Form No 10 306 (Rev 10 74)

WA-VI-047
AL-I-B-074

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY	MAGI #0108430719
RECEIVED	
DATE ENTERED	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Western Maryland Railway Right-of-Way, Milepost 126 to Milepost 160

AND/OR COMMON
(Abandoned)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Woodmont, Washington Co., to North Branch, Allegany Co.

__VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
2d--WV; 6th--MD

STATE
Maryland

CODE
24

COUNTY
Washington 043; Allegany 001

CODE

also Morgan Co. (065), West Virginia (54)

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	X UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	X PARK
X STRUCTURES	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*
National Capital Region, National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER
1100 Ohio Drive SW

CITY, TOWN
Washington

__VICINITY OF

STATE
DC 20242

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
(same as above)

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Maryland Historical Trust Historic Sites Survey

DATE
1978

__FEDERAL X STATE X COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Maryland Historical Trust

CITY, TOWN
Annapolis

STATE
Maryland 21401

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7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	x UNALTERED (except for track removal)	x ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The subject of this nomination is the 34-mile-long abandoned Western Maryland Railway right-of-way between milepost 126 at the intersection of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and Long Ridge Road, Woodmont, and milepost 160 just west of Maryland Route 51, North Branch. For the most part the right-of-way closely parallels the Potomac River and the C & O Canal running along the north (Maryland) bank of the river. Downstream from Paw Paw, West Virginia, however, the line crosses bends in the river six times, transferring seven miles of the right-of-way to West Virginia, and tunnels through three mountainous intervening fingers of land on the Maryland side.

The line had a single track with occasional parallel sidings. The track and most ties were removed shortly after the line's abandonment in 1975, but the roadbed and other structural features are largely intact, unaltered, and in fair-to-good condition. The roadbed itself is composed of a limestone sub-base approximately two feet deep with a layer of packed cinders or pea gravel on top. Numerous cuts and fills maintain a nearly level grade through hilly terrain. In several areas retaining walls of crosstie cribbing are used for stabilizing slopes. Approximately 160 culverts, most constructed of concrete or terra cotta pipe, provide drainage beneath fills; only those of 6' or more in diameter are individually mentioned below. The Potomac bridge piers and abutments were built wide for later double tracking, which was never carried out. Steel beams serve as mileposts.

A listing of principal features, from east to west, follows. Except as noted, all were constructed between 1903 and 1906. Features may be located by number on the accompanying USGS map quadrangles. An asterisk indicates that the feature is illustrated in an accompanying photograph.

1. Concrete arch culvert, 6' in diameter by 76' long, carrying small branch beneath grade at Woodmont.

2. Concrete arch culvert, 6' in diameter by 69' long, carrying small branch beneath grade at Pearre.

*3. Sideling Hill Creek Bridge: two deck plate girder spans on concrete piers and abutments; length 146'.

*4. Indigo Tunnel, 4350' long, cut through rock. Concrete arch portals, timber sets and roof planking within.

*5. Concrete arch culvert, 17' in diameter by 29.5' long, carrying road beneath grade at Little Orleans. Dated 1904 above the arch on each face.

(continued)

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*6. Double concrete arch culvert, each arch 20' in diameter by 155' long, carrying Fifteen Mile Creek beneath grade.

*7. Timber two-lane road bridge crossing railroad cut southwest of Little Orleans.

*8. Potomac Bridge No. 1: Four Pratt riveted deck trusses and two deck plate girder spans on concrete piers and abutments over C & O Canal and Potomac River; length 767'.

9. Potomac Bridge No. 2: Six Pratt riveted deck trusses and nine deck plate girder spans on concrete piers and abutments over Potomac River and C & O Canal; length 1367'.

10. Stickpile Tunnel, 1707' long, cut through rock. Concrete arch portals, timber sets and roof planking within.

11. Concrete arch culvert, 8' in diameter by 100' long, carrying Roby Run beneath grade.

12. Potomac Bridge No. 3: Three Pratt riveted deck trusses and six deck plate girder spans on concrete piers and abutments over C & O Canal and Potomac River; length 855'.

13. Skewed Pratt riveted through truss bridge on concrete abutments over Baltimore and Ohio Railroad right-of-way southwest of Potomac Bridge No. 3 in West Virginia; length 123'.

