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The
Maryland Historical Society

Sir:

The regular Monthly Meeting of the Society will be held at its Home on the evening of Monday, the twelfth of February, nineteen hundred and thirty-four at eight-fifteen o'clock.

A paper will be read by Mr. James E. Hancock entitled, "Some New Facts About Fort McHenry".

Immediately upon the adjournment of the Monthly Meeting, the Annual Meeting will be held, at which an Election of Officers and Standing Committees will take place and Reports of Officers and Committees will be submitted.

There is enclosed herewith a List of Nominations made at the Regular Monthly Meeting of January eighth, nineteen hundred and thirty-four, under the provisions of Art. III, Section 9, of the Constitution.

Respectfully,

JAMES E. HANCOCK,

Recording Secretary.

at Whetstone Point to prevent an entrance to town from
 an expedition ^{upon the town} attack by a part of the British Fleet that was
 spent in the Chesapeake. As the ~~British~~ ^{British} ~~fleet~~ ^{fleet} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~not~~ ^{not}
 strong as the ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~not~~ ^{not} ~~with~~ ^{with} the two batteries
 that were erected at Gill's Point on the ~~Gilbert~~ ^{Gilbert} ~~side~~ ^{side}
 other side of the harbor, ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~drawn~~ ^{drawn} by volunteer artillerymen
 from Baltimore and were regarded as a ~~well~~ ^{well} ~~protected~~ ^{protected} position for Baltimore
 during the Revolution.

apart from its ^{importance} ~~value~~ as the ~~infantry~~ ^{infantry} of the Star
 of Hope Gun, ~~it~~ ^{it} ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~not~~ ^{not} ~~merely~~ ^{merely} ~~a~~ ^a ~~small~~ ^{small} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~unimportant~~ ^{unimportant}
 military monument but a ~~well~~ ^{well} ~~known~~ ^{known} ~~example~~ ^{example} of the skill
 of the artisans of this period.

harbor ~~between Whetstone Point and the other shore~~ ↘
suddenly threw up a battery of 18 guns on Whetstone
Point, which was further strengthened as the vessel ~~prisoner~~
~~The Maryland Ship "Defense"~~ was being built in Baltimore
at the time

Two other batteries were mounted at Hills Point
on the opposite side of the harbor to fortify the
Maryland Ship "Defense" which was being built in port
until she could be properly armed or manned when
she sailed out against the enemy and captured & captured
her prizes & forced her from the bay. absolutely

Whetstone Point was ~~a Maryland fort~~ ^{continued as was}
a Maryland fort until 1793, when the legislature

passed ^{the following} a resolution
"Whereas The United States may think it necessary to
erect a fort, arsenal or other military work or buildings
on Whetstone Point for the public defence, therefore
it resolved, That upon the application of the President
of the United States to the Governor for permission
to erect a fort, arsenal or other military work on the
said Point for the purpose aforesaid, the Governor
shall as may regard the same, with the consent of
the owner of the soil"

In March 1794, ^a request was made by ^{Genl Knox}
Governor the Secretary of War to have cartridges & implements
made for the eleven 18 pounders at Whetstone Point for
the purpose of fortifying the harbor of Baltimore, and
Major J. D. Blinck Rivardi

was appointed by President Washington for the purpose
of to examine the fortification of Gettison
Major Rivard drew up ~~the~~ ^{the} plans ~~as he~~ to
strengthen the old work by ~~filling~~ ^{filling} or made estimates
for additional fortifications, but very apparently when
the war began enticed the Federal Government was not
so keen about the appropriation for it, but the public
spirit of Gettison kept it alive. Subscriptions were
taken up among the merchants & ship owners of the city
and in 1798, Major ^{Conrad} was directed by the
then Secretary of War James McHenry to examine the
existing works at Whetstone Point and report to a
Committee of Gettison Citizens what additions he
considered necessary for the protection of Gettison Harbor.
~~At this time, the fortification was named Fort~~
~~McHenry~~ The fortification was the name Fort
McHenry in honor of the Secretary of War and in July 1799
the government was determined to man the fort, but
on July 24th 1799, ~~when John Adams was President~~
Washington's successor had been inaugurated, the
Gettison Committee reported to their citizens
"On an reference by the Secretary of War that the
finances of the United States did not admit of a
larger appropriation than \$20000 towards the ~~exp~~
fortifications to be erected in our City and Major Conrad
was enjoined to keep this circumstance in view in preparing
the proposed new works. - Thus did your committee
see the economy of the government of variance with the
safety of the city. The latter was too serious and too

Fort McHenry.

