

CAPSULE SUMMARY
CT-1361
Blankenship House
7041 Briscoe Turn Road
Owings, Calvert County, Maryland
1924
Private

The Blankenship House is located on a three-acre lot at the southwest intersection of Briscoe Turn Road and Appaloosa Way in Owings, Calvert County, Maryland. The property consists of a 1924 Colonial Revival dwelling and ca.-1931 storage shed, animal shed, corncrib, and machine shed. A gravel driveway stretches southeast from Briscoe Turn Road to access the dwelling and outbuildings. The property, which is characterized by mature deciduous and evergreen trees, is surrounded by wooded lots sparsely interspersed with residential dwellings.

The Blankenship House was designed and built in 1924 by Lyons, Gibson & Company, a local Calvert County contracting firm responsible for many of Calvert County's more important early twentieth-century public buildings and private residences. The Colonial Revival dwelling was constructed for Estep R. Watson and his wife, Ethel, whose family retained ownership of the property for almost fifty years. In 1998, the property was acquired by Ralph D. and Mary Ann Blankenship, who retain ownership in 2012.

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. CT-1361

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Blankenship House

other Watson House

2. Location

street and number 7041 Briscoe Turn Road __ not for publication

city, town Owings __ vicinity

county Calvert County

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

name Ralph D. and Mary Ann Blankenship

street and number 7041 Briscoe Turn Road telephone

city, town Owings state MD zip code 20736

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Calvert County Clerk of Circuit Court liber 1086 folio 454

city, town Prince Frederick tax map 10 tax parcel 139 tax ID number 091453

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
- Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Recorded by HABS/HAER
- Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
- Other: Calvert County Planning Department

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	<u>4</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<u>0</u> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<u>0</u> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	<u>4</u> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
				Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
				<u>0</u>

7. Description

Inventory No. CT-1361

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Blankenship House is located on a three-acre lot at the southeast intersection of Briscoe Turn Road and Appaloosa Way in Owings, Calvert County, Maryland. The property consists of a 1924 Colonial Revival dwelling and ca.-1931 storage shed, animal shed, corncrib, and machine shed. A gravel driveway stretches southeast from Briscoe Turn Road to access the dwelling and outbuildings. The property, which is characterized by mature deciduous and evergreen trees, is surrounded by wooded lots sparsely interspersed with residential dwellings.

DWELLING

The Blankenship House consists of a one-and-one-half-story Colonial Revival-style dwelling constructed in 1924 (Photograph 1). The dwelling sits atop a full concrete block foundation, which features evenly spaced single-light, awning-sash windows. The exterior walls of the dwelling are clad in white-painted clapboard siding. A hipped roof sheathed in pressed tin shingles caps the dwelling. Hipped-roof dormers pierce each of the roof slopes. A central interior brick chimney extends from the central roof peak. The dwelling is lit by two-over-two, double-hung, wood-sash windows, except where noted.

The northwest elevation (façade) measures three-bays wide. A one-story porch extends the full width of the façade (Photographs 1 and 2). The porch roof is integral to the hipped roof of the main dwelling. The porch retains its original wood floor, although the brick foundation has been repointed and the four evenly spaced turned spindle wood posts were recently replaced. The porch features a central brick landing that extends approximately one-bay outward from the porch itself. Three brick steps lead to the landing, which is sheltered by an asphalt shingle-clad low-pitched gable roof supported by two wood posts. A simple wood railing sits atop the landing. The landing leads to the main entry into the dwelling, which occupies the center bay. The entry consists of a single-leaf, one-light over wood panel door flanked by three-light over one-panel sidelights. The entry is set into a simple classical wood surround. A set of paired typical windows occupies the northern and southern bays of the first story. The central dormer features an additional set of paired typical windows.

The southwest elevation of the Blankenship House contains two evenly spaced bays (Photograph 3). The westernmost bay contains a typical window, whereas the southernmost bay is inset with a one-over-one light, double-hung, wood-sash window. Two one-over-one light, double-hung, wood-sash windows are situated in the rear enclosed porch addition. The central dormer features a set of paired typical windows.

The rear (southeast) elevation contains a wood deck, added in 2005, at the south corner (Photograph 4). The deck leads to a rear porch addition, enclosed in the 1950s, that occupies the south corner of the elevation.¹ A secondary entry consisting of a single-leaf, 15-light door is situated near the south end of the porch addition. A single one-over-one light, double-hung, wood-sash window is located to the south (left). Two smaller, single-light, awning-sash windows occupy the remaining openings in the rear porch addition, to the north (right) of the

¹ Mary Blankenship, in conversation with author, March 21, 2012.

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secondary entry. A small one-story, one-bay, shed-roof addition, which provides exterior access to the basement, appends the north elevation of the rear porch addition. A single-leaf, wood-paneled door in the southeast elevation provides the only opening. A typical window occupies the northernmost bay of the southeast elevation of the main dwelling. The central dormer above features a set of paired typical windows.

The northeast elevation contains two evenly spaced single typical windows in the first story. The central dormer features a set of paired typical windows (Photograph 5).

Overall, the dwelling, which continues to serve as a single-family dwelling, is in good condition.

SHED

A small one-story ca.-1931 frame shed is located to the southeast of the dwelling (Photograph 6). The shed lacks a foundation, and board-and-batten siding comprises the exterior walls. The gable-front roof is covered in corrugated metal. A single-leaf door, attached with metal strap hinges, provides the only opening, which is located in the northwest elevation. Overall, the shed, which is used for storage, is in good condition.

CORNCRIB

A small one-story, ca.-1931 corncrib is situated immediately to the south of the shed (Photograph 7). The corncrib sits atop concrete block piers. Board-and-batten siding comprises its exterior walls, except at the rear elevation, which consists of the open vertical slats necessary for drying corn. A gable-front roof, sheathed in corrugated metal, caps the building. Four wooden steps lead to a single-leaf door, attached with metal strap hinges, situated in the northwest elevation that provides the only access into the interior. The corncrib, which is currently used for storage, is in good condition.

ANIMAL SHED

A one-story, ca.-1931 animal shed is located within the center of a large fenced-in area to the southeast of the outbuildings (Photograph 8). The animal shed consists of a poured concrete foundation, horizontal wood siding, and a gable-front roof clad in corrugated metal. The date "1931" is written in the northeast threshold. Three roughly hewn logs support a lean-to that extends from the southeast elevation. A set of Dutch-style doors, attached with metal strap hinges, are located in the northeast and southwest elevations. The animal shed, currently used for storage, is in good condition.

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MACHINE SHED

A one-story, frame machine shed, constructed ca. 1931, is situated outside the fenced-in area, to the southwest of the outbuildings. Two sets of double-leaf doors, attached with metal strap hinges, are located in the northeast elevation (Photograph 9). A small four-over-one light, double-hung, aluminum sash window is situated in the northwest and southeast elevations. A six-over-six light, double-hung, aluminum-sash, replacement window occupies the northernmost bay in the southwest elevation, and a one-over-one light, double-hung, aluminum-sash, replacement window is located in the southernmost bay (Photograph 10). The machine shed, which is currently used for storage, is in good condition.

LANDSCAPE FEATURES

The dwelling is surrounded by mature deciduous and evergreen trees that largely obscure the dwelling from the street. A grass lawn stretches southwest and southeast from the dwelling. A wire and wood post fence frames an area to the southeast of the shed, corncrib, and animal shed.

INTEGRITY

The Blankenship House retains its integrity of location, on the southeast side of Briscoe Turn Road. Integrity of setting has been slightly compromised through the construction of Appaloosa Way, the associated subdivision that occurred in the 1970s, and the conversion of the former agricultural fields into wooded residential lots. Although the dwelling has undergone alterations at the rear elevation, including construction of the deck and enclosure of the rear porch, overall, the dwelling retains integrity of materials, workmanship, and design through the retention of original doors, windows, and overall footprint. The retention of integrity of location, workmanship, materials, and designs contributes to retention of integrity of feeling and association as an early twentieth century Colonial Revival dwelling.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates 1924; ca. 1930 **Architect/Builder** Lyons, Gibson, & Company

Construction dates 1924; ca. 1930; ca. 1950; 2005

Evaluation for:

National Register Maryland Register not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The Blankenship House was designed and built in 1924 by Lyons, Gibson & Company, a local Calvert County contracting firm responsible for many of Calvert County's more important early twentieth-century public buildings and private residences. The Colonial Revival dwelling was constructed for Estep R. Watson and his wife, Ethel, whose family retained ownership of the property for almost fifty years. In 1998, the property was acquired by Ralph D. and Mary Ann Blankenship, who retain ownership in 2012.

HISTORY OF THE BLANKENSHIP HOUSE

On October 19, 1922, Estep Watson, a Calvert County farmer, obtained 85 ½ acres “on the east side of the public road leading from Chaneyville to Lower Marlboro,” from John and Mary Wells for \$1,200.² The land mainly consisted of agricultural fields, interspersed with wooded lots. In 1924, the Watsons contracted with the firm of Lyons, Gibson, & Company to design and build a one-and-one-half-story, Colonial Revival-style home on the east side of Briscoe Turn Road. The dwelling was completed one year later, and soon became a center of social activity for the neighborhood, with weekly poker games hosted by Estep Watson in the basement. Purportedly, Ethel Watson insisted on the construction of the exterior basement door so that Estep's guests could come and go without stepping foot on the first floor.³

By 1931, the animal shed, machine shed, and corncrib were constructed on the property. The poured concrete foundation of the animal shed features a “1931” date at the threshold. A 1938 historic aerial photograph illustrates the dwelling and outbuildings located amongst agricultural fields.⁴ The 1930 Federal Population Census lists Estep Watson, then age 36, along with his wife Ethel and their two sons, Murray and Royce. Estep's occupation is listed as a “general farmer.”⁵

The Watsons continued to live on the property for almost the next 50 years. In the 1950s, the Watsons enclosed

² Calvert County Clerk of Circuit Court, Land Record Liber 8: 89.

³ Mary Blankenship, in conversation with author, March 21, 2012.

⁴ Calvert County GIS mapping, http://calvertgis.co.cal.md.us/flexviewer_imagery/, accessed May 2012.

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, *Population Census of the United States: Estep Watson* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 1930).

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the rear porch in order to create an indoor bathroom, which, prior to this time, the house did not have.⁶

On June 17, 1970, the Watsons subdivided their property into eight lots and conveyed them to PIP Associates; however, the Watsons continued to reside at the Blankenship House as part of a life tenancy agreement.⁷ The subdivision of the lot separated the dwelling, outbuildings, and a surrounding three acres from a historically associated barn adjacent to Briscoe Turn Road, situated to the southwest of the Blankenship House.⁸ On February 7, 1977, PIP conveyed the property, designated as Lot Number 12, Section 2 of "Calvert Manor," to Ronald and Barbara Hoagland, who resided on the property by this time.⁹ The Hoaglands retained ownership until 1995, when they sold the property to Francisco and Dora Gomez., who sold the property three years later to Ralph D. and Mary Ann Blankenship.¹⁰ The Blankenships oversaw the construction of the rear deck in 2005 as well as the replacement of the front porch posts. They continue to retain ownership of the property in 2012.

LYONS, GIBSON, & COMPANY¹¹

The contracting firm of Lyons and Gibson was founded about 1905, by Joseph Daniel Lyons and Stanley L. Gibson, both of Calvert County. The company was reorganized in 1922 as Lyons, Gibson, & Company, Inc. The firm started as primarily a lumber yard and construction company, emerging as one of the few local building companies operating during the early twentieth century. Located in the small village of Huntingtown, their modest office building (CT-103) was designed and finished to serve as an advertisement of building materials and the construction trade. According to Margaret Phipps, granddaughter of Lyons, the firm did not employ an architect but instead Lyons drafted all the plans, drawing inspiration largely from builders' guides and catalogues. Purportedly, he learned to draw from Charles Spicknall, a local builder who constructed numerous churches and residences throughout Calvert County.¹² Most of the materials the firm used were shipped via water from Baltimore and Maryland's Eastern Shore.

