NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Retreat (CH-10)

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number MD Rt. 484 (Poor House Road) and MD Rt. 6 [ ] not for publication N/A

city, town Port Tobacco [X] vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Charles code 017 zip code 20677

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property		
		Contributing	Noncontributing	
[X] private	[X] building(s)	2	1	buildings
[ ] public-local	[ ] district			sites
[ ] public-State	[ ] site			structures
[ ] public-Federal	[ ] structure			objects
	[ ] object	2	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official — Date 2-18-88

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

State or Federal agency and bureau Housing and Community Development, Maryland Historical Trust

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

[ ] entered in the National Register.
[ ] See continuation sheet.

[ ] determined eligible for the National Register. [ ] See continuation sheet.

[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.

[ ] removed from the National Register.

[ ] other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Colonial

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Weatherboard
roof Asphalt
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

Situated on the north side of Md. Rte. 484, (Poor House Road), .02 mile northwest of its junction with Md. Rte. 6, Retreat is a one story, clapboard sheathed, frame house basically ell-shaped in overall plan. The circa 1770 principal part of the house faces south-southwest and is of regionally traditional styling characteristic of its period, distinguished by a three-bay facade with an end door, and a high gable roof with peaked dormers. At one end stands a large double chimney of brick construction incorporating a flush, shed-roofed pent. Extending out from the rear of the house is a one story, gable-roofed, frame wing with dormers and an exterior chimney. The wing is attached to the main block by a narrow, low roofed, one bay hyphen. The room configuration of the original part of the house consists of a side-passage and off-set stair with two adjacent rooms, and two rooms at the attic level. Much of the eighteenth century woodwork of this part of the house remains preserved, including simple but bold mantles with applied fretwork, ceiling cornices, chair rails, window and door trim, raised panel doors, and blind paneled wainscoting lining the stairwell and the end wall of the hall. Two attic doors with fixed glass panes above four raised panels are an especially interesting interior detail. The rear wing, joined to the main hall by a narrow, board sheathed passage, contains two main rooms at the first floor and two attic chambers above. One of the first floor rooms features walls sheathed with flush beaded boards and exposed ceiling joists, while the adjacent room, now a modern kitchen, has exposed wall and ceiling framing. The wing, built circa 1800, originally stood off the chimney end of the main block and was moved to its present location circa 1910. A frame, pyramid-roofed meathouse, dating from the early nineteenth century and located near the rear wing, was moved here from another historic property in the county known as "Brentland" in 1953, and is the only surviving building associated with that property. Retreat, approached by a private gravel road, is surrounded by cultivated fields, meadows and woodland, preserving its original agricultural and rural setting.

[X] See continuation sheet for GENERAL DESCRIPTION

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Built on brick, English bond foundations, Retreat measures 30'-4" wide and 28'-3½" deep with a centered exterior chimney at the southeast end that is 16'-3" across at the base. The three-bay principal elevation includes a transomed entrance door to the left with two nine-over-nine pane sash windows to its right. Above are two clapboard sheathed, gable-roofed dormers containing sash of six-over-six panes. The same arrangement of door, windows and dormers is repeated on the rear elevation, although the rear door, formerly exposed, is now covered by the hyphen connecting the main block and rear wing. The northwest end elevation of the house has two first floor windows of nine-over-nine sash and two smaller gable windows above.

The dominant feature of the southeast end is a double chimney with two free-standing stacks, each having uneven, tiled weatherings. The chimney incorporates a flush pent with an unusually narrow shed roof. A small, two-pane casement window, centered in the chimney wall but not aligned with the pent roof, lights the interior chimney closet. Of Flemish bond construction at the base, the chimney masonry changes to common bond below the weatherings. Other more subtle changes in the brickwork suggest that the chimneys might have been partially rebuilt before the 1945 restoration of the house. An interesting and as yet unexplained feature of the chimney are two flat topped shoulders on the right side of both stacks. It is possible that these may have been intended to support the structural framework of an original wing.

The northwest elevation of the wing is set back about 4-inches from the end wall of the main block, and is attached to the latter by a 7'-3" hyphen. The wing, approximately 32'-6½" wide by 18'-3" deep, is four bays wide on its southwest side. A door occupies the second bay from the northeast end and is sheltered by a small shed-roofed porch. Each of the end windows frame sash of six-over-six panes, while a narrower window to the right of the door is of four-over-four panes. The rear elevation has an off-centered door fronted by a small stoop and steps, and two windows of six-over-six sash. The partially exposed southeast elevation has a single six-over-six pane window while the northeast end has an exterior chimney, 6'-10" wide at the base. The chimney is flanked by small, six-pane casement windows at the first floor level and two smaller windows in the gable. The wing was built on brick piers and has two gable-roofed dormers on the northwest side.

The hyphen joining the two parts of the house was originally without foundations, its only support being the joining of its framing to that of the house and wing. It has a single window centered in its northwest wall and a centered door, now sealed, in its southeast wall.

See Continuation Sheet No. 7.2

The front entrance door of the main block opens onto an ell-shaped hall, 9'-2" wide at the front and 15' wide at the back. An open string stair with winders rises along the northeast wall at the end of the ell from the east corner. The stair features scrolled spandrels, delicate block and turned balusters, molded rail, and an unusually shaped, block and turned newel capped by a shaped newel. A stair closet below is enclosed by a paneled wall composed of molded rails and stiles framing plain panels. The stairwell is lined on one side by wainscoting composed of flush angled boards with a molded cap that continues across the full width of the back wall of the hall as well.

Of the two first floor rooms the front room is the largest, the rear room being shortened by the recessed stair. (See Attached Plan.) Both rooms feature mantles of a fairly simple yet bold design, their principal decorative elements being fretwork below molded shelves, blocked panels on the frieze, and reeded pilasters. Other original interior woodwork includes three-piece chair rails, two-piece ceiling cornices composed of a double ogee crown molding with a beaded back plate, beaded baseboards, and two-piece window and door trim. Of special interest are four original doors with molded raised panels. (There is a possibility that the stair paneling and the mantles date ca. 1800; the balance of the woodwork closely resembles that of The Exchange, NR, built in 1778.)

