

**GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF NEW JERSEY:  
REPORT ON A SURVEY OF THE  
BOUNDARY LINE BETWEEN  
NEW JERSEY AND NEW YORK: MADE IN  
JULY AND AUGUST, 1874; (PP.1-43;  
CONCLUSION 48)**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649262670

Geological Survey of New Jersey: Report on a Survey of the Boundary Line Between New Jersey and New York: Made in July and August, 1874; (pp.1-43; conclusion 48) by George H. Cook

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**GEORGE H. COOK**

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Geological Survey of New Jersey

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REPORT

ON A

SURVEY OF THE BOUNDARY LINE

BETWEEN

NEW JERSEY AND NEW YORK,

MADE IN JULY AND AUGUST, 1874.

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GEORGE H. COOK,  
STATE GEOLOGIST.

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New Brunswick, N. J. :  
TERHUNE & VAN ANGLE'S PRESS, 31 ALBANY STREET.  
1874.



*TO HIS EXCELLENCY JOEL PARKER, Governor of the State  
of New Jersey, and ex-officio President of the Board of Managers of  
the State Geological Survey.*

SIR :

I have the honor herewith to submit my report upon the  
Survey of the Boundary or "Partition" line between New Jersey  
and New York.

With high respect,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE H. COOK,

*State Geologist.*

NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J., Sept. 8, 1874.





## REPORT.

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From the beginning of the Geological Survey it has been noticed that the mile monuments, which mark the line of division between this state and New York, are not well protected, or fixed so as to ensure their permanency. Several of them were not to be found; of these one or two were reported to have been burned into lime. Three others were found lying on the ground not far from the line. It is also suspected that some of those now standing have been moved from their original locations by land-owners, for dishonest purposes. And it was known by local surveys that the monuments were not all in a straight line.\*

These particulars have been brought to the attention of the Board of Managers in former reports of this Survey. And in view of the doubtful accuracy of the monuments as they now stand, and the important questions of property as well as jurisdiction depending on the correct location of this line, a vote was passed by your Board at its meeting in Dec. 1872, authorizing the State Geologist to have the line, as the monuments now mark it, surveyed. This Survey has been made and its results are herewith presented.

A short account of the boundary itself, the questions which have arisen regarding it, and the means heretofore taken to ascertain and mark it, seems important for the proper understanding of this Survey.

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\* The late Capt. H. L. Southard, in 1859, surveyed the line across the Ringwood Tract, from the 19th to the 25th mile-stone, and showed that the monuments there were not set in a straight line.

New Jersey was first constituted and named as a distinct colony or province in the year 1664, when its territory was sold by James, Duke of York (afterwards King James second) to Lord Berkeley and Sir George Carteret. In the deeds of lease and release dated respectively 23d and 24th of June 1664 it is described as "That tract of land adjacent to New England, lying west of Long Island and Manhattan Island; and bounded on the east, part by the main sea, and part by Hudson's River; and hath upon the west, Delaware Bay or River; and extendeth southward to the main ocean, as far as Cape May, at the mouth of Delaware Bay; and to the northward as far as the northernmost branch of the said bay or river Delaware, which is in 41 deg. 40 min. of latitude; and crosses over, thence, in a straight line, to Hudson's River, in 41 deg. of latitude; which said tract of land is hereafter to be called Nova Cæsarea, or New Jersey." In this description, all the boundaries are natural features except the straight line which separates it from the State of New York.\* But differences of opinion arose very soon, in regard to the precise meaning or intent of several of the words used in the description, and at least two questions of public interest have been involved in them.

Staten Island, though to the west of Long Island and only separated from the main land of New Jersey by a small and indirect channel, while the deep and direct channel of the Hudson is to the east of it, and though none of the water of that river finds its way behind the Island to the main sea, was early claimed as a part of New York. And her title to it was finally confirmed by the action of the Legislatures of the two states, and of the U. S. Congress in 1834.

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\* Wm. A. Whitehead, Esq., of Newark, contributed a paper to the N. J. Historical Society on "The circumstances leading to the establishment, in 1763, of the Northern Boundary line between New Jersey and New York," which was read May 19th, 1859, and printed in the proceedings of the Society for that year, pp. 159-186. Much of the material for the historical matter of this report is taken from Mr. Whitehead's paper, and where other facts have been obtained, it is his preparatory work which has pointed out the way to secure them.

The terminal points for the Northern Boundary were also the subjects of controversy very soon after the first settlements were begun; the proprietors of East and West Jersey and the patentees of land in the adjoining parts of New York having different views in regard to the extent of each other's rights. The eastern extremity of the boundary was first determined to be at the mouth of Tappan Creek, afterwards it was claimed that it properly began opposite the mouth of Spuyten Duyvil Creek, and still other claims were presented for its location at various points between these extremes. The western end of the boundary was proposed by some to be fixed at the head of Delaware Bay, and by various others at the mouths of the Lehigh, the Neversink, the Popaxtun and the Mohawk branches of Delaware river, and at the lower end of Minisink Island. Many attempts were made to reconcile these conflicting claims and to ascertain and mark the line.

Among these is the following, which is on record in the office of the Secretary of State of New Jersey, Book F, 2 Deeds, p. 435.

"By His Excellency Lewis Morris, Esq., Captain General and Governor in Chief of His Majesty's Province of New Jersey and Territories thereon depending in America, and Vice Admiral in the same &c.

"I do hereby certify that sometime in or about, as I believe, the year 1685 or 1686, Colonel Thomas Dongan then Governor of New York with some of the gentlemen of the Council of New York and others, met with Gawen Lawrie then Governor of New Jersey and some of the gentlemen of the Council of New Jersey and others, at a place which stood afterwards the house of Col. William Merret on the west side of Hudson's River, where an observation was there made of the latitude, and marked with a pen knife on a beech tree standing by a small run or spring of water that runs down on the north side of the place where, I think, Merret's house afterwards stood. Some time early in the beginning of the year 1691, I went and re-