The Dover farmhouse, although reaching an advanced state of disrepair, is a finely detailed two-story brick house specifically dated to 1810 by an end wall datebrick. The datebrick also carries the owners' initials at the time of construction, Joseph J. and Mary S. Gillis. Finely crafted mantels, door and window surrounds, and pilastered window aprons on the first floor contribute to the sophisticated features of this rural dwelling. The house achieved its stepped profile during the mid to late nineteenth century with successive additions. The first addition, now the center section of the house, was built around 1840, and it provided space for a dining room on the first floor. The third part, the single story kitchen, was attached around the turn of the twentieth century at a time when service wings were commonly built with the dwelling.

On December 15, 1802, Mary Spence Robins (also known as Maria) purchased parts of several contiguous tracts known at the time as Chance and Dover as well as part of Smiths First Choice for £700. The following month, two days before Christmas, Mary Spence Robins married Joseph J. Gillis. Eight years later the couple engaged craftsmen in the construction of the two-story Federal-style house as the centerpiece to a sizable plantation east of Snow Hill and two miles from what was then known as Spence's Landing Assateague (now Chincoteague) Bay.

Although Joseph and Mary mortgaged the property in 1824 and eventually lost title to the farm, the "Dover estate" remained in Spence family hands until 1858 when William S. Moore purchased the house and
farmland for $6750. Thirty-eight year old William Moore is listed in the 1860 United States Census for Worcester County as a gentleman with real estate and personal property valued at 13,500, a sizable amount for the time. He shared the house with his thirty-year old wife Mary and three young children, William, Anna, and Ellen.

As a result of a court settlement initiated in 1867 the farm was sold six years later to Susan A. Ennis, who resided on the property with her husband, Joseph I. Ennis. Joseph Ennis is designated at this site on the 1877 Worcester County atlas, and the patron list identifies him as a county farmer owning 400 acres. Late in the nineteenth century the property entered Worcester County court once more. In 1899 the trustee, George W. Purnell, transferred the title to the farm to William F. Johnson. Since the twentieth century the Spence vicinity farm has been sold a half-dozen different times until the current owner purchased it in 1965.
Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name
(indicate preferred name)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic</th>
<th>DOVER</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>And/or common</td>
<td>DOVER FARM</td>
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2. Location

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>County, state</td>
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3. Classification

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<th>Present Use</th>
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<td>x occupied</td>
<td>x agriculture</td>
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<td>x private</td>
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<td>both</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>structure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>site</td>
<td>Public Acquisition</td>
<td>x in process</td>
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<tr>
<td>object</td>
<td>x not applicable</td>
<td>x not applicable</td>
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</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Ann O. Blank</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street &amp; number</td>
<td>Route 3, Box 112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City, town</td>
<td>Snow Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and zip code</td>
<td>MD 21863</td>
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5. Location of Legal Description

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.</th>
<th>Worcester County Clerk of Court</th>
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<tr>
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<td>liber FWH 218</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>City, town</td>
<td>Snow Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>MD 21863</td>
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6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

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<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repository for survey records</td>
<td>Maryland Historical Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>City, town</td>
<td>Annapolis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>MD 21401</td>
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</table>
Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Dover farm is located on the south side of Public Landing Road near the small crossroads village of Spence, Worcester County, Maryland. The two-story, three-part stepped house faces northeast with the gable roof oriented on a northwest/southeast axis.

Built in three stages, the main two-story side hall-parlor brick house is dated to 1810 by a brick fixed in the north gable end. The middle two-story section was added during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, while the single story third section dates to around 1900. The brick block is stuccoed, while the frame parts are covered with asbestos shingles. Wood shingle roofs cover each of the three sections.

Resting over a fully excavated cellar, the 1810 brick house is three bays wide and one room deep. The north (main) facade is marked by a side entrance and boarded over twelve-over-twelve sash windows on the first floor. The arched front entrance is flanked by reeded pilasters. Topping the double, flat-paneled doors is an arched transom light. The second floor is defined by three boarded-over twelve-over-eight sash windows. Trimming the base of the roof is a boxed cornice fitted with a period dentiled bed molding.

The northwest gable end is marked by a datebrick centered in the upper wall surface. Flanking the 1810 date are the owners initials, J. J. Gillis and Mary S. Gillis. Marking the wall at ground level is a deteriorated cellar opening, while a pair of six-over-six sash windows pierce the upper wall surface to light the attic. Rising through the roof is an interior end brick stack, and a beaded edge bargeboard trims the gable end.

