George R. Roberts, shown here many years later, was a Baltimore African American who served aboard American privateers throughout the War of 1812, including Thomas Boyle's Chasseur *in 1814–1815. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

Mirage of Freedom: African Americans in the War of 1812

CHRISTOPHER T. GEORGE

Frank A. Cassell, writing in 1972, estimated that three to five thousand black slaves from Virginia and Maryland fled to the British in the War of 1812 and were transported to British possessions, notably to Nova Scotia and the West Indies. Some two hundred former slaves in the Chesapeake region even donned the scarlet uniform of "Colonial Marines" to fight for the British against the United States, and a number of blacks helped the enemy by serving as guides. Yet, Cassell says, "even when confronted with overwhelming evidence that substantial numbers of slaves were not only fiercely determined to escape but also willing and able to join a foreign enemy in fighting their former masters, white southerners did not abandon their faith in the institution of slavery or their conceptions about the characters of slaves."[1]

Winthrop D. Jordan, in his seminal *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550–1812*, observes that the overwhelming view of southern whites was that African Americans were inferior human beings, indeed were perhaps less than human, and were contented and genial[2]—surprising perceptions in the face of slaves fleeing to the British and widespread fear of slave plots and rebellions such as that fomented by Gabriel Prosser in Richmond in 1800.

Cassell states that proslavery southerners chose to ignore the evidence that there were rebellious slaves who "demonstrated their profound alienation from and antagonism towards a country and a society that professed equality for all while tolerating bondage for some." Moreover, because white southerners held to their conception that their slaves were basically loyal and docile, "in their obtuseness lay the seeds of future tragedy."[3]

Ironically, even whites who worked to better the lot of the Negro thought of the black race not in the context of U.S. society but of sending the African Americans back to Africa or elsewhere, viz., the Colonization Society of Maryland, founded in 1832 to encourage free blacks to return to Africa, which was responsible in large part for the foundation of Liberia.[4]

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It is unfortunate that the black man was not more trusted, understood, and welcomed into American society before the Civil War. If African Americans had been welcomed as full combatants (as opposed to fatigue men, drummers, trumpeters, or servants) into the state militias if not the U.S. Army in the War of 1812, the United States might not have suffered such reverses as the defeat at Bladensburg, which led to the burning of Washington, D.C., on August 24–25, 1814. The southern Maryland county of Prince George's, which includes Bladensburg, had in the 1810 census a population of just over 20,000, including 6,500 whites, 4,900 free blacks, and 9,200 slaves.[5] We can surmise, though not entirely realistically, of course, that if a few thousand able-bodied male African Americans had been trained in arms and added to the U.S. regulars and militia of 6,000, the British army, which only numbered about 4,000, might not have routed the Americans nor enjoyed its relatively unimpeded march of fifty miles through the Prince George's County countryside.

The British commander at Bladensburg, Major General Robert Ross, told his wife in a letter of September 1, 1814, that the Americans "feel strongly the Disgrace of having had their Capital taken by a handful of Men and blame very generally a Government which went to War without the Means or the Abilities to carry it on. . . . The Injury sustained by the City of Washington in the Destruction of its public Buildings has been immense and must disgust the Country with a Government that has left the Capital unprotected."[6]

Obviously, the American reverses in the war cannot be blamed on the fact that African Americans were not called on to help defend the country. Lack of preparation for war by the Madison administration, the small size of the U.S. regular army and navy, and overreliance on the volunteer militia all played a part.[7] It seems nevertheless a supreme irony that although slaves were generally believed to be loyal to their masters, their loyalty to their country was not tested.

This exposes the fallacy of the slave masters' belief in the loyalty of their slaves: deep down, slaveowners knew the slaves could not be trusted to be given arms. Or they clung to their belief in the basic ignorance of the black man. By contrast, partly for their own ends and partly because African Americans of the Chesapeake proved their capabilities fighting in British uniform, leading officers in the British forces frequently noted the intelligence and capabilities of the American blacks they inducted into their ranks.

The questions of slavery and the status of free African Americans in the United States would not be resolved for decades to come, and the situation would not change while the executive and legislative branches of the government were under the influence of southern slaveholding interests. Four of the first five presidents of the United States were southerners as well as slaveowners.

All the same, two of the greatest American successes in the closing months of the War of 1812—the deflection of the British attack on Baltimore on September 12–14, 1814 (during which General Ross was killed) and the British

defeat at New Orleans on January 8, 1815 (during which their generals Paken-ham, Gibbs, and Keane perished along with two thousand of their men) —were achieved with the help of African Americans. At Baltimore, under the direction of Major General Samuel Smith, free blacks helped to construct the earthworks that saved the city, and black sailors of the U.S. Navy manned bat-teries ready to repulse an assault by the enemy.[8] At New Orleans, where black laborers also helped to throw up defensive works, General Andrew Jackson welcomed black freedmen into his fighting forces, African Americans as well as expatriate Haitians.[9]
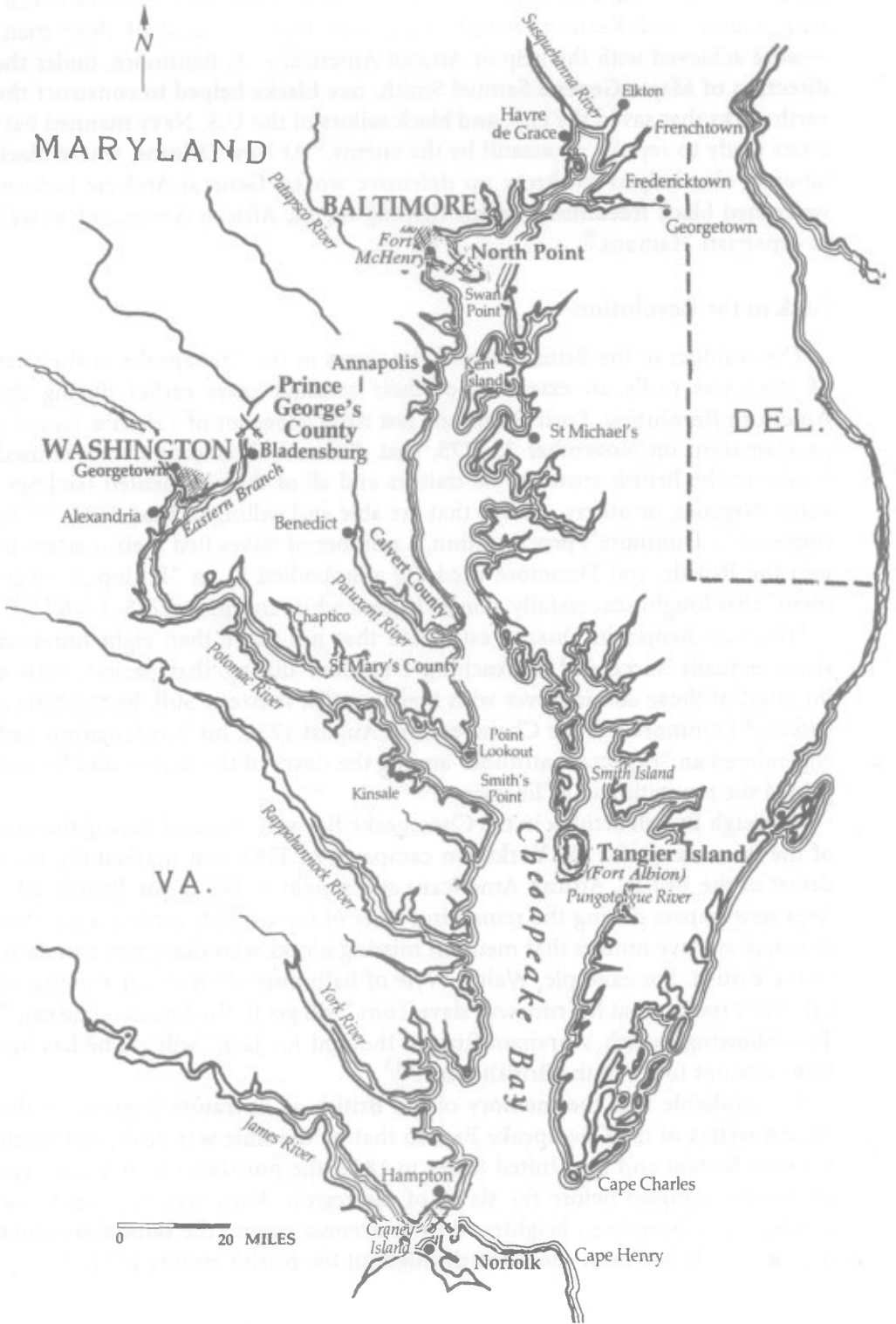
Back to the Revolution