14. Potomac Bridge No. 4: Four Pratt riveted deck trusses and nine deck plate girder spans on concrete piers and abutments over B & O Railroad right-of-way and Potomac River. Banked curve at northeast (West Virginia) end. Length 1029'.

15. Kessler Tunnel, 1843' long, cut through rock. Concrete arch portals, timber sets and roof planking within. Named for landowner John Kessler.

*16. Potomac Bridge No. 5: Four Pratt riveted deck trusses and two deck plate girder spans on concrete piers and abutments crossing Potomac River only; length 636'.

(continued)

*17. Potomac Bridge No. 6: Four Pratt riveted deck trusses and two deck plate girder spans on concrete piers and abutments over Potomac River and Maryland Route 15; length 651'.

*18. Pratt riveted through truss bridge on concrete abutments over C & O Canal north of Keifers; length 138'. Builder's plate reads "Built by the Pennsylvania Steel Co., Steelton, Pa., 1905."

19. Concrete arch culvert, 14' in diameter by 78' long, carrying Purslane Run beneath grade at Keifers.

20. Concrete arch culvert, 14' in diameter by 79' long, carrying Big Run beneath grade east of Town Creek.

*21. Town Creek Bridge: Three deck plate girder spans on concrete piers and abutments; length 181'. Carried double track, the second laid in 1913.

*22. Concrete arch culvert, 10' in diameter by 36' long, for canal overflow from berm side beneath railroad grade into Town Creek, just west of Town Creek Bridge and C & O Canal aqueduct. Has provision for inserts to regulate canal level.

23. Concrete arch culvert, 6' in diameter by 60' long, carrying small branch beneath grade on east side of Oldtown.

*24. Bridge over county road on east side of Oldtown: single track carried on six exposed I-beams 20" high by 20' long supported on concrete abutments.

*25. Concrete arch culvert, 8' in diameter by 75' long, carrying Seven Springs Run beneath grade at Oldtown. Simulated keystones cast in concrete over arch openings.

26. Bridge over Mill Run west of Oldtown: six I-beams 20" high by 20' long encased in concrete on concrete abutments; built 1934.

*27. Deep cut through rock, with removed material used for fill across pond backed up by C & O Canal just east.

(continued)

28. Concrete arch culvert, 10' in diameter by 73' long, carrying branch under grade at Sloan.

29. Concrete arch culvert, 10' in diameter by 158' long, carrying Brice Hollow Run beneath grade; abuts C & O Canal culvert underground.

30. Timber single-lane private road bridge over grade; deteriorated condition.

31. Bridge over Maryland Route 15 at Spring Gap: single track carried on 10 36", 300 lb. I-beams encased in concrete on skewed concrete abutments; length 53.5'. Built 1932.

*32. Concrete arch culvert, 10' in diameter by 174' long, carrying Collier Run beneath grade west of Spring Gap.

33. Bridge over Maryland Route 15 at North Branch: double track carried on 21 24", 115 lb. I-beams encased in concrete on skewed concrete abutments; length 37'. Built 1925 to replace previous grade crossing.

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8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	X ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	X TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1903-06 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Western Maryland Railway Company
Pennsylvania Steel Co. (bridges)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The 34-mile abandoned section of the Western Maryland Railway acquired by the United States for the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park has regional significance as a protected remnant of one of the last major phases of trans-Allegheny railroad expansion in the early 20th century. The engineering sophistication of this line is most dramatically illustrated by the six Potomac River bridges and three tunnels crossing the Paw Paw Bends within a 12-mile segment of the route.

The Western Maryland Railway Company originated with a state charter in 1852 as the Baltimore, Carroll and Frederick Rail Road Company, so designated until the following year. After initial financial difficulties, the first 10-mile segment of track from Relay House to Owings Mills, Maryland, was laid between 1857 and 1859. In 1873 the Western Maryland was extended west to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal at Williamsport in expectation of receiving a major share of the canal's coal cargo for transport to Baltimore; but the railroad lacked its own line into the seaport city and was financially burdened by having to pay for the use of competitors' trackage.

Between 1874 and 1902 the Western Maryland underwent major expansion under the presidency of John Mifflin Hood, rising from local to regional status. In 1892 the Western Maryland-controlled Potomac Valley Rail Road extended the line from Williamsport west to Big Pool and across the Potomac to Cherry Run, West Virginia, through which the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road passed. This addition provided a lucrative link between the B & O and the Philadelphia and Reading. At the eastern end, the desired connection with tidewater in Baltimore was not achieved until 1904 with the extension to and construction of Port Covington.

