

COMPILATION OF
CANAL TRADE ARTICLES FROM
THE NEWS
A Frederick, Maryland newspaper
AND
THE MORNING HERALD
A Hagerstown, Maryland newspaper
1924

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DECEMBER 2016

A. PREFACE

In this compilation, all the **Canal Trade** articles were transcribed from *The News*, a Frederick, Maryland newspaper and *The Morning Herald*, a Hagerstown, Maryland newspapers of the era. The articles were compiled, chronologically in a two-column format, much as they appeared in the newspaper. Articles from *The News* are preceded by *News*, those from *The Morning Herald* are preceded by MH.

The newspapers were found on-line. There may be some duplication or overlapping of stories due to the varied sources, date of publication, and local interest. I did not include the newspaper editorials because those were opinion pieces. The research continues because the reader may yet find a missing date.

The reader will notice the absence of articles from either Cumberland or Washington newspapers. They were searched, to no avail.

Readers are encouraged to search the enclosed report for information on their ancestor, as their time and interest permits. Feel free to send additional observations for the benefit of others.

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Canal Trade 1924.

Explode Myth That City Tried To Keep B. And O. R. R. Out In 1829.

The impression that has existed for years that the citizens of Frederick, about 1829, raised a purse of \$10,000 for the projected Baltimore and Ohio railroad provided it would be kept out of Frederick, was denied in a statement by Dr. William Crawford Johnson, of this city, who is well posted on early affairs in this section.

A revival of the subject arose from an article appearing in the January number of "Farm Life." The article in question was entitled "This Railroad Problem – How to Settle It," and was written by O. M. Kile. In the course of the article, Mr. Kile says: "In sharp contrast with the action of the citizens of Frederick, Maryland, who in the early days raised purse of \$10,000 to give to the projected Baltimore and Ohio railroad – provided they would stay out of Frederick, hundreds of towns from the Alleghenies westward later raised handsome purses, donated lands and bought large blocks of stock in their efforts to induce railroads to pass through."

Dr. Johnson repudiated this statement saying it was just a statement that had been handed down. He went on to say that, "the B. and O. railroad stopped at Frederick for a number of years, because the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal had the right-of-way around Point of Rocks and because the B. and O. could not get its right of way, due to the fact that there was not ground enough, not twice sixty feet. Finally, a compromise was reached and the B. and O. used part of the canal property. In later years, the B. and O. made the tunnel they use now. In those days, they did not know about tunnels.

"During the time the B. and O. had its terminus at Frederick, its tracks were on Market street as far as the corner of Market and Fourth streets. The freight cars were

hauled up Market street, so people could unload freight in front of their store doors, which is certainly a proof that they wanted the railroad.

"All the yards of the B. and O. in the southeastern portion of the town were swamp. That land was given to the B. and O. by the city and the excavation on East All Saints' street was used to fill that up, which is another proof that they wanted it."

Williams in Volume 1, of this "History and Biographical Record of Frederick County, Maryland" in speaking of this subject, states in regard to the B. and O. railroad in obtaining the right of way through Frederick county that it had little difficulty. "The land owners," he went on to say, "were greatly interested in the work and none of them exacted large prices. Many gave the right of way free."

Not only does Williams put to flight all such ideas that the Frederick citizens were in the frame of mind to make an offer to keep the railroad out of the confines of the city, but goes on to give the real reason for it being taken away from Frederick. After saying that in 1829, the Canal Company obtained an injunction against the railroad company, which, with subsequent litigation, put a stop to the progress of the railroad west of Point of Rocks for a period of three or four years from 1832, Williams, in telling of the second injunction, apparently gives the real reason for the railroad removing from Frederick. He has the following to say: "A second injunction was next obtained to restrain the railroad from building or locating its tracks anywhere within Frederick county. This second injunction, as far as it related to that part of the road east of Point of Rocks – was withdrawn by the Canal Company."

