But the first system to consider is the pattern of human settlement, as illustrated by historical changes to Baltimore's municipal boundaries. At the time of its purchase and construction, Homewood was one of many gentlemens' estates, each of them far from the perceived pressures, discomforts, or — conversely — the benefits of urban life.

So here is an easy question to ask about Homewood:
How did the City of Baltimore, itself, come to Homewood?

It came in fits and starts, but with a certain inexorability. Homewood, although far from Baltimore's center, was always within the orbit of Baltimore's social and mercantile culture.

Fry & Jefferson, "A Map of the most Inhabited part of Virginia," in Jefferys, *The American Atlas* (London: Sayer & Jefferys, 1776) | MD Historical Soc.

In an sense, Baltimore was the Union's first "city of the west," although its physical characteristics were similar to those of other East-coast ports. Its eventual success in the 19th century derived from its position close to Maryland's Alleghenie piedmont — and to the Ohio river system beyond — which served both as a source of goods for water-born export from its navigable basin and a staging point for the country's nascent western expansion.

All of the technologies which would eventually define Baltimore's urban history, such as turnpike, rail, telegraph, and steel, have their roots in the city's physical position between the Atlantic coast and the early frontier to the west.

Although its founding is traditionally dated to 1730, the city emerged not from a single settlement but from three distinct centers: Baltimore Town, Jones Town, and Fells Point. The natural topography encouraged this: The Jones Falls is a formidable boundary along its length even today, and the hilly terrain to the basin's north has tended to separate one neighborhood from another, even as a surveyor's line might run between them without care.

Onecan see this clearly in this 1792 map, based on a survey by the French-born geographer, Folie.

At about this time, the construction of turnpikes led out along the Patapsco's tributaries, each at a different angle, and so encouraged distinct street plans quite unrelated to those in adjacent areas.

Folie, A. P., "Plan of the town of Baltimore and it's environs," (Philadelphia: James Poupard, Engraver, 1793) | NY Public Library

"Hampton Mansion, North Elevation" Historic American Buildings Survey Frederick D. Nichols, Photographer May 1937 HABS MD,3-TOW.V,1A-7

In her dissertation about Baltimore's earliest Architects, written at Johns Hopkins almost sixty years ago, Claire Eckles has noted that, from the very beginning, Baltimore's wealthiest citizens founded their homes outside the city itself. "Fear of the recurrent epidemics of yellow fever and smallpox led them to the surrounding rolling hills. Baltimore became the first town in the Union to have suburbs before it was a city." In Baltimore's case, before the City's incorporation in 1797, there was no essential political (or financial) distinction between areas of dense settlement and the outlying areas. Another writer has put it, "Baltimore County administered all major local public activites and collected the bulk of the local taxes."

So the estates of Mount Clare, Druid Hill, Green Mont, Montebellow, Mount Royal, Belvidere, Hampton, and Perry Hall — names which continue to resonate in today's Baltimore! — were, from their conception a part of Baltimore's civic life while laying physically beyond it.

