

TALBOT COUNTY.

The first settlement of whites on the eastern shore of the Bay was near Stevensville on Kent Island where the inhabitants were relatively free from sudden attacks of the Indians. For nearly two decades after the settlement on the island no attempts at gaining a foothold on the mainland are on record, although it is probable that when the Marylanders reduced Kent Island in 1647 some of the former inhabitants moved across the straits to the adjoining shore. On July 5, 1652, by a treaty the Susquehanna Indians granted to the whites the right of settlement along both sides of the Bay from the head of it to the Patuxent on the western shore and the Choptank on the eastern. The prospect of relative security seems to have stimulated migration landward along the shores of the Choptank, Chester, and intervening estuaries. In 1658 land was taken up on the Chester River and by 1665 grants are found recorded of land as high as Southeast Creek lying about five miles below Chestertown.

The growth of population on the mainland was met by the erection of Talbot County about 1661, the exact date is unknown as the order for its creation has not been found. The earliest record referring to the county is that of February 18, 1661-2, when the Council records the order "that Moises Stagwell be Sherriffe of Talbott County till the County Co^t can meete to p^rsent other persons to the Gouvernor & Councell." This would indicate that the county had just been erected and that the date assigned should be 1661-2 rather than 1660-1, as suggested by McMahan and others who have perhaps overlooked the differences in style of calendars. Nothing is known of the limits of the territory which was intended to be included within the new county, although it was limited on the Choptank River when Dorchester County was erected in 1668-9. The first suggestion of its western limits are found in the proclamations of the Governor appointing landing places for vessels during the years 1667 to 1669. From these it would appear that the northwestern boundary of Talbot passed along the eastern shore of the Front Wye River northward to the head of Harris Mill Branch and thence down Tanyard Branch and possibly up Langford's Bay toward Wharton Creek on the Bay shore. To the west of this line would be