OLD KENT

Editor's note—"The following history written by Mr. George Hanson, covers the early history of the northern part of the Eastern Shore, particularly Kent County. Not only does it cover the early history of the settlement but also follows in detail the old families of that time. It is interesting to note that the descendants of the pioneer of this section are still outstanding citizens and a large part of the present population can justly lay claim to descending from the generation described in Old Kent.

'Mr. Hanson, the author, started his series of articles when the late Eben F. Perkins was editor of The Transcript and later became editor of the paper himself. He lived at Radcliffe Hall, the property in Quaker Neck now owned by Mr. W. S. Collins and also the site of the Country Club. The articles, which will be continued each week, are an exact reproduction of those published in 1875. Part of the articles which were originally published in the Transcript were made into book form and are in the treasued possession of numerous families in Kent county.'"

COMMUNICATION No. 1.

E. F. Perkins, Esq., Editor of Transcript, etc.: My Dear Sir—Before proceeding to communicate to you and your readers the notes I have collected illustrating the "Early History of Kent County," I propose to group some facts which are not elsewhere brought so closely together.

Kent county claims, justly, the honor of being the most ancient settlement and of inheriting the oldest organized government in the State of Maryland, and as such was represented by Captain Nicholas Martin in the Legislative Assembly of Virginia several years before the first settlement at St. Mary's, and before the Grant of Maryland was made by Charles I. to Lord Baltimore. (Vide "The Day Star," by George Lynn-Lachland Davis, pp. 41-46 et sub., "An Historical Review of the Government of Maryland," by John V. L. McMahon, p. 8, and "Hening's Statues at Large of Virginia," vol. I., 1610-1660, p. 154.)

The Kent Settlement, i. e. Kent county, aut quo cunque alio nomine, originally embraced and included the whole of the Eastern Shore and was under the government of an officer styled the "Commander of the Isle of Kent." The present limits of the county were, from time to time, defined by the boundaries of new counties carved out of her ancient domain; thus, Talbot was taken from it in 1661, Somerset in 1666, Cecil in 1674, Dorchester in 1669, Queen Anne's in 1706, Worcester in 1742, and Caroline in 1773. In 1695 Kent Island was attached to Talbot. In 1706 it was divorced from Talbot and given to a younger sister, Queen Anne's, who values the "Isle of the olden time" as the most precious jewel in her dowry—the borrowed pledge of her royal descent. (Vide McMahon, pp. 82 & 83.)

When James I. ascended the throne, (24th March, 1603,) Virginia was the name applied by the English to the whole continent of North America. A Patent was granted to "The London Company" in 1606, for lands between the 38th and 45th degrees of N. latitude. This Company received a new charter in 1609, with the title of "The Treasurer and Company of Adventurers of the city of London for the first colony of Virginia," and the grant of all lands North and South of "Cape Comfort" to the extent of 200 miles in both directions, which embraced the territory of the present State of Maryland. A third charter, in 1611, made no change in the boundaries on the main land. In 1623 a quo warranto was issued and all these charters were annulled. From that time Virginia ceased to be a "Proprietary" and became a "Royal Government," subject to the pleasure of the King, to be dealt with as he saw fit. This decision was distasteful to the proud Virginians and they did not submit to it cheerfully.

However, Charles I. granted to Cecilius Calvert, Baron of Baltimore, the charter for Maryland, bearing date 20th day of June, 1632, embracing lands which once formed part of the lands granted by the Virginia charter, which had been annulled, as we have seen, by the judgement on the writ of quo warranto in 1623 (vide "The History of Maryland," by John Leeds Bozman, vol. II., p. 9-21—"A Relation of Maryland, reprinted from the London Edition of 1635,"—McMahon, p. 5, et sub.)

At the time of this Grant of Maryland no settlement had been made within its prescribed limits except upon the "Isle of Kent," by one William Clayborne, an influential and prominent colonist of Virginia, who had previously, the 26th day of August, 1624, been nominated by King James, "one of the Council" in a commission issued to Sir Francis Wyat and others. When King Charles I. renewed the Charter for the government of Virginia Clayborne was continued of the Council and assigned to be the Secretary of State in Virginia. In 1627, the 26th day of March, Clayborne was again, for special reasons, re-appointed Secretary of the State. It is fair to presume that he was a man of liberal education and of unusual ability. During the years 1627-28-29 the Governor of Virginia authorized William Clayborne, "the Secretary of State of this Kingdom," to explore and discover the source of the Chesapeake Bay from the 34th to the 41st degrees of North Latitude." Under this authority it appears Clayborne made his unauthorized settlement on the Isle of Kent. (Vide Bozman, vol. I., p. 263, et sub.) After this Charles I., in May 1631, gave Clayborne a license "to trade in all the seas, coasts, harbors or territories, in or near to those parts of America, for the sole trade with which, there had been no former Grant from the crown." (Ibid.)

