

K-630

Cypress Farm

Near Massey

Private

Located between the Peacock's Corner-White Stone Road and the Delaware state line south of the upper reaches of the Cypress Branch of the Chester River near Massey, Cypress Farm appears to have been a marginally productive farm that was carved out of the Maryland-Delaware Forest in this last-settled section of the county. The two-part farmhouse has been long-vacant and is in near ruins. The two-storey, five-bay-wide, frame, gable-roofed main section is very plain and appears to date from the early twentieth century. The earlier gable-roofed, one-story-with-loft rear wing is of planked-log construction (but frame in the gables) that was covered on the exterior with horizontal, lapped weatherboard and on the interior with lath and plaster. There is one large, poorly-lit first-storey room and an open, unfinished loft space. Probably dating from the middle to late nineteenth century, the wing is a rare surviving example of a kind of construction once quite common for both dwellings and meathouses, especially in this forested northeastern section of the county. Apparently part of the once-extensive Kent County holdings of the politically-prominent Dulany family and hence tenanted for many years, the log wing probably was built to serve as a tenant house.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Cypress Farm

and/or common

## 2. Location

Big Stone Neck School Road

JLK 7/7/94

 street & number East side Peacock's Corner-White Stone Road, .7 mile south of  
 the Massey-Delaware Line Road, east of Massey  not for publication

 city, town Massey  vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland 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	<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 type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

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

name Fred Berinche

street &amp; number R.D. Box 141 telephone no.: unlisted

city, town Golts, state and zip code Maryland 21637

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Court House liber EHP 61

street &amp; number Cross Street folio 816

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys NONE

title

 date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No. K-630

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

A two-part vacant farmhouse in near ruins is located on what appears to have been only a marginally productive 119 acre farm between the Peacock's Corner-White Stone Road and the Delaware state line, south of the upper reaches of the Cypress Branch of the Chester River. The two-story five-bay-wide frame, gable-roofed main section, appearing to date from the early twentieth century, is very plain and of little interest architecturally. The earlier one-story-with-loft rear wing, however, is of planked log construction (but frame in the gables), originally clad throughout in horizontal, lapped weatherboard. The wing probably dates from the nineteenth century. The axis of the main section is north-south; that of the wing is east-west.

The log wing has but one large room on the first story; it was last used as a kitchen. The room measures about 17'-0" wide by 14'-9" deep. The wing could not be measured on the exterior due to the site's overgrown state, but it was probably laid out for an exterior measurement (excluding the weatherboard) of 18 feet by 16 feet. The logs appear to have been hewn to a thickness of five inches and vary in height from about nine to twelve inches. They are dovetailed together at the corners. The spaces between the logs are chinked with mortar. Horizontal, lapped weatherboard only 1/2" thick at the lower edge and with an exposure of ca. 4-1/2" covers the wing walls. There are single corner boards, on the long sides. In the first-story room lath (showing both circular saw and up-and-down saw marks) and plaster have been applied to the logs, except in the northeast stair corner, where the plaster was applied directly to the logs. The log kitchen is a dark room, with only one double-hung window with 6-over-6 lights, in the east bay of the south side. The sash are not original; they are somewhat too large for the 28" by 47" opening. A door was in the approximate center of both south and north sides, the north door leading to a low porch in the L between the house's main, front section and the wing.

A corner stair, quarter-turn with winders, is in the northeast corner of the wing, behind a board-and-batten door of two wide and one narrow boards; however, since fillers have been added at the top and bottom. Under the corner stair is a closet, with the door gone. The stair carriage and closet studs show circular-saw marks.

(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 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	Builder/Architect
check: Applicable Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D and/or Applicable Exception: <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 type="checkbox"/> local	

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

Planked-log (of square-log) dwellings were once quite common in Kent County and in the northeastern part of the county along the Delaware boundary in particular. This area, the center of the county's logging industry, has always been heavily forested, providing abundant raw materials for this type of dwellings. However, termites, rot and the desire for "improved," more spacious housing have caused the demise of many of these planked-log dwellings. The wing at Cypress Farm is one of the county's relatively few survivors. In Kent County the earlier log structures generally were dovetailed at the corners while later ones tied the logs to corner posts. Though no conclusion can be drawn with certainty about the age of the log portion, it is possible that is older than the frame structure above the logs. It and the lath, with machine-saw marks, may have been done during a rebuilding of an older log portion. Commonly thought of as an unrefined kind of structure, log houses eventually, if not initially, were in fact often weatherboarded on the exterior and lathed and plastered on the interior, as this dwelling shows. The result was a dwelling that appeared indistinguishable from those of frame construction but provided insulation lacking in frame structures with unfilled stud spaces. The one-room original log dwelling at Cypress Farm may also be a rare survivor of the kind of minimal dwelling often provided for farm tenants by landlords during the nineteenth century.

