

BIG ANNEMESSEX RIVER, MD.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

TRANSMITTING,

WITH A LETTER FROM THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS, REPORTS ON
PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION AND SURVEY OF BIG ANNEMESSEX
RIVER, MD., WITH A VIEW TO PROVIDING A SUITABLE CHANNEL
FROM CLEAR CREEK POINT TO MUDDY CREEK POINT.

DECEMBER 10, 1914.—Referred to the Committee on Rivers and Harbors and ordered
to be printed, with illustrations.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, December 9, 1914.

The SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a letter from the Chief of Engineers, United States Army, of this date, together with copies of reports from Col. Lansing H. Beach, Corps of Engineers, dated January 2 and October 13, 1914, with map, on preliminary examination and survey, respectively, of Big Annemessex River, Md., made by him in compliance with the provisions of the river and harbor act approved March 4, 1913.

Very respectfully,

LINDLEY M. GARRISON,
Secretary of War.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS,
Washington, December 9, 1914.

From: The Chief of Engineers, United States Army.
To: The Secretary of War.
Subject: Preliminary examination and survey of Big Annemessex River, Md.

1. There are submitted herewith, for transmission to Congress, reports dated January 2 and October 13, 1914, with map, by Col. Lansing H. Beach, Corps of Engineers, on preliminary examination and survey, respectively, of Big Annemessex River, Md., with a view to providing a suitable channel from Clear Creek Point to Muddy Creek Point, authorized by the river and harbor act approved March 4, 1913.

2. Big Annemessex River is a tributary of Tangier Sound, Chesapeake Bay, which it enters a few miles north of the town of Crisfield, Md. The navigable portion of the river is really a bay or inlet about a mile and a half wide at its mouth and extending to the northeast, with a navigable depth of 7 feet or greater for a distance of about 6 miles, at which point it dwindles to an insignificant depth. Fords Wharf, which is located between Clear Creek Point and Muddy Creek Point, is practically the only landing on the north side of the stream and serves as an outlet for the commerce of several settlements with an aggregate population of between 3,000 and 4,000, engaged principally in fishing, oystering, and crabbing, and to a lesser extent in trucking. The improvement desired by interested parties is stated by the district officer to be a channel 8 feet deep at mean low water through the middle ground or shoal area lying between the main channel of the Big Annemessex River and the wharf. He submits a plan providing for a channel of the desired depth of 8 feet and a width of 100 feet, with a turning basin at the wharf, at an estimated cost of \$5,600, and recommends that improvement to this extent be undertaken by the United States, provided that local interests shall first repair the wharf, restore the road thereto, and construct a suitable terminal building within one year from the date of the appropriation by the United States for the improvement. The division engineer concurs in the views and recommendations of the district officer.

3. These reports have been referred, as required by law, to the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, and attention is invited to its report herewith, dated November 24, 1914, concurring in the views of the district officer and the division engineer.

4. After due consideration of the above-mentioned reports, I concur in the views of the district officer, the division engineer, and the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, and therefore report that the improvement by the United States of Big Annemessex River, Md., is deemed advisable to the extent of providing a channel 8 feet deep at mean low water and 100 feet wide from the main channel of the river to Fords Wharf, with a turning basin at the wharf, as shown on accompanying map, at an estimated cost of \$5,600, provided that local interests first restore the wharf and the road leading thereto and construct a suitable terminal building as proposed by the district officer. The full amount of the estimate should be provided in one appropriation.

DAN C. KINGMAN.
Chief of Engineers, United States Army.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF ENGINEERS FOR RIVERS AND HARBORS
ON SURVEY.

[Third indorsement.]

THE BOARD OF ENGINEERS FOR RIVERS AND HARBORS,
November 24, 1914.

To the CHIEF OF ENGINEERS, UNITED STATES ARMY:

1. The following is in review of the district officer's reports of preliminary examination and survey of Big Annemessex River, Md., with a view to providing a suitable channel from Clear Creek Point to Muddy Creek Point, submitted in compliance with the act of March 4, 1913.

