HO-802, Stone boundary wall fragment
Ellicott City vicinity, Howard County
Date unknown
Private access

CAPSULE SUMMARY

On a piece of property off of Ilchester Road, adjacent to Patapsco State Park, a fragment of an old stone boundary wall is nearly hidden beneath the fallen leaves and branches that litter the forest floor. The wall begins just to the northwest of a gravel driveway that serves several home sites and runs northwest for approximately 150 feet before it turns a 90 degree angle and runs northeast at least another 250 feet along the edge of a ridge. The wall is constructed of native material, probably granite, of a variety of sizes and shapes. Stones range in size from 4" in diameter to 18" or more in some locations. They are both angular and rounded and are not worked at all. The wall was not dry laid or laid with mortar in regular courses but instead simply mounded to form an A-shape in profile. Currently the wall is an average of 18" tall and between three and four feet thick at its base.

This boundary wall fragment is significant under criteria A as an example of a once common landscape feature that has been all but obliterated from the landscape. Such rudimentary walls built entirely of native material were probably common in the county, especially in the area along the Patapsco River where the raw material is extremely plentiful. But the extensive development of the eastern half of the county has transformed the forests, farms and hills into graded townhouse lots and manicured subdivisions and there are no surviving examples of such boundary walls in the area of the county bounded on the west by I-95 and the east by the Patapsco River and the county line.

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. HO-802

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	Stone boundary wall fragment
other	

2. Location

street and number	behind 4635 Ilchester Road	___	not for publication
city, town	Ellicott City	X	vicinity
county	Howard		

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

name	Robert A. Hale				
street and number	4635 Ilchester Road			telephone	
city, town	Ellicott City	state	MD	zip code	21043

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Howard County Courthouse	tax map and parcel:	Map 31, P 623		
city, town	Ellicott City	liber	1267	folio	356

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

___ Contributing Resource in National Register District
___ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
___ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
___ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
___ Recorded by HABS/HAER
___ Historic Structure Report or Research Report
___ Other _____

6. Classification

Category
___ district
___ building(s)
X structure
___ site
___ object

Ownership
___ public
X private
___ both

Current Function
___ agriculture
___ commerce/trade
___ defense
___ domestic
___ education
___ funerary
___ government
___ health care
___ industry
___ landscape
___ recreation/culture
___ religion
___ social
___ transportation
___ work in progress
___ unknown
X vacant/not in use
___ other: _____

Resource Count

Contributing	Noncontributing	
___	1	buildings
___	___	sites
1	___	structures
___	___	objects
1	1	Total

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory 0

7. Description

Inventory No. HO-802

Condition

___ excellent	___ deteriorated
___ good	___ ruins
X fair	___ altered

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

On a piece of property off of Ilchester Road, adjacent to Patapsco State Park, a fragment of an old stone boundary wall is nearly hidden beneath the fallen leaves and branches that litter the forest floor. The wall begins just to the northwest of a gravel driveway that serves several homesites and runs northwest for approximately 150 feet before it turns a 90 degree angle and runs northeast at least another 250 feet along the edge of a ridge. To the north of the wall, the topography drops off sharply towards the Patapsco River. The wall was observed to continue on, bending to the east but it was surveyed as a result of a proposed development and the neighbors' hostility prevented the surveyor from following the wall off of the property being developed. The wall runs through a mature hardwood forest and probably meanders onto park land. The existing house on the 5-acre parcel containing the stone wall fragment is not historic.

The wall is constructed of native material, probably granite, of a variety of sizes and shapes. Stones range in size from 4" in diameter to 18" or more in some locations. They are both angular and rounded and are not worked at all. The wall was not dry laid or laid with mortar in regular courses but instead simply mounded to form an A-shape in profile. Currently the wall is an average of 18" tall and between three and four feet thick at its base. The short section running northwest is the portion of the wall that is the most intact at this point. The portion that runs northeast along the edge of the ridge incorporates some very large boulders but some sections of this portion of the wall have tumbled down the hillside. There is also one area directly to the north of and adjacent to the wall where the ground is covered with rocks of the same size and shape as those used in the wall. Though rocks of the type used in the wall litter the ground throughout this forested area, the concentration of stones in this particular spot is unusually high. These stones may have been incorporated into the wall at one point and been intentionally dismantled and spread across the ground for some reason. Someone may have dismantled the wall to reuse stones of a particular size and shape for something else.

