

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

CH-2905

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY MAGI #0902955404

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

GREENWOOD; (THREE SISTERS)

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 300 yards northwest of the intersection of Poor House Road (Md. Rte. 484), Annapolis Woods Road and Ripley Road

CITY, TOWN

Pisgah

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1st

VICINITY OF Ripley

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Charles

**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 type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" 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	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Harold H. Benjamin

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Charles County Courthouse

Liber #: 224

Folio #: 674

STREET & NUMBER

Charles Street (P.O. Box B)

CITY, TOWN

La Plata

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

CH-295

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED    DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

Greenwood is located approximately 300 yards northwest of the intersection of Poor House Road (Rte. 484), Ripley Road and Annapolis Woods Road. The house site is immediately to the west of a Southern Maryland Electrical Cooperative transmission right-of-way.

A ruin in the summer of 1977, the house has entirely collapsed since then. Nevertheless, a sufficient amount of original fabric remains to document its original plan and detail and to establish its significance to the study of regional architecture.

Probably built in the early or mid-eighteenth century, the house was an almost square frame building, measuring 28'6" by 27'6", one story high with a dormerless gable roof. Its most distinguishing exterior feature was its large chimneys, one at each end and both measuring 17' across at the base. Duplicates in design, the chimneys housed two first floor fireplaces with a recessed pent closet between. On the exterior they had elongated lower weatherings tiled with brick, small windows centered in the wall to light the interior closets, and short weatherings at the attic gable level that tapered up to wide, free-standing stacks.

The principal facade faced south and was four bays wide. The entrance door occupied the second bay in from the west end. The three windows framed sash of 9-over-6 sash. In the late nineteenth or early twentieth century a shed-roofed, wood-floored porch was built across this elevation. The rear, north elevation was three bays wide, having a single off-centered door flanked by one window of 9-over-6 sash on each side. A shed-roofed porch with posts set on the ground was built against this elevation at a later date. There were no known original first floor openings in the ends of the house, but there were two 6-over-6 sash windows in both of the gables.

In the early twentieth century the west end chimney was torn down and a partially enclosed shed-roofed porch built across this end. However, the chimney base was left beneath the floor of the porch, as were portions of the chimney wall that protruded within the end wall of the house and retained the facing brick of the fireplace openings. When the porch addition was made a door was installed immediately to the right of the fireplace in the northwest room.

The exterior of the house was originally sheathed with random width, half-lapped beaded boards, secured to the wall studs  
(continued on attached sheet)

**CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY**

**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 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/HUMANITARIAN		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

GREENWOOD, in ruinous condition and now lacking even those original features that in 1977 established its significance as a unique opportunity for study, was one of Charles County's most interesting examples of regional architecture. A simple but attractive frame house with massive end chimneys, it was less a house type than a composite of various regionally characteristic features. An almost square building, 28'6" by 27'6", it had several interesting details. Broad end chimneys measuring 17' across at the base, with interior closets lighted by small windows in the chimney wall, elongated tiled weatherings and wide free-standing stacks, dominated the exterior of the house. Chimneys of the same type can be seen at Maxwell Hall, (CH-196), Loch Leven, (CH-43), and Mt. Tirzah, (CH-81).

Greenwood's floor plan, which on the first floor was divided into four rooms with a centered rear stair hall, was like that seen at Marshall Hall, (CH-54), Maxwell Hall, the original Rich Hill, (CH-177), and Mt. Tirzah, among others. Interior details included exposed ceiling joists and, in the front rooms, large arched fireplaces.

It has not yet been determined who built Greenwood, although physical evidence suggests that it was constructed in the mid-eighteenth century. The land history is very complicated prior to 1820 when it was part of a large tract called "The Three Sisters." Between 1831 and 1885 it passed through eight separate ownerships, most of these being land speculators. A small cemetery near the house has only one inscribed stone, marking the grave of Jane Watson who died in 1840 and whose relationship to the property has not been established.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Greenwood is located on a 97-acre tract of land identified as parcel 44, Map 31 of the Charles County Tax Map (revised Jan. 1976). The property is bounded on the south by Poor House Road, on the west by a United Methodist Church and on the east by Ripley Road.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

J. Richard Rivoire, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Charles County Planning Department

DATE

January 1, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

Charles County Courthouse

TELEPHONE

645-6537

CITY OR TOWN

La Plata

STATE

Maryland

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  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

Continuation of #7 (Description)--GREENWOOD  
Page 2

with wrought nails. All of the window and door openings had plain, 3-inch board facings with a narrow outer molding. There is no indication that either of the two entrance doors had a transome or overlight. Paint evidence indicates that the original colors of the house consisted of white walls with rust-red trim. The cornice boxing was also painted white, but the ogee bedmolding was painted the same red as the window and door trim.

On the interior the house was partitioned into four rooms with a short stair hall at the rear, a regionally popular plan used here throughout the eighteenth century. Interior first floor features included yellow pine random width flooring, plastered walls, narrow beaded baseboards, and simple two-piece chairrails and window and door surrounds. Until the mid-nineteenth century the first floor rooms had exposed ceiling joists, planed smooth but not beaded, with both the joists and underside of the attic flooring above painted white. No original mantels remained in the house when it was recorded, but they were probably of a fairly simple traditional design, with perhaps a crosseted surround below a high paneled frieze and, above the frieze, a molded cornice shelf. All four first floor fireplaces had segmental arches of header brick and interior smoke chanel. Although no doors remained they were probably of a six-panel design. A narrow stair with winders rose along the west wall of the centered rear hall and was enclosed by a plastered wall. All of the first floor woodwork and walls apparently were painted in the same manner as the exterior.

On the second floor were four narrow bedrooms, each lighted by a single window in the end of the house. All of the woodwork was of the same type as the first floor. The balustrade framing the east side of the stair well had a square chamfered post, molded rail and square balusters set with thin edges facing outward. About 200 yards east of the house is a small cemetery with several graves. The only grave marked by an inscribed stone, however, is that of Jane Watson who died in 1840.

0902985404

Mt. Pomfret House (Site)  
CH-299 1975  
DRAFT - Survey Report

The ruin of the Mt. Pomfret House is situated approximately three hundred yards northwest of the intersection of Poor House Road and Ripley Road (Annapolis Woods Road) in Charles County, Maryland. The site and ruin were found and recorded with photographs and measured drawings, the latter showing reconstructed views based on available evidence, by J. Richard Rivoire and Bradley C. Stedding in November, 1974 and April, 1975. The Mt. Pomfret House was first recorded (chimney only) as Greenwood by H. Chanlee Forman in his book The Architecture of the Old South.<sup>1</sup>

The four bay principal facade of this one-story, gable roofed frame dwelling with massive end chimneys faced southeast, an area now cleared for the passage of a small voltage transmission line. The original approach to the house, now intersected by the path of the transmission line, began on the north side of Poor House Road about one hundred yards west of the above named intersection. Only the beginning and end of the drive are still discernable.

In basic form the house resembled Nevitt's St. Anne and Locust Hill, two mid-eighteenth century houses in St. Mary's County, and Maxwell Hall (c. 1760-80) and Mt. Tirzah (1774) in Charles County. With the exception of Maxwell Hall and Mt. Tirzah, which are gambrel

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<sup>1</sup>Forman, H. Chanlee, The Architecture of the Old South. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1948. P. 154, 155.

Mt. Pomfret House  
Page Two

roofed, these four houses are simple, rectangular, one-story frame structures with gable roofs and large double tiered end chimneys. Of the four Locust Hill probably resembles more closely the Mt. Pomfret House in total form and detail.

Only a small portion of the front elevation of the house remained standing in November, 1974, and this confined to the wall area around the first two bays from the south corner, as well as that portion of the roof framing above. There was, however, substantial evidence on which to reconstruct this elevation, including mortice marks on the wall plate and front sill, and collapsed framing members of the remaining wall area. From this evidence it was determined that the facade was four bays wide with the entrance occupying the second bay in from the south corner of the structure. The door framed by the narrow beaded surround of the opening was probably paneled but the door, like all others in the house, was missing when the survey commenced. Most of the window sash in the house was also missing but fragments of the front sash and the dimensions of the openings indicated that they were <sup>probably</sup> of 9/6 panes. The sash was framed by the same beaded surround of the door. The rear elevation was similar to that of the facade except that the door occupied the second bay in from the north corner and rather than three windows there were only two. The wood shingled roof was gabled and unbroken and had a slight flare or "kick" at the eaves. The eave cornice on both sides was boxed and decorated with small ogee crown and bed moldings.

Mt. Pomfret House  
Page Three

At both ends of the house stood massive, double-tiered, Flemish-bond brick chimneys that resembled closely those seen at Maxwell Hall (c. 1760-70), Mt. Tirzah (1774) and Loch Leven (third quarter, eighteenth century) in Charles County, and Locust Hill and Nevitt's St. Anne in St. Mary's County. As in those examples listed above the chimneys of the Mt. Pomfret House had elongated lower weatherings tiled with brick laid in a herringbone pattern, shorter weatherings on the upper tier, and wide, free-standing stacks. A prototype for the decorative chimney caps with plaster bandings shown on the reconstruction drawings can be found on all of the chimneys of the cited examples and was a characteristic feature of mid-eighteenth century chimneys throughout the lower Southern Maryland region. As is also the case with the other examples the chimneys of the Mt. Pomfret House had firewalls that extended up above the lower weatherings to a height even with the base of the first floor ceiling joists. Between the two first floor fireplaces of both chimneys was a small shelved closet lighted by a small window in the chimney wall. This same feature is seen in the chimney of Loch Leven and the upper tier of the west chimney of Maxwell Hall. Such built-in chimney closets were a characteristic feature of Southern Maryland chimney design, particularly within the Charles, St. Mary's and lower Prince Georges County region, although isolated examples are found in Maryland counties further north and east, as well as in the northern Neck of Virginia and the Carolinas. In Southern Maryland chimney pents are common to buildings of the second half of the eighteenth century through to the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

Mt. Pomfret House  
Page Four

They usually take the form of a connecting wall between two separate chimney systems, such as is seen at Chimney House (c. 1770) Charles County and Deep Falls (c. 1750), St. Mary's County.

By November, 1974, only the ruined lower portion of the southeast chimney of the Mt. Pomfret House remained; the chimney at the opposite end of the house had been removed several decades earlier. The base of the southwest chimney, however, stood beneath the floor of a partially enclosed later extension of the house at this end, and fragments of the firewall were retained within the end wall of the house. The absence of wall studs in certain areas of the wall, the presence of old studs framing a narrow door in the south chamber, and a fragment of the fireplace arch in the northwest rear chamber gave ample evidence that the chimney at this end of the house was a duplicate in both side and detail of that at the opposite <sup>end</sup> and where more of the chimney fabric remained to be studied and recorded. There were no exterior openings on the first floor level at either end of the house beyond the small chimney closet windows previously discussed.

On the attic gable of both elevations of the house were two windows flanking and close to the sides of the upper tier of the chimneys. Only the southwest gable was standing when the house was recorded but since the <sup>Northwest</sup> gable had collapsed in one piece an accurate record of both ends could be made.

In 1975 the four exterior walls of the house were sheathed with standard width clapboards that were probably applied in the late-nineteenth century. Portions of the original weatherboarding remained behind the chimney wall of the southeast end, revealing that the house

Mt. Pomfret House  
Page Five

was originally sheathed with riven, random width, lapped boards, that were beaded on their exposed edges.

The house stood on brick foundation walls that rose an average of four courses above present grade. It did not appear that either of the two entrances were covered by a porch or hood or that either was fronted by a porch or stoop. Large flat stones were found in the area of both doors and these may have originally served the purpose of a step to the door if such was needed. In the late nineteenth century a full-length shed-roofed farm porch was built across the front elevation. A small shed-roofed porch on the rear wall was probably added early in this century, as was the partly enclosed shed-roofed southwest extension.

On the interior the room configuration consisted of four principal chambers with a centered rear stair hall extending half the depth of the house. This plan is one characteristic of Charles and St. Mary's County. The earliest recorded instance of its use is seen at Marshall Hall, (phase 1, c. 1720), Charles County. This plan continued to be generally popular well into the last decades of the eighteenth century. The best examples of its use are seen at Maxwell Hall, Mt. Tirzah, and Araby (phase 1, c. 1745), in Charles County, and Sandgates (c. 1760), in St. Mary's County. A variation of this plan is found at Waverley, c. 1790-1810, Charles County and Woodlawn (c. 1800), St. Mary's County.

From the door on the principal facade one entered the south chamber, as opposed to entering the larger of the two front rooms as is more often the case in other examples of this same plan. Each of the four

Mt. Pomfret House  
Page Six

principal rooms had plastered, whitewashed walls finished with flush beaded baseboards and chairrails painted a rust red. The narrow two-piece surrounds of the doors and windows consisted of a beaded board to which a shallow molding had been applied. The four fireplaces had deep arched openings, slightly rounded back corners and smoke chanel. A similarity in detail exists between these fireplaces and those seen at Marshall Hall and Sarum (stage 2, c. 1730), Charles County; Ocean Hall (c. 1680), St. Mary's County, and Holly Hill (stages 1 and 2, c. 1670-1700), Anne Arundel County. On one side of the two larger front fireplaces was a narrow door opening into the chimney closets. The treatment of the fireplace walls in all rooms remain largely undetermined although nailing blocks set into the inside face of the chimney wall indicated that each was faced with a large mantelpiece, probably with an applied molding around the opening and a narrow cornice shelf above a paneled frieze as at West St. Mary's Manor (c. 1760) and Sandgates, St. Mary's County, and The Exchange (c. 1750) and Mt. Pleasant (c. 1790) in Charles County.

In all rooms, including the stair hall, the unornamented ceiling joists were exposed and whitewashed. The stair rose along the southwest wall of the hall, divided from the hall by a plastered partition wall that enclosed it within a narrow closet. On the upper floor level the open stair well had a balustrade composed of a square post, a molded hand rail, and square, closely spaced balusters set on the diagonal and morticed into the floor and underside of the handrail.

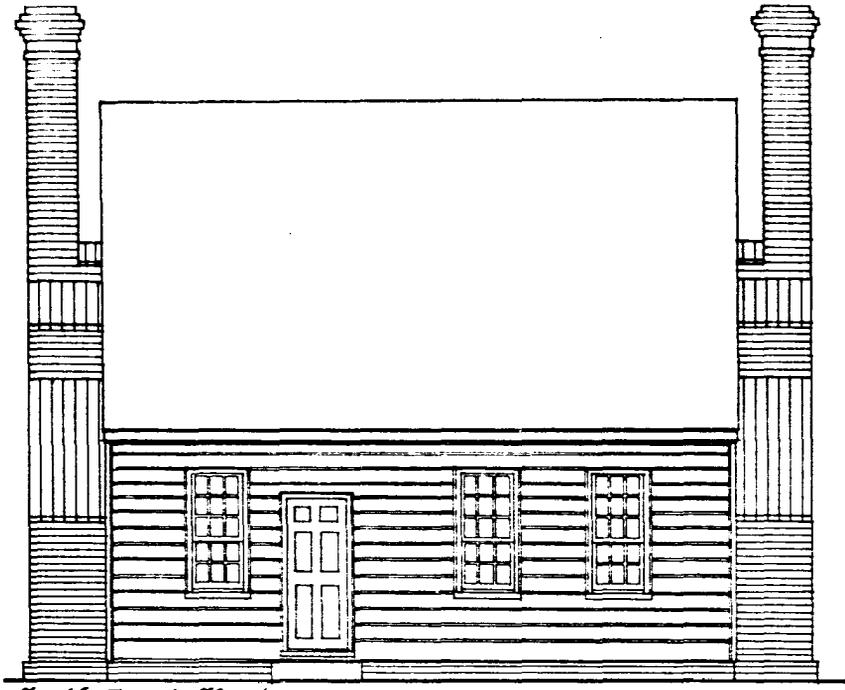
CH-295

Mt. Pomfret House  
Page Seven

Due to its advanced state of deterioration little information about the upper chambers was available. Both the walls and ceilings were plastered, the molding profiles of the first floor were repeated, as was the basic room configuration.

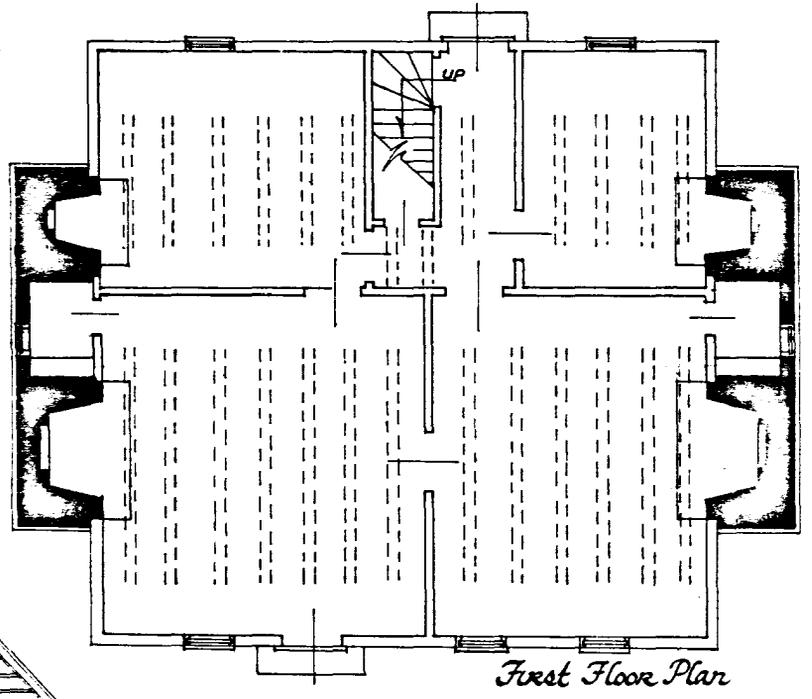
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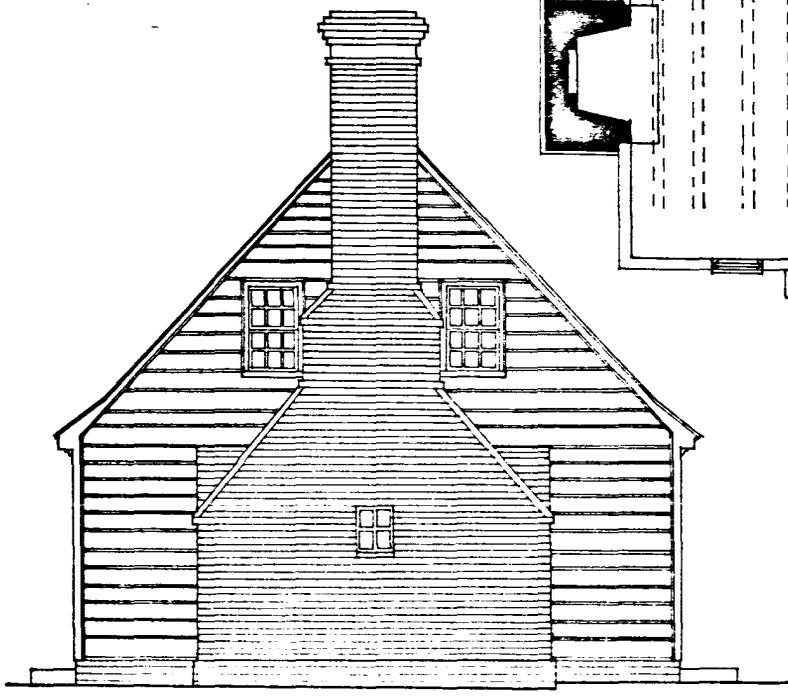