2. Big Annemessex River is a tributary or arm of Tangier Sound. The locality under consideration is about 3.5 miles by channel from the junction of the Big Annemessex River with the sound. There are several villages or settlements on the peninsula between the Big Annemessex and the Manokin Rivers, having an aggregate population of between 3,000 and 4,000. The principal industry of the community is fishing, oystering, and crabbing, although there is considerable gardening, and several canning factories are in operation. Practically the only landing for this locality on the Big Annemessex is Fords Wharf, up to which there is now a channel with an available depth at mean low water slightly in excess of 6 feet. The improvement desired is the deepening of the channel of approach and a turning basin in the vicinity of the wharf. The commerce by water consists of about 9,500 tons, composed principally of coal, wood, building material, and sea food.

3. A plan of improvement is presented which provides for a channel 8 feet deep and 100 feet wide, with a turning basin at the wharf, at a total estimated cost of \$5,600. It is stated that no data are available on which to base an estimate of the cost of maintenance, but that this item will probably not be excessive. The district officer reports that in his opinion the locality is worthy of improvement, provided, however, that interested parties first repair the wharf, restore the road leading thereto, and construct a suitable terminal building within one year from the date of the appropriation by the United States for the improvement. The division engineer concurs in this view.

4. It appears that due to inadequate facilities a steamboat which formerly used this landing has been discontinued, and that commerce is seriously inconvenienced thereby. The cost of the improvement necessary to meet the demands of navigation is comparatively small, and in view of this fact and the belief that there is sufficient commerce, present and prospective, to warrant this expenditure, the board concurs with the district officer and the division engineer and recommends the provision of a channel 8 feet deep and 100 feet wide, with a turning basin at the wharf, as shown on the accompanying map, at a total first cost of \$5,600, provided, however, interested parties restore the wharf and the road leading thereto and construct a suitable terminal building as proposed by the district officer. The whole amount of the estimate should be made available in one appropriation.

5. In compliance with law, the board reports that there are no questions of terminal facilities, water power, or other subjects so related to the project proposed that they may be coordinated therewith to lessen the cost and compensate the Government for expenditures made in the interests of navigation.

For the board:

W. M. BLACK,
Colonel, Corps of Engineers,
Senior Member of the Board.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION OF BIG ANNEMESSEX RIVER, MD.

UNITED STATES ENGINEER OFFICE,
Baltimore, Md., January 2, 1914.

From: The District Engineer Officer.

To: The Chief of Engineers, United States Army
(Through the Division Engineer).

Subject: Preliminary examination of Big Annemessex River, Md.

1. The following report is submitted on the preliminary examination of Big Annemessex River, Md., with a view to providing a suitable channel from Clear Creek Point to Muddy Creek Point, as called for in the river and harbor act of March 4, 1913, and referred to this office by department letter of March 18, 1913.

2. Big Annemessex River is a tributary of Tangier Sound, as that portion of Chesapeake Bay is termed which lies between the eastern Shore and the chain of islands opposite the mouth of the Potomac River. The river enters this sound a few miles north of the town of Crisfield, Md., which forms the center of the fishing industries of lower Chesapeake Bay. The navigable portion of the river is formed by what is really a bay or inlet from Tangier Sound, about a mile and a half wide at its mouth and extending to the northeast, with a navigable depth of 7 feet or greater for a distance of about 6 miles, at which point it dwindles to an insignificant depth.

