

**FIRST RECORDS OF
BALTIMORE TOWN AND
JONES' TOWN 1729-1797**

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First Records of Baltimore Town and Jones' Town 1729-1797 by Various

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BALTIMORE:
1905

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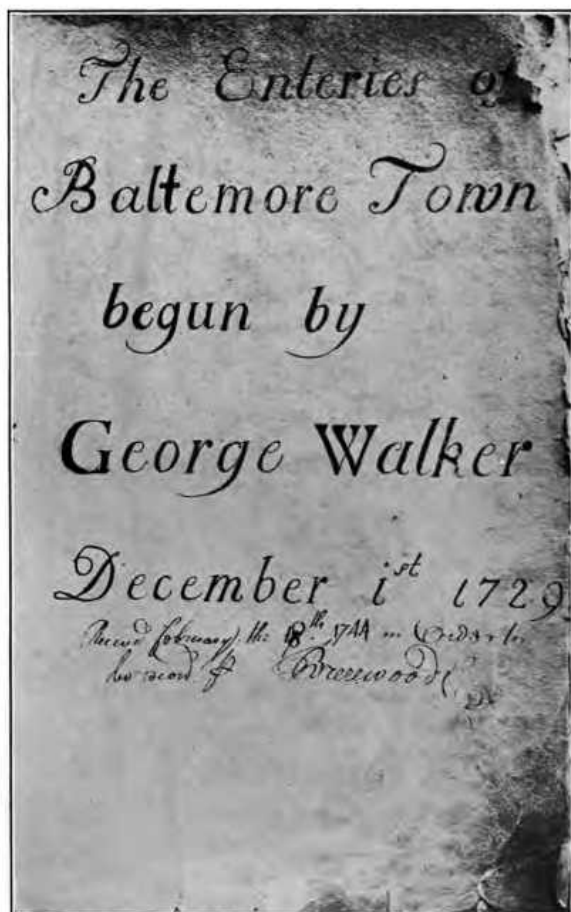


*Life of
James F. Rhodes*

Copyright, 1905,

by

Mayor and City Council of Baltimore



TITLE PAGE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF BALTIMORE TOWN.
(From photograph.)

Preface

It may not be amiss to state that the records herein contained were printed in the main from the First Book of Baltimore Town. Viewed through modern spectacles the handiwork of the recordmaker of 1729 is a queer production.

In giving that handiwork to the general public—now upward of two hundred years after it was begun—an effort has been made to preserve the eccentricities of the English of the day, or, perhaps, as better expressed, the liberties taken with the English of the day have not been disturbed by the transplanting process. They are given very accurately in this—their typographical counterpart.

The pen has been faithfully followed by the type. The one object was to produce the records—spelling, punctuation and all, and to portray, as far as possible, general characteristics. To an extent, at least, this has been accomplished.

Nothing has been taken from; nothing added to the old book. It stands for itself. But its spelling—at times unique; its erratic punctuation (or lack of punctuation, as the matter may be); its quaint phraseology, though transferred from fading lines to printed pages, tell a story of early Baltimore that can be nothing but historically correct. Events were written at a time when history was being made; when the foundation of the now great City of Baltimore was laid.

The records begin with the first session of a Commission which was authorized to select a site for Baltimore Town. It is the doings of this Commission, or rather the Commissioners of Baltimore Town, relative the establishment of boundaries, laying out of streets, "taking up" of lots, etc., from 1729 to the incorporation of the City—1797, that are chronicled.

The printing of these archives will, if it accomplishes no other good, prevent wear and tear upon the originals, for it has not been possible to refuse all requests by those who desired to use the old books and manuscripts in search of information concerning early Baltimore. Likewise the perpetuation of the records is assured even though the originals should, by any lamentable mischance, be destroyed or lost. There are many other reasons that appeal to the writer as arguments why the First Records of Baltimore Town should be given to the public; hence the public has them.

WILBUR F. COYLE,

BALTIMORE, December 1st, 1905.

City Librarian.

Explanatory Note

The contemplated publication of the First Records of Baltimore Town suggested also the printing of the Act which authorized the erection of Baltimore Town.

A copy of this was, happily, obtained at the State Library, and is given here just as it appears in the original.

Two other Acts, important links in the chain of historical events associated with early Baltimore, are also reproduced, to wit: An Act authorizing the "erection" of Jonas Town, later Jones' Town, on the North (generally referred to as East) bank of Jones' Falls, at the point where that stream is now spanned by Gay street bridge; and another which provided for the consolidation of Baltimore, and Jones' Town under the name of Baltimore Town.

Hence, this volume covers three distinct periods:

First—The "erection" of Baltimore Town—1729.

Second—The "erection" of Jonas (Jones) Town—1732.

Third—The consolidation of Baltimore and Jones Town as Baltimore Town—1745.

As stated, the Acts cited are so directly connected with the town's history and interwoven with the records herein given—in fact, lead up to the latter—that concurrent publication was deemed advisable.

The writer feels it will be generally appreciated that there is a great deal of important history represented by these three laws, and that they constitute a highly fitting and very desirable introduction to the publication of the town records.

Acts and records—taken together—say, as prologue and sequel—give, in their own way, a far better history along certain lines of very early Baltimore than can be written by any latter day individual.

It may be of some interest to note that meagre references to the Act authorizing Baltimore Town are to be found in the unprinted journals of the General Assembly of 1729, in the custody of the Maryland Historical Society. The bill may be traced from July 14th to August 8th, which latter date it was signed by the Governor of the Province. The archives show that "several inhabitants in and about Patapsco River and the rest of the inhabitants of Baltimore County" petitioned the General Assembly for authority to erect Baltimore Town. This petition was presented to the Upper House July 14th, 1729, was "read and recommended to the Consideration of the Lower House of Assembly with the further indorsement 'we the subscribers proprietors of the land mentioned in the within petition do consent there may an act pass as prayed for * * *

'CHARLES CARROLL,
'DANIEL CARROLL.'"

On reading the petition in the Lower House it was "ordered that leave be given to bring in the bill prayed for." The next hint of the

parliamentary progress of the Act is found later in the Upper House journal, as follows: "A bill from the Lower House by Mr. Mathews and Mr. Scott, entitled 'an act for erecting a Town on the North Side of the Patapsco River in Baltimore County' * * * indorsed by the Lower House of Assembly July 23rd, 1729 * * * was read a first and second time and will pass." This prophesy proved true. The journal shows the bill was signed August 8th, 1729, by the Governor, and became a law.

W. F. C.