The latter extension was part of the final major expansion of the Western Maryland under the Fuller Syndicate, which acquired the city of Baltimore's major interest in 1902. Among the principals was George Gould, son of the notorious Jay and inheritor of the Missouri Pacific and Wabash railroads, who planned the new acquisition as a link in a transcontinental system under syndicate control. To this end a survey was immediately undertaken to extend the line 60 miles west from Big Pool to Cumberland. Since the B & O already held the preferred alignment along the south bank of the Potomac, the Western Maryland was forced to use the opposite bank and undertake sophisticated grade engineering to achieve superiority over its competitor.

(continued)

Construction on this extension, including the portion covered by this nomination, began August 1, 1903. The engineers sought to minimize grades by closely following the river and the C & O Canal along its north bank, in places having retaining walls rise directly from the canal bed to support track squeezed between the canal and mountainsides or the parallel National Road. At the great river loops between Hancock, Maryland, and Paw Paw, West Virginia, however, the railroad boldly cut through the mountainous intervening fingers of land in Maryland, across the river, and around the bends in West Virginia with three tunnels totaling a mile and a half in length and six bridges totaling over a mile long. Train traffic opened to Cumberland on this route March 15, 1906.

At Cumberland the Western Maryland connected with the West Virginia Central system, acquired by the Fuller Syndicate in 1905 and reaching southwest to Elkins and the rich surrounding coalfields. The final expansion of the Western Maryland came in 1910-12 with construction of a line from Cumberland northwest to Connelsville, Pennsylvania, which provided transcontinental connections. This occurred under reorganized management, the Fuller syndicate having overextended itself and lost control in 1909. Although George Gould's dream of his own transcontinental system was dashed, his expansion of the Western Maryland and the subsequent link to other track at Connelsville gave this regional railroad the shortest route from Pittsburgh to Baltimore and one of the best engineered crossings of the Alleghenies with a .80 percent ruling grade eastbound, the direction of most traffic. The predominant cargo was coal and other freight, inspiring the Western Maryland's sobriquet, "Fast Freight Line."

The Western Maryland retained autonomy until 1972 when it was acquired by the Chessie System, a recent combination of the Chesapeake and Ohio and B & O railroads. In 1975 sections of the Western Maryland duplicative of other Chessie System track were abandoned, including the 34-mile stretch between Woodmont and North Branch addressed by this nomination. Because much of this stretch closely paralleled the historic C & O Canal and provided opportunity for adverse development should it fall into other private hands, the National Park Service got legislative authority to acquire it in 1978 and did so in 1980. At the time of purchase, the Service committed itself to relinquishing fee title to the seven-mile portion of the right-of-way in West Virginia subject to suitable development controls there.

Removal of the tracks and ties upon the line's abandonment compromised the integrity of the roadbed, but the route retains essential continuity and most of it may be traveled by vehicle or on foot. The bridges, tunnels, and other structural features retain high integrity.

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Edward M. Killough. History of the Western Maryland Railway Company. Rev. ed. Baltimore: Western Maryland Railway Co., 1940.

Don Phillips. "Whatever Became of the Western Maryland?" Trains, May 1980, pp. 44-49.

Harold A. Williams. The Western Maryland Railway Story; A Chronicle of the First Century, 1852-1952. Baltimore: Western Maryland Railway Co., 1952.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 500 (approx.)

UTM REFERENCES

See continuation sheet.

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A				B			
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary is that of the abandoned Western Maryland Railway Company right-of-way between railway milepost 126 at the intersection of the C & O Canal and Long Ridge Road, Woodmont, and milepost 160 just west of Maryland Route 51, North Branch. The included right-of-way, depicted on maps of the Western Maryland Railway Company, is 34 miles long and varies from 75 to 150 feet in width.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Maryland	24	Allegany	001
		Washington	043
West Virginia	54	Morgan	065

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: Barry Mackintosh, Regional Historian

ORGANIZATION: National Capital Region, National Park Service

DATE: March 10, 1981

STREET & NUMBER: 1100 Ohio Drive SW

TELEPHONE: 202-426-6660

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: DC 20242

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES____ NO____ NONE____

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ____National ____State ____Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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UTM References

The first and last references below mark the easternmost and westernmost points, respectively, of the nominated right-of-way. The references between are spaced at points where the line makes significant bends. Owing to the purely linear nature of the nominated feature, the references do not form a closed figure.