News, Sat. 3/1/24, p. 1. **Self Defense Plea.**
– A plea of self-defense was set up for Millard Goodhart, aged about 42, who was placed on trial before a jury composed of seven members of the regular panel and five talisman in the Washington county court Friday morning, on a charge of murder. Ida Downey is foreman of the jury. Goodhart is charged with shooting and killing Chester Smith at the Goodhart home, at the lock on the C. and O. Canal, near Harper's Ferry, on the evening of December 24, 1923.

News, Mon. 3/3/24, p. 1. **Goodhart Freed**
– In less than 45 minutes a jury in the Circuit Court at Hagerstown, Saturday afternoon, freed Millard Goodhart, aged 42, a lock tender near Sandy Hook, who was on trial for the murder of Chester Smith, at Goodhart's home, on Christmas Eve. Only one ballot was taken by the jury. Goodhart made a plea of self-defense and pictured Smith as a leader of a mountain gang. Testimony that he had been brutally beaten by Smith on numerous occasions was corroborated by a number of witnesses. Smith was shot as he was about to enter the Goodhart home late in the evening, having previously been there the same day threatening Goodhart.

News, Sat. 3/29/24, p. 1. **FLOOD SWEEPING THROUGH CUMBERLAND; BALTIMORE ST. SUBMERGED; STREAMS HERE UP**
Locality – One of the heaviest rain storms to visit this section for a long time deluged Frederick county Friday night with the result that from practically all sections came reports of high water.

Reports from various sections of the county are to the effect that high water conditions exist. The Monocacy is reported out of banks and rising rapidly while the Potomac is said to be following suit.

The Potomac river was reported to be several feet high at noon and was rapidly rising, according to reports coming from Brunswick and Point of Rocks. The condition of the river is not alarming, however. The high condition of the Potomac, while to a large extent due to conditions existing in extreme Western Maryland, is also largely due to the heavy rains which swept this section of the State over Friday night.

News, Mon. 3/31/24, p. 1. **Flood Menace Passes County As Waters Recede.** – Flood waters of the Potomac river, which for a time threatened Brunswick, Point of Rocks, Washington Junction and other towns situated along the river front, began to recede this morning at six o'clock.

No damage was reported from any of the places which had been menaced.

In some places the water came close to the edge of the banks of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, but did not reach them. At no place in Frederick county were the tracks of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad inundated, it was reported.

At Brunswick, it was reported that the rive would have to rise an additional four feet to reach the canal and this danger seemed removed early this morning when it was reported the waters had begun to recede.

The big shops of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, which are located along the Brunswick river front, were not endangered. Trains were reported running late but this was because of conditions in the vicinity of Cumberland, it was reported.

The waters of the Potomac started to recede this morning about six o'clock and in a comparatively short time were back within their banks though still much higher than normal, it was stated. The waters of the Potomac and the C. & O. Canal were as one some places when the peak of the flood was reached.

Having a reddish mud color and much unlike the usual peaceful stream it is the Monocacy on Sunday and early this morning was far out of its banks and inundating the adjacent field along its entire route. About 5 o'clock this morning, however, the stream began to recede, and while still abnormally high, was nothing compared to what it was Sunday.

Ibid, p. 5. **Bridges Swept Away.**

Hagerstown, March 31, - The biggest floods since 1902 are playing havoc in those sections of Washington county contiguous to the Potomac river. They are at their worst at Hancock.

The bridge on the Hancock-Hagerstown state road has been swept away and all bridges east and west of Hancock have been washed loose and traffic has been forbidden over them all.

Hancock has been without a water supply since 9 o'clock Sunday morning. The floods drowned the motor in the pump stations on Tonoloway creek, which supplies the municipality with water. For some time the town was also without light and power, but this condition was remedied late Sunday evening.

News, Tue. 4/1/24, p. 3. **FLOOD WATERS LEAVE TOLL OF RUIN IN WAKE – C. and O. Canal is Wrecked –** Cumberland, Md., April 1. – With dogged reluctance the muddy waters of the unleashed Potomac were slowly giving up Monday the story of their devastation in Western Maryland and West Virginia – a tragic tale of death, destroyed farms, ruined homes, scattered families and shattered fortunes.

