

William Lea's 1787 Pennsylvania Land Patent

Ever since King Charles I in 1632 gave land grants to George Calvert to be Maryland, and to William Penn to be what would be called Pennsylvania (though he first wanted to call it New Wales, later change to be Sylvania) there was confusion as to boundary lines.

Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon were called from England to draw a line between Maryland and Pennsylvania. Unfortunately they did not extend their line as far as Ohio valley, due to time available and the threat of Indian attacks. Adding to the confusion was that King James' royal charter did not draw a western boundary to Virginia, which extended to the Mississippi River. Local settlers accepted that they resided in the District of West Augusta County, Virginia.

After David Rittenhouse and Andrew Elliott completed the Mason and Dixon boundary line in 1782, the District of West Augusta Country, Virginia, was ceded into Pennsylvania. Settlers who held Virginia certificates had to transfer their claim to be in Pennsylvania.

This caught William Lea and others, forcing them to claim Pennsylvania residence. When King George III of England bestowed land grants to the veterans of the French, British and Indian War he favored Major Wil-

liam Lea as a veteran of the attack on Fort Duquesne in 1758. Lea was given some 400 acres beside the Chartiers Creek in the then colony of Virginia. This land was reduced to 335 and a half acres in Pennsylvania. The photo is of a boundary marker, with an "M" on the Maryland side, and dated 1767.



The image below is a copy of Letters Patent Pennsylvania issued to Major William Lea for his land, situated initially in the District of West Augusta County of Virginia. A survey was made by Neville of Ritchie Township, (Joseph Neville, a Virginia statesman ?) on the third day of February, 1787 of 335 acres and a half, on the waters of the Chartiers Creek, Washington County, for William Lee (Lea), and returned on the fifteenth day of May 1787, witnessed by the Able Steve Muhlenberg, Esq., the first day of April, 1788.

*Photocopy courtesy of
Lynn Keller, Uniontown, Pa.*