A: 17/731260/4390020
B: 17/726760/4391100
C: 17/724700/4389790
D: 17/723220/4387970
E: 17/720680/4388680
F: 17/721100/4387280
G: 17/720240/4384730
H: 17/718460/4384610
I: 17/720100/4382500
J: 17/718510/4380330
K: 17/717850/4377470
L: 17/715310/4377210
M: 17/712980/4377860
N: 17/709280/4377660
O: 17/707280/4379110
P: 17/704660/4379520
Q: 17/703830/4379860
R: 17/702660/4379020
S: 17/700540/4379240
T: 17/696750/4381370
U: 17/694960/4382910
V: 17/694500/4384520

BELLEGROVE QUADRANGLE
Maryland-Pennsylvania-West Virginia
USGS Map

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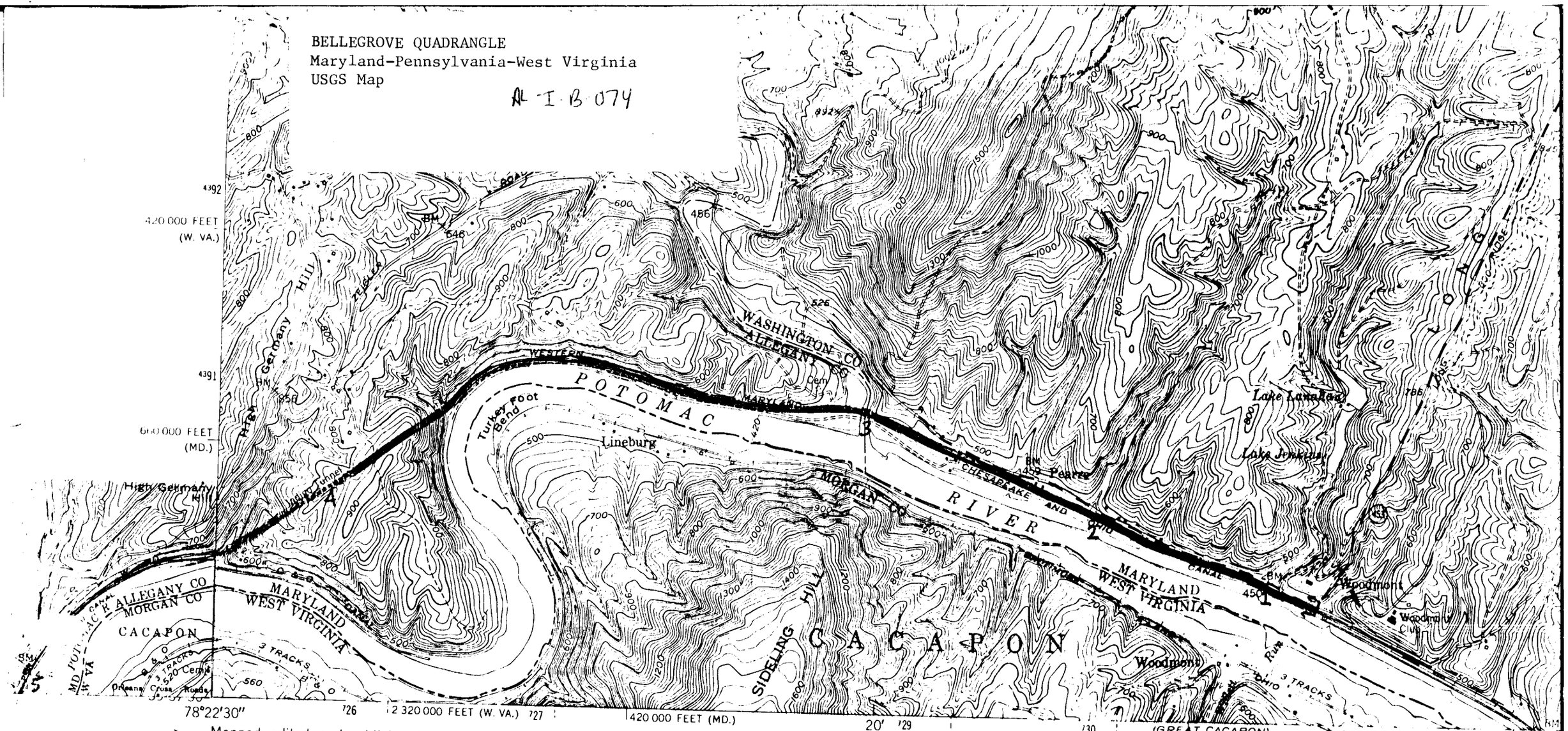

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods
Aerial photographs taken 1947. Field check 1951

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on Maryland coordinate system, Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone, and West Virginia coordinate system, north zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1974. This information not field checked

MN GN
7° 124 MILS
1°43' 31 MILS
UTM GRID AND 1974 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1:24 000
1 MILE
7000 FEET
1 KILOMETER

CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

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Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(3) Sideling Hill Creek Bridge, downstream side; portion of canal aqueduct in foreground. Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81

R

1969
-71-72
ALAN

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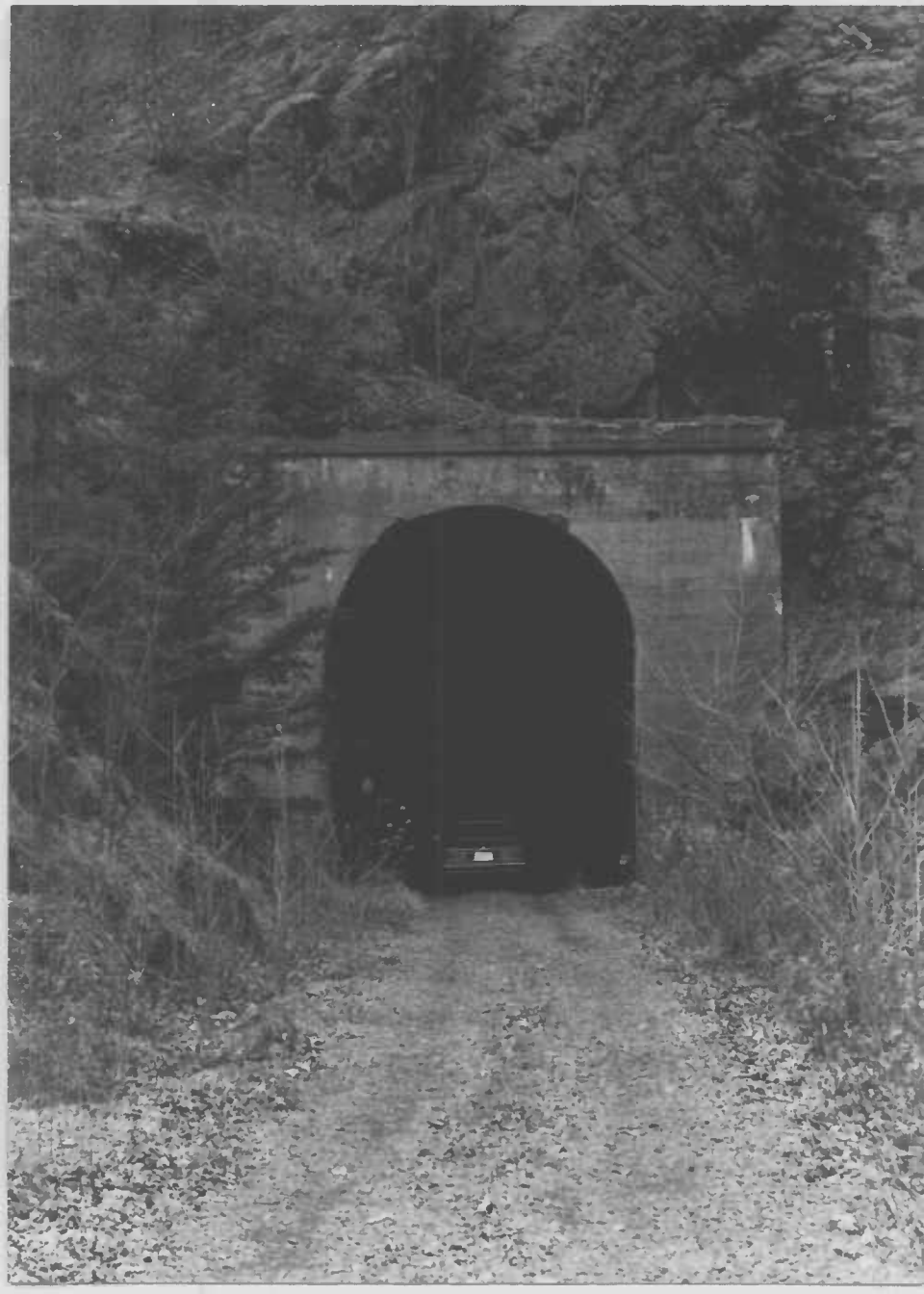
Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(5) Little Orleans Road Culvert, northwest face
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81



