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The reason that was given by the Assembly of Maryland for moving the capitol of the province from St. Mary's to Anne Arundel Town was to provide a more convenient seat of government for the colony, which was growing more rapidly on the northern reaches of the Chesapeake than it was in the lower section and, although this cause has been considered by some as specious, nevertheless the future development of Maryland has shown the wisdom of the transfer.

One must remember that, while the Reformation in England was effected quickly and without much disturbance to the people, there ^{afterwards} had appeared groups of dissenters, whose growth vexed the ecclesiastical authorities. The combination of the thrones of England and Scotland under James I, must have increased the zeal of those who inclined to Presbyterianism ^{the ~~King~~ ~~Church of Scotland~~} and whose sense of worship was ^{averse to the} ~~so personal that they could not reconcile their idea of the humility of religion with the aristocratic rankings of the clergy and the costly vestments of service.~~ These people were punished and harassed, but the various sects grew ^{during} amazingly until the reign of Charles I, William Laud, Bishop of London and the confidential adviser of the king, attempted to standardize the religious forms of the kingdom by establishing a ritual with certain habiliments of the Church.

The persecutions that followed this effort to force the various separatists into the Church of England, by the aid of the Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission, consolidated the non-conformist elements against the activity of the crown, until Parliament was compelled to intervene to protect the constitution from the tyranny of the king. The Commonwealth which was established under the protectorate of Cromwell continued for ten years, but shortly after Cromwell died, Charles II was called to the throne to continue the monarchy. The frivolous and indecisive ^{reign} of Charles II was followed by the bigoted

hostility of James II, who attempted to restore the same machinery of despotism that had caused Charles I to be beheaded. Fortunately the genius of the English people was more powerful than the shortcomings of their monarchs, and, while the affairs of England improved wonderfully, the spirit of personal inquiry which had been created, awakened an increasing interest in matters political as well as religious.

Undoubtedly the desire of most of the settlers who had come to the American colonies was to improve their living conditions, and yet it is equally apparent that many who went into other provinces than Virginia, were men who also wished to escape the religious persecution of the time. Many had also been transported as political prisoners, especially during the reign of Cromwell and James II, and these men were generally of a stronger character than the ordinary. Although far removed from England, many of the colonists knew the weaknesses that had belittled the reign of Charles II, whom they had seen break faith with England's Protestant allies. They knew that the state politics of Europe had become quasi religious, especially after the Treaty of Westphalia, which had closed the Thirty Years War in 1648, by declaring that hereafter the religion of the peoples of the different nations must conform to the religion of their several sovereigns. They were aware that Charles II and James II had been pensioners of France and that both had been willing to carry out the schemes of Louis XIV to the positive harm and disadvantage of their own subjects.

Cecilius Calvert, wishing to avoid the dissensions that were disrupting the civil life of Europe, had early established the principle of freedom of worship in the colony; and in 1649, the Assembly of Maryland passed the so called "Toleration Act", which incorporated these ideas of Lord Baltimore by declaring that "no one within this province professing to believe in Jesus Christ shall be in any way, troubled,

molested, or discountenanced for his or her religion or in the free exercise thereof".

This Act encouraged many Puritans, who had originally settled in Virginia, to come into Anne Arundel County and start a large settlement, and here in this "Land of the Sanctuary" there voluntarily gathered Catholic and Protestant- Puritan, Quaker and Church of England men, hoping for a more peaceful life. All would probably have been well had it not been for the disturbances in England, where occurred four changes of government within forty years, each of which had ~~their~~ ^{its} influence on the colonies. They then saw James II arbitrarily give to William Penn a large portion of Maryland territory, and they were aware that when the French and their Indian allies were threatening the western areas of Maryland, he had instructed Governor Dongan of New York not to warn the Iroquois, who were friendly to the English settlers, that De la Barre had been ordered to exterminate them. From some Huguenot refugees, who had come into the colony, they heard how Louis XIV had revoked the Edict of Nantes and harassed and driven ^{these} Protestants out of France. They knew ^{reestablish} that Louis XIV was trying to ~~establish~~ James II, on the throne of England, and they feared the mischief that James II, an avowed Catholic, had intended with his "Declaration of Indulgence".

From the very founding of the colony, the majority of the settlers in Maryland were Protestant. At the time of the passage of the "Toleration Act" this majority was ten to one, and in 1688, at the time of the accession of William and Mary, the Protestants outnumbered the Catholics nearly thirty to one. Despite this fact, the Proprietors had managed to keep the government of the colony in the hands of the Catholics, but Charles Calvert had recently proven very arbitrary in his attitude towards the Assembly; and now unfortunately his message to his agents in Maryland, notifying them of the change of government and outlining his policy towards William and Mary, was lost through the death of his

messenger. The situation was made more awkward by the attempt of the President of the Council to coerce the members of the House of Delegates to take an oath of allegiance to Lord Baltimore. This proved a dangerous expedient in a world where religion had become politics, and it developed a suspicion that Lord Baltimore was attempting to keep Catholic control of Maryland, despite the change of government which had occurred, and the members of the House of Delegates refused to take the submitted oath to Lord Baltimore, although as Englishmen they offered to take the oath of allegiance to their new king.

Some malcontents in the lower counties formed an association "for the defense of the Protestant religion, and for asserting the rights of King William and Queen Mary to the province of Maryland and all the English dominions". These associators held several conventions, but did not attempt to set up a permanent organization, probably because the people of Anne Arundel County and Cecil County would not cooperate with them. They sent addresses to their majesties, reciting exaggerated grievances in the province, citing their loyalty, and finally in 1692, the Maryland Council petitioned King William to give them a Protestant governor. Proclaiming Maryland a royal province, King William appointed Sir Lionel Copley, the first royal Governor of Maryland; and while this change in the character of the Province annulled the feudal anachronism "Lord Absolute", William insisted that the Proprietor should retain his landed rights and all of the emoluments that he had enjoyed.

When Governor Copley arrived and took over the affairs of the Province of Maryland, he convened the Assembly to meet at St. Mary's on May 10th, 1692, where they immediately recognized the title of William and Mary, and made the Church of England the Church of the Province. Sir Lionel Copley died on September 12th, 1693, and in the absence of the Lieutenant Governor, Francis Nicholson, who was in England, the

government was taken over by Sir Thomas Lawrence, who had been Secretary to Governor Copley. Objection arising to the legality of this, Sir Thomas Lawrence was afterwards installed as President of the Council, to hold control until Governor Nicholson arrived.

Governor Nicholson was familiar with colonial affairs, having previously been Deputy Governor of New York and Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, he immediately convoked the Assembly to meet at Anne Arundel Town on September 21st, 1694. Nicholson probably felt that he was conserving the best interest of the province in the selection of this site for the new capital. He knew that there had been several attempts to move the seat of government from St. Mary's to a location that was more convenient for the growing colony, and he also knew that Anne Arundel County had held kept out of the contentions between the old regime and the associators, of whose leader, Nicholson did not have a very good opinion. Although originally settled by Puritans, many of their descendants had affiliated with Church of England, and he felt that they were loyal to the traditions of their race and to English institutions.

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The first session of the Assembly in Anne Arundel Town was held in the house of Major Dorsey; and at the next session they changed the name of Anne Arundel Town to Annapolis in honor of the princess apparent, and made provisions for the erection of a church, a school house, and a State House. This Stadt House, as it was called, in compliment to King William, was built of brick made from Maryland clay, under contract with Casper August Hermann, a burgess from Cecil County. ^{Apparently no} There ~~seems to be no record of any plans that might have been~~ ^{now given} ~~made for this State House as provided in the Act of 1694,~~ but as it neared completion, on June 11th, 1697, the Assembly passed an Act providing that:

"The Great Room below Stairs, for Courts and Assemblies to sit in: The Little Room below the Stairs, to be for a Magazine for every thing but Powder to lie in: The two Rooms on the Right Hand ~~above Stairs,~~ for Jury and Committee Rooms: The two Rooms on the Left Hand, to be for Provincial and Land-Office Records to be kept: And the Fore-Porch to be for Commissary's Office, and Records of Probat of Wills and Granting Administrations, etc. to be kept in: The two Rooms on the Right Hand, in the upper Lofts, One for the County Clerk to keep the County Court Records in, and the other for Annapolis Town Clerk to keep his Papers in; and the other two Rooms on the Left Hand, One of them for keeping the Records of the Chancery Court, and the Other for keeping the Records of the Governor and Council in one Part of it, and another Part of the same Room, for lodging of all Bonds, Bills, Certificates, Cockets, and other Naval Papers, transmitted from the Collectors and Naval Officers of this Province: To which end and purpose, all Naval Officers and Collectors, are by this Act, bound and obliged to return to the Governor and Council, once in the Year, That is to say, on the tenth day of June yearly, and in every Year,

all Cockets, Bonds, Papers, and Certificates lodged with them, or any of them, by any Persons as aforesaid, under Penalty of being proceeded against, and punished, for such Contempt. The Room above the Back-Porch to be for the Clerk of the House of Delegates, to keep the Journals and Papers and Proceedings of that House in: And the Loft above the Fore-Porch over the Commissary's Office, to be for hanging a Lanthorn out, and for a Committee Room."

This State House was struck by lightning in July of 1699, while the House of Delegates was in session, splintering the flag staff, knocking off the vane, and setting fire to the roof, shattering the door posts and window frame of the upper floor, and one of the delegates of Calvert County was killed and several others badly wounded and shaken. The Council then recommended to the House "that four or five small water engines and twenty leather buckets may be sent for by the present shipping, which may be hung up in the Court House and ready upon any such unhappy occasion".

In 1704, this State House was destroyed by fire, and another was immediately ordered to be built. The new State House was completed in 1706, and in the meantime, the sessions of the Assembly were held in a house that was rented from Col. Edward Dorsey at twenty pounds per year.

This equipment evidently proved insufficient, because this State House was destroyed by fire in 1704. Another State House was immediately ordered to be built, which was completed in 1706, the sessions of the Assembly being held in the meantime in a house furnished by Col. Edward Dorsey, at a rental of twenty pounds per year.