

HA-4

Rigbie House

Architectural Survey File

This is the architectural survey file for this MIHP record. The survey file is organized reverse-chronological (that is, with the latest material on top). It contains all MIHP inventory forms, National Register nomination forms, determinations of eligibility (DOE) forms, and accompanying documentation such as photographs and maps.

Users should be aware that additional undigitized material about this property may be found in on-site architectural reports, copies of HABS/HAER or other documentation, drawings, and the “vertical files” at the MHT Library in Crownsville. The vertical files may include newspaper clippings, field notes, draft versions of forms and architectural reports, photographs, maps, and drawings. Researchers who need a thorough understanding of this property should plan to visit the MHT Library as part of their research project; look at the MHT web site (mht.maryland.gov) for details about how to make an appointment.

All material is property of the Maryland Historical Trust.

Last Updated: 02-18-2004

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE	Maryland
COUNTY	Harford
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

1. NAME

COMMON:	The Rigbie House
AND OR HISTORIC:	"Philip's Purchase"

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:				Berkley.
Lane enters east of Castleton Road (Md 625) about 0.3 mile south of /				
CITY OR TOWN:		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT		
Berkley		First		
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE	
Maryland	24	Harford	025	

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Comments: _____ _____ _____			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:		
John E. Clark, Esquire		
STREET AND NUMBER:		
The Rigbie House		
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
Darlington RFD	Maryland	24

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:		
Clerk of the Circuit Court		
STREET AND NUMBER:		
Harford County Courthouse	40 South Main Street	
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
Bel Air	Maryland	24

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:			
Maryland Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks			
DATE OF SURVEY	1970	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:		<input type="checkbox"/> County	<input type="checkbox"/> Local
Maryland Historical Trust			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
2525 Riva Road			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE	
Annapolis	Maryland	24	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This frame and stone one-and-a-half story structure in two parts faces south in a grove of oak trees on a plateau west of the Susquehanna River southeast of Berkley. It is notable for the exquisitely panelled interior and the unevenly-pitched roof of the frame section, and for the long low east wing.

The larger west section of frame, weatherboarded, is almost square. Now three bays by three, with windows 9 lights over 6, its peaked roof ridge-line runs east-west with a large brick chimney rising inside the west gable. The south slope of the roof has three sharply peaked dormers over windows 6 lights over 9. The north slope, less steep, extends over a long narrow north room that was once two small rooms. (Upstairs a long dormer now enlarges the north bedroom.)

Restored in 1931 to what was believed to be its condition in 1781, we find now that it had already been altered at the early date from its original shape, and it can be surmised that this change took place, perhaps, as early as 1752.

This frame section contains some very fine woodwork. The living room is fully panelled, with an exceptionally rich molding around the panels. The treatment over the fireplace between the two west windows has raised field-ed panels above a handsome late Georgian mantel. A staircase with carved step-ends and a walnut railing rises to the north along the east wall, turns at a landing in the corner, and continues in one more small flight to the second floor. The dining room to the north, has one wall of raised paneling.

A long low wing runs east, one room deep. The first room has stone walls over two feet thick. A central chimney rises from a huge cooking fireplace with its crane still in place behind the wide brick hearth. A winding staircase in the fireplace-wall leads to a small bedroom under the low eaves. Rooms east of this old kitchen were built in 1931 for a modern kitchen and laundry.

Heavy masonry supports in the cellar indicate a larger fireplace than that existing in the living room. This arched support extends across two-thirds of the windowless west wall to the northwest corner of the room. This confirms Henry Chandlee Forman's plan view¹ of the house (see copy of his sketch on continuation sheet #1). This change was made in the late 18th century. The elegant smaller fireplace in the present west wall and the two windows beside it are remembered by our contemporary members of the Jones family who lived in the house in the late 1800's. There seems to have been only moderate wealth among the preceding owners until we go back as far as James Rigbie in the 1750's, 60's and 70's when the living room was used as a courtroom.