The stair rises to a small landing off from which open two bedrooms with partially sloped ceilings. The stair originally opened onto a narrow, unlighted passage extending to the front of the house. This arrangement was later altered to accomodate a bathroom and closets. Both bedrooms retain most of their original woodwork, including chair rails, knee wall doors, baseboards, door and window trim, and doors. The fireplace mantle in the northeast room is a later replacement, however, and at one time this same room had been converted into two rooms by a partition wall of vertical beaded boards. An especially interesting feature of the attic level are its two hall doors. Both have raised molded panels, but instead of two smaller panels at the top have three glass panes. This is an original feature that was undoubtedly intended to provide light to the earlier, windowless hall.

The hyphen connecting the main block to the wing was added when the wing was moved to its present location circa 1910. It has an open ceiling without collars or joists, and both the ceiling and walls are sheathed with painted, mill sawn boards applied horizontally.

The wing contains two principal rooms, currently housing a dining room and a modern kitchen. Between the two is a modern bathroom opening off the dining room. A narrow corner stair rises along the common wall from the kitchen end and provides access to two bedrooms off a small passage above.

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This part of the house had suffered extensive deterioration by 1945 and most of its interior finishes are contemporary with its subsequent restoration. In the dining room only a small portion of its original board sheathing remained, consisting of wide, beaded boards applied to the studs horizontally. These boards have been retained, but the balance of the existing wall sheathing is a replacement. The ceiling joists in this room are exposed, as are the wall plates and the brick nogging of the eaves, all of which retain evidence of earlier lath and plaster coverings. The kitchen also features exposed ceiling joists, as well as the wall framing, with plaster between the framing members. This framing also retains evidence of earlier lath and plaster. While the framing was probably not exposed originally, it nevertheless allows a more detailed examination of the building's structural details than would otherwise be possible, and adds additional interest to a part of the house that had experienced numerous previous alterations.

The earliest part of the house has changed very little since its initial construction, Whether it had a wing off the chimney end that was contemporary is unknown. Various marking on the chimney masonry suggest that at least two different wings existed. The first may have been a hyphen or breezeway connecting the house to the kitchen, superceeded by the existing wing now located at the rear of the house. A former door to the left of the chimney opened onto the addition from the front room of the house.

The inventories of 1795, 1809 and 1822 all suggest that a wing existed during that period. It may even have functioned as a plantation and medical office at various times. Evidence of this is suggested by the 1809 inventory of Dr. Jenifer, where such items as "one medical desk with furniture,""one shop counter with drawers," "medicine and shop furniture," and a "library of 245 volumes" are included with the household and kitchen furniture rather than at the end of the inventory or being listed separately. This theory is further reinforced by the sale description of 1824. (See Property History.)

The Orphan's Court proceedings of 1822 are of interest for the references to various architectural features and the utilization of rooms. For instance, the rear first floor room was used as a bedroom, and testimony was presented in which mention was made of a "piazza" across the front of the house. The latter coincides with the listing of "14 Windsor chairs" in the 1809 inventory. Windsor chairs were standard porch and passage furnishings of that period.

In 1959 a granddaughter of John Cocking, who lived at Retreat from 1871 to 1890, (See Property History), sent the present owners a letter, with an attached floor plan, describing how the house appeared circa

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1890. In this letter it is stated that "so far as we know, the only change made (to) the original house (by John Cocking) was the removal of a porch running across the front of the house" and that "after his (Cocking's) death the next owner (possibly J. Ben Mattingly) moved the large kitchen from the (southeast) end of the house and attached it to the (northeast) side." Even in 1890 the back first floor room was still being used as a bedroom. The wing as it existed in 1890 is said to have contained a breakfast/dining room, a kitchen with a large fireplace fitted with a crane, and a small pantry and "meal room" between the two main rooms. The wing is also said to have had a brick floor, though this would be very unusual for a frame structure of this type and is probably not accurate.

By 1945 the house had been standing vacant and neglected for a number of years and consequently had suffered extensive exterior deterioration. Photographs taken at that time show it to have had random width clapboarding on all but the front elevation and the wing. These were sheathed with wider boards of a more even exposure. The roof of the main block was covered with composition shingles, and a crude porch extended across the front. The rear wing had a wood shingled roof.

As part of the restoration all of the exterior siding was replaced. The new siding was cut from trees on the property and replicates the earlier clapboard sheathing found on the front wall and wing. All of the window sash, most of which was missing or damaged, was replaced as well. Concrete block was inserted between the brick piers supporting the wing, and beneath the hyphen. The only notable alteration to the exterior was the addition of two dormers to the front roof slope of the wing, and new stoops and porches.

The interior of the main block required extensive refurbishing, but its plan and all of its interior woodwork was left intact. Some of the woodwork required repair, however, and the mantle of the front room had deteriorated to the extent that it had to be replaced. The new mantle is a reproduction of the original. The only change to the attic level was the partial partitioning of the front of the hall and the adjacent southeast room to provide for a bathroom and closets, but the original room configuration remains clearly evident.

One noteworthy aspect of the restoration involves the stair balustrade. Shortly after the house was acquired the original balustrade was stolen. The existing balustrade was salvaged from another abandoned house then standing on an adjacent property. Interestingly, the replacement balustrade is a duplicate of the original. The distinctive design of the rail, post and balusters suggest that both were fashioned by the same person.

