

Section 1: Map Skills And Travel

In 1808, Mother Seton and her three young daughters left their home in New York City to open a school for girls on Paca Street in Baltimore, Maryland. Elizabeth considered going by land, but a journey that way would have taken two or three weeks, and at greater expense. Read Letter 1, which describes their journey aboard the *Grand Sachem*. When you visit the museum, look for the picture of the boat.

LETTER 1 Journal of Mother Seton 1808

June 13- “*Friday, Saturday and Sunday are past, my dear one, with many a prayer, many a sigh; we are rocking and rolling without getting on. Ann is suffering every way...This morning we are again in sight of land and near Cape Henry.*”

June 14- “*After rolling and dashing all night... with both little dear ones in my narrow berth, the hand held over to Ann, praying every ten minutes and offering the life so justly forfeited, here we are flying up the Chesapeake. A fairer wind and lighter hearts never went through it, I believe. The sun is setting gloriously...Are you looking at it?*”

June 15- “*Evening once more...aboard the Grand Sachem. Not yet in Baltimore Bay. Hope is on the wing, expecting tomorrow morning.*”

June 16, morning- “*Since eleven last night we are at the wharf but cannot quit the vessel until our things are entered at the custom house. It rains very hard.*”

Evening- “*...all I can tell you is [that] a carriage conveyed us to the seminary.*”

In 1809, Mother Seton and her companions left Baltimore to go to their new home in Emmitsburg, Maryland. She and four others walked the entire distance. Read Letter 2, which tells some of the sights they saw on the way.

LETTER 2 Elizabeth Ann Seton to W. Dubourg, SS 1809

June 21- “*We are so far safe though our progress is so much slower than you expected. Your turnpike road is...a very rough one, and we were obliged to walk the horses all the way and have walked ourselves...except Cecelia [Cecelia Seton, Elizabeth’s sister-in-law, was suffering from a prolonged illness] nearly half the time, this morning four miles and a half before breakfast. The dear patient was greatly amused, and all the natives astonished as we went before the carriage. The dogs and pigs came out to meet us, and the geese stretched their necks in mute demand to know if we were any of their sort, to which we gave assent.*”

ACTIVITIES

1. Compare and contrast the different ways to travel in 1800 and now.
2. Find New York City, NY; Baltimore, MD; and Emmitsburg, MD on today’s map. How far did they have to travel on each journey? How long would it take someone to drive from New York to Baltimore today?
3. What things would be necessary for journeys of this sort then and now?
4. What advantages, if any, did a sea voyage have over a stage coach journey?
5. From reading the letters, how would you describe the conditions of travel at this time?
6. Mother Seton talks of a turnpike. What is a turnpike?