Under such circumstances, then, was the charter of Maryland granted to Cecilius Calvert the 20th day of June, 1632. Lord Baltimore did not accompany the colonists to Maryland, "hee appointed Leonard Calvert to goe Governour in his stead, with whom he joyned in commission, Mr. Jerome Hawley and Mr. Thomas Cornwallis (two worthy and able Gentlemen)" (vide "A Relation," etc., p. 4). They arrived at "Point Comfort in Virginia" the 24th day of February, 1634, and were treated with much "courtesie and humanitie" by the Governor of Virginia. William Clayborne welcomed them, also, with a grim saluation. "At this time, one Captaine Cleyborne (one of the Council of Virginia) comming from the parts whether they intended to goe, told them that all the natives were in preparation of defense by reason of a rumor some had raised amongst them, that 6 shippes were to come with many people, who would drive all the inhabitants out of the country. (Ibid p. 5.) This was a polite declaration of war—for the wish was father to the thought and Clayborne never took back the gage which he then threw down.

Clayborne was fully acquainted with the scope and objects of the expedition. He had come to Virginia in 1621, as surveyor and soon became a councillor. When George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore, visited Virginia in 1628-29 and landed at Jameston, the Governor (West) and Council, composed of William Clayborne and others, called him before them and demanded what his purpose was, being Governor of another plantation, (New Foundland) to abandon that and come thus to Virginia. He replied that he came to plant and to dwell. "Very willingly, my lord," they answered, "if your lordship will do what we have done, and what your duty is to do." Upon his refusal to take the oath of supremacy they ordered him to depart. Clayborne soon followed him to England and was prompt, with his partners William Cloberry, John de la Barre and David Moorhead, to remonstrate against the grant of Maryland to Lord. Baltimore, on the ground that it embraced the Isle of Kent, which he had purchased from the "Kings of that country." When the charter was granted his rage was great, and his complaints loud and deep. He exerted, with some success, his utmost efforts to excite the ire of the Virginians. Many of them proclaimed and made it their familiar talk, that they would rather knock cattle in the head than sell them to Maryland. His friend Capt. Sam. Matthews, scratching his head, and stamping his foot, cried out: "A pox of Maryland!"

It was on the feast of the "Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin," being the 25th day of March, 1634, the "Pilgrims" first landed in Maryland, on an Island called St. Clement by McSherry, but now called Blackistone's Island. The occasion was a solemn one and was celebrated with such religious ceremonies as were becoming to an event so important to mankind, and has been reverently alluded to by all writers, except the flippant author of "Terra Mariae,"—"A Stranger whose paternal ancestors dwelt in the Colony of Maryland." It is not surprising that the Puritan showed his other side. The book is a tolerable specimen of that Puritan scavenger literature which scents carrion in a vernal breeze, and snuffs it from afar. The founders of Maryland stand conspicuous, in History, as God-fearing, man-loving Christians, wise politicians, and prudent, far-seeing Statesmen,—infinitely, head and shoulders above the "Blue-Book," supercilious, hypocritical puritan Yankees, who feared God, worshipped Mammon, served the Devil, stole negroes from Africa, burned witches, and made money in New England.

A fixed settlement, two days afterwards, i. e. the 27th day of March, 1634, was made at St. Mary's, and this latter day must be considered as the true date of the actual settlement of the colony. (Vide "History of Maryland" by McSherry, pp. 30 & 32.)

From this time until the year 1650, when the erection of new counties curtailed the limits of St. Mary's, the whole of the Western Shore was called "St. Mary's," to distinguish it from the Eastern Shore, or Kent.

The grant to Lord Baltimore created great dissatisfaction among the colonists of Virginia, and they petitioned the King to restore to them their former possessions. The petition was finally acted upon, in the Star Chamber in July 1633, when it was adjudged, by the Privy Council, "that Lord Baltimore should be left in possession of this grant, and the petitioners to their remedy at law if they have any such." The Governor and Council of Virginia received the decision sullenly and not in the spirit of acquiescence. They did not surender, "rescue or no rescue," but bided their time. It never came.

