

Ho-332  
Oliver Viaduct  
Ellicott City  
Private

circa 1830

Named for Robert Oliver, one of the original founders of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, this viaduct was initially a stout, triple arch structure. It remained in service until 1868, when two of the arches were removed, a pier left in the middle of the highway and metal spans installed. Today a single original stone arch remains south of the Old Frederick Turnpike.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Ho-332  
Dist 2  
MAGI #1403323420

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Oliver Viaduct

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER Oliver Viaduct and Baltimore Fredericktown Turnpike

CITY, TOWN Ellicott City VICINITY OF 6th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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"/> 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	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME B and O Railroad Telephone #: 237-2313

STREET & NUMBER 2 North Charles Street Attn: G.C. Totty

CITY, TOWN Baltimore VICINITY OF Maryland STATE, zip code 21201

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Hall of Records Tax Map 25-A

Liber #: Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER Howard County Court House

CITY, TOWN Ellicott City STATE Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Howard County Historic Sites Inventory

DATE 1977  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Maryland Historical Trust

CITY, TOWN 21 State Circle, Annapolis STATE Maryland

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<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
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE 1830

**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

The Oliver Viaduct which supports the B&O railroad track across the Baltimore National Pike originally featured three centered arches which supported the load and weight of the trains passing above. Today only one remains, the other two have been replaced by steel girder beams spanning the width of the Baltimore Pike which enters Ellicott City over a modern concrete bridge. Concrete abutments rise from a concrete base. Walls for the steel brackets which hold the spanning steel beams are laid in ashlar granite which is proportionally scaled from top to bottom.

The remaining original arch is located just north of the railroad station and spans the Tiber River which runs into the Patapsco at this point. A concrete cap has been placed along the top of the viaduct. The interior walls of the arched vault stand on a ashlar granite base which projects outward some six inches. The walls on either side of the vault are constructed of proportionally scaled granite blocks. The base stone of the arch is cut in such a way as to form a kind of interior cornice on each side of the vault from which the arch springs. The stones which form the stone lintels of the arch are cut to fit into the stone masonry. The arch is held by a tall granite keystone. Stone is rusticated up to the base of the arch in the interior vault.

West Elevation

The west elevation of the bridge features a granite pilaster on each side of the bridge which meets the terminating line of the corbeled granite block initiating the arch of the viaduct.

An iron railing runs from the southeast corner of the Patapsco Hotel to a wooden fence which is attached to the northeast corner of the railroad terminus. A sign hangs from the center of the bridge reading: **ELLICOTT CITY: First terminus of the BALTIMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD 1831.**

**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/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 1830

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

On November 14, 1828 the Board of Directors of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad by resolution decided to exclude wooden bridges on the "First Division" (the original 12-mile stretch, between Baltimore and Ellicott City). Accordingly, all such bridges were made of stone such as the stone arch viaduct built at Ilchester, ten miles west of Baltimore and the Oliver Viaduct at Ellicott City, twelve miles west of Baltimore.

On August 4, 1830, the important Oliver Viaduct was formally opened to traffic. On Saturday, August 28, 1830 the Tom Thumb drew Mr. Robert Oliver, President Thomas and the other directors of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to the ceremonies at Ellicotts Mills. The passengers, twenty-six men, were in a car pushed ahead of the locomotive.

Initially a stout triple arch structure, the Oliver Viaduct remained in service until 1868, when two of the arches were removed, a pier left in the middle of the high way and metal spans installed. In 1890 and 1911 replacements were again made. Today a single original stone arch remains south of the Old Frederick Turnpike.

The Oliver Viaduct was named for Robert Oliver, one of some twenty-five outstanding citizens who formed a committee to prepare the formal application to the Legislature of Maryland

for an act incorporating a joint stock company to be styled "The Baltimore and Ohio Railway Company," and clothing such company with all the powers necessary to the construction of a railroad, with two or more sets of rails, from the city of Baltimore to the Ohio River.<sup>1</sup>

The following interesting account of Mr. Oliver was written by Mr. Latrobe in describing the founders of the B&O as they rode out to the gorge of the Patapsco to inspect the route of the railroad:

