

HO 737, Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill,
ca. 1761, 1833, 1885.
Ellicott City vicinity, Ilchester area, public access.
Capsule Summary, page 1.

Description:

No remains are visible above ground for the mill site.

Documentary sources reveal that seven structures stood on the site.

The earliest, ca. 1761, was a frame grist mill--called the Dismal Mill--built by Baltimore resident John Cornthwaite; it had a wooden dam secured by stone abutments. Structure number two was a three-story flour mill, most likely of stone construction, with a step gable fronting a gable roof. This operation was called the Ilchester Mill, and went into service in 1833. Four other structures were related to the Ilchester Mill complex, and were probably built about the same time as the mill itself. These were: 1) owner George Ellicott Jr.'s residence, a three-story, five-bay stone dwelling, with a hipped roof, sited on the slope above the mill; 2) the miller's residence and storehouse, a three story stone dwelling with a frame addition; 3) and 4) mill workers' residences, frame dwellings with stone lower floors. The last building on the site was the Ilchester railroad depot, constructed in 1885 on the south side of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad line.

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Ellicott City vicinity, Ilchester area, public access.
Capsule Summary, page 2.

Significance:

John Cornthwaite's ca. 1761 Dismal Mill was a small-scale grist mill intended to serve the needs of local planters, who in this period were just beginning to go to farming--to grow grain as a cash crop alternative to tobacco. This type of facility was typical of milling operations in the Patapsco Valley before the arrival of the Ellicott family in 1771, who were the first to promote large-scale merchant milling of flour. Evidently Cornthwaite's mill stood until the second decade of the nineteenth century, but the site was never further developed until George Ellicott, Jr. constructed the large Ilchester Flour Mill at the same location in 1833. Ellicott built his own residence at Ilchester, as well as those for the miller and laborers, establishing a community in a manner analogous to his grandparents' generation at Ellicott City--though in Ilchester on a smaller scale. The Ilchester community was also significant in that it clearly reflected the influence of the railroad, then newly established, but soon to become dominant nation-wide. Ellicott oriented the mill to the railroad, rather than the highway, and sited

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his own house directly in line with the Patterson Viaduct. Ellicott
sold the Ilchester properties in 1866, shortly before his death, and
by 1882, the mill was no longer standing. The Redemptorist
religious order, which purchased part of the property, became the
dominant presence in the area, and constructed the railroad depot in
1885.

**Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. HO 737

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill
historic

and/or common

2. Location

street & number River Road at the Patterson Viaduct, Ilchester area. not for publication

city, town Ellicott City vicinity of congressional district Sixth

state Maryland county Howard

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Please see continuation sheet.

street & number telephone no.:

city, town state and zip code

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

None
title

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. HO 737

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

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

No remains are visible above ground for the mill site. A poured-concrete stair which climbs the hillside from the present River Road served the institutional structures incorporated into the former George Ellicott house.

Seven structures existed on this site:

1) The Dismal Mill, ca. 1761. A drawing, now lost, was executed about 1811 of the Dismal Mill. John S. Tyson described it in 1847; the building was a long frame structure with a low hipped roof. (John S. Tyson, "The Founders of Ellicotts' Mills, No. II," *Howard District Press*, 24 May 1847; transcribed by John McGrain.) The mill dam was built of logs secured in notches cut in rock abutments. (Baltimore County Deed 169/29, 10 September 1823, Jonathan Ellicott, et al to Alexander Fridge and William Morris.)

(**Documentary sources for the following structures are presented in Section 8, Significance.)

2) The Ilchester Mill, 1833. This was a three-story structure facing the railroad, surmounted by a gable roof with dormers; a cupola above may have stood atop a step gable at the facade. The mill building stood just west of the Patterson Viaduct, between the railroad and the river.

3) George Ellicott Residence, ca. 1833. This dwelling stood at the head of the hill above the Patterson Viaduct. It was a three-story, five-bay stone structure, surmounted by a hipped roof with two dormers; chimneys rose from each end.

4) Miller's Residence and Store House, ca. 1833. This building stood at the edge of the county road, between the Patterson Viaduct and Bonnie Branch. It was a three-story structure of stone, with a two-story frame addition attached to one end.

[Please see the continuation sheet.]

8. Significance

Survey No. HO 737

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates ca. 1760-1820; 1833-1900 Builder/Architect unknown

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.

Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill

Few remains above ground testify to the history of the Ilchester Mills. The earliest development on the site occurred in the second half of the eighteenth century with the construction of the Dismal Mill. A small-scale grist mill intended to serve the local needs of nearby farms, the Dismal Mill was typical of milling operations in the Patapsco Valley before the arrival of the Ellicott family in 1771. The Ellicotts' establishment of large-scale merchant milling operations upstream of the Dismal Mill site both reflected and promoted a new economic reality. This was a substitution of grain cultivation for the long-maintained reliance on tobacco as a major cash crop in the region. Ironically, the Dismal Mill site did not fully develop until after the Ellicott family had lost its dominance of the flour-milling industry during the 1830s. George Ellicott, Jr. (1798-1869), who became a mayor of Ellicott City, began construction of the Ilchester Flouring Mill in 1833, and incorporated the Ilchester Manufacturing Company in 1841. After 1837, this was the only flour mill left in Ellicott hands.

Recognizing the importance of the newly-formed Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to industrial development and, indeed, its quick dominance over other modes of transport, Ellicott oriented the Ilchester mill building toward the main line. He also placed his substantial dwelling on a hillside directly in line with the railroad's approach over the Patterson Viaduct, a clear and imposing architectural expression of his place in this community, and of that community's reliance on rail transportation. Ellicott built an additional mill, perhaps in the 1850s, and promoted a place in the industry for his nephews in the Tyson family, to whom he leased the milling operations. Shortly before his death, Ellicott sold his residence to the Redemptorists, a religious order which established an educational institution on the site. St. Clement's, later St. Mary's, College built

[Please see the continuation sheet.]

