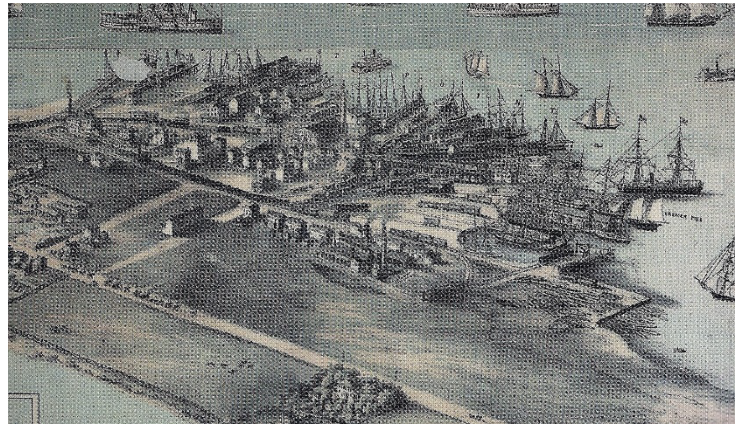


Lost Piers and Streets

Locust Point: An International Port 1868-1914

by Francis A. Tewey

In 1849 the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad extended its tracks to the deep water off Locust Point on Whetstone Point. Clean burning anthracite coal from western Maryland arrived at the coal piers built by Irish and German work crews. Steamship and sailing ships loaded coal, cotton and tobacco and unloaded European manufactured goods. The shift from sail to steam meant that more and more ships came to Locust Point piers for coal bypassing the older international piers on Fells Point.



In March 1868 conditions in Baltimore and the German lands allowed the B&O Railroad and the North German Lloyd Line of Bremen enter into an agreement that benefited these corporations. The city of Baltimore was rebounding from the years of the Civil War. Steamboats and the bankers of the city transported the cotton and tobacco of the coastal South to Baltimore Harbor and the B & O railroad brought the grain from the Midwest to the port of Baltimore.

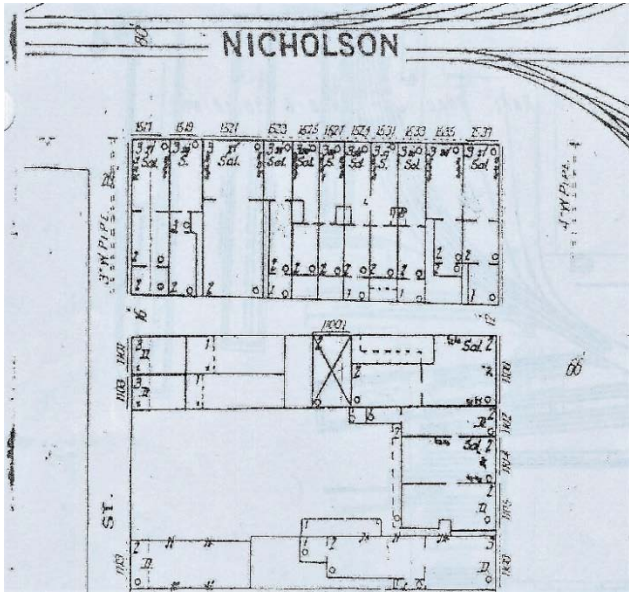
The B&O agreed to build a modern pier at Locust Point and the North German Lloyd Line agreed to send modern immigrant steamships to Locust Point. What was to be a ship a month quickly became weekly scheduled arrivals. Coal was provided at a cut rate and profits were shared. The steamships got bigger and faster over time, and the B&O piers were enlarged four times. Tobacco, cotton and grain left Locust Point, and



immigrants and German manufactured products came to Locust Point. The piers of Locust Port hummed with activity. Employment of locals on the coal piers and in the B&O railyards was now augmented by the need for many stevedores to load the steamships and move the cargoes to warehouses on and near the piers. Laboring jobs were available in Locust Point.

