

Kent County with its County Court held on Kent Island until 1686, when it moved to New Yarmouth on Grays Inn Creek. On the east would be Talbot County to the eastern limits of the province, at this time nominally extending to the Delaware Bay, although the representatives of the Duke of York were just beginning to grant patents for its lands. On the north the boundary of Talbot County with respect to Baltimore County was obscure. The latter apparently included Sassafras River and early land records and ferry-rights would seem to indicate that the boundary line lay somewhere along the divide between the Sassafras and Chester rivers. What are now the first and second districts of Kent County may possibly have been an unsettled portion of Talbot in 1667, but it seems more probable that Talbot County did not exercise jurisdiction on the north side of the Chester River. On the 4th of June, 1671, according to the Kent County records²⁴ by proclamation it was ordered

“that for the future the northeast side of Chester, as far as the bounds of Talbot County were formerly on that side, shall now be added to Kent County”

and it was also decreed that Poplar's Island, which had already been given to Kent County on September 24, 1657, should become a part of Kent County. From the terms of this proclamation it would appear that the territory had formerly been in Talbot County.

Twenty years later, on the 31st of May, 1692, the inhabitants of Kent Island petitioned, asking that this historic spot, the first settled in Maryland, might again become an independent county and not, as it then was, an appendage to the more rapidly growing settlement on the mainland. At the same time (June 8, 1692) the inhabitants living on the north side of the Chester River petitioned that if Kent Island be separated into a distinct county there might be a reasonable number of inhabitants added from the settlements on the south side of the Sassafras River. The latter petitioned also that this might be done as it was quite a hardship to them to be compelled to transact their county business on the western side of the Bay at the Baltimore County Court, which at that time was held at old Baltimore on the Bush River.

²⁴ Liber A, p. 54, quoted in Hansen, *Old Kent*, p. 221.