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By 1945 the interior of the wing had undergone numerous renovations and was missing most of its original interior finishes. Evidence was found that the room opening off the hyphen,and now used as a dining room, was sheathed with wide, horizontal, flush, beaded boards. Several of the original boards remain preserved on the interior partition wall, while the balance of the existing wall sheathing is a replacement. During the renovation of this part of the house a bathroom was added, a modern kitchen installed, and the attic chambers completely renovated. The corner stair leading from the kitchen to the attic chambers is an original features, as are the flush beaded boards lining the stairwell.

Overall, the 1945 restoration was extremely sympathetic to the building's historic fabric and architectural integrity.

Features of more recent vintage include the brick steps and a narrow brick patio at the front of the house, and an exterior chimney with a stepped base and sloped weatherings at the end of the wing. The chimney replaces a previous, single-flue stove chimney installed when the wing was relocated.

A small frame meathouse with lapped beaded clapboards and a pyramid roof stands about 75-feet north of the wing. While not original to the site it nevertheless is an historically contributing structure. Built in the early nineteenth century, it is probably similar to the meathouse that formerly stood near the house in 1783 and 1824. Such buildings are becoming increasingly rare in this region. This meathouse originally stood on a neighboring property and was scheduled for demolition.

The only non-contributing structure is a frame corn crib that was built after 1945. While not historic, it too replaces an earlier similar structure and serves to maintain a sense of continuity in the agricultural history of the property.

8. Statement of Significance

CH-10

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
architecture		C-1770

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

Retreat is architecturally significant as the earliest known example of side-passage, two room dwelling in Charles County. Probably built during the latter part of the third quarter of the eighteenth century, the house has a double-chimney with pent, unusual floor plan, and interesting woodwork. Features that clearly differentiate Retreat from other examples of this house type are the narrow pent roof, oddly placed closet window, and irregular chimney weatherings combined with the flat topped projection to one side creating a composition that is distinct. It is one of very few pre-1780 houses in Charles County whose original integrity has survived essentially unaltered. Of particular importance is the unusual configuration of the hall, its boldly fashioned first floor trim and mantels, and the unique design of its paneled doors. The remarkable preservation of so much of Retreat's original fabric, coupled with an extraordinary amount of historical documentation, and its association with one of Maryland's most distinguished early families, established Retreat as an architectural and historic landmark of singular importance.

☒ See continuation sheet

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Because of the complexity of the various areas of significance the supporting documentation is presented in three parts: Historical Associations, Property History and Architecture.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

Retreat is of particular significance for its direct association with Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, one of Maryland's preeminent historical figures. Jenifer was instrumental in Maryland's political and economic development following the Revolutionary War, and as a Maryland delegate to the Constitutional Convention made numerous important contributions toward the creation of America's new Federal Constitution.

Details of Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer's early life and education remain obscure. Only five years old when his father died, he was likely raised by his mother and step-father, John Theobald. It is clear that Jenifer received considerable formal training in law, finance and languages, and at age 22 assumed his first public office, that of Charles County justice, a position he retained for fifteen years.

In 1756 Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer was elected to represent Charles County in the Lower House of the Proprietary Assembly, and between 1760 and 1775 was appointed to a number of important provincial and state offices, including, in 1760, that of commissioner to settle the boundary dispute between Pennsylvania and Delaware that ultimately resulted in the 1769 Mason-Dixon boundary settlement; Justice of the Provincial Court from 1766 to 1773; Rent Roll Keeper of Maryland's Western Shore in 1768; commissary general in 1771 and 1772; and president of the Council of Safety from 1775 to 1777, among others.

In 1771, Jenifer, then living in Annapolis, was elected to the Upper House of the Assembly from Anne Arundel County and in 1777 became the first president of Maryland's first State Senate. He continued to preside as Senate President until 1781 when he resigned due to ill health. During his tenure

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as Senate President he also represented Maryland as a delegate to the Second Continental Congress of 1778-1779.

Jenifer was unsuccessful in his 1782 and 1785 bids as governor of Maryland, but nevertheless remained a prominent figure in Maryland's political and economic affairs. Certainly the highlight of his public career occurred in 1787 when he was elected a Maryland representative to the Federal Convention in Philadelphia where he was an effective, influential participant and signer of one of the most important historic documents in the world, the Constitution of the United States of America.

Jenifer maintained close personal and business ties to Charles County throughout his life. On attaining legal age he assumed ownership of several tracts of land left to him by his father, and significantly increased the size of his local land-holdings by a succession of purchases that continued into the 1780s. In addition to his investments in real estate he maintained an active interest in a profitable mercantile establishment in Port Tobacco, then county seat and the region's principal center of commerce.

Despite Jenifer's remarkably active political and business life in Annapolis, he managed to spend considerable time in Charles County. To date, no reference has been found to indicate he maintained a permanent local residence, but as a bachellor there would have been little need for him to do so. Given his close relationship with his brother, and his brother's family, and the convenient proximity of the Jenifer plantation to both Port Tobacco and his outlying plantations, it is reasonable to assume that he stayed at Retreat during these visits.

Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer died at his "Stepney" plantation near Annapolis in 1790, leaving a sizeable estate that included about 11,000 acres of land in Anne Arundel, Baltimore and Charles counties, as well as several improved lots in both Port Tobacco and Annapolis. In his will he left generous individual legacies to a number of friends and relatives. To his nephew, attorney and congressman Michael Jenifer Stone, he devised his library "except such Books as are written in the French Language and those I bequeath to my Friend James Madison now a Member of the House of Delegates of the United States." To his brother, Daniel, he left "all my Plate, Household and Kitchen Furniture and my Waring (sic) apparel." To his nephew, Dr. Daniel Jenifer, the son of his brother Daniel, he bequeathed all of his negro slaves with the provision that he "manummit and set them all free from Slavery" by January 1, 1796. Dr. Jenifer also received all of his Charles County property, and was named residual heir of what still remained a very valuable estate.

The bequests that Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer made to his brother, but especially that to his nephew, had a profound impact on the fortunes of both the Jenifer family and the Retreat plantation. (See Property History.)

