

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED  
DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Content

AND/OR COMMON

Bowling House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

14518 Church Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Upper Marlboro

VICINITY OF

Fourth

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

CODE

24

COUNTY

Prince George's

CODE

033

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. Jess Joseph Smith, Jr.

STREET & NUMBER

14618 Main Street (office)

CITY, TOWN

Upper Marlboro

VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

29870

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Prince George's County Courthouse

LIBER #: 4745

FOLIO #: 805

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Upper Marlboro

STATE

Maryland

29870

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1936

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D. C.

**7 DESCRIPTION**

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

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

Content is located on the north side of Church Street at number 14518 in Upper Marlboro, Prince George's County, Maryland. Perpendicular to the street, the house faces east, overlooking its broad, terraced lawn, to the county courthouse.

Also known as the Bowling house, this is a two-storey, two-part, frame structure with gable roofs built in three stages. The first, built in 1787, consisted of the present main block (the south portion) excluding the stair hall and porch. The latter were added circa 1800. The north wing was added before 1844.

The main block has a two-storey porch, partially screened; across its east (entrance) facade. On the first and second floors of this elevation there are three windows and then a doorway in the northernmost bay. The west facade has identical fenestration on the first floor, but four windows on the second, and no porch. The first floor windows have nine-over-nine light sash, while those on the second floor have nine-over-six. The main entrance on the east has a door -- once six-paneled, now glass above two panels -- framed by plain pilasters and sidelights with a fanlight across them all. The original side and fan lights have all been replaced with single sheets of glass. The steps at this entrance are of modern brick, although the bottom tread is stone and appears to be old. The south gable end has two large, unmatched chimnies with a one-storey brick pent between. There is a four-over-four light window in the pent, and a six-over-six one in the south gable between the chimney stacks and a six-over six one on each floor to the east of the east chimney on this gable end. The foundation of this section is of stone, with small, six-paned windows on both the east and west.

The wing was built onto the north gable end of the main block, to the north of the stair hall. It is also two storeys tall, but slightly shorter than the main block, and only one room deep. It is three bays long, with a door in the southernmost bay of the first floor on the east and the northernmost bay on the west, and windows in all other openings. All windows in this section have six-over-six sash. On the west facade there is a small, six-pane window to the right and above the southernmost window. A one-storey, partially enclosed, screened porch covers the door and central window on the west facade first floor. Most of the windows on the entire house, except those covered by porches, have louvered shutters. On the north gable end of the wing there is a single chimney flanked by two small, six-over-six windows in the gable.

In the south section the floor plan consists of a stair hall on the north, a large room in the southeast corner and a slightly narrower room in the southwest corner. A small square room has been created in the northwest corner of the latter; this room was also divided originally (see floor plan).

In the hall the living room door appears to be the only old one remaining in place. It is six-paneled and has part of its old lock in place. Other similar doors have been stored in the cellar and upstairs. A transom with vertical louvers is over the doorway to the dining room. The hall has an ornate, plaster rosette on the ceiling; wide, curved cornice; a cross-arch with simple molded trim; and narrow chair rail with a carved low relief design. The latter does not match that elsewhere in the house. The stair is in the northwest corner of the hall. It has a plain walnut hand rail, square balusters and step-ends with a scroll design. Below the stair the wall is paneled and there is a door to the basement stairs.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET 2.

Form No. 10-300a  
(Rev. 10-74)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMContent  
Prince George's County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

## (DESCRIPTION CONTINUED)

The two rooms in the south section are connected by a doorway and each has a door into the hall. Both have fireplaces on the south wall. The mantel in the living (southeast) room is of black marble in an ornate design. To the west of it is the doorway into the pent closet. The floor of wide pine boards has been patched to cover the area where the original stairway was located. The chair rail is similar but not identical to that in the hall. The cornice is curved with a design of scrolls and flowers. This room measures about 24' x 16'.

The southwest room is about ten feet wide and at some time in the past was divided into two rooms. Nail holes in the floor show where the wall was located. A bathroom has been partitioned off the north end of this room. Marks on the wall indicate that there was a chair rail and that two different mantels have been on the fireplace. The floor near the fireplace has been patched. Lathe in the cellar ceiling shows there has been a fire here.

The dining room is on the north side of the hall and with the adjoining kitchen forms the north section of the house. At some earlier time, the dining room was divided in half (east-west). A corner cupboard of Victorian style conceals the utility pipes in the southwest corner of the room. A tiny window is high in the west wall inside of the cupboard. The casings on the doors and windows in this room do not match one another or those in other rooms of the house.

The kitchen has been changed by the addition of modern equipment, cabinets and new floor cover. The north wall has been covered over, concealing the fireplace.

The second floor is similar in plan to the main floor. The hall has very wide molded chair rail. The door at the east end of the porch has been altered and resembles the main door on the floor beneath it. The fireplaces in the north and southwest bedrooms are covered. The mantel in the southeast room is plain wood with curved capitals atop plain pilasters.

The attic has one large room on either side of the stair hall. The wall and ceiling are plastered. The exterior wall of the north end of the hall is exposed. It clearly indicates the addition of the north section of the house. There is a door with a window on either side connecting the two sections of the house.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #2.

Form No. 10-300a  
(Rev. 10-74)

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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Content

Prince George's County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

(DESCRIPTION CONTINUED)

The cellar walls define the three stages in which the house was built. The south section has four stone (probably from Aquia) walls. Brick partitions have been added to make two small rooms on the west side. There is a large fireplace on the south wall. Next to the fireplace near the east wall is a wide, short door of vertical boards. The space where the stairway was formerly located can be seen where the ceiling has been altered. The floor is earthen. The hall and north rooms have concrete floors and brick walls. The west wall of the north room formerly had an exterior door near the hall wall.

The house is located in the southwest corner of the property, creating a large area of lawn to the north and east of the house. The highest point of the property is the northwest corner. Several curved, deep terraces which appear to be very old bring the land down to the level of the house. One terrace (north-south) breaks the expanse of the east yard. A border of trees of many varieties nearly surrounds the property. Evidence of brick paths has been found in the yard.