Inventory Number HO 737
Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Section 4.1

Mill Site:
State of Maryland
Natural Resources, Department of Forests and Parks
Annapolis, Maryland 20701

George Ellicott House Site:
BCS Limited Partnership
c/o S & S Partnership
P. O. Box 312
Savage, Maryland 20763

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Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Section 5.1

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

Howard County Tax Map 25

Parcel 81 (Mill Site): this parcel is not indexed in the Howard County property tax system. Such a circumstance invariably indicates state ownership of land and its consequent removal from the tax roles.

Parcel 86 (George Ellicott House Site): liber 2677, folio 698.

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Section 7.1

5) and 6) Mill Workers' Residences, ca. 1833. These two dwellings stood on the hillside between George Ellicott's residence and the Miller's residence. One was a three-and-a-half story building, the lower two floors of stone and the upper of frame. The other was a one-and-a-half story building of frame, set on a stone basement.

7) Ilchester Railroad Depot, 1885. This building stood west of the Patterson Viaduct, on the south side of the railroad tracks, adjacent the Miller's Residence and Store. Its architectural character is unknown.

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Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Section 8.1

extensive facilities on the hilltop above Ellicott's residence, and by the 1880s became the dominant presence in the valley. The Ilchester Mill had been destroyed by 1882, and technological developments freed milling operations from dependence on water power, making mill sites in flood-prone areas less attractive for reinvestment. Once connected to the railroad by its own depot, the Redemptorist facility closed, likely the result of declining enrollments and revenue saving measures by the Catholic authorities.

The Ilchester Mills site actually comprises the sites of seven related structures, none of which possess any identifiable remains above ground. The earliest of these was a grist mill owned or operated by John Cornthwaite and an individual named Brown; it was called the Dismal Mill. Two Ellicott family deeds provide this information. A partition among the members of the second generation of Ellicotts, dated 9 Sept 1812, reserved to Jonathan Ellicott (1756-1826) the sole right to grind wheat into merchantable flour except "that the Mill formerly occupied by Brown & Cornthwaite shall not be debarred from grinding grists or country work as heretofore" (Baltimore WSG 2/119). A decade later Jonathan Ellicott sold undeveloped mill land to Alexander Fridge and William Morris (for the Thistle Mill), and cited the adjacent "formerly occupied . . . premises [downstream] constituting the old Dismal mill, otherwise called Brown and Cornthwaites. . ." (Baltimore 169/29).

Martha Ellicott Tyson stated that the Dismal Mill was established in 1761, but her assertion is undocumented (Tyson, p. 32). Similarly, John McGrain indicates in his *Molinography in Maryland* series that John Cornthwaite appeared as owner of record in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax, but a search of these documents for both Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties reveals no assessments under Cornthwaite's name. Andrew Ellicott (1734-1789) and John Ellicott (1739-1795), of the first generation, did pay ground-rents to a John Cornthwaite in 1783, but these entries appear in the Baltimore East Hundred property tax records, and probably concern warehouse lots in Baltimore City. At any event, Cornthwaite's mill appears on the 1794 Griffith Map of Maryland, in the correct location, and this is the earliest datable reference. Soon afterwards, the Ellicott family acquired the property.

The 1812 and 1822 deeds above suggest that the Dismal Mill building was still standing in those years, but by 1828, the Ellicott family advertised for sale only a mill seat--that is, a location for a mill (Dorsey v Ellicott). By 1830, when a large quantity of Ellicott land-holdings along the Patapsco was partitioned,

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Section 8.2

lot 32 contained only the Dismal Mill Seat, and apparently no usable structures. George Ellicott (1760-1832) held this lot for two years, until his death. George Ellicott, Jr. (1798-1869) evidently began construction of the second mill at this location in 1833. Passing directly by the site on 13 March 1832, Charles Varle described the view from the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, and saw here nothing to remark; yet a year later, he noted of the site: the "*Dismal Mill* lately erected by *George Ellicott*, [is] not yet in operation" (Varle, pp. 111, 100). In 1840 this new structure was identified on a plat as the Ilchester Mill (Howard 2/119), and the General Assembly of Maryland incorporated the Ilchester Manufacturing Company the next year. The Ilchester post office was established in 1842 (Mc Grain, *Molinography*).

As a cooperative venture, George Ellicott, Jr. sold the mill pool and dam for the Ilchester Flouring Mill to his nephew James Tyson in 1851; Tyson then funded raising the dam, to increase the water fall--and thus the power--available to the mill (Howard 10/396). James Tyson leased the mill, corn kilns, and a miller's residence for five years beginning in 1859 (Howard 20/106), and at the termination of that lease, James' younger brother, Robert, arranged for a ninety-nine year lease of the operations (Baltimore 42/41 and Howard 23/247). The Schofield Lithograph of the Patapsco valley shows the mill in the early 1860s. It was a three-story structure facing the railroad, surmounted by a gable roof with dormers; a cupola above may have rested atop a step gable at the facade. A photograph of the Patterson Viaduct dating before 1866, shows such a step-gable structure in the background (Dilts, see bibliography). By 1882, the mill had been destroyed, and after acquiring the leasehold from a trustee, Tyson sold the site to the Thistle Mills that year (Howard 44/650). Milling operations on the site were apparently not resumed.

In conjunction with the Ilchester Mill, George Ellicott built a residence for himself and at least three auxiliary dwellings for mill workers. In addition, he may have constructed another flour mill on Bonnie Branch; for this site, please see Inventory number HO 738. The Schofield lithograph shows George Ellicott's house as a three-story, five-bay structure, surmounted by a hipped roof with two dormers; chimneys rose from each end. A twentieth-century photograph confirms these features of the stone dwelling (Cram, pp. 102-103). Three smaller structures descended the hillside in front of the house to the county road at the edge of the river, between the Patterson Viaduct and Bonnie Branch. George Ellicott insured these three smaller buildings from loss by fire in 1867. The largest was probably the miller's dwelling at the edge of the river, and is shown in both the Schofield lithograph and the pre-1866 photograph of the

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Section 8.3

Patterson Viaduct:

a three story stone dwelling and store house 34 x 22 1/2, attached to one end is a two story frame addition 12 x 12 (occupied by one family), shingle roof \$1500.

The two additional structures housed millworkers:

a 1 1/2 story frame weatherboarded tenement with two stories of stone underneath (making a 3 1/2 story building) 30 x 18 (occupied by four families), shingle roof \$1000

[and] . . . a 1 1/2 story frame weatherboarded tenement with a stone basement under, 30 x 18, (occupied by two families), shingle roof \$600. (George Ellicott fire insurance policies).

In an arrangement similar to one operating in 1812 at the house of George Ellicott Sr. in Ellicotts Mills, fresh water supplied from a spring on the top of the hill ran through pipes installed to Ellicott's dwelling, the Ilchester Mill, and other structures (Anne Arundel WSG 2/119, and Howard 25/404).

In 1866, George Ellicott sold to the Redemptorists religious order his dwelling and 110 acres of land north of Bonnie Branch and west of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (Howard 25/404). The fire insurance policy he executed consequently was a gift to the order, but also served to protect structures necessary for the mill, then beginning operations under his nephew Robert Tyson. The Redemptorists sold two small parcels to the Railroad in 1885 and 1887, and the plats executed for these transfers illustrate the largest of the three dwellings insured by Ellicott in 1867. This structure is identified, as in the insurance policy, as a dwelling and store. Adjacent to it in 1885, the railroad built a depot (Howard 49/68, and 52/427). The Ilchester improvement, initiated by the railroad in 1900 and 1901, bypassed the Patterson Viaduct and the Redemptorists' depot (73/227). With the mill by then twenty years defunct, what structures the Order no longer required for its own uses were ultimately destroyed.

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Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Section 9.1

Dilts, James D. *The Great Road: the Building of the Baltimore and Ohio, the Nation's First Railroad, 1828-1853*. Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 1993. [see photograph between pages 158 and 159].

Dorsey v. Ellicott, Maryland State Archives, Special Collections, MSA 40191-2, Folder 6; Deed of Jonathan Ellicott and George Ellicott of Baltimore County, and Elias Ellicott and William Kenworthy, trustee, of Baltimore City to Alexander Fridge and William Morris of the firm Fridge and Morris in Baltimore City, 13 Feb 1822.

Cramm, Joetta. *Howard County: A Pictorial History*. Norfolk, Va.: Donning Company, 1987.

George Ellicott fire insurance policies with the Mutual Fire Insurance Company, Baltimore County, 6 Aug 1867, Policy number 6057; Maryland State Archives, Special Collections, Andrew Heubeck Collection, MSA SC 1100.

McGrain, John W. *Molinography in Maryland Series*, Howard County notebook. Maryland State Archives, Special Collections, MSA SC 4300.

Tyson, Martha Ellicott. *A Brief Account of the Settlement of Ellicott's Mills*. Baltimore: J. Murphy, 1871.

Varle, Charles. *A Complete View of Baltimore*. Baltimore: Samuel Young, 1833.

Howard County Historical Society Library, Ellicott City, Maryland:

Schofield, John. *Panoramic View of the Scenery on the Patapsco, Ellicotts Mills, Md.*

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Geography and Maps Division:

Griffith Map of Maryland, 1794; G 3840, 1794, .G7;
Martenet's Map of Howard County, 1860; G 3843 .H6 1860 .M3;
Raynolds' Military Map of Baltimore County, Maryland, 1863; G 3843 .B3 1863 .R3;
Taylor's Map of the City and County of Baltimore, 1857; G 3843 .B3 1857 .T3.

Inventory Number HO 737
Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Plan
Statewide Historic Contexts

Geographic Organization:

Piedmont

Chronological Development/Periods:

- | | | |
|--|------|-----------|
| 9) Rural Agrarian Intensification | A.D. | 1680-1815 |
| 10) Agricultural-Industrial Transition | A.D. | 1815-1870 |
| 11) Industrial/Urban Dominance | A.D. | 1870-1930 |

Historic Period Themes:

- 1) Agriculture
- 3) Economic
- 8) Transportation

Resource Type:

Category: Site

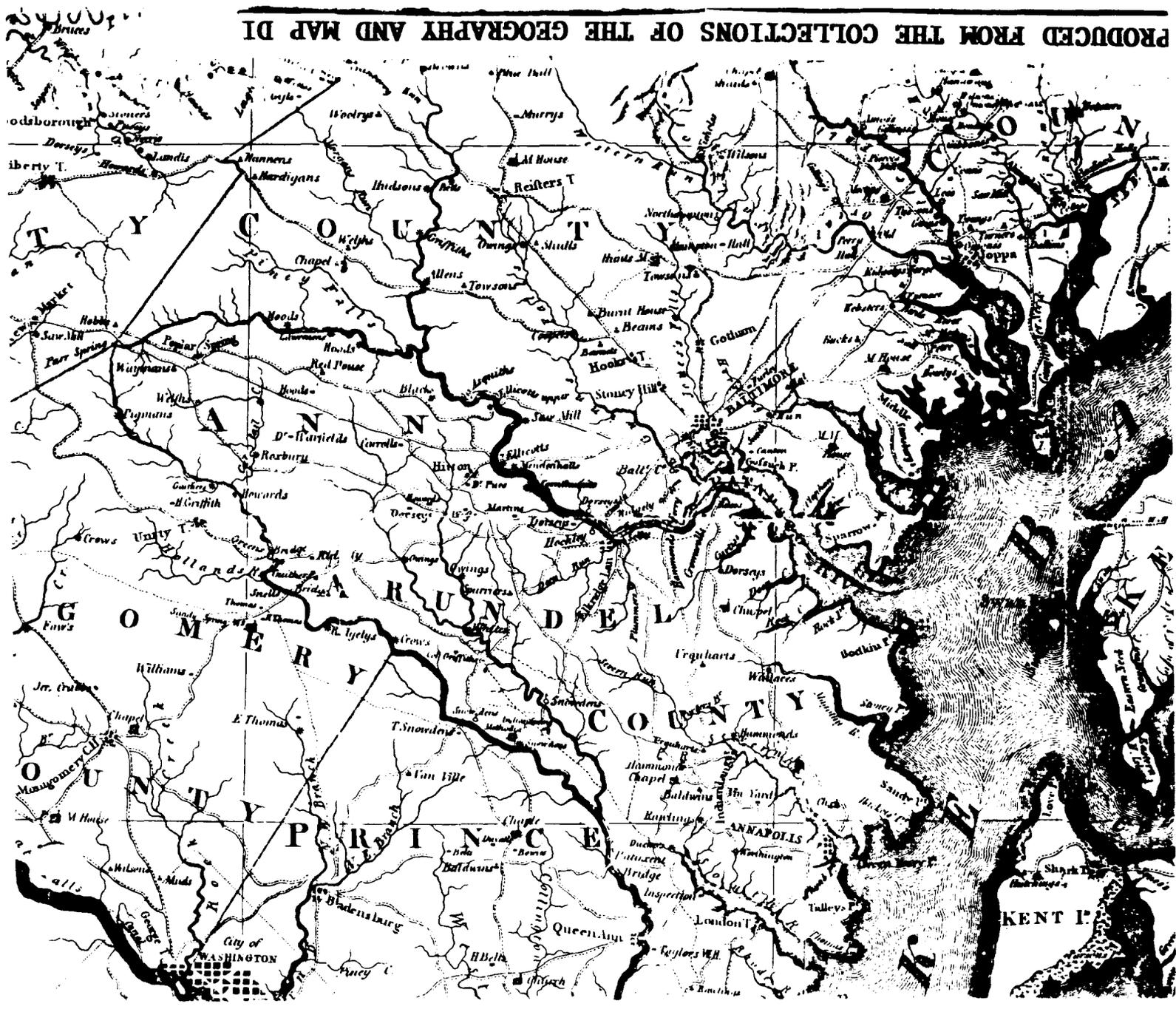
Historic Environment: Rural/Village

Historic Functions and Uses: Flour Mill, Residences, Store, Railroad Depot

Known Design Sources: None

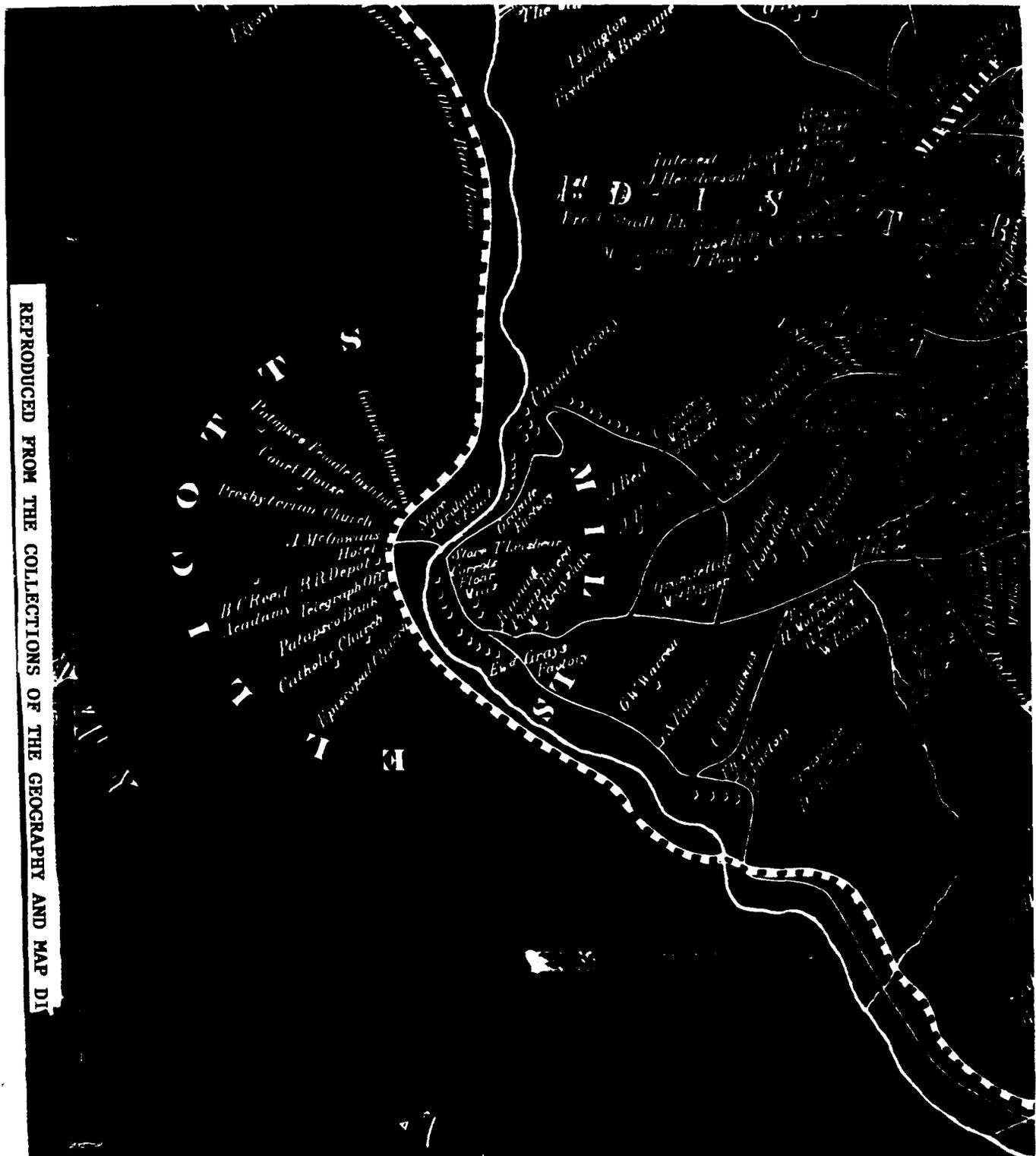
Inventory Number HO 737
Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Ellicott City Vicinity, Ilchester area
Maps.2

Griffith Map of Maryland, 1794,
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Geography and Maps Division: G 3840,
1794, .G7.



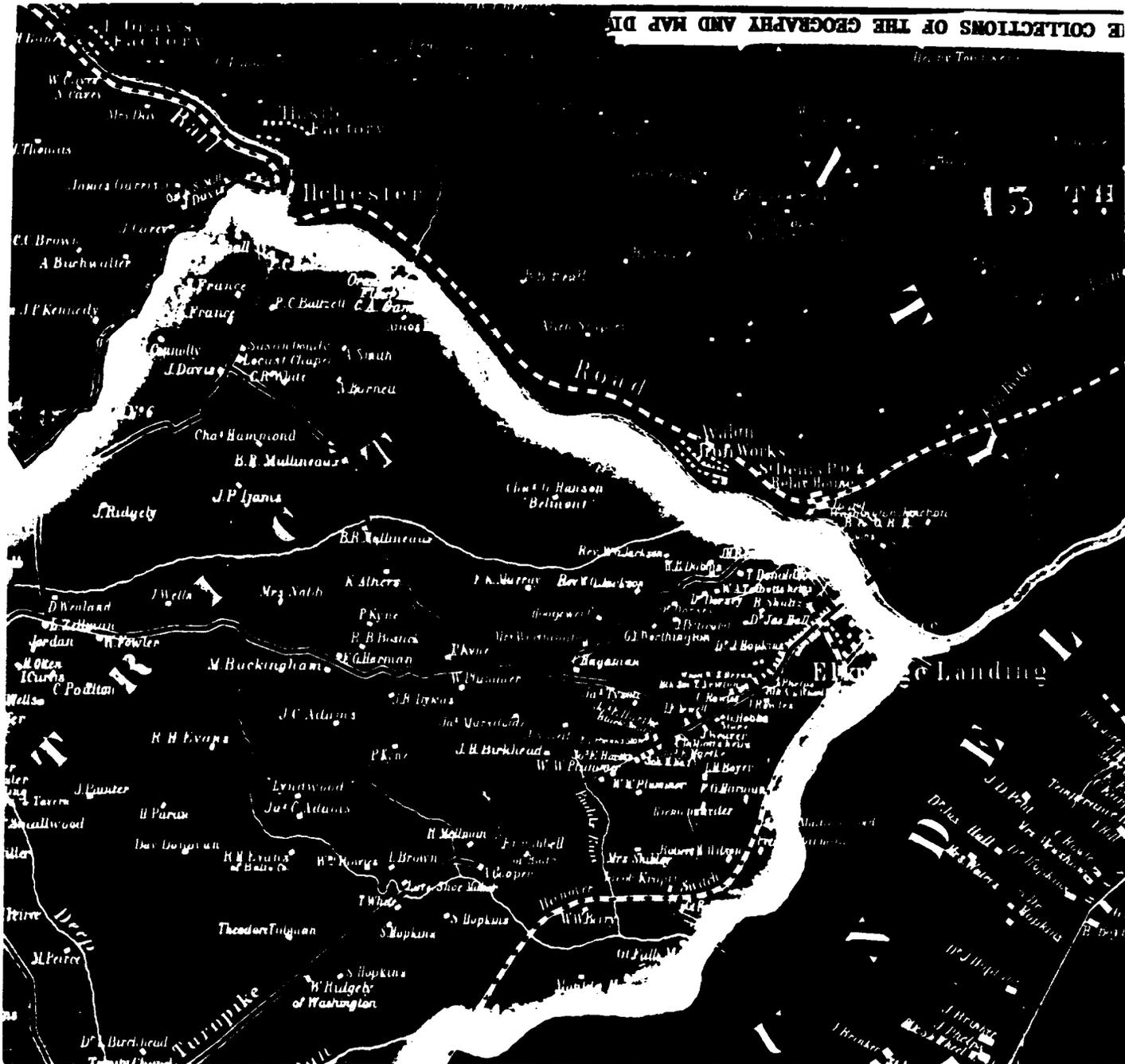
Inventory Number HO 737
Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Ellicott City Vicinity, Ilchester area
Maps.3

Taylor's Map of the City and County of Baltimore, 1857,
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Geography and Maps Division: G 3843 .B3
1857 .T3.



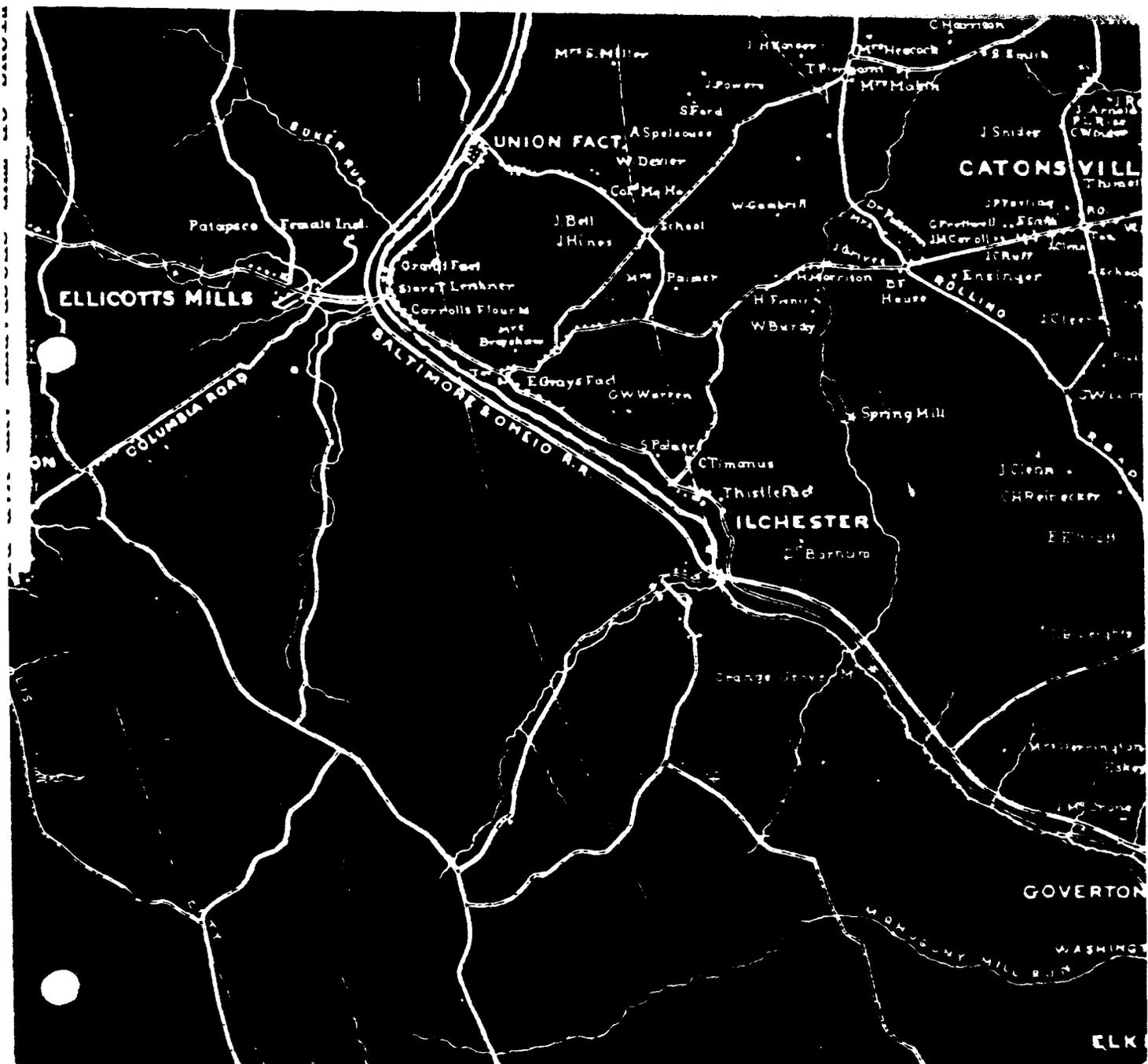
Inventory Number HO 737
Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Ellicott City Vicinity, Ilchester area
Maps.4

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



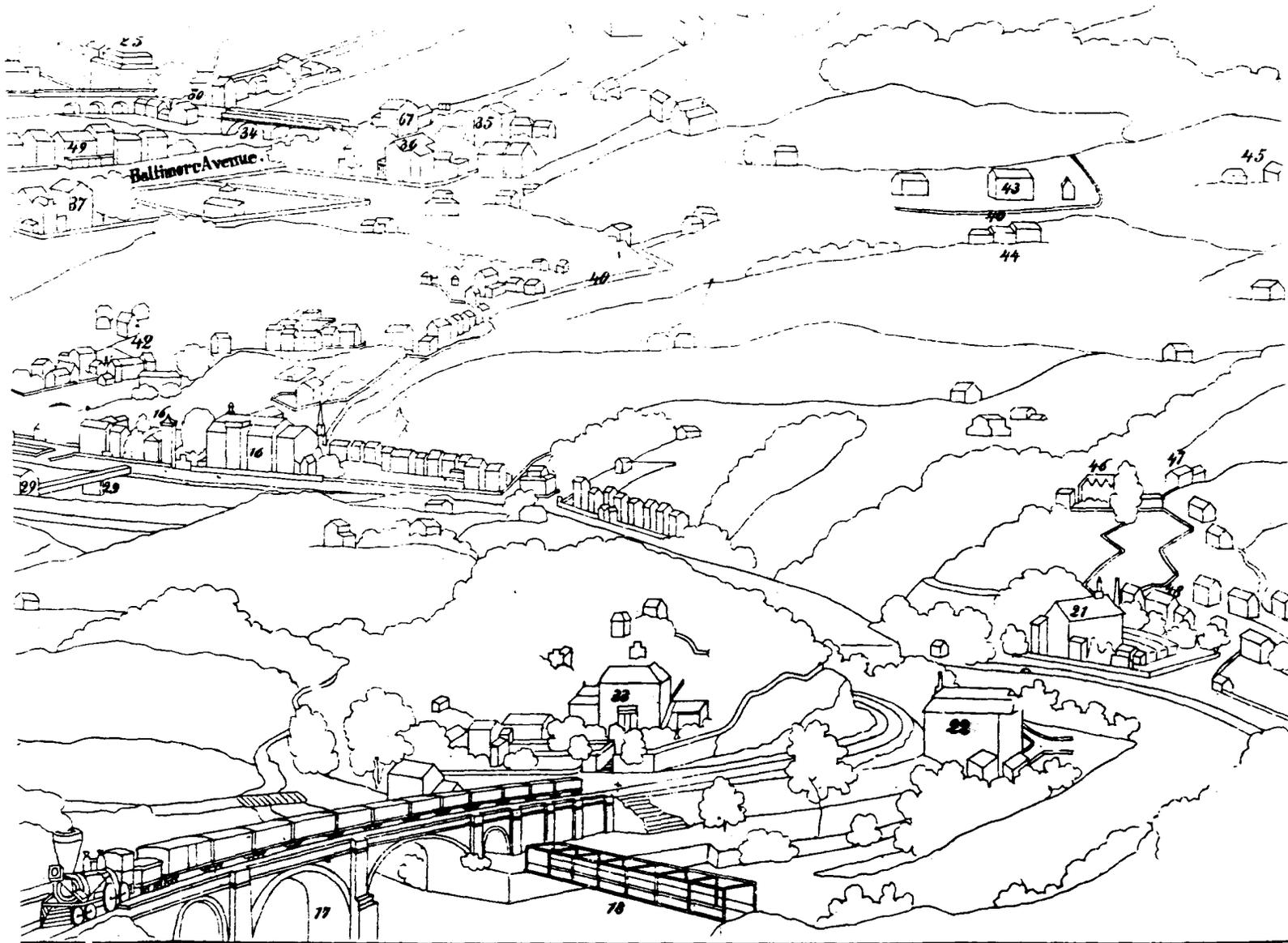
Inventory Number HO 737
Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Ellicott City Vicinity, Ilchester area
Maps.5

Raynolds' Military Map of Baltimore County, Maryland, 1863,
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Geography and Maps Division: G 3843 .B3
1863 .R3.



Inventory Number HO 737
Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Ellicott City Vicinity, Ilchester area
Maps.6

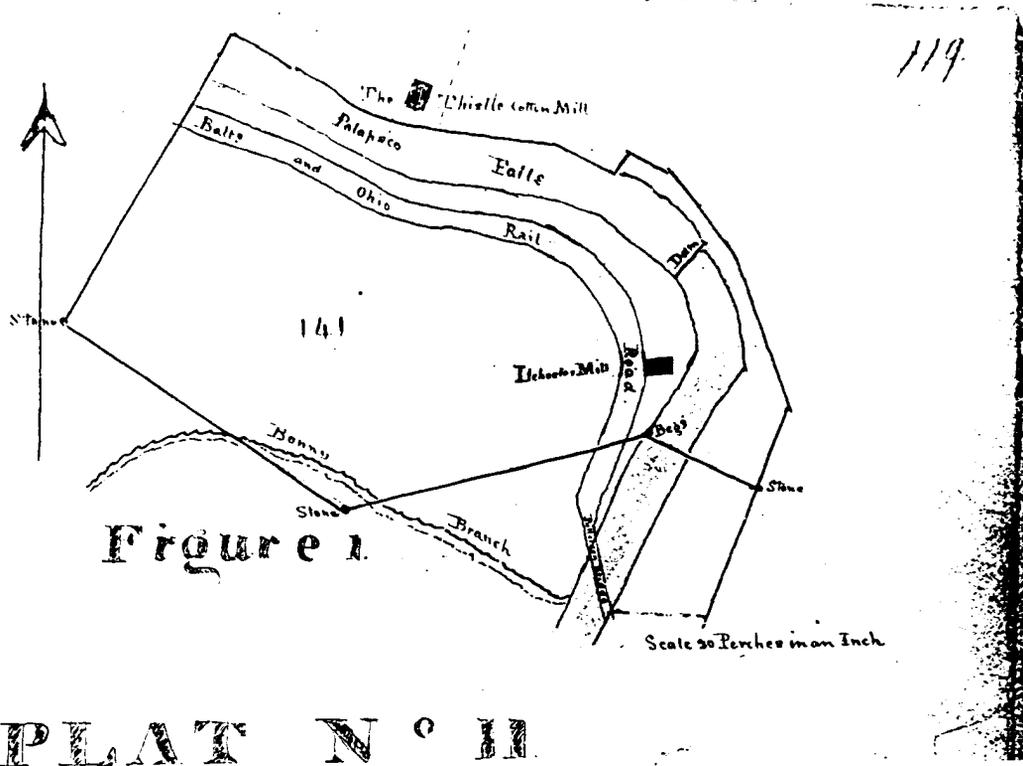
John Schofield, *Panoramic View of the Scenery on the Patapsco, Ellicotts Mills, Md.* [key],
Howard County Historical Society Library, Ellicott City, Maryland.



Number 22 is the Ilchester Mill; number 33 is George Ellicott's dwelling.

Inventory Number HO 737
Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Ellicott City Vicinity, Ilchester area
Plats. 1

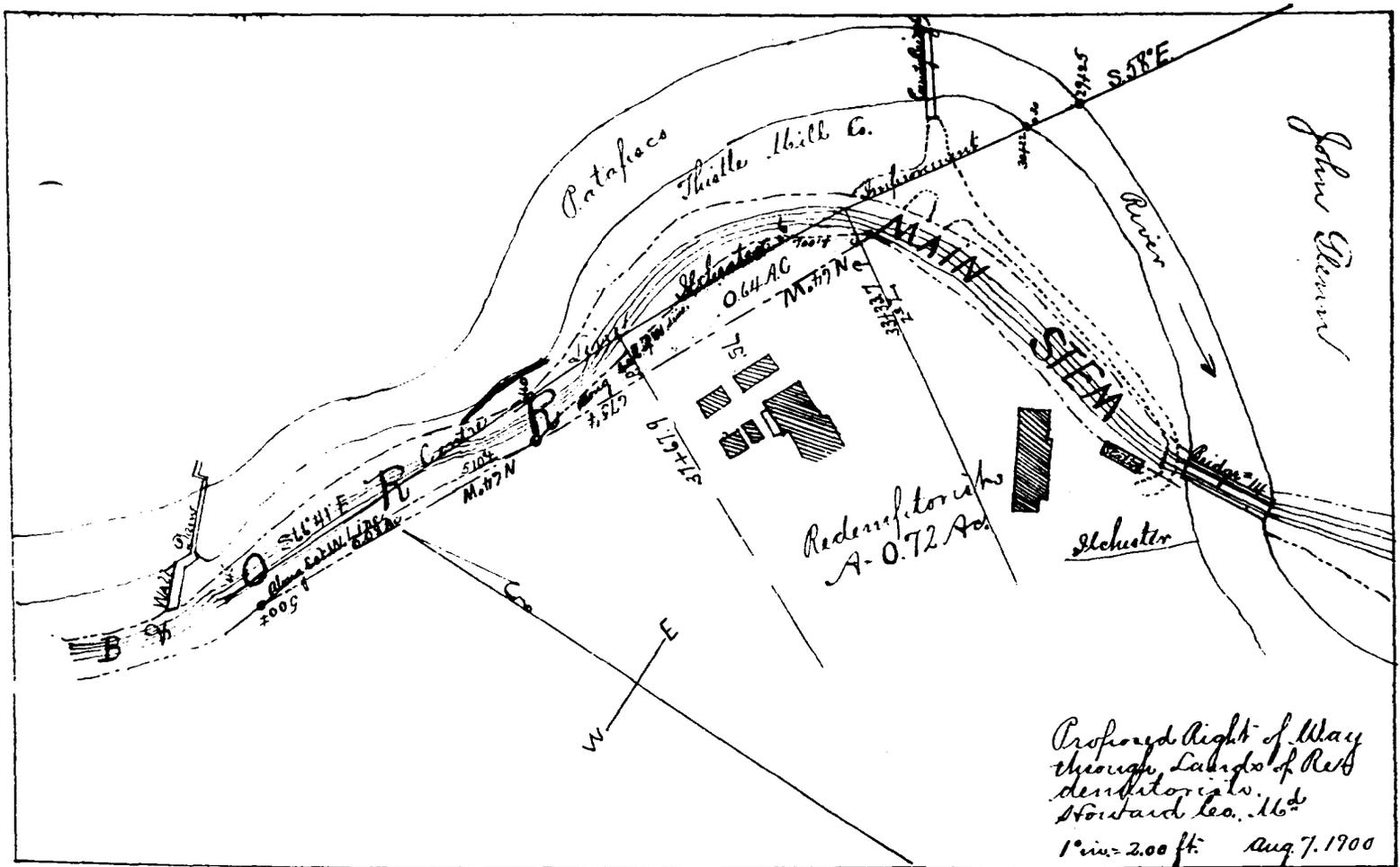
Division of George Ellicott's Estate,
1 May 1840,
Howard County Deed Book 2, page 119.



