

UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF GEORGE WASHINGTON THE POTOMAC COMPANY WAS ORGANIZED TO ENHANCE THE POTOMAC RIVER AS A COMMERCIAL WATERWAY FROM GEORGETOWN, D.C., TO WESTERN MARYLAND AND VIRGINIA. AT THIS END, A SYSTEM OF NAVIGABLE CHANNELS AND SKIRTING CANALS WERE CONSTRUCTED IN AREAS OF SHALLOWS AND FALLS.

THE MOST DEMANDING TASK WAS IN BY-PASSING THE GREAT FALLS, WHERE THERE WAS A DROP OF 76' CONSTRUCTION OF A SKIRTING CANAL BEGAN IN MARCH, 1786, BUT FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH WAS ADEQUATE FUNDING, WORKED STOPPED AND STARTED SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE

COMPLETION IN FEBRUARY, 1802.

THE FIVE NECESSARY LOCKS WERE THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MILE-LONG CANAL THE THREE LOWEST LOCKS, BLASTED OUT OF SOLID ROCK, HAD COMMON GATES, THUS REQUIRING LARGE AMOUNTS OF WATER FOR THE LOCKING OPERATION THEREFORE, TWO HOLDING BASINS WERE CONSTRUCTED AT THE TOP OF THE RISE TO PROVIDE EXTRA WATER TO THESE LOCKS LOCK 3 IS OF SPECIAL NOTE AS BOATS ENTERING IN ONE DIRECTION HAD TO TURN BEFORE DEPARTING.

ON AUGUST 15, 1828, THE POTOMAC COMPANY WAS ABSORBED BY THE CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO CANAL COMPANY THE SKIRTING

CANAL AT GREAT FALLS WAS FINALLY ABANDONED IN 1830.

THIS SURVEY IS PART OF A LONG-RANGE PROGRAM BY THE HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD (HAER) TO DOCUMENT ENGINEERING AND INDUSTRIAL WORKS IN THE UNITED STATES WORK ON THE POTOMAC CANAL DURING 1973-74 WAS CO-SPONSORED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (HAER) AND THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS FIELD HEADQUARTERS WERE LOCATED IN SENECA, MARYLAND.

THE FIELD WORK, MEASURED DRAWINGS, AND PHOTOGRAPHS WERE PREPARED UNDER THE GENERAL DIRECTION OF DOUGLAS L

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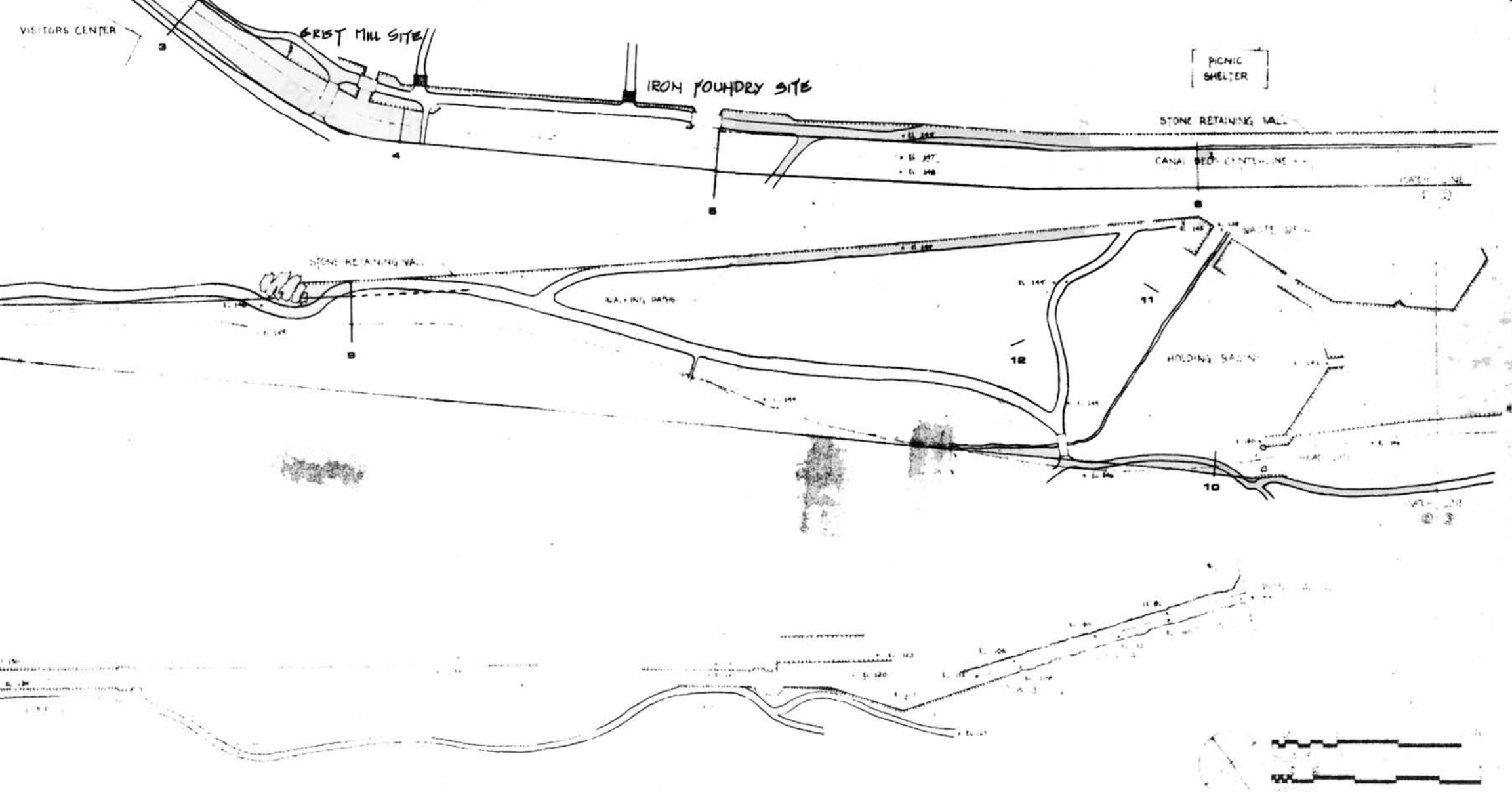
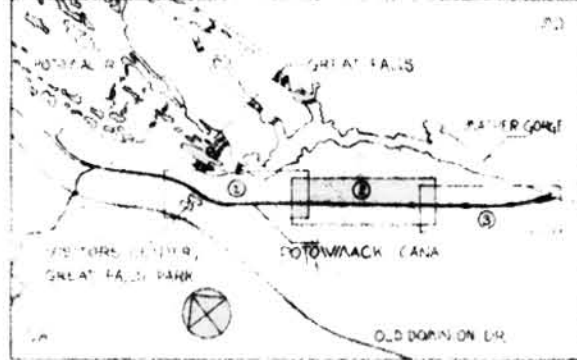


Fig. 15

NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE