

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #79-53 Building Date: 1927

Building Name: County Jail

Location: 14811 Pratt Street, Upper Marlboro, Maryland

Public/Government/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description

The County Jail is a small two-story brick building, constructed in the form of a fortress. It has a flat roof, and is three bays by one bay, with the principal three-bay facade facing roughly north on Pratt Street. Entrance is in the central bay of this principal facade; it is surmounted by a decorative fan, composed of five concentric courses of gray stone blocks. This entrance is sheltered by a one-story temporary entry vestibule. The single sash windows on the first story have molded stone block sills and lintels. Windows in the second story are triple-sash, one pane each, and round-arched, and are surmounted by double arches of brick. At second level, the single bays of east and west facades, as well as the central bay of the north facade, are filled by double round-arched windows. All windows are barred. The corners of the building project slightly to suggest corner towers. At the roof-line, there is a shallow parapet of smooth gray stone. The facades are embellished with string courses of the same gray stone. Above the second story windows is a dentilled projecting string course of smooth stone; running through the line of the second story windows is a lower string course of molded stone blocks. The foundation of the building is defined by large blocks of the same stone. To the rear of the building is a two-story flat-roofed brick addition, and behind it, a larger three-story brick addition. The entire complex is surrounded by a high security fence.

Significance

The Marlboro Jail was constructed in 1927 to replace the old brick jail building which stood at approximately the same site. It is an unusual example of Romanesque Revival architecture. The first jail building was constructed shortly after Upper Marlboro was established as the County seat in 1721; it burned to the ground in 1750. It was replaced by a brick structure in the following year, and rebuilt in 1800, using materials from the 1751 structure. This building was repaired in 1823, and was still standing in the 1920's. After storm damage in 1923, there was pressure to construct a new jail building. In April 1927, the General Assembly authorized bonds of \$40,000 to build and equip a County Jail Building in Upper Marlboro, and construction began in that year. The new jail resembled a miniature fortress, and was an unusual example in Prince George's County of the Romanesque Revival style of architecture. In the years since its construction it has had numerous additions, principally the two-story extension in the 1950's, and the major three-story addition completed in 1977. The original 1927 section is the smallest, and is partly hidden and dwarfed by the additions.

Acreage: 1.75 acres

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic County Jail

and/or common Marlboro Jail

2. Location

street & number 14811 Pratt Street _____ not for publication

city, town Upper Marlboro _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 5

state Maryland _____ county Prince George's

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input 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 checked="" 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 Prince George's County

street & number 14741 Gov. Oden Bowie Drive _____ telephone no.:

city, town Upper Marlboro _____ state and zip code MD. 20772

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Maryland State Archives _____ liber NN

street & number _____ folio 473

city, town Annapolis, _____ state MD.

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records

city, town _____ state

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 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 County Jail is a small two-story brick building, constructed in the form of a fortress. It has a flat roof, and is three bays by one bay, with the principal three-bay facade facing roughly north on Pratt Street. The central bay of this principal facade consists of an entrance on the first story and a double window at second level. The entrance is surmounted by a decorative fan, composed of five concentric courses of gray stone blocks. This entrance is sheltered by a one-story temporary entry vestibule.

The single sash windows on the first story have molded stone block sills and lintels. Windows in the second story are triple-sash, one pane each, and round-arched, and are surmounted by double arches of brick. At second level, the single bays of east and west facades, as well as the central bay of the north facade, are filled by double round-arched windows. All windows are barred.

The corners of the building project slightly to suggest corner towers. At the roofline, there is a shallow parapet of smooth gray stone. The facades are embellished with string courses of the same gray stone. Above the second story windows is a dentilled projecting string course of smooth stone; running through the line of the second story windows is a lower string course of molded stone blocks. The foundation of the building is defined by large blocks of the same stone.

To the rear of the building is a two-story flat-roofed brick addition which covers the south facade of the building. A larger three-story addition extends the jail building south as far as the access road from Douglass Street. The entire complex is surrounded by a high security fence.

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"/> 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> Local History

Specific dates 1927 **Builder/Architect** unknown

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 Marlboro Jail was constructed in 1927 to replace the old brick jail building which stood at approximately the same site. It is an unusual example of Romanesque Revival architecture.

