NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Llandaff House

other names Llandaff T-231

2. Location

street & number 28472 Old Country Club Road ☐ not for publication

city or town Easton x vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Talbot code 041 zip code 21601

3. 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☑ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date 11-14-02

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of certifying official/Title — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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

Llandaff House, T-231
Name of Property

Talbot County, Maryland
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- x private
- ☐ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- x building(s)
- ☐ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
3	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne/Queen Anne-Eastlake

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Wood/Shingle
roof Asphalt
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.

☐ B Property associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

x C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ B removed from its original location.

☐ C a birthplace or grave.

☐ D a cemetery.

☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ F a commemorative property.

☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Area of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance
1877-1920

Significant Dates
1877-78

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Landscape architect Thomas Hogan

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on files (NPS):

☐ 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:

x State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository:

Llandaff, T-231
Name of Property

Talbot County, Maryland
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 13 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	405240	4287560	3	18	405400	4287250
2	18	405410	4287570	4	18	405240	4287270

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian
Organization Private Consultant date 9/7/2001
street & number Cedar Hill P. O. Box 5 telephone 410-651-1094
city or town Westover state Maryland zip code 21871

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)

name Ms. Kitty Calavita
street & number 3430 Villanova Drive telephone
city or town San Diego state California zip code 92122

Paperwork Reduction Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et. seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Description Summary:

Llandaff House is located on the south side of Peachblossom Creek and on the west side of MD Route 333, also known as Peachblossom Road, south of Easton, Talbot County, Maryland. The two-and-a-half story, irregular plan frame house stands at the end of a long tree-lined lane surrounded by a mature stand of shade trees. The house faces south with the principal roof oriented on an east/west axis. Joining the dwelling on nominated property is a three-story frame watertower/windmill as well as an early twentieth-century frame boat house. Dating to 1877-78, the two-and-a-half story, irregular plan frame dwelling is supported on a raised brick foundation with a full cellar, and the exterior is clad with a variety of decorative and plain wood shingles. A steeply pitched hip roof with multiple gable roofed extensions is covered with asphalt shingles.

General Description:

The two-and-a-half story Victorian dwelling at Llandaff is situated on a prominent site on the south side of Peachblossom Creek within a landscaped yard of mature shade trees. Built in 1877-78, the two-and-a-half story, irregularly shaped frame dwelling is supported on a fully excavated brick cellar laid in Flemish bond, and the exterior is clad with decorative and plain wood shingles. Central to the house is a steeply pitched hip roof, which has a variety of gable roofed wings and dormers that extend from each side.

The two-and-a-half story south (main) elevation has an asymmetrical façade with a center entrance incorporated in a projecting two-story, two-bay pavilion distinguished by an open porch on the first floor. The porch features clustered sets of Tuscan columns resting atop high brick bases. A partially glazed front door is flanked on the east side with a paired set of sixteen-over-sixteen sash windows. The wall surface around the door and windows is sheathed with decorative fishscale shingles. The second floor of the projecting pavilion is defined by a pair of six-over-six sash windows that pierce a wall sheathed with round-butt fishscale shingles, and a small lunette window pierces the gable end. To the right (east) of the entrance pavilion is an asymmetrical set of graduated, multi-paned windows incorporated under a projecting second floor eave. The edges of the window series is accented with decorative brackets. The second floor of the house is defined by an asymmetrical placement of six-over-six sash windows, and a multi-paned window topped by a gable roof marks the inside corner where the main house joins the pavilion.

To the left (west) of the entrance pavilion is a paired set of six-over-one sash windows with a decorative panel of diamond-shaped fishscale shingles between the two sash. The window openings are further embellished by a continuous sill that has fluted brackets and scrollwork under it, and a row of horizontal panels and a dentiled cornice stretch across the top

of the window openings. The bottom of the second story has a flared base executed in fishscale shingles. The southwest corner of the first story is defined by an inset corner window. The small sized eight-over-eight sash window is framed by decorative brackets, which flank an enriched cornice. The base of the window opening has a heavy sill and a scrollwork trim underneath. The second story left of the entrance pavilion is lighted by a pair of six-over-six sash windows, which have a slightly projecting panel of fishscale shingles below each sill. All of the window openings have shutter pintels, however the shutters have been removed and are stored in the cellar. Defining the roof is a pair of gable roofed dormers defined by shingled sides and pediment fronts. Slightly projecting panels of round butt shingles flare out below each window sill. The side of the west dormer is pierced by a small sash window.

The west side of the house is an asymmetrical, multi-gabled elevation dominated by a large exterior Flemish bond brick stack which rises in the center of a gable-roofed extension of the main roof. The stack is painted white on the first story, and it is accented with a pediment form of cornice moldings. The upper sections of the stack have inset panels in natural red brick. Originally the top of the chimney stacks flared with a wide corbelled cap, however the tops of the chimneys retain only a few courses of corbelling.

