

portion of the proclamation, dated August 22, 1666, dealing with the limits of the county, runs as follows:

"Caecilius Absolute lord . . . for the ease & benifitt of the people of this or pvince & for the Speedy & more exact Admneon of Justice have erected & doe by theis pnts erect all tht Tract of land wthin this our province of Maryland bounded on the South with a line drawne from Wattkins point (being the North point of tht bay into web the River Wighco formly called Wighcocomoco afterwards Pocomoke & now Wighcocomoco againe doth fall exclusively) to the Ocean on the East. Nantecoke river on the North & the Sound of Chesipiake bay on the West into a County by the name of Sommersett County in honor to our Deare Sister the lady Mary Somersett. . . ."

The erection of this county was but one of many steps taken by the proprietor to stimulate settlement along that portion of his territory on the Eastern Shore which was gradually becoming occupied by people from the Delaware side who held patents from representatives of the Duke of York. On October 22, 1669, the rent of any who should settle on the seaboard side was reduced to a shilling for each fifty acres; at the same time it was also ordered in accordance with the instructions from the lord proprietor under date of 28th of July, 1669,

"that from the Whore kill to the degree of forty Northerly Latitude be erected into a County and called by the Name of Durham County and that from the Hore kill to Mount Scarborough be likewise erected into a County & called as the Lord Proprietary shall hereafter direct" (Md. Arch., 5: 57). These counties were evidently intended to include part of what had but a few years before been assigned to Somerset County and the dividing line, determined in great measure by the area settled, would probably have followed along the divide of the Delaware-Chesapeake watershed. The records, however, of these counties show that they never existed except in name. Officers, it is true, were appointed and certain land records were kept but the title to the territory was in dispute, the inhabitants in great part of different stock and nationality from that of St. Mary's, and little authority was ever exercised by the Maryland government in these temporary counties. If Durham and its companion county had been erected permanently the eastern boundary of Somerset County would have been changed to approximately as it was in 1742 when the Worcester County of to-day was erected.