3. Fords Wharf is about 2½ miles above the mouth of the waterway, measuring in a direct line, and probably about 3½ miles by the boat channel. It is on the north side of the stream and between Clear Creek Point and Muddy Creek Point, being considerably nearer the latter. The Annemessex lies on the south side of the peninsula, about 10 miles long and not over 5 miles wide, between it and the Manokin River on the north. This peninsula contains the settlements of Rumbley, Landonville, Fairmount, Upper Fairmount, Freetown, Upper Freetown, Inverness, Manokin, Westover, and Revells Neck, with an aggregate population of between 3,000 and 4,000 people. Although these are localities with separate names, the settlements practically blend into each other and the roads are lined with almost a continuous row of houses. These settlements contain 25 general merchandise establishments, 7 oyster packing houses and canneries, 5 crab packing concerns, and 1 lumber manufactory. This locality produces considerable garden truck and material used in the canning factories, but it may be said that more inhabitants are engaged in oystering, fishing, and crabbing than in all other occupations combined, and the yield from the river and

adjacent waters is probably greater than that derived from the land. Unfortunately, no means of ascertaining this commerce with accuracy are available.

4. Fords Wharf forms practically the only landing on the north side of the Big Annemessex. It is a privately owned structure of open piles in front of a solid filled bulkhead, on which are several frame storehouses and sheds with light cranes for handling freight. It is a general public landing, at which wharfage is charged, but it is open to all on equal terms.

5. It is reported that 20 schooners of from 50 to 60 tons, and from 4½ to 8 feet draft; 75 to 80 bugeyes of from 10 to 20 tons, and from 3 to 5 feet draft; from 200 to 300 skipjacks of from 3 to 10 tons, and from 3 to 4 feet draft; and from 18 to 20 motor boats of from 3 to 10 tons, and from 4 to 7 feet draft, regularly use Fords Wharf, besides other vessels intermittently.

6. There is at present no regular steamboat line to Fords Wharf. The steamboats of the Baltimore, Chesapeake & Atlantic Railway formerly made regular trips to this locality, but were withdrawn about six years ago. A letter from the vice president and general manager of the company to one of the citizens stated the reason as follows:

Our steamers had a great deal of difficulty in making that wharf on medium low tide, and a great deal of difficulty in finding the entrance in foggy weather by reason of the channel not being buoyed out, and one of the principal reasons why we were forced to give it up as a landing place was those two conditions, which caused us at times a very great delay and injured our connection at Crisfield, which was a railroad connection.

I believe if the channel was made sufficiently wide and deep and properly buoyed out that steamboat facilities would be renewed there again, and I hope you may be successful in procuring an order for a survey.

7. The commerce of Fords Wharf, by water, is as follows:

Receipts:	Value.
200 tons of coal, at \$6.....	\$1,200
200 tons of wood, at \$4.....	800
200 tons of building materials, at \$50.....	10,000
	<hr/> 12,000
Shipments:	
2,000 tons of oysters, at \$10.....	20,000
1,000 tons of crabs, at \$30.....	30,000
1,000 tons of potatoes, at \$20.....	20,000
5,000 tons of canned goods, at \$40.....	200,000
	<hr/> 270,000

The incoming commerce of the peninsula tributary to Fords Wharf which comes by rail, is as follows:

1,000 tons of flour, at \$50.....	\$50,000
500 tons of meal, at \$40.....	20,000
1,000 tons of wheat, at \$30.....	30,000
500 tons of corn, at \$30.....	15,000
500 tons of mill feed, at \$20.....	10,000
2,000 tons of general merchandise, at \$50.....	100,000
	<hr/> 225,000

The shipments by railroad from the locality are said to consist of cattle, sheep, hogs, poultry, eggs, oysters, crabs, fish, strawberries,

tomatoes, potatoes, wheat, and corn, and are claimed to amount to \$500,000. No itemized account of these could be obtained.

8. Freight rates from Baltimore are given as follows:

	By rail.	By water
Coal.....per ton.....	\$2.50	\$0.80
Fertilizer.....do.....	2.90	1.00
Corn, wheat, rye, oats.....per bushel.....		.0
Potatoes.....per barrel.....	.38	.15
Eggs.....per crate.....	.37	.15

9. The wording of the clause directing the preliminary examination states "with a view to providing a suitable channel from Clear Creek Point to Muddy Creek Point." This does not cover, or truly represent, the improvement desired, which is stated by the people interested to be a channel through the middle ground or shoal area, believed to consist of hard sand and shells, lying between the main channel of the Big Annemessex River and the wharf. This middle ground is believed to be about 600 or 700 feet across, with its inner edge about 400 feet from the wharf, and has only 4½ feet over it at mean low tide, the rise and fall of the tide being about 2½ feet.