The first and second stories, sheathed with square butt shingles, are divided by a flared base to the bottom of the second floor. Small two-over-two sash windows with scroll decorated sills flank the stack on the second story. The flush gable end is finished with a crown molding that forms a pediment, and the tympanum is sheathed with round butt shingles. The adjacent gable end extension of the main block is set several feet inside the chimney stack gable, and a late nineteenth-century porch with simple chamfered posts and pierced brackets fills in the rear corner. Each porch bracket is pierced with the form of a four-point star. Inside the porch, the first story is sheathed with diamond-shaped fishscale shingles, whereas the second floor is covered with square butts. The second story is lighted by a pair of six-over-six sash windows, and the openings share a continuous sill. Each opening is also trimmed with a slight crown molding. The upper gable end is pierced by a pair of six-over-six sash windows which light the attic, and these window openings have a common sill as well. The edge of the roof is trimmed with a molded bargeboard. The upper part of the gable end is sheathed with decorative round butt shingles enclosed within a small pediment framed by with a crown molding.

The north (rear) wall is an asymmetrical façade with the first story sheltered by the chamfered post porch. A gable roof on the north face of the porch is sheathed with round butt shingles. Rising through the porch roof and partially within and partially outside the house is another brick stack marked by double inset panels that extend the length of the chimney. Atop the roof, the stack passes through a gable roof form which is flanked on its east side with a shed roofed dormer fitted with a paired set of six-over-six sash windows. Projecting from the north wall east of the porch is a gable roofed extension of the main block that houses the dining room on the first floor. The north wall of the gable roofed dining room wing is defined by an asymmetrical fenestration with a paired set of six-over-one sash windows lighting the first floor

dining room. The dining room windows are separated by a decorative panel of fishscale shingles. The windows have a common sill, and each opening is accented with a small crown molding. The second story is marked by separate, unevenly spaced six-over-six sash windows, whereas the attic level is pierced by paired six-over-six sash windows fixed below a gable end peak ornament of fishscale shingles framed within a pediment of crown moldings.

The east side of the main block is largely covered by a two-and-a-half story, two-part service wing sheathed with square butt shingles. The kitchen and pantry are housed in the two-and-a-half story wing, whereas a servant's quarter and engaged porch on the first floor occupy a slightly shorter two-story gable roofed extension of the main kitchen wing. A large gable roofed dormer fitted with a six-over-six sash window extends from the north side of the main kitchen wing roof. Rising through the roof of the service wing is a third chimney stack with inset paneled sides above the roofline. The kitchen wing is lighted by a combination of eight-over-eight sash and smaller two-over-two sash windows. The large eight-over-eight sash windows have thick sills and a crown molding across each lintel. The southeast corner of the servant's section of the kitchen wing is defined by an engaged porch. The roof edges of the service wing are simply finished with flush gable ends and boxed cornices trimmed with bed and crown moldings.

The interior follows an irregular center hall plan with a variety of rooms extending from each side. The center hall is dominated by a turned post staircase distinguished by a closed stringer, square fluted balusters, and a molded handrail. The wall surface below the stringer is finished with a triangular panel with an ovolo molded backband. An adjacent section under the stair landing is finished as an open closet with a section of partition finished with a four-panel design. To the east of the main staircase is a narrow service hall that leads to the kitchen wing. Each of the principal door openings is framed by a complex Victorian surround molding, which frames nine-panel doors hung on intricately cast door hinges. Several doors, including the front door, retain decorated lock face plates and knobs.

West of the stairhall is a large ell-shaped parlor, reported to have been two rooms initially. Around 1900 the two spaces were consolidated into a large parlor. Fixed in the west end of the ell-shaped room is a late nineteenth-century fireplace set within a recessed niche framed by chamfered edge boards. The mantel has a bold series of brackets that support a thick board shelf. Slightly recessed panels embellish the frieze between each bracket. Distinguishing the hearth are Eastlake style decorative tiles executed in a bird motif with a brown, navy blue and cream color scheme. Fixed atop the mantel is a mirror set within a decorative Victorian frame. Another distinctive feature of the parlor are heavy arched braces that define the transition between the two original spaces. The two rooms are fitted with high molded baseboards and intricate plaster cornices.

North of the stairhall is the dining room, which features a corner fireplace fronted by an elaborate Eastlake style mantel and overmantel, however, this Eastlake element was moved to Llandaff from a family residence in Easton. Finished in a dark stain, the mantel has intricately

carved ornaments as well as built-in cupboards and mirrors. The firebox is framed by a narrow band of blue and white tiles. The Eastlake style hearth tiles for the dining room fireplace are original to this opening. Nine-panel doors framed by heavily molded surrounds open into an adjacent pantry hall as well as the north porch.

The pantry space is an adjunct to the kitchen and servant's wing on the north side of the service wing. The pantry is fitted with built-in cupboards with beaded edge board-and-batten doors, plain board-faced drawers, and a simple crown molding. The kitchen has vertical beaded board wainscoting, and a section of corbelled brickwork serves as a mantel shelf. The servant's room is a small, simply finished space located off the kitchen porch.

The second floor of the main house has a center stairhall with six main chambers. The stair railing is distinguished by turned newel posts with turned finial post heads. The range of rooms around the second floor stairhall are entered through six-panel doors framed by Victorian molded surrounds. The doors retain porcelain knobs. The west chamber has been modified with the installation of a partition to enclose a small space for a bathroom. The bathroom is entered through a turn of the century four-panel door, and the claw-footed tub was positioned in front of the Victorian mantel. Adjacent to the bathroom is a heavily molded Victorian door and surround that fronts a small closet.

The northwest chamber is also fitted with a Victorian mantel, six-panel Victorian doors, and molded surrounds. The mantel is distinguished by intricate machine carved surfaces. Fixed in the firebox is an iron insert for burning coal. The room is fitted with a high molded baseboard. A six-panel door framed by a Victorian surround opens into a small closet adjacent to the fireplace.

On the north side of the hall is another chamber fitted with a corner fireplace and original Victorian mantel enhanced with machine-carved brackets to either side of a paneled frieze. The firebox is fitted with an iron insert. Flanking the firebox are paneled pilasters. Fixed atop the carved frieze brackets is a molded shelf. Six-panel doors open into a closet as well as an adjacent bathroom. The bathroom is fitted with beaded board wainscoting.

Several servant's rooms are located in the attic, which is accessed through a turn of twentieth-century four-panel door. The lion-share of the attic staircase is enclosed, and at the head of the stair is a chamfered newel post and a series of chamfered edge balusters. The attic is divided into several rooms entered through four-panel or six-panel doors. Small beaded board hatch doors provide access to the knee wall spaces. There is a hatch as well in the center of the ceiling to provide entrance into an unfinished upper attic. Some of the rooms retain early twentieth-century plumbing fixtures.

Standing southeast of the house is a three-story, frame watertower/windmill erected around the same time as the dwelling. Sheathed with decorative and plain wood shingles, the sides of the tower slope inward to a third story, which is capped by a nearly flat roof distinguished by a wide overhanging eave underpinned by stick brackets. Entrance to the interior is provided through a door opening framed by a pointed arch surround. The opening is

fitted with an eight-panel door with ovolo profile panel moldings. The doorway is topped by a pointed arch fitted with a two-light transom. The second story is defined by multi-pane windows under a gable roof. The third floor is marked by four-over-four sash windows under gable roofs as well. The interior of the tower is unfinished with a ladder rising three stories to a water tank and platform.

Located on the northwest edge of the property is a single-story boathouse distinguished by an unusual gable roof executed in three slopes on a side. The boathouse walls are covered with asphalt shingles. The interior is divided into several small rooms with thin vertical, beaded board partitions separating the spaces. A four-panel door pierces the southeast gable front, while two-pane windows define the north and south sides.

The only non-contributing resource on the property is a third quarter of the twentieth century, single-story, ell-shaped frame ranch-style house that stands east of the main dwelling. East of the ranch-style house is a small pond.

Summary Statement of Significance:

Llandaff House derives its significance from its Victorian architectural design with a distinctive blend of Queen Anne and Shingle style building forms and Eastlake surface finishes. The hybrid, individualistic design was clearly produced by an as-of-yet unidentified architect or skilled designer/builder influenced by the range of architectural styles popular during the late nineteenth century. The irregular floor plan and multi-faceted roof forms are characteristic of Queen Anne domestic designs, while the universal sheathing of wood shingles and flared base to the second story indicate an influence of the popular Shingle style. By contrast, the bold turned forms in the original front porch, and interior staircase, as well as the carved mantel ornaments, decorative tile hearths, and intricately cast hardware point to the interior designs of Charles Locke Eastlake (1833-1906). The combined architectural influences and resulting exterior and interior designs at Llandaff House are like none other in Talbot County.

Augmenting the architectural significance of the property are two outbuildings, a late nineteenth-century, three-story combination watertower and windmill as well as an early twentieth-century frame boathouse. The house and two outbuildings are set within an expansive park-like yard dotted with mature shade trees and ornamental plants, which constitutes the remnants of professionally designed grounds plan executed by New York landscape architect Thomas Hogan.

Resource History and Historic Context:

The tract of land known as "Llandaff" was purchased and improved by John R. Robinson (1810-1892), a successful entrepreneur, engineer, and inventor, who had a long and diverse career in milling, commerce, railroads, and mining that extended over sixty years. His longest and most lucrative association was with Wells Fargo & Co. of New York as a mining engineer and investor. During his career with Wells Fargo he and several sons spent considerable time in Mexico inspecting and operating silver mines for company investments between 1861 and 1890.[1]

During the years following the Civil War, northern capitalists like John R. Robinson descended on the Eastern Shore of Maryland after reading popular articles about the region that were published in national periodicals such as *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, *Scribner's Monthly*, or *Lippincott's Monthly*.[2] Writing for Harper's in October 1871, Bayard Taylor described the peninsula as,

[1] Personal correspondence from Ethel R. Zott, 20 September 2001. Ethel R. Zott is a great granddaughter of John R. Robinson.
[2] Harold D. Jopp, ed. *Rediscovery of the Eastern Shore: Delmarva Travelogues of the 1870's*. Wye Mills, Maryland: Chesapeake College Press, 1986.

> *It is a fine open country, easily improved, apparently healthy, and offering such inducements in the way of mild winters, cheap lands, and nearness to markets that the absence of immigration seemed to call for some explanation. Why should Eastern and Northern farmers go to Iowa or Nebraska when such a region lies within twenty-four hours of Maine or Vermont. Until very recently immigration has been practically discouraged, not alone through the hostile sentiment of the old proprietors, but also through their reluctance to part with any portion of their large (and generally encumbered) estates. It has been held to be more "aristocratic" to possess a thousand heavily mortgaged than a few hundred free acres.* [3]

Reaching a national readership, descriptions such as Bayard Taylor's lured many to explore and ultimately settle on the peninsula creating a wave of new investment. The northern capitalists came from various industrial and commercial centers buying up old estates or creating for themselves entirely new ones.

Providing direct access from northern cities were the newly created railroad lines, erected before and after the Civil War, which traversed the peninsula connecting established towns and providing expedient exposure for inland areas previously accessible by water of circuitous road networks. By 1871 a branch line of the Delaware Railroad was complete through Talbot County with its terminus at Oxford.

Most likely John R. Robinson took advantage of the new railroad lines to visit the Eastern Shore, and he was one of scores who found Talbot County a desirable place in which to resettle. In December 1875 he executed an initial purchase of part of the old Bozman estate, encompassing 196 acres, "*on the north side of the county road*" leading to Oxford.[4] Late the following year, in December 1876, Robinson purchased the "Llandaff" acreage bordering Peachblossom Creek for $14,000.[5] This second acquisition encompassed 485 acres; land which was part of the real estate of Matthew Tilghman Goldsborough. The livestock, farm machinery and implements were sold at auction on Wednesday, December 13th, according to an advertisement in the *Easton Star* [6]. True to Robinson family oral tradition, the house was started in 1877 and most likely finished the following year. The source of the design has not surfaced, but its unusual form and adherence to popular national influences strongly suggest a professional hand. Thomas Hogan, a New York landscape architect, was retained to lay out the grounds in a romantic manner with a traditional tree-line lane and circular turn-around. The yard immediately

[3] Quoted from Bayard Taylor, *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Volume 43, Number 257, October 1871.
[4] Talbot County Land Record, 82/15, 30 December 1875.
[5] Talbot County Land Record, 88/253, 22 November 1879. This land transfer was formally recorded three years following the actual transaction. The *Easton Star* announced on 5 December 1876 that "Messrs. M. T. Goldsborough, F. C. Goldsborough, and F. H. Johnson have sold the farm in Baileys Neck called Llandaff, containing near 500 acres, to Mr. Robinson, of New York, for $14,000. On the 13th instant they will offer at public sale all the valuable live stock, farming implements, and machinery on the said farm."
[6] *Easton Star*, 5 December 1876.

surrounding the lane and house were planted with deciduous hardwoods, many of which remain on the property.

About two years following the completion of the house, the property was the site for the marriage of May Robinson and John M. Elliott on October 28, 1880. The Robinson-Elliott marriage "*held at the residence of the bride's father, in Bailey's Neck*" was announced in the November 2nd issue of the Easton paper. [7] Also in 1880, the United States census listed numerous occupants in the Robinson household including John R., aged 70; Jane R., aged 65; son Charles S., aged 33; daughter Kate, aged 27; Mary (May), aged 24; Carmen Torres, Charles' wife, aged 31; a two-year old grandson along with two servants, Elizabeth and Carrie, and a boarder, Guadalupe Moratine, aged 38.[8]

In June 1883 John R. Robinson conveyed title of Llandaff to his daughter May and son-in-law John M. Elliott.[9] The metes and bounds of the property described the estate as a

> *....situate, lying, and being in Bailey's Neck....485 acres...all of that part of the said tract or parcel of land known as Llandaff House and grounds...Beginning at low waters edge on the shores of Peach Blossom Creek east of Llandaff House...*

It is not entirely clear why Llandaff was conveyed to May and her husband John at this point; perhaps in light of ill health the property was transferred. Jane Wilkinson Robinson had died several months before on January 3, 1883 in New York City.[10] A little over two years later, John R. Robinson married Catherine Taylor on February 12, 1885. In October 1890, the Llandaff acreage was repurchased by John R. Robinson from his daughter and son-in-law, who were at the time recorded as residents of Calhoun County, Alabama.[11] Two years later, and two months shy of his 82nd birthday, John R. Robinson died.[12]

John R. Robinson's personal and professional lives are not easily summarized since he live and worked in a variety of places and occupations throughout his long life. He was born in Prospect Hill, Connecticut on July 13, 1810 to Richard and Rebecca Sage Robinson. At a young age, John's father left the family, and his mother with two sons, relocated to Knox County, Ohio in 1820. Rebecca Robinson married Asel Webster and resided in Mansfield. At age 26, John married Jane Wilkinson on July 19, 1836. During the 1830s and 1840s John R. Robinson had interests in a Mansfield grist mill, jewelry store as well as the prospect of a railroad between

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[7] *Easton Star*, 2 November 1880.
[8] Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Population Schedule for Talbot County, transcribed by Helen E. Seymour, 1997, . 110.
[9] Talbot County Land Record, 97/21, 26 June 1883.
[10] Family bible record, Llandaff Collection.
[11] Talbot County Land Record, TH 113/409, 24 October 1890.
[12] Family bible record, "John R. Robinson died on 9 May 1892 at Llandaff, Llandaff Collection.

Mansfield and Sandusky. An advertisement for the jewelry business was printed in the Richland County paper, "The Shield and Banner," which stated in June 1848 that

> *"Three doors south of the Elephant's Stall next door to the Book Store, at John R. Robinson's can be found a new and fashionable store of Jewelry...Brass Clocks as low as $3. Watches and Clocks repaired and warranted, also made to order silver spoons and silver and brass plating done."* [13]

In 1845, J. R. Robinson took as well a position as the superintendent for the construction of the first leg of the Sandusky, Mansfield & Newark Railroad. A charter for a railroad between Mansfield and Sandusky, Ohio had been issued that year and construction lapsed into 1846. John R. Robinson's uncle Asher Riley wrote him a letter from New York dated December 15, 1845 in which he commented,

> *"I am very sorry that you have not got your R R finished before winter sett (sic) in, it seems that business of all kinds building warehouses & c are all progressing rapidly and expected to be full of wheat before you have a conveyance to carry it to market, your director should be wide awake these stiring (sic) times and have the road ready by the time the Erie Canal is open in the spring to convey all your wheat & Produce to Market..."* [14]

John R. Robinson prospered with his many business interests, especially with the new rail transportation and direct delivery east by way of the Erie Canal. The new railroad was built through one of the most productive wheat-growing regions in the country, and the rail line proved immediately profitable. The railroad was capitalized for $450,000, and in the year that it opened it returned $49,999. An extension to the line connecting Newark, Ohio was started in 1846.[15]

The 1850 United States census listed John R. Robinson's position with the railroad, and the value of his personal real estate holdings amounted to a substantial $25,000 at age 40. Several years prior to the census, in 1847, he and his wife financed the construction of an impressive Gothic Revival brick dwelling they named Oak Hill cottage.

On the eve of the Civil War, John R. Robinson's career changed direction in an association with Wells Fargo & Company of New York. His energies were turned to the inspection and operation of silver mines in Mexico. John R. Robinson's first foray into Mexico to inspect silver mines at Batopilas is recorded in a diary that he kept during a seven-month

[13] Correspondence from Ethel R. Zott, dated 20 September 2001.
[14] Letter from Asher Riley to nephew John R. Robinson, dated 15 December 1845, Collection of Ethel R. Zott.
[15] Caroline E. MacGill, et al. *History of Transportation in the United States before 1860*. Peter Smith, 1948, p. 499.

journey.[16] The diary begins on February 14, 1861 with the announcement that a contract with Belden & Stearns for the acquisition of the silver mines at Batopilas was issued with partners D. N. Barney, W. G. Fargo, A. H. Barney & J. R. Robinson. The contract called for the transfer of ¾ interest in the mines for $50,000 to be paid if a satisfactory report was submitted after John R. Robinson's personal inspection.

After the inspection of the Mexican silver mines, John R. Robinson returned to his home in Mansfield, leaving two sons, Asher and Wilshire, to tend to the silver extraction. Tragically, both sons died of typhoid fever and were buried in a church yard at Batopilas. By 1864 John R. Robinson and his family had relocated to 115 Duffield Street in Brooklyn, New York to be near the Broadway office of Wells Fargo & Co.[17]

In order to protect company interests, John R. Robinson personally supervised the mine operation at Batopilas, even during turbulent times with Mexico in revolution. In late 1871 John R. Robinson was jailed by insurrectionists fighting for Profirio Diaz and independence from the established government. In a letter written the following January to the U. S. Consul at Chihuahua, John R. Robinson described how he had been jailed and tried on trumped up charges. The revolutionaries demanded $15,000 or else they would plunder the town and the mines. The citizens and merchants of the town raised $7,000 and another $2400 through a draft on a San Francisco bank before the revolutionaries left Batopilas.[18] Despite heavy financial losses during the revolution, the Wells Fargo Company continued to work the Batopilas mine until it was sold in 1879. Afterwards, other mining prospects were exploited in and around Chihuahua. John R. Robinson was involved in developing the Santa Eulalia mining district. Late in his mining career John R. Robinson patented an ore vehicle known as the "John R. Robinson Dumping Car." The U. S. patent was issued in 1890.[19]

Following John R. Robinson's death in May 1892, his second wife, Catherine J. T. Robinson, transferred her dower rights in the Llandaff property to May Elliott in December for $2,878.78.[20] The following month, in January 1893, May's siblings and their spouses—Charles R. Robinson and wife Carmen, of New York City; Kate R. Searls and her husband William P. Searls of Worcester County, Massachusetts; and Annie R. Rose and her husband Percy W. Rose of Atlanta, Georgia—conveyed to her their interests in the Talbot County estate.[21]

John M. and May R. Elliott resided at Llandaff through the balance of their lives. They had three children, Kate, Jack, and Robert. Kate married William B. Shannahan in 1913. The Shannahans had three children of their own, May Elliott, Jane Wilkinson, and William E.

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[16] Diary of John R. Robinson, February 14—September 15, 1861, transcript, Collection at Llandaff, Easton, Maryland.
[17] Genealogical information provided by Ethel R. Zott, correspondence dated 20 September 2001.
[18] Letter from John R. Robinson to William M. Brown, U. S. Consul at Chihuahua, 31 January 1872.
[19] Period drawing of "J. R. Robinson Dumping Car," patented 26 January 1890, used on personal stationery.
Talbot County Land Record, TH 118/214, 16 December 1892. The deed conveys, "*....all the right, title and interest of said Catherine J. T. Robinson (being her dower rights therein) of, in and to all and singular the tract or parcel of land situate lying and being in Bailey's Neck...containing 485 acres of land more or less and called and known as Landaff.*"
[21] Talbot County Land Record, TH 118/215, 5 January 1893.

Shannahan. In 1939, May Elliott Shannahan married Arthur B. Cecil, Jr., who obtained a medical degree and served as a local doctor in Talbot County. Kate Elliott Shannahan remained at Llandaff until her death in 1970, after which Arthur and May Shannahan Cecil occupied the property. Recently, the Llandaff house and property have passed to the next generation of owners, Arthur Bond Cecil III and his sister Kitty Cecil Calavita.[22]

[22] Personal interview with Kitty Calavita, 4 September 2001.

Major Bibliographical References:

Diary of John R. Robinson, February 14, 1861 through September 15, 1861, "His Journey to Batopilas, Mexico, to inspect silver mines with a view to purchase," Unpublished typescript. Llandaff Collection.

Family bible and other records, Llandaff Collection.

John L. Graham, et. *The 1877 Atlases of the Eastern Shore of Maryland.* Wicomico County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Caroline MacGill, et al., *History of Transportation in the United States before 1860.* Peter Smith, 1948.

Research file and personal correspondence from John R. Robinson's great granddaughter, Ethel R. Zott, dated 20 September 2001.

Personal interviews with Kitty Cecil Calavita, great-great granddaughter of John R. Robinson, at Llandaff House, September 4th and 10th, 2001.

Talbot County Land Records, various volumes, Talbot County Courthouse.

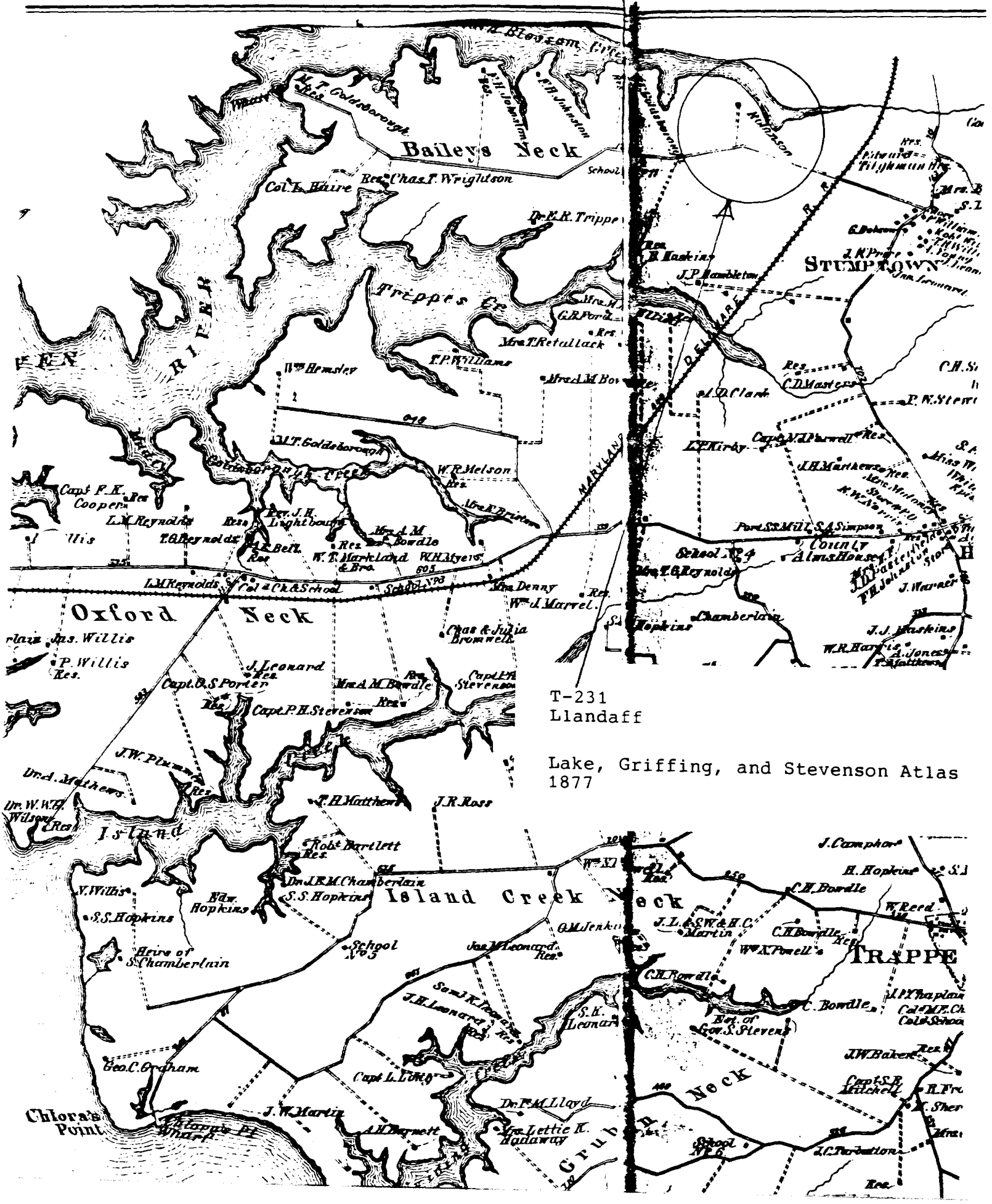
Tenth Census of the United States, Population Schedule for Talbot County, 1880, compiled by Helen E. Seymour, 1997.

