

Capsule Summary

CE-1510

Principio Iron Works Hoist House Remains

Principio

Private

Circa 1889-90

The Principio Company was established in 1720. Beginning in 1725, intensive ironmaking activity started at the site and continued until the American Revolution. After the war, Samuel Hughes operated a cannon factory on the site, and, in 1836, the property passed to Joseph and George Price Whitaker, who made a series of capital improvements to it. Today the property reflects the Whitaker era of ownership.

The hoist house was built as a single-story brick structure with a shed roof. Today, only the south wall and part of the east wall remain standing. Built to house steam-powered machinery which raised the stock elevator on the 1890 furnace, the building was later called the "oil house."

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization:

Eastern Shore

Chronological/Development Period (s):

Agricultural-Industrial Transition: 1781-1835

Industrial-Urban Dominance: 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme (s):

Economic

Resource Type:

Category: Structure

Historic Environment: Village

Historic Functions (s) and Use (s):

Hoist House

Known Design Source:

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

Survey No. CE-1510

Magi No.

DOE \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic Principio Iron Works - Hoist House Remains

and/or common Principio Furnace

**2. Location**

street & number Maryland Route 7 and Principio Creek Bridge \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Principio Furnace  vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Cecil

**3. Classification**

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

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

name York Building Products

street & number 1020 N. Hartley Street telephone no.:

city, town York state and zip code PA 17405

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cecil County Courthouse liber NDS65

street & number Main Street folio 794-98

city, town Elkton state MD

**6. Representation in Existing** Historical Surveys

title

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

pository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No. CE-1510

**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved    date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

# 8. Significance

Survey No. CE-1510

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

### Specific dates

### Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
and/or

Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Level of Significance:  national  state  local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. CE-1510

- May, Earl Chapin. Principio To Wheeling. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1945.
- Robbins, Michael W. The Principio Company. New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1986.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 90 acres  
 Quadrangle name Havre De Grace, MD Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The Principio Iron Works property is bounded by Principio Creek to the east and south, by Maryland Route 7 to the north, and by Principio Station Road to the west.

The boundary encompasses all the resources associated with the historic iron works.

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Lee R. Maddex, Project Coordinator Sr.		
organization	Institute for the History of Technology & Industrial Archaeology	date	4/30/98
street & number	1535 Mileground	telephone	(304) 293-3829
city or town	Morgantown	state	WV 26505

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~~ **MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST**  
 Shaw House  
 21 State Circle  
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
 (301) 269-2438

**DHCP/DHCD**  
**100 COMMUNITY PLACE**  
**CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023**  
**514-7600**

CE-1510  
Principio Iron Works-Hoist House Remains  
Cecil County

Section 7.1

The Principio Company was established in 1720. Beginning 1725, intensive ironmaking activity started at the site and continued until the American Revolution. After the war, Samuel Hughes operated a cannon factory on the site, and, in 1836, the property passed to Joseph and George Price Whitaker, who made a series of capital improvements to it. Today, the property reflects the Whitaker era of ownership. The property consists of the Second Empire-style company office building, two 1920s corn cribs, foundational remains of a circa 1836 barn, a circa 1850 tool house, a 1890s wagon barn, standing remains of a 1890s blacksmith/wheelwrights shop, a 1890 charcoal kiln, a circa 1890 wash house, foundational remains of a scale house, foundational remains of two charcoal barns, 1837 charcoal iron blast furnace with hot blast stove and waterpowered blowing engine, partial remains of a 1890 hoist house, a 1890 blower engine house, and a circa 1850 shanty.

Resource Count: one (1)

The hoist house was built in 1889-90. It was a small single-story brick structure, with a shed roof. Only the south wall and part of the east wall are still standing.

This structure housed steam powered machinery which raised the stock elevator on 1890 furnace. It was later called the "oil house." Besides the blower engine house, this is the last above ground remains associated with the 1890 blast furnace.

CE-1510

Principio Iron Works-Hoist House Remains  
Cecil County

Section 8.1

The hoist house remains are significant under Criterion A for the area of industry. The hoist house was integral to the operation of the 1890 improvements, housing equipment which raised the stock to the top of the furnace.

Established in 1720, the Principio Company constructed the Principio Iron Works, the first blast furnace and refinery forge in the Maryland Colony. Located at the head of the Chesapeake Bay, the ironworks plantation consisted of the 1725 Principio Furnace, the 1728 Principio Forge, a store, and dwellings. The Principio Iron Works operated until the time of the American Revolution when they were abandoned. The property was confiscated by the state of Maryland in 1781, and it passed to Colonel Samuel Hughes in 1785. Hughes rebuilt the furnace and added a foundry for the production of cannon. After these works were destroyed by British raiders during the War of 1812, Hughes rebuilt the ironworks, but it bankrupted him and the property passed to his creditors in 1817. The property remained virtually idle for the next two decades when it was first acquired by David Stewart and others in 1834, who in turn sold it Joseph Whitaker II and his brother George Price Whitaker in 1836. The Whitaker brothers completely renovated the aged ironworks, erecting a new blast furnace plant and new worker housing. Importantly, the site was crossed by the recently completed Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad which created a nexus enabling the ironwork's products to reach larger national markets. Following the Civil War, George Price Whitaker embarked on a second program of capital improvements which included the construction of a new dam, hot blast stove, blowing engine, and waterpowered turbine. Expanding the scope of production at the site, Whitaker, in 1883-84, erected a steampowered forge for the manufacture of wrought iron blooms. The 1837 furnace could not produce enough iron to keep his forge operating continuously and Whitaker commenced a third period of capital improvements to remedy this shortfall. Completed in August 1890, Whitaker erected a cupola-style blast furnace with hot blast stoves, blower engine house, boiler house, hoist house, and a cast house, but these improvements were abandoned shortly after his death in December 1890. Control of the property then passed to Whitaker's nephew Nelson E. Whitaker, who chose to close down the furnaces and produce wrought iron blooms only. Bloom production became closely allied with the Tyler Tube and Pipe Company of Washington, Pennsylvania, owned by William P. Tyler, Nelson E. Whitaker's son-in-law. The forge continued to operate until 1925 when production ceased. The storied Principio property reverted to agricultural use.