The conduct of the British toward the slaves of the Chesapeake in the War of 1812 was really an extension of their conduct years earlier during the American Revolution. Lord Dunmore, last royal governor of Virginia, issued a proclamation on November 7, 1775, that declared all colonists who refused loyalty to the British crown to be traitors and all of their "indented [sic] Ser-vants, Negroes, or others . . . free that are able and willing to bear Arms."[10] In response to Dunmore's proclamation, a number of slaves fled their masters to join the British, and Dunmore used the able-bodied in an "Ethiopian Regi-ment" that fought successfully alongside loyal white troops in 1775–1776.[11]

Historian Benjamin Quarles estimated that not more than eight hundred slaves actually succeeded in reaching Dunmore during that period, with a hundred of those coming over with their Loyalist masters. Still, by the time a defeated Dunmore left the Chesapeake in August 1776, his proclamation had engendered an "expectant attitude" among the slaves of the region, and he had gained the reputation of a "liberator."[12]

Although British activity in the Chesapeake Bay was minimal during the rest of the war, except for the Yorktown campaign of 1781 that marked the final defeat of the British, African Americans still sought to flee to the British side. Area newspapers during the remaining years of the conflict carried a number of runaway slave notices that mention missing blacks who likely had run away to the British. For example, Walter Wyle of Baltimore County ran a notice in July 1779 stating that his runaway slave Tom "will get to the English if he can." The following month, Abraham Risteau thought his Jack "will (as he has be-fore) attempt to get to the British army."[13]

It is probable that the memory of the British as liberators lingered in the slave quarters of the Chesapeake Bay, so that by the time war broke out again between Britain and the United States in 1812, the possibility of freedom was once more dangled before the slaves of the region. Moreover, the specter of freedom may have been heightened by awareness among the same slaves that the slave trade had been abolished throughout the British empire in 1807.

N

MARYLAND

Susquehanna River

Elkton

Havre
de Grace

Frenchtown

Patapsco River

BALTIMORE

Fredericktown

Fort
McHenry

North Point

Georgetown

Swan
Point

DEL.

Annapolis

Kent
Island

Prince
George's
County

St Michael's

WASHINGTON

Georgetown

Bladensburg

Eastern Branch

Alexandria

Benedict

Calvert County

Patuxent River

Chaptico

Potomac River

St Mary's County

Point
Lookout

Kinsale

Smith's
Point

Smith Island

Rappahannock River

Tangier Island
(Fort Albion)

Pungoteague River

VA.

Cheapeake Bay

York River

James River

Hampton

Cape Charles

0   20 MILES

Craney
Island

Norfolk   Cape Henry

On No Account Give Encouragement

When the British began operations in the Chesapeake in the spring of 1813, a British army under Colonel Sir Sidney Beckwith was sent to the bay in the hopes of diverting American troops from operations on the Canadian border. Lord Bathurst, the British secretary for war and the colonies, sent Colonel Beckwith a letter that included express instructions not to foment a slave uprising:

> You will on no account give encouragement to any disposition by the Negroes to rise against their Masters. . . . If any Individual Negroes shall in the course of your operations have given you assistance, which may expose them to the vengeance of their Masters after your retreat, you are at liberty on their earnest express desire to take them away with you. You are authorized to enlist them in any of the Black Corps if they are willing to enlist; but you must distinctly understand that you are in no case to take slaves away as Slaves, but as free persons whom the public become bound to maintain.[14]

Despite Bathurst's cautions, as at the time of the Revolution, escaped slaves started to make their way to the British, and British officers found themselves confronted with blacks anxious to leave America. As Cassell notes, "under this pressure, British commanders chose to interpret their orders liberally and to take on board any slave who so requested."[15] In June 1813 the British attacked Norfolk and Hampton in Virginia and in July occupied Point Lookout in southern Maryland. In both Virginia and Maryland, when the British came near, slaves fled in large numbers to their protection.

The escaped slave and freedman Charles Ball, who later served as a cook with Commodore Joshua Barney's Chesapeake Bay flotilla, described the destruction caused by the British raiding parties and the manner in which southern Maryland slaves were taken off:

> In the spring of the year 1813, the British fleet came into the bay, and from this time, the origin of the troubles and distresses of the people of the Western Shore, may be dated. I had been employed at a fishery, near the mouth of the Patuxent, from early in March, until the latter part of May, when a British vessel of war came off the mouth of the river, and sent her boats to drive us away from our fishing

Opposite page: Map of the Chesapeake during the War of 1812 showing key locales where British landing parties raided. As part of their attempt to cripple the economy of the region, the British took away perhaps as many as five thousand African-American slaves during 1813–1814, shipping most to Nova Scotia. About two hundred ex-slaves trained on Tangier Island as British Colonial Marines and fought in engagements from May to September 1814, including Bladensburg and North Point. (Map by the author.)

ground. There was but little property at the fishery that could be destroyed; but the enemy cut the seines to pieces, and burned the sheds belonging to the place. They then marched up two miles into the country, burned the house of a planter, and brought away with them several cattle, that were found in his fields. They also carried off more than twenty slaves, which were never again restored to their owner; although, on the following day, he went on board the ship, with a flag of truce, and offered a large ransom for these slaves.[16]

It should be noticed that the carrying off of the slaves was part of the total pattern of destruction and robbery practiced by the British in the region. Ball states almost in one breath that "several cattle" were taken *and* that "more than twenty slaves" were carried off. These African Americans were an economic asset to the people of the Chesapeake, just as their cattle and crops were—or indeed the seines and sheds of the fisheries. The intent was to cripple the Americans economically and hinder their ability to carry on the war and, if possible, to use some of the blacks as guides or even as fighters against their old masters.

As early as May 1813 the *National Intelligencer* reported that several Negroes had deserted to the British and "became pilots for them in plundering." This would be a pattern seen throughout the Chesapeake in the following eighteen months, but the same Washington-based newspaper assured its readers that the slaves were basically patriotic and that they "perform their daily labor not as a task enforced by fear . . . but rather under the influence of an instinct which impels them to the voluntary performance of what they are conscious is their duty."[17] The white southerner's belief in the institution of slavery was bolstered by the press even in the face of abundant evidence that slaves fled with ideas of freedom and stalwartly refused attempts to get them to return to bondage.

Ball stated that he was asked to intercede to try to persuade the slaves of a Mrs. Wilson to return. An owner of "more than a hundred slaves," she lost them all in one night, except, he wrote, for one man who chose not to go because he had "a wife and several children on an adjoining estate" who were kept under rigid guard and so could not flee to the British. The escape was effected after two or three of the black men stole a canoe one night and paddled out to a British ship and informed the officer of the ship that their mistress owned over a hundred slaves. The men were advised to return to the plantation and bring the other slaves to the shore the following night, the officer promising "that he would send a detachment of boats to the shore, to bring them off." The escape was accomplished around midnight "partly by persuasion, partly by compulsion" by the first of the black fugitives.

Ball characterized this incident as "the greatest disaster that had befallen any individual in our neighbourhood, in the course of the war." For this reason a

deputation of local gentlemen was gathered for the purpose of retrieving the slaves either by ransom or, it was hoped, by persuasion, since their mistress "had never treated them with great severity." Ball said he was asked to go along to help persuade the "deserters" to return to Mrs. Wilson:

> I [went] along with the flag of truce, in the assumed character of the servant of one of the gentlemen who bore it; but in the real character of the advocate of the mistress, for the purpose of inducing her slaves to return to her service. . . . The whole of the runaways were on board this ship, lounging about on the main deck, or leaning against the sides of the ship's bulwarks. I went amongst them, and talked to them a long time, on the subject of returning home; but found that their heads were full of notions of liberty and happiness in some of the West India islands.

Ball and one gentleman remained on board when the rest of the deputation returned to shore. Ball was instructed to exert himself "to the utmost, to prevail on the runaway slaves to return to their mistress." After lying off Calvert County for two nights, however, the ship sailed for Tangier Island, where "all the black people that were with us" were transferred to a sloop of war.

Ball added that he was asked by the British to go along with the other African Americans (not the only reported instance of attempted coercion on the part of the British):

> I was invited, and even urged to go with the others, who, I was told, were bound to the island of Trinidad, in the West Indies, where they were to be free. I returned many thanks for their kind offers; but respectfully declined them; telling those who made them, that I was already a freeman, and though I owned no land myself, yet I could have plenty of land of other people to cultivate. In the evening, the sloop weighed anchor, and stood down the Bay, with more than two hundred and fifty black people on board. . . . What became of the miserable mass of black fugitives, that this vessel took to sea, I never learned.[18]

By the end of 1813 blacks were still flocking to the British, as evidenced by the following dispatch from Captain Robert Barrie of HMS *Dragon* to Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren, written from near Lynnhaven on November 14:

> The Slaves continue to come off by every opportunity and I have now upwards of 120 men, women and Children on board, I shall send about 50 of them to Bermuda in the *Conflict*. Among the Slaves are several very intelligent fellows who are willing to act as local guides should their Services be required in that way, and if their assertions be true, there is no doubt but the Blacks of Virginia & Maryland would

> cheerfully take up Arms & join us against the Americans. Several
> Flags of Truce have been off to make application for their Slaves . . .
> but not a single black would return to his former owner.[19]

A second British naval captain, writing in more racist terms, described the coming off of the slaves: "Some of their first exclamations were 'me free man, me go cut massa's throat, give me musket,' which many of them did not know how to use. . . . Another favorite expression when we wanted them to work was, 'no, me no work—me free man.'. . . but they considered work and slavery synonymous terms." The officer then turns his bile on the white masters, perhaps with some truth: "Republicans are certainly the most cruel masters. . . . American liberty consists in oppressing the blacks beyond what other nations do, enacting laws to prevent their receiving instruction, and working them worse than a donkey—'But you call this a free country—when I can't shoot my nigger when I like—eh?'"[20]

De facto Becomes de Jure

In the spring of 1814, the aged Admiral Warren was replaced as commander of the British North American station by Vice Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane. The new commander made the encouragement of slaves to flee their masters and the taking away of slaves official British policy. On April 2, Cochrane issued a proclamation in which he declared:

> All persons who may be disposed to migrate from the United States,
> will with their families, be received on board of His Majesty's ships
> or vessels of War, or at military posts that may be established on or
> near the coast of the United States, [and] will have their choice of
> either entering into His Majesty's sea or land forces, or of being sent
> as free settlers to the British possessions in North America or the
> West Indies, where they will meet with all due encouragement.[21]

Cochrane's intent was partly to supplement the British forces with able-bodied blacks—a shortage of manpower being one of the problems facing the British. Tangier Island in the southern Chesapeake Bay was fortified as a place to train blacks in arms. The vice admiral relished unrealistic ideas, however, about the prospects for this new fighting force. He wrote to Lord Bathurst on July 14: "The Blacks are all good horsemen. Thousands will join upon their masters' horses, and they will only require to be clothed and accoutered to be as good Cossacks as any in the European army, and I believe more terrific to the Americans than any troops that could be brought forward." To his subordinate Rear Admiral George Cockburn, he intimated that "With them properly armed and backed with 20,000 British troops, Mr. Maddison [*sic*] will be hurled from his throne."[22]
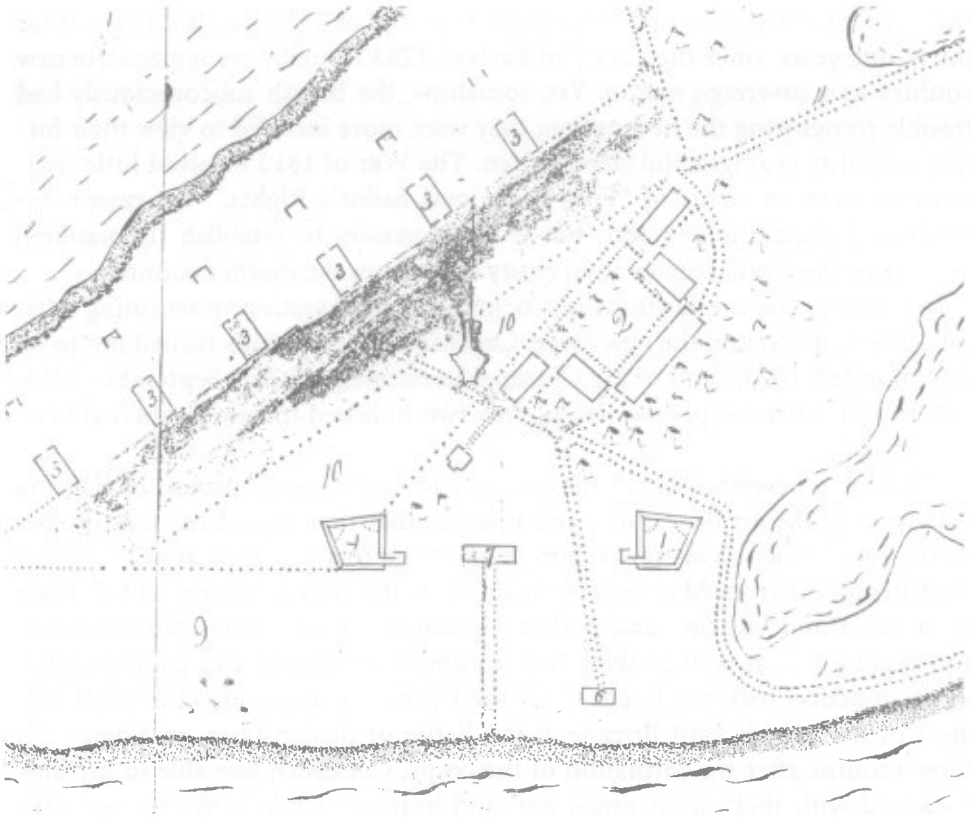
Detail from a British map of Tangier Island showing their Fort Albion, where former Chesapeake Bay slaves were trained by the British in the art of war. Shown are 1) two redoubts, 2) officers' barracks, 3) privates' barracks, 6) garrison barracks, 7) garrison store house, 9) parade ground, and 10) gardens. (Courtesy, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, ms. 2608, Cochrane Papers.)

Cockburn, who had been operating in the Chesapeake the previous year and possibly had a firmer grasp of the real possibilities of employing the former slaves, urged caution. He told his superior that his "Proclamation should not so distinctly hold out to them the option of being sent as free settlers to British settlements, which they will most certainly all prefer to the danger and fatigue of joining us in arms."[23] Cockburn rightly perceived that the fugitive slaves were basically interested in freedom and would not want to serve (and possibly die) in the ranks of a British regiment if they were offered land instead.

This cautionary note notwithstanding, the rear admiral set about constructing the fort on Tangier Island and recruiting a "Corps of Colonial Marines from the People of Colour who escape to us from the Enemy's shore in this Neighborhood to be formed, drilled, and brought forward for service."[24]

It seems highly significant that the British chose to call these African Americans "*Colonial* Marines"—a term which goes to the root of the reasons for the War of 1812. The former colonies that composed the "United States of Amer-

ica" were no longer *colonies* of Great Britain, and in 1814 had not been so for thirty-one years, since the Treaty of Paris of 1783 formally recognized the new country as a sovereign nation. Yet, somehow, the British subconsciously had trouble recognizing the new nation; they were more inclined to view their former colonists as ungrateful stepchildren. The War of 1812 resolved little militarily or even in terms of "Free Trade and Sailor's Rights," the reason for Madison's declaration of war, but it was *necessary* to establish the national identity of the United States as an entity apart from the mother country.

In terms of the implications of Cochrane's proclamation in tempting African Americans to join the new force, Cockburn's reservations turned out to be well founded: by the end of the Chesapeake campaign in late September 1814, five months after the proclamation, only two hundred former slaves had been recruited.

Cockburn nevertheless put the best face he could on the project of training the slaves in the art of warfare, and it seems that they repaid the trust put in them. The former slaves saw action in all of the major British attacks around the Chesapeake from May to September 1814, and they were praised for "their great spirit and vivacity, and perfect obediance," their "order, forebearance, and regularity," as well as their "extraordinary steadiness and good conduct when in action with the Enemy." Of their presence alongside elite white soldiers of the British light brigade at the Battle of Bladensburg on August 24, three months after the formation of the corps, Cockburn was able to say they "behaved with their accustomed zeal and bravery" while suffering one man killed and three wounded.[25]

In contrast to documented looting by white British troops at Hampton, Virginia, and Havre de Grace, Maryland, it seems that the former slaves resisted looting the homes they captured and the temptation of seeking revenge on their former masters. And this, it should be borne in mind, when capture by the Americans might have meant swift execution. Certainly, Cochrane never lost faith in the black marines, who he maintained were perfectly suited for campaigning in the hot, humid Chesapeake Bay summer. He was so pleased with their performance that he ordered an additional bounty to be paid to them to remain in the British forces, and the two hundred former slaves were combined with three hundred royal marines in an integrated battalion.[26]

The exodus of slaves along the coast led the Virginia legislature to increase appropriations to slaveowners whose slaves had been executed or sold out of state for disciplinary reasons. In 1813, slave masters were compensated $10,000 for slaves that were lost to them in these ways, double the figure for 1812, and in 1814 the total reached $12,000.[27] As Cassell notes, "In these grim figures can be read the personal tragedies suffered by slaves whose bid for freedom failed."[28] The Virginia legislature also contemplated abolishing schools for blacks and restricting the movements of slaves outside their masters' plantations as well as those of free black vendors, who were suspected of urging the slaves to escape.[29]

In Maryland, Governor Levin Winder instructed General Caleb Hawkins of the militia to "take all proper precautions to prevent an intercourse between the Enemy and the slaves of your counties."[30] Due to the long, ragged coastline of the bay, however, "defense" against the flight of slaves was left to small parties of whites who attempted to intercept the fugitives as they left the usually wooded shores to reach the British ships. Newspaper accounts tell of a number of tragic incidents in which runaway slaves were killed or injured by whites.[31] In April 1813 it was reported that near Hampton, Virginia, some runaway slaves mistakenly rowed out to an American ship thinking it was British and were apprehended after telling the crewmen they wanted arms for a large number of fellow slaves who were planning a general massacre of whites.[32] Because the latter report appeared in the fiercely anti-British and pro-slavery *National Intelligencer*, it is possible that the report is an exaggeration if not outright propaganda. Either way, such reports fed rumors of an impending slave insurrection that swept Washington, D.C., in the coming months.

Every Precaution

On July 20, 1813, Margaret Bayard Smith, a prominent Washington socialite, wrote to her sister:

> As for our enemy *at home* I have no doubt that they will if possible join the British; here we are, I believe firmly in no danger, as the aim of those in the country would be as quickly as possible to join those in the city and the few scatter'd s——s about our neighbourhood, could not muster force enough to venture on an attack. We have however counted on the possibility of danger and Mr. S. has procured pistols &c &c sufficient for our defence, and we make use of every precaution which we should use were we certain of what we now only reckon a possibility. . . . At present all the members and citizens say it is impossible for the enemy to ascend the river, and our home enemy will not assail us, if they do not arrive.[33]

Perhaps significantly, given the virulent anti-black paranoia of Smith's letter, it should be noted that the writer's husband, Samuel Harrison Smith, was the founder in 1800 of the *National Intelligencer*, and that her brother-in-law Joseph Gales, Jr., was at that time the proprietor and editor. This is not to say, however, that rumors of a coming slave insurrection were not rife in Washington in 1813–1814. Fear of slave rebellions had grown in the southern states since the bloody revolt on the Caribbean island of Santo Domingo (Hispaniola) in the 1790s, which had culminated in the establishment of the black Republic of Haiti in 1804. News reports of the atrocities committed there had alternately fascinated and horrified Americans and had certainly

British woodcut of the destruction of Commodore Barney's flotilla (foreground) and the burning of Washington, D.C.—events of August 22 and August 24–25, respectively, condensed in one scene in this artist's conception. (Courtesy, Greenwich Hospital Collection, Royal Maritime Museum, Greenwich, England.)

fueled fears that the same bloody events could happen at home.[34]

Closer to Washington, the memory of Gabriel's Conspiracy in August 1800 in Richmond, Virginia, a mere eighty miles from the national capital, must have been fresh in the minds of District of Columbia whites. The plot failed when Governor (and future U.S. president) James Monroe called out the militia after two slaves betrayed it. The plan, devised by Gabriel Prosser and Jack Ditcher, rural slaves on plantations to the west of the city, had been to conquer Richmond and to hold Governor Monroe hostage until whites agreed to black freedom.[35]

