

WA-II-001  
Old South Mountain Inn (Mountain House)  
Alt. US 40  
Turner's Gap (Boonsboro)

18th & 19th centuries

Located on the south side of Alt. US 40 on the top of South Mountain, the Old South Mountain Inn is a two-story five-bay stone house with several rear wings and a glass-enclosed side addition. The main block of the house has a flush chimney at each gable end. The two west bays of the first floor of the front (north) facade have been replaced by one large frame-filled opening with a wide picture window set in it. The center door has been covered by a porch with square posts and a short balustrade above. This porch is now enclosed, with the entrance to the east side and a window on the north side.

A frame wing extends south from the main block, with another stone building joined to that, parallel to the main block. This stone section has a single dormer on the south side of the gable roof, and also has flush chimneys at the ends. This section is also five bays wide, and both the first and second floors have a central entrance. The second floor entrance opens onto a deck, which leads to the parking lot, which is at about the second floor level.

The windows of both the stone sections have been replaced with diamond-pane casement windows.

Extending eastward from the frame section is a more modern frame section almost entirely composed of windows and French doors.

To the east of the building is a small stone and brick outbuilding with a pyramidal hip roof topped by a finial. The first two or three feet of this structure

is built of stone, the remaining three or four feet is 1/6 common bond brick. Above the entrance door is a hip-roofed hood with elaborate carved wooden brackets. The point of the hip roof of this hood also holds a finial.

Part of the building may date to the 18th century, but this has not been ascertained. The building was used as an Inn as early as the early 19th century, and notable visitors included Abraham Lincoln, Daniel Webster, and Henry Clay. During the Civil War, the building was used as headquarters during the Battle of South Mountain by Confederate General D.H. Hill.

In 1876, the South Mountain House was purchased by Madeleine V. Dahlgren, widow of Admiral John A. Dahlgren, who invented the Dahlgren gun. She converted the inn to a private residence and constructed the private chapel across the road.

The building has again been used as a restaurant since 1973.

ADDENDUM

WA-II-001

Old South Mountain Inn

Turner's Gap

Boonsboro, MD

ITEM 8: Statement of Significance and History

This additional information is being supplied as part of the South Mountain Battlefield Survey Project, February 1998. The Old South Mountain Inn, known historically as the Mountain House, is located within the survey area and was impacted by the Battle of South Mountain which occurred on September 14, 1862. The inn was Confederate General D.H. Hill's headquarters during the battle, and so was the command center for the action that occurred at Turner's and Fox's Gaps, as rebels tenaciously defended the passes over South Mountain.

The Old National Pike which passes in front of the inn was of strategic importance to both the Confederate and Union armies because it provided access to one of the few crossing places through the mountains and because of the superior quality of its surface which could accommodate large numbers of marching men, horses and supply trains. Turner's Gap at the summit where the inn is located, became the focal point for the fight and was the main objective for the Union army as it attempted to follow the Confederates into the Hagerstown Valley and capture the divided rebel army.

The discovery on September 13, 1862 of General Robert E. Lee's Special Order #191, the Lost Order, in a field near Frederick where the Confederates had camped precipitated the march of the Army of the Potomac toward South Mountain along the Old National Pike. The turnpike crossed the mountain running west toward the center of Lee's divided army. Had Union commander, George B. McClellan approached the mountain with speed, as he had indicated he would to President Lincoln, the Battle of South Mountain might have ended differently.<sup>1</sup>

The Special Order #191 detailed General Lee's deployment of the Army of Northern Virginia in September 1862. In addition to the siege of Harper's Ferry by three divisions under Stonewall Jackson from the west and two divisions under Lafayette McLaws from the northeast, the orders described the location of Robert E. Lee and James Longstreet with two divisions at Hagerstown and D.H.Hill's division, alone at Boonsboro, just below Turner's Gap. With the knowledge of the divided nature of Lee's army on the west side of South Mountain, and the small defensive line at the pass, McClellan felt confident in his army's ability to catch Lee's forces in this vulnerable position. However, McClellan's infamous cautiousness and over-estimation of the size of his opponent, delayed the movement of the Army of the Potomac for half a day. The result of his slow approach to the pass at South Mountain was to give the Confederate defenders time to reinforce their tenuous position and begin pulling their divided army together again at Sharpsburg.

