

LONG MAY IT WAVE:



Fort MCHenry and the War of 1812

A National Curriculum for Grades 4 through 8



Developed by the Friends of Fort MCHenry in collaboration with Fort MCHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine and the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail

Funding provided by the National Park Service, Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network

LESSON TITLE: What's In a Name?

LESSON WRITER: Donna Olszewski

LESSON EDITOR: Jennifer Frieman

DATE: May 2011

COURSE/GRADE: Social Studies, Grade 4

UNIT: American History

TIME NEEDED: One 45-minute class period

LESSON OVERVIEW:

Every day, thousands of Baltimoreans travel on streets and to places with familiar names. Some of those streets and places are named after commonly found plants, trees, or numbers such as Rose Street, Poplar Grove, and 33rd Street. Other streets and places are named after well-known historical figures such as Washington Street, Carroll Park, or Jefferson Street. However, some streets and places have the names of less familiar historical figures, many of whom are from the War of 1812. Of course, most Baltimoreans know the namesake of Key Highway and the Key Bridge, but far fewer know the origins for the names of streets and places like Stricker Street, Armistead Gardens, and Fort McHenry. This lesson will have students research these individuals so that they have a better understanding both of the War of 1812 and the places that they see everyday.

OUTCOMES: At the end of this lesson students will be able to name several of the primary figures from the Battle of Baltimore and explain their roles in that engagement.

OBJECTIVES:

Focus Question for the Lesson: Which important figures from the Battle of Baltimore during the War of 1812 have we honored by naming streets and places after them, and why?

Historical Thinking Skills Targeted:

Chronological Thinking:

Distinguish between past, present, and future time.

Historical Comprehension:

Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage.

Historical Research Capabilities:

Interrogate historical data.

Maryland State Curriculum Content Objectives:

3.A.1.a. Construct and interpret a variety of maps using map elements

5.C.2.a. Describe Maryland's role in the War of 1812

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Maryland State Curriculum Skills and Processes Objectives

6.D.1.a. Gather and read appropriate print sources, such as textbooks, government documents, timelines, trade books, and web sites

Common Core State Standards for Literacy: Reading, Informational Text (Grade 4):

RI.4.2. Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

RI.4.3. Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

RI.4.4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 4 topic or subject area*.

RI.4.10. By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

MATERIALS:

Teacher Handout 1 – Francis Scott Key

Student Resource 1 – John Stricker

Student Resource 2 – George Armistead

Student Resource 3 – James McHenry

Student Resource 4 -- Biographical Sketch Template

Student Resource 5 – Biographical Sketches

Street Map of Baltimore

PRIMARY SOURCES:

Excerpts from a Francis Scott Speech (*Francis Scott Key Life and Times* by Edward S. Delaplaine) Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine Library.

Niles, H. ed. *Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. VII (September 1814-March 1815). Baltimore: Franklin Press, 1815. p. 26-27.

Foncier, John. Letter to James McHenry [13 September 1814]. Transcription of Manuscript. John Eager Howard Collection. MS 1846. Special Collections Department, Maryland Historical Society Library, Baltimore, MD.

SELECTED VOCABULARY:

Vocabulary in primary sources can be historically dated to the time period and will need to be cleared prior to having students work independently. Students need to be reminded that there are often different spellings of common words, misspelled words, and grammatical errors.

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PROCEDURE:

1) Motivation

Ask several of the students to recall the route that they took to school. List the streets on which they traveled. Talk about the names of the streets, and ask students to “guess” the origin of the names. Some streets will contain the names of flowers and other familiar objects. Perhaps the street named “Rose Street” was given that name because it once contained rose bushes, etc.

Explain to students that many times we name streets or places to honor individuals who have made important contributions to our city, state, or nation. Ask them if they can name any such streets or places in Baltimore.

Tell students that some of Baltimore’s streets and places are named after important figures from the War of 1812. Take a moment to activate prior knowledge of the War of 1812 by asking students to list any information they can recall about the war. What countries fought during this war? What were the general causes of the war? Ask students to recall anything they know about Baltimore’s involvement in the war (e.g. privateers, the British attack on Fort McHenry, the *Star-Spangled Banner*, etc.).

2) Guided Practice

- Display Teacher Handout 1 – Francis Scott Key. (Provide the students a copy of the handout so that they can highlight or mark specific words or phrases as you read the text.)
- Read Francis Scott Key’s speech aloud. Stop at unfamiliar words or language and provide contemporary words or language.
- Discuss the questions provided on the worksheet.
- Ask students what contribution Francis Scott Key made to city, state, or national history that earned him the honor of having streets and places named after him.

3) Independent Practice

- Divide the class into groups of 4 students. Assign cooperative group tasks (team leader, recorder, timer, reporter).
- Tell students they will now be using historical documents to explore the contributions of some other lesser-known figures that played important roles in the defense of Baltimore during the War of 1812. Assign each group one of the following three historical figures:
 - John Stricker
 - George Armistead
 - James McHenry
- Give each group the appropriate primary source to read and questions to answer.
- Allow each group to report out to the entire group. All students should take notes regarding each historical figure so that they can complete the final product (biographical sketch).

