

the Atlantic seaports, which afford reciprocally a market for the products of western industry; it was very natural that our countrymen, both in the East and West, should early contemplate perfecting the communications between their old and new homes, even by subduing the obstacle, which nature had upreared in those numerous mountain ranges known as the Alleghanies. Accordingly, we witness the great States of the seaboard, at immense expense, vying with each other in establishing magnificent lines of transportation, to secure to themselves as far as practicable, the traffic of that vast basin from which they are separated by the lofty crests of the Appalachian chain.

Stupendous are the barriers interposed by nature, but dazzling the stake they play for—costly must be the honorable strife, but splendid the reward accruing to that State which shall ultimately possess the most perfect line of western communication.

The trade with the great West, naturally divides itself into two distinct branches--one light, demanding expedition, the other heavy, in which time is less an object; with extraordinary facilities for both, nature has singularly favored Maryland

These advantages were early perceived and appreciated, by those valiant men who led the chivalry of the seaboard, in that illstarred march, which terminated on the fatal field near Fort Duquesne, where Braddock fell a victim to his inexperience in woodland warfare.

There was one commander in that army whose quick eye, was ever ready to note topography for future use—who had antecedently pursued his humble occupation of surveyor upon the margin of the Potomac, having been for some time forted, upon the present farm of Mr. George Catlett, about 8 miles below your Tunnel—and whose comprehensive mind quickly grasped the vantage offered by the valley of the Potomac as a western route, owing to that stream severing in succession, every one of the numerous rocky ranges, known by the general name of the Alleghany Mountains.

This officer—Washington himself—was the early and steadfast patron of improvements upon the line of the Potomac; and soon after the revolutionary peace, in fact on the 22nd of December 1784, we find General Washington sitting as chairman of a joint commission of Maryland and Virginia, to take into consideration the propriety of improving the navigation of the