Clayborne did not remain idle. In March, 1634, he petitioned the Governor and Council of Virginia, asking for advice as to the course he should pursue, informing them that he and his colonists had been required to renounce their dependence upon and subordination to Virginia. The Governor and Council, archly, expressed surprise that such a question should be propounded. They said they saw no reason why he should surrender the Isle of Kent, and "as the right to my lord's patent is yet undetermined in England, we are bound in duty, and by our oaths, to maintain the rights and privileges of the colony. Nevertheless in humble submission to his majesty's pleasure, we will keep a good correspondence with them, not doubting that they will not entrench upon the rights of his majesty's plantations." (Vide McMahon, p. 12.) They kept themselves quiet, and Clayborne chafed like an untamed tiger, in leading strings, until the headstrong Harvey was removed and Sir William Berkeley became Governor, in 1639.

(The writer of this has in his possession, among old family documents, some interesting autograph papers of Governor Berkeley relating to the Bacon Rebellion in 1676. The choleric Governor wrote as bold a hand as John Hancock. That Rebellion was suppressed with a strong and mighty hand by Berkeley. Thomas Hansford, a gallant partizan leader and a native of Virginia, was captured and ordered to be hung. He demanded as a favor that he "might be shot like a soldier and not hanged like a dog." "You die," said the vindictive Berkeley, "not as a soldier, but as a rebel." Col. Anthony Lawson commanded the military at the execution, 13th Nov. 1686. "Take notice," said he as he came to the gibbet, "I die a loyal subject and a lover of my country." That country was Virginia. Thomas Hansford perished, the first native, on the gallows, a MARTYR to the right of the people to govern themselves. Col. Lawson and Hansford had been intimate, were hereditary friends. Their fathers, Thomas Lawson and Humfrey Hansford had come, together, with Captaine John Smith, from England. Political differences, now, arrayed them as enemies. More than one hundred years elapsed and the bloody feud was healed by the intermarriage of two of their descendants, and lineal descendants of them, both, by that marriage, are now living in this county.)

Clayborne refused to submit to the Lord Proprietary's demand and in September, 1634, he was forced to withdraw and fled to Virginia; he was attainted and his property confiscated. Governor Harvey refused to surrender him to the authorities of Maryland or to protect him; but under the pretence of high respect for the King's license sent him to England, with the witnesses, to await the royal pleasure. Claybourne never forgot or forgave this conduct of the authorities of Virginia and brought it, bitterly, to their remembrance in 1652.

Clayborne went to England a bitter vindictive and unrelenting enemy to the Lord Proprietary. He petitioned the King for a confirmation of his former license to trade, for a grant of other lands adjoining Kent Island, and the power to govern them. The King, influenced by Sir William Alexander, his Secretary for Scotland, and one of Clayborne's associates in the license, issued a favorable order. The matter was finally adjudicated, in April 1638, and determined "that the right to all the territory, within which Clayborne' settlements were made, was vested in Lord Baltimore."

The next year, as an humble suppliant, he begged of the Governor and Council of Maryland, the restitution of his confiscated property. This was sternly and harshly denied. Failing in this, in 1644, he instigated the Indians to make war upon the colony. As soon as peace was restored to the afflicted people, he associated himself with Richard Ingle, a proclaimed "traitor to the King," excited and led a rebellion against the Proprietary's government, and actually drove the Governor out of the colony. For more than a year he held possession of the Government, during which time many valuable records of the Province were lost or destroyed.

The Governor Leonard Calvert, did not long survive his restoration. He died at St. Mary's the 9th day of June, 1647. Among his last acts, and peculiary interesting to us, was the reconstruction of the government of Kent Island.

After this, when King Charles had been beheaded, (30th Jan. 1649,) and the Commonwealth was established their-repressible Clayborne, with Fuller and others, was commissioner, in September 1651, by Cromwell's Council of State, to subjugate the Province, whence he had lately been driven as a rebel. They were empowered "to reduce and govern the colonies within the Chesapeake Bay."—Here was a fine and open field for Clayborne to glut his vengence, and he was swift to avail himself of the opportunity. Never did a towering hawk more eagerly swoop upon a poor mousing owl than did Clayborne, straight as an arrow from the bow, seek and find his quarry. He paid his respect, first, to Virginia—performed his agreeable task of "reduction" neatly, cleanly and expeditiously. Then, like a falcon, he plumed his feathers, and, in March 1652, borne upon the wings of the wind, pounced upon St. Mary's. He treated Governor Stone with insolent indignity, violently seized upon his commission, and deposed him from office.