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Another prominent member of the Jenifer family directly associated with Retreat was Daniel Jenifer, (1791-1855), son of Dr. Daniel Jenifer and a grand-nephew of Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer. Daniel Jenifer was born at Retreat and continued to live there until the marriage of his older brother in 1821.

Like many other members of his family, Daniel Jenifer was educated in law, and like his great-uncle served as a justice of Charles County before his election to the Maryland legislature. Jenifer was first elected to the United States House of Representatives as a National Republican in 1831, and served in the 22nd, 24th, 25th and 26th Congresses.

A plantation owner dependent on slaves as a labor force, he nevertheless supported the American Colonization Society in their efforts at a government financed resettlement of free blacks in this country to a colony in Africa. Jenifer had a particular interest in the tobacco trade as well, and served as presiding officer of the Tobacco Convention held in Washington in 1840. In 1841 he was appointed U. S. minister to Austria by President William Henry Harrison, continuing in that capacity until 1845. In his later years he was Register of Wills for Charles County.

PROPERTY HISTORY

From the time of their first acquisition of lands in Charles County in the seventeenth century until the death of Congressman Daniel Jenifer in 1855, the Jenifers' played a major role in the county's history, particularly in the areas of law, medicine, politics and local society. Their Retreat plantation was central to the Jenifer family, which by intermarriages included a number of other notable historical figures including Thomas Stone, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, Dr. James Craik, Revolutionary War Surgeon General and life-long intimate friend and physician of George Washington, Maryland Governor John Hoskins Stone, Congressman Michael Jenifer Stone, and Judge Walter Hanson, among other famous countians. The amazingly complete and remarkably interesting history of Retreat adds considerably to its significance in a local social, economic, cultural and architectural context.

The existing house stands on land for which Dr. Daniel Jenifer (d. 1729) was issued a warrant for resurvey in 1720.[1] Known then as "Coates Retirement," this property had been patented by the widow of Barthalomew Coates in 1674 but was later declared escheat when their two sons died intestate and without heirs.[2]

Dr. Jenifer was the son of Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, (1672-1730), a St. Mary's County merchant, and was the grandson of Daniel Jenifer, (c. 1637 c. 1692). The grandfather immigrated to Maryland in about 1662, and was

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an Assemblyman and a Provincial Court judge, and patented several thousand acres in Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties.[3]

Dr. Daniel Jenifer was the first of the family to take up permanent residence in Charles County, and purchased a number of properties in the Port Tobacco area in the 1720s. The 500 acres of Coates Retirement appears to have been his first major acquisition, and it was on this property that he established his dwelling plantation.

Dr. Jenifer was probably about 37 years old at the time of his death in 1729, and left as heirs two sons, Daniel and Daniel of St. Thomas, and four daughters. In his will he bequeathed two tracts of land lying in Panguiah Manor, (the purchase of the largest of these, part of Durham, had not been completed by the time of his death), to his son Daniel of St. Thomas. Coates Retirement and other acreage was devised to Daniel, with the balance of his estate to be divided between all of his children. Interestingly, he made no provisions for his wife, who survived him, and named the Rev. William McConchie executor of his estate and guardian of his children. Nevertheless, his widow, who married John Theobald within a few months of the doctor's death, was named administrator of the estate.[4]

The inventory of Dr. Jenifer's personalty listed nine slaves, household furnishings that included a surprising amount of fine linens and cloth, as well as medicines and medical equipment. The contents of the dwelling indicate that it was probably not much larger than one or two rooms with a loft above, and apparently had a separate kitchen.[5]

Daniel Jenifer assumed ownership of his father's dwelling plantation on attaining majority and over the course of his life made extensive improvements, including the replacement of his father's house with the existing structure. In 1803 he enlarged the property by the purchase of a contiguous tract called His Excellency's Gift from Samuel Hanson, his brother-in-law.[6] A planter and Port Tobacco merchant, Daniel Jenifer died in 1795 and named his principal beneficiary his second eldest son, Dr. Daniel Jenifer.[7] (The oldest son, Dr. Walter Hanson Jenifer, died in 1785.[8])

Prior to his father's death, Dr. Daniel Jenifer had individually acquired additional adjacent lands, considerably increasing the plantations total acreage, and following his inheritance undoubtedly continued to make improvements to the property. It was during his ownership that the property became known as Retreat.

Dr. Daniel Jenifer died intestate in 1809. An inventory of his personalty filed on August 9th of that year is of particular interest in that it is broken down into four headings: "Panguiah Estate," "Port Tobacco Estate," "Nanjemoy Estate," and "Retreat Estate." Much of the

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lands comprising the Nanjemoy, Panguiah and Port Tobacco estates had been inherited by Dr. Jenifer on the death of his uncle, Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, with the "Retreat Estate" being the principal dwelling plantation. The household furnishings that were itemized were appropriate in number and type to a house the size and architecture of the existing home. Also recorded were medicines, medical equipment and furniture housed in Dr. Jenifer's office and "shop."[9] It is also of interest that a number of the items in this inventory appear in the inventory of his father (1795) and later that of his son (1822) as well. It is very likely that some of these furnishings were moved here from Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer's Stepney home in 1790.

