

Ho- 91  
Hobson's Choice  
Woodbine  
Private

circa 1828

Hobson's Choice is a five bay wide, one room deep, two and one half story gabled roof (running east-west) brick (laid in flemish bond and English garden wall brick bond) structure laid on a stone foundation with east and west brick chimneys. It features a central hall, central north and south entrances, rectangular, proportionally scaled, vertically aligned fenestration with first floor windows decorated with splayed brick, flat arched lintels. It is the sister house of the original structure of Oakdale, built in 1838 and later the home of Governor Edwin Warfield. Its windows and interior woodwork and mantelpieces are almost identical. Ceilings are one inch higher at Hobson's Choice while the west room floors of both homes are top nailed. The bricks used in the construction of Hobson's Choice and Oakdale were fired in a kiln located at Cherry Grove, Ho-1.

HO-91  
HOBSON'S CHOICE  
WOODBINE  
PRIVATE

CIRCA 1810

HOBSON'S CHOICE IS AN ARCHITECTURAL GEM, ONE OF HOWARD COUNTY'S FINEST EXAMPLES OF EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY, BRICK ARCHITECTURE, FACING SOUTH ON THE EAST SIDE OF FLORENCE ROAD, TWO MILES NORTH OF ITS INTERSECTION WITH WARFIELD ROAD. IT IS A FIVE BAY WIDE, ONE ROOM DEEP, TWO STORY HIGH, GABLED ROOF (RUNNING EAST-WEST) BRICK (LAID IN FLEMISH BOND AND ENGLISH GARDEN WALL BRICK BOND) STRUCTURE, LAID ON A STONE FOUNDATION WITH WIDE BRICK CHIMNEYS INSET INTO ITS EAST AND WEST WALLS. IT FEATURES A CENTRAL HALL AND STAIRCASE WITH CENTRAL NORTH AND SOUTH ENTRANCES AND RECTANGULAR, PROPORTIONALLY SCALED, VERTICALLY ALIGNED FENESTRATION. FINE BRICK WORK IS FOUND IN ITS SPLAYED BRICK, FLAT ARCHED LINTELS AND CORBELED BRICK CORNICES ON ITS NORTH AND SOUTH ELEVATIONS. THESE BRICKS WERE FIRED IN A KILN LOCATED AT NEIGHBORING CHERRY GROVE, HO-1. THE WINDOWS, INTERIOR WOODWORK, WIDE, RANDOM WIDTH FLOORS AND MANTLEPIECES ARE ALL ORIGINAL TO THE HOUSE.

THE DINING ROOM MANTLE IS GEORGIAN IN CHARACTER, WITH PILASTERS AND WIDE LINTEL TOPPED BY AN EXTENDED SHELF. AN ORIGINAL CUPBOARD LIES SOUTH OF THIS FIREPLACE, FOUND IN THE RESTORATION OF THE HOUSE BY ITS OWNERS, MR. AND MRS. EDWIN GRAMKOW. THE LIVING ROOM MANTLE IS FLANKED BY SINGLE, FULL DORIC COLUMNS, WITH CIRCLES DECORATING THEIR CAPITALS, LENDING A FEDERAL ELEMENT TO THE COMPOSITION.

AN OLD LOG KITCHEN WAS ONCE ATTACHED TO THE WEST SIDE OF THE BUILDING'S NORTH WALL. IT WAS DELAPIDATED AND HAS BEEN REPLACED BY A TWO STORY HIGH, CAT SLIDE, KITCHEN-DEN ADDITION, WHICH FEATURES TWO LARGE BRICK FIREPLACES, AN INTERIOR BACK STAIRCASE AND SMALL BUTLER'S PANTRY, ALL VERY MUCH IN SCALE AND KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE MAIN HOUSE.

HISTORICALLY, THE BUILDING IS ASSOCIATED WITH A THOMAS MEREDITH, WHO ACQUIRED 258 ACRES HERE ON APRIL 13, 1808, WILLING THE OLD HOMESTEAD FARM IN 1828 TO HIS THREE SONS, JAMES, WASHINGTON AND JOHN F. MEREDITH.

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Hobson's Choice

and/or common Hobson's Choice

## 2. Location

street & number 2921 Florence Road n/a not for publication

city, town Woodbine n/a vicinity of congressional district Sixth

state Maryland code 24 county Howard code 027

## 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Edwin W. Gramkow (Mary Louise)

street & number 2921 Florence Road

city, town Woodbine n/a vicinity of state Maryland 21797

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Howard County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Ellicott City state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust

Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

# 7. Description

HO-91

Condition  excellent  deteriorated  unaltered  original site  
 good  ruins  altered  moved date n/a  
 fair  unexposed

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### Number of Resources

Contributing	Noncontributing	Number of previously listed National Register properties included in this nomination: <u>0</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites	
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u> structures	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects	Original and historic functions and uses: residential
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> Total	

### DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

Hobson's Choice is second quarter nineteenth century five bay, two and a half story brick rectangular house with a low pitched dormerless gable roof and a low two story frame back wing which was built in recent years. The principal windows have double-hung wooden sashes with narrow frames and six-over-six lights, brick flat arches, and louvered shutters. The brick is laid in Flemish bond on the front and common bond on the sides. A corbeled brick cornice runs along the front and back walls. The interior of the brick section has a center hall with flanking rooms on each floor. The Federal wood work is symmetrical with corner blocks. The balustrade has a simple round newel, square balusters, and cut decoration on the step-ends. The front door has eight panels. Also on the property are a wooden out building and the stone foundation walls of a barn.