First came Mr. Robert Oliver, mounted as should be the proprietor of Harewood and the leader of the hunt in the necks of the Patapsco-a grand looking man, far advanced in years, his few remaining locks snow-white, but with all the vitality and vigor of youth. Straight as an arrow, broad-chested and

<sup>1</sup> Hungerford, Edward. The Story of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. New York, 1928 Vol.1, 25.

with the seat of a solidier in a saddle; frank and joyous in his manner, his very voice was inspiration, so cheerful and so resonant - the impersonation of the "fine Old English gentleman," all of the olden time. He went at the gap (left by the contractors in the construction of the grade of the railroad) carelessly and gracefully; and when across stood in his stirrups and laughed at the hesitation of those who were to follow. If ever the title of "merchant prince" fitted any one it was Mr. Robert Oliver.<sup>2</sup>

One graceful arch remains of the Oliver Viaduct, indicating the fine stone work and detail involved in its construction.

Significant architecturally and historically, the remaining arch should be placed on the National Register of Historic structures.

Note: The Oliver Viaduct was the third stone structure built by the B&O railroad, the first being the Carrolton Viaduct over Gwynn Falls and the second, the Patterson Viaduct which spanned the Patapsco River near Ilchester.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, Vol. 1, p.55.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Sloan, A.C. Historical Data - B&O Bridges. Mimeographed paper to Mr. A.N. Knowles. March 5, 1943.

Hungerford, Edward. The Story of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. (in Two Volumes) New York. 1928.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

See attachment 1,  
Tax Map 25-A

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See attachment 1  
Tax Map 25-a

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

STATE Maryland COUNTY Howard

STATE COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Cleora Barnes Thompson, Archivist

