

K-96

Brice Mill Farm (Perkins Mill)
Near Chestertown
c. 1761

Brice Mill Farm is located on the upper reaches of the east branch of Langford Creek on the land that was called Mill Ford. Matthias Harris was the owner of the property prior to 1752 when it was purchased by Daniel Perkins, Jr.¹ Perkins was the son of Daniel Perkins who had established a saw mill, grist mill and fulling mill on Morgan Creek in the early 18th century.² Apparently Daniel, Jr. prospered at the new mill, for he purchased 13 acres of Wheatfield on the west side of the mill pond in 1765, along with two seats at St. Paul's Church.³ He died only three years later with the instructions that the properties were to be sold at public auction under the direction of "my Friends Thomas Ringgold and William Ringgold ..."⁴

The property was purchased by the Ringgolds' cousin, Thomas Smyth in 1769, but was later sold back to Daniel Perkins, III, in 1781, including 284 acres of Millford and 15 acres of Wheatfield, and including the "Grist Mill or Water Mill."⁵

The buildings which remain on the property today are largely the product of Daniel Perkins, III, and include a brick house, brick stable, and the foundation of the former mill. The house, when built, was a two-bay, two-story structure with enclosed gable-end chimneys and a central entrance. The brickwork is irregular, looking as though part of an earlier building was included in the new. It apparently had no wing originally, as there is a fireplace in the basement. The arrangement of the house was a

standard hall-parlor plan, but the rear facade had no central entrance, indicating the probable location of an original stair between the rooms.

South of the house, a brick stable was built for the horses. It was a simple brick structure with gable-end doors flanked by two long slits in the walls for ventilation. Beyond the stable, south of the mill dam was the mill, a structure not much larger than the stable.

Daniel Perkins, III was even more prosperous than his father had been, increasing his land acquisitions with the purchase of more of Wheatfield and the Garnett property, Cedar Hill, both in 1800.⁶ He died around 1826 and bequeathed the family properties to his children, who sold Cedar Hill the following year.⁷ The children, however, kept the family farm, even though they lived in Chestertown. They leased the mill to James F. Wilkins in 1843⁸ and finally sold it to John W. Jones in 1855, reserving the graveyard.⁹ Jones is listed on the 1860 Martinet Map. Sarah, Eliza and Caroline Perkins are buried in the family graveyard between the house and the mill pond.

In 1865 Jones sold the farm to Benjamin F. Beck who resided at Stephney Farm on Broad Neck.¹⁰ It is Beck's name which appears in the 1877 Atlas. In 1882, Beck sold the 160 acre property to John Brice for whom the property was named.¹¹ After his death in 1900, the property was acquired by his son Joseph Brice, who continued to operate the mill until it burned around 1910. Thereafter, Joseph moved to Chestertown and the mill was never rebuilt. He sold the property in 1930 to S. Arthur Eastburn.¹²

The Eastburns were responsible for adding the current kitchen wing, remodeling the stable and building a new dairy barn. Between 1937 and 1966 there were six owners of the farm. In 1966, the parents of the present owner purchased the farm, some of which they later sold.¹³

Brice Mill farm stands today as a reminder that the Perkins family was important to Kent County by establishing not just one, but two mills.

1. Land Records, Lib. JS 27, fol. 241.
2. Wills, Lib. 3, fol. 36.
3. Land Records, Lib. DD 2, fol. 120.
4. Wills, Lib. 4, fol. 325.
5. Land Records, Lib. EF 6, fol. 22.
6. Land Records, Lib. TW 1, fol. 343; fol. 487.
7. Land Records, Lib. JNG 4, fol. 83.
8. Land Records, Lib. JNG 9, fol. 150; fol. 152.
9. Land Records, Lib. JFG 2, fol. 555.
10. Land Records, Lib. JKH 4, fol. 611.
11. Land Records, Lib. SB 3, fol. 481.
12. Land Records, Lib. JTD 14, fol. 331; Lib. RAS 5, fol. 308.
13. Land Records, Lib. EHP 16, fol. 57.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. K-96

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Perkins Mill, Jones Mill, Beck's Mill, Brice's Mill

and/or common Brice's Mill

2. Location

street & number 7710 Brices Mill Road not for publication

city, town Chestertown vicinity of congressional district 1st

state Maryland county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<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:

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

name Richard C. Thompson

street & number 7710 Brice's Mill Road telephone no.: 410-778-2139

city, town Chestertown state and zip code MD 21620

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber MLM 22

street & number Cross Street folio 129

city, town Chestertown state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Kent County Windshield Survey

date 1968 federal state county local

pository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Crownsville state MD

7. Description

Survey No. K-96

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input 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 checked="" 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.

