HO 736, Williams Run Water Station,
1829, ca. 1854, twentieth-century additions.
Ellicott City vicinity, public access.
Capsule Summary, page 1.

Description:

The remains of nine structures survive at Williams Run Water Station, here designated A through I. Structure A is the upper portion of a now toppled tower. Constructed entirely of poured concrete, the structure evidently served as a coal tower, designed to dispense coal by gravity into steam engine tenders or gondolas. It stood over a Baltimore and Ohio Railroad siding, now removed. Structure B is another concrete tower which rises intact from the ground on the north side of the present CSX railroad tracks. Its function is unknown, but it possibly served as the pump house for a nearby cistern. The materials of these structures suggest a twentieth-century date, but their precise construction date is unknown. Building C is a rough-cut granite shop or storehouse opening to the south side of the former B & O right-of-way. It may date to the development of the site in 1854. Structure D is a single arch railroad bridge--now bypassed--spanning Williams Run. Of rusticated ashlar granite construction, it likely dates from 1829, when the first bridges for the railroad were constructed. Structure

E is a poured-concrete cistern on a hill above Williams Run, and by its materials appears to have been built at the same time as Structures A and B. Letters F through I mark the sites of dwellings now razed.

Significance:

Like neighboring Gray's Water Station (HO 734), Williams Run Water Station developed around a water tank constructed to serve the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. In 1854, trustees for Elizabeth Ellicott Lea sold the lot for the tank to the railroad. Other building lots had been laid out nearby as early as 1840, probably for the Patapsco Cotton Factory, located across the river, though the lack of later property records for the site obscures its development to the end of the nineteenth century. The architectural evidence does establish a chronology and speaks to the development and transformation of the railroad system over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The single-arched bridge--Structure D--erected in 1829 for the first line of the Nation's first railroad,

exemplifies the attention given to function and artistry in the railroad's first building campaigns. The early supremacy of steam power, its steady perfection, and the consequent expansion of the rail system behind ever larger and more powerful engines increased the need for reliable fuel and water supplies along the line as well as maintenance shops and the crews to support them. Both the establishment of Williams Run and the modernization of the facility in the twentieth century demonstrate this period of progress, as does the abandonment of the early bridge. Transformation to diesel power after World War Two radically altered the support systems necessary for the railroad's operation, and installations like Williams Run became, practically overnight, superfluous, and were consequently abandoned. Like the residents at Grays, those of Williams Run also worked at neighboring factories, and their community remained until the early 1960s, when the State of Maryland purchased the land for Patapsco State Park.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. HO 736

Magi No.

DOE __yes __no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Williams Run Water Station

and/or common

2. Location

street & number One mile and 3/10 SE of Ellicott City along CSX Railroad ___ not for publication

city, town Ellicott City ___X___ vicinity of congressional district sixth

state Maryland county Howard

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___X___ public	___ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
___ building(s)	___ private	___X___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___X___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___X___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___X___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	___ not applicable	___ no	___ military	___X___ other:

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

name State of Maryland

street & number Natural Resources/Dept. of Forests and Parks telephone no.:

city, town Annapolis state and zip code Maryland 20701

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Please see continuation sheet. liber

street & number folio

city, town state

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title none

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. HO 736

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	_X_ original site
___ good	_X_ ruins	_X_ altered	___ moved date of move _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

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

Contributing Resource Count: 9

The remains of nine structures survive at Williams Run Water Station--here designated A through I.

Structure A is the upper portion of a now-toppled tower. Constructed entirely of poured concrete which retains the marks of plank shuttering, the surviving structure is a vertical rectangular volume surmounted by a gable roof, now prone on its side. The inclined floor surface is visible, and slopes to two square openings, originally at the bottom of the volume. Some fragments of iron machinery survive, and were evidently intended to regulate the dispensing of the tower's contents. On this underside of the volume are six truncated piers which have been sheered off where the relatively narrow columnar support widened to meet the rectangular volume above. Though there is no evidence on the ground where these piers were founded, it is likely that the tower was toppled where it stood when its function was superseded, and the piers removed when the railroad reconstructed the road bed. To have moved such a heavy and useless structure any further than necessary would have been a pointless exercise. The precise function of the tower has not been determined, though, again, it is quite likely to have been built to contain coal, which was a vital component of the railroad system during the age of steam. In this respect the position of the tower and the relatively narrow profile of its piers suggests that railroad engines were intended to proceed along a siding underneath it, with the coal then dispensed by gravity into the tender behind the engine.

Structure B is another poured-concrete tower, square in plan, and of a single rectangular volume, rising from the ground between the CSX railroad tracks and the south bank of the Patapsco. The marks of plank shuttering are clearly discernible on the four sides, and a single concrete slab caps the top, extending slightly beyond the vertical plain of each wall. Two openings in the slab, approximately one foot and three feet square, respectively, are outlined by a raised lip, originally molded with the slab. An iron frame lines the larger of these, while bolts protrude from the smaller. The wide differential in ground level here places the top of this structure at the elevation of the railroad.

[Please see continuation sheet.]

8. Significance

Survey No. HO 736

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	_X_ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	_X_ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	___ architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	
_X_ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ expioration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater
___ 1900–	___ communications	_X_ industry	___ poiitics/government	_X_ transportation
		___ invention		___ other (specify)

Specific dates 1829 ca. 1854 **Builder/Architect** unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: X A __B __C X D
and/or
Applicable Exception: __A __B __C __D __E __F __G

Level of Significance: __national X state __local

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

Williams Run Water Station

Please see the historical background for Gray's Water Station, inventory number HO 734, and the Charles H. Thomas House, inventory number HO 735.

