

**CURTIS' BAY; ITS SUPERIOR  
ADVANTAGES AND ADMIRABLE  
LOCATION AS THE ONLY  
EXISTING AND AVAILABLE DEEP WATER  
HARBOR CONTIGUOUS TO THE CITY OF  
BALTIMORE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649402779

Curtis' Bay; Its Superior Advantages and Admirable Location as the Only Existing and Available Deep Water Harbor contiguous to the city of Baltimore by Various

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

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**VARIOUS**

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# CURTIS' BAY;

Its Superior Advantages and Admirable Location

AS THE

ONLY EXISTING AND AVAILABLE

## DEEP WATER HARBOR

Contiguous to the City of Baltimore,

IN CONNECTION WITH ITS

RAPIDLY INCREASING LOCAL MANUFACTURES, THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF ITS COAL TRAFFIC, AND  
THE ACCOMMODATION OF ITS

Western and Southern Railroad Connections.

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PUBLISHED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

THE PATAPSCO LAND COMPANY

OF

BALTIMORE CITY.

Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1874, by  
THE PATAPSCO LAND COMPANY OF BALTIMORE CITY,  
in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.

PRINTED BY JOHN MURPHY & Co.  
182 BALTIMORE STREET, BALTIMORE.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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NEARLY half a century has elapsed since the attention of the merchants of Baltimore was fully directed to the necessity for providing easy and expeditious lines of communication between the city and port, with which they were identified and the then infant West, if they wanted to perpetuate the commercial importance of Baltimore, and neutralise the prejudicial influence to their interests exercised by the public works in Pennsylvania and the Erie canal in New York. They realized that a large amount of business which was legitimately tributary to their city, was being gradually attracted to New York and Philadelphia, in consequence of the superior facilities for transportation furnished by the States of which these two cities were the recognized commercial centres, and that their bright anticipations for the future of the "Monumental City" would be comparatively blasted unless they could compete on more equal terms with their rivals, and furnish for their customers some more expeditious and certain means of transportation than those which were coincident to the old fashioned wagon and stage routes. At the time alluded to, a project for building the *Chesapeake and Ohio Canal* had been inaugurated and work had been commenced, but its success as a commercial undertaking was seriously questioned in consequence of the high elevations over which it had to be carried, and the scarcity of water, while its projected eastern terminus at Georgetown on the banks of the Potomac was calculated to prejudice in many respects the commercial interests of Baltimore, or at any rate exclude its citizens from the actual benefits which had been anticipated from the construction of the canal. This fact was so fully realized by a then prominent merchant of Baltimore, Mr. Philip E. Thomas, that he voluntarily withdrew in 1827 from the canal commissionership which he held as representative for the State of Maryland, and applied himself

energetically in connection with Mr. George Brown and other prominent citizens of Baltimore, to maturing a plan for building a railroad which should be the highway for traffic from the Ohio River at Wheeling to Baltimore. The ideas as then enunciated by Messrs. Thomas, Brown and their associates, appeared at the time somewhat chimerical because although short lines of railroad, such as the "Stockton and Darlington" in England and the "Granite Branch" near Boston, had been built for the conveyance of coal and stone to navigable waters, no railroad had been constructed either in Europe or in this country for the general conveyance of passengers and produce between distant points:—In brief for general purposes, railroads were regarded as an untried experiment, and it was a mooted question whether horses or stationary steam engines would be the preferable motor. In laying their plans fully before the citizens of Baltimore at that time, and corroborating their views by the opinion of prominent engineers both in Europe and America, the committee alluded at length to the advantages possessed by the city of Baltimore as being 200 miles nearer to the navigable waters of the West than New York and 100 miles nearer than Philadelphia, also that the easiest and by far the most practicable route through the ridges of mountains which separated the Atlantic from the western waters was along the depression formed by the Potomac River in its passage through them. Special allusion is made to these historical facts, as indicating the prescience and business sagacity of the Baltimore merchants, and although it is not within the sphere of our present duties to trace out the various steps by which the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, (incorporated in accordance with the views of Mr. Thomas and his associates in 1828,) successfully overcame every obstacle which nature, the hatred of innovation and political chicanery placed in their path; still the inhabitants of the city of Baltimore and the State of Maryland may be proud of having been the pioneers of railroad construction in this country, of having been practically the founders of a system which now extends in an unbroken line from the Atlantic to the Pacific; which has pierced mountains and spanned the mighty rivers of this vast continent, and which, whether regarded as the missionary of civilization or the architect of industrial development and material prosperity has tended to make the United States

one of the foremost among the nations of the world, to be respected and honored by the dynasties of either hemisphere. These wise and good men, who projected a great and glorious future for the city of Baltimore, and for the State of which it is the recognized commercial centre and manufacturing emporium, rest in their honored graves, but the memory of their noble aspirations lives fresh and green as the flowers which deck their last homes in the hearts of the present generation, whose aim seems to be that Baltimore shall avail itself by every legitimate means of the superior geographical advantages which it possesses, and that to its port shall converge not merely the traffic originating on the waters west of the Alleghanies, but the trade of the Western, South-western and North-western States and Territories, the older trans-Atlantic countries and of the West Indies and South America.

It is true that the present proud position of Baltimore in connection with the commerce of America, is mainly due to the conservative and consistent manner in which successive managers of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company have adhered to the policy of their predecessors; and by advancing, *pari passu*, with the growth of the city in the development of new railroad enterprises, have secured for the railroad proper, as well as for the mercantile community, large accretions of wealth; but a question naturally arises at this juncture, when the cap stone, (to speak figuratively,) is shortly about to be placed on the scheme and system of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, by the completion of its new line from Centreton on the Lake Erie Division, to Chicago; and when other railroad lines such as the Baltimore and Potomac, Northern Central and Western Maryland are requiring terminal accommodations at tide-water for a rapidly increasing coal trade and general traffic, whether the necessary facilities for handling such a large accretion of traffic, as will be coincident to the growth of the West and the proper development of local business, can be furnished either at Locust Point, the present tide-water terminus of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, or at Canton where it was anticipated, (although such anticipations have, in consequence of prohibitory rates, not yet been realized,) that the tide-water business of the Northern Central and Western Maryland Railroads would be concentrated. It is the object of