

Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly, 1874 (Maryland)

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MONDAY, March 23rd, 1874.

The House met and was opened with prayer by the Rev. Father Oberly.

Present at the call of the roll, the following members:

Messrs. Hines, (Speaker,) Colton, Henkle, Robinson, Turner, of Calvert, Lancaster, Hawkins, Keech, Merryman, Turner, of Bait. co., Seth, Valliant, Sudler, Duer, Johnson, Hodson, Turner, of Cecil, Latchford, Robey, Thompson, Kemp, Pruitt, Lamar, Annan, Lee, Williams, McCosker, T. H. Hamilton, Cooper, C. R. Hamilton, McWilliams, Staylor, Stewart, of Bait. city, McAleese, Gill, Hart, Leane, Greenfield, McColgan, Joyce, Groh, Fenton, Stake, Clark, Watkins, Fletchall, Park, Brace, Waters, Vanderford, Maclin, Bedsworth, Glotfelty—53.

The Speaker laid before the House the official returns of the special election held in Baltimore county, on the 18th instant, to elect a member of the House of Delegates, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of the Hon. Robert Fowler.

Which was read and referred to the Committee on Elections.

Hon. Andrew Banks, members elect from Baltimore county, appeared, qualified, and took his seat.

Mr. T. H. Hamilton presented the petition of A. J. Stewart and one hundred and twenty policemen, asking for increase of pay.

Which was read and referred to the Baltimore City delegation.

Mr. Merryman presented the petition of J. F. C. Talbot, Adam D. Talbot, Thomas D. (jockey, Jr., and eight other relatives of Penelope D. Gist, against the transfer of a certain graveyard in Baltimore county.

Mr. Stake submitted the order:

In the year 1768, the Commissioners appointed to mark the boundary line between the Provinces of Maryland and Pennsylvania, (the line now known as Mason and Dixon's line,) in executing their commission, did set up and erect stone monuments, for the distance of one hundred and thirty-two miles west from the place of beginning. The beginning was at the eastern extremity of boundary line, and from thence the Commissioners proceeded with the erection of these stone monuments a due west course until they reached the foot of Sideling Hill. The stones used as monuments were dressed stone, imported from England, and were placed on the line a mile apart. At every five

miles distance, the stone had on the side facing north, the arras of Thomas Penn and Richard Penn graved, and on the south side, the arms of Frederick Lord Baltimore graved, and on the intermediate stones were graved on the north side, the letter P, and on south side, the letter M, (Pennsylvania—Maryland.)

These Commissioners having reached as far west as the foot of Sideling Hill, found the stones prepared to be placed on the line, as monuments were exhausted. They then proceeded to mark the line by erecting on the tops of ridges and mountains, over which the line passed, heaps or piles of stone and earth from six to seven feet in height.

The stone which were used as monuments were imported from England, and were landed at either Philadelphia or New Castle, the nearest port to the place where they were to be used. As all these imported stone had been used, and the western portion of the boundary line had been only marked by piles of stone and earth, it became necessary to import from England other stone to be used as monuments on the line. And accordingly, in the year 1769, or the following year, another importation was made, and these stones were landed at Alexandria. From Alexandria they were transported to Fort Frederick, on the Potomac River, where they still remain. The failure to use these stone as monuments was probably from the difficulty to reassemble the Commissioners at a point so distant from their homes, or from the dangers they would incur in an unsettled country infested with hostile Indians. And the Revolution occurring so soon after, the political agitation had also an effect in preventing the completion of the work of the Commissioners in erecting these stone monuments on the boundary of Maryland and Pennsylvania. And for a century they have remained at Fort Frederick, unused for the purpose for which they were imported from England. These stones are no doubt the property of the State of Maryland, and she has a right, at such period as she wishes, to reclaim them.

Predicated on the foregoing statement, it has been deemed of sufficient importance to make an inquiry after these monumental stones at Fort Frederick, in order to ascertain their number and character, and whether they are of any practical value or not.

I have therefore thought proper to submit the following order:

Ordered, That the Governor be requested to appoint a suitable person to examine these monumental stones at Fort Frederick, and report to him their number and condition, and all information in relation thereto, but not to incur any expense without the authority of the Governor.

Which was adopted.