The few surviving buildings within Calvert County known to have been built by Lyons, Gibson, & Company, like the Blankenship House, are largely traditional in design. The larger homes are often square, two-story frame structures with hipped roofs. The buildings are known for their high-quality carpentry, both in construction and in the finishing details. The firm's stated purpose was to "build Good Homes...using the very best grades of material [and] using the highest class of mechanics." The company remained active largely up

⁶ Mary Blankenship, in conversation with author, March 21, 2012.

⁷ Calvert County Clerk of Circuit Court, Land Record Liber 120: 500.

⁸ This barn remains extant in 2012.

⁹ Calvert County Clerk of Circuit Court, Land Record Liber 207: 434.

¹⁰ Calvert County Clerk of Circuit Court, Land Record Liber 814: 291; Liber 1086: 454.

¹¹ Except where noted, the following is taken from J. Richard Rivoire, *Joseph D. Lyons House National Register of Historic Places Nomination*, prepared June 15, 1996.

¹² Margaret Phipps, in communication with Kirsti Unnila, Calvert County Historic Preservation Planner, May 2012.

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until the death of Joseph Lyons in 1945. Stanley Gibson later died in 1971, at the age of 92.¹³

COLONIAL REVIVAL

The Blankenship House was constructed in 1924 in the Colonial Revival style, a dominant style for dwellings constructed throughout the United States during the early twentieth century. Character-defining features of the style include an accentuated main entry; symmetrical facade; double-hung sash windows, hung frequently in pairs; and overall horizontal emphasis. The one-story form, as illustrated by the Blankenship House, was most commonly used from the 1920s into the 1940s.¹⁴

¹³ Other known Calvert County buildings designed and constructed by Lyons, Gibson, and Company include the Calvert County High School, Mt. Harmony, Asbury, and Olivet United Methodist Churches, the Solomons Island Bank of the Eastern Shore Trust Company, Calvert County Hospital, as well as various residences including those at 4110 Old Town Road (CT-766) and the Blankenship House (CT-1361).

¹⁴ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 321-323.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CT-1361

Calvert County Clerk of Circuit Court, Land Records, Prince Frederick, Maryland.

J. Richard Rivoire, *Joseph D. Lyons House National Register of Historic Places Nomination*, prepared June 15, 1996. On file at the Maryland Historical Trust, Crownsville, Maryland.

Mary Ann Blankenship, in conversation with author, March 21, 2012.

U.S. Census Bureau, *Population Census of the United States*. Washington, D.C., U.S. Census Bureau, 1930.

Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 3.00 acres
Acreage of historical setting 85.50 acres
Quadrangle name Lower Marlboro, MD

Quadrangle scale: 1: 24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary for the Blankenship House includes all of Calvert County Tax Parcel 139 of Tax Map 10. The boundary includes the 1924 dwelling that has occupied the property since the time of its construction.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Emma K. Diehl/Sr. Architectural Historian		
organization	A.D. Marble & Company	date	June 2012
street & number	10989 Red Run Boulevard, Suite 211	telephone	410.902.1421
city or town	Owings Mills	state	MD

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

Maryland Historical Trust
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Photograph 1: Blankenship House, northwest elevation, view looking southeast. March 2012.

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Photograph 2: Blankenship House, northwest elevation, view looking east. March 2012.

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Photograph 3: Blankenship House, southwest elevation, view looking north. March 2012.

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Photograph 4: Blankenship House, southeast elevation, view looking west. March 2012.

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Photograph 5: Blankenship House, southeast and northeast elevations, view looking west. March 2012.

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Photograph 6: Blankenship House, shed, west elevation, view looking east. March 2012.

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Name Blankenship House
Continuation Sheet

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Photograph 7: Blankenship House, corncrib, west elevation, view looking east. March 2012.

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Photograph 8: Blankenship House, animal shed, southwest and southeast elevations, view looking north. March 2012.

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Photograph 9: Blankenship House, machine shed, southeast and northeast elevations, view looking west. March 2012.

