

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE  
WESTERN BOUNDARY OF  
MARYLAND: A PAPER READ BEFORE  
THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY, DECEMBER 9TH, 1889**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649277858

Report of the Committee on the Western Boundary of Maryland: A Paper Read before the Maryland historical society, December 9th, 1889 by Various

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**VARIOUS**

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE  
WESTERN BOUNDARY OF  
MARYLAND: A PAPER READ BEFORE  
THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY, DECEMBER 9TH, 1889**



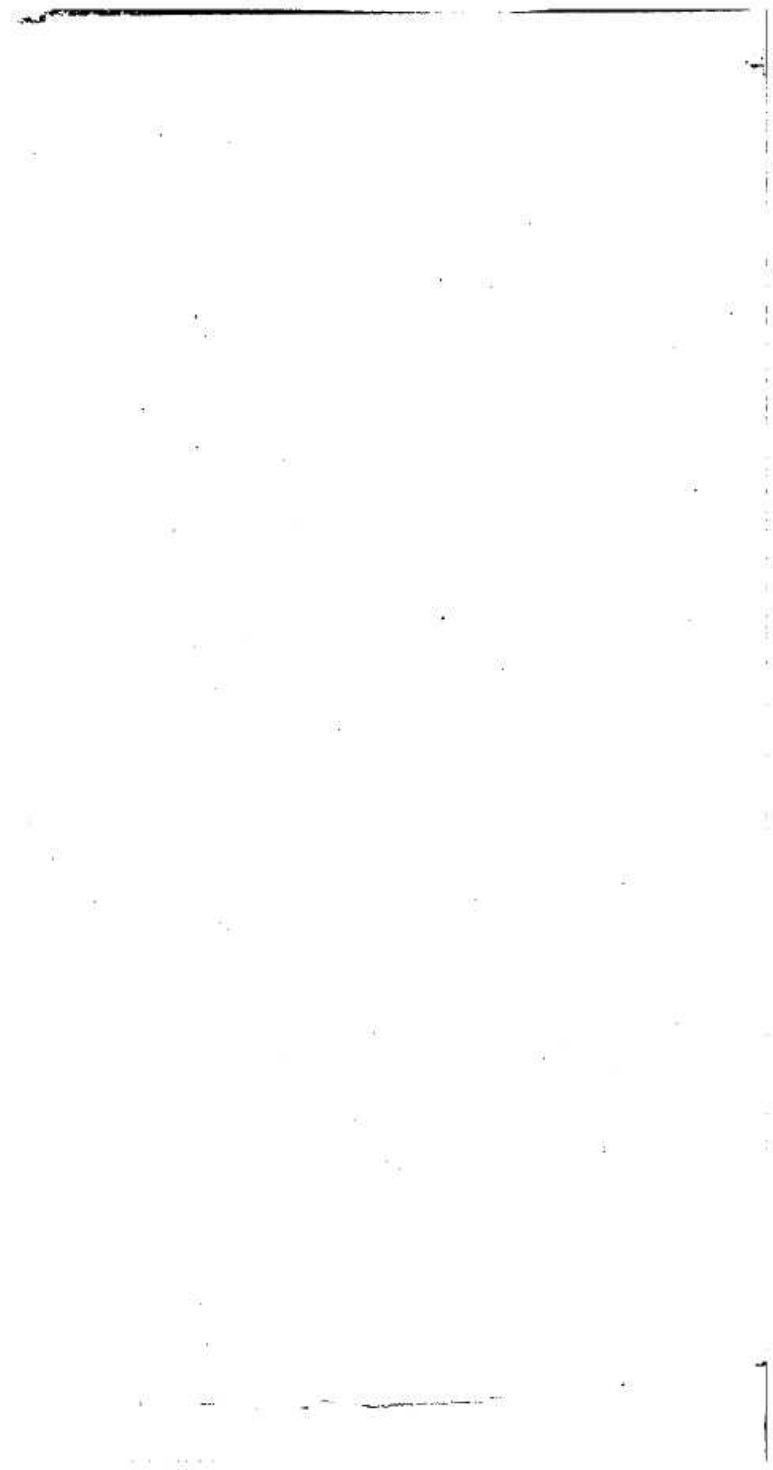
**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE**  
**ON THE**  
**WESTERN BOUNDARY OF MARYLAND.**



A Paper read before the Maryland Historical Society,

December 9th, 1889.

