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# THE ARCHEOLOG

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Mason and Dixon House (?)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
A LEFT HANDED ABORIGINE ? . . . . .	1
by Perry S. Flegel	
A MASON AND DIXON HOUSE ? . . . . .	6
by Francis Lewis	
TWO DORCHESTER COUNTY SITES TO BE OPENED . . . . .	10
by Perry S. Flegel	
THE MASON AND DIXON MARKERS IN SUSSEX COUNTY . . . . .	12
by William and Florence Pedersen	
A PICTORIAL GUIDE TO THE TRANSPENINSULAR STONES . . . . .	19

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A LEFT HANDED ABORIGINE ?

by

Perry S. Flegel

Does the drawing below shown in Fig. 1. have any meaning to you other than a rim shard from an Indian clay pot? Look at it again. Notice that the cord-wrapped-stick impressions run from the top of the rim downward to the right. From the most convenient way to hold a clay vessel so as to fuse the coils in its manufacture, these impressions must have been made by a left-handed individual.

Rim

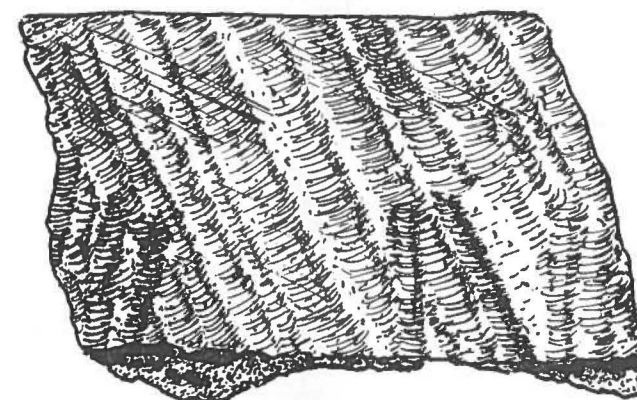


Fig. 1. (full size)

The cause of the right or left-handedness is really not known. Of the dextral and sinistral individuals it is common knowledge that the first mentioned far outnumbers the latter. Available references state that the prevalence of left-handedness in children in the United States is estimated at one out of 18-24 individuals.<sup>1</sup>

We assume that this figure has been derived from data gathered in urban areas. It seems rather high for rural areas. In my experience, embracing over 40 years of teaching in rural areas I have noticed less than one per-cent of left-handedness. A recent check of 308 rural elementary school students reveals but four left-handed children. If this is any trend, how fewer left-handed individuals might be counted among the aborigines?

Results are inclusive but an environmental surrounding might have an effect upon left-handedness. Could it be that the farther removed individuals are from urban surroundings the less left-handedness might be found?

<sup>1</sup> The Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. II, p. 53. •

The propensity of man to use the right hand instead of the left hand is by some attributed to the lack of symmetry of the body. Assume that the body could be folded over from a medial line so that each organ from the one side should lie exactly on a corresponding organ of the other, the body would be fitted highly, in a mechanical sense, for the equal use of either limb, and ambidextrous individuals would be the rule.

But the center of gravity of the body of the average person is a little heavier to the right side of such a medial line. Thus the right side is a bit heavier. This greater weight has been estimated at about one pound. Again, this may be the result and not a cause of right-handedness.

And yet it is known that the left side of the body controls what the right side does, and that the right side controls what the left side does.

The 3-lobed right lung of our body receives more air during inspiration than the 2-lobed left lung. The liver during inspiration swings to the right side shifting the center of gravity farther to that side. These facts tend to have a bearing on a tendency to balance our center of gravity so that we use our right hand more than we use our left hand.<sup>2</sup>

In many Asian countries as well as in Africa and Europe we have observed that it is a racial habit growing out of the left hand being used for unclean purposes that makes it unfit for eating, salutations, etc. This statement has also not been proven.

Others like Charles Reade (1814-1884) contended that man should be ambidextrous and that it is his duty in athletics to preserve the balance between the hands.

Information is not readily available relative to left and right-handedness as inheritable traits in humans. It would be interesting at this point to determine how, for the general laws that have been established for plants and animals, they apply to man.

In the absence of experimental data, as is available for plants and animals, the geneticist must content himself with a study of the crosses already made. Human families are small in comparison to those produced by the lower species which have chiefly been investigated. On the other hand, the general interest in human traits is greater than those of the lower organisms and familiarity with them correspondingly more intimate.

Much more study is needed to determine the extent of left-handedness in humans as being hereditary. What is known has not convinced this writer's viewpoint. (I am the only left-handed individual in my family, or my wife's family as traced through

<sup>2</sup> The Encyclopedia Americana, Vol. 23, p. 520.

six generations on my side and five generations on her side which extends through our grandchildren.

Right-handedness appears to be more persistent in man than the corresponding quality in the lower animals. Naturalists, who observe that monkeys catch more nuts with the right hand; that African elephants dig more with the right tusk; and that the Carolina parrot has a preferential claw for grasping, tell us that these habits are subject to exceptions more numerous than those of left-handed human beings.<sup>3</sup>

From my observations I have found that right-handedness is more the case or the rule rather than the exception. In the Nariobi National Game Park, Kenya, and also along the Uganda-Congo border of Lake Edward I have watched countless baboons (*papio anubis neumanni*) reach for food given them, and also pick up objects from the ground most always with the right hand. This is also true in the grooming of each other. Of the herds of zebra, Burchell's (*Equus burchelli granti*) in the Serengeti National Park in Tanzania, as well as Grevy's zebra (*Equus dolichohippus Grevyi*) found only in northern Kenya and Ethiopia, I have observed males fighting and pawing the ground always using the right foot.

Another view of the entire subject has been taken by psychologists, who maintain the probability that the tendency to right-handedness is due to unrecognized spiritual causes, which underlie all phenomenon of life. Since we do not know what life is, or even why or how we are such sentient creatures, the problem is wholly beyond our reach, and the ingenious theories we propose only demonstrate man's fondness for speculation.

No historical information is known that mentions left-handedness of Indians. The subject was not studied at the time when there were enough of them around to secure the data. There are some that think that the evolution of man's right-handedness has been in all probability a late acquisition. This also has not been proven.

The oldest records of the human race suggest that early man from the beginning has been right-handed. The pre-historic weapons that have been found are those of right-handed individuals. Many of the tools and weapons now in use and made today are for the right hand.

Out of Pit #2, area 1R2 from the Lankford site in Dorchester County, Maryland, has come a rim shard which this writer believes was made by a left-handed artisan. No other piece of pottery from this or other pits excavated at this site was found made this way.

<sup>3</sup> The Encyclopedia Americana, ibid.



The shard was 2.75 inches long and 1.75 inches deep, and its thickness was  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch. The curvature of the shard indicated that it came from a vessel that had a diameter of approximately 12.50 inches. It was shell tempered and of a reddish-gray color and had a hardness of 3.0. The rim was straight and the lip rounded. There was no incising on the shard and the impressions were made with a cord-wrapped-stick. The impressions were clear and definite reaching to the very lip of the vessel.<sup>4</sup> See Fig. 1.

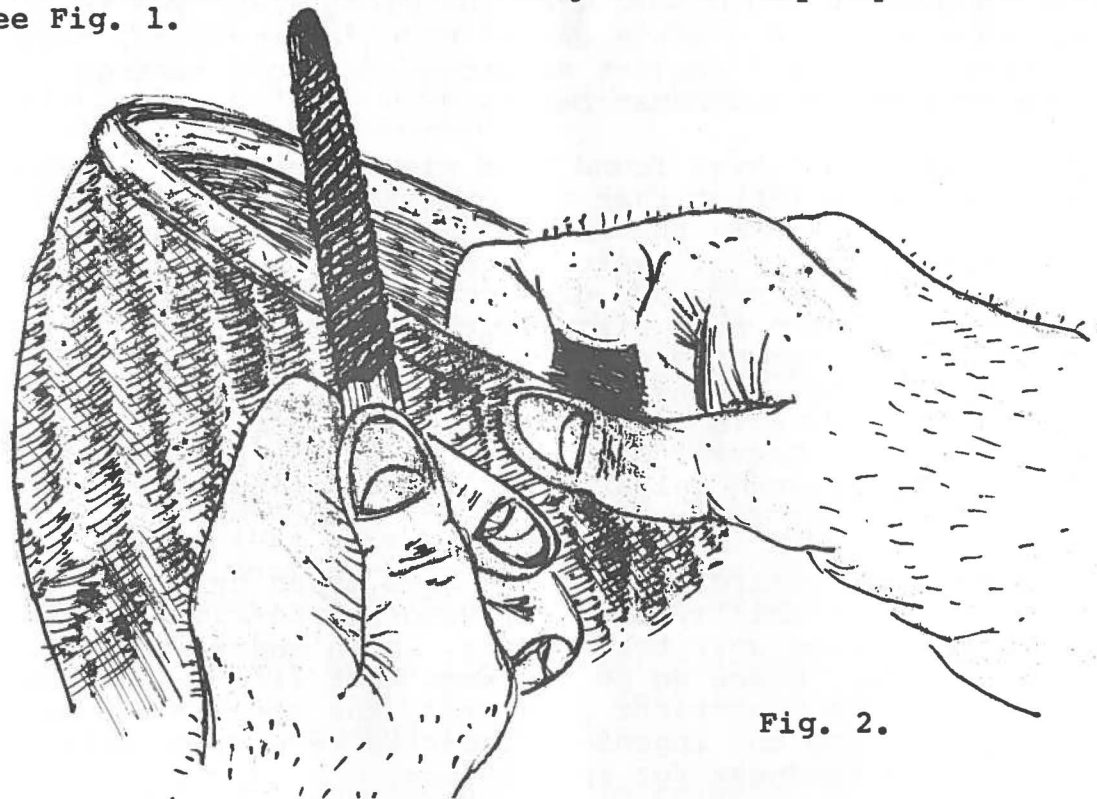


Fig. 2.

POSITION OF HANDS AND POTTERY OF A LEFT-HANDED INDIVIDUAL WHILE FUSING COILS DURING CONSTRUCTION OF A CLAY POT.

Of the thousands of shards that this writer has handled this is the first that he has seen in which the cord-wrapped-paddling impressions ran in this direction. That is downward from left to right. This feature was the most noticeable observation made when the shard was discovered. This direction of paddling is the only one that can take place, if the work to be done to fuse the vessel's coiling proceeds when the pot is held in the right hand and the paddling stick in the left hand. See Fig. 2.

Anyone can demonstrate this fact to his own satisfaction were he to hold an empty bowl, can, or cup in his right hand and a pencil to represent a cord-wrapped-stick in his left hand. Were impressions to be made, they would slant downward to the right.

<sup>4</sup> Lankford Site Report Pit #2 p.3; with comment in the summary page (i), Dorchester Heritage Museum, Cambridge, Maryland.

In the actual manufacturing of a pottery vessel the following procedure may have taken place. After a coil of clay was pressed into place on the forming upper edge of the vessel, the next step was the fusing of the coils.

The vessel was held in the right hand (if the artisan was left handed) with the bottom toward the worker and directed slightly toward the left. With the fingers on the inside of the pot and over the area to be paddled, so as to support the wall or side of the vessel, and the thumb on the outside, the working of the clay could be done on a fairly solid surface. This reinforcing of the vessel with the fingers was necessary in order to prevent the collapse and/or distortion of its shape. As this procedure took place the vessel could be turned either clockwise or counter-clockwise fusing the coils ahead or behind the thumb as the case may be.

To attempt to do this left handed in any other way, or in any other position would result in an awkward and inconvenient operation.



# A Mason and Dixon House?

by

Francis Lewis

The Mason-Dixon Line is a boundary line established by a survey conducted by Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, two English Astronomers, in order to settle a long dispute between the holdings of the Penns of Pennsylvania and the Lord Baltimores of Maryland. The Mason-Dixon survey was started in 1763 and completed in 1767 and the line was resurveyed several times; once in 1849-50, again in 1901-03 and most recently, in 1975.

The boundary line that was established became very important not only as a line separating the holdings of the Penns and the Baltimores but as a symbolic division between the North and the South. North of the line was free while south was slave. This symbolism was very inaccurate as the State of Delaware is considered north (really east) of the line yet the counties of Sussex and Kent were strongly slave holding and their sympathies with the South.

Back in 1920, I was told by a very old man who lived near Bridgeville, Delaware that his father had told him that Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, while surveying the line near Woodenhawk, had broken their instruments and had to send to England to get replacements. Transportation being what it was in those days, it took nearly six months to get these pieces of equipment to finish the survey.

It was told to me that while waiting for the equipment Mason and Dixon lived in the house pictured here. The house is on the road from Woodenhawk, Delaware to Federalsburg, Maryland about two miles south of Woodenhawk and one mile from the Maryland line.



Clarence Parker of that area explained that his father, Joe Parker, and his grandfather had often told the same story. As the event was over two hundred years ago, I am somewhat skeptical. However, it is possible as the house appears to have the original unpainted shingles. One lower addition has been re-roofed while an old pump bench still stands nearby. Mr. Parker is now deceased and his grandfather's time would have been back close to the period of the survey.

The house is in an open area protected by woods. Go see it for yourself and see what you think.

Editors Comments: As suggested by Mr. Lewis, a visit was made to the alleged Mason and Dixon House and it indeed looks as though it could have existed during the time of the survey. The house is easy to find if you travel southwest out of Woodenhawk towards Federalsburg and will be on the righthand side of the road about two miles from Woodenhawk.

In an attempt to establish the authenticity of the story as told to Mr. Lewis, an endeavor was made to find some reference to Mason and Dixon having to wait while their instruments were either repaired or replaced. Several works were consulted in the Archives at Dover before one was found that appears to dispute the story. None was found that mentioned a wait or even that their instruments were being repaired. The source that appears to dispute the tale is the Journal written by Mason and Dixon as they travelled northward from the Middle Point to the end of their survey on the west line between Maryland and Pennsylvania. The Journal is a day by day account of the entire survey and is on microfilm at the Archives and available for viewing.

The part of the Journal that seems to dispute the tale begins on June 25, 1764 when Mason and Dixon began their survey at the Middle Point and ran the first portion of their line northward. According to the Journal they only ran three-fourths of a mile that first day. The following chart shows the dates and the mileposts that were established on that particular date.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Milepost</u>
June 25, 1764	0 only ran three-fourths of a mile
26	1, 2 and 3
27	Rained
28	4 and 5

June 29, 1764	6	
30	Crossed Nanticoke River	
July 1	(No entry but signed. Must be Sunday)	
2	7	
3	8 and 9	
4	10 and 11	
5	12, 13 and 14	
6	15	
7	16	
8	( No entry - Sunday)	
9	17, 18 and 19	(These would have been the
10	20	mileposts that would have
11	21	put them in the general
12	22	area of the house)
13	23 and 24	
14	Axemen working - went to Lloyds (?)	
15	(No entry)	
16	25 and 26	
17	27 and 28	
18	29 and 30	
19	31 and 32	
20	33	
21	34, 35 and 36	
22	( No entry - Sunday)	
23	37	
24	38 and 39	
25	40 and 41	Crossed Choptank River
26	42 and 43	
27	Working on visto	(Clearing land ahead)
28	44	
29	(No entry)	
30	45 and 46	
31	47 and 48	
Aug. 1	49 and 50	
2	51	
3	52 and 53	
4	54 and 55	Crossed Chester River
5	(No entry)	
6	56	
7	57 and 58	
8	59 and 60	
9	61	
10	62	
11	63 and 64	
12	(No entry)	
13	65 and 66	
14	67	
15	68 and 69	Crossed Bohemia River

Aug. 16, 1764	70
17	71
18	72 and 73
19	(No entry)
20	74
21	75 and 76
22	77
23	78 and 79
24	80
25	81
26	(No entry)
27	Arrival at Tangent Point - North-South line
	81 miles, 78 chains, 31 links

As can be seen from the Journal entries only one day, June 27, was lost and that due to rain. What could have happened was that Mason and Dixon stayed at the house during their travels northward for a few days and as the line became more and more famous and the tale passed down through more and more generations the stay at the house became correspondingly longer and longer. It makes a good tale nevertheless but must be considered as folklore based on Mason and Dixon's Journal.



