

F-7-23
Bloomsbury Forge
Urbana vicinity
Private

Ca. 1774-1787

The stone dwelling built between 1774 and 1787 is the principal structure remaining at the site of the Bloomsbury Forge, an iron finishing manufactory established by the Johnson brothers, Thomas, James, Baker, and Roger and delegated to Roger's management and profit. The house was a simple two-room structure with outbuildings which have not survived except for a log granary and a stone and frame barn which may be part of an earlier structure in the forge operations. The house was considerably altered in the early 1940's and again in the 1980's, the first period resulting in the construction of a stuccoed concrete block 1-1/2 story addition on the west gable end and the 1980's period in a frame sun room addition on the south elevation. The interior partition walls on each floor of the stone section were removed at an undetermined date, leaving outlines on the original flooring which is still in place. The house is moderately significant in architecture as a vernacular residence of the late 18th century in which its original plan is still discernible and which retains an original vernacular mantelpiece, strap hinges, a battened panel door on the south side of the house, and original trim at the windows. It is also one of four houses in the Urbana Region built during the period about 1774-1812 associated with Roger Johnson. The site of the forge is potentially significant, although untested, for information on the late 18th century iron industry in Frederick County, the forges and furnaces of the Johnson brothers having been one of the first organized developments in industry in the county.

F-7-23

Bloomsbury Forge; Forge Farm

Urbana

Frederick County

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

(Harford, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery
Counties, and Baltimore City)

Chronological/Development Period:

Rural Agrarian Intensification, A.D. 1680-1815

Prehistoric/Historic Period Themes:

Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Community Planning
Economic (Industrial)

Resource Types:

Category: Building and Site

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function and Use:

Domestic/single dwelling/residence

Agriculture/subsistence/storage/granary

Known Design Source: None

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Bloomsbury Forge; Forge Farm

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 8401 Peters Road not for publicationcity, town Urbana vicinity of congressional district 6th

state Maryland county Frederick

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Karla L. Stoner

street & number 8401 Peters Road 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 1121

street & number 100 W. Patrick Street folio 82

city, town Frederick state MD 21701

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title MHT Inventory of Historic Properties F-7-23

date 1976 federal state county local

repository for survey records Md. SHPO

city, town Crownsville state Md.

7. Description

Survey No. F-7-23

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE COUNT: 3

Bloomsbury Forge is a two-story stone dwelling built between 1775 and 1787 with a 1940's 1-1/2 story concrete block side wing and a 1980's sun room on the rear elevation, located on the south side of Peters Road about 1/2 mile southwest of the intersection of Thurston Road, near Urbana, Frederick County, Maryland. The house was extensively rehabilitated during both the 1940's and the 1980's and work on the rear addition is continuing. The house has two remaining contributing outbuildings, a log granary and a stone and frame barn, part of which may have been a building associated with the Bloomsbury Forge, an iron processing and finishing factory built about 1774 on the north bank of Bennett Creek, which runs south of the house. The forge site is believed to be in the vicinity of the barn, according to a 1973 site plan of the farm, but its archeological potential has not been tested. The property also contains two non-contributing outbuildings. The current principal elevation of the house faces north. The dates of the buildings are based on architectural evidence, local histories, historical maps, and land records.

