NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

SEE REVISED BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION DTD FEBRUARY 1996

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

HA-417, 418
419, 420

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name

other names/site number THE VINEYARD

2. Location

street & number 1201 Conowingo Road (US Route 1) N/A ☐ not for publication

city, town Bel Air ☒ vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Harford code 025 zip code 21014

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
☒ private	☒ building(s)	5	2 buildings
☐ public-local	☐ district		sites
☐ public-State	☐ site		1 structures
☐ public-Federal	☐ structure		objects
	☐ object	5	3 Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER Date 6/17/94

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding
AGRICULTURE/agricultural field

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding
AGRICULTURE/agricultural field

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

FEDERAL
LATE VICTORIAN

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
walls STONE
roof SLATE
other WOOD

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

The Vineyard consists of a 310-acre working grain and livestock farm in Harford County, Maryland. The property, comprising several tracts patented by James Preston in the 1740s and since then continuously owned by his direct descendants, is located about two miles due north of the county seat, Bel Air. The property forms a natural amphitheater, and serves to screen The Vineyard from its heterogeneous neighbors. Most of the property's principal buildings, which date to the early 19th century, are clustered together, crowning a knoll in the center of the acreage, with panoramic vistas of the fields and croplands. The main house, located at the center of the entire amphitheater, is a large stone structure: the oldest section (the three western bays) comprises a two story, 32'x30' side stairhall/double parlor dwelling built by Bernard Preston (grandson of the Patentee) c.1804. The rubblestone walls display distinct coursing and all windows and doors boast keystoned stone lintels, a treatment similar to that seen on the finest structures of the time and place. Most of the restrained federal interior woodwork remains intact. Around 1870, Bernard Preston's grandchildren and great-grandchildren divided the property, and the house (and its acreage) was acquired by John B. Wysong, who added two bays to the old house. Wysong's addition is easily distinguishable because it lacks the distinctive lintels and has a central attic gable, but is fully sympathetic to the old house, for it repeats the use of coursed rubblestone, follows the same general massing and window treatment, and continues the gable roofline. The Vineyard also contains an array of stone outbuildings to the rear (north) of the main house; they date to the Bernard Preston era and are locally unsurpassed in variety of function and continuity of use.

[X] See continuation sheet No. 1
For GENERAL DESCRIPTION

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
ARCHITECTURE	c.1804-c.1875	c.1804
		c.1875

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Vineyard, a working family farm for nine generations of the Preston family, is primarily significant for the architectural character of the main house and outbuildings. The 2½ story, five-bay, stone main house on the property, built in 1804 and enlarged c.1875, is a superior example of two distinct and important eras in Harford County architecture. The three-bay older section, built by Bernard Preston and still easily discerned, ranks among the finest of the county's federal-era houses. The side stairhall/double parlor plan, coursed rubblestone walls, and general massing anticipate such important county dwellings as Woodside (1823; National Register) and Oak Farm (1821; National Register), and its keystoned stone lintels seem to be locally unique among the county's domestic buildings. Within, the virtually untouched woodwork (chairrails, mantels, stairs, and panelled window inserts) ranks with the finest known local examples. In all, it thoroughly reflects the agriculturally derived wealth and sophistication of the Preston family, leaders in the region since the early 18th century. (Indeed into the 20th century, for James H. Preston, born in Harford County and mayor of Baltimore from 1911-1919, was a grandson Bernard; Mayor Preston's brother, Harford County Circuit Court Judge Walter Preston, published The History of Harford County in 1901, the first comprehensive work on the subject.) The house and 310 of the original 400 acres passed to Preston's great-grandson John B. Wysong in 1878, and the farm's boundaries have remained virtually unchanged since then. Wysong, who with his wife, nee Fannie Preston, moved into the house in 1872, added two rooms to the dwelling (a dining room, and a kitchen to replace the earlier freestanding log kitchen); in accomplishing this he extended the three-bay house to five bays, but retained the window alignment, roofline, and massing of Bernard's dwelling. He also added a central attic gable to the roofline. All his work is thoroughly representative of the time, an era that saw Harford County enter its most prosperous years. Interestingly, Wysong incorporated subtleties into his work (e.g., the windows lack keystone lintels) that still allow one to detect two distinct eras of growth. In addition to the main house, the farm retains among the county's most elaborate and intact collection of historically significant outbuildings, including three structures (a dairy/smokehouse, an ice house, and a slaves' quarters) which may predate the older section of the main dwelling.

☒ See continuation sheet No. 9
For HISTORIC CONTEXT and MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN data.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Land, Equity, and Probate Records of Harford County; Harford County Courthouse, Bel Air, Maryland.

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, Harford County, Maryland Historical Trust, Crownsville, Maryland.

"Preston" files in the Historical Society of Harford County Archives, Bel Air, Maryland.

Preston, Walter, History of Harford County, (Baltimore: The Sun Book Office, 1901).

Wright, C. Milton, Our Harford Heritage, (Bel Air: privately printed, 1967).

☐ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- [X] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- [ ] previously listed in the National Register
- [ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
- [ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:
- [ ] State historic preservation office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [X] Local government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 310 acres
USGS Quad: Bel Air, MD

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	385180	4380970
B	18	385490	4379830
C	18	383620	4379290
D	18	384500	4381100

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Nominated property consists of parcels 336, 339, and 138 on Harford County Tax Map 41.

[X] See continuation sheet No. 18

Boundary Justification

[X] See continuation sheet No. 17

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christopher Weeks, Preservation Planner
organization Department of Planning and Zoning date March, 1993
street & number 220 S. Main Street telephone (410)638-3103
city or town Bel Air state Maryland zip code 21014

*U.S.GPO:1988-0-223-916

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The Vineyard consists of a 310-acre working grain and livestock farm located in the rapidly developing central section of Harford County, Maryland, approximately two miles due north of the county seat, Bel Air. The property consists of several tracts patented by James Preston in the 1740s, and owned without interruption by eight generations of his direct descendants.

The property naturally forms a huge amphitheater which radiates out from a central knoll; the land, largely cleared, is ringed by forested hills and the principal structures, grouped together on the knoll, form the focus for the farm. The largely flat amphitheater has been intensively and profitably farmed for more than two centuries; the soil is exceptionally rich and the acreage is well-watered for the farm contains springs which form two headwaters for Bynum Run, one of the county's principle streams. This rich agricultural heritage is reflected in the main residence (a coursed rubblestone structure begun around 1804 and enlarged in the 1870s) which is noticeably more substantial in scale than most of its local contemporaries. It also boasts neoclassical influences, such as keystoned stone window and door lintels and windows which are larger on the ground story than on the second. These features are unusual among the county's generally astylar federal-era buildings. The farm's prosperous and varied history also doubtless explains the locally unexcelled collection of stone outbuildings, which are arranged in linear fashion just north of the main dwelling. Each of the farm's principal structures is described below; numbers are keyed to the accompanying sketch map. HA numbers refer to each building's separate entry in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties.

1. Main House; HA-417; c.1804; c.1875; c.1980; 1 contributing building

Members of the Preston family were among the first English settlers to acquire land in the upland central region of what is now Harford County. James Preston (?-1766) began patenting land along Bynum Run in 1709 (for James's Choice); he continued to add to his holdings (i.e., The Vineyard in 1741 and Preston's Chance in 1758), and when he took out his last patent in 1761 (for Plumb Point) he owned "about 1,500 acres situated south of Hickory and north of Bynum's Run...in the vicinity of Bel Air."[1]

James's grandson Bernard Preston inherited all or part of six of these tracts; around 1804 he chose a cleared knoll in the center of the acreage and began constructing a rubblestone house, "the third [one] on this site,"[2] that

[1] C. Milton Wright, Our Harford Heritage, (Bel Air: privately printed, 1967), p. 32.

[2] Wright, Heritage, p. 33. Another descendant, Judge Walter Preston, wrote that "Bernard Preston, who had married Sarah...Bond, built the large stone house, which is still in good repair, situate

See Continuation Sheet No. 2

forms the bulk of the present structure. Bernard built a two-story, three-bay, rubblestone dwelling that faces south, with panoramic vistas of field and forest. Far larger than most of the county's period dwellings, the house reflected Bernard's wealth. According to the 1814 tax list, Bernard Preston owned 496½ acres improved by a "dwelling house, stone, 30 X 32, two stories," while the vast majority of county residences were 1-or 1½-story frame buildings). It's depth allows for its side stairhall/double parlor plan. The house is reached from U.S. Route 1 (Conowingo Road, since the late 18th century the main thoroughfare between Baltimore and Philadelphia via the Susquehanna River crossing at Conowingo) by a long, winding dirt lane; the lane, once it traverses the woods which ring the property, is generally open to the fields although here and there it is accented by a few ancient, specimen red cedar trees. Just before ascending the hillock which leads to the main house and principal outbuildings, the lane divides and the right, or east, fork leads to the farmer's house (or tenant house, barn, and farmyard, see below).

