

F-4-43

Dahlgren Chapel

Ca. 1881

(Chapel of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart of Jesus)

Middletown vicinity

Private

The Dahlgren Chapel is a stone Gothic Revival chapel with a projecting foyer and a belfry on the south elevation and four window bays with stained glass windows and buttresses on the side elevations. Built about 1881 as a family chapel and mausoleum by Madeleine V. Dahlgren, the chapel is a good example of the Gothic Revival style in churches, which was popular from the second quarter of the 19th century through the third quarter of the 20th century. In 1876, Mrs. Dahlgren, widow of Rear Admiral John A. Dahlgren, the U.S. Navy's Chief of Ordnance during the Civil War, purchased the 18th century stone tavern on the south side of the Old National Pike (now the South Mountain Inn) which was the Mountain House around which much of the Battle of South Mountain took place on September 14, 1862. Admiral Dahlgren, who died in 1870, was the inventor of the Dahlgren gun which revolutionized naval armament.

F-4-43

Dahlgren Chapel

(Chapel of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart of Jesus)

Middletown

Frederick County

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

(Harford, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery  
Counties, and Baltimore City)

Chronological/Development Period:

Industrial Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Themes

Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Community Planning

Resource Types:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function and Use:

Religion/religious structure/church

Known Design Source: None

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Chapel of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

and/or common Dahlgren Chapel (preferred)

### 2. Location

street & number 1600 block Old National Pike  not for publicationcity, town Middletown  vicinity of congressional district 6th

state Maryland county Frederick

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

### 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Richard B. Griffin

street &amp; number P.O. Box 842 telephone no.:

city, town Frederick state and zip code Md. 21701

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Frederick County Courthouse liber 671

street &amp; number 100 W. Patrick Street folio 267

city, town Frederick state Md. 21701

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Paul Brinkman Survey of Frederick County #1095

date C. 1968  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Md. SHPO

city, town Crownsville state Md.

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE COUNT: 1

The Dahlgren Chapel (Chapel of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) is a circa 1881 Gothic Revival stone church located on the north side of Old National Pike (U.S. 40A) at the summit of Turner's Gap on South Mountain, near Middletown, Frederick County, Maryland. The chapel is located just east of the boundary between Frederick and Washington Counties. The chapel is not currently in use as a religious building and is privately owned.

The chapel faces south toward Old National Pike and is sited on a southward slope at the edge of open fields on the north and east and adjoining a residential lot on the west. A hedge of shrubbery separates the chapel lot, which is an irregular rectangle about 76.5 ft. by 156 ft. by 48 ft. by 143.5 ft., from the surrounding land. It has coursed fieldstone walls with a projecting foyer on the south elevation containing double diagonally paneled doors under a circular stained glass window. A belfry tower rises from the southwest corner, terminating in a gable roof covered with composition material and topped by a stone cross. The main roof is slate. The east and west elevations have four bays each with buttresses and arched stained glass windows. The north end of the church is apsidal with openings only at side doors to the vestry on the east and west.

The interior of the chapel was inaccessible for this survey; however, some descriptive information is given in Bevan's 200 Years . . . A History of the Catholic Community of the Frederick Valley (1977). The interior has native walnut paneling, white marble floors, and a marble altar. The chapel had been vandalized by the late 1950's, although Bevan does not state what damage had been done. The Dahlgren family members buried in the crypt were removed about 1959 to the cemetery of St. Michael's Church in Poplar Springs, Md. Bevan states that the current owner, Mr. Richard Griffin, has tried to restore the chapel since 1962.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** C. 1881 **Builder/Architect**

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check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
and/or  
Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Level of Significance:  national  state  local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Dahlgren Chapel is a good example of the Gothic Revival style for churches which was an enduring historical revival from the mid 19th century through the mid 20th centuries. The chapel is generally reminiscent of English Gothic country churches, with a simple entrance through a foyer, a bell tower with a gable roof, an apse, and buttresses on the side elevations. It was built about 1881 as a family chapel and mausoleum by Madeleine Vinton Dahlgren, widow of Rear Admiral John A. Dahlgren. Madeleine Dahlgren (1825-1898) purchased the Mountain House, now the South Mountain Inn, on the south side of the Old National Pike in 1876 for her summer residence. Admiral Dahlgren (1809-1870) was Chief of the U.S. Navy's Bureau of Ordnance during the Civil War and his innovative gun designs, called "Dahlgrens", revolutionized naval armament.

The only Catholic church which may be considered as a private chapel in origin is St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church (F-2-13) in Petersville, built about 1826 with a bequest from the will of former Governor Thomas Sim Lee, reportedly in gratitude for the recovery from illness of his Catholic wife Mary Digges Lee. Sited near the Lee estate at Needwood, it contained a family pew for the Lees and many of the family are buried in the church cemetery. St. Mary's was not private in service, however, and Catholics of the Petersville and Brunswick vicinity were members of the parish. Madeleine Dahlgren's first husband David Converse Goddard (1825-1862) was buried in the Dahlgren Chapel crypt, along with several Dahlgren descendants. In her will, Mrs. Dahlgren expressed a desire to be buried there herself. It is clear that the building was intended as a family mausoleum on private land. The bodies were removed to the cemetery of St. Michael's Catholic Church in Poplar Springs, Maryland about 1959 to protect them from vandals and the chapel was deconsecrated about the same time.

The old Mountain House is just west of the county line in Washington County. It was heavily involved in the Battle of South Mountain, September 14, 1862. Mrs. Dahlgren wrote about ghosts and legends of the South Mountain vicinity in an 1882 book, South Mountain Magic. In the 1890's, Mrs. Dahlgren provided restoration money for the Washington Monument a short distance to the north.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. F-4-43

Williams, T.J.C. and Folger McKinsey, History of Frederick County, 1910. Reprinted Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co.; 1979, pp. 178, 1152  
Bevan, Thomas R. 220 Years ... A History of the Catholic Community of the Frederick Valley. Frederick: Da-Mark Associates, Inc., 1977, pp. 38-39.  
(Continued on separate sheet)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1  
Quadrangle name Middletown, Md.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

C 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

E 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

G 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

B 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

D 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

F 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

H 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

## Verbal boundary description and justification

Rectangular lot 76.5 ft. x 156 ft. x 48 ft. x 143.5 ft. on Tax Map 45, Parcel 67

## List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janet L. Davis, Historic Sites Surveyor

organization Frederick County Planning & Zoning Dept. date March 1992

street & number 12 E. Church Street telephone 696-2958

city or town Frederick state Md. 21701

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DHCP/DHOD  
100 COMMUNITY PLAC.  
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2000

Dahlgren Chapel  
(Chapel of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart of Jesus)  
Frederick County

Survey No. F-4-43

9.1 Bibliography (Continued)

Concise Dictionary of American Biography, 4th ed. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1990, pp. 248-249

LIBER/F 10	GRANTEE	GRANTOR	ORIGINAL TRACTS	COST	DATE
671/267 <del>433/241</del> 671/267 433/241 15 May 41	Vernon E. Hutzell	<del>Josiah Peirce</del>	<del>Stone memorial chapel</del>		
671/267 17 Jul 62	Richard B. Griffin	Foster E. Ford & Olive M. Ford	10 a. Excepting all that small lot ... on which is a stone memorial chapel erected by Madeline Sarah Vinton Dahlgren		
547/459 19 Feb 55	Foster E. & Olive M. Ford	Carl B. & Flora V. Phillips	10 a. except (as above) conveyed to Vernon E. Hutzell		
506/11 11 Jul 52	<del>Vernon E. Hutzell</del> Carl B. & Flora V. Phillips	<del>Carl B. &amp; Flora V. Phillips</del> Vernon E. Hutzell	10 a.		
433/241 15 May 41	Vernon E. Hutzell	Josiah Peirce	10 a.		
Well Record GES 2/63- 12 Apr 26 probated	Josiah Peirce NYC.	Ulrica Dahlgren Peirce of D.C.	lot is 76.5' x 156', 48' x 143.5' Stone memorial chapel erected by my (Josiah's) grandmother Madeline Sarah Vinton Dahlgren		
362/314 10 Jan 25	Ulrica Dahlgren Peirce	St. Mary's Academy of Notre Dame, St. Joseph's Co., Ind.	"The Dahlgren Property"		
340/170 31 May 22	St. Mary's Academy	Ulrica Dahlgren Peirce			

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Concise Dictionary of American Biography

F-4-43

4th ed. New York: Chas Scribner's Sons  
1990, p. 248-249

Dahlgren, John Adolphus Bernard  
b. Phila, Pa. 1809; d. Wash. D.C. 1870

Assigned Ordnance duty in Wash. 1847

Became Chief, Bureau of Ordnance 1862

Innovations revolutionized naval armament

Sarah Madeline Vinton Dahlgren

b. Gallipolis, Oh. 1825; d. Wash. D.C. 1898

author; married Dahlgren 1865

P. 2 Dahlgren Chapel

LIBER/FOLIO	GRANTEE	GRANTOR	ORIGINAL TRACTS	COST	DATE
Will Record JKW 2/304 30 Nov-1890	Ulrica Mary Dahlgren	Madeline Sarah Vinton Dahlgren			
TG 5/708 19 Apr 1876	Madeline V. Dahlgren	George F. Smith Wash. Co.	partly in Fredrick & partly in Washington Co's. 60a.	\$3,500	

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Bevan, Thomas P. 220 Years... A History of the Catholic  
Community of the Frederick Valley. Frederick: Da-Mark  
Associates, Inc., 1977. P. 38-39

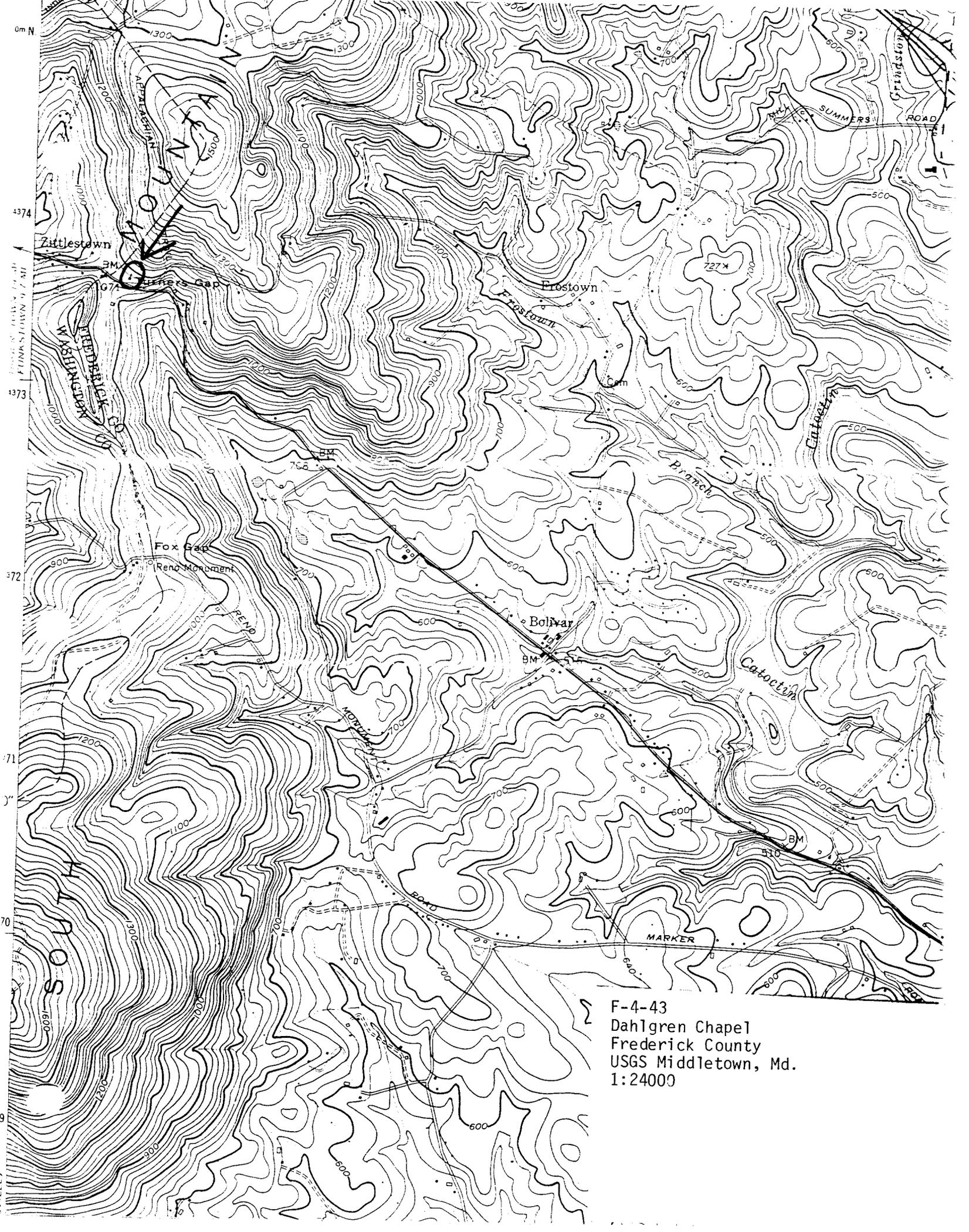
F-443

1882: Mrs. Dahlgren was a pious woman, a Catholic who had  
always been very cordial to the Jesuits and their work.  
Her son John V. Dahlgren & his wife Eliz. Drexel donated  
Chapel of Georgetown W., cornerstone laid on 19 May 1892.  
Admiral Dahlgren began as ordinary seaman, app to  
US Nav. Academy. Chief of Ordnance for U.S. Navy during  
Civil War.

Widow lived in Washington; summered at Turner's Gap.  
By 1881 she was well advanced in years. Her grandson  
Josiah Price (sic) in that year built the present  
chapel dedicated to the Sacred Heart. Not built to be  
a parish church or mission... but as a family chapel  
or burial crypt... Josiah Price and Alma Dahlgren  
were married there by Cardinal Gibbons. Mrs.  
Madeleine Dahlgren expressed a desire in her will  
to be buried there. Original bell cast by McShane  
Bell Foundry in Balto.; sent to Benlult St. Michael's  
Church in Poplar Springs. Since brought back and hung  
at Dahlgren Chapel. Weighs 400 lbs. Cost \$28 + 25¢ for  
other metal parts

Buried in crypt: David Converse Goddard (1825-1862)  
1st husband of Madeleine Dahlgren  
Madeleine Vinton Dahlgren (1825-1898)  
Josiah Price (sic) (1866-1925)  
Eric Dahlgren (1866-1922)  
Vinton Dahlgren Price (sic) (1896-1925)

D. 39 Interior: native walnut paneling, white marble floor  
& altar. Windows "cathedral" shaped, edged with  
grapes and leaves, colors red, green, gold, amethyst.  
By 1959, family had long ago sold the tower (So. Mt. Dan)  
Chapel bell into disrepair & vandalized. Bodies moved  
1959 to cemetery of St. Michael's Church, Poplar Springs.  
Chapel deconsecrated  
Since 1960, Richard Griffin has tried to repair damage & opened chapel  
to visitors on weekends



F-4-43  
Dahlgren Chapel  
Frederick County  
USGS Middletown, Md.  
1:24000



F 4-48

Est. ...

Dorchester County

Photo ...

March 19...

... ..

... ..

...



F. D. C.

Dublin Chapel

Fredrick County

Photograph of House

March 1894

Location of house on map

Northwest corner of

city