Form No 10-300 (Rev 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

(3)

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC: DAFFIN HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON: Thawley House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: On west side of Deep Branch Road, three miles south of Hillsboro

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN: Hillsboro X VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: First

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Maryland	24	Caroline	011

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		X NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Mr. and Mrs. George N. Murray, Jr. (et al)

STREET & NUMBER: Kirk's Cove

CITY, TOWN: St. Michaels __ VICINITY OF

STATE: Maryland 21663

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Caroline County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER:

CITY, TOWN: Denton

STATE: Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE:

DATE:

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

CITY, TOWN:

STATE:

7 DESCRIPTION

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CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on the west side of Deep Branch Road, three miles south of Hillsboro, the Daffin House is a large, two-and-one-half story brick structure (circa 1780) with a two-part, one-and-one-half story brick wing on its east end (circa 1760).

The initial stage of construction is believed to be represented by that portion of the house standing at the east end of the structure (see plan). Built of brick laid in a Flemish bond pattern, it has a dormered gable roof, one central interior chimney and one chimney at the east end of the roof ridge. The principal (land approach) facade is four (originally five) bays wide, but the first two bays in from the southeast corner are positioned several feet lower than the remaining two bays. This difference in positioning can be accounted for by the fact that there is a cellar beneath the west half of this wing, while the floor of the east end is at ground level and contains the kitchen. Although the changes in floor level in such a small house would suggest different periods of construction, no physical features can be discerned to substantiate this theory. A door on the west half of the building between the two windows was removed and the opening bricked during a 1930's restoration of the house.

This earliest part of the Daffin House contains two rooms. The parlor, or west room, has plastered walls above paneled wainscoting. The chimney breast is fully paneled and the fireplace ornamented by a fairly simple but finely executed mantel, stylistically attributable to the late eighteenth century and possibly a replacement of an earlier treatment. A narrow winding stair enclosed within a paneled closet rises in the northeast corner of the room. The ceilings of both rooms are plastered and finished with a three-piece fluted cornice. Most of the woodwork appears to date from the late eighteenth century and, if so, it was probably installed when the large circa 1780 west addition was made. That this part of the house predates the main block is evidenced by the brickwork and other physical characteristics.

It is believed that shortly before the construction of the larger main block, a one-room addition was made to the west end of the initial stage. Its construction must have occurred not too long after the first house was erected for there are so many similarities that the two appear to be contemporary to one another. However, subtle differences indicate that this is not so. The single ground floor room that this addition contains is treated in exactly the same fashion as the west room of the initial house. It presently has a cater-cornered chimney wall and fireplace in the southwest corner. The odd positioning of this chimney, if the west end of the addition was exposed when built, suggests that it might be a replacement of an earlier chimney that probably stood near the center of the west wall. It is also entirely possible that this chimney, with its flue joined to the east end chimney of the later main block, was introduced at the time the circa 1780 addition was made.

see continuation sheet #1

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION	
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE	
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE	
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
X 1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER	
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION	
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	X OTHER (SPECIFY) local history	
		__INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES circa 1760 and 1780 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

During the years 1775-1778, Charles Daffin purchased over 700 acres of land in newly-formed Caroline County. In 1784 he was granted a patented certificate for this property, to be called Daffin's Farm. It was resurveyed with added acreage in 1787.

Several buildings already existed on the tracts included in Daffin's Farm when Daffin acquired them.[1] One of these was apparently a 1 1/2-story house to which he added a 2 1/2-story structure after he bought the property in the 1770's. This addition is traditionally said to have been built in 1783.[2]

The earlier (circa 1760) part of the house is typical of the two-room, 1 1/2-story houses built in the eighteenth century by the smaller planters on Maryland's Eastern Shore. This particular example is notable for the high quality of its brickwork and structural detail. Its interior woodwork, probably installed in the 1780's, is well executed and complements the rooms.

The main block, built during Charles Daffin's ownership, illustrates the successful combination in one house of the original architectural style with later alterations in other styles. This section exhibits both Georgian and Federal details. Embellishments added in the Victorian era were done tastefully and add rather than detract from the building's appearance. A Greek Revival interior installed during the first half of the nineteenth century is proportionately scaled to the rooms and harmonizes with the house.

Charles Daffin, probably one of that breed of men known in eighteenth century Maryland as merchant-planters, was living in Talbot County as a planter when he bought the land in Caroline County for Daffin's Farm. About ten years later, in a 1786 deed, he is mentioned as a merchant of

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[1]Deeds A/164, A/215, A/253, Land Records of Caroline County, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

[2]Edward M. Noble and others, History of Caroline County, Maryland from its Beginning (Reprint of 1920 ed.; Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1971), p. 96.

see continuation sheet #2

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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PRIMARY SOURCES:

Land Records of Caroline County and Patented Certificates. Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland, and Caroline County Courthouse, Denton, Maryland.

Probate Records of Caroline County. Caroline County Courthouse.

Tax Assessments of 1783 and 1798, Caroline County. Hall of Records.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

see continuation sheet #3

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 82 acres

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	18	418660	4303210
B	18	419780	4303450
C	18	419880	4300400
D	18	419210	4300800

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

pmj

NAME / TITLE

J. Richard Rivoire, Architectural Historian; Pamela James, Assistant Histo

ORGANIZATION — DATE

Maryland Historical Trust — December 23, 1974

STREET & NUMBER — TELEPHONE

21 State Circle — (301) 267-1438

CITY OR TOWN — STATE

Annapolis — Maryland 21401

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL ___

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE — DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

GPO 888-445

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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Caroline County
Maryland

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In about 1780, the present five bay main block was added to the west end of the earlier house. Although well-proportioned and displaying finely executed brickwork, the pedimented river and approach facades are simple in detail. In the mid-nineteenth century, the approach facade was embellished with a wide bracketed cornice at the eaves and on the roof pediment. New architraves replaced the old, and on the first floor they included bracketed pediments. On the river facade, the window surrounds were also replaced but are a great deal simpler in detail than those of the opposite elevation and rather than a Palladian window there is a bulls-eye window in the pediment. Original details that remain include splayed brick arches over the windows and doors (most of these hidden by the existing wide surrounds), a projecting brick belt course extending across all four sides of the house between the first and second floor levels, a brick pediment within which is a small Palladian window with foliated sash, and brick end walls which extend above the roof line, the last a characteristic of Federal period architecture. At each end of the roof ridge is a single flush chimney. Unfortunately, a chimney containing a furnace flue was built against the exposed west end of the house. Its poorly executed brickwork makes no attempt to match or blend with the original and is visually distractin

A modillioned cornice on the second stage of the house is stylistically contemporary to the circa 1780 addition and may be a scaled-down version of the cornice original to the circa 1780 section but which was replaced by the existing circa 1860-1880 work.

On the river facade, the center second floor window was lowered, probably during the mid-nineteenth century, to light the stair landing between the first and second floor levels. Also on the river facade can be traced the outline of a one-story, pedimented entrance porch. This porch was removed at an unknown time. On both end gables of the main block, there are two bulls-eye windows retaining their original surrounds.

The room configuration of the circa 1780 addition consists of a wide center hall flanked by single parlors. The same arrangement exists on the second floor. Apparently in about 1825-1835, the woodwork contemporary to the construction date of the main block was removed and replaced by handsome architraves, doors, mantels, and baseboards in the Greek Revival style. The open, balustraded stair to the second and third floors was also replaced at this time. The only indication of the appearance of the earlier work is a simple, fluted ceiling cornice in the first floor hall and two parlors (this is the same cornice

see continuation sheet #2

Description, continued

recorded in the first two rooms of the east wing). Also, in the attic chambers, the keystoned surround of the Palladian window and the moldings of the doors and chairrails are stylistically characteristic of the late eighteenth century and are similar in profile to the woodwork of the east wing. Some of this work is said to have been introduced in these rooms when the 1830 alterations to the first and second floors occurred. The framing and decorations of the Palladian window and two doorways, however, appear original.

The grounds around the house are well maintained and the north side of the house faces wide open fields and Tuckahoe Creek. There is not a single remaining, domestic dependency proximate to the house. A modern, colonial-style brick garage stands at a right angle to the house on its west side. Plantings of trees and shrubs lessen its visual impact and the styling, while an obvious modern interpretation of what a "colonial" building should look like, does not represent an undesirable intrusion.

In a field adjacent to the rear of the garage is a small cemetery containing four known vaults believed to date from the second half of the eighteenth century.

About 1/4 mile southeast of the house stands a late eighteenth century grist mill once belonging to the Daffin House property. It is now undergoing renovation for use as a private home.

Significance, continued

Dorchester County. It is uncertain when he resided in Caroline County, but he did not live on Daffin's Farm in 1783. The Tax Assessment for Caroline County in that year lists him as owner of the property, but there were no white inhabitants on the land at that time. In the 1790 Maryland census, Daffin was still living in Dorchester County. This could be explained by this statement in the 1920 Caroline County history: "It is said that the great cost of building the house practically led to the financial failure of the builder."[3] If this is true, perhaps Daffin never lived at the Daffin House. Thomas Daffin (relationship to Charles Daffin undetermined, perhaps his son) was the owner of the house in 1798 according to that Tax Assessment. However, he acquired

[3]Noble, p. 295.

see continuation sheet #3

Significance, continued

1/3 interest in Daffin's Farm from both Francis Willson and Joseph G. Daffin at the turn of the century, so it is possible that shares of 1/3 interest were sold by Charles Daffin to offset the cost of building the house.

Thomas Daffin married Rebecca Dickinson, sister of the Charles Dickinson who won fame through his death in a duel in Tennessee with Andrew Jackson.[4] Thomas and Rebecca Daffin lived at the Daffin House in the late eighteenth century where they reputedly entertained lavishly and often. The Daffins were a well-known family in Dorchester County in the Colonial and Federal periods.[5] Members of the Thawley family, also prominent on this part of the Eastern Shore, owned the house from 1841 until 1902. It was called Thawley House until the older name of Daffin was revived in the 1940's or 1950's. The land itself, however, has continued to be called Daffin's Farm Resurveyed.

[4]Noble, p. 253.
[5]Noble, p. 295.

Major Bibliographical References, continued

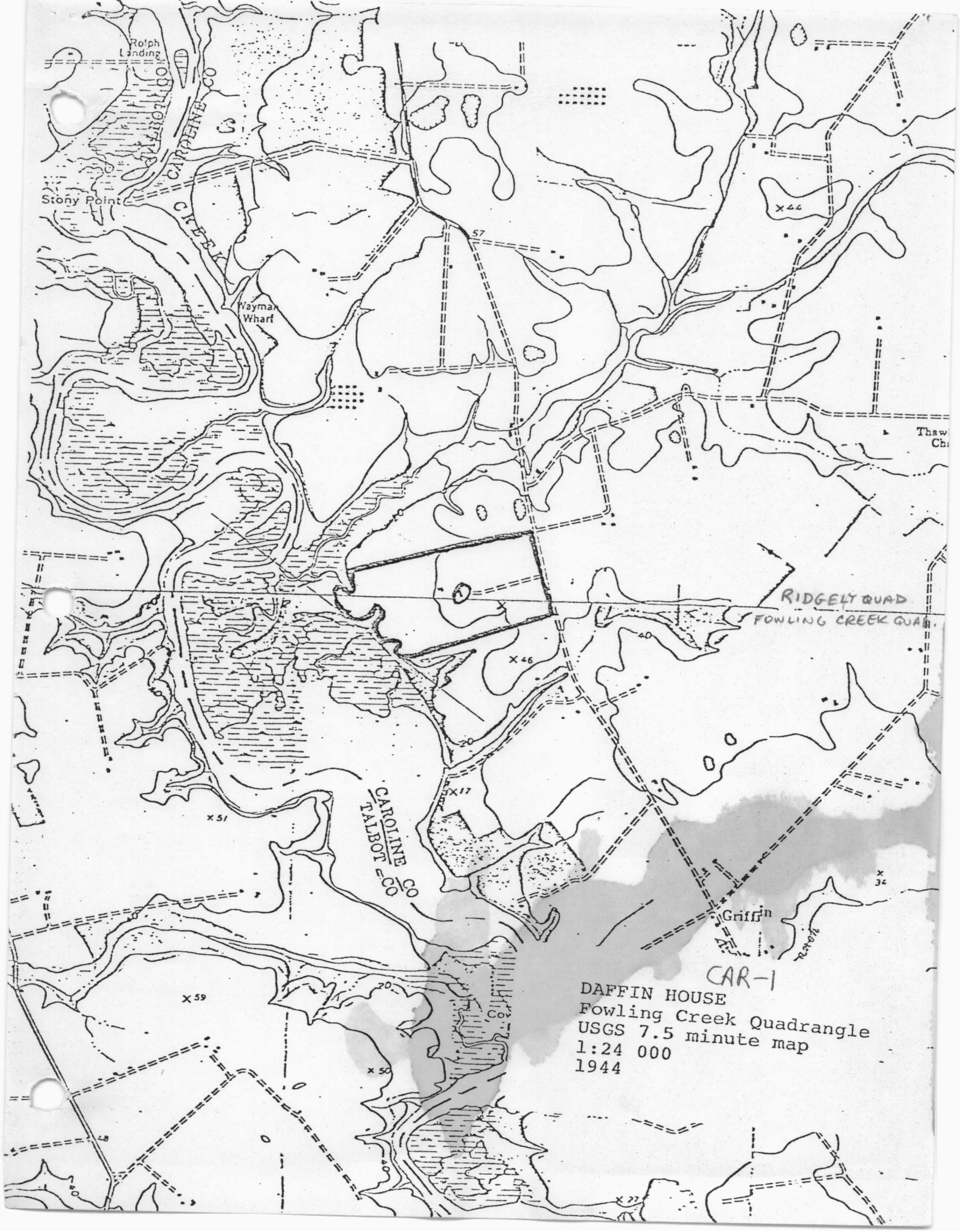
SECONDARY SOURCES:

Forman, H. Chandlee. Tidewater Maryland Architecture and Gardens. New York: Bonanza Books, 1956.

Noble, Edward M. and others. History of Caroline County, Maryland, from its Beginning. Reprint of 1920 ed. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1971.

Wilstach, Paul. Tidewater Maryland. New York: Blue Ribbon Books, Inc., 1931.

Works Progress Administration Writers' Project. Maryland, A Guide to the Old Line State. American Guide Series. Reprint of 1940 ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.


Rolph Landing
CAROLINE CO
Stony Point
CREEK
Wayman Wharf
57
X44
RIDGELY QUAD
FOWLING CREEK QUAD.
X46
X17
X51
CAROLINE CO
TALBOT CO
Griffin
X59
X58
X27
CAR-1
DAFFIN HOUSE
Fowling Creek Quadrangle
USGS 7.5 minute map
1:24 000
1944

Daffin House - CAR - 1

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Duffin House - CAR-1