Preston, a man of education and wealth, took care that his house reflected the restrained neoclassicism then fashionable among the county's elite. He had his mason (name unknown) lay the rubblestone walls in courses on the two main facades while stonework on the two less important side elevations was less finished. The corners were marked by distinct quoining and the two still-exposed corners still are. (The house was expanded c.1875, see below, and one facade and two of the original corners were covered.) In addition, windows and doors on the main facades are embellished with stone keystone lintels, a device seen locally only at buildings erected by the county's few truly wealthy men and women, i.e., at the Rock Run mill (National Register), built c.1800 by John Stump of Stafford. Further evidence of Preston's architectural aspirations comes from the size of the windows which, in good neoclassical fashion, are taller on the ground story than on the second (nine-over-nine panes making the window floor-length versus six-over-six). Most of the pegged window frames appear to be original--as does all the masonry. The main, six-panel door in the easternmost ground story bay is placed in a panelled recess, is flanked by two-pane sidelights, and is crowned by a three-light transom. A large, interior brick chimney (seemingly original) rises at the gable roof's western peak; it collects flues from the four working fireplaces within (two per floor, i.e., one in each of the original principal rooms). The exceptionally large slate-covered roof holds a spacious, finished attic which is lit by two small casement windows regularly placed around the chimney.

Within, the rooms display the original simple treatment favored in the county at the time: 1) smoothly plastered walls rise above panelled wainscot and chairrail in all main-floor rooms; 2) the two ground story rooms have a finely executed simple wooden mantel with fluted pilasters and a narrow shelf that combine to create the effect of a classical entablature; 3) the windows' panelling matches that found at the main door; and 4) the original, squared

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between Bel Air and Hickory." Walter Preston, History of Harford County, (Baltimore: The Sun Book Office, 1901), p. 31.

See Continuation Sheet No. 3

opening between the two rooms is finished with simple architrave trim and has double, four-panel doors that probably date to the house's first (c.1875) major addition, see below. The doorways to the stairhall have six-panel doors, with what seems to be original simple brass hardware. The side stairhall is finished similarly to the other spaces; in addition, it displays an open string stair with the delicate turned newel and squared balusters popular in the county among Preston's economic peers. The upstairs bedrooms are more simply finished; the attic is plastered but lacks any wood trim. In all, The Vineyard compares favorably with such well-known nearby stone structures as Dr. Joshua Wilson's three-bay Woodside (1823, National Register), the Stump's five-bay Stafford and Stump-Holloway House (both c.1800 and both National Register), Dr. John Archer's five-bay Medical Hall (c.1815, National Register), and the Rev. William Finney's three-bay Oak Farm (1821, National Register). Bernard Preston granted the entire farm to his eight children and except for two of the children (Dr. Jacob Preston and Alonzo Preston, who sold their interests to their siblings) the next generation apparently lived in the house and maintained the farm the rest of their lives. The last member of this generation, Frances, died in 1877 whereupon Bernard's grandchildren and great-grandchildren petitioned the Harford County Equity Court to divide the property; this division occurred in 1878 when John B. Wysong (a grandson of James Bond Preston and great-grandson of Bernard, who had married his cousin Fannie Preston, b.1827) bought the northern 310 acres, "the Home Farm," for $6,000.[3] According to an 1892 history The Vineyard "has been the home of the present owner [i.e., Wyson] since 1872."[4]

Wysong added a two-bay rubblestone extension adjacent and to the east of the 1804 building. He retained the older section's overall massing, roofline, window treatment (even the 9/9 vs. 6/6 panning), and roofline, but his work can be discerned from Bernard's because it lacks the federal-era keystoned window treatment. Wysong also added a central attic gable to the main facade, a treatment typical of the time; it contains a single, round-arched window. Within, the addition contains two rooms similar in size and finish to those of the 1804 section; the front (south) room contains the dining room and the rear room the kitchen, which replaced the original detached log kitchen indicated in the 1814 tax list. A low, frame modern kitchen/dining room extends to the east and is reached from the 1870s kitchen; the newest section, designed by Baltimore architect Walter Schamu, AIA, harmonizes with the older sections.

2. Smokehouse/Dairy; HA-418; c.1800; 1 contributing building

Located to the rear (north) of the main house, this two-part, two-story rubblestone structure measures about 10' by 20' and was built to serve two

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[3] See Harford County Equity Record No. 2752; also deed ALJ 39/301.

[4] A Portrait and Biographical Record of Cecil and Harford Counties. (New York: Chapman Publishing Company, 1897), p. 390.

See Continuation Sheet No. 4

different uses. The thick-walled ground story, placed slightly below grade, was the Prestons' dairy; a masonry trough skirts the perimeter of the single room and water (pumped in from the adjacent, latticed well) filled the trough to cool products kept here. Two louvered openings, one in the east wall and one in the west, allowed for ventilation. Upstairs, and reached by a simple wooden exterior stair (probably a replacement), is the windowless room used as the Prestons' smokehouse; the brick chimney rises in the northeast corner. The structure is covered with a steep, wood-shingled gable roof which protrudes about two feet from the entrance (south) facade to create a shelter above the doors. The building appears in the 1814 tax rolls.

3. Ice House; HA-419; c.1800; 1 contributing building

Located just east of the smokehouse/dairy (and north of the well) is the icehouse, whose rubblestone walls are built deep into the ground beneath a wood-shingled gable roof. The Prestons cut ice from the several ponds still located on the well-watered property.

4. Slaves Quarters; HA-420; c.1800; 1 contributing building

This 1½ story rubblestone structure completes the linear arrangement of outbuildings begun with the smokehouse/dairy. A simple plank door is located on the south facade's ground story; two small casement windows (replacement glass but possibly with original framing), one each in the north and south facades, light the upper level. The building measures approximately 15' by 20' below a wood-shingled gable roof. According to family tradition, the building was a slaves' quarter; the Prestons did own slaves, and a building of similar dimensions does appear in the 1814 tax roll as "slaves."

5. Garage; 20th century; 1 non-contributing building

One-story masonry structure located between the ice house and slaves' quarters.

6. Swimming pool; mid 20th century; 1 non-contributing structure

Modern in-ground pool located west of main house; non-contributing but the area nearby has been attractively landscaped with boxwood, flowering trees, and bulbs.

7. Barn and Farmyard; 20th century reconstruction of c.1800 barn; 1 non-contributing building.

Gambrel-roofed, 2½ story structure with long, low, one-story modern equipment sheds to the rear (south). Rubblestone on ground and main stories; frame upper level; bank barn with exposed side to south. Distinct quoining. Appears in 1814 tax rolls; burned; rebuilt along original lines c.1935. There are a varying number of lesser outbuildings clustered near the barn such as a silo, a corn crib, and a hog pen; all are modern; they all read as a single group

