

mentioned here in reference to one of our feeder routes to be afterwards described.

The main lateral ridge thus far is termed the Cracklinton Ridge. At Cracklinton the ridge divides; one arm of it following a general course of S. E. to Mechanicsville, a distance from Cracklinton of upwards of six miles; the other arm pursues nearly a southerly course to Rockville, a distance of about nine miles from Cracklinton.

The route of canal surveyed this season crosses these arms or twin ridges, the one termed for distinction the Mechanicsville, and the other the Rockville Ridge. In the intervening valley lie the waters of Rock Creek.

At Rockville, the Rockville Ridge becomes subdivided into various minor ridges by the head waters of Muddy Creek and Watts Creek. At Mechanicsville the Mechanicsville Ridge becomes likewise subdivided into two ridges, by the head waters of the North western Branch.

The description thus far exhibits the original lateral ridge, diverging at Damascus, (and distinct as one ridge only as far as Mr. Henry Griffith's,) dissipated into as many minor ridges as have been described. Its character may as well be inferred from the position of the rivers Patuxent and Seneca which after approaching very nearly, opposite Etchison's Mills, diverge thence with courses nearly at right angles to each other, as indicated on the map. These minor ridges, in relation to height, become generally less formidable in proportion to their distance from the great Parr's Ridge, to which they appertain indeed as a portion of its great original slope towards the seaboard. If therefore we estimate for the width of this lateral ridge, originating at Damascus, all the parts of which it is composed, we see that as we recede from the mountain range this width becomes very formidable indeed, and taken in connection with the small supplies of water which can be obtained from the heads of the lesser streams, which have thus subdivided it, the most economical summit level and route of any practicable canal in that quarter, or the route, which, with due supply of water would reduce the expense to a minimum, must be the result of extensive instrumental labor, nor can it be certainly predicated until the divided ridges have been still further explored, that the surveys for this season indicate this result. We say this in reference to the probability of a more economical crossing existing some miles still lower down, or entirely south from the Brookville Route. Neither the force, nor the time, however, at our disposal this season after the preliminary observations indicated such a probability, admitted of an investigation of the subject in all its ramifications. It was believed that a route had already appeared which would very likely satisfy that part of the instructions relating to the supply of water, and it was felt important to perfect this part of the subject on some one route this season. This conceded, the demonstration of the most feasible route (if the one surveyed should not prove so,) or the developement of a route which should satisfy as well the question of expense, if that be possible, was necessarily left to ulterior operations.