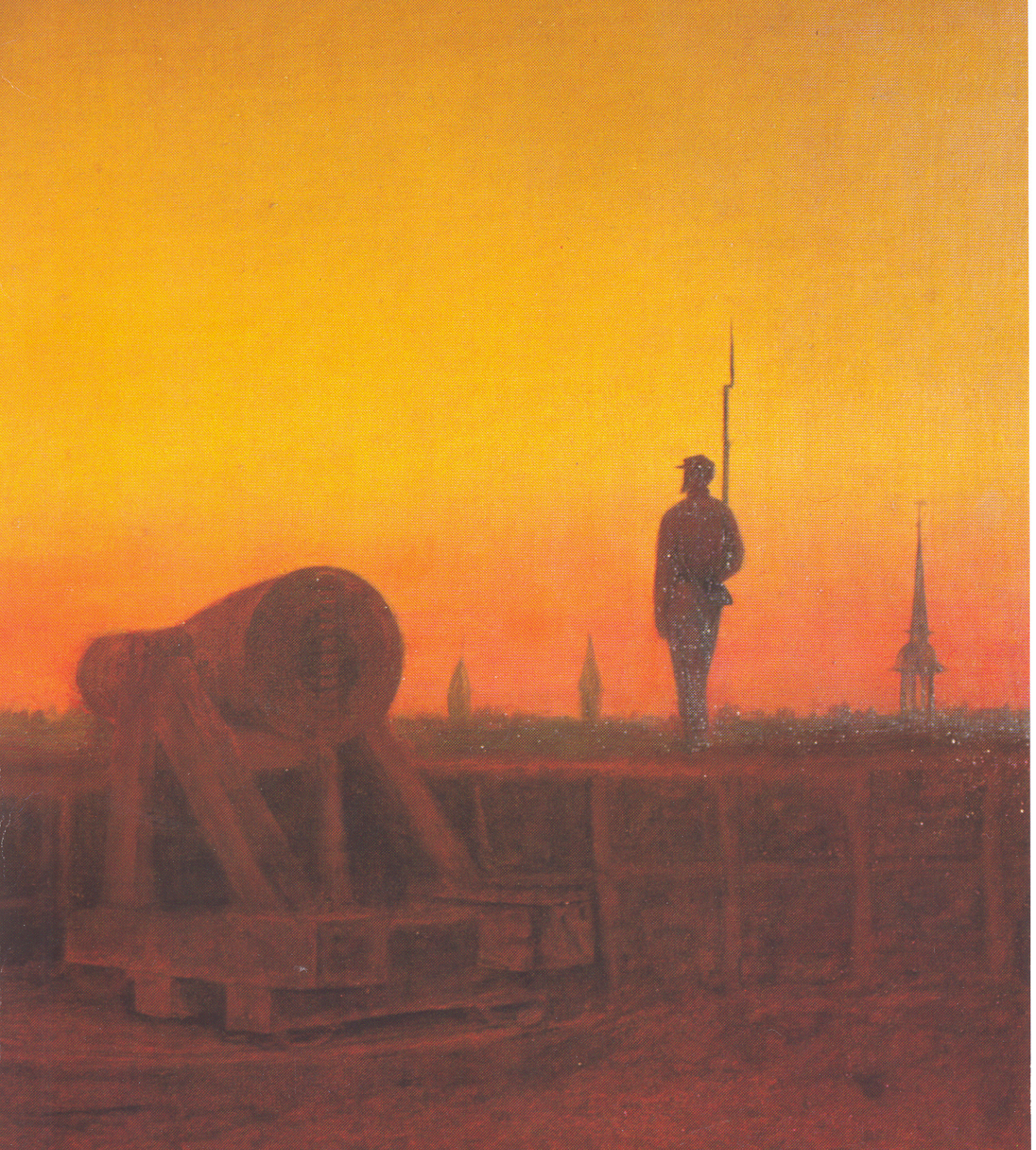


FEDERAL HILL

A Baltimore National Historic District

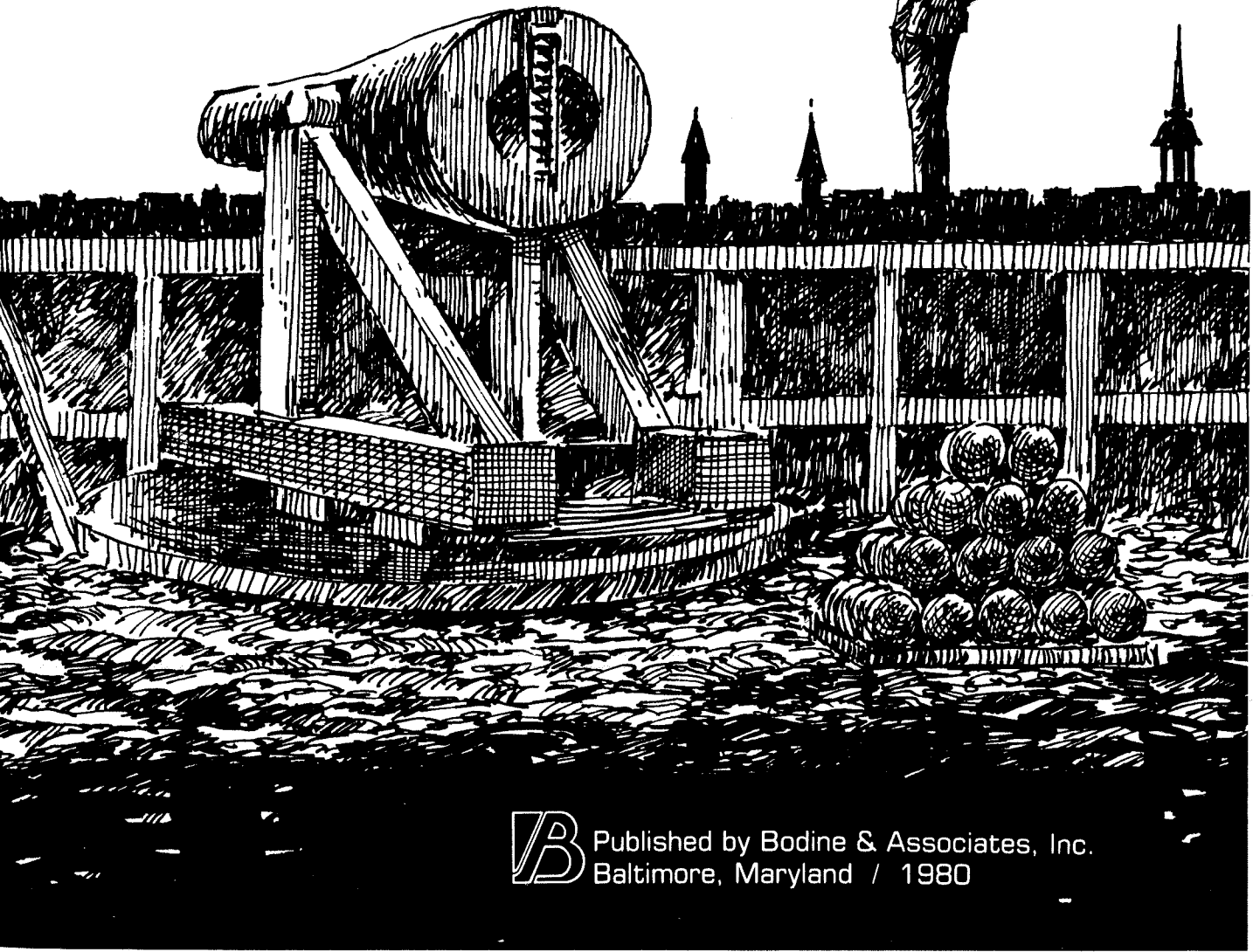


NORMAN G. RUKERT

FEDERAL HILL

A Baltimore
National Historic
District

by
Norman G.
Rukert



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FEDERAL HILL

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District



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Foreword

Over the years, local history has not fared too well on American turf, outside of the New England states. The Baltimore story has been told only in piecemeal fashion and one reason why may be the historic attitude of Maryland academics, now rapidly changing, that the only history worth researching is that of national or world scale.

It is the special value of "Federal Hill" and books like it that it helps to reverse this negative trend. It shows us that small locales, on the contrary, when treated in depth, can have rich meanings and, indeed, be mirrors of the American experience over three centuries.

Novelists know this and Norman Rukert feels it instinctively for he develops it in an engaging manner . . . the day-to-day and the person-to-person things that have shaped this all too little-known East Coast landmark.

We must remember from the start that Federal Hill, well within the memory of the Spanish-American War generation, was merely a battered mudpile of no great charm, let alone beauty. The smooth, pyramidal mound we know, with its orderly pattern of trees, is a creature of modern times, no older than the Ragtime age.

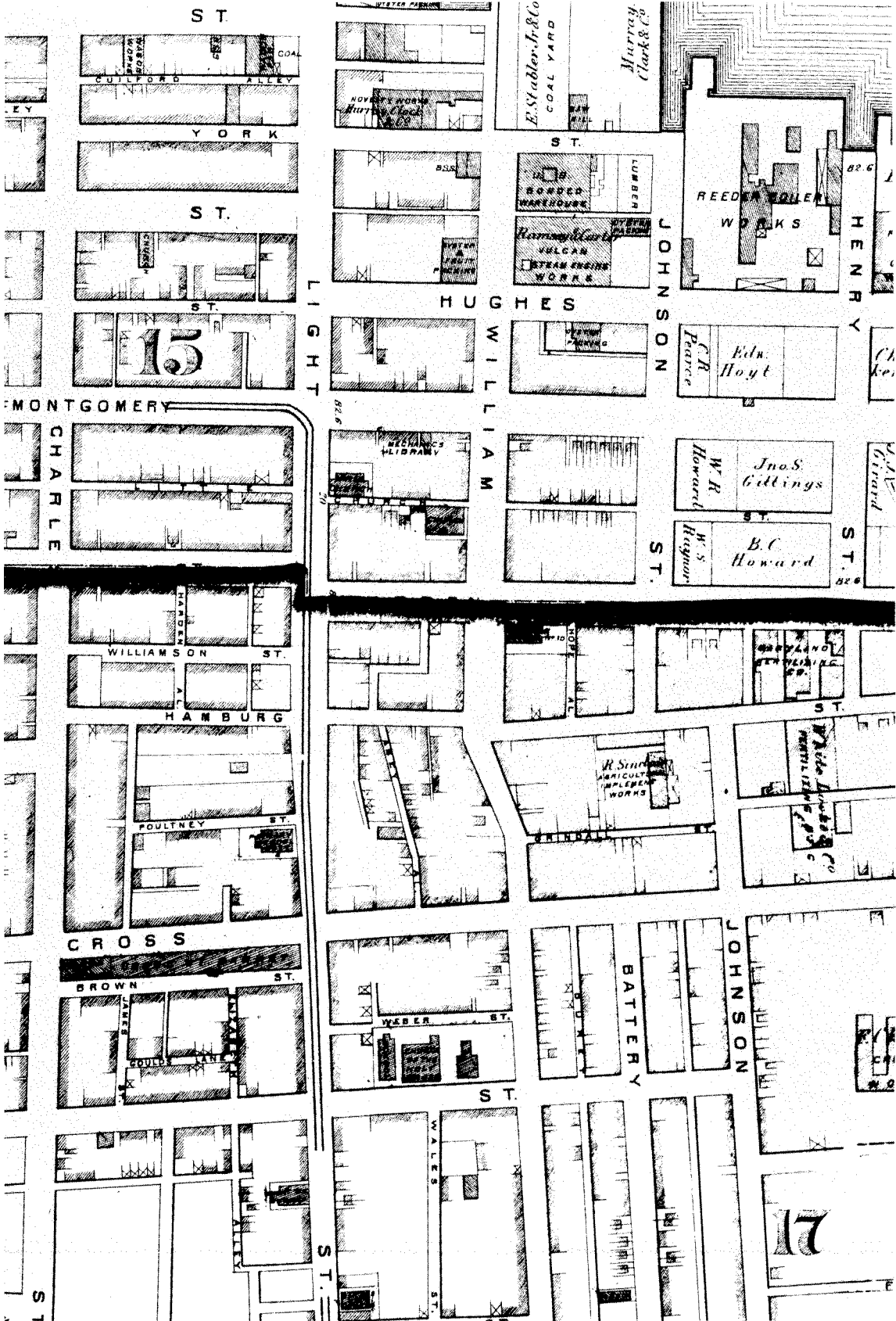
Yet Federal Hill is far older, as the author well knows, and he reaches back into its storied past over and over again in well-researched flashbacks. Here was launched the last of the great Baltimore clippers and here occurred the first armed occupation ever of a major American city by the United States Army.

These are the better-known moments of Federal Hill and what gives it its star quality, insofar as Maryland history goes. The big harbor hump, however, has an industrial lesson to give us, as well as intriguing folk tales. It was the birthplace of the city's glass industry and important, too, in shipbuilding and food processing.

The author balances these more formal elements with the hill's role in maritime adventure and folklore. He tells the story of Old Mike, the alcoholic hermit; of the great pig hoax of 1830, of the vanishing Egyptian circus mummy and — perhaps strangest of all — the eerie folly of the steamship *Howard Cassard*, the huge "seagoing Pullman car" that was shaped like a knife blade and never took a single paying passenger anywhere.

Through its 300 years, the real Federal Hill emerges, the hill of great sandy caves, of Indian legends and slave escapes, of saloon fights and fire department riots, of volunteers and prisoners, brewers and ladies' men. Nearly a century ago one Federal Hill launching created a lovely image for this great fort-shaped place that never fired a shot in anger. A covey of white doves, instead of the usual champagne smashing, was released to launch a ship. We hope Mr. Rukert's newly launched history has similar smooth sailing.

Carleton Jones



ST.

CULFORD ALLEY
YORK

ST.

ST.

ST.

15

MONTGOMERY

CHARLE

WILLIAMSON ST.

HAMBURG

FOULTNEY ST.

CROSS

BROWN ST.

COULT

ST.

LIGHT

WESTER PARK
NOVETY WORKS
MUTUAL

SOLO

979

WILLIAMS
LIBRARY

10

10

VADER ST.

ST.

VALES ST.

E. Stabler, Jr. & Co.
COAL YARD

Murray
Clark & Co.

ST.

BONDED
WAREHOUSE
LUMBER
VULCAN
STEAM ENGINE
WORKS

HUGHES
WILLIAM

978

W. R. Howard
Jno. S. Gillings

JOHNSON

ST.

BATTERY

JOHNSON

17

REEDER & SONS
WORKS

Edw. Hoyt

W. R. Howard
Jno. S. Gillings

W. S. Haynes
B. C. Howard

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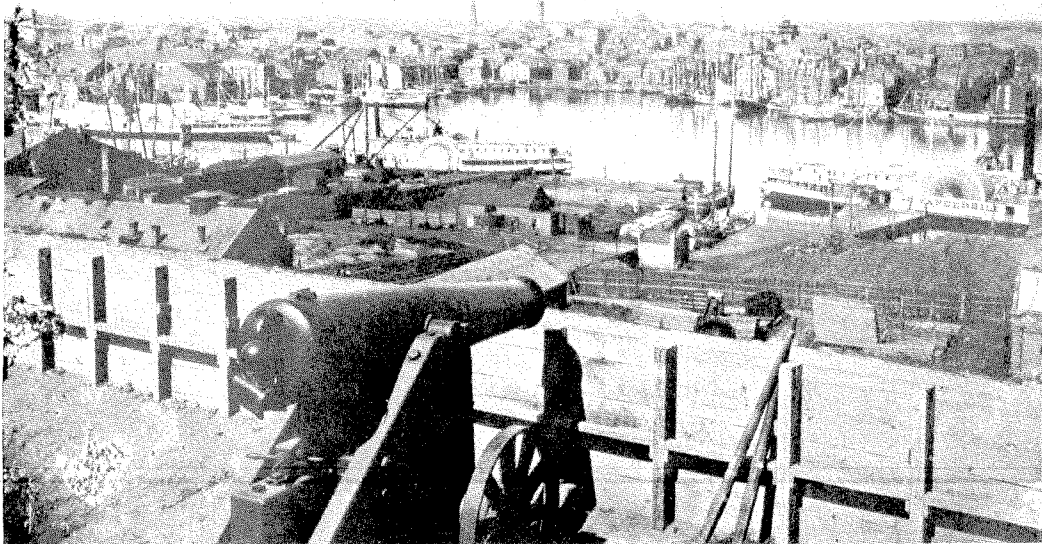
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The Changing View of Baltimore from Federal Hill



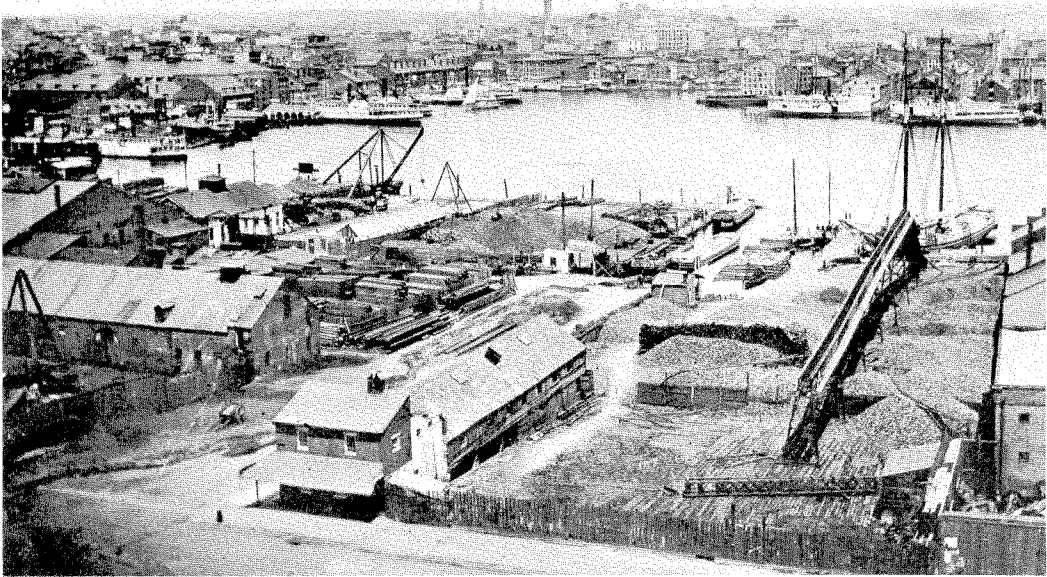
1830

—*Enoch Pratt Free Library*



1863

—*Enoch Pratt Free Library*



1873

—H. Graham Wood



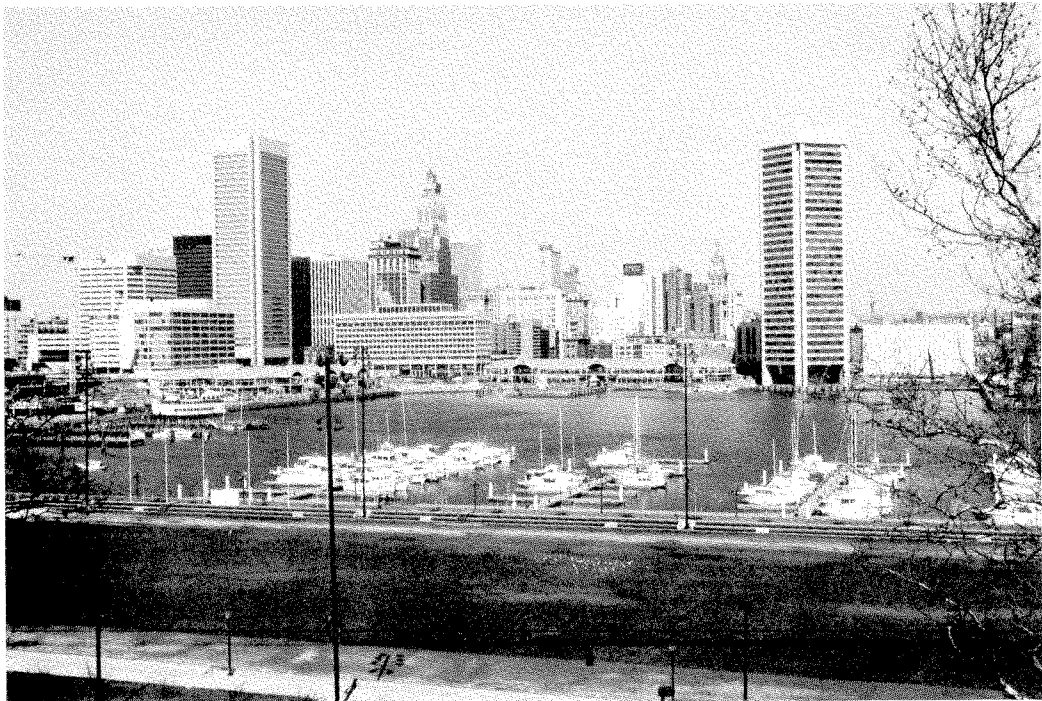
1900

—Henry F. Rinn



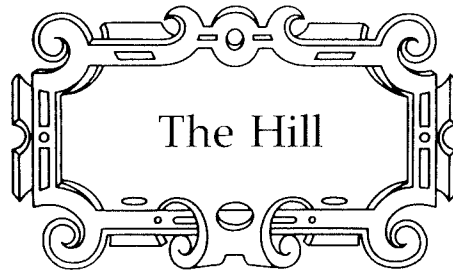
1950

—William Marlow



1980

—The Hughes Company



As it stands today, Federal Hill park overlooking Baltimore's inner harbor is 4½ acres of trees, grass, shrubs and pathways at the top and about 9½ acres of mother earth and rock at its base. The entire park is a memorial to the Revolution and the hectic days that followed. In the northeast corner, there is a monument to Major George Armistead, the man who commanded the land forces at Fort McHenry during the War of 1812.

No spot in Baltimore is surrounded by more legends and traditions than Federal Hill, and also, no other spot affords the fine view of Baltimore's harbor and skyline than the one that can be had from the hill. Though most of the hill's history has accumulated for the past 200 years, the area's written record actually goes back into the remotest of Maryland's exploratory history.

Captain John Smith, the English explorer-adventurer, sailed from Jamestown on June 2, 1608, in company with seven men described in his journal as "gentlemen" and seven others listed as "soldiers." This, the first of Smith's two voyages of exploration on the Chesapeake Bay, lasted nineteen days—a brief period indeed, considering the number of points at which the three-ton open barge stopped to make observations. After passing the "Straits of Limbo" (presently the vicinity of Hooper Island), at the southwestern extremity of Dorchester County, the explorers crossed the bay to the Western Shore. Sailing past many shallow creeks, Smith entered the first navigable river, which he called "Bolus," now the Patapsco river. At the conclusion of his trip up the Patapsco, he wrote that he had seen "a great red bank of clay flanking a natural harbour basin." The hill thus described was known to early settlers for many years as "John Smith's hill."

It is extremely doubtful that John Smith ever revisited the basin, but it is likely that his apt description engendered the interest of other Englishmen when reports of his discoveries reached London.

The present name of Federal Hill dates from December 22, 1788, when a great celebration followed the Maryland General Assembly's ratification of the Federal Constitution. A procession was formed on Philpot's Hill in Fells Point to celebrate this great event. Artisans, merchants, and professional men were represented, and each guild and organization displayed its distinctive banner. Commodore Joshua Barney, naval hero of the Revolution, had a conspicuous part in the festivities. He had a small boat built, which though only fifteen feet in length was completely rigged as a ship. Appropriately, he named the tiny ship the *Federalist*. Mounted on four wheels and drawn by as many horses, *Federalist* was commanded by Barney and manned by a crew of "captains," themselves heroes of the War for Independence. After being paraded through the principal streets of Fells Point and other parts of the city, *Federalist* was



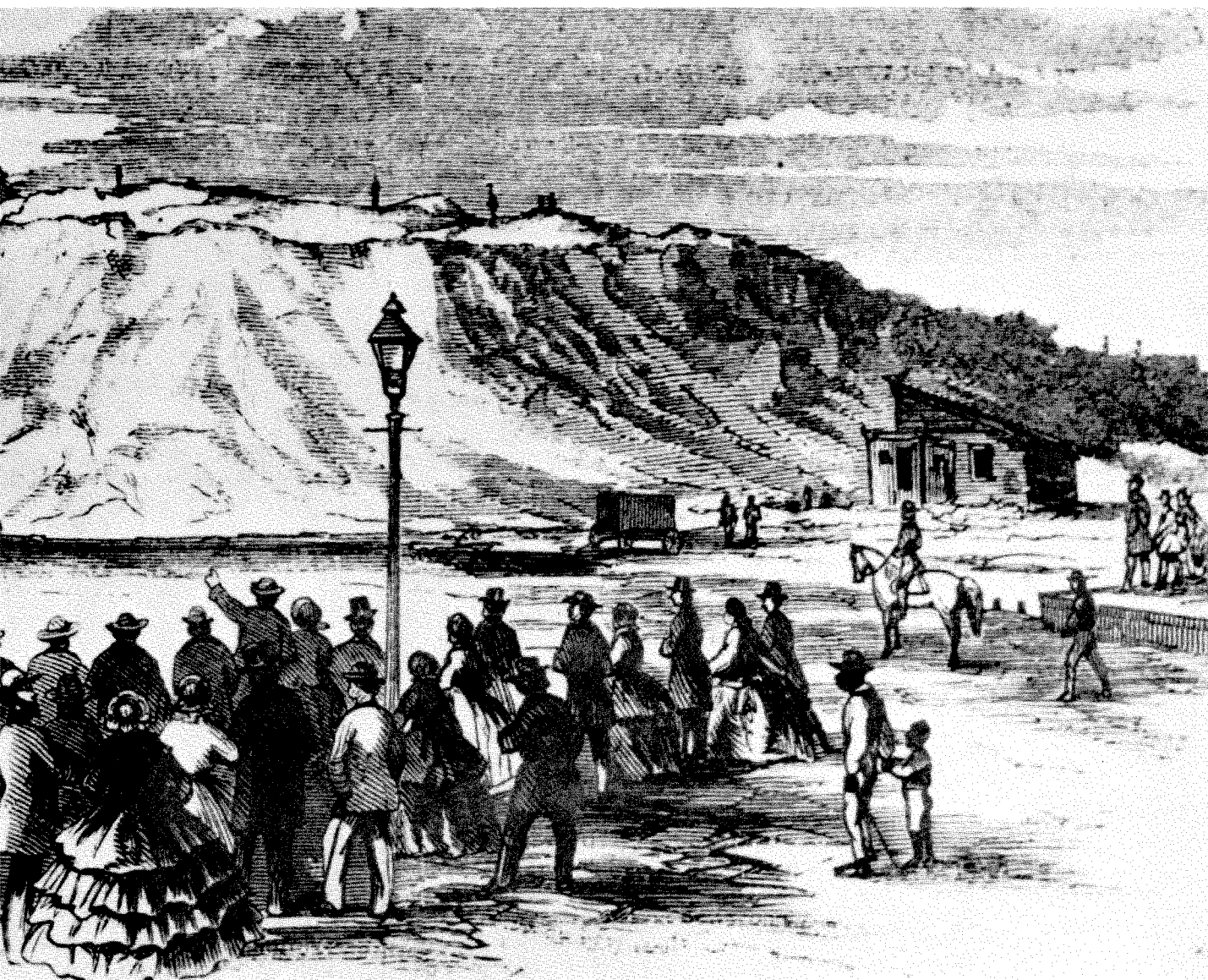
The Hill from the Northwest, c.1850

launched and anchored at the foot of the great bank southwest of the basin, which by popular acclamation then became and has since remained known as Federal Hill.

On the hill on that eventful day, four thousand persons sat down together at dinner; the environs rang with cries of "Huzzah for the Constitution!" The celebrants consumed 500 pounds of ham, 1,000 pounds of beef, 15½ barrels of beer, 240 gallons of hard cider and 9½ gallons of peach brandy. The evening was ushered in by a giant bonfire and the festivities of the day concluded with a fireworks display.

The bill for the party—which came to exactly 200 pounds sterling and was paid by William Goddard, editor of the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, and George Salmon, president of the Bank of Baltimore—included an item of 1 pound 10 shillings for "carting provisions, etc. to Federal Hill."

It was well after midnight when most of the celebrants went home. But Commodore Barney longed for a command and so in the early morning hours he called together a crowd of men and boys to help him slide his little ship carefully down the hillside into the water. Then getting aboard, he sailed majestically down the harbor and out into the broad river, having given Annapolis as his destination.



—Enoch Pratt Free Library

Word of his exploit preceded him and off the mouth of the Severn he was hailed by a vessel carrying an invitation from the governor, General William Smallwood. He spent three days in the capitol as the guest of the governor, being feasted and made much over. Taking to sea again, he went down the bay to the Potomac river and then sailed up that broad river to Mount Vernon, where he presented his vessel to General George Washington as a gift from the merchants and shipmasters of Baltimore. General Washington acknowledged its receipt in gracious terms in a letter to "William Smith and others" of Baltimore. The replica remained in the Potomac at Mount Vernon for two months until it was torn from its mooring and sunk by high winds.

Had a bold plan that was proposed in 1838 been realized, Federal Hill might have disappeared forever. In November of that year, Dr. Thomas H. Buckler proposed a novel plan to fill up the basin from Pratt street to the west side of Jones Falls by leveling Federal Hill. Buckler's scheme contemplated the extension of Calvert, South, Commerce, Gay, and Frederick streets, Marsh Market Space, Concord street, and West Falls avenue across and over the basin, and the opening of Camden, Conway, Barre, Lee, York, Hill, Hughes, and Montgomery streets eastward to intersect West Falls avenue.

Dr. Buckler contended that adoption of his proposal was necessary to the health of the city, and that commercial and financial advantage would also accrue. The removal of Federal Hill would not only extend the view from the city, but would admit fresh air from the river. Transportation between virtually separated parts of the city would be greatly facilitated, and land would be created which would, when sold and improved, add at least \$9 million to the city's tax base. The measure would also eliminate the noxious and pestilential waters of the shallow stagnant basin.

Buckler's plan was laid before the City Council, debated, and referred to a committee; a report by Benjamin H. Latrobe demonstrated its financial practicality by showing the cost for actual filling to be only \$764,346, not including the cost for damage to existing property rights. After much discussion in the press and a very great opposition from shoreline property owners, the plan was dropped.

During the early part of the Nineteenth Century, Federal Hill became a favored location for public events and festivities of all sorts. In 1819 General Andrew Jackson was honored with a 21-gun salute from the hilltop. Five years later, the guns fired again—this time in honor of the Marquis de Lafayette, the Revolutionary hero, who was enjoying his final visit to the United States. The general entered the city at Forrest street (now Light) and at the intersection of Montgomery street he passed under a beautiful arch which spanned 40 feet, flanked at each end by another of fifteen feet. Above the smaller arches were the inscriptions "Brandywine" and "Yorktown", and on the principal arch the words "Welcome Lafayette." As the General passed through the Federal Hill area he was greeted everywhere with cheers and the waving of handkerchiefs. The song "General Lafayette's Waltz," was published for this occasion and came the most popular of all tunes written in his honor.

Not all the gatherings on the Hill were peaceful. In 1851, a mob of several hundred people angered at the execution of 50 American citizens in a Cuban revolution, stormed through the city streets carrying an effigy of the American consul in Havana, who apparently had been less than effective in trying to save his countrymen. Upon reaching Federal Hill, the effigy was burned.

The events which followed the election of President Lincoln—the secession of South Carolina and the Gulf states, the rapid rise of the flames of wrath on both sides, and ineffectual efforts to bring about a peaceful settlement, were watched from Federal Hill with intense interest. The majority of Baltimoreans sympathized with the South, but scarcely more than a handful advocated the secession of Maryland, devotion to the Union under the Constitution being the majority sentiment. As events hurried on, however, the division of sympathies became more and more pronounced, and men began to side with North or South.

At a late hour on Friday, April 12, 1861, a dispatch was received from Charleston, S.C., announcing that the attack on Fort Sumter had begun. This news was received in Baltimore with teeming excitement which waxed ever more intense during the following four years.

At noon on April 18, a mob of Southern supporters went wild with glee and ascended the hill with a flagpole, a Confederate flag, and a cannon. They hoisted the flag and began firing a salute of the one hundred guns, but a band of Union supporters stormed the hill driving the rebel sympathizers off. In short order, the rebel flag was burned and the cannon cast into the basin.

The Union men then ran up the American flag and a squad of police came to help protect it. When it looked as if there might be trouble, one of them, Sgt. Ed Daneker, tore off his badge and coat, pulled out his revolver and shouted that he would "kill on the spot" any man who attempted to tear the flag down.

The next day—one of the darkest days in the history of Baltimore—a mob attacked the soldiers of the 6th Massachusetts Regiment as they marched from the President Street railroad station along Pratt street to the Camden station. Deeply as this riot was to be regretted, it did not justify the rage and hatred which was manifested toward Baltimore by the Union.



Major General Benjamin F. Butler

—National Archives

Somewhat informally, it had been agreed by Union Army leaders that Baltimore was within the geographical area of Major General Benjamin Franklin Butler's newly created Department of Annapolis. At Relay, Baltimore was only a tantalizing eight miles away. With the 6th Massachusetts aching to square accounts, the temptation was too great for the ambitious General Butler. He had received a number of communications from General Winfield Scott's Washington headquarters calling attention to arms reportedly being gathered in Baltimore and to openly rebellious activities going on there. As he put it later—and with a lawyer's logic—how could he seize these arms and stop these activities without going there? He saw one big drawback—General Scott was known to have separate plans for dealing with Baltimore when more troops became available. General Butler resolved to act promptly and without the orders he knew would be denied.

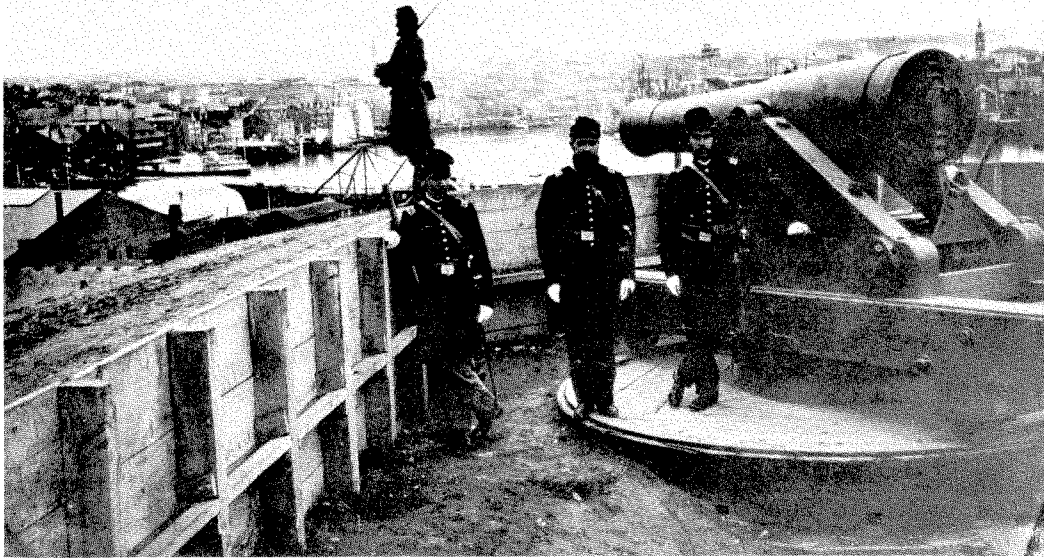
The move against Baltimore was planned in great secrecy. Above all, no hint of the pending action was allowed to reach General Scott. General Butler decided to use an old military ploy, misdirection. He would send a picked contingent to Frederick to arrest Ross Winans, the leading exponent of secession in the legislature and he would then slip the 6th Massachusetts into Baltimore at sundown and occupy Federal Hill overlooking the ship basin. Federal Hill was ideally situated. Artillery placed on the high ground could reach most of downtown Baltimore. It could be supplied by water, if need be, and supported by fire from the mortars of lightly garrisoned Fort McHenry on the tip of the peninsula.

On the afternoon of May 13, a train was made up at Relay. Two locomotives were used, one in front and one in the rear. The first two cars were loaded with troops going to Frederick to arrest fiery old Winans. The remaining cars carried the 6th Massachusetts and the Boston Light Artillery Company. Then, in full view of spies around the camp, the train pulled out in the direction of Frederick as if to carry out a demonstration against the Rebels at Harpers Ferry. Two miles out of Relay the train was stopped. The front section was uncoupled for the run to Frederick. After a suitable delay, the longer rear section reversed direction and headed back through Relay for the Camden station in Baltimore.

It was a textbook operation. Ross Winans was arrested without a fuss. The 6th Massachusetts, with the artillery company and its six pieces, detrained at dusk. The march began in the midst of a terrific thunderstorm. People stayed indoors. The occupation of Federal Hill went almost unnoticed.

General Butler immediately wrote a proclamation to be published in the local newspapers. He began by saying "A detachment of the forces of the federal government under my command have occupied the City of Baltimore, for the purpose, among other things, of enforcing respect and obedience to laws." He banned the display of any secession flags or banners, and directed all state military officers to report to him. Under his direction, his men hastily constructed fortifications and gun emplacements on Federal Hill. General Butler directed his largest cannon at the Maryland Club on Monument square, known to be the local hotbed of Rebel dissidence, and issued the following order to his artillery commander: "If I am attacked, please open on Monument Square with your mortars."

When the unruly population of Baltimore awoke on the bright spring morning of May 14, they could see Federal Hill sprinkled with tents and bristling with artillery



Officers of a Union battery on Federal Hill, 1861

—*Enoch Pratt Free Library*

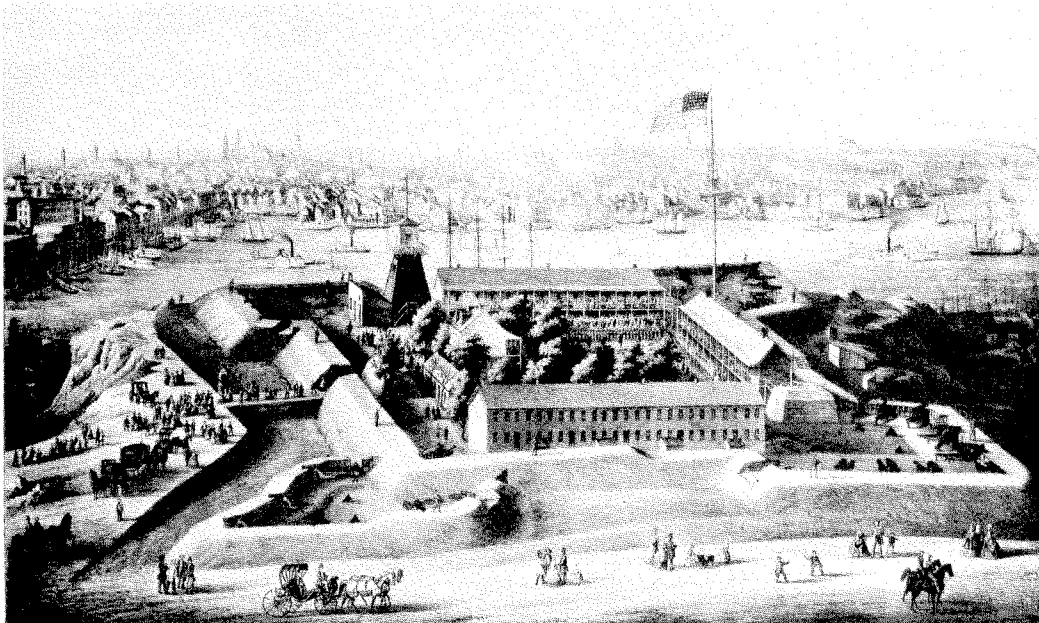
aimed right at them. And there, stretched to the breeze, was a flag with 33 stars and thirteen stripes—and it remained there unchallenged.

On May 15 “for his hazardous occupation of Baltimore without the knowledge” and approbation of General Scott, General Butler was recalled to Washington; General Cadwallader was appointed in his stead.

The United States Government had now resolved to hold Baltimore for the duration of the war and made extensive additions to the fortifications at Federal Hill from time to time. Colonel Brewerton, of the United States Topographical Engineers, planned and executed the work, supervising from 250 to 400 men of the New York State Zouaves as well as 80 mechanics and laborers and eighteen horses and carts involved in constructing the battlements. By November of 1861, “Fort” Federal Hill was fully protected and armed, and by the following January, barracks for 1,000 men had been built. Alfred Davenport, a member of the New York Zouaves, has provided a description of the Fort as it stood on October 10, 1861:

“The hill on which it is built is a very admirable site for a fortification. When standing on the parapet the visitor can have but one opinion as to its commanding position; and in the event of an attack, it could resist any force brought against it. It is an immense square fortification—the space inside being nearly four acres in extent. The earthworks would be half a mile in length if extended in a single line, thus affording shelter for a large body of men, who could keep up a fearful fire of musketry in perfect security, while the columbiads and other siege guns were admirably planted for dealing out death and destruction.”

The breastworks of the fortification were nine feet high and fifteen feet through at the base and formed of compacted red clay dug from the hill. The three large bastions, equipped with eight inch guns, commanded the river and all parts of the city. An eighty-foot well had been dug to provide fresh water.



Fort Federal Hill, lithographed by E. Sachse & Co., 1862

—Maryland Historical Society

Davenport also wrote a description of the soldier's daily schedule that could have been written of any army camp removed from the front in any war, but some of the troops' off-duty escapades are peculiar to encampments in border-state cities during the Civil War.

"Guard Running" (AWOL) for an evening on the town was a common occurrence, and often the Yankees would become embroiled in brawls in "secesh" taverns.

In one instance, however, love was the victor. A young New Yorker became enamored of a young lady residing on the Hill. The girl's father, unfortunately, was an ardent secessionist, and had given his daughter's hand to a Rebel described "as great a coward as ever lived, and in principle so mean that a clock would not tick while he was in the room." The young lady detested the fiancé her father had selected, and resolved to marry the dashing Zouave. An elopement was planned and the couple set off on a Sunday morning and were married by the Reverend Mr. Thomas at the Broadway Baptist church in Fells Point.

By the Spring of 1862, a calm at gunpoint had settled over Federal Hill. The *Baltimore American* reported on June 16, 1862:

"The Seventh New York Regiment made their usual dress parade . . . within the works of Federal Hill and there were scarcely 800 ladies and gentlemen present. Many occupied the balconies of the barracks and had a fine view of the movements. Afterwards there was a burlesque regimental parade and those who witnessed it declared that it was one of the most laughable scenes they ever witnessed. The parade lasted for an hour and the performance of the band, the brass instruments consisting of long stove pipes, and the drums of empty flour barrels excited greater laughter."

Thanks to the outstanding collection of Civil War memorabilia of two young men of the Federal Hill area, Robert L. White and William A. Kulick, one is able to

learn about the life of the enlisted men who served in the Union Army at Fort Federal Hill. Twenty-five year old Abial P. Randall, who enlisted on July 22, 1862, at Lockport, N.Y., made these entries in a diary now in the collection of Messrs. White and Kulick:

“August 25th—We arrived at Camp Belger [located north of Madison and North avenues, south of Druid Hill park] about 8 A.M. after a long train trip from Lockport. It is a nice place situated on a hill about a mile west of the city of Baltimore and in good view of it. It is covered with an oak grove. A large reservoir is situated between this and the city with a large fountain in the center of it throwing a large column of water to, as I should judge the height of 30 feet.

August 26th—This morning I feel very much rested after a good night's sleep. The boys feel good. I have not yet heard any grumbling, we are first rate. There has been no time since I enlisted that I have felt so hearty or healthy and I think it is so through camp. I have not heard of a man being sick yet. There are a good many rumors afloat about our leaving here.

August 28th—Left Camp Belger for Federal Hill a distance of three miles through the city. At about half past ten o'clock while drilling orders came to prepare to march and in less than one hour we had our baggage all packed, our tents rolled and we with our load on our backs and gun in hand, as we received this morning, were formed into line, with each officer at the head of his Company. The word of the command was given and we were off. When we were about halfway through the City a number fell out of the rank from exhaustion and fatigue not having been very well. I was ordered by the Colonel to help take care of them, so by this means I got a ride on the street car, with my baggage by my side instead of on my back trudging in the hot sun. Federal Hill is a fort situated on a hill from which it derives its name, in the southern part of the city at the head of one arm of the Chesapeake Bay and has a good command of the City and harbor, the barracks are nearly new and very good. There is an observatory from which we can see all over the city and surrounding country for miles in all directions very plain. I have already been into it which is free unless we use the telescope, quite a large one, then ten cents. We can see a good deal from our barracks over the city and harbor. There are a number of forts within sight. Our barracks are divided into two floors, ours is on the lower floor so there is another Company above us. During the day the boys were writing letters and a few gambling, the latter mostly in another place.

Sept. 1st—Today I have been detailed with Ed Phillips to keep our barracks clean. This is for Co. A. It has to be swept five or six times a day, and this is our day's work. As you would like to know what I am about from day to day I will give you the general orders of our day's work when not on guard or other duties. At five in the morning at the beat of the drum, which beats for everything, we get up. Roll call immediately. From six to seven—drill. Seven to eight—breakfast. Eight to eleven—drill. Twelve to one—our dinner. Two to four—drill. Five—inspection of quarters, from six to seven—dress parade. Seven to eight—supper. Half past nine—roll call. Ten—lights out. Our drill is part time with our guns and part at the cannons.”

Abial P. Randall was killed on June 3, 1864 at the battle of Cold Harbor, Va. while helping to carry a wounded colonel from the battlefield.

The Union Army supplied the enlisted personnel with stationery which showed a picture of Fort Federal Hill with the City of Baltimore in the background.

Here are excerpts from a letter written by Pvt. John L. Hasel on September 3, 1862 to his sister in Lockport, N.Y.

"This pleasant working finds me with pen in hand ready to greet the rising of the sun, and as its golden beams shoot heavenward, I ring voice in adoration to him who gives existence for another day and soon the gentle wind from the distant ocean comes and lifts the vapors from off our soldiers' home and we go forth to the duties for another day. The picture of the above engraving is a most perfect picture of the quarters which we at present occupy and which I think you will pronounce a "very pleasant place" for soldiers to live in. In the upper story and at the north end of the building seen on the right is the present quarters of our company. The bed-steeds consist of wooden bins in which two can comfortably sleep, they arrange these one above the other, our room is about twenty feet wide and thirty long so that about 100 men can sleep in it. At six o'clock each night the whole regiment comes out on dress parade to be reviewed by the Colonel and hear the general orders. We are fixed up splendidly upon this occasion: we all have to polish our boots, then we all have on white cotton gloves which gives us a very gentlemanly appearance. The other night at the parade General Wood was in to see us, he is a very dignified-looking man though somewhat advanced in years. After the parade is dismissed we all go to supper. After we have eaten our supper we wash our dishes and go back to our quarters and raise h--l until nine o'clock then the roll call and we all go to bunk for the night. When on guard duty it is somewhat lonesome for a fellow to keep walking on the ramparts of the fort all night. We are not wholly out of danger neither, for sometimes a devil from the other side of the bay will send a bullet after us. Last night we had some fun at our poor fellows expense, about eleven o'clock last night a dog came up to northern side of the fort and tried to scale the wall. He was probably attracted there by the scent of the throw-away victuals when the frightened guard fearing lest the dog might be a man in disguise cried halt but the doomed dog kept advancing and the guard fixed upon him and dead dog was he. So we had a good laugh at the frightened soldier. This morning they marched us out of the fort and about two miles and a half down the bay where we all went swimming in the salt water of the bay. It is the first time that I was ever in salt water and we had a fine time. In this letter you will find some gravel stones which I picked up on the shore of the bay and which I am sending you as specimen."

Somewhat more specific was a letter written by Pvt. R. Erckemeyer on July 25, 1862 to his wife in New York City:

"I wrote you a few lines this morning and begin now to write you about our visit to Baltimore. At 7 o'clock yesterday morning McFarlan Otis and myself began to black our Gumboots [shoes] to put ourselves in fighting trim and with our passes in our pockets we started off for Baltimore. After a short sail we landed in Fells Point. The harbor is a very nice sheet of water but it does not compare with the Bay of New York or does the shipping look near as numerous. The street we went up in a very wide one [Broadway] and the houses are not

built like any part of New York as most of them seem to be private residences and all of them have little yards around them. We took the street car there for Druid Hill, a sort of a park about a mile outside of the city. We landed within $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile of the park. At the end of the car line we took an omnibus and got safely into the park. We had expected to find something like the Central Park in New York but were agreeably surprised when we looked around us. There is a very little art in Druid Hill Park but the trees are oak and the whole surface covered with luxurious grassplots. The park was as Great as a Sunday morning during Church time. We took right to the woods and all we wished for was to have our families all along and have a picnic under one of the glorious old kings of the forest. In the middle of the park was a small pond with ducks, etc. and a number of visitors were seen sitting here and there in the shade with their books, etc. and other good things with groups of children playing in the grass. Nearby we visited a reservoir which supplies the water to the City of Baltimore. The finest part of it was a fountain throwing up the water in 6 or 8 solid streams up to the height of 20 to 30 feet. The next move we made was to get in the Washington Monument. If you look at the picture of Baltimore you will see the Monument as it stands on Monument Square. After a walk of about $\frac{1}{2}$ hour we got to the foot of it. We certainly did not expect to see such a grand sight as this monument. We went in and went up to the gallery you will notice on the picture of this monument. You cannot imagine what a beautiful sight Baltimore is. On the top of the monument which is 200 feet above the highest hill in Baltimore the city looks like a map spread out before you. The houses and people look like holes in the floor. After that we went and had a very good dinner and then went back to the barracks.

PS Please send \$5.00 greenback. I have got money enough but might want some more."

For the next four years, Fort Federal Hill was manned by various units of the Union Army. On April 3, 1865, news of the evacuation of Petersburg and the capture of Richmond was received in the city, the next day a salute of one hundred guns was fired from Federal Hill by order of General Morris, commanding general of the 8th Army Corps.

Following the close of hostilities, Union troops remained in Baltimore until an order was issued announcing that "the provost-marshal's department will cease to exist in this command on the 31st of January 1866." The reign of the military governors and the occupation of Federal Hill had come to an end, and the Hill's residents looked forward to ensuing years of peace with eagerness.

George H. Elmer was born in Pittsburgh, Pa., on December 2, 1849, and his family moved to Federal Hill in 1854. He wrote "Reminiscences of Federal Hill in 1861" in 1925, two years before he died, but the manuscript was not published until it appeared in the *Baltimore Magazine* in May, 1952. His story allows one to view life as seen through the eyes of a twelve-year-old boy during the most troubled period in the history of Baltimore:

"One rainy Saturday night, a short while after war was declared between the North and South, General Butler arrived on Warren Street (afterwards changed to Warren Avenue) with a regiment from Massachusetts. As they ar-

rived, before their supplies of tents and provisions, my father, Louis Elmer, and several other Union men of the neighborhood secured the keys of old No. 10 School and opened the schoolhouse to the soldiers as a shelter from the storm. The next morning it had cleared off and the Union People of neighborhood welcomed the soldiers into their homes. The following day when their supplies arrived, they pitched tents on the hill; and planted a pole on the northeast end of the hill and hoisted the American flag."

"After a short time the Massachusetts regiment was replaced by Colonel Duryea's Fifth New York Zouaves. Their uniforms were white canvas leggings, baggy red pantaloons to the knees, little blue jackets, and a red turkish cap with a red tassel. They made a splendid appearance on parade, also a splendid target for the enemy. They fought all through the war and most of them were killed. Some years after the war, the survivors, a party of about two dozen, came back to Baltimore to see the old fort which they had built while they camped on the hill. We boys liked these soldiers, and we wheeled loads of dirt on the ramparts to help them build the fort. The hill was mounted with a great number of large smooth bore cannon, and when they fired them, it broke windows of nearby houses."

"After the Zouaves left for the front, the crack Seventh New York militia took possession of the fort. They wore grey uniforms and when on parade they wore white pants. We did not like the men of that regiment; and we called them paper soldiers, because they put on so many airs. We revelled in shooting beans and gravel through our sling-shots at the guards who patrolled the ramparts. The south side of Warren Street was used for a drill ground; so the boys dug holes, filled them with soft mud, and sprinkled dry dirt over them, so that when the companies came out to drill dressed in their pants, they trod in these holes and got their feet and pants full of mud."

"During the war a rumor was spread that the Confederates contemplated making a raid on Baltimore. So the soldiers built a stockade around the fort with branches of trees planted close together so no one could possibly go through them. They also barricaded the streets leading to the fort with hogsheads piled one upon another, filled with sand and dirt; which reached clear across the street. But the raid never matured and the barriers were removed."

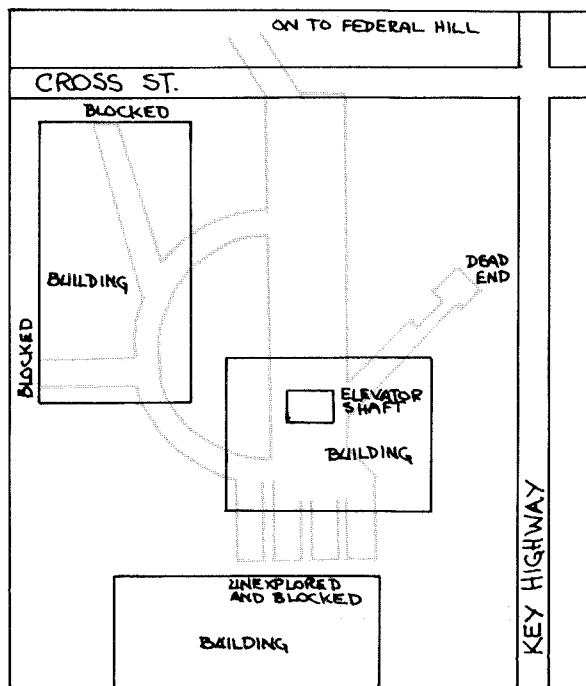
When the Union Army occupied Federal Hill, a number of local residents including Mr. and Mrs. George W. Sumwalt of 425 Hamburg street welcomed the soldiers into their homes. During the first night of the occupation, Mrs. Sumwalt prepared a feast for a number of the enlisted men. Later her husband, a member of the William Street Methodist Episcopal church, organized a Bible class in their parlor for the soldiers.

The small house at 337 E. Hamburg street has been occupied by members of the Frazier family for over 60 years. George Frazier, age 73, maintains the house was used as General Butler's headquarters during the occupation of Federal Hill. The house still has prison bars on the basement windows and an iron door with a grate for passing food through. Also in the cellar, since removed, were iron rings in the floor and wall used to shackle prisoners.

In 1853 the Mayor and City Council passed a resolution for the erection of a public park on the hill, but nothing was done about it for over twenty years. An ordinance was passed on October 25, 1875, for the condemnation of the ground and property, and four years later the site was put under the jurisdiction of the Public Parks Commission. On September 19, 1879, a question was asked by a city councilman as to why the city could not sell Federal Hill, for which they had paid \$76,000 four years previously. After an investigation into the history of the measure, it was found that the original ordinance provided that if it was not used for a public park, the ground would revert to its original owners.

The charm of hidden things discovered lies close around the labyrinth of tunnels which radiate in every direction under Federal Hill. Neither residents of the neighborhood nor historians are certain of the origin of the tunnels, but two answers come frequently from both groups.

One opinion is that the vaults and passages were dug for the mining of sand and clay. Ferdinand Kopp, a German immigrant, was one of those who tunneled extensively under the Hill. Kopp lived at what is now the intersection of Key highway and Battery avenue during the 1850s. He was a building contractor and also sold sand and clay. He propped his excavations under the hill, as miners do, in following the sand veins. The famous "Rebecca pitchers" were made by the Bennetts of clay from the hill and for many years the Rittenhouse Company used it as the basis for terra cotta pipes. The excellent grade of sand found there was used by Frederick M. Amelung, a early glassmaker in Federal Hill. Ferdinand Kopp is as responsible as anyone for the winding subterranean passages under the Hill, although he was certainly not the first to dig there.



Tunnel Diagram (from Baltimore Sun) —Harry M. Robinson III

During the Civil War, tunneling was sometimes used for defensive or offensive purposes. Some historians believe that as Union General Butler built the fortifications on Federal Hill, he strengthened his position with three tunnels. One of Butler's supposed tunnels led north to the harbor as a concealed and protected avenue of supply; another ran west to Camden Station as a means of secret troop movement and the third linked Federal Hill with Fort McHenry to the south. The existence of this tunnel network has never been verified, even though a cache of Civil War-Era grenades was discovered in a chamber deep beneath the hill during the 1920's. The only reference to tunnels in Butler's memoirs concerns the discovery by his troops of a preexisting tunnel and the suspicions it aroused of a Confederate plot to blow up his fortress. Since Butler was never the type of a man to let one of his achievements go unheralded in writing or headlines, it is doubtful that he or the engineers of his command were responsible for any tunneling. Other historians tend to conclude that the Union soldiers only developed and extended the underground chambers which they found, carrying on their operations under the shelter of the buildings themselves, so that the chambers—since they are directly connected with Federal Hill—acted as a hidden entrance and supply house to the fort.

It has been documented that both Rossmarck's and Seeger & Stiefel's breweries used tunnels beneath Federal Hill prior to the Civil War for storage of kegs of beer. The reminiscences of George H. Elmer include the following:

"The caves were dug by men to get the sand for glass manufacturing and building purposes; and sometime before the war, the caves were abandoned. There were six caves running under the hill. Two opened on the south side, facing Cross street and one on the east side facing the shipyards was used to store beer. Two were on the north side facing the city and one was on the west side facing the end of little Church street. The latter was called Kopp's cave and Mr. Kopp lived on the corner of Hughes street, now called Key highway, joining Federal Hill. He kept a saloon there and had a pump on his front sidewalk to which the people of the neighborhood went on hot summer evenings to get a cool drink of water."

"The boys of the neighborhood, on hot afternoons after school hours, went up to the caves where it was nice and cool and played 'I Spy' and different games. One of the caves from the Cross street side met one of the caves from Hughes street, with just a thin partition of sand separating them. You could stand on one side of the partition and hear the boys talking on the other side so they dug a hole through the partition and connected the two. We ran all through the caves, hid in niches dug in the sides and had a delightful time together."

How extensive are the tunnels under Federal Hill?

When in 1944 the United States Printing and Lithographing Company at Cross street and Key highway began excavating for a new building, workers discovered a maze of tunnels. One led to the park, one northeasterly toward the water and group of five fingerlike passages headed south from a central vault. In addition, a spacious corridor connected the northern and southern extremes of the vault on the west side.

In the spring of 1952, two local boys, Fred Crowley and his brother Arthur, were standing in the vacant lot on the southwest corner of Warren and Battery avenues when a large hole opened nearby. Overcome with boyish curiosity, they entered the "cavern" to explore. By the time inquisitiveness gave way to fear, the boys figured that

they had followed the tunnel as far as the Cross Street Market. They reported that the walls of the tunnel were of sand, with niches every fifty feet or so.

Periodic trenching by utility workmen and strange collapses of buildings have exposed other underground voids, and when the current Southern High school buildings at Cross and Covington street were planned, portions of the network were exposed and examined by a team of engineers.

As yet, however, no one has compiled a thorough, accurate, scientific examination of the controversial Federal Hill caverns, colorful legends far outnumbering the available facts.

John Hill Hewitt, a Civil War balladeer said by some to be "Baltimore's most important forgotten literary man," relates in an unpublished manuscript of the 1880's titled "Annals of Baltimore" the story of a rush of citizens to Federal Hill brought about by an anonymous newspaper advertisement:

"On the first of April, 1830, a paragraph appeared in the local columns of one of the daily papers calling the attention of all kind-hearted and humane people to the fact that there was a poor destitute female, with twin infants at the breast, in a sand cave on the north side of Federal Hill in a terribly suffering condition—destitute of food or clothing and exposed to cold winds and rain.

The male members of the several humane societies read the paragraph with stoical indifference for they had their business to attend to, but the ladies, who, we all know, have more of the angel in them than their liege lords, took the matter in hand—it being truly a case fitted to their duties—and forthwith sought the cave which hid from the heartless world so much misery and destitution. They were proud to bear relief to the sufferers; there was quite a rush of tender-hearted females toward the spot, and they found to their great disgust that a sow with a brace of infant pigs inhabited the sand cave at the foot of the bluff without fear of being buried alive under a landslide. They returned slowly to their homes with a mixed expression of features which seemed to indicate anger, mortification and merriment—for they had not thought of it's being All Fool's Day."

The *Sun* of March 4, 1856, refers to the loss of beer by a tunnel cave-in:

"We are told, that a day or two since, two boys who were threading their way through some of the subterranean passages made by the sand diggers of Federal Hill, came upon a deposit which, upon tapping, proved to be lager beer. They first tasted, then drank, became fuddled and then 'How came ye so.' It was subsequently ascertained that there had been deposited, about two years since, in one of these subterranean passages, a large quantity of beer in kegs. Suddenly an avalanche of earth came down which covered the entire deposit. The owner gave it up as a lost operation, and with some slight effect abandoned it. It is now brought to light and said it is nothing the worse for its long imprisonment."

Long-time residents of the Federal Hill community often tell stories of the "caverns" beneath their neighborhood. Here are a few of the tales which have been told over and over again:

A group of Sunday tunnel explorers once stumbled onto several barrels of whiskey. Who left the liquor there no one knew even then—some said a local beer garden

proprietor named Schimmelman, some claimed Rossmarck's brewery workers, and still others suspicioned Butler's Zouaves—but all agree that the discovery prompted a spontaneous and "spirited" celebration.

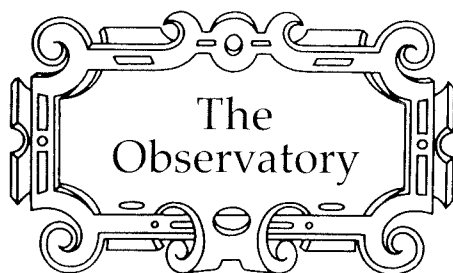
Beyond the tunnel entrance at the southeastern corner of the present park, a "smokey" (Baltimore argot for a bibulous vagrant) named "Old Mike" made his home in a garage. It is said that he would disappear through a trapdoor in the garage floor and remain below for days on end; rumor had it that he had found an unlimited supply of the hard stuff. Mike made his home in the tunnels for many a year, and it was there that his body was finally found.

In the early 1920s, George Frazier recalls, some boys from the Hill had one of their games interrupted by a grisly incident which George is sure none have ever forgotten. When their only ball went over the roof of the old dog pound, it went into a hole and down into the "cavern," as the boys called the tunnel system. Pursuing the ball down below, they came to what they immediately recognized as an Egyptian mummy in its wooden case; the boys' initial horror soon turned to elation, and the news spread through the neighborhood like wildfire. This was about the time of the first "King Tut" craze. Boys of all ages flocked to the vault and opened the case. Unsatisfied, they began to unwrap the ancient corpse. They then commenced dismemberment of the skeleton and, fingerbones to femurs, all became trophies of the discovery. It was later learned that the man who owned the dog pound property had purchased the mummy with a view toward selling it to a local museum, but by the time the news reached the hapless owner and he arrived, there was nothing left but the empty wooden case.



The Armistead Monument

—A. Aubrey Bodine



For all of its legends of caves and cannons, of sieges and wars, Federal Hill in the Nineteenth Century was probably more famous for its skyline to the average casual Baltimorean. That skyline supported signal structures that were the city's main link to maritime industry and, indeed, the world. To find out how this happened and relate how it meshed with the port, we must delve fairly deeply into the naval history of the budding Republic as it was in the 1790's.

A few years after the War of Independence, reports of the Secretary of the Treasury showed that Baltimore had become not only the first port of the Chesapeake, but also one of the first five in the United States. Her vessels were to be found in the Ganges and the Orinoco, in the Thames and the Congo. In 1795, Judge Thomas Jones counted some 6,085 vessels entering the port at North Point in spite of a harbor that was definitely not yet one of the five best on the Atlantic seaboard. Baltimore attained her eminent position and maintained it primarily because her merchants and her maritime community displayed unceasing energy and resourcefulness in making the most of what nature had provided.

One of the first man-made improvements to the harbor at Baltimore was a means whereby merchants could be informed when one of their vessels was approaching her home port. In the words of an early commentator, knowledge of a vessel's nearing port might "afford the merchant an opportunity of saving an insurance premium and the underwriters the gratification of beholding a flag on which they had largely insured." Well before the vessel dropped anchor, customs officials could get their red tape ironed out and quarantine doctors could ready their pills and bleeding cups. Wives and sweethearts could prepare for the sailor's return. In fact, everyone directly or indirectly concerned with waterborne commerce was vitally interested in knowing of the pending arrival of a vessel in port.

When, in 1797, Captain David Porter, Sr., announced that he was about to provide a means to bring Baltimore quicker news of incoming shipping, his efforts at the outset received hearty support. His ultimate achievement benefited the port for more than a century.

Porter has been largely forgotten by Baltimore, but in his time he was one of the best known men in the city's maritime community. He was born in Massachusetts in 1754, the son of Alexander Porter, a Boston merchant and shipmaster. He served in privateer vessels during the Revolution, and after once being captured by the British and taken into Halifax, made one of the most daring escapes recording during the war. He had also been one of John Barry's midshipmen in the revenue cutter service. In 1791, Porter was given command of the USRC Revenue Cutter *Active* and stationed in the Chesapeake.

His command was not an easy one. The colonial tradition of avoiding, if not evading, the King's customs had persisted in the minds of merchants and seamen alike after the Revolution, and there were plenty who were willing to risk jail if they could get a cargo past a not-too-watchful cutter. In addition, both the French and British navies had strong squadrons around the mouth of the Bay with guns double shotted, tompions out, and matches lit, each waiting for the other to start something—and the territorial rights of the Americans be hanged!—they had too little means to defend their dominion. The revenue cutter service was new, and none too well organized, but Captain Porter acquitted himself well, and although he had one or two close calls, somehow he maintained good order afloat.

About 1796, Porter "swallowed the anchor," bought a home on Montgomery street in Federal Hill, and at once became active in the affairs of the port. In company with several other seafaring men, he was one of the organizers of the Charitable Marine Society.

What induced Porter to establish the Marine observatory has not been recorded. Certainly his life afloat had shown him the undeniable usefulness of such an institution, but the reason may have been only that the boredom of life ashore influenced him to seek some touch with the sea. Whatever his motivation, he advertised on March 10, 1797, in the *Federal Gazette*:

"PROPOSAL

For the erection of a Flag-Staff on the highest ground on Federal Hill

DAVID PORTER

Proposes to build a Look-out House, and raise a Flag-Staff on Federal Hill, that early information may be obtained of ships and vessels coming up the Bay."

He further proposed to equip the station with "a good telescope and perspective glasses," and to have "suitable signal flags prepared."

In return for his own and his station's services, he sought three hundred subscribers at \$2.50 annually, half to be paid in advance to finance the construction of the lookout house. Each subscriber who was a vessel owner would have his "private signal" (a banner of distinctive design and coloring selected by the owner in order that his vessel might be identified at considerable distance). The observatory was to fly an identical signal upon sighting that at the masthead of an approaching vessel. Each subscriber would receive a printed copy of all the signals of the port. He would have free access to the observatory and preferential use of the telescope and glasses. Those not subscribers were required to pay twenty-five cents each time they sought admittance.

The subscriptions apparently came in quickly, for on April 7, 1797, Captain Porter informed the public that the flagstaff had been erected, that the observatory would be completed "with an expedition," and that "as good a Telescope as can be procured in London" was expected. At the same time, merchants with vessels then at sea and equipped with private signals were invited to inform Captain Porter of the designs of those signals so that he might promptly report sightings of their vessels. Evidently, however, so few merchants were using private signals that general signals were fixed for use until better arrangements could be made. These general signals identified the type of vessel approaching (ships, schooner, brig, or sloop) but not the owner. Other signals indicated groups or combinations of vessels approaching.



Captain David Porter's Observatory

—*The Baltimore Sunpapers*

Even in the observatory's earliest days, Baltimore's maritime community was quick to see its practicality and anxiously awaited its completion. On May 8, Porter advertised that the signals were ready for delivery on the 9th and that "Care shall be taken to make the observatory answer the purpose for which it was intended." He went on to say, "Time will show the utility of the work, and I flatter myself merchants and others who feel themselves interested in this intelligent undertaking, will endeavor to encourage the same." With that, the subscription price went up to \$3 a year.

Two days later, the general signals first flown on the flagstaff were discontinued, and the new private signals were inaugurated. No copies of these signals are known to exist in the "card" form which Captain Porter gave to each subscriber. They would be of more than passing interest, because many of the private signal flags, like coats of arms, were handed down from father to son or from one business firm to its successor. Some are carried today on yachts whose owners' ancestors had hoisted them on packets and clippers a century ago.

The earliest extant signal list is that with which "Captain Porter has, for the information of the public, politely favoured the publishers of the *New Baltimore Directory & Annual Register*." This list gives fifty-six private signals and the ensigns of the city-states of Bremen and Hamburg, both of which were greatly interested in the Baltimore trade. Among the private signals listed were such firms as John McKim and Son, "Green Flag with a white ball and white fly;" William Patterson, "Red above, white below, the letters WP in the white;" Paul Bentalou, "Blue and white, checkered;" Alexander Brown, "Red on top, white strip, red on bottom with a B in the red."

The method of using the signals was, as Captain Porter wrote, "on a scale easy to be understood." When sighted through the telescope by the observatory, the signal flown as the masthead of the approaching vessel was hoisted on the Federal Hill flag-

staff, there to be easily seen from every part of the harbor and business district. When a second vessel hove in sight, a small cannon was fired to alert the port to the change in or addition to the flag hoist. Foreign vessels were indicated by their respective national ensigns being hoist. There also seems to have been some scheme whereby, through the use of large canvas or basketwork balls being hauled aloft, other information, perhaps the position of the inward-bound vessel, could be conveyed. Knowledge of this latter system, however, has not survived.

The observatory on Federal Hill became to all who entered the port the most prominent landmark of the town. It was depicted on almost every view and mentioned in every guidebook up to the turn of the twentieth century. The hill itself, "a beautiful and commanding eminence, on the south side of the Basin" rose about 75 feet above the water. On its crest was a two-story frame house, evidently Porter's residence, and the look-out house itself. The latter was a square pyramid thirty feet high with a projecting balcony. A "watcher's room" had a window in each side giving an unobstructed view of the whole land- and waterscape downriver. A flagstaff stood atop the roof, and there were other masts. An eventual four were erected in the dooryard and the yard itself was enclosed by a high board fence.

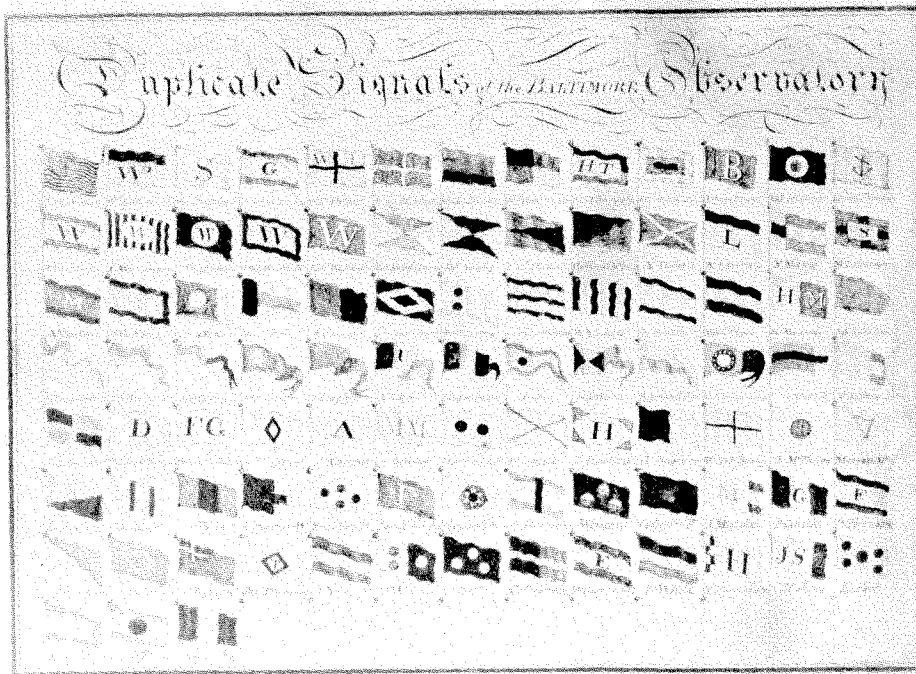
Even though the observatory was fully functioning in May, the real opening came on July 4, 1797. Not since the celebration following the ratification of the Federal Constitution had Federal Hill seen such a fete. Captain Porter's program was announced in the newspaper as follows:

"OBSERVATORY

The Citizens are respectfully informed that the observatory will be illuminated This Evening. The fire works of various forms will be exhibited but no squibs [firecrackers]—a proper place is prepared for this exhibition. . . . The morning of this memorable day will be ushered in with the discharge of the Observatory Artillery. At 10 in the evening the citizens who may please to honor the observatory with their company, shall have a Federal Salute and a rocket for each gun. The Fire works will be as follows; wheels horizontally and otherwise, a discharge of one of Buonaparte's conquering Pistols—this scene will be open by the drawing of the cork of a bottle of Porter which will turn into a volcano. A collation and the very best liquors will be provided; the proprietor of the observatory earnestly solicits the patronage of the citizens, every exertion shall be to please. . ."

By 1800, it was reported that "the observatory proves . . . of the greatest utility," and there was no question of the success of the undertaking. Just why and when Porter left the observatory is unclear. Perhaps he was drawn by the smell of spent powder wafting up the river from the guns of HMS *Leopard* after she inexcusably attacked the USS *Chesapeake*; the old privateersman would have looked to the future and wanted to be on hand for the first chance at the "red ensign."

Captain Porter's longing, if indeed he foresaw renewed hostilities between America and Britain, was not to be fulfilled, even though he did enter naval service. One of his sons, David Jr., had enlisted in the United States Navy during the Revolution (he served as a midshipman in the Baltimore-built USS *Constellation*). By 1807, the younger Porter had risen to command the New Orleans Naval station, and in that year his father was appointed sailing master to serve under him. It was the son's sad duty



The Signal Chart of 1806

—Maryland Historical Society

on June 25, 1808, to report to the Secretary of the Navy, "I have the honor to inform you that Mr. David Porter, Sailing Master, departed this life on the 22nd inst."

Two charts of the private signals of the merchants of Baltimore have been preserved as relics of Captain Porter's tenure at the observatory. These are water colors dating c.1802 and 1806 respectively. The earlier includes 50 flags, the ensigns of Bremen and Hamburg, and an ominous but doubtless often-flown pennant which denoted "vessel aground." The later chart gave 92 private signals, attesting to the growth in the number of Baltimore sea-traders during the era of neutrality, just preceding Jefferson's Embargo. Comparison of the two signal charts also brings to light an important factor in the growth of the port's foreign trade; in addition to the "Old Baltimore" firm names, those of French, German, and Irish merchants appear on the 1806 chart in such proportions that the chart is an important piece of evidence in the commercial history of the port.

No one has discovered the identity of Porter's immediate successor; the observatory must, however, have been relatively inactive business of the long embargo during the War of 1812.

Some time before 1830, the observatory came under the management of Thomas L. Neilson and John L. Dudley, both of whom were also associated with the Merchants' Exchange, then the focal point of all of Baltimore's sea trade. Neilson and Dudley extended the observatory's watch system by building, about 1832-33, another lookout located at Bodkin point. There the watcher could see well down the Bay, and hoisting a signal on his mast, the colors were picked up at the observatory; here a signal was repeated and a third watcher in the upper story of the exchange building itself announced the impending arrival of the vessel, then perhaps some 65 miles away.

About 1846, a third lookout station, at North Point, is said to have been in operation; but if so, it is difficult to see a sound reason for its creation, unless some structure had been erected cutting off the view of the Bodkin Point station. There may, however, have been no reason whatsoever, since when Neilson died in 1859 his eulogist remarked that the deceased had been "noted for eccentricity of character."

In the year of Neilson's death, Baltimorean Henry J. Rogers, co-worker with Samuel F. B. Morse on the magnetic telegraph and a close friend of Dudley, devised a semaphore system for use at the observatory. As the system did not come into general favor, it was quickly dropped and the old system of private signals was reinstated.

One of Neilson's watchers was Thomas W. Lawrence, who, so it is said, spent his time when his eyes were not at the telescope, nor his hand on the signal halyard, making watercolor copies of the signal charts. These he sold for two dollars each. One of them, dating from the period 1843-57, has been preserved through a poor reproduction in the *Sun* of April 19, 1908. Watercolor copies, though, had been superseded by 1852, when a large color lithograph with ninety-seven signals and a portrait of the ship *Alexander*, flying the flag of Alexander Brown and Sons, was issued. That chart was followed in 1860 by another lithograph with 104 flags, including six national ensigns, one of which was to the maritime world a very new one, that of the Rising Sun of the Japanese empire. A view of the observatory itself decorated the chart.

Throughout the Civil War, the observatory, now managed by George U. Porter and Marcus L. Dudley, was surrounded by the breastworks of Fort Federal Hill. A print of the fort during the war period shows not only the staff on the Lookout house but also the four other staves bare of signals. Whether the Federal troops stopped the operation of the observatory is not known, but it would appear that they did.

When the City of Baltimore condemned Federal Hill for a public park in 1875, the proprietors of the observatory offered to construct a new and in their opinion more pleasing building at their own expense if they were allowed to continue business on the site. By July 1885, Messrs. Porter and Dudley had removed the last stick of the old structure. The proprietors themselves did not build the replacement; the Park commission did the work, appropriating \$8,000 (the original had cost but \$750) for the new observatory. It was completed in 1887 and thereafter the commission collected an annual rental of \$325; \$200 for the observatory, and \$125 for an ice cream stand on the first floor.

The work of the commission certainly was not the equal of that of the original developer. His look-out house, stark and clean, with its almost modern lines, stood the storms of 88 years. Not so the Park commission's structure, which, festooned with Victorian gingerbread decorations, was reported within a year of its opening to be "six inches out of plumb from last winter's gales." Windows were continually being broken, and the building itself "rocked ominously under storm pressure."

But by then there was little work left for the signal station. Faster and more accurate communications than flag hoists had been devised. On June 7, 1899, the past proprietor, Marcus Dudley, sold his interest to the Chamber of Commerce which promptly set up a telephone system linking their offices with Cove point far down the Bay to get the entires through the Capes of Chesapeake, and another line to North Point to gain news of the upper bay traders. One hundred two years of faithful service had been rendered by the flags and telescopes. Now their day had passed. As if the



The Park Board's Observatory

—Enoch Pratt Free Library

very building knew its work was finished, on July 20, 1902, amid a crash of thunder as loud as the guns which had heralded its opening, and flashes of lightning reminiscent of "bombs bursting in air," the look-out house toppled and fell apart during a summer squall.



Shipyards and Shipbuilding

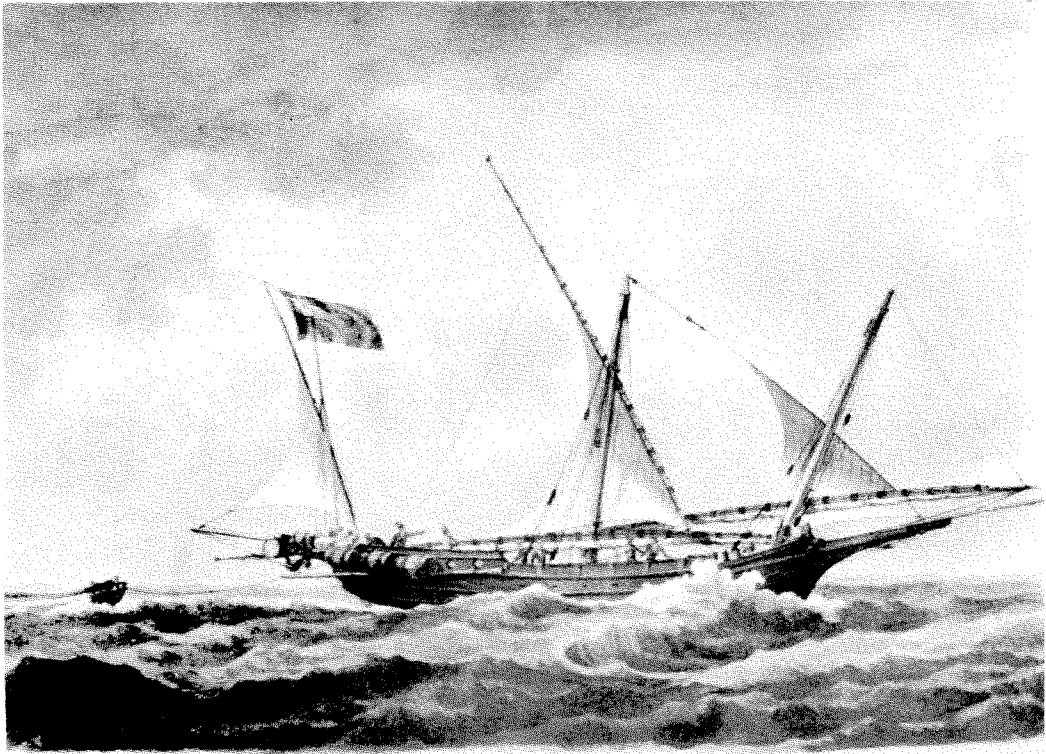
From the earliest days of Baltimore's commercial growth and the stirrings of the steamboat era, through the heartbreak of World War II's "battle of the Atlantic," Federal Hill has performed an honorable and often innovative role in shipbuilding and ship design. As Fells Point became the major center for production of Baltimore's "clipper schooners" and as Bear Creek had served as the launching pad for Baltimore's earliest Colonial craft, so Federal Hill became putteringly active with the advent of the steamboat.

William Parsons was one of Baltimore's early Nineteenth Century shipbuilders. One first learns of his yard from an advertisement in the *American* of September 4, 1801, offering "a few best white oak keels, between 50 and 56 feet long—the prices may be known by applying to my shipyard head of the Bason." Actually, the Parsons yard existed prior to 1796, for the proprietor was identified at the same location in the first city directory, published in that year. The phrase "head of the bason," in the usage of that period, meant the south side of the harbor, on the north shore of Federal Hill. Parsons' yard was located close to Forrest (Light) and York streets.

A number of refugees, fleeing Santo Domingo because of civil disturbances in 1793, landed that year in Baltimore. Two of the immigrants, Andrew Descandes and S. Salenave, established shipyards side by side on York street east of Forrest (Light) street. In one of these yards the most unusual War of 1812 privateer was built.

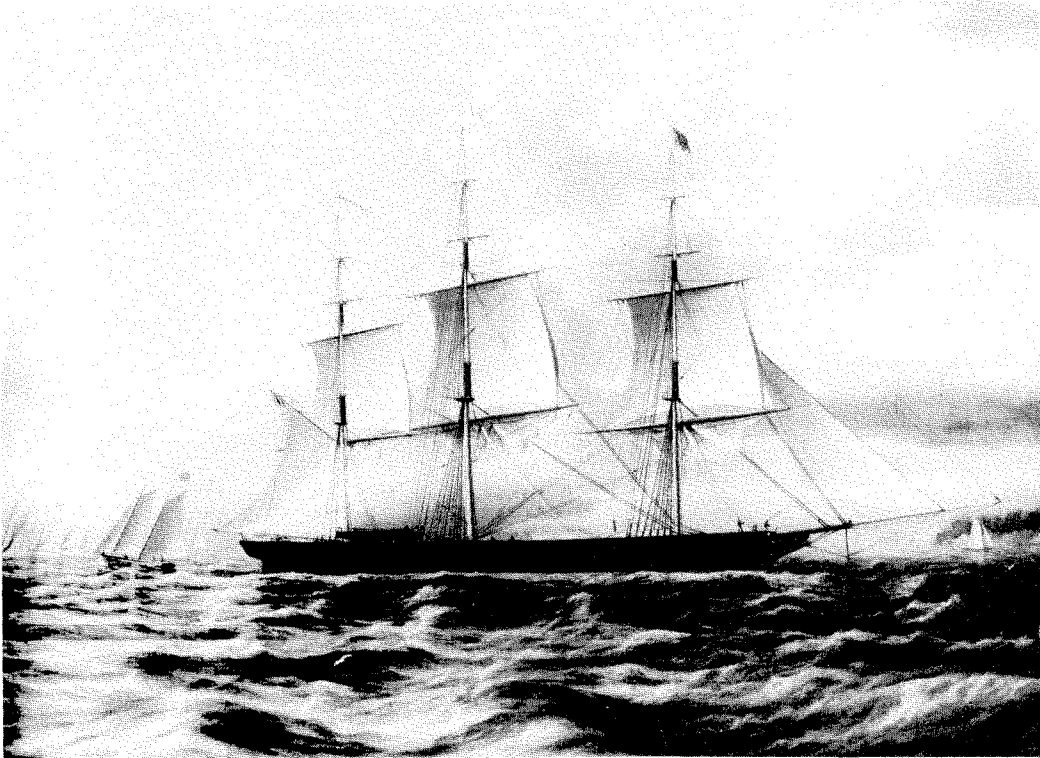
On June 12, 1813, an advertisement appeared in the Baltimore *American* concerning the impending launch of what was probably the strangest-looking craft that had ever appeared on the Chesapeake. The newspaper notice was quixotically headed "XEBECK." It continued: "Will be launched this afternoon at 5:30 by Andrew Descandes, from his wharf near Glass House, Federal Hill the beautiful XEBECK, 70 feet keel and 75 feet on deck, this vessel is built entirely upon a new plan and calculated to be a first rate sailer, and is to carry two guns, on a circle of the largest size."

The builder was justified in describing his creation as being of "a new plan" in so far as the local shipyards were concerned. Although "xebecs" had sailed the Mediterranean for centuries, it is doubtful whether any of them had previously been built in Baltimore, and unlikely that many of them had been seen there. There were, however, certain points of resemblance between a Baltimore clipper and the xebec, according to experts, who said that "the ends of the Clipper had much the same profile as the xebec and the modern Baltimore and Chesapeake craft show an even stronger resemblance." Both kinds of vessel were characterized by low freeboard, but above the deck their similarity ceased altogether. In place of the two sharply-raked and towering masts of the clipper schooner, Descandes' vessel had three masts, the foremost of which was pitched forward rather than aft. The huge fore-and-aft sails, and the square topsails of the typical Baltimore clipper had been replaced on the xebec with lateen sails reminiscent of those on Barbary Coast pirate vessels.



Armed Xebec, watercolor by Antoine Roux

—Peabody Museum, Salem, Massachusetts



The *Architect*, painted by Peterson

—Peabody Museum, Salem, Massachusetts

Though one might wonder at the selection of such a design in the face of the immense success of the clipper schooner rig, the history of the cruises of the *Ulltor*, as Descandes christened her, and a knowledge of the seaman's mentality at the time, provide the answer. The Baltimore clipper had been copied all along the coast, and the appearance on the horizon of one of these distinctive speedsters usually carried only one message to the British merchantman: he was about to be pursued (and very probably captured) by an American privateer. The reaction to such a sighting was dictated by the experience of countless vessels then in American hands or ransomed at great expense—any merchantman would immediately turn and run, and any warship would immediately give chase. The *Ulltor's* designer in all probability chose her rig to conceal her true purpose; this theory is given weight by the impressive list of prizes captured on her cruises. During her first foray into the Caribbean, she was seldom pursued, though often within sight of enemy ships-of-war, and she was frequently approached without suspicion by British merchant ships, which she could capture without a chase.

Following her launch, Descandes immediately sold the *Ulltor* to a group of seven Baltimoreans, one of whom was James McCulloh, the collector of customs. Her letters of marque were issued on September 30, 1813, giving her complement as 65 men and her armament as two long twelves on transverse carriages; her master was John Cock. Cock made several attempts during the next two months to get to sea, but was foiled each time by the blockade at Cape Henry. Dissatisfied with his lack of success, the owners replaced Captain Cock with his first lieutenant, James Matthews.

Matthews successfully ran the blockade in December, carrying a cargo to Havana. After landing some merchandise at Little Egg harbor on the return trip, and following orders, he put into New York to prepare for privateering, on February 23, 1814. By this time, however, that port was almost as closely guarded by British men-of-war as was Baltimore. Matthews was unable to clear the blockade until the middle of April when he escaped under cover of heavy fog. Aided by the *Ulltor's* innocuous appearance, her master was soon aggressively pursuing his commission to "sink, burn, and destroy" English commerce.

On May 24, *Ulltor* captured two schooners, *Caledonia* and *Governor Bentick*, bound for Demerara from the Orinoco with mules. Having no room for such freight, and not wishing to drown the animals, Matthews permitted the vessels to proceed. After a few eventless days, the *Ulltor* chased, overhauled, and captured the brig *Favourite*. Like the *Caledonia* and the *Governor Bentick*, the *Favourite* was also saved for her owners by reason of the fact that she was carrying live freight—in this case, eleven female passengers. Feeling, no doubt, that such prisoners on the privateer would be even more trouble than mules, Matthews took the gallant course, permitting the *Favourite* to proceed.

Matthews captured the last prize of the cruise on June 17, when he ran down and boarded the privateer schooner *Amity*, carrying one brass six-pounder and twenty-four men. The *Ulltor* closed so rapidly that the crew of the *Amity*, seemingly misled by the approaching vessel's rig, made no resistance. Matthews took off the schooner's crew and set her afire, then sailed for New York.

On December 6, 1814, Matthews cleared New York on his second cruise. Although the *Ulltor* did not pass Sandy Hook until five days later, by December 29 she was off the coast of Surinam in search of English merchant shipping. She found, however, only English ships of the line, and for the next three days was continually

chased. The activities of American privateers in those waters during the preceding eighteen months had been so fierce that the Royal Navy pursued any strange sail, regardless of rig.

Although peace had been concluded between the United States and England, Matthews had not received the news and celebrated New Year's Day, 1815, by taking and burning the old schooner *Perseverance*. For the next three months, beset by the pursuits of English warships, and with enemy merchantmen hard to find unconvoyed, Matthews' *Ulltor* captured and sank only four British ships. The last vessel captured by Matthews was the English brig *Mohawk*, whose master on March 13 ransomed her for bills of exchange to the value of "three thousand Spanish mill dollars . . . that she should not be disturbed by the *Ulltor* during the rest of the cruise." Not two weeks later, Matthews was hailed by the schooner *Macaria* of Baltimore, whose Captain showed him the "President's Proclamation of Peace," ending the war and the career of Baltimore's most unusual privateer.

Of some significance in the history of Federal Hill shipbuilding was the launching of the *Ann McKim* on June 4, 1833 at the rival locale of Fells Point. She was the forerunner of the illustrious American Clipper fleet destined to help make the American merchant marine known in every part of the globe as, indeed, the earlier Baltimore clipper schooner had done. The last vessel built of the old Baltimore Clipper design was the *Lawrence*, launched at the Federal Hill shipyard of Langley B. Culley on August 1, 1843. The American Clipper, when compared with the Baltimore Clipper, was probably not as fast under general condition; but due to the American Clipper ship's greater power, she could make long voyages in shorter time, because she could carry her sail longer in heavy weather and also because she was larger.

When gold was discovered in California in 1848, the East suddenly began to seethe with excitement. Prospectors, adventurers, and settlers clamored for passage; the demand for fast, sturdy cargo-carriers increased enormously, and freight rates leaped to unprecedented levels. One of the first clipper ships to clear for the gold fields was the *Architect*, under a Captain Gray. The *Architect* was a Baltimore design of 520 tons built by Langley B. Culley at his Federal Hill shipyard at York street east of William street and launched on August 28, 1848.

The *Architect* made New Orleans in January, 1849, and was soon filled with passengers and freight for San Francisco. Like many other vessels in the early months of 1849, most of the *Architect's* crew served without pay as a means of reaching the gold fields. The voyage proved eventful and tedious. Cholera broke out, causing several deaths among the 56 passengers. Dissensions arose, and the ship was obliged to put into Rio de Janeiro. Sailing again on March 18, she made slow time in the South Atlantic, encountered heavy weather off Cape Horn, and was reported to have put into a Chilean port for supplies and repairs, arriving at San Francisco on June 28, 1849. Some accounts state that this voyage consumed only 120 days actual sea time, which was a remarkable record for the period.

After making one more trip from New York to San Francisco, the *Architect* spent four years in trading between the western coast of the United States and the Far East. Perhaps her most celebrated voyage occurred during the summer of 1853, when under the command of Captain George A. Potter, she sailed from Hong Kong with a cargo of tea for London in the company of about a dozen English clipper ships. After an as-

toundingly fast trip of only 107 days (against a monsoon), the *Architect* was able to sell her entire cargo before the first of her rivals even sighted land. By the time the *Architect* had returned to China, her reputation for speed was so great that she was chartered immediately to carry another cargo of tea to London at £8 Sterling per ton; at a time when her English competition was glad to get £3 or £4.

The *Architect* was reported sold at Hong Kong in 1854 for \$23,000. She then sailed under the British flag and for at least a few years continued in the London-China trade but her name does not appear in the register of 1857-58.

The small shipyard of Adams Gray, at the foot of Montgomery street, also built two beautiful clippers for the gold fields run; each was characterized by sharp lines, lofty spars, and great expanse of sail. These two ships, launched in 1850 and 1852 respectively, were the *Sea Nymph* and the *Lady Suffolk*. The *Sea Nymph*, 526 tons, was placed in the New York to San Francisco service in the fall of 1850. During the next two years her average sailing time from New York to San Francisco was 124 days which was remarkable for such a small clipper. In 1853 she was sold to German interests and traded in the Pacific until 1860 when she was abandoned in Hong Kong.

The Federal Hill shipyards were also noted for building small fast revenue cutters used by the government for enforcing revenue laws, suppression of slave trade and piracy, life-saving, salvage work at sea, and carrying of government dispatches. Three of the well-known cutters were the *Reliance* and *Vigilant* built by the Fardy Brothers at Hughes and Covington street and the *Morris* built by John S. Brown at his shipyard at the foot of Battery avenue.

One of the most prominent shipbuilders in Baltimore during the late 1800's started his career in Federal Hill. As a boy, William Easley Woodall roamed the docks of Liverpool, gazing spellbound at the ships which crowded the port. He loved them all—especially the handsome schooners from a city far across the sea.

They were the Baltimore clippers, those rakish vessels which had terrorized his country's merchantmen in the War of 1812. In the 1840's though, they were famous as speedy cargo carriers; after seeing them arrive in the port, the young man decided that he should some day go to Baltimore and build fine ships.

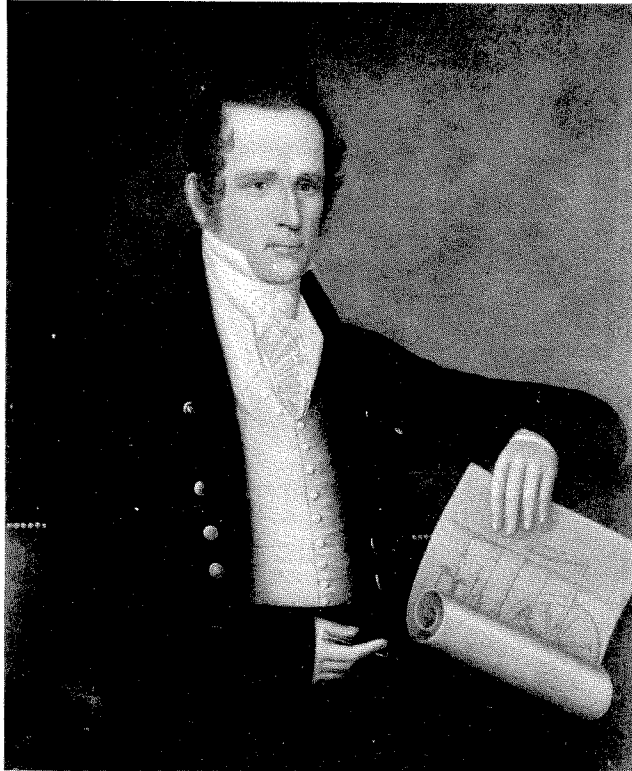
With the permission of his father, a Liverpool shipowner, he sailed for America at the age of 15 and was apprenticed in his cousin Captain William Easby's shipyard in Washington. It was 1853 when he arrived in Baltimore and went to work for John T. Fardy and Philip Auld, who ran a yard at the foot of Hughes street.

Woodall was made foreman at 19. By the time the Civil War began he was so skilled a shipwright that he was able to supervise the complete rebuilding of the *U.S.S. Wyoming*. That led to a partnership in 1866 with John T. and Matthew Fardy and one year later the name of the yard was changed to Fardy and Woodall. In 1873, aided by his brothers Henry and James, the dynamic Englishman set up a yard for himself in Locust Point at the foot of Allen street, later renamed Woodall street in his honor.

The gold rush traffic to California, occurring at a time when oceangoing steam vessels were virtually experimental, created the last great demand for swift large sailing ships. Steam came of age as a motive force and the shipyards of Federal Hill, with their neighboring machine and boiler works, became the most active on the Bay with decades of expansion and consolidation ahead. Already, during the emergence of the highly successful coastal and Bay steamboats, Charles Dickens had written, while in

Baltimore in 1842 that "The American steamboat is superior to any other in the world. It is a perfectly exquisite achievement of neatness, elegance and order."

History must recognize Charles Reeder, Sr. and John Watchman as the earliest pioneers in steamship building in Baltimore, and their industry and vision was ultimately responsible for the impressive growth of shipbuilding in the port which has continued to the present day. When these men began to install steam engines, first in wooden hulls, later in iron, steam power itself was in its infancy. Much of their success



Charles Reeder, Sr.

—Oliver H. Reeder

was accomplished after repeated trials and sometimes disastrous failure, but their perseverance revolutionized their industry.

Charles Reeder was born in Bucks County, Pa., on April 18, 1787, and in his early teens was apprenticed to a millwright and carpenter. Faithfully serving out his apprenticeship, he became a master of the trade. Feeling himself competent to take a position outside his trade, he went to work for Daniel Large, an early builder of steam engines who had worked with James Watt in England. Soon Reeder became a proficient machinist. He studied the design and use of the steam engine, and in 1813 was sent to Baltimore to supervise the installation of a steam engine in the *Chesapeake*, Baltimore's first steamboat.

Charles Reeder worked in Baltimore as a machinist until 1815, when he established a small steam engine factory on Honey Alley (now Hughes street) near Hanover street, the first such plant in Baltimore.

At the Honey Alley factory, Reeder achieved a solid reputation as an engine builder. As small as his plant was, in 1816 it produced the engines for Baltimore's second steamboat, the *Experiment*, and the city's fourth, the *Philadelphia*. Later from the factory came the engine for the *Norfolk*, the first steamboat built in Virginia. In 1818 followed engines for the *United States*, and in 1822 the *Constitution*. It is astounding today to realize that all of this early engine construction took place in a small alley plant that was all of 150 yards from the waterfront.

Charles Reeder was a man who pursued his business with great enthusiasm and was committed to remaining in the vanguard of the developers of steam power. He gave early attention to the construction of railroad engines, building and improving the old "grasshopper" type of locomotive so as to make it work much faster. This engine, one of the first introduced on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, was originally made in York, Pa., but its success was due to its reconstruction by Reeder. It continued to operate for many years and is now kept in the B & O Transportation Museum.

In 1832, Charles Reeder, Jr. entered his father's factory, and while learning the machinist's trade employed his leisure hours in the study of mechanical philosophy and mathematics. J.J. Reekers, an accomplished mathematician, was his tutor. He regularly attended lectures at the University of Maryland and read voraciously, adding to his stock of knowledge the laws of chemistry and physics as they applied to the steam engine and developing a genius for machinery. He became a partner in his father's concern in less than a year and acted as foreman of the machinery room. Under his management the business was greatly expanded and was able to supply engines to any East Coast shipyard.

The Reeder works were destroyed by fire in 1838, and in attempting to rebuild, the company fell into a serious financial decline from which it did not free itself for several years. The recovery of the company and its resumption of a leading position in its industry was primarily due to the dedication and innovation of Charles Reeder, Jr. In 1848, he furnished the machinery for the Fells Point-built steamer *Isabel*, Baltimore's first oceangoing steamship. One of the frequent accidents which plagued the early days of steam occurred during the *Isabel's* launching; an explosion killed four men and injured thirty. In this period Reeder's Marine works began to receive many contracts for modifications to vessels already in service.

Charles Reeder, Sr., died in 1855, and Charles, Jr., admitted his sons Oliver, Charles Merrick, and George into the firm and changed its name to Charles Reeder and Sons. The firm prospered until the general decline of business brought about by the Civil War. Other reasons for the slowdown of Reeder's business were competition from the neighboring firm of Watchman and Bratt and from larger plants in other cities, plants that could readily supply the immense engines required by iron-hulled steamers. The latter competition was met by the construction at Reeder's wharf of the first floating dry dock ever built in Baltimore. With this facility, vessels that formerly had to be taken to New York could be accommodated. About one million board feet of white oak and Georgia pine were used in the construction of the Reeder dry dock, built by William E. Woodall and Company. The Reeder works supplied all of the needed machinery, including a 40 horsepower engine, many gears and 28 pumps. The dry dock had a capacity of more than 2,000 tons.

In 1880 the Reeder firm was approached by Captain Caleb C. Wheeler for instal-



The Reeder works, c.1887

—Maryland Historical Society

lation of an engine, boiler and other machinery in a new grain-carrying freighter whose hull had already been built in the nearby yard of Samuel R. Waite. The new vessel, when completed by the Reeder yard, would be christened the *Minnie V. Wheeler*.

While the machinery installation was in its final stages, an 1842 passenger steamer, the *Massachusetts* was being dismantled. Her mahogany-panelled staterooms and joinery were in perfect condition and could be bought for a tiny fraction of their worth. Captain Wheeler, who previously had had no thoughts of operating a passenger service, was easily talked into altering his plans for the new ship. The windlass, bits, davits and deck furniture had also been salvaged from the *Massachusetts* and when completed the new ship cost less than Captain Wheeler had expected to pay for a freighter.

With his new steamer, Captain Wheeler became a pioneer in offering steamboat pleasure travel on the Choptank river and the *Minnie V. Wheeler* enjoyed commercial success until 1899.

Though the Reeder company built engines for over eighty vessels, it built only five complete steamboats, the *Galveston* (1891), *Sassafras* (1892), *Easton* (1896), *Susquehanna* (1898), and *Queen Anne* (1899). The launchings of these vessels were often themselves examples of Reeder novelty and singularity as the following items from the *Sun* indicate:

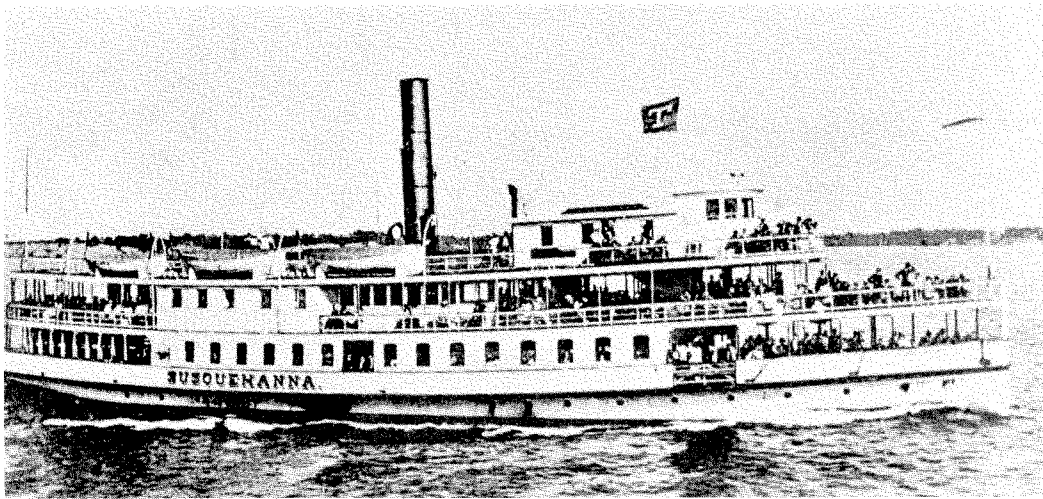
STEAMER SUSQUEHANNA

To Be Christened Today With Water From
The River After Which She Is Named

At 1 o'clock this afternoon water dipped from the Susquehanna River will lave the bow of a new vessel as she moves from the ways at the shipyard of Charles Reeder & Sons, and the sponsor will name a handsome steamer *Susquehanna*.

The pristine nectar arrived yesterday, carefully packed in jug and the latter handsomely covered with vari-colored silk and ribbons. Miss Ethel M. Nesbitt, of Port Deposit, will perform the christening ceremony.

—Baltimore *Sun*, April 30, 1898



The *Susquehanna*

—H. Graham Wood



The *Queen Anne*

—H. Graham Wood

HANDSOME STEAMER QUEEN ANNE LAUNCHED AT REEDER'S

Instead of Breaking a Bottle of Champagne
Four White Doves Were Liberated

A few minutes after 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon Charles Reeder & Sons launched from their shipyard, one of the most graceful side-wheel steamers ever built in this port. She is the largest steel steamer of her type built in a Baltimore shipyard above Sparrows Point. The sponsor was Miss Gladys Hermione Mary Gittings, daughter of Mr. John S. Gittings, one of the directors of the Queen Anne Railroad Company.

As announced in *The Sun*, the ceremonies were of a novel character and have never before been used in Baltimore. Instead of the usual breaking of a bottle of wine over the bow of the vessel, the impressive Japanese custom of liberating white doves was followed. High in the air and just inside the bow a neat cage hung above the sponsor. Within were white doves, while from the cage pure white satin streamers were coquetting with the breeze. As the steamer began to move toward the water, Miss Gittings pulled a streamer and forth flew the doves, spreading in their flight to liberty a shower of white flowers.

—Baltimore *Sun*, June 30, 1899

After 68 years in business, Charles Reeder, Jr., died on December 1, 1900, aged 83 years. His sons, led by Oliver, continued the business, but it dwindled to a nominal existence, soon handling only odds and ends of repair jobs at small profit. By 1904 the last of the equipment had been sold, and the forges of Charles Reeder & Sons cooled forever. Although the company's products had always been renowned as being of the highest attainable quality of workmanship and durability, perhaps the finest monument to the Reeders was created by themselves. In 1879 they produced the very powerful engines for the icebreaker *F.C. Latrobe*, which, incredibly, remained in service on the Chesapeake until the year 1959.

Less than a year after Charles Reeder, Sr., established his first Honey Alley engine plant, John Watchman built an engine and boiler works on the north shore of Federal Hill. Watchman had been born at Newcastle upon Tyne in England about 1787. Emigrating to Baltimore in 1816, he made arrangements with Christopher Hughes to lease Federal Hill property for his plant on a month-to-month basis. In his first year of business, he was joined by John Bratt, an engineer skilled in the building of steam engines and other heavy machinery. Bratt's sons, Samuel and William were respectively an engineer and a blacksmith and also entered the firm. The Watchman and Bratt works so prospered that by 1822, a 99-year lease had been obtained from Hughes for a lot 50 by 100 feet between William street and Battery avenue. The annual rental was \$150 per year.

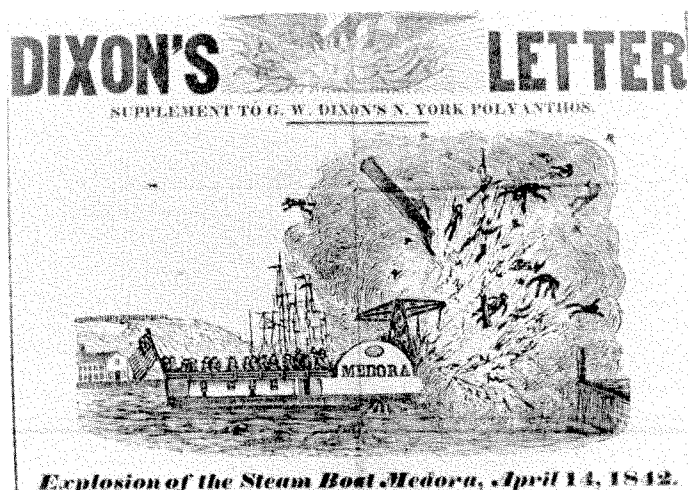
Over the years, much money and energy had been expended in efforts to deepen the Baltimore harbor basin, which in places was only two feet deep at low water. A practical scheme, said to be the first attempt to deepen an American harbor, had been put into operation in 1783. This effort utilized an iron scoop drag drawn by oxen, horses and sometimes by manpower. Zeal for dredging the harbor remained strong following this cumbersome attempt and in 1826 Watchman and Bratt were awarded the contract for construction of a floating steam-powered dredge after having producing a

model and selling the scheme to the city. The twelve-horsepower steam engine and dredging machinery were delivered on April 1, 1827, at a cost of \$19,000 (A sum which today would not buy a scow of the type used to haul dredge spoil).

Watchman and Bratt received no little amount of fame from the dredge, which, being admired at work by many visitors, was duplicated for other harbors. A period of expansion began, and orders were accepted for engines, boilers, bridges, and scows in addition to dredging machinery. The company rapidly became known for its marine engines; in 1817, it produced the engine for the *Virginia*, and in 1819, that for the *Maryland*. Both of these vessels were later put in service between Baltimore and Norfolk. Between 1822 and 1846, Watchman and Bratt built 32 steamboat engines, the majority delivered to Federal Hill shipyards. By 1837 this plant and the neighboring Reeder plant employed 440 workers, and were among the largest employers of labor in the city.

The first iron vessel built in Baltimore was a 90-foot paddle steamer appropriately named *Ironette*. She was built in 1833 by Watchman and Bratt for the firm of Rowlett, Roper, and Noble of Petersburg, Va., and was successfully put in service between that city and Norfolk.

Early in 1841, John Bratt withdrew from the partnership, thus avoiding involvement in the most fearsome disaster in the history of Chesapeake Bay steamboating. The Brown and Collyer shipyard, also located at Federal Hill, had built the new steamer *Medora* for the Baltimore Steam Packet Company (Old Bay Line). John Watchman constructed and installed her engine and boiler at his wharf. On April 14, 1842, the *Medora* was in readiness for her trial trip. The numerous officials of the line and their invited guests, together with shipyard workers and crew, swelled the total number of persons on board to 79. At 3:30 PM her lines were cast off, but before her engines had made two full revolutions, her boiler exploded. Her stack and the forward section of her upper deck, along with the persons assembled there, were blown forty feet into the air. The sides of the vessel around the boiler were blown to bits, and the iron boiler landed crosswise on deck. The entire craft was enveloped in scalding steam, which killed several people; others were killed by flying timbers or drowned after being thrown or having jumped overboard. The vessel sank almost immediately.

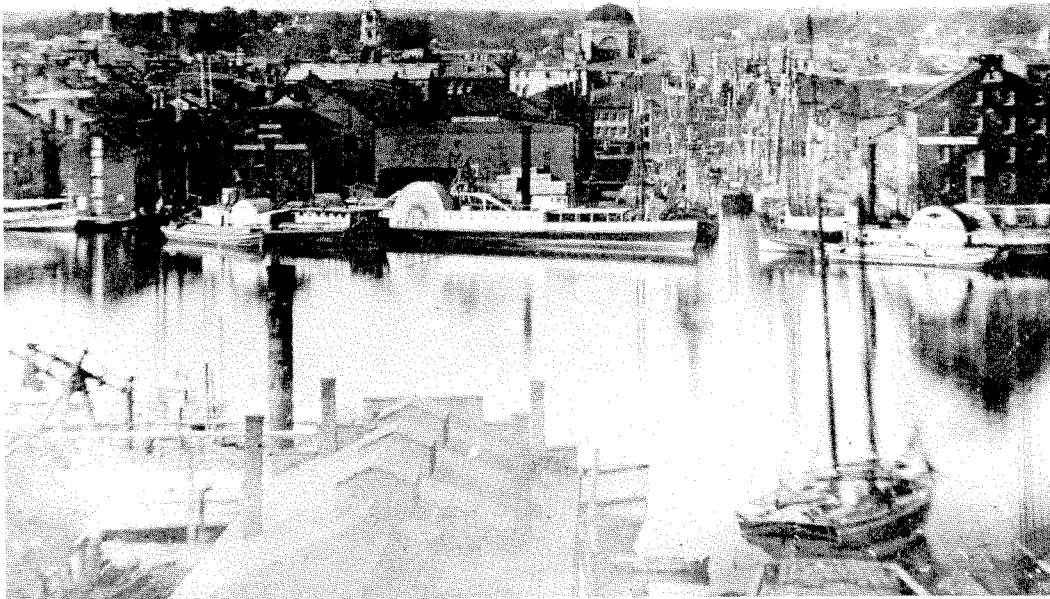


The *Medora* disaster

—Mariners Museum, Newport News, Virginia

A pall of gloom settled over the entire city as rescue workers, answering the plea of Mayor Solomon Hillen, started on their gruesome mission of recovering the dead. At intervals during the day, a cannon was fired over the basin in the belief that the concussion would cause the bodies to rise to the surface. In all 26 persons, including Andrew F. Henderson, first president of the Old Bay Line, were killed and 38 were injured. Only fifteen escaped unhurt.

The *Medora* was rebuilt by Brown and Collyer, and with a new Reeder boiler was relaunched before the end of the year and rechristened *Herald*, under which name she enjoyed a remarkably long and useful life in service on the bay. After the Civil War, she was taken to the Hudson river for use as a tug and was not dropped from the list of merchant vessels until her 43rd year of service.



The *Herald*

—Peale Museum

In the early 1840's, Watchman built a new and much larger home, a three-story structure, on the northeast corner of Montgomery and William streets. Adjoining this home he also built a new two-story brick office building on William street which gave the appearance of having an additional story. Then and in later years, people wondered at the extra expense of simulating a third story. The answer was that a wooden eagle, the pilothouse ornament from the old steamboat *Eagle* had been removed from the former Watchman office and placed on the top of the false third floor wall. The additional height was used to display the eagle above the lower two-story residential structures immediately adjoining. The eagle from 1824 had been the emblem of the factory known as the Eagle Works of Watchman & Bratt. The original Watchman residence still stands and is in good physical condition. Also remaining are several colored glass window panes made at the old Schaum glassworks in Federal Hill.

John Watchman continued to operate the business until 1846, when he sold the entire operation to Murray & Hazlehurst. It has never been determined whether the great humiliation and sorrow he suffered in the aftermath of the *Medora* disaster had anything to do with his decision to retire. He continued to reside at his home on Montgomery Street until his death on April 11, 1865. He was remembered as a very civic-minded and generous man and one of the first Baltimoreans to have been interested in the conversion of Federal Hill into a public park.

Watchman's successors, Murray & Hazlehurst, are best remembered for having fulfilled the contract authorized by Congress on March 3, 1847, for the construction of a lighthouse on the Gulf of Mexico at Biloxi, Miss. One year after being awarded the contract, the Baltimore firm had completed the cast iron tower and shipped it to Biloxi on a sailing vessel. The tower was set on a brick foundation and the light, 61 feet above the sea, could be seen at a distance of thirteen miles. This was said to have been the first lighthouse of cast iron to be seen in the South. After 132 years, the Biloxi lighthouse is still serving its original purpose, and it is one of the most photographed objects in Mississippi.

Two of the most unusual steamboats built in Federal Hill were the *De Rossett* and the *Col. William S. Harney*. The *De Rossett* was built for G. B. Lamar of Savannah, Ga. for intercoastal trade. She was an iron sidewheel steamboat of 209 tons, built in sections by John Laird in England. The sections were then shipped to Langley B. Culley, where the hull was assembled, equipped with a Watchman and Bratt engine and boiler and launched here in 1839.

That same year Culley entered into a contract with the U.S. Quartermaster Corps to construct a small steamboat for timber protection service in Florida. This sidewheeler of 250 tons was built of wood with an engine and boiler made by Charles Reeder and launched in 1840 as the *Col. William S. Harney*.

On March 20, 1841 this report appeared in the *American and Commercial Advertiser*:

“ The United States steamer *Col. William S. Harney* built in this place, under the supervision of Captain D. S. Miles, Assistant Quartermaster, left yesterday for Palatka, East Florida, via Norfolk, Charleston and Savannah. The *Col. Harney* has been detained some days in consequence of the state of the weather; but the Captain determined to proceed yesterday notwithstanding its threatening appearance. This boat is commanded by Captain John Pearson, and her crew consists of 1 mate, 2 engineers, 3 firemen, 1 cook and 5 deck hands; and from the powers which she exhibited when tried in our bay, it is supposed she will reach her destination, including stoppages, in 5½ or 6 days.”

The U.S. Army used these two small steamboats to supply its numerous outposts in Florida during the Seminole War.

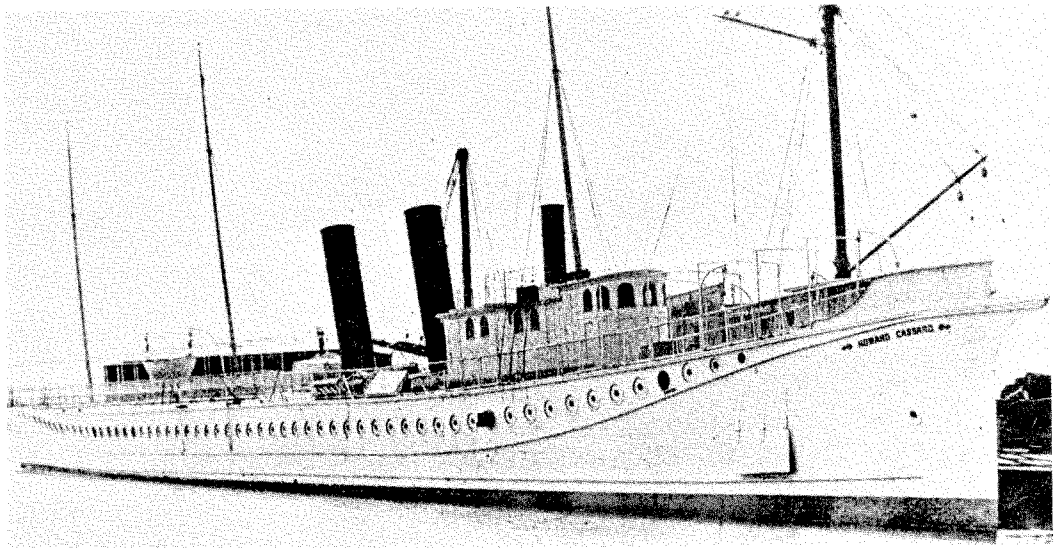
Freaks appear in every art and industry, and Federal Hill shipbuilding has been no exception. What was perhaps the strangest craft ever built on the Chesapeake was a unique vessel named the *Howard Cassard*. The Cassards were a very wealthy Baltimore family and had accumulated a fortune in the lard trade. Howard Cassard, the head of the family, was approached one day by a certain Robert M. Freyer, who sought backing for a plan to construct a steamship designed to cross the Atlantic in half the time required by the large liners of the day. Freyer, as any shipyard laborer might tell by examining his plans, was not a naval architect, but then neither was Howard Cassard,

who swallowed the designer's salespitch completely, thereby sealing the doom of a large part of his ready cash.

As if to compound Freyer's lack of familiarity with matters nautical, the firm of H. Ashton Ramsey, who were not shipwrights, were selected to build the ship. The workers at Ramsey's Federal Hill plant, with the exception of a few riveters, had never before even repaired a ship. It is not known whether either Freyer or Cassard tried to interest any of the competent Baltimore shipbuilders in accepting the contract, but it is probable that no reputable shipyard would have touched the job.

The *Howard Cassard* was to be a sort of seagoing Pullman car. She was 222 feet in length, with an 18-foot depth of keel, but her beam was only sixteen feet. Making her float would be a task akin to making a board float edgewise in the water. In order to compensate for his hull's inherent instability afloat, Freyer had made provisions for a cast iron keel of thirty-four tons. The *Cassard* was also to carry 80,000 pounds of machinery and 200,000 pounds of coal. Her propeller shaft was 92 feet long (said to be the largest forging made up to its time) and displaced sixteen tons.

Being too narrow to allow for staterooms, the *Cassard* was fitted with Pullman-style berths. Externally, she was a rather good-looking ship (if viewed broadside), having the appearance of a large yacht, with a clipper bow and short bowsprit, three masts and two stacks. There was no other superstructure except skylights, a fidley, and a pilothouse.



The *Howard Cassard*

—Mariners Museum, Newport News, Virginia

The launching of this remarkable vessel was set for November 6, 1890. George Kelly, a recognized expert in such matters, had been approached to supervise the launch, but had wisely declined. Freyer then undertook to handle the matter himself, and with 5,000 spectators gathered on the shore, and more watching from the decks of the excursion steam *Columbia*, eleven-year-old Alice Freyer broke a bottle of champagne across the bow. Champagne ran down the stem and the tripping blocks were hammered away, but the *Cassard* stood fast. The tug *Parole* tried to start her down the ways, but the tow line parted.

Not discouraged, Freyer rescheduled the launching for the following day, and many of the spectators returned. This time, the tug *Britannia* passed the *Cassard* a line and she began at last to move toward the water. When the ways parted, she began to list to starboard. The list increased due to the shifting of her coal and her mast struck the tug *Baltimore*, carrying away the tug's smokestack and flagstaff. Having lost two of her three masts in this encounter, the *Cassard* now floated in the Basin with an extreme list. She was righted and towed to Woodall's shipyard for repairs.

With repairs completed, a trial trip was scheduled and a number of guests were invited. They started off stalwartly, but had travelled only a short distance when the *Cassard* began once again to list alarmingly whereupon the passengers became panicky and demanded to be put ashore. This only voyage of the *Howard Cassard* covered a distance of about one mile. Twelve idle years later, she was sold for scrap for \$1,775.

The tale of the *Howard Cassard* is all the more remarkable considering the tremendous expertise Baltimore had developed in steamship design and travel by the late Nineteenth Century. A major contributor to this in-depth lore was the story of Federal Hill's Skinner family.

William Skinner was a native of Dorchester county where he had learned the art and science of shipbuilding as applied to brigs, barks and schooners. In 1820 he arrived in Baltimore and sharpened his skills in the shipyards of Fells Point. When, in 1827, he established his own yard at the foot of Henry street in Federal Hill, Skinner founded a firm which for the next 88 years engaged primarily in repairs of all types but was unafraid to accept work on innovative designs. The earliest brave venture was aptly named the *Experiment*, as had been Baltimore's second steamboat in 1816.

General Charles Ridgely of Hampton had discovered coal on his property and had mined it commercially since 1801. Doubtless hoping to expand his market, Ridgely commissioned Skinner to build a 70-foot vessel of 46 tons in which would be installed a steam engine with coal-fired boilers built by Watchman and Bratt. Unfortunately, the machinery design specified boilerplate of the same gauge used by old wood-fired boilers. During initial trials in 1829 near the mouth of the Gunpowder river, the *Experiment* was wracked by a boiler explosion brought on by the vastly hotter coal fire. Two persons lost their lives in this disaster.

The *Experiment* and the *Kentucky* (1832) were the only steamboats built at Skinner's Henry Street yard. By 1845, the demand for sailing craft and bay steamboats had become great enough to encourage expansion to a new location at the foot of Cross street. The Henry Street yard remained in operation for one year, concentrating on the repair of sailing vessels; the new yard was designed with the budding steamship industry in mind.

William Skinner sold his Henry street shipyard in 1846 to his older brother, Zachariah. Like his brother, Zachariah was born in Dorchester county and learned the shipbuilding trade in the yards at Fells Point. In 1832 he established his own shipyard on Hughes Quay (York street) near William, which was the site occupied by Federal Hill's first shipbuilder, Thomas Morgan, back in 1783. The firm traded under the name of Zachariah Skinner & Son, and the founder first was joined by John Jones Skinner, then by others of his eight sons.

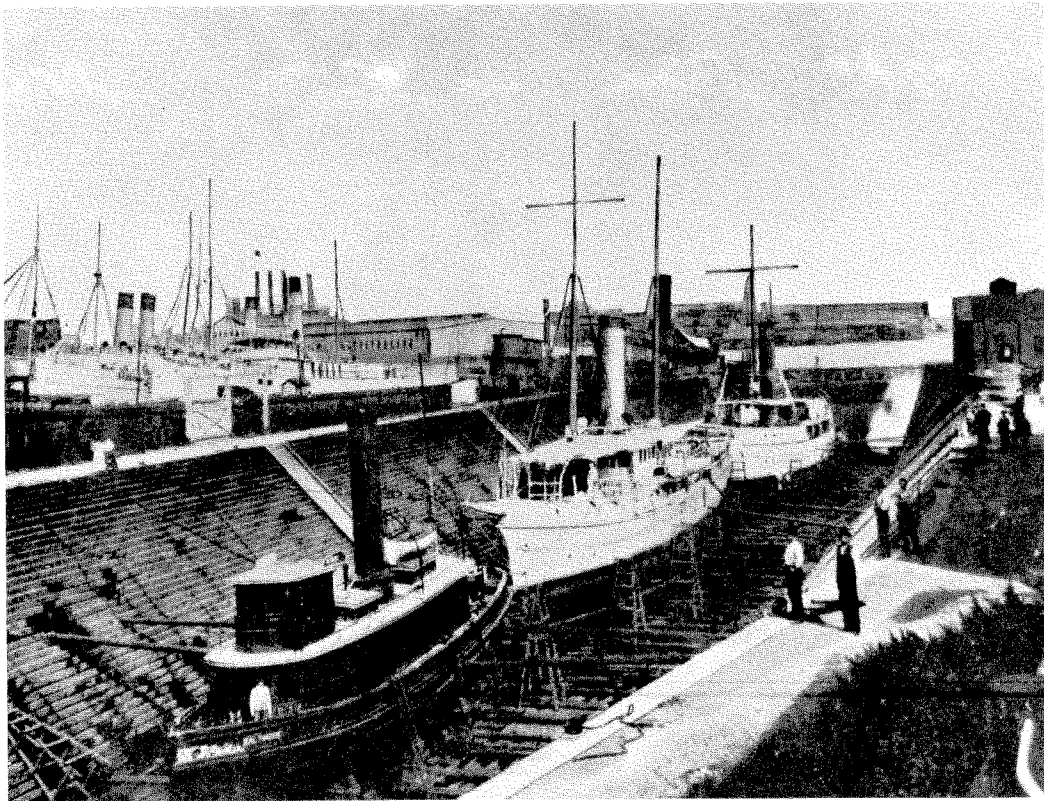
From 1832 to 1845 the original yard only built small schooners for the Bay and coastwide trade. As soon as Skinner moved into his new yard he started building barks

for New York interests to be used in foreign trade. The first two barks built were the *Urania*, 190 tons (1846) and the *Charter Oak*, 300 tons (1847).

The *Sun* of March 10, 1846, reports that the *Urania* was launched that day, and was the largest vessel built, up to that time, on the south side of the basin. The band of the Independent Grays, a military organization, was on board at the time of the launching and, according to the newspaper, played beautiful airs. The firm continued to operate until 1857 when Zachariah was forced to retire because of poor health.

The coffee trade, began in the 1840's, but did not reach its peak until after the Civil War. It was a natural counterpart of the flour trade and constitutes a significant chapter in the history of the port of Baltimore. Because flour exported from Baltimore was more stable in the tropics than that from northern ports, vessels bringing coffee to Baltimore were always assured a return load south. This trade grew rapidly, causing a demand for additional swift sailing vessels. The Skinner Cross Street shipyard built a number of barks and brigantines for the coffee fleet, including the *Rainbow* (1847), *William Skinner* (1854), *William H. Brune* (1855), *Hurricane Bird* (1856), *Dorchester* (1856), *Tal-lusah* (1857) and *Washington* (1860).

William Skinner died on March 22, 1853, and the firm he founded passed into the hands of his four sons, Jeremiah, James, George, and William Henry. Under their direction, business expanded rapidly. Since a large part of the yard's business had always been in repairs, the brothers undertook construction of a steam-powered marine railway. When completed, late in 1854, this facility was one of the largest in the United States, 550 feet long with a 250-foot cradle capable of handling vessels up to 800 tons.

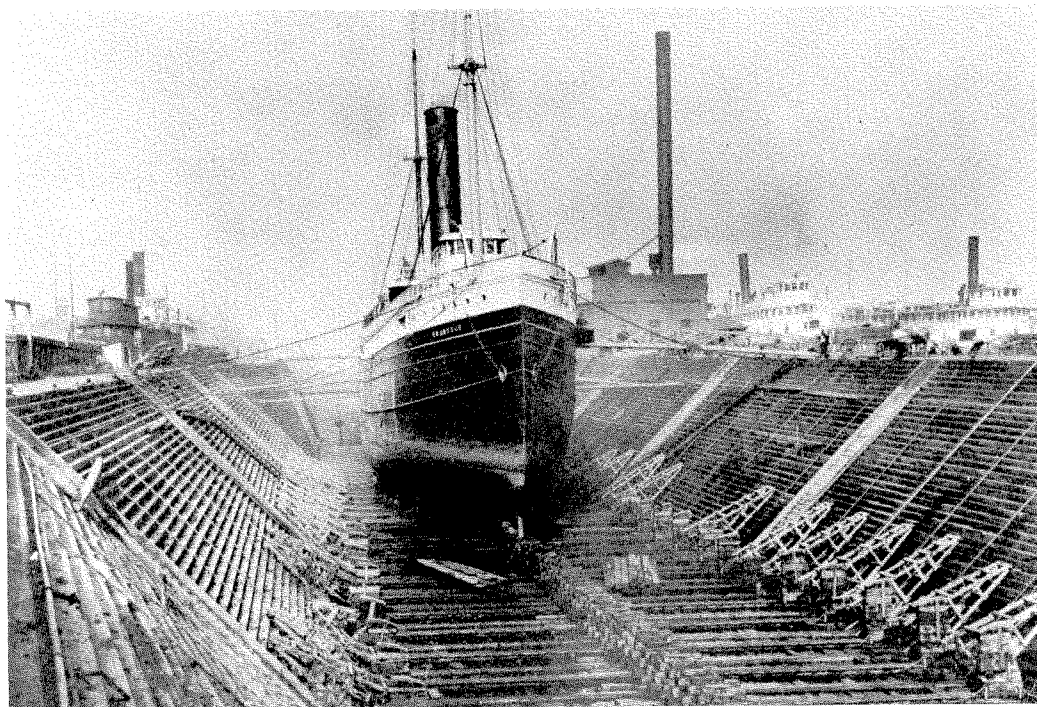


The Skinner drydock

—Henry F. Rinn

Skinner, as well as present day shipyards, had his labor troubles. The *Sun*, on July 3, 1858, carried the following item: "The yard on the south side of the basin, near the chemical works (Maryland Chemical Company), laid its labor case before Mayor Thomas Swann to prevent the whites from stopping black caulkers from working. The same newspaper, on July 5, 1858, reported that "so serious are labor troubles that William Skinner & Sons suspended business, removed its books and papers and gave its property to the protection of the city. It resolved to take legal steps against the city for damages to its business." At the same time the yard of William A. and James Skinner on Henry street, formerly that of their uncle William, were having identical labor trouble.

The shipyard of Andrew J. Robinson, at the foot of Montgomery street, had similar difficulties with whites attempting to prevent black employees from working. In these and other nearby yards some of the black workers were beaten and stabbed, according to the *Sun* of June 10, 1858. The same newspaper of May 12, 1860 proved the trouble was of long duration. On that day it stated: "The Quay Winters, a gang on Federal Hill, threatened black workers at the coal yard of Robbins & Gilmer, near the Hill".



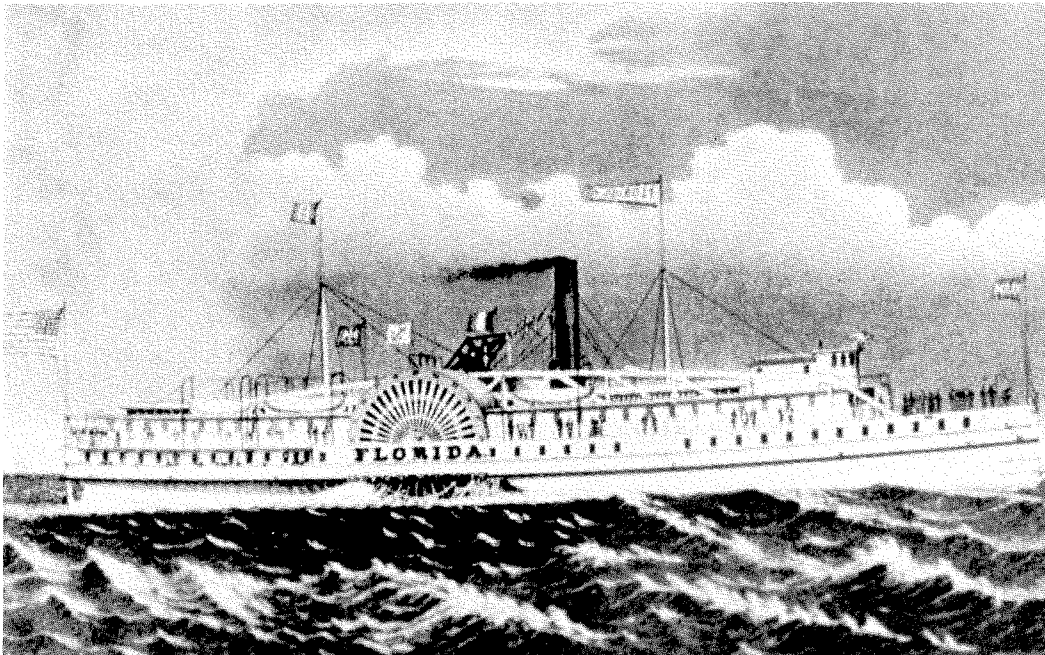
The Skinner drydock

—Henry F. Rinn

The Skinner yard was kept busy during the Civil War repairing Baltimore steamboats which had been taken over by the Union army. Some of the major repair jobs reported in the pages of *The Sun* were the *George Peabody* which had collided with the Government steamer *West Point* off Ragged point, Potomac river, with the loss of 76 convalescent Federal soldiers from General Burnside's expedition to Hatteras and the *Louisiana*, which had collided with and sunk the Government steamer *Cambria*. An-

other Skinner contract was for the *Adelaide*, which had accidentally run on the sunken wreck of the Confederate ironclad *Merrimac*, sometime after the latter's engagement with the Union ironclad *Monitor* in Virginia's Elizabeth river. Skinner craftsmen fixed the *Planter* of the Weems Line, a company whose owners were known as Confederate sympathizers and whose vessels were frequently boarded in Baltimore, either at Light Street wharf or off Fort McHenry, for search and seizure of such contraband articles as medicines, Confederate bonds, and weapons.

In 1871, the Skinners undertook complete rebuilding and modernization of the steamer *Louisiana* for the Baltimore Steam Packet Company (Old Bay Line). The *Louisiana* had fallen into disrepair while in Union service, even though she had been dry-docked at Skinners in 1866. The cost was \$50,000, the largest repair contract the yard had ever received. When the work was finished, the *Louisiana* was said to be the most luxurious vessel afloat on the Chesapeake. Unfortunately she was rammed and sunk by the Baltimore-Charleston steamer *Falcon* in 1874.



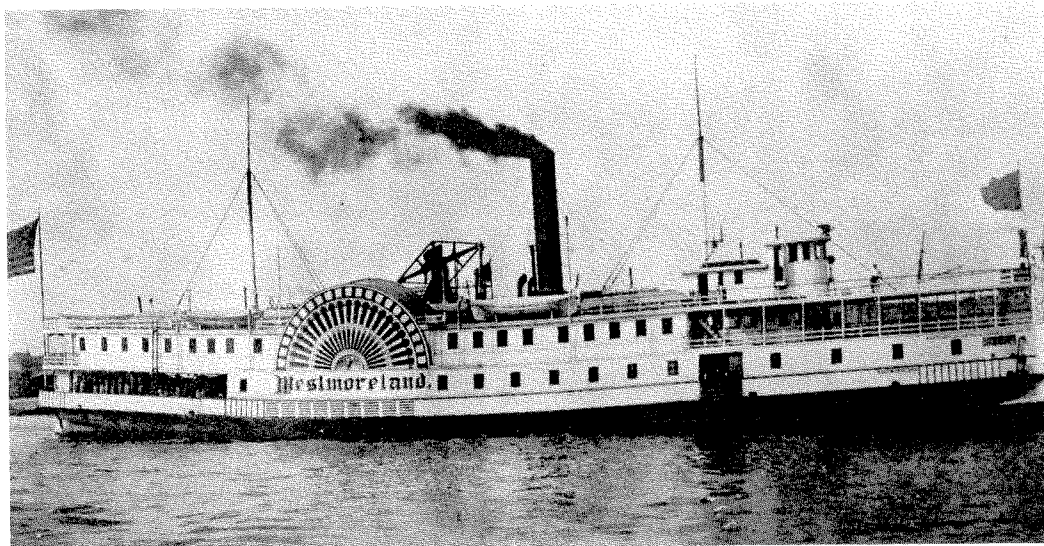
The *Florida*

—The Old Bay Line

Faced with the necessity of replacing the *Louisiana*, the Old Bay Line again employed the Skinner yard in the construction of its last wooden vessel, the *Florida*. Launched in 1876 at a cost of \$231,207, the *Florida* was 259 feet overall, displacing 1,279 gross tons. Her engine was one salvaged from the 1875 wreck of the *State of Virginia*. Her accommodations throughout were of the finest and most decorative materials, including several thousand square inches of gold leaf. Travel aboard her was indeed a sumptuous experience. She was quite fast, but mechanically cranky, hard to steer, and vibrated so badly that additional bracing had to be installed which cut through several staterooms to the annoyance of the passengers assigned to them.

Other luxurious Chesapeake Bay steam packets built by Skinner's Cross Street yard were:

Date	Name	Displacement	Owners
1860	<i>Northampton</i>	405 tons	Norfolk & Chesapeake Steamboat Co.
1864	<i>Matilda</i>	707 tons	Weems Line
1872	<i>Theodore Weems</i>	535 tons	Weems Line
1881	<i>Mason L. Weems</i>	503 tons	Weems Line
1883	<i>Westmoreland</i>	673 tons	Weems Line
1885	<i>Essex</i>	484 tons	Weems Line
1889	<i>Tochwoagh</i>	397 tons	Sassafras River Steamboat Co.
1890	<i>Richmond</i>	648 tons	Weems Line



The *Westmoreland*

—H. Graham Wood

Harry G. Skinner, grandson of the founder, controlled the business from 1894 to 1899 and in the latter year reorganized the company as William Skinner and Sons Shipbuilding and Drydock Company. By then the old yard was in need of enlargement and modernization, improvements which were started with the construction of an immense graving drydock 628 feet long and eighty feet wide with a low-water draft of twenty-two and one half feet. In addition to the drydock, the expansion program included two new marine railways, one 315 feet long with a capacity of 1,500 tons, and the other 200 feet long with a capacity of 800 tons. Under normal operating conditions, the expanded Skinner yard now employed 250 workers, making it the largest shipbuilding and repair facility in the port. New carpenters' and metalworking shops, a spar shop, and a new forge building completed the building program.

In 1906, Skinner acquired the Locust Point yard of the Baltimore Dry Dock Company, which had been in operation since 1879. Both yards were operated until business reverses brought about a reorganization in 1914 and a receivership the following year,

a period during which Skinner was obliged to relinquish control of the company. The business was renamed the Baltimore Dry Dock & Shipbuilding Company the new interests immediately built another new railway on the south side of Fort avenue. Early in 1918, after 43 years in the shipbuilding business, Harry G. Skinner retired and moved to the State of Washington where he served with distinction for the remainder of World War I as Captain of the Port of Seattle. He died on December 12, 1943,

On October 1, 1921, all of the properties of the Baltimore Dry Dock and Shipbuilding Company were acquired by the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation, and the modern era of Federal Hill shipbuilding was begun. The new owners soon planned and had underway extensive rearrangements and improvements of the properties.

In 1916, Bethlehem had acquired its Sparrow Point shipyard, formerly operated by the Maryland Steel Company, and on March 1, 1923, the 6,000 and 20,000-ton floating drydocks from the Sparrows Point facility were moved to Federal Hill. Sparrows Point was to become purely a shipbuilding facility, while all repair work would be accomplished at Federal Hill. The original Skinner property at the foot of Cross street was expanded by the acquisition in 1926 of the adjoining Numsen and Applegarth cannery properties. Then, in 1930, Cross street was closed east of Key highway and the former right-of-way was also incorporated into the property, along with about four acres to the north of Cross street.

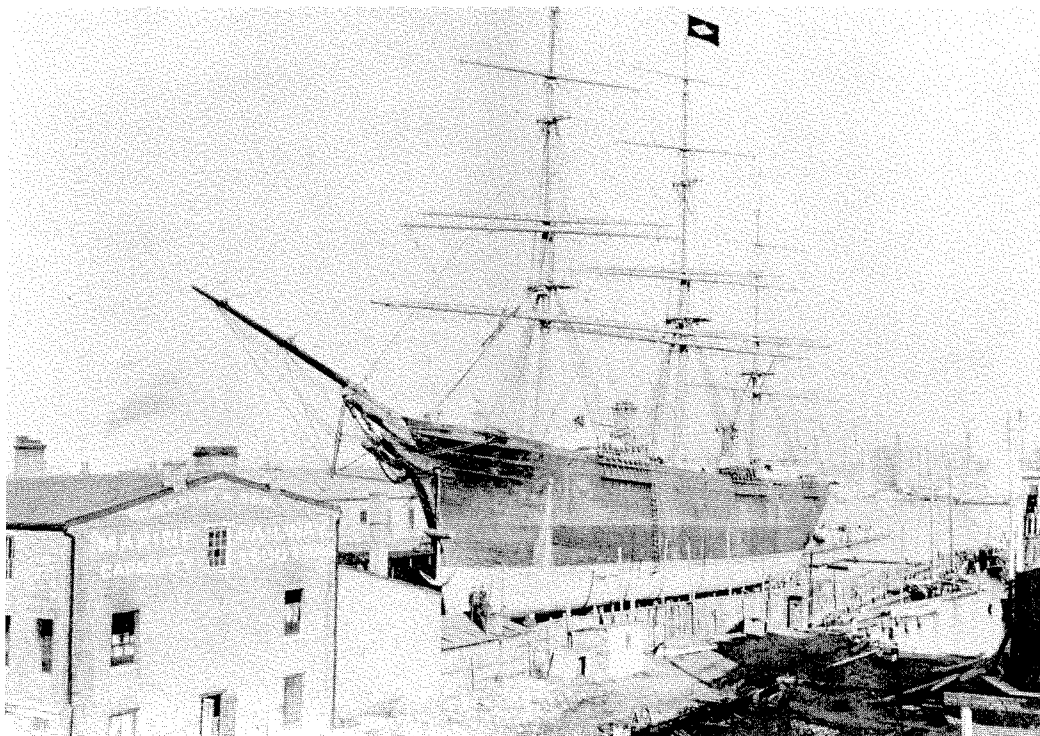
The southern limit of the plant reached its present position in 1939 with the acquisition of the irregularly shaped Cahill property running south below Webster street. The final acquisition came about in 1941 with the absorption of the land formerly owned by the Redman and Vane Shipbuilding Company, Baltimore Ship Repair Company, and Booz Brothers, Inc. Including land and water, Bethlehem Shipbuilding now owned 28.33 acres and had the use of 6.78 government-owned acres.

Along with the growth of Bethlehem's waterfront holdings was an ongoing program of shop construction. This involved heavy provisioning of machine tools and new material handling appliances. A constant improvement in methods of operation resulted in a yard of superior efficiency, equipped to perform every kind of work in the repair and conversion of all types of ships.

The first of the conversions for which the Bethlehem yards became known involved revamping the bulk carriers *Achilles* and *Jason* into self-unloading colliers in 1935 and 1940 respectively. These jobs involved great strengthening of hulls, structural additions, and design and installation of heavy machinery. From 1939 to 1941, several conversions were undertaken to provide training ships for merchant seamen for the U.S. Maritime Commission; thus the *Edgemoor* became the *American Seaman*, the *Edgemont* became the *American Sailor*, and the former coastal passenger steamer *Berkshire* became the *American Engineer*.

While the Bethlehem yard grew and bustled with frenzied activity, an entirely different atmosphere prevailed to its north. Around 1900 and early in this century there were three small shipyards side by side at the foot of Montgomery street, namely Booz Brothers, McIntyre and Henderson, and Redman and Vane.

Booz Brothers, founded in 1849 in Canton, moved their marine railway to Federal Hill in 1880. The shipyard was used for new ship construction and for repairs. Hundreds of clippers ships, brigs, barks, brigantines, and schooners were brought to this yard to be "stripped, caulked, and coppered." Records were kept as to the ton-



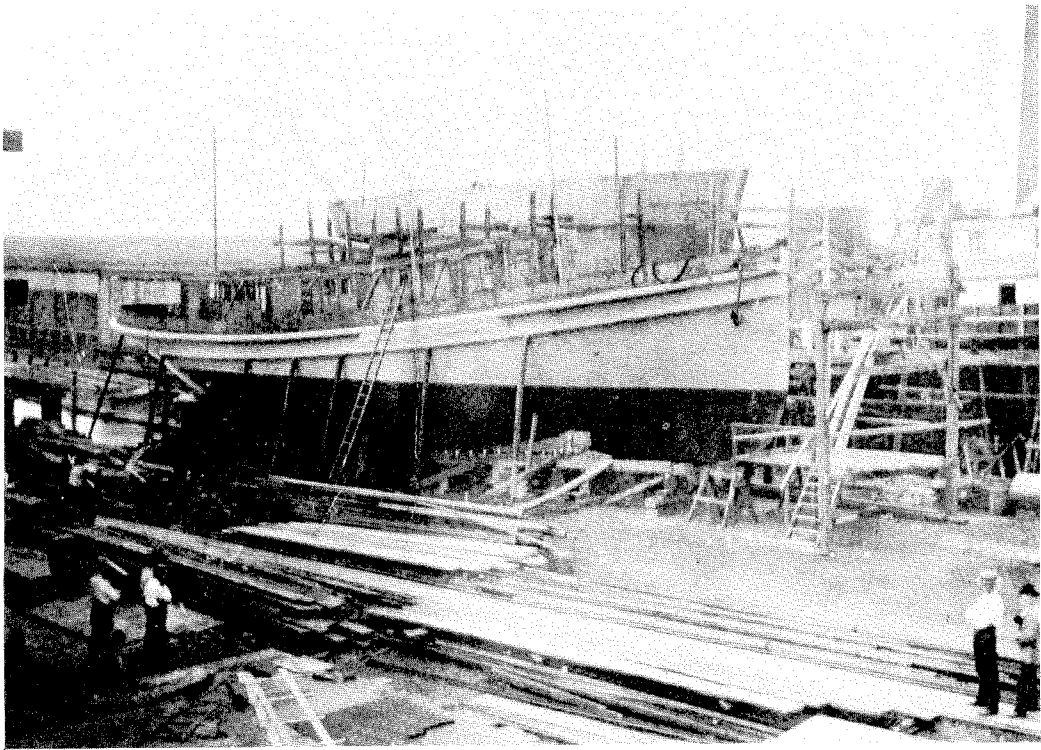
C.W. Booz & Sons's marine railway

—*Maryland Historical Society*

nage and measurements of every vessel that ever docked at the company wharves or had been placed on its marine railways, so that blocking could be quickly set on its next visit, sometimes as long as twenty years later.

Mary Margaret McIntyre, writing for a local paper during World War II, recalled that her grandfather, Edward P. McIntyre, began his career as an engineer apprentice with the E.J. Codd Company of Fells Point. Here he learned both machine- and boiler-making and he also studied mechanical drawing at the Maryland Institute. For a period he worked as superintendent for John Wells & Son, located at the foot of Broadway where the Recreation Pier now stands, but that firm dissolved, and McIntyre, together with J. Edward Henderson, became the partners of Captain Robert M. Spedden. Mr. McIntyre, as superintendent, designed tugboats with improved hull lines and increased horsepower. So rapidly were they built that along the waterfront the saying was that "McIntyre built them by the yard, cut them off and sold them by the foot."

In 1902, McIntyre and Henderson withdrew as partners in the Spedden organization and formed their own Federal Hill company, the McIntyre and Henderson Marine Engine and Boiler Company. After Key highway was cut through part of their land, they built a modern plant, specializing in the construction of tugboats and repairs to steel hulls. At one period they handled the repairs to practically all the banana boats in from the West Indies and to foreign ships consigned to Furness Withy & Co., Ltd. The partners were also active in the organization of at least six other firms with interest in shipbuilding and marine commerce. In 1922, McIntyre sold his interest to his partner because of his health and the name of the firm was changed to the Baltimore Ship Repair Company.

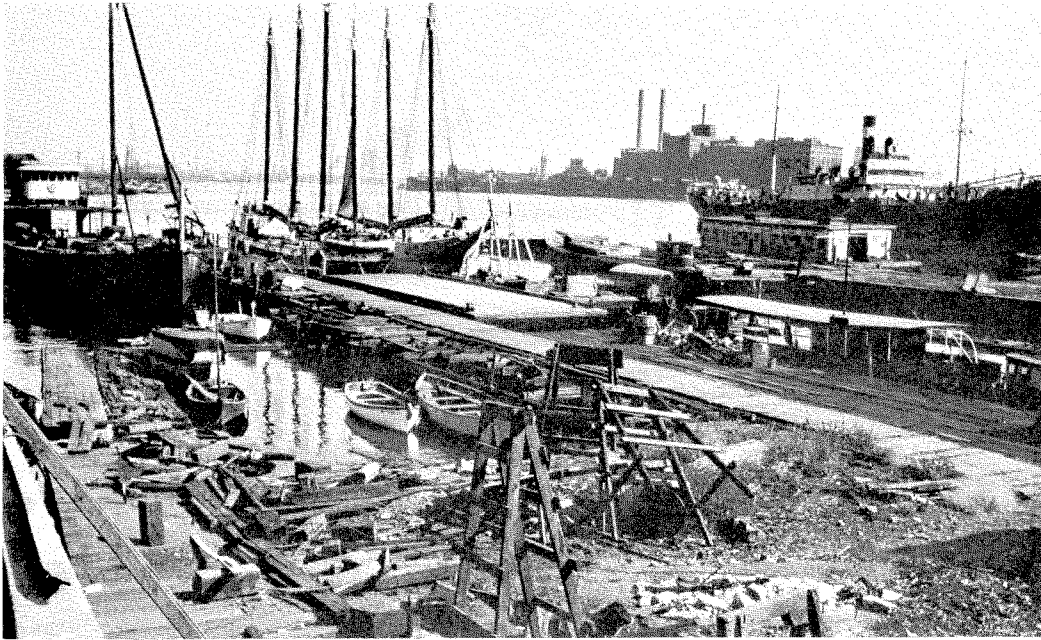


McIntyre & Henderson's Shipyard

—Mary Margaret McIntyre

In 1917, the brothers William B. and Allen P. Vane, together with John Clarence Redman, founded a new shipyard on the site of what had been the J.S. Beacham's yard at the foot of Montgomery street. Specializing in the repairing of wooden sailing ships, the yard was a marked contrast to its bustling, steam-belching neighbors. The Redman and Vane yard was unique. A fascinating attraction for the boys of the hill was its spar shed, filled sometimes knee-deep with scented shavings and pungent pitch; the craftsmen here had manned tall ships and had, with a little encouragement, spellbinding yarns to convey.

Redman and Vane had two marine railways, the largest of which was 235 feet long with a capacity of 1200 tons. They also operated the Maryland Block and Pump Works on the same property, and conveniently leased space to the rigging shop of William F. Wilson. The yard endured until January 20, 1942, when a U.S. Marshal arrived to tack condemnation proceedings to the office wall. The Navy Department, requiring additional property to expand Bethlehem Steel shipbuilding, had also condemned the property of Booz Brothers and The Baltimore Ship Repair Company. The combined facilities consisted of ten acres with a water-frontage of over 1000 feet. Baltimore Ship Repair and Booz Brothers resumed business on the site of the old Woodall shipyard, next to the American Sugar Refinery in Locust Point. The firm of Redman and Vane simply ceased to exist, there being no demand for wooden ships or their repair for the duration of the second World War.



Redman & Vane Shipyard

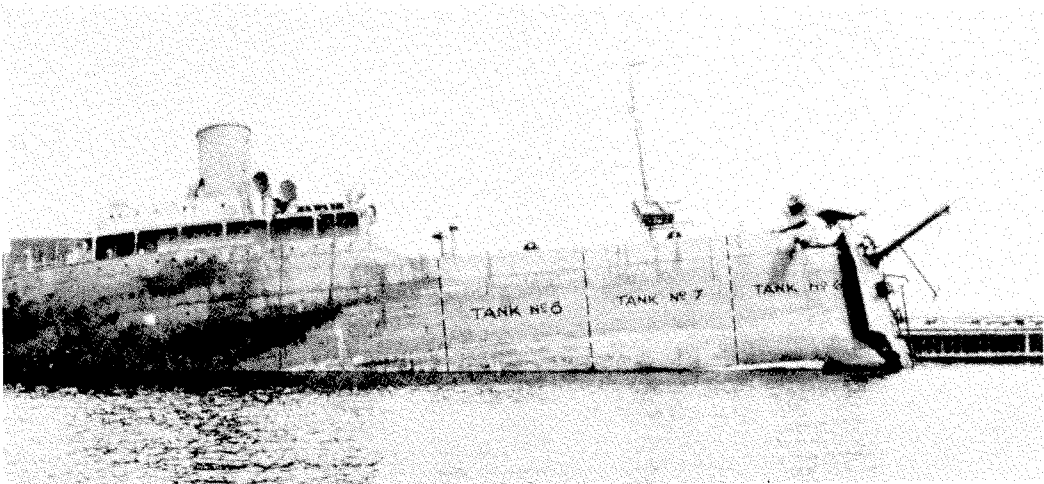
—Robert H. Burgess

Where once bugeyes, pungies, schooners and four-masted barks had docked, ships would be repaired to help bring the industrial might of America to her hard-pressed allies on the continent of Europe.

During World War II, Bethlehem's Federal Hill yards were a frenzy of activity, as merchant ships of every allied nation were made better able to weather the dangers of passage through a sea made hostile by the actions of German submarines and surface raiders. The installation of armorplate and gun platforms and magazines was carried out around the clock. Passenger liners were converted into troop transports for the U.S. Navy. At the same time, ships damaged by hostile action were under repair constantly. Altogether approximately 4,500 ships were repaired, reconditioned, or converted during the war.

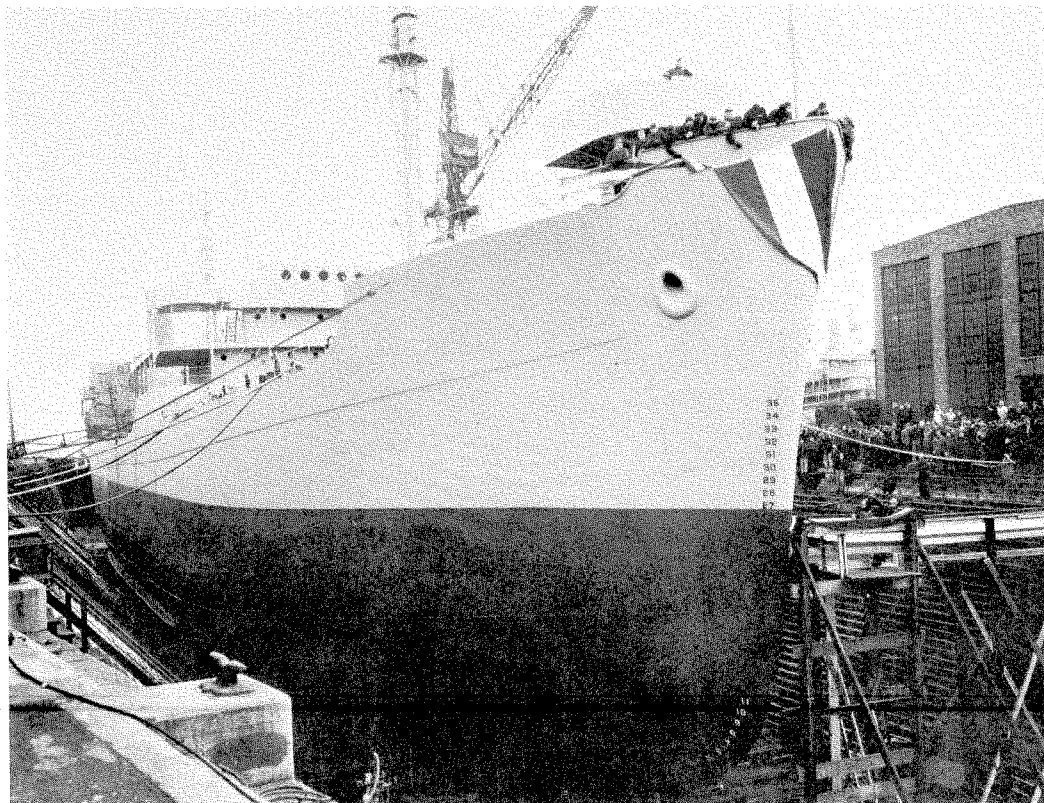
One of the most remarkable feats accomplished during World War II at the Key highway yards of Bethlehem Shipbuilding took place after the Sparrows-Point-built tanker *Esso Nashville* was torpedoed off the Atlantic Coast and broke in two. The forward portion of the vessel sank, but the stern section was towed into Baltimore. Within 90 days, the entire forward two-thirds of the ship was rebuilt from the keel up and joined to the salvaged after section. The *Esso Nashville* then rejoined the war effort.

Of the more than 200 conversions and reconversions since World War II, one of the most unusual was the complete remasting and re-rigging of Marjorie Post Hutton's four-masted bark *Sea Cloud*. In 1928, Mrs. Hutton had contracted with a shipyard in Kiel, Germany to build her the most luxurious yacht in the world. In December 1931, her incredible yacht, christened the *Huzzar V*, and later renamed the *Sea Cloud*, sailed into New York Harbor for the first time. Depression-stunned New Yorkers could not believe that this magnificent ship belonged to a private citizen.



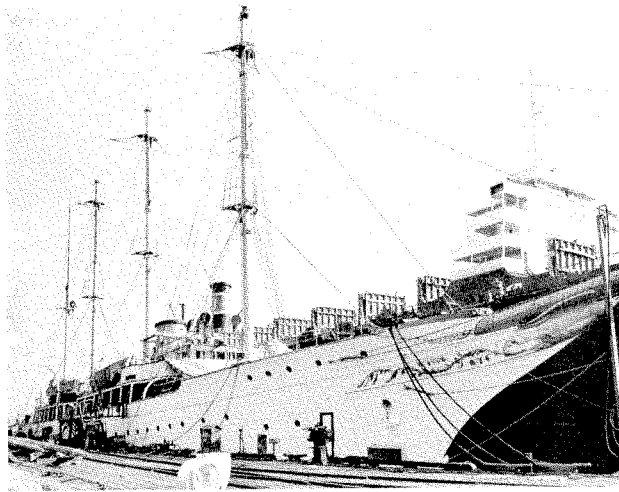
The *Esso Nashville*, before

—Exxon Corporation



The *Esso Nashville*, after

—Bethlehem Steel Corporation



The Sea Cloud, start of rerigging —Bethlehem Steel Corporation

The bill for the four-masted barque was \$1 million. Her overall length was 350 feet, and she required a crew of 72 men. In full sail the yacht looked like a square-rigger from the Nineteenth Century. Imposing as the sails were, they were insufficient to power the ship; four diesel engines assisted the wind.

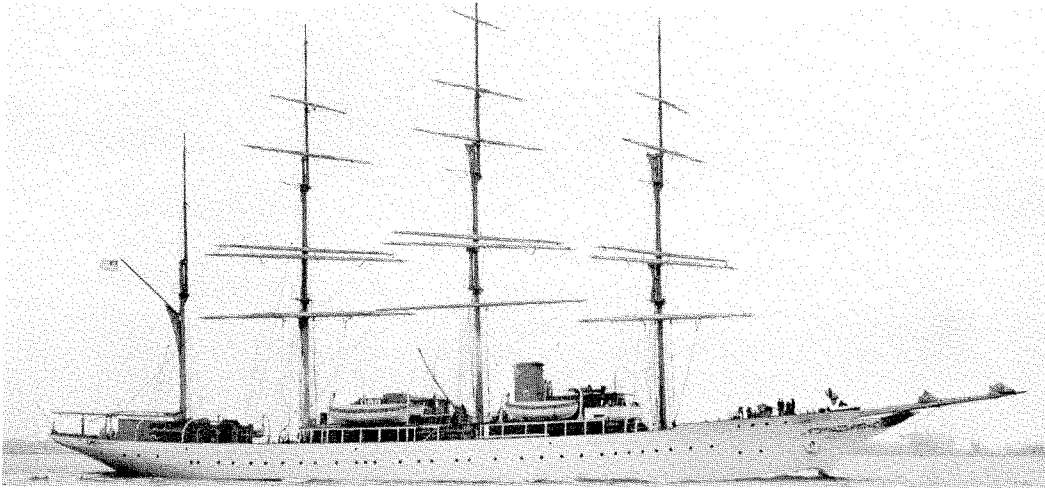
The ship's main salon had an open fireplace, antique furniture, and works of art, including some Sevres china that had to be glued in place to protect it against high seas. The guest staterooms were not like ship's quarters, but rather spacious bedrooms in a private home. Each had regular beds, not bunks, and each had an electric fireplace. Also on board was a movie-projection room and a barber shop.

For all the gold and marble fixtures, the thick carpeting, and the oak paneling, the ship's real opulence was reflected in unseen technological features—gyroscope stabilizers, ship-to-shore telephone, and watertight bulkheads that could be closed automatically from the bridge.

This beautiful yacht had served as a patrol ship and weather station during World War II and had had all of her masts and rigging, save only the mainmast, removed. As her original plans were not available, Bethlehem's engineers and draftsmen had to prepare a complete set of drawings for the work. Bethlehem had to call out of retirement the assistant foreman of the rigging department. He was the only person with the expertise necessary to direct the replacement of the intricate rigging.

During the repair period, Mrs. Marjorie Post Davies (she had remarried), had friends visiting the ship and on one occasion Walter Huston, the motion picture actor-director, was invited aboard. While on the tour, Mr. Huston was anxious to see the solid gold bathroom fixtures but they were under lock and key during the reconversion and were not available. They were installed just prior to the sailing of the vessel. Continuing his inspection, Mr. Huston visited the gallery; while there he admired the highly polished brass floor drains and asked whether they, too, were made of gold.

Everyone visiting or working on the ship had to put on cotton overshoes so that there would not be any possibility of scratching the finished teakwood decks. The *Sea Cloud*, with her graceful spars and rigging, presented a rare sight among the steamers and motor cargo vessels surrounding her at the yard.



The Sea Cloud, completely refitted

—Bethlehem Steel Corporation

Since World War II, Bethlehem's Federal Hill yards on Key highway have kept pace with the changing demands of ship repair, and even though conversions have greatly declined, the yards have been kept busy. The volume of work for shore installations has tremendously increased, and Bethlehem now produces pre-fabricated steel buildings, hoppers, chutes, conveyor frames, and section barge hulls. In addition, the yard is equipped for hammer and press forging, and has manufactured steam winches, steam and diesel foundations, and frames of all types. Improvements to the facilities are constantly being made, and work is always handled in the most modern and expeditious manner.



Bethlehem Steel's Key Highway Yards, 1980

—Bethlehem Steel Corporation



The landward side of Federal Hill's coastline was never wholly given to ship's ways and docks. Local inland industry developed, part of it based on the availability of free sand. The hill is also one of the cradles of the Maryland food industry. Its isolation from central Baltimore meant that industrial developers had a relatively free hand and the inner harbor basin formed a natural boundary for Baltimore town's earliest days. The hill in a real sense served as the out-of-town industrial center for an early Baltimore in the same sense that Canton and Curtis Bay served a later generation, until absorbed into the city through annexation.

The very first industry of major note became an important chapter in the history of American glassmaking.

During the early months of 1784, John Frederick Amelung, a glassmaker of Bremen, Germany, met Benjamin Crocket, who sold him on the idea of settling in Maryland to manufacture window glass, desperately needed in the new state. Amelung arrived during that summer with 72 co-workers and purchased land on Tuscarora creek, four miles above Frederick. A plant was built and in May 1789 the first glass was manufactured. The new enterprise, called the Aetna Glass Works, was troubled from the start. Amelung applied to Congress for a \$20,000 loan in 1790, but was voted only \$8,000. By 1796, the company was in bankruptcy; Amelung moved to Baltimore, where he died on November 20, 1799, at the age of 59.

One of his sons, Frederick, had moved to Baltimore with the elder Amelung, and in 1787 had improved his fortune by marrying the daughter of a prosperous citizen, Alexander Furnival. Two years later he had induced his father-in-law to finance the establishment of Baltimore's first glass plant.

In November, 1799, ground on Hughes street, between Henry and Covington, was leased from George Presstman, and a factory was erected. The firm, first known as Frederick M. Amelung & Co., began operations on July 1, 1800. The sand to be used would be mined from Federal Hill.

Evidently, the younger Amelung possessed no more business acumen than his father. Within less than three years, this enterprise, too, was bankrupt. Amelung, being of German ancestry, had embarrassed the large German community of Baltimore, who felt their pride unnecessarily damaged by his failure. Rudolph Joachim Friese, as a German of known means and enterprise, was approached with the suggestion that he should "redeem the credit of the German name by taking up the fallen business and bringing it to a successful issue."

Friese "examined into all the details," and was convinced that with skilled workmen, abundant capital, and good management, the business must be profitable. His judgement proved correct, for by 1810 the factory was turning out 500,000 square feet of glass annually, valued at \$65,000.

Friese and his brother, John Frederick, ran the business until about 1840. Then the company passed into the hands of George, Jacob and Lewis Reppert, whose family had immigrated with Amelung, and who had secured a half interest by giving substantial financial aid to the Frieses. The Repperts lived but a block distance from the plant at Montgomery and Reppert streets (the latter street was obliterated when Key highway was built). Later joining in ownership with the Repperts were Frederick and Lewis Schaum, who had also been brought from Germany by Amelung. There ensued fairly frequent changes in the ownership and fortunes until the entire operation was purchased in 1865 by Baker Brothers & Company, then one of the South's largest dealers in paint, oil and glass. The plant operated until about 1890 as the Baltimore Glass Works of Baker Bros., & Company.

Next to shipbuilding, the canning and packing industry was the most important factor in the early commercial development of Federal Hill. Fruit, vegetable and oyster packing plants abounded along the Federal Hill waterfront to the north and south of the shipyards. These enterprises had their beginnings mostly in the mid-nineteenth century and some persisted until after World War I.

The pioneer Baltimore canner was Thomas W. Kensett, who had as early as 1818 operated a factory in New York which produced food preserved in glass containers; Kensett moved to Baltimore in 1826 and established an oyster cannery on the east shore of Federal Hill. Canned foods were a luxury item in these days, and indeed contemporary accounts indicate that the serving of tinned preserved food was a mark of status.

As canning developed, however, the products became less expensive, and ship-owners began to provide canned food to their crews. One can imagine that smoked oysters and canned vegetables and fruits were a welcome supplement to the usual seaman's fare of salt meat and hard tack. The Gold Rush to California that began in 1849 greatly increased the demand for canned goods, food that could remain wholesome during the long voyage around Cape Horn or during months spent on the overland route to the goldfields.

William Numsen, another early canner in Federal Hill, was born in 1803, the second son of a prosperous and respected merchant of Delmhorst, Germany. The family, however, was reduced to actual want through a litigation involving the elder Numsen's business, and he sent his wife and youngest child to America to live with her brother, a Lutheran minister of Philadelphia. A year later, the father followed, leaving William and his sister to live with their grandparents in Germany.

Before his parents had re-established themselves in Philadelphia, William's grandfather died, and the Numsen children were sent to live with strangers who mistreated them. William, however, was able to convince a Moravian sea captain, master of the ship *Diana*, to take him and his sister to America. Greatly encouraged by the prospect of being able to rejoin their family, the Numsen children were again disappointed, as the *Diana* encountered a violent storm and was wrecked. When rescued, the children were returned to Germany.

Now, aged eighteen, William Numsen became a "redemptioner," an immigrant to America who obtained passage by becoming an indentured servant. Arriving in Baltimore in 1821, he was apprenticed to a baker named Muth, and served his term productively, gaining detailed knowledge of the baking trade.

After separating from Muth, Numsen rented a bakery and equipment, purchased three barrels of flour on the security of a friend, and becoming successful almost at once, was able to bring his mother, now widowed, to Baltimore. He investigated pickling and preserving processes, as well as hermetic sealing, and ultimately developed a large cannery business in Federal Hill. The plant and wharf was located on the east shore just south of the foot of Cross street.



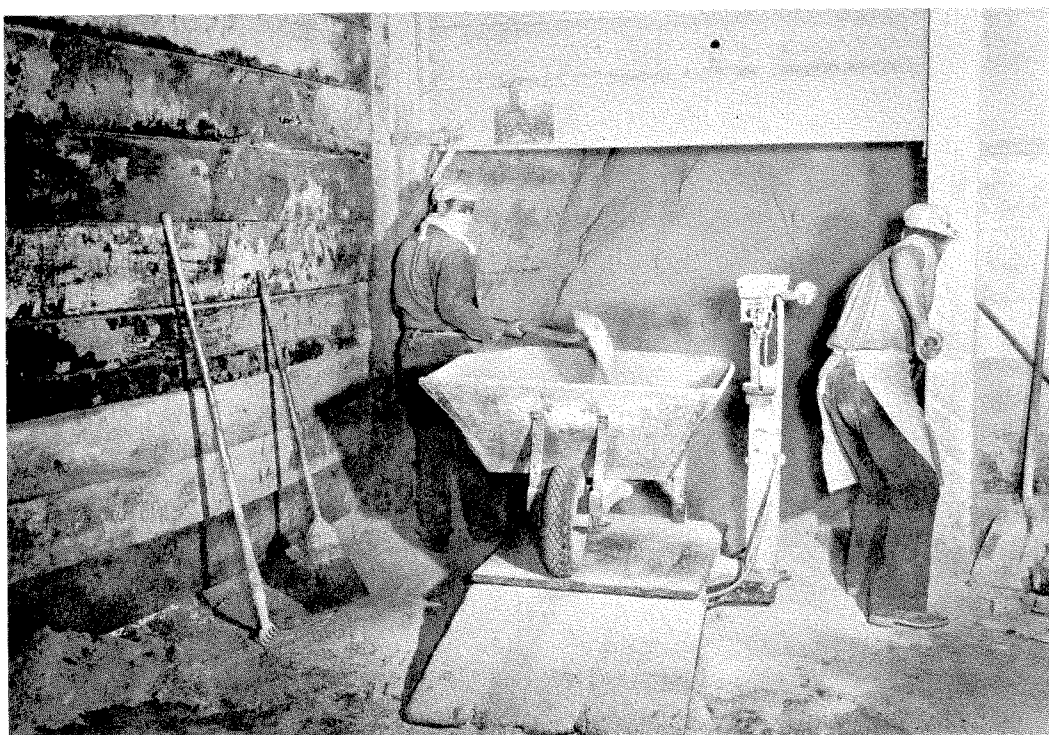
Inspection of oyster canning

—National Archives

Year-round, sailing craft stood at the cannery docks—in the winter, bugeyes and sloops brought oysters freshly dredged from the bay and; in the spring, schooners returned from the Bahamas with succulent pineapples. In the Summer and early Fall, those same schooners returned, now laden with tomatoes, corn, and melons from the Eastern Shore. The canning business enjoyed its golden years between 1849 and the turn of the century and expansions and amalgamations became common. By 1876 the east shore of Federal Hill could boast the largest canneries to be found anywhere; major operators were Moore & Brady, Louis McMurray, and William Numsen and Company, later to be joined by Storey and Bunnell and George M. Roberts. Many of these plants were in operation during the First World War and made important contributions to the nation's war effort, but their properties were all absorbed during the expansion of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation in 1921.

