

RS#05.1

Teacher Guide to the Resources

Document D: Images of Baltimore – Photographs and Broadside

Background Information:

- The photographs were taken from the mid to late 1800s. The broadside was created in 1850.
- The focal point of the first image should be placed on the rail line. The idea of horse car service along Baltimore Street was presented before the City Council in 1854. Debate over the logistics, mainly financial, needed to be worked out before construction began. Service launched on the pilot line in 1859, and the Baltimore Transit story was born. Originally founded by independent companies like the City Passenger Railway, these companies were in the business of making money off of their lines. Throughout the next decades, new lines started to serve many points of the city. The lines were laid at a gauge of 5 feet, 4 1/2 inches, the widest gauge in the country. This width could accommodate the wooden wagon wheels from the rough cobblestone and wood block streets lining the city at that time. From 1859 to c. 1890 horses provided the power to the cars. Depending on the length and grade of the lines, a horse would usually perform a few trips a day, with rest days given as well. Operators of the cars weren't so lucky, typically working 6 days of the week and 13 to 18 hours per day.
- The second photograph is of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Pier. The Chesapeake Bay and the port were key elements to Baltimore's growth and success. For instance, by the 1880s Baltimore became best known for its important canning industry. The technology of canning developed in France in the early 1800s and received commercial application in the United States c. 1820 when Thomas Kensett began canning oysters and other delicacies in New York. Kensett moved to Baltimore in 1826. Handling oysters in season and fruits and vegetables in the warmer months, he made canning a year-round industry. Canned foods had a ready market in ship provisioning and grew in demand during the Civil War. By the 1870s, steam pressure cookers greatly hastened the process and enabled canners to meet large demand. Oysters, tomatoes, corn, peaches, and cheap labor were abundant. There were more than one hundred packing houses in Baltimore, including Kensett and William Numsen and Sons. Consequently, not only did Baltimore stand as the leading canning center in the country, canning stimulated the manufacture of tin sheeting and packing cases in the city.
- Success came to Americans in the 19th century who could best assemble, deploy, and exploit the physical labor of others. This is true for the people of Baltimore. Baltimore's establishment, development, and achievement are not only due to its location, but to the people who provided the needed labor. Unskilled labor:
 - built the infrastructure of wharves, streets, canals, and railroads to facilitate the movement of goods and people
 - assisted in the harvest and milling of grain.
 - worked as domestic help.
 - worked in the service sector to provide food, clothing, shelter, and recreation for the city's growing population.
 - worked in manufacturing. Skilled artisans controlled the saddle, tin, and print industries primarily using unskilled labor for grunt work – chopping wood, cleaning hides, carrying buckets, etc. Many of the common laborers toiled in shipyards, forges, and breweries.
- Transforming Baltimore into a major commercial center required the labor of thousands. The city's population increased more than sevenfold between 1790 and 1840. The city saw its

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number of free and enslaved workers grow simultaneously. Unlike New York where racial division was apparent and resulted in violence, black people in Baltimore were too numerous for their impoverished white neighbors to render them invisible and too crucial to the labor market for employers to see them sacrificed on the altar of their “whiteness.” All common laborers – free, enslaved, black, white, women, and children – were needed for Baltimore to thrive, thus employers gave little regard to the complaints from skilled artisans or from poor white workers.

Guided Questions/Teaching Suggestions:

Ask students:

- When were the two photographs and broadside created?
- Summarize the main idea of each visual.
- Who do think provided the labor to build the city and modes of transportation?
- What kinds of employment opportunities are available? Who do you think provided the labor?
- Based on this document, is Maryland more Northern, more Southern, or represents the middle ground? Explain your answer using the evidence from the photographs.

The two photographs could be compared using a Y-Chart. See below.

