

Survey # F-2-99

Approximate date September 14, 1862

Stone Walls and Mountain Church Road
Street Address: Mountain Church Road
Town, State: Burkittsville, MD
private X, public X

This property is included in the survey of resources associated with the Civil War Battle of South Mountain, which occurred on September 14, 1862. This survey form documents the portion of Mountain Church Road extending north from Burkittsville Road for approximately one mile, and the remnants of stone walls along it on both sides. These structures played a direct and primary role in the military action that took place at Crampton's Gap as part of the Battle of South Mountain. The stone walls which parallel Mountain Church Road on both the west and east sides originally delineated the farm fields and kept domestic livestock in. The limestone, which is so prevalent in the fields of Frederick County, was used primarily because of the need to clear the fields of stone for cultivation. The walls which survive today are in good to poor condition. Only small sections of the original walls still stand, approximately 1000 feet of crumbled wall on the east side of the south end of Mt. Church Rd., and approximately 500 feet with several gaps on the west side of the central section of Mt. Church Rd. The road runs along its original path between the old walls exactly as it did in September, 1862. The walls were directly involved in the course of the battle. They provided cover for a thinly spread line of skirmishers from Georgia who opposed the US Army VI Corps, an entire division of which was arrayed on farmland a short distance to the east of the road and the walls protecting the Confederates.

Photo Reference: Photo #

Form Prepared By: Paula S. Reed, PhD and Edith B. Wallace
Woodward-Clyde
200 Orchard Ridge Drive
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Date: February, 1998

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. F-2-99

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Stone Walls and Mountain Church Road

2. Location

street & number Mountain Church Road

not for publication

city, town Burkittsville

vicinity of

congressional district 6

state Maryland

county Frederick

3. Classification

Category

district)
 building(s)
 structure
 site
 object

Ownership

public
 private
 both
Public Acquisition
 in process
 being considered
 not applicable

Status

occupied
 unoccupied
 work in progress
Accessible
 yes: restricted
 yes: unrestricted
 no

Present Use

agriculture
 commercial
 educational
 entertainment
 government
 industrial
 military
 museum
 park
 private residence
 religious
 scientific
 transportation
 other: Wall

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

name Frederick County Roads Department

(Multiple owners, see continuation sheet)

street & number Winchester Hall, East Church St.

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

street & number 100 W. Patrick Street

Folio

city, town Frederick

state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title National Register Nomination Form, South Mountain Battlefields, F-4-17 A,B,C

date February, 1986

federal state county local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Crownsville

state MD

7. Description

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Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date of move _____

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

This survey form documents the portion of Mountain Church Road extending north from Burkittsville Road for approximately one mile, and the remnants of stone walls along it on both sides. These structures played a direct and primary role in the military action that took place at Crampton's Gap as part of the Battle of South Mountain on September 14, 1862.

The stone walls which parallel Mountain Church Road on both the west and east sides originally delineated the farm fields and kept domestic livestock in. The limestone, which is so prevalent in the fields of Frederick County, was used primarily because of the need to clear the fields of stone for cultivation.

The walls which survive today are in good to poor condition. Only small sections of the original walls still stand, approximately 1000 feet of crumbled wall on the east side of the south end of Mt. Church Rd., and approximately 500 feet with several gaps on the west side of the central section of Mt. Church Rd. The road runs along its original path between the old walls exactly as it did in September, 1862 (see maps).

8. Significance

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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 checked="" 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 September 14, 1862

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or

Applicable Exceptions: 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 Mountain Church Road and the stone walls along it are significant for their association with the Civil War Battle of South Mountain. The walls were directly involved in the course of the battle and the military action that took place on September 14, 1862. They provided cover for a thinly spread line of skirmishers from Georgia who opposed the US Army VI Corps, an entire division of which was arrayed on farmland a short distance to the east of the road and the walls protecting the Confederates.

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.¹

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 mountain passes, 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 gaps at South Mountain was to give the Confederate defenders time to reinforce their tenuous positions and begin pulling their divided army together again at Sharpsburg.

General McClellan ordered General Franklin, with the VI Corps to "seize Crampton's Gap and beyond it Rohrersville, a key crossroads in Pleasant Valley [Washington County]. His objective was to 'cut off, destroy or capture'

¹Stephen W. Sears, "Fire on the Mountain," Blue and Gray, December-January, 1986-86, p. 11

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DOE yes no

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Franklin's Corps was approximately 12 miles east of Crampton's Gap, and took time to reach the village of Burkittsville at the base of the mountain. When he did arrive, Franklin spent an additional four hours planning his attack. Behind the stone walls along Mountain Church road, were "four thin regiments under Colonel William Parham plus some dismounted cavalry, perhaps a thousand men in all, under the overall direction of Colonel Thomas T. Munford."³ From behind the wall, these Confederates aimed musket fire at Franklin's two divisions, numbering some 12,300 men. Although General McLaws had ordered Howell Cobb's brigade back to Crampton's Gap to help defend it, when he learned of the union approach, they did not arrive for several hours.

The importance of these stone walls in the defense of Crampton's Gap cannot be over-stated. The Confederate force left to defend this gap was small, one battery from Brigadier General Paul Semmes' artillery, three regiments from Brigadier General William Mahone's brigade, and the Second Virginia Cavalry under Colonel Thomas T. Munford. The terrain of the gap and surrounding areas, however, gave them the advantage.⁴

The stone wall which lined the east and west sides of Mountain Church Road was significant to the defense of Crampton's Gap. Colonel Thomas T. Munford reported, "...[I] instructed the officers commanding the two fragments of regiments (infantry) of Mahone's brigade to hold the post at all hazards. I posted the infantry behind a stone wall, at the base of the mountain, and running parallel with it..."⁵ This placement so impressed the Union commanders, they delayed three hours preparing for large assault, fearing greater numbers of Confederate forces. Colonel Joseph J. Bartlett, General Henry Slocum's Division wrote: "I was ordered by General Slocum to halt until he could mass his troops and arrange the plan of the assault, as the appearance of the mountain pass convinced all that artillery was of no avail against it, and that nothing but a combined and vigorous charge of infantry would carry the mountain....My line of skirmishers found the enemy at the base of the mountain, safely lodged behind a strong stone wall. Their entire line, being now developed, exhibited a large force."⁶ Thus the placement behind the stone wall, combined with artillery and sharpshooters further up the mountain, convinced Union commanders of the need for a single overwhelming attack which took hours to organize.⁷ In the words of Major General William Franklin, "The line of battle thus formed, an immediate charge was ordered and most gallantly executed. The men swept forward with a cheer, over the stone wall, dislodging the enemy, and pursuing him up the mountain side..."⁸ Clearly the stone wall at the base of the mountain was central to

³Sears, "Fire," p. 14.

⁴James V. Murfin, *The Gleam of Bayonets*, New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1965, p.182.

⁵O.R., Vol XIX, Part I, p. 826.

⁶War College Guide, p.79, from O.R., Vol.XIX, Part I, pp.388-89

⁷Stephen W. Sears, *Landscape Turned Red*, New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1983, p.147.

⁸Official Report of Maj. Gen. Wm B. Franklin, from U.S. Army War College Guide to the Battle of Antietam, p. 78.

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the defense of the gap. Within hours of the Federals' clearing of the stone wall, Crampton's Gap was theirs, but not in time to save Harpers Ferry.

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DOE yes no

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HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

Agricultural-Industrial Transition, A.D. 1815-1870

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Military

Resource Type:

Category: Structure

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s):

Transportation/Road
Wall

Known Design Source: None

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Books

- Hartwig, D. Scott, Civil War Regiments, A Journal of the American Civil War, Vol 5, #3, "Antietam, the Maryland Campaign of 1862". Article entitled "My God, Be Careful! The Morning Battle of Fox's Gap", Savas Publishing Co., Campbell, CA, 1997.
- Luvaas, Jay and Harold W. Nelson eds., The U.S. Army War College Guide to the Battle of Antietam, The Maryland Campaign of 1862, Harper Collins Publishers, Washington, 1987.
- Murfin, James V., The Gleam of Bayonets, The Battle of Antietam and Robert E. Lee's Maryland Campaign, September 1862, Thomas Yoseloff, New York, 1965.
- Roth, Dave, "The General's Tour of South Mountain", Blue & Gray Magazine, Dec-Jan, 1986-87.
- Schildt, John W., The Ninth Corps, At Antietam, Chewsville, Maryland, 1988.
- Sears, Stephen W., "Fire On The Mountain, The Battle of South Mountain September 14, 1862", Blue & Gray Magazine, Dec-Jan, 1986-87.
- Sears, Stephen W., Landscape Turned Red, The Battle of Antietam, Ticknor and Fields, New York, 1983.
- Swinton, William, Army of the Potomac, Smithmark Publisher, New York, 1995.
- U.S. War Department, The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series I, Vol XIX, Parts I and II, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1880-1901.

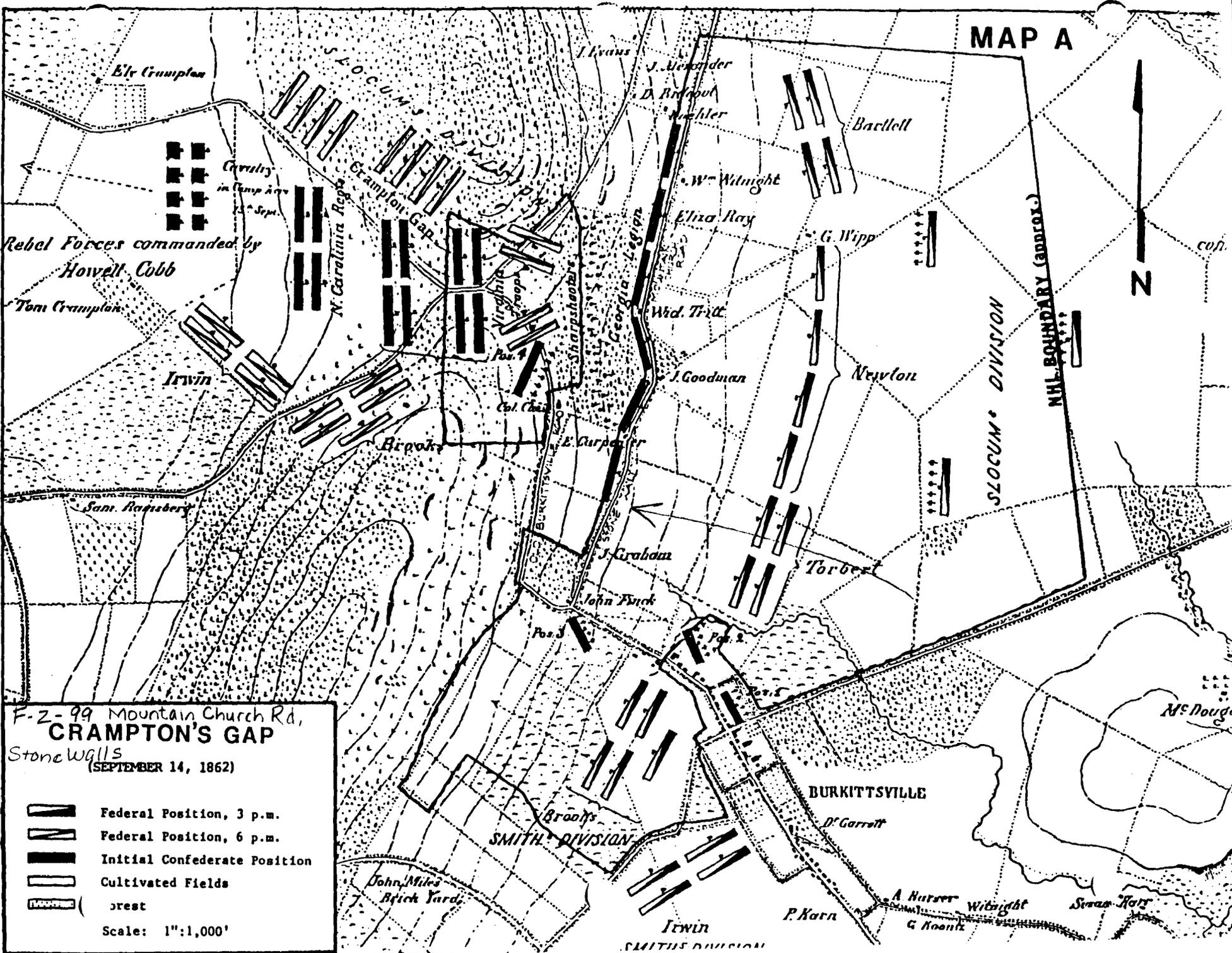
Manuscripts

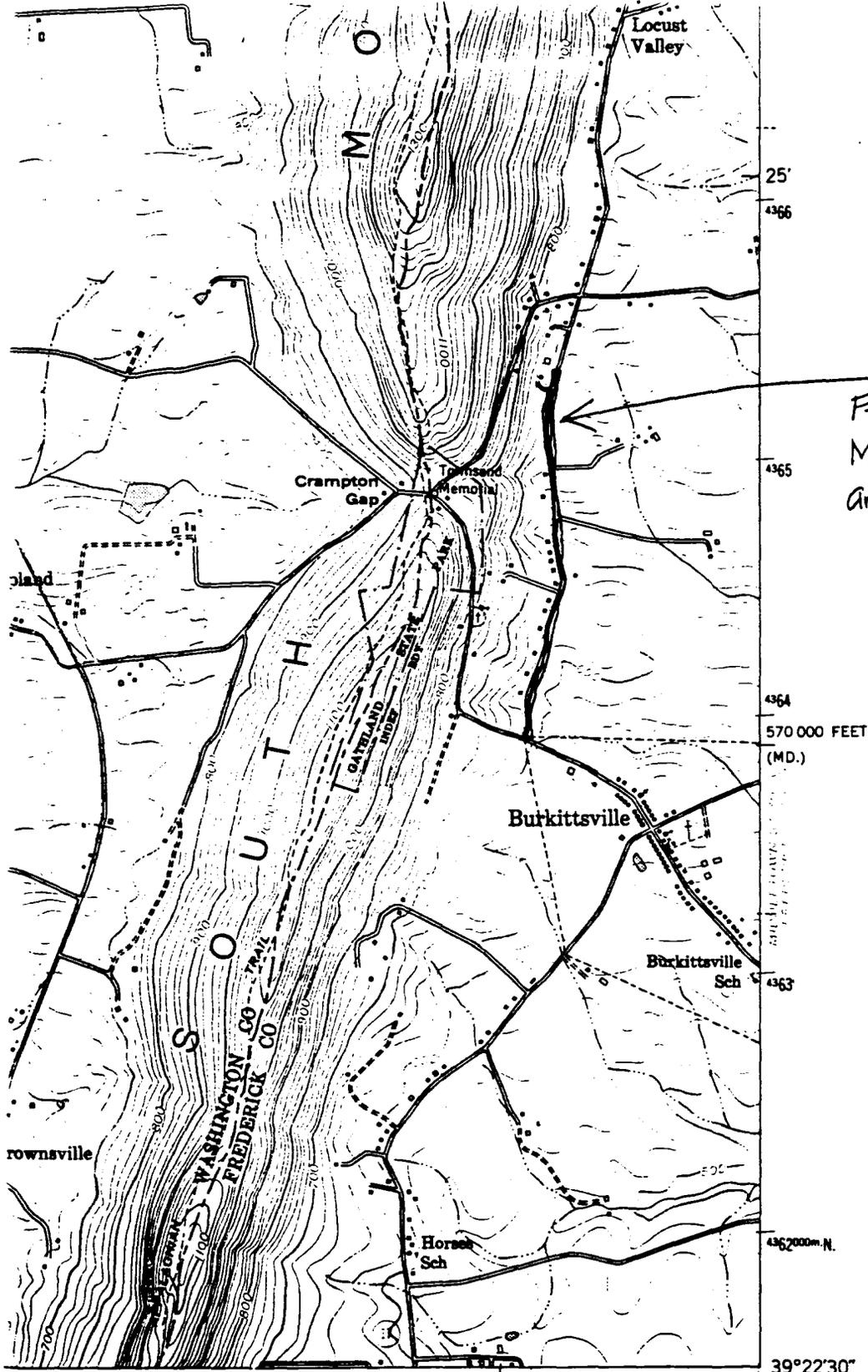
- Trye, Dennis, National Register Nomination Form, South Mountain Battlefields F-4-17-A,B,C, 1986.

Maps

- The Official Military Atlas of the Civil War, Plate 27, Gramercy Books, New York, 1983.
- Engineers Maps, 1862, National Register Nomination, South Mountain Battlefields F-4-17-A,B,C, 1986.
- Macombe Map, 1861.

MAP A





F-2-99
Mountain Church Road
and Stone Walls

© INTERIOR-GEOLOGICAL SURVEY WASHINGTON D C - 1972
 REFERENCE TO U.S. 11
 POINT OF ROCKS TO W

620 000 FEET (MD.)
 273 000 m. E
 39°22'30"
 77°37'30"

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
 1963

- Heavy-duty ————— Light-duty —————
- Medium-duty ————— Unimproved dirt - - - - -
- U. S. Route ○ State Route

(POINT OF ROCKS)
 3462 / SE



KEEDYSVILLE, MD.-W. VA.

N3922.5-W7737.5/7.5

MD-11



F. 2 - 14

Mr. Church rd

St. John's Church

Church rd

St. John's Church

on

1/3



F 2 19

Stairwell

Fr 11 1

2000 - 2000

2 - Number 100

Maryland State

1 - 1000 - 1000

1 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000 - 1000

1 - 1000



F-2 11

1000000

1100000

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1500000

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1800000

1900000

2000000

SW from 1100000

1000000

3/3