4) Assessment

Have students choose one of the historical figures and write a biographical sketch using the information found in the research. Have them use the template provided in this activity. Completed products should be checked for accuracy of information. Provide students with a street map of Baltimore so that they can locate the streets/places named after their historical figure.

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5) Closure

Display the street map of Baltimore (either a paper map or electronic display). Have students read their biographical sketches and point to the streets or locations named after their chosen historical figure.

Suggested link to a Baltimore Street Map: <http://travel.nytimes.com/travel/guides/north-america/united-states/maryland/baltimore/maps.html>

Provide students with the secondary source biographies of their historical figures so that they can check the accuracy of their biographical sketches. This is a good opportunity to discuss the differences between primary and secondary sources. You might ask students what other sorts of primary sources they would like to see to gather more information about these important men.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students should be paired with attention to varying reading abilities, especially when using primary source documents.

LESSON EXTENSIONS: (Bulletin Board) List the names of other important figures from the War of 1812 (Battle of Baltimore). Post a map of Baltimore on a bulletin board. Have students mark the streets, schools, communities, or landmarks bearing the names of individuals from the list. Students are to then find one important fact about each person and place it on the bulletin board. Use string to connect the street/landmark with the fact that has been posted.

Ex: Commodore John Rodgers, James McHenry Elementary, Francis Scott Key Elementary, etc.



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Francis Scott Key

Nearly twenty years after the War of 1812, Francis Scott Key was attending a public event. These words are part of the speech that he gave that day.

“. . . I saw the flag of my country waving over a city – the strength and pride of my native State- a city devoted to plunder [being robbed] . . . by its assailants [attackers]. I witnessed the preparation for its assaults [attack], and I saw the array of its enemies as they advanced to the attack. I heard the sound of battle; the noise of the conflict fell upon my listening ear, and told me that ‘the brave and the free had met the invaders.’”

“...and though I walked upon a deck surrounded by a hostile [enemy] fleet, detained as a prisoner, yet was my step firm, and my heart strong, as these recollections [memories] came upon me. Through the clouds of war, the stars of that banner still shone [shined] in my view, and I saw the discomfited [defeated] host [whole group] of its assailants [attackers] driven back in ignominy [deep disgrace] to their ship. Then, in that hour of deliverance [rescue] and joyful triumph, my heart spoke; and “Does not such a country, deserve a song?”

As quoted in: Delaplaine, Edward S. *Francis Scott Key: Life and Times*. New York: Biography Press, 1937. pp. 379-80.

1. What event was Francis Scott Key describing?
2. What words did he use to describe the soldiers who were protecting the city?
3. How did he feel as he witnessed the battle?
4. What song is Key referring to in the last lines of the quote?
5. What was Francis Scott Key’s important contribution to history?

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General John Stricker

General John Stricker was a very important figure in the Battle of Baltimore. Some of his actions are described in this letter from Major-General Sam Smith, who was in charge of all of Baltimore's defenses, to the Secretary of War dated September 19, 1814.

“On Monday, brigadier-general Stricker took a position at the junction [intersection] of the two roads leading from this place to North Point, having his right flanked [bordered] by Bear creek and his left by a marsh. He here awaited the approach of the enemy, having sent on an advance corps under the command of major Heath of the 5th regiment....”

“...General Stricker gallantly [bravely] maintained his ground against a great superiority of numbers...”

“In this affair the citizen soldiers of Baltimore . . . have maintained the reputation they so deservedly acquired at Bladensburg, and their brave and skilful [skillful] leader has confirmed the confidence which we had all so justly placed in him.”

“...I cannot dismiss the subject without expressing the heart-felt satisfaction I experience in thus bearing testimony to [telling about] the courage and good conduct of my fellow townsmen...”

Niles, H., ed. Niles Weekly Register, Vol. VII (September 1814-March 1815). Baltimore: Franklin Press, 1815. p. 26.

- 1) What was Brigadier General John Stricker's role in the Battle of Baltimore?
- 2) Major-General Smith is the commanding officer of General John Stricker. Based on the excerpts from his letter, how did he feel about General Stricker's conduct during the battle?
- 3) What words did General Smith use to describe General Stricker's actions?
- 4) What was John Stricker's important contribution to history?

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Major George Armistead

General John Stricker was a very important figure in the Battle of Baltimore. Some of his actions are described in this letter from Major-General Sam Smith, who was in charge of all of Baltimore's defenses, to the Secretary of War dated September 19, 1814.

"I have now the pleasure of calling your attention to the brave commander of Fort McHenry, Major Armistead, and to the operations confided to that quarter..."

