



PANNEBAKKER FAMILY NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE PANNEBAKKER FAMILY ASSOCIATION

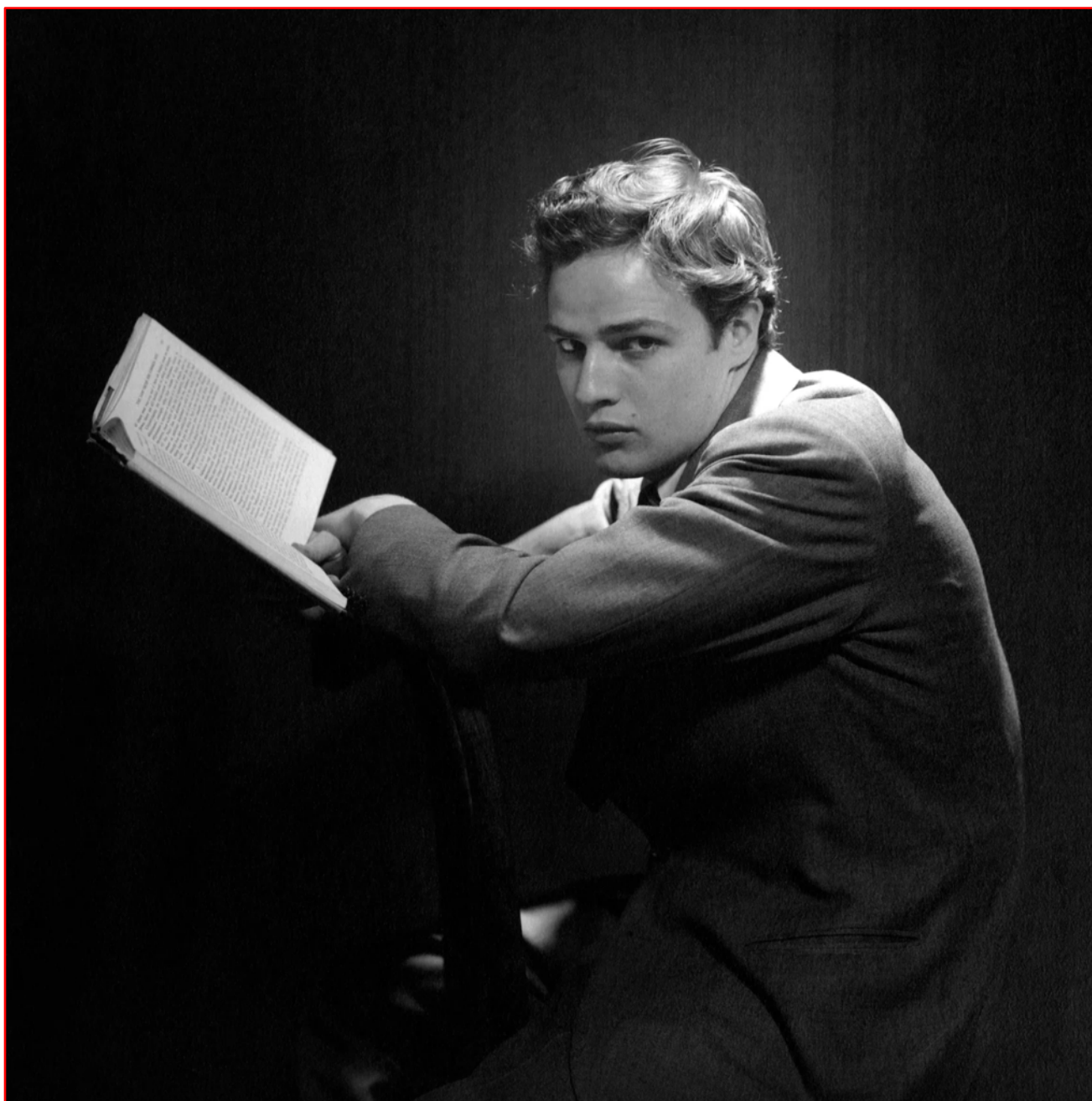
More than 70 years after he first scorched the screen as Stanley Kowalski in the movie version of Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951) and 45 years after his last great performance as Col. Kurtz in Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979),

MARLON BRANDO REMAINS THE CULTURAL ICON AGAINST WHICH ALL AMERICAN ACTORS ARE STILL BEING MEASURED.