Even though a distribution of Dr. Jenifer's negro slaves was made among the heirs shortly after his death, the division of his realty did not take place until 1816, following passage of an Act of the Chancery Court. At the court's direction Dr. Jenifer's four estates were broken down to actual acreage and appraised separately. The total came to 5,959½ acres valued at $66,264.25. Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, Dr. Jenifer's eldest son, was awarded the Retreat plantation, estimated to encompass 1,392 acres with an appraised value of $13,572.00.[10]

At least the fifth descending member of the family to bear this unusual name, the origin of which remains unknown, Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer was born at Retreat in 1789. Just married and only recently elected to the State legislature, he died in 1822. His deathbed will, drafted by his attorney and relative, Frederick D. Stone, was challenged by Jenifer's family and heirs who claimed that Jenifer was not aware of the contents of the will. The county Orphan's Court, which reviewed the case, ultimately declared the will valid, but only after hearing extensive testimony. The court record is an extremely interesting document, presenting in great detail the Jenifer's ancestry, family relations spanning several generations, vivid accounts of Jenifer's illness and death, and invaluable descriptions of the interior and exterior of the house as it appeared at that time.[11]

In order to meet the terms of Jenifer's will it was necessary for Retreat and its associated lands to be sold. In 1824 an advertisement appeared in the Alexandria Gazette for the sale of the property, describing it as "The Retreat and Plantation, formerly the residence of Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, Esq., deceased," containing "upwards of 1,100 acres, (with the) mail road from Port Tobacco to Nanjemoy separating it into nearly equal parts." The land lying south of the road, "generally known as the Plantation includes about 700 acres (688 by actual survey), with an extensive Quarter and Overseer's House, Stables, Hay Loft and Granary under one roof, a Crib, Corn House, and large Tobacco Barn." (This is the part of the original Coates Retirement tract on which Ellerslie (NR) stands.)

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The balance of the property, lying on the north side of the road, "known as the Retreat, is one of the most desirable situations in the county for a professional gentleman, being remarkable for health and excellent water. The buildings upon this part are a convenient Frame Dwelling House, with two rooms on each floor, a wide passage below, a kitchen adjoining, an Office, with two rooms, Meat House, Store House and Stables, including Carriage House and Hay Loft."[12]

In 1825 the property was sold in two parts: the 688 acre "Plantation" to Henry Brawner for $5,161.87½, and Retreat to William D. Merrick, a U. S. Senator from Charles County and land speculator, for $4,479.00.[13]

Senator Merrick did not take up residence at Retreat, and several years later it came into the possession of John and William Fergusson. In 1847 the Fergussons conveyed the then 450 acres to the estate of Barnes Compton, minor heir of William Penn Compton, who in turn sold the same to John Cocking, an Englishman, in 1871. Cocking and his family lived at Retreat until his death in 1890. In 1903 Cocking's son, then living in Baltimore, sold Retreat to J. Ben Mattingly. Gradually reduced in acreage, Retreat passed through several ownerships between then and 1945 when its remaining 240 acres were purchased by the present owners.[14] By this time the house had been vacant and deteriorating for many years, and none of the ancillary buildings mentioned in the 1824 sales advertisement remained standing except the semi-detached rear wing.

ARCHITECTURE

The existing house was probably built during the latter part of the third quarter of the eighteenth century, and is undoubtedly the dwelling house with a "kitchen and four other houses (outbuildings) and barns" listed in the 1783 tax assessments as improvements to Coates Retirement.

The building is in many respects architecturally unique in this area, being not only the earliest known example of a one story, two room, side-passage plan, but because it possesses many other distinctive features as well that clearly differentiate it from others of its basic type.

Especially notable details of the original part of the house include the unusual design of its double chimney with pent. Although exterior chimneys of this type are a characteristic feature of regional vernacular architecture of the latter half of the eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century, they are generally of a fairly symmetrical design; the narrow pent roof, oddly placed closet window, irregular chimney weatherings and the flat topped projection to one side combine to create

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a composition that is distinctly different.

The interior of the house possesses a remarkable amount of its original woodwork, and in fact is one of very few pre-1780 houses in Charles County whose original integrity has survived essentially unaltered. Of particular importance is the unusual configuration of the hall, its boldly fashioned first floor trim and mantles, and the unique design of its paneled doors.

The rear wing, of a slightly later date and moved to its present location from the chimney end of the house circa 1910, was very likely the medical office and "shop" of Dr. Daniel Jenifer, (1756-1809), and bridged the space between the dwelling house and its former detached kitchen, adding considerable interest and value to this part of the structure.

The remarkable preservation of so much of Retreat's original fabric, coupled with an extraordinary amount of historical documentation, and its association with one of Maryland's most distinguished early families, establish Retreat as an architectural and historic landmark of singular importance.

NOTES:

A. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS:

Although the location of Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer's "Stepney" plantation is known, the exact site of the house, long since destroyed, has not been firmly established as far as the author of this nomination is aware. The location of Jenifer's grave remains undocumented as well. It is possible that his body was removed from Annapolis to Charles County, and if so he most likely would have been interred in the old Episcopal cemetery in Port Tobacco (now lost) where many members of his family were buried.

It should also be noted that beginning in the second quarter of the eighteenth century there were actually few permanent residents in Port Tobacco. The maintenance of separate homes on convenient outlying properties, safely removed from the disease and pestilence that plagued this port town, was a common practice among the "elite" that continued well into the nineteenth century. It is doubtful that Jenifer, who even preferred to live outside Annapolis, would have subjected himself to possible infection when Retreat was barely more than a mile distant.

See Continuation Sheet No. 8.8

Because Retreat is the only known standing structure directly linked to Daniel Jenifer, and because it has long been traditionally recognized as the site of his birthplace, it will be the focus of a Maryland celebration in the spring of 1988 honoring the ratification of the Constitution and Jenifer's participation in the framing of that historic document.

B. PROPERTY HISTORY: (Abbreviations given below are as follows: CCLR: Charles County Land Records, LaPlata; CCPR: Charles County Probate Records, LaPlata; HR: Hall of Records, Annapolis. Liber and folio numbers are given thus: M#2/185.)

