

CHAPTER I.

GEOLOGY—PREHISTORIC RACE—INDIANS—PENN'S GRANT—CON-
TROVERSY WITH VIRGINIA—CONFLICT BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND
ENGLISH FOR SUPREMACY IN THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY.

Uniontown lies three miles west of the western base of the Allegheny mountains and 79 degrees 44 minutes west longitude, and 39 degrees 54 minutes north latitude and at the base of the court house is 999 feet above mean tide of the Atlantic Ocean.

There is unmistakable evidence that the site of Uniontown has undergone marvelous geological changes in past epochs. From a seething mass of molten rock, through the varied strata, each reveals the wonderful changes that have transpired ages before vegetable or animal life was possible on this planet. Epoch after epoch has slowly stalked the earth, each leaving its stately steppings indelibly impressed upon the petrified strata by which the geologist is enabled to unfold a most marvelous history.

When the great Appalachian range reared its mighty form from the slumbering deep and rolled back the waves of the Atlantic to the east, and the floods of the great lakes and gulf to the west, barrier after barrier was forced to give way, leaving deposits of marine fossils and water-worn stones in their wake. Excavations display a subsoil of gravel and pebbles that have been worn by the floods from the mountain side and have been deposited in the valley below. Beneath these gravel beds are the stratified rocks, the sandstone quarry beds, the marine fossil beds, the Uniontown coal bed, the latter being an inferior vein of coal of about three feet in thickness and confined principally to the vicinity of the town, disappearing to the west. Beneath this is shale, then the Great Limestone bed which averages eight feet in thickness, beneath which lies the Sewickley coal vein. The Pittsburgh or nine foot vein of coking coal lies some four hundred feet below the surface, and the oil producing or Seneca shale lies several thousand feet under Uniontown.

PREHISTORIC RACE AND AMERICAN INDIAN.

That this country at a remote age was inhabited by a pre-historic race much superior in prowess and intellect to the

American Indian there is incontrovertible evidence. Their works of defense and implements of war which have been found indicate that this early race must have been numerous and to have occupied the land for many ages, and the repeated growths of forest trees that have occupied the site of their mounds and fortifications attest the fact that their builders have long since passed from the face of the earth, but when and by what means is altogether conjectural.

These Mound Builders, as they were called, it appears, entered this country near the gulf, as their settlements there were the most numerous and grew scarcer as they passed north and east. Their remains are found as far north as West Virginia, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa and Nebraska. In some of these states they had large towns and carried on weaving, spinning and other trades. It may be they disappeared by a scourge.

When the white man first set his foot upon the shores of the new continent he found it inhabited by a race of beings whom he erroneously supposed to be natives of India, to rectify which the name of the new race was called the American Indian.

This race, like the preceding one, having no written language, little of its history could be learned except by tradition; but from the abundance of the implements of war and of the chase that have been found, this race too must have been numerous or have occupied the country for ages before the advent of the white man.

A confederacy of Indian tribes known as the Five Nations, or as the French called them, the Iroquois, was composed of the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida and Mohawk tribes, all occupying lands within the state of New York, to which was subsequently added the Tuscaroras tribe of Virginia, after which the confederacy was known as that of the Six Nations, which by their combined strength conquered many other tribes and reduced them to vassals, among which were the Shawanese and Delawares. These, by permission of the Six Nations, roamed the valley of the Monongahela and its tributaries in quest of game and fish, and here located their camps, and it was with these that the pioneer settlers west of the Allegheny mountains came in contact, and against whose incursions they were obliged to defend themselves.

It is estimated that the whole population of the various In-

dian tribes inhabiting North America at the time of the advent of the white man was not more than a million; there are now approximately 300,000 on the reservations of the United States, of whom not more than 26,000 are pure-bloods who adhere to their primitive mode of life.

PENN'S GRANT.

The Crown of England was indebted to Admiral William Penn for services rendered his country and also for money loaned to the amount of 16,000 pounds, to liquidate which Charles II, on the 4th day of March, 1681, granted unto the son, William Penn, a charter for a tract of land on the new continent, which he named Pennsylvania. This tract was to extend from the Delaware river westward five degrees of longitude, and from twelve miles distant northward from New Castle, Delaware, unto the forty-third degree of north latitude, and bounded on the south by a circle drawn at twelve miles distant from New Castle northward and westward unto the beginning of the fortieth degree of north latitude.

