

VLR- 2/11/76
NRHP- 7/01/76

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC St. Mary's Church, Fairfax Station

AND/OR COMMON same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 5605 Vogue Road

CITY, TOWN Fairfax Station VICINITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT #8 (Herbert E. Harris II)

STATE Virginia CODE 51 COUNTY Fairfax CODE 059

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 type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME St. Mary's Church

STREET & NUMBER

Box 15

CITY, TOWN

Fairfax Station

STATE

Virginia 22039

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Fairfax County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER 4000 Chain Bridge Road

CITY, TOWN

Fairfax

STATE

Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites

DATE

December 1, 1969

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Virginiana Collection, Fairfax County Public Library

CITY, TOWN

Fairfax

STATE

Virginia

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

St. Mary's Church, Fairfax Station, is a simple one story white frame building in the early Gothic Revival tradition. It has a basilican plan with a steeple at the entrance end and an interior gallery. Over the entrance door is a large Gothic arched window with a simple tracery pattern forming twin arches within it. On either side of the entry way are lancet windows. There are four additional arched windows along each of the two sides of the building, three on each side are filled with plain glass and are without tracery. The end window on each side is filled with stained glass. The exterior of the church has not been altered since its construction in 1853. It is sited on a small hill, but extensive tree cover now limits the visibility from the site. There is a small churchyard and cemetery on the property.

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
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 **1858**

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. Mary's Church was built to serve the needs of the Irish immigrants recruited to work on construction of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad who then settled in this area.

This was the first Roman Catholic Church built within Fairfax County and has been in continuous use as a church.

During the Civil War, after the Second Battle of Bull Run, wounded were brought here by train to be treated and evacuated to Alexandria and Washington. Federal troops occupied the church and used the pews for firewood.

Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, made this church her headquarters for treatment of the wounded in August, 1862.

The Orange and Alexandria Railroad line was one of the first lines from the coast to the inland of Virginia and a forerunner of the Northern Virginia railway system. One of its lines ran from Alexandria through Fairfax Court House and out to Bull Run. The Irish immigrants recruited to build this line formed the members of St. Mary's parish.

Saint Mary's Church, Fairfax Station, is a small one story white frame building strongly evocative of nineteenth and early twentieth century rural Virginia. Constructed in 1858, the building was sited on a small hill to overlook the area and especially the railway line about a quarter of a mile to the south. The Church and the railroad were closely connected. The Orange and Alexandria Railroad was one of the first railway systems of northern Virginia, this spur of it connecting Alexandria with Bull Run. Recruited to work on the railway, Irish immigrants became the first sizeable group of Roman Catholics to settle in this part of Virginia. It was this group which formed the nucleus of the new parish and constructed the simple church.

Not long after the construction of the building, the Civil War erupted and much of the activity of its first two years centered around northern Virginia. In August, 1862, Saint Mary's Church became the focal point for treatment of the wounded following the Second Battle of Bull Run. During the preceding spring, Clarissa Harlow Barton, a United States Patent Office clerk and former school teacher from Oxford, Massachusetts, had begun

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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buying food and medicines for wounded soldiers bivouacked at the *Capitol Building* in Washington. In addition, her pleas for supplies through Massachusetts newspapers brought donations of medicines, bandages and food.

When reports came of steadily mounting casualties during the Second Battle of Bull Run, Clara Barton responded. Recruiting three other women volunteers and collecting more donated supplies, Miss Barton cut across regulations and social conventions, obtaining permission to have supplies sent to the front by train, and enabling her and her team to work close to the battle lines. As the Union Army withdrew before General Lee's advancing troops, the federal field hospital was removed to Saint Mary's, Fairfax Station. A train of 88 cars arrived there on Sunday, August 31, carrying food and ammunition for General Pope's troops. When emptied, it would carry the wounded back to Washington. In the meantime the men would have to be laid out on the hill stretching away from the church.

Clara Barton, too, arrived on that train, bringing food and first aid. She nursed the wounded for three sleepless days and nights as violent rains fell and doctors operated in the only dry place available -- the church. Although Miss Barton and the doctors tried, and although trains moved 1,000 wounded men at a time back to Washington, many soldiers died and were buried in the churchyard. Two Union Generals died during this conflict -- Isaac Stephens and Philip Kearny, the latter once Lee's comrade in the Mexican War. The deaths of both men were brought to the attention of General Lee, who ordered their bodies returned to their own lines under a flag of truce.

Clara Barton described the scene:

At six p.m. (September 1), a thunderstorm and artillery could be heard. We waited in a tent, the old Massachusetts 21st between us and the Rebs as poor Kearny and Stephens' bodies were brought through.