The stone building has three bays on the first elevation and two on the second story. An area of the fieldstone wall above the present entry porch has been heavily repointed, suggesting that an opening was filled in at this point, but no interior evidence to support this theory has been observed. Another possible explanation is that it was an area washed out by a gutter failure or heavy snow melt. The door and window openings have plain architraves with mortise and tenon joinery. The north door is a replacement of the 1940's period. The windows are 9/6 on the first story and 6/6 on the second. The roof is covered with composition, replacing a slate roof which was in place as late as 1959. The cornice is boxed and appears to be a replacement added in the 1940's period of rehabilitation. The chimneys are located at the interior gable ends. By the early 1940's, frame shed additions had been added to both the north and south elevations, covering the first story on each elevation. They were in very deteriorated condition by that time and the owners from 1943 to 1980, Mr. and Mrs. George Speer, removed them and built an entry porch on the south elevation. The outline of the south elevation shed is visible in a band of weathered whitewash or paint on the exterior wall of the south elevation. The rest of the south elevation is obscured by the 1980's sun room with wood siding, which replaced the 1940's porch. The original door on the south elevation has been retained as an interior door and has 6 panels on the outer side with heavy battens on the inner side and original strap hinges. A shed dormer was added in the 1940's to the south roof slope of the stone section. The east gable end has no openings, but a slight change in the color and size of the stones above the cornice line suggests that an early alteration of the roof may have taken place. On the west gable end, the 1940's addition dominates the view of the stone wall, but again, a subtle difference in the stone work is visible above the roof of the addition. The addition has a white stucco finish and two dormers on the north elevation. The two bays on the first story have 6/6 windows with wood frames apparently made from old wood perhaps salvaged from a demolished addition or outbuilding. On the south elevation is a shed dormer.

(Continued on separate sheet)

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates C. 1774-1787 **Builder/Architect**

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

Applicable Exception: 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.

Bloomsbury Forge is moderately significant in architecture for the late 18th century vernacular design of the dwelling, built by Roger Johnson between about 1774 and 1787. Although the house has been considerably altered in the 1940's and 1980's, evidence of its original plan is still visible and an original mantelpiece, battered door, hinges and interior trim and flooring have been retained. The house is one of at least four standing structures and two archeological sites in the Urbana Region associated with Roger Johnson (1749-1831), the youngest of the four Johnson brothers whose late 18th century iron furnaces and forges were among the earliest developments of rural industrial potential in Frederick County. The simple stone house was possibly built as the ironmaster's house, although some local historians believe that Roger Johnson was himself the ironmaster and lived in the house prior to his 1781 marriage, after which he built a larger and finer residence about a half mile to the north, now the Roger Johnson House (F-7-18). The other houses probably built by Roger Johnson are Rock Hall (F-7-2), about 1812, and the Richard Johnson House (F-7-16), a circa 1780 house enlarged about 1808-1815 for his oldest son.

The property also has archeological potential in the probable site of the 18th century forge, which is indicated by a frame and stone barn, one of the two remaining outbuildings associated with the dwelling. Bloomsbury (also documented as "Bloomsberry" and "Bloomsburg") was established on Bennett Creek in about 1774, although the date has also been reported as 1787, to finish the raw iron supplied by the Johnsons' iron furnace on Furnace Branch near the mouth of the Monocacy River, which is also a sub-surface site not yet evaluated. At about the same time, the Johnsons' more famous Catoctin Furnace was established on Hunting Creek north of Frederick. Catoctin was supervised by James and Baker Johnson, as well as Thomas Johnson, who later became the first governor of Maryland, and supplied cannon to the Continental Army during the Revolution. The Bennett Creek forge and another forge on Bush Creek were delegated to Roger Johnson. According to a Ralph Martz article in the Frederick News-Post in 1959, the Bloomsbury Forge manufactured firebacks, nails, andirons, bar iron, and cookware as well as pig iron. The relative scarcity of iron ore in the lower Monocacy Valley apparently resulted in the decline of the forge's activity as it was inactive after about 1811. An 1859 deed makes no mention of industrial activity, although it was known in the late 19th and 20th centuries as "the Forge Farm".