The south wall, failing to the point of eventual collapse, is a three-bay facade with a side entrance and flanking twelve-over-twelve sash windows. The rear entrance is framed by an elaborate Federal style surround of reeded pilasters under an articulated frieze and modillioned cornice. The door is missing, and the transom lights have been broken out. Nevertheless, the frieze is marked by three projecting blocks under a cornice with small console-shaped modillions and a fine row of dentil molding. Lighting the second floor are three twelve-over-eight sash windows, and the deteriorating cornice survives with part of its dentiled bed molding.

The southeast gable end is largely covered by the two-story, two-bay mid nineteenth-century addition which was partially built over one (north) window which was made smaller at the time. The south window retains its original size although the sash has been removed. Extending below the interior end chimney is a beaded edge bargeboard.

(continued)
DOVER FARM DESCRIPTION (continued)  Page 12

The two-story frame section is slightly shorter in elevation, and it is covered by a shallower pitched gable roof. The north (front) wall is defined by two window openings on each floor, however the sash have been broken out. The base of the roof is trimmed with a plain boxed cornice, and the eave is slightly extended on the gable end. Protruding through the gable end is an interior end stuccoed brick chimney stack.

Covering a large part of the gable end is the single story one-room plan late nineteenth century kitchen wing, two bays across by one room deep. The front (north) wall is marked by a door and window opening, while the east gable end is pierced by a single two-over-two sash window. The south side of both the middle section and the kitchen are covered with a turn of the century shed roofed addition.

The interior of the brick house retains much of its early nineteenth-century woodwork although the stair railing was replaced during the late nineteenth century. A turned post and a series of turned balusters support a molded handrail. Surviving in the hall are the early nineteenth-century moldings that frame the front door. A molded surround on each side visually support an arched molding with keystone that frames the transom. The rear entrance is framed by a astragal-backband molding, and the reveals are paneled.

The parlor is the most elaborately finished room in the house with a distinctive Federal style mantel framing the hearth. Paneled pilasters rise under a five-part frieze with decorated gougework tablets. The stepped mantel shelf is enriched with a carved rope molding as is the inside edge of the hearth surround. Trimming the perimeter of the room is a decorated chair rail with four-point stars alternating with vertical gouge marks. Each of the windows is marked by plastered aprons flanked by paneled pilasters with a bead-and-reel inset panel molding. The window surrounds boast the same bead-and-reel treatment, and the window reveals are paneled as well. A high molded baseboard also trims the room.

The second floor is divided into two rooms which open off the second floor hall. The main bedroom retains its period woodwork with a fancy Federal style mantel of reeded pilasters, and a five-part frieze with three reeded tablets. Intricate rows of delicate moldings enrich the mantel entablature and cornice. Stretching around the perimeter of the room is period chair rail and baseboard.

The small room at the head of the stair is enclosed behind beaded board partition walls. Fixed next to the small bedroom is the partially enclosed attic stair. A short closer stringer stair comprised of four steps rises to the boxed steps. Supporting a circular profile handrail is a slender square newel post with a molded cap. A series rectangular balusters survives as well. Paralleling the stair balustrade is a half-rail wall molding. An adjacent door opening providing access to the plain second floor bedroom is hung with Federal style four-panel door.
The partially finished attic is divided into three rooms by vertical beaded board partitions. The doors have been removed.

The interior of the center section is finished with sawn lath and plaster, and built into one wall of the first floor room is a narrow beaded board closet. An early nineteenth century six-panel door survives on the back door which leads to the shed addition.

The adjacent kitchen, on the other hand, is fitted with narrow beaded board walls and ceiling as well as a built-in cupboard.
## 8. Significant

<table>
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<th>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</th>
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<td>commerce</td>
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<tr>
<td>1900-</td>
<td>communications</td>
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**Specific dates** 1810

**Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: _A_ _B_ x _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 Dover farmhouse, although reaching an advanced state of disrepair, is a finely detailed two-story, brick house specifically dated to 1810 by an end wall datebrick. The datebrick also carries the owners' initials at the time of construction, Joseph J. and Mary S. Gillis. Finely crafted mantels, door and window surrounds, and pilastered window aprons on the first floor contribute to the sophisticated features of the rural dwelling. The house achieved its stepped profile during the mid to late nineteenth century with successive additions. The first addition, now the center section of the house, was built around 1840, and provided space for a dining room on the first floor. The third part, the single story kitchen, was attached around the turn of the twentieth century at a time when service wings were commonly built with the dwelling.

**HISTORY AND SUPPORT**

On December 15, 1802, Mary Spence Robins (also known as Maria) purchased parts of several contiguous tracts known at the time as Chance and Dover as well as part of Smiths First Choice for $700. (V/320) The following month, two days before Christmas, Maria Spence Robins married Joseph J. Gillis. Eight years later, in 1810, the couple engaged craftsmen in the construction of this two-story brick house finished in sophisticated Federal style woodwork as the centerpiece to a large plantation east of Snow Hill. Joseph and Mary's initials and the 1810 construction date are found in a brick fixed in the north gable end.

