

# Maryland in the War of 1812

Celebrating the 200th Anniversary of the War of 1812

## Baltimore Bellona Gunpowder Manufactory (1801-1856)

*“Baltimore Bellona Gunpowder Manufactory. The proprietors have commenced manufacturing and offer for sale Gunpowder of a superior quality, and refined Saltpetre. LEVERING.” Federal Gazette, December 5, 1801.*

The Bellona Gunpowder Manufactory was Maryland’s most extensive powder works established seven miles north of Baltimore along the Jones Falls west of Towson, Baltimore County receiving its name from the Roman Goddess of War – *Bellona*. It was one of four known Baltimore powder mills, all competing with the famous Eleuthere Irenee du Pont de Nemours & Company along the Brandywine River in Delaware. All delivered gunpowder to Maryland during the War of 1812.

The manufactory in 1810 was capable of making thirty-two quarter casks per day. It was governed by several leading citizens, one of whom was James Beatty, U.S. Naval Agent in Baltimore who later had the company incorporated by an act of the General Assembly on April 16, 1815. The company’s agent, Aaron R. Levering (1784-1852) served during the war as captain of the *Baltimore Independent Blues*, 6th Maryland Regiment that was held in reserve during the Battle of North Point, Sept. 12, 1814. By 1816 the company was able to enter into contracts for 100,000 lbs of different descriptions of powder.

Subsequent explosions in 1812, 1820-21, and 1833 did not diminish its production until 1856 when the site was sold to the City of Baltimore as a water works and soon found itself submerged below the waters of Lake Roland, Baltimore County.

**Sources:** *“An Act to Incorporate the Bellona Gunpowder Company of Maryland,”* Archives of Maryland, Vol. 192, pp. 1625-1626, Maryland State Archives; *Maryland Gazette*, June 13, 1810; *Baltimore Patriot*, June 6, 1816.