The pastor of Saint Mary's Church conducted a short service over the fallen men and then work resumed. Under the threat of the Confederate advance, Miss Barton and the doctor remained until the last wounded man had embarked, then abandoned the place to the soldiers who then burned everything they could not carry. When the Confederates arrived, they found a few smoldering railroad cars, some unburned supplies, and Saint Mary's.

The pews of Saint Mary's Church were also destroyed during this time, serving as firewood for the federal troops. Local tradition holds that the present pews were installed at the

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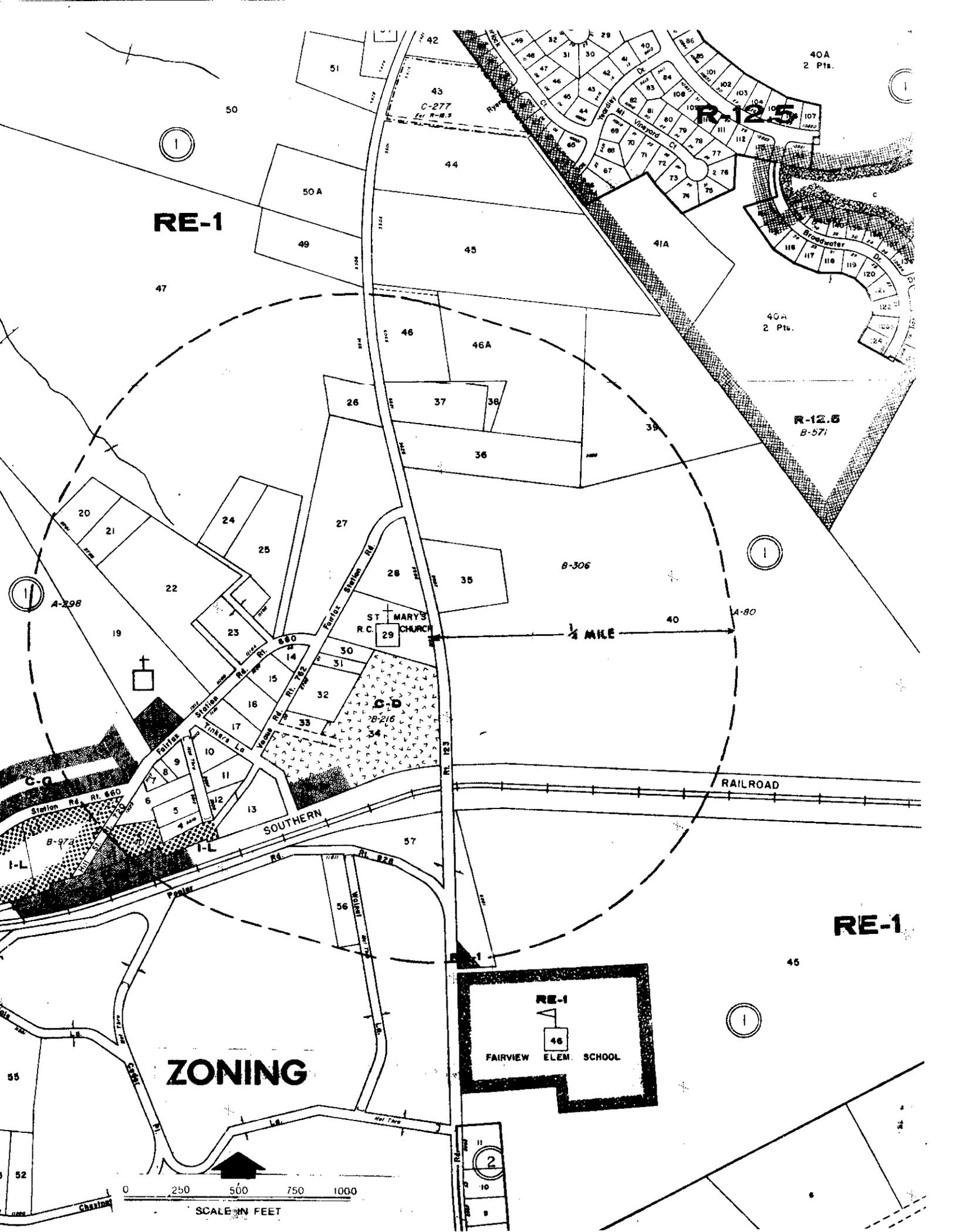
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE TWO

order of President Ulysses S. Grant who often travelled by train to a resort in nearby Clifton. Hearing of the damage inflicted on the Church by federal troops, he is said to have personally ordered restitution.

The last decades of the nineteenth century were a time of anti-foreign and anti-Catholic sentiment in much of this country. Yet Saint Mary's Church activities were always covered by the local newspapers and its parishioners were known and respected. It was during these years that the first Saint Mary's picnic was held. Originally a Fourth of July celebration, the affair became an annual event and was transferred to Labor Day sometime after 1894. In September of 1975 parishioners and area residents enjoyed the ninety-ninth annual picnic, an event which is considered to be the oldest outdoor social function in Fairfax County.



