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During the colonial period, the American people not only built the ships that were necessary for their own trade, but they carried a large part of England's cargoes to and from the West Indies. When the Revolutionary War was over, the United States found that while it had gained political independence, her commercial rights were limited to the thinly settled territory south of the St. Lawrence, east of the Mississippi and north of Florida. By the terms of the Treaty of Paris, Great Britain still retained the force of her old navigation acts, which were the primary cause of the Revolution, and she would not permit the United States to trade with its old customary outlets in the West Indies. As the demand for foodstuffs and other merchandise, that had been stimulated by the needs of the army during the war fell off, the excess wheat, corn, flour, timber or other items, which had previously been a profitable export to the islands, could not be absorbed by the colonies, and we were forced to realize that we had not gained that liberty which the Revolution promised. Washington truthfully expressed this hopeless condition by saying "we are fast verging to anarchy and confusion", and Jay was sent abroad to make a treaty with England. The method and the terms of the submitted treaty, however, made no concessions to the United States, and when this became known it almost brought on another conflict.

In March, 1776, the people of Baltimore were alarmed by the appearance of the British sloop-of-war "Otter", accompanied by two tenders and several prizes that came into the Patapsco after committing depredations in the Chesapeake. Earthworks were hastily thrown up and eighteen cannon were mounted on Whetstone Point to defend the town, and this battery, which was the beginning of Fort McHenry, was commanded by Captain N. Smith. Chains were stretched between Whetstone Point and the Lazaretto to prevent the British from entering the harbor, and the Maryland ship "Defense" was rapidly completed and placed under the

command of Captain James Nicholson. Manned by a force from Smallwood's battalion who volunteered to serve as marines, Nicholson drove the British from the bay and recaptured their prizes, and on June 5th, following, he was commissioned Commodore by the United States Government, to rank as the first officer of the newly organized navy.

When in 1794, it seemed that the United States would be forced into another war with Great Britain it was decided to enlarge the defenses at Whetstone Point, and Major J. J. Ulrich Rivardi, a French artillery engineer, who had come to this country during the Revolution, was employed to plan the present star bastion fort, with upper and lower batteries. This enlarged fortification was named for James McHenry, a Baltimorean, who had served on Washington's personal staff during the Revolution and was Secretary of War in 1798, who ordered Major Tousard to examine and report upon these defenses to the War Department so that Fort McHenry might be placed under the control of the national government. Fort McHenry was garrisoned by regular troops in 1799, although, federal jurisdiction was not assumed until the Maryland Legislature ceded this reservation of twenty six and one half acres to the United States Government, January 30th, 1816. This area was later increased to fifty two and three quarter acres by similar Act of the Maryland Legislature dated May 28th, 1834.

It was an unusual period in the world's affairs. The American people finding themselves deprived of those advantages which they had hoped to win by breaking away from Great Britain, were trying to adapt themselves to the new conditions of their Federal Constitution, when suddenly the French Revolution broke out across the Atlantic and Europe was aflame with war. Following the French Revolution, successive coalitions of European powers waged persistant warfare against Napoleon in their efforts to maintain their old monarchical systems, and the demand for foodstuffs and materials from abroad relieved our commercial

crisis, while our ship yards were busy turning out vessels which were immediately loaded and sent to sea. England, seeing that if this condition continued it would make the United States her great commercial rival, determined to prevent it by adopting drastic methods of trade oppression, and insisted upon her right to search all vessels for contraband, while her navy lay off our coast to rigidly enforce her navigation acts. For over a century Great Britain had controlled the maritime commerce of the world and the sudden prosperity and growth of the United States was not pleasing to British interests who had hoped to force us into the war as their ally, and our increased shipping was soon restricted by British Orders of Council and French Imperial Decrees until we were practically forbidden by either nation to trade with the other and her allies.

Napoleon, resenting the fact that France had been compelled to cede Louisiana to Spain in order to keep it from falling into the hands of England during the French and Indian War, persuaded the King of Spain to secretly recede it to France, and to order New Orleans closed to foreign navigation, thus abrogating our treaty of 1795, and closing the outlet of one half of the territory of the United States. The section beyond the Alleghanies became especially incensed over this and threatened to secede, and everyone realized that, if England should take New Orleans from France during the war that was going on, the United States would be surrounded by an intolerable band of British trade regulations, which would prevent our natural expansion in the west. Jefferson's pacific efforts were severely criticized and not wishing a war with France, he sent over a commission to negotiate the Louisiana question. Napoleon was preparing an expedition to take possession of Louisiana at the time, but realizing that it would ultimately be a source of trouble, he concluded to sell the territory to the United States and said when the sale was ratified: "This

accession of territory by the United States, establishes forever the power of the United States and gives to England a maritime rival destined to humble her pride".

Great Britain had never given up the hope of regaining her lost colonies in America and attempted to demoralize our government by creating discord between the New England and the Southern States. Courting the trade and the favor of the New England merchants for herself, her navy hovered along the more southerly coast and seized the shipping in her efforts to prevent our commerce with France and the West Indies. Continuing the practice that she had established during our Revolution, they boarded our vessels and impressed American seamen into the British navy or put them in prison if they refused to serve, until the American people became incensed over her unjust measures. At first, this activity was confined to merchant ships, but on November 17th, 1797, they boarded the United States sloop-of-war "Baltimore", and took off fifty five men for examination and impressed five of them into the British service. Although the British government apologized for this particular act, the arrogance of British naval officers after Nelson's victory at Trafalzar, became so unrestrained that they committed in 1807, an unwarranted and cowardly attack upon the United States' frigate "Chesapeake", in American waters off the capes of Chesapeake Bay. President Jefferson imposed the Embargo Act in his efforts to avoid a war, but its restrictions were so contrary to human nature that it was openly broken, and, after fourteen months of hardship to American interests, it was repealed. Jefferson's policy of non-aggression not only proved a failure, but it encouraged England to further deny American rights, until, June 18th, 1812, the United States with an empty treasury and with seven frigates in its navy and about 5000 men in its army was compelled to declare war upon Great Britain, the richest nation in the world, that had at its disposal more than 1000 warships and corps of trained soldiers.