Over its first quarter-century of operation, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad grew from an experimental to a fully proven mode of transportation, based on steam-driven locomotion. The need for installations supplying water, wood, and coal at crucial points along the route likewise increased over this time. Communities developed around these points to house the staff required for service operations. In the Patapsco valley, the residents of Grays and Williams Run Water Stations worked also at neighboring factories, maintaining a community at these locations after the closure of the closest factory, the Gray Manufacturing Company, in 1888. The transformation of the railroad from steam to diesel power after World War Two rendered obsolete these nineteenth and twentieth-century installations supporting steam power, but the communities remained until the early 1960s. State purchases then for the expansion of Patapsco State Park reveal an evolving view of the river valley from a primarily private, industrial resource to a public, recreational one.

At the time of the construction of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, the region between Ellicott City and Ilchester, south and west of the Patapsco, was largely undeveloped woodland. Trustees for the estate of John Ellicott, Jr. (1769-1820) advertised this land for sale in 1828 as 250 acres of timberland (Dorsey v. Ellicott, Baltimore City Circuit Court Equity Papers). Subsequent deaths in the Ellicott family, and legal and financial settlements lead to partitions and sales

[Please see continuation sheet.]

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. HO 736

Land Records as noted.

Dorsey v. Ellicott, Baltimore City Circuit Court Equity Papers, Maryland State Archives, Special Collections, MSA C186-3, MdHR 40,191-2-1/10.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property fourteen

1 : 24,000

Quadrangle name Ellicott City

Quadrangle scale 7.5 Series

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundaries of the site conform to those of Howard County Tax Map 25, parcels 191, 192, 195, and, 252, extended to the bank of the Patapsco River. This comprises the sites of nine structures.

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

state	code	county	code
tate	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Henry K. Sharp
organization	none
date	16 December 1998
street & number	100 South Street West
telephone	804/295-0140
city or town	Charlottesville
state	Virginia 22902

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/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023

Inventory Number HO 736
Williams Run Water Station
Section 5.1

Howard County Circuit Court
8360 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Howard County Tax Map 25
Parcel 191: liber 371, folio 514;
Parcels 192 and 252: liber 374, folio 377;
Parcel 195: liber 375, folio 240.

Structure B's function is also unknown, though its construction methods make it likely to have been a contemporary of Structure A. Its proximity to the river suggests a relationship with water; perhaps it was an overflow basin or contained a pump or well, ordinarily supplying water through pipes attached to the smaller opening at the top, and permitting human access for repairs or cleaning via a larger hatch.

Building C may date to the development of this site in 1854; at any event, its rough-cut granite construction clearly predates that of Structures A and B. The granite walls apparently survive to near their full height, making the building a single story, 21 by 61 feet, set into the slope of the hill, where it stands at the south edge of the former Baltimore and Ohio Railroad bed. A range of three windows and a ten-foot-wide doorway open on the northern elevation, an eight-foot-wide door on the west, and a four-foot on the east. Ashlar blocks generally form these surrounds. Adjacent the building to the west are five battered, rough-cut granite piers, of a type not unlike those at the Patapsco Quarry Company sites, building D (see inventory form HO 733). These all are parallel to the railroad. The largest is the northernmost, extending almost 35 feet over fifteen feet high. Two smaller piers, as tall as the first, stand in a line thirteen feet south; the eastern is 14.5 feet long, then a gap of just over six feet, and the western pier is just over fifteen feet long. Between these three piers, in front of the gap in the southern line stand two short, parallel piers, roughly a foot wide by just over four feet long. No machinery survives which these piers must have secured, but they are positioned to allow a railroad siding to run between the three largest, supported in the center by the two smallest. Here, perhaps, is a railroad shop, with tools and workspaces accommodated in the building, and rolling stock secured for repair in a structure permitting access from below and hoisting capabilities above.

Structure D is a single arch railroad bridge spanning Williams Run. Its rusticated ashlar granite construction with a keystone, impost blocks, and a heavy granite coping are consistent with similar finely-executed stonework done for the first bridges of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (see, for example, the Patterson, Oliver, and Thomas Viaducts). The right-of-way has now bypassed this bridge.

Structure E is a poured-concrete cistern sited atop the brow of a hill above Williams Run; it is of a piece with structures A and B, the marks of plank

shuttering--vertical in this case--plainly visible around the perimeter. The character of its covering is unknown, though it appears to be entirely sealed in concrete.

Buildings F through I survive as rough-cut granite and concrete block foundations of dwellings. These are more fully illustrated in a series of plats filed with the Howard County Circuit Court in the early 1960s, when the State purchased the lots to augment Patapsco State Park. Their general architectural character may be inferred from the extant Charles H. Thomas House at the adjacent and contemporary Gray's Water Station (see inventory form HO 735). In its initial configuration, the Thomas house was a single-cell frame dwelling clad in board and batten, unfinished on the interior, sheltered probably by a shed roof. This was shortly given a second room of identical character, and much later substantially renovated and expanded as a six-room, two-story frame dwelling with two porches and a poured concrete foundation.

Building F stood in 1961 on property belonging to Durwood S. Taylor and wife; it was a two-story frame dwelling, with a free-standing shed behind.

Building G also stood on the Durwood Taylor tract. It was a two-story frame dwelling encircled by two sheds and a spring house.

Building H belonged to Herbert C. Taylor, Jr. and Durwood S. Taylor in 1961; it is noted only as a dwelling with adjacent sheds, and a barn to the side.

