

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. CT-1194

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Leitchs Wharf

and/or common

2. Location

street & number located at end of Leitchs Road not for publication

city, town near Prince Frederick vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Calvert

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" 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"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Board of County Commissioners of Calvert County

street & number 175 Main Street telephone no.: 535-1600

city, town Prince Frederick state and zip code MD 20678

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. M.D.A.T. liber

street & number Goldstein Building, 200 Duke Street folio

city, town Prince Frederick state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. CT-1194

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.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE COUNT: 1

Standing Wharf Structures: None.

Associated Standing Wharf Structures: None.

Description: Leitchs Wharf is a historic wharf site with no visible features on land or above mean low water.

Previously Existing Wharf Structures: "Patuxent River Maryland from Gods Grace Point to Hollin Point" 1859 revised 1908 depicts an "L" shaped wharf angled down river. An unimproved road leads to the landing. A structure is indicated on the "L" head. "Map of Calvert County Showing Topography and Election Districts" 1902 depicts a small "L" wharf at the end of an unimproved road. "Soil Map Calvert County, Maryland" 1928 uses the same base map as the 1902 map with identical depictions of the wharf. "Patuxent Folio" 1907 appears to also use the same base map but depicts the wharf as a simple straight non-"L" wharf. "Chart no. 19, Natural Oyster Bars" 1908 clearly depicts the wharf as an "L" head wharf nearly perpendicular to the shore with an "L" shaped structure over the water on the south side of the wharf immediately at the juncture of the wharf with the shore. "Patuxent River" chart 1934 reissued 1938 depicts an "L" shaped wharf. An aerial photograph taken in 1938 shows no wharf.⁸¹ "Benedict Quadrangle Topographic Map" 1953 shows a structure at the end of an unimproved road where the wharf was once located. Interestingly, chart 24 in "Salt Water Sport Fishing and Boating In Maryland," no date, but probably circa mid 1970s, indicates "piles" just off where Leitchs Wharf was located, though it does not name the wharf nor show a road leading to it. No piles were visible during the land or boat survey of the site.

⁸¹ Aerial photograph AHS 7-8, dated 1938, scale 1 inch equals 660 feet, Calvert Soil Conservation District, photostatic copy deposited at Calvert Marine Museum.

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 checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1873-1928 **Builder/Architect**

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.

Leitchs Wharf is one of twenty historic steamboat wharf/landing sites identified in “Calvert County Steamboat Wharves and Landings: Architectural Level Survey and Inventory.” This survey and inventory was completed in 1996 by Eshelman & Associates for the Calvert County Historic District Commission with funding from the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners. The final report includes a context study which places the historic significance of these steamboat wharf and landing sites within the broad pattern of local county history and regional history of the Chesapeake Bay. The study falls within the theme of “Transportation” within the time periods of “Agricultural-Industrial Transition (1815-1870)” and “Industrial/Urban Dominance (1870-1930).” Refer to this study for a general historical overview and historical significance of the resources as a whole. Leitchs Wharf was located at the end of Leitchs Road, on the Patuxent River approximately 22 miles above its mouth. Oyster shells 12 to 18 inches thick cover the ground just below the surface on both sides of the road along the shore. This appears to be a prehistoric shell midden as there is no evidence of an oysterhouse at this location. There is a drop of about 5 feet from the end of the road to the beach. There are also several large fragments of cement blocks along the shore. These may be related to former wharf structures. This wharf was named for the owners of the plantation on which it was built. Members of the Weems family apparently lived at the Lyda Leitch House (CT-33), a circa 1820 house near the wharf.⁸² This wharf is referred to as “Leitches Landing” in a 1896 Weems Steamboat Company publication. “Benedict Quadrangle” 7.5 minute series map dated 1953 calls the site “Leitch Wharf.”