James Sidbury, author of the thesis "Gabriel's World: Race Relations in Richmond, Virginia, 1750–1810," which analyzes the background of the planned revolt, points out that "the Haitian Revolution must have encouraged black Virginians to consider seriously the chances for a black revolution."[36] The abortive uprising was the culmination of a number of insurrection scares that had swept Virginia during the 1790s but was put down with relative ease by Monroe after the governor had first suspected that the plot was, like most of the previous scares in the state, "more rumor than reality." Gabriel and some thirty-five other conspirators were publicly hanged as an example to

other blacks, but Monroe demonstrated his equanimity by allowing co-ring-leader Jack Ditcher to be transported out of the United States. Other convicted conspirators were either pardoned or had their sentences commuted to transportation. Sidbury concludes that "ironically one of the biggest insurrection scares in American history helps illustrate the strength and stability of slavery in Virginia."[37]

Gabriel's Conspiracy led some whites to look for reasons for the plot. One anonymous letter writer dared to conjecture that the cause of the planned revolt was the "existence of slavery in one of the freest republics on earth."[38] Jordan notes that the plot also greatly harmed an abolitionist movement that had already grown weak through the 1790s and that hopes for black equality that might have flowed from the American Revolution were instead transformed into a pattern of racial separation.[39]

In the final event, it was not a slave insurrection that traumatized Washington after the American defeat at Bladensburg but destruction caused by the British, in the burning of its public buildings. African Americans from Washington did not contribute to it, nor did the British urge them to do so. However, the British third brigade, consisting of the 21st Regiment, sailors, and the "Colonial Marines" or former slaves, were the troops that marched into the capital on the night of August 24 and engaged in the incendiarism.

To citizens fleeing from the invaders, every manner of hearsay was evident, including the ever-familiar rumor of an unfolding slave insurrection, this time instigated by the enemy. As with previous alarms of slave revolt, the rumors proved more virulent than the reality, but as Charles J. Ingersoll reported in his 1849 history of the war, this did not stop the stories spreading through the District and plaguing Mrs. Madison and her "caravan of affrighted ladies" in their flight from the capital through the Virginia countryside:

> Consternation was at its uttermost; the whole region filled with panic-struck people, terrified scouts roaming about and spreading alarm that the enemy were coming from Washington and Alexandria, and that there was safety nowhere. Among the terrific rumors, one predominated that Cochrane's proclamation was executed by Cockburn, inducing the slaves to revolt, and that thousands of infuriated negroes, drunk with liquor and mad with emancipation, were committing excesses . . . , subjecting the whole country to their horrid outrages. . . . Gen. Young, commanding a brigade of Virginia militia, . . . says they were delayed on their march to join General Winder [at Montgomery Courthouse], "by an alarm of a *domestic nature*, which he was so credulous as to believe, from the respectability of the country people, who came to him for protection; he halted his brigade and sent out light troops and one troop of cavalry to ascertain the fact, which finally proved erroneous."[40]

If the citizenry had its fears, the invaders had concerns of their own. On the night of August 25 the British decamped because they feared an American attack. One of the British brigade commanders stated that "we could scarce think the Americans (from their immense population, and a well trained Artillery) would tamely allow a handful of British Soldiers, to advance thro' the heart of their Country, and burn, & destroy, the Capitol [*sic*] of the United States."[41]

Fears of black civil unrest resurfaced as soon as the British had evacuated the city. General Tobias Stansbury of the Fifth Maryland Militia reported to Congress on conditions after the British withdrawal:

> Reports from Georgetown and the city reached me, that arms of many of the enemy had fallen into the hands of the blacks, and it was apprehended that they would take advantage of the absence of the men to insult the females, and complete the work of destruction commenced by the enemy; and at the earnest solicitation of Brigadier General Smith and Major Peter, who expressed much anxiety respecting their families, and considering it all important to prevent further injury to the city, I ordered the troops of the District of Columbia to move thither for its protection.[42]

On the march back to their ships, the British were approached by a number of runaway slaves who asked to be taken along. One of the junior officers recalled:

> During this day's march [August 26] we were joined by numbers of negro slaves, who implored us to take them along with us, offering to serve either as soldiers or sailors, if we would but give them their liberty; but as General Ross persisted in protecting private property of every description, few of them were fortunate enough to obtain their wishes.[43]

It is probable that Ross refused to take along most of these slaves because he knew they would slow up the march, the British being afraid of imminent American attack. As it happened, their fears were groundless: the U.S. forces were dispirited and more disorganized than ever after Bladensburg. Ross's refusal shows, however, how hollow the offer of freedom to slaves was on the part of the British. They were not offering freedom for humanitarian reasons but purely for their own ends, to use the slaves' manpower and local knowledge, as well as to sap the economic strength of the region. When it was not convenient to aid them in their escape, the slaves were turned away.

According to Walter Lord, free blacks joined with whites in digging entrenchments to protect Washington.[44] Yet, in truth, and again to the shame of Madison's unprepared administration, the entrenchments at Washington
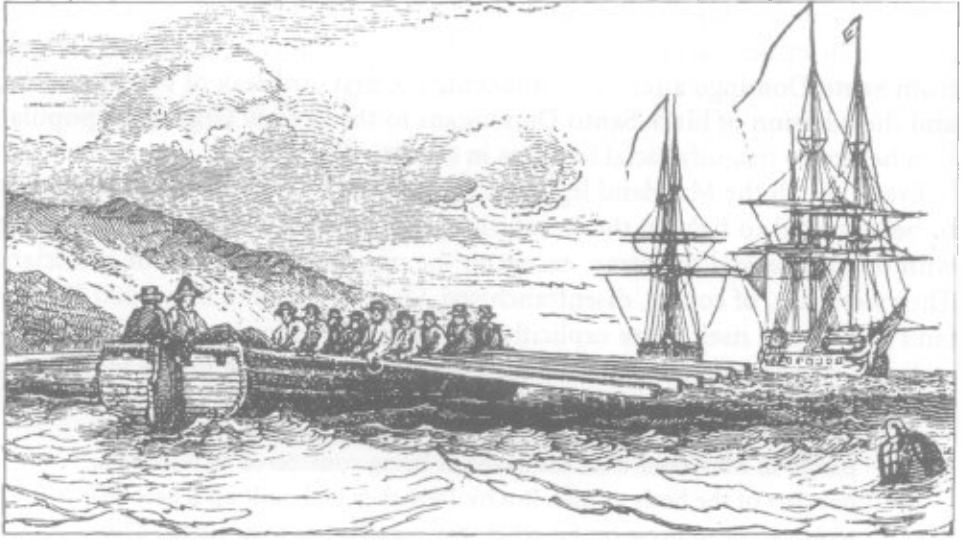
British landing party in the Chesapeake tidewater. (Courtesy Donald G. Shomette.)

were minimal and mainly confined to a small earthwork at Bladensburg, above the Eastern Branch of the Potomac, which the Americans used for a six-gun battery to command the bridge stormed by the British.

Defending Baltimore

The defenses at Baltimore were much more formidable due to the fore-thought of Major General Samuel Smith, a local merchant and U.S. senator who had much to lose if the British sacked the city. It is significant that, in contrast to General Andrew Jackson at New Orleans, and perhaps not wanting to upset the status quo, Smith did not seek to include free blacks in the militia, though he did welcome their help in constructing the mile-long line of entrenchments that protected the eastern approaches to the city, stretching from Bel Air Road in the north, south to Harris Creek in the harbor.

