Treasury Department,
U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey.

J. N. Dithmar,
Superintendent.

State: Md. & Va.

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topographic Sheets No. 2598-2600

LOCALITY:

Potomac River.

1904

Chief of Party:

W. J. Vinal.
Mr. O. H. Tittmann,
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 1907 lies between Cedar Point and St. Clement's Bay, Maryland, and between Roanoke Bay and Nanticoke Cliff, Virginia.

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

No. 2598, "Potomac River: Blackstone Island to Nanticoke River, Md. and Va."
No. 2599, "Potomac River: Nanticoke 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 W. S. Forney, 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 some 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 new buoys, marking the upper and lower ends of the Kettle Bottom Shoal, were replaced by bell buoys. Some dredging was done on these Shoals, north of Leeward 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 deposit, generally descending from the alluvial surface of sand and clay, consists of coarse sand and gravel, sand and small conglomerate, and finally, a thin band of pebbles and some
Pennsylvanian water. These sediments are often clearly stratified, usually in horizontal beds, as shown in the almost perpendicular faces of the Stratford and Yosemite Cliffs, on the Virginia shore. Large quantities of yellow and blue mud have been taken from these cliffs. The characteristic fossils, clams, often occur, and the teeth and vertebrae of sharks, distinctly indicate the marine conditions surrounding the origin of these deposits.

On places these cliffs are very much water worn, forming shoulders or terraces resembling the Tama formation at the head of Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts. Now these shoulders the cliffs are vertical.

Back of these cliffs, which are 150 feet or more in height, the land lies in almost level stretch 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 of Maryland, shore is low, the ex-
compact seldom exceeding twelve feet above
the high water line, and is protected in many
places by a seaward strip of sandbars. The country on
this side of the river is rolling and generally
naturally drained.
The forests, both in Maryland and Virginia, con-
sist largely of pine, oak and cedar. Locust, buck-
sey, black locust, poplar and several varieties of gum.
Other species found are cypress, ash, holly, elm, Map-
son, eucalyptus, spruce, pine, birch, beech, juniper (now
sometimes 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 inji-
dictions dredging and by Pearl. Pouched and
oyster-shell fishing is carried on extensively.
The settlements along this part of the river, ow-
ing to the large size of the plantations and
farms, are small and widely separated. Colonial
Beach, Va., situated between the river and
Mount Bay, is the only town of importance.
It is a summer resort, and, during the excursion season, steamboats run daily to and from Washington. The other resorts are found at Williamsburg, Va., River Springs, Colton and Blackstone Island, Va.

Steamboats from Washington land regularly at Round Cedar Point. Williamsburg, Colonial Beach, West and Hartjes, Harveys, Rock Point, Nashwood and Col-bens. Boats of the Necessity line, running between Baltimore, Md. and Washington, run at Nashwood and Rock Point.

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

Near the mouth of Bridge Creek, Va., along a wharf was constructed by the National government for the purpose of landing the materials used in constructing the monument which stands as the birthplace of George Washington. The grounds on which the monument stands, together with the road leading to it, form the wharf, constitute a government reservation of about twenty acres.

The monument, a handsome marble shaft, is located on Fox or Burnt House Point,
Washington 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 inscription, carved on the monument, is "Washington's Birthplace." The location is shown on Sheet No. 2599.

The birthplace of President James Monroe is also shown approximately on the same sheet. It is located about one-half mile from Hope Landing, near the head of Yousee 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
yourself 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. King Decimal
Assistant U. S. N. G. Survey

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