



Emmitsburg

CATOCTIN MOUNTAIN TOWN

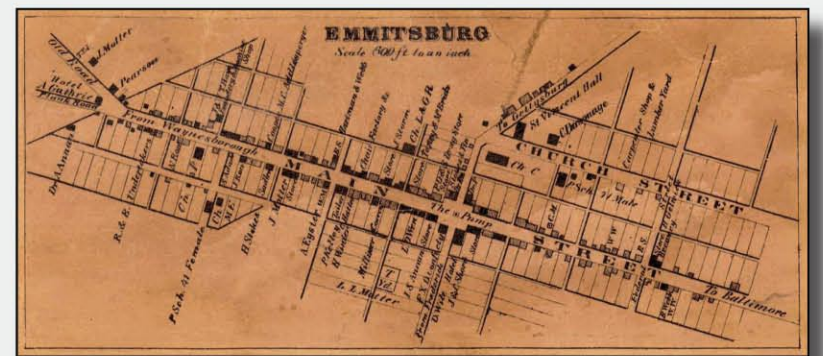


A former resident of Emmitsburg, Elizabeth Ann Seton (August 28, 1774 – January 4, 1821) was the first native-born citizen of the United States to be canonized by the Roman Catholic Church.
Courtesy of Daughters of Charity, Provincial Archives, Emmitsburg, MD

After playing host to native peoples for centuries, Catoclin Mountain has served home to European settlers since the 1730's. Among the first to come to what was considered "the backlands of the province," were descendants of English Catholics who had founded Maryland in 1634.

Hearty settlers like William Elder found a "heavenly" setting in this picturesque landscape that would come to be known as St. Mary's Mount. Tradition says that the first mass took place in the Elder's home in 1745. Sixty years later, a French émigré named John Dubois came to this area with instructions to build a Catholic seminary on Catoclin's face. Elizabeth Ann Seton arrived shortly thereafter in 1809, creating a religious community of women and the parochial school system.

In 1785, resident Samuel Emmitt entered into an agreement with neighbors to sell land lots to create a market center for surrounding farmsteads. Fittingly the village would take the name of Emmitsburg and quickly became known as the most productive wheat-growing area in the nation.



During the American Civil War, Catoclin Mountain screened the movements of armies, while Emmitsburg served as a front line staging area and fall-back position during the nearby Battle of Gettysburg. Afterwards, many of the wounded were treated by Mother Seton's Daughters of Charity.

The former St. Joseph's College is now the site of the National Fire Academy and features a national memorial dedicated to those fire and rescue professionals who have lost their lives in the line of duty.



Vintage scene of Main Street and Town Square featuring a four-tiered fountain originally installed in 1885 (and destroyed in 1927).
Courtesy of Emmitsburg Area Historical Society



"Emmettsburg [sic], MD. Gen. Meade's Army pursuing Gen. Lee" from a sketch by Edwin Forbes, in Frank Leslie's *The Soldier in Our Civil War*, 1885.