As the Federal Hill canneries processed the produce of Eastern Shore Farms, nearby factories produced fertilizer to replenish their soil. Maryland was one of the first states to make practical use of fertilizers on a large scale, and the Federal Hill area was the first major manufacturing and distribution center for the industry.

Good fertilizer should contain three principal ingredients: nitrogen, which hastens the growth of plants; phosphoric acid, which stimulates root growth, and potash, which aids starch formation and gives body to the plants. The use of Peruvian and Navassa guanos, containing much nitrogen and some potash, was a major step toward a satisfactory food for the soil, but it was not the final answer. The problem was solved when a German chemist treated bone and other substances containing lime with sulphuric acid to produce phosphoric acid, so essential to the quick growing of crops.



Mixing superphosphate

—National Archives

William Davison was born in South Ireland of well-to-do Scotch-Irish parents. When his family refused to sanction his marriage with the girl to whom he was engaged, the young man married her anyway, and emigrated to the United States, finally settling in Baltimore in 1826.

A graduate of the University of Belfast, where he had specialized in Chemistry, young Davison quite naturally turned to the subject with which he was most familiar. He began the manufacture of drugs and chemicals in a plant whose site is now beneath the waters of Druid Hill lake. In 1832, in company with John Kettlewell, he build a plant occupying the block west of Henry street (Riverside avenue) from Warren avenue to Hamburg street and included what was probably the first sulphuric acid chamber in the United States.

The firm, styled as Davison, Kettlewell and Company, advertised itself as "Grinders and Acidulators of Old Bones and Oyster Shells." Bones and shells were used as raw material for the production of phosphoric acid. The method employed was this: first, bones or shells were ground to powder and placed in a large pit. Sulphuric acid was added, and the entire mass vigorously stirred with large wooden paddles. When thoroughly mixed, the product was shoveled out and sifted through a screen. It is also said that Davison was the first to substitute phosphate rock from South Carolina for shells and bones in the manufacture of phosphoric acid.

The second sulphuric acid plant to be established in Baltimore was erected in 1836 by Dr. Philip S. Chappell, a local chemist. The plant was located in Federal Hill on Jackson street between Cross and West streets.

Even with all the essentials at hand, a system for the manufacture of cheap and satisfactory commercial fertilizer was slow to develop. It was not until 1857 that Gustavus Ober and John Kettlewell started Baltimore's first complete commercial fertilizer plant, Ober and Kettlewell, in a building on Hamburg street east of Riverside avenue, presumably adjoining the Davison and Kettlewell sulphuric acid plant. Commandeered by the Union Army during the Civil War, the plant was used as a barracks and warehouse; in 1869, the government provided a compensatory site at the foot of Hull street in Locust Point, where, after the death of Kettlewell, Gustavus Ober operated as G. Ober and Sons.

In 1872, R. W. L. Rasin, who had moved with his family from Queen Anne county to Baltimore at the age of ten, founded the firm of R.W.L. Rasin and Company. The factory was located at Cross and Covington streets, and for many years was one of the largest and most progressive in the city. Acting on the suggestion of a Yale chemistry professor, Rasin was the first to bring to the local plants refuse from the slaughterhouses of the midwest. In the 1880's, he claimed that his product "has not a superior in the world," and that the Rasin Fertilizer Company was "foremost among the enterprises in the fertilizer business."

During the 1870's, two other companies, the Maryland Fertilizing and Manufacturing Company and the Chesapeake Guano Company, established factories in the Federal Hill area. The plants continued to operate until the late 1880's, when, pressed by the increasing numbers of homeowners in the area who objected to their noxious fumes and mounds of guano, they were forced to move to Canton or Fairfield.

The Maryland Chemical Works, chartered in 1826 by Howard Sims and two sons of Isaac McKim, David Telfair McKim and Richard McKim, opened a plant on the south side of Hughes street for the manufacture of alum, epsom salts, and other chemical needs of the day. Only two years later, an item in the *London Mechanics Magazine* noted that the "United States of America, which used to be furnished with epsom salts from this country, have now the whole of their supply from a manufactory of their own established in Baltimore . . . making purer salt than in Europe, at much less price, and now manufacture 1,500,000 lbs. monthly." This plant continued to produce chemicals and drugs, reputed to be the best in the country until 1854, when it ceased operation.

In 1840, the brothers Evan, Samuel and Philip Ellicott, whose father had been one of the builders of the mills which became Ellicott City, built the Maryland Steam Blast Furnace at Jackson and West streets, and obtained a pier at the foot of West street to receive iron ore and cord wood. By 1853, a second furnace had been built. These furnaces supplied chiefly a Baltimore market, one of the major consumers being Charles Reeder's engine and boiler works on the north shore of the hill.

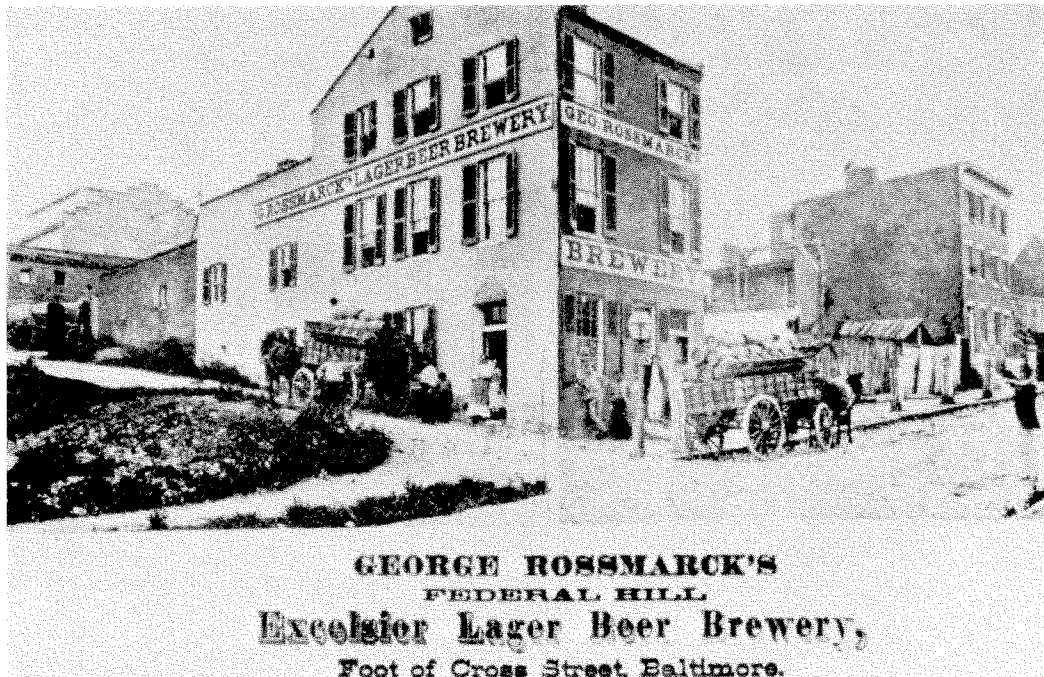
The local demand for charcoal iron and steel was great enough to support another furnace, and in 1846 Daniel M. Reese and Levin Mills opened the Laurel Furnace next to the Ellicotts.

The iron and steel mills on Federal Hill owed their existence to the local boom in steamboat building and this industry's need for a ready supply of metal on more or less short notice. The ultimate demise of these mills was not due to local competition, but rather to progress: the development of the Bessemer process and the emergence of the tremendous plants in Pennsylvania, not to mention the beginning of the world's largest single steel plant at Sparrows Point. The small mills of Federal Hill, like those of Canton, depended on a local supply of ore, from Lazaretto point, and on charcoal made from cordwood brought to their plants by sailing vessels. Clearly, they could not meet the vastly increased demands of mechanized industries which, by the turn of the century, required a virtually unending supply of steel.

Established in 1842 by William Augustus Dunnington, Dunnington's City Plaster Mill occupied one of the huge buildings abandoned by the Maryland Chemical Works at Hughes & Montgomery streets, still the property of the Ellicott family. Interestingly, plaster had been ground from gypsum years before by the Ellicotts at their mills west of Baltimore for use as fertilizer for wheat. Dunnington, however, prepared plaster for wall coating, molding, and casting, obtaining his raw material from Nova Scotia. The mill's products were widely known for high quality, and Dunnington continued in business for more than fifty years until his retirement in 1895. Upon his death in 1896, the mill was demolished.

In 1842, at the age of 27, George J. Rossmarck, with some brewing experience gained in his native Bavaria, arrived in Baltimore from Philadelphia with the goal of being the first to brew lager beer in the city. By 1846, he had established a very small brewery at the southwest corner of Liberty and Saratoga streets. In that year, the population of Baltimore was 165,000, Jacob G. Davies was Mayor, the first presidential telegraph message (that of James Polk) had been received in Baltimore, war had started with Mexico and lager beer was first made in Baltimore.

Rossmarck's carefully-made brew became popular, and he began to look for a site where he could establish a large underground lagering cellar. Another brewer, Jacob Wohlleber, had settled in 1837 on Cross street, near Covington, with access to the caves under Federal Hill. Wohlleber, though, brewed no lager, and since Rossmarck did, the two brewers, in the tradition of the German community, sold out to each other.



The Rossmarck Brewery

—Maryland Historical Society

The Rossmarcks were on Cross and Covington streets during two different periods. The first of these was from 1852 to 1858. This early brewery was converted from a 3½-story residence with a one story brick building in the rear. Adjoining this was a two story brick building, so that the two additions formed an "L" shape. The ground floor of the residence was used as a barroom. The *Baltimore Weekly Clipper* of October 16, 1858, reported:

"On Thursday, October 15, 1858, a fire was discovered in the three-story house which was formerly occupied by Mr. Rossmarck as a lager beer brewery, situated on Cross Street, Federal Hill. The building, which was unoccupied, was entirely destroyed. Supposed incendiary."

Evacuation of the building shortly before the fire and the erection on the site within a year of a new building seems to indicate that "incendiarism (arson) was well-surmised. The new brewery, a crude brick structure, was constructed without living quarters; its only ornamentation was a cupola on its northern rooftop. Laging vaults were created for the new brewery on the south side of Cross street under the plant itself, saving rental cost for the vaults under Federal Hill.

John C. Rossmarck, son of the founder, remained in business with his father, but in 1878 his mortgage was foreclosed and the plant came under control of one Joseph Claus, who had worked in the brewery for several years. In 1880, the mortgage was again foreclosed, and the plant was shut down, never to open again.

Throughout the operation of the Rossmarck brewery, the insatiably dry throats of the employees of the nearby canneries, shipyards, chemical plants, and the hundreds of seamen ashore awaiting repairs to their vessels used to find an ample number of saloons at the foot Cross street, dispensaries at which Rossmarck's Federal Hill pioneer lager beer seemed not too hard to take.

On the morning of March 2, 1887, George Rossmarck, aged 71, fell dead of apoplexy on the corner of Charles and Cross streets, about three blocks from his former brewery.

A city ordinance to cut through and pave Covington street was passed in 1914, and when work was begun a year or two later, a vault was discovered by city workers; in the vault were some of the old Rossmarck kegs, containing a caked, molasses-colored residue. The origin of the kegs, believed to have been in the vault since the brewery closed in 1880, was authenticated by George J. Rossmarck, grandson of the brewer, who was presented with one.

Another brewery, that of Seeger and Stiefel, had a short and tempestuous tenure on Federal Hill. The partners who conducted this enterprise were Edward W. Stiefel and Theodore Seeger. Stiefel was born in Bavaria in 1825 and came to Philadelphia in 1845. Seeger was also born in Germany, in 1820 and he, too, came to Philadelphia where the two met. Each had had some brewing experience in Germany, and in 1854 they formed a partnership and came to Baltimore, opening their brewery on Federal Hill.

The Seeger and Stiefel operation was harassed from its inception by a low class of South Baltimoreans who belonged to the city's notorious Know-Nothing gangs. The open brutality of the gangs, abetted by politicians and the then un-uniformed police, persecuted Germans and Irishmen. From one of the terroristic tactics of this period, the "Blood-Tubs" gang took its name. The mobsters brought tubs of blood from neighboring butchers' establishments to the polls. Whenever a luckless German or Irishman approached, he was seized, dragged to the tubs, and doused with blood from the tubs. One can imagine the horror created by the retreat of these gory immigrants through the streets.

As friendless Germans, Seeger and Stiefel found the situation dangerous to their persons and property. After about a year of insufferable intimidation, they purchased a site on Frederick Road opposite Mt. Olivet cemetery, and in 1857 established their second brewery.



The year 1852 saw the start of Federal Hill's most enduring commercial enterprise—the Muhly bakery. Eberhardt Muhly had come to America from Germany some time before 1850 and first worked in Baltimore as a carpenter in the building trade. Finding himself with scraps of wood left over from his work, he built a brick oven in the backyard of his house at 1115 S. Charles street. He used his scrap wood to fire it, and in addition to baking his own family's bread, he allowed the women of the neighborhood to bring him their own dough, which he made into loaves for two cents each. Soon Muhly offered his loaves for sale at five cents. By 1855, the business was self-sustaining, Eberhardt Muhly gave up woodworking, and was listed in the Baltimore City directory as "baker".

Soon after South Carolina seceded from the Union, both Eberhardt Muhly and his son Christian, who had entered business with his father, left Baltimore to join the Confederate Army. The bakery remained in operation, run by Eberhardt's wife, who was assisted by a recently arrived immigrant from Germany. The Muhly ovens were commandeered by General Butler when he occupied Federal Hill in 1861, and were

used to produce various baked goods, principally gingerbread, for the Union troops. The soldiers, during their tenure, called the establishment the "American Eagle Bakery."



The Muhly family in their bakery, c.1900

—Christian Muhly, III

Returning from the war, Eberhardt Muhly abandoned baking to become again a carpenter, then studied homeopathic medicine and practiced in a house at Light and Wheeling streets during the 1870's and early 1880's. His son Christian took charge of the bakery, and with the support of his wife Sarah and a succession of immigrants from Germany, expanded the business greatly. It was during this period that Muhly's famous fruitcake was first baked. (It is still today a Baltimore institution.) Christian also developed a large business supplying special breads to ships calling at Baltimore. Another of his innovations was to use the horse-drawn delivery wagons supplying the ships for delivering products to small neighborhood grocery stores, thus providing an expansive system of outlets. Unfortunately, he was kicked while inspecting a horse one day, and died soon after the injury.

From that time to the present, three more generations of Muhly's have continued the business. The original bakery is once again being expanded, and Muhly bakeries now exist in several Maryland cities. This remarkable family was featured in the special edition of the *Enterprise* published for the 1979 Cross Street Festival, the story being appropriately titled, "The Muhly Story: Five Generations of Chocolate Eclairs."

In 1870, two enterprising but relatively obscure painters, George and William Bair, began a small marine paint manufacturing business near Charles and Lombard streets. For over a century, ship bottoms had been sheathed with copper mainly because the chemical reaction between seawater and copper produced conditions noxious

to shipworms. The Bair Brothers conceived the notion of a paint prepared from pulverized copper as a means of protecting ship bottoms much more easily and cheaply. In 1885, capital for expansion was obtained from Oliver Reeder (grandson of Charles) and shipbuilder William H. Bixler. Larger facilities were completed at Covington and Montgomery streets in 1887. The business has continued to prosper to the present day as the Jotun-Baltimore Copper Paint Company. Significantly, Oliver H. Reeder, great-grandson of Charles Reeder, Sr., is Vice President of the firm.

The rear of the oldest section of the present Jotun-Baltimore Copper Paint Company's plant, on the northwest corner of Covington and Montgomery streets, was from 1885 to 1887 occupied by a factory called Dunfermline Mills. The City Directory for 1887 listed Dunfermline as a cotton mill, and various writers have presumed that the operation was named for a town in Scotland which was the center of the fine linen industry.

Dunfermline Mills had the capability to weave, dye, ornament and fringe; its major product was fancy red and blue checkered tablecloths, which were immensely popular with east coast restaurants. Once however, the plant was mistaken for a slaughterhouse when a group of boys playing nearby noticed the spent red dye running into the gutter and emptying into the harbor. Investigating a possibly macabre experience, doubtless good for terrorizing sisters, the boys unfortunately discovered the plant's true function.



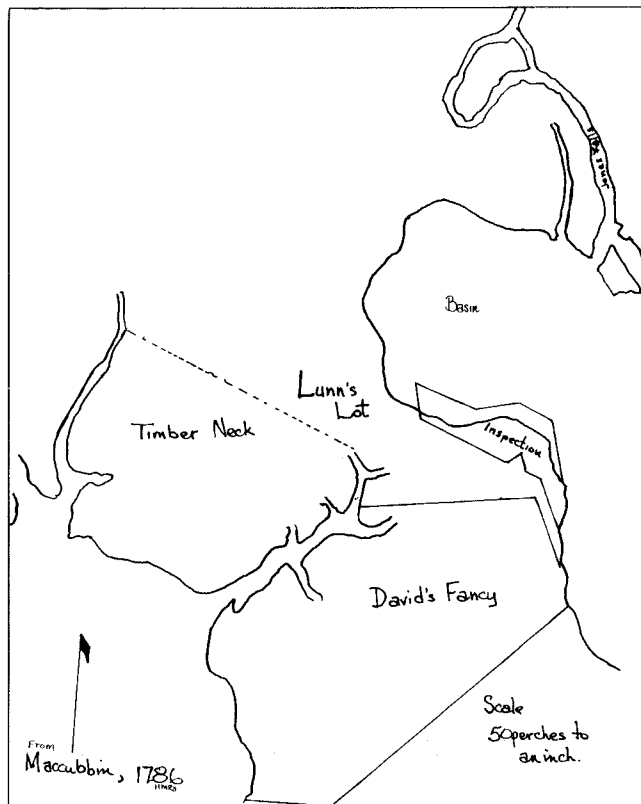
The Maine Lake Ice Company was located at the northeast corner of Hughes and Covington streets (now key highway and Covington streets). Ice was cut during the winter on the Kennebec river and other fresh water rivers and stored in ice houses on the river banks. A large fleet of three and four-masted schooners carried coal from Baltimore to the Maine ports and returned with cargoes of ice. The blocks of ice were unloaded by the vessels' donkey engines and sent by chutes into the wooden warehouse. They were stored layer by layer and hoisted to the upper levels by tongs, ropes and pulleys. Straw and sawdust were placed between the layers for insulation.

The Maine Lake Ice Company became part of the Knickerbocker Ice Company, which in turn was taken over by the American Ice Company. The transport of ice continued until World War I, when manufactured ice and electric refrigerators made it uneconomical.

The Community

Federal Hill today is a visible lesson in national history and industrial evolution, but even more durable has been the community life its own people have shaped, the traditions and institutions they have fostered. Again we must reach well back into time for the earliest notes of the hill's settlement, almost 300 years.

Today's Federal Hill neighborhood was originally part of an area covered by four land grants patented in the Seventeenth Century. The tracts were Lunn's Lot, David's Fancy, Timber Neck, and Gist's Inspection, the property of the progenitors of two of Baltimore's most illustrious families, the Gists and the Howards.



Earliest Land Patents

—Harry M. Robinson, III

Christopher Gist arrived in America from England about 1682, and lived in Baltimore county until his death in 1699. His son, Richard, was the surveyor of the Western shore and was one of the commissioners who laid out the town of Baltimore. Richard's son, also named Christopher, preceded Daniel Boone in exploring much of present day Ohio and Kentucky. Between 1750 and 1753, he traveled with Major George Washington, and once saved Washington's life during the French and Indian War. Richard Gist later served as a guide to General Braddock. As his father had been, Richard was an extremely competent surveyor and cartographer, his plats and surveys having been praised as "models in mathematical exactness and precision in drawing." General Mordecai Gist was another distinguished descendant of the original Christopher, beginning his military career as second major in Smallwood's Battalion in 1776. He became a general within three years, took a prominent part in the battle of Camden, was cited by Congress for bravery, and accomplished the difficult task of recruiting and equipping the army for the southern district. Mordecai Gist's devotion to the Revolutionary cause is bespoken by the names he selected for his two sons—Independent and States

Joshua Howard had served in the army of James II at the time of Monmouth's Rebellion (1685), and soon after emigrated to America, where he had received a large grant of land in Baltimore county. His grandson, John Eager Howard, was born on June 4, 1752 and was trained for no particular profession, but received an excellent classical education. Serving throughout the Revolution, he began as a captain in the Maryland Flying Camp and by 1779 he had been commissioned lieutenant colonel. During the battle of Cowpens on January 17, 1781, he led the charge which turned the conflict at a critical moment. His prompt and courageous action at Cowpens has been immortalized as "Howard's warlike thrust" in the State anthem.

The Gist and Howard families thus had many common attributes and interests—they had served together during the War for Independence, their lands were contiguous, and three of John Eager Howard's aunts, all sisters, had married sons of Richard Gist.

By 1782, when Gist's Inspection and Lunn's Lot were annexed to the City of Baltimore, these tracts, as well as most of the other land now comprising Federal Hill, had become John Eager Howard's property, and he became virtually interested in the prospect of commercial development of the area.

Another early landowner and developer in the Federal Hill area was Christopher Hughes. Hughes was born in County Wexford, Ireland, about 1744, and is said to have emigrated from Dublin in 1771. The first issue of the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, which appeared on August 30, 1773, carried the following notice:

Christopher Hughes and Co.
Goldsmiths and Jewelers

At the sign of the CUP and CROWN, the corner of Market and Gay Street in the House where Mr. Jacob Myers formerly lived and opposite Mr. Usher's new Store (late Mr. Little's Coffee House).

Beg Leave to inform their FRIENDS and the PUBLIC in general, that they have for Sale, a neat and elegant assortment of

PLATE AND JEWELLERY

Hughes, a capable and highly successful silversmith, later entered other fields of commerce amassing a considerable fortune in Federal Hill real estate. As early as

1787, his name appears in the land records as "Christopher Hughes, Gentleman", "Gentleman" being the eighteenth century equivalent of "capitalist." Hughes, who was also active in social and municipal affairs, probably ceased silversmithing about 1790. There are no surviving pieces by him in the styles which became popular about that time and the city directory for 1796 does not list him as a silversmith.

Christopher Hughes married Peggy Sanderson on January 6, 1779, at St. Paul's. They had three sons and four daughters, several of whom became conspicuous citizens. Christopher Hughes, Jr. (1786-1849) married a daughter of General Samuel Smith, hero of the Battle of North Point, and served as secretary of the commission which negotiated the Treaty of Ghent concluding the War of 1812. He was later charge d'affaires in the Netherlands and in Sweden from 1816 to 1845. His sister Louisa married Colonel George Armistead, the defender of Fort McHenry during the British attack of September 1, 1814.

Christopher Hughes, Sr. lived his last 30 years in a house on Forrest (Light) street on Federal Hill. He spent these years promoting and developing his vast real estate holdings, and died on September 7, 1824, in his 80th year. His wife Peggy survived him by a year.

In 1782 the General Assembly passed an act directing the commissioners of Baltimore Town to annex Lunn's Lot, Timber Neck, and Gist's Inspection. The first recorded transaction between the residents of Federal Hill and the Commissioners of Baltimore Town came in 1791, when on July 11, Christopher Hughes petitioned to have the intersections of several streets fixed by the commissioners. A difference of opinion on the location of the southeast corner of Montgomery and Forrest streets was reconciled by in a second meeting two weeks later. Commissioners Daniel Bowley, William McLaughlin, Philip Graybell, and Thomas Elliott duly signed the record of the proceedings.

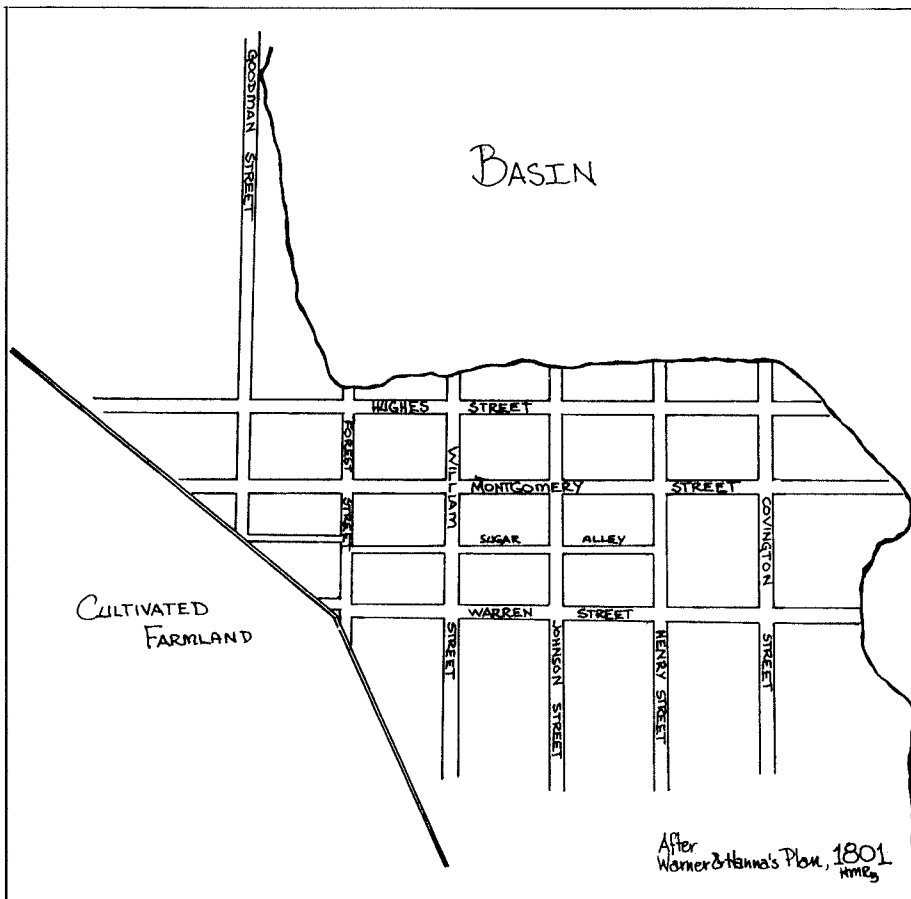
In August, 1814, a British fleet manned by Wellington's veterans sailed up the Patuxent river, landed at Benedict, and at Bladensburg defeated a larger but hastily assembled and ill-trained army of Americans. The redcoats then entered Washington after scarcely five miles' march, and burned the White House and the Capitol building as the beginning of the humiliation they sought to heap on the upstart Yankees. They then turned their attention to Baltimore, which had earned English enmity by the actions of her successful clipper schooner privateers during the Revolution.

On September 10, word reached Federal Hill that the British fleet under Admiral Alexander Cochrane had passed Annapolis and was cruising near the mouth of the Patuxent. The city rustled with rumors and at one o'clock on the afternoon of Sunday, the eleventh, news arrived that the British had landed a large force at North Point and were advancing toward Baltimore. There was near panic on Federal Hill. Troops raced to Fort McHenry while women and children were evacuated, most fleeing north on Charles street. The emotional climate was succinctly crystalized by the Reverend John Gruber, who closed his sermon at the Light Street Methodist Church with the words, "May the Lord Bless King George, convert him, and take him to heaven, as we want no more of him."

The British fleet, meanwhile, had moved within a few miles of Fort McHenry, and on Tuesday, September 13, began a fearsome cannon and rocket bombardment from beyond the range of the fort's guns. Hundreds gathered on the hill to watch the

cannonade, which lasted through the night. At seven in the morning, when the British Frigate *Surprize* signaled the squadron to retreat, the citizens on Federal Hill exploded in uncontrollable joy. They were still celebrating when on the evening of the sixteenth a small sloop arrived at Hughes' Wharf and discharged John S. Skinner, Dr. William Beanes, and Francis Scott Key, who had been amid the attacking ships under a flag of truce throughout the night. Key immediately retired to the Indian Queen Hotel, there to polish the poem he had written during the bombardment to the tune of the English sailors' drinking song, "Anacreon in Heaven."

The first settlers in Federal Hill worked either in the shipyards or in the glass factory. The earliest houses built on the lots laid out by the Howard and Hughes families were two story wooden ones from twelve to fourteen feet wide. These houses had low ceilings, small windows with panes of green glass, and whitewashed walls. Due to the danger from fire, the city in 1800 passed an ordinance prohibiting further construction of this type, and new homes, considerably more substantial, began to replace them. The early nineteenth century houses were 2½ stories, brick, and from eleven to fifteen feet wide. They had much more ornamental trim, both exterior and interior, including elaborate moldings and finely carved mantels.



Original Streets

—Harry M. Robinson, III

Early Federal Hill women followed an arduous daily schedule; they raised their children, did the family cooking and washing, sewed, nursed the sick, and often spent spare moments tending dooryard gardens. They dressed in long gowns and petticoats of wool and linsey-woolsey in summer. Only the fortunate had silk dresses or other finery for special occasions, and it would be years before calico would be cheap enough for everyday dresses. Men wore buckskin breeches, checked shirts, leather aprons, and red flannel jackets to work.

The pleasures of the early families were as simple as their clothes. Typical recreation would entail getting dressed up in the evening and visiting a neighbor to chat. During the summer, many would climb the hill to enjoy the cool evening breeze and the spectacular view of Baltimore Town and the rolling hills to the north.

Many early settlers of Federal Hill were veterans of the War of 1812. Typical was Nathan Grafton, who was born in Harford county in 1786. He married Martha Dawes on November 18, 1810. During the war he served with the 1st Regiment Artillery, Captain Moale's Company, Maryland Militia. The pay was very poor in those days, and for the week of August 18-24, 1813 he received \$1.80. After the war he and his brother Mark opened a bootmaker's shop at 2 Hanover street in Baltimore.

On March 7, 1816 Nathan and Martha inherited a parcel of property on the northside of Great Montgomery street, 122 feet east of Forrest street, from the estate of Martha's brother, James Dawes. In researching the title one finds this property passed through the hands of three of Baltimore's most prominent citizens. On Sept. 5, 1797, it was conveyed from John Eager Howard, Revolutionary hero, to David Porter, founder of the Federal Hill observatory, and on April 6, 1814 from Johns Hopkins to James Dawes. On February 25, 1818 they purchased a second parcel of property in Federal Hill located at the southwest intersection of Montgomery and Henry streets.

Nathan became very prominent in civic affairs, representing the 8th Ward on the Baltimore city council in 1826 and 1827. In the Spring of 1833 he and his wife sold all their property in Federal Hill and moved to Louisville, Ky. When Nathan died of cholera on July 24, 1833, Martha returned to Baltimore and lived with her daughter and son-in-law, James McConky, until her death on June 14, 1848.

The first church in Federal Hill was the William Street Methodist Episcopal church. In 1834, a small group of interested people purchased a lot on the southwest corner of William and Little Church (Churchill) streets. At that time, the lot had a crude shed in which services were held until September 11, 1850, when the cornerstone of a massive new church was laid. The new building, dedicated on June 22, 1851, was a thick-walled meetinghouse and the bricklayers, stonemasons, carpenters, glaziers, and tanners of the congregation did the actual construction work themselves. One of the names on a memorial window of the old church was that of William Skinner, owner of one of the largest shipyards in Federal Hill.

The history of regularly constituted police protection for the Federal Hill area began in 1784, when the Maryland Legislature passed "an Act for the establishment and regulation of a night watch and the erection of lamps in Baltimore Town." The introduction to the Act refers to the necessity of providing a night watch to check thievery, prevent robberies, disorders, disturbances of the peace, and fires.

The yearly salary of the watchmen under the Act was \$350 and they were required to give bond for the faithful performance of their duties. The men of the night

watch were equipped with pistols, nightsticks, and badges. They also carried huge rattles—heavy, cumbersome affairs, which were “sprung” by seizing the handle and giving it a rotary motion, which caused the bulky rattle to revolve a narrow tongue of hard wood against a wooden ratchet. The noise made by these appliances was far-reaching and terrific. The police used them principally to call upon each other for assistance or to alarm residents and firemen when fires were discovered.

Watchmen, in addition to preventing disorder and crimes and looking out for fires, were required to call the hour of the night and, whether required or not, generally shouted forth the state of the weather. “Five o’clock and a rainy morning!” the watchman would shout, and the good citizen would awaken, sit up, and with a shiver rebury himself under the covers, glad that it was the watch and not he who was obliged to be out in the unpleasant weather.

As the population of Federal Hill grew, a demand was created for fire houses, a floating church, a market, and the first public school.



The Watchman Fire Company Building —Box 414 Association

The Watchman Fire Company, the first such company on Federal Hill, was organized in 1840 and incorporated by an act of the Legislature passed March 2, 1842. Among the twelve incorporators were two Federal Hill shipbuilders, Langley Culley (who became first president) and John S. Brown. By 1843, the company was equipped with four suction engines, two hose reels, and seven hundred feet of hose. There were 32 active firemen and 116 honorary members. The first headquarters of the company had been at 125 E. Montgomery street, but in July, 1843, the cornerstone of a new building on Light street at York street was laid.

