

F-4-88

Charles T. Ramsburg Farmstead  
Middletown vicinity  
Private

Ca. 1890-1940

The Charles T. Ramsburg Farmstead is an agricultural complex centered on a circa 1890 Queen Anne style frame house with 2-1/2 stories and twin shingled gables over a one-story porch and polygonal two-story bay, and its contemporary outbuildings including a frame summer kitchen, a frame wagon shed/corn crib, a frame bank barn, and a rusticated concrete block dairy barn and milk house with a terra cotta silo, the last three structures being erected in the early to mid 1930's. The farm was recognized in 1938 as a typical farm of the period by its being featured in a Life magazine article about the effect of the Agricultural Adjustment Act on American farmers, with aerial photos identifying its structures and the crop planting patterns for that year. The Ramsburg Farm was also the first farm in Maryland to vaccinate its dairy herd against brucellosis or Bang's Disease, a serious threat to the state's livestock in the early 20th century. Established about 1880, probably by Charles T. Ramsburg, the house and farm buildings may have been built for Charles' son Henry T. Ramsburg. It remains a Ramsburg (currently spelled Rensberg) family property.

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Charles T. Ramsburg Farmstead  
Middletown  
Frederick County

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont  
(Harford, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery  
Counties, and Baltimore City)

Chronological/Development Period:  
Industrial/Urban Dominance, A.D. 1870-1930  
Modern Period, A.D. 1930-Present

Prehistoric/Historic Period Themes:  
Agriculture  
Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function and Use:  
Domestic/single dwelling/residence  
Domestic/secondary structure/kitchen  
Agriculture/subsistence/animal facility/barn  
Agriculture/subsistence/animal facility/chicken coop  
Agriculture/subsistence/storage/granary

Known Design Source: None

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Charles T. Ramsburg Farmstead

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 7229 Holter Road  not for publicationcity, town Middletown  vicinity of congressional district 6th

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Thomas D. &amp; Bonnie Rensburg

street &amp; number 7229 Holter Road telephone no.:

city, town Middletown state and zip code Md. 21769

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Frederick County Courthouse liber 1614

street &amp; number 100 W. Patrick Street folio 492

city, town Frederick state Md. 21701

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date  federal  state  county  local

pository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No. F-4-88

<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE COUNT: 8

The Charles T. Ramsburg Farmstead is an agricultural complex centered on a circa 1890-1900 2-1/2-story frame dwelling with a frame summer kitchen, a frame bank barn, a frame wagon shed/corn crib, all contemporary with the dwelling, and a rusticated concrete block dairy barn and milk house, and a terra cotta tile silo, dating from about 1935. The farmstead is located on the northeast side of Holter Road about 1 mile southeast of Middletown, Frederick County, Maryland. The farmstead is surrounded by open fields and the agricultural outbuildings are still in use, along with a non-contributing concrete block equipment shed, a loafing shed, and a concrete silo. An aerial photo of the farm published in a Life magazine article in 1938 shows that the farmstead once contained several more small agricultural buildings, including two chicken houses, a tool shed, a wagon shed, a hog barn, and an earlier silo. All of these have been demolished since about 1950.

The dwelling is a Queen Anne style house, with a double gabled southwestern elevation facing Holter Road. The exterior is covered with aluminum siding on the north and east elevations and narrow clapboard siding on the southwest and south elevations. This is planned for replacement with aluminum in the near future. The main facade has three bays with a polygonal, two-story bay on the southwest corner. The simple entrance in the center bay has a glazed and paneled door below a plain rectangular transom. The first story is sheltered by a veranda which extends around to the south elevation. The porch has a turned balustrade railing. The double gables are faced with diamond pattern wood shingles and each has a 1/1 window. The lower edges of the gable above the polygonal bay are decorated with pendants. The windows are 1/1 with louvered shutters. The roof is covered with composition material and two central chimneys rise above it. A modern exterior brick chimney is on the north elevation. At the southeast corner is a two-story open porch. The interior has a simple, central stairhall plan with a parlor on each side of the hall and a dining room and kitchen across the rear of the plan. The walls have new wallpaper, but the original hardwood floors and chestnut trim are still intact and unpainted. In the north parlor is a painted and grained slate mantel and the south parlor has a chestnut mantel; both are in a generally Renaissance Revival style.

