

**WEST POINT, VIRGINIA,  
AND KING WILLIAM  
COUNTY. 1888**

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West Point, Virginia, and King William County. 1888 by Anonymous

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1888.

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1888.

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## WEST POINT, VIRGINIA.

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WEST POINT is situated at the head of York river on the Peninsula formed by the Pamunkey and Mattaponi; and is destined to become a large and important city, because of its many advantages of location for commercial and manufacturing purposes.

The town site is a beautiful level plateau, sufficiently elevated to secure proper drainage, and the surrounding view cannot be surpassed. Standing on the point, may be seen five counties bordering on the York, while this river presents its splendid sheet of water free from rocks and shoals and without a bend as far as the eye can reach. This smooth body of water seems to gracefully kiss the shores of West Point and then divide in twain and form the Mattaponi and Pamunkey.

Nature has provided along the shores of these three rivers all the elements for happy homes—a soil producing great varieties of fruits, vegetables, and the standard cereals. The rivers also furnish cheap food and remunerative employment for hundreds of fisherman and oystermen.

In winter season the rock-fish is caught in large numbers, and the famous York river oyster figures largely in our markets.

In spring and summer, crabs, both hard and soft-shell, come in abundance to our shores, and along with them shad, spotts, trout, and other fish. Thus it will be seen that the water furnishes abundant supplies for food and for shipment to other markets.

As a hunting locality, this section of the country is equal to any. The plump partridge can be found in all the surrounding counties, the rivers swarm with ducks and geese, and in September and October the marshes of the Mattaponi and Pamunkey are alive with that mysterious bird, the *sora*. Wild deer also roam in large numbers in our woods.

## THE CLIMATE.

West Point is too far north for yellow fever, too far south for diphtheria and typhoid, and too near salt water for malarial fever. This is found to be true from experience, and therefore no place presents a better health record.

The winters are mild, and free from blizzards. For this reason, together with the fact that this river is straight and wide, this harbor is always free of ice.

## HARBOR ALWAYS OPEN.

It is no unusual sight in winter for the wharves to be crowded with ships from other ports, driven here by necessity. In 1875, and during several winters since that time, all the harbors north of the Potomac were closed by ice, while the York river was entirely free.

The climatic advantages also render the surrounding country specially adapted to early vegetables. The soil is light, and only needs proper cultivation to cause it to blossom like the rose.

The summers are pleasant, and the sea-breeze renders this quite a resort at that season. The splendid beach brings hundreds to our shores to enjoy the invigorating salt-water bath. The nights are specially cool and pleasant, and on account of the overflow of the surrounding marshes at high tide with salt water, there is no danger of sickness from that source.

Taking all things into consideration, West Point, as regards scenery, climate and healthfulness, cannot be surpassed as a place at which to live, and as regards its future, presents every advantage for safe and remunerative investments.

## ARTESIAN WATER.

Among the many advantages of West Point must be mentioned her plentiful supply of artesian water. Pure water for drinking purposes is a blessing which all appreciate. These wells can be obtained at a cost of about \$50, and will furnish an abundant supply of water for an indefinite time. Indeed, there is no reason why they should not last for hundreds of years. The upward pressure of the water is such that it can be carried from house to house by means of piping, thus supplying many families from one well.

The flow from each well, with one and a half inch pipe, is about 40 gallons per minute.

But the main feature in this water is its health-giving qualities. It is especially adapted to those who suffer from dyspepsia, many cases having been entirely cured by its constant use.

This water is clear, and free from smell or taste.

#### MANUFACTORIES.

The artesian water at this place should be a great inducement to the establishment of an ice factory here. This would render the ice clear as crystal, and also render it the more salable on account of its medicinal qualities.

To the manufacturer peculiar advantages exist here, to which their attention should be called.

Connected by steamship with Europe, New York, Boston, and other cities, and by railroad with all the Atlantic and Gulf States, cotton, tobacco, wheat, corn, cattle, timber and coal can be obtained here as cheap as at any port in the country. Here is the cheapest and best entre port for the coffee of Brazil, the sugar of the West Indies, and the products of Europe.

Here the manufacturer will find inexhaustible supplies of cheap land, cheap fuel, cheap food, cheap labor, and ready markets for his production.

The products of the South and of the West can meet here with the capital of the North at the lowest cost of transportation.

The town and surrounding country is being rapidly filled by a splendid class of citizens from the North and West, drawn hither by cheap land and the mild and health-giving climate.

This increase of population gives a splendid opening for canneries. The cheap lands would furnish cheap vegetables, and the rivers would furnish in winter oysters for such an enterprise.

#### TAXES FREE.

Our Town Council always shows a disposition to aid manufacturing enterprises. They will release from taxation any infant industry which may chance to be established in our midst, and give other advantages, if necessary.



## SEAPORT.

This port, for convenience, safety and depth of water cannot be surpassed on the coast.

