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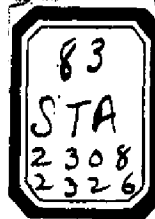
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Form 504	
U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY	
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE	
DESCRIPTIVE REPORT	
Type of Survey	<i>Topographic</i>
Field No.	<i>2308</i>
Office No.	<i>2326</i>
LOCALITY	
State	<i>Maryland</i>
General locality	<i>Potapom River</i>
Locality	<i>Western Shore</i>
<i>Ches Bay. 1897-98</i>	
<i>194</i>	
CHIEF OF PARTY	
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U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

*Henry S. Pritchett*, Superintendent.

State: *Maryland*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

*Topographic* Sheet No. *2308*  
*2326*

LOCALITY:

*Western shore of*  
*Chesapeake Bay*  
*Potomac River to*  
*Brush Point*

*1897+98*

CHIEF OF PARTY:

*William Bowie*

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Write me at: .....

Telegraph me at: .....

My Express Office is: .....

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY,

Washington, D.C.

Dec. 10th, 1898

2-547

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

Sir:-

I have the honor to submit to you this Descriptive Report of original topographical sheets Nos. 2326 and 2308. These sheets embrace the shore line and inland topography on the western shore of Chesapeake Bay, Maryland, within the following limits:-

Sheet No. 2326 extends from the North shore of the Patapsco River to the North shore of Back River, and from Colgate Creek and a line from Colgate Creek to the head of Back River, to the Chesapeake Bay. It will thus be seen to include all the land between the Patapsco and Back Rivers, known as the "Patapsco Neck;" and all of Back River. A portion of Hart Island is also included.

Sheet No. 2308 extends from the North shore of Back River to the South shore of the Bush River. The P.W. & B. Branch of the Penna. R.R. forms its inland limit, and of course it extends to the Bay.

It will be seen that the entire work extends from the North

shore of the Patapsco River to the South shore of the Bush River, and is located in Baltimore and Harford Counties. It was surveyed by the party under my direction during the season of 1897 and 1898.

The general character of the country is low, but beyond the inland limits of the sheets, the ground becomes higher in elevation and is more or less broken. By referring to the sheets, it will be seen that the portion surveyed is in the form of a series of "Necks", formed by the numerous rivers and creeks. These necks are low in elevation, seldom showing heights of more than forty feet. The only land of more than this elevation is found near the inland limits of the sheets, and is located on the Patapsco Neck, where a height of about 160 feet is found; and on Back River Neck, where the highest point is about 105 feet, near Stemmer's Run, Penn. R.R. Station. All elevations are referred to mean highwater of the Chesapeake Bay.

On the rivers and creeks, and their numerous branches, are marshes of greater or less extent, the largest ones being on the Back, Gunpowder, and Bush Rivers. Nearly all the land on Miller's, Hart, and Spry's, Islands is also marshy. These *marshes* are constantly flooded at highwater and consequently are salt.

The greater part of the area surveyed is rather heavily wooded with oak and deciduous trees, interspersed with some pine. Only small portions of the forest is full grown, and there is a considerable amount of scrub. The heights of the forests vary from fifty to eighty feet, and contain underbrush in nearly every instance. There are some peach orchards, but they are of small extent and not numerous. All other fruit

trees are very scarce.

Most of the arable land is rather fertile, and South of the Gunpowder River is used for growing garden products, which are marketed in Baltimore. There is very little land used for grass. Not more than one third of the total area is clear from woods and scrub. Between the Gunpowder and Bush Rivers (Gunpowder Neck), farm products are raised. The truck farms South of the Gunpowder are small and mostly owned by people of German descent, who in most cases live in small houses. This trucking ground being more or less valuable, has caused gradual encroachment on the forest lands; hence the proportion of cleared land is greater than at the time of the original survey, forty or fifty years ago. On the Gunpowder Neck, however, the woods are growing up on some of the cleared portions, owing probably to its smaller value as farming land.

At Sparrow's Point, on the Patapsco River, is located the plant of "The Maryland Steel Company", around which a large village has grown up. A plane table survey of the works and village was made by Ex-Assistant Donn during the year 1891. Owing to the growth of the latter, the old work was revised by me in 1898. The only other factory within the limits of the sheets, is at "Dundalk", where iron pipes are manufactured. This place is located on the Balto. & Sparrow's Point R.R., about four miles from Sparrow's Point.

The chief means of communication are by land; but the rivers and creeks are navigable, nearly to their heads, by small craft.

All the county roads South of the Gunpowder River are kept

in excellent condition, and are made of oyster shells; even many private roads are of this material.. The Eastern Avenue Road extends from Baltimore to Chase, which is near the Gunpowder River; all other roads branch from this <sup>road</sup> point. On Gunpowder Neck the roads are of earth, and are poor in wet weather; the grades are very light, except in a few instances.

The only railroad of importance is the P.W. & B. Branch of the penna. R.R., which, as mentioned before, is the inland limit of the sheets; except at the head of Back River, where the B. & O. R.R. is shown for a short distance. A single track railroad runs from Sparrow's Point to Baltimore.

An electric line runs nearly the whole length of the Eastern Ave. road, ending at Middle River. Another extends from Baltimore to Dundalk.

The rivers and creeks, spoken of before, have very little traffic, this being chiefly the farm products, which are taken to Baltimore. They are used somewhat by small fishing boats.

The streams running into the Rivers and Creeks are very small and the water is all brackish. However, near the head of tidewater, it may be drunk without causing sickness.

There are railroad bridges over the Gunpowder, Bush, and Back Rivers, on the Penna. R.R., which are kept in good condition; as is also the case with the bridge over Bear Creek, approaching Sparrow's Point. There are very few bridges in the country roads, and they are kept in excellent condition.

Owing to most of the country being used for trucking, and not for farm purposes, fences are not needed to any extent, and

are consequently not numerous; they are mostly of wood or wire.

On all the streams there are numerous small fishing and pleasure resorts, called "Shores"; these are patronized by people from Baltimore. On the Bush and Gunpowder Rivers there are some large Clubhouses, which are the headquarters for ~~some~~ very wealthy gunning clubs during the season for shooting ducks and geese.

The sheets are a re-survey. Many changes are found in the topographical features. Contours are run at intervals of 20 feet elevation. The main roads have changed but little, except to be straightened in places. A good many of the old branch roads have been abandoned and new ones have taken their places. Most of the county <sup>is</sup> has increased in population, judging from the greater number of houses and farms. There is <sup>no</sup> ~~marked~~ increase in ~~wealth~~ <sup>wealth</sup>.

Very few new names were found to exist; the old ones are being retained by the inhabitants. The few changes noted seem to be apparently permanent.

Respectfully submitted,

*William Bowie*

Aid C. & G. Survey, Chief of Party.