8. Significance

Inventory No. HO-802

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
__ 1600-1699	__ agriculture	__ economics	__ health/medicine	__ performing arts
__ 1700-1799	__ archeology	__ education	__ industry	__ philospohy
X 1800-1899	__ architecture	__ engineering	__ invention	__ politics/govemment
X 1900-1999	__ art	__ entertainment/ recreation	X landscape architecture	__ religion
__ 2000-	__ commerce		__ law	__ science
	__ communications	__ ethnic heritage	__ literature	__ social history
	__ community planning	__ exploration/ settlement	__ maritime industry	__ transportation
	__ conservation		__ military	__ other:

Specific dates unknown **Architect/Builder** unknown

Construction dates unknown

Evaluation for:

____ National Register ____ Maryland Register __X__ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

This boundary wall fragment is significant under criteria A as an example of a once common landscape feature that has been all but obliterated from the landscape. Such rudimentary walls built entirely of native material were probably common in the county, especially in the area along the Patapsco River where the raw material is extremely plentiful. But the extensive development of the eastern half of the county has transformed the forests, farms and hills into graded townhouse lots and manicured subdivisions and there are no surviving examples of such boundary walls in the area of the county bounded on the west by I-95 and the east by the Patapsco River and the county line. There are probably (hopefully) other fragments like this one along the northern county line along the river between Ellicott City and Elkridge that remain to be documented, but this region is also being subjected to heavy residential development.

This wall was probably constructed as a boundary wall between two separate parcels or land grants. At this point it is impossible to say when it was constructed, it could be as recent as the early 20th century but it could just as easily be as old as the 18th century. These walls are an important part of the historic landscape and the remaining fragments of them should be preserved. Documenting where they are, or were, on the landscape can inform our understanding of settlement patterns and early land surveying. In such cases where a corner is intact, as with this wall fragment, noting its location on a map can assist with future research on surrounding parcels by potentially providing a known point on the property line to compare to deed records.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. HO-802

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 5

Acreage of historical setting unknown

Quadrangle name Savage

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

Verbal boundary description and justification

Tax map 31, parcel 623 was the only parcel surveyed as a result of a proposed development. The existing house on the property is not historic.

