

Capsule Summary

CE-112A

Principio Iron Works Company Office

Principio

Private

Circa 1877-80

The Principio Company was established in 1720. Beginning in 1725, intensive ironmaking activity started at the site and continued until the American Revolution. After the war, Samuel Hughes operated a cannon factory on the site, and, in 1836, the property passed to Joseph and George Price Whitaker, who made a series of capital improvements to it. Today the property reflects the Whitaker era of ownership.

This two-story, Second Empire style brick building was built as the office of the George P. Whitaker Company. Supported by a cutstone foundation, the structure has been stuccoed on the exterior of the first floor. At one time this building also housed the Principio Post Office.

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization:

Eastern Shore

Chronological/Development Period (s):

Agricultural-Industrial Transition: 1781-1835

Industrial-Urban Dominance: 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme (s):

Economics

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Village

Historic Functions (s) and Use (s):

Company Office

Known Design Source:

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. CE-112A

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Principio Iron Works - Company Office

and/or common Principio Furnace

2. Location

street & number Maryland Route 7 and Principio Creek Bridge not for publication

city, town Principio Furnace vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Cecil

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name York Building Products

street & number 1020 N. Hartley Street telephone no.:

city, town York state and zip code PA 17405

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cecil County Courthouse liber NDS65

street & number Main Street folio 794-98

city, town Elkton 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. CE-112A

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

8. Significance

Survey No. CE-12A

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 **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.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. CP-107A

May, Earl Chapin. Principio To Wheeling. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1945.
Robbins, Michael W. The Principio Company. New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1986.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 90 acres

Quadrangle name Havre De Grace, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Verbal boundary description and justification

The Principio Iron Works property is bounded by Principio Creek to the east and south, by Maryland Route 7 to the north, and by Principio Station Road to the west.

This boundary encompasses all the resources associated with the historic iron works.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lee R. Maddex, Project Coordinator Sr.

organization	<u>Institute for the History of Technology & Industrial Archaeology</u>	date	<u>4/30/98</u>
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street & number	<u>1535 Mileground</u>	telephone	<u>(304) 293-3829</u>
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city or town	<u>Morgantown</u>	state	<u>WV 26505</u>
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The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory 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
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST.
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
514-7600

The Principio Company was established in 1720. Beginning 1725, intensive ironmaking activity started at the site and continued until the American Revolution. After the war, Samuel Hughes operated a cannon factory on the site, and, in 1836, the property passed to Joseph and George Price Whitaker, who made a series of capital improvements to it. Today, the property reflects the Whitaker era of ownership. The property consists of the Second Empire-style company office building, two 1920s corn cribs, foundational remains of a circa 1836 barn, a circa 1850 tool house, a 1890s wagon barn, standing remains of a 1890s blacksmith/wheelwrights shop, a 1890 charcoal kiln, a circa 1890 wash house, foundational remains of a scale house, foundational remains of two charcoal barns, 1837 charcoal iron blast furnace with hot blast stove and waterpowered blowing engine, partial remains of a 1890 hoist house, a 1890 blower engine house, and a circa 1850 shanty.

Resource Count: one (1)

The company office was built circa 1877-80. It is a two-story Second Empire-style building with a simple mansard roof, dormers, and cupola. The first floor of the brick building has been stuccoed and was founded upon a cutstone foundation. It was named Second Empire for its association with Napoleon III's Second Empire which lasted from 1852 to 1870.¹

The building was used as the office of the George P. Whitaker Company and once housed the Principio Post Office.

¹Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), pp. 241-42.

The company office is significant under Criterion C for the area of architecture. The building is Second Empire-style architecture, a high style architecture which was very popular in northeastern and the midwestern United States from 1850 to 1880.

Established in 1720, the Principio Company constructed the Principio Iron Works, the first blast furnace and refinery forge in the Maryland Colony. Located at the head of the Chesapeake Bay, the ironworks plantation consisted of the 1725 Principio Furnace, the 1728 Principio Forge, a store, and dwellings. The Principio Iron Works operated until the time of the American Revolution when they were abandoned. The property was confiscated by the state of Maryland in 1781, and it passed to Colonel Samuel Hughes in 1785. Hughes rebuilt the furnace and added a foundry for the production of cannon. After these works were destroyed by British raiders during the War of 1812, Hughes rebuilt the ironworks, but it bankrupted him and the property passed to his creditors in 1817. The property remained virtually idle for the next two decades when it was first acquired by David Stewart and others in 1834, who in turn sold it Joseph Whitaker II and his brother George Price Whitaker in 1836. The Whitaker brothers completely renovated the aged ironworks, erecting a new blast furnace plant and new worker housing. Importantly, the site was crossed by the recently completed Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad which created a nexus enabling the ironwork's products to reach larger national markets. Following the Civil War, George Price Whitaker embarked on a second program of capital improvements which included the construction of a company office, a new dam, hot blast stove, blowing engine, and waterpowered turbine. Expanding the scope of production at the site, Whitaker, in 1883-84, erected a steampowered forge for the manufacture of wrought iron blooms. The 1837 furnace could not produce enough iron to keep his forge operating continuously and Whitaker commenced a third period of capital improvements to remedy this shortfall. Completed in August 1890, Whitaker erected a cupola-style blast furnace with hot blast stoves, blower engine house, boiler house, hoist house, and a cast house, but these improvements were abandoned shortly after his death in December 1890. Control of the property then passed to Whitaker's nephew Nelson E. Whitaker, who chose to close down the furnaces and produce wrought iron blooms only. Bloom production became closely allied with the Tyler Tube and Pipe Company of Washington, Pennsylvania, owned by William P. Tyler, Nelson E. Whitaker's son-in-law. The forge continued to operate until 1925 when production ceased. The storied Principio property reverted to agricultural use.

(Draft)

1. STATE Maryland
 COUNTY Cecil County
 TOWN Principio Furnace VICINITY
 STREET NO.
 ORIGINAL OWNER
 ORIGINAL USE Office
 PRESENT OWNER Whitaker Iron Company
 PRESENT USE U.S. Post Office
 WALL CONSTRUCTION stone
 NO. OF STORIES 1 1/2

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
 INVENTORY

CE-112A CE-112A

2. NAME Whitaker Iron Company Office
 DATE OR PERIOD 1860-1880
 STYLE Victorian
 ARCHITECT
 BUILDER

3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC yes

The Whitaker Iron Company office, presently used for a U.S. Post Office at Principio Furnace, is a one-and-one-half-story Victorian structure with mansard roof. It is three bays long and two bays deep and constructed of stuccoed masonry on a granite foundation and basement. The mansard roof has two dormers on each of its four sides and a cupola in the center. The entire structure has elaborate Victorian trim. The cornice has brackets and encloses the gutter. The center door has six panels and the windows have interior shutters.

Behind the office is a necessary house with pediment.

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered NO Interior fair Exterior fair

6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional) 7. PHOTOGRAPH CE 2261

8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)
 INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.
Johnston, History of Cecil County,

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER
Michael Bourne
Maryland Historical Trust
 DATE OF RECORD December 27, 1967

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

170

← TO PENNAPVILLE

CE-112A

MD RT 7 (POST ROAD)

