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Form 504

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

Type of Survey Topographic

Field No. ..... Office No. 2296

LOCALITY

State Maryland

General locality Chester River

Locality To Still Pond

Eastern Shore Ches Bay

1897

CHIEF OF PARTY

John Nelson

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DATE .....

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U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

Henry S. Pritchett, Superintendent.

State: Maryland

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topographic Sheet No. 2296

LOCALITY:

Eastern Shore, Chesapeake Bay, From the Mouth of Chester River to Still Pond.

1897.

CHIEF OF PARTY:

John Nelson, Assist.

2296

FORM 65.—Field Letter.

Write me at: C. & G. Survey Office

Telegraph me at:

My Express Office is:

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY,

Washington, D.C.

February 18th, 1897

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Dr. Henry S. Pritchett
Superintendent C. & G. Survey
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

In compliance with instructions and memoranda for Descriptive Reports to accompany original sheets 1887. I herewith submit the following report for topographic sheet No.

This sheet covers a portion of the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay, extending from the mouth of Chester River to Still Pond, Md.

The general character of the coast line is mostly an eroded bluff, ranging from 10 to 70 feet in height, which is broken by a number of creeks, marshes and small salt ponds. Some of these creeks are from two to three miles long and one mile wide and are important points for shipping, and as harbors for small craft during storms.

Worton Creek is the most important one

between Swan Point and the Sassafras River a distance of nearly twenty miles, and it is navigable for about two miles, (for vessels drawing 7 ft.) from its mouth. Gales Wharf and Buck Neck Landing are both important shipping points. Green Point and Plummers landings are both in this creek. A regular Steamer plies between these points and Baltimore, Md. daily, during the summer months, and triweekly at other seasons of the year. Great quantities of fruit, grain and stock are shipped from this locality. Swan Creek and Tavern Creek are both on the Southwestern edge of the sheet, near the town of Rock Hall. Swan Creek is a narrow, shallow stream a short distance from its mouth and is used principally by the oystermen as a place to lay up their pungies between seasons. The Haven adjoining Swan Creek is a safe harbor for small craft. Tavern Creek is a small stream, too shallow for navigation. The strip of land between it and Swan Creek, is low and marshy. Fairlee Creek is a beautiful sheet of water, about 3 miles above Tolchester Beach, it has a very narrow entrance, and big sand bar just outside, which is constantly shifting. Inside the water is deep and the stream is about half a mile wide, Small vessels of light

draft can get in this creek, but it is never used as an harbor on account of the great difficulty in sailing through the narrow channel. Still Pond and Churn Creeks come on the northeastern corner of the sheet, they are both small streams and have narrow entrances. There is a small amount of shipping, principally grain, out of Still Pond Creek, which is navigable for about four miles; for vessels drawing three or four feet. Churn Creek is not navigable for more than one mile above its mouth, for small boats drawing less than two feet.

Rock Hall is the most important and largest town on the sheet. The approximate population is 600 inhabitants, who are chiefly occupied in the oyster and fishing industry. There is a good harbor at this point, and a daily line of steamers plying between Baltimore and Chestertown, Md.

A new wharf has been built in Rock Hall Harbor, during the past summer, by Dr. Sharp, and it is known as Sharps Wharf. A channel has been dredged from this wharf, extending beyond the bar running out from Swan Point, thus saving a distance of about six miles for the Baltimore Steamers.

Fairlee is a small town about 7 miles N.E. from Rock Hall, it consist of a few scattering

houses and is of little importance.

Tolchester Beach is a prominent and well known summer resort, about 5 miles north of Rock Hall. During the season they have Excursion Steamers twice daily, from Baltimore, carrying from two to three thousand visitors per day. There is a good wharf at this place, extending out into Bay, but there is no harbor, and it a dangerous place for vessels during a storm. The country covered by this sheet is devoted to agriculture, the land is undulating and the soil consists of a heavy clay and loam mixture. It is well covered with woods and water. Special care is given to peach culture and thousands of baskets of peaches are shipped from this section every season and find a ready market in Baltimore and Philadelphia Great quantities of wheat and corn are grown, also the smaller fruits and vegetables.

There are numerous well traveled public roads along the coast, connecting the Landings and wharves with the farms and towns, as this country is very thickly settled.

Water can be secured for the use of steam launches, at Rock Hall, Tolchester Beach, Buck Neck Landing and near the mouth of Still Pond Creek, by hauling it from Wells

situated from 1/4 to 1/2 mile distant.

Coal can be procured at Rock Hall in small quantities, but it could be shipped from Baltimore at a small cost to any of the above named landings and stored close by.

Very respectfully
John Nelson
Assist. C. & G. Survey