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<sup>1</sup>Stephen W. Sears, "Fire on the Mountain," **Blue and Gray**, December-January, 1986-87, p. 11

D.H.Hill's response to the deployment of the Union troops as he viewed them from his headquarters at the Mountain House on the crest of the pass, would set up the battles at Fox's and Turner's Gaps. Major General Hill stated, "Should the truth be known, the battle of South Mountain, as far as my division was concerned, will be regarded as one of the most remarkable and creditable of the war....the division numbered less than 5,000 men the morning of September 14, and we had five roads to guard, extending over a space of as many miles."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Official Records, Vol. XIX, Part I, p. 1021.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

*Richard...*

NOMINATION FORM  
for the  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**1. NAME**  
COMMON:  
Old South Mountain Inn  
AND/OR HISTORIC:  
South Mountain House

**2. LOCATION**  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
South side of U.S. 40-A, Turner's Gap, summit of South Mountain  
CITY OR TOWN:  
East of Boonsboro  
STATE: Maryland COUNTY: Washington

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Bath	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____
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**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**  
OWNER'S NAME:  
Charles Reichmuth  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
Route 3, Box 459  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Boonsboro STATE: Maryland

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**  
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Washington County Court House  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
West Washington Street  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Hagerstown STATE: Maryland

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**  
Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #): 527/627

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
DATE OF SURVEY:  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  Federal  State  County  Local  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
CITY OR TOWN: STATE:

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered     Unaltered     Moved     Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The South Mountain House is located along the south side of Alternate U.S. 40, about three miles east of Boonsboro, at the summit of South Mountain, at Turner's Gap. The main section of the structure faces northeast or toward the highway.

The front or main section of the inn is a five-bay, two-story stone structure with all walls except the first story of the facade covered with white stucco. The area of wall that is exposed is of coursed local field-stone. It is trimmed with white, black and red paint. Extending to the rear of the main section is a wing which terminates with a third section set perpendicular to it and parallel to the main structure. The building complex is roughly H-shaped.

Chimneys, like the walls are covered with stucco. The main section has chimneys inside each gable end. An inside end chimney is also located at the west gable of the rear section. An interior chimney rises from the central section.

Windows are located on all sides of the structure. At the facade the original sashes have been replaced with modern diamond-pane casement windows. Little of the original framing appears to remain. It is likely that the facade originally had five bays with a center door, a design common to the area. The main entrance has been greatly altered. The windows of the facade are flanked with louvered shutters at the second story and paneled shutters at the main floor level. In the gable ends, windows are located at the attic level as well as the first and second floors.

The gable roof of each section is covered with modern grey shingles. The cornice consists of a simple neoclassically-inspired band of molding. The ends of the roof at the gables are finished with a barge board placed against the end walls.

Several porches are associated with the various sections of the house. None appear to be original.

There is no substantiated date indicating the year that this building was erected but historians have traced land records to transactions prior to 1750. The exterior physical appearance of the present structure would indicate that it dates from after 1800. It is possible, however, that an earlier building could be incorporated into parts of the present South Mountain Inn.

The building is located on 3.7 acres of land. It is in excellent condition and is being operated as a restaurant.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian
- 15th Century
- 16th Century
- 17th Century
- 18th Century
- 19th Century
- 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

portions of the building could date from the 18th

century

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |   |

Significant as an early inn and stage stop on the National Road.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although its architecture has been greatly altered, the South Mountain Inn is rich in historical significance. According to a publication on the history of South Mountain House, Robert Turner, for whom Turner's Gap was named, purchased a 575-acre tract from Arthur Nelson in 1750. The property was called "Nelson's Folly."<sup>1</sup> In 1769, the land was apparently transferred to Jacob Young, an innkeeper.<sup>2</sup>

It is possible then, that an inn was in operation at the summit of South Mountain by the 1770's if not earlier. Detailed physical examination of the structure would be necessary to determine whether any parts of an 18th century building remain.

It is apparent from historical data that the South Mountain Inn did a brisk business during the first half of the 19th century when the National Road took many travelers by its door. Abraham Lincoln is said to have spent the night at the inn in 1840 and other distinguished visitors are reported to have been Daniel Webster and Henry Clay.

During the Civil War General D. H. Hill, commander of the rear guard of Lee's Confederate forces, established headquarters at the inn during the Battle of South Mountain.

In 1876, the South Mountain House was purchased by Madeleine V. Dahlgren, widow of Admiral John A. Dahlgren, who invented the Dahlgren gun. She converted the inn to a private residence and constructed the private chapel across the road.

The property was acquired by the present owner in July, 1973.

<sup>1</sup>Lemoine Cree, "A Brief History of South Mountain House," The Valley Register, Inc., Middletown, Md., 1963, p. 4, as noted from the Land Office, Annapolis, Md., Liber B, Folio 336.  
<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Cree, Lemoin, "A Brief History of South Mountain House," The Valley Register, Inc., Middletown, Md., 1963.  
 Dahlgren, Madeleine, V., South Mountain Magic, Boston University Press, Cambridge, 1882.  
 Guinn, Barbara, "A Family Jaunt to Boonsboro, Md.: Something for Everyone," The Washington Post, E5, Sunday, September 17, 1972.  
 Payette, Skip, "Ancient South Mountain House Played Host to Presidents, Statesmen, Bankers, Generals," The Morning Herald, Hagerstown, Md., July, 1951.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 3.7 acres

Acreage Justification:

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

STATE:	COUNTY:

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Paula Stoner Dickey, Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Washington County Historic Sites Survey DATE: November, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 Court House Annex

CITY OR TOWN: Hagerstown STATE: Maryland

**12 State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)**

Significance of this property is:  
 National  State  Local

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



WASHINGTON MONUMENT  
STATE PARK

WA-II-00

4375000m N

4374

HAGERSTOWN 14 MI  
FUNKSTOWN 9 MI

4373

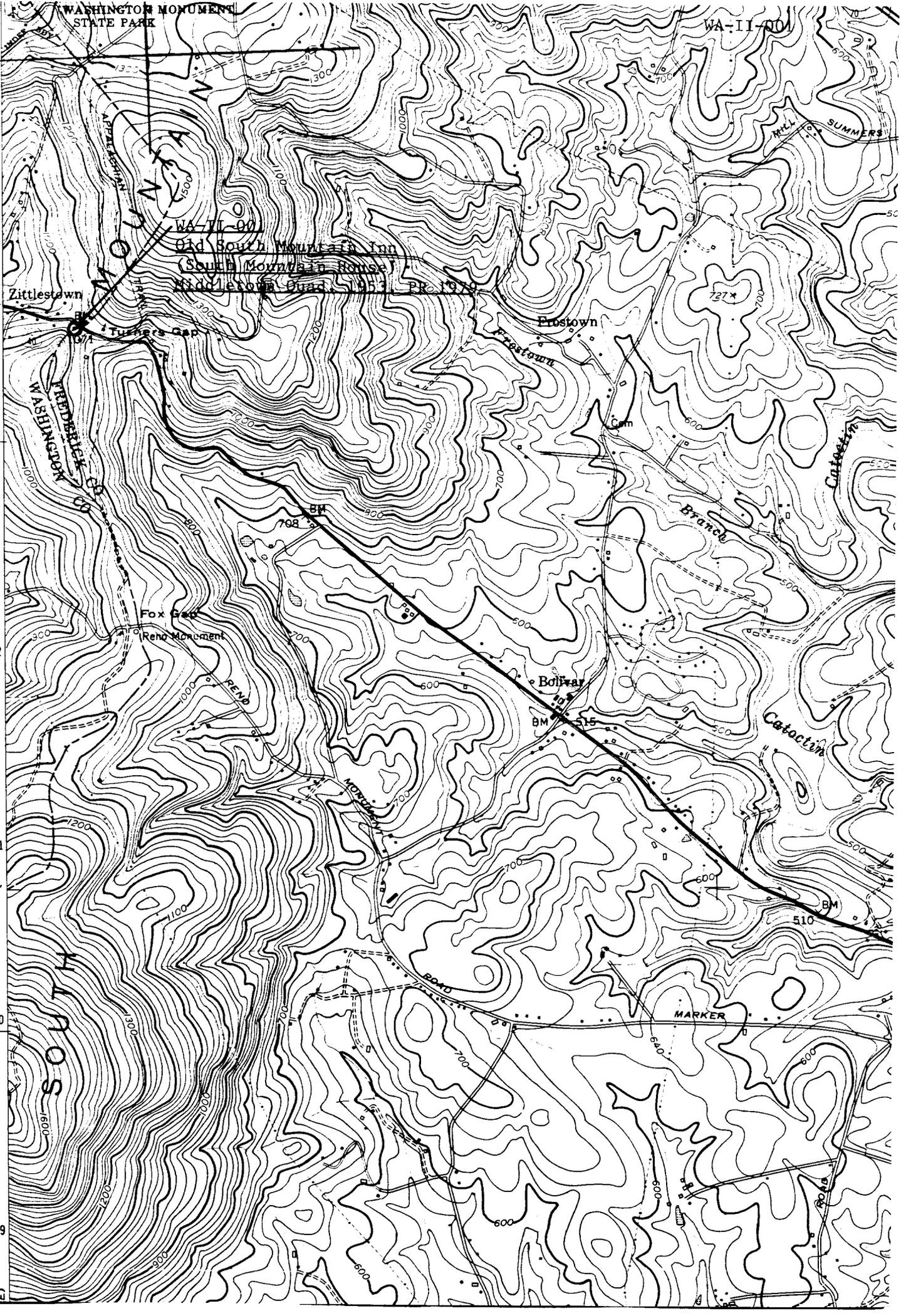
4372

4371

27°30'

4370

4369



MOUNTAIN  
 WASHINGTON  
 FREDERICK  
 SOUTH MOUNTAIN

WA-II-00

Old South Mountain Inn  
(South Mountain House)

Middlebrook Road

Zittlestown

Turners Gap

Prostown

Cam

Fox Creek

Rend Monument

Bolivar

BM 515

BM 510

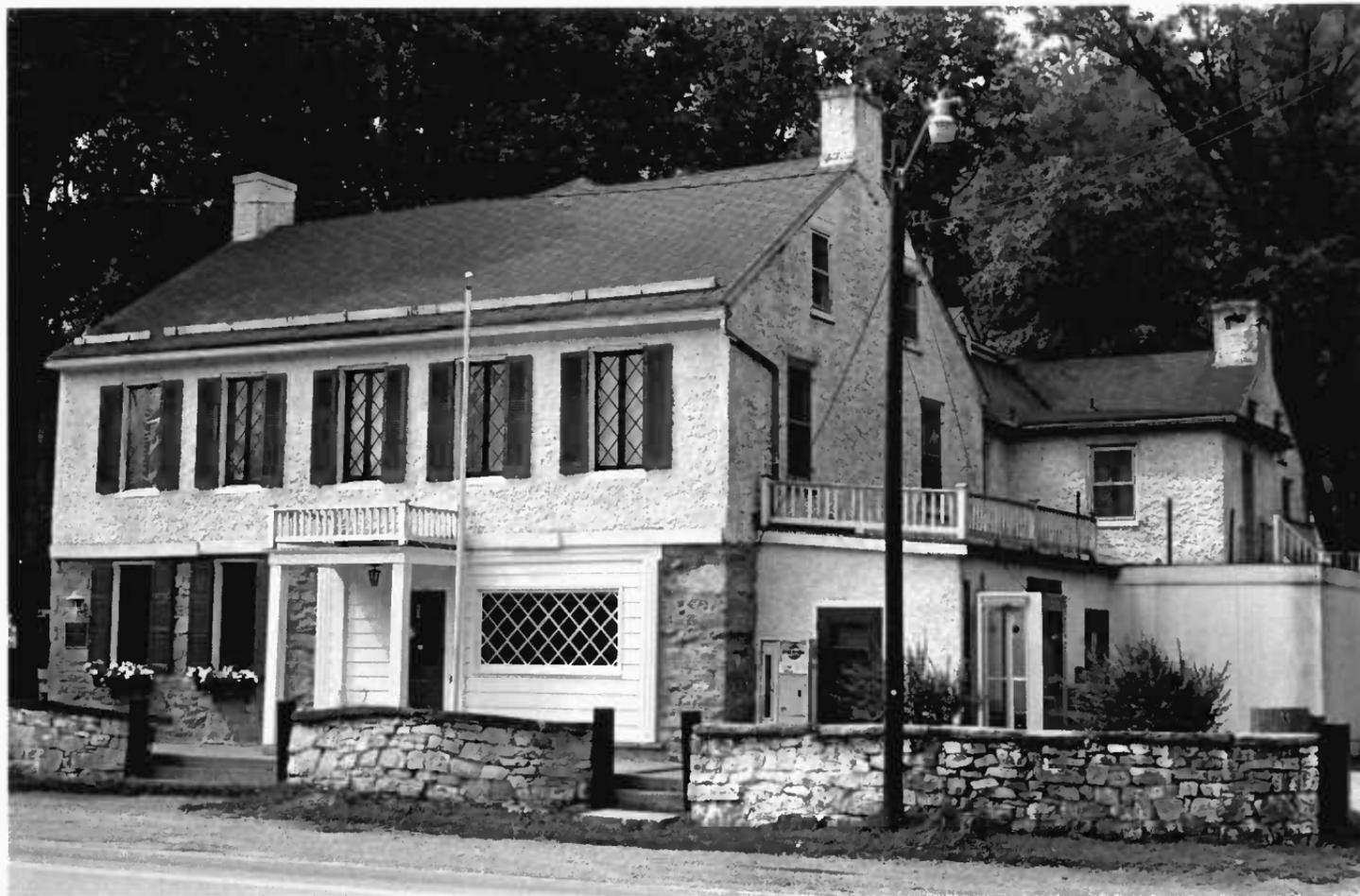
MARKER

SUMMERS

Catoctin

Catoctin

Branch



11-11-13

Paula Stone Dickey

Consentment, Washington State Department of Social Services

March, 1913



WE 11 9

Frank Stewart L. Day

Consultant, Department of Historical & Surveying

August 1933



Historic  
Building  
No. 12

Historic Building

1852

Historic Building

Historic Building









