

presented to the Governor and was sealed into law by him (p. 359), and a comparison of the text with the amendments proposed by the Upper House indicates that they were accepted, for they are in the act as passed (pp. 291-292, 414-419).

From now on, any debtor remaining in jail twenty days could petition three justices of the peace for his county for his discharge. And if the justices decided, after a hearing, that his debts were not in excess of £200 sterling, they were directed to set the debtor free. He must, before being freed, surrender to the sheriff everything he owned except his clothing and his tools. The act did not contain one provision that had long been in every act for the relief of languishing prisoners. It did not provide for the sale of the unmarried prisoners for five years to satisfy their debts. But there would be no more languishing prisoners.

During these sessions of Assembly, two new counties were set up out of parts of others. From the beginning of Baltimore County as a county, not later than 1659, it included what is now Harford County, and a great deal more than it now does. As far as is known, Baltimore County was to run from the Patapsco across the Bay and the Susquehanna to the Chester River, and up to the Pennsylvania boundary line. The part east of the Bay was erected into Cecil County in 1674. At that time the county seat of Baltimore County was at old Baltimore on Bush River. Later it was moved south to Joppa, and in 1768 it was once more moved, this time to Baltimore Town (For the migrations of the county seat, see *Md. Hist. Mag.*, vol. I, pp. 3-15, 99-112). The removal to Baltimore Town, in the southernmost part of the county, left the settlers in the northern part very far from the county seat, and without a doubt this feeling of distance fanned the demand for a separate county. November 29, 1773 a petition of a considerable body of the inhabitants of Baltimore County prayed for a division of the said county (p. 48). Petitions for the division of Dorchester and Queen Anne's Counties were introduced the same day, and all were sent down to the Lower House (p. 105). The Baltimore petition was granted at once, and Thomas Cockey Deye, Charles Ridgely and Aquila Hall of Baltimore County and Paca and John Hall of Anne Arundel were directed to draft the necessary bill. It passed the Lower House December 7, the Upper House next day (pp. 59, 118), and was sealed into law by the Governor on December 17, 1773 (p. 72).

Harford County as set up in 1774 had almost the boundaries it has today. Rivers and waterways make the best boundary lines and Harford has water on two and a half sides. Except, of course, for the happily immobile Mason and Dixon line, and in that connexion there is a slight puzzle in the law. By it, the line from the fountain head of the falls of the Gunpowder ran due "north to the Temporary Line of this Province and thence with the Temporary Line to Susquehanna River" (p. 198). But the law was passed in 1774, and the temporary line of 1739 had given place to the Mason and Dixon line in 1769. In that day statutes often contained informalities that would invalidate them now.

Seven commissioners were named in the law, John Paca, John Mathews,