

boundary and the 40th parallel, her charter-boundary, and of the territory which is now the State of Delaware; nor of extending, by means of a forged map on which Cape Henlopen was misplaced, their territory twenty-three miles further south than their agreement gave them, were trying to cut another cantle out of Maryland by taking advantage of the obscure terms in which the eastern boundary was made a tangent to a circle twelve miles from New Castle.

There was also a difficulty about the western boundary of the Province. The charter made this a due north and south line between the 40th parallel and the furthest source of the Potomac, and thence following the further, or western, bank of that river to the Chesapeake Bay. But for many years it was undetermined whether the north or the south branch of the Potomac was the longer, and therefore which was the true boundary of the Province.

In 1651 Charles II granted to the Earl of St. Albans, Lord Hopton and others, the land in Virginia lying between the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers. This land, by marriage and descent, came into the possession of Thomas, 5th Baron Fairfax, who, assuming the northern branch to be his boundary, in 1733 empowered commissioners to settle his lines with parties representing the crown. Maryland had no voice in the matter. His son, Thomas, 6th Baron, came to America in 1745, and shortly after his arrival began granting lands to settlers.

But as settlements came to be pushed further to the west, and the topography of the mountain regions better understood, it was discovered that the south branch took its rise further from the mouth, and, consequently, that it, and not the north branch, was the boundary of Maryland.

Sharpe had been especially charged by the Proprietary to determine the boundaries of his Province; and almost immediately upon his arrival, he sent for Capt. Thomas Cresap, who lived near the lands in dispute, to learn his opinion of the matter. Cresap affirming that the south branch ran from 60 to 80 miles further west than the north, Sharpe wrote to Fairfax (p. 6) asking his concurrence in fixing the true boundary. Fairfax replied that it would be to his advantage if the south branch were decided to be the boundary (because it would carry his western line so much further to the west), but declined to move personally in the matter. Sharpe had the two branches surveyed and mapped by Cresap (p. 72); but the outbreak of hostilities with the French and Indians prevented any further action at this time.*

But Sharpe's chief troubles sprang from the attitude of the House of Burgesses. There had been a spirit of opposition to the Proprietary rule almost from the foundation of the colony; and in Governor Ogle's time it seems to have assumed serious proportions and given rise to a

*The report of the Virginia Boundary Commissioners (Richmond, 1872) is full of historical errors. For example, they say (p. 83) that [Cecilius] Lord Baltimore fled into Virginia in 1644; and (p. 88) that Lord Baltimore and Fairfax "fixed the boundary by the Fairfax Stone." It is notorious that Cecilius was never in Maryland, nor any Lord Baltimore after 1733. But we cannot be surprised at these and similar errors from writers who state (p. 89) that the Commonwealth Commissioners "restored it [Maryland] to the colony of Virginia."