## Two Dorchester County Sites To Be Opened

by

Perry S. Flegel

Two new sites are to be opened in Dorchester County, Maryland this coming fall. Arrangements have been made with the owners of the land and plans for each "dig" are underway at this time.

Both excavations will be under the auspices of the Dorchester Heritage Museum of Cambridge, Maryland. The supervision of each site will be under the direction of this writer.

### 1. FOUR WINDS SITE:

This is on the property of Mr. T. E. Fletcher, Jr. of Preston, Maryland and will be called the "Four Winds Site" because that is the name of the farm upon which it is located.

The farm is near Vienna, Maryland being about a mile north of this town. The site itself lies along the south side of Chicone Creek, which forms the northern boundary of the Fletcher property. Just across the creek will be found what was formally known as the Nanticoke Indian Lands (Chicacoan Reservation).<sup>1</sup> The area was excavated in part by members of the Sussex Society of Archaeology and History in 1963.<sup>2</sup>

The site has been surface hunted for many years and still is to this day. Many nice projectile points, celts, and axes have been found here. Much more material has been recovered from this area than has been found at the Chicone Site.

An interesting feature of this site is the great distance of some of the features from the creek and also their large size. One shallow pit was started to be excavated in 1976, close to the creek, but it had to be abandoned. Three large pits are in a row and a fourth one is still farther inland.

### 2. WESTON SITE:

This site is located on the Nanticoke River about six miles below US Route 50 at Vienna, Maryland on the Vienna-Elliott's Island Road. Modern maps identify this place as Lewis' Landing.<sup>3</sup>

Whether it will be called the Weston Site or the Royer Site has not been decided. Weston is the name of the brick home built there by Colonel Charles Hutchins in 1668. It is steeped in local history. Later owned by John Henry, Maryland's first governor from Dorchester County (1797), shelled by British Gunboats during the Revolutionary War, and recently restored by the present owners Mr. and Mrs. F. H. Royer, who now live there.

High banks along this western shore of the Nanticoke River

made it a very adaptable place for an Indian campsite or village. Preliminary examination seems to indicate that a permanent Indian village once stood there. Remains of oyster shell pits extend over a distance of perhaps one-half mile along the river shore-line.

No work has ever been done at this site. A limited amount of surface hunting has taken place but its removal from the main stream of traffic, both east and west on US Route 50 and the good distance to the east of the Vienna-Elliott's Island Road has not encouraged or invited surface hunters.

We are very fortunate in that the Maryland State Archaeological Division has promised us Carbon-14 dating of the pits from both this site and the one at Four Winds. We feel that this added information will greatly enhance our knowledge of the Nanticoke Indian especially in this area.

We have been informed that excavating by the SSA&H is at a very low ebb. It is hoped that its members, at least some of them, would be interested in either of these two sites and if such is the case, we in Dorchester County would be willing to grant you permission to work here.

If such is the case, a letter to this writer, stating your interest to work at either site would be welcomed.

Meticulous notes and records will be required, with assistance given as needed, and all finds and materials are to remain the property of the Dorchester Heritage Museum.

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<sup>1</sup>C. A. Weslager, The Nanticoke Indians, A Tribal Refuge Group of Pennsylvania (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1948), p. vii.

<sup>2</sup>H. H. Hutchinson, "Report on Chicone Site No.1 and No.2", The Archeologist, XVI No.1, 1964, pp. 6, 14.

<sup>3</sup>Topography Map of Dorchester County, US Geological Survey, Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources, 1943.