10. Interested parties state that a channel 8 feet deep at mean low water, and from 100 feet to 300 feet wide, as might be granted, is what is desired. It is probable that the length of channel would be about 700 feet. It is claimed that the dredging of such a channel would result in both an increased amount of water-borne commerce and a reduction in freight rates to the locality.

11. A survey would not be expensive, and, if the shoal area in front of the wharf is no larger than has been stated to this office, the improvement desired could be made at reasonable cost and would probably result in considerable benefit to the locality. It is therefore regarded as worthy of a survey to determine the cost of the improvement indicated.

12. There are no questions of water-power development or land reclamation which can be considered in conjunction with the proposed improvement. There are no bridges over the waterway concerned.

13. A sketch map¹ of the locality accompanies the report.

LANSING H. BEACH,
Colonel, Corps of Engineers.

[First indorsement.]

OFFICE OF DIVISION ENGINEER, EASTERN DIVISION,
New York City, January 3, 1914.

To the CHIEF OF ENGINEERS:

Concurring in the views and recommendation of the district officer.

W. M. BLACK,
Colonel, Corps of Engineers.

¹ Not printed.

[Third indorsement.]

BOARD OF ENGINEERS FOR RIVERS AND HARBORS,
January 13, 1914.

To the CHIEF OF ENGINEERS, UNITED STATES ARMY:

1. For reasons stated herein the board concurs with the district officer and the division engineer in recommending a survey in order to determine the extent and advisability of the improvement.

For the board.

FREDERIC V. ABBOT,
Colonel, Corps of Engineers,
Senior Member Present.

SURVEY OF BIG ANNEMESSEX RIVER, MD.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
UNITED STATES ENGINEER OFFICE,
Baltimore, Md., October 13, 1914.

From: The District Engineer Officer.

To: The Chief of Engineers, United States Army
(Through the Division Engineer).

Subject: Survey of Big Annemessex River, Md.

1. In compliance with department letter of January 17, 1914, the following report is submitted on the survey of Big Annemessex River, Md., with a view to providing a suitable channel from Clear Creek Point to Muddy Creek Point:

2. The field work of the survey was completed in May, 1914. It extended over a length of river in front of Fords Wharf and between Clear Creek Point and Muddy Creek Point, in which local parties indicated the deepest water in which to reach the wharf from the channel would be found, and extended out from the shore to the curve of 10 feet depth.

3. Bench marks and a tide gauge were established by running a line of checked levels from a United States Geological Survey mean sea-level bench mark at Marion, Md., applying the correction to reduce to a mean low-water reference, and transferring it across the river by simultaneous gauge readings extending over a period including one high and one low tide.

4. The bottom in the depression along the base line, shown on the accompanying map, for about one-half of the distance out, is of sticky mud, running to compact sand on both sides at about the 3.5-foot depth; for the balance of the distance it is of compact sand.

5. Since the preliminary examination considerable damage has been done by storms to the oyster shell approach, which has been partly washed away; to the buildings thereon; and to the wharf. The building that stood on the wharf has entirely collapsed. Interested parties state that the approach and buildings will be put in repair and that part of the wharf will be rebuilt.

6. They now state that a boat can not lie at the wharf in its present location, owing to exposure to westerly and southwesterly winds, during which the water is very much disturbed; that it is their inten-

tion to tear away all except a short length at the shore end of the wharf, extending beyond the oyster shells, and extend a bulkhead which exists along the easterly side of the shell pile from the inner end of the wharf to bench mark No. 2, back far enough to provide a suitable landing for such steamboats as would use it. They desire that a channel be dug from the 8-foot depth to and alongside of the present bulkhead and proposed extension, and that the dredged material be placed on the westerly side of the oyster shells between the shore line and the outer end of the pile, where they state a bulkhead to retain it will be built.

7. A channel of the desired depth of 8 feet and a width of 100 feet, with a turning basin at the wharf as shown on the accompanying map, with an allowance for 1 foot overdepth dredging, would require the removal of—

17,000 cubic yards, scow measure, at 20 cents.....	\$3,400
from the channel, and	
8,500 cubic yards, scow measure, at 20 cents.....	1,700
from the turning basin.	
Engineering, superintendence and contingencies, say.....	500
Total cost.....	5,600

The material would consist of sand, mud, and shells.

8. There are no available data on which to base an estimate of the cost of maintenance, but as the original cutting would be only slight, it is thought that it would not be excessive.

9. If an improvement were made, the full amount of the estimated cost should be provided in one appropriation.

10. Nothing further bearing on the merits of this case, excepting as stated above regarding the damage to the terminal facilities and the proposed change in the pier, was developed by the survey.

11. As stated in the preliminary examination report, there are no questions of water power, terminal facilities, or other subjects so related to the proposed improvement as to be considered in connection therewith to lessen the cost.

12. While the natural channel in the Big Annemessex River is somewhat tortuous, it is of ample depth and width to points above Fords Wharf for vessels drawing more water than is desired from this channel to the wharf, and it is thought that if it were buoyed there would be no difficulty in getting in and out.

13. It is recommended that a channel 8 feet deep at mean low water, with a turning basin as shown on the map, be provided in Big Annemessex River, Md., with a view to providing a suitable channel from Clear Creek Point to Muddy Creek Point, but as it would be a lateral from the main channel, and almost in the nature of a terminal facility, no work should be done thereon unless local interests first repair the wharf, restore the road thereto, and construct a suitable terminal building within one year from the date of the appropriation by the United States of money for the improvement, otherwise said money to be returned to the Treasury of the United States.

LANSING H. BEACH,
Colonel, Corps of Engineers.

[First indorsement.]

OFFICE OF DIVISION ENGINEER, EASTERN DIVISION,
New York City, October 15, 1914.

To the CHIEF OF ENGINEERS:

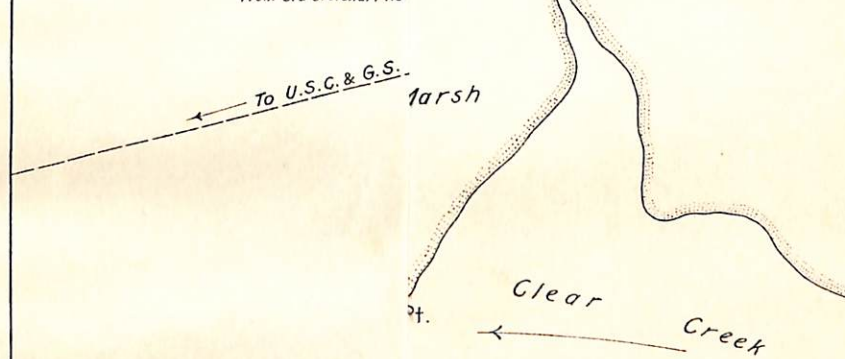
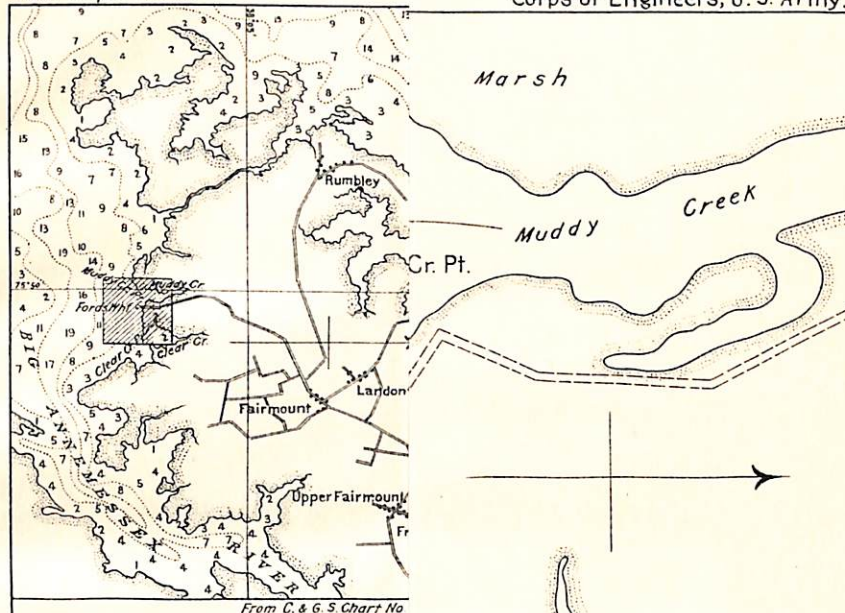
Concurring in the views and recommendation of the district engineer officer.

