CHAS-304
SPYE PARK
White Plains
Private

Late eighteenth century

Spye Park is an appealing example of a regionally characteristic house type. A modestly proportioned one story dwelling with dormered roof, end chimneys, and a five room first floor plan with centered rear stair hall, it is believed to have been built during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. Its gable roof, thought to be later, extends out over the front wall of the house to provide a "recessed porch," giving Spye Park some physical similarity to The Capper House in St. Mary's County (STM-175). Exposed corner posts and wall plates in the principal first floor room suggest the possibility that part of the house may be older. Although most of the interior trim dates from the early and mid-nineteenth century, fragments of trim, specifically chairrails and door facings of a characteristic eighteenth century profile, survive. A 1783 tax assessment of Spye Park lists as improvements a "middling good dwelling house," then a frequently used phrase for a house of this design.

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 Spye Park

other names/site number CH-304

2. Location

street & number Off Padgett Road on Griffith Lane [N/A] not for publication

city, town White Plains [X] vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Charles code 017 zip code 20695

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property		
		Contributing	Noncontributing	
[X] private	[X] building(s)	2	4	buildings
[ ] public-local	[ ] district			sites
[ ] public-State	[ ] site			structures
[ ] public-Federal	[ ] structure			objects
	[ ] object	2	4	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 8/29/90

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

CH-304

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/single dwelling	DOMESTIC/single dwelling
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding	AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)
Colonial	foundation brick
Federal	walls wood
	roof asphalt
	other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

Spye Park is a modestly scaled, one-story, three-bay frame dwelling with one exterior chimney at each end, a dormered gabled roof, and a full-width front porch. Extending off the building's west end is a lower, two-part frame wing. Spye Park's present plan and appearance is the result of a series of nineteenth and early twentieth century alterations to an eighteenth-century structure. In its original form the house was a rectangular, one-room-deep building with end chimneys. Of a locally traditional hall-parlor plan, with two small attic chambers off a central stair passage, the building's interior featured a corner stair immediately to the left of the front door, brick nogged walls, exposed ceiling joists, and partially exposed wall framing. In the early nineteenth century the house was enlarged by adding several rooms across the rear elevation and rebuilding the roof to cover both the enlarged house and the front porch. Subsequent changes included the relocation of the stair to a central rear passage, a relocation of the partition that separated the two original first-floor rooms, centering the door of the front elevation, and the addition of dormer windows to both sides of the roof. The existing west wing was built early in the twentieth century on the site of a detached kitchen dependency. A short distance west of the house stands a timber-framed tobacco barn with braced roof trusses seated on tilted false plates. Believed to date from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, the barn was later extended at the east end and a shed addition made to one side. Non-historic buildings include a former animal barn, a cornhouse, a poultry house/machine shed, and a wellhouse, all of which were built in the twentieth century.

[X] See continuation sheet 7.1 for GENERAL DESCRIPTION

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Located on the north side of Padgett Road, approximately northwest of the junction of Md. Rte. 2 and U. S. Rte. 301, Spye Park is approached by a private drive and is situated amid open, cultivated fields bordered by woodland.

The following building descriptions are keyed to the site plan on Sheet No. 7.4:

1. Main House - contributing

A one-story, three-bay, gable-roofed frame house built on an east-west axis, Spye Park's exterior features a full-width porch across the south front elevation, two gable-fronted dormer windows on each side of the roof, and clapboard siding. A single exterior chimney stands at each end of the house, and these are positioned orward (south) of the apex of the gables. The house has brick foundation walls and the roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles. A small, two-part, frame wing stands at the building's west end. (See Sheet 7.5 .)

The centered door of the front elevation opens into the largest of Spye Park's two front rooms. Behind these are two smaller rooms flanking a central stair passage. Surviving early woodwork and finishes of the first floor rooms include flooring, exposed and painted brick nogging on the north wall of the southwest room and the south and east walls of the northeast room, sections of chair rails and the architraves of several doors, and partially exposed wall posts and wall plates in the southwest room. There are two chambers at the attic level separated by a closet and a small stair lobby. Both bed chambers retain their early nineteenth-century finishes except in the areas of the twentieth-century dormer windows.

Spye Park's present plan and appearance is the result of an early nineteenth century alteration of a two-room, hall-parlor dwelling. A timber-framed structure with full sills raised above grade, the house had an off-centered door front and back. The south, front entrance door was flanked by two narrow, sash windows; presumably, two similarly placed windows existed on the rear elevation. Given the overall dimensions and relative simple architecture of the building, it is likely that its exterior walls and roof were sheathed with riven clapboards. The house had an exterior chimney centered on each end elevation, and a gable roof. It is unlikely that there were roof dormers or porches. The two original first floor rooms were separated by a partition wall and the larger of the two rooms, the hall, was at the east end. A stair with winders stood in the southwest corner of this room, immediately to the left of the entrance door. (See Sheet 7.6 .) Known interior features contemporary with the original house include exposed wall posts and wall plates, and exposed ceiling joists. There is some evidence suggesting that the brick nogging and interior face of the wall studs was left exposed and painted in both rooms

See Continuation Sheet 7.2

rather than covered by lath and plaster. The attic was partitioned into two small bed chambers flanking a central stair passage. These rooms were presumably lighted by small gable windows and were probably unheated. Other than the original flooring, which retains mortises from the original knee wall and partition wall studs, no eighteenth-century features remain preserved.

Carpentry details and finishes combined with historical records associated with the Spye Park property indicate that the building's alteration occurred about 1814. The most significant change made to the house was the addition of several first floor rooms across its north side and the replacement of the original roof frame. The new roof, with lapped and nailed rafters and collars, was considerably larger than its predecessor, and was built to cover the new rear rooms as well as a full-width front porch. It is likely that the earlier exterior siding and trim was replaced at the time the house was remodeled. Changes to the interior of the house included lathing and plastering over its former exposed joist ceiling, and lathing and plastering most of the original wall surfaces of the southeast room. While the spatial arrangement of the attic level remain essentially the same, the two bed chambers were enlarged by moving the knee walls outward to take advantage of the increased height and depth of the new roof. Although it is not known with certainty, it is possible that the existing east end chimney is contemporary with the circa 1814 alterations, and that it was rebuilt to provide a fireplace for the larger of the two bed chambers.

Other improvements to the property thought to be contemporary with the alteration of the house included construction of a detached kitchen dependency off the west end of the dwelling, a meathouse, a dairy, and possibly the existing historic tobacco barn (#2 below) as well. All of these buildings are referenced in an 1843 estate inventory, but are not identified in any earlier documents. The detached kitchen, a frame structure with a small window in its south wall, a door in its east end, and a large exterior chimney at its west end, is depicted in a circa 1866 photograph of the house. (See 7.7 and Section 8: RESOURCE HISTORY.)