The first jail building was constructed shortly after Upper Marlboro was established as the County seat in 1721; it burned to the ground in 1750. It was replaced by a brick structure in the following year, and rebuilt in 1800, using materials from the 1751 structure. This building was repaired in 1823, and was still standing in the 1920's.¹ In 1923, during a severe storm, the roof of the jail was blown off, and prisoners had to be transferred to another building. The roof was replaced, but there was soon pressure to construct a new jail building. Finally, in April 1927, the General Assembly authorized bonds of \$40,000 to build and equip a County Jail Building in Upper Marlboro. Construction began in that year; jail space in Charles County was rented during the period of construction.²

The new jail resembled a miniature fortress, and was an unusual example in Prince George's County of the Romanesque Revival style of architecture. In the years since its construction it has had numerous additions, principally the two-story south extension in the 1950's, and the major three-story addition completed in 1977. The original 1927 section is the smallest, and is partly hidden and dwarfed by the additions.

Notes

¹ L. J. Hienton, Prince George's Heritage, Maryland Historical Society, 1972, pp. 121-132; Prince George's County Court Records, 1800-1825.

² Prince George's County Commissioners Records, 1917-1928

9. Major Bibliographical References

cf. Notes, Item #8

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.75 acres

T.M. #101, parcel 88

Quadrangle name Bristol, Section D

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A
 Zone Easting Northing

B
 Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl

organization Historic Preservation commission date March 1986

street & number c/o Planning Division, M-NCPPC telephone 952-3521

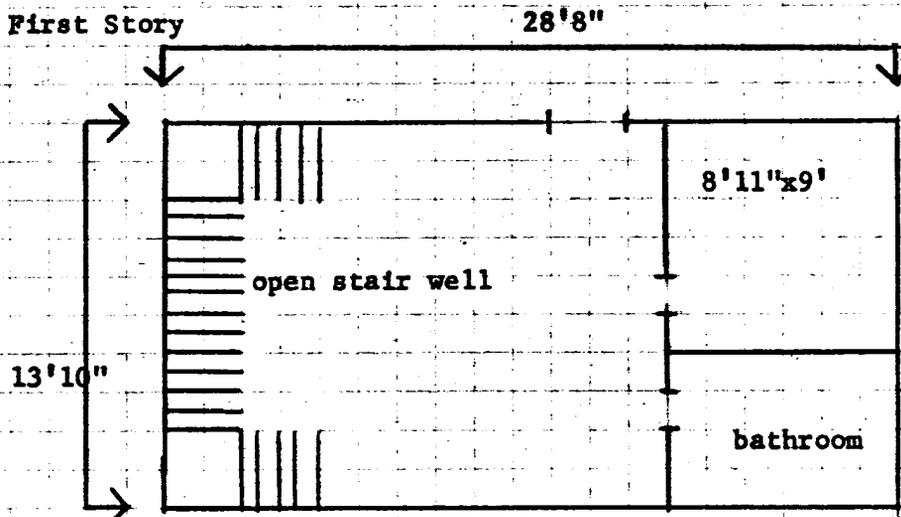
city or town Upper Marlboro, state MD. 20772

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.

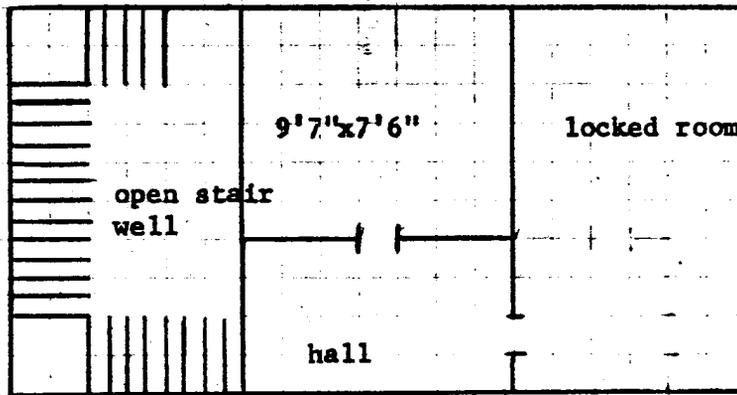
return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

First Story



ceiling 9'

Second Story



ceiling 10'

AROUND THE REGION

Pr. George's Jail Demolition Angers Preservationists

Preservationists in Prince George's County are bitter that they were not given time to save the county's 60-year-old jail in Upper Marlboro, which fell to a wrecking ball a day ahead of schedule.

The county decided to tear down the structure Friday and deemed the decision nonnegotiable, prompting a last-minute lobbying effort by history and architecture enthusiasts who wanted the jail to stay intact.

A team of preservationists and Chamber of Commerce leaders, who had been fighting since June to save the 1927 structure, rushed to County Executive Parris Glendening's office when they heard the news Friday afternoon.

