

JLR-5/17/83 NRHP-6/14/84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic SPRING HILL

and/or common BENTON (Preferred)

(VHLC 53-107)

2. Location

street & number Route 744

N/A not for publication

city, town Middleburg

~~X~~ vicinity of

state Virginia

code 51

county Loudoun

code 107

code 107

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
o b j e c t	<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	transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	o t h e r :

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. William T. Leith

street & number 1800 Old Meadow Road, Apartment 1709

city, town McLean

N/A vicinity of

state Virginia 22012

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Loudoun County Courthouse

street & number 18 E. Market St.

city, town Leesburg

state Virginia 22012

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (2) (See Continuation Sheet #1)

(1) Historic American Buildings Survey
title Inventory (HABSI)

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date August 15, 1958

federal state county local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington

state DC

7. Description

<u>Condition</u>		<u>Check one</u>	<u>Check one</u>	
<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 <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Benton dwelling house is a stately, early 19th-century Federal plantation house set in the rolling hills of Virginia's hunt country, four miles north of Middleburg. The grounds are entered from the west, off Route 744, via two driveways, one to the north side of the house (the present front), and one to the south (the original front of the house). The south driveway takes one past the two 1½-story brick dependencies in front of the house. Further east down the driveway is a large three-story barn, a stable, small house, icehouse, and corn crib, all built of brick and/or wood. The main house is surrounded by gardens and groves of large old trees. Completed by 1831, it consists of a two-story center block, 23' x 60', and two 1½-story wings, 16' x 30'. A basement runs under the entire building, which is partially underground and made of fieldstone painted white. The excellent brickwork is in Flemish bond on the main block south facade, and five-course American bond everywhere else. A 1½-story brick kitchen extension and a porch were added to the west wing in the early 20th century. Slate-covered gable roofs with interior end chimneys are used for the main block, wings, and kitchen extension.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The north elevation, or present front of the house has a five-bay main facade and three-bay wings. Its first floor has four tall casement French windows. Originally, they were probably 6/6 sash windows, as on the second story, or 6/9 as found on the first-floor south elevation, and were lengthened to the floor when a one-story hexastyle porch was added shortly after 1908. The main (north) entrance consists of paneled double doors with double storm doors, an elegant fanlight above, and sidelights with an intricate tracery pattern of overlapping ovals. The door and sidelights are framed by full and half Doric pilasters. The brick repairs around the doorway indicate that the sidelights and fanlight are remodelings done when the north side was made the front of the house in the early 20th century. The repaired bricks above the fanlight show where the original dwarf portico was attached to the wall. A 19th-century drawing of Benton inside the house shows the portico and steps. Scarred brickwork along the second-story line shows where a lone one-story porch was added shortly after 1908. The second-story center window is different from the other 6/6 sash windows on the second floor. It is a four-light casement window, indicating that it was changed as well after 1908. All the windows have similar jack arches and shutters. The gable roof probably originally had wooden shingles but is now covered in slates. The roof has two interior end chimneys. The basement of the main block originally had four small windows as shown in the 19th-century drawing, but the windows are currently blocked.

The north elevations of the two wings are virtually identical. On the first floor there are three 6/6 sash windows with shutters. Above are three broken pedimented dormers with arched, lancet tracery windows framed by Doric pilasters. These dormers were added shortly after 1908. The west wing has three additional sash windows at the basement level because the basement is above ground on the west side of the house, but not on the east. Both wings have interior end chimneys in brick.

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

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 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 1830-31 **Builder/Architect** William Benton

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Benton is an excellent, well-preserved example of an early 19th-century Federal plantation house, complete with dependencies, including a rare brick barn. The high quality of the architecture reflects the skill and importance of its builder and initial owner, William Benton. The house symbolizes the growing agricultural prosperity of the region that allowed for the construction of other outstanding farm-houses in the first half of the 19th century in northern Virginia. Born in England, William Benton was an expert brickmaker and mason, who served as the foreman for the building of Oak Hill, James Monroe's Loudoun County home. He is credited with making the bricks for most of the early brick houses in the Middleburg area, as well as supervising the construction of a number of these buildings. Except for a remodeling of the north front and some of the interior after 1908 when it was purchased by Daniel Sands, the house has changed very little since its construction. Its flanking dependencies have survived, along with a rare three-story brick barn, and the splendid interior woodwork of the main house remains in excellent condition.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

William Benton was a master brickmaker and builder, born in Lincolnshire, England in 1788. His first known activity in this country was supervising the brickmaking and laying at President James Monroe's house, Oak Hill, in 1820. William Benton continued working for James Monroe after the building of Oak Hill, serving him in the triple capacity of steward, counselor, and friend. In the 1820s he successfully managed the extensive farming operations of Monroe's estate.