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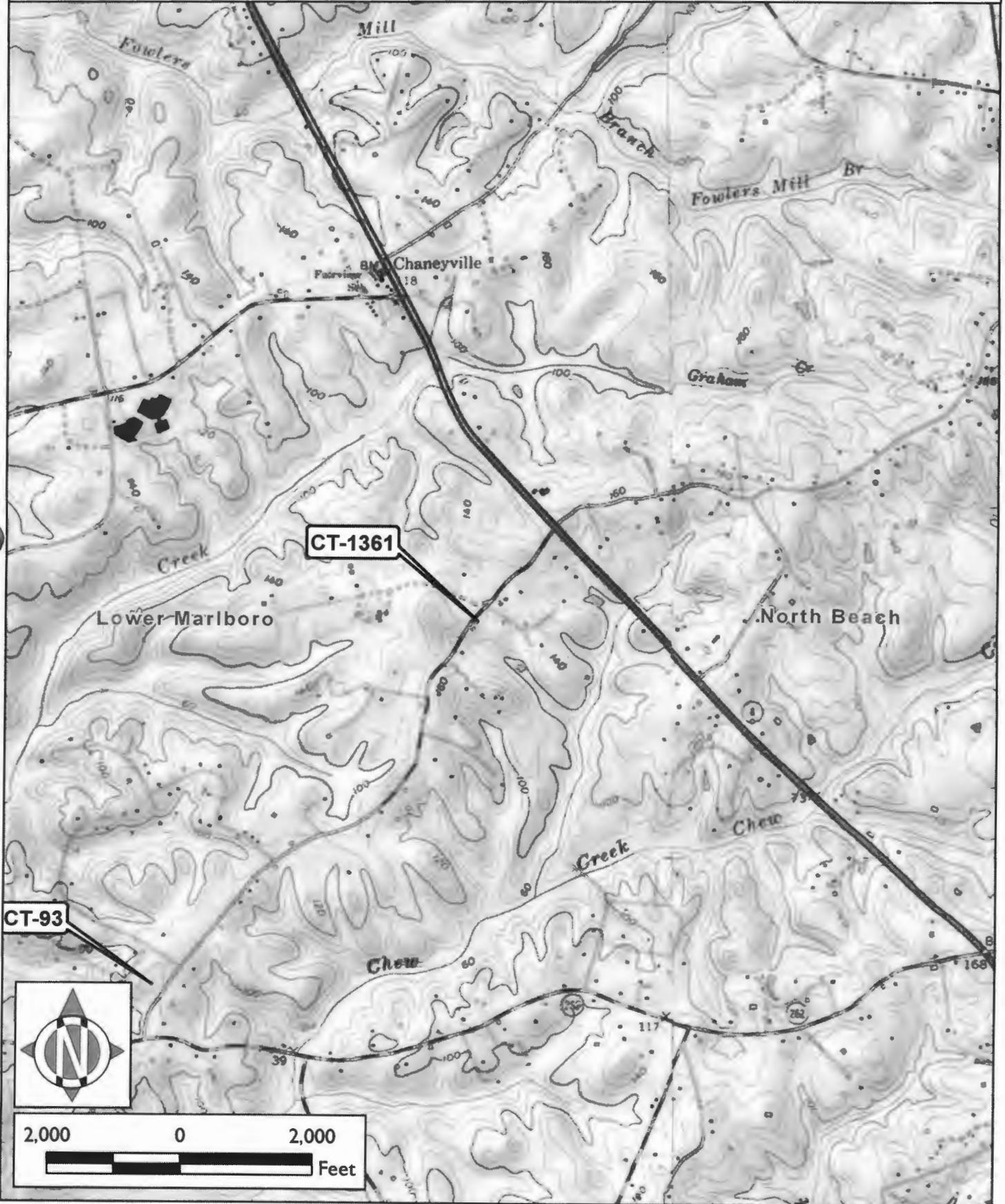
Name Blankenship House
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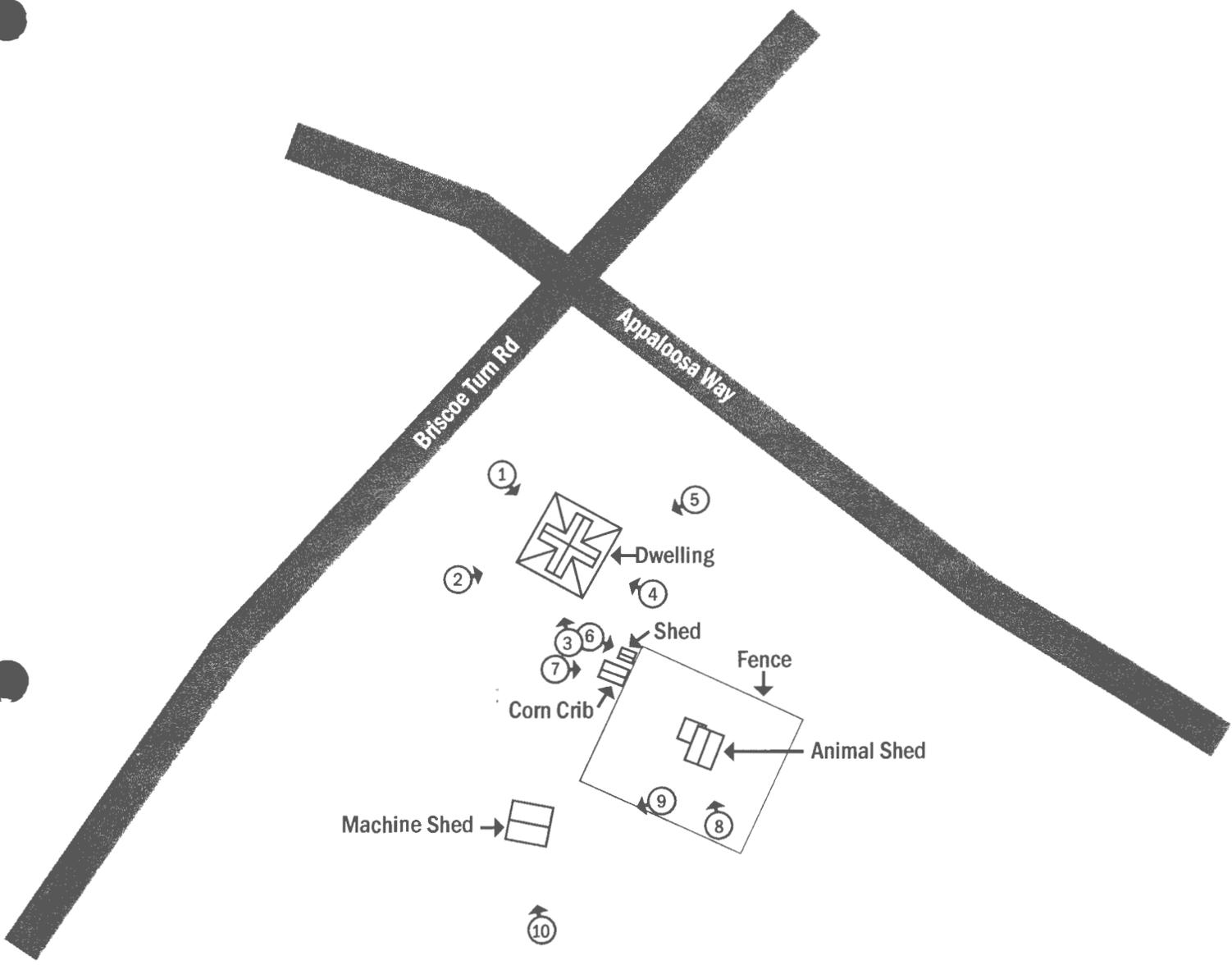
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Photograph 10: Blankenship House, machine shed, southwest and southeast elevations, view looking north. March 2012.