Building I, the property of David C. Bortle and wife in 1961, was a frame dwelling with an adjacent outbuilding.

of the substantial Ellicott land holdings in the Patapsco valley over the 1830s and early 1840s (Ann Arundel WSG 15/516--524--531; Howard 2/1-91). No longer under the control of a single family, more land consequently opened up for development. Robert Mickle, a trustee for members of the Ellicott family, sold small tracts of land on the Howard-County side of the Patapsco to Edward Gray, owner of the Gray Manufacturing Company in 1841 and 1848 (Howard 3/113, and 8/128). Perhaps these small parcels allowed for the construction of a bridge across the Patapsco, directly opposite Grays Factory. Such a link is depicted in the Schofield lithograph of the Patapsco dating from the early 1860s, where it is labeled "The New Bridge," perhaps replacing an earlier bridge. At any event, a link to the factory would have encouraged growth on the opposite shore, and a plat of the estate of George Ellicott (1760-1832) recorded 1 May 1840 illustrates in fact twelve lots laid out between the river and the railroad, east of land held on the Howard-County side of the river by the Patapsco Cotton Mill (Gray Manufacturing Company) (Howard 2/1-91, plat 5). A next logical step for development would have been the lands to the southwest just across the railroad, and it is here that the Grays and Williams Run Water Stations are found.

The George Ellicott (1760-1832) estate land partition of 1840 allotted this parcel southwest of the railroad (comprising 54.5 acres) to his daughter Elizabeth (Ellicott) Lea. Her husband Edward Lea and brother-in-law Nathan Tyson, acting as trustees on her behalf, sold a parcel sixty-six feet square to the railroad at Williams Run in 1854. The deed specifically granted a "right of way to and from said Lot of ground and especially the right to enter upon, excavate and use so much of the adjoining land . . . as may be necessary to enable the [railroad] to conduct the water from said Williams run at such point and level as they may require to the tank of a water station that they propose to erect upon the lot of ground . . . [and the right to] lay pipe for that purpose" (Howard 15/19).

Except for the alterations made to the Baltimore and Ohio right-of-way in 1900 and 1901--termed the Ilchester Improvement--no other property records detail the subsequent development of the site. Architectural evidence, however, provides some clues. The difference in construction materials employed for Building C (rough-cut granite) and for Structures A, B, and E (poured concrete) certainly result from two different building campaigns. While it is possible that shop facilities may have been constructed shortly after the 1854 water tank, no evidence for the date of Building C has yet been revealed in research. Similarly, the remaining rough-cut granite foundations of the dwellings place them in the earlier period of development at the site, though these were likely altered significantly over time, as the Charles H. Thomas house at the neighboring Grays

Water Station to the west indicates. Clearly, the concrete structures testify to a modernization of the facility in the twentieth century, and the lack of such building at Grays suggests that the Railroad chose to consolidate operations at the more modern Williams facility next door.

In sum, one may find in the architectural evidence at Williams Run a history of the development and transformation of American railroads. The fine, single-arched span of Structure D, the bridge erected in 1829 for the first line of the Nation's first railroad company, exemplifies the attention given not only the functional requirements of the new road, but also the self-conscious expression of artistry considered necessary for its construction. In the treatment of the stone a common aesthetic language emerges among the early viaducts, Carrollton, Patterson, Oliver, and Thomas, expressions as much of Roman engineering as American. The early supremacy of steam power in the history of the railroad, the steady perfection of this technology, and the consequent expansion of the rail system behind ever larger and more powerful engines increased the need for more reliable fuel and water supplies as well as maintenance shops and the crews to support them. Both the establishment of Williams and the alterations made to it demonstrate this period of progress, as does the abandonment of the early bridge. Larger rolling stock and more frequent traffic necessitated the straightening of roadbeds for improved speed and efficiency, and the addition of more lines and sidings to accommodate greater numbers of trains. In addition, the stripped, functional character of the twentieth-century concrete constructions at Williams not only speaks to the division between high-style and strictly utilitarian architecture, but also reveals the abandonment of classical aesthetics as a model for both, in a society increasingly driven by the need to minimize costs to the fullest extent possible. Of course, this century saw the parallel development of the machine aesthetic as the model for all contemporary artistic creations. Transformation to diesel power after World War Two radically altered the support systems necessary for the railroad's operation, and installations like Williams Run became, practically overnight, superfluous, and were consequently abandoned. The further reorganization of the railroads into long-haul freight carriers over passenger and local transfer services also served to consolidate maintenance, staffing, and yard functions at major hubs, rather than in small-scale operations scattered along the routes.

Inventory Number HO 736
Williams Run Water Station, Howard County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Plan
Statewide Historic Contexts

Geographic Organization:

Piedmont

Chronological Development/Periods:

10) Agricultural-Industrial Transition	A.D.	1815-1870
11) Industrial/Urban Dominance	A.D.	1870-1930
12) Modern Period	A.D.	1930-Present

Historic Period Themes:

2) Community Planning
3) Economic
8) Transportation

Resource Type:

Category: Site (Ruins and Structures)

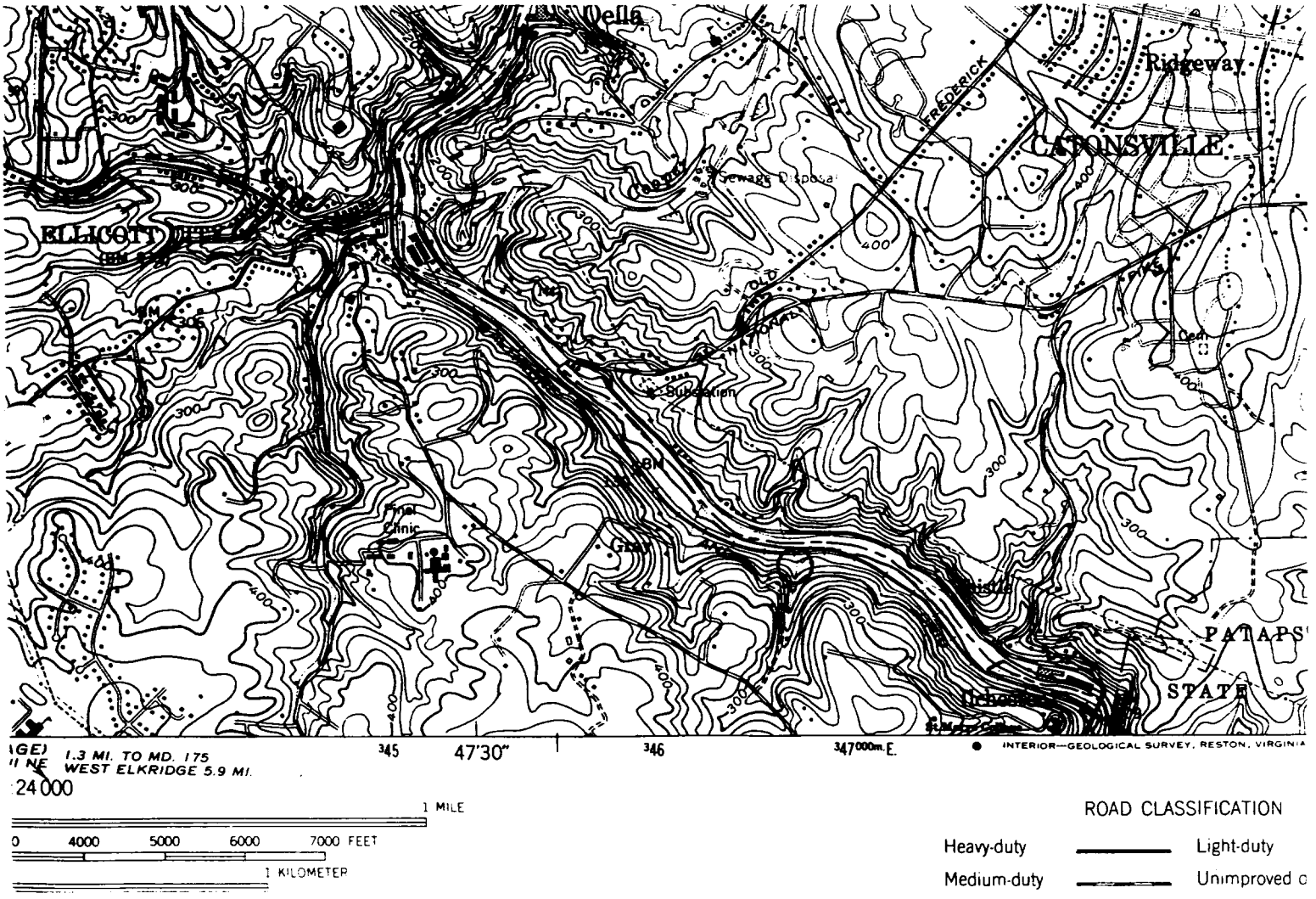
Historic Environment: Village

Historic Functions and Uses: Water and Coal supply structures for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, Residences for railroad and factory laborers, ancillary structures.