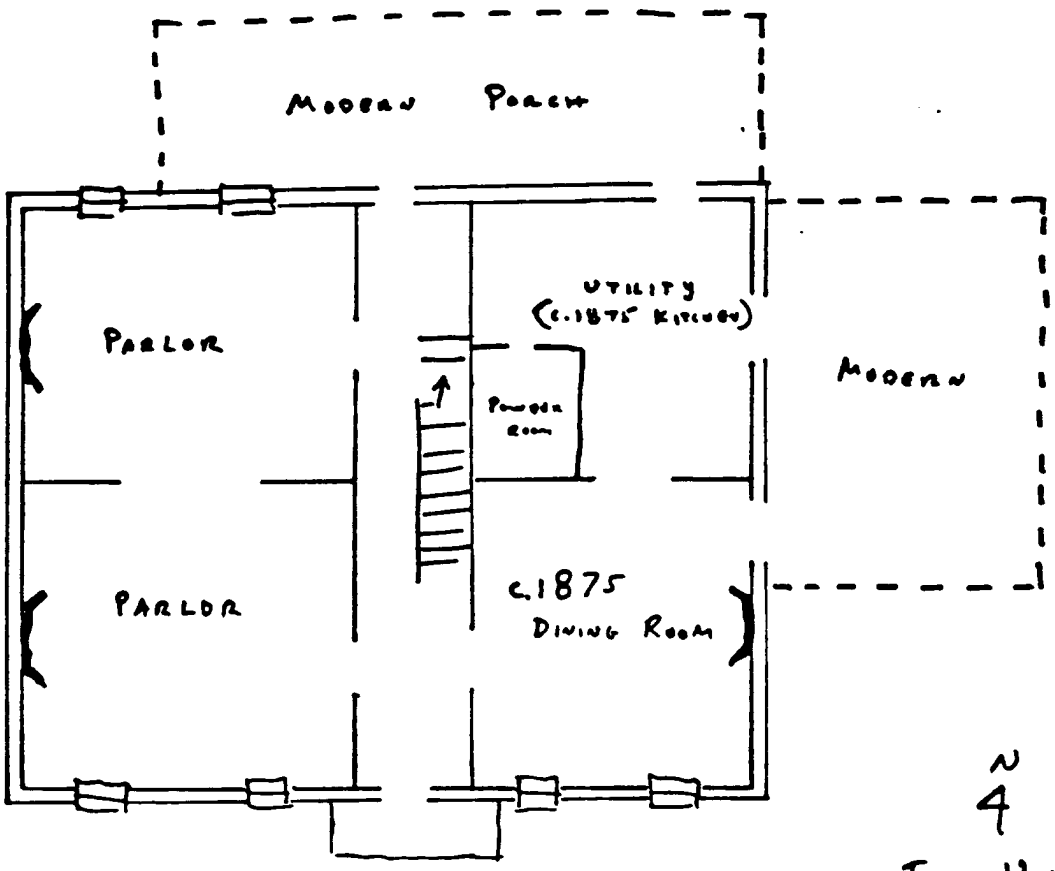
See Continuation Sheet No. 5

and while none contributes to the resource's historic integrity, all add to its important sense of continuum.

8. Farmer's House; mid 19th century; 1 contributing building

Two-story, three-bay frame gable-roof dwelling (with low, one-story modern frame kitchen) located at end of farm lane approximately 500 yards east of main house. All windows have 6/6 sash; a one-story porch spans the main (south) facade; it's shed roof is supported by simple turned posts.

See Continuation Sheet No. 6



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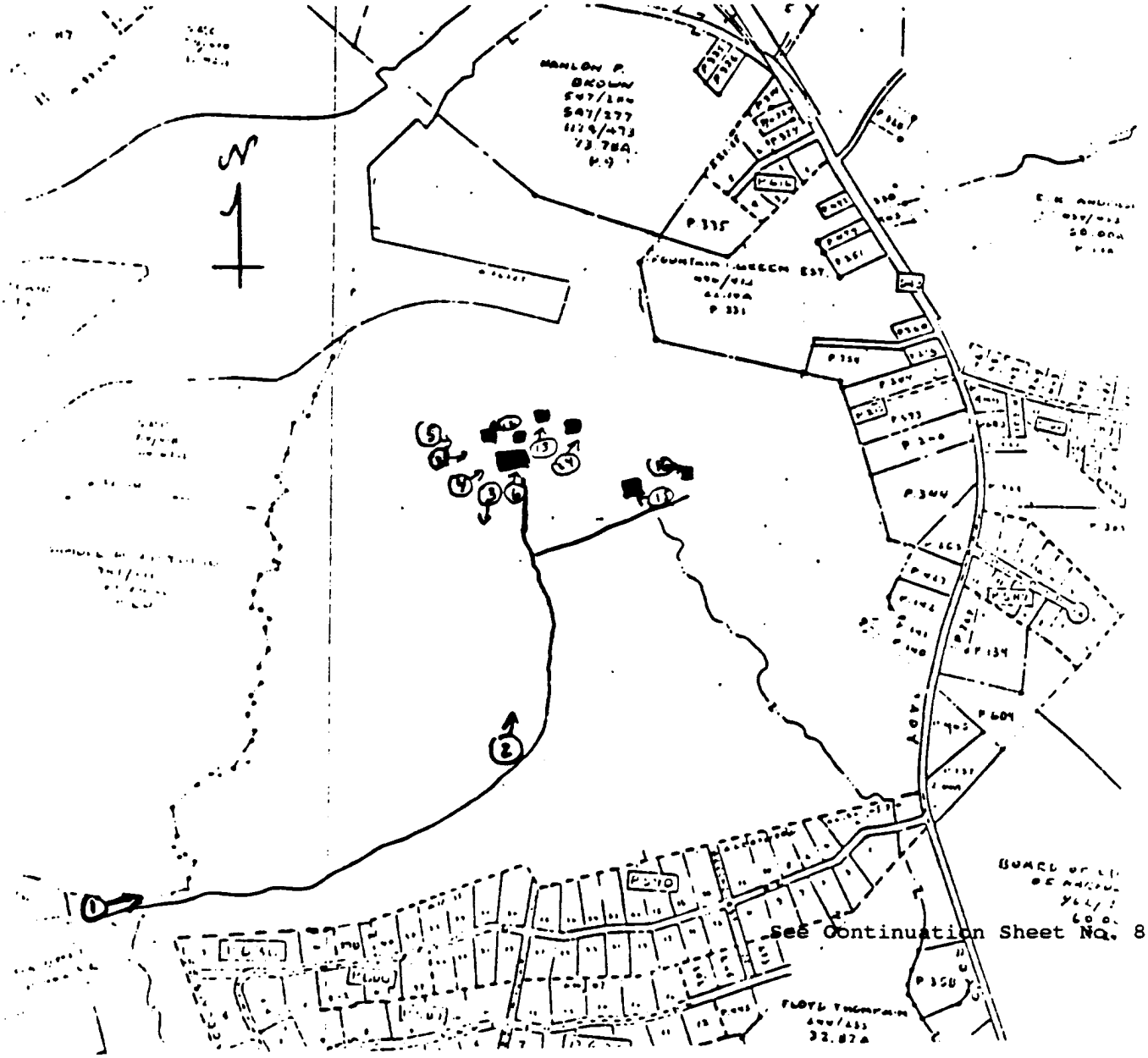
THE VINEYARD
HARFORD COUNTY, MD
HA-417, 418, 419, 420
SKETCH FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE
C. WEEKS 4/[illegible]/[illegible]

See Continuation Sheet No. 7

PHOTOGRAPH MAP ♂ = number and view 7-10 interior photos



See Continuation Sheet No. 8

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The Vineyard
Harford County
Maryland

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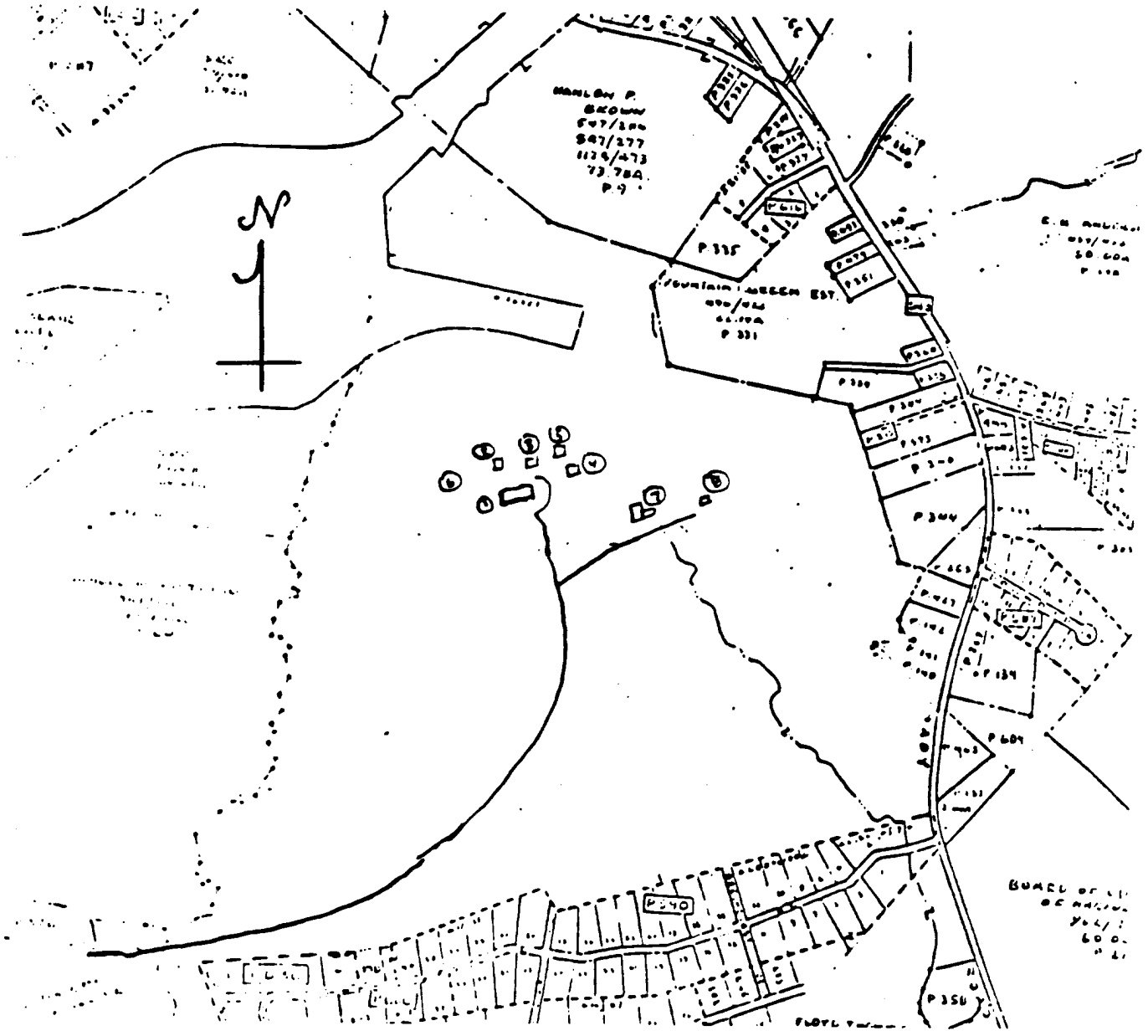
RESOURCE SKETCH MAP



HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

Rural Agricultural Intensification A.D. 1680-1815
Agricultural-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Agriculture
Architecture/Landscape Architecture/Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s):

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding
AGRICULTURE/agricultural field

Known Design Source: None

See Continuation Sheet No. 10

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

The history of The Vineyard, a large farm established by James Preston in the mid-18th century and continuously owned by his direct descendants, is inextricably bound up with the history of Harford County, indeed of central Maryland. This fact was recognized a century ago when the compilers of the 1897 Portrait and Biographical Record of Cecil and Harford Counties observed "to narrate the history...of the Preston family would be to give the history of Harford County, for as the county has grown and developed, the family has...prospered" and vice versa.[5] Indeed the Prestons' intimate and pivotal connection with the history of the northern Chesapeake region continued into the 20th century, partially through the careers of brothers James H. Preston, mayor of Baltimore, and Walter Preston, Harford County Circuit Court Judge and compiler of the county's first (1901) complete published history, and their cousin Cpt. B. Richard Wysong (father of the farm's present owner) who lived at The Vineyard while serving for decades as president of the Maryland Pilot Boat Association, an organization founded "in Jefferson's time... to curb exploitation" of the Bay's shippers.[6] For this and other reasons, in 1987, both the Maryland Historical Trust (SHPO) and the Maryland State Highway Administration agreed that the entire 310-acre farm is National Register-eligible.[7]

While the Bay-fronting Tidewater regions of Harford (then Baltimore) County were thickly settled during the late 17th and early 18th centuries, the vast inland Piedmont area remained virtually terra incognita until just before the American Revolution. As a result, while most of the inland acres had been patented, few people actually built houses and lived there. This began to change in the 1740s and '50s, at least partially because the regional economy began to change. The first shipment of flour left the port of a struggling Baltimore City in 1750 and "this was the turning point in the town's fortunes...Baltimore traders traveled throughout the high, well-watered valleys of the Piedmont, in Maryland and southern Pennsylvania, dealing for wheat crops that flourished in the region...[and] the backlands filled with settlers."[8] The Preston family, prominent growers of grain at The Vineyard and owners of Preston's Mill on Deer Creek, contributed to this phenomenon.

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[5] Portrait and Biographical, p. 390.

[6] See "The Bay's No. 1 Pilot, Still a Farmer," in The Sun, September 13, 1936.

[7] See material relating to SHA contract H873-101-470N.

[8] Edward C. Papenfuse et al., Maryland: A New Guide to the Old Line State, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), pp. 352-353.

See Continuation Sheet No. 11

Harford, separated from Baltimore County in 1773, quickly attracted numerous immigrants who were drawn by the virginal, fertile land. The houses of these mid-18th century settlers (most of whom came from elsewhere in Maryland) form what has become the oldest documented group of buildings in the county, and all of them have been located, recorded, and listed in the National Register. (Broom's Bloom, built by the Webster family [who owned a gristmill on the nearby James Run] c.1747, and Joshua's Meadows, built by the Bond family [who owned a gristmill on the nearby Winter's Run] c.1745.)

James Preston, and his descendants and in-laws, may be viewed as personifying these general historical trends. James arrived in these parts "when Harford County was a trackless wilderness," wrote a late-Victorian historian, and over the course of generations the family helped transform the county into a region "dotted with smiling farms and quiet villages, traversed by railroads and telegraph wires."[9] A native of Southern Maryland (a grandson of Richard Preston of Patuxent, whom Charles Calvert called "the Great Quaker" and who "had one of the longest and most active legislative careers in seventeenth-century Maryland"[10]), James Preston started patenting Piedmont lands north of what became the Harford County seat, Bel Air, in the early 18th century; his acquisitions were slow at first (James' Chance in 1709, Dennis' Choice in 1715, and Everly Hills in 1718),[11] but intensified with the growing demand for grains. He acquired The Vineyard in 1741, Preston's Chance in 1748, Hog Neck in 1753, Mate's Addition in 1756, Robinson's Chance in 1758, and, finally, Plumb Point in 1761. He chose well, too, for his grants, which totalled in aggregate some 1,500 acres[12] are well washed by both Winter's Run and Bynum Run, two of the county's principal north-south streams. The Vineyard still contains two springs, located about 300 yards apart, whose waters form two of the headwaters of Bynum Run, and the springs have, throughout nine generations of Preston family tenure, helped ensure the farm's productiveness. Harford County circuit Court Judge Walter Preston, a descendant of James, wrote in 1901 that his ancestor's tracts "stretch...from Winters Run...toward Hickory...[and] are now owned and occupied by a descendant of James Preston." And, as Judge Preston floridly noted, "this continued possession and occupancy...speaks volumes for the healthfulness and beauty of Harford and attests the love of the descendants for the land of their

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[9] Portrait and Biographical, p. 390.

[10] Edward C. Papenfuse et al., A Biographical Dictionary of the Maryland Legislature, 1635-1789 Vol. 2, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), p. 660.

[11] Wright, Heritage, p. 32; see also Preston, History, pp. 35-36.

[12] See Wright, Heritage, p. 32.

See Continuation Sheet No. 12

illustrious ancestors."[13] That was true in 1901; it remains true in 1993.

That first James Preston and his son (also named James, born 1713[14]) cleared the land, planted and harvested crops of wheat and corn, and lived on their lands, all of which came to be known simply and collectively as The Vineyard. James Preston was chosen to serve on the vestry of St. George's Church (Anglican) in Perryman in 1744; the first (frame) church on the site had been built in 1718 and Preston, during his tenure on the vestry, oversaw its rebuilding, for "in the year 1744," the vestry and rector discovered that "the church had become so dilapidated that ...rebuilding" was necessary. Moreover, "the parish at this time was at the height of its prosperity."[15] That church was also replaced but the vestry house, begun at that time, still stands, and is listed in the National Register. When war with Britain seemed imminent in 1775, James enlisted in Cpt. John Love's militia, a company formed pursuant to the provincial convention held in Annapolis that July.

James's son Bernard Preston, born in 1756, inherited The Vineyard tract. It was Bernard Preston, the third generation to own the property, who in 1804 built the large stone house still standing there.[16] The house, one of the earliest and most substantial extant exponents of the neoclassically-derived "country federal" style in Harford County, bears comparison with such celebrated, inland structures as John Stump's Stafford (c.1800), the Stump-Holloway House (c.1800), and the Rock Run Mill (c. 1801), all contributing elements in the National Register Lower Deer Creek Historic District, and the Hays-Heighe House (1808, datestone, National Register), Dr. John Archer's Medical Hall (c. 1815, National Register), and the Rev. William Finney's Oak Farm (1821, National Register), all near Churchville.

The house reflects the affluence and sophistication of Bernard Preston and of his wife, nee Sarah Bond. She was a daughter of Jacob Bond (died 1780), "the most prominent of the Bonds from the standpoint of Harford history:" Jacob (whose brother Joshua built Joshua's Meadows mentioned above) "was a prominent member of the Committee of Harford County in the Revolution, having been elected by the people, and was captain of Company Eleven of Harford militia in the Revolution." He also "represented Harford County in the convention which met in Annapolis in 1776 and formed the first constitution of the State....[and] was

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[13] Preston, History, p. 229.

[14] Preston, History, p. 209.

[15] See Preston, History, pp.147-149.

[16] See Preston, History, p. 209; also notes by Mrs. Richard Wysong, in "Preston" file at the Historical Society of Harford County Archives, Bel Air.

See Continuation Sheet No. 13

also one of Harford's representatives in the Annapolis convention of June 22, 1774, which protested the tax on tea," according to Judge Preston.[17]

Like his father and father-in-law, Bernard Preston served the county in a variety of pro-bono ways. He was a member "of the first grand jury for Harford County...[which] met at Harford Town or Bush on August 23, 1774," and heard 89 cases.[18] After the Revolution he served on the petit jury in March 1783, August 1791, and March 1796, and the Grand Jury for March 1801. A devout and early convert to Methodism (one of his sons was named John Wesley Preston), in the 1780s and '90s Bernard served as a trustee of the recently-established Methodist Meetinghouse in Bel Air.[19] Bernard also continued to harvest bountiful crops of wheat and corn from his acres at The Vineyard; he had these grains ground into flour at the well-known (now demolished) Preston's Mill, which the family established on Deer Creek.

Bernard and Sarah Bond Preston had eight children, all, as far as can be determined, born in the stone house at The Vineyard. Of these, the best known, perhaps, was Dr. Jacob Bond Preston, who like his ancestor, served on the St. George's vestry. Dr. Preston's term of office began in 1829 and continued, off and on, until his death in 1868; also like his grandfather, he was able to oversee an important church building, this time the extant St. George's (National Register) begun in 1851 to the design of the Baltimore architects Neirnsee and Neilson. Dr. Preston also won distinction by being elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1843.

According to the 1814 Federal Direct Tax, Bernard Preston owned 496½ acres "on Binam's [sic] Run" improved by a two-story stone dwelling house measuring 30 X 32 feet, and a variety of outbuildings (i.e., a smokehouse, corn house, wash house, and slaves' quarters); in actuality, however, he was only partial owner of the property then, for he had earlier deeded a joint interest in The Vineyard to his eight children,[20] who apparently lived here off and on all their lives until the last of that generation died in the house in 1877.[21]

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[17] Preston, History, p. 208.

[18] Preston, History, p. 65.

[19] See, e.g., deed HD K/412, dated November 9, 1789, in which Preston, as trustee, is deeded land for the church, which was established that year.

[20] Harford County deed HD Q/278.

[21] See Harford County Equity Case No. 2752.

See Continuation Sheet No. 14

But even as Bernard's children lived on the farm, effective management of The Vineyard had passed to a great-grandson, John B. Wysong, born 1847, a son of Sarah Preston and the Rev. Thomas Turner Wysong. The Rev. and Mrs. Wysong had acquired a c.1850 frame house, HA-1026, near the stretch of the Upper Deer Creek known as The Rocks, from her uncle, James B. Preston (a son of Bernard), in 1873.[22] Wysong was a prominent Methodist minister and amateur historian who compiled the first known history of that district, the still-valid and useful Rocks of Deer Creek, a charming mix of documented facts and local legends that was published in 1880. James B. Preston was the owner-operator of the well-known 18th century Preston gristmill on Deer Creek, according to molinographer John McGrain. The mill, destroyed c.1885, and one of several located on Deer Creek, was both a cause and effect of inland Harford's settlement: production of flour at such establishments encouraged farmers to take up land in the area and grow wheat and corn, while the area's rich soil and abundant water-power encouraged entrepreneurs to erect this and other mills.[23]

According to the generally reliable 1897 Portrait and Biographical Record of Cecil and Harford Counties, John B. Wysong was "born at the parental home [i.e., the house near The Rocks]...in 1847;" his parents enrolled him in the local private grammar school (public school wouldn't come to Harford County until the 1860s), but his health failed, and to build up his strength his parents determined that "outdoor work" would be of more benefit than "confinement in the school room," and "he therefore gave his attention mostly to farm duties."[24] The farm near The Rocks was small (only about 100 acres), and the family evidently felt he would prosper more at their much larger property, The Vineyard, since the farm's "fertility and productiveness" was "among the best in the neighborhood." So, Wysong moved to The Vineyard in 1872, planted the soil "in various cereals," and spruced up its "substantial farm buildings." Wysong also enlarged his ancestors' house from its original three bays to five. His work has not been precisely dated, but it almost certainly occurred either around 1872, when he moved to the then-550 acre farm, or around 1878, when he purchased the house and 310 acres of the farm from his relatives.

When Wysong moved to The Vineyard, the main house was occupied by Fannie Preston, the maiden daughter of Bernard. According to material in the Harford County Circuit Court, Miss Preston was "feeble," and since 1866 had been cared for by a niece, Caroline Preston, another daughter of J. Bond Preston and therefore one of Wysong's aunts. Fannie Preston died in 1877, and J. Bond's children began equity proceedings against their cousins to determine the future

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[22] Deed ALJ 28/375.

[23] See John McGrain, "Molinography of Harford County," unpublished typescript in the Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning, Bel Air.

[24] Portrait and Biographical, p. 177.

See Continuation Sheet No. 15

of the farm. (There were too many heirs to divide the acreage among them; Caroline also petitioned the court to collect monies [amounting to $2,897.50] she had advanced her Aunt Fannie.) To settle the matter as equitably as possible, the court divided the acreage in two parts; Wysong bought the larger portion (310 acres known as the "Home Farm") for $6,000, and Bel Air attorney Otho Scott bought the lower 245 acres for $4,500. (Scott's "ancestors for generations had been planters and large land owners in Harford and Baltimore Counties:" his grandfather Aquila Scott had laid out Bel Air, the seat of the new county of Harford, on his farm Scott's Old Fields in 1780, and a more distant ancestor gave "the land...on which the first courthouse at Joppa was built" in the 1720s. Otho Scott himself, "one of the most distinguished lawyers in Maryland,...codified the Laws of Maryland in 1860, "condensing in two volumes all the varied and unskillfully framed laws passed in the State since its foundation;" Scott's work won praise as "the best code ever produced" in America.[25])

In 1895, John B. Wysong married Ella Grymes, a "great-granddaughter of George Mason," the noted Virginia revolutionary figure. The Wysongs were members of the Rock Spring Episcopal Church, located about two miles west of The Vineyard between Bel Air and Forest Hill. Wysong continuously served on the vestry there from 1872 until his death in 1918; his term as vestryman coincided with his years at The Vineyard, a place where the "high state of cultivation" was entirely due to the efforts of that skilled farmer. (Wysong's estate inventory suggests the emphasis he placed on farming: his personal property was valued at $1,410, most of which--$1,185--was made up of items such as "30 bbls. corn," "25 Bus. Oats," "60 Bus. Wheat," and 17 "milk cows;" a relatively small part of that figure--$225--consisted of household furniture.) Circuit Court Judge and historian Walter Preston witnessed his cousin Wysong's will. (Walter Preston, born in 1863, was a son of the miller James B. Preston mentioned above; educated at St. John's College, Annapolis, and Princeton, he received his LIB from the University of Maryland in 1883; "in 1888 he was elected to the Maryland legislature,...[as] the youngest member of the House;" "elected prosecuting attorney for Harford County" in 1891 and re elected in 1895, he was elevated to the Harford County bench in 1921. He was also a co-founder of Bel Air's Commercial and Savings Bank, still the largest locally-owned bank in the county, and served on its board of directors continuously from its inception in 1904 until his death in 1951.[26] Judge Preston's brother, James H. Preston, was born in Harford County in 1860; educated at the Bel Air Academy, he earned his LIB from the University of Maryland in 1881 and moved to Baltimore City. He formed the partnership of Gill and Preston and embroiled himself in city politics. He was elected to the Maryland House of Delegates, was chosen Speaker of the House, and in 1911 capped his career by being elected Mayor of Baltimore; he stayed in City Hall until 1919, and during those years he initiated many reforms in government and fostered

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[25] See Preston, History, p. 228.

