much it is sed most of them prefit it to any plase they ever see..."

The women of Annapolis were a majority of the town's twelve hundred and eighty inhabitants. Elizabeth Dowson probably could read and write as well as most, although some of the more affluent ladies, like Molly Ridout, could afford private tutors and were better educated.

The 449 slaves in town probably had less "schooling" than Elizabeth Dowson. Runaway ads rarely indicated that a slave could read or write, although some were clearly articulate and ingenious when it came to making their escape. Blacks worked as servants, carters, skilled craftsmen, and laborers. During the war some were soldiers, and otherwise by their labor they materially supported the struggle for independence. It is no wonder that slaves would not only try to escape to freedom, but also would begin to question why the Declaration of Independence did not apply equally to all Americans. In May of 1783, the *Maryland Gazette* offered its readers an eloquent plea by *Vox Africanorum* calling for the abolition of slavery and equal rights for blacks. While in Annapolis, Congress addressed the issue obliquely by passing Thomas Jefferson's ordinance prohibiting the spread of slavery into the northwest territory, but the struggle for liberty and justice for all would prove to be more difficult than anyone in 1784 ever imagined.

- LETTER OF ELIZABETH DOWSON, December 27, 1783
Maryland State Archives, MdHR D 387-18. Photograph, MdHR G 1556-97
- FRANCIS STREET by Frank B. Mayer (1827-1899).
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1935. MdHR G 1556-36
- ADVERTISEMENT FOR RUNAWAY SLAVE.
Maryland Gazette, December 25, 1783
Maryland State Law Library. Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-51
- ANTI-SLAVERY ARTICLE BY VOX AFRICANORUM
Maryland Gazette, May 15, 1783
Maryland State Law Library. Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-42

Where They Stayed

In July of 1783 "a plat of the city and its precincts: was made and sent ot Maryland Congressman James McHenry to use in persuading Congress to come to Annapolis. The following November, after the city was informed by McHenry that Congress would come temporarily, Isaac McHard was lent "one hundred pounds continental state money to enable him to provide for the accommodation of the members of Congress." Although it is not known for certain, McHard probably rented Thomas Hyde's new building on Church Circle for himself and made arrangements with Mrs. Frances Bryce and Mrs. Mary Ghiselin to provide room and board also. When it is definitely known where a Congressman or visitor stayed, a star (*) appears after the name.

- JOHN CALLAHAN'S MAP OF ANNAPOLIS, ca. 1783
Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-123
- ISAAC MCHARD'S BOARDING HOUSE?
Church Circle, now the Maryland Inn, ca. 1895

- Roger Sherman, Connecticut*
 James Wadsworth, Connecticut*
 Jonathan Blanchard, New Hampshire*
 Abiel Foster, New Hampshire*
 John Beatty, New Jersey*
 Samuel Dick, New Jersey*
 John Stevens, New Jersey*
 Charles Dewitt, New York
 Ephraim Paine, New York
 William Ellery, Rhode Island*
 David Howell, Rhode Island*
 Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR, G 1556-124
- GEORGE MANN'S TAVERN, formerly fronting 161-167 Main Street, ca. 1890
 George Washington*
 Thomas Jefferson, Virginia*
 Samuel Hardy, Virginia
 James Monroe, Virginia*
 Richard Beresford, South Carolina
 Jacob Read, South Carolina
 William Houston, Georgia
 James McHenry, Maryland
 Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR, G 1556-125
 - FRANCES BRYCE'S BOARDING HOUSE, 10-12 Francis Street, 1948
 Gunning Bedford, Jr., Delaware
 Elcazor McComb, Delaware
 James Tilton, Delaware
 Francis Dana, Massachusetts*
 Elbridge Gerry, Massachusetts*
 Samuel Osgood, Massachusetts*
 George Partridge, Massachusetts*
 Samuel Dick, New Jersey*
 Jonathan Blanchard, New Jersey*
 Edward Hand, Pennsylvania*
 John Montgomery, Pennsylvania
 Cadwallader Morris, Pennsylvania
 Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-126
 - MRS. GHISELIN'S BOARDING HOUSE, 30 West Street, recent photo
 Thomas Jefferson, Virginia*
 James Monroe, Virginia*
- Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-127
- MIDDLETON'S TAVERN, 2 Market Space, ca. 1900
 Benjamin Hawkins, North Carolina
 Richard Dobbs Spaight, North Carolina
 Hugh Williamson, North Carolina
 Arthur Lee, Virginia*
 John Francis Mercer, Virginia
 Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-128
 - GOVERNOR'S HOUSE, formerly on Naval Academy grounds, ca. 1900
 Thomas Mifflin, Pennsylvania, President of Congress*
 Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-129
 - CHASE-LLOYD HOUSE, 22 Maryland Avenue, ca. 1890
 Edward Lloyd, Congressman from Maryland*
 Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-130
 - HAMMOND-HARWOOD HOUSE, 19 Maryland Avenue, ca. 1930
 Jermiah Townley Chase, Congressman from Maryland and Mayor of Annapolis
 Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-131
 - DR. UPTON SCOTT'S HOUSE, 4 Shipwright Street, ca. 1900, from the garden
 Sir Robert Eden, last Proprietary Governor of Maryland*
 Henry Harford, former proprietor of Maryland and illegitimate son of the last Lord Baltimore*
 Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-132
 - CARROLL MANSION, 109 Duke of Gloucester Street, recent photo
 Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Signer of the Declaration of Independence and President of the Maryland Senate*
 Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-133
 - BRICE HOUSE, 42 East Street, before 1900

James Brice, former Mayor of Annapolis*
Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-134

- MURRAY HOUSE, 142 Prince George Street, recent photo

Dr. James Murray, Jefferson's physician
Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-135

- GREEN HOUSE AND PRINT SHOP, 124 Charles Street, ca. 1900

Frederick Green, printer of the Maryland Gazette and postmaster*
Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-136

- SHAW HOUSE, 21 State Circle, before 1900

John Shaw, cabinetmaker and superintendent of the State House*
Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-137

- RIDOUT HOUSE, 118-120 Duke of Gloucester, ca. 1910

Molly Ridout, whose letter to her mother describes Washington's resignation*
Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-138

- PACA HOUSE, 186 Prince George Street, before 1900, from the garden

Thomas Jenings, lawyer, living in the former home of Governor William Paca*
Warren Collection, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-139

Washington's Commission

George Washington's letter to Congress announced his arrival in Annapolis and asked "in what manner it will be most proper to offer my resignation." Congress immediately resolved that "his Excellency the Commander in Chief be admitted to a Public Audience, on Tuesday next [December 23] at twelve o'clock," and referred his letter to a committee chaired by Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson and fellow committee members Elbridge Gerry

and James McHenry devised a ceremony and composed a response that President Thomas Mifflin would deliver on behalf of Congress.

- LETTER TO CONGRESS, December 20, 1783
National Archives and Records Service Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-104
- GEORGE WASHINGTON'S COMMISSION AS GENERAL AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMY OF THE UNITED COLONIES.

Dated June 19, 1775, the Commission was signed by John Hancock, President of the Continental Congress.

Library of Congress. Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-6.

- WASHINGTON, LAFAYETTE, AND TILGHMAN AT YORKTOWN by Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827), 1784

Painted for the Maryland State House and first hung by the artist in the fall of 1784 in the old House of Delegates Chamber, this portrait now hangs above the fireplace in the adjoining old Senate Chamber.

After resigning his Commission as Commander-in-Chief, George Washington probably gave this draft of his remarks to the Committee on which James McHenry served. McHenry kept it among his papers. Another copy, in the hand of Washington's secretary David Humphreys, is in the Library of Congress.

