

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Clagett House at Cool Spring Manor

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 17610 Clagett Landing Road not for publicationcity, town Upper Marlboro Clagett Landing vicinity of congressional district 5

state _____ county _____

3. Classification

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

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

name Richard H. Dobson

street & number 13600 Brandywine Road telephone no.:

city, town Brandywine state and zip code MD 20613

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber #2521

street & number Main Street folio 123

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Prince George's County Historic Sites and Districts Plan

date 1992 federal state county local

depository for survey records Historic Pres Office, M-NCPPC

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

7. Description

Survey No. PG#74B-15

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Clagett House at Cool Spring Manor stands on a knoll in open farmland above and west of the Patuxent River near Clagett Landing. It is a one-story house of wood frame construction that rests on a high brick basement; it has a shallow hip roof and four tall interior chimneys. It resembles houses commonly found in the deep South: roughly square, with hip roof, usually with prominent porches, and with the lower level mostly below grade. In the more modest of the Southern versions, there is only one story above the basement; this is also the case with this unique Prince George's County example.

Exterior

The Clagett House is five bays by two, approximately 42 by 32 feet. It has a shallow hipped roof, and rises one-and-one-half stories above grade, much of the lower level being below grade. The plain horizontal board siding is now covered with patterned gray asphalt shingle (installed after 1958). The principal elevation is the five-bay south facade. Entrance is in the central bay, through an eight-panel door with three-pane transom and four-pane sidelights, each of which is actually a narrow 2/2 double-hung-sash window over a wainscot panel. The flanking windows are 6/6-double-hung-sash, and have plain board surrounds. Sheltering the entrance is a recent shed-roof porch across the second and third bays of the south facade; it is supported by tall brick piers, has plain horizontal railing, and is approached by a flight of five wooden steps. (This porch was rebuilt in the late 1980s, replacing an earlier facade-wide twentieth-century porch, with hip roof and chamfered posts.) The basement foundation of the south facade is lighted by three 3/3 double-hung-sash windows, in first, third and fifth bays.

While it is clear that there was always a porch on the south facade, its exact configuration is not known; similar period houses from locations south of Maryland feature both entry porches and facade-wide porches raised on high piers or foundations, and sometimes allowing entrance to the lower story beneath or beside the porch.

The Clagett House gives clear evidence of early architectural workmanship. Structural members are visible at the top of the brick foundation on each side of the south porch; in these locations it is possible to see the carpenter's locational marks incised in the ends of the first floor joists, studs and downbraces. Other structural members, once visible in the basement and shallow loft space, are all made from hand-hewn lumber: heavy joists, roughly 12" square in section, joined to the plate by wooden

pegs in mortise and tenon joints.¹

A plain shed-roof porch shelters the entire north (rear) elevation, accessible by a centered flight of seven wooden steps. Rear entrance to the upper story is through a central eight-panel door that has a three-pane transom but no sidelights. Three openings pierce the brick basement foundation beneath the porch: 3/3 double-hung-sash windows in the first two bays, and a door in the fifth bay. This batten door is the only exterior opening into the lower story.

The brick foundation rises to a height of more than five feet above grade, and is laid in 5:1 American bond. Each of the east and west walls of the foundation is lighted by two 3/3 double-hung-sash windows. The two windows in the east foundation are symmetrically located, while those in the west are not, providing light from both west windows into the northwesterly basement space (kitchen). All openings have plain, narrow board surrounds, and there are no shutters.

Four tall interior chimneys rise from the shallow hipped roof: tall parged brick stacks arranged slightly asymmetrically on each side of the central hallway. They serve fireplaces located in the interior walls of the four corner parlors. The slightly wider northwest chimney also serves a large cooking fireplace in that quadrant of the basement space. The roof is covered with dark asphalt shingle, and the cornices are of plain board.

Interior

The interior of the house consists of a central passage that gives access to two spaces on each side, both in the basement level and in the living level above it. There is a modest one-run, closed-string stair at the north end of the central basement passage. It rises to the north against the east wall of the passage; it has a plain, slim tapered-rectangular newel mitred to a plain railing, and plain rectangular balusters. This stair went out of use more than a generation ago when the opening into the upper level was structurally closed. (A kitchen counter has been built into the space where that opening once was.)

The northwesterly space of the basement was the original kitchen, as evidenced by the large fireplace with heavy hewn lintel. This is the largest space in the basement level, and receives light from both of the windows (which are offset, asymmetrically, in order to provide the kitchen light) in the west foundation. In the other three corner spaces, relieving arches have been built into the interior walls, supporting the hearths

¹ Reported by previous occupant, 1985.

above them. The southeast space has been fitted up for food storage, and shelves have been built into and on each side of the arch. Interior walls of these basement spaces show evidence of several coatings of plaster, much of which has worn off to reveal the brick behind it. Large areas of ceiling plaster have fallen, revealing the hand-split lath above.

On the upper level, the central passage is divided into two unequal spaces, the northern part of which has been fitted up as a kitchen. A sink and counter have been built along the northeastern wall of this space over the original opening of the stair to the basement level. The two easterly parlors (15'10" by 17'10") are connected by a tall double door centered in the partition wall; each leaf of this double door has four molded panels. Plain wooden mantels survive at the fireplaces of the two westerly parlors; they have plain shelves and friezes, and each flanking plain wide pilaster is detailed only with a projecting base. The narrow molding beneath the shelves of these wooden mantels may be replacement material. The fireplace in the northeast parlor has been structurally closed, and there is no mantel. The mantel in the southeast parlor is unusual and interesting. It consists of an iron frame with a wide flared arch above the frieze. Inset into the frieze and pilasters of this iron frame are panels of clear glass. In the frieze are inset five panels of glass: a central broad pointed-arch panel, flanked on each side by a horizontal panel, with a square panel at each end. In each of the pilasters is inset a pointed-arch glass panel. These seven glass panels cover what appears to be grained dark slate behind them. The lower end of the pilasters consists of heavy squared bases of iron. All of the surface of the mantel, both iron and glass, has been covered with white paint, but the paint it is wearing off to show the dark gray slate behind the glass and the rusting surface of the iron frame.

All doors and windows are framed with plain board surrounds and unornamented cornerblocks; baseboards are of plain wide board. In the westerly parlors, small closets have been built in adjoining the chimney breasts; they are probably original. An opening in the plaster ceiling reveals a very shallow loft area, with no access or space for storage; in several spaces a modern dropped ceiling has been installed. A few deteriorating sections of wall plaster reveal original hand-split lath as well as circular-sawn replacement lath.

Setting

The Clagett House stands prominently on a knoll overlooking Clagett Landing Road. Directly north of the house is a brick-lined well, and approximately 300 feet to the northeast of the house, hidden in a thick copse of trees, is the family burial ground. To east and west of the house, on lower ground, are cultivated fields. Behind the house, to the north, the area is wooded. Several mature trees frame the house on north and south: several large oaks, and a large holly, as well as smaller younger trees.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM
Statement of Significance (continued)

Survey No. 748-15

Section 7 Page 4

The only surviving farm buildings appear to be of the twentieth century. There is a large tobacco barn on higher ground northwest of the house, and another at the edge of a cultivated field to the east. A smaller gambrel-roof storage barn stands approximately 300 feet west of the house. There are two small domestic outbuildings (a privy and a small storage shed) directly east of the house.

William D. Clagett home: "We called at Mrs. William D. Clagett's where Lou Allen was, and where I have always wanted to go. I could realize for the first time some of Lou's enthusiastic love and admiration for this part of the country. The very look of the country is pleasanter, freer than down here, where they live only to make money. Mrs. Clagett was motherly and kind as ever, Maggie sweet and lively, and we pursued our way into an adjoining county over a half-ruined bridge over the Patuxent into the next county, Anne Arundel."¹³

After the upheaval of the Civil War, Clagett, like many other planters in the County, found himself heavily in debt. In 1865, he mortgaged his 297-acre Cool Spring Manor farm (including his house) to James Owens of Anne Arundel County in order to secure a loan of \$10,000. The property at that time was described as "highly improved real estate . . . upon which William D. Clagett now resides . . . excellent neighborhood in Queen Anne District, within one mile of a shipping point on Patuxent River . . . Improvements consist of a substantial dwelling, stabling, tobacco houses and other necessary buildings."¹⁴

Clagett was unable to repay the loan; Owens brought suit in the Equity Court, and the Clagett farm was offered at public sale. James Owens' bid of \$8000 for the 297-acre farm was the highest bid, and the farm was sold to Owens in May 1871.¹⁵

William D. Clagett had written his will in October 1868, and at that time indicated that he wished to devise his farm to his wife, Mary Ann, and their daughter Margaret. His will, however, indicated that it was his intention to sell the farm, and by the time of his death, the farm had indeed been sold to James Owens. Clagett indicated in his will his desire to be "buried in the family grave yard on my estate . . . and it shall be used hereafter if desired by any of the members of my family or by any of the members of the families of either of my sisters or by the members of the family of my

¹³ Letter written by Sarah Hagar to Kate Hagar, 4 June 1860, in the special collections of the University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont. Lou Allen, a friend of Sarah Hagar, had worked as governess in the William D. Clagett household. Maggie, about 20 years old in 1860, was the only child of William D. Clagett and his second wife, Mary Ann Bowie. Sarah Hagar was comparing the countryside at Cool Spring Manor with the countryside near Weston, just seven miles to the southwest, near Upper Marlboro. The "half-ruined bridge" was at Queen Anne, the principal Patuxent River crossing point in this immediate area.

¹⁴ Prince George's County Land Record (mortgage) FS#3:13; *Prince Georgian* (newspaper printed in Upper Marlboro), 8 September 1865

¹⁵ Prince George's County Equity #788.

friend and relative, William B. Bowie."¹⁶ Although it has not been absolutely established, it is assumed that Clagett (and possibly his wife and daughter, Margaret) were buried on the subject property. The only surviving gravestone in the burial ground is that of Clagett's niece, Eleanor Ann Clark Darnall.

Although James Owens took possession of and operated the Clagett farm, he apparently never received a legal deed for the land. He continued to reside in Anne Arundel County and operate several other farms there. He died in June 1895, and management of the Clagett farm fell to his son, Edward R. Owens. Because the elder Owens had not received a deed, his heirs had to take the case to court in order to accomplish the disposition of his estate. Through these court proceedings, we have additional information about the property in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.¹⁷

In order to effect disposition of James Owen's property, his sons (James W. Owens and Edward R. Owens) took the case to Anne Arundel County Equity Court. The Court appointed two trustees to sell Owens' five farms, two of which were in Prince George's County; one of those two was Clagett's Cool Spring Manor farm. The sale of this farm was to take place 2 September 1902; it was advertised as follows:

"In Queen Anne District, Prince George's County, 297 acres adjoining Samuel Brook, Mrs. Ellen Howard, and Goodwood, formerly of Charles Carter.

"There is a good frame dwelling with comfortable basement rooms and large kitchen on the property, also 3 large tobacco barns, corn house and granary. There are 60 acres of wood and timber on the place, and 2 springs of good water carried off by ditches. Soil is principally of loam and produces excellent crops of tobacco, corn and vegetables, and it is well adapted to growth of all kinds of fruit. Approximately 3 miles from Hall and Leland (*sic*) Stations on Baltimore and Potomac Railroad, 1/2 mile from Patuxent River, and 16 miles from Washington with good wagon road leading to that city. Approximately 6 miles from Upper Marlboro in Prince George's County. The fencing is mostly of wire and in fairly good condition."¹⁸

¹⁶ Unprobated will of William D. Clagett, 30 October 1868, in the private collection of papers of the Clark and Bowie families of Melwood Farm. (See E.G. Bowie, *op.cit.*, pp. 285-6)

¹⁷ Anne Arundel County Equity #2356.

¹⁸ Advertisement in *Maryland Republican* (newspaper printed in Annapolis) and *Prince George's Enquirer* (newspaper printed in Upper Marlboro) for four weeks prior to sale, 2 September 1902. See also Anne Arundel County Equity #2356. Samuel Brook farmed the land

Another advertisement for the same sale, printed as a broadside, included the same information as well as the somewhat ambiguous description of the house: "a good frame dwelling with comfortable basement rooms and a large kitchen with two rooms above it."¹⁹ The sale took place as scheduled in September 1902, and the 297-acre Clagett farm was sold to the same Edward R. Owens who had been managing the farm since the time of his father's death in 1895. By order of the Court the 30-year-old foreclosure of Clagett's mortgage was confirmed, and the property was legally conveyed to James Owens' son.²⁰

Edward R. Owens continued to operate the farm and live in the Clagett family house until his death in 1917. His will devised "my farm where I now reside called Cool Spring Manor containing 297 acres . . . and all stock and farming implements, household furniture and growing or matured crops" to his niece, Maria Owens Hill. Maria Hill and her family lived in Hyattsville, but continued to manage the farm; in 1947, it passed, through Maria Hill's will, to her daughter, Helen Hill Schindler, who sold the farm to the present owner in 1961.²¹ Since the death of Edward Owens in 1917, the historic Clagett property has been farmed by tenants, as it is still.

Today only the dwelling survives from the original complex of nineteenth-century buildings. Three early twentieth-century barns and several small later outbuildings complete the present farm complex. The family burial ground is now hidden in a thick copse of trees to the northeast of the house. The dwelling itself stands prominently on the knoll, overlooking Clagett Landing Road. It has been unoccupied for several years and is steadily deteriorating, but appears to be structurally sound. The Clagett House is a plain but solid example of domestic architecture which is unexpected in this area. In form, it departs drastically from the region's more traditional modest plantation houses of the period, but it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type found frequently in the deep south. There is no other building of its type in Prince

south of the Clagett's property, also part of Cool Spring Manor (see PG#74B-16); Ellen Howard, William D. Clagett's daughter by his first marriage, lived on the farm immediately east of the Clagett property; Goodwood, one of the large plantations of the Calvert family, had been the home of Eugenia Calvert, wife of Charles Carter, and was located to the west of the Clagett property (see PG#74B-14). All of these farms fronted on the road to Clagett's and Brooke's Landing.

¹⁹ Anne Arundel County Equity #2356.

²⁰ *Ibid*

²¹ Prince George's County Wills GPH#1:295, WEC#2:481; Administration files #2839, #8803; Prince George's County Deeds #1549:414, 417; #2521:123.

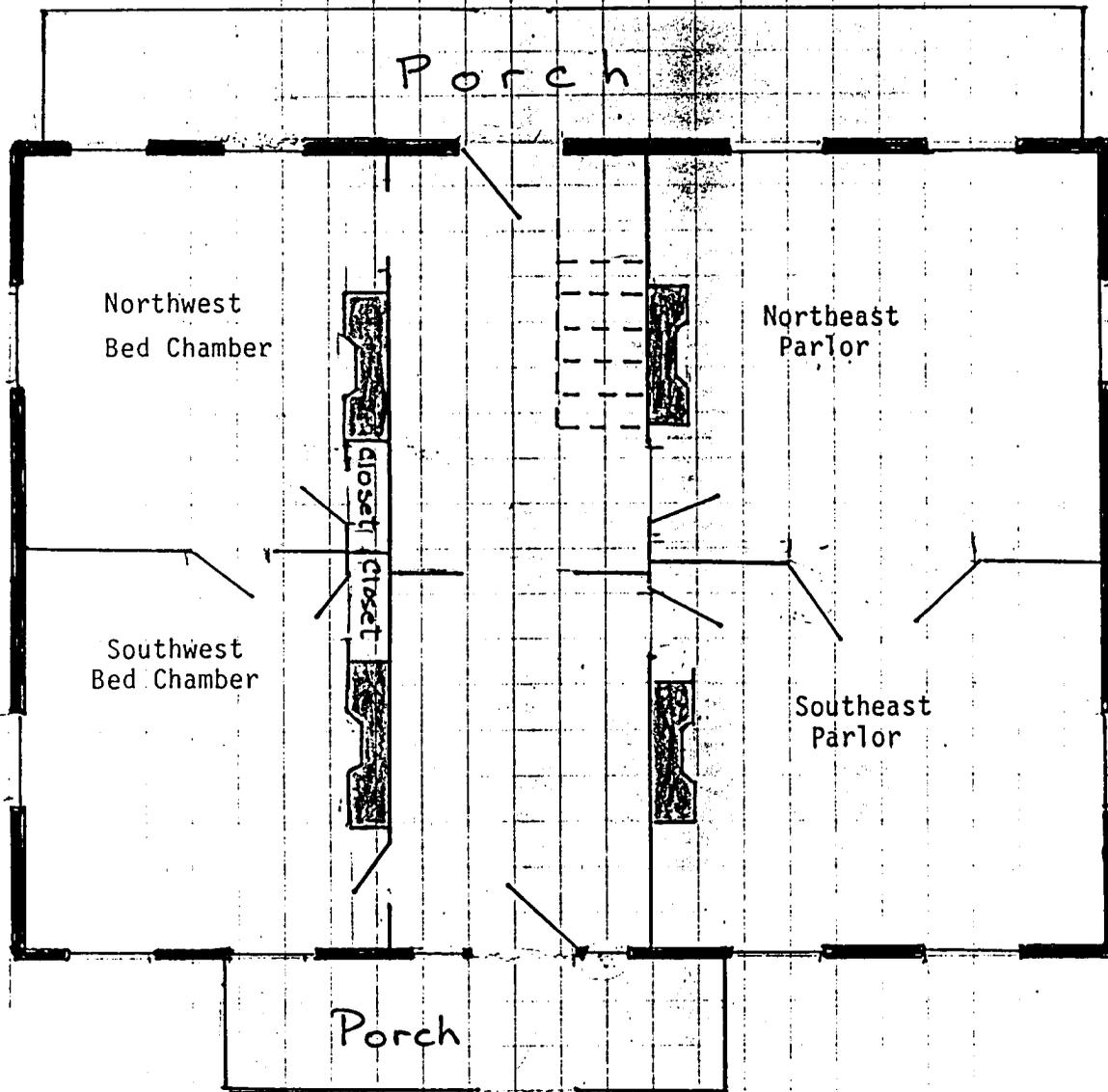
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM
Statement of Significance (continued)

Survey No. PG#74B-15

Section 8 Page 8

George's County, and scarcely any in Maryland - no truly comparable examples have been identified in the southern counties (Calvert, Charles and Saint Mary's), and only Arden in Anne Arundel County (of similar period, but without the high basement) exhibits features similar to those of the subject house.

The uniqueness of the Clagett House at Cool Spring Manor makes it outstandingly important in the social, cultural and architectural history of Prince George's County.

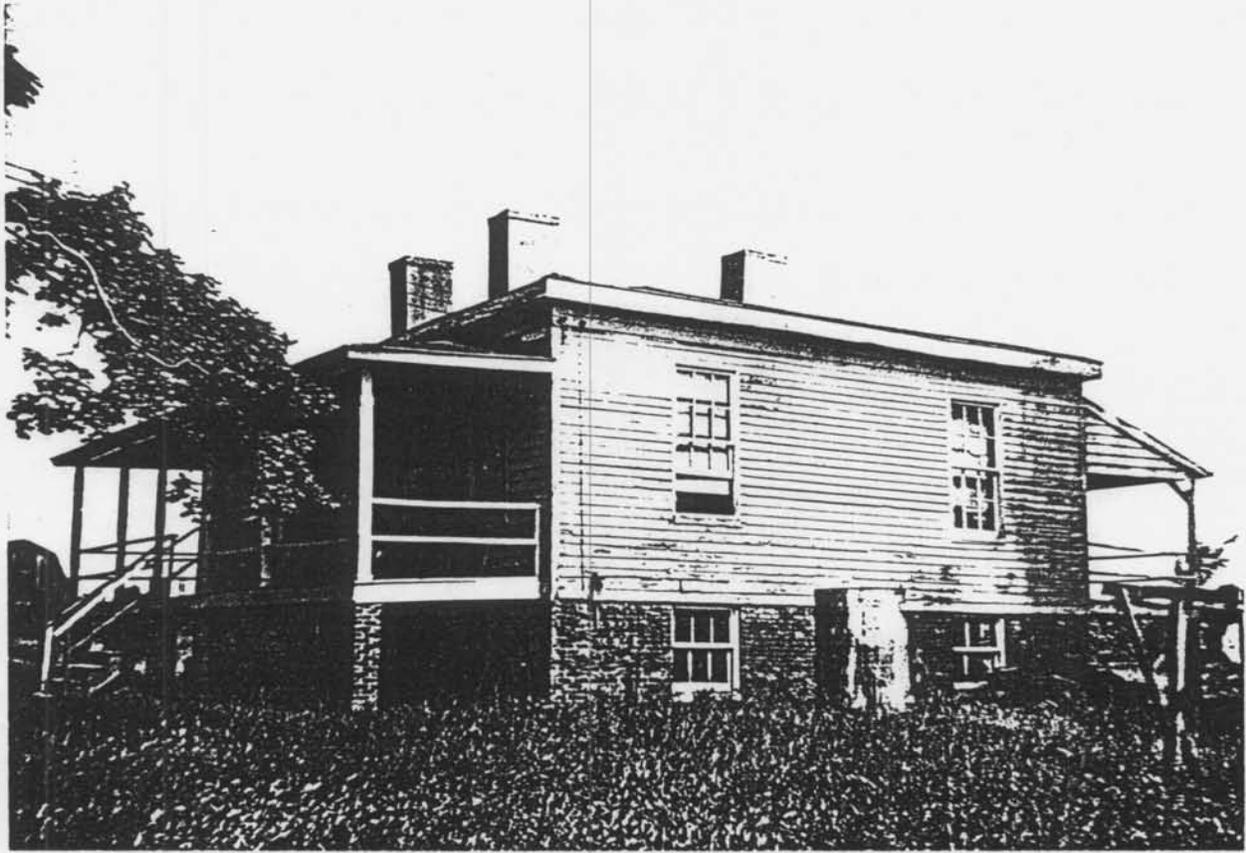


PG#74B-15

William D. Clagett House

(not exactly to scale)

1" = approx 7'



Photograph, circa 1958

(before application of asphalt shingle siding)



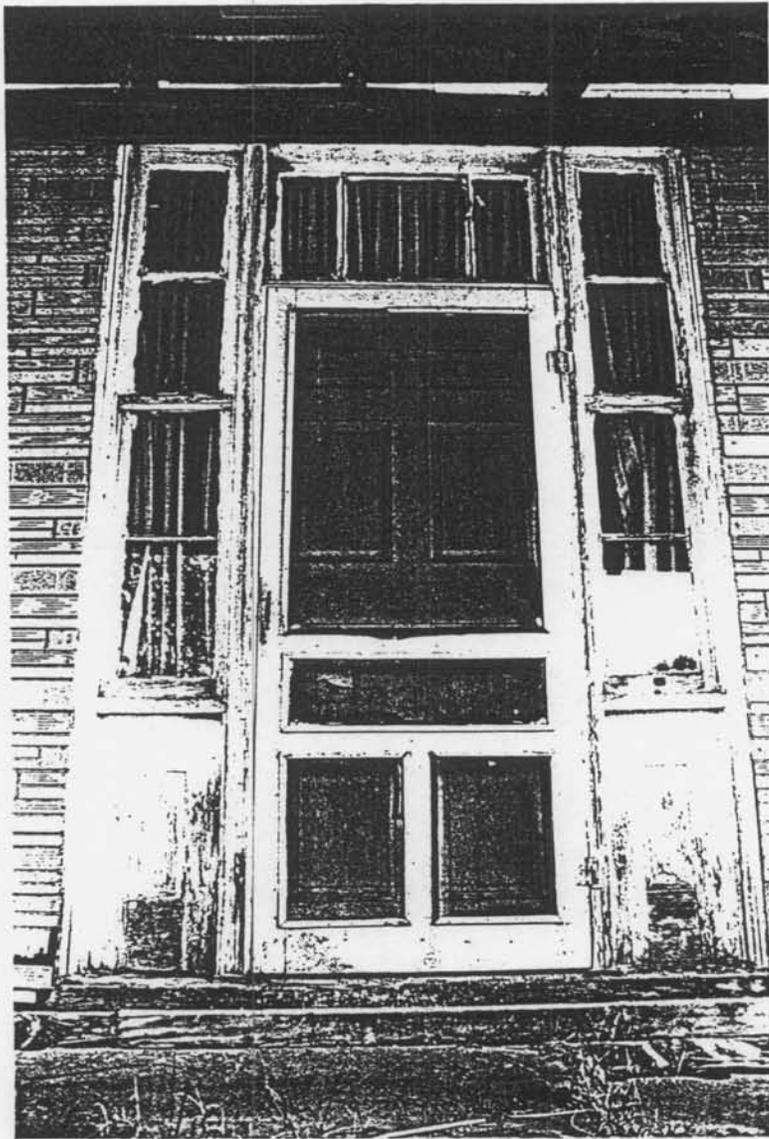
South facade from southeast

June 1998



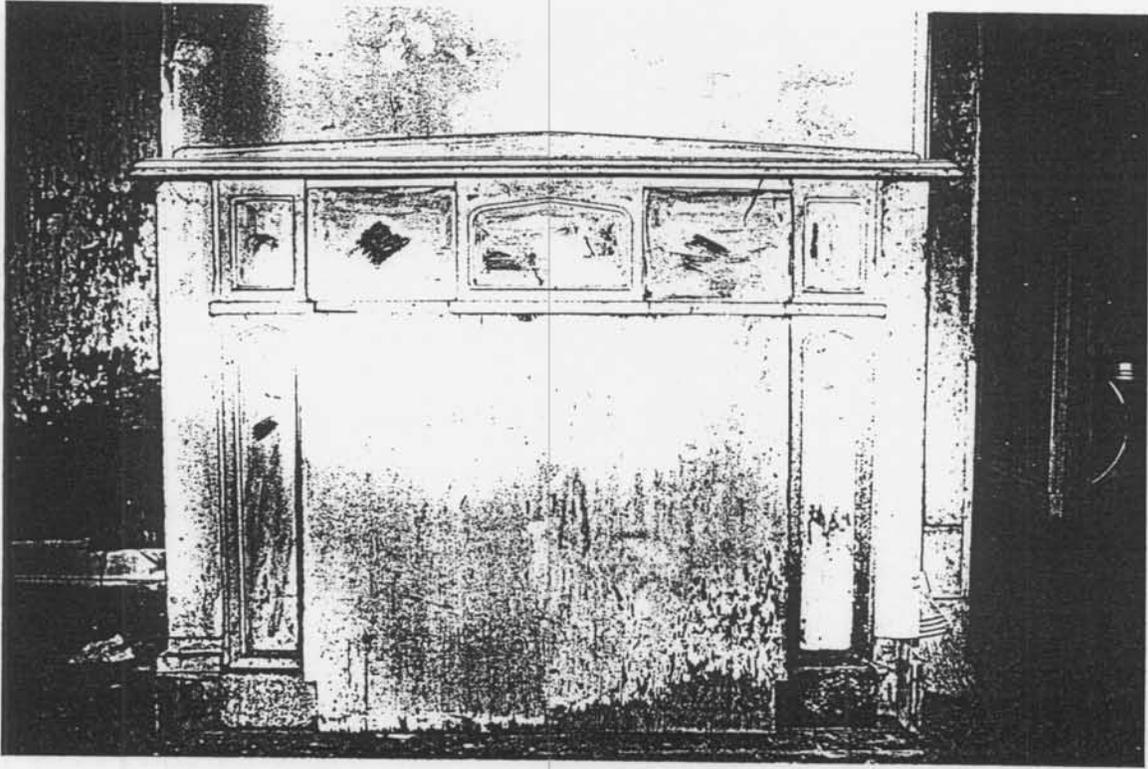
North elevation from northeast

June 1998



South entrance

June 1998



Mantel in southeast parlor

June 1998

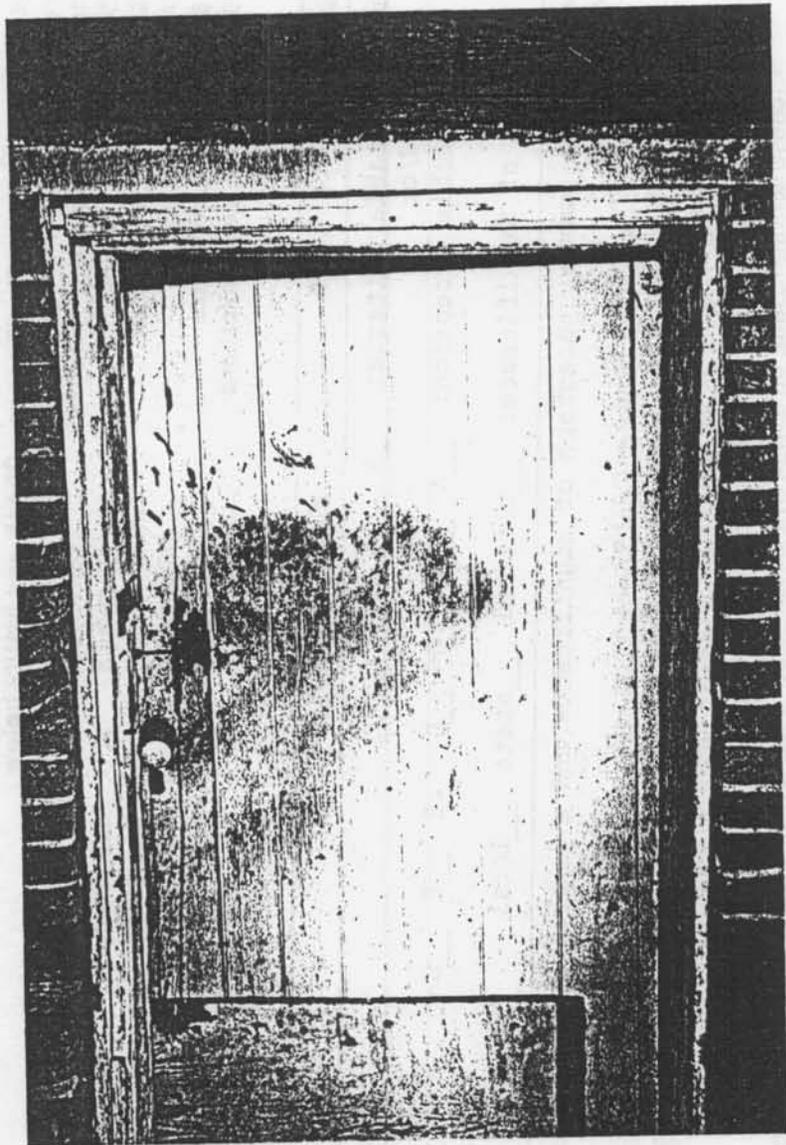


Basement staircase, from south

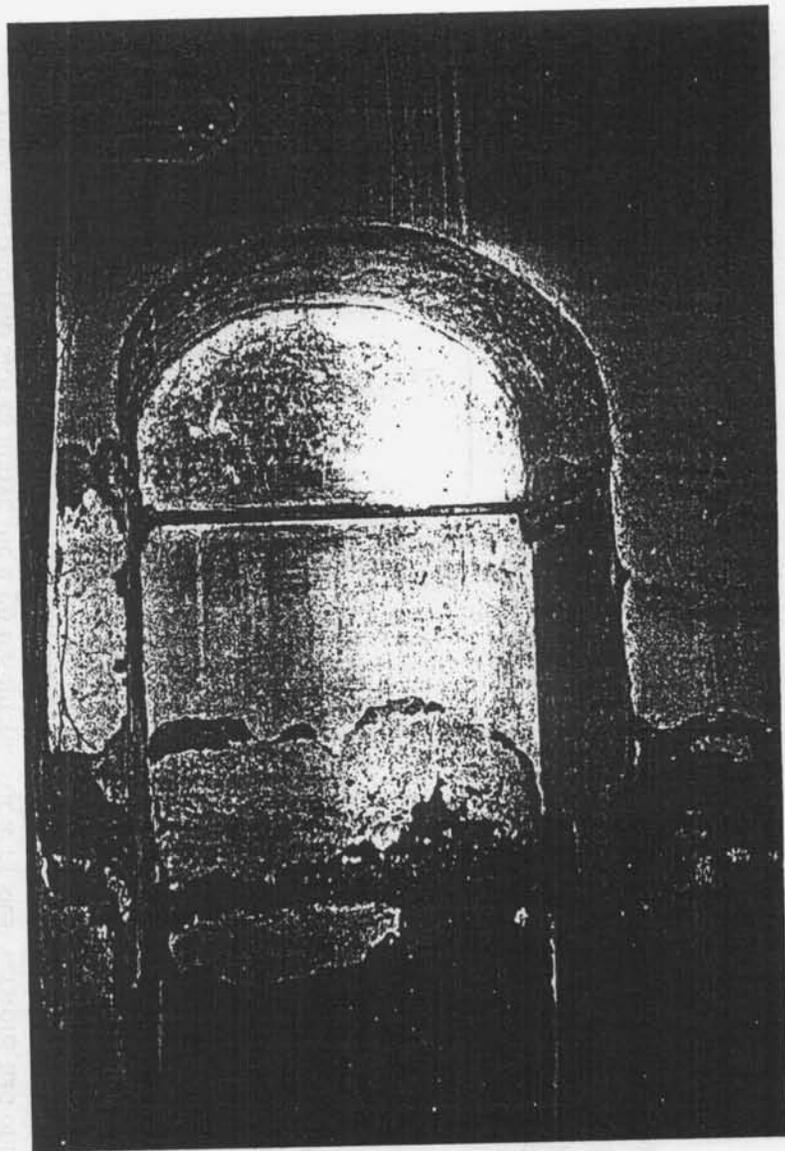


Basement kitchen fireplace, from southwest

June 1998



North entrance to basement



Basement, southwest space, relieving arch supporting hearth above

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
			<input type="checkbox"/> science
			<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
			<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
			<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) local history

Specific dates ca 1830 Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
 and/or
 Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G
 Level of Significance: national state local

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

The Clagett House at Cool Spring Manor is the only known example in Prince George's County of a house type similar to early nineteenth-century dwellings of the deep south. The house stands on a knoll in open farmland above and west of the Patuxent River near Clagett Landing. It is a one-story house of wood frame construction, resting on a high brick basement; it has a shallow hip roof and four tall interior chimneys.

The Clagett House resembles a house form commonly found in Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia, Louisiana and other southern states in the early nineteenth century: roughly square, with hip roof, usually with prominent porches, and with the lower level mostly below grade. The substantial houses of wealthy planters were often built of brick and had two stories above the high basement. More modest versions had only one story above the basement, and were often built of wood.

The subject house was built by William Digges Clagett circa 1840 on land which he had received from his father, Joseph White Clagett. The elder Clagett had inherited this property in 1779 from his grandfather, Samuel White; the property consisted of circa 450 acres of "White's Adventure," which had been resurveyed out of a larger tract, the 1050-acre Cool Spring Manor.¹ Joseph White Clagett built his own two-story frame house on his inherited property after the American Revolution; it was listed as "new" at

¹ Prince George's County Will T#1:114. In 1754, "White's Adventure" had been resurveyed out of the earlier and larger Cool Spring Manor tract, which itself had been patented for 1050 acres in 1658. Although White's, and then Clagett's, property was technically known as "White's Adventure," it was still referred to most often thereafter as "part of Cool Spring Manor."

the time of the 1798 Federal Direct Tax.² It is not known exactly where Joseph White Clagett's house stood; it has not survived.

In 1782, soon after he inherited his uncle's property, Joseph White Clagett married Eleanor Digges of Melwood Park. Their son William Digges Clagett, born circa 1790, would eventually receive from his father the subject property. William Digges Clagett was raised, with his three sisters, on his father's 500-acre plantation at White's Adventure; this fertile area was bordered by larger plantations of the Calvert family, about one-half mile from the Patuxent River. There were several nearby landings on the Patuxent, known over the years as Oyster Shell Landing, Wootton's Landing, Clagett's Landing and Brooks Landing; the Clagett farm was located just about half-way between the bridge at Queen Anne (to the north) and the ferry at Mount Pleasant (to the south). In 1808 a new road was built, connecting the Clagett farm to Queen Anne, thus providing for the Clagett family easier access to that port town and its bridge to Anne Arundel County.³

William Digges Clagett remained on his father's property near Queen Anne, operating their small plantation. He was apparently a man of wide interests; in 1816, he was one of a group of men of the Upper Marlborough area who formed and incorporated the Philomathean Society of Upper Marlboro, its purpose being to promote literature and science, and to support the establishment of a public library and a free school.⁴ In 1819, William Clagett married Sarah Young, only daughter of Nicholas Young of Piscataway. The couple continued to live on the White's Adventure property, probably in the house where Clagett had grown up. William and Sarah Clagett had one daughter, Eleanor, born in 1824 shortly before Sarah Clagett died.⁵

Joseph White Clagett made sure that his only son would continue to operate his ancestral plantation. In April 1828 he wrote his will, devising the land on which he "now resides and all contiguous land" (circa 520 acres) to his son, William D. Clagett,

² Federal Direct Tax for Prince George's County, Patuxent Hundred, 1798; Microfilm #865, Maryland State Archives, Annapolis.

³Prince George's County Levy Court Records, 1808; R. L. Van Horn, *Out of the Past*, Prince George's County Historical Society, 1976, p. 246.

⁴ *Acts of the General Assembly* 1816, Chapter 146, Chapter 268.

⁵ *National Intelligencer*, 24 April 1819, 9 April 1825. In 1840, Ellen, daughter of William D. and Sarah Clagett, married Dr. Joseph Howard; the Howards took up residence on a farm immediately east of the Clagetts', possibly on the site of Joseph White Clagett's eighteenth-century house.

and on the same day confirmed this legacy by legal deed. William D. Clagett, in turn, promised to give to his father all profits and proceeds from the plantation for the rest of his father's life. Joseph W. Clagett lived another two years, dying in May of 1830.⁶

Just two months before Joseph Clagett devised and conveyed the plantation to his son, William D. Clagett married for a second time. William D. Clagett's second marriage united him, in February 1828, with Mary Ann Bowie, daughter of Colonel Thomas Bowie of "War Park" (later known as Parthenon Heights) in Bladensburg. One daughter, Margaret, was born of this union.⁷

It was possibly soon after his second marriage, and his inheritance of the family plantation, that William D. Clagett began the building of the subject house. His property was designated "first class" in the 1832 tax assessment, but architectural details suggest a building date of 1840 or slightly later.⁸ The plan and design of the new house was very unusual for Prince George's County in that it followed a form much more common in the deep south. In such houses, both family spaces and working spaces are enclosed within a high basement, keeping them cooler in hot weather. In the true southern examples, the hip roof usually had steeper planes, and often enclosed usable loft space lighted by dormers. The larger plantation houses normally had more than one story above the basement, providing protection from the heat and sun to the principal first story. In this unique Prince George's County example, there is only one story above the basement, and the hip roof has a very shallow pitch and encloses no usable loft space. It has not been determined how William D. Clagett came to choose such a house form, possibly after travel in the more southern states. And it is possible that he was limited in the size of the house he might build, and decided that in the more temperate Maryland location, the insulating space of a deeper loft would not be necessary. The extra chimney flues suggest that he may have planned an additional upper story. In any case, this small house became his family home, with a large working kitchen beneath the westerly parlors, and those two westerly parlors probably serving as bed chambers. The two easterly parlors, connected by a double door, certainly served as the entertaining and dining space, and the two easterly basement spaces served as summer bedroom and parlor.

⁶ Prince George's County Will TT#1:459; Prince George's County Deed AB#5:186.

⁷ Marriage license records, Prince George's County; see also Bowie, E.G., *Across the Years in Prince George's County*, 1950, reprinted 1975, page 284.

⁸ Prince George's County Tax Assessment for Election District 3, 1832 and 1842; verbal report on site inspection by Andrew Wallace and Daniel Filippelli. A significant increase in the assessed value of the property in the 1842 tax assessment may indicate construction of the house at that time.

The most noticeable visual feature of the exterior is the configuration of the chimneys: four tall interior chimneys serving the fireplaces in the interior walls of the four parlors. The combination of the high basement, shallow roof pitch, tall chimneys, and the siting of the house 20 feet above the road, give the house an unusual, almost truncated appearance.

William D. Clagett was actively involved in County and community improvements. In 1826 he was appointed one of the commissioners of the lottery to raise funds for cleaning out the creeks leading to and from Upper Marlboro and Queen Anne; his neighbor William Wells, who operated a plantation immediately to the south on another part of Cool Spring Manor, worked with Clagett in these efforts.⁹ In 1845 Clagett was appointed lumber inspector for four points on the Patuxent River: Clagett's Landing, Queen Anne, Mount Calvert and Green Landing.¹⁰ Clagett's Landing was at that time one of the smaller landings on the Patuxent, about a half mile northeast of Clagett's plantation, on the road which had been established in 1808 between the plantation and the town of Queen Anne.

During the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Clagett gradually increased the acreage of his plantation to over 700 acres, operated by a labor force of more than 40 slaves. The farm production was devoted mostly to livestock and tobacco. Clagett kept a larger than average number of sheep and swine, and maintained a correspondingly larger production of wool and hams. His production of tobacco was also relatively high, compared to other plantations in the area, until the beginning of the Civil War.¹¹

Through his mother, William D. Clagett was connected with the Digges family of Melwood Park as well as the related Clark family of Melwood Farm; in fact, William D. Clagett held a partial interest in the 550-acre Melwood Farm in trust for his sister's two daughters, Eleanor Ann Clark and Ann Hall Clark. Various papers in the private collection of Clark family descendants indicate that members of the Clark family resided at some times with the Clagett family at Cool Spring. The family burial ground at Cool Spring Manor (a very short distance from the subject house) was also the burial place for members of the Clark family; at least one of their members, Eleanor Ann Clark, was buried at Cool Spring Manor when she died in 1834, only a few months after

⁹ Act of the General Assembly, 1825, Chapter 209; see also Maryland Inventory Form #74B-16a (William Wells House at Cool Spring Manor).

¹⁰ Act of the General Assembly, 1845, Chapter 171

¹¹ Prince George's County Tax Assessments, 1832-1850; Prince George's County Land Records AB#7:25, JBB#4:195, JBB#5:120; Federal Census Records (Agricultural Schedules) for Prince George's County, Maryland, Enumeration Districts 3 and 7, 1850, 1860, 1870.

her marriage to Nicholas Darnall. William D. Clagett continued to hold an interest in Melwood Farm until 1836, when his younger niece, Ann Hall Clark, came of age.¹²

A brief mention of the Clagett house at Cool Spring Manor occurs in the correspondence of Sarah Hagar, a young Vermont woman who served from 1854 to 1861 as governess to the children of Thomas Clagett of Weston, a distant cousin of William D. Clagett. In a letter dated 4 June 1860, Sarah Hagar described a visit to the William D. Clagett home: "We called at Mrs. William D. Clagett's where Lou Allen was, and where I have always wanted to go. I could realize for the first time some of Lou's enthusiastic love and admiration for this part of the country. The very look of the country is pleasanter, freer than down here, where they live only to make money. Mrs. Clagett was motherly and kind as ever, Maggie sweet and lively, and we pursued our way into an adjoining county over a half-ruined bridge over the Patuxent into the next county, Anne Arundel."¹³

In the tumultuous period before the outbreak of the Civil War, William D. Clagett continued to be active in the Queen Anne community. In 1857 and 1858, he chaired a committee for the purpose of establishing Negro Patrols, to monitor activities of blacks in the Queen Anne area, and to guard against "insurrection." In 1860 he chaired a committee to form a military company at Queen Anne.¹⁴

After the upheaval of the Civil War, Clagett, like many other planters in the County, found himself heavily in debt. In 1865, he mortgaged his 297-acre Cool Spring Manor farm (including his house) to James Owens of Anne Arundel County in order to secure a loan of \$10,000. The property at that time was described as "highly improved real estate . . . upon which William D. Clagett now resides . . . excellent neighborhood in Queen Anne District, within one mile of a shipping point on Patuxent River . . . Improvements consist of a substantial dwelling, stabling, tobacco houses and other

¹² Bowie, E.G., *op.cit.*, pages 212, 282-287.

¹³ Letter written by Sarah Hagar to Kate Hagar, 4 June 1860, in the special collections of the University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont. Lou Allen, a friend of Sarah Hagar, had worked as governess in the William D. Clagett household. Maggie, about 20 years old in 1860, was the only child of William D. Clagett and his second wife, Mary Ann Bowie. Sarah Hagar was comparing the countryside at Cool Spring Manor with the countryside near Weston, just seven miles to the southwest, near Upper Marlboro. The "half-ruined bridge" was at Queen Anne, the principal Patuxent River crossing point in this immediate area.

¹⁴ *Planters' Advocate and Southern Maryland Advertiser*, 7 January 1857, 20 January 1858, 15 February 1860.

necessary buildings.”¹⁵

Clagett was unable to repay the loan; Owens brought suit in the Equity Court, and the Clagett farm was offered at public sale. James Owens' bid of \$8000 for the 297-acre farm was the highest bid, and the farm was sold to Owens in May 1871.¹⁶

William D. Clagett had written his will in October 1868, and at that time indicated that he wished to devise his farm to his wife, Mary Ann, and their daughter Margaret. His will, however, indicated that it was his intention to sell the farm, and by the time of his death, the farm had indeed been sold to James Owens. Clagett indicated in his will his desire to be “buried in the family grave yard on my estate . . . and it shall be used hereafter if desired by any of the members of my family or by any of the members of the families of either of my sisters or by the members of the family of my friend and relative, William B. Bowie.”¹⁷ Although it has not been absolutely established, it is assumed that Clagett (and possibly his wife and daughter, Margaret) were buried on the subject property. The only surviving gravestone in the burial ground is that of Clagett's niece, Eleanor Ann Clark Darnall.

Although James Owens took possession of and operated the Clagett farm, he apparently never received a legal deed for the land. He continued to reside in Anne Arundel County and operate several other farms there. He died in June 1895, and management of the Clagett farm fell to his son, Edward R. Owens. Because the elder Owens had not received a deed, his heirs had to take the case to court in order to accomplish the disposition of his estate. Through these court proceedings, we have additional information about the property in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.¹⁸

In order to effect disposition of James Owen's property, his sons (James W. Owens and Edward R. Owens) took the case to Anne Arundel County Equity Court. The Court appointed two trustees to sell Owens' five farms, two of which were in Prince George's County; one of those two was Clagett's Cool Spring Manor farm. The sale of this farm was to take place 2 September 1902; it was advertised as follows:

¹⁵ Prince George's County Land Record (mortgage) FS#3:13; *Prince Georgian* (newspaper printed in Upper Marlboro), 8 September 1865

¹⁶ Prince George's County Equity #788.

¹⁷ Unprobated will of William D. Clagett, 30 October 1868, in the private collection of papers of the Clark and Bowie families of Melwood Farm. (See E.G. Bowie, *op.cit.*, pp. 285-6)

¹⁸ Anne Arundel County Equity #2356.

“ In Queen Anne District, Prince George’s County, 297 acres adjoining Samuel Brook, Mrs. Ellen Howard, and Goodwood, formerly of Charles Carter.

“There is a good frame dwelling with comfortable basement rooms and large kitchen on the property, also 3 large tobacco barns, corn house and granary. There are 60 acres of wood and timber on the place, and 2 springs of good water carried off by ditches. Soil is principally of loam and produces excellent crops of tobacco, corn and vegetables, and it is well adapted to growth of all kinds of fruit. Approximately 3 miles from Hall and Leland (*sic*) Stations on Baltimore and Potomac Railroad, 1/2 mile from Patuxent River, and 16 miles from Washington with good wagon road leading to that city. Approximately 6 miles from Upper Marlboro in Prince George’s County. The fencing is mostly of wire and in fairly good condition.”¹⁹

Another advertisement for the same sale, printed as a broadside, included the same information as well as the somewhat ambiguous description of the house: “a good frame dwelling with comfortable basement rooms and a large kitchen with two rooms above it.”²⁰ The sale took place as scheduled in September 1902, and the 297-acre Clagett farm was sold to the same Edward R. Owens who had been managing the farm since the time of his father’s death in 1895. By order of the Court the 30-year-old foreclosure of Clagett’s mortgage was confirmed, and the property was legally conveyed to James Owens’ son.²¹

Edward R. Owens continued to operate the farm and live in the Clagett family house until his death in 1917. Farm production concentrated, as it had during the Clagett family operation, on livestock (mainly sheep and swine) and tobacco, with

¹⁹ Advertisement in *Maryland Republican* (newspaper printed in Annapolis) and *Prince George’s Enquirer* (newspaper printed in Upper Marlboro) for four weeks prior to sale, 2 September 1902. See also Anne Arundel County Equity #2356. Samuel Brook farmed the land south of the Clagett’s property, also part of Cool Spring Manor (see PG#74B-16); Ellen Howard, William D. Clagett’s daughter by his first marriage, lived on the farm immediately east of the Clagett property; Goodwood, one of the large plantations of the Calvert family, had been the home of Eugenia Calvert, wife of Charles Carter, and was located to the west of the Clagett property (see PG#74B-14). All of these farms fronted on the road to Clagett’s and Brook’s Landing.

²⁰ Anne Arundel County Equity #2356.

²¹ *Ibid*

additional income from forest produce.²² Owens' will devised "my farm where I now reside called Cool Spring Manor containing 297 acres . . . and all stock and farming implements, household furniture and growing or matured crops" to his niece, Maria Owens Hill. Maria Hill and her family lived in Hyattsville, but continued to manage the farm; in 1947, it passed, through Maria Hill's will, to her daughter, Helen Hill Schindler, who sold the farm to the present owner in 1961.²³ Since the death of Edward Owens in 1917, the historic Clagett property has been farmed by tenants, as it is still.

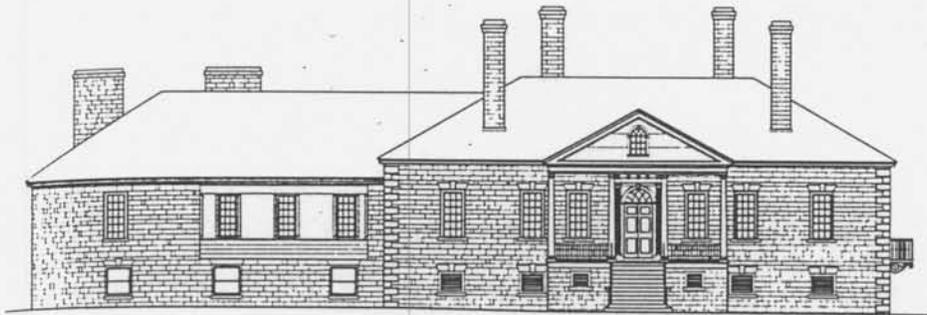
Today only the dwelling survives from the original complex of nineteenth-century buildings. Three early twentieth-century barns and several small later outbuildings complete the present farm complex. The family burial ground is now hidden in a thick copse of trees to the northeast of the house. The dwelling itself stands prominently on the knoll, overlooking Clagett Landing Road. It has been unoccupied for several years and is steadily deteriorating, but appears to be structurally sound. The Clagett House is a plain but solid example of domestic architecture which is unexpected in this area. In form, it departs drastically from the region's more traditional modest plantation houses of the period, but it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type found frequently in the deep south. There is no other building of its type in Prince George's County, and scarcely any in Maryland - no truly comparable examples have been identified in the southern counties (Calvert, Charles and Saint Mary's), and only Arden in Anne Arundel County (of similar period, but without the high basement) exhibits features similar to those of the subject house.

The uniqueness of the Clagett House at Cool Spring Manor makes it outstandingly important in the social, cultural and architectural history of Prince George's County.

²² Federal Census Records (Agricultural Schedule) for Prince George's County, Maryland, Enumeration District 7, 1880.

²³ Prince George's County Wills GPH#1:295, WEC#2:481; Administration files #2839, #8803; Prince George's County Deeds #1549:414, 417; #2521:123.

PG:
Southern comparables to 74B-15



Belle Grove (c. 1795), Middletown, Va., resembles other houses influenced by Jefferson that were often one story on a raised basement with a small Roman portico. In this instance, Jefferson himself gave "the favor of [his] advice on the Plan." The formal symmetry of the facade is compromised by the side wing, which was added sometime between 1815 and 1820.

Similar form in Anne Arundel County



AA0212-Arden, built 1842.

Arden, 1842, Harwood vicinity

Closest parallel in nearby Maryland; similar form
but without high basement

Southern comparables to 74B-15^{PG-}



Hahnville, LA, early 19th century
(Modest example of wood frame construction,
without the usual Louisiana high basement)

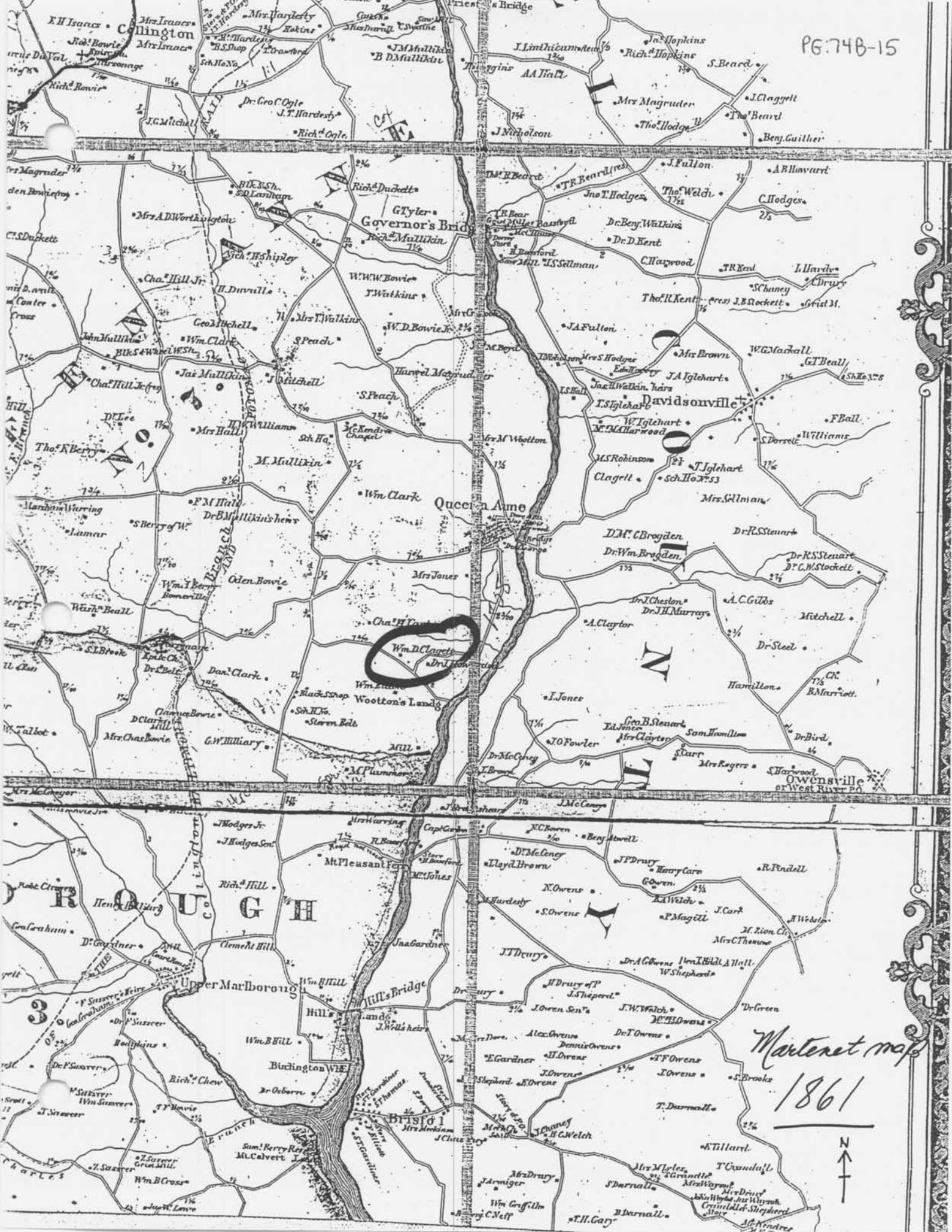
PG
Southern comparables to 74B-15



One-story example, Staunton, Va., 1818



One-story over high basement, Meriwether County, Ga., 1852



Martenet map
1861



G Tyler
Governor's Bridge

Queen Anne

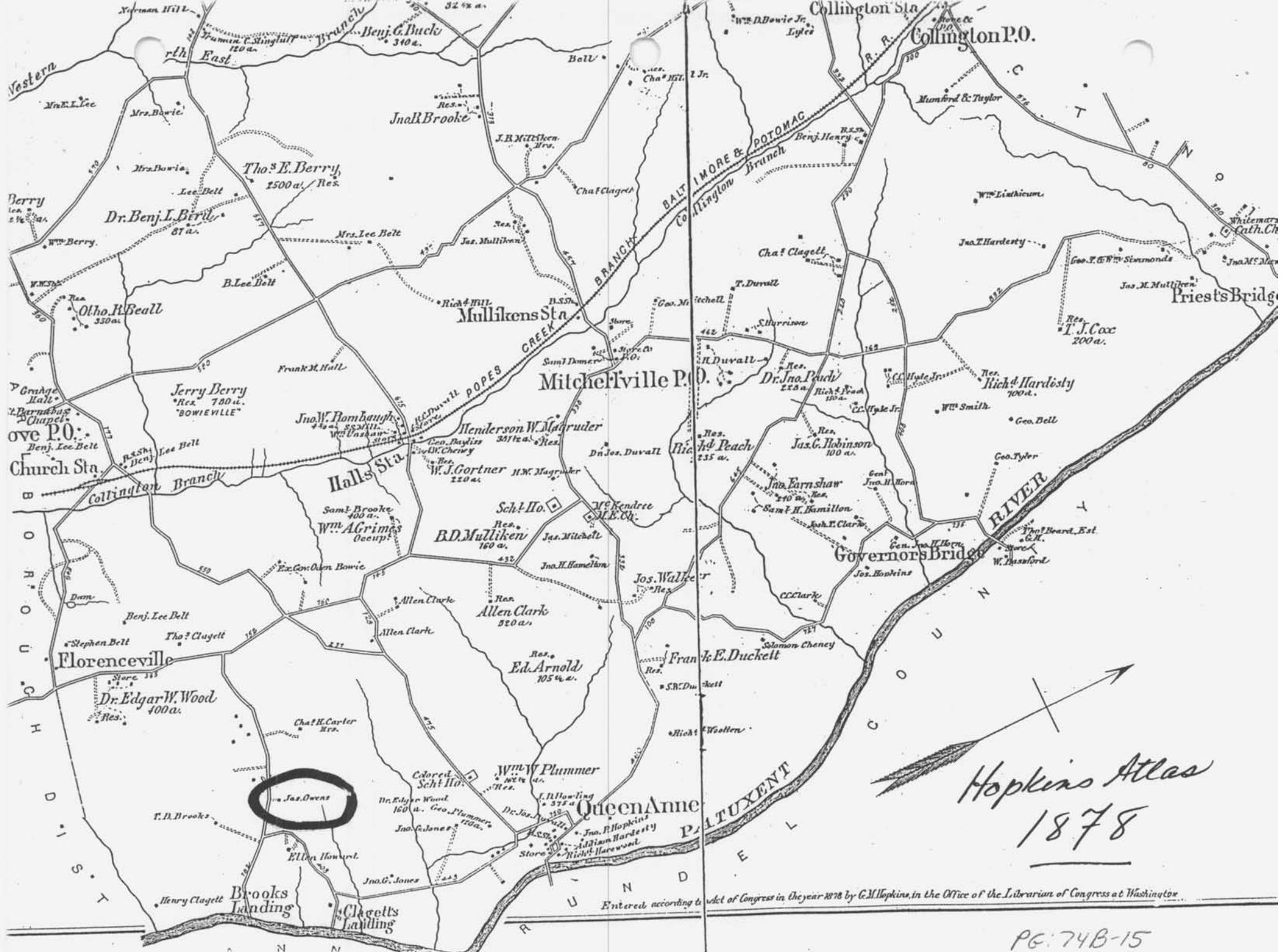
Davidsonville

R O U G H

Upper Marlborough

Bristow

Owensville
or West River PO



Hopkins Atlas
1878

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1878 by G.M. Hopkins, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington

PG: 74B-15

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #74B-15 Building Date: early 19th century

Building Name: Clagett House at Cool Spring Manor

Location: 17610 Clagett Landing Road, Mitchellville, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Deteriorated/Inaccessible

Description:

The Clagett House at Cool Spring Manor stands on a knoll in open farmland above and west of the Patuxent River near Clagett Landing. It is a one-and-one-half story frame hip-roofed house which rests on a high brick foundation and has four large interior chimneys. The principal elevation is the five-bay south facade. Entrance is through an eight-panel door with three-pane transom, and four-pane sidelights, each of which is actually a narrow 2/2 double-hung-sash window over a panelled wainscot. The flanking windows are 6/6 double-hung-sash, and have plain board surrounds. The wooden cornice is plain and boxed. Siding of the housing is now covered with gray asphalt shingle. There is a raised porch (now ruinous) across the south facade; it has chamfered posts and is supported by brick piers. There is a similar porch across the north facade; the central eight-panel door of the north facade has a three-pane transom but no sidelights. Three openings pierce the brick foundation on the north facade: 3/3 double sash windows in the first two bays, and a door in the fifth. Four interior chimneys rise from the shallow hipped roof: tall parged brick stacks arranged slightly asymmetrically on each side of the central hallway. They serve fireplaces located on the interior walls of the four corner rooms.

Significance:

The Clagett House at Cool Spring Manor is an unusual one-and-one-half-story hip-roofed Greek Revival style dwelling which is unique in Prince George's County. It was constructed early in the nineteenth century, probably by William D. Clagett, on the plantation which his father had inherited from his grandfather, Samuel White. The house is unusual in that its lower story is partially underground, enclosed by a high brick foundation; the upper story is covered by a shallow hipped-roof which gives it a low, almost truncated, appearance. The house is distinguished by its handsome door treatment and its four prominent chimneys. It follows a standard Georgian floor plan, with central passage and two double parlors. The Clagett house was built on the site of and to replace a house described in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax assessment as new and in good repair. The Cool Spring plantation remained in the Clagett family until after the Civil War, when it was purchased by James Owens. The Owens family held it until 1961, but it has been farmed by tenants since the First World War. Today, only the dwelling survives from the original plantation complex; it stands prominently on a knoll, steadily deteriorating but still occupied, a unique example of Greek Revival style plantation architecture.

Acreage: 301.8 acres

Magi No.

DOE yes no

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Clagett House at Cool Spring Manor

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 17610 Clagett Landing Road not for publication

city, town Mitchellville Clagett Landing vicinity of congressional district 5

state MD county Prince George's

3. Classification

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

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

name Richard H. Dobson

street & number 9003 Stuart Lane telephone no.:

city, town Clinton state and zip code MD 20735

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber #2521

street & number Main Street folio 123

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Prince George's County Inventory of Historic Sites

date 1974 federal state county local

depository for survey records History Diviij Division, MNCPPC

city, town Riverdale state MD

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Claggett House at Cool Spring Manor stands on a knoll in open farmland above and west of the Patuxent River near Claggett Landing. It is a one-and-one-half story frame hip-roofed house which rests on a high brick foundation and has four large interior chimneys. The principal elevation is the five-bay south facade. Entrance is through an eight-panel door with three-pane transom, and four-pane sidelights, each of which is actually a narrow 2/2 double-hung-sash window over a panelled wainscot. The flanking windows are 6/6 double-hung-sash, and have plain board surrounds. The wooden cornice is plain and boxed. Siding of the housing is now covered with gray patterned asphalt shingle. There is a raised porch (now ruinous) across the south facade; it has chamfered posts and is supported by brick piers.

There is a similar porch across the north (rear) facade; the central eight-panel door of the north facade has a three-pane transom but no sidelights. Three openings pierce the brick foundation on the north facade: 3/3 double sash windows in the first two bays, and a door in the fifth. The high (10 feet) brick foundation is laid in American bond. (There are no openings into the basement on the south facade.) Four interior chimneys rise from the shallow hipped roof: tall parged brick stacks arranged slightly asymmetrically on each side of the central hallway. They serve fireplaces located on the interior walls of the four corner rooms. The northwest chimney also serves a large fireplace in that quadrant of the basement space. The roof is now covered with asphalt shingle.

The house gives clear evidence of early architectural workmanship. The structural members, once visible in the basement and loft space, are all made from hand-hewn lumber: heavy joists, roughly 12" square in section, joined to the plate by wooden pegs in mortise and tenon joints.¹ On the south elevation, where the porch is falling away, it is possible to see the carpenter's locational marks incised in the ends of the first floor joists, studs and diagonal braces.

A short distance northeast of the house is a single gravestone, a slab covering for the low altar tomb of Ellen Ann Clark Darnell, niece of William D. Claggett. There are two twentieth century tobacco barns, one to the west and one to the east of the house. There is a brick lined well (the only source of water) directly north of the house, and beyond it a board-and-batten shed, and a small concrete block shed.

Notes

¹ Reported by current occupant.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG#74B-15

Cf. Chain of Title

Cf. Notes, Item #8

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 301.8 acres

Tax Map #78, parcel 13

Quadrangle name Bristol, Section B

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl, Research Historian

organization Historic Preservation Commission date August 1985

street & number c/o County Planning, MNCPPC telephone 952-3521

city or town Upper Marlboro state MD 20772

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

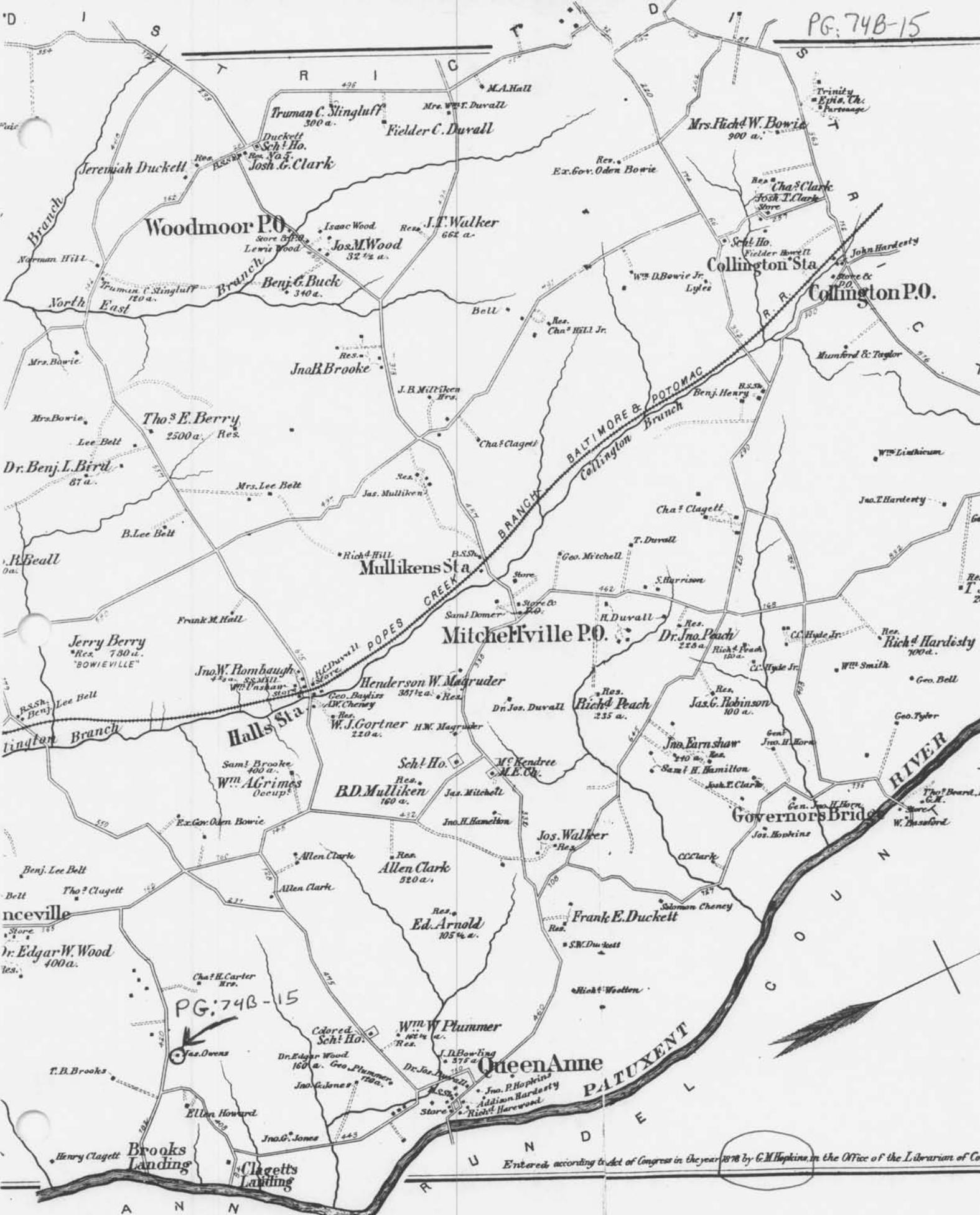
#8 Continued

Court, and purchased the property at public sale in 1871.⁵ For nearly a century, from the 1870's to 1961, the 300-acre Cool Spring Manor property was farmed by four generations of the Owens family.⁶ Since the death of Edward Owens in 1917 it has been farmed by tenants, as it is still.

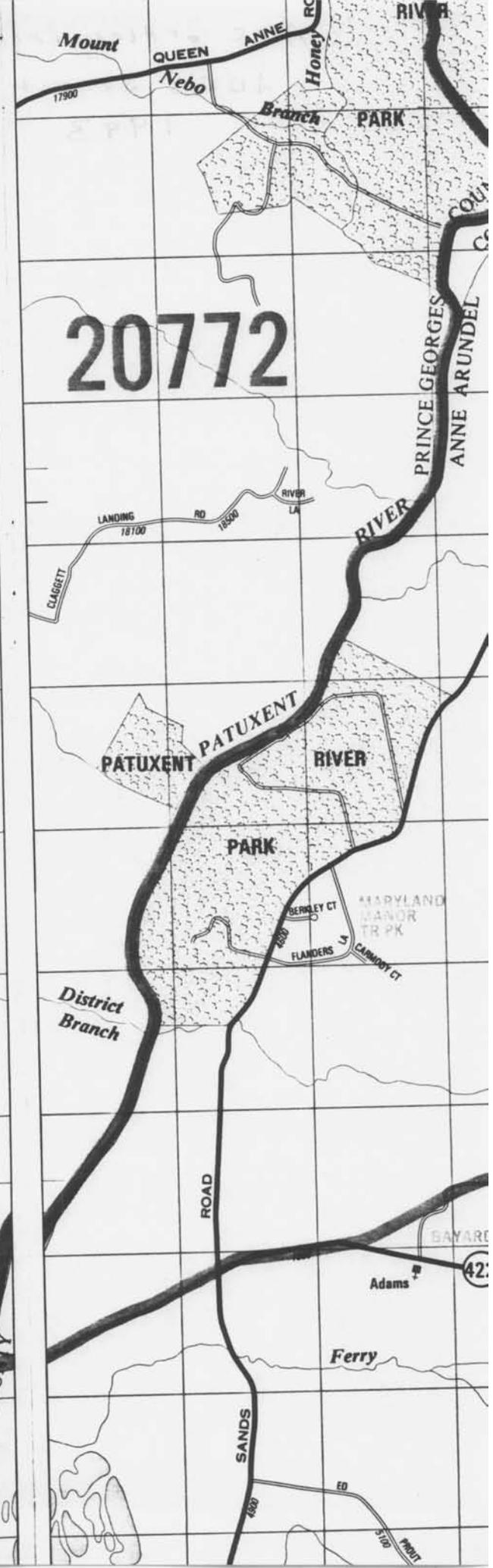
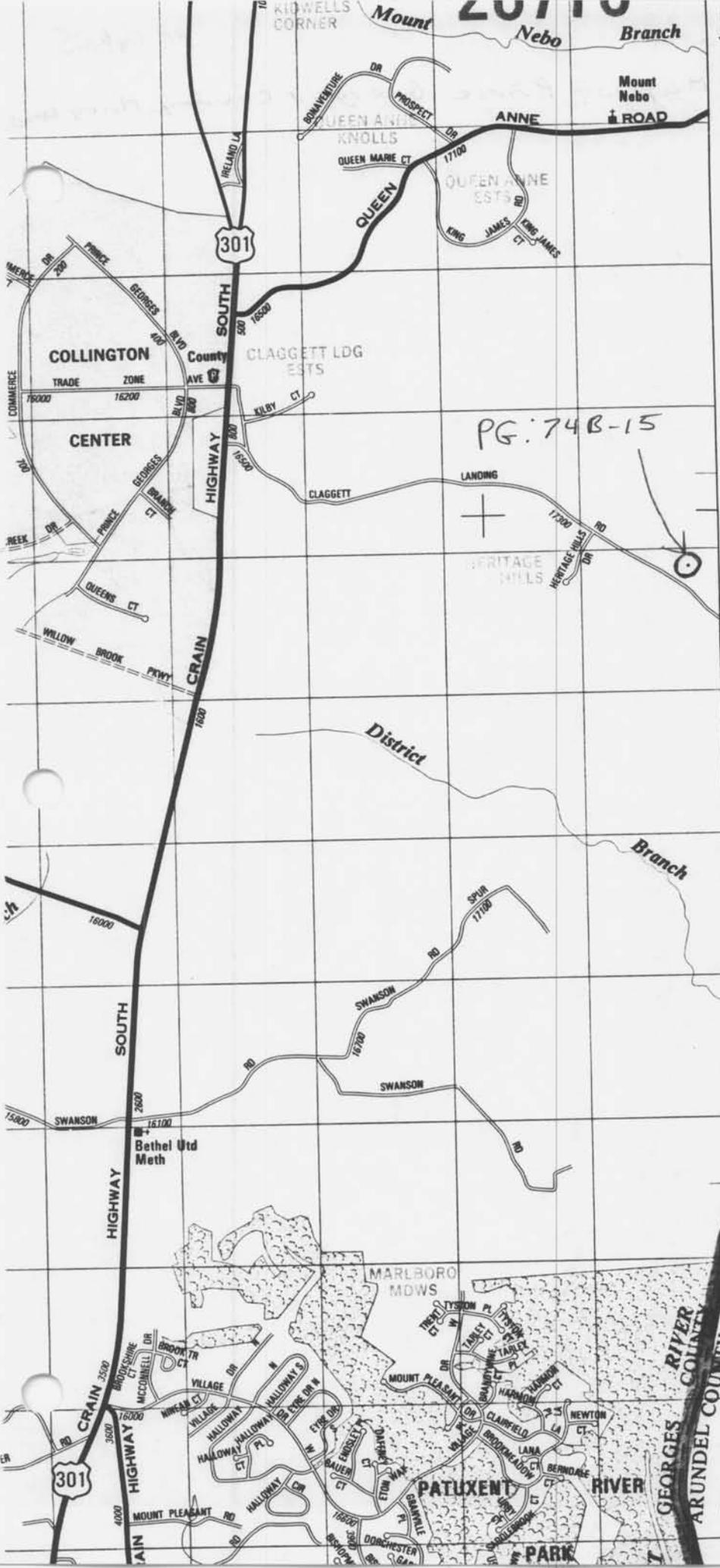
Today, only the dwelling survives from the original complex of farm buildings. The family burial ground may conceal the remains of many other family members, but only one tombstone is visible today, that of William D. Clagett's niece. (Her mother, Eleanor Clagett, had spent her childhood in this house, and apparently continued to reside there periodically after her marriage.) The barns and outbuildings appear to be twentieth century replacements. The dwelling itself stands prominently on a knoll, overlooking Clagett Landing Road, steadily deteriorating but still occupied, a unique example of Greek Revival style plantation architecture.

Notes

- 1 Prince George's County Will, T #1:114.
- 2 1798 Federal Direct Tax for Prince George's County, Patuxent Hundred.
- 3 Prince George's County Will, TT #1:459; Deed AB #5:186.
- 4 Prince George's County Census 1850-1870; Tax Assessments 1800-1850.
- 5 Prince George's County Equity #788; Deeds #15:339, 340.
- 6 Cf. Chain of title.



PG: 74B-15





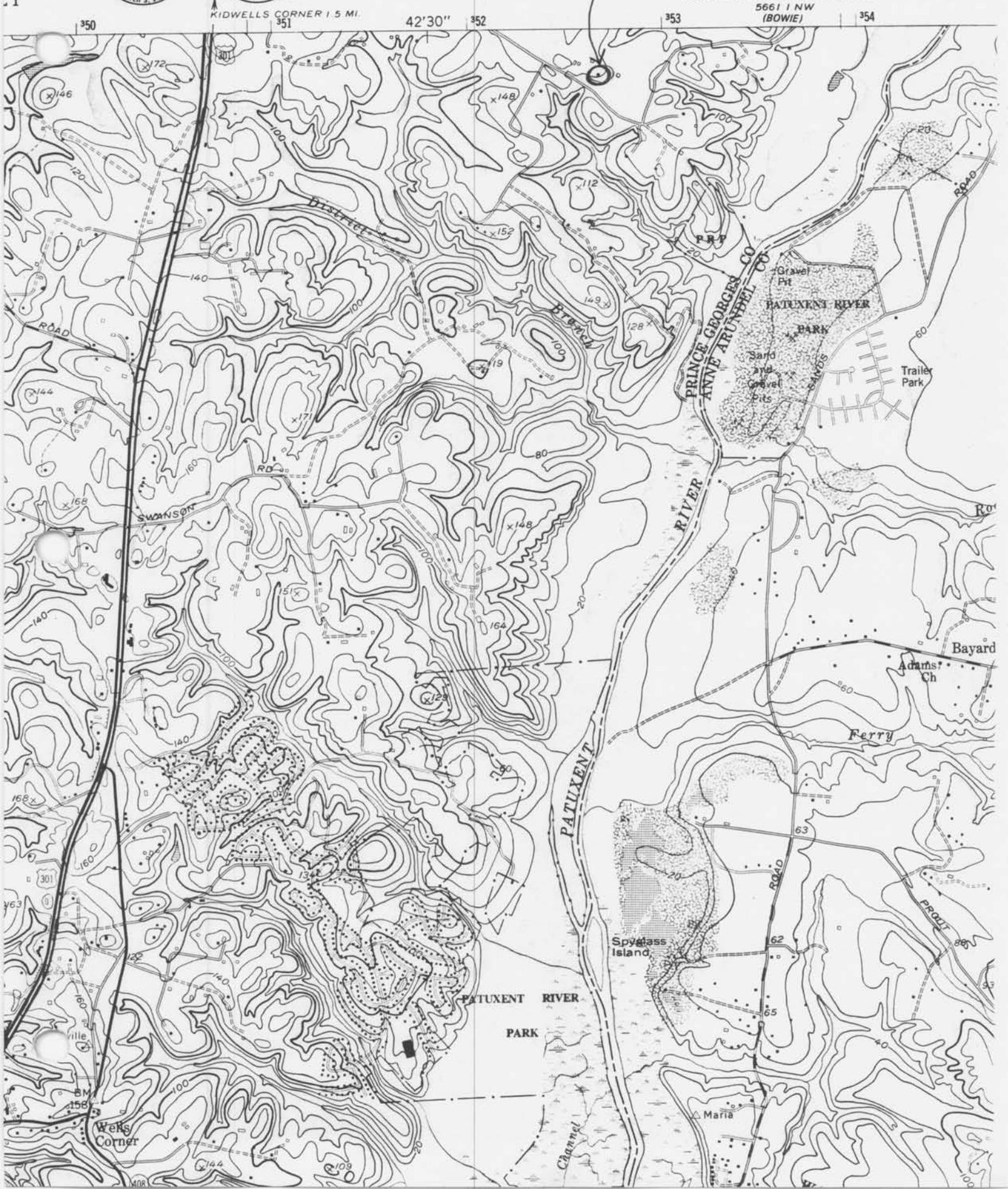
TERIOR
Y



VSGS 7.5' Topo. Quad
BRISTOL 1957 PR 1979
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS

PG: 74B-15

5661 NW
(BOWIE)





P.G. #74B-15

Clagett House, Cool Spring Manor
Prince George's County, md.

Susan G. Pearl

April 1985

Northeast 3/4 elevation

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



74-B-15

Clagett House at Cool Spring
manor

Prince Georges Co. MD

Photo taken July 1958



P.G.#74B-15

Clagett House, Cool Spring Manor
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
April 1985
South entrance
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



50
House east of "Goodwood"
Queen Anne, Pr. Geo. Co., Md.
#74-B-15 Clagett House at Cool Spring Manor

FOR got to give you
this last Friday.

PG:74B-15

July 1958



NAME # 74B-15 CLAGETT HOUSE

PG: 74B-15

LOCATION CARTER HALL Rd UPPER MARLBORO, MD

FACADE SW

PHOTO TAKEN 10/3/74 MOWYER