There are no outbuildings.

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Local History
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1789 to about 1844

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Content is one of the oldest buildings remaining in Upper Marlboro. Construction on only two buildings in the town was begun earlier. Content and these other two are also the or three eighteenth century houses surviving in Upper Marlboro. The main block of Content is representative of the two-storey structures of this period, while Kingston and the Br (or James Wardrop) house were both 1½ storeys when first constructed. Content is the most untouched of the three; Kingston was Victorianized and the Brick house made over into a two-storey dwelling.

Content was built in three stages. Part of the south section nearest Church Street was built first, in 1787. The stair hall and the two-storey front porch were added next, about 1800.

The several rows of terraces and falls on the east and north sides of the house are typical of the sort of landscaping done in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Although no plantings remain, it is unusual enough for the terraces themselves to have survived.

Content has always been owned by families who were prominent in the civic, economic and social affairs of Upper Marlboro, Prince George's County and the State of Maryland. The house is located on part of the tract "Meadow," which was patented in 1694 by Col. Ninian Beall and included in Marlborough when the town was laid out in 1706.<sup>1</sup> In 1729 some of this land passed from Col. Beall's descendants to David Craufurd, a wealthy merchant who lived at "Kingston."<sup>2</sup> It was his son, David, Jr., who conveyed part of lot #36 to his infant granddaughter, Sarah Contee, in April, 1787, " . . . on which a dwelling house is now erecting, or about to be erected . . ."<sup>3</sup> Sarah evidently died early because in 1799 her father, Richard Alexander Contee, sold the place to his nephew, James Alexander Magruder who also had acquired the adjoining lot #48 from his father John Read Magruder who was Clerk of the County Court for many years.<sup>4</sup> Almost immediately, James Alexander Magruder sold both lots with their improvements to his brother-in-law, William Bradley Beanes, half brother of Dr. William Beanes of the "Star Spangled Banner" storey.<sup>5</sup> Beanes paid 300 pounds currency for the property and sold it two years later to Thomas Contee for 548 pounds currency. Either Beanes made a handsome profit in the sale or he had improved the property considerably. Contee had been a member of the first Senate of the State of Maryland.<sup>7</sup> Dr. Benjamin Lee purchased the house from Contee's estate in 1821.<sup>8</sup> According to tradition, it was he who had the north section of the house added. In 1844, Dr. Lee moved to his plantation near Largo and sold Content to Cal Clarke Magruder.<sup>9</sup> Mr. Magruder's name is conspicuous in the newspapers and Court Proceedings of the State and County during the 1850's and 1860's for his participation in civic and legal affairs.<sup>10</sup> There is a story that he kept fighting cocks in the cellar. The property changed hands several times until 1921 when Mrs. Mildred W. N. Bowling

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #3.

Form No 10-300a  
(Rev. 10-74)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Content  
Prince George's County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

(SIGNIFICANCE CONTINUED)

purchased it. She and her descendants were in possession until the present owner purchased Content in 1977.

<sup>1</sup>Patents, Liber B#23, folio 133, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

<sup>2</sup>Deeds, Liber M, folio 503, Courthouse, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, Liber HH, folio 480.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, Liber JRM#4, folio 357; Liber JRM#7, folio 202.

Ibid, Liber JRM#7, folio 203.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid, Liber JRM#8, folio 376.

<sup>7</sup>R. Lee Van Horn, Out of the Past, Prince George's County Historic 1 Society, Riverdale, 1976, pp. 217-218.

<sup>8</sup>Deed, Liber AB#2, folio 55, Courthouse, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid, Liber JB#3, folio 449.

<sup>10</sup>Effie Gwynn Bowie, Across the Years in Prince George's County, Garrett and Massie, Inc., Richmond, 1947, p. 545.



Form No. 10-300a  
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Content  
Prince George's County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 4

PRIMARY SOURCES

- Courthouse, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Deeds: M-503; HH-480; JRM#4-357; JRM#7-202, 203; JRM#8-376; AB#2-55; JB#3-499.

Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

Patents: B#23-133.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Bowie, Effie Gwynn. Across the Years in Prince George's County. Richmond, Virginia: Garrett and Massie, Inc., 1947.

Van Horn, R. Lee. Out of the Past. Riverdale, Maryland: The Prince George's County Historical Society, 1976.

# MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #4.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.1580 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 347770 4297490  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B           
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mrs. Margaret W. Cook

