

**Sunnyside Farm**  
**CH-214**  
**Bryantown vic.**  
**Private**

1868; c. 1920

Once consisting of 750 acres near the village of Bryantown, Sunnyside Farm contains an array of historic buildings from the mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries. Standing as a centerpiece is a large 2 1/2 story front gable frame dwelling built c. 1868 and extensively renovated between 1915-1920. This dwelling is surrounded by several typical outbuildings grouped in four areas including a domestic yard, a farmyard, and barn clusters in the rear and south fields barn. Contributing outbuildings include a smokehouse, milkhouse and brooder house in the domestic yard; a carriage house, stable, equipment shed, and a granary with an attached workshop in the farmyard; a dairy barn and tobacco barn in the rear field; and three tobacco barns, a stripping shed and a tenant house in the south field. The site also includes a number of non-contributing resources such as a c. 1960 tobacco barn and a concrete block hog house.

Sunnyside Farm is a good example of an evolving farmstead in Charles County from the mid-19th to early 20th century. First established by Benjamin Marcellus Edelen in 1868, Sunnyside is believed to stand on land that was once part of the Boarman Manor grant of 1696. During the first half of the 19th century, Benjamin Marcellus Edelen (1834-1915) acquired property from his father George Edelen and just after the Civil War began constructing the dwelling house that is the centerpiece of the farm today. After his death, the property eventually descended to Benjamin's son Edward George Edelen (1880-1915) who is responsible for the construction of many surviving outbuildings and who oversaw a substantial renovation of the dwelling during the 1920's. Finally, the property passed to Edward Benjamin Edelen, Sr., who continued to farm the property, and built several additional outbuildings. His wife Vivian Edelen lives in the home today and their son Edward Benjamin Edelen II lives on a subdivided parcel and manages the farm. Sunnyside Farm is recognized by the Maryland Department of Agriculture as a Century Farm, having operated as a working farm by the same family for over 100 years.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. CH-214

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Sunnyside Farm

other

### 2. Location

street and number 12970 Edelen Road  not for publication

city, town Bryantown  vicinity

county Charles

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

name Edward B. Edelen

street and number 12970 Edelen Road telephone 301-274-3557

city, town Bryantown state MD zip code 20617-0178

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Charles County Courthouse tax map and parcel: 35-95

city, town LaPlata liber 232 folio 139

### 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
- Other

### 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function		Resource Count	
				Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture		<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	<u>14</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 structures
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social		<input type="checkbox"/> objects
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<u>15</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress		
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:		
				<b>Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</b>	
				<u>1</u>	

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## 7. Description

Inventory No. CH-214

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### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

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

Once consisting of 750 acres near Bryantown, Sunnyside Farm contains resources that span from the mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries. Standing as a centerpiece is a large 2 1/2 story front gable frame dwelling built c. 1868 and extensively renovated between 1915-1920. This dwelling is surrounded by several typical outbuildings grouped in four areas including a domestic yard, a farmyard, and barn clusters in the rear and south fields barn. The farm is generally distinguished by large cultivated fields on a parcel extending from Edelen Road to Zekiah Swamp. The historic district of Bryantown is to the South and is connected by historic roads no longer in use. Several substantial farms lie nearby including Brinkwood (CH-213), Phoenix Hall (CH-216), and Bowling Green (CH-215). Contributing outbuildings include a smokehouse, milkhouse and brooder house in the domestic yard; a carriage house, stable, equipment shed, and a granary with an attached workshop in the farmyard; a dairy barn and tobacco barn in the rear field and three tobacco barns, a stripping shed and a tenant house in the south field. The site also includes a number of non-contributing resources such as a c. 1960 tobacco barn and a concrete block hog house.

