

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY/DISTRICT  
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property/District Name: Grossnickle Farm (main farm) Survey Number: F-4-108

Project: Replace Harmony Road Bridge Agency: FHWA/Frederick County

Site visit by MHT Staff:  no  yes Name Elizabeth Hannold Date 2/17/95

Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  None

Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map)

Based on the available information, the Grossnickle Farm (main farm) appears to be eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C, along with the adjacent Grossnickle Farm (tenant farm) property. The main farm, located on the west side of Harmony Road, beside the Little Catoctin Creek and between I-70 and U.S. Route 40, includes a mid 19th century brick house, mid 19th century frame forebay bank barn, a c. 1920s rock-faced concrete block dairy and milk house, stone out-kitchen, spring house and various sheds. Facing the main farm, on the east side of Little Catoctin Creek lies the Grossnickle Farm tenant farm, which includes a late 19th century frame house, late 19th century frame stable, frame out-kitchen and frame shed. The two properties are visually connected, sharing a small valley which is defined by geographic topography and enclosed by two major roads. In addition, they are linked historically by common ownership. The Grossnickle Farm complex is significant as a well-reserved rural complex which retains the full compliment of domestic and agricultural buildings and which clearly expresses the main farm-tenant farm relationship. The main farm house, with its recessed double porch along part of the front elevation is an important regional type from the c. 1840-1870 period. The agricultural buildings reflect the process of change over time in farming in this area, from general crop farming to a concentration on dairy farming in the early 20th century. The property appears to retain a high level of integrity.

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: MHT Inventory forms F- and F-

Prepared by: Paula S. Reed

Elizabeth Hannold 7/7/95  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date

NR program concurrence:  yes  no  not applicable

Orlando Redmit July 12, 1995  
Reviewer, NR program Date

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA - HISTORIC CONTEXT

I. Geographic Region:

- Eastern Shore (all Eastern Shore counties, and Cecil)
- Western Shore (Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's)
- Piedmont (Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery)
- Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett and Washington)

II. Chronological/Developmental Periods:

- Paleo-Indian 10000-7500 B.C.
- Early Archaic 7500-6000 B.C.
- Middle Archaic 6000-4000 B.C.
- Late Archaic 4000-2000 B.C.
- Early Woodland 2000-500 B.C.
- Middle Woodland 500 B.C. - A.D. 900
- Late Woodland/Archaic A.D. 900-1600
- Contact and Settlement A.D. 1570-1750
- Rural Agrarian Intensification A.D. 1680-1815
- Agricultural-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870
- Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930
- Modern Period A.D. 1930-Present
- Unknown Period (  prehistoric  historic)

III. Prehistoric Period Themes:

- Subsistence
- Settlement
- Political
- Demographic
- Religion
- Technology
- Environmental Adaption

IV. Historic Period Themes:

- Agriculture
- Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning
- Economic (Commercial and Industrial)
- Government/Law
- Military
- Religion
- Social/Educational/Cultural
- Transportation

V. Resource Type:

Category: Buildings

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Domestic--single dwelling, Domestic--secondary structure, Agriculture--processing, Agriculture--storage, Agriculture--field, Agriculture--animal facility, Agriculture--outbuilding

Known Design Source: none

## Capsule Summary

F-4-108

Grossnickle Farm, G.W. Summers Farm, Oakland Mills  
9120 Harmony Road  
Middletown, MD

1850-1945

This farmstead on the west side of Harmony Road and Little Catoctin Creek is located between I-70 and U.S. Route 40. The buildings face south and southeast and include a mid-19th century brick house; mid 19th century frame forebay bank barn; a ca. 1920s rock-faced concrete block dairy and milk house; stone out-kitchen; spring house and various sheds. The buildings are located at the base of a steep hill, on the west bank of the creek. An additional small frame shed is located on the opposite side of Harmony Road from the main complex of buildings.

This farmstead is significant as a well-preserved rural complex with a full compliment of outbuildings remaining intact. Newer (ca. 1920) structures such as the milk house and dairy reflect the process of change over time in farming and, perhaps the change from general crop farming to a concentration on dairy farming which occurred generally over the region in the early 20th century. Specifically, the house with its recessed double porch along part of the front elevation is an important regional type from the approximately 1840-1870 period. It appears to be derived from Germanic cultural traditions and is prominent through central Maryland and south-central Pennsylvania.

This farmstead, known as Val Creek Farm is an excellent and intact complex of the third quarter of the 19th century. It is notable for its remaining group of outbuildings dating from a span of time reflecting the shift from an economy based on grist and flour milling to one based on dairy farming. This transition occurred gradually in the early 20th century as local mills were unable to compete with large scale mid-western mills and easy access to mass-produced baked goods. After the Grossnickle family purchased the property in 1917, they built the dairy barn and the Oakland Mill passed from the scene. This property therefore represents the rich agricultural historic of Frederick County and central Maryland.

The architecture of the house represents an important regional type from the mid 19th century characterized by the recessed double porch along part of the front elevation. This type appears to be associated with Germanic building traditions. From readily visible exterior features this house appears to have been built by the Kinna family. It is shown on an 1857 plat of the farm although it is drawn in with pencil, possibly at a later date. (Equity Records Liber BGF #1, folio 596). Since the mill, operating as Oakland Mills was here prior to 1831, it is possible that another house stood on this location, or that the present mid-19th century appearing building incorporates an earlier house.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. F-4-108

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

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

historic **Grossnickle Farm, G.W. Summers Farm, Oakland Mills**

and/or common **Val Creek Farm**

## 2. Location

street & number **9120 Harmony Road**  not for publication

city, town **Middletown**  vicinity of **\_\_\_\_\_** congressional district **6**

state **Maryland** county **Frederick**

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name **Mr. James P. Grossnickle**

street & number **9120 Harmony Road** telephone no.: **\_\_\_\_\_**

city, town **Middletown** state and zip code **Maryland 21769**

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. **Frederick County Courthouse** Liber **482**

street & number **West Patrick Street** Folio **184**

city, town **Frederick** state **Maryland**

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title **N/A**

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records **\_\_\_\_\_**

city, town **\_\_\_\_\_** state **\_\_\_\_\_**

## 7. Description

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### Condition

excellent     deteriorated  
 good         ruins  
 fair          unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

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

### DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

This farmstead on the west side of Harmony Road and Little Catocin Creek is located between I-70 and U.S. Route 40. The buildings face south and southeast and include a mid-19th century brick house; mid 19th century frame forebay bank barn; a ca. 1920s rock-faced concrete block dairy and milk house; stone out-kitchen; spring house and various sheds. The buildings are located at the base of a steep hill, on the west bank of the creek. An additional small frame shed is located on the opposite side of Harmony Road from the main complex of buildings.

### General Description

The principal building in this group is the southeast facing farmhouse which is a two story, eight bay brick structure with four of its facade bays recessed beneath an overhanging double porch. The recessed porch contains the second-sixth bays from the west end of the house. The house has four front doors, each with a transom. Two of the entrances lead from the porch into the house. The other two are in the first and third bays from the east end of the house. Windows have two over two pane sash. The roofing material is pressed metal shingles. The house appears to date from the third quarter of the 19th century. The barn which appears contemporary with the house is a timber framed structure with vertical siding and an overhanging forebay. It faces south.

Among the domestic outbuildings, located to the southwest of the house is a stone out-kitchen. Typical of stone construction in the Middletown Valley, it is made of narrow, flat courses of local stone. It and a spring house between the out-kitchen and the house appear to be contemporary with the house and barn. The other major building is a dairy and milk house of rock-faced concrete block. These buildings appear to date from the 1920s. Other structures include a silo, a chicken coop and gable-roofed frame sheds, one of which is separated from the farmstead complex by Harmony Road. These sheds probably date from the late 19th or early 20th century. The separate shed is slated for demolition in the Harmony Road bridge replacement project. While this shed is contemporary with others in the farmstead, since it is detached from the rest of the complex and is not individually significant or eligible, its demolition would not affect the integrity or significance of the main complex.

## 8. Significance

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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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater	
<input checked="" 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					
<b>Specific dates</b>	1850-1945	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	unknown		
check: Applicable Criteria:	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	
and/or					
Applicable Exceptions:	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	
	<input type="checkbox"/> E	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> G		
Level of Significance:	<input type="checkbox"/> national	<input type="checkbox"/> state	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local		

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

### SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

This farmstead is significant as a well-preserved rural complex with a full compliment of outbuildings remaining intact. Newer (ca. 1920) structures such as the milk house and dairy reflect the process of change over time in farming and, perhaps the change from general crop farming to a concentration on dairy farming which occurred generally over the region in the early 20th century. Specifically, the house with its recessed double porch along part of the front elevation is an important regional type from the approximately 1840-1870 period. It appears to be derived from Germanic cultural traditions and is prominent through central Maryland and south-central Pennsylvania.

### **Historic Context**

Frederick County and central Maryland in general were settled during the second half of the 18th century although there were habitations in the region as early as the 1730s. Although land was initially held by English entrepreneurs from eastern Maryland, the majority of settlers who actually lived in Frederick County were Germans who had migrated south from Pennsylvania. The area developed into a prime agricultural region with emphasis on the production of small grains. With grain farming dominating, related industries and transportation networks soon developed. Grist and flour milling was prevalent, as was distilling. Central Maryland along with south central Pennsylvania grew in importance as an agricultural region. In Maryland, Frederick and adjoining Washington County led the state in wheat and corn production throughout most of the 19th century. The allure of the agricultural prosperity of central Maryland influenced Robert E. Lee's plan to invade Maryland in the late summer of 1862. The greater region was the nation's bread basket until large scale grain production in the midwest overtook local production in the later 19th century.

### **Resource History**

According to the 1873 Atlas of Frederick County, C.O. Titus, a property marked at this site was owned by G.W. Summers in that year. That atlas also records the presence of Oakland Mill, a grist mill, located south of Little Catoctin Creek and west of present Harmony Road. It too, was owned by G.W. Summers. The small scale of the 1858 Map of Frederick County makes precise identification of properties difficult, but a house is identified, apparently slightly west of the present complex of buildings as belonging to the heirs of J. Kinna. According to Scharf's History of Western

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Maryland, G.W. Summers was a miller residing at Harmony. On the 1873 map he is shown as owning several properties along the Little Catocin Creek and at Harmony.

In 1831, John Craft was appointed trustee to sell the real estate of Frederick and Elizabeth Craft, deceased. Their property included "Oakland Mills" containing 255 $\frac{3}{4}$  acres plus a 68 acre tract which was sold on July 16, 1835 to James Kinney (Kinna) for \$10,487.75. James Kinna acquired numerous parcels of land and another "lower" mill from James Bowlus over the next two decades. In 1857, James Kinna died intestate and in debt. Through equity court case #2735, with Central Bank of Frederick versus Samson Kinna, Thomas Kinna et. al. (heirs of James Kinna), Richard Marshall, Trustee sold the extensive real estate of James Kinna. The Oakland Mills property, at this time containing a little more than 178 acres, was sold to George W. Summers, on December 20, 1861. George W. Summers also purchased in 1866, a house and lot, part of the mill property from Charlotte Kinna. This place contained slightly more than 3 acres.

Oakland Mills remained in the Summers family, being conveyed to George's son Joshua, until March 30, 1909 when Joshua sold 180 acres plus the 3-acre parcel to James K. Waters for \$11,700. (Liber STH 287, folio 252). James K. Waters sold the two tracts for \$11,000 to Welty Grossnickle in 1917 (Liber 346, folio 576). The property remains in the Grossnickle family today, although they added several parcels to make the total 207 acres. The Grossnickle family converted the farm to dairy and presumably cased operations of the mill.

### Resource Evaluation

This farmstead, known as Val Creek Farm is an excellent and intact complex of the third quarter of the 19th century. It is notable for its remaining group of outbuildings dating from a span of time reflecting the shift from an economy based on grist and flour milling to one based on dairy farming. This transition occurred gradually in the early 20th century as local mills were unable to compete with large scale mid-western mills and easy access to mass-produced baked goods. After the Grossnickle family purchased the property in 1917, they built the dairy barn and the Oakland Mill passed from the scene. This property therefore represents the rich agricultural historic of Frederick County and central Maryland.

The architecture of the house represents an important regional type from the mid 19th century characterized by the recessed double porch along part of the front elevation. This type appears to be associated with Germanic building traditions. From readily visible exterior features this house appears to have been built by the Kinna family. It is shown on an 1857 plat of the farm although it is drawn in with pencil, possibly at a later date. (Equity Records Liber BGF #1, folio 596). Since the mill, operating as Oakland Mills was here prior to 1831, it is possible that another house stood on this location, or that the present mid-19th century appearing building incorporates an earlier house.

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## HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

### MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont (Frederick County)

Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

Agricultural-Industrial Transition 1815-1870 A.D.

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Architectural/Landscape Architecture/Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: Buildings

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s):

Domestic/single dwelling  
Domestic/secondary structure  
Agricultural/Subsistence/animal facility

Known Design Source: Vernacular



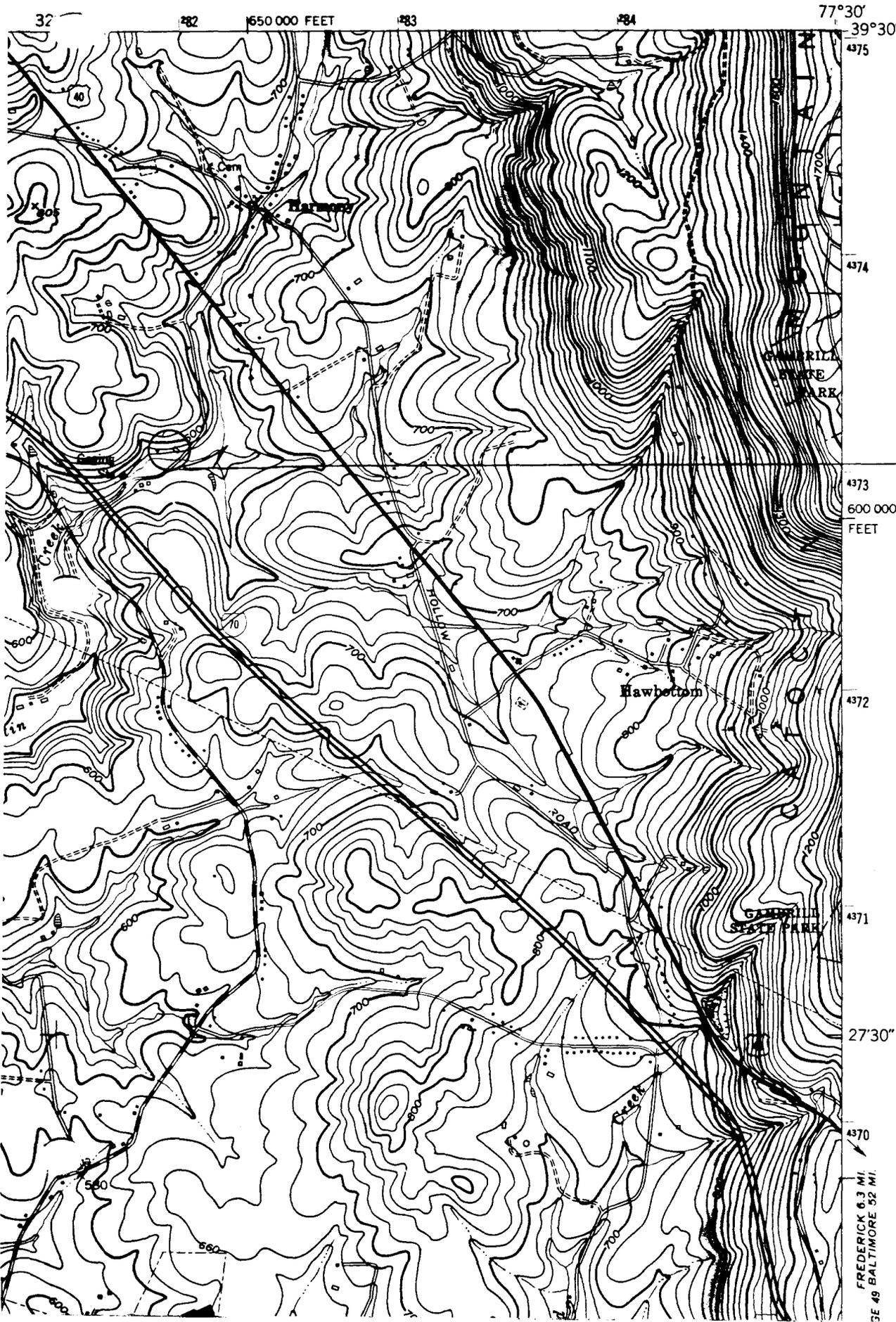
F-4-108  
F-4-109  
MIDDLETOWN VICINITY  
FREDERICK CO. MD.



Site Plan  
Harmony Rd Bridge Project Area  
Frederick Co., MD  
Not to Scale

MIDDLETOWN QUADRANGLE  
MARYLAND  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

5563 III SW  
(CATOCTIN FURNACE)



32 1650 000 FEET 1651 000 FEET 1652 000 FEET 77°30' 39°30' 4375 4374 4373 600 000 FEET 4372 4371 27°30" 4370  
FREDERICK 6.3 MI.  
BALTIMORE 92 MI.

F-4-108  
GROSSNICKLE FARM  
OAKLAND MILLS  
9120 HARMONY RD  
MIDDLETOWN, MD  
FREDERICK CO.



GROSSYICKLE FARM, G.W. SUMMERS, OAKLAND MILLS

SURVEY NO. F-4-108

VAL CREEK FARM

Harmony Rd. Frederick Co. MD

Photo by P. Reel 4/95 (NEGATIVE LOCATION, PRESERVATION ASSOC. INC)

General view, NE

#1



GROSSMICELE FARMS, 6 W. SUMMITES, OAKLAND MILLS

SURVEY NO. F-4-108

Val Creek Farm

Harmony Road, Frederick Co. MD

photo by P. Reed 4/95 (COOPERATIVE LOCATION, PRESERVATION ASSOC)

Dairy, milk house, house and domestic outbuildings

NW view

#2



CROSSICKLE FARM, G. W. SUMMERS, OAKLAND MILLS

SURVEY NO. F-4-10

Val Creek Farm

Harmony Road, Frederick Co., MD

photo by P. Reed 4/95 (NEGATIVE LOCATION PRESERVATION ASSOC. INC)

House Elevation, NW view

#3



GROSSICKLE FARM, G. W. SUMMERS, OAKLAND MILLS

SURVEY NO. F-4-108

Val Creek Farm

Harmony Road, Frederick Co., MD

photo by P. Reed, 4/95 (NEGATIVE LOCATION PRESERVATION ASSOC. INC)

House and Stone Kitchen + Spring house

NW view

#4



GROSSWICKLE FARM, G.W. SUMMERS, OAKLAND MILLS  
VAL CREEK FARM

Harmony Road, Frederick County

photo by P. Reed 4/95 (NEGATIVE LOCATION PRESERVATION ASSOC. INC.)

Domestic outbuildings - stone out kitchen, spring house  
shed / chicken house

NW view

#5



GROSSICKLE FARM, G.W. SUMMERS, OAKLAND MILLS

SURVEY NO. F-4-108

VAL CREEK FARM

Harmony Rd., Frederick Co.

photo by P. Reed, 4/95

(NEGATIVE LOCATION PRESERVATION ASSOC. INC.)

Dairy & milk house

N view

#6



GROSSNICKLE FARM, G. W. SUMMERS, OAKLAND MILLS

SURVEY NO. F. 4-108

VAL CREEK FARM

Harmony Road, Frederick Co, MD

photo by P. Reed 4/95 (NEGATIVE LOCATION PRESERVATION ASSOC. INC.)

Barn N view

#7