¹ Henry Chandlee Forman, Early Manor and Plantation Houses of Maryland (Easton, Maryland: By the Author, 1934) p. 124.

(see continuation sheet #1)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

B. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian☐ 16th Century☒ 18th Century☐ 20th Century☐ 15th Century☐ 17th Century☐ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATES (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal☐ Education☒ Political☐ Urban Planning☐ Prehistoric☐ Engineering☐ Religion, Phil.☐ Other (Specify)☐ Historic☐ Industry☐ Philosophy☐ Agriculture☐ Invention☐ Science☒ Architecture☐ Landscape☐ Sculpture☐ Art☐ Architecture☐ Social Human-☐ Commerce☐ Literature☐ Education☐ Communications☒ Military☐ Theater☐ Conservation☐ Music☐ Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Rigbie House was twice the scene of important events in our country's history. In April 1781 Lafayette's officers quelled a mutiny that might have prevented his army of New England troops, who had been headed home-ward, from turning south again to join General Greene and General Washington at Yorktown, in which case that battle might never have been fought. Earlier it had been one of a series of forest outposts fortified against the Indians and representing Lord Baltimore's claim of 1632 to land extending north to the 40th parallel, a claim disputed fifty years later by William Penn (1682) until the Mason Dixon line was set in 1767.

This is the manor house of Philip's Purchase, 2,000 acres willed to Nathan Rigbie by his grandfather Thomas Tench of Annapolis. Rigbie settled here before 1732, having sold off three smaller tracts to Thomas Jones (1728), Gerrold Hopkins (1728) and Henry Coale (1731). He raised tobacco, shipping his crop to England by way of his warehouse at the port of Lapidum. He had a store along the road from Joppa to Bald Prior (probably at the fork of the road to Lapidum at Darlington). In partnership with Jacob Giles and John Hall, of Cranberry he built and operated the Cumberland Forge on Deer Creek just above Stafford. And he is believed to have built a gristmill at Wilson's Mill on Deer Creek on a tract called Parkers Chance deeded to his son James in 1743, one of the earliest mills in Harford County. In 1755 he was commissioned Colonel in the Cavalry of Baltimore (now Harford) County, and given the additional responsibility three years later of an appointment as High Sheriff.

James Rigbie, Nathan's eldest son, inherited this property at his father's death in 1752, along with some of his judiciary and military powers. Captain of the Militia and High Sheriff of Baltimore (now Harford) County, he is thought to have built the elegant frame section of the house or perhaps rebuilt the interior using the panelled living room as his court room. Here General Lafayette was received in 1781, his troops cooled at the huge fireplace in the old kitchen, their mutiny of that night resolved the next morning.

Owned in later years by the Reed, Nelson, and Jones families, the history of the house was re-discovered in 1951 by J. Alexis Shriver of the Harford Historical Society, who persuaded the owners to clear off the plaster covering the panelled interior for a celebration of the 150th anniversary of General Lafayette's visit.

(see continuation sheet #2)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Forman, Henry Chaudee, Early Manor and Plantation Houses of Maryland.
Easton, Maryland: By the Author, 1954.

Mason, Samuel. Historical Sketches of Harford County. Darlington,
Maryland. By the Author, 1940.

Preston, Walter W. History of Harford County. Baltimore, Maryland: Press
of the Sun Book Office, 1901.

(see continuation sheet #2)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	39°	39'	42"	76°	12'	16"			
NE	39°	39'	42"	76°	12'	06"			
SE	39°	39'	53"	76°	12'	06"			
SW	39°	39'	53"	76°	12'	16"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 18 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Jean S. Ewing

ORGANIZATION: Maryland Historical Trust DATE: April 24, 1975

STREET AND NUMBER: 2525 Riva Road

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name Orlando Ridout IV

Title State Preservation Officer for Maryland

Date April 24, 1975

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #2

STATE	Maryland	HA-4
COUNTY	Harford	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		

(Number all entries)

The Higbie House
"Philip's Purchase"

No. 8. Significance Continued.