W. M. BLACK,
Colonel, Corps of Engineers.

[For report of the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors on survey, see page 3.]

War Department

Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army.



ESSEX RIVER

ryland

TO MUDDY CREEK POINT

Tide gauge set with zero at mea.
B. M. No. 1, Elev. 7.62 is the center
nails driven thus ... in vertical
gauge is nailed.

B. M. No. 2 is the center big nail
driven thus ... in vertical surt
above m. l. w.

U.S.C. & G.S. Triangulation stati
Proposed channel shown thus:

FOR THE DIRECTION OF
G. H. BEACH

ENGINEERS, U.S.A.

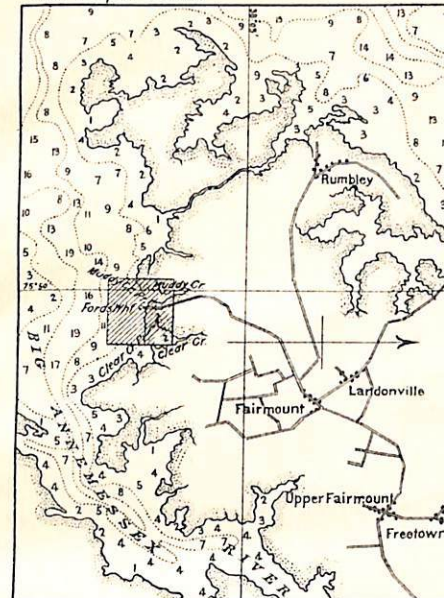
yle, Asst. Engr.

Scale
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1000 ft.