1. HR. Patents, CE#2/310.
2. ibid, #15/303.
3. Papenfuse, et al, pp. 483-486. (See section 9.)
4. CCPR. Wills: AB#3/223.
5. ibid, Inventories: 1717-1735/264.
6. CCLR. IB#5/426. (See also: D#3/242.)
7. CCPR. Wills: AK#11/269.
8. ibid, AH#9/188. (In his will Walter refers to his father as "ever fond and indulgent.")
9. ibid, Inventories and Accounts: 1808-1812/160,501.
10. Original ms in possession of property owners.
11. CCPR. Orphans Court Proceedings: 1821-1822/287, 353, 440, 455.
12. Alexandria Gazetter, February 3, 1824. Copy in possession of property owners.
13. CCLR. IB#17/352; IB#22/63.
14. For conveyances between 1825 and 1945 see CCLR: WM#2/291; GAH#3/362; JST#6/44; JST#8/196; 21/567; 25/162; 32/578; 65/433; 81/454.

See Continuation Sheet No. 8.9

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Historic/Prehistoric Theme(s):

Government/Law
Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Community Planning

Geographic Organization:

Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Periods:

Rural Agrarian Intensification 1680-1815
Agricultural-Industrial Transition 1815-1930

Resource Type:

Single dwelling

ARCHEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT:

The Retreat property has a high potential for containing significant historic archeological resources. The 30 acre parcel remains relatively undisturbed aside from its use for agricultural purposes, thus enhancing the likelihood and integrity of any surviving resources. These resources may include the remains of outbuildings, wings, privies, wells, and related domestic plus agricultural activity areas associated with the existing structure. The historic and architectural record clearly indicate that several outbuildings and an original wing were located on the property. Archeological investigations may provide valuable information concerning the farm's spatial organization; document the presence and location of the original wing(s) to the existing house; and enhance our understanding of the social, economic and cultural conditions of the plantation. In addition, archeology provides the primary means to conclusively determine whether or not the site of the first Jenifer house at Retreat is located within the 30 acre parcel. If the site exists on the property, it has the potential to yield important information concerning the Jenifers' occupation and use of the plantation, as well as document early settlement patterns and conditions in the Port Tobacco area.

The parcel's potential for prehistoric archeological resources is considered low, due to the property's distance from the small unnamed tributary of Hogshole Run and the parcel's steep sloping terrain closest to the stream.

9. Major Bibliographical References

CH-10

Edward C. Papenfuse, et al, A Biographical Dictionary of the Maryland Legislature, 1635-1789, Vol. II. (Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1985.)

Land and probate records, Charles County Courthouse, LaPlata, MD.

Probate Records, patents and tax assessments, Hall of Records, Annapolis, MD.

Maryland Historical Trust Historic Sites Inventory, Charles County (CH-10). Annapolis, MD.

☐ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☒ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository:
Hall of Records, Annapolis, MD;
Courthouse, LaPlata, MD

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property approximately 30 acres
USGS quad: Port Tobacco, MD

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	321640	4264400
B	18	321640	4263920
C	18	321330	4264400
D	18	321330	4264400

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of Retreat are shown in dashed lines on the accompanying survey plat.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass the house, outbuildings, approach drive, locations of probable domestic archeological sites relating to the original complex, and serve to maintain the agricultural setting and environmental integrity of the site.

