Baltimore's preparations for defense in this war centered around
efforts to repair, strengthen, and renovate Fort McHenry on Whetstone
Point. Smaller redoubts such as Forts Covington and Babcock were built
further up the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River to support Fort McHenry.
Hampstead Hill (now Patterson Park) also was fortified. The Committee of
Vigilance and Safety, headed by Mayor Edward Johnson, was the coordinating
and planning unit for the defense of Baltimore, including the equipping and
supporting of the militia. Major General Samuel Smith, the commanding
officer of the Maryland militia, worked closely with this committee in
coordinating and planning the defense of the city.

In August 1814 Washington, D.C. was invaded and burned by British
troops and on September 12 the British landed at North Point at the mouth
of the Patapsco River. An American force, made up of Maryland and
Pennsylvania militia, sailed from Baltimore and under General John Stricker
engaged the British force in a two hour stalemate and retreated to
Baltimore. On September 13 the British advanced on Baltimore and shelled
Fort McHenry with cannon fire, bombs, and rockets in an attempt to weaken
the city's defenses for a land attack. A night landing was attempted below
Fort McHenry but was repelled by heavy fire. The harbor was shallow (ships
were also deliberately sunk in the harbor of the city) and the larger
British ships were unable to maneuver close to the city to cover a land
assault. After the attack Baltimore continued strengthening its defenses,
repairing damage to Fort McHenry and the other fortifications.
There has been much written about Baltimore during the War of 1812. The most helpful study concerning the municipal government's involvement is Frank A. Cassell's "Response to Crisis: Baltimore in 1814," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 66 (Fall 1971): 261-87.

Series 1. HRS War of 1812 Records. 1813-14. 4.5 cubic feet.
(10 boxes)

Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.

A wide variety of records relating to Baltimore's involvement in the war originally indexed by the Historical Records Survey. The 1813 documents (nos. 549-940) include correspondence relating to the defense of Baltimore; miscellaneous bills, receipts, and vouchers for arms, repairs, construction, and labor; muster rolls for the months of April and May for the Baltimore Mechanical Volunteers, Fifth Regiment Maryland Cavalry and Maryland Militia, First Baltimore Maryland Rifleman, First Regiment Artillery, Sixth Regiment Maryland Militia; payrolls for the months of April and May for the Fifth Regiment Maryland Cavalry and Maryland Militia, First Regiment Artillery, Fifty-first Regiment Maryland Militia, First Baltimore Maryland Rifleman, and Sixth Regiment Maryland Militia; and subsistence accounts for the months of April and May for the Baltimore Mechanical Volunteers, Fifth Regiment Maryland Cavalry and Maryland Militia, First Baltimore Maryland Rifleman, and Thirty-ninth Regiment Maryland Militia.

The 1814 documents (nos. 462-1732) are of a different nature and substance. Correspondence to the Committee of Vigilance and Safety for the defense of the city for the period February to December concern construction, military equipment, laborers, and pay, as well as
some letters from Major General Samuel Smith. Correspondence from the committee for the period April to December concern construction and loans. Further miscellaneous papers concerning the committee include a list of the members of the committee, receipts, and bills of sale and licenses for some ships; vouchers relating to music, labor, arms, construction, repair work, iron work, and coffins; daily morning reports for the Twenty-seventh Regiment, Maryland Militia cover its individual companies; daily and weekly reports of the regiment; and correspondence with abstracts of disbursements for supplies and selected disbursements to officers and men of the militia.

Series 2. Pensions. 1820. 0.25 lin. in.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
Two letters from Louis Gassaway to Thomas Rogers, notary public, regarding pension monies due Gassaway's sister. One document transmits the sister's affidavit required in the investigation of her claim; the affidavit is not present. Gassaway explains the circumstances surrounding the claim in the other document and questions Rogers as to how to have this pension continued.

Series 3. War Loan Interest Correspondence. 1826. 0.5 lin. in.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
Correspondence relative to the settling of Baltimore's claim for interest due the city on monies loaned to the federal government for the purposes of defense during the War of 1812. The majority of the letters are addressed to Mayor John Montgomery and concern a memorial passed in Congress to authorize payment of the funds owed.