Summer kitchen: The one-story frame summer kitchen is located near the northeast corner of the dwelling. It has a rectangular plan with german siding and a corrugated metal gable roof with an off-center chimney. In the south elevation are a 4-panel door and a 6/6 window. The summer kitchen is contemporary with the dwelling.

Agricultural outbuildings:

Wagon shed/corn crib: The frame wagon shed/corn crib was built in the last quarter of the 19th century. It has vertical siding and a standing seam metal roof. Double corn cribs flank the central drive-through passage. The wagon shed stands next to the bank barn and in the 1938 photo was flanked on the north by another wagon shed.

(continued on separate sheet)

# 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 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 checked="" 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** C. 1890-1940 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
and/or  
Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Level of Significance:  national  state  local

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

The Charles T. Ramsburg Farmstead was recognized as a progressive, "model" farm in the late 1930's by its being featured in a Life magazine article in 1938 regarding the effect of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of that year on American farmers. The Ramsburg Farm was also the first in Maryland to have its dairy herd vaccinated against brucellosis or Bang's Disease in about 1935, a serious threat to the health of both animals and humans in the early 20th century. In the magazine article, aerial photos identified the buildings in the agricultural outbuilding group of the farmstead and the various crops being planted in the outlying fields surrounding it. These photos provide a striking visual impression of the character of Frederick County in the late 1930's when agriculture was at a much more intensive level than in the present, when much farmland is being converted to private residential use and subdivisions. In the 1938 photos, the fields are almost completely cleared, with thin treelines and creeks dividing them. The farmstead appears as a compact cluster rather than a linear group as in some other Frederick County farms, with clearly defined sections according to use. The health issue of Bang's Disease in Frederick County in the early 20th century has not been fully researched for this survey; however, in 1933, the Frederick County Holstein Association heard a presentation by state health department veterinarians which was the first local public introduction to the problem. By 1935, the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service was working with local authorities to control the disease, presumably by inoculations of dairy herds. Presumably, the Ramsburg Farm's herd was vaccinated about that time. This progressive step may have heightened the reputation of Frank G. Ramsburg (spelling of the family name appears to have changed in deed records between 1910 and 1941), the farm tenant in the 1930's, as a "modern" farmer, leading to the 1938 magazine article.

The farm was established during the last quarter of the 19th century on a section of the 275-acre tract called "Good Wife" purchased by John R. Ramsberg, Sr. (or Ramsburg as in Williams and McKinsey's History of Frederick County of 1910) (1760-1844). His son Henry Ramsburg (1796-1868) came into ownership of the southern part of the family estate and it was from this holding that his son Charles T. Ramsburg (1841-?) established the present farmstead, the center of a 120-acre tract which his son Henry T. Ramsburg farmed, acquiring it for himself in 1910. It is likely that the house was built for the family of Henry T. Ramsburg. The current owners, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas D. Ramsberg, are direct descendants of Charles T. and Henry T. Ramsburg.



7.1 Description (Continued)

Bank barn: The frame bank barn was probably built about 1875-80. It has vertical siding and a standing seam metal roof over a mortise-and-tenon frame. A non-contributing loafing shed extends to the southeast from the barn. In 1938, a silo, possibly of brick, stood next to the ramp on the north side; it was demolished probably in the 1950's. The barn's stall level on the southeast was identified in the 1938 magazine photo as the "old cowshed", and the neighboring dairy barn as the "new cowshed".