It was while working for Monroe that William Benton first acquired land of his own in Loudoun County. The land tax records of 1822 show that he obtained from the Martin family 250 acres, located one-half mile from Goose Creek, and sixteen miles southwest of the courthouse in Leesburg. Soon after this he went to Wales to collect an inheritance and, while there, it is said he was attracted by a country residence he saw and decided to build a similar house of his own on his land north of Middleburg where he had discovered good clay for bricks. The 1832 tax records show that on his original 250-acre site, "buildings (were) assessed" at a value of \$5,000. The tax records indicate that the house and its dependencies were not completed until 1831. The 1833 tax records show that William Benton sold six acres to William Leath (Leith) - an ancestor of the present owner, while he acquired 171½ more acres in the surrounding area. The 1834 tax records show that "additional buildings (were) assessed" on the original 250-acre site at a value of \$1,500. This information would corroborate the "1833" date in iron numbers located on the facade of the brick barn near the house. By 1844, the tax records show that William Benton owned more than 600 acres

(See Continuation Sheet #3)

9. Major Bibliographical References (See Continuation Sheet #3)

Leith, William T. Interview, 26 November 1982.
 Loudoun County Deed Book 403; Land Tax Books 1822, 1832, 1833, 1834, 1844; Personal Property Tax Books 1832, 1833, 1834, 1844.
 Nicklin, Agnes. "Notes On 'Benton'."

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 13.20 acres

Quadrangle name Bluemont, VA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	1 1 8	2 6 0 5 0 0	4 3 2 0 6 7 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 8	2 6 0 3 0 0	4 3 2 0 3 4 0
E			
G			

B	1 1 8	2 6 0 5 8 0	4 3 2 0 4 7 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1 8	2 6 0 1 0 0	4 3 2 0 5 2 0
F			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at a point on E side of VA 744, approximately 630' SE of intersection of VA 744 and VA 745; thence extending approximately 375' SE along said side of VA 744; thence approximately 260' NNE to S side of entrance road; thence approximately 475' ESE; thence approximately 500' ENE crossing stream to a

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries (See Continuation Sheet #4)

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
-------	-----	------	--------	-----	------

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
-------	-----	------	--------	-----	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Thomas C. Roby

organization University of Virginia

date February 1983

street & number 104 12th St. NW

telephone 804-979-7915

city or town Charlottesville

state VA 22903

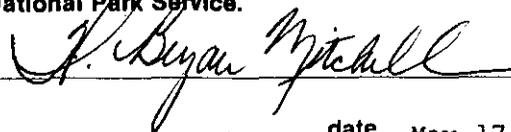
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director

title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date May 17, 1983

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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BENTON, LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

Continuation sheet #1

Item number 6, 7

Page 1, 1

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

- (2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
File #53-107
1969 State
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, VA 23219

7. DESCRIPTION--Architectural Analysis

The south, or present rear elevation has retained more of its original features. On the main block there are four small windows at the stone basement level, four 6/9 sash windows on the first floor, and five 6/6 sash windows on the second floor. The first- and second-story windows have jack arches and shutters. The south entrance has ten wooden steps leading up to a wooden porch with side railings and a simple single-bay portico. The doorway is much simpler than the north doorway, thus supporting the conclusion that the north doorway is a later remodeling. It has paneled double doors and storm doors similar to the north doors, but it has no sidelights and only a plain rectangular eight-light transom. The use of Flemish bond for this elevation further indicates that the south elevation was the original front. Each wing has a wooden two-bay shed porch extension with railings that extend the roof line of the wings out to the facade of the main block. There are three windows on the basement and first-floor levels. Both wings have undergone substantial remodeling on the south elevation. The kitchen addition was added perpendicular to the west wing following the elevation heights of the wing, and a small porch or veranda was added to the west facade of the west wing. The east wing porch has been partially enclosed and made part of the interior. Mr. Sands, an early 20th-century owner, was responsible for all the above changes made soon after 1908.

The east elevation shows some evidence of remodeling. Two French windows exactly like the ones on the north facade appear on the first floor of the east elevation of the east wing. The brick scars all around the windows show that these windows either replaced earlier smaller sash windows, or more likely, were completely new additions. Two 6/6 sash windows are located at half-story level at the gable end of the wing. On the main block are two small, square casement windows at the attic level. The west elevation is similar in the main block and half-story of the west wing. On the first floor, however, are two French doors similar to the windows of the opposite end of the house. They give access to an uncovered 20th-century porch with wooden railings. Enclosing the area below the porch is a wooden trellis.