ORGANIZATION

Prince George's County Committee of Maryland Historical Trust August 1977

STREET & NUMBER

5621 Delaware Drive

TELEPHONE

301-839-3638

CITY OR TOWN

Oxon Hill

STATE

Maryland 20021

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

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

*John N. Pearce* 3/15/78

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

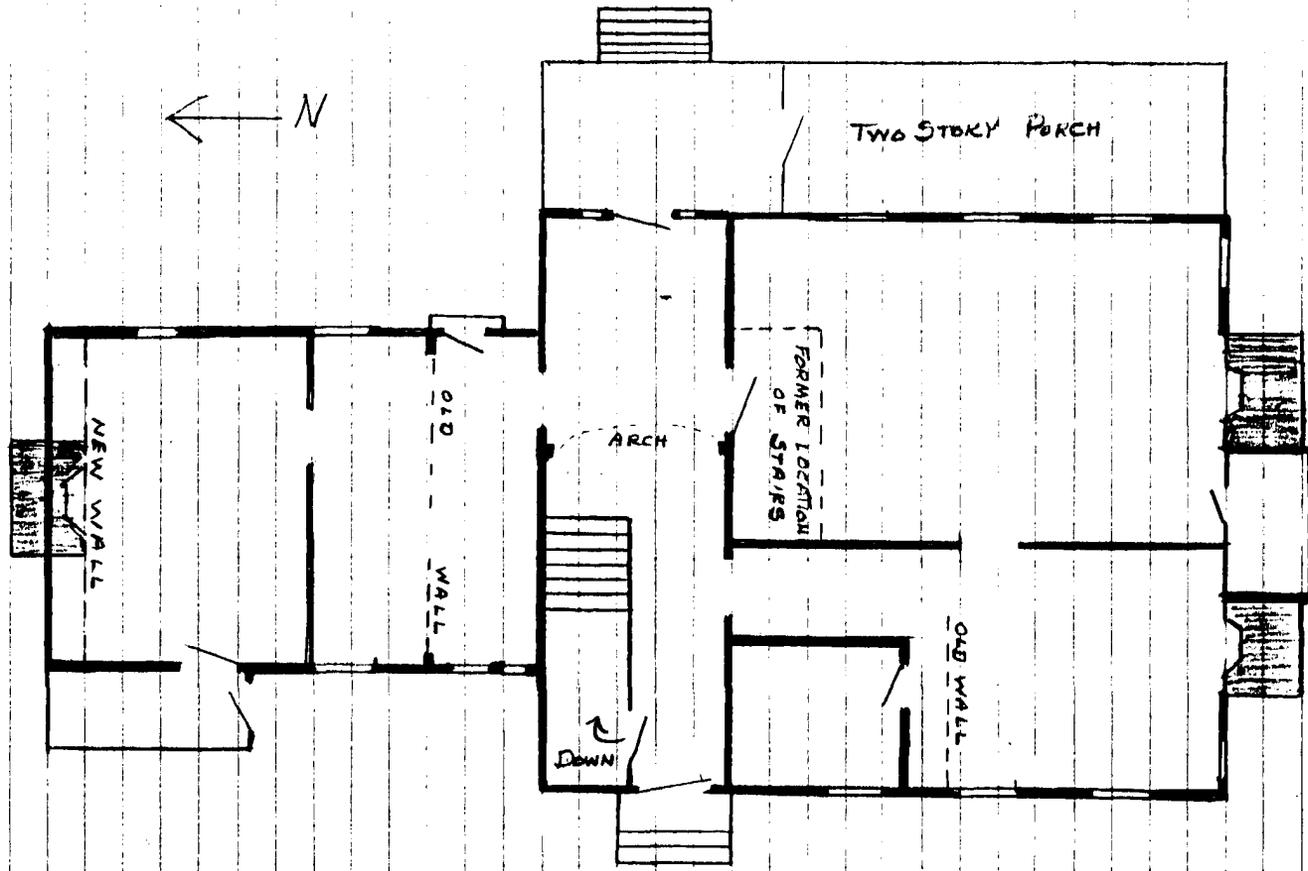
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



FIRST FLOOR

CONTENT

14518 CHURCH STREET  
 UPPER MARLBORO  
 MARYLAND

NO SCALE

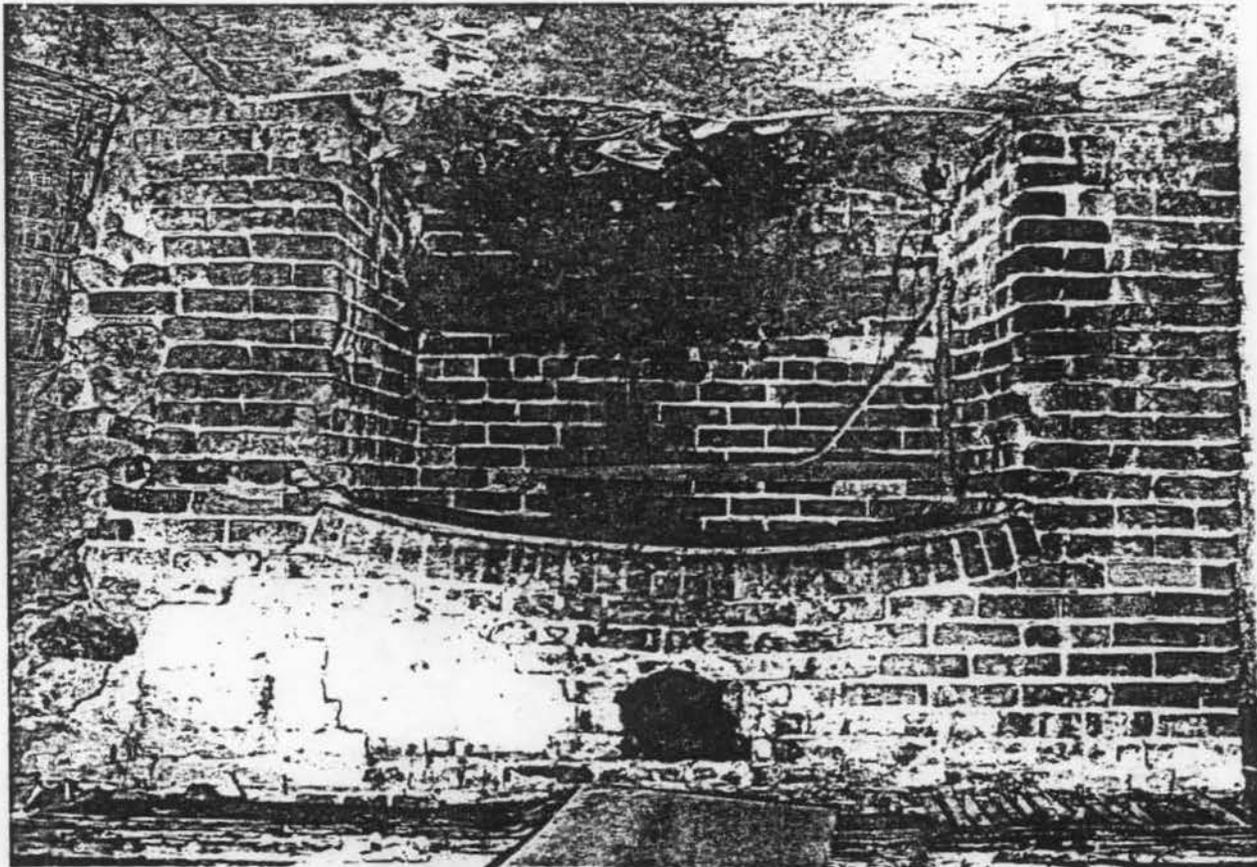
5/77 M. COOK

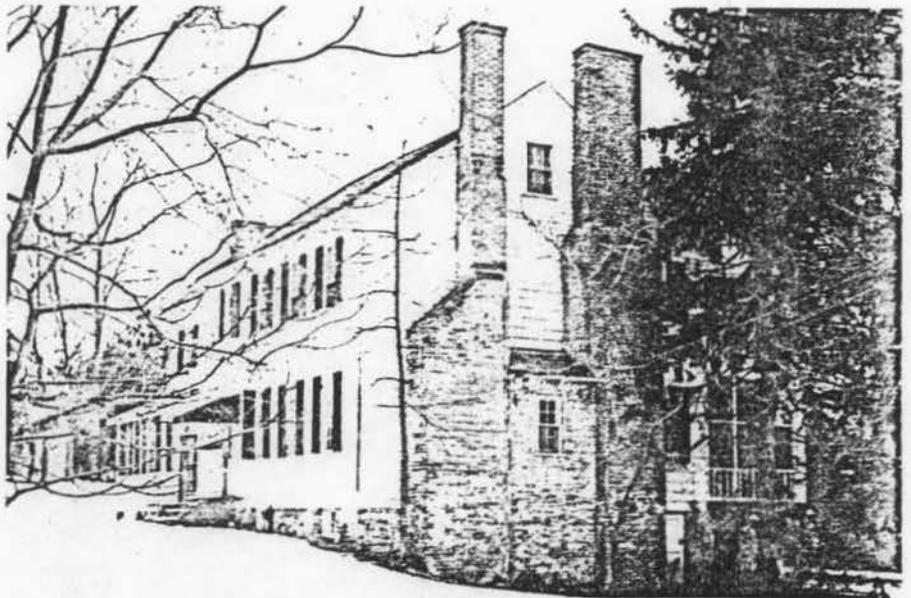
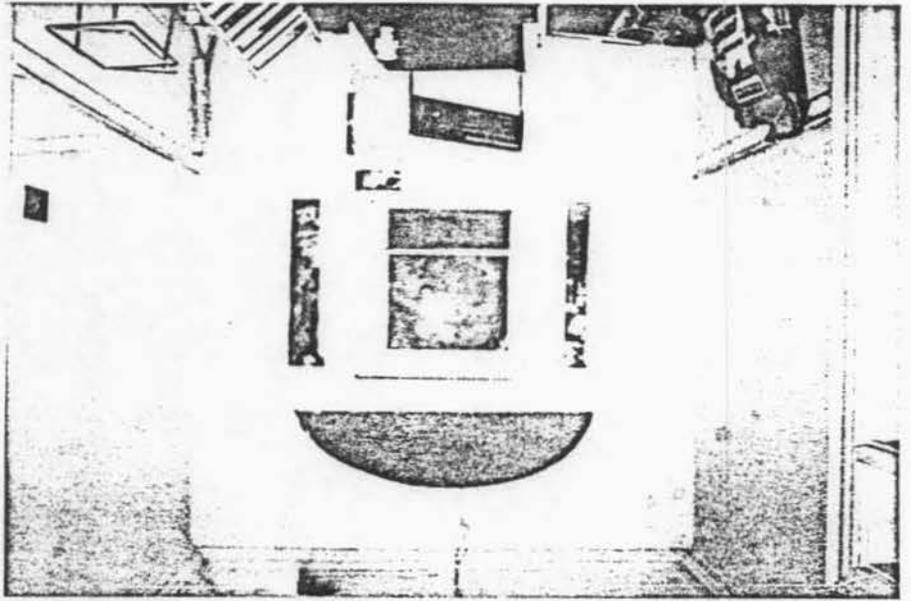
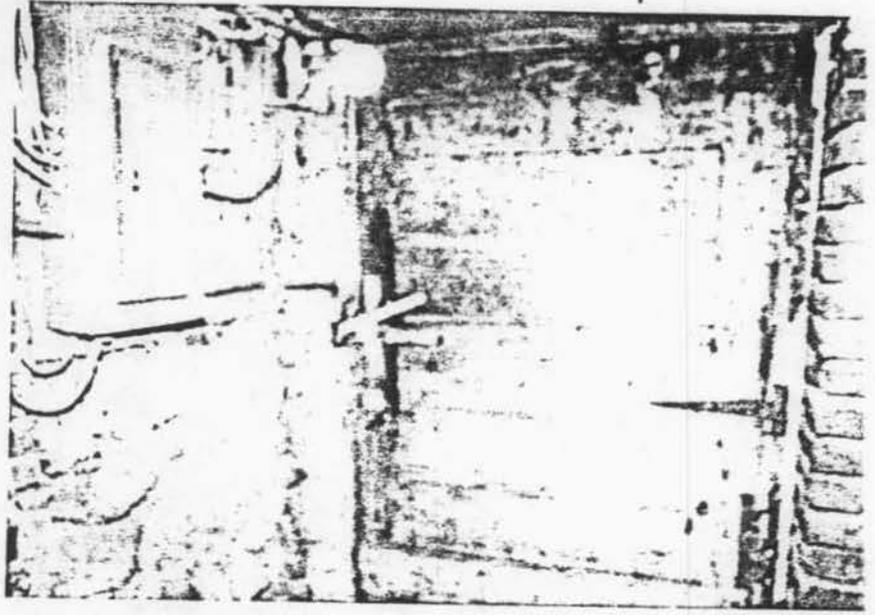
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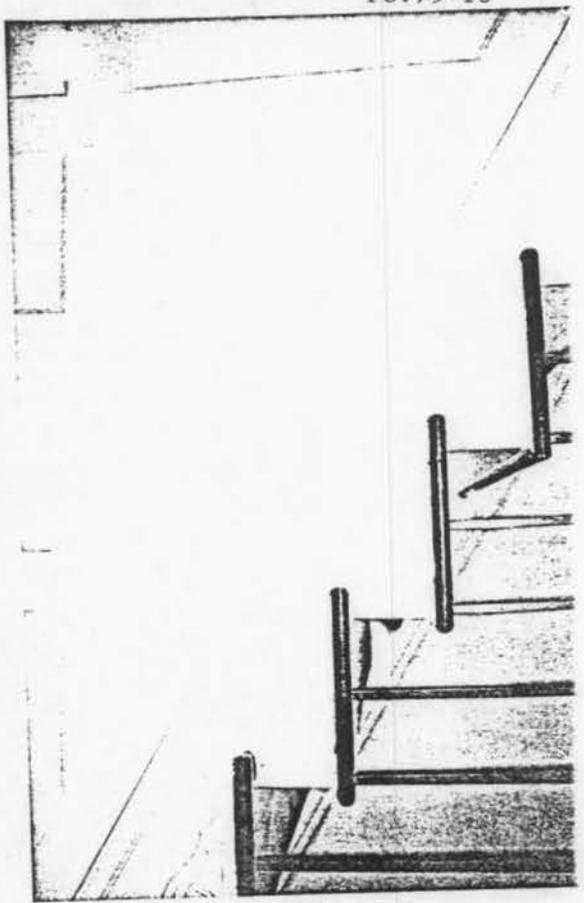
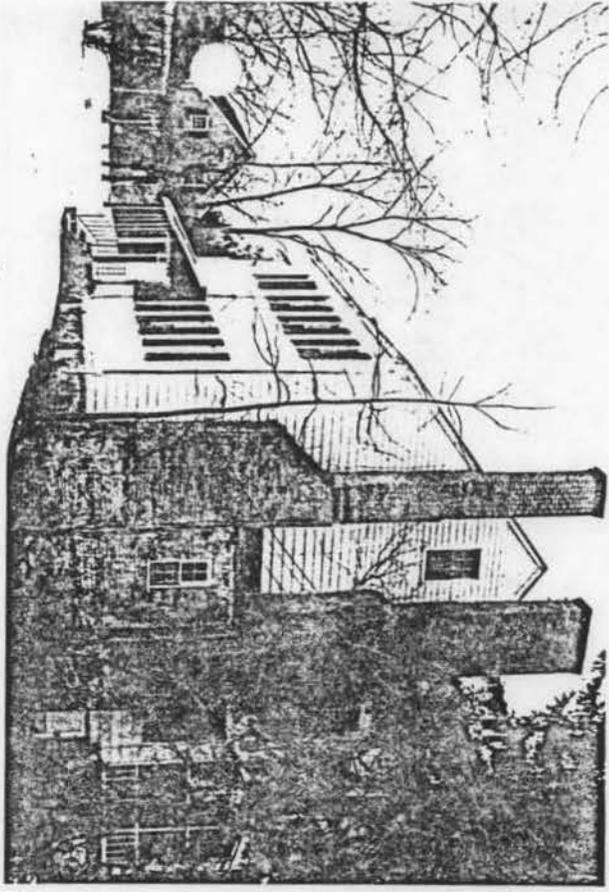


0.4 MI. TO MD 408  
 4298  
 0.7 MI. TO U.S. 301  
 37  
 1.2 MI. TO MD 4  
 10 MI. TO U.S. 50  
 4296  
 4295  
 47'30"  
 4294  
 4293

## Content







PG. 79-16

Content . . .

Rinn

2/1967

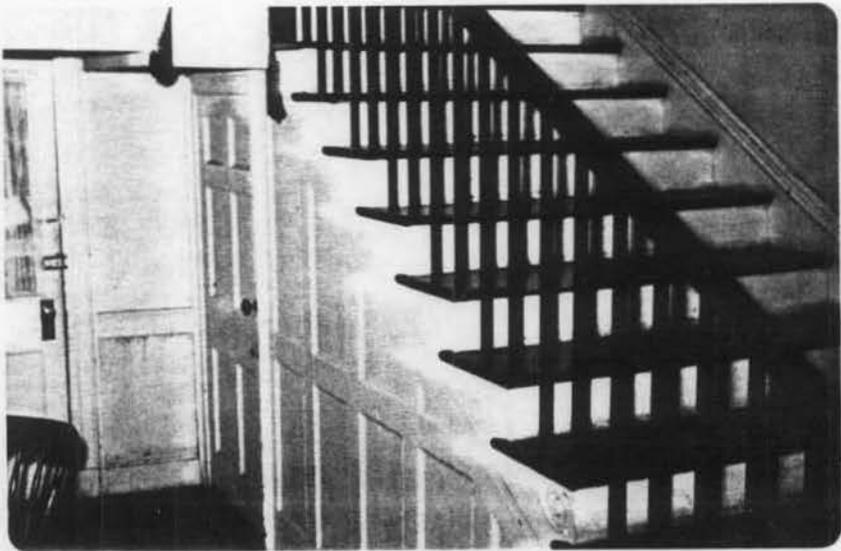
~~Rinn~~  
~~2/1967~~



East Front



North end



Stairway

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITES SUMMARY SHEET

P.G. County Survey # 79-16 Date 1787

Building Name Content

Location 14518 Church Street, Upper Marlboro

Open to Public  yes  no

Content is one of the oldest buildings remaining in Upper Marlboro. It is a large, two-story frame house in two sections: the southernmost is four bays wide and is the older section; the northern is three bays wide.

The south part of the house was constructed in 1787, and its foundations are built of stone. The large southeast room and the smaller room to its west are the oldest rooms in the house. Originally a two-story stairway was in the northwest corner of the of the larger room. There are two large unmatched brick chimneys at the south gable end, with a one-story pent.