“He was so remarkable early on that you couldn’t help but think, ‘God, what a great actor he would be.’”

-- Alan Shayne, from his 2023 Memoir.

(Shayne, who became a top executive at Warner Bros. Television, was in Brando’s acting class in 1943 at the New School for Social Research in Manhattan.)



B April 3, 1924 Omaha NE
D July 1, 2004 Los Angeles CA

Our common ancestor is **Johannes Pfannebecker** (1645-1703).

He married Anna Sybilla (Rasp) Pfannebecker. They had five sons (and three daughters).

Two of their sons, **Hendrick** and **Frederick**, came to Pennsylvania.

My direct ancestor, **Hendrick**, came as a young man and had five sons (and three daughters)

Brando’s direct ancestors, **Frederick** and **Weigand** came as aging father and son.

Brando’s mother was Dorothy Julia **Pennebaker**, from whom he got his talent.

Brando at age 19, in 1943, by legendary photographer, Cecil Beaton.

Acting was a skill he honed as a child, the lonely son of alcoholic parents. With his father away on the road, and his mother frequently intoxicated to the point of stupefaction, the young Bud would play-act for her to draw her out of her stupor and to attract her attention and love. His mother was exceedingly neglectful, but he loved her. Marlon struck out for The Big Apple in 1943, following his older sister, Jocelyn, into acting.

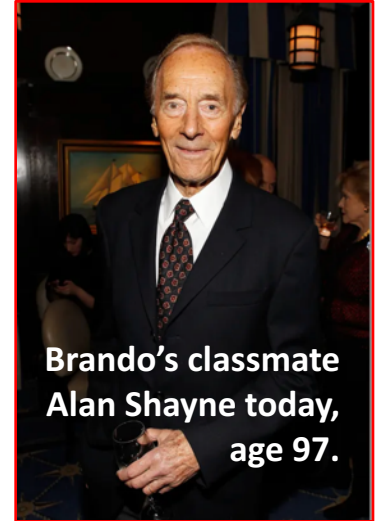
ACTING WAS THE ONLY THING HE WAS GOOD AT, FOR WHICH HE RECEIVED PRAISE, SO HE WAS DETERMINED TO MAKE IT HIS CAREER.

HE ENROLLED IN ACTING CLASSES IN 1943, WHILE WORKING ODD JOBS, INCLUDING AS AN ELEVATOR OPERATOR.

"I remember everyone in the class couldn't stop talking about this guy named **Marlon**, this showoff. I mean, he was wonderful looking but didn't do much in class. He was very odd, actually. He would play bongo **drums** in the hall. ... I remember we did this performance where he suddenly took these pair of tights and put a huge bongo drum in it to make himself look pregnant. The entire audience went into pieces laughing . . . "



The **drums** were more than an affectation. Toward the end of his life, Brando, who had been an avid drummer, worked on patenting a new conga drum that, instead of being tuned by five or six screws at the top, could be tuned by only a single crank at the bottom.



Brando's classmate Alan Shayne today, age 97.



At home with his sister, Frances, father, Marlon Brando, Sr., niece, and mother, Dorothy Julia Pennebaker Brando, in Libertyville IL, 1945.

According to the **Omaha Community Playhouse**: **Henry Fonda** may get all the credit for starting a family of successful actors, but there's at least one more person who deserves some of that credit, and that's **Dodie Brando**, the mother of acting legend Marlon Brando.



Dodie was closely associated with this theater company, and even starred in their **1925** play, "The Enchanted Cottage."

The Playhouse was in need of a young man to play the lead in their production of "You and I." Dodie reached out to her friend, Herberta Fonda, and asked if her son, Henry, would be interested in the role. He accepted. Within days, Fonda decided to switch his career to acting,