# The Mason and Dixon Markers In Sussex County

by

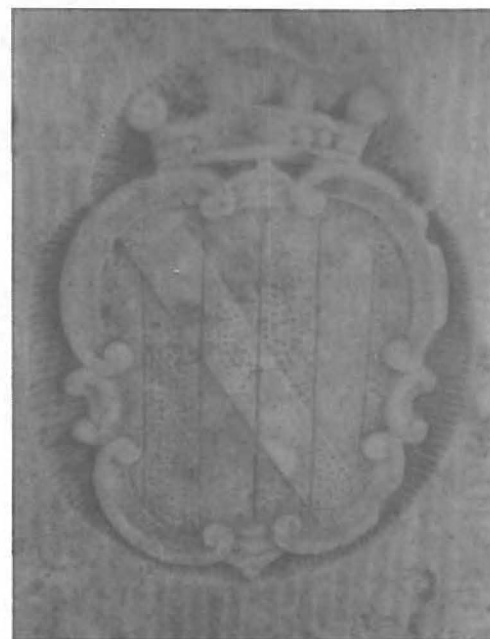
William and Florence Pedersen

Several references have been made in past articles written for The Archeolog concerning the Transpeninsular Line and the five mile markers used to show where the line between Maryland and Delaware has been established.<sup>1</sup> Nothing has been written telling of the condition of the real Mason and Dixon markers that run from the Middle Point towards the north. While looking for Mr. Lewis' Mason and Dixon House, it was decided to try and locate all the stones associated with the Mason and Dixon Line in Sussex County. A Delaware Highways map was used and a mark along the western border of Delaware was made at five mile intervals using the established scale on the map. This, it was thought, would take us to a close proximity of where the stones should be.

The 0 mile marker or, as more commonly known, the Middle Point marker was the starting off point. This particular stone is easy to locate by traveling west on Delaware route 54 west of Delmar going towards Mardela Springs. The stone is enclosed in a monument on the right hand side of the road and surrounded by a small park. The construction of the shelter has been described in The Archeolog<sup>2</sup> and will not be covered here. This is the only example of a double crownstone erected by Mason and Dixon as the other stone at the northern end of the line is lost. Picture number one shows the coat of arms of Thomas and Richard Penn while picture two has the coat of arms of Frederick, the Lord Baltimore.



Picture one



Picture two

Picture three shows the Baltimore coat of arms on the south side while the Penns would be to the east or present day Delaware. Picture number four shows the Baltimore arms on the west side and the Penns on the north. The stone is well protected by the shelter and is in remarkable condition.



Picture three



Picture four

The five mile stone was found by traveling west on Delaware route 24 from Laurel to Sharptown. As you approach the Maryland State line you pass the Red Top Liquor Store on your right. There is a small gray house just past the Red Top with a one lane dirt road going north between Red Top and this gray house. Take this road to the right for .8 of a mile. The five marker will be on the right hand side about three feet from the dirt road next to the woods.

Picture five shows the Baltimore coat of arms on the west side of the stone while picture six shows the Penns'. The markings are clear but the stone has been chipped. Several rows of some type of chippings has been done to both sides of the stone as though by some type of farm machinery. The stone is not protected in any way and could very easily be hit.



Picture five



Picture six



Picture seven



Picture eight

The ten mile stone was more difficult to locate. From Galestown take the Reliance-Del. Line Road going north. This road is as straight as an arrow for about three miles just before reaching Reliance. Just as you hit the straight portion there is a large brick home on the right with a small pond and across the street is a white frame house. According to our calculations the stone was in this area but was not in sight. We stopped and looked around and the people from the brick home came over and assisted us. According to the story they gave us the stone was supposed to be in the middle of the road but as the road was being paved the stone was broken. Part of the stone is under a manhole cover as shown in picture seven while the rest ended up in a museum in the State of Colorado. They pointed out the Geodetic Survey Marker in their front yard and told us of the recent survey and how the surveyors easily found all the triangular reference points and also how they wanted to lower the marker so their lawn mower would not strike the top so they dug down for six feet before giving up the idea. Picture eight shows the Geodetic Marker in their front yard while the manhole cover is just in line with the bumper of the vehicle. We did not lift the cover to investigate.