Known Design Sources: None

Inventory Number HO 736
Williams Run Water Station
Maps.1

U.S. Geological Survey
Ellicott City 7.5 Quadrangle

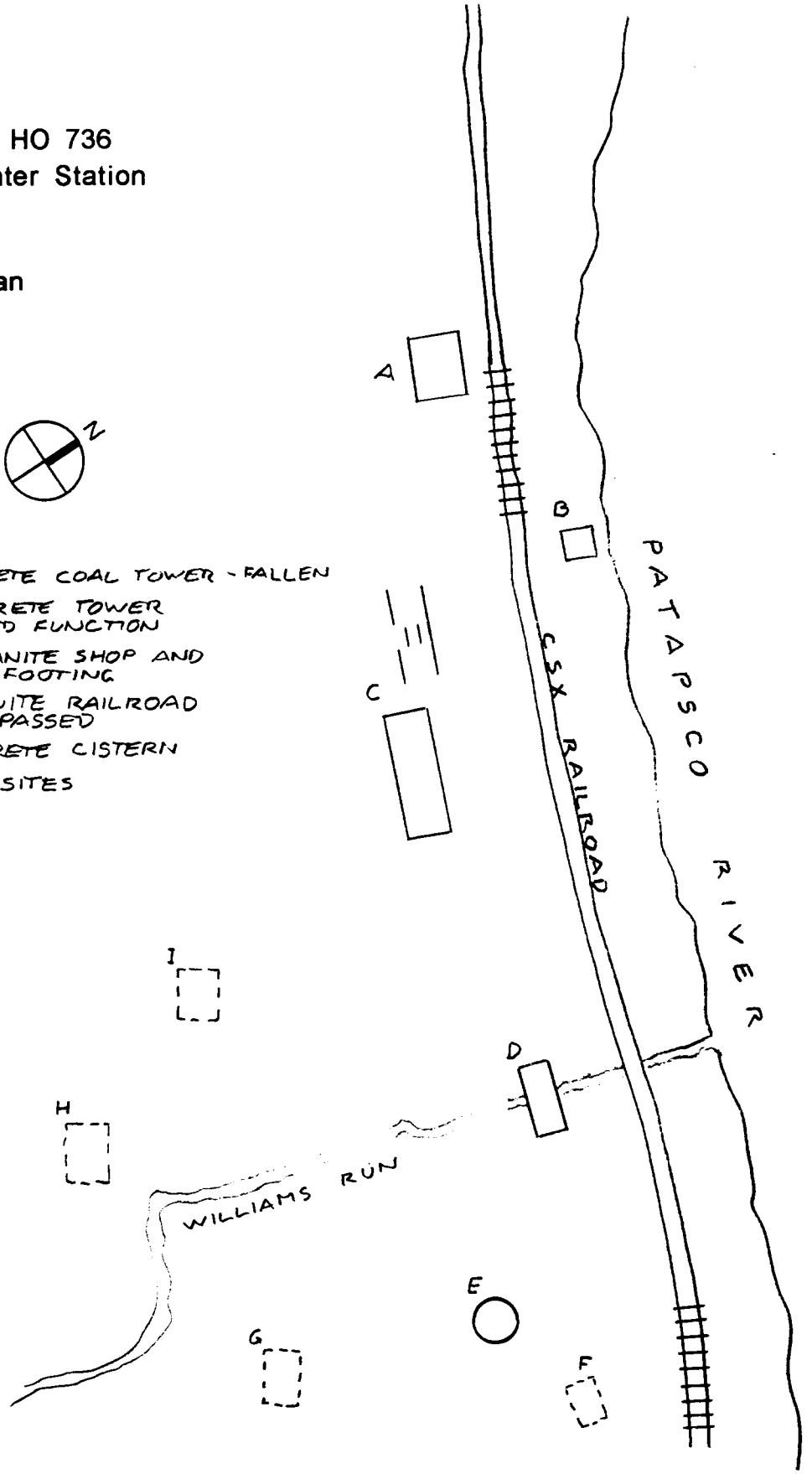


Inventory Number HO 736
Williams Run Water Station
Maps.2

Resource Site Plan

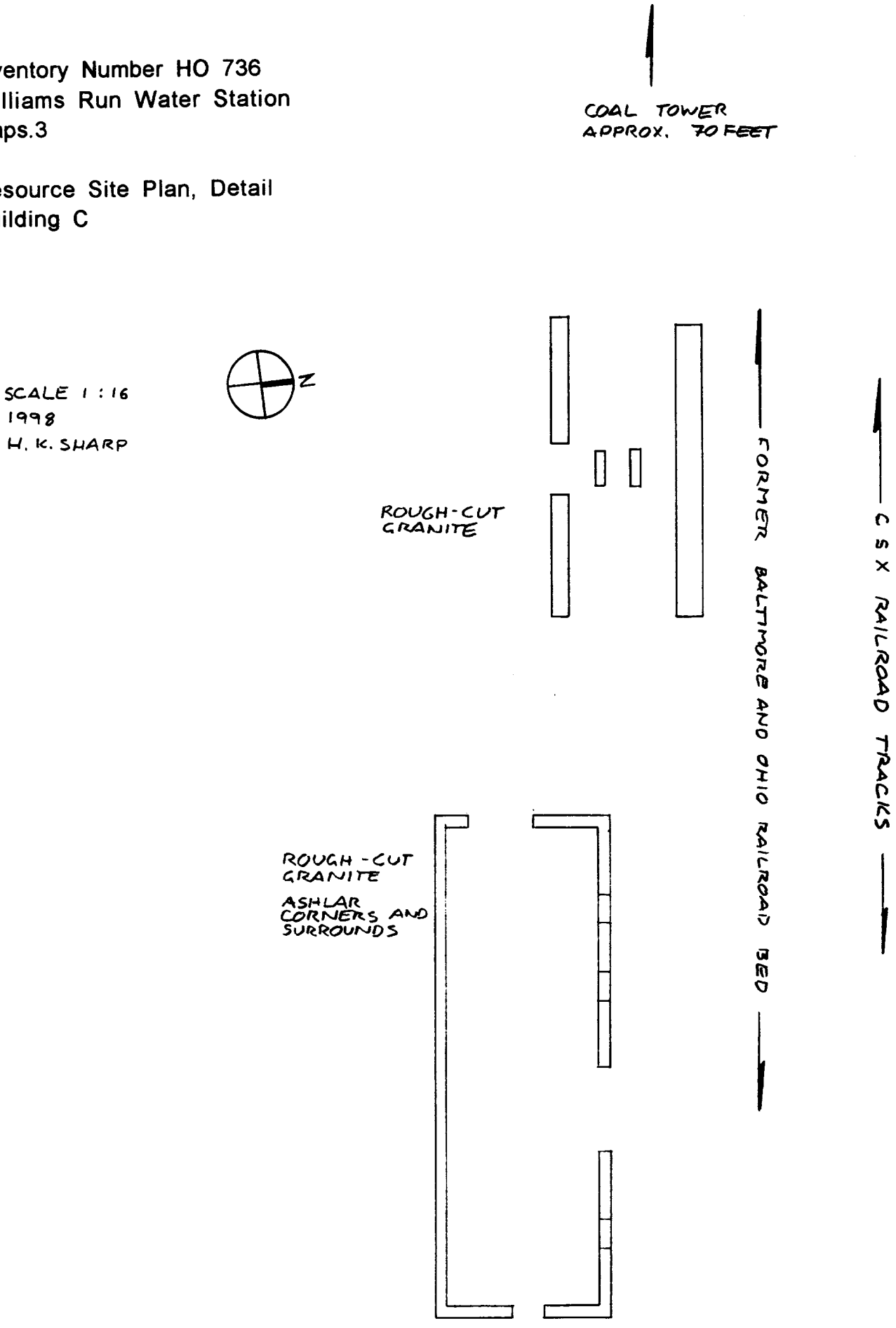
NOT TO SCALE
1998
H. K. SHARP

A POURED CONCRETE COAL TOWER - FALLEN
B POURED CONCRETE TOWER UNIDENTIFIED FUNCTION
C ROUGH-CUT GRANITE SHOP AND MACHINERY FOOTING
D ASHLAR GRANITE RAILROAD BRIDGE - BYPASSED
E POURED CONCRETE CISTERN
F-I DWELLING SITES



