

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

THEME: Travel & Communications

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

STATE: Maryland	BE-143
COUNTY: Baltimore	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM
(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME

COMMON: Thomas Viaduct

AND/OR HISTORIC: Thomas Viaduct

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: C&O-B&O Railroad where it crosses the Patapsco River, 2200 feet northwest of U.S. Route 95

CITY OR TOWN: Relay CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 7th

STATE: Maryland 21228 CODE: 24 COUNTY: Baltimore CODE: 005

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure 	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both 	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 type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	Viaduct	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: President, Mr. John Hanifin, Chesapeake & Ohio--Baltimore & Ohio Railroad.

STREET AND NUMBER: 2 North Charles Street

CITY OR TOWN: Baltimore STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Howard County Court House--Clerk of Circuit Court

STREET AND NUMBER: 8360 Court Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Ellicott City STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Building Survey (4 photos)

DATE OF SURVEY: 1936 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress/Annex

STREET AND NUMBER: Division of Prints and Photographs

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D.C. CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Maryland
COUNTY: Howard
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE
FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Constructed of local granite, the Thomas Viaduct has proven to be a lasting tribute to its designer, Benjamin H. Latrobe. The viaduct is 612 feet in length formed of eight semicircular arch spans varying in length from 58 feet 5 inches to 58 feet, 10-1/2 inches. Because of the route alignment at the time of construction, the structure was built on a four degree curve and stands 59 feet above the river. The floor is 26-foot wide, broad enough to hold a double track. In addition to the track, a wooden-floored walkway, 4-feet in width and supported by cast-iron brackets, is located on the deck of the viaduct. To aid pedestrains, ornamental cast iron railings were erected upon the outermost edge of the walkway. The granite is ashlar, roughly squared and dressed, laid in cement mortar, with openings at the crown of each arch. Pilasters, made of the same material, run from the top of each pier to the base. Crude in execution, they visually support the massive form of the viaduct while enhancing the harmonious proportion and inherent grace of the Roman arches. The structure contains 24,476 cubic yards of stone and cost \$142,236.51, to build. To counteract deterioration, the viaduct underwent repairs in 1938, performed by the Baltimore and Ohio Maintenance of Way Department. The work consisted mainly of improvements for drainage and the application of a grout mixture to the stone spandrel filling. At an unknown date railing blocks were removed from the north side of the deck and a bracketed walkway added, giving more lateral clearance. Thomas Viaduct is in excellent condition and has been in continuous service since its construction in 1835.

Thomas Viaduct is located on the Chesapeake and Ohio--Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at the point where it crosses the Patapsco River. This is approximately 2200 feet northwest of Interstate 95 at the point where it crosses the tracks of the C&O-B&O Railroad.

The Thomas Viaduct exists today in an area heavily built up with major highways extending from Baltimore to Washington. A modern road bridge towers above the viaduct on the south and tends to diminish the massive construction of the earlier structure. Because of existing intrusions the landmark boundary is drawn only to protect the structure itself and its approaches, a distance of 50-feet from each end of the Thomas Viaduct along the tracks of the railroad, including the railroad right of way property and the McCartney monument.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1835

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input 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 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 type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Still in use today, the Thomas Viaduct, located on the Chesapeake and Ohio-Baltimore and Ohio Railroad line at the point where it crosses the Patapsco River, is the world's oldest multiple stone arched railroad bridge as well as America's earliest notable example of railroad bridge construction. Designed in 1835 by Benjamin H. Latrobe, a civil engineer and son of the architect of the same name, the bridge was, for its day, of massive size, the largest in the country, dwarfing all contemporary masonry works and marking the real beginning of the major railway structure in America. Still impressive today, the structure has required no major repairs or changes in its many years of service.