Dairy barn, milk house, and terra cotta silo: These three structures are located immediately southwest of the bank barn. Built in the early or mid-1930's, the dairy barn or "new cowshed", as noted in 1938, and the milk house are rusticated concrete block with corrugated metal gable roofs. The windows are metal casements and the gables have vertical and tongue-and-groove siding in the peaks. The terra cotta "new" silo is located at the northwest corner of the dairy barn and has a domed standing seam metal cap. This silo is in excellent condition and is a good example of the terra cotta type.

Charles T. Ramsburg Farmstead  
Frederick County

SURVEY No. F-4-88

9.1 Bibliography (Continued)

Williams, T.J.C., and Folger McKinsey. History of Frederick County, 1910.  
Reprinted Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1979, p. 1037.

# LIFE ON THE AMERICAN NEWSFRONT: MR. ROOSEVELT'S FARM. BILL AND MR. REMSBERG



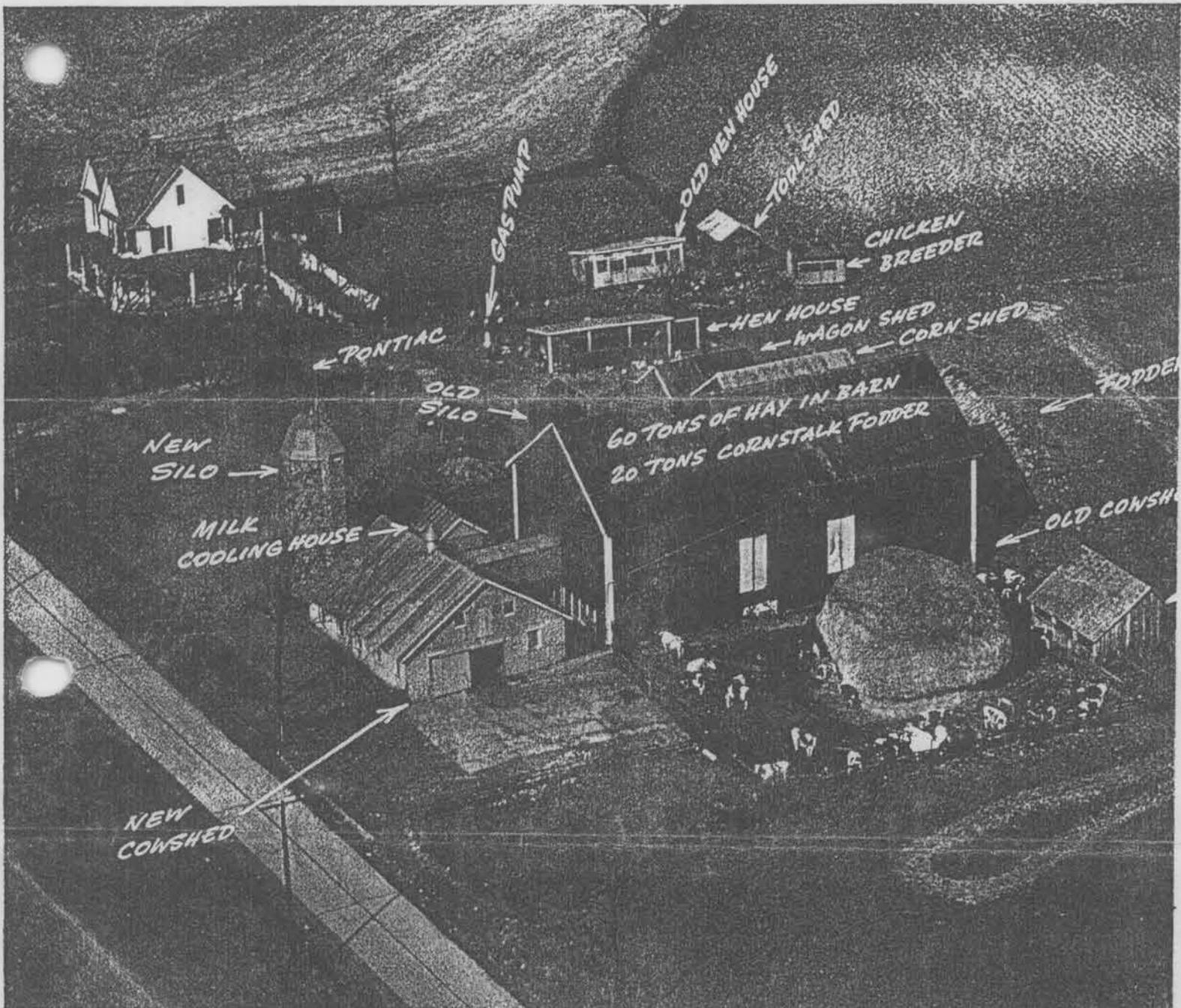
Secretary Wallace, who gives farmers their planting orders, buys his milk from the dairy of Frank Remsberg (right).

