

COMPILATION OF
CANAL TRADE ARTICLES FROM
THE NEWS
A Frederick, Maryland newspaper
and
THE MORNING HERALD
THE DAILY MAIL
two Hagerstown, Maryland newspapers
1924

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A. PREFACE

In this compilation, all the **Canal Trade** articles were transcribed from *The News*, a Frederick, Maryland newspaper, *The Morning Herald* and *The Daily Mail* two 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, and those from *The Daily Mail* are preceded by DM.

The first two newspapers were found on-line, while the latter newspaper was researched by Richard Ebersole. Thanks, Dick. 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.

DM, 1/17/24, p. 1. **POTOMAC RIVER RISING; FLOOD DANGER FEARED**

The Potomac river is rising rapidly today as the result of recent heavy rains and reports from Hancock and Williamsport at noon stated that a flood is feared. The river was eight feet above normal at Dam No. 5, this morning and the water is still rising

The Potomac is out of bank at Williamsport at noon and still rising at the rate of a foot to the hour. No damage has been reported. Precautions have been taken to protect property.

The Antietam and Conococheague creeks and all small streams are high and acres of farm land in low sections are under water and many sections of county roads are flooded.

DM, Tue. 2/5/24, p. 1. **MACHINE PLUNGES INTO C. & O. CANAL** – Two Middletown youths narrowly escaped death last night when the automobile in which they were riding plunged into the flume of the C. & O. canal at the bottom of the steep hill across the river from Shepherdstown. The machine dropped twenty feet, but neither of the occupants were injured. The identity of the youths, who walked into Sharpsburg is unknown, but the machine was owned by J. Austin YOUNKINS, Middletown. The car was badly damaged.

News, Fri. 2/8/24, p. 1. **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.

DM, Sat. 3/29/24, p. 1. **Cumberland Flooded As Creek Overflows.** – With the Potomac river rising 30 inches an hour at Cumberland, where thousands of dollars damage has already been done and the entire George's Creek region flooded, the river in this section is expected to reach a high and dangerous stage tonight or tomorrow morning with indications of probably one of the worst floods in years. At noon today, the Potomac was seven feet above normal at Williamsport and Dam No. 5, where water gauges of the Potomac Edison Company showed the water has been steadily increasing all morning.

Preparations are being made at all points along the river to meet flood conditions that are sure to come within the next 12 hours. Extreme danger is felt for the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal by the river overflowing the waterway. Warnings have been sent to Hancock, Williamsport and other places in the lower river region, where great alarm is felt over the situation.

Big Flood Expected

Heavy rains in Western Maryland since yesterday and the melting of a mass of snow in the mountains in that section are the cause of the serious condition and what may prove one of the worst floods in the Potomac river region in many years.

Heavy rains fell throughout this section all last night adding to the danger and causing the Antietam and Conococheague Creeks to leap up at a dangerous rate. Both creeks were out all banks at noon today and are still rising.

One and half inches of rain had fallen by noon today, J. A. Miller, of Keedysville, declared. The streams in that section overflowed their banks this morning.

Trains Annulled

Announcement was made from the Western Maryland offices here today that on account of the unprecedented flood there

will be no passenger service between Hagerstown and Cumberland today or tomorrow. It is hoped to resume passenger service between these points by Monday. All through passenger service on the Western Maryland lines west of Cumberland is annulled and will be probably several days before through passenger service in that territory can be resumed.

Bridges Gone

According to special advices from Cumberland this morning, Western Maryland trains are marooned at Keyser, several bridges on the line being swept away. A C. & P. train is marooned at Barton. In Cumberland gangs of men are guarding the Western Maryland bridge, logs and other debris rushing down against it.

Cumberland Flooded

Tremendous damage has been done in Cumberland, some of the streets being flooded by Wills Creek. Practically all of the business section of Cumberland is inundated and the damage will run into many thousands of dollars. The bathing beach along the Potomac was washed away.

Mechanic street, the main artery east and west and the principal business street is under two feet of water and the first floors of all the banks and other buildings are flooded. The water raced through the street with such force as to tear up the wooden paving blocks. Sections of Baltimore street also are flooded and lower parts of the city. Families are leaving their homes

Other Towns Inundated

Piedmont, Barton, Westernport and other town in the George's Creek are inundated. At Piedmont the principal streets are flooded to a depth of several feet and in the lower sections of the town residents are abandoning their homes.

Dam Breaks

Washington, March 29. – Shores of western Maryland towns have been flooded by the breaking of the Stony River dam, at the

headwaters of the Potomac river, according to reports reaching here today. No casualties have been reported but the damage is expected to run into thousands of dollars.

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 river 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.

DM, Mon. 3/31/24, p. 1. **Receding Water Is Expected To Reveal Wrecked Canal Banks** – The most dangerous flood in the Potomac river since the Johnstown deluge of 1889, which was 35 feet, reached its highest last night at Williamsport, 28 feet above normal and at daylight this morning the water began receding. Reports from Williamsport and Hancock at noon stated that the river had fallen off six feet. Colder weather following the flood helped check the rising water.