From the earliest period of settlement into the twentieth century, the area between the Chester and Sassafras rivers stretching several miles west of the present Delaware-Maryland boundary and into Delaware was call "The Forest." With quite sandy but often poorly drained soils and no navigable waters, it seems to have been the last-settled area in the county. Gradually,

(Continued)



The loft was accessible only by this stair. No opening was ever cut through from the main section after its addition. At present, however, one can pass through from one section to the other where wall materials are gone from the studs. Because of the absent wall materials, it can be seen that both sections are framed independently; the weatherboard is gone from the exterior of the log wing's west gable end, however.

The main log walls extend two logs high (a total of ca. 18") into the loft space above the loft floor on both sides; there is a single, large above-floor-level log at the gable ends. Above the topmost log on the gable ends is stud framing, which on the east end appears to be replacement, with twentieth-century dimensions. In the east gable there are two casement-window-size openings, one on each side of the square chimney. The sash is gone, and the remaining window frames do not appear particularly old. The west gable studs are ca. 3" by 4", are spaced 22-27" apart, and are circular-sawn. There is no evidence that a window was ever located in the west gable. The horizontal, lapped weatherboard was fastened to the studs and log lower walls with cut nails. A ca. 17" square chimney rises through the east end of the loft, with the logs continuous behind it. Most of the loft flooring is random wide; the type of wood could not be discerned because of dirt and debris. The east end flooring from stair well to south wall has been replaced; it is narrow tongue-and-groove pine. One old floor board shows up-and-down saw marks. The loft was only floored; walls and ceiling were never finished, though whitewash remnants indicate that the space was once used for living quarters.

The common rafters measure 2-1/2" by 4"; their feet rest on the top log of the sides; the method of attachment could not be seen. Small-dimension (ca. 2" by 2-1/2") false rafter ends have been nailed along the upper sides of the rafters. They extend the roof ca. 8-10 inches beyond the walls. These rafter ends are exposed on the exterior; board decking above them is visible. Cornice treatment of the main section is identical. The roof overhangs the gables a similar distance on both house sections. The wing roof is of corrugated metal, applied directly to shingle nailers, which show circular-saw marks. The rafters are butted at the ridge; there are no half-lap or other joints using pegging.

The wing's first storey room has a low ceiling, 6'-10" from the floor. There is sheet composition material on it over the earlier 2-1/2" tongue-and-groove pine. Door and window trim for this room is 1" by 4", as in the main section. On the gable-end wall, between chimney and southeast corner, is a 13"-deep backless shelf and cupboard unit ca. 4'-7" wide and from floor to ceiling for storage of kitchen supplies. There is no fireplace but only the ca. 17" square chimney with a hole for a stove flue. The red brick chimney now extends only two or three courses above the ridge.

The weatherboarded main section, with its rear wall centered on the log wing's west end, is five evenly-spaced bays wide on the first storey of the approach (west) side. The main entry is in the center. The second-storey windows are aligned vertically with the first-storey windows; there is no opening in the second-storey central bay, where on the interior there is a closet over the small first-storey entry hall and part of the stair. Both gable ends have a single window on each storey, in the east bay. There are no

rear-wall windows to either side of the log wing. Windows, now largely gone, were double-hung and with 2-over-2 lights and plain trim. The wing is entered through an opening in the rear wall of the south room near its north corner; the door is gone. The floor of the wing is one step lower than that of the main section.

There is a center brick chimney in each gable end, within the walls, but no longer extending above the roof. They are square and for use only with stoves, for which there are second-storey flue holes.

Entry is into a tiny hall (38" deep by 42" wide), from which rises a central, enclosed, steep, straight-run stair, into a similarly small second-storey rear hall. There was formerly a plain board rail let in to a 3" by 3-1/2" newel post at each end of the stair run. The post had stopped-chamfer corners. There is one room ca. 13-1/2 feet wide by 13 feet deep on each side of the stair on both storeys, with doors originally from halls to rooms. All interior main-section doors are missing. The main-entry door, mostly missing, may have been one horizontal panel over a large light over three horizontal panels. One-time front steps or porch are gone. Crudely done, door and window trim is plain and measures about 1" by 4". There is an under-stair closet with access from the south room.

