

S-302  
Old Customs House and Post Office  
Crisfield  
Public

c. 1900-1915

The Old Crisfield Customs House and Post Office (now used as a hardware store under the name of Clarence Sterling and Son) is a two-story combination beige and red brick commercial building located in the center of downtown. The simply executed Classical facade is divided by four plain brick pilasters highlighted with limestone capitals. Due to the similarity of building details between this structure and the Marine Bank of Crisfield, it is thought the Customs House was erected during the first decade of the twentieth century. Crisfield's earlier Customs House was a large Victorian brick building located along the wharf near Dock Street.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Old Customs House and Post Office

and/or common Sterling and Son Hardware

## 2. Location

street & number NW side of Main Street (Maryland Avenue) \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Crisfield \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Somerset

## 3. Classification

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

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

name Mr. William Sterling

street & number c/o Sterling and Son Hardware telephone no.:

city, town Crisfield state and zip code Md. 21817

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Somerset Clerk of Court liber

street & number Somerset County Courthouse folio

city, town Princess Anne state Md. 21853

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. S-302

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<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 Old Customs house stands in the center of "downtown" Crisfield on the northwest side of MD 413 near the public wharf. The two-story three-bay brick building faces southeast with the principal gable oriented on a northwest/southeast axis.

The c. 1900-1910 two story, combination yellow and red brick commercial building is three bays across and five bays deep. Extending farther to the rear is a series of shorter sections, eight bays in length. The seven course common bond brick structure is faced with a beige to yellow, stretcher bond brick facade. The simple gabled roof behind the arched parapet is covered with slate.

The southeast (main) elevation is a three-bay facade divided by four brick pilasters on each floor. A modern glass door occupies the center bay, while the two adjacent bays have large glass display windows. Painted on each window is "Clarence Sterling and Son." Also located in the north bay is a side door entrance that leads to the second floor. Each window and door opening is topped by a plain limestone flat arch. The first and second floors are divided by a rusticated stone string course with a decorative row of brick dentils below. Rising from the string course are four identical pilasters that divide the second floor windows. Tri-partite single-pane sash windows are topped by smooth limestone lintels. Stretching across the base of the gable roof is a corbelled brick cornice and another rusticated limestone string course. The gabled parapet roof is highlighted by corbelled brick that parallels the rusticated limestone parapet capping.

The southwest side of the main block is evenly divided into five bays marked by single pane sash windows with segmental brick arches. The sills are of rusticated stone and iron grills cover the first floor windows. Round butt rafter feet peak out below the slate roof, and a partially demolished brick stove stack rises from the southwest side and the southwest corner.

The rear (northwest) face of the main block is covered on the first floor by a single-story eight-bay wing. The second floor is pierced by three unevenly spaced single-pane sash windows with segmental arches. A diamond-shaped brick vent marks the uppermost portion of the gable end.

The rear section appears to have been built near to or at the same time as the main block due to the basic consistency in the brickwork and window details. There is an irregular seam in the brickwork of the rear portion between the fifth and sixth bays from the north which may suggest the tail end five bays were added a short time after initial construction. Parapet sides conceal a low pitched gable roof that covers the rear section. An irregular arrangement of single-pane sash windows and smaller lights mark the northwest gable end.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. S-302

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 type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** \_\_\_\_\_ **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 Old Customs House and Post Office (now used as a hardware store under the name of Clarence Sterling and Son) displays a simply designed Classical facade in beige-colored brick with limestone highlighting windows, doors and stringcourses. Due to the similarity of building details between this structure and the Marine Bank of Crisfield, it is thought the Old Customs House and Post Office was erected during the first decade of the twentieth century. Crisfield's earlier Customs House was a large Victorian brick building located along the wharf near Dock Street.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. S-302

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

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

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Touart- Architectural Historian

organization Somerset County Historical Trust date 7/9/85

street & number 424 N. Somerset Avenue telephone 651-0077

city or town Princess Anne state Md. 21853

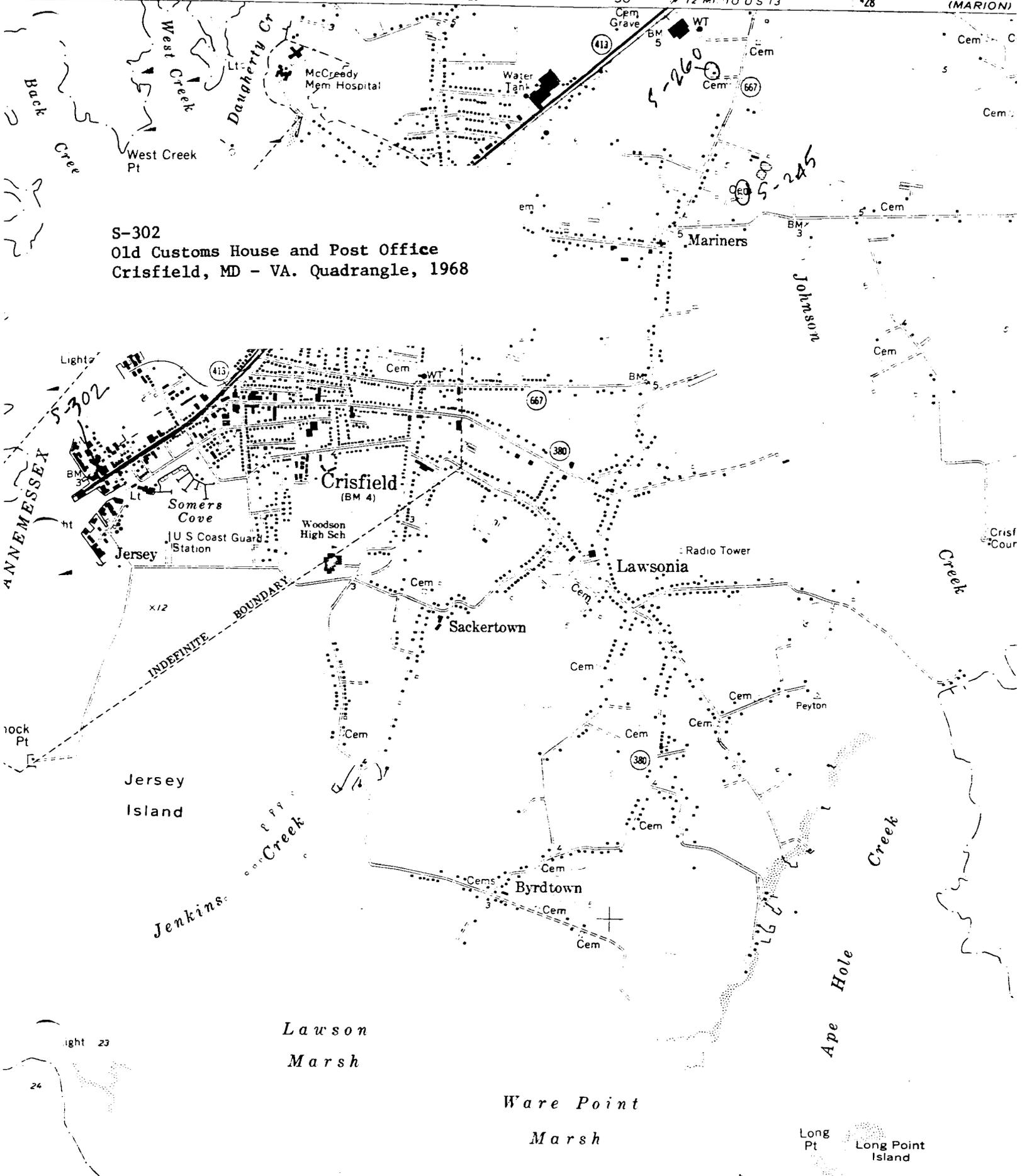
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

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

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

424000m E. 2 760 000 FEET (VA.) 425 426 50' 12 MI. TO U.S. 13 428 5860 III SE (MARION)



S-302  
Old Customs House and Post Office  
Crisfield, MD - VA. Quadrangle, 1968

ANNESEX  
S-302

INDEFINITE BOUNDARY

S-260  
S-245

Lawson  
Marsh

Ware Point  
Marsh

Long Pt  
Long Point  
Island



Old Customs House and Post Office S-302  
Crisfield, Somerset County  
Southeast Elevation  
7/85 Photographer - Paul Touart  
Neg/Maryland Historical Trust



Old Customs House and Post Office    S-302  
Crisfield, Somerset County  
Southwest Elevation  
7/85    Photographer - Paul Touart  
Neg/Maryland Historical Trust