For General Description, see Continuation Sheet No. 1

HO-90

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
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Hobson's Choice

Continuation sheet Howard County, Maryland

Item number

7

Page

1

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Hobson's Choice is a second quarter nineteenth century brick house that stands in a bucolic setting surrounded by farm fields in northwestern Howard County. The terrain slopes gently downward from in back of the house. The property is reached by a long drive from Florence Road. The house is not visible from the public way. Landscaping is simple consisting primarily of a circular drive in front of the house and a wide expanse of lawn with trees scattered about surrounded by fields.

The house is two and a half stories high with a wood shingled gable roof. It is built of brick and rectangular in shape with a recent vintage frame two story wing projecting from the back. Brick internal end chimneys project from the gable ends. The front wall bricks are laid in Flemish bond and the gable-end and back walls in common bond. The building stands on a stone foundation.

The facade is symmetrical with five bays and a central doorway. The gable end walls have square four-light attic windows. The east wall is blank on the first and second floors. The west wall has one window on each floor. The new frame addition which is lower in height than the brick section projects from the westerly section of the back. The principal windows of the brick section are double-hung with six-over-six wooden sashes, brick flat arches, and louvered shutters. The main entrance has an eight panel door with a rectangular transom.

The interior plan consists of a center hall with one room on either side on both floors and fireplaces in the end wall of each room. The stair case rises along the west wall. The woodwork is Greek Revival in influence. The windows and doors are framed by symmetrical trim with flat Greek Revival ogee molding and corner blocks. The six panel doors also have flat Greek Revival ogee trim. The balustrade has a plain round newel, rectangular balusters, a round hand rail, and cut decoration on the step ends. The mantels, with trim similar to the door and window trim, also display flat Greek ogees.

To the northwest of the house is a one story frame outbuilding. The stone foundations of a barn are located to the northwest. These buildings do not contribute to the architectural significance of the house.

# 8. Significance

HO-91

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 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		

**Specific dates**    c. 1830                      **Builder/Architect**    unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Applicable Criteria:    C  
 Applicable Exceptions:    none  
 Level of Significance for Evaluation:    local

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

Hobson's Choice is significant for its architecture, embodying the distinctive characteristics of second quarter nineteenth century domestic architecture in rural central Maryland. Among these distinctive characteristics which survive intact at Hobson's Choice are a simple rectangular configuration with a center hall plan consisting of one room on both sides, a symmetrical facade, and transitional Federal/Greek Revival influenced decorative detailing. The interior woodwork with the flat Greek ogee trim is particularly typical. Although several houses of this type still stand, few have the high degree of integrity of design, materials, setting and workmanship, particularly in Howard County, as found at Hobson's Choice.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Continuation sheet Hobson's Choice Item number 8, 9 and 10 Page 2  
Howard County, Maryland

HISTORY AND SUPPORT:

Hobson's Choice, a name that is derived from land patents, was built about 1830 for James A. Meredith who farmed the land. Meredith acquired title to the property after the death of his father in 1828 and retained possession of it until his death in 1889. By tradition, the house is said to have been built for his father Thomas soon after purchasing the land in 1808. The basic construction and stylistic features, however, are characteristic of the 1830 period.

The Meredith family retained ownership of the land, totally about 260 acres, until 1892 when it was purchased by George Hardy. Ownership changed several times until purchase by the present owners in 1970.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Howard County Land and Will Records, Ellicott City, MD.

Maryland Historical Trust Historic Sites Inventory, Annapolis, MD:  
Howard County (HO-91); Cleora Thompson, surveyor.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Hobson's Choice stands in a rural setting which is reflective of the historic role as the center of a large farm. The terrain surrounding the house is relatively flat to the south, east, and north and slopes gently downward to the west. The property is approached by an undulating drive from Florence Road. The house, which is not visible from the public way, is visible from a high point part of the way back the drive. From this high point the view opens with the house almost centered in the rural setting. The boundaries are drawn to protect this setting.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

HO-91

See Continuation Sheet No. 2

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approximately 23

Quadrangle name Woodbine, Maryland

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>3</u> <u>1</u> <u>9</u> <u>5</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>3</u> <u>1</u> <u>9</u> <u>7</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>3</u> <u>1</u> <u>9</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>4</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u>
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D	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>3</u> <u>1</u> <u>9</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>
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E	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>
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F	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>
---	-----------	-----------	-----------

G	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>
---	-----------	-----------	-----------

H	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet No. 2 for Boundary Justification.