Charles the First had previously granted unto Cecilius Calvert (Lord Baltimore), June 20, 1632, letters patent for a tract of land in America lying under the fortieth degree of north latitude, and running from the Delaware river westward unto a true meridian of the first fountain of the Potomac. It will be observed that this grant to Lord Baltimore was for all the territory lying under the fortieth degree of north latitude, while that to William Penn was limited on the south by the beginning of the said fortieth degree, thus making an overlap of one whole degree of latitude, which would now include all the state of Delaware and much of the built portion of the city of Philadelphia. This vagueness of title gave rise to the dispute between the proprietories of Pennsylvania and the heirs of Lord Baltimore until the 10th day of May, 1732, when an adjustment of their differences was made, and controversy was suspended until July 4, 1760, when the former agreement was ratified. The services of Messrs. Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, celebrated mathematicians and surveyors of London, were engaged, who arrived in Philadelphia November 15, 1763, and under whose able jurisdiction, the following year, the line was run and permanently marked, and peace between the two provinces secured.

FRENCH AND ENGLISH.

While England lay dormant as to her interests west of the Alleghenies France was active in establishing her forts, missions and trading posts throughout the Mississippi valley, establishing her claims by prior explorations and settlements. To anticipate this action on the part of France a company was formed in 1748, known as the Ohio Land Company. Among the members of this company were Robert Dinwiddie, governor of Virginia, Lawrence and Augustine Washington, brothers of George Washington and John Hamburg, a wealthy merchant of London. This company secured a royal grant for a tract of five hundred thousand acres of land to be located on the Ohio river, and Governor Dinwiddie was also authorized to use the militia of the state to secure the company in its rights. Major George Washington was sent as an envoy to inquire into the intentions of the French in penetrating the Ohio valley. The French commandant informed Washington that the French had not only come to stay, but further, intended to eject every English trader from the Ohio valley. Immediate steps were taken to establish an English fort at the Forks, but the French descended the Allegheny river in such numbers that the unfinished fort was surrendered without a blow. The following spring a small force was sent out under the command of Major Washington to recover, if possible, what had been lost at the Forks, and upon the hills of Fayette county he encountered a French force under the command of Ensign Jumonville. Here the first conflict at arms took place in the great French and Indian war, and which was known in Europe as the Seven Years' war. Here Washington fought his first battle, and from here arose the star of Washington to attract the wonder and the admiration of the world. Although victory crowned this first engagement, about five weeks after, Washington was compelled to capitulate to a superior French and Indian force under the command of de Villiers, a half brother to Jumonville. The following year General Edward Braddock was sent over to recover what had been lost to the French. He had under his command two regiments of English regulars to which were added several companies of provincials. He met a most disastrous defeat where the city of Braddock now stands, and upon the retreat of the remnant of his army the French flag floated in triumph from the Alleghenies to the Mississippi. This

triumphal possession, however, was of short duration, for in three years after, General John Forbes advanced on Fort Duquesne with an army, upon the approach of which the French exploded their magazines, set fire to the buildings and fled by water and by land, leaving the Ohio valley in the possession of the English.

CONTROVERSY WITH VIRGINIA.

Ambiguity in Penn's charter gave rise to a controversy with Virginia as it had with Maryland.

The Forks of the Ohio was regarded as a strategic point by both the French and the English for supremacy in the Ohio valley. The proprietaries of Pennsylvania learning that the authorities of Virginia were preparing to build a fort at the Forks to repel an expected invasion of the French, instructed Governor Hamilton to assist in the undertaking, but at the same time exacting from Virginia an acknowledgment that such action would not prejudice the rights of the Pennsylvania proprietaries. This appears to have been the first open declaration of the claims of the two commonwealths for the territory west of the Alleghenies. The controversy of jurisdiction over the territory west of the mountains thus begun, lasted, with more or less animation, frequently to the verge of hostility and bloodshed, until in June, 1780, when the two colonies ratified an agreement by which the boundary controversy was closed.

