

**CH-518**  
**John Miller House**  
**Pisgah vic.**  
**Private**

**circa 1884**

Located on a 41-acre farm, the John Miller House is a common example of a 2-story rural farmhouse of the late 19th century. The house consists of a typical I-house with an original rear "ell," and a later 2-bay side gable extension. The house is surrounded by a number of related domestic and agricultural outbuildings, most dating to the first half of the 20th century.

John Miller had this house erected for himself and his family shortly after he purchased the 41-acre farm from Pliny Bowie in 1884. Of African-American descent, Miller was one among a large number of his race who remained in Charles County and purchased or leased and cultivated small farms following the Civil War. The house is a typical rural farmhouse of modest proportions and architectural ornamentation.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
MD INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Inventory No. CH-518

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name John Miller House

Common/other name \_\_\_\_\_

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number 7855 Poor House Road not for publication \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Pisgah vicinity  state Maryland code MD

county Charles code 017 zip code 20646

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification N/A

=====

4. National Park Service Certification N/A

=====

5. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property (Check all that apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing		Noncontributing	
<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>		buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>		sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>		structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>		objects
<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>		Total

Is this property listed in the National Register?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Listing \_\_\_\_\_

No

=====  
6. Function or Use  
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: Single dwelling  
AGRICULTURAL Storage/processing

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: Single dwelling  
DOMESTIC Storage

=====  
7. Description  
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Vernacular Victorian

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation not visible (parged concrete)  
roof side gable: pressed metal shingles  
walls wood frame: vinyl siding  
other \_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property.)

See Continuation Sheet No. 7-1

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8. Statement of Significance  
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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-518

=====  
Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
AGRICULTURE  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance circa 1884  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates circa 1884  
circa 1920  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation African American  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property.)

See Continuation Sheet No. 8-1

CH-518

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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(Cite the books, articles, legal records, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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

Charles County Land Records. Charles County Courthouse, La Plata, Maryland.

Klapthor, Margaret Brown. The History of Charles County, Maryland. La Plata, MD: Charles County Tercentenary, Inc., 1958.

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property 41 acres

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property is designated as Parcel 65 on Map 31, Grid 20 on the Charles County Property Map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Miller House has been associated with Parcel 65, Map 31 since its construction circa 1884.

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Kathryn Gettings Smith, Architectural Historian
organization Charles County Planning Dept. date May 12, 1999
street & number P.O. Box B telephone 301-645-0689
city or town La Plata state MD zip code 20646

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12. Property Owner
=====

name Mary Laurette Smith
street & number P.O. Box 564 telephone
city or town Indian Head state MD zip code 20640
=====

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-518

Section 7 Page 1

John Miller House  
name of property  
Charles County, Maryland  
county and state

=====  
Located on a 41-acre farm, the John Miller House is a typical example of a 2-story rural farmhouse of the late 19th century. The house consists of a common I-house with an original rear "ell" and a later 2-bay side gable extension. The house is surrounded by a number of related domestic and agricultural outbuildings, most dating to the first half of the 20th century.

The 41-acre tract, known as part of "Greenwood," contains mainly open fields bordered by wooded areas. The farm stands along the south side of Poor House Road approximately two miles east of the village of Pisgah.

The dwelling consists of a 2-story, single-pile side gable frame structure with an original 2-story rear "ell." The facade of the original house is fronted by a full-width 1-story porch covered in a half-hipped metal shingled roof. A 2-story, side gable frame addition has been made to the building's south end.

The house stands on a continuous parged concrete foundation that obscures the original base. Its walls have been reclad with vinyl siding, but its roof retains its original decorative pressed metal shingle covering. Two interior chimneys break the roof line. Both may be original, but the southern stack has been reconstructed and parged, while the original stack retains its decorative brick cap.

The original facade of the house has been somewhat altered by the remodeling of the bays. There remains an original side-passage entrance holding a replacement single-leaf door. The second first story bay contains a multiple window consisting of a fixed center light flanked by 3/1 sash windows on either side. At the second story, the facade contains two 3/1 light windows. The remaining window openings throughout the original section of the house also contain 3/1 wood sash. These were likely installed during a remodeling campaign perhaps in the 1920s or 1930s.

In addition to the 2-story frame extension on the south, the house has been altered by the enclosure of its rear porch and the construction of a gable-roofed rear wing at the building's southwest corner. Both were rendered in frame and are now clad with vinyl siding.

OUTBUILDINGS:

The dwelling is accompanied by seven contributing and two non-

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-518

Section 7 Page 2

John Miller House  
name of property  
Charles County, Maryland  
county and state

=====  
contributing outbuildings. These include a 1920s gable-roof frame shed, a 1930s front gable garage/machine shed, a front gable frame meathouse erected circa 1900, a 1930s chicken house with a sloping roof, a front gable tool shed, and a small frame stable/animal shelter built circa 1930. In addition, a modestly sized frame tobacco barns built circa 1940 occupies the property.

The non-contributing resources include a concrete block workshop dating to the 1960s, and a metal-clad shed located southeast of the house.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-518

Section 8 Page 1

John Miller House  
name of property  
Charles County, Maryland  
county and state

=====  
John Miller had this house erected for himself and his family shortly after he purchased the 41-acre farm from Pliny Bowie in 1884. Of African-American descent, Miller was one among a large number of his race who remained in Charles County and purchased or leased and cultivated small farms following the Civil War. The house is a typical rural farmhouse of modest proportions and architectural ornamentation.

Known as "Part of Greenwood Farm," the 41-acre property was purchased by Miller from Pliny Bowie for \$184.50 in 1884. The land has remained in the Miller family ever since.

Several significant alterations have been made to the house over the years. In addition, all of the outbuildings were erected after 1900.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-518

John Miller House  
name of property  
Charles County, Maryland  
county and state

=====  
**Chain of Title:**

February 27, 1884: Pliny Bowie to John Miller (died  
intestate in 1897)  
\$184.50 part of Greenwood Farm  
41 acres  
Charles County Land Records  
Liber BGS 7 Folio 111

1897: John Miller died intestate  
next of kin & sole heirs his widow,  
Mary E. Miller (died 1920) &  
daughter, Gertrude Matthews (m. to  
Albert M. Matthews)  
Mary Miller(died 1939 intestate)  
married George Hackerson  
heir-husband(George) died 1940  
Children(2)son: James Matthews (died  
1943)  
daughter: Mary Laurette Matthews  
(married Clayton Smith)

