

It appears that, in 1662, Mr. Charles Gorsuch, of the society of Friends, took up and patented fifty acres of land on Whetstone Point. The practice at that time was to take up waste lands in small quantities, although the price was extremely low. In 1663, Mr. Alexander Moutenay took up two hundred acres of land, comprising the glade or bottom lying on both sides of Harford Run, and called Moutenay's Neck. In 1668, Timber Neck, lying between the heads of the middle and north branches of the Patapsco, was patented for Mr. John Howard. In the same year, a tract of five hundred and fifty acres was granted to Thomas Cole, and called Cole's Harbor. This tract extended from Moutenay's land westwardly across the north side of the river, one mile; and northwardly from the river about half a mile, in the form of a rhomboid, divided into two nearly equal parts by the stream afterwards called Jones's Falls.

At later periods, different persons patented Copus's Harbor, Long Island Point, Kemp's Addition, and Parker's Haven, on the east;—Lunn's Lot and Chatsworth, on the west;—David's Fancy, on the south;—and Salisbury Plains, Darley Hall, and Gallow Barrow, on the north; which, with other tracts, were afterwards added to the town.

About 1682, the tract called Cole's Harbor was conveyed to Mr. David Jones, who gave his name to the stream which runs through the city, and who is believed to have been the first actual settler; having his residence on the north side of the stream, near the head of tide water. In 1711, Mr. Jonas Hanson, having purchased thirty-one acres of Cole's Harbor, with a mill-seat, erected a mill, the remains of which, within a short time, were yet standing near the corner of Holliday and Bath streets. In 1726, Mr. Edward Fell, a merchant from Lancaster, of the society of Friends, settled on the east side of the Falls. The improvements at this time, consisted of two dwellings, a mill, tobacco houses, orchards, &c. The land was about half cleared, and is represented, by a surveyor's return, as middling in quality.

The establishment of ports, towns, &c., was among the instructions first given to the governor of the province; and accordingly, about the year 1683, there seems to have been a general excitement in regard to laying out towns, and creating ports of trade, by act of Assembly. In 1706, Whetstone Point was made a town;—other towns, which had been previously laid out, were discontinued;—but so large a number of acts of settlement was passed, as to indicate that the private interests of landholders had more to do with their enactment than public necessity.

At this period, as the produce raised on the borders of the Patapsco was insufficient alone for the lading of ships, and as the population on any one river was too sparse to consume the whole of a cargo, the common station for vessels was off North Point; whence they could easily communicate with the rivers and even with the other side of the bay. The increase of population, and the consequent increase of produce and consumption, gradually brought the ships into the river, though not at once to the head of it. In 1723, there were five ships in the Patapsco up for freight to London; yet but one of them lay in the northern branch; and it is evident that there were then as many inducements for vessels to anchor in the south and middle branches, as in the north branch.

At this time the idea of laying out a new town was conceived. As the common place of anchorage for the merchant vessels, and the place to which the main road from the west was directed, the point between the middle and south branches of the Patapsco was regarded by the inhabitants as the most eligible situation; and application was made to Mr. John Moale, the owner, a merchant from Devonshire, for ground upon which to lay out a town. It is