The name of the new fire company was undoubtedly derived from that of John Watchman, but it also served to describe the alertness and vigilance of the organization. Fires in those days were frequent, and contemporary newspapers often reported their cause as "incendiary."

The second fire company in Federal Hill, The United States Hose Company, was formed on March 8, 1854, at a meeting called for that purpose at the 17th Ward house. The city council on March 20 gave authority for its organization and establishment on William street. The company commenced operations with a hose-carriage purchased in Philadelphia, and with five companies of Baltimore.

Baltimore historians have recorded how fire alarms in those days were war whoops that brought out not only the firemen and "de Masheen" (the engine), but crowds of runners and hangers-on armed with clubs, knives, pickaxes, hooks, bricks, guns and any other sort of a weapon that was handy.

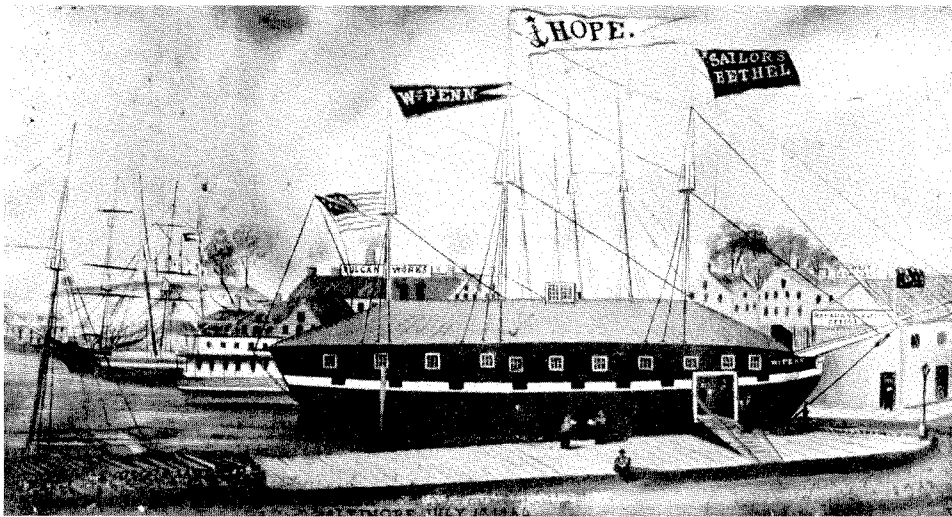
The Watchman Fire Company and the United States Hose Company were no different from others in the city during its time and the members often engaged in brawls with rival fire companies, sometimes while nearby property was consumed by flames. Confrontations also seem to have been "staged" by the firemen at times. Some firemen would enter the district of a rival company on a Sunday morning, set a trash fire, and shout the alarm. The responding company would then be surprised along its route to the fire with a hail of paving blocks and a *melée* would ensue. Later the combatant firemen would return to their stations with broken heads and damaged equipment, vengeance would be vowed and plans laid for the next encounter. Many of the city's early independent fire companies seemed to consider this type of activity their major reason for existence. One of the most violent confrontations occurred in 1857 when two companies met in a pitched battle on Federal Hill. Several men were shot, and a hose wagon was rolled down the hill into the basin.

Even when the city council passed an ordinance on December 2, 1858 providing for district organization and pay for the firemen, a spirit of violent competition endured, and fights were common.

In 1846, a number of merchants whose interests were closely allied with the shipping industry in Baltimore saw the necessity of providing a place where the many seamen visiting the port would be attracted to attend divine worship. The organizers felt that the seamen would be more comfortable at their devotions in a marine setting. This, coupled with the fact that a donor of land was not forthcoming, led to the purchase and conversion of the battered hulk of the ship *William Penn*, then lying stripped of spars and rigging in the basin. A roof was fitted over the deck and pews were set in place, the result being said to bring to mind Noah's Ark.

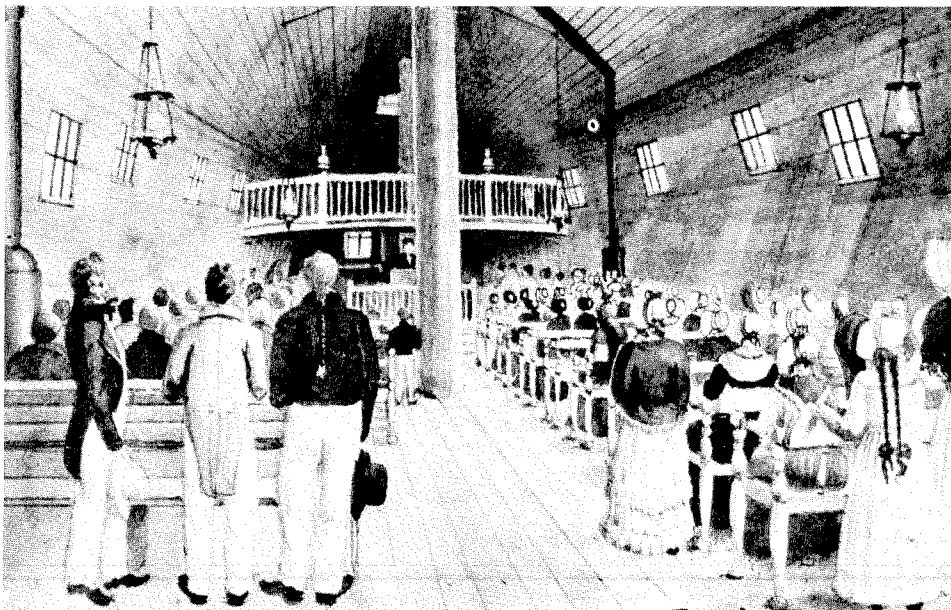
The converted vessel, now called "Ship Church *William Penn*," was berthed at the intersection of Forrest (Light) street with the Lee Street wharf. The original pastor was Captain Creamer, who had been master of the *William Penn*, and who had made four circumnavigations of the globe, each involving a passage through Cape Horn's tempestuous seas without loss of equipment. Captain Creamer was known as a deeply religious man, and his faith was often credited with his safe passage through hazardous waters. The fame of the Ship Church became widespread, and its pews were filled for each service with seamen of many nationalities who had heard of the Church during their travels.

In 1852, the *William Penn* was condemned, later to be dismantled at Locust Point. Wishing to continue the popular services, the founders acquired property on the south side of Lee street near Forrest street. Services were conducted at this location until 1867, when the Lee street property was sold, and another church was built on Hill street near Charles. This property, too, was sold in 1871 (to the Christ English Lutheran church, which has remained in the location to the present day), and the Sailors' Union Bethel, as the Seamen's church had become known, moved to its present location on the north side of Cross street just west of Covington street.



The Ship Church *William Penn*

—Maryland Historical Society



Interior of the Ship Church

—Maryland Historical Society

In 1936, an American flag and pole were donated by a local shipbuilder, and local newspapers proclaimed that "never in the history of any church in Maryland has a pole been placed on a church from which the Stars and Stripes will flutter." Continuing to serve seamen and the community today, the church remembers its origin aboard the *William Penn*. A model of a three-masted ship hangs above the nave as a wordless reminder of the church's heritage.

By the early eighteen forties, it was felt that the burgeoning families of Federal Hill had created sufficient demand for the construction of a market place. Residents of the hill had either to row across the basin or walk around it to reach the original city market at Baltimore and Harrison streets. Accordingly, construction of the Federal Hill Market house was begun in 1845 at corner of Cross and Charles streets. The original market house was 100 feet long, 60 feet wide, and contained spaces for the stalls of twelve butchers, four fishmongers, and twenty hucksters. The huckster stalls (or eave stalls) were let to farmers, who supplied them with fruits and vegetables brought by wagons each morning from the outlying farms. From its earliest days, the bustling market was a great success.

In 1850, the hill's first free school, Number 10, was built on the southeast corner of William and Warren streets. This was a small building (44 by 103 feet), and was constructed at a cost of \$17,900.

On March 16, 1853, the state legislature passed a bill "to provide for the better security of life and property in the City of Baltimore". This new law gave authority to the mayor and city council to increase and strengthen the police department, night watchmen, bailiffs, or officials in any way entrusted with preserving the peace. The act also provided that a marshal of police should be appointed annually, to have complete authority over the police force and to be subject to the supervision and authority of the mayor. The city was divided into four police districts, the eastern, central, southern and western, with the Federal Hill area under the authority of the southern district.



Southern District Police Sergeants, 1880

—John C. Vaeth, Jr.

Sometimes policemen who found intoxicated persons on the street requisitioned passing vehicles and one instance is recorded where a policeman in Federal Hill, who found a hopelessly intoxicated man on his hands, called upon the driver of a passing hearse. The bibulous person was placed inside and the policeman climbed up on the seat with the driver. All went well until the drunk, awakened by the jolting of the hearse, sat up, opened his eyes, saw what kind of vehicle he was riding in, and with a yell of terror, plunged through the glass side to the street, and, sobered by his unusual experience, started to run. He was caught by the policeman and was entirely able and willing to walk rather than be carted to the station house in such a gruesome manner.

Federal Hill had no street cars until the 1870s. To make this section more accessible to the rest of the city, the Federal Hill Steam Ferry Company was chartered in 1854. It ran a boat, *The City Block*, between the foot of Hughes street and West Falls avenue. This seems to have been Baltimore's first ferry.

As the area's industry continued to grow, a large group of German and English immigrants settled in Federal Hill. Both groups felt that one of their primary needs was a suitable place to worship in their respective faiths.

The Light Street Presbyterian church, located at Light street near Montgomery, was formerly known as the South church. The corner-stone of the church was laid on November 23, 1854 and the new church dedicated June 10, 1855 by its first minister, Rev. J. H. Kaufman. The German Catholics, needing a place to worship, built a church on the corner of West and Light streets. Called The Church of Holy Cross, it was dedicated on April 9, 1860. A new school was built next to the church for about two hundred pupils, who were taught by lay teachers. Another group of German immigrants organized the Light Street German Methodist Episcopal church in 1868. The construction of their new church on Light street north of West street began in August, 1873.

Between 1865 and 1870 there was a dramatic change in the area surrounding Federal Hill. The waterfront of Locust Point had been developed by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and large deepwater piers with rail sidings, grain elevators, coal bins, and supporting warehouses constructed. Population in Baltimore had increased due to the influx of free blacks and poor southerners who settled mostly in the Sharp-Leadenhall corridor, but the Federal Hill neighborhood remained relatively stable since little housing was available.

Summer vacations spent in Federal Hill were pleasant and sometimes exciting for the local teenagers, as George Elmer reports:

"The top of Federal Hill was a source of joy on hot summer evenings. There Mr. Schillinger, who kept a saloon, had a large yard where tables and benches were placed, so that men could be comfortable while sipping their beer and eating sandwiches. Women and children from squares around went up to the hill, sat on the grass and watched the boats go to and fro, while enjoying the cool evening breezes from the river."

"There was a wooden stairway that reached from the top of the hill to the road that was on the level with the shipyards, which enabled the workmen to go down direct to their work instead of having to walk the distance around the hill. Close by the stairway was a small wooden cottage, occupied by a Mr. McCutcheon and his family. McCutcheon's occupation was to paint figureheads on the ships and their names on the sterns."

“There was a steep road that led up from Montgomery Street to the top of the hill, which we called “Black Road,” because it was covered with fine cinders; and during the winter when there was snow, hundreds of boys coasted down to the water’s edge. Most of the boys wore long Yankee boots with red tops and copper toes.”

“Previous to the organization of the police force, which took place a few years before the war, we had night watchmen. These watchmen had little round watch boxes with small wood-burning stoves, where they went after midnight to keep warm. One of these boxes was located in the corner of No. 10 school yard, facing William Street.”

“On summer evenings, we boys went down to the shipyards, stripped off our clothes, put them on the logs which floated near the stages and went swimming between the railway where the boats were hauled out of the water for repairs. The women on the hill used to see us running around the stages like cannibals, and they made a complaint to John W. Davis, who was one of the first police commissioners, and who lived next door to us on William Street. He had three children, one girl and two boys; and his boys joined us in swimming. However, Mr. Davis decided to put a stop to our swimming in the shipyard; so one evening while we boys were enjoying ourselves in the water, a squad of 25 policemen appeared and each officer took possession of a different suit of clothes, thereby forcing the boys to come ashore to get their clothes. As we came from the water, an officer got hold of each of us and marched us over to the Southern Police Station where our names were taken. The captain gave us a scolding and warned us that if we were caught again we would be locked up. We were then dismissed. But it required more than a scolding to scare us and we were back at the shipyards the next evening, but we took precautions to put our clothes in a boat and tow it out in the river where we had the laugh on the officers.”

Most popular of the policeman in the Federal Hill area was Thomas L. Farnan who joined the department on April 30, 1867.



Thomas J. Farnan, Marshall of Police

—History of the Baltimore
Police Department, Clinton McCabe

One of his first cases was that of George Moore, alias Woods, a notorious thief and desperate character. Captain Wallace Clayton, of the schooner *Pringy*, docked at Bowly's Wharf, was assaulted and robbed one night and the thieves cut out one of his eyes. The assault and robbery aroused a great deal of indignation, and though the thieves left no clue behind, Patrolman Farnan worked assiduously on the case for a nearly a year, finally struck a trail and arrested Woods. He denied the crime, but Captain Clayton positively identified him as one of his assailants, and, with the evidence collected by the young officer who had been on his track, Moore, alias Woods, was convicted and sent to the Maryland Penitentiary for fifteen years.

One night when Farnan was a sergeant he met a man who was a mute. The man, a giant in stature and muscle, had committed an assault. Sergeant Farnan placed him under arrest, but he suddenly wheeled about, caught the Sergeant's arm and threw him over his shoulder as though he was a sack of meal.

With both his hands held, the sergeant was at the giant's mercy. Without apparent effort the man climbed up the stairs of a house in the neighborhood until he reached the attic, and Sergeant Farnan found himself face to face with three other men who he knew to be of questionable character. Realizing his position, the sergeant told the other three men that if they did not assist him in arresting the deaf and dumb man he would hound every one of them if he got away alive. Knowing Farnan's reputation, the three men felt they had better take sides with him. Throwing themselves on their former companion, they grappled with him while Farnan tried to handcuff him. Struggling, the five men pitched down the steep stairway. The struggle on the staircase was more than its crumbling, ramshackle supports could stand, and it gave way. The mass of humanity, of which the sergeant was a part, rolled out on the sidewalk, and the sergeant, as he struggled, managed to rap on the sidewalk with his nightstick. Other policemen responded, and it took eight of them to land the giant man in the Southern Station.

Thomas Farnan had an outstanding career with the Baltimore Police department. He climbed the ladder of promotion step by step until, on August 8, 1902, he reached the summit; by the unanimous vote of the Board of Police Commissioners, he was appointed marshal of police.

Primary school number 17 was built in 1875 on the southeast corner of Poultney and Light streets. A well-appointed brick Victorian structure 50 by 72 feet, the new building was welcomed by the neighborhood as the 1850 schoolhouse at Warren and William streets had been crowded for some time.

For several years the Society of Friends maintained a mission in the southern portion of the city. It first occupied rented buildings, but in 1871 a lot was purchased on Light street near Hamburg and a two-story brick building was erected in 1880. In addition to a kindergarten, evening classes provided instruction in various useful arts.

In 1873 a resolution passed the city council appropriating the sum of \$31,000 to be used to build a new market to replace the aging Federal Hill market house. The market building, called the Cross Street market, was 268 feet long and 60 feet wide, and located in Cross street between Light and Charles streets. A few years later a two-story community hall was built on the Charles street end of the market.

In the 1880s, most of the boys in the Federal Hill area sought the honor of being accepted by one of the local gangs, chief among which was the "Ragged Cadets."

These boys were not serious juvenile delinquents, but a love of swimming in the harbor, oystershell battles, and running from the cops seemed to be qualifications for membership. The Ragged Cadets were also sought by local politicians to build huge bonfires on election nights. The boys idolized the members of the local fire companies, most of whom were still volunteers. Early in the career of a Ragged Cadet, it was important to declare for one company or another, and often one youth would be challenged by another with the question "What fire company do you go for?" Depending on the answer, an oystershell battle, or at the very least, hot pursuit might result.



Hook and ladder on Light Street, 1880

—William F. Snyder

In the latter part of the Nineteenth Century, when Federal Hill steamship yards and engine works were at their busiest, workers were summoned to their jobs by the ringing of the "mechanics' bell," which was hung in a high tower on the east side of Covington street near the foot of Grindall street. The bell was rung four times on each of the week's six working days: at the start of the day's work (sunrise), at the beginning and also the end of the noon lunch hour, and at the close of the workday at sundown. The cost of this service was borne cooperatively by the master-shipbuilders, who paid the bellringer \$200 annually. Usually, though, the wife of the paid ringer did the ringing while her husband was more gainfully employed in one of the shipyards. Some years ago William J. Kelley, whose manuscripts contain an abundance of Federal Hill history, traced this bell. It had come into the possession of Peter Fritz, who kept one of the hill's many taverns, and who presented it to the Holy Cross cemetery, where it has ever since tolled the arrivals of funerals.

Sandy Bottom, at the foot of York street, was the mecca of the seafaring man for wine, women, and wassail. Sailors who had spent weeks, and in many cases months, in the narrow confines of slow ocean carriers naturally felt like making the most of their shore leave when in port. They would flock to Sandy Bottom to enjoy drinking at the many saloons and betting on the weekly bulldog fights, cockfights, and boxing

matches. Two of the more notorious saloons were the High Hat and Mary's. There were hundreds of brawls, assaults, robberies, and a number of murders. Sandy Bottom soon gained a reputation as Baltimore's honky-tonk district, where one could enjoy not only drinking and gambling but another diversion offered in every port city in the world.

The district had a number of flophouses where the smokies and derelicts could spend the night—5¢ for a blanket spread on the floor or 15¢ for a cot. The more experienced bum would always sleep with his shoes tied around his neck—if this was not done, one would wake up the next morning minus a right, left or both shoes—whatever one of his associates needed most. Early in the morning, the manager would come in the room and order everyone back out on the street. If his order was not carried out immediately, he would grab the upper part of the blanket by each corner, stand the individual upright and either push or carry him out bodily.

John Beck, a German immigrant, settled on Federal Hill and opened a small cooperage shop on York street near Light. As his business began to prosper, he moved to larger quarters at William street and Armistead lane. Having learned the tastes of the local Irish population, Beck decided to also operate a tavern at the new location in Sandy Bottom.

Though Beck's cooperage was well-patronized, his tavern operation, superintended for the most part by his wife Gertrude, was beset with aggravations and outrages from the beginning. The gang was the recognized social unit for the Irish working men and gang members had little respect for either Beck or his property. Often the customers refused to pay, threatening violence when pressed and brawls and general disorder were the rule. Although the proprietor complained to the police, he received little protection from the law, since the policemen in the area were either afraid of the gangs or had been recruited from among their members.

The *Sun* of October 23, 1857, reported that on the previous Wednesday a group of men had arrived at Beck's tavern between one and two in the morning demanding admittance. The proprietor, being in bed, refused them, and the rowdies tore down his awning, threw stones through the windows and fired several times at the proprietor. The would-be customers then went to the foot of William street, piled wood on Beck's fishing sloop, set it afire, and cut it adrift, having stolen the sails and most of the rigging. The fire was extinguished by the police but no arrests were made.

Understandably, John Beck gave up his tavern business early in 1858. His cooperage business expanded once again, and he began to offer a line of coopering tools to the trade. He and his wife moved, in 1864, to 200 E. Montgomery street, the house which had been built by John Watchman, and in 1871 Beck had the house at 229 E. Montgomery street built and died there a few years later.

“Bulldog” Frazier got his nickname from the pit bulls he raised and trained for the popular (if somewhat gory) Sandy Bottom dogfights. Bulldog applied his energy and wiles to the development of the meanest, most tenacious, winningest strain of canines Baltimore had ever seen. Though his straining methods were well guarded secrets then, they were passed on to his nephew George and are here revealed for the first time.

Each breeding season, careful selections were made. Newborn pups began their education as soon as they were weaned. Just having ornery parents did not qualify a

pup for the pit. The dogs were deliberately tested soon after teething. "Bulldog" would get the pups good and angry by thrusting at them with a flour bag and, when all the pups had set their teeth in it, he would hang the bag on his backyard fence. As the pups let go and fell off, he would put them aside to be sold. The last dog to let go of the bag would be kept and trained further.

At this time "Bulldog" was faced with a chore he did not relish—biting off the dog's tail. He would first wash his mouth out with 100 proof Maryland rye, bit off the puppy's tail and again wash his mouth out with another slug of whiskey. A third shot (a double) was taken not to wash out his mouth but to calm his nerves.

The fights were noisy, gory and attracted a blood-thirsty crowd. The dogs were so tenacious that when an owner wanted to yield the fight, it was often necessary to fling pepper in the victor's face to make him sneeze, thus loosening his grip.

Cockfights attracted the same type of crowds as the pit bulls. The men of Federal Hill who enjoyed cockfighting insist that theirs was an amateur—not a professional—sport and that the greatest zest to be obtained from it was in their many chances to gamble before and throughout the fight. Odds against one bird or the other fluctuated constantly and it was not uncommon for a great deal of money to be wagered.

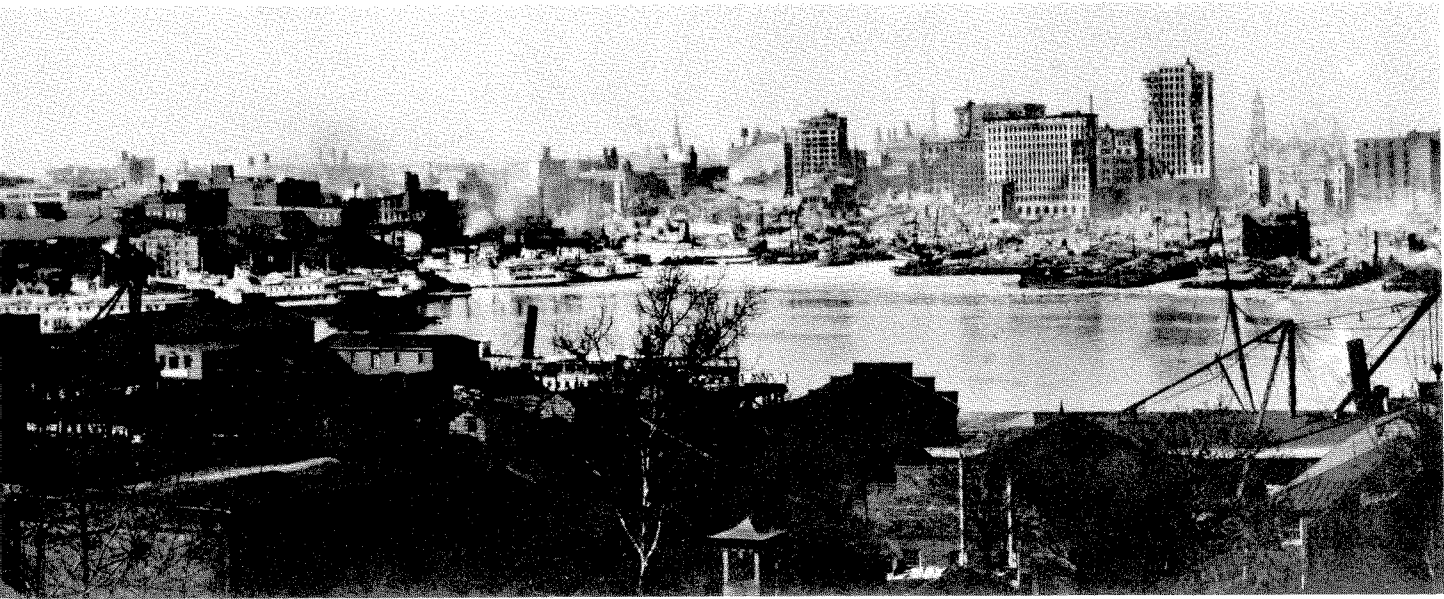
The breeders of gamecocks in Federal Hill stressed pedigree and their favorite strain of cocks were called the Baltimore Topknots. Preceding their entrance into the fighting pit, they were given intensive training. As youngsters, they were permitted a great deal of exercise to develop muscles. Chief features of their special diet were cooked corn meal, chopped hard-boiled eggs and occasional helpings of raw beef. The birds were massaged with a mixture of alcohol and ammonia, which toughened their skin. Their wings were trimmed at the slope, the hackle and rump feathers were shortened; and the comb was cut as close as possible to reduce it as a target for the enemy.

In ancient times cocks were permitted to fight until one or the other was killed. In the Federal Hill era, the rules were amended somewhat. Although some fights were allowed to go to an absolute finish, others permitted the withdrawal at any time of a badly damaged cock.

Even when "Bulldog" Frazier could not attend the cock fights he would like to stand outside when the program was finished to pick out the losers. He said it was easy—they were the men who passed by with a burlap bag over their shoulders with blood dripping out of the bottom of the bag.

The worst disaster in the history of Baltimore was the Great Fire of February 7, 1904. It was a raw, blustery Sunday, when at 10:45 A.M. an automatic alarm went off in the drygoods warehouse of John E. Hurst & Co., at German street (now Redwood) and Hopkins Place. Whipped by the wind, the fire spread to near-by buildings and was quickly out of control, speeding north and east.

That night thousands gathered on Federal Hill where the whole extent of the lurid panorama was visible. The warehouses, from that height, would be intact one minute and completely engulfed the next, sending roaring flames hundreds of feet in the air. "Fireproof" skyscrapers burning like giant torches made a sight of terrifying grandeur. Many stayed on the Hill until Monday evening when the fire was declared under control.



Aftermath of the 1904 Baltimore Fire

The construction of Key highway in 1913, which was such a godsend to the expanding Bethlehem shipyard facilities, was not universally approved. As recorded by Letitia Stockett in *Baltimore: A Not too Serious History*, at least one resident not only found the new highway ill-conceived, but even erected a memorial to the foolishness of the city highway department:

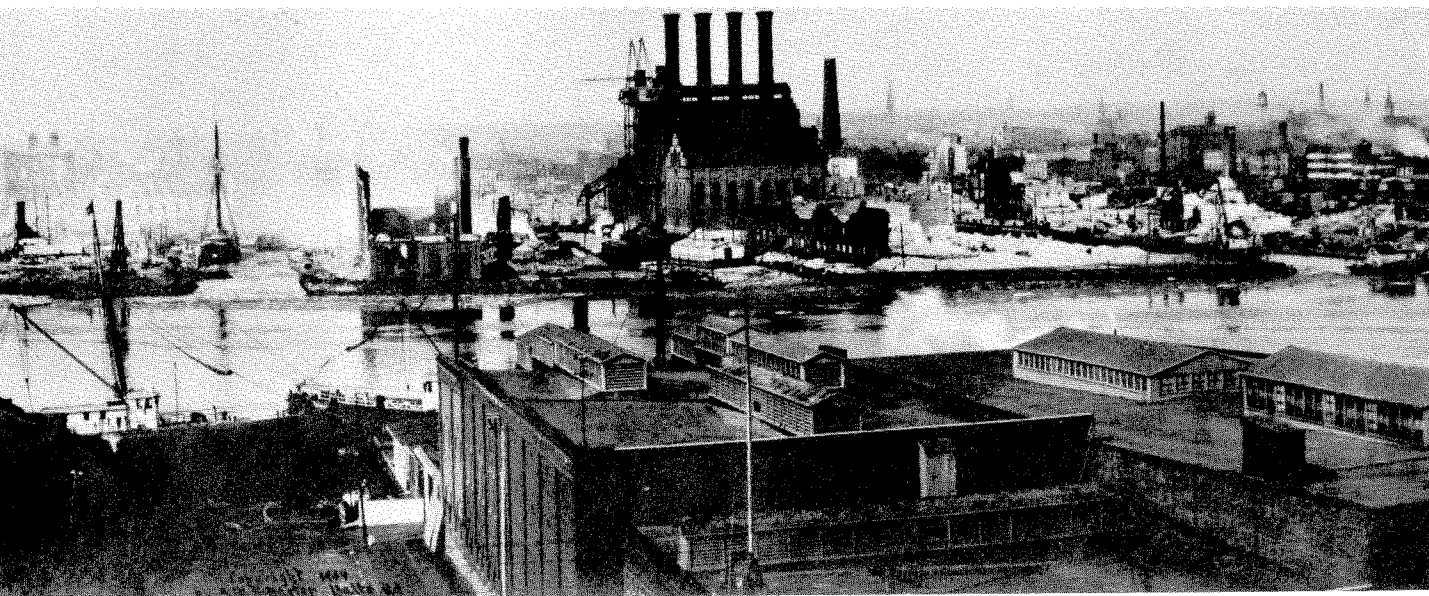
“At the corner of Light and Montgomery there is a small shop with a peaked roof, and in the yard some rough blocks of stone where two men were busily at work. This drew me at once and as I came near I saw on the left of the doorway a long panel of stone set with a small spirited bronze horse. There I read this inscription:

*The City Put the (horse)
In the cellar
But the business on
a mountain
But I am still making
tombstones
on the old corner
And selling them for
Less money than you
Can buy them elsewhere.”*

Not in every day’s walk does such an adventure befall. Who was the horse? Why did the city act in such an inexplicable manner? Nor did Mr. Wingrove, the owner of the business, seem averse to telling me.

“‘Now,’ said he, ‘young lady, I’ll explain; you come with me.’ Meekly I went. He showed me an old stable where the fine horse—the ‘grand stud horse’ once lived. Now the stable was at least six feet above the level of the pavement.

“‘That,’ said Wingrove, ‘is where my horse lived. That was my stable. But along came those smart fellows from the City Hall making improvements—oh this has all been wrote up all over the country—and they cuts down the street to make this here Key Highway to improve things. Huh! And there is my horse, my fine stud horse in the stable high and dry. What am I to do?



—Maryland Historical Society

“ ‘What?’ said I, for ignorance is always best when a man is mounted on his hobby and a fine stud hobby at that.

“ ‘Come here,’ he said patronizingly, ‘look through this chink. Well,’ says he, surveying me as if he were Dr. Norwood of Saint Bartholomew’s or Dean Inge, ‘What does I do, young lady? I lets down a plank from the stable to the next room, see? Then I get the horse out! Then I made this monument just to let folks know what they done with their improvements, and I puts it up in memory of my horse which was as fine a horse as you can find in Maryland and that’s saying something.’

“It is. Billy Barton (Maryland’s most famous steeplechase horse) may have a finer monument, but Howard Bruce will be no prouder of his horse than Wingrove was of his.”



Restoring brick sidewalks, 1890's

—John C. Vaeth, Jr.

By 1919, a need was seen for a new type of school to fill the gap between primary and high school and the Southern Junior High school became one of the first such institutions in the United States. It was located at the corner of Warren and William streets in the 1910 three-story brick structure which had replaced Primary School No. 10.

The following year, a national survey organization found Federal Hill to be an ideal site for a new senior high school. Subsequently, concerned area residents, led by Mrs. Mary V. Fisher, began a campaign for the establishment of a high school. A new building was started in 1925 to the east of the original structure, and in 1929, the first senior class was enrolled with Judson Hunt as principal and John H. Schwatka as special assistant. The first class graduated in 1932; and a year later the Southern High basketball team, doubtless with players trained for years in the Cross Street Market hall, won the Maryland Scholastic Association championship.

During the sobering days of the Great Depreciation, recreation for the community surrounding Federal Hill centered around the church halls and the Cross Street Market hall. The hall, in the second floor of the large brick structure at the Charles street end of the market, was the scene of social affairs, fraternal meetings, dances, and sports events, the most popular of the latter being basketball games featuring local teams. One of the more successful teams, coached by Bill Bolander of West street, was strictly a family affair. The starting players were Bill's sons Woodrow, Harry, Lester, James, and Wilbur. When needed, another son, Harold, left the bench to substitute. The Bolanders won the Hall championship in 1938.



The Watermelon Man

—The A. Aubrey Bodine Collection, The Peale Museum

On humid summer evenings, Federal Hill park was a favorite congregating spot or families gathering to enjoy concerts by the Municipal band or the Park band. The municipal band, under the direction of Bob Iula, played the stirring music of John Philip Sousa, while the Park band specialized in the romantic airs of Victor Herbert and Sigmund Romberg. During the stifling heat of July and August, many families would spend the entire evening camped on the hill in the hope of catching a breeze to make the night more bearable. If sleep was impossible, one could always enjoy the activity of the small Bay steamboats arriving and departing from the Light street wharves below.

In 1940, despite the threat of war, the popularity of Federal Hill park did not suffer. The shady green plateau was still the most popular rendezvous and favorite promenade for South Baltimoreans. As a group, these people were one of the most homogeneous in Baltimore. They consisted almost entirely of what has been called "old American stock." Many had come from the Eastern Shore of Maryland. There was but a slight admixture of Irish and Germans, immigrants who had arrived in Baltimore immediately before or after the Civil War.



A "Cockeyed" Block

—The A. Aubrey Bodine Collection, The Peale Museum

Except for the business sections along Light and Charles streets, the physical appearance of this part of Baltimore had changed less than any other during the last fifty years. Streets like Riverside avenue running back from Federal Hill park had looked the same at the turn of the century.

Neighborhood stores, old churches, high porches, dormer windows, picketed corner yards, covered alleyways in rows of neat brick houses—all these belonged to the best of an older, quieter Baltimore, and wore a homely air of permanence and thrift.



East Montgomery Street from the Hill, 1947

—Henry F. Rinn

After a visit to Federal Hill during this period, Baltimore author Letitia Stockett wrote:

“Indeed I have discovered nearby the ideal Baltimore house. It stands on the steep edge of Warren Street, almost toppling down into the harbour. All its eastern windows are open to the sun. It is a perfect location; peace itself. To keep the natives from tumbling off the hill a stout row of stumps runs along the edge inviting the foolhardy, but warning the wise. I followed the line of these stumps and descended a flight of wooden steps; and found myself in a narrow court more like a country lane than a city street. It was a poor place, but by no means forlorn. Bits of garden were tucked in here and there, and as it was wash-day the lines were strung with red, orange, and green. If there is anything more decorative than a line of rainbow rompers I would like you to name it. This whole neighborhood is a network of little courts and alleys. They must be sought for, but they can be found. Grindalls Court for instance is a tiny place with not more than five or six houses on each side; Compton has its mansions set in sawtooth fashion, like a chevron molding. The roadway was muddy—very—but the houses themselves are small and quaint and gaily colored. One was pale green one sported a bright yellow transome and window sills. This neighborhood tucked away under Federal Hill is anything but drab.”