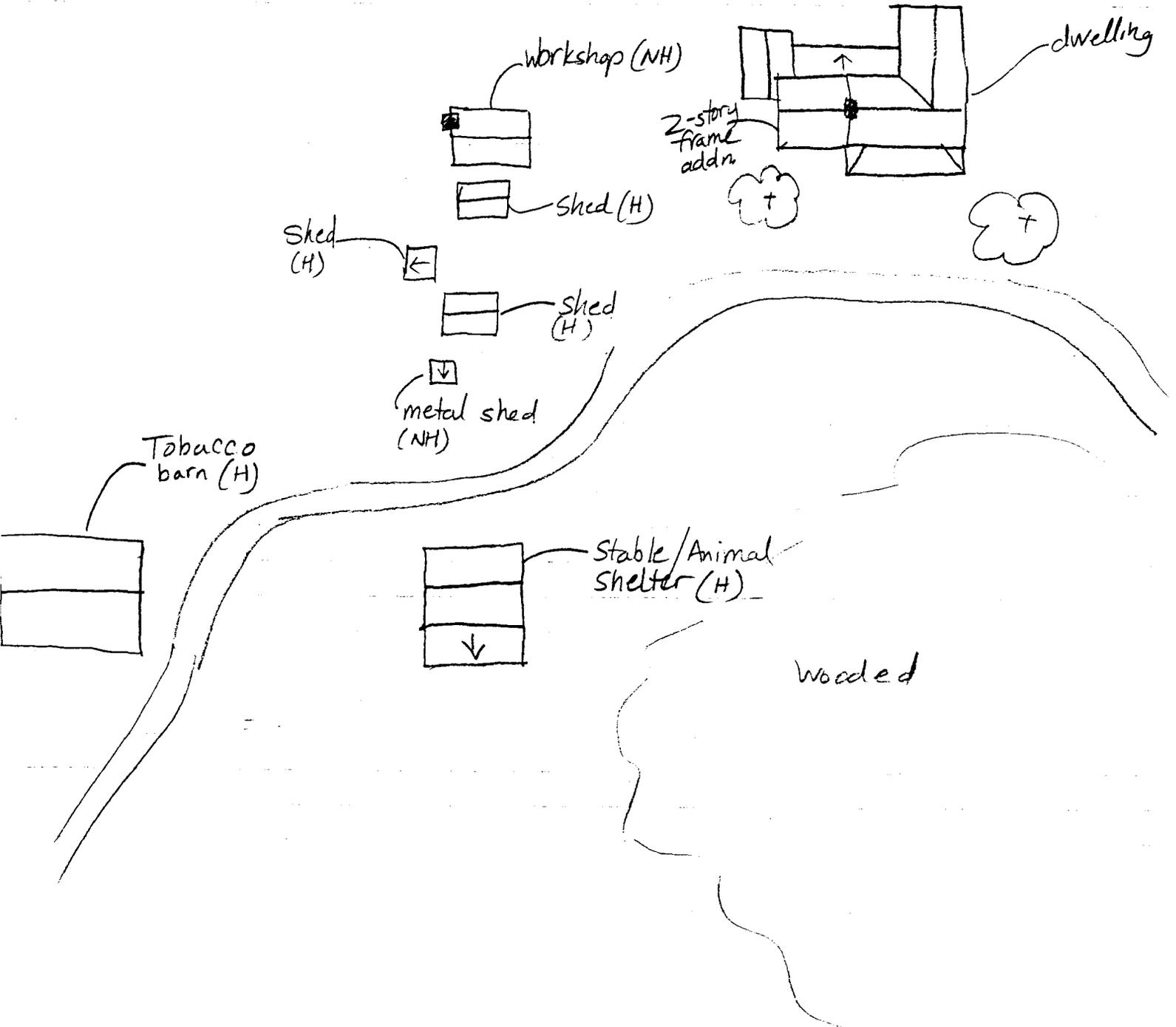
September 2, 1964: Albert M. Matthews, widower to Mary  
Laurette Smith  
41 +/- Acres Part of tract called  
"Greenwood Farm"  
west side of Main Road from Port  
Tobacco to Pisgah  
Charles County Land Records  
Liber 170 Folio 657

RESOURCE SKETCH MAP

4/99

JOHN MILLER HOUSE  
CHARLES COUNTY, MD  
7855 Poor House Rd.  
Pisgah Vic

CH-518



MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-518

John Miller House  
name of property  
Charles County, Maryland  
county and state

=====

**HISTORIC CONTEXT:**

**Geographic Organization:** Western Shore

**Chronological/Development Period (s):**

Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-  
1930

**Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme (s):**

ARCHITECTURE  
AGRICULTURE

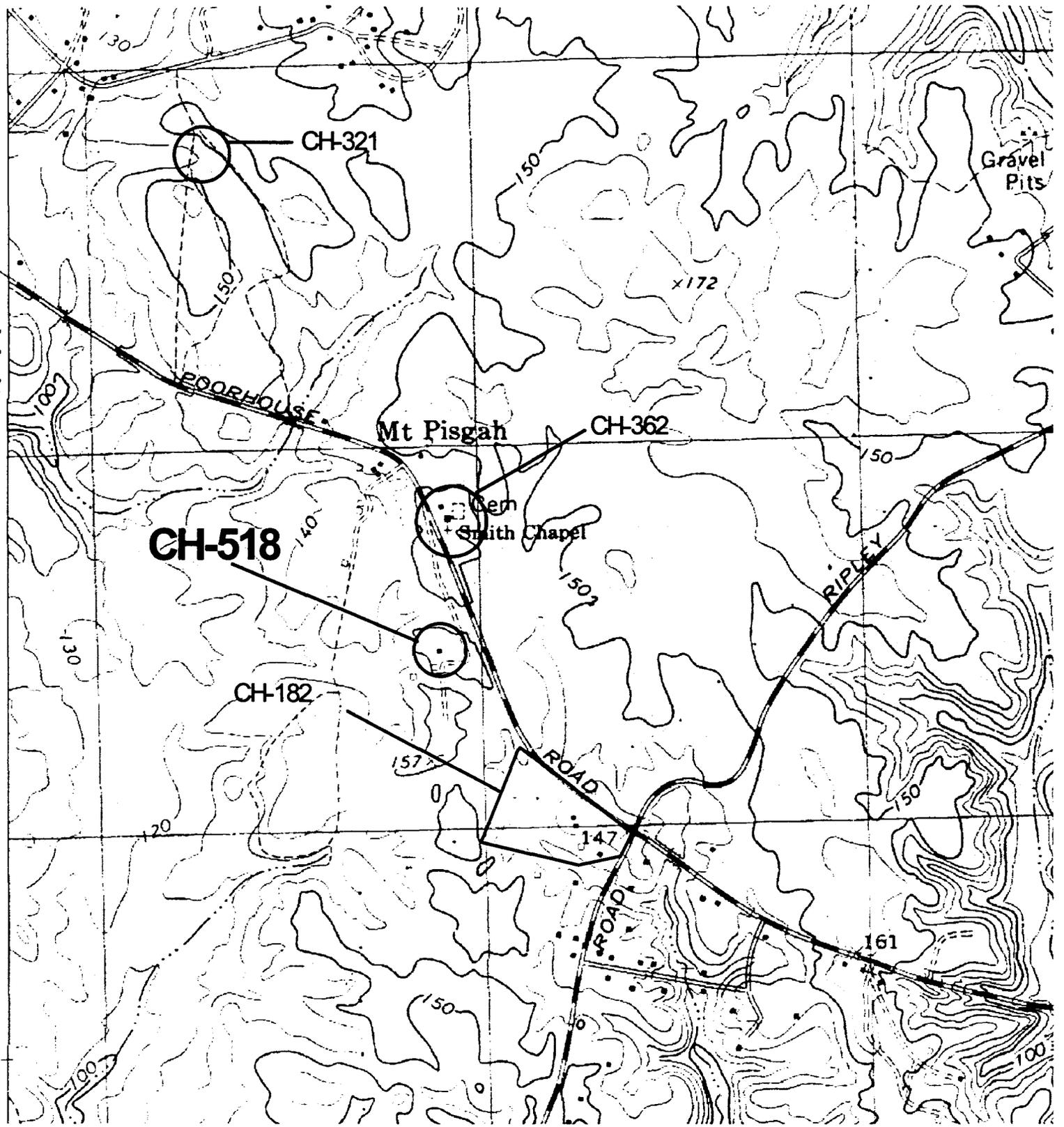
**RESOURCE TYPE(S)**

**Category:** Building

**Historic Environment:** Rural

**Historic Function (s):** DOMESTIC/Single dwelling  
AGRICULTURAL/Storage/Processing

**Known Design Source:** Unknown



John Miller House Charles County, MD	CH-518
PORT TOBACCO, MD QUAD	



CH-518

JOHN MILLER HOUSE  
CHARLES COUNTY, MD  
K.G. SMITH

4/99

MARYLANDSHPD

LOOKING SW

1 OF 5



CH-518

JOHN MILLER HOUSE  
CHARLES COUNTY, MD

K.G. SMITH

4/99

MARYLAND SHPO

LOOKING NE

2 OF 5



CH-518

JOHN MILLER HOUSE

CHARLES COUNTY, MD

K.G. SMITH

4/99

MARYLAND SHPO

L TO R: GARAGE, SHED - LOOKING SW

3 OF 5



CH-518

JOHN MILLER HOUSE

CHARLES COUNTY, MD

K.G. SMITH

4/99

MARYLAND SHPO

L TO R : STABLE, 3 SHEDS & WORKSHOP  
LOOKING SE

4 OF 5



CH-518

JOHN MILLER HOUSE

CHARLES COUNTY, MD

K.G. SMITH

4/99

MARYLAND SHPO

FOREGROUND - METAL SHED

BACKGROUND - TOBACCO BARN

LOOKING SOUTH

5 OF 5