South Front Elevation

A Restoration of  
"Greenwood"  
ca. 1750  
Charles County, Maryland



First Floor Plan

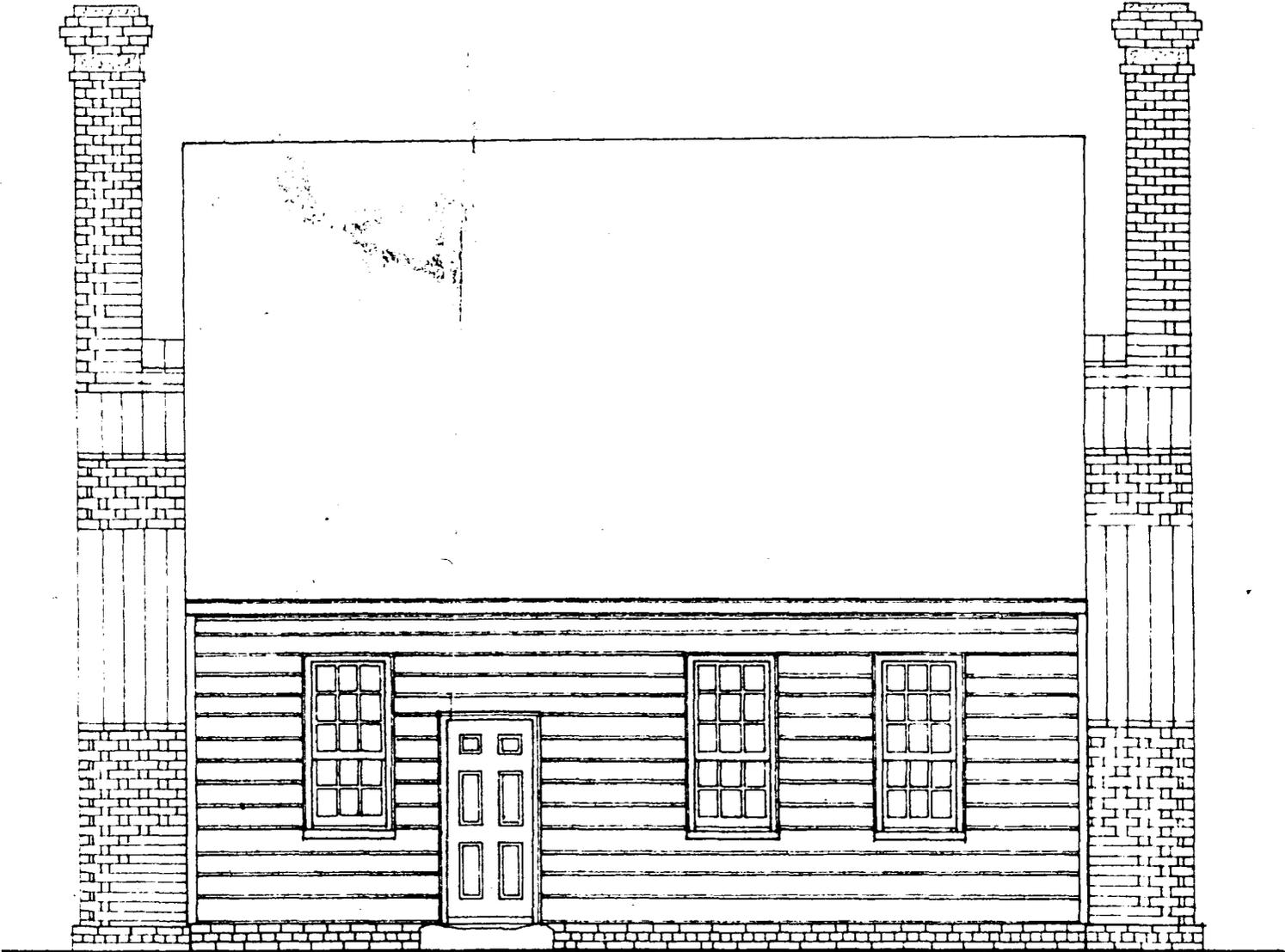


East End Elevation

Scale:

J. Richard Ruxore  
La Plata, Md.  
Jan. 1978

CH-295

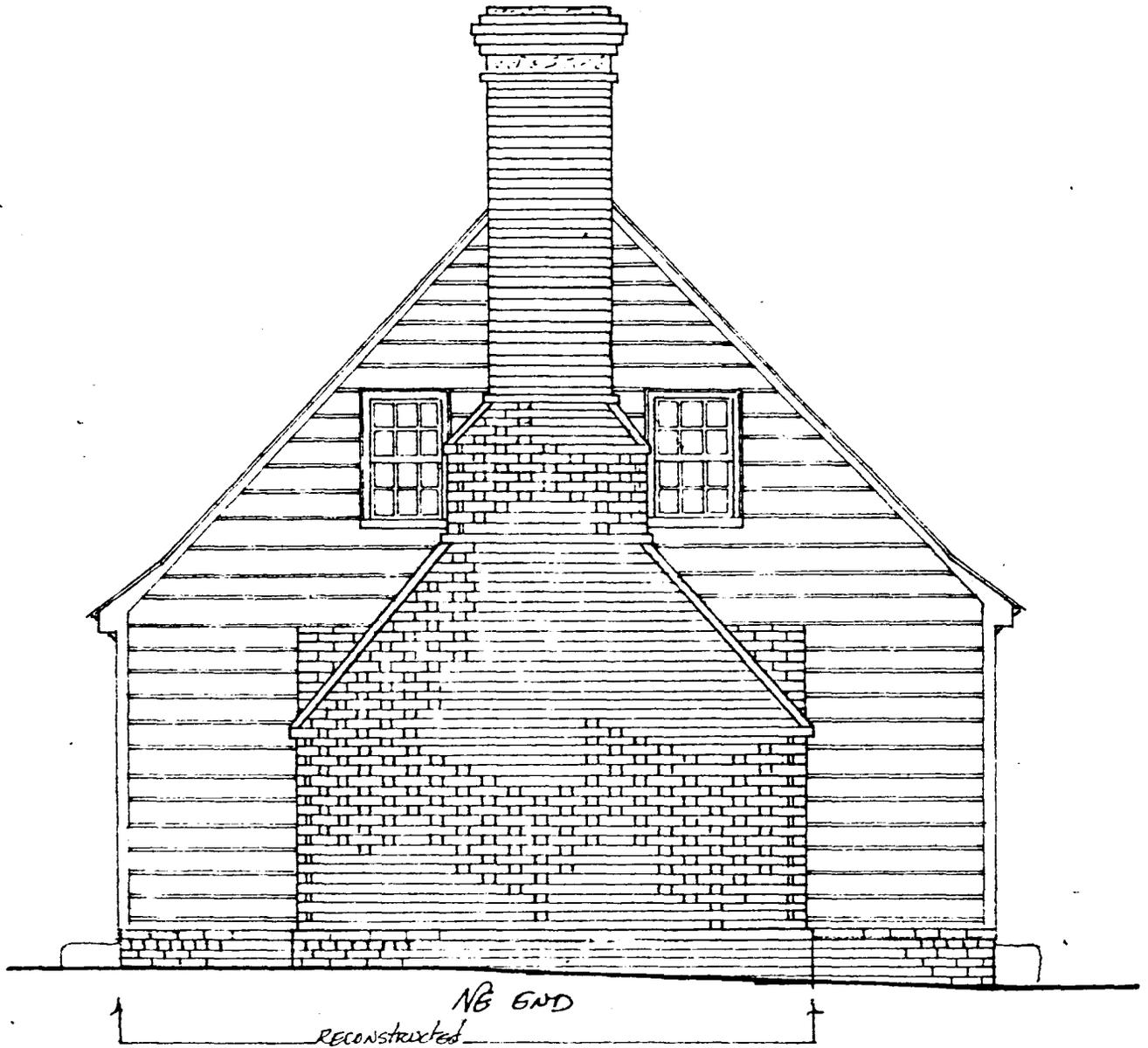


SE ELEVATION

RECONSTRUCTED

RECONSTRUCTED

CH-295





CH-295

CHAS-295  
GREENWOOD SITE; View From  
East. J.R.Rivoire, 1978