The fifteen mile stone was more easily found. Going towards Seaford on route 20 turn left on Road 549 to Oak Grove. At Oak Grove cross the railroad tracks going through Oak Grove and proceed about one mile north. The stone will be on your left marked by four white posts about eight feet from the side of the road. The stone leans towards the south but the markings are still clear. Picture nine shows the Baltimore arms on the west side while picture ten shows the Penns. Except for the Middle Point Stone, this is the only other stone that has some form of protection.



Picture nine



Picture ten



The twenty mile stone area was found by going east on route 18 from Federalsburg to Atlanta and turning north on Cannon Road at Atlanta. Follow this road until you come to a stop sign. Cross this intersection and proceed on Smithville Road. Turn left at the first intersection. The marker for the stone is on your right about .2 of a mile from the intersection. This road was under construction and had been graded prior to paving. As the marker for the stone was only inches from the side of the construction, we hope that the stone was removed to prevent damage and was to be replaced when done. Picture eleven shows the construction area and the white post that has been substituted for the original stone. A Geodetic Marker stands about two feet south of the wooden marker. Picture twelve shows how close the construction comes to the marker area. We returned several weeks later to the area to see if the stone had been replaced and found the road paved but only the wooden marker still in place. The Mason and Dixon House is about 1.8 miles from this marker on the road to Woodenhawk. The house site is on the left near the edge of the road and is easily seen.



Picture eleven



Picture Twelve

From Woodenhawk travel north to route 16 near Hickman. Turn left towards Hickman and as you approach the Maryland State line turn left on Liden School Road. This road, while black topped, is not shown on our map. Proceed south for approximately .7 of a mile. As you approach a fork in the road keep left and the stone will be on your left about six feet from the road. This stone is in excellent shape including the edges. Picture thirteen is the Baltimore side while picture fourteen shows the Penns.

The twenty-five mile stone described above completed the survey of the Sussex County Mason and Dixon Stones and in the future maybe a survey will be taken of the Kent and New Castle stones to see how they are standing the centuries.



Picture thirteen

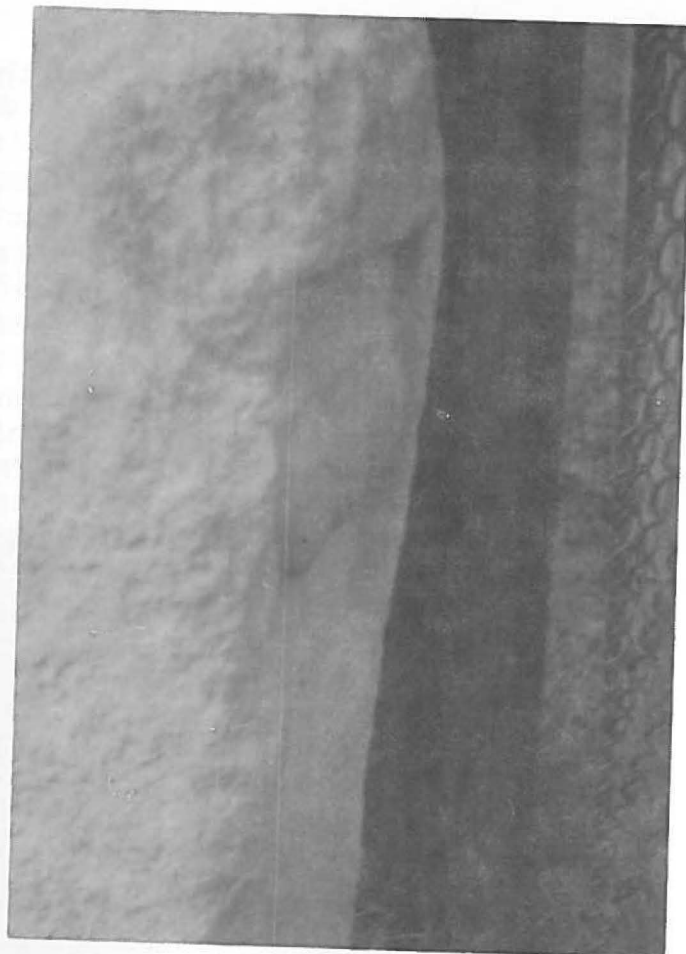


Picture fourteen

<sup>1</sup>James A. Kelley, "The Transpeninsular Line," The Archeologist, XXV, Fall 1973, pp. 12-19.