With a small appropriation from Congress, there is twenty-three feet at low water on the only bar in the river, known as Goff's bar. There are no rocks, shoals, or other obstructions, and the river is straight from here to the Bay.

It is only twenty-eight miles from here to Yorktown, and only sixty-three miles from here to Cape Henry.

The following table of distances shows the short rail-line advantages of West Point :

## FROM NEW ORLEANS.

To Boston . . . . .	1,535 miles.
“ New York . . . . .	1,303 “
“ Philadelphia . . . . .	1,213 “
“ Baltimore . . . . .	1,115 “
“ West Point . . . . .	994 “

## FROM MEMPHIS.

To Boston . . . . .	1,459 miles.
“ New York . . . . .	1,227 “
“ Philadelphia . . . . .	1,137 “
“ Baltimore . . . . .	1,039 “
“ West Point . . . . .	918 “

## FROM MOBILE.

To Boston . . . . .	1,394 miles.
“ New York . . . . .	1,162 “
“ Philadelphia . . . . .	1,072 “
“ Baltimore . . . . .	974 “
“ West Point . . . . .	853 “

## FROM WASHINGTON.

To West Point . . . . .	132 miles.
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## FROM ST. LOUIS.

To Boston . . . . .	1,295 miles.
“ New York . . . . .	1,063 “
“ Philadelphia . . . . .	973 “
“ Baltimore . . . . .	929 “
“ West Point . . . . .	904 “

## FROM CHICAGO.

To New York . . . . .	913 miles.
“ Philadelphia . . . . .	823 “
“ Baltimore . . . . .	809 “
“ West Point . . . . .	878 “

## FROM CINCINNATI.

To New York . . . . .	757 miles.
“ Philadelphia . . . . .	667 “
“ Baltimore . . . . .	589 “
“ West Point . . . . .	584 “

## FROM LOUISVILLE.

To New York . . . . .	864 miles.
“ Philadelphia . . . . .	774 “
“ Baltimore . . . . .	699 “
“ West Point . . . . .	651 “

## FROM PITTSBURG.

To New York . . . . .	444 miles
“ West Point . . . . .	432 “

## [EXTRACTS FROM REPORT MADE BY LIEUT. M. F. MAURY, U. S. N.]

At a meeting of the stockholders of the Richmond and York River Railroad Company, held in the city of Richmond on the 18th and 19th days of January, 1855, convened by order of the Board of Public Works for the purpose of selecting the route and eastern terminus of their railroad.

According to the request made and promise given, I proceeded in the last days of December to Richmond, and thence to York River, for the purpose of examining as to the most suitable point on its waters for the terminus of the Richmond and York River Railroad.

## YORK THE NOBLEST.

Many fine arms of the sea branch off from the Chesapeake Bay and embellish Eastern Virginia with noble sheets of water; and, commercially speaking, York river is the noblest of them all. Formed by the junction of the Pamunkey and Mattaponi at West Point, it continues thence S. E. to the Bay, and that by a course so singularly straight and direct as to give it the appearance of a canal with boundless capacities.

York river differs in one respect, and that a very important one,

from all the other principal feeders of the Chesapeake Bay. The Potomac, the Rappahannock, and the James rivers meet tide-water at their lowest falls. Before they pass these they have received the waters with the mud and silt of all their principal tributaries. As soon as the turbid waters of these streams—and in times of flood they are very, very muddy—leaps the falls and meets the tide, this mud and silt commences to settle, and the consequence is that all three of these rivers are raising up their beds and obstructing their channels, particularly near the head of tide, with bars. This is the case with the Potomac near Georgetown and Washington, and the Rapahannock at Fredericksburg. There are places in front of these cities where large sea-going craft used to lie, but where now the lightest skiff can scarcely pass, so much mud have these rivers brought down and deposited in the way of navigation.

As soon as the turbid waters of the rivers meet the tide from the sea, the rapidity of their flood is checked, and the deposit of sediment commences. Hence the most rapid filling up of channels takes place at and near the head of tide-water. Where the running streams from the land meet the flow of tide from the sea, there is always a conflict, and in this conflict of waters a deposit of sediment is made and bars are formed. This is a law of nature.

#### WITHOUT FALLS.

On the other hand, the York river is without falls, and it is formed by two tidal streams in which the conflict of waters has already taken place and heavy deposit of sediment been made long before they came together. Moreover, these streams themselves receive no large tributaries. The tide runs far up both of them, and the mud which their head waters, when in a swollen state, bring down to them, is generally deposited before they join to form the York. After the heaviest rains, and when the Mattaponi and Pamunkey are at their highest stage, the mud with which their upper waters are charged is, for the most part, deposited before it gets to York river, for it takes this mud several days after it meets tide-water, and begins to ebb and flow, to reach West Point. Consequently the Pamunkey and Mattaponi are filling up their beds some 60 or 80 miles above West Point, and the volume of water discharged by these two streams is so small in comparison with that