

K-167

Spear Farm
Near Millington
c. 1850's

The first district of Kent County has many homes built between the 1820's and 1860, due primarily to the fact that the owners improved their farming methods producing results that would enable them to build anew. Many of the houses of this area which date from the late 18th century were log, so it is also feasible that they were by this time at the end of their useful lives.

During this period many of the farmers owned several farms which enabled them to build of brick, like the Massey houses and the Cacy holdings. James Spear was another of the successful farmers of the 1st district who acquired several farms—all of which totaled 1114 acres.

The house which James Spear built was similar in plan to Timber Wick and the house built for William Cacy's son, now called the "Donohoe Farm." It was built of brick and was the usual five bays in length with a rear extension of two two-bay sections. The Spear house, unlike the houses compared to it immediately above, was only two stories tall. It had a very low pitch hip roof with end chimneys. Its facades were severely plain with the exception of the cornice which was made of corbeled brick with one course of brick set on the diagonal to create dentils or "mouse teeth."

The back wings, brick and frame respectively, have the same roof line, though obviously the frame wing lacks the corbeled cornice. The interior trim is nearly identical to the trim at the Donohoe Farm, with

slightly arched crosstetted door and window heads, typical of the Greek Revival style. Indeed, with the lack of brackets and porches usually associated with this form of house, it falls clearly into the Greek Revival style. Another feature of the house that is unusual for the form is the use of relatively low ceilings and a stair with winder at the top – features normally associated with smaller vernacular dwellings.

When James Spear died in 1874, he left six children, and to each, a farm. “The tract of land on which I now reside . . .” he left to his daughter Georgianna¹ who remained there at least until the Atlas was printed three years later (1877). The farm remained in the Spear family for another hundred years, gradually falling into disrepair. It was thought that there was no hope for the future of this house, but in the late 1980’s the farm was purchased and the house was restored as an office for the farm operation.

1. Wills, Lib. EC 1, fol. 98.

K-167

Circa 1830-1860

Spear Farm
Near Millington
Private

The two-storey brick house at the front Spear Farm is located at the end of a long allee on the east side of the Millington-Massey road. It was built in a vernacular Greek Revival Style between about 1830 and 1860. The main section is five bays wide, with the main entry in the central bay; the roof is a shallow hip. The main facade openings are symmetrically arranged and evenly spaced; they align from first storey to second. There is a short two-storey rear wing built of brick whose south side is continuous from the south end of the main section. Added to its rear is a frame wing extension. The wing roofs cannot be seen easily as they appear almost flat. They may be a continuous, very shallowly-pitched shed, toward the rear. On the interior details such as mantels and door and window trim are very plain; some architraves are shallowly and quite plainly pedimented. The stair has been vandalized but was very simple. There is a notable corbelled brick cornice with one "mousetooth" course. The plan of the main section is central hall with one room on each side. The building has been vacant for many years and has deteriorated; the rear section of the wing is almost in ruins. Most windows are covered with plywood, and vines are growing on the walls. The farm known as the Spear Farm was owned by members of the Spear family for over a hundred years. In fact, it was known as the Front Spear Farm to distinguish it from the two other family farms that were farther to the east from the Millington-Massey road, up to and beyond Pudding Branch, that were known as the Middle Farm (now Alexander Farm, K-636) and the Back Farm. According to the 1860 Martenet map of Kent County, a house was on the site of the Front Spear Farm by that year, presumably the standing brick structure, owned by James Spear, who apparently lived in it. There apparently was no back farm at this time or in 1877, and the farmhouse once there is gone. The house at the front Spear Farm is a rare occurrence of a middle-nineteenth-century dwelling with a hipped roof and vernacular Greek Revival styling that is built of brick. The form and style were not very commonly built (or relatively few survive), but most were frame. The brick corbelled cornice with "mousetooth" detailing is very rare locally.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Spear Farm

and/or common Spear Farm

2. Location

street & number East side Rt. 313, 1.5 miles north of Rt. 291, north of Millington not for publication

city, town Millington vicinity of congressional district First

state Millington county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Unused

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

name Mr. & Mrs. Noble Alexander, Sr.

street & number P.O. Box 178 telephone no.: 928-3318

city, town Millington state and zip code Maryland

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Court House liber EHP 111

street & number Cross Street folio 229

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Historic Sites Inventory - HABS Inventory

date May 1970 federal state county local

repository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland

7. Description

Survey No. K-167

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input 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.