⁸² David Holly, *Tidewater by Steamboat: A Saga of the Chesapeake: The Weems Line on the Patuxent, Potomac, and Rappahannock* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press in cooperation with Calvert Marine Museum, 1991), p. 266; and *Inventory of Historic Sites in Calvert County, Charles County and St. Mary’s County* (Annapolis, Maryland, Maryland Historical Trust, revised edition 1980), p. 9. Charles Stein, *A History of Calvert County, Maryland* (privately published in cooperation with Calvert County Historical Society, 1976), p. 289 spells the name “Leach’s Wharf” but every other reference to this wharf during this survey spells it “Leitch” or “Leitchs.” Henry Gannett, *Gazetteer of Maryland* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), p. 47, spells it as “Leitch” and calls it a wharf on the Patuxent River, Calvert County.

Continuation Sheet 8.1 Leitchs Wharf

Ira Young and his wife Christiana E. sold Leitchs wharf and adjoining property to William A. Leitch for \$369.75 on November 4, 1873. William and his wife Anna V. Leitch sold the wharf and adjoining property consisting of about one-half acre to Mason L. Weems of Baltimore for \$500 on August 11, 1874. On September 12, 1871, Henry Williams sold a parcel apparently adjacent to the wharf to William A. Leitch which he then sold to his wife Anna V. for \$1,000 on April 8, 1896. William A. Leitch also owned a sailing vessel in which he delivered produce to Baltimore; probably using the same the wharf.⁸³

Mrs. W. A. Grierson ran a boarding house one-half mile from the landing taking advantage of the steamer service for potential guests. It was described in 1896 as "An old Brick Housestead, surrounded by an abundance of Shade and a sloping Lawn commanding one of the finest views of the Patuxent River. One mile from Buena Vista Post Office and three-quarters mile from Barstow Post Office. Leitchs Landing one-half mile distant. Rates, \$4.50 per week."⁸⁴ It is not certain if this house is still standing. In 1907 the wharf generated \$1,124.36 in local freight, \$5.26 in through freight, and \$271.50 for passengers, for a total revenue of \$1,401.12.⁸⁵ The wharf had an iron track for a hand cart and wooden side hand rails prior to 1907 when the wharf was "overhauled thoroughly, and put in first class condition." These repairs included the removal of all the old decking and 5,000 feet of new decking as well as 600 feet of new iron track.⁸⁶

The John W. Hodges House (CT-120) is a frame house built in 1883 with a 1905 and 1930s addition. Mr. Hodges was a steamboat man who purchased part of the Leitchs Wharf property, north of the wharf, in 1883 where he built his house. The Julia V. Boyd House (CT-121) is a 1910 cross-gable farmhouse with 1920 and circa 1945 additions. The house sits on the site of an earlier structure. Julia's son, Lee Boyd, born in 1891 in the earlier house, remembers hauling tobacco by ox cart to Leitchs Wharf. The Willow Glen (CT-34) residence is located about a mile inland from Leitchs Wharf. It is a mid-18th century dwelling, one of the two finest examples of Georgian architecture in the County. It is owned by

⁸³ Calvert County Deeds located at Maryland Archives; and written communication "Steamboat Landings - Calvert County," to Ralph Eshelman from Ailene Hutchins, December 16, 1996, copy deposited at Calvert Marine Museum.

⁸⁴ *Summer Homes and Historical Points Along the Routes of the Weems Steamboat Company* (1896), p. 57.

⁸⁵ "Maryland Delaware & Virginia Railway Company Annual Report, Statement of Freight and Passenger Revenue by Wharves for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31st, 1907." Original in private ownership, copy deposited in collections of Calvert Marine Museum.

⁸⁶ "Maryland Delaware & Virginia Railway Company Annual Report, Repairs to Wharves on Various Routes for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31st, 1907." Original in private ownership, copy deposited in collections of Calvert Marine Museum.

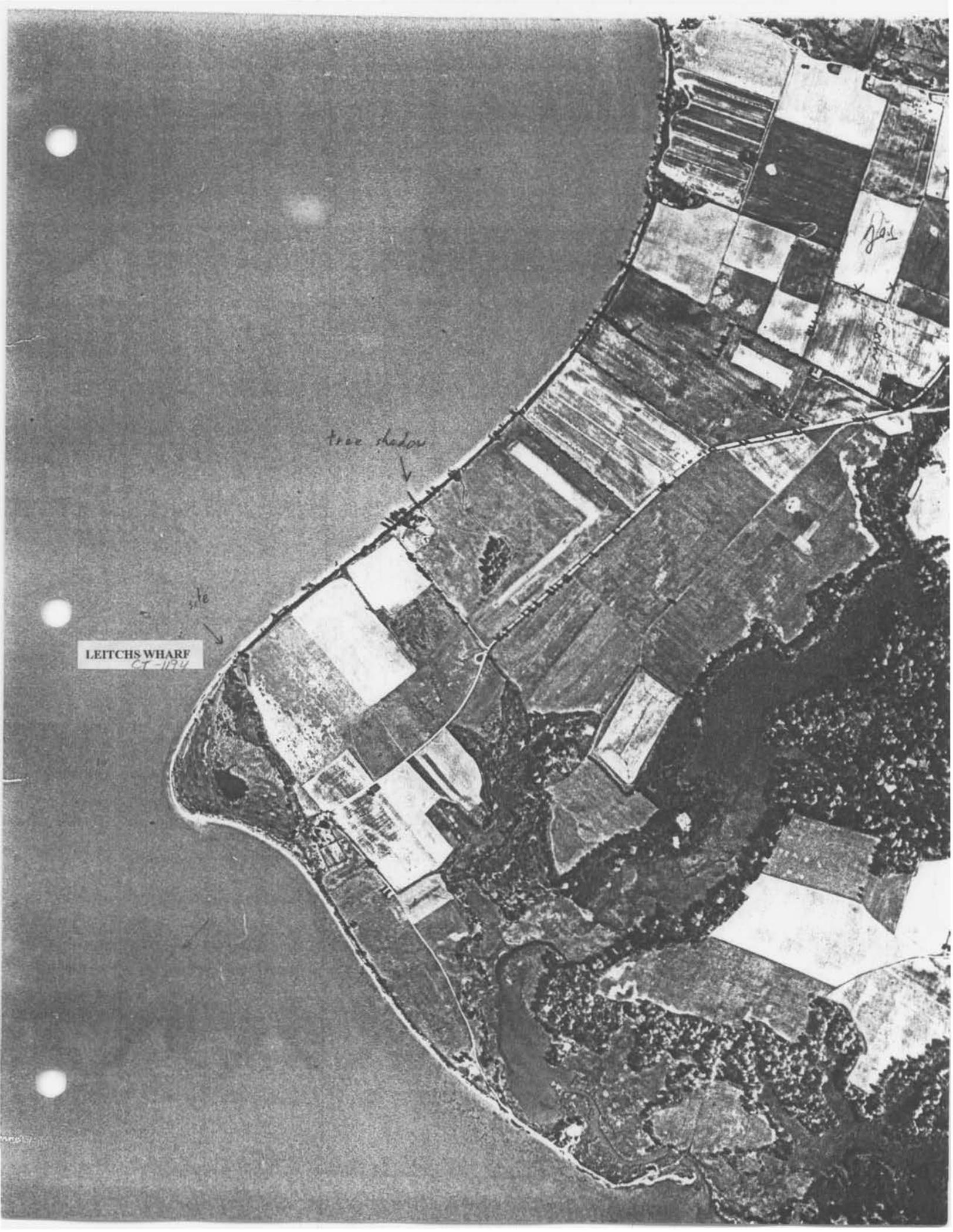
Continuation Sheet 8.2 Leitchs Wharf

members of the Weems family.⁸⁷

From about 1922 to 1926 Mrs. V. E. Tydings ran a guest house called River Side near Leitchs Wharf. She could accommodate up to 6 guests, many who came by steamboat.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ *Inventory of Historic Sites in Calvert County, Charles County and St. Mary's County*, pp. 10 and 25-26.

⁸⁸ "Vacation Trips and Resorts in the Chesapeake Bay Country, BC7A and MD&V Railway Companies," undated season brochure believed to be circa 1922 and one dated 1926, originals in Steamship Historical Society of America Library, copies deposited at Calvert Marine Museum.



LEITCHS WHARF

ST-194

tree shadow

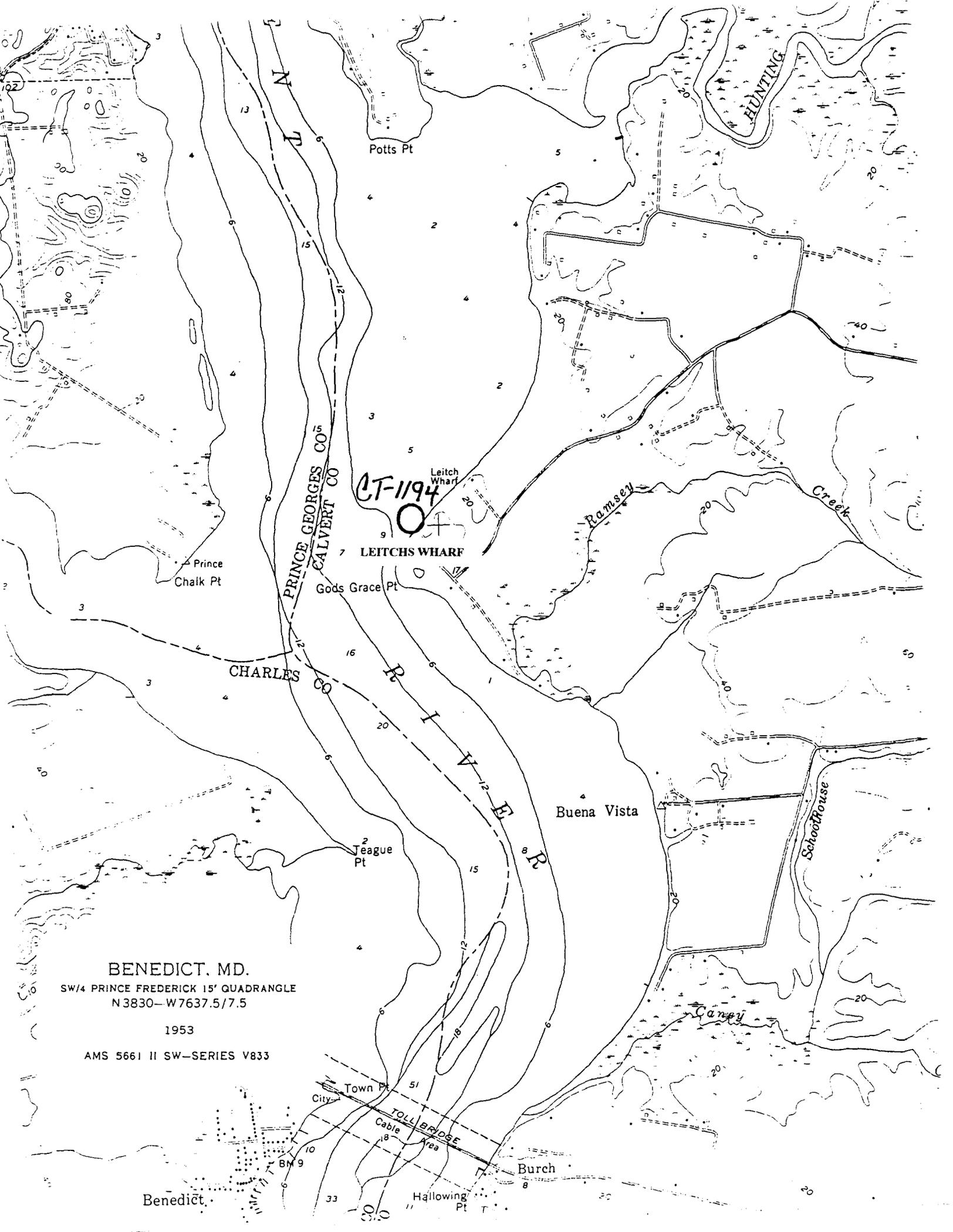
site

gas

Notes: 1. 1st AH 1.3

1993

Calvert Soil Conservation District



CT-1194

LEITCHS WHARF

BENEDICT, MD.

SW/4 PRINCE FREDERICK 15' QUADRANGLE
N3830-W7637.5/7.5

1953

AMS 5661 II SW-SERIES V833

Benedict

Hallowing Pt

Burch

TOLL BRIDGE
Cable Area

Town Pt

City

BM 9

33

Hallowing Pt

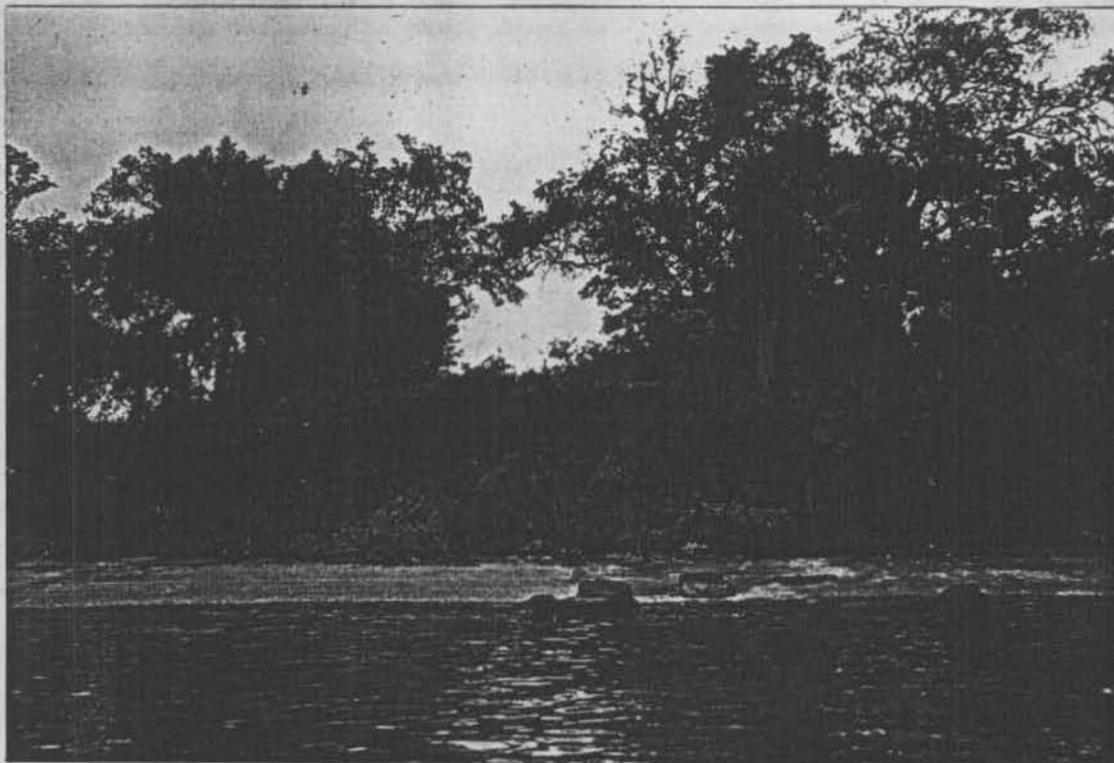
Burch

Town Pt

City

BM 9

33



CT-1194

Leitchs Wharf
Calvert Co., MD

Ralph Estelmann

Aug 1996

neg: MD SHPO

view SE of wharf site

Leitchs Wharf