The main block of the house is one room deep with a spacious central hall between two rooms, each approximately twenty feet square, on the first floor. The interior woodwork is a notable feature of the house, and is well-preserved. The main stair faces the original front door on the west side of the hall. It has twelve solid

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

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BENTON, LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

Continuation sheet #2

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7. DESCRIPTION--Architectural Analysis

walnut treads up to the landing which cuts across the fanlight, further indicating the fanlight is a later addition. The stair has a single, thin handrail and square balusters, two to a tread, and slender newels. Below each tread on the side of the stair is a carved scroll design.

The living, or east room, is distinguished by an elaborate Colonial Revival over-mantel above the original mantel. The mantel has fluted Doric engaged columns under a double-tiered architrave, a simple paneled frieze, and a wide, flaring, tightly-molded mantel shelf. Above the shelf are fluted Ionic pilasters framing a set-in picture frame into which Mrs. Sands put what she thought was a portrait of William Benton. Above the pilasters is an elaborate, tightly-molded cornice, similar to the mantel shelf that is carried around the top of the room. To the right of the mantel is a doorway that leads to the east wing.

The west, or dining room, has a less elaborate, flatter mantel. On either side are built-in cases with glass doors. The overmantel, also Colonial Revival, is paneled. The continuous cornice is less intricately molded and contains a row of dentils. This room has a door on either side of the mantel leading into the west wing. The wooden floorboards in each of the first-floor rooms appear to be original. The basement of the west wing contains the original kitchen with its large, stone cooking fireplace and crane.

To the south of the house are two flanking dependencies. The west one is larger, and has suffered less drastic changes than the east one, which appears to have been a smokehouse as evidenced by the diamond-shaped openings in the wall above the west doorway. Both flanking dependencies have five-course American-bond brick over painted fieldstone foundations, and wooden portico extensions on the south elevation, similar to the wings of the house. The west dependency is a well-built, 1½-story, two-bay long rectangular building with a gable roof featuring a central chimney and interior end chimney. There are no windows on the west elevation, and one on each floor of the east elevation. The rear, or north elevation, has two 6/6 sash windows and shutters. It was built by 1831 or 1833, and has been called the "laundry house," but could have been used as servant's quarters as well.

Southeast of the house are a number of other outbuildings that have undergone changes over the years, most notable among them being a large, three-story, 33' x 110' barn of which sixty feet is brick. It has an iron capital "B" on the north facade, and "1833" in iron numbers on the south facade. (The north facade of the main house has "1830" in iron numbers, probably added by Mr. Sands when the north side was made the front of the house.) There were other buildings on the plantation but they are no longer part of the present property.

To the south, east, and west of the house are gardens that have not been maintained well since the Sandses owned the house, and to the north and east, among a large grove of trees, is a miniature golf course that has fallen into disrepair.

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BENTON, LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA
Continuation sheet #3

Item number 8, 9

Page 1, 1

8. SIGNIFICANCE--Historical Background

of land and that \$2,000 worth of additional buildings had been built on two other parts of the plantation. In the same year his estate also included a mill, ten slaves, and twenty-eight horses.

During the period William Benton worked for James Monroe and afterwards, he continued to be a brickmaker and to supervise the construction of a number of buildings in the Middleburg area. They include: the old Foxcroft house, one of the oldest of many brick houses in the area; Huntlands; and the Methodist Church in Unison.

Benton remained in the Benton family until 1894 when the house and 218 acres were sold at public auction to Joshua Hatcher. Then in 1908, Mr. Daniel Sands from New York bought the property. He changed the name of the estate from Spring Hill to Benton, and made architectural changes as well. He added a one-story porch across the north facade, removing the single-bay porch, enlarging the doorway, and making it the front of the house in the process. He also enlarged the first-floor windows under the portico, added three dormer windows on each of the wings on the north side, added the kitchen wing on the south side perpendicular to the west wing, added a porch to the end of the west wing of the house, and extended gable ends past the end chimneys. Mr. Sands also added to the acreage of the estate, and under his ownership, Benton became a famous horse farm and one of the centers of hunt country social activity. Under the direction of Mrs. Sands, significant landscaping was undertaken on the property. The impressive trees and beautiful gardens surrounding Benton made it a showplace of the Garden Club of Virginia tours in the first half of the 20th century.

In 1954 Mr. and Mrs. James Nicklin bought Benton and thirteen surrounding acres from the Sands, and then sold it to the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. William T. Leith in 1961. Since then, the north porch has been removed.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Williams, Harrison. Legends of Loudoun.
Richmond, Va. Virginia State Library. Works Progress Administration, Historic
Buildings Files, Loudoun County, 1936.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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BENTON, LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

Continuation sheet #4

Item number 10

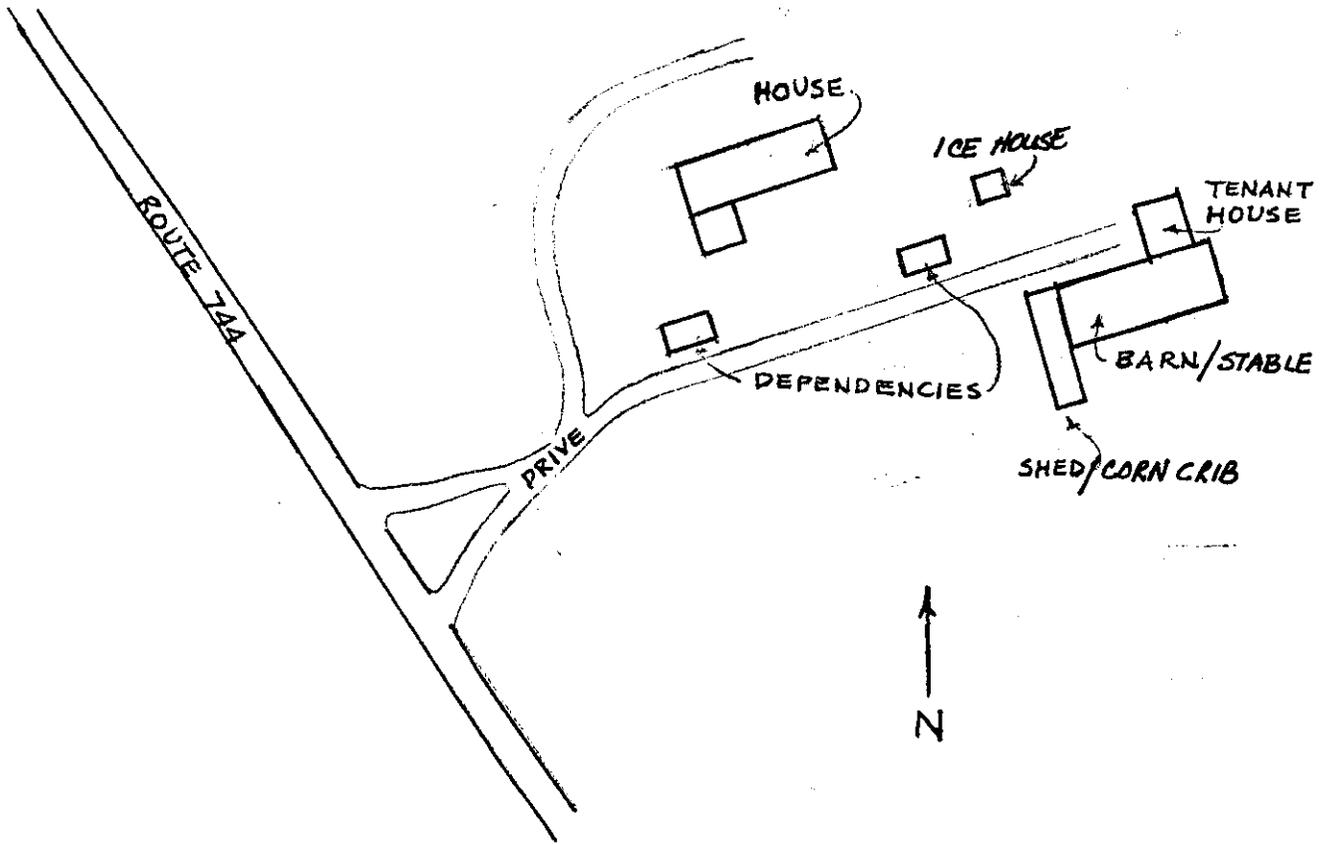
Page 1

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA -- Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

point approximately 275' S of S side of entrance road; thence approximately 285' NW to N side of entrance road; thence approximately 350' NW following tree line; thence approximately 650' W along said tree line; thence approximately 600 SSW following said tree line to point of origin.

Boundary Justification: The bounds have been drawn to include 13.20 acres and main house, dependencies, icehouse, tenant house, barn, stable, and corn crib of which only the main house and one dependency are shown on the USGS quad map. The aforementioned buildings are shown in an ariel photograph included with this nomination. The bounds also coincide with those of the parcel described in Loudoun County Deed Book 403, p. 525.