Although Joseph and Mary mortgaged the property in 1824 and eventually lost title to the property, (see AQ 311, and AY 314) the Dover farm remained in Spence family hands until 1858 when William S. Moore purchased the house and farmland for $6750. (WET 1/233) Thirty-eight year old William Moore is listed in the 1860 United States Census for Worcester County as a gentleman with real estate and personal property valued at 13,500, a sizable amount for the time. He shared the house with his 30-year old wife Mary and three young children, William, Anna, and Ellen.

(continued)
10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property
Quadrangle name
Quadrangle scale
UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

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<th>A</th>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>H</td>
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Verbal boundary description and justification

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>state</th>
<th>code</th>
<th>county</th>
<th>code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Paul B. Touart Architectural Historian
organization: Worcester County
date: 2/1/89
street & number: Worcester County Courthouse
telephone: 301-632-1194
state: MD

declaration:
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
As a result of a court settlement initiated in 1867 the farm was sold six years later to Susan A. Ennis, who resided on the property with her husband, Joseph I. Ennis. Joseph Ennis is designated at this site on the 1877 Worcester County atlas, and the patron list identifies him as a county farmer owning 400 acres. Late in the nineteenth century the property entered Worcester County court once more. In 1899 the trustee, George W. Purnell, transferred the title to the farm to William F. Johnson. (FHP 12/17) Since the twentieth century the Spence vicinity farm has been sold a half-dozen different times until the current owner purchased the property in 1965.
HISTORIC CONTEXT INFORMATION

Resource Name: DOVER

MHT Inventory Number: WO-40

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA:

1) Historic Period Theme(s):
   Architecture, Agriculture

2) Geographic Orientation:
   Eastern Shore

3) Chronological/Developmental Period(s):
   1880-1815 Rural Agriculture Intensification

4) Resource Type(s):
   Standing Structure
   a. Single-Family Dwelling on Old Farmstead
WO-40
DOVER FARM
Spence vicinity, Worcester County, Maryland
Chain of title

FWH 218/120  R. R. Blackburn
Mary O. Blackburn

to

4/7/1967  William B. Blank
Anne Ogburn Blank
"Dover Farm"

FWH 218/118  William B. Blank
Anne Ogburn Blank

to

4/7/1967  R. R. Blackburn
Mary O. Blackburn
295 acres

FWH 184/482  Crawford D. Rayne and others

to

3/4/1965  William B. Blank
Anne Ogburn Blank
"Dover Farm"  295 acres

FWH 133/449  William P. Phillips, Jr., Dorothy W. Phillips
Robert S. Phillips, Shirley Phillips

to

4/1/1960  Crawford D. Rayne, Ethel D. Rayne, et. al.
$2,600 "Dover Farm"  295 acres

conveyed to grantors by two deeds from Marcus J. Williams, trustee, 4/17/1959, FWH 122/93
DOVER FARM
Chain of title

FWH 122/93  Marcus J. Williams, trustee
          to
          Dorothy W. Phillips, et. al.
$21,000  "Dover Farm"  337 acres

CWN 16/308  Harry Ward, Eunice E. Ward
          to
7/9/1947  William A. Phillips
          "Dover Farm"  337 acres

JEB 10/442  Margaret W. Monds, et. al.
          to
1/6/1942  Harry W. Ward, Eunice E. Ward
          $5,700  "The Dover Farm"

ODC 35/373  Elton M. Jones
          Nellie R. Jones
          to
12/31/1919  Riley S. Monds and
          Carson F. Chandler
          ... and the interest of said Carson F. Chandler
          therein having been conveyed unto the said Riley
          S. Monds by deed 12/29/1927  BB 4/573

ODC 9/113  William F. Johnson and wife, Lillian D. Johnson
          to
3/25/1911  Elton M. Jones
          "Dover Farm"  350 acres
George W. Purnell, trustee
to
William F. Johnson $1,500

Decree of Circuit Court, 1420 Chancery Docket 6/3/1893
Ara P. Bowen, complainant vs. Joseph and Susan Ennis, defendants
...and being the same land which was conveyed to one Susan A. Ennis by Ephraim K. Wilson, trustee 5/21/1873 ITM 2/537

Ephraim K. Wilson
to
Susan A. Ennis
Circuit Court 7/16/1867
Mary A. Moore next friend to Anna Moore and
Elizabeth E. R. Moore vs. Anna Moore and
Elizabeth E. R. Moore
"Dover Estate"

John S. Spence
Mary N. Spence
to
William S. Moore $6,750. "Dover"

George P. Spence, Worcester County
to
John S. Spence, Dorchester County $6,000
WO-40
DOVER FARM
Chain of title