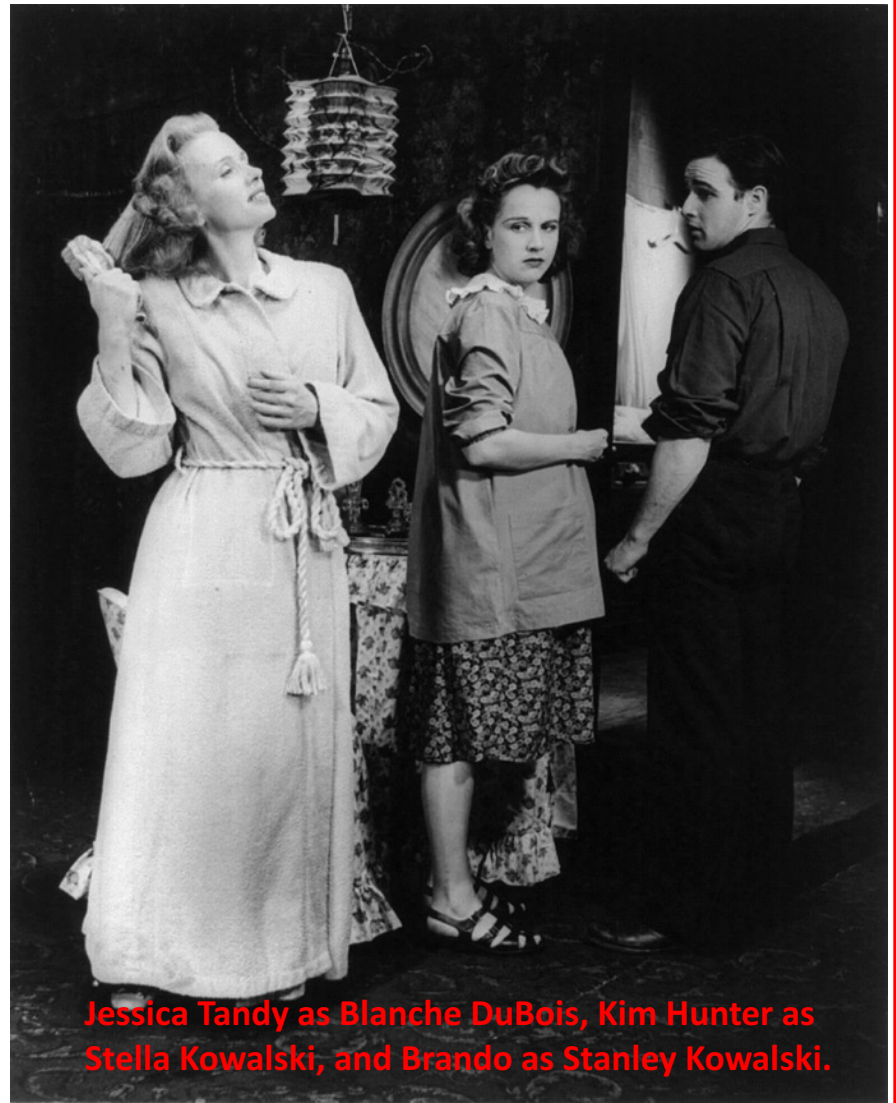
A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE ON BROADWAY IN 1947

The problem with casting Brando as Stanley was that, at age 23, he was much younger than the character as written by Tennessee Williams. However, after a meeting between Brando and Williams, the playwright eagerly agreed that Brando would make an ideal Stanley. Williams believed that by casting a younger actor, the Neanderthalish Kowalski would evolve from being a vicious older man to someone whose unintentional cruelty can be attributed to his youthful ignorance.

During the out-of-town tryouts, Director Elia Kazan realized that Brando's magnetism was attracting attention and audience sympathy away from Blanche to Stanley, which was not what the playwright intended. The audience's sympathy was intended to be solely with Blanche.

Kazan queried Williams on the matter, broaching the idea of a slight rewrite to tip the scales back to more of a balance between Stanley and Blanche, but Williams demurred, smitten as he was by Brando, just like the preview audiences.

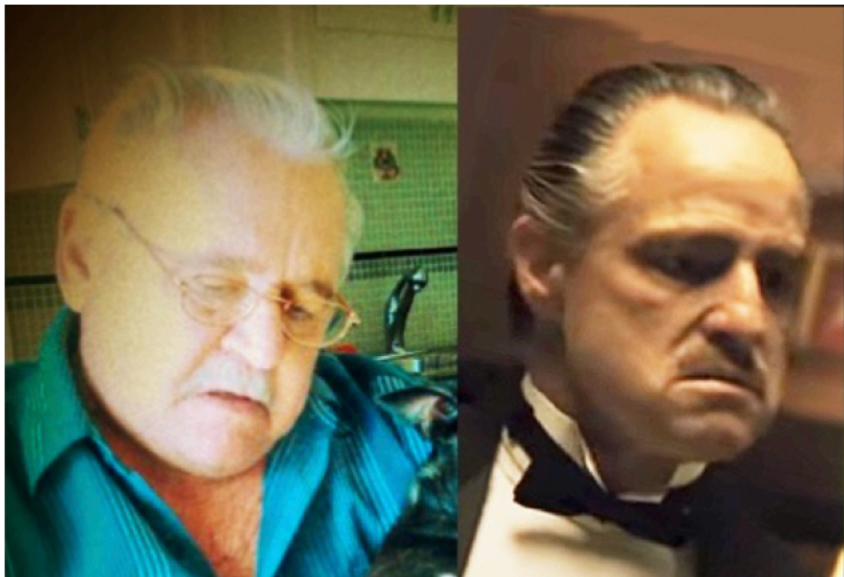
The 1947 production remains a touchstone in American drama, winning both the Pulitzer Prize and the New York Drama Critics' Circle award for the year's best play, as well as a Best Actress Tony for Tandy.