Clayborne, then, the 29th March, 1652, appointed a council, of which Robert Brooke was made president and acting Governor, took possession of the records and abolished the authority of the Proprietary. In July, 1652, Stone submitted and was re-instated and permitted to retain and administer the government "in the name of the keepers of the liberty of England." Claybourne, again, took possession of Kent Island and Palmer's Island, at the mouth of the Susquehanna; having triumphed, this man of Belial was master of the situation, and the power of Lord Baltimore was overthrown.

A proclamation, in the name of Cromwell was issued, dated 22d day of July, 1654, and a commission appointed for the government, at the head of which was Captain William Fuller.

As soon as convenient Lord Baltimore made an effort to regain his rights, and directed Stone to require all persons to take the "oath of fidelity" and re-establish the Proprietary government. This was done in the latter part of 1654, o. s. As soon as Clayborne heard of these proceedings, with one full spring he grappled with his foes: at the battle of Providence, (now Annapolis) 25th March, 1655, he took Stone prisoner, and compelled him, again, to submit. He condemned Stone to be shot; but the soldiers loved the amiable Governor, and refused to execute the cruel order.

In 1658 the government was, happily, restored to the Proprietary, by treaty, and the claims of Virginia and of Clayborne at once and forever extinguished.

Clayborne retired to Virginia and settled in a secluded valley of the Pamunkey, in a county called by himself, New Kent, in remembrance of that beautiful Isle in the Chesapeake, the scene of the struggles of his early manhood, the goal of his ambition, and the grave of his fondest hopes. He continued to court the distinction of public life, was, again, appointed Secretary of Virginia, by Governor Berkeley, and in 1666 represented New Kent county in the Virginia Legislative Assembly. He was slain in battle by the Indians at Moncock Hills, and was buried on the field.

In 1699, his son, William Clayborne, lived on Pamunkey Neck, and his decendants, "prosperous gentlemen," are still living in Kent William county Virginia. They now spell their name Claiborne.

William Clayborne was a man of mark in his day and generation. His adventursome character was cast in an heroic mould. He deserved the admiration and won and retained the affections of his rougher followers. His liberal education enabled him to wield a facile pen, which joined to unusual ability in conception and prompt execution, with lofty and untireing ambition, promised a better fate than the doom of a nameless tomb. In his later days, alone, when successful opposition and keen disappointments had soured his disposition, he showed the hard, vindictive side of his character, and became the unrelenting enemy of Maryland. There was, still, a soft spot of tenderness in his heart. He never forgot his first love! The "Isle of Kent" remained to him, "the fairy spot on earth," around which the tendrils of his affections twined to the last.

(continued next week)

KENNEDYVILLE

There will be a meeting of the W. C. T. U. in the M. P. Church next Sunday evening. Mrs. Edgar Pennington, Mrs. Harry Hill and Mrs. John Sutton will have charge of the meeting.

The Ladies Aid Society met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. T. Redmile last Friday evening after the business meeting a very interesting literary programme prepared by Mrs. Ray King was very much enjoyed after which refreshments were served consisting of punch and cake.

The 4-H Club will meet at the home of Joe Weer, next Friday evening, March 31st.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Miller and children spent Sunday with his sister, Mrs. Parsons, near Worton.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Mitchell entertained at cards Friday evening.

Mrs. James Nickerson entertained the Woman's Club Thursday afternoon.

Mr. Cleve Tucker and friend, Mr. Shietz, of Washington, D. C., are spending the week end with relatives here.

Quite a number enjoyed the address given by the Indian boy in the school house on Thursday morning.

Service in the Presbyterian Church next Sunday evening at 7.30 p. m.

The stork visited Mr. and Mrs. Norman Hopkins in Easton hospital last week and left a baby boy, Norman Tophan. Mother and baby are doing very nicely.

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Dawson and Mr. and Mrs. Jester and baby, of Wilmington, spent the week end with Mr. and Mrs. Wilmer Ford.

Miss Mary Worth Moffet spent the week end with Annabel Groves.

Those on the sick list are Mrs. Othoson, Ms. Glenn and Mrs. Lipscomb.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Scotten and daughter spent Sunday with Mrs. Chrisfield in Locust Grove.