The studs of the newer, main section measure a full 2" by 4". Lath and plaster have been applied on the interior walls and ceilings, though much is now fallen. Some ceilings have replacement composition board panels. Baseboards are plain. The flooring is of 2-1/2" tongue-and-groove pine. Ceiling height of the second storey is 6'-11".

The foundations of neither section could be determined with certainty due to the undergrowth. Several large stones were seen at or just below ground level of the wing, including a very large one at the wing southwest corner. In the south L formed by the intersection of the main section and the wing is a low, covered frame entry to what appears to be a partially enlarged crawl space under the main section, such as for a root cellar or some other unknown purpose. Under the main section's south room, in the deeper area, there is some sort of concrete block structure, which could not be well seen from the exterior.

The farmhouse is almost entirely hidden from view from the public road during the growing season. The farm lane, which angles northeast from the road, passes the house to its south and continues to a farmyard to the east and northeast and then to the rear of the property. Deteriorated farm buildings appear to date from the twentieth century or very late nineteenth century and to be of no particular significance. The entire site is neglected and overgrown. A small cultivated field lies to the south of the farm buildings adjacent to the lane, with trees in the near distance behind. Old mimosa trees remain in what was the house's front yard, to the west of the house.

however, farms were carved out of the woods but seem to have been marginally productive. The noted Dulany family (Daniel senior, the younger Daniel and his brother Dennis, who was the clerk of the Kent County Court before the Revolution) seem to have acquired extensive holdings for investment in the area east and south of Massey and in Delaware as well. Although the Dulanys do not seem to have lived in Kent County after the Revolution (and only Dennis before it), they were able to retain some if not all their Kent County lands for many years. Martenet's 1860 map of Kent County shows a J. H. Dulan(e)y as the owner of Cypress Farm though the building shown is closer to the boundary than the present one. However, the Martenet map is not noted for its precision. The 1877 atlas of Kent County, with better maps, shows a building in the location of the present one at Cypress Farm. It may have been the rear planked-log wing, which also may have been the building present in 1860. However, no owner's name is given, perhaps an omission but possibly an indication of the structure's minimal nature. Dulaney properties are shown in the vicinity, some noted as belonging to the "Dulany Estate." These Dulaney properties would have been tenanted. The rear wing of the house at Cypress Farm may thus be an example of the kind of minimal building built for or by a tenant in this agriculturally marginal portion of the county. Very likely the difficult living conditions in this sparsely settled section of the county, with its marginal soils and the necessity of constantly pushing back the forest, resulted in a lower caliber of tenant who was assumed to deserve only minimal housing. Landlords also may have been unwilling to assume the cost of better housing when the land could not support the cost.