RE-1

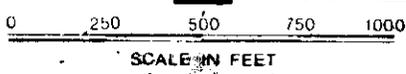
R-12.5

R-12.6
B-571

ST. MARY'S
R.C. CHURCH

RE-1
FAIRVIEW
ELEM. SCHOOL

ZONING



B-306

RAILROAD

SOUTHERN

1/4 MILE

40A
2 Pts.

40A
2 Pts.

45

RE-1

42

50

51

43
C-277
Est. R-12.5

44

50A

45

49

41A

47

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46A

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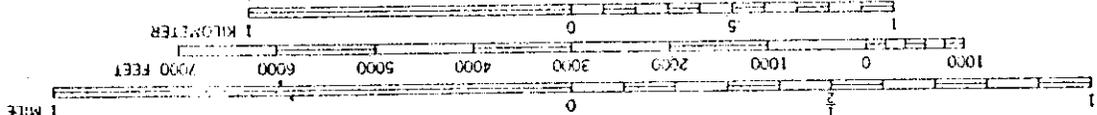
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303

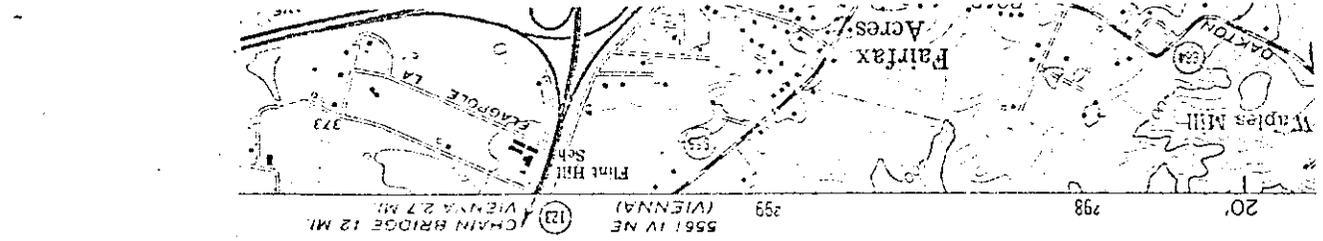