An abundance of easily worked and high grade iron ore from which to make the necessary tools, and implements for shipbuilding, and several swift waterways upon which were built mills to grind the grain that profusely grew in the rich soil around the town, had determined the commercial importance of early Baltimore, and the reputation of Maryland flour, grain, and tobacco, rapidly developed the colonial trade of this port with Europe and the West Indies. When the Revolutionary War interrupted this increasing traffic, many of our ship owners and merchants turned to privateering, and during the war, two hundred and forty eight privateers and letters of Marque sailed from Baltimore. These privateersmen were the nursery of our infant navy, and while the town grew rich with spoils of British commerce, the population of Baltimore doubled because of the activity of the port. The population of the city was progressively doubled in each of the several decades that followed and its commerce grew by leaps and bounds until, in 1812, Baltimore had become the third city of commercial importance in the Union; and when the Chesapeake Bay was again blockaded by the British, its shipping turned to privateering as it had done during the Revolution and played havoc with the British.

Baltimore sent more privateers to sea than any other city and her activities during the first year of the War of 1812 marked her with England's particular hatred. Gracefully modeled and equipped with a pivot gun amidship, besides broadside armament proportionate to their size, these privateers amazed the British. Their captains, with no other training than they had gotten in merchant service proved themselves equal in strategy to the famed commanders of the British. Not only did they take nearly all of the prizes that were captured in 1814, while the British blockade kept the American warships in port, but the boldness of these privateers was so aggravating that the British Naval Register complained that, with a thousand ships in their navy and at

peace with the rest of Europe "it was not safe for a vessel to sail without convoy from one part of the English and Irish Channel to another".

Early in the war, when the British established headquarters at Tangier Island in their efforts to blockade the Chesapeake and close the port of Baltimore, the city authorities had arranged with Captain Ridgely to display a flag from the cupola of his residence at "Steeplehouse Farm" near North Point, whenever the British were seen in this part of the bay. Our privateers, however, continued to slip past the British, and on April 16th, 1813, this signal was relayed by a barge which was sent down the river for that purpose. Fort McHenry was strengthened by a new battery of twenty large guns which were taken from a French frigate that was laying at Despeaux's shipyard, and the militia was called out. As no money was available from the government, the City Council of Baltimore under the direction of Mayor Edward Johnson, appropriated twenty thousand dollars while the citizens of Baltimore subscribed five hundred thousand dollars for constructing the defenses around the town. Ward Committees were appointed and every able-bodied citizen who was not under arms was ordered to report with pickaxes, shovels, wheelbarrows, etc., for duty in constructing earth-works, which were thrown up around the city.

The British advanced a flag of truce to one of the Baltimore barges about four miles from the city, under pretext of forwarding a letter to the Secretary of War, and while their truce officer was detained, he had ample opportunity to observe the new defenses and learn that Fort McHenry had been strengthened by long range guns. His report evidently persuaded Admiral Cockburn to change his plans for an immediate attack, because the fleet sailed up the Chesapeake, taking Havre de Grace, Fredericktown and Georgetown, and occupied Spesutia Island. The British stayed in the upper part of the bay all summer,

sacking several towns on the Eastern Shore and menacing Annapolis; and, from another encampment near Point Lookout, they patrolled the Potomac and the Patuxent sections until the Chesapeake Bay was under their control.

On August 8th, fifteen of their vessels again moved up in sight of Baltimore prepared for an attack, but when they saw that the fortifications around the city were promptly manned, they withdrew, and in a few days the fleet moved off and occupied Kent Island, from which place they marauded the Eastern Shore and Anne Arundel County. In November most of this fleet left for Bermuda to be repaired, returning in the spring of 1814 with reinforcements.

Although the British fleets had been blockading the Chesapeake and ravaging its shores almost with sight of the City of Washington for over a year, there were on June 1st, 1814, but 2,208 soldiers of the regular army in the whole district from Norfolk to Baltimore. On July 2nd, the Tenth Military district was formed, consisting of the State of Maryland, the District of Columbia, and that part of Virginia lying between the Rappahannock and the Potomac. On July 9th, General Winder, commanding that district, whose entire force of regular troops was between 700 and 800 men, suggested that 4,000 militia should be called out, 2000 of whom should be stationed between the South River and Washington, and 2,000 in the vicinity of Baltimore.

On August 20th, General Winder's suggestion was approved, and on that same day the British fleet, accompanied by a corp of Wellington's Invincibles which had been released from the French War, ascended the Patuxent River and forced Barney to burn his fleet of gunboats, which had been furnished by the people of Baltimore. Disembarking at Pig Point the British army marched to Upper Marlborough, and at daylight on August 24th, General Ross began his advance on Bladensburg, where the Washington troops were joined by 2,000 volunteers from Baltimore.

The morning report of this recently organized American army consisted of 400 regular troops, 500 marines, and 4,000 militia, and when the fight occurred the Americans were routed in the presence of the President and his Cabinet. Bladensburg decided the fate of the City of Washington, which President Madison was forced to evacuate, while the British wantonly burned the Capitol, the Navy Yard, the White House, and other public buildings. Emboldened by their success, the British returned to their ships and within several days sailed for Baltimore, appearing at the mouth of the Patapsco on the morning of September 11th. Evidently intending to attack Baltimore from the south and the rear because of the strengthened defenses at Fort McHenry and along the eastern side of the city, the British first attempted to make a landing on the Bodkin Peninsula, but the shoal water prevented a close approach of their ships to the shore, and when their landing boats were fired upon by a company of the Twenty Second Regiment (Anne Arundel County) which was posted behind the trees on the bluff, they withdrew and crossed over to North Point, on the opposite side of the river.

Early Sunday morning, September 11th, 1814, the flag signal at "Steeplehouse Farm" was again observed to be flying, and when this was verified by the appearance of the enemy, three cannon were fired on the Courthouse Green in Baltimore to summon the militia to their appointed places. That afternoon General Stricker, commanding a militia brigade, composed of the Fifth, Sixth, Twenty Seventh, Thirty Ninth and Fifty First Regiments of infantry, 150 riflemen, 140 cavalry, and 75 artillerymen with six four-pound guns, went down the Philadelphia Road and turning to the right at Long Log Lane (now the North Point Road) marched to the Old Trappe Road, where the main body spent the night. The cavalry was sent forward about three miles to Poplar Heights and the riflemen were posted in the tall grass and behind trees about one

mile to the rear of the cavalry, to act as supports if they should be attacked.

The British fleet of more than fifty sail had anchored in Old Roads Bay inside the mouth of the river, and at three o'clock on the morning of September 12th, they began to land their troops from the transports on the low shores inside of North Point, near what is now Fort Howard. This force of 9000, comprising 5000 veterans of Wellington's Invincibles, 2000 marines and 2000 sailors, ^{landed} were by seven o'clock, and the frigates and bombing vessels moved up the river and took their positions in a large crescent line in front of Fort McHenry and the Lazaretto.

Planning a joint attack against Baltimore by land and water, the British army, under the command of General Sir Robert Ross, deployed over the surround^{ing} country and began its advance by way of the North Point Road to Poplar Heights, where General Ross took breakfast at the house of Joshua Gorsuch, on the farm that had been occupied by the American cavalry the night before. About noon the main body of the British having arrived, General Ross continued his advance, up the North Point Road, and shortly before 1 P. M. suddenly came in contact with an advance party of 150 infantry, seventy riflemen and ten artillerymen with ~~one~~ one four-pound gun, under the command of Major Richard K. Heath, of the Fifth Maryland Regiment, who had been ordered forward to reconnoiter. As he emerged from the woods, General Ross was killed; and Major Heath, seeing that he had a superior force to contend with, ordered his men to fall back upon the American battle line, which was posted in advance of the juncture of the Old Trappe Road and the North Point Road. The Fifth Regiment, with its right resting on Bear Creek, extended its left across the North Point Road. At its left were the Twenty Seventh and the Thirty Ninth Regiments. The Fifty First was posted at right angles to the Thirty Ninth, facing a marsh and Back River

in anticipation of a flank attack which the British actually attempted, while the Sixth Regiment was posted in the rear to act as a reserve.

The fight at this point lasted about an hour and a half, when Stricker, realizing that he was opposing the main body of the British with a force only about one third as strong, retreated back to the position on the hill occupied by the Sixth Regiment and later retreated to the Philadelphia Road, where he would have better protection during the night at Worthington's Mill, where Herring Run crosses that road. Next morning he fell back to the entrenchment of Roger's Bastion, the remains of which may still be seen in Patterson Park, where the original breastworks have been marked by the Society of the War of 1812 in Maryland, with a parking of old cannon that were used in the conflict.

The British next morning advanced as far as Orangeville on the Philadelphia Road, extending their right nearly to what is now Clifton Park. Here they carefully studied the vast earthworks which had been thrown up from the waterfront, beginning near the old Sugar House at Canton and running along the face of Hampstead Hill to the west of Broadway, with other detached emplacements, stretching to a hill just south of what is now Greenmount Cemetery.

This large display of defense disconcerted the enemy, who were already demoralized by the death of their commander, and hearing that their fleet had been unable to pass Fort McHenry, they decided to retreat. About three o'clock on the morning of September 14th, they made their departure, so noiselessly that the Americans did not discover it until after daylight.

Heavy iron chains supported by a number of boats which had been sunk in the channel to prevent the British from entering the harbor, had been stretched between the Lazaretto and Fort McHenry, and a line of hulks had been sunk in the channel of the Ferry Bar Branch to prevent their ships from getting behind the Fort. At daylight on the morning of September 13th, the British fleet opened fire on Fort

Fort McHenry was defended by 1000 men, commanded by Major George Armistead and distributed as follows: One company U. S. artillery under Captain Frederick Evans, and one company Baltimore Fencibles under Captain J. H. Nicholson manned the bastions of the Star Fort. One company Baltimore Independent artillerists-- Captain Charles Pennington, one company Washington artillerists-- Captain John Berry, two companies Sea Fencibles--Captain M. S. Bunbury and William H. Addison and a detachment from Barney's Flotills under Lieutenant Rodman manned the upper and lower batteries, while 600 infantry--detachments from the Twelfth, Fourteenth, Thirty Sixth and Thirty Eighth Regiments under the command of Lieutenant Col. Stewart and Major Lane--were stationed in the moat between the walls of the fort and the outer batteries to oppose any landing that the enemy might attempt to make. Many of the artillerymen had seen service on privateers out of Baltimore and were efficient in operating the twenty four pounders on the bastions and the 42's that were in the water battery.

McHenry, which was bombarded until seven o'clock on the morning of September 14th. Besides round shot and rockets, more than 1500 bombs, weighing nearly 250 pounds a piece, were fired at Fort McHenry and the Lazaretto, but the British were unable to take a single position, while the recoil from the heavy discharge of their own guns so weakened their ships that they were compelled to stop firing and withdraw.

Before dawn on the morning of September 14th, the enemy attempted a surprise attack from the rear by sending a regiment of men in small boats up the main branch of the Patapsco between Fort McHenry and Cromwell's Marsh (now Wagner's Point), but Captain Hancock's company of the twenty second regiment, which was patrolling that position, heard their muffled oars and lighted a hayrick on the shore. This threw them into full view of the six gun battery and Fort Covington further up the river, and the terrible crossfire from these batteries and Fort McHenry soon forced them to return to their ships.

When the British army was in camp at Upper Marlboro preparing for its attack on Washington, Admiral Cockburn had made his headquarters at the house of Dr. Beanes, the leading physician of that town, under agreeable conditions of mutual courtesy, but when their army had returned to their ships from the pillage of Washington, small groups of stragglers began to appear, who plundered the homes that they passed. Dr. Beanes put himself at the head of a small body of citizens, who pursued and arrested some of them, and when this news was conveyed to the British commander a detachment was sent to release the prisoners and arrest Dr. Beanes. Francis Scott Key, a personal friend of Dr. Beanes, hearing of this, obtained permission from President Madison to intercede for his friend.

Key was instructed to go to Baltimore and report to Col. John S. Skinner, the Government agent for flags of truce, who was ordered to accompany Key. Sailing down the bay on one of the swift moving dispatch

pilot boats that had been evolved in this section, they found the British fleet off the mouth of the Potomac River preparing for the expedition against Baltimore. Explaining his mission, Key made a strong plea for Dr. Beanes and spoke of the care and attention that had been given to the British wounded, until the British commander relented and promised that Dr. Beanes would be released after the attack on Baltimore, but that in the meantime, neither he nor Key would be permitted to leave the fleet. Key was quartered on the frigate Surprise, which was commanded by Sir Thomas Cochrane, a son of the fleet commander, and when the British arrived at the mouth of the Patapsco, Admiral Cockrane shifted his flag to the Surprise and moved up the river to superintend the attack on Fort McHenry, while Key and Dr. Beanes were sent back on board the American vessel accompanied by a guard of marines to keep them from landing.

Anchored amid the enemy transports in Old Roads Bay, below Sparrow's Point, they were fortunately so placed that they could see the whole bombardment and Key watched every shell that fell. Hearing the cannon of Fort Covington and the City Battery, who fired on the British soldiers when they attempted to get behind Fort McHenry, and sensing the lull which followed as their boats were escaping, Key wondered if Baltimore had fallen. Pacing the deck as dawn broke, he was relieved to see that "Our flag was still there", and observed the British troops as they returned to their transports. In the exultation of that moment, Key wrote the "Star Spangled Banner" which by popular acclaim is conceded to be our national anthem, and when the British withdrew and they were permitted to return to Baltimore, the words were immediately set to music.

Although the American army had been on the defensive for over two years, and its several campaigns against Canada had been dismal failures, our small navy, with the wonderful assistance of the privateers, had

captured fifty six British warships, over two thousand armed merchantmen with millions of dollars worth of materials, several thousand cannon, and thousands of prisoners. England's boast that Britannia ruled the waves was humiliated and, following her defeat at North Point and Fort McHenry, she consented to the treaty of peace which was signed at Ghent on December 24th, 1814.

The War of 1812--Our Second War of Independence from Great Britian--has been called by some a needless war. It is true that it might have been prevented by the United States submitting to England's demands, but when one counts the attainments, few things in our nation's history have produced greater results. It completed our Revolution by winning that independence which we had hoped to attain, and, by breaking the States away from those influences of our old colonial life which were holding back our proper development, it established a national spirit for our Union. It freed American politics and policies from European standards and gained a respect for the United States among the governments of the world which permitted us to work out our own systems for the betterment of the country.

The experience of our privateersmen and of our citizen soldiers in their sturdy defense of Baltimore, encouraged a healthy spirit in the young men of our city, many of whom, stimulated by the successes that we had won by the war, entered the merchant marine service and carried the name of Baltimore to all parts of the world. The Baltimore Clipper became the standard of swift sailing ships in the seven seas, and the period which followed was the day of Peabody, of Johns Hopkins and other merchants who helped to develop the prestige of Baltimore as one of the leading seaports of the world.

Fort McHenry was continuously used as a garrison post until 1914, when the art of war had become so changed by modern guns and high power explosives that its usefulness as a fortification had passed. During

the World War one of the largest military hospitals in the country was built on its reservation and was maintained for several years thereafter, caring for thousands of wounded and otherwise disabled soldiers, until it was finally evacuated. Fort McHenry has been made a national shrine--the birthplace of the Star Spangled Banner--; and restored as it was during the War of 1812, its glory will still live as a real monument to the American Flag and to the gallant defense of Baltimore, the only large city on our Atlantic coast over which an enemy flag has never flown.

During the colonial period, the American people not only built the ships that were necessary for their own trade, but they carried a large part of England's cargoes to and from the West Indies. When The Revolutionary War was over, the United States found that while it had gained political independence, her commercial rights were limited to the thinly settled territory south of the St. Lawrence, east of the Mississippi and north of Florida. By the terms of the Treaty of Paris, Great Britain still retained the force of her old navigation acts, which were the primary cause of the Revolution, and she would not permit the United States to trade with its old customary outlets in the West Indies. As the demand for foodstuffs and other merchandise that had been stimulated by the needs of the army during the war fell off, the excess wheat, corn, flour, timber or other items, which had previously been a profitable export to the islands, could not be absorbed by the colonies, and we were forced to realize that we had not gained that liberty which the Revolution promised. Washington truthfully expressed this hopeless condition by saying "we are fast verging to anarchy and confusion", and Jay was sent abroad to make a treaty with England. The method and the terms of the submitted treaty, however, made no concessions to the United States, and when this became known it almost brought on another conflict.

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When the news of the Battle of Lexington was received in Maryland, the provincial council promptly expressed its support of the cause by enacting laws to raise troops and prepare fortifications for defense. One of the two batteries of artillery that were ordered, was raised in Baltimore and in March 1776, when our people heard that the British were in the Chesapeake, 250 negroes were employed to cut timber and logs and a boom was erected between Whetstone Point and the Lazaretto and earthworks were hastily thrown up and a battery of eighteen guns was mounted at Whetstone Point to defend the town. This battery which was the beginning of Fort McHenry was commanded by Captain N. Smith, and the Maryland ship "Defense" was rapidly completed and placed under the command of Captain James Nicholson and manned by a force from Smallwood's Battalion who volunteered to serve as marines. Promptly sailing against the enemy they drove them from the bay and recaptured their prizes; and on June 5th, following, Captain Nicholson was commissioned by the newly created Government to rank as the first officer of the United States Navy.

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In 1794, when this feeling of resentment was most acute, President Washington recommended offensive and defensive plans for another war against Great Britain and the people of Baltimore, at their own expense, decided to enlarge the defenses at Whetstone Point, and employed Major J. J. Ulrich Rivardi, a French artillery engineer, who had come to this country during the Revolution, to plan the present star bastion fort, with upper and lower batteries. When completed this enlarged fortification was named for James McHenry, a Baltimorean who had served on Washington's personal staff during the Revolution and was Secretary of War 1796-1800, and Major Tousard was ordered to examine and report upon these defenses to the War Department in 1798 so that Fort McHenry might be placed under the control of the national government. Although federal jurisdiction was not assumed until the Maryland Legislature ceded this reservation of twenty six and one half acres to the United States Government, January 30th, 1816, Fort McHenry was garrisoned by regular troops in 1799, and the area of the reservation was later increased to fifty two and three quarter acres by similar Act of the Maryland Legislature dated May 28th, 1834.

It was an unusual period in the world's affairs. The American people finding themselves deprived of those advantages which they had hoped to win by breaking away from Great Britain, were trying to adapt themselves to the changes and restrictions which were brought about by the conditions of their new nationality, when suddenly the French Revolution broke out across the Atlantic and Europe was aflame with war. Following the French Revolution, successive coalitions of European powers waged persistent warfare against Napoleon in their efforts to maintain their old monarchical systems, and the demand for foodstuffs and materials from abroad relieved our commercial

crisis, while our ship yards were busy turning out vessels which were immediately loaded and sent to sea. England, seeing that if this condition continued it would make the United States her great commercial rival, determined to prevent it by adopting drastic methods of trade oppression, and insisted upon her right to search all vessels for contraband, while her navy lay off our coast to rigidly enforce her navigation acts. For over a century Great Britain had controlled the maritime commerce of the world and the sudden prosperity and growth of the United States was disappointing to British interests that had hoped to force us into the war as their ally, and our increased shipping was soon restricted by British Orders of Council and French Imperial Decrees until we were practically forbidden by either nation to trade with the other and her allies.

Napoleon, resenting the fact that France had been compelled to cede Louisiana to Spain in order to keep it from falling into the hands of England during the French and Indian War, persuaded the King of Spain to secretly recede it to France, and to order New Orleans closed to foreign navigation, thus abrogating our treaty of 1795, and closing the outlet of one half of the territory of the United States. The section beyond the Alleghanies became especially incensed over this and threatened to secede, and everyone realized that, if England should take New Orleans from France during the war that was going on, the United States would be surrounded by an intolerable band of British trade regulations, which would prevent our natural expansion in the west. Jefferson's pacific efforts were severely criticized, and not wishing a war with France, he sent over a commission to negotiate the Louisiana question. Napoleon was preparing an expedition to take possession of Louisiana at the time, but realizing that it would ultimately be a source of trouble, he concluded to sell the territory to the United States and said when the sale was ratified: "This accession of territory of the United States establishes forever the power of the United States and gives to England a maritime rival destined to humble her pride".

Great Britain had never given up the hope of regaining her lost colonies in America and attempted to demoralize our government by creating discord between the New England and the Southern States. Courting the trade and the favor of the New England merchants for herself, her navy hovered along the more southerly coast and seized the shipping in her efforts to prevent our commerce with France and the West Indies. Continuing the practice that she had established during our Revolution, they boarded our vessels and impressed American seamen into the British navy or put them in prison if they refused to serve, until the American people became incensed over her unjust measures. At first, this activity was confined to merchant ships, but on November 17th, 1797, they boarded the United States sloop-of-war "Baltimore", and took off fifty five men for examination and impressed five of them into the British service. Although the British government apologized for this particular act, the arrogance of British naval officers after Nelson's victory at Trafalgar, became so unrestrained that they committed in 1807 an unwarranted and cowardly attack upon the United States' frigate "Chesapeake", in American waters off the capes of the Chesapeake Bay. President Jefferson imposed the Embargo Act in his efforts to avoid a war, but its restrictions were so contrary to human nature that it was openly broken, and, after fourteen months of hardship to American interests, it was repealed. Jefferson's policy of non-aggression not only proved a failure, but it encouraged England to further deny American rights, until, June 18th, 1812, the United States, with an empty treasury and with seven frigates in its navy and about 5000 men in its army, was compelled to declare war upon Great Britain, the richest nation in the world, that had at its disposal more than 1000 warships and corps of trained soldiers.

An abundance of easily worked and high grade iron ore from which to make the necessary tools and implements for shipbuilding, and several swift waterways upon which were built mills to grind the grain that profusely grew in the rich soil around the town, had determined the commercial importance of early Baltimore, and the reputation of Maryland flour, grain, and tobacco, rapidly developed the colonial trade of this port with Europe and the West Indies.

When the Revolutionary War interrupted this increasing traffic, many of our ship owners and merchants turned to privateering, and during the war two hundred and forty eight privateers and letters of marque sailed from Baltimore. These privateersmen were the nursery of our infant navy, and while the town grew rich with spoils of British commerce, the population of Baltimore doubled because of the activity of the port. The population of the city was progressively doubled in each of the several decades that followed and its commerce grew by leaps and bounds until, in 1812, Baltimore had become the third city of commercial importance in the Union; and when the Chesapeake Bay was again blockaded by the British, its shipping turned to privateering as it had done during the Revolution, and played havoc with the British.

Baltimore sent more privateers to sea than any other city and her activities during the first year of the War of 1812 marked her with England's particular hatred. Modeled for speed and equipped with a pivot gun amidship, besides broadside armament proportionate to their size, these privateers amazed the British. Their captains, with no other training than they had gotten in merchant service, proved themselves equal in strategy to the famed commanders of the British. Not only did they take nearly all of the prizes that were captured in 1814, while the British blockade kept the American warships in port, but the boldness of these privateers was so aggravating that the British Naval Register complained that, with a thousand ships in their navy and at peace with the rest of Europe "it was not safe for a vessel to sail without convoy from one part of the English and Irish Channel to another".

Early in the war, when the British established headquarters at Tangier Island in their efforts to blockade the Chesapeake and close the port of Baltimore, the city authorities had arranged with Captain Ridgely to display a flag from the cupola of his residence at "Steeplehouse Farm" near North Point, whenever the British were seen in this part of the bay. Our privateers, however, continued to slip past the British, and on April 16th, 1813, this signal was relayed by a barge which was sent down the river for that purpose.

Fort McHenry was strengthened by a new battery of twenty large guns which were taken from a French frigate that was laying at Despeaux's shipyard, and the militia was called out. As no money was available from the government, the City Council of Baltimore, under the direction of Mayor Edward Johnson, appropriated twenty thousand dollars, for constructing the defenses around the town. Ward Committees were appointed and every able-bodied citizen who was not under arms was ordered to report with pick-axes, shovels, wheelbarrows, etc., for duty in constructing earthworks which were thrown up around the city.

The British advanced a flag of truce to one of the Baltimore barges about four miles from the city, under pretext of forwarding a letter to the Secretary of War, and while their truce officer was detained, he had ample opportunity to observe the new defenses and learn that Fort McHenry had been strengthened by long range guns. His report evidently persuaded Admiral Cockburn to change his plans for an immediate attack, because the fleet sailed up the Chesapeake, taking Havre de Grace, Fredericktown and Georgetown, and occupied Spesutia Island. The British stayed in the upper part of the bay all summer, sacking several towns on the Eastern Shore and menacing Annapolis; and from another encampment near Point Lookout, they patrolled the Potomac and the Patuxent sections until the Chesapeake Bay was under their control.