The property is now well maintained by John E. Clark, Esquire, a practicing lawyer, a member of Harford County's Educational Foundation, a trustee of the Maryland Environmental Trust, and a founder and trustee of the Maryland Historical Trust.

² Walter W. Preston, History of Harford County (Baltimore, Maryland: Press of the Sun Book Office, 1901), pp. 158-143.

³ Samuel Mason, Historical Sketches of Harford County, (Darlington, Maryland, By the Author, 1940) pp. 47-50.

No. 9. Major Bibliographical References

Wright, C. Milton. Our Harford Heritage. By the Author, 1967.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #1

STATE	Maryland	HA-4
COUNTY	Harford	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		

(Number all entries)

The Rigbie House
"Philip's Purchase"

No. 7 Description Continued.

Guest

Dining

Kitchen

N

Living

new kitchen wing

Rigbie House

(Traced from Forman's
Early Manor & Plantation
Houses in Maryland.)

Dining

Kitchen

New

Kitchen


Living

wing

Rigbie House

As Restored in 1951

(Sketched from Forman's
drawing in Early Manor &
Plantation Houses in Maryland)

1. STATE Maryland COUNTY Harford TOWN Darlington VICINITY STREET NO.		HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY HA - 4	
ORIGINAL OWNER Nathan Rigbie ORIGINAL USE Dwelling PRESENT OWNER John E. Clark PRESENT USE Dwelling WALL CONSTRUCTION Frame and stone NO. OF STORIES 1-1/2		2. NAME Rigbie House DATE OR PERIOD 1732 - 1750 STYLE Colonial ARCHITECT BUILDER	
		3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE	
4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC <u>NO</u> <p>The Rigbie House is situated on a hill. It is three bays wide and three bays deep. The slate roof is a "catslide" under which the main section entrance door is centered. The first floor level windows have 9 over 9 window sash, and shutters. There are three pedimented roof dormers with 6 over 6 sash and the rear facade has a large shed dormer.</p> <p>The "great room", panelled to the ceiling on all the walls, contains the open staircase. This woodwork is of fine quality and gives distinction to both the room and staircase. Behind the "great room" is a long narrow room used by the present owner, as a dining room.</p> <p>An earlier kitchen wing is 1-1/2 stories, the flat roof of which is topped by a railing; and a screened porch extends across the front facade. The wing roof contains two 6 over 6 sash dormer windows. The siding of the wing is beaded shiplap, but there is, reputedly, stone beneath this wood sheathing.</p> <p>(continued on page 2)</p>			
5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered Interior Exterior			
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-end;"> <div style="width: 45%;">  6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional) </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> 7. PHOTOGRAPH </div> </div>			
8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages) INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC. <p style="text-align: center;">See Page 2</p>		9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER <p style="text-align: center;">Michael O. Bourne Maryland Historical Trust</p> <p style="text-align: right;">DATE OF RECORD March 11, 1968</p>	

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Rigbie House
Harford County

Page 2

A Harford County Historical Society marker reads:

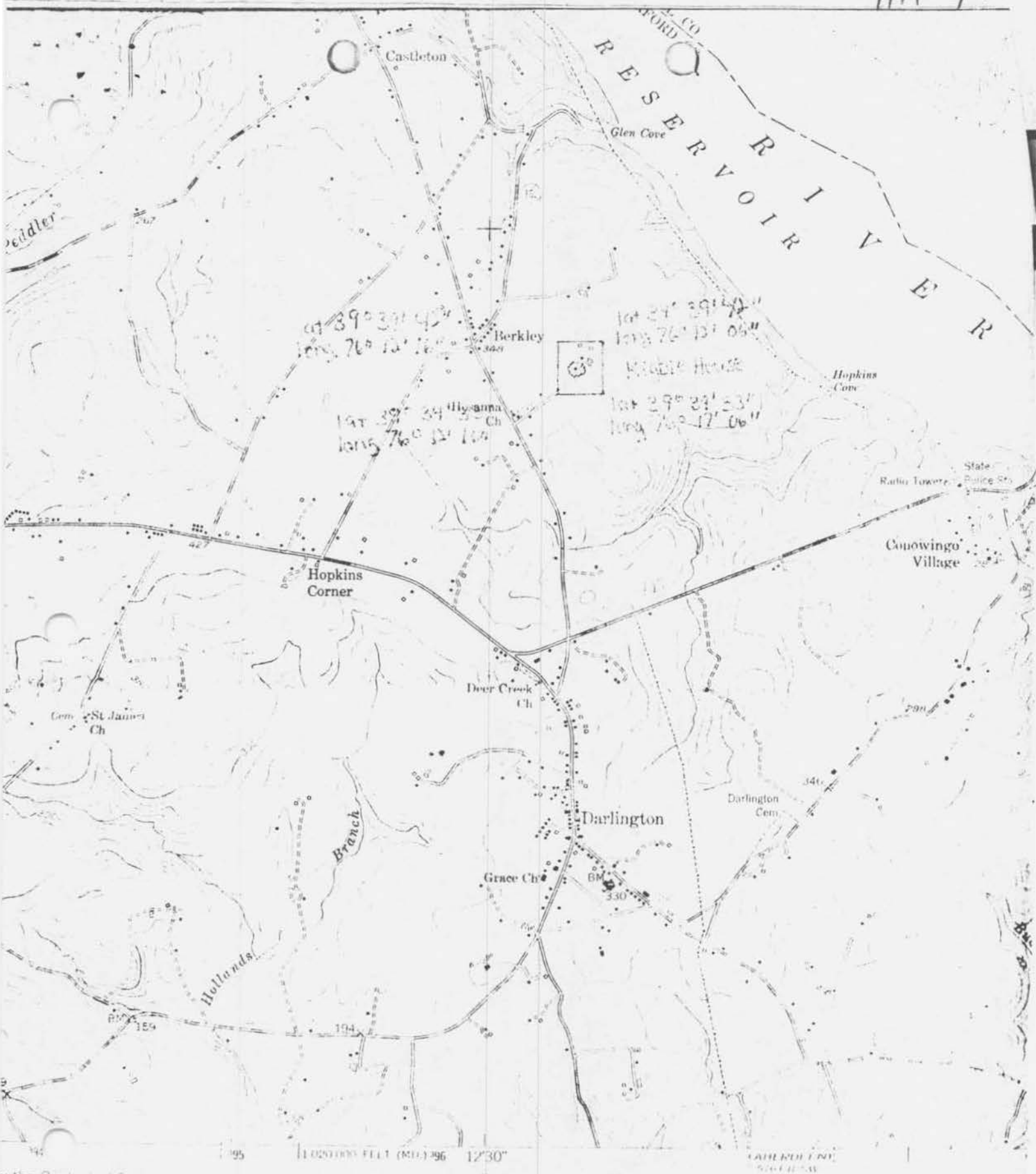
" Lafayette
 at
 Col. Rigbie's House

Had Lafayette failed in quelling the
mutiny of his troops here on Friday
April 13, 1781 the Battle of
Yorktown might never have been
fought."

Item 8. Published Sources

Forman, Henry Chandler

Early Manor and Plantation Houses
of Maryland, 1934



y the Geological Survey

from aerial photographs
ble surveys 1939 and 1940

MN
JGN

SCALE 1:250,000



HA-4

CENTRAL MARYLAND - HARFORD COUNTY - RIGBIE HOUSE C 20



RIGBIE HOUSE, HARFORD CTY

HA-4

MD. HISTORICAL TRUST
BOX 1704
ANNAPOLIS, MD. 21404

MOB 3/68

PSI