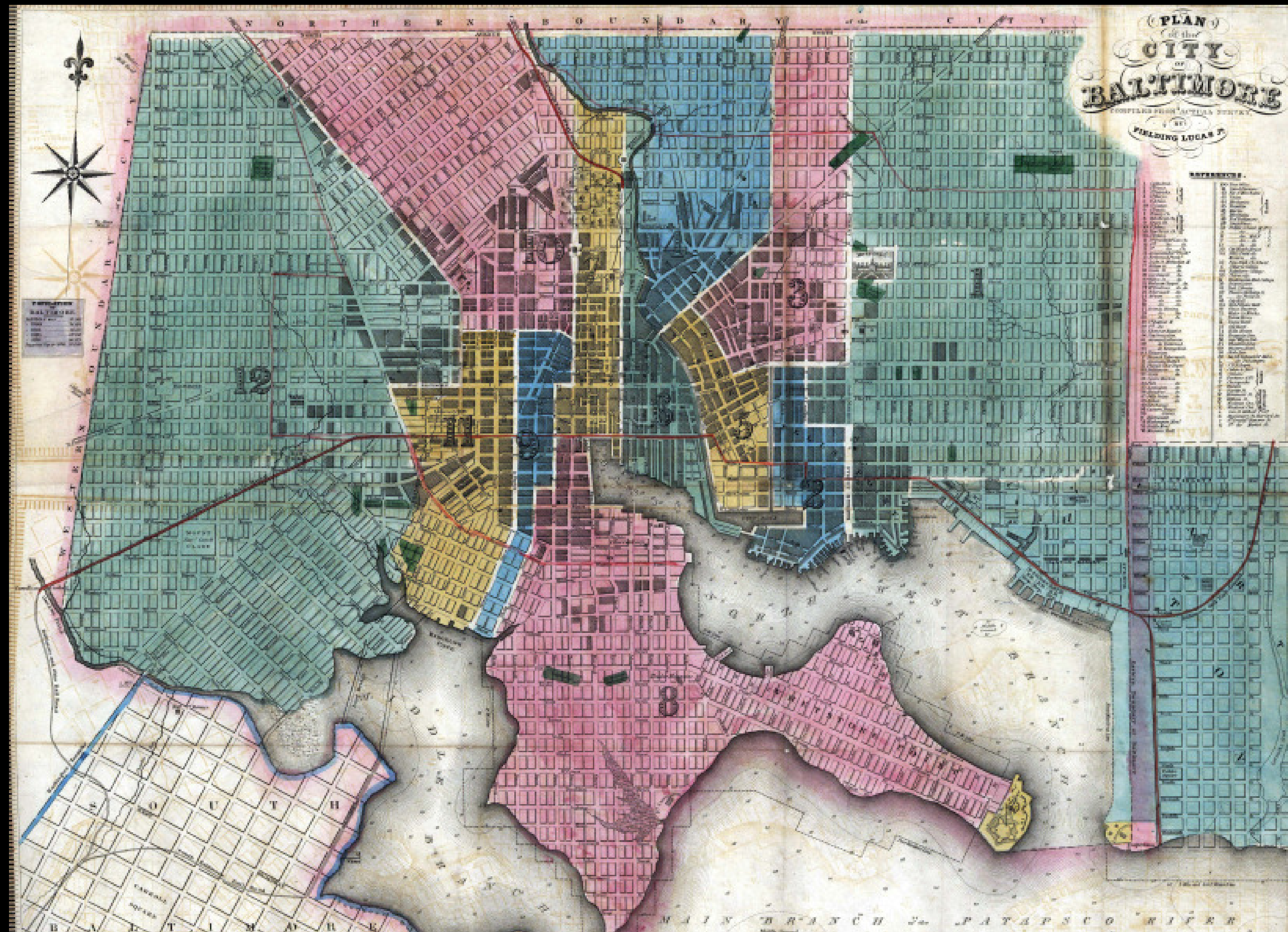
Charles Varle? "Plan of the City and Environs of Baltimore," (Baltimore: Warner & Hanna, 1801) | Maryland Historical Society

One gets a sense of that from Warner and Hanna's well-known map of 1801. The city streets are clearly distinct from surrounding countryside, and in the countryside are found the homes of Baltimore's gentry. John Eager Howard's estate, Belvedere, blocks the northward progress of Calvert Street. Other estates are situated even further out.

And where is Homewood in all this?

The land which would be bought by the Carroll family in 1800 was far from either settlement or turnpike. Homewood was three miles from Baltimore's center.