← TO PENNYVILLE

CE-1510

MD RT 7 (POST ROAD)

PRINCIPIO STATION ROAD

CE-112A

CE-1499

CE-1500

CE-1501

CE-1502

CE-1503

CE-1506

CE-1504

CE-1505

CE-1507

CE-1508

CE-1509

CE-1510

CE-1511

CE-1512

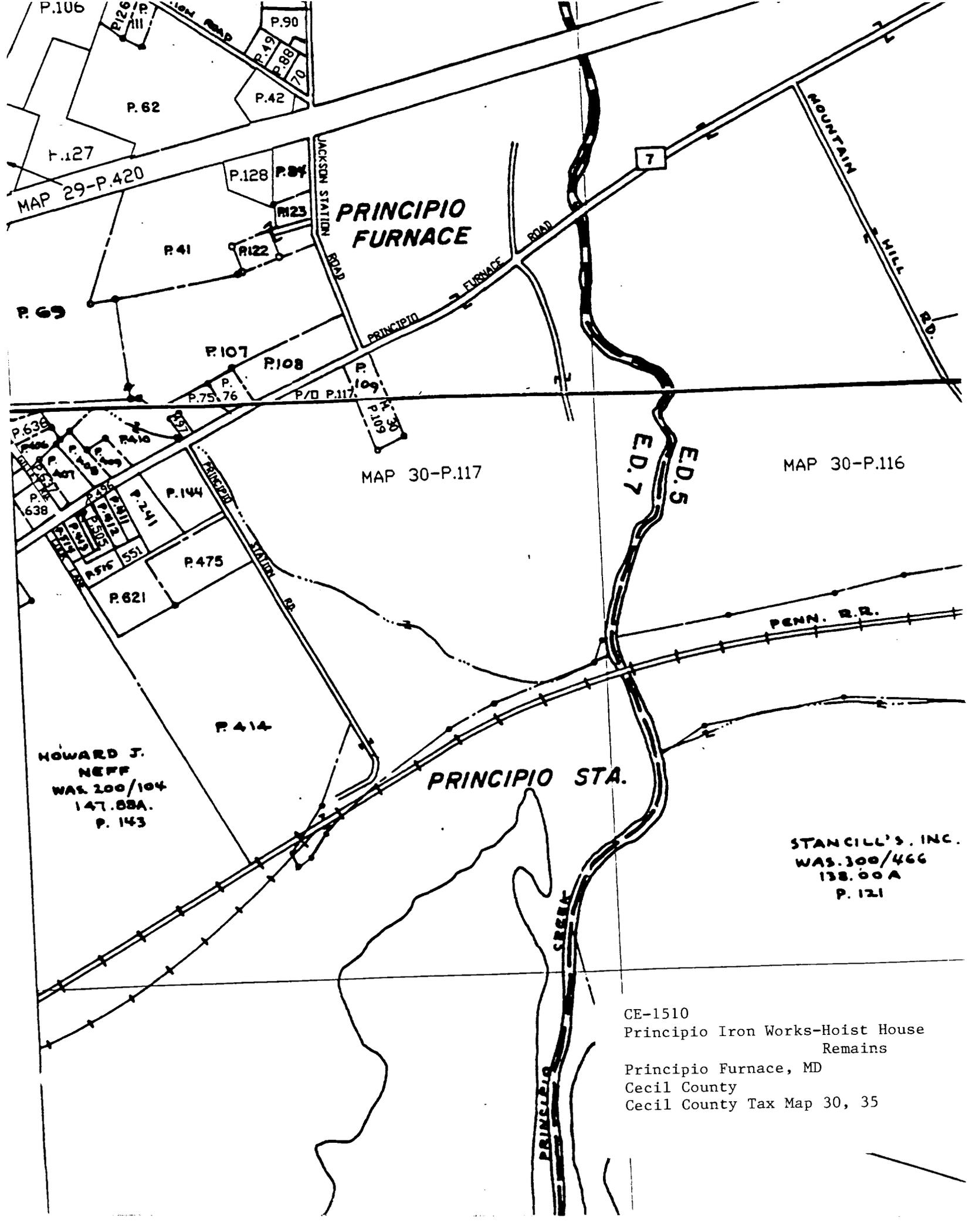
PRINCIPIO CREEK



NO SCALE

Principio Inland Wetlands  
RESOURCE SKETCH MAP  
MAY 1998

Principio Furnace, Cecil County, Maryland



**PRINCIPIO FURNACE**

MAP 30-P.117

MAP 30-P.116

HOWARD J. NEFF  
WAS. 200/104  
147.88A.  
P. 143

**PRINCIPIO STA.**

STANCILL'S, INC.  
WAS. 300/466  
138.00A  
P. 121

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Principio Iron Works-Hoist House  
Remains  
Principio Furnace, MD  
Cecil County  
Cecil County Tax Map 30, 35



CE-1510

HOIST HOUSE REMAINS

PRINCIPIO IRON WORKS

CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND

LEE R. MADDEX

MARCH 1998

MARYLAND SHPO

SOUTH ELEVATION

~~1416~~