

ACHS SUMMARY FORM

1. Name Wormweed Distillery
2. Planning Area/Site Number 10/4
3. MNCPPC Atlas Reference Map 2 J-9
4. Address 28800 Kemptown Road, Damascus

5. Classification Summary

Category structure  
 Ownership private  
 Public Acquisition n.a.  
 Status occupied  
 Accessible yes; restricted  
 Present use commercial  
 Previous Survey Recording M-NCPPC Federal    State X County X Local   

(Title and date: Inventory of Historical Sites 1976 )

6. Date 1939
7. Original Owner Harry Greene and Arthur Hardy

8. Apparent Condition

- a. good
- b. altered
- c. original site

9. Description:

The mill consists of 2 structures, one housing a large steam engine and the other, 3 vats and a covered drive-through for unloading the wormweed into the vats. A moveable pulley on a rail carries the weed to the vats, while steam is supplied through pipes running from the engine house in a sluice-type structure. Both structures are built of posts, either buried in the ground or sitting on slabs. These support plates which carry the rafters. Neither structure has sidewalls. A log barn with vertical siding sits near the mill.

10. Significance: This distillery is one of only 2 remaining in the world. American Wormweed has been cultivated in Carroll Co., Md. since the 1840s. Although the uncultivated forms of the plant are available throughout most of the U.S., wormweed oil production on a commercial basis has been confined almost entirely to this region; climatic conditions and soils here are well suited to the crop. As the demand for the crop increased, farmers in adjoining areas of Frederick, Montgomery, and Howard County began to cultivate the crop. The oil was widely used to kill parasites in animals and humans, and in domestic and foreign perfumes.

The original equipment for the Damascus distillery was built and assembled on the site about 1939 by Harry Greene and Arthur Hardy, and the distillery was operated by them for 21 years. They sold the set up to Tom Hawkins and Joe Linthicum in 1969, and they in turn sold it to Millard and Madeline Burdette in 1971. The Burdettes extract wormweed oil and sell it to be used as a perfume oil.

11. Date researched and researcher Nov. 1978 Pat Ehrlich
12. Compiler Eileen McGuckian
13. Date Compiled 1/79
14. Designation Approval
15. Acreage structure only

Candy Reed - Architectural Description

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Wormweed Distillery

AND/OR COMMON (sometimes called "Wormseed")

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 28800 Kemptown Road (Route 80)

CITY, TOWN Damascus CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 6  
 VICINITY OF Farney Branch

STATE Maryland COUNTY Montgomery 20750

**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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" 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 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 Raymond Moxley (Land) Millard Burdette Telephone #: (Structure)

STREET & NUMBER 28800 Kemptown Road

CITY, TOWN Damascus STATE, zip code Maryland 20750  
 VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Montgomery County Courthouse

Liber #: Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Rockville STATE Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE M-NCPPC Inventory of Historical Sites

DATE 1976  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Park Historian's Office

CITY, TOWN Rockville STATE Maryland 20855

**7 DESCRIPTION**

M.10-1

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

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

The Damascus Worm Weed Mill is located about two hundred yards from Hemptown Road. The mill consists of two open, one and a half story sheds with gable roofs. These sheds are roughly on a southeast-northwest axis. The first building, on the southeast, has unmilled vertical narrow tree trunks which support the gabled roof. On the northeast side of this open building there is a wooden platform with three large circular, metal vats set into the platform. Each vat has a domed lid with a gasket around it which seals the lid when the vat is closed and the clamps are locked. On the southwest side of this building there is an area wide enough to permit a tractor hauling a wagon laden with worm weed to load and unload next to one of the three vats. Worm weed is manually loaded into a vat with pitchforks. Someone must stand in the vat and stamp the worm weed down as his partner pitchforks the weed over to him. When the heating process is completed, the worm weed is lifted out of the vat by means of a tackle and pulley system and loaded onto a wagon. This tackle system is suspended from a wooden beam located just below the ridge pole.

The second building, located immediately northwest of the first, is enclosed only on the northwest elevation by wide vertical planking. It, too, has a gable roof with corrugated metal covering. Set into a poured concrete base is an old black railroad steam engine with a smoke stack. A steam operated whistle extends through a hole cut for it in the roof. The oil burner is located at the northwest end of the engine. A short distance west of the shed is a two thousand gallon tank of fuel oil. Underground pipes lead the oil to the burner which consumes thirty gallons of oil an hour when the engine is operating. Just north of this shed is a hand dug well which provides water for the mill.

The first (southeast) building is connected to the second (northwest) by a wooden trough which is filled with water.

The railroad engine produces steam which is piped into the bottom of the three vats in the southeast building. The wormweed is heated by a pressure cooker system at 80-90 pounds of pressure for one-half to three quarters of an hour. As the steam rises through the wormweed the oil is lifted out of the plant and is carried by the steam out two pipes at the top of the vats. The two pipes lead into the wooden water trough where each pipe is sub-divided into two pipes. Thus each vat has four pipes. A total of twelve pipes run through the wooden water trough.

The water cools the steam and oil until they become liquid. At the northwest end of the trough there are three smaller open poured concrete vats. Each groups of four pipes pours out into one of these vats. Here the oil rises to the top and may be drawn off in buckets and placed in fifteen gallon drums. When it has reached the desired clarity, water is recycled into a fourth smaller vat which catches whatever oil may have spilled out. The water is then cycled back into the boiler along a concrete trough and is reheated until it turns into steam when it is again sent through pipes to one of the large vats in the southeast building.

The Damascus Worm Weed Mill produces between two and three thousand pounds of worm weed oil annually.

**CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY**



**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

See Attachment Sheet A

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

Structure

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

On Fahrney Branch near Route 80

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

Candy Reed - Architectural Description

NAME / TITLE  
Pat Ehrlich

ORGANIZATION  
Sugarloaf Regional Trails

DATE  
November 12, 1978

STREET & NUMBER  
Box 87

TELEPHONE  
926-4510

CITY OR TOWN  
Dickerson

STATE  
Maryland 20753

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 Shenandoah House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438~~

SUGARLOAF REGIONAL TRAILS  
Box 87, Sugarloaf  
Dickerson, Md. 20753  
(301) 926-4510

Wormweed Distillery

M: 10/4  
MAGI#

Attachment Sheet A

Bibliography

An investigation of the American Wormseed Grown in South Dakota,  
March, 1926.

Grubisich, Thomas, "Wormseed Oil: Punjent, Lucrative", Washington  
Post, March 28, 1974.

Interviews of Millard & Madeline Burdette and Arthur Hardy,  
September 26, 1978.

"Rare Weed for Milady", Cooperative Farmer, Nov.-Dec. 1974.

University of Maryland Extention Service Fact Sheet #45, 1951.

Weiland, G.S., L.B. Broughton, & J.E. Metzger, "Wormseed Oil  
Production", University of Maryland, Agricultural Experiment  
Station, (College Park, Md.) Bulletin #384, July 1935.

Maryland Magazine, Spring 1974.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

NOMINATION FORM for the NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**1. NAME**

COMMON: Worm Weed Mill

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: 28800 Kemptown Road

CITY OR TOWN: Damascus

STATE: Maryland COUNTY: Montgomery

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: Raymond Moxley

STREET AND NUMBER: 28800 Kemptown Road

CITY OR TOWN: Damascus STATE: Maryland

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Montgomery County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Rockville STATE: Maryland

Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #):

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: None

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE:

7. DESCRIPTION	
CONDITION	(Check One)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	
<p>The mill consists of two structures, one housing a large steam engine and the other, three vats and a covered drive-through for unloading the wormwee into the vats. A movable pulley on a rail carries the weed to the vats, while steam is supplied through pipes running from the engine house in a sluice-type structure.</p> <p>Both structures are built of posts, either buried in the ground or sitting on slabs. These support plates which carry the rafters. Neither structure has sidewalls.</p> <p>A log barn with vertical siding sits near the mill.</p>	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



M:10-4

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Newspaper clipping: Post, 3/28/74

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

Acreage Justification:

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

STATE:	COUNTY:

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Christopher Owens, Park Historian

ORGANIZATION: MNCPPC      DATE: 10/25/73

STREET AND NUMBER:  
8787 Georgia Avenue

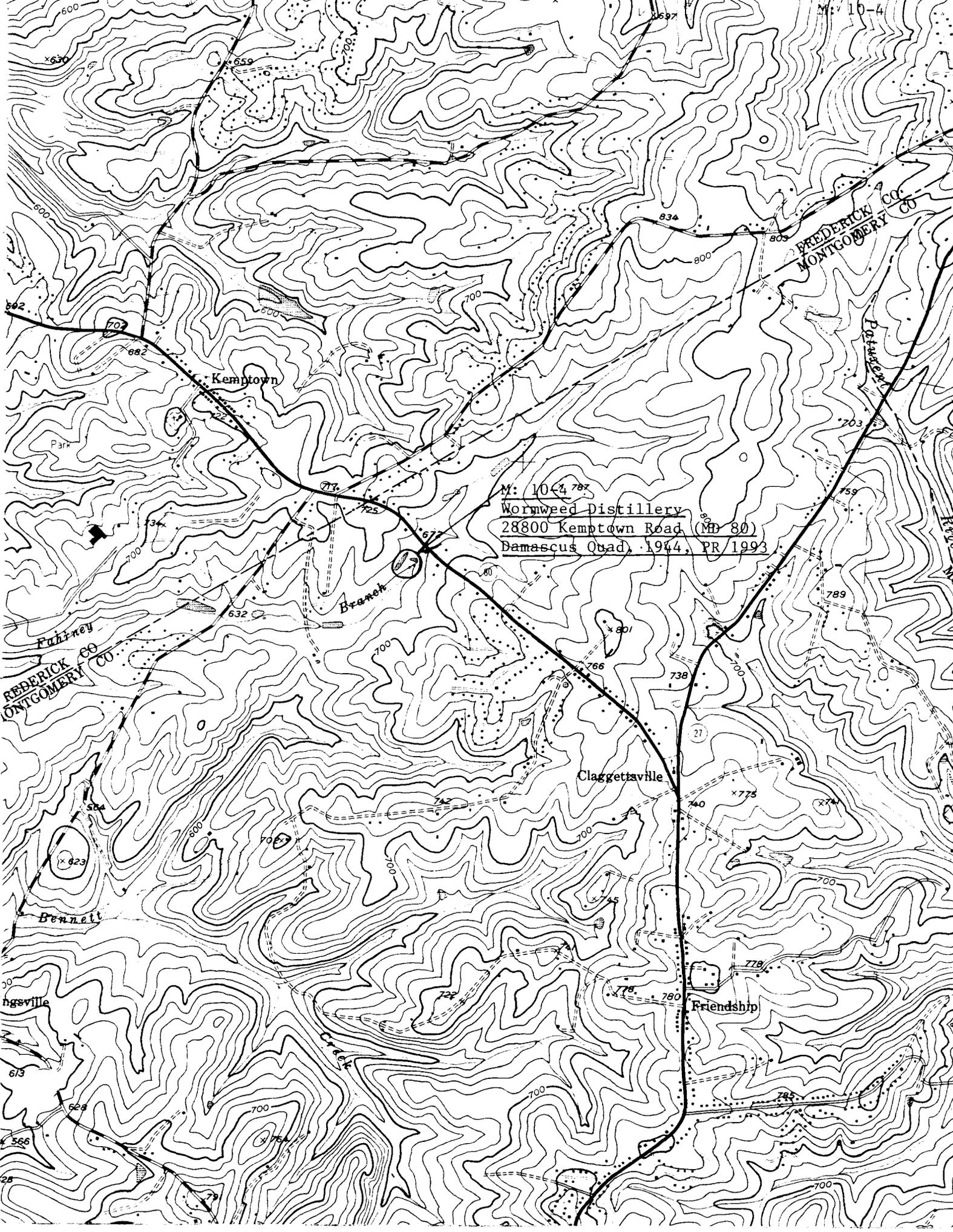
CITY OR TOWN: Silver Spring      STATE: Maryland

12. State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)

Significance of this property is:  
 National     State     Local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



M: 10-4

FREDERICK CO  
MONTGOMERY CO

FREDERICK CO  
MONTGOMERY CO

M: 10-4 787  
Wormweed Distillery  
28800 Kemptown Road (MD 80)  
Damascus Quad, 1944, PR/1993

Kemptown

Branch

Claggettville

Friendship

Fahney

Bennett

ngsville

Friendship

M.D.



Millard & Madeline Burdette

Examining 1st run of oil

Sept 26, 1978

Seagrassweed Distillery

Damascus, Md.



Wormweed  
awaiting  
processing

Site #10-4

Wormweed Distillery  
Damascus, Md.

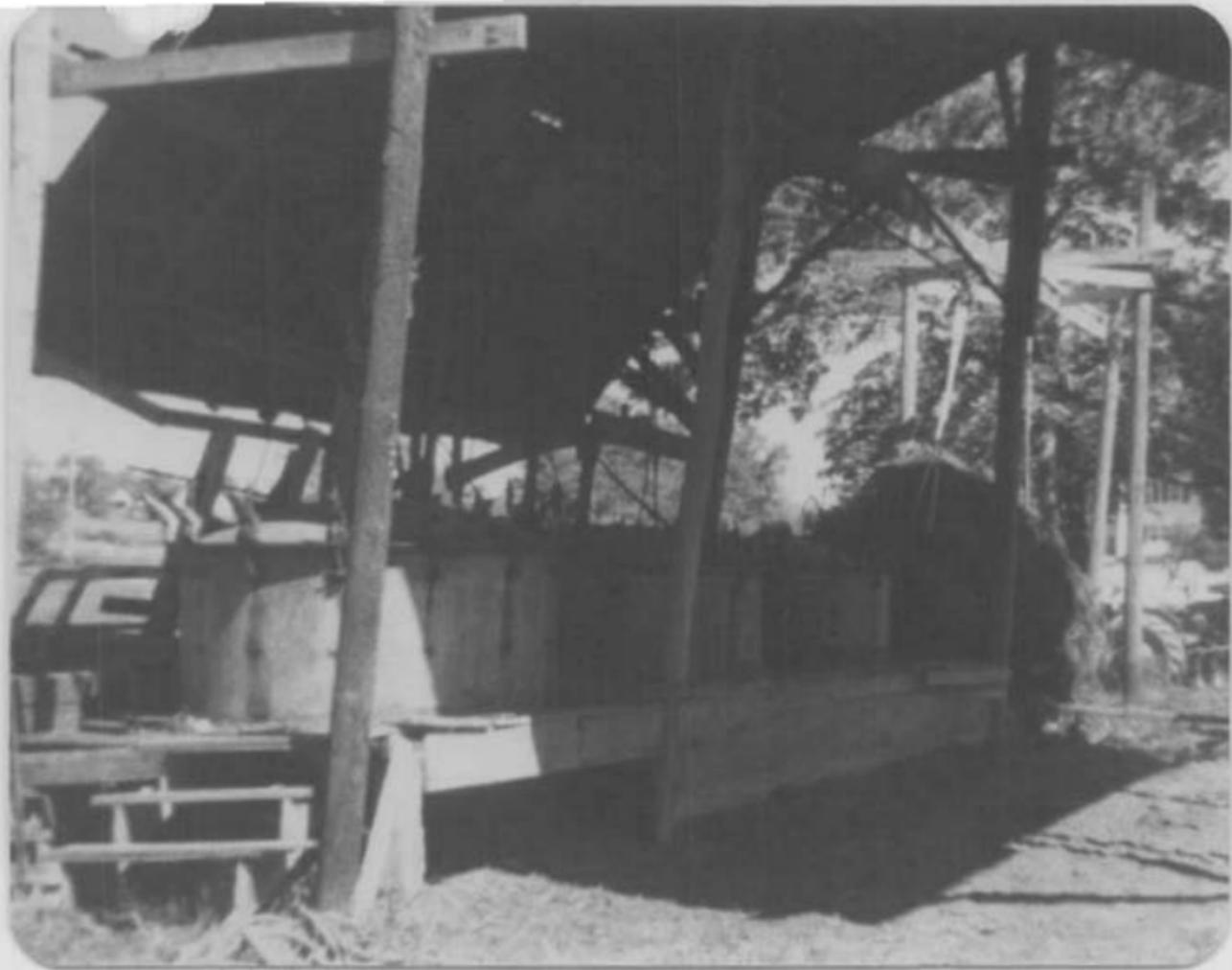
Sept 26, 1978



Water Trough for  
Condensation

Wormweed Distillery  
Darrascus, Md.

Sept 26, 1978



Kettles for distillation

We need distillery

Damascus, Md.

Sept 26, 1978



Kettles being opened  
after being distilled

Wormweed Distillery  
Damascus, Md.

Sept 26, 1978



— Wormweed —  
Seed pods  
before distilling

Sept 26, 1978



Engine Boiler

Wommeed Distillery  
Damascus, Md.

Sept 26, 1978



#10-4

NAME WORM WEED MILL

LOCATION Rt. 80 + FAHRNEY BRANCH DAMASCUS, Md

FACADE LOOKING NW

PHOTO TAKEN 10/25/73 MOWYER



#10-4

NAME WORM WEED MILL

LOCATION RT 80 + FAHRNEY BRANCH DAMASCUS, Md

FACADE

PHOTO TAKEN 10/25/73 MOWYER



#10-4

NAME WORM WEED MILL

LOCATION Rt 80 + FAHRNEY BRANCH DAMASCUS, Md

FACADE LOOKING NW

PHOTO TAKEN 10/25/73 MOWER



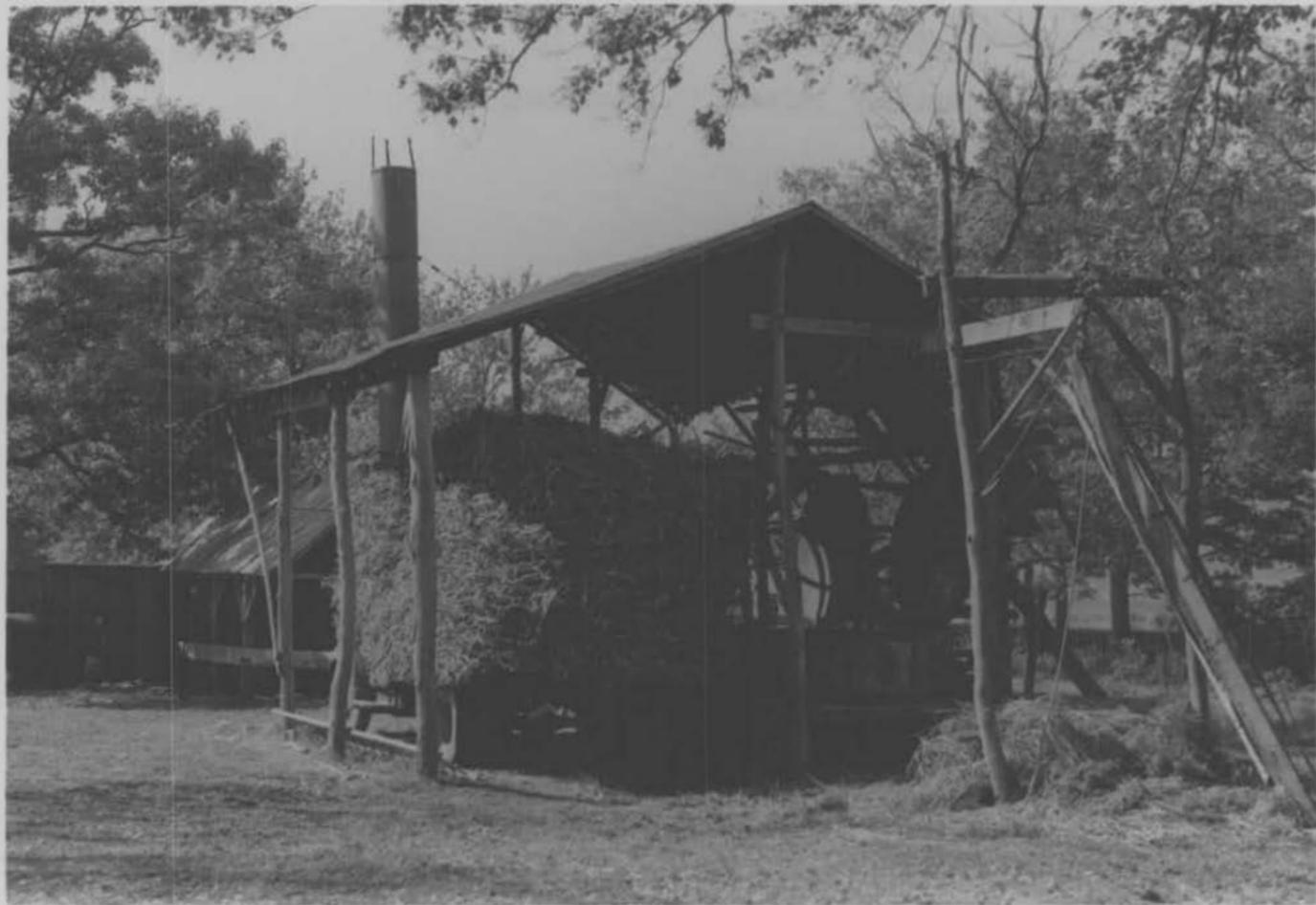
#10-4

NAME WORM WEED MILL

LOCATION Rt 80 & FAHRNEY BRANCH DAMASCUS, Md

FACADE

PHOTO TAKEN 10/25/73 MDWYER



#10-4

NAME WORM WEED MILL

LOCATION Rt 80 + FAHNEY BRANCH DAMASCUS, MD

FACADE

PHOTO TAKEN 10/25/73 MOWYER



#10-4

NAME WORM WEED MILL

LOCATION RT. 80 + FAHRNEY BRANCH DAMASCUS, Md

FACADE

PHOTO TAKEN 10/25/73 MDWYER