### DWELLING

The dwelling house at Sunnyside faces southwest and consists of a 2 1/2 story, five bay frame structure with two large interior chimneys flanking the gable ends. The house has a center passage, double pile plan with an original two story, two bay kitchen wing attached to the north end. Early 20th century additions include three dormers on the front elevation, bay windows on the front elevation first floor and a wrap-around, partially screened porch with a hipped roof resting on Tucson columns. Late in the 20th century the entire house was reclad in vinyl siding, almost all of the windows were replaced, and a second story cross-gable addition was constructed at the rear elevation, accommodating an interior bathroom.

The front elevation includes a centered double door with transom and sidelights. The door is flanked by c. 1920 bay windows on either side, replacing the original fenestration which presumably mirrored that found on the second floor. The second story includes two 2/2 light windows on either end with an altered double window in the center. The kitchen wing includes two 1/1 windows on the second floor and a single window and door on the first.

The rear elevation has 1/1 replacement windows on the second floor positioned on either side of the cross gable bathroom addition. This addition incorporates a 1/1 window on the outside wall. The first floor has four symmetrical 2/2 original windows and a centered door sheltered by a large wrap-around porch. Two 1/1 windows are found on the second floor of the kitchen wing. Below this, a shed porch has been enclosed some time after the middle of the 20th century and includes a centered door flanked by two windows.

A historic photograph reveals the earlier and likely original appearance of the dwelling which had double galleries on the front elevation with scrollsawn railings and decorative brackets. Part of this railing survives on the small kitchen porch at the northwest corner of the dwelling.

The interior includes characteristics commonly found on a center-passage double-pile plan including a center hall with a staircase and exterior doors at either end. Double parlors are found to the east of the hall. To the west is a set of rooms including the dining room conveniently located next to the kitchen wing. The hall retains its original newel, stair paneling and turned balusters. Flooring in the hall consists of 2 1/4 inch plank and probably dates to the c.1920 renovation. The double parlors on the north side are divided by large tuck away paneled doors. These two rooms also feature original lighting fixtures from the time the home was first electrified. Currently an early 20th century door divides the two rooms on the north end, suggesting that the partition wall is a later alteration. It may have originally consisted of either one large dining room, or a tuck away door similar to that found on the opposite side of the hall. A small bathroom has been added under the stair at the rear of the hall.

The second floor mirrors the first with two bedrooms on either side of a centered hall. All plasterwork and woodwork appears to be intact and original. The attic story was not accessible at the time of the survey, but according to the owner it is a plastered, finished

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## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No CH-214

Name Sunnyside Farm  
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living space.

The kitchen wing is accessed from the first floor of the main block through a door near the rear of the dining room. A passageway opens onto a large pantry now containing a modern furnace. Beyond this is a kitchen which has been altered little since the 1930's and includes metal cabinetry, and a period dinette. A small, narrow service stair is located near the door, running along the front wall to a small hall in the second floor of the kitchen wing. The second floor includes two small bedrooms which, according to the owners, were occupied by hired farm or domestic helpers. A door between the main block and kitchen wing provides second story access into the master bedroom.

### DOMESTIC OUTBUILDINGS(milkhouse, smokehouse, brooder house, c. 1920)

The milkhouse is a front gable structure with a stucco over wood frame exterior. The smokehouse and brooder house are also front gable structures but are clad in novelty siding. All buildings have a concrete block foundation and a metal seam roof.

### FARMYARD COMPLEX (carriage house, stable, equipment shed, granary, 1920-1940)

The carriage house is a single bay, front gable, frame structure resting near the dwelling house. Next to the carriage house begins a connected structure that joins the stable, equipment shed, granary and workshop. The stable is a concrete block gambrel roof structure with a handful of stalls to the left, an open area to the right, and a center isle down the middle. Connected to the stable is a shed roof equipment shed that is in the form of an L. At the end of the L is a front gable granary with a center 6/6 light window in the attic story. Attached to the granary is a small room used as a workshop.

### REAR FIELD BARN COMPLEX

#### COW BARN (c. 1920)

Behind the dwelling is a large c. 1920 bank barn consisting of a frame structure resting on a concrete block and poured concrete foundation. Used as a dairy barn, the bottom section is accessible on the southwest elevation and includes a center isle flanked by a feeding area to the left and a milking area to the right. All columns are white-washed. The upper loft is accessed through either a loft stair in the rear or by a earthen ramp on the northeast wall. The loft is an airy open room with a wooden floor. The roof features a pulley system to assist in processing hay.

#### TOBACCO BARN(c.1850)

This building appears to date from the middle of the 19th century. It is rectangular in form with a three bay shed extending from the southwest wall. The plate has a regular number of empty mortises suggesting the earlier presence of additional studs needed for horizontal clapboard siding. Some original riven clapboards are visible on the southwest wall under the shed addition and under the east gable. Doors on the gable ends have been altered to accommodate machinery. According to the Edelen Family, an additional structure was once attached to the west end, but was torn down around 1985. At one point used as a stripping shed, this addition is said to have included hand-hewn post and beam construction.

### SOUTH FIELD

#### (1) TOBACCO BARN (c.1925)

The most substantial of the three barns, this structure includes a concrete foundation, metal roof and wooden frame. A large center isle with doors on either end allows tractors to drive through. Tier pole placement is very uniform throughout this barn. Posts on either side of the isles are fitted with slats for holding additional poles. In this way the isle space could be used as drying space when necessary. Ventilation is provided through hinged boards fastened by iron hooks on the exterior.

#### (2) BARN (c.1925)

This structure is of frame construction with a metal roof. While clearly used for tobacco curing in its later life, it appears that it

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probably was not originally built for such a purpose. Constructed in three sections, the long rectangular end was constructed first, followed by a narrow high barn. Finally, a shed addition extending across the entire rear elevation was constructed. Slats for tier poles are hastily fastened to the interior posts and poles rest on the existing structural horizontal timbers along the exterior walls. The unusual height of the narrow second section suggests this structure may have been used for grain storage or processing.

### (3) TOBACCO BARN (c.1930)

This long center isle barn has a wood frame, a metal roof, and a single vent extending the full length along the ridge. Windbraces are present above the rafters.

### STRIPPING SHED

A frame stripping shed is located near the tobacco barn complex. It has a sloping metal roof, vertical board siding and an interior chimney flue.

### TENANT HOUSE (c. 1875)

Near the south field barn complex is a small tenant house constructed c.1875. It is a modest frame structure with a hall and parlor plan. The building, now ruinous, stands on a brick and stone rubble pier foundation. Weatherboard siding covers the frame and a single stove chimney projects from the metal roof. Although much of this siding was replaced early in the 20th century, the northwest wall which was eventually enclosed under a shed addition, includes original siding attached with cut nails. Missing siding reveals that the endposts were braced downward.

The front elevation faces southwest and includes four windows - two first floor and two above. Remnants of the original windows suggest they were 6/6 sash. The original doorway stands between the first floor windows. Moving clockwise, the gable elevation includes a single doorway. The rear elevation differs from the front, including only two first floor windows. The opposite gable end is without fenestration.

The interior consists of two rooms below and one large room above. The main entrance opens into the larger of the two rooms which is plastered from the ceiling to approximately three feet from the floor. Below the plaster line the walls are formed using narrow planks laid horizontally. A small enclosed stair is located in the rear of the structure dividing the two downstairs rooms from one another. The opposite room is smaller and unplastered. The walls are covered with vertical planking. Ceiling joists are exposed and whitewashed.

The entire farm contains a notable amount of early farm machinery that was used on the property over the last century.

# 8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-214

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

<b>Specific dates</b>	1868-1920	<b>Architect/Builder</b>	unknown
<b>Construction dates</b>	1868; 1920		

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 reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

Sunnyside Farm is a good example of an evolving farmstead in Charles County from the mid-19th to early 20th century. First established by Benjamin Marcellus Edelen in 1868, Sunnyside is believed to stand on land that was once part of the Boarman Manor grant of 1696. During the first half of the 19th century, Benjamin Marcellus Edelen (1834-1915) acquired property from his father George Edelen and just after the Civil War began constructing the dwelling house that is the centerpiece of the farm today. After his death the property eventually descended to Benjamin's son Edward George Edelen (1880-1915) who is responsible for the construction of many surviving outbuildings and oversaw a substantial renovation of the dwelling during the 1920's. Finally, the property passed to Edward Benjamin Edelen, Sr., who continued to farm the property, and built several additional outbuildings. His wife Vivian Edelen lives in the home today and their son Edward Benjamin Edelen II lives on a subdivided parcel and manages the farm. Sunnyside Farm is recognized by the Maryland Department of Agriculture as a Century Farm, having operated as a working farm by the same family for over 100 years.

Following the Civil War, Charles County suffered the same fate as most southern states. The basis of the economy, slave labor, was gone. Land ceased to be cultivated, credit collapsed and many planters fell deep into debt. In addition Federal taxes levied by the "carpet-bag" government threatened landowners with the loss of their land. The turmoil of the Reconstruction era continued in Charles County well into the 20th century. Despite the collapse of the slave-based tobacco economy following the War, Charles County and most of the surrounding counties retained their dependence on tobacco cultivation. While some diversification did occur, the reliance on agriculture, mainly tobacco, continued throughout the early 20th century.

While tobacco remained the main export in Charles County throughout this period, changes in its usage altered production methods and trading. With the outset of World War I, domestic manufacturers began producing vast quantities of cigarettes for the American servicemen in Europe. In turn, the servicemen introduced this product to the Europeans, increasing the demand for Maryland tobacco. Charles County planters responded by increasing the acreage of land under cultivation. Because increased acreage meant increased need for drying facilities, a surge in barn construction corresponded to rising tobacco prices. Many farmers, like the Edelens, modified existing barns and built new ones to increase production and therefore maximize profits.

Modernization of agricultural equipment also affected the output of county farmers. The introduction of the automobile and steam and combustion equipment in the early-20th century allowed farmers to produce more tobacco using fewer farm hands, and transport it to markets economically. Improved fertilizers shipped from plants in Baltimore enhanced the county's soils, increasing their yield. The equipment shed at Sunnyside is representative of the new types of structures built specifically to house farm machinery.

In addition to the change in tobacco export and production, some agricultural diversification took place during the late-19th and early-20th century. An agricultural depression during the early years of the 20th century prompted some farmers to begin the

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Continuation Sheet

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cultivation of canning crops and to experiment with dairy production. The construction of the Popes Creek Railroad in the last quarter of the 19th century assured farm products would arrive quickly to markets, paving the way for further innovation and experimentation. The railroad also transported new farm machinery to local farmers. Several dairies were established in Charles County including one at Araby Farm and Sunnyside.

Not only were farm products changing but also the nature of labor was impacted as well. The Naval Ordnance Manufacturing Plant was built at Mattawoman Neck in 1890. Today the installation is known as the U.S. Naval Surface Warfare Center at Indian Head, and continues to be one of the County's major employers. From the beginning, the plant and proving ground provided an important and stable center of employment for the county. During the war years especially, the plant expanded, requiring more laborers. The Navy contributed to the housing and education of its employees and their children by building housing and a school at Indian Head. Offering wage labor and steady work, employment at the Naval Proving Ground was considered by many a step above the inconsistencies of life as a tenant farmer, and many chose to leave the farm in search of better opportunities.

Established just after the Civil War, this farm reflects the transition from a manual to mechanical agricultural economy. Before World War II, virtually all farm work and much of the domestic work was completed with the help of laborers who often lived as tenants on the farms in which they worked. After World War II, these domestic servants and agricultural workers became increasingly hard to find as tenant families chose to seek higher wages in the booming post war economy, especially at the nearby military installations of Indian Head and the Patuxent Naval Base in St. Mary's County.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Inventory No. CH-214

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property 31.5420

Acreage of historical setting 250

Quadrangle name Hughesville

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Sunnyside Farm is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 35, Grid 13, Parcel 95.

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Cathy Currey/Historic Sites Surveyor

organization Charles County Planning Dept.

date 3/12/01

street and number 200 Baltimore Street

telephone 301-396-5815

city or town LaPlata

state MD zip code 20646

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  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville MD 21032  
410-514-7600

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-214

Section 8 Page 1

Sunnyside Farm  
name of property  
Charles County, MD  
county and state

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**Chain of Title:**

March 11, 1971	Matilda Owen to Edward B. and Vivian B. Edelen. 516 acres <b>232:139</b>
March 11, 1971	Edward B. Vivian Edelen to Mathila Owens. 516 acres <b>232:137</b>
1967	Will of Edward G. Edelen to Edward B. Edelen <b>GCW 28:275</b>
September 23, 1936	J. Walbach to Edward G. Edelen ½ interest in 750 acres. <b>64:75</b>
May 27, 1916	Benjamin Marcellus trustees to J. Walbach and Edward G. Edelen 750 acres. <b>29:621</b>
October 9, 1854	Will of George Edelen to Benjamin M. Edelen. 360 acres; 250 acres <b>JS 17:164</b>

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-214

Section 9 Page 1

Sunnyside Farm  
name of property  
Charles County, Maryland  
county and state

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**Major Bibliographic References:**

Brown, Jack D., et al. Charles County, Maryland, A History.  
Charles County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Charles County Land Records, Charles County Courthouse, LaPlata, Maryland.

Klaphor, Margaret Brown. The History of Charles County, Maryland.  
LaPlata, MD: Charles County Tercentenary, Inc., 1958.

RESOURCE SKETCH MAP

Date: 1/2001

North arrow:



Name: SUNNYSIDE FARM

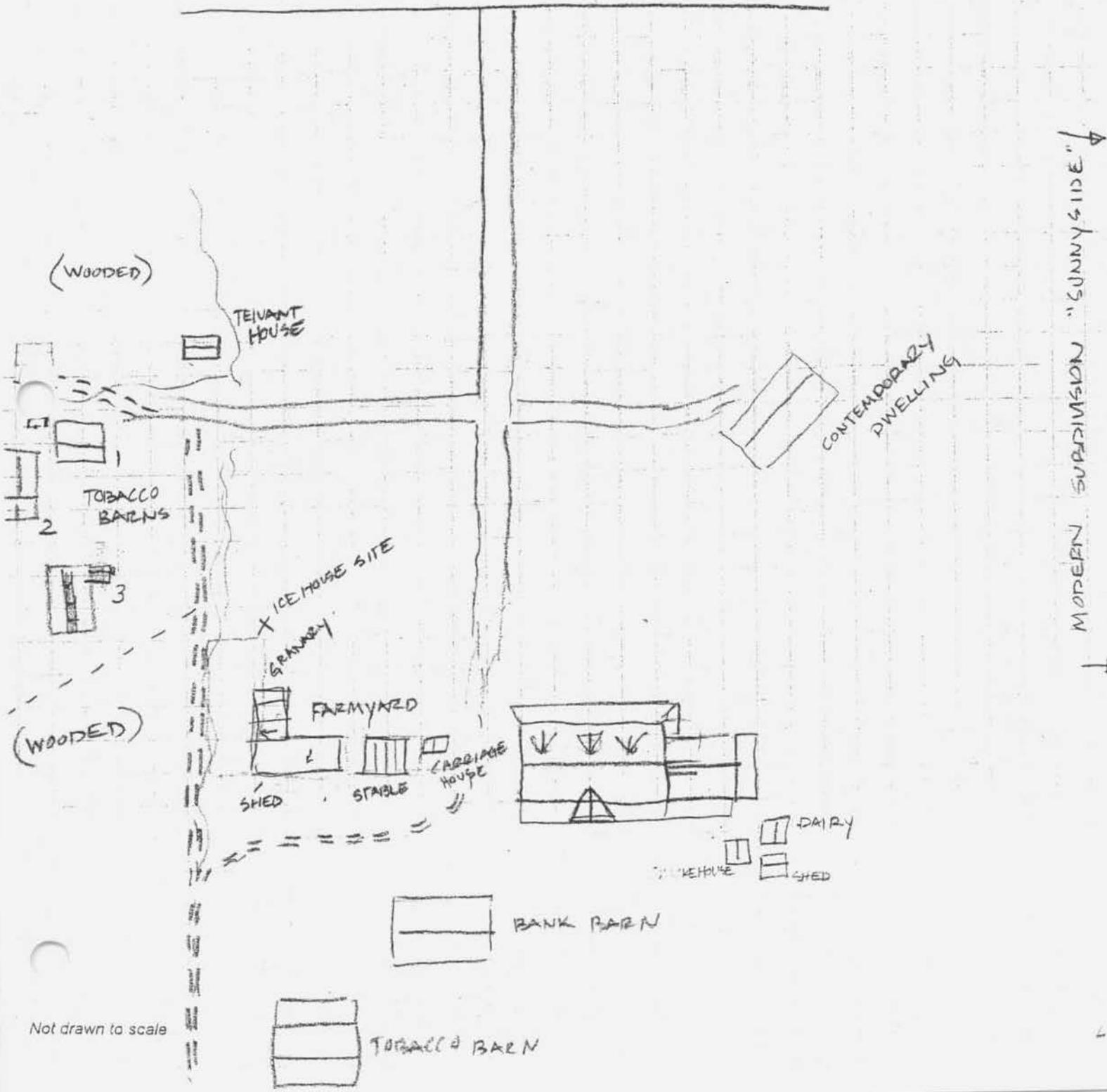
Address:

CH - 214

Charles County, Maryland

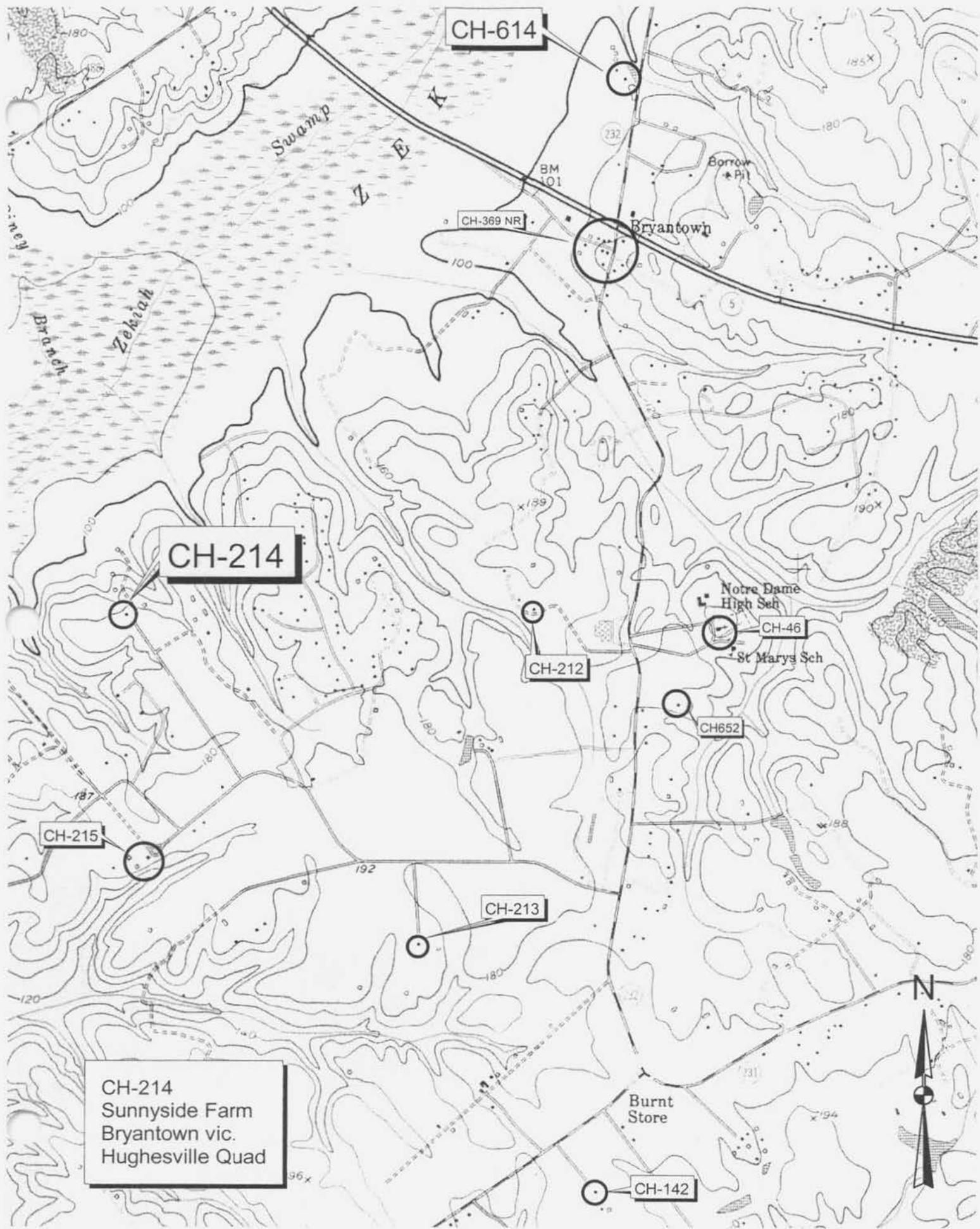
BRYANTOWN X Vicinity

EPELEN ROAD



Not drawn to scale

MODERN SUBDIVISION "SUNNYSIDE"





CH-214

SUNNYSIDE FARM  
BRYANTOWN VIC.

