

pose of Keeping the Public Records, whereon the Estates of many of his Majesty's Subjects of this County, and elsewhere, depend; which are thereby, and from its lonesome Situation, exposed to the open Attempts of malicious ill-designing or wanton People being executed without Alarm.

That the said Town of Joppa is on a low Peninsula, the Isthmus into which is so miry, as to be often nearly impassable, especially after high Tides, or heavy Rains, which overflowing the Isthmus, reduce the Situation of the Town to an Island: From whence and from the Want of navigable Water up to the said Town, and for many Miles below it, other than for Shallops and smaller Vessels; and also from the Length the said Town has been laid out, and its little Improvement, or Increase of Inhabitants, Your Petitioners cannot flatter themselves with the most distant Hopes of any favourable Alteration therein.

That the County-Goal, from its original ill Construction, has been a continual Expence to the County, and although large Quantities of the Public Tobacco have been frequently levied and expended thereon, hath always proved defective and insufficient to restrain the Attempts of Criminals and other Prisoners; great Numbers of whom have escaped to the Loss and Vexation of the Sheriffs and Suitors, and not a little to the Discredit of the County; and there being no Yard or Windows to the said Prison, other than Windows in the Front, and no Draft or Air through the same, such Prisoners as do not escape, suffer additional Misery from the Loss of their Health.

These Considerations, may it please Your Excellency and Honors, your Petitioners humbly hope, may justify their present Application for a new Court-House and Prison. But when it is added, That from the Scarcity of Houses and necessary Accommodation in the said Town of Joppa, the People, who attend the Courts, are for the most Part obliged to ride by Night to their Houses or Country Neighbours for Lodging, in all Weathers, whereby they are often exposed to the Danger of Catching violent Colds, Pleurisies, and other Disorders; early Adjournments and late Meetings of the Courts are unavoidable, and the Public Business Greatly retarded: And when it is also considered, that the Town of Baltimore is free from the Inconveniences to which Joppa is subject; that there are therein Houses sufficient to accommodate, with Ease and in Plenty, much greater Numbers of People than are used to attend our Courts; and from the Number of Inhabitants residing therein, a Court-House and prison would be better secured against the Attempts aforesaid: That the said Town is situate on a fine River, navigable for large Ships, and within a few Years past has greatly encreased in Trade, and is daily increasing therein and in Buildings, Inhabitants, Merchants, Mechanics and others; insomuch that the