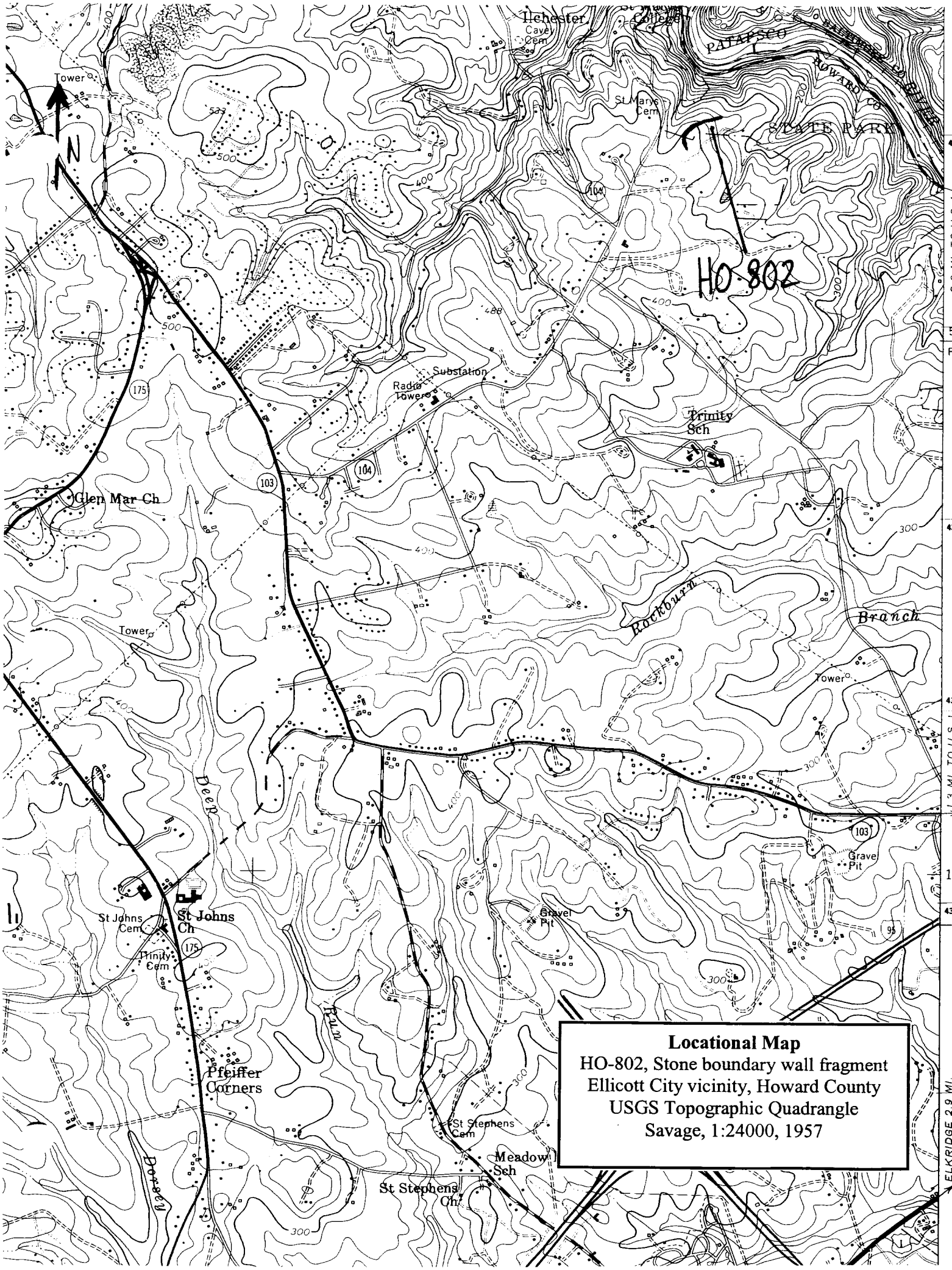
11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Kristin Hill, Historic Sites Surveyor		
organization	Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning	date	10/20/03
street and number	3430 Court House Drive	telephone	410-313-4335
city or town	Ellicott City	state MD	zip code 21043

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600



Locational Map
HO-802, Stone boundary wall fragment
Ellicott City vicinity, Howard County
USGS Topographic Quadrangle
Savage, 1:24000, 1957

HO-802 Stone boundary wall fragment
behind 4635 Ilchester Rd, Ellicott City vic.
Howard County, MD
Kristin Hill, 10/03
Negative at MDSHPO
corner of the wall, looking SW
1/8

HO-802 Stone boundary wall fragment
behind 4635 Ilchester Rd, Ellicott City vic
Howard County, MD
Kristin Hill, 10/03
Negative at MDSHPO
corner of the wall, looking SW
2/8

HO 802 stone boundary wall fragment
behind 4635 Ilchester Rd, Ellicott City, v.c.
Howard County, MD
Kristin Hill, 10/03
Negative at MDSHPO
Looking northeast along the wall
3/8

HO-802 stone boundary wall fragment
behind 4635 Ilchester Rd, Ellicott City vic.
Howard County, MD
Kristin Hill, 10/03
Negative at MDSHPO
Looking northeast along the wall
4/8

HO-802 Stone boundary wall fragment
behind 4635 Ilchester Rd, Ellicott City, MD.
Howard County, MD
Kristin Hill, 10/03
Negative at MDSHPO
Corner of the wall, looking SW
5/8

HO-802 stone boundary wall fragment
behind 4635 Ilchester Rd, Ellicott City, MD.
Howard County, MD
Kristin Hill, 10/03
Negative at MDSHPO
Looking S-SE across scattered rocks at wall running across middle of photo.
6/8

HO-802, stone boundary wall fragment
behind 4635 Ilchester Rd, Ellicott City, MD
Howard County, MD
Kristin Hill, 10/03
Negative at MDSHPO
Looking S-SE across scattered rocks at wall running across middle of photo.

7/8

HO-802, Stone boundary wall fragment
behind 4635 Ilchester Rd, Ellicott City, vic.
Howard County, MD
Kristin Hill, 10/03
Negative at MDSHPO
rocks from the wall (?) scattered beside wall, looking north
8/8