

Maryland 1634

George Calvert the First Lord Baltimore was a royal courtier and convert to Catholicism. In 1625 he attempted to establish a colony in Newfoundland, which failed because of the harsh climate. Baltimore then sought a patent from King Charles I to plant a colony in what was at the time Virginia. Baltimore died five weeks before issuance of the patent, and it instead was issued to his son Cecil Calvert, Second Lord Baltimore. It was a proprietary colony, with Baltimore having vice regal powers and ownership of the land. Baltimore wanted to call it *Crescentia* (meaning land of growth or increase), but the King decided instead to name it *Terra Maria*, or Maryland, in honor of his wife Henrietta Maria.

In November 1633 an expedition of largely Catholic colonists left England aboard two ships, *Ark* and *Dove*, for Maryland. They landed on March 25, 1634 and soon established their settlement at St. Marys' City in what is now St. Mary's County, on land granted them by the Piscataway Indians who hoped they would be an ally and buffer against their enemies the

Susquahannocks. The colonists were led by the Second Lord Baltimore's younger brother Leonard Calvert, who as the first Proprietary Governor ruling on behalf of his brother had vast powers consistent with the charter, although his authority was hedged somewhat by the application of English common law and by the establishment of a unicameral legislative assembly in 1635. The assembly consisted of the Governor and his Council and a general assembly of all free men (it separated into two chambers in 1650).

The colony was unique in that it was established by Catholics but was open to all Christians. Immigration of substantial numbers of Anglicans, Puritans and Quakers soon followed so that the Catholic colonists became a minority. This, plus resentment of the wide-ranging powers of the Proprietary Governor, led to a Protestant revolt against the Proprietary government in 1644. Two years later Governor Calvert reasserted his control, but this proved to be the first of many struggles between the Protestant factions and the Catholic Proprietary regime, with the result being continuous political and military turmoil and alternating successions of Proprietary and Royal Governors until the American Revolution. Longstanding border disputes with Pennsylvania troubled Maryland's rulers until the drawing of the Mason-Dixon line in 1767.

During the colonial period Maryland was predominantly rural. Its economy was largely driven by tobacco production and exportation, with plantations worked by black slaves as well as significant numbers of transported British convicts and indentured servants. Fishing and shellfish harvesting in the Chesapeake Bay also were significant sources of income, and many

Marylanders became proficient mariners, both in the Bay and more broadly.