ORGANIZATION

Office of Planning & Zoning-Comprehensive Planning Section

DATE

465-5000 x257

STREET & NUMBER

3450 Court House Drive

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Ellicott City

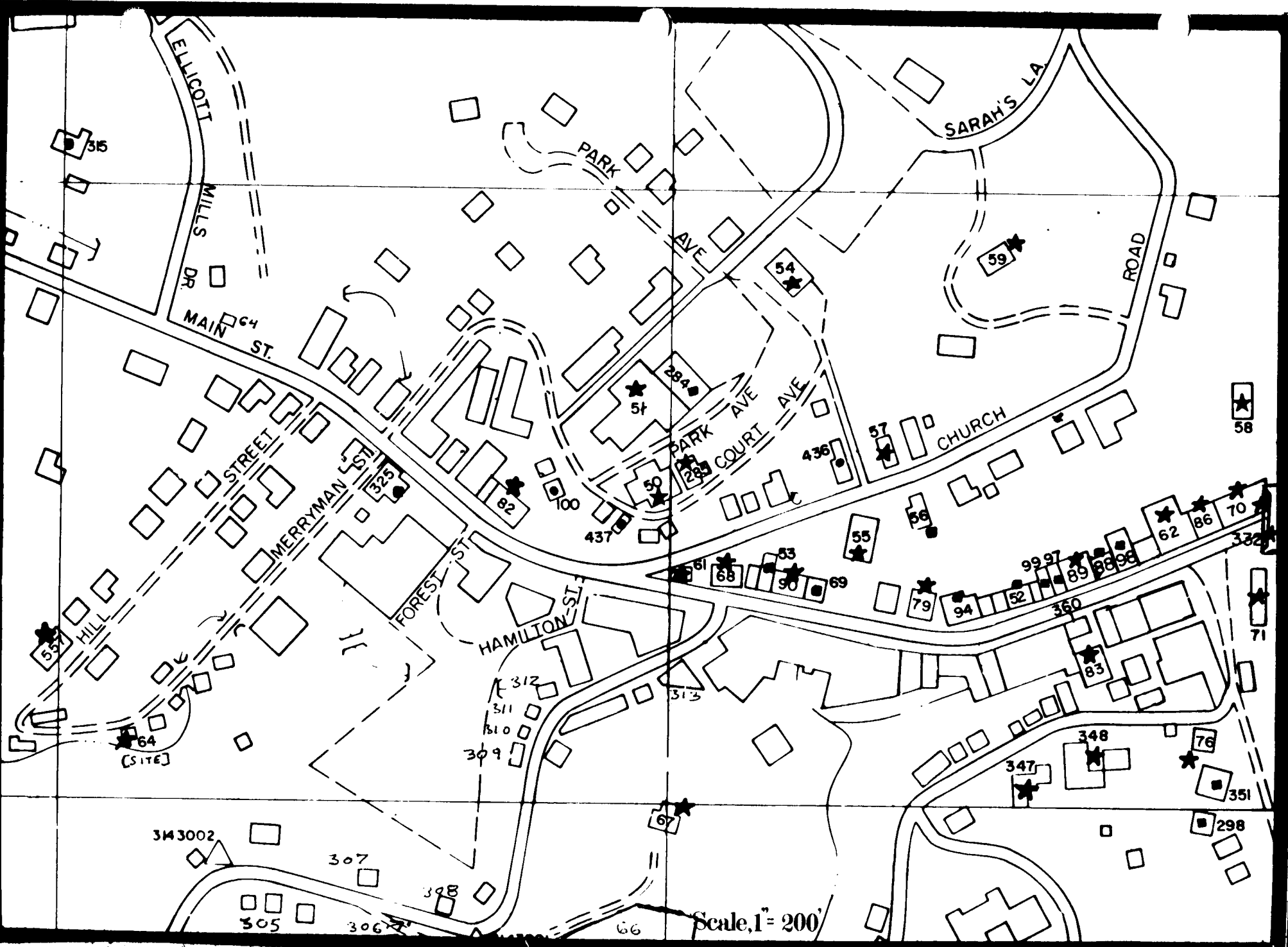
STATE

Maryland

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



Scale, 1" = 200'