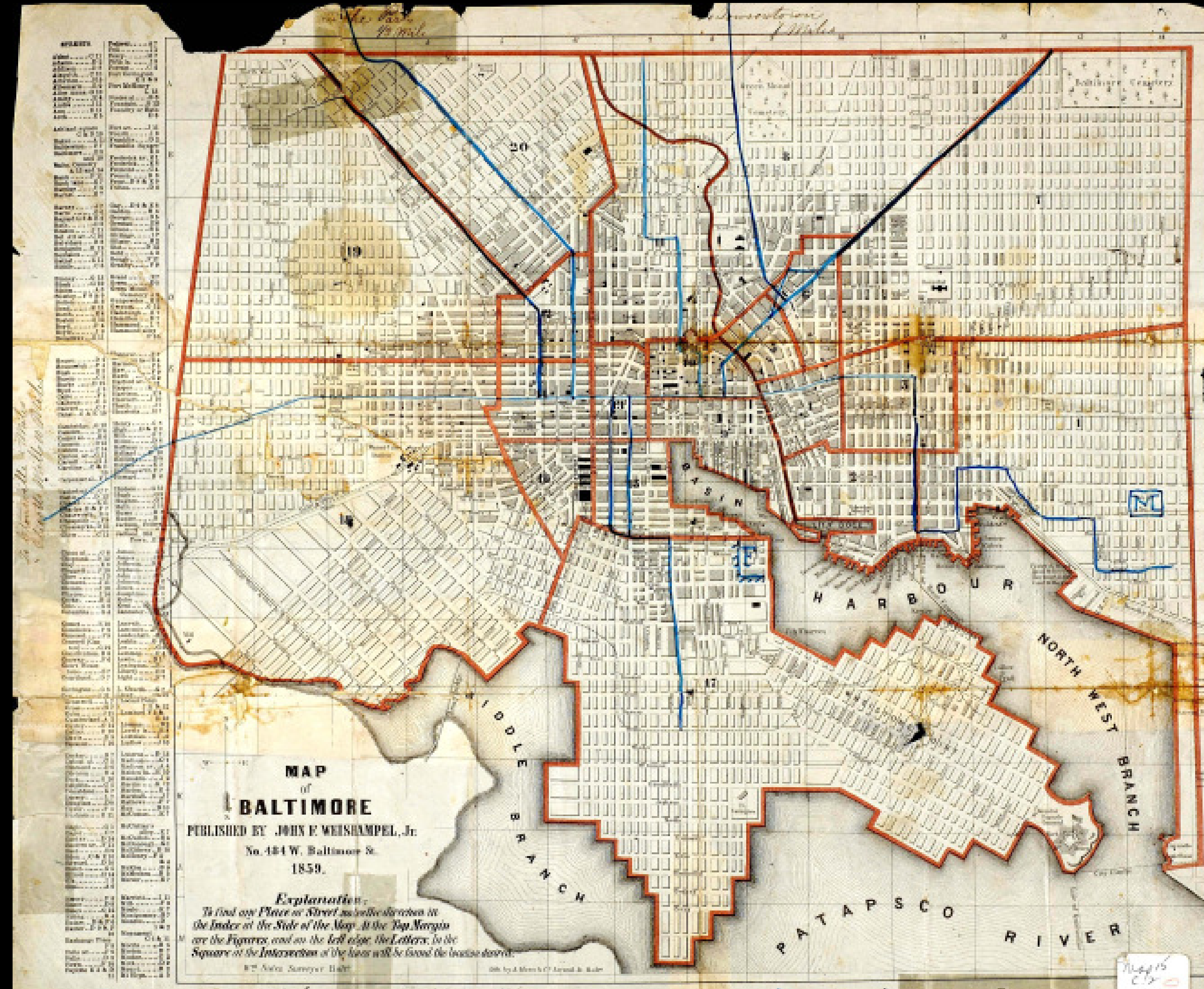
At Homewood's founding, only three years after Baltimore's original charter, the City's municipal boundaries reached less than a mile north of the city center. In 1816 an annexation was approved by the Maryland legislature and served as the pretext for politicians to commission a new layout of roads and alleys.



"Plan of the City of Baltimore," (Baltimore: Fielding Lucas Jr., 1836) | Maryland State Archives

Yet even with this annexation, the scope of which is illustrated on this map by Fielding Lucas in the year 1836, Homewood still remained well outside of municipal boundaries. One can see the northern extent of the city at what is now North Avenue.

Homewood sits a mile-and-a-third beyond that, quite "off the edge of the map," as it were.



"Map of Baltimore," (Baltimore: , John F. Weishampel Jr., 1859) | JHU Sheridan Libraries

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, Baltimore's development proceeded by filling out the grid already established, as this map dating to 1859 shows. Baltimore emerged during this time as a manufacturing center, with factories now established at latitudes similar to Homewood's.

But although the city line stayed put, this period witnessed increasing divergence between the City's interests and the County's — so much so that the County offices relocated to Towson by 1852.