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point on the east side of the nominated property coincidental with the north line of the Llandaff acreage at a marker on the west side of the right-of-way of MD Route 333 near the Peachblossom Bridge and running westward by and with the course of Peachblossom Creek as depicted on a plat entitled, "Llandaff, Property of Kate E. Shannahan," dated June 1954, to a point along said shore line west of the boathouse to a west line dividing parcels marked I and II on said plat, thence by and with the said boundary line in two courses drawn southeast to south for approximately 309 feet to a concrete post set along a line on said plat dividing said property, thence due south through the middle of a lot marked IV on said plat for approximately 574 feet to the north side of Old Country Club Road, thence by and with the north line of Old Country Club Road in an easterly direction to the intersection of MD Route 333, thence by and with the line of MD Route 333 in a northerly direction to the place of beginning on the west side of the Peachblossom Creek bridge, containing approximately 13 acres more or less.

Boundary Justification:

The 13 acres that join these buildings in nomination include the immediate land around the house, watertower/windmill, and boathouse as well as the entrance lane. Three of the most sensitive boundaries are the lines that run with the course of Peachblossom Creek on the north and the public roads on the south and west.



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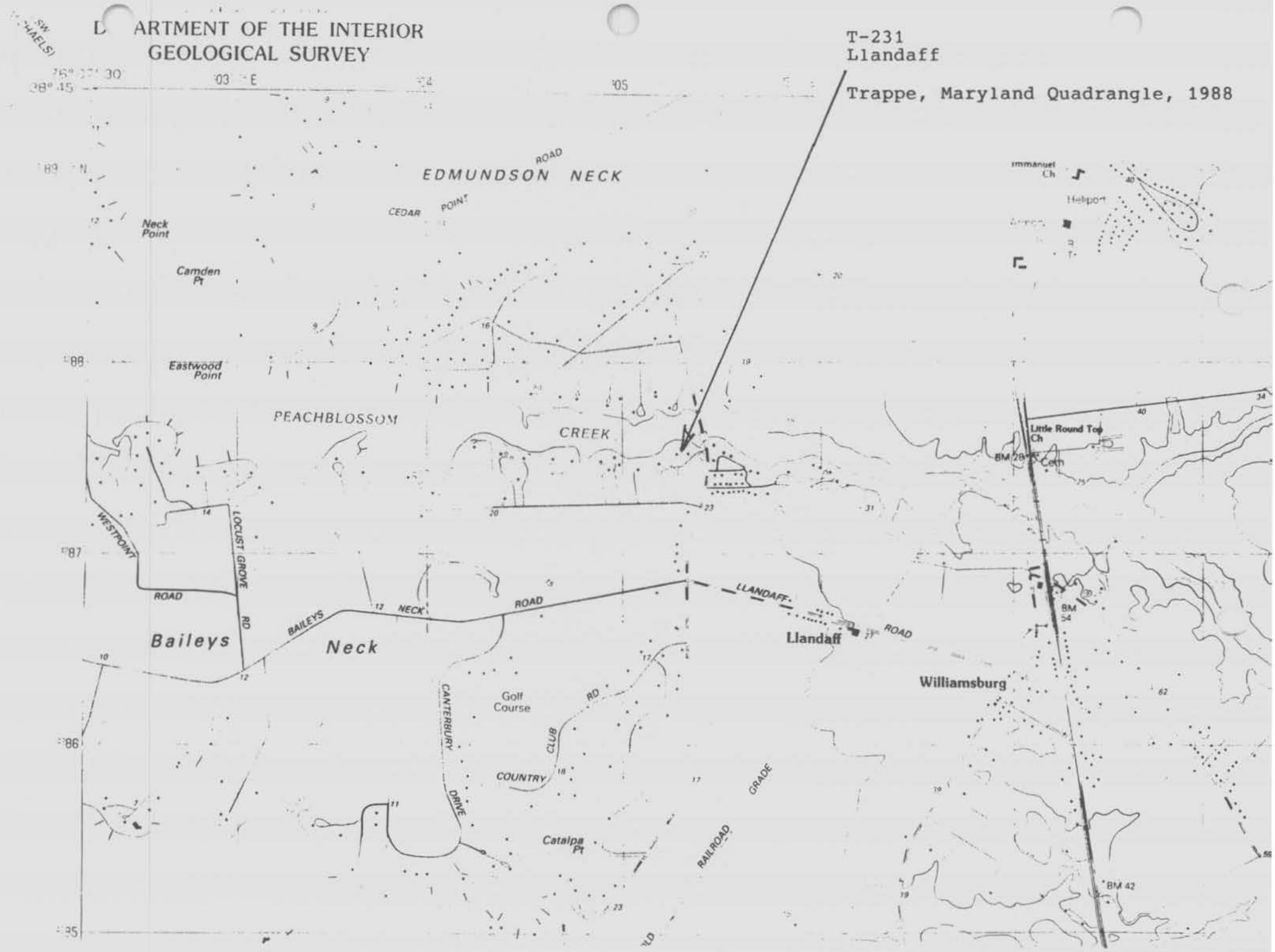
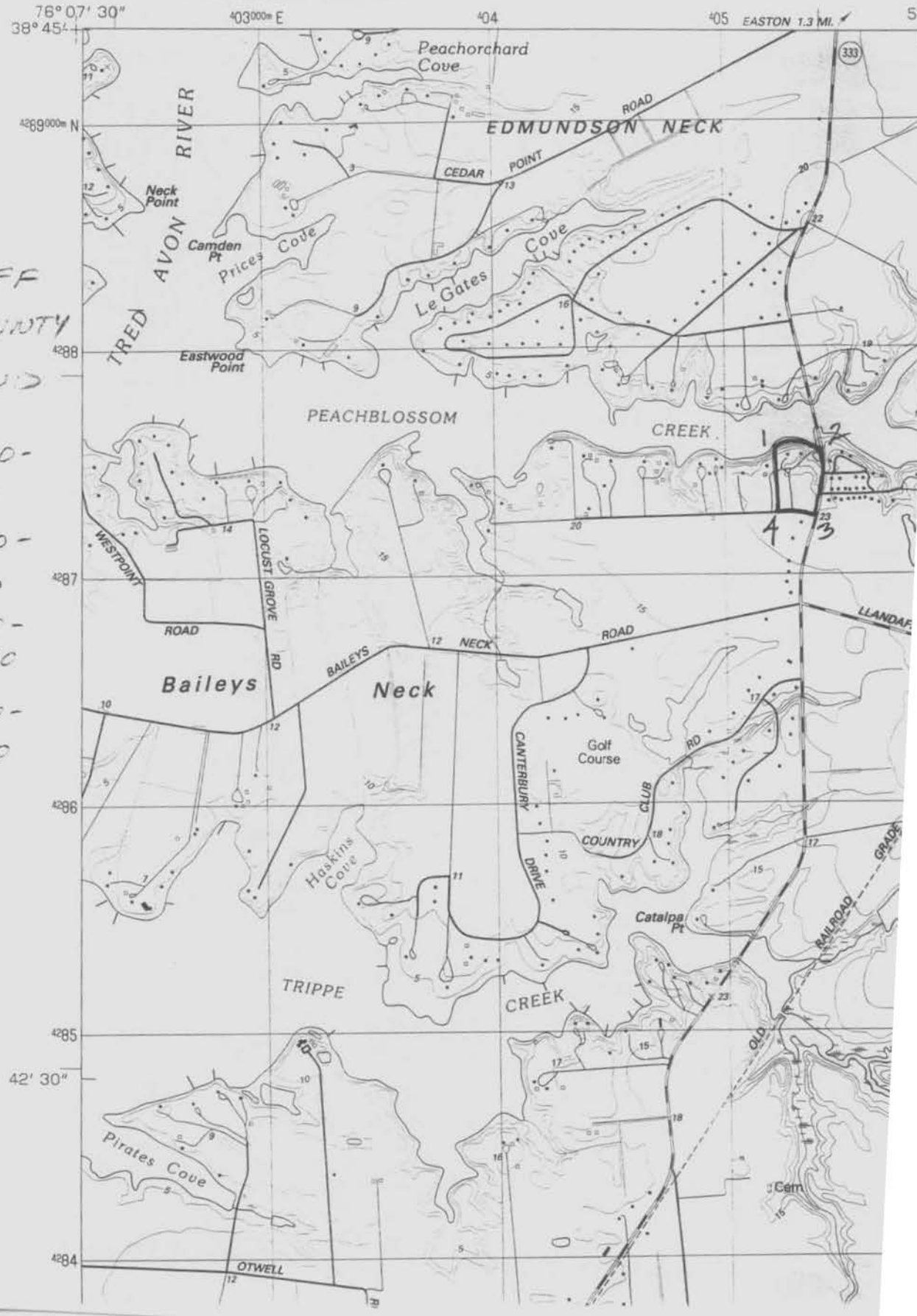
Llandaff

Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson Atlas
1877


DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
T-231
Llandaff
Trappe, Maryland Quadrangle, 1988
EDMUNDSON NECK
ROAD
CEDAR POINT
Neck Point
Camden Pt
Eastwood Point
PEACHBLOSSOM
CREEK
WESTPOINT
ROAD
LOCUST GROVE RD
BAILEYS
NECK
ROAD
Baileys
Neck
LLANDAFF
ROAD
Llandaff
Williamsburg
Golf Course
CANTERBURY DRIVE
CLUB RD
COUNTRY
Catalpa Pt
RAILROAD GRADE
Little Round Top Ch
Cem
BM 54
BM 42
Immanuel Ch
Heliport

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



T-231
LLANDAFF
TALBOT COUNTY
MARYLAND

1: 18-405240-4287560
2: 18-405410-4287570
3: 18-405400-4287250
4: 18-405240-4287270