George Douglass, a local merchant serving as a private in the Baltimore Fencibles, wrote on September 3, 1814, to his friend Henry Wheaton, editor of the *National Advocate* in New York, stating that white and black together were working on the defenses, determined that Baltimore would not suffer the same fate as Washington:

> All hearts and hands have cordially united in the common cause. . . . Last Sunday, at least a mile of entrenchments with suitable batteries were raised as if by magic, at which are now working all sorts of people, old and young, white and black, in so much, before Saturday next we expect every vulnerable point will be strongly fortified.[45]

At the time, as shown by the city directory for 1810, Baltimore had a sizable population of free blacks. There also had been an influx of blacks and whites from Santo Domingo after 1793, following the first outbreak of violence there, and the addition of black Santo Domingans to the already large black population helped to magnify racial tensions in the city.[46]

Even though the Maryland legislature had voted in 1781 to allow free blacks to be recruited to fight in the Revolution, they were now barred from serving with the militia and the army, except in the capacities of servant or musician. They were also, of course, disenfranchised. Quarles stated that by 1800 "Maryland committed itself more explicitly than ever before to slavery and to a subordinate role for the free black." However, blacks faced the future with hope, knowing that not all whites wanted to see blacks downtrodden:

> Blacks in Maryland were dismayed at being considered as outsiders, not part of the body politic. But by 1800 they had built up a new determination to press on for what they regarded as their rights. They had faith in the future. . . . They believed that the egalitarian mood of the Revolutionary War period would never be wholly lost and that America would eventually right itself and do justice to them and to the high principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the preamble to the Constitution.[47]

Perhaps because they were aware of the economic opportunities afforded to them in Baltimore, African Americans, both freemen and slaves, worked together to help save the city by helping to build the necessary defenses.

The British landed at North Point, fifteen miles from Baltimore, on the morning of September 12. As General Ross rode toward the city at the head of his troops, he was mortally wounded in a skirmish with Brigadier General John Stricker's advance forces. Colonel Arthur Brooke assumed command and met Stricker's main troops in a battle near Bear Creek. Brooke won the battle—but at a cost. The next morning, September 13, after bivouacking for the night on the battlefield, the British continued their march toward the city. Shortly after dawn, the Royal Navy began to bombard Fort McHenry at the entrance to Baltimore harbor.

Present among the six hundred regulars deployed in the fort's moat to prevent an attempted landing by Royal Marines was a certain Private William Williams. Williams, whose real name was Frederick or Frederick Hall, was a slave who months earlier had escaped from the Prince George's County tobacco plantation of Benjamin Oden. Instead of seeking the sanctuary of a non-slave state to the north, the fugitive had taken the seemingly astounding step of volunteering as a soldier in the 38th U.S. Infantry. Possibly the runaway, described in a reward notice of May 18 as "a bright mulatto. . . so fair as to show freckles," could pass as a white man. On enlisting in Baltimore on April

> # Forty Dollars Reward
>
> For apprehending and securing in jail so that I get him again,
>
> ### NEGRO FREDERICK;
>
> Somtimes calls himself FREDERICK HALL a bright mulatto ; straight and well made ; 21 years old ; 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high, with a short chub nose and so fair as to show freckles, he has no scars or marks of any kind that is re-collected : his clothing when he left home, two months since, was home made cotton shirts, jacket and Pantaloons of cotton and yarn twilled, all white. It is probable he may be in Baltimore, having a relation there, a house servant to a Mr. Williams, by the name of Frank who is also a mulatto, but not so fair as Frederick.
>
> BENJAMIN ODEN.
> Prince George's County, May 12th,
> may 16   d4t

Reward notice placed by Benjamin Oden of Prince George's County for the apprehension of "Negro Frederick" who became Private William Williams of the 38th U.S. Infantry and who helped defend Fort McHenry in September 1814. Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser, *May 18, 1814. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

14, the twenty-one-year-old young man received an enlistment bounty of fifty dollars and a private's monthly wage of eight dollars.[48]

As the bombardment began, a rocket ship, schooner, and five bomb ships began to hurl cannonballs, 200-pound bombs, and rockets toward the brick and earth fort. An answering fusillade ordered by fort commander Major George Armistead compelled the schooner and rocket ship to retire. However, the bomb ships, after retreating a safe distance, continued the bombardment with but short intermission for twenty-three hours until after dawn on September 14. Sometime during this terrifying rain of metal, Private William Williams had "his leg blown off by a cannonball." He died some months later at the Baltimore Public Hospital.[49]

During the bombardment, African-American sailors manned batteries that supported Fort McHenry. Unlike the army and militia, there existed no proscription against recruiting African Americans for service in the navy or in Commodore Barney's flotilla. Although Barney himself had been severely wounded at Bladensburg, his flotillamen worked the batteries of Forts Babcock, Covington, and Lazaretto that rendered invaluable assistance to the defenders of Fort McHenry. Other black sailors stood ready to work both shipborne cannons and land batteries for the defense of the city should the Royal Navy force a way past the star fort. Probably 10 to 25 percent of the sailors were African-American.[50]

The defenses of Hampstead Hill (now Patterson Park), manned by around 15,000 militiamen, literally bristled with cannons. In the face of these daunting defenses, Colonel Brooke, on receiving word from Admiral Cochrane that the Royal Navy had failed to "reduce" Fort McHenry, decided to withdraw rather than risk an attack.

During their retreat to the ships, the British not only looted area houses and burned one house but reportedly carried off one free black farmhand who supposedly did not want to go, according to an account that was printed in the *Baltimore Sun* some decades later: "One free colored man, Joe Gale, a carpenter, employed on the farm, boastfully declared he was a free man and no slave, was taken prisoner to Halifax and did not get back until peace was declared."[51] Is it possible that British troops, angry that their commander shied away from sacking Baltimore, made a prisoner of this African American because he refused their offer of "freedom"?

A Life in Canada?

What of the fate of the three to five thousand former slaves—men, women, and children—shipped out of the Chesapeake region by the British? Although a few of them ended up in Bermuda, notably the ex-Colonial Marines who were rewarded with jobs in the Ireland Island British naval base and a number who were sent to the West Indies, it seems the majority were sent to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Cassell relates:

> The single largest group of black exiles was deposited in Halifax in the early months of 1815. Over two-thousand former slaves with no resources of any kind were left standing on the docks. Penniless, jobless, many of them sick, the refugees were immediately reduced to seeking public relief. What eventually happened to them is something of a mystery. At least a portion established themselves as farmers or domestics while others may have migrated to the West Indies.[52]

Researchers in Canada have gone far toward solving the "mystery" that puzzled

Cassell, although the fate of the former slaves turns out to be bleaker than the scenario he envisioned. John N. Grant and Robin W. Winks relate that the African Americans who were sent to Nova Scotia as a result of the War of 1812 actually comprised the third wave of black immigrants to land in the Canadian province over a thirty-four-year period. The first blacks were the "black Loyalists" who fled during the American Revolution, notably several thousand former slaves from New York who had fled to the British and were shipped out after the British defeat at Yorktown in 1781. The second wave were Maroons who were exiled from Jamaica in 1796 after waging a war against white settlers there. Although both of these earlier groups suffered from the bureaucratic inefficiencies of the British Colonial Office, they did get the chance to get out of the forbidding climate of Nova Scotia, since projects were instituted to give any who wanted the chance to emigrate to Sierra Leone in Africa in 1792 and 1800.[53]