"...The situation of major Armistead was peculiarly trying [difficult] – The enemy having taken his position at such a distance as to render offensive operations [attacks] on the part of the fort entirely fruitless [useless], whilst their bombs and rockets were every moment falling in and about it – the officers and men being at the same time entirely exposed...."

Niles, H., ed. Niles Weekly Register, Vol. VII (September 1814-March 1815). Baltimore: Franklin Press, 1815. p. 26-27.

- 1) Major-General Smith is the commanding officer of Major Armistead. Based on the excerpts from his letter, how did he feel about Major Armistead's conduct during the battle?
- 2) What word(s) did General Smith use to describe Major Armistead's actions?
- 3) Using General Smith's letter, describe what Major Armistead and his men were experiencing.
- 4) What was Major Armistead's important contribution to history?

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James McHenry

James McHenry was the Secretary of War before the War of 1812. Here are some parts of a letter sent to James McHenry by John Foncier, a French citizen who helped to build Fort McHenry.

“...You not only have supported me while you was (were) Secretary of war; but your satisfaction towards my conduct, has been a great encouragement for the exerting [using] of all my faculties [abilities] in the service of the United States; and I still keep alive the flattering remembrance of the satisfaction of the citizens of Baltimore, while I was building Fort McHenry...”

“P.S. it is a painful idea to me that the beautiful city of Baltimore be exposed to the disaster of War; but my mind will be a little solaced [comforted], if Fort McHenry does answer the purpose for which it was established, and affords me the satisfaction of having contributed to your defence.”

Foncier, John. Letter to James McHenry [13 September 1814]. Transcription of Manuscript. John Eager Howard Collection. MS 1846. Special Collections Department, Maryland Historical Society Library, Baltimore, MD.

1. What was James McHenry’s job as Fort McHenry was being built?
2. What was John Foncier’s job related to Fort McHenry?
3. Do you think that he had a good experience working for James McHenry?
What did he write in his letter that makes you think that?
4. How does John Foncier feel about Baltimore? What words does he use to describe the city and the people?

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(Name of Historical Figure)

_____ was an important person during the War of 1812 because

_____.

He will best be remembered for

_____.

One thing that many people might not know about him is (use the information that you found in the primary source).

In Baltimore, there is a _____ named after him. If you look at a map of Baltimore it is located near _____.

Student Resource 5 – Biographical Sketches

Biographical Sketches

Important People from the Battle of Baltimore

JOHN STRICKER

During the War of 1812, **John Stricker** commanded the 3rd Brigade of the Maryland Militia. He led the American troops in what became known as the Battle of North Point. The efforts of Stricker and the soldiers that he led prevented the British from getting into Baltimore and attacking the city.

Because Baltimore's defenses were so strong and the militia soldiers fought so bravely under Stricker, the British soldiers could not begin an attack on the city without the support of their warships. When the ships were unable to defeat Fort McHenry and get into the Baltimore Harbor to help the British army, the British soldiers were forced to abandon their attack on Baltimore.

After the war, Stricker went on to become a successful businessman but he is best known as commander of the Baltimore Brigade in the Battle of North Point during the British attack on Baltimore on September 12, 1814.

GEORGE ARMISTEAD

George Armistead was an American military officer who served as the commander of Fort McHenry during the Battle of Baltimore in the War of 1812.

He was born in Virginia in 1770. He participated in the capture of Fort George from the British, on May 27, 1813 while serving as an artillery officer at Fort Niagara. Battles in the north near Canada were also part of the War of 1812. He would later carry the captured British flags (a sign of victory over the enemy) to President James Madison. Upon his arrival in Washington, Armistead was ordered to "take command" of Fort McHenry.

When he arrived at Fort McHenry, located in the outer harbor of Baltimore, Maryland, Armistead ordered "a flag so large that the British would have no difficulty seeing it from a distance". That flag became known as the Star-Spangled Banner flag.

Armistead was the commander during the nearly 25-hour bombardment of Fort McHenry, which began before dawn on September 13 until the morning of September 14, 1814. Following the battle, Armistead was promoted to lieutenant colonel. However, Armistead was not in good health and died at age 38, only three years after the war ended.

JAMES MCHENRY

James McHenry was born on November 16, 1753 in Ireland. In 1771 he came to America and lived and worked in Philadelphia. Later, his family also settled in America and opened a store in Baltimore. James attended school for a time in Delaware and eventually returned to Philadelphia where he studied to become a doctor. He served as an army surgeon during the War of Independence. After the war he moved to Baltimore where he gave up medicine and became interested in politics.

McHenry was elected to the Maryland Senate and later represented Maryland in the Continental Congress. In 1787 he was appointed by the Maryland legislature to attend the Constitutional Convention and later was one of the signers of the United States Constitution.

In 1796, McHenry was asked by President George Washington to become his Secretary of War. He accepted the position and held it until 1800. During the time that McHenry was Secretary of War, he helped to raise funds for the rebuilding of the fort (Fort Whetstone) at Baltimore's harbor. The fort was renamed Fort McHenry in his honor.