

spot where the Battle Monument now stands, and continued till the new Court House was built in 1808; the latter, of stone, was near St. Paul's lane, and stood till the erection of the present county Jail, in 1800.

In 1769, an association, aided by a general subscription, procured a fire engine, at an expense of upwards of \$250; and took the name of the "Mechanical Company." This was the first engine in the place; and the association which procured it may be regarded as the germ of the present extended and efficient organization of companies for extinguishing fires.

In 1773, about eighty acres of Plowman's, Philpot's and Fell's lands were added to the east of the town. An alms-house was erected, and work provided for the poor. On the 20th of August, Mr. Wm. Goddard commenced the first newspaper, a weekly, under the title of the "Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser." Before this, it was the custom to take the papers from, and send advertisements to, Annapolis and Philadelphia. Soon after, proposals were issued for a circulating library, but the plan failed. Theatrical performances were about this time presented to the inhabitants, in a warehouse on the corner of Frederick and Baltimore streets; but a small theatre was afterwards erected in Water street, and the performances continued till the revolution. The increasing trade and intercourse, at this period, induced the establishment of a line of stages and packets, by the head of Elk, to and from Philadelphia.

When the revolutionary crisis came on, as Annapolis was the capital of the province, the stamps and the teas, upon which duty was to be raised, were sent to that city. There is no doubt, however, that, had they been sent to this place instead of that, their reception would have been resisted with equal energy. On the arrival, in 1774, of the news that the port of Boston had been closed, a meeting was promptly held, and a committee appointed to correspond with the neighboring colonies. Non-exportation resolves were afterwards entered into; collections were made for the distressed Bostonians; and the most decided measures taken to manifest the patriotic zeal of the citizens. Several companies were formed, and great exertions were made to procure arms and ammunition.

Early in the year 1775, there were in the town, 564 houses, and 5,934 inhabitants. In the course of this year, Mr. John Dunlap established a weekly paper, called "Dunlap's Maryland Gazette." A battery was commenced on Whetstone Point, and three massive iron chains, passing through floating blocks, were stretched across the river, leaving a narrow passage only, on the side next the fort. In 1776, the members of the Convention authorized the inhabitants of Baltimore to choose two delegates, to represent the town, exclusive of the four for the county; and on this election there appear to have been 472 votes taken. The population of the Point, about the same time, was 821. On the 22d of July, the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed at the Court House, with great rejoicings. In consequence of the possession of Philadelphia by the British, Congress assembled in Baltimore on the 26th of December of this year. They occupied Mr. Jacob Fite's house, on the south-east corner of Baltimore and Liberty streets, which was long afterwards known as "Congress Hall."

In 1778, foreign goods having become scarce, numerous manufactories of articles which had been prohibited in the colonies, were established in or near the town. Hitherto, the merchants of Baltimore had been obliged to obtain registers, and to enter and clear vessels at Annapolis; but in 1780, a Custom House was opened, and the naval officer, Thomas Sollers, was authorized to grant registers for vessels here. In one week in May, there entered one brig, from France; one ship, three brigs, and five schooners, from the West Indies.