The ex-slaves who landed in Halifax during the War of 1812, dubbed in contrast to the other two groups the "Refugee Negroes," mostly missed this chance to resettle in a more conducive climate. Except for a handful who were resettled in Trinidad in 1820, the remainder of the exiles lost the chance to emigrate due to miscommunications with the whites who talked of resettling them. The former Chesapeake slaves also suffered more deprivations and misery than the first two groups, because they were less accustomed to the cold weather than the New York Loyalists and because they lacked the skills of the Maroons, most having been field hands back in the Chesapeake tidewater. British governmental bungling made their situation even worse. A shipment of three thousand pairs of shoes and other clothing intended to help them through their first winter was misdirected to Bermuda. It took twelve months for the shipment to reach them, leaving the miserable exiles to shiver through their first winter in the bitter Nova Scotia climate without new clothes.[54]

In 1816, when some of the Refugee Negroes were given land by the British government, the land turned out to be worthless and stony, and the blacks did not know how to work it, particularly since it was frozen a large part of the year. The British government had not planned for the long-range support the new settlers would need. When the Earl of Dalhousie took over as governor in October 1816, the refugees were, he said, in "a state of starvation," having been left in a "deplorable condition" during the absence of the previous governor, and he urged that the legislature allow them provisions for at least another year. Dalhousie was hardly sympathetic to the woes of the new colonists. They must, he said, be "supported for many years" by the government, and he added haughtily, "little hope can be entertained of settling these people so as to provide for their families and wants. . . . Slaves by habit & education, no longer working under the dread of the lash, their idea of freedom is Idleness and they are altogether incapable of Industry." Dalhousie suggested that they be sent to Sierra Leone or the West Indies and even went so far as to suggest

that one solution would be to restore them to their masters in the United States![55]

The lot of these African Americans in Nova Scotia would not improve for the next few decades: hundreds died of disease and deprivation. A member of the Refugee Negroes made the following scourging statement: "I have felt my color is my pride and I should have suffered often the pain of being skinned alive could it make me white."[56] Descendants of the former Chesapeake Bay slaves still live in Nova Scotia.

"The Pride of Baltimore"

On the evening of April 8, 1815, Captain Thomas Boyle sailed his privateer *Chasseur* past the ramparts of Fort McHenry into Baltimore harbor. Boyle ordered the schooner's cannons to be fired to salute the fort that six months earlier had withstood the might of the Royal Navy. The citizens of the city acclaimed the *Chasseur* the "Pride of Baltimore."[57]

The *Chasseur* must have been a special source of pride to one of Boyle's gunners, the free black man George R. Roberts. The African-American seaman was on board the privateer on August 28, 1814, when Boyle issued his paper blockade of the British Isles, which he requested that the British post at Lloyd's Coffeehouse in London. Boyle's audacious proclamation was a spoof of the blockades of the U.S. coast that had been declared by British admirals Warren and Cochrane in the preceding eighteen months. During the *Chasseur*'s capture of the British schooner *St. Lawrence* on February 27, 1815, Roberts is said to have "displayed the most intrepid courage and daring."[58]

At the beginning of the war, Roberts had enlisted on board the Baltimore privateer *Sarah Ann* under the command of Captain Richard Moon. In October 1812 the *Sarah Ann* was captured by the enemy off the Bahamas. Six crewmen, including George Roberts, accused of being British subjects, were put on board ship for Jamaica. In a letter sent to the owners in Charleston, South Carolina, Captain Moon said he feared the men would "be tried for their lives." The privateer skipper rebutted the British charge that the sailors were not Americans. In regard to "George Robert [*sic*], a coloured man and seaman," he stated, "I know him to be native born of the United States. . . . He entered on board the *Sarah Ann* at Baltimore where he is married. . . ." The editor of *Niles' Register* reported that in retaliation for the British action, the Charleston cartel took twelve British prisoners from a prison ship "and put [them] into close confinement, to be detained as hostages."[59] No doubt this ploy worked. Certainly, the episode counts as one of the "hairbreath escapes" this brave African American experienced, as mentioned in his obituary in the Baltimore *Sun* following his death in January 1861 at his home in Canton at the reported age of ninety-five years.[60]

Indeed, in his waning years, as his nation teetered toward civil war, the

newspapermen of Baltimore noted that the aged George Roberts still felt proud to parade with the other "Old Defenders" of Baltimore. For he too had served.

NOTES

1. Frank A. Cassell, "Slaves of the Chesapeake Bay Area and the War of 1812," *Journal of Negro History*, 57 (April 1972): 144–155.

2. Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 482–511.

3. Cassell, "Slaves of the Chesapeake Bay Area," 155.

4. See Penelope Campbell, *Maryland in Africa: The Maryland State Colonization Society, 1831–1857* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971).

5. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of 1810, Prince George's County, Maryland.

6. Robert Ross to Elizabeth Ross, September 1, 1814. Quoted in Christopher T. George, "The Family Papers of Maj. Gen. Robert Ross, the Diary of Col. Arthur Brooke, and the British Attacks on Washington and Baltimore of 1814," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 88 (Fall 1993): 300–316. The British sack of the national capital forced Pennsylvania and New York to revise their state militia acts to allow the recruitment of "free men of color" in black combat units. See Gerard T. Altoff, *Amongst My Best Men: African-Americans and the War of 1812* (Put-in-Bay, Ohio: The Perry Group, 1996), 69–72.

7. See J. C. A. Stagg, *Mr. Madison's War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic, 1783–1830* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).

8. Scott S. Sheads, *The Rockets' Red Glare: The Maritime Defense of Baltimore in 1814* (Centreville, Md.: Tidewater Publishers, 1986), 60–61.

9. Charles B. Brooks, *The Siege of New Orleans* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), 51, 57–58, 87–88. It is curious that both Andrew Jackson and Samuel Smith were controversial figures. They were the type of men who either inspired love or hate. Although Smith never reached the political heights of Jackson, he did aspire to national office, having to settle for serving twenty-three years as a U.S. Senator; he also was elected mayor of Baltimore and served until his death in 1839 at age eighty-seven. Both Jackson and Smith were accused of arrogance and high-handedness. Although these commanders seemingly made careers of creating enemies, as the architects of plans to save American cities from the British, they got the job done.

10. Proclamation of the Earl of Dunmore, November 7, 1775. Broadside, Tracy W. McGregor Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville.

11. "Lord Dunmore's Ethiopian Regiment" in Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1973), 19–32.

12. Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution*, 31–32. Ironically, as governor, Dunmore had withheld his signature from a bill against the slave trade.

13. *Maryland Journal*, July 13 and August 24, 1779. Although the British offer of freedom to Chesapeake Bay slaves was renewed by Benedict Arnold, then a British general, during

his 1781 raid through Virginia, there is evidence that his intentions were ambiguous at best. A letter of Arnold's states that he intended to return Negroes to their masters. This letter is discussed in James Sidbury, "Gabriel's World: Race Relations in Richmond, Virginia, 1750–1810" (Ph.D. diss., The Johns Hopkins University, 1991), 6.

14. Lord Bathurst to Colonel Sir Thomas Sidney Beckwith, March 20, 1813. Thomas Brisbane Papers, 1813–1815, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

15. Cassell, "Slaves of the Chesapeake Bay Area," 146.

16. Charles Ball, *Slavery in the United States: A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Charles Ball, a Black Man* (1837, repr.; New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 469.

17. *National Intelligencer*, April 30 and May 1, 1813.

