

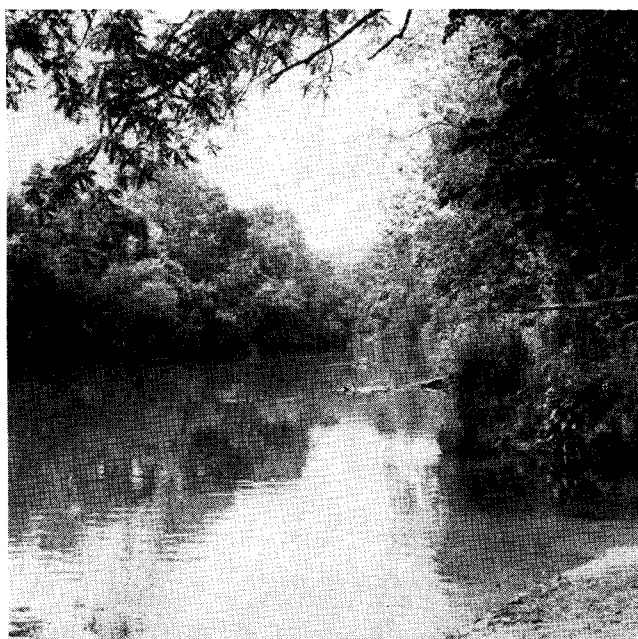
SECTION IV

DESCRIPTION OF THE GUNPOWDER RIVER VALLEYS

Physical Features

Gunpowder River—The Gunpowder River has its source in Pennsylvania, just above the village of Lineboro in Carroll County. The river does not reach significant size, however, until it approaches the Baltimore County line near the village of Roller, some four miles or more downstream. Here, as a stream perhaps 20 feet wide, it enters the steep-sided, generally wooded, and often rocky valley through which it travels almost continuously until, as a turbulent river over 100 feet wide, it plunges through the Fall Line into tidewater near the old colonial county seat and port of entry of Joppa Town, some 50 miles farther downstream. This valley has, over the ages, been cut by the river into the Piedmont Plateau, which today is represented by the tops of the hills bordering the river on either side. Near the river's source, these hills rise to over 1,000 feet above sea level, but at the Fall Line their elevation is only about 125 feet.

Except at its lower end, the valley cut into the Piedmont Plateau by the river is generally from 200 to 250 feet deep. The valley floor is rather narrow for much of its length, although in its middle reaches, from around Monkton to



Gunpowder River West of Belair Road
Key No. 4



Gunpowder—View Upstream
Key No. 7-b

the upper end of the Loch Raven Reservoir, there are sections where broad meadow bottoms occur. At other places, such as at Green Branch, Dulany Valley and Mine Bank Run, the valley widens out to present a broad open rolling type of landscape.

Except at the latter places, the hills bordering the valley are steep-sided, but with rounded, gently-sloping tops, which are largely devoted to farming. The forested areas are largely confined to the steeper slopes of the valley sides, and it is this steep rugged aspect of the valley itself which has deterred development, thus preserving the wilderness-type character of much of the valley which is its principal attraction. This is particularly true of the section above and around the Prettyboy Reservoir and for some six or seven miles below Prettyboy Dam. Substantial stretches of the Loch Raven Reservoir above and below Dulany Valley as well as the entire reach from Loch Raven Dam to the Fall Line also exhibit this same steep rugged characteristic, but the $4\frac{1}{2}$ mile reach from Harford Road to Belair Road is probably the most rugged and inaccessible section of the entire river.

East of Pulaski Highway (Route 40) the hills disappear, and the river flows quietly for several miles through flat coastal plain country to the Gunpowder tidal estuary.

The river itself varies its mood as it flows through the