Mrs. Norman Htch and niece, Mrs. Porter, visited Mrs. W. S. Hurlock last week.

Mrs. W. S. Hurlock spent the week end with her daughter, Mrs. Walter Hill and family, near Phoenixville, Pa.

Miss Lizzie and Hanna Scotten spent Sunday with their sister, Mrs. Carl Price and family near Middletown, Del.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Crew and children spent Sunday with Miss Lula Van Dyke and Mrs. Crew.

Mrs. Gerald Myers visited in Wilmington a part of this week.

The girls 4-H Club held a social at the home of Miss Alice Kennedy last Friday evening, games, songs and refreshments were enjoyed by all.

Mrs. Parsons, of Broad Neck, is visiting her daughter, Mrs. John George.

Mrs. Mollie Archibald and daughter, Miss Maud spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Jomes Archibald.

Mr. Ross Wiltbanks and Miss Mary Hill visited in Wilmington on Saturday.

Mrs. Walter Kernan and daughter are visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry George, near town.

FURROWS



BY JOSIAH ALLEN WEATHERBY

There is a lot of talk goin round about the banks bein closed, and some of them not being allowed to open except on a restricted basis, and others maybe not openin at all. Well, it wouldn't have made much difference out our way if none of 'em hadn't opened fer quite a spell longer, only that some of us could have put off renewin our notes fer awhile. We ain't had much money in our neighborhood fer a long time, and a bank bein open or closed don't matter with us. We can git along right well without banks. Them that has made crops, and didn't give all of their stuff away last fall, has something to eat and to feed the stock, and so ye can make out fer awhile longer.

But this here bank holiday has been a blessin in disguise to some people, and if they will learn the lesson it teaches they will be a lot better off in the years to come. In the first place, people has found out that they can live on a whole lot less than they been a spendin. It don't take no wise man or prophet to see them facts. I know one feller that had fifteen dollars when the banks closed and after they had been closed fer about two weeks and a half he still had seven dollars of his fifteen left and had paid fer all his groceries too. And he ain't no country-man neither. He lives in town and has to buy everything his family uses. And I reckon a good many more people has done the same thing.

In the second place, it has showed up just about what sort of folks most people are. There is some that always kicks about every little inconvenience that comes along. And then there is a lot more that is willin to take things as they come and always keep rightside up, so to speak. Or course, we have some that always gits scared about a little money, if they can't git it just the minute they want it. It don't do no good to git scared and talk a lot about goin broke and that sort of thing.

Well, if you've got money in one of these here banks that ain't allowed to open up fer full business or not all only fer new business you are better off than some folks that lives on the farms. Why, they ain't got no money in the banks or out of the banks. What do you reckon they will do? They got along some way, such as it wuz, before the banks closed and they'll have to git along the same way now. And these here folks that is kickin and them that is scared most to death ought to try livin our way fer awhile.

Hard feelins and short talk about the banking situation won't help things a bit. I reckon the bank people has done their best, and it won't do no good to git mad about it. Maybe some of the bankers has used more judgment, but I wonder if some of the kickers could do any better? If I had any money I'd hate to let these here kickers have the investin of it. And gittin scared is one of the reasons so many people drawed their money out of the banks before they wuz all closed.

I reckon this here tie-up in the bank-in business is goin to make bankers more careful about their investments fer a good many years to come, and it will do the country a lot of good to settle down. When we git over this here period of inconvenience and have time to do a little sober thinkin the whole country, business men, bankers, and the people in general will begin to act like sensible human beins.

A community gits along best when everybody tries to help everybody else git along, and when we conisder that we are all dependin on one another in our business relations we will all learn to pull together and make the best of every kind of situation that comes up. Them that pulls apart is pullin back.

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

NOTICE is hereby given that the undersigned has obtained from the Orphans' Court for Kent County letters Testamentary on the personal estate of

MARY ELIZABETH CAPEL

late of said county, deceased. All persons having claims against said deceased's estate are hereby warned to exhibit the same, with the proper vouchers thereof, to the undersigned on or before the 25th day of August, 1933, otherwise they may by law be excluded from all benefit of said deceased's personal estate.

All persons indebted to this estate must settle at once.

Given under my hand this 21st day of February, 1933.

ELIZABETH TAYLOR, Executrix.

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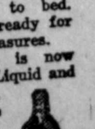
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