On August 8th, fifteen of their vessels again moved up in sight of Baltimore prepared for an attack, but when they saw that the fortifications around the city were promptly manned, they withdrew, and in a few days the fleet moved off and occupied Kent Island, from which place they marauded the Eastern Shore and Anne Arundel County. In November most of this fleet left for Bermuda to be repaired, returning in the spring of 1814 with reinforcements.

Although the British fleets had been blockading the Chesapeake and ravaging its shores almost within sight of the City of Washington for over a year, there were on June 1st, 1814, but 2,208 soldiers of the regular army in the whole district from Norfolk to Baltimore. On July 2nd, the Tenth Military district was formed, consisting of the State of Maryland, the District of

Columbis, and that part of Virginia lying between the Rappahannock and the Potomac. On July 9th, General Winder, commanding that district, whose entire force of regular troops was between 700 and 800 men, suggested that 4,000 militia should be called out, 2,000 of whom should be stationed between the South River and Washington, and 2,000 in the vicinity of Baltimore.

On August 20th, General Winder's suggestion was approved, and on that same day the British fleet, accompanied by a corp of Wellington's Invincibles which had been released from the French War, ascended the Patuxent River and forced Barney to burn his fleet of gunboats, which had been furnished by the people of Baltimore. Disembarking at Pig Point the British army marched to Upper Marlborough, and at daylight on August 24th, General Ross began his advance on Bladensburg, where the Washington troops were joined by 2,000 volunteers from Baltimore.

The morning report of this recently organized American army consisted of 400 regular troops, 500 marines, and 4,000 militia, and when the fight occurred the Americans were routed in the presence of the President and his Cabinet. The Battle of Bladensburg decided the fate of the City of Washington, which President Madison was forced to evacuate, while the British wantonly burned the Capitol, the Navy Yard, the White House, and other public buildings. Emboldened by their success, the British returned to their ships and within several days sailed for Baltimore.

Early Sunday morning, September 11th, 1814, the flag signal at "Steeplehouse Farm" was again observed to be flying, and when this was verified by the appearance of the enemy, three cannon were fired on the Courthouse Green in Baltimore to summon the militia to their appointed places. Evidently intending to attack Baltimore from the south and the rear because of the strengthened defenses at Fort McHenry and along the eastern side of the city, the British first attempted to make a landing on the Bodkin Peninsula, but the shoal water prevented a close approach of their ships to the shore, and when their landing boats were fired upon by a company of the Twenty Second Regiment (Anne Arundel County) which was posted behind the trees on the bluff,

The preservation of Fort McHenry as a national shrine is an accomplishment that marks the perseverance of a group of Baltimoreans who have attempted to create a real monument to the American Flag by properly placing the traditions of their city in our national history.

When the news of the Battle of Lexington was received in Maryland, the provincial council expressed its support of the revolutionary cause by enacting laws to raise troops and prepare fortifications for defense. A battery of artillery was raised in Baltimore and in the spring of 1776, when the British were operating in the Chesapeake, 250 negroes were employed to cut logs ~~and timber~~ for a boom that was stretched between Whetstone Point and the Lazaretto, to keep their ships out of our harbor. Earthworks were thrown up and 18 guns were mounted at Whetstone Point to defend the town and this fortification, which was the beginning of Fort McHenry, was commanded by Captain N. Smith. The Maryland ship "Defense" was rapidly completed and manned and placed under the command of Captain James Nicholson, who went out and drove the British from the bay and recaptured their prizes; and in June following, Captain Nicholson was commissioned by the newly created government to rank as the first officer in the United States Navy.

During ^{the} ~~our~~ colonial period the American provinces developed considerable trade with the West Indies, and an abundance of easily worked iron ore and the necessary timber from the surrounding forests enabled the people of Baltimore to quickly build their own ships as needed, without depending on outside sources for materials. Baltimore was rapidly becoming a preferred shipping point to the islands because of the excellence of Maryland grain and flour, ~~and~~ when the Revolutionary War interrupted this growing trade, ^{and} many of her merchants and shipowners turned to privateering. During that ^{and} ~~period~~ 248 privateers and letters of marque sailed from this port and because of its activities, the population of the town doubled and grew rich from the spoils of British commerce.

Although the United States gained their political independence by the Revolution, ^{the people} we found when the war was over, that our ^{land} commercial rights were restricted by the Treaty of Paris, to the thinly settled section south of the St. Lawrence, east of the Mississippi and north of Florida. Without credit and unable to absorb the production that had been stimulated by the armies during the war our infant republic ^{was} staggered ^{by} under this trade limitation, when suddenly the French Revolution broke out and was succeeded by twenty years of persistent warfare in Europe against Napoleon. This condition practically isolated the western hemisphere from its old trade connections and in turn created a demand for our excess grain, flour, tobacco and timber from abroad and in the West Indies, that would have relieved our commercial depression; but Great Britain strenuously asserted the power of her old Navigation Acts, which had been the primary cause of our revolt, and ^{with anyone} (would not permit us to trade ~~outside~~ ^{except herself} of our own domain.) We then realized that we had not gained that full liberty which our Revolution had promised, and Jay was sent to England to negotiate a new treaty, ^{but} ~~by~~ the submitted terms were so unsatisfactory and the resentment became so acute that President Washington, in 1794, recommended plans for another war against Great Britain.

In this emergency the people of Baltimore decided to strengthen the defenses of their city at their own expense, and employed Major J. J. Ulrich Rivardi to build the present star bastion fort, with upper and lower batteries; and when completed the enlarged fortification was named for James McHenry, a Baltimorean who had served on Washington's staff during the Revolution and was Secretary of War 1796-1800. Major Toussard was ordered to examine and report upon the defenses by the War Department so that Fort McHenry might be placed under the control of the Federal Government. Fort McHenry was garrisoned by regular troops in 1799, although federal jurisdiction was not assumed until

January 30th, 1816, when the Maryland Legislature ceded this reservation of twenty six and one half acres to the United States Government, which area was later increased to fifty two and three quarter acres by similar Act of the Maryland Legislature dated May 28th, 1834.

For several centuries Great Britain had dominated the commerce of the world, but in the early years of the 1800's, American shipyards were busily turning out swift moving vessels that evaded the British navy and successfully landed their cargoes in France and in the West Indies. This provoked those English interests that hoped to force the United States into the war as her ally and she perceived that if this condition continued America would be her maritime rival when the war was over. Insisting upon her right to search all vessels for contraband, she determined to break down this sudden growth of American shipping and the British Navy patrolled our coast in their efforts to enforce their Navigation Acts, until our commerce was threatened by British Orders of Council and French Imperial Decrees that we were practically forbidden by either nation to trade with the other.

In 1800, Napoleon persuaded the King of Spain to secretly cede Louisiana to France and order New Orleans closed to foreign navigation. This not only closed the water outlet of the western section of the United States and abrogated our treaty of 1795, but it so disturbed the settlers ~~section~~ west of the Alleghenies that talk of secession from the Union became widespread, and everyone realized that if England should take New Orleans from France during the war that was going on, the United States would be surrounded by an intolerable band of British trade regulations, which would prevent our natural expansion in the west. In his efforts to avoid a war with France, Jefferson sent a commission to negotiate the Louisiana question with Napoleon, who was preparing an expedition to take possession of Louisiana at the time. Being convinced that if French troops were landed on American soil it would cause the

United States to side with Great Britain, Napoleon decided to sell Louisiana as the best way out of a difficulty and said when the sale was ratified: "This accession of territory by the United States establishes forever the power of the United States and gives to England a maritime rival destined to humble her pride".

Great Britain promoted sectional discord between the States by using New England shipping for her own ends while she blockaded the more southerly coast and seized its shipping in her efforts to prevent their commerce with France and the West Indies. Continuing the practice that she had established during our Revolution, her officers boarded American vessels and impressed our seamen into the British navy or put them in prison if they refused to serve. This activity was, at first, limited to merchant ships, but after Nelson's victory at Trafalgar, the arrogance of her navy was uncontrolled and in 1807, they made an unprovoked attack on the U. S. Frigate "Chesapeake" off the capes of our bay. The weakness of Jefferson's policy in his efforts to avoid a war and in particular the failure of his Embargo Act encouraged England to deny American rights until, on June 18th, 1812, the United States, with an empty treasury and with seven frigates in its navy and about 5000 men in its army, was compelled to declare war upon Great Britain, the richest nation in the world, that had at its disposal more than 1000 warships and corps of trained soldiers.

The commerce of Baltimore had grown by leaps and bounds and its population had progressively doubled in each of the several decades that followed the Revolution until, in 1812, Baltimore had become the third city of commercial importance in the Union. When the British blockaded the Chesapeake Baltimore shipping again turned to privateering as it had done during the Revolution. ^{Am} More privateers sailed from Baltimore during the War of 1812 than from any other port ^{American} and their activities marked the city with England's particular hatred. Modeled for speed and equipped

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they withdrew and crossed over to North Point, on the opposite side of the river.

That afternoon General Stricker, commanding a militia brigade, composed of the Fifth, Sixth, Twenty-seventh, Thirty-ninth and Fifty-first Regiments of infantry, 150 riflemen, 140 cavalry, and 75 artillerymen with six four-pound guns, went down the Philadelphia Road and turning to the right at Long Log Lane (now the North Point Road) marched to the Old Trappe Road, where the main body spent the night. The cavalry was sent forward about three miles to Poplar Heights and the riflement were posted in the tall grass and behind trees about one mile to the rear of the cavalry, to act as supports if they should be attacked.

The British fleet of more than fifty sail anchored in Old Roads Bay inside the mouth of the river, and at three o'clock on the morning of September 12th, they began to land their troops from the transports on the low shores inside of North Point, above what is now Fort Howard. This force of 9000, comprising 5000 veterans of Wellington's Invincibles, 2000 marines and 2000 sailors, were landed by seven o'clock, and the frigates and bombing vessels moved up the river and took their positions in a large crescent line in front of Fort McHenry and the Lazaretto.

Planning a joint attack against Baltimore by land and water, the British army, under the command of General Sir Robert Ross, deployed over the surrounding country and began its advance by way of the North Point Road to Poplar Heights, where General Ross took breakfast at the house of Joshua Gorsuch, on the farm that had been occupied by the American cavalry the night before. About noon, the main body of the British having arrived, General Ross continued his advance up the North Point Road, and shortly before 1 P. M. suddenly came in contact with an advance party of 150 infantry, seventy riflemen and ten artillerymen with one four-pound gun, under the command of Major Richard K. Heath, of the Fifth Maryland Regiment, who had been ordered forward to reconnoiter. As he emerged from the woods, General Ross was killed; and

Major Heath, seeing that he had a superior force to contend with, ordered his men to fall back upon the American battle line, which was posted in advance of the juncture of the Old Trappe Road and the North Point Road. The Fifth Regiment, with its right resting on Bear Creek, extended its left across the North Point Road. At its left were the Twenty-seventh and the ~~Thirty-ninth~~ ^{Thirty-ninth} Regiments. The Fifty-first was posted at right angles to the ~~Thirty-ninth~~, facing a marsh and Back River in anticipation of a flank attack which the British actually attempted, while the Sixth Regiment was posted in the rear to act as a reserve.

The fight at this point lasted about an hour and a half, when Stricker, realizing that he was opposing the main body of the British with a force only about one third as strong, retreated back to the position on the hill occupied by the Sixth Regiment and later retreated to ^{North Point on} the Philadelphia Road, where he ~~would have better protection during the night at~~ Worthington's Mill, where Herring Run crosses that road. Next morning he fell back to the entrenchment of Roger's Bastion, ~~the remains of which may still be seen~~ in Patterson Park, ^{where} ~~where~~ the original breastworks have been marked by the Society of the War of 1812 in Maryland, with a parking of old cannon that were used in the conflict.

The British next morning advanced as far as Orangeville on the Philadelphia Road, extending their right nearly to what is now Clifton Park. Here they carefully studied the vast earthworks which had been thrown up from the water-front, beginning near the old Sugar House at Canton and running along the face of Hampstead Hill to the west of Broadway, with other detached emplacements, stretching to a hill just south of what is now Greenmount Cemetery.

This large display of defense disconcerted the enemy, who were already demoralized by the death of their commander, and hearing that their fleet had been unable to pass Fort McHenry, they decided to retreat. About three o'clock on the morning of September 14th, they made their departure, so noiselessly that the Americans did not discover it until after daylight.

Heavy iron chains supported by a number of boats which had been sunk in the channel to prevent the British from entering the harbor, had been stretched between the Lazaretto and Fort McHenry, and a line of hulks had been sunk in the channel of the Ferry Bar Branch to prevent their ships from getting behind the Fort. At daylight on the morning of September 13th, the British fleet opened fire on Fort McHenry, which was bombarded until seven o'clock on the morning of September 14th. Besides round shot and rockets, more than 1500 bombs, weighing nearly 250 pounds ^{each} ~~a piece~~, were fired at Fort McHenry and the Lazaretto, but the British were unable to take a single position, while the recoil from the heavy discharge of their own guns so weakened their ships that they were compelled to stop firing and withdraw.

Fort McHenry was defended by 1000 men, commanded by Major George Armistead and distributed as follows: One company U. S. artillery under Captain Frederick Evans, and one company Baltimore Fencibles under Captain J. H. Nicholson manned the bastions of the Star Fort. One company Baltimore Independent artillerists--Captain Charles Pennington, one company Washington artillerists--Captain John Berry, two companies Sea Fencibles--Captain M. S. Bunbury and William H. Addison and a detachment from Barney's Flotilla under Lieutenant Rodman manned the upper and lower batteries, while 600 infantry--detachments from the Twelfth, Fourteenth, Thirty-sixth and Thirty-eighth Regiments under the command of Lieutenant Col. Stewart and Major Lane--were stationed in the moat between the walls of the fort and the outer batteries to oppose any landing that the enemy might attempt to make. Many of the artillerymen had seen service on privateers out of Baltimore and were efficient in operating the twenty-four pounders on the bastions and the 42's that were in the water battery.

Before dawn on the morning of September 14th, the enemy attempted a surprise attack from the rear by sending a regiment of 1200 men with scaling ladders in small boats up the main branch of the Patapsco between Fort McHenry and Cromwell's (now Wagner's) Point, but Captain Hancock's company of the

the twenty second regiment, which was patrolling that position, heard their muffled oars and lighted a hayrick on the shore. This threw them in full view of the six-gun battery and Fort Covington further up the river, and the terrible crossfire from these batteries and Fort McHenry soon forced them to return to their ships.

When the British army was encamped at Upper Marlboro preparing for its attack on Washington, Admiral Cockburn had made his headquarters at the house of Dr. Beanes, the leading physician of that town, under agreeable conditions of mutual courtesy, but when they were returned to their ships from the pillage of Washington, small groups of stragglers followed the main body plundering the homes that they passed. Dr. Beanes put himself at the head of a small body of citizens, who pursued and arrested some of them, and when the British commander heard of this he sent back a detachment to release the prisoners and arrest Dr. Beanes. Francis Scott Key, a personal friend of Dr. Beanes, hearing of this outrage, obtained permission from President Madison to intercede for his friend.

Key was instructed to go to Baltimore and report to Col. John S. Skinner, the Government agent for flags of truce, who was ordered to accompany Key. Sailing down the bay on one of the swift moving dispatch pilot boats that had been evolved in this section, they found the British fleet off the mouth of the Potomac River preparing for the expedition against Baltimore. Explaining his mission, ~~Key~~ made a strong plea for Dr. Beanes and spoke of the care and attention that had been given to the British wounded, until the British commander relented and promised that Dr. Beanes would be released after the attack on Baltimore; but that in the meantime, neither he nor Key would be permitted to leave the fleet. Key was quartered on the frigate "Surprise", which was commanded by Sir Thomas Cockrane, a son of the fleet commander, and when the British arrived at the mouth of the Patapsco, Admiral Cockrane shifted his flag to the "Surprise" and moved up the river to superintend the attack on Fort McHenry, while Key and Dr. Beanes were sent back on board the

the American vessel accompanied by a guard of marines to keep them from landing.

Anchored amid the enemy transports in Old Roads Bay, below Sparrow's Point, they were fortunately so placed that they could see the whole bombardment and Key watched every shell that fell. Hearing the cannon of Fort Covington and the City Battery, who fired on the British soldiers when they attempted to get behind Fort McHenry, and sensing the lull which followed as their boats were escaping, Key wondered if Baltimore had fallen. Pacing the deck as dawn broke, and observing the British troops as they returned to their transport, he was relieved to see that "Our flag was still there". In the exultation of that moment, Key wrote the "Star Spangled Banner" which by popular acclaim is conceded to be our national anthem, and when the British withdrew and they were permitted to return to Baltimore, the words were immediately set to music.

Although the American army had been on the defensive for over two years, and its several campaigns against Canada had been dismal failures, our small navy, with the wonderful assistance of the privateers, had captured fifty six British warships, over two thousand armed merchantmen and millions of dollars worth of materials, several thousand cannon, and thousand of prisoners. England's boast that Britannia ruled the waves was humiliated and, following her defeat at North Point and Fort McHenry, she consented to the treaty of peace which was signed at Ghent on December 24th, 1814.

The War of 1812--Our Second War of Independence from Great Britain--has been called by some a needless war. It is true that it might have been prevented if the United States had submitted to England's demands, but when one counts the attainments, few things in our nation's history have produced greater results. It completed our Revolution by winning that independence which we had hoped to attain, and, by breaking the States away from those influences of our old colonial life which were holding back our proper

development, it established a national spirit for our Union. It freed American politics and policies from European standards and gained a respect for the United States among the governments of the world which permitted us to work out our own system for the betterment of the country.

The experience of our privateersmen and of our citizen soldiers in their sturdy defense of Baltimore encouraged a healthy spirit in the young men of our city, many of whom, stimulated by the successes that we had won by the war, entered the merchant marine service and carried the name of Baltimore to all parts of the world. The Baltimore Clipper became the standard of swift sailing ships in the seven seas, and the period which followed was the day of Peabody, of Johns Hopkins and other merchants who helped to develop the prestige of Baltimore as one of the leading seaports of the world.

Fort McHenry was continuously used as a garrison post until 1914, when the art of war had become so changed by modern guns and high power explosives that its usefulness as a fortification had passed. During the World War one of the largest military hospitals in the country was built on its reservation and was maintained for several years thereafter, caring for thousands of wounded and otherwise disabled soldiers, until it was finally evacuated. By Act of Congress, Fort McHenry has been made a national shrine--the birthplace of the Star Spangled Banner--; and, restored as it was during the War of 1812, its glory will still live as the real monument to the American Flag and to the gallant defense of Baltimore, the only large city on our Atlantic coast over which an enemy flag has never flown.