The original route of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad left Baltimore City near its southwest corner, following the Patapsco River to Ellicott's Mills on its way westward. Shortly after this portion of the main stem had been in operation it was realized that a rail connection with the Nation's Capital was essential to the company's success, and construction was begun in 1832. Where the new line branched from the old at Relay, site of a former postroad hotel and changing point for stage horses, a crossing of the Patapsco River was necessary. The Patapsco span, designed by Benjamin H. Latrobe in 1835, was a structure remarkable in every aspect of its conception. In laying out the route, Latrobe had to provide for passage over the river which flowed through a deep ravine between Relay and Elkridge Landing. The route alignment required that the viaduct follow a four degree curve, giving rise to almost unprecedented problems of design and construction. The present structure illustrates his answer to the problem. Latrobe's design was executed by John McCartney, contractor, under the direction of Jonathan Knight, principal assistant engineer and Caspar Wever, superintendent of construction. When the structure was finished a 15-foot monument with the names of the builder, directors of the railroad, the architect, engineer, and others associated with the viaduct was constructed by the builder, John McCartney.

Until after the Civil War the B&O was the only railroad into Washington and was used by Federal forces for supply trains, with heavy guards stationed along the viaduct. The Baltimore and Ohio named the bridge the "Thomas Viaduct" after the company's president, Philip E. Thomas, illustrating the company's confidence in the structure. Some skeptical engineers however, thinking the bridge would collapse under its own weight,

(continued)

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

(NATIONAL HISTORIC INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM
LANDMARKS)

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Maryland	
COUNTY Baltimore	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8. Statement of Significance: (1) Thomas Viaduct

nicknamed the viaduct "Latrobe's Folly." The error in these predictions is proven by the bridge itself. Since August 25, 1835, the viaduct has remained in constant service, carrying every type of locomotive used in the B&O's long history from the original six-ton engines of the period to the 300-ton engines of today, with no alteration or major repair. All main line traffic between Baltimore and the west passed over the Thomas Viaduct until about 1870, when the main line was rerouted along the Washington Branch.

BA-143

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

STATE Maryland	
COUNTY Baltimore	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(NATIONAL HISTORIC
LANDMARKS)

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

6. Representation (1)

Historic American Building Survey -- large property file, data sheets--
photographs.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"The Oldest Stone-Arch Railroad Bridge in the World: The Thomas Viaduct, Across the Patapsco River," The Scientific Monthly, XLI (October 1935), 381-383.

Hungerford, Edward, The Story of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, New York, 1928, vol. I, pp. 153, 166-67, 171-72.

Vogel, R. M., Unpublished report, Historic American Engineering Record, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., 1965.

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			
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds			
NE	° ' "	° ' "			
SE	° ' "	° ' "			
SW	° ' "	° ' "			

18.352080 .4342590

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: .5

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Maryland	24	Howard County	027
Maryland	24	Baltimore County	005
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Patricia Heintelman, Architectural Historian, Landmarks Review Project; original form prepared by S. Sydney Bradford, 1963.

ORGANIZATION: Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE: 7/30/74

STREET AND NUMBER: 1100 L Street NW

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: D.C.

CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Name _____

Title _____

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Date _____

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Landmark Designated: Jan. 1967 date

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Boundary Certified: 6-19-75 date

Chief, Hist. & Arch. Surveys

ATTEST:

Boundary Affirmed: [Signature] date

Keeper of The National Register

Director, OHP

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Maryland	
COUNTY Baltimore	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON:		Thomas Viaduct, Baltimore & Ohio Railroad	
AND/OR HISTORIC:		Thomas Viaduct	
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: Relay			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Maryland	24	Baltimore	005
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE: U.S.G.S. Map, 7.5 Relay Quadrangle			
SCALE: 1:24000			
DATE: 1957 Photorevised 1966			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			

BA-143

STATE		Maryland 07-143	
COUNTY			
Anne Arundel			
FOR NPS USE ONLY			
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE	

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON:		Thomas Viaduct	
AND/OR HISTORIC:		Thomas Viaduct	
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: C&O-B&O Railroad where it crosses Patapsco River, 2200 feet northwest of U.S. Route 95.			
CITY OR TOWN: near Relay			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Maryland	24	Baltimore	005
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT:		National Park Service	
DATE OF PHOTO:		1964, verified July 1974	
NEGATIVE FILED AT:		National Park Service, Washington Negative File	
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			
View of Thomas Viaduct looking North.			

STATE		Maryland	
COUNTY			
Baltimore			
FOR NPS USE ONLY			
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE	

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON:		Thomas Viaduct	
AND/OR HISTORIC:		Thomas Viaduct	
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: C&O-B&O Railroad where it crosses Patapsco River, 2200 feet northwest of U.S. Route 95.			
CITY OR TOWN: near Relay			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Maryland	24	Baltimore	005
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT:		Patricia Heintzelman	
DATE OF PHOTO:		July 1974	
NEGATIVE FILED AT:		Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service	
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			
View of intrusions around viaduct			

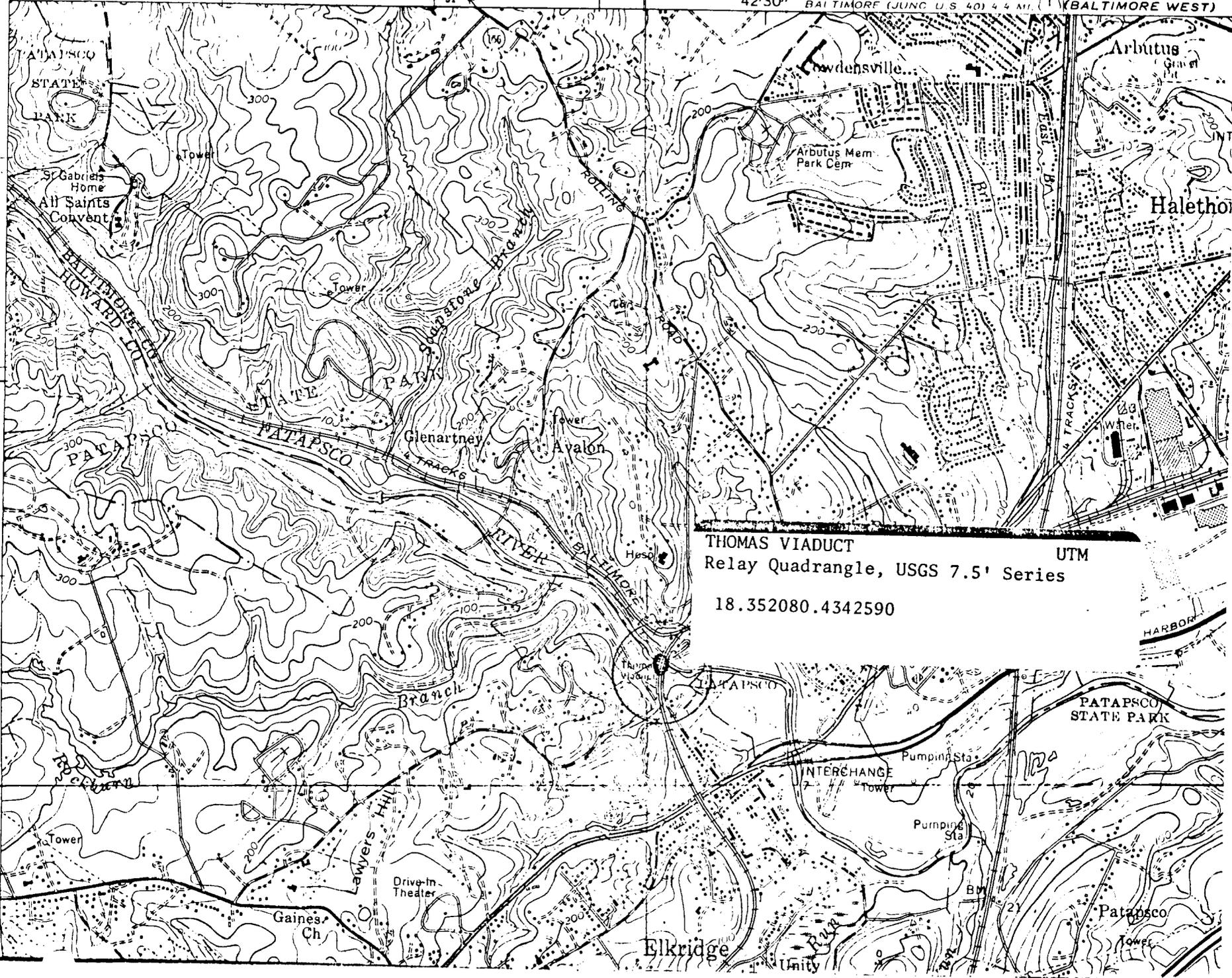
BA-143

4345000m N

4344

4343

4342



THOMAS VIADUCT
 Relay Quadrangle, USGS 7.5' Series
 UTM
 18.352080.4342590

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

83D1432417

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Thomas Viaduct (See attached National Register form)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