Jessica Tandy as Blanche DuBois, Kim Hunter as Stella Kowalski, and Brando as Stanley Kowalski.

In **1950**, before playing the paraplegic soldier in **The Men**, Brando had gone to live at a Veterans Administration hospital with actual disabled veterans, and confined himself to a wheelchair for weeks. It was an acting method, and research, that no one in Hollywood had ever heard of before, that willingness to experience life.

In **1951**, Brando received his first Academy Award nomination for Best Actor in a Leading Role for reprising the role of Stanley Kowalski in the 1951 film adaptation of **A Streetcar Named Desire**.



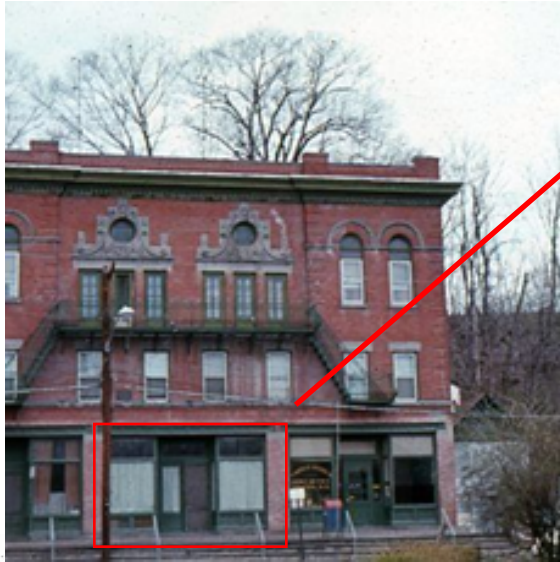
A FAMILY RESEMBLANCE 2014

LEFT Your author's first cousin, Leo Pennebaker, sixth great grandson of Hendrick Pfannebecker of Skippack PA. ca. 2014, in his mid 70s.

RIGHT Marlon Brando, fifth great grandson of Frederick Pfannebecker, Hendrick's brother, of Upper Hanover Twp, Montgomery PA. At age 47, in makeup as the 53-63 year old Vito Corleone in *The Godfather*, in 1972.

CROSSING CULTURAL AND GEOGRAPHIC PATHS IN 1972

I LIVED IN THE TINY HUDSON RIVER TOWN OF MILTON NY, 90 MILES DUE NORTH OF MANHATTAN, **1970-72**, WHILE STUDYING FOR AN MFA IN PAINTING AT SUNY NEW PALTZ. MY STOREFRONT STUDIO APPEARS IN THE FILM. I HAD NO IDEA BRANDO WAS OUR COUSIN.



Production Still
Set in the Deep South. The locals joked, "That movie crew covered our main street with dirt. They ruined this town."



Inside my Storefront Studio

THE FUGITIVE KIND

1959 Starring **Marlon Brando**, Anna Magnani, and Joanne Woodward. Directed by Sidney Lumet. Tennessee Williams screenplay, based on his 1957 play, Orpheus Descending.

Review in *The New York Times* ...Mr. Brando and Miss Magnani... being fine and intelligent performers... play upon deep emotional chords...



THE GODFATHER

TODAY I LIVE 3.5 MILES FROM THE WEDDING SCENE LOCATION

The home at 110 Longfellow Avenue was the centerpiece of a cluster of houses on the block that was transformed into Don Corleone's estate.

The elaborate wedding scene in the opening of the epic film was shot entirely on the home's four-acre grounds, complete with a fake brick wall and wrought-iron gate to create the illusion of a sprawling well-guarded retreat.