The street between the piers at the foot of Andre Street and the steam ferry to

Fells Point at the foot of Haubert Street became the main street of the international port of Locust Point. Nicholson Street, this street parallel to the water, looked out onto an extension rail yard. This street became lined with service businesses on its left side as people moved towards the Locust Point-Broadway Ferry. Nicholson Street had its druggist, tobacconist, grocery, ship chandler, and many saloons. Towson and Andre Streets, perpendicular to Nicholson,



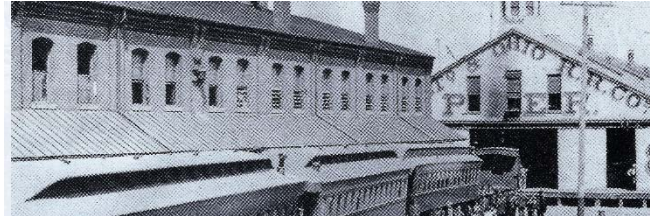
also developed to handle the multitudes of people drawn by the piers. Saloons and boarding houses proliferated

Coal wharf laborers, local rail workers, custom agents, immigration officials, railroad officials (ticket agents, conductors, fireman engineers, etc.), stevedores, the Baltimore police, transient immigrants, visitors, out-bound travelers, draymen, hack drivers, food vendors, ship stewards, sailors (German, English, others), soldiers from Fort McHenry and Locust Point residents mingled on Nicholson Street on any given day. There was a mix of languages, German and English were the most common, but any of the languages and dialects of central and eastern Europe could be heard on any given day.

The piers were rebuilt in 1881, 1889, 1904, and 1909. Piers 8 and 9 made Locust Point a major international port with a German flavor. A growing transportation infrastructure supported the piers. The B&O laid more track and built warehouses and grain elevators. South Baltimore rail yards spread from

Locust Point to Riverside; switching facilities, yards, and repair shops were built. The horse drawn streetcars came to Locust Point in 1875, and the electrified streetcars by 1893. These supplemented the steam ferry as a way of coming to and from Locust Point.

Most of the 1.2 million Immigrants were gone within hours after arriving on steamships and transferring to the trains going west. Some of these immigrants bought land in the Midwest and created rural pockets of German speaking communities. Others sought jobs or used their skills in the growing industrial cities of the Midwest, i. e. Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee. They created or joined the ethnic communities of these cities. They became the brewers, butchers and bakers that keep their traditions alive. A fraction, who



SUN

**FIRE SWEEPS B. & O. PIERS;
STEAMER BURNS; 10 MISSING
ENEMY HAND IS SUSPECTED**

Quick Spread Of Flames Lends Color
To Belief That Disaster Was
Planned.

BOMBS ON SHIP EXPLODE

Pier 9 First One To Blaze Up And Pier 8 Soon
Catches--Buildings Filled With Pulp
Wood Prove Easy Prey--Men
Take To Icy Water.

The most disastrous fire which has visited the Baltimore water front for years broke out shortly before 11 o'clock last night at Baltimore and Ohio Pier 9, Locust Point; destroyed that pier, the old Immigration Building adjoining, and, within an hour, had spread to Pier No. 8.

stayed in Baltimore, found work near Locust Point or used the steam ferry and streetcars to move into Baltimore to find jobs and use their skills. A strong German presence in Baltimore meant that the brewer, baker, butcher and other with German based skills could easily transition to work. In Locust Point there was a need for German language stevedores and harbor workers because of the weekly presence of the steamships of the North German Lloyd Line.

From 1868 to 1914 Locust Point was a busy international port with a German flavor. Nicholson Street was the street connecting the piers to the ferry. The perpendicular side streets were built up with home for workers. Hull, Andre and Towson Streets, connected with the streetcars on Fort Avenue. When World War I broke out, all this changed.

The piers were destroyed by fire, Nicholson Street's importance was gone, and Fort McHenry became a major hospital for the wounded of World War I. Fort Avenue in the future would be the main street of the expanded Locust Point.

The passenger Piers 8 and 9 were never rebuilt. Nicholson Street disappeared with the extension of the B&O yards, the building of the American Sugar Refinery, the Procter and Gamble Factories, and the creation and extension of the Key Highway. The Immigration Piers and Nicholson Street, the main



markers of the period of Baltimore Immigration are gone.

Today only this building the German Immigration House, a designated historic landmark built in 1904, the home of our Baltimore Immigration Museum, and a marker in the "Liberty Garden" at the end of Hull Street (the property of the Under Armour Corporation) are the chief reminders of the arrival of

1.2 million immigrants soon to be American, who came to Baltimore/Locust Point as part of the Great Wave of Immigration in the late 19th century.