

form. They are nine in number. It is denied that the court house is too small and is insecure, and it is intimated that any damages that it may have suffered in the past have been instigated by designing persons interested in removal; that Joppa is centrally located and Baltimore Town is at the end of the county; that the road complained of over the isthmus is short and can be readily repaired; that the jail is strong, and that a yard and wall can be easily added; that there are sufficient accommodations in the town for the justices, and that those who resort to neighboring houses do so to avoid expense at the inns. There should be due consideration for the interests of the descendants of the ancient settlers in this section. The center of justice should be as near as possible to all, and suitors, witnesses, and jurymen from the Bush River and Gunpowder River neighborhoods should not be required to travel 50 miles to court; that it would be better to abandon a suit for a debt of £10 than to incur the expense of traveling to Baltimore. It is asserted that the agitation for removal comes largely from Baltimore innkeepers and from those interested in its foreign trade. The petition closes with the statement that the volume of business in a county now containing 8256 taxables cannot be carried on with dispatch at one court house, and that as in a few years a division of the county will be unavoidable, the removal of the court house should not take place before a division has been made. It may be added that in 1773 Harford County was cut off from Baltimore County.

The act under which Baltimore replaced Joppa as the county seat, from its title obviously does not give the principal reason for the change, which was the shift of population. The preamble states that the removal was advisable because the Court House at Joppa was considerably too small for transacting the public business and was out of repair, and that the building was "slight and insecure for keeping the Publick Records"; the county jail ill constructed and a continual expense and so defective that escapes were frequent; the small number of houses in the town insufficient to accommodate those attending court, thus causing early adjournments and late meetings of the court. The act created a commission of seven Baltimore County men, headed by John Beale Bordley, a member of the Upper House and Clerk of the Baltimore County Court, and associated with him the three delegates from that County who had voted for removal, John Ridgely, John Moale and Robert Adair, together with Robert Alexander, William Smith and Andrew Buchanan, prominent residents of Baltimore Town who were not members of the Assembly. These commissioners were to lay off so much as was required of the street called Calvert at its upper part next to Jones Falls, and to acquire from the owners by purchase or condemnation at a reasonable price not more than one and a half acres, and to erect thereon a court house and public prison with a good yard. Subscriptions had already been promised towards the purchase of the land and erecting the buildings, and the Commission was empowered to collect the subscriptions promised. The balance required was to be raised by a public levy not exceeding 300,000 pounds of tobacco (£2500). Until the court house was completed, court was to be held in the market house. The Clerk of the Court was to remove the records to the Baltimore Market House, or to some other place