7.1 Description (Continued)

The interior of the stone section has been altered by the addition of insulation and drywall, although the window and door frames were retained. The increased depth of the wall is visible in a joint line in each window bay. The original plan had two rooms on the first story and two on the second. At a date not yet determined, the inner partition wall on each floor was removed, but the location is visible in the floors, which retain their original random width boards. The east room has a mantelpiece featuring an incised vernacular floral motif in the central panel of the frieze and a deeply molded mantel shelf. Cupboards flanking the chimney were probably original, but the doors are apparently replacements of the 1940's. In the west end of the room, the fireplace opening is no longer in use and has an ogee molding surrounding it, possibly also from the 1940's. No shelf or other mantel feature has survived. The narrow enclosed winding stair to the second story was made slightly narrower at the first floor level because of the insulation application. On the second story, the outline of the removed wall suggests that a small hall or landing was at the top of the stairs, with the single doorway to the chamber near the center of the wall. No usable fireplace was apparently in this room. The attic has been completely altered, having been used as an artist's studio by the Speers and remodeled for a bedroom by the current owners, Mr. and Mrs. Stoner. Its low-ceilinged scale and light originally coming only from the 2/2 windows flanking the west end chimney suggest that it may have been for slaves or for children not sleeping in the main chamber on the second story. The interior of the wing contains a dining room and a modern kitchen. The 1973 site plan indicates the location of a separate summer kitchen west of the house which has not survived, as well as a stone foundation to the southeast which is no longer visible above ground.

Granary: The log granary is located southwest of the house and appears to have been built in the first quarter of the 19th century. It is rectangular in plan with a foundation of stone piers raising the structure above ground level. The logs are mostly unchinked and the east and west gable ends are covered with some late 19th century vertical siding and a few modern replacements. The gable roof is covered with corrugated metal. At the east gable end is a raised square opening to a cross aisle with access to two sections separated by a center vertical log beam. The rest of the separating wall has largely deteriorated. In about 1985, an open shed was added to the south side of the granary, replacing a deteriorated frame chicken house on the site. The granary is currently used for storage.

Barn: The frame barn with a stone lower level is located south of the granary at the edge of the former mill race shown on the 1873 map. The upper structure was undoubtedly a replacement of the mid or late 19th century on a stone structure associated with the forge. The openings on the stone lower level are a doorway near the southwest corner and a window opening near the southeast corner. A wider doorway is on the east elevation. The roofline of the upper structure is an uneven low gable with a sloping shed to the north elevation.

Forge site: The possible site of the forge may be a depression in the flat field east of the barn, but the 1973 site plan sketch shows it as being approximately on the site of the barn. Archeological testing may reveal the locations of the major structures of the forge.

Bloomsbury Forge; Forge Farm
Frederick County

Survey No. F-7-23

9.1 Bibliography (Continued)

Martz, Ralph F. "Old Johnson Stone House Had Colorful Spot in Area History",
Frederick News Post, Feb. 1959.

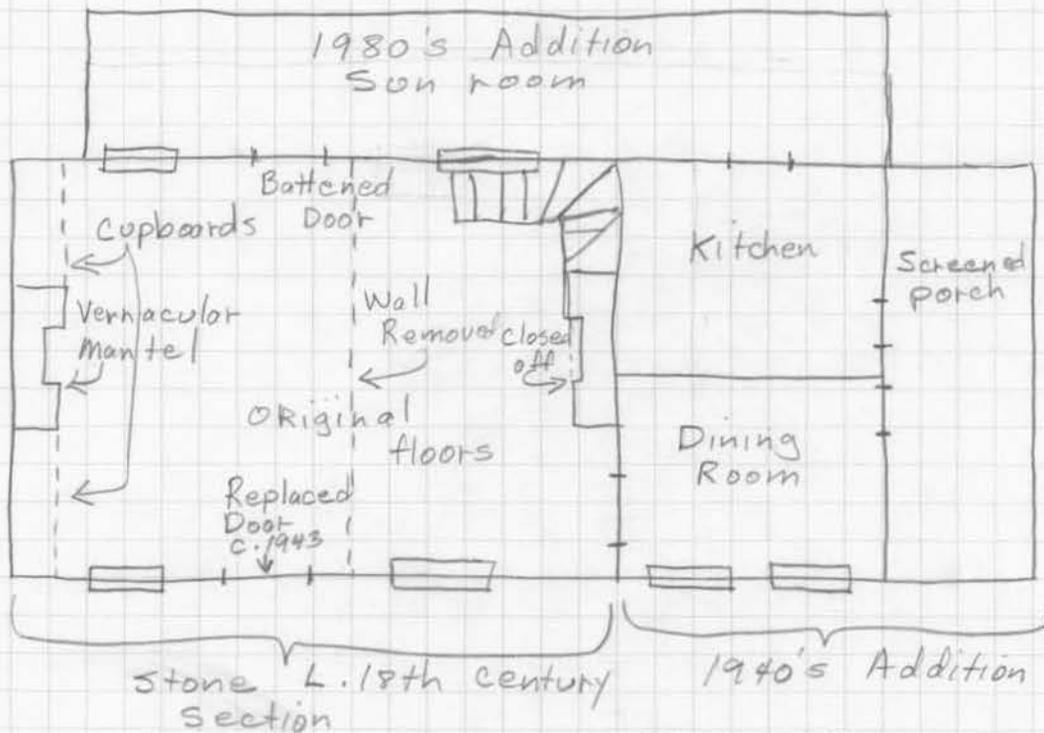
Scharf, Thomas J. History of Western Maryland. Philadelphia: L.H. Everts,
1882, p. 598