With a squiggle of his pen on Feb. 16, President Roosevelt signed the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 and destroyed for good the outworn myth of the American farmer's sturdy independence. With the coming into law of the most drastic and far-reaching farm-control bill in the nation's history, Frank G. Remsberg of Frederick County, Md., (right) and the other 10,000,000 American farmers will now run their businesses pretty much as one man—the Secretary of Agriculture (left)—tells them to.

The new AAA revives most of the old except processing taxes, covers much new ground. Few Congressmen who passed the 30,000-word bill even pretended to understand its provisions. But all of them knew the chief purpose of it: to put money in the farmer's pocket, principally by keeping his crop prices up the same way the manufacturer keeps his up, i.e. by regulating supply. For buyers of food, this means less food at higher prices. That seems outrageous, when "one-third of the nation" is "illnourished." But on the other hand, why should the farmer continue to be the goat of the capitalistic system?



Farmer Remsberg (right) scratches his head as the agent explains his powerful customer's new

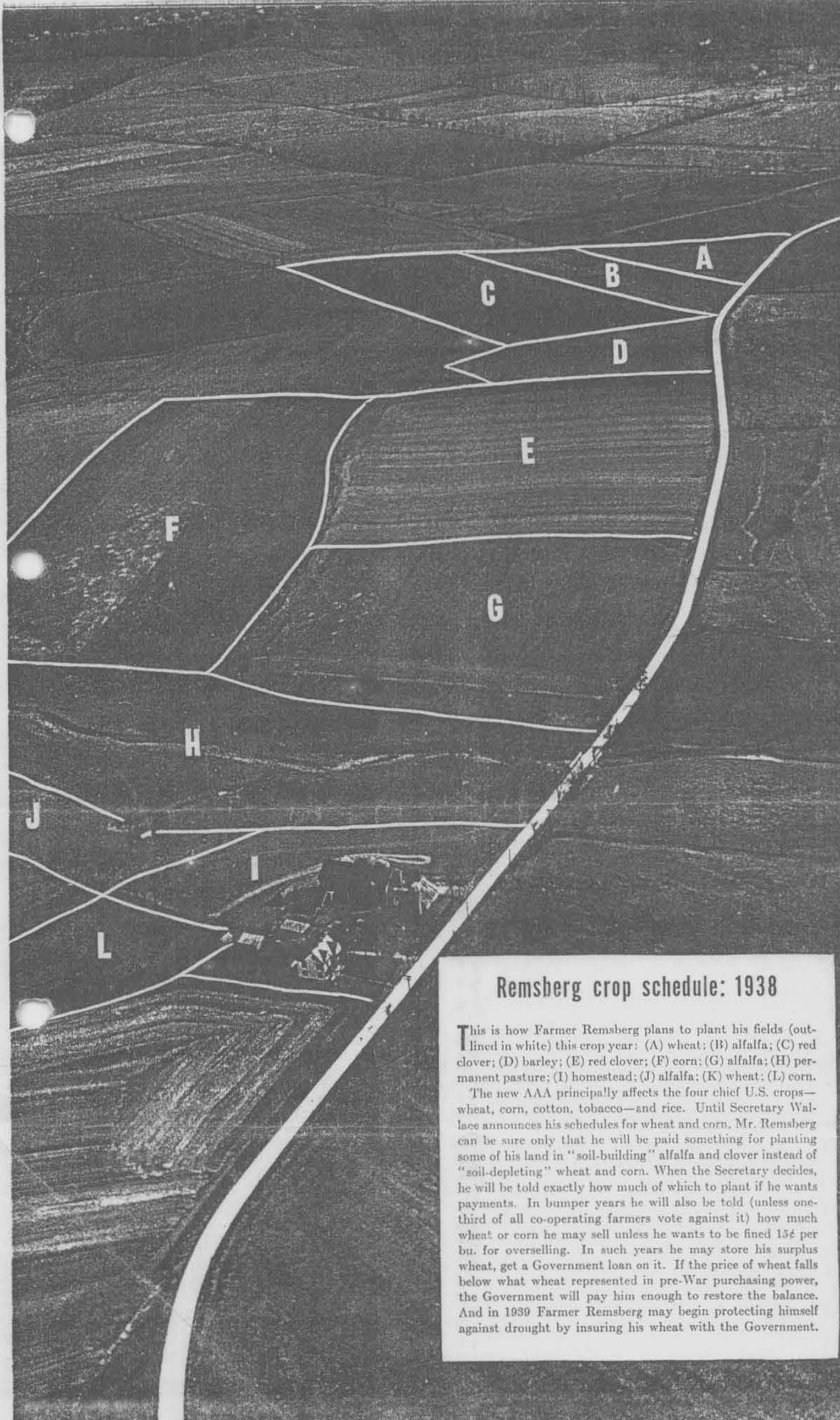


The Remsberg farm, shown above and on opposite page in aerial photographs taken Feb. 15, lies in Frederick County, Md., one of the most prosperous farm counties in America.

Mr. Remsberg gets his principal income from milk (which he sells to Washington's Chestnut Farms Dairy, patronized by Secretary of Agriculture Wallace). His chief cash

crop is wheat. He rents the 120-acre farm. Farmer Remsberg has co-operated with receiving yearly cash benefits ranging from

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Charles T. Ramsburg Farmstead  
Frederick County



### Remsberg crop schedule: 1938

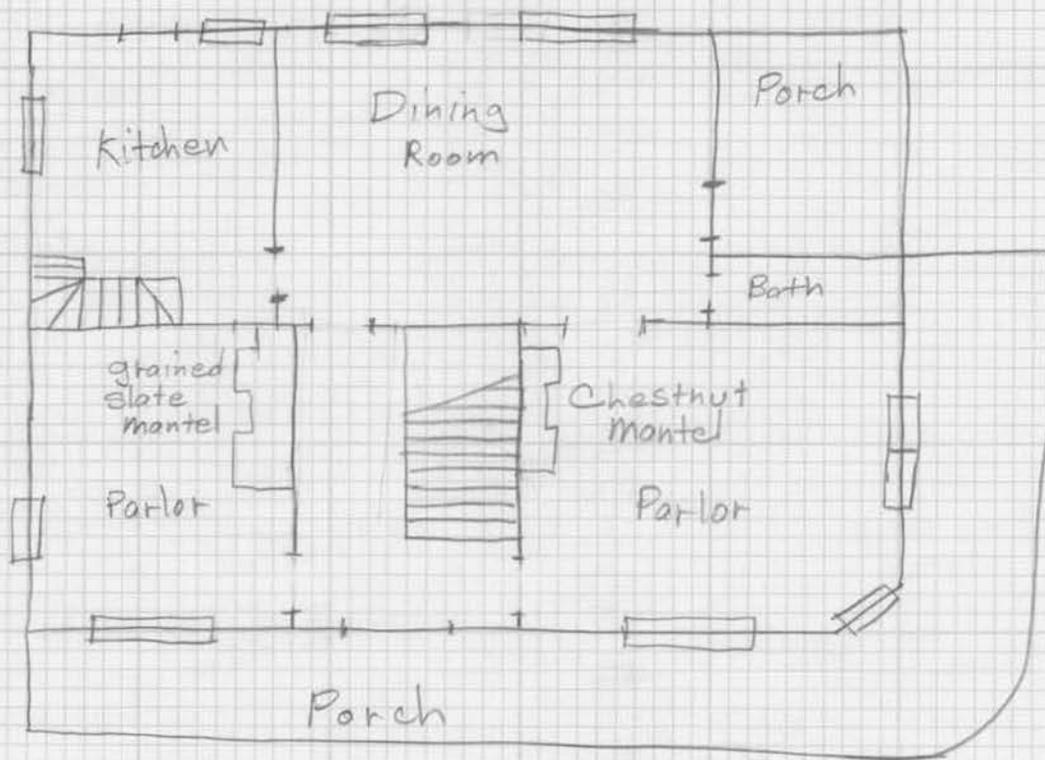
This is how Farmer Remsberg plans to plant his fields (outlined in white) this crop year: (A) wheat; (B) alfalfa; (C) red clover; (D) barley; (E) red clover; (F) corn; (G) alfalfa; (H) permanent pasture; (I) homestead; (J) alfalfa; (K) wheat; (L) corn.