Six persons are known to be dead, others are reported to have lost their lives, hundreds are homeless and many more are shivering in water-soaked homes just released by the flood, while a stinging

northwester is sweeping the wake of the torrent with freezing temperatures.

Guardsmen Called Out

Snow added to the suffering of the survivors in the district around Cumberland, Monday, a. m. Although the waters had completely subsided west of the city, the mercury is falling steadily and the snowfall is severe in the mountain regions. National Guard companies have been ordered to active service in both Cumberland and Piedmont, where conditions are desperate, to police the cities and prevent looting. Looters are to be shot on sight.

Although the crest of the flood was rushing seaward past Washington Monday, brief messages from the heart of the stricken districts, up the Potomac valley brought news of whole cities still isolated, completely surrounded by angry, swirling waters, with half of their homes and business houses submerged as high as the second stories.

While it will be impossible for many days to ascertain the extent of the property damage suffered by residents of Cumberland and those living in adjacent towns flooded by the turbid waters of the Potomac, leading businessmen and city officials agreed that \$3,000,000 would be a conservative estimate of the damage done.

Canal Ruined

Hagerstown, Md., April 1. – The entire Williamsport division of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal has been destroyed and may never be rebuilt. For more than 100 years it has been a lane of traffic from Cumberland to Washington, and thousands of tons of coal have been carried down it every year. The flood completely covered it, and when the waters receded Monday it was found that its banks had been obliterated. Officers of the company controlling the canal said they frankly

doubted if the damage would ever be repaired.

Hancock Isolated

Hancock, Md., the largest city between Hagerstown and Cumberland, was still inundated Monday. It is located on the banks of the Potomac river, and suffered tremendous damage. Every bridge leading to it has been destroyed, three-fourths of the homes in the place are either wholly or partially submerged, and at noon today the water still reached almost to the Methodist church, occupying the highest ground in the town. Many clubhouses along the river bank were swept away. A Baltimore and Ohio passenger train and hundreds of automobile tourists are marooned there without prospects of being released some time.

Worst Flood Since 1899

It was the worst flood seen in Washington county since 1889. The \$2,000,000 plant of the Potomac-Edison Power Company at Williamsport has lost heavily. The office buildings are completely submerged and the power station escaped only because it had been built high to withstand flood ravages. The workmen were ferried to and from the plant in rowboats.

A pile of coal worth \$20,000 has been washed down the Potomac and the substations at two of its largest dams are still out of commission.

Poultry houses and other small buildings were swept away by the floods all along the Potomac. At Dam No. 4, at Williamsport, the water was found to be 29 feet deep. People living along the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal were forced to abandon their homes by the rising waters.

News, Fri. 4/4/24, p. 1. **To Repair Canal.**

Reports that the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, which sustained severe injury

as the result of the recent flood in the Potomac river, might be abandoned for the season, are denied from official sources and steps have been taken to begin repairs at Cumberland by the Vang Construction Company, which has been given the contract to repair the canal banks at that place. The contract was awarded on a cost plus basis.

News, Wed. 4/9/24, p. 3. **Start Repairs On Canal** – Arrangements have been made to start work this week repairing the damage done to the banks of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal by the recent disastrous flood in the Potomac river. J. T. Richards, supervisor of the Williamsport division, has directed the section foremen to begin work at once. The only possible delay is expected from a shortage of labor, it being found that laborers are scarce and the work may not progress as rapidly as desired on this account. An inspection of the Williamsport division shows that the only damage was done to the towpath bank, which was badly washed in places. It will require several weeks to make the repairs.

News, Tue. 5/13/24, p. 1. **Residents Flee As Potomac River Sweeps In Town.** – Fed by scores of tributaries and transformed from a tranquil stream into a menacing torrent by the recent heavy rains, the waters of the Potomac River today reached a point in this county higher than at any time since the Johnstown flood in 1889. Reports about 10:30 o'clock indicated that the water was more than 30 feet above normal, but that it was expected to begin to recede at almost any time.