But they were too late.

"I looked out the window and couldn't believe it," said W.C. Dutton of the Prince George's County Chamber of Commerce. "They had already knocked it down."

Glendening's spokesman, Tim Ayers, said the building was demolished one day ahead of schedule to avoid a demonstration planned by the group.

Dutton said he and others were going to lie down in front of the bulldozers and other demolition equipment in an effort to save the jail.

County officials said they were determined to destroy the jail because of their commitment to no longer house prisoners in Upper Marlboro. John Wesley White, the city's chief administrative officer, said that if the jail remained, a court order could have forced the county to house prisoners there.

URGENT REQUEST:

3/13/87 9:15am

From Gail Rothrock (952-3520)

requests JRL call Co Exec Paris Glendinning (952-4131)

TODAY to stay demolition (^{conting action} scheduled for tomorrow) of
 "OLD MARLBORO JAIL" (PG: 79-53)

just in last week, Found architect -

Theodore Weill Pretsch(assoc w/ Simmons;
firm active in Baltimore)Why save?* no other bldg known by him outside ~~Baltimore~~ Baltimore - thus signif.* Chamber of Commerce interested in adaptively-re-using bldg
(contact is Bud Patton from Chamber)

bldg now 3 parts 1927 / 2nd section / 1920s-rear - want to convert to day-care
 center - this will stay.

No one quarrels demo of central section. But want to save oldest sect.
 * Gail has architect's rendering of what this would look like preserved (separate)
 * County roads dept doesn't want to retain bldg, because too close to road.

R-T

P.139

STATE OF MARYLAND
5156/836
6.39 A.
P.250

8/267
4.00A.
P.285

R-R 202

2.20A.
P.44

O-S

SCHOOL HOUSE POND

P.G.CO.
4411/183
11.00A.
P.258

MNC P & BPC.
4413/241
805 A
P.70

R-18

R-80

1.69A.
P.75

I-1

BINGE
BROS., INC.
3077/
409

5471
/517
3.15 A
P.40

725

ODEN BOWIE DRIVE

O-S

PARKING

FINGLASS
1.03 A.
P.171

VOL. FIRE DEPT.