Stoner, Mrs. Karla L. personal interview, Nov. 26, 1993, site sketch made in
1973 and C. 1943 photos of house prior to rehabilitation.

Titus, C.O. Atlas of Frederick County, 1873

Varle, Charles. Map of Frederick and Washington Counties, 1808

Williams, T.J.C., and Folger McKinsey. History of Frederick County, 1910.
Reprinted Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1979, pp. 108, 325, 763



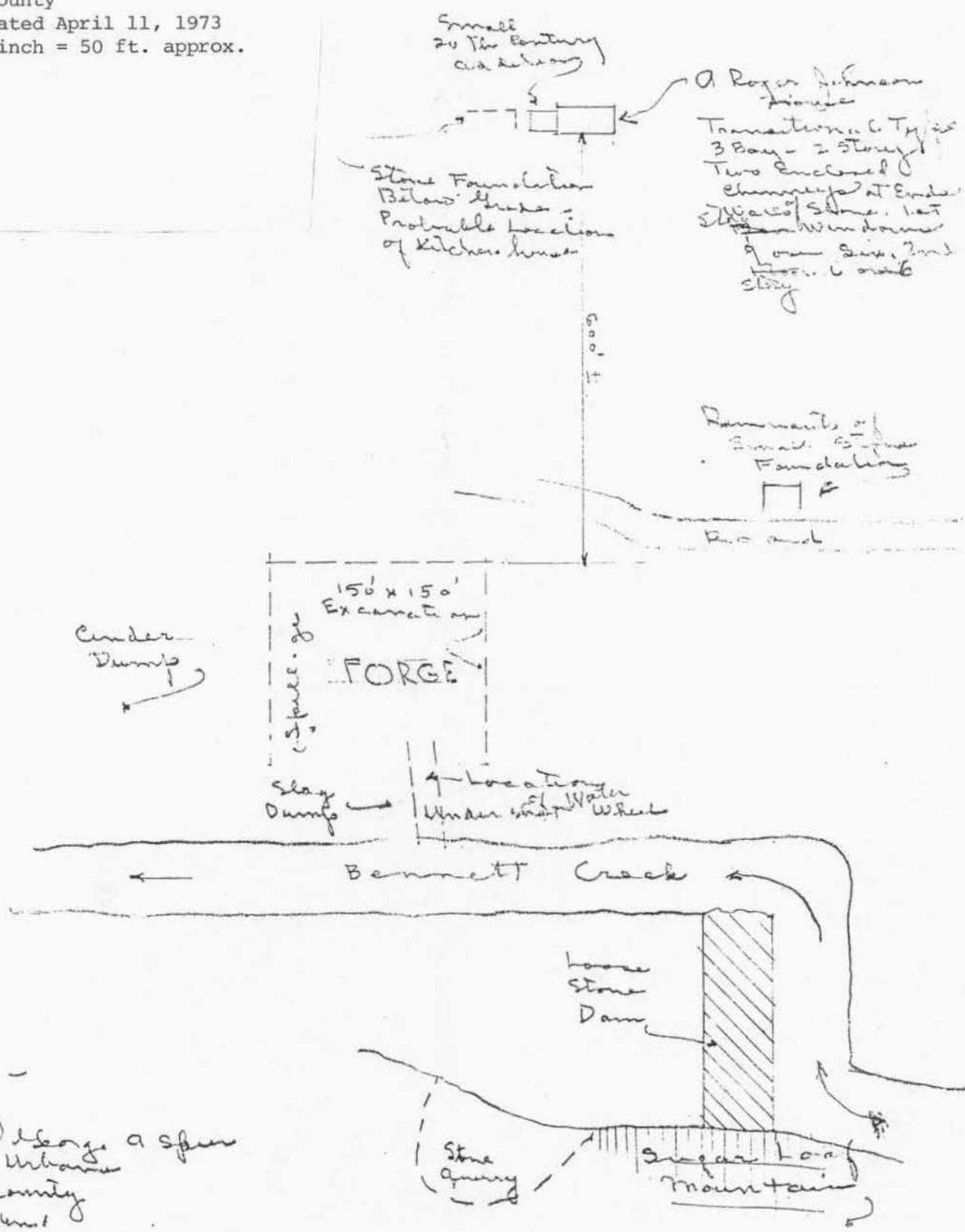
F-7-23

Bloomsbury Forge
Frederick County

Janet Davis
Nov. 26, 1993

Not to Scale

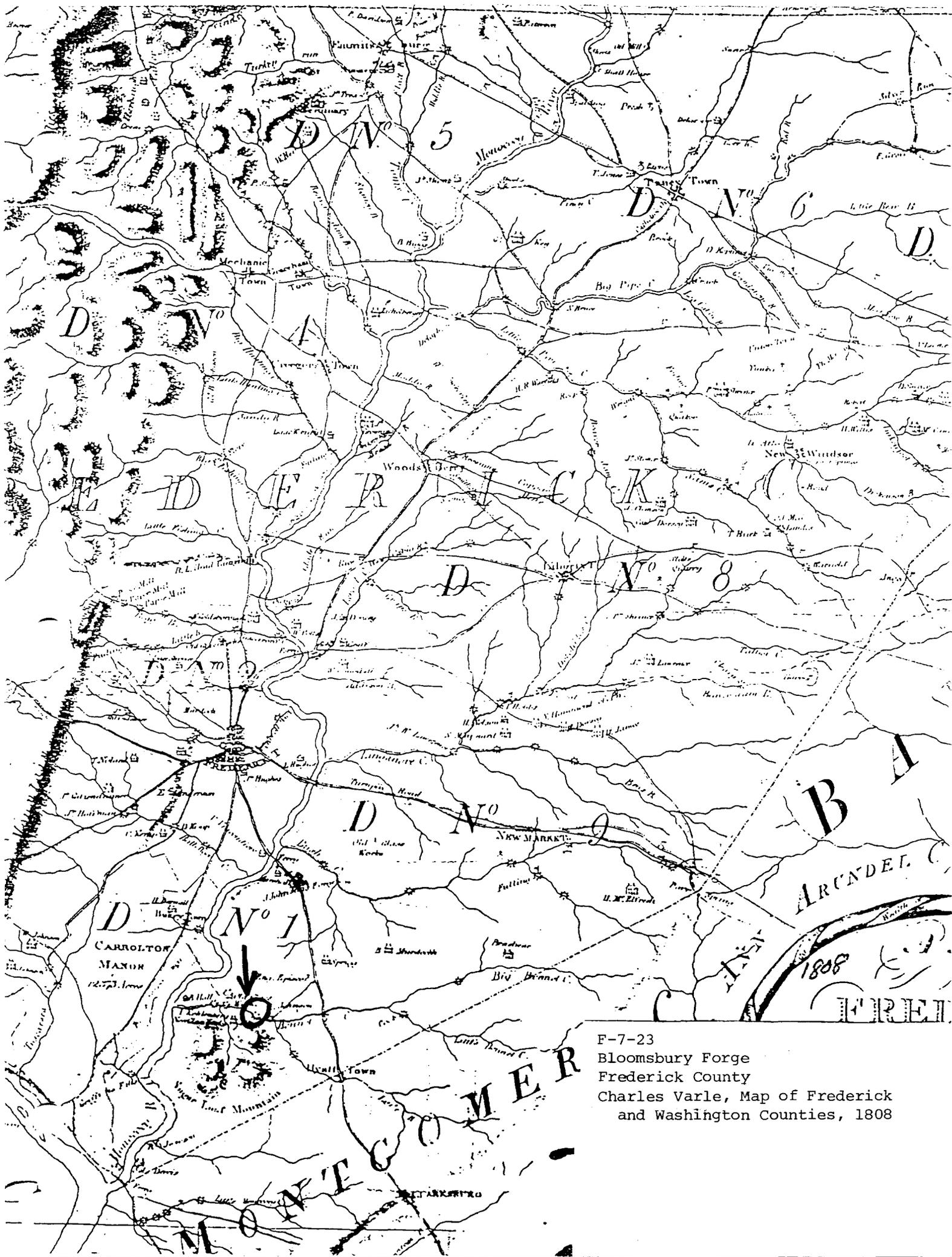
F-7-23
 Bloomsbury Forge
 Frederick County
 Site plan dated April 11, 1973
 Scale: 1/2 inch = 50 ft. approx.