2

Oliver Viaduct

1

HO-332

FRI DERICK VILLAGE

GERMAN

325

PARADE

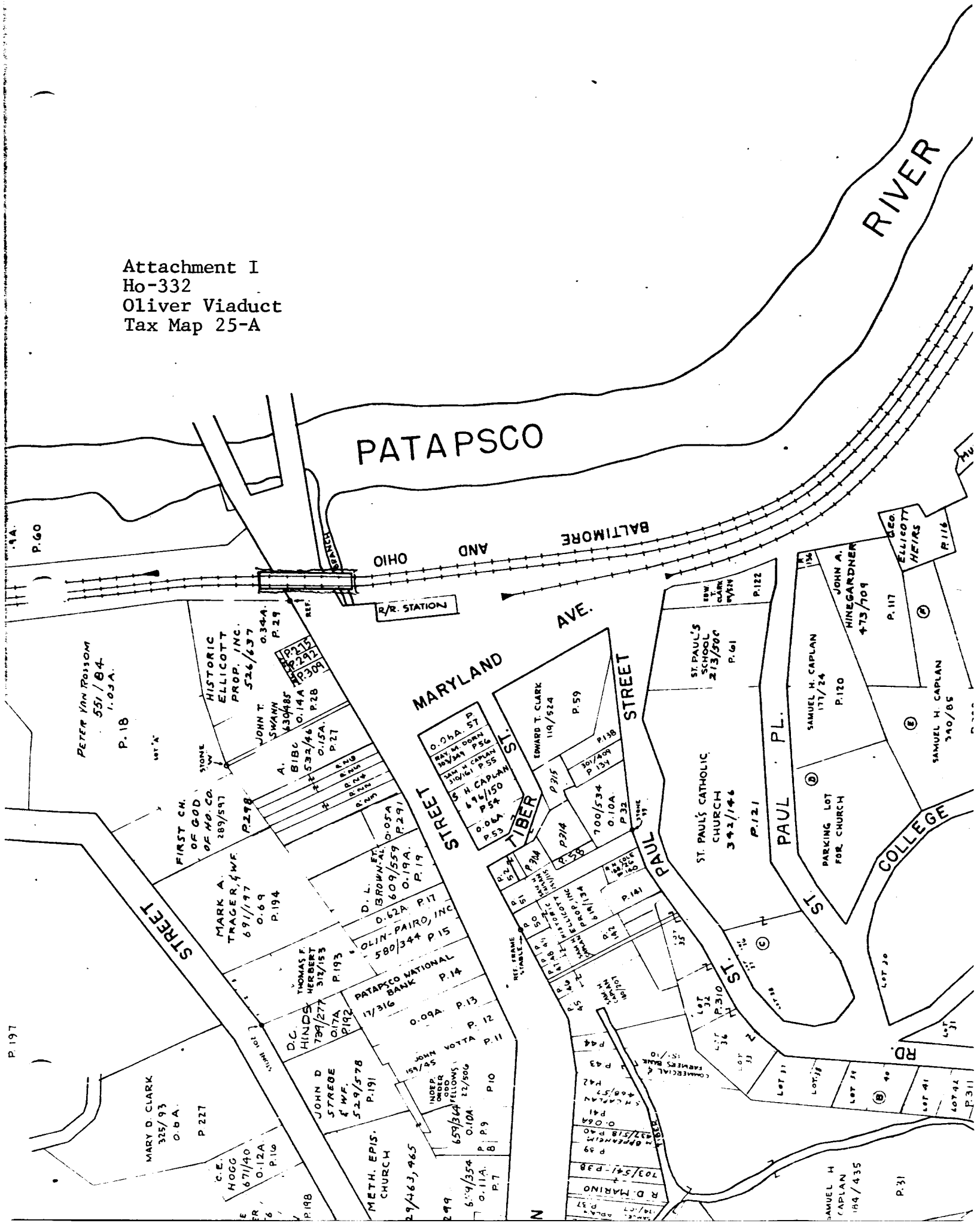
WESTERN

SEMINARY

ST. MAURICE

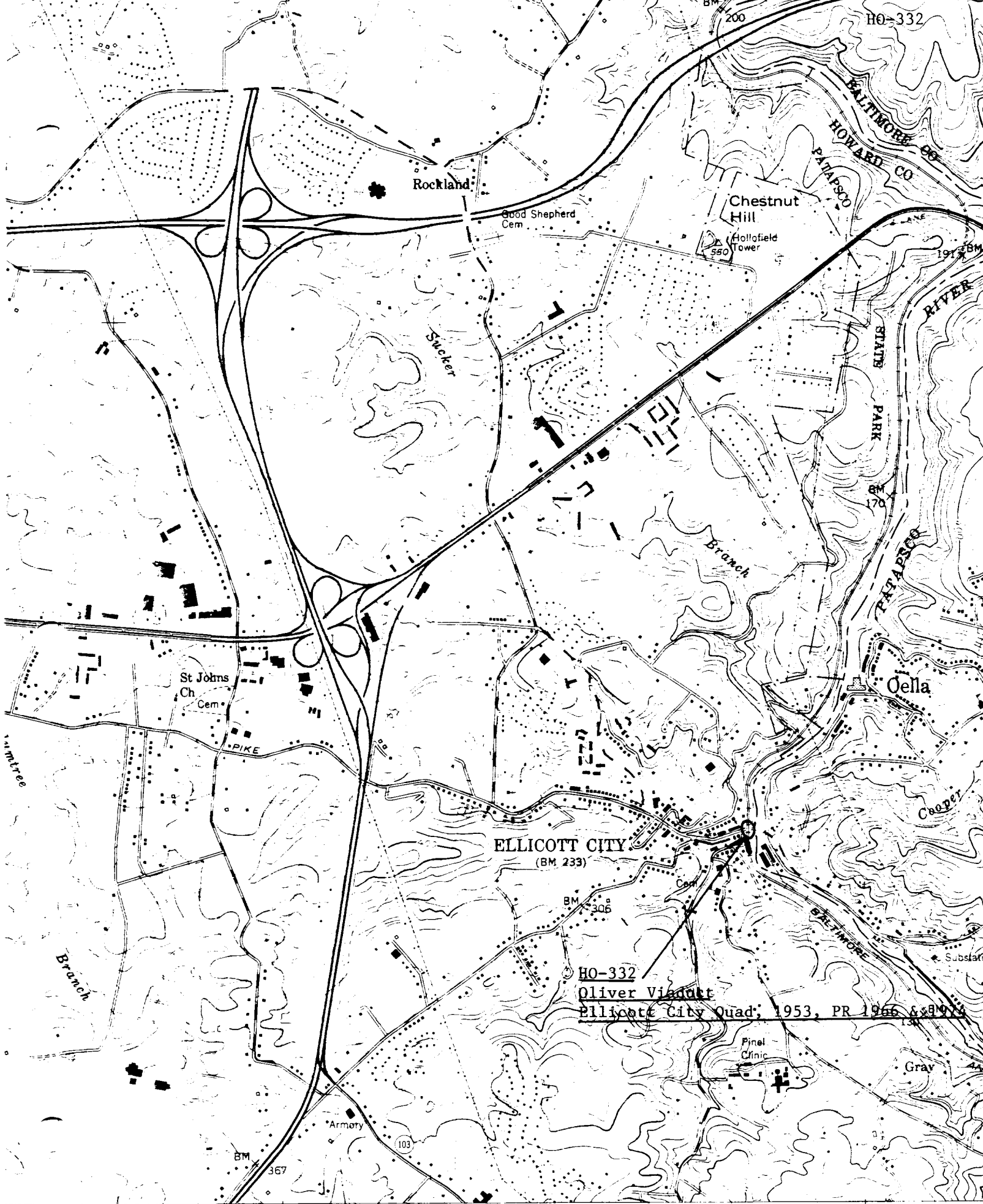
AVENUE

Attachment I  
 Ho-332  
 Oliver Viaduct  
 Tax Map 25-A









HO-332

Rockland

Good Shepherd  
Cem

Chestnut  
Hill

Hollofield  
Tower  
590

BALTIMORE  
HOWARD CO  
PATAPOSCO

RIVER

STATE  
PARK

Sucker

Branch

St Johns  
Ch  
Cem

PIKE

Oella

Cooper

ELLICOTT CITY  
(BM 233)

BM 306

HO-332

Oliver Viaduct

Ellicott City Quad; 1953, PR 1966 & 1973

Pinel  
Clinic

Gray

Armory

103

BM 367

50'

342

343

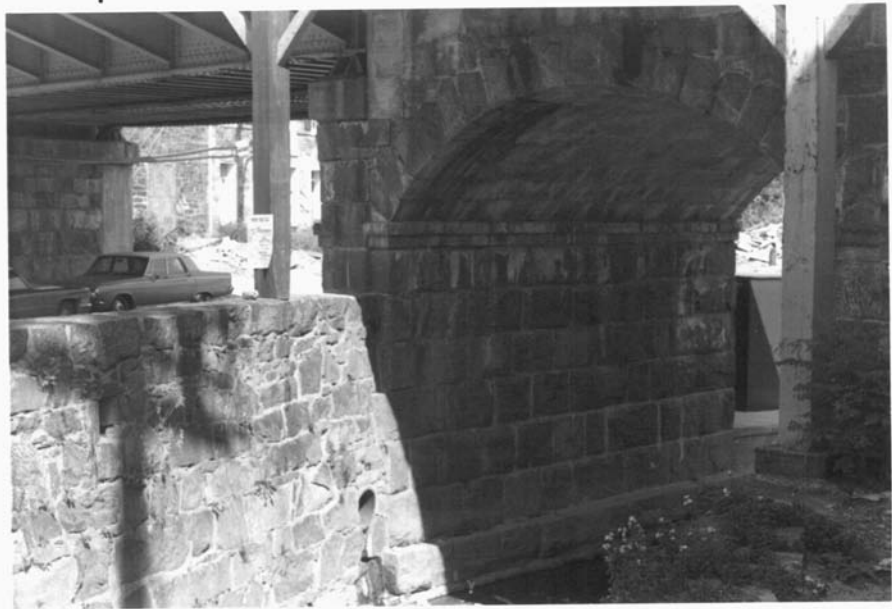
(SAVAGE)  
5662 III NE

345

47'30"

346

SCALE 1:24,000



No 332

Ellicott City

Oliver Viaduct

188 11/72

Stone bridge, B&O at Ellicott City

A. L. 5829  
A. D. 1829

H<sub>0</sub> ~~266~~  
332

6/17/13  
H<sub>0</sub> 332

22/11  
332

Oliver Viaduct

(Dates tone) Stone bridge, B&O at Silcott City



HO 332  
[ ]