At the upper reaches of the East Branch of Langford Creek, approximately four miles Southwest of Chestertown, stands a late 18th Century vernacular brick house with accompanying brick stable and ruins of an old mill. The two and one half story brick building was completely remodeled in the second quarter of the 20th Century at which time a two story kitchen and dining room wing was added onto its north gable. Between the house and the dried-up mill pond West of the house is the burial ground of the Perkins family, who operated a mill on this site.

The house is a two bay long, two story brick structure on a high basement. Its east facade has a central entrance with c.1940's architrane and a brick stoop with wrought iron railings. The wall east of the entrance has a section of good Flemish bond brickwork. but the remainder of the house is irregular common bond. Both first and second story windows have 6/6 sash and louvered blinds. Two dormers on each side of the A roof appear to be mid to late 19th Century and have 2/2 sash. Both chimneys rise from the gables within the structure. The two bay two story frame wing is well proportioned.

The south gable has two windows flanking the chimney on each story, the attic windows having 4-pane casements. On the ground floor is a basement entrance with architrane similar to the front door on the east with the edge of a segmental arch showing beyond the architrane. This is the only exterior use of an architrane on the exterior of the house.

The back or west side has only the south window on the first floor, but two windows above and dormers, as on the front. The north window of the first floor and the basement window below were bricked up when the house was remodeled. There was never a back door like the front facade. The west side of the wing has a small back porch.

A short distance to the west are the gravestones of at least three of the Perkins sisters. This group of ladies lived their adult life at 115 Water Street, Chestertown. To the south of the house is the first story of a brick stable which has a central entrance and two flanking 4/4 lite windows. Apparently the windows are enlargements of narrow slits which still exist on the west side thereof. During the 20th Century remodeling the A roof was removed and replaced with a tall gambrel roof. The old rafters were used as dividers in the grain shed on the south. A north shed provided cover for the animals.

Farther to the south, where the land slopes off to a marshy area stands the brick remains of the mill on the property. It apparently burned around 1910 and was never rebuilt. When the foliage is gone, it will be possible to trace the race, which was very short as the ruin is close to the southeast corner of the pond. The tail race is still visible from Brice's Mill Road.

The interior of the house was totally renewed in the 1930's or 40's. Everything was renewed, including the stair. As it now exists, there is one large living room with fireplace on the south end. The north fireplace has been blocked up. The stair rises from the center of the west wall to the north. The basement stair is beneath it. In the 20th Century wing is a dining room and kitchen. It is apparent that the kitchen was originally located in the basement, with a cooking fireplace on the north end. The south chimney has a segmentally arched support in the middle of that gable. All other evidence is gone.

The re-arrangement of the 1st floor plan is similar to the remodeled "Stanley's Hope" and "Wichcote Castle", though the stair is run in the opposite direction.

From the scant evidence and lack of west door, the original floor plan might have been hall-parlor with the stair ascending in the center of the building, like "New Nithsdale" and "Lloyds Landing" in Wicomico and Talbot Counties respectively.

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/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 4th qarter 18th C. **Builder/Architect** unknown

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.

Brice's Mill house is a curious two bay two story brick house that resembles Great Hopes in Queen Annes County. It was apparently the home of Daniel Perkins (III) who ran a grist mill and farmed the adjoining land to the north of the house and west of the mill pond. The property had been in his family beginning in 1752.