The new AAA principally affects the four chief U.S. crops—wheat, corn, cotton, tobacco—and rice. Until Secretary Wallace announces his schedules for wheat and corn, Mr. Remsberg can be sure only that he will be paid something for planting some of his land in "soil-building" alfalfa and clover instead of "soil-depleting" wheat and corn. When the Secretary decides, he will be told exactly how much of which to plant if he wants payments. In bumper years he will also be told (unless one-third of all co-operating farmers vote against it) how much wheat or corn he may sell unless he wants to be fined 15¢ per bu. for overselling. In such years he may store his surplus wheat, get a Government loan on it. If the price of wheat falls below what wheat represented in pre-War purchasing power, the Government will pay him enough to restore the balance. And in 1939 Farmer Remsberg may begin protecting himself against drought by insuring his wheat with the Government.

Rensberg 7229 Haller Rd.

LIBER/F 10	GRANTEE	GRANTOR	ORIGINAL TRACTS	COST	DATE
1614/492 28 Dec 89	Thomas D. & Bonnie L. Rensberg	C. Renn Rensberg	50% interest 1.29.		
<del>1614/489</del> 1474/265 29 Feb 88	Charles Renn Rensberg & Thomas D. Rensberg	Charles Renn Rensberg & Nancy R. Loughheed, pers. reps. of estate of Frank H. Rensberg			
426/304 11 Jan 41	Frank H. & Marie R. Rensberg	Henry J. Rensberg			
HW B290/335 29 Jan 10	Henry J. Rensberg	Charles Thomas Rensberg		\$12,500	

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Charles T. Ramsburg Farmstead  
Frederick County