Rising from its banks and sweeping across the C. & O. Canal, the hitherto peaceful waters of the Potomac have inundated all adjacent lowlands, compelled nearby residents to vacate their homes and leave all their possessions behind them. All along the path followed by the historic

stream, the same condition prevails. At Point of Rocks, however, conditions are worse than they have been for many years, according to reports from there this morning. Persons living along the canal were forced to seek shelter elsewhere as their homes are more than two-thirds under water. Traffic over the Point of Rocks bridge between Maryland and Virginia is suspended as the water is up to within six feet of the bridge, it is said, thereby cutting off ingress and egress.

News, Tue. 5/13/24, p. 1. **Potomac River Highest In Washington Since Johnstown Flood; Damage Done** – Washington, May 13. – The Potomac river is the highest since 1899 and still rising. Virtually every summer camp along the Georgetown and Virginia palisades has been inundated and the lower floor of boat clubs flooded.

Reports from Harper's Ferry, Harrisonburg, Woodstock, Cumberland and other towns in Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia, along the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers told of serious conditions. Ten bridges were washed away with others rapidly becoming unsafe.

The Norfolk and Western and the Southern Railroads have cancelled all their train service over their main line in the Shenandoah Valley.

At Chain Bridge, five miles from the center of Washington, the water had risen 31 feet above normal with sprays dashing occasionally over the bridge.

Camper had been warned yesterday and succeeded in moving their effects to higher ground along the river.

In many places water of the Potomac and C. and O. canal were merged, damaging the canal so badly that traffic probably will be abandoned for the summer.

The wall in Potomac park was covered in many places.

The Weather Bureau announced at noon that the crest had passed Harper's Ferry and the water was subsiding.

News, Fri. 5/16/24, p. 3. **TAKE TOLL OF FLOOD LOSS ALONG POTOMAC** – Washington, May 16 – As the flood waters of the Potomac began to recede Thursday with the same rapidity that marked their rise, officials of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal set in motion machinery to open that historic waterway to the west as quickly as possible.

Although much of the canal is still submerged beneath the overflow from the Potomac and the total damage cannot be estimates, contracts were let today for the repair of the two serious breaks in the banks of the canal in the vicinity of Chain Bridge.

When the sustaining walls gave way during the flood, only a little more than a month after a similar cataract washed away great gaps in them, reports were circulated that the damage was so great that the breaks would never be repaired and the canal, which has been a highway to the west for more than a century, would be abandoned.

On Tour of Inspection

Officials of the company started out for a tour of inspection Thursday, however, and they are proceeding up the canal as quickly as the receding river releases it from its muddy grip. No decision to abandon the canal will be reached, at least until the inspection is completed, and examination of the banks thus far has been so reassuring that it was decided to let contracts for repairing the Chain Bridge breaks immediately.

Hundreds of families whose homes were inundated by the flood began to take stock Thursday. Most of them found the furniture of their homes ruined and in many cases, it is believed the houses will never again be tenable, several feet of sticky, yellow mud was left on floors and walls of

the water and the danger of disease appeared menacing.

Structures Weakened

In addition, the structures themselves have been seriously weakened. Scarcely had the river backed out of the houses than the refugees poured in, taking stock of the damage. Where two days ago the river banks were lined with bits of furniture and clothing salvaged before the flood reached its crest, now there are rapidly rising great piles of mud-smearred, ruined furnishings.

It will be days before the real damage is known. Some estimates for this section were placed at \$1,000,000, but most persons regard this sum as exorbitant. A majority of the homes swept by the flood were small – some of them mere camps – and there was no farm land along the river here to be damaged. Only a few miles up the valley, however, the damage will run well into several millions of dollars.

Crop Prospects Ruined

Hundreds of acres of crops have been made desolate for at least a season, and several towns were virtually entirely submerged. Messages from Point of Rocks, just this side of Harper's Ferry, stated the waters were fast disappearing there. Harper's Ferry is free today. Railroad traffic is moving once more over the Maryland main lines, which had been completely blocked for several days.

It will be months before normal conditions are fully restored in that section of the Potomac Valley. One of the most serious consequences of the flood was the partial destruction of the highway bridge connecting Harper's ferry with the main highway in Maryland.