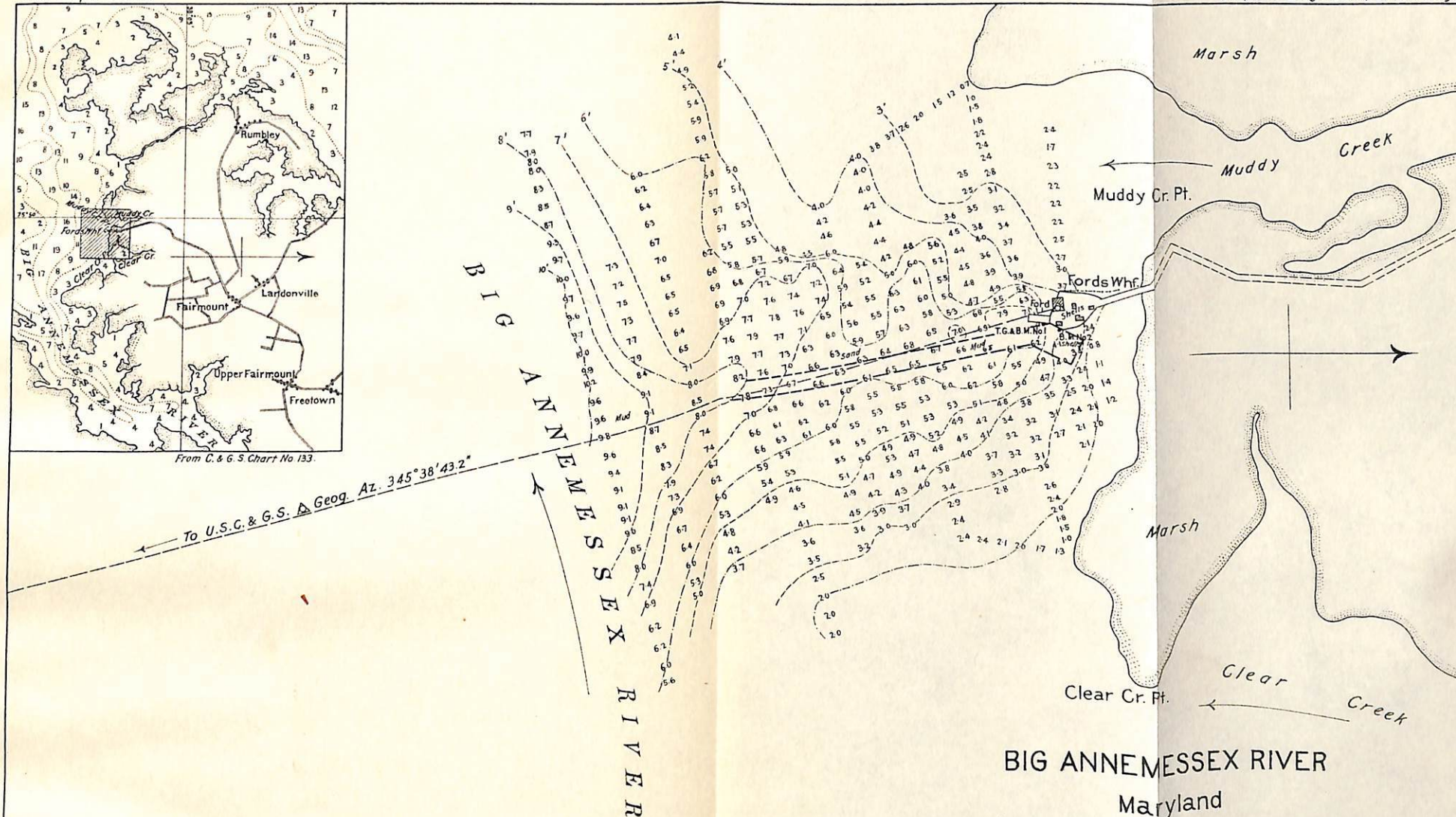
Shlessinger, Jr. Engr.

Wm. A. Wansleben.

April 1914.



From C. & G. S. Chart No. 133.



Tide gauge set with zero at mean low water is nailed to pile on wharf.
B. M. No. 1, Elev. 7.62 is the center round headed nail between 6 other
nails driven thus $\cdot\cdot\cdot\cdot$ in vertical surface near top of the pile, to which
gauge is nailed.

B. M. No. 2 is the center big nail surrounded by 4 other nails
driven thus $\cdot\cdot\cdot\cdot$ in vertical surface near top of pile, Elev. 4.25
above m. l. w.

U.S.C. & G.S. Triangulation station Ford is shown thus: Δ
Proposed channel shown thus: -----

U. S. Engineer Office
Baltimore, Md. Oct. 13, 1914

Approved: *Lansing H. Beach*,
Col. Corps of Eng'rs., U.S.A.

To accompany report of Oct. 13, 1914
to the Chief of Engineers.

BIG ANNEMESSEX RIVER Maryland CLEAR CREEK POINT TO MUDDY CREEK POINT

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
LANSING H. BEACH
COL. CORPS OF ENGINEERS, U.S.A.

John S. Doyle, Asst. Engr.

Scale
100' 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1000 ft.

Surveyed by J. Shlessinger, Jr. Engr.

Drawn by Wm. A. Wansleben.

April 1914.