Virginia had insisted that the western line of Maryland be extended due north to the fortieth degree of north latitude, thence along that line due west to five degrees of longitude computed from the Delaware.

By compliance with this proposition Pennsylvania would have lost to Virginia a parallelogram 55.2 miles in length and 19.2 miles in width, including the historic spots of Washington's first battle field; the grave of Jumonville, the first officer who fell in the initial conflict between the French and English in the struggle for supremacy west of the Alleghenies; the site of Fort Necessity where Washington made his only surrender to a foe; and the grave of General Braddock, who met his defeat at the battle of the Monongahela, in his attempt to capture Fort Duquesne, and would have thrown the site of Uniontown seven and a half miles within her borders. This proposition was rejected by Pennsylvania.

Virginia always contended that the western line of Pennsyl-

vania would fall fifty miles east of the Forks of the Ohio and proposed that the line be run as follows: from the northwest corner of Maryland to Braddock's road; by it to the Great Crossings of the Youghiogeny; down that river to the Chestnut Ridge mountain; along its crest to Greenlick Run branch of Jacob's creek; by the road and its continuation towards Pittsburg to the Bullock Pens (a little north of the present site of Wilksburg), and thence by a straight line to the mouth of Plum creek on the Allegheny river, thus reserving unto herself all the valuable part of Western Pennsylvania. This proposition was also promptly rejected by Pennsylvania.

It will be remembered that Mason and Dixon having extended their line from the northwest corner of Maryland to the third crossing of Dunkard creek without any authority from Virginia, that province did not recognize the line as the boundary of her jurisdiction, but continued all the while acting on the aggressive while Pennsylvania was acting on the defensive and in the meantime trying to hold jurisdiction west of the mountains.

Notwithstanding Pennsylvania had established her courts of justice west of the mountains in 1773, Dr. John Connolly, a shrimp and willing dupe and cringing tool of Lord Dunmore, was sent to Fort Pitt in 1774, took possession of the fort and changed its name to that of Fort Dunmore, and issued his proclamation calling the militia together. For this act of imperialism Arthur St. Clair, then a magistrate of Westmoreland county, issued a warrant and had him committed to the jail at Hannastown. He was soon released on bail, but returned in March with both civil and military power, and with one hundred and fifty armed men, arrested the justices of the Westmoreland court and sent them under guard to Staunton, Virginia; released the prisoners and committed other acts befitting only a tyrant. At the mutterings of the Revolutionary war Dunmore skulked aboard an English man-of-war and his cringing cur followed.

Augusta county, Virginia, was erected in 1738 and included all the territory west of the Blue Ridge mountains, the western part of which acquired the name of West Augusta district from the fact of its remote western location.

Virginia's next move was to divide this West Augusta district into three distinct counties, to take effect in December, 1776. These counties were named Ohio, Monongalia and Yoho-

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gania; much of the former two and nearly all of the last was composed of Pennsylvania territory. The last took in what is now the county seats of Washington, Fayette, Westmoreland and Allegheny counties, and under this arrangement, civil and military authority was exercised from 1776 to 1780; but upon the completion of the Mason and Dixon line it was found that the greater part of Yohogania county fell within the limits of Pennsylvania, and what was left of it was absorbed by Ohio county, and Yohogania became extinct.

The court for Monongalia county was held in a shop on the land of Theophilus Phillips in Springhill township; that of Ohio, at Black's cabin near West Liberty, and that of Yohogania on the plantation of Andrew Heath, on the western bank of the Monongahela river, about where the line of Washington and Allegheny counties strike that river. Thus bitter contentions continued until a commission representing the two contending provinces met at Baltimore and on August 31, 1779, reached the agreement that the Mason and Dixon line should be extended to the distance of five degrees westward from the Delaware and this should be the southern boundary of Pennsylvania, and that a meridian drawn from the western extremity thereof should be the western limit forever. Thus ended the boundary controversy that had been waging so long between these two sister provinces. It remained yet to run and mark the line left unfinished by Mason and Dixon to the southwest corner. This, however, was done in 1782, and in the fall of 1784, after the most exacting and scientific manner then known, the permanent stone was set, and in 1786, the western boundary was finished to Lake Erie.