18. Ball, *Slavery in the United States*, 471–473.

19. Captain John Barrie, R.N., to Admiral Sir John B. Warren, November 14, 1813, Admiralty Archives, Adm. 1/505, 131–133, Public Record Office, London.

20. William Stanhope Lovell, *Personal Narrative of Events from 1799 to 1815* (London, 1879), 152.

21. Cochrane Proclamation, April 2, 1814, Admiralty Archives, Adm. 1/508, 579.

22. Cochrane to Bathurst, July 14, 1814, War Office 1/141, Public Record Office, London; Cochrane to Cockburn, July 1, 1814, Cochrane Papers 2346, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.

23. Cockburn to Cochrane, April 2, 1814, Cochrane Papers 2574.

24. Cockburn to Cochrane, May 19, 1814, Admiralty Archives, Adm. 1/507, 59–60.

25. Captain James Ross to Cockburn, May 29, 1814, Admiralty Archives, Adm. 1/507, 68–70; Captain William Baines to Cockburn, June 19, 1814, ibid., Adm. 1/507, 81–86; Cockburn to Cochrane, June 23, 1814, ibid., Adm. 1/507, 57–58; Cockburn to Cochrane, August 27, 1814, ibid., Adm. 1/506, 609–612. Interestingly, at New Orleans General Andrew Jackson used the same argument as Admiral Cochrane for using African-American troops: the blacks were "inured to the Southern climate and would make excellent soldiers." Jackson to Louisiana Governor William C. C. Claiborne, September 21, 1814, in John Spencer Bassett, ed., *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, Vol. 2, May 1, 1814–December 31, 1819 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1927), 56.

26. Cochrane to Admiral John Croker, September 28, 1814, Admiralty Archives, Adm. 1/507, 248.

27. Virginia Senate Journal, January 22, 1813, January 24 and 25, 1814, Class A.1a (reel 2), Microfilm Collection of Early State Records, Library of Congress.

28. Cassell, "Slaves of the Chesapeake Bay Area," 150.

29. Virginia House Journal, January 8, 11, 17, 26, and 27, 1814, Class A.16 (reel 6), Microfilm Collection of Early State Records, Library of Congress.

30. Governor Levin Winder to General Caleb Hawkins, August 27, 1813, Maryland Governor's Letterbook, Class E.2 (reel 4), Library of Congress.

31. *Richmond Enquirer*, July 30 and October 8, 1813.

32. *National Intelligencer*, April 6, 1813.

33. Margaret Bayard Smith to Mrs. Jane Kirkpatrick, July 20, 1813, in Gaillard Hunt, ed., *The First Forty Years of Washington Society* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906),

89–91. Around the time of the British invasion, rumors circulated of a slave conspiracy in Frederick, forty miles northwest of Washington, with several leaders already arrested (*New York Evening Post*, August 22 and 24, 1814; *Richmond Enquirer*, August 27, 1814).

34. Jordan, *White Over Black*, 375–402.

35. James Sidbury, "Gabriel's World," 180–184.

36. Ibid., 20.

37. Ibid., 5, 185–187.

38. *Virginia Gazette*, December 11, 1800.

39. Jordan, *White Over Black*, 400–426.

40. Charles J. Ingersoll, *Historical Sketch of the Second War between the United States of America, and Great Britain. Vol. 2, Embracing the Events of 1814* (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1849), 207–208. Although the rumors proved for the most part to be unfounded, there were certainly blacks and others who took advantage of the chaos in the capital, notably looting by a "rabble" at the president's mansion after the Madisons fled. A slave, Nace Rhodes, later returned some of the President's silver urns, trays, and a candelabra, for which he was rewarded five dollars (Nace Rhodes, letter to "dear sir," April 24, 1815, District Commissioners' letters received, National Archives).

41. Diary of Colonel Arthur Brooke, quoted in Christopher T. George, "The Family Papers of Maj. Gen. Robert Ross, the Diary of Col. Arthur Brooke, and the British Attacks on Washington and Baltimore of 1814," 300–316.

42. Report of General Tobias E. Stansbury, November 15, 1814, *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, 1:560–562.

43. George R. Gleig, *The Campaigns of the British Army at Washington and New Orleans, 1814–1815* (London: John Murray, 1861), 80.

44. Walter Lord, *The Dawn's Early Light* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), 76–77.

45. George Douglass to Henry Wheaton, September 3, 1814, Vertical File, Fort McHenry Library. Another anonymous observer commented: "White and black are all at work together. You'll see a master and his slave digging side by side. There is no distinction whatsoever." (*New York Evening Post*, September 5, 1814).

46. William Joseph Fletcher, "The Contribution of the Faculty of Saint Mary's Seminary to the Solution of Baltimore's San Domingan Negro Problems, 1793–1852." M.A. thesis, the Johns Hopkins University, 1951. Also, Walter Charlton Hartridge, "The Refugees from the Island of St. Domingo in Maryland," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 38 (June 1943): 103–122. The 1820 Baltimore city directory lists 220 free blacks. In comparison, New Orleans had around six hundred free blacks, probably more than any other city in the United States. See Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 64. Moreover, many of the New Orleans African Americans were well-to-do Creoles or expatriate Haitians, in comparison to Baltimore's free blacks, who were artisans, laborers, and the like.

47. Benjamin Quarles, "'Freedom Fettered': Blacks in the Constitutional Era in Maryland, 1776–1810—An Introduction," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 84 (Winter 1989): 299–304.

48. Scott S. Sheads, "A Black Soldier Defends Fort McHenry, 1814," *Military Collector & Historian*, 41 (Spring 1989): 20–21. Also see Altoff, *Amongst My Best Men*, 126–127. Slave

escape notice, *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertizer,* May 18, 1814.

49. Sheads, *The Rockets' Red Glare,* 91–102. Altoff, *Amongst My Best Men,* 127.

50. Altoff, *Amongst My Best Men,* 127–128.

51. "Baltimore's Proud Day. The Battle of North Point. A Maryland Lady's Reminiscences," *Baltimore Sun,* September 12, 1888.

52. Cassell, "Slaves of the Chesapeake Bay Area," 153–154. The former Colonial Marines apparently later were given land in Upper Canada and, according to a British report of 1840, they and their descendants were alleged to be "happy and loyal settlers." *United Service Journal,* 4 (May 1840): 27.

53. John N. Grant, "Black Immigrants into Nova Scotia, 1776–1815," *Journal of Negro History,* 48 (July 1973): 253–270; "The Refugee Negroes" in Robin W. Winks, *The Blacks in Canada: A History* (Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 1971), 114–141.

54. Winks, *The Blacks in Canada,* 116 and 124–125.

55. Dalhousie to Bathurst, December 29, 1816. CO217/98, Colonial Office Records, Public Record Office, London.

56. Lenore DeWolf Rathbun, "First Freed Slaves at Five Mile Plains and Vicinity," typescript manuscript in the Public Record Office of Nova Scotia, written in 1950 from interviews with great-grandchildren of African-American settlers and diaries of the author's parents and grandparents, quoted in Winks, *The Blacks in Canada,* 114.

57. *Niles' Weekly Register,* April 15, 1815.

58. *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertizer,* January 16, 1861. For more on Boyle and the *Chasseur,* see Fred W. Hopkins, Jr., *Tom Boyle, Master Privateer* (Cambridge, Md.: Tidewater Publishers, 1976).

59. *Niles' Weekly Register,* November 14, 1812.

60. *Baltimore Sun,* January 16, 1861.