The two-story brick house at the front Spear Farm is located at the end of a long allée on the east side of the Millington-Massey road. It was built in a vernacular Greek Revival Style between about 1830 and 1860. The main section is five bays wide, with the main entry in the central bay; the roof is a shallow hip. The main facade openings are symmetrically arranged and evenly spaced; they align from first story to second. There is a short two-story rear wing built of brick whose south side is continuous from the south end of the main section. Added to its rear is a frame wing extension. The wing roofs cannot be seen easily as they appear almost flat. They may be a continuous very shallowly pitched shed, toward the rear. On the interior details such as mantels and door and window trim are very plain; some architraves are shallowly and quite plainly pedimented. The stair has been vandalized but was very simple. There is a notable corbelled brick cornice with one "mousetooth" course. The plan of the main section is central hall with one room on each side. The building has been vacant for many years and has deteriorated; the rear section of the wing is almost in ruins. Most windows are covered with plywood, and vines are growing on the walls.

(Continued)

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Circa 1830-1860 **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 farm know as the Spear Farm was owned by members of the Spear family for over a hundred years. In fact, it was known as the Front Spear Farm to distinguish it from the two other family farms that were farther to the east from the Millington-Massey road, up to and beyond Pudding Branch, that were known as the Middle Farm (now Alexander Farm, K-636) and the Back Farm. According to the 1860 Martenet map of Kent County, a house was on the site of the Front Spear Fram by that year, presumably the standing brick structure, owned by James Spear, who apparently lived in it. There apparently was no back farm at this time or in 1877, and the farmhouse once there is gone. The house at the front Spear Farm is a rare occurrence of a middle-nineteenth-century dwelling with a hipped roof and vernacular Greek Revival styling that is built of brick. The form and style were not very commonly built (or relatively few survive), but most were frame. Although it is difficult to tell from the deteriorated structure, it is not a particularly impressive building because of its simplicity and because of the apparent decay of construction quality and craftsmanship sometimes seen during the first half of the nineteenth century. However, this was a fashionable and unusual building for its time, when, perhaps a reaction against what came to be considered the "fussiness" of the Federal period, the plain, broad, understated details of the Greek Revival Style became desirable. There a very few similar buildings in the county, and it will be unfortunate if this one is lost, as seems likely. The corbelled brick cornice with "mousetooth" detailing is very unusual, seen only in Chestertown and somewhat later.

The walls of the main section and first wing section, which is contemporary with the main section (though the second frame section may not be) are built of brick. The brick bond is 1-to-6 common. The bricks appear to have been dark orangey-red originally and quite uniform in color, though there has been some deterioration and some appear somewhat different. The bricks are typically sized nineteenth-century bricks: about 8-1/4" x 2-1/8" x 4 to 4-1/8". The mortar joints are wide, about 1/2". The mortar shows oyster shells and is nearly flush with the brick faces. The joints appear unstruck. The first wing section is also brick. There is a possibility that there is a one-course belt on its north side, three courses below the second-storey window, though the reason is unclear. There has been later infill building of frame structures within the L in this area, perhaps beginning with a porch. It is not clear, however, just what this space was used for in this area. A bathroom seems to have used part of the space. The rear wing section, whose sides continue from the sides of the brick wing, is now covered with asbestos-cement shingles that are applied over horizontal, lapped weatherboard.