I-2

DEPOT

C-S-O

79-53

Court House

BOARD OF EDUCATION
419/446
4.34A
P.60

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
5299/267,269
150.42A.
P.32

I-1

R-80

112031

e-o

TRINITY CHURCH
3296/253

P.G.CO. COMM.
3190/520
5.48 A.
P.266

FLOOD CONTROL
2125/414 5.70A
P.245

I-3

1/2 MILE RACE TRACK

1/2 MILE RACE TRACK

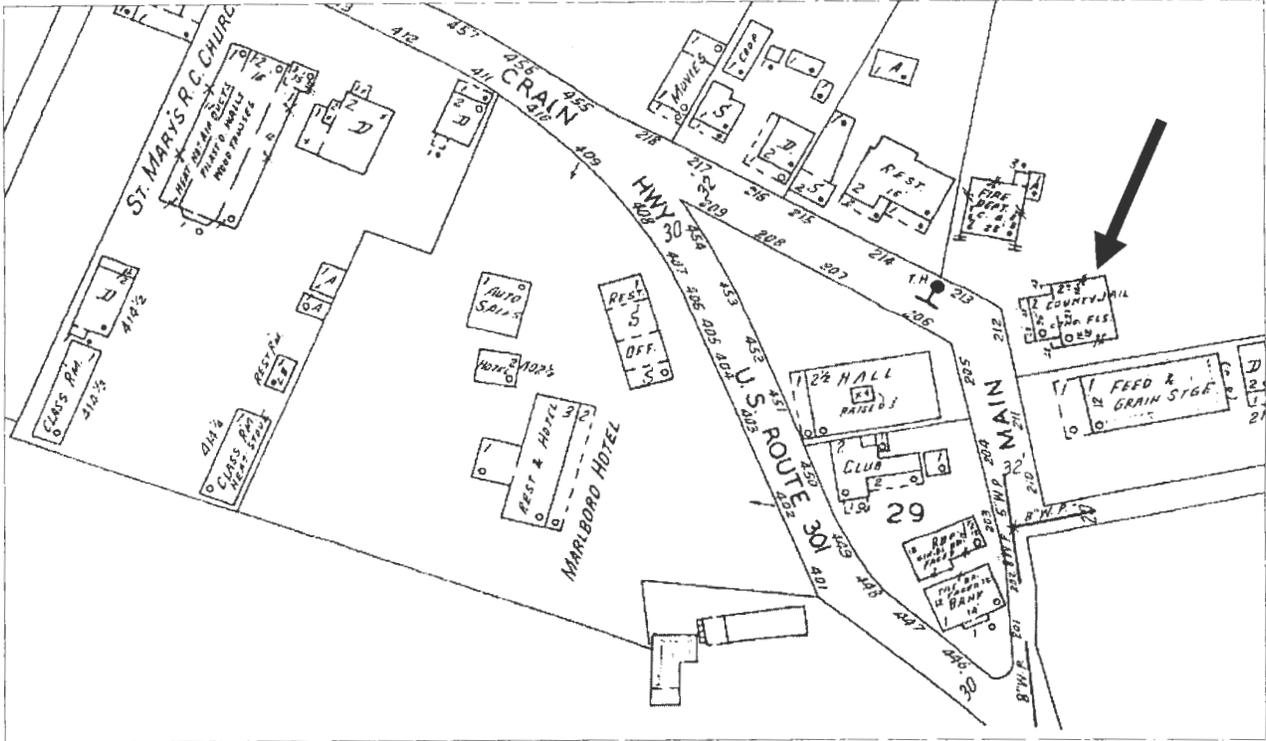
PG:79-53

R-A

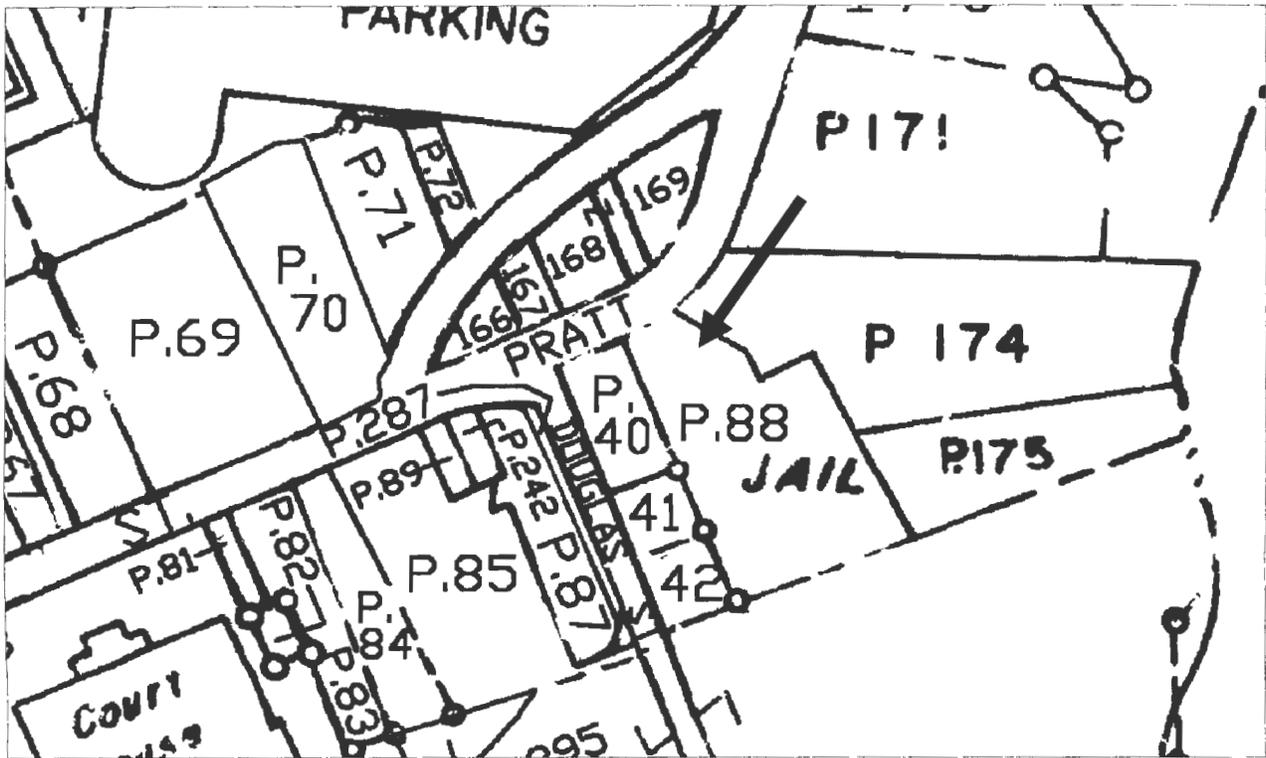
WESTERN

P/C

Marlboro Jail, site (County Jail)
14811 Pratt Street, Upper Marlboro
Sanborn Map, July 1949