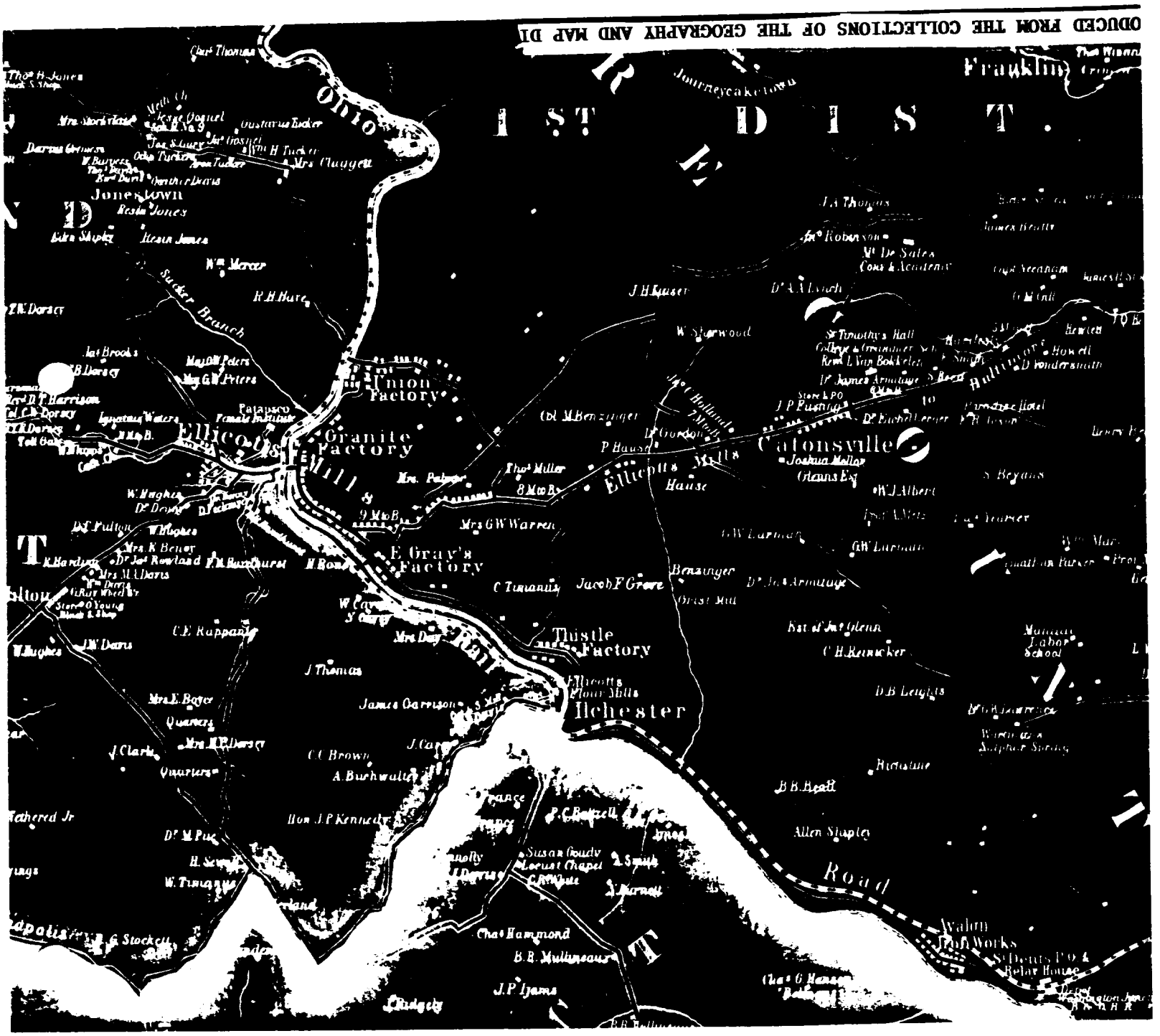
Inventory Number HO 736
Williams Run Water Station
Maps.3

Resource Site Plan, Detail
Building C



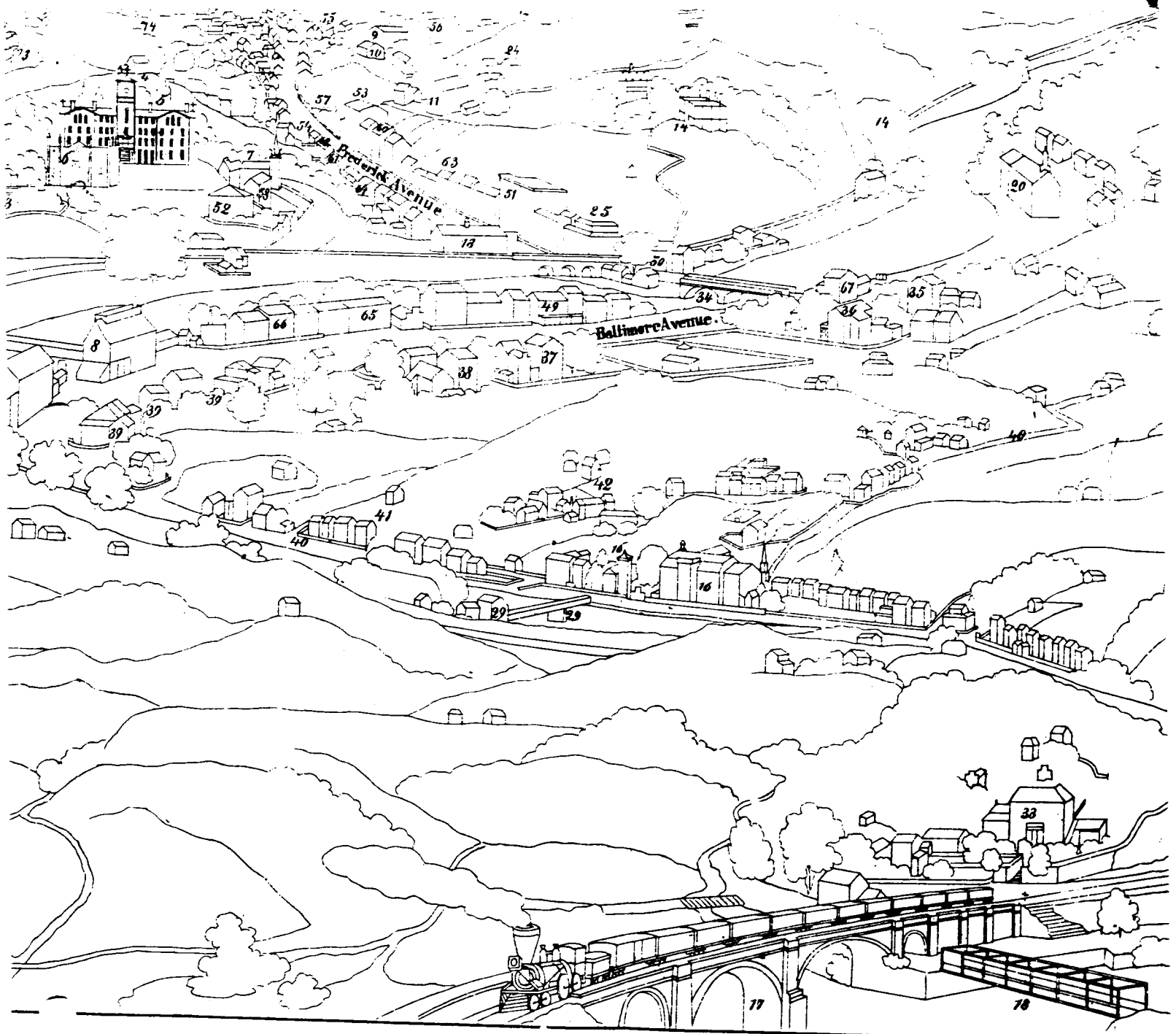
Inventory Number HO 736
Williams Run Water Station
Maps.4