Circa 1800, an east-west hallway was constructed immediately north of the southern section, giving access to both southern rooms, and the present stairway was raised at the west end of the hall. The original exterior wall of this stairhall may be seen at the attic level. Sometime before 1844, the dining room and kitchen section of the house was constructed north of the stairhass on brick foundations. Modern kitchen alterations hide the fireplace centered in the north exterior wall.

Owned by David Craufurd Jr., at the time of its construction in 1787, Content was subsequently the home of members of the Magruder, Beanes, Contee and Lee families. It was probably during the ownership of William Bradley Beanes that the stairhall was constructed; and later Dr. Benjamin Lee added the northern section. One of Content's most prominent owners was Caleb Clarke Magruder, who bought it in 1844, and whose name was conspicuous in the legal affairs of both county and state.

*M. Cook*

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

PG 79-16

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC **Content**

AND/OR COMMON **Bowling House**

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER **14518 Church Street**

**Fourth**

CITY, TOWN **Upper Marlboro**

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE **Maryland**

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	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input 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"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME **Mr. and Mrs. Jess Joseph Smith, Jr.**

Telephone #: **627-339 (office)**

STREET & NUMBER **14718 Main Street (office)**

CITY, TOWN **Upper Marlboro**

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code **20870**

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. **Courthouse**

Liber #: **4745**

Folio #: **805**

STREET & NUMBER **Main Street**

CITY, TOWN **Upper Marlboro**

STATE **Maryland**

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE **Historic American Buildings Survey**

DATE **1936**

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS **Library of Congress**

CITY, TOWN **Washington**

STATE **D.C.**

**7 DESCRIPTION**

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

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

Content is located on the north side of Church Street in Upper Marlboro, Prince George's County, Maryland. The front of the house faces east, overlooking its broad, terraced lawn, toward the County Courthouse. Two sections of two stories each comprise this large frame house. The section nearest the street has a two-story front porch across the east front. This east facade has three evenly spaced windows and a doorway in the south section and a doorway and two evenly spaced windows in the north section. The west facade is similar but has no large porch. The north gable-end has a centered single chimney flanked by two small windows at attic level. The south gable-end has two large unmatched chimneys with a one-story brick pent. The foundation beneath the south part of the house is of stone. The later additions were built on brick foundations. Most of the windows have exterior, louvered shutters. On the south section the windows on the east and west sides of the first floor are nine-over-nine light sash while the second floor has nine-over-six. The windows on the north section, both sides of the house, are six-over-six. There are small six-paned windows in the east and west walls of the cellar. The windows in both gable ends are narrow six-over-six. The pent window is four-over-four. The steps at both front and rear porches are modern brick. The bottom tread at the east entrance is stone and appears to be old. The two story porch on the east side is enclosed in screen. The railing is made of small square spindles. The main entrance has a single door framed by plain pilasters, with sidelights and arched transom.

The hallway traverses the house east-west. The main entrance (east) has a single door which has had its top four panels replaced with a single window. The sidelights and fanlight have been replaced each with a single piece of glass. Beneath each side-light is a carved wood panel. The rear (west) door is similar except there are no sidelights or fanlight. Wide casings trim the interior doorways. A transom with vertical wooden slats is above the dining room doorway. The only door remaining in place is that to the living room. It has six panels, appears to be old, and has part of its old lock in place. Other similar doors have been stored in the cellar and upstairs. There is an ornate plaster rosette on the ceiling. The ceiling moldings are wide and curved. Midway in the hallway is a cross-arch with plain molded trim. The chair rail is narrow with a carved, low relief design. It does not match the ones in any other part of the house. The stair in the northwest corner of the hall ascends to the west, then south, then east. The hand rail is plain walnut, the spindles, two to a tread, are square. The step-ends have a scroll design. The panelling beneath the stairs has a rectangular pattern. The cellar stair is under this staircase.

The southeast room and the room adjoining it to the west are in the oldest part of the house. Each room has a doorway into the hallway and the two rooms are connected by a door. Both rooms have fireplaces on the south wall. The fireplace mantel in the living room (SE) is obviously a replacement. It is made of black marble in an ornate design. The doorway into the pent is next to the fireplace. The floor is of wide pine boards. At the north end of the room the floor has been patched to cover the area where the original stairway was located. The chair rail is similar but not identical to that in the hallway. Some of the glass in the windows in this room appears to be old. The ceiling cornice has a design of scrolls and flowers with curved molding. This room is about 24 feet by 16 feet.

(See continuation sheet #1)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

Content  
14518 Church St.  
Upper Marlboro  
Prince George's County  
Maryland

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM # 7

PAGE 1

The southeast room is about ten feet wide and at some time in the past has been divided into two rooms. Nail holes in the floor show where the wall was located. A bathroom has been partitioned off the north end of this room. Marks on the wall indicate that two different mantels have been there at some time. The floor near the fireplace has been patched. Lathe in the cellar ceiling shows there has been a fire here.

The dining room is on the north side of the hall and with the adjoining kitchen forms the north section of the house. At some earlier time, the dining room was divided in half (east-west). An elaborately decorated corner cupboard conceals the utility pipes in the southwest corner of the room. A tiny window is high in the west wall inside of the cupboard. The casings on the doors and windows in this room do not match one another or those in other rooms of the house.

The kitchen has been changed by the addition of modern equipment, cabinets, and new floor cover. The north wall has been covered over, concealing the fireplace.

The second floor is similar in plan to the main floor. The hallway has very wide molded chair rail. The door at the east end to the porch has been altered and resembles the main door on the floor beneath it. The fireplaces in the north and southwest bedrooms are covered. The mantel in the southeast room is plain wood with curved capitals atop plain pilasters.

The attic has one large room on either side of the stair hall. The wall and ceiling are plastered. The exterior wall of the north end of the hall wall is exposed. It clearly indicates the addition of the north section of the house. There is a door with a window on either side connecting the two sections of the house.