BENTON



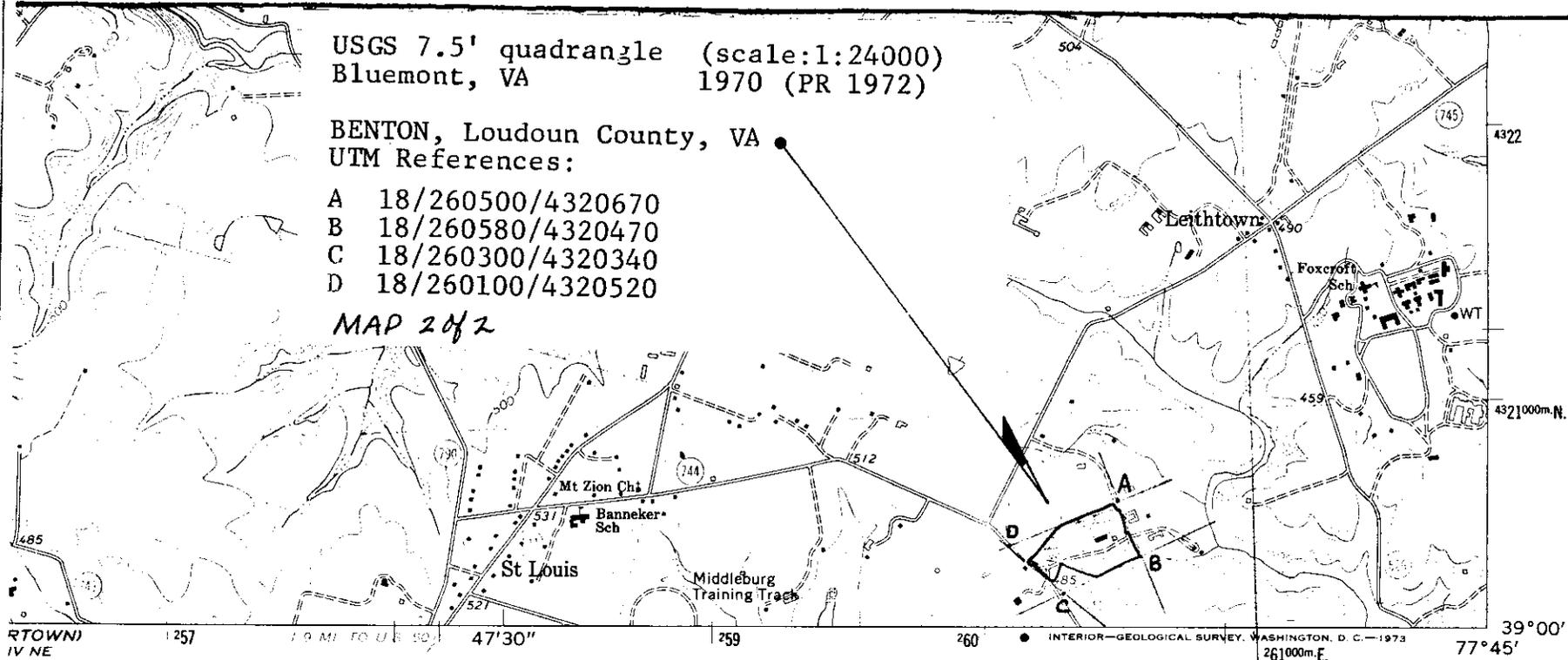
BENTON
Loudoun County, VA
SKETCH MAP 1 of 2
1983
Not to Scale
VA Historic Landmarks Comm.

USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale:1:24000)
 Bluemont, VA 1970 (PR 1972)

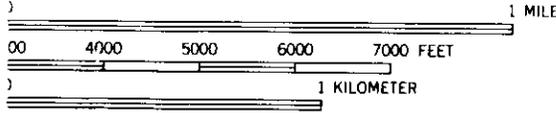
BENTON, Loudoun County, VA
 UTM References:

- A 18/260500/4320670
- B 18/260580/4320470
- C 18/260300/4320340
- D 18/260100/4320520

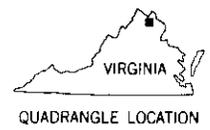
MAP 2 of 2



RTOWN) IV NE
 1:24000



IRVAL 10 FEET
 AN SEA LEVEL



NAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
 SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
 URCES, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903
 ; AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with
 Commonwealth of Virginia agencies from aerial photographs
 taken 1972. This information not field checked

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, all weather, hard surface	Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface	Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
	State Route

BLUEMONT, VA.

N3900—W7745/7.5
 1970
 PHOTOREVISED 1972
 AMS 5462 III SE—SERIES V834

(MIDDLEBURG)
 5461 NW