☐ See continuation sheet

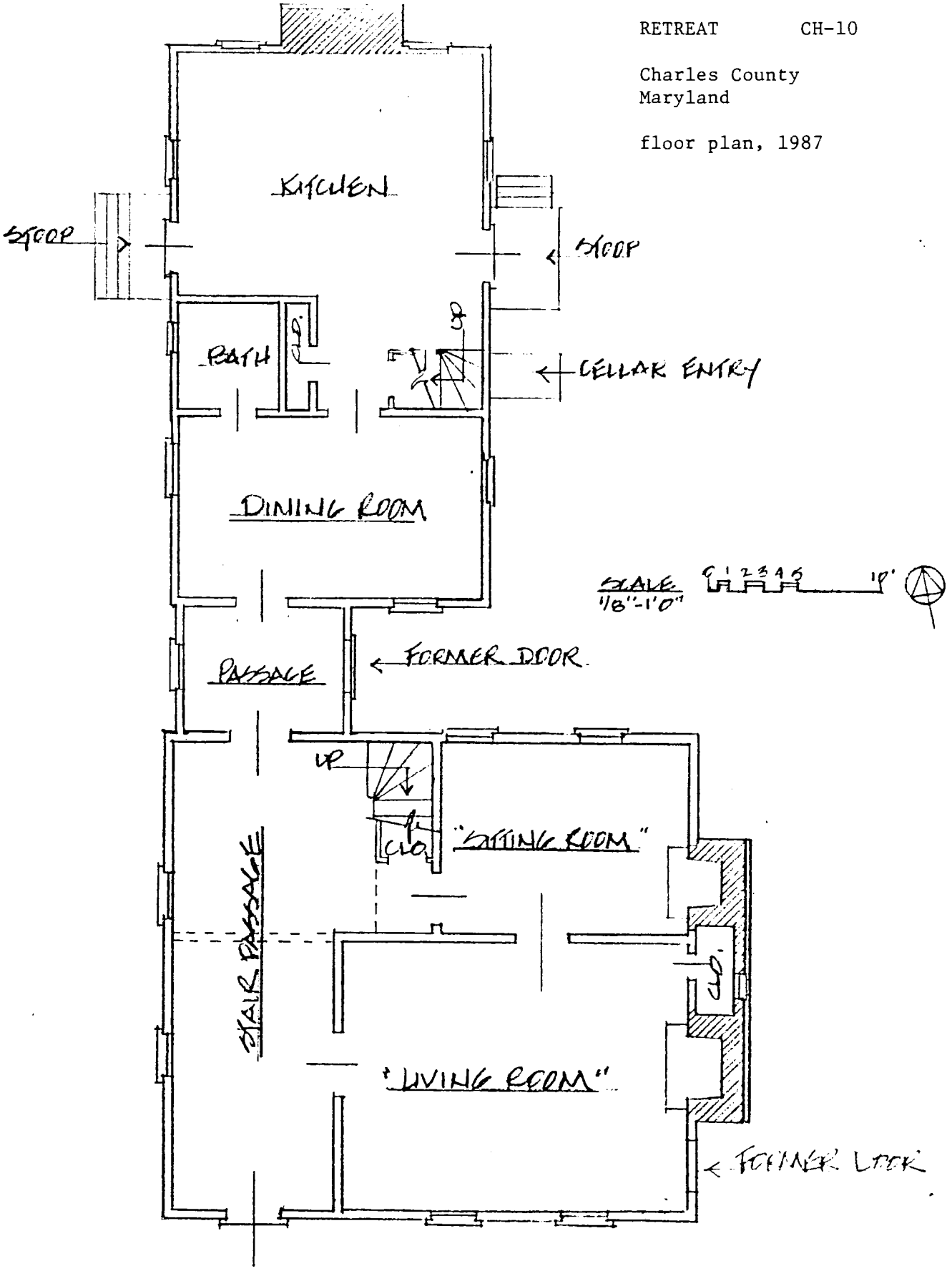
11. Form Prepared By

name/title J. Richard Rivoire, Preservation Consultant
organization _____ date 16 August 1987; revised May 1988
street & number P. O. Box 132 telephone (301) 932-1000
city or town LaPlata state Maryland zip code 20646

RETREAT CH-10

Charles County
Maryland

floor plan, 1987

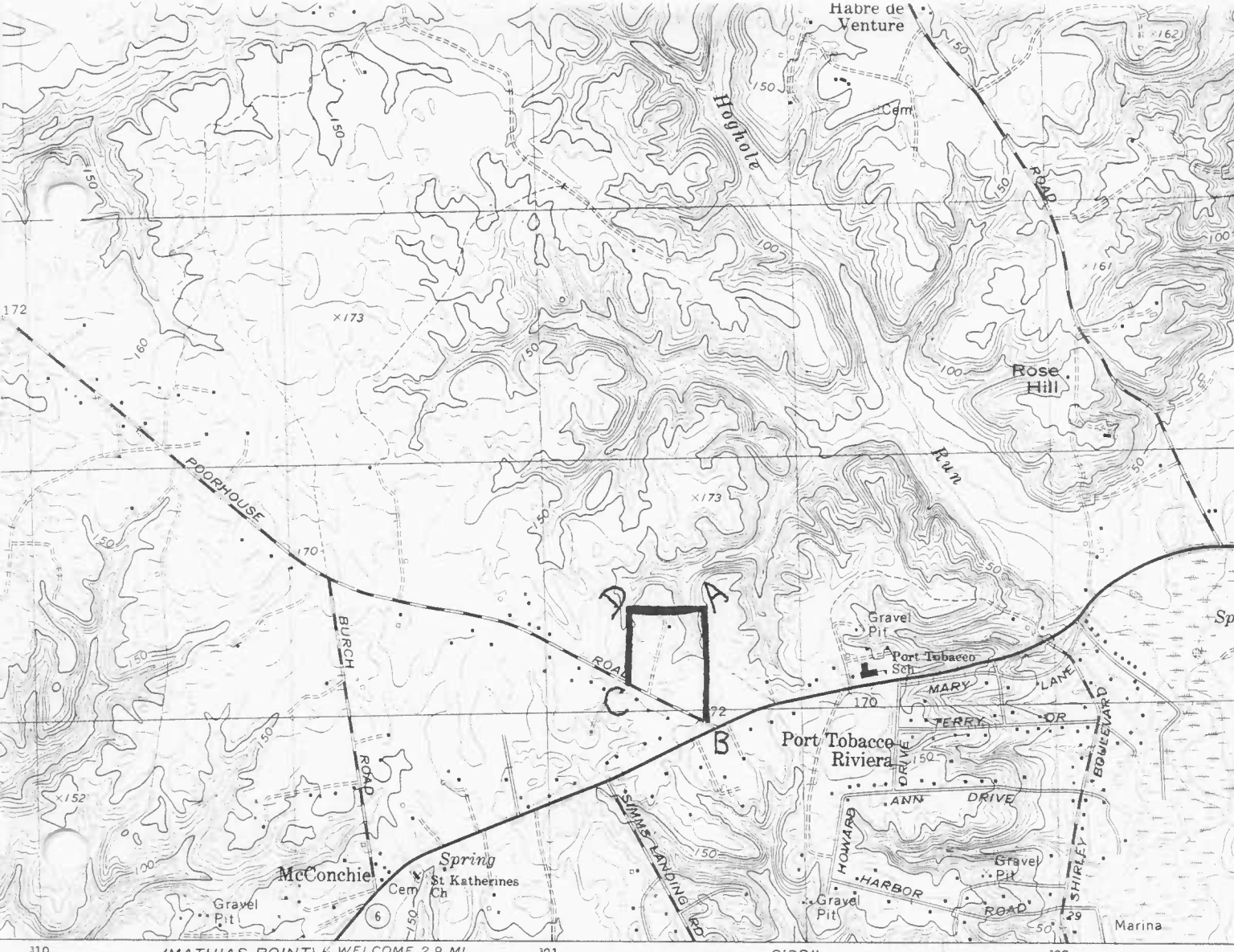


"RETREAT" FIRST FLOOR PLAN J.R.RIVOIRE, 1987
(CH-10)

RETREAT CH-10

Charles County
Maryland

boundaries, 1987
and resource sketch map

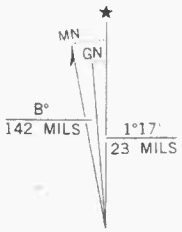


CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
BATHYMETRIC CONTOUR INTERVAL 1 METER WITH SUPPLEMENTARY
0.5 METER CONTOURS—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 0.6 METER