Ellicott City

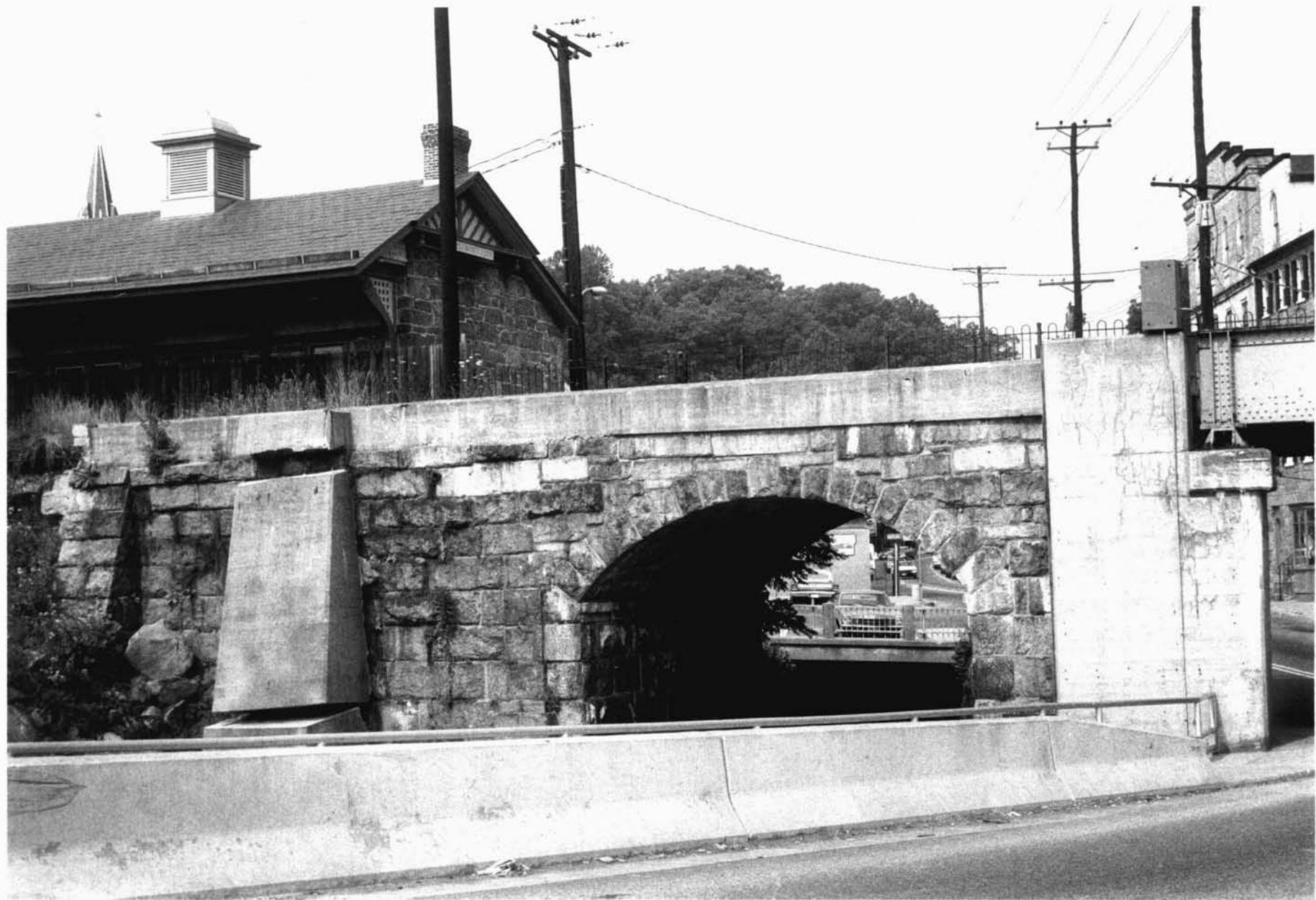
3 2 1 0

Oliver Viaduct

B & O bridge at Ellicott City.

Ry stn





CLEORA BARNES THOMPSON  
PLANNING CONSULTANT  
HISTORICAL SITES SURVEY

Ho-332

B&O Bridge/OHVER  
East VIADUCT

SEPT-1977