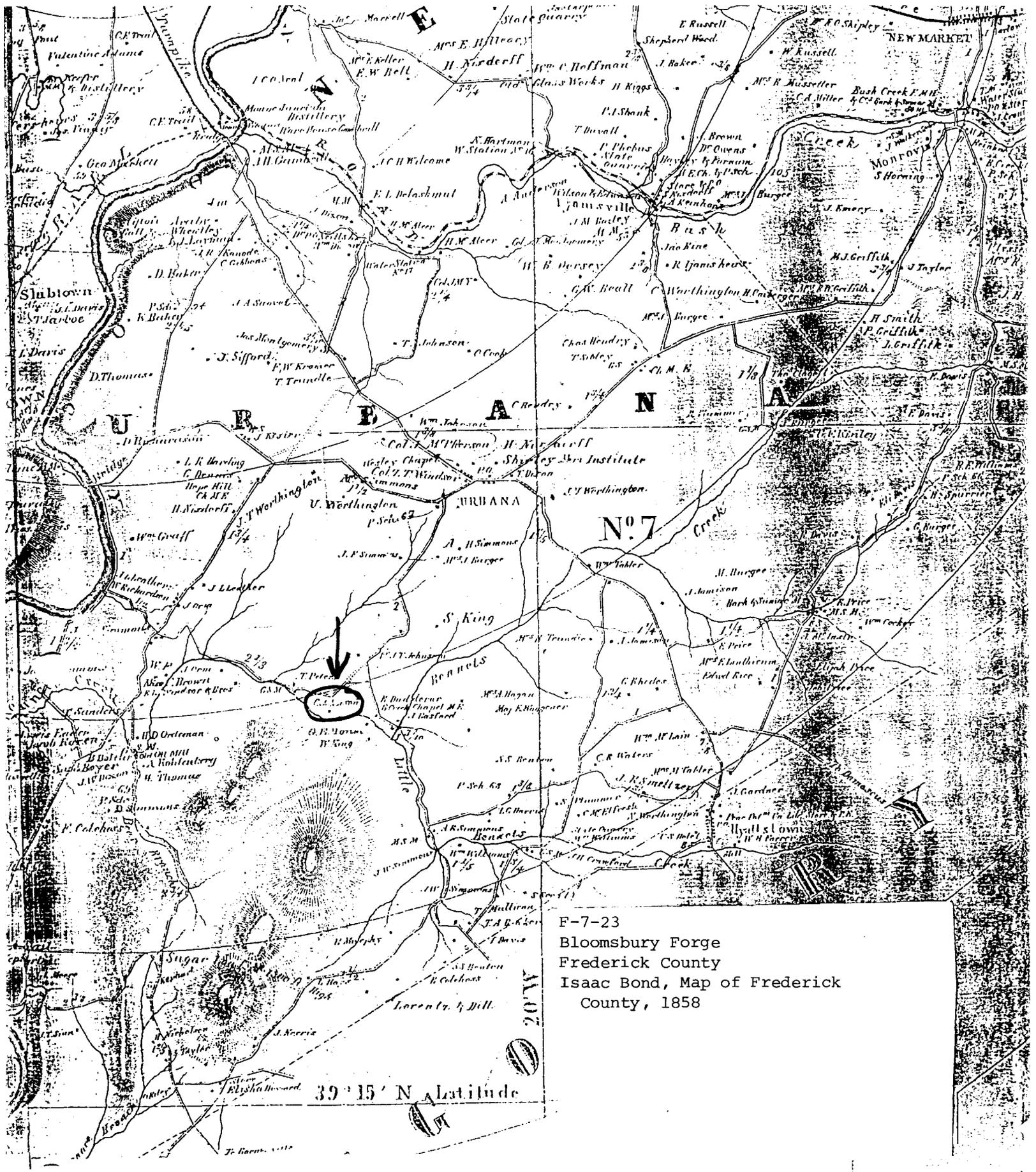
- Forge -
 Property of
 Mr and Mrs George A Spurr
 South of Urbansville
 Frederick County
 Maryland
 April 11, 1973
 Scale 1/2 inch = 50 feet ±

