

2598 2599 2600



Library and Archives.

JAN - 12 1973. 00200

Treasury Department,
U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

J. N. Pittman,
Superintendent.

State: *Md & Va.*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topographic Sheets No. *2598*
2599
2600

LOCALITY:

Patuxent River

1902

CHIEF OF PARTY:

W. I. Vinal.

2598-99-
2600.

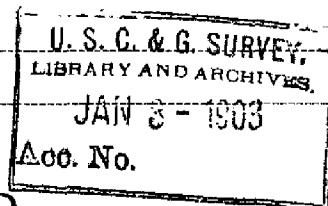
2598 2599 2600

Write me at:

Telegraph me at:

My Express Office is:

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY,

*Washington, D.C.**December 31st., 1902.*

Mr. C. H. Pittman,
Superintendent U. S. Coast & Geodetic Survey,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

The following Descriptive Report relates to Topographical Sheets Nos. 2598, 2599 and 2600, survey of the Potomac River.

The area surveyed in 1902 lies between Lower Cedar Point and St. Clement's Bay, Maryland, and between Raccoon Bay and Nomini Cliffs, Virginia.

The titles of these three sheets, all of which are surveyed on a scale of 1:20,000, are as follows:

No. 2598, "Potomac River: Blackstone Island to Wicomico River, Md. and Va."

No. 2599, "Potomac River: Wicomico River to Colonial Beach, Md. and Va."

No. 2600, "Potomac River: Colonial Beach to

Lower Cedar Point, Md. and Va.

The work on sheet No. 2598 extends only to the limits of the hydrographic survey of the present year: that on sheet No. 2599 was finished in the field, and the survey on sheet No. 2600 is being carried forward by Assistant S. Forney, who has been furnished with a projection covering the same area.

Detailed topography was surveyed back from the shore line for distances varying from one-quarter of a mile to one-half of a mile, in most cases being limited by the line of heavy woods. All buoys, within the limits of the area surveyed, have been located. During the season the can buoys, marking the upper and lower ends of the Kettle Bottom Shoals, were replaced by bell buoys. Some dredging was done on these shoals, south of Swan Point, under the direction of the U. S. Engineer Corps.

Geologically, this section is of recent formation, being classified as Middle Tertiary or Miocene. The deposits, generally descending from the alluvial surface of sand and clay, consist of coarse sand and gravel, marl and shell conglomerate, and finally, a thin band of pebbles and some

ferruginous matter. These materials are often clearly stratified, usually in horizontal belts as shown in the almost perpendicular Horse-Head, Stratford and Gormin Cliffs, on the Virginia shore. Large quantities of yellow and blue mud have been taken from these cliffs. The characteristic fossils, clams, often entire, and the teeth and vertebrae of sharks, distinctly indicate the marine conditions surrounding the origin of these deposits.

In places these cliffs are very much water worn, forming shoulders or butresses, resembling the "Kames" formation at the head of Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts. Above these shoulders the cliffs are vertical.

Back of these cliffs, which are 150 feet or more in height, the land lies in almost level stretches with gradually increasing elevation as it passes inward from the coast, the topography becoming more pronounced when the region is cut by wooded ravines or tidal estuaries. Under these cliffs, except where they are protected by forest growth or outcropping rock, the shore line wears considerably, varying from three to ten feet in a year.

The north, or Maryland, shore is low, the elevation seldom exceeding twelve feet above the high water line, and is protected in many places by a narrow strip of marsh. The country on this side of the river is rolling and generally naturally drained.

The forests, both in Maryland and Virginia, consist largely of pine, oak and cedar, Locust, Hickory, Chestnut, poplar and several varieties of gum. Other species found are cypress, ash, holly, elm, sycamore, walnut, maple, birch, beech, juniper (sometimes called cedar), dogwood, persimmon, etc. Chopped fields, in many places, are covered with oyster shells, the land being well adapted to the cultivation of wheat and corn. Tobacco and fruits are also grown in considerable quantities. The oyster industry, formerly thriving in this section, has been seriously injured by injudicious dredging and by freshets. Pound and sweep-net fishing is carried on extensively. The settlements along this part of the river, owing to the large size of the plantations and farms, are small and widely separated. Colonial Beach, Va., situated between the river and Youvoe Bay, is the only town of importance.

It is a summer resort, and, during the excursion season, steamboats run daily to and from Washington, D.C. Other resorts are found at Wilkinson, Va., River Springs, Colton and Blackstone Island, Md.