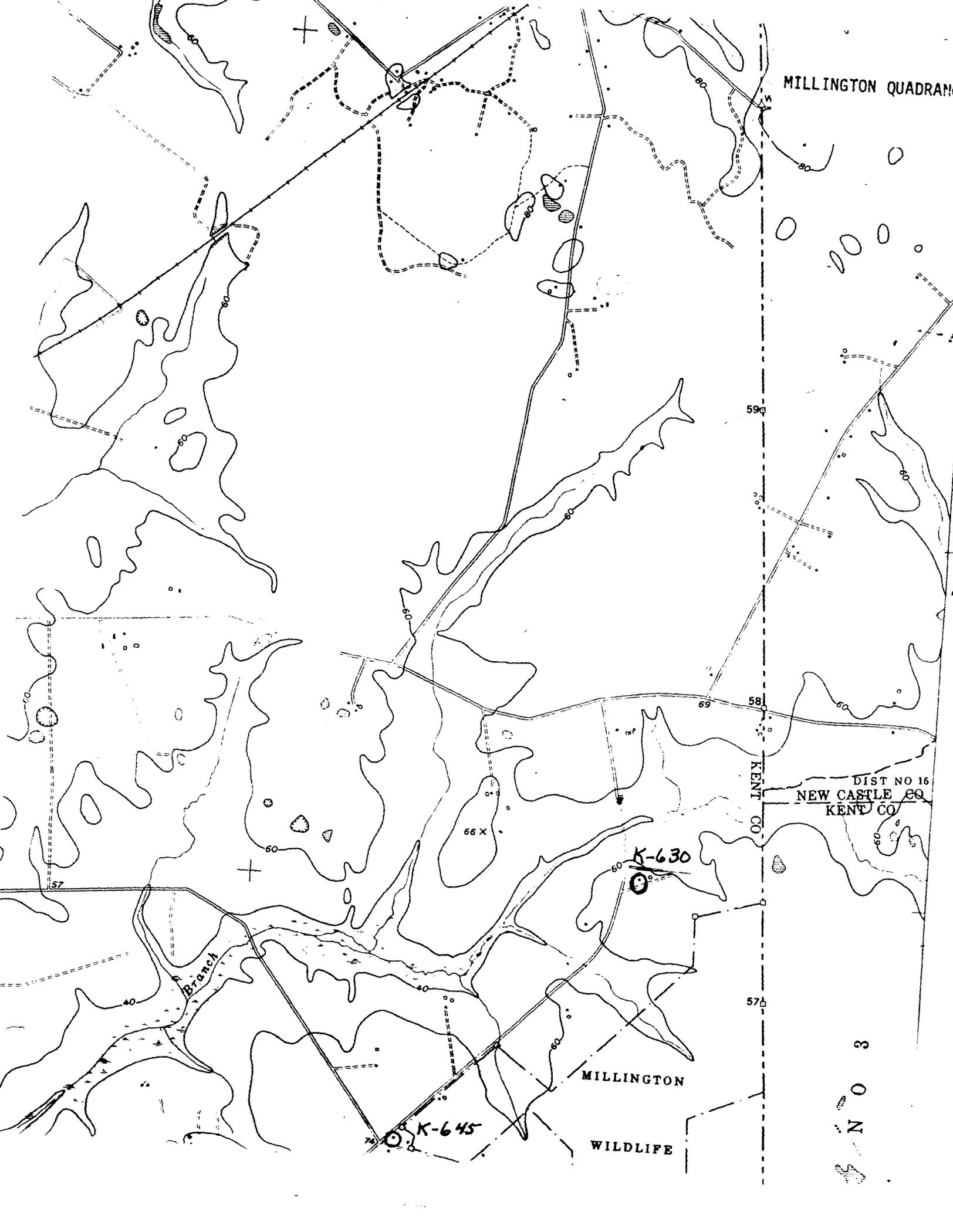
The area south of Golts between the railroad line and the Delaware border (about three miles north of Cypress Farm) once contained both black and white communities said to have contained numerous dwellings built of planked logs. The black community is largely gone and the white one entirely gone, though the 1942 (revised 1953) U. S. Geological Survey Millington Quad sheet shows the network of winding roads in these areas where these simple dwellings were once located.

Cypress Farm is in the area of an early twentieth-century immigration-colonization venture, and its present owner and last occupant seems to be the last of the immigrant families who participated in it. This farm was not purchased by this family until 1929, however (Kent Co. Land Records, RAS 3/6), and whether or not Cypress Farm was part of the original land scheme was not researched. The Kent County News of August 15, 1914, reported that 1700 acres had been bought up by William H. Cacy, a prosperous farmer who lived near Massey, and then sold to a George F. Gootee and his wife of Delaware. The Gootees intended "to divide the property into small tracts and colonize Bohemians or other good citizens there." All the tracts were near Massey and "adjoin each other as far as possible. Eight farms were bought and resold." The Berensci family that bought the farm in 1929 is said to have been one of the immigrant families involved earlier in the land scheme. Fred Berinche (the name has been changed) is the current owner. Schoolteachers in the area recall that the immigrants were Hungarians, not Bohemians (though Bohemians was a generic term used locally for eastern and central Europeans). Never especially numerous (the venture was on the eve of World War I), the immigrants are said to have felt misled when they arrived and discovered the hard life to which they had come. According to Stanley

Sutton in his Beyond the Roadgate, "it is not known exactly how many did stay, but the town never materialized. By 1931 there were several families who did carve out farms from the wilderness...." He recalls seeing the original plat of the proposed town. He further says that "all but one farm of this area has been bought by the State of Maryland and now is managed as a wildlife refuge. The land is flat, poorly drained, and heavily wooded." (p. 299)

The state of Maryland has purchased many of the surrounding farms to the south and southwest for a wildlife demonstration area under the supervision of the Department of Natural Resources. It is likely that this farm also will become yet another addition to the state-owned wildlife lands. Having been neglected and unoccupied for some time, it is not likely that this farmhouse will survive long.

MILLINGTON QUADRAN



DIST NO 16  
NEW CASTLE CO  
KENT CO

MILLINGTON

WILDLIFE

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Cypress Farm

Big Stone Road, near Massey

M. Q. Fallaw - 6/18/86

View to northeast



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Cypress Farm

Big Stone Road, near Massey

M. Q. Fallaw - 6/18/86

View to northwest