While no great amount of property damage in this section was reported grave fears are felt for the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, which has probably received a death blow. The canal parallels the Potomac from Cumberland to Washington and was flooded for many miles. Canal officials stated that the extent of the damage to the waterway will not be known until the water recedes and an inspection can be made.

Practically the entire Williamsport division of the canal was inundated, the rushing current from the streams sweeping over the waterway with the probability that the banks will be badly damaged and the channel filled with bars.

Other sections of the canal above and below Williamsport have been under deep water since Saturday night. At Williamsport the river rushed over the towpath and aqueduct and at other places between that point and the lock. Below the lock the channel was entirely submerged.

The river rose steadily from Saturday morning, the rise increasing to a foot to the hour as the waters spread in every direction. The Conococheague creek was backed up for more than a mile, overflowing roads and many acres.

Plants Submerged

The water power plants of the Potomac Edison Company at Dams No. 4 and 5 on the Potomac river were submerged and put out of commission cutting off Martinsburg and other towns. Poles carrying light and telephone and telegraph poles were swept down crippling communication.

The clubhouse of F. W. McGraw, along the Potomac two miles above Sharpsburg, was swept away by the flood and other small buildings and boats went down in the current. Clubhouses owned by residents of Hagerstown were protected and saved.

Thousand See Flood

Thousands visited Williamsport yesterday to view the flood, most of the sightseers being from Hagerstown. Residents of Williamsport report more people and automobiles were in the town than ever known. Additional cars were run on the trolley line and run on a fifteen minutes schedule. All cars were jammed.

Between 10,000 and 15,000 persons were attracted to Williamsport during the

day. Streams of automobiles lead in and out of town all day. At Halfway, 1,185 automobiles passed through from Hagerstown to Williamsport in an hour.

Hancock Not Damaged

The damage at Hancock will amount to only a few thousand dollars. The river was receding this morning, having dropped about four feet from the high mark reached yesterday afternoon. The state highway both east and west of that town was opened again at 10 o'clock last night.

The water, which was standing 18 inches deep on the floor of the West End garage in Hancock, left the building early today as the river dropped. The garage is at the lowest point in the western section of the town. The water supply was threatened for a time, but the pumps were moved.

Pump House Flooded

The river overflowed into the C. & O. Canal from Weverton to Point of Rocks last night. The water was running into the pump house at the latter place, cutting off all heat and light from the railroad station at that place.

It was impossible to cross the bridge which spans the Potomac river at Point of Rocks, the river cutting off the road from both sides of the bridge.

Truck Marooned

A truck of the Imperial Ice Cream Co. was marooned on the bridge over the Potomac at Point of Rocks.

The state road at Sandy Hook was under water this morning, and traffic was halted in that section. Shenandoah street in Harper's Ferry was under water, but no damage caused yet.

Freighted with debris of every kind the river, broadening at Williamsport, spread over the lowlands toward the canal and town with a steady and menacing increase until it reached its highest during last night. At 6 o'clock this morning the turbid waters had receded three feet and there has been a

gradual decrease since. Great relief was felt when the river stopped rising.

Spreading to more than twice its normal size, the river looked like a sea reaching from the berm bank of the canal to the West Virginia fields. Nearly the entire width of the river was a raging current.

Power Plant Isolated

Standing alone and isolated on its massive concrete foundation, the two million dollar power plant of the Potomac Edison Company seemed to defy the flood. All around it raced a swift current with from ten to fifteen feet of water submerging the railroad tracks. The banks, which were built of cinders and earth, it is believed, have been badly damaged. The yard engine and three car loads of coal were placed on the highest point of the hump, out of the reach of the flood. The coal elevator had been filled and there was enough coal on hand to keep the plant running for a week.

A large pile of coal, probably \$20,000 worth at the plant, was nearly all swept away, but much of this it is believed, can be saved. The hospital and office buildings at the canal bank were nearly covered. As the water rose Saturday night all of the records and supplies were removed, two teams and gangs of men working all night and until late Saturday, removing them to the Goddard building.

Families living along the canal at Williamsport and above and below that place were removed, together with their household goods, on flat-boats and canal boats, which were tied to trees.

Tannery is Closed

The Conococheague creek reached a dangerous height over Sunday and being backed up by the more rapid rise in the Potomac, overflowed acres of land and the pump house of W. W. Byron and Sons big tannery and several dwellings near the canal. The pumps were removed from the pump

house and the tannery was unable to operate today.

Employees of the tannery living near the plant and their families were cut off from the town by the approaches to the stone bridge over the creek, being flooded for some distance on both sides. They were forced to cross on the Western Maryland trestle to get supplies. The creek overflowed the baseball grounds to the top of the railroad tracks at the edge of Williamsport and several houses were surrounded.

Water rose high in the first story of Kemp's Mill and overflowed the road along the creek for some distance. A bridge over the stream at Lefevers farm was carried away and fencing was swept down by the current.

Ibid, **DESTRUCTION IN BIG FLOOD** – The Potomac reached its highest last night at Williamsport, 28 feet above normal, the highest since the Johnstown deluge in 1889. The water is receding.

Grave fears are felt for the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, which is flooded for miles and probably damaged beyond repair in many places.

Property loss in this section as a result of flood in Potomac and creeks will amount to thousands of dollars.

Twelve lives and \$4,500,000 in property damage in devastated regions of Western Maryland, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Beeman, their two children and David Beeman of Kitzmiller, Md., were drowned when a tree to which they were clinging in the flood was uprooted and swept away.

J. Bowdin Duryee, a government clerk of Washington, was drowned in the flood.

Three children perished in the flood at Melcroft, Pa.

Scores of families are homeless.

Militia is patrolling the streets of Cumberland, where all power service has been paralyzed.

The city is isolated from the rest of the State. Telephone and telegraph wires are down and until today there is no possible means of communication, except by auto couriers.

Railroad traffic throughout the flooded area was demoralized when bridges were destroyed and many miles of track washed away.

A tabulation of reports from half a dozen states this afternoon showed a total of fourteen deaths since flood waters began rising on various watersheds in their district. The deaths are expected to be increased when complete reports are made.

Ibid, **Relief Work Is Started At Cumberland** – Damage in this city by flood waters in the Potomac river and its tributaries is estimated at from \$1,000,000 and \$1,500,000. The city, especially the business and downtown sections present a pathetic scene as the waters receded displaying ruin.

Streets are left strewn with wreckage and covered with mud and the streets since last night have been patrolled by National Guardsmen who are assisting the police. Help is being rushed here by the Baltimore and Ohio and Western Maryland Railroads and Mayor Koon and the city officials have started work of resuscitation.

Traffic is still paralyzed in many directions and additional reports of damage are coming in. Wire service is badly crippled. Towns in Garrett and Allegany counties in the Potomac river region suffered severely. Traffic is being resumed on the State roads.

Railroad traffic in and out of Cumberland was at a standstill. Five B. and O. passenger trains including the Capitol Limited, were flood bound at various points

while one Western Maryland train was stranded three miles west of Keyser, West Virginia. The passengers from that train spent the day at Keyser. The railroads were the heaviest hit by the flood. The Capitol Limited finally reached Cumberland at noon. The four-span steel bridge of the Western Maryland across the Potomac here was swept away as were other structures at Maple Run and Oakmont and in fact were under 3 feet of water. In addition to roadbeds and shacks of both Western Maryland and B. and O. being destroyed, many freight cars were washed away.

Street Paving Ruined

The greatest damage in Cumberland was the destruction of four miles of newly paved streets. Foundations of many buildings were weakened, plate glass windows broken and much damage to merchandise was caused by flooded basements. In the territory loss was the destruction of the interstate bridge connecting Westernport, Maryland and Piedmont, West Virginia. That bridge, a structure more than half mile long, was swept away when the Potomac flooded an area of a mile from each end. The only section of Cumberland under water tonight was the tenement district where the river broke through the C. and O. Canal and flooded Wineow street. The water there reached a depth of 15 feet but had receded tonight to 5 feet and was falling rapidly.

Three men who were reported lost when the Western Maryland bridge was washed away, jumped to safety a moment before it went. Three policemen were injured when their automobile overturned while answering an emergency call.

Cumberland was without power again tonight owing to failure of the power plant during the flood.

Tonight a few of the principal streets were lighted by a local tire manufacturing

company but the remainder of the city was in darkness.

Guard Called Out

Tonight, the National Guard Company is patrolling the town to keep order and aid the police force in handling the situation. The Red Cross held a meeting to arrange for immediate relief measures, with the Salvation Army, for persons whose homes were washed away at Ridgely. The Western Maryland fed refugees in its cars.

Last night a B. and O. train went through to Altoona, Pa., the first train out of Cumberland since yesterday morning.

The estimated loss of over a million dollars here included a half million damages to the Western Maryland Railroad property; \$50,000 to the American Cellulose and Chemical Manufacturing plant; \$25,000 or \$50,000 to the Fort Cumberland Hotel, whose guests waded through several feet of water in the lobby, and whose supplies stored in the basement were a total loss; many hundreds of thousand of dollars to Footer's Dye Works, the Kelly-Springfield Tire Company and other industries; and large losses to merchants on Baltimore, Liberty, Center and Mechanic streets, whose goods were destroyed by water.

Cumberland newspapers were crippled, the staff of the *Times*, the afternoon daily, being marooned in the office until 2 a.m. Sunday, when a rescue party arrived. Men workers carried the girls across the rising water while they could still wade, and later about twelve of the men escaped from the building by means of a rope stretched across to a Western Maryland railroad building, a distance of 30 or 40 feet. By going hand over hand over the rope, they were able to get to a section where the water was not so deep and were then carted to dry land. Up until late last night no power was obtainable to work the presses although newspaper staff were in the office waiting

for the moment when extras could be gotten out.

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.