The Boundaries are delineated on the attached map.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	n/a	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ronald L. Andrews, National Register Administrator

organization Maryland Historical Trust date 1984

street & number 21 State Circle telephone (301) 269-2438

city or town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature [Signature] 8-8-84

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date

**For HCRS use only**

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Ho-91  
Dist 4  
MAGI # 1400915404

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Hobson's Choice also Great Park and Small Piece

AND/OR COMMON

Hobson's Choice

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Hobson's Choice Florence Road

CITY, TOWN

Woodbine

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

6th

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Howard

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input 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 type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Mr. and Mrs. Edwin W. Gramkow

Telephone #: 442-2642

STREET & NUMBER

Hobson's Choice

CITY, TOWN

Woodbine

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

Maryland 21797 STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, Tax Map 13, p.140  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Hall of Records

Liber #: 534

Folio #: 418

STREET & NUMBER

Howard County Court House

CITY, TOWN

Ellicott City

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Howard County Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

1977

\_\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Maryland Historical Trust

CITY, TOWN

21 State Circle, Annapolis

STATE

Maryland

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED			
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

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

Hobson's Choice is a five bay wide, two bay deep, two and a half story brick (laid in flemish and English garden wall brick bond) gabled roof structure facing south laid on a stone foundation with corbeled edge chimneys set into its east and west walls.

Fenestration is rectangular, double-hung with six-over-six lights, decorated with projecting wood sills and flat arched stretcher brick lintels and shutters. A paneled rectangular door surmounted by a four light transom and splayed brick flat arched lintel is placed in the central bay of the south wall. Windows on the first floor on all four elevations have splayed brick flat arched lintels, while those on the second floor are decorated with stretcher brick flat arched lintels. Four light casement attic windows in the east and west walls have header brick flat lintels. The west wall also holds a first and second floor window similar to those described.

The north and south elevations have cornices composed of two courses of rounded, corbeled header bricks. The south wall is laid in Flemish bond brick.

A two story gabled roof (running north-south) frame structure, three bays wide and four bays deep springs from the three west bays of the north wall. Its east wall holds an entrance door with nine lights surmounted by a projecting flat lintel decorated with a row of dentils in the south bay, with two rectangular, double-hung windows with nine-over-six lights. Three similar second floor windows, proportionally scaled and vertically aligned hold six-over-six lights. A brick patio bordered by a stone wall extends eastward. The west side of the gabled roof extends downward to form a shed roof addition effect on the west elevation, affording space for a kitchen.

The north elevation holds a horizontal, tripartite rectangular window in the east bay with a central twenty-five light section flanked by double-hung rectangular windows holding six-over-nine lights. Two rectangular double-hung windows with six-over-six lights lie above on the second floor and to the west on the first floor. A batten wood gate connects the north west corner of this building with a gabled roof structure on the west.

A rectangular entrance lies in the second north bay of the west wall flanked by a casement window with six-six lights on the north and a doubled-hung window with six-over-six lights on the south.

The interior features a central hall and staircase with cherry spindles wide random width floors, and original mantelpieces. The dining room mantle is Georgian in character with pilasters and wide lintel topped by an extended shelf. An original cupboard lies south of this fireplace. The living room mantle is flanked by a single full doric column with circles decorating its architrave, lending a federal element to the mantelpiece.

**CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY**

A wide cement open landing lies along the south wall, surrounded by boxwood with a brick walk leading to the central door from the circular driveway.

Barns lie north east of the house.

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input 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		

SPECIFIC DATES circa 1828

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Hobson's Choice stands on some 23.058 acres of land on the east side of Florence Road. It is significant both historically and architecturally. Tracts of land mentioned in deeds as once a part of the tract of land called "Hobson's Choice" are "Great Park" and "Small Piece."

The house is believed to have been built by a Mr. Thomas Meredith who acquired the property on April 13, 1808 (private papers of Mrs. Edwin Gramkow) and devised the land and homestead farm in a will dated, April 18, 1828 to his son, James A. Meredith and his two brothers, Washington and John T. Meredith. (Orphans Court, Anne Arundel County) (Howard County Land Records: Liber: JHO 54, Folio 142). James A. Meredith subsequently purchased his two brother's interest in the "old homestead farm upon which he resides" and mortgaged the farm to Joshua N. Warfield on 30th of January, 1889. (JHO 54-143)

Joshua H. Warfield, executor of the estate of James A. Meredith by the power of the mortgage, dated 30th of January, 1889, sold the property at public auction to Rachel C. Meredith on the 4th of October, 1890 (JHO 56-417).