[Crosses the Patapsco within the Park, Baltimore County to Howard

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

County near Elkridge Landing VICINITY OF

STATE

COUNTY

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 type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" 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	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The Chessie System

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

HABS/NR/NHL/SIA Guide, April 1975 (R. Vogel)

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

2-1-80

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- DETERIORATED
- RUINS
- UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

- UNALTERED
- ALTERED

CHECK ONE

- ORIGINAL SITE
- MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

National Historic Landmark
 National Register

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1835

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Thomas Viaduct is of tremendous visual (as well as historical) importance to the park and the surrounding area, and every effort must be made to maintain it. While owned by the C&O it spans park lands, and the Department of Natural Resources may be called upon to cooperate in its maintenance, especially in securing the ends against access as a safety precaution and the precaution against vandalism.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

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
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

Maryland
Baltimore County
District XIII
Relay

BA-143
Thomas Viaduct

Q. 10. 13. 16.

1833035

Old stone, arched railroad bridge built over the Patapsco River, by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, named for its first president, Philip Thomas.

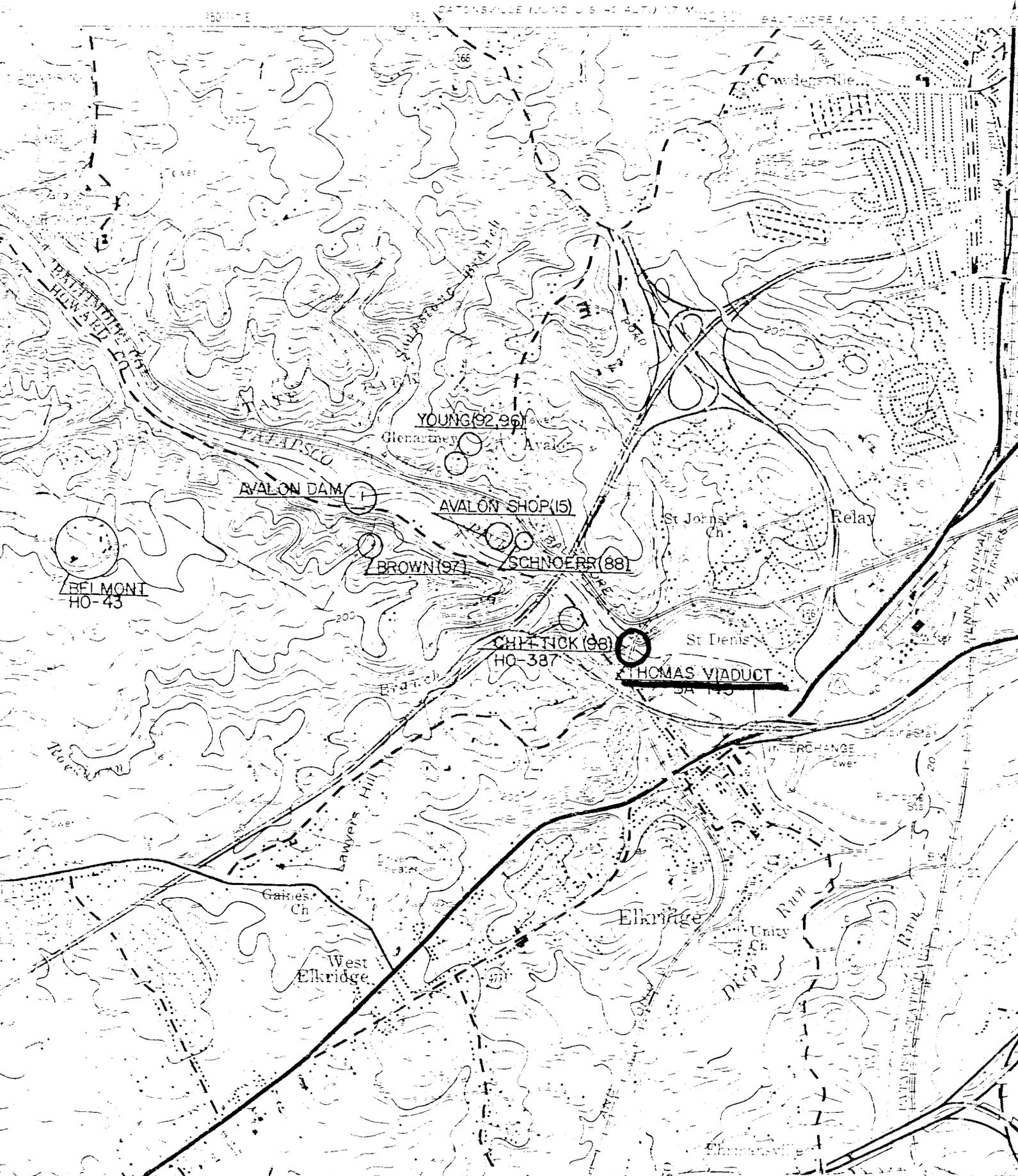
National Historic Landmark

on National Register July 1968

(First HABS Report)
E. Frances Offutt
HABS COMMITTEE OF BALTIMORE
COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

July 29, 1965

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



THE BRIDGE THAT COULDN'T BE BUILT

Phillip Thomas, President of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, secured the talents of a famous Baltimorean, Benjamin Latrobe, to design a bridge that would carry the trains over the gorge. John McCartney, an engineer from Ohio, was given the job of constructing it. Many people said that such a bridge could never be built; and, even if it were, it would surely collapse under its own weight.

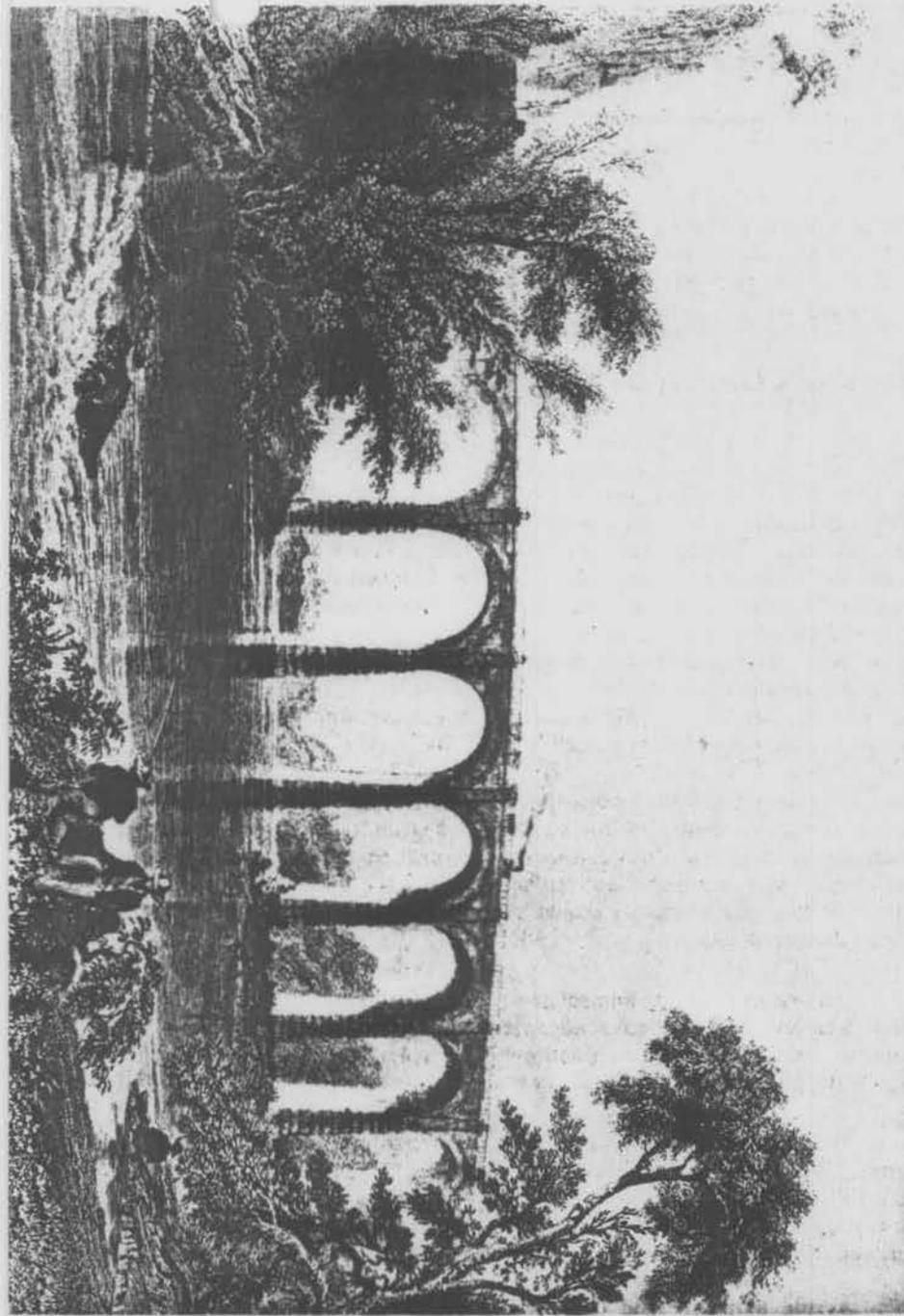
Construction was begun on July 4, 1832, and took three years to complete. When finished, the bridge stretched in a four degree arc from the Baltimore County side of the river to the Howard County bank, a distance of 612 feet.

Eight elliptical arches measuring 57 feet 10½ inches to 58 feet 4½ inches supported the 60 foot high structure. The height of the arches served two purposes. First, they were of sufficient height to allow ships to pass freely under the bridge. The Patapsco River remained navigable until the flood of 1868 which reduced river traffic to barges and light crafts. Second, the wide openings would permit flood waters to rush through without destroying the bridge. The bridge was 26 feet wide, which allowed enough room for two tracks to be laid. The bridge was constructed of granite block quarried in Maryland. A total of 24,476 cubic yards of masonry was required. The final cost of the construction was \$142,236.51. A shrewd investment when one considers the fact that the bridge has withstood 140 years of constant use, five major floods, and numerous ice jams without any major repairs whatsoever!

The bridge was named the Thomas Viaduct in honor of Phillip Thomas, the first president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and the man who initiated its construction. Before opening day ceremonies on July 4, 1835, it was known as Latrobe's Folley. When the first six and one-half ton engine, the Atlantic, pulled onto the bridge, many people closed their eyes for fear that all would fall into the river. When a second train successfully mounted the span, a great roar went up from the crowd that lined both sides of the river. Latrobe's Folley had become the eighth wonder of the world! Legend has it that McCartney was so excited when the bridge was opened that he had some of his workmen kneel on the ground while he baptized them with a bottle of liquor. It is a fact that when construction was completed, McCartney erected his own monument at the north end of the bridge, listing his name and the names of government and railroad officials connected with the project. Like the bridge, the monument still stands today.

When the new line first opened, it ran only as far as Bladensburg, Maryland. Passengers completed their journey by stagecoach until tracks could be laid into the Capitol. Relay became known as Washington Junction, a name that did not last. The Thomas Viaduct was not only a major contribution to railroad development in America, but it also supplied the only connection from the north into the Nation's Capitol until well after the Civil War.

On February 14, 1845, James K. Polk of Tennessee became the first president elect to travel by train to his inauguration. President Polk travelled all day by coach from Cumberland to Relay. Two and one-half hours later he was in Washington.



An early engraving of the Thomas Viaduct looking down river from the Howard County shore. Note monument to left of bridge.

Toomey, Daniel C.
1975 A History of Relay, Maryland, and The Thomas Viaduct.

7 THOMAS VIADUCT - 1835 - Relay. Reported to be the world's oldest multiple-arched railroad bridge, built by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to span the Patapsco between Relay and Elkridge. Designed by Benjamin H. Latrobe, a Baltimore architect, the bridge is built, on a curve, of huge blocks from the Granite Quarries. Named for Philip E. Thomas, first president of the Baltimore and Ohio. A National Historic Site.

8 ST. TIMOTHY'S CHURCH (PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL) - 1844 - Ingleside Avenue. Of stone, Gothic style, designed by Robert Carey Long at a cost of \$10,000, one-half contributed by John Glenn, prominent landowner. Private girl's school, established 1872, continues today, but in another location.

9 OLD SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH - 1849 - Ingleside Avenue. Founded by early German settlers in the Catonsville area. Sermons and day school conducted in German for many years.

10 MT. de. SALES ACADEMY - 1852 - Edmondson Avenue and Academy Lane. A convent and school for girls, run by the Sisters of the Visitation.

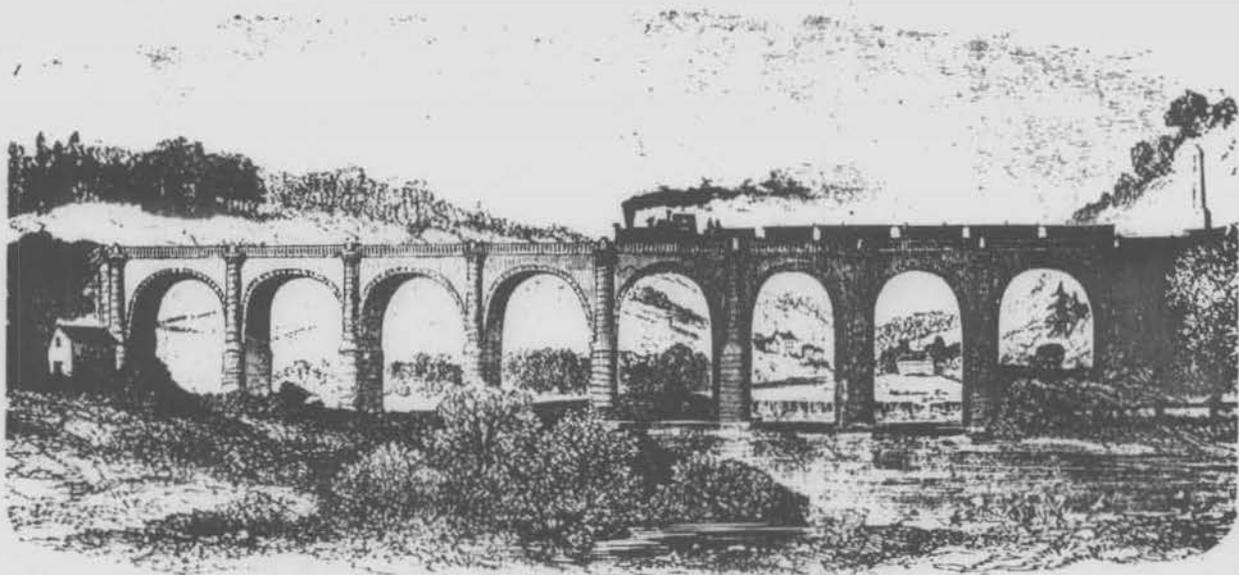


6 OLD SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH



ELLICOTT BROTHERS' HOMES

Offutt, E. Frances
1971
Baltimore County Landmarks. Board of Library Trustees for Baltimore
County, Maryland.



GREAT STONE VIADUCT AT "WASHINGTON JUNCTION,"

BY WHICH THE "WASHINGTON BRANCH" OF THE BALTIMORE & OHIO RAILROAD CROSSES THE PATAPSCO RIVER, 9 MILES FROM BALTIMORE.

THE THOMAS VIADUCT - A NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE IN BALTIMORE COUNTY