

## 1792

The performance of George Washington as the first President was generally well-received and there was no serious effort to challenge him for the nation's highest office in 1792. However, the country was beginning to see political divisions developing and solidifying at the national as well as state and local levels of government by the second presidential election year. The financial policies and political philosophy of the Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, conflicted with those of the first Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, and delineated the political battle lines.<sup>19</sup>

The lack of competition for President and acceptance of the new Constitution meant the contest for presidential electors in 1792 received considerably less attention from Maryland voters than the first election, 1789. There was a greater number of candidates for elector but the race was conducted without strong partisan effort or burning issues. Reapportionment based on the 1790 census had given Maryland 10 electoral votes which the General Assembly provided would be cast by the six highest candidates from the Western Shore and the four highest candidates from the Eastern Shore who would again be elected on a statewide or general ticket basis.<sup>20</sup>

A total of 9,143 votes were cast for 49 individuals during the election conducted from November 11-14, 1792. The leading candidate for the Western Shore positions was Alexander Contee Hanson who received 898 votes. This was far below the 5,595 votes he received in 1789 as a member of the Federalist elector ticket and 6,766 less than the highest vote getter in the first election. The most votes for the Eastern Shore positions were garnered by William Richardson whose 806 votes were likewise far less than the 5,406 votes he received as a "Federalist ticket" member in 1789. The list of those receiving votes for presidential elector represents a cross-section of local and state political leaders. Those persons elected either received very strong support from activist subdivisions or had a fairly consistent statewide showing. (See Appendix A, Table 2.) A "Continental" ticket headed by Governor Thomas S. Lee based on geographic representation was heralded by the Annapolis press but only three of its suggested candidates were elected.<sup>21</sup> The relative disinterest in this election is manifested by the low turnouts in several populous counties. The highest number of votes received in Baltimore County was 14 and only 37 were cast in

## 1792 ELECTION SUMMARY

Candidate (Party)	Popular Vote		Electoral Vote	
	Md.	U.S.	Md.	U.S.
John Adams (F)		(not available)	8	77
Aaron Burr		"		1
George Clinton		"		50
Thomas Jefferson		"		4
George Washington (F)	898	"	8	132