There is a cellar at least under the main section. Interior access is from within the wing in its southwest corner, with the stair leading west into the cellar. There also appears to be an exterior entry under the east end of the main section. The cellar was not inspected.

The main section has two short, wide chimneys, one in each gable-end, within the wall in the center. They are 14 courses tall below the cap. They have four-course caps, but the north chimney's cap is partly parged, and the south chimney's cap is partly gone. There is also a chimney at the rear, east end of the brick wing, in the center within the wall. It is built of brick but is smaller, more square, and its cap probably is gone. There may have been a chimney once for the frame wing section, which appears to have been a kitchen.

The brick cornice is unusual in Kent County. Its lowest course is stepped out only slightly from the main wall. The second course is "mousetooth," cut bricks set with corners pointing out. The last three courses are stepped out only slightly, the last two together. Window arches are flat and made of headers.

On the interior it can be seen that the windows are double-hung and with 6-over-6 lights. The north parlor has two west windows and two east windows opposite. The trim is wide, 7" overall. It is quite simple and split-faced. There is an inside fillet 2" wide, next one of 2-1/4", then an ogee-and-bevel molding, and lastly a 1" outside fillet. The head trim is slightly pedimented and dogeared. The window aprons are very deep, 6-3/4", with a total of five fillets. An ogee-and-bevel molding serves as a bed for the sill. The lower section is three corbelled courses. The door trim is simpler than the window trim, with all flat, unmolded surfaces. It is seven inches wide but absent the ogee-and-bevel-with fillet 2-3/4" backband. The baseboard is tall (8-1/2") overall. There is corbelling and an ogee-and-bevel
(continued)

cap. The mantels are simple. The north parlor one has simple pilaster bases. There are plain recessed-panel pilasters, which are corbelled. The frieze is two-panel, twice recessed like the pilasters. These panels are molded with a small, flat ogee-and-bevel. The shelf is rectangular. The stair is quarter-turn with winders, like the stair at the Alexander Farm (K-636) formerly known as the middle Spear Farm, to the east.

1. STATE <i>Maryland</i> COUNTY <i>Kent</i> TOWN <i>Millington</i> VICINITY STREET NO. <i>Rt 313, 1.4 miles North of</i> <i>Millington (east side of rd.)</i> ORIGINAL OWNER ORIGINAL USE <i>dwelling</i> PRESENT OWNER <i>James E. Spear</i> PRESENT USE <i>Vacant</i> WALL CONSTRUCTION <i>brick</i> NO. OF STORIES <i>2</i>	HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY <i>K-167</i> 2. NAME <i>Spear House</i> DATE OR PERIOD <i>c. 1830</i> STYLE <i>Federal</i> ARCHITECT BUILDER 3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE
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4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC *No*

The Spear House would fall into the category of an Ante-Bellum house, although it has certain features which could be called Federal.

It is a two story brick house, five bays long with central door, having an "L" off the south half of the east facade. Its brick is laid in common bond and the first floor is about four feet above ground, there being a low cellar beneath. Its windows have narrow frames and 6/6 sash. Below a very low-pitch hipped roof is a cornice of stepped courses of brick. At north and south ends of the building are short brick chimney within the walls.

It's presently unoccupied and is in poor condition. Its west facade looks across an overgrown lawn and drive flanked by rows of trees.

by the elements

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE *Endangered* *?* Interior Exterior *fair*

6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)	7. PHOTOGRAPH
8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages) INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.	9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER <i>Michael Bourne</i> DATE OF RECORD <i>May, 1970</i>