GMH 5/123
Ara Spence

to

1/1/1842
George P. Spence
$7,000 "Dover"

Mary Spence
to

Ara Spence

William Bratton
to

Ara Spence

AY 314
Ephraim K. Wilson
to

9/28/1832
Ara Spence $1960.
Whereas by a decree of circuit court-5/6/1831,
E. K. Wilson appointed trustee in a case involving
lands mortgaged by Joseph J. Gillis and Mary his
wife unto James B. Robins

AQ 311
Joseph J. Gillis and Mary his wife
to

11/26/1824
James B. Robins $1,100.
"...all that parcel of Land whereon the said
Joseph and Mary lately lived consisting of parts of
several tracts, viz. part of a tract called 'Dover'
including as well of all that part originally conveyed
by the said James to his sister the said Mary as also
that part of the same tract that was devised by Mary
S. Gillis as also part of a tract of land contiguous called 'Chance' part of one other called 'Smiths First Choice' and also part of other tract called 'Mount Ephraim' or 'Brattens Choice' and all other tract or tracts contiguous thereto by whatever name called or known all the same lands being situate lying and being in the county and state aforsaid about two miles from the Bay side..."

James B. Robins

to

Mary Spence Robins
£700 Whereas a certain Adam Spence, Sr. being seized in fee of two Tracts of Land Viz. Chance and Dover and also of part of tract of Land called Smiths First Choice all situated contiguous to each other in County afsd (did by his last will bearing date the 7th day of May 1761) among other things devise unto his son George Spence all his right of a Tract of Land... which devised lands the said George Spence by his Deed duly executed did convey to a certain James Selby of Ezel on March 6, 1789...containing 175 acres...and the said James Selby by his deed dated about January 27th, 1801 did convey his title to same lands to James B. Robins..."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<th>Occupation</th>
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<td>Gentleman</td>
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<td>Ellen Moore</td>
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WO-40
DOVER FARM
Spence vicinity, Worcester County, Maryland

Marriage records

Joseph Gillis married Maria T. Robins (probably misread, should be Maria S. Robins)

December 23, 1802

Daughter of Major John Purnell Robins and Anne Spence Robins
Married in 1770
1. STATE: Maryla  
   COUNTY: Worcester  
   TOWN: Snow Hill  
   VICINITY: Spence  
   STREET NO.: Rt. 365, .3 mile west of Taylor Rd. (south)

2. NAME: Dover  
   DATE OR PERIOD: 1810  
   STYLE: Federal  
   ARCHITECT:  
   BUILDER:  

3. ORIGINAL OWNER: William Blank  
   ORIGINAL USE: dwelling  
   PRESENT OWNER: William Blank  
   PRESENT USE: vacant  
   WALL CONSTRUCTION: brick and stucco  
   NO. OF STORIES: 2

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION

William Blank's house is one of the finest existing brick Federal houses in Worcester County. Unfortunately it will not be standing long if something is not done about its preservation. The walls are all covered with cement, now turned a grey green in color. There was a water table which is now undiscernable. The main portion is three bays long and one room deep. The entrance on both sides is located on the eastern side of the facades. Both have elaborate enframements, one on north with fluted pilasters and a very delicate semicircular fanlight. The opposite door has modillions dentils and some fine carved Federal decoration. Both of the doors may have had a pediment. Sash have twelve over twelve panes on first story, twelve over eight panes on second story, and six over six in attic. On the west gable end are two bricks with initials and the date 1810, located at about second floor level. There is a chimney at both gables.

Some of the interior could be seen from the yard. There were sunken paneled window jambs. And a very fine carved mantel which had the central panel removed, in the living room. The hall contained a mid-nineteenth century stair which rose on the living room wall, thus making it possible to have two rooms on second story.

There are two other sections of the house, both two bays long, one two stories and the other one story, with leanto off the south of each.

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE
   Endangered: Yes  
   Interior: poor  
   Exterior: poor

The building is in poor condition but has great detail and charm. It sits on a knoll with several maple trees toward the road. Behind the house is a large barn and several outbuildings, all in poor condition.

6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)

7. PHOTOGRAPH

8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)
   INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER
   Michael Bourne  
   MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
   2525 RIVA ROAD  
   ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401  
   DATE OF RECORD: October, 1969
WO-40
DOVER
Public Landing vic., Worcester Co., MD
West gable end
11/69, Michael O. Bourne, photographer
Negative/MD Historical Trust
WO-40
DOVER
Public Landing, vic., Worcester Co., MD
Southeast elevation
11/69, Michael O. Bourne, photographer
Negative/MD Historical Trust
WO-40
DOVER
Public Landing vic., Worcester Co., MD
South elevation
11/69, Michael O. Bourne, photographer
Negative/MD Historical Trust