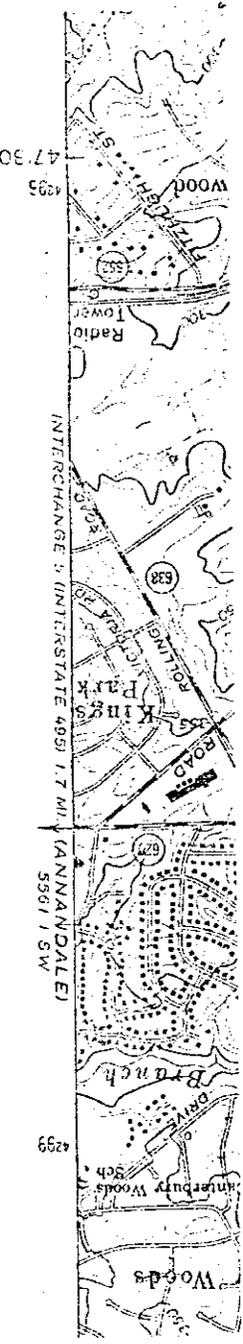
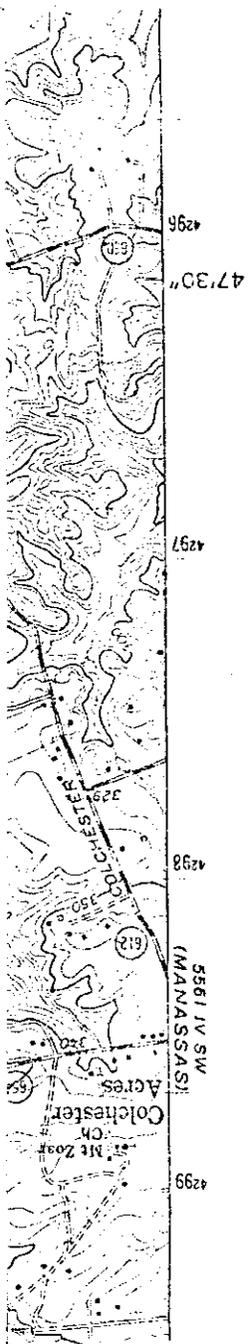
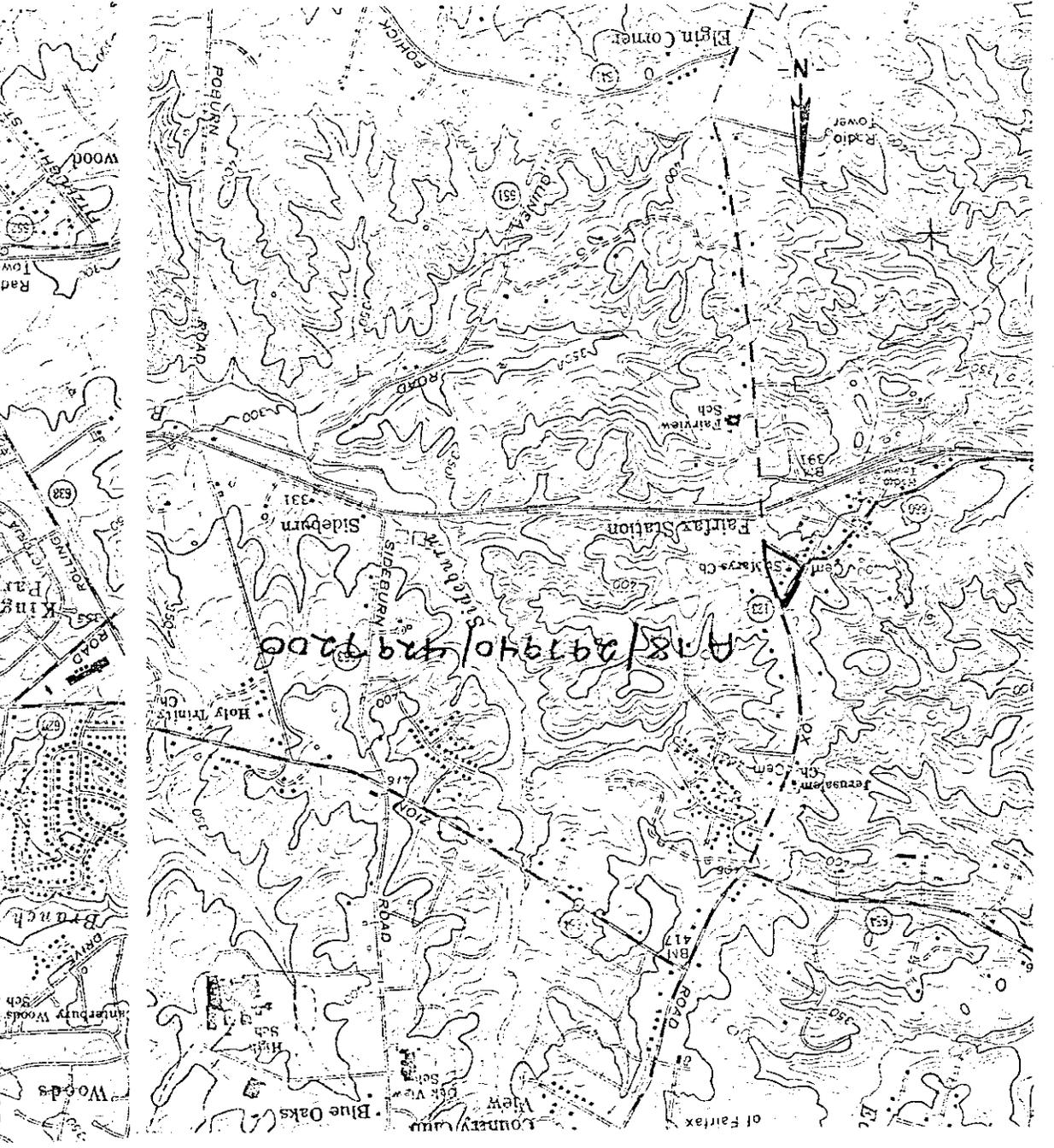
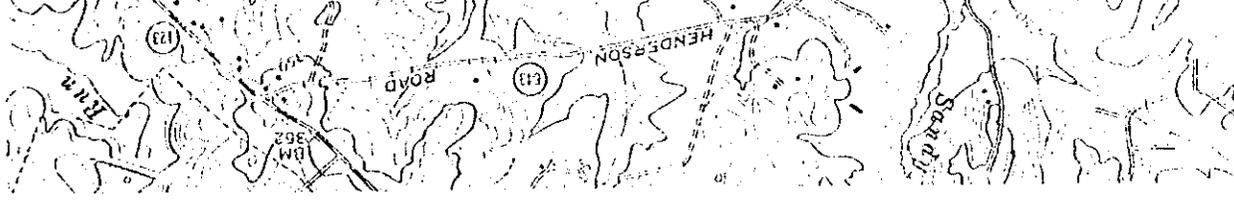
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DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

SCALE 1:24000



297 20' 298 20' 299 20' 300 20'



47 30" 4295 INTERCHANGE 2 (INTERSTATE 495) 1.7 MI. (ANNANDALE) 5561 / SW

4296 47 30" 4297 4298 5561 / SW (MANASSAS) 4299

299 20' 298 20' 299 20' 300 20'