

By 1840 Maryland had a fully functioning two party political system and direct election of the Governor and State Senators was initiated in 1838. Although the Whigs had controlled the legislature, fueled by anti-Jackson sentiment, during most of the 1830s the reforms of 1838 brought a Democratic resurgence. The first elected Governor in Maryland was William Grason, a Democrat and former Jacksonian leader on the Eastern Shore. He was joined in 1839 by a Democratic majority in the House of Delegates even though the State Senate would remain controlled by the Whigs until 1851. Thus, both parties entered the 1840 presidential election with a solid footing in the state.

The Harrison/Van Buren rematch ushered in a decade of grassroots political activity which highlighted parades and picnics. The campaign started early with the Whigs organizing a "Grand National Procession" in Baltimore held simultaneously with the Democratic convention. On the morning of May 4, 1840, a round of cannon fire started a day of parades, speeches and a huge picnic at the Canton Race Track. Featured were orations by national Whig leaders including Henry Clay and Daniel Webster and a huge Harrison parade ball which reportedly had been rolled all the way to Baltimore from Allegany County.<sup>49</sup> It was probably difficult to duplicate this campaign kick-off but enthusiasm remained high through the November elections.<sup>50</sup>

This time Maryland's support of the Whigs conformed to national sentiment. Harrison's 52.88 percent of the national vote was only a single percent less than the Maryland margin which Harrison achieved out of a total vote of 62,292 which represented almost 85 percent of the state's eligible voters. The Democrats held onto Baltimore City by a mere 30 votes and, in addition, carried only newly formed Carroll County and Baltimore County. However, with Van Buren's departure the Democrats in Maryland no longer had to defend unpopular Jackson policies and could concentrate on statewide issues without distraction in other elections.

#### 1840 ELECTION SUMMARY

Candidate (Party)	Popular Vote		Electoral Vote	
	Md.	U.S.	Md.	U.S.
Martin Van Buren (D)	28,759	1,128,854		60
Wm. H. Harrison (W)	33,533	1,275,390	10	234

#### 1844

One month after his inauguration, President Harrison died of pneumonia thereby elevating to the nation's highest office Vice President John Tyler of Virginia. Although he desired to serve another term, President Tyler was denied renomination at the Whig convention held in Baltimore on May 1, 1844. Tyler, a former Democrat, had open differences with Congressional Whigs which failed to heal by the expiration of his term.<sup>51</sup>