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

Spear House - K-167

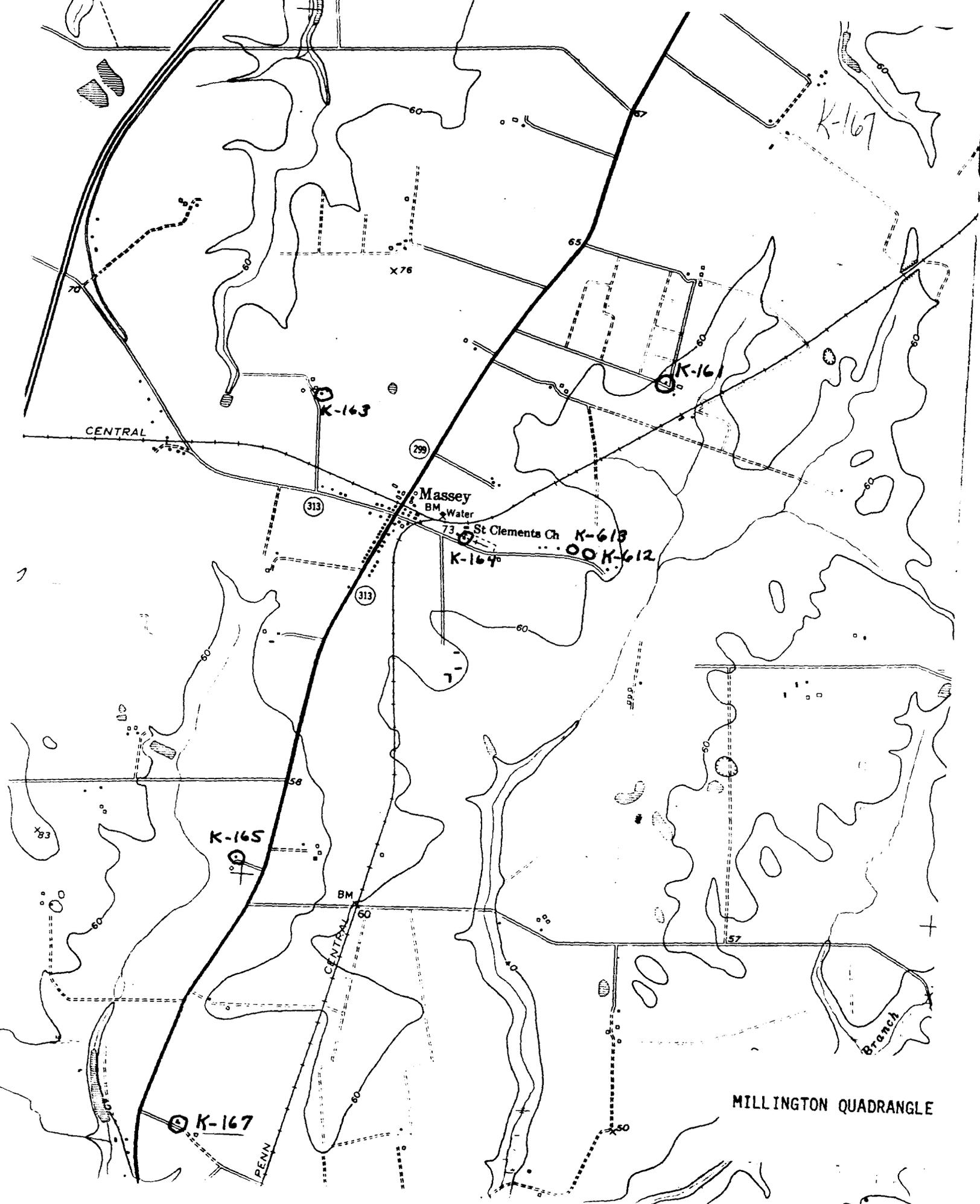
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MBS

5/19/90



K-167

K-161

K-163

299

Massey
BM
Water

73 St Clements Ch

K-613

K-164

K-612

313

313

K-165

BM

CENTRAL

K-167

PENN

Branch

MILLINGTON QUADRANGLE



K-167

Spear Farm

Rt. 313, near Millington

M.Q. Fallaw - 12/6/85

View to northeast

K167

#4

Case

A



K-167

Spear Farm

Rt. 313, near Millington

M. Q. Fallaw - 12/6/85

View to southwest

K167
#2

10 sec w/ PC 2 1/2