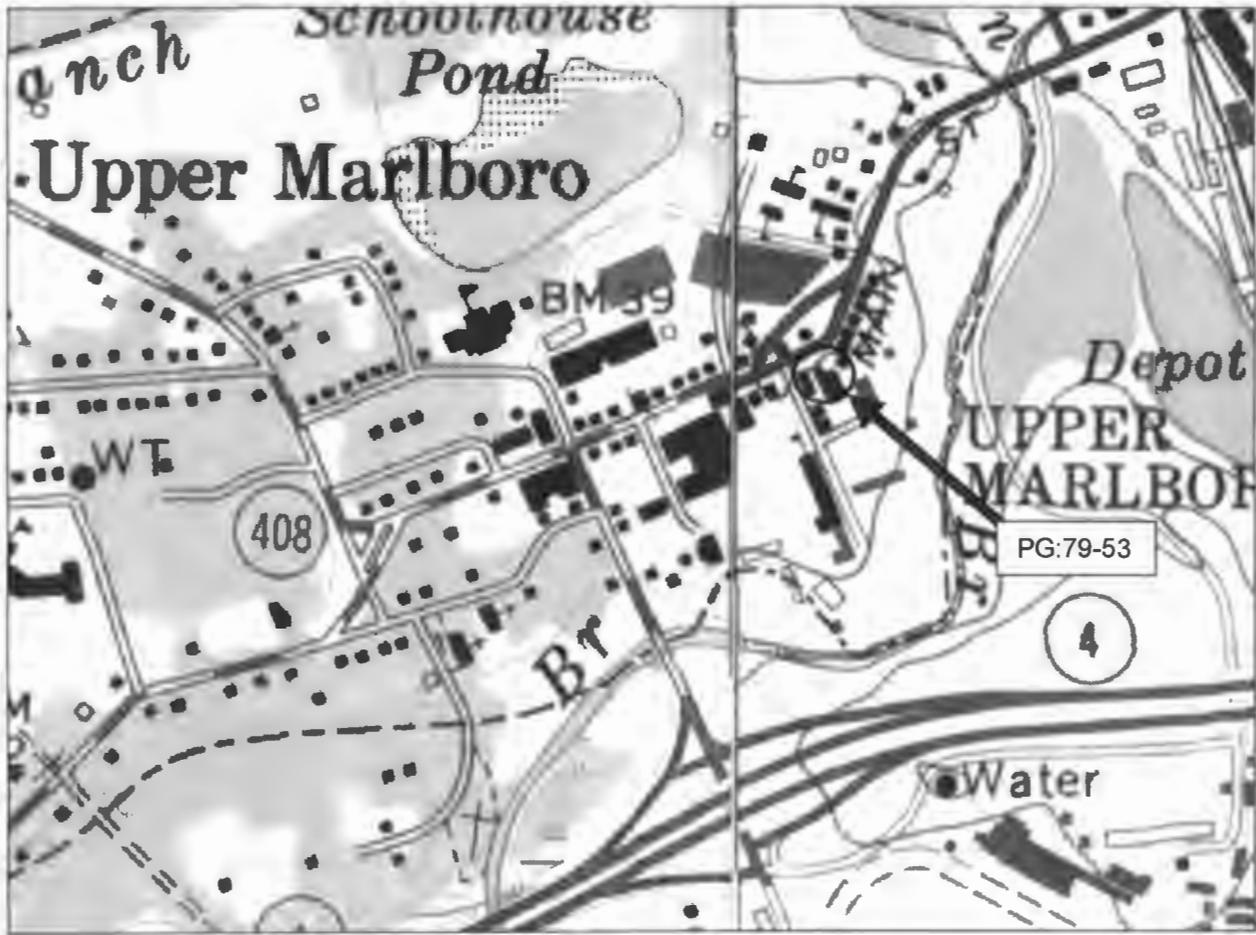


Tax Map 101, p. 88



PG:79-53
Marlboro Jail, site (County Jail)
14811 Pratt Street, Upper Marlboro
Bristol quadrangle 1957, Photorevised 1979

DEMOLISHED 1987





PG#79-53

Marlboro Jail
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
February 1986
Northeast 3/4 elevation
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



PG#79-53

Marlboro Jail
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
February 1986
Northwest 3/4 elevation
Neg: MD Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD