

D-590  
Wesley United Methodist Church  
Vienna  
1932  
Public worship

The Wesley United Methodist Church stands on the northwest side of Vienna, and it is the most tangible historical and architectural landmark defining the development of an African-American neighborhood on the edge of this river-front community. A marble datestone records that the structure was “newly built” on December 12, 1932. The type of brick used in the foundation and the single flue stove chimneys, and the paired windows with multi-pane colored glass upper sash, are exterior architectural features that point to the second quarter of the twentieth century construction date.

Land record research for the community along Vienna Back Street, identified as “Rabbit Town” on some maps, indicates that a distinct African-American community developed here during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Free black Hooper Jolly purchased 16 acres west of Vienna in 1850, and the property description references the road from Vienna to Big Mill and the African American M. E. Church. By the time the Vienna district map in the Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson atlas was printed in 1877, a distinct black neighborhood included a “Colr’d Church” and “Colr’d School” along with several dwellings oriented to what later became Vienna Back Street.

In November 1880, the trustees of the Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church, James W. Standley, Robert W. Parker, Steven Jones, John H. Standley, Wesley Pinder, and Robert Hayward, paid William C. Marsters of Wicomico County \$37.50 for a 100 square lot of ground that bordered a new road that had been created as an extension of

Race Street to connect with the road to Big Mill and Cambridge, thereby providing a straighter, more direct route than the original one that passed through the center of the African-American neighborhood.

When the new Vienna Methodist Protestant Church in town was erected on Church Street in 1882, the old mid nineteenth century structure was relocated to the recently purchased lot on "new" road, however, the congregation maintained the old church lot as its burial site. The old white Methodist Protestant church was replaced in 1932 with the present structure.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-590

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

historic Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church

other Wesley United Methodist Church

## 2. Location

street and number 4904 Old Route 50  not for publication

city, town Vienna  vicinity

county Dorchester

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

name Trustees of Wesley United Methodist Church

street and number P. O. Box 11 telephone

city, town Vienna state MD zip code 21869

## 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dorchester County Clerk of Court liber CL 3 folio 201

city, town Cambridge tax map 56 tax parcel 42 tax ID number 046684

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Classification

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

## 7. Description

Inventory No. D-590

### 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.

### DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The Wesley United Methodist Church, historically the Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church, is located at 4904 Old Route 50 on the northwest side of the town of Vienna, Dorchester County, Maryland. The single-story frame church, dating to 1932, is supported on a continuous brick foundation, and the exterior is clad with vinyl siding. The medium pitched roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Attached to the back of the main block is a single-story Sunday School and church hall wing. The church faces southwest with the gable roof oriented on a northeast/southwest axis.

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Wesley United Methodist Church, historically known as the Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church, stands at 4904 Old Route 50 on the north side of Vienna in the historically black neighborhood identified on maps as "Rabbit Town." Built in 1932 in replacement of a late nineteenth century structure, the single-story gable front frame church is supported on a continuous brick foundation, and the exterior is clad with vinyl siding over plain weatherboards. A medium pitched roof finished with boxed cornices and slightly extended eaves is covered with artificial vinyl sheathing. Defining the gable front façade is a two-story entrance tower that is capped by a low pitched hip roof.

The southwest (main) elevation is a three-bay façade with the entrance tower projecting slightly forward of the principal gable front wall. A pair of replacement double doors fills the entrance, which is sheltered by a gable roofed portico supported on square columns. The upper wall surface of the tower is marked by a rectangular window with an upper sash enhanced with colored perimeter panes. A long handicapped ramp of concrete extends outward from the entrance. The gable-front wall to each side of the projecting tower is marked by a paired sash windows fitted with a multi-pane colored glass top windows and plain lower sash. Fixed in the southeast corner of the brick foundation is a marble datestone inscribed, "Wesley M. E. Church, Built Newly December 12, 1932."

The northwest and southeast side elevations are similarly finished with a single-flue exterior brick stack rising mid-point along the wall with paired window sash to each side. The paired windows follow the same format at the front windows with multi-paned upper sash and single-pane lower sash. On the northwest side there is a small gable roofed cross wing. Extending to the back of the main block is a slightly shorter single-story frame wing built atop a modern concrete block foundation.

The interior was not inspected.

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. D-590

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 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 checked="" 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

Architect/Builder

Construction dates 1932

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.)

### SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The Wesley United Methodist Church stands on the northwest side of Vienna, and it is the most tangible historical and architectural landmark defining the development of an African-American neighborhood on the edge of town. A marble datestone records that the structure was “newly built” on December 12, 1932. The type of brick used in the foundation and single flue stove chimneys, and the paired windows with multi-pane colored glass window sash are architectural finishes that point to the second quarter of the twentieth century construction date.

### HISTORIC CONTEXT

Land record research for the community along Vienna Back Street points to the settlement of free blacks in this area during the second quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Free black Hooper Jolly purchased 16 acres west of Vienna in 1850, and the property description references the road from Big Mill to Vienna and the African M. E. Church as landmarks.<sup>2</sup> By the time the Vienna district map in the Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson atlas was published in 1877, a clearly established African-American neighborhood included a “Color’d Church” and “Color’d School” along with several dwellings oriented to what was later named “Vienna Back Street,” a former section of the main road that led to Big Mill and Cambridge.

In November 1880, the trustees of the “Colored Methodist Episcopal Church,” James W. Standley, Robert W. Parker, Steven Jones, John H. Standley, Wesley Pinder, and Robert Hayward, paid William C. Marsters of Wicomico County \$37.50 for a 100 square rod lot of ground that bordered a new road that had been created as an extension of Race Street to connect with the road to Big Mill and Cambridge, thereby providing a straighter, more direct route than the original one which passed through the African-American neighborhood.

<sup>1</sup> Souvenir Booklet, *Vienna, Maryland, 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, July 15-16, 2006*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Dorchester County Land Record, WJ 5/442, 3 July 1850, Dorchester County Courthouse, Cambridge, Maryland.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-590

Name Wesley United Methodist Church  
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

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When a new Vienna Methodist Protestant Church was erected on Church Street in 1882, the old mid nineteenth century structure was moved to the parcel of land located on the "new" road, while the original burial ground remained at its original site on what later came to be known as Vienna Back Street.

**Maryland Historical Trust**  
**Maryland Inventory of**  
**Historic Properties Form**

Inventory No. D-590

Name Wesley United Methodist Church  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 2

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Wesley United Methodist Church  
4904 Old Route 50  
Vienna vicinity, Dorchester County, Maryland

Map 56, Parcel 42

1877 Vienna, District No. 3, Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson Atlas  
"Color'd Church and Color'd School situated on Vienna Back Street

CL 3/201 William C. Marsters, Wicomico County

to

11.6.1880 Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Colored Church...  
James W. Standley, Robert W. Parker, Steven Jones, John H. Standley,  
Wesley Pinder and Robert Hayward with others...

All that lot or parcel of ground situated near Vienna in Dorchester County,  
which is described as follows, Beginning at a stone on the northwest side of  
the new county road leading from Vienna to Big Mills and on the Southeast  
side of a private road at its junction with the said county road, thence by and  
with the said private road at its junction with the said county road....  
containing 100 square rods of land more or less...

\$37.50

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Inventory No. D-590

Dorchester County Land Records, Dorchester County Courthouse, Cambridge.

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property .24 acres  
Acreage of historical setting 100 square rods  
Quadrangle name Mardela Springs, MD      Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The metes and bounds of this property are coincidental with the current boundary of the lot.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

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name/title	Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian		
organization	Chesapeake Country Heritage & Preservation	date	10/14/2010
street & number	P. O. Box 5	telephone	410-651-1094
city or town	Westover	state	Maryland 21871

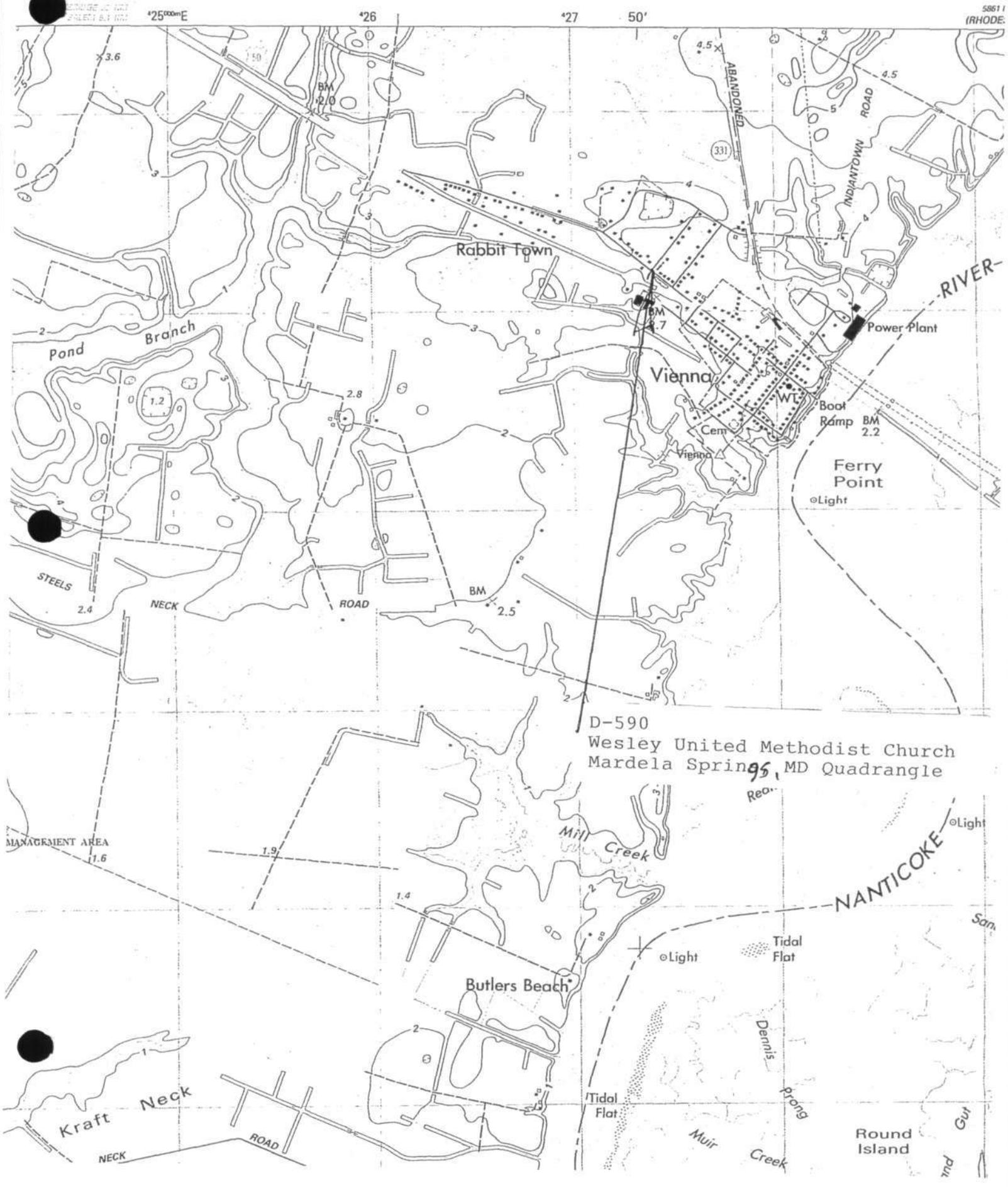
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The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

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 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



D-590  
Wesley United Methodist Church  
Mardela Springs, MD Quadrangle

5861 I  
(RHODE)



D-590

WESLEY UNITED METH. CHURCH  
VIENNA VICINITY, DORCHESTER

SOUTHWEST ELEVATION W. MD

10.2010, PAUL B. TONANT, PHOTO.