Baltimore, 1890.



REPORT  
OF THE  
COMMITTEE  
ON THE  
WESTERN BOUNDARY OF MARYLAND.

PEABODY PUBLICATION FUND.

---

COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION.

1889-90.

HENRY STOCKBRIDGE,  
BRADLEY T. JOHNSON,  
CLAYTON C. HALL.

PRINTED BY JOHN MURPHY & Co.  
PRINTERS TO THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY.  
BALTIMORE, 1890.



F176  
M3  
no. 29

## REPORT.

---

**T**HE original boundaries of the Province of Maryland were laid down with unwonted precision in the charter which created it. These were: the fortieth parallel of north latitude; a meridian line running south to the first or most distant fountain of the Potomac — (“ad verum meridianum primi fontis fluminis de Patowomack”) thence proceeding southward (“deinde vergendo versus meridiem”) to the farther or western bank of that river, and following that bank to a specified point at the mouth of the river where it debouches into the Chesapeake; thence by a straight line across the bay to Watkins Point and onward to the ocean, and thence by the ocean and Delaware bay and river to the fortieth parallel.

Md. Charter  
in  
Md. Arch.  
Council,  
1636-67.  
Appendix  
A.

The only one of these courses that was at all uncertain at the time the charter was granted, was that at the extreme west. The country to the west of the Alleghanies was then altogether unknown.

Indeed, for many years the geography of the continent was so little understood, that Herman, in his map (1670), considers the mountains about Cumberland to be the central ridge between the two oceans. The point at which the meridian line was to begin had, therefore, to remain undetermined until it should be found which was the furthest source or first fountain of the Potomac: in other words, which of the branches of that river took its rise farthest from its mouth. This point settled, the spring-head or source of that branch determined the western boundary of Maryland.

In 1649, Charles II, then a fugitive in Holland, granted to Lord Hopton, Sir Thomas Culpeper, and other exiled royalists, a tract of land in Virginia, lying between the rivers Rappahannock and Potomac, and running down to the Chesapeake Bay. Under the commonwealth, this remained, of course, a mere grant on paper; but after the restoration the grantees, or rather their heirs and assigns, proposed to avail themselves of their rights. Certain questions having been raised as to the validity of the original grant, these claimants surrendered their patent, and in 1669 received a re-grant, under the privy seal, of the lands in question. This grant, however, conveyed only a title to the soil, which still remained a part of Virginia, and subject to her

Boundary  
Com. Rep.  
85.

Md. Acts,  
1832.

Res. 128.

jurisdiction. It was not an enlargement of the territory of Virginia, but a grant within Virginia, and necessarily limited by the boundaries of that colony.

The Virginians were violently opposed to this grant, which placed the ownership of a vast extent of territory within two or three hands; and in 1675 they sent agents to England to remonstrate against it, or, if remonstrance were unavailing, to buy out the grantees' claims; but without success in either case.

McMahon,  
Hist. Md.,  
p. 60.

By the year 1688 the whole title had vested in Thomas, Lord Culpeper; and James II granted him a new patent for the whole tract. This descended to Catharine, his daughter and heiress, who brought it in marriage to Thomas, fifth Baron Fairfax of Cameron, in the Scottish peerage. Lord Fairfax proposed to reap some advantage from his immense territorial possessions, which were still unsurveyed; and in 1733 petitioned the King for the determination of his boundaries by commissioners. The petition was granted, and six commissioners were appointed, three representing Virginia, and three the Crown, who determined the boundaries separating his grant from the rest of Virginia. The grants had all called for lands lying south of the Potomac river; and consequently there was nothing in them interfering with the

Va. Acts,  
1736.