112001

C. CURZEY

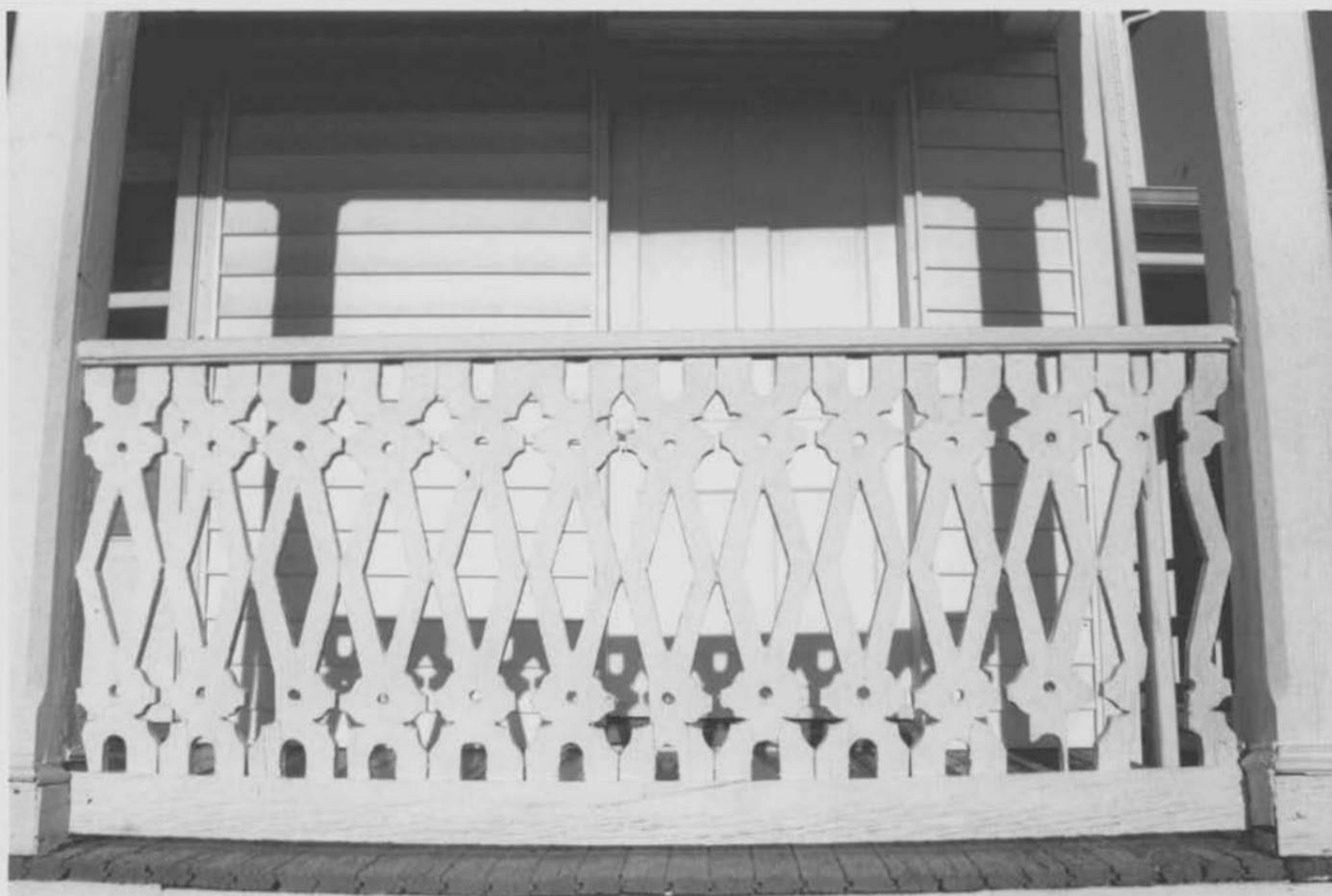
MD SHPS

LOOKING WEST

1 OF 13



CH-214  
SUNNYSIDE FARM  
BRYANTOWN VIC.  
1/2001  
C. CURREY  
MD SHPO  
LOOKING SOUTH  
2013



CH-214  
SUNNYSIDE FARM  
BRYANTOWN VIC

1/2001

C. CURREY  
MD SHPO

RAIL DETAIL, KITCHEN PORCH

3 OF 13



CH- 214  
SUNNYSIDE FARM  
BRYANTOWN VIC.  
1/2001  
C. CURZEY  
MD SHPO  
MAIN STAIR, LOOKING NORTH

4 OF 13



CH-214  
SUNNYSIDE FARM  
BRYANTOWN VIC  
1/2001

C CURREY  
MD SHPO

DOUBLE PARLORS, LOOKING EAST  
SOF 13



CH - 214  
SUNNYSIDE FARM  
BRYANTOWN VIC.

1/2001

C. CURREY

MD SHPO

FARMYARD, LOOKING EAST  
6 OF 13



CH - 214  
SINNYSIDE FARM  
BRYANTOWN VIC.  
1/2001

C. CURREY  
MD SHPO  
BANK BARN, LOOKING WEST

7 OF 13



CH-214

SUNNYSIDE FARM  
BRYANTOWN VIC.

11/2001

C. CURREY

MD SHPS

TOBACCO BARN, LOOKING NORTH

8 of 13



CH-214  
SUNNYSIDE FARM  
BRYANTOWN VIC.

1/2001

C. CURREY

MD SHPS

TENANT HOUSE, LOOKING ~~HOUSE~~ EAST

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CH-214

SUNNYSIDE FARM

BRYANTOWN VIC

11/2001

C. CURREY

MD SHPO

TENANT HOUSE, INTERIOR, LOOKING NORTH

10 OF 13



CH-214  
SUNNYSIDE FARM  
BRYANTOWN VIL.

1/2001

C. CURREY  
MD SHPO

SOUTH BARN COMPLEX, LOOKING EAST

11 OF 13



CH-214  
SUNNYSIDE FARM  
BRYANTOWN VIC.  
1/2001  
C. CURREY  
NO SHPO  
BARN, LOOKING EAST

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