In her last Will and Testament, dated 16th of February, 1891 (Wills 3-129), Rachel C. Meredith authorized and empowered Joshua N. Warfield, executor, to sell the property. He did so at public auction to George Hardy for \$3,197.77, which sale was ratified on January 5, 1892 by the Orphan Court of Howard County. On May 30, 1892, Joshua N. Warfield conveyed the deed to the property to Mr. George Hardy and Sallie, his wife. This property contained 265 acres, one rood and 20 perches of land.

By September 2, 1916 when Howard and Arthur Poole acquired Hobson's Choice for \$9500 from Norman H. and Clara Warfield the acreage had diminished to 153 acres, 2 roods and 28 perches. (Howard County Land Records - Liber 102 - Folio 142).

Architecturally this building is of great significance to Howard County and the state for it is identical in almost every aspect to the original structure of Oakdale, built in 1838 by Albert G. Warfield, grandson of Captain Benjamin Warfield of Cherry Grove. Oakdale was enlarged and used as a residence by his son, Governor Edwin Warfield. The present Mr. and Mrs. Albert Warfield of Sunnyside have papers on the brick used in the construction of this house and Oakdale, which were produced by a

**CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY**

kiln at Cherry Grove. (Albert and Carrie Warfield at one time owned Cherry Grove.) General and Mrs. Theodore Warfield have the molds in their possession, with which the bricks were made. By measurements taken by Mr. and Mrs. Gramkow, owners of Hobson's Choice, the following facts were found:

- 1) Windows of the original structure of Oakdale are identical in dimension and character to those found in Hobson's Choice, while the ceilings at Oakdale are 1" lower.
- 2) The staircases in the central hall were similar. That of Oakdale has been removed to the back and a very grand staircase installed in the 1898 addition to allow for a more spacious central hall and entrance foyer.
- 3) The floor of the first floor west room in both Hobson's Choice and Oakdale are top nailed. This feature occurs no where else, tongue and groove characterizing the construction of the other floors.
- 4) The mantles of the living and dining room (office at Oakdale) are the same in both homes, though concave molding is found at Hobson's Choice and flat molding at Oakdale.
- 5) Door hinges marked Thomas Clark are found in both homes, as well as the same shutter dogs.
- 6) Location of windows is identical with the exception of the first floor east room which in Oakdale holds an east window and in Hobson's Choice none on that wall.

This house may well predate Oakdale. It is certainly of that period and built by the same carpenter who left his mark on the top nailed floor of the west rooms, the bannister and walnut spindles of the staircase and the work on the mantle pieces.

Adjoining property is in the process of being developed into five acre lots. Due to its proximity to this development as well as its architectural significance, Hobson's Choice should be included in the National Register of Historic Places and any future local landmark legislation as well as the State Planning Department's Critical Area Program.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

1. Private research papers of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Gramkow.
2. Land Records of Howard County.
3. Interview with Mrs. Edwin Gramkow at her home, Hobson's Choice on March 30, 1977.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 23.058 Acres

Please see Attachment I  
Tax Map 13, BIK 10, p. 140

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

BEGINNING FOR THE SAME at an iron pipe now set at 23.27 feet on the first or South 43° East 136 perches line of that land which by deed dated November 3, 1959 and recorded among the Land Records of Howard County in Liber No. 342, Folio 530, etc. was granted and conveyed by Mary E. Hawkins to C. Milton Jaycox and Mabel H. Jaycox, his wife, and running with a part of the said line, as now surveyed, (1) South 40° 39' East 1135.97 feet to

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

STATE	Maryland	COUNTY	Howard
-------	----------	--------	--------

STATE	COUNTY
-------	--------

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Cleora Barnes Thompson, Archivist