Daniel Perkins (I) died in 1742 and left his "plantation, saw mill, grist mill and fulling mill" on Morgan Creek to his son Thomas, but if Thomas was to die, then it was to go to his son Daniel. Thomas thrived at Morgan Creek and is known for his participation in supplying flour to the Revolutionary troops. Daniel however began acquiring land called "Mill Ford" in 1752, "near the mill pond". In 1765 he acquired 130 acres of "Wheatfield" west of the mill pond and two seats in St. Paul's Church. Only three year er he died and stipulated that his grist mill and "Mill Ford" be sold to the highest bidder and to sell "Wheatfield" if necessary to cover his debts at the discretion of his "friends Thomas and William Ringgold".

Apparently Thomas Smyth purchased the property in 1769 from Mary Perkins, but was to sell it back to her son Daniel in 1781. It was this Daniel who was responsible for constructing the house and stable on the property, apparently maintaining and running the grist mill for the inhabitants of the area, especially Quaker Neck and Broad Neck.

Daniel Perkins (III) had four daughter, Sarah, Ann, Eliza and Caroline, who inherited the land and grist mill. In 1843, they sold the land and house to James F. Wilkins, holding the mortgage. Wilkins apparently defaulted in his obligation for the Perkins ladies sold "All that Mill, Mill seat, Lands, Ponds, land covered with water, springs, races, dam lying and being in Kent Co. commonly called "Perkins Mill...." in 1855 to John W. Jones.

Jones operated the mill for ten years before selling it to Benjamin F. Beck who lived at Middle Plantation just up the road west of the village of Langford. In that deed the Perkins Graveyard was excluded from the sale.

Benjamin Beck sold "Beck's Mill" in 1882 to John Brice, who appears to have lived across the road from Beck in the 1877 Atlas. When his son Joseph came of age, Joseph operated the mill until it burned around 1906. Thereafter he sold the property and the mill was never re-built.

Between 1906 and 1966 there were nine owners of the farm. In the 1930's or 40's, the house was totally gutted and renewed. At the same time, a large concrete block barn was constructed and the old stable remodeled. Since 1966 it has been in the same family.

The Brice's Mill House is an eighteenth-century structure which accompanied a mill, owned during the Revolution by Col. Perkins, who also owned a house and mill at Urieville, near Kennedyville which supplied flour to the troops at Valley Forge.

The house is two bays long with a center door and two bays deep. The east facade is laid in Flenish bond, the rest in common bond. There are neither belt course nor water table. The first floor stands about four feet above ground level. All windows have 6/6 sashes and louvered shutters, painted a light green against the white brick. There are two dormers on the A roof between two large and tall chimneys. A two bay, two story frame wing is located off the north gable.

1. STATE Md COUNTY Kent TOWN Chestertown VICINITY Langford STREET NO. Brice's Mill Rd N. of Langford Rd. ORIGINAL OWNER Col. Perkins ORIGINAL USE dwelling PRESENT OWNER Richard N. Thompson PRESENT USE dwelling WALL CONSTRUCTION Brick NO. OF STORIES 2 1/2	HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY K-96
	2. NAME Brice's Mill House DATE OR PERIOD 18th Century STYLE Colonial ARCHITECT BUILDER
3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE	

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC **NO**

The Brice's Mill House is an 18th Century structure which accompanied a mill, ~~with~~ ~~is~~ owned by ^{Colonel} Perkins who also owned a house and mill at Ansville, near Kenedyville which supplied flour to the troops at Valley Forge.

The house is 2 bays long with a center door and 2 bays deep. The rest facade is laid in Flemish bond, the rest in common bond. There is neither belt course nor water table. The 1st floor stands about four feet above ground level. All windows have 6/8 sash and louvered shutters, painted a light green against the white brick. There are 2 dormers on the 'A' roof between 2 large and tall chimneys. A 2 bay, 2 story ^{front} wing is located off the north gable.