[26] Wright, Heritage, p. 415.

See Continuation Sheet No. 16

plans for the promotion of parks and the beautification of the city."[27])

Wysong left The Vineyard, and all his other property, real and personal, to his four sons, Thomas, B. Richard, Francis, and John Jr.; B. Richard Wysong slowly purchased his siblings' interest in The Vineyard, "where John B. Wysong resided at the time of his death,"[28] until he, a great-great-grandson of Bernard Preston, eventually acquired sole ownership of the farm. And while maintaining his ancestral acres' famous productivity, Richard Wysong (born 1899) gained renown in the maritime world through his work in the Chesapeake Pilot Boat Association. According to an article in the 1936 Baltimore Sun, Wysong, who by then had "spent more than half his life as a pilot," had, "oddly enough...found it possible to reconcile his profession of navigation with the divergent occupation of dairy farming. Born on a Harford County farm (where he still lives) which is a part of an original grant made to his forebears, Wysong turned to the sea when 16....Former Mayor James H. Preston, Captain Wysong says, is responsible for his choice of profession....Mr. Preston, a relative, had been asked...to nominate a likely candidate for a pilot's post and the then Mayor had asked young Wysong if he would be interested." Wysong, elected president of the association in 1935, affected many reforms to the association and under his administration "the association has grown steadily in reputation and the traditions upon which it was founded have strengthened. High standards of navigating skill have been set for membership and new ones are admitted only after six exacting years of apprenticeship;" in addition Wysong oversaw and dealt with the vast increase in Bay traffic that occurred as a result of the widening of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal in the 1930s.

The Harford County Council elected B. Richard Wysong a county "Living Treasure" in 1981; he has since died, and The Vineyard is now owned by his daughter, Susan, and her husband, Hayes Gardiner; the Gardiners' three sons, active in the Maryland 4-H, are the great-great-great-great-grandsons of Bernard Preston, who built the house, and the ninth generation in uninterrupted succession of the family to farm the property and simultaneously shape the history of Harford County.

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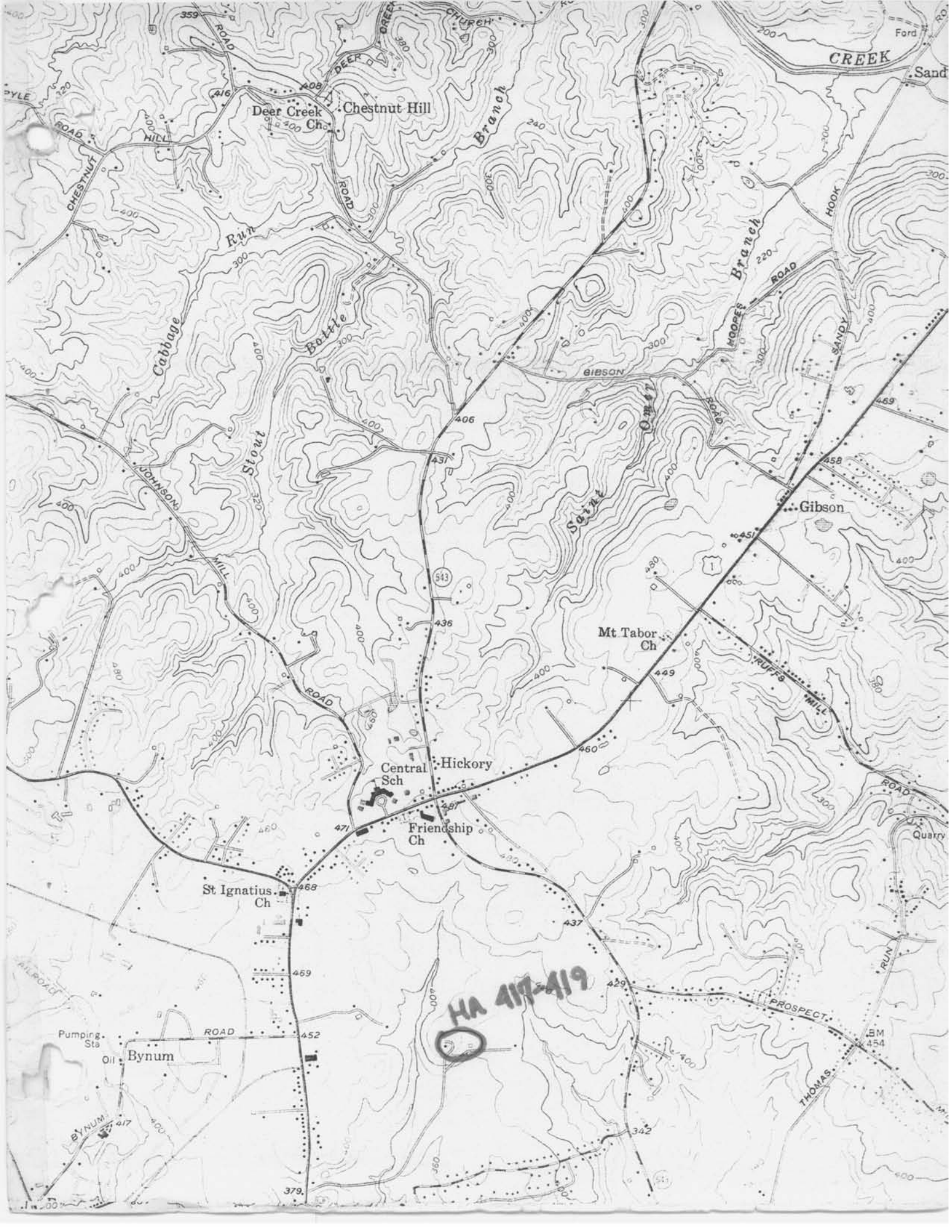
[27] Wright, Heritage, p. 414.

[28] Deeds DGW 186/246 and 216/427, dated 1924 and 1930, respectively.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The large acreage is necessary to encompass the property's many historically significant resources, to convey the property's historical setting, and to ensure the resource's integrity. The general acreage has continuously been associated with the built resources since the 1740s; the specific property boundaries have remained virtually unchanged since January 1878.