ORGANIZATION

Office of Planning & Zoning-Comprehensive Planning Section 465-5000 x257

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

3450 Court House Drive

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Ellicott City

STATE

Maryland

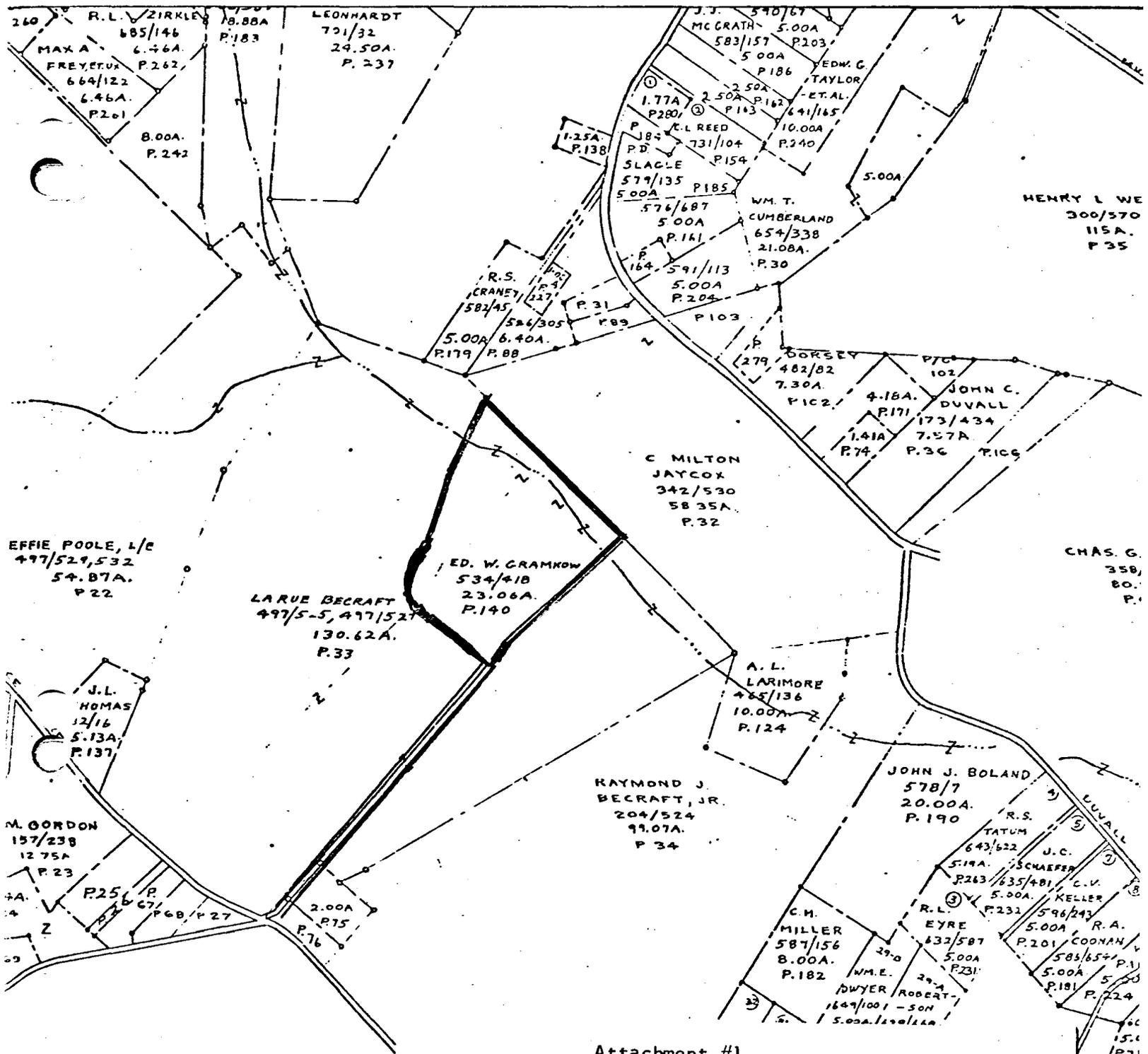
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

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

a stone heretofore set at the intersection of the existing rail fences, thence leaving the said line with the first of eight lines of division now made and running with an existing fence and a straight line projection thereof, (2) South  $51^{\circ} 32'$  West 1063.22 feet to an iron pipe now set, thence passing through the South-westernmost of two pear trees on a hilltop, (3) North  $49^{\circ} 22'$  West 518.10 feet to an iron pipe now set in the existing swale, thence running with the said swale, (4) North  $18^{\circ} 12'$  West 117.78 feet to a spring, thence running with the center of the spring branch the four following courses and distances, (5) North  $08^{\circ} 11'$  East 88.67 feet, (6) North  $23^{\circ} 29'$  East 169.91 feet, (7) North  $41^{\circ} 27'$  east 64.78 feet, (6) North  $23^{\circ} 29'$  East 169.91 feet, (7) North  $41^{\circ} 27'$  east 64.78 feet, (8) North  $21^{\circ} 44'$  East 395.48 feet, thence running with the said spring branch and running with a straight line extension thereof North of Cattail Creek, (9) North  $31^{\circ} 23'$  East 485.44 feet to the point of the beginning, containing 23.058 acres of land, more or less.