Whetstone Point - the site of Fort McHenry - was the
 extremity of a long gracefully tapering peninsula that ran
 out from the heart of old Baltimore or divided the main
 branch of the Patuxent River from the ~~North East branch~~ ^{Bay or harbor}
 around which Baltimore was settled. It was first patented
 by ~~Charles Carroll~~ ^{John Carroll} July 24th 1661, by Charles Carroll who
 afterwards receded it and on June 2nd 1702 another patent
 for Whetstone was taken out by James Carroll as by Act of the
~~Assembly of Maryland~~ ^{of Maryland} April 19th 1706, by ~~Act of the~~
~~Assembly of Maryland~~ it was made a town by Act of
 the Assembly of Maryland. Probably because of the exposure of the
 point to easterly storms the ~~shippers~~ ^{the shore} ~~point~~
 shows of the harbor behind it in Baltimore ~~the Whetstone Point~~
 was little used by us as a port of entry or it was eventually
 absorbed into Baltimore which lay upon more sheltered
 shores behind it. The land of Whetstone however contained
 considerable iron ore and in 1715, Carroll sold it to
~~rights to~~ John Giles, who in turn sold the mining rights to
 the Principio Company an English Corporation - in 1727, whose
 holdings were confiscated by the State of Maryland during
 the Revolutionary War.

Early in the Revolution the local Committee of Safety
 recognized the value of Whetstone Point as the most
 important point of defense for Baltimore ~~to~~ ^{as in}
 March 1776 they ordered a ~~town~~ ^{the} ~~or~~ ^{chain} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~fortification~~
 by ~~trusty one~~ ^{Gunpowder} ~~which~~ ^{guns} should cross the narrow neck
 of the harbor entrance and a battery of 18 guns was mounted

are know the interest of his fellow citizens for proper local
 defense, he directed Major ~~Lawson~~ Lawson to examine
 "the existing works at Whetstone Point & report to the committee of
 Galtimer Citizens what additions he considered necessary for the
 protection of Galtimer Harbor". Objections to the old works & the
 proposals for strengthening them, Major Lawson would not risk his
 professional reputation by offering them and submitted his plans
 for proper defense. The Senate of New Hampshire had advised
 the Committee that the finances of the government would not admit
 of an appropriation of more than 20000 for the defense of Galtimer.
 On July 24th 1799, the Committee made a public address the
 following public address. "thus did your Committee see the
 economy of the government at variance with the safety of the city -
 as your Committee recommends, at every hazard, recommend that
 the fortification should be executed on the most approved or
 efficient plan. In doing this they have relied upon on the well
 known liberality, patriotism & zeal of their fellow citizens to
 supply the deficiency. The Senate of New has complied with
 their recommendation & under the direction of your Committee
 the proper quantity of land has been purchased & considerable
 progress is made in the necessary work. Mr. Foreman, the
 present engineer & superintendent, in whose skill, industry &
 economy your Committee has perfect confidence, has improved
 upon the plan of Major Lawson and devotes his whole time to
 its completion. In the meantime the public funds are
 nearly exhausted. But these works of defense, which all
 must admit to be proper even in the most of peace &
 indispensable in time of war, remain incomplete - In this
 intemperate situation you are called upon to supply the deficiency
 of public appropriation by voluntary contributions. If facilities
 be granted, the city will be divided into districts & the

The story of Fort M^cHenry is so intimately blended with the historical traditions of Baltimore that it is impossible to tell the one without including the other.

Whetstone Point, upon which Fort M^cHenry stands is the ^{extreme} end of a long peninsula that runs out from the heart of Baltimore and divides the middle branch from the northern branch of the Patuxent river was patented on July 24th 1661 by Charles Sossuel, who afterwards vacated. On June 2nd 1702 James Carroll took out another patent for Whetstone, and by Act of Assembly, April 19th 1706, Whetstone Point was made a ~~part of entry~~ ^{part of town} for the Province of Maryland. Because of its exposure to north east storms, ~~however~~ it never amounted to more than a ~~town~~ port of entry and it was afterwards absorbed into Baltimore town which lay ~~behind~~ ^{along} upon the ~~more sheltered~~ shores of the harbor behind it. The land of Whetstone Point ~~did~~ ^{did} however contain considerable iron ore that could be easily worked and James Carroll sold it to John Siles who sold the mining rights in 1727 to the Principio Company - an English Corporation, whose holdings were confiscated by the State of Maryland during the Revolutionary War.