Steamboats from Washington land regularly at Lower Cedar Point, Wilkinson, Colonial Beach, Wirth and Mary's Wharves, Rock Point, Bushwood and Colton. Boats of the Ocean Line, running between Baltimore, Md. and Washington, D.C. touch at Bushwood and Rock Point.

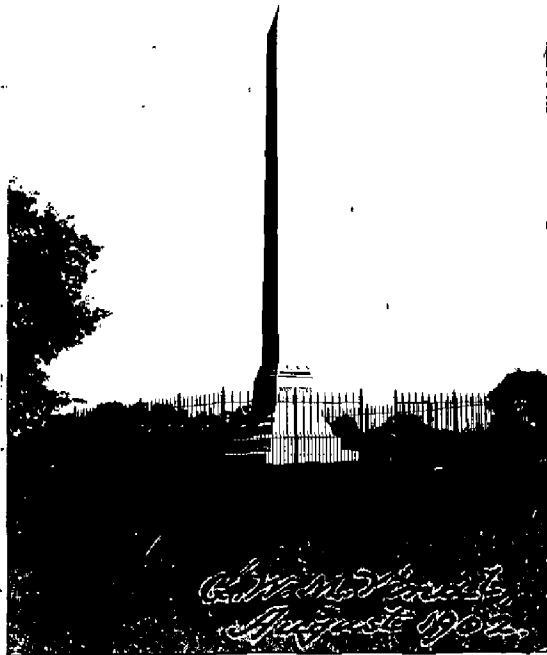
The nearest point at which a railroad reaches the river is at Popo's Creek, Md., about fifteen miles from Colonial Beach.

Near the mouth of Bridge Creek, Va. a long wharf was constructed by the National government for the purpose of landing the materials used in constructing the monument which marks the birthplace of George Washington.

The ground on which the monument stands, together with the road leading to it from the wharf, constitute a government reservation of about twenty acres.

The monument, a handsome marble shaft, is located on Fox or Burnt House Point,

Wahyfield Plantation,
on the west side of Hope's
Creek. It is 56.1 feet
high and stands on
ground elevated 19.6
feet above half tide.
It is surrounded by a
high iron fence. The
only inscription, carved
on the monument, is
"Washington's Birthplace".
The location is shown on
Sheet No. 2599.



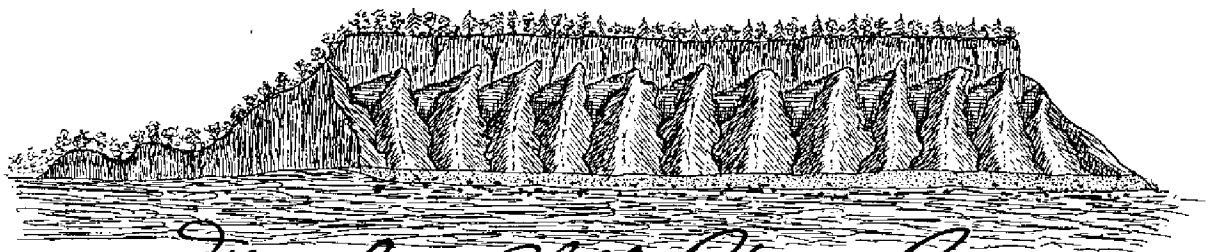
G.W.M. Vinal,
August 1902.

The birthplace of President
James Monroe is also shown,
approximately, on the same
sheet. It is located about
one-half mile from Slave
Landing, near the head
of Monroe Bay, and is
marked by a large Locust
tree at the north west end
of the home lot. The house
in which Monroe was
born has long since dis-

appeared, presumably a few years after
 Yfouroe moved to the village of Oak Grove,
 four miles south.

The birthplace of General Robert E. Lee
 is located on Stratford Plantation, about
 one and a half miles back of the cliffs of
 the same name. (Sheet No. 2598). His an-
 cestors formerly owned and occupied a
 plantation on Gum Bar Point. (Sheet No.
 2599).

Respectfully yours,
 W. Irving Nival,
 Assistant U. S. and G. Survey-



Horseshoe Cliffs, Potomac River,
 eight miles southeast of Colonial Beach, Va.
 These cliffs are 155 feet high and show the
 peculiar "Kauai" (comb) formation described
 on page 3 of this report.