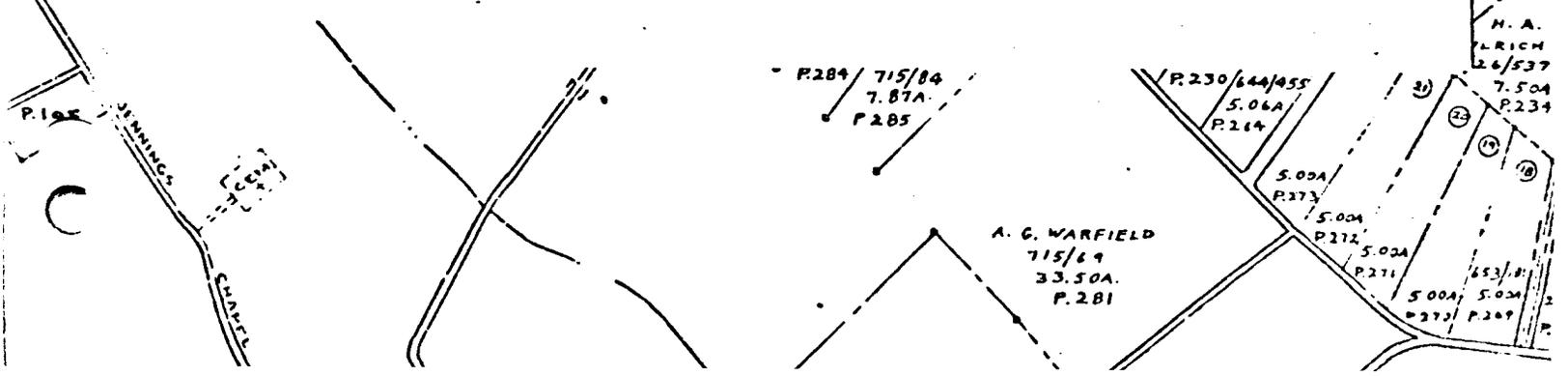




Attachment #1

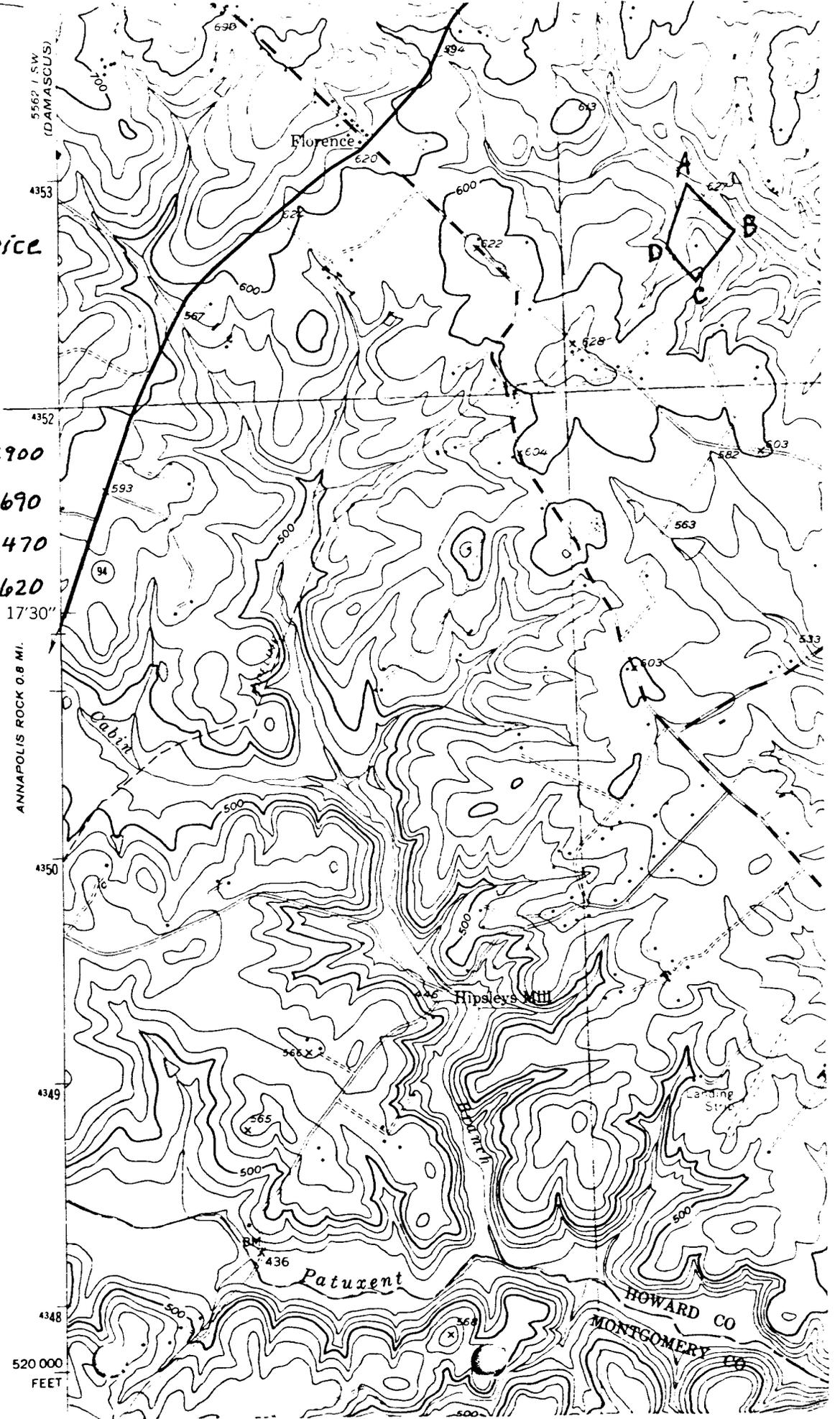
H0-91 Hobson's Choice

Tax Map 13



HO-91  
Hobson's Choice  
Howard Co.  
Maryland

- A 18/319560/4352900
- B 18/319780/4352690
- C 18/319600/4352470
- D 18/319460/4352620



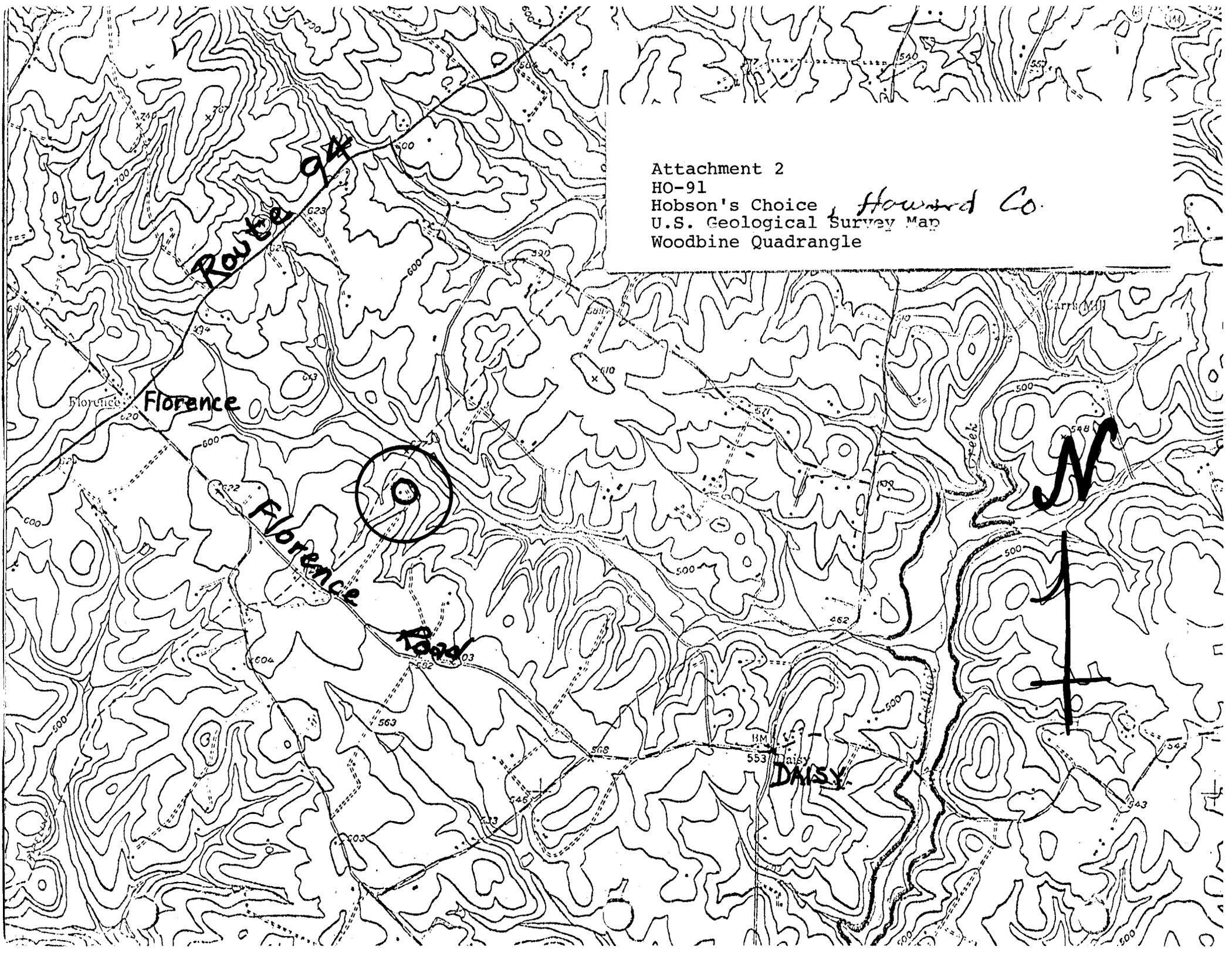
Attachment 2

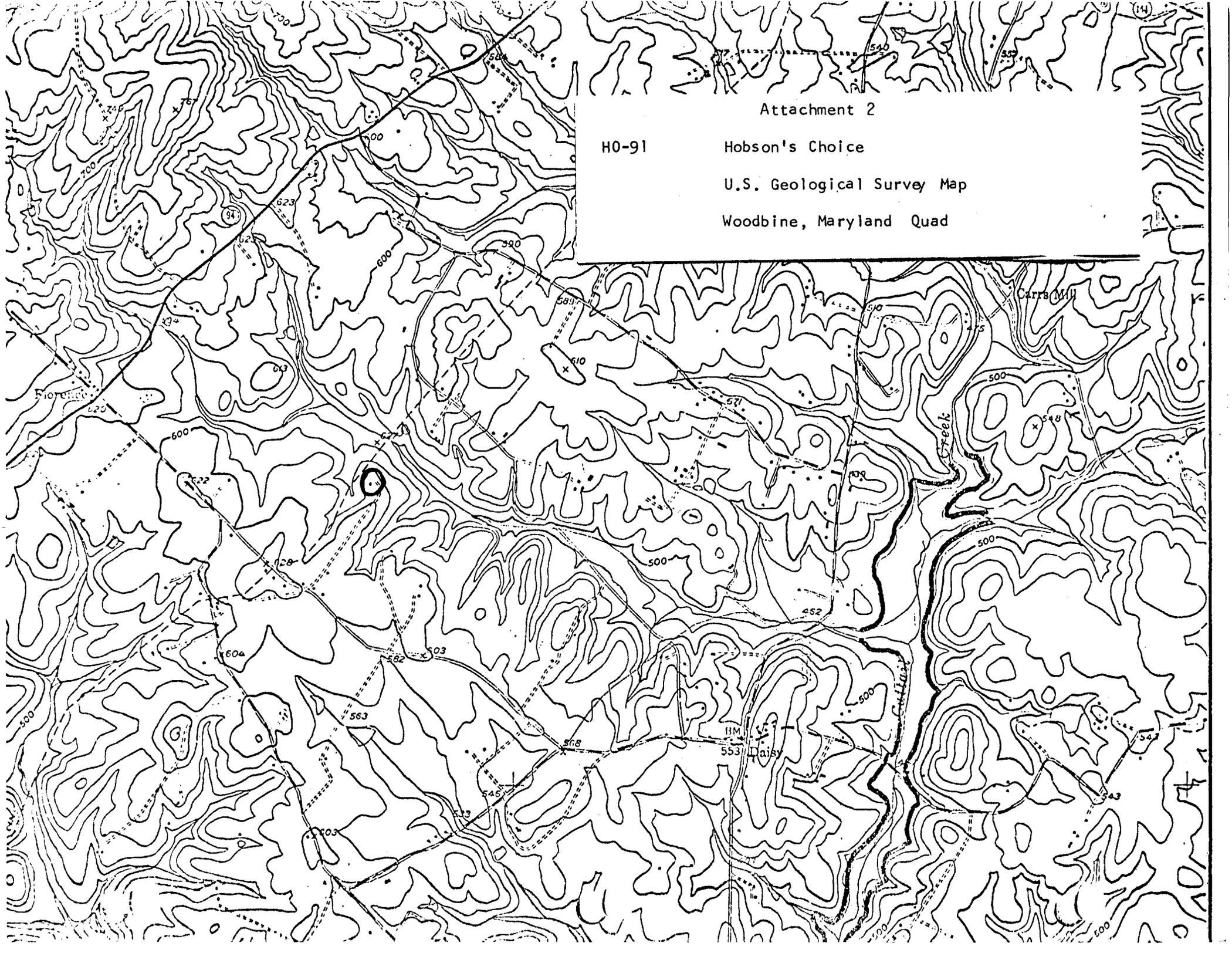
HO-91

Hobson's Choice, *Houston Co.*

U.S. Geological Survey Map

Woodbine Quadrangle





Attachment 2

H0-91

Hobson's Choice

U.S. Geological Survey Map

Woodbine, Maryland Quad

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Hobson's Choice  
2921 Florence Road, Woodbine  
Jennifer K. Cosham  
3/7/2004  
Digital photo on file at MHT



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Hobson's Choice  
2921 Florence Road, Woodbine  
Jennifer K. Cosham  
3/7/2004  
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4/10-91

Hobson's Choice

SE dev

9/1980

Cleora B. Thompson

Neg. on File @ MHT



H0-91

Nelson's Choice

Wehr

9/1980

Clara B. Thompson  
neg. on file @ M#T



H091

H0-91

Hobson's Choice

Selw

9/1980

Cleora B. Thompson

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H0-91

H0-91

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N elevation

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1<sup>st</sup> fl hall

9/1980

Cleora B. Thompson

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HO-91

HO 91

Hobson's Choice

1<sup>st</sup> fl, N parlor

9/ 1980

Clara B. Thompson

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H0 91

Hobson's Choice

1<sup>st</sup> fl, view into living room,  
N room

9/1980

Cleora B. Thompson

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HO-91

HO-91

Hobson's Choice

1<sup>st</sup> fl

view into dressing room, 1<sup>st</sup> fl  
B room

9/1980

Cleora B. Thompson  
Neg. on file @ MHT