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered **NO** Interior Exterior **good**

6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional) 7. PHOTOGRAPH

8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)
 INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER
Michael Bourne

DATE OF RECORD **Oct 2, 1968**

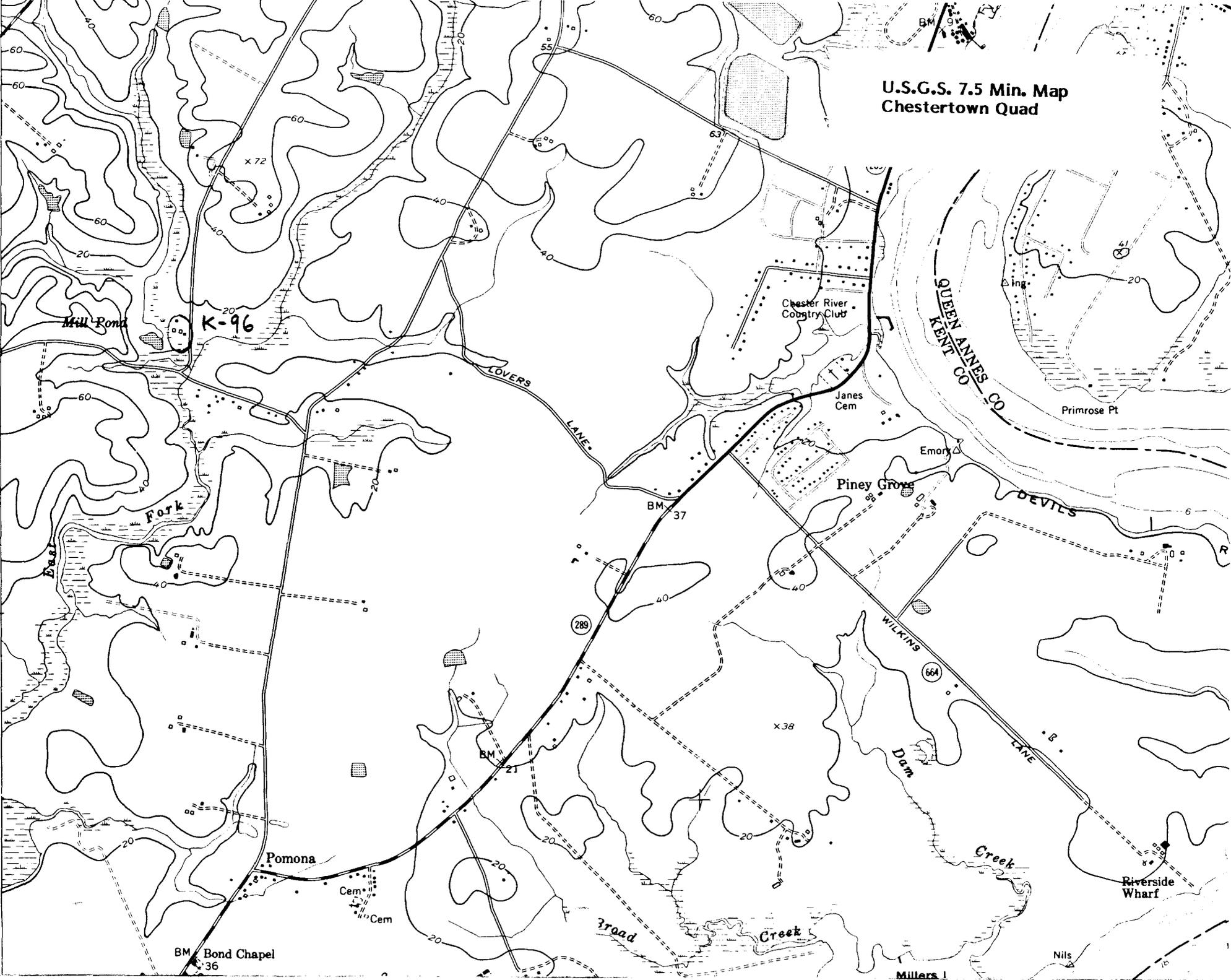
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTO APHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE



U.S.G.S. 7.5 Min. Map
Chestertown Quad

K-96

LANGFORD 1.4 MI.
5762 11 NW (ROCK HALL)
4337
4336
4335



Millers I



Brice Mill Farm K-96

East facade

M. Bowne

Fall, 1995

1/3



Brice Mill Farm K-96

West facade

M. Bowne

Fall, 1995

2/3



Brice Mill Farm - K-96

Stable

East facade

M. Bowne

Fall, 1995

3/3