WES. / MD HISTORICAL TRUST

1 of 1

Dorchester - 590  
Wesley ME Church  
Rt. 50  
Vienna, MD, 21869

1881, 1932

Access: Public

Wesley ME Church stands 20' from the east side of Rt. 50 at Vienna. The present church was newly built to replace the old church (1881) in 1932. Wesley ME Church is part of a rural charge that include's a congregation at Reid's Grove. These churches grew up after the Civil War when there was pressure to remove black members from majority white congregations.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Wesley M.E. Church  
AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER Rt. 50 (Race St. & Harris Avenue) JK, 12/20/92  
CITY, TOWN Vienna VICINITY OF First CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
STATE Maryland COUNTY Dorchester

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" 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"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Trustees, Wesley M.E. Church Telephone #: 228-2031  
C/O Rev. Roland W. Dennis  
STREET & NUMBER 215 Bradley Ave.  
CITY, TOWN Cambridge VICINITY OF STATE, zip code MD, 21613

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, Registry of Deeds, ETC. Dorchester Co. Court House Liber #: CL 2  
Folio #: 120  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN Cambridge STATE Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE N/A  
DATE  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
CITY, TOWN STATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

D-590

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- DETERIORATED
- RUINS
- UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

- UNALTERED
- ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

- ORIGINAL SITE
- MOVED
- DATE 1881-1932

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

Wesley M.E. Church stands 20' from the east side of Rt. 50 at Vienna. The present church was newly built to replace the old church (1881) in 1932. This church measures 40' across the front facade and is 60' in depth. The building faces west. There are 2 concrete steps that lead to double wooden doors that have three horizontal wooden panels with 6 panes of clear glass atop each door. There is an entrance tower in the west gable that only protrudes 4' from the facade of the building. This tower has a rectangular window that is composed of 13 colored glass lights surrounding a single clear glass pane. This window measures 4'. There are two double-rectangular windows in the front facade. These windows are 6' and are composed of 16 colored glass lights surrounding a clear-glass pane (upper) with one clear-glass pane in the bottom. These windows are at either side of the doors. There Two of these identical double windows in the north side of the building and two more identical windows in the south side. An addition has been erected on the east end of the church. This structure is gabled (North-South) and is the Sunday School and Hall.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

D-590

## PERIOD

- PREHISTORIC
- 1400-1499
- 1500-1599
- 1600-1699
- 1700-1799
- 1800-1899
- 1900-

- ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC
- ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC
- AGRICULTURE
- ARCHITECTURE
- ART
- COMMERCE
- COMMUNICATIONS

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

- COMMUNITY PLANNING
- CONSERVATION
- ECONOMICS
- EDUCATION
- ENGINEERING
- EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
- INDUSTRY
- INVENTION

- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
- LAW
- LITERATURE
- MILITARY
- MUSIC
- PHILOSOPHY
- POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

- RELIGION
- SCIENCE
- SCULPTURE
- SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
- THEATER
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER (SPECIFY)

SPECIFIC DATES 1881-1932

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The present church is the successor to an older building that stood near the new building. Wesley M.E. Church is part of a rural charge that includes congregations at Reid's Grove and Salem. These churches grew up after the Civil War. The Methodist Church on the eastern shore of Maryland always had many black members. Conference records in the Maryland Hall of Records show that in some cases black members out numbered white members in some congregations since the congregations were founded. Most black churches were founded after the Civil War when there was more pressure to remove blacks from congregations that still had white members.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

James W. Clark, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION Maryland Commission on Afro-American  
History & Culture