The cellar walls define the three stages in which the house was built. The south section has four stone (probably Aquia) walls. Brick partitions have been added to make two small rooms on the west side. There is a large fireplace on the south wall. Next to the fireplace ~~on the south wall and~~ near the east wall is a wide, short door of vertical boards. The space where the stairway formerly was located can be seen where the ceiling has been altered. The floor is earthen. The hall and north rooms have concrete floors and brick walls. The west wall of the north room formerly had an exterior door near the hall wall.

The house is located in the southwest corner of the property, creating a large area of lawn to the north and east of the house. The highest point of the property is the northwest corner. Several curved, deep terraces which appear to be very old bring the land down to the level of the house. One terrace (north-south) breaks the expanse of the east yard. A border of trees of many varieties nearly surrounds the property.

There are no outbuildings.

Content  
 14518 Church St.  
 Upper Marlboro  
 Prince George's County  
 Maryland

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM #8 and #9

PAGE 2

## Item #8. Significance

- <sup>4</sup>Ibid. Liber JRM#4, folio 357; Liber JRM#7, folio 202
- <sup>5</sup>Ibid. Liber JRM#7, folio 203
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid. Liber JRM#8, folio 376
- <sup>7</sup>R. Lee Van Horn, Out of the Past, Prince George's County Historical Society, Riverdale, 1976, pp.217-218.
- <sup>8</sup>Deed, Liber AB#2, folio 55, Courthouse, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.
- <sup>9</sup>Ibid. Liber JB#3, folio 449
- <sup>10</sup>Effie Gwynn Bowie, Across the Years in Prince George's County, Garrett and Massie, Inc., Richmond, 1947, p. 545.

## Item #9. Bibliography

## PRIMARY SOURCES

Courthouse, Upper Marlboro, Maryland

Deeds: M-503; H.I-480; JRM#4-357; JRM#7-202, 203; JRM#8-376; AB#2-55; JB#3-499.

Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland

Patents: B#23-133

## SECONDARY SOURCES

Bowie, Effie Gwynn. Across the Years in Prince George's County. Richmond, Virginia: Garrett and Massie Inc., 1947.

Van Horn, R. Lee. Out of the Past. Riverdale, Maryland: The Prince George's County Historical Society, 1976.

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) local history
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1787-1844

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Content is one of the oldest buildings remaining in Upper Marlboro. Construction on only two other houses in the town was begun earlier. Content was built in three stages. Part of the south section nearest Church Street was built first, in 1787. The stair hall and the two-story front porch were added next, about 1800. The north section was added before 1844. The classic terraces and falls in the north and east sides of the yard make the landscape design of historical interest.

Content has always been owned by families who were prominent in the civic, economic and social affairs of Upper Marlboro, Prince George's County and the State of Maryland. The house is located on part of the tract "Meadows" which was patented in 1694 by Col. Ninian Beall and included in Marlborough when the town was laid out in 1706.<sup>1</sup> In 1729, some of this land passed from Col.<sup>2</sup> Beall's descendants to David Craufurd, a wealthy merchant who lived at Kingston.<sup>2</sup> It was his son David, Jr. who conveyed part of lot #36 to his infant granddaughter, Sarah Contee, in April, 1787, "...on which a dwelling house is now erecting, or about to be erected..." Sarah evidently died early because in 1799 her father, Richard Alexander Contee, sold the place to his nephew, James Alexander Magruder who also had acquired the adjoining lot #48 from his father John Read Magruder who was Clerk of the County Court for many years. Almost immediately, James Alexander Magruder sold both lots with their improvements to his brother-in-law, William Bradley Beanes, half brother of Dr. William Beanes of the "Star Spangled Banner" story.<sup>5</sup> Beanes paid 300 pounds currency<sup>6</sup> for the property and sold it two years later to Thomas Contee for 548 pound currency.<sup>6</sup> Either Beanes made a handsome profit in the sale or he had improved the property considerably. Contee had been a member of the first Senate of the State of Maryland.<sup>7</sup> Dr. Benjamin Lee purchased the house from Contee's estate in 1821.<sup>8</sup> According to tradition, it was he who had the north section of the house added. In 1844, Dr. Lee moved to his plantation near Largo and sold Content to Caleb Clarke Magruder.<sup>9</sup> Mr. Magruder's name is conspicuous in the newspapers and Court proceedings of the State and County during the 1850's and 1860's for his participation in civic and legal affairs.<sup>10</sup> There is a story that he kept fighting cocks in the cellar. The property changed hands several times until 1921 when Mrs. Mildred W.N. Bowling purchased it. She and her descendants were in possession until the present owner purchased Content in 1977.

<sup>1</sup> Patents, Liber B#23, folio 133, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

<sup>2</sup> Deeds, Liber M, folio 503, Courthouse, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Liber HH, folio 480

(see continuation sheet #2)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

See Continuation Sheet #2

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**  
 ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.1580 acres

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE Mrs. Margaret W. Cook

ORGANIZATION Prince George's County Committee of MHT

DATE August 1977

STREET & NUMBER 5621 Delaware Drive

TELEPHONE 301-839-3638

CITY OR TOWN Oxon Hill

STATE Maryland 20021

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

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

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
 The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
 (301) 267-1438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

1702965204

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

<b>1. NAME</b>					
COMMON:					
AND/OR HISTORIC: Content					
<b>2. LOCATION</b>					
STREET AND NUMBER: Church Street					
CITY OR TOWN: Upper Marlboro					
STATE: Maryland			COUNTY: Prince George's		
<b>3. CLASSIFICATION</b>					
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment		<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) _____ _____
<b>4. OWNER OF PROPERTY</b>					
OWNER'S NAME: Bowling Mr + Mrs. Jess Joseph Smith, Jr.					
STREET AND NUMBER: 14618 Main Street (office)					
CITY OR TOWN: Upper Marlboro			STATE: Maryland 29870		
<b>5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION</b>					
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Prince George's County Courthouse					
STREET AND NUMBER:					
CITY OR TOWN: Upper Marlboro			STATE: Maryland		
Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #):					
<b>6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS</b>					
TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey					
DATE OF SURVEY: 1936 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local					
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress					
STREET AND NUMBER: 1st St. between E. Capitol St. and Independence Avenue SE					
CITY OR TOWN: Washington, DC			STATE:		