Martenet's Map of Howard County, 1860,
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Geography and Maps Division: G 3843 .H6 1860 .M3.



Inventory Number HO 736
Williams Run Water Station
Maps.5

John Schofield, *Panoramic View of the Scenery on the Patapsco, Ellicotts Mills, Md.* [key], Howard County Historical Society Library, Ellicott City, Maryland.



THE PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE SCENERY ON THE PATAPSCO RIVER ABOVE AND BE

1 Church, built 1844. Rev. Cyrus , Pastor.
piscopal Church, built 1837.

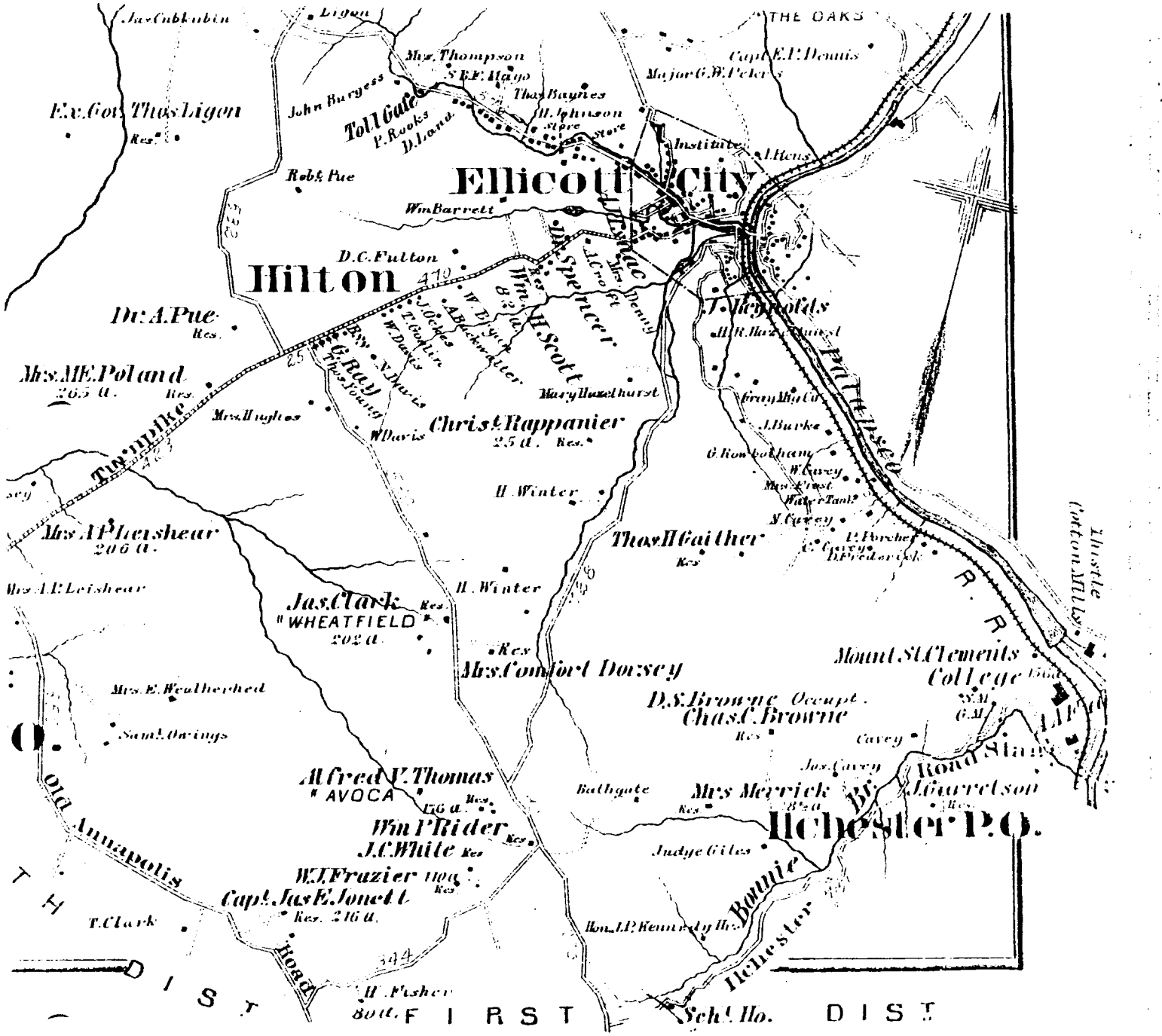
19. Union Manufacturing Company's Works, built 1809, and Railroad Bridge across Patapsco, built 1856. President D. R. Ranke, Esq.