A hundred feet of the bridge was washed down the Potomac Wednesday and the only approach to Harper's Ferry from Maryland now is via Williamsport, twenty-five miles above. The bridge was the

gateway to the much traveled Shenandoah Valley.

News, Fri. 6/13/24, p. 7. **NO "Y" CAMP** – In all probability there will be no Y. M. C. A. camp at Big Pool this year for the young boys and girls of this city. The recent floods played havoc with the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and no water has as yet been put in the canal. Consequently, there is at present no Big Pool.

Physical Director Alvin G. Quinn, of the local "Y," stated Thursday evening that he had received no word as to when the canal would be filled and the summer camp made suitable for the campers.

He must receive word prior to June 20 to do any good for the prospective campers here.

MH, Fri. 8/1/24, p. 1. **CLOSE C. AND O. CANAL** – The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, over which coal from the George's Creek region above Cumberland has been shipped to Georgetown for many decades, will not be reopened this year. The canal was damaged by the two floods this spring, and an effort has been made for several months to repair its banks, but with little success.

It was decided that it would be useless to reopen it this season, and all employees were discharged. The few boats left are in such condition that they cannot be used again, it is said.

The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which owns the waterway, has not made any plans as to its future, it was asserted. In the event the company fails to operate, it is understood, an ancient agreement forces the owners to return the land through which it passes to the heirs of the original owners who donated the land to the canal company.

Engineers who recently surveyed the route of the canal recommended that it be used for a railroad line from Washington to Cumberland.

Ibid, p. 15. **CANAL IS CLOSED – Famous Waterway May Never Be Opened Again** – With the announcement Wednesday that no attempt will be made to operate the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal this year orders were received at Williamsport and elsewhere along the waterway that all employees of the waterway would be laid off September 1. The only exception to the order is the retention of Frank Wyand, who had charge of the level below Williamsport. He will have charge from Big Slackwater to Dam No. 5.

The announcement and orders are interpreted as meaning that the waterway will never be operated again. It is said that what few boats the company has are in such condition that they can never be used again, especially after remaining idle an entire season.

[Transcriber's Note: "Canal Trade 1924" concludes this series of reports. However, the following 1931 article was found accidentally and is added here. In 1924 the court overseeing the C&O Canal under the trustees of the 1844/1878 bonds approves the non-repair of the canal and suspension of navigation on it. The C&O Canal Company continues as the owner with a small staff and income from water and property leases, etc. Mr. G. L. Nicholson remains as the general manager of the C. & O. Canal Company until the canal is finally condemned by the District and Washington County courts, and sold by newly-appointed receivers in 1938.]

Wed. 4/8/31, p. 9. **WANT "HUMP" IN LEFT FIELD STRAIGHTENED** – Whether or not the left field fence at Community Park will be straightened out will be known by this evening since Col. Nelson W. Russler, president of Community Baseball and G. L. Nicholson, general manager of the C. & O. Canal Towage Co.,

of Washington, are to settle the question here this afternoon.

Will Take Out "Hump"

Mr. Nicholson was due here early this afternoon from Washington to confer with local baseball officials and A. Taylor Smith, the canal company's attorney here, about the "hump" in the local ball park. Henry W. Schaidt, local engineer, surveyed the park here and drew a plan for straightening the fence, which would mean that the left field barrier in that arena, will be dropped back on an angle to meet the center field.

It is expected that Mr. Nicholson will agree to the plan which has been talked about for several years but never before broached to the canal country executive. It will be necessary to erect the new fence and at the same time maintain a roadway behind the park to provide an entrance to the other property of the company.

Will Kill "Fluke" Homers

The improvement, if agreed upon, will add much to the local enclosure and will make it perhaps the biggest park in the circuit and a real one so far as the clouting of honest home runs is concerned. The fence was always considered "duck soup" for lusty left field hitters and many a long fly that went over it for home runs in the past will be easy outs in the future.

If the plan meets the approval of Mr. Nicholson the work of tearing down the old fence and erecting the new one will have to be rushed since the squad of 36 players is due here to start training next Wednesday, Manager Leo Mackey is due her Friday.¹

¹ *Cumberland Evening Times*, Cumberland, Md.