~~Early in the Revolution, the importance of Whetstone Point as the most important point of defense for Baltimore was recognized by the Council of Safety in March 1776 when part of the British fleet was seized.~~

Early in the Revolution, the local Council of Safety recognized the importance of Whetstone Point as the ~~principal~~ most important point of defense for Baltimore and in March 1776 a boom & chain supported by thirty one wooden vessels was thrown across the narrow mouth of the harbor between Whetstone Point & ~~at~~ the point on the opposite shore and ~~whilst~~ a battery of 18 guns was mounted at Whetstone Point to protect the town from an unexpected

This battery & the two batteries that were located
on Hill's Point were named by volunteer artillerymen of
Gettiser & were the main defense of the town

Rivard's report seems however to speak of
the upper & lower batteries as well of the star fort
while on ~~the~~ ^{small} Fort McHenry

of Galtimer had not kept it alive, the work on Whetstone
Point would have been abandoned. In 1798, James
McHenry of Galtimer was appointed Secretary of War ^{and}
~~knowing the actual ^{but not the} of this city that it had been ^{by} the ^{citizens}~~
~~in the ^{of} of Galtimer ^{of} the ^{Committee} He directed~~
~~Major Tomsard to examine the existing works at Whetstone~~
~~Point and report to the Committee of Galtimer Citizens~~
~~what additions he considered necessary for the~~
~~fortification of Galtimer Harbor.~~
Knowing the actual ^{point} ^{concern} ~~of this city~~ that had been taken by
his fellow citizens for ^{perpetrated} defense He directed Major
Tomsard to examine the existing works at Whetstone
Point and report to the Committee of Galtimer Citizens
what additions he considered necessary for the
fortification of Galtimer Harbor. After an examination of
the old works and the proposals for ^{their} strengthening them
Major Tomsard would not risk his ^{personal} reputation by
opposing them. ~~and~~ ~~to~~ ~~submit~~ his plans for defense.
The Secretary of War however had advised that the
finances of the government would not admit of an appropriation
of more than 20,000 towards the fortification of Galtimer
and in their public address of, July 21st 1799, the
Committee after rehearing the above said ^{and} has did
your Committee see the ^{of} the ground at
Whetstone and the safety of the city. The latter was
too serious or too important an object to be relinquished.
and your Committee, at every hazard, recommended that
the fortifications should be erected on the most
approved or effectual plan. In doing this they have

reliance ~~for~~ on the well-known loyalty,
patriotism & zeal of their fellow citizens to supply
the deficiency. The Secretary of War has complied
with their recommendation, & under the direction
of your Committee the proper quantity of Lead has
been purchased, & considerable progress is made
in the necessary works. Mr. Forein, the former
Carpenter & Superintendent, in whose skill, industry
& economy your Committee has placed confidence,
has improved the plan of Major Conner &
devotes his whole time to its completion. In the
meantime the artificers are nearly exhausted.
But these works of defence ~~which~~, which all must
admit to be perfect even in the event of peace & indisputable
interest of war, remain incomplete - In this emergency
situation you are called upon to supply the deficiency of
public appropriations by ~~private subscription~~ voluntary contributions
to facilitate the business the City will be divided into
districts & those of the subscribers will call on the trustees
of each district to receive their donations. On or before the
25th inst.".

With these local subscriptions, the Committee was
able to build that intemperate ^{structure}, the Star Fort, which
~~has been rehabilitated to its original condition, is now~~
~~Fort McHenry~~ known as Fort McHenry in honor of
Colonel James M. Henry of Giltner - Secretary of War under
Presidents Washington & John Adams.

The fortress was built of Gettison made brick
or mortar and is a monument to the skilled artizans
of the day or to Gettison's loyalty to the nation's
military preparedness. Fort McHenry is pentagonally
star shaped with a distance of 300 feet between its
points or 125 feet between the bases of each star
point. The wall of the fort is constructed in two sections
~~that~~ ^{fasten} together in one compact whole 35 feet thick. The
outside brick work is over two feet thick or 14 feet
high topped with a six inch coping of granite on the
parallels & the sides of the star ~~with~~ ^{with} sandstone ~~ground~~ ^{coping}
~~to a knife edge~~ on the star points. The inside wall
is made of ~~field~~ ^{field} stone or is only 10 feet high, so as
to provide a lower elevation ^{for the gun platform} to ~~be~~ ^{gunners} protect the ~~area~~
~~between~~ ^{whole} ~~the~~ ^{between} the ~~two~~ ^{between}
is another brick wall of the 14 foot high to ~~gain~~ ^{prevent}
the shifting of the rip rip that is ~~confined~~ ^{between} the
walls fills the space between the walls. The ~~whole~~
entire wall is coddled ~~except at the coping~~ ^{from}
the coping and the flag pole that now stands ~~within~~
~~one of the~~ ^{one} on the wall ~~occupies~~ ^{is} ~~the~~ ^{position} when
it was ~~erected~~ ^{originally}.