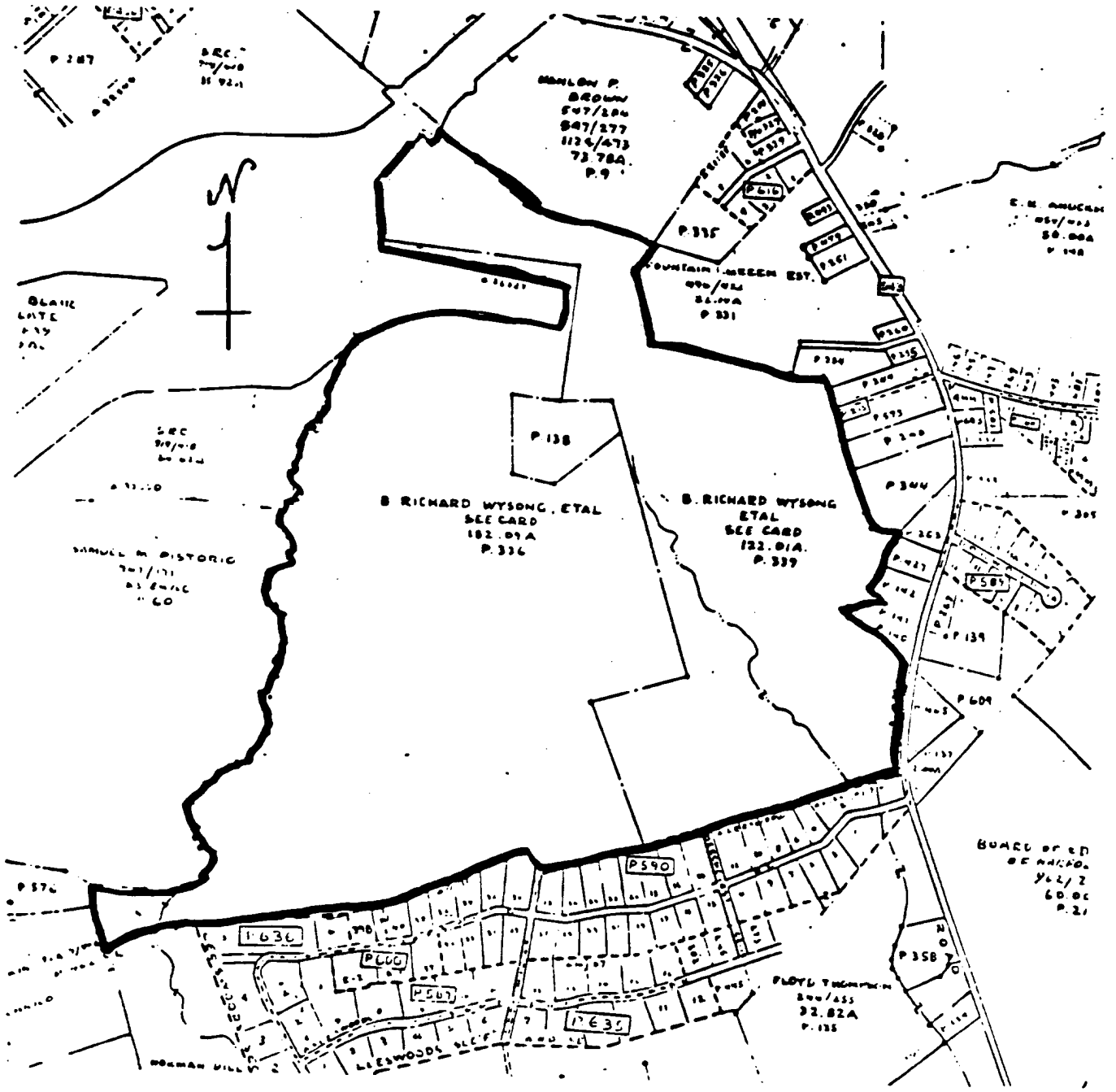
See Continuation Sheet No. 18



Deer Creek Ch
Chestnut Hill
Branch
CREEK
Ford
Sand
CHURCH
DEER
ROAD
HILL
CHESTNUT
Run
Cabbage
Stout
Bottle
Branch
HOOK
HOOPES
ROAD
SANDY
GIBSON
ROAD
Omer
Saint
Gibson
JOHNSON
MILL
ROAD
Mt Tabor Ch
RUFFS
MILL
ROAD
Central Sch
Hickory
Friendship Ch
St Ignatius Ch
Quarry
RUN
PROSPECT
THOMAS
BM 454
Pumping Sta
Oil
Bynum
ROAD
BYNUM
HA 417-419

BOUNDARY MAP
1993

Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation Map:
Harford County, map 41, parcels 336, 339, 138



NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

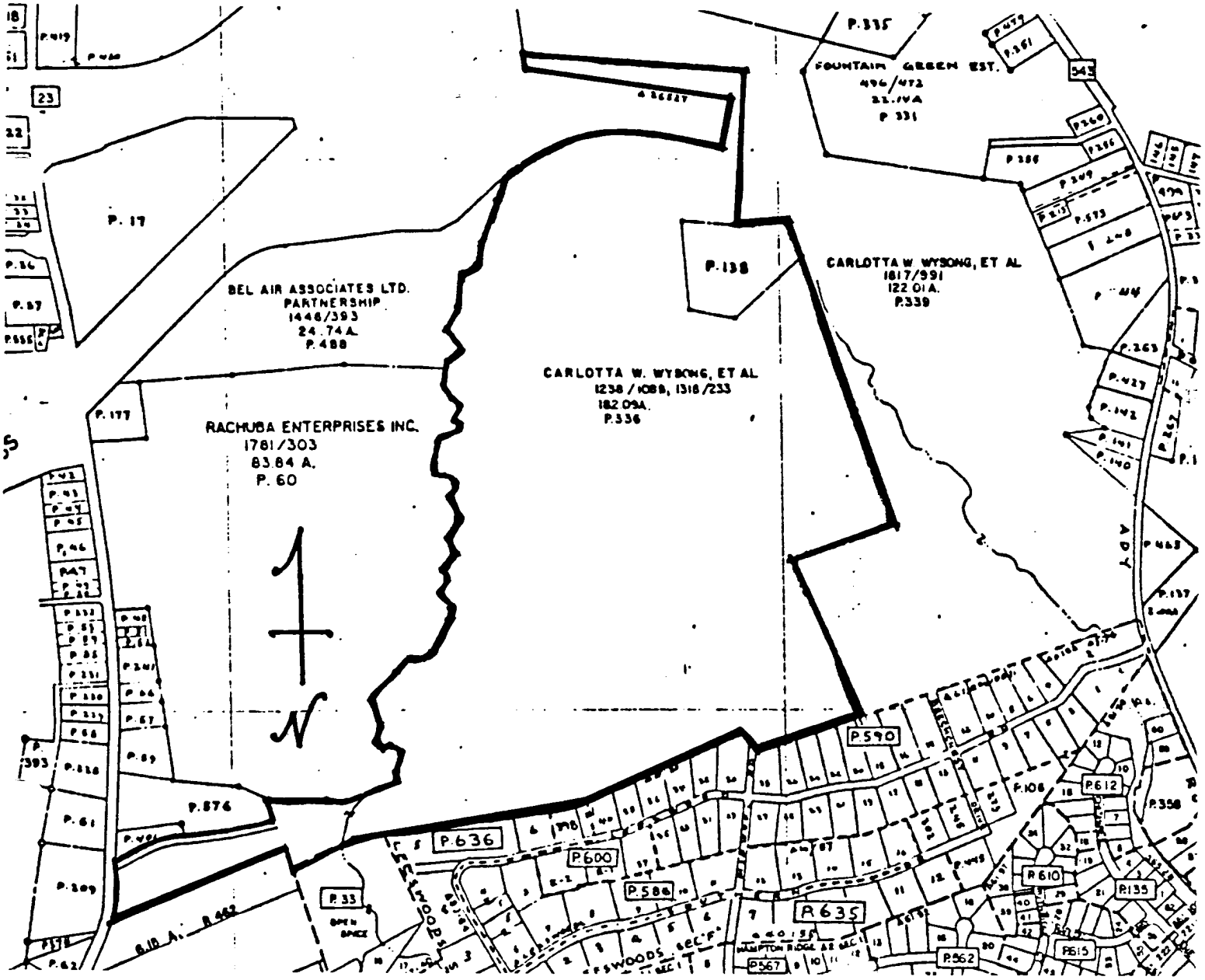
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

THE VINEYARD
Harford County
Maryland

Section number 10 Page 20

BOUNDARY MAP
February 1996

Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation Map:
Harford County, map 41, parcels 336 and 138



NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

THE VINEYARD
Harford County
Maryland

Section number 10 Page 19

Revised information: February 1996

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The Vineyard was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on July 22, 1994. It is significant under Criterion C for the architectural character of its rural domestic and agricultural buildings. The previous boundaries for this resource inadvertently included 122 acres of unimproved wooded property (identified as Parcel 339 on the boundary map) which does not contain any resources related to the listed significance. The owners of this parcel were not notified of the pending nomination according to 36 CFR 60, as SHPO staff did not intend to include this unrelated acreage in the nomination. Parcel 339 is to be removed from the nomination. The revised boundaries include 188 acres, encompassing the buildings (concentrated on Parcel 138) within their immediate historic setting (Parcel 336).

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Nominated property consists of Parcels 138 and 336 on Harford County Tax Map 41. Boundaries are depicted on the enclosed map, dated February 1996.

ACREAGE: 188 acres

UTM REFERENCES: (all revised)

A: 18-384810-4380920

B: 18-384930-4380500

C: 18-385000-4380000

D: 18-384900-4379650

E: 18-383640-4379380

F: 18-384450-4379980

The Vineyard
Harford Co
Maryland

NA: 417, 418,
419, 420

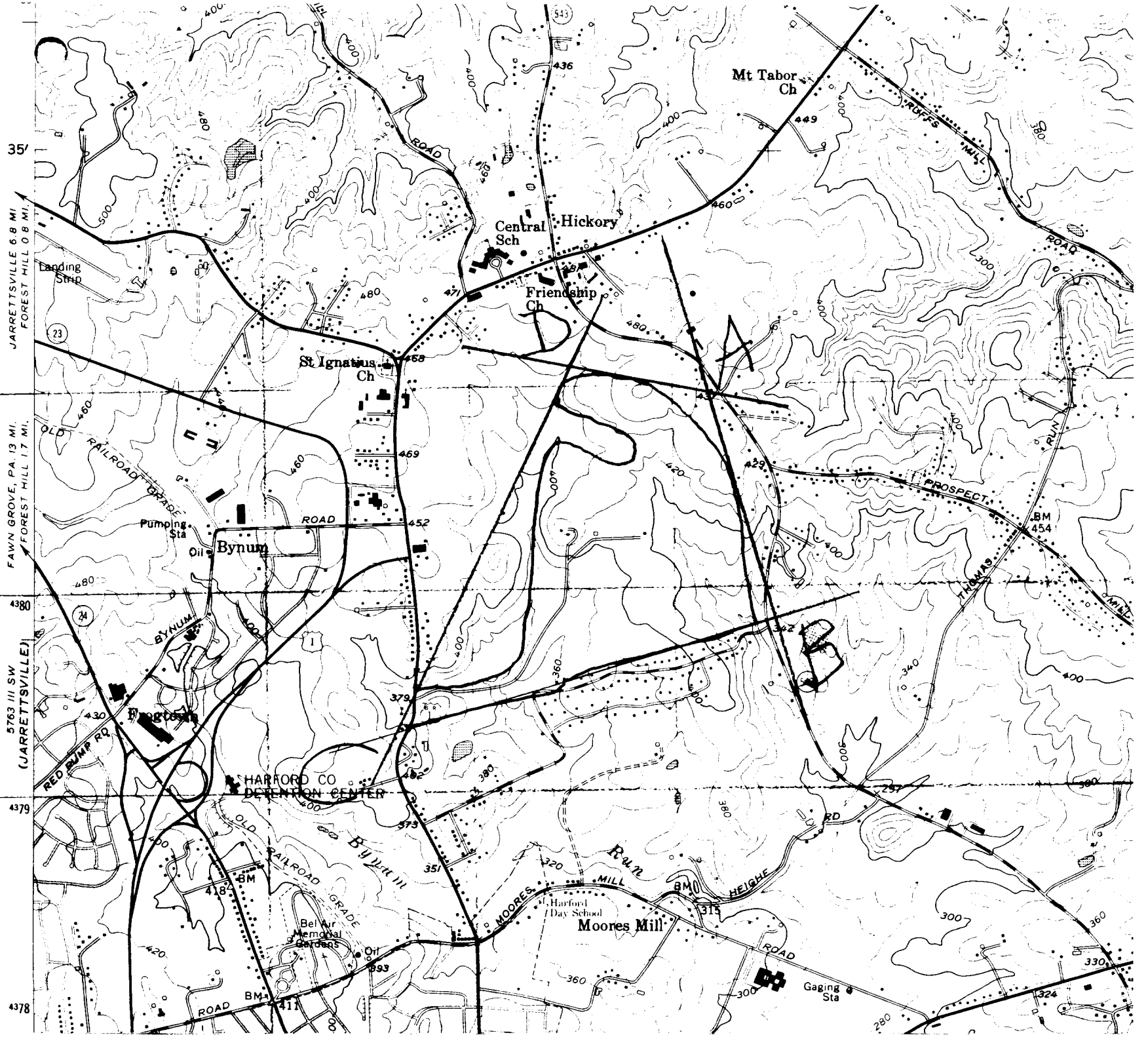
A 18/385180/
4380970

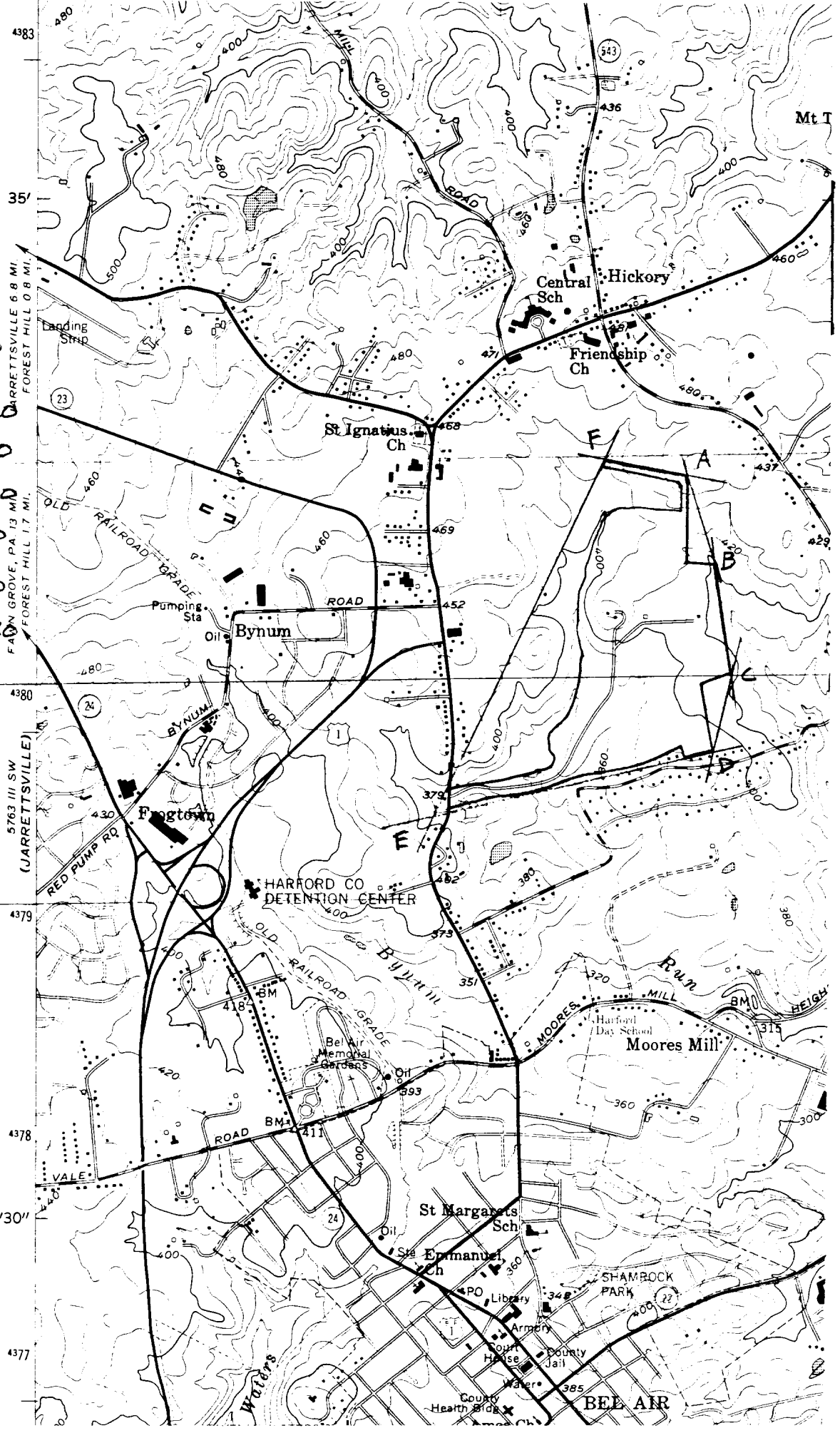
B 18/385490/
4379830

C 18/383620/
4379290

D 18/384500/
4381100

Bel Air




HA-417,418,419,420
THE VINEYARD
HARFORD CO., MD
A: 18-384810-4380920
B: 18-384930-4380500
C: 18-385000-4380000
D: 18-384900-4379650
E: 18-383640-4379380
F: 18-384450-4379980
REVISED BOUNDARY
FEB. 1996
4383
4380
4379
4378
4377
35'
32'30"
5763 III SW
(JARRETTSVILLE)
JARRETTSVILLE 6.8 MI.
FOREST HILL 0.8 MI.
FAWN GROVE, PA. 1.3 MI.
FOREST HILL 1.7 MI.
Landing Strip
Central Sch
Hickory
Friendship Ch
St Ignatius Ch
OLD RAILROAD GRADE
Pumping Sta
Oil
Bynum
ROAD
BYNUM
Frogtown
RED PUMP RD.
HARFORD CO DETENTION CENTER
Bynum Run
MOORES MILL ROAD
Harford Day School
Moores Mill
Bel Air Memorial Gardens
BM
VALE
St Margarets Sch
Ste Emmanuel Ch
PO
Library
Armory
Court House
County Jail
Water
County Health Bldg
SHAMROCK PARK
BEL AIR
Waters
A
B
C
D
E
F

HA417, 418, 419, 420

The Vineyard HA-417-420
Harford Co MD
C. Weeks 4/93
Harford Co Planning Dept.
House & Fields looking N
2/16

The Vineyard HA-417-420
Harford Co MD
C. Weeks 4/93
Harford Co Planning Dept.
House - S. Facade
4/16