Bloombury Forge

Liber/Folio	Grantee	Grantor	Lot Size, Description, Original Tracts, Miscellaneous	Cost
1121/82 25 Jul 80	Karl Leon Stone	John Van Allen, ¹ John Van Allen & F.M. Mull Bank, trustees under L.W. & T. of Jane Van Allen Sproule	P. 1: Forge Farm 119A., 32 sq. p. 438/12, 29 Jan 43 P. 2: 2A. P. 3:	
P. 1: 438/12 29 Jan 43	George W. & Jane Van Allen Speer	Louis J. & Laura Louise Conard	Forge Farm 119A., 32 sq. p.	
308/402 3 Feb 14	Louis J. Conard et al	Jemima & Horace J. Peters	Forge Farm 119A., 32 sq. p.	
304/114 12 Mar 13	Jemima Peters	Horace J. Peters	Forge Farm 119A., 32 sq. p.	
304/110 4 Mar 13	Horace J. Peters	Wm. S. Baker, exec. of Arnold H. Wendson, dec.	Forge Farm, ± 118 A., part of "Bloombury" sold to Peters took place 10 Sept 1889. H. Wendson, dec. no deed heretofore recorded	
BGF 3/677 23 Mar 1859	Edmund L., Godlock H., & Arnold H. Wendson	Charles Johnson	part of "Bloombury", part of the southern division laid off by Commissioner, for the said Charles Johnson, from the real estate of Roger Johnson, dec. 119 A., 32 sq. p., also being part of the real estate bequeathed to the said Charles Johnson by Roger Johnson dec.	#3, 337.60



F-7-23
Bloomsbury Forge
Frederick County
Charles Varle, Map of Frederick
and Washington Counties, 1808



F-7-23
 Bloomsbury Forge
 Frederick County
 Isaac Bond, Map of Frederick
 County, 1858