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Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP

(4) Indigo Tunnel, southwest portal
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81

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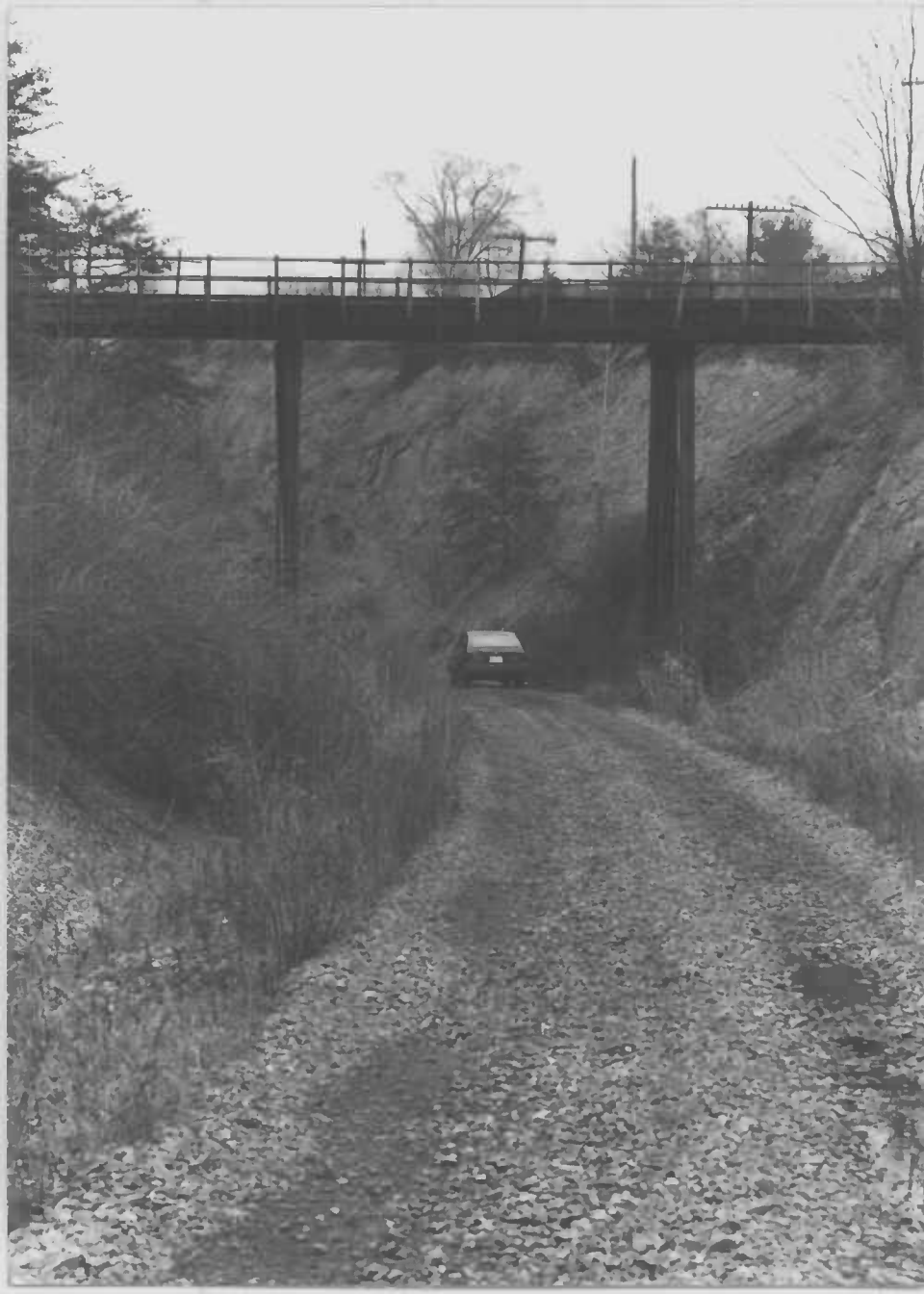
Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(6) Fifteen Mile Creek Culvert, downstream face
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81