BRANDO WINS HIS SECOND ACADEMY AWARD

He declined it due to "the treatment of American Indians today by the film industry ... and the recent happenings at Wounded Knee," (Wounded Knee had been the last armed Native American resistance on the Plains). Sacheen Littlefeather collected the award on his behalf and declared his reason for refusing it. **Brando probably didn't know that the defeated George Armstrong Custer was his cousin or that there was a county in his birth state of NE named Custer.**

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN SIGNS WITH COLUMBIA RECORDS

He was signed by Clive Davis, who had signed Bob Dylan to the same label a decade earlier. He auditioned with "It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City." Line three: **"I could walk like Brando right into the sun."**

HENDRICK WAS A SURVEYOR. BUT WHAT DID THAT MEAN?

Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln were all surveyors. In that profession, they played a critical role in the early development of America.

--AND SO DID HENDRICK PFANNEBECKER, BEFORE THEM--
THROUGH HIS WORK FOR WILLIAM PENN'S COLONY

PENNSYLVANIA BORDERS BECAME THE FOUNDATION FOR MANIFEST DESTINY



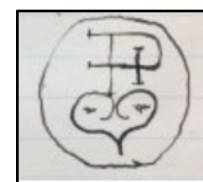
THE SURVEYING
COMMUNITY
OFTEN REFERS
TO MOUNT RUSHMORE
AS "THREE SURVEYORS
AND THAT OTHER GUY."

Yes, Hendrick was a guy with an instrument on a tripod wandering the countryside as he laid out the roads in Montgomery County.

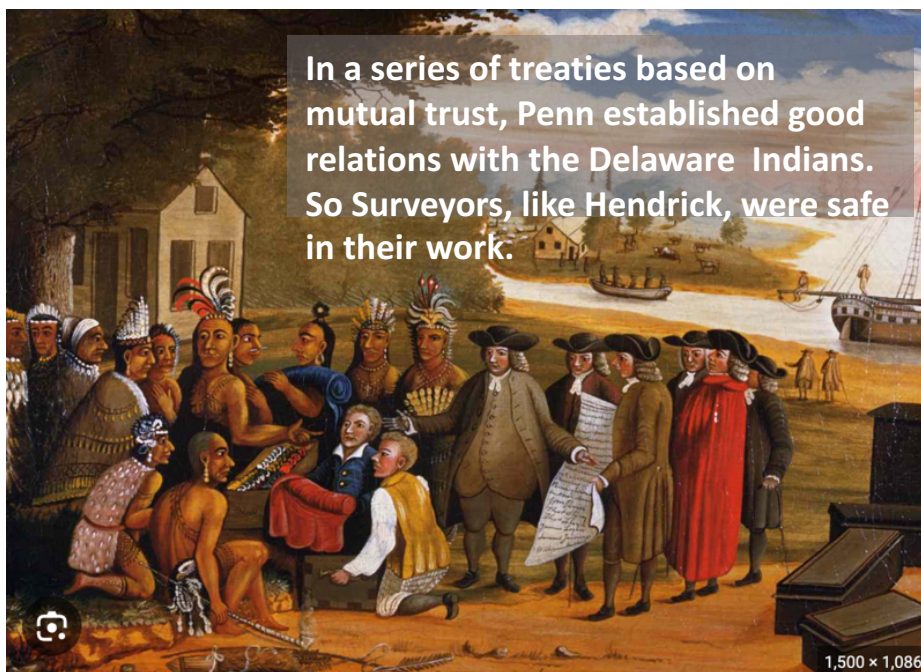
BUT, ACCORDING TO SAMUEL W.

"... in the performance of his work, at a time when land afforded almost the only opportunity for investment, he was brought into relations of acquaintance, if not of friendship, not only with the Penns, but with the leading men of Philadelphia and throughout the province."

Hendrick was "the attorney for Matthias van Bebber for the sale of the Lands." Colonial surveyors were generally literate men who learned their craft from books on surveying or through experience. From its earliest days as an English colony, Pennsylvania needed men to run the government, settle disputes, and keep the peace. **THIS INVOLVED HENDRICK IN SEEMINGLY ENDLESS LAWSUITS.**



"He wrote a very pretty script, drew deeds and devised a seal."



In a series of treaties based on mutual trust, Penn established good relations with the Delaware Indians. So Surveyors, like Hendrick, were safe in their work.

