

TALBOT COUNTY.

Although there is no formal contemporary record of the erection of Talbot County, this unquestionably occurred early in 1662, as the first mention of the county which is to be found was on February 19, 1661/2, when the Governor and Council appointed a certain Moses Stagwell Sheriff of Talbot "till the County Co^{rt} can meete to present other persons to the Governor & Council" (*Arch. Md.* iii, 448). The county was named for Grace, the sister of Cecilius, second Lord Baltimore, the wife of Sir Robert Talbot.

The boundaries of Talbot as first established are not accurately known as the order for its erection cannot be found. That it included not only the present Queen Anne's County, but also at first extended further north and west than Chester River and embraced some parts of what is the present Kent County seems probable, but the matter is too involved to be discussed here. The whole question is comprehensively treated by Edward B. Mathews in his *The Counties of Maryland* (*Maryland Geological Survey; 1907*, pp. 552-556). In 1696 Kent Island was taken from Kent County and made part of Talbot, and in 1707 what is now Queen Anne's County including Kent Island became a new county.

The shifting dividing line between Kent and Talbot counties in the sixties and seventies may account for the fact that what appears to be a change in the residence of certain justices from one county to another was really due to changing county boundaries.

The first patents to land on the upper Eastern Shore in what was then Kent County, but was later subdivided into Talbot, Queen Anne's and Kent counties, were issued in 1658, when it was felt that relations with the Indians were sufficiently satisfactory to justify settlement on the mainland. That there had been squatters, traders, and hunters already scattered along the bay shore is known, but no actual grants to land had been issued before 1658. Envious eyes, however, had been cast upon the fertile mainland by the Kent Islanders and the people of the Western Shore, and as early as 1651 a few warrants for land had been issued although no actual grants were made until 1658. In that year there was a rush of applicants, and land was rapidly taken up between 1658 and 1662 in that part of Kent which was in the latter year to be Talbot County.

In Talbot County, as in Kent, several waves of immigration contributed to its settlement. On Kent Island was a population made up of the Virginians who had come on the island with Claiborne and their descendants, to which had been added in the late thirties and throughout the forties Marylanders from St. Mary's, many of whom had played a part in the pacification and subsequent settlement of the island. To this old Kent Island element belonged Thomas Vaughan, Philip Conner, and Thomas Bradnox, who figure so prominently in the early Kent County court proceedings. In the early fifties important