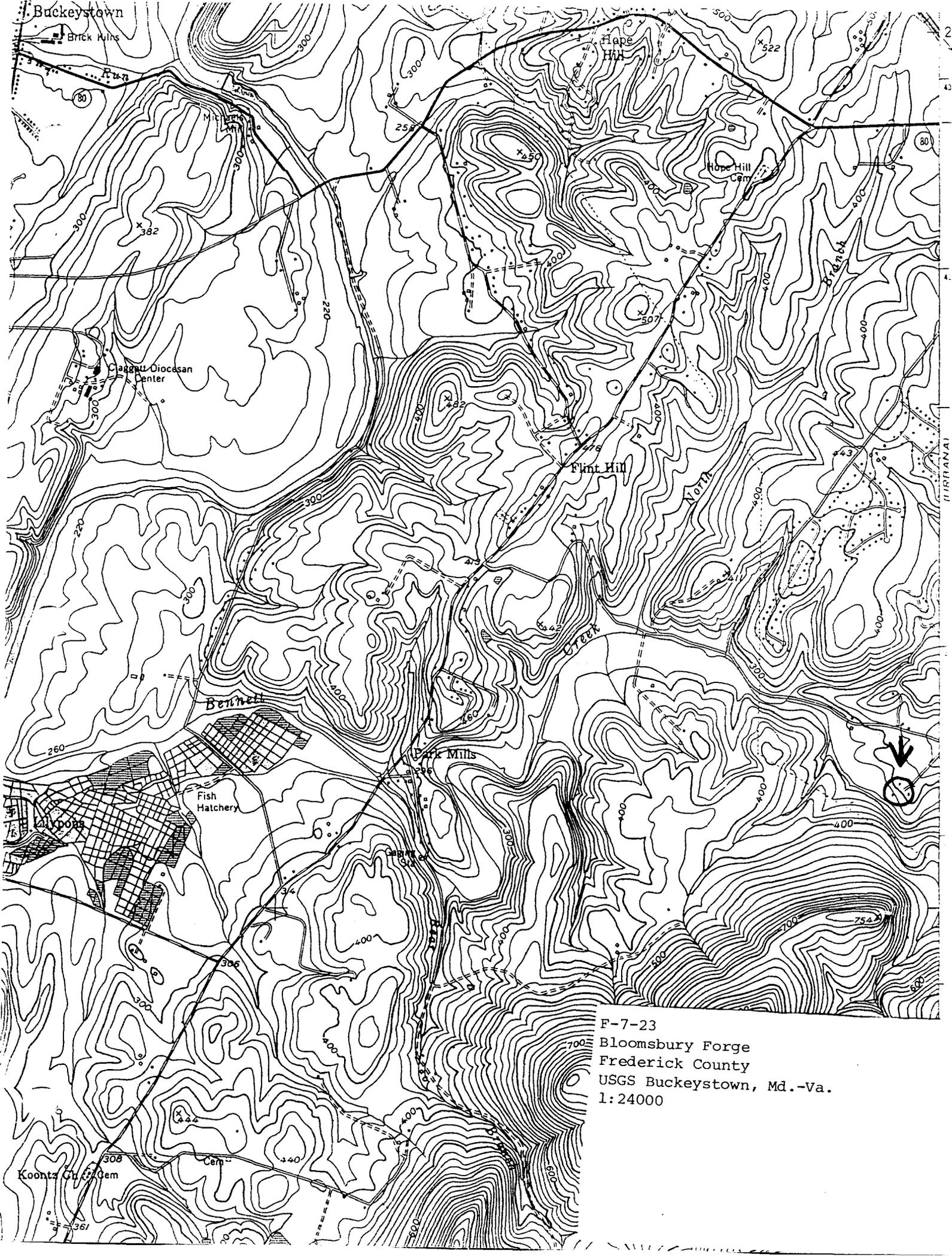
URBANA DIST. No. 7

Scale 1/4 inches to a mile



F-7-23
 Bloomsbury Forge
 Frederick County
 C.O. Titus, Atlas of Frederick
 County, 1873

GEOI



F-7-23
Bloomsbury Forge
Frederick County
USGS Buckeystown, Md.-Va.
1:24000