Later nineteenth-century alterations to the house included the removal of the eighteenth-century stair, construction of a new stair along the west wall of the existing rear passage, moving the south entrance door to the center of the wall and enlarging its two flanking windows. In the early twentieth-century, the eighteenth-century partition between the two first floor front rooms was relocated to its present position to the right of the entry door, and the addition of two dormer windows to each side of the roof. It was about this time that the existing, two-part west wing was constructed in place of the earlier detached kitchen. Other than the installation of electricity, plumbing and heating, there have been no significant changes to the house since the early twentieth century.

2. Tobacco Barn - contributing

The oldest part of this barn is a heavily timbered, post and beam structure measuring 20-by-40 feet. The barn's mortise and tenon joinery and other carpentry details is consistent with building methods commonly practiced in the region from

See Continuation Sheet 7.3

the latter part of the seventeenth century well into the first decades of the nineteenth century. One feature possessed by the Spye Park barn that is especially characteristic of local, eighteenth-century building customs is its tilted false plates; however, as illustrated by the nineteenth-century additions to the Johnsontown Tobacco Barn (CH-332; demolished), tilted false plates continued to be used in building barns in this locality long after they ceased to be used in building houses. The Spye Park barn has evenly spaced, down-braced wall posts seated on raised, full sills. The barns most distinguished feature is its roof frame, which utilizes rafter trusses braced by diagonal timbers in a manner similar to a king post truss but with a less substantial centered vertical brace. (See 7.8.) Originally having a single, double-leafed door centered in each side elevation, the sills spanning the central bays were removed to provide for a wagon aisle. In the late nineteenth or early twentieth century the barn was extended by an addition of the same height and depth at its east end, and a full-width shed across the south elevation. Nail patterns on the surface of the original roof rafters over which the shed roof was built, indicates that the roof of the oldest part of the barn was initially sheathed with horizontally laid riven clapboards. The exterior walls were probably similarly sheathed. In its present form, the barn is clad with vertical planks and the roof with metal.

3. Animal Barn - non-contributing

A rectangular, gable-fronted, frame barn with a north-south axis, this building was erected about the turn of the century as a stable and for housing livestock. The exterior walls are sheathed with vertical plank and the roof with metal.

4. Cornhouse - non-contributing

Of about the same age as the adjacent animal barn, this small, rectangular, frame structure was built and used for the storage of corn.

5. Poultry Shed and Shop - non-contributing

A small frame structure built early in the twentieth century and later extended and modified for use as a machine shop and for storage.

6. Wellhouse - non-contributing

A modern frame structure used also for storage.

See Continuation Sheet 7.4

8. Statement of Significance

CH-304

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.1767 - c.1814	c. 1767
		c. 1800
		c. 1814

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

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

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The earliest part of Spye Park is a rare surviving example in Charles County of a modestly scaled and finished hall-parlor dwelling dating from the eighteenth century. While such buildings represented a traditional form of housing in this locality from the seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century, remarkably few examples built before 1800 exist. Of those few that do, Spye Park is of particular interest for its small scale and formerly exposed interior framing. It is also the only known eighteenth century house surviving in Charles County that received a valuation of less than $100 in the 1798 federal tax assessments. The eighteenth century section is believed to date after 1767. The house was altered about 1814 with changes that are of significance in their own right, largely due to the carpentry used in fashioning its new roof and the fact that the roof projects forward to cover the full-width front porch. The combined plan and appearance of the house following the circa 1814 alteration is wholly unique in a local context. Some additional changes were made to the house in the latter part of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century, but these do not diminish the building's historic architectural integrity since significant physical evidence remains of the plan and carpentry of the house prior to these later alterations. Also of considerable architectural significance is the tobacco barn, an exceptionally rare surviving early barn for southern Maryland having both tilted false plates and braced rafter trusses. The tobacco barn dates from about 1800.

☒ See continuation sheet 8.1 for HISTORIC CONTEXT and MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN data.

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

Rural Agrarian Intensification A.D. 1680-1815

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Architecture/Landscape/Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: buildings

Historic Environment: rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s):

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

Known Design Source: none

See Continuation Sheet 8.2

HISTORIC CONTEXT: HISTORIC SETTING:

Largely because of an unstable economy and its geographic isolation, Charles County's architectural development saw remarkably little change among the lower and middle economic class levels from the time of the arrival of the first English colonists to settle here in the 1630s up to the second decade of the nineteenth century. Among the most common housing forms were timber-framed structures with wooden or brick chimneys and riven clapboarded walls and roofs. Riven clapboards were often used to line interior spaces as well. Toward the 1770s and 1780s, two-room dwellings with the rooms placed side-by-side were succeeded in popular use by similarly carpentered houses but ones in which the two rooms were placed one behind the other. Because those houses with a room-behind-room plan were easily enlarged without the necessity of rebuilding the entire roof, they survive in greater numbers than those with a side-by-side room plan which were not as adaptable to expansion. Clear evidence of this is shown by recent intensive surveys of local historic architecture. These studies have revealed that there are no fewer than 30 extant (or only recently destroyed) examples of one-story buildings with room-behind-room plans, but only five with an original side-by-side room configuration. In the opening decades of the nineteenth century, improved agricultural practices and marketing conditions, and greater opportunities for individual economic and social mobility, resulted in an expanding middle class. During this same period many older homes, particularly the smaller types, were enlarged, either by additions to one side, or across the rear, or by raising them to a full two-story height. However, modestly scaled and finished dwellings like Spye Park began to disappear from the county's landscape during the latter part of the nineteenth century concurrent with a dramatic decline in population in the aftermath of the Civil War. The loss of these buildings, like that of the county's early agricultural buildings, has continued unabated and, in fact, has accelerated in recent years in the face of the county's transformation from rural agrarian to suburban.

See Continuation Sheet 8.3

HISTORIC CONTEXT: RESOURCE HISTORY:

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the period during which the earliest part of Spye Park was built, most of Charles County's inhabitants occupied dwellings that were not appreciably different from those of their forebears a century earlier. The county's agrarian-based economy had never been particularly stable, and small land-owning planters and poorer tenants continued to dominate the local population. Economic and social conditions served to hinder the county's progress until well after the American Revolution, thus perpetuating building customs established in the seventeenth century. The vast majority of dwelling houses listed in the 1783 tax assessments for Charles County, for example, were described as "small" and/or "old." Almost all were "in need of repair" and many had wooden chimneys. Housing conditions were not noticeably different by the close of the century; nearly 60% of all dwelling houses listed in the federal tax assessment of 1798 were worth less than the minimum taxable value of $100. That two-room dwellings like Spye Park typified the average or "middling" house in Charles County during the second half of the eighteenth century is amply illustrated by surviving building contracts, descriptions recorded in estate evaluations, inventories, and the 1783 and 1798 tax lists. Despite the fact that modest, one and two-room houses were a common part of the landscape for such an extended period of time, remarkably few examples retaining any degree of architectural integrity remain preserved. Changing agricultural practices and improved marketing conditions here in the first several decades of the nineteenth century provided a source of new wealth and the basis for a dramatic surge in local building activity. Many new homes were built and older houses enlarged or otherwise "improved." Nearly 70% of all surviving county houses built before the Civil War date from the first half of the nineteenth century; of the forty or fewer older houses that have been recorded, all were changed to one degree or another during the same period.[1]

Spye Park stands on land for which a patent was issued in 1741 to the sons of Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton, who emmigrated from Scotland to Maryland about 1714, had purchased 200 acres of Panguiah Manor on which he was living at the time of his death in 1730. It was these 200 acres, plus a 48-acre surplus, that were resurveyed in 1741 and patented under the name Spye Park.[2] By 1773 the land was occupied by Alexander Hamilton's youngest son, Samuel. Samuel's will, probated that year, bequeathed a portion of Spye Park "where I now live" to his wife Elizabeth during her life or widowhood. It was then to pass in ownership to his nephew, Samuel Hamilton II. The balance of Spye Park, together with a small tract known as Hamilton's Woodyard, was devised to James Hamilton, brother of the testator. On James's death the same land was to descen to his son, Bennett. By 1767 James Hamilton had moved to Prince George's County, after which his share of Spye Park was presumably occupied by Bennett Hamilton. However, it wasn't until his father died in 1785 that Bennett assumed legal title.[3]

See Continuation Sheet 8.4

It is reasonable to conjecture that the oldest part of the existing house was built by Bennett Hamilton after 1767, although the possibility remains that it may be earlier. In the 1783 tax assessments Bennett Hamilton was recorded as owning 172 acres of Spye Park improved by a "middling good dwelling" and two "indifferent" out buildings.[4] That the house was described as "middling good" implies that it was considered an average house in an acceptable state of repair. This, and the fact that what is thought to be original trim in one of the first floor rooms is stylistically characteristic of the latter part of the eighteenth century, suggests that the house had not been built more than ten or twenty years before. Hamilton's other taxable assets in 1783 included 13 slaves, horses and cattle, and 6 ounces of plate.

The 1790 census records for Charles County list Bennett Hamilton as the owner of 13 slaves and the head of a houshold that included his wife and nine children. In the 1798 federal tax assessments Hamilton was reported as the owner of 329½ acres improved by a dwelling worth $75, and 11 slaves, five of whom were exempt from taxation due to age or physical disabilities. The low valuation given the house indicates that it had not yet been enlarged and had probably fallen into disrepair. That the alteration of the building had not occurred by the time of Bennett's death in 1808 is suggested by the relatively small amount of household furnishings included in the inventory of his personal estate. Hamilton's 14 slaves, livestock and salable crops were assigned the greater share of the estimated $2,986 value given his personalty.[5]

In 1814, following the death of their mother, Bennett Hamilton's six surviving children conveyed all of their interest in the home plantation of Spye Park, together with several contiguous tracts Hamilton acquired in 1789, to the heirs of John Dement. Apparently, Dement had contracted to purchase the property but died before the sale was legally recorded. Richard Dement, the eldest of John Dement's sons, ultimately assumed full ownership of Spye Park.[6]

It is likely that it was Richard Dement who enlarged the former dwelling of the Hamilton family, a probability supported by the carpentry and contemporary interior detailing of the roof and rear rooms. Richard Dement maintained Spye Park as his dwelling plantation until his death in 1843. His will, written the day of his death and entered into probate the following day, devised one-half of his real and personal property to his cousin, Richard T. Tubman, and the other half to the children of his cousin John E. Dement.[7] The inventory of Richard Dement's personalty is of interest for its reference to a dairy and a meathouse, and its listing of carpenter's tools and building materials, including 3½ barrels of plaster, window glass, nails, tar and "1 set Old Tubs and lumber upstairs." Dement owned 23 slaves and was apparently fairly successful at farming, raising such diverse cash crops as wheat, corn, cabbage and potatoes as well as tobacco. The total appraised value of his personal estate came to $8,100.82½. An additional list of debts due the estate, totalling $3,360, was filed in 1844. Interestingly, most of these moneys were owed by several prominent local merchants. The total value of Dement's estate placed his worth above that of the average countian of the period. This, together

See Continuation Sheet 8.5

with the larger amount of furnishings he owned over those listed in the inventory of Bennett Hamilton, further reinforces the theory that the alterations to the house occurred after the 1814 sale.[8]

Shortly after Richard Dement's will was probated his executor and heir, Richard Tubman, petitioned the county court to make a division of the estate between himself and the children of John E. Dement. In 1844 the court assigned 487 acres, land that Dement had purchased after 1814, to Tubman. The house and 279 acres were assigned to the children of John Dement, all of whom were then minors.[9]

Spye Park subsequently became the home of William E. Dement, the eldest son of John E. Dement. William Dement, who served in the Mexican-American War and held local office, lived at Spye Park until moving to Washington D.C. about 1890. In 1917 the property was purchased from the surviving heirs of John E. Dement by William Dement's daughter, Mary (Dement) Padgett, the grandmother of Spye Park's present owner.

Footnotes:

1. J. Richard Rivoire, Homeplaces: Traditional Domestic Architecture of Charles County, Maryland (La Plata, Maryland: Charles County Community College, 1990), pp. 5-25.
2. Patents, Liber G no. B, folio 281. Maryland State Archives.
3. Charles County Wills, Liber 39, folio 290; Prince George's County Wills, Liber T no. 1, folio 225. Both Maryland State Archives.
4. 1783 Tax Assessments, District 4, Land and General. Maryland State Archives.
5. Inventories, Liber 1808-1812, folio 2. Charles County Courthouse, La Plata.
6. Deeds, Liber IB no. 11, folio 9. La Plata.
7. Land Commission Records, Liber WM no. 1, folio 321. La Plata.
8. Inventories, Liber 1841-1844, folio 409. La Plata.
9. Land Commission Records, Liber WM no. 1, folio 324.

See Continuation Sheet 8.6

HISTORIC CONTEXT: RESOURCE ANALYSIS:

Although the original eighteenth-century structure as built by Bennett Hamilton was considerably altered circa 1814, the remaining historic fabric provides important information regarding construction techniques, the arrangement and use of interior spaces, and other architectural features typical of a small planter's dwelling in this area in the second half of the eighteenth century. Almost all of Charles County's surviving eighteenth-century houses were built and occupied by upper class merchant-planters, whereas house types common to the small planter and tenant class are practically non-existent. Of the fifteen or so two-room dwellings with room configurations similar to Spye Park's that existed in the early 1970s, fewer than a half-dozen survive, and all were later altered just as extensively as Spye Park. Thus, even though only fragments of the eighteenth century fabric might still be preserved, the extreme scarcity of buildings like Spye Park gives each greater value than such houses might otherwise possess if comparable but more intact examples existed in greater numbers. Even though Spye Park's alterations of circa 1814 somewhat diminished the historic architectural integrity of the original house, the alterations are not without significance in their own right, particularly when viewed in the context of the extraordinary transformation in the region's material culture and socioeconomic development that occurred during first several decades of the nineteenth century. The uniqueness of Spye Park's exterior design, interior plan and associated carpentry details are of particular importance to the study of local building customs during that period.

Similarly important in a local context is Spye Park's tobacco barn, the original portion of which is in unusually good condition. While heavily timbered tobacco houses with mortise and tenon joinery and tilted false plates were commonly built in this locality from the seventeenth century through the first several decades of the nineteenth century, they have suffered the same fate as the smaller dwelling houses. Today, only three tobacco houses with tilted false plates survive in a reasonably good state of repair, while only 20 years ago there were more than a dozen. Of those that exist, Spye Park's is the only one with braced roof trusses. Charles County's early agricultural buildings have been especially vulnerable to abandonment and destruction in recent years as more and more agricultural land is given over to residential, commercial and industrial development. More than two-thirds of the county's pre-Civil War agricultural buildings and domestic dependencies recorded since 1970 have disappeared or are now in complete ruins.

9. Major Bibliographical References

CH-304

Charles County Deeds, Wills and Inventories, Charles County Courthouse, La Plata.

1783 and 1798 Tax Assessment Records, Maryland State Archives, Annapolis.

Hamilton Collection, Southern Maryland Studies Center, Charles County Community College, La Plata.

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, Maryland Historical Trust, 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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 8 acres

USGS quad La Plata, MD

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	329760	4273190
B			
C			
D			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

☒ See continuation sheet 10.1

Boundary Justification

The boundaries are drawn to maintain the historic rural setting of the historic resources but to exclude the surrounding agricultural land not containing historic resources.

☒ See continuation sheet 10.1

11. Form Prepared By

name/title J. Richard Rivoire

organization Architectural Historian date May, 1990

street & number P. O. Box 132 telephone (301) 932-1000

city or town La Plata state Maryland zip code 20646

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

CHAS-304

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY MAGI # 0903045204

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON: SPYE PARK

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: North side Padgett Road

CITY, TOWN: White Plains ___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 1st

STATE: Maryland

COUNTY: Charles

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
___DISTRICT	___PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	___AGRICULTURE	___MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	___UNOCCUPIED	___COMMERCIAL	___PARK
___STRUCTURE	___BOTH	___WORK IN PROGRESS	___EDUCATIONAL	X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
___SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	___ENTERTAINMENT	___RELIGIOUS
___OBJECT	___IN PROCESS	___YES: RESTRICTED	___GOVERNMENT	___SCIENTIFIC
	___BEING CONSIDERED	___YES: UNRESTRICTED	___INDUSTRIAL	___TRANSPORTATION
		X NO	___MILITARY	___OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Phillip Griffith

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER: Spye Park

CITY, TOWN: White Plains ___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code: Maryland

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Charles County Courthouse

Liber #: 32

Folio #: 201

STREET & NUMBER: Charles Street (P. O. Box B)

CITY, TOWN: La Plata

STATE: Maryland 20646

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___FEDERAL ___STATE ___COUNTY ___LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

CH-304

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Spye Park is a modestly scaled, one story plus attic frame house that many would describe, and not without certain justification, as a quaint and very charming example of a typical Tidewater planter's home of the eighteenth- century. Similar in overall design to the Capper House in St. Mary's County (STMA-175), it is distinguished by the extension of the roof and attic chambers out beyond the front wall of the house to cover a "recessed" porch, a thought-to-be unique feature in Charles County.

The house faces south and is three bays in width on this elevation. The entrance door is transomed and occupies a slightly off-centered position. It is flanked by two windows of six-over-six sash. Although the windows are believed to be in their original locations, certain interior features suggest that the door has been moved from a formerly centered position. The porch extends the full width of this side and is supported by five square posts. On the front slope of the roof are two pedimented dormers that appear to be of late nineteenth or early twentieth century date. Both have overhanging eaves and rake boards and frame six-over-six pane sash. The faces of both dormers are positioned about three feet forward of the fro wall of the house. The north side of the house repeats the fenestration and door placement of the front, but lacks the recessed porch of the south elevation. At each end of the house stands a single exterior chimney situated toward the front of the house from the roof ridge. The east end chimney appears original to the building and has tiled shoulders and a free-standing stack. To the right of the chimney at the first floor level are two windows;two more windows flank the chimney stack at the gable level. The chimney at the opposite end is a relatively recent reconstruction of the original. Extending out from the east end of the house is a three part frame wing of mid-twentieth century date, the main part of which stands on the foundations of an earlier semi-detached kitchen. (This former kitchen, probably original to the house, had a large exterior chimney at its west end.) The two main parts of the existing wing consists of a small rectangular room attached to the house by a lower one room hyphen. Across the north wall of the larger section is a shed-roofed room housing the new kitchen.

The main block of Spye Park, built on brick foundations, is sheathed with lapped clapboards. The roof is covered with composition shingles. The kitchen wing is sheathed with "novelty" siding. The roofing is the same as that of the main block. Most if not all of the exterior features, excluding the foundations and east end chimney, are of twentieth century date.

The interior room configuration of the house is one characteristic of eighteenth century Charles County architecture, consisting of two

(continued on attached sheet)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

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8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
X 1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Spye Park is an appealing example of a regionally characteristic house type. A modestly proportioned one story dwelling with dormered roof, end chimneys, and a five room first floor plan with centered rear stair hall, it is believed to have been built during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. Its gable roof, thought to be later, extends out over the front wall of the house to provide a "recessed porch", giving Spye Park some physical similarity to The Capper House in St. Mary's County (STM-175). Exposed corner posts and wall plates in the principal first floor room suggest the possibility that part of the house may be older. Although most of the interior trim dates from the early and mid-nineteenth century, fragments of trim, specifically chairrails and door facings of a characteristic eighteenth century profile, survive. A 1783 tax assessment of Spye Park lists as improvements a "middling good dwelling house," then a frequently used phrase for a house of this design.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CH 304

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Spye Park is located on a 239.60 acre tract of land identified as Parcel 44, Maps 14 and 23, Charles County Tax Maps (revised January 1976.)

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE J. Richard Rivoire

ORGANIZATION Charles County Planning Department DATE October 1978

STREET & NUMBER Charles County Courthouse TELEPHONE 645-6537

CITY OR TOWN La Plata STATE Maryland

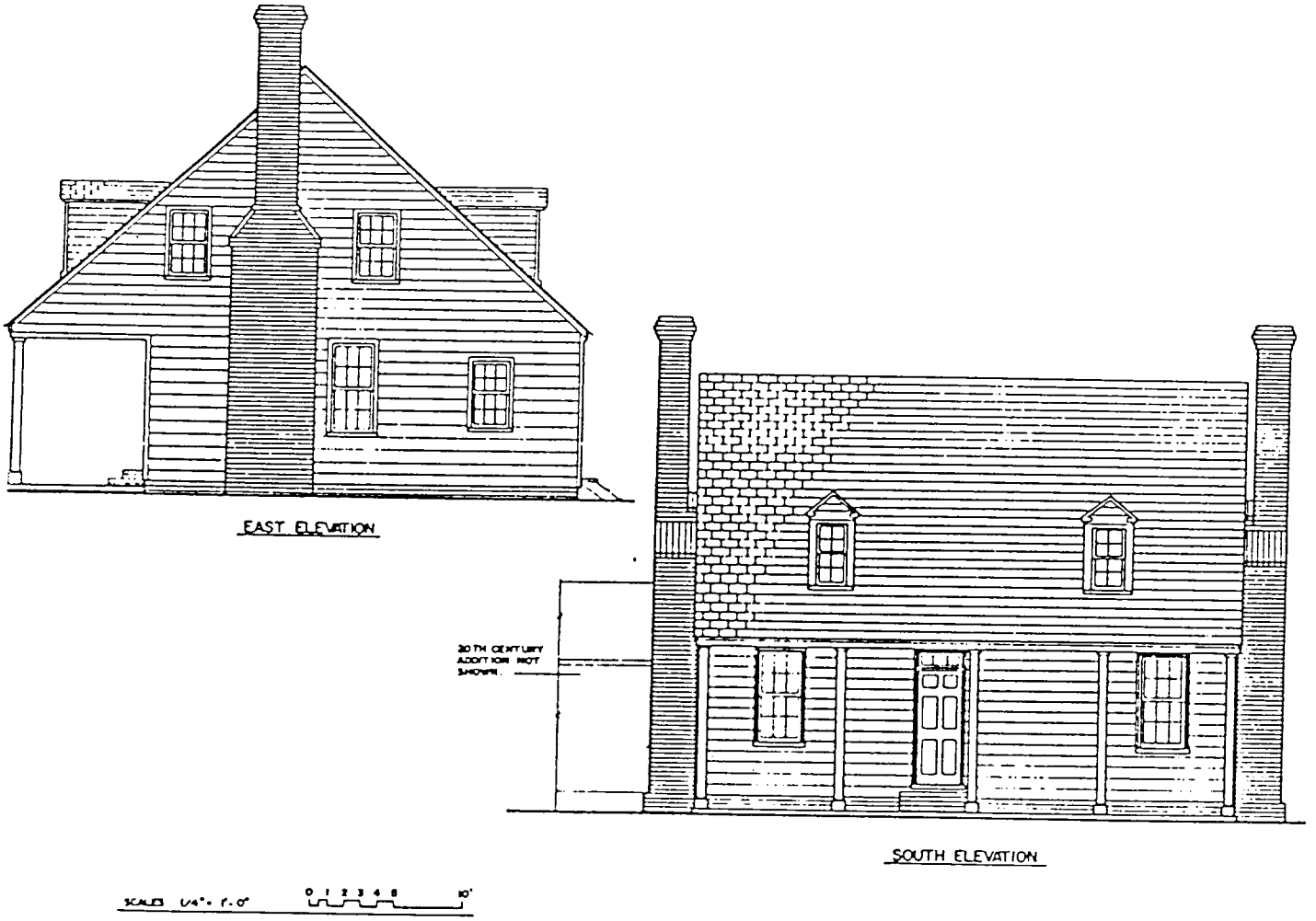
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

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

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

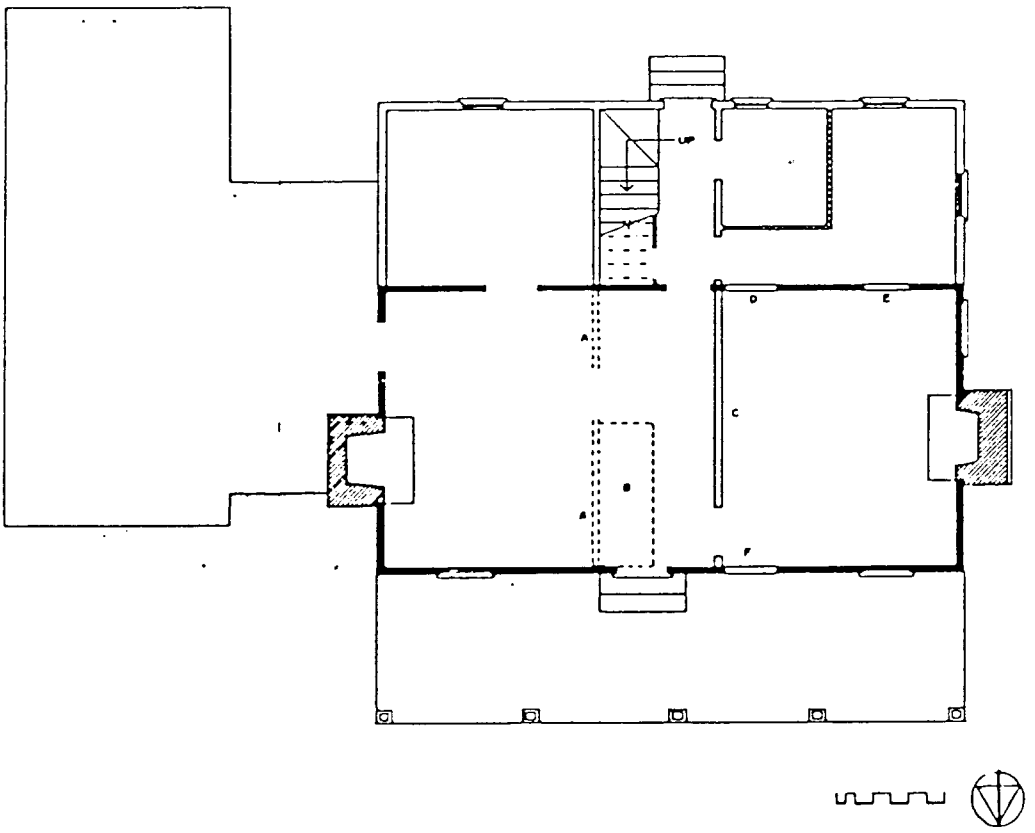
large front rooms with two smaller rear rooms and a centered rear stair hall. This is the same plan as Maxwell Hall (CHAS-196), Greenwood (CHAS-295), Araby (CHAS-11) and Marshall Hall (CHAS-54), to name but a few examples. At one time a center hall was created by the installation of a partition in the larger, southwest room, but this was later removed. This same alteration is not uncommon to houses of this type, a notable example being River View in St. Mary's County (STMA-120). In the two rear rooms and part of the southwest front room, the original post and beam construction and brick nogging is exposed and painted. Almost all of the existing trim, including doors and mantels, is of the nineteenth century. However, one small section of chairrail of a typical eighteenth century profile, and a two piece door surround, survive on the north wall of the southwest room. This same room is of additional interest because its corner posts and wall plates project out beyond the plastered wall surfaces, a feature generally common to pre-1750 regional architecture. It is possible that the room is older than the rest of the house since this particular feature is not repeated in any other room. In the attic are several small bedrooms. Mortice marks in the floor suggest various alterations, among them the possibility that the present roof is a replacement of the original, and that when it was rebuilt it was enlarged to its present plan.

Near the house is a three bay tobacco barn, possibly of late eighteenth century date, that displays evidence of having been initially sheathed, roof and walls, with riven clapboards, a standard sheathing used on barns and smaller dwelling houses throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It is probable that the same type of sheathing was initially used on the house, although in this instance it may have been beaded as at the Trinity Lake House (CHAS-294) and the Richard Bland House (CHAS-341).



SPYE PARK. Exterior elevations.
J. R. Rivoire

See Continuation Sheet No. 7.6

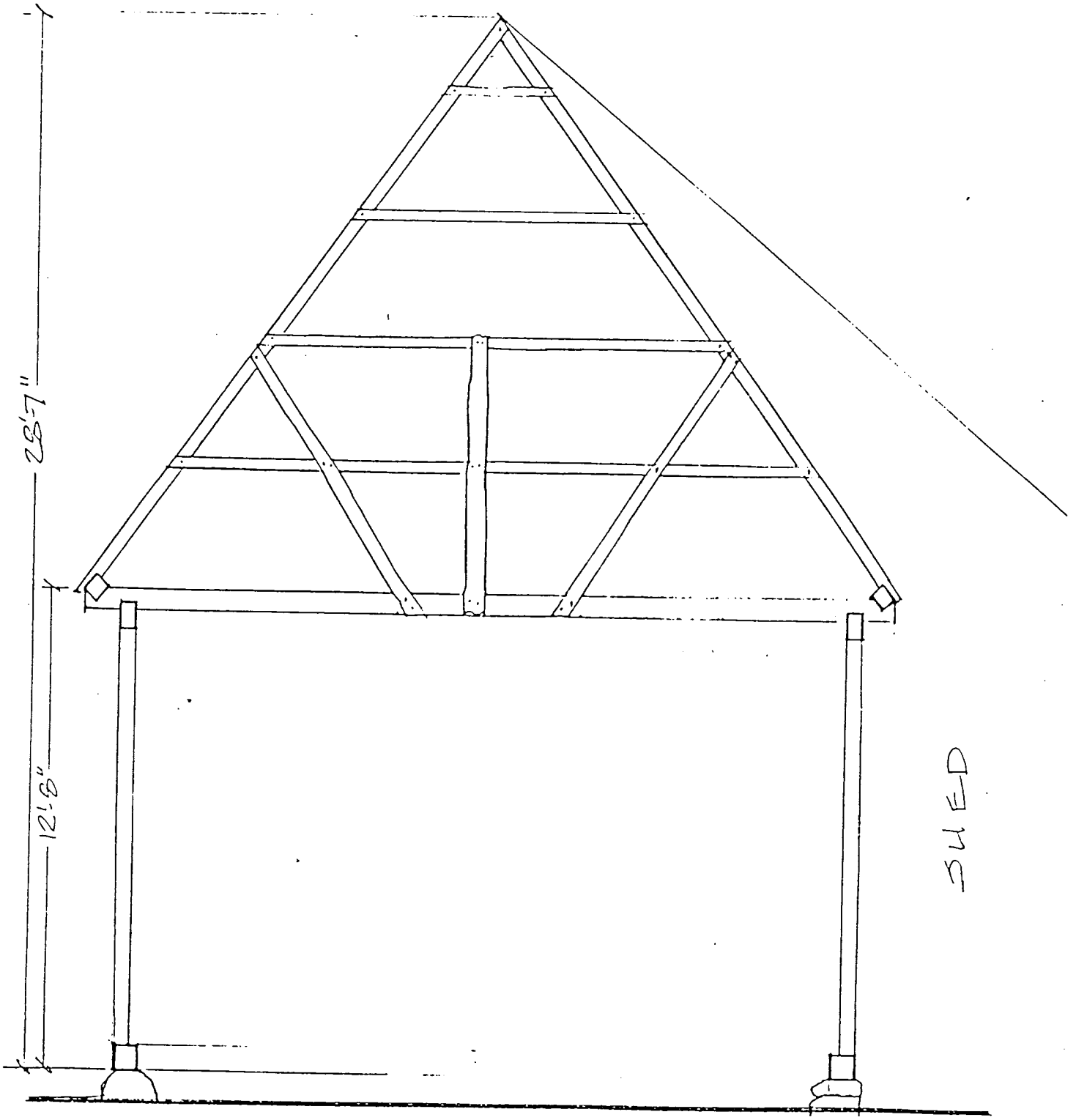


SPYE PARK. First floor plan. (Period I section defined by bold lines.) A. Period I partition wall location; B. Period I stair location; C. early twentieth-century partition wall; D. Period I exterior door location; E. possible Period I window location; F. Period I door location. Early twentieth-century wing not detailed.

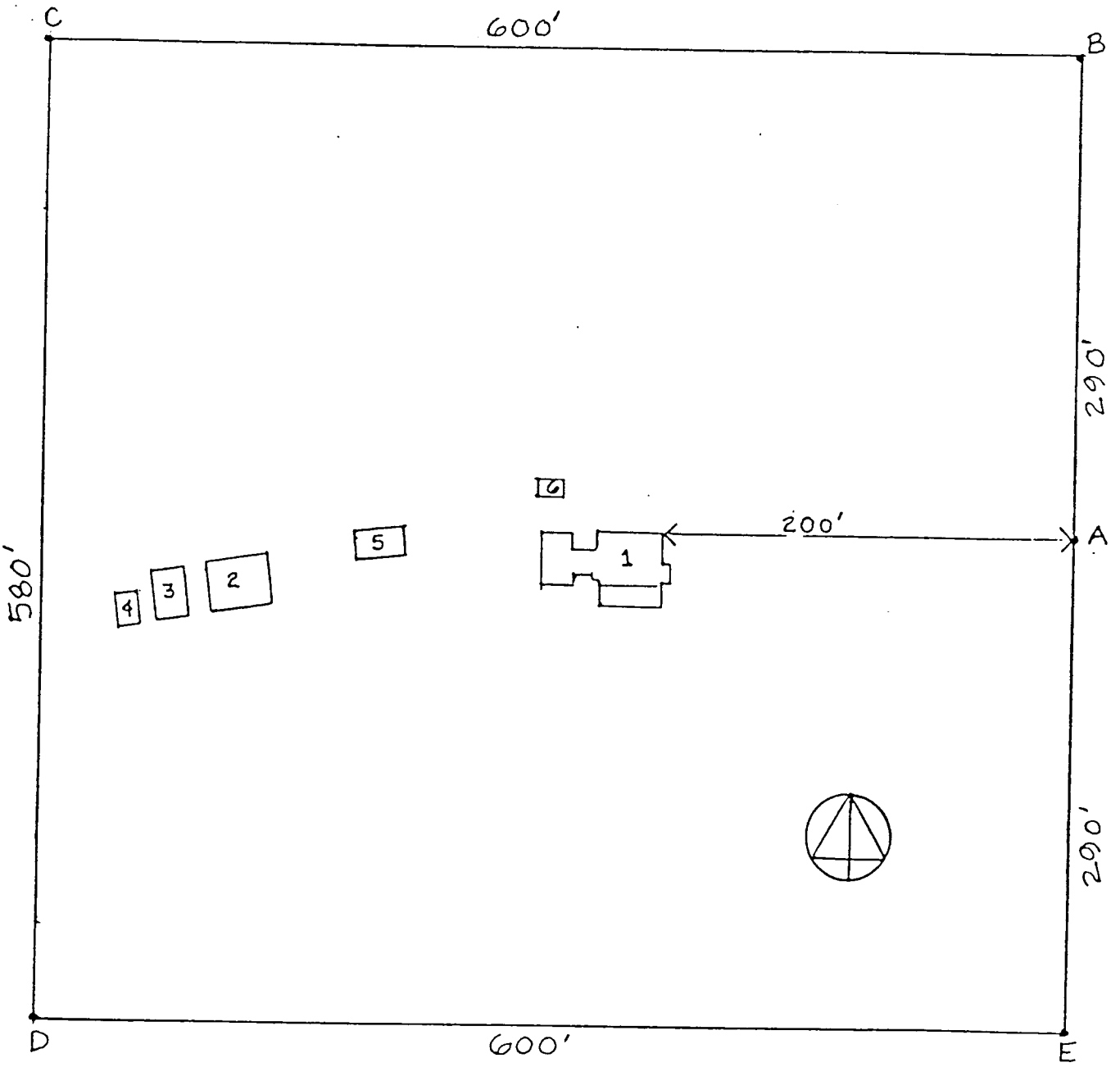
J. R. Rivoire

See Continuation Sheet 7.7

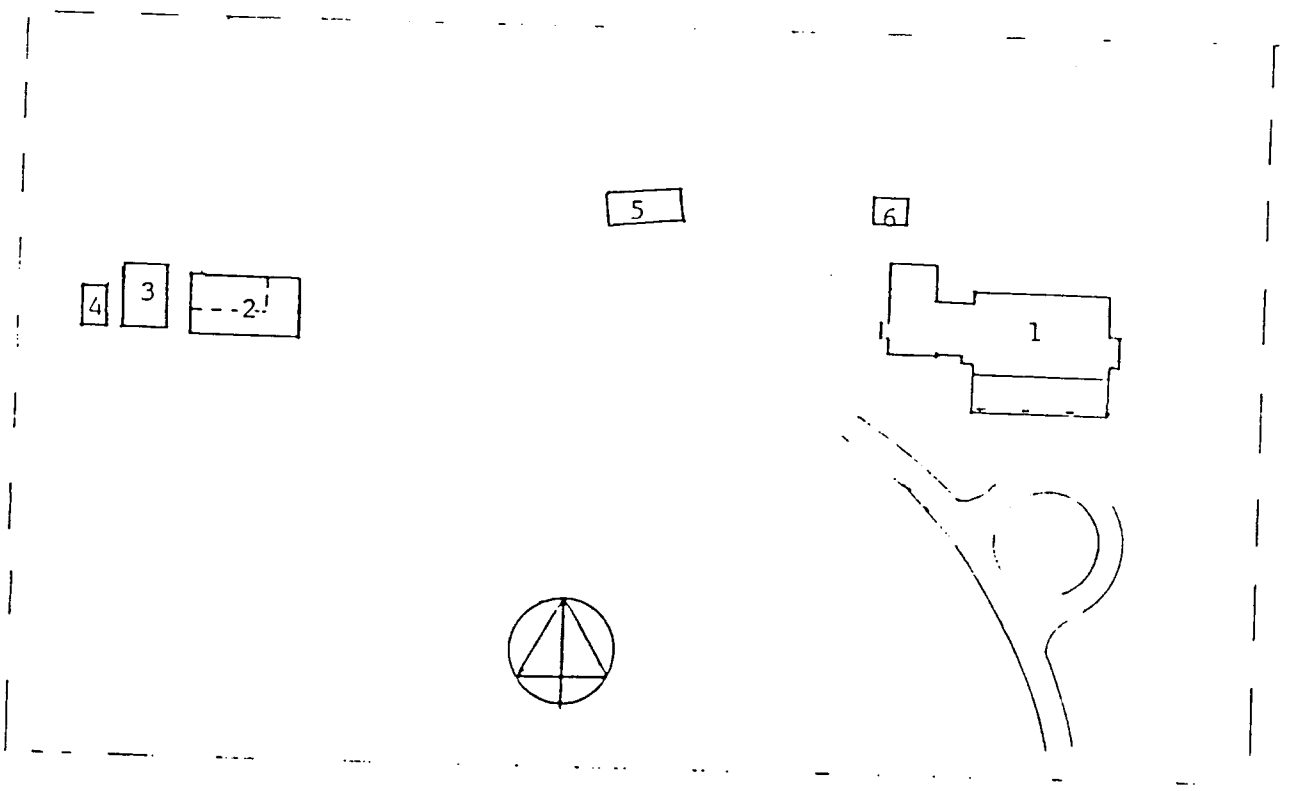
Spye Park. Circa 1866. Owner's Collection.



Spye Park. Historic tobacco barn. Typical rafter truss. ¼-in to 1-foot.



BOUNDARIES: Begin at Northeast corner of house, 200 feet East to Point "A"; then North, 290 feet to Point "B"; then 600 feet West to Point "C"; then 580 feet South to Point "D"; then 600 feet East to Point "E"; then 290 feet North to Beginning Point "A". Containing 8 acres ±.

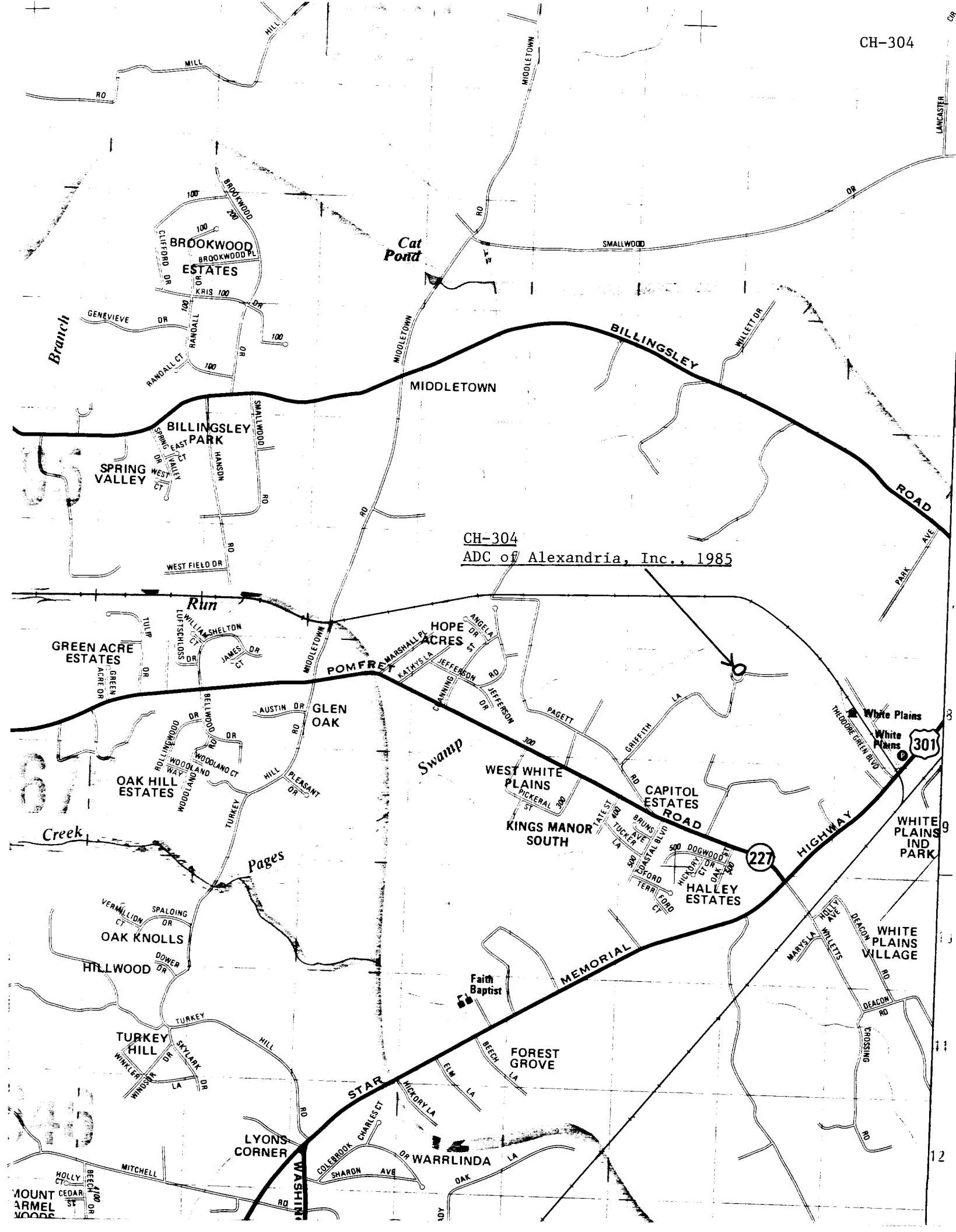


Spye Park. General Site Plan.
Not to scale.
J. R. Rivoire

KEY:

1. House
2. Historic Barn
3. Animal Barn
4. Cornhouse
5. Poultry Shed/Shop
6. Wellhouse

See Continuation Sheet 7.5


CH-304
ADC of Alexandria, Inc., 1985
BROOKWOOD ESTATES
Cat Pond
MIDDLETOWN
BILLINGSLEY PARK
SPRING VALLEY
BILLINGSLEY ROAD
Branch
Run
GREEN ACRE ESTATES
HOPE ACRES
POMFRET
GLEN OAK
OAK HILL ESTATES
Swamp
WEST WHITE PLAINS
KINGS MANOR SOUTH
CAPITOL ESTATES
ROAD
HALLEY ESTATES
White Plains
301
227
HIGHWAY
WHITE PLAINS IND PARK
WHITE PLAINS VILLAGE
Creek
Pages
OAK KNOLLS
HILLWOOD
Faith Baptist
MEMORIAL
TURKEY HILL
FOREST GROVE
STAR
LYONS CORNER
WARRLINDA
WASHING
MOUNT CARMEL WOODS

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Spye Park
CH-304
Charles Co
Maryland

18/329760/4273
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SPYE PARK
CH-304
VIEW FROM SOUTH

SPYE PARK
CH-304
VIEW FROM SE

SPYE PARK CH-304
VIEW OF BARN FROM SE

SPYE PARK
CH-304
VIEW FROM NE

SPYE PARK
CH-304
S. WALL, NE 1ST FLOOR ROOM

(BOTTOM)

SPYE PARK
CH-304
N. WALL, SW 1st FLOOR ROOM

SPYE PARK (BARN)
CH-304
VIEW OF EAVE FRAMING,
SOUTH SIDE.

CHAS-~~344~~ 304 Spye Park
~~JOHNSONTOWN~~; View From East
J.R.Rivoire, 1978

CH.304 65% P.90

CHAS-304
SPYE PARK; View From South
J.R.Rivoire, 1978