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Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(7) Road overpass southwest of Little Orleans
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81

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Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(8) Potomac Bridge No. 1, from Maryland side
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81

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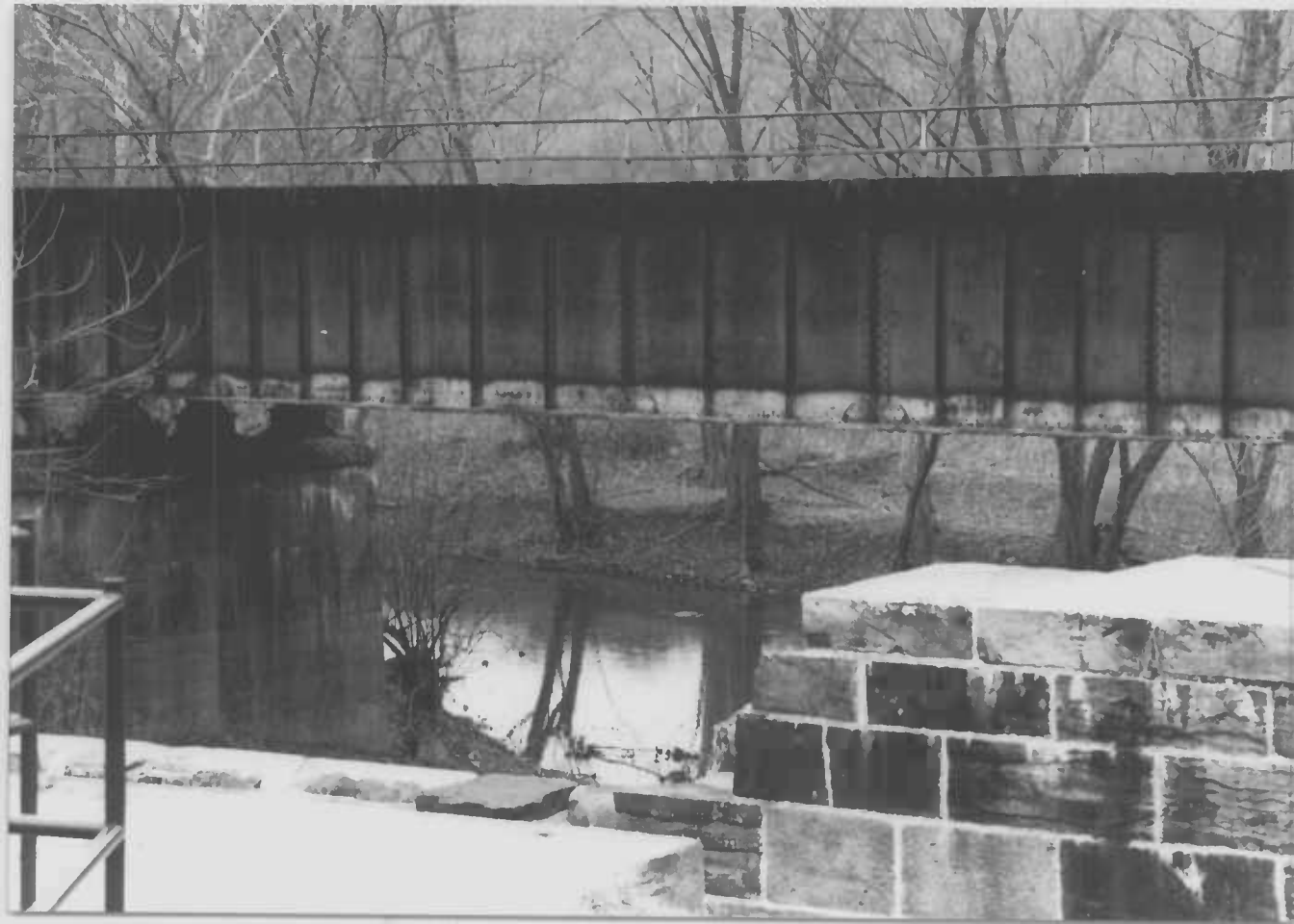
Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(16) Potomac Bridge No. 5, upstream side
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81



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Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(21) Town Creek Bridge, downstream side; canal aqueduct in foreground. Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81

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Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(22) Canal overflow culvert to Town Creek
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81

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Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(18) Bridge over C & O Canal, from northeast
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81

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Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(25) Seven Springs Run Culvert, downstream face
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81

SOUND
HORN
BAD
CORNER

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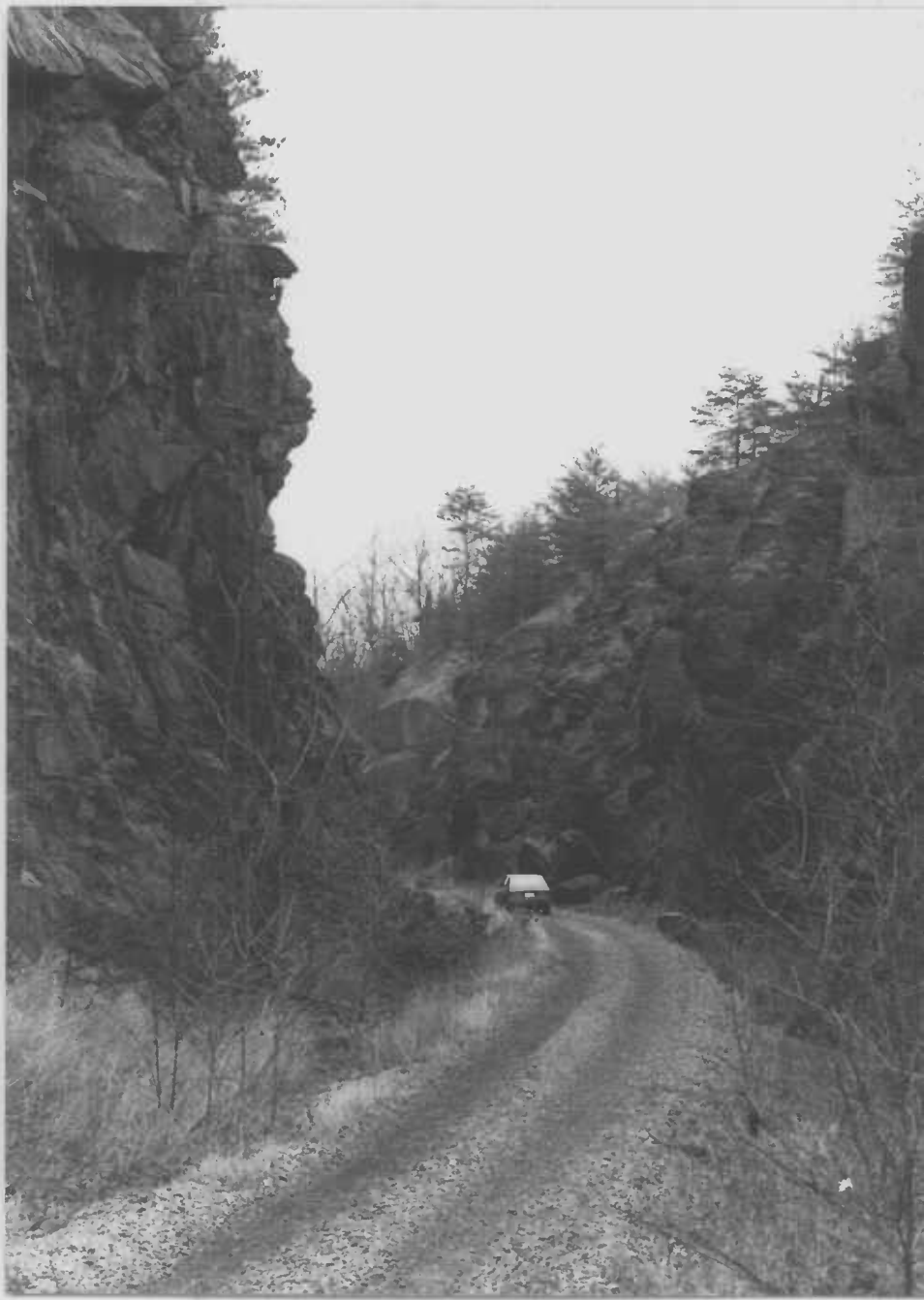
Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(24) Road underpass, Oldtown, south side
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81



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Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(27) Deep cut through rock
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81

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Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(32) Collier Run Culvert, downstream face
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81

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Western Maryland Railway, C & O Canal NHP
(17) Potomac Bridge No. 6, downstream side
Mackintosh, NPS, 2/81

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