Retreat
CH-10
Charles Co.
Maryland

A 18/321640/4264400
B 18/321640/4263920
C 18/321330/4264400
D 18/321330/4264400

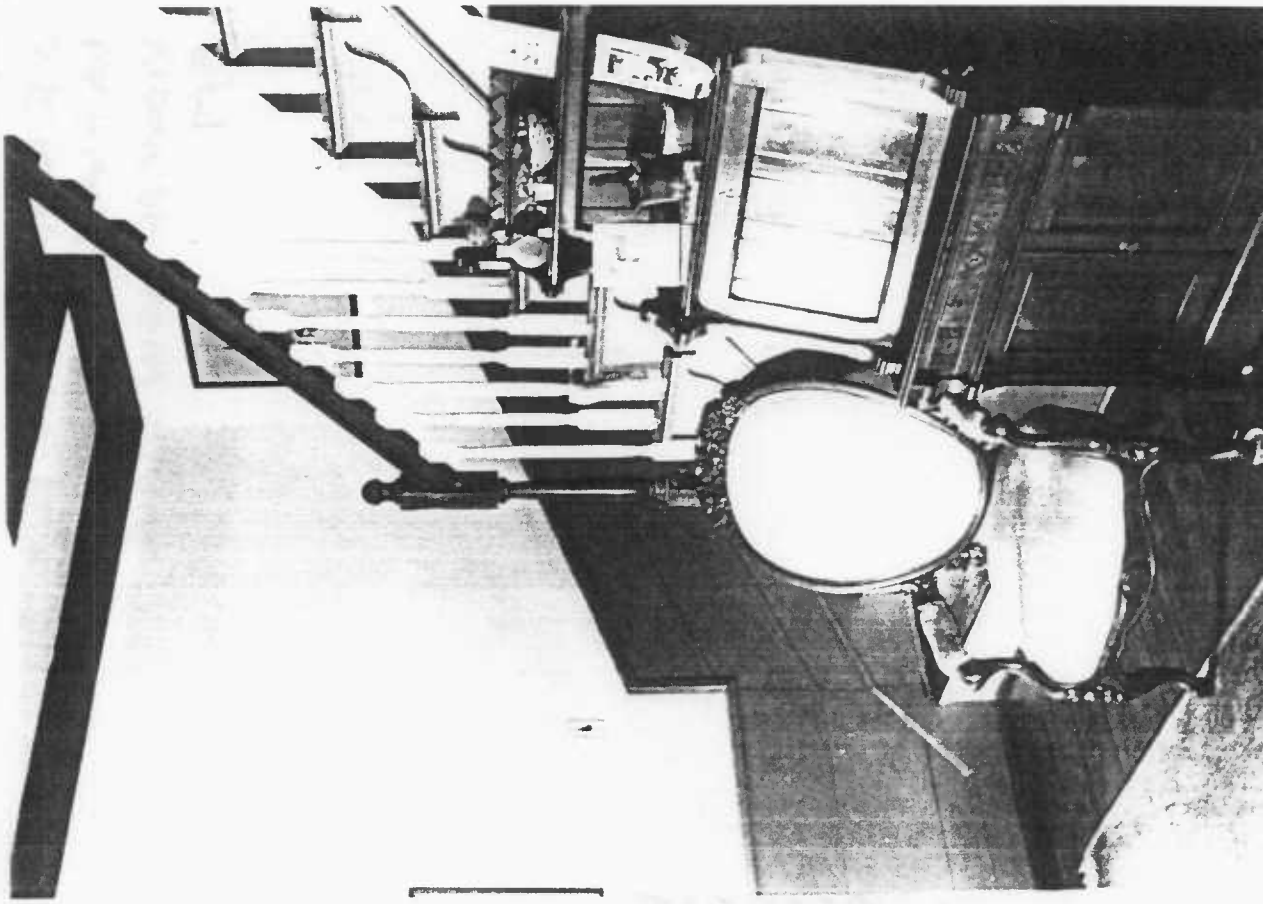
QUADRANGLE LOCATION



UTM GRID AND 1978 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

BASE MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
BATHYMETRIC SURVEY DATA COMPLIES WITH INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION (IHO) SPECIAL PUBLICATION 44 ACCURACY STANDARDS AND/OR STANDARDS USED AT THE DATE OF THE SURVEY

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND NATIONAL OCEAN SURVEY, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20852
OLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



CH-10

1. RETREAT
2. CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND
3. J.R. RIVOIRE
4. JULY, 1987
5. J.R. RIVOIRE, P.O. BOX 132, LA PLATA, MD. 20646
6. VIEW OF MAIN STAIR
7. 5/7

1. RETREAT
2. CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND
3. J.R. RIVOIRE
4. JULY, 1987
5. J.R. RIVOIRE, P.O. BOX 132, LA PLATA, MD. 20646
6. MANTEL, 1ST FLOOR, SE ROOM
7. 6/7

1. RETREAT
2. CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND
3. J.R. RIVOIRE
4. JULY, 1981
5. J.R. RIVOIRE, P.O. BOX 132, LA PLATA, MD. 20646
6. ATTIC LEVEL DOOR
7. 7/7

CH-10

Retreat, CH-10
Charles County, Maryland
J. Richard Rivoire
August, 1987
J. Richard Rivoire, LaPlata,
Maryland
Camera facing East
1/7

Retreat, CH-10
Charles County, Maryland
J. Richard Rivoire
August, 1987
J. Richard Rivoire, LaPlata
Maryland
Camera facing W-SW
2/7

Retreat, CH-10
Charles County, Maryland
J. Richard Rivoire
August, 1987
J. Richard Rivoire,LaPlata,
Maryland
Camera facing West
3/7

Retreat, CH-10
Charles County, Maryland
J. Richard Rivoire
August, 1987
J. Richard Rivoire, LaPlata,
Maryland
Camera facing E-SE
4/7

65%

P 60 ch 10

65%

CH-10 ~~CH-10~~

THE RETREAT

[redacted]

C