7 DESCRIPTION	
CONDITION	<div style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">(Check One)</div> <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <div style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">(Check One)</div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered    <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered           </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <div style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">(Check One)</div> <input type="checkbox"/> Moved    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site           </div> </div>
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	
<p style="text-align: center;">The house is a two story, framed building set on a high brick basement on the east facade. The entrance is through the north bay of the four-bay east facade; the doorway has a low arched fanlight and side lights. On the south end, double brick chimneys with a pent rise two stories to free-standing stacks; they have weatherings on all three exposed faces.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">On the north end is a two story, three-bay addition with a two story chimney. A two story gallery runs across the front of the four bay main house; foundation evidence points to its having been added after the house was built.</p>	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) C. 1790

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	osophy	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	itarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1787 David Craufurd deeded to Sarah Contee, his granddaughter, the land where "Content" is built, being land where "a dwelling house is now erecting or about to be erected." In 1799, Sarah's father, Richard Alexander Contee, deeded the property to James Alexander Magruder, who in the same year, deeded it to William Beanes. In 1801, Thomas Contee acquired the land, and in 1821, he deeded it to Dr. Benjamin Lee. In 1844, Caleb Magruder acquired it, and on the 1878 "Hopkins Atlas" is shown as the owner.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

Acreage Justification:

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

STATE:	COUNTY:

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Christopher Owens, Park Historian

ORGANIZATION: M-NCPPC      DATE: 5/9/73

STREET AND NUMBER:  
8787 Georgia Avenue

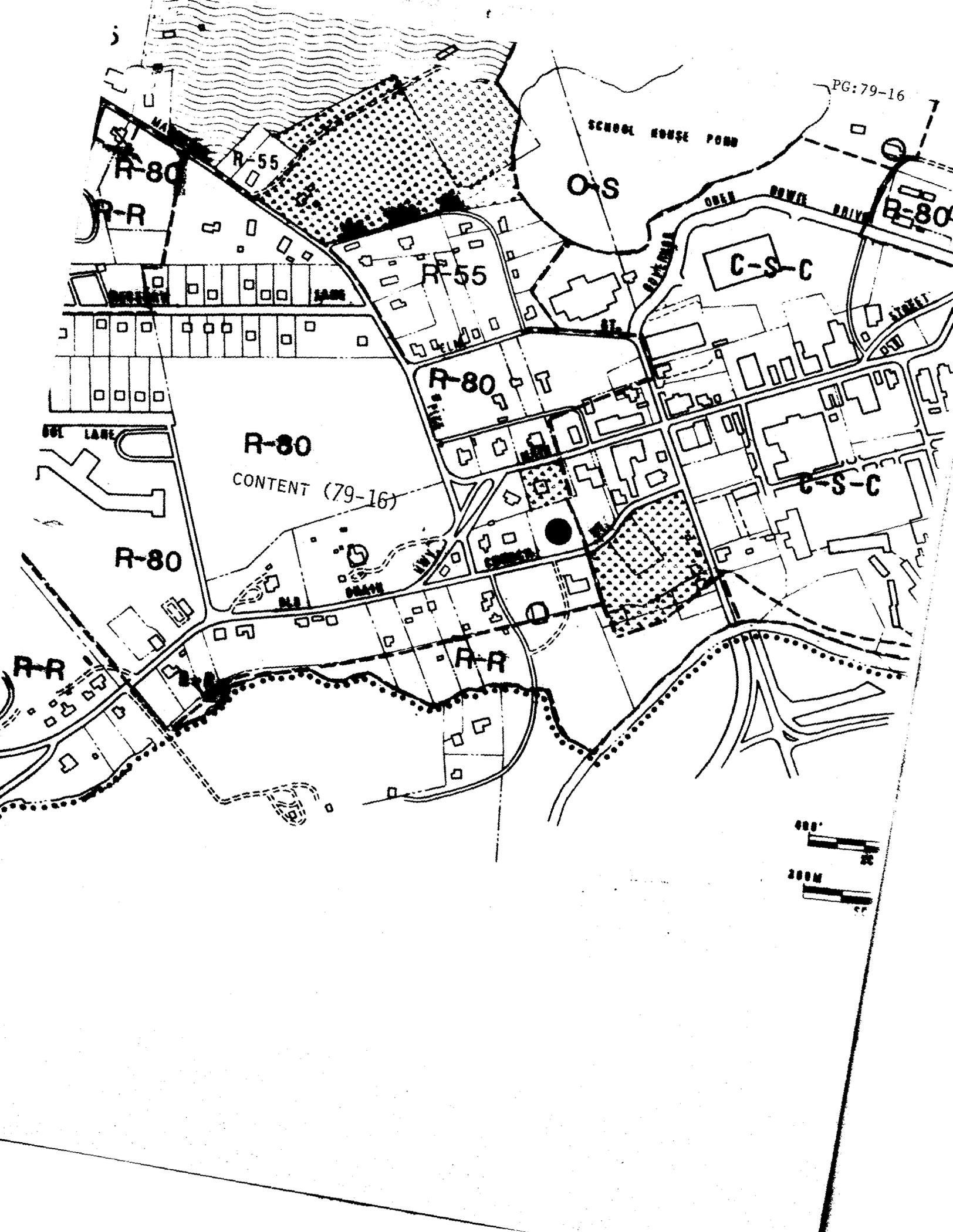
CITY OR TOWN: Silver Spring      STATE: Maryland

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

Significance of this property is:  
 National     State     Local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

SEE INSTRUCTIONS





NAME \ CONTENT

PG: 79-16

LOCATION 14500 BLOCK, CHURCH ST. UPPER MARLBORO, Md.

FACADE E.

PHOTO TAKEN 5/9/73 M. DWYER