On April 23, 1944 Federal Hill park resembled a modern battlefield for a time during South Baltimore’s “All Purpose War Rally.” Troops from Edgewood arsenal gave demonstrations of colored smoke signals, flame-throwers, and trench mortars,

enabling the thousands who attended to get an idea of what front-line troops were experiencing. The exercises started at 1 P.M., and at 1:30 there was a parade of veterans' organizations headed by a detail from Edgewood Arsenal. Later in the afternoon, Governor O'Connor spoke on "Maryland's Part in America's Defense," followed by Mayor McKeldin's talk on "Baltimore's Contribution to the Cause of Freedom". The rally closed with a supper for the servicemen and women who had participated.

During the research for this volume, vignettes of life in Federal Hill during the early twentieth century came to light, remembered by a few of the older residents.

Marie Parks fondly remembers learning numbers and ABC's at Public School No. 70 with the aid of a bag of lentils, sledding from the top of Federal Hill down Warren avenue to Light street, jumping rope with her girlfriends (sometimes they were joined by an elderly gentleman by the name of Daugherty who paid each one a penny so he could get his daily exercise) and begging her mother to be allowed to meet Mr. Dunn, the milkman, so she could pet the horse while the pitcher was being filled. Other memories included climbing Federal Hill on election night to find out what party was victorious (this was determined by looking across the basin to the Sun Square; if the searchlight was moving in one direction the Democrats and won, if in the other direction, the Republicans were in) and receiving a 25¢ weekly allowance every Saturday. Twenty cents was spent that day at the McHenry theatre—followed by a week, worrying if the remaining 5¢ would last six more days. Marie was being sent by her Dad every Sunday evening to the saloon at Riverside and Grindall streets for a pitcher of beer. The bar being closed, she would rap at a side entrance and as soon as she rapped an arm would reach out, take the pitcher and in a few minutes return it overflowing with foam. Marie's fondest memories are about Federal Hill park, its stirring band concerts, delightful cool breezes on hot summer nights, and Sunday afternoon gatherings of neighborhood boys and girls. She might be biased though, because that is where she met her husband.



Wagons of the Delldora Dairy, which served Federal Hill at the turn of the century

—Cloverland Farms Dairy

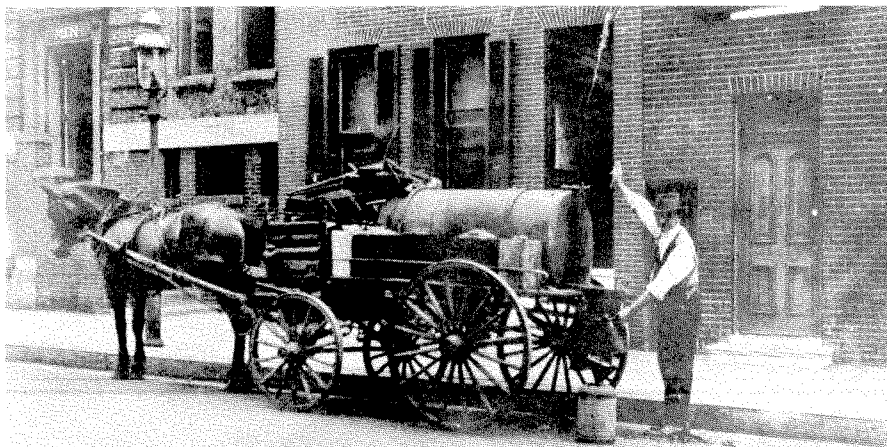
Harry Herbert Reynolds was born in 1902 in a small house on Riverside avenue near Federal Hill park—the third generation of the Reynolds family to reside there.

Harry's grandfather, John Charles Reynolds, after receiving his master's license in 1866, went to work for the Baltimore and Philadelphia Steamboat Company. He served first as mate and later as master of ugly, barge-like steamboats like the *Richard Willing* and the *W. Whilldin* which were built to negotiate the narrow locks of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. For many years transportation of freight was his company's mainstay and its boats had only a few berths for passengers.

Jesse Benjamin Reynolds, Harry's father, obtained his master's certificate in 1891. He spent many years as Captain of the Ericsson Line steamboats, the *Anthony Groves, Jr.*, *Ericsson*, *Lord Baltimore* and *John Cadwalader*. The company started to cater to the passenger trade in 1870 and advertised that its steamers had been enlarged with extra accommodations. The Centennial Celebration in 1876 brought increased demand for passenger transportation between Baltimore and Philadelphia and from that time on passenger traffic was an important phase of operations for the company. While master of the Ericsson Line steamboats, Jesse had worked out a unique plan to advise his wife what time to expect him for dinner. As he passed Federal Hill on his return trip from Philadelphia, he would give three long and one short blasts on the ship's whistle, a code that told his wife that he would be home within the hour. He ended his career sailing between New York and Baltimore for the Clyde Line whose Baltimore terminal was located at the foot of Henry street in Federal Hill.

Harry spent his boyhood days as did other boys in the neighborhood, with one exception—during his summer vacations he traveled back and forth to Philadelphia on one of his dad's steamboats.

At 10:15 AM on March 7, 1913, Mrs. Reynolds asked Harry to take the lamps out in the back yard and fill them with kerosene. Several minutes later the *S/S Alum Chine* blew up while loading ammunition just outside Baltimore harbor. The blast shook the entire house, shattering a number of windows. Terrified, Mrs. Reynolds rushed to the yard thinking Harry had set off the explosion, but discovered her son safe and sound, looking down the harbor to the scene of the disaster.



The Kerosene Man

—John C. Vaeth, Jr.

After Harry had finished his schooling he approached his dad about the possibility of going to sea. After being told, "One in a family is enough," he went to work for the City of Baltimore in 1924 and retired 44 years and 5 months later. His last and most memorable trip with his dad was in 1927 when he and Mary, his wife spent their honeymoon on the *John Cadwalader*.

When I interviewed Harry in March, 1980, he and his wife were living in a small, neat cottage in Stevenson, Baltimore county, and they both were looking forward to celebrating their 53rd wedding anniversary in a few months.

One of the multitude of German immigrants to land at Locust Point during the late 1860's was J. Henry Broening, a tailor from Hanau in Bavaria, who opened a shop on Charles street near Hill street. At the time of his death in the mid-1880's, his eldest son, Henry J. Broening, was studying law, while a younger son, William F., had just completed the eighth grade at the public school at Charles and Ostend streets. William took a job in a coppersmith's shop to help support the family, and in his spare time read law in his brother's office. With this preparation, he entered the University of Maryland Law School, where he was graduated two years later, in 1897.

William F. Broening worked to build a successful law practice, but his true gift was for politics. He became a city councilman, then a member of the House of Delegates, then State's attorney, and was twice mayor of Baltimore. Both he and his brother had moved to Montgomery street, and their houses there remained in the Broening family for many years.

While his own career flowered, Mr. Broening was, in large measure, responsible for the political training of another South Baltimore Republican, who would also serve twice as Mayor with an interim stint as Governor—Theodore R. McKeldin.

The Cross Street market was completely destroyed by a raging fire during the early morning hours of Friday May 19, 1951. Starting in the fish section at the west end of the shed, the fire spread quickly throughout the frame structure to Light street. Twelve alarms were sounded in the twenty minutes between 1:38 AM and 1:58. The first firefighters on the scene dragged a score or more of sleeping derelicts from danger as others evacuated the dwellings on the southside of Cross street. On the north side of the market, the buildings were steaming hot, but firefighters played an effective curtain of water to prevent their ignition.

When dawn came, the market shed, community hall, and thirteen buildings bordering the market on the south were in ruins. In the aftermath of the fire, proprietors of stalls which had been fully stocked for weekend shopping exhibited their indomitable spirit. One of the owners, Ben Bongiovanni, obtained two outside stands from a farmer and was open for business the next day. The market was rebuilt by the city and reopened in 1952, but although the new structure was fireproof, the market hall, scene of so many athletic and social events, was gone forever.

In the late 1950's, as suburbanites reacted to their long drive to work, there began a new trend toward city residency for those with jobs downtown. As the city center underwent revitalization with the construction of huge new office buildings and cultural attractions, nearby residential areas around Tyson Street and Bolton Hill were being restored to their former positions of elegance. To the "urban pioneers" who bought and restored in these areas, the practicality of walking to work and to restaurants, theaters, and stores far outweighed the cost of renovation.

As the city began to plan redevelopment of the inner harbor area, now virtually useless to marine commerce, into a focal point for the new Baltimore, the stately townhouses immediately surrounding Federal Hill park began to attract the attention of those with vision. On the whole, the Federal Hill properties were in excellent structural condition; in many cases, the same family had occupied them for generations, and as a result, streets were kept clean, yards were in good order, and marble steps were well-scrubbed. By the early 1960's, nearly a dozen new arrivals had begun painstaking restoration of the venerable old townhouses, many of which had been built by the industrial tycoons of the 1800's.

The one dark spectre on the horizon was the plan for the new Southwest boulevard, which would cut across the north face of Federal Hill park and require the destruction of a large number of houses on Montgomery, Hughes, Hanover, and Charles streets. In the face of this threat, restorations continued; the dedicated preservationists were convinced that the highway could be realigned. The *News American* of October 3, 1965, said that it was possible that some day Federal Hill townhouse would sell in the \$30,000 bracket, or even higher, and that those willing to take the risk could still get in "on the ground floor."

In December, 1966, informal meetings were held by a few concerned Federal Hill residents to discuss opposition to the proposed expressway. During the next February, this group joined forces with preservationists in Fells Point whose properties were also threatened by the road, and formed the Society for the Preservation of Federal Hill, Montgomery Street, and Fells Point. The stated aim of the society was to find means to preserve and develop the two districts as a living heritage of the city's history, and to bring to the attention of the public the historic and architectural value of the two old neighborhoods. The first order of business, however, was to try to save the communities from destruction by the highway system.

For the next 22 months, many meetings, most charged with emotion, were convened between the society and the State Roads Commission in an effort to resolve the problem. The importance of the Society's struggle began to be appreciated by other groups throughout the city; on August 3, 1968, more than 30 civil rights, neighborhood, preservation, and professional groups met to organize their support behind the Society and to bring pressure on city, state, and federal planning officials. Victory for the preservationists came on December 23, 1968, when Mayor Thomas D'Alesandro, III, announced that he favored the 3-A expressway route, which would align the highway south of the Federal Hill area.

In 1970, the Federal Hill Historic District, bounded by Covington, Hughes, Charles, and Hamburg streets, was nominated and accepted for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

By the mid-1970's, some 50 or 60 previously neglected Federal Hill houses were in some stage of restoration or renovation. The physical labor involved in remodeling most of the houses was tremendous. Tons of debris had to be disposed of from basements, attics, and deteriorated floors, partitions, and ceilings removed. There was, however, a real spirit of working together in the neighborhood; everybody was helping everyone else. Neighbors borrowed bricks, for instance, to restore a fireplace, but in return would help the donor install his marble steps.

One man in the midst of a restoration project was Augustus Pickens, a longtime

neighborhood resident and collector of antiques. By the early 1960's, Pickens had amassed such a collection of past glories that he found the whole not at all suited to his Charles street apartment. After many trips to Alexandria, Va. and studies of early homes in other historic areas, he considered his love of the water, and decided to scrutinize the Federal Hill area for an old house to restore as a residence. Centering his search on the 100 block of East Montgomery street, where Federal period homes prevailed, he found two vacant houses belonging to the Broening family, whose father had been mayor of Baltimore from 1919 to 1923. Pickens inspected both houses carefully, and decided to purchase No. 105. Within a month, his Eighteenth Century furnishings, of Queen Anne, Chippendale, and Hepplewhite design had familiar surroundings.

Real estate values in Federal Hill were escalating rapidly; a house on William street was purchased for \$7,200 during the expressway scare and yet only seven years later, to see the one-family dwelling next door sold for \$47,000. Renovations continued apace—building after building was stripped of formstone and natural brick facades with colonial windows appeared literally overnight. The dramatic architectural changes left little doubt that the neighborhood was undergoing an irreversible change.

Unfortunately, a contentious cloud came with the restorations. The question was raised in the Cross Street market, in church groups, and in political club meetings as to whether all this renovation would allow old Federal Hill families to afford to live in their own neighborhood. Many longtime residents complained of the sky-rocketing property prices which were accompanied by great property tax increases. Still others claimed that the newcomers were unfriendly, wishing only to renovate "in order to make us pay more taxes." Without doubt, a highly emotional clash was developing between the new "immigrants," most of whom were young professional people generally without children, and the staid, complacency-loving Federal Hill people.

During the spring of 1971 the City of Baltimore announced plans to rebuild the Inner Harbor shoreline from Pratt and Light streets to the eastern end of Federal Hill. Within seven years the entire shoreline facing Federal Hill and been revitalized with the new \$6 million Maryland Science Center, an athletic field with spectator stands and a marina with 158 slips.

In 1973, a young Rochester (New York) native, who had been an Urban Studies major at Brown University, arrived in Federal Hill. William Struever, who had done some carpentry while in college, and his classmate-partner, Cobber Eccles, had decided to undertake a general contracting business in the Federal Hill area. They had selected the area because of the restoration and preservation work already underway in the area and because Struever's mother had just accepted a university teaching post in the Baltimore area. Bill Struever's brother, Fred, would supervise field construction, Eccles would perform liaison duties with lending institutions and do the estimating, while Bill would secure, with his optimism and salesmanship, restoration contracts.

After three years of renovating and restoring vacant houses, the company, called Struever Brothers and Eccles, Inc., made a major decision which has greatly affected the Federal Hill area. A city residential area, according to Bill Struever, is not attractive to potential residents without a well-developed retail area. To combat the lack of such a marketplace in the Federal Hill area, these energetic young men turned their attention to the area surrounding the Cross Street market. Their ideas was to prove the

potential of the area, create a kind of atmosphere of “belonging,” and thereby to eliminate the nervousness some felt about city living. They felt that once prospective buyers and tenants could feel that sense of belonging, area homes would sell themselves.

During the latter part of 1978, the partners engaged in a kind of “pump-priming” by opening the Children’s Bookstore on Patapsco street, the immediately successful Sundae Times Ice Cream Parlor on Cross street, and Hammerjacks Tavern on Charles street. These renovations were so well-designed and executed that all three received awards for architectural excellence.

Their involvement in the Federal Hill and Cross Street Marketplace areas had been in a way a homecoming for the Struever family. In the 1700’s, their ancestors had lived in Baltimore and had owned several businesses, including an arms firm called “The Sign of the Golden Gun” near the inner harbor.

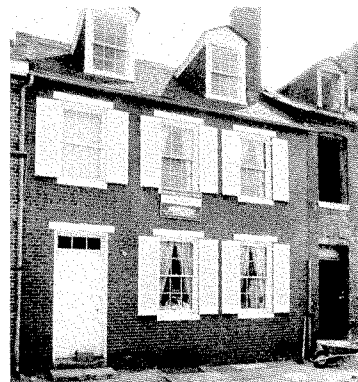
The profound change being wrought by new homeowners in Federal Hill is exemplified by the following properties, to mention only a few:

130 E. Montgomery street—Mr. and Mrs. Neil J. Ruther

This is one of the oldest and most unique houses in Federal Hill. It was the only surviving wood frame house in the district. The exact date of construction is unknown but it was during the late Eighteenth Century since a city ordinance of 1800 prohibited further construction of wooden houses. Because of its terrible condition and existing fire laws it was extensively rebuilt. The wooden walls were replaced by concrete block covered by cedar clapboard. But the changes carefully preserved the original appearance of the house. The interior was considerably altered, the basement lowered to provide a den, five fireplaces installed, and extensive changes made with interior walls and ceilings to provide a more functional use of space.



9 E. Montgomery Street — before



9 E. Montgomery Street — after —James F. Craig

This house was restored under the ownership of Dr. James F. Craig with a matching grant from the Maryland Historical Trust and the National Park Service and has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The property itself was constructed between 1800-1802 and is a typical example of Federal architecture. Its 2½ story brick facade is laid in Flemish bond and is 23 feet wide—unusual for Federal Hill houses which are typically 15 feet wide. This house was originally free-standing and served as part of a farm.

122 E. Hamburg street—Mr. Harry C. Bowie, III

The brick front of this 2½ story row house, built around 1830, has been cleaned and restored to its original appearance, with the appropriate addition of white marble steps. Inside, a complete renovation was necessary, beginning with such basics as central heating and new wiring. Walls were shifted or removed and the kitchen replaced. Although the house now has such modern conveniences as air-conditioning, the interior with its white walls and Williamsburg gold wood trim still remains traditional in appearance. Most of the work was done by the owner during his "leisure hours." For those contemplating a similar venture, it took him approximately 1 year and 9 months to complete.

45 E. Henrietta street—Mr. John T. Fetzer

Built in the early Nineteenth Century, the interior of this renovated corner home reflects the Federal period. This house was originally built by the Henrietta family for whom the street was named. The current owner was able to save the original random width floors throughout the first level and the tin ceiling in the kitchen, giving the renovations an atmosphere of authenticity. The many levels of the structure (due to additions to the original), the numerous windows, and the formal dining room add light and depth not usually found in similar houses.



George R. Soth, President of the Light Street Saving and Building Association, has been involved in Federal Hill real estate transactions for over 60 years. He remembers that during the Great Depression houses in the 100 block East Montgomery street sold for \$1800 to \$2000 and the same houses 50 years later brought more than over \$100,000. He will never forget his most unusual financial transaction: In 1931 a man named Perry purchased the house at 123 W. Montgomery street for \$2300 with the aid of a mortgage from George. His weekly payment, including principal and interest was \$3.56, which he paid faithfully for two years. One day when his next payment was due he advised George that he could not afford the payments, so the mortgage was foreclosed. Two weeks later Perry rented the same house for \$5 per week and lived in it for the next ten years.

Mr. Soth said the restoration of The Federal Hill area set an example by which home owners in the surrounding communities of Locust Point, Riverside Park, and Otterbein can upgrade their property. Everywhere, as one travels through these sections, are signs of restoration, redecorating, and, in many instances, rebuilding.

When I interviewed George in March 1980, he was eagerly looking forward to celebrating his 90th birthday on June 18.

According to a report published in the *News American* of August 25, 1979, the most expensive residential land in Baltimore city was in the Federal Hill area. According to the city assessors, this land lay on the north side of the 200 block of East Montgomery street, with inner harbor views to the north of each residence.

The *News American* article explained that assessment records for the Federal Hill area indicated that land values there approached \$1 million per acre, contrasting with values of from \$15,000 to \$20,000 per acre in Roland Park or Guilford, and about three to four times the land value of commercial property elsewhere in Federal Hill.

To arrive at the \$1 million per acre value, the writer used the following logic:

“Taking 200½ E. Montgomery street which has a lot size of 464 square feet. divided into the \$4,760 assessment, gives an assessable price of \$10.25 per square foot. Multiply this by the 43,560 square feet that make up an acre of land, and you get \$446,490. Then you have to double this, as assessments are based on 50 percent of market, thus coming up with a figure of \$892,980 an acre. However, as there is the Homesteaders tax credit of 10 percent, which puts all assessments on owner-occupied properties back to 45 percent of market value. So you have to add 10 percent, and get a final total of \$982,278 an acre, making it without doubt the most expensive residential parcel in the city.”

Today Federal Hill is a neighborhood in transition; the first phase of change, the influx of “new pioneers,” is past. Real estate speculators have displaced the less economically secure long term residents, and developers have begun conversion of long-vacant structures. The city-owned properties condemned for the east-west expressway have been sold and must, by agreements riding the contracts of sale, be renovated completely by their new owners.

Yet there remain residents whose roots are generations deep. The two groups live side by side, and both use the Cross Street market, but few of the newer residents are employed south of Pratt street and still fewer attend area churches or send children to area schools.

One could speculate at length on the type of neighborhood that will develop around Federal Hill in the future. For the historic district, the future is sure; guidelines set forth by the Department of the Interior assure that architectural restoration must continue. The area surrounding the registered district, however, is the key to the future of the area as a whole; members of the “old guard” like their formstone, own their homes, and tend to resist integration with the newcomers. Neighborhood meetings exhibit less contention now and chances are the future holds continued change at a less hectic pace.

The Federal Hill section has many advantages: a bustling market, neighborhood shops, an air of history, a fine park, and walking-distance closeness to the commercial and cultural attractions of the rejuvenated inner city. A thriving neighborhood can evolve only through a synthesis of the two “communities” whose roots are dissimilar. Perhaps the best evidence of likely success of the transition is the determination of both groups to remain as residents.

SHIPBUILDERS IN THE FEDERAL HILL AREA

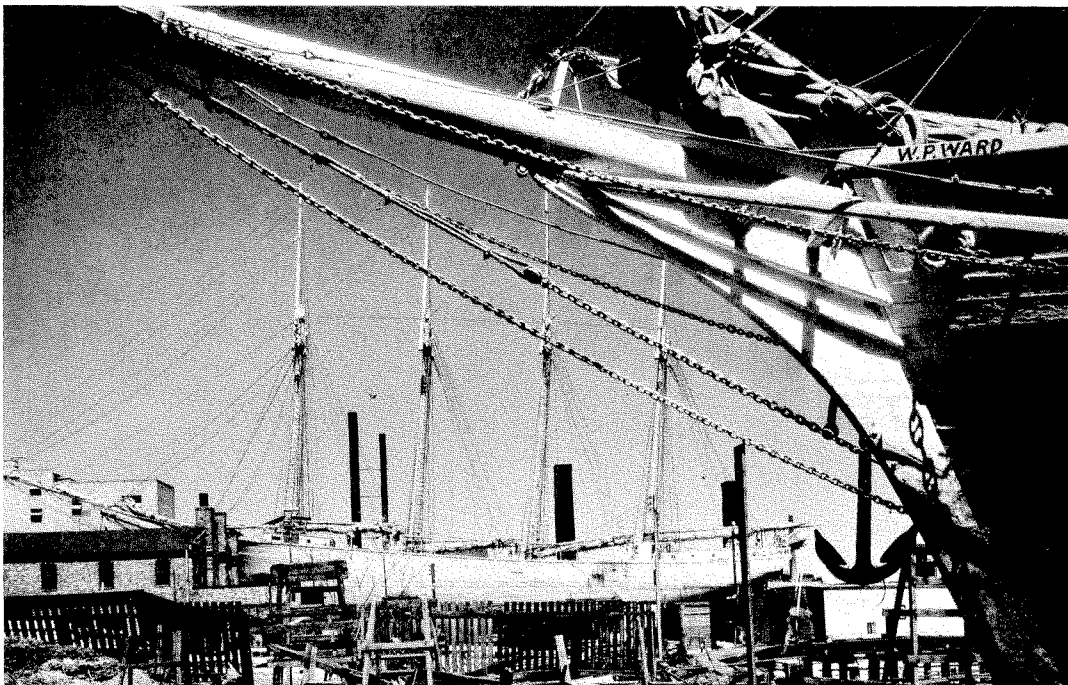
Note: Where a yard remained under the control of one of the original partners or passed to a son with little or no change in name and no change in location, only one entry appears.

DATES	NAME	LOCATION
1773-1779	Thomas Morgan	York St. E. of Light St.
1796-1803	William Parsons	York St. E. of Light St.
1799-1808	Charles Pearce	E. Side, Foot of Battery Ave.
1810-1813	S. Salenave	York St. E. of Light St.
1810-1815	Andrew Descandes	York St. E. of Light St.
1815-1825	Charles Reeder (engine & boiler works)	Honey Alley
1816-1819	Charles Clarke	York St. E. of Light St.
1816-1849	Watchman & Bratt	William, Hughes, & York Sts.
1825-1904	Charles Reeder	Hughes St. betw. Battery & Henry
1827-1831	Andrew Gray	York St. E. of Light St.
1827-1845	William Skinner & Sons	Foot of Henry St.
1831-1856	Langley B. Culley	York St. E. of William St.
1832-1845	Zachariah Skinner	Hughes & William Sts.
1834-1839	E. Willey	York St. E. of Light St.
1835-1841	Fooks & Dale	York St. E. of Light St.
1835-1840	William S. Rogers & Co. from 1837, Brown, Culley, & Rogers from 1841, Brown & Culley	E. of foot of Battery Ave.
1837-1844	John H. Davis	York St. E. of Light St.
1839-1840	Levin W. Tall	York St. E. of Light St.
1842-1850	Lewis Reppart	Foot of Montgomery St.
1844-1863	Sanks & Riggan	Foot of Hamburg St.
1845-1906	William Skinner & Son	Foot of Cross St.
1845-1868	Thomas Hooper & Co.	Foot of Hamburg St.
1846-1851	George Jory	Foot of Battery Avenue
1846-1872	Murray & Hazelhurst from 1860, Hazelhurst & Co.	Hughes & William Sts.
1847-1873	Fardy & Auld from 1855, John T. Fardy	NW corner, Hughes & Covington Sts.
1846-1857	Brown & Cottrell	Foot of Battery Ave.
1847-1882	John S. Miles	York St. of William St.
1849-1850	R.W. Regester	Covington St. E. of Hughes St.
1849-1851	Culley & Gray	Foot of Montgomery St.
1850-1856	Thomas & Mitchell	Foot of Cross St.
1851-1854	William J. Page	Foot of Montgomery St.
1855-1917	Flannigain & Beacham from 1863, Beachan Brothers	Foot of Warren Ave.
1857-1858	Sinsz & Kerr	Foot of Henry St.
1857-1858	Caleb Richardson	Foot of Henry St.
1858-1860	Carroll & Uniak	Foot of Henry St.
1858-1861	Andrew J. Robinson	Foot of Montgomery St.
1863-1868	Hazen, Kelly & Co.	Foot of Hamburg St.
1864-1867	Skinner & Forsythe	Foot of Henry St.
1871-1875	Cook, Randall, & Ruark	Foot of Henry St.
1872-1875	William E. Woodall	Foot of Montgomery St.
1872-1905	William H.H. Bixler & Co.	Hughes & Covington Sts.
1873-1887	Ramsay & Carter from 1885, H.A. Ramsey & Son	William & Hughes Sts.
1875-1878	William R. Tumblinson	Foot of Montgomery St.
1875-1885	Waite & Kerr from 1883, Samuel R. Waite & Co.	Foot of Warren Ave.
1879-1939	Charles W. Booz & Co. (Booz Bros.)	Foot of Montgomery St.

1902-1922
1914-1960
1915-1921
1917-1942
1924-1942
1938-pres.

McIntyre & Henderson
Chesapeake Marine Railway Co., Inc.
Baltimore Drydock & Shipbuilding Co.
Redman & Vane
Baltimore Ship Repair Co., Inc.
Bethlehem Steel Shipbuilding Div.

Foot of Montgomery St.
Key Highway & Covington St.
Foot of Cross St.
Foot of Warren Ave.
821 Key Highway
Foot of Cross St.



—A. Aubrey Bodine

Acknowledgments

As with my two previous histories, preparation and publication of this volume was made possible by the enthusiasm, interest, and cooperation of a number of individuals.

The chapter on Shipyards and Shipbuilding is dedicated to the memory of WILLIAM J. KELLEY without whose lifelong tireless research its writing would not have been possible. The vast store of detailed information in Mr. Kelley's manuscripts, now in the collection of the Maryland Historical Society, is an invaluable source for the student of shipbuilding in Baltimore.

Special thanks are due to Harry M. Robinson, III, who assisted in research and made valuable suggestions and refinements while editing the manuscript, and to Carleton Jones for editorial assistance.

Katharine Chatard also assisted in research, spending many long hours at the Maryland Department of the Enoch Pratt Free Library and at the Maryland Historical Society.

Others who provided invaluable assistance were Robert L. White and William A. Kulick, Mrs. G. Marie Parks, Harry Reynolds, George R. Soth, George and Patrick Frazier, Oliver H. Reeder, John Lambros, and Harvey Rivkin. Mrs. Eleanor Callahan provided valuable information on early residents.

The staffs of many institutions were most helpful; I mention especially Dr. Morgan Pritchett and the Maryland Department of the Enoch Pratt Free Library; Robert H. Burgess and Paul Hensley of the Mariners Museum, Newport News, Virginia; and Lewis A. Beck, Randolph W. Chalfant, and Dr. Ferdinand E. Chatard of the Radcliffe Maritime Museum at the Maryland Historical Society.

Collection of illustrative material was a particular problem, and while many of those already mentioned were helpful, special thanks must go to H. Graham Wood, Charles F. Hughes, Jr., Roger Marino, and Jack Vaeth.

From time to time, informative articles have appeared in various magazines and newspapers. *Baltimore Magazine*, indispensable for anyone interested in the commercial history of Baltimore, published the following: "Federal Hill," by William T. Snyder, Jr., November, 1943; "Glass," by Ralph J. Robinson, February, 1948; "Reminiscences of Federal Hill in 1861," by George H. Elmer, May, 1952; "Shipbuilding on the Patapsco," by Ralph J. Robinson, June, 1957; "Queer Ships That Sailed the Bay," by William C. Steuart, February, 1964.

The *News American* has touched on the subject of Federal Hill numerous times; see "About Tunnels under Federal Hill" and "One Explanation of City Caverns," by Carroll Dulaney, June, 1951; "Federal Hill — Another Bolton Hill?" October, 1965; "A Town House on Federal Hill Surrounds Antique Collection," by Gail R. Blaisdell, May, 1968; "Face Lift on Federal Hill," by Josephine Novak, October, 1976; "Federal Hill Where We Learned to Grow," by Solomon Liss, August, 1979; "South Baltimore Homes Are a Sure Investment," by Jacques Kelly, March, 1979; "The Speculators," by Jan Pogue and Stephen Braun, October, 1979; "Baltimore Homeowners with a Harview View," by Marcelle Sussman, November, 1978; "Federal Hill," August, 1979; and "Why's Baltimore Hot," October, 1979.

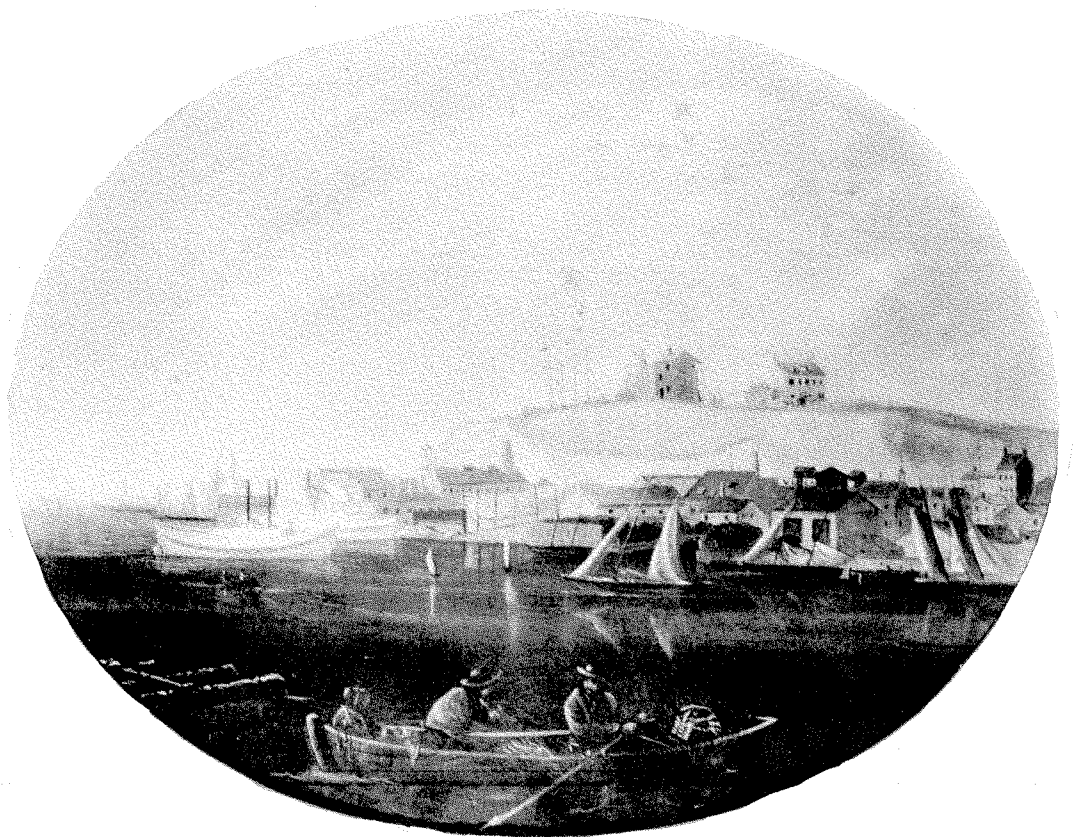
The *Sun* has printed "Entrepreneur Develops Sense of Belonging," by James Gutman, October 1978; "Federal Hill Area Belongs to Best of an Older and Quieter Baltimore," by Lee McCardell, July, 1940; "A Favorite Spot since the Revolution," and "William E. Woodall," by William Stump, March 1957 and September, 1964.

Also informative were the reminiscences of the Cross Street Market merchants as published in the *Enterprise* newspaper special edition for the 1979 Cross Street Festival.

The following articles from the *Maryland Historical Magazine* were used: "Baltimore Steamboats in the Civil War, by William J. Kelley, March, 1942; "The Observatory on Federal Hill," by M.V. Brewington, March, 1949.

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—Baltimore Museum of Art

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by William J. Kelley (privately published)

FEDERAL HILL

Since 1608 when Capt. John Smith first sighted the Baltimore height, it has been a noteworthy landmark at the head of the harbor. He called it "Bolus" because its clay appeared to contain iron.

Author Rukert calls it a center of activity during war and peace, especially in the early days of the Republic.

All types of maritime and commercial enterprise took place on Federal Hill.

It is a fascinating slice of an important city's history, made even more enjoyable by virtue of numerous charming illustrations.

This is the third of Mr. Rukert's Baltimore neighborhood histories, in much the same vein as "The Fells Point Story" and "Historic Canton."



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