PRINCIPIO STATION ROAD

CE-112A

CE-1499

CE-1500

CE-1501

CE-1502

CE-1503

CE-1506

CE-1504

CE-1505

CE-1507

CE-1509

CE-1508

CE-1510

CE-1511

CE-1512

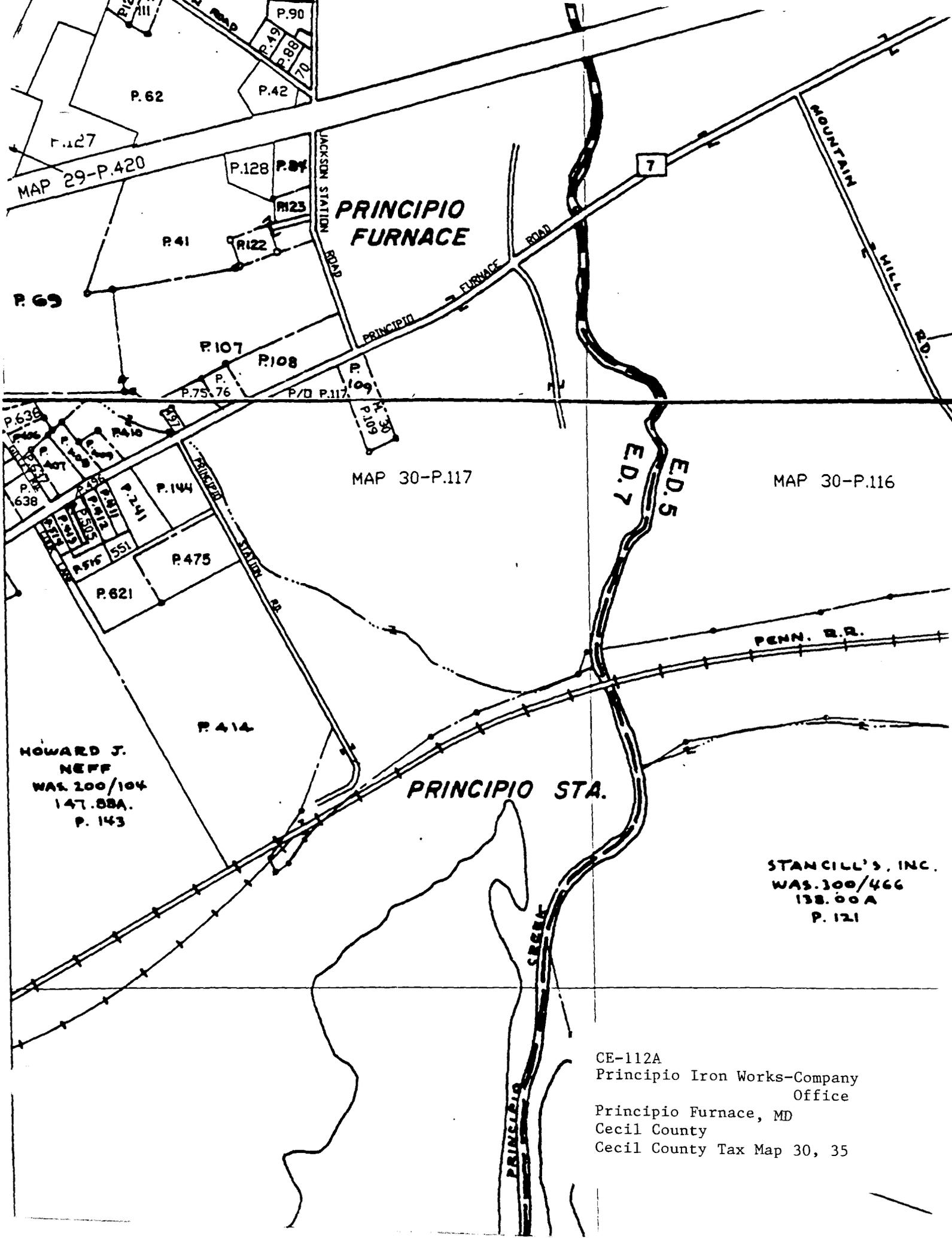
PRINCIPIO CREEK



NO SCALE

Principio Jaw Waxies
RESOURCE SKETCH MAP
MAY 1998

Principio Farmstead, Cecil County, Maryland



HOWARD J. NEFF
WAS. 200/104
147.00A.
P. 143

PRINCIPIO STA.

STANCILL'S, INC.
WAS. 300/466
138.00A
P. 121

CE-112A
Principio Iron Works-Company
Office
Principio Furnace, MD
Cecil County
Cecil County Tax Map 30, 35



PRINCIPAL IRON WORKS
FURNACE, BARRIS & CO. LONDON

NO TRESPASSING
PROPERTY OF
THE IRON WORKS
BARRIS & CO. LONDON
OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

CE-112A

COMPANY OFFICE

PRINCIPAL IRON WORKS

CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND

LEE R. MADDEX

MARCH 1998

MARYLAND SHPD

NE ELEVATION

~~1/16~~



CE-112-A

Whittaker Iron Company
at Principio Furnace

Negatives at MIT



PRINCIPIO IRON WORKS
FOUNDED MARCH 4, 1790 LONDON

CE-112A

Whittaker Iron Company - Office

North Elevation

G. Henry 5/85 - Negatives at MHT

21 State Circle, Annapolis, Md. 21401



Whitaker Iron Co. Office
Near Perryville
Northwest Elevation
MOB/1968
NEG - MD. Hist. Trust

CE - 112

A