- DRAFT OF WASHINGTON'S REMARKS
Original, private collection. Facsimile, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-105

In Attendance

In March of 1784, Charles Willson Peale wrote the President of Congress, Thomas Mifflin, that he had intended to come to Annapolis to make "a capital historical picture [of] . . . Gen. Washington taking leave of Congress . . . but alas my finances at present will not permit of such an undertaking." Perhaps Peale hoped for a commission from Congress, but none ever came, and he abandoned his project al-

together. The first artist to attempt to reconstruct the scene was Robert Edge Pine not long after the event. Unfortunately Pine's large canvas was destroyed in a fire in 1803 and there is no surviving record of its appearance. John Trumbull completed the earliest extant painting of the ceremony in 1824, after taking considerable pains to determine the principal people in attendance, and to secure their likenesses. For some unknown reason, Trumbull chose to reverse the room, both in his preliminary sketches and in the final painting. Trumbull also included a number of people who were not there, such as Martha Washington and James Madison.

Edwin White's painting depicts even fewer people in attendance at the ceremony than Trumbull's, although he does show the room correctly. Neither painting includes the two Congressmen, James McHenry and James Tilton, who provided the most detailed contemporary accounts of the event. From McHenry and Tilton it is known that the room was packed with Congressmen, members of the Maryland Legislature, the Governor's Council, City Officials, Washington's aides, and guests, including the former Proprietor of Maryland, Henry Harford, and his brother-in-law, former governor Sir Robert Eden. The room was so crowded that Washington withdrew to this Committee Room while the "company" left. After a few moments, when the Chamber was at last clear except for Congressmen (twenty-one or twenty-two) and clerks, "the General then stepped into the room again, bid every member [of Congress] farewell and rode off from the door [of the State House], intent upon eating his christmas dinner at home."

- GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON RESIGNING HIS COMMISSION AS COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE ARMY, 1824, by John Trumbull (1756-1843)

Architect of the U.S. Capitol, neg. no. 34256. Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-2

- CONTEMPORARY KEY TO JOHN TRUMBULL'S PAINTING OF WASHINGTON RESIGNING HIS COMMISSION

Architect of the U.S. Capitol Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-152

- WASHINGTON RESIGNING HIS COMMISSION, by Edwin White (1817-1877), 1859

Commissioned for the State House, it now hangs above the first floor landing on the marble staircase leading to the second floor.

Maryland Commission on Artistic Property MdCAP 1112. Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-8

- CONTEMPORARY KEY TO EDWIN WHITE'S PAINTING OF WASHINGTON RESIGNING HIS COMMISSION.

Maryland Commission on Artistic Property. Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-107

Following a carefully devised protocol worked out by Thomas Jefferson and his Committee, the ceremony of Washington's resignation as *Commander-in-Chief* began at twelve noon on December 23, 1783. James Tilton, member of Congress from Delaware, described the scene:

"Tuesday morning, Congress met and took their seats in order, all covered. At twelve o'clock the General was introduced by the secretary, and seated opposite to the president, until the throng, that filled all the avenues, were so disposed of so as to behold the solemnity. The ladies occupied the gallery as full as it would hold, the Gentlemen crowded below stairs. Silence ordered, by the Secretary, the General rose and bowed to congress, who uncovered, but did not bow. He then delivered his speech, and at the close of it drew his commission from his bosom and handed it to the president. The president replied in a set speech. The General bowed again to Congress. They uncovered and the General retired. After a little pause until the company withdrew, Congress adjourned. The General then stepped into the room again, bid every member farewell and rode off from the door, intent upon eating his christmas dinner at home. Many of the spectators particularly the fair ones, shed tears on this solemn and affecting occasion."

- **PROTOCOL FOR WASHINGTON'S RESIGNATION**

The "order for the publick audience of general Washington" as published for the first time in the Secret Journals of the Acts and Proceedings of Congress, 1821.

Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-140

While Elbridge Gerry, Congressman from Massachusetts, drafted the order of the ceremony, Thomas Jefferson composed President Mifflin's response to Washington's remarks. Fellow committeeman, James McHenry from Maryland made this copy from which Mifflin may have read.

- **THOMAS JEFFERSON'S DRAFT OF THOMAS MIFFLIN'S RESPONSE.**

National Archives and Records Service Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-141

According to Congressman James Tilton of Delaware, the feast on the Monday before Washington's resignation was "the most extraordinary I ever attended. Between 2 and 3 hundred gent[leme]n dined together in the ballroom. The number of cheerful voices, with the clagor of knives and forks made a dine of a very extraordinary nature and most delightful influence. Every man seemed to be in heaven or so absorbed in the pleasures of imagination, as to neglect the more sordid appetites, for not a soul got drunk, though there was wine in plenty"

- **MARYLAND GAZETTE ACCOUNT OF WASHINGTON'S ARRIVAL AND RESIGNATION**

Maryland State Law Library Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-7

McHenry carefully composed his account of Washington's resignation in this letter to his future wife. In an effort to polish his prose, he omitted some details from the copy he sent Peggy, including the observation that "the doors of Congress were thrown open at twelve o'clock when the governor and his council [ar-

rived]." Otherwise McHenry made little substantive change to what remains as the most dramatic account of the resignation ceremony. Ironically, neither of the great historical paintings of the event includes McHenry or Governor Paca's council.

- **LETTER OF JAMES MCHENRY TO PEGGY CALDWELL, December 23, 1783**

On loan to the State of Maryland through the Maryland Historical Society

- **JAMES MCHENRY (ca. 1752-1816) by Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827), 1778**

Original, private collection. Facsimile, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-???????

- **MARGARET CALDWELL (1762-1833) by Charles Willson Peale (1741-1823), ca. 1783**

Original, private collection. Facsimile, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-???????

On January 16, 1784, Molly Ridout, wife of an official in the old proprietary government, wrote her mother in England, dispatching her letter by one of the couriers entrusted with a copy of the ratified Treaty of Peace. Molly had attended Washington's resignation, "with several others," on December 23. She told her mother that "The Congress were assembled in the State House. Both Houses of Assembly were present as spectators, the gallery full of Ladies. The General seemed so much affected himself, that every body felt for him. He addressed Congress in a short speech but very affecting. Many tears were shed . . . I think the World never produced a greater Man & very few so good."

- **LETTER OF MRS. MOLLY RIDOUT TO HER MOTHER, JANUARY 16, 1784**

Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-146

On December 24, 1783, Thomas Jefferson wrote the Governor of Virginia about the "affecting scene of yesterday" and of his "extreme anxiety at our present critical situation." Jefferson feared that there would not be enough Congressmen present to permit ratification of the Treaty of Paris and, if the

treaty was not returned ratified in time, Britain might choose to deny its validity.

- THOMAS JEFFERSON, attributed to John Trumbull (1756-1843)

Original, Virginia Historical Society. Photograph, Maryland State Archives, MdHR G 1556-145

William Pitt was a British Statesman who was considered to be a friend of the American Colonies in their struggle with Parliament over taxes. Peale painted this portrait in London and offered it in 1774 to the General Assembly for the new State House, then under construction. He told the Upper House that he hoped for a "favourable acceptance of" the portrait, and that it would be "placed in the State House or such other conspicuous place as shall be thought most fit and Convenient."

Until the State House was completed, it hung in the public Ball Room on Duke of Gloucester Street, now Annapolis City Hall, where the General Assembly had its temporary quarters. From the fall of 1779, when the General Assembly met in this State House for the first time, the Pitt portrait had been on public display, first in the old House of Delegates Chamber, then, after 1784, in the Old Senate Chamber, and now in the old Senate Committee Room.

- WILLIAM PITT, by Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827), 1768

Maryland Commission on Artistic Property, State House Collection.