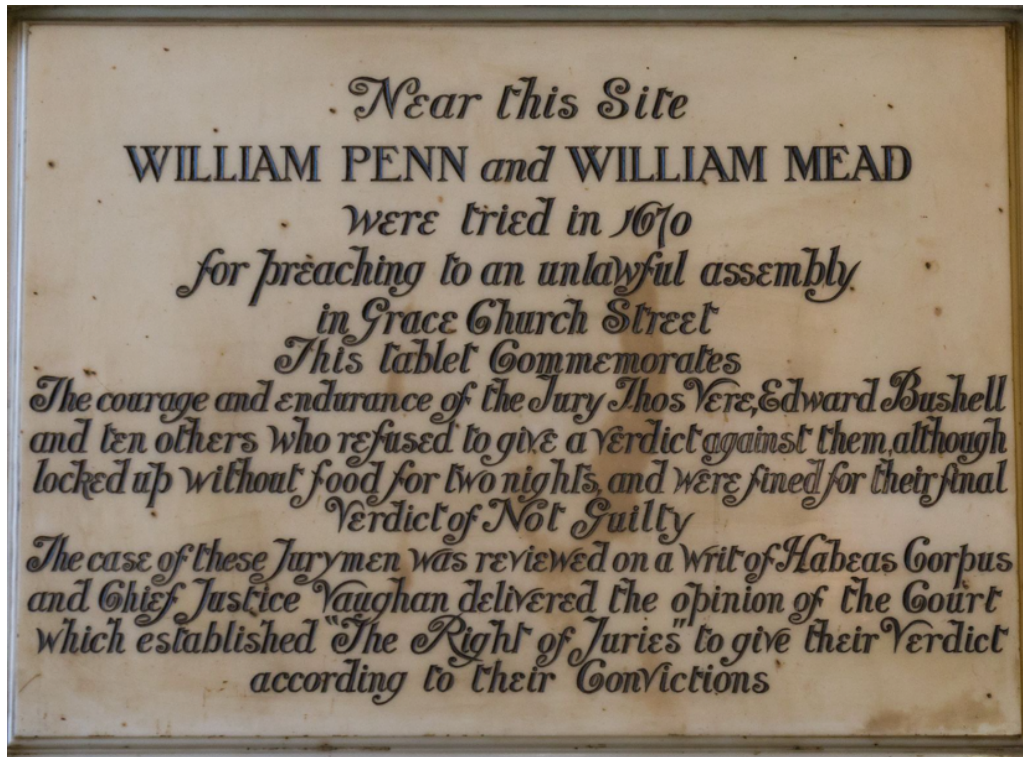


The proprietors of Pennsylvania, the Penn family, derived their income primarily from selling land to the rapidly expanding settler population and a steady stream of newcomers from Europe. Their finances depended upon the price of land, which derived its value primarily from accurate documentation, settlers' improvements, and from an owner's ability to sell to newcomers and investors.

**SURVEYS GAVE LANDHOLDERS DOCUMENTS THAT MADE LAND CLAIMS LEGAL.
THE WORK OF MEN LIKE HENDRICK MADE THIS POSSIBLE.**

The English were the first to survey and map the whole of a European country – Ireland.
So prior to establishing his colony, William Penn already knew the role of surveys
in fashioning orderly civic life -- which could support
the democratic principles that he set forth for his surveyed colony.

THESE INSPIRED MUCH IN THE U.S. CONSTITUTION -- INCLUDING HABEAS CORPUS



In 1682 Penn drew up a Frame of Government for his colony that would, he said, leave himself and his successors **“no power of doing mischief, that the will of one man may not hinder the good of a whole country.”**

Freedom of worship in the colony was to be absolute, and all the traditional rights of Englishmen were carefully safe-guarded: free elections, fair trials, and a separation of political powers.

The actual machinery of government outlined in the Frame proved in some respects to be clumsy and unworkable, but Penn wisely included in the Frame an **amending clause—the first in any written constitution**—so that it could be altered as necessity required.

VOLTAIRE PRAISED PENNSYLVANIA AS THE ONLY GOVERNMENT IN THE WORLD THAT “RESPONDS TO THE PEOPLE AND IS RESPECTFUL OF MINORITY RIGHTS.”

Ahead of his time, Penn even published a plan for a United States of Europe, **“European Dyet, Parliament or Estates;”** today’s European Union.

PENNSYLVANIA SURVEYING WAS PART OF THE ULTMATE BORDER CONTROVERSY



In 1760, tired of border violence between colonies, the British crown demanded that the parties involved settle the matter.

The Penn and Calvert families hired Mason and Dixon, English surveyors, to settle their dispute over the exact boundary between their two proprietary colonies, Pennsylvania and Maryland.

The boundary was finally settled and marked using stones every five miles, with **Pennsylvania’s** crest on one side and **Maryland’s** on the other.

In 1763, colonists were protesting the British Crown Proclamation, declared at the end of the French and Indian War, to prevent colonists from settling beyond the Appalachians and angering the Native Americans.

By 1797, the states south of the Mason-Dixon line argued for the perpetuation of slavery in the new United States while those north of line hoped to phase out the ownership of human chattel.

One hundred years after Mason and Dixon began their effort to chart the boundary, soldiers from opposite sides of the line first met on the field of battle at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

PENNYPACKER COUSINS SAMUEL W. & GEORGE A. CUSTER WERE THERE.

**WE TAKE FOR GRANTED PENN'S PRACTICE OF SURVEYS TO ESTABLISH OWNERSHIP
--AS CARRIED OUT BY HENDRICK.
BUT ENGLISH OFFICIALS OVERSEEING OTHER AMERICAN COLONIES
TOLERATED DISORGANIZED SURVEYING REGIMES.**

SOUTHERN SYSTEM OF INDISCRIMINATE LOCATION Below the Mason-Dixon Line, GEORGIA, the last British colony founded on the mainland, struggled to establish a regular surveying system. GEORGIA initially borrowed surveyors from SOUTH CAROLINA, then experimented briefly with a lottery system for distributing land before relying on the more common indiscriminate location. VIRGINIA settlers initially had little use for surveys.

THIS DISPARITY WAS A FACTOR IN THE SOUTH'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND EVENTUALLY, THE CIVIL WAR.

NEW ENGLAND The earliest colonists intended to establish farming settlements, forming corporations that established townships by negotiating land purchases with Indians and setting aside lots. This system created tightly knit towns that hosted sizable minorities of landless settlers. In many towns a handful of prestigious families controlled the best plots of land, often while residing elsewhere.

SPANISH AMERICA (which included what would become the vast Louisiana Purchase) Early colonists had little interest in securing permanent land tenures. To gain vast fortunes, ambitious conquistadors needed access to labor, not just land. Spanish elites came to control plantations through the encomienda system, a grant of control over local Indians that produced the side effect of giving the encomendero a large plantation on which to employ his labor. Spanish law prevented these men from fencing in their estates or preventing free passage through their lands. Private ownership to one's own land extended only to ground put to agricultural use. Forests and waterways remained commons, while the crown reserved the right to mine the earth.

NOBLES IN EUROPE resisted nationally mandated surveys. Except for the English and their survey of Ireland.

QING DYNASTY CHINA (Manchu 1644-1911) didn't survey so as not to upset prominent military families.

Despite his visionary political beliefs, Penn had hoped that Pennsylvania would be a profitable venture for himself and his family. He marketed the colony throughout Europe in various languages and, as a result, settlers flocked there. Despite Pennsylvania's rapid growth and diversity, the colony never turned a profit for Penn or his family.

**PENN WOULD LATER BE IMPRISONED IN ENGLAND FOR DEBT
AND, AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH IN 1718, HE WAS PENNILESS.**

**MEANWHILE HIS SURVEYOR, HENDRICK, HAD EXTENSIVE LANDHOLDINGS AND
ESTABLISHED A FAMILY WHOSE LIVES FORMED THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THEIR NATION.**



HENDRICK'S surveying work reached its logical conclusion on this continent in the work of **THOMAS HUTCHINS**, who was designated **THE FIRST GEOGRAPHER TO THE UNITED STATES** in 1781.

In 1785, Pennsylvania and Virginia Surveyors had provided a Beginning Point for the **US PUBLIC LAND SURVEY**. Hutchins used that Beginning Point to survey the land to the West. Ultimately, the Survey reached all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

THIS SURVEYING LED TO THE CONCEPT OF MANIFEST DESTINY

The proposition that the United States should annex west Florida and Louisiana, which were then controlled by Spain, and expand Westward to the Pacific Ocean.