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Delaware: Up-State, Down-State: In recent years there have been major population changes in the United States, but historically nearly every state has its “city people” and its “country people” (including small towns and cities), with widely diverse values and opinions. Nearby states where this division is especially apparent are New York and Pennsylvania. In Delaware, this division was Wilmington and its suburbs (and Newark to a lesser extent) versus everything else, which years ago was mostly agricultural. There were farms and country people in the hills west of Wilmington, but the much larger area of the coastal plain known as “downstate” accounted for 90 percent of the state’s crops while having less than half its population. In the 1930s, city people in Delaware observed Daylight Saving Time during the summer months, but country people wanted nothing to do with it.

Up-State and Down-State was further divided by the Cheapeake and Delaware Canal, originally dug about 1845 to connect the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland with the Delaware River and Bay that separated Delaware from southern New Jersey, thereby facilitating commerce between the population centers of Philadelphia and Baltimore. This is one of the few places where a canal replaced a railroad, as usually it was the opposite, but the New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad, built in 1832, went out of business when the canal opened. This canal, greatly modernized over the years, also separated the population into “Upstaters” and “Downstaters,” even though about 1/3 of New Castle County, the northernmost of Delaware’s three counties, was south of the canal. Many say the climate is even different on opposite sides of the canal, and that storms and rainfall are affected by it.

Delaware’s boundaries, like those of many states, make little sense in today’s world. Uncharted as it was, the boundary made sense to William Penn, however, as he needed access to the sea from his landlocked Pennsylvania and persuaded his friend, the Duke of York (later King Charles, II), to take the “three lower counties on the Delaware” away from Lord Baltimore’s colony of Maryland. These counties, the boundaries of which were more accurately delineated by Mason and Dixon in the mid-18th century, were a part of Pennsylvania until they became a separate colony named Delaware about a month before the Declaration of Independence was signed. Their names could not have been more English: New Castle, Kent, and Sussex.

Tidewater rivers like the Appoquinimink, Duck Creek, the St. Jones, the Murderkill, the Mispillian, and the Broadkill were navigable for sailing vessels and early steamboats in the 18th and early 19th centuries, making it possible for farmers to get livestock and produce to the markets of Wilmington and Philadelphia, but as these shallow streams silted up over the years, lower Delaware became cut off from its retail outlets. In 1859, something happened to change this isolation forever. Watch for the “Delaware Road” in a future edition of the *Weekly News*.