PLAT N° II

Inventory Number HO 737
 Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
 Ellicott City Vicinity, Ilchester area
 Plats 4

The Redemptorists to The Baltimore and Ohio Railway,
 13 February 1901,
 Howard County Deed Book 73, p. 230.



Inventory Number HO 737
Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Ellicott City Vicinity, Ilchester area
Archive Images.1

James D. Dilts, *The Great Road: the Building of the Baltimore and Ohio, the Nation's First Railroad, 1828-1853* (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 1993), photograph between pages 158 and 159.

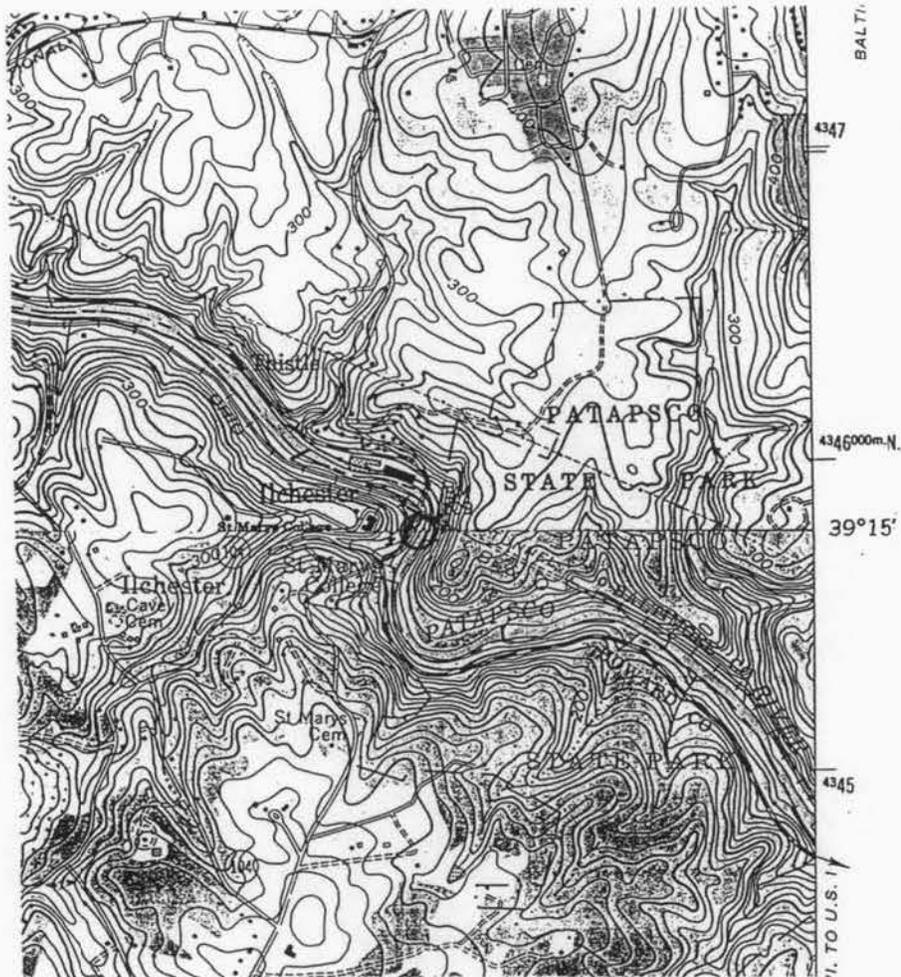
This photograph shows the step-gable facade of the Ilchester Mill in the center background and the miller's residence to the left.



This rare photograph (*left*) of the 1829 Patterson Viaduct was taken before 1866, when the two central arches were destroyed in a flood; an 1872 photograph (*bottom*) shows the Bollman truss bridge that replaced them. A track realignment in 1903 left the bridge abandoned, and today all that remains of the original viaduct in this still-bucolic area is a single roadway arch. 1866 photo: Wilgus Collection; 1872 photo: © The B&O Railroad Museum, Inc., Collection.

Inventory Number HO 737
Ilchester Mill/Dismal Mill, Howard County
Ellicott City Vicinity, Ilchester area
Maps.1

U.S. Geological Survey
Ellicott City 7.5 Quadrangle
Savage 7.5 Quadrangle







43757

120 WESTER HILL 'DIPLOID' M...

HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND

HENRIETTA ROAD

JUNE 1959

MARYLAND STATE

SITE 1129, SW. 1/4 SEC. 10, T. 10 N., R. 10 W.

21/2