Janet Davis

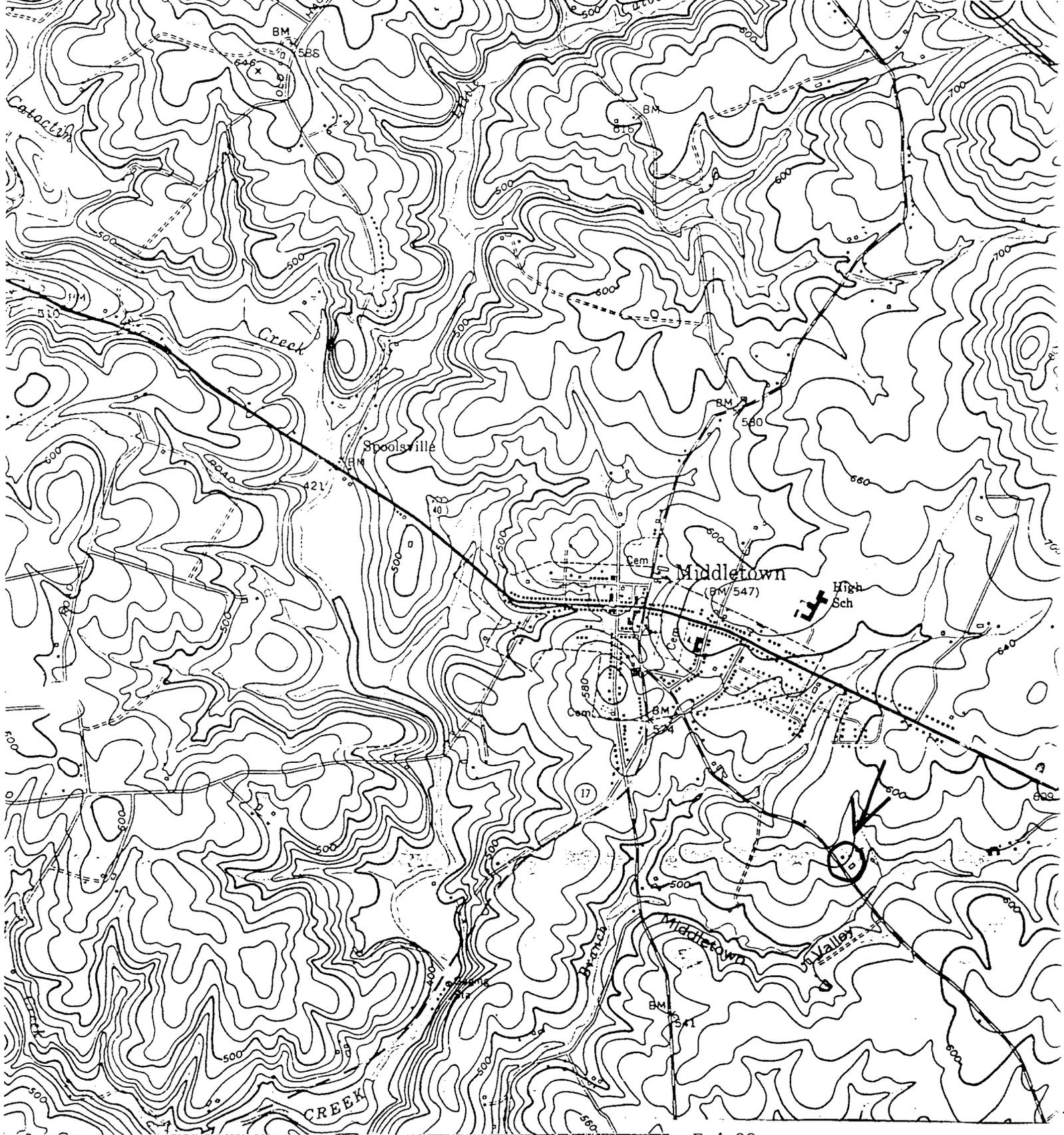
June 1992

Not to Scale

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Charles T. Ramsburg Farmstead (currently spelled Remsberg)  
7229 Holter Road  
Middletown, Md.

See Library Photograph Collection for additional photos.



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Charles T. Ramsburg Farmstead  
Frederick County  
USGS Middletown, Md.  
1:24000



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Charles T. Rowsburg Farmstead  
Frederick County

Photo: Janet Davis

June 1992

Neg. loc.: Md. SUPO, Crownsville, Md  
Southwest elevation

1/4



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Charles T. Romsburg Farmstead

Frederick County

Photo: Janet Davis

June 1992

Neg. loc.: Md. SHPO, Crownsville, Md.

South east corner view

2/4



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Charles T. Romsburg Farmstead

Frederick County

Photo: Janet Davis

June 1992

Neg. loc.: Md. SHPO, Crownsville, Md.

Wagon shed and bank barn, north elevation

3/4



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Charles T. Ramsburg Farmstead

Frederick County

Photo: Janet Davis

June 1992

Neg. loc.: Md. SHPO. Crownsville, Md

Site, dairy barn and bank barn, south elevation.

7/4