DATE

STREET &amp; NUMBER 20 Dean Street

TELEPHONE

269-2893

CITY OR TOWN Annapolis

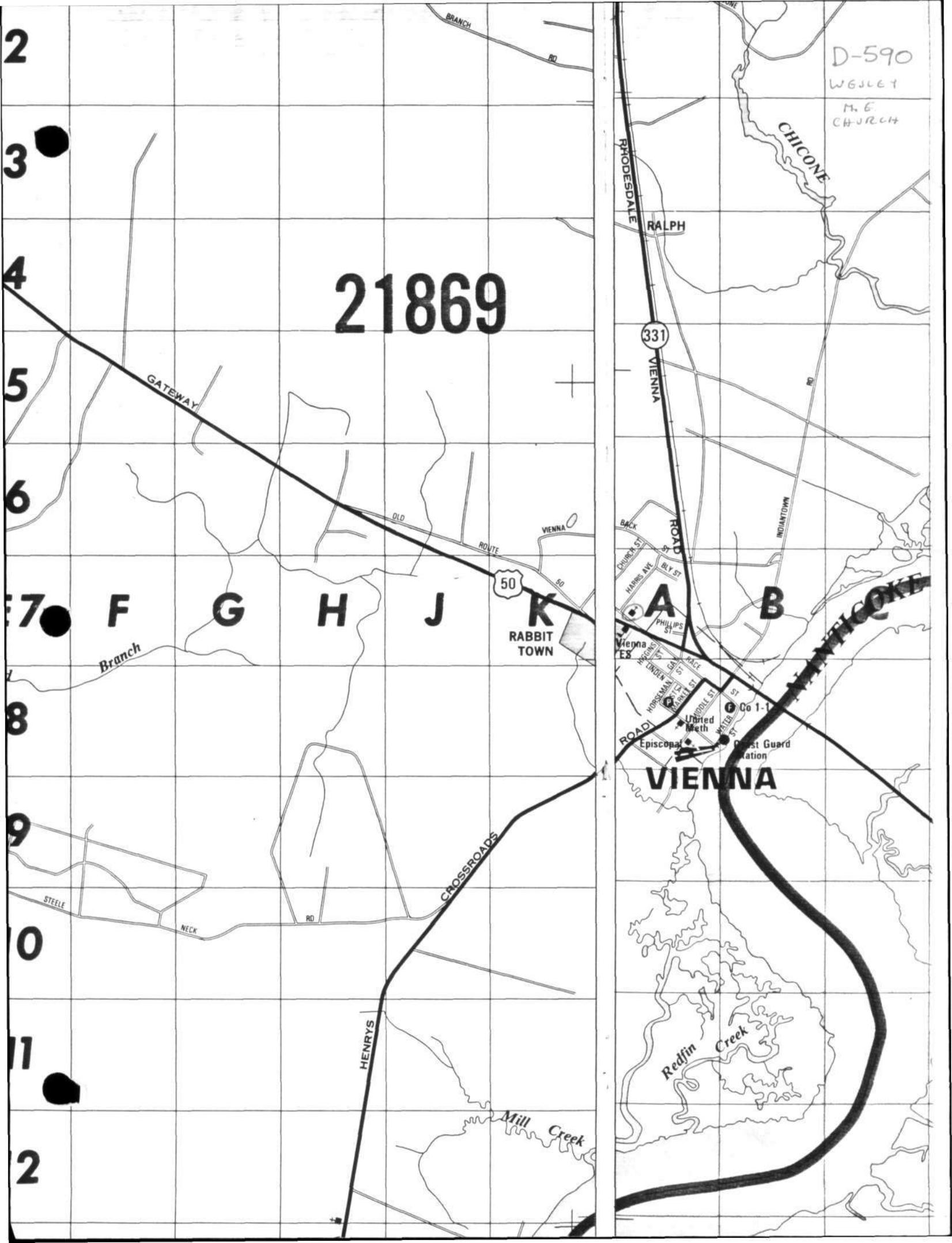
STATE

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



21869

D-590  
WGSLEY  
M. E.  
CHURCH

RHODESDALE

RALPH

331

VIENNA

CHICONE

GATEWAY

OLD ROUTE

VIENNA

50

RABBIT TOWN

BACK ROAD

CHURCH ST

HARRIS AVE

BLV ST

PHILLIPS ST

VIENNA

ES

ROAD

RODGINS ST

WHEELER ST

Branch

F

G

H

J

K

B

VIENNA

Co 1-1

Episcopal

United Meth

Post Guard Station

Redfin Creek

Mill Creek

CROSSROADS

HENRY'S

NECK

STEELE

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

0

1

2

EAST NEW MARKET

Mardela Springs Quad

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

D-590

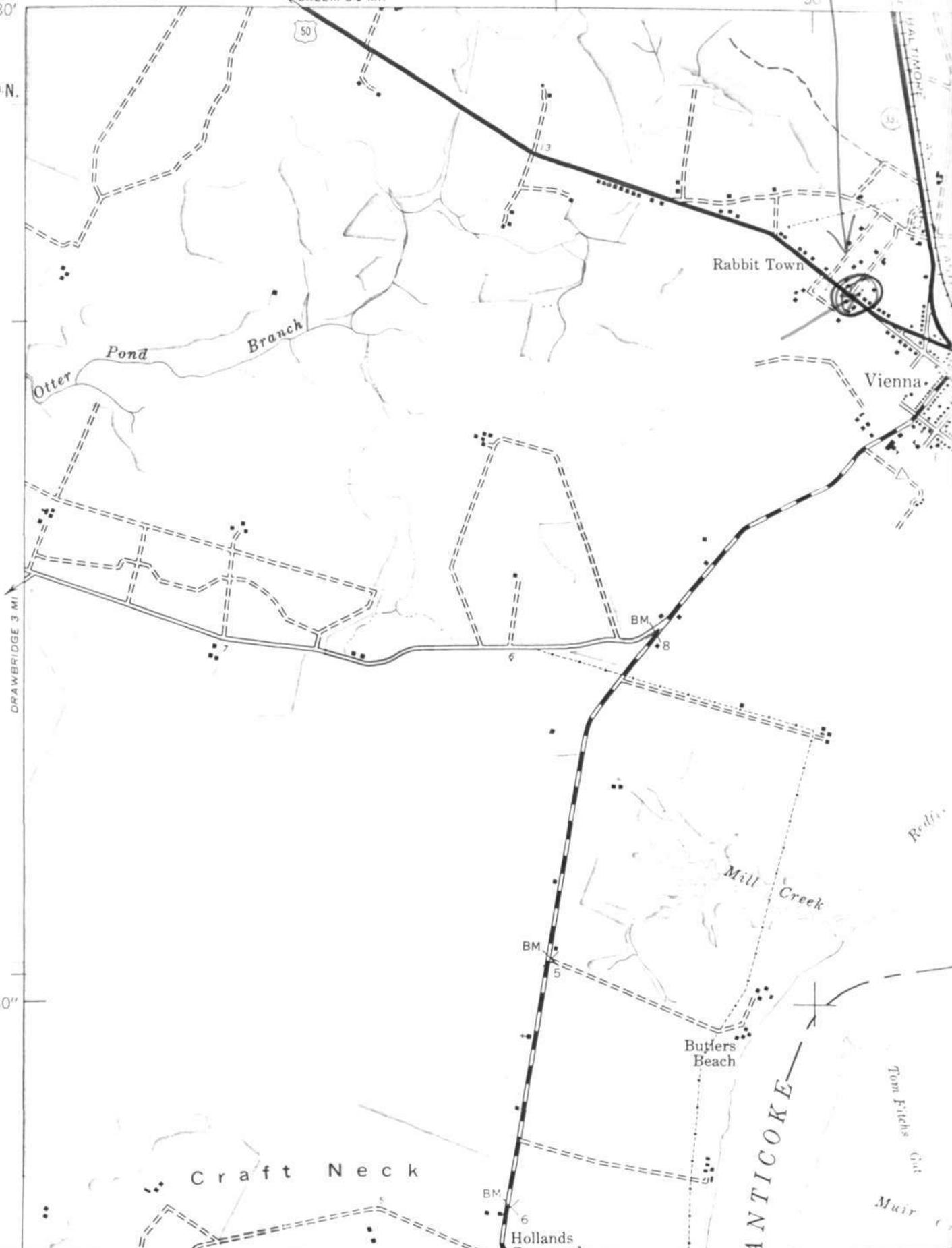
75°52'30"  
38°30"

424000m.E.

CAMBRIDGE 14 MI  
SALEM 32 MI.

50

4261000m.N.



27'30"

Craft Neck

Butlers Beach

Rabbit Town

Vienna

Hollands

ANTIOKE

Tom Fitches  
Gait  
Muir



WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH  
SUNDAY SERVICES  
10:00 A.M.  
6:00 P.M.

065

47%

Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church      D-500  
Vienna, Dorchester County, MD  
Michael Hosford

Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis  
Northwest elevation  
2/81



Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church      D-590  
Vienna, Dorchester County, MD  
Michael Hosford

Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD  
West elevation  
2/81