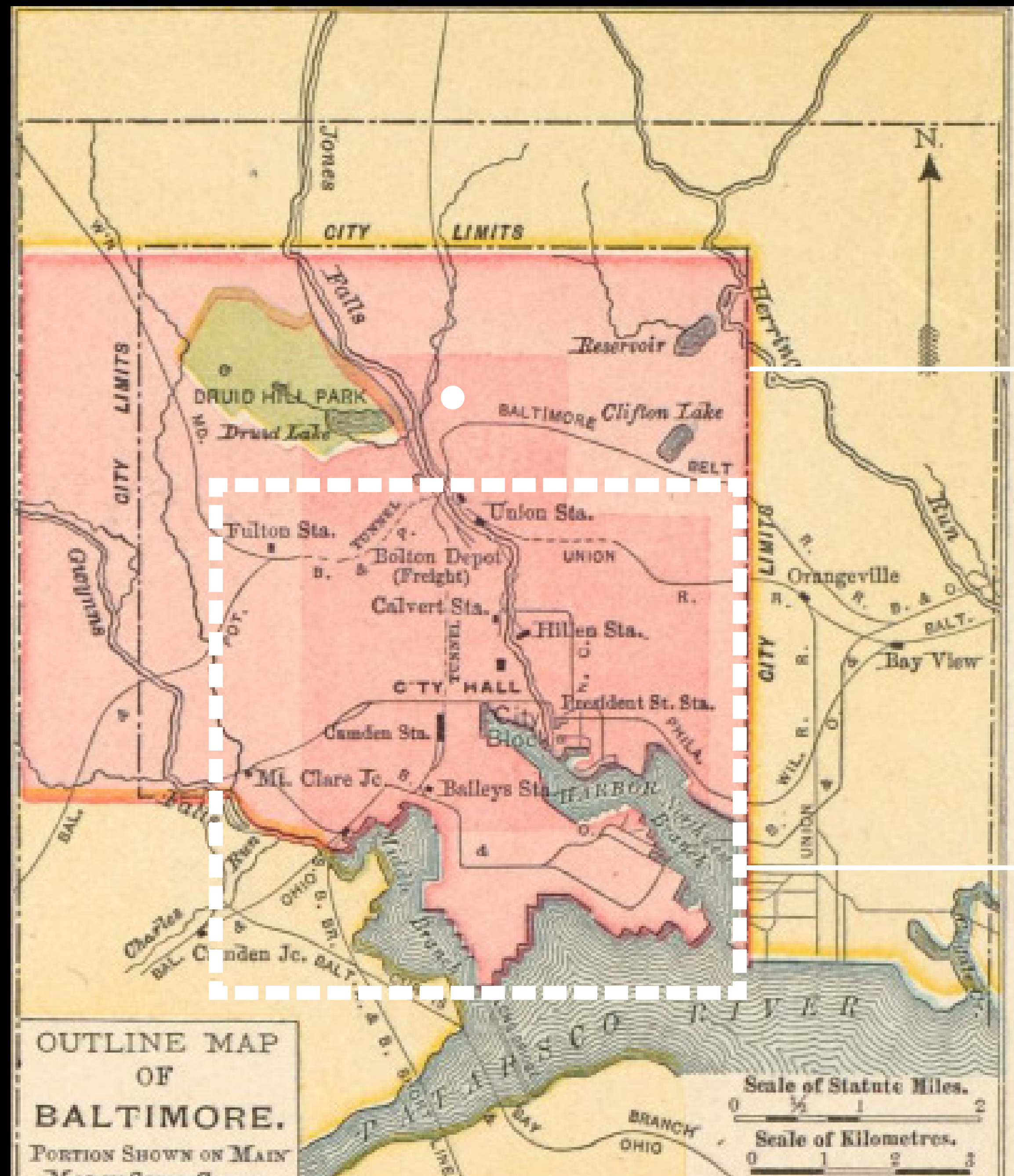
During this time, increasing suburban settlement encroached upon Homewood from the city's direction. The Wyman family purchased Homewood from the Carrolls in 1838, and although the estate remained in the hands of a few brothers and cousins, the property's division among family members illustrates the overall trend: increased density, smaller parcellations, and far less reliance on the immediate landscape for sustenance.

"Baltimore County," from *Martenet's Atlas of Maryland* (Baltimore: Simon J. Martenet, 1866) | JHU Sheridan Libraries

Here is a look at the City and its neighboring County areas to the North, circa 1865. Homewood is not indicated on the map, but its contemporary neighbors are Hampden to the west and Govanstown to the east.

Seemingly more prominent than natural features are railroad lines, the source of Baltimore's prosperity in those years. The manufacturing capacity of Baltimore's hinterland, too, is clearly marked: Caverton Mills appears to be a major development, for instance, and the factories around Woodbery dot the landscape near to the rail spur running north.

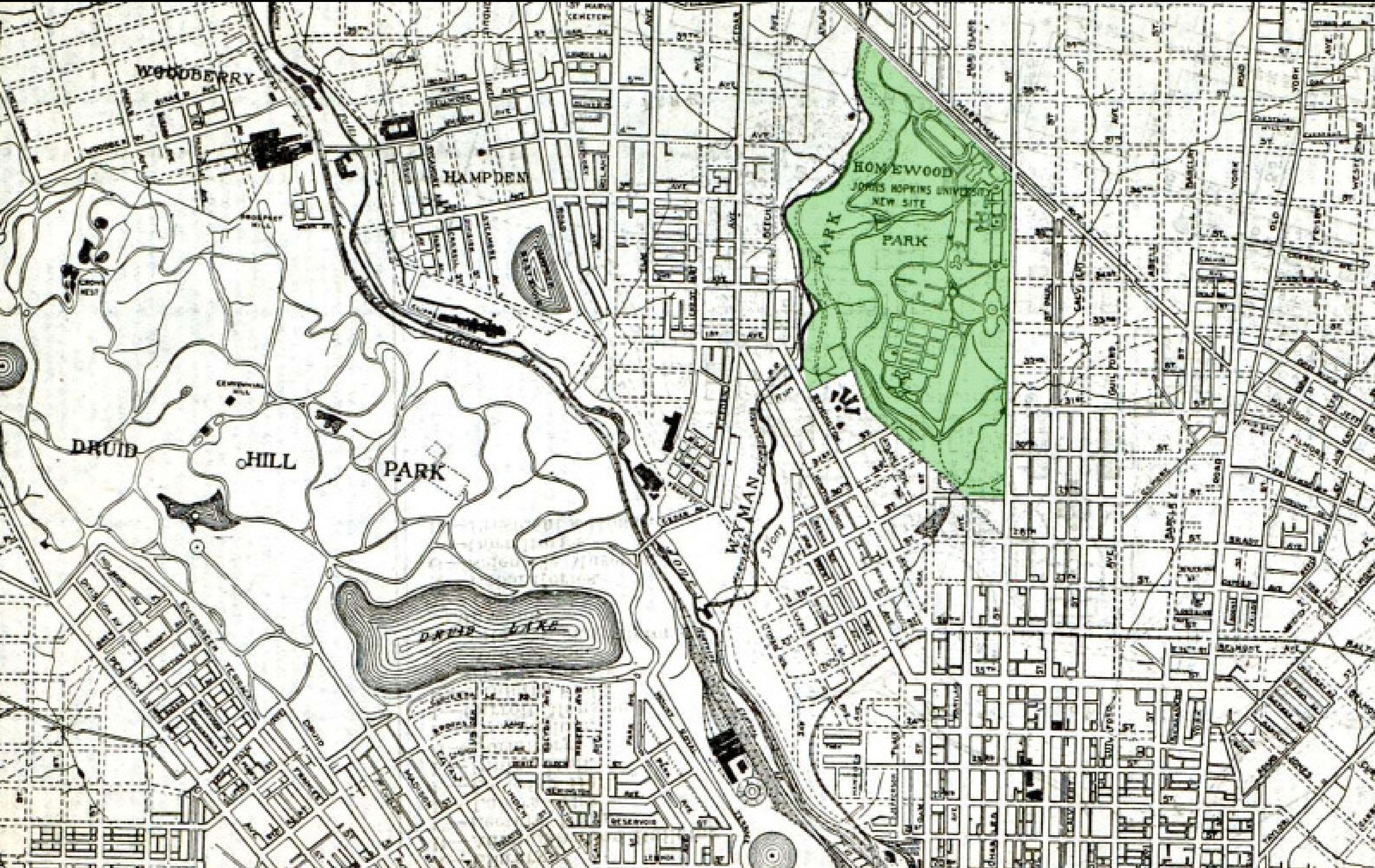
Annexation bills were introduced by the City as early as 1868, but the final referendum for the "Belt" areas — including Homewood — passed only in 1888. Motivating the push towards annexation were worsening health conditions in these areas, conditions which Baltimore County government was unable to address.



Detail from "Map fo the Main Portion of Baltimore ," from *Atlas of the World* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1895) | JHU Sheridan Libraries

The final passage of annexation underscored once more the interrelationships among so many different systems: politics, housing, public health, and sanitation.