29. Residence of Hugh Bone, Esq., Manager of Patapsco Factory. The New Bridge and Patapsco

41. Patapsco Store.
42 Residence and Far

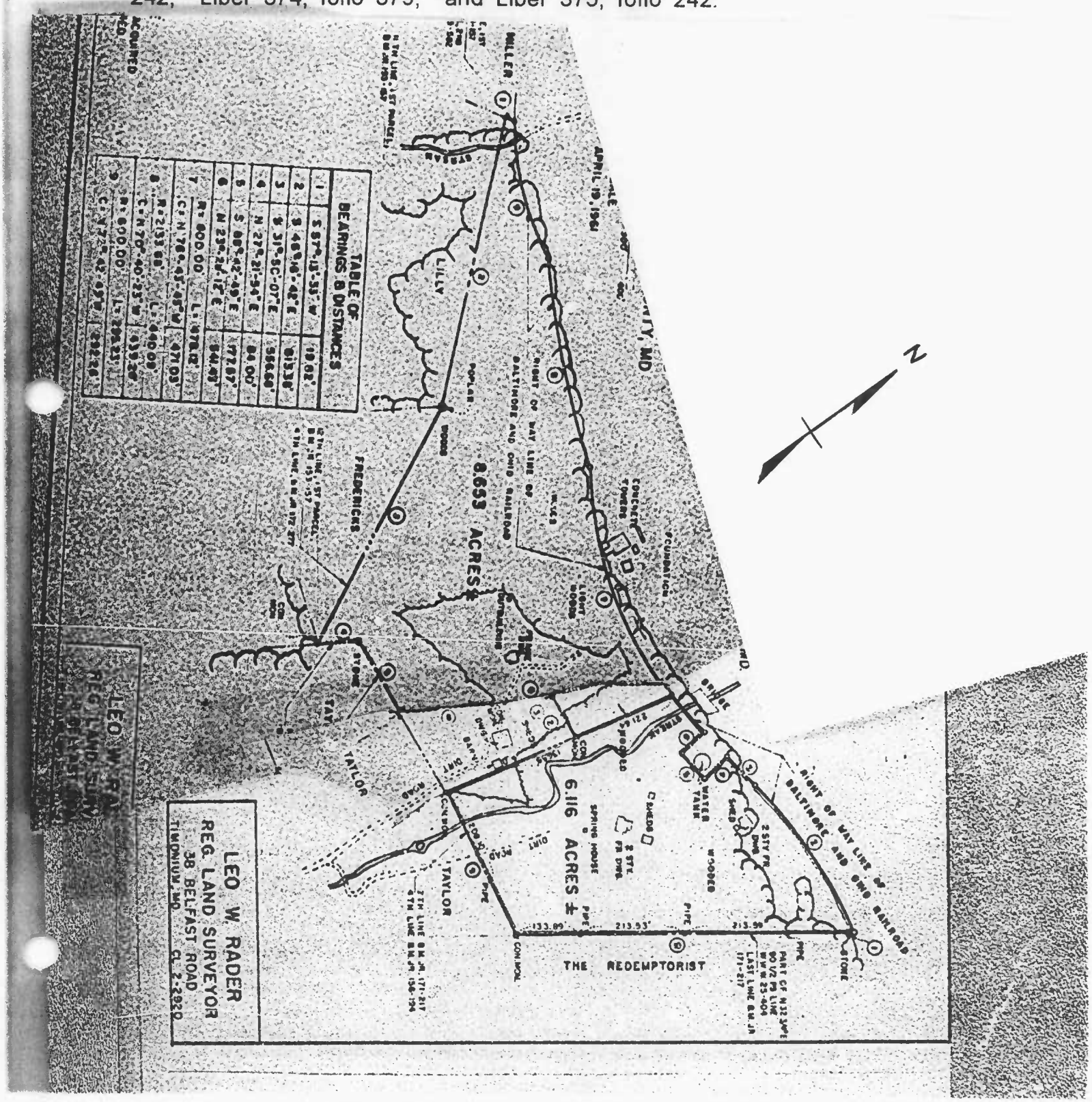
Inventory Number HO 736
Williams Run Water Station
Maps.6

G. M. Hopkins, *Atlas of Howard County Maryland* (Philadelphia: F. Bourquin's Steam Lithographic Press, 1878), p. 15.



Inventory Number HO 736
Williams Run Water Station
Plat.1

Composite image, assembled from Howard County land records Liber 371, folio 242; Liber 374, folio 379; and Liber 375, folio 242.



HO 736
WILLIAMS RUN WATER STATION
HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND
HENRY K SHARP
NOVEMBER 1998
MARYLAND SHPO (FILED WITH HO 735)
STRUCTURE A, VIEW SOUTHEAST
1/6

(HO-739)
WILLIAMS RUN WATER STATION
HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND
HENRY K SHARP
NOVEMBER 1998
MARYLAND SHPO (FILED WITH HO-739)
STRUCTURE B, VIEW NORTH
3/6

HO 736
WILLIAMS RUN WATER STATION
HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND
HENRY K SHARP
NOVEMBER 1998
MARYLAND SHPO
STRUCTURE C, VIEW NORTH
4/6

HO 736
WILLIAMS RUN WATER STATION
HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND
HENRY K. SPARK
NOVEMBER 1998
MARYLAND SHPO
STRUCTURE D, VIEW NORTH
5/6