<sup>2</sup>Henry H. Hutchinson, "The Preservation of the Middle Stones at the South-West corner of the State of Delaware," Ibid., p. 20.





# A PICTORIAL GUIDE TO THE TRANSPENINSULAR STONES

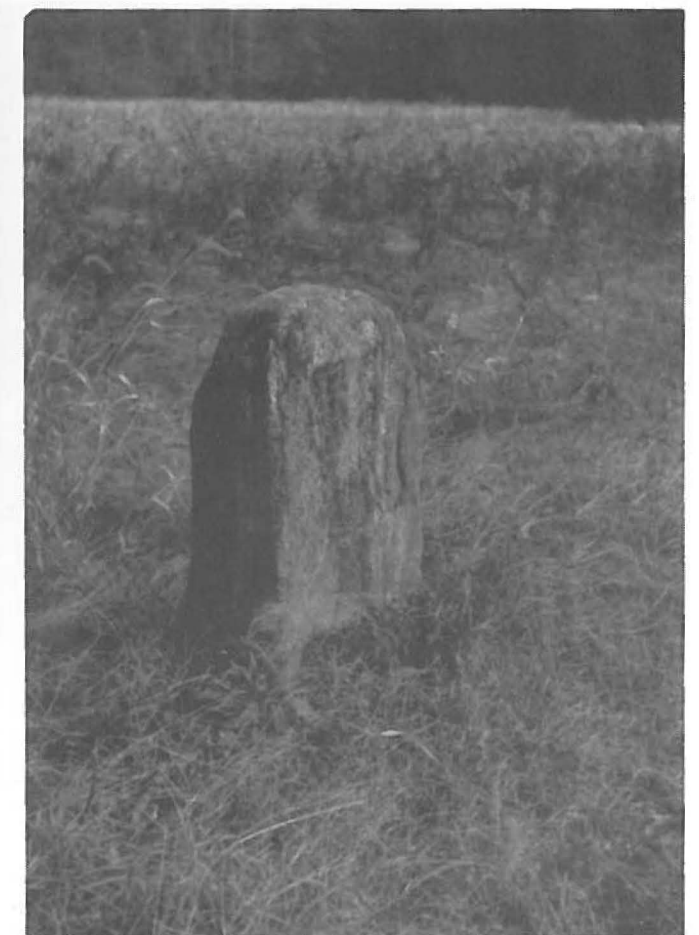
Upper left and right: Zero  
mile marker located at Fen-  
wick Lighthouse on south side.  
Leans to west. Arms very  
distinct. Maryland in upper  
left, Penn in right.  
Painted white.

Lower left: Five mile stone.  
Located near Williamsville.  
In excellent condition. Firm  
and straight. Coats of arms  
very clear. Maryland arms  
shown.



Five mile marker near  
Williamsville shown in  
upper left. Penns coat  
of arms shown.

Ten mile stone: Located  
in Selbyville. In poor  
condition but arms still  
visible. Marker appears  
to be sunken and very  
weathered.





There is no fifteen mile stone as a river is located in this site.

Twenty mile stone: Located in cemetery at Line Church on north side. No arms visible and leaning to southeast. Chipped in places.

Twenty-five mile stone: Located near Pepperbox and Line roads. Very poor shape. Top badly worn and chipped. Top portion of arms missing. Initial M scratched on base. Said to have been struck by car.



Thirty mile marker: Site destroyed by ditch diggers along side of road. Stone location unknown at this time but was used as a door step for trailer for many years.



Thirty-five mile marker: Located near Mardela under shelter described in past issue of the Archeolog. Good condition. Original marker is stone to left in picture in lower portion of page. Large stone to right is the Mason and Dixon Cornerstone. Small stone in center has no known purpose concerning the boundary but is thought to be an old farm boundary marker.