Blankenship House
CT-1361
7041 Briscoe Turn Road
Owings, Calvert County, Maryland





50'

Site Plan and Photograph Locations
 Blackenship House
 CT-1361
 7041 Briscoe Turn Road
 Owings, Calvert County, Maryland



 Photograph Locations

Blankenship House (CT-1361)**Digital Photo Log: All photographs printed using Epson Ultrachrome Pigmented Ink on Epson Premium Matte Photo Paper**

Photo File Name	MIHP #	Property Name	County	Photographer	Date of Photo	Photo Description	Photo Sequence
CT 1361_201203_01	CT-1361	Blankenship House	Calvert	E. Diehl	03/2012	Northwest elevation, view looking southeast.	1 of 10
CT 1361_201203_02	"	"	"	"	"	Northwest elevation, view looking east.	2 of 10
CT 1361_201203_03	"	"	"	"	"	Southwest elevation, view looking north.	3 of 10
CT 1361_201203_04	"	"	"	"	"	Southeast elevation, view looking west.	4 of 10
CT 1361_201203_05	"	"	"	"	"	Southeast and northeast elevations, view looking west.	5 of 10
CT 1361_201203_06	"	"	"	"	"	Shed, west elevation, view looking east.	6 of 10
CT 1361_201203_07	"	"	"	"	"	Corncrib, west elevation, view looking east.	7 of 10
CT 1361_201203_08	"	"	"	"	"	Animal shed, southwest and southeast elevations, view looking north.	8 of 10
CT 1361_201203_09	"	"	"	"	"	Machine shed, southeast and northeast elevations, view looking west.	9 of 10
CT 1361_201203_10	"	"	"	"	"	Machine shed, southwest and southeast elevations, view looking north.	10 of 10



CT-1361

BLANKENSHIP HOUSE

CALVERT COUNTY, MD

E. DIEHL

03.2012

MD SHPO

NORTHWEST ELEVATION, VIEW LOOKING SOUTHEAST

PHOTO # 1 of 10



CT-1361

BLANKENSHIP HOUSE

CALVERT COUNTY, MD

E. DIEHL

03.2012

MD SHPD

NORTHWEST ELEVATION, VIEW LOOKING EAST.

PHOTO # 2 OF 10



CT-1361

BLANKENSHIP HOUSE

CALVERT COUNTY, MD

E. DIEHL

03.2012

MD SHPO

SOUTHWEST ELEVATION, VIEW LOOKING EAST.

PHOTO # 3 of 10



CT-1361

BLANKENSHIP HOUSE
CALVERT COUNTY, MD

E. DIEHL

03.2012

MD SHPO

SOUTHEAST ELEVATION, VIEW LOOKING WEST.

PHOTO # 4 of 10



CT-1361

Blankenship House

Calvert County, MD

E. DIEHL

03.2012

MD SHPO

SOUTHEAST ↗ NORTHEAST ELEVATIONS, VIEW LOOKING WEST

PHOTO # 5 of 10



CT-1361

BLANKENSHIP HOUSE

CAWVERT COUNTY, MD

E. DIEHL

03.2012

MD SHPO

SHED, WEST ELEVATION, VIEW LOOKING EAST.

PHOTO # 6 OF 10



CT-1361

BLANKENSHIP HOUSE
CALVERT COUNTY, MD

E. DIEHL

03. 2012

MD SHPO

CORNCRIB, WEST ELEVATION, VIEW LOOKING EAST.

PHOTO # 7 of 10



CT-1361

BLANKENSHIP HOUSE

CALVERT COUNTY, MD

E. DIEHL

03. 2012

MD SHPO

ANIMAL SHED, SOUTHWEST ↔ SOUTHEAST ELEVATIONS, VIEW
LOOKING NORTH.

PHOTO # 8 of 10



CT-1361

BLANKENSHIP HOUSE

CALVERT COUNTY, MD

E. DIEHL

03.2012

MD SHPO

MACHINE SHED, SOUTHEAST & NORTHEAST ELEVATIONS, VIEW
LOOKING WEST.

PHOTO # 9 of 10



CT-1361

BLANKENSHIP HOUSE

CALVERT COUNTY, MD

E. DIEHL

03.2012

MD SHPO

MACHINE SHED, SOUTHWEST & SOUTHEAST ELEVATIONS, VIEW
LOOKING NORTH.

PHOTO # 10 of 10