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

J. N. Dillman,
Superintendent.

State: Md. & Va.

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topographic Sheets No. 2598-2600

LOCALITY:
Potomac River

1892

CHIEF OF PARTY:
W. J. Vinal.
Mr. W. T. Pittman,
Superintendent, U. S. C. & G. S. 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. Clements Bay, Maryland, and between Roeux Bay and Dominion Cliff, Virginia.

The titles of these three sheets, all of which are surveyed on a scale of 1:30,000, are as follow:

No. 2598, "Potomac River: Blackstone Island to Nicomico River, Md. and Va."
No. 2599, "Potomac River: Nicomico River to Colonial Beach, Md. and Va."
No. 2600, "Potomac River: Colonial Beach to
Lower Cedar Point, Md. and Va.

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

Details of topography were 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 wood. 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 Shoal, were replaced by bell buoys. Some dredging was done on three Shoals, south of Leuca Point, under the direction of the U.S. Engineers 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, mud and shell compression, eratic, and finally, a thin band of pebbles and sand.
Peninsular waters. These sediments are often clearly stratified, usually in horizontal belts as shown in the almost perpendicular faces of the Virginia Shore. Large quantities of yellow and blue sand have been taken from these cliffs. The characteristic fossils, clams, oysters, cut, and the teeth and vertebra 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 terraces resembling the Tama formation at the head of Weymouth Harbor, Massachusetts. Soon 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 mouth, or Maryland, shore is low, and
comparatively seldom exceeding twelve feet above
the high water line, and is protected in many
places by a raised strip of sand. 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, buck-
ony, chestnut, poplar and several varieties of gum.
Other species found are cypress, arbor, holly, elm, yew,
carolina, saltwood, maple, cherry, beech, juniper (som-
times called cedar), dogwood, persimmon, etc.

Clear fields, in many places, are covered with
oyster shells; the land being well adapted to
the cultivation of wheat and corn. Tobacco and
fruit are also grown in considerable quantities.

The oyster industry, formerly thriving in this
section, has been seriously injured by inju-
dicious dredging and by Perlii. Pond and
swamp eel fishing is carried on extensively.

The settlements along this part of the river, owe-
ing to the large size of the plantations and
farms, are small and widely separated. Colonial
Beach, Va., situated between the river and
Yoocoe Bay, is the only town of importance.
This a resort, and, during the excursion season, steamboats run daily to and from Washington. Other resorts are found at Wilkinsville, Va., River Spring, Colts and Blackstone Island, Md.

Steamboats from Washington land regularly at Loomis Creek Point, Wilkinsville, Colonial Beach, Rappahannock Shores, Rock Point, Rushwood and Colon- 
town. Boats of the Severn Line, running between Baltimore, Md. and Washington, Md., land at
Rushwood and Rock Point.

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

Near the mouth of Bridge Creek, Va., along the wharf now 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,
Northfield Plantation, on the west side of Pope'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 inscriptions carved on the monument, is "Washington's Birthplace", The location is shown on Sheet No. 2579.

The birthplace of President James Monroe is also shown approximately one mile east on the same sheet. It is located about one-half mile from Hare Landing, near the head of Yancey Bay, and is marked by a large locust tree at the north end of the homes lot. The house in which Monroe was born has long since dis-
appeared, presumably a few years after
yourse 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 cliff of
the same name. (Sheet No. 2598). His an-
cestor formerly owned and occupied a
plantation near Queen Anne Point. (Sheet No.
2598).

Respectfully yours,
W. King Meade,
Assistant U.S. Army Survey.

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