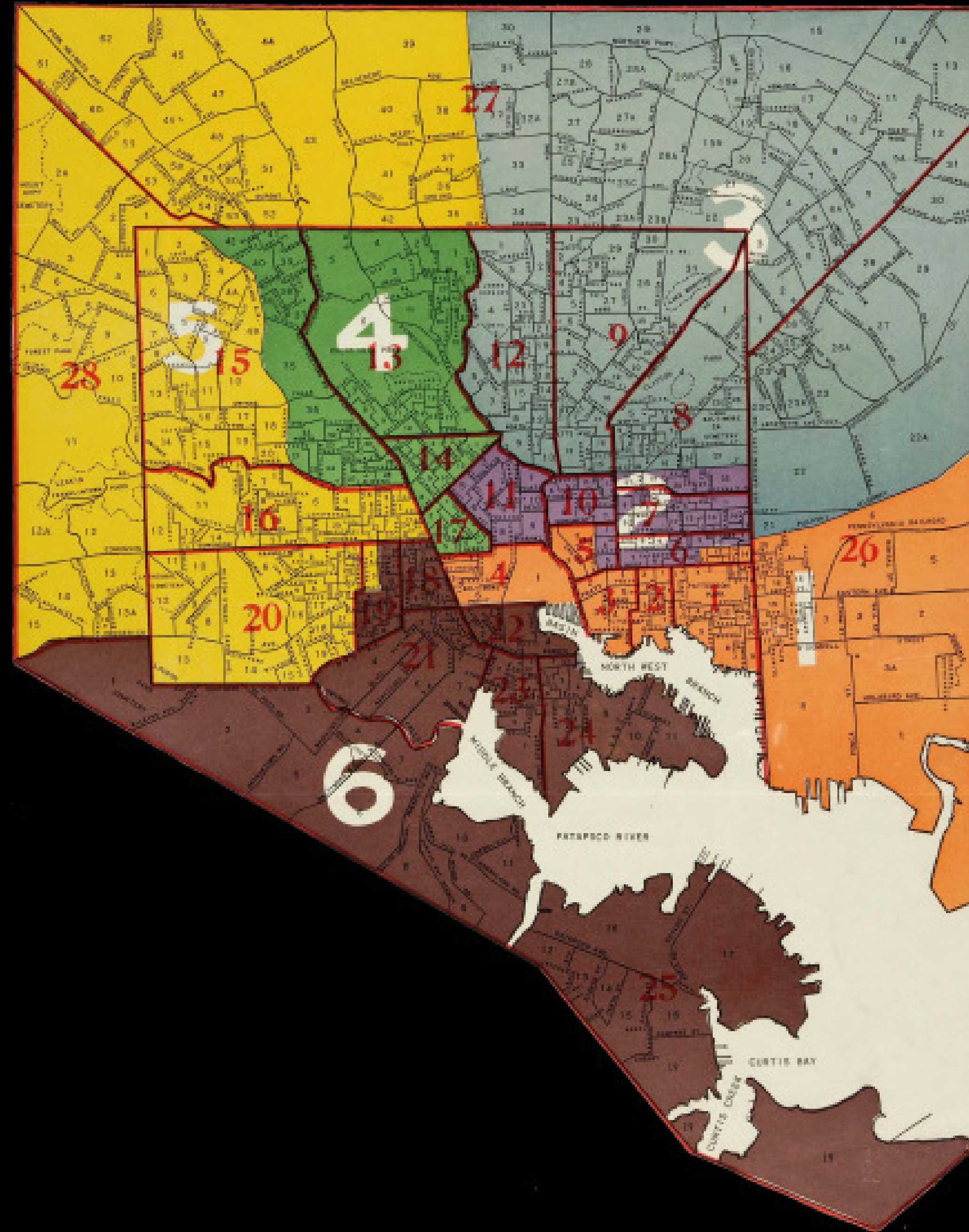
The City — with its corporate ability to address those factors — had finally come to Homewood; and so, not surprisingly, Homewood's own function would soon fundamentally change.



Detail from "Map of Baltimore," (Baltimore: Young Men's Christian Association of the Johns Hopkins University, 1906) | JHU Sheridan Libraries

By the time the Johns Hopkins University had acquired Homewood at the beginning of the twentieth century, urban development in Homewood's vicinity had more or less been mapped out.

The Peabody Heights community, developed in the 1890's, encroached upon the new campus from the south and east; Hampden and Roland Park had already been developed to the West and North of the site.



The annexation of 1919 opened up huge areas of the surrounding countryside to municipal administration. This map, dating to 1952, illustrates the legislative districts which resulted from Baltimore's expansion.

One writer suggests cynically that the main motivation for expansion was "boosterism" in advance of the 1920 census, so that Baltimore's place among American cities would surpass recently enlarged rivals such as Pittsburgh. In any case the consequence of annexation was to integrate fully under City management those areas made accessible by transportation in the preceeding two decades.

Doing so, in turn, had another result. Its main impact was to afford these suburban tracts with a single administrative system for both drinking water and sewage removal — and, so, to afford them with a key urban infrastructural amenity.

"Map of